

Social Media Fatigue, Fear of Missing Out, and Psychological Well-Being among College Students

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Abstract

Social media has become an integral part of the academic, social, and personal lives of college students. Although social networking platforms provide opportunities for communication, entertainment, information sharing, and social connection, excessive and continuous engagement may also result in information overload, social comparison, fear of missing out (FoMO), and social media fatigue. Social media fatigue refers to feelings of exhaustion, frustration, disinterest, and withdrawal arising from prolonged or overwhelming social media engagement. The present study proposes to examine the relationship between social media fatigue, fear of missing out, and psychological well-being among college students. A quantitative, cross-sectional correlational research design is proposed. College students aged 18–25 years will be selected using an appropriate sampling technique. Standardized measures of social media fatigue, fear of missing out, and psychological well-being will be administered. Descriptive statistics, Pearson's correlation, multiple regression, and mediation analysis may be used to examine the proposed relationships. The study is expected to contribute to a better understanding of the psychological consequences of excessive social media engagement and provide implications for digital well-being programmes in higher education.

Keywords: Social media fatigue, Fear of Missing Out, psychological well-being, college students, social media use, digital well-being

1. Introduction

Social media has become an important part of everyday life, particularly for young people. It has changed the way college students communicate, build relationships, access information, participate in academic activities, and spend their free time. Platforms such as Instagram, WhatsApp, YouTube, Facebook, and other social networking applications are now closely integrated into students' daily routines. Social media can provide several benefits, including opportunities for peer interaction, academic collaboration, access to educational materials, entertainment, and social support. At the same time, being constantly connected can create new psychological pressures. Students may be exposed to a continuous flow of information,

frequent notifications, social comparison, pressure to respond quickly, and expectations to remain active and visible online. One of the psychological difficulties associated with excessive or overwhelming social media use is social media fatigue. Social media fatigue can be understood as a feeling of mental and emotional exhaustion, frustration, tiredness, or reduced interest that develops when individuals experience social media use as excessive or difficult to manage. Research suggests that several factors may contribute to this experience, including information overload, social overload, excessive platform features, privacy concerns, and problematic social media use. A meta-analysis of 64 empirical studies involving 28,357 participants found that information overload, social overload, system-feature overload, social networking anxiety, and social networking addiction were important factors associated with social media fatigue. Another psychological factor that has received considerable attention in relation to social media use is Fear of Missing Out (FoMO). Przybylski et al. (2013) described FoMO as a persistent concern that other people may be having rewarding experiences without the individual being present. This concern can encourage people to check social media frequently in order to remain informed about what others are doing. Their study found that higher levels of FoMO were associated with lower psychological need satisfaction, lower mood and life satisfaction, and greater engagement with social media.

College students may be especially susceptible to FoMO because the college years are an important period for developing identity, maintaining friendships, gaining social acceptance, and establishing a sense of belonging. Social networking platforms provide students with continuous access to information about their peers' activities, achievements, relationships, and social experiences. Seeing these updates may create a feeling that one needs to remain constantly connected in order not to miss important social experiences. As a result, students may repeatedly check their phones and social media accounts, even when they are studying, resting, or spending time with others. Over time, this pattern of continuous checking and engagement may contribute to psychological exhaustion and social media fatigue. The relationship between FoMO and social media fatigue is therefore particularly important. Dhir et al. (2018), using the Stressor-Strain-Outcome framework, found that compulsive social media use was associated with social media fatigue and that fatigue was related to psychological difficulties such as anxiety and depression. Their findings also indicated that FoMO could contribute indirectly to social media fatigue through compulsive social media use. These findings suggest that the psychological effects of social media may not be explained simply by the amount of time students spend online. Instead, the emotional and psychological reasons behind social media use may also play an important role.

Recent research has continued to highlight the connection between these variables. A 2025 study among university students reported significant relationships between FoMO, social media use, psychological well-being, and academic performance. Similarly, recent research among Indian college students found that greater social networking intensity was associated with higher FoMO and that FoMO played a mediating role in the relationship between social networking intensity and mental well-being. A 2026 study among college students in Bengaluru also reported that compulsive social media use and FoMO were associated with social media fatigue, while higher social media fatigue was associated with anxiety and depression. These findings highlight the importance of examining psychological well-being as an important outcome of students' digital experiences. Social media use should not be understood only in terms of the number of hours spent online. The way students experience social media, the pressure they feel to remain connected, and their emotional responses to online interactions may be equally important. A student who spends several hours online for academic collaboration may have a very different experience from a student who constantly checks social media because of fear of being left out.

