A study on Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) and its addictive gratification.

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ABSTRACT:
Background: This research paper focus to study on The fear of missing out, or FoMO, which is an exploration of the dread of being socially excluded. There is a constant awareness, brought about by social media, of what an individual may be missing out on in terms of having a good time. The study focusses on the concept of social media addiction. The researcher took 500 respondents as her sample size to study on the duration of time period spend on social media, the addictive nature towards usage of SNS and the need of gratification with the access of social networking sites.
KEYWORDS : Fear of Missing Out, Addiction, Social networking sites.

I.   Introduction

Fear of missing out (FoMO) is an original word that was coined in 2004 and has seen widespread usage ever since 2010(*Oh My God You Are so Missing Out*, n.d.) to describe a phenomena that may be seen on social networking sites. Social networking sites have become increasingly popular in recent years. It wasn't until 2013 that it was finally included in the Oxford Dictionary. It is of the utmost significance to investigate the influence that social media has on the maturation process of adolescents. There is a growing corpus of study that investigates the impact of social media on the friendships, identities, cognitive development, and health of adolescents. The usage of social media has been shown to have associations with a variety of mental health issues, including anxiety, depression, substance misuse, and personality disorders, among adolescents. However, studies also show that social media may be a good medium for the teaching of the public about public health and for the stimulation of creative thought.

Since the advent of social networking sites in 2008, there has been a continuous growth in the number of enhanced social interactions that take place online. The term "fear of missing out," which was first used in the field of marketing, was formally adopted in the field of clinical psychiatry in the year 2014 to define a specific occurrence(Deniz, n.d.). Recent studies have made it abundantly clear that this condition has a complex psychological basis that is comprised of cognitive, behavioural, and addictive processes. Fear of missing out (FoMO) is a form of skewed thinking that might originate from a sense of worry about missing out on something enjoyable. On the other hand, it is maintained by a persistent reactivity to SNS. According to the findings of several studies, these habits are likewise classified as compulsive. On the other hand, one might make the case that human cognitive processes have been falling behind the quickly evolving interface of technology(Kalpidou et al., 2011). This is a legitimate point to make. These studies are an effort to identify and comprehend the origins of, as well as the psychological interactions between, a number of different brain processes(Hattingh et al., 2022). Not only has fear of missing out (FoMO) been related with distractibility, but it has also been associated with an overall drop in productivity and worse mental health outcomes(Käll et al., 2020). Recent research have found a relationship between sleep difficulties, clinical depression, social anxiety, and a deterioration in academic performance(Huckins et al., 2020). The most common explanations for this phenomenon are a lack of closeness in the contacts themselves and the presence of a sizable number of people with whom one is continually confronted with the need to evaluate oneself in relation to others(Billieux et al., 2015). It is likely that persons in this pool would sense irritation and jealousy as a result of comparing themselves to others, even if they will still be inclined to want to become closer to the person with whom they are comparing themselves (Fox & Moreland, 2015).These actions might make negative feelings like envy, jealously, anger, and anxiety worse, as well as the drive to seek perfection on social media (Chotpitayasunondh

& Douglas, 2018). It is quite likely that the impacts will be exacerbated for persons who already struggle with their mental health (Gupta & Sharma, 2021).

