

Millennials, FOMO, and the Qur'an: A Spiritual Response to a Modern Anxiety

Agustini^{1*} and Sultan Gholand Astapala²

^{1,2}, Fatmawati Sukarno State Islamic University of Bengkulu, Indonesia

ABSTRACT

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Correspondence Address:

agustini@mail.uinfasbengkulu.ac.id

This study examines how the culture of Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) influences the tendency of millennials to become addicted to social media. As the number of internet users in Indonesia increases, especially among millennials, social media addiction has become a problem that negatively impacts the anxiety and mental health of this generation. The leading cause of growing anxiety and weakening self-confidence in social media addiction situations is FOMO, which is triggered by seeing other people's lives on social media. This article outlines at least four strategies for developing positive social media habits, including prioritizing yourself, avoiding excessive use, seeking genuine connections, and increasing self-esteem. It is hoped that these steps will help millennials overcome the negative impacts of social media addiction and FOMO, and create a positive social media culture based on the ideals of the Qur'an. This study tells us all about the importance of understanding the negative impacts of social media addiction, especially in the context of FOMO culture, and the need to change behavior to maintain mental health and balance in the lives of the younger generation.

Keywords: *Al-Qur'an, Fomo, Millennial Generation, Modern Anxiety*

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini mengkaji bagaimana budaya Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) memengaruhi kecenderungan generasi milenial untuk menjadi kecanduan media sosial. Seiring dengan meningkatnya jumlah pengguna internet di Indonesia, khususnya di kalangan milenial, kecanduan media sosial telah menjadi masalah yang berdampak negatif pada kecemasan dan kesehatan mental generasi ini. Penyebab utama meningkatnya kecemasan dan melemahnya kepercayaan diri dalam situasi kecanduan media sosial adalah FOMO, yang dipicu oleh melihat kehidupan orang lain di media sosial. Artikel ini menguraikan setidaknya empat strategi untuk mengembangkan kebiasaan media sosial yang positif, termasuk memprioritaskan diri sendiri, menghindari penggunaan berlebihan, mencari koneksi yang tulus, dan meningkatkan harga diri. Diharapkan langkah-langkah ini akan membantu generasi milenial mengatasi dampak negatif dari kecanduan media sosial dan FOMO, serta menciptakan budaya media sosial yang positif berdasarkan cita-cita Al-Qur'an. Penelitian ini memberi tahu kita semua tentang pentingnya memahami dampak negatif dari kecanduan media sosial, terutama dalam konteks budaya FOMO, dan perlunya mengubah perilaku untuk menjaga kesehatan mental dan keseimbangan dalam kehidupan generasi muda.

Kata Kunci: *Al-Qur'an, Fomo, Generasi Milenial, Kecemasan Modern*

INTRODUCTION

The availability of the internet, which allows access to information on various social media platforms, has accelerated technological progress (Margaretha, 2023). Social media was first created as a tool (Jannah, 2022). Teenagers in Indonesia are the biggest social media users, and it is one of the most popular communication tools available today (Jannah, 2022). It is called a "cyberspace" because its content is usually seen as imaginative and virtual (Maza & Aprianty, 2022). Based on the results of the 2018 Basic Health Research (Riskedas), 19 million Indonesians under the age of 15 suffer from emotional mental disorders. As many as 12 million adults over the age of 15 suffer from depression. Based on the results of the 2016 Health Research and Development Agency Sample Registration System research, 1,800 people commit suicide each year, or five people per day if reported. As many as 47.7% of suicide victims are between the ages of 10 and 39. In short, the millennial generation is a generation that is currently productive and adolescent.

According to the 2017 Networld Stats Internet report, Indonesia is ranked fifth as the highest internet user in the world. In 2022, internet users will reach 210 million, or 77.02% of the population. However, the figure increased to 78.19% in 2023, or around 215 million Indonesians. According to another survey, the millennial group, most internet users in Indonesia, dominate the data above. According to a survey by Alvara Research, 90.4% of millennials use the internet more often than other generations, while Generation Z is in second place with 97.7%. Indonesia has 160 million social media users, and social media penetration is relatively high, at 59%.

