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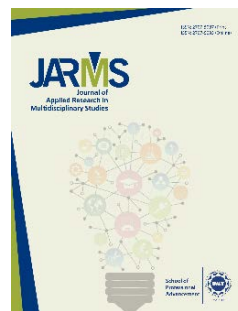|	
Title:	**Factors Affecting Digital Media Acceptance for Journalistic Purposes: From the Theory of Planned Behavior Perspective**
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Factors Affecting Digital Media Acceptance for Journalistic Purposes: From the Theory of Planned Behavior Perspective

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Abstract

Digital media has transformed the journalism landscape across the globe; however, the reasons behind its wider adoption in the developing regions are still under investigation. The current study attempted to examine the digital journalism acceptance among Pakistani journalists. The researchers used a cross-sectional approach and a Structural Equation modelling (SEM) for the data analysis. Supported by the basic propositions of the Theory of Planned Behavior, the findings affirmed the role of certain psychological factors in digital media acceptance among journalists. The researchers determined that subjective norms significantly affect the behavioral intention of the journalists, which also indicates a positive effect on Perceived Behavioral Control. Besides, the Perceived Behavioral Control also affects the behavioral intention. Consequently, behavioral intention causes digital journalism acceptance among journalists. Finally, the indirect effect of gender on digital journalism acceptance also remained significant among Pakistani journalists. This research concluded that the role and acceptance of digital journalism is expanding in Pakistan. Despite the importance of traditional approaches , the role of digital journalism is also acknowledged at different levels. Therefore, more studies are recommended to explore the role of gender and demographics on digital media acceptance among journalists, which may bring out in-depth details.

Keywords: digital media, journalism, online journalism, Pakistan, Structural Equation Modelling

Introduction

Technology has profoundly impacted journalism and continues to do so, particularly in terms of digital media. With the advent of internet and digital tools, journalists are now capable to create and distribute content to a global

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audience almost instantaneously (Tong & Zuo, 2021). This feature has allowed news to become more accessible which resulted in an increased demand for online content. Moreover, digital technology also helped to enable media outlets to target specific audiences and tailor their content accordingly. Additionally, digital media has also enabled the journalists to engage with readers and viewers in ways that were not possible earlier. Today, journalists better understand their audience and create more relevant and engaging content (Campbell, 2022). According to Fahmy and Attia (2021), technology not only altered the journalism and journalistic practices; but it has also added more value to the role of journalists. Nowadays, journalists are also considered as stakeholders and opinion builders as they do not rely on one resource; however, they also focus on other platforms to communicate and interact with the masses. Zboja et al. (2020) considered digital technology as an ease of access, wider audience, and increased interactivity, leading to information sharing and gathering between the journalists and their audiences. Zayani (2020) further argued that digital media helps to revolutionize the way journalists may work. It makes it easier for them to access and share the news and information quickly and efficiently. Moreover, it also enables them to build larger audiences, reach new audiences, and connect with the readers in new ways. Digital media also improved the quality of journalism by allowing journalists to access more sources, conduct more in-depth research, and create more engaging content.

Notably, the modern era of advanced technology played an influential role to enhance the responsibility of news media even more (Desai et al., 2021). Swift development in the field of computer technology, during the last couple of decades, broadened the boundaries of media. It provided more avenues to citizens to participate actively in the field of journalism through various platforms including blogs, Facebook, and Twitter etc. which eventually influenced the society (AlAashry, 2020). According to Laor (2022), besides news gathering, digital media is also beneficial for media organizations to keep an eye on the developments and stories reported around the world. It not only provides new ideas to media practitioners; however, it also helps them to strengthen their relations with their audience through reporting the latest news and trends, getting attention nationally or internationally (Kerunga et al., 2020). Due to these characteristics, digital media is now used as a key tool to collect information and keep in touch with the readers. Rapid information flow is another primary reason that new

media has become a more considerable platform for journalists to rely on both, for news gathering and dissemination (Tong & Zuo, 2021). Figueiras et al. (2021) further cited an example of citizen journalism facilitated and enhanced by digital media. As noted, that, public today, is not only a news receiver; however, it also contributes as a dissemination agent through their mobile phones which emerged as a new journalistic terminology called "civic journalism". This new trend of public involvement helped to redefine the traditional patterns of communication among news stakeholders including journalists, the target audience, and the sources. Therefore, it is undeniable that digital media brought a visible change in journalism and journalistic practices (Tandoc et al., 2020).

