Fear Of Missing Out (FOMO) and Instagram Social Media Addiction Among Early Adulthood

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Abstract. The purpose of the research was to find out a relationship between fear of missing out (FOMO) and Instagram addiction in early adulthood. This research used quantitative methods and obtained a total of 220 early adult participants with an age range from 18-25 years old. Fear of missing out was measured by Przybylski's FOMO Scale and Instagram Addiction was measured by The Instagram Addiction Scale. This research used correlational design as a data analysis technique. This research also used Spearman's correlation which stated that there was a positive significant relationship between fear of missing out (FOMO) and Instagram addiction (r_s =0.779, p<0.05). It can be concluded that there was a positive significant relationship between fear of missing out (FOMO) and Instagram addiction in early adulthood.

1 Introduction

The development of increasingly innovative technology has had an impact on the early adult generation, namely social media. Social media is a platform used to socialize with each other online without being limited by time and space. However, currently, Indonesia is still experiencing the COVID-19 pandemic. With the outbreak of the COVID-19 virus from 2020 to the present, individuals must reduce physical contact with family, relatives, and friends to maintain their mutual connections and health. Therefore, the government issued regulations and appeals to stay at home, distance learning (PJJ), and work from home (WFH). This has led to increased use of social media compared to pre-pandemic conditions. [1] [2] noted that there are 202.6 million people out of a total of 274.9 million Indonesians who use social media. The survey also noted that 170 million people are active social media users.

One social media is used by many early adult individuals, it’s called Instagram. Instagram is a photo and video-sharing platform that allows users to take photos directly, apply digital filters, and share them with other social media platforms [3]. Instagram has two main features, which are story Instagram and feed Instagram. The Instagram feed as a feature where users can share photos and videos.

Then, users will get feedback such as replies and likes from other users. [4] Meanwhile, the Instagram story features a digital storytelling concept that allows users to "tell stories" about their daily lives by sharing photos and videos that are automatically deleted after 24 hours [5].

[6] reports that 92.5 million people are using Instagram in Indonesia. The majority of Instagram users come from the 18-24 age category, which is 37.2%. [7] states that Instagram is one of the worst social media for individual mental health and well-being because it causes decreased sleep quality, bullying, increased anxiety and depression, and fear of missing out (FOMO).

The appeal of Instagram's features makes it a perfect medium to showcase our everyday life. It indirectly encourages users to share photos and videos. Users will then check the number of notifications such as likes and comments, uploaded photos, and videos, and stalk other people's profiles. This is very likely to lead to excessive use which eventually develops into social media addiction. [4] Social media addiction according to Griffiths [8] is a situation where individuals show excessive social media use behavior. Social media addiction is caused by spending excessive time on certain social media sites so that there is an urge to constantly access the site which causes individuals to be unable to control it. [9] Excessive behavior can be interpreted as a pattern of repeated habits that are not only caused by substance use but also behaviors that are carried out with little or no control and have adverse consequences. These adverse consequences include increased risk of illness, personal problems, and interpersonal problems. [8]

[10] mentions 6 (six) criteria of social media addiction including; 1) salience, which is where individuals feel engrossed in activities that cause pleasant effects or change moods so that they ignore other important activities; 2) tolerance, which is the need to spend more time doing activities to achieve the same pleasant or mood-changing effects as when the activity was done the first time; 3) mood modification, which is the subjective experience of individuals when there is high involvement in using social media which causes feelings of pleasure and calm when addictive behavior arises; 4) relapse, which is the tendency for addictive activities to recur after

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control; 5) withdrawal, which is withdrawal symptoms after reducing or stopping social media use such as unpleasant mood and behavioral states such as frustration, irritation, and problems with other physical symptoms; and 6) conflict, which is a conflict between the addict and the people around them (inter-personal conflict) or a conflict from within the individual (intrapsychic conflict) who chooses short-term pleasure and relief and ignores long-term consequences and losses and ultimately chooses addictive activities as a coping strategy.

Social media addiction is inseparable from the duration of time individuals spend using social media. The Georgia Institute of Technology through the GVU Center states that internet usage is divided into 3 (three) groups, namely as follows: 1) heavy users (> 40 hours/month), are users who experience severe addiction to the internet which is characterized by internet usage of around 6 hours/day; 2) medium users (> 10-40 hours/month), are users who fall into mild to moderate addiction which is characterized by internet usage of around 3-6 hours/day; and 3) light users (> 10 hours/month), light users are still considered normal usage and fall into the general internet usage time limit. This stage is characterized by internet usage of fewer than 3 hours per day [11]

[12] argues that social media addiction is a possible cause of increased mental health problems in early adulthood individuals. [13] explains that emerging adulthood is a transitional period from the adolescent stage to the adult stage in the age range of 18-25 years which is characterized by experimentation and exploration. Arnett also explained that early adult individuals have a high vulnerability to addiction due to instability in managing their lives, feeling in-between where early adult individuals do not consider themselves to be mature adults, and at the age of possibilities stage, when early adult individuals experience an unpleasant childhood, they are more vulnerable to anxiety, depression, and other problems related to anxiety in the future. In this case, when individuals experience difficulties in their life development process, individuals will escape through impulsive social media use.

