

FoMO and Instagram Story Usage Intensity among Indonesian Instagram Users

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ABSTRAK

Instagram Story merupakan fitur media sosial yang bersifat sementara dan terus diperbarui sehingga dapat mendorong pengguna untuk memantau aktivitas sosial secara berulang. Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis pengaruh Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) terhadap intensitas penggunaan Instagram Story, baik secara langsung maupun secara tidak langsung melalui keterlibatan pengguna, serta menguji peran kepercayaan terhadap platform. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan desain survei potong lintang terhadap 290 pengguna aktif Instagram di Indonesia berusia 18-25 tahun yang memiliki pengalaman menggunakan fitur Instagram Stories. Data dianalisis menggunakan Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM). Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa FoMO berpengaruh positif terhadap keterlibatan pengguna ($\beta = 0,206$; $p = 0,009$) dan intensitas penggunaan Instagram Story ($\beta = 0,339$; $p < 0,001$). Keterlibatan pengguna berpengaruh positif terhadap intensitas penggunaan ($\beta = 0,160$; $p = 0,019$), sedangkan kepercayaan terhadap platform menunjukkan pengaruh langsung terkuat terhadap intensitas penggunaan ($\beta = 0,359$; $p < 0,001$). Namun, pengaruh tidak langsung FoMO terhadap intensitas penggunaan melalui keterlibatan pengguna tidak signifikan ($\beta = 0,033$; $p = 0,085$), sehingga peran mediasi keterlibatan pengguna tidak didukung. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa motivasi psikologis, keterlibatan pengguna, dan kepercayaan terhadap platform berkontribusi melalui jalur langsung yang berbeda terhadap intensitas penggunaan Instagram Story.

Kata kunci: Fear of Missing Out, Instagram Story, keterlibatan pengguna, kepercayaan terhadap platform, intensitas penggunaan

ABSTRACT

Instagram Story is a temporary and continuously updated social media feature that may encourage users to monitor social activities repeatedly. This study examines the influence of Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) on Instagram Story usage intensity, both directly and indirectly through user engagement, while also assessing the role of platform trust. A quantitative approach with a cross-sectional survey design was employed involving 290 active Instagram users in Indonesia aged 18-25 years who had experience using the Instagram Stories feature. The data were analysed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM). The results show that FoMO positively affects user engagement ($\beta = 0.206$, $p = 0.009$) and Instagram Story usage intensity ($\beta = 0.339$, $p < 0.001$). User engagement positively affects usage intensity ($\beta = 0.160$, $p = 0.019$), while platform trust demonstrates the strongest direct

effect on usage intensity ($\beta = 0.359$, $p < 0.001$). However, the indirect effect of FoMO on usage intensity through user engagement is not significant ($\beta = 0.033$, $p = 0.085$); therefore, the mediating role of user engagement is not supported. These findings demonstrate that psychological motivation, user engagement, and platform trust contribute through distinct direct pathways to Instagram Story usage intensity.

Keywords: Fear of Missing Out (FoMO), Instagram Story, user engagement, platform trust, usage intensity

A. INTRODUCTION

Social media has become an integral part of everyday communication. Beyond facilitating information exchange, social media enables users to maintain interpersonal relationships, construct social presence, express themselves, and remain involved in activities within continuously connected digital environments (Dwivedi et al., 2021; Purwanto et al., 2023). These practices indicate that social media use is closely connected to users' social and emotional need to remain visible, informed, and involved.

Instagram Stories represent a particularly relevant feature within this environment because their content is temporary, continuously updated, and rapidly consumed. Unlike permanent feed posts, Story content disappears after a limited period, potentially encouraging users to access the

feature repeatedly to avoid missing current social information (Anwar et al., 2020; Israfilzade & Babayev, 2020; Kircova et al., 2020; Rindiani et al., 2023). These characteristics make Instagram Stories a feature-specific communication environment in which social monitoring, interpersonal visibility, and repeated usage may become closely interconnected.

Recent studies in Indonesian communication contexts demonstrate that digital platforms support relational continuity and social interaction, while user engagement is also influenced by content credibility, emotional relevance, and opportunities for participatory communication (Bate, 2025; Farida et al., 2025; Surokim & Rosyidi, 2025). However, these studies do not specifically explain how psychological motivations operate within the temporary and continuously

updated environment of Instagram Stories.

Previous FoMO research has predominantly examined general social media use, problematic usage, psychological well-being, and repeated checking behaviour. Meanwhile, studies of Instagram Stories have mainly focused on self-presentation, user engagement, ephemeral marketing, and patterns of feature use. Consequently, limited evidence explains how FoMO, user engagement, platform trust, and usage intensity operate together within a feature-specific social media environment, particularly among Indonesian Instagram users.

Therefore, the research problem addressed in this study concerns the limited understanding of the direct and indirect relationships among FoMO, user engagement, platform trust, and Instagram Story usage intensity. To address this problem, the study develops a feature-specific model that examines the direct influence of FoMO on Instagram Story usage intensity, tests the potential mediating role of user engagement, and incorporates platform trust as a contextual predictor.

The novelty of this study lies in shifting the analytical focus from general social media use to Instagram Stories as an ephemeral communication feature characterised by temporality, continuous updates, and social monitoring. The study also integrates psychological motivation, user engagement, platform evaluation, and usage behaviour within a single explanatory model and provides empirical evidence from Indonesian Instagram users.

Based on this research problem, the central research question is: How does Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) influence Instagram Story usage intensity among Indonesian Instagram users, both directly and indirectly through user engagement, while accounting for the role of platform trust?

Accordingly, this study aims to analyse the direct influence of FoMO on Instagram Story usage intensity, examine the potential mediating role of user engagement, and assess the contribution of platform trust as a contextual predictor of usage behaviour among Indonesian Instagram users. The study contributes to feature-specific social media research by clarifying how

psychological, behavioural, and platform-related factors are connected within the communication environment of Instagram Stories.

B. LITERATURE REVIEW

Uses and Gratifications Theory

Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) provides an overarching communication perspective for explaining why individuals actively select and use media features. Rather than viewing audiences as passive recipients of media messages, UGT positions users as active participants who choose media according to their psychological and social needs. These needs may include information seeking, entertainment, social interaction, self-expression, emotional reassurance, and the maintenance of interpersonal connections.

