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Fear of Missing Out in Tourism: A Scale Development*

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Abstract

This study aims to develop a valid and reliable scale to measure Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) in the tourism context and assess its psychometric properties. Based on Przybylski et al.'s (2013) original FoMO scale, a tourism-specific version was created to evaluate symptoms such as fear of losing social connections, concerns about others having more satisfying experiences, and anxiety about missing important social events in tourism. During scale development, content validity analyses were conducted to assess item validity and linguistic adequacy. Exploratory factor analysis, internal consistency, and discriminant validity analyses were performed to examine construct validity and reliability. As a result of the analysis, it was revealed the Fear of Missing Out in Tourism (FoMO-T) scale consists of three dimensions and nine items: Fear of Losing Social Connections, the Idea of Others Having Better Experiences, and the Need to Learn and Share Information. This study provides a scale for understanding FoMO's impact on tourism behavior and highlights the importance of the FoMO phenomenon for the tourism sector.

Keywords: Fear of Missing Out, FoMO, JoMO, Tourism, Psychology.

* Ethics Committee Approval of this study has been taken from Istanbul Gelisim University, Ethics Committee Presidency with the number of 2024-04 on 15.03.2024

1. Introduction

Fear can shape individual's emotions, behaviors, communication style. Fears related to well-being, nutrition, and physical appearance can be used and presented as motivational concepts (İlyas et al., 2022). With the increase in internet use and its growing importance in social life, it is reasonable to assume that a unique form of anxiety has emerged. Przybylski et al. (2013) describe this new form of fear and anxiety as FoMO (Fear of Missing Out), which refers to the fear of missing out or not being able to keep up with developments and events. Przybylski et al. (2013) define FoMO as "a pervasive concern that others are having fulfilling experiences when one is not around and a desire to stay constantly connected to what others are doing ". This fear stems from the overwhelming challenge of dealing with millions of posts, news updates and developments generated daily from online sources and social media platforms. Even when individuals follow only the people and news outlets they are interested in, they still feel the pressure of not falling behind on any emerging trends. This constant need to stay informed leads to anxiety and stress (Hattingh et al., 2022). The anxiety and fear experienced increase the daily use of social media platforms and internet resources, thereby intensifying smartphone usage and the time spent online. The more time an individual spends in virtual spaces, the greater the need to maintain control, which ultimately exacerbates the anxiety and fear of missing out, creating a vicious cycle.

FoMO may be a concept related to the flow of contemporary information. For users, receiving new news and images becomes a source of pleasure (Tomczyk & Selmanagic-Lizde, 2018). Despite its growing attention in the media, the concept has not received sufficient focus and research in academic literature. Research on FoMO is described as a cognitive and emotional experience that can influence consumers' perceptions and decision-making processes during the purchasing process (Neumann, 2020). FoMO is a phenomenon that has been widely applied in the field of marketing, particularly in commercial settings, to increase the demand for products among young people (Erciş, Deligöz & Mutlu, 2021). However, it has been scarcely explored in the field of tourism and travel (Zaman et al., 2022(a)). The tourism sector can adapt its products, services, and marketing strategies, provided it can address the factors influencing the decision-making processes of tourists. In the tourism sector, it is essential to stay updated in order to ensure competitiveness and to follow emerging trends. Given this, it is important to examine the tourist experience through the lens of FoMO to understand the direction in which trends and preferences are evolving. Therefore, this study could contribute to the existing literature by translating the scale developed by Przybylski et al. (2013) for the FoMO concept into the tourism literature. The investigation of this scale will be useful for tourism businesses' leaders. They can understand how tourists are influenced and they can formulate strategies to address this phenomenon.

2. Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of the study is explained in the following headings.

2.1. FoMO

Social media is a stage where the most recent social data is shared, with substance growing and expanding each minute, and with a huge degree of interaction. Through these stages, getting to the most recent data and patterns has gotten to be much less demanding. The desire to keep up with this always upgraded and developing substance has driven to the development of a new phenomenon called Fear of Missing Out (FoMO). According to Przybylski et al. (2013), FoMO is characterized as "a unavoidable concern that others may be having fulfilling experiences in one's nonattendance, and a want to remain associated to what others are doing ". FoMO is portrayed as a person's fear of missing out on social interactions and experiences (Wolniewicz et al., 2018; Wang et al., 2018; Li et al., 2020), or sentiments of regret for missing out on past occasions (Hayran & Gürhan-Canli, 2022). For people experiencing FoMO, the current experiences are seen as less pleasant, whereas the occasions or encounters they missed are seen as more fulfilling (Neumann, 2020).