FoMO is characterised by the urge to keep consistently linked with what other people are experiencing. In 2013,(Przybylski et al., 2013)British psychologists expanded and defined it as "pervasive worry that others could be having gratifying experiences from which one is missing." Self-determination theory (SDT), which was established by Ryan et al.(Ryan et al., 2014) and utilised (Przybylski et al., 2013) to explain what drives FOMO, was used to conceptualise fear of missing out (FoMO). [Citation needed] The idea that fear of missing out (FoMO) might lead to bad feelings as a result of unfulfilled social needs is analogous to ideas that examine the detrimental psychological impacts of being excluded from a group((Whiting & Williams, 2013). The fear of missing out (FoMO) is a modern psychological issue. It may exist as an episodic feeling that occurs in the middle of a conversation, as a long-term disposition, or as a state of mind that causes the individual to feel a deeper sense of social inferiority, loneliness, or intense rage(Ayar et al., 2018). It may also exist as a state of mind that leads to the individual feeling isolated from others. Two processes are involved in FOMO: the first is the feeling that one is missing out on something, and the second is an obsessive need to keep up with their social relationships. The social part of fear of missing out (FOMO) might be posited as relatedness, which relates to the need to belong and the establishment of strong and stable interpersonal connections. Relatedness refers to the social side of the urge to belong. FOMO is a type of problematic attachment to social media, and it is associated with a variety of negative life experiences and feelings, such as a lack of sleep, reduced life competency, emotional tension, negative effects on physical well-being, anxiety, and a lack of control over one's emotions; with close personal connections possibly being seen as a way to counteract the effects of social rejection (Altuwairiqi et al., 2019). Additionally, it is not apparent which reward pathway appears to be involved in the impacts that it has on the organism. Dopaminergic tracts, in particular mesolimbic circuits, are known to become engaged when effective social relationships are made. (*Has Dopamine Got Us Hooked on Tech? | Technology | The Guardian*, n.d.)This theory has gained widespread acceptance in recent years.

II.   Objective of the Study
The existing corpus of research on the fear of missing out (FOMO) as it relates to the usage of social media is what this particular study hopes to contribute to. The purpose of this study is to explore whether or not persons who have higher levels of FOMO have a greater number of social media accounts (i.e., the depth of their usage of social media) and whether or not they access these accounts more regularly. It also determine whether individuals who report higher levels of FOMO also report higher levels of behavioural change and discomfort without accessing mobile phones. The study goals are addressed with data from the outcomes of a cross-sectional survey that was conducted to 500 respondents ranging in age from 18 to 56 years old.

III.   Literature Review
As social networking sites (SNSs) like Instagram gained widespread popularity, researchers began focusing their attention on the ways in which SNSs affect users' psychosocial functioning. However, the link between using social media and one's mental health continues to be a contentious issue (Pantic, 2014). SNSs have the potential to boost well-being by providing chances for identity expression (Grieve & Watkinson, 2016), social connectivity(Cornejo et al., 2013; Neubaum & Krämer, 2015) (Cornejo et al., 2013, and interest-driven learning (Tice, 1993). In the same vein, increased time spent on social media is correlated with lower levels of both life satisfaction and self-esteem (Kross et al., 2013). Comparison to peers is natural for adolescents, and it is an essential component in the maturation of a sense of identity (Bessière et al., 2008). Self-perceptions are skewed and too favourable in early childhood, before the development of cognitive skills that make comparison for the purpose of self-evaluation possible (Billieux et al., 2015; O'Keeffe et al., 2011). The ability to compare oneself to others in a social setting leads to more accurate but also more pessimistic assessments of oneself among teenagers(Dixit et al., 2010) .

For teenagers who struggle with social anxiety(Clayton et al., 2013), social networking sites (SNS) offer a compensating medium that allows them to address their unmet social needs in a manner that is different from face-to-face communication(Dixit et al., 2010).. People who have communication difficulties benefit from the usage of social networking sites because it makes it possible for them to fulfil their unfulfilled social requirements with significantly less effort and in almost real time(Baker & Algorta, 2016; Hou et al., 2019; Lim et al., 2016). Nevertheless, this "social compensation" might be problematic when it perpetuates avoidance for face-to-face interactions and, as a consequence, increases social anxiety(Kuss & Griffiths, 2011). These processes have a high likelihood of exacerbating social concerns and making one more susceptible to anxiety disorders. The fear of missing out (FoMO) has also been linked to problematic usage of social networking sites (SNS) because of the ease with which teenagers may communicate with one another at whim(Stead & Bibby, 2017; Strickland, 2014) and the ongoing desire for personal validation and rewarding assessments of a skewed

