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Analysis of FoMO Behavior and Its Impact on Social Skills Among Sixth Grade Students in Elementary School

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ABSTRACT. This study aims to analyze Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) behavior and its impact on the social skills of sixth grade students at MI AL HUDA Pacitan. The research employed a qualitative field study approach involving students, teachers, and parents as participants. Data were collected through observations, semi-structured interviews, and documentation, then analyzed using data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing techniques. The findings revealed that FoMO behavior influenced students' communication patterns, emotional stability, cooperation skills, empathy, and peer relationships. Students with high FoMO tendencies tended to prioritize digital interaction over direct social communication and frequently experienced anxiety when excluded from peer activities. The study also found that excessive smartphone and social media use strengthened students' dependence on online social validation. Therefore, teachers and parents play an important role in guiding children to develop balanced digital habits and healthy interpersonal relationships in the digital era.

Keywords: *Fear of Missing Out (FoMO), social skills, elementary school students, digital behavior, peer interaction*

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INTRODUCTION

The rapid development of digital technology and social media has significantly influenced children's social behavior in contemporary education environments. Elementary school students are increasingly exposed to online communication platforms, digital entertainment, and peer interactions through smartphones and social networking applications. This phenomenon has contributed to the emergence of Fear of Missing Out (FoMO), a psychological condition characterized by anxiety when individuals feel excluded from social experiences or information shared by others. According to Educational Psychology studies, FoMO can affect emotional well-being, interpersonal communication, and social participation among school-aged children. Recent research revealed that children with high FoMO tendencies often experience difficulties in maintaining healthy facetoface interactions and emotional regulation (Orben & Przybylski, 2019). In the context of elementary education, understanding FoMO is important because social skills

are fundamental competencies that support students' academic success and personal development.

Social skills refer to the ability of individuals to communicate, cooperate, empathize, and build positive relationships with others in everyday life. Students with strong social skills tend to adapt more effectively to school environments, participate actively in group activities, and demonstrate better emotional intelligence. Conversely, students with limited social competence may experience social isolation, peer conflicts, and reduced classroom engagement. Research conducted by Griffiths and Kuss(2020) explained that excessive digital interaction can gradually reduce children's direct communication abilities and social sensitivity. Furthermore, Boer and Marais (2021)emphasized that FoMO is closely related to emotional dependency on peer approval and online social validation. These conditions indicate that the increasing use of digital media among elementary students may influence how they interact and socialize within their school community.

The phenomenon of FoMO among children has become increasingly visible in Indonesian elementary schools, especially among upper-grade students who are entering early adolescence. Sixth grade students are generally in a transitional developmental stage characterized by heightened curiosity, emotional sensitivity, and stronger peer attachment. During this phase, students tend to seek social acceptance and become more vulnerable to feelings of exclusion when they are not involved in peer activities. Studies conducted by Santoso and Rahmawati(2022) showed that Indonesian students with high exposure to social media demonstrated greater anxiety in maintaining peer relationships. Similarly, research by Reer and Tang(2019) found that elementary students frequently compared themselves with their friends through online interactions, leading to decreased self-confidence and unhealthy social competition. These findings suggest that FoMO may influence the quality of social interactions among elementary school students, including their ability to cooperate, communicate, and empathize with peers.

At MI AL HUDA Pacitan, social interaction among sixth grade students reflects the broader impact of digital communication trends on children's daily behavior. Preliminary observations indicate that several students tend to prioritize online engagement over direct social interaction during break times and collaborative classroom activities. Some students also appear anxious when they are excluded from peer discussions or group activities shared through social media platforms. This condition potentially affects students' confidence, communication abilities, and participation in cooperative learning activities. According to Przybylski et al. (2013), the inability to manage FoMO can reduce children's social adaptability and create emotional dependency on peer recognition. Therefore, analyzing FoMO behavior in the school environment is necessary to identify its influence on students' social skills and interpersonal relationships.

