

The Fear of Missing Out and Usage Intensity of Social Media

Zainul Anwar
Department of Psychology,
University of Muhammadiyah Malang
zainulanwar@umm.ac.id

Erlin Dias Fury
Department of Psychology,
University of Muhammadiyah Malang
erlindiasfury@gmail.com

Santhia Roya Fauziah
Department of Psychology,
University of Muhammadiyah Malang
santhiaroya@webmail.umm.ac.id

Abstract: Social media make adolescents easy to connect with others; thus, it can change the way of communication in this modern era. Adolescents often observe and compare their lives with others' lives through social media, which could lead to decreasing level of life satisfaction. Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) is the fear of losing another person or group moments where the subject does not involve. This study aims to examine the association between the influence of FoMO on the usage intensity of Social Media by adolescents. Participants were 200 adolescents aged 15 – 18 who use social media of whom 83 male and 117 female in Mojokerto, East Java, Indonesia. The technique of sampling uses quota sampling. Participants respond to the standardized measure of FoMO scale and Usage intensity of Social media scale in which the result indicated that there is influence or a positive relationship between FoMO on usage intensity of social media ($R = .550^*$). The data were analyzed using simple linear regression analysis of Statistical Package for Social Science for Windows 21.0 version. This study result explains that FoMO and Usage Intensity of Social Media are more experienced by males rather than females.

Keywords: Fear of missing out, social media usage, adolescent

Introduction

Information and communication technology has become an important part of human life; new enhancements in virtual technology and communication is changing in daily habit and behavior (Kim et al., 2013). The problem of internet use in adolescents has become a serious problem in several countries, especially in Asia. The use of the internet, especially social media currently regardless of age, as stated by Madden, Cortesi, & Lenhart (2012), the use of the internet is mostly used by adolescents (12-17 years) and early adults (18-29 years).

The growing internet in this modern era is also increasing the use of social media. In research conducted by (Przybylski, A. K., Murayama, K., DeHaan, C. R., & Gladwell, 2013) shows that Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) plays an important role in social media involvement, such as the level of satisfaction with the needs of the individual. Przybylski, A. K., Murayama, K., DeHaan, C. R., & Gladwell (2013) argue that FoMO can function as a mediator that connects deficit in psychological needs with individual attachment to social media.

Although FoMO is not a completely new concept, the intensity and discussion of FoMO have increased significantly due to the emergence of technology called social media. A recent study conducted by (JWT Intelligence, 2012) found that around 70% of adults claimed to have experienced FoMO. Ease access to get information through technology has potential motivating individuals to easy comparing their own

lives with the lives they look upon through online posted and observation through images on social media sites causing them to feel less satisfied with their lives and behavior (Wortham, 2011).

Accordingly, there has been a changing in technology, called social media, which seems to be increasingly developing the term of FoMO. Thus, understanding the development and impact of social media is very important to understand about FoMO. Previous research conducted by (Wortham, 2011) has shown that FoMO consists feeling of irritability, anxiety, and feeling of inadequacy. Feeling of irritability, anxiety, and inadequacy increase when they look upon social media.

According to a recent survey conducted by JWT Intelligence (2012), 83% of respondents said they felt their lives were excessive to do things like reading, buying, and watching. Even though excessive data is coming out on social media to be consumed and understood, people are still trying to absorb as much as possible. Direct connection of information through social media can cause people to feel worse because they are chasing up what other people are doing on social media.

Przybylski, A. K., Murayama, K., DeHaan, C. R., & Gladwell (2013) explain that FoMO is characterized by a desire to stay connected with what other people are doing. The development of FoMO on social media in society makes an individual tends always to find out whatever is happening on social media. The tendency

of individuals to know everything on social media will automatically increase the usage intensity of social media on these individuals.

Adolescence is a period of transition in which individuals try to resolve issues of identity, gender, individual separation and seek closeness both in social and psychological. The use of the Internet and social media expands exponentially and spreads in developed and developing countries.

