



Coping Strategies in Overcoming Fear of Missing Out in Early Adulthood: A Study of Active Social Media Users

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Abstrak

Teknologi digital telah mengubah komunikasi dan interaksi sosial, terutama di kalangan demografi pengguna media sosial terbesar di Indonesia, yaitu kaum muda. Penggunaan yang berlebihan ini biasanya menyebabkan rasa takut ketinggalan (FoMO), yaitu kecemasan terus-menerus tentang kehilangan informasi penting atau aktivitas daring. Terlepas dari dampak negatif FoMO terhadap kesehatan mental, sebagian besar literatur Indonesia menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif-korelasi statis, sehingga meninggalkan kesenjangan penelitian tentang bagaimana kaum muda secara aktif mengembangkan strategi penanggulangan subjektif, terutama yang menggabungkan nilai-nilai spiritual lokal. Studi kualitatif fenomenologis ini meneliti proses penanggulangan untuk mengatasi kecemasan modern. Enam mahasiswa IAIN Langsa yang aktif menggunakan media sosial dengan tingkat kecemasan digital tinggi diambil sampelnya menggunakan metode purposive sampling. Wawancara semi-terstruktur mendalam, observasi partisipan terhadap kecemasan motorik, dan analisis waktu penggunaan layar serta riwayat transaksi elektronik digunakan untuk mengumpulkan data. Kaum muda memanfaatkan PFC (Personal Functioning Coping) dalam bentuk detoksifikasi digital dan manajemen waktu penggunaan layar, dan EFC (Electronic Functioning Coping) dalam bentuk penilaian ulang positif. Penanggulangan religius-spiritual seperti doa, zikir, dan internalisasi qana'ah (kecukupan) dan tawakkal merupakan kunci untuk menetralkan tekanan sosial digital dan memulihkan kesehatan mental. Studi ini menyarankan intervensi psikososial dan literasi digital holistik untuk kaum muda di era hiperkonektivitas menggunakan paradigma Kerangka Dialektika FOMO-Qana'ah (FQDF).

Kata kunci: Rasa Takut Ketinggalan (FoMO); Strategi Mengatasi Masalah; Masa Dewasa Awal; Media Sosial; Mengatasi Masalah secara Religius.

Abstract

Digital technology has transformed communication and social interaction, especially among Indonesia's largest social media user demographic, young adults. This excessive use typically causes fear of missing out (FoMO), a persistent anxiety about missing out on crucial information or online activities. Despite FoMO's negative effects on mental health, most Indonesian literature uses static quantitative-

correlational approaches, leaving a research gap on how young adults actively develop subjective coping strategies, especially those that incorporate local spiritual values. This phenomenological qualitative study examines coping processes to overcome modern anxiety. Six active IAIN Langsa student social media users with high digital anxiety were sampled using purposive sampling. In-depth semi-structured interviews, participant observation of motor anxiety, and screen time and electronic transaction history analysis were used to collect data. Young adults utilize PFC in the form of digital detox and screen time management, and EFC in the form of positive reappraisal. Religious-spiritual coping like prayer, dhikr, and internalizing qana'ah (sufficiency) and tawakkal are key to neutralizing digital social pressures and restoring mental health. This study suggests holistic psychosocial and digital literacy interventions for young adults in the hyperconnected era using the FOMO-Qana'ah Dialectic Framework paradigm.

Keywords: Fear of Missing Out (FoMO); Coping Strategies; Early Adulthood; Social Media; Religious Coping

A. Introduction

Advances in digital technology and the internet have revolutionized communication and social interaction patterns in Indonesia, particularly among young adults. According to a recent report from the Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association (APJII), the national internet penetration rate by mid-2025 will reach a significant 80.66% of the total population, representing approximately 229 million active users (Asosiasi Penyelenggara Jasa Internet Indonesia, 2025). This digital space is no longer simply a practical means of information exchange; it has shifted to become a primary existential space for individuals to shape their identity, maintain connectivity, and monitor peer social dynamics (Kusumaningrum, R. I., Setyaningtyas, A. S., & Sijabat, 2026). The emergence of highly interactive, visual-based platforms like Instagram and TikTok has further positioned social media use as an integral part of the daily rituals of active users (Maharatu, C., & Hizkia, 2024).