Previous studies have widely discussed FoMO in adolescents and university students; however, research focusing on elementary school children remains limited. Most existing studies concentrate on the relationship between FoMO and social media addiction, mental health, or academic performance among teenagers. For example, research byLo Coco et al. (2020)examined the correlation between FoMO and excessive smartphone use among adolescents, while Wang et al. (2022) investigated FoMO's effect on emotional well-being in secondary education. Nevertheless, limited attention has been given to how FoMO influences the development of social skills among younger learners in elementary schools. This gap highlights the importance of conducting further investigation specifically among sixth grade students who are experiencing critical stages of social and emotional development. Consequently, this study seeks to contribute new insights into the relationship between FoMO behavior and students' social skills within the context of elementary education in Indonesia.

Based on the background above, this study aims to analyze FoMO behavior and its impact on the social skills of sixth grade students at MI AL HUDA Pacitan. The study focuses on identifying the forms of FoMO experienced by students and examining how these behaviors influence communication, cooperation, empathy, and peer interaction in school settings. Understanding this phenomenon is expected to provide valuable information for teachers, parents, and educational institutions in developing strategies to improve students' social competence and digital awareness. In addition, the findings of this study may support schools in creating balanced learning environments that encourage healthy social interaction both online and offline. Educational practitioners can also utilize the results to design guidance programs that help students manage emotional challenges related to FoMO. Therefore, this research is considered important in supporting the social and emotional development of elementary school students in the digital era.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative approach using a field study design to analyze Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) behavior and its impact on the social skills of sixth grade students at MI AL HUDA Pacitan. Qualitative research was selected because it allows researchers to explore students' experiences, behaviors, and social interactions in a natural educational setting. According to Creswell and Poth (2021), qualitative methods are appropriate for understanding social phenomena through participants' perspectives and contextual interpretations. The field study design enabled the researcher to directly observe students' daily interactions, communication patterns, and emotional responses related to FoMO behavior within the school environment. This approach also provided comprehensive insights into how students perceive peer relationships and social inclusion in the digital era. Therefore, qualitative field research was considered suitable for examining the influence of FoMO on elementary students' social skills in depth.

The participants of this study were sixth grade students, classroom teachers, and several parents at MI AL HUDA Pacitan. Participants were selected using purposive sampling techniques based on their relevance to the research objectives and their experiences related to students' social behavior. The researcher focused on students who actively used smartphones or social media and demonstrated noticeable social interaction patterns among peers. Teachers and parents were involved to provide additional perspectives regarding students' communication habits, emotional behavior, and interpersonal relationships both at school and at home. Data collection was conducted through direct observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation. Observations were used to examine students' interactions during classroom activities, break times, and collaborative learning sessions, while interviews explored participants' opinions and experiences concerning FoMO and social skills development.

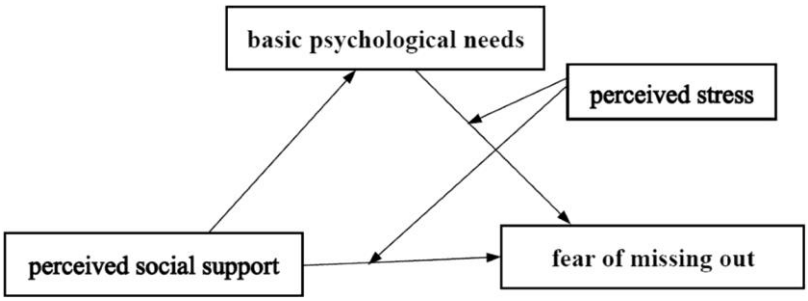
The data obtained in this study were analyzed using interactive qualitative analysis techniques consisting of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Miles et al.(2018)explained that qualitative data analysis involves organizing information systematically to identify patterns, themes, and relationships relevant to the research problem. In the data reduction stage, the researcher selected important information related to FoMO behavior and students' social interactions. Subsequently, the data were presented descriptively in narrative form to facilitate interpretation and thematic analysis. The final stage involved drawing conclusions based on recurring patterns and findings obtained from observations and interviews. To ensure data validity, the researcher applied triangulation techniques by comparing information from students, teachers, and parents as well as combining different methods of data collection. Through these procedures, the study aimed to produce credible and comprehensive findings regarding the impact of FoMO on students' social skills.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

The findings of this study revealed that Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) behavior was clearly observed among sixth grade students at MI AL HUDA Pacitan. Most students demonstrated strong curiosity toward peer activities shared through digital communication platforms such as WhatsApp groups, online games, and social media applications. During classroom observations, several students frequently discussed trending online content and expressed concern when they were unaware of information circulating among their peers. Some students also showed signs of anxiety when they were excluded from online conversations or group activities. Teachers explained that students often became distracted during lessons because they continuously checked notifications from their mobile devices. These findings indicate that FoMO behavior among sixth grade students is closely associated with their desire to maintain social connectedness and peer acceptance.

