



Comparing The JOMO (Joy Of Missing Out) Experiences Through Age And Gender Perspectives

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Abstract

This correlational study examines the phenomenon of the Joy of Missing Out (JOMO) in relation to age and gender perspectives. The research aims to understand how individuals experience JOMO, characterized by finding fulfillment in disconnecting from social activities and digital distractions. A group of 87 participants, spanning two age groups (15–25 and 35–45) and both genders, completed the JOMO Scale questionnaire. The findings indicate a significant difference in JOMO experience between the age groups, with older individuals (35–45) reporting higher levels of JOMO compared to younger individuals (15–25). However, gender did not significantly influence JOMO experience, suggesting that both males and females exhibit similar tendencies to embrace JOMO. These results highlight the importance of considering age-related differences in JOMO experience and suggest potential interventions to promote well-being across different demographic groups. Further research is recommended to explore additional factors shaping individuals' experiences of JOMO.

Keywords: JOMO, age, gender, social media

Introduction

In the era of hyperconnectivity facilitated by digital technology, the concept of the "Fear of Missing Out" (FOMO) has permeated societal discourse, reflecting individuals' anxieties about being excluded from social activities and experiences. However, amidst the pervasive presence of FOMO, a contrasting phenomenon has emerged—the "Joy of Missing Out" (JOMO). JOMO represents a paradigm shift in attitude, wherein individuals find fulfillment and contentment in intentionally disconnecting from the relentless stream of social engagements and digital distractions. This emerging concept has garnered attention for its potential to alleviate the stress and pressure associated with constant connectivity and promote greater well-being.

The rise of technology and social media has significantly impacted societal interactions, particularly among millennials and Generation Z. While social media offers the advantage of connecting with people across distances, it also fosters issues like social media addiction and problematic internet usage. The feeling of FOMO, induced by seeing others' lives online, can negatively affect mental health, increasing the desire for constant social engagement.

In contrast, the novel concept of JOMO, coined by Anil Dash in 2012, emphasizes the joy found in missing out on social engagements and digital distractions. JOMO encourages individuals to be present and content with their current life circumstances, letting go of comparisons and unnecessary engagements (Perina, 2018). This concept has implications for mental health, promoting self-love, self-esteem, and quality of life.

While the notion of JOMO offers a compelling alternative to the incessant pursuit of social validation and digital consumption, its manifestation and impact vary across different demographic groups. Age and gender, in particular, play pivotal roles in shaping individuals' experiences and perspectives regarding JOMO. Age-related factors encompass developmental stages, life experiences, and evolving priorities, all of which influence one's receptivity to the JOMO ethos. Younger individuals may be more susceptible to FOMO, driven by a desire for social acceptance and validation, whereas older individuals may prioritize introspection, personal growth, and deeper connections, thereby embracing JOMO as a means of reclaiming agency over their time and attention. Similarly, gender dynamics contribute to nuanced expressions of JOMO, reflecting societal expectations, social roles, and communication styles. Research suggests that females may exhibit higher levels of social comparison and interpersonal sensitivity, potentially predisposing them to FOMO-induced anxieties. Conversely, males may demonstrate a greater propensity for autonomy and self-reliance, facilitating the adoption of JOMO as a liberating mindset. However, these gendered patterns are not absolute and may vary based on individual personality traits, such as extraversion, introversion, and openness to experience.

Understanding the interplay between age, gender, and personality differences is essential for elucidating the complexities of JOMO and its implications for well-being. By examining how these factors shape individuals' perceptions, behaviors, and coping mechanisms in the digital age, researchers can offer tailored interventions and strategies to promote a healthier relationship with technology and foster a culture of mindful engagement. Moreover, practicing JOMO has been associated with a myriad of benefits, particularly in reducing stress and enhancing overall well-being. By intentionally disconnecting from the constant barrage of notifications, social comparisons, and digital stimuli, individuals can create space for relaxation, reflection, and genuine connection with themselves and others. Research indicates that moments of solitude and disconnection are essential for replenishing cognitive resources, improving focus and attention, and fostering creativity and innovation.