Rapid technology advancement and challenges produced effects on newsrooms and news culture at different levels. It may be enunciated that routines, practices, and news-producing procedures widely transformed during the last few years (Jamil & Appiah-Adjei, 2020). In this regard, the usage of digital media is equally beneficial for the journalists in Pakistan, as it allows them to reach wider audiences more efficiently and cost-effectively as a key factor for success in an ever-evolving media industry (Jamil, 2021b). Notably, technology acceptance is comparatively with a slower acceptance and integration in Pakistani society, digital media acceptance may allow them to reach wider audiences more efficiently and cost-effectively as a key factor for success in an ever-evolving media industry. Moreover, the relevant media allows the journalists to access more data and information quickly, providing them with a better understanding of the news stories, their audience, and the ever-changing industry (Hamid & Ali, 2021). Notably, it is assumed that digital media also helps the Pakistani journalists reach audiences worldwide, allowing them to share stories, opinions, and insights on a larger scale and with a more diverse audience (Mansoor, 2021). According to Sarwar et al. (2022), digital media is equally useful for the journalists, particularly female journalists could enhance their careers at maximum. Especially, during and after the Covid-19 pandemic, the scope and interest towards digital media for journalistic purposes has increased. It also indicates a positive change in the new media landscape of Pakistan.

Therefore, in the light of above arguments, the current study also focused on digital media usage for journalistic purposes in Pakistan. The focus remained on journalists, currently working in different media

organizations. This study was significant, as it provided insight to accept the digital media. It could also help to identify any challenges that journalists may face in accepting the digital media, which may be addressed to ensure that journalism is equipped with digital technology. It would further improve journalistic practices in Pakistan. Additionally, this study may also help to adopt the strategies to ensure that journalists could make the most of the opportunities offered by digital media.

Notably, the current study was conducted in the post-pandemic era (Ali et al., 2022), when digital journalism has strongly rooted in Pakistan., that further increases the significance of the current research. This article was structured formally into different sections that range from introduction to the conclusions and limitations, as the aim was to provide systematic and empirical evidence as per the formal research requirements.

Digital Media and Journalism in Pakistan

According to Ittefaq and colleagues, journalists in Pakistan achieve their goals to cater pace of changing trends in the media industry, specifically after the advent of digital media (Ittefaq et al., 2021). Despite the digital revolution being comparatively slow in Pakistan, an urge among Pakistani journalists to step forward and keep pace with the evolving technology is also observable. As internet penetration is increasing in Pakistan, journalists also seem willing to avail the opportunities offered by digital media (Jamil, 2020). According to Shabbir et al. (2021), the current era of digitalization also indicates digital transformation among journalists in Pakistan. These journalists consider to attain digital skills and apply them to their practices as a part of their professional development and a pathway to modify their conventional practices. As noted by Ejaz and colleagues (2022), conventional new reporting and other journalistic patterns have declined in Pakistan. These changing patterns also led the journalists to invest their efforts and time in digital media to reach their audience and obtain their feedback. For instance, Twitter has drastically changed the news reporting and writing patterns (Digital Journalism, 2022). Many senior journalists widely prefer Twitter to publish new reports. Journalists, such as Hamid Mir, Asma Shirazi, Mubashir Luqman, Sana Bucha, Ansar Abbasi, and many others prefer using Twitter as a major microblogging platform for the dissemination of news and information (Digital Journalism, 2022). According to Jamil (Jamil, 2021a), the increasing level of digital media usage, access to readers, and positive engagement also accelerates their

usage among Pakistani journalists. It indicates their inclination and interest in digital media as providing a major space to communicate directly with the readers.