The emerging adulthood group (aged 18–25) is psychosocially characterized by a search for identity, a transition to independence, and the formation of stable interpersonal relationships (Kusumaningrum, R. I., Setyaningtyas, A. S., & Sijabat, 2026). At this developmental stage, they tend to be highly vulnerable to social rejection and highly sensitive to online feedback in pursuit of social recognition (Hasanah, S., & Aviani, 2025). Consequently, constant exposure to visual content on social media that presents idealized depictions of others' lives often triggers upward social comparison behavior, which risks lowering self-esteem (Sitorus, F. D., & Simarmata, 2026). This strong urge to constantly monitor others' lives ultimately triggers social anxiety known as Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) (Fiqh, S., Khumas, A., & Sufartianingsih, 2026).

Conceptually, FoMO is defined as a form of persistent social anxiety in which individuals worry that others are enjoying rewarding experiences while they are offline (Maharatu, C., & Hizkia, 2024). Based on self-determination theory, this tendency toward FoMO stems from the unfulfilled three basic psychological needs in the real world: autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Kusumaningrum, R. I., Setyaningtyas, A. S., & Sijabat, 2026). When these psychological needs are deficient, young adults are vulnerable to shifting their search for emotional satisfaction to the virtual world, which unfortunately exacerbates mental exhaustion or social media fatigue.

The main problem in the field indicates that the inability to regulate the duration of social media use has led to serious behavioral pathologies affecting the mental health of young adults in Indonesia (Irbathy, 2026). Some active users have even been recorded as spending an average of 7 to 9 hours per day compulsively monitoring their devices (Bahrudin, M. A., & Al Afghani, 2026). A disturbing phenomenon among college students is the emergence of cognitive-spiritual dissonance; They are aware that doomscrolling is detrimental to productivity, but psychologically, they are powerless to put down their devices for fear of being ostracized from digital society (Bahrudin, M. A., & Al Afghani, 2026).

The negative impact of this addictive cycle not only disrupts focus in class but also carries a high risk of triggering depression, digital fatigue, sleep disturbances, and decreased academic performance (Pujiastuti, T., Pebriyanti, L., Oktavia, R., Joharman, E. E. Y., & Sari, 2025).

In addition to disrupting emotional stability, the FoMO phenomenon in Indonesia also manifests itself in the formation of detrimental consumerist and impulsive behaviors among young adults (Pramesty, J. A., & Merida, 2025a). Anxiety about being left behind by lifestyle trends, fashion trends, or owning tickets to certain events triggers compulsive spending behavior (doom spending) simply to maintain a social image and remain relevant in the eyes of the virtual public (Pramesty, J. A., & Merida, 2025b). This fear of online social exclusion is exploited by the commercial systems of social media to continuously encourage unplanned purchasing decisions, which ultimately trigger financial stress and worsen individual life satisfaction (Juliandhani, A. F., & Tjahjawati, 2024).

Although the impact of FoMO has touched various aspects of young adult life, most scientific literature in Indonesia is still dominated by quantitative approaches focused on static correlational relationships between macro variables (Kusumaningrum, R. I., Setyaningtyas, A. S., & Sijabat, 2026). Previous studies have generally limited themselves to mapping linear correlations between social media intensity and levels of social anxiety, academic stress, or impulsive buying tendencies ((Ramadhani, R. R., Faqihuddin, A. A., & Faqihuddin, 2025). A fundamental research gap exists; qualitative exploration of how young adults dynamically construct, negotiate, and implement self-defense mechanisms to address this anxiety is still rare (Kusumaningrum, R. I., Setyaningtyas, A. S., & Sijabat, 2026). However a qualitative understanding of subjective coping is crucial for formulating applicable mental health interventions (Siagian, A. U., & Is, 2025).

Furthermore, the uniquely religious nature of Indonesian society demands the integration of local cultural values and spirituality as psychosocial defense mechanisms (Siagian, A. U., & Is, 2025). When young adults attempt to limit themselves from social media, they often experience psychological shock in the form of acute anxiety and withdrawal symptoms early in the process (Bahrudin, M. A., & Al Afghani, 2026). This phenomenon is where spiritual coping, such as devout prayer, dhikr recitation, and self-surrender (tawakkal), play a crucial cognitive role in activating the parasympathetic nervous system, reducing emotional panic (overthinking), and building strong emotional resilience (Sarippi, L. D., & Romas, 2026).

