

Volume 2



# KAZGUU LIBERAL ARTS DIGEST



JANUARY 2022





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# KAZGUU LIBERAL ARTS DIGEST

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Information about the journal



**“K L A D” IS A STUDENT JOURNAL FIRST PUBLISHED AT M. NARIKBAYEV KAZGUU UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LIBERAL ARTS. THIS JOURNAL IS AIMED AT ENHANCING STUDENTS’ INVOLVEMENT INTO SCIENCE AND RESEARCH.**

**“K L A D” JOURNAL ADMITS FOR PUBLICATION VARIOUS TYPES OF ARTICLES: ORIGINAL RESEARCH, REVIEW ARTICLES, SHORT REPORTS OR ESSAYS, REFLECTIONS, CASE STUDIES, METHODOLOGIES AND CASES IN ENGLISH; CONTAINING THE RESULTS OF FUNDAMENTAL AND APPLIED RESEARCH IN THE FIELD OF PHILOSOPHY AND IDENTITY, HISTORY OF KAZAKHSTAN, PEDAGOGY, LINGUISTICS AND METHODS OF TEACHING LANGUAGES, TRANSLATION, AND TOURISM.**

**JANUARY 2022**

**M. NARIKBAYEV KAZGUU UNIVERSITY  
SCHOOL OF LIBERAL ARTS**

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# Research articles

KAZGUU Liberal Arts Digest



M. NARIKBAYEV KAZGUU UNIVERSITY

### INFLUENCE OF THE FEAR OF MISSING OUT (FOMO SYNDROME) ON STUDENTS' PERSONALITY

*Menissova Ilhara*

#### Abstract

This paper will focus on the problem of addiction from social media of adolescents and its influence on users' academic performance and general identity. Also, this paper will outline actions, that people can take against given problem. The suggestions that can be drawn from the research results will include the ways to avoid some illnesses as FoMO syndrome or addictions from the internet.

The objectives of this research were to assess the prevalence of how FoMO syndrome is familiar among adolescents, to know how well people know about syndrome and examine patterns of the association between real and virtual life, socio-demographic, mental health characteristics among schoolchildren of Kazakhstan, Karaganda. The aim of the study is to define problematic social media use and level of fear of missing out developments in social media (FoMO) in adolescents.

**Keywords:** Fear of missing out, FoMO syndrome, social media, internet addiction, mental health, virtual life

#### Introduction

It is very important to define the terms as "social media", "addiction from social media", "FoMO syndrome" to explain what would be considered as those in the current research. So firstly, "social media is forms of media that allow people to communicate and share information using the internet or mobile phones" (Cambridge Dictionary (2020). Nowadays a lot of people can not even imagine their life without social media, so it shows that rest of the people may have an "addiction" from the internet.). The term FoMO as "a fear of losing when a person doesn't know about other individuals exciting experiences or events".( Przybylski (2013)) It can also be an obsessive desire to stay connected with people and a curiosity to know what is happening in others life. He also found that FoMO usually occurs around age 13-33 as this age group were the first who grew in a technologically advanced world (Iqbal, N., Ahmad, M., Zargar, S.R., & Aleem, S. (2019). FOMO is abbreviation for "fear of missing out": a worried feeling that you may miss exciting events that other people are going to, especially caused by things you see on social media". Also, FOMO may involve habits like checking phones again and again even when people are around us. More than half of the world's population experiences this feeling, to be more exact 56% faced this problem. Obviously, faced with such a syndrome, many of them have changed their behavior and personality.

I have chosen to research this topic for two reasons. First of all, I am worried about the prevalence of addiction from the social media in Kazakhstan, because I think that the situation of internet-addiction is not yet explored in Kazakhstan due to the absence of proper monitoring tools. Nowadays a lot of children from an early age hang on the Internet and gradually it becomes an addiction. Moreover, I personally experienced and witnessed such a problem in my own entourage. I

have met with some few situations in which teenagers were sick with the syndrome FOMO. Furthermore, I have been sicked with FOMO, so I am biased that this all contributes to problems with personality changes and self-esteem. In addition, by choosing and learning this topic, I can somehow contribute to the well-being of my peers and healthy communication in schools as an outcome of the research.