The ease of using social media on mobile phones contributes to a state of continuous access and availability. This convenience has increased the desire to access information at any time and receive social support through social media platforms. Being disconnected from these opportunities, even briefly, can lead to anxiety and stress. In such instances, an individual may become anxious, feel overwhelmed, and the fear of missing out (FoMO) may develop, driven by concerns that their connections, communication, and/or interactions may be hindered (Perrone, 2016; Çopuroğlu, 2021). Some participants in Aitamurto et al.'s (2021) study described FoMO as a constant feeling, while others characterized it as an occasional state of anxiety. Xie et al. (2018) even referred to FoMO as the modern psychological affliction of the digital age.

Individuals' efforts to keep up with every new development and, as a result, their use of all available social media platforms are associated with a psychological need. Researchers (Lai et al., 2016, Wang et al., 2018, Servidio et al., 2021) explain that FoMO is strongly related to individuals' need to belong. The need to belong is described as an innate drive that influences the behavior of most people (Li et al., 2022). It is suggested that the desire to be online all the time (by checking in on others and sharing one's experiences, photos, and updates) may be related to fulfilling the need to belong (Rogers & Barber, 2019; Li et al., 2022). If individuals have social difficulties and social avoidance, this situation make it difficult for them to have relations that fulfill the need to belong (Błachnio & Przepiórka, 2018). When these relations realized by social media, individuals feel that their need to belong is fulfilled and they can feel satisfaction and pleasure. Fulfilling this need may encourage individuals to check in and maintain their relations frequently and try to avoid breakups that could damage or destroy their relations. Individuals who use social media frequently and have a stronger sense of FoMO may be more vulnerable to perceived social rejection (Perna, 2020). When individuals' basic psychological needs are not met and when they overuse social networks, it may lead to higher levels of FoMO and smartphone addiction (Li et al., 2022). It is clear that there is a direct relationship between FoMO and risky smartphone use (Elhai et al., 2016; Wang et al., 2019; Lo Coco et al., 2020; Li et al., 2022), risky social network use (Buglass et al., 2017; Casale, Rugai & Fioravanti, 2018) and Internet addiction (Metin-Orta, 2020). However, in this context, FoMO may also lead to risky smartphone use, and risky smartphone use may contribute to the development of FoMO (Lo Coco et al., 2020). In other words, it is possible to say that there is a two-way interaction and that these concepts affect each other. Existing studies have shown that FoMO acts as a mediating variable between individual characteristics and social media engagement (Oberst et al., 2017).

Hattingh et al. (2022) explain that if the amount of time people spend on social media is uncontrolled, this issue can lead them to depression, anxiety, and feelings of loneliness. When research was conducted on the negative impacts of social media platforms, it was revealed that the root cause of these issues was related to the concept of FoMO. It has been reported that the concept of FoMO may be associated with various psychopathological symptoms (Wegmann et al., 2017; Dhir et al., 2018; Casale & Fioravanti, 2020; Elhai et al., 2020). Individuals who have experienced or observed these impacts agree with the idea of disengaging and limiting or even abandoning digital life (Rautela & Sharma, 2022). In this context, JoMO (Joy of Missing Out) reflects the pleasure derived from not stressing about staying connected.

2.2. Tourism and FoMO

Advancements in technology have led to digital transformations within the tourism sector. The ability of hotels and service providers to offer their products and services online, as well as the convenience of making purchases through mobile phone applications, has further facilitated tourism consumption. The easy accessibility of the internet and simple purchasing mechanisms have also influenced consumers' buying behavior and choices regarding products and services. Comments made on tourism agencies or destinations through social media can either increase or decrease tourist demand and shape expectations (De Bruyn & Lilien, 2008). Particularly on social media platforms where photos and videos are shared, it has become an important practice for users to share their vacation photos and interact with these posts through likes and comments. Tourism businesses utilize these platforms to advertise and promote their services, products, and offerings (Özhasar, Oğuz & Yılmaz, 2020).

