

Gratitude and Self-Regulation as Predictors of Fear of Missing Out among Generation Z in Indonesia

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Abstract

Generation Z (gen Z) is a generation exposed to the digital world. The use of social media, coupled with the abundance of other trend information, for gen Z can lead to fear of missing out (FoMO) behavior. FoMO can cause harm to individuals, including psychological problems. For this reason, FoMO needs to be reduced. The current study believes that FoMO can be influenced by the level of gratitude and self-regulation of individuals. Therefore, the current study aims to look at the influence of gratitude and self-regulation on FoMO in generation Z in Indonesia. The current study used a quantitative approach with a correlational design and involved 158 generation Z individuals. The data analysis technique used was multiple linear regression test. The results of this study indicate that there is an influence between gratitude and self-regulation simultaneously on the fear of missing out in generation Z in Indonesia. In addition, this study identified that gratitude has a positive influence on FoMO. On the other hand, self-regulation negatively affects FoMO. Further research is expected to be able to explain the relationship patterns of these three variables, especially between gratitude and FoMO by involving other variables.

Keywords: Fear of missing out, Gratitude, Self-regulation, Generation Z

INTRODUCTION

The era of digitalization that occurs today makes it easier for everyone to access various information and share every moment they have to their social media channels. Through social media, people can interact globally and exchange information in *real-time*. Not surprisingly, in this day and age, the use of social media shows rapid numbers. This is illustrated from the 2021 Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association (APJII) survey, that internet users touched more than 210 million people with a percentage of 77.02% of the total people in Indonesia. This figure is likely to show an increasing trend if you look at surveys in previous years. This illustrates that people are very familiar with the use of social media or the internet, especially for generation Z (gen Z).

Gen Z is a generation born in the digital era from 1997 to 2012 (Dimock, 2019). Gen Z as a digital generation does more interaction and socialize digitally (Niaz Ahmed, 2019; Ozkan &

Solmaz, 2015; Putra & Fitriani, 2019; Shams & Hoque, 2018; Singh, 2014; Gentina, 2020; Hathaway & O'Shields, 2022; Turner, 2015). APJII survey in 2021 illustrate, that users in the age group of 13-18 years occupy the top position as the most often user of social media. Then in the age group of 19-34 years with a slightly different percentage. Meanwhile, the age group of 35-54 years old has the lowest percentage in using social media. The higher the number of using social media or the internet as the main connection in interacting causes high interest for users to always follow the latest developments that exist. This excessive use of social media leads to addictive behaviors that correlate with *fear of missing out* (FoMO) behaviors (Fuster et al., 2017).

FoMO is a person's feelings related to the fear of missing out on valuable experiences or opportunities (Przybylski et al., 2013). This behavior leads the individual to always connect with what is experienced by others (Tanhan et al., 2022) and

crave for more validation from others (Alutaybi et al., 2019). This fear can cause individuals to spend a lot of time scrolling through social media (Akbari et al., 2021; Anastasya et al., 2022; Kargin et al., 2020; Metin-Orta, 2020; Putri & Halimah, 2019), creating a cycle of always feeling like they are left out

Based on a survey conducted by JWT Intelligence, 40% of individuals aged 12-67 feels that social media use leads to FoMO (Abel et al., 2016). Meanwhile, the research by Abel et al. (2016) showed that 70% of individuals aged 18-34 years experienced FoMO. Moreover, the study from Milyavskaya et al. (2018) reported that only 13% of the entire sample that had never experienced FoMO. In addition, research conducted by Putri & Halimah, (2019) found that students in late adolescence (18-21) and early adulthood (22-24) who experienced FoMO was related to patterns of social media addiction. The age described in the survey and the results of the study tend to be in generation Z.