### Context (Literature review)

Before the discussing an influence of the FoMO, we need to understand the concept of the fear of missing out (FoMO). FoMO syndrome is a kind of emotions, when people feel anxiety that others having 'more' fun, living 'better' life and so on, FoMO may involve habits like checking phones again and again even when people are around us, it can also be a desire to stay connected with people and a curiosity to know what is happening in others life. FOMO is taking a major toll on the psychology of social media users, due to the rise in use of social media, this process gained its importance as it had direct implications on the mental health of an individual. Wortham (2011) said that scrolling through posts which may include pictures and checking status updates of others may evoke a fear which may be referred to as fear of missing out (FoMO) (Dr. Luis Feliciano-García, 2019, p.39). FoMO is relatively new phenomenon, this term was officially added in oxford dictionary in (2013) and defined it as an "anxiety that an exciting or interesting the event may currently be happening elsewhere, often aroused by posts seen on a social media website". FOMO is one of the most basic cognitive biases embedded in our deep subconscious. NPR's Hidden Brain podcast (21:28) explains more:

"In all of our experiments we've found that it's really more a function of an anxiety that something might happen in a group experience that will shape the group history in the future that you may not be part of and that will undermine your group belongingness". (Heather Yamada-Hosley, 2017) FoMO appears as a global problem, because it is a problem that faced millions of people, especially, it occurs around age 13-33 as this age group were the first who grew in a technologically advanced world.

There are different viewpoints about this issue, some people think that this is just a period of adolescence and that this kind of "illnesses" goes away by itself, while others believe that this disease should be fought and consider this as a global problem. In fact, any such kind of addictions is a real disease and society should militate with it. Especially when it makes you aware of its existence due to its influence on the academic performance of an adult or teenager.

There is also problem as imaginary disease, these are series of symptoms of a disease experienced by a person who is convinced that he is sick, although in fact there is no disease. With our thoughts and beliefs, we influence on our health, and just as it happens with a nocebo (no-brain) effect, negative thoughts can increase the likelihood of a disease. Subsequently person loses his good grades. To date, most of the research examining the FOMO phenomenon is reported in the social media literature and focuses on its influence on social media use and how teenagers are constantly barraged by what their friends are doing. (Ashley S.& John P.& David F., 2019, p.1604). By the way humans tend to compare themselves with others and feel jealous seeing other people successful and doing better in their lives. The need to feel affiliated or connected with each other is considered as a basic survival

for human beings. People may feel anxious of not being part of a group and would do anything to be associated with each other like making accounts on social media. Such individuals can experience FoMO and can lead to social pain and a fear of rejection and loneliness of not being a part of the group which can have adverse impact on their mental health. Also, the FoMO variable is the strongest predictor of smartphone addiction among all the other problems. It cannot be denied that social media tend to have a powerful impact on our lives, and it has transformed relationships and interaction patterns (Asur & Huberman, 2010). There has also been a decrease in the quality of sleep as people tend to remain online most of their time. Individuals who experience high levels of FoMO may be seen to use social media more often and checking their mobile phone as soon as the notification arrives. By seeing others or their friends on social media enjoying their lives or being successful can make a person feel sad or depressed with themselves. (Divya Arora & Mandeep Kaur, 2019, p. 3) Thus, FoMO syndrome with addiction from the smartphones greatly affects the performance of a person, in this case, a student. With the growing attention paid to fear of missing out (FoMO) psychological phenomenon in explaining social media engagement (SME), this mixed-method research measured the relative impact of FoMO on students' SME for personal reasons during lectures. The moderating effect of culture (minority vs. non-minority students) on the connection between FoMO and SME was also considered. Nightly diaries and end-of-semester measures provided data on the short and long-term consequences of experiencing FOMO. Results showed that students experience FOMO frequently, particularly later in the day and later in the week, and while doing a required task like studying or working. More frequent experiences of FOMO were associated with negative outcomes both daily and over the course of the semester, including increasing negative affect, fatigue, stress, physical symptoms, and decreased sleep. (Karayagiz Muslu, 2019, p. 1004)

FOMO is only the latest symptom of technologically mediated world-weariness. As easy as it seems to dismiss the term, like any other piece of slang, it has some depth. According to an article out of *Innovation*, the influence of social networks can have devastating effects on the psychological well-being of users. Dr. Abigail Scholer, an Associate Professor in social psychology at the University of Waterloo who specializes in motivation, echoes that sentiment, telling THUMP that expressions like FOMO help us "label and identify what it means to be human." Though neither said they were aware of any formal studies on FOMO, they both agreed that the term clearly overlaps with some pre-existing theories of social psychology.

