

EXAMINING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN NETFLIX SEASONS AND FEAR OF MISSING OUT (FOMO) AMONG YOUTH: A QUANTITATIVE STUDY

Mohsin Hassan Khan¹, Manahil Khan², Aemen Khalid^{*3}

¹Senior Assistant Professor Department of Media Studies, Bahria University Islamabad

²M.Phil. Scholar, School of Media and Communication Studies, University of Management and Technology, Lahore

^{*3}Associate Professor (Corresponding Author) School of Media and Communication Studies, University of Management and Technology, Lahore

¹mhkhan.buic@bahria.edu.pk, ^{*3}aemen.khalid@umt.edu.pk

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17369640>

Keywords

Netflix, Netflix seasons, FOMO, Anxiety, Social influence theory, Social influence

Article History

Received on 26 May 2025

Accepted on 26 June 2025

Published on 02 July 2025

Copyright @Author

Corresponding Author: *

Aemen Khalid

Abstract

The current study, titled "Role of Netflix in creating Fear of missing out among Youth," is quantitative research aimed at exploring the role that Netflix seasons play in creating fear of missing out among non-watchers of Netflix seasons. Another aim of this study is to find whether the fear is missing out is related to anxiety among youth or not. The trend of Netflix emerged in Pakistan during COVID-19. While most of the youth were passing their time in quarantine watching seasons on Netflix, there were many of them who did not watch Netflix at all. These non-watchers can be facing the fear of missing out due to missing this opportunity. A sample of 350 respondents was collected through a survey method from university students, and a structured, closed-ended questionnaire comprising 33 questions was used as a data collection tool. The purposive sampling method was used for the collection of data. The study implied a theoretical framework using social influence theory. Lastly, the data is analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences version 17.0. The study explores four hypotheses. Chi-square test and correlation analysis are employed to examine H_1 and H_4 , while the Chi-square test alone is applied to assess H_2 and H_3 .

INTRODUCTION

Netflix is a streaming service that is accessible on thousands of devices with internet access. It provides a huge collection of award-winning TV shows, movies, web series, documentaries, animation, and more. It has become a worldwide company, now the leading provider of streaming media globally. Netflix has 269.6 million paying subscribers from 190 countries, making it the largest driving entertainment platform in the world. There is an accessibility of 45 different languages. Netflix is a subscription-based video-on-demand service that excels in maintaining strong customer connections. It is a widely popular platform

worldwide. Viewers can enjoy their preferred content at any time and from any location, provided they log into their Netflix account (Netflix, n.d.).

Globally, digital technology is becoming more and more prevalent. Every year, the pace of technological development accelerates, and today's youth are all too keen to keep ahead of it. Teenagers find Netflix to be one of the most fascinating and powerful platforms available. This paid video streaming platform has gained popularity among Pakistani youth. Instead of viewing traditional television, today's youth choose to

watch Netflix. Youth is particularly susceptible to new trends.

The trend of Netflix emerged among Pakistani youth during the Covid-19 lockdown phase. With people in quarantine, one of the most popular activities was to stream movies, series, and seasons online. This is the period when Netflix became popular with the youth of Pakistan, as it was the platform offering all of the above. Although the Covid era has concluded and quarantine measures have long been lifted, people have resumed their normal lives. However, one change that has been integrated into everyone's daily life is the habit of watching seasons on Netflix. Youngsters are investing an excessive amount of time in seasons. Youth prefer seasons for great cast and fun purpose. Youth can watch the Netflix seasons of their interest at any time that's seasons are television crossover (Shabbir, n.d.).

Youth today not only watch Netflix seasons but also engage in conversations about them. However, a large number of people still do not use Netflix and do not even have an account. They get a sense of missing out when they hear their friends talking about Netflix seasons, as if they are the only ones who aren't viewing them.

Fear of Missing Out

FOMO, or the fear of missing out, is the sensation that one is missing out on an enjoyable experience that other people are having. Fear of Missing Out is associated with the notion that individuals engage in particular activities not just out of interest but also so they may discuss them with their social network. The person consequently exhibits behaviours that are more consistent with the norms of the social group than with their own interests (Maxwell et al., 2021). FOMO is the anxiety people feel on social media when they think their friends are enjoying something worthwhile or having good experiences while they are not. (Gil, Chamorro, & Oberst, 2015; Przybylski, Murayama, DeHaan, & Gladwell, 2013).

Fear of missing out is defined as an overpowering sense of unease that arises when one is unaware of the enjoyable activities that others are participating. As a result, the person who is experiencing FOMO tries to stay in touch and up to date on what other people are doing. Because of this fear, the person is always glued to social media to keep up with what other people are

doing and what they are missing (Singh & Seth, 2023). Youth are more vulnerable to FOMO because they are more likely to have internalized the social norm of "being constantly online" and, more importantly, since they are going through a pivotal period in their identity development (de Bruijn, 2021).

In the case of Netflix seasons, the Fear of Missing Out refers to the ability of a person who has not watched Netflix seasons, but his fellow peers have watched. And if his fellows have watched seasons and are discussing in front of him, then that person must watch seasons that are being published on Netflix to be able to communicate with his friends. Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) is the anxiety associated with missing out on other people's rewarding experiences (Hayran & Anik, 2021). And in some situations, it can lead to several psychological issues such as loneliness, anxiety, etc. (Sohail et al., 2019).

Peer pressure

The youth's engagement with social media and their socialization is greatly influenced by their peers, who play an essential role in their lives. Young individuals are especially vulnerable to peer pressure since they frequently relate and compare themselves to their peer group. They desire to participate in the conversations and activities of their peers. youth' exposure to peer pressure has significantly risen in recent years, in part because of the ease with which they may communicate with one another digitally. Peer pressure might therefore serve as a link between Netflix seasons and fear of missing out (de Bruijn, 2021).

Statement of Problem

The trend of Netflix seasons has grown in the modern world, and youth of Pakistan make up a portion of this audience. It's essential to realize that young people are not only watching these seasons but are also discussing the plot, storyline, and characters with one another whenever they meet or get a chance. But this discussion leads to a fear of missing out among those who are part of this discussion but do not watch Netflix seasons or Netflix at all. In the present Netflix era, they feel as though they are missing out on something that may be crucial. Many young individuals feel compelled to keep up with popular Netflix shows to engage in peer discussions

and social interactions, which exacerbates FOMO. This psychological effect not only shapes their viewing habits but may also lead to heightened anxiety and compulsive media consumption. Numerous studies have been conducted on Netflix's seasons, series, and binge-watching behaviour and its impact on viewers. The present study aims to investigate whether the Netflix seasons are responsible for creating a sense of fear-FOMO among those who are not watching it or are not. The researcher seeks to explore the influence of Netflix seasons in creating FOMO among young people because youth are avid Netflix users.