The study also found that students with higher FoMO tendencies tended to prioritize online interaction over direct communication with peers in the school environment. During break times, many students preferred discussing online games, viral videos, or social media trends instead of engaging in face-to-face collaborative activities. Several students appeared more comfortable communicating through digital platforms than participating in direct interpersonal conversations. This condition influenced the quality of their social interaction because some students demonstrated limited eye contact, reduced empathy, and lower participation in group discussions. Teachers reported that certain students became less responsive during cooperative learning activities and showed difficulty expressing opinions confidently in front of classmates. These results suggest that excessive attention toward digital social engagement may reduce opportunities for students to develop healthy interpersonal communication skills.



Another important finding revealed that FoMO behavior significantly influenced students' emotional conditions and peer relationships. Students who frequently experienced FoMO often felt worried when they were not invited to group chats, online games, or peer activities organized outside school hours. Some participants admitted feeling sad, jealous, or isolated when they saw friends sharing activities on social media without involving them. This emotional response sometimes caused conflicts among peers, especially when students perceived exclusion or unfair treatment in friendship groups. Observations further showed that students experiencing FoMO were more sensitive to peer opinions and often sought validation from classmates to feel socially accepted. Consequently, FoMO behavior not only affected students' emotional well-being but also influenced the stability and quality of their social relationships within the classroom environment.

The findings additionally demonstrated that FoMO affected students' cooperation skills during collaborative learning activities. In several classroom group assignments, students with high FoMO tendencies were often distracted by conversations regarding online content and digital activities unrelated to the lesson. This reduced their focus and participation in completing academic tasks collaboratively with peers. Some students relied heavily on socially dominant classmates to maintain inclusion within peer groups rather than actively contributing their own ideas. Teachers observed that these students sometimes avoided expressing disagreement because they feared social rejection from their friends. As a result, FoMO behavior indirectly limited students' confidence and independence during group learning processes. These conditions indicate that FoMO can influence the development of essential cooperative and communication skills needed in elementary education.

In terms of empathy and emotional understanding, the study found mixed social responses among students experiencing FoMO. Several students still demonstrated supportive attitudes toward peers, especially within close friendship circles, but others showed reduced sensitivity to classmates outside their preferred social groups. Students with strong FoMO tendencies tended to focus more on maintaining their own social status and peer recognition rather than understanding the emotional needs of others. During observations, some students ignored classmates who were socially isolated because they were more interested in participating in popular peer interactions. Teachers explained that students who constantly sought online validation occasionally became less attentive to real-life social situations occurring around them. This phenomenon suggests that FoMO may gradually weaken students' empathy and emotional awareness if not managed appropriately within the educational environment.

Table 1. Summary of FoMO-Related Social and Emotional Findings

Emerging Theme	Observed/Reported Indicators	Implications for Students' Social Development
Digital connectedness	Frequent checking of notifications, online games, WhatsApp groups, and social media updates	Strong dependence on continuous peer connectivity
Peer acceptance	Anxiety when excluded from chats, games, or peer activities; seeking peer validation	Increased sensitivity to peer opinions and social acceptance
Face-to-face communication	Reduced eye contact, limited participation, and greater comfort with digital communication	Fewer opportunities to practise direct interpersonal communication
Emotional well-being	Feelings of worry, sadness, jealousy, isolation, and fear of exclusion	Potential disruption of emotional regulation and peer relationships
Cooperation	Distraction during group tasks, dependence on dominant peers, and reluctance to express disagreement	Reduced confidence, independence, and active participation
Empathy	Lower sensitivity toward socially isolated classmates outside preferred friendship groups	Potential weakening of emotional awareness and inclusive peer interaction
Academic concentration	Checking smartphones and discussing online trends during lessons	Reduced attention and engagement in classroom learning
Peer pressure	Pressure to follow viral trends, games, and online conversations	Reinforcement of FoMO-related digital engagement