The high internet usage rate among young Indonesians often raises various new issues. This is because, in general, negative impacts always accompany technological advances. The development of excessive worry and lack of self-confidence when seeing different or even famous social media users, even though they are not required to follow the latest fashion trends, is one of the negative impacts of the culture of social media addiction. The symptom of Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) is the fear of not keeping up with the times, which is known as (Kiding & Matulessy, 2020). Simply put, FOMO is the fear of missing out on information that is currently happening (Ayuningtyas & Wiyono, 2020).

One of the negative impacts of social media on psychological conditions is the Fear of Missing Out Syndrome, which has recently been discussed again, even though this phenomenon has emerged since 2004. Fear of Missing Out, this acronym was introduced by Patrick J. McGinnis in an article entitled "Social Theory HBS: McGinnis' Two FOs" (Patrick McGinnis,

2020), according to Mc. Ginnis, Fear of Missing Out is an unwanted feeling of speed that arises from the perception of other people's experiences that are more satisfying than one's own, usually experienced through exposure to social media. He also defines Fear of Missing Out as a social pressure that comes from the feeling of being left behind in an event, or being left out of a positive or memorable collective experience (Patrick McGinnis, 2020).

From the definition of FOMO that has been explained, FOMO can be increasingly triggered by social media. An individual who increasingly accesses his social media to see posts from friends, relatives, or family will increasingly feel pressure on himself. Like when an individual sees a friend's WhatsApp story posing with a famous restaurant-style food dish, sees a friend's Instagram story showing that he bought an Apple smartphone, or sees a family gathering with a pleasant atmosphere. In contrast, the individual does not participate. Immediately, the individual affected by Fear of Missing Out will feel worry, fear, and even anxiety because he thinks he cannot take part in that moment.

The occurrence of FoMO is natural because the development of digital technology is so rapid and easy to access that it makes people want to be updated about everything (Narti & Yanto, 2022). However, for those who experience excessive FoMO, it will have an impact on the decline in people's mental health conditions, such as increased stress, depression, and levels of satisfaction with everything they have (Astuti, 2021).

Fear of Missing Out or feelings of anxiety and worry in the Qur'an are detailed into four terms, namely: the word Khouf and its derivatives are mentioned 122 times in the Qur'an, Huzn and its derivatives are mentioned 42 times in the Qur'an, the word Dhoyiq is mentioned 12 times, and the word Halu'a is mentioned once in the Qur'an (Abdul Baqi, 1962).

Verses that fall into the category of worries or anxieties related to worldly matters. As the theme in this study, which discusses Fear of Missing Out, FOMO is a syndrome that causes various worries about the world. Whereas Allah has told us to fear various worldly matters so that we can be patient in facing them, as explained in the Qur'an. Al-Baqarah [2]: 155

وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنَ الْخَوْفِ وَالْجُوعِ وَنَقْصٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَنْفُسِ وَالثَّمَرَاتِ وَبِشَيْءٍ مِّنَ الصَّبْرِ

"And indeed we will give you trials, with a little fear, hunger, lack of wealth, souls and fruits, And give good news to those who are patient"

Prof. Dr. KH. Muhammad Quraish Shihab, MA, through his interpretation of Al-Misbah, explains that in this verse Allah gives a sign to humans that they will be given a little

trial in the form of fear or anxiety about various things in the world, such as hunger, lack of wealth, souls, and fruits. According to him, the revelation of this verse is a pleasure for humans, because by knowing the information that Allah gives about the trial in the form of fear of worldly things, humans should be able to prepare themselves to avoid things that will lead them to feelings of worry or fear (Shihab, 2001).

METHOD

The library research strategy used in this study is a strategy for collecting information by understanding and focusing on hypotheses from different writings and collecting information by searching and updating various sources, such as files, books, and scientific articles related to Religious Moderation. In this study, the author analyzes and focuses on research strategies for collecting information, reading, and handling library materials and facilities that must be prepared by exploring to obtain information (Rupadha, 2016).

This study examines how the culture of Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) influences the tendency of millennials to become addicted to social media. As the number of internet users in Indonesia increases, especially among millennials, social media addiction has become a problem that negatively impacts the anxiety and mental health of this generation. The leading cause of increasing anxiety and weakening self-confidence in social media addiction situations is FOMO, which is triggered by seeing other people's lives on social media. Using a qualitative descriptive methodology based on content analysis and Qur'anic interpretation, the study explores FOMO's psychological and spiritual implications (Maza & Aprianty, 2022).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Definition of FOMO (Fear of Missing Out)

FOMO is a syndrome that can affect anyone regardless of age. In the Oxford dictionary explained again by McGinnis, Fomo is included in the noun meaning a feeling of anxiety, where its presence is not desired by the person experiencing it, but the anxiety arises because of a perception of other people's experiences that are considered more satisfying than their own experiences and things are more triggered by social media. Fomo can also be interpreted as social pressure that comes from fear of missing out on a moment or event that is more interesting or memorable than what they experience (Patrick McGinnis, 2020).