FoMO behavior tend to increase mental health and behavioral problems (Gupta & Sharma, 2021). FoMO can lead individual to experience anxiety and fatigue due to high intensity in social media (Świątek et al., 2021), low self-esteem, unhappiness, and depression (Elhai et al., 2020), as well as addiction (Putri & Halimah, 2019). Meanwhile, FoMO may also increase the risk of problematic behaviors in social media use and phubbing behavior (Coskun & Karayagız Muslu, 2019; Franchina et al., 2018). In addition, some research reported that FoMO can increase maladaptive behavior, which might harm oneself in the future (Brunborg et al., 2022; Riordan et al., 2021).

Reflecting from the large amount of previous literature that explains the detrimental effects of FoMO behavior, it is necessary to enact a strategy to reduce it. FoMO behaviors that lead individuals to focus too much on the experiences of others cause the behavior of comparing oneself with others thus opening up feelings of failure or left behind (Silvia & Anna Appulembang, 2022). FoMO and social media addiction can also be mediated by

the feeling of envy (Yin et al., 2021), therefore jealousy is also a characteristic of FoMO. Important experiences that occur in personal life become neglected simply because of the focus on the experiences of others. In fact, everyone has different experiences and moments. For this reason, individuals need to instill the value of gratitude to the experience they have in overcoming this phenomenon (Rosyida & Romadhani, 2022).

According to Emmon & Crumpler (in Allen, 2018), gratitude is a concept that combines emotions, virtues, moral sentiments, motives, coping responses, skills, and attitudes. The concept of gratitude has a correlation on various positive feelings, such as happiness (Gottlieb & Froh, 2020), self-esteem (Amin et al., 2018; Bartlett et al., 2020), life satisfaction (Yildirim & Alanazi, 2018), and so on. Focusing on the positive things in life through gratitude leads to feelings of self-acceptance and self-love (Homan & Hosack, 2019). This encourages individuals to focus more on themselves and refuse to follow or minimize the desire to have the same experiences as others. However, knowing the fact that humans are dynamic, especially the younger generation who are in a period of transitioning and adapting to adult life, many of factors that might affect their condition. Therefore, gratitude alone is not enough, the individual also needs to cultivate the ability to regulate FoMO behavior through self-regulation (Barron & Kaye, 2020; Hanoum et al., 2022; Muhtarom, 2022; Tiara & Abdillah, 2024; Wati et al., 2022).

Self-regulation is a multidimensional construct, involving several structure of behaviors, starting from basic physiological functions to complex intentional cognitive processes (Gestsdottir et al., 2015). This concept align with the whole aspect of adaptation, when people change thoughts, attentions, emotions and behaviors to react to contextual events and, also, to influence the selected features of their context (McClelland. et al., 2017). This concept is also considered the basis for achieving the completion of adaptive developmental tasks at all stages of life (McClelland. et al., 2017)

and can even help in solving mental health problems and promoting positive experiences.

Previous study in Indonesia has found that gratitude could significantly predict FOMO in young people (Rosyida & Romadhani, 2022). Another study, also in young people in Indonesia, found self-regulation to be one of the predictor of FOMO (Amelisastridkk., 2024). However, study that combined these to constructs as predictors of FOMO has not been found. The FoMO phenomenon that occurs in generation Z needs to be studied to reduce the unintended impact on mental health and behavior. However, the characteristics of generation Z who are still in the development stage as labile individuals sometimes tend to be easily distracted by various posts on social media. Therefore, gratitude alone is not enough to prevent this. Self-regulation is needed to minimize the possibility of distraction so that individuals can control themselves and the environment around them. Thus the current study aims to 1) prove that gratitude and self-regulation are predictors of FoMO in generation Z simultaneously (Major Hypothesis), 2) prove that gratitude is a predictor of FoMO (Minor Hypothesis 1), and 3) prove that self-regulation is a predictor of FoMO in generation Z (Minor Hypothesis 2).

