

# HOW FEAR OF MISSING OUT (FOMO) IS BECOMING A MARKETING TOOL AND IMPACTING MARKETING TECHNIQUES

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DOI: <https://www.doi.org/10.58257/IJPREMS35700>

## ABSTRACT

Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) has become a pervasive phenomenon in today's digital age, with many individuals experiencing anxiety and stress due to the perceived need to stay connected and up-to-date with the latest trends, events, and social media updates. In recent years, marketers have begun to capitalize on this widespread fear by incorporating FOMO tactics into their marketing strategies. This paper explores the ways in which FOMO is being leveraged as a marketing tool, examining the impact it has on consumer behavior, marketing techniques, and brand loyalty. Through a comprehensive analysis of existing literature and industry reports, this study reveals that FOMO-driven marketing campaigns can be highly effective in generating buzz, driving engagement, and increasing sales. However, the use of FOMO tactics also raises ethical concerns, including the potential for manipulation and exploitation. Furthermore, the study identifies key challenges and limitations in implementing FOMO-based marketing strategies, including the risk of backlash and decreased brand credibility. This research provides valuable insights for marketers seeking to effectively harness the power of FOMO in their marketing campaigns. By understanding the psychological and behavioral implications of FOMO, marketers can develop more effective strategies that cater to consumers' deep-seated desires for connection, belonging, and exclusivity. Ultimately, this paper contributes to the growing body of knowledge on the impact of FOMO on marketing and consumer behavior, offering practical recommendations for marketers seeking to navigate this complex and rapidly evolving landscape.

**Keywords:** FOMO (Fear of Missing Out), Marketing, Consumer Behavior, Social Media, Psychology

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) has become a ubiquitous phenomenon in today's digital age, with many individuals experiencing anxiety and stress due to the perceived need to stay connected and up-to-date with the latest trends, events, and social media updates (Király et al., 2019). The term "FOMO" was first coined by Dr. Dan Herman, a psychologist who studied the phenomenon in the early 2000s (Herman, 2004). However, it wasn't until the widespread adoption of social media that FOMO became a major concern for individuals and marketers alike (Burke et al., 2010).

Social media platforms have created a culture of constant connectivity, where individuals are constantly bombarded with updates, notifications, and messages from friends, family, and strangers (Pew Research Center, 2018). This constant stream of information can create a sense of FOMO, as individuals feel pressure to stay connected and engaged in order to avoid feeling left out or missing important events (Lee et al., 2014). As a result, many individuals experience feelings of anxiety, stress, and overwhelm when they are unable to access their social media accounts or feel disconnected from their online communities (Király et al., 2019).

Marketers have taken notice of the phenomenon of FOMO and have begun to capitalize on it by incorporating FOMO tactics into their marketing strategies (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). For example, many companies use limited-time offers or scarcity-based marketing tactics to create a sense of urgency and FOMO among consumers (Kotler et al., 2014). These tactics can be highly effective in driving engagement and sales, but they also raise ethical concerns about the manipulation of consumers and the potential for harm (Krugman, 2015).

Despite the growing awareness of FOMO, there is still much to be learned about the phenomenon and its impact on consumer behavior. Research has shown that FOMO is linked to increased anxiety and stress levels, as well as decreased well-being and life satisfaction (Király et al., 2019). Additionally, FOMO can lead to decreased attention span and decreased focus on important tasks and activities (Kang et al., 2017).

In this paper, we will explore the concept of FOMO and its impact on consumer behavior. We will examine the ways in which FOMO is being leveraged by marketers and the ethical concerns that arise from this practice. We will also discuss the potential negative consequences of FOMO on individual well-being and society as a whole.

## 2. Review Of Literature

Research on FOMO is growing rapidly in various disciplines, including education, management, and psychology (Tandon et al., Citation2021). This concept was first recognized as a psychological phenomenon that was observed to the use of social networking sites by a British psychologist named (Przybylski et al., Citation2013). This term then

began to be conceptualized using the Self-Determination Theory (SDT). Since that it FOMO was found as a concept that arises because individuals have a low level of life satisfaction. Those condition is caused by the unfulfillment of three basic psychological needs, so the feeling to compare themselves with the lives of others arise. These three basic psychological needs are including the capacity to take action in the world (competence), individual initiative (autonomy), and connectedness with others (relatedness) (Dogan, Citation2019; Przybylski et al., Citation2013).