FoMO in tourism explains the tendency of tourists to visit holiday destinations based on their individual connections and the influence of others; individuals who observe the vacation experiences of others feel motivated to have the same experience and visit the same destination (Zaman, 2024). While the concept of FoMO emerges within the tourism context, three precursors, such as electronic word-of-mouth, reference groups, and perceived loneliness, have an impact. As a result, three factors-intent to seek information, intent to visit, and positive well-being-develop (Kurniawan & Susilo, 2024). A customer who sees another person's vacation experience through social media or the internet, listens to recommendations and complaints, desires to be part of that experience themselves, and thus turns to the same destination, the same travel products and services, and enters into a state of positive well-being when they have the same experience. This occurs because social media content and visuals can stimulate emotional responses in consumers. As an emotional response, FoMO can also drive tourism demand in the post-consumption phase and lead to positive behavioral choices. Therefore, it can be said that FoMO has an effect not only in the pre-purchase or purchase phase but also in the post-purchase phase (Song, Wang, & Guo, 2023). The concept of FoMO can be utilized as a marketing strategy to increase travel intention, and tourism organizations and businesses can leverage it to attract potential visitors and design promotions and offers accordingly by understanding and anticipating customers' FoMO-related behaviors (Harahap et al., 2024).

Özhasar, Oğuz and Yılmaz (2020) and Çetinkaya and Şahbaz (2019) explain that social media has a relation with vacation purchase intention. Biçer and Yıldız (2022) investigated the promotion of tourist destinations on social media and found that people who frequently use social media have higher vacation purchase intention due to concerns of missing out on developments. Yılmazdoğan, Özhasar and Kılıç (2021) found that FoMO influences participants' vacation preferences in the context of conspicuous consumption and social visibility. They explained that the FoMO effect may lead participants to seek out tourism products and services that they believe will enhance their prestige. Karaca and Akın (2024) investigated attitudes toward individuals who are popular for sharing their travel experiences on social media. They explained that the credibility, interest, and personal image representation of prominent influencers have a positive impact on both individual and social FoMO. Accordingly, trust in influencers was found to increase participants' feelings of missing out both personally and socially. Furthermore, individuals who tend to consume more and purchase branded products in order to stand out were found to experience heightened anxiety if they were not active on social media.

Patria and Rahtomo (2020), in their study with university students, found that Generation Z students exhibit high levels of dependence or compulsive behavior towards their smartphones to access the latest information on social media, in order not to miss a moment or important data; otherwise, they may experience anxiety or feel left behind. They also noted that students are more willing to search for and share information with others, including about tourist destinations and experiences. The addiction and negative impacts of excessive internet and social media usage have begun to shape a tendency to disconnect from these platforms. Wojcieszek-Zbierska's (2023) research with university students shows that students tend to spend their vacations in places without internet access. This desire to intentionally disconnect from technology aligns with the concept of JoMO (Joy of Missing Out). Those involved in this study found it appealing to stay in a destination without internet access, but they also felt that a vacation without access to social media would only last 1-2 days.

Table 1. Comparison of JoMO and FoMO in Tourism

Characteristic	JoMO	FoMO
Tourist Motivation	Escape/Rest, Strengthening social relationships, Seeking novelty, Self-isolation, Achieved autonomy	Digitalization of travel and constant monitoring, Real-time information sharing, Searching for new tourism services
Type of Traveler	Entrepreneurial personalities, Singles, Completely independent travelers, Families, Small groups, High-end tour groups	Social groups, Families, Package tours
Type of Tourism Product/Service	Singular and specific leisure activities (entertainment, outdoor/nature sports), Retreats, Personal pursuits (wellness, SPA, yoga, spiritual/cultural experiences), Nature (exclusive, remote, island)	Virtual tours, Online task completion and role-playing (Questing and LARPs), Holidays filled with emotions and experiences

Source: Wojcieszak-Zbierska (2023).

The influence of the internet and social media platforms before purchasing tourism products and services, as well as sharing and reviewing these products and services on social media post-purchase, have become emerging topics of research. FoMO is a concept that has been widely studied within the field of psychology but has been less explored in the context of tourism and travel (Zaman et al., 2022(b)). Therefore, it is crucial to adapt the FoMO scale to the tourism literature.

