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Project Dissertation Report

Effect of FOMO on Financial Decision-Making and Spending Behaviour Among College Students

Submitted By

Aastha Jain

2K23/DMBA/02

Under The Guidance

Dr Yashdeep Singh

Assistant Professor



DELHI SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the research report titled “Effect of FOMO on Financial Decision-Making and Spending Behaviour Among College Students” has been successfully completed by Aastha Jain (2K23/DMBA/02), a student of the MBA program (2023-2025) at Delhi School of Management, Delhi Technological University under the supervision of Dr. Yashdeep Singh.

The research undertaken by the student is an original work, conducted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the MBA degree. The findings, analysis, and conclusions presented in this report reflect the student's understanding of the subject matter and their research capabilities.

We hereby acknowledge the successful completion of the research work and commend the efforts of the student.

Date:

Place: Delhi School of Management, Delhi Technological University

Dr. Yashdeep Singh

Assistant Professor

Delhi School of Management,

Delhi Technological University

DECLARATION

I, Aastha Jain, a student of Delhi School of Management, Delhi Technological University, hereby declare that the project report titled “Effect of FOMO on Financial Decision-Making and Spending Behaviour Among College Students” is the result of my independent research work carried out under the guidance of Dr. Yashdeep Singh, Assistant Professor, Delhi School of Management.

1 The data, analysis, and findings presented in this report are original and have not been submitted previously to any other institution or university for the award of any degree, diploma, or certificate. Wherever references from existing literature or secondary data have been used, they have been duly acknowledged.

27 This report is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the Master of Business Administration (MBA) program at Delhi Technological University.

Aastha Jain

2K23/DMBA/02

MBA (2023–2025)

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Aastha Jain

2K23/DMBA/02

MBA (2023–2025)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This research investigates the impact of the Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) on the financial decision-making and spending behavior of college students in India. In a digital era where social media constantly showcases peer lifestyles and experiences, FOMO has emerged as a critical psychological driver influencing consumption patterns. This study aims to explore how FOMO affects students' saving habits, spending decisions, emotional well-being, and long-term financial planning, based on a survey of 90 students aged 18–26. Using descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and cross-tabulations performed in SPSS and Excel, the study assesses the relationship between FOMO intensity and financial behavior indicators.

Key Variables in the Study

- Frequency and intensity of FOMO experiences
- Peer comparison tendencies and fit-in purchasing behavior
- Influence of decision-making factors (peer advice, family influence, advertisements)
- Financial planning behaviors (saving before spending, setting spending limits)
- Post-purchase emotions such as regret and dissatisfaction
- Interest in and exposure to financial literacy education

Key Findings

1. **High FOMO Prevalence with Financial Consequences:**
Over 60% of respondents reported experiencing FOMO often, particularly triggered by social media posts related to shopping, travel, and dining. FOMO significantly correlated with impulsive spending and weakened saving behavior.
2. **Peer Influence Amplifies Spending:**
Students exhibiting stronger peer comparison tendencies were notably more likely to make unplanned or non-essential purchases, often exceeding their monthly budgets.

3. **Emotional Aftermath of FOMO Purchases:**

A considerable portion (around 58%) of students who made FOMO-driven purchases reported post-purchase regret, feelings of guilt, or dissatisfaction with their spending decisions.

4. **Financial Literacy as a Moderating Factor:**

Students with prior exposure to financial literacy (through courses, workshops, or self-learning) demonstrated better spending discipline, higher saving rates, and lower susceptibility to FOMO-driven purchases.

5. **Saving Behaviors and Spending Limits:**

Only about 32% of students reported consistently saving before spending, and fewer than 40% actively set spending limits — both behaviors were negatively impacted by higher FOMO scores.

6. **Desire for Financial Education:**

A large majority (over 70%) expressed interest in receiving more structured financial education to better manage emotional spending triggers and improve budgeting skills.

Implications for Stakeholders

- **For Educational Institutions:** There is a strong need to integrate emotional aspects of financial decision-making, including FOMO awareness, into college financial literacy programs. Teaching students coping mechanisms to resist impulsive urges can foster better long-term financial health.
- **For Financial Advisors and App Developers:** Designing tools that alert users about emotional spending, promote goal-based savings, and gamify responsible spending behavior can effectively support youth in managing FOMO-driven tendencies.
- **For Policymakers:** As FOMO becomes an increasingly powerful consumption driver, awareness campaigns and early interventions can help prevent future financial vulnerabilities among the youth.

Conclusion

The study highlights that FOMO is not just a fleeting emotion but a profound factor shaping the financial behavior of young consumers. While college years are formative for building financial habits, the constant digital exposure to peers' curated lifestyles makes students vulnerable to emotional spending and financial overextension. By promoting financial literacy, emotional resilience, and responsible consumption, stakeholders can help students turn financial decision-making into a conscious, empowered process rather than a reactive one driven by fear or comparison.

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INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

In today's digital age, social media platforms like Instagram, Snapchat, WhatsApp, YouTube, and X (formerly Twitter) have profoundly influenced how young people experience and perceive life. College students, navigating critical academic and personal milestones, are particularly vulnerable to social pressures that shape their behaviors and decisions. Among these influences, the Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) has emerged as a significant psychological force.

Initially seen as a casual pop-culture term, FOMO is now recognized by psychologists and marketers as a powerful driver of behavior, often leading to impulsive actions, stress, and poor decision-making. Constant exposure to curated online lives fuels comparison and anxiety, pushing students to participate in experiences not for personal satisfaction but to avoid feeling excluded.

The roots of FOMO can be linked to fundamental psychological needs like belonging and esteem. In the social media era, however, these needs are often distorted, leading to unhealthy spending habits. Despite some research on FOMO's academic impacts, its financial consequences—particularly in India—remain underexplored.

Today's digital marketplace, with its flash sales, influencer promotions, and easy credit options like "Buy Now, Pay Later," intensifies impulsive buying. For financially inexperienced students, this can lead to poor money management, debt accumulation, and consumerist pressure. Moreover, spending driven by FOMO often becomes tied to identity and social acceptance, creating a cycle of emotional spending.

In a society like India, where social comparison is deeply ingrained, FOMO's effects are further amplified by cultural expectations and peer influence. Understanding how FOMO shapes financial decisions is therefore critical—not just for academic inquiry but also for promoting healthier financial habits among youth.

This study seeks to explore how FOMO affects college students' financial choices, combining psychological theory with empirical research to better understand the economic behaviors of the next generation.

1.2 Problem Statement

The transition to college life marks a critical phase in an individual's journey toward adulthood. For many students, this period is characterized by newfound autonomy, identity exploration, and, significantly, the management of personal finances. However, this autonomy also comes with vulnerabilities—especially in the context of an increasingly digital and socially connected environment. Among these vulnerabilities, the fear of missing out (FOMO) has emerged as a psychological and behavioral force capable of influencing daily decision-making, including financial choices.

College students today are bombarded with visual content portraying an idealized version of life—luxurious vacations, trendy fashion, premium gadgets, and high-end food experiences. This constant exposure, combined with the innate human desire for social inclusion, often results in reactive, emotionally driven financial behavior. Many students make purchases not out of necessity, but to avoid the feeling of being excluded from what others are enjoying or showcasing.

Despite growing academic interest in FOMO as a psychological construct, its specific influence on financial decision-making among Indian college students remains under-researched. While Western literature has touched upon the correlation between FOMO and consumerism, cultural differences and socio-economic contexts in India necessitate localized studies. The financial habits of Indian students are shaped by unique factors such as familial expectations, traditional values around savings, and varying levels of access to technology and financial education.

Moreover, this issue is compounded by a lack of practical financial literacy. While students may be introduced to basic economic principles in their curriculum, the application of these concepts to real-life scenarios—such as budgeting, distinguishing needs from wants, or evaluating the long-term impact of debt—is often missing. As a result, students may fall into a pattern of reactive financial behavior, making impulsive purchases and neglecting long-term planning.

The problem is further intensified by technological advancements in digital marketing. Algorithms now track user behavior to offer hyper-personalized ads and

suggestions, creating an illusion of relevance and necessity. When combined with time-limited deals or influencer endorsements, these strategies often trigger impulsive buying decisions. In such cases, FOMO becomes not just a fleeting emotion, but a key driver of poor financial judgment.

This research is prompted by the growing realization that FOMO is more than a psychological quirk—it is a behavioral economic problem with real-world consequences. Without adequate awareness and coping mechanisms, students risk developing habits that could lead to long-term financial instability.

Thus, the central problem this study aims to address is:

To what extent does FOMO affect the financial decision-making and spending behavior of college students in India, and what are the underlying psychological and social mechanisms that drive this behavior?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The primary objective of this research is to explore and analyze the impact of the Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) on the financial decision-making and spending behavior of college students. To achieve this, the study outlines the following specific objectives:

1. **To define and understand the concept of FOMO in the context of college students.**

This includes an in-depth exploration of how FOMO manifests among youth, the platforms that intensify it, and how students perceive and react to it emotionally and behaviorally.

2. **To examine the influence of social media on the spending habits of college students.**

The study seeks to identify the role of digital content—particularly from peers, influencers, and advertisements—in shaping the financial choices students make.

3. **To evaluate how FOMO-driven behavior affects financial planning and decision-making.**

This objective involves understanding whether students plan their expenses or if they succumb to impulsive buying as a result of peer pressure and social comparison.

4. **To assess the level of financial literacy among college students.**

The research will measure students' awareness and application of budgeting, savings, and responsible credit use to understand if financial knowledge buffers against FOMO.

5. **To identify the coping mechanisms students use to manage FOMO and financial stress.**

By understanding current strategies, the study hopes to highlight both effective and ineffective methods of managing social pressure and financial decision-making.