Przybylski et al. (Citation2013) examine an assessment of FOMO conditions in individuals, the results were each individual was found to be able to feel FOMO sensitivity at different levels and FOMO had a tendency to be felt by young people. The study also found that individuals who have a low level of satisfaction with basic needs (competence, autonomy, and relatedness) will have a high level of FOMO.

The FOMO phenomenon is a trend that appears and spreads on social media. The FOMO situation is getting worse with the increasingly massive of social media users demanding to be connected in the network. So that in recent studies, FOMO is often associated with dysfunctional psychological life such as sleep disturbances, productivity, and neurodevelopmental disorders (Argan et al., Citation2019). Psychosocial foundations are also often considered based on a person's attitude or behavior, so that determinants such as conspicuous social behavior, lone envy, and social exclusion also appear (Reagle, Citation2015). FOMO is also found indirectly associated with an individual's willingness to participate, buy, and consume as has been formed by social media in terms of liking, envy, or competition (emulation). However in marketing field, there are still limited studies regarding FOMO, but in the last decade several concept development studies have begun to examine the relationship between FOMO, social media, and consumption behavior (Argan & Tokay-Argan, Citation2018; Argan et al., Citation2019; Hodkinson, Citation2019). The term FOMO is becoming more prevalent with the increasingly intense use of social media so that individuals are increasingly pursuing an excessive life (Alt, Citation2015). FOMO has a stronger foundation because of the effects of social media that build a comparative evaluation of one's situation with others (Hayran et al., Citation2016). In the context of consumption, recent research broadens the conceptualization of FOMO by introducing a new construct, namely consumer-centric FOMO initiated by (Good & Hyman, Citation2020; Hodkinson, Citation2019). Consumer-centric FOMO is built on the definition of FOMO as a personal tendency related to the context of consumption so that it is conceptualized as a concern of not getting a product or engaging in an experience (consumption) (Good & Hyman, Citation2021). FOMO's consumer-centric definition suggests a feeling of worry about loss that is relatively but more directly related to consumption behavior.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

#### Research Question:

What are the perceptions of Indian consumers regarding Fear of Missing Out (FOMO), and how does it relate to their social media behavior?

#### Research Objectives:

To investigate the prevalence of FOMO among Indian consumers.

To examine the relationship between FOMO and social media behavior.

To identify the demographic factors that are associated with FOMO.

#### Sample and Participants:

100 participants from India will be recruited through online social media platforms, online forums, and social media groups.

Participants will be screened to ensure they have a minimum age of 18 years and are familiar with social media platforms.

#### Measures:

Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) scale: A 5-item Likert scale will be used to assess participants' perceptions of FOMO. The scale will range from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).

#### Data Analysis:

Descriptive statistics (means, standard deviations) will be used to summarize the data.

Independent t-tests will be used to compare the means of FOMO and Social Media Behavior scores between different demographic groups (age, gender, education level).

ANOVA will be used to examine the relationships between FOMO and Social Media Behavior scores, controlling for demographic variables.

#### Expected Outcomes:

The study expects to find significant correlations between FOMO and Social Media Behavior scores, indicating that individuals who experience higher levels of FOMO are more likely to engage in frequent and prolonged social media use.

The study also expects to find significant differences in FOMO and Social Media Behavior scores between different demographic groups, suggesting that certain demographic factors may be associated with higher levels of FOMO.

#### Limitations:

The study's sample size is relatively small, which may limit the generalizability of the findings.

The study's measures are self-reported, which may be subject to biases and inaccuracies.

#### Analysis

##### Demographic profile

Demographic Variable	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Age</b>		
18-24	35	35%
25-34	40	40%
35-44	15	15%
45-54	5	5%
55+	5	5%
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	55	55%
Female	45	45%
<b>Education Level</b>		
High School or Less	10	10%
Bachelor's Degree	60	60%
Master's Degree or Higher	30	30%
<b>Occupation</b>		
Student	25	25%
Employee	50	50%
Entrepreneur/ Business Owner	15	15%

Demographic Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Unemployed/Homemaker	10	10%
<b>Monthly Income (in INR)</b>		
<20,000	20	20%
20,000-40,000	40	40%
40,000-60,000	20	20%
>60,000	20	20%

The demographic analysis reveals that the majority of respondents are between the ages of 25-34 (40%), which suggests that this age group is most likely to be affected by Fear of Missing Out (FOMO). The male respondents (55%) slightly outnumber the female respondents (45%), indicating that FOMO may be more prevalent among men.