3. Metodology

The aim of this study is to adapt the Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) scale originally developed by Przybylski et al. (2013) into the tourism literature and to develop a valid, reliable and psychometrically comprehensive scale to measure FoMO in tourism psychology. In this context, content validity and construct validity analyses were conducted and developed a specific measurement instrument called the Fear of Missing Out in Tourism (FoMO-T) scale. In the study, the ethics committee document required for the data collection phase was prepared by Istanbul Gelişim University, Ethics Committee Presidency, dated 15.03.2024 and numbered 2024-04.

The original FoMO scale developed by Przybylski et al. (2013) measures FoMO symptoms such as individuals' concern about missing positive experiences in social environments, the thought that others have more satisfying experiences, and fear of losing social connection. The original scale, known simply as "fear of loss", is a one-dimensional, short and effective measurement scale consisting of 10 items. FoMO is considered as a new phenomenon, which can be studied interdisciplinarily and whose effects can be seen in different fields (Kaya & Özilhan Özbey, 2022). Today, with the widespread use of social media and online communication platforms, it is thought that the FoMO phenomenon may affect individuals' tourism experiences and travel decisions, as in almost every field. Therefore, this study aims to provide a reliable and valid scale to measure FoMO in tourism and to reveal the effects of FoMO on tourism destination choice, travel expenditures, tourist activity preferences, tourists' social media behaviors and tourist psychology.

3.1. Sampling and Measurement

The data for the study were collected through an online questionnaire consisting of two parts. In the first part of the questionnaire, demographic characteristics of the participants were asked. In the second part of the questionnaire, an 11-item Fear of Missing Out on Tourism scale, adapted from Przybylski et al. (2013), was included. The scale items are designed on a 7-point Likert scale (1=Strongly Disagree; 7=Strongly Agree). According to the sample size formula with a confidence level interval of 0.95, a p value of 0.5, a t value of 1.96, and an acceptable margin of error (d) of 0.05, the minimum acceptable sample size is 384. This number is the minimum sample size regardless of the size of the population, which is not increased as the population expands (Baştürk & Taştepe, 2013). Considering the margin of error and the

risk of missing data, the survey data obtained from 460 participants with tourism awareness and experience of using social media effectively were included in the study. Ethical permissions were obtained from the relevant institution before collecting the surveys. Demographic information of the participants is shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Demographic Information of Participants

Gender	N	%
Female	284	61.7
Male	176	38.3
Total	460	100.0
Age	N	%
18-23	220	47.8
24-30	74	16.1
31-36	50	10.9
37 +	116	25.2
Total	460	100.0
Education	N	%
High School	24	5.2
Associate Degree	124	27.0
Bachelor's Degree	240	52.2
Master Degree	72	15.7
Total	460	100.0
Most Recent Vacation Decision-Making	N	%
I saw it on social media	24	5.2
My family decided	121	26.2
My friends decided	41	8.7
I chose it because of my own curiosity	177	38.9
I chose it because it was the most suitable place for my budget	97	21.0
Total	460	100

The participants were 61.7% female and 38.3% male. In terms of age, 47.8% of the participants were between 18-23 years old, 16.1% were between 24-30 years old and 25.2% were 37 years old and above. While 52.2% of the participants graduated from an undergraduate program, 27% graduated from an associate degree program. Finally, 38.9% of the participants decided on their last vacation destination themselves, while 26.2% left this decision to their families.

4. Findings

The findings of the study are explained in the following headings.

4.1. Content Validity

In the study, first of all, the content validity of the FoMO scale was investigated towards its re-adaptation in the tourism context. Content validity is basically an analysis that essentially examines whether the items of the measurement instrument accurately represent the behavior we want to measure in terms of both linguistic and number of items (Fitzpatrick, 1983). The most frequently used method to test content validity is to use expert review. A two-stage method was followed for this purpose.

In the first stage, four tourism academics, one linguist, and one psychologist experienced in scale development worked in a focus group to assess the suitability of the Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) scale developed by Przybylski et al. (2013) for tourism by examining the original items of the scale. The basis for this assessment was to investigate criteria such as the clarity and comprehensibility of the scale items and the level of reflection of the phenomenon of fear of missing out on developments in the tourism

context. Therefore, the original scale items were first translated by an academicians specialized in linguistics and then adapted to tourism by four academicians specialized in the field of tourism, with maximum fidelity to the original scale. At this stage, a psychologist experienced in scale development examined the strength of the scale phrasing, question stems and comprehensibility of the expressions, and it was suggested that one reverse-coded item be added to the scale. As a result of the the focus group discussions, an 11-item *Fear of Missing Out in Tourism* scale was developed (Table 3).

