

## FOMO and Social Media Addition

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Social media creates a platform for bragging; it is where things, events, and even happiness itself seems to be in competition at times. People are comparing their best, picture-perfect experiences, which may lead you to wonder what you are lacking the purpose of this paper describes the relationship of FOMO and social media addition. When we see social media users' highlight reels, we often experience a "fear of missing out", or "FOMO". FOMO describes the anxiety we feel when it seems that others are having rewarding experiences without us. "FOMO is probably the most hurtful in teenagers or younger adults, specifically because they are trying to figure out where they fit in life and what groups they fit into," shares Dr. Sullivan. Higher FOMO was associated with more social media use and more problems due to social media use. Age and gender did not affect the result using social media has benefits too, such as keeping in touch with friends, expressing ourselves, and getting support from our social networks. So how can we ease the negative effects of social media use on our well-being without losing the benefits of it.

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Social media has accelerated the FOMO phenomenon in several ways. It provides a situation in which you are comparing your regular life to the highlights of others' lives. Therefore, your sense of "normal" becomes skewed and you seem to be doing worse than your peers. You might see detailed photos of your friends enjoying fun times without you, which is something that people may not have been so readily aware of in past generations. Social media creates a platform for bragging; it is where things, events, and even happiness itself seems to be in competition at times. People are comparing their best, picture-perfect experiences, which may lead you to wonder what you are lacking.

Psychologists began using the term FOMO in the early 2000s to describe a phenomenon associated with the use of social networking sites. It has gained greater attention over the years as our social media presence has increased," says Natalie Christine Dattilo, Ph.D, the founder of Priority Wellness Group and an instructor of psychology at

Harvard. "FOMO includes both the perception of missing out, which triggers anxiety, and compulsive behaviors, like checking and refreshing sites, to maintain social connections," she says. "It is closely related to the fear of social exclusion or ostracism, which existed long before social media."

The purpose of this paper describes the relationship of FOMO and social media. When we see social media users' highlight reels, we often experience a "fear of missing out", or "FOMO". FOMO describes the anxiety we feel when it seems that others are having rewarding experiences without us. FOMO isn't exclusive to social media, but browsing social media sets us up for experiencing it. Imagine you're happy to stay home on a Friday night, but when you're scrolling through social media while sitting on the couch, it looks like everyone you know is having a great time. You might feel like you're missing out on the fun. Indeed, people who are very engaged in social media use experience more FOMO

than those who use social media less intensely. FOMO can affect anyone, but certain people are at higher risk for FOMO if they have an underlying mental health condition or have low level of self-esteem. Of course, social media isn't all bad, but it can be particularly harmful if your personal relationship with your body image is in disarray. And in particular, anxiety disorder and depression both lend themselves to experiencing FOMO more frequently and with longer lasting effects.

The idea that you might be missing out on a good time is not new to our era. However, while it has presumably been around for centuries you can see evidence of FOMO in ancient texts it has only been studied during the past few decades, beginning with a 1996 research paper by marketing strategist, Dr. Dan Herman, who coined the term "fear of missing out." Since the advent of social media, however, FOMO has become more obvious and has been studied more often. According to the World Journal of Clinical Cases, the term "fear of missing out" gained traction in 2004. This was the year Facebook launched, one of the first large online spaces where people were able to publicly display their friendships and what they were doing through status updates and photos.

What concerns me is people who are predisposed to emotional disorders like anxiety or depression typically withdraw or avoid situations, and their way of connecting with others may be through social media," notes Dr. Sullivan. "The human experience is all about connection, so we have an innate need to connect. But in the instance of a person with anxiety or depression, the majority of their connection may be through social media."

A 2017 study correlated more daily social media use with a higher chance of having an anxiety disorder. While a 2022 study suggests depressive and anxious symptoms worsen the longer we spend on social media. While social media likely isn't going anywhere anytime soon, how we use it and how often we use it certainly has a direct impact on our ability to experience FOMO.

When we have basic needs that are unmet and we depend on social media use to satisfy those needs, it likely compounds the severity of symptoms we're experiencing. Studies also suggest that FOMO is a negative emotional state resulting from unmet social relatedness needs.

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If you were to open Instagram, Facebook, or your social media platform of choice right now, what would you see? Would you see meaningful updates from your close friends? Most of the time, we see the latter. As you may expect, the onslaught of unachievable exciting lives can affect how we view our own.

