

Teachers' Perspectives on Mobile Gaming: Academic, Behavioral, and Classroom Implications for Secondary School Students in Punjab

Hina Fatima

Ph. D Scholar, Education Department, G.C university Faisalabad, Pakistan

mahdishabbirali@gmail.com

Dr. Muhammad Naeem Mohsin

Associate Professor, Education Department G.C University Faisalabad, Pakistan

mnmohsin71@gmail.com

Abstract

Mobile gaming has been popular with secondary school students, and this has raised questions about its effects on learning, behavior, and classroom participation. This study evaluated the perspectives of teachers on the academic, behavioral, and classroom effects of mobile gaming among secondary school students in Punjab, Pakistan. It reviewed teachers' methods and school-level strategies for monitoring gaming and promoting balanced and appropriate usage of digital devices. The interpretivist paradigm was used to inform a qualitative research strategy. Purposive sampling was used to select thirty secondary school teachers who were chosen from selected public and private schools in Faisalabad, Lahore, and Jhang. Data were acquired via semi-structured interviews and analyzed thematically. Results showed teachers associated excessive mobile gaming with poor attention and interest in classroom activities, disrupted and irregular bedtime and rising times, irritability, distraction, problems with game engagement, and other behavioral problems. However, teachers also saw some benefits of moderate gaming, such as engagement and communication with peers, strategic thinking, problem-solving, and enjoyment. Teachers used monitoring, counselling, awareness exercises, time-management coaching, sports, and school policies to encourage the responsible use of digital devices. In general, the data imply that the consequences of mobile gaming mostly depend on how intensively it is used, on students' self-regulation and on the advice provided by schools and families.

Keywords: *Mobile gaming, secondary school students, teachers' perceptions, classroom engagement, academic performance, self-regulation*

1.1 Introduction

Digital technologies have revolutionized the way people socialize, learn, and spend their leisure time in the twenty-first century (Graesser et al., 2022). One innovation like this is smartphone gaming, which has become an important element of adolescents' everyday routines (Papale et

al., 2025). The advent of online gaming platforms, mobile networks, and affordable smartphones has further increased the interaction of the young people with mobile games (Oni et al., 2025). Therefore, mobile gaming has transformed from a leisure activity into a significant element of the daily lives, social connections, and digital lifestyles of adolescents (Chan et al., 2022; Bibi et al., 2025).

Other aspects of adolescent growth, like social and emotional development, should also be considered (Hong et al., 2025). Mobile games can facilitate social interaction and develop certain strategic and cognitive skills (Topçu & Doğan, 2026). Such games can affect you in your emotional development, learning, and academic accomplishment as well as social interactions, including your sleep (Barros, 2025).

Gaming addiction and compulsive behaviors among students are growing as a public health problem in Pakistan (Khan & Ali, 2026). Likewise, the addiction to mobile gaming is also growing rapidly among the students of Pakistan, particularly among boys (Khan & Ali, 2026). Other than PUBG Mobile, Free Fire, and Call of Duty: Mobile, other mobile games are also quite popular. Games like Battlegrounds Mobile India and Garena Free Fire are also very popular. Their immersive elements, competitive challenges, achievement systems, and constant online interaction might enhance user engagement (Karthikeyan & Aruna, 2025). Therefore, students' concentration, participation, emotional stability, and academic engagement in the classroom have been identified as issues due to excessive gaming (Alacida et al., 2025).

But mobile gaming has its upsides too. Gaming has been linked with some cognitive capacities and motivation and social engagement (Amin et al., 2025). Mobile gaming, particularly with high emotional investment, predicted anxiety and depression symptoms and loneliness with poorer interest in academic work (Chew et al., 2026). Mobile games could have beneficial and detrimental effects on students' academic achievement depending on the level of engagement (Syvertsen et al., 2022).

