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**HỘI CHỨNG SỢ BỎ LỖ (FOMO) TRÊN MẠNG XÃ HỘI:
ĐÁNH GIÁ TRƯỜNG HỢP CỦA SINH VIÊN NĂM NHẤT
TRƯỜNG ĐẠI HỌC NGOẠI THƯƠNG**

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Tóm tắt

Hội chứng sợ bỏ lỡ (FOMO) chỉ cảm giác bất an tột độ khi đứng ngoài trào lưu của đám đông hoặc bỏ lỡ một điều mà mọi người đều biết rõ. Từ đó suy ra, FOMO khi sử dụng mạng xã hội đề cập đến hiện tượng tâm lý lo lắng, bồn chồn khi không sử dụng mạng xã hội trong một khoảng thời gian nhất định vì sợ rằng sẽ không thể cập nhật kịp thời xu hướng hay tin tức trên mạng xã hội. Tương tự như hội chứng nghiện điện thoại hay nghiện mạng xã hội, hiện tượng tâm lý này cũng mang lại ảnh hưởng tiêu cực tới khả năng tập trung trong học tập của học sinh sinh viên và cần phương pháp giải quyết tức thì. Chính vì vậy, bài nghiên cứu này tập trung vào đánh giá mức độ FOMO khi sử dụng mạng xã hội của sinh viên năm nhất tại trường Đại học Ngoại thương, Hà Nội; từ đó đề xuất giải pháp góp phần cải thiện chất lượng giáo dục và cuộc sống cho các sinh viên. Các phân tích từ những người tham gia trả lời khảo sát cho thấy những bạn sinh viên năm nhất tại trường Đại học Ngoại thương có mức độ FOMO tương đối thấp khi sử dụng mạng xã hội.

Từ khóa: Hội chứng sợ bỏ lỡ, FOMO, mạng xã hội, sinh viên năm nhất.

**FEAR OF MISSING OUT (FOMO) IN SOCIAL MEDIA CONTEXT:
ASSESSING THE CASE OF FOREIGN TRADE UNIVERSITY'S
FIRST-YEAR STUDENTS**

Abstract

Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) refers to the all-consuming insecurity of being excluded from something or of not knowing something that is already well-aware by others. Therefore, FOMO on social media indicates the feeling of anxiety or inadequacy when being abstained from using social media for a certain period of time for the fear that online updates are missed and that one cannot

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react timely to them. This phenomenon, which somewhat resembles the tendency of phone or social media addiction, whose effect on students and undergraduates should not be neglected since it might pose a hindrance to their attention span when studying, is yet to be widely and deeply looked into. Hence, this research paper sets out to examine the level of FOMO on using social media of first-year undergraduates in Foreign Trade University, Hanoi; from which sound suggestions will be made in an attempt to improve the quality of education and life for those freshmen. Interpretations from survey respondents show that first year students at Foreign Trade University had relatively low levels of FOMO when using social media.

Keywords: Fear of missing out, FOMO, social media, first-year students.

1. Introduction

With the bloom of technology and the impact from Covid 19 worldwide lockdowns stimulating a massive transit from offline to online, followed by the notably increasing use of social media, an upward tendency in the rates of phone addiction has also been witnessed, one of whose causes lies in the phenomenon of FOMO. In this case, a compulsive concern arises in many social media users, especially the young, that being offline for a specific time frame is synonymous with missing an opportunity which can be spotted on social media at that time if they stay online. This mentality has led to the feeling of insecurity or even irritation when one abstains from using social media; urging them to use these networks on an ever-increasing frequency just to get rid of the fear of missing out. According to previous studies (Altuwairiqi et al., 2019) FOMO is a main type of problematic attachment to social media, resulting in tons of other negative physical and mental problems, namely short attention span for schoolwork when it comes to students, leading to deteriorating school performance.

Most former research on FOMO focuses on the correlation between FOMO and social media addiction among general groups (Blackwell et al., 2017; Hetz et al., 2015), our work, on the other hand, narrows our target audience down to first year students in Foreign Trade University only. Our research looks closely into the level of FOMO when using social media from which we continue to give recommendations on enhancing the quality of learning among freshman students.

Our research consists of five main parts: Literature Review, Methods, Results, Discussion and Conclusion. The Literature Review mentions the context, the components of FOMO; followed by Methods used to collect the data. After the Methods part, our research then interprets the results that are gathered from survey respondents. Then we will put forward proper recommendations to solve the problems based on the interpreted results in the Discussion part before going to the Conclusion relating to the level of FOMO when using social media of first year students in Foreign Trade University. The results of our literature are based on descriptive statistics collected from our Google survey spreaded among freshmen in FTU, with questions whose validation and reliability has been verified in the previous research (Abel et al., 2016). All collected data from the survey are interpreted and converted into results, from which measures on how to improve the quality of education for our target audience will be discussed.

