

Role of Impulsivity, Compulsive Use, and Fear of Missing Out on Social Media Fatigue and Psychological Distress

Spurthi S P^{1*}, Manoj K Pandey², Rithvik S Kashyap³

ABSTRACT

The study aimed to explore the influence of impulsivity, compulsive use of the internet, and Fear of missing out (FoMO) on social media fatigue (SMF) and psychological distress among young adults. The study sample included 120 social media users who were active on different social media platforms. Analysis of the data revealed the following outcomes: Impulsivity, compulsive use of the internet, and FoMO had a significant impact on SMF and psychological distress. People with high impulsivity, compulsive internet use, and FoMO were significantly higher on both SMF and psychological distress as compared to their counterparts who were had low impulsivity, compulsive internet usage, and fear of missing. Participants with high SMF were found to have significantly more psychological distress as compared to those who had low SMF. Researchers may design future studies to test and explore the outcomes of this research either in random control trials or in quasi-experimental research to generate a more trustworthy database for this line of research.

Keywords: *Impulsivity, Compulsive Use, Fear of Missing Out, Psychological Distress, Social Media, Social Media Fatigue*

The roots of social media date back more than forty years to technologies that would seem enigmatic to the majority of the latest users of social media. While it took online media a long time to acquire a foothold as a practical correspondence and business instrument, the speed at which the innovation has created and progressed as of late is hard to comprehend. As confirmed in countless aspects of our everyday correspondence propensities, web-based media has set itself up as one of the more transcendent correspondence vehicles. Studies show that 75% of web clients get to an interpersonal organization or blog when they go on the web (Johnston, 2010). The term "social media" refers to the use of web and mobile technologies to make communication more interactive. Organizations, individuals, and groups can use social media to interact, connect, collaborate,

¹Clinical Psychologist, Department of Neurology, National Institute for Mental Health and Neurosciences, Bangalore, Karnataka, India

²Associates Professor, Department of Clinical Psychology, JSS Academy of Higher Education and Research, Mysuru, Karnataka, India

³Assistant Professor, Department of Clinical Psychology, JSS Academy of Higher Education and Research, Mysuru, Karnataka, India

*Corresponding Author

Received: July 30, 2022; Revision Received: December 25, 2022; Accepted: December 31, 2022

Role of Impulsivity, Compulsive Use, and Fear of Missing Out on Social Media Fatigue and Psychological Distress

and grow communities by creating, collaborating, transforming, sharing, and engaging with easily accessible user-generated content. The various forms of social media include microblogs, bookmarking sites, media sharing, social news, social networks, and community blogs.

Impulsivity

In the areas of research with risk behaviours and certain mental illnesses, the concept of impulsivity is especially relevant. The concept of impulsivity has been explored from various angles and many descriptions have been recommended. According to Eysenck (1993), impulsivity is a characteristic that includes unpredictable risky behaviour and quick decision making. According to Dickman (1990), impulsivity is characterized by the fact that a person acts less attentively than others with similar abilities and experiences. Dickman (1993) then attributed another component known as inhibition, which was presented as insufficient focus and identified as a source of impulsivity. Similarly, the Barratt identifies three types of impulsive behaviour. Firstly, acting without thinking (motor), secondly, quick decision making (cognitive) and finally, lack of planning (reduced future orientation). Niggel et al. (2005) describes impulsivity as a hasty reaction when a more cautious reaction is more appropriate. According to Patton et al., (2005), three elements that contribute to impulsivity are current actions (motor activity), lack of attention to the task at hand (inattention), and inability to plan and think carefully (planning deficit).

From a cognitive standpoint, impulsivity is considered as the inability to control one's actions and thoughts. It assumes impulse control to be a crucial part of executive functions. It has a major impact on one's social and personal wellbeing. Kagan's idea has had an important impact on processing and learning concepts among cognitive theories. Behavioural inhibition is a temperament in children that affects their behavioural, cognitive, and psychological reactions to novelty. In terms of behaviour, impulsivity encompasses a broad range of immature, dangerous, inappropriate situations and done without planning, all of which have negative implications. Impulsive individuals cannot resist gratification and control themselves. When faced with an array of consequences, they prefer less deserving instant incentives to more deserving delayed rewards.

The definition of impulsiveness should consider several other factors to allow for better understanding. Many psychological processes cause impulsive behavior, such as a decreased ability to memorize multiple alternatives for analysis (working memory) or an inability to predict behavior. However, the dilemma of describing impulsivity remains.

Compulsive Use

A study by Luigjes et al., (2019) progressed the definition of what makes up compulsive behaviour, cross-diagnostically by analyzing various definitions in the psychiatric research. They distinguished three categories of descriptive facets within the definitions: phenomenological, observational, and explanatory. Below are some of the original definitions identified by the researchers with keywords of 'compulsivity' and 'compulsive behaviour'. According to Torregrossa, Quinn, and Taylor (2008), with compulsivity, a person feels compelled to perform a behaviour to relieve anxiety or stress, even if the behaviour is inappropriate or counterproductive. Fineberg et al. (2010) define compulsivity as a tendency to perform unpleasant repetitive actions habitually or stereotypically to prevent perceived negative consequences leading to functional impairment. According to Dalley et al. (2011), compulsivity is described as actions inappropriate to the situation which

Role of Impulsivity, Compulsive Use, and Fear of Missing Out on Social Media Fatigue and Psychological Distress

persists, has no apparent association to the overall goal and frequently results in consequences which are undesirable. According to Fineberg et al. (2014), compulsivity exemplifies the performance of repetitive acts and impairing overt or covert behaviour without adaptive functionality, performed in a stereotyped manner, either according to firm regulations or as a means of dodging perceived adverse consequences.