6. To provide recommendations for reducing the negative impact of FOMO on students' financial behavior.

This includes suggestions for educational institutions, parents, and students themselves on fostering financial mindfulness and digital well-being.

Each objective is designed to build a holistic picture of how emotional and social influences, particularly FOMO, intersect with the financial realities faced by students.

1.4 Scope of the Study

This study investigates how the Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) influences the financial decision-making and spending behavior of college students. While broadly relevant to the fields of digital culture, psychology, and financial behavior, the research maintains a focused approach by targeting specific demographics, behaviors, and concepts.

Demographic

Scope:

The study focuses on undergraduate and postgraduate students aged 18–25 years — a critical phase where individuals gain financial independence and establish spending habits. This group, being highly active on social media, is particularly vulnerable to FOMO-driven financial behavior. Students across different academic disciplines are included, given the cross-cutting nature of FOMO.

Geographical

Scope:

Primary data is collected from a college in India, with findings relevant to urban and semi-urban youth across the country. Given the rising internet usage, growing middle class, and digital consumerism among Indian students, the study offers insights applicable beyond the immediate sample.

Behavioral

Scope:

The research examines daily and occasional spending habits, credit usage patterns, and the influence of social media, peer pressure, and advertisements. It looks at impulsive spending on both minor lifestyle expenses and larger purchases such as gadgets, events, and travel, including behaviors like reliance on "Buy Now, Pay Later" services.

Conceptual

Scope:

The study draws from behavioral economics, psychology, and marketing theories to explore cognitive biases (e.g., herd mentality, present bias), emotional triggers (anxiety, social validation), and social norms. It also considers how financial literacy acts as a buffer against impulsive, FOMO-driven spending.

Limitations of Scope:

- The study focuses only on financial behaviors, excluding other FOMO-related impacts such as academic or social outcomes.
- High-income students from elite institutions are excluded to maintain focus on financially sensitive groups.
- A cross-sectional approach is used, capturing a single point in time rather than long-term behavioral trends.

Despite these limitations, the study provides important insights into how FOMO shapes college students' financial decisions and can inform targeted financial education and digital well-being initiatives.

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Unraveling FOMO: Exploring the Factors Behind Fear of Missing Out Among College Students by Ulfi Hida Zainita and Dien Anshari (2025):

“Missing Out Among College Students” by Ulfi Hida Zainita and Dien Anshari (2025) investigates the growing psychological phenomenon of FOMO (Fear of Missing Out) in the digital age, particularly among college students in Indonesia. With the widespread integration of social media into daily life—especially among Gen Z students—the study seeks to understand how certain variables such as age, academic program type, duration of social media use, and the number of social media accounts contribute to FOMO levels in this demographic. FOMO is defined as the anxiety or distress one feels when believing others are engaging in rewarding experiences without them. Previous studies have established links between excessive social media use and FOMO, but few have explored the influence of specific behavioral and demographic variables within college student populations.

This study employed a quantitative, cross-sectional survey design using purposive sampling, targeting 104 undergraduate students aged 17–28 from Universitas Indonesia. Data were collected through an online questionnaire disseminated via student networks. The instrument used to measure FOMO was adapted from Przybylski et al. (2013) and validated for the Indonesian context. In addition to the FOMO scale, the questionnaire gathered data on respondent characteristics (age, sex, program type, organizational involvement), duration of social media use, number of social media accounts, and motivations for social media usage.

The findings revealed that a significant portion of the students (73.1%) were high-duration users, spending more than three hours per day on social media. WhatsApp and YouTube were universally used by all respondents, while TikTok had the least usage (50%). The most common motivations for using social media were to interact (66.3%), followed by distance learning and entertainment. Notably, 43.3% of the students reported high levels of FOMO. Statistical analyses identified significant relationships between FOMO and several key variables: younger students reported higher FOMO levels ($p=0.003$), regular program students experienced more FOMO

compared to extension students ($p=0.001$), and longer daily usage ($p=0.012$) as well as a higher number of social media accounts ($p=0.007$) were also positively associated with FOMO scores. The study found no significant correlation between FOMO and gender or participation in student organizations.

These findings underscore the psychological vulnerability of younger college students and those with intense engagement in social media platforms. The results align with prior literature indicating that excessive social media usage fosters a perceived pressure to stay constantly connected, contributing to increased anxiety, distraction during lectures, and lower emotional well-being. The authors recommend that educational institutions take proactive measures to mitigate the negative effects of FOMO. Suggested interventions include awareness campaigns, counseling services focused on digital wellness, and promoting healthier online behaviors—such as limiting screen time and reducing the number of active social media accounts. Peer counseling initiatives at both faculty and university levels were also proposed as practical strategies for early intervention.

The study concludes that FOMO is a prevalent concern among college students, shaped significantly by behavioral and demographic factors. However, it acknowledges several limitations, including the use of a cross-sectional design (which prevents causal inferences), purposive sampling (which limits generalizability), and a relatively small sample size. Future research is encouraged to adopt longitudinal approaches with larger and more diverse samples to further explore the causal relationships and long-term impacts of FOMO in the context of evolving digital lifestyles.

2.2 The Effects of FOMO on Student Consumption Behavior in the Digital Economy Era by Jihan Arifah Husna and Anggi Aprizal (2025):

This research examines the psychological phenomenon of Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) and its effects on student consumption behavior in the context of the digital economy. The study is grounded in the observation that the digital era—marked by the rapid proliferation of smartphones, internet access, and social media platforms—has significantly altered the way individuals, particularly students, engage with information, peers, and commerce. FOMO, defined as the persistent anxiety about missing out on rewarding experiences that others may be having, is particularly prevalent among students who are highly engaged with social media. The constant stream of curated content showcasing friends' lifestyles, purchases, and experiences leads to emotional dissatisfaction, comparison, and a compulsion to stay continuously connected.

The study aimed to analyze how FOMO influences consumption decisions among students, particularly focusing on digital consumption patterns. It adopted a quantitative research methodology, surveying a sample of university students using structured questionnaires designed to measure FOMO levels and their correlation with consumer behavior in the digital realm. The findings of the study demonstrate a positive relationship between high FOMO levels and impulsive consumption behavior. Students experiencing FOMO tend to engage more frequently in online shopping, especially when exposed to promotional content or peer posts highlighting exclusive deals, travel experiences, or product purchases. This behavior is driven by a psychological need to “catch up” or remain part of the social narrative constructed online.

Moreover, the study underscores that FOMO not only leads to impulsive buying but also results in irrational spending, driven more by emotional and social triggers than by need-based decision-making. The paper also discusses how marketing strategies on digital platforms, especially those employing scarcity, urgency, and peer-influencer techniques, exacerbate FOMO-driven consumption among students. The researchers highlight the risks associated with such

behaviors, including increased financial strain, mental stress, and lower self-satisfaction.

In conclusion, the study advocates for greater awareness about the effects of FOMO on consumption and calls for educational initiatives aimed at promoting healthier digital habits and financial literacy among students. It also encourages ethical marketing practices from companies targeting youth through social media. By shedding light on the intersection between psychology and digital consumer behavior, the research provides valuable insights for both educators and marketers in the evolving landscape of the digital economy.

2.3 Role of Financial Literacy in Financial Planning and Decision Making Among College Students by Anita Choudhary and Akhil Goyal (2024):

This empirical study investigates the vital role of **financial literacy** in shaping financial planning and decision-making among college students. It explores how increased financial knowledge impacts students' investment behavior, risk perception, and decision-making capabilities, particularly in the rapidly evolving digital financial ecosystem. The study emphasizes that financial literacy—defined as the ability to understand and apply financial knowledge—empowers students to manage expenses, plan budgets, navigate loans, and make informed investment decisions. The researchers argue that most college students, especially non-business majors, often lack essential financial knowledge, which can negatively impact their long-term financial well-being. The paper highlights that age, educational background, and exposure to financial courses significantly influence financial awareness.

Using a quantitative research methodology, data was gathered from 113 students through structured questionnaires. These assessed students' financial knowledge, behaviors, and investment choices both before and after taking financial courses. Statistical tools like ANOVA, correlation, and regression analyses revealed that financial literacy significantly affects risk perception and investment planning. Notably, students' investment choices shifted after completing financial courses: while gold remained a dominant investment avenue, preferences expanded to include mutual funds, stocks, bonds, and cryptocurrencies. The study found a strong positive correlation ($r = 0.95$) between knowledge gained and changes in investment preferences. Demographic variables such as age and income also showed some influence, although education level did not significantly correlate with specific knowledge about mutual funds.

The study concludes that financial literacy is not only crucial for personal financial security but also for promoting economic stability at a societal level. It suggests that institutions of higher education should integrate practical financial education into their curricula—through case studies, simulations, industry interactions, and

internships—to better prepare students for real-world financial challenges. Furthermore, it highlights the need for collaborative efforts from educational institutions, financial organizations, and policymakers to foster a financially literate youth population capable of making prudent investment decisions. The research ultimately supports the idea that improving financial literacy enhances students' confidence, reduces impulsive or ill-informed decisions, and contributes positively to their long-term financial health

2.4 Predicting Changes in Helicopter Parenting, Fear of Missing Out (FOMO), and Social Anxiety in College Students by Chengfei Jiao, Ming Cui, and Frank D. Fincham (2024):

This longitudinal study explores the interrelated development of helicopter parenting, FOMO, and social anxiety among college students. Helicopter parenting is defined as a style of over-involved and over-controlling parenting that restricts the autonomy of emerging adults. The research investigates how this parenting style may contribute to students' experiences of FOMO—the anxiety that others are having rewarding experiences without them—and social anxiety—the fear of being judged or rejected in social situations. These social and psychological challenges are particularly prevalent during the transition to college, a period of increased independence, identity exploration, and social comparison. The study builds on previous research showing that helicopter parenting can hinder psychological well-being, peer relationships, and academic success.