2. Literature Review & Theoretical Framework

2.1. Literature Review

2.1.1. Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) in the context of social media

According to the literature, the concept of “social media” first appeared in 1994. It was claimed that the term was used during the development of an online media environment - Matisse – in Tokyo (Bercovici, 2010). Since then, there has been a significant increase in the number of social media platforms, the concept is playing an important role in 4.62 billion active social media users worldwide (We are Social & Hootsuite, 2022a). Much research has been carried out concerning social media, its definition has been proposed and developed over time. According to Aichner et al (2021), social media is described as an “umbrella term”, which means it is a combination of various online platforms, including blogs, forums, microblogs such as Twitter, photo/file/video sharing, social gaming, products video, enterprise social networks, etc. After synthesizing the social-media-related literature from 1994 to 2019, the researchers suggest that there are 5 major applications of social media. The first two involve personal life: (1) maintaining the connection with friends and family, and (2) developing romantic relationships. The others care more about business, as social media is where (3) the interaction between customers and companies/brands happens, (4) applicants can find potential jobs and build professional networks, and (5) business can be competitive and innovative (Aichner et al, 2021). The prominent characteristic of social media is its continually updating – the more people use it, the better it becomes. These virtual platforms allow the users themselves to create the content, provide their data and edit others, and participate in the development of the platform (Fuchs, 2021).

Social media is attracting millions of Vietnamese users. According to Digital 2022 (We are Social & Hootsuite, 2022) report on Vietnam, in 2022, Vietnam's population is more than 98.56 million, 76.95 million of which are social media users (equivalent to 78.1% of the population); the majority of these users are young people at the age of 15 to 34 (account for 71% of the users). Social media brings several positive values and allows users to search for information easily, connect, interact with the community, develop relationships and entertain. The advent of social media has created new values, increased economic efficiency, improved education and training, and other aspects of social life (Nguyen, 2022).

However, social media has its drawbacks that can be detrimental to users. For instance, excessive virtual usage is a sign of social media addiction, especially when the Internet is increasingly easier to access anywhere, anytime. This addiction is proven to be associated with mental health troubles such as depression, anxiety, and stress as well as people’s well-being in the long term (Marino et al., 2017). The phenomenon Fear of Missing Out - FOMO is often described as the reason for this excessive usage of digital platforms. FOMO has been first discussed without the social media context in an article in 2000 by Dan Herman, concerning the motivations to buy of consumers. Herman (2000) claimed that they are not only led by intrinsic motivations such as the need for that particular product, but a new motivation occurs: “ambition to exhaust all possibilities and the fear of missing out”. However, the concept of FOMO was not discussed further in that article.

With the increasing use and access to social media, FOMO emerges as a prominent research topic, the researchers mainly investigate people's usage of technology (Tanhan et al., 2022). The definition of FOMO from the Cambridge Dictionary describes FOMO as a “worried feeling” people have when they think they are missing exciting experiences that other people are having, especially when they see updates from social media platforms. Past research suggests that FOMO is a combination of irritability, feeling of inadequacy and anxiety is worsen, which gets worsened

by the use of social media and receiving information from fellows and friends (Wortham, 2011). Social media users have constant updates on what their networks are experiencing in real-time and be more aware of what they have missed out on, which can make the individual have feelings of unworthiness, anxiety, and dissatisfaction (Miller, 2012). This constant frightening of missing out on exciting experiences can have the power of changing behavior, and it has been investigated further in the field of social media marketing to change or influence the buying decision of consumers (Zhang et al., 2020)

2.1.2. The impacts of FOMO on university students

FOMO should be considered a worth-investigating phenomenon among students, especially university students as young adults have the tendency to be online for longer periods than other age groups (Andone et al., 2016). Past literature shows that FOMO has a negative impact on students in their learning and their overall well-being. According to Al-Furaih and Al-Awidi (2021), FOMO is strongly correlated with the learning disengagement and the attention distraction of students during lectures. Students have more potential to disengage during classes, especially when they are aware that the knowledge is available online and they can access it later, which means they have the encouragement for not noticing and not remembering the information (Carrier 2018). This can be alarming in the context of Covid-19 where learning is also carried out online, the online availability of lecture records and teaching material encourages students to focus less on the lecture and check social media instead. When it comes to attention span, it obviously decreases with the appearance of smartphones. Checking social media is a huge distraction that can challenge students with short attention spans and low self-control (Hofmann et al. 2016), as they may think of what is happening on social media rather than what is happening in their class.