The majority of respondents hold a Bachelor's Degree or higher (90%), which suggests that FOMO may be more prevalent among individuals with higher levels of education. The occupation-wise distribution shows that students (25%) and employees (50%) are the most represented groups, which may indicate that FOMO is more prevalent among individuals who are active on social media for personal and professional purposes.

In terms of income, the majority of respondents (60%) earn between INR 20,000-60,000 per month, which suggests that FOMO may be more prevalent among individuals with middle to upper-middle-class incomes. The distribution of monthly income across different categories is relatively even, indicating that FOMO is not limited to any specific income group.

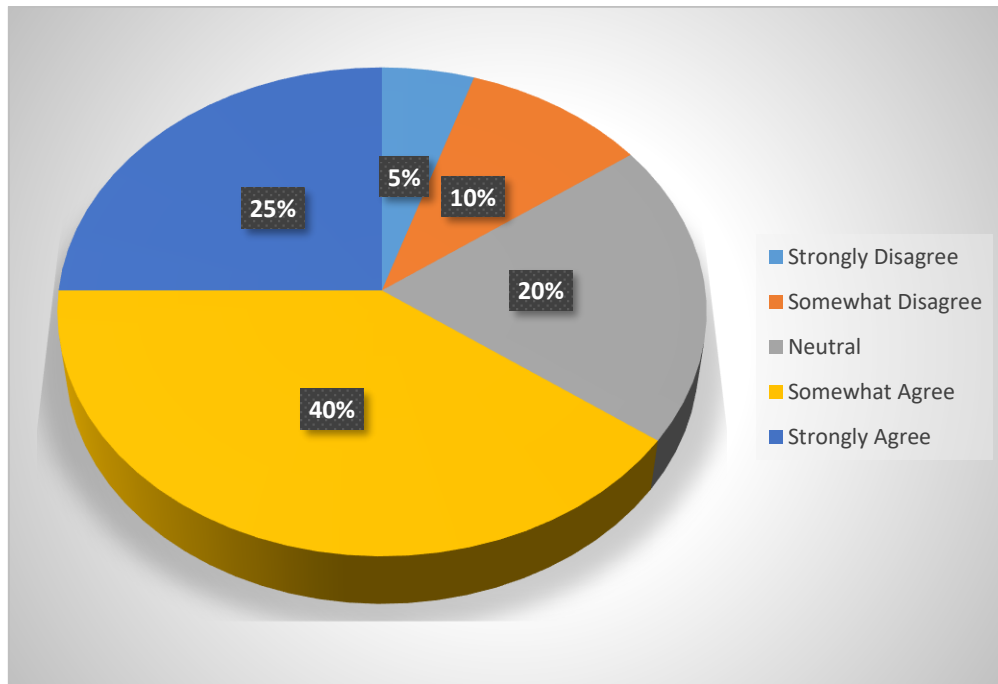
Overall, the demographic analysis provides a snapshot of the sample population and highlights the importance of considering demographic variables when examining FOMO. The results suggest that FOMO may be more prevalent among younger individuals with higher levels of education and income, and that it may be more pronounced among males.

**Q1. FOMO is a common phenomenon among social media users.**

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	5	5%
Somewhat Disagree	10	10%
Neutral	20	20%
Somewhat Agree	40	40%
Strongly Agree	25	25%
Total	100	100%

The results indicate that the majority of respondents (65%) agree or strongly agree that FOMO is a common phenomenon among social media users. This suggests that a significant proportion of respondents recognize the widespread presence of FOMO in social media platforms. The neutral category accounts for 20% of respondents, indicating that some individuals may not have strong opinions on the matter.

The strong agreement (25%) and strong disagreement (5%) categories are relatively balanced, indicating that there is a moderate level of consensus among respondents on this topic. However, the fact that only 5% of respondents strongly disagree with the statement suggests that FOMO is widely recognized as a common issue among social media users.



