



**EFFECT OF PSYCHOLOGICAL DISTRESS AND SELF-CONTROL ON
ELECTRONIC CIGARETTE DEPENDENCE AMONG UNIVERSITY
STUDENTS**

A Research Project Presented to

School of Professional Psychology

Bahria University Islamabad, E-8 Campus

**In Partial Fulfilment of the requirement of the Degree of Bachelor
of Science**

BS. Psychology

By

AMNA SAEED

BISMA EMAAN

MAY 15, 2025

**SCHOOL OF PROFESSIONAL PSYCHOLOGY BAHRIA
UNIVERSITY - ISLAMABAD CAMPUS (E-8)**

**EFFECT OF PSYCHOLOGICAL DISTRESS AND SELF-CONTROL ON
ELECTRONIC CIGARETTE DEPENDENCE AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENT
ELECTRONIC CIGARETTE USERS**

By

Amna Saeed

&

Bisma Emaan

Approved By

External Examiner

Internal Examiner

Supervisor

(Dr. Shazia)

Principal/ Head of Department

BAHRIA UNIVERSITY, ISLAMABAD CAMPUS (E-8)**APPROVAL SHEET****SUBMISSION OF RESEARCH PROJECT****Candidate's Names: Amna Saeed****Bisma Emaan****Discipline: BS Psychology****Faculty/Department: School of Professional Psychology**

I hereby certify that the above candidate's work including the research project has been completed to my satisfaction and that the research project is in a format of an editorial standard recognized by the faculty/department as appropriate for examination.

Signature (S):**Principal Supervisor:****Date:****The undersigned signifies that:**

1. The candidate presented at a pre-completion seminar, an overview, and synthesis of major findings of the thesis and that this research is of a standard and extent appropriate for submission as a research project.
2. I have checked the candidates' research project and its scope and format. Editorial standards are recognized by the faculty/department as appropriate.

Signature(s):**Dean/Head of Faculty/ Department:****Date:**

DECLARATION OF AUTHENTICATION

We certify that the research work presented in this research project, to the best of my knowledge, is our own. All the sources used, and any help received in the preparation of this thesis have been acknowledged. We hereby declare that we have not submitted this material, either in whole or in part, for any other degree at this or any institution.

Signature(s):

Amna Saeed

Bisma Emaan

DEDICATION

This thesis is whole heartedly dedicated to our parents, teachers and friends. Without their constant love and support this thesis wouldn't have been possible. Special thanks to Ms.Sanam Younis for her unwavering support, encouragement and belief in us and who guided us every step of the way. Above all to Almighty Allah who gave us the strength, knowledge and wisdom in everything we did.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

In name of Allah, the Most Merciful and Most Beneficial. With profound gratitude to the Almighty Allah, we find ourselves blessed to have been bestowed with the privilege of accomplishing our dreams. In this endeavour, we owe an immeasurable debt of gratitude to the Holy Prophet (PBUH) whose exemplary pursuit of knowledge has set an unparalleled benchmark for all seekers of wisdom. We would like to express our heartfelt gratitude and sincere appreciation to our supervisor, Ms. Sanam Younis, for all her unwavering patience and exceptional guidance throughout our research journey. Her expertise, dedication, and commitment to our project have been invaluable and have played a vital role in its success. Her profound knowledge in the field, as well as her willingness to share insights and provide constructive feedback, has greatly enriched our understanding and enhanced the quality of our work. We are indebted by the availability of Ms. Sanam Younis whose valuable feedback and guidance on our drafts have significantly enhanced our work and for being a constant source of direction and motivation. Lastly, we would like to credit all the participants who took part in our study without their help this research would have been impossible.

Amna Saeed & Bisma Emaan

Table of Contents

Abstract	12
Chapter I: Introduction	13
Background of the Study	13
Literature Review	18
Theoretical Framework	28
Conceptual Model	30
Rationale	32
Objectives of the Study	33
Hypotheses of the Study	34
Chapter II: Method	35
Research Philosophy and Approach	35
Research Design	35
Participants and Sampling	37
Instruments	38
Procedure	40
Ethical Considerations	42
Chapter III: Results	43
Descriptive Statistics	44
Reliability Analysis	46
Correlation and Regression Analysis	47
Group Comparisons (t-tests)	48
Chapter IV: Discussion	53
Interpretation of Findings	53
Limitations	56
Implications and Recommendations	57

Conclusion	58
References	60
Appendices	70

List of Tables

No	Table Title	Page No.
Table 1	<i>Descriptive Characteristics of the Sample</i>	44
Table 2	<i>Descriptive Statistics and Reliability Analysis of Penn State Electronic Cigarette Dependence Index (PSECDI) , Kessler Psychological Distress Scale (K10) , Brief Self Control Scale (BSCS)</i>	46
Table 3	<i>Bivariate Correlation Between Psychological Distress, Self-Control and Electronic Cigarette Dependence</i>	47
Table 4	<i>Multiple Linear Regression Analysis between Demographics and Psychological Distress, Self-Control and Electronic Cigarette Dependence</i>	48
Table 5	<i>Independent Sample t-test comparing Psychological Distress, Self- Control and Electronic Cigarette Dependence Across Genders</i>	49
Table 6	<i>Independent Sample t-test comparing Psychological Distress, Self- Control and Electronic Cigarette Dependence Across Employment Status</i>	50
Table 7	<i>Independent Sample t-test comparing Psychological Distress, Self- Control and Electronic Cigarette Dependence Across Family System</i>	51
Table 8	<i>Independent Sample t-test comparing Psychological Distress, Self Control and Electronic Cigarette</i>	52

List of Figures

Figure No.	Figure Title	Page No.
Figure 1	Conceptual Model	30

List of Appendices

Annexures	Page No.
Annexure A	
Detailed Information Sheet & Informed consent	70
Annexure B	
Demographic Sheet	71
Annexure C	
Penn State Electronic Dependence Index	72
The Kessler Psychological Distress Scale	73
Brief Self-Control Scale	74
Annexure D	75

Abstract

The increasing use of electronic cigarettes among young adults has raised serious public health concerns, especially in developing countries like Pakistan where awareness and regulation remain limited. This study aimed to examine the predictive roles of psychological distress, self-control, and gender in relation to e-cigarette dependence among university students. Data were collected from a sample of university students using validated measures: the Kessler Psychological Distress Scale (K10), the Brief Self-Control Scale (BSCS), and the Penn State Electronic Cigarette Dependence Index (PSECDI). The results showed that psychological distress significantly positively predicted e-cigarette dependence, suggesting that students may use vaping as a coping mechanism for anxiety, depression, or stress. Self-control was found to significantly negatively predict e-cigarette dependence, indicating that individuals with lower self-regulation were more likely to engage in habitual vaping. Additionally, psychological distress negatively predicted self-control, supporting the idea that emotional distress can impair one's ability to control impulses. Gender significantly predicted psychological distress levels, but not self-control or e-cigarette dependence. These findings highlight the importance of addressing both emotional well-being and behavioral regulation in efforts to reduce e-cigarette use among young adults. The study contributed to the limited literature on vaping in the Pakistani context and emphasized the need for culturally appropriate prevention programs that integrate mental health support and self-control training. Such strategies can help promote healthier lifestyles and reduce nicotine dependence among university populations.