



Fear of missing out, academic procrastination, and perceived stress among students: A correlational study

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Abstract

The present study aimed to examine the relationship between fear of missing out (FoMO), academic procrastination, and perceived stress among students. With the increasing use of social media, FoMO has emerged as an important psychological factor influencing students' behavior and well-being. A quantitative, correlational research design was employed, and data were collected from a sample of 103 students aged 18–30 years using standardized instruments, including the Fear of Missing Out Scale (FoMOS), the Procrastination Assessment Scale for Students (PASS), and the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS-10).

Descriptive statistics and Pearson correlation analysis were conducted to analyze the data. The results revealed moderate levels of FoMO, academic procrastination, and perceived stress among participants. A significant moderate positive correlation was found between FoMO and academic procrastination ($r = .56, p < .01$), indicating that higher levels of FoMO are associated with increased procrastination behavior. Additionally, FoMO showed a moderate positive relationship with procrastination as a problem ($r = .48, p < .01$). However, perceived stress demonstrated weak correlations with both FoMO and academic procrastination.

The findings suggest that FoMO plays a more prominent role in influencing academic procrastination compared to perceived stress. The study highlights the importance of addressing social media-related behaviors to reduce procrastination and promote better psychological well-being among students.

Keywords: Fear of missing out, academic procrastination, perceived stress, students, social media

Introduction

Background of the Study

In recent years, the rapid development of digital technology and social media platforms has significantly influenced the daily lives of students. Social media applications such as Instagram, WhatsApp, and other networking platforms allow individuals to stay constantly connected with others and remain informed about social activities and events. While these platforms provide opportunities for communication and information sharing, they may also contribute to certain psychological concerns among users.

One such phenomenon that has gained attention in recent years is Fear of Missing Out (FoMO). FoMO refers to the feeling of anxiety or apprehension that others might be having rewarding experiences from which one is absent. Individuals experiencing FoMO often feel a strong urge to stay continuously connected with social media in order to keep track of what others are doing. This constant need to check updates and notifications can influence individuals' daily routines and academic responsibilities.

Among students, excessive engagement with social media may interfere with academic tasks and responsibilities. Students may spend considerable time browsing social media platforms, which can lead to delays in completing assignments, studying for examinations, or fulfilling other academic obligations. This delay in performing necessary tasks is commonly referred to as academic procrastination. Procrastination has been widely associated with poor academic performance, reduced productivity, and increased psychological distress.

Another important psychological factor associated with academic life is perceived stress. Students often experience

stress due to academic workload, deadlines, examinations, and expectations from family and society. When students frequently procrastinate on their tasks, academic pressure may accumulate, which can further increase their stress levels. Moreover, the constant comparison with others on social media may also contribute to feelings of inadequacy and stress.

Therefore, understanding the relationship between FoMO, academic procrastination, and perceived stress among students is important. Exploring these factors may provide valuable insights into how social media related behaviors influence students' academic functioning and mental well-being.

Rationale of the Study

The increasing use of social media among students has raised concerns regarding its impact on psychological well-being and academic behavior. Many students spend a significant amount of time engaging with online platforms to remain socially connected and informed about others' activities. While this connectivity may provide social benefits, it may also lead to experiences of fear of missing out (FoMO), which can influence individuals' behavior and emotional state.

FoMO has been associated with excessive social media use, difficulties in time management, and distraction from important tasks. As a result, students may delay completing academic work, leading to academic procrastination. Persistent procrastination can contribute to academic difficulties and increased stress levels. At the same time,

academic stress is a common concern among students, as they often face various academic pressures and expectations.

Despite growing interest in these variables, it is important to further examine how FoMO, procrastination, and perceived stress are related among students. Understanding these relationships may help researchers, psychologists, and educators identify factors that contribute to students' academic and psychological difficulties. The findings of the present study may also help in developing strategies and interventions aimed at reducing procrastination, managing stress, and promoting healthier patterns of social media use among students.

Objectives of the Study

The present study aims to achieve the following objectives

1. To assess the level of fear of missing out (FoMO) among students.
2. To assess the level of academic procrastination among students.
3. To examine the level of perceived stress among students.
4. To examine the relationship between FoMO and academic procrastination.
5. To examine the relationship between FoMO and perceived stress.
6. To examine the relationship between academic procrastination and perceived stress among students.

