The Correlation among Social Media Addiction, Loneliness and Fear of Missing Out: A Psychoeducation Program Implementation Proposal

La correlación entre la adicción a las redes sociales, la soledad y el miedo a perderse algo: Una propuesta de implementación de un programa de psicoeducación

Ayşen Kovan
Atatürk University
Erzurum, Turkey
ayseen26@hotmail.com
https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4702-2675

¿Cómo citar este artículo?

ABSTRACT

This study aimed to examine the correlations between social media addiction, loneliness and fear of missing out (FOMO) among university students in Turkey. The sample group of this cross-sectional study consisted of a total of 466 students comprised 239 males (51%) and 227 females (49%), of which 83 were freshmen, 131 were sophomores, 98 were juniors, and 154 were senior students. Data collection employed an online survey incorporating the Social Media Addiction Scale, UCLA-Loneliness Scale, and Fear of Missing Out Scale. Results indicated a positive correlation between social media addiction and loneliness, with fear of missing out serving as a mediator in this relationship. The study's implications were examined through the lens of Self-Determination Theory, shedding light on its impact on students' psychological needs. The findings underscored the importance of developing tailored psychoeducational programs to support students in managing their social media usage and enhancing their emotional well-being. Such initiatives hold significance in fostering students' awareness of healthy social media habits and promoting overall well-being. Additionally, the study offers valuable insights for informing policies, interventions, and practices aimed at cultivating healthier social media behaviors and enhancing societal well-being in contemporary contexts.

KEYWORDS: Social Media, Social Media Addiction, Loneliness, Fear of Missing Out, University Students.

RESUMEN

Este estudio tenía como objetivo examinar las relaciones entre la adicción a los medios sociales, la soledad y el miedo a perderse algo entre las personas estudiantes universitarias de Turquía. El grupo de muestra de este estudio transversal consistió en un total de 466 estudiantes, compuestos por 239 hombres (51%) y 227 mujeres (49%), de los cuales 83 eran de primer año, 131 de segundo año, 98 de tercer año y 154 eran estudiantes de último año. Se utilizó una encuesta en línea para la recopilación de datos, que incluía los siguientes cuestionarios: Escala de Adicción a las Redes Sociales, UCLA-Loneliness y Escala de Miedo a Perderse Algo. El estudio demostró que existe una relación positiva entre la adicción a las redes sociales y la soledad, y que el miedo a perderse algo media en esta relación. Los resultados se evaluaron en el contexto de la teoría de la autodeterminación y contribuyeron a nuestra comprensión del impacto de estas relaciones en las necesidades psicológicas de los individuos. Según las conclusiones, el desarrollo de programas psicoeducativos prácticos adaptados a las personas estudiantes, como en este estudio, e incluso la elaboración de estudios piloto, puede ayudarles a gestionar conscientemente su uso de los medios sociales y mejorar su bienestar emocional. Esto es muy importante para aumentar la concienciación de las personas estudiantes sobre el uso de las redes sociales y promover hábitos más saludables. Además, los conocimientos adquiridos pueden

proporcionar información para políticas, intervenciones y prácticas destinadas a promover comportamientos más saludables en el uso de las redes sociales y mejorar el bienestar de las personas en la sociedad contemporánea.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Redes sociales, Adicción a las redes sociales, Soledad, Miedo a perderse algo, Estudiantes universitarios.

INTRODUCTION

Throughout their educational journey, students often challange with loneliness, defined as the absence of desired social connections and meaningful relationships are important for fulfilling emotional, social, or psychological needs. This phenomenon can arise from various factors, including social isolation, inadequate social support, or personal tendencies (O'Day & Heimberg, 2021), alongside challenges such as academic struggles (McIntyre et al., 2018), deficits in social skills, and difficulties in navigating new environments and friendships (Ashori & Shamsi, 2023). Moreover, technological immersion, rigorous academic demands, and familial detachment have emerged as notable contributors to students' experiences of loneliness (Lee & Goldstein, 2016). This sense of isolation may also stem from diverse circumstances, including adjustment to new social environments, academic pressures, demanding course loads, and inter-student competition (Hako et al., 2023). Addressing these multifaceted factors is crucial for fostering student well-being. Besides, the widespread engagement with social media and the subsequent decline in face-to-face interactions profoundly affect students' ability to establish genuine personal bonds, potentially exacerbating feelings of loneliness.

Social Media Addiction and Loneliness

Social media addiction (SMA) refers to a condition wherein individuals spend excessive and uncontrolled time on digital platforms, often becoming addicted to online interactions and constantly focusing on social media content. This addiction is characterized by its negative impact on daily functioning and social relationships (Hou et al., 2019). It can reduce real-world interactions, affect self-esteem, and have adverse effects on emotional well-being (Brooks, 2015). According to Brown & Kuss (2020), addictive patterns of social media use can develop due to desires for validation, constant information consumption, and immersion in the digital world. It is necessity to recognize this issue and take steps to manage social media usage effectively.