Social interaction is deeply ingrained in humanity, "comparable to needing food and shelter," says Dr. Summerville. FOMO has a lot to do with that social necessity. Besides benchmarks for success in life like promotions at work, or getting that ripped festival body, time with friends is also extremely important, and the excitement that other people are experiencing can drive at our own feelings of accomplishment. There are going to be people "who are really going to not want to miss out on things and that's' going to be a bigger driver of their behaviour,". (Dr. Scholer; Gigen Mammoser, 2016) The good news however is that you're probably just worrying too much. "The research on that says, pretty consistently, that people overestimate how bad they are going to feel about something in the future," Dr. Summerville explains. "Those feelings tend to be way worse than the actual experience." Which is to say that the sob story you keep telling yourself about how much fun everyone is having without you at Coachella isn't nearly as bad as you're making it out to be.

Knowing all this, what can be done to help overcome FOMO? There are really a lot of solutions and advices from psychologists that can help people to get the better of feeling of missing out:

- The problem must be recognized and accepted by person. It means that problem must be identified, and the fact of its harmful effect on your life, career or health is unconditionally recognized.
- Schedule access to social networks. Define for yourself some convenient time intervals and make your own timetable when you will be “accepted” to reply to those messages in social networks.
- The most important thing that everyone should remember: on the Internet people show you only what they want to show. Behind a beautiful scenes absolutely any problems can be hidden. It means that what person publishes on social network completely does not reflect human’s real life for 100%.
- The surest way to be content with your life is to choose what you like and enjoy among the million possibilities of this world.

The main thing that FOMO should teach us - is an attentive advertence towards yourself, your desires, needs, capabilities and goals. These all help a person to live in harmony with himself and the world.

### Methodology

#### Research Design

I chose mixed research to give a full answer to the research question. Mixed research contains both types of investigations: quantitative and qualitative. So, the research was based on qualitative and quantitative investigations in order to obtain full and sufficient answers to research questions. Through the statistical information provided by the quantitative method, the researcher can make a conclusion about the full picture of the problem and its consequences by giving a holistic representation of the topic. The only using one type of sampling would not be enough as it was possible with two investigations. Quantitative research helped to get general statistical information with people’s opinions about the chosen topic, whereas I got more detailed information from the expert from a similar department via qualitative research.

#### Research Instrument

I decided to make a quantitative research, due to it I conducted an online survey. It gave a chance to know the opinions of people that helped to make some points of conclusion. Also, for qualitative research I conducted the interview with one of the specialists in medical industry on the topic of FoMO syndrome. That’s all will help me to understand the relevance and vitality of topic better and to make a right conclusion.

#### Research Participants

I chose students of 7<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade of NISK scholars to gain some statistics using random sampling.

With margin of error equal to 10%, confidence level of 95% and population of around 720 people, 85 school students need to be asked to participate in the survey. So, it helped to get results that are clear enough.

### **Research Site**

The investigation will be held in Nazarbayev Intellectual School in Karaganda city, Kazakhstan. However, students from other NIS schools from all regions of Kazakhstan were also able to participate in this survey in order to take a clearer verdict about the effects of FOMO syndrome. This location was chosen as a research area because it is significant to know the statement of the problem locally, before discovering it globally to not to be mistaken.

### **Procedures**

The survey was carried out online and sent to members through e-mail and some social networks. Demonstrating graphs or/and tables were created by specific software programs.

An interview was conducted during a personal meeting. Time for an interview is already chosen but might be changed by the interviewee. There was recorded audio of the interview and then it was transcribed and analyzed by me.

### **Ethical Considerations**

The survey was completely anonymous, so 100% anonymity and confidentiality of research participants will be guaranteed; it means that participants wouldn't need to input personal information as name/surname, email and etc. Members were not needed to state only their gender and age range. Furthermore, involvement in the survey will be voluntary because the link to the survey will be sent to nearly 720 students and no one else than me will know who answered questions. It will be decided to leave the interviewee's anonymous depending on his wish. Outcomes of the research will be kept on my working email and will be deleted (if it is necessary) after finishing this project.