Hypotheses of the Study

Based on the objectives of the study, the following hypotheses were formulated:

1. There will be a significant relationship between fear of missing out (FoMO) and academic procrastination among students.
2. There will be a significant relationship between fear of missing out (FoMO) and perceived stress among students.
3. There will be a significant relationship between academic procrastination and perceived stress among students.

Review of Literature

The increasing use of social media has led researchers to examine its psychological impact on individuals, particularly among students and young adults. Concepts such as fear of missing out (FoMO), academic procrastination, and perceived stress have gained significant attention in recent years. Previous research has explored how these variables influence students' academic behavior and psychological well-being.

Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) is a relatively recent psychological concept that refers to the feeling of anxiety or apprehension that others might be having rewarding experiences from which one is absent. Andrew K. Przybylski and colleagues (2013) ^[2] introduced the concept of FoMO and developed the Fear of Missing Out Scale (FoMOS) to measure this phenomenon. Their research suggested that individuals with higher levels of FoMO tend to engage more frequently with social media in order to stay connected with others. The study also found that FoMO is associated with lower life satisfaction and higher levels of negative mood.

Further research has supported the relationship between FoMO and social media engagement. For example, Elhai Jon D. *et al.* (2016) found that individuals who experience higher levels of FoMO are more likely to engage in excessive smartphone and social media use. Their findings suggested that FoMO may contribute to problematic technology use and may also be associated with psychological distress such as anxiety and stress.

Another important variable associated with students' academic functioning is academic procrastination. Procrastination refers to the voluntary delay of intended tasks despite knowing that this delay may lead to negative consequences. Laura J. Solomon and Esther D. Rothblum (1984) ^[3] developed the Procrastination Assessment Scale for Students (PASS) to measure procrastination behaviors among students. Their research indicated that many students procrastinate on academic tasks such as writing assignments, preparing for examinations, and completing coursework. Procrastination is often associated with poor time management, fear of failure, and lack of motivation.

Several studies have also examined the psychological consequences of procrastination. Joseph R. Ferrari (1995) reported that chronic procrastination is linked with negative emotional states such as guilt, anxiety, and stress. Students who frequently delay academic tasks may experience increased pressure as deadlines approach, which can ultimately affect their academic performance and overall well-being.

Perceived stress is another important factor influencing students' psychological health. Stress refers to the feeling of being overwhelmed or unable to cope with demands or pressures. Sheldon Cohen *et al.* (1983) ^[1] developed the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) to assess the degree to which individuals perceive situations in their lives as stressful. Their research suggested that perceived stress reflects how unpredictable, uncontrollable, and overloaded individuals find their lives.

Research has consistently shown that students experience significant levels of stress due to academic workload, examinations, deadlines, and expectations from family and society. High levels of stress may negatively affect concentration, motivation, and academic performance. When stress levels remain high for prolonged periods, it may also lead to psychological difficulties such as anxiety and emotional exhaustion.

Recent studies have attempted to examine the relationship between FoMO, procrastination, and stress. For instance, studies have suggested that individuals who frequently check social media due to FoMO may become distracted from academic responsibilities. This distraction may contribute to procrastination, as students may postpone academic tasks in order to remain engaged with online activities. Over time, the accumulation of unfinished tasks may increase students' stress levels.

Moreover, FoMO may also directly contribute to stress. Constant comparison with others' achievements, experiences, and lifestyles on social media may lead individuals to feel inadequate or left out. This comparison can create feelings of dissatisfaction and pressure, which may increase perceived stress.

Overall, previous literature suggests that FoMO, academic procrastination, and perceived stress are interrelated factors that can influence students' academic behavior and psychological well-being. However, further research is

needed to better understand how these variables interact among students in different educational contexts. The present study aims to explore the relationship between FoMO, academic procrastination, and perceived stress among students in order to contribute to the growing body of research in this area.

Methodology

1. Research Design

The present study adopted a quantitative, cross-sectional research design to examine the relationship between perceived stress, fear of missing out (FoMO), and academic procrastination among students. A correlational approach was used to explore the associations among these psychological variables. Data were collected at a single point in time using standardized self-report questionnaires. This design was considered appropriate because it allows the researcher to measure multiple variables simultaneously and analyze the relationships among them without manipulating any conditions.

2. Sample and Sampling Method

The sample for the present study consisted of 103 participants. Participants were primarily students, recruited through online platforms using Google Forms.