In digital communication environments, media selection is shaped not only by platform characteristics but also by users' expectations regarding the gratifications that features can provide. Social media enables individuals to construct meaning, maintain relationships, negotiate identity, and preserve social presence

through continuously evolving networked interactions (Dwivedi et al., 2021; Topsümer et al., 2023). Among Indonesian social media users, social media use is closely associated with the need for social connection, recognition, emotional regulation, and continued awareness of others' activities (Purwanto et al., 2023; Urano & Kobayashi, 2025). From a UGT perspective, these motivations help explain why users repeatedly engage with social media features that provide immediate and continuous access to social information.

Within this framework, Instagram Stories represent a feature-specific communication environment that offers several forms of gratification. The feature allows users to observe current social activities, share everyday experiences, maintain interpersonal visibility, and respond to content within a limited period. Unlike permanent feed posts, Instagram Stories are characterized by temporality, rapid consumption, and algorithmically curated visibility (Anwar et al., 2020; Rindiani et al., 2023)

Because Story content is available only temporarily, users may feel the need to access it promptly to remain

informed and socially connected. These characteristics create a sense of urgency and may encourage repeated engagement within an ongoing cycle of digital social observation (Israfilzade & Babayev, 2020; Kircova et al., 2020).

From a UGT perspective, the use of Instagram Stories can therefore be understood as an active attempt to satisfy social, informational, and emotional needs. Users may use Stories not only for self-expression but also to observe others' activities, assess their position within social networks, and sustain a sense of social presence even in the absence of direct interaction (Rindiani et al., 2023; Israfilzade & Babayev, 2020). The continuously updated and temporary nature of Stories may strengthen users' involvement with the feature, particularly when they perceive that failing to check updates could result in missing socially meaningful experiences. This condition provides the theoretical basis for explaining FoMO as a psychological motivation that may influence user engagement with Instagram Stories.

FoMO and User Engagement

Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) refers to apprehension or discomfort arising from the perception that other people may be experiencing rewarding or meaningful events from which an individual is absent. In digitally mediated environments, FoMO reflects a heightened need to remain connected, informed, and aware of others' activities. This psychological condition may encourage individuals to monitor social media repeatedly to reduce uncertainty about ongoing social experiences.

Previous studies have demonstrated that FoMO is associated with frequent social media checking, stronger emotional attachment to online activities, and continued attention to social updates (Meradaputhi et al., 2023; Nurhayati & Azhar, 2023). Among social media users, FoMO may function as a psychological motivation that encourages sustained attention to time-sensitive social information. This motivation is particularly relevant to Instagram Stories because the temporary availability of content creates the possibility that an update may disappear before it is viewed.

From the perspective of Uses and Gratifications Theory, FoMO may be understood as a psychological motivation arising from unmet needs for social connection, belonging, and continuous awareness. Users who are concerned about being excluded from socially meaningful experiences may actively access Instagram Stories to obtain social information, follow others' activities, and maintain a sense of symbolic presence within their social environment. FoMO therefore operates not merely as an emotional condition but also as a motivation that may encourage users to become more involved with Instagram Story content.

User engagement reflects the degree of users' cognitive, affective, and behavioural involvement with digital content. In the context of Instagram Stories, engagement may be expressed through sustained attention to updates, emotional responses to content, repeated viewing, and interaction with available features. Previous research indicates that social media environments can intensify emotional participation, visibility, and attention-driven interaction, particularly when platform characteristics encourage rapid content circulation and continuous

audience involvement (Widodo et al., 2026).

Taken together, FoMO represents a psychological motivation that may strengthen users' cognitive attention, emotional involvement, and behavioural participation in Instagram Stories. Users with higher levels of FoMO are more likely to remain attentive to temporary updates, monitor socially meaningful content, and interact continuously with the feature. Accordingly, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1: Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) has a positive effect on user engagement with Instagram Stories.

User Engagement and Instagram Story Usage Intensity

User engagement represents users' cognitive attention, affective attachment, and behavioural involvement with digital content. In social media contexts, engagement develops when users perceive content as personally relevant, emotionally meaningful, or socially valuable. Higher engagement encourages users to devote greater attention to platform content and interact with it more consistently.

Conceptually, user engagement and usage intensity are related but distinct constructs. User engagement refers to the quality and depth of users' cognitive, affective, and behavioural involvement with Instagram Story content. In contrast, usage intensity refers to the extent to which the feature is repeatedly accessed and incorporated into users' daily routines. Engagement therefore reflects how strongly users become involved with the content, whereas usage intensity reflects how frequently and consistently they use the feature. This distinction positions user engagement as a proximal predictor of Instagram Story usage intensity rather than as an interchangeable measure of usage behaviour.

Instagram Stories provide a communication environment that supports repeated and continuous engagement. Their temporary availability, rapid content flow, and algorithmically organised visibility may encourage users to return frequently to follow ongoing updates. Studies of digital communication have shown that platform environments characterised by participation, immediacy, and emotional resonance tend to intensify audience

involvement and repeated interaction (Israfilzade & Babayev, 2020; Kircova et al., 2020; Widodo et al., 2026).

Within the UGT framework, engagement indicates that users perceive Instagram Stories as capable of satisfying social, informational, and emotional needs. When users become cognitively attentive and emotionally involved with Story content, they are more likely to access the feature repeatedly, monitor updates, and incorporate it into their daily communication routines. Therefore, user engagement is a proximal behavioural factor that may contribute to greater intensity of Instagram Story usage. Based on this reasoning, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H2: User engagement positively affects Instagram Story usage intensity.

FoMO and Instagram Story Usage Intensity

Previous quantitative studies indicate that FoMO is associated with more intensive social media use and various affective consequences, including digital fatigue, problematic social media use, and difficulties in emotional regulation (Jabeen et al., 2023; Bella et al., 2023). Individuals

who experience stronger FoMO are more likely to monitor social media repeatedly because continuous access provides reassurance that they remain informed about ongoing social activities.

This relationship is particularly relevant to Instagram Stories because the feature is temporary, continuously updated, and available only for a limited period. These characteristics may intensify users' concern that socially meaningful content will disappear before it is viewed, thereby encouraging repeated access and continuous monitoring (Liu et al., 2024). Instagram Story usage intensity can therefore be understood as a behavioural manifestation of the interaction between FoMO and the temporal characteristics of the feature.

social information, maintain connectedness, and reduce uncertainty regarding others' activities. Instagram users with higher levels of FoMO may therefore use Instagram Stories more intensively to preserve social awareness and maintain a sense of symbolic presence within their social environment (Angesti & Oriza, 2018; Przybylski et al., 2013). Based on this reasoning, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H3: Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) has a positive effect on Instagram Story usage intensity.