There is scarce study on mobile gaming among secondary school students in Pakistan (Khan & Ali, 2026). The research in the past has been about internet addiction, smartphone addiction, screen-time habits, and behavior in general. Few academic and psychological studies have been done on the consequences of mobile gaming (Nawaz et al., 2025). Additionally, the effect of mobile gaming on the academic achievement and emotional health of students has been acknowledged (Tariq et al., 2026). Hence, it is essential to know about students' gaming experiences to build instructional techniques that promote healthy and balanced interaction with digital technology (Uslu, 2025). This type of evidence can also help teachers, counselors, parents, and policymakers to identify gaming-related concerns and necessary support systems (Sywelem & Alotaibi, 2025).

Therefore, the present study explored the academic and behavioral effects of mobile gaming among secondary school students in Punjab, Pakistan, with special reference to teachers' perceptions and behaviors. It also examined teachers' perspectives of students' classroom engagement, academic challenges, behavioral changes, and the tactics employed to monitor and promote balanced mobile gaming and responsible technology use.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Teachers frequently observe that students become distracted, disengaged, develop poor study habits, exhibit irritability, and struggle to balance gaming with schoolwork. In contrast, mobile gaming may also provide social contact, enjoyment, and some problem-solving skills, which complicates its implications for the classroom.

Thus, the research focused on the perspectives of teachers regarding the academic, behavioral, and classroom implications of mobile gaming among the students of the secondary school of Punjab. It also examined teachers' practices and school-level strategies for monitoring gaming behavior and promoting balanced and appropriate usage of digital devices.

1.3 Objectives of the study

1. To investigate teachers' perceptions about academic, behavioral, and classroom outcomes of mobile gaming in secondary school students.
2. To examine teachers' practices and school-level strategies for monitoring mobile gaming and promoting balanced and responsible use of digital devices among students.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The study is significant since it offers teachers' views on the role of mobile gaming in 'students' academic conduct, participation in the classroom, attention, discipline, and engagement in secondary education schools. The results can help teachers better identify the positive and negative effects of mobile games and the effects of excessive game use on students' learning behaviors.

Moreover, the research can assist school officials to develop practical strategies to monitor students' mobile gaming behaviors and to promote healthy and responsible digital device usage. It can also be used to help guide school policies, awareness, guidance, and counselling on healthy technology use. The results can also be beneficial for parents, teachers, and policymakers to promote positive digital behaviors and a positive school culture for students in Punjab.

1.5 Limitations

“The findings are based on the perceptions of 30 secondary school teachers from three districts of Punjab and hence should not be taken as direct evidence of students' gaming behavior or academic outcomes. The qualitative design provided contextual knowledge but did not prove causality between mobile gaming and student results. Furthermore, the study relied on teachers' views rather than firsthand statements from students or objective indicators of gaming time and academic success.

2 Related Literature Review

2.1 Mobile Gaming and Adolescent Engagement

Mobile gaming is an integral part of teens' digital lives. Smartphones are ubiquitous, the Internet is inexpensive, and mobile games are engaging. Mobile games are used based on frequency and duration of playtime, intensity of engagement, genre of the game, motivation, and social contact with others (Syvertsen et al., 2022). Also, the results from gaming are related

to the rationale and level of involvement (Granic et al., 2014). Mobile games can offer fun, social contact, and social engagement, but abuse can lead to problems with self-control, time management, and focus (Oriaso & Joshua, 2025).

2.2 Mobile Gaming, Academic Performance, and Classroom Engagement

Researchers have looked further than ever into the learning behaviors of students and their academic accomplishments in mobile gaming. Casual gaming can be distracting when mixed with schoolwork, research, reading, and other academic obligations (Tlili et al., 2024). It can also influence students' ability to concentrate, motivation, classroom participation, and study habits (Lee & Jeong, 2024). There is a body of research that investigates the negative effect of overgaming on scholastic attainment (Kaya & Sarpkaya, 2025). Some negative effects are procrastination, lack of motivation, and loss of sleep. Chen et al. (2025) found that different types of video gaming allow people to improve their reasoning, creativity, and decision-making. Therefore, the authors recommend that while trying to understand the relationship between gaming and academic performance, it is important to analyze the types of gaming activities used in the given academic circumstance and how the gaming activities have been included in that specific academic context.

