

Fear of Missing out and Psychological Well-Being among Undergraduate University Students Who are Working on Thesis in Indonesia

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Abstract. This study attempts to establish a link between the fear of missing out (FoMO) and the level of psychological well-being among undergraduate university students in Indonesia who are actively involved in their thesis work. The study encompassed 423 participating students during their thesis writing process. The Psychological-Wellbeing Scale (PWBS) developed by Putra was employed to assess psychological well-being, while the measurement of fear of missing out relied on The Fear of Missing Out Scale, developed by Przybylski. Both scales underwent professional translation into Indonesian. The analysis of the data was conducted using the Pearson Correlation method. The study reveals a fascinating negative correlation between FOMO and psychological well-being ($p = 0.000$, $r = -0.423$). This outcome underscores the connection between high levels of FoMO among undergraduate university students working on their theses and lower levels of psychological well-being, and vice versa.

Keywords: *Fear Of Missing Out (FoMO), Final Year, Psychological Well-Being, Social Media, Undergraduate University Student.*

1 Introduction

Psychological well-being is a person's ability to recognize and develop themselves by their potential [23]. In general, psychological well-being can be defined as a condition in which individuals positively perceive themselves and can face life's challenges well [21]. The conclusion that can be drawn is that psychological well-being is a condition where individuals fill their lives meaningfully and purposefully so that they can function optimally in living their lives.

Ryff [22] mentions six characteristics of individuals with good psychological well-being. They can accept themselves and build positive relationships with others. They make choices based on personal values and goals, have meaningful life goals, and continue to grow and develop. They can also control themselves and manage the demands of daily life. Individuals with these characteristics are considered to have good psychological well-being.

The concept of psychological well-being is the dream of every individual, including final-year students. However, contrary to the concept of psychological well-being, based on the results of research by Aulia & Panjaitan[4] found that 47.2% of final-year students had a low level of psychological well-being. Meanwhile, other research by Ningrum et al.[17] also stated that

47% of final-year students had low psychological well-being. Final-year students will face greater demands, namely having the obligation to complete the final project or thesis. Many final-year students feel burdened and experience difficulties in completing the thesis. Interviews with several students also revealed that the final thesis assignment was considered a stressful job [28].

All these difficulties can cause high-stress levels in students [28]. The news about a final-year student with the initials RWP in Jatinangor who died by suicide on Christmas 2018, which is believed to be the cause of stress and depression while working on an unfinished thesis. It was found again in a final-year student with the initials MMM in Medan who died hanging himself due to the stress of his thesis not being accepted by the campus. Another study on final-year students at Riau University revealed that 35% experienced depression due to thesis preparation [14].

Supporting data for the case was also obtained from the researcher's interview with a subject with the initials DPS, who is completing her thesis as a final-year student. The interview results showed that the subject had behaviors that showed low psychological well-being, the symptoms of which the subject constantly felt anxiety, worry, and stress while working on the thesis. The subject admitted to being under pressure from his extended family, which made him feel negative emotions and could not deal with them appropriately. SUBJEK also has low confidence in completing thesis writing. Finally, the subject felt he did not have a clear and purposeful goal of what he wanted to do after graduating from college.

Several studies correlate psychological well-being with various variables such as social support [2], personality [12], social status [10], social media use [30], and anxiety [16]. An anxiety-related phenomenon is a fear of missing out (FoMO). This research will focus on this anxiety phenomenon because FoMO is one of the signs of a person's low psychological well-being [7]. Research suggests high FoMO leads to poor emotional levels, poor environmental mastery, and negative interpersonal interactions[3].

The fear of missing out as a phenomenon characterized by a desire to stay connected to what others are doing and a great fear that others may have valuable experiences that they do not have[18]. Meanwhile, according to Abel et al. [1], FoMO is a feeling of irritability, anxiety, and inability, which tends to worsen when someone plays on social media. The conclusion that can be drawn is that fear of missing out is a form of anxiety of feeling "left behind" if someone chooses not to participate in certain activities. The idea that others are having fun, enjoying a better life, or having more excellent experiences is at the core of the fear of missing out.

Symptoms of the fear of missing out phenomenon are characterized by anxiety behavior and a strong urge to use social media when offline. Individuals who have high levels of fear of missing out have a solid need to stay online and not miss news and receive messages on social media passively or actively because of their fear of missing out on conversations in social circles, valuable events, and valuable activities that are considered attractive [29]. Higher levels of FoMO are associated with lower life satisfaction, happiness, and purpose. In addition, this study found that FoMO was positively associated with symptoms of anxiety and depression, suggesting that it may hurt mental health [7]

Several studies have examined the relationship between the fear of missing out phenomenon and psychological well-being, [20,25,27]Some of the results of research conducted show that

FoMO is negatively related to a person's psychological well-being. Azizah [5] revealed that final-year students play social media to reduce tension when working on a thesis; however, students find it difficult to escape from the use of social media, which affects the pending thesis work process and results in levels of even higher stress or anxiety due to not completing the thesis and leads to lower psychological well-being.