Family interaction	Preference for smartphone-based interaction and reduced direct communication at home	Possible reduction in family-based social interaction
Educational response	Collaborative learning, classroom discussion, character education, and teacher guidance	Greater opportunities to strengthen communication, empathy, cooperation, and responsible digital behavior

Source: synthesized from classroom observations and interviews with teachers and parents in the present study.

The interviews with classroom teachers revealed that digital technology played a significant role in shaping students' FoMO behavior. Teachers stated that most students already possessed personal smartphones and had access to social media platforms despite their relatively young age. The availability of internet access enabled students to remain continuously connected with peer activities both during and outside school hours. According to teachers, this constant connectivity increased students' curiosity and fear of being excluded from social interactions. Several teachers also mentioned that students frequently discussed online trends during lessons, which sometimes disrupted classroom concentration and communication. These findings demonstrate that technological accessibility contributes substantially to the emergence and development of FoMO behavior among elementary school students.

Parents who participated in the study similarly acknowledged changes in their children's social behavior due to increased digital exposure. Some parents reported that their children spent considerable time using smartphones to communicate with friends or access social media content after school. Parents also observed that children became emotionally upset when they could not participate in online interactions or digital entertainment shared among peers. In certain cases, students preferred staying at home using digital devices rather than engaging in direct social play with neighborhood friends. Several parents expressed concern that excessive digital engagement reduced children's communication within the family environment. These findings indicate that FoMO behavior extends beyond the school setting and influences students' broader social interactions in daily life.

The study further identified that peer pressure strongly contributed to the emergence of FoMO behavior among sixth grade students. Students often felt obligated to follow current online trends, games, or discussions to maintain their social position within friendship groups. Participants explained that failing to understand popular online topics sometimes resulted in teasing or exclusion from peer conversations. Consequently, many students continuously monitored social updates to avoid feeling left behind socially. This pressure encouraged students to spend more time engaging with digital content despite potential negative effects on their academic focus and interpersonal communication. The findings demonstrate that peer influence is a major factor reinforcing FoMO behavior among elementary school children.

Despite these challenges, the study also revealed several positive efforts implemented by teachers to strengthen students' social skills and reduce excessive FoMO behavior. Teachers encouraged collaborative learning activities, classroom discussions, and group projects that required direct communication among students. These activities aimed to improve students' confidence, cooperation, and interpersonal interaction within the classroom setting. Teachers also reminded students about the importance of balancing digital activities with real-life social relationships. In addition, schools occasionally organized character education programs emphasizing empathy, teamwork, and respectful communication among peers. These initiatives demonstrated the school's commitment to supporting students' social development amid the increasing influence of digital culture.

Overall, the results of this study indicate that FoMO behavior among sixth grade students at MI AL HUDA Pacitan has both psychological and social implications. FoMO influences students' emotional conditions, communication patterns, cooperation skills, and peer relationships within the school environment. Excessive concern about missing social experiences often distracts students from direct interpersonal interactions and reduces the quality of face-to-face communication. However, supportive educational environments and collaborative learning strategies can help students develop healthier social skills despite digital pressures. The findings emphasize the importance of guidance from teachers and parents in helping children manage digital engagement responsibly. Therefore, understanding FoMO behavior is essential for promoting balanced social and emotional development among elementary school students in the digital era.

These findings are broadly consistent with recent evidence showing that FoMO among primary school children can manifest through concerns about staying connected with peers and anxiety about missing friends' activities. A recent longitudinal study of 541 primary school students identified distinct FoMO profiles, including children characterized by strong social monitoring and others characterized by worry and anxiety regarding what their friends were doing. Similarly, research among primary school children has reported a positive relationship between FoMO and social media engagement, reinforcing the relevance of examining FoMO within elementary education contexts.