Furthermore, embracing JOMO empowers individuals to set boundaries, prioritize their mental and emotional health, and cultivate a sense of autonomy and self-awareness. In a world characterized by information overload and perpetual busyness, JOMO serves as a powerful antidote to stress and burnout, offering individuals the freedom to savor the present moment, cultivate gratitude, and lead more fulfilling lives. As such, the promotion and practice of JOMO are integral to fostering resilience, balance, and psychological well-being in an increasingly interconnected world.

Literature Review

Hook (2023) discusses strategies for transforming the fear of missing out (FOMO) into joy, focusing on the impact of FOMO on individuals, particularly in the context of parenting high-potential children. Hook provides insights into recognizing and addressing FOMO in children, offering practical advice for parents to help their children embrace JOMO and prioritize meaningful experiences over constant connectivity.

Barry, Smith, Murphy, Halter, and Briggs (2023) explore the concept of JOMO and its implications for social media use, self-perception, and mental health through a mixed-methods approach. The study involved quantitative surveys measuring social media use, self-perception, and mental health indicators among participants, alongside qualitative interviews to gain deeper insights into personal experiences of JOMO. The findings indicate that individuals who experience higher levels of JOMO report lower social media usage, improved self-esteem, and better mental health outcomes, including reduced anxiety and depression. The research suggests that JOMO fosters a positive appreciation for solitude and intentional living, counteracting the negative effects associated with the Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) and excessive social media engagement, ultimately contributing to enhanced well-being.

Chan, Van Solt, Cruz, Philp, Bahl, Serin, Amaral, Schindler, Bartosiak (2022) conducted a literature review examining the relationship between social media use, mindfulness, and psychological well-being, focusing on the transition from the Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) to the Joy of Missing Out (JOMO). Through a synthesis of quantitative and qualitative studies, including surveys, interviews, and observational research, the findings suggest that excessive social media usage driven by FOMO correlates with heightened stress, anxiety, and depression, while mindfulness practices, such as meditation, foster present-moment awareness and acceptance, mitigating these negative effects. Embracing JOMO, characterized by a positive appreciation for solitude and disconnection from social media, leads to decreased social media use and increased life satisfaction. The study underscores the potential of mindfulness techniques to facilitate a healthier relationship with social media, promoting mental well-being and overall satisfaction with life.

Nguyen (2023) conducted a qualitative study exploring the motivations and challenges for disconnecting from social media. In-depth interviews revealed that various reasons, including reduced interests, overuse, privacy concerns, and significant life transitions, influence disconnection experiences. This indicates that age can play a role in JOMO experience, with life transitions triggering a shift towards JOMO.

Rautela and Sharma (2022) investigate the relationship between problematic internet usage, psychological and mental health, social media fatigue, FOMO, desire to disconnect, and JOMO. Their findings suggest that problematic internet usage positively impacts mental health, FOMO, and social media fatigue, which in turn influences the desire to disconnect and JOMO.

Aranda and Baig (2018) present an ethnographic exploration of JOMO and the freedom associated with disconnecting from excessive smartphone use. Their qualitative mixed-methods research offers insights into coping mechanisms for disconnection and the subjective experiences of individuals who disconnect from their smartphones, proposing solutions for promoting healthier digital habits and well-being.

As the concept of JOMO is relatively novel, there are limited studies on the topic. However, existing research provides a foundation for understanding the factors influencing JOMO experiences and the potential benefits of embracing this mindset.

Method

Hypotheses

There is a significant difference in the level of JOMO experience between individuals aged 15–25 and individuals aged 35–45.

There is a significant difference in the level of JOMO experience between males and females.

Sample

A total of 87 participants within the age range of 15–25 and 35–45 years participated in this study. The demographics of the participants are summarized as follows: Female = 61, Male = 26, Age range: 15–25 years old = 55, and 35–45 years old = 32 participants.



Variables

Criterion variable: Level of JOMO experience (Joy of Missing Out).

Predictor variables: Age ranges (15–25 and 35–45); Genders (Male and Female).