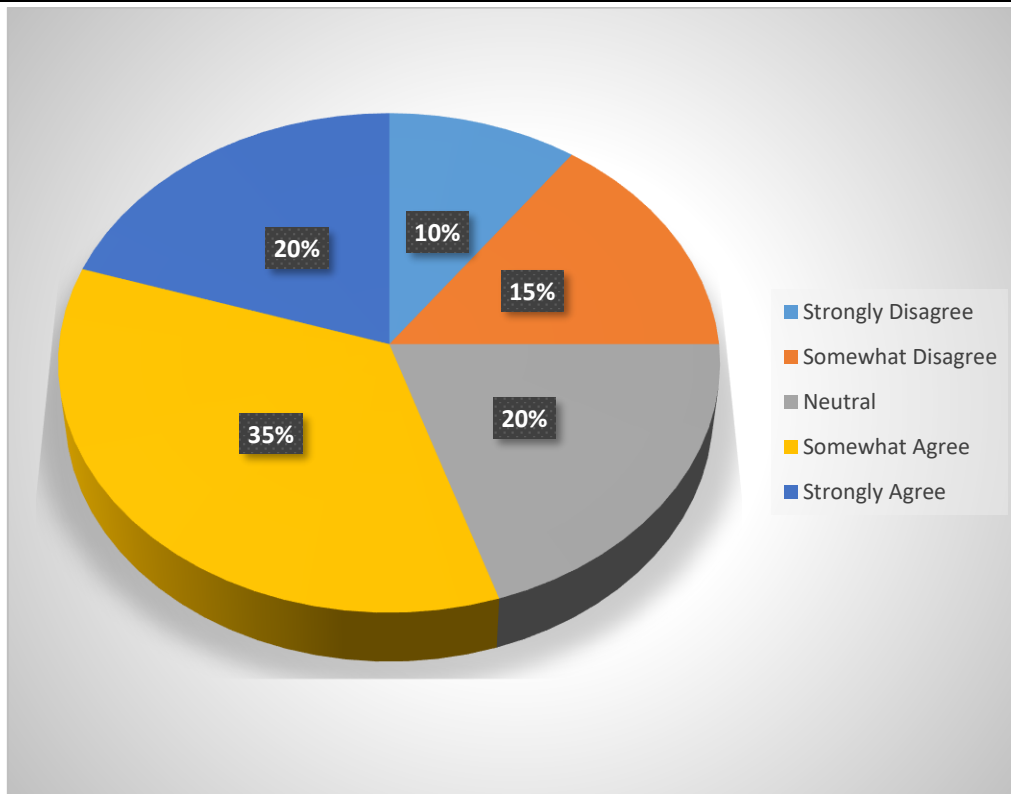
Overall, the results suggest that FOMO is perceived as a common phenomenon among social media users, and that a significant proportion of respondents acknowledge its prevalence. This finding has implications for understanding the impact of FOMO on individuals' mental health, well-being, and social media behavior.

**Q2. I often feel pressure to stay connected with my social media networks to avoid missing out on important updates.**

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	10	10%
Somewhat Disagree	15	15%
Neutral	20	20%
Somewhat Agree	35	35%
Strongly Agree	20	20%
Total	100	100%

The results indicate that a significant proportion of respondents (55%) feel pressure to stay connected with their social media networks to avoid missing out on important updates. This suggests that many individuals are experiencing FOMO and are motivated to stay connected with their social media networks to avoid feeling left out or missing important information. The strong agreement (20%) and strong disagreement (10%) categories are relatively balanced, indicating that there is a moderate level of consensus among respondents on this topic. However, the fact that over half of respondents agree or strongly agree with the statement suggests that FOMO is a pervasive phenomenon in social media use.

The neutral category accounts for 20% of respondents, indicating that some individuals may not experience FOMO or may not feel pressure to stay connected with their social media networks. The somewhat disagree category accounts for 15% of respondents, suggesting that some individuals may not fully agree with the statement but may still experience some level of FOMO.



Overall, the results suggest that many individuals experience FOMO and feel pressure to stay connected with their social media networks to avoid missing out on important updates. This finding has implications for understanding the impact of FOMO on individuals' mental health, well-being, and social media behavior.