There are some questions which will be included in online survey:

1. Please, indicate your gender
  - Female
  - Male
2. Please, indicate your age
  - 12-14
  - 15-17
  - 18-20
  - 21 and higher
3. Are you familiar with the term as FoMO syndrome?
  - Yes, I am
  - No, I am not

Here also will be given the description of FoMO in order not to confuse some students, who are not aware of this topic.

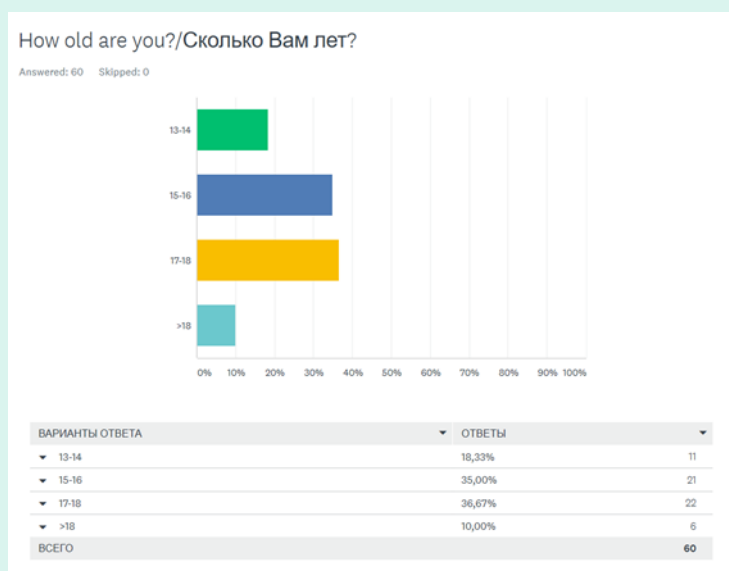
## Results

### Description of the research process

I did a primary research about FoMO syndrome, so in order to do more relevant research I decided to make mixed type research: qualitative and quantitative analysis. It will give a chance to know the opinions of people that will help to make some points of conclusion. I made an online survey and interview; they all were based on local area – Nazarbayev Intellectual School in Karaganda.

### Research Participants

Initially, 85 school students need to be asked to participate in the survey. I chose students of 7<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade of NISK scholars to gain some statistics using random sampling. So as a result, intended number of respondents is 60. There was the same amount of female and male participants, it means 30 (50%) women and 30 (50%) men voluntarily took place in a survey. 11 (18.33%) of participants were 13-14 aged students, 21 (35.00%) were 15-16 y.o., 22 (36.67%) – 17-18 y.o. students and 6 (10.00%) of participants were 18+ aged people(as it shown in figure 1.1).



(10.00%) of participants were 18+ aged people(as it shown in figure 1.1).