Initially, researchers coined the excessive use of the internet and the loss of control over its use as 'internet addiction' due to its commonalities with substance use disorders (Young & Rogers, 1998). However, the word addiction, on the other hand, has clear connotations of physiological adaptation, a central characteristic of substance-based addiction that behavioural addictions do not share (e.g., Griffiths, 2000; 2010). Compulsive internet use is defined by Meerkerk et al. (2010) as 'a pattern of internet use characterised by loss of control, preoccupation, struggle, withdrawal symptoms, and use of the internet as a coping strategy'. Meerkerk et al. (2010) developed their diagnostic tool of compulsive use of internet based on pathological gambling, a type of impulse control disorder. Griffiths (2000), on the other hand, worked on a variety of behavioural addictions and conceptualized compulsive internet usage as a subcategory within this group.

Fear of Missing Out

The term Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) was coined by Patrick J. McGinnis and was popularized in *The Harbus*, the magazine of Harvard Business School. More than just a quirky expression, the acronym is infiltrating vocabularies. FoMO is an ageless term that has reached a turning point in the era of social media. It encapsulates an increasingly distinct phenomenon in the era of social media. With Facebook's 845 million active users, not to mention Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, and other social media networks, today's unparalleled understanding of how others live their lives predisposes an increasing number of people to FoMO. The perceived need to remain engaged with one's social network is central to FoMO, resulting in constant (and for some people, excessive) use of social networking sites (SNS) and messaging services. FoMO was first introduced in the early 2010s when it was first mentioned in the media. SNS use had risen around the world at the time. With the widespread availability of means to search social media sites, especially the growing ubiquity of smartphones, it has become simple to learn about potentially satisfying (online and offline) experiences that one might be lacking.

Self-determination theory (SDT), developed by Ryan and Deci, was applied by Przybylski et al. (2013) to explain what drives FoMO. SDT attempts to explain how personality is shaped and the psychological needs that drive building personality. According to SDT, intrinsic (rather than extrinsic) motivation for reward is critical for promoting mental wellbeing, and intrinsic motivation is better encouraged when one feels socially connected to others. As a result, in SDT, social relatedness can promote positive mental health by enhancing intrinsic motivation. Przybylski et al. (2013) used SDT to FoMO, and proposed FoMO as a negative emotional state resulting from unmet social relatedness need. The idea that FoMO causes negative emotions due to unmet social needs is close to hypotheses about the adverse emotional effects of social exclusion.

Social Media Fatigue

Fatigue is a non-specific symptom that may be caused by a variety of factors, including physiological states including sleep deprivation or excessive muscular activity; medical conditions including chronic inflammatory conditions, bacterial or viral infections, or

Role of Impulsivity, Compulsive Use, and Fear of Missing Out on Social Media Fatigue and Psychological Distress

autoimmune diseases; and psychiatric disorders including major depression, anxiety disorders, and somatoform disorders (Manu, Lane, & Matthews, 1992). Prescribed medicines such as antihistamines, medications for insomnia, and chemotherapy drugs can all cause fatigue. Previous research has defined social media fatigue as a situation whereby social media users experience a mental exhaustion after undergoing numerous technological, informative, and communicative overloads through their involvement and interactions on different social media platforms (Bright, Kleiser, & Grau, 2015; Lee, Son, & Kim, 2016; Ravindran, Kuan, Chua, & Hoe Lian, 2014; Zhang, Zhao, Lu, & Yang, 2016).

The determinants of social media fatigue can be linked to psychological and behavioural stressors such as content and communication overload, and interactive social activities. Due to personal distress, social media users are more likely to refrain from engaging in online social media activities, either temporarily or permanently. Fatigue may also be caused by unhealthy behaviours, such as repeated disruptions in the wake-sleep cycle, heavy alcohol or caffeine use, and psychosocial stressors, as well as the long-term impact of stressful incidents (Manu et al., 1992). Finally, fatigue may be "unexplained" if none of the above reasons exists or if the causes are unknown. Chronic fatigue is characterised by persistent, severe, and disabling fatigue (Fukuda et al., 1994).

Bright et al. (2015) used the term social media fatigue to reveal a common feature of social media fatigue from a cognitive context, which is cognitive overload. Apart from that, social media fatigue has other emotional and behavioural traits. Tiredness, exhaustion, burnout, indifference, or a loss of confidence are examples of afflictions attributed to social media fatigue. Fatigue might trigger affective, physiological, and cognitive responses such as concentration dissipation, forgetfulness, inability to make decisions, inability to cope, and a variety of other symptoms. Similarly, Huff described three behavioural symptoms of social media fatigue: procrastination, lack of focus, and temporary amnesia.