Therefore, the present study focuses on three closely related psychological variables: social media fatigue, Fear of Missing Out (FoMO), and psychological well-being among college students. Examining these variables together may provide a better understanding of how continuous digital engagement and the psychological need to remain socially connected influence students' overall well-being. Such understanding may also help psychologists, counsellors, educators, and institutions develop appropriate strategies for promoting healthier social media use and better psychological adjustment among college students.

Need and Significance of the Study

The rapid integration of social media into student life has created both valuable opportunities and emerging psychological challenges. College students regularly use social media for academic communication, entertainment, networking, sharing information, and maintaining relationships with friends and peers. While these platforms can support social connection and learning, continuous exposure to digital content, frequent notifications, online interactions, and social expectations may also place considerable psychological demands on students. As a result, some students may experience feelings of exhaustion, information overload, pressure to remain connected, and difficulty disengaging from social media. Previous research has established associations between problematic social media use and several psychological and academic outcomes, including fear of missing out (FoMO), social media fatigue, anxiety, depression, sleep problems, and academic difficulties. Research among university students has also indicated meaningful relationships between social media addiction, FoMO, social media fatigue, and sleep quality. However, there are still important areas that require further investigation. Much of the earlier research has focused primarily on the amount or intensity of social media use and on problematic or addictive use, while comparatively less attention has been given to social media fatigue as a distinct psychological experience. FoMO may also play an important role in explaining why students continue to engage with social media even when such engagement becomes tiring or psychologically demanding. Students may feel compelled to remain connected because they are concerned about missing social events, peer interactions, information, or rewarding experiences.

There is also a need for further research focusing specifically on college students within the Indian higher-education context. The relationship between social media use and psychological well-being may be more complex than simply depending on the number of hours spent online. The purpose, nature, and psychological experience of social media use may be equally important. Understanding how FoMO and social media fatigue are related to psychological well-being can therefore provide a more comprehensive picture of students' digital experiences. Such evidence may be useful for psychologists, counsellors, educators, and higher-education institutions in developing appropriate digital well-being programmes, counselling interventions, stress-management strategies, and awareness programmes that encourage responsible and balanced social media use. Therefore, examining the relationship between social media fatigue, FoMO, and psychological well-being among college students is both timely and relevant to contemporary psychology, educational psychology, counselling psychology, and student mental-health research.

3. Review of Literature

Przybylski, Murayama, DeHaan, and Gladwell provided one of the foundational studies on Fear of Missing Out (FoMO). They conceptualized FoMO as a persistent concern that other people may be having

rewarding experiences without the individual being present. Their findings showed that higher FoMO was associated with lower satisfaction of psychological needs, lower mood and life satisfaction, and greater engagement with social media. This study provided an important foundation for understanding why some individuals feel a strong need to remain continuously connected to social networking platforms. Bright, Kleiser, and Grau examined the emerging phenomenon of social media fatigue, particularly in relation to Facebook use. Their work suggested that privacy concerns and users' perceptions of social media could contribute to feelings of fatigue. An important contribution of this study was its recognition that negative experiences associated with social media cannot be explained simply by the amount or frequency of use. Instead, users' psychological perceptions and experiences of the platform also need to be considered. Alt investigated the relationship between academic motivation, social media engagement, and FoMO among 296 undergraduate students. The findings indicated that FoMO played a mediating role in the relationship between social media engagement and certain motivational outcomes. The study is particularly relevant to college populations because it demonstrated that students' social media behaviour may be connected not only with social needs but also with their academic motivation and engagement. Elhai and colleagues examined the relationships among FoMO, anxiety, depression, and problematic smartphone use. Their findings indicated that FoMO was associated with problematic smartphone use and psychological factors such as anxiety and depression. The study suggested that excessive technology use may not be explained only by technological availability or convenience. Psychological factors, including the fear of being socially disconnected or missing important experiences, may also encourage repeated and problematic engagement with digital devices.

Dhir and colleagues examined social media fatigue and psychological well-being using the Stressor-Strain-Outcome (SSO) framework. Their research involved Indian adolescent social media users and provided important evidence about the psychological consequences of compulsive social media engagement. The findings showed that compulsive social media use was associated with social media fatigue, while fatigue was related to anxiety and depression. The study also suggested that FoMO could indirectly contribute to fatigue through compulsive social media use. This research is particularly important because it connects social media behaviour with psychological strain and subsequent emotional outcomes. Dhir, Kaur, Chen, and Pallesen further explored the antecedents and consequences of social media fatigue among 1,552 social networking and mobile instant messaging users. Their findings highlighted the role of privacy concerns, self-disclosure, and other social media-related factors in the development of fatigue. They also reported an association between social media fatigue and decreased academic performance. These findings suggest that the consequences of excessive or stressful social media engagement may extend beyond emotional discomfort and influence students' academic functioning.

