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Fear of Missing Out in Digital Culture from a Hadith Perspective and the Prophetic Desire-Attention Regulation Model

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Abstract: Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) has developed into one of the most prominent psychological experiences in digital culture because users are continuously exposed to other people's activities, achievements, consumption, relationships, and experiences. Psychological literature has explained FoMO through the need for connectedness, social comparison, problematic social media use, and weak self-regulation, yet Islamic studies tend to stop at general advice about gratitude, qana'ah, or the prohibition of hasad. This article aims to reconstruct a hadith perspective on the mechanisms of FoMO and to propose the conceptual Prophetic Desire-Attention Regulation (PDAR) model. The study employs qualitative library research with an integrative conceptual-hermeneutic design. The primary corpus consists of authentic hadiths concerning qana'ah, ghina al-nafs, the direction of social comparison, ghibtah, the boundlessness of desire for wealth, and the value of health and leisure time. This corpus is read thematically and brought into dialogue with research on FoMO, social comparison, problematic social media use, social media fatigue, and digital well-being. The findings show that FoMO cannot adequately be understood merely as a fear of missing out, but rather as a disturbance in sufficiency calibration, comparison orientation, desire escalation, and attention fragmentation. Hadith does not negate social needs, but regulates the direction of desire and attention so that self-worth is not externally determined by other people's experiences. The PDAR model consists of five mechanisms: sufficiency anchoring, comparison recalibration, aspirational

filtering, desire de-escalation, and attention stewardship. The model offers novelty in the form of a mechanistic and non-moralistic hadith-based framework for Islamic digital literacy, education, da'wah, and the development of empirically testable digital well-being interventions.

Keywords: *Fear of Missing Out; Qana'ah; Social Comparison; Digital Well-Being; Attention Regulation*

INTRODUCTION

Digital culture has changed how people know what others are doing. Activities that in the past were known only through limited encounters now appear through real-time posts, stories, live streaming, notifications, trending lists, popularity indicators, and content recommendations. This change means that social experience no longer ends with what a person experiences personally, but is continually compared with experiences currently enjoyed by others. The term Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) is used to describe a persistent apprehension that others may be having rewarding experiences while one is absent, accompanied by an urge to remain continuously connected so as not to miss out.[1]This concept is important because it explains not merely the frequency of media use, but a relational anxiety that makes connectivity feel like a need that must be continuously satisfied.

Research following the initial conceptualization shows that FoMO is related to academic motivation and media engagement, particularly when digital connectivity interrupts other priorities.[2]Studies of adolescents also link FoMO with social needs, Facebook use, and platform-related stress.[3]In the domain of device use, FoMO is associated with problematic smartphone use alongside anxiety and depression.[4]Other findings show that FoMO can mediate some of the negative consequences of heavy social networking use among adolescents.[5]Taken together, these findings show that FoMO does not stand alone; it lies at the intersection of the

[1]Andrew K. Przybylski, Kou Murayama, Cody R. DeHaan, and Valerie Gladwell, "Motivational, Emotional, and Behavioral Correlates of Fear of Missing Out," Computers in Human Behavior 29, no. 4 (2013): 1841–1848, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2013.02.014.

[2]Dorit Alt, "College Students' Academic Motivation, Media Engagement and Fear of Missing Out," Computers in Human Behavior 49 (2015): 111–119, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2015.02.057.

[3]Ine Beyens, Eline Frison, and Steven Eggermont, "I Don't Want to Miss a Thing: Adolescents' Fear of Missing Out and Its Relationship to Adolescents' Social Needs, Facebook Use, and Facebook Related Stress," Computers in Human Behavior 64 (2016): 1–8, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2016.05.083.

[4]Jon D. Elhai, Jason C. Levine, Robert D. Dvorak, and Brian J. Hall, "Fear of Missing Out, Need for Touch, Anxiety and Depression Are Related to Problematic Smartphone Use," Computers in Human Behavior 63 (2016): 509–516, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2016.05.079.

[5]Ursula Oberst, Elisa Wegmann, Benjamin Stodt, Matthias Brand, and Andrés Chamarro, "Negative Consequences from Heavy Social Networking in Adolescents: The Mediating Role of Fear of Missing Out," Journal of Adolescence 55 (2017): 51–60, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.adolescence.2016.12.008.

need to connect, self-evaluation, media-checking habits, and difficulty disengaging the flow of attention.

Its effects are also not uniform and should not be interpreted simplistically. FoMO is not a clinical diagnosis, and the need to feel connected is a normal part of social life. Problems arise when the fear of missing out becomes a pattern that reduces the capacity to regulate attention, disrupts the experience of being present in ongoing activities, or makes self-worth overly dependent on external comparison. Baker, Krieger, and LeRoy found associations between FoMO, depression, mindfulness, and physical symptoms, suggesting the importance of attention regulation and present-moment awareness.[6] Meanwhile, personality factors and attachment styles also play a role in the relationship between FoMO and social media use and addiction.[7]Thus, FoMO is better understood as a psychological condition arising from the interaction of individual characteristics, relational needs, and the media environment.

This vulnerability gains further force because social platforms provide an almost endless supply of comparative material. On a single screen, users can evaluate other people's travel, work, achievements, lifestyles, appearance, friendship networks, religious activities, and even productivity. Research on online vulnerability shows that social networking site use and FoMO can interact in patterns that increase users' vulnerability.[8]Research on social media fatigue likewise places compulsive use and FoMO, together with anxiety and depression, within a chain that can reduce well-being.[9]The problem, therefore, is not simply "spending too much time on social media," but a change in how people allocate attention and assess the sufficiency of their lives.

