

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FEAR OF MISSING OUT (FoMO) AND LEARNING MOTIVATION AMONG BIOLOGY EDUCATION STUDENTS OF THE 2023 COHORT AT THE FACULTY OF TARBIYAH AND TEACHER TRAINING UIN ALAUDDIN MAKASSAR

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Article History

Received: 27-06-2026

Revision: 21-07-2026

Accepted: 26-07-2026

Published: 30-07-2026

Abstract. This study aims to analyze the level of Fear of Missing Out (FoMO), learning motivation, and the relationship between the two in students of the Biology Education Study Program, class of 2023, Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training, UIN Alauddin Makassar. The study used a quantitative approach with a correlational design. The study subjects were 49 students selected through a saturated sampling technique. Data were collected using a Likert scale questionnaire and analyzed through descriptive statistics and Spearman's rho correlation. The results showed that students had a high level of FoMO and very high learning motivation. Although there was a tendency for a positive relationship between FoMO and learning motivation, the strength of the relationship was very weak ($r = 0.070$) and not statistically significant ($p = 0.630 > 0.05$). These findings indicate that students' FoMO levels were not significantly related to their learning motivation. Thus, the high level of student learning motivation in this study cannot be explained by FoMO levels, so it is likely influenced by other factors not analyzed in this study.

Keywords: Fear of Missing Out (FoMO), Learning Motivation, Biology Education.

Abstrak. Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis tingkat *Fear of Missing Out* (FoMO), motivasi belajar, serta hubungan antara keduanya pada mahasiswa Program Studi Pendidikan Biologi angkatan 2023 Fakultas Tarbiyah dan Keguruan UIN Alauddin Makassar. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan desain korelasional. Subjek penelitian berjumlah 49 mahasiswa yang dipilih melalui teknik *sampling jenuh*. Data dikumpulkan menggunakan kuesioner skala Likert dan dianalisis melalui statistik deskriptif serta korelasi Spearman's rho. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa mahasiswa memiliki tingkat FoMO yang tinggi dan motivasi belajar yang sangat tinggi. Meskipun terdapat kecenderungan hubungan positif antara FoMO dan motivasi belajar, kekuatan hubungan tersebut sangat lemah ($r = 0,070$) dan tidak signifikan secara statistik ($p = 0,630 > 0,05$). Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa tingkat FoMO mahasiswa tidak berkaitan secara bermakna dengan motivasi belajar mereka. Dengan demikian, tingginya motivasi belajar mahasiswa dalam penelitian ini tidak dapat dijelaskan oleh tingkat FoMO, sehingga kemungkinan dipengaruhi oleh faktor lain yang tidak dianalisis dalam penelitian ini.

Kata Kunci: *Fear of Missing Out* (FoMO), Motivasi Belajar, Pendidikan Biologi

How to Cite: Amelia, N., Taufiq, A. U., & Hamansah. (2026). The Relationship Between Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) and Learning Motivation Among Biology Education Students of the 2023 Cohort at the Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training UIN Alauddin Makassar. *PEDAGOGIC: Indonesian Journal of Science Education and Technology*, 6 (4), 2768-2780. <http://doi.org/10.54373/ijset.v6i4.6767>

INTRODUCTION

Rapid advances in science, technology, and globalization have transformed the academic and social environment of higher education. University students are required not only to achieve academic competence but also to adapt to dynamic social and technological changes. These demands make students increasingly exposed to academic competition, social comparison, and expectations to participate in various academic and social activities. Consequently, the psychological conditions experienced by students may influence their engagement and motivation in learning (Fitriana, 2019; Hazlinda et al., 2023; Ramadhan, 2025; Sinaga et al., 2025).

The development of digital technology and social media has further intensified students' exposure to information about the activities, achievements, and experiences of others. This condition has contributed to the emergence of *Fear of Missing Out* (FoMO), defined as a persistent concern that others may be experiencing rewarding events without one's participation. Students experiencing FoMO tend to monitor social media and online information continuously, maintain constant social connectivity, and compare their experiences with those of others. Such conditions may affect students' psychological well-being, self-confidence, concentration, and ability to regulate their behavior (Amadea et al., 2023; Adi et al., 2025).