Hayran and Anik (2021) has carried out a correlational analysis about FOMO and the well-being of university students during the pandemic Covid-19, and they suggest that FOMO still exists and evolves – people now scare of missing out on virtual activities such as the online gatherings or a digital concert. They found that FOMO can threaten well-being by some psychological and health issues (loss of focus, sleep deprivation, stress for example). There is still an amount of research suggesting that FOMO in some cases helps improve social connection in college students, helps them creating, bonding, and maintaining social networks (Steinfeld et al.,2008), though high level of FOMO still means an alarming sign. Based on previous literature, the research group believes there should be research concerning the FOMO level of Foreign Trade University's students. After searching in relevant available sources such as FTU Working Paper Series, we have not found articles relating to this topic. Thus, the topic has been chosen. We pay more attention to first year students as they have experienced the changing phase of their life – from high school to university – in a unique situation, the Covid 19. The widespread of the pandemic has forced them to interact with the new environment online and have higher exposure to social media.

2.2. Theoretical Framework

2.2.1. Social media

In this research, the term “social media” is defined with some key characteristics. First, social media utilizes Web 2.0 technologies – unlike the web 1.0 era where there were a few content creators, Internet users are mere consumers, nowadays, web 2.0 era allows users to be content

creators themselves, generating and sharing their original ideas (Fuchs, 2021). Therefore, the content generated by the users are key for the existence of social media. Social media exists in the form of sites or apps where individuals or groups of people can create profiles for specific purposes. By connecting those profiles, social media help users develop social networks (Obar & Wildman, 2015). Some of the most common examples for social media platforms are Facebook, Youtube, Twitter and Instagram.

Social media is becoming an indispensable part of human daily life, and has a huge impact in the young generation. Among students, social media has long been used to communicate in out-of-school context (Greenhow et al., 2019). During the Covid 19 pandemic, school-related issues are added into their conversation as social media aids the process of distance learning. This increasing reliance on social media makes the users more exposed to its possible threats.

2.2.2. Fear of Missing Out (FOMO)

The fear of missing out (FOMO) refers to the feeling that others are having more fun, living better lives, or experiencing better things than you are (Elizabeth Scott, 2022). During the Covid-19 pandemic, the main channels of communication and access to news are through social media and the Internet. With a huge amount of information and constantly being updated, missing information is inevitable, leading to the fact that FOMO level is increasing. Without exception, students in general and students of Foreign Trade University in particular are also afraid of missing out on information about their schools, about studying or news related to their majors or social issues they pay attention to.

2.2.3. Component of FOMO

In this research paper, FOMO is constituted by self-esteem, Social Interaction and Social Anxiety, according to the FOMO scale developed by Abel et al. (2016). The first one aims at assessing people's perceptions of themselves. The second one is to assess how people feel about interacting with other people, their problem with shyness, and how comfortable they are as a member of a group. The last one will assess the anxiety caused by social media usage (Abel et al., 2016).

- Self-esteem

Self-esteem is the way an individual feel about himself or herself (Leary & Baumeister, 2000). Low self-esteem has been supported to have association with social media use among young adults and teenagers, as well as depression or low sleep quality (Woods & Scott, 2016). Woods and Scott (2016) found that one of the key factors is their emotional investment in social media, which aligns with the urge to stay connected and get updates from the world around them in the FOMO concept. A study also suggests that when people compare themselves to others, their self-esteem is affected (Vogel et al., 2014). People with FOMO also look at others' lives and make comparisons, trying to identify whatever they are missing out on.

- Social interaction

This category concerns shyness, how individuals feel about interacting with others. In the past, social interaction cannot happen without being together physically. However, with the advent of social media and the Internet, people are almost always able to communicate and interact with their social communities. Nevertheless, these increased opportunities of social interaction also

come with FOMO, as people are constantly concerned about what is happening online (Beyen et al., 2016). Moreover, the online environment makes some people less embarrassed in terms of sharing personal data, they also find online communication more comfortable (Ledbetter, 2009). This is surely an advantage of shy people, which makes them prone to higher social media use and FOMO.

- Social anxiety

Anxiety is suggested to be one of the underlying factors of FOMO, and it can be attributed to ostracism and social exclusion. According to the model of Williams (2001), the desires of belonging can be impacted negatively if one is being excluded and ignored. The belongingness theory (Baumeister & Leary, 1995) also suggests that loss of belonging caused by social exclusion signals anxiety in an individual. People may be motivated to conform to groups in order to avoid being either socially excluded or ostracized. This may cause FOMO as missing out on exciting experiences with others can be a threat of getting along well with the groups.

2.3. Hypotheses

This research posed two questions: How much time do students spend on social networks and what is the level of FOMO first-year students? Research group will find the answer for these two questions based on the collected data. According to the first conjecture and the information that is collected from the literature review, the assumption is that first-year students of Foreign Trade University would use social media at a high intensity and they would have a high level of FOMO.

3. Methodology

3.1. Method and methodological connection

This study is conducted through quantitative methods, which gathers data and statistics through surveys, polls, and other forms of data collection to explain a specific phenomenon-. (Organizing Your Social Sciences Research Paper: Quantitative Methods, n.d.)

The purpose of the study is to measure the students' FOMO level, so the results should be based on the collected data. The numbers will most accurately evaluate the level of FOMO among students. As a result, choosing the quantitative method is the most appropriate for the study.