The development of social media has also influenced the development of social anxiety, as evidenced by the term FOMO which appears as a person's anxiety due to seeing too much

social media which ultimately affects the perception of the social media user, considering what they see on social media is something more interesting or more proud than their situation. FOMO is a phenomenon where someone feels afraid or anxious about various things related to world affairs that are stimulated by many things on social media, either in the form of news or stories about other people on social media.

History of FOMO (Fear of Missing Out)

The emergence of the Fear of Missing Out syndrome certainly has a story of how it first became known to the world. Historically, the emergence of this term began with a journalist who exhibited his article entitled "Social Theory at HBS: McGinnis' Two Fos" in May 2004 which was published in *The Harbus*, a student magazine at Harvard Business School (HBS) which is now known as Fear of Missing Out and has the acronym FOMO (Patrick McGinnis, 2020). Now, this acronym has become a word that is quite popular among the general public. This term entered the Oxford and Merriam-Webster dictionaries in 2013 (Patrick McGinnis, 2020).

Patrick J. McGinnis published the article in the HBS student magazine. In the article, McGinnis discusses the Two Fos, namely Fear of Missing Out and Fear of a Better Option, in social and cultural life at HBS. He is an author and speaker who has invested in various leading companies in the United States, Latin America, Europe, and Asia. In addition, McGinnis is also a creator and host of the popular podcast program HBR Present: FOMO Sapiens, which is broadcast by Harvard Business Review (Patrick McGinnis, 2020).

Then, scientifically, this phenomenon was studied through empirical methodology by Andrew K. Przybylski and published in *Computers in Human Behavior* in 2013. Cohen wrote an article with a similar discussion published by *The Telegraph* in 2013. Rossen also released his writing in *Psychology Today* in 2013, and Hedges published his writing through *Forbes* in 2014 (Sitompul, 2017). The term FOMO has developed and continues to be researched by many people who are interested in this discussion.

Fear of Missing Out in the view of the Qur'an and its relevance to life balance

Teenagers and millennials should avoid using social media in an immodest manner. Of course, this is contrary to the word of Allah SWT that has been mentioned. A 14-year-old died in 2019 due to despair while using social media. 20 Due to addiction to online games on mobile phones, two teenagers in Tangerang City experienced mental disorders. Before committing suicide, a teenager was addicted to social media. In a recent tragic incident, a teenager died by hanging himself from a piece of cloth in his house to create social media content.

According to a survey conducted in 26 countries, including Indonesia, social media use has a higher impact on feelings of worry, anxiety, and mental health problems. These concerns arise from not being able to follow the latest information and not being able to follow people they admire on social media. Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) syndrome in teenagers is mainly caused by this. It is natural for children to want to buy items related to their favorite celebrities.

FOMO is closely related to social media because it impacts the need for social media. Research conducted by Amar (Ahmad, 2020) explains that Social media addiction causes various problems, especially for young people. Their dependence on social media is undoubtedly rooted in its negative features, including its impact on individuals, society, and spirituality.

Fear of missing out is a significant factor that causes many social media addictions. Teenagers are also sometimes attracted to inappropriate or even inappropriate content for consumption. The millennial generation will be negatively impacted by such information. Violence, hostility, drugs, gambling, exposure, and even explicit content are some examples (Een et al., 2020).

Along with the growth of identity as youth, the millennial generation must make a real contribution to the nation and state. In His word, Allah SWT also discusses youth.

نَدْنُ نَقْصُ عَلَيكَ نَبَاهُمْ بِالْحَقِّ إِنَّهُمْ فِتْيَةٌ آمَنُوا بِرَبِّهِمْ وَزِدْنَهُمْ هُدًى ۝ ١٣

The Prophet Muhammad SAW seems to have long discussed the problem of social media addiction in one of his hadiths, and even considered it as one of the instructions to continue to maximize oneself before regretting it or coming of old age (Sabri, 2012).