Discussion

The findings of this study demonstrate that Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) has emerged as a significant social and psychological phenomenon among sixthgrade students at MI AL HUDA Pacitan. Students showed strong emotional attachment to peer interactions through digital platforms, which influenced their communication patterns and social participation. This finding is consistent with the conceptualization of FoMO as anxiety arising from the possibility of being excluded from rewarding social experiences and the desire to remain continuously connected with others (Przybylski et al., 2013). Recent Indonesian research likewise indicates that FoMO is closely associated with digital connectivity, social interaction, and concerns about being left behind in peer activities (Meradaputhi et al., 2023; Desmita et al., 2023).

In the elementaryschool context, FoMO should therefore be understood not merely as a consequence of social-media exposure but also as an expression of children's increasing need for peer acceptance, belonging, and social recognition. This interpretation is supported by research showing that digital communication patterns are increasingly related to FoMO, while self-regulation represents an important factor in managing problematic digital engagement (Muhtarom, 2022). Thus, the FoMO observed among sixth-grade students can be understood as the interaction of developmental needs, peer dynamics, and expanding digital accessibility. These findings highlight the importance of strengthening students' social-emotional skills and self-regulation so that digital connectivity supports, rather than replaces, healthy face-to-face peer relationships.

The study found that students with stronger FoMO tendencies preferred online interaction over direct interpersonal communication. This finding is consistent with D'Lima and Higgins, (2021), who found a significant positive relationship between FoMO and social media engagement among primary school children aged 9–11 years, suggesting that concerns about peer activities can encourage greater involvement in online social spaces. Similarly, Schmuck (2021)reported that FoMO may undermine adolescents' social well-being by intensifying the need to remain continuously connected to social media. In the present study, students frequently monitored peer activities through smartphones rather than engaging actively in face-to-face collaborative interaction at school. This pattern suggests that FoMO may reshape how

elementary students maintain peer connectedness, potentially reducing opportunities to practise direct communication, cooperation, and interpersonal responsiveness.

Another important finding concerns the emotional impact of FoMO on students' social experiences. Many students reported anxiety, sadness, and feelings of isolation when excluded from peer activities or online group interactions. This finding is consistent with evidence that FoMO is associated with emotional distress, anxiety, and reduced psychological well-being among adolescents (Mahmud et al., 2023). Mahmud et al. (2023), for example, highlighted the role of emotion regulation and self-esteem in adolescents' experiences of FoMO, suggesting that difficulties in managing emotions may intensify vulnerability to social comparison and fear of exclusion.

Recent evidence further indicates that FoMO is closely related to negative social experiences and psychological well-being. Dam et al. (2023) found that higher FoMO was associated with poorer quality of life, depressive symptoms, and stress related to rejection and negative responses from online peers. These findings help explain why students in the present study became emotionally sensitive when they perceived exclusion from peer interactions. Thus, FoMO may affect not only students' social participation but also their emotional stability and sense of belonging within school environments. Emotional guidance, supportive peer relationships, and structured opportunities for face-to-face interaction are therefore important to help students regulate feelings of exclusion and develop healthier patterns of social engagement.

The influence of FoMO on students' cooperation skills was also evident in classroom learning activities. Students experiencing FoMO often showed reduced concentration during group assignments because they remained distracted by online communication and digital trends. This finding is consistent with Tanrikulu and Mouratidis (2023), who found that FoMO was associated with in-class distraction and study interference, which may undermine students' academic engagement. Cooperative learning, meanwhile, depends on active communication, shared responsibility, mutual contribution, and social interaction among learners. Evidence from Indonesian educational research also indicates that collaborative-cooperative learning can strengthen students' social discipline and character development (Harianto et al., 2020). However, students with high FoMO may prioritize peer approval over expressing independent ideas, limiting active participation and weakening the effectiveness of group learning. Thus, FoMO may indirectly constrain the development of communication, cooperation, self-confidence, and other social competencies essential for effective teamwork.

