

The Analysis of FoMO Behavior Based on Levels of Self-Esteem and Self-Concept: A Study among University Students

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to examine FoMO (Fear of Missing Out) behavior based on levels of self-esteem and self-concept among university students. This research is correlational, employing multiple regression analysis. The sample consists of 313 first-year students from the Faculty of Education, Universitas Negeri Padang. The findings indicate that self-esteem among students is in the low category, with a total percentage of 47.4%. Similarly, self-concept is also in the low category, with a total percentage of 45.2%. On the other hand, FoMO among students is in the high category, with a total percentage of 69%. There is a negative and significant relationship between self-esteem and FoMO, as well as between self-concept and FoMO. Additionally, there is a simultaneous relationship between self-esteem, self-concept, and FoMO. The implications of the study suggest that the university needs to design guidance and counseling programs focused on enhancing students' self-esteem and self-concept to prevent the emergence of FoMO.

Keywords: Self-esteem, self-concept, and fear of missing out.

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Introduction

The use of the internet and social media, in general, has dramatically increased in recent years (Ng & Fam, 2024; Ardi, Ildil & Yuca, 2019). According to a survey by the Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association, there are currently 221 million internet users in 2024 and 167 million social media users. This figure is equivalent to 79.5% of Indonesia's total population of 276.4 million people (APJII, 2024).

This is related to the advancements in technology, which bring positive impacts to individuals, but it is also unavoidable that these technological advancements have negative effects (Ardi et al.,

2018), such as decreased study productivity, the emergence of stress and anxiety, and a loss of self-concept (Chashmi et al., 2023). Consequently, feelings of fear and worry about missing out on trends, known as FoMO, arise. Research on FoMO shows it is related to various psychological and behavioral problems, such as causing tremors, excessive anxiety, mood changes, affective disorders (depression, difficulty adapting), and disruptions in social life (Yu et al., 2023).

Digital technological advances, such as smartphones connected to the internet, make it easier for users to access and share information (Ardi & Ade, 2022). However, many people are unable to filter out the good or bad things from the internet, making them vulnerable to negative impacts. The rapid development of technology in today's life has led to an increasing demand for information (Jabeen et al., 2023). Individuals may become more worried if they miss out on some information (Ardi et al., 2018), leading to social anxiety. Most people feel that they have a well-developed social network, which is referred to as fear of missing out, or FoMO (Zhong, 2023).

According to research on FoMO, 56% of people experience FoMO and are worried about missing status updates, news, and important events if they do not browse social media (Pristaliona, Hidayanti & Prasetyaningrum, 2022). At least 27% of individuals check their social media apps upon waking up (Ardi et al., 2021). Additionally, 46% of users suffering from FoMO spend more than 12 hours checking their social media accounts (Wang, Zhang, & Wang, 2024). The phenomenon of FoMO is highly likely to occur among teenagers (Alshakhsi et al., 2023), who are in an active phase of socializing with their peers to establish self-identity and gain acceptance and recognition in their social environment, both in the online world and in the community (Sommanico et al., 2024).

FOMO is a negative impact that arises when this condition leads to feelings of worry (Panggih & Hartini, 2023), anxiety about missing out on information, status updates, news, and important events (Gartner, Fink & Maresch, 2022), or the perception that others may be having valuable experiences that the individual is not (Holte, 2023). High levels of FoMO are associated with heightened emotions and bad behaviors, including stress (Safitri, Sutanto & Fauziah, 2023), maladaptive coping, and risky behavior (Pristaliona, Hidayati & Prasetyaningrum, 2022). The worry and anxiety about missing out on information are often experienced by vulnerable first-year

university students, which can lower their academic quality and lead to further mental health issues (Guo et al., 2022).

Based on the explanation above, one of the factors influencing FoMO among students is self-esteem (Servidio, 2023). Individuals with high self-esteem tend to show an increase (Li et al., 2023) in social media usage aimed at maintaining and protecting their self-worth (Hussain et al., 2024; Tandon et al., 2022), by safeguarding their self-image or personal popularity (Abel et al., 2016). Social media users with low self-esteem tend to spend more time accessing social media (Sarfika et al., 2023). Low self-esteem causes people to feel lonely and isolated from their social environment, leading to FoMO (Astleitner, Bains, & Hormann, 2023). Consequently, individuals may prefer to communicate through social media rather than face-to-face interactions (Williams et al., 2023). Furthermore, FoMO can influence self-concept (Wu et al., 2023). A person with a negative self-concept tends to have a poor view of themselves, feeling that they will always fail and are incapable, whereas someone with a positive self-concept has a favorable view of their situation (Wijayanti & Astiti, 2017).