Platform Trust and Instagram Story Usage Intensity

Platform trust refers to users' confidence that a digital platform is reliable, credible, and capable of functioning consistently in supporting online communication. It reflects users' evaluation of whether the platform can be depended upon to provide stable access, deliver information predictably, and facilitate continued interaction. In digitally mediated environments, trust reduces uncertainty and strengthens users' willingness to rely on a platform for accessing information, continuing its use, and participating in platform-mediated activities (Pertwi et al., 2025; Zhang et al., 2025; Petrovic et al., 2026).

From the perspective of Uses and Gratifications Theory, users actively select media features that they expect will satisfy their social, informational, and emotional needs. However, the pursuit of these gratifications also depends on whether users believe that the platform can consistently provide the expected communication

experience. Platform trust is therefore not a gratification or psychological motivation. Instead, it functions as an enabling evaluation that supports users' willingness to continue relying on a particular platform.

Platform trust is particularly relevant to Instagram Stories because users depend on Instagram to deliver temporary and continuously updated content within a limited period. Because Story content may disappear before it is viewed, users must perceive the platform as sufficiently reliable and accessible to follow ongoing updates. When Instagram is regarded as dependable, users may be more willing to revisit Stories, monitor new content, and incorporate the feature into their daily communication routines.

Conceptually, platform trust and FoMO influence usage intensity through different pathways. FoMO represents an internal psychological motivation arising from users' concern about missing socially meaningful experiences, whereas platform trust represents an external evaluation of the communication environment provided by Instagram. FoMO explains why users feel motivated to check Stories, while platform trust

explains why they are willing to rely on Instagram as the medium through which those social updates are accessed. The two constructs are therefore complementary rather than interchangeable.

In this study, platform trust is positioned as an exogenous contextual predictor rather than as a control variable. It is expected to influence Instagram Story usage intensity directly because confidence in the platform may support repeated access and continued feature use. Platform trust is not hypothesised to create psychological involvement with Story content; instead, it provides a reliable communication context in which repeated usage can occur. Based on this reasoning, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H4: Platform trust has a positive effect on Instagram Story usage intensity.

The Mediating Role of User Engagement

The relationship between FoMO and Instagram Story usage intensity may operate not only directly but also indirectly through user engagement. FoMO creates a psychological

motivation to remain informed, socially connected, and aware of others' activities. User engagement reflects the cognitive, affective, and behavioural involvement through which this motivation may be translated into actual media-use behaviour.

From a UGT perspective, psychological needs do not automatically produce media-use outcomes. Users first evaluate and become involved with media content that is expected to provide the desired gratifications. In the context of Instagram Stories, FoMO may increase users' attention to social updates, emotional involvement with Story content, and willingness to monitor the feature continuously. This heightened engagement may subsequently encourage more intensive use.

User engagement may therefore function as a mediating mechanism linking FoMO as a psychological motivation with observable usage behaviour. FoMO may strengthen users' need for connection and social awareness, which in turn increases their cognitive, affective, and behavioural involvement with Instagram Stories. Such involvement

may subsequently contribute to greater Instagram Story usage intensity. Based on this reasoning, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H5: User engagement mediates the relationship between Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) and Instagram Story usage intensity.

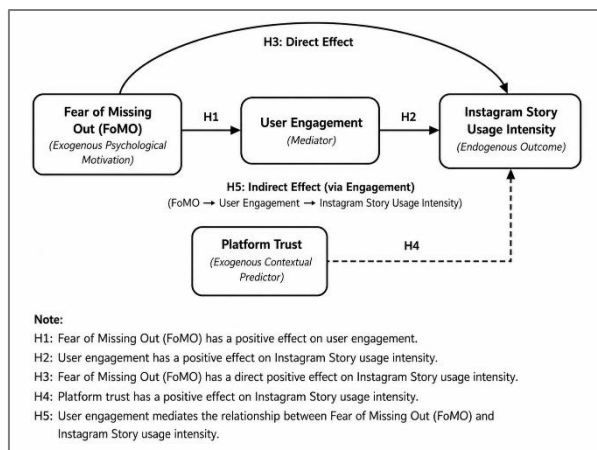
Conceptual Framework

Based on Uses and Gratifications Theory, the conceptual framework integrates a motivational pathway and a contextual pathway to explain Instagram Story usage intensity. FoMO is positioned as an exogenous psychological motivation that is expected to influence user engagement (H1) and Instagram Story usage intensity directly (H3). User engagement represents users' cognitive, affective, and behavioural involvement with Instagram Story content and is expected to influence usage intensity (H2).

The motivational pathway also includes the potential indirect influence of FoMO on Instagram Story usage intensity through user engagement (H5). This pathway assumes that FoMO may initially strengthen users' involvement with Instagram Story content, which may

subsequently influence the intensity with which they use the feature. User engagement is therefore positioned as a potential mediating construct whose mediating role is evaluated through empirical hypothesis testing

Platform trust forms a separate contextual pathway within the model. It represents users' evaluation of Instagram as a reliable, credible, and consistently functioning communication environment. Unlike FoMO, platform trust does not represent an internal psychological motivation. Instead, it is expected to influence Instagram Story usage intensity directly by strengthening users' willingness to rely on the platform for continued feature use (H4).



Source: Developed by the authors (2026).

Figure 1. Research Conceptual Framework

Taken together, the framework distinguishes the direct motivational

influence of FoMO, the involvement-based pathway through user engagement, and the contextual influence of platform trust. Instagram Story usage intensity constitutes the observable behavioural outcome of these proposed relationships. The framework is empirically tested among active Instagram users in Indonesia who have used the Instagram Stories feature .

C. METHODS

This study employed a quantitative approach with a correlational-explanatory design to examine the relationships among Fear of Missing Out (FoMO), user engagement, platform trust, and Instagram Story usage intensity. The quantitative approach enabled the relationships among the constructs to be measured systematically and empirically (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Neuman, 2014). The correlational component was used to identify the direction and strength of the relationships, while the explanatory component was used to examine the direct and indirect associations proposed in the conceptual model. Because the study did not involve

experimental manipulation, the findings are interpreted as statistically supported relationships rather than definitive causal effects.

Data were collected using a cross-sectional survey design within a specified data-collection period. This design was considered appropriate because it enabled the study to examine psychological motivation, user engagement, platform trust, and Instagram Story usage intensity at a particular point in time within a rapidly evolving digital communication environment.

The target population consisted of active Instagram users in Indonesia who had used the Instagram Stories feature. This population was selected because Instagram Story users are directly exposed to the feature's temporary, continuously updated, and socially interactive communication environment. Their experience with the feature made them an appropriate population for examining the relationships among FoMO, user engagement, platform trust, and Instagram Story usage intensity.

