



RESEARCH ARTICLE

A Descriptive-Comparative Study of Fear of Missing Out (FoMO), Social Media Use, and Viral Trend Participation Among Early Adults in Indonesia

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Abstract: The development of digital technology and social media has contributed to the emergence of Fear of Missing Out (FoMO), a psychological phenomenon in which individuals feel left out of others' social experiences. This study employed a descriptive-comparative cross-sectional survey design to examine FoMO among early adults in Indonesia. Data were collected through an online questionnaire distributed via Google Forms, involving 400 respondents aged 18–40 years. Accordingly, the sampling approach is convenience sampling, described as voluntary response sampling. The research instrument was a 15-item FoMO scale with high reliability (Cronbach's Alpha $\alpha = .923$). The results indicated that 71.5% of respondents reported high levels of FoMO among early adults in Indonesia. Significant differences in FoMO levels were found based on the types of viral trends followed and the number of social media platforms used, particularly among individuals using more than three platforms and engaging with trends such as concerts and merchandise collections. In contrast, no significant differences were observed across demographic variables, including gender, age group, employment status, or geographic location. These findings suggest that FoMO is widely experienced among early adults in Indonesia and is more closely associated with patterns of digital engagement than with demographic characteristics.

Keywords: Fear of Missing Out, Social Media, Viral Trends, Young Adults

INTRODUCTION

The development of modern times, marked by advances in digital technology, has brought significant changes to people's lifestyles. Social media now functions not only as a means of communication but also as a central space for the rapid spread of various trends that quickly capture public attention. In Indonesia, this phenomenon is evident from the widespread participation in numerous viral activities, such as contemporary culinary trends, new sports like padel, the purchase of Harry Potter merchandise driven by nostalgia, the rising interest in collecting rare and exclusive Labubu figurines, and the popularity of viral foods such as Dubai chocolate and Cromboloni. These trends are not only followed by adolescents but also widely embraced by early adults, who theoretically should be in a developmental phase characterized by more mature self-control. This condition indicates that participation in viral trends has become part of the psychological and social developmental dynamics of early adulthood.

These phenomena are not only followed by adolescents but are also widely embraced by individuals who have

entered early adulthood. This indicates that interest in viral trends transcends age boundaries, including among those who are expected to possess more mature self-control. Early adulthood represents the peak of an individual's developmental stage and serves as a transitional period from adolescence, which is typically characterized by a carefree lifestyle. During early adulthood, individuals encounter various life challenges that they are expected to manage effectively. Early adulthood, spanning approximately from age 18 to 40, is a significant developmental period marked by physical maturation, intellectual growth, evolving social roles, and the search for personal identity (Hurlock, 1980; Santrock, 2015). During this stage, individuals navigate a range of psychosocial challenges, including establishing meaningful relationships, building career trajectories, and developing a stable sense of self. According to Mappiare (1983), early adulthood is a transitional stage involving changes in physical, intellectual, social-role, and psychological functioning that accompany the decreasing reproductive ability.

However, in reality, many early adults still exhibit signs of emotional immaturity in their thoughts and behaviors, such as a strong dependence on social validation, susceptibility to viral trends, and anxiety when they are unable to participate in what is currently popular on social media. This is supported by research conducted by Dutta et al., (2015), who describe emotionally immature individuals as those who may behave childishly, be self-centered, confrontational, and demanding. Emotionally immature individuals also tend to be overly focused on their own

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weaknesses and often experience difficulties in expressing or receiving love. Furthermore, the egocentrism associated with emotional immaturity may contribute to a heightened need for recognition and acceptance from others (Joy & Mathew, 2018).

At the same time, following viral trends can also represent a legitimate form of identity expression, social affiliation, and cultural participation, allowing early adults to connect with peers and establish their place within social communities. However, when such participation is driven primarily by anxiety, social pressure, or fear of being left behind rather than by genuine interest or personal values, it may indicate an underlying psychological vulnerability that warrants further examination. This vulnerability can be understood through the lens of Self-Determination Theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000), which posits that human behavior is motivated by three fundamental psychological needs: the need for relatedness (feeling connected and accepted by others), competence (feeling capable and effective), and autonomy (feeling that one's actions are self-directed). When these needs go unmet particularly the need for relatedness, individuals may seek external sources of validation to compensate. In the context of social media, this often manifests as heightened sensitivity to peers' activities, compulsive monitoring of trending content, and a felt pressure to participate in viral phenomena in order to remain socially relevant and included.

This dynamic is further explained by Social Comparison Theory (Festinger, 1957), which suggests that individuals evaluate their own abilities, opinions, and experiences by comparing themselves to others. In the digital environment, social media continuously exposes individuals to curated representations of others' lives, achievements, and social experiences, intensifying the tendency for upward social comparison. Research by Tariq et al., (2025) confirms a positive correlation between social comparison and validation-seeking behavior among young adults, suggesting that repeated exposure to peers' social media posts may erode self-worth and amplify the perceived need for external approval. When the need to belong (Baumeister & Leary, 1995) is coupled with social comparison and validation-seeking, individuals become increasingly susceptible to anxiety about being excluded from valued social experiences a psychological state recognized as Fear of Missing Out (FoMO).

According to Przybylski et al., (2013), FoMO is defined as a pervasive apprehension that others might be having rewarding experiences from which one is absent, accompanied by a desire to stay continually connected with what others are doing. At its core, FoMO reflects an unmet need for relatedness, a deficiency in feelings of closeness and social connectedness as well as unmet needs for competence and autonomy, which together drive the compulsive urge to monitor and participate in social activities (Przybylski et al., 2013). A common behavior observed in individuals experiencing FoMO is the frequent checking of social media to monitor updates and posts shared by their peers. This phenomenon is closely associated with social media use, as individuals may feel left behind from social experiences or events occurring around them. FoMO reflects a persistent worry about missing experiences that are perceived as more interesting, enjoyable, or up-to-date (Gupta & Sharma, 2021). The desire to be accepted, recognized, and included within certain social groups makes early adults particularly sensitive to what others do, own, or experience, especially as displayed on social media platforms.

FoMO can contribute to feelings of isolation and lower satisfaction with one's personal life. According to Abel et al.,

(2016), individuals may be considered to exhibit FoMO symptoms when they are unable to detach from their phones and experience excessive anxiety when missing information shared by others on social media. Furthermore, Przybylski et al., (2013) explained that FoMO is associated with various emotional problems related to social media use. These effects are linked to two fundamental psychological needs underlying FoMO: the unmet need for relatedness, which refers to a lack of closeness or social connection with others, and the unmet need for self, which involves feelings related to competence and autonomy.