The research group set up a survey questionnaire with scales with content to measure learners' feelings, concerning three factors: personal information, Social Media Usage Urge and FOMO level. The first part includes 2 questions about their gender and the Institute or Faculty they are in in Foreign Trade University and 2 more about their habits of using social media. The Social Media Usage Urge has 4 questions asking about feeling "urged" to use social media in specific situations. The final section is composed of two parts: 5 questions about self-esteem, 3 questions about social interaction and 2 questions about anxiety in using social media. There are 3 out of 5 items of the Self-esteem component using a reverse score scheme. The survey questionnaire is inherited from the research paper "Social Media and the Fear of Missing Out: Scale Development and Assessment", published in 2016 by Jessica P. Abel, Cheryl L. Buff and Sarah A. Burr. This is public and recognized scientific research, which has been tested for validity and reliability; therefore, the questionnaire's background would be firmer and more trustworthy.

First-year students will certainly be exposed to a lot of information when they enter school. Moreover, the way to access information at university is different from high school as well as the Covid - 19 pandemic occurred at the beginning of the school year, greatly affecting students' familiarization with the way university works. Our initial prediction was that first-year students at Foreign Trade University would have a high amount of social media usage and a high level of FOMO.

3.2. Instruments of data collection

Data will be collected through a survey via the internet among first-year students in Foreign Trade University. The tool would be used is Google Form, which is familiar and easy to use for students. Form is opened from July 1st to July 4th.

3.3. Data analysis method

“Descriptive statistics are brief descriptive coefficients that summarize a given data set, which can be either a representation of the entire population or a sample of a population.” (Descriptive Statistics Definition, 2022) The most commonly used numerical tools for description are the mean and the standard deviation. The most commonly used visualization tools are charts. The group quantities are mainly directed towards the central quantity group. These concentration bias measures describe the central position of the data set distribution. To analyze the frequency of each data point in the distribution and describe it, the analyst uses the mean, median, or mode to measure the most frequently occurring values of the analyzed data set.

3.4. Sampling description

The results obtained include 126 responses, of which 122 are valid, 4 are invalid because of the wrong research subject (not first-year students of Foreign Trade University).

To measure the variables, the research group uses a Likert scale from 1 to 7. To analyze participation, the study used the following mean-score assessments to the mean of each item: 1.00 - 1.85 corresponds to Very bad, 1.86 - 2.71 corresponds to Rather bad, 2.72 - 3.57 corresponds to Bad, 3.58 - 4.43 corresponds to Neither good nor bad, 4.44 - 5.29 corresponds to Good, 5.30 - 6.15 corresponds to Rather good and 6.16 - 7.00 corresponds to Very good. (Pimentel, 2019). This scoring method says that the lower the score, the lower the FOMO level, which is a good sign for students.

Table 1. Survey sample description

No.	Evaluation Criteria	Research sample	Ratio (%)
1	Gender	Male	72.7 %
		Female	24.1 %
		Rather not say	3.2 %

No.	Evaluation Criteria	Research sample	Ratio (%)
		School of Economics and International Business	15.3 %
		VJCC Institute (Vietnam-Japan Institute for Human Resources Development)	2.41 %
		Faculty of Chinese Language	1.61%
		Faculty of French Language	0%
		Faculty of Japanese Language	0.8%
2	Faculty	Faculty of Business English	4.03%
		Faculty of Finance and Banking	7.25%
		Faculty of Business Administration	62.1%
		Faculty of Law	0%
		Faculty of International Economics	4.83%
		Faculty of Accounting and Auditing	0%
		Faculty of International Education	1.61%

Source: The research group's data

From the sample study above, the research group saw several limitations. First, the time opening the application for the number of students who filled out the form is not sufficiently long. Second, the ratio of samples across institutes/faculties filling out applications is certainly not equivalent to the ratio of the population. Two limitations can lead to certain blind spots during the analysis of the results.

4. Results

4.1. Social media usage of FTU's first-year students

In order to measure students' FOMO level, participants answered questions regarding three aspects: personal information, Social Media Usage Urge, and FOMO level. In terms of personal

information, the students provided statistics for the amount of time they spent on social media (Figure 1) and various social platforms they frequently used (Figure 2).