The presence of FoMO is particularly relevant to students' learning motivation. Learning motivation is an important factor that encourages students to engage in academic activities, persist when facing difficulties, and achieve learning goals. However, a strong tendency to remain connected to social networks and monitor the activities of others may divert students' attention from academic responsibilities. Previous studies have associated FoMO with reduced self-regulation, decreased learning interest, academic procrastination, impaired concentration, and lower intrinsic motivation (Afnita et al., 2023; Chyquitita, 2024). These findings suggest that FoMO may be related to students' motivation to learn, although the nature and strength of this relationship may vary across educational contexts.

The relationship between FoMO and learning motivation is particularly important to examine among Biology Education students. Students in this program are required to master scientific knowledge, pedagogical competence, and technological skills while completing various academic tasks and participating in social or organizational activities. These multiple demands may create conditions in which the desire to remain socially connected competes with students' academic responsibilities. Moreover, students in the 2023 cohort are generally in the developmental stage of late adolescence or early adulthood, a period in which social belonging

and recognition remain important psychological needs. This combination of academic demands and social pressures may make the relationship between FoMO and learning motivation particularly relevant to investigate (Budiono et al., 2022; Laurence & Temple, 2023; Udin et al., 2024).

Previous studies have examined FoMO in relation to social media use, self-esteem, academic achievement, psychological well-being, and academic performance (Daffanur et al., 2025; Made et al., 2023; Pujiastuti et al., 2025). However, most studies have focused on the psychological or behavioral consequences of FoMO, while empirical research specifically examining its relationship with learning motivation among Biology Education students remains limited. In addition, the relationship between FoMO and learning motivation cannot necessarily be generalized across different student populations because it may be influenced by academic characteristics, educational environments, and students' social contexts. Therefore, this study offers a more specific examination of the relationship between FoMO and learning motivation among Biology Education students of the 2023 cohort at the Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training, Alauddin State Islamic University of Makassar.

Based on this research gap, this study aims to analyze the level of *Fear of Missing Out* (FoMO), the level of learning motivation, and the relationship between FoMO and learning motivation among Biology Education students of the 2023 cohort at the Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training, Alauddin State Islamic University of Makassar. The novelty of this study lies in its focus on examining the relationship between these two variables within the specific context of Biology Education students, rather than examining FoMO solely in relation to social media use or general psychological well-being. The findings are expected to provide empirical evidence regarding the extent to which FoMO is associated with students' learning motivation and to serve as a basis for developing academic guidance and counseling strategies that support student engagement and well-being.

METHOD

This study employed a quantitative correlational design to examine the relationship between *Fear of Missing Out* (FoMO) and learning motivation among Biology Education students of the 2023 cohort at the Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training, Alauddin State Islamic University of Makassar. The research was conducted in the Biology Education Study Program at UIN Alauddin Makassar, South Sulawesi, Indonesia. The population consisted of 49 students from the 2023 cohort, comprising 24 students from Class A and 25 students from Class B. The respondents were students enrolled in the Biology Education Study Program

during the 2023 academic cohort and were selected because they shared the same academic program and cohort characteristics. Due to the relatively small population size, a saturated sampling technique was employed, involving all 49 students as research participants. The study adhered to research ethics principles, including academic honesty, objectivity, transparency, responsibility, accuracy, and respect for scholarly work.

Data were collected through online questionnaires administered using Google Forms. The instruments consisted of a FoMO scale and a learning motivation scale, both using a four-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The FoMO questionnaire consisted of 14 valid items representing three indicators: fear, worry, and anxiety. The learning motivation questionnaire consisted of 13 valid items covering intrinsic and extrinsic motivational dimensions, including the desire to succeed, learning needs, future aspirations, learning appreciation, and a conducive learning environment. Content validity was established through expert judgment involving two validators, with both instruments achieving very valid categories. Empirical validity testing confirmed 14 valid FoMO items and 13 valid learning motivation items. Reliability testing using Cronbach's Alpha yielded coefficients of 0.839 for the FoMO instrument and 0.876 for the learning motivation instrument, indicating high internal consistency.

