Journal of Social Media Research
ISSN: 3062-0945
2026, 3(2), 162-171
https://jsomer.org

REVIEW ARTICLE OPEN ACCESS

Emerging evidence on doomscrolling: A scoping review of empirical studies

Görkem Avcı[1]*, Magdalini Vampa[2], Inda Kreso[3], Mohammadhossein Homaei[4] and Octa Pratama Putra[5]

1 Department of Elementary Education, Faculty of Education, Bartın University, Bartın, Türkiye.
2 Department of Social Sciences, Faculty of Natural and Human Sciences, Fan S. Noli University, Korçë, Albania.
3 Department of Criminal Justice, Faculty of Criminal Justice and Security Studies, Sarajevo University, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina.
4 Department of Computer and Telematics Systems Engineering, Faculty of Computer Science, Extremadura University, Cáceres, Spain.
5 Department of English Literature, Faculty of Communication and Language, Bina Sarana Informatika University, Jakarta, Indonesia.
* **Correspondence:** Department of Elementary Education, Faculty of Education, Bartın University, Türkiye. Tel: +90378501000/2065, Email: gorkem.avci.35@gmail.com

Article Info

DOI: 10.29329/jsomer.102

Article History:

Received: 01/03/2026
Revision Requested 02/05/2026
Accepted: 15/05/2026

Keywords:

Doomscrolling
Scoping review
Digital media behavior
Social media
Digital well-being

Highlights:

- This scoping review synthesizes evidence from 50 empirical studies on doomscrolling.
- Doomscrolling is consistently associated with anxiety, depression, stress, psychological distress, and reduced well-being.
- Cross-sectional quantitative studies, with limited longitudinal, qualitative, experimental, and intervention-based evidence, dominate existing research.
- The review highlights key gaps in definitions, measurement tools, contextual coverage, and cross-cultural validation.

Abstract

This scoping review maps the scope, characteristics, and emerging patterns of empirical research on doomscrolling. Guided by PRISMA-ScR recommendations, searches were conducted in Scopus and Web of Science, and 50 empirical studies met the inclusion criteria. The findings indicate that doomscrolling is generally conceptualized as repetitive, prolonged, and difficult-to-stop consumption of negative digital news, often driven by uncertainty, informational needs, and emotional discomfort. Research on doomscrolling has expanded rapidly since 2020, with a focus on pandemic-related contexts and growing attention to climate change, natural disasters, geopolitical conflicts, and other crises. Methodologically, the field is dominated by cross-sectional quantitative studies, while longitudinal, experimental, qualitative, and intervention-oriented studies remain limited. Across the reviewed studies, doomscrolling was frequently associated with adverse psychological outcomes, including anxiety, depression, stress, psychological distress, and reduced well-being. Emerging evidence also suggests social and occupational implications, including distraction, reduced productivity, and altered risk perceptions. Key individual-level factors associated with doomscrolling include fear of missing out, intolerance of uncertainty, emotional vulnerability, and low self-regulation. Despite growing scholarly interest, the literature remains fragmented in terms of definitions, measurement tools, research designs, and contextual coverage. This review highlights the need for standardized, cross-culturally validated measures; broader populations and crisis contexts; and stronger longitudinal, experimental, and intervention-based evidence. Overall, the findings position doomscrolling as a multidimensional phenomenon at the intersection of digital media use, crisis communication, and mental health, with important implications for future interdisciplinary research and digital well-being initiatives.

Citation: Avcı, G., Vampa, M., Kreso, I., Homaei, M. & Putra, O. P. (2026). Emerging evidence on doomscrolling: A scoping review of empirical studies. *Journal of Social Media Research, 3*(2), 162-171. https://doi.org/10.29329/jsomer.102

©The Author(s). This is an **open-access** article under the **CC BY-NC-ND license** https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/. The authors agree that the text, figures, and documents in the article do not violate the copyrights of third parties and that the publisher is not responsible for any claim or lawsuit by third parties due to copyright infringement. The authors declare that the publisher is not responsible for the article's content and that all responsibility for the article belongs to the authors.

1. Introduction

The rapid expansion of digital media ecosystems has fundamentally transformed how individuals encounter, interpret, and emotionally respond to negative information. Continuous connectivity through smartphones, social media platforms, and algorithmically curated news feeds enables real-time access to crisis-related information at an unprecedented scale (Cinelli et al., 2020). While this accessibility can support public awareness and preparedness, it may also intensify maladaptive patterns of information consumption, particularly during periods of uncertainty and large-scale societal disruption (Buchanan et al., 2021). Repeated exposure to negative news has been associated with increased psychological distress, heightened uncertainty, and altered risk perception during global crises (Price et al., 2022). One behavior that has attracted increasing attention in this context is doomscrolling, generally understood as persistent engagement with negative digital news despite emotional discomfort or difficulty disengaging (Sharma et al., 2022).

Recent global crises, including the COVID-19 pandemic, climate-related disasters, geopolitical conflicts, migration pressures, and rapid technological developments, have intensified public engagement with crisis-related digital content (Douglas et al., 2019). Within this changing information environment, doomscrolling has emerged as a behavioral pattern located at the intersection of digital media use, crisis communication, and mental health research (Sharma et al., 2022). However, despite growing empirical interest, the literature remains dispersed across disciplines such as psychology, media studies, communication, public health, and information science (Sharpe et al., 2026; Yasan-Ak et al., 2025). Moreover, the phenomenon has gained prominence due to its association with traumatic global events such as pandemics, earthquakes, wars, and migration, yet it has not yet been comprehensively examined (Akat & Hamarta, 2025). As a result, there remains limited clarity regarding how doomscrolling has been defined, which contexts and populations have been examined, which methodological approaches dominate the field, and which gaps should guide future research. Therefore, a scoping review is needed to map the conceptual, contextual, and methodological development of this emerging empirical literature (Anlı, 2023).