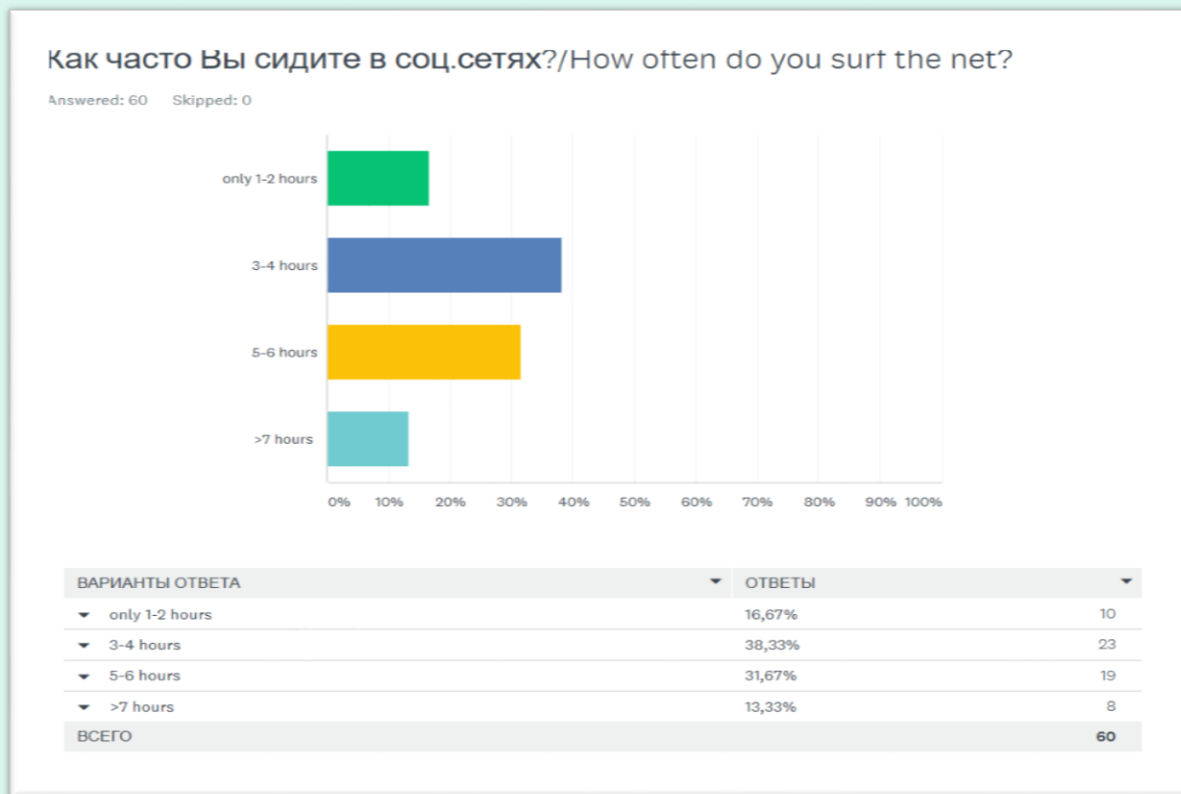
Figure 1.1

Also I did an interview with the specialist of Nazarbayev Intellectual School in Karaganda, I thought that it would be better if I conduct interview with someone who versed in medicine and knows some information about our scholars to help me answer my research question. So, the interviewee was a school pedagogue-psychologist – Tussupova Meiramgul Maksutovna.

### Survey

The platform which I used is “Survey Monkey” platform, especially for making surveys, it was an online survey, so it was easier to take part in it from any web-site. This survey gave me quantitative data. Only two days were spent on quantitative data collection.

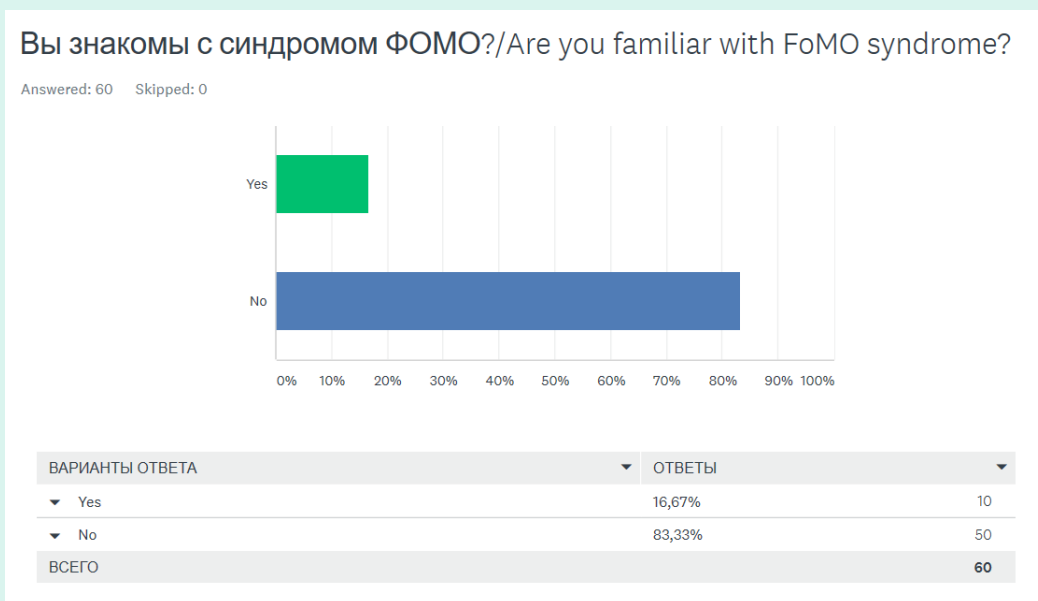
Figure 1.2



The third question was “How often do you surf the net?”. 10 people (16.67%) answered that they surf the net only 1-2 hours per day, while 23 people (38.33%) sit on Internet 3-4 hours per day. But there are also 19 (31.67%) and 8 (13.33%) people who surf the Internet more than 5 times per day. These results show us that vast majority usually spend their time on Internet.