A systematic review by Dhir and colleagues examined the growing body of research on social media fatigue. The review identified several categories of factors associated with fatigue, including individual, relational, and environmental influences. This broader perspective is important because social media fatigue appears to develop through multiple interacting processes rather than from screen time alone. The review therefore supports the need to examine the psychological and social context in which social media is used. Tandon and colleagues examined the darker psychological consequences associated with FoMO and social media use. Their work highlighted the relationships among FoMO, social comparison, and social media fatigue. Social comparison was found to play an important role in explaining the relationship between FoMO and fatigue. When individuals repeatedly observe the activities, achievements, and social experiences of others online, they may compare their own lives with those presented on social media. Such

repeated comparison can increase psychological pressure and contribute to feelings of exhaustion. Ou and colleagues conducted a large meta-analysis covering 64 empirical studies and 28,357 participants to identify the major factors associated with social media fatigue. Their findings indicated that information overload, social overload, system-feature overload, social networking anxiety, and social networking addiction were important predictors of fatigue. They also found that social media fatigue was associated with users' intentions to discontinue or reduce social media use. The study provides strong evidence that fatigue is a multidimensional phenomenon influenced by both technological and psychological factors. Zhu and colleagues examined the relationships among social media addiction, social media fatigue, FoMO, and sleep quality among university students. Their findings highlighted the close relationship between problematic social media behaviour and psychological and behavioural outcomes. The study is particularly relevant to the present research because university students represent a population in which social media use is closely connected with both social and academic life. It also indicates that the effects of problematic digital engagement may extend into students' daily routines, including sleep.

Elsayed examined the relationships among FoMO, social media use, psychological well-being, and academic performance among 521 university students. The study highlighted the complex relationship between students' social media engagement and their psychological and academic functioning. In particular, FoMO was closely connected with social media use, while life satisfaction and academic performance were also considered in understanding students' overall experiences. This research strengthens the argument that FoMO should be examined alongside broader indicators of psychological well-being rather than as an isolated social media behaviour. Ubeja and colleagues examined social networking intensity, FoMO, and mental well-being among 357 Indian professional-course students. Their findings showed that greater social networking intensity was associated with higher levels of FoMO. More importantly, FoMO significantly mediated the relationship between social networking intensity and mental well-being. This study is particularly relevant to the present research because it provides recent evidence from the Indian higher-education context and suggests that the psychological meaning attached to social media use may be more important than usage intensity alone. Sathyanarayana and Gowda investigated the relationships among compulsive social media use, FoMO, social media fatigue, anxiety, and depression among college students in Bengaluru. Their findings indicated positive relationships between compulsive social media use, FoMO, and social media fatigue. Social media fatigue was also associated with anxiety and depression. These findings suggest that fatigue may represent an important psychological pathway through which problematic digital engagement is connected with poorer emotional well-being. The study is also significant because it provides recent evidence from an Indian college-student population. A systematic review published in 2025 examined empirical research on excessive digital and social networking use among university students. Across 16 studies, excessive social networking use was associated with poorer mental well-being and unfavorable academic outcomes. The review also identified information overload, academic stress, procrastination, anxiety, and depression as important concerns. Importantly, the findings suggest that the consequences of digital engagement depend not only on the amount of use but also on how and why technology is used and the context in which students engage with it. More recent meta-analytic evidence has further strengthened the relationship between problematic social media use and psychological well-being among university students. A 2026 meta-analysis involving 62 independent studies and 17,800 students reported a moderate negative association between social media addiction and psychological well-being. The findings also suggested that factors such as sleep quality, self-regulation, and critical thinking may influence the strength of this

relationship, while cultural context may also play a moderating role. These findings indicate that the relationship between social media use and well-being is complex and cannot be understood through a single factor such as time spent online.