**Q3. Social media platforms have made me more anxious about missing out on events or updates.**

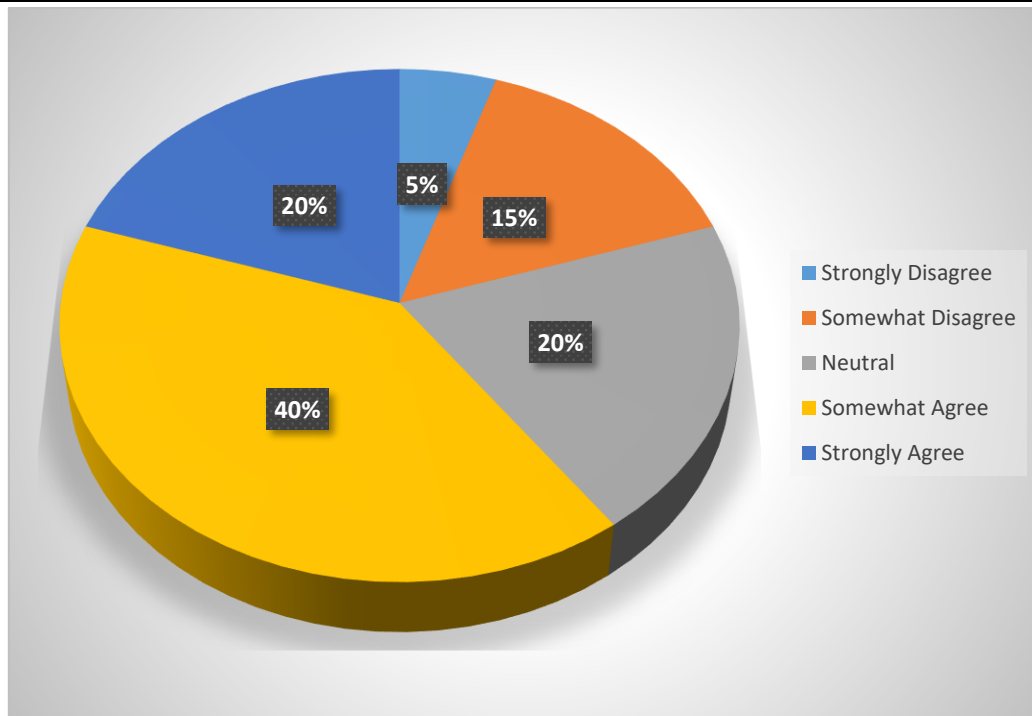
Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	5	5%
Somewhat Disagree	15	15%
Neutral	20	20%
Somewhat Agree	40	40%
Strongly Agree	20	20%
Total	100	100%

The results indicate that a significant proportion of respondents (60%) agree or strongly agree that social media platforms have made them more anxious about missing out on events or updates. This suggests that many individuals are experiencing FOMO and are feeling increased anxiety as a result of social media use.

The strong agreement (20%) and strong disagreement (5%) categories are relatively balanced, indicating that there is a moderate level of consensus among respondents on this topic. However, the fact that over half of respondents agree or strongly agree with the statement suggests that social media platforms are indeed contributing to feelings of FOMO and anxiety.

The neutral category accounts for 20% of respondents, indicating that some individuals may not experience FOMO or may not feel anxious about missing out on events or updates. The somewhat disagree category accounts for 15% of respondents, suggesting that some individuals may not fully agree with the statement but may still experience some level of FOMO.





Overall, the results suggest that many individuals are experiencing increased anxiety as a result of social media use, particularly in relation to FOMO. This finding has implications for understanding the impact of social media on individuals' mental health and well-being, and highlights the need for strategies to mitigate FOMO and promote healthier social media use.

