



ANALYSIS OF MADONNA IN A FUR COAT THROUGH FOMO

Kürk Mantolu Madonna'nın Günceli Kaçırma Korkusu Açısından İncelenmesi

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Abstract

Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) has been researched in various disciplines over the years; related perspectives have been developed in exploring the anxiety of being left behind the popular culture and addictive behaviors especially happening through social media and smart devices. There are various studies about the phenomenon, but they are insufficient. This study aims to emphasize the impact of the phenomenon on people's reasons of reading Sabahattin Ali's timeless work *Madonna in A Fur Coat* having a considerable mass of people in Türkiye and sales rates of the book, also, it examines its influence on people's reading habits and approaches to popularity. It is obvious that the book is popular, and creates a feeling of belonging to a crowd, and has an impulse to sympathize with popularity in the arts. The phenomenon is introduced in the introduction then information about psychological background is given, its effects on society and people's perspectives on the popularity of the book are analyzed. The results were shared under relevant literature studies. It is observed that demonstration of the book on social media and the growth of visual-based social media tools have seriously arisen the need for the several prints of the book.

Keywords: FoMO, *Madonna in A Fur Coat*, Sabahattin Ali, social media.

Öz

Geçtiğimiz yıllar boyunca FoMO, çeşitli disiplinler kapsamında araştırılmış, popüler kültürün gerisinde kalma kaygısı ve özellikle sosyal medya ile akıllı cihazlar vasıtasıyla meydana gelen bağımlılık yapıcı davranışların araştırılmasına ilişkin bakış açıları ortaya konmuştur. Olguya ilişkin çalışmalar yaygın olmakla birlikte yetersizdir. Bu çalışma, olgunun insanların Sabahattin Ali'nin Türkiye'de hatırı sayılır bir kitleye ulaşmış zamansız eseri *Kürk Mantolu Madonna*'yı okuma sebeplerini ve kitabın satış oranları üzerindeki etkisini vurgulamayı amaçlamakta, aynı zamanda insanların okuma alışkanlıkları ve popülerliğe yaklaşımları üzerindeki etkisini de incelemektedir. Kitabın popüler olduğu, bir kalabalığa ait olma hissi yarattığı ve sanatta popülerliğe yakınlık duyma dürtüsü taşıdığı aşikârdır. Giriş kısmında olgunun tanıtılmakta daha sonra olguya ait psikolojik arka plan hakkında bilgi verilmekte, toplum üzerindeki etkileri ve insanların kitabın popülerliğine bakış açıları analiz edilmektedir. Sonuçlar ilgili literatür çalışmaları altında paylaşılmıştır. Kitabın sosyal medyada sunulması ve görsel tabanlı sosyal medya araçlarının yaygınlaşmasının ciddi anlamda kitabın birçok baskısının yapılmasına olan ihtiyacı ortaya çıkardığı gözlemlenmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: FoMO, *Kürk Mantolu Madonna*, Sabahattin Ali, sosyal medya.

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INTRODUCTION

Communication has developed in time through the history of humankind. It has been evolved from communicating through drawings on the walls of caves and smokes to clicking on a single key. A few centuries ago, newspaper was the best medium to achieve this desire, and then approximately 70 years ago, it was replaced by television. Since 1990s, internet has become a part of life. In the 21st century, people have chance to know about the life of other people even though they are thousands of kilometres far from each other. They can contact with other people by pressing on turn on button of the mobiles and connecting to internet. Moreover, they can see what the other people are doing for the time being thanks to some applications on mobiles and computer technologies. Knowing this fact, people share their life routines no matter it is private or not. Besides, they take pleasure if it is liked by other people. On the other hand, they become sad if it is disliked. The number of likes and dislikes is very important factor. They cannot prevent themselves from checking the names of the people, number of followers. Now, there is another world, which is more important than real life. This new world or environment is called social media.

Social media can be portrayed as computer-centered applications that users can create their content and profiles, and can connect with others (Rozgonjuk et al., 2020). It is a certain fact that social media has been a major part of people's daily life. It is observed that people pretend to behave in a manner, which is very different from their real being. Several ways have been followed to build a personality, which mostly could be the ideal ego. In fact, they try to create a personality of their wish in various virtual platforms. Along with the the fast development of internet and computer technology, social media has been a perfect way to do it, and it is crucial to understand the importance of social media in life in this context. It is estimated that roughly 3,7 billion people are active on social media (We Are Social Ltd, 2019, Rozgonjuk et al., 2020).