By the illustration, we can conclude that social networks and Internet are popular among Nazarbayev Intellectual School of Karaganda students.

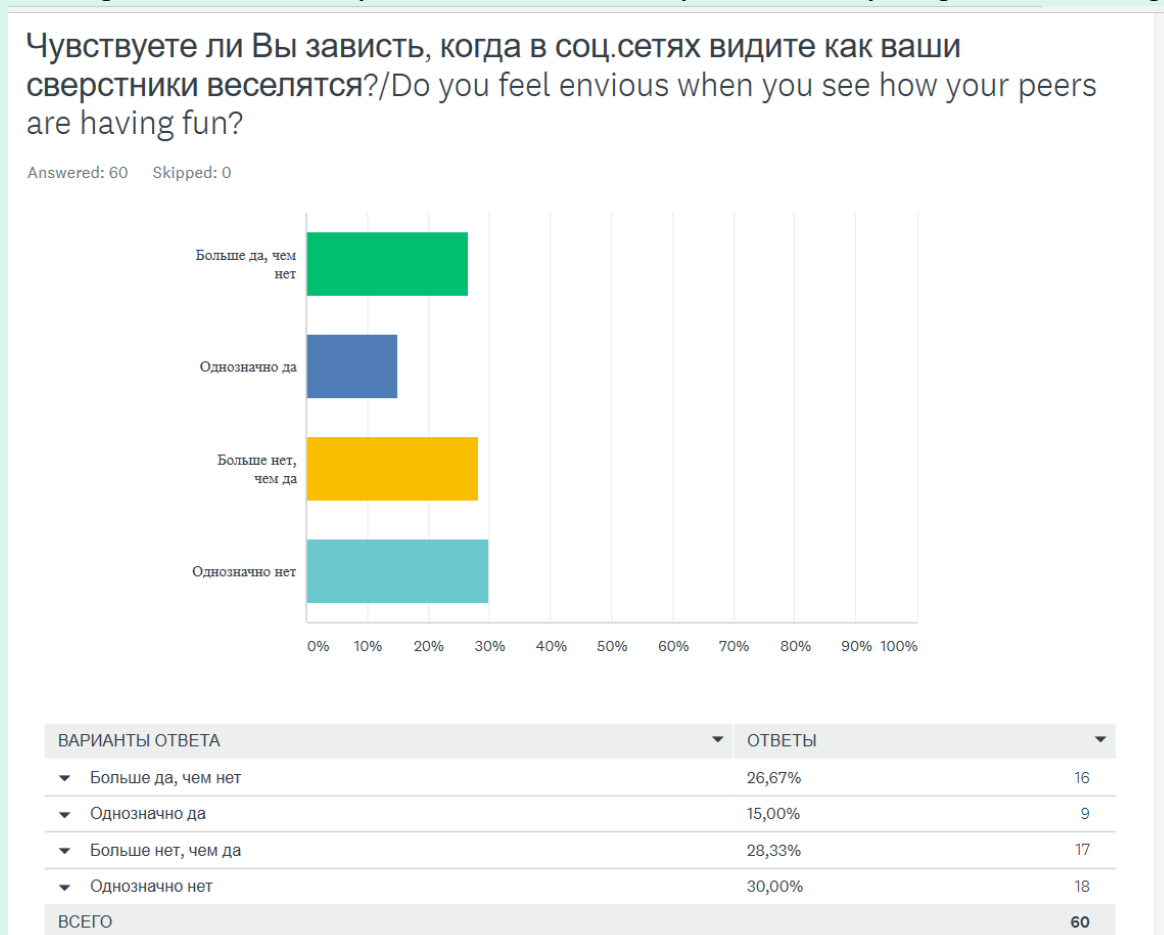
Next question was: “Are you familiar with FOMO syndrome?”.



**Figure 1.3**

Unfortunately, as we can see, in given diagram 50 (83.33%) of respondents are not familiar with FoMO syndrome, it means that they probably do not know that they can be sick with this syndrome and do not know how to deal with it. It is important to know about the existence of such disease, because a frivolous attitude can lead to serious consequences.