Social comparison is one important mechanism. Social comparison orientation and FoMO have been found to mediate the relationship between psychosocial well-being and social media engagement.[10]Passive use may also relate to well-being

[6]Zachary G. Baker, Heather Krieger, and Angie S. LeRoy, "Fear of Missing Out: Relationships with Depression, Mindfulness, and Physical Symptoms," Translational Issues in Psychological Science 2, no. 3 (2016): 275–282, https://doi.org/10.1037/tps0000075.

[7]David Blackwell, Carrie Leaman, Rose Tramposch, Ceri Osborne, and Miriam Liss, "Extraversion, Neuroticism, Attachment Style and Fear of Missing Out as Predictors of Social Media Use and Addiction," Personality and Individual Differences 116 (2017): 69–72, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2017.04.039.

[8]Sarah L. Buglass, Jens F. Binder, Lucy R. Betts, and Jean D. M. Underwood, "Motivators of Online Vulnerability: The Impact of Social Network Site Use and FOMO," Computers in Human Behavior 66 (2017): 248–255, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2016.09.055.

[9]Amandeep Dhir, Yossiri Yossatorn, Puneet Kaur, and Sufen Chen, "Online Social Media Fatigue and Psychological Wellbeing—A Study of Compulsive Use, Fear of Missing Out, Fatigue, Anxiety and Depression," International Journal of Information Management 40 (2018): 141–152, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijinfomgt.2018.01.012.

[10]Felix Reer, Wai Yen Tang, and Thorsten Quandt, "Psychosocial Well-Being and Social Media Engagement: The Mediating Roles of Social Comparison Orientation and Fear of Missing Out," New Media & Society 21, no. 7 (2019): 1486–1505, https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444818823719.

through social comparison and FoMO.[11]As information exposure increases, users not only receive social information but continually gain new opportunities to conclude that others are more active, happier, more successful, or more connected. At that point, the digital feed functions like an unfinished social mirror; every update introduces a new standard for what counts as enough.

Recent literature extends this problem to social overload, stalking, fatigue, phubbing, and various forms of problematic technology use. Social overload and FoMO can help explain why greater social networking site intensity does not automatically improve well-being.[12]Elhai, Yang, and Montag's review places FoMO in relation to negative affectivity and problematic technology use.[13]Tandon and colleagues show links between social media-induced FoMO and stalking, comparison, and fatigue.[14]These findings shift the question from "is social media good or bad?" to "what makes online social relations turn into pressure to remain constantly active and connected?"

This mechanistic question opens space for dialogue with hadith. Popular Islamic discussions often translate FoMO directly into a lack of gratitude, hasad, love of worldly life, or weak qana'ah. Such explanations have a certain moral basis, but risk reducing a complex phenomenon to individual fault. Hadith does not contain FoMO as a modern psychological construct, so this study does not claim historical equivalence. What can be done is to reconstruct normative principles from hadith related to sufficiency, comparison, desire, and time, and then test them as a lens for reading contemporary FoMO mechanisms. This approach is consistent with the need to develop studies of Muslim well-being that do not merely quote religious norms, but explicitly connect them with psychological processes that can be explained and tested.[15]

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[11]Kaitlyn Burnell, Madeleine J. George, Justin W. Vollet, Samuel E. Ehrenreich, and Marion K. Underwood, "Passive Social Networking Site Use and Well-Being: The Mediating Roles of Social Comparison and the Fear of Missing Out," Cyberpsychology: Journal of Psychosocial Research on Cyberspace 13, no. 3 (2019), article 5, https://doi.org/10.5817/CP2019-3-5.

[12]Huan-You Chai, Ni-Fu Niu, Li-Na Lian, Xin-Yu Chu, Jian-Zhong Liu, and Zheng-Wen Sun, "Why Social Network Site Use Fails to Promote Well-Being? The Roles of Social Overload and Fear of Missing Out," Computers in Human Behavior 100 (2019): 85–92, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2019.05.005.

[13]Jon D. Elhai, Haibo Yang, and Christian Montag, "Fear of Missing Out (FOMO): Overview, Theoretical Underpinnings, and Literature Review on Relations with Severity of Negative Affectivity and Problematic Technology Use," Brazilian Journal of Psychiatry 43, no. 2 (2021): 203–209, https://doi.org/10.1590/1516-4446-2020-0870.

[14]Anushree Tandon, Amandeep Dhir, Shalini Talwar, Puneet Kaur, and Matti Mäntymäki, "Dark Consequences of Social Media-Induced Fear of Missing Out (FoMO): Social Media Stalking, Comparisons, and Fatigue," Technological Forecasting and Social Change 171 (2021): 120931, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techfore.2021.120931.

[15]Aishath Shahamaa, Aashiya Patel, Jerome Carson, and Ahmed M. Abdel-Khalek, "The Pursuit of Happiness Within Islam: A Systematic Review of Two Decades of Research on Religiosity and Happiness in Islamic Groups," Mental Health, Religion & Culture 25 (2022): 629–651, https://doi.org/10.1080/13674676.2022.2028748.

The research gap lies on two sides. FoMO literature is rich in measurement, correlation, mediation, and the consequences of technology use, but it was not designed to explain how Islamic normative sources regulate the orientation of desire and attention. Conversely, Islamic writings on digital phenomena often mention qana'ah, gratitude, or hasad without explaining the psychological mechanisms that make these values relevant to checking, upward comparison, desire thinking, or social media fatigue. This article bridges that gap through the Prophetic Desire–Attention Regulation (PDAR) model. The novelty of the article does not lie in claiming that hadith "predicted" FoMO, but in reconstructing hadith into a five-mechanism regulatory architecture: sufficiency anchoring, comparison recalibration, aspirational filtering, desire de-escalation, and attention stewardship.