It would be very risky if it were left alone without a revolution. Therefore, teenagers must learn to live without social media. It is undeniable that the influence of FOMO culture on social media addiction is a tendency that arises due to this phenomenon.

Not just an Addiction, FOMO, or the Fear of Missing Out, is simply the fear of missing out on precious moments and dependence on the continuous use of social media, both individually and in interpersonal relationships. Social media platforms are a significant contributor to the feeling of FOMO. Because people are jealous of other people's posts and lives, they get bad emotions and sentiments from social media platforms (Akbar et al., 2019).

According to a JWT Intelligence survey, students and those aged between 16 and 24 often suffer from FOMO syndrome. The use and accessibility of internet technology among today's youth is one of their characteristics, especially in contrast to the previous generation, who were

mainly active on social media. Furthermore, the internet has become ingrained in modern life, namely the millennial generation.

Shows that FOMO contributes significantly to emotional instability, especially feelings of inadequacy and disconnection. This article outlines at least four strategies for developing positive social media habits, including prioritizing yourself, avoiding excessive use, seeking genuine connections, and increasing self-esteem. These steps will help millennials overcome the negative impacts of social media addiction and FOMO, and create a positive social media culture based on the ideals of the Qur'an. Overall, this study highlights the importance of understanding the negative impacts of social media addiction, especially in the context of FOMO culture, and the need to change behavior to maintain mental health and balance in the lives of the younger generation.

Furthermore, one factor contributing to the development of FOMO syndrome is the presence of an unfavorable situation, or what is known as relative depreciation. This is caused by emotions that characterize dissatisfaction in relationships with others. Based on this comparison, dissatisfaction and a sense of being left behind by those who lose cause behavior. FOMO syndrome also arises as a result of the many demands for information. A person with a strong desire to learn more about information on social media must follow the latest developments (updates).

Many millennials have long been exposed to the FOMO virus in their daily lives, whether they realize it or not. If they feel left behind by other people they meet on social media, they will become depressed and want to live their lives according to the facts they find on social media. This has become their habit and natural attitude (Akhtar, 2020).

When Coldplay's concert was scheduled for yesterday, a new phenomenon emerged. Celebrities and influencers in Indonesia even flocked to social media to share their excitement over the performance. To follow the band's performance, new terms emerged in society, such as hunting for tickets or ticket wars.

The FOMO phenomenon is closely related to the use of social media in the digital era. Most people are certainly familiar with social media in this digital era. Thanks to social media, communication can occur without the limitations of distance, time, or space. Social media provides a space for someone to communicate actively with others.

Some argue that the events mentioned above are small manifestations of the FOMO phenomenon, which has spread throughout life. In general, the younger generation experiences more negative impacts than positive impacts due to the FOMO phenomenon.

In other words, the FOMO phenomenon can be described as a symbiotic parasitic relationship in which some people benefit and others suffer. It is also interesting to note that although God has long warned about the existence of this FOMO phenomenon, few people pay attention to it. His Word says so.

أَقْتَرَبَ لِلنَّاسِ حِسَابُهُمْ وَهُمْ فِي غَفْلَةٍ مُّعْرِضُونَ ۝١

Meaning: "*The people have drawn closer to their calculations (charities), while they are in a state of heedlessness and are turning away (from them)*" (QS. Al-Anbiya[21]: 1

Instead of communicating in person, people choose to engage and build relationships on social media because it is fast and easy. Because they are always on social media, even today's millennial generation tends to forget their responsibilities in the real world, which leads to FOMO syndrome. However, the fact that most people are unaware of this is quite embarrassing, because many people who use social media are unaware of the time (Aisafitri & Yusriyah, 2020).

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the culture of Fear of Missing Out (FoMo) has contributed significantly to the emergence of social media addiction issues as a result of technological advances. The millennial generation should have known the negative impacts of social media addiction. Ironically, because of the FOMO culture, they do not realize that they are currently addicted to social media. Therefore, the millennial generation will suffer terrible consequences if this behavior continues. Understanding each person's needs is one way to respond to incidents like this.

However, implementing this seemingly simple idea is not that easy. Because the development of social media has made it possible to deliver all available information online, it has been combined with new fashions. In this regard, parents play an important role in protecting their children from cultural dangers. However, it is frightening to note that rapid technological advances also gradually weaken parental control and push the millennial generation towards destruction.

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