Data analysis was conducted systematically using SPSS. First, the collected questionnaire data were examined to ensure completeness and consistency before analysis. Second, descriptive statistical analysis was performed to calculate the scores, frequency distributions, percentages, and categories of FoMO and learning motivation. Third, prerequisite testing was conducted using the Shapiro–Wilk normality test and a linearity test. The normality test indicated that the data were not normally distributed. Therefore, the relationship between FoMO and learning motivation was tested using Spearman's rho correlation, a nonparametric correlation technique appropriate for non-normally distributed data. The analysis examined the direction and strength of the relationship between the two variables. Statistical significance was determined at the 0.05 level, with a *p*-value below 0.05 indicating a statistically significant relationship. The correlation coefficient was subsequently interpreted based on established criteria for the strength of the relationship.

RESULTS

Data on FoMO levels amongst Biology Education students from the 2023 intake are divided into four categories, with 28 students falling into the ‘high’ category (57.14%)—the highest percentage; the ‘very high’ category comprises 14 students (28.57%); the ‘moderate’ category comprises 6 students (12.24%); whilst the low FoMO category comprises 1 student (2.04%). There are no students in the low category.

Table 1. Results categorization FoMO

Criteria	Interval	Category	F	Persent
$X \leq \mu - 1.5\sigma$	$X \leq 24,5$	Sangat Rendah	0	0%
$\mu - 1.5\sigma < X \leq \mu - 0.5\sigma$	$24,5 < X \leq 31,5$	Rendah	1	2,04%
$\mu - 1.5\sigma < X \leq \mu + 0.5\sigma$	$31,5 < X \leq 38,5$	Sedang	6	12,24%
$\mu + 1.5\sigma < X \leq \mu + 0.5\sigma$	$38,5 < X \leq 45,5$	Tinggi	28	57,14%
$X > \mu + 1.5\sigma$	$X > 45,5$	Sangat Tinggi	14	28,57%
Amount			49	100%

Data on the learning motivation of Biology Education students from the 2023 intake is divided into three categories, with the highest percentage being in the ‘very high’ category, comprising 37 students (75.51 per cent); the ‘high’ category comprises 9 students (18.37 per cent); and the ‘moderate’ category comprises 3 students (6.12 per cent). Meanwhile, there were no students in the ‘very low’ or ‘low’ categories.

Tabel 2. Results categorization learning motivation

Criteria	Interval	Category	F	Persent
$X \leq \mu - 1.5\sigma$	$X \leq 22,75$	Sangat Rendah	0	0%
$\mu - 1.5\sigma < X \leq \mu - 0.5\sigma$	$22,75 < X \leq 29,25$	Rendah	0	0%
$\mu - 1.5\sigma < X \leq \mu + 0.5\sigma$	$29,25 < X \leq 35,75$	Sedang	3	6,12%
$\mu + 1.5\sigma < X \leq \mu + 0.5\sigma$	$35,75 < X \leq 42,45$	Tinggi	9	18,37%
$X > \mu + 1.5\sigma$	$X > 42,25$	Sangat Tinggi	37	75,51%
Amount			49	100%

Prior to hypothesis testing, normality and linearity tests were conducted to determine the suitability of the data for correlation analysis. The normality test was performed using the Shapiro–Wilk test because the sample size consisted of 49 respondents. The results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Results of the Shapiro–Wilk Normality Test

Variable	Statistic	df	Sig.
Fear of Missing Out (FoMO)	0.982	49	0.663
Learning Motivation	0.910	49	0.001

The results indicate that the FoMO variable was normally distributed ($p = 0.663 > 0.05$), whereas the learning motivation variable was not normally distributed ($p = 0.001 < 0.05$). Since one variable did not meet the normality assumption, a non-parametric statistical approach was employed using Spearman's rho correlation analysis. A linearity test was subsequently conducted to examine whether a linear relationship existed between FoMO and learning motivation.

Table 4. Results of the Linearity Test

ANOVA Table	F	Sig.
Linearity	0.476	0.495
Deviation from Linearity	1.275	0.273

The significance value for deviation from linearity was greater than 0.05 ($p = 0.273$), indicating no significant deviation from linearity. Therefore, the relationship between the two variables can be considered linear and suitable for further correlation analysis. Hypothesis testing was performed using Spearman's rho correlation to examine the relationship between FoMO and learning motivation.