Based on this gap, the study addresses three questions. First, what psychological factors cause FoMO to persist in digital culture? Second, how can authentic hadiths concerning qana'ah, ghina al-nafs, social comparison, ghibtah, the boundlessness of desire, and time be read as principles for regulating these mechanisms? Third, how can these principles be formulated into an appropriate model for strengthening Muslim digital literacy and well-being without becoming judgmental or ignoring contemporary context?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study is qualitative library research using an integrative conceptual-hermeneutic design. The primary sources are authentic hadiths selected on the basis of their thematic proximity to FoMO mechanisms, rather than the presence of modern terminology in the texts. The main corpus includes hadiths on sufficiency and qana'ah (Sahih Muslim no. 1054), the instruction to look at those below oneself in worldly matters (Sahih Muslim no. 2963c), richness of the soul as the measure of true wealth (Sahih al-Bukhari no. 6446), ghibtah regarding two productive uses of blessings (Sahih al-Bukhari no. 1409), the boundlessness of desire for wealth (Sahih al-Bukhari no. 6436), and health and leisure as two blessings that are often wasted (Sahih al-Bukhari no. 6412). This corpus was selected because it forms a normative sequence concerning how a person evaluates what they possess, whom they compare themselves with, what is worth desiring, and how attention and time are used.

Secondary sources consist of peer-reviewed articles on FoMO, social comparison, problematic smartphone/social media use, phubbing, desire thinking, social media fatigue, mindfulness, and digital well-being. Priority is given to journals with DOIs and direct relevance to the mechanisms analyzed. Classic studies of social comparison are retained because they provide the theoretical foundation for reading comparison mechanisms, while recent research from 2023–2026 is used to trace conceptual developments, including the relationships of FoMO with mobile phone addiction, desire thinking, state/trait FoMO, peer pressure, fatigue, and well-being. A meta-analysis of FoMO and mobile phone addiction

reinforces that the association is consistent across studies, although the strength of association does not by itself establish causality.[16]

The analysis proceeds in four stages. First, the study maps FoMO mechanisms from the psychological literature: perceived insufficiency, upward social comparison, continuous connectivity, desire thinking, checking behavior, and attention fragmentation. Second, the hadiths are read thematically by attending to the meanings of key terms and their ethical direction, with the assistance of classical commentaries to avoid detaching the texts from the interpretive tradition. Third, a conceptual dialogue is conducted between FoMO mechanisms and hadith principles. The relationship sought is not terminological equivalence but regulatory function: whether the hadith texts provide principles for changing standards of sufficiency, the direction of comparison, the quality of aspiration, the escalation of desire, and the distribution of attention. Fourth, the results of this dialogue are synthesized into the PDAR model, which can generate propositions for subsequent empirical research.

This article adopts strict epistemological boundaries. Hadith is used as guidance for responding to the FoMO phenomenon, not as evidence that every user experiencing FoMO has weak faith. FoMO is also not positioned as a single moral illness. Situational variation, the need for connectedness, personality, social support, and patterns of platform use remain acknowledged. Research on trait- and state-FoMO shows the need to distinguish relatively persistent vulnerability from situational experiences triggered by context.[17]For this reason, the PDAR model is designed as a conceptual framework for self-regulation and digital literacy, not as a tool for clinical diagnosis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

FoMO as a Crisis of Sufficiency Calibration in Digital Culture

FoMO is often understood as the fear of missing out on other people's experiences, but that definition does not yet explain why certain exposures produce anxiety. The findings of this study show that the most fundamental mechanism is a shift in the standard of sufficiency. A person no longer evaluates whether life is worthwhile on the basis of available needs, goals, and blessings, but on the gap between oneself and what others are displaying. When that standard moves every time the feed is refreshed, "enough" becomes a difficult target to reach. Research on social networking intensity and well-being also shows that FoMO can turn the effects of connectivity into a paradox: the more opportunities users have to know

[16]Yali Zhang, Shijie Shang, Lixian Tian, Lijuan Zhu, and Weina Zhang, "The Association Between Fear of Missing Out and Mobile Phone Addiction: A Meta-Analysis," BMC Psychology 11 (2023): 338, https://doi.org/10.1186/s40359-023-01376-z.

[17]Lihua Zuo, Jian Mao, Lili Yang, Haini Wang, and Zihan Xie, "From Self-Construal to Trait- and State-Fear of Missing Out: The Roles of Need to Belong and Active Social Media Use," Frontiers in Psychology 17 (2026): 1743687, https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2026.1743687.

about other people's lives, the greater the possibility that they will feel there is something they still do not have.[18]

The hadith on qana'ah offers the first turning point. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said: "قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ أَسْلَمَ، وَرُزِقَ كَفَافًا، وَقَنَّعَهُ اللَّهُ بِمَا آتَاهُ" — successful is the one who submits, is granted sufficient provision, and whom Allah makes content with what He has given.[19]The structure of this hadith is important because success is not located in maximizing possessions, but in objective sufficiency (kafaf) accompanied by subjective sufficiency (qana'ah). Al-Nawawi reads qana'ah as contentment and acceptance of the share granted to a person, not as the cessation of effort.[20]This concept differs from passive resignation: a person may continue to grow, while self-worth is not continually suspended on what has not yet been obtained.