sense of self(Burrow & Rainone, 2017). The cognitive component of FOMO is characterised by anxious ruminations, such as excessively monitoring and reloading social networking sites for new alerts and notifications. These things, in turn, make the levels of anxiety that need to be maintained in order to keep up with the theme higher in preparation for a reward. The fear of missing out, or FoMO, is an exploration of the dread of being socially excluded. There is a constant awareness, brought about by social media, of what an individual may be missing out on in terms of having a good time. This is what a researcher means when they say that social media "creates inaccurate perspectives of the lives of others." Self-esteem can be negatively impacted when an individual is subjected to ongoing "upward social comparisons" and excessive expectations. There is a correlation between the occurrence of these events and the development of depression symptoms in certain people(Steers et al., 2014). These depressed symptoms may be made worse by the impression that one may avoid experiencing bad feelings when participating in online forums (Twenge et al., 2017). In a study carried out in Belgium(De Cock et al., 2014)with a sample size of 1000 people, it was discovered that 6.5% of the participants made excessive use of social networking sites. These participants were found to have lower levels of emotional stability and agreeableness, as well as lower levels of conscientiousness, perceived control, and self-esteem, all of which are potential risk factors for affective disorders. There is a correlation between problematic internet use and the growth of fear of missing out (FoMO), which has been linked to young adults disregarding their peer interactions, which can potentially lead to depressed symptoms(Shensa et al., 2017). In addition, utilising social networking sites for longer periods of time (using them for more than two hours per day) was associated with a considerably increased risk of suicidality(Lee et al., 2014).

Despite the fact that young people may have quick and desired contacts with their friends via social media platforms, many report feeling more alone and alone than ever before.

After prolonged use of social networking sites (SNS), emotions of loneliness that were already present may become worse due to fear of missing out (FoMO). It has been stated that communication channels that have less nonverbal indicators may result in less warmth and connection among individuals who are connecting with one another through verbal methods, hence avoiding meaningful and pragmatic conversation. Insomnia and consequent negative mental health effects have been linked to the fear of missing out (FoMO) as well as interpersonal stress(Adams et al., 2020). Researchers in China conducted another study on university students and found that negative affect, which the researchers defined as "a general dimension of subjective distress and unpleasurable engagement that subsumes a variety of aversive mood states, including anger, contempt, disgust, guilt, fear, and nervousness," was linked with poor sleep as a result of FoMO(Montag et al., 2018). The participants in this study were from China. It is also well known in clinical study that blue light emitted from the screens of electronic devices (short-wave blue light with wavelength between 415 nm and 455 nm) affects sleep(Mortazavi et al., 2018). [Short-wave blue light] A state of cognitive arousal is thought to result from the suppression of the pineal hormone melatonin, which is part of the theorised process. These shifts in circadian rhythm might result in increased sleep latency, decreased total sleep time, and increased time spent sleeping during the day.

FoMO is strongly tied to the usage of social networking sites (SNS), which has been shown to have a detrimental impact on academic achievement (Alt, 2018).

The continual connection provided by cellphones can have a negative impact on cognitive capacities and lead to distractions in the classroom. In addition, there is a correlation between rapidly moving between activities and poor learning (Ophir et al., 2009). It is well known that people who multitask are more prone to making mistakes and taking longer to finish activities (L. Hur & Gupta, n.d.).

Young individuals who express high levels of fear of missing out (FoMO) are less likely to indicate that they have a healthy lifestyle overall. Poor eating habits are connected not just to sentiments of jealousy and social rejection but also to feelings of social isolation (Weinstein, 2017). In addition, FOMO encourages heavy use of social networking sites, which results in a sedentary lifestyle and contributes to the epidemic of obesity among young adults (Booker et al., 2015).

III. Methodology

500 respondents ranging from the age of 18 to 56 was taken for the study. The respondents included students, housewife, working professionals as well as retired personel. A survey method was done using a close ended questionnaire tool. The researcher has opted for purposive sampling method, with survey questionnaire technique. The respondents were firstly asked about their age, those who fit the age gap from 18 to 56 years were told about the topic of the study. As the study focussed primarily on only a specific age group, it was important to know the socio demographic details of the respondents, as the use of mobile phone varies between old and young age groups.

