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FEAR OF MISSING OUT (FoMo) AMONG HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT
This research paper aims to study the Fear of Missing Out (FoMo) among high school students. A total sample of 50 high school student (25 boys and 25 girls) were chosen for the study from Rudrapur city. The measurement tool used was Fear of Missing out (FoMo) developed by "Andrew K. Przybylski, Kou Murayama, Cody R. DeHann and Valerie Gladwell" in 2013. The t-test was used to analyze data and the result shows that there is no significant difference in FoMo among boys and girls.
KEYWORDS: *FoMo, Social Media, High school student, Gender.*

INTRODUCTION
In the digital age, "the pervasive influence of social media has significantly shaped the lives of adolescents, with high school students being particularly vulnerable to its impact. Among the many psychological effects associated with social media usage, the concept of Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) has gained considerable attention. FOMO refers to the anxiety or fear individuals experience when they believe they are missing out on experiences or social interactions that others are enjoying, often fueled by social media posts" (Przybylski, Murayama, DeHaan, & Gladwell, 2013). This phenomenon is particularly prominent among high school students, as they navigate the complex social dynamics of adolescence while being exposed to the constant stream of digital content that social media platforms provide. Given that social media usage is widespread across both genders, it is crucial to explore whether there are significant differences in the impact of FOMO between boys and girls in high school settings.

Understanding the impact of FOMO on boys and girls is essential for educators, parents, and mental health professionals to develop effective interventions that support the well-being of adolescents. While existing literature has explored FOMO in various age groups and contexts, there remains a gap in research specifically focusing on gender differences in FOMO among high school students. The purpose of this study is to examine whether boys and girls experience FOMO differently, and if so, what the underlying factors might be. Do boys and girls perceive social exclusion in different ways? Do they experience different levels of anxiety related to missing out on social activities? Are there gender-specific strategies employed to cope with FOMO?

This study will not only contribute to the growing body of research on FOMO but also provide insights into how gender may influence the ways adolescents interact with social media and navigate their social worlds. By exploring these questions, the research aims to highlight key differences and similarities in how boys and girls experience FOMO, offering valuable perspectives for addressing the psychological challenges of adolescence in the digital era.

To understand the impact of FOMO on boys and girls, it is important to consider the theoretical frameworks that explain social behavior and media consumption. Social comparison theory (Festinger, 1954) suggests that "individuals evaluate themselves based on comparisons with others, which can lead to feelings of inadequacy or exclusion when they perceive others as having more rewarding experiences. This theory is highly relevant to FOMO, as adolescents often compare their lives to those presented on social media, leading to a heightened sense of missing out". Additionally, the uses and gratifications theory (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1973) posits that "people actively seek media to fulfill specific needs, such as social connection and validation. The pursuit of social approval and peer acceptance is particularly relevant during adolescence, and social media provides an avenue for fulfilling these needs". However, the constant exposure to curated and idealized representations of others' lives can result in feelings of insecurity and FOMO, particularly for adolescents seeking affirmation and belonging.

Gender and Social Media Use
The experience of FOMO may be influenced by gender, as boys and girls may have different ways of engaging with social media and interpreting online interactions. Gender differences in social media use have been widely studied, with research showing that girls tend to use social media more for relational purposes, such as maintaining friendships and sharing personal experiences (Valkenburg & Peter, 2011). In contrast, boys may use social

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media more for entertainment or information-seeking (Kuss & Griffiths, 2017). This difference in usage patterns may influence how boys and girls experience FOMO, as the emotional investment in social connections may lead girls to feel more acutely the fear of missing out on social events or group activities.

Moreover, the types of content consumed on social media could also play a role in gendered experiences of FOMO. Girls are often exposed to images that emphasize social and emotional experiences, such as group photos or posts about friendships, while boys may encounter more content related to achievements, status, or success (Tiggemann & Slater, 2014). These varying content types may contribute to different ways in which FOMO is experienced, with girls potentially feeling a stronger sense of social exclusion based on their desire for connection and approval, and boys focusing more on the fear of missing out on status-related opportunities.

Impact of FOMO on Adolescents

The emotional and psychological consequences of FOMO in adolescents are wide-ranging. High school students, in particular, are at a developmental stage where peer relationships and social identity formation are critical. "FOMO can lead to negative outcomes such as anxiety, depression, and a diminished sense of self-worth" (Przybylski et al., 2013). Studies have shown that FOMO is associated with lower life satisfaction, higher levels of loneliness, and an increased likelihood of engaging in unhealthy behaviors, such as excessive social media use or social withdrawal (Elhai, Dvorak, Levine, & Hall, 2016). These outcomes can be particularly harmful during adolescence, a time when emotional regulation and self-concept are still developing.

The effects of FOMO may also vary based on gender, as girls tend to be more sensitive to social rejection and are more likely to experience anxiety in response to exclusion (Nolen-Hoeksema, 2012). Boys, on the other hand, may experience FOMO in different ways, such as feeling excluded from competitive or achievement-oriented activities. Understanding these gendered experiences is crucial for addressing the mental health challenges that may arise from FOMO and providing targeted support for adolescents.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The study "Fear of Missing Out on Social Media Platforms and its relationship to Self-Esteem among Adolescents in Jordan" was conducted by Al-Nasa'h et al. in 2024. Cluster sampling was employed in this study to gather information from Amman's private schools. 590 adolescents in all, including both male and female were the part of the study. The findings indicate that there were notable variations in self-esteem and FOMO across grade levels, with seventh-grade kids outperforming all others in every category. However, students in the seventh grade had significantly different FoMo levels.