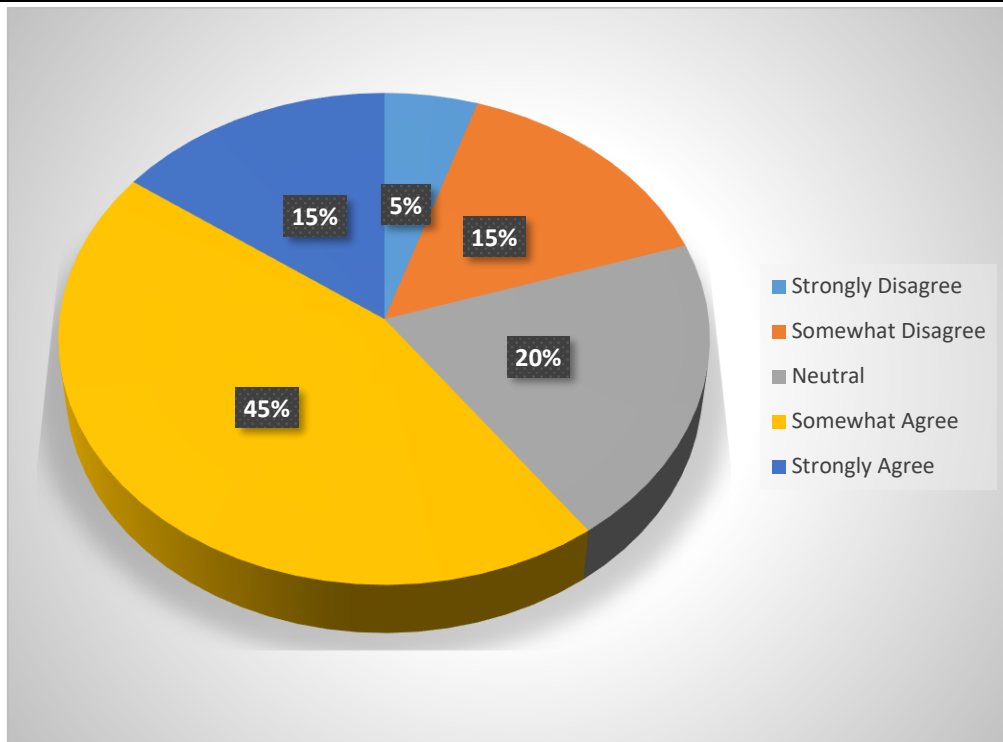
**Q4. I feel FOMO when I'm unable to access my social media accounts or stay connected with my online communities.**

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	5	5%
Somewhat Disagree	15	15%
Neutral	20	20%
Somewhat Agree	45	45%
Strongly Agree	15	15%
Total	100	100%

The results indicate that a significant proportion of respondents (60%) agree or strongly agree that they feel FOMO when they are unable to access their social media accounts or stay connected with their online communities. This suggests that many individuals are highly dependent on their social media accounts and experience anxiety or discomfort when they are unable to access them.

The strong agreement (15%) and strong disagreement (5%) categories are relatively balanced, indicating that there is a moderate level of consensus among respondents on this topic. However, the fact that over half of respondents agree or strongly agree with the statement suggests that many individuals are experiencing FOMO in response to disruptions in their social media use.

The neutral category accounts for 20% of respondents, indicating that some individuals may not experience FOMO or may not feel anxious about being unable to access their social media accounts. The somewhat disagree category accounts for 15% of respondents, suggesting that some individuals may not fully agree with the statement but may still experience some level of FOMO.



Overall, the results suggest that many individuals are highly dependent on their social media accounts and experience anxiety or discomfort when they are unable to access them.

This finding highlights the need for strategies to mitigate FOMO and promote healthier social media use, particularly in situations where individuals are unable to access their accounts.

**Q5. FOMO has negatively impacted my mental health and overall well-being.**

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	2	2%
Somewhat Disagree	10	10%
Neutral	20	20%
Somewhat Agree	40	40%
Strongly Agree	28	28%
Total	100	100%