Participation in academic activities is of particular importance, as it shows behavioral, emotional, and cognitive involvement in learning (Skvarc et al., 2021). The extent to which mobile games affect students' motivation, perseverance, and engagement in school tasks depends on the number of mobile games they play (Oriaso & Joshua, 2025). Excessive amounts of time may negatively influence students' motivation, perseverance, and engagement with school tasks. If the amount is not excessive, their self-regulation in mobile games may allow them to balance their mobile gaming and school duties (Zhou et al., 2026).

2.3 Behavioral and Self-Regulation Implications

Some studies show if school-aged students indulge in excessive mobile gaming, it can have damaging impacts on self-regulation and concentration. It is hypothesised that a young person engaging in mobile gaming in a highly aroused state will be less able to concentrate and might take more diversions and be more disruptive in the classroom (Kar et al., 2025). Mobile games can influence a child's self-regulation, accountability, and learning concentration (Shanmugasundaram & Tamilarasu, 2023). Therefore, effective regulation of gaming time and digital-device use may help reduce potential academic and classroom difficulties.

2.4 Balanced Gaming and School-Based Management

The study examined the detrimental impacts of unregulated mobile gaming use. The influence of mobile gaming on students' academics depends on the amount of time they spend gaming, the frequency of gaming, the stimulation level of gaming, the environment where gaming occurs, and the ratio of gaming to studying (Syvertsen et al., 2022). If regulated, they can be beneficial for academics and cognitive development (Özkan et al., 2025). Schools can play an important role in promoting responsible gaming behavior through teacher guidance, monitoring, digital literacy, and appropriate technology-use policies.

2.5 Mobile Gaming in the Pakistani Educational Context

More Pakistanis are getting online and buying smartphones. More Pakistani youth are playing mobile games. Among the challenges are digital literacy, appropriate parental control, and responsible use of technology (Sain et al., 2024). In this situation, it can be said that uncontrolled gaming caused disinterest in academic activities and was a strong disruptive element in academic activities. Controlled gaming had a positive effect on relaxation, socialization, and other activities (Azadvar & Ni, 2025). It is imperative that policies for digital literacy and use of technology for child and adolescent academic and behavioral well-being be developed. There is also great potential for integrating school policies and teacher guidance with the already existing techniques of integrating mobile gaming for positive effects.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research Paradigm and Philosophical Assumptions

The study was guided by an interpretivist perspective, as it sought to explore teachers' perceptions and experiences of students' mobile gaming. Interpretivism posits that reality is socially produced and can vary according to people's experiences and situations. Hence, the perceptions of teachers were regarded as vital to understanding the academic, behavioral, and classroom ramifications of mobile gaming. This paradigm also enabled the investigation of teachers' interpretations of students' gaming behaviors and schools' attempts to encourage safe digital-device use.

3.2 Research Design

The research design was qualitative in nature to explore the opinions of teachers about mobile gaming among secondary school students in Punjab. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to collect extensive information about teachers' observations of students' academic achievement, classroom involvement, behavior, and excessive gaming. The interviews also looked at the teachers' monitoring techniques, advising strategies, and school-level efforts to promote balanced and responsible technology use.

3.3 Population of the Study

The population of the study included the secondary school teachers serving in the selected public and private schools of the Faisalabad, Lahore, and Jhang districts of Punjab, Pakistan. The study involved teachers who had direct contact with secondary school students in the classroom and who were aware of the students' mobile gaming behavior, academic engagement, and classroom behavior.