The significance of this study lies in the certainty that Netflix is an effective medium of exposure among youth, and they like to watch seasons mostly. When they are fascinated by the storyline or characters, they like to discuss it with their friends but there are also many people among those friends who do not watch Netflix at all. So, when these non-watchers are a part of the group that regularly watches Netflix a fear of missing out on something interesting that everyone is doing is raised among them. In other words, Youth are highly engaged with digital entertainment, social media and peer conversations, making them more vulnerable to FOMO. Their binge-watching habits, fear of missing out, and peer-driven discussions amplify anxiety and social pressure. The FOMO leads to serious psychological issues among youth, which is becoming a social concern for parents and psychologists of such adolescents. This study forms the fundamentals for further studies in the field of psychology regarding the coping strategies of FOMO contribute to the mental and social development of the youth. Furthermore, this study will also help to gain a better understanding of how Netflix fits into the lives of young people and the potential effects it may have on their mental health and well-being (Noor et al., 2020).

Literature Review

Netflix has emerged as one of the biggest streaming services and subscription video-on-demand platforms. It stands as the largest internet television network worldwide, offering on-demand TV shows available on almost every internet-connected screen. As a

distributor of films, television shows, seasons, and series, it is arguably the most popular service globally (Hosch, n.d.).

Netflix started as a DVD rental service in 1997 in Scotts Valley, California, founded by Reed Hastings and Marc Randolph. Initially, Netflix provided DVDs for rent and sale through their website, netflix.com. In 1999, Netflix launched a subscription service that allowed for unlimited DVD rentals at an affordable monthly price. A year later, Netflix rolled out a system for personalized movie recommendations (Trench, n.d.).

Netflix has transformed into a movie streaming service, keeping pace with technological progress. By the third quarter of 2019, the global count of Netflix subscribers reached 158 million. Concurrently, there were 5.5 million individuals who registered for a free trial (Osur, 2016).

Emergence of Netflix as a streaming service

Netflix launched its streaming services in 2007, allowing customers to view live TV shows and movies on their computers. Up until 2010, Netflix collaborated with several electronics companies. Among these were the Xbox 360, Blu-ray players, TV converters, PS3, television manufacturers, Apple devices, and others. This cooperation offers Netflix users a wide array of streaming video choices, making it easy for them to enjoy Netflix's offerings. In 2011, Netflix expanded its operations beyond the United States, initially targeting Latin America and the Caribbean. Two years later, European countries were also able to access Netflix's streaming service. In 2012, Netflix was awarded its first Primetime Emmy Engineering Award. The following year, Netflix launched its original programming, featuring shows created by Netflix itself. Many of these original episodes have garnered various television awards and prestigious film accolades, from the Emmy Primetime to the Oscars (<https://media.netflix.com/en/about-netflix>, n.d.). In January 2016, Netflix Co-Founder and CEO Reed Hastings announced plans to extend the streaming service to 130 countries (Trench, n.d.).

Netflix in Pakistan

In 2016, Netflix extended its service to Pakistan, making the emerging phenomenon of "global internet TV" more attainable than ever (Reuters, Television

giant Netflix comes to Pakistan, 2016). The platform started accepting payments in Pakistani rupees in 2018. Numerous Pakistani dramas and films, such as Humsafar, Zindagi Gulzar Hai, Moor, and Ho Mann Jahan, can be found on Netflix (Sachwani, 2018). The country's first Netflix Original series is currently in development (Desk I., 2018), although there has been no further information about it released in the past two years (Hashmi, 2020). Since 2018, Google trends and search results have indicated a 73% interest rate in Netflix-related queries, averaging around 150,000 searches each month (Hussain, 2019), and PTCL (Pakistan Telecommunication Company Limited) has offered its broadband users gift subscriptions for free Netflix access for up to six months, marking the first collaboration between a Pakistani firm and Netflix to gain significant attention (Pakistan A. N., 2018).

During the COVID-19 pandemic, people were restricted, and young individuals were not allowed to attend school, college, or university. They began utilizing the internet primarily for entertainment. One of the most prevalent ways to occupy their time was by watching movies, series, and seasons online. As a result, many young people in Pakistan turned to watching Netflix series online. This led to a rise in the trend of Netflix seasons, series, and movies in Pakistan. According to previous research, Netflix has gained immense popularity among the youth. Viewers can enjoy their favorite Netflix seasons whenever and wherever they wish.

Fear of missing out (FOMO)

Fear of missing out, is a term which is often referred to as FOMO has gained popularity recently and is widely discussed in the media. This feeling appears to be quite prevalent. The anxiety of "missing out" on experiences has been a part of human behavior for a long time. However, before 2010, the term "FOMO" was absent from academic studies, as noted in Voboril's research (2010). While Watson and Meyer are often said to have introduced the term "FOMO" in 1985, that reference remains unverified in mainstream publications (Batorski, 2011). Although discussions around 'missing out' on scarce resources can be found in academic literature (e.g., Bonabeau 2004), these typically have an economic foundation. Nevertheless, specific definitions of FOMO are not frequently encountered in existing research. J. Walter

Thompson (JWT) Worldwide (2011, 2012) defines FOMO as 'the uneasy and sometimes all-consuming feeling that you're missing out – that your peers are doing, in the know about, or in possession of more or something better than you' (2011, 4). Whereas Przybylski et al. (2013, 1841) define FOMO as ... "a pervasive apprehension that others might be having rewarding experiences from which one is absent".

In 2013, British researchers described and defined it as the "inescapable anxiety that others might be having fulfilling experiences that one is not part of." FOMO is characterized by the desire to remain constantly aware of what others are doing. FOMO consists of two components: first, the feeling of being left out, and second, a compulsive urge to maintain social connections. Relatedness, which signifies the desire to belong and to create deep and strong interpersonal relationships, can be viewed as the social aspect of FOMO. As a relatively recent psychological phenomenon, FOMO can manifest as a fleeting urge during conversations, a long-term tendency, or a mindset that leads an individual to experience a heightened sense of social inadequacy, feelings of depression, or intense anger.