FoMO, or *Fear of Missing Out*, can be defined as the fear of missing important moments. This fear is understood as a social construct that examines whether an individual is worried about missing experiences that others are having, and how this concern relates to their anxiety about missed activities within their cultural context (Hetz et al., 2015). This finding is further supported by Jabeen et al., (2023), who state that FoMO is a form of social anxiety resulting from excessive exposure to social media. Individuals experiencing FoMO may feel isolated or undervalued when they do not participate in social activities or experiences occurring around them, which are often displayed through social media posts.

The FoMO phenomenon is clearly reflected in the trend of collecting Labubu dolls among early adults in Indonesia. These limited-edition Pop Mart figurines gained significant popularity after BLACKPINK's Lisa was seen owning them, creating the perception that having a Labubu represents a modern and exclusive lifestyle. The urge to follow this trend became even stronger when Indonesian public figures, such as CJ, admitted that they felt compelled to collect Labubu after seeing Lisa, illustrating a real-life example of FoMO (Sundari, 2025). Such social pressure demonstrates that some early adults remain vulnerable to external influences, similar to adolescents who often seek social approval. In contrast, the normative expectation of early adulthood involves being more independent, capable of making autonomous decisions, and no longer relying heavily on external validation when navigating social choices (Erikson, 1989). In other words, the Labubu trend reflects how some early adults continue to seek social acceptance through the ownership of popular items. Interest in these dolls is driven not only by their collectible value but also by the desire to gain recognition from others and to demonstrate participation in social circles that follow current trends. This condition underscores that social pressure and the fear of being left behind remain significant challenges in the developmental process of early adulthood.

Besides the Labubu phenomenon, the involvement of early adults in following trends is also illustrated in the case of W.G., who initially focused on tennis. However, when most of his peers shifted to padel, he began playing as well in order to maintain social connections. Moreover, W.G. purchased an expensive padel racket despite still preferring tennis. This behavior reflects a strong influence of *Fear of Missing Out* (FoMO), where the desire to remain accepted within a group and sustain social relationships motivates individuals to follow trends and make purchases that are not necessarily essential. This phenomenon highlights that during early adulthood, FoMO can shape both trend participation and consumptive decision-making as a means of preserving social belonging and gaining recognition from one's social environment.

A similar phenomenon can also be seen in entertainment trends popularized through social media and public figures, such as attending concerts by BLACKPINK, Coldplay, and Bruno Mars. The relatively high ticket prices and limited availability often trigger anxiety among early

adults who fear being unable to participate. The motivation to purchase tickets is driven not only by personal interest in the music but also by the desire to remain part of the ongoing social wave. Such involvement is often perceived as a way to avoid feeling out of place, missing out on information, or being seen as disconnected from current cultural developments. The psychological pressure to stay “up-to-date” and the anxiety of not participating have become tangible aspects of early adulthood in the digital era.

The anxiety driven by FoMO is often exploited by irresponsible individuals through various fraud schemes. For example, the ticket scam surrounding the Coldplay concert in Indonesia illustrated how many people were tempted to buy tickets from scalpers due to the fear of missing out. Certain “jastip” (personal shopping) providers even collaborated on social media to deceive potential concertgoers, leading several victims to lose millions of rupiah. Although the police eventually arrested the perpetrators, this case highlights that FoMO not only prompts impulsive decision-making but also increases individuals’ vulnerability to criminal activities (C. A. Putri & Sa’id, 2024).

According to Przybylski et al., (2013), individuals with a high level of FoMO have a strong need to constantly monitor social media and to stay updated on whatever others are discussing. This behavior is driven by the desire to remain part of ongoing social discourse and to avoid feeling left out of significant moments. Moreover, those with high FoMO tend to experience psychological discomfort when they are unable to keep up with popular trends or widely discussed events. For example, when a viral trend emerges, an international artist announces a concert, or a limited-edition product such as the Labubu doll becomes popular, these individuals feel compelled to participate—even when they do not have a genuine personal interest in the activity or item. They feel socially insecure if they are not “present” within the collective moment, and in many cases, this pressure pushes them to make decisions based on external expectations rather than internal motivations. Their actions are often reactive, driven by the fear of being left behind or seen as out of touch, rather than stemming from personal autonomy in making choices.

Conversely, individuals with low levels of Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) tend to exhibit more stable and adaptive psychological responses to social exposure, particularly within the fast-paced and competitive digital media environment. They do not easily become overwhelmed by anxiety when they are unable to participate in trending activities or widely discussed events on social media. According to Abel et al., (2016), individuals with low FoMO do not experience a compulsive urge to constantly monitor social media or compare themselves with others. Instead, they are able to maintain psychological comfort and remain calm even when they do not take part in activities perceived as exciting or popular within their social circles.

The characteristic of individuals with low FoMO is their ability to regulate their emotions and maintain focus on their personal interests without being driven by the fear of being left out. Such individuals do not feel threatened by other people’s social media posts, nor do they feel compelled to purchase certain items or attend events solely to remain socially relevant. They demonstrate strong self-control in responding to social expectations, allowing their decisions to be guided by personal values, needs, and priorities rather than external pressure. For example, a young adult with low FoMO may appreciate the Labubu

character, but will not necessarily buy the doll merely because it is trending or endorsed by popular public figures. They can recognize that the desire is not an urgent need and that not owning the item will not diminish their self-worth. Similarly, they do not feel anxious if they cannot attend a popular concert or try a trending food item, because their sense of satisfaction or happiness is not dependent on participating in viral social moments.

In the study conducted by Kusumaisna (2023) stated that the intensity and frequency of social media use are primary triggers for the emergence of FoMO. The study explains that the more frequently individuals view posts from friends or public figures, the stronger their fear of being left out becomes. The findings indicate that repeated exposure to trends can create a deep-seated need among young adults to remain constantly up-to-date. Thus, it can be concluded that the higher the intensity of social media use, the greater the likelihood that an individual will experience FoMO. Furthermore, the study conducted by Putri et al., (2023), states that FoMO is closely linked to Instagram addiction among individuals in early adulthood. Respondents with high levels of FoMO tend to continuously check and engage with Instagram content as a way to maintain a sense of connectedness and relevance. Based on the findings, the study reveals that FoMO does not merely manifest as an internal form of anxiety but also significantly influences persistent digital behavior patterns on popular social media platforms. Another study conducted by Mufidah et al., (2023) found a significant negative correlation between self-concept and Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) among adolescent Instagram users. Adolescents with a low self-concept tend to experience instability and difficulty accepting themselves, which increases their vulnerability to FoMO. This indicates that an adolescent’s self-concept plays an important role in influencing the level of FoMO experienced when engaging with social media, particularly Instagram.