Scholars claim that social media fatigue has severe consequences for both users, businesses, and service providers. On a user basis, social media fatigue causes a decline in both behavioural and physiological capacities, increasing the likelihood of users developing unhealthy behaviours. Similarly, social media fatigue can be harmful to companies and service operators because fatigue results in withdrawal from service use, which later transforms into lower profits for companies and service operators.

The theoretical underpinnings of social media fatigue include the Limited Capacity Model (LCM) which assumes that people need computing ability to encrypt, archive, and eventually retrieve the data they collect. According to LCM, long-term exposure to excessive content makes individuals with SMF feel overloaded and, as a result, reduces their use of social media. Information overload in cognition is an essential component of SMF. Second, behavioural signs such as forgetfulness and loss of attention are essential components of SMF. The limited capacity model highlighted that excessive knowledge could impair memory, and research has shown that people find it hard to focus on tasks requiring intensive cognitive loading.

Decker (1997) and Burnette and Mui (1997) described psychological distress as lack of enthusiasm, trouble with sleep, feeling downhearted or blue, feeling hopeless about the future, feeling emotional (crying easily or feeling like crying), losing interest and thoughts of suicide (Weaver, 1995). According to Lerutla (2000), psychological distress is the

Role of Impulsivity, Compulsive Use, and Fear of Missing Out on Social Media Fatigue and Psychological Distress

emotional state experienced while coping with unsettling, frustrating, or harmful situations. According to Mirowsky and Ross (1989), psychological distress is the painful subjective condition of depression and anxiety symptoms (tenseness, restlessness, worry, irritability, and fear), which has both mental and physiological manifestations. They went on to say that psychiatric depression can vary from moderate to severe, with severe cases being classified as psychiatric illnesses like schizoaffective disorder.

Psychological distress is defined as a state of emotional turmoil characterised by symptoms of depression (e.g., lost interest; sadness; hopelessness) and anxiety (e.g., restlessness; feeling tense). These symptoms can be associated with somatic symptoms (e.g., insomnia; headaches; lack of energy) that are likely to differ between various cultures. Other principles have been used in the definition of psychological distress, although there is little agreement on these criteria. In particular, tenets of the stress-distress model postulate that the defining aspects of psychological distress are the exposure to a stressful event that impends the physical or mental health, the inability to cope efficiently with this stressor and the emotional turmoil which results from the ineffective coping (Horwitz 2007, Ridner 2004).

On one hand, psychological distress is viewed as an emotional disturbance that may affect individuals' social and occupational living. It has been the topic of several studies intending to find the risk and protective factors associated with it. On the other hand, distress is used as a diagnostic criterion for diagnosing certain psychiatric disorders (e.g., obsessive-compulsive disorders; posttraumatic stress disorder) and, together with impairment in daily living, an indicator of the severity of symptoms in other disorders (e.g., major depression; generalized anxiety disorder). Hence, psychological distress would need medical attention mostly when it is accompanied by other symptoms that, when added up, fulfil the diagnostic criteria for a psychiatric disorder. Otherwise, along the lines of the stress-distress model, it is viewed as a transient phenomenon coherent with a “normal” emotional reaction to a stressor.

METHODOLOGY

Aim:

To explore the influence of impulsivity, compulsive use of internet and fear of missing out (FoMO) on social media fatigue and psychological distress among young adults.

Objectives:

- To study the severity of impulsivity, compulsive use of internet, FoMO, social media fatigue and psychological distress among young adults.
- To study the influence of compulsive use, impulsivity, and FoMO on social media fatigue.
- To study the influence of compulsive use, impulsivity, and FoMO on psychological distress
- To study the influence of SMF on psychological distress

Hypotheses:

- There will be a variation in the severity of impulsivity, compulsive use of the internet, FoMO, social media fatigue, and psychological distress among young adults.
- There will be no significant influence of impulsivity, compulsive use, and FoMO on social media fatigue

Role of Impulsivity, Compulsive Use, and Fear of Missing Out on Social Media Fatigue and Psychological Distress

- There will be no significant influence of impulsivity, compulsive use, and FoMO on psychological distress
- There will be no significant influence of SMF on psychological distress

Participants

The study required participants in their early adulthood with an age range between 18- 35 in India. The study required participants to be active users on social networking sites/apps such as Facebook, Instagram, Messenger, WhatsApp, Twitter, YouTube, Snapchat, Reddit, Pinterest, LinkedIn, or any other social media apps. The study excluded inactive participants on social media apps, participants diagnosed with psychiatric/psychological problems, participants diagnosed with chronic medical illness, and participants with ongoing psychiatric/psychological problems treatment.