|					
Neither Agree nor Disagree	0.60%	0.00%	1.00%	3.80%	1.00%	6.40%
Strongly Agree	14.60%	15.00%	3.00%	2.20%	1.00%	35.80%
Strongly Disagree	1.40%	4.60%	2.40%	6.20%	2.60%	17.20%
Grand Total	**20.60%**	**25.20%**	**28.40%**	**19.60%**	**6.20%**	**100.00%**

Table no.2: Do you think behaviour have changed after using Social Networking Sites?
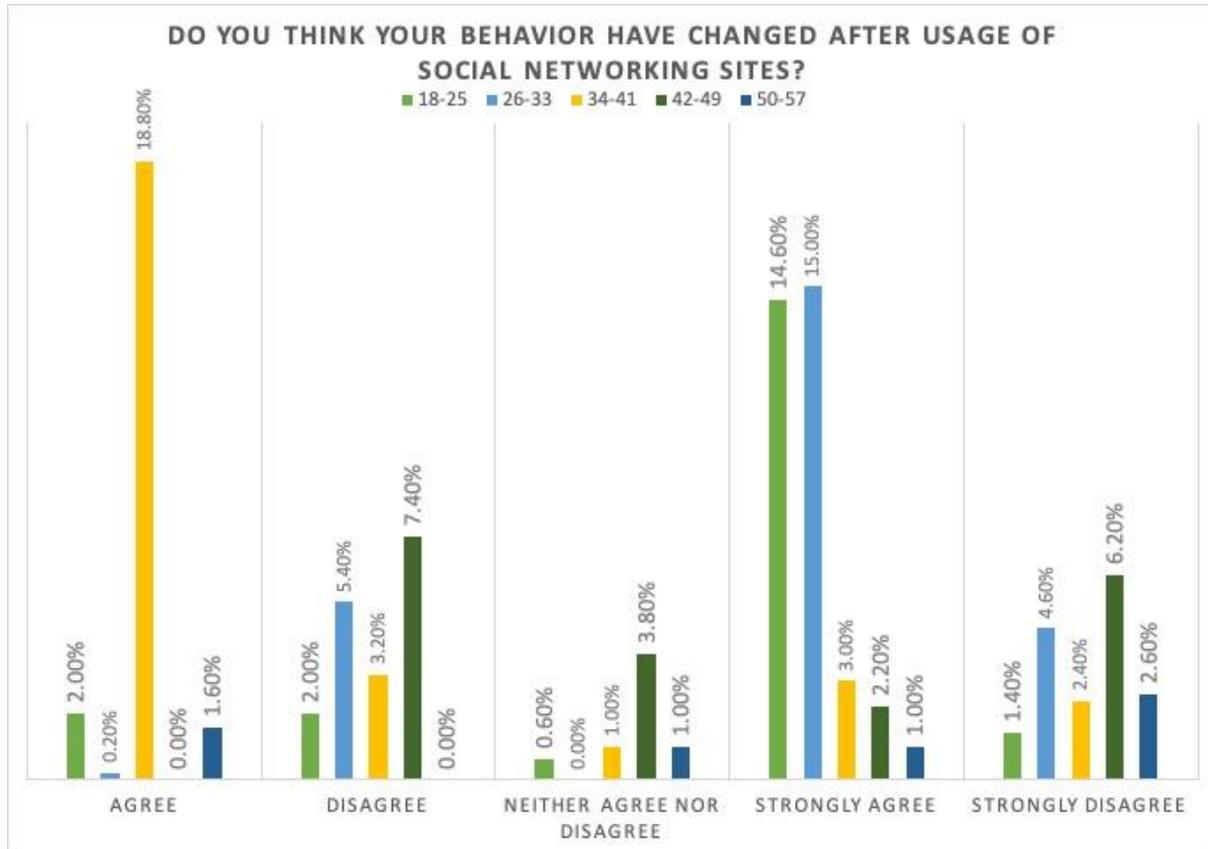
35.80% of the total respondents falling under the age group of 18 to 25 years and 26 to 33yrs strongly agreed that their behaviour have changed after using social networking sites. The age group ranging from 34 to 41 yrs agreed to the change in behaviour after using Social networking sites.

Table no.3: Is Social Media is addictive in nature?