The context of FoMO makes the distinction between stagnation and sufficiency crucial. Qana'ah does not mean eliminating aspiration, just as digital well-being does not mean ceasing to use technology. Qana'ah functions as a cognitive-affective anchor that establishes an internal reference point: I can desire growth without concluding that my life is a failure simply because someone else is having an experience that I am not. This is sufficiency anchoring, the first component of PDAR. The function of this model is to restrain the externalization of standards of success. Psychologically, this step is relevant because FoMO is connected with relational needs and evaluations of experiences assumed to be more enjoyable elsewhere, while recent research among university students also shows relationships between FoMO, social media use, well-being, and academic performance.[21]

Local Indonesian findings reinforce the need to read this problem in the context of young users. A meta-analysis of FoMO and problematic internet use shows a consistent relationship across the studies analyzed.[22]A study of Indonesian university students who use Instagram also found a relationship between FoMO

[18]Satnam Ubeja et al., "Unpacking the Theoretical Role of Fear of Missing Out in the Relationship Between Social Networking Intensity and Well-Being Among Indian College Students," Discover Mental Health 6 (2026): 5, published online December 8, 2025, https://doi.org/10.1007/s44192-025-00353-9.

[19]Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj, Sahih Muslim, Kitab al-Zakah, bab "al-Kafaf wa al-Qana'ah," no. 1054, https://sunnah.com/muslim:1054.

[20]Yahya ibn Sharaf al-Nawawi, Al-Minhaj Sharh Sahih Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj (Beirut: Dar Ihya' al-Turath al-'Arabi, 1392 H), commentary on hadith no. 1054.

[21]Hala Abd Ellatif Elsayed, "Fear of Missing Out and Its Impact: Exploring Relationships with Social Media Use, Psychological Well-Being, and Academic Performance Among University Students," Frontiers in Psychology 16 (2025): 1582572, https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2025.1582572.

[22]Ida Ayu Nyoman Kartikawati, Seto Mulyadi, and Wahyu Rahardjo, "Fear of Missing Out and Problematic Internet Use: A Meta Analysis," Humanitas (Jurnal Psikologi) 8, no. 3 (2025): 289–302, https://doi.org/10.28932/humanitas.v8i3.10139.

and social comparison.[23]These two findings do not prove that qana'ah automatically functions as therapy, but they strengthen the rationale for testing "perceived sufficiency," or subjective sufficiency, as a mediator/protective factor in an empirical Muslim model. The novelty of PDAR here is to transform qana'ah from a moral slogan into a psychological hypothesis: the more stable the internal calibration of sufficiency, the weaker the need to use other people's activities as a continuous indicator of whether one's own life is enough.

Reorienting Social Comparison: From Upward Comparison to Comparison Recalibration

Social comparison theory explains that people evaluate their abilities and circumstances by comparing themselves with others, especially when objective standards are unavailable.[24]Social media expands this opportunity on an unprecedented scale and frequency. Users compare themselves not only with close friends, but also with celebrities, influencers, experts, colleagues, alumni, religious figures, and strangers whom algorithms display because their content is engaging. The problem is that digital content is generally selective: what is visible is what is worth posting, not the whole of life. As a result, upward comparison easily occurs against curated representations.

The relationship between social media and self-esteem has been demonstrated through social comparison mechanisms.[25]Studies of Facebook, envy, and depression likewise show that patterns of social consumption can be associated with envy and negative affective states.[26]Experimental and longitudinal evidence on passive Facebook use shows that how a platform is used, rather than merely having an account, is relevant to affective well-being.[27]In the domain of body image, Facebook exposure can trigger social comparison that influences mood and body image concerns.[28]Even the perception that others are "happier and having better

[23]Reina Okta Cahyani and Retno Pangestuti, "Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) dengan Social Comparison pada Mahasiswa Pengguna Instagram," Psikoislamika: Jurnal Psikologi dan Psikologi Islam 20, no. 1 (2023): 568–578, https://doi.org/10.18860/psikoislamika.v20i1.20567.

[24]Leon Festinger, "A Theory of Social Comparison Processes," Human Relations 7, no. 2 (1954): 117–140, https://doi.org/10.1177/001872675400700202.

[25]Erin A. Vogel, Jason P. Rose, Lindsay R. Roberts, and Katheryn Eckles, "Social Comparison, Social Media, and Self-Esteem," Psychology of Popular Media Culture 3, no. 4 (2014): 206–222, https://doi.org/10.1037/ppm0000047.

[26]Edson C. Tandoc Jr., Patrick Ferrucci, and Margaret Duffy, "Facebook Use, Envy, and Depression Among College Students: Is Facebooking Depressing?," Computers in Human Behavior 43 (2015): 139–146, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2014.10.053.

[27]Philippe Verduyn et al., "Passive Facebook Usage Undermines Affective Well-Being: Experimental and Longitudinal Evidence," Journal of Experimental Psychology: General 144, no. 2 (2015): 480–488, https://doi.org/10.1037/xge0000057.

[28]Jasmine Fardouly, Phillippa C. Diedrichs, Lenny R. Vartanian, and Emma Halliwell, "Social Comparisons on Social Media: The Impact of Facebook on Young Women's Body Image Concerns and Mood," Body Image 13 (2015): 38–45, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bodyim.2014.12.002.

lives" has long been identified in research on Facebook use.[29]Taken together, these findings explain why FoMO is often constructed through asymmetrical comparison.

A hadith in Sahih Muslim offers a strategy that appears simple but is mechanistically highly relevant: "انْظُرُوا إِلَى مَنْ أَسْفَلَ مِنْكُمْ، وَلاَ تَنْظُرُوا إِلَى مَنْ هُوَ فَوْقَكُمْ، فَهُوَ أَجْدَرُ أَنْ لاَ تَزْدَرُوا نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ" — look at those who are below you and do not look at those who are above you; that is more appropriate so that you do not belittle Allah's blessings upon you.[30]This hadith is not a universal prohibition against looking at people who are superior. Its context is worldly blessings and the tendency to belittle what one already possesses. Thus, its principal message is the regulation of the direction of comparison so that the comparison function does not become an engine of dissatisfaction.