According to Coleman (2010), viewed from a developmental perspective, building interpersonal relationships is one of the important developmental tasks of adolescence. Internet usage can be seen as a habit. Teenagers are more connected to the internet than socializing with their environment, and the Internet is almost always part of their world. Those aged 12 to 15, in particular, tend to say that the Internet is the least media they will be missed, and they cannot imagine life without the internet (Larose & Eastin, 2004). Judging from the explanation above, that adolescents tend to experience FoMO compared to adults. It is due to the high use of social media by teenagers. Therefore, adolescents tend to have more potential to experience FoMO because of the tendency to compare their lives with others on social media.

Research by Vogel, Rose, Roberts, & Eckles (2014) illustrates that high-class Facebook users had a significant comparison mediating the relationship between the use of SNS and self-esteem. Mediation with a comparison of lower-class social life was not significant, thus indicating that individuals using Facebook tend to have low self-esteem because they compare their lives with individuals who have a higher social life. Thus it triggers an individual always to follow the trend to they are seen better by their social environment.

FoMO can be one type of addiction to SNS, smartphones, or waiting for new messages in online communicators (Kuss & Griffiths, 2017). The social construct of FoMO also assumes elements such as a desire to be popular, fear of being rejected, meeting the need to belong especially with online in virtual peer groups (Beyens, Frison, & Eggermont, 2016). FoMO affects on most youth with lower moods and satisfaction of life, but also people who are intensively online.

According to the existence of social media, individuals tend to follow the trending, which causes the feeling of FoMO, because the individual does not want to lose something new happening on social media. An individual will always update his social media to keep up with the times.

The researchers are interested in conducting research on the FoMO and usage intensity of Social Media in Adolescents to find out whether there is an influence of FoMO on the intensity of social media use by adolescents.

FoMO and Usage intensity of Social Media

According to Przybylski, A. K., Murayama, K., DeHaan, C. R., & Gladwell (2013), FoMO is an individual's fear of losing other individuals and groups precious moments where the individual is not involved the moment and is marked by the desire of the individual to stay connected with what others do on the internet or social media. There are aspects of FoMO, including (a) an individual's fear will lose his precious moment, (b) individual fears will lose valuable moments from other groups, and (c) the desire of individuals to stay connected to what others do.

Usage intensity of social media is an activity undertaken by individuals that involve interest or concern in using social media as an individual meant to communicate with other individuals, and the frequency of social media use can be seen. The forms of social media according to Jalonen (2014) can be divided into ten types, namely (1) Blogs, such as Blogger, Wordpress, Facebook, (2) Microblogs, such as Twitter, Google+, LinkedIn, (3) Podcasts, such as iTunes, (4) Videocasts, such as Youtube, (5) Media Sharing System, such as Slideshare, Dropbox, (6) Discussion forums, such as Apple Support Communities, KasKus, (7) Instant messaging, such as Skype, WhatsApp, LINE, (8) Shared Workspace, such as GoogleDocs, (9) Mash-ups, such as Google Maps, Foursquare, and (10) Wikis, such as Wikipedia.

Social media plays an important role in the FoMO. That emerges several questions. Does the increase of social media examination results due to someone has FoMO, or does the increase of social media examination lead FoMO or a combination of them? Does a higher FoMO level result decrease in social media checking because individuals are afraid to be left and want to avoid pain? These questions are based on the ability to measure FOMO (Abel, Buff, & Burr, 2016).

Method

This research is a quantitative study, and the data obtained will be processed using statistical techniques. The sampling technique uses quota sampling. Research subjects as many as 200 teenagers aged between 15-18 years have social media in Mojokerto, East Java.

The instruments for data collection were a scale of FoMO using an adapted scale of Przybylski with a reliability index of 779 for eight items and an intensity scale for social media usage with a reliability index of .814 for 13 items.