This study applied non-probability sampling by combining purposive and convenience sampling techniques. Respondents were

selected according to the following inclusion criteria: (1) residing in Indonesia, (2) having an active Instagram account, and (3) having used the Instagram Stories feature. Purposive sampling ensured that respondents possessed experience relevant to the research context, while convenience sampling facilitated access to eligible participants through available social networks and digital communication channels.

Because purposive and convenience sampling were employed, the probability of each member of the target population being selected was unknown. The online recruitment process may also have resulted in the overrepresentation of users who were more digitally active or more closely connected to the questionnaire-distribution networks. Consequently, the sample should not be regarded as statistically representative of all Instagram users in Indonesia. The findings are therefore interpreted as empirical evidence of the relationships among the variables within the eligible respondent sample rather than as population estimates or prevalence measures.

Data were collected through a structured online questionnaire distributed via social media and digital communication channels. Before completing the questionnaire, respondents received information regarding the purpose of the study, the voluntary nature of participation, and the academic use of the data. Respondents provided informed consent before participating. No personally identifying information was recorded, and all responses were treated anonymously and confidentially.

The questionnaire consisted of items measuring FoMO, user engagement, platform trust, and Instagram Story usage intensity. FoMO was positioned as an exogenous psychological motivation, user engagement as a mediating construct, platform trust as an exogenous contextual predictor, and Instagram Story usage intensity as the endogenous behavioural outcome. Platform trust was therefore examined as a direct predictor of Instagram Story usage intensity rather than as a control variable. All constructs were operationalised using measurement instruments adapted from established scales and relevant previous studies.

Measurement of Variables

All constructs were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). The questionnaire measured four constructs: Fear of Missing Out (FoMO), user engagement, platform trust, and Instagram Story usage intensity. The measurement indicators were contextualised to reflect the characteristics of Instagram Stories and the experiences of active Instagram users in Indonesia.

FoMO was measured using items adapted from the Fear of Missing Out Scale developed by Przybylski et al. (2013). The construct reflects individuals' apprehension that others may be experiencing rewarding or meaningful social events from which they are absent. In the present study, the indicators assessed respondents' concerns about missing social activities, updates, and ongoing experiences communicated through Instagram Stories.

User engagement was operationalised as respondents' cognitive, affective, and behavioural involvement with Instagram Story content. Cognitive engagement refers to the attention devoted to Instagram

Story updates, affective engagement reflects emotional involvement with the content, and behavioural engagement refers to repeated viewing and interaction with the feature. These dimensions were contextualised specifically to the Instagram Stories environment.

Instagram Story usage intensity was operationalised by adapting the social media usage intensity concept developed by Ellison et al. (2007). The construct reflects the extent to which respondents repeatedly use Instagram Stories and incorporate the feature into their daily digital routines. The items measured frequency of access, duration of use, habitual use, and repeated monitoring of Instagram Story content.

Platform trust was operationalised as respondents' confidence in Instagram as a reliable, credible, and consistently functioning digital platform. The construct reflects users' evaluations of whether Instagram can be relied upon to provide accessible information, support interaction, and facilitate the continued use of Instagram Stories.

The final measurement model comprised 12 retained indicators. FoMO was represented by FOMO1–

FOMO4, user engagement by ENG2–ENG4, Instagram Story usage intensity by ISUI1, ISUI2, and ISUI4, and platform trust by PT1–PT2. ENG1 and ISUI3 were not retained in the final measurement model. The retained indicators and their respective outer loadings are reported in Table 8.

Before evaluating the structural model, the measurement model was assessed for indicator reliability, internal consistency reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity. Indicator reliability was evaluated using outer loadings. Internal consistency reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha, rho_A, and composite reliability. Convergent validity was evaluated using the Average Variance Extracted (AVE), while discriminant validity was assessed using the Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio of correlations (HTMT), supplemented by an examination of indicator cross-loadings.

Data Analysis Technique

Data were analysed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS software. PLS-SEM was selected because the study examined a predictive model involving multiple latent constructs and both direct and

indirect relationships. This approach was considered appropriate for evaluating the measurement properties of the constructs and estimating the structural relationships proposed in the conceptual model.

The analysis was conducted in two stages. The first stage involved the evaluation of the measurement model, also referred to as the outer model. This evaluation assessed indicator reliability, internal consistency reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity. Indicator reliability was examined using outer loadings, while internal consistency reliability was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha, rho_A, and composite reliability. Convergent validity was assessed using the Average Variance Extracted (AVE), whereas discriminant validity was evaluated primarily using the Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio of correlations (HTMT). Cross-loadings were also examined as a supplementary assessment.

The second stage involved the evaluation of the structural model, also referred to as the inner model. The structural model assessment included collinearity, the coefficient of determination (R^2), effect size (f^2), path

coefficients, t-statistics, p-values, confidence intervals, and indirect effects. These criteria were used to evaluate the explanatory and predictive relationships among FoMO, user engagement, platform trust, and Instagram Story usage intensity.

Hypothesis significance was assessed using a bootstrapping procedure with 5,000 bootstrap subsamples, a two-tailed test, and a 5% significance level. Bootstrapping was used to evaluate the direct relationships proposed in H1-H4 and the specific indirect relationship proposed in H5. The mediating role of user engagement was assessed through the specific indirect effect of FoMO on Instagram Story usage intensity through user engagement.

Because this study employed a cross-sectional and non-experimental design, statistically significant path relationships were interpreted as supported associations within the proposed model rather than as definitive causal effects.

Measurement Model Evaluation

The measurement model was evaluated to determine whether the retained indicators adequately represented their respective latent constructs. The assessment covered

indicator reliability, internal consistency reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity.

Indicator reliability was assessed using outer loadings. Outer loading values of approximately 0.708 or higher indicate satisfactory indicator reliability because the construct explains approximately 50% or more of the indicator variance (Hair et al., 2021). Indicators with lower outer loadings should be evaluated by considering their theoretical relevance and their effects on composite reliability and Average Variance Extracted (AVE).

Internal consistency reliability was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha, rho_A, and composite reliability. Values of 0.70 or higher were considered satisfactory. The three reliability coefficients were reported separately because they represent complementary approaches to assessing construct reliability (Hair et al., 2021).

Convergent validity was assessed using AVE. An AVE value of 0.50 or higher indicates that a construct explains at least half of the variance in its indicators. Convergent validity was considered satisfactory when the construct demonstrated acceptable outer loadings and an AVE value above

the recommended threshold (Hair et al., 2021).