The novelty of this study lies in its qualitative-phenomenological approach, which examines the integration of cognitive-behavioral coping with Islamic spiritual coping to address FoMO in young adults (Siagian, A. U., & Is, 2025). This study specifically explores the psychological transition process from the anxiety of FOMO to a state of psychospiritual well-being known as the Joy of Missing Out (JoMO) through the practice of digital detox (Bahrudin, M. A., & Al Afghani, 2026). By integrating spiritual values such as the concept of qana'ah (sufficiency), this study constructs a new theoretical framework called the FOMO-Qana'ah Dialectic Framework (FQDF) that bridges modern cognitive psychology with spiritual education (tarbiyah nafsiyah) (Dewi, I., 2026). The results of this phenomenological study are expected to provide a transformative contribution to the formulation of a contextual and adaptive digital well-being model in Indonesia.

B. Research Method

The purpose of this research was to gain a comprehensive understanding of the subjective experiences and meanings that young adults ascribe to the phenomenon of fear of missing out (Moleong, 2017). The research was conducted using a qualitative approach and a phenomenological design.

Plan for the Research

According to, this research utilized a descriptive-analytical design, with the primary objective being the discovery of individual narratives concerning the internal processes that are involved in coping with digital anxiety. A comparison was made between the analysis and the transactional coping theory as well as the present mental health perspectives in Indonesia (Fitriani, 2023).

Parties involved

Using a method called purposive sampling, ten students between the ages of 18 and 25 who were actively enrolled at the State Islamic Institute (IAIN) Langsa were chosen to participate. Both the usage of social media for at least three to six hours per day (Fitri & Suwarjo, 2026; Ramadhani et al., 2025) and the manifestation of fear of missing out (FoMO) symptoms, such as anxiety when not in contact with gadgets (Przybylski et al., 2013), were conditions that were required for inclusion.

The instrument

A semi-structured interview guide was used in conjunction with the researcher, who served as the principal instrument in this study. The interview subjects covered characteristics of social media use, triggers for fear of missing out (FoMO), and implemented coping techniques by the participants.

Methodology for Analyzing Data

Thematic analysis techniques were utilized in order to conduct the study of the data outlined the procedures that included familiarizing oneself with the data, coding, and the formation of themes. Triangulation of sources and methods was utilized in order to guarantee the accuracy of the data (Sugiyono, 2018).

C. Result and Discussion

Characteristics and Manifestations of FoMO in Early Adulthood

Based on a qualitative analysis of active social media users at IAIN Langsa, it was found that the Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) experience among young adults is not ordinary anxiety, but rather a form of existential unease that operates systemically. Primary data collected through in-depth interviews with six participants revealed that they were trapped in a constant need to stay connected. Through technical triangulation combining in-depth interviews, physical observation, and analysis of screen time logs, it was identified that participants spent an average of 7 to 9 hours per day compulsively surfing the internet, seeking a false sense of security to avoid digital exclusion.

The first manifestation predominantly identified in the field is Social FoMO, characterized by an extreme fear of being excluded from offline peer groups. This was clearly illustrated in the narrative of one of the key participants, PNJ (interview, May 15, 2026), who expressed his anxiety: "It hurts so much when I see my classmates' Instagram stories hanging out at cafes in Langsa without inviting me. My chest immediately tightens, my mind wanders, wondering if I did something wrong or if I'm simply not considered important in their circle."

Source triangulation was conducted to verify this complaint by interviewing PNJ's classmate, AM (interview, May 16, 2026), who confirmed that PNJ often suddenly becomes moody, withdraws from group discussions in class, and loses focus during lectures after actively monitoring Instagram. Furthermore, the researcher's direct observations during the interview noted obvious motor restlessness in PNJ, such as constant finger tremors while discussing the posts and the reflexive behavior of flipping his phone on the table seven times in a 30-minute period.