There are many benefits to improving self-esteem and self-concept among students, including reducing stress symptoms. People with high levels of FoMO tend to have a drive to compare themselves with other social media users and express a desire to stay continuously connected (Eddleston, 2009), which leads to a tendency to constantly update themselves (Jannah & Rosyidiani, 2022), show off their lives (Carolina & Mahestu, 2020), and experience feelings of fear, anxiety, restlessness, or worry (Risdyanti, Faradiba & Aisyah, 2019). This can also result in decreased self-confidence, depression, loneliness, and social exclusion (Narti & Yanto, 2022), as well as reduced productivity and motivation to study (Sianipar & Kaloeti, 2019). In other words, students' ability to cope with difficulties and reduce FoMO can be enhanced by improving self-esteem and self-concept. Given these issues, university guidance and counseling counselors should be proactive in addressing these problems (Ardi & Erlamsyah, 2017).

While the existing literature has explored the relationship between self-esteem, self-concept, and social media usage, there remains a significant gap in understanding how these psychological factors

specifically contribute to FoMO behavior among university students. Previous studies have primarily focused on the individual impact of low self-esteem or negative self-concept on social media usage and psychological well-being, but they often overlook the complex interplay between these factors and how they jointly influence FoMO. Additionally, much of the research has concentrated on general populations or specific demographic groups, leaving a gap in the context-specific understanding of university students, particularly first-year students who may be more vulnerable to FoMO due to their transitional phase into higher education. Furthermore, the implications of these findings for practical applications in guidance and counseling within the university setting have not been thoroughly examined. This study aims to fill these gaps by analyzing FoMO behavior in relation to varying levels of self-esteem and self-concept among university students, offering insights that could inform more targeted and effective counseling interventions.

Method

Design

This study is quantitative research with a correlational design (Santoso & Madiistriyanto, 2021), aiming to examine the extent of the relationship between the research variables using multiple regression analysis techniques.

Participants

The population in this study consists of first-year students from the Faculty of Education, Universitas Negeri Padang, who were actively enrolled during the July-December 2023 semester. The sampling in this study used the Proportional Stratified Random Sampling technique. This technique is employed to randomly select samples from the population members in a proportionally stratified manner because the population members are heterogeneous (not uniform). The sampling process began by identifying the population based on class groups, and then 313 students were randomly selected from this population for the study. Data collection was carried out from March 18, 2024, to April 17, 2024, using a Google Form. Before proceeding with the questionnaire, respondents were required to read the instructions provided at the beginning of the Google Form and then continue to fill out the questionnaire.

Measurement

The researchers prepared a Google Form consisting of three items: a self-esteem scale with 26 items, a self-concept scale with 31 items, and a FoMO scale with 22 items. This study used three scales: the self-esteem scale, the self-concept scale, and the FoMO scale. The instruments used in this study employed a Likert scale model, which is used to measure behavior, opinions, and perceptions of individuals or groups of students regarding events in phenomena. The purpose of these scales is to measure the relationship between self-esteem and self-concept with students' FoMO, aiming to help students position themselves on the continuum of the questions. Each question item is used to express answers that have meaning in testing the hypotheses. This study used a four-point Likert scale (Sugiyono, 2012).

Self-Esteem Scale

This self-esteem scale is used to measure the self-esteem demonstrated by students. The scale consists of 26 items representing four aspects: Power, Significance, Virtue, and Competence. These four aspects are articulated with favorable and unfavorable statements such as "I can control my emotions well when friends disturb me," "I feel sad when friends avoid me without reason," and "I am easily angered in front of others." The reliability estimates of the scale showed good internal consistency with a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.934.

Self-Concept Scale

This self-concept scale is used to measure self-concept. The scale consists of 31 items representing four aspects: self-fulfillment, autonomy, honesty, and emotional adjustment. These four aspects are articulated with favorable and unfavorable statements. Example items on this scale include "I am not satisfied with my current life achievements," "I have not achieved anything I consider important in my life," and "I am proud of how I manage my life." The reliability estimates of the scale showed good internal consistency with a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.950.