A convenience sampling method was employed, as participants were selected based on their accessibility and willingness to participate in the study. This method is commonly used in psychological research when the target population is easily accessible through online platforms.

Participants voluntarily completed the questionnaire after being informed about the purpose of the study. Participation was completely voluntary and no incentives were provided.

Instruments and Scales

1. Perceived Stress Scale (PSS-10)

Perceived stress was measured using the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS-10) developed by Cohen, Kamarck, and Mermelstein (1983) ^[1]. The scale consists of 10 items designed to measure the degree to which individuals perceive situations in their life as stressful.

Participants respond to each item on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 0 (Never) to 4 (Very Often). Higher scores indicate higher levels of perceived stress. The PSS-10 is widely used in psychological research and has demonstrated good reliability and validity across different populations.

2. Fear of Missing Out Scale (FoMOS)

Fear of Missing Out was measured using the FoMO Scale developed by Przybylski *et al.* (2013) ^[2]. The scale consists of 10 items that assess the extent to which individuals experience apprehension that others might be having rewarding experiences from which they are absent.

Responses are recorded on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (Not at all true of me) to 5 (Extremely true of me). Higher scores reflect greater levels of fear of missing out.

The FoMO scale has been widely used in studies examining social media behavior and psychological well-being.

3. Procrastination Assessment Scale for Students (PASS)

Academic procrastination was measured using the Procrastination Assessment Scale for Students (PASS) developed by Solomon and Rothblum (1984) ^[3].

The PASS measures students' procrastination behavior in academic settings and consists of two major components:

Frequency of procrastination

Procrastination as a problem

Participants rate items on a Likert-type scale, indicating how frequently they delay academic tasks and the extent to which procrastination is problematic for them. Higher scores indicate greater levels of academic procrastination.

The PASS is a widely used instrument for assessing procrastination among students.

4. Ethical Considerations

Ethical principles were carefully followed during the conduct of this study. Participants were informed about the purpose of the research before completing the questionnaire. Participation in the study was voluntary, and participants had the right to withdraw at any time without any consequences. Informed consent was obtained prior to data collection.

The confidentiality and anonymity of participants were maintained. No identifying information was collected, and the responses were used solely for academic research purposes.

5. Procedure

Data for the present study were collected using an online questionnaire created through Google Forms. The questionnaire included demographic questions followed by the standardized scales measuring perceived stress, fear of missing out, and academic procrastination.

The survey link was distributed through social media platforms and online student communities. Participants were requested to read the instructions carefully and respond honestly.

A total of 103 completed responses were obtained and included in the final analysis.

6. Data Analysis

The collected data were organized and analyzed using statistical methods. Descriptive statistics such as mean, standard deviation, minimum, and maximum values were calculated to understand the general distribution of the variables.

To examine the relationships among perceived stress, fear of missing out, and academic procrastination, Pearson correlation analysis was conducted.

The results were presented in the form of tables and graphs to facilitate clear interpretation of the findings.

Results

1. The purpose of the present study was to examine the relationship between perceived stress, fear of missing out (FoMO), and academic procrastination among students. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and Pearson correlation analysis to understand the levels of the variables and the relationships among them.

A total of 103 participants completed the questionnaire. The results of the statistical analysis are presented below.

2. Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics were calculated to determine the mean, standard deviation, minimum, and maximum values of perceived stress, fear of missing out, and academic procrastination.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Study Variables (N = 103)

| Variable | Mean (M) | Standard Deviation (SD) | Minimum | Maximum |
|----------------------------|----------|-------------------------|---------|---------|
| Perceived Stress (PSS-10) | 21.49 | 3.57 | 13 | 32 |
| Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) | 26.52 | 6.83 | 10 | 41 |
| Procrastination Frequency | 16.42 | 4.75 | 6 | 30 |
| Procrastination Problem | 15.93 | 5.54 | 6 | 30 |

The results indicate that participants reported moderate levels of perceived stress. The mean score of the FoMO scale also suggests a moderate level of fear of missing out among the participants.

Similarly, the scores for procrastination frequency and procrastination as a problem indicate moderate levels of

academic procrastination among the students.

3. Correlation Analysis

Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationships between perceived stress, fear of missing out, and academic procrastination.