Discriminant validity was primarily evaluated using the Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio of correlations (HTMT). Because the four constructs are conceptually distinct, the more conservative threshold of 0.85 was applied. Cross-loadings were examined as supplementary evidence to confirm that each indicator loaded more strongly on its assigned construct than on the other constructs (Henseler et al., 2015).

The empirical results of the measurement model evaluation, including outer loadings, internal consistency reliability, AVE, HTMT, and indicator cross-loadings, are presented in the Findings section.

D. FINDINGS

This study involved 290 respondents who met the inclusion criteria as active Instagram users in Indonesia with experience using the Instagram Stories feature. The respondent profile indicates that the participants were familiar with social media and routinely used Instagram Stories in their daily digital activities. Accordingly, the sample provides

relevant empirical evidence for examining the relationships among FoMO, user engagement, platform trust, and Instagram Story usage intensity within the specified inclusion criteria.

The demographic characteristics of the respondents are presented in Tables 1-3, providing an overview of the sample profile in terms of age, gender, education level, and marital status.

Table 1. Respondent Characteristics by Age and Gender

Characteristic	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Age	18-25 years	290	100.0%
Gender	Male	188	65.0%
	Female	102	35.0%

Source: Survey data processed by the authors (2026).

All respondents were between 18 and 25 years of age, consistent with the age characteristics of the sample obtained through the questionnaire-distribution process. This age distribution indicates that the findings primarily represent young adult Instagram users and should not be generalized to all age groups within the broader population of Instagram users in Indonesia.

Table 2. Respondent Characteristics by Education Level

Education	Frequency	Percentage
High School	25	8.6%

Bachelor's Degree	193	66.4%
Master's Degree	69	23.9%
Doctoral Degree	3	1.0%

Source: Survey data processed by the authors (2026).

As shown in Table 2, most respondents held a bachelor's degree (66.4%), followed by a master's degree (23.9%), high school education (8.6%), and a doctoral degree (1.0%). This distribution indicates that the sample predominantly consisted of respondents with higher education backgrounds.

Table 3. Respondent Characteristics by Marital Status

Status	Frequency	Percentage
Married	145	50%
Unmarried	142	49%
Divorced	3	1.0%

Source: Survey data processed by the authors (2026).

The marital status distribution was relatively balanced, with 50% of respondents reporting that they were married, 49% unmarried, and 1% widowed.

Measurement Model Results

Table 4. Construct Reliability and Convergent Validity

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability (rho_C)	AVE
User Engagement	0.888	0.917	0.930	.815
FoMO	0.880	0.890	0.917	.735

Instagram Story Usage Intensity	0.924	0.925	0.952	0.868
Platform Trust	0.733	0.734	0.882	0.789

Source: SmartPLS output processed by the authors (2026).

Table 4 shows that Cronbach's alpha values range from 0.733 to 0.924, rho_A values range from 0.734 to 0.925, and composite reliability values range from 0.882 to 0.952. All values exceed the recommended minimum threshold of 0.70, demonstrating satisfactory internal consistency reliability. The AVE values range from 0.735 to 0.868, exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.50. These results indicate that all four constructs demonstrate satisfactory convergent validity (Hair et al., 2021).

Discriminant validity was primarily assessed using the Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio of correlations (HTMT). The results are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Discriminant Validity Assessment Using HTMT

	User Engagement	Fomo	Instagram Story Usage Intensity	Platform Trust
User Engagement	–	–	–	–
Fomo	0.229	–	–	–
Insta Story	0.316	0.417	–	–
Platform Trust	0.217	0.089	0.489	–

Source: SmartPLS output processed by the authors (2026).

As shown in Table 5, the HTMT values range from 0.089 to 0.489. All values are below the conservative threshold of 0.85, indicating that FoMO, user engagement, platform trust, and Instagram Story usage intensity are empirically distinct constructs. Therefore, discriminant validity based on the HTMT criterion is established (Henseler et al., 2015).

Table 6. Indicator Cross-Loadings

Indikator	Engagement	FoMO	Instagram Story	Platform Trust
ENG2	0.853	0.192	0.176	0.045
ENG3	0.922	0.142	0.354	0.266
ENG4	0.932	0.234	0.249	0.162
FoMO1	0.248	0.840	0.288	0.068
FoMO2	0.147	0.893	0.400	-0.014
FoMO3	0.201	0.799	0.341	0.029
FoMO4	0.087	0.894	0.259	0.067
ISUI1	0.275	0.306	0.933	0.438
ISUI2	0.328	0.407	0.936	0.324
ISUI4	0.226	0.365	0.926	0.362
PT1	0.211	0.014	0.352	0.885
PT2	0.126	0.055	0.363	0.892

Source: SmartPLS output processed by the authors (2026).

Table 6 shows that each indicator has its highest loading on its assigned construct. The retained user engagement indicators load most strongly on user engagement, the FoMO indicators load most strongly on FoMO, the Instagram Story usage intensity indicators load most strongly on Instagram Story usage intensity, and

the platform trust indicators load most strongly on platform trust. These results provide supplementary evidence of discriminant validity. Taken together, the reliability, convergent validity, HTMT, and cross-loading results confirm that the measurement model is adequate for subsequent structural model evaluation.

Taken together, the results of reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity assessments confirm that the measurement model is robust and appropriate for subsequent structural model evaluation.

The results showed that in general, respondents had a FoMO level and the intensity of Instagram Story use in the medium to high category. This indicates that Instagram Stories are part of users' digital routines, both as a means of self-expression and social monitoring.

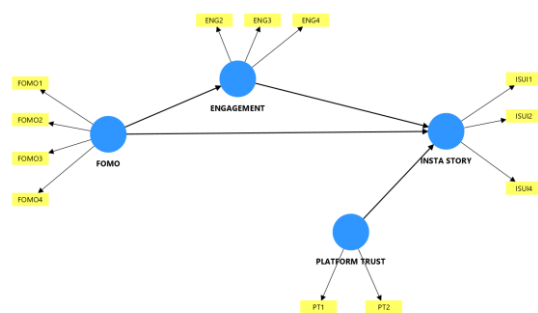


Figure 2. Bootstrapping Results of the Structural Model.
Source: Survey data processed by the authors using SmartPLS.

Figure 2 presents the bootstrapping results used to evaluate the significance of the direct and indirect relationships among FoMO, user engagement, platform trust, and Instagram Story usage intensity. Statistical significance was assessed using 5,000 bootstrap subsamples, a two-tailed test, and a 5% significance level.

Descriptive statistics were subsequently examined to identify the general response tendencies for the retained measurement indicators. The indicator means and medians are presented in Table 7.