When examining the effects of SMA on university students and its associated problems, it becomes evident that this addiction negatively affects academic performance (Cao et al., 2018). Students often struggle to focus during study sessions due to extended periods spent on social media, hindering their academic success (Malik et al., 2020). Besides, excessive digital interactions can lead to health issues such as sleep disturbances and fatigue, further impacting students' overall well-being (Tandon

et al., 2020). Furthermore, SMA may substitute face-to-face social interactions, resulting in heightened feelings of isolation among students (Yavich et al., 2019). Virtual interactions replacing personal connections can impede the development of deep and meaningful relationships (Kovan, 2022), consequently contributing to psychological issues like stress, anxiety, and depression.

Literature examining the correlation between SMA and loneliness indicates a strong correlation between these variables. Studies suggest that as SMA increases, feelings of loneliness also escalate (Kovan & Ormancı, 2021). Virtual interactions on social media platforms can negatively affect real-world social connections, with individuals prioritizing online interactions over face-to-face engagement (Aslan, 2023). This shift can exacerbate loneliness by diminishing meaningful connections between individuals. Moreover, frequent comparison with others on social media can intensify feelings of inadequacy, further reinforcing loneliness.

Self-Determination Theory (SDT) aims to elucidate individual behavior by emphasizing motivation to fulfill basic psychological needs such as relatedness, autonomy, and competence (Deci & Ryan, 2008). Examining the correlation between social media use and loneliness in students through the lens of SDT can provide insights into the impact of social media on their psychological needs (Koç et al., 2023). For example, SMA can divert individuals from real-world social connections, particularly impacting their need for autonomy (Chen et al., 2023). Time spent in the virtual world may hinder students' ability to connect and engage socially, contributing to increased feelings of loneliness. Moreover, constant social comparisons on social media platforms can reinforce feelings of inadequacy by prompting students to compare their achievements and social status with others (Burnell et al., 2019). Understanding these interactions between SMA and loneliness in the context of SDT can deepen comprehension of their complexities among university students.

Investigating the correlation between social media usage and loneliness among students holds significant potential for shedding light on important aspects of their daily lives and psychosocial health. This research can enhance understanding of students' social media habits in the digital age and their impact on loneliness. Studies have demonstrated that social media can influence the dynamics of social interaction among students, potentially heightening or alleviating loneliness. By discerning the connections between digital connections and loneliness, strategies can be devised to assist young adults in managing their social media use (Curran et al., 2023). Examining SMA and loneliness in university students can thus aid in developing effective interventions to foster healthier digital habits at both individual and societal levels.

Mediating Role of FoMO between SMA and Loneliness

Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) is a phenomenon describing the anxiety experienced by social media users when they perceive potential exclusion from online activities, experiences, or social interactions

shared on digital platforms. Individuals witnessing posts on social media may interpret them as part of social or entertaining activities, leading to anxiety about being disconnected from their social circles (Przybylski et al., 2013). FoMO, exacerbated by the constant accessibility and sharing features of social media, underscores individuals' desire to maintain social connections and acceptance. However, excessive social media use can disrupt psychosocial dynamics and negatively impact psychological and social well-being (Buodo et al., 2023). Understanding FoMO is an important for comprehending social interactions in the digital age, evaluating its effects on social perceptions and experiences, and assisting individuals in managing their social media use consciously.

The impact of FoMO on students can be profound, particularly concerning psychosocial effects. Students may experience FoMO while monitoring peers' posts on social media platforms, fearing exclusion if they do not participate (Arifiani & Mahanani, 2023). This pressure on social connections among students can affect academic performance (Franchina et al., 2018). The prevalence of FoMO, coupled with social competition and frequent self-comparison among students, may detrimentally affect emotional well-being, leading to psychological problems such as stress and anxiety (Jabeen et al., 2023). Moreover, students heavily engaged in digital interactions may reduce real-world social interactions, thereby increasing feelings of loneliness (Tandoc Jr et al., 2023).

SMA can influence individuals' need for autonomy, leading to excessive dependence on online interactions (Liang et al., 2023). This dependency can trigger FoMO in individuals constantly comparing themselves to others on social media, thereby impacting their autonomy need. Excessive social connection efforts can further diminish autonomy by reducing real-world interactions. Besides, prolonged social media use can impede the development of real-life skills, hindering individuals' sense of competence and making it challenging for them to feel competent offline (Parent, 2023). Viewed through the lens of SDT, SMA and FoMO can form a reinforcing network that affects individuals' fundamental psychological needs, making it difficult to balance social media usage, enhance intrinsic motivation, and cultivate healthy social connections (Li et al., 2023).

Conversely, FoMO revolves around social connections and interactions, influencing the need for connection and prompting constant self-comparison on social media (Schmuck et al., 2019). This increased focus on digital activities may lead individuals to distance themselves from real-world connections, thereby exacerbating loneliness. FoMO can trigger feelings of loneliness when individuals attempt to fulfill their need for connection in the digital environment (Arifiani & Mahanani, 2023). From an SDT perspective, understanding the correlation between these variables provides insights into maintaining healthy social connections and balancing digital and real-world interactions.

Research indicates that as social media usage increases, individuals experience higher levels of FoMO, driven by a desire to remain constantly engaged in online interactions (Tang et al., 2023).

