



# STIMULANT UNAVAILABILITY AND BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE ADHD TREATMENT IN PAKISTAN :A CROSS SECTIONAL SURVEY OF PSYCHIATRISTS



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## INTRODUCTION

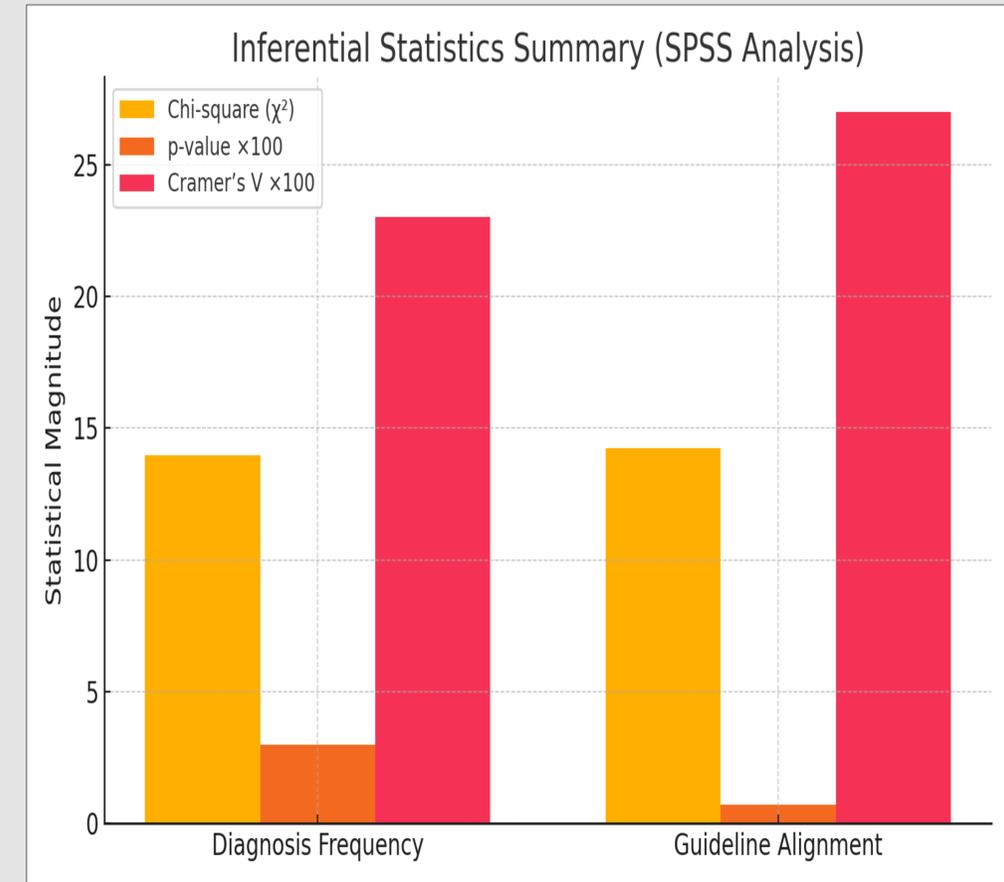
Stimulant medications are central to ADHD management; however, access remains limited in Pakistan. This study examined stimulant availability, barriers, and adherence to international guidelines among psychiatrists.

## METHODOLOGY

A cross-sectional online survey of 100 psychiatrists was analyzed using SPSS 29. Descriptive and inferential analyses (Chi-square tests with Cramer's V) assessed associations between stimulant availability, diagnostic frequency, and treatment alignment.

## RESULTS

Most psychiatrists (36%) diagnosed 6-20 ADHD cases annually, primarily among children aged 6-12 years (79.6%). Stimulants were difficult to procure for 56% and completely unavailable for 30%. Significant associations were observed between stimulant availability and ADHD diagnosis frequency ( $\chi^2=13.98$ ,  $df=6$ ,  $p=0.03$ ,  $V=0.23$ ), and between availability and guideline alignment ( $\chi^2=14.24$ ,  $df=4$ ,  $p=0.007$ ,  $V=0.27$ ). Better stimulant access correlated with higher diagnostic frequency and improved adherence to evidence-based care.



## DISCUSSION

These findings highlight profound disparities in stimulant medication access within Pakistan's psychiatric community. Stimulant scarcity, driven by stringent narcotic regulations and limited pharmaceutical importation, was the most significant impediment. Psychiatrists with access to stimulants demonstrated greater diagnostic vigilance and stronger adherence to international ADHD guidelines.

## CONCLUSION

Stimulant scarcity remains the principal barrier to effective ADHD management in Pakistan. Enhanced import regulation, clinician training, and national guideline development are urgently needed.

## REFERENCES



Availability Status	Percentage of Psychiatristst
Available but difficult to procure (import/supply issue)	56%
Completely unavailable	30%
Available but expensive	14%

Perceived availability of stimulant medications