Table 7. Descriptive Statistics of Retained Measurement Indicators

Indicator	Mean	Median
ENG2	3.790	4
ENG3	3.738	4
ENG4	3.403	4
FOMO1	4.114	4
FOMO2	4.124	4
FOMO3	3.738	4
FOMO4	4.179	4
ISUI1	3.997	5
ISUI2	3.979	4
ISUI4	3.759	4
PT1	3.759	4
PT2	4.093	5

Source: SmartPLS output processed by the authors (2026).

Indicator reliability and convergent validity were further examined through the outer loadings and AVE values presented in Table 8. The 12 retained indicators have outer loadings ranging from 0.799 to 0.936, exceeding the recommended value of approximately 0.708. The AVE values range from 0.735 to 0.868, exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.50. These findings demonstrate that the retained indicators have satisfactory indicator reliability and adequately represent their respective constructs (Hair et al., 2021).

Table 8. Outer Loading and AVE Test Results

Construct	Item	Outer Loading	AVE
User Engagement	ENG2	0.853	0.815
	ENG3	0.922	
	ENG4	0.932	
FoMO	FOMO1	0.840	0.735
	FOMO2	0.893	
	FOMO3	0.799	
	FOMO4	0.894	
Instagram Story Usage Intensity	ISUI1	0.933	0.868
	ISUI2	0.936	
	ISUI4	0.926	
Platform Trust	PT1	0.885	0.789
	PT2	0.892	

Source: SmartPLS output processed by the authors (2026).

Once the measurement model was confirmed to be adequate, the analysis proceeded to the structural model evaluation, beginning with the

assessment of R-square values. The results show that FoMO explains a relatively small proportion of variance in user engagement ($R^2 = 0.043$), while FoMO, engagement, and platform trust collectively explain a moderate proportion of variance in Instagram Story usage intensity ($R^2 = 0.323$).

The R-square value of 0.323 indicates that the model explains a moderate proportion of variance in Instagram Story usage intensity, suggesting that while the included variables are important, other external factors may also contribute to usage behavior.

This suggests that Instagram Story usage is influenced not only by psychological and behavioral factors but also by broader contextual or platform-related dynamics.

This indicates that while FoMO alone has limited explanatory power for engagement, the combined model provides a more substantial explanation of usage intensity behavior.

Table 9. Coefficients of Determination

Endogenous Construct	R^2	Adjusted R^2
User Engagement	0.043	0.039
Instagram Story Usage Intensity	0.323	0.316

Source: SmartPLS output processed by the authors (2026).

To compare the relative contribution of each predictor to its respective endogenous construct, effect-size (f^2) analysis was conducted. The f^2 values were interpreted using conventional benchmarks, in which values of approximately 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35 indicate small, medium, and large effects, respectively. The complete effect-size results are presented in Table 10.

Table 10. Effect Sizes

Predictor Construct	User Engagement	FoMO	Instagram Story Usage Intensity	Platform Trust
User Engagement	–	–	0.035	–
FoMO	0.044	–	0.162	–
Instagram Story Usage Intensity	–	–	–	–
Platform Trust	–	–	0.183	–

Source: SmartPLS output processed by the authors (2026).

Story usage intensity ($f^2 = 0.183$), followed closely by FoMO ($f^2 = 0.162$). Both values exceed the conventional threshold of 0.15 and can therefore be interpreted as medium effects. In contrast, user engagement has a small effect on Instagram Story usage intensity ($f^2 = 0.035$), while FoMO has a small effect on user engagement ($f^2 =$

0.044). These results show that users' confidence in the reliability and consistency of the platform makes the largest relative contribution to Instagram Story usage intensity in the structural model, although the contribution of FoMO is nearly comparable. User engagement remains statistically significant, but its relative contribution to usage intensity is substantially smaller.

The hypotheses were subsequently tested by examining the path coefficients, t-statistics, and p-values. FoMO has a positive and statistically significant relationship with user engagement ($\beta = 0.206$, $t = 2.601$, $p = 0.009$), supporting H1. User engagement also has a positive and significant relationship with Instagram Story usage intensity ($\beta = 0.160$, $t = 2.338$, $p = 0.019$), supporting H2. FoMO has a positive direct relationship with usage intensity ($\beta = 0.339$, $t = 5.071$, $p < 0.001$), supporting H3. Platform trust has a positive and significant relationship with usage intensity ($\beta = 0.359$, $t = 5.395$, $p < 0.001$), supporting H4.

The direct effects were assessed by examining the path coefficients, t-statistics, and p-values obtained through the bootstrapping procedure.

The results indicate that FoMO has a positive and significant effect on user engagement, user engagement has a positive and significant effect on Instagram Story usage intensity, FoMO has a positive and significant direct effect on Instagram Story usage intensity, and platform trust has a positive and significant effect on Instagram Story usage intensity. The complete results of the direct-effect hypothesis testing are presented in Table 11.

Table 11. Path Coefficients Results

Hypothesis	Relationship Between Variables	Path Coefficient	T-Statistics	P-Values
H1	FoMO → User Engagement	0.206	2.601	0.009
H2	Engagement → Instagram Story Usage Intensity	0.160	2.338	0.019
H3	FoMO → Instagram Story Usage Intensity	0.339	5.071	<0.001
H4	Platform Trust → Instagram Story Usage Intensity	0.359	5.395	<0.001

Source: SmartPLS output processed by the authors (2026).

As shown in Table 11, all four direct-effect hypotheses are supported. FoMO has a positive and significant effect on user engagement ($\beta = 0.206$, $t = 2.601$, $p = 0.009$), thereby supporting H1. User engagement has a positive and significant effect on Instagram Story usage intensity ($\beta = 0.160$, $t = 2.338$, $p = 0.019$), supporting H2.

FoMO also has a positive and significant direct effect on Instagram Story usage intensity ($\beta = 0.339$, $t = 5.071$, $p < 0.001$), supporting H3. Furthermore, platform trust has a positive and significant effect on Instagram Story usage intensity ($\beta = 0.359$, $t = 5.395$, $p < 0.001$), supporting H4. Following the assessment of these direct effects, the specific indirect effect of FoMO on Instagram Story usage intensity through user engagement was examined to determine whether user engagement performs a mediating role. The mediation-testing results are presented in Table 12.

Table 12. Specific Indirect Effect and Mediation Testing

Hypothesis	Relationship Between Variables	Path Coefficient	t-Statistics	p-values
H5	FoMO → User Engagement → Instagram Story Usage Intensity	0.033	1.724	0.085

Source: SmartPLS output processed by the authors (2026).