Instruments:

Compulsive Internet Use Scale

The CIUS was designed by Meerkerk et al. (2009) to measure the severity of Compulsive Internet Use and derives from an analysis of the criteria for Dependence and Obsessive-Compulsive disorder as found in the DSM-IV, studies on behavioural addictions, and from qualitative research among self-declared Internet addicts. The 14 items of the CIUS represent the core components of compulsive or addictive behavior, as far as applicable to Internet use (loss of control, preoccupation, conflict, withdrawal symptoms, and coping), and relate mainly to the compulsive and impulse control elements of the behavior. The 14 items assess the frequency of events ("how often...?"), with a total score ranging from 0 to 56 measured on a five-point Likert scale ("never", "seldom", "sometimes", "often", and "very often"). A higher score indicates higher severity of compulsive internet use.

Urgency, Premeditation (lack of), Perseverance (lack of), Sensation Seeking, Positive Urgency Impulsive Behavior Scale (UPPS-P)

Short-form version of the UPPS-P is composed of 20 items rated on a four-point Likert scale: (1) disagree strongly, (2) disagree somewhat, (3) agree somewhat, and (4) agree strongly. The total score on the scale range between 20 to 80, whereby higher values indicate more impulsive behavior.

Fear of Missing Out Scale (FoMOs)

To date, FoMO has been measured predominantly using Przybylski et al. (2013) 10- item FoMO scale. The FoMOs measures the extent to which individuals fear missing out on events, experiences, or group activities (e.g., "When I miss out on a planned get together, it bothers me"; "fear others have more rewarding experiences than me"). Participants rate each item on a five-point Likert scale from 1 (not at all true of me) to 5 (extremely true of me).

Social Media Fatigue Scale (SMFS)

Zhang et al., (2021) developed a 15-item SMFS based on a cognitive-behavioural emotional framework. SMFS comprises 15 items and participants rate each item on a seven-point Likert scale (1 = totally disagree, 7 = totally agree). The total score on the scale range between 15 to 105, whereby higher scores indicate a higher level of social media fatigue.

Kessler Psychological Distress Scale (K10)

Kessler Psychological Distress Scale (Kessler, 1996) is a measure of non-specific psychological distress based on a framework that includes behavioral, emotional, cognitive, and psycho-physiological manifestations. The ten-item version (K10) measures the

Role of Impulsivity, Compulsive Use, and Fear of Missing Out on Social Media Fatigue and Psychological Distress

frequency with which respondents experienced symptoms in the past month, including nervousness, hopelessness, sadness, worthlessness, and fatigue. Response choices are based on a 5- point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (none of the time) to 5 (all of the time). Responses are summed to create a total score (range = 10–50), with higher scores signifying more psychological distress. Andrews and Slade (2001) suggested the following cut-off scores to estimate the psychological distress level: 10 to 15 points "low distress", 16 to 21 points "moderate", 22 to 29 points "high" and 30 to 50 points "very high".

Procedure

A sample of 127 participants were contacted and then collected using snowball sampling through online mode (using Emails, WhatsApp.). A formal consent from the participants was taken to be a part of the study after explaining the purpose and the aim of the study. All study questionnaires along with consent from were sent to all the participants through online Google forms. After collecting data, 7 participants (out of 127) were excluded due to either having mental health conditions or chronic medical illness or meeting other criteria for exclusion. Thereafter, statistical analysis was carried out in a sample of 120 participants.

Data Analysis Strategy

Descriptive Statistics:

- Mean
- Standard Deviation
- Frequency
- Percent

Inferential Statistics:

- Test of Normality – Shapiro Wilk
- Mann-Whitney U Test

RESULTS

Table No. 1

Descriptive Statistics

Variables	Impulsivity	FoMO	Compulsive Use	Social Media Fatigue	Psychological Distress
Mean	44.11	26.30	22.67	49.83	25.31
SD	7.38	7.88	11.52	16.97	9.42
Variance	54.52	62.12	132.75	288.09	88.80
Range	34.00	32.00	56.00	82.00	37.00
Minimum	27.00	10.00	.00	17.00	10.00
Maximum	61.00	42.00	56.00	99.00	47.00

The mean score and SD for impulsivity is 44.11 and 7.38 respectively. The mean score and SD for compulsive use for 22.67 and 11.52 respectively. The mean score and SD for FoMO is 26.30 and 7.88 respectively. The mean score and SD for social media fatigue is 49.83 and 16.97 respectively. The mean score and SD for psychological distress is 25.31 and 9.42 respectively.

Role of Impulsivity, Compulsive Use, and Fear of Missing Out on Social Media Fatigue and Psychological Distress

Table 2 Results of Mann-Whitney U test examining the influence of impulsivity on social media fatigue and psychological distress

Independent variables	Categories	Dependent variables	N	Mean Rank	Mann-Whitney U	Z	Sig.
Impulsivity	Low	Social media	61	50.44	1186.000	-	.001
	High	fatigue	59	70.90		3.22	
	Low	Psychological	61	49.78	1145.500	-	.001
	High	distress	59	71.58		3.43	

The results in table 7 reveal that participants with low impulsivity experienced lesser social media fatigue ($M = 50.44$) than participants with high impulsivity ($M = 70.90$). The test results reveal that participants with low impulsivity ($M = 49.78$) experienced lesser psychological distress than participants with high impulsivity ($M = 71.58$).

