



From Four Dimension's FoMO: A Phenomenological Study of the Role of Social Networking in New Students

Nadia Khairinia¹, Azam Kapindo Tarigan¹, Rafly Fauzi Chadrayana¹

¹ Faculty of Psychology, State University of Malang, Jl. Semarang No. 5 Malang, East Java, Indonesia

nadia.khairina.fpsi@um.ac.id

Abstract. In social networks, millions of people can share information about interests and especially share photos and videos, create blogs and send messages, and can build conversations in person. Researchers later linked addiction to social networking with Fear of Missing Out. This study aims to understand the dynamics of FoMO in first-year students who are influenced by social networking. This study uses a qualitative descriptive approach where the data collected is in the form of words, pictures and not numbers. The data in this study were obtained through interviews and document studies. The results of the study showed that the picture of FoMO dynamics in the two participants was very unique, where only the anxiety dimension was clearly visible, while the need to belong, need for popularity and addiction were less visible in this study. This is due to the existence of new factors and even aspects that affect the level of FoMO in both participants. These aspects are a fairly high level of self-esteem and the existence of gratitude (gratitude) in the participants.

Keywords: Fear of Missing Out; Social Networking; First Year Student

1 Introduction

Social Networking is a concept that has been known long before the internet and mass communication. The most important asset of a human being is to build connections with others and cooperate with each other in a group as social beings. The trend of social networks is causing a major change in the design and functioning of the internet. Previously, humans only considered the internet as a place to get information, but with the emergence of social networks, the function of the internet has developed into a tool for interaction. Social networking sites that began to evolve from form, size, to function, made the emergence of major movements, especially evolution in human social interaction [1].

Nowadays, social networks have become an important tool in communication between people. In social networks, millions of people can share information about interests and especially share photos and videos, create blogs and send messages, and can build conversations in person. Networks with such functions are able to strengthen relationships between people, especially members in a community or forum through the internet. The most well-known social networks are Facebook, Twitter and MySpace [2]. But nowadays, the most widely used social network is Tik Tok. With more than 176 million downloads in the third quarter of 2019 [3], Tik Tok became the second

application downloaded on Android phones [4], and the fifth most downloaded application through the Apple Store [4].

The development of social networks that are increasingly sophisticated from time to time, to the emergence of new applications, has made a new impact on the mental health of its users. In a study conducted by [5], data from the World Health Organization (WHO) reported that there are 10%-20% of children and adolescents around the world who experience or have a history of mental health problems. From the data, it is known that as many as 50% of 14-year-old adolescents suffer from mental disorders while as many as 75% of 18-year-old adolescents suffer from mental health problems. A mental health disorder or problem that is often experienced by adolescents is anxiety [5]. In addition to mental health, there are also several negative impacts that arise due to excessive use of SNS, including, poor health, increased negative emotions, decreased performance, and distraction [6][7]. In fact, many researchers have researched the impact of addiction to using social networks. Researchers have recently linked addiction to social networking with Fear of Missing Out [7][8][9][10].

The use of social networks has an impact on a person's perception of other people's lives. For example, an individual who has been using Facebook for a long time will feel that life feels unfair and that others seem happier and that others have a better life than the individual [11], leading to increased anxiety when others may have had a valuable experience when we don't. that's what is referred to as FOMO. As a concept that describes a broad concern, FoMO encompasses the fear felt when we are not present at an event, while friends or close people make a precious memento, so we are not up to date and cannot keep up with the conversation when we meet [12].

Previous research indicated that reliance on social networks had a positive relationship with FoMO. Previous research conducted by [13] stated that smartphone use problems are related to FoMO, depression, anxiety, and the need for touch. In addition [14] in his research stated that the use of one of the most popular social networks, Facebook, positively has a relationship with FoMO. When compared to individuals who don't check their accounts or access their Facebook accounts very often, they have lower levels of FoMO than individuals who access their Facebook accounts frequently.

1.1 The Relationship between FoMO and Social Networks and Its Problems.

FoMo is a growing phenomenon and is a factor that makes this generation spend more money due to the rise of social applications [15] (Carolina & Mahestu, 2020). Impact on Individuals' Mental well-being FOMO can cause stress, anxiety, and depression in individuals. Constantly feeling left behind from what's happening on social media can damage mental well-being. Decreased Productivity: Students who are overly focused on social media and FOMO may be less productive in their studies, as they are more often distracted by social media updates than focusing on academic tasks.