Table 2: Pearson Correlation Between Perceived Stress, FoMO, and Academic Procrastination

| Variables | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|---|
| 1. Perceived Stress | — | | | |
| 2. Fear of Missing Out | .13 | — | | |
| 3. Procrastination Frequency | .19 | .56 | — | |
| 4. Procrastination Problem | .15 | .48 | .63 | — |

The results indicate a moderate positive correlation between fear of missing out and procrastination frequency ($r = .56$) as well as procrastination as a problem ($r = .48$). This suggests that students who experience higher levels of FoMO are more likely to engage in academic procrastination.

Additionally, a strong positive relationship was found between procrastination frequency and procrastination as a problem ($r = .63$), indicating that students who frequently procrastinate are also more likely to perceive procrastination as a significant problem.

4. The results were statistically significant at $p < .01$ level.

However, perceived stress showed weak correlations with FoMO and academic procrastination, suggesting that stress may not be a strong predictor of procrastination behavior in this sample.

Summary of Results

The findings of the present study indicate that students experience moderate levels of perceived stress, fear of missing out, and academic procrastination.

Correlation analysis revealed that fear of missing out is moderately associated with academic procrastination, suggesting that students who worry about missing social experiences may delay their academic tasks.

On the other hand, perceived stress showed weaker relationships with procrastination, indicating that other psychological factors, such as FoMO, may play a more important role in influencing procrastination behaviors among students.

Discussion

1. The present study aimed to examine the relationship between perceived stress, fear of missing out (FoMO), and academic procrastination among students. With the increasing use of social media and digital platforms, psychological experiences such as FoMO have become more prevalent and may influence students' academic behaviors. The study sought to understand how these psychological factors interact and contribute to academic procrastination.

Data were collected from 103 participants, and the results were analyzed using descriptive statistics and Pearson

correlation analysis. The findings revealed moderate levels of perceived stress, FoMO, and academic procrastination among participants. Additionally, FoMO showed a moderate positive relationship with academic procrastination, whereas perceived stress demonstrated weak correlations with procrastination behaviors.

2. Discussion of Major Findings

Perceived Stress Among Students

The results of the present study indicated that participants reported moderate levels of perceived stress. This finding is consistent with previous research suggesting that students commonly experience stress due to academic demands, deadlines, and personal responsibilities.

The Perceived Stress Scale (PSS-10) measures the degree to which individuals perceive situations in their lives as stressful. Moderate stress levels in the current sample may reflect typical academic pressures faced by students. University students often experience stress related to examinations, assignments, and future career concerns.

Although stress is often associated with negative academic outcomes, the current study found that perceived stress had only a weak relationship with academic procrastination. This suggests that stress alone may not necessarily lead to procrastination behavior. Some students may experience stress but still manage their academic tasks effectively.

Fear of Missing Out (FoMO)

The findings of the study also revealed moderate levels of fear of missing out among participants. FoMO refers to the apprehension that others might be having rewarding experiences from which one is absent. This phenomenon has become increasingly relevant with the rise of social networking platforms and constant online connectivity.

The results support previous research by Przybylski *et al.* (2013) [2], who suggested that FoMO is associated with increased social media engagement and a strong desire to remain socially connected. Students who frequently check social media may experience concerns about missing important social interactions, events, or updates.

Moderate FoMO levels in the present study indicate that many students experience a certain degree of anxiety related to staying connected with others. This psychological

tendency may influence how students allocate their time and attention, particularly when balancing social and academic responsibilities.

Academic Procrastination

The results also showed moderate levels of academic procrastination among participants. Academic procrastination refers to the intentional delay of academic tasks despite expecting negative consequences.

This finding is consistent with previous studies that indicate procrastination is a common behavior among students. Students may delay tasks such as studying for exams, completing assignments, or preparing presentations due to various factors including lack of motivation, poor time management, distraction, or emotional avoidance.

The results further showed a strong relationship between procrastination frequency and procrastination as a problem, indicating that students who frequently delay tasks are also more likely to perceive procrastination as problematic in their academic life.

Relationship Between FoMO and Academic Procrastination

One of the most important findings of the present study is the moderate positive relationship between FoMO and academic procrastination. Students who reported higher levels of FoMO also tended to report higher levels of procrastination.

This relationship can be explained by the influence of digital distractions and social media engagement. Individuals who experience FoMO may frequently check social media platforms in order to stay updated with others' activities. This constant monitoring of social information can consume significant time and attention, which may interfere with academic responsibilities.

Previous research has suggested that FoMO is associated with increased social media usage and difficulty in disengaging from online activities. As a result, students may postpone academic tasks while engaging in online interactions, which ultimately contributes to procrastination. The findings of the present study support the idea that FoMO may act as a psychological factor that contributes to academic delay behaviors.