Literature Review & Hypotheses Development

Theory of Planned Behavior and Online Journalism

Despite the popularity of digital media, very little is known about its adoption and integration for journalistic purposes in Pakistan (Jamil, 2020). During the past years, the rise of digital media technology and wider adoption with the pace of more than 85 million users in Pakistan, indicates its general acceptance and usage countrywide (Data Portal, 2022). Journalists believe that digital media allows them to gather news stories from different resources. Be it international or national level occurrences, news gatherings are comparatively feasible that may be further enhanced and showcased by using other tactics for instance, graphical visualizations and data representations (Zhang & Feng, 2019). Resultantly, under the theory of planned behavior, the concepts of subjective norms and positive behavior towards digital media adoption remain prominent (Shabbir et al., 2021). Particularly, regarding the digital media adoption of Pakistani journalists, the theory of planned behavior provides a baseline to assess the psychological phenomenon (Ajzen, 2020), that accelerates its adoption and usage. (Allington et al., 2021) cited an example of digital media adoption for healthcare reporters among British journalists, as the purpose was to provide in-depth- on-time news reports to the public during the Covid-19 pandemic. According to the authors, the current study aimed to discuss the provision of instant news when the world was relying on digital media and journalists transitioned their tasks to digital platforms. They were looking for efficient news reporting and dissemination was the need of the day that further led them to accept and use digital platforms for their professional practices (Heravi & Lorenz, 2020).

H1: Subjective Norms positively influence the behavioral intention.

The Relationship between Subjective Norms & Behavioral Intention

More than nine out of every ten journalists worldwide use digital media for their practices (AlAashry, 2020). The rise of Information Communication Technology (ICT) and further remote devices are now considered important gateways of news acquisition, dissemination, and consumption (Irfan et al., 2022). The interactive features available in

different digital platforms provided the journalists with forums whose basic purpose was to stay updated and keep others updated. Today, many digital platforms, such as microblogs, blogs, Facebook, Pinterest, YouTube, and many others have become potential central to spread important news (Tong & Zuo, 2021). Resultantly, journalists observe and follow each other in fast and efficient dissemination of news reports as huge flow of information is today more than a desk job for journalists. Many journalists who used fieldwork and physical visits for news collection purposes, now attain news reports online that further help them to save time, be more productive, and use their preserved time and creativity in their jobs (Figueiras et al., 2021).

According to Ejaz et al. (2022), with the technology in their hands, journalists not only produce news and spread it faster but also inspire other colleagues to update their working patterns. Besides, journalists believe in audience empowerment, which further leads to increased digital media usage among them. It is pertinent to mention here that, observing others, following the trends, and having a desire to keep pace with technological advancements, all equally contribute to digital media adoption and use among journalists. As noted by Laor (2022), those who believe in the potential of technology, desire to gain maximum benefit in their career advancement and also serve the right to know, prefer using digital media as a normative practice.

H2: Perceived Behavioral Control positively influence the behavioral intention

The Relationship between Perceived Behavioral Control & Behavioral Intentions

According to Vural & Masip (2021), journalism practices have transformed considerably in the late 20th and early 21st centuries. The conventional idea of journalism to work and serve their organization by providing them with news stories has now turned into a direct news spread without even any external interference. Journalists worldwide, also believe that digital media carries the facility regarding the normative concepts of objectivity and transparency that are the core considerations of journalism (Lee, 2020). As the relevant concepts are well-served by the journalists, increased access to digital media also led them to actively adopt these platforms, indicating their positive perceptions and behavior towards informing the public (Camaj et al., 2022). However, de-Lima-Santos &

Mesquita ([2021](#)) considered digital media as promoting biased journalism. Yet the role of digital media and its active integration into traditional journalism practices also highlights its positive and even dominating role.

According to Kotisova ([2020](#)), journalists also take advantage of digital media to promote political thoughts, social activism and even control the readers' behavior through propaganda and framing. Yet, the internet has enabled journalists to become better authors as not only news reporting patterns are refined; but also, blogs and microblogs have further enhanced news writing practices and exposure too. As a result, online journalism attracts readers from all over the world as the practitioners understand the importance of the world where new cycles have faster circulation. Consequently, they also deal successfully with in-depth reporting and time laps (Jamil, [2021a](#)).

H3: Subjective Norms positively influence the perceived behavioral control.

The Relationship between Subjective Norms & Perceived Behavioral Control

Subjective Norms are considered as one of the most important and basic factors that drive most of our everyday behaviors. Under the relevant phenomenon, it is obvious that the general behaviors are shaped and influence by subjective norms in a society (Lowrey & Hou, [2021](#)). Subjective norms refer to social expectations regarding the behavior of individuals within a given community, which substantially influence how people use technology and adopt new technology (Tran et al., [2023](#)). Zhuang ([2021](#)) noted that the way in which people use technology is also impacted by subjective norms. People are more likely to use technology in a certain way if they believe that is expected of them by the people in their social network or if they perceive that their usage behavior is supported by the group. The relevant phenomenon is also seen in the study by Ziani et al. ([2021](#)) about digital media usage among Arab journalists during the Covid-19 outbreak. The case study indicated a stronger dependency on digital media among Arab journalists due to its usefulness and faster communication ability. The current study also showed that Arab journalists consider digital media as providing ease of use to journalists across the globe, which further motivates them to adopt and integrate digital media for their professional purposes.