This finding suggests that social media addicts tend to incessantly compare themselves with others, viewing social media usage as a means of strengthening their social connections through increased online interactions. Moreover, research indicates a positive correlation between FoMO and loneliness, with individuals experiencing FoMO tending to report heightened feelings of loneliness (Tang et al., 2023). FoMO's constant preoccupation with others' social media activities can lead individuals to neglect real-world interactions, exacerbating feelings of loneliness. Balancing digital and real-world interactions can be challenging due to conflicting desires to strengthen social connections and engage in constant digital interactions (Tang et al., 2023), potentially resulting in difficulties in maintaining real-world social connections and increased loneliness.

Literature suggests that experiencing FoMO is associated with increased loneliness during social media use (Mao et al., 2023), underscoring the need to understand dynamics shaping individuals' social connections in the digital age and assessing their impact on psychosocial well-being. Furthermore, understanding the correlation between FoMO and loneliness can inform the development of strategies to manage digital media usage and design effective interventions to enhance individuals' social well-being. This study lays a foundation for future research aiming to assist students in building healthy connections and improving their emotional well-being in the digital world. The research questions for the aim of the study are formulated below:

RQ1. Is there a positive correlation between SMA and loneliness?

RQ2. Is there a positive correlation between FoMO and SMA?

RQ3. Is there a positive correlation between FoMO and loneliness?

RQ4. Does FoMO mediate the correlation between SMA and loneliness?

This study aimed to investigate the correlation between SMA and loneliness, with a focus on examining the mediating role FoMO. It hypothesized that mediation analysis could provide a more nuanced understanding of the relationship between these variables. Furthermore, the analysis aimed to elucidate the influence of students' social media usage on their emotional and social well-being and to develop effective intervention strategies. The study is structured into the following main sections:

METHODS

Design and Procedure

To streamline the research process and facilitate data collection among university students, convenience sampling was chosen as the preferred method (Etikan & Bala, 2017). This approach allowed for the inclusion of a diverse array of university students representing various disciplines and demographics, thereby enabling the research to capture a broad spectrum of perspectives aligned with its aim. The inclusion criteria for sample selection encompassed students enrolled in state universities

across Turkey. Conversely, exclusion criteria were applied to students enrolled in universities outside Turkey or those affiliated with private or foundation institutions. Furthermore, data from participants with incomplete or inaccurately filled-out scales were omitted from the study. Further, student groups falling outside the defined sample parameters or failing to meet the stipulated sampling criteria were excluded from the research.

Recruitment for the study was conducted through an online questionnaire administered via Google Forms, which was distributed across various social media platforms to attract potential participants. Prior to participation, individuals were provided with detailed information consistent with ethical guidelines. These informational briefings aimed to ensure participants' comprehensive understanding of the research objectives, procedures, and privacy protocols, thus promoting voluntary engagement. It is noteworthy that certain undergraduate programs in Turkey faced limited availability during the fall semester of 2022-23. The research protocol received approval from the Ethics Committee (No. 012), and data collection occurred between the months of January and April 2023.

A total of 489 scales were distributed, out of which 23 were excluded due to incompleteness. Consequently, the final sample comprised 466 students, consisting of 239 males (51%) and 227 females (49%). Among these, 83 students were freshmen, 131 were sophomores, 98 were juniors, and 154 were seniors. Interestingly, the majority of participants reported spending an average of 2-3 hours per day on social media (45%), with none reporting usage of 0-1 hour per day. The primary purposes cited for social media usage included chatting (53%), watching movies, videos, and listening to music (20%), while only 9% reported using social media for academic purposes. Further demographic details of the participants are presented in Table 1.

Table 1.

Demographics

		n	%
Gender	Female	227	48.7
	Male	239	51.3
Grade	Freshman	83	17.8
	Sophomore	131	28.1
	Junior	98	21
	Senior	154	33
Daily SM usage	Less than 2 hours	-	-
	2-3 hours	130	27.9
	4-5 hours	212	45.5
	6 hours and above	124	26.6

	Following agenda	82	17.6
SM usage purpose	Chat	249	53.4
	Movies/videos/music	92	19.7
		43	9.2

Source: Own elaboration.

Measures

The Social Media Addiction Scale (SMAS) was developed by adapting the Internet Addiction Scale, with a specific emphasis on assessing impairment in functionality associated with social media addiction (Çömlekçi & Başol, 2019). Consisting of seven items (e.g., *Due to my use of social media, I neglect my responsibilities at home/work/school and spend less time with my friends*), the SMAS employs a five-point Likert scale. A higher score on the scale indicates a greater degree of social media dependency. The Cronbach's α coefficient for the SMAS was determined to be .85, while for the current study, it was .88.

The UCLA-Loneliness Scale (UCLA-LS) was originally developed by Russell and colleagues, and later reexamined by Russell, Peplau, and Cutrona to address potential systematic biases in negative statements. In the Turkish adaptation study utilized for this research, the scale comprised 20 items (e.g., *I feel myself in harmony with other people in the environment*), utilizing a four-point Likert scale (Demir, 1989). Each item presented individuals with feelings and thoughts pertaining to social relations, prompting them to indicate the frequency of their experiences. A higher score on the scale indicates a greater level of loneliness. In the adaptation study, the Cronbach's α coefficient for internal consistency was calculated as .96, while the test-retest reliability coefficient of the scale was .94 (Demir, 1989). Furthermore, the scale demonstrates robust internal consistency, as evidenced by a Cronbach's α value of .84 for this study.