The second manifestation, News FoMO, is characterized by a compulsive urge to stay up-to-date on the latest topics or viral news to maintain social bargaining power in offline interactions on campus. This condition is confirmed by subject AN (interview, May 18, 2026), who stated: "I feel very panicked if I miss news on Twitter (X) and TikTok, afraid of being considered old-fashioned, being called "kudet," and not being able to connect with friends in the cafeteria."

To test the validity of AN's statement, researchers conducted source triangulation by interviewing HL (interview, May 19, 2026), AN's roommate in the dormitory. HL testified that AN consistently stayed up until 3:00 a.m. just scrolling through the screen looking for viral threads, which ultimately led to AN often being late for morning lectures and falling asleep in class.

The third dimension, Commercial FoMO, manifests in impulsive consumer behavior driven by the fear of missing out on promotions or lifestyle trends popular among Generation Z. Subject RF (interview, May 21, 2026) acknowledged this impulsive urge: "I always check out cosmetics on Shopee Live because I'm afraid my friends will think I'm out of touch."

Technical triangulation in the form of document analysis was conducted by directly examining screenshots of e-commerce transaction history on RF's device. The documents verified the occurrence of impulsive shopping behavior (doom spending), with five purchases of non-essential items recorded in the past week, purchased purely out of fear of missing out on digital fashion trends. Table 1 presents a comprehensive classification of this type of digital anxiety, directly linked to behavioral responses, emotional impacts, and the data triangulation techniques used by the researchers to validate the findings.

Table 1. Classification Matrix of Dimensions, Psychosocial Impacts, and Data Triangulation of FoMO Manifestations in Early Adulthood at IAIN Langsa

FoMO Category	Behavioral Manifestations	Emotional Impact	Data Evidence	Triangulation
Social FoMO	Repeatedly checking friends' Instagram stories	Feelings of isolation and low self-esteem	Results of observation and interviews (AM)	motor and peer
News FoMO	Compulsively reading viral threads	Anxiety about being considered "kudet" (out of date)	Testimony from a roommate (HL) regarding late-night sleeping patterns	
Commercial FoMO	Impulse buying (doom spending)	Financial stress and post-purchase regret	Examination of RF e-commerce transaction screenshots	

This dynamic is reinforced by the similarity of patterns among other participants, indicating that anxiety about being left behind in online activities is a dominant psychosocial stressor in their daily lives. Based on random tracking of their device activity history, participants tended to access social media immediately after waking up and just before bed, demonstrating that their attachment to cyberspace has profoundly interfered with their biological rhythms.

Reviewing the aforementioned findings, the existential anxiety experienced by young adults at IAIN Langsa confirms that FoMO is a psychological pathology deeply integrated with the structure of digital interactions (Kusumaningrum, R. I., Setyaningtyas, A. S., & Sijabat, 2026). Based on self-determination theory, the participants' compulsive social media monitoring behavior compensates for unmet basic psychological needs in the real world, particularly the need for social connectedness and competence (Maharatu, C., & Hizkia, 2024). When individuals fail to achieve adequate social recognition in offline environments, they shift their search for emotional satisfaction to the virtual world, which unfortunately triggers upward social comparison, which undermines self-esteem and subjective well-being (Sitorus, F. D., & Simarmata, 2026). This obsessive online vigilance ultimately traps students in a vicious cycle of exhausting digital addiction ((Fiqh, S., Khumas, A., & Sufartianingsih, 2026). The manifestation of News FoMO, confirmed by participants' late-night sleep patterns, suggests that digital anxiety has a direct impact on students' cognitive function and academic performance. When individuals obsessively doomscroll late into the night to monitor viral news, they experience decreased sleep quality, leading to mental exhaustion or digital fatigue in the campus environment. Impaired concentration due to constant distractions from devices directly contributes to decreased learning motivation and triggers long-term academic stress (Pujiastuti, T., Pebriyanti, L., Oktavia, R., Joharman, E. E. Y., & Sari, 2025). The fear of being perceived as out of touch (kudet) by their peers reinforces this pathological dependency, thus exacerbating symptoms of social anxiety in young adults (Hasanah, S., & Aviani, 2025).