Another study by Beiler et al. (2020) also indicated the role of subjective norms in digital media adoption among American journalists. The researchers applied the exploratory approach and established that the journalists indicated an explicit reliance on digital media as an enhancement of the conventional media platforms. According to the respondents, the significant shift from traditional to conventional media in different organizations also motivates them to adopt and integrate digitalization into their professional practices. Therefore, besides several individual factors, social pressure and mainstream practices play an important role in technology (digital media) adoption among journalists. The factors that influence its adoption are important as they also indicate the perceived outcomes attributed to its adoption and usage (Mourão & Harlow, 2020).

The Relationship between Intentions & Online Journalism Acceptance

According to Zhang & Chen (2022), journalists in the present era fully acknowledge the importance of new technology to transform the landscape of journalistic practices. In particular, the main concern of journalism is to keep people aware and help them to decide what is in their best interest. As a result, the acceptance of online journalism is trending worldwide, witnessed by the existing literature from different geographical regions. As noted by Arias-Robles & López López (2021), digital media has become an important part of contemporary journalism. Journalists are widely using digital media for content creation and circulation purposes nowadays. Notably, the older patterns of news creation are still prevalent, whereas the use of digital media has its own importance. A study conducted by Hess & Gutsche (2022) examined the use of digital media for journalistic purposes under the gatekeeping theory. The content analysis of online articles revealed that the American journalists increasingly rely on digital media. However, their reliance is purely based on official and institutional platforms for news gathering and dissemination purposes. Besides, the written information was more prevalent than the visualizations. Based on the findings, Twitter was found to be comparatively more preferable by journalists that aimed to seek content on digital media.

According to Pantic & Cvetkovic (2020), another important factor that accelerates digital media for journalistic purposes is the free flow of communication and information without any barriers. The logic to integrate digital media in journalism is as attractive as trying a new approach and getting the expected fruitful results. A second important factor behind

digital media for journalism is the core expectations of news organizations and journalists that revolve around the economics models. In other words, getting revenue and generating more financial opportunities are also considered digital media-based journalism today (Warholm, 2020).

H4: Behavioral Intention positively influences the online journalism acceptance.

The Role of Gender in Online Journalism Acceptance

According to Ali et al. (2021), readers' characteristics, judgment capabilities, credibility, and critical thinking also motivate and demand journalists to adopt digital media. Quick evaluation and re-sharing further facilitates the journalists to use digital media for their professional purposes. A study conducted by Ali and colleagues also assessed the role of gender in digital media acceptance. The results gathered by using the case study approach also affirmed the role of gender as causing a major difference among the users for digital media adoption and usage (Ali et al., 2021).

As noted by Ziani et al. (2021), individuals from both genders equally consider digital media usage and acceptance as the need of the day. However, discrepancy regarding adoption exists at some level. In some cases, women comparatively prefer to use digital media for professional purposes and in some cases, men use it for their professional purposes. Communication and entertainment, on the other hand, are some common factors that are equally determined as important for both. According to Svensson et al. (2022), digital media enhances a sense of empowerment among individuals, especially journalists. Both males and females rely on these resources, especially after the pandemic, which provide them opportunities to practice their tasks without any barriers.

H5: Gender moderates the relationship between intentions & online journalism acceptance.