According to Singh & Seth (2023), the main reason for FOMO is people's incapacity to satisfy their own needs, which leads them to seek fulfilment in other people's lives by using social media excessively and being connected to it all the time. FOMO is comprised of two processes: first, a sense of missing out, and second, a compulsive behavior to preserve social ties. Relatedness, which refers to the need to belong and the establishment of strong and solid interpersonal relationships, could be posited as the social part of FOMO.

FOMO, Social Networking Sites, and Mental Health.

FOMO is a significant mental development in the computerized age. FOMO has been inspected and approved internationally with a few self-report mental scales, as well likewise with physiological observation. For teenagers with social anxiety, social networking sites (SNS) offer a compensating way to meet their unfulfilled social requirements outside of in-person interactions. The fear of social exclusion is examined by the FOMO concept. According to experts, "it makes a mutilated view of edited lives of others"

because of the constant awareness of what one might be missing out on in terms of having a good time due to online entertainment. FOMO phobia is an anxiety disorder associated with increasing media consumption that is frequently triggered by social media posts. It is characterized by the fear of missing out on fascinating or thrilling activities taking place elsewhere. Additionally, some research has also shown that people who experience high levels of FOMO are more likely to use social media platforms, which can result in obsessive and excessive use of OTT media content (Gopakumar, S., 2024).

FOMO is defined as the deficiencies associated to the innate requirements for autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Social media users may be intrinsically inclined to maintain constant connections with these platforms due to their desire to satisfy basic needs like popularity, belonging, and interpersonal attachment. A person may therefore experience a sense of social exclusion or alienation as a result of any perceived (or real) communication breakdown, which may also serve as a prelude to FOMO. Therefore, it is proposed that FOMO is a condition in which a person's basic wants are not met, which may lead them to act in particular ways (Tandon et al., 2021).

Young adults who disregard their peer interactions are more likely to use the internet problematically and have FOMO, which can result in symptoms of depression. Additionally, there was a correlation between a higher risk of suicidality and increased use of social media (more than two hours per day). Fear of missing out is becoming more and more important in customer behaviour, especially in relation to social media marketing (FOMO). FOMO refers to the anxiety social media users feel when they perceive their peers are doing, experiencing, or possessing something rewarding while they are not (Gil, Chamarro, & Oberst, 2015; Przybylski, Murayama, DeHaan, & Gladwell, 2013). It is a feeling of being "left behind" (Salem, 2015), wherein the frequency and extent of social media engagement, as well as the individual desire to remain informed and connected with other people's experiences, intensifies (Przybylski et al., 2013). Interestingly, FOMO has also been found to be related to offline behavior, including smartphone overuse (Elhai, Levine, Dvorak, & Hall, 2016), substance abuse (Riordan, Flett, Hunter, Scarf, & Conner, 2015), and diminished sleep (Milyavskaya,

Saffran, Hope, & Koestner, 2018). FOMO can develop into a problem, causing worry, disrupted sleep, lack of focus, and a reliance on social media to satisfy one's needs (Alutaybi et al., 2020).

In recent years, the extensive adoption of social media has influenced society, prompting many journalists and popular authors to explore how our constant accessibility, exposure, and interconnectedness have caused many to experience a "fear of missing out" (FOMO) regarding the experiences of others (Morford, 2010; Wortham, 2011). Within the realm of social media, psychologists were among the first to conduct empirical research on FOMO. The initial empirical study that identified the behavioral, affective, and motivational aspects of this concept was conducted by Przybylski et al. in 2013. They characterized and quantified FOMO as a widespread assumption that others are having more enjoyable experiences than oneself. The writers rely on the self-determination theory (SDT; Deci & Ryan, 1985), which contends that the satisfying of three fundamental psychological needs—competence, autonomy, and relatedness—is what leads to an individual's psychological well-being. According to the authors' theory, people with low levels of need fulfilment went through psychological discomfort (also known as FOMO) and therefore tried to find solutions to control their mental health (e.g., social media use). According to Przybylski et al. (2013), the influence of low levels of psychological well-being on social media use is mediated by FOMO. The authors made the case that FOMO drives people to search social media for solutions to their issues. Researchers, as defined by Przybylski et al. (2013), describe FOMO as the apprehensive belief that others may be having "experiences" that are more enjoyable or fulfilling than one's own. FOMO is characterized by an intense urge to remain informed about the activities of others or by the sensation of being excluded from experiences one wishes to partake in (social exclusion) (Alt, D., 2015).

FOMO and Anxiety

One form of social anxiety is fear of missing out. Usually, emotions of social inadequacy, loneliness, anxiety, and irritation are linked to FOMO. FOMO can also result in a number of major problems. For example, prior studies have linked FOMO to greater levels of depression; this could be because of the

distress and dissatisfaction that come with FOMO. The Fear of Missing Out and interpersonal stress are also associated with insomnia and subsequently poor mental health outcomes. FOMO also causes stress and anxiety, which are detrimental to mental health (Singh and Seth, 2023). Lower life satisfaction and a negative correlation with social self-efficacy have also been linked to FOMO (Deniz, 2021). Sleep deprivation, lowered academic motivation and problematic social media use are also some common effects of fear of missing out (Singh & Seth, 2023).

The sensation of feeling forced, persuaded, or dared by peers to do something, or acting in a specific way due to social pressure, is known as peer pressure. Peer pressure-sensitive people find it difficult to say "no" to their peers. Research indicated a positive association between increased social media use and sensitivity to peer pressure (de Bruijin, 2021). Peer pressure refers to the impact that peer groups have on a person's attitudes, beliefs, and actions, and it is well acknowledged as a powerful factor that influences social interactions and behaviors among youth (Rachel, n.d.).

Peer pressure, social media and FOMO

People who are more vulnerable to peer pressure appear to use social media more frequently, because they wish to stay in touch with people and believe that the group they are a part of expects them to utilize it for group communication. It is reasonable to believe that young people who are more susceptible to peer pressure suffer from FOMO more frequently, as it is mostly about the fear of missing out on rewarding experiences that others are having. Social media offers a platform for youngsters to display their experiences, belongings, and successes, which helps shape different peer norms that become key sources of peer influence and fear of missing out (de Bruijin, 2021).

