

INSTAGRAM ADDICTION AND THE PHENOMENON OF FOMO AMONG K-POP FANS

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ABSTRACT

Easy access to the internet can lead to physical and mental problems such as social media addiction. Problems related to media addiction have the potential to cause social anxiety. Therefore, today's easy access to the internet can cause different types of physical and mental problems for individuals. One type of mental health problem that can occur is internet addiction. Internet addiction can lead to other problems such as social anxiety or anxiety disorders. Social anxiety comes in many forms, one of which is the fear of missing out or commonly referred to as FoMO. The objective of this research is to depict the addiction to Instagram among Indonesian K-Pop fans and the phenomenon of FoMO. Utilizing phenomenological methodology, this qualitative study involves interviews and observations of Instagram users who are also K-Pop fans. The media dependency theory, social media concepts, social media addiction, and K-Pop fandom serve as the foundation for examining the research object and subjects. The findings indicate that the participants exhibit no signs of addiction to Instagram in their pursuit of current information and significant moments involving their idols. The FoMO phenomenon arises only when fans are unable to participate in specific K-Pop events attended by someone they know. Therefore, this research provides a comprehensive insight into the levels of social media usage among K-Pop fans that, when stated, do not exhibit signs of social media addiction.

Keywords: addiction, social media, fear of missing out, k-pop fans

1. PREFACE

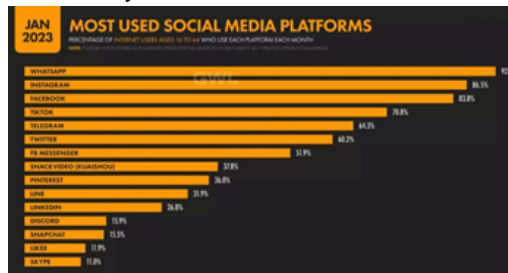
The ease of internet access today can trigger various types of physical and mental issues experienced by individuals. One type of mental problem that can occur is internet addiction. Internet addiction can lead to other problems such as social anxiety or anxiety disorders. Social anxiety comes in various forms, one of which is the Fear of Missing Out, commonly known as FoMO (Putri et al., 2019). Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) prompts individuals to share their personal lives on social media with the aim of seeking excitement and a semblance of happiness, driven by the desire not to be left behind in the pursuit of a glamorous lifestyle (Aisafitri & Yusriyah, 2020).

There are several addictive behaviors that can occur in social media, such as excessive use of social media, constantly seeking new information even when unnecessary, and even blaming others due to lacking social skills (Krisnadi & Adhandayani, 2022). The utilization of social media for information seeking is also undertaken by fans of foreign cultures. Through social media, fans can acquire information about their idols. One of the cultures of a foreign country that has garnered many fans in Indonesia is South Korea. The dissemination of South Korean culture is referred to as the Korean Wave.

Korean Wave or Hallyu (한류) is a global phenomenon involving the widespread dissemination of popular South Korean culture, including K-Pop, K-Drama, K-Film, K-Fashion, and also K-Food (Saraswati & Yoedtadi, 2023). The cultural and national differences have led Indonesian K-Pop fans to spend more time seeking information about their idols through social media. Therefore, in this study, K-Pop fans are deemed suitable subjects for investigation.

There are various platforms that fans use to communicate and obtain information about their idols. One of the social media platforms favored by fans is Instagram. The popularity of Instagram has risen due to its attractive and comprehensive features. The name "Instagram" originates from the words "insta" or "instant," signifying that users can share messages, photos, and videos instantly. Meanwhile, the term "gram" itself is derived from "telegram," symbolizing the quick transmission of information to others (Esa, 2018).

Figure 1
Commonly Used Social Media in Indonesia



There is a classification of social media addiction, namely fundamental focus, where an individual constantly thinks about social media even when offline; emotional diversion, where one experiences joy while engaging in social media; exceeding predefined time limits, an increase in duration beyond the initially set boundaries; restlessness if not checking social media content; internal conflicts arising with others due to behavior on social media; and relapse, the inability to cease the addiction to social media (Sugianto, 2017).