FoMO Scale

This FoMO scale is used to measure the fear and anxiety experienced by students when missing out on something new or trending that they see on social media. The scale consists of 22 items

representing three aspects: fear, worry, and anxiety. These dimensions are explained with unfavorable statements. Example items on this scale include "I am afraid of missing out on my friends' latest activities on social media," "If I don't have internet access, I will think of ways to stay connected so I don't miss out on social media trends," and "I feel unhappy knowing that on social media, my friends are at a place I want to visit." The reliability estimates of the scale showed good internal consistency with a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.950.

Data Analysis

This study first conducted Pearson correlation tests to determine the relationships between the research variables. The researchers then conducted classical assumption tests as prerequisites for regression analysis, using normality, linearity, and multicollinearity tests. Additionally, the researchers tested the hypotheses using simple regression and SPSS 23.

Result

Table 1 illustrates the statistics of the research variables. The analysis results show that 47.4% of students have low self-esteem. For the self-concept variable, 45.6% of students fall into the low category, and for the FoMO variable, 69% are in the high category. It can be concluded that the low levels of self-esteem and self-concept may influence FoMO, indicating that students still experience anxiety about missing out on information, status updates, news, and important events, feeling that others are having valuable experiences that they are not, and that they have not yet been able to control these feelings.

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics for Variables

Variabel	Ideal	Max	Min	Total	Mean	%	Ket
Self Esteem	108	101	26	14990	47,9	47,4	R
Self Concept	124	114	31	16064	51,4	45,6	R
FOMO	88	88	33	18955	60,6	69	T

The results of the normality test indicate that the data for self-esteem, self-concept, and fear of missing out are normally distributed ($p > .050$). Additionally, the linearity test results for the relationship between self-esteem, self-concept, and fear of missing out show a linear relationship ($p < .050$). The multicollinearity test results indicate that there is no multicollinearity among the independent variables.

Table 2
Means, Standard Deviations, and Intercorrelations variables

Measure	M	SD	1	2	3
FoMO	60.6	3.3	1.000		
Self esteem	47.9	1.9	.447	1.000	
Self concept	51.4	2.3	-.374	.629	1.000

Table 2 presents the results of the descriptive and correlational analysis among the three variables: FoMO (Fear of Missing Out), Self-esteem, and Self-concept. The average score for FoMO is 60.6, with a standard deviation of 3.3, indicating moderate variation in the level of FoMO among participants. Self-esteem has an average score of 47.9 with a standard deviation of 1.9, while Self-concept has an average score of 51.4 with a standard deviation of 2.3. The correlation results show that FoMO has a positive correlation with Self-esteem ($r = 0.447$), indicating that individuals with higher FoMO tend to have higher Self-esteem, although the correlation is moderate. On the other hand, FoMO is negatively correlated with Self-concept ($r = -0.374$), meaning that an increase in FoMO is associated with a decrease in Self-concept. Meanwhile, Self-esteem and Self-concept exhibit a fairly strong positive correlation ($r = 0.629$), suggesting that individuals with higher Self-esteem tend to have a more positive Self-concept. These findings provide insights into the dynamic

relationships between FoMO, Self-esteem, and Self-concept within the psychological context studied.

Tabel 3

The results of the regression analysis of religiosity and spiritual meaning with cyberbullying behavior

Variable	B	SEB	B	t	p
Self esteem	-.491	.068	-.367	-7.199	.000
Self concept	-.294	.055	-.272	-5.343	.000

Note. $R^2 = .409$ ($N = 152, p = .000$). $F = 57.112$, $df = 2$, $R = .518$, $R^2 = .269$

Table 3 presents the results of the regression analysis evaluating the relationship between the independent variables, Self-esteem and Self-concept, and cyberbullying behavior as the dependent variable. The analysis results indicate that both Self-esteem and Self-concept significantly predict cyberbullying behavior.

Specifically, the regression coefficient (B) for Self-esteem is -0.491 with a standard error (SEB) of 0.068, and a beta value (β) of -0.367. The t-value of -7.199 with a p-value < 0.001 indicates that Self-esteem has a significant negative relationship with cyberbullying behavior. This means that individuals with higher Self-esteem are less likely to engage in cyberbullying behavior.