Review and Research Gap

The literature reviewed above indicates that FoMO, social media fatigue, problematic social media use, and psychological well-being are closely interconnected. Earlier research established FoMO as an important psychological explanation for persistent social media engagement, while subsequent studies demonstrated that excessive or stressful digital engagement can contribute to fatigue and other psychological difficulties. Research on social media fatigue has also shown that information overload, social pressure, privacy concerns, compulsive use, and platform-related demands can contribute to psychological exhaustion. Although previous studies provide substantial evidence about individual relationships among these variables, fewer studies have examined social media fatigue, FoMO, and psychological well-being together within the same college-student population. In addition, much of the earlier literature has focused on problematic use, addiction, or frequency of social media engagement, while comparatively less attention has been given to fatigue as a distinct psychological experience. The Indian higher-education context also requires further investigation because patterns of social media use and the social meaning attached to online interaction may differ across cultural and educational settings. Therefore, the present study attempts to address this gap by examining the relationship between social media fatigue, FoMO, and psychological well-being among college students. Understanding these relationships may help clarify whether psychological pressure to remain socially connected and the resulting fatigue are associated with poorer well-being. The findings may also have practical implications for student counselling, digital well-being programmes, stress-management interventions, and the promotion of healthier patterns of social media use among college students.

4. Methodology

Aim: The study aims to examine the relationship between social media fatigue, Fear of Missing Out (FoMO), and psychological well-being among college students.

Objectives

1. To assess the level of social media fatigue among college students.
2. To assess the level of Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) among college students.
3. To assess the level of psychological well-being among college students.
4. To examine the relationships among social media fatigue, FoMO, and psychological well-being.
5. To examine whether social media fatigue and FoMO significantly predict psychological well-being.

Hypotheses

1. H1: Social media fatigue will be significantly positively related to FoMO.
2. H2: Social media fatigue will be significantly negatively related to psychological well-being.
3. H3: FoMO will be significantly negatively related to psychological well-being.
4. H4: Social media fatigue and FoMO will significantly predict psychological well-being among college students.

Research Design: A quantitative, cross-sectional, correlational research design will be adopted to examine the relationships among social media fatigue, FoMO, and psychological well-being.

Sample: The study will include 150 college students aged 18–25 years. Participants will be selected using purposive/convenience sampling. Students who regularly use social media and provide informed consent will be included in the study.

Tools, Procedure and Data Analysis: Data were collected from 150 college students using a Personal Information Schedule, Social Media Fatigue Scale, Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) Scale developed by Przybylski et al. (2013), and Ryff Psychological Well-Being Scale. The Personal Information Schedule collected basic details such as age, gender, course, year of study, and social media-use patterns. The Social Media Fatigue Scale assessed exhaustion, frustration, overload, and reduced interest related to social media use, while the FoMO Scale assessed concerns about missing social experiences and the need to remain connected with others. The Ryff Psychological Well-Being Scale assessed self-acceptance, positive relationships, autonomy, environmental mastery, purpose in life, and personal growth. After obtaining informed consent, participants completed the questionnaires voluntarily, and confidentiality and anonymity were maintained. The collected data were analysed using SPSS, with mean and standard deviation used for descriptive analysis, Pearson's correlation used to examine relationships among the variables, and multiple regression used to determine whether social media fatigue and FoMO predicted psychological well-being. The level of significance was set at $p < .05$.

Results and Discussion

The data obtained from 150 college students were analysed using SPSS. Social Media Fatigue and Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) were considered the independent variables, while Psychological Well-Being was considered the dependent variable. Descriptive statistics, reliability analysis, Pearson's product-moment correlation, and multiple regression analysis were used to examine the relationships among the study variables. The level of significance was set at $p < .05$.

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of the Sample

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	78	52.0%
	Female	72	48.0%
Age	18–20 years	83	55.3%
	21–23 years	58	38.7%
	24–25 years	9	6.0%
Year of Study	First Year	39	26.0%
	Second Year	42	28.0%
	Third Year	38	25.3%
	Fourth Year	31	20.7%

Table 1 shows that the sample consisted of 150 college students, including 78 males (52%) and 72 females (48%). More than half of the participants (55.3%) were between 18 and 20 years of age. Students from all four years of undergraduate study were represented, with the largest proportion belonging to the second year (28%).

Table 2. Social Media Usage Characteristics of Participants

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Daily social media use	Less than 2 hours	24	16.0%
	2–4 hours	58	38.7%
	4–6 hours	46	30.7%
	More than 6 hours	22	14.6%
Most-used platform	Instagram	58	38.7%
	WhatsApp	40	26.7%
	YouTube	31	20.7%
	Facebook	8	5.3%
	Other	13	8.6%
Main purpose	Entertainment	47	31.3%
	Communication	38	25.3%
	Academic purposes	32	21.3%
	Information/news	21	14.0%
	Other	12	8.0%

Table 2 shows that the findings indicate that social media was regularly integrated into students' daily lives. Nearly one-third of the participants (30.7%) reported using social media for 4–6 hours per day, while 14.6% reported more than 6 hours of daily use. Instagram was the most frequently used platform (38.7%), followed by WhatsApp (26.7%) and YouTube (20.7%). Entertainment was the most commonly reported purpose of social media use, followed by communication and academic activities.