This principle produces comparison recalibration, the second component of PDAR. Digital users are not required to reject all comparison, but to distinguish its domains. Upward comparison in wealth, lifestyle, access, popularity, and experiences can be recalibrated through awareness that digital feeds concentrate attention on other people's surplus, not on the overall distribution of blessings. Recalibration shifts the question from "why do I not have what they have?" to "am I evaluating what I already have fairly?" This is not a technique for denying reality, but a correction of the social sampling bias created by selective exposure.

Research on FoMO and social comparison reinforces this mechanism. Steinberger and Kim found mediating roles for social comparison of ability and FoMO in the relationship between well-being and social network site addiction.[31]Jabeen and colleagues likewise include comparison as an important part of the relationship between social media-induced FoMO and social media fatigue.[32]This relationship indicates that interventions that only reduce screen time without changing the logic of comparison may be inadequate. Users may spend less time on social media while still carrying the same external standards into self-evaluation.

Ghibtah as Aspirational Filtering

A hadith reading of FoMO would become overly moralistic if every impulse triggered by seeing other people's success were treated as hasad. The hadith

[29]H.-T. G. Chou and N. Edge, "'They Are Happier and Having Better Lives Than I Am': The Impact of Using Facebook on Perceptions of Others' Lives," Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking 15, no. 2 (2012): 117–121, https://doi.org/10.1089/cyber.2011.0324.

[30]Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj, Sahih Muslim, Kitab al-Zuhd wa al-Raqa'iq, no. 2963c, https://sunnah.com/muslim:2963c.

[31]Philipp Steinberger and Hyunji Kim, "Social Comparison of Ability and Fear of Missing Out Mediate the Relationship Between Subjective Well-Being and Social Network Site Addiction," Frontiers in Psychology 14 (2023): 1157489, https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1157489.

[32]Fauzia Jabeen, Anushree Tandon, Juthamon Sithipolvanichgul, Shalini Srivastava, and Amandeep Dhir, "Social Media-Induced Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) and Social Media Fatigue: The Role of Narcissism, Comparison and Disclosure," Journal of Business Research 159 (2023): 113693, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2023.113693.

tradition instead provides a more nuanced category through ghibtah: the desire to obtain a similar good without wishing for another person's blessing to disappear. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) stated that "there is no hasad except in two cases," namely, a person who is given wealth and spends it in truth, and a person who is given wisdom, judges by it, and teaches it.[33]The expression "la hasada illa fi ithnatayn" is understood by scholars as praiseworthy ghibtah, not destructive hasad. Ibn Hajar explains this distinction when discussing the use of the term hasad in a context that, in meaning, points to competition in goodness (munafasah).[34]

From this point, PDAR does not instruct users to become unambitious. The model offers aspirational filtering, namely filtering what is worthy of making someone say, "I want that too." Hadith shifts the object of imitation from possession as status to the use of blessings that produces value. Wealth is praised not because of its amount, but because it is spent rightly; wisdom is praised not because of its intellectual symbolism, but because it is practiced and taught. This logic is relevant to digital culture, which makes final outcomes far more visible than process, function, and responsibility.

FoMO can arise when someone sees friends attending events, obtaining positions, traveling, buying products, following trends, or receiving public recognition. Aspirational filtering asks two questions before a desire is internalized: does the object I desire have intrinsic value or merely social status, and do I desire its beneficial function or merely its visibility? These questions transform social comparison into moral selection rather than social withdrawal. They also make room for productive forms of FoMO: the fear of missing knowledge, good deeds, opportunities to help others, or professional quality can be directed into motivation if it is not accompanied by resentment of other people's success.

This distinction is important because research on FoMO shows a close relationship with desire thinking. Brandtner and Wegmann found a relationship between desire thinking and FoMO in the social media context, so FoMO can be understood not only as a response to information, but as a mental process that keeps the object of desire within attention.[35]Casale and colleagues also distinguish fear of missing out from fear of not being up to date, which may lead through different pathways toward problematic smartphone use.[36]Aspirational filtering works before the cycle of desire intensifies: not every update needs to be followed, not every

[33]Muhammad ibn Isma'il al-Bukhari, Sahih al-Bukhari, Kitab al-Zakah, no. 1409, https://sunnah.com/bukhari:1409.

[34]Ahmad ibn 'Ali Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani, Fath al-Bari bi Sharh Sahih al-Bukhari (Beirut: Dar al-Ma'rifah, 1379 H), commentary on Kitab al-Riqaq.

[35]Annika Brandtner and Elisa Wegmann, "The Fear in Desire: Linking Desire Thinking and Fear of Missing Out in the Social Media Context," BMC Psychology 11 (2023): 176, https://doi.org/10.1186/s40359-023-01216-0.

[36]Silvia Casale, Giulia Fioravanti, Francesca Gioia, and Valentina Boursier, "Fear of Missing Out and Fear of Not Being Up to Date: Investigating Different Pathways Towards Social and Process Problematic Smartphone Use," Current Psychology 42 (2023): 22847–22856, https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-022-03368-5.

opportunity must be taken, and not every other person's success needs to be converted into a personal standard.

Ghina al-Nafs and the De-Escalation of Desire in the Attention Economy

The third and fourth components of PDAR meet around the issue of desire. A hadith in Sahih al-Bukhari states: "لَيْسَ الْغِنَى عَنْ كَثْرَةِ الْعَرَضِ، وَلَكِنَّ الْغِنَى غِنَى النَّفْسِ" – richness is not an abundance of possessions; rather, true richness is richness of the soul.[37]This hadith shifts the center of value from external accumulation to an internal condition. The shift is highly relevant to FoMO because digital platforms make many forms of capital visible at once: economic, social, aesthetic, professional, experiential, and even spiritual capital. If the sense of being rich depends on relative position across all of these domains, users will almost certainly find reasons to feel lacking.