Figure 1
Conceptual Model of Current Research

Methodology
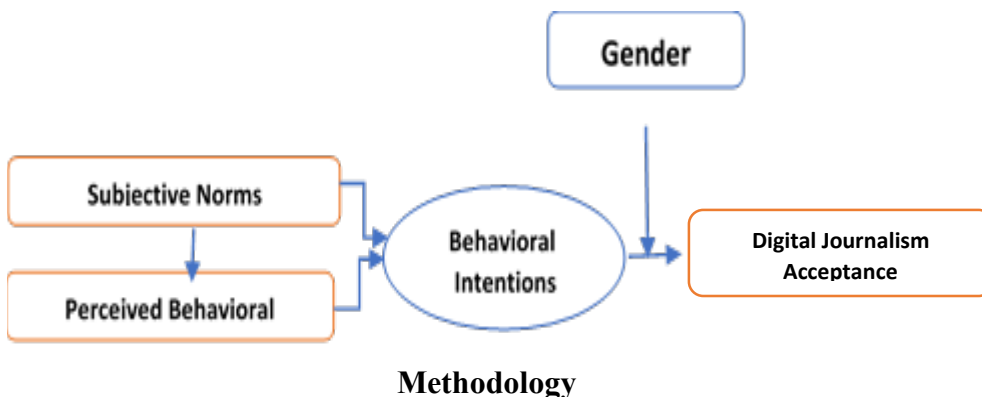
Study Design

The current research was based on the cross-sectional design. As noted by Farhi et al. (2022), cross-sectional designs-based studies rely on brief periods with highly generalizable results. The relevant studies are considered important due to the nature, timeframes, and resources they require. Furthermore, the researchers applied the survey method for data-gathering purposes. As noted by Habes et al. (2023), the survey method helped to gather data from respondents having a direct, first-hand experience of a relevant phenomenon. They take comparatively less time and guarantee reliable results. Notably, the process of data gathering was conducted from 13th July, 2022 to August 15th, 2022. Afterwards, the researchers manipulated and coded the data for further analyses including descriptive and inferential approaches.

Sampling Approach

The current research comprises journalists currently working in Pakistan. However, as per the research requirements, the researchers first enlisted the sample according to the two leading newspaper languages, that is, Urdu, and English. Afterwards, the researchers selected journalists covering English news in twin cities, that is, Rawalpindi and Islamabad. Notably, the selection of journalists from twin cities was based on two reasons. Firstly, both cities have a comparatively strong technology acceptance due to potential urbanization and awareness based on the literacy rate. Secondly, access to the journalists was comparatively easy due

to the National Press Club Pakistan where the journalists are registered and their personal contact details may be availed for the research purposes. Therefore, regarding the sample size, the researchers enlisted $n= 300$ journalists practicing data journalism both with a media organization and independently. Therefore, the researcher selected the relevant sample size by using the G*Power analysis (See Figure 2). As noted by Habes et al. (2021), G* Power analysis helps to examine the statistical power of approaches used in the research. The sample size estimation through G*Power analysis helps to determine and validate the number of respondents that may suit a study. Thus, the relevant analysis revealed a minimum sample size of $n= 74$ individuals with one predictor variable, effect size (f^2) at .015, and a non-centrality parameter value at 3.331. Therefore, the sample size of $n= 300$ was ideal under this criterion. Finally, the respondents were selected by using the convenient sampling method, as the researchers searched and visited the most suitable individuals for the current research and gathered data from them. The figure represents the central and non-central sample distribution.

Figure 2
Central and Non-Central Sample Distribution
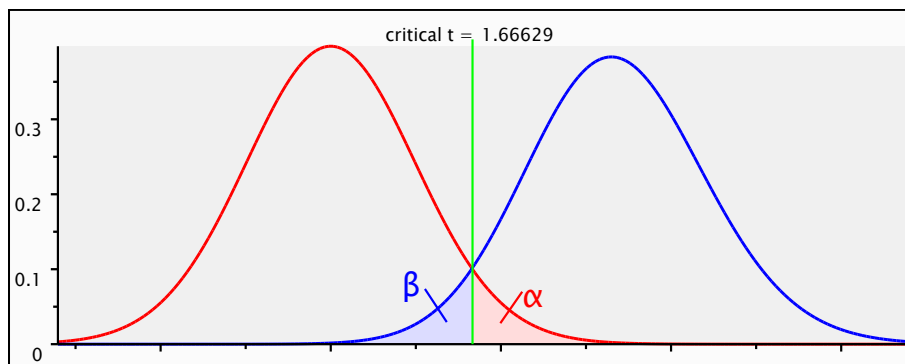
Research Ethics

The researchers complied with the basic ethics of research in the current study (Pasha et al., 2021). Firstly, the respondents were ensured that their data, particularly personal details would not be used for commercial purposes. Secondly, the respondents were provided with informed consent and they were briefed about the research purposes, problem, and usefulness of the obtained results.