Table 5. Spearman's rho Correlation Between FoMO and Learning Motivation

Variable	Correlation Coefficient	Sig. (2-tailed)	N
FoMO ↔ Learning Motivation	0.070	0.630	49

The analysis revealed a positive but very weak correlation between FoMO and learning motivation ($r = 0.070$). However, the significance value exceeded the 0.05 threshold ($p = 0.630$), indicating that the relationship was not statistically significant. These findings suggest that FoMO was not significantly associated with learning motivation among Biology Education students of the 2023 cohort. Therefore, the research hypothesis stating that there is a relationship between FoMO and learning motivation was rejected.

DISCUSSION

Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) Among Biology Education Students of the 2023 Cohort

The findings indicate that most students exhibited moderate to high levels of FoMO, reflecting concerns about being left behind in academic information, achievements, and learning activities. FoMO may function as a psychological drive that encourages students to remain engaged in academic environments and maintain competitiveness among peers. Previous studies have shown that the desire to keep up with others can increase academic engagement and participation (Alt, 2015). In line with the conceptualization of FoMO as a need to stay connected with important experiences, students may become more active in seeking

information, participating in academic activities, and maintaining their academic standing (Przybylski et al., 2013).

Students with higher FoMO tendencies generally demonstrate stronger involvement in academic activities because of their need for belonging and recognition within peer groups. Similar findings reported that FoMO and peer influence may encourage participation in academic and skill-development activities (Zhou et al., 2025). Nevertheless, FoMO may also generate emotional pressure and difficulties in prioritizing tasks. Research suggests that FoMO has a dual-edged effect, positively predicting learning engagement while simultaneously reducing self-control and psychological balance (Kong et al., 2024). FoMO is therefore associated not only with academic participation but also with emotional tension, social comparison, and the need for social connectedness (Bajwa et al., 2023; Franchina et al., 2018). Effective self-regulation is needed to ensure that FoMO functions as an adaptive motivation rather than a source of psychological distress (Rozgonjuk, et al., 2020).

Learning Motivation Among Biology Education Students of the 2023 Cohort

The findings indicate that students in the Biology Education Study Program of the 2023 cohort generally demonstrated high learning motivation. This condition may be related to the academic characteristics and learning demands of the program. As Biology Education students, they are required to engage not only with theoretical biological concepts but also with practical activities, scientific investigations, laboratory work, and the development of pedagogical competencies. These varied academic demands may encourage students to maintain consistent engagement in learning and develop persistence in completing academic tasks. In addition, as students in the same cohort and study program, they share similar academic experiences, learning environments, and curricular demands, which may contribute to the development of relatively strong learning motivation.

The high level of motivation may also be associated with students' orientation toward their future professional roles as prospective biology teachers. The need to master biological knowledge and pedagogical skills may encourage students to view learning activities as relevant to their future careers. This career orientation can strengthen students' willingness to achieve academically and persist in facing academic challenges. The finding is consistent with McClelland's Need for Achievement theory, which explains that individuals with a strong need for achievement tend to set goals, direct their efforts toward success, and persist in completing challenging tasks (Pang & Schultheiss, 2005). It is also consistent with previous research indicating that learning motivation is associated with academic performance and learning

outcomes (Maharani et al., 2025). Nevertheless, the high motivation identified in this study should be understood within the specific context of Biology Education students and may reflect the interaction between students' academic demands, professional aspirations, and learning environment rather than being solely attributable to general motivational factors.

The Relationship Between Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) and Learning Motivation

The correlation analysis revealed a positive but very weak and statistically insignificant relationship between *Fear of Missing Out* (FoMO) and learning motivation among Biology Education students of the 2023 cohort ($r = 0.070$, $p = 0.630$). This finding indicates that the tendency to experience FoMO was not systematically associated with students' learning motivation in this research context. Although students generally reported high levels of both FoMO and learning motivation, the two conditions did not vary together in a consistent pattern. Thus, students with higher FoMO were not necessarily more or less motivated to learn than students with lower FoMO. This finding challenges the assumption that the psychological pressure to remain socially connected automatically influences students' academic motivation.