Ghina al-nafs does not negate material poverty or social inequality. Reading the hadith as meaning that "every lack is only a matter of mindset" would ignore structural realities. The function of the hadith in the context of FoMO is more specific: to protect self-evaluation from the demand for limitless accumulation. Another hadith uses a powerful anthropological hyperbole: if the son of Adam had two valleys of wealth, he would seek a third; in the end, nothing fills the human belly except dust.[38]Its message concerns the tendency of desire to normalize achievement and then immediately produce a new target. This mechanism resembles a digital form of "nextness": one notification is finished and another update appears; one trend is followed and another replaces it.

Contemporary research supports reading FoMO as a self-sustaining cycle. Meta-analytic studies strongly associate FoMO with mobile phone addiction.[39]Research by Sun and colleagues shows an association between FoMO and problematic mobile phone use, with roles played by factors such as self-control, social support, and future orientation.[40]Hattingh and colleagues connect social media-induced FoMO with fatigue through different mechanisms among Instagram and Snapchat users.[41]A 2025 cross-lagged study even shows a reciprocal

[37]Muhammad ibn Isma'il al-Bukhari, Sahih al-Bukhari, Kitab al-Riqaq, no. 6446, https://sunnah.com/bukhari:6446.

[38]Muhammad ibn Isma'il al-Bukhari, Sahih al-Bukhari, Kitab al-Riqaq, no. 6436, https://sunnah.com/bukhari:6436.

[39]Yali Zhang, Shijie Shang, Lixian Tian, Lijuan Zhu, and Weina Zhang, "The Association Between Fear of Missing Out and Mobile Phone Addiction: A Meta-Analysis," BMC Psychology 11 (2023): 338, https://doi.org/10.1186/s40359-023-01376-z.

[40]Changkang Sun, Binghai Sun, Yishan Lin, and Hui Zhou, "Problematic Mobile Phone Use Increases with the Fear of Missing Out Among College Students: The Effects of Self-Control, Perceived Social Support and Future Orientation," Psychology Research and Behavior Management 15 (2022): 1–8, https://doi.org/10.2147/PRBM.S345650.

[41]Marie Hattingh, Amandeep Dhir, Peter Ractham, Alberto Ferraris, and Dorra Yahiaoui, "Factors Mediating Social Media-Induced Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) and Social Media Fatigue: A Comparative Study Among Instagram and Snapchat Users," Technological Forecasting and Social Change 185 (2022): 122099, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techfore.2022.122099.

relationship between FoMO and social media fatigue, meaning fatigue is not always the end of the cycle; it can also reinforce the next phase of the process.[42]

These longitudinal findings are important for hadith theory. If FoMO and fatigue can form a feedback loop, the advice "do not be envious" is too narrow because it does not address the behavioral cycle. Desire de-escalation in PDAR seeks to break the automatic link among exposure, desire, checking, and the updating of standards. Ghina al-nafs provides an identity foundation, while the hadith of the two valleys functions as an ethical diagnosis of endless wanting. Users do not need to reject new goals, but they need to distinguish goals that are genuinely chosen from targets produced because the feed displays something new to pursue.

The context of short-video platforms further clarifies this problem. Research on Instagram and TikTok shows that usage patterns relate differently to problematic use and well-being depending on the form of engagement.[43]FoMO is also related to phubbing, namely ignoring face-to-face interaction because attention is drawn to a smartphone; a systematic review and meta-analysis support the association between FoMO and phubbing.[44]Consumer research identifies FoMO and smartphone addiction as predictors of phubbing behavior.[45]Ethically, this problem reveals a paradox: fear of missing something elsewhere can actually cause a person to miss the people or activities present directly before them.

This paradox underscores that the problem of FoMO does not always involve false content. Much content may be entirely true, yet attention can still become dysregulated if every social truth demands an immediate response. Therefore, a hadith-based model needs to move from content ethics toward attention ethics. The focus is not only "what is seen," but "how many things are allowed to demand attention, when, and for what purpose."

Attention Stewardship: Time, Presence, and the Right Not to Be Always Connected

The hadith concerning two blessings provides a foundation for attention stewardship: "نِعْمَتَانِ مَغْبُونٌ فِيهِمَا كَثِيرٌ مِنَ النَّاسِ: الصِّحَّةُ وَالْفَرَاغُ" — there are two blessings in which many people incur loss: health and leisure time.[46]The word maghbun comes

[42]Xue Yao et al., "Relationship Between Fear of Missing Out and Social Media Fatigue: Cross-Lagged Panel Design," Journal of Medical Internet Research 27 (2025): e75701, https://doi.org/10.2196/75701.

[43]Calanthe Hendrikse and Maria Limniou, "The Use of Instagram and TikTok in Relation to Problematic Use and Well-Being," Journal of Technology in Behavioral Science 9 (2024): 846–857, https://doi.org/10.1007/s41347-024-00399-6.

[44]Sameer Ansari, Ahmad Azeem, Irum Khan, and Naved Iqbal, "Association of Phubbing Behavior and Fear of Missing Out: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis," Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking 27, no. 7 (2024), https://doi.org/10.1089/cyber.2023.0761.

[45]Justin Paul et al., "'I Can't Look at You While Talking!'—Fear of Missing Out and Smartphone Addiction as Predictors of Consumer's Phubbing Behavior," Journal of Research in Interactive Marketing 18, no. 4 (2024): 666–687, https://doi.org/10.1108/JRIM-06-2023-0177.