3.4 Sample of the Study and sampling technique

The secondary school teachers were 30 who were purposively selected for the study because they deal directly with the students in academic and classroom activities and are exposed to the behavior of playing mobile games. Their perspectives provide useful feedback on the academic, behavioral, and classroom repercussions of mobile gaming and the techniques used to promote balanced digital-device use.

3.5 Instrumentation

Through semi-structured interviews, teachers were asked for their opinions on students' mobile gaming and its implications for students' academic performance, behaviors, and the classroom atmosphere. The interview questions examined teachers' perceptions of students' gaming behavior, the link between mobile gaming and classroom engagement, involvement, academic success, and behavioral issues, and the steps taken by teachers and schools to promote responsible and balanced use of digital devices.

3.6 Data Collection Method

To study teachers' impressions of students' mobile gaming and its effects on academic, behavioral, and classroom levels, qualitative data were obtained from teachers using semi-structured interviews. The interviews were voluntary, and confidentiality was assured, and informed consent was sought prior to the interviews. Interviews were carried out on observed gaming behavior, attention and involvement in class, academic performance, behavioral concerns, and school measures to promote balance in the use of digital devices. Interviews ranged in length from 25 to 30 minutes, were audio recorded with consent, and were transcribed and thematically analyzed.

4. Data Analysis

Q1. How do you think changes in students' use of mobile games affect students? Describe some gaming behaviors that you observe in students.

Figure 4.1

Teachers' Perceptions (word cloud) of the Effects of Mobile Gaming and Observed Student Gaming Behaviours

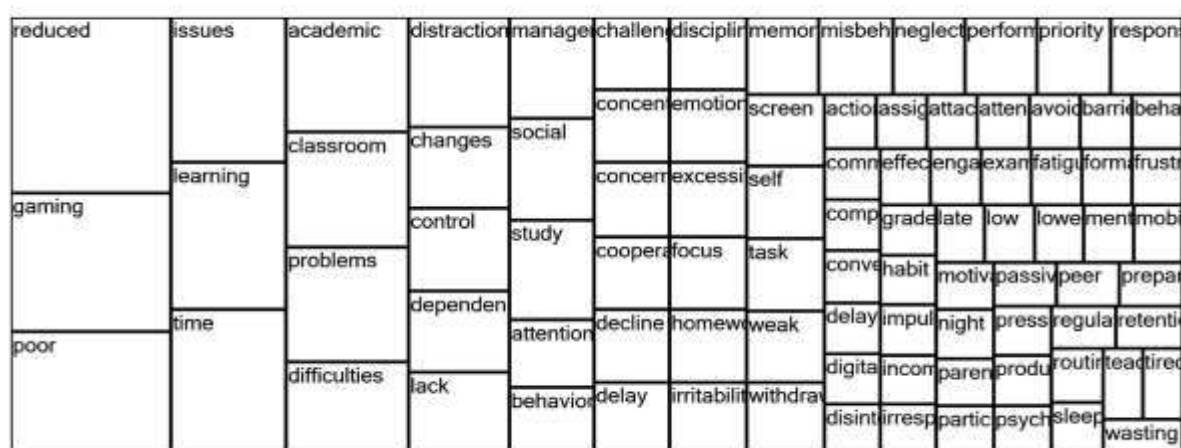


The word cloud displays teachers' perceptions of students' mobile gaming habits and their effect on learning. Teachers highlighted that mobile gaming can facilitate fun, communication, and socializing; however, it can also lead to distractions, a lack of concentration, insufficient focus on assignments, disrupted sleep, and poor time management. Teachers also reported students to be dependent and frustrated by the halting of games, weary, less attentive in class, and losing interest in school activities. The results generally demonstrated the significance of preserving an adequate balance in playing games, time management, and responsible use of digital technologies.