Do you think social media is an addiction?						
	18-25	**26-33**	**34-41**	**42-49**	**50-57**	**Grand Total**
Agree	0.00%	2.00%	0.40%	10.20%	0.00%	12.60%
Disagree	4.80%	5.20%	6.20%	1.20%	0.00%	17.40%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	0.60%	0.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	3.60%
Strongly Agree	4.00%	8.00%	19.80%	6.20%	4.20%	42.20%
Strongly Disagree	11.20%	10.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	24.20%
Grand Total	**20.60%**	**25.20%**	**28.40%**	**19.60%**	**6.20%**	**100.00%**
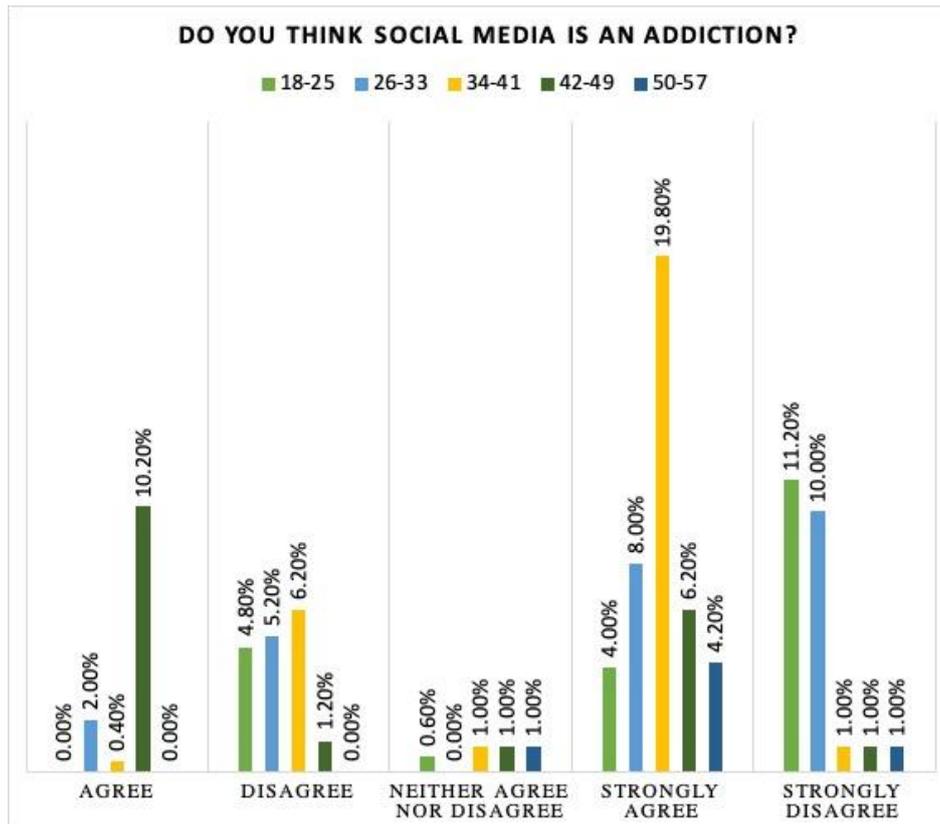
42.20% of the total respondents strongly agreed that they think social media is a kind of addiction, in which 19.80% were the respondents ranging from the age group of 34 to 41 years.

Table no. 4: Records the percentage of comparison between female and male response in social media addiction