Third question was: “Do you feel envious when you see how your peers are having fun?”.



**Figure 1.4**

This is question was asked for a reason. Because question includes one of the symptoms of the disease. Feeling envious while watching how your friends are having fun can made someone unsure of his happy life. This feeling produces a fear of missing out, it makes people afraid to miss something interesting. So, according to the survey question №3 (figure 1.4), we can see that 25 (41.67%), almost half of the respondents answered that they feel themselves jealous, they feel the same way. This may mean mild symptoms and maybe these people are may be sick with the fomo, even in a mild form.

In conclusion, there are no relevant information about this disease in our country, so we need to take care about media-health of people. It will help to solve the problem regarding addiction from the Internet, also.

### Summary of the context information

I also decided to take an interview with expert about FoMO and its influence on students' personality. It is been crucial to this research to know the perspective of a professional specialist, who had an experience working with teenagers, because it is vital to compare the survey data with the opinion of an expert. So, the interviewee was a school pedagogue-psychologist – Tussupova Meiramgul Maksutovna. The interview was conducted in Microsoft Teams application and all the audio materials are saved privately.

So, that are what I mentioned as a main points for my research: FoMO syndrome is one of the problems caused by addiction to social networks. Although it is called FoMO syndrome, it is not officially included in the list of medical or psychiatric diseases. The prevalence of this syndrome can be estimated only by the results of practice. Now more and more children come to the psychologist with problems about their dissatisfying by themselves. For example, this can be considered as a symptom of this syndrome. All the issues have their pluses and minuses, so when it comes to advantages or disadvantages of fomo syndrome, any user of a social network first wants to know the news, what are the changes. Perhaps the advantage is to keep abreast of these new trends. And the disadvantage is that it makes a person addicted from social networks, thinking that he will not miss something new, he does not pay attention to what is happening around him in real life, he loses the ability to feel and express emotions. That is, it motivates a person to live a virtual life. The consequences can be very serious.

In general, the effect of this syndrome on a person depends on the goal of the person who does not want to miss the news. Like, his virtual life can be interesting for a teenager who still cannot even tell good from bad. Life behind the screen looks great, you are not satisfied, you feel useless. A person can blame his parents and relatives and hate them. When you feel worse, others may feel better, and jealousy and envy may develop. If a person constantly thinks about it, this can lead to mental disorders, which, in turn, can lead to stress and depression. A person who is used to competing on social networks, and in other cases, is prone to competition. If there is a desire to get ahead of someone, to be the first, and not to stay behind, such a person has no feelings. Such a person cannot sympathize with the emotions of others. Therefore, it is difficult to adequately assess both successes and failures in life. Because when he prepares for a lesson, he does not set a goal to learn, he only wants to be ahead of the others.

However any illness should be treated. The right way to treat fomo it is just to forget about the virtual world for a while. Do not use the Internet, forget about the computer and phone for a while. If person suffers three or ten days, he realizes that he has nothing left. It also depends on the psychology of the person, he can be stopped in time, put into practice, taught to communicate with people, bring the child to a normal state, if the parents themselves are an example. The most important thing is to teach a teenager to behave properly. If this syndrome is indicated as a disease, of course, it will have its own stages of development. Therefore, the outcome of prevention depends on its degree.

That was all the important aspects, overall, Meiramgul Maksutovna expressed her own personal and professional opinion about FoMO. She mentioned both positive and negative sides of disease. The main thing is that she answered how FoMO can affect on students' behavior and personality,

as she said student can become more aggressive and he becomes person who cannot sympathize with the emotions of others. To sum up, FoMO has more negative effects on student's personality, that is why any person should have some breaks from the social networks and Internet, to avoid this kind of illness.

### Conclusion

To reiterate the chosen topic, I can confidently answer to my research question: FoMO syndrome, being an unconfirmed medical or psychiatric disease, still has great importance in the formation of a person. It still has huge impact on students' personality and academic performance. It is a problem caused by addiction to social networks, so it leads to serious consequences related to student's psychology.