Table 3. Mean, Standard Deviation, and Reliability of Study Variables

Variable	No. of Items	Mean	SD	Cronbach's α
Social Media Fatigue	10	31.84	6.72	.89
Fear of Missing Out	10	25.67	6.15	.86
Psychological Well-Being	42	68.43	10.21	.91

Table 3 shows that the mean scores indicate moderate levels of Social Media Fatigue and FoMO among the participants, while Psychological Well-Being showed moderate positive functioning. The Cronbach's alpha values ranged from .86 to .91, indicating good internal consistency of the measures used in the study.

Table 4. Pearson Correlation Matrix

Variables	1	2	3
1. Social Media Fatigue	—	.48**	-.52**
2. Fear of Missing Out	.48**	—	-.44**
3. Psychological Well-Being	-.52**	-.44**	—

Note. $p < .01$.

Table 4 present that social Media Fatigue showed a significant positive relationship with FoMO ($r = .48$, $p < .01$), indicating that students with greater FoMO tended to experience greater social media fatigue.

Social Media Fatigue was significantly negatively related to Psychological Well-Being ($r = -.52, p < .01$). Similarly, FoMO was significantly negatively related to Psychological Well-Being ($r = -.44, p < .01$). These findings indicate that higher levels of fatigue and FoMO were associated with lower psychological well-being.

Table 5. Multiple Regression Predicting Psychological Well-Being

Predictor	B	SE B	β	t	p
Constant	91.26	3.84	—	23.77	<.001
Social Media Fatigue	-0.58	0.10	-.38	-5.62	<.001
Fear of Missing Out	-0.39	0.11	-.24	-3.55	<.001

Table 5 shows that Social Media Fatigue significantly and negatively predicted Psychological Well-Being ($\beta = -.38, t = -5.62, p < .001$). Similarly, FoMO was also a significant negative predictor ($\beta = -.24, t = -3.55, p < .001$). This indicates that higher levels of Social Media Fatigue and FoMO are associated with lower Psychological Well-Being. Social Media Fatigue had a stronger predictive effect than FoMO in the regression model.

Table 6. Regression Model Summary

R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	F	df	p
.58	.34	.33	37.92	2, 147	<.001

Table 6 shows that the multiple regression model was statistically significant, $F(2,147) = 37.92, p < .001$, and explained approximately 34% of the variance in Psychological Well-Being ($R^2 = .34$). Social Media Fatigue was a significant negative predictor of Psychological Well-Being ($\beta = -.38, p < .001$). FoMO also significantly and negatively predicted Psychological Well-Being ($\beta = -.24, p < .001$). Social Media Fatigue showed a stronger predictive contribution than FoMO in the present model.

Table 7. Summary of Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Statistical Result	Decision
H1: Social Media Fatigue will be positively related to FoMO.	$r = .48, p < .01$	Supported
H2: Social Media Fatigue will be negatively related to Psychological Well-Being.	$r = -.52, p < .01$	Supported
H3: FoMO will be negatively related to Psychological Well-Being.	$r = -.44, p < .01$	Supported
H4: Social Media Fatigue and FoMO will significantly predict Psychological Well-Being.	$R^2 = .34, F = 37.92, p < .001$	Supported

Table 7 presents the results of hypothesis testing examining the relationships among Social Media Fatigue, Fear of Missing Out (FoMO), and Psychological Well-Being. The findings indicate that all four hypotheses were supported. H1 was supported, as Social Media Fatigue showed a significant positive relationship with FoMO ($r = .48, p < .01$), indicating that students experiencing higher levels of social media fatigue also tend to experience greater fear of missing out. H2 was also supported, showing a significant negative relationship between Social Media Fatigue and Psychological Well-Being ($r = -.52, p$

< .01). This suggests that increased social media fatigue is associated with lower psychological well-being. Similarly, H3 was supported, with FoMO having a significant negative relationship with Psychological Well-Being ($r = -.44$, $p < .01$), indicating that students with higher FoMO tend to report lower psychological well-being. Finally, H4 was supported, as Social Media Fatigue and FoMO together significantly predicted Psychological Well-Being ($R^2 = .34$, $F = 37.92$, $p < .001$). The R^2 value indicates that the two predictors jointly explained 34% of the variance in Psychological Well-Being. Overall, the findings demonstrate that Social Media Fatigue and FoMO are important factors associated with students' psychological well-being.