Do you think social media is an addiction?			
	female	male	Grand Total
Agree	6.00%	6.60%	12.60%
Disagree	11.00%	6.40%	17.40%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	1.80%	1.80%	3.60%
Strongly Agree	23.20%	19.00%	42.20%
Strongly Disagree	14.60%	9.60%	24.20%
Grand Total	**56.60%**	**43.40%**	**100.00%**
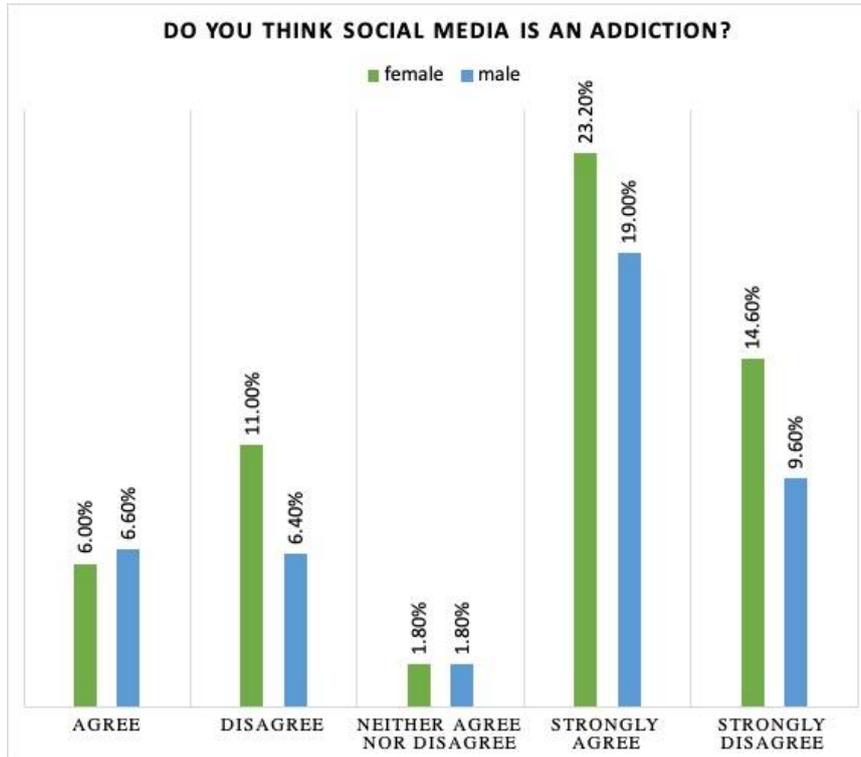
Both male(19.00%) and female (23.20%) equally strongly agreed that social media is an addiction.

Table no.5: Records the level of anxiety and discomfort without access to information through smartphone

I would feel uncomfortable without constant access to information through my smartphone						
	18-25	26-33	34-41	42-49	50-57	Grand Total
Agree	5.40%	5.00%	23.20%	2.20%	1.80%	37.60%
Disagree	0.00%	5.20%	2.40%	4.00%	0.00%	11.60%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	0.60%	0.00%	1.00%	7.20%	1.00%	9.80%
Strongly Agree	11.20%	10.60%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	24.80%
Strongly Disagree	3.40%	4.40%	0.80%	5.20%	2.40%	16.20%
Grand Total	20.60%	25.20%	28.40%	19.60%	6.20%	100.00%