As presented in Table 12, the indirect effect of FoMO on Instagram Story usage intensity through user engagement is positive but not statistically significant ($\beta = 0.033$, $t = 1.724$, $p = 0.085$). Because the p-value exceeds the 0.05 significance

threshold, user engagement does not mediate the relationship between FoMO and Instagram Story usage intensity. Therefore, H5 is not supported. Taken together, the direct- and indirect-effect results provide the basis for the overall decisions concerning the five hypotheses, as summarised in Table 13.

Table 13. Summary of Hypothesis Testing Results

No.	Hypothesis	Decision
H1	FoMO has a positive effect on Instagram Story user engagement.	Supported
H2	Engagement has a positive effect on Instagram Story usage intensity.	Supported
H3	FoMO has a positive effect on Instagram Story usage intensity.	Supported
H4	Platform trust has a positive effect on Instagram Story usage intensity.	Supported
H5	Engagement mediates the effect of FoMO on Instagram Story usage intensity.	Not Supported

Source: SmartPLS output processed by the authors (2026).

aken together, the results show that platform trust has the largest direct coefficient for Instagram Story usage intensity ($\beta = 0.359$), followed closely by FoMO ($\beta = 0.339$), while user engagement has a smaller but statistically significant direct coefficient ($\beta = 0.160$). The effect-size results

support this pattern: platform trust provides the largest relative contribution to usage intensity ($f^2 = 0.183$), followed by FoMO ($f^2 = 0.162$), whereas user engagement provides a smaller contribution ($f^2 = 0.035$). However, the indirect effect of FoMO through user engagement is not statistically significant ($\beta = 0.033$, $p = 0.085$). Therefore, FoMO is supported as a direct predictor of Instagram Story usage intensity, but not as an indirect predictor through user engagement. These findings provide the empirical basis for discussing how psychological motivation, user involvement, and platform evaluation operate through distinct pathways in shaping Instagram Story usage intensity.

E. DISCUSSION

This study examined how FoMO, user engagement, and platform trust are associated with Instagram Story usage intensity among eligible respondents. The structural-model results reveal that all four direct relationships are positive and statistically significant. Platform trust shows the largest direct coefficient for Instagram Story usage intensity, followed closely by FoMO, while user engagement has a smaller but significant direct relationship with

usage intensity. However, the indirect effect of FoMO through user engagement is not statistically significant. These findings indicate that psychological motivation, user involvement, and platform evaluation contribute through distinct pathways rather than through a single sequential mediation process.

The positive relationship between FoMO and user engagement supports H1. Users with stronger concerns about missing socially meaningful experiences tend to become more cognitively, affectively, and behaviourally involved with Instagram Story content. This finding is consistent with previous studies associating FoMO with repeated social-media monitoring, emotional attachment, and continued attention to social updates (Meradaputhi et al., 2023; Nurhayati & Azhar, 2023). From the perspective of Uses and Gratifications Theory, FoMO can be interpreted as a psychological motivation arising from needs for social connection, belonging, and continuous awareness. Instagram Stories provide users with immediate access to peer activities and therefore offer a communication environment through which these needs may be pursued. Nevertheless,

the relatively modest coefficient suggests that FoMO is not the only factor associated with engagement; content relevance, entertainment, interpersonal interaction, and emotional appeal may also contribute to users' involvement.

The positive relationship between user engagement and Instagram Story usage intensity supports H2. Although the coefficient is smaller than those of FoMO and platform trust, the finding indicates that stronger cognitive, affective, and behavioural involvement is associated with more intensive use of Instagram Stories. This result aligns with studies showing that temporary availability, immediacy, and emotionally resonant content can encourage repeated interaction with Instagram Stories and other participatory digital environments (Israfilzade & Babayev, 2020; Kircova et al., 2020; Widodo et al., 2026). The finding also supports the conceptual distinction between engagement and usage intensity. Engagement reflects the quality and depth of users' involvement, whereas usage intensity reflects the extent to which the feature is repeatedly accessed and incorporated into daily routines. Thus, engagement contributes to usage

intensity without being conceptually identical to it.

The direct positive relationship between FoMO and Instagram Story usage intensity supports H3. This finding is consistent with previous research associating FoMO with more frequent social-media monitoring and intensive platform use (Bella et al., 2023; Jabeen et al., 2023). In the context of Instagram Stories, the temporary availability of content may be particularly relevant because users know that updates will disappear after a limited period. From a UGT perspective, repeated Story access may represent an active attempt to obtain social information, reduce uncertainty, and maintain a sense of connectedness with peer activities. However, the present study does not compare Instagram Stories with other social-media features. Therefore, the result should not be interpreted as proof that Instagram Stories produce stronger FoMO effects than permanent feeds or other platforms. Rather, it demonstrates that FoMO is significantly associated with usage intensity within this specific feature environment.

Platform trust has a positive and statistically significant relationship with

Instagram Story usage intensity, supporting H4. Notably, its coefficient is slightly larger than the direct coefficient of FoMO. This result challenges the assumption that usage intensity is primarily driven by psychological urgency and indicates that users' evaluation of the platform is equally important. The finding is consistent with broader digital-platform research showing that trust reduces uncertainty and supports users' willingness to rely on a platform for continued interaction and information access (Pertiwi et al., 2025; Zhang et al., 2025; Petrovic et al., 2026).

In this study, platform trust does not represent a psychological gratification. Instead, it functions as an enabling evaluation: users may be more willing to use Instagram Stories repeatedly when they perceive Instagram as reliable, credible, accessible, and consistently functioning. Thus, FoMO explains why users may feel motivated to check Stories, whereas platform trust explains why they are willing to continue relying on Instagram as the communication environment through which those updates are accessed.

In contrast to the direct relationships, the indirect influence of FoMO on Instagram Story usage intensity through user engagement is not statistically significant; therefore, H5 is not supported. This result differs from the proposed sequential mechanism in which FoMO was expected to increase engagement and engagement was subsequently expected to transmit that influence into greater usage intensity. Although FoMO is positively associated with engagement and engagement is positively associated with usage intensity, the combined indirect effect is insufficient to establish mediation. One possible interpretation is that the urgency associated with potentially disappearing content may encourage users to access Instagram Stories directly, without requiring a deeper process of cognitive or affective involvement. Another possibility is that engagement represents only one of several mechanisms connecting FoMO with usage behaviour. Accordingly, the finding refines rather than rejects the role of engagement: engagement contributes directly to usage intensity, but it does not significantly carry the influence of FoMO in the present sample.