Social media platforms have a strong appeal to young people, making them the most influenced by it. Similarly, Netflix has targeted youth as its primary audience, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, as they spent their leisure time watching seasons, web series, and movies on the platform. This trend continued even after the pandemic when individuals returned to their usual routines. Additionally, they often shared their opinions about Netflix shows with friends. Those in their circles who do not engage with

Netflix tend to feel a sense of missing out due to this constantly ongoing conversation. They perceive themselves as the only ones not experiencing the enjoyment that Netflix offers. This feeling of being left out can foster a fear of missing out among those who do not use Netflix. The continuous discussions among peers, along with this fear of missing out and being left behind, may influence their decision to start watching Netflix.

Hypothesis

H₁ Netflix seasons are associated with creating FOMO among non-users.

H₂ Peer conversations significantly influence the creation of FOMO among youth regarding Netflix usage.

H₃ Netflix FOMO is associated with creating anxiety among youth.

H₄ FOMO and social influence lead non-viewers to watch Netflix.

Social influence theory

Social influence theory was originally formulated by Herbert Kelman (1953). Social influence is basically a change or shift in a person's behaviour, emotions, mindset, or thoughts brought about by interactions with other people or groups. The theory was created in the midst of major political and social movements, such as the anti-war movement and the civil rights movement. The contradictory phenomenon that people might follow social norms and rules whether or not they thought they were legitimate was highlighted by the shift in the sociopolitical milieu. Yet, prior research on social influence fell short in explaining how social compliance becomes altered attitudes and behaviors as well as the underlying mechanisms of collective persuasion. There was evidence about indicators of conformity, but there was no theoretical explanation for the complex nature of attitude changes induced by a particulate form of communication (Kelman 1953 & Sherif 1935). Dissatisfied with the previous theories' capacity to explain inconsistent reactions to social pressures and norms, Kelman (1953; 1958; 1974) examined many influence scenarios and corresponding reactions in order to develop Social Influence Theory (Davlembayeva & Papagiannidis, 2024).

According to Venkatesh et al. (2003), *Social influence* is defined as "the extent to which an individual believes that it is essential for others to believe that he or she should use the new system." Basically, social influence refers to the mechanisms by which individuals either directly or indirectly affect the attitudes, feelings, and behaviors of others (Izuma, 2017).

Social influence, according to Kelman (1974), is a behaviour shift brought about by an individual or a group of individuals in social contexts (Davlembayeva & Papagiannidis, 2024).

Kelman (1958) stated that there are three types of social influence acceptance proposed by the Social Influence Theory that are

- Compliance
- Identification
- Internalization (Davlembayeva & Papagiannidis, 2024).

Compliance

According to Kelman (1958) and Pelinka & Suedfeld (2017), *compliance* is the embrace or acceptance of influence for people to get incentives and avoid penalties/punishments for non-compliant behaviour. Pelinka and Suedfeld (2017) stated that compliance is a reaction to external demands driven by worries about the social consequences of that behaviour (Davlembayeva & Papagiannidis, 2024). The lowest sphere of social influence is compliance. This is the instance in which someone complies with a straight request. In general, people conform to social norms when they are among other people, yet have different opinions when they are alone. This kind of social influence is short-lived, and once the person is no longer watched, the activity usually stops.

Identification

The goal of identification is to achieve self-defined goals through social influence (Kelman, 1958; Pelinka & Suedfeld, 2017). Similar to compliance, adopting a conduct after identification is essentially fulfilling even though it does not reflect an individual's personal values (Cialdini & Goldstein, 2004; Kelman, 1958; Pelinka & Suedfeld, 2017). Identification-based behaviour induction is predicated on the idea that the behaviour will contribute to the fulfilment of specific social responsibilities. People value it because it can

help them advance their own status in society. When expectations in social positions are well defined, the induced behaviour takes front stage (Kelman, 1958; Pelinka & Suedfeld, 2017). Kelman (1974) stated that when people identify with a specific social category, their social roles become clear (Davlembayeva & Papagiannidis, 2024). The medium degree of social influence is known as identification, where a person identifies with a group or members of the group out of a desire to fit in and value the group. The person may alter certain behaviors both in public and privately, yet they may disagree with certain of the group's actions or viewpoints.

Internalization

According to Kelman (1958), Pelinka & Suedfeld (2017), O'Keeffe (2016), influence internalization is the process of adopting behaviour because it is perceived as being consistent with personal values and ideas, such as deeply rooted beliefs and attitudes about social conduct, conventions, and idealized images. These attitudes, values, and beliefs are typically developed early in life as a result of the social milieu in which a person was raised (Bagozzi & Lee, 2002). They function as self-guiding principles. Since Internalization is independent of social and situational environment, it can be regarded as the strongest indicator of long-term commitment (Kelman, 2006). Kelman (1958) stated that when someone has internalized norms and ideas, it means that their behaviour is in accordance with these deeply ingrained principles in the current system. Since the impact doesn't contradict preexisting beliefs, the induced behaviour is more likely to succeed in every situation and in any social setting (Davlembayeva & Papagiannidis, 2024).

Situation, Influencing agent, and response specification

Social influence, according to Kelman (1974), is a change in behaviour brought about by an individual or group of individuals in a social situation. For an influence to affect its recipient, a specific situation, agent presentation, and response specification are necessary.

Situation

The state that results from information provided by an influencing agent in an effort to elicit conduct, whether intentional or not, is referred to as a *situation* (Kelman, 1974). Direct directives like threats, demands, orders, or persuasion are examples of deliberate behaviour induction. Expectations, ideas, and conventions may be subtly expressed by inadvertent induction.

Influencing agent

The presentation of the agent is the point at which an individual assesses the qualities of an *influencing agent*, which could include societal status, expertise, reputation, principles, resources, and other characteristics.

Response specification

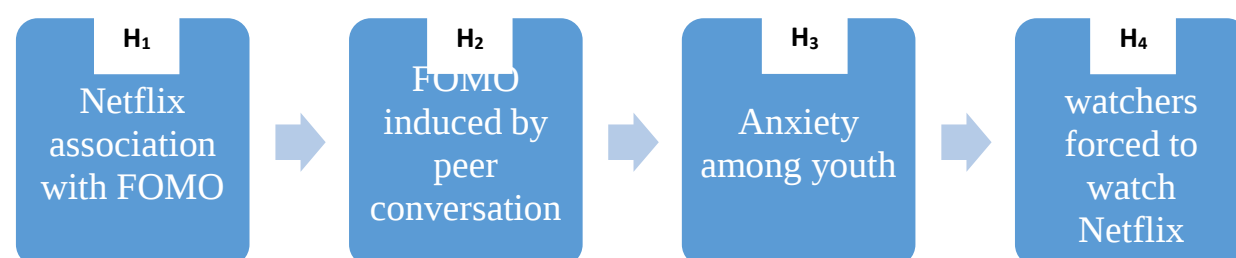
The step before adopting a behaviour is called "*specification of response*," during which a person determines the exact steps that must be taken in order to carry out the activity.