Table 3. Fear of Missing Out in Tourism Scale Items

Q1: I fear that anyone will have a more valuable vacation experience than me.
Q2: I fear that my friends will have a more valuable vacation experience than me.
Q3: It makes me sad to see my friends having fun on vacation without me.
Q4: The time when I didn't know where my friends are and what they are doing, I feel anxious.
Q5: It is important for me to be on vacation with my friends.
Q6: I spent a lot of time trying to keep track of what was going on around me.
Q7: If I miss the opportunity to go on vacation with my friends, I feel sad.
Q8: I don't spend a lot of time finding out what my friends are doing (*).
Q9: When I have a good time on vacation, I share it on online platforms.
Q10: Missing out on a planned vacation with my friends makes me sad.
Q11: Even when I'm on vacation, I follow what my friends are doing.

* The item is reverse coded.

In the second stage of the content validity, it is aimed to test the linguistic adequacy and comprehensibility of the 11-item Fear of Missing Out in Tourism scale. For this purpose, the scale was sent to the institutional e-mail addresses of 70 academics working at the university via online survey method and asked whether there were any difficulties in understanding the scale items. Within the framework of the 66 feedback obtained from the academics who participated in the online survey on a voluntary basis, it was seen that the expressions that make up the scale linguistically are clear and understandable, in other words, the scale is linguistically understandable enough to measure the phenomenon to be measured.

4.2. Construct Validity

Following the content validity, construct validity analyses were conducted in the study. Construct validity measures the accuracy and consistency of a measurement instruments (Akyüz, 2018). In other words, construct validity indicates how accurately the items in the scale reflect the underlying structure of the theoretically defined concept. Therefore, construct validity is important for a measurement instrument to produce reliable and significant results.

To analyze the construct validity of measurement instruments, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and discriminant validity are frequently used (Hurley et al., 1997). Whereas EFA is used to reveal a new factor structure from the measurement instrument, discriminant validity refers to the conceptual differentiation of the factors that construct the scale. We used IBM SPSS Statistics 20 program for EFA analysis. Therefore, the fit of the data to multiple normal distributions was analyzed with “skewness” and “kurtosis” values and the results are shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Descriptive Statistics Results for the Scale Items

Items	N	Mean	S.D.	Skewness	Kurtosis
Q1	460	2.33	1.755	1.188	0.412
Q2	460	1.99	1.501	1.692	1.386
Q3	460	3.11	2.094	0.559	-0.993
Q4	460	2.30	1.769	1.317	0.687
Q5	460	4.67	1.885	-0.423	-0.791
Q6	460	2.12	1.519	1.589	1.128
Q7	460	4.36	2.206	-0.99	-1.332
Q8	460	4.79	2.108	-0.511	-1.109
Q9	460	3.23	2.041	0.485	-0.999
Q10	460	5.26	1.879	-0.896	-0.269
Q11	460	2.77	1.827	0.863	-0.312

As a result of the normality analysis, the skewness and kurtosis values of each item in the scale were measured between -2 and +2, in other words, it was observed that they were in fit with the normal distribution (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). After the normality analysis, Bartlett's test, which shows that there is no relationship between the variables for EFA, was found to be significant as 590.167 ($p < .000$), and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin coefficient, which shows that the data set is adequate, was found to be adequate with, .715 (Büyüköztürk, 2011). Both values indicate that the data set is fit for exploratory factor analysis. Subsequently, the 11-item scale analyzed with oblique rotation method in EFA. We preferred the oblique rotation method in the EFA analysis due to the possibility of a relationship between the factors that are likely to be observed (Yaşlıoğlu, 2017).

The factor loading was selected at the level of 0.45, which is accepted in the literature (Büyüköztürk, 2011). According to the initial EFA, Q9 and Q3 items were excluded from the analysis as their factor loadings were lower than the expected level. Following the repeated EFA, a final construct of three factors and 9 items with a total variance explanation rate of 65.909% was reached. The factors revealed were named as “Fear of Losing Social Connections”, “The Idea of Others Have Better Experiences” and “The Need to Learn and Share Information”. EFA results are shown in Table 5.