In this study, the distinction from previous research is that the present study focuses solely on one variable, Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) with participants drawn from early adulthood, a developmental stage characterized by more complex psychosocial challenges, such as the search for social identity and pressure to meet environmental expectations. While previous studies have largely been conducted in Western contexts, research examining FoMO specifically within the Indonesian sociocultural setting remains limited, particularly among early adults who navigate multiple social media platforms simultaneously. The collectivist cultural norms prevalent in Indonesia, combined with the rapid expansion of digital platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, X (formerly Twitter) and others may shape FoMO experiences in ways that are distinct from those documented in existing literature. Furthermore, most prior studies have focused on single-platform use, leaving a gap in understanding how multi-platform engagement collectively amplifies FoMO tendencies in this population.

Additionally, comparative studies examining differences in FoMO levels across demographic variables—such as gender, ages, occupational status, place of residence, types of viral trends followed and the number of social media platforms used. To address these gaps, this study adopts a descriptive and comparative quantitative approach aimed at objectively illustrating how FoMO emerges within the broader context of engagement in popular cultural trends, including participation in social media trends, consumption of popular products, and involvement in viral activities.

Although the phenomenon of Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) has been widely studied, most previous research has focused primarily on adolescents or social media users in general, without taking into account the unique characteristics of individuals in early adulthood. In fact, those in early adulthood face more complex psychosocial challenges, such as the search for social identity, the establishment of stable relationships, and future planning. The pressure to constantly follow trends or participate in viral activities may trigger anxiety, diminished self-worth, and feelings of social exclusion when they fall behind.

The limited number of studies that specifically examine FoMO among early adults within the context of popular culture and digital trends has resulted in an incomplete understanding of its psychological, social, and behavioral impacts on this group. Therefore, this study is essential to fill this gap by providing a more comprehensive picture of how FoMO develops and influences the lives of early adults in an era of rapid technological advancement. Based on the explanation presented above, the researcher is interested in conducting a study entitled "A Descriptive-Comparative Study of Fear of Missing Out (FoMO), Social Media Use, and Viral Trend Participation Among Early Adults in Indonesia.". Accordingly, the research questions of this study are as follows: (1) What is the level of FoMO among early adults in Indonesia? and (2) Are there significant differences in FoMO levels when examined based on gender, ages, occupational status, place of residence, types of viral trends followed and the number of social media platforms used?

METHODS

This study employed a cross-sectional descriptive-comparative survey design, which was selected to capture FoMO levels and group differences at a single point in time across a diverse sample of early adults in Indonesia.

Participants and Sampling Procedure

The population of this study consisted of Indonesian residents aged 18–40 years who are active social media users. Participant recruitment was conducted using convenience sampling through an online questionnaire distributed via Google Forms. The survey link was disseminated through multiple channels, including WhatsApp groups, Instagram stories, and university student networks, to maximize reach across geographic locations. A total of 457 initial responses were collected. Of these, 30 responses were allocated for a pilot study to test the psychometric properties of the modified FoMO scale and were therefore excluded from the main analysis. The remaining 427 responses underwent further data screening, of which 27 responses were excluded due to incomplete answers, failure to meet the inclusion criteria, or suspected duplicate submissions. As a result, the final sample consisted of 400 participants who met all eligibility requirements and provided complete data. Participants were included in this study if they: (1) were Indonesian citizens aged between 18 and 40 years old, (2) identified as active social media users (using at least one platform on a daily basis), and (3) provided complete and valid responses to all questionnaire items. Participants were excluded if they: (1) fell outside the specified age range, (2) did not meet the active social media user criterion, (3) submitted incomplete responses, or (4) provided response patterns suggesting random or invalid answering (e.g., selecting the same option for all items).

Data Analysis

The data analysis techniques employed in this study included frequency analysis, categorization, cross-tabulation (crosstab), and comparative analyses. Prior to conducting comparative tests, a normality test was performed using the One-Sample Kolmogorov–Smirnov test. The results indicated that the data were not normally distributed, as evidenced by a significance value of $p < .001$ ($p < .05$), which led to the rejection of the null hypothesis of normality. Consequently, non-parametric tests were used for comparative analyses: the Mann–Whitney U test was applied for comparisons between two independent groups (e.g., gender), and the Kruskal–Wallis H test was used for comparisons involving three or more groups (e.g., age group, employment status, geographic location, types of viral trends followed, and number of social media platforms used). For Kruskal–Wallis tests yielding significant results, post hoc pairwise comparisons were conducted using Dunn's test with Bonferroni correction to control for Type I error inflation due to multiple comparisons. The research was conducted from May 2025 to August 2025.

Measurement Instrument

This study utilized the FoMO Scale based on the theoretical framework developed by Przybylski et al., (2013), as previously applied by Sitasari et al., (2021). The researcher modified the instrument by adding and revising several item statements. The modified scale was initially composed of 17 items, which were subjected to a pilot study involving 30 participants. Item analysis revealed that 2 items did not meet the minimum discrimination criteria and were therefore dropped, resulting in a final scale of 15 items. The retained items demonstrated satisfactory psychometric properties, with item-total correlation coefficients ranging from .400 to .826 and an overall Cronbach's alpha of .923, indicating excellent internal consistency reliability.

RESULTS OF STUDY

Research Demographic Data

Based on Table 1, the majority of respondents in this study were female, with 234 respondents (58.5%), while male respondents accounted for 166 respondents (41.5%). In terms of age, most respondents were between 18–25 years old, totaling 232 respondents (58.0%), followed by those aged 26–32 years with 122 respondents (30.5%), and those aged 33–40 years with 46 respondents (11.5%). Regarding employment status, the respondents were predominantly private employees, with 136 respondents (34.0%), followed by university students with 123 respondents (30.8%), entrepreneurs with 94 respondents (23.5%), teachers with 42 respondents (10.5%), and unemployed respondents with 5 respondents (1.3%). Based on domicile, the majority of respondents came from Java, totaling 176 respondents (44.0%), followed by Sumatra (20.5%), Kalimantan (13.3%), Sulawesi (12.5%), and Papua (9.8%). In terms of trends followed by respondents, the most common trend was visiting viral tourist destinations, with 74 respondents (18.5%), followed by trying newly popular restaurant or café menus (17.0%) and attending Coldplay concerts (15.0%). Additionally, most respondents actively used four social media platforms, with 120 respondents (30.0%), and TikTok

was identified as the most frequently used social media platform, with 118 respondents (29.5%).