Given the interdisciplinary and still-developing nature of doomscrolling research, a scoping review is an appropriate methodological approach for examining the extent, range, and characteristics of available evidence (Sharpe et al., 2026). Scoping reviews are particularly useful for mapping research fields that are conceptually evolving, methodologically diverse, and not yet sufficiently mature for effect-focused systematic synthesis (Levac et al., 2010). Rather than estimating intervention effects or aggregating outcome sizes, scoping reviews aim to clarify conceptual boundaries, identify research trends, describe methodological patterns, and highlight gaps in the literature (Peters et al., 2020).

1.1. Doomscrolling

Although the term doomscrolling began appearing in public discourse around 2018 (Merriam-Webster, 2021), it gained widespread recognition during the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020 (Rajan et al., 2026). The concept combines “doom,” referring to catastrophic or negative expectations, with “scrolling,” which reflects habitual navigation through digital content streams (Ytre-Arne & Moe, 2021). Initially popularised through journalistic discourse, doomscrolling has generally been used to describe the compulsive consumption of negative news content that may increase anxiety, emotional distress, and perceived threat (Güme, 2024). In academic literature, doomscrolling is commonly defined as the repetitive, prolonged consumption of distressing or negative news on digital platforms, often linked to uncertainty, fear, perceived informational necessity, and difficulty disengaging (Sharpe et al., 2026). Although the construct overlaps with related concepts such as problematic social media use, news overload, excessive negative news exposure, and compulsive information seeking, doomscrolling is more specifically characterized by repeated engagement with negative or threatening information despite emotional discomfort. This behavior may develop into a self-reinforcing cycle in which individuals continue to seek negative information even when doing so worsens their emotional state (Satici et al., 2023). Individual differences in self-regulation, crisis-related information needs, and platform features such as algorithmically curated feeds and infinite scrolling may all contribute to compulsive scrolling behavior (Sharma et al., 2022). Empirical findings suggest that doomscrolling is negatively associated with optimism, life satisfaction, and mental well-being, and positively associated with anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress symptoms, negative affect, and psychological distress (Kaya, 2025).

1.2. Rationale for the Scoping Review

Doomscrolling remains a relatively new research topic, and empirical evidence is still developing (Satici et al., 2023). Although academic interest has grown rapidly since 2020 (Yasan-Ak et al., 2025), existing studies span diverse theoretical perspectives, disciplinary traditions, and methodological designs. This fragmentation makes it difficult to determine how doomscrolling has been conceptualized and measured, which crisis contexts have received scholarly attention, and what methodological patterns characterize the field. Scoping reviews provide a structured approach for mapping emerging bodies of literature, clarifying conceptual boundaries, and identifying knowledge gaps (Peters et al., 2020). Given the growing public concern and expanding research interest in doomscrolling, a comprehensive scoping review is warranted to systematically map and synthesize the academic literature on this emerging digital behavior. The scoping review methodology is particularly suited to this topic because doomscrolling is a relatively new research area that lacks descriptive clarity, standardized measurement tools, and intervention-based research. This method is necessary to explore the scope of existing research, clarify conceptual boundaries, identify methodological patterns, and highlight areas requiring further research (Sharpe et al., 2026).

Several gaps further justify a scoping review of research on doomscrolling. First, existing studies tend to examine doomscrolling through single disciplinary lenses, most commonly psychology or media studies, resulting in limited conceptual integration across digital media behavior, crisis communication, and mental health frameworks (Sharma et al., 2022). Second, empirical findings are largely concentrated in pandemic-related contexts, leaving doomscrolling in other crisis environments, such as climate disasters, geopolitical conflicts, and technology-related uncertainties, comparatively underexplored (Dominguez-Rodriguez et al., 2025). Third, methodological approaches remain heterogeneous, making it difficult to identify overarching patterns in the antecedents, mechanisms, and outcomes of doomscrolling behavior (Sharpe et al., 2026). These limitations highlight the need to map existing evidence, clarify conceptual boundaries, and identify areas requiring further empirical development. The present scoping review addresses these gaps by mapping a larger body of empirical research on doomscrolling (n = 50). Unlike previous reviews that have primarily summarized associations between doomscrolling and mental health outcomes, this review adopts a broader, interdisciplinary perspective. It situates doomscrolling within the intersecting domains of digital media behavior, crisis communication, and psychological well-being. In doing so, it identifies conceptual inconsistencies, methodological limitations, and underexplored research contexts, including social, occupational, and crisis-related dimensions. This field-level synthesis provides a foundation for future theoretical development, methodological standardization, cross-cultural measurement, and intervention-oriented research in digital well-being.