The researchers conducted a 12-week longitudinal study with 282 college students to examine how perceived helicopter parenting, FOMO, and social anxiety change over time and how these changes are interconnected. Using latent growth curve modeling, the study found that while FOMO significantly decreased over time, levels of helicopter parenting and social anxiety remained relatively stable. However, the rate of decrease in FOMO was positively associated with the rate of decrease in helicopter parenting, indicating that students who experienced less parental control over time also felt less FOMO. Furthermore, reductions in FOMO and helicopter parenting were significantly related to reductions in social anxiety, suggesting these three experiences are interlinked in their developmental trajectories.

The study also identified key demographic influences: younger students tended to report higher levels of FOMO and social anxiety, both at the beginning and throughout the study, whereas gender, race, living arrangement, and family structure showed no significant influence. These findings highlight that overprotective parenting can contribute to social and emotional difficulties, such as anxiety and disconnection, in college students. Moreover, the study suggests a potentially

reciprocal relationship, where increased anxiety may lead parents to become more controlling, thus exacerbating the cycle.

This research adds valuable insight by using a temporal lens to show how changes in family dynamics and social pressures unfold during college. It has important implications for college counseling and student support services, encouraging them to consider family dynamics when addressing student mental health issues. Educators and parents are encouraged to foster independence and support without excessive interference, especially for younger college students who are more vulnerable to FOMO and social anxiety. Despite some limitations, such as a gender-skewed sample and short duration, the study offers a compelling case for longitudinal intervention strategies targeting both students and their parents.

2.5 Study on the Influence of Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) and Impulsive Buying Behavior on Online Compulsive Buying Behavior of Young Consumers in India by Dr. S Saibaba (2022)

This research explores the rising influence of psychological and technological factors—specifically smartphone addiction, social media addiction, fear of missing out (FOMO), and impulsive buying—on the compulsive online buying behavior of young Indian consumers. With the rapid penetration of the internet and mobile technologies in India, young consumers—those under the age of 39—have become major users of smartphones and social networking platforms. The study highlights how the easy access to mobile internet, aggressive digital marketing strategies, and the immersive nature of online platforms have contributed to compulsive and unplanned shopping behaviors. This behavioral trend is particularly fueled by emotional triggers like anxiety, low self-control, and the desire to stay connected and updated with peers' online activities—collectively leading to compulsive buying patterns that may have psychological and financial consequences.

The research employed a quantitative approach using an online survey, collecting data from 164 young consumers in India who had prior online shopping experience. The survey was administered between February and May 2022 and utilized structured measurement scales adapted from existing literature to evaluate the intensity of smartphone addiction, social media use, FOMO, impulsive buying, and compulsive buying tendencies. The findings revealed that both smartphone and social media addiction levels were significantly high among users who spent 2 to 4 hours daily on these platforms. Female respondents tended to show slightly higher compulsive buying behaviors, while male respondents reported slightly higher FOMO and smartphone addiction. Social media addiction was found to be higher among females, and impulsive buying tendencies were evenly distributed across genders.

Crucially, hypothesis testing confirmed a statistically significant positive relationship between all four psychological factors and compulsive online buying behavior. That is, higher smartphone use, frequent engagement on social media, greater fear of missing out, and impulsive purchasing habits all increased the likelihood of

compulsive online shopping. Consumers with 1–5 years of online shopping experience were particularly prone to these behaviors. These findings indicate that digital environments are not only shaping consumer choices but also amplifying potentially harmful behavioral patterns among youth. I

n response to these findings, the study emphasizes the dual responsibility of marketers and policy-makers. While marketers need to continue innovating to attract young consumers, they must also promote responsible digital consumption, aiming to reduce the psychological risks associated with compulsive buying. The paper calls for consumer education, ethical marketing practices, and perhaps digital well-being initiatives to mitigate long-term negative consequences. The research significantly contributes to the limited body of literature on compulsive online buying in the Indian context, especially among youth, and offers a foundation for future studies to further investigate causal factors and preventive strategies.

RESEARCH METHDOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

In order to investigate the “Effect of FOMO on Financial Decision-Making and Spending Behaviour Among College Students,” this chapter outlines the systematic approach adopted for conducting the study. It provides an in-depth description of the research strategy, design, data sources, and methods used to collect, analyze, and interpret the data. By carefully selecting appropriate methodologies and tools, the study aims to maintain both scientific rigor and relevance to the real-life behaviors and attitudes of students navigating the modern digital economy

3.2 Variables in the study

Variable Name	Type	Data Type
Age	Demographic	Continuous
Gender	Demographic	Categorical
Education Level	Demographic	Categorical
Source of Expenses	Demographic	Categorical
FOMO Frequency	Independent	Ordinal
Peer Comparison	Independent	Ordinal
Fit-in Purchase	Independent	Ordinal
Spending Regret	Dependent	Ordinal
Decision Influencers	Independent	Categorical
FOMO-based Borrowing	Dependent	Ordinal
FOMO Impact Score	Dependent	Ordinal / Scale
Post-Purchase Emotions	Dependent	Categorical

Variable Name	Type	Data Type
Spending Limit	Dependent	Ordinal
Saving Before Spending	Dependent	Ordinal
Long-term Goal Consideration	Dependent	Ordinal
Financial Advice Sources	Independent	Ordinal
Interest in Financial Education	Dependent	Categorical

3.3 Rationale Behind the Methodology

Understanding how FOMO (Fear of Missing Out) influences students' financial behaviors requires exploring both psychological and behavioral aspects. The nature of this study leans toward exploring human emotions, thought processes, and their consequent actions—areas that are deeply rooted in social sciences. Thus, a well-structured methodology was essential to ensure that the data collected captures the nuances of FOMO as well as the practical implications it has on money-related decisions.

Given the topic, a descriptive and quantitative research design was considered most appropriate. Descriptive studies aim to explain characteristics or functions of a population in detail, which aligns well with this project's goal of documenting how students feel about financial decisions under the influence of FOMO. Meanwhile, the quantitative nature of the research allows for objective measurement and statistical analysis, making the conclusions more reliable.

3.4 Selection of Research Design

The study utilizes a **cross-sectional design**, wherein data was collected at a single point in time from a defined group of respondents. This approach was chosen due to the time-bound nature of the academic project and the need for timely analysis. Cross-sectional designs are particularly effective in behavioral studies because they

capture immediate perceptions and actions, offering insights into current trends without the need for long-term follow-ups.

The decision to focus on quantitative data collection was made for several reasons:

1. **Precision and Objectivity:** Quantitative data is measurable and allows for precise comparisons between variables.
2. **Ease of Analysis:** With tools like SPSS, Python, Excel, and Power BI available, quantitative data can be analyzed quickly and effectively.
3. **Generalizability:** Larger sample sizes and structured responses increase the potential for generalizing the findings across similar populations.

3.5 Population and Sampling

The target population for this research includes **college students aged between 18 and 25 years**, both undergraduate and postgraduate, from diverse academic backgrounds. This age group is most relevant for studying FOMO-induced financial behavior as they are highly active on social media and are in a critical phase of life where financial habits begin to take shape.

A total of **100 students participated** in the survey, forming the sample for this study. The sampling method adopted was **convenience sampling**, primarily due to the accessibility of participants and constraints in terms of time and resources. While convenience sampling has its limitations, it is a widely accepted method in exploratory and time-sensitive research.

3.6 Instrument for Data Collection

The primary tool for data collection was a structured questionnaire created using Google Forms. This format was chosen because it allowed for easy distribution and ensured anonymity, encouraging honest responses. The questionnaire was divided into several sections:

- **Demographic Details:** Age, gender, education level, and monthly allowance or income.
- **Spending Behavior:** Categories and frequency of expenditures.
- **Financial Decision-Making:** Approach to saving, borrowing, or investing.
- **FOMO Indicators:** Influence of social media, peer comparison, emotional spending, etc.
- **Financial Awareness:** Basic knowledge of budgeting, digital payments, and financial planning.

Most questions were designed using Likert scales, multiple-choice options, and some open-ended fields to ensure structured yet insightful data.

3.7 Data Collection Procedure

Data was collected over a period of two weeks through online distribution of the Google Form questionnaire. Participants were informed about the objective of the research, and confidentiality was assured to increase participation honesty. While personal interviews or qualitative methods were considered initially, time constraints and the need for broader reach made online surveys the most practical option.

In total, 100 complete and valid responses were received, which formed the basis for the data analysis. Each response was automatically logged into a Google Sheets file, from which it was later exported into Excel and Python for deeper statistical evaluation.

3.8 Tools and Techniques for Data Analysis

For this project, SPSS was primarily used to perform:

- **Descriptive Statistics:** Mean, median, mode, standard deviation, and frequency distribution.

- **Visualization:** Charts and graphs (bar graphs, pie charts, histograms) for depicting patterns in responses.
- **Correlation Analysis:** To examine relationships between FOMO-related behaviors and financial actions.
- **Cross-tabulation:** To compare financial behavior based on gender, age, or other demographic indicators.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

Maintaining ethical standards was a critical part of the research. Participants were made fully aware of the purpose of the study, and their consent was implied through voluntary participation. No personal identifiers were collected, and the responses were used solely for academic purposes. The data has been stored securely, ensuring confidentiality and data protection.

ANALYSIS, DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATION

4.1 Data Collection

The data collection for this study was structured around both primary and secondary sources, ensuring a balanced foundation for meaningful analysis. Given the nature of the research — examining the influence of FOMO (Fear of Missing Out) on financial decision-making and spending behavior — it was important to capture real-life, firsthand data from individuals who are actively navigating the challenges of financial independence in the digital age.