The Fear of Missing Out Scale (FoMOS), developed by Przybylski et al. (2013), comprises 10 items (e.g., *I fear that others are having experiences that are more fulfilling than mine*), each rated on a five-point Likert scale. Higher scores on the scale indicate a greater level of perceived FoMO. Gökler et al. (2016) conducted Turkish validity and reliability studies, determining the Cronbach's α coefficient of the scale to be .81. The item total score correlation values exceeded .30, indicating satisfactory scale reliability. In addition to that, the test-retest reliability values of the scale were found to be high ($r = .813$, $p < .001$). In the context of this study, the reliability analysis yielded a Cronbach's α value of .78, indicating acceptable internal consistency.

Statistical Analyses

Prior to initiating the analysis, data normality was assessed by examining skewness and kurtosis values of the variables, which fell within the range of ±1.5, aligning with the criteria for normality

assumption (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). Subsequently, the correlations between the variables were explored using Pearson correlation coefficient.

Mediation analysis was performed to explore the correlation FoMO, SMA, and loneliness using the Macro Process (v4.3). This analysis entailed testing the mediating correlation with bootstrap confidence intervals (CIs) for the indirect effect, specifically examining whether FoMO, serving as the mediating variable, influences the strength of the correlation between the independent variable (SMA) and the dependent variable (loneliness). The bootstrap technique was utilized to generate CIs, with the number of resampling increased to 10,000 to enhance statistical robustness. The absence of zero within the bootstrap CIs indicated significance of the tested model ($p < .05$).

RESULTS

Figure 1.

Mediation Model
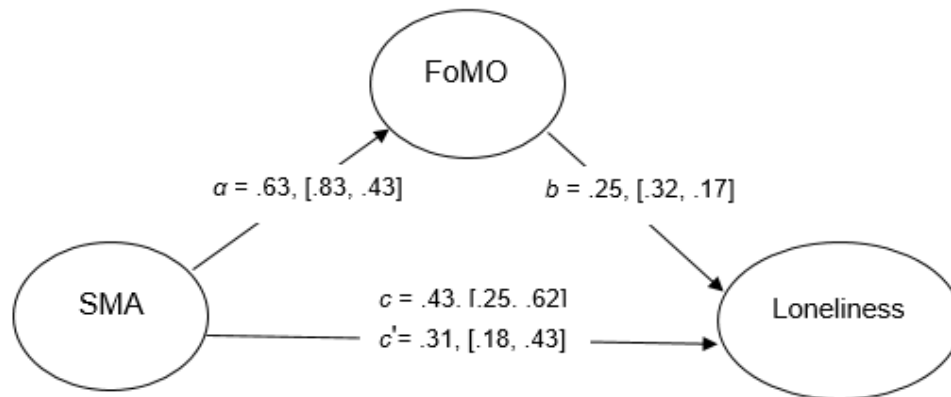
Note: Model including predictor as SMA, mediator as FoMO, and outcome as loneliness: α = path of predictior to mediator, b = path of mediator to outcome, c = path of predictor to outcome, c' = direct effect as path of predictor to outcome including mediator

Source: Own elaboration.

Table 2.

Descriptives and Correlations

Variables	SMA	UCLA-LS	FoMO
SMA	1		
UCLA-LS	.19**	1	
FoMO	.27**	.29**	1
M±SD	14.86±5.17	15.61±2.91	25.32±8.27

$N = 466$, **: $p < .01$
Source: Own elaboration.

Table 2 shows a significantly positive correlation between SMA and both loneliness and FoMO, as well as between loneliness and FoMO as expected.

The mediation analysis, as illustrated in Figure 1 for the sample group, revealed a consistent pattern. Among students, FoMO emerged as a significant mediator in the positive correlation between SMA and loneliness. The main correlation between SMA and loneliness remained statistically significant (total effect, c: $p < .001$). Both the connection between SMA and FoMO (path α: $p < .001$) and the correlation between FoMO and loneliness (path b: $p < .001$) were also found to be significant. Even with the inclusion of FoMO in the model, the correlation between SMA and loneliness retained significance (direct effect, c': $p = .003$). Furthermore, the indirect effect (αb) was noteworthy, with $b = 0.16$, and a 95% CI of [.08, .25].

DISCUSSION

SMA represents a concept with diverse negative consequences for university students. Recognizing the potential harm stemming from excessive social media usage is paramount, necessitating proactive measures to mitigate its adverse effects. Prolonged digital interaction and content consumption can detrimentally affect academic performance, weaken social bonds, and undermine psychosocial well-being (Malik et al., 2020). Moreover, the proliferation of social media platforms has facilitated increased virtual interactions often lacking the depth of face-to-face connections, leading to heightened emotional isolation among students (Cao et al., 2018). Consequently, this deterioration in the quality of social relationships has adverse implications for their psychosocial well-being (Kovan, 2022). In tandem with this dual correlation, FoMO emerges as a significant variable characterized by its increasing prevalence, particularly exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, and continuing impact (Kovan & Ormancı, 2021). The enduring influence of this phenomenon underscores its significance in comprehending the dynamics of this relationship. Its heightened impact is discernible with the advancement of communication technologies.