1.3. Purpose of the Study

The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated major shifts in global digital information consumption. Quarantine measures, social isolation, and heightened uncertainty increased public reliance on online news and social media (Ytre-Arne & Moe, 2021). However, doomscrolling should not be understood solely as a pandemic-specific phenomenon. Ongoing exposure to global risks, including climate change, geopolitical instability, disasters, migration, and technological uncertainty, has sustained high engagement with online news and crisis-related social media content in the post-pandemic period (Newman et al., 2025). These developments underscore the need to examine doomscrolling as a broader behavioral pattern embedded in contemporary digital information environments. While previous scoping reviews have mainly summarized associations between doomscrolling and mental health outcomes, this review takes a more integrative, interdisciplinary approach. This study systematically examines how doomscrolling is conceptualized and shaped by interactions among technological features, individual-level factors, and broader global crises. In doing so, it builds on and extends prior work by situating doomscrolling within a wider literature on crisis communication and digital media behavior. This scoping review aims to map the empirical literature on doomscrolling by examining how the construct has been conceptualized and measured, identifying the contexts and populations studied, describing dominant methodological approaches, and highlighting gaps for future research. By adopting an interdisciplinary perspective, the review situates doomscrolling at the intersection of digital media behavior, crisis communication, and psychological well-being.

2. Method

2.1. Search Strategy (PRISMA-ScR Aligned)

Following the PRISMA-ScR guidelines (Tricco *et al*., 2018), a comprehensive and iterative search strategy was developed to map the extent, nature, and characteristics of the literature on doomscrolling and exposure to negative news content. Searches were conducted in Scopus and Web of Science using combinations of free-text terms, with the strategy refined throughout the review process to ensure thorough coverage.

The selection of Scopus and Web of Science was based on their comprehensive multidisciplinary coverage and rigorous indexing standards, which ensure the inclusion of high-quality, peer-reviewed studies and enhance the reliability and replicability of the review process. Database searches were conducted from January to March 2026, with the final search completed in March 2026. To enhance methodological rigor and transparency in study selection, inter-rater reliability procedures were applied during screening. Two authors independently screened all titles and abstracts, read all retrieved articles, and then conducted full-text assessments against predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria. Inter-rater agreement was assessed using Cohen's kappa coefficient, indicating almost perfect agreement ($\kappa = 0.92$). Any discrepancies between reviewers were resolved through discussion and consensus, ensuring consistent decision-making and alignment with PRISMA-ScR recommendations. The initial search focused on three main components: terms such as "doomscrolling," "problematic news consumption," and "excessive exposure to negative news"; combinations of "social media use" with "negative news"; and broader terms such as "digital media consumption" or "online news exposure" combined with "mental health" or "psychological well-being."

In the second stage, the search was expanded to capture determinants, correlates, and contextual factors. This included linking "doomscrolling" or "excessive news consumption" with "risk factors" or "determinants," or "marginalized groups", as well as connecting "doomscrolling" to psychological outcomes such as anxiety, stress, depression, or fear, and to contextual events including political elections, earthquakes, and climate change. Family-related terms, including "family environment" or "parental model," job-related terms, including "reduced productivity" or "avoiding work tasks," were also combined with "social media use" or "news consumption" to explore environmental influences.

The third stage incorporated terms related to responses, prevention, and mitigation. Searches included "digital well-being" or "media literacy" combined with "intervention" or "mental health promotion," paired with "social media use," and school-based approaches linking "digital literacy" or "responsible media use." Finally, the search was broadened to capture conceptual, empirical, and methodological perspectives, including terms such as "doomscrolling," "negative news exposure," and "social media use" combined with "mental health."

Table 1. Search strategy across stages

Stage	Focus	Example keywords and combinations
Stage 1	Core concepts	"doomscrolling"; "problematic news consumption"; "excessive exposure to negative news"; ("social media use" AND "negative news"); ("digital media consumption" OR "online news exposure") AND ("mental health" OR "psychological well-being")
Stage 2	Determinants and context	("doomscrolling" OR "excessive news consumption") AND ("risk factors" OR "determinants" OR "marginalized groups"); ("doomscrolling" AND anxiety/stress/depression/fear); links to elections, earthquakes, climate change; ("family environment" OR "parental model"); ("reduced productivity" OR "avoiding work tasks")
Stage 3	Responses and prevention	("digital well-being" OR "media literacy") AND "intervention"; "mental health promotion" AND "social media use"; school-based ("digital literacy" OR "responsible media use"); broader combinations with "mental health"

2.2. Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Studies were included if they examined doomscrolling, problematic news consumption, excessive exposure to negative news, or closely related concepts and addressed psychological, emotional, or mental health outcomes, such as anxiety, stress, fear, emotional distress, or well-being. Eligible studies focused on digital or online media environments, including social media, online news platforms, or mobile technologies. Only peer-

reviewed studies published in English between 2021 and January 2026 and indexed in Scopus or Web of Science were considered. Eligible study designs included empirical, qualitative, and mixed-methods research, consistent with scoping review objectives. Studies were excluded if they were duplicates, unrelated to doomscrolling or exposure to negative news, focused exclusively on non-digital or traditional media without a clear digital component, or did not report or discuss social, psychological, emotional, or mental health–related outcomes relevant to the review focus.

2.3. Article screening and data extraction

As shown in Figure 1 (PRISMA flow diagram), a total of 106 records were identified through database searches (Scopus, n = 55; Web of Science, n = 51). Following the removal of 47 duplicates, 59 records remained for screening. Titles and abstracts were screened, and 7 records were excluded as irrelevant.

The first stage of screening involved an independent review of titles and abstracts by two senior researchers to ensure that the studies examined doomscrolling or exposure to negative news as either an outcome influenced by individual and contextual factors or a predictor of psychological, social, and occupational outcomes. In cases of uncertainty, insufficient information, or inability to retrieve full texts (n = 2), studies were retained for further consideration and discussed with the full research team.