4.1.1 Primary Data Collection

To gather primary data, a structured questionnaire was developed and distributed using Google Forms. The questionnaire was specifically designed to collect information from college students, including both undergraduate and postgraduate students, who fall within the critical age bracket of 18 to 25 years. This demographic was deliberately chosen because it is most susceptible to social influences, especially those emerging from digital environments such as social media platforms.

The questionnaire included both multiple-choice and scaled response questions aimed at measuring the respondents' financial habits, their emotional and psychological response to peer-related content, and their levels of awareness or concern about FOMO-driven behavior. Topics covered in the form included spending on lifestyle products, gadgets, entertainment, social outings, food delivery, online sales, and use of credit facilities like Buy Now Pay Later (BNPL), credit cards, or student loans.

Importantly, the questionnaire was not restricted to respondents from a specific college or geographical region. Instead, it was shared across a wide range of college groups and forums, allowing for a diverse range of responses from students of varying backgrounds. This approach ensured that the data was not biased toward a single institution or region. Approximately 100 responses were collected, which is a

sufficiently representative sample for conducting behavioral and perceptual analysis within the context of this study.

The method of data collection allowed for anonymity, which encouraged participants to respond more openly and honestly, particularly on sensitive topics like financial anxiety, peer pressure, and impulsive spending. Since the Google Form was accessible online, it provided convenience to the participants and facilitated easy collation and processing of data for further analysis.

4.1.2 Secondary Data Collection

In addition to primary research, secondary data was collected through a review of existing literature in the form of research papers, journal articles, and previously conducted surveys related to FOMO, financial literacy, consumer behavior, and youth psychology. These sources helped shape the conceptual framework of the study and provided benchmarks for comparison with the findings derived from primary research.

The secondary literature not only guided the formulation of the questionnaire but also helped identify variables and behavioral patterns worth exploring. Several peer-reviewed research papers were reviewed to understand how FOMO manifests in financial decisions across different contexts, and how students manage their money in an age where experiences, trends, and consumerism are broadcast constantly on social media.

Together, the combination of primary and secondary data allows this study to draw grounded, evidence-based conclusions and offer realistic recommendations that reflect both theoretical understanding and practical insight

4.2 Data Analysis

23 This chapter presents the results of the statistical analysis conducted on the primary data collected from 100 college students. The objective is to explore the impact of FOMO on financial decision-making and spending behavior. The data was analyzed using SPSS software, and a combination of univariate, bivariate, and multivariate statistical techniques were applied. Univariate analysis helped in understanding the distribution and frequency of individual variables. Bivariate analysis, including cross-tabulations and correlation, was used to examine relationships between variables. Multivariate techniques such as regression and ANOVA were applied to identify significant predictors and group-wise differences. The following sections detail the findings, supported by relevant tables, charts, and interpretations.

4.2.1 Univariate Analysis

Gender Distribution: The gender distribution of respondents showed a relatively balanced split, with 54% identifying as male and 46% as female.

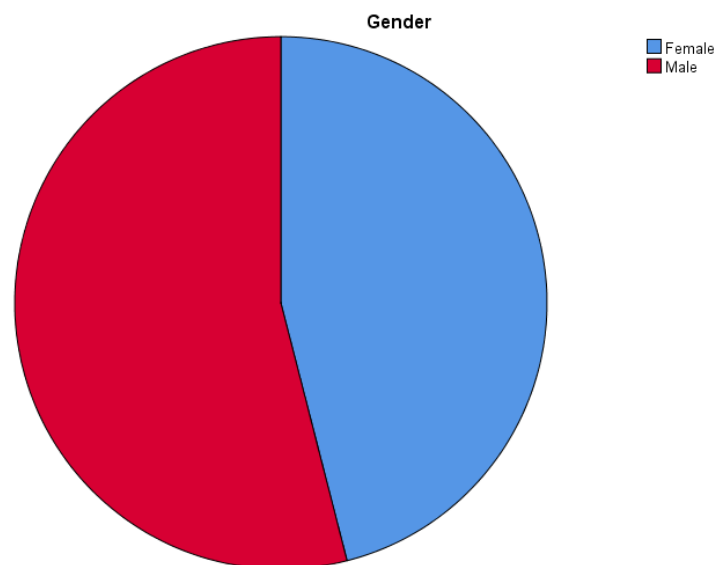


Fig 4.1 (Own Analysis)

Education Level: Regarding education level, 52% of the participants were postgraduate students, 46% were undergraduate students, and 2% selected Other.

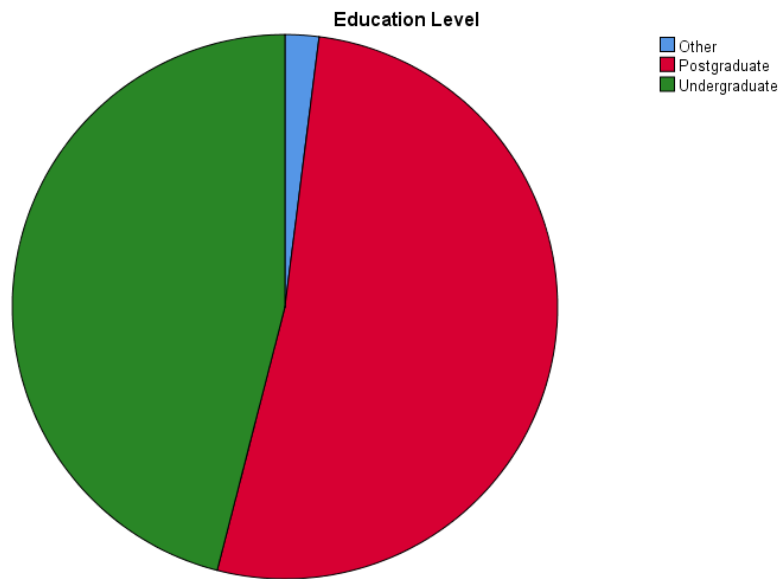


Fig 4.2 (Own Analysis)

Source of Expenses: a majority (50%) reported depending primarily on their parents or guardians. Others indicated combinations of personal savings, part-time jobs, and freelancing, while 16% of respondents relied solely on personal savings.

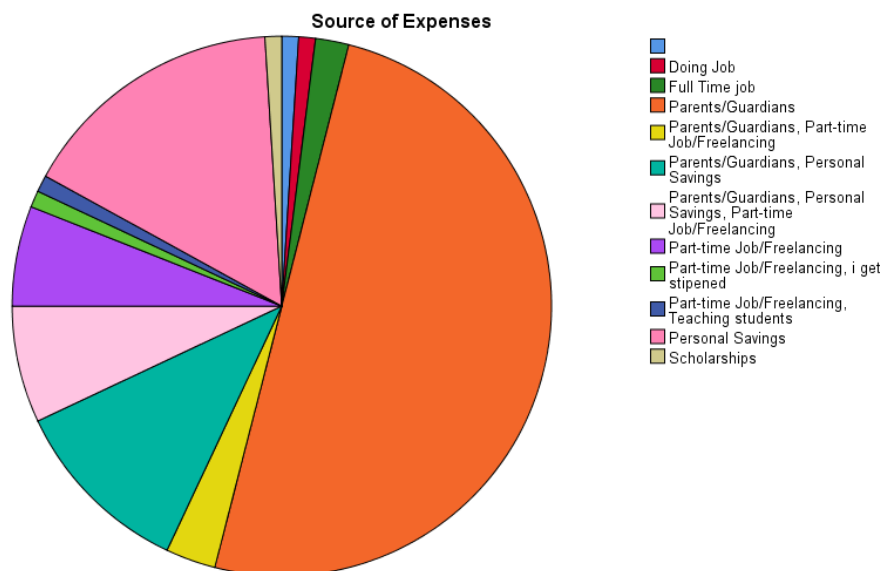


Fig 4.3 (Own Analysis)

FOMO Frequency: When asked how often they experience FOMO upon seeing others on social media, 37% of students responded "sometimes," 31% said "rarely," 11% said "often," 16% said "never," and 5% said "always."