Based on the review of the research results above, it can be concluded that several studies discuss the relationship between fear of missing out and psychological well-being with various criteria for respondents. Therefore, the author is interested in researching the relationship between fear of missing out and psychological well-being in undergraduate university students working on their thesis.

2 Literature Review

2.1 Psychological well-being

Psychological well-being is defined as a person's ability to recognize and develop themselves following their potential [23]. In general, psychological well-being can be defined as a condition in which individuals positively perceive themselves and can face life's challenges well [21]. The conclusion that can be drawn is that psychological well-being is a condition where individuals fill their lives meaningfully and purposefully so that they can function optimally in living their lives.

Psychological well-being consists of six dimensions, including autonomy, which refers to an individual's capacity for independence and problem-solving; personal growth, the capacity to develop one's potential in a more positive direction; purpose in life, the ability to establish goals, visions, and missions; self-acceptance, maintaining a positive self-view; environmental mastery, the aptitude for seizing opportunities in one's surroundings; and positive relations with others, the skill of cultivating warm interpersonal connections. Furthermore, factors influencing psychological well-being include age, gender, personality, social support, social status, social media use, and fear of missing out [23,12,2,10, 30,18]

2.2 Fear of missing out (FoMO)

Fear of missing out (FoMO) as defined by Przybylski et al. [18], refers to the unease and nervousness individuals feel when they see others partaking in meaningful experiences or activities from which they are excluded. FoMO arises when people's fundamental needs for competence, autonomy, and interpersonal connection remain unmet. Furthermore, in the current era, information of all kinds is readily accessible and widely shared via social media. When individuals continually strive to maintain online connections with others, they become susceptible to experiencing FOMO[18]

3 Method

A quantitative methodology is utilized in this research, employing a correlational research design. Correlational research is applied to explore the connection between variables. The variables under investigation in this study encompass psychological well-being and the fear of missing out (FOMO). The study's participants consist of Indonesian students actively engaged in their thesis work, with a total sample size of 423 students.

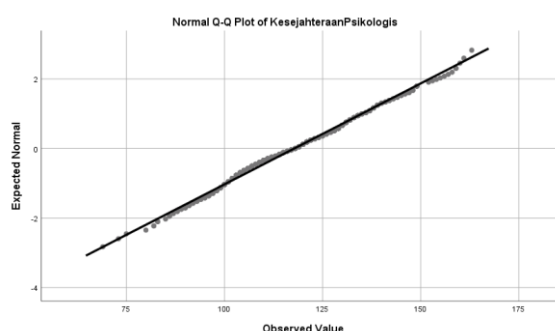
The psychological well-being scale used in this study is the Psychological Well-Being scale (PWBs) by [23], which consists of thirty-six items and six dimensions, namely autonomy, personal growth, purpose in life, self-acceptance, environmental mastery, and positive relations with others. This scale has been adapted into Bahasa by Putra [19]. The reliability of this scale is shown through a Cronbach alpha value of 0.91 and is multi-dimensional. The fear of missing out scale used in this study is the Fear of Missing Out scale (FoMOs) by Przybylski et al. [18], which consists of ten items and has been adapted into Bahasa by researchers and tested with Indonesian respondents. The reliability of this scale is shown through a Cronbach alpha value of 0.82 and is unidimensional.

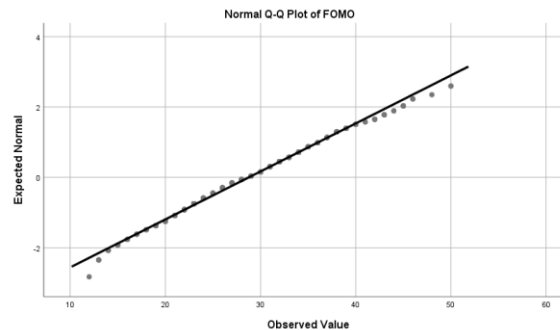
Data were collected online using Google Forms. The data analysis method employed in this study is the Pearson Correlation technique, conducted using the IBM SPSS Statistic for Windows version 25.

4 Result

The normality test uses decision-making based on the distribution of Q-Q Plots. Data distribution is expected if the data is spread around the line or the points are narrowly spaced around the line (Loy et al., 2016). When the data distribution is normal, decision-making can apply to the entire population; otherwise, it does not apply. The results of the normality test are presented in **Figure 1**.