In the second stage, 52 full-text articles were assessed for eligibility. Following full-text review, 50 studies met the inclusion criteria and were included in the synthesis. Two full-text articles were excluded, with reasons documented (e.g., a primary focus on linguistic aspects of doomscrolling or on journalistic training issues related to doomscrolling).

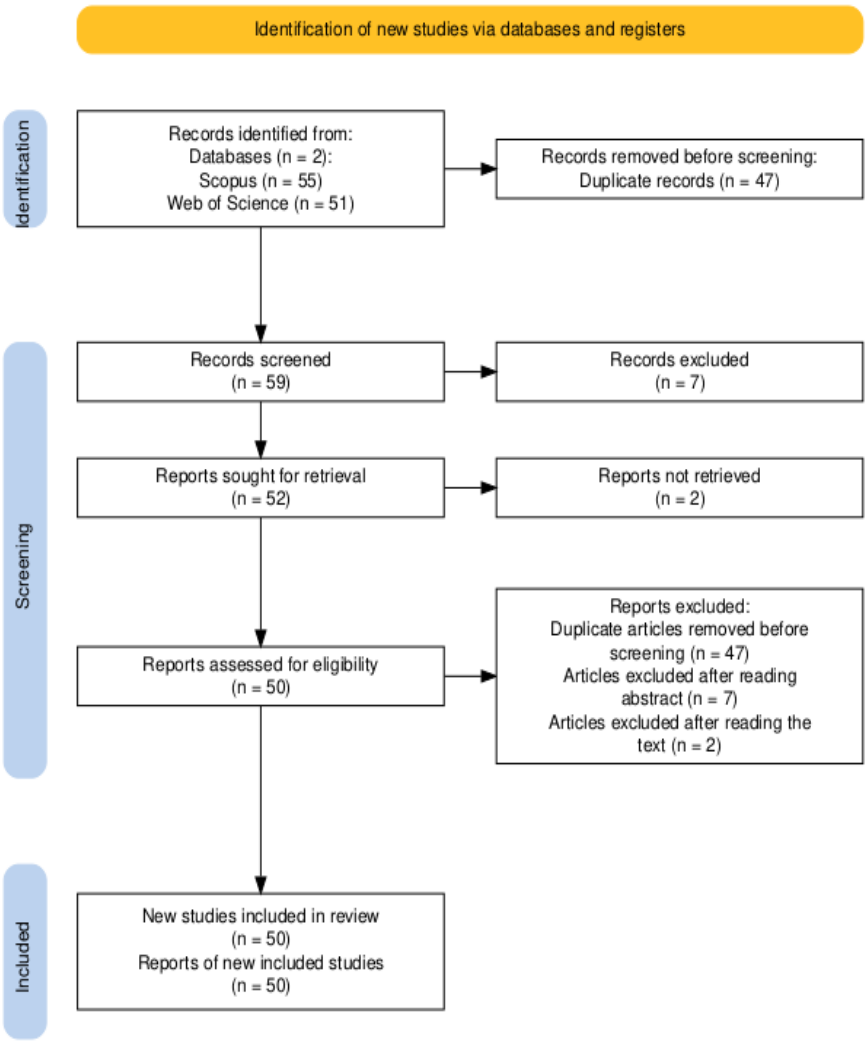

Figure 1. PRISMA (2020) flow diagram of the study selection process for the scoping review on evidence of doomscrolling.

2.4. Data extraction and synthesis approach

For each included study, data were charted on the conceptualization and measurement of doomscrolling and related constructs (e.g., problematic news consumption and excessive exposure to negative news), study characteristics, and key domains of associated factors. Given substantial heterogeneity in constructs, measurement tools, and study designs, a quantitative synthesis was not feasible. Consequently, the evidence was synthesized using a thematic analysis. Study findings were systematically coded and grouped into the following thematic domains: (a) doomscrolling in the context of negative news events (e.g., pandemics, earthquakes, and climate change); (b) associations between doomscrolling and psychological well-being; (c) social impacts of doomscrolling, including effects on political processes, marginalized populations, and work effectiveness; and (d) doomscrolling in relation to personality traits, particularly the fear of missing out (FoMO).

3. Results

A total of 50 empirical studies met the inclusion criteria and were included in this scoping review. The majority of studies were published after 2020, reflecting the recent emergence of doomscrolling as a research topic and the increased academic attention it has received following the COVID-19 pandemic. Most studies employed quantitative cross-sectional designs, typically using self-report surveys to assess doomscrolling behaviors and psychological outcomes. Fewer studies used longitudinal, qualitative, or mixed-methods approaches. The included studies were conducted across diverse geographical contexts, including North America, Europe, Asia, and Australia, indicating the global relevance of doomscrolling as a digital behavior. Participants included adolescents, university students, working adults, and the general population. Social media platforms, online news websites, and mobile devices were consistently identified as the primary environments in which doomscrolling behavior occurred. Measurement approaches varied substantially across studies. While some studies employed validated instruments such as the Doomscrolling Scale, others operationalized doomscrolling through related constructs, including excessive negative news consumption, problematic social media use, or compulsive information seeking. This heterogeneity in measurement reflects the evolving conceptualization of doomscrolling as a research construct.