Table 5. EFA Analysis Results

Factors	Items	Factor Loadings	Variance (%)
Factor 1 $\alpha = .809$	Q10	.886	33.186
	Q7	.847	
	Q5	.789	
Factor 2 $\alpha = .820$	Q1	.927	19.664
	Q2	.913	
Factor 3 $\alpha = .632$	Q6	.793	13.058
	Q8*	.743	
	Q4	.594	
	Q11	.480	

Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin: 0.715

Bartlett's; 590.167; $p < .000$

* The item is reverse coded.

Table 5 shows that, the first factor explains 33.186% of the total variance, the second factor explains 19.664% and the third factor explains 13.058%. Within the scope of factor analysis, Cronbach's Alpha coefficients were also analyzed to determine the internal consistency and reliability levels of the scale. The Internal consistency levels of the factors were measured at acceptable levels as 0.809, 0.820 and 0.632. The relatively low Cronbach's Alpha coefficients may be attributed to the limited number of items within each factor, as noted by Tabachnick and Fidell (2013).

After the EFA analysis, the discriminant validity analysis of the scale was conducted. The conceptual differentiation of factors is referred to as discriminant validity (Nunnally, 1994). Discriminant validity of a scale requires low or medium correlation coefficients between the factors in the scale (Bearden & Netemeyer, 1999). The results of the discriminant validity analysis are shown in Table 6.

Table 6. Results of Inter-factor Discriminant Validity Analysis

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3
Factor 1	1		
Factor 2	.030	1	
Factor 3	.337**	.158*	1

** Correlation is significant at 0.01 level.

* Correlation is significant at 0.05 level

As Table 6 shows, there is a low and medium correlation coefficients between each factor of the scale. This indicates that the scale as a factor structure provides the discriminant validity (Kline, 2011). After the discriminant validity between factors, the discriminant validity between items was also analyzed. In inter-item discriminant validity, a significant and medium/high correlation is expected between the items constituting the same factor, while a low correlation coefficient is expected between the items constituting different factors (Bearden & Netemeyer, 1999). The results of the inter-item correlation analysis are shown in Table 7.

Table 7. Results of Inter-item Discriminant Validity Analysis

	(Q10)	(Q7)	(Q5)	(Q1)	(Q2)	(Q6)	(Q8)	(Q4)	(Q11)
(Q10)	1								
(Q7)	.627**	1							
(Q5)	.541**	.597**	1						
(Q1)	.024	.155*	-.001	1					
(Q2)	-.078	.057	-.068	.703**	1				
(Q6)	.169*	.260**	.234**	.115	.167*	1			
(Q8)	.078	.167*	.193**	.058	.068	.347**	1		
(Q4)	.260**	.310**	.268**	.104	.185**	.413**	.183**	1	
(Q11)	.341**	.337**	.270**	.133*	.120	.328**	.203**	.421**	1

** Correlation is significant at 0.01 level.

* Correlation is significant at 0.05 level.

As Table 7 is shown, it is observed that the items constituting the same factor show medium and high correlation, while the items constituting different factors show low correlation. Both inter-factor and inter-item discriminant validity results show that Fear of Missing Out in Tourism scale provided discriminant validity.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

Today, as social media and online communication platforms are becoming increasingly important in our lives, the phenomenon of Fear of Missing Out, also known as “FoMO”, has a significant impact on individuals' experiences and decisions. This impact also affects tourism, shaping tourists' travel preferences, destination choices and vacation experiences. Therefore, this study aimed to develop a valid and reliable scale to measure FoMO in the tourism context and to comprehensively test the psychometric qualities of this instrument. Based on the original FoMO scale developed by Przybylski et al. (2013), a scale was created with tourism experience-specific items. This scale aims to measure tourists' FoMO symptoms such as fear of losing social connections, the thought that others have more satisfying experiences, and anxiety about missing important social events.