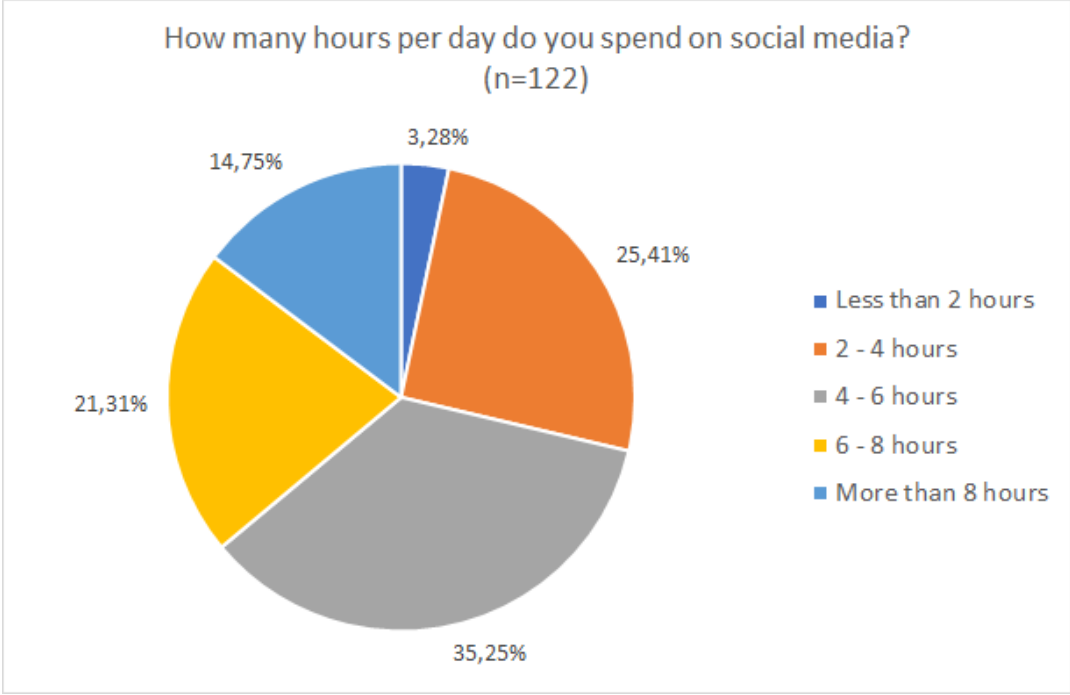


Figure 1. Hours per day students spend on social media

Source: The research group’s data

As clearly seen on the pie chart, 43 students (which accounted for 35.2%) spent 4-6 hours using social media daily, which is the highest figure. Meanwhile, a quarter of participants answered that social media activities took away 2-4 hours of their day. Only 4 students, making up 3.3%, spent less than 2 hours on social media.

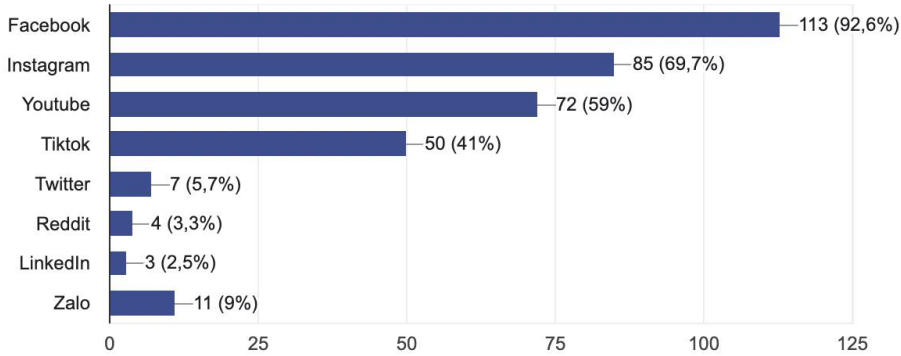


Figure 2. The use of different social media applications among students

Source: The research group’s data

Facebook is the most popular social media application among Foreign Trade University students, with 113 out of 122 participants using them frequently. Next comes Instagram and Facebook, with 85 and 72 students reporting visiting these applications regularly.

4.2. Urge to use social media of FTU's first-year students

The research group measured students' FOMO level by analyzing students' urge to use social media. Table 2 illustrated the general figures, and Table 3 compared the score of students' urge to use social media to the midpoint (16) of the scale.

Table 2. Overall statistics of students' urge to use social media

	Category	Figure (points)
Maximum	Possible maximum	28
	Real maximum	28
Minimum	Possible minimum	4
	Real minimum	9
	Mean (Average)	19.02
	Median	19
	Midpoint	16

Source: The research group's data

Table 3. Total score of students' urge to use social media compared to midpoint (16) of the scale

Category	Figure (Number of students)	Rate (%)
Points earned lower than the midpoint	27	22.13%
Points earned higher than the midpoint	82	67.21%
Points earned equal to the midpoint	13	10.66%

Source: The research group's data

With 4 questions and the highest point being 7, the possible maximum figure is 28, while the possible minimum one is 4. In reality, only one participant had the strongest urge to check social media in all four circumstances. Moreover, the lowest score is 9. The mean and the median are 19.02 and 19 respectively. The midpoint is 16 and 82 students, making up 67.21% of participants (n=122) earned higher scores than the midpoint. Overall, the majority of samples has a high urge to use social social media.