Therefore, it is imperative to elucidate the factors and mechanisms contributing to the adverse effects of SMA and to develop strategies aimed at reducing its association with loneliness. Within this framework, the current study seeks to investigate the interplay among SMA, loneliness, and FoMO among university students. By exploring the correlations between these variables, the study aims to enhance the existing knowledge base and provide insights into potential explanatory pathways underlying the observed negative consequences. Ultimately, this endeavor can facilitate the development of tailored interventions and preventive measures aimed at mitigating the deleterious consequences associated with SMA among university students.

The research findings underscore a significant correlation between SMA and loneliness, consistent with previous literature (O'Day & Heimberg, 2021; Yavich et al., 2019). According to SDT, unders-

tanding this correlation sheds light on the dynamics involved in fulfilling individuals' fundamental psychological needs among university students (Wang et al., 2021). SMA can impinge upon an individual's need for autonomy, as the incessant urge for online interaction may curtail one's capacity to freely make and regulate decisions (Chen, 2019), thereby diminishing self-determination. Conversely, in accordance with SDT, loneliness can affect an individual's ability to cultivate and sustain healthy relationships (Lemay et al., 2019). SMA can exacerbate loneliness by emphasizing online interactions (Kovan, 2022) and diverting attention from real-life relationships (Kuss & Griffiths, 2017). This predicament, particularly SMA, may stem from individuals' limitations in fulfilling their relational needs.

As expected, this study unveiled a positive correlation between FoMO and both SMA and loneliness among students. Of particular significance is the identification of FoMO as a significant mediator in the correlation between SMA and loneliness. Several factors can elucidate the observed mediation effect. The correlation between FoMO and SMA implies that heightened FoMO levels may drive increased engagement with social media platforms (Alt, 2017), stemming from a desire for continuous connection and information (Milyavskaya et al., 2018). The mediating role of FoMO in the SMA-loneliness nexus suggests that FoMO could exacerbate the loneliness experienced by individuals with elevated SMA (Kovan & Ormancı, 2021). This mediation underscores the necessity for targeted interventions addressing both FoMO and SMA to reduce the risk of loneliness among students.

Within the framework of SDT, the positive correlation of FoMO with SMA and loneliness can be elucidated by individuals' tendency to engage in constant online interactions (Topino et al., 2023). Social media is often perceived as a platform for sustaining social connections and staying up-to-date, prompting individuals to feel the need to remain online continuously, thus resulting FoMO (Roberts & David, 2020). This suggests that social media usage may serve as an endeavor to fulfill the need for autonomy posited in SDT. Furthermore, the mediation of the correlation between SMA and loneliness by FoMO aids in comprehending the impact of individuals' social media usage on their feelings of loneliness. The incessant pursuit of online interactions driven by FoMO can exacerbate feelings of loneliness, thereby augmenting SMA and diverting attention from real-world relationships, thereby contributing to heightened feelings of loneliness. The findings affirming the positive association and mediation role of FoMO in the correlation between SMA and loneliness underscore the interplay of psychological needs emphasized in SDT on social media usage.

Directions for Future Research

This study offers a cross-sectional quantitative analysis of the interrelationships among SMA, loneliness, and FoMO among university students in Turkey. Its comprehensive nature significantly contributes to the field by uncovering the mediating role of FoMO in the link between SMA and loneliness. Within this framework, the mediation effect of social media usage on individuals' loneliness

levels is explored using SDT, aligning closely with the variables under investigation. This approach facilitates a more holistic comprehension of the phenomenon. The findings of this research underscore the need for further inquiry aimed at deepening understanding of the psychosocial effects of social media usage. Specifically, investigations focusing on how social media usage influences individuals' emotional and social needs hold promise for significant advancement. Moreover, conducting studies encompassing participants from diverse cultural backgrounds, age groups, and socioeconomic backgrounds, employing qualitative methodologies such as in-depth interviews or focus groups, as well as longitudinal and mixed-methods approaches, can offer comprehensive insights into the multifaceted effects of social media on individuals. Such research endeavors can have the potential to inform policies and practices concerning social media usage, with a particular focus on young adults and adolescents, who are considered high-risk groups. Building upon the findings of this study, the development and implementation of a short-term psychoeducational program for students integrating motivational and behavioral strategies could represent a pivotal step forward in future research initiatives.

However, it is crucial to acknowledge the limitations inherent in this study. Firstly, the generalizability of the findings may be constrained, as the study exclusively targets public university students in Turkey. Likewise, the utilization of convenience sampling to recruit university students may further restrict the generalizability of the study's outcomes. Moreover, the cross-sectional design of the data renders it inadequate for establishing causal correlations between the variables under investigation. These limitations underscore the need for caution when interpreting the findings and highlight avenues for future research to address these constraints.