Table 3 Results of Mann-Whitney U test examining the influence of compulsive use on social media fatigue and psychological distress

Independent variables	Category	Dependent variables	N	Mean Rank	Mann-Whitney U	Z	Sig.
Compulsive Use	Low	Social Media	61	45.64	893.00	-4.76	.003
	High	Fatigue	59	77.86			
	Low	Psychological	61	51.27	1236.50	-2.95	.003
	High	distress	59	70.04			

The results in the table 3 reveal that participants with low compulsive use ($M=45.64$) experienced lesser social media fatigue than participants with high compulsive use ($M=77.86$). The test results reveal that participants with low compulsive use ($M=51.27$) experienced lesser psychological distress than those with high compulsive use ($M=70.04$).

Table 4 Results of Mann-Whitney U test examining the influence of FoMO on social media fatigue and psychological distress

Independent variables	Category	Dependent variables	N	Mean Rank	Mann-Whitney U	Z	Sig.
FoMO	Low	Social Media	61	45.64	933.50	-4.54	.000
	High	Fatigue	59	77.86			
	Low	Psychological	58	51.06	1250.50	-2.87	.004
	High	distress	62	70.04			

The test results revealed that participants with low FoMO ($M=45.59$) experienced lesser social media fatigue than participants with high FoMO ($M=74.44$). The test results revealed that participants with low FoMO ($M=51.06$) experienced lesser psychological distress than participants with high FoMO ($M=70.04$).

Table 5 Results of Mann-Whitney U test examining the influence of social media fatigue on psychological distress

Variables	Category	N	Mean Rank	Mann-Whitney U	Z	Sig.
Social Media Fatigue	Low	65	52.58	1273.000	-2.712	.007
	High	55	69.85			

Role of Impulsivity, Compulsive Use, and Fear of Missing Out on Social Media Fatigue and Psychological Distress

The test results revealed that participants with low SMF ($M=51.06$) experienced lesser psychological distress than participants with high SMF ($M=70.04$).

DISCUSSION

The purpose of the research was to explore the influence of impulsivity, compulsive use of the internet, and FoMO on social media fatigue and psychological distress among young adults. Scholars argue that social media fatigue has serious consequences for users as well as service operators. Social media fatigue causes a decline in both psychological as well as physiological well-being in users, and users are more likely to participate in harmful behaviours as a consequence.

Despite such negative consequences, the study assessing SMF is still in its early phase whereby most existing literature has particularly dependent on its correlation with the frequency of service usage, privacy, service fulfilment, discontinuous usage, extreme social media usage, and technological stress. However, the correlation between psychological health and SMF was not yet fully explored. The present study explores to fill these gaps.

The participants in the current study included young adults with ages ranging between 18 – 35 years of using social media regularly. The average age of the participants was 25 years. The study consisted of 57% of females and 43% of males.

In terms of social media usages, 48% of the participants used Facebook, 88% used Instagram, 90% used YouTube, 22% used Twitter, 29% used Pinterest, 43% used LinkedIn, 36% used Snapchat, 98% used WhatsApp, 2% used Telegram, 3% used Reddit, 1% used Quora, and 1% used Tumblr.

Among the participants, 6% of users spent less than an hour on social media usage, 33% spent 1-2 hours, 51% spent 2-5 hours, 13% spent 6-8 hours, and 2% spent more than 8 hours. Among the participants, 1% of the participants had been using social media in the past 1-2 years, 10% have been using it in the last 2-3 years, 27% in the last 3-5 years, and 62% for more than 5 years. 78% of the participants belong to a nuclear family, 18% belong to a joint family, and 4% belong to an extended family.

The first hypothesis in this research states that there will be a variation in the severity of impulsivity, compulsive use of the internet, FoMO, SMF, and psychological distress among young adults. The results reveal that 28%, 27%, 28%, 28%, and 31% of the participants belong to the normal category of impulsivity, compulsive use, FoMO, SMF, and psychological distress respectively. 28%, 25%, 23%, 25%, and 19% of the participants belong to the mild category of impulsivity, compulsive use, FoMO, SMF, and psychological distress respectively. 21%, 26%, 27%, 18%, and 18% of the participants belong to the moderate category of impulsivity, compulsive use, FoMO, SMF, and psychological distress respectively. Finally, 23%, 23%, 22%, 29%, and 32% belong to the severe category of impulsivity, compulsive use, FoMO, SMF, and psychological distress respectively. According to the findings, the first hypothesis is accepted as there is variation in the severity of impulsivity, compulsive use, FoMO, SMF, and psychological distress.