Internet usage has grown by approximately 1,239% between 2000 and 2020 (Internet World Stats, 2020, Röttinger et al., 2021). Considering the fact that people tend to create themselves in a way that they want, statistics are not surprising. It has been reported that Facebook is the most popular social media platform among adolescents (Lenhart, 2015, Beyens, Frison & Eggermont, 2016). We consider it just because Facebook is an environment that allows both to create their ideal ego through the contents they share and communicate with others at the same time. Popularity of the platform makes scientists think about the motivation behind this tendency, and sense of belonging and the need for popularity might be critical motivations for the use of Facebook (Beyens, Frison & Eggermont, 2016). Instagram and Snapchat and Twitter, etc. are the other sample social media platforms. Number of examples can be different, but the concept of being followed or following others and desire of being liked by other people is same. Associated with the sense of belonging, Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) can be considered as a mediator to use social media at a high rate.

METHOD

It can be said that most of the people living in this global world and surrounded by technological age can feel isolated or alienated from a social gathering if they are not a part of it. Or they can watch or follow them and spend an enjoyable time in spite of the fact that they are not physically there. FoMO is defined in the literature as a thought that other people may experience delightful things, which one is absent, and the constant desire to stay connected with others (Przybylski et al., 2013). To be relatively a new phenomenon, FoMO was studied by Przybylski and colleagues in 2013, and they created a scale to measure FoMO (Przybylski et al., 2013, Öztürk, Gençoğlu & Kırkgöz, 2020). It is associated with digital technology use, which is at a problematic level (Rozgonjuk et al., 2020). Also, it is related to maladaptive smartphone use (Barry & Wong, 2020). It is very closely related to these. The reason for this may be that the beautiful moments spent are widely shared on social media. When people have a pleasant evening or go to a fancy breakfast together, they can share it on social media. Others who see these posts may experience FoMO. The situation directly fits Przybylski's description, which is seeing pleasant moments that you are not present and feeling left behind.

It can be seen associated with psychology but, besides anxiety and depression, FoMO is not studied widely in terms of concerning psychopathologic constructs (Elhai et al., 2018). Researches also have shown that FoMO has neurobiological links (Öztürk, Gençoğlu & Kırkgöz, 2020). It is a quite wide phenomenon. The fact that only 13% of American adults said they never experienced FoMO confirms this reality (Milyavskaya, Saffran, Hope, & Koestner, 2018, Budnick, Rogers & Barber, 2020). Social media usage and FoMO can be claimed to have a sedative effect. When a person wants to be liked or appreciated by other people, he can use social media to achieve this desire. By this way, he compensates his social need with social media (Akbari et al., 2021).

FoMO, which is clearly a compulsive force to use social media, also affects people's perception of art and literature in real life. In this study, FoMO and its influences on people's life are discussed through *Madonna in A Fur Coat*, which has become one of the best sellers in Turkish literature and the results of these influences are revealed.

FINDINGS

People refresh social media pages even though they know they will see what they have seen a few moments ago. They regularly check out either a social media account or a person, however, they know that nothing will change once they know what is going on. The situation is the outcome of compulsive behavior that arises from the thought of "What if I am missing out something. They feel pity and sorrow to miss that activity or item. The data on the definition of this phenomenon is very recent and much data is needed. However, a cumulative definition of FoMO has been accepted over time as obsessive thoughts and behaviors, which are their outcomes.

According to some publications, FoMO emerged in 2004 but has been widely used since 2010 (Gupta & Sharma, 2021). It is a fact that a satirical explanation of FoMO was made by Patrick McGinnis. FoMO was born at Harvard Business School in 2004, McGinnis was there and he was very impressed by it; he says "All you wanted to do was live life to the fullest at every second", to not miss out better opportunities (Schreckinger, 2014). He believed the term, FoMO, emerged at Harvard in 2003-2004 and spread from there (Knowles, 2016). The first emergence of social media, Friendster occurred while he was studying at HBS. After all, McGinnis published a satirical article named "Social Theory at HBS: McGinnis' Two FOs" (The Harbus, 2004).

FoMO affects many aspects of the life. It influences not only smartphone usage habits, relationships with friends but also shopping habits. For example, world avocado production was 7.1 million tons in 2019. Total amount of avocados increased % 6.1 compared to the previous year (Tarımsal Ekonomi ve Politika Geliştirme Enstitüsü Müdürlüğü, n.d.). The shares on social media and other internet platforms may have affected it. On a website, eksisozluk1923.com, a user with "Narsist Psikiyatrist" nickname said, "The indispensable fruit of dietation accounts". Because influencers shared photos in which they are eating avocados in their breakfast. The fact that nutrition styles that have become popular on social media are gaining supporters day by day is a good example of how widespread the FoMO effect is.