A large proportion of the included studies examined doomscrolling within the context of crisis-related events. The COVID-19 pandemic was the most frequently studied context, with studies reporting increased exposure to negative news and prolonged digital media consumption during periods of lockdown, uncertainty, and social isolation. Beyond the pandemic, several studies examined doomscrolling in relation to other crisis environments, including climate change, natural disasters such as earthquakes, and geopolitical conflicts. These studies consistently reported that periods of heightened uncertainty and perceived threat were associated with increased engagement in doomscrolling behaviors. Individuals frequently reported feeling compelled to remain continuously informed despite experiencing emotional distress. Algorithmically curated news feeds, infinite scrolling interfaces, and constant smartphone accessibility were identified as key technological factors contributing to sustained exposure to negative content. These structural features of digital media environments appear to facilitate repetitive consumption patterns characteristic of doomscrolling. The most consistent finding across the included studies was the strong association between doomscrolling and adverse psychological outcomes. Doomscrolling was positively associated with increased levels of anxiety, depression, stress, and psychological distress. Several studies also reported associations with post-traumatic stress symptoms, emotional exhaustion, and negative affect.

Conversely, doomscrolling was negatively associated with indicators of psychological well-being, including life satisfaction, emotional stability, optimism, and overall mental well-being. Individuals who engaged more frequently in doomscrolling reported lower perceived control and greater emotional vulnerability. Multiple studies identified a self-reinforcing cycle in which psychological distress increased doomscrolling behavior, while doomscrolling further exacerbated distress. This bidirectional relationship suggests that doomscrolling may function both as a coping mechanism and a contributing factor to worsening mental health.

In addition to psychological outcomes, several studies examined the broader social and occupational impacts of doomscrolling. Excessive engagement with negative news was associated with reduced productivity, increased distraction, and difficulty maintaining attention during work or academic activities. Some studies also highlighted the influence of doomscrolling on political attitudes, risk perception, and trust in institutions. Continuous exposure to crisis-related information was found to shape individuals' perceptions of threat severity and social stability. Marginalized and vulnerable populations appeared to experience disproportionate

psychological effects, particularly in contexts involving crisis-related uncertainty. However, empirical evidence examining these populations remains limited.

Several studies examined individual-level factors associated with doomscrolling behavior. Fear of missing out (FoMO) emerged as one of the most consistently reported predictors of doomscrolling. Individuals with higher levels of FoMO were more likely to engage in compulsive monitoring of news and social media content. Other personality-related factors linked to increased doomscrolling included higher neuroticism, poorer emotional regulation, and greater sensitivity to threat-related information. Conversely, higher self-regulation and digital literacy were associated with less doomscrolling. These findings suggest that doomscrolling is influenced not only by external crisis contexts and digital platform design but also by individual psychological characteristics. Despite growing research interest, several gaps were identified across the included studies. Most research relied on cross-sectional designs, limiting conclusions about causal relationships. Longitudinal and experimental studies remain scarce. Additionally, measurement approaches lack standardization, with varying definitions and operationalizations of doomscrolling. Research has also predominantly focused on pandemic-related contexts, with less attention to other types of crises. Furthermore, relatively few studies have examined intervention strategies, prevention approaches, or protective factors that may mitigate doomscrolling behavior.

4. Discussion

This scoping review mapped the empirical literature on doomscrolling and identified key conceptual, methodological, and thematic patterns across 50 studies. Overall, the findings indicate that doomscrolling has rapidly emerged as a prominent research topic since 2020, largely catalyzed by the COVID-19 pandemic and the intensified reliance on digital information environments during periods of uncertainty (Ytre-Arne & Moe, 2021; Newman et al., 2025). While the pandemic remains the dominant context in the literature, evidence increasingly suggests that doomscrolling extends beyond COVID-19 and occurs in other crisis environments, including climate change and natural disasters (Dominguez-Rodriguez et al., 2025; Kartol et al., 2023).

The literature shows inconsistent definitional boundaries, with studies operationalizing doomscrolling through related constructs such as excessive negative news consumption, problematic social media use, compulsive information seeking, and news overload (Price et al., 2022; Shabahang et al., 2024). This conceptual diversity aligns with the broader observation that research on doomscrolling is still developing and remains interdisciplinary and fragmented (Sharpe et al., 2026; Yasan-Ak et al., 2025). Importantly, emerging measurement work indicates progress toward standardization, particularly through validated tools such as the Doomscrolling Scale and related measurement approaches (Satici et al., 2023; Sharma et al., 2022; Shabahang et al., 2024). Nevertheless, continued refinement and cross-cultural validation are needed to improve comparability across studies and contexts (Satici et al., 2023; Yang et al., 2024). A central pattern in the reviewed literature is that doomscrolling is often intensified during crisis events marked by uncertainty, perceived threat, and rapidly evolving information (Ytre-Arne & Moe, 2021; Price et al., 2022). The COVID-19 pandemic is the most frequently studied context, with evidence showing that higher exposure to pandemic-related digital news is associated with worse mental health outcomes and sustained negative affect (Price et al., 2022; Buchanan et al., 2021). Beyond COVID-19, crisis-driven doomscrolling has been documented in contexts such as exposure to climate change news and earthquake-related information consumption (Dominguez-Rodriguez et al., 2025; Kartol et al., 2023). Importantly, multiple studies emphasize that doomscrolling should not be understood solely as an individual behavior; it is also shaped by platform architecture, including algorithmic curation, infinite scrolling design, and continuous smartphone accessibility, which may reinforce persistent engagement with negative content (Sharma et al., 2022; Yasan-Ak et al., 2025). This supports the interpretation of doomscrolling as an interaction between crisis-driven information needs and technological affordances that promote prolonged attention.