A Mann-Whitney U test was applied to evaluate the hypothesis that impulsivity will have no significant impact on SMF. The results revealed that individuals with low impulsivity ($M = 50.44$) experienced lesser SMF than individuals with high impulsivity ($M = 70.90$). The test

Role of Impulsivity, Compulsive Use, and Fear of Missing Out on Social Media Fatigue and Psychological Distress

results reject the null hypothesis with a significant influence of impulsivity on SMF, $z = -3.22$, $p < .05$. To date, none of the studies has investigated the correlates of impulsivity on SMF. The findings of our work reveal that impulsivity does influence SMF with $z = -3.22$, $p < .05$. However, people who have impulsive symptoms are more prone to use social media excessively. It is also emphasized that impulsive individuals who have difficulties with self-control are at risk when it comes to using social media appropriately (Wu et al., 2013)

A Mann-Whitney U test was applied to evaluate the hypothesis that compulsive use will have no significant influence on SMF. The results of the test reveal that individuals with low compulsive use ($M=45.64$) experienced lesser SMF than individuals with high compulsive use ($M=77.86$). The test results reject the null hypothesis with a significant influence of compulsive use on SMF, $z = -4.76$, $p < .05$. The above findings are in line with Fontes-Perryman & Spina (2021) which demonstrates that FoMO and compulsive social media usage as mediators between SMF and OCD symptoms. The findings also support Dhir et al. (2018) which report compulsive social media usage as a mediating factor between FoMO and SMF otherwise stated, FoMO indirectly results in SMF through compulsive usage.

A Mann-Whitney U test was applied to evaluate the hypothesis that FoMO will have no significant influence on SMF. The results reveal that individuals with low FoMO ($M=45.59$) experienced lesser SMF than individuals with high FoMO ($M=74.44$). The test results rejected the null hypothesis with a significant influence of FoMO on SMF, $z = -4.54$, $p < .05$. Researchers have just lately begun assessing the detrimental effects of social media users' FoMO. The results are consistent with findings by Shen et al., 2020 suggested FoMO as one of the mediating factors for SMF along with extrinsic motivation as well as problematic social media usage. Dhir et al. (2018) also found an indirect link between fatigue and FoMO, which is consistent with our findings. Social media users suffering from FoMO are more probable to participate in excessive social media use, which leads to SMF.

A Mann-Whitney U test was applied to evaluate the hypothesis that impulsivity will have no significant influence on psychological distress. The results revealed that individuals with low impulsivity ($M = 49.78$) experienced lesser psychological distress than individuals with high impulsivity ($M = 71.58$). The test results reject the null hypothesis with a significant influence of impulsivity on psychological distress, $z = -3.43$, $p < .05$. The outcomes are consistent with a study by Moustafa et al. (2021) which reveals anxiety, depression, and stress levels to be significantly and positively related to impulsivity in individuals of all ages.

A Mann-Whitney U trial was applied to evaluate the hypothesis that compulsive use will have no significant influence on psychological distress. The test results revealed that individuals with low compulsive use ($M=51.27$) experienced lesser psychological distress than those with high compulsive use ($M=70.04$). The test results reject the null hypothesis with a significant influence of compulsive use on psychological distress, $z = -2.95$, $p < .05$. Potenza, Wolfling, Laier, Young, and Brand, (2016) demonstrated that uncontrollable Internet use leads to negative cognitive states that impact physical and mental processes and decisions.

A Mann-Whitney U test was applied to evaluate the hypothesis that FoMO will have no significant influence on psychological distress. The test results revealed that individuals with low FoMO ($M=51.06$) experienced lesser psychological distress than individuals with high

Role of Impulsivity, Compulsive Use, and Fear of Missing Out on Social Media Fatigue and Psychological Distress

FoMO ($M=70.04$). The test results reject the null hypothesis with a significant influence of FoMO on psychological distress, $z = -2.87, p < .05$. The previous study has also shown that greater levels of FoMO are related to higher levels of despair and a worsening of general mood (Przybylski, 2013; Baker et al., 2016).

The fourth hypothesis states that there will be no significant influence of SMF on psychological distress. A Mann-Whitney U test was applied to evaluate the hypothesis that SMF will have no significant influence on psychological distress. The test results revealed that individuals with low SMF ($M=51.06$) experienced lesser psychological distress than individuals with high SMF ($M=70.04$). The test results reject the null hypothesis with a significant effect of SMF on psychological distress, $z = -2.87, p < .05$. According to previous research, social media users who are depressed are more likely to use social media to deal with their depression (Lin et al., 2016; Ophir, 2017; Hoare et al., 2017; Hussain et al., 2017; Brunet and Scherr, 2017). Furthermore, to deal with depression, they are more prone to indulge in excessive social media usage, which may lead to a loss of mental energy and, as a consequence, render them vulnerable to psychological suffering, like exhaustion and distress (Bright et al., 2015; Ophir, 2017).

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The study aimed to explore the influence of impulsivity, compulsive use of the internet, and FoMO on SMF and psychological distress among young adults. The study sample included 120 social media users, both male and female, aged between 18-35 years (young adults) who were active on different social media platforms like YouTube, Instagram, Facebook, WhatsApp, Messenger, LinkedIn, Snapchat, Pinterest, and so on. The sample was taken using convenient sampling. The exclusion criteria for the study were social media users diagnosed with psychological/psychiatric/chronic illness with ongoing treatment. Impulsivity, compulsive use of the internet, and FoMO had a significant impact on SMF and psychological distress.

- Impulsivity, compulsive use of the internet, and FoMO had a significant impact on SMF and psychological distress.
- People with high impulsivity, compulsive internet use, and FoMO were significantly higher on both SMF and psychological distress as compared to their counterparts who were had low impulsivity, compulsive internet usage, and fear of missing.
- Participants with high SMF were found to have significantly more psychological distress as compared to those who had low SMF.