I WOULD FEEL UNCOMFORTABLE WITHOUT CONSTANT ACCESS TO INFORMATION THROUGH MY SMARTPHONE
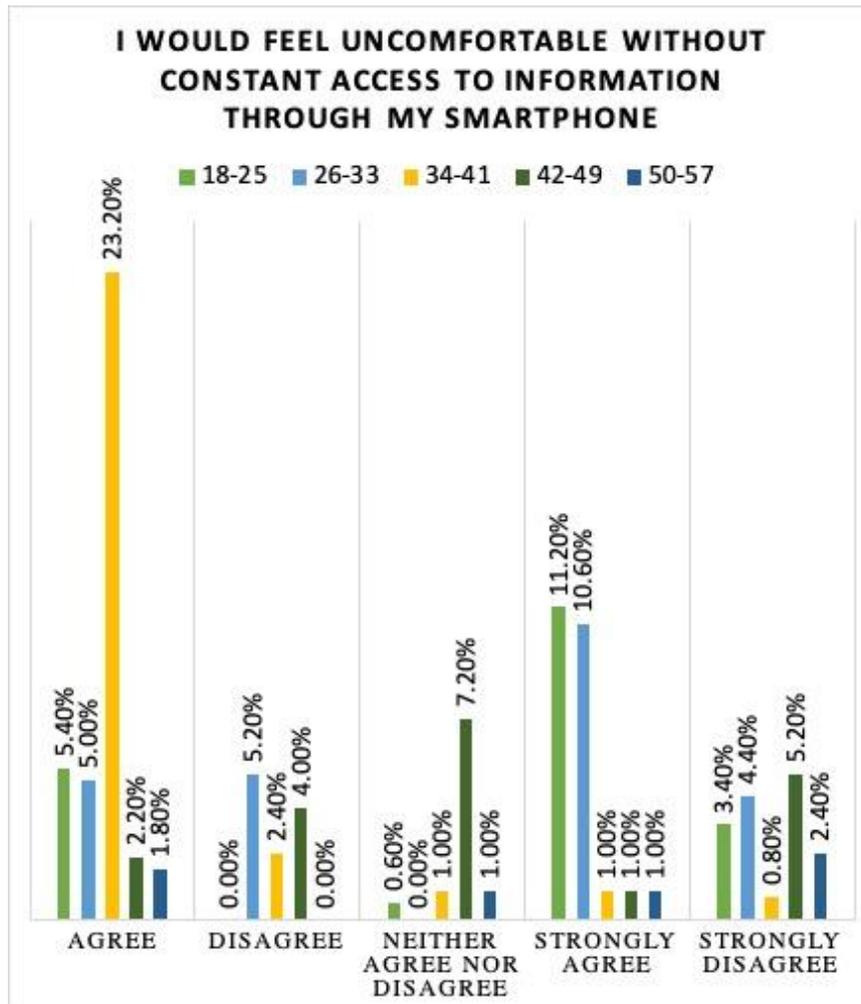
37.60% of the total respondents agrees that they would feel uncomfortable without constant access to their smartphone. The age group of 34 to 41 years agreed the most of such uncomforting (23.20%).

Table no.6 : Records the percentage of anxiety and discomfort without access to information through smartphone between female and male.

I would feel uncomfortable without constant access to information through my smartphone			
	female	**male**	**Grand Total**
Agree	22.20%	15.40%	37.60%
Disagree	7.00%	4.60%	11.60%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	4.60%	5.20%	9.80%
Strongly Agree	15.00%	9.80%	24.80%
Strongly Disagree	7.80%	8.40%	16.20%
Grand Total	**56.60%**	**43.40%**	**100.00%**
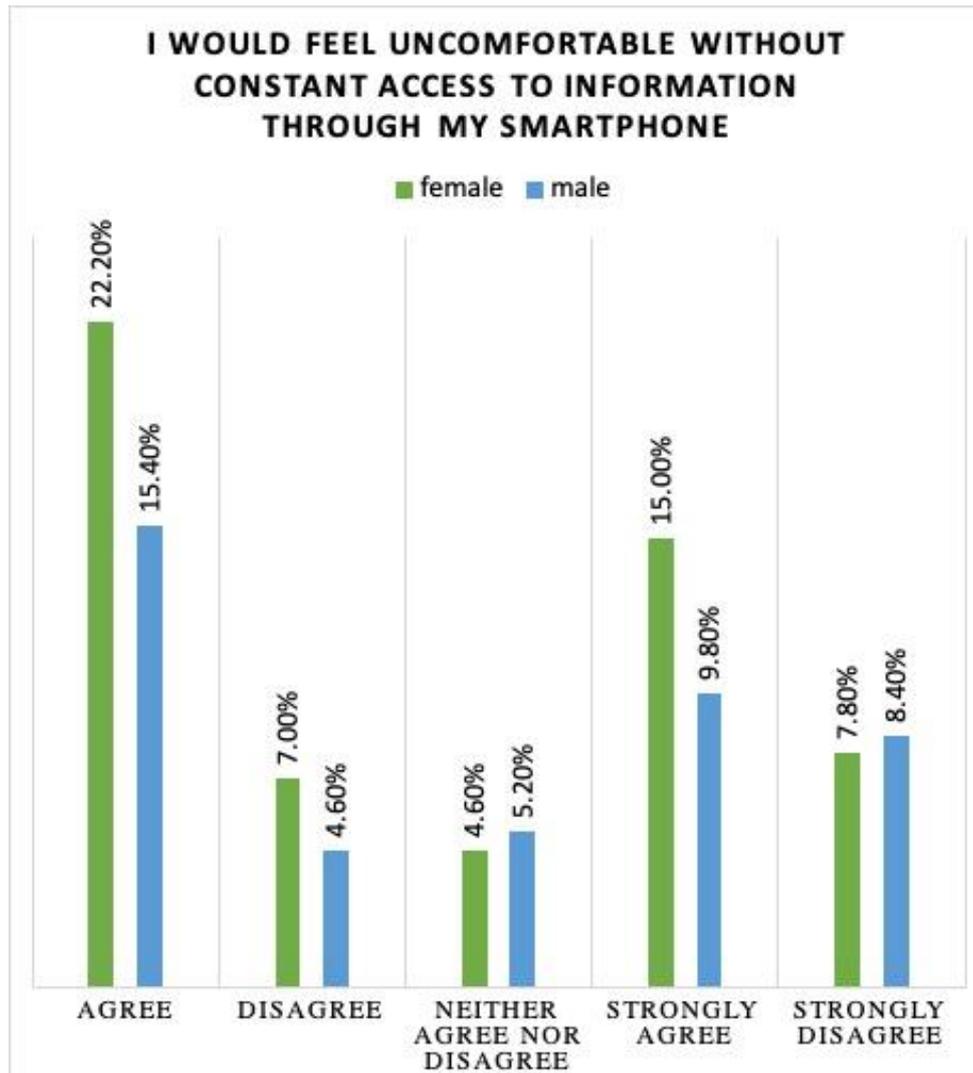
Both female (22.20%)and male(15.40%) agreed to the fact that they would feel uncomfortable without constant access to information through their phone.