In addition, participants were also asked about their urge to check social media in various situations. The results for their responses can be seen in Table 4.

Table 4. Detailed figures for students' urge to check social media in different situations

	Urge to check social media when			
	...you're with others.	... you are unable to log on for any reason.	...you're in class.	...you're alone.
Mean	3,82	4,98	4,32	5,98
Mode	5,00	6,00	5,00	7,00
Median	4,00	5,00	4,00	6,00

Source: The research group's data

Overall, the majority of samples has a high urge to use social media. Among four circumstances, students were inclined to have the strongest urge to use social media when they were alone, given that the mean for the question "Urge to use social media when you are alone" is 5.98, a much higher number than other figures. On the other hand, when asked about their urge to use social media when they were with others, students had an average score of 3.82, indicating that they have the weakest urge to be on social platforms in this circumstance.

4.3. FOMO level of FTU's first-year students

Next, the research group presents the figures for students' FOMO level. According to Elizabeth Scott (2022), the fear of missing out (FOMO) refers to the feeling that others are having more fun, living better lives, or experiencing better things than you are. It is also considered a main type of problematic attachment to social media (Altuwairiqi et al., 2019). Table 5 and Table 6 show how high students' FOMO level is by comparing the figures to the midpoint of the scale.

Table 5. Overall statistics of students' FOMO level

	Category	Figure (points)
Maximum	Possible maximum	70
	Real maximum	53
Minimum	Possible minimum	7
	Real minimum	7
Mean (Average)		33.26
Median		34

Category	Figure (points)
Midpoint	38.5

Source: The research group's data

Table 6. Detailed figures for students' FOMO level

Category	Figure (Number of students)	Rate (%)
Points earned lower than the midpoint	81	66.39%
Points earned higher than the midpoint	41	33.61%

Source: The research group's data

To measure students' FOMO level, we prepared 10 questions regarding 3 topics, namely "Self Esteem", which is the way a person feels about oneself (Leary & Baumeister, 2000), "Social Interaction", and "Social Anxiety".

In this section, the 7-point Linkert scale was also used to measure the frequency, with 1 point equaling "never"; meanwhile, 7 points equals "always". 1 student had the highest FOMO score, at 53. The lowest score recorded was 7, which was also the possible minimum number. Overall, the majority of the samples had a quite low FOMO level, with 81 students having lower results than the midpoint, accounting for 66.39% of the participants. These responses were actually contradictory to our hypothesis which believed that FOMO was prevalent among students.

Apart from analyzing respondents' total points for FOMO level, the research group also studied data of three aspects regarding FOMO, namely self-esteem, Social Interaction, and Social Anxiety (Abel et al., 2016). First, Table 7 illustrates the figures for students' self-esteem in different aspects.

Table 7. Detailed figures for students' self-esteem

	Students self-esteem in various aspects				
	Positive attitude towards themselves	Satisfied with themselves	Feel that they have good qualities	Feel that they are failures	Feel that they do not have much to be proud of
Mean	2.02	2.43	1.48	3.59	3.28
Mode	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00
Median	2.00	2.00	1.00	3.00	3.00

Source: The research group's data

We asked 5 questions to measure participants' sense of self-esteem. Overall, the results illustrate that students had a high self-esteem. The mean for question about good qualities had the

lowest score, at 1.48, indicating that most participants frequently believed that they owned good qualities. The highest mean recorded regarding these 5 questions was about students considering themselves failure, at 3.59 out of 7. However, this score is actually considered neither good or bad, according to Pimentel (2019).

Next, Table 8 provides data for students’ social interaction, which is relevant to their feelings when communicating with others.

Table 8. Detailed figures for students’ social interaction

Students’ Social Interaction			
	Uncomfortable feelings when meeting new people	Frequency of troubled by shyness	Trouble thinking of right things to talk about when in a group
Mean	4.37	4.26	4.25
Mode	5.00	4.00	6.00
Median	4.00	4.00	4.00

Source: The research group’s data

In terms of Social Interaction, students’ attitude can be considered neutral. To be specific, among three situations, they were most likely to feel uncomfortable when meeting new people, with the mean for this question being 4.37. Meanwhile, the mean for the question “When in a group of people, do you have trouble thinking of the right things to talk about?” is 4.25, making it the smallest number among 3 circumstances.

Finally, Social Anxiety, which is caused by social exclusion, is an important factor regarding FOMO (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Table 9 demonstrates the statistics of students’ social anxiety.

Table 9. Detailed figures for students’ social anxiety

Students’ feeling when unable to check social media		
	Frightened	Nervous
Mean	3.61	4.26
Mode	4.00	5.00
Median	4.00	4.00

Source: The research group’s data

When it comes to Social Anxiety, the numbers demonstrate that students were likely to be nervous rather than frightened if they were unable to check their social media applications.