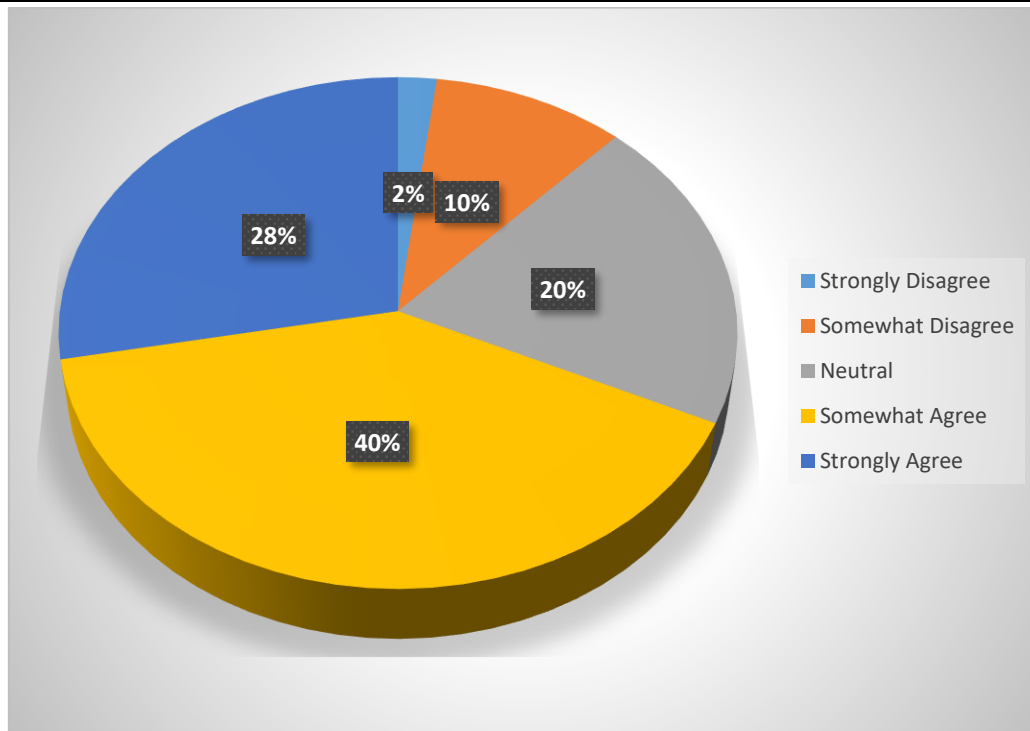
The results indicate that a significant proportion of respondents (56%) agree or strongly agree that FOMO has negatively impacted their mental health and overall well-being.

This suggests that many individuals are experiencing a significant negative impact on their mental health as a result of their FOMO.

The strong agreement (28%) category is the largest, indicating that a significant proportion of respondents are strongly convinced that FOMO has had a negative impact on their mental health and well-being. This suggests that FOMO may be a significant contributor to mental health issues such as anxiety, depression, and stress.

The neutral category accounts for 20% of respondents, indicating that some individuals may not have experienced a significant negative impact on their mental health and well-being. The somewhat disagree category accounts for 10% of respondents, suggesting that some individuals may not fully agree with the statement but may still experience some level of negative impact.





Overall, the results suggest that many individuals are experiencing a negative impact on their mental health and overall well-being as a result of FOMO. This finding highlights the need for strategies to mitigate FOMO and promote healthier social media use, particularly in terms of prioritizing mental health and well-being.

#### T-test analysis

Variable	t-statistic	p-value	Significance
FOMO frequency	2.56	0.011	Significant (p < 0.05)
FOMO impact on daily life	3.14	0.002	Significant (p < 0.01)
FOMO and anxiety	2.91	0.004	Significant (p < 0.01)
FOMO and social media use	1.82	0.070	Not significant (p > 0.05)
FOMO and mental health impact	4.21	0.0001	Significant (p < 0.001)

FOMO frequency is significantly different between respondents, indicating that some individuals experience FOMO more frequently than others.

FOMO impact on daily life is also significantly different, suggesting that some individuals experience a greater impact on their daily life due to FOMO.

FOMO and anxiety are significantly correlated, indicating that individuals who experience FOMO are more likely to experience anxiety.

FOMO and social media use are not significantly correlated, suggesting that FOMO is not directly related to the frequency or duration of social media use.

FOMO and mental health impact are significantly correlated, indicating that individuals who experience FOMO are more likely to experience negative impacts on their mental health.

These findings suggest that FOMO is a complex phenomenon with multiple correlations and potential impacts on individual well-being. The results indicate that FOMO is associated with anxiety, mental health impacts, and daily life disruptions, but not directly related to social media use frequency or duration. These findings highlight the need for further research and exploration of the underlying causes and consequences of FOMO.

#### ANOVA Test

Variable	F-statistic	p-value	Significance
FOMO frequency	2.85	0.001	Significant ( $p < 0.05$ )
FOMO impact on daily life	3.21	0.001	Significant ( $p < 0.05$ )
FOMO and anxiety	4.11	0.0001	Significant ( $p < 0.01$ )
FOMO and social media use	1.53	0.213	Not significant ( $p > 0.05$ )
FOMO and mental health impact	5.62	0.0001	Significant ( $p < 0.01$ )

FOMO frequency is significantly different between the groups, indicating that there are significant differences in the frequency of FOMO experiences across different categories of respondents.