Based on social media addiction and the Fear of Missing Out phenomenon, researcher are intrigued to delve into the issues surrounding this phenomenon through the lens of media dependency theory, which posits that an individual's dependence on a particular media increase when that media provides significant information for the user. Additionally, there are concepts that can reinforce the research foundation and provide meaningful interpretations of the findings. Social media is a popular medium because users can form friendships and relationships online. Through this concept, social media addiction becomes the fundamental concept under investigation, as excessive use of social media has the potential to lead to addiction on the platforms being utilized.

The next concept, also related to the research, is FoMO, which stands for Fear of Missing Out. It refers to the anxiety experienced by social media users when unable to access social media and feel left out of the information within it. Pertaining to the subject under investigation, there is a final concept in this study, namely K-Pop fans, where the term refers to a group of individuals who are fans of South Korean pop music culture (Wishandy et al., 2019). Through the theories and concepts that have been elucidated, the researcher is keen on achieving a specific goal, namely to ascertain and describe the addiction to Instagram social media in the context of the Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) phenomenon among Indonesian K-Pop fans.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

Researcher employed a qualitative research method in this study. Bogdan and Taylor elucidate that qualitative research method is a systematic approach undertaken to develop a procedure leading to the analysis of qualitative data derived from interviews and observations with specific individuals (Prabowo, 2015). Based on the objects and subjects under investigation, this research falls within the category of phenomenology. According to Creswell, the phenomenological

research method serves to develop and provide meaning to a case or phenomenon experienced by individuals or groups (Widyaputri, 2020).

According to Sugiyono, the research subject refers to individuals, places, or objects that possess specific variables (Tanujaya, 2017). The targeted subjects are K-Pop fans in Jakarta who are either college students or late adolescents. This research involves three K-Pop enthusiast interviewees and a triangulator, Rudi Cahyono, S.Psi., M.Psi., who is a psychologist and a psychology lecturer at Airlangga University. Meanwhile, the focus of the study is on social media addiction within the phenomenon of FoMO. According to Supriati, the research object is the variable examined in a study (Cahyana, 2018). The primary objective of this research is to understand the cause-and-effect processes resulting from excessive use of social media on Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) behavior.

In conducting research, the collection of data is a crucial step that can significantly impact the progress of a study. According to Riduwan, data collection methods refer to the approaches or techniques employed by researcher to gather relevant information necessary for completing a research project (Tanujaya, 2017). The data is categorized into two types, namely primary data, which includes methods such as in-depth interviews and observations, and secondary data, which encompasses literature reviews.

The next step involves processing the existing data. Researcher employ the data analysis technique of the interactive model by Huberman and Miles (Camang, 2021). The components of this technique encompass data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. After the data has been analyzed, the next step is data validity, which involves verifying whether the conducted research is scientific and accountable (Dayanti, 2019). The technique employed is triangulation, which involves utilizing external data beyond the research data to serve as a comparative reference against the existing data (Chakim, 2017).

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Attraction and beginning of joining k-pop

Korean Pop, commonly known as K-Pop, is a genre of music closely associated with boy groups, girl groups, and soloists originating from South Korea (Rahmawati, 2020). Each K-Pop enthusiast has a unique timeline and reasons for joining the K-Pop fandom. The third interviewee developed an interest in K-Pop during the December 2022 holiday season. She began watching YouTube based on a friend's recommendation and discovered the excitement of K-Pop variety shows. Initially, the third interviewee felt bored, but upon giving it another chance, she found herself intrigued and started exploring the songs of a K-Pop idol group. The reason behind the third interviewee becoming a K-Pop fan was an invitation from a friend who had already been following K-Pop.

The utilization of instagram social media among k-pop fans

The utilization of Instagram is an integral element in the formation and development of online communities of K-Pop fans. On Instagram, fans can actively engage in various communications that take place among fellow fans as well as between fans and their idols. Instagram can serve as a cohesive force that connects K-Pop fans with a community sharing the same interest in a particular group or idol.