The relationship between FoMO and the relationship between SNS is also discussed in self-determination theory (SDT). SDT contains 3 (three) basic psychological needs, namely a need for competence (for example, the need to feel that you have qualified abilities, be able to be an effective individual, and be able to face various problems in life), a need for autonomy (for example, the need to be someone who can influence the behavior of others, be able to identify yourself with your group, to the need to be able

to stand on your own), a need for relatedness (e.g., the need to feel close to others and accepted by others and the need to get social support). In the study of [12], it was shown that individuals who had a level of satisfaction with the fulfillment of all three needs in SDT showed higher levels of FoMO, where an increase in FoMO levels led to an increase in the use of SNS.

Another study [16], showed that two of the indicators in FoMO, namely the need to belong and the need for popularity in adolescents, were related to increased levels of FoMO, thus increasing the use of Facebook. This is due to the lack of fulfillment of these two indicators, where the need to belong and need for popularity in adolescents cannot be felt and fulfilled psychologically by adolescents, thereby increasing feelings of anxiety and inadequacy of being left behind (FoMO). Research with similar results conducted by [17] showed that FoMO is a mediator that influences the relationship between the need to belong that is not met and the percentage of self in social networks in adolescents who have a low level of perception of social support.

FoMO can also increase social disparities, as people who have limited access or no access to social media at all can feel marginalized. In addition to the role of FoMO can trigger social media addiction, which has a negative impact on productivity, physical health, and social well-being, FoMO can also affect the way individuals understand environmental and social issues. A person can be said to be FoMO if he experiences symptoms such as not being able to get rid of his phone, anxious and anxious if he has not checked his social media account, more concerned with communicating with his colleagues on social media, obsessed with other people's statuses and posts, and always wanting to exist by sharing his every activity and feeling depressed if few people see his account [18]. Research by [12] also underline that the potential relationship between FoMO and human psychological well-being and health. FoMO can play an important role in connecting individual variability in various factors, such as the need for psychological satisfaction, mood, life satisfaction, and social media engagement.

1.2 *Present Study*

Research on the FoMO construct has been extensively researched in recent years. Including FoMO's relationship with social networks. Even because of the relationship between the two, especially the relationship between FoMO and the problems caused by the use of social networks, such as low self-esteem, and the tendency to impulsive behavior. In fact, FoMO is theoretically often a mediator or moderator factor in many studies/studies [19]. However, research that describes the dynamics of FoMO in humans by including 4 (four) dimensions, such as need to belong, anxiety, addiction and need for popularity is still rarely described in research. So based on the presentation of the problem and the results of previous findings, the researcher is interested in understanding the dynamics of FoMO in first-year students who are influenced by social networking.

2 **Method**

This type of research uses a qualitative descriptive approach. According to [20] descriptive qualitative research is a research approach where the data collected is in the

form of words, pictures and not numbers. The data collection method in this study is interviews and document studies. Interviews are question-and-answer activities between researchers and informants, with the aim of obtaining information or explanations related to the problems being researched [21]. The sampling technique used is incidental sampling, which is an incidental sampling technique for first-year students who are met by researchers without certain criteria. The participants in this study are 2 people, namely G and R (pseudonym) with an age of 19 years and are first-year students.

The data sources used in this study are primary data and secondary data. Primary data according to [22] is data obtained from field study activities, both through interviews and documentation. Primary data in this study were obtained through interviews and document studies. The interviews conducted were with informants (people who can be used as sources of information). Secondary data is data obtained through document studies, namely in the form of research journals, reference books, and news contained in newspapers or magazines [22].

The data that has been collected will be analyzed with an interactive model based on [23]. According to [23], interactive model data analysis has 3 (three) components, namely, 1) data reduction, 2) data presentation, and 3) conclusion drawn/verification. The three components are used as steps in analyzing the research data that has been collected, while the data analysis technique used is domain analysis. Domain Analysis is an analysis that functions to know and understand in general about data in an effort to answer the focus of research. Researchers will read the data manuscript in general and thoroughly to obtain which domains or domains are in the data [24].

3 Result and Discussion

3.1 Result

Based on the results of an interview with G on Tuesday, November 21, 2023 and with R who is a first-year student. The results of the interview were seen through the questions that had been prepared in the interview guide with 4 main questions, namely related to need to belong, anxiety, addiction, and need for popularity.