5. Discussion

This study's main objective was to measure first-year college students’ social media usage intensity and their FOMO levels. We decided to measure the FOMO level of Foreign Trade

University first-year students in the context of social media by assessing these students with varying levels of FOMO and their social media usage habits. Results suggest that students were inclined to have the strongest urge to use social media when they were alone and the weakest urge to be on social platforms when they were with others. Besides, the survey revealed that many of the surveyed college students spent 4-6 hours using social media daily, which is quite high, and Facebook is the most popular social media application for them. Moreover, our research also showed that generally, participants have a quite high self-esteem and moderate performance in Social Interaction and Social Anxiety level. In terms of Social Interaction, the figures collected revealed that first-year students at Foreign Trade University have a neutral attitude towards interacting with new acquaintances or finding the right things to talk about in a group of people. With regard to Social Anxiety, the questioned students do not have much anxiety regarding social media. This might be because nowadays, besides social media platforms, students can keep themselves up to date by using many other means of communication such as televisions, magazines, radio or asking people like their friends, acquaintances, and relatives.

Although numerous studies have shown that students are often negatively affected by social media usage, the results from the survey show that there are still some logical explanations for the relatively negligible effects of social media on most of the surveyed FTU first-year students. The impacts of FOMO caused by social media have been reported to influence students negatively in many studies. First, due to FOMO, students suffer from learning disengagement and attention distraction (Al-Furaih & Al-Awidi, 2021). Students sometimes fail to focus on learning and pay attention to the lesson, knowing that they can look up the knowledge online, and also because they constantly have the urge to check their social media to keep up with the latest news (Hofmann et al. 2016). Given the fact that FTU students have better academic ability than other business students in general, it is highly likely that the majority of FTU first-year students attach more importance to studying than to playing. Therefore, the research group assumes that they often use social media as a learning tool rather than a place to feel inferior about themselves. Although they have to go online frequently to look up new knowledge, the research group believe that they still know well about how to separate social media usage from studying time as they give top priority to their learning process. This can probably be why many of the surveyed FTU students do not suffer much from low self-esteem even though they all use social media as other university students. Secondly, the students' constitution may be worsened because of FOMO, given that using social media excessively can lead to health issues such as stress, and sleep deprivation (Hayran and Anik, 2021). Regarding health effects of social media, the study group suppose the reason for the finding that the survey participants' physical and mental health are not severely affected by different social media platforms is that a large number of FTU first-year students regard social media as a motivation and an inspiration for them to develop and complete themselves rather than a place to compare themselves with their peers or other students. In that way, social media can hardly affect FTU students in terms of health as they are not under too much stress when using different social media platforms. However, it is essential that further studies are needed to better investigate the reasons why FTU first-year students are not acutely affected by social media usage.

It is crucial to create coping mechanisms for a situation like FOMO, which has a significantly negative impact on daily life and especially on the lives of young people. According to Paker (2019), people should be able to manage their FOMO if they spend the majority of their time

online and using virtual media, especially if this negatively affects their mood and social interactions. Barker (2016) emphasized the significance of addressing FOMO and offered the following suggestions for coping. When a person is dissatisfied, he or she should avoid places where people in the virtual world congregate to exchange joyful experiences and instead concentrate on having actual relationships and living realistically. When a person concentrates on his or her pleasant and positive emotions, this circumstance can also have a favorable impact on his thoughts and feelings. It is important to remember that everyone has both pleasant and negative memories from their lives.

According to Gottberg (2017), one of the most crucial strategies to lessen FOMO or its effects on our lives is to live a simple, joyful life. People should take a number of actions to combat their fear of FOMO. There are five crucial approaches to manage FOMO, according to Sokol (2016).

- First and foremost, list three blessings one experiences each day. This activity can not only positively influence individuals' moods and thoughts but also keep a person away from their electronics and smartphones.
- Second, one should cease evaluating themselves and their lives in comparison to others. Everyone should be conscious that they are living or acting in accordance with their own best interests.
- Third, one ought to be happy with oneself. Everyone has a unique life story, which shouldn't be overlooked. Goals should be set by individuals based on their own lives, their ability to attain them, and not on the lives or experiences of others.
- Fourth, material things should not be prioritized. In fact, it is our meaningful, valuable, and happy life experiences that will enrich our lives, not material possessions. Remember that money can never buy happiness.
- Last but not least, instead of focusing on sharing quick-paced social media activities like who shared what and what people are doing, one should be present and spend time slowly with friends, family, and interests.