Table 1. Demographic of Participants (N= 400)

Variables	Distributions	f	%
Gender	Male	166	41.5
	Female	234	58.5
Ages	18-25	232	58.0
	26-32	122	30.5
	33-40	46	11.5
	College Students	123	30.8
	Private sector workers	136	34.0
Occupational Status	Teachers	42	10.5
	Entrepreneurs	94	23.5
	Unemployed	5	1.3
	Kalimantan	53	13.3
Place of Residence	Sumatera	82	20.5
	Papua	39	9.8
	Jawa	176	44.0
	Sulawesi	50	12.5
	Purchasing Harry Potter merchandise	36	9.0
Viral Trends Previously Followed	Attending a Coldplay concert	60	15
	Purchasing a Labubu doll	51	12.8
	Visiting viral or trending tourist destinations	74	18.5
	Attending K-pop concerts	57	14.2
	Trying new menu items at popular restaurants or cafés	68	17.0
The Number of Social Media Platforms Frequently Used	Purchasing football merchandise	54	13.5
	1 Social Media	9	2.3
	2 Social Media	16	4.0
	3 Social Media	83	20.8
	4 Social Media	120	30.0
The Primary Social Media Platform	5 Social Media	94	23.5
	>6 Social Media	78	19.5
	Instagram	44	11.0
	Facebook	30	7.5
	Tiktok	118	29.5
	Line	70	17.5
	Twitter (X)	87	21.8
	Whatsapp	51	12.8

Categorization Results of Fear of Missing Out (FoMO)

Table 2. The Categorization of Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) (N=400)

Cut of Score	Score	Categorization	Total
$x \geq \mu$	$x \geq 47.62$	High	286 (71.5%)
$x < \mu$	$x < 47.62$	Low	114 (28.5%)

The categorization of the Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) variable in this study was conducted using two levels: high and low based on empirical mean of sample. Based on the statistical calculations, the FoMO scores obtained by respondents showed a minimum value of 20, a maximum value of 57, with a mean (μ) of 47.62, and a standard deviation (σ) of 6.135. These values were used as the basis for determining the cutoff scores for each category, allowing the classification of respondents into low and high FoMO groups.

Based on the results presented in Table 2, it can be seen that 286 respondents (71.5%) fall into the high Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) category, while 114 respondents (28.5%) fall into the low FoMO category. These findings indicate that individuals with high FoMO tendencies constitute the majority of the sample. Furthermore, both male and female respondents show a similar tendency to fall within the high FoMO category, suggesting that elevated FoMO levels occur consistently across genders.

Crosstabulation of Fear of Missing Out Based on Supporting Data

To describe the supporting data in this study, crosstabulation (crosstabs) was used and calculated using statistical software, based on the following background characteristics of the participants:

Table 3. Fear of Missing Out Based on Gender (N= 400)

Gender	Fear Of Missing Out	
	Low	High
Male	48 (28.9%)	118 (71.1%)
Female	66 (28.2%)	168 (71.8%)
Total	114 (28.5%)	286 (71.5%)

Fear of Missing Out Based on Gender

Based on the results presented in Table 3, it can be seen that female respondents exhibit a high level of Fear of Missing Out, with 168 respondents (71.8%) categorized as high FoMO and 66 respondents (28.2%) categorized as low FoMO. Male respondents also show a higher proportion of individuals with high FoMO, with 118 respondents (71.1%) falling into the high category and 48 respondents (28.9%) in the low category. Therefore, it can be concluded that respondents with high levels of Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) are found among both male and female participants, indicating that both genders share a similar tendency to fall into the high FoMO category.

Table 4. Fear of Missing Out Based on Age (N=400)

Ages	Fear Of Missing Out		Total
	Low	High	
18-25 years old	65 (28.0%)	167 (72.0%)	232 (100%)
26-32 years old	36 (29.5%)	86 (70.5%)	122 (100%)
33-40 years old	13 (28.3%)	33 (71.7)	46 (100%)
Total	114 (28.5%)	286 (71.5%)	400 (100%)

Fear of Missing Out Based on Age

Based on the results shown in Table 4, it can be observed that respondents in the 18–25 age group have a high level of FoMO, with 167 respondents (72.0%) categorized as high FoMO and 65 respondents (28.0%) categorized as low FoMO. In the 26–32 age group, 86 respondents (70.5%) fall into the high FoMO category, while 36 respondents (29.5%) fall into the low category. Meanwhile, in the 33–40 age group, 33

respondents (71.7%) exhibit high FoMO and 13 respondents (28.3%) fall into the low category. Thus, it can be concluded that across all age groups—from 18 to 40 years old—individuals predominantly exhibit high levels of Fear of Missing Out (FoMO).

Table 5. Fear of Missing Out Based on Occupational Status (N=400)

Occupational Status	Fear Of Missing Out		Total
	Low	High	
College Students	33 (28.8%)	90 (73.2%)	123 (100%)
Private-sector Workers	41 (30.1%)	95 (69.9%)	136 (100%)
Teachers	12 (28.6%)	30 (71.4)	42 (100%)
Entrepreneurs	26 (27.7%)	68 (72.3%)	94 (100%)
Unemployed	2 (40.0%)	3 (60.0%)	5 (100%)
Total	114 (28.5%)	286 (71.5%)	400 (100)

Fear of Missing Out Based on Occupational Status

Based on the results in Table 5, it can be seen that the student group shows a high level of FoMO, with 90 respondents (73.2%) reporting high FoMO and 33 respondents (26.8%) reporting low FoMO. In the private employee group, 95 respondents (69.9%) reported high FoMO, while 41 respondents (30.1%) reported low FoMO. In the teacher group, 30 respondents (71.4%) reported high FoMO and 12 respondents (28.6%) reported low FoMO. Among entrepreneurs, 68 respondents (72.3%) reported high FoMO and 26 respondents (27.7%) reported low FoMO. Meanwhile, in the unemployed group, 3 respondents (60.0%) reported high FoMO and 2 respondents (40.0%) reported low FoMO. Overall, these findings indicate that all employment status categories fall within the high Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) level.