Data Analysis

The researchers first calculated the descriptives of the study respondents. It was determined that most of the respondents were males (70.8%), while 39.2% were females. Regarding the qualification level, 51.7% were graduated, 31.6% were post-graduated, and 16.6% of the respondents marked other that may include professional diplomas/certifications. Finally, 65.3% of the respondents were from Rawalpindi city and 34.7% were from Islamabad. Table 1 summarizes the description of the respondents' demographic data.

Table 1

Respondents' Demographics

Constructs	Variables	N	%
Gender	Male	179	70.8%
	Female	115	39.2%
Qualification	Graduate	152	51.7%
	Postgraduate	93	31.6%
	Other	49	16.6%
City	Rawalpindi	192	65.3%
	Islamabad	102	34.7%

Table 2

Summary of Convergent Validity (Factor Loading, LAMBDA, Epulsion, Average Variance Extracted, and Composite Reliability)

Variables	Items	FL	LAM	EPL	AVE	CA	CR
Subjective Norms	Sub1	.760	.577	.422			
	Sub2	.855	.731	.268	.797	.801	.734
	Sub3	.774	.599	.400			
	Sub4	.799	.638	.361			
Perceived Behavioral Control	BCL1	.719	.516	.483			
	BCL2	.759	.576	.423	.773	.856	.890
	BCL3	.841	.707	.292			
	BCL4	.550	.302	.697			
Behavioural Intentions	INT1	.751	.564	.435			
	INT2	.845	.715	.304	.791	.750	.824
	INT3	.597	.356	-.644			
	INT4	.681	.463	.536			

Variables	Items	FL	LAM	EPL	AVE	CA	CR
Online Media Acceptance	OCA1	.660	.435	.564			
	OCA2	.808	.652	.347	.798	.712	.760
	OCA3	.788	.620	.379			
	OCA4	.626	.391	.608			

The researchers examined the discriminant validity by using the two-criterion approach (Almaiah et al., 2022). The focus was to examine the extent to which scale items differ from each other, indicating explicit discrimination among them. Firstly, findings of the Fornell-Larcker criterion revealed that squares of all the average variance extracted values (.597-.536) were greater and different than the calculated correlation values given in Table 3. Afterwards, the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio scale revealed (See Table 4) the HTMT value at .327, which was significantly smaller than the threshold value of .85. Results revealed that the discriminant validity of the measurement model was also established.

Table 3

Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio Scale

	SUB	BCL	INT	OCA
SUB	**.635**			
BCL	.262	**.597**		
INT	.005	.095	**.625**	
OCA	.055	.160	.076	**.636**

Table 4

Fornel-Larcker Criterion

	SUB	BCL	INT	OCA
SUB				
BCL	-.257			
INT	.021	-.087		
OCA	-.015	-.144	-.062	

According to Akour et al. (2022), Goodness of Fit helps to examine the extent to which the observed data fits into the expected data. This analysis in the current study revealed the chi-square value of X^2= .442(04) with the probability level at .001. Besides, the Standardized Root Mean Square value remained at .611 which is less than 0.9 and the Non-Fit Index value at .415.

This, the Goodness of Fit for the current measurement model is also validated (See Table 5).

Table 5

Coefficients of Determination R^2

Variables	R^2	Strength
Subjective Norms	.733	Strong
Perceived Behavioral Control	.686	Strong
Behavioural Intention	.692	Strong

R^2 analysis also known as Coefficients of Determination R^2 is a standard test which is used to examine the predictive ability of the latent variables. The relevant test examines the extent to which variations are caused by the exogenous variable into the endogenous variables (Farhi et al., 2023). Thus, Coefficients of Determination R^2 in this study revealed a 73.3% variation in the subjective norms, 69.2% in the behavioral intention, and 68.6% variation in the perceived behavioral control. Overall, results revealed a strong predictive power of the exogenous variable in this study (See Table 5).