METHOD

The current study aims to see the relationship between gratitude and self-regulation towards FoMO in generation Z in Indonesia. Therefore, this study uses a type of quantitative research with a correlational design. Quantitative research is a method based on the philosophy of positivism and seeks to test a determined sample, collect data through research instruments, and analyze it using statistics to find the truth of a predetermined hypothesis (Sugiyono, 2022). Meanwhile, correlational design research is a study that aims to test the characteristics of two or more variables (Duli, 2019).

The participants of this study are individuals aged 1-26 years in Indonesia. The

sampling technique used is a *nonprobability sampling technique* with a type of *convenience sampling*. *Nonprobability sampling* is a method of sampling where not all members of the population to be sampled have the same opportunity (Sugiyono, 2022). The inclusive criteria set for this research are individuals with generation Z aged 13-26 years and Indonesian citizenship. Meanwhile, the exclusion criteria set are individuals who are not included in gen Z, and are less than 13 years old and more than 26 years old, and are not Indonesian citizens.

The data collection for this research is using the google form. The questionnaire includes *informed consent*, participant identity and demographics, and statements that have been conformed to the instruments used. Moreover the total participants of this research are 158 participants (see table 1).

Fear of Missing Out scale (FoMOs)

The measuring instrument used to measure FoMO is the *Fear of Missing Out scale (FoMOs)* by Przybylski et al. (2013). This measuring instrument has a *good internal consistency* value ($\alpha = 0.90$). This measuring tool has 10 items and has 3 aspects; *goal setting*, *decision making*, and *perseverance* (e.g., I feel anxious when I don't know what my friends are doing; Sometimes I wonder if I'm spending too much time keeping up with what's going on). This measuring instrument uses a Likert scale from point 1 to point 5. The response of each point has a descriptor of point 1 = very inappropriate to point 5 = very appropriate. Respondents were asked to fill in measuring instruments according to what was experienced.

Islamic Gratitude Scale (IGS-10)

The measuring instrument used to measure gratitude is the *Islamic Gratitude Scale (IGS-10)* by Rusdi et al. (2021). This measuring instrument has a good reliability value ($\alpha = 0.863$) with two aspects; intrinsic and extrinsic gratitude. This measuring instrument has 10 favorable items (e.g., If I get a favor, I often help others; I pray for others who have

given me benefits and conveniences.) This measuring instrument uses a Likert scale from point 1 to point 6. The response of each point has a descriptor of point 1 = very inappropriate to point 6 = very appropriate. Respondents were asked to fill in measuring instruments according to what was experienced.

Short Self-Regulation Scale (SSR)

The measuring instrument used to measure self-regulation is the *Short Self-Regulation Scale (SSR)* (Pichardo et al., 2014) which has been adapted in Indonesian (Abel et al., 2016). This measuring instrument has a high construct of validity indicated in a good index (CFI, RMSEA, & GFI) ($\alpha > 0.9$). This instrument has 9 items (e.g., I have trouble focusing on something; I feel like I didn't learn from the problems that have already happened). This measuring instrument uses a Likert scale from point 1 to point 5. The response of each point has a descriptor of points 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. Respondents were asked to fill in measuring instruments according to what was experienced.

Data analysis in the current study is an assumption test and a hypothesis test. The assumption test in this study includes normality test and linearity test. This assumption test is carried out

to be the basis for deciding the statistical method used. Meanwhile, the hypothesis test of this study was carried out with multiple linear regression tests. The software used to perform statistical tests is Statistical Product and Service Solution (SPSS) version 25.

RESULT

The total participants of this study was 158. The participants were males ($n = 35$, 22.2%) and females ($n = 123$, 77.8%) generation Z. Their employment status were categorized into employees ($n = 22$, 13.9%), students ($n = 129$, 81.6%), and neither ($n = 7$, 4.4%).