The most consistent empirical finding across the literature is a strong association between doomscrolling and adverse psychological outcomes, including anxiety, depression, stress, distress, and reduced well-being (Satici et al., 2023; Shabahang et al., 2024; Kaya, 2025). Experimental evidence suggests that brief exposure to doomscrolling content can worsen emotional states, indicating that the behavior may have immediate affective consequences (Buchanan et al., 2021). Longitudinal diary evidence also supports a link between daily news exposure (“doomscrolling”) and mental health symptoms across repeated assessments (Price et al., 2022). Several studies suggest a self-reinforcing cycle in which distress may increase compulsive monitoring of negative information, while doomscrolling further exacerbates distress (Satici et al., 2023; Shabahang et al., 2024). This potential bidirectional mechanism is important for future causal research and aligns with calls for

greater use of longitudinal and experimental designs. Across studies, individual differences emerge as robust predictors of doomscrolling. Fear of missing out (FoMO) is one of the most consistent correlates and explanatory factors, with evidence showing that higher levels of FoMO are associated with increased compulsive monitoring and engagement with negative content (Rajan et al., 2026; Satici et al., 2023). Similarly, emotional vulnerability and reduced self-regulation are frequently associated with greater doomscrolling (Satici et al., 2023; Sharma et al., 2022).

Evidence also suggests that intolerance of uncertainty is a key psychological mechanism, particularly in contexts of crisis-related ambiguity. Studies examining intolerance of uncertainty consistently indicate that individuals experiencing greater uncertainty may engage in more doomscrolling, which, in turn, is associated with lower well-being (Kaya & Griffiths, 2025; Türk-Kurtça & Kocatürk, 2025). Related work in disaster contexts suggests that doomscrolling may mediate pathways linking distress and future anxiety after traumatic events (Kartol et al., 2023; Kaya & Griffiths, 2025). Together, these findings support a model in which doomscrolling is driven by a combination of psychological vulnerabilities (e.g., FoMO, intolerance of uncertainty) and exposure to crisis information in highly engaging digital environments. Beyond psychological outcomes, the literature indicates that doomscrolling may have broader functional consequences. Authors report associations between overexposure to negative news and reduced productivity, distraction, and impaired work engagement (Chand & Mishra, 2024). Doomscrolling has also been discussed in relation to social attitudes, political engagement, and trust-related outcomes, including how exposure to elite messaging or conspiracy-related content may shape perceptions and behavior (Haselswerdt & Fine, 2024). However, evidence remains limited regarding vulnerable and marginalized populations. While emerging studies suggest that certain groups may experience disproportionate psychological impacts under conditions of heightened threat and uncertainty (Blacha et al., 2025), this area requires more targeted research and more diverse sampling strategies.

Methodologically, the literature is dominated by cross-sectional survey designs, which limit causal inference and preclude conclusions about directionality (Satici et al., 2023; Shabahang et al., 2024). Although diary and longitudinal studies exist, they remain relatively scarce (Price et al., 2022). Another key gap is the lack of standardized measurement across studies, as definitions and operationalizations vary widely, reducing cross-study comparability (Sharpe et al., 2026; Yasan-Ak et al., 2025). Additionally, despite growing recognition of the harms of doomscrolling, research on interventions and prevention remains limited. Conceptual and digital wellness discussions propose media literacy, self-regulation strategies, and platform-level design considerations, but empirical testing of these mitigation strategies remains underdeveloped (Peters et al., 2020). Future research should prioritize experimentally tested interventions, evaluate protective factors (e.g., digital literacy, mindfulness, self-compassion), and examine platform design modifications to reduce compulsive exposure to negative content. Taken together, the evidence indicates that doomscrolling is a multidimensional phenomenon shaped by crisis contexts, platform design, and individual psychological vulnerability. The consistency of associations with anxiety, distress, and reduced well-being suggests that doomscrolling should be considered an important target for digital mental health research and public health communication (Buchanan et al., 2021; Satici et al., 2023; Price et al., 2022).

5. Conclusion & Practical Implications

In conclusion, this scoping review consolidates a rapidly expanding yet conceptually fragmented body of research and positions doomscrolling as a salient, multidimensional phenomenon within contemporary digital media ecosystems. The synthesis demonstrates that doomscrolling is consistently associated with adverse psychological outcomes, particularly anxiety, depression, stress, and diminished well-being, while also exerting broader functional and societal effects, including reduced productivity and altered risk perception. Importantly, the findings indicate that doomscrolling is not confined to pandemic-related contexts but reflects a more pervasive pattern of crisis-driven information engagement shaped by the interplay of individual vulnerabilities (e.g., fear of missing out, intolerance of uncertainty), platform affordances (e.g., algorithmic curation, infinite scrolling), and ongoing exposure to global risks. Despite these advances, the current evidence base is limited by conceptual ambiguity, methodological heterogeneity, and a predominance of cross-sectional designs that constrain causal inference. Accordingly, future research should prioritize theoretically grounded frameworks, longitudinal and experimental designs, and the development of standardized and cross-culturally validated measurement tools. Moreover, there is a pressing need to move beyond descriptive work toward intervention-oriented research that examines protective factors such as digital literacy, self-regulation, and platform-level design modifications. Addressing these gaps will be critical to advancing a more coherent understanding of

doomscrolling and to informing evidence-based strategies to promote digital well-being in increasingly crisis-saturated information environments.