Finally, the researchers examined the structural relationships between the study variables using path analysis in Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) (Pasha et al., 2021). Results revealed strong support for the proposed hypotheses as the assumed effects remained significant (See Table 6). As indicated, the first study hypothesis, suggesting a significant effect of subjective norms on behavioral intention remained significant with a *t*-value of 4.643 and p-value at *p>* .000. The second hypothesis proposing a significant effect of subjective norms on the perceived behavioral control also remained significant with the *t*-value at .213 and *p*-value at *p>*.037. Furthermore, the third hypothesis proposing a significant effect of perceived behavioral control on behavioral intention also remained significant with a *t*-value at .372 and a p-value at *p>* .097. Besides, the effect of behavioral intention on digital journalism acceptance remained significant, with the *t*-value at .414 and p-value at *p>* .019. Finally, the last hypothesis proposing the moderating role of gender on digital media acceptance among Pakistani journalists was tested using path and moderation analyses. Results revealed that the moderating effect of gender on digital journalism acceptance remained insignificant, with the path value .015 and p-value at *p>* .628 (See Figure 3). Therefore, the overall calculation revealed that the first four

hypotheses were significant while the last hypothesis remained unsupported.

Table 6
Hypotheses Testing

Hypotheses	B	t	p	Decision
Subjective Norm → Behavioral Intentions	.235	4.643	.000	Accept
Subjective Norm → Perceived Behavioral Control	.213	.336	.037	Accept
Perceived Behavioral Control → Behavioral Intentions	.372	1.660	.097	Accept
Behavioural Intentions → Digital Media Acceptance	.414	.645	.019	Accept
Behavioural Intentions → Gender→ Online Journalism Acceptance	.015	.485	.628	Reject

Discussion and Conclusion

According to Jamil (2021b), social media provides an extensive platform to share and receive information in multiple ways. Traditionally, mass communication was limited to television, radio, newspapers, and magazines, in which the accessibility, target audience, and communication were limited. In the present era, the basic features of digital media not only transformed the traditional media landscape; however, it also provided content creators with the feasibility to improve the content by directly interacting with the audience and observing their behaviour (Golan & Mishol-Shauli, 2020). Similar patterns were also observed when digital media merged with journalism practices, indicating a rapid shift from conventional to modern journalistic practices. Resultantly, a positive attitude towards digitalization is widely seen among journalists in many countries (Habes et al., 2021). These results further affirmed the propositions given under the Theory of Planned Behavior in which certain psychological factors affect the decision-making process (Ajzen, 2020). According to Ajzen (2020), the psychological factors are evaluated and determined to an extent to which an adoption or relevant decision may become favourable to them. As a result, the decisions are made accordingly.

Figure 3
Moderation Analysis of Gender
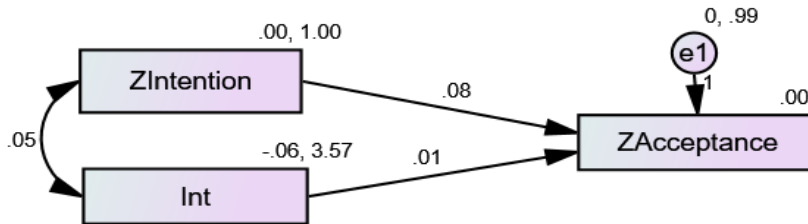
As the current research was based on the Theory of Planned Behaviour, the focus remained on technology which has become an integral part of modern life (Habes et al., 2023). According to Henriques (2021), technology today is more like a necessity than a luxury. From communication to earning a livelihood, people rely on this digital technology for different reasons. Digital media usage among journalists reflects a similar concept, in which journalists adopt digital resources to gather and disseminate news reports, while the readers receive, read, and share them with others.

Table 6(a)
Descriptives of the Study Results

Items	Mean	SD	Max	Min
Sub1	3.95	.227	4.00	3
Sub2	3.91	.284	4.00	3
Sub3	3.87	.359	4.00	2
Sub4	3.87	.359	4.00	2
BCL1	3.77	.766	4.00	0
BCL2	3.92	.269	4.00	3
BCL3	3.89	.349	4.00	2
BCL4	3.89	.357	4.00	2

Talking particularly about the respondents' opinions, the current research was based on five theme questions that further contained relevant questions to gather detailed responses (Table 6a and 6b summarzie the decrptives of the results). For instance, the first theme was about the journalists' common perceptions of digital media in journalism, its usage,

and perceived benefits (Qamar et al., 2020). The respondents agreed with the fact that digital media have transformed their professional activities, especially after the pandemic. News gathering attained digitalization and dissemination is also conducted on these platforms to readers' feasibility. The second theme question focused on the respondents' opinions regarding how digital media adoption in different countries and their colleagues affected their digital media adoption for journalistic purposes. The respondents revealed the mainstream media as an important part of their professional practices. They also agreed that their colleagues from other different countries often talk about their digital media experiences, which further enhanced their curiosity and interest in digital media incorporation for their professional aspirations (Stalph et al., 2022).