Meanwhile, the Commercial FoMO dimension, identified through impulsive shopping behavior (doom spending), demonstrates how digital anxiety can be exploited by the commercial systems of social media. Fear of social disapproval drives young adults to purchase non-essential items promoted virally, often at the expense of personal financial rationality (Pramesty, J. A., & Merida, 2025b). This consumptive behavior driven by emotional panic ultimately leads to new financial stress and deep post-purchase regret, which cumulatively lowers individuals' levels of life satisfaction ((Juliandhani, A. F., & Tjahjawati, 2024). Thus, the manifestation of FoMO in young adults encompasses social, cognitive, and economic dimensions, all of which reinforce each other (Pramesty, J. A., & Merida, 2025a).

The interview data can be seen below:

1. Semi-Structured Interview Data (Social FoMO)

Researcher Question:

"How do you feel when you see friends gathering or participating in an activity without inviting you, then posting about it on social media?"

Subject PNJ:

"I immediately feel sad and anxious. My thoughts wander, worried that they deliberately didn't invite me. I end up constantly checking Instagram to see who's there and what they're doing."

Participant Observation Results:

During the interview, the researcher observed PNJ gripping his cell phone tightly, tapping his fingers on the table, and reflexively unlocking the phone screen several times when the discussion turned to his friends' Instagram posts. These symptoms indicate motor anxiety accompanying Social FoMO.

2. Semi-Structured Interview Data (News FoMO)

Researcher Question:

"Why do you feel the need to constantly follow news or information that's going viral on social media?"

Subject AN:

"If I don't know what's trending, I'm afraid of being seen as disconnected from conversations. That's why I often stay on TikTok or Twitter (X) late at night to stay informed."

Participant Observation Results:

The researcher observed that during the interview, AN checked his phone notifications several times even when the device was on silent. This indicates a tendency toward online vigilance, the compulsion to constantly monitor digital information.

Screen Time Analysis:

AN's screen time documentation shows an average of 8 hours and 12 minutes of social media usage per day, with the most frequently used apps being TikTok, Instagram, and X. Peak usage activity occurs between 10:00 PM and 2:30 AM WIB, indicating doomscrolling behavior before bed.

3. Semi-Structured Interview Data (Commercial FOMO)

Researcher Question:

"What usually makes you decide to buy a product that's going viral on social media?"

Subject RF:

"I'm afraid that if I don't buy, I'll be considered out of trend. Usually, when there's a promotion on Shopee Live or TikTok Shop, I just check out without thinking twice."

Electronic Transaction History Document Analysis

Researchers examined RF's e-commerce transaction history after obtaining the subject's consent. The documents revealed five purchases of non-essential items in one week, including cosmetics, accessories, and fashion products purchased during online promotions. RF admitted that most of the purchases were made out of fear of missing out, rather than out of necessity.

Coping Strategy Analysis: Between Problems and Emotions

Facing constant digital anxiety, participants actively engaged in coping strategies divided into problem-focused coping and emotion-focused coping. In the problem-focused coping category, the primary action undertaken by participants was behavioral modification through a digital detox, which involved periodically deleting social media apps. Subject SZ (interview, May 22, 2026) recounted her experience: "I deleted Instagram and TikTok from my phone for three full days over the weekend. At first, I felt tight and anxious, but after the second day, I felt incredibly calm."

Source triangulation was conducted by interviewing SZ's classmate, AM (interview, May 23, 2026), who observed that on the first day of the digital detox, SZ experienced physical anxiety, reflexively reaching for her phone in her pockets. However, starting on the third day, SZ appeared much more focused on listening to the lecturer in class and was able to interact calmly without distraction. In addition to digital detox, another form of coping is activating the screen time limiter for TikTok, limiting screen time to a maximum of two hours per day. This was validated by researchers through an examination of participant YL's device system menu.

In the emotion-focused coping category, participants employed positive reappraisal and self-acceptance. These measures were taken when they could no longer control what others posted on social media. Subject BR (interview, May 25, 2026) described the cognitive restructuring she undertook: "I trained myself to think that what's on Instagram is just a curation of my best moments, deliberately displayed. They hide their failures, so it's unfair to compare my real life to their filtered snapshots."