Figure 2
Time Spent by Second Interviewee on Instagram



The second interviewee is a content creator for a brand and is required to regularly access Instagram, Twitter, and TikTok every day. In seeking information about K-Pop, she prefer using Instagram or Twitter due to the faster dissemination of information. The second interviewee revealed that she spend approximately 3-6 hours per day on Instagram.

Fear of missing out (FoMO) among k-pop fans

Fear of Missing Out refers to the anxiety that arises when K-Pop fans feel they are missing out on information, experiences, or activities conducted by other fans. In the world of K-Pop fandom, FoMO can arise due to the desire to constantly stay updated on the latest developments regarding idol groups, song releases, or news about the Korean entertainment industry. Fans often feel the importance of staying connected with their online community to avoid missing crucial moments or the latest information that might be shared by fellow fans or even by their idols.

The first interviewee feels at ease when a friend they know possesses more information about the same idol. However, if that friend has firsthand experience in the K-Pop scene, the first interviewee experiences a slight sense of envy. She aspires to attend fansign events, fan meetings, and concerts, hoping to take photos and interact more closely with her cherished idol. Through a shared Instagram story, the first interviewee experiences FoMO as their friend attends the Korean awarding event held in Jakarta.

The impact of instagram utilization for k-pop fans

Instagram plays a significant role in the global development of K-Pop fan communities. Through this platform, K-Pop fans can connect with each other, share content, and form collective bonds around their favorite music, groups, and idols. Instagram provides an opportunity for K-Pop fans to engage directly with their idols through comments, likes, and direct messages. Fans can experience a more personal involvement and show closer support to their idols.

The third interviewee mentioned that she did not feel significantly affected by the negative impacts of using Instagram due to her limited engagement with existing fan bases. However, the positive effects she have experienced include a deeper understanding of K-Pop, including its internal humor. She emphasize that the positive impact is more prominent in their experience.

The utilization and dependency on instagram social media

The University of Oxford has proposed a theory suggesting that the optimal daily usage of social media is 257 minutes, approximately 4 hours and 17 minutes (Hepilita & Gantas, 2018). The

interviewees utilizes social media within controlled limits as their daily Instagram usage ranges from approximately 1 to 3 hours. In their engagement with social media, the interviewees expresses their love and enthusiasm for K-Pop through posts containing images, videos, and positive comments. Instagram serves as a platform for the interviewees to foster a community, share moments of happiness, and stay connected with the latest news in Korean pop culture. By maintaining a balance in usage and focusing on its positive aspects, the interviewees is able to experience joy without succumbing to the pressures or potential dependencies that may arise from social media use.

Media dependency theory posits that the impact of using a social media platform depends on the intricate relationship among the social system within it, the role of media in that system, and the interactions of users with the media (Santoso, 2021). This refers to a condition in which K-Pop fans experience an emotional attachment and significant behavioral engagement with the Instagram social media platform. According to the triangulator, signs of K-Pop fans being addicted to social media are evident when they feel restless when not updated with K-Pop developments. The second indicator is a somewhat obsessive desire to be the center in the community they follow. Through interview results, the interviewees do not feel addicted to social media. Their use of Instagram is within an ideal duration, and they do not consider social media as a reference for their daily lives. At this stage, interviewees only exhibit indicators of emotional diversion, where Instagram is used during leisure time and functions as a means to access information about their favorite idols.

The use of Instagram for K-Pop fans can facilitate the formation of a strong community and deep engagement with the lives of their idols. Through social media, K-Pop fans can digitally follow the activities of their beloved idols. While social media provides a space to build close relationships among K-Pop fans, the risks of dependency that can affect mental health should also be taken into consideration. Triangulator emphasizes the importance for K-Pop fans to be aware of and understand the boundaries of healthy Instagram usage. Additionally, in their daily use of social media, users should have a purpose that serves as the reason for their engagement. It is crucial not to let social media control various aspects of one's life. Lastly, fostering a positive and non-competitive community is essential to prevent feelings of anxiety about missing out on information. Consequently, K-Pop fans can experience a healthier use of social media and contribute to the development of a positive community in the era of Korean pop culture growth.