The study of social influence theory looks into how individuals are affected by the behaviors, viewpoints, and attitudes of those in their social circles. FOMO is a social pressure that makes people feel as though they

have to engage in the same goals and activities as their friends, both online and offline. People may experience anxiety or feelings of inadequacy if they believe they are lagging behind the media consumption habits of their social circle. Another factor the researcher also seeks to study in this research that whether intervening variables, such as peer conversation and pressure, and social influence, influence the non-watcher youth to watch Netflix or not.

A situation emerges when individuals who actively use Netflix frequently discuss or recommend its content to peers who do not use the platform. When non-users are exposed to such conversations or become part of peer group discussions centered around Netflix shows, they may begin to experience a sense of exclusion and a fear of missing out (FOMO) on shared social experiences. In this context, **peer pressure** and **social influence** function as key influencing agents, reinforcing the perceived social significance of engaging with Netflix content. As a result, non-user youth, upon experiencing this social pressure, enter the stage of **response specification**, during which they feel influenced to begin using Netflix to align with their peer group and avoid social marginalization.

Conceptual framework



Methodology

The current study uses quantitative research methodology to investigate the relationship between Netflix and FOMO among youth. The study has used a structured survey for data collection and applied statistical analysis to ensure the reliability, validity

empirical rigour in testing its hypotheses. This method offers a systematic, data-driven comprehension of how anxiety and Netflix-watching decisions are affected by peer conversations and pressure, social influence, and Netflix-related FOMO. The current study has used a structured survey questionnaire to collect numerical data from the target population. The survey contains closed-ended questions, Likert scale-based, that enable numerical

analysis. The survey method is used to test the hypothesis about Netflix and the fear of missing out among the youth. The data was collected from November 2024 to January 2025.

A questionnaire is designed to find out the opinion of the Youth. An online questionnaire consisting of 33 questions was distributed among the Youth. All the questions were closed-ended and related to the objectives and rationale of the study. The scales for social influence, FOMO and anxiety were adapted by the researcher with some variations. The researcher designed a set of questions based on the literature review to ensure alignment with research objectives. The questionnaire was designed in English language that can be easily understood.

The current research covered only Lahore-based universities, including the University of Management and Technology, Lahore College for Women University, Kinnaird University, University of Engineering and Technology and Punjab University. The population of the study consisted of university students between 17 years to 25 years old, enrolled in BS, MPhil/MS.

The United Nations defines Youth as “those persons between the ages of 15 and 24 years”. With regards to the current study, which targets university students, it has adapted the age group from 17 years to 25 years to align with the study's eligibility criteria. Youth who do not watch Netflix are the target population of the study. This study includes 42.5% male and 57.5% female participants.

In this research, the sample is taken from the BS and MPhil/MS departments of the University of Management and Technology, Kinnaird University, Lahore College for Women University, University of Engineering and Technology, and Punjab University. The sample size consisted of N=350.

The universe of this study is Lahore, to study the role of Netflix seasons in creating fear of missing out among youth.

In this research, purposive sampling is used by the researcher to target only those specific university

students who do not use or watch Netflix. The inclusion criteria for this research study were non-watcher youth between the ages 17-25 years. The exclusion criteria are participants below 17 years and above 25 years.

The questionnaire employed in this study collects data from a sample of participants by asking them a series of standardized questions. It was a quantitative study; hence the questions were closed-ended. There were seven sections to the questionnaire, and the first one asked for demographic data. Secondly, the researcher adapted the social influence, anxiety, and FOMO scales with some modifications. Lastly, the researcher used the literature review to help self-design a few questions in order to meet the objectives to the fullest. The subjects received assurances that all ethical guidelines would be adhered to ensure the confidentiality of the data and that it would only be used for research purposes.

The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS Version 17.0) was used in the current study to analyze the data. Furthermore, Microsoft Word was utilized to create the thesis script and construct charts, graphs, and tables, while Microsoft Excel was used in order to organize, clean, and classify data for improved analysis.

Measurement for analysis

Once the data was gathered, responses were categorized according to the questions to quantify the variables. The data for this investigation were entered using SPSS. Data collected from the respondents was transferred into the datasheet for examination. Data was rigorously assessed and analyzed in relation to the study's hypotheses. The current study investigated the relationship between Netflix and fear of missing out, to understand this link and to test the hypothesis, correlation was used. Furthermore, the chi-square test was used to determine the significant association between the variables.

The study has used a Likert 5-point scale for measuring subjective constructs.

Totally disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Totally agree
1	2	3	4	5

Data Analysis and Results

The current study analyzed the relationship between Netflix seasons and fear of missing out among youth.

This study was carried out for both male and female university and college students who are not users of Netflix to find if they get a sense of missing out when they hear that their peers are having an enriching experience watching Netflix seasons. Furthermore,

the study posits that the sense of missing out may escalate into FOMO, which in turn could be a contributing factor to anxiety and loneliness. The researcher also wanted to study whether this fear of missing out, peer conversation and pressure, and social influence led non-watcher youth to watch Netflix.

Reliability

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.916	38

The table above shows the reliability of the instrument, which was measured through Cronbach's alpha statistic. The alpha value is (.916),

which indicates that the data was highly reliable. The alpha value also indicated higher internal consistency and a strong correlation between the 38 items.

ANOVA with Cochran's Test

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	Cochran's Q	Sig
Between People	9785.975	306	31.980	10145.874	.000
Within People Between Items	253741.007	37	6857.865		
Residual	30339.411	11322	2.680		
Total	284080.418	11359	25.009		
Total	293866.393	11665	25.192		

Grand Mean = 4.1747

The table shown above indicates an analysis of variation to determine whether there are significant variations between different groups, and the large F-statistic (Cochran's Q = 10145.874, $p = 0.000$)

illustrates statistically substantial variations among responses. p -value = .000 depicts that the differences are not due to chance. The grand mean (4.1747), which is greater than 4, suggests positive responses.