BR's cognitive approach was validated through technical triangulation in the form of an analysis of her gratitude journal, which showed that by practicing self-acceptance, BR's social anxiety gradually subsided. BR also counterbalanced this by seeking offline social support, choosing to confide in close friends when feeling stressed by digital social comparisons. Table 2 maps the comparative tactical utility of each of these coping tactics analyzed from field triangulation data.

Table 2. Evaluation of the Comparative Effectiveness of Problem-Focused and Emotion-Focused Coping Strategies Based on Participant Experiences

Coping Type	Specific Strategies	Subjective Effectiveness	Data Evidence	Triangulation
Problem-Focused	Digital detox (Delete apps regularly)	High (Short Term)	Peer interviews documenting the withdrawal period	(AM) initial
Problem-Focused	Limit notifications and screen time	Moderate (Discipline Depends)	Verification of screen time history on participants' phones	
Emotion-Focused	Positive Reappraisal (Cognitive Reframing)	High (Long Term)	Analysis of gratitude diaries indicating life satisfaction	
Emotion-Focused	Seek offline social support	High (Emotional Stability)	In-depth interviews with dorm mates regarding behavioral stability	

In relation to problem-focused coping, the digital detox attempted by participants is an effective form of behavioral modification to regain control over cognitive attention (Bahrudin, M. A., & Al Afghani, 2026). Although this process of self-disconnecting from social media triggered initial resistance in the form of withdrawal symptoms such as physical anxiety and phantom vibration syndrome, the resulting cognitive break has been shown to provide space for the mind to recover from the overload of digital information. Self-managing screen time limits is crucial for preventing digital fatigue and restoring students' functional focus on their academic obligations on campus (Fitriani, 2023).

In addition to relying on behavioral modification, the application of emotion-focused coping through cognitive restructuring also plays a crucial role in neutralizing digital stressors beyond an individual's direct control. When participants practice positive reappraisal, recognizing that virtual reality is merely a curation of their best moments, their anxiety levels decrease drastically (Hasanah, S., & Aviani, 2025). This stable process of self-acceptance helps individuals separate their self-worth from the number of digital interactions on social media. Coupled with authentic offline social support from friends and campus counseling services, the emotional burden experienced by young adults can be distributed healthily without resorting to internet addiction (Muliadi Hasibuan, M. Y., & Sabarrudin, 2025).

The success of managing stress caused by FoMO confirms that effective adaptation does not depend on a single coping method exclusively, but rather on an individual's flexibility in combining cognitive and emotional approaches (Ramadhani, R. R., Faqihuddin, A. A., & Faqihuddin, 2025). PFC strategies such as screen time management are excellent for reducing physical exposure to digital stressors, but without being balanced by EFC strategies such as cognitive reframing, individuals will be highly susceptible to relapse when re-exposed to social media. Therefore, the ability to integrate these two coping axes is a key prerequisite for building psychosocial resilience in early adulthood in today's era of hyperconnectivity.

The Significance of Religious Coping in Indonesian Culture

This qualitative research identified a very specific and original dimension of coping among young adults at IAIN Langsa, namely the use of religious values and Islamic spirituality as a shield against FoMO. The concept of qana'ah (being content with what Allah has given) became a central theme internalized by participants to restructure their negative thoughts. This was expressed profoundly by subject AN (interview, May 18, 2026): "I used to be jealous of my classmates posting about luxury goods and vacations. But through Sufism lessons and cultivating the habit of qana'ah (contentment), I realized that everyone has their own path of sustenance, as ordained by Allah. This sense of sufficiency helped me stop comparing myself and become more grateful for what I have in the real world."

This mental attitude proved effective in shifting participants' perspectives from focusing on digital backwardness to peaceful self-acceptance. Furthermore, practical practices such as devout prayer and repetitive recitation of dhikr reportedly serve as instant psychological relaxation to reduce emotional panic (overthinking) when anxiety caused by social comparison begins to set in. Subject RF (interview, May 21, 2026) recounted her experience: "If I start to feel worthless after scrolling through TikTok, I immediately perform ablution (wudu), then pray and dhikr. When I prostrate, I feel like I'm totally surrendering all my burdens to Allah. That inner peace comes instantly and makes my anxiety evaporate."