Statement of Researchers	
Researchers' contribution rate statement:	GA: Conceptualization, investigation, project administration, writing (original draft). MV: Formal analysis, methodology, data curation, other analysis. IK: Investigation, validation, supervision, visualization. MH: Validation, writing (review & editing), supervision. OPP: Methodology, analysis, writing (review & editing). All authors read and approved the final manuscript.
Conflict statement:	The authors declare no conflicts of interest.
Data Availability Statement:	The data supporting this study's findings are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.
Funding:	This research did not receive any specific grant from funding agencies in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.
Ethical Considerations:	This is a review study; therefore, ethical approval was not required.

Author Biographies

Görkem Avcı is an Associate Professor whose research focuses on social studies education, outdoor education, disaster education, instructional technologies, life science teaching, teacher education, technology integration in education, sustainable development education, and geography teaching. He has participated in both ongoing and completed international interdisciplinary projects in collaboration with researchers from Asia, Europe, and Africa.

Magdalini Vampa is Associate Professor at the Faculty of Natural and Human Sciences, University "Fan S. Noli", Korçë, Albania, where she served as Head of the Department of Social Sciences from 2016 to 2024. Her research focuses on Educational Leadership, qualitative research methodology, leadership transformation in post-1990 Albanian education, and emerging issues related to technology and Artificial Intelligence in Education.

Inda Kreso holds a degree in Computer Science and Electrical Engineering and a PhD in Criminal Justice and Security Studies. She is a researcher and author in cybersecurity, digital forensics, and critical infrastructure protection, with a particular focus on ICS/OT systems, energy security, and cyber resilience. Her research interests include cyber-physical security, digital forensics, electronic warfare, risk management based on the IEC 62443 framework, and the protection of energy and industrial systems.

Mohammadhossein Homaei is a postdoc researcher of the Media Engineering Group at the Polytechnic School of Cáceres. Since 2019, he has served as a Visiting Researcher at Óbuda University, Hungary, focusing on the Internet of Things (IoT) and Big Data. He has also collaborated with J. Selye University, Slovakia, and National Yunlin University, Taiwan, on projects related to Artificial Intelligence and IoT. More recently, he was affiliated with Universidade da Beira Interior in Portugal, where he contributed to research on Digital Twins, Machine Learning, and Cybersecurity. His research interests include Digital Twins, Cybersecurity, IoT, AI, Machine Learning, Neuromorphic Computing, Digitalization, and Industry 4.0.

Octa Pratama Putra is a Lecturer of English Literature at Bina Sarana Informatika University and a doctoral student at Universitas Negeri Jakarta. His research interests include academic journal writing, collaborative scholarship, and cross-cultural literary studies.

6. References

Akat, M., & Hamarta, E. (2025). Doomscrolling and social media addiction in adolescents: A two-wave longitudinal study. *Journal of Addictive Diseases*, 1-9. https://doi.org/10.1080/10550887.2025.2504231

Anlı, G. (2023). The validity and reliability of the Turkish form of the doomscrolling scale. *Dokuz Eylul University The Journal of Graduate School of Social Sciences, 25*(1), 301–316. https://doi.org/10.16953/deusosbil.1178025

Blacha, S., Anderson, I. A., & Mar, R. A. (2025). Tension in attention: Hypervigilance helps explain why marginalization leads to doomscrolling. *Psychology of Popular Media, 14*(4), 550–559. https://doi.org/10.1037/ppm0000575

Buchanan K, Aknin LB, Lotun S, Sandstrom GM (2021). Brief exposure to social media during the COVID-19 pandemic: Doomscrolling has negative emotional consequences, but kindness-scrolling does not. *PLoS ONE 16*(10): e0257728. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0257728

Chand, P. K., & Mishra, N. (2024). Detached effects of doomscrolling on Generation Z employees' performance in the Indian information technology sector. *Information Discovery and Delivery*, 53(2), 261–271. https://doi.org/10.1108/IDD-07-2023-0081

Cinelli, M., Quattrociocchi, W., Galeazzi, A. et al. (2020). The COVID-19 social media infodemic. *Scientific Reports*, 10, 16598. https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-020-73510-5

Dominguez-Rodriguez, A., Apprich, F., Friehs, M. A., van der Graaf, S., & Steinrücke, J. (2025). Climate change news and doomscrolling: An examination of influencing factors and psychological effects. *Acta psychologica*, 255, 104925. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.actpsy.2025.104925

Doomscrolling during COVID-19: The negative association between daily social media use and mental health symptoms. *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy, 14*(1), 84–91. https://doi.org/10.1037/tra0001205

Douglas, K. M., Uscinski, J. E., Sutton, R. M., Cichocka, A., Nefes, T., Ang, C. S., & Deravi, F. (2019). Understanding conspiracy theories. *Political Psychology, 40*(S1), 3–35. https://doi:10.1111/pops.12568

Güme, S. (2024). Doomscrolling: A review. *Current Approaches in Psychiatry, 16*(4), 595–603. https://doi.org/10.18863/pgy.1416316

Haselswerdt, J., & Fine, J. A. (2024). Echo chambers or doom scrolling? Homophily, intensity, and exposure to elite social media messages. *Political Research Quarterly, 77*(1), 199–212. https://doi.org/10.1177/10659129231202969

