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## Exploring the Relationship between the Fear of Missing Out and Social Networking Use

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**Abstract** — *In this project, I examined the extent to which the fear of missing out is related to active and passive social networking use.*

### I. INTRODUCTION

The present correlational study examined the extent to which people's self-reported fears of missing out are related to their active and passive use of various social networking sites (i.e., Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and Snapchat). Results revealed that the more participants feared they were missing out on rewarding experiences, the more frequently they reported using Instagram, Twitter, and Snapchat. Further analyses suggests that this correlation between fear of missing out and social networking use, however, may be driven by participants passive, but not active, use of these social networking sites.

### II. FINDINGS

The more participants feared they were missing out on rewarding experiences, the more often they used Instagram, Twitter, and Snapchat. Interestingly, although participants fear of missing out scores failed to be associated with actively posting content on these social networking sites, their scores on the measure were positively associated with passively reading content on these social networking sites. The more participants feared they were missing out on rewarding experiences, the more often they passively read content on Instagram, Twitter, and Snapchat.

# Its Not What You Post, Its What You View: Exploring the Relationship Between the Fear of Missing Out and Social Networking Use

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*PSYC2001 – Research Methods and Statistics I*

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# Question...

- Fear of Missing Out (FOMO)
  - “a pervasive apprehension that others might be having rewarding experiences which one is absent” (Pzybylski et al., 2013, p 1841).



# FOMO and Social Networking Sites

- Fear of missing out is positively correlated with the use of various social networking sites such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and Snapchat (Alt 2015; Przybylski et al., 2013).
  - The more people fear that they are missing out, the more frequently they use social networking sites
- Research has yet to examine the extent to which FOMO is associated with specific social networking behaviors.
  - Active networking use (e.g., posting and sharing content)
  - Passive networking use (e.g., viewing/reading content)

# Current Study

- Present study was created to systematically examine the extent to which the fear of missing out is associated with active vs passive social networking use.
- FOMO is characterized by a desire to stay continually connected with what others are doing (Przybylksi et al.), it is hypothesized that...
  - FOMO scores will be positively correlated with passive networking use (i.e., viewing content on SNS).
  - FOMO scores will be unrelated to active networking use (i.e., posting and sharing content on SNS)

# Method

- Sample
  - A convenient sample of 136 adults (72% female), ranging in age from 18 to 65 ( $M = 25.90$ ,  $SD = 10.79$ ) were recruited using snowball sampling techniques online via Facebook and Twitter.
- Procedure
  - After providing their consent to participate, participants were asked to complete a questionnaire that assessed their use of various social networking sites as well as a four-item measure of fear of missing out (Przybylski et al., 2013)
    - Sample item = “I fear others have more rewarding experiences than me.” ( $\alpha = .86$ ).

# Materials

- Social Networking Site Use
  - Participants were asked four questions about their use of Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and Snapchat

***Time Spent*** – 1 (*less than 10 minutes*) to 7 (*5 hours or more*)

1. “On average, how much time do you spend on \_\_\_\_\_ each day.”

***Specific Behaviors*** – 1 (*never*) to 5 (*very frequently*)

2. “How often do you post content on \_\_\_\_\_?”
3. “How often do you view/read content on \_\_\_\_\_?”
4. “How often do you share content on \_\_\_\_\_?”\*

\*For SnapChat, the question stated “how often do you privately send Snaps on Snapchat”

# Results: Social Networking Use

- Percent of respondents that use...
  - Facebook = 94% (n = 128)
    - 56% of stated they spend 1 hour or more on Facebook each day
  - Instagram = 79% (n = 108)
    - 55% stated they spend 1 hour or more on Instagram each day
  - Snapchat = 80% (n = 109)
    - 56% stated they spend 1 hour or more on Snapchat each day
  - Twitter = 53% (n = 72)
    - 51% stated they spend 1 hour or more on Twitter each day

# Results: Time Spent & FOMO

- To what extent is the use of various social networking platforms associated with the Fear of Missing Out?*

## Fear of Missing Out

Time Spent on Facebook (n = 123)	.005
Time Spent on Instagram (n = 106)	.24*
Time Spent on Twitter (n = 67)	.36**
Time Spent on SnapChat (n = 107)	.22*

\*  $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$

# Results: Specific Behaviors & FOMO

- To what extent is the Fear of Missing Out associated with specific social networking behaviors?*

	<b>Fear of Missing Out</b>			
	<i>Facebook</i>	<i>Instagram</i>	<i>Twitter</i>	<i>Snapchat</i>
Posting Content	-.13	.18	.16	.07
Reading/Viewing content	.06	.30**	.24*	.25**
Sharing Content/Sending Private Messages	-.16	.19	.15	.09

\*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$

# Discussion

- The present study was the first to examine the extent to which FOMO is associated with passive and/or active use of social networking sites.
- Although, consistent with prior research, FOMO was positively correlated with frequency of SNS use across three (out of four) SNS platforms, it appears that the correlation may be driven by passive, but not active, use of these SNS.

# Future Research

**FOMO**



**Passive use of SNS**

**OR**

**Passive use of SNS**

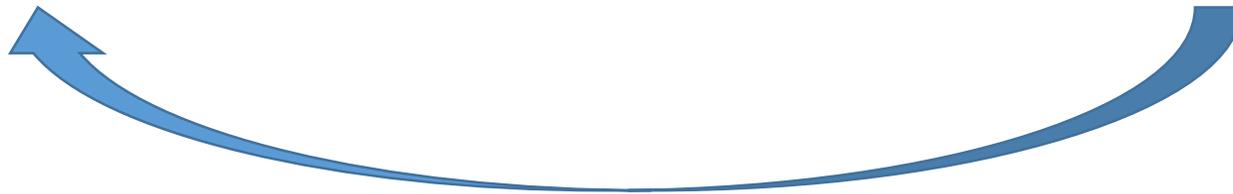
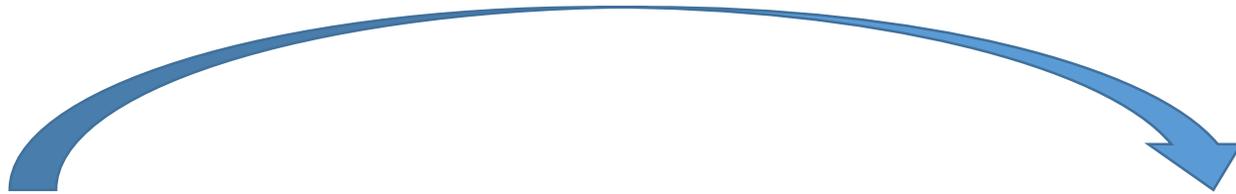


**FOMO**

# Future Research

**FOMO**

**Passive use of SNS**



# References

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