Chapter 28
Social Media Addiction and Fear of Missing Out

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ABSTRACT

Social networks are part of daily life, and their use has been growing exponentially. Despite its potential, research has shown that social networks can be enhancers of addition. Psychological well-being can be called into question by the restlessness of the subject caused by the dependence on wanting to be online, particularly in social networks that gives rise to the term FoMO (fear of missing out), explaining the desire to remain online continuously. This chapter characterizes addiction to social networks and its relationship with FoMO. The concept of FoMO is discussed and explanatory theories. Some measures will be presented. Individual, intrafamilial, and extrafamilial characteristics associated with fear of missing out will be analyzed. The consequences of FoMO in different areas of the individual's life are presented. Some strategies for managing digital technologies to minimize this symptomatology will be discussed.

INTRODUCTION

In modern day society, social networking sites (SNSs) are becoming more and more popular, giving users the chance to be connected with the whole world (Chai et al., 2019; Su & Chan, 2017; Tanhan et al., 2022). Therefore, SNSs like Instagram or Facebook have gained huge popularity in the latest years (Chai et al., 2019). Helping its growing is the fact that internet and smart phones are becoming more popular around the world (Tanha et al., 2022). Smart phones are devices that can access the digital world in a matter of seconds, receiving updates at any moment (Tanha et al., 2022).

More than half of world´s population is now using the internet, according to Tanhan et al. (2022). In the year 2020 the average time spent on smart phones per day in Turkey was four hours, and, in general population, the average time on social media was very close to three hours (Tanhan et al., 2022).

The digital world, in particular social media, is enhancing curiosity into people, giving them the chance to share with the others their personal information (Tanhan et al., 2022). However, in social media only tends to appear the content that people publish, therefore, if someone is unhappy, they may not share such information regarding to that effect (Tanhan et al., 2022). That seems to be the reason why social media is so important these days. Because it exists this idealization of the way others are living that simply isn´t real. So, the information that users are seeing is generally made to present their lives in a much more glorified world they´re living at. The continuing use of social media to communicate and socialize with their peers may give a contribute to the increase of a phenomenon called fear of missing out (FoMO) (Casale & Fioravanti, 2020).

Some research suggests that it exists a positive correlation between SNS stress and FoMO, which enhances the role that social media has in modern day lifestyle (Beyens et al., 2016; Bloemen & De Coninck, 2020). Individuals who have a higher FoMO are likely to use internet intensively as well as social media (Elhai et al., 2016; Sapadin, 2015). Therefore, these individuals put themselves at greater vulnerability. This emerging phenomenon can cause depression, increase anxiety, stress, risk of psychopathology and technology addiction, as well as having a significant impact in the psychological well-being of an individual (O'Connell, 2020; Rozgonjuk et al., 2021).

This chapter aims to bring new information about social media addiction and the fear of missing out. In this way, the aim was to explore the relationship between addiction to social networks and FOMO, to analyse the concept of Fear of Missing Out, presented by the different types and explanatory theories, and to make known the main negative effects for the individual. Individual, intrafamilial and extrafamilial characteristics associated with the Fear of Missing Out will be analysed. As well as, expose the consequences of the Fear of Missing in the different areas of the individual's life. Finally, some digital technology management strategies will be addressed to minimize this symptomatology, thus aiming at the search for specialized help.

BACKGROUD

Social Media Addiction

In today´s world it is undeniable the variety of places we can visit online (Costa et al., 2018). Thus, one of the biggest changes that appeared in the last decade was the development of social media. This online platform allows you to communicate efficiently and at a fast rate with pretty much anyone anywhere

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