Hypothesis testing

H_1 Netflix seasons are associated with creating FOMO among non-users.

Correlation analysis

Correlations

		Are you a Netflix user?	Why don't you use Netflix?	Creation_of_FOMO
Are you a Netflix user?	Pearson Correlation	1	-.094	.022
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.079	.679
	N	348	346	342
Why don't you use Netflix?	Pearson Correlation	-.094	1	.090
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.079		.097
	N	346	346	340
Creation_of_FOMO	Pearson Correlation	.022	.090	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.679	.097	
	N	342	340	342

The results of the correlation analysis between Netflix usage and the creation of fear of missing out are shown in the above table.

A modest negative correlation (-0.094) indicates that there are a variety of reasons why people choose not to use Netflix, rather than a single external one. A p-value of 0.079 indicates that the correlation is not statistically significant, as it is just over 0.05. According to the very weak positive connection (0.022), Netflix does not substantially lead to the creation of FOMO among non-users. There is no discernible association, as the p-value (0.679) is

significantly more than 0.05. FOMO and the reasons for not using Netflix have a modest and non-significant correlation ($r = 0.090$, $p = 0.097$). A high positive connection ($r > 0.5$) would be anticipated if Netflix significantly increased FOMO among non-users. The results of the correlation analysis show that there is no significant correlation between FOMO and either using or not using Netflix. It is not always the case that not using Netflix causes a strong sense of missing out among the non-user youth.

Chi-square test**Chi-square Test Statistics**

	Are you a Netflix user?	Creation of FOMO
Chi square	340.046 ^a	337.825 ^b
Df	1	61
Asymp. Sig.	.000	.000

The above table represents the results of the chi-square test for the first hypothesis.

Netflix user status: The extremely high chi-square value (340.046), indicates that there is a substantial difference between observed and expected Netflix users. p-value is 0.000, meaning there is a statistical

association between Netflix and the creation of fear or missing out.

FOMO creation: A high chi-square score of (337.825) indicates that there are notable differences in FOMO reactions. The difference is confirmed to be statistically significant with a p-value of 0.000. The chi-

square test is statistically significant, meaning there is a strong association between Netflix and FOMO.

The high chi-square values show that responses about Netflix and FOMO deviate significantly from the random distribution, indicating that responses about FOMO are influenced by Netflix-related factors.

H₁ Netflix seasons are associated with creating FOMO among non-users, which is partially supported as the chi-square tests represent a strong association between

Chi-square test

Chi-Square Test Statistics

	Creation_of_FOMO	Peer_conversation_and_pressure
Chi square	337.825 ^a	226.159 ^b
Df	61	49
Asymp. Sig.	.000	.000

The table above depicts the results for the 2nd hypothesis. The tested variables are peer conversation and pressure, and creation of FOMO. The researcher wanted to study whether the peer conversation or peer pressure regarding Netflix content contributes to the creation of fear of missing out among youth or not. The high Chi-square values (226.159 for peer conversations and 337.825 for FOMO) indicate that the variables being tested have significant relationships. Degrees of freedom for FOMO are 61, and peer conversation and pressure are 49, which indicates the responses are measured across multiple categories. Both peer conversation and FOMO test's p-values are 0.000, indicating strong significance. This indicates that the creation of FOMO is statistically significantly associated with

Netflix and the creation of FOMO, as it influences fear of missing out among non-user youth. However, the correlation analysis shows no direct relationship between Netflix and FOMO. The hypothesis is supported in terms of association but not causation.

H₂ Peer conversations significantly influence the creation of FOMO among youth regarding Netflix usage.

peer pressure and conversations. The strong relationship between peer conversations/pressure and FOMO is demonstrated by the significant chi-square values. The feeling of FOMO in Youth rises in tandem with peer discussions about Netflix. The substantial association ($p = 0.000$) demonstrates that peer conversations affect FOMO in a quantifiable manner. **H₂** Peer conversations significantly influence the creation of FOMO among youth regarding Netflix usage, as supported by the chi-square test results, indicating that youth are more likely to feel left out or pressured to watch Netflix due to peer discussions. **H₃** Netflix FOMO is associated with creating anxiety among youth.

Chi-square test

Test Statistics

	Creation of FOMO	Creation of anxiety
Chi square	337.825 ^a	296.733 ^b
df	61	76
Asymp. Sig.	.000	.000

The table given above represents the results of 3rd hypothesis for the tested variables Netflix, FOMO and creation of anxiety. The substantial variation in

FOMO and anxiety across respondents, as indicated by the high chi-square values (337.825 for FOMO and 296.733 for anxiety), indicates that their distribution is not random. Anxiety and FOMO are statistically significantly associated, as demonstrated by highly significant p-values (0.000). The results imply that Netflix-related FOMO may exacerbate

anxiety as Netflix is frequently a source of FOMO (because of popular seasons, peer conversations, and

Correlation analysis

Correlations

		Creation of FOMO	Social influence	Impact
Creation of FOMO	Pearson Correlation	1	.621**	.678**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000
	N	342	327	318
Social influence	Pearson Correlation	.621**	1	.605**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000
	N	327	331	316
Impact	Pearson Correlation	.678**	.605**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	318	316	320

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The aforementioned table indicates the results of correlation analysis for tested variables i.e. FOMO, social influence and impact on non-users.

FOMO and social influence: A strong relation is indicated by correlation value (0.621) between fear of missing out and social influence. The youth experiencing greater social influence from peers are more likely to feel fear of missing out. Highly significant correlation is indicated by p-value this is 0.000.

FOMO and impact: The correlation value of 0.678 indicates that as FOMO increases, its impact on non-user youth also increases. FOMO may make people more likely to change their behavior (for as by joining a Netflix subscription or participating in similar social activities). Statistical Significance: This relationship's statistical significance is confirmed by the p-value of 0.000.

exclusive content). **H₃** Netflix FOMO is associated with creating anxiety among youth, and is supported by the chi-square test results depicting a significant association between FOMO and anxiety. This implies that anxiety levels tend to rise in tandem with FOMO levels. The youth experiencing higher levels of FOMO are more likely to feel anxious.

H₄ FOMO and social influence lead non-viewers to watch Netflix.