Source triangulation was conducted through verbal confirmation with RF's dormitory friend, BR (interview, May 22, 2026). BR confirmed a positive behavioral change: "RF now seems much calmer after getting into the habit of immediately praying and dhikr whenever he feels anxious. He used to constantly check his phone screen while complaining about anxiety, but now he chooses to turn it off and take a quiet moment after praying."

Researchers conducted additional technical triangulation through analysis of daily self-monitoring logs voluntarily completed by participants. These logs showed a linear decrease in daily anxiety intensity as participants' consistency in performing spiritual practices in the last third of the night increased. Table 3 presents the operationalization framework of the religious values adopted by participants and its impact on their digital anxiety.

Table 3. Framework for Internalization of Spiritual Values as an Adaptive Coping Mechanism for FoMO in Active Users

Spiritual Values	Cognitive-Behavioral Implementation	Impact on FoMO	Data Evidence	Triangulation
Contentment	Appreciating one's blessings without comparing them	Reduces digital envy	Periodic journaling	gratitude
Patience	Controlling the impulse to check one's device	Improves attention regulation	Observation of decreased phone usage during interviews	
Trust	Surrendering to the future and achievements	Reduces social competition anxiety	Analysis of participants' weekly self-reflection sheets	
Remembrance of Allah	Remembering Allah when anxiety strikes	Stabilizes physiological stress responses	Daily emotion logs (self-monitoring logs)	

The use of religious-spiritual coping as a mental barrier against digital culture is IAIN Langsa's most innovative finding (Siagian, A. U., & Is, 2025). Internalising Islamic spiritual values like qana'ah (sufficiency in God's decree) has been empirically shown to be a powerful cognitive counter-narrative mechanism for mitigating social media algorithm-induced envy (hasad) (Dewi, I., 2026). This religious coping helps kids move from seeking online approbation to a more meaningful existence (Siagian, A. U., & Is, 2025). In Eastern civilisations, local religiosity can moderate the negative effects of digital social anxiety (Irbathy, 2026).

Prayer and dhikr can restore inner peace or thuma'ninah neurophysiologically and psychologically (Wasfiyah, W., 2025). Active meditation like prayer and dhikr recitation activates the parasympathetic nervous system, which slows the heart rate, relaxes motor muscles, and suppresses stress hormones like cortisol and adrenaline (Sarippi, L. D., & Romas, 2026). Total submission to divine will (tawakkal) relieves future tension and overthinking caused by excessive digital information consumption.

The convergence of all these adaptation techniques should enable a healthy psychological shift from FoMO to JoMO (Bahrudin, M. A., & Al Afghani, 2026). Young adults acquire JoMO when they regain attention autonomy, have steady life satisfaction, and have strong psychospiritual well-being. This synergy introduces the FOMO-Qana'ah Dialectic Framework (FQDF), a novel mental health intervention curricular paradigm that incorporates critical digital literacy, cognitive-behavioural self-regulation, and local wisdom-based spiritual anchoring (Dewi, I., 2026). This integrative paradigm can help religious higher education institutions protect young people's mental health and emotional resilience from hyperconnectivity.

D. Conclusion

This study successfully explored in-depth the dynamics of coping strategies for dealing with FoMO in young adults, particularly at IAIN Langsa. The main conclusion of this study is that young adults actively use a combination of problem-focused and emotion-focused coping strategies to reduce their digital anxiety. The most important finding is that religious coping, especially the internalization of the ideas of gratitude and contentment, is a very effective cognitive-spiritual defense mechanism against the negative effects of comparing oneself to others online. While problem-focused coping strategies such as digital detox provide immediate results in reducing stressors, their sustainability is highly dependent on the individual's level of self-regulation. Conversely, emotional-spiritual coping strategies provide long-term psychological stability by shifting individuals' perspectives on self-worth and life success. This study also identified the risk of maladaptive coping, where efforts to avoid FoMO actually lead to deeper social media addiction.

Practical recommendations for young adults include the need to develop healthy digital literacy and strengthen spirituality as an emotional anchor. Higher education institutions need to provide mental health support services that are not only clinical and psychological in nature but also integrate relevant local spiritual values. Future research is recommended to experimentally explore the effectiveness of mindfulness- and spirituality-based interventions to provide a stronger evidence base for addressing FoMO in Indonesia.

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