[46]Muhammad ibn Isma'il al-Bukhari, Sahih al-Bukhari, Kitab al-Riqaq, no. 6412, https://sunnah.com/bukhari:6412.

from the semantic field of loss in transactions; a person possesses a valuable asset but trades it poorly. Applied conceptually to digital culture, time and attention are not empty spaces that must be continuously filled, but valuable trusts that can incur "loss" when surrendered without priority.

FoMO directly challenges this capacity because digital absence feels like an informational and social risk. Gioia and colleagues show that FoMO affects social networking site use through the dynamics of online relational closeness and online communication attitudes.[47]Koessmeier and Büttner show that social media distraction arises in diverse situations and is influenced by reasons for distraction and individual differences.[48]When users feel they must know other people's conversations, trends, and activities immediately, leisure time loses its reflective character and becomes a slot ready to be filled by notifications.

Attention stewardship, the fifth component of PDAR, changes this premise: not all available information has an equal right to attention. The hadith on health and leisure time does not provide a technical digital schedule, but it does provide a principle of valuation. Time must be spent with awareness that opportunity cost is real. Ten minutes spent checking a platform is not merely ten minutes of "use"; it can become fragmentation that changes the quality of work, worship, conversation, rest, or sleep. Accordingly, practices such as scheduling checking times, turning off non-essential notifications, reducing access while with family, and establishing device-free spaces can be understood not merely as productivity techniques, but as governance of the trust of attention.

Its relevance becomes even stronger because FoMO is related to the quality of rest. Recent Indonesian research links FoMO, screen-time duration, and sleep quality among university students.[49]Research on problematic use also shows that psychological context and self-control matter, so solutions cannot consist only of rigid time rules. Attention stewardship must be combined with sufficiency anchoring and desire de-escalation; if the sense of insufficiency remains high, technical restrictions can easily be broken because users continue to interpret disconnection as the loss of social opportunities.

Recent research also shows that peer pressure may be related to FoMO through the mechanism of self-authenticity.[50]This finding extends attention

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[47]Francesca Gioia, Giulia Fioravanti, Silvia Casale, and Valentina Boursier, "The Effects of the Fear of Missing Out on People's Social Networking Sites Use During the COVID-19 Pandemic: The Mediating Role of Online Relational Closeness and Individuals' Online Communication Attitude," Frontiers in Psychiatry 12 (2021): 620442, https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyt.2021.620442.

[48]Claudia Koessmeier and Oliver B. Büttner, "Why Are We Distracted by Social Media? Distraction Situations and Strategies, Reasons for Distraction, and Individual Differences," Frontiers in Psychology 12 (2021): 711416, https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.711416.

[49]Muchlisah et al., "Fear of Missing Out (FoMO): Durasi Screentime dan Kualitas Tidur pada Mahasiswa dan Mahasiswi," Jurnal Sipakalebbi 10, no. 1 (2026), https://doi.org/10.24252/sipakalebbi.v10i1.68164.

[50]H. Li and X. Ji, "Peer Pressure and Fear of Missing Out Among University Students in the Social Media Environment: The Influence Mechanism of Self-Authenticity," BMC Psychology (2026), https://doi.org/10.1186/s40359-026-04952-1.

stewardship into a question of authority over life choices. Users need the ability to say "I am not joining" without regarding absence as a threat to identity. The quality of feeling sufficient (ghina al-nafs) and qana'ah provides the basis for remaining true to oneself. A person does not have to follow every trend, because self-worth is not determined by how actively one participates socially.

The Prophetic Desire–Attention Regulation Model and Its Contribution

Table 1. Prophetic Desire–Attention Regulation (PDAR) Matrix

PDAR Mechanism	Hadith Basis	FoMO Mechanism Corrected	Operational Implications
Sufficiency anchoring	Qana'ah and kafaf (Muslim 1054)	Perceived insufficiency and external standards of sufficiency	Establish sufficiency indicators before exposure and distinguish needs from status
Comparison recalibration	Looking at those below in worldly matters (Muslim 2963c)	Upward social comparison that belittles one's own blessings	Audit the direction of comparison and neutralize the bias of curated feeds
Aspirational filtering	Ghibtah regarding wealth used rightly and wisdom (Bukhari 1409)	Status imitation and fear of not being up to date	Select objects of aspiration based on benefit, process, and responsibility
Desire de-escalation	Ghina al-nafs and the two valleys of wealth (Bukhari 6446; 6436)	Desire thinking and endless wanting	Stop target escalation before it becomes compulsive checking
Attention stewardship	Health and leisure time (Bukhari 6412)	Continuous connectivity and attention fragmentation	Schedule connectivity, limit notifications, and protect time for presence

The synthesis of the study produces the Prophetic Desire–Attention Regulation (PDAR) model. The model begins from the assumption that problematic FoMO emerges when four systems mutually reinforce one another: standards of sufficiency become external, social comparison tends upward, desire is difficult to de-escalate, and attention is continually pulled toward the possibility of experiences elsewhere. Hadith does not operate as a list of prohibitions against platforms, but

as a counter-architecture that regulates these points. PDAR consists of five interrelated mechanisms.

First, sufficiency anchoring positions qana'ah as the capacity to establish a sense of enough without stopping growth. Second, comparison recalibration regulates the direction of worldly comparison so that blessings are not evaluated only through those who possess more. Third, aspirational filtering distinguishes productive ghibtah from status imitation; users may be inspired, but objects of aspiration should be filtered according to benefit rather than visibility. Fourth, desire de-escalation uses ghina al-nafs and the hadith critique of endless wanting to halt the normalization of continually shifting targets. Fifth, attention stewardship positions time and health as assets with opportunity costs. Together, these five mechanisms make PDAR broader than digital detox because it regulates the reasons for being connected, not merely the duration of connection.