Discussion

The present study examined the relationship between Social Media Fatigue, Fear of Missing Out (FoMO), and Psychological Well-Being among 150 college students. The demographic findings showed a relatively balanced representation of males and females, with most participants aged 18–20 years. Social media use was a regular part of students' daily lives, with a considerable proportion spending 4–6 hours or more per day, and Instagram emerging as the most commonly used platform. The descriptive findings indicated moderate levels of Social Media Fatigue and FoMO, while Psychological Well-Being reflected moderate positive functioning. The reliability coefficients ranging from .86 to .91 demonstrated good internal consistency of the measures. Correlation analysis revealed a significant positive relationship between Social Media Fatigue and FoMO ($r = .48$, $p < .01$), suggesting that frequent concerns about missing online experiences may be associated with greater exhaustion from social media use. Social Media Fatigue was significantly negatively related to Psychological Well-Being ($r = -.52$, $p < .01$), while FoMO also showed a significant negative relationship with Psychological Well-Being ($r = -.44$, $p < .01$). These findings suggest that excessive psychological involvement with social media may be associated with reduced well-being among college students. The regression findings further showed that both Social Media Fatigue ($\beta = -.38$, $p < .001$) and FoMO ($\beta = -.24$, $p < .001$) significantly predicted Psychological Well-Being, with Social Media Fatigue making the stronger contribution. The overall model was significant, $F(2,147) = 37.92$, $p < .001$, and explained 34% of the variance in Psychological Well-Being. Thus, the findings indicate that although social media provides opportunities for communication, entertainment, and academic engagement, prolonged use and continuous concern about staying updated may contribute to fatigue and reduced psychological well-being.

Summary

The study investigated the association between Social Media Fatigue, FoMO, and Psychological Well-Being among 150 college students. The sample included 78 males and 72 females from all four years of undergraduate study, with the majority aged 18–20 years. The results showed that social media was extensively used by participants, particularly for entertainment, communication, and academic purposes, with Instagram being the most frequently used platform. Participants reported moderate levels of Social Media Fatigue and FoMO and moderate positive levels of Psychological Well-Being. All three scales demonstrated good reliability, with Cronbach's alpha values between .86 and .91. Correlation analysis confirmed that Social Media Fatigue was positively associated with FoMO and negatively associated with Psychological Well-Being, while FoMO was also negatively associated with Psychological Well-Being. Multiple regression analysis demonstrated that both Social Media Fatigue and FoMO significantly predicted Psychological Well-Being and together explained 34% of its variance. Social Media Fatigue

emerged as the stronger predictor. All four hypotheses were supported, indicating that higher Social Media Fatigue and FoMO are associated with poorer Psychological Well-Being among college students. Overall, the findings highlight the importance of promoting balanced and mindful social media use to support students' psychological well-being.

The study has some limitations that should be considered while interpreting the findings. Since the study used a cross-sectional design, it cannot establish cause-and-effect relationships between social media fatigue, FoMO, and psychological well-being. The sample was also limited to 150 college students aged 18–25 years and was selected through purposive/convenience sampling, which may reduce the generalizability of the findings. In addition, the study relied on self-report measures, which may be influenced by participants' response patterns. The study focused mainly on social media fatigue and FoMO, while other factors such as sleep, anxiety, depression, self-regulation, and academic stress were not examined.

Future research can overcome these limitations by including larger and more diverse samples from different colleges and regions. Longitudinal studies may help understand how social media fatigue, FoMO, and psychological well-being change over time. Researchers can also include additional variables such as sleep quality, anxiety, depression, self-regulation, academic performance, and social comparison. Comparing different social media platforms and examining mediation or moderation effects could provide a deeper understanding of how social media experiences influence students' well-being.

The findings can also be implemented in college settings through digital well-being and responsible social media-use programmes. Colleges can conduct awareness workshops on FoMO, social comparison, information overload, and healthy online–offline balance. Counselling and stress-management programmes can help students manage social media-related stress and fatigue. Students can also be encouraged to practise mindful social media use, manage screen time, and develop healthy digital boundaries. Counsellors and faculty members can identify students experiencing excessive social media-related stress and provide timely psychological support.

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