Table 6. Fear of Missing Out Based on Place of Residence (N=400)

Place of Residence	Fear Of Missing Out		Total
	Low	High	
Kalimantan	14 (26.4%)	39 (73.6%)	53 (100%)
Sumatera	27 (32.9%)	55 (67.1%)	82 (100%)
Papua	13 (33.3%)	26 (66.7%)	39 (100%)
Java	46 (28.0%)	130 (73.9%)	176 (100%)
Sulawesi	14 (28.0%)	36 (71.5%)	50 (100%)
Total	114 (28.5%)	286 (71.5%)	400 (100%)

Fear of Missing Out Based on Place of Residence

Based on the results presented in Crosstab Table 6, it can be seen that respondents residing in Kalimantan show a high level of FoMO, with 39 respondents (73.6%) categorized

as high and 14 respondents (26.4%) categorized as low. In the Sumatera group, 55 respondents (67.1%) fall into the high FoMO category, while 27 respondents (32.9%) fall into the low category. In the Papua group, 26 respondents (66.7%) exhibit high FoMO and 13 respondents (33.3%) exhibit low FoMO. For respondents living in Java, 130 individuals (73.9%) are categorized as having high FoMO, whereas 46 individuals (26.1%) are categorized as having low FoMO. Meanwhile, in the Sulawesi group, 36 respondents (71.5%) show high FoMO and 14 respondents (28.5%) show low FoMO. Overall, these findings indicate that respondents across all regions of Indonesia predominantly fall into the high Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) category.

Table 7. Fear of Missing Out Based on Viral Trends Previously Followed (N=400)

Viral Trends Previously Followed	Fear Of Missing Out		Total
	Low	High	
Purchasing Harry Potter merchandise	14 (38.9%)	22 (61.1%)	36 (100%)
Attending a Coldplay concert	14 (23.3%)	46 (76.7%)	60 (100)
Purchasing a Labubu doll	15 (29.4%)	36 (70.6%)	51 (100%)
Visiting viral or trending tourist destinations	23 (31.1%)	51 (68.9%)	74 (100%)
Attending K-pop concerts	14 (24.6%)	43 (61.8%)	57 (100%)
Trying new menu items at popular restaurants or cafés	26 (38.2%)	42 (61.8%)	68 (100%)
Purchasing football merchandise	8 (14.8%)	46 (85.2%)	54 (100%)
Total	114 (28.5%)	286 (71.5%)	400(100%)

Fear of Missing Out Based on Viral Trends Previously Followed

Based on the results presented in Crosstab Table 7, it can be seen that in the group who purchased Harry Potter merchandise, 22 respondents (61.1%) were categorized as having high FoMO, while 14 respondents (38.9%) had low FoMO. In the group who attended the Coldplay concert, 46 respondents (76.7%) had high FoMO, and 14 respondents (23.3%) had low FoMO. In the group who purchased Labubu dolls, 36 respondents (70.6%) had high FoMO, while 15 respondents (29.4%) had low FoMO.

In the group who visited viral tourist destinations, 51 respondents (68.9%) were categorized as having high FoMO, while 23 respondents (31.1%) had low FoMO. In the group who attended K-Pop concerts, 43 respondents (75.4%) had high FoMO, and 14 respondents (24.6%) had low FoMO. In the group who tried new menu items at popular restaurants or cafés, 42 respondents (61.8%) had high FoMO, while 26 respondents (38.2%) had low FoMO. Meanwhile, in the group who purchased football merchandise, 46 respondents (85.2%) were categorized as having high FoMO, while only 8 respondents (14.8%) had low FoMO. Thus, it can be concluded that overall, individuals who followed various viral trends in Indonesia tended to exhibit high levels of Fear of Missing Out (FoMO).

Fear of Missing Out Based on the Primary Social Media Platform Used

Based on the results shown in Table 8 (crosstab analysis), it can be seen that among Instagram users, 33 respondents (75.0%) had high FoMO, while 11 respondents (25.0%) had low FoMO. Among Facebook users, 14 respondents (46.7%) reported high FoMO and 16 respondents (53.3%) reported low FoMO. For TikTok users, 77 respondents (65.3%) had high FoMO and 41 respondents (34.7%) had low FoMO. Among Line users, 48 respondents (68.6%) had high FoMO and 22 respondents (31.4%) had low FoMO. For Twitter (X) users, 72 respondents (82.8%) had high FoMO and 15 respondents (17.2%) had low FoMO. Meanwhile, among WhatsApp users, 42 respondents (82.4%) had high FoMO and 9 respondents (17.6%) had low FoMO.

Thus, it can be concluded that high levels of Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) were found across all groups based on the primary social media platform used. The highest percentage of high FoMO was observed among TikTok users, with 77 respondents (65.3%), while the lowest percentage was found among Facebook users, with 14 respondents (46.7%).

Table 8. Fear of Missing Out Based on the Primary Social Media Platform Used (N=400)

The Primary Social Media Platform	Fear Of Missing Out		Total
	Low	High	
Instagram	11 (25.0%)	33 (75.0%)	44 (100%)
Facebook	16 (53.3%)	14 (46.7%)	30 (100)
Tiktok	41 (34.7%)	77 (65.3%)	118 (100%)
Line	22 (31.4%)	48 (68.6%)	70 (100%)
Twitter (X)	15 (17.2%)	72 (82.8%)	87 (100%)
Whatsapp	9 (17.6%)	42 (82.4%)	51 (100%)
Total	114 (28.5%)	286 (71.5%)	400(100%)

Fear of Missing Out Based on the Number of Social Media Platforms Frequently Used

Based on the results in Table 9 (crosstab), it can be seen that among respondents who use one social media platform, 3 individuals (33.3%) had high FoMO, while 6 individuals (66.7%) had low FoMO. In the group using two platforms, 3 respondents (18.8%) reported high FoMO, and 13 respondents (81.3%) reported low FoMO.

Table 9. Fear of Missing Out Based on The Number of Social Media Platforms Frequently Used (N=400)

The Number of Social Media Platforms Frequently Used	Fear Of Missing Out		Total
	Low	High	
1 Social Media	6 (66.7%)	33 (75.0%)	39 (100%)
2 Social Media	13 (81.3%)	14 (46.7%)	27 (100)
3 Social Media	34 (41.0%)	77 (65.3%)	111 (100%)
4 Social Media	37 (30.8%)	48 (68.6%)	85 (100%)
5 Social Media	12 (12.8%)	72 (82.8%)	84 (100%)
>6 Social Media	12 (15.4%)	42 (82.4%)	54 (100%)
Total	114 (28.5%)	286 (71.5%)	400 (100%)

Among those using three social media platforms, 49 respondents (59.0%) had high FoMO, while 34 respondents

(41.0%) had low FoMO. In the group using four platforms, 48 respondents (68.6%) were categorized as high FoMO, and 37 respondents (30.8%) as low FoMO. For respondents using five platforms, 82 individuals (87.2%) had high FoMO, and 12 individuals (12.8%) had low FoMO. Meanwhile, among those using more than five platforms, 66 respondents (84.6%) were categorized as high FoMO, while 12 respondents (15.4%) were categorized as low FoMO.