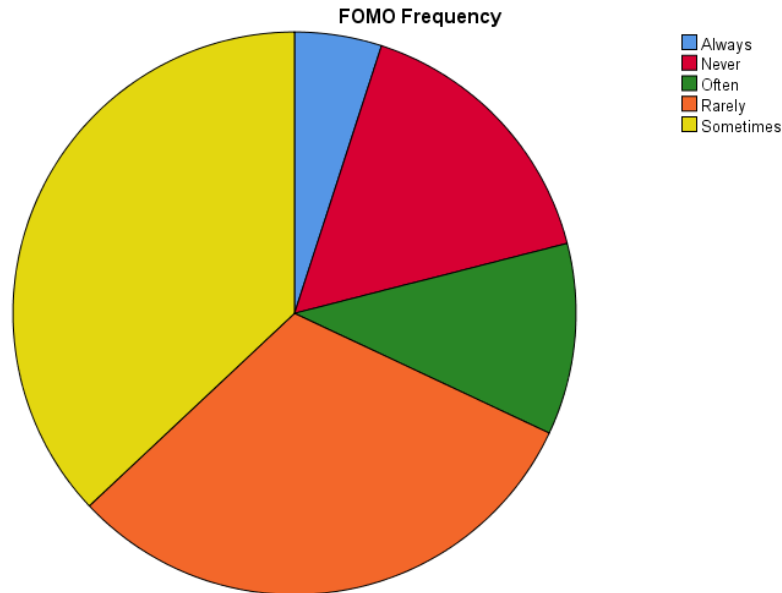
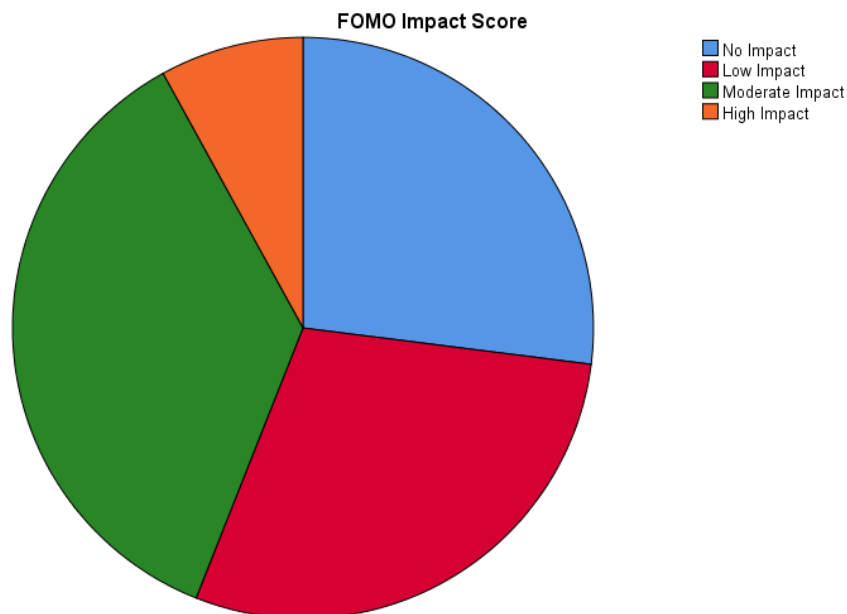


Fig 4.4 (Own Analysis)

FOMO Impact Score: Finally, on a scale assessing the impact of FOMO on financial decision-making, 36% reported a "moderate impact," 29% indicated a "low impact," 27% experienced "no impact," and 8% felt a "high impact."



Descriptive Statistics for FOMO Impact Score: The FOMO Impact Score, rated on a scale of 1 to 5, had a mean value of 2.25 with a standard deviation of 0.947, indicating that on average, students perceive a low to moderate impact of FOMO on their financial decisions. The minimum and maximum observed scores were 1 and 4, respectively. The skewness value of 0.059 suggests that the data is fairly symmetrical, indicating a balanced distribution of responses across the scale.

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error
FOMO Impact Score	100	1	4	2.25	.947	.059	.241
Valid N (listwise)	100						

Table 4.1 (Own Analysis)

4.2.2 Bivariate Analysis

Cross-tabulation and Chi-Square Test

Objective: To explore the relationship between **Gender** and **how frequently students experience FOMO** when they see others on social media, a cross-tabulation was conducted. The results are summarized in the table below:

		Always	Never	Often	Rarely	Sometimes	Total
Female	Count	3	6	7	15	15	46
	% within FOMO Frequency	60.0%	37.5%	63.6%	48.4%	40.5%	46.0%
Male	Count	2	10	4	16	22	54
	% within FOMO Frequency	40.0%	62.5%	36.4%	51.6%	59.5%	54.0%
	Count	5	16	11	31	37	100
	% within FOMO Frequency	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 4.2 (Own Source)

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	2.752 ^a	4	.600
Likelihood Ratio	2.765	4	.598
a. 2 cells (20.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.30.			

Table 4.3 (Own Source)

From the tables:

- Among females, the highest concentration was in the “**Rarely**” and “**Sometimes**” categories (both 15 out of 46).
- Among males, a slightly higher number reported “**Sometimes**” experiencing FOMO (22 out of 54).
- Overall, the pattern of FOMO frequency appears somewhat evenly distributed across genders.

A **Chi-square test** was also performed to check whether the observed differences between males and females are statistically significant.

Chi-Square Test Results:

- Pearson Chi-Square value = **2.752**,
- Degrees of freedom (df) = **4**,
- Asymptotic Significance (p-value) = **0.600**

Since the p-value is greater than 0.05, **the result is not statistically significant, indicating that there is no significant association between gender and the frequency of experiencing FOMO on social media.**

Conclusion:

While the distribution shows minor differences, statistically, gender does not have a significant impact on how often students experience FOMO.

Spearman Correlation Analysis

Objective: To understand the relationships between various behavioral and attitudinal aspects related to FOMO and financial decision-making, Spearman's rank-order correlation tests were conducted. This method was chosen due to the ordinal nature of many survey responses

Summary Table: Spearman's Correlation Results

Variables Compared	Correlation Coefficient (ρ)	Sig. (2-tailed)	Strength & Direction	Significance
FOMO Impact Score & Consideration of Long-Term Financial Goals	-0.044	0.664	Very Weak Negative	Not Significant
Peer Comparison & Fit-in Purchase	0.245	0.014	Weak Positive	Significant
Saving Before Spending & Consideration of Long-Term Goals	0.197	0.049	Weak Positive	Significant
Interest in Financial Education & Spending Regret	-0.021	0.839	Very Weak Negative	Not Significant

Table 4.4 (Own Creation)

Interpretation:

- FOMO Impact vs. Long-Term Goals:** The correlation between *FOMO Impact Score* and *Consideration of Long-Term Financial Goals* was found to be extremely weak and negative ($\rho = -0.044$, $p = 0.664$), indicating no meaningful relationship.
- Peer Comparison vs. Fit-in Purchase:** A weak but statistically significant **positive correlation** ($\rho = 0.245$, $p = 0.014$) was observed. This implies that

students who compare their spending habits with peers are somewhat more likely to make purchases just to fit in socially.

3. **Saving Before Spending vs. Long-Term Goals:** A significant **positive relationship** ($\rho = 0.197$, $p = 0.049$) indicates that students who save before spending are more inclined to consider long-term financial goals, reflecting financially responsible behavior.
4. **Interest in Financial Education vs. Spending Regret:** There was no significant correlation ($\rho = -0.021$, $p = 0.839$), suggesting that interest in financial education does not necessarily predict whether a student regrets spending driven by FOMO.

Conclusion:

The correlation analysis reveals certain meaningful patterns. Notably, peer-influenced behaviors such as *comparison* and *fitting in* show an interconnection. Similarly, *saving habits* appear to align with *long-term goal orientation*. These insights help illustrate how FOMO-related behaviors either align or diverge from responsible financial practices among students.

4.2.3 Multivariate Analysis

Multiple Liner Regression

Objective: To examine whether FOMO-related factors (FOMO Frequency, FOMO Impact Score, Spending Regret, and Peer Comparison) predict the likelihood of making purchases to fit in purchase with social groups.

Dependent Variable: fit in purchase (have you ever made a purcjase just to fit in with Your friends)

Independent Variables: FOMO Frequency, FOMO Impact Score, Spending Regret, Peer Comparison

Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Fit-in Purchase	1.85	.833	100
FOMO Frequency	3.79	1.241	100
FOMO Impact Score	2.25	.947	100
Spending Regret	2.26	.960	100
Peer Comparison	2.23	.930	100

Table 4.5 (Own Creation)

Corelation Table

		Fit-in Purchase	FOMO Frequency	FOMO Impact Score	Spending Regret	Peer Comparison
Pearson Correlation	Fit-in Purchase	1.000	-.070	.176	.239	.266
	FOMO Frequency	-.070	1.000	.002	.106	.007
	FOMO Impact Score	.176	.002	1.000	.350	.347
	Spending Regret	.239	.106	.350	1.000	.125
	Peer Comparison	.266	.007	.347	.125	1.000
Sig. (1-tailed)	Fit-in Purchase	.	.245	.040	.008	.004
	FOMO Frequency	.245	.	.492	.148	.471
	FOMO Impact Score	.040	.492	.	.000	.000
	Spending Regret	.008	.148	.000	.	.108
	Peer Comparison	.004	.471	.000	.108	.

Table 4.6 (Own Creation)

4

Model Summary Table

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.351 ^a	.123	.086	.797	.123	3.332	4	95	.013

Table 4.7 (Own Creation)

21

ANOVA Table

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	8.459	4	2.115	3.332	.013 ^b
	Residual	60.291	95	.635		
	Total	68.750	99			

Table 4.8 (Own Creation)

10

Coefficient Table

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	1.165	.361		3.228	.002		
	FOMO Frequency	-.063	.065	-.094	-.972	.334	.987	1.013

	FOMO Impact Score	.019	.096	.021	.194	.847	.783	1.277
	Spending Regret	.184	.090	.212	2.055	.043	.866	1.154
	Peer Comparison	.209	.092	.233	2.278	.025	.880	1.137

Table 4.9 (Own Creation)

Collinearity Diagnostic Table

Model	Dimension	Eigenvalue	Condition Index	Variance Proportions				
				(Constant)	FOMO Frequency	FOMO Impact Score	Spending Regret	Peer Comparison
1	1	4.616	1.000	.00	.00	.01	.01	.01
	2	.138	5.780	.01	.27	.17	.04	.32
	3	.128	6.015	.01	.11	.10	.51	.22
	4	.082	7.484	.00	.05	.69	.39	.35
	5	.036	11.277	.97	.56	.04	.05	.12

Table 4.10 (Own Creation)

From the Tables:

From the Model Summary Table:

- The regression model shows an R value of 0.351, indicating a low to moderate positive relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable (Fit-in Purchase).
- The R Square value is 0.123, meaning the model explains 12.3% of the variance in Fit-in Purchase behavior.
- The Adjusted R Square is 0.086, which adjusts the R Square based on the number of predictors and sample size.
- The Sig. F Change value is 0.013, which is statistically significant ($p < 0.05$), indicating that the combination of predictors reliably predicts the dependent variable.