As any health illnesses, FoMO syndrome has own advantages and disadvantages: keeping an ear to the ground, being abreast of all events and drawbacks are addiction and the fact that person does not pay attention to what is happening around him in real life, he loses the ability to feel and express emotions. Life behind the screen looks great, so human become not satisfied by his own life, he feels like he's nothing more than a nuisance, so person can even hate himself and blame his parents and relatives. If a person constantly thinks about it, this can stimulate mental disorders, which, in turn, can lead to stress and depression. So, it is an answer for main research question.

If we summarize international and our national perspectives, I think that the results will be similar in both international and national levels. But Meiramgul teacher notices that other nations' people pay more serious attention on teenagers' addiction from Internet, whereas our local people think that it is just a period of adolescents and they don't pay attention on it, which leads to serious consequences in formation of a person. However, does not matter where the viewer come from, my research results will be reliable. That is because, no matter what country is it and from where to look at this, any illnesses will negatively affect most people.

### Evaluation

I decided to provide RAVEN analysis to assess the credibility of the cases.

R – reputation	The person with whom the interview was conducted is an educational psychologist, who worked for about 6-7 years with students and has vast experience behind her. Her credibility and reputation may be proven by the place where we agreed to conduct an interview and her job place: Nazarbayev Intellectual School in Karaganda.
A – ability to observe	In the case that I have reviewed, the author usually used her own life experiences, where she met those students who had some problems

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	with the symptoms of FoMO. So she has an experience and much knowledge in this question.
V – vested interest	As Meiramgul teacher said, FoMO is not officially included in the list of medical or psychiatric diseases. Also, recently, the number of people suffering from FoMO syndrome has increased due to the development of the Internet and social networks. That is why Meiramgul teacher was interested in it, in order to help students from our school. So, I believe she won't lie in this case.
E – expertise	Of course, Meiramgul teacher is not a scientist, who is engaged in the study of FoMO syndrome, but anyway she is a psychologist and she knows how the human brain works, so she can understand how FoMO syndrome can influence on students' personality.
N – neutrality	As I said she is an pedagogue and psychologist, so she needs to save her neutrality for any problem and this case is no exception.

If we say about quantitative research, it is also valuable and reliable, because it also provided by me and all of answers of participants were undergo checking. So, it clearly seen that it can be signifying and suggesting research question for an audience as a provided work.

### Limitations

There were some difficulties of the research process, firstly, for me it was hard to provide survey with full answer needed (opened) questions, because it takes some time to answer and most of students can not spend their time on it. So, it is easier and gives more answers with closed questions. Also, survey was conducted among adolescents, who sometimes still did not want to answer truthfully and wanted to show themselves from “the good side” even if the survey was anonymous. However, research can act as a model of research for topic about FoMO.

### Strengths

I need to admit that the main strength of this project is that I fully answered to main research question. Because that was the main goal why did I this whole work – to give an answer for research question. Also, I think that one thing that went very well is an interview, because we

really made kind of contact with Meiramgul teacher and she answered for all my questions as fully as she can.

### **Further research**

#### **Process of providing primary research (including my personal view)**

Providing primary research was quite interesting because of its' topic, it means that I really tried to make good research, I was really interested in it, as I mentioned once, I supposed that I had a FoMO, but then providing some research I understood that this syndrome is deeper than I thought. Also, it was new experience to use new platforms as SurveyMonkey, Microsoft Teams, etc. So, I have gained some new individual experience by analyzing myself also.

While I did my primary research, I deeply understand why people get this syndrome and it became only stronger that this issue should be considered as a global health problem. Overall, my initial perspective about internet addiction and fomo syndrome has remained the same, it is serious, popular issue in the world.

#### **Suggestions for further research**

There are a lot of potential studies for this topic because the impact of FoMO syndrome has very limited number of researches. In future I plan to do research, for example, for the question of how a person recovered from FoMO and how this process went. I want to conduct some interview with someone who really had this syndrome. If I were real scientist or professor, I would conduct a research with the special neurological purposes in order to know how the syndrome influence on person's brain and his neurons. To reiterate, topic has very prospective background, which should be realized in sooner future.

#### **Helpfulness of further research**

Conducting research with professional scientists and the special neurological purposes will help to understand influence on person's brain and his neurons, it means that it would be helpful for medicine to add this syndrome to the official list of all medical disease, also it can be beneficial to this research paper because it might change the mindset of people who do not take this issue seriously.

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