"No, I don't feel left behind, I don't really like to follow like that"

"I don't feel it, it's normal"

Based on the results of the interview, it can be explained that the subject is a person who does not really like to just follow along and the subject feels ordinary when he does not follow the existing trend. However, when he does not follow the trends on social media, he once felt disconnected when his friends talked about trends. This is based on the researcher's interviews with the subjects.

"It's like, for example, a friend talks about a viral event, for example on TikTok or on any social media, like not connecting"

Both subjects were also asked about their feelings when they saw the activities and developments of their friends on social media, both of them felt left behind but only until the phase where both subjects felt that they did not change their behavior, when they saw their friends on social media.

"For example, friends follow trends that are going viral like dance or something. But it's just normal"

"Once, but it doesn't really matter"

Based on the interview, the subjects explained that they did not experience anxiety when the subjects could not access social media, both subjects revealed that they only felt bored when they could not access social media and diverted their boredom to other activities such as walking, reading books, and other activities.

The two subjects also did not experience anxiety because seeing their friends on social media who had activities or developments of the subject with the initials G revealed that the subject was grateful for what the subject had, while the subject with the initials R did not pay attention to it. When the subject was asked how many hours of time was spent in a day to open social media, the two had different answers: G could spend 3-4 hours a day opening social media, while R answered 5 hours.

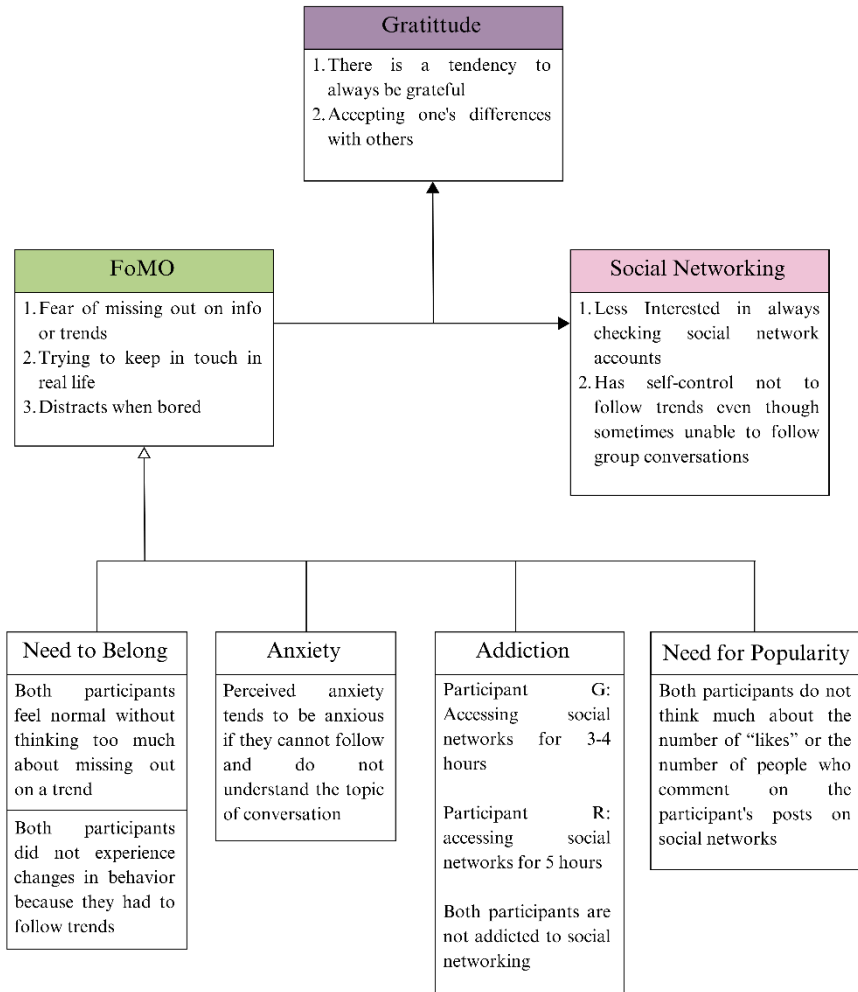


Fig. 1. FoMO Dynamics Findings from the Two Participants (G&R)

3.2 Discussions

The concept of Fear of Falling Behind (FoMO) is a basic need to interact with others and stay connected to what others are doing [12]. Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) has 4 main disciplines, namely Need to Belong, Anxiety, Addiction, Need for Popularity [25]. Need to belong: Reflects the experience of fear of being abandoned and the urge to be part of a group. Related to meeting social needs and affiliation through the use of social media. Need for popularity is used to measure the reliance on online approval from peers, such as the number of "Likes", the number of "Comments", and how often their friends share their posts on their friends' social media. Related to the need for recognition and increased self-esteem. Anxiety includes anxious tendencies, excessive rumination, and negative influences when individuals lose their internet connection or

cannot access social media. Addiction, an indicator that shows a lack of self-control in using social media to behavioral changes such as addiction to accessing social networks.