Furthermore, the third theme of the study inquired about how journalists consider digital media as providing readers with the content that not only increases their information level; however, it also helps them to act accordingly (Heravi & Lorenz, 2020). The study respondents revealed that online journalism is transparent and objective. It helps the audience to gain certain features, for instance, graphical illustrations, maps, and charts. Besides this, the respondents also revealed that they provide the readers with background knowledge and references from where the data is gathered. Resultantly, the readers find convincible facts and information that may be seen in their behavior and conversation patterns (Zboja et al., 2020).

Table 6(b)
Descriptives of the Study Results

Items	Mean	SD	Max	Min
INT1	3.96	.237	4.00	2
INT2	3.98	.207	4.00	2
INT3	3.92	.293	4.00	2
INT4	3.89	.357	4.00	2
OCA1	2.50	1.32	4.00	2
OCA2	3.89	.311	4.00	3
OCA3	3.85	.375	4.00	2
OCA4	3.94	.260	4.00	2

The theme about the effect of behavioral intention on digital journalism acceptance also indicated the users' explicit agreement. According to the

respondents, although digital journalism took a slow pace, it has strengthened its roots in Pakistan. Many vents in the past two years helped to change the journalism practices and no journalists actively adopt the ways that may benefit them professionally (Ausserhofer, 2020). Finally, the last theme was based on the role of gender in digital journalism acceptance. The respondents moderately agreed with the fact that their gender intervenes in digital media acceptance for journalistic practices. However, the analysis indicated the effect of gender as insignificant. On the other hand, it is notable that Pakistani society is based on socio-cultural limitations, where female journalists are comparatively given limited opportunities to cope with their domestic and professional tasks (Kashyap et al., 2020). Similar results were found in this study, as most of the female respondents showed a comparatively strong reliance on digital resources for news-gathering purposes. Men, however, indicated suitability of both traditional and digitalized patterns of news gathering and spread as per needed. Yet, respondents from both genders considered their reliance on digital media as a part of the modern approach to journalism (Shabbir et al., 2021).

Conclusion

The current study examined the role and effect of factors influencing digital media acceptance among journalists in Pakistan. The factors included latent constructs proposed by the Theory of Planned Behavior, repeatedly tested in different thematic and geographical contexts. Furthermore, the role of gender as a moderator in digital media acceptance was also proposed and tested, supported by the existing studies. The researchers put forth an explanatory conceptual model that graphically illustrated the proposed relationships between the study variables that were further tested by applying the Structural Equation modeling. Overall, the direct effects of the factors including subjective norm, perceived behavioral control, and behavioral intentions on digital media acceptance remained supported. However, gender remained insignificant to influence the digital media acceptance in Pakistan. Therefore, considering the findings, it was concluded that the role and acceptance of digital journalism are expanding in Pakistan. Although, the traditional approaches are still regarded as important, the role of digital journalism is also acknowledged at different levels. The results remained consistent with the idea that factors, such as, social norms (subjective norms), perceptions about behavioral change, and journalists' intentions to accept and use digital media are important.

Furthermore, the role of gender also remained strong, indicating potential support from the concepts introduced by the theory of planned behavior.

Limitations and Future Directions

The current study observe two primary limitations that narrow down its scope. Firstly, the researchers only focused on twin cities, that is, Rawalpindi and Islamabad. The generalizability of the results in other regions, even within the country, may contradict the current findings. Secondly, the variable "gender" remained insignificant, because it did not affect the digital media acceptance among journalists. The purpose was to provide a primary idea behind gender as indirectly affecting. However, more studies further exploring the role of gender and demographics on digital media acceptance among journalists can bring out in-depth details. Considering the current limitations, the researchers suggest some future investigation directions. Future researchers can focus on other different demographic factors affecting digital journalism acceptance in Pakistan. These researchers can also assess the role of different components of attitudes, including behavior, in determining digital media acceptance. Finally, the researchers can further focus on adopting data journalism, especially after the Covid-19 pandemic.

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