Figure 1. Normality Test Results from Psychological Well-Being and Fear of Missing Out





Based on the Q-Q Plot normality results, the points are narrowly spaced around the line, so it can be concluded that the data follows a normal distribution.

This study tested linearity using the Compare Means technique. This test determines whether the relationship between the two variables is linear. If the significance number on linearity is below 0.05 ($p < 0.05$), then the data can be considered linear. The results of the linearity test are presented in **Table 1**.

Table 1. Linearity Test Results

Variables	F	Sig.	Description
FoMO and Psychological Well-Being	1.037	0.000	Linear

In this linearity test, the significance number in linearity is 0.000 ($p < 0.05$), and the calculated F is 1.037, meaning that the two variables have a linear relationship or are in a straight line. If the significance number is $p < 0.05$, the study can be continued to test the hypothesis.

After conducting a normality test and linearity test, it was found that the data results on the fear of missing out and psychological well-being variables were normally distributed and linear. Then, testing the hypothesis of this study using the Pearson Correlation parametric test technique. The **Table 2** shows the results of the research hypothesis test.

Table 2. Correlation Test Results Fear of Missing Out and Psychological Well-Being

Variables	r	r ²	P	Description
FoMO and Psychological Well-Being	-0.423	0.179	0.000	Significant

The results of hypothesis testing show that the variable's psychological well-being and fear of missing out have a correlation coefficient of -0.423 with a significance value of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$), meaning a significant negative relationship exists between the two variables. Thus, the hypothesis is acceptable. The coefficient of determination (r^2) is 0.179, meaning that the fear of missing out variable affects the psychological well-being variable, with a contribution of 17.9%.

In addition, researchers also conducted additional analysis in the form of correlation tests of the fear of missing out variable on the dimensions of the psychological well-being variable, difference tests based on gender and durations of playing social media, and partial correlation

tests based on gender. The results of the correlation analysis of each dimension are described in **Table 3**.

Table 3. Correlation Test Results Fear of Missing Out and Dimensions of Psychological Well-Being

Dimensions	r	r²	p
FoMO and Autonomy	-0.224	0.050	0.000
FoMO and Self-acceptance	-0.404	0.163	0.000
FoMO and purpose in life	-0.410	0.168	0.000
FoMO and Positive relations with others	-0.330	0.109	0.000
FoMO and Environmental mastery	-0.237	0.056	0.000
FoMO and Personal growth	-0.266	0.071	0.000

Based on the results of the correlation test conducted, it show that the fear of missing out variable correlates with all dimensions of the psychological well-being variable. These results indicate a significant correlation with a negative direction in the fear of missing out variable and all dimensions of the psychological well-being variable. The results of the correlation analysis regarding gender differences are presented in **Table 4**.

Table 4. Correlation Test Based on Genders

Genders	R	r²	P
Male	-0.563	0.317	0.000
Female	-0.407	0.166	0.000

The results of the analysis showed a value of $r = -0.563$ with $p = 0.000$ ($p < 0.05$) for the male sex and a value of $r = -0.407$ with $p = 0.000$ ($p < 0.05$) for the female sex, meaning that the relationship between the variable fear of missing out and the variable of psychological well-being based on gender correlated significantly and negatively. The results of different tests based on gender differences are presented in **Table 5**.

Table 5. Differential Test Results Based on Gender

Variables	Gender	Mean	F	p
Fear of Missing Out	Male	29.32	1.303	0.531
	Female	28.67		
Psychological Well-Being	Male	120.72	0.065	0.162
	Female	117.32		

Based on the results of the gender difference test analysis, the results of the level of difference in both the fear of missing out and psychological well-being variables between respondents with male and female gender show that there is no significant difference, as seen from the significance results for fear of missing out 0.531 ($p > 0.05$) and psychological well-being 0.162 ($p > 0.05$). The results of different tests based on the duration of playing social media are presented in **Table 6**.

Table 6. Differential Test Results Based on Durations of Playing social media

Variables	Duration of Playing social media	Mean	p
Psychological Well-Being	< 5 hours	120.12	0.026
	> 5 hours	123.88	
Fear of Missing Out	< 5 hours	27.98	0.000
	> 5 hours	30.62	

The results of the difference test prove that there is a significance value of $p = 0.026$ ($p < 0.05$) for the psychological well-being variable and a significance value of $p = 0.000$ ($p < 0.05$) for the fear of missing out variable. Thus, a significant difference exists between the fear of missing out and psychological well-being with the duration of playing social media. The results of moderation analysis with the Duration of Playing Social Media as a moderation variable showed $R = 0.526$; R Square = 0.267 ; $p = 0.000$. When viewed from the R square value, it can be concluded that the duration of playing social media can influence the relationship between Fear of Missing Out and Psychological Well-being by 26.7%.