Thus, it can be concluded that social media users with accounts on more than three platforms tend to fall into the high Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) category, as the proportion of high FoMO in this group is higher compared to users with fewer accounts. Conversely, users with only one or two social media platforms are more likely to fall into the low FoMO category.

Comparison Test of Fear of Missing Out Based on Supporting Data

Based on Table 10, it can be seen that there are significant differences in Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) based on the viral trends followed ($H = 16.680$; $p < .05$) with small effect size ($\eta^2 = .027 < .06$) and the number of social media accounts owned ($H = 47.197$; $p < .01$) with a moderate to large effect size ($\eta^2 = .107$). Meanwhile, for other sociodemographic variables such as gender, age, occupational status, place of residence, and primary social media platform used, no significant differences in FoMO were found ($p > .05$).

Next, a post hoc test was conducted following the Kruskal-Wallis analysis using the Mann-Whitney test. Based on Table 11, the analysis results indicate significant differences in the level of Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) among different groups of individuals following various trends. A significant difference in FoMO was found between individuals who purchased Harry Potter merchandise and those who attended a Coldplay concert ($U = 784.5$; $p < .05$), with the Coldplay concert attendees (Mean = 49.08) exhibiting higher FoMO than the Harry Potter merchandise buyers (Mean = 45.78). Furthermore, a difference was also observed between Harry Potter merchandise buyers and football merchandise buyers ($U = 691.0$; $p < .05$), with the football merchandise buyers (Mean = 49.48) showing higher FoMO.

Other findings indicate differences between the Coldplay concert attendees and individuals who tried viral food menus ($U = 1440.5$; $p < .01$), with Coldplay concert attendees (Mean = 49.08) exhibiting higher FoMO compared to the group trying viral food (Mean = 45.32). In addition, individuals who purchased Labubu dolls also showed higher FoMO compared to those who tried viral food ($U = 1339.5$; $p < .05$; Mean Labubu Doll = 48.31; Mean Viral Food = 45.32).

Furthermore, a difference was found between individuals visiting viral tourist spots and those who purchased football merchandise ($U = 1557.0$; $p < .05$), with the football merchandise buyers (Mean = 49.48) showing higher FoMO. Similarly, K-pop concert attendees (Mean = 48.23) had higher FoMO than the group trying viral food (Mean = 45.32; $U = 1513.5$; $p < .05$). Lastly, a difference was also observed between individuals who purchased football merchandise and those who tried viral food ($U = 1254.5$; $p < .01$), with the football merchandise buyers showing higher FoMO. Overall, these findings indicate that individuals tend to experience higher Fear of Missing Out regarding viral trends related to concerts and collectible merchandise compared to more temporary consumer trends, such as trying viral foods or visiting popular tourist spots.

Based on the analysis in Table 11, differences were also found in FoMO levels among individuals with varying

numbers of social media accounts. The Mann-Whitney U test results showed significant differences between individuals with two social media accounts and those with three accounts ($U = 593.5$; $p < .01$), four accounts ($U = 633.5$;

$p < .01$), five accounts ($U = 424.5$; $p < .01$), and more than six accounts ($U = 352.0$; $p < 0.05$). Individuals with two social media accounts (Mean = 42.03) exhibited lower FoMO compared to the other groups.

Tabel 10. Fear of Missing Out Based on Viral Trends Previously Followed and The Number of Social Media Platforms Frequently Used (N= 400)

Variable	Distribution	Freq	Fear of Missing Out			
			Mean	H	P	η^2
Viral Trends Previously Followed	Purchasing Harry Potter merchandise	36	45.78	16.680	.011	.027
	Attending a Coldplay concert	60	49.08			
	Purchasing a Labubu doll	51	48.31			
	Visiting viral or trending tourist destinations	74	47.12			
	Attending K-pop concerts	57	48.23			
	Trying new menu items at popular restaurants or cafés	68	45.32			
	Purchasing football merchandise	54	49.48			
The Number of Social Media Platforms Frequently Used	1 Social Media	1	37.00	47.197	.001	.107
	2 Social Media	24	42.03			
	3 Social Media	83	46.49			
	4 Social Media	120	47.93			
	5 Social Media	94	48.73			
	>6 Social Media	78	48.83			

Note: $p < .05$ indicates statistical significance, and $p < .01$ indicates high statistical significance

Tabel 11. Mann-Whitney U Analysis for Post Hoc Test of Kruskal-Wallis on Fear of Missing Out Based on Viral Trends Previously Followed and The Number of Social Media Platforms Frequently Used (N=400)

Variable	Distribution	Freq	Fear of Missing Out				Effect Size Categories
			Mean	U	p	r	
Viral Trends Previously Followed	Purchasing Harry Potter merchandise	36	45.78	784.5	.024	.228	Small
	Attending a Coldplay concert	60	49.08				
	Purchasing Harry Potter merchandise	36	45.78	691.0	.019	.244	Small
	Purchasing football merchandise	54	49.48				
	Attending a Coldplay concert	60	49.08	1440.5	.004	.253	Small
	Trying new menu items at popular restaurants or cafés	68	45.32				
	Purchasing a Labubu doll	51	48.31	1339.5	.033	.194	Small
	Trying new menu items at popular restaurants or cafés	68	45.32				
	Visiting viral or trending tourist destinations	74	47.12	1557.0	.032	.188	Small
	Purchasing football merchandise	54	49.48				
	Attending K-Pop concert	57	48.23	1513.5	.034	.188	Small
	Trying new menu items at popular restaurants or cafés	68	45.32				
	Trying new menu items at popular restaurants or cafés	68	45.32	1254.5	.003	.271	Small
	Purchasing football merchandise	54	49.48				
The Number of Social Media Platforms Frequently Used	2 Social Media	24	42.03	593.5	.003	.291	Small
	3 Social Media	83	46.49				
	2 Social Media	24	42.03	633.5	.000	.360	Moderate
	4 Social Media	120	47.93				
	2 Social Media	24	42.03	424.5	.000	.433	Moderate
	5 Social Media	94	48.73				
	2 Social Media	24	42.03	352.0	.000	.456	Moderate
	>6 Social Media	78	48.83				
	3 Social Media	83	46.49	3890.5	.008	.186	Small
	4 Social Media	120	47.93				
	3 Social Media	83	46.49	2528.5	.000	.303	Moderate
	5 Social Media	94	48.73				
	3 Social Media	83	46.49	1922.5	.000	.350	Moderate
	>6 Social Media	78	48.83				
	4 Social Media	120	47.93	3704.5	.013	.176	Small
	>6 Social Media	78	48.83				