Havighurst [14] explains that early adult developmental tasks generally include choosing a life partner, building a household, getting a job, and having a harmonious social group. Meanwhile, Erikson suggests that the stage of psychosocial development in early adulthood is intimacy vs isolation. Erikson stated in [15] said that early adults still have a desire to blend their identity with their friends. In this stage of development, not all individuals succeed in reaching the intimacy stage but some of these individuals also experience the isolation stage. Isolation is a condition where individuals experience failure in exploring their own identity, this is because these individuals avoid the responsibilities of being adults in terms of their careers, as well as their romantic relationships. So this is related to the world of relationships in social media, one of which is the fear of missing out (FOMO).

Fear of missing out (FOMO) is a concern experienced by individuals when others have memorable experiences in their absence. Fear of missing out (FOMO) is characterized by a desire to remain continuously connected to what others are doing. Individuals with a high fear of missing out will aggressively seek opportunities to engage in social media activities [16]. [17] argue that individuals who experience fear of missing out (FOMO) have the desire to know everything that happens in their environment. This is in line with [17] who state that the desire to know encourages individuals to constantly move on social media without time limits so that it can lead to social media addiction.

Based on the Self-Determination theory, fear of missing out (FOMO) can also be interpreted as a low level of basic psychological needs such as competence, autonomy, and connectedness with other individuals [18]. This is caused by the unfulfillment of basic psychological needs.) [15] added that individuals who have a low level of fulfillment of basic psychological needs are more interested in using social media. The relationship between fear of missing out (FOMO) and social media addiction can be seen from the role of social media for individuals who have a fear of missing out (FOMO). [17] said that the needs and urges that arise due to fear of missing out (FOMO) in maintaining communication can be fulfilled through social media. The availability of information from social media allows individuals to know what moments or events other people are doing all the time. This also causes individuals who experience fear of missing out (FOMO) to lead to social media addiction.

Meanwhile, [19] have an assumption contrary to the above statement which states that fear of missing out (FOMO) can contribute to social media dependence because individuals feel worried that not being able to connect to the internet network can develop a habit of checking social media impulsively which over time turns into social media addiction.

Then, previous research results were found regarding the relationship between fear of missing out (FOMO) and social media addiction in Indonesia in Adolescent Social Media Users by 20. This study supports the relationship between fear of missing out (FOMO) and social media addiction in SMA Negeri 14 students. Then, a similar study was found by [21] where the results of his research also support the relationship between fear of missing out (FOMO) and social media addiction in adolescents at MAN Surabaya.

This research needs to be done because there are not many topics that focus on fear of missing out (FOMO) and Instagram addiction using research participants in early adulthood and there are not many research results in Indonesia. The purpose of this study is to find out whether
or not there is a relationship between *fear of missing out* (FOMO) and Instagram social media addiction in early adulthood. The hypothesis used in this study is that there is a significant relationship between *fear of missing out* (FOMO) and Instagram social media addiction in early adulthood.

### 2 Method

#### 2.1 Participants

The total number of participants obtained was 220 subjects. The research questionnaire was distributed through social media sites such as WhatsApp, Line, Instagram, Twitter, and Telegram. The criteria for participants in the study were: (1) aged 18-25 years (early adulthood); (2) residing in Jakarta, Bogor, Depok, and Tangerang; and (3) actively using the Instagram application. A correlational research design was used to find the relationship between *fear of missing out* (FoMO) and Instagram social media addiction in early adulthood. The type of non-probability sampling technique used was the convenience sampling technique. The analysis technique in this study used the Spearman test.

#### 2.2 Measurement tool

##### 2.2.1. Fear of missing out (FOMO) measurement tool

The *fear of missing out* (FOMO) was measured by Przybylski et al's *fear of missing out* (FOMO) theory and modified and translated by [22]. The measuring instrument has 3 (three) indicators on the FOMO variable, namely, *fears, worries, and anxiety*. This measuring instrument totals 19 items with 5 (five) response options with a Likert Scale of scores 1 = Scale Very Does Not Reflect Me, 2 = Does Not Reflect Me, 3 = Somewhat Reflects Me, 4 = Reflects Me, and 5 = Very Reflects Me. Reliability on the *fear of missing out* (FOMO) measuring instrument is 0.89.

##### 2.2.2. Measuring Tool for Instagram Social Media Addiction

The Instagram social media addiction was measured by *The Instagram Addiction Scale* which is based on the Instagram Addiction Scale theory of [4] and modified and translated into Indonesian by [23]. This measuring instrument has 6 (six) indicators on the Instagram Social Media Addiction variable, namely *salience, tolerance, mood modification, relapse, withdrawal, and conflict.*

The measuring instrument has a total of 24 items which are divided into 2 (two) parts, namely the Instagram Feed Addiction (IFA) section of 12 items and the Instagram Stories Addiction (ISA) section of 12 items. This measuring instrument is given 5 (five) response options using a Likert Scale, namely from score 1 = Scale Very Does Not Reflect Me, 2 = Does Not Reflect Me, 3 = Somewhat Reflects Me, 4 = Reflects Me, and 5 = Very Reflects Me.