The model also avoids a dichotomy between religion and psychology. FoMO remains treated as a psychological construct that must be measured with valid instruments. Hadith functions to provide normative orientation and mechanistic hypotheses. For example, future research can test whether qana'ah or ghina al-nafs moderates the relationship between upward comparison and FoMO; whether aspirational filtering reduces envy without lowering achievement motivation; or whether attention stewardship increases the effectiveness of notification-reduction strategies. With such a design, religious values are not merely positioned as a general religiosity variable, but translated into specific testable processes.

PDAR can also explain why the number of social connections is not identical with satisfaction. Research by Ozimek and colleagues shows that having more social media friends does not automatically produce life satisfaction when FoMO is involved.[51]On the other hand, media use can still serve a positive relational function when undertaken with clear purposes. Therefore, PDAR does not recommend digital isolation. The model rejects two extremes: hyper-connectivity that makes users feel constantly left behind and withdrawal that treats all platforms as harmful.

The implication for Islamic education is the need to teach qana'ah as an evaluative competence, not merely as a definition of moral character. Learners can be trained to analyze a feed: what is selected for display, what standard of life is produced, what emotions arise, and whether the urge to follow something comes from values or social pressure. Digital da'wah also needs to avoid practices that actually produce religious FoMO through decontextualized symbolic competition, for example by turning every religious achievement into a display that measures piety socially. Ghibtah can be cultivated, but it should be directed toward benefit and process.

The implications for digital health are preventive rather than clinical. Findings that FoMO is associated with anxiety, depression, problematic smartphone use,

[51]Phillip Ozimek, Linda-Elisabeth Reimann, Julia Brailovskaia, Hans-Werner Bierhoff, and Elke Rohmann, "More Social Media Friends, More Life Satisfaction?—Why Fear of Missing Out Leads to Contrary Effects," Current Psychology 43 (2024): 32388–32398, https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-024-06778-9.

social media fatigue, and phubbing indicate the need for multilayered interventions, but PDAR does not replace psychological services when symptoms have already disrupted functioning.[52]Its role is closer to value-based digital literacy and self-regulation. For Muslim users, this framework may enhance cultural fit because the concepts of sufficiency, intention, ghibtah, and the trust of time already possess strong normative resonance.

The most recent research emphasizes that FoMO is not static. Trait and state FoMO can be distinguished, the need to belong and active social media use can affect its pathways, and social context also determines the intensity of the experience.[53]Therefore, the effectiveness of PDAR is likely to vary across individuals. Users with situational FoMO may be sufficiently helped by comparison recalibration and attention stewardship, whereas those with more persistent vulnerability may need more comprehensive psychological support. This boundary is important so that hadith is not used to blame individuals for conditions that require professional care.

The theoretical contribution of this article lies in the shift from moral labeling toward mechanism-based hadith ethics. FoMO is not uniformly labeled as hasad; it is mapped into problems of sufficiency, comparison, aspiration, desire, and attention. Each mechanism is then paired with the hadith whose normative function is most relevant. This approach enables hadith studies to address contemporary phenomena without claiming historical identity, while also offering digital psychology normative concepts that can be operationalized.

CONCLUSION

Fear of Missing Out in digital culture is a phenomenon more complex than the fear of "not following the trend." The literature shows its relationships with social needs, upward social comparison, problematic smartphone/social media use, fatigue, phubbing, desire thinking, and various indicators of well-being. This article shows that a hadith perspective can make a strong contribution when it does not stop at moral labeling. Hadiths concerning qana'ah, ghina al-nafs, the direction of comparison, ghibtah, the boundlessness of desire, health, and time form an ethical architecture that regulates how people assess sufficiency and distribute attention.

The Prophetic Desire–Attention Regulation (PDAR) model formulates this architecture into five mechanisms. Sufficiency anchoring stabilizes the measure of enough; comparison recalibration corrects upward-comparison bias; aspirational filtering distinguishes value-based inspiration from status imitation; desire de-escalation interrupts the escalation of endless targets; and attention stewardship protects time and presence from the demands of permanent connectivity. The five

[52]Jon D. Elhai, Haibo Yang, and Christian Montag, "Fear of Missing Out (FOMO): Overview, Theoretical Underpinnings, and Literature Review on Relations with Severity of Negative Affectivity and Problematic Technology Use," Brazilian Journal of Psychiatry 43, no. 2 (2021): 203–209, https://doi.org/10.1590/1516-4446-2020-0870.

[53]Lihua Zuo, Jian Mao, Lili Yang, Haini Wang, and Zihan Xie, "From Self-Construal to Trait- and State-Fear of Missing Out: The Roles of Need to Belong and Active Social Media Use," Frontiers in Psychology 17 (2026): 1743687, https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2026.1743687.

components operate as a single system: notification restrictions will be fragile without a sense of sufficiency, qana'ah can lose practical force without attention governance, and social comparison need not be eliminated if aspirations can be ethically filtered.

The novelty of this study lies in formulating hadith as a mechanism-based normative framework for FoMO, rather than as a literal analogy to modern psychological terminology. The model opens a new empirical agenda, for example developing a sufficiency anchoring scale, testing qana'ah and ghina al-nafs as moderators of the social comparison–FoMO relationship, and conducting value-based attention stewardship experiments. Its limitation is its conceptual and library-research nature, so the effectiveness of PDAR cannot yet be concluded before testing it across different populations of digital users. Future research can combine FoMO psychometrics with more specific indicators of religiosity, ecological momentary assessment, or notification-regulation experiments to assess whether PDAR mechanisms genuinely improve digital well-being.

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