Social media addiction and the phenomenon of fear of missing out

Social media addiction among K-Pop fans has emerged as a significant issue in this digital era. Regularly, K-Pop fans experience a strong urge to continuously monitor the latest developments, updates, and significant moments involving their idols through various social media platforms, particularly Instagram (Rinata & Dewi, 2019). The symptoms of addiction are evident in behavioral patterns such as excessive use of social media, intensive interaction with K-Pop content, and active participation in online communities. In this study, the interviewees did not perceive any disruption due to social media addiction as they personally limit their use of Instagram to daily K-Pop-related needs. The interviewees only utilizes the Instagram social media platform at specific times and does not force the situation when unable to access it. The triangulator asserts that signs of social media addiction include restlessness and obsession, but these factors were not identified in the interview results. However, the interviewees did mention that there are aspects contributing to the emergence of FoMO (Fear of Missing Out) feelings.

Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) is a state in which an individual experiences anxiety when witnessing others engage in valuable moments or experiences, while they are not directly involved (Komala & Rafiyah, 2022). This creates an impetus to stay constantly connected with the activities or engagements of others through social media. This phenomenon encompasses the need for continuous and constant connection, concerns about missing out on the latest information, and excessive time spent on these platforms. The interviewees have repeatedly faced feelings of anxiety when unable to keep up with various content, social interactions, events, and information related to K-Pop on Instagram or in real life. The anxiety experienced by the interviewees intensifies if a known friend is attending a K-Pop event while they cannot be present. Restlessness arises when the interviewees perceive information and experiences through someone they know, rather than through independent individuals. However, through the interview results, it was stated that there is no sense of obsession when the interviewees cannot access social media.

According to the triangulator, not all FoMO phenomena are initiated by social media addiction. Instagram is merely a medium or a place where FoMO can develop due to the prevalence of long-distance communication in today's social media. Plus, there are reasons expressed by the interviewees regarding the emergence of anxious feelings when acquaintances attend K-Pop events that they cannot be a part of. The stated reasons revolve around the notion that specific and authentic K-Pop activities, such as concerts, hold far greater allure for a K-Pop enthusiast compared to updates or information through social media. Such experiences can be stirring and profoundly emotional when attended by someone personally acquainted with the fan.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Referring to the results obtained by researcher during the Instagram addiction and the Fear of Missing Out phenomenon among K-Pop fans research process that align with the criteria of the interviewees, the conclusion that can be drawn is that K-Pop fans among college students or late teenagers in Jakarta do not experience social media addiction, specifically on Instagram. The intensity of Instagram usage among K-Pop fans falls within a reasonable duration of 1-3 hours, engaging in daily activities such as staying updated on the latest news and seeking entertaining content related to their favorite idols. K-Pop fans demonstrate the ability to self-regulate their daily Instagram usage by finding other activities, such as work and study, and remaining focused on the positive impacts of social media utilization.

Furthermore, K-Pop fans among college students or late teenagers in Jakarta only experience the Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) if someone they personally know is attending a K-Pop event that they cannot be a part of. The phenomenon of FoMO does not arise from information or news shared by other K-Pop fans. In the course of being a K-Pop enthusiast, there are instances when fans feel anxious upon learning that acquaintances known to them have had a more captivating K-Pop experience. This sentiment does not manifest if the individual merely shares information or news about K-Pop through their social media.

In accordance with the findings and conclusions derived from this research, there are several recommendations that can serve as references for further studies and for K-Pop fans. Academically, for subsequent research with a similar focus, it is advised to consider alternative theories other than the media dependency theory and to use different subjects, thereby exploring responses from various perspectives for a broader insight into the examined phenomenon.

Moreover, there are practical suggestions that can be implemented, such as conducting awareness campaigns to enhance awareness regarding the consequences of social media addiction and the Fear of Missing Out phenomenon in the context of mental health among K-Pop fans. For application providers, in this case Instagram, it is advisable to consider the development of reminder features and time limitations when users exceed the daily limits that have been set.

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