This study aims to see the relationship between gratitude and self-regulation towards FoMO of generation Z in Indonesia. Based on the description of the data, it was found that: the FoMO variable has a value of max = 50, min = 16, SD = 6.699, mean = 31.04, and range = 34. Meanwhile, gratitude has a max value = 60, min = 38, SD = 4.848, mean = 51.94, and range = 22. In addition, self-regulation has a max value = 45, min = 9, SD = 8.109, mean = 25.94, and range = 36. The majority of participants were women (76.9%) and students (81.9%), as described above, and the majority had moderate levels of FoMO, gratitude and self-regulation (see Table 1).

Table 1. Categorization of gratitude levels, self-regulation, and FoMO

Variables	Percentiles	N	%
FoMO			
Low	$X < 24.3$	23	14.6
Moderate	$24.3 \leq X < 37.7$	108	68.4
High	$X \geq 37.7$	27	17.1
Gratitude			
Low	$X < 47.1$	32	20.3
Moderate	$47.1 \leq X < 56.8$	96	60.8
High	$X \geq 56.8$	30	19
Self-regulation			
Low	$X < 17.8$	24	15.2
Moderate	$17.8 \leq X < 34$	105	66.5
High	$X \geq 34$	29	18.4

To analyze the feasibility before the regression test, this the normality test is used and linearity test to check the assumption test. A residual normality

test is performed to see the distribution of data. The data is normally distributed if the sig value $\geq .05$. The normality test results show the value of sig =

.200 ($\text{sig} \geq .05$). In other words, the study found that the data was normally distributed. In addition, the data is said to be linear if the sig value $< .05$. The results of the linearity test between gratitude and FoMO show the value of $\text{sig} = .001$ ($\text{sig} < .05$) so it

is said to be linear. In addition, the results of the linearity test between self-regulation and FoMO show the value of $\text{sig} = .002$ ($\text{sig} < .05$) so it is said to be linear. Thus, both gratitude and self-regulation, have a linear relationship with FoMO.

Table 2. Correlation between gratitude, self-regulation, and FoMO

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. FoMO								
2. Extrinsic Gratitude	.002							
3. Intrinsic Gratitude	.185*	.285**						
4. Gratitude	.103	.849**	.749**					
5. Goal setting	-.264	.090	.158*	.149				
6. Decision Making	-.230**	.130	.095	.143	.673**			
7. Perseverance	-.243**	.234**	.138	.238**	.660**	.682**		
8. Self-regulation	-.278**	.167*	.148	.197*	.889**	.888**	.874**	

Note. * $<.05$, ** $<.01$, *** $<.001$

Based on table 2, intrinsic gratitude has a positive correlation with FoMO ($r = .185$, $p < .05$). Meanwhile, FOMO was found to have significant negative correlation with decision making ($r = -.230$, $p < .01$), perseverance ($r = -.243$, $p < .01$), and total self-regulation ($r = -.278$, $p < .01$). FOMO was found to have no significant correlation with extrinsic gratitude, total gratitude, and goal setting.

The correlation coefficient test (r) was performed to see the strength of the correlation of gratitude and self-regulation to FoMO. Meanwhile, the coefficient of determination (*R Square*) test was conducted to see the contribution of the influence of gratitude and self-regulation to FoMO. This study conducted a hypothesis test by conducting multiple linear regression tests.

Table 3. Regression of total gratitude and self-regulation of FoMO

IV	B	β	ONE	t	VIF	R2	Adj. R2
Gratitude	.227*	.165*	.107	2.121	1.040	.104	.092
Self-regulation	-.257***	-.311***	.064	-4.008	1.040		

Note. IV: Independent variables. B: Unstandardized beta. β : Standardized beta. SE: Std, error.

* $<.05$, ** $<.01$, *** $<.001$

Based on the multiple regression test in table 9, it was found that the significance effect between gratitude and FoMO with low β strength ($\beta = .165$). Meanwhile, self-regulation significantly affected FoMO at a low level ($\beta = -.311$). Both variables were able to predict FoMO by 10.4%, while the rest were other variables.