This research has consequences for researchers and clinicians. The study found that people with high impulsivity, compulsive use of the internet, and FoMO appear to be fatigued by social media usage which further causes psychological distress. Clinicians, while dealing with people having problems with digital technology use such as social media and social networking sites should assess and manage the impulsivity, compulsive use, and FoMO among their clients to reduce the psychological distress faced by social media usage. Researchers may design future studies to test and explore the outcomes of this research either in random control trials or in quasi-experimental research to generate a more trustworthy database for this line of research.

REFERENCES

- Bachleda, C., & Darhiri, L. (2018). Internet addiction and mental and physical fatigue. *The International Technology Management Review*, 7(1), 25. <https://doi.org/10.2991/itmtr.7.1.3>
- Beranuy, M., Oberst, U., Carbonell, X., & Chamarro, A. (2009). Problematic internet and mobile phone use and clinical symptoms in college students: The role of emotional intelligence. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 25(5), 1182-1187. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2009.03.001>
- Bright, L. F., Kleiser, S. B., & Grau, S. L. (2015). Too much Facebook? An exploratory examination of social media fatigue. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 44, 148-155. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2014.11.048>
- Bright, L. F., & Logan, K. (2018). Is my fear of missing out (FOMO) causing fatigue? Advertising, social media fatigue, and the implications for consumers and brands. *Internet Research*, 28(5), 1213-1227. <https://doi.org/10.1108/intr-03-2017-0112>
- BRUNNER, D., & HEN, R. (1997). Insights into the neurobiology of impulsive behavior from serotonin receptor knockout mice. *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, 836(1 Neurobiology), 81-105. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1749-6632.1997.tb52356.x>
- Chen, W., & Lee, K. (2013). Sharing, liking, commenting, and distressed? The pathway between Facebook interaction and psychological distress. *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking*, 16(10), 728-734. <https://doi.org/10.1089/cyber.2012.0272>
- Choi, S. B., & Lim, M. S. (2016). Effects of social and technology overload on psychological well-being in young South Korean adults: The mediatory role of social network service addiction. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 61, 245-254. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2016.03.032>
- Cyders, M. A., Littlefield, A. K., Coffey, S., & Karyadi, K. A. (2014). Examination of a short English version of the UPPS-P impulsive behavior scale. *Addictive Behaviors*, 39(9), 1372-1376. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.addbeh.2014.02.013>
- Davis, R. (2001). A cognitive-behavioral model of pathological internet use. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 17(2), 187-195. [https://doi.org/10.1016/s0747-5632\(00\)00041-8](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0747-5632(00)00041-8)
- Dhir, A., Yossatorn, Y., Kaur, P., & Chen, S. (2018). Online social media fatigue and psychological wellbeing—A study of compulsive use, fear of missing out, fatigue, anxiety and depression. *International Journal of Information Management*, 40, 141-152. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijinfomgt.2018.01.012>
- Elhai, J. D., Yang, H., & Montag, C. (2021). Fear of missing out (FOMO): Overview, theoretical underpinnings, and literature review on relations with severity of negative affectivity and problematic technology use. *Brazilian Journal of Psychiatry*, 43(2), 203-209. <https://doi.org/10.1590/1516-4446-2020-0870>
- Evenden, J. L. (1999). Varieties of impulsivity. *Psychopharmacology*, 146(4), 348-361. <https://doi.org/10.1007/pl00005481>
- Fu, S., Li, H., Liu, Y., Pirkkalainen, H., & Salo, M. (2020). Social media overload, exhaustion, and use discontinuance: Examining the effects of information overload, system feature overload, and social overload. *Information Processing & Management*, 57(6), 102307. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ipm.2020.102307>
- Heather, N. (2017). Is the concept of compulsion useful in the explanation or description of addictive behaviour and experience? *Addictive Behaviors Reports*, 6, 15-38. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.abrep.2017.05.002>

Role of Impulsivity, Compulsive Use, and Fear of Missing Out on Social Media Fatigue and Psychological Distress