The research procedures are the researcher tests the instrument to see its validity and reliability, and then distributes the instrument to subjects. After the data has been collected, the data is processed using a simple linear regression analysis of SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) for the windows 21.0 version.

Results

The subjects in this study were adolescents with an age range of 15-18 years. The total subjects used in this study were 200 adolescents. The following data is obtained.

Table 1. Data Description

Variable	Category	Interval	Frequency	Percentage	Mean	SD
Fear of Missing Out	Highest	25-40	110	55%	25,44	5,716
	Lowest	9-24	90	45%		
Usage intensity of Social Media	Highest	37-52	73	36,5%	35,4	6,214
	Lowest	22-36	127	63,5%		

Based on Table 1, it can be seen that subjects with the highest FoMO counted 110 people with a percentage of 55%, and those who had the lowest FoMO counted 90 people with a percentage of 45%. For the variable intensity of the use of social media, it can be seen that the subjects who have the highest intensity of social media use are 73 people with a percentage of 36.5% while the subjects with the lowest intensity of social media use are 127 people with a percentage of 63.5%.

Table 2. Data Description based on Sex

Variable	Sex	Category	Interval	Frequency	Percentage	Mean
Fear Of Missing Out	Female	High	25 - 40	60	51,28%	24,96
		Low	9 - 24	57	48,71%	
	Male	High	28 - 40	33	39,75%	26,10
		Low	11 - 27	50	60,24%	
Usage intensity of Social Media	Female	High	37 - 52	45	38,46%	35,37
		Low	22 - 36	72	61,53%	
	Male	High	36 - 51	18	21,68%	35,43
		Low	16 - 35	63	78,31%	

Table 2 illustrates that FoMO is more experienced by the male, as seen from the mean value shown that male has a mean value of 26.10, while the mean value of female is 24.96. It shows that males are more likely to experience fear of missing out than females. The usage intensity of social media also shows that males tend to have the behavior of usage intensity of social media. The higher average value of males shows it compared to females. The mean value of males was 35.43, while the mean value of females was 35.37.

Based on the skewness and kurtosis test, the FoMO variable has a skewness value of -.801 and kurtosis value of .522. For usage intensity of social media, the result of skewness value is 1.909, and the kurtosis value is 1.519. Hence the results of the skewness and kurtosis test can be seen that the data is normal. The linearity test result has a value of .1098*

Based on the results of the simple linear regression test in the table above, it can be seen that the R-value is .550. The results above indicate that there is an influence or a positive relationship between FoMO on the usage intensity of social media.

Through the results can be seen in the table above, we get the coefficient of determination or R square, which indicates how closely the regression formed between the existing variables. R square value obtained from this study is 30.3%, which can be considered that

the independent variable or the variable FoMO has influence and contribution of 30.3% to the dependent variable usage intensity of social media while 69.7% is another factor which affects usage intensity of social media among adolescents.

Further, the comparison of the significant value with the condition $\text{sig} < .05$, it can be concluded that the X variable, namely FoMO, is considered to have a significant effect on the Y variable, namely usage intensity of social media. The significant value shows the effect of the X variable on the Y variable. Based on a simple linear regression test, a significance value of .000* is obtained, it means the independent variable, FoMO, significantly influences the dependent variable, namely the usage intensity of social media.

Discussions

Based on the result of research, it can be seen there is a significant positive relationship between FOMO on the usage intensity of social media in adolescents ($R = .550^*$). It shows that the higher the person's tendency of FoMO, the higher the usage intensity of social media. Conversely, if an individual has a low tendency of FoMO, then the usage intensity of social media is low as well. The results prove that the FoMO hypothesis affects the usage intensity of social media can be accepted. Based on the acceptance of the hypothesis in this study, it can be said that FoMO affects the usage intensity of social media in adolescents.