From the ANOVA Table:

- The p-value (Sig.) is 0.013, showing that the overall regression model is statistically significant.
- This implies that the set of independent variables together has a significant linear relationship with Fit-in Purchase behavior.

From the Coefficients Table:

- Spending Regret ($p = 0.043$) and Peer Comparison ($p = 0.025$) are statistically significant predictors.
 - This indicates that higher levels of regret after spending and higher levels of peer comparison are both associated with an increased tendency to make purchases to fit in.
- FOMO Frequency ($p = 0.334$) and FOMO Impact Score ($p = 0.847$) are not significant, suggesting that they do not independently predict Fit-in Purchase behavior when other variables are held constant.

- The positive Beta coefficients for Spending Regret and Peer Comparison indicate a positive influence, whereas the negative coefficient for FOMO Frequency indicates a non-significant, slight negative trend.

From the Collinearity Diagnostics:

- Tolerance values are all above 0.7, and VIF values are all well below 2, indicating no multicollinearity issues among predictors.
- This confirms that each independent variable is contributing unique information to the model.

Conclusion

- The regression analysis suggests that social influence factors, such as peer comparison and emotional responses like spending regret, play a statistically significant role in explaining why students may make purchases just to fit in.
- In contrast, while FOMO as a concept is relevant to consumer behavior, its frequency and self-reported impact did not significantly predict fit-in purchasing in this model.
- The model explains a modest portion (12.3%) of the behavior, suggesting that additional factors not included in this analysis may also influence such consumer decisions.

ANOVA

To determine whether there is a significant difference in the **FOMO impact score** across groups based on different characteristics, a **one-way ANOVA** was conducted. This test compares the mean of a scale (continuous) variable across two or more groups (categorical variable).

In this study, ANOVA helps answer whether students from different **education levels** or **genders** experience significantly different levels of FOMO impact.

If the ANOVA test is significant, a **post hoc test** such as **Tukey HSD** is conducted to identify **which specific groups differ** from each other. However, when comparing only two groups (like gender), post hoc tests are not required.

1. FOMO Impact Scores and Education Level:

Objective: This analysis aims to determine whether students from different education levels (Undergraduate, Postgraduate, Others) experience significantly different levels of FOMO impact by comparing their average FOMO impact scores using ANOVA.

Scale Variable - FOMO Impact- Score

Groups Variable - Education Level

ANOVA Table

FOMO Impact Score					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	4.849	2	2.424	2.803	.066
Within Groups	83.901	97	.865		
Total	88.750	99			

Table 4.11 (Own Creation)

6

Post Hoc Table

Multiple Comparisons						
(I) Education Level	(J) Education Level	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Other	Postgraduate	-.462	.670	.771	-2.06	1.13
	Undergraduate	-.022	.672	.999	-1.62	1.58
Postgraduate	Other	.462	.670	.771	-1.13	2.06
	Undergraduate	.440	.188	.056	-.01	.89
Undergraduate	Other	.022	.672	.999	-1.58	1.62
	Postgraduate	-.440	.188	.056	-.89	.01

Table 4.12 (Own Creation)

Homogeneous Subset Table

FOMO Impact Score		
Education Level	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05
		1
Other	2	2.00
Undergraduate	46	2.02
Postgraduate	52	2.46
Sig.		.688

Table 4.13 (Own Creation)

- From The Tables:

The **ANOVA table** shows that the p-value (Sig.) is **0.066**, which is slightly above the standard significance level of 0.05.

- This means there is **no statistically significant difference** in the mean FOMO impact scores **among the three education levels**. However, the result is **close to significance**, suggesting a **possible trend** that might be worth further exploration with a larger or more balanced sample.

Post Hoc Test (Tukey HSD):

- The **Tukey post hoc test** compares group pairs to see where any differences may lie.
- The only comparison that came close to significance was between **Undergraduates and Postgraduates** ($p = 0.056$), where **Postgraduates** had a slightly higher mean FOMO score (2.46 vs. 2.02).
- However, this difference was still **not statistically significant**, as the p-value was above 0.05.

Subset Means Table:

- This table groups the means: Postgraduates reported the highest average FOMO impact score (2.46), while “Others” reported the lowest (2.00).
- But again, differences in group means were **not statistically significant**.

Conclusion

The ANOVA test indicated that there is **no statistically significant difference** in FOMO impact scores among students from different education levels. Although postgraduates reported a slightly higher average score compared to undergraduates and others, the differences were **not strong enough to be considered significant**. This suggests that **education level may not play a major role** in influencing how strongly students feel the impact of FOMO.

4.3 Findings and Recommendations

4.3.1 Key Finding

This study examined the influence of FOMO (Fear of Missing Out) on financial decision-making and spending behavior among college students. The analysis used descriptive, bivariate, and multivariate statistical methods to derive insights from the primary data collected. The major findings are as follows:

1. Prevalence and Nature of FOMO

- A significant proportion of students (68%) reported experiencing FOMO to some extent, with 37% indicating “sometimes,” 31% “rarely,” and 11% “often.”
- However, only 8% reported a high impact of FOMO on their financial decisions, while 36% acknowledged a moderate impact. The average impact score of 2.25 out of 5 indicates that, overall, students perceive a low to moderate influence of FOMO on their financial behavior.

2. Gender Differences in FOMO Experience

- The analysis found no statistically significant difference between males and females in terms of how often they experience FOMO ($p > 0.05$).
- While distribution patterns varied slightly by gender, these differences were not strong enough to be considered meaningful.

3. Behavioral Correlations

- A significant positive correlation exists between peer comparison and fit-in purchases ($\rho = 0.245$, $p = 0.014$), implying that students who compare themselves with peers are more likely to spend just to fit in socially.
- A similar positive relationship was found between saving before spending and consideration of long-term financial goals ($\rho = 0.197$, $p = 0.049$), indicating that financially disciplined students also think about future goals.

- Other variables, such as interest in financial education and spending regret, did not show statistically significant correlations, suggesting a possible gap between awareness and action.

4. Predictors of Fit-in Purchases (Multivariate Findings)

- A multiple regression analysis revealed that Spending Regret ($\beta = 0.212$, $p < 0.05$) and Peer Comparison ($\beta = 0.253$, $p < 0.05$) are significant predictors of students making purchases just to fit in.
- FOMO Frequency and FOMO Impact Score were not significant predictors in the model.
- The overall model explained 12.3% of the variance in fit-in purchase behavior, which, while modest, indicates that social influence and emotional regret are meaningful drivers of such spending.

4.3.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are proposed for students, educators, and institutions to mitigate the negative financial impacts of FOMO:

1. Promote Peer-Resilience and Financial Literacy Campaigns

- Since peer comparison strongly influences unnecessary spending, universities should conduct workshops on peer pressure awareness and self-worth building.
- Integrate real-life financial stories and case studies that demonstrate the consequences of impulsive, comparison-driven purchases.

2. Incorporate Behavioral Finance into Curriculum

- Colleges should consider embedding behavioral finance topics in general education or elective courses. This would help students understand how psychological triggers like FOMO can distort rational decision-making.

3. Foster Habitual Saving and Long-Term Planning

- The positive correlation between saving behavior and long-term financial goal setting indicates a strong foundation for financial health.
- Institutions could launch campus-based savings challenges or gamified apps that reward long-term thinking and budgeting.

4. Targeted Interventions for Students with High Spending Regret

- Since regret over purchases was a key predictor of fit-in spending, counseling services or financial mentorship programs should target students who frequently express regret or stress after spending.
- Offering personalized financial coaching can help these students make better decisions in high-pressure scenarios.

5. Shift from Awareness to Practice in Financial Education

- While many students express interest in financial education, it does not always translate into better habits.
- Educational programs should emphasize practical tools like budgeting apps, expense tracking sheets, and monthly spending reviews, encouraging application beyond theoretical knowledge.

CONCLUSION

The present study aimed to investigate the influence of Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) on financial decision-making and spending behavior among college students. By employing a structured questionnaire and analyzing responses from approximately 90 students, the research provided a comprehensive understanding of how emotional and social factors, particularly FOMO, shape financial behaviors in the younger demographic. The findings offer meaningful insights for academia, financial educators, and policy makers, especially in light of the increasing financial independence and digital exposure among students today.

5.1 Summary of Key Descriptive Findings

The demographic profile of the respondents indicated that the majority were aged between 18 and 26 years, representing a mix of undergraduate and postgraduate students. The gender distribution was relatively balanced, and the participants came from diverse income backgrounds, with varied sources of financial support such as family assistance, scholarships, or part-time work.

Regarding FOMO experiences, a significant portion of students reported moderate to high frequency of feeling the pressure to spend or participate in activities due to social influence, especially triggered by social media exposure. A notable finding was that although many students acknowledged the emotional impact of FOMO, a substantial number lacked structured financial planning or savings habits.

Overall, descriptive statistics pointed towards a strong presence of impulsive buying tendencies, peer-influenced purchasing decisions, and limited emphasis on long-term financial goals among students experiencing higher levels of FOMO.

5.2 Summary of Analytical Findings

- **FOMO and Impulse Spending Behavior:** Correlation and regression analyses demonstrated a positive relationship between FOMO frequency and impulsive spending. Students with higher

FOMO scores were more likely to make unplanned purchases, often driven by peer activities or trending products showcased on social media.