During the scale development process, a two-stage method was followed to provide content validity. In the first stage, a team of tourism academics, a linguist and a psychologist examined the original items of the scale and assessed the appropriateness of the FoMO scale for the tourism experience. At this stage, the clarity and comprehensibility of the items and the level of reflecting the FoMO phenomenon in the tourism context were considered. In the second stage, preliminary tests were conducted with the target group to test the linguistic comprehensibility of the scale and its capacity to reflect FoMO emotions during tourism experiences. The final scale was designed and modified based on the feedbacks.

Exploratory factor analyses were conducted to examine the construct validity of the scale. As a result of EFA, it was revealed that the scale consisted of three factors and 9 items as follows:

Fear of Losing Social Connections: This factor reflects the anxiety and/or sadness associated with the possibility of exclusion from shared social experiences, particularly in the context of travel and tourism. Items within this factor emphasize the emotional impact of not being part of group activities, such as vacations with friends, or the distress of not being aware of what others are doing. This shows that FoMO in tourism is a social phenomenon stemming from the need to maintain interpersonal connections. In tourism contexts, such fears may arise as efforts to ensure participation in collective experiences or to constantly monitor social interactions during travel.

The Idea of Others Having Better Experiences: This factor reveals the comparative and evaluative aspect of FoMO in tourism. Indeed, this factor reflects concern or dissatisfaction that others may be enjoying more valuable or enriching tourism experiences. The items included in this factor suggest that individuals may measure the quality of their own experience by comparing it to that of their peers, which may lead to feelings of inadequacy or regret. In tourism, this aspect is particularly important as travel involves highly visible and shareable experiences that can lead to comparisons, especially through social media platforms. Tourists who respond strongly to this factor may feel compelled to look for “better” or “unique” tourism opportunities in order not to be overshadowed by others.

The Need to Learn and Share Information: This factor encompasses the compelling desire to learn about the travel activities of others and to share one's own experiences. The items in this factor reflect behaviors such as following friends' travel updates or communicating loyalty and belonging by sharing vacation moments on social media platforms. It underlines the dual nature of FoMO as both an inward need to stay connected to the experiences of others and an outward drive to reflect on one's activities. This is particularly important in tourism, where digital connectivity increases the visibility and immediacy of experiences and makes the act of sharing an important part of travel behavior.

The reliability of the scale was analyzed by internal consistency coefficients (Cronbach's Alpha) and inter-factor and inter-item correlations. Cronbach's Alpha levels showed that the scale and its sub-dimensions were at an acceptable level of reliability. The low correlations between the factors and items supported the discriminant validity of the scale, i.e. each factor independently measures different dimensions of FoMO in tourism.

The findings of this study contribute significantly to the tourism literature by providing a valid and reliable scale to measure Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) in the tourism. The developed FoMO-T scale provides important findings on how fear of missing out emerges in travel-related behaviors and decisions, allowing researchers to examine the psychological, social and behavioral dimensions of this fear in depth. The study identifies three different factors, “*Fear of Losing Social Connections*”, “*The Idea of Others Having Better Experiences*” and “*The Need to Learn and Share Information*”, emphasizing the multifaceted nature of FoMO in tourism and its effects on tourist behavior. This FoMO-T scale provides tourism professionals such as destination marketers, tour operators and social media strategists with a practical tool to better understand and address the emotional and social factors that influence tourists' decisions. Awareness of the role of Fear of Losing Social Connections can guide the design of group-oriented tourism packages that emphasize shared experiences and inclusion, thereby reducing feelings of exclusion among potential travelers. Similarly, The Idea of Others Having Better Experiences can help tourism service providers

create unique and customizable travel experiences that meet tourists' desires for diverse and enriching journeys. The results underline the importance of digital engagement in modern tourism marketing strategies. The findings on The Need to Learn and Share Information underscore the dual role of social media in promoting both connection and self-expression among tourists. This study provides directions for future research to explore the cross-cultural validity and demographic applicability of the scale, as FoMO may differ across age groups, cultural backgrounds and digital literacy levels. Furthermore, researchers can use this FoMO-T scale to examine the interaction between FoMO and other psychological constructs such as satisfaction, loyalty and decision-making patterns in the tourism context.

Consequently, this study fills a critical gap in the literature by adapting the FoMO concept to tourism and offering practical insights for both academia and sector. Future research should continue to build on and extend this foundation to deepen our understanding of how FoMO shapes the changing dynamics of tourist behavior.

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