In their article Good and Hyman (2020) tell that women feel a strong urge to buy tickets if they receive an invitation to a concert. In this case, it can be said that people are invited to buy *Madonna in A Fur Coat* because of the shares on social media and other virtual platforms. In addition to the fact that it is a masterpiece of Sabahattin Ali in terms of its literary features, it is demanded by many people thanks to FoMO. In terms of shopping habits, the sales of *Madonna in a Fur Coat* are good examples of the phenomenon. The urge to buy the book affects the sales of *Madonna in A Fur Coat*. Being first published as a 48-episode story in a newspaper and then called "The Great Story", it made its first book edition in 1998 at a reputable publishing house, Yapı Kredi Yayınları, in Türkiye, and it was sold more than 1.5 million copies until 2017. On 1000kitap.com, a book reviews-sharing site, "Oğuz Aktürk" declared this book as the best-selling book in Türkiye (Aktürk, 2022). It has been translated into 21 different languages, including English, French, and Chinese (Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2017). An article was published in *The Guardian* about its being a surprising bestseller (Freely, 2018). It was adapted into a theatre play and staged on a tour by the Istanbul Theatre Group (Tiyatrolar, n.d.).

A study showed that FoMO mediated the association between the need to belong and online self-presentation (Wang et al., 2018, Popovac & Hadlington, 2020). Anxiety about the opinion of others shapes the use of new media (Tomczyk & Selmanagic-Lizde, 2018). A bridge can be built between this situation and social media. Through social media, people create communities about things they love. When you get involved the subject, you also get in the community. Maybe because of the anxiety you feel need to be a part of a community. Its social structure also includes a desire for popularity, fear of rejection, and belonging to peer groups online (Beyens, Frison, & Eggermont, 2016, Tomczyk & Selmanagic-Lizde, 2018).

Online peer groups are often based on shared tastes, and chances of acceptance increase radically when you share the same tastes as the dominant group. On another website, dunyasozluk.com, a user called "Hep Yanlış Yazıyorum" said, "Sharing the photo of the book on social media helps to get likes and give the message that there is no one in my life." (Dünya Sözlük, n.d.).

In a review of the book on the website, 1000kitap.com, it was clearly stated that the reason for reading the book was to be influenced by someone else (Özlem, 2021). Comments have been written in many different forums. There are 66 pages of entries about the novel on www.uludagsozluk.com. A forum user, called "Boyle Buyur Zerdust", said, "The book is a product of popular culture, it can easily impress you, but it is not a book that everyone needs to share." The user named "Kitap Ayracı Koleksiyoncusu" expressed his opinion as follows: "The number of people who share the photo of this book with tea or coffee on Instagram is 12 million". "Berkendar", another user in the same forum, said, "The book

fell victim to populism, it left behind the author's other books in terms of literary value.” (Uludağ Sözlük, n.d.). As it is seen, many people using various social media platforms have clearly stated that their opinion about *Madonna in A Fur Coat* deeply changed because of what they saw and read in the platforms.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Consequently, it is clear that fast and easy access to internet facilities change people's lifestyles, eating, drinking and shopping habits today. Watching shorts and listening podcasts directly or indirectly specifies social and artistic preferences. Moreover, they identify which books people should read. Consciously or unconsciously, they feel that they must read the book which they are imposed to buy even they will not read.

It seems that FoMO is a quite common phenomenon nowadays, and it will continue to affect people's life more by the developing technology and social media devices, such as; Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter, and so on. It has been influential on the customers of art works as it is seen that it is adapted into other fields of art like theatre. It is also evolved into a theatre play.

In addition, it seems that it is going to be witnessed in various fields like cinema, and Tv series. FoMO has created an impulse to buy literary works. This impulse is clearly seen in the sales of the *Madonna in A Fur Coat*; thus, it has become one of the best-selling books in Türkiye. It is obvious that posts, comments, shares on various social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, etc., on *Madonna in A Fur Coat*, highly influence the thoughts of other people and vice versa. The impact of the book has gone beyond the borders of the country and it is translated into 21 different languages. The book has a huge influence on internet websites; it is talked and commented by many people.

The more popularity it has gained, the more it is sold