CONCLUSION

The research findings reveal a positive correlation between SMA, loneliness, and FoMO among university students, underscoring the burgeoning influence of social media and online interaction in contemporary digital culture. Specifically, the persistent engagement in online interaction among university students appears to coincide with heightened levels of loneliness and SMA. This phenomenon manifests as a result of diminishing real-life connections and escalating social isolation among individuals, despite the prevalence of virtual social networks.

Additionally, it has been discovered that FoMO mediates the correlation between SMA and loneliness. This indicates that the apprehensions individuals encounter during social media usage are intertwined with feelings of social isolation and SMA. Particularly, as the prevalence of social media among young adults continues to rise, the significance of FoMO becomes increasingly pronounced. These findings represent a substantial contribution to the deeper comprehension of the psychosocial repercussions of social media utilization. Moreover, they serve as a pivotal cornerstone for initiatives

and interventions aimed at mitigating these effects and fostering positive social media usage behaviors. For example, the development of educational programs and awareness campaigns targeted at university students could effectively raise awareness about the potential risks associated with excessive social media usage and provide strategies for managing FoMO and loneliness effectively. Building upon the research findings, a psychoeducational program has been developed, comprising short-term sessions focused on motivation and behavior management for university students.

Session 1. Introduction and providing information

Objective: Getting to know the group members, explaining the objectives of the program, creating an atmosphere of trust.

- Short introduction tour of the group members.
- Explanation of the program's objectives and expected outcomes.
- Sharing the expectations of the group members and addressing their concerns.

Session 2. SMA and awareness

Objective: To understand the concept of SMA, to enable individuals to recognize their own usage habits.

- Information about SMA and its effects.
- An activity where group members evaluate their own social media habits.
- Focus on the importance of healthy social media use.

Session 3. Loneliness and relationship skills

Objective: To understand the feeling of loneliness and develop healthy relationship skills.

- Introducing the concept of loneliness and discussing its effects.
- Developing effective communication and relationship building skills within the group.
- Interactive activities on empathy and emotional sharing.

Session 4. FoMO and emotional regulation

Objective: To understand the concept of FoMO and strengthen emotional regulation skills.

- Introducing FoMO and associating it with social media.
- Workshops for group members to express their emotional experiences.
- Sharing and practicing emotional regulation strategies.

Session 5. Personal strategies and values

Objective: To develop strategies for healthy social media use on an individual level, to understand the values of individuals.

- Sharing personal strategies for healthy social media use by group members.
- Enabling individuals to understand their own values and set goals aligned with social media use.
- Focusing on aligning social media use with personal values.

Session 6. Feedbacks and closing

Objective: To evaluate the program, give feedback to group members, share resources and support.

• Group members share their thoughts about the program process and achievements.

• Providing support and resources in achieving individual goals.

The findings of this study, consistent with existing research in the literature, suggest that the proposed psychoeducational program could serve as a valuable intervention for addressing the psychosocial impacts of social media usage. Each session of the recommended program is designed with interactive and informative activities tailored to the target group, with the aim of aiding participants in recognizing their social media habits, understanding feelings of loneliness, and cultivating healthy relationship skills. By addressing foundations such as SMA, loneliness, FoMO, and personal values, the sessions seek to enhance participants' emotional awareness and regulation abilities. This may assist participants in managing their social media usage more consciously and balancedly, thus contributing to the fostering of healthier relationships and heightened emotional well-being. The program's closing session emphasizes participants' reflection on the program process and accomplishments, while also providing support and resources to aid them in achieving individual goals. Kind of, this psychoeducational program can present a promising approach to increasing individuals' awareness of social media usage and promoting healthier habits. Ultimately, the insights garnered from these endeavors can inform policies, interventions, and practices designed to promote healthier social media usage behaviors and enhance the well-being of individuals in contemporary society.

REFERENCES

Alt, D. (2017). Students' social media engagement and fear of missing out (FoMO) in a diverse classroom. *Journal of Computing in Higher Education, 29*, 388-410. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12528-017-9149-x

Arifiani, Z. N., & Mahanani, F. K. (2023). The relationship between loneliness and fear of missing out on students of the State University of Semarang. *Nusantara Journal of Behavioral and Social Sciences, 2*(4), 117-126. https://doi.org/10.47679/202342

Ashori, M., & Shamsi, A. (2023). The effect of Adlerian play therapy on the alexithymia and social isolation of deaf students. *International Journal of Play Therapy, 32*(1), 10-21. https://doi.org/10.1037/pla0000192

Aslan, S. (2023). Investigation of the relationship between smartphone addiction and social loneliness in high school students. *Vulnerable Children and Youth Studies, 18*(1), 113-123. https://doi.org/10.1080/17450128.2022.2079788

Brooks, S. (2015). Does personal social media usage affect efficiency and well-being?. *Computers in Human Behavior, 46*, 26-37. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2014.12.053

Brown, L., & Kuss, D. J. (2020). Fear of missing out, mental wellbeing, and social connected-ness: A seven-day social media abstinence trial. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, 17*(12), 1-18. https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph17124566