- James, T. L., Lowry, P. B., Wallace, L., & Warkentin, M. (2017). The effect of Belongingness on obsessive-compulsive disorder in the use of online social networks. *Journal of Management Information Systems*, 34(2), 560-596. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07421222.2017.1334496>
- Kircaburun, K., Alhabash, S., Tosuntas, S. B., & Griffiths, M. D.(2018). Uses and gratifications of problematic social media use among University students: A simultaneous examination of the Big Five of personality traits, social media platforms, and social media use motives. *International Journal of Mental Health and Addiction*, 18(3), 525-547. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11469-018-9940-6>
- LaRose, R., Connolly, R., Lee, H., Li, K., & Hales, K. D. (2014). Connection overload? A cross cultural study of the consequences of social media connection. *Information Systems Management*, 31(1), 59-73. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10580530.2014.854097>
- Lee, E., Lee, K., Sung, Y., & Song, Y. (2019). #DeleteFacebook: Antecedents of Facebook fatigue. *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking*, 22(6), 417-422. <https://doi.org/10.1089/cyber.2018.0200>
- Malik, A., Dhir, A., Kaur, P., & Johri, A. (2020). Correlates of social media fatigue and academic performance decrement. *Information Technology & People*, 34(2), 557-580. <https://doi.org/10.1108/itp-06-2019-0289>
- Meerkerk, G., Van den Eijnden, R., Franken, I., &Garretsen, H. (2010). Is compulsive internet use related to sensitivity to reward and punishment, and impulsivity? *Computers in Human Behavior*, 26(4), 729-735. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2010.01.009>
- Miller, D., Costa, E., Haynes, N., McDonald, T., Nicolescu, R., Sinanan, J., Spyer, J., Venkatraman, S., & Wang, X. (2016). *How the world changed social media*. UCL Press.
- Milyavskaya, M., Saffran, M., Hope, N., &Koestner, R. (2018). Fear of missing out: Prevalence, dynamics, and consequences of experiencing FOMO. *Motivation and Emotion*, 42(5), 725-737. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11031-018-9683-5>
- Montag, C., & Reuter, M. (2015). *Internet addiction: Neuroscientific approaches and Therapeutical interventions*. Springer.
- Nawaz, M. A., Shah, Z., Nawaz, A., Asmi, F., Hassan, Z., & Raza, J. (2018). Overload and exhaustion: Classifying SNS discontinuance intentions. *Cogent Psychology*, 5(1), 1515584. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311908.2018.1515584>
- Plomin, R.(1976). Extraversion: Sociability and impulsivity? *Journal of Personality Assessment*, 40(1), 24-30. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327752jpa4001_6
- Przybylski, A. K.,Murayama, K., DeHaan, C. R., & Gladwell, V. (2013). Motivational, emotional, and behavioral correlates of fear of missing out. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 29(4), 1841-1848. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2013.02.014>
- Quinones, C., & Griffiths, M. D. (2017). The impact of daily emotional demands, job resources and emotional effort on intensive internet use during and after work. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 76, 561-575. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2017.07.020>
- Rahmanyanti, P. L., &Yasa, N. N. (2019). Discontinuous usage intention of millennials in using Facebook: The role of SNS exhaustion mediates social overload. *European Journal of Business and Management Research*, 4(3). <https://doi.org/10.24018/ejbr.2019.4.3.24>
- Ravindran, T., YeowKuan, A. C., & Hoe Lian, D. G. (2014). Antecedents and effects of social network fatigue. *Journal of the Association for Information Science and Technology*, 65(11), 2306-2320. <https://doi.org/10.1002/asi.23122>

Role of Impulsivity, Compulsive Use, and Fear of Missing Out on Social Media Fatigue and Psychological Distress

- Sasaki, Y., Kawai, D., & Kitamura, S. (2016). Unfriend or ignore tweets?: A time series analysis on Japanese Twitter users suffering from information overload. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 64, 914-922. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2016.07.059>
- Shen, Y., Zhang, S., & Xin, T. (2020). Extrinsic academic motivation and social media fatigue: Fear of missing out and problematic social media use as mediators. *Current Psychology*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-020-01219-9>
- Shin, J., & Shin, M. (2016). To be connected or not to be connected? Mobile Messenger overload, fatigue, and mobile shunning. *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking*, 19(10), 579-586. <https://doi.org/10.1089/cyber.2016.0236>
- Social media: Past, present, and future. (2014). *The Routledge Companion to the Future of Marketing*, 269-284. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203103036-25>
- Sriwilai, K., & Charoensukmongkol, P. (2015). Face it, don't Facebook it: Impacts of social media addiction on mindfulness, coping strategies and the consequence on emotional exhaustion. *Stress and Health*, 32(4), 427-434. <https://doi.org/10.1002/smi.2637>
- Tromholt, M. (2016). The Facebook experiment: Quitting Facebook leads to higher levels of well-being. *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking*, 19(11), 661-666. <https://doi.org/10.1089/cyber.2016.0259>
- Whelan, E., Najmul Islam, A., & Brooks, S. (2020). Is boredom proneness related to social media overload and fatigue? A stress-strain-outcome approach. *Internet Research*, 30(3), 869-887. <https://doi.org/10.1108/intr-03-2019-0112>
- Zhang, S., Zhao, L., Lu, Y., & Yang, J. (2016). Do you get tired of socializing? An empirical explanation of discontinuous usage behaviour in social network services. *Information & Management*, 53(7), 904-914. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.im.2016.03.006>

Acknowledgement

I express my sincere gratitude to all the participants who came forward to be a part of the study. I wish to extend my special thanks to my guide and co-guide who supported me throughout.

Conflict of Interest

The author declared no conflict of interest.

How to cite this article: Spurthi, S. P., Pandey, M. K. & Kashyap, R. S. (2022). Role of Impulsivity, Compulsive Use, and Fear of Missing Out on Social Media Fatigue and Psychological Distress. *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, 10(4), 1515-1528. DIP: 18.01.144.20221004, DOI:10.25215/1004.144