- **Peer Comparison and Financial Decision-Making:**
The study revealed that peer comparison significantly influenced financial decisions. Students who often compared themselves with peers were more susceptible to spending beyond their planned budgets, highlighting the social dimension of financial behavior.
- **Post-Purchase Emotions and Spending Regret:**
A substantial proportion of respondents reported feelings of regret and dissatisfaction after FOMO-driven purchases. This indicates that decisions made under emotional or social pressure often lead to negative financial and emotional consequences.
- **Saving Habits and Financial Planning:**
Students with higher FOMO experiences exhibited weaker saving behaviors and a lower tendency to consider long-term financial goals. Saving before spending was less common among those heavily influenced by social trends.
- **Interest in Financial Education:**
Despite the influence of FOMO, many students expressed a willingness to improve their financial literacy. Students interested in learning about budgeting, investment, and mindful consumption were found to be more resilient to FOMO-driven overspending.

5.3 Practical Implications of the Study

- **For Educational Institutions:**
Financial education programs that incorporate emotional and social aspects of money management could be effective in equipping students to resist impulsive behaviors driven by FOMO. Workshops on financial resilience, budgeting, and mindful consumption would be highly beneficial.

- **For Financial Advisors and App Developers:**
Tools designed to help students track emotional spending, set savings goals, and differentiate between needs and wants can assist in reducing FOMO-related financial strain.
- **For Policy Makers and Regulators:**
Considering the increasing digital exposure of students, policies encouraging responsible marketing practices on social media, and awareness campaigns about financial risks associated with FOMO, are necessary to protect young consumers.
- **For Academic Research:**
This study contributes to the growing field of behavioral finance by highlighting the emotional triggers behind financial decision-making among emerging adults, particularly in the digital era.

5.4 Final Reflection

The study concludes that FOMO has a tangible and significant impact on the financial decision-making and spending behavior of college students. While social connections and experiences are vital aspects of student life, unchecked FOMO can lead to impulsive spending, financial stress, and poor savings habits. However, the presence of financial literacy and a conscious effort towards mindful spending act as protective factors against these negative outcomes.

It is crucial for students to develop not only financial knowledge but also emotional awareness regarding their consumption patterns. Educational initiatives focusing on building financial discipline, critical evaluation of peer influence, and promotion of long-term financial planning are necessary to empower students to make informed and balanced financial decisions.

As the digital world continues to evolve, further studies could explore the long-term effects of FOMO on financial health and strategies to integrate emotional intelligence into financial education frameworks. Ultimately, fostering a culture of informed

decision-making and emotional resilience among students will be key to ensuring their financial well-being and stability in the future.

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ANNEXURES

Annexure 1: Survey Questionnaire

Effect of FOMO on Financial Decision-Making and Spending Behavior Among College Students

Dear Participant,

This survey explores how FOMO (Fear of Missing Out) affects financial decisions and spending habits among college students. Your responses will remain anonymous and help in understanding the impact of social media, impulsive buying, and financial literacy.

The survey will take few minutes!!

Let's begin !!!

Gender *

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

Education Level *

- ☐ Undergraduate
- ☐ Postgraduate
- ☐ Other

How do you primarily manage your expenses *

- ☐ Parents/Guardians
- ☐ Personal Savings
- ☐ Part-time Job/Freelancing
- ☐ Other:



Have you ever borrowed money or used credit (e.g., Buy Now Pay Later Services, credit cards) to make a purchase influenced by FOMO? *

- ☐ Yes, frequently
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ No

On a scale of 1-5, how much do you think FOMO impacts your financial decisions? (1 = No impact, 5 = Very high impact) *

- 1 ☐
- 2 ☐
- 3 ☐
- 4 ☐
- 5 ☐

What emotions do you typically experience after making a FOMO-driven purchase? 

- ☐ Satisfaction and excitement
- ☐ Regret and guilt
- ☐ Neutral, no strong feelings
- ☐ Other: _____

Do you set a monthly spending limit for non-essential purchases, such as trends or social outings influenced by FOMO? *

- ☐ Yes, always
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ No, never

Do you save a portion of your income/allowance before spending on non-essentials? *

- ☐ Yes, always
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ No, I usually spend first



How often do you experience FOMO when you see others on social media engaging in activities (e.g., shopping, dining out, traveling)? *

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always

Do you compare your spending habits with those of your peers, especially based on their social media posts or lifestyle? *

- ☐ Yes, frequently
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ No, never

Have you ever made a purchase just to fit in with friends or social groups? *

- ☐ Yes, frequently
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ No

Do you regret spending money impulsively due to social pressure or FOMO? *

- ☐ Yes, frequently
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ No

When making financial decisions, what influences you the most? *

- ☐ Personal Needs
- ☐ Peer Pressure
- ☐ Social Media Trends
- ☐ Advertisements



Do you consider long-term financial goals (e.g., savings, investments) when making short-term spending decisions? *

☐ Yes, I always consider my long-term goals

☐ Sometimes, but I prioritize short-term desires

☐ Rarely, I mostly focus on immediate wants

☐ No, I do not consider long-term goals while spending

Have you ever taken financial advice from online sources (e.g., influencers, blogs, YouTube) regarding money management or spending? *

☐ Yes, frequently

☐ Sometimes

☐ Rarely

☐ No, never

If given financial education on budgeting, saving, and smart spending, would you be interested in learning more? *

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Maybe

☐ Send me a copy of my responses.

	Timestamp	Name	Age	Gender	Location	Leisure	Marital	Social	Medium	Peers	Impulsive	Just to fit in	Impulsions	Whys	Later	Spots	your	fire	after	purchases	/allowances	invest	influenced	smart
1	2025-03-26 19:59:01	Aastha Jain	23	Female	Postgraduate	Often	Yes, frequ	Rarely	Rarely	Personal	N	No	Personal	N	No	1	Neutral, n	Yes, always	Sometime	Sometime	Yes, frequ	Yes		
2	2025-03-27 22:36:13	Vanshika Agrawal	24	Female	Postgradu	Parents/Gi	Never	No, never	No	Personal	N	No	Personal	N	No	1	Neutral, n	Yes, always	Yes, always	Sometime	No, never	Yes		
4	2025-03-27 22:39:56	Mansi Garg	23	Female	Postgradu	Parents/Gi	Rarely	Sometime	Sometime	Yes, frequ	Personal	N	No	Personal	N	4	Regret anc	Rarely	Sometime	Sometime	Rarely	Yes		
5	2025-03-28 20:51:13	Akansha Negi	23	Female	Postgradu	Parents/Gi	Often	Sometime	Rarely	Sometime	Personal	N	No	Personal	N	4	Neutral, n	Sometime	Yes, always	Yes, I alwa	No, never	Yes		
6	2025-03-29 21:32:05	Karan Gupta	25	Male	Postgradu	Personal	S	Rarely	Rarely	Sometime	No	Personal	N	No	1	Neutral, n	No, never	Sometime	Yes, I alwa	Sometime	Yes			
7	2025-03-29 21:33:12	Aryan Gupta	23	Male	Postgradu	Parents/Gi	Sometime	Sometime	No	No	Personal	N	No	Personal	N	1	Neutral, n	Yes, always	Yes, always	Yes, I alwa	Sometime	Maybe		
8	2025-03-29 21:36:42	Nikhil Kumar Vashist	26	Male	Postgradu	Parents/Gi	Rarely	Rarely	Rarely	Rarely	Personal	N	No	Personal	N	2	Regret anc	No, never	Yes, always	Yes, I alwa	Sometime	Maybe		
9	2025-03-29 21:41:29	Ayushi Saini	23	Female	Postgradu	Parents/Gi	Never	No	No	Personal	N	Rarely	2	Neutral, n	Rarely	Yes, always	Sometime	No, never	Maybe					
10	2025-03-29 21:44:19	Yashashvi Singh	26	Male	Postgradu	Parents/Gi	Sometime	Yes, frequ	No	Sometime	Personal	N	Yes, frequ	4	Neutral, n	No, never	Yes, always	Yes, I alwa	Sometime	Yes				
11	2025-03-29 21:59:12	Saksham Jain	20	Male	Undergrad	Parents/Gi	Rarely	Rarely	Sometime	Sometime	Personal	N	No	2	Neutral, n	No, never	Sometime	Sometime	Rarely	Maybe				
12	2025-03-29 22:02:21	Khushi singh	21	Female	Undergrad	Parents/Gi	Often	Sometime	No	No	Social	Med	No	3	Neutral, n	Yes, always	Sometime	Sometime	Sometime	Yes, frequ	Yes			
13	2025-03-29 22:04:33	Samidha Garg	25	Female	Postgradu	Parents/Gi	Sometime	Yes, frequ	Rarely	Sometime	Personal	N	No	3	Regret anc	Sometime	Sometime	Sometime	Rarely	Yes				
14	2025-03-29 22:18:05	Suhani	19	Female	Undergrad	Parents/Gi	Sometime	Rarely	Sometime	Sometime	Personal	N	No	2	Regret anc	Yes, always	Yes, always	Sometime	No, never	Yes				
15	2025-03-29 22:19:46	Vishwajeet sahani	23	Male	Postgradu	Parents/Gi	Sometime	Sometime	Sometime	Sometime	Personal	N	Sometime	3	Neutral, n	Rarely	Sometime	Sometime	Sometime	Maybe				
16	2025-03-29 22:28:15	Tushar Jain	23	Male	Postgradu	Parents/Gi	Sometime	Rarely	Sometime	Yes, frequ	Personal	N	Yes, frequ	3	Neutral, n	No, never	Rarely	Sometime	Yes, frequ	Yes				
17	2025-03-29 23:04:48	Shubhangi Gulati	23	Female	Postgradu	Personal	S	Sometime	Sometime	Rarely	Sometime	Personal	N	3	Neutral, n	No, never	Sometime	Rarely, I m	No, never	Yes				
18	2025-03-29 23:21:18	Md Riyazuddin	24	Male	Postgradu	Part-time	Sometime	Rarely	Rarely	Sometime	Personal	N	Sometime	3	Neutral, n	Sometime	Sometime	Rarely, I m	Rarely	No				
19	2025-03-29 23:26:46	Jatin Mitrv	22	Male	Postgradu	Parents/Gi	Rarely	Rarely	No	Sometime	Personal	N	No	2	Neutral, n	Rarely	Yes, always	Yes, I alwa	Sometime	No				
20	2025-03-29 23:55:04	Sneha	19	Female	Undergrad	Parents/Gi	Rarely	No, never	No	No	Personal	N	Rarely	2	Regret anc	Rarely	No, I usual	Rarely, I m	Sometime	Yes				
21	2025-03-30 07:34:07	Harsh Parashar	22	Male	Postgradu	Scholarship	Rarely	Rarely	Rarely	Personal	N	No	4	Neutral, n	Sometime	Yes, always	Yes, I alwa	Sometime	Yes					
22	2025-03-30 12:43:34	Anuati Jain	25	Female	Postgradu	Doing Job	Sometime	Sometime	Rarely	Rarely	Discounts	No	2	Regret anc	No, never	Yes, always	Yes, I alwa	Sometime	Yes					
23	2025-03-30 13:11:02	Khushbu jain	26	Female	Postgradu	Parents/Gi	Sometime	No, never	No	Rarely	Personal	N	No											