Buodo, G., Moretta, T., Santucci, V. G., Chen, S., & Potenza, M. N. (2023). Using social media for social motives moderates the relationship between post-traumatic symptoms during a COVID-19-related lockdown and improvement of distress after lockdown. *Behavioral Sciences, 13*(1), 1-11. https://doi.org/10.3390/bs13010053

Burnell, K., George, M. J., Vollet, J. W., Ehrenreich, S. E., & Underwood, M. K. (2019). Passive social networking site use and well-being: The mediating roles of social comparison and the fear of missing out. *Cyberpsychology: Journal of Psychosocial Research on Cyberspace, 13*(3). https://doi.org/10.5817/CP2019-3-5

Cao, X., Masood, A., Luqman, A., & Ali, A. (2018). Excessive use of mobile social networking sites and poor academic performance: Antecedents and consequences from stressor-strain-outcome perspective. *Computers in Human Behavior, 85*, 163-174. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2018.03.023

Chen, A. (2019). From attachment to addiction: The mediating role of need satisfaction on social networking sites. *Computers in Human Behavior, 98*, 80-92. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2019.03.034

Chen, S. H., Wang, W. T., & Wang, Y. J. (2023). Effects of social connection on dual attitudes and continuance ıntentions of using social media. *International Journal of Human–Computer Interaction*, 1-16. https://doi.org/10.1080/10447318.2023.2266790

Curran, T., Ito-Jaeger, S., Perez-Vallejos, E., & Crawford, P. (2023). What's up with everyone?: The effectiveness of a digital media mental health literacy campaign for young people. *Journal of Mental Health, 32*(3), 612-618. https://doi.org/10.1080/09638237.2023.2182412

Çömlekçi, M. F., & Başol, O. (2019). Gençlerin sosyal medya kullanım amaçları ile sosyal medya bağımlılığı ilişkisinin incelenmesi [Investigation of the relationship between social media usage purposes of young people and social media addiction]. *Manisa Celal Bayar Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi, 17*(4), 173-188. https://doi.org/10.18026/cbayarsos.525652

Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2008). Self-determination theory: A macrotheory of human motivation, development, and health. *Canadian Psychology, 49*(3), 182-185. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0012801

Demir, A. (1989). The validity and reliability of the UCLA loneliness scale. *Psikoloji Dergisi, 7*(23), 14-18.

Etikan, I., & Bala, K. (2017). Sampling and sampling methods. *Biometrics & Biostatistics International Journal, 5*(6), 215-217. https://doi.org/10.15406/bbij.2017.05.00149

Franchina, V., Vanden-Abeele, M., Van-Rooij, A. J., Lo-Coco, G., & De-Marez, L. (2018). Fear of missing out as a predictor of problematic social media use and phubbing behavior among Flemish adolescents. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, 15*(10), 1-18. https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph15102319

Gökler, M. E., Aydın, R., Ünal, E., & Metintaş, S. (2016). Sosyal ortamlarda gelişmeleri kaçırma korkusu ölçeğinin Türkçe sürümünün geçerlilik ve güvenilirliğinin değerlendirilmesi [Determining validity and reliability of Turkish version of fear of missing out scale]. *Anadolu Psikiyatri Dergisi, 17*(1), 52-59. https://doi.org/10.5455/apd.195843

Hako, A. N., Shikongo, P. T., & Mbongo, E. N. (2023). Psychological adjustment challenges of first-year students: a conceptual review. In P. Aloka & K. Mukuna (Eds.). *Handbook of Research on Coping Mechanisms for First-Year Students Transitioning to Higher Education*. (pp. 191-210). IGI Global. https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-6684-6961-3.ch012

Hou, Y., Xiong, D., Jiang, T., Song, L., & Wang, Q. (2019). Social media addiction: Its impact, mediation, and intervention. *Cyberpsychology: Journal of Psychosocial Research on Cyberspace, 13*(1). https://doi.org/10.5817/CP2019-1-4

Jabeen, F., Tandon, A., Sithipolvanichgul, J., Srivastava, S., & Dhir, A. (2023). Social media-induced fear of missing out (fomo) and social media fatigue: The role of narcissism, comparison and disclosure. *Journal of Business Research, 159*, 1-11. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2023.113693

Koç, H., Şimşir-Gökalp, Z., & Seki, T. (2023). The relationships between self-control and distress among emerging adults: A serial mediating roles of fear of missing out and social media addiction. *Emerging Adulthood, 11*(3), 626-638. https://doi.org/10.1177/21676968231151776

Kovan, A. (2022). *Sosyal medya bağımlılığı ve yalnızlık: İletişim fakültesi öğrencileri üzerine bir çalışma* [Social media addiction and loneliness: A study on communication faculty students] [Oral presentation]. Uluslararası Toplumsal Araştırmalar Kongresi, Erzurum.