The word cloud shows the teachers related the excessive mobile gaming to the behavioral and academic problems. Heavy gaming was viewed as reducing students' interest, motivation, self-discipline, and engagement in learning activities and influencing time management and academic duties. Teachers also identified behavioral issues, such as impatience, mood swings, reliance, withdrawal, fatigue, and lack of self-control. In general, it was shown that uncontrolled gaming could be a factor that could hamper the rhythm of students' classroom behavior, study routine, and academic involvement.

Figure 4.6

Teachers' Perceptions (Tree map) of Behavioural and Academic Problems Associated with Excessive Mobile Gaming



The treemap shows teachers associating heavy mobile gaming with lower classroom engagement, poorer study habits, and lower academic success. It was seen that students who played video games for long hours were seen to disregard their classwork, homework, and revision and also showed decreased attention, memory, and concentration. Teachers also reported behavior problems such as reliance, impatience, disengagement, impulsiveness, weariness, and lack of self-control. Excessive gaming was considered interfering with students' normal routines, time management, responsibilities, and participation in academic activities.

Q4. What steps do you take to manage students' interest in mobile gaming? What steps do you take to motivate students to use mobile games and other electronic digital devices in a balanced way? What school policies do you have regarding the use of games and other electronic digital devices?

Figure 4.7

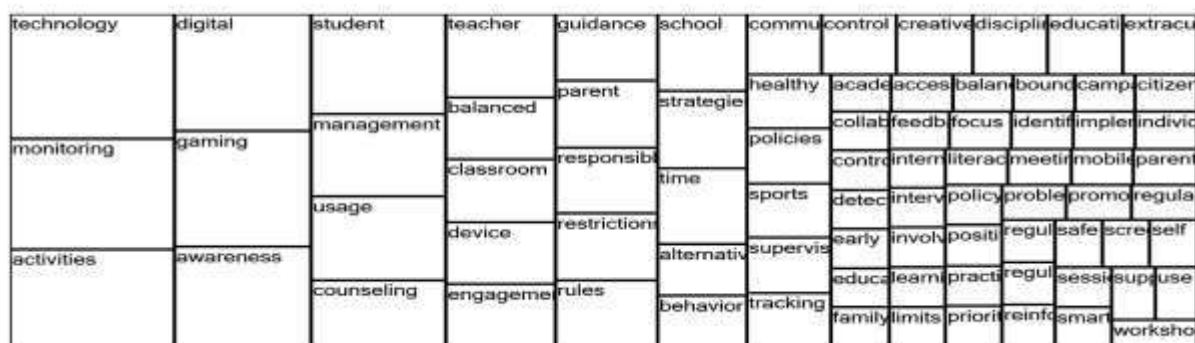
Teachers' Perceptions (word cloud) of Strategies and School Policies for Managing Mobile Gaming and Promoting Balanced Gadget Use



The word cloud illustrates that teachers employed several tactics to manage students' mobile games and encourage safe digital-device use. They included awareness activities, guidance, digital literacy, time management, sports, and other non-digital activities to achieve a healthy balance between gaming, study, rest, and physical activity. Teachers also stressed cooperation between schools and parents. At the school level, policies generally took the form of rules, restrictions, discipline, and limitations on the use of personal mobile devices during lessons, while allowing the use of technology for acceptable educational purposes.

Figure 4.8

Teachers' Perceptions (word cloud) of Strategies and School Policies for Managing Mobile Gaming and Promoting Balanced Gadget Use



The treemap shows that teachers had many options for dealing with students's mobile gaming, such as monitoring, awareness, advice, counselling, and restrictions. They also encouraged a positive balance between time management, sports, creative hobbies, and adequate use of modern tools for educational purposes. School policies also barred or limited the use of personal devices during lessons but allowed the use of technology for teaching and learning. Teachers also underlined the need for communication and collaboration with families and school associations to encourage ethical gaming conduct.