Note: $p < .05$ indicates statistical significance, and $p < .01$ indicates high statistical significance

Additionally, differences in FoMO were observed between individuals with three social media accounts and those with four accounts ($U = 3890.5$; $p < .01$), five accounts ($U = 2528.5$; $p < .01$), and more than six accounts ($U = 1922.5$; $p < .01$). Individuals with three accounts (Mean = 46.49) showed lower FoMO compared to groups with more accounts. Furthermore, a significant difference was found between individuals with four social media accounts and those with more than six accounts ($U = 3704.5$; $p < .05$), with the four-account group (Mean = 47.93) exhibiting lower FoMO than the group with more than six accounts (Mean = 48.83).

Overall, these findings indicate that the greater the number of social media accounts an individual has, the higher the level of Fear of Missing Out experienced. This suggests that engagement across multiple social media platforms may increase the tendency to feel anxious about missing activities or information shared by others.

DISCUSSION

This study found that the level of Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) among early adults in Indonesia is high, with 286 respondents (71.5%) classified as having high FoMO, while 114 respondents (28.5%) were in the low FoMO category. FoMO in this study encompasses several aspects, such as the need to constantly follow trends, anxiety when missing information, and the urge to immediately participate in social activities. This indicates that the proportion of individuals with high FoMO is greater than those with low FoMO. This may be due to high exposure to social media, which allows individuals to access the latest trends instantly, creating a strong drive to stay connected to avoid feeling left out. This finding is also reflected in the large number of respondents who selected "Strongly Agree" (SS) on the statement, "I feel afraid if I do not know the latest trends that are popular on social media" (item 13 on the FoMO questionnaire). Such fear illustrates a characteristic of FoMO described by Przybylski et al., (2013), namely the psychological need to continuously acquire up-to-date information as a form of fulfilling social connectedness.

Social media can increase the level of Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) by distorting an individual's perception of fulfilling real-life needs and by encouraging social comparison with others. This condition creates an illusion of connection, equates online validation with self-esteem, and establishes unrealistic social norms (Nesbit & Lole, 2026). Among early adults, social media can trigger the pursuit of need fulfillment through online validation and social comparison, thereby reinforcing FoMO. The need to belong emerges as the strongest predictor of FoMO, increasing both directly and indirectly through significant mediation by social media use (Alabri, 2022).

The comparative analyses revealed no significant differences in FoMO levels based on gender, age group, occupational status, location of residence, or primary social media platform used. These null findings carry meaningful interpretive value and should not be dismissed. Regarding gender, the absence of significant differences aligns with Rozgonjuk et al., (2020), suggesting that FoMO is not a gendered phenomenon but rather a universal psychological response to the shared experience of social media exposure and the need to belong (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Both male and female early adults appear equally susceptible to the anxiety of social exclusion, which points to the psychosocial rather than demographic nature of FoMO. The need for social connection (need to belong), an aspect of

FoMO, can be universal and not limited by gender. Both men and women can experience the fear of missing out or not being involved in social activities deemed important by their group.

Similarly, the lack of significant age-based differences across the 18–25, 26–32, and 33–40 year groups suggests that vulnerability to FoMO remains relatively stable throughout early adulthood. This aligns with Abel et al., (2016), who stated that individuals in late adolescence to early adulthood tend to have higher levels of Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) due to intense social media usage and a strong need for social validation. This may reflect the fact that individuals across this entire developmental span continue to actively build and maintain social networks, seek recognition, and engage with digital platforms as primary tools for social participation (Santrock, 2015).

The absence of employment status differences further underscores this universality: students and unemployed individuals may experience FoMO due to greater discretionary time and unrestricted platform access, while employed individuals may be driven by financial capacity that enables trend participation and the social visibility it affords (Pebriana et al, 2024). It can be concluded that both employed and unemployed individuals, such as students or those without work, exhibit high levels of FoMO. The high FoMO among unemployed respondents or students is due to their greater concern about being able to access their smartphones (Hafni & Sianturi, 2022). This is related to the number of social media accounts and the amount of free time, as unemployed individuals or students generally have more leisure time to access the internet, and smartphones cannot function optimally without internet access, resulting in higher FoMO levels (Argan et al., 2024). Meanwhile, high FoMO among employed individuals can be associated with relatively better financial capacity compared to the unemployed. Higher income allows them to quickly access, purchase, or participate in popular trends, whether in the form of goods, services, or entertainment activities.

The non-significant finding based on location of residence suggests that FoMO has become a widespread phenomenon across Indonesian regions, reflecting the increasing homogeneity of digital experiences facilitated by broad internet access. Individuals in both urban and rural areas are increasingly exposed to the same viral trends through nationally and globally connected platforms, narrowing the geographic gap in digital social experiences.

Regarding primary platform use, while descriptive results indicated that TikTok users showed the highest proportion of high FoMO and Facebook users the lowest, but the difference test did not yield a statistically significant result. Therefore, it would be premature to conclude that TikTok exerts the strongest influence on FoMO. Descriptively, TikTok's algorithmic design characterized by infinite scrolling and short-form, trend-driven content may create conditions conducive to social comparison and trend anxiety (Darmayanti et al., 2023). In contrast, Facebook usage tends to decline among early adults because the platform is perceived as less dynamic and does not showcase trends in real time. A study conducted by Akbari et al., (2021) found that Facebook use was unrelated to FoMO in certain populations. Additionally, the perception that Facebook is more popular among older generations encourages many young individuals to switch to social media platforms that offer faster, fresher, and trend-oriented digital experiences, such as TikTok, Instagram, or X (Twitter). However, whether platform type is a meaningful predictor of FoMO levels requires further investigation through controlled comparative or longitudinal designs before firm conclusions can be drawn.