This study focuses on adolescents from the age range of 15-18 years with details of male subjects totaling 83 people with a percentage value of 41.5% and for female subjects totalling 117 people with a percentage value of 58.5%. For the total age of the subjects in this study, the highest number of subjects were adolescents aged 17 years, amounting to 71 people with a percentage value of 35.5% and subjects with a vulnerable age of 15 years were subjects who had the least number of 40 people with a percentage of 20%. For the average number of social media owned by each subject, each subject has approximately two social media. It is shown from the number of social media owned by the subject with 2 social media as the highest number, amounting to 74 people with a percentage of 37%. The number of social media owned by most subjects is WhatsApp, with 177 users out of 200 research subjects or with a percentage value of 88.5%.

FoMO is an impact caused by the use of social media. The use of social media networks is considered capable of increasing an individual's self-esteem because when people have social media, they are free to share their information with their fellow social media users (Gonzales & Hancock, 2011). One factor in the use of social media is the concept to present themselves; some individuals experience concern about others who see their posts uploaded on social media; thus it makes an individual must be careful with their posts on social media (Kim & Tussyadiah, 2013). Most

people can use social media as a way to communicate with large-scale audiences, as a way to show themselves and their lives or to know others' lives. The ease of accessing social media provides many opportunities for someone to overcome anxiety and feelings of discomfort or feeling of loss that is the feeling of FoMO (Patricia, Christi, Theresa, 2015).

The Research related to the role of FoMO on usage intensity of social media is also supported by research conducted by Marina, Mark, Nora & Richard (2018) who examine related to the prevalence, dynamics, and consequences of experiencing FoMO. In their research, they found that social media is an important factor in the occurrence of FoMO. In the study, people who experience FOMO did not care how they missed their activities. FoMO tendency itself is more owned by someone when alone. The research shows that FoMO is not just a matter of self-control for someone, because most people still sacrifice their time for activities that are more interesting to them.

FoMO is a form of the type of internet addiction, which is especially true among adolescents. FoMO has emerged along with the increasingly popular use of smartphones among teenagers today (Tomczyk, L., & Lizde, 2018). According to Hetz, P. R., Dawson, C. L., & Cullen (2015), FoMO is associated with a strong need to stay online, receive media messages, online games and other types of web pages and internet services. If an individual is unable to meet this, it will cause negative emotions on themselves as an individual. FoMO behavior tends to compare oneself with others, such as comparing oneself with others that individuals see on their social media. According to Gibbon, F. X., & Buunk, (1999), they define SCO (social comparison orientation) as a tendency of individuals to compare themselves with others. It has been found that the tendency of high SCO (social comparison ratio) is commonly experienced by individuals who have low self-esteem and mental problems, such as depression, anxiety, or stress.

An individual currently has the power or ability to see the latest circumstances of others in their lives in real time. Social media helps most people to make it easier for them to access something that has been missed. According to Miller (2012), people who always connect to social media can cause individuals to experience feelings of dissatisfaction, anxiety and unworthiness because individuals will tend to compare themselves to others.

An aspect supports the emergence of a tendency to FoMO is the low life satisfaction in an individual. This is reinforced by research by Błachnio & Przepiórka, (2018) which revealed that a greater level of fear is experienced by people who have low life satisfaction because of their tendency to follow others' lives. There are several possible explanations, although only hypothetical, the relationship between FoMO and life satisfaction. The need to connect with others and to stay up-to-date can cause cognitive and emotional burdens on individuals. The higher frustration that

results from this unsatisfied need might be detrimental and will affect life satisfaction. Moreover, the results of this study have similarities with the results of previous studies related to FoMO.

The advantages possessed in this study are the results of the study contain the latest results from the role of FoMO in the intensity of social media use among adolescents, especially adolescents at the age range of 15-18 years and the new results obtained from this study can be a comparison in previous studies.