5. Conclusion

Findings revealed that Teachers perceived excessive mobile gaming as being associated with reduced academic engagement, distraction, and behavioral difficulties. Moderate gaming was connected with enjoyment, contact with peers, communication, strategic thinking, and problem-solving, while teachers perceived excessive gaming as being associated, diminished motivation, poor study habits, weariness, irritation, distraction, and lower classroom involvement. Teachers also observed that lack of control in gaming may interfere with students' academic routines, time management, responsibilities, and overall involvement in learning. In addition, the teachers stressed the importance of supervision, mentoring, counselling, digital literacy, time management, athletics, and other positive pursuits for a well-rounded gaming lifestyle. School-level regulations and restrictions were also considered vital in regulating personal device use and encouraging appropriate instructional use of technology. In conclusion, the results showed the significance of balanced mobile gaming, effective self-regulation, and the collaboration between schools and families in reducing academic and behavioral problems.

6. Discussion

The present study's findings suggest that teachers perceived excessive mobile gaming as a severe problem regarding students' academic engagement and classroom conduct. Heavy gaming was associated with lack of concentration, lack of enthusiasm, poor study habits, tiredness, irritability, distraction, and limited class engagement. Teachers also noted that too much gaming could have an impact on students' sleep and reduce the time and energy that students could put into schoolwork. The results match those of Anjum et al. (2024), who pointed out the influence of excessive mobile gaming by students on their attention, learning habits, and behavior in the classroom. Similar concerns by Kaya and Sarpkaya (2025) identified excessive gaming by students as the cause of procrastination, disrupted sleep, low motivation, and academic apathy.

It was also noted that students have problems regulating their mobile gaming. Unregulated gaming can affect students' ability to do their homework and revise and interfere with the management of their time and completion of their studies (schoolwork), teachers added. This has been corroborated by Syvertsen et al. (2022), who suggest that the effects of mobile gaming, more often than not, are dependent on the intensity, duration, and context of its use. Likewise, Tlili et al. (2024) claimed that gaming would eat up time that could be used for studying, reading, and other educational activities. The results indicate that academic effects of gaming are highly dependent on students' ability to self-regulate and balance between leisure and academic demands.

Teachers have concerns, but many see mobile games as having positive aspects. It was found that moderate, controlled gaming provided opportunity for enjoyment, peer discussion, management, rationalization, strategic thinking, and issue solving. This outcome is consistent with the findings of Chen et al. (2025), who said that well-structured and well-managed digital games have a good effect on logical thinking and decision-making. As with any instructional media, educational games must be carefully conceived, developed, integrated, assessed, and

used by teachers and students to realize their full potential, educational value, and outcomes. instructive policies and game studies should also be done to include essential games that are safe, instructive, competency-building, character-development, and encourage lifelong learning.

Results also showed that teachers need to monitor students online, lead and counsel them for digital literacy and time management, and do other important tasks. The current findings similarly mirrored the good effect of supervision of students as suggested by Sain et al. (2024). Azadvar and Ni (2025) also discussed the good social and recreational advantages of game time administration and the detrimental effect of inadequate game time administration on education.

Overall the results suggest that teachers perceived the impact of mobile gaming to depend on the number of students gaming, their ability to self-regulate their gaming behaviors, and the support of school and family. Moderate gaming may enhance some social and cognitive skills, whereas high and poorly controlled gaming may interfere with students' academic habits, involvement in the classroom, and behavioral adjustment. Thus, a balanced approach that combines self-regulation, teacher supervision, school-level policy, and family aid appears to be effective to offset the likely academic and behavioral difficulties linked with excessive mobile gaming.

7. Recommendations

1. Digital awareness programs are starting to become available for excess mobile/video game use. These programs will help students curb their mobile/video game use.
2. Students need to be provided with ways to self-regulate their mobile and video game use. Students should be taught how to balance their mobile and video game use with responsible activities.
3. Parents and teachers in the student's life should actively encourage and support self-regulation and balance.
4. In addition, teachers should promote and facilitate participation in other after-school activities, especially sports and recreation.

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