Relationship Between Perceived Stress and Procrastination

In contrast to FoMO, perceived stress showed weak correlations with academic procrastination in the present study. Although stress is often assumed to contribute to procrastination, the results suggest that this relationship may not always be strong.

One possible explanation is that students may respond to stress in different ways. Some individuals may cope with stress by becoming more organized and focused on completing tasks, while others may delay tasks due to feeling overwhelmed.

Another explanation could be that other psychological factors, such as motivation, self-regulation, and time management skills, may play a more significant role in influencing procrastination behavior.

3. Overall Interpretation

Overall, the findings of the study suggest that fear of missing out may play a more important role in academic

procrastination than perceived stress among students. While students experience moderate stress, it does not appear to strongly predict procrastination behaviors in the present sample.

Instead, FoMO appears to be more closely associated with procrastination, possibly due to the increasing influence of social media engagement and digital distractions on students' daily lives.

These findings highlight the importance of considering modern psychological and technological influences when examining academic behaviors.

Conclusion

1. Summary of the Study

The present study aimed to examine the relationship between perceived stress, fear of missing out (FoMO), and academic procrastination among students. With the growing influence of digital technology and social media in students' lives, understanding the psychological factors that affect academic behavior has become increasingly important.

A quantitative, correlational research design was used for this study. Data were collected from 103 participants using standardized psychological instruments, including the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS-10) developed by Cohen *et al.*, the Fear of Missing Out Scale (FoMOS) developed by Przybylski *et al.* (2013) [2], and the Procrastination Assessment Scale for Students (PASS) developed by Solomon and Rothblum.

The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and Pearson correlation analysis in order to examine the levels of the variables and the relationships among them.

2. Major Findings

The results of the study revealed that participants reported moderate levels of perceived stress, fear of missing out, and academic procrastination.

The analysis also indicated a moderate positive relationship between fear of missing out and academic procrastination, suggesting that students who experience higher levels of FoMO are more likely to delay their academic tasks. This finding highlights the possible role of social media engagement and the desire to remain socially connected in influencing students' academic behaviors.

In contrast, perceived stress showed relatively weak relationships with academic procrastination, suggesting that stress alone may not strongly predict procrastination behaviors in this sample. These findings indicate that other psychological and behavioral factors may contribute to procrastination among students.

Overall, the results suggest that fear of missing out may be a more significant factor related to academic procrastination than perceived stress.

3. Implications of the Study

The findings of the present study have several important implications for students, educators, and mental health professionals.

First, the results highlight the need to increase awareness about the impact of social media use and FoMO on students' academic functioning. Excessive engagement with social media may create distractions and interfere with students' ability to focus on academic responsibilities.

Second, educational institutions may consider implementing time management and self-regulation strategies to help

students manage distractions and reduce procrastination behaviors.

Third, psychologists and counselors working with students may address FoMO-related concerns and digital habits during counseling sessions in order to support better academic performance and psychological well-being.

4. Limitations of the Study

Despite its contributions, the present study has certain limitations that should be considered when interpreting the results.

First, the study used a convenience sampling method, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to a broader population. Second, the data were collected through self-report questionnaires, which may be influenced by participants' subjective perceptions or response biases.

Additionally, the study employed a cross-sectional research design, which means that causal relationships between the variables cannot be established.

Future research may address these limitations by using larger and more diverse samples, longitudinal research designs, and additional psychological variables.

5. Suggestions for Future Research

Future studies may explore the relationship between FoMO, stress, and academic procrastination in different populations such as school students, working professionals, or individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds.

Researchers may also investigate additional factors such as social media usage patterns, self-control, motivation, and time management skills, which may further explain procrastination behaviors.

Longitudinal research designs may help in understanding how these psychological variables influence academic behavior over time.

6. Final Conclusion

In conclusion, the present study provides insight into the relationship between perceived stress, fear of missing out, and academic procrastination among students. The findings suggest that while students experience moderate levels of stress, fear of missing out appears to have a stronger association with academic procrastination.

As digital technologies continue to shape students' daily lives, understanding psychological experiences such as FoMO becomes increasingly important. Addressing these factors may help students develop healthier digital habits, better time management skills, and improved academic engagement.

These findings emphasize the growing influence of digital behavior on students' academic functioning in the modern era.

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