Conclusion

Based on the result of the research and analysis conducted by researchers, it can be concluded that the hypothesis in this study can be accepted. The results of this study indicate that there is an influence of FoMO on the intensity of the use of social media ($R = .550^*$). The results of this study are relevant to research that has been done by previous researchers.

References

- Abel, J. P., Buff, C. L., & Burr, S. A. (2016). Social media and the fear of missing out: Scale development and assessment. *Journal of business & economics research (JBBER)*, 14(1), 33–44. <https://doi.org/1.19030/jber.v14i1.9554>
- ABeyens, I., Frison, E., & Eggermont, S. (2016). "I don't want to miss a thing": Adolescents' fear of missing out and its relationship to adolescents' social needs, Facebook use, and facebook related stress. *Computers in human behavior*, 64(November), 1–8. <https://doi.org/1.1016/j.chb.2016.05.083>
- Błachnio, A., & Przepiórka, A. (2018). Facebook intrusion, fear of missing out, narcissism, and life satisfaction: A cross-sectional study. *Psychiatry Research*, 259, 514–519. <https://doi.org/1.1016/j.psychres.2017.11.012>
- Coleman, J. C. (2010). *The nature of adolescence* (4th eds.). London: Routledge.
- Gibbon, F. X., & Buunk, B. P. (1999). Individual differences in social comparison: Development of a scale of social comparison orientation. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 76(1), 129–142.
- Gonzales, A. L., & Hancock, J. T. (2011). Mirror, mirror on my facebook wall: Effects of exposure to facebook on self-esteem. *Cyberpsychology, behavior, and social networking*, 14(1–2), 79–83. <https://doi.org/1.1089/cyber.2009.0411>
- Hetz, P. R., Dawson, C. L., & Cullen, T. A. (2015). Social media use and the fear of missing out (FoMO) while studying abroad. *Journal of research on technology in education*, 47(4), 259–272.
- JWT Intelligence. (2012). Fear of missing out (FoMO).
- Kim, J., & Tussyadiah, I. P. (2013). Social networking and social support in tourism experience: The moderating role of online self-presentation strategies. *Journal of travel and tourism marketing*, 30(1–2), 78–92. <https://doi.org/1.1080/10548408.2013.751220>

- Kuss, D. J., & Griffiths, M. D. (2017). Social networking sites and addiction: Ten lessons learned. *International journal of environmental research and public health*, 14(3). <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph14030311>
- Larose, R., & Eastin, M. S. (2004). *A social cognitive theory of Internet uses and gratifications : Toward a new social cognitive theory of Internet uses and gratifications : Toward a new model of media attendance*. (October). <https://doi.org/10.1207/s15506878jobem4803>
- Madden, M., Cortesi, S., & Lenhart, A. (2012). Parents, Teens, and Online Privacy. *Interaction*, 9(8), 29. Retrieved from http://www.crossingguardconsulting.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/PIP_ParentsTeensAndPrivacy.pdf
- Miller, S. (2012). FoMO: Are you a slave to FoMO? Retrieved from ABC news website: <https://abcnews.go.com/Health/Wellness/fear-missing-slave-fomo/story?id=16629972>
- Przybylski, A. K., Murayama, K., DeHaan, C. R., & Gladwell, V. (2013). Motivational, emotional, and behavioral correlates of fear of missing out. *Computers in human behavior*, 29(4), 1841–1848.
- Tomczyk, L., & Lizde, S. L. (2018). Fear of missing out (FoMO) among youth in Bosnia and Herzegovina — scale and selected mechanisms. *Children and youth services review*.
- Vogel, E. A., Rose, J. P., Roberts, L. R., & Eckles, K. (2014). Social comparison, social media, and self-esteem. *Psychology of popular media culture*, 3(4), 206–222. <https://doi.org/10.1037/ppm0000047>
- Wortham, J. (2011, April 9). Feel like a wallflower? Maybe it's your facebook wall. Retrieved from The New York times website: <https://www.nytimes.com/2011/04/10/business/10pining.html>