In contrast to the above, two variables did yield statistically significant differences in FoMO levels: the types of viral trends followed and the number of social media platforms used. These findings constitute the central analytical contribution of this study and warrant focused discussion. With respect to the types of viral trends, early adults who followed concert attendance and limited-edition merchandise collection trends showed notably higher FoMO levels compared to those who engaged primarily in more transient trends such as trying viral foods or visiting popular tourist destinations. This pattern can be understood through the lens of social identity and symbolic consumption: concerts and exclusive collectibles carry strong signals of cultural belonging and social status, and their limited availability amplifies the perceived cost of non-participation (Sari et al., 2023). Unlike consumable trends that are relatively accessible and temporary, concert experiences and rare merchandise are scarce and time-bound, heightening the anxiety of missing out. This aligns with Festinger (1957) social comparison theory—when peers publicly display participation in high-visibility, exclusive events, individuals who are absent face stronger upward comparison pressure, intensifying FoMO. These findings suggest that FoMO is not uniformly triggered by all forms of trend participation, but is particularly acute when trends carry strong symbolic social value and involve exclusivity.

The second significant finding—that FoMO levels increase with the number of social media platforms used—provides important insight into the cumulative nature of digital social exposure. Participants using more than three platforms simultaneously showed considerably higher FoMO than those using one or two. This supports the proposition that multi-platform engagement broadens the scope of social comparison, as individuals are exposed to a wider and more diverse array of peers' experiences, achievements, and trend participation across different digital environments (Ellison et al., 2007). Each additional platform introduces new social referents, new trending content, and new opportunities to perceive oneself as falling behind. From a Self-Determination Theory perspective (Ryan & Deci, 2000), this cumulative exposure may progressively undermine the sense of autonomy and competence, as individuals feel increasingly compelled to monitor and respond to external social cues rather than acting from internally motivated choices. These findings suggest that it is not simply social media use, but the breadth and simultaneity of multi-platform engagement, that most meaningfully amplifies FoMO among early adults.

The findings of this study indicate that the majority of early adults fall into the high FoMO category, characterized by a need to constantly follow trends, anxiety when missing information, and a strong drive to immediately participate in social activities. This condition shows that social media functions not only as a means of communication but also as a primary medium for early adults to maintain social relevance, gain recognition, and stay connected with their social environment. This aligns with Abel et al., (2016), who argue that FoMO is influenced by continuous exposure to information, social attachment, and a strong urge to be part of social interactions.

Overall, the findings of this study carry important implications for managing psychological well-being and digital wellness among early adults. First, in terms of digital literacy, early adults need to develop a critical awareness of how algorithmic content delivery and multi-platform exposure shape their perceptions of social norms and peer experiences. Psychoeducational programs and public health campaigns targeting this population should incorporate modules on recognizing FoMO triggers, understanding

social comparison mechanisms, and distinguishing between genuine personal interest and externally driven participation.

Second, regarding self-regulation, the significant association between multi-platform use and elevated FoMO highlights the importance of intentional and mindful platform management. Early adults are encouraged to develop self-regulatory strategies, such as setting screen time limits within platform settings, curating their followed accounts to reduce unnecessary social comparison, and taking periodic digital breaks to restore psychological balance and reduce anxiety driven by constant connectivity. And, third, with respect to digital well-being, the findings underscore the need for a broader cultural shift in how social media participation is framed. Rather than treating trend participation as a measure of social worth, early adults should be supported through counseling, peer education, and community-based programs in cultivating a more grounded sense of identity that is guided by personal values and internal motivations, rather than contingent on external validation or the fear of social exclusion.

This study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. The descriptive-comparative design limits the ability to establish causal or directional relationships between FoMO and other psychological variables. Future research would benefit from examining FoMO in relation to variables such as self-esteem, self-concept, social comparison orientation, and psychological well-being, as well as exploring potential mediating and moderating mechanisms. Additionally, variables such as income level, personality traits, and frequency of social media use were not controlled for in this study and may independently influence FoMO levels. Longitudinal designs could further illuminate how FoMO evolves across different phases of early adulthood and in response to changing digital habits.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

This study found that early adults in Indonesia predominantly exhibit high levels of Fear of Missing Out (FoMO), with 71.5% of participants classified in the high FoMO category. This condition is broadly characterized by anxiety about missing trends, information, or social experiences perceived as important within one's social environment, and appears to be widespread across the Indonesian early adult population regardless of demographic background. Comparative analyses revealed no statistically significant differences in FoMO levels based on gender, age group, employment status, or geographic location, suggesting that FoMO is a psychosocial phenomenon driven primarily by shared patterns of social media exposure and the universal need for relatedness, rather than by demographic characteristics. Similarly, while descriptive results indicated that TikTok users showed the highest proportion of high FoMO and Facebook users the lowest, the difference test did not yield a statistically significant result across primary platform types. Therefore, TikTok should be understood as descriptively prominent rather than conclusively the strongest driver of FoMO; further research is needed to confirm any platform-specific effects.

Two variables did yield statistically significant differences in FoMO levels. First, the type of viral trend followed was significantly associated with FoMO, with individuals participating in concert attendance and limited-edition merchandise collection trends showing higher FoMO levels compared to those engaging in more transient

trends. This suggests that trends carrying strong symbolic social value and exclusivity are more potent triggers of FoMO anxiety. Second, the number of social media platforms used was significantly associated with FoMO levels, with individuals using more than three platforms particularly four to five showing a markedly higher tendency toward high FoMO. This points to the cumulative effect of multi-platform engagement in broadening social comparison exposure and intensifying the psychological pressure to remain constantly connected. Overall, the widespread prevalence of high FoMO among early adults in Indonesia carries meaningful implications for psychological well-being, including heightened anxiety, increased susceptibility to social pressure, compulsive digital monitoring, and reduced capacity to maintain a healthy balance between online engagement and real-life experience. These findings underscore the importance of promoting digital literacy, self-regulation skills, and digital well-being awareness among this population.

DECLARATIONS

Ethical Statement

This study was conducted in accordance with established ethical standards. Artificial intelligence was used solely for grammar checking and language editing; all English translations and the intellectual content of the manuscript were completed manually by the researcher.

Conflict of Interest Statement:

No Applicable

Consent to participate

Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study.

Availability of data and materials

The datasets generated during and/or analyzed during the current study are available from the corresponding author on reasonable request.

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Author Contributions

All authors have made substantial contributions to all of the following: (a) the conception and design of the study, or acquisition of data, or analysis and interpretation of data, (b) drafting the article or revising it critically for important intellectual content, and (c) final approval of the version to be submitted.

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