

Look At What They're Doing! Does the Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) mediate the
Relationship Between Self-Esteem and Psychological Distress?

Shannen Aungiers

BPsych (Hons)

This thesis is presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of
Clinical Psychology, School of Psychology, University of Newcastle, Australia.

August 2021

Declarations Statement of Originality

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text. I give consent to the final version of my thesis being made available worldwide when deposited in the University's Digital Repository, subject to the provisions of the Copyright Act 1968.

Acknowledgement of Collaboration

I hereby certify that the work embodied in this thesis has been done in collaboration with other researchers. I have included as part of this thesis a statement clearly outlining the extent of collaboration, with whom and under what auspices.

I contributed to the research question, statistical analysis and the interpretation of results. Dr Nicholas Harris was responsible for the development of the survey, submitting the initial application to the Ethics Committee, data collection, reimbursements of participants, and data screening.

Acknowledgements

Firstly, I would like to express my sincerest gratitude and appreciation to Dr Nicholas Harris, because without his patience, guidance and ongoing support this study would have not been possible. I would also like to thank my supervisor, Professor Ross Wilkinson for his generosity and support throughout this study.

Lastly, I would like to express my deepest thanks to my family, friends and partner who have all supported and encouraged me over the past two years. I am forever grateful to be surrounded by such wonderful and wholesome people.

Statement of Authorship

I hereby certify that the work embodied in this thesis contains a manuscript of which I

am a joint author. I have included as part of the thesis a written statement, endorsed by my supervisor, attesting to my contribution to the joint work.

Signed:

Shannen Aungiers

Master of Clinical Psychology (Research Student)

Date: 10.09.2021

A/Prof. Ross Wilkinson

Research Supervisor

Date: 10.09.2021

Table of Contents

Thesis Title Page.....	1
Declarations	2
Acknowledgements	2
List of Tables	5
List of Figures	6
Formatting Style Used in This Thesis	6
Journal Title Page	7
Journal Declarations	8
Abstract	9
Look What They're Doing! The Mediating Effect of FOMO Between Psychological Distress and Self-Esteem	10
FOMO and Social Media	11
FOMO as a Broader Construct	13
FOMO and Mental Health	14
Self-Esteem	15
FOMO and Self-Esteem	16
The Current Study.....	17
Method	18
Participants	18
Measures.....	19
Procedure	20
Results	20
Data Screening	20
Descriptive Statistics, Factor Analysis and Correlations	21

Mediation Analysis	22
FOMO, Self- Esteem and Psychological Distress.....	22
Pathway One (FOMO Mediates the Relationship Between Self-Esteem and Distress).....	22
Pathway Two (Self-Esteem Mediates the Relationship Between FOMO and Distress).....	23
Discussion	24
Relationships Between FOMO, Self-Esteem and Psychological Distress	24
The Mediating Role of FOMO Between Self-Esteem and Psychological Distress.....	26
Pathway One (FOMO Mediates the Relationship Between Self-Esteem and Distress).....	26
Pathway Two (Self-Esteem Mediates the Relationship Between FOMO and Distress).....	27
Limitations	29
Strengths	32
Conclusions	32
References	34
Tables.....	44
Figures.....	46
Appendix A: Journal Submission Requirements.....	50
Appendix B: Ethics Approval.....	52
Appendix C: FOMO Scale.....	55
Appendix D: Self-Esteem Scale.....	56
Appendix E: Depression, Anxiety, Stress Scale	57
Appendix F: Participant Information Form	58
Appendix G: Mediation Effects.....	60

Formatting Style Used in This Thesis

This thesis is formatted according to the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, seventh edition*. The manuscript was formatted for submission to the Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology in line with the submission guidelines and instructions for authors which are contained in the Appendix (please see Appendix A).

Look At What They're Doing! Does the Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) Mediate the
Relationship Between Self-Esteem and Psychological Distress?

Ms Shannen Aungiers^{1*}, Ross B. Wilkinson¹ & Nicholas C. Harris¹

School of Psychological Sciences

1. School of Psychological Sciences, University Drive, Callaghan, NSW, 2308.

Australia

*Corresponding Author: Shannen Aungiers, School of Psychological Sciences, University
Drive, Callaghan, NSW, 2308. Email: C3164111@uon.edu.au