5 Discussion

This study explored the association between fear of missing out (FoMO) and psychological well-being in undergraduate university students engaged in their thesis work in Indonesia. The analysis results revealed a negative correlation between the fear of missing out and the psychological well-being of these undergraduate students, meaning that as FoMO levels increased, psychological well-being among students decreased, and vice versa. This finding is in line with previous research that has also identified a significant negative relationship between FoMO and psychological well-being, suggesting that an increase in FoMO leads to a decrease in an individual's psychological well-being and vice versa [27,25,26].

The intercorrelation results show a difference in correlation between each dimension of psychological well-being and fear of missing out. Based on the correlations found, it is known that the most influential dimension in FoMO is the purpose in life dimension. FoMO has a negative and significant relationship with the dimension of purpose in life, where individuals who have high FoMO tend to lose direction and clear life goals. This finding is in line with the research of Przybylski et al. [18] which states that individuals with FoMO have low satisfaction in meeting their basic psychological needs. Therefore, they focus more on fulfilling these needs than developing more significant life goals.

Furthermore, FoMO has a negative and significant relationship with the self-acceptance dimension, in line with the results of Beyens et al. [7], which shows that people with FoMO experience anxiety and difficulty accepting themselves. Individuals with high levels of FoMO feel anxious and worried about other people's activities, feeling that other people's activities and possessions are more enjoyable than they experience. Therefore, individuals with high FoMO tend not to feel satisfied with themselves and desire to be someone else.

Researchers also conducted differential tests based on gender; the results of the difference in both fear of missing out and psychological well-being between male and female genders showed no difference. The reason is that the difference in the number of male and female respondents is too far and uneven. Research conducted by Gezgin et al. [11] also found that a person's FOMO experience is not influenced by gender. This research also aligns with Salleh & Mustaffa [24], who state that there is no difference in psychological well-being between males and females.

The researcher then added a different regression test based on the duration of social media playing. The results showed a significant difference between the duration of playing social media with the variable fear of missing out and psychological well-being with an effect of 26.7%. The results showed a significant difference: a more extended level of social media use will affect an individual's more excellent FoMO experience. Individuals with more significant FoMO tend to spend more time on social media platforms to stay connected so as not to miss the events that occur on social media [18]. Another study found that excessive social media engagement harms psychological well-being. They found when students intentionally reduced or refrained from using social media for a significant period, they reported an improvement in their mental health for the better [13].

Students who are in their final year of studies are those who are writing their undergraduate thesis, usually in the seventh (seventh) semester or fourth (fourth) year of study [4]. Due to the many challenges, the academic burden of completing a thesis may be a factor that triggers stress for final-year students. Revealed that final-year students play social media to reduce tension when working on their thesis; however, students find it difficult to escape from the use of social media, which affects the pending thesis work process and results in levels of even higher stress or anxiety due to not completing the thesis and leads to lower psychological well-being[5].

Several studies consistently show that social media usage mediates psychological well-being and fear of missing out. Specifically, these studies reveal that lower levels of psychological well-being are associated with higher levels of FOMO [18,31]. Additionally, research by Baker et al. [6] demonstrates that students at ethnically diverse universities exhibit a positive relationship between FoMO and the time spent on social media. People who experience FoMO tend to feel the constant need to access the internet, making them more susceptible to social media addiction. Consequently, students addicted to social media due to the fear of missing out may experience adverse effects on their psychological well-being and mental health.

Additionally, a regression analysis was performed to assess how much fear of missing out impacts psychological well-being. The results indicated that FoMO accounts for 17.9% of the variance in psychological well-being among Indonesian students working on their theses, with the remaining 82.1% being influenced by other factors. This finding aligns with research, which found that FoMO is one of the factors that can influence an individual's psychological well-being [18].

Overall, this research still has shortcomings in its implementation. Researchers assume that the data distribution process is less even and accurate because it is collected from social media. Therefore, the data collection process cannot be directly supervised and controlled when

respondents fill out the scale. Another drawback is that researchers lack a proportion of male and female participants.

6 Conclusion

According to the results of the study, it was concluded that there is a negative relationship between fear of missing out and psychological well-being among undergraduate university students working on their thesis in Indonesia. That is, the lower the fear of missing out score in final year students, the higher the psychological well-being score, and vice versa. This study also revealed a difference in the levels of FOMO and psychological well-being among students working on their thesis when they use social media for more than five hours.

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