The first dimension in FoMO, Need to Belong, is a social need (e.g., being a member of a certain group), leading to the desire to be socially involved or the desire to be recognized, including the need to interact with others and the need to be accepted by others. One of the needs to interact can be done is to follow the latest trends so that they can blend in with a group of friends [25]. Need to Belong appears as a motivation to be accepted in a friendship. In this study, the two participants, G and R, stated that they did not really want to follow the latest trends, for example the trend of dancing with the background sound of a song that is currently a hit. This is because they feel that it is not an obligation to try a trend. However, both participants felt that there was fun in the discussion when discussing dance that is currently trending. This can happen due to their lack of interest in dance which is trending on social networks. On the other hand, both participants can still be friends and enter the circle of friends because of the similarities in the viral content seen, including content related to mental health in adolescents. This can happen because the two subjects are still in the period of identity recognition and are still in the process of searching for their identity. And due to the changes in environmental conditions that are much different, between high schools and campuses, the focus of participants and their friends leads to the process of adaptation to education and the university's social environment.

In this study, it was also known that both participants lacked interest in wanting to be recognized and known by the public, for example, often getting "Likes" or getting a lot of positive "Comments" related to participants' posts. This shows that the second dimension, Need for Popularity, is not very visible in the participants. This can be due to the tendency that the self-esteem of the two participants is classified as high self-esteem. Low self-esteem affects the individual's perceived FoMO level [26][27]. Esteem and its relationship to the need for popularity play an important role in lowering FoMO, which is negatively correlated with self-esteem [26].

The third dimension in measuring FoMO is anxiety. The existence of FoMO involves the concern that the individual becomes "outdated" about new experiences and is less able to blend in with his or her friend group [25]. The existence of a feeling of being left behind and not being able to blend in causes a person to experience a decrease in quality of life and satisfaction with his life. In this study, both participants felt quite anxious if in the friendship group, they were less able to follow the topic of conversation, due to the lack of information they got from social networks. However, this can happen because it is related to the fourth dimension, namely addiction. In research [28] stated that high intensity in using social networks often occurs in individuals who feel FoMO because the individual wants to continue to get the latest information and not be left behind. One of the characteristics of social network addiction is accessing social networks > 5-7 hours per day. This is in accordance with research by [29] which states that if a person accesses social networks for more than 5-7 hours per day, it can be categorized as social network addiction. According to [30], a person who experiences addiction to social media is caused by psychological disorders caused by accessing social media for too long in a daily life, thus reducing productive activities in his life. However, the two participants in this study accessed social

networks for 4-5 hours per day. So it is still not included in the addiction category and this is what causes less visible anxiety from the participants.

In addition to the four dimensions examined in this study, there are also other findings, namely related to gratitude. Gratitude is defined as an attitude of being aware and grateful for the good things that have happened [31]. Previous research has stated that gratitude can reduce anxiety in individuals [32]. In addition, research conducted by [31] shows that gratitude has an influence of 7.7% on FoMO. So it can be seen that the gratitude felt by both participants when seeing the achievements and development of their friends on social networks can reduce the perceived FoMO level. This is a new basis to see the possibility of new aspects that may be seen through qualitative research.

4 Conclusions

This study aims to see and understand the Dynamics of Fear of Missing Out which is influenced by the use of social networks, especially in first-year students. From the results, it is known that the picture of FoMO dynamics in the two participants is very unique, where only the anxiety dimension is clearly visible, while the need to belong, need for popularity and addiction are less visible in this study. This is due to the existence of new factors and even aspects that affect the level of FoMO in both participants. These aspects are a fairly high level of self-esteem and the existence of gratitude (gratitude) in the participants. In addition, the participants were also not among the heavy social network users or were in the addict category. So that for the next research, it is hoped that it can consider the duration of the accessibility of participants in accessing social networks, as well as the level of self-esteem of each participant in the study.

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