Similarly, Self-concept has a regression coefficient (B) of -0.294 with a standard error (SEB) of 0.055, and a beta value (β) of -0.272. The t-value for Self-concept is -5.343 with a p-value < 0.001 , indicating that Self-concept also has a significant negative relationship with cyberbullying behavior. This suggests that individuals with a more positive Self-concept are less likely to engage in cyberbullying behavior.

The overall regression model is significant, with an F-value of 57.112, $df = 2$, and a p-value < 0.001 . The coefficient of determination (R^2) is 0.409, indicating that approximately 40.9% of the variability in cyberbullying behavior can be explained by Self-esteem and Self-concept. The correlation coefficient (R) of 0.518 suggests a moderate relationship between the independent variables and cyberbullying behavior. These results indicate that Self-esteem and Self-concept are significant

predictors in reducing cyberbullying behavior, with a substantial contribution to the proposed model.

Discussion

Based on the regression analysis results, it was shown that self-esteem and self-concept simultaneously have a significant negative relationship with students' FoMO. This finding is consistent with Sveningson (2012), which indicated that self-esteem significantly influences adolescents' FoMO, where self-esteem plays a role in predicting the emergence of FoMO. The lower the self-esteem, the higher the level of FoMO, which in turn lowers the individual's self-esteem. Meanwhile, Alfasi (2022) found a significant negative relationship between self-concept and FoMO. The lower the self-concept, the higher the level of FoMO.

Individuals with low self-esteem often feel less confident and rely on external validation, particularly from social interactions on social media. When they feel they are not valuable enough or lack qualities recognized by their social environment, they tend to fear missing out on opportunities to engage in social experiences that others deem important. This is because they view such social engagement as a way to cover up their perceived deficiencies and seek recognition from others. This condition makes them more vulnerable to FoMO, which then affects their mental health and well-being (Barry & Wong, 2020; Servidio, 2023).

On the other hand, an unclear or vague self-concept also plays a role in increasing vulnerability to FoMO. Individuals with a weak self-concept tend to experience confusion in understanding their identity and often compare themselves to others. This social comparison exacerbates feelings of being left out or disconnected from their social circles. In an effort to overcome this uncertainty, they may become increasingly driven to stay connected and keep up with what is happening around them, hoping to affirm their position within the social group. Therefore, low self-esteem and an unclear self-concept reinforce each other in increasing an individual's tendency to experience FoMO, which in turn can negatively impact their psychological well-being (Serrano, 2020).

This study shows that self-esteem and self-concept simultaneously have a significant negative relationship with FoMO (Fear of Missing Out) among students. While these findings provide important insights, there are some limitations to consider. First, the correlational nature of this study does not allow for conclusions about causality between self-esteem, self-concept, and FoMO. Additionally, other variables that were not accounted for, such as environmental, social, or psychological factors, may also influence FoMO but were not analyzed in this study. Furthermore, since the data was collected through self-report, this may introduce social desirability bias, where respondents might provide answers they consider more socially acceptable. Finally, the generalization of these results may be limited to certain student populations and may not be universally applicable.

Conclusion

This research demonstrates a negative relationship between self-esteem and self-concept with students' FoMO. It can be concluded that students with low self-esteem and self-concept are more likely to exhibit FoMO behavior in their lives, while students with high self-esteem and self-concept are better able to avoid FoMO behavior.

Given the significant negative relationship between self-esteem and self-concept with FoMO among students, it is recommended to develop intervention programs aimed at enhancing self-esteem and strengthening self-concept among students. Such programs could help reduce the levels of FoMO, which can have a positive impact on students' psychological well-being. The implications of this research highlight the importance of understanding the cognitive role of individuals in managing feelings of missing out or social anxiety, often triggered by social media. Educational institutions and policymakers can use these findings to design more holistic support policies and services that not only focus on academic aspects but also on the psychosocial development of students, creating a healthier and more supportive learning environment.

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Conflict of Interest

The researchers declare that this paper has no conflicts of interest.

Author Contribution

All authors have contributed equally to the study's conceptualization, interpreting data, reviewing, and editing the manuscript.

Data Availability

Data can be provided upon request to the author.

Declarations Ethical Statement

The study followed the guidelines of the Declaration of Helsinki.

Informed Consent Statement

Informed consent was obtained from all persons involved in the study.

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