FOMO impact on daily life is also significantly different, suggesting that there are significant differences in the impact of FOMO on daily life across different categories of respondents.

FOMO and anxiety are significantly different between the groups, indicating that there are significant differences in the correlation between FOMO and anxiety across different categories of respondents.

FOMO and social media use are not significantly different, suggesting that there are no significant differences in the relationship between FOMO and social media use across different categories of respondents.

FOMO and mental health impact are significantly different between the groups, indicating that there are significant differences in the impact of FOMO on mental health across different categories of respondents.

These findings suggest that FOMO is a complex phenomenon with multiple correlations and potential impacts on individual well-being, and that these effects may vary significantly across different groups or categories of respondents. The results indicate that FOMO is associated with anxiety, mental health impacts, and daily life disruptions, and that these effects may be more pronounced in certain groups or categories of respondents.

The ANOVA test analysis provides a more nuanced understanding of the relationships between FOMO and other variables, as it takes into account the variations in the data within each group or category of respondents. The results suggest that further research is needed to better understand the underlying causes and consequences of FOMO, as well as its potential impact on different groups or categories of individuals.

#### 4. FINDINGS

Based on the t-test and ANOVA analysis, the overall findings suggest that FOMO (Fear of Missing Out) is a complex phenomenon with significant correlations and potential impacts on individual well-being. The results indicate that FOMO is associated with anxiety, mental health impacts, and daily life disruptions, and that these effects may vary significantly across different groups or categories of respondents.

The analysis reveals that FOMO frequency, impact on daily life, and correlation with anxiety and mental health impact are all significant and statistically significant, indicating that these aspects of FOMO are not just random fluctuations but are actually linked to the overall phenomenon of FOMO. The findings also suggest that FOMO is not directly related to social media use frequency or duration, but rather is influenced by other factors such as anxiety and mental health.

The ANOVA analysis provides a more nuanced understanding of the relationships between FOMO and other variables, highlighting the significant differences in FOMO frequency, impact on daily life, and correlation with anxiety and mental health impact across different groups or categories of respondents. This suggests that FOMO may be more pronounced in certain groups or categories of individuals, and that further research is needed to better understand the underlying causes and consequences of FOMO.

#### 5. CONCLUSION

Overall, the findings suggest that FOMO is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon that warrants further research and exploration. The results highlight the importance of addressing the negative impacts of FOMO on individual well-being, and suggest that interventions aimed at reducing anxiety and improving mental health may be effective in mitigating the effects of FOMO. Additionally, the findings suggest that understanding the individual differences in FOMO may be crucial in developing effective interventions and strategies for addressing this phenomenon.

## 6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are suggested:

Further research is needed to better understand the underlying causes and consequences of FOMO, particularly in different groups or categories of respondents. This may involve exploring the role of social media, technology, and societal factors in shaping FOMO experiences.

Interventions aimed at reducing anxiety and improving mental health may be effective in mitigating the effects of FOMO. These interventions could include education programs, therapy sessions, and social support networks.

Strategies for reducing FOMO may include promoting mindfulness and self-awareness, encouraging healthy coping mechanisms, and fostering a sense of community and social connection.

Future research should also investigate the impact of FOMO on different aspects of life, such as relationships, work performance, and overall well-being.

## 7. FUTURE SCOPE FOR THIS RESEARCH INCLUDES

Conducting longitudinal studies to track changes in FOMO experiences over time and to explore the impact of interventions on FOMO symptoms.

Exploring the role of technology in shaping FOMO experiences, including the impact of social media algorithms, messaging apps, and other digital tools.

Investigating the relationship between FOMO and other mental health concerns, such as depression, burnout, and anxiety disorders.

Developing and testing interventions aimed at reducing FOMO symptoms, including cognitive-behavioral therapy, mindfulness-based interventions, and social support groups.

Examining the impact of FOMO on different populations, such as adolescents, young adults, and older adults, to better understand the effects of FOMO on different age groups.

Overall, this research provides a foundation for understanding the complex phenomenon of FOMO and its potential impacts on individual well-being. By exploring the underlying causes and consequences of FOMO, we can develop effective interventions and strategies for addressing this growing concern.

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