V.   Findings

The age group between 18 and 25 was the group that spent the most amount of time on social networking sites (4.00%). Out of the 500 respondents, 4.40 percent spend more than 12 hours participating in social networking activities. The age group spanning from 42 to 49 years was the most likely to spend less than two hours on social networking each day (11.20%), while 26.40% of people spend less than two hours on social networking each day. The percentage of respondents who said they used social networking sites for nine to twelve hours each week was higher than the overall percentage of respondents who said they used SNS for nine to twelve hours, which was 11.20%. A total of 21.00% of respondents admitted to spending 6 to 8 hours on social networking sites, of which 12.20% were between the ages of 26 and 33 and utilised the largest amount of time. 37.00% of all respondents utilised social networking sites for only three to five hours each day, with the largest number of respondents being between the ages of 34 and 41.

35.80% of the total respondents within the age range of 18 to 25 years and 26 to 33years strongly agreed that their behaviour has altered as a direct result of utilising social networking sites. The age group that ranged from 34 to 41 years of age agreed with the change in behaviour that occurred as a result of utilising social networking sites.

42.20% of all respondents strongly agreed that they think using social media is a form of addiction. Of them, 19.80% were respondents in the age range of 34 to 41 years old. There was a significant amount of agreement among both male (19.00%) and female (23.20%) respondents that excessive use of social media can become addictive.

37.60% of the total respondents are in agreement with the statement that they would experience discomfort in the event that they were unable to constantly use their smartphone. The percentage of those who agreed that this was uncomfortable who were between the ages of 34 and 41 was the highest. The majority of respondents, both male (15.40%) and female (22.20%), concurred that they would experience anxiety if they were unable to have continual access to information through their phone.

VI.   Conclusion:

The current study offers an introductory look at a pervasive social phenomenon that has been largely ignored by academics in the field of psychology. Social psychologists need to be at the forefront of understanding FOMO (Fear of Missing Out), conducting research, and developing hypotheses that could eventually help people deal with such experiences and limit the addictive nature of being engaged to the mobile phone. Given the negative consequences of FOMO (Fear of Missing Out), social psychologists need to be at the forefront of understanding FOMO, conducting research, and developing hypotheses. Perhaps through shifting their thoughts or behaviours as a reaction to the sentiments of fear of missing out (FOMO). Overall, we are of the opinion that social psychology has not done enough study on FOMO, and that further studies be conducted on this phenomenon.

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