The absence of a significant relationship is theoretically plausible because FoMO and learning motivation represent different psychological domains. FoMO primarily reflects concerns related to social exclusion, social connectedness, and awareness of others' experiences, whereas learning motivation is more directly associated with academic goals, achievement needs, self-regulation, and the perceived value of learning. Consequently, the presence of FoMO may influence students' online behavior or social engagement without necessarily changing their motivation to complete academic tasks. This interpretation is consistent with previous research suggesting that the relationship between FoMO and academic engagement is limited when other factors, such as self-control, learning strategies, and intrinsic motivation, play a more dominant role in shaping academic behavior (Agustin & Permatasari, 2020). Similarly, research has shown that FoMO does not necessarily become a primary determinant of academic performance (Elsayed, 2025).

The finding also differs from studies that associate FoMO with negative academic consequences, including reduced concentration, procrastination, and declining academic engagement. This difference suggests that the impact of FoMO may be context-dependent rather than universal. Among the Biology Education students examined in this study, academic demands and professional aspirations may have provided a relatively stable basis for learning motivation, allowing students to remain academically engaged despite experiencing concerns about missing social or informational experiences. In addition, students may have developed

strategies to manage social media use and academic responsibilities, thereby weakening the potential connection between FoMO and learning motivation. This interpretation is consistent with findings that students may maintain effective academic engagement when supported by self-discipline, intrinsic motivation, and a favorable learning environment (Nurrahmi et al., 2025).

Several methodological and contextual factors should also be considered when interpreting the non-significant result. First, the relatively small sample, consisting of 49 students from a single study program and cohort, limits the variability and generalizability of the findings. Restricted variation in respondents' FoMO and learning motivation scores may weaken the correlation coefficient, even when a theoretical relationship may exist in a broader population (Osborne, 2002). Second, the use of self-report questionnaires may introduce response bias, including social desirability and self-enhancement, which can reduce the accuracy of reported psychological conditions (Ones, 2010). Third, the use of a correlational design does not allow causal conclusions regarding whether FoMO influences learning motivation. Therefore, the finding should not be interpreted as evidence that FoMO has no relevance to students' academic behavior in general, but rather that no statistically significant relationship was identified within the specific population and measurement conditions of this study.

Overall, the findings indicate that FoMO should not be treated as a primary explanatory factor for learning motivation among the Biology Education students studied. The very weak relationship suggests that students' motivation to learn is likely shaped more strongly by academic and motivational factors such as intrinsic motivation, self-regulation, achievement orientation, academic support, and perceived relevance of learning to future professional goals (Goertzen & Cribbie, 2010). The practical implication is that efforts to strengthen students' learning motivation should not focus solely on reducing FoMO or social media engagement. Instead, educational interventions should prioritize the development of self-regulated learning, academic goal orientation, and supportive learning environments. Future research should involve larger and more diverse samples and consider testing mediating or moderating variables, such as self-control, social media use intensity, self-efficacy, and self-regulated learning, to provide a more comprehensive explanation of how FoMO may be related to students' academic motivation.

CONCLUSION

The findings indicate that Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) among Biology Education students of the 2023 cohort was generally at a high level. This suggests that many students experienced a strong concern about missing information, activities, or experiences involving others. However, the high level of FoMO did not necessarily translate into higher learning motivation. The learning motivation of the respondents was generally in the very high category, indicating strong enthusiasm, persistence, and commitment toward academic activities. This condition may be related to students' academic demands and professional orientation as prospective Biology teachers. The correlation analysis showed a positive but very weak and statistically insignificant relationship between FoMO and learning motivation. Therefore, FoMO was not identified as a significant factor associated with learning motivation among Biology Education students of the 2023 cohort. These findings suggest that students' learning motivation is likely influenced more strongly by other factors, such as intrinsic motivation, self-regulation, academic goals, and the learning environment.

RECOMMENDATIONS

More broadly, this study offers practical and theoretical implications that can serve as an empirical foundation for future researchers to deepen their analysis of similar phenomena on a broader scale, taking into account other variables that may play a greater role as mediators or moderators. This study is expected to contribute to accelerating the development of knowledge regarding the relationship between FoMO and learning motivation among Biology Education students, thereby enriching existing empirical data in a more in-depth and comprehensive manner serving as a basis for comparison, a complement, and a reinforcement of the theoretical framework.

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