66	2025-04-10 23:56:14	Soumya	21 Female	Undergrad Parents/Gi Always	Yes, frequ	Yes, frequ	Sometime: Personal N No	3 Regret anc Sometime: Sometime: No, never No
67	2025-04-11 12:10:46	Krish Butola	19 Male	Undergrad Parents/Gi Never	Sometime: Rarely	No	Personal N Sometime:	3 Regret anc No, never Sometime: Rarely, I m Rarely Yes
68	2025-04-13 13:47:01	Shreyas sah	22 Male	Undergrad Parents/Gi Sometime:	No, never Rarely	Rarely	Personal N No	1 I never put No, never Yes, always Yes, I alwa No, never Yes
69	2025-04-08 14:11:13	Aarav Mehta	18 Female	Postgradu Parents/Gi Never	No, never Rarely	No	Discounts No	2 Regret anc Sometime: No, I usual Yes, I alwa Sometime: Yes
70	2025-03-26 21:43:01	Ishita Sharma	24 Male	Undergrad Personal S Rarely	Sometime: Rarely	Sometime: Personal N Sometime:		1 Satisfactio Sometime: No, I usual Yes, I alwa Yes, frequ Maybe
71	2025-04-14 08:59:15	Rohan Verma	20 Female	Postgradu Parents/Gi Never	Yes, frequ No	No	Personal N No	3 Neutral, nc No, never Yes, always Yes, I alwa Sometime: Yes
72	2025-04-02 20:36:05	Priya Nair	25 Female	Undergrad Personal S Sometime:	Rarely	Sometime:	Sometime: Personal N No	2 Neutral, nc No, never Sometime: Yes, I alwa Rarely Yes
73	2025-03-20 12:51:35	Aniket Joshi	21 Female	Undergrad Parents/Gi Sometime:	Rarely	Rarely	Sometime: Personal N No	2 Neutral, nc Rarely Rarely Rarely, I m Yes, frequ Yes
74	2025-04-06 22:24:29	Sneha Reddy	19 Male	Postgradu Personal S Rarely	Rarely	Rarely	Personal N Yes, frequ	2 Neutral, nc Sometime: No, I usual Rarely, I m Sometime: Yes
75	2025-04-01 01:51:21	Arjun Deshmukh	18 Female	Undergrad Parents/Gi Rarely	No, never No	Rarely	Personal N No	2 Neutral, nc Yes, always No, I usual Sometime: Yes, frequ Yes
76	2025-03-31 22:12:13	Nisha Patel	20 Male	Undergrad Personal S Sometime:	Rarely	Rarely	Sometime: Personal N Yes, frequ	3 Regret anc No, never Sometime: Rarely, I m Sometime: Yes
77	2025-04-06 03:34:32	Kunal Bansal	21 Male	Undergrad Part-time : Sometime:	No, never No	Rarely	Personal N Sometime:	1 Neutral, nc Rarely Sometime: Yes, I alwa Sometime: Yes
78	2025-03-28 11:21:31	Mitali Sengupta	23 Male	Postgradu Parents/Gi Rarely	Sometime: No	Sometime: Personal N Yes, frequ		2 Regret anc Sometime: Yes, always Rarely, I m Rarely Yes
79	2025-03-21 22:45:02	Rahul Iyer	21 Female	Undergrad Parents/Gi Rarely	Rarely	No	Personal N Sometime:	4 Regret anc Sometime: Yes, always Yes, I alwa Sometime: Maybe
80	2025-03-25 20:51:37	Divya Chauhan	20 Female	Postgradu Parents/Gi Often	No, never No	No	Personal N No	1 Neutral, nc Yes, always No, I usual Sometime: Sometime: Maybe
81	2025-04-14 23:50:50	Yash Thakur	22 Male	Postgradu Parents/Gi Sometime:	No, never Rarely	Yes, frequ	Personal N No	3 Neutral, nc Rarely Sometime: Yes, I alwa No, never Maybe
82	2025-04-09 17:06:54	Pooja Menon	25 Female	Postgradu Parents/Gi Rarely	Rarely	Rarely	Personal N No	2 Neutral, nc Rarely No, I usual Yes, I alwa Sometime: Yes
83	2025-03-29 03:55:59	Siddharth Kapoor	23 Male	Postgradu Part-time : Sometime:	Rarely	Sometime: Rarely	Personal N No	3 No buy on No, never Sometime: Yes, I alwa Sometime: Yes
84	2025-03-22 19:48:11	Ananya Dutta	20 Female	Postgradu Parents/Gi Rarely	Sometime: Sometime: Rarely	Personal N No		3 Neutral, nc No, never Sometime: Sometime: Yes, frequ Maybe
85	2025-03-30 19:42:41	Varun Khanna	26 Female	Postgradu Part-time : Rarely	Sometime: No	Sometime: Discounts Rarely		3 Neutral, nc Sometime: Sometime: Yes, I alwa Yes, frequ No
86	2025-04-03 02:54:42	Meera Jain	26 Male	Undergrad Parents/Gi Never	Rarely	No	Sometime: Personal N No	3 Neutral, nc Sometime: Sometime: Yes, I alwa No, never No
87	2025-04-07 09:42:31	Aditya Rathi	21 Female	Postgradu Parents/Gi Sometime:	Yes, frequ Rarely	Rarely	Personal N No	2 Neutral, nc No, never Yes, always Sometime: Rarely Yes
88	2025-04-06 10:46:39	Riya Salvi	23 Female	Undergrad Parents/Gi Rarely	Rarely	No	Personal N Yes, frequ	1 Regret anc Sometime: Rarely Yes, I alwa Yes, frequ Yes
89	2025-03-18 03:07:39	Nikhil Chauhan	25 Female	Undergrad Parents/Gi Often	Rarely	Sometime: Rarely	Personal N No	1 Neutral, nc No, never Rarely Yes, I alwa No, never Yes
90	2025-04-15 05:40:10	Tanvi Desai	22 Female	Undergrad Personal S Never	Rarely	Sometime: Rarely	Personal N No	1 Satisfactio No, never Rarely Yes, I alwa Sometime: Yes
91	2025-04-07 21:46:26	Harsh Vyas	23 Female	Undergrad Parents/Gi Sometime:	Rarely	No	Personal N No	3 Neutral, nc No, never Sometime: Sometime: Rarely Yes
92	2025-04-03 21:41:50	Aisha Qureshi	28 Male	Undergrad Full Time ji Never	Sometime: Rarely	Sometime: Personal N Yes, frequ		1 Regret anc No, never Yes, always Rarely, I m No, never Yes
93	2025-03-31 15:21:06	Tushar Pillai	21 Male	Postgradu Parents/Gi Rarely	Rarely	Sometime: Sometime: Personal N No		1 Regret anc No, never Sometime: Rarely, I m Sometime: Yes
94	2025-04-08 02:02:05	Kavya Sinha	20 Female	Postgradu Parents/Gi Rarely	No, never No	No	Personal N No	1 Neutral, nc No, never Yes, always Rarely, I m Yes, frequ Yes
95	2025-03-23 12:44:02	Omkar Kulkarni	23 Male	Postgradu Personal S Never	Rarely	No	Personal N No	3 Neutral, nc Yes, always No, I usual Sometime: Rarely Yes
96	2025-04-12 05:31:44	Rachna Bhatia	19 Male	Undergrad Personal S Sometime:	Rarely	No	Yes, frequ Social Mec No	3 Regret anc No, never Sometime: Sometime: Sometime: No
97	2025-03-21 03:34:11	Pranav Ghosh	21 Male	Undergrad Parents/Gi Sometime:	Sometime: No	No	Social Mec No	1 Neutral, nc Sometime: Sometime: Yes, I alwa No, never Yes
98	2025-03-24 20:55:33	Neha Saxena	23 Male	Postgradu Parents/Gi Sometime:	Sometime: Rarely	Sometime: Personal N Rarely		3 Regret anc Yes, always Sometime: Yes, I alwa Yes, frequ Maybe
99	2025-03-24 19:30:40	Akshay Jindal	26 Male	Undergrad Personal S Sometime:	Rarely	No	Personal N No	1 Neutral, nc Yes, always Yes, always Yes, I alwa Rarely No
100	2025-03-29 09:40:18	Simran Kaul	20 Female	Undergrad Parents/Gi Sometime:	No, never Rarely	Rarely	Personal N No	3 Regret anc No, never Rarely Rarely, I m Sometime: Yes