Viewed together, these results qualify the emphasis placed on FoMO in previous studies of intensive social-media use. Consistent with Bella et al. (2023) and Jabeen et al. (2023), FoMO remains an important direct predictor of usage intensity. However, platform trust produces a slightly larger path coefficient and effect size than FoMO, while user engagement makes a considerably smaller relative contribution. This pattern indicates that repeated Instagram Story use cannot be explained solely by psychological urgency or emotional involvement. Users' confidence in the platform as a reliable communication environment is at least equally important. At the same time, the unsupported mediation result demonstrates that statistically significant individual paths do not necessarily constitute a significant sequential mechanism. Thus, FoMO, user engagement, and platform trust should be understood as distinct but complementary pathways rather than as components of a single linear process.

Theoretically, this study extends Uses and Gratifications Theory in three respects. First, it applies the theory at the feature level rather than treating

social media as a single, homogeneous medium. The temporary availability and continuous updating of Instagram Stories create a distinctive communication environment in which the gratification of social awareness is accompanied by temporal urgency. Second, the findings distinguish between motivational and enabling conditions of media use. FoMO represents an internal psychological motivation to remain socially informed, whereas platform trust represents users' evaluation of whether Instagram can reliably provide the expected communication experience. The slightly stronger contribution of platform trust demonstrates that gratification-seeking alone is insufficient to explain usage intensity when users' confidence in the medium is considered. Third, the unsupported mediation effect challenges a simple linear assumption that psychological motivation necessarily increases usage through deeper engagement. In this study, FoMO is associated directly with both engagement and usage intensity, but engagement does not significantly transmit its influence. The findings therefore refine the proposed model by identifying parallel and complementary relationships among

psychological motivation, user involvement, platform evaluation, and feature-use behaviour.

Practically, the findings suggest different courses of action for users, digital-literacy educators, and platform providers. For users aged 18–25 years, awareness programmes should explain how disappearing content, continuous updates, and FoMO may encourage repeated checking even when such behaviour does not reflect meaningful engagement. Digital-literacy educators, including those working in universities and youth communities, can incorporate notification management, scheduled checking, screen-time monitoring, and reflection on emotionally driven platform use into their programmes. For platform providers, the strong contribution of platform trust indicates that reliable functionality, transparent information practices, predictable content delivery, and accessible privacy controls are important for maintaining users' confidence. However, reliability should not be combined with excessive urgency cues that exploit users' concerns about missing temporary content. Optional notification controls, usage reminders, "take-a-break" prompts, and clearer

explanations of Story visibility and content management may help users make more deliberate decisions about their engagement. These recommendations should nevertheless be treated as context-specific because the present study did not experimentally evaluate the effectiveness of any particular intervention or platform feature.

The respondent characteristics should also be considered when interpreting the findings. All respondents were between 18 and 25 years of age, the sample included a larger proportion of male respondents, most respondents had a bachelor's degree, and the marital-status distribution was relatively balanced. These characteristics may be associated with differences in social-media motivations, patterns of engagement, perceptions of platform trust, and Instagram Story usage. However, gender, education level, and marital status were collected only to describe the sample and were not included in the structural model as control or moderating variables. Therefore, the present study cannot determine whether the relationships among FoMO, user engagement, platform trust, and Instagram Story

usage intensity differ across demographic groups

These interpretations should be considered considering several limitations. First, the cross-sectional design does not establish the temporal or causal direction of the relationships; therefore, the findings represent statistical associations rather than definitive causal effects. Second, purposive and convenience sampling limits the statistical generalisability of the results beyond the eligible respondent sample. Third, the measures were based on respondents' self-reports and were not verified using actual Instagram usage logs; consequently, reported usage intensity may differ from users' recorded behaviour. Fourth, gender, education level, and marital status were used only to describe the sample and were not tested as control or moderating variables. Finally, the study examined Instagram Stories without directly comparing them with permanent feeds, short-form video features, or other social-media platforms. Future research should employ longitudinal or experimental designs, probability-based sampling across different institutions and geographical regions, and combinations of self-reported

measures and digital usage records. Control-variable or multigroup analyses could examine demographic differences, while comparative feature-level studies could determine whether temporality and disappearing content produce relationships that differ from those associated with permanent or less time-sensitive social-media features. Future studies could also examine alternative mechanisms, such as social comparison, habit, perceived relevance, emotional reassurance, or notification responsiveness, that may explain how FoMO is related to usage behaviour.

F. CONCLUSION

This study examined the relationships between FoMO, user engagement, platform trust, and Instagram Story usage intensity among eligible respondents. The results show that FoMO is positively associated with user engagement ($\beta = 0.206$, $p = 0.009$) and Instagram Story usage intensity ($\beta = 0.339$, $p < 0.001$). User engagement is also positively associated with usage intensity ($\beta = 0.160$, $p = 0.019$), while platform trust shows the strongest direct relationship with usage intensity ($\beta = 0.359$, $p <$

0.001). However, the indirect effect of FoMO through user engagement is not statistically significant ($\beta = 0.033$, $p = 0.085$). Therefore, user engagement contributes directly to usage intensity but does not mediate the relationship between FoMO and Instagram Story usage intensity.

Theoretically, the findings extend Uses and Gratifications Theory by demonstrating that feature-specific social-media use is associated not only with psychological motivation and user involvement but also with users' evaluation of platform reliability. FoMO represents a psychological motivation to remain socially informed, whereas platform trust represents an enabling evaluation of the communication environment. Their distinct contributions, together with the unsupported mediation result, indicate that Instagram Story usage intensity is associated with parallel and complementary pathways rather than a single linear process.

Practically, users and digital-literacy educators should recognise how disappearing content, continuous updates, and FoMO may encourage repetitive checking. Notification management, scheduled checking, screen-time monitoring, and reflection

on emotionally driven use may support more deliberate engagement. Platform providers should maintain reliable and transparent user experiences while offering accessible privacy controls, usage reminders, notification settings, and other digital-well-being features..

This study is limited by its cross-sectional design and the use of purposive and convenience sampling. Consequently, the findings should be interpreted as associations within the eligible respondent sample and cannot be statistically generalised to all Instagram users in Indonesia. In addition, gender, education level, and marital status were used only to describe the respondent profile and were not tested as control or moderating variables. The study therefore cannot establish whether the structural relationships differ across demographic groups. Future studies should employ longitudinal or experimental designs, use probability-based sampling across different institutions and geographical regions, test demographic differences through control-variable or multigroup analyses, compare Instagram Stories with other social-media features, and examine additional mechanisms that

may explain how FoMO is related to usage behaviour..

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