However, in small doses and under certain conditions, FOMO can be beneficial. "I've seen FOMO motivate people to step out of their comfort zone," says Kellie Zeigler, one of just 1,500 Certified Applied Positive Psychology Practitioners in the world (Summerville, 2011). Zeigler uses the example of deciding whether to attend a birthday party of a friend after a long, hard-working day. You are aware that going would be fun, but at this time, all you can focus on is the effort required to get there. You might be more inclined to go if you experience some FOMO. You'll go, have a great time, and come away from your interactions there feeling re-energized. Lauren Cook, Doctoral Candidate of Clinical Psychology at Pepperdine University agrees. "FOMO can pull us near one another. When we want to socially isolate, it can be the reminder that connection is really key for our health," she says (The Upside to FOMO, n.d.). According to a study by Brigham Young University psychology and neuroscience professor Julianne Holt-Lunstad, PhD, having a lack of social connections raises health risks just as much as smoking 15 cigarettes per day or having an alcohol use disorder (Kedia et al., 2014). One more benefit of FOMO, according to Cook, is that it can inspire us to believe that we can live our best lives when we witness others doing so. Seeing others succeed can motivate us to strive for more. That can serve as motivational fuel for us (The Upside to FOMO, n.d.).

6. Conclusion

In summary, students in their first year of college at the Foreign Trade University in Hanoi actually had low levels of FOMO when utilizing social media. This conclusion is corroborated by survey respondents from a wide range of majors and highly diverse genders. Moving in tandem with that, the majors also reported having a modest inclination to use social media during social interactions and used it moderately on a regular basis. Along the same lines, further study reveals that most survey participants had rather strong senses of self-worth and moderate performances in social interaction, as well as low levels of social anxiety. All those elements together provide evidence for the outcome that first-year FTU students have relatively low FOMO levels. However, the phenomenon “Fear of Missing Out” is still an alarming threat to social media’s users and young people tend to be more vulnerable to FOMO on digital networking. The best way to combat FOMO is to live a simple, fulfilling life and prioritize real-world relationships and activities over virtual ones. Consequently, our hypothesis was verified specifically, however, in the future, these results should be replicated in more varied contexts with a larger spectrum of individuals in subsequent studies.

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Appendix

SURVEY ABOUT FOMO LEVEL IN SOCIAL MEDIA CONTEXT OF FOREIGN TRADE UNIVERSITY’S FIRST YEAR STUDENTS

We are a research group from Faculty of Business Administration, Foreign Trade University. We are currently carrying out research about FOMO level in social media of FTU’s freshmen, after evaluating the level, we could suggest some solutions to address the problem of Fear of Missing Out. This survey is designed to gather the information to achieve our research objectives. We hope you can spend a few minutes answering the survey. We are sure that all the respondents’ information and opinions are confidential and used for research purpose only.

Part 1: General Information

What is your gender?

- Male
- Female
- Rather not say

Which Faculty do you belong to?

- School of Economics and International Business
- VJCC Institute (Vietnam-Japan Institute for Human Resources Development)
- Faculty of Chinese Language
- Faculty of French Language
- Faculty of Japanese Language
- Faculty of Business English
- Faculty of Finance and Banking
- Faculty of Business Administration
- Faculty of Law
- Faculty of International Economics
- Faculty of Accounting and Auditing
- Faculty of International Education

How many hours per day do you spend on social media?

- Less than 2 hours

- 2 – 4 hours
- 4 – 6 hours
- 6 – 8 hours
- More than 8 hours

Which social media do you frequently use? (Choose no more than 3 options)

- Facebook
- Instagram
- Youtube
- Tiktok
- Twitter
- Reddit
- LinkedIn
- Other: ...

Part 2: Social Media Usage Urge

The feeling of being “urged” to check the social media at least once a day; otherwise, the users will feel uncomfortable and may have negative emotions.

Please choose the level of being urged from 1 to 7 (1 is the lowest level indicating Very Weak, 7 is the highest level indicating Very Strong)

No.	Items Content	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	Urge to check social media when you’re with others.							
2	Urge to check social media when you are unable to log on for any reason.							
3	Urge to check social media when you’re in class.							
4	Urge to check social media when you’re alone.							

Part 3: FOMO level in social media of FTU’s first-year students

FOMO is when people feel worried because they think they are missing exciting experiences that other people are having, especially when they see updates from social media platforms.

Please choose the level of frequency from 1 to 7 in each of these questions (1 is the lowest level indicating Never, 7 is the highest level indicating Always)

No.	Items Content	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Self-esteem							

<i>Self-esteem is the way an individual feels about himself or herself</i>								
1	I take a positive attitude toward myself							
2	On the whole, I am satisfied with myself							
3	I feel I have a number of good qualities							
4	All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure							
5	I feel I do not have much to be proud of							
Social Interaction								
<i>This component indicates how people feel about interacting with other people, their problem with shyness, and how comfortable they are as a member of a group.</i>								
6	Do you feel uncomfortable meeting new people?							
7	How frequently are you troubled by shyness?							
8	When in a group of people, do you have trouble thinking of the right things to talk about?							
Social Anxiety								
<i>This component assesses the anxiety caused by social media usage</i>								
9	Assume you are unable to check social media when you want to. Generally, how frequently do you feel frightened?							
10	Assume you are unable to check social media when you want to. Generally, how frequently do you feel nervous?							