Comparing ourselves to other people who seem to be doing better than us (called upward comparison) can make us feel like we don't measure up. Social media amplifies these negative effects, because we're often viewing photos and updates from people we don't know very well in real life. Seeing "highlight reels" from acquaintances or strangers affects us negatively because when we don't know people very well, it's easy to forget that their lives aren't as perfect as they appear on social media. Comparing ourselves to others on social media affects our self-esteem, perceptions of ourselves, depressive symptoms, and mood. These effects are especially strong among people who are more sensitive to social comparisons in general. If you find that you frequently compare yourself to others in your daily life and place a lot of importance on those comparisons, you're at high risk for feeling worse after using social media.

Experiencing FOMO is not only distressing; it may actually be bad for our health. On the days that we experience a lot of FOMO, we're more likely to be in a bad mood, feel fatigued and stressed, and even more likely to have sleep problems and physical symptoms.

A new study investigated the association between FOMO (fear of missing out) and social media use.

- Higher FOMO was associated with more social media use and more problems due to social media use.

- Age and gender did not affect the result

People show considerable differences in their interest in social media and researchers are only beginning to grasp why. Understanding what makes people interested in social media is particularly important in the context of so-called problematic social media use. Problematic social media use occurs if social media use starts to resemble an addiction. For example, if someone is spending so much time on social media that they neglect real-life relationships, or risk their jobs, this can be considered problematic use. Knowing which factors lead to problematic social media use is important for developing psychological strategies to help people who engage in it getting back to a healthy relationship with social media. One concept that has been linked to problematic social media use is FOMO, or “fear of missing out.” FOMO describes the nagging feeling that other people may be experiencing something fun and awesome but that you are missing out on it. It is easy to see why experiencing FOMO has been linked to interest in social media: If someone is afraid that their friends are doing all of these awesome activities without including them, constantly checking their social media feeds to see what they are up to could make sense from this person’s perspective.

A new study (Fioravanti et al., 2021), published in the scientific journal *Computers in Human Behavior*, investigated the link between the individual level of FOMO and social media use, as well as problematic social media. The authors conducted a meta-analysis — a statistical analysis that integrates the results of many different scientific studies. The results were clear: People who showed more FOMO also showed more problematic social media use. The age and gender of the participants in the

included studies did not influence this effect. The team also investigated the relation of FOMO with differences in personality of the tested participants. They found that people who showed high FOMO also were more depressed, anxious, and neurotic than those with lower FOMO. Moreover, high FOMO was linked to a higher fear of negative evaluation. In contrast, people with lower FOMO had a higher level of self-discipline than those with high FOMO.

Out of FOMO come other things like JOMO (the joy of missing out) and ROMO (the reality of missing out). And it’s that reality piece that’s an important part to remember: What you see online is just a sliver of what’s actually happening behind the scenes.

“Most of the time, we’re only seeing half the picture,” clarifies Dr. Sullivan. “We’re not always seeing the reality of what’s happening behind the scenes, and we all have struggles and challenges that we’re faced with. We have to ask ourselves: Are we evaluating a real situation or is this just half the picture?” Using social media has benefits too, such as keeping in touch with friends, expressing ourselves, and getting support from our social networks. So how can we ease the negative effects of social media use on our well-being without losing the benefits of it? Here are some best practices for healthy social media use, based on research:

1. Use social media in moderation. The negative effects of social media often occur when social media is used very frequently, or at the expense of maintaining relationships offline. Social media can be a great tool for connecting with other people. Although we can experience FOMO when we learn about fun events after-the-fact, social media can also be a great way to find out about events we are able to attend. Social media can complement a healthy, fulfilling social life when used in moderation. To reduce your social media use, try using Moment or another activity-tracking Smartphone app to monitor the

time you spend on social media and set realistic goals for reducing your social media time and replacing it with more fulfilling activities.

2. Focus on your friends more than your acquaintances. We can use social media to keep in touch with people who live far away and to see what our friends are doing. Viewing close friends' posts is less likely to provoke the upward social comparison that harms our well-being.

3. Share updates from your own life in a mind full way. Although we know our own

lives aren't perfect, it's often tempting to portray them that way on social media.

It's natural to want to present ourselves positively, and updating our own social media accounts can boost our self-esteem. However, occasionally discussing the less-than -perfect aspects of our lives can help others feel connected to us and give them the opportunity to support us. Honesty on social media may also help mitigate the negative consequences of social media use for others.

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