Yosep et al. (2024) studied the "Fear of Missing Out Among High School Students in Bandung". In this study 100 high school student were chosen from Bandung. They used descriptive design and random sampling technique to collect data from various schools. The result indicated that mostly high school student had moderate level of FoMo while 30% high school student experience high level of FoMo.

Liu et al. (2023) conducted the study on "effect of fear of missing out on mental health: and differences in different solitude behaviors". In this study convenience sampling method was used to the collect data from Tianjin university in China. A total 616 college student were selected for the study. The result revealed that "Positive solitude and eccentricity did not have an impact on mental health due to fear of missing out; however, social avoidance and loneliness had a mediating effect of fear of missing out".

Tanvi Kothari (2023) explored how the "Social Media Causes Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) and Substance Abuse among Adolescents". The research finding shows that "distractibility, a general decrease in productivity, and poorer mental health outcomes have all been connected to FOMO. Furthermore, because of FOMO, there is a favorable association between substance use and social media use".

Koca and Saatçı (2022) investigated the "The mediator role of fear of missing out the parent – adolescent relationship quality and problematic internet use". The sample included 547 university students, aged between 17 to 23 from Trabzon and Bayburt. The result show that "Positive mother-father-adolescent relationships are linked to problematic internet use via reduced FoMO feelings. On the other hand, negative mother-father-adolescent relationship traits are linked to problematic internet use through increased FoMO feelings".

Deniz (2021) explored the "Fear of missing out (FoMO) mediate relations between social self-efficacy and life satisfaction". The this study included 323 students, age range 18 to 32 years from Turkey. The result revealed that "there was a significant negative relationship between social self-efficacy and FoMO. Further, there was a significant negative correlation between FoMO and life satisfaction".

Bloemen and De Coninck (2020) studied "Social Media and Fear of Missing Out in Adolescents: The Role of Family Characteristics". In this study quota sampling method was used to collect the data. A total of 841 adolescents were selected from Belgium. The result indicated that "adolescents from stable families had a higher rate of FoMo compared to those from non-stable families. Further, Lower FoMo is associated with parent-child relationship. A high-quality relationship with mothers and fathers is associated with lower of FoMo".

Nusrath VP & Nikki Veronica (2020) studied the "relationship between fear of missing out, mindfulness, and social media usage among adolescence". A total of 120 sample were collected through purposive sampling, age range 12 to 23 years. It was

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found out that "there was a significant positive correlation between fear of missing out and social media usage, and there was a significant negative correlation between fear of missing out and mindfulness. Also, there was also no significant difference between fear of missing out, social media usage, and mindfulness among the two gender".

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Objective

- To study Fear of Missing Out (FoMo) among high school student.

Hypothesis

- There will be no significant difference in FoMo between boys and girls of high school student.

Variables

Independent Variable

- High school Students

Dependent Variable

- Fear of Missing Out (FoMo)

Inclusion criteria

- Age between 12 to 17 years.
- Boys and girls adolescence
- Willingness to participate in the study

Exclusion criteria

- Having any psychological illness
- Not willing to participate in the study

Sample

A total sample of 50 adolescence including both male and female were selected from Rudrapur city. In this study, cross-sectional research design was used to collect the data. The selection of the sample will be based on convenience sampling technique.

Tool

Fear of Missing Out (FoMo)

The fear of missing out scale was developed by Andrew K. Przybylski, Kou Murayama, Cody R. DeHann and Valerie Gladwell in 2013 to evaluate FoMo. The scale have 10 items with which are rated on a 5 point Likert rating scale respond. This scale has high internal consistency (0.82). It also have good construct validity (CFA 0.99).

RESULT

SPSS was used to evaluate the mean , SD and t-test.

Variable	N	Mean	SD	t-value
Boys	25	24.44	5.88	0.31*
Girls	25	22.60	6.86	

*Not Significant p>0.05

The result show that there is no significant difference in FoMo between boys and girls of high school student. The mean and SD of boys is 24.44 and 5.88 respectively. The mean and SD of girls is 22.60 and 6.86. The t-value 0.31 shows that the result is not significant at level 0.05.

DISCUSSION

The result shows that there is no significant difference in FoMo (Fear of Missing Out) between boys and girls of high school. This shows that both genders experience social anxiety and the fear of exclusion in similar ways. Various research has shown that FoMo is linked to social media usage, which affects both boys and girls in the same way, as they both engage with digital platforms frequently. However, while boys and girls might experience FoMo differently, such as in terms of the specific events they feel they're missing out on, the overall psychological effect is comparable. Factors like personality, social environment, and access to technology are likely more influential in shaping FoMo than gender itself. Therefore, it is plausible that, for high school students, gender does not play a major role in determining the intensity of FoMo.

CONCLUSION

There is little evidence to support a significant difference in FoMo between boys and girls of high school students. Both genders experience similar fear of missing out, particularly due to their extensive use of social media. While individual experiences may vary, factors like personality, social context, and technology access seem to have a greater influence on FoMo than gender. Thus, FoMo affects high school students, regardless of gender, in comparable ways.

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