Social influence and impact: A significant relationship between social influence and impact is indicated by a correlation value of 0.605. This demonstrates that social influence (peer conversations, recommendations, and pressure) has a direct effect on individuals, perhaps prompting them to modify actions or attitudes. A p-value of 0.000 confirms a statistically significant relationship between social influence and its impact on non-user youth of Netflix. According to the correlation analysis, it is depicted that FOMO serves as a bridge between social influence and its impact on behavior. The high correlation values show that FOMO and social influence significantly influence people's emotions and decisions significantly and impacting the decision of non-viewers regarding Netflix.

Chi-square test:

Chi-Square Test Statistics

	Creation of FOMO	Social influence	Impact
Chi-Square	337.825 ^a	309.810 ^b	354.250 ^c
df	61	51	57
Asymp. Sig.	.000	.000	.000

The above table represents the findings of the chi-square test for the 4th hypothesis.

Creation of FOMO: The chi-square value (337.825) is extremely high, indicating a substantial variance in the responses addressing the development of FOMO. Since the p-value is 0.000, it means that FOMO is statistically significant and not a result of random variation.

Social influence: The chi-square value of 309.810 indicates that responses to the question about social impact varied significantly. Statistical significance is confirmed by a p-value of 0.000.

Impact: The impact of social influence and FOMO on the behavior of youth appears to vary the most, according to the highest chi-square value

(354.250). An extremely significant result is indicated by a p-value of 0.000.

The results of the Chi-Square test indicate a significant statistical association between social influence, FOMO, and their impact on youth. This

implies that social influence and FOMO may cause non-viewers to feel compelled or influenced to start using Netflix.

Hence, the hypothesis that **H₄** FOMO and social influence lead non-viewers to watch Netflix is supported by both correlation analysis and chi-square test.

Summary of results

SR NO	HYPOTHESIS STATEMENT	RESULTS
H ₁	Netflix seasons are associated with creating FOMO among non-users.	Partially supported
H ₂	Peer conversations significantly influence the creation of FOMO among youth regarding Netflix usage.	Supported
H ₃	Netflix FOMO is associated with creating anxiety among youth.	Supported
H ₄	FOMO and social influence lead non-viewers to watch Netflix.	Supported

Discussion

The current research study “Role of Netflix seasons in creating fear of missing out among Youth” mainly focused on studying if the Netflix seasons are playing a role in creating fear of missing out – FOMO among those youth, both male and female university students, who do not use Netflix but their friends do. This study hypothesized that Netflix seasons are associated with the development of FOMO among non-users, peer conversations significantly influence

the creation of FOMO among youth regarding Netflix usage, and Netflix FOMO is associated with creating anxiety among youth. Lastly, the study hypothesized that FOMO and social influence lead non-viewers to watch Netflix.

This research study draws on Social Influence Theory as its theoretical framework to support the hypothesis. Social influence theory, developed by the renowned social psychologist Herbert Kelman in 1953, explains how individuals’ opinions, perceptions, convictions,

and actions are influenced by their social interactions. This theory is related to the current study in a way that fear of missing out is a kind of social pressure that leads individuals to engage in activities similar to those of their peers. Netflix offers a social experience, with numerous series turning into worldwide sensations due to social interactions, peer pressure, and trends in the media. FOMO manifests when people sense they are missing out on discussions and experiences regarding trending Netflix seasons, prompting them to watch these shows to stay socially relevant. People may watch Netflix to improve their relationships with their peer group and participate in their discussions because they feel pressured by their peers.

The influence transitions from societal peer pressure to personal motivation, as people begin to watch Netflix series for their own enjoyment instead of feeling obligated to do so because of others.

The researcher used the survey method and the purposive sampling method for data collection. The tool used for the data collection is a questionnaire. A sample of 350 people was drawn. Youth (university students 17-25 years of age) who do not watch Netflix seasons are the targeted population of this study. They were asked 33 questions with seven sections related to Netflix usage, FOMO, anxiety, peer pressure, social influence, and impact on non-viewers. The objectives of the study have been achieved quite successfully.

The statistical analysis of the gathered data offers substantial empirical evidence for these hypotheses. The findings emphasize that social pressure and discussions among peers play a crucial role in FOMO, which subsequently impacts the engagement of non-users with Netflix and their mental health.

Conclusion

This research study aims to find the role that Netflix seasons play in the development of fear of missing out among Youth. The aim of this study is to find whether Netflix seasons create FOMO in youth that are non-watchers of the Netflix seasons or Netflix at all. Netflix's viewership has risen, notably among youth. The majority of their time is spent viewing Netflix seasons or other content on it. Meanwhile, there are those in youth who do not watch Netflix, and when they encounter such people who do watch Netflix or

discussions regarding Netflix content, does it cause fear of missing out among them?

The Researcher used Social Influence Theory by Kelman. The Researcher employed a survey method with a sample of 350 respondents to conduct this research. The researcher has employed the chi-square test and correlation analysis to evaluate the hypothesis using SPSS version 17.0. H_1 is partially accepted, whereas H_2 , H_3 and H_4 are supported. The results highlight the intervening role that peer pressure and conversations, and social influence play in the development of FOMO, which in turn affects non-users' engagement with Netflix and their mental health. the findings illustrate not only the development of FOMO but also the creation of anxiety and loneliness among non-viewer youth, which effectively impacts their decision to watch Netflix.

H_1 Netflix seasons are associated with creating FOMO among non-users. (Partially supported)

H_2 Peer conversations significantly influence the creation of FOMO among youth regarding Netflix usage. (Supported)

H_3 Netflix FOMO is associated with creating anxiety among youth. (Supported)

H_4 FOMO and social influence lead non-viewers to watch Netflix. (Supported)

Ethical Considerations

This study adhered closely to ethical standards, which include informed consent, objectivity, and participant privacy protection; the respondents were fully informed about the study's goal to provide them a better understanding of the research. Participants in the survey were approached based on their comfort, convenience, and consent rather than being coerced into participating or under pressure to give a biased response. This research study resulted in a publication that was very authentic and devoid of duplicate labor. The researcher also took every precaution to avoid bias in the language or the current study's findings.

Practical Implications

- Media Literacy & Awareness Programs – Educational institutions should introduce media literacy initiatives to help youth critically analyze online content and manage FOMO-driven anxiety.