Kartol, A., Üztemur, S., & Yaşar, P. (2023). 'I cannot see ahead': Psychological distress, doomscrolling, and dark future among adult survivors following MW 7.7 and 7.6 earthquakes in Türkiye. *BMC Public Health, 23*, 2513. https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-023-17460-3

Kaya B. (2025). Pay attention to what your fingers scroll: The roles of doomscrolling and psychological adjustment between adolescents' problematic social media use and psychological distress. *The Journal of Genetic Psychology*, 1–17. https://doi.org/10.1080/00221325.2025.2584991

Kaya, B., & Griffiths, M. D. (2025). Intolerance of uncertainty and mental wellbeing: The mediating and moderating role of doomscrolling. *Behaviour & Information Technology, 44*(10), 2323–2332. https://doi.org/10.1080/0144929X.2024.2314747

Levac, D., Colquhoun, H., & O'Brien, K. K. (2010). Scoping studies: Advancing the methodology. *Implementation Science, 5*(69), 1–9. https://doi.org/10.1186/1748-5908-5-69

Merriam-Webster. (2021). On 'doomsurfing' and 'doomscrolling'. https://www.merriam-webster.com/words-at-play/doomsurfing-doomscrolling-words-were-watching

Newman, N., Ross Arguedas, A., Robertson, C. T., Nielsen, R. K., & Fletcher, R. (2025). Digital news report 2025. Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism. https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/digital-news-report/2025

Peters, M. D. J., Godfrey, C., McInerney, P., Munn, Z., Tricco, A. C., & Khalil, H. (2020). Chapter 11: Scoping reviews. In E. Aromataris & Z. Munn (Eds.), JBI manual for evidence synthesis. JBI. https://doi.org/10.46658/JBIMES-20-12

Price, M., Legrand, A. C., Brier, Z. M. F., van Stolk-Cooke, K., Peck, K., Dodds, P. S., Danforth, C. M., & Adams, Z. W. (2022). Doomscrolling during COVID-19: The negative association between daily social and traditional media consumption and mental health symptoms during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice and Policy, 14*(8), 1338–1346. https://doi.org/10.1037/tra0001202

Rajan, C. K., Keerthana, P., & Sathiya, S. (2026). Personality and doomscrolling: The mediating role of fear of missing out in an Eastern context. *New Ideas in Psychology, 80*, 101208. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.newideapsych.2025.101208

Satici, S. A., Gocet Tekin, E., Deniz, M. E., & Satici, B. (2023). Doomscrolling scale: Its association with personality traits, psychological distress, social media use, and wellbeing. *Applied Research in Quality of Life, 18*(2), 833–847. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11482-022-10110-7

Shabahang, R., Hwang, H., Thomas, E. F., Aruguete, M. S., McCutcheon, L. E., Orosz, G., Hossein Khanzadeh, A. A., Mokhtari Chirani, B., & Zsila, Á. (2024). Doomscrolling evokes existential anxiety and fosters pessimism about human nature? Evidence from Iran and the United States. *Computers in Human Behavior Reports, 15*, 100438. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chbr.2024.100438

Sharma, B., Lee, S. S., & Johnson, B. K. (2022). The dark at the end of the tunnel: Doomscrolling on social media newsfeeds. *Technology, Mind, and Behavior, 3*(1), 144–156. https://doi.org/10.1037/tmb0000059

Sharpe, A. T., Tyndall, I., Poulus, D. R., Obine, E. A., & Sharpe, B. T. (2026). The influence of doomscrolling on mental health: a scoping review. *Mental Health and Digital Technologies*, 1–53. https://doi.org/10.1108/MHDT-10-2025-0068

Tricco, A. C., Lillie, E., Zarin, W., O'Brien, K. K., Colquhoun, H., Levac, D., Moher, D., Peters, M. D. J., Horsley, T., Weeks, L., Hempel, S., Akl, E. A., Chang, C., McGowan, J., Stewart, L. A., Hartling, L., Aldcroft, A., Wilson, M. G., Garritty, C., Lewin, S., Godfrey, C. M., Macdonald, M. T., Langlois, E. V., Soares-Weiser, K., Moriarty, J., Clifford, T., Tunçalp, Ö., & Straus, S. E. (2018). PRISMA extension for scoping reviews (PRISMA-ScR): Checklist and explanation. *Annals of Internal Medicine, 169*(7), 467–473. https://doi.org/10.7326/M18-0850

Türk-Kurtça, T., & Kocatürk, M. (2025). Beyond the scroll: Exploring how intolerance of uncertainty and psychological resilience explain the association between trait anxiety and doomscrolling. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 233, 112919. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2024.112919

Yang, L., Tan, X., Lang, R., Wang, T., & Li, K. (2024). Reliability and validity of the Chinese version of the doomscrolling scale and the mediating role of doomscrolling in the bidirectional relationship between insomnia and depression. *BMC Psychiatry*, 24, 565. https://doi.org/10.1186/s12888-024-06006-5

Yasan-Ak, N., Livberber, T., & Kamalı-Arslantaş, T. (2025). Journey in the digital era: Exploring doomscrolling, algorithmic literacy, and subjective well-being. *Psychology of Popular Media*. 1–10. https://doi.org/10.1037/ppm0000644

Ytre-Arne, B., & Moe, H. (2021). Doomscrolling, monitoring and avoiding: News use in COVID-19 pandemic lockdown. *Journalism Studies, 22*(13), 1739–1755. https://doi.org/10.1080/1461670X.2021.1952475