Kovan, A., & Ormancı, N. (2021). Üniversite öğrencilerinin sosyal medyadaki gelişmeleri kaçırma korkusu ile sosyal medya bağımlılığı arasındaki ilişki: COVID-19 pandemi örneği [The relationship between fear of missing out (fomo) and social media addiction (sma) on social media of university students: A case of covid-19 pandemic]. *Erciyes İletişim Dergisi*, (2), 125-145. https://doi.org/10.17680/erciyesiletisim.975976

Kuss, D. J., & Griffiths, M. D. (2017). Social networking sites and addiction: Ten lessons learned. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, 14*(3), 1-17. https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph14030311

Lee, C. Y. S., & Goldstein, S. E. (2016). Loneliness, stress, and social support in young adulthood: Does the source of support matter?. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 45*, 568-580. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10964-015-0395-9

Lemay, D. J., Doleck, T., & Bazelais, P. (2019). Self-determination, loneliness, fear of missing out, and academic performance. *Knowledge Management & E-Learning, 11*(4), 485-496. https://doi.org/10.34105/j.kmel.2019.11.025

Li, Y. X., Zhang, Y. H., Yang, R., Lian, S. L., Yan, L., & Zhu, X. M. (2023). Relationship between perceived social norms and phubbing: Individual control and fear of missing out as mediators. *International Journal of Mental Health and Addiction, 21*, 1898-1913. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11469-021-00696-8

Liang, M., Duan, Q., Liu, J., Wang, X., & Zheng, H. (2023). Influencing factors of social media addiction: A systematic review. *Aslib Journal of Information Management*. https://doi.org/10.1108/AJIM-10-2022-0476

Malik, A., Dhir, A., Kaur, P., & Johri, A. (2020). Correlates of social media fatigue and academic performance decrement: A large cross-sectional study. *Information Technology & People, 34*(2), 557-580. https://doi.org/10.1108/ITP-06-2019-0289

Mao, J., Fu, G. X., & Huang, J. J. (2023). The double-edged sword effects of active social media use on loneliness: The roles of interpersonal satisfaction and fear of missing out. *Frontiers in Psychology, 14*, 1-10. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1108467

McIntyre, J. C., Worsley, J., Corcoran, R., Harrison-Woods, P., & Bentall, R. P. (2018). Academic and non-academic predictors of student psychological distress: The role of social identity and loneliness. *Journal of Mental Health, 27*(3), 230-239. https://doi.org/10.1080/09638237.2018.1437608

Milyavskaya, M., Saffran, M., Hope, N., & Koestner, R. (2018). Fear of missing out: Prevalence, dynamics, and consequences of experiencing fomo. *Motivation and Emotion, 42*, 725-737. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11031-018-9683-5

O'Day, E. B., & Heimberg, R. G. (2021). Social media use, social anxiety, and loneliness: A systematic review. *Computers in Human Behavior Reports, 3*, 1-13. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chbr.2021.100070

Parent, N. (2023). Basic need satisfaction through social media engagement: A developmental framework for understanding adolescent social media use. *Human Development, 67*(1), 1-17. https://doi.org/10.1159/000529449

Przybylski, A. K., Murayama, K., DeHaan, C. R., & Gladwell, V. (2013). Motivational, emotional, and behavioral correlates of fear of missing out. *Computers in Human Behavior, 29*(4), 1841-1848. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2013.02.014

Roberts, J. A., & David, M. E. (2020). The social media party: Fear of missing out (fomo), social media intensity, connection, and well-being. *International Journal of Human–Computer Interaction, 36*(4), 386-392. https://doi.org/10.1080/10447318.2019.1646517

Schmuck, D., Karsay, K., Matthes, J., & Stevic, A. (2019). "Looking up and feeling down". The influence of mobile social networking site use on upward social comparison, self-esteem, and well-being of adult smartphone users. *Telematics and Informatics, 42*. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tele.2019.101240

Tabachnick, B. G., & Fidell, L. S. (2013). *Using multivariate statistics*. Pearson.

Tandoc Jr, E. C., Goh, Z. H., Wong, D. K. J., & Zhang, L. (2023). The good, the bad, and the Internet: Investigating the impact of online prosocial and anti-social behaviors on well-being. *Cogent Social Sciences, 9*(1), 1-14. https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2023.2225834

Tandon, A., Kaur, P., Dhir, A., & Mäntymäki, M. (2020). Sleepless due to social media? Investigating problematic sleep due to social media and social media sleep hygiene. *Computers in Human Behavior, 113*, 1-12. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2020.106487

Tang, T. C., Chi, L. C., & Tang, E. (2023). Office islands: Exploring the uncharted waters of workplace loneliness, social media addiction, and the fear of missing out. *Current Psychology*, 1-16. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-023-05445-9

Topino, E., Gori, A., Jimeno, M. V., Ortega, B., & Cacioppo, M. (2023). The relationship between social media addiction, fear of missing out and family functioning: A structural equation mediation model. *BMC Psychology, 11*(383), 1-10. https://doi.org/10.1186/s40359-023-01409-7

Wang, X., Zhang, R., Wang, Z., & Li, T. (2021). How does digital competence preserve university students' psychological well-being during the pandemic? An investigation from self-determined theory. *Frontiers in Psychology, 12*, 1-13. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.652594

Yavich, R., Davidovitch, N., & Frenkel, Z. (2019). Social media and loneliness - forever connected?. *Higher Education Studies, 9*(2), 10-21. https://doi.org/10.5539/hes.v9n2p10