The findings further revealed that FoMO influenced students' empathy and emotional awareness in peer relationships. Some students appeared more concerned with maintaining popularity and social recognition than responding to classmates' emotional needs. This finding suggests that persistent attention to online peer activities may shift children's social attention toward validation and inclusion rather than direct interpersonal engagement. However, the relationship between digital engagement and empathy is not necessarily negative,Meuthia et al. (2023), for example, found a significant positive association between social networking-site use and cognitive empathy, affective empathy, and sympathy among Indonesian adolescents. Thus, the issue may lie less in digital use itself than in how FoMO shapes the purpose and intensity of such engagement. When children become preoccupied with monitoring peer activities and maintaining social recognition, opportunities for direct communication, emotional observation, and inclusive interaction may be reduced. In the present study, this tendency was reflected in students' occasional neglect of socially isolated peers in favor of popular friendship groups. Therefore, schools should strengthen character education and collaborative activities that promote empathy, perspective-taking, respect, and inclusive face-to-face interaction.

participants already possessed smartphones and accessed social media despite their young age. Continuous digital connectivity enables children to monitor peer activities, social updates,

and online trends, potentially intensifying concerns about exclusion and social disconnection. This interpretation is supported by Rachmat et al.(2021), whose study of 338 parents of kindergarten students in Indonesia found that smartphone addiction was directly associated with children's emotional dysregulation, while interpersonal communication was associated with better emotional outcomes. Recent Indonesian research also indicates that social-media accessibility and intensity of use are important contexts in the emergence of FoMO and may reduce the quality of direct social interaction (Faramita & Fadila, 2023). In the present study, teachers similarly observed that students frequently discussed online trends during lessons, which distracted them from learning and face-to-face interaction. Therefore, technological accessibility should be understood not merely as a source of digital engagement but as a contextual factor that may reinforce FoMO and challenge children's social-emotional development.

Parental observations in this study confirmed that FoMO-related behavior extends beyond school into students' everyday social lives. Several parents reported that their children spent substantial time engaging in digital interaction rather than communicating directly with family members or neighborhood peers. This finding is consistent with Rachmat et al. (2021), who found that smartphone addiction was directly associated with children's emotional dysregulation, while stronger family cohesion and interpersonal communication were associated with better emotional adjustment. FoMO may further intensify children's dependence on peer approval and online feedback, particularly when exclusion from digital interactions triggers feelings of anxiety, sadness, or isolation. Thus, parental supervision, family communication, and balanced digital literacy are essential for helping children regulate digital engagement and maintain healthy interpersonal relationships. This is particularly important because FoMO has also been identified as a risk factor for social disconnection among adolescents (Parent et al., 2021).

Peer pressure emerged as another dominant factor influencing FoMO behavior among sixth-grade students. Students often felt compelled to follow popular online trends, games, and peer discussions to maintain social acceptance and avoid exclusion. This finding is consistent with the social identity perspective, which emphasizes individuals' need for belonging and positive social recognition. Recent research shows that peer exclusion in online classmate groups can intensify FoMO, as students become concerned about being left out of socially rewarding peer experiences (Marengo et al., 2021). Similarly, research in the Indonesian context confirms that FoMO reflects a persistent concern about maintaining social connectedness and staying informed about peers' activities (Kaloeti et al., 2021). Thus, among upper-elementary students, peer pressure may reinforce FoMO by encouraging continuous monitoring of online trends and interactions. These findings suggest that FoMO is shaped not only by digital technology but also by children's developmental need for peer acceptance and social belonging.

The findings suggest that FoMO is associated with students' self-confidence and communication abilities. Several students hesitated to express their opinions because they feared peer rejection or disagreement. Consistent with social cognitive theory, children's confidence and behavioral responses are shaped by social interaction and feedback. FoMO may therefore encourage conformity and dependence on peer validation, potentially limiting assertiveness and authentic self-expression. Previous research similarly found that FoMO is associated with peer exclusion and emotional difficulties among early adolescents (Marengo et al., 2021), while Deniz (2021)demonstrated a significant relationship between FoMO and social self-efficacy. Thus, schools should provide supportive classroom environments that encourage confident expression, respectful disagreement, and independence from excessive peer judgment.