Tools

The Joy of Missing Out Scale (JOMOS) questionnaire was used to assess the level of JOMO of the participants. The questionnaire was accessed from the research paper by Barry et al. (2023) titled "JOMO: Joy of missing out and its association with social media use, self-perception, and mental health." The internal consistency of JOMOS total scores was $\alpha = .85$. The questionnaire consists of 22 items to be responded to on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from "Not at all true of me" to "Extremely true of me." Some items were positively scored and some were reversely scored on a range of 1 to 5. The highest possible score is 110.

Procedure

The JOMOS questionnaire was circulated through a Google Form among the age criteria population. A total of 87 participants completed the questionnaire. The scoring of the obtained data was done separately for both age ranges (15–25 and 35–45) and genders (Male and Female) using Excel sheets. The total score was also obtained for all 22 items. The data was then analyzed using one-way ANOVA to test both hypotheses.

Statistical Analysis

The data was analyzed using one-way ANOVA to test both hypotheses.

Research Design

This study uses a correlational research design.

Results and Discussion

Age Perspective

The study aimed to investigate the relationship between age and the experience of JOMO. The one-way ANOVA results indicate a significant difference in the level of JOMO experience between individuals aged 15–25 and those aged 35–45. Thus, the hypothesis regarding age differences in JOMO experience is accepted.

The group aged 15–25 had an average JOMO score of 21.02, with a variance of 3.68.

The group aged 35–45 had an average JOMO score of 22.13, with a variance of 2.54.

The significance level (α) was set at 0.05.

These results suggest that older individuals (35–45) report higher levels of JOMO compared to younger individuals (15–25). The greater tendency towards JOMO among older individuals may be attributed to their life experiences, evolving priorities, and a stronger inclination towards introspection and personal growth.

Gender Perspective

The study also explored gender differences in JOMO experience. The one-way ANOVA results show no significant difference in the level of JOMO experience between males and females. Thus, the hypothesis regarding gender differences in JOMO experience is rejected.

The male participants had an average JOMO score of 21.57, with a variance of 3.24.

The female participants had an average JOMO score of 21.80, with a variance of 3.23.

The significance level (α) was set at 0.05.

These findings indicate that both males and females exhibit similar tendencies to embrace JOMO. This suggests that the inclination towards JOMO is not significantly influenced by gender, highlighting the universal appeal of finding joy in missing out on social engagements and digital distractions.

Theoretical and Practical Implications

Theoretically, this study contributes to the growing body of literature on JOMO by elucidating the age-related differences in JOMO experience and reinforcing the notion that JOMO transcends gender boundaries. Practically, the findings underscore the importance of fostering a culture that encourages intentional disconnection and mindful engagement with technology, especially among younger individuals who may be more susceptible to FOMO.

Interpretation of Results

The higher levels of JOMO among older individuals may reflect a shift in priorities, with a greater emphasis on personal well-being, introspection, and meaningful connections. In contrast, younger individuals may still be navigating the pressures of social validation and connectivity, making them more prone to FOMO. The absence of significant gender differences suggests that the appeal of JOMO is universal and not constrained by societal gender norms.



Limitations

The study's sample size was relatively small, limiting the generalizability of the findings. Additionally, the cross-sectional design does not allow for causal inferences, and the self-reported nature of the JOMOS questionnaire may be subject to response biases.

Areas for Further Research

Future research should explore the longitudinal aspects of JOMO, examining how individuals' experiences and attitudes towards JOMO evolve over time. Additionally, investigating the impact of cultural and socio-economic factors on JOMO experience would provide a more comprehensive understanding of this phenomenon.

Informed Consent

Participants' consent was gathered by informing them about the study and obtaining their agreement using the following statement:

"By agreeing to participate, you confirm that you have read and understood the information provided. You voluntarily agree to take part in the study. Your consent will be recorded, and your data will be kept confidential and used anonymously for this research purpose only."

Ethical Guidelines

All ethical guidelines were followed, including obtaining informed consent from participants. There was no experiment conducted on any human. A survey was conducted among the participants. All the guidelines were followed while conducting the survey.

Declarations

Author Contribution

Corresponding Author prepared the tables

Data Availability

Kaswa, Arpita (2024), "JOMO", Mendeley Data, V1, doi: 10.17632/zcb6kbvdz4.1

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