- Encouraging Digital Well-Being – Youth should adopt mindful media consumption practices, such as setting screen-time limits and engaging in offline social activities to reduce reliance on digital validation.
- Mental Health Support & Counseling – Universities should integrate FOMO-related anxiety management strategies (e.g., CBT-based counseling) to help students cope with social pressure from Netflix-related discussions.

REFERENCES

- Abel, J. P., Buff, C. L., & Burr, S. A. (2016). Social media and the fear of missing out: Scale development and assessment. *Journal of Business & Economics Research*, 14(1).
- Almeida, F., Pires, L., Marques, D. R., & Gomes, A. A. (2024). The European Portuguese version of the Fear of Missing Out scale (FoMOs-P) in higher education students. *Current Psychology*, 43(20), 18025-18041.
- Alt, D. (2015). College students' academic motivation, media engagement and fear of missing out. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 49, 111-119.
- Alutaybi, A., AlThani, D., McAlaney, J., & Ali, R. (2020). Combating fear of missing out (FoMO) on social media: The fomor method. *International journal of environmental research and public health*, 17(17), 6128.
- Davlembayeva, D. & Papagiannidis, S. (2024) Social Influence Theory: A review. In S. Papagiannidis (Ed), TheoryHub Book.
- de Bruijn, M. P. M. (2021). *Social Media and the Fear of Missing Out among Adolescents: The Role of Peer Pressure* (Master's thesis).
- Faghani, N., & Moghadasin, M. (2023). Psychometric Properties of the Persian Version of Social Anxiety Scale for Social Media Users (SAS-SMU). *Iranian journal of psychiatry*, 18(4), 406.
- Gopakumar, S. (2024). FOMOPhobia: The Psychological Drivers of OTT Media Consumption Through Social Comparison, Self-Esteem, and Anxiety. *The Rise of Over-the-Top (OTT) Media and Implications for Media Consumption and Production* (pp.161-184)
- Hilderbrand, L. (2010). The art of distribution: video on demand. *Film quarterly*, 64(2), 24-28.
- Hodkinson, C. (2019). 'Fear of Missing Out'(FOMO) marketing appeals: A conceptual model. *Journal of Marketing Communications*, 25(1), 65-88.
- Hayran, C., & Anik, L. (2021). Well-being and fear of missing out (FOMO) on digital content in the time of COVID-19: A correlational analysis among university students. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 18(4), 1974.
- Hashmi, S. T. (2020). *Pakistan's Cultural Identity in the Era of Netflix: Perspectives of EMU's Pakistani Students* (Master's thesis, Eastern Mediterranean University (EMU)-Doğu Akdeniz Üniversitesi (DAÜ)).
- Kandel, B. (2020). Qualitative versus quantitative research. *Journal of product Innovation management*, 32(5), 658.
- Lee, C. C., Nagpal, P., Ruane, S. G., & Lim, H. S. (2018). Factors affecting online streaming subscriptions. *Communications of the IIMA*, 16(1), 2.
- Lunsford, T.R., & Lunsford, B.R. (1995). The research sample, part I: sampling. *JPO: Journal of Prosthetics and Orthotics*, 7(3), 17A.
- Maxwell, L. C., Tefertiller, A., & Morris, D. (2022). The nature of FoMO: Trait and state fear- of-missing-out and their relationships to entertainment television consumption. *Atlantic Journal of Communication*, 30(5), 1-13.
- Mohajan, H. K. (2020). Quantitative research: A successful investigation in natural and social sciences. *Journal of Economic Development, Environment and People*, 9(4), 50-79.
- Majid, U. (2018). Research fundamentals: Study design, population, and sample size. *Undergraduate research in natural and clinical science and technology journal*, 2, 1-7.
- Noor, U. S., Humera, S., & Khan, M. H. (2020). Persuasive strategies and video games: An insight into Age of Empire III. *International Journal of Media and Information Literacy*, 5(2), 191-198.

- Oberst, U., Wegmann, E., Stodt, B., Brand, M., & Chamorro, A. (2017). Negative consequences from heavy social networking in adolescents: The mediating role of fear of missing out. *Journal of adolescence*, 55, 51-60.
- Osur, L. (2016). Netflix and the development of the internet television network.erspective. *Psychology & Marketing*, 37(11), 1619-1634.
- Rao, D. S., & Reddy, A. V. (2013). An examination of the role of conceptualization and operationalization in empirical social research. *ZENITH International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research*, 3(7), 108-114.
- Rachel, I. T. (n.d.). PEER PRESSURE AND SOCIAL ANXIETY AMONG TEENAGEERS.
- Singh, P. & Seth, A. (2023). A Study On Social Media And The Fear Of Missing Out (FOMO). *International Journal of Creative Research Thoughts (IJCRT)*, 11(6).
- Shabbir, T., Latif, M., & Khan, N. Impact of Netflix Web series on Intellectual and Behavior of Pakistani Youth.
- Stibe, A., & Cugelman, B. (2019). Social influence scale for technology design and transformation. In *Human-Computer Interaction-INTERACT 2019: 17th IFIP TC 13 International Conference, Paphos, Cyprus, September 2-6, 2019, Proceedings, Part III* 17 (pp. 561-577). Springer International Publishing.
- Suciati, P., & Putra, B. M. (2022). Indonesian gen Z consumer preference for subscribing to netflix in the Covid-19 pandemic era. *Journal of Media and Information Warfare (JMIW)*, 15(1), 71-84.
- Sohail, S. A., Mahmood, Q., Khan, M. H., & Gull, Z. (2019). Tinder use among Pakistani adults: A socio-psychological need perspective. *Jurnal Studi Komunikasi*, 3(3), 316-331.
- Tandon, A., Dhir, A., Almugren, I., AlNemer, G. N., & Mäntymäki, M. (2021). Fear of missing out (FoMO) among social media users: a systematic literature review, synthesis and framework for future research. *Internet Research*, 31(3), 782-821.
- Thomas, F. B. (2022). The role of purposive sampling technique as a tool for informal choices in a social Sciences in research methods. *Just Agriculture*, 2(5), 1-8.
- Trench, R. The Rise of Netflix.
- Zhang, Z., Jiménez, F. R., & Cicala, J. E. (2020). Fear of missing out scale: A self-concept perspective. *Psychology & Marketing*, 37(11), 1619-1634.
- Noor, U. S., Humera, S., & Khan, M. H. (2020). Persuasive strategies and video games: An insight into Age of Empire III. *International Journal of Media and Information Literacy*, 5(2), 191-198.