### 3 Result and discussion

#### 3.1. Overview of Research Participants

There were 220 subjects, consisting of 41.8% male and 58.2% female. The subjects were aged 19-24 years old. Most participants were college students, as many as 160 people (72.7%). Meanwhile, the least participants were participants who did not work as many as 9 people (4.1%).

#### 3.2. Participant Overview Based on Duration of Instagram Use

The following were participants based on the duration of Instagram use, as follow:

Table 1. Participant Overview Based on Duration of Instagram Use

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duration of Instagram Usage</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 3 hours/day</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-6 hours/day</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>45.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 6 hours/day</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>29.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on Table 1, showed that most participants used Instagram for 3-6 hours/day as many as 100 people (45.5%). Meanwhile, the least participants used Instagram for < 3 hours/day as many as 55 people (25%).

#### 3.3. Participant Overview Based on Most Frequently Accessed Instagram Features

The following were participants based on the most frequently accessed Instagram features, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Participant Overview Based on Most Frequently Accessed Instagram Features

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IG Features</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feed</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>18.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Story</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>62.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reels</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>18.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IGTV</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on Table 2, showed that most participants used the *Story* feature on Instagram as many as 138 people (62.7%). Meanwhile, the least participants used the IGTV feature on Instagram as many as 2 people (0.9%).

#### 3.4. Correlation Test

The following are the results of *Spearman’s rho* correlation test, which are shown in Table 3.
The correlation test used the Spearman correlation test. The Spearman correlation test is included in non-parametric statistics. The Spearman correlation test is used to measure the consistency of the relationship between the fear of missing out variable (X) and the Instagram Addiction variable (Y). The Spearman correlation test has a reference if the Sig. (p) < 0.05 then it is assumed that there is a significant relationship, but if the Sig. value (p) > 0.05 then it is assumed that there is no significant relationship.

Table 3 showed that the Sig. (p) 0.00 < 0.05. So there was a significant relationship between fear of missing out (FOMO) and Instagram addiction. The research hypothesis is accepted. It means that the higher the level of FOMO, the higher the level of Instagram addiction. This also applies vice versa if the lower the level of FOMO, the lower the level of Instagram addiction.

Meanwhile, the results of the correlation coefficient are obtained, \( r = 0.779 \) according to the reference [23] which shows the strength of the relationship between fear of missing out (FOMO) and Instagram addiction in early adulthood.

The results stated that there was a significant positive relationship between fear of missing out (FOMO) and Instagram social media addiction with a Sig value. (p) 0.000 <0.05 which means the research hypothesis is accepted. Followed by the results of the correlation coefficient, \( r = 0.779 \) which shows the strength of the relationship between fear of missing out (FOMO) and Instagram social media addiction in early adulthood. This is in line with previous research by [21] and [20] which state that there is a positive significant relationship between fear of missing out (FOMO) and social media addiction in adolescents. In addition, previous research was found that contradicts the above research, namely [19] stating that fear of missing out (FOMO) contributes to social media dependence because individuals worried about not being able to connect to the internet network can develop the habit of checking social media impulsively which over time turns into social media addiction. The research conducted by the current researcher focuses on social media addiction specifically, namely Instagram. Also, the research subjects used are early adults.

Based on the results of the general description of participants based on gender, there were 128 people (58.2%) who were women. [13] argues that women in emerging adulthood have a greater interest in forming intimate friendships with their friends. So the use of Instagram is considered to be able to fulfill women's needs to build relationships with people around them continuously. This is in line with [24] who state that women are more at risk of developing addictive behavior in the use of social media.

Based on the results of the general description of participants based on employment status, there were 160 people (72.7%) who were students. Then, followed by the results of the general description based on the last education, most of whom graduated from SMA / SMK / Equivalent as many as 168 people (76.4%). Students are individuals who enter the stage of emerging adulthood. Referring to [13] that students are characterized by self-exploration. This self-exploration is characterized by [13] early adults changing their lifestyle when accessing social media which causes them to easily connect even though they are far apart. One of the social media they use is Instagram. [13] also added that addiction in early adulthood (emerging adulthood) is caused by emotional instability in organizing their lives, they do not feel adolescent or mature as a whole, and they experience an unpleasant childhood which makes them "escape" through impulsive use of social media. This is in line with [25] who found a tendency for social media addiction behavior in Bandung students.

4 Conclusion

Based on the results of research conducted on 220 early adult participants, it can be concluded that there was a positive significant relationship between fear of missing out (FOMO) and Instagram social media addiction in early adults. This is evidenced by the results of the Spearman correlation test which stated that there was a strong relationship between fear of missing out (FOMO) and Instagram addiction.

References


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3. Correlation Test of FOMO and IG Addiction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Correlations</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FOMO</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correlation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coefficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IG Addiction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correlation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coefficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**. The correlation was significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).