DISCUSSION

In the current study, gratitude and self-regulation had a significant effect with FoMO simultaneously ($\text{sig} < .05$). However, current study found a unique and interesting result: there was a partial positive effect of gratitude on FoMO.

Meanwhile, the effect of self-regulation on FoMO has a significant negative influence as expected.

The unique and interesting finding that gratitude positively affects FoMO in respondents to this study may be due to several things. First, about the perspective on gratitude. Basically, gratitude is subjective, meaning that gratitude can be interpreted differently by different individuals and different contexts (Allen, 2018). Appreciation for a moment can be consider as a form of gratitude (Fagley, 2016; Hlava & Elfers, 2014; Sansone & Sansone, 2010, Rusdi et al., 2021), including getting the same happy moment with the closest people. That way, when they lose the same moment with peers as a

source of happiness, it will affect the gratitude they have.

Second, there is a desire to be part of something (*need of belongingness*) as a source of happiness and satisfaction (Avcı, 2023; Çikrikçi & Gençdoğan, 2017; Massey et al., 2021; Mellor et al., 2008). Individuals get a feeling of *belongingness* when they receive the same experience with their friend in social media (as well as friends in real life) resulting in FoMO. Roberts & David (2020) explain that FoMO can have a good affect on individual's well-being, such as using social media to gain more social connections. In addition, MacKenzie & Baumeister (2019) conveying that FoMO will positively affect gratitude in cases where individuals who have a low *sense of enlightenment* who have a fear of rejection get social connections (*social connection*). This is also reinforced by the correlation findings that intrinsic gratitude provides a significant correlation to FoMO. But on the other hand, total gratitude and external gratitude did not have a significant correlation. That way, it is likely that gen Z in this study perceives that being part of a moment is something that is personally or intrinsically happy and should be grateful so it is not surprising that gratitude has a positive influence on FoMO.

This study identified the relationship and influence of self-regulation towards FoMO. Self-regulation refers to the ability to manage and achieve predetermined goals by including a process of evaluating the achievements that have been owned (Tresnadiani & Taufik, 2020). When individuals have good self-regulation, they will be able to control themselves in time and frequency in using social media. Self-regulation helps in controlling oneself and the surrounding environment in order to do something more productive than doing something that gives satisfaction, such as behaving consumptively because it follows trends (Milyavskaya et al., 2018). The results of this study also support several previous studies that examined the relationship and

influence between these two variables (Sianipar et al., 2019; Yusra & Napitupulu, 2022) .

There are some limitations in this study. The number of respondents in this study is still small in generalizing to gen Z in Indonesia. Furthermore, the relationship between gratitude and FoMO is still limited. As this findings was unique compared to previous research that found significant correlation between FOMO and gratitude. However, interesting and unexpected finding that gratitude positively influences FoMO leads this study to suspect the role of other variables that make this possible. The need of belongingness is a human need that leads to life satisfaction (Avcı, 2023; Çikrikçi & Gençdoğan, 2017; Massey et al., 2021; Mellor et al., 2008), perhaps including gratitude, hypothetically. Therefore, future research is expected to be able to investigate the relationship or influence of gratitude and FoMO with a more complex model by considering the culture or social interaction patterns of gen Z and considering other variables such as need of belongingness and social connection.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study, gratitude and self-regulation have a partial influence on FoMO. Meanwhile, FoMO and self-regulation have a significant relationship. However, gratitude and FoMO have a unique dynamic of relationship. Gen Z is an individual who is at a stage where they like to gather with friends and get pleasure when gathering with friends or individuals with whom they have an attachment. In addition, gen Z also needs to regulate themselves to sort out activities or consume more useful content on social media so that they do not have the desire to follow other people's lifestyles that are deemed unproductive. The limitation of this study is the need for mediating variables to determine the relationship of gratitude and FoMO, so that future researchers can add mediator or moderator variables to improve the more comprehensive results of this study.

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