Despite these challenges, the study identified positive educational efforts to strengthen students' social skills through collaborative learning, classroom discussions, and character education. These strategies create opportunities for direct communication, cooperation, empathy, and emotional regulation. Empirical evidence supports this finding: cooperative project-based learning has been shown to improve social and emotional competencies among primary school

students (Llorent et al., 2022), while teacher-led interventions can significantly strengthen elementary students' social and emotional skills (Al-Jbouri et al., 2023). Teachers' efforts to balance online interaction with face-to-face engagement are also important because digital learning can generate both positive and negative social-emotional experiences, requiring preventive guidance within classroom practice (Kim et al., 2023). Similarly, the implementation of social-emotional learning in elementary schools provides a structured approach for developing students' self-awareness, emotional regulation, empathy, and interpersonal skills (Lestari & Azizah, 2023). Therefore, schools should not merely restrict children's digital engagement but integrate collaborative learning and SEL-oriented guidance to help students manage FoMO, maintain healthy peer relationships, and develop balanced patterns of online and face-to-face interaction.

This study also contributes to the growing discussion regarding children's mental and social health in the digital era. Previous studies predominantly focused on adolescents and university students, while research concerning elementary school children remains relatively limited (Anderson & Jiang, 2022). The findings demonstrate that FoMO behaviors can emerge even at younger educational levels due to increased exposure to digital communication technologies. Elementary students may not yet possess sufficient emotional maturity to manage social comparison and online peer pressure effectively. As a result, they become vulnerable to emotional insecurity and social dependency related to digital interaction. This study therefore expands understanding of how FoMO influences younger learners within elementary education contexts. The findings provide valuable insights for educators, parents, and policymakers concerned with children's social development in technologically advanced societies.

Another important implication of this study concerns the need for balanced digital literacy education. Digital literacy should not only focus on technical skills but also emphasize ethical communication, emotional awareness, and responsible technology use (UNESCO, 2021). Students need guidance in understanding that social media interactions do not fully represent real-life relationships or personal value. Without appropriate literacy education, children may become emotionally dependent on online approval and social comparison. Teachers and parents should collaboratively establish healthy digital habits and encourage offline social interaction among children. In addition, schools can organize educational programs discussing the psychological effects of excessive digital engagement. Such preventive measures may help students develop healthier relationships with technology while maintaining positive interpersonal communication skills.

The study findings ultimately confirm that FoMO significantly influences the social skills development of sixth grade students at MI AL HUDA Pacitan. FoMO affects communication patterns, emotional stability, empathy, cooperation skills, and peer relationships within educational settings. Although digital technology provides opportunities for social connection, excessive dependence on online interaction may reduce students' ability to engage meaningfully in direct interpersonal communication. Nevertheless, supportive school environments, parental guidance, and social-emotional learning programs can help students manage FoMO effectively. Teachers and parents must work collaboratively to create balanced educational environments that encourage healthy digital behavior and positive social interaction. Therefore, understanding FoMO among elementary school students is essential for supporting children's emotional well-being and social competence in the modern digital era.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) behavior has a significant influence on the social skills of sixth grade students at MI AL HUDA Pacitan. The findings revealed that students experiencing FoMO tended to prioritize digital interaction over direct interpersonal

communication, which affected their cooperation skills, empathy, emotional stability, and peer relationships. Excessive concern about being excluded from online activities or peer interactions also caused feelings of anxiety, insecurity, and social dependency among students. In addition, the availability of smartphones and continuous access to social media intensified students' desire for social validation and peer acceptance. These conditions demonstrate that FoMO has become an important social phenomenon influencing children's behavior in the digital era. Therefore, FoMO not only affects students' emotional well-being but also shapes the quality of their social interaction within school environments.

The study further highlights the important role of teachers, parents, and educational institutions in helping students manage FoMO behavior positively. Collaborative learning activities, character education, and social-emotional learning programs were found to support the development of healthy communication and interpersonal skills among students. Parents also need to supervise children's digital activities and encourage balanced interaction between online engagement and real-life social communication. Moreover, schools should strengthen digital literacy education that emphasizes responsible technology use, empathy, and emotional awareness. Through appropriate guidance and supportive educational environments, students can develop healthier social relationships and reduce excessive dependence on online validation. Consequently, understanding and addressing FoMO behavior is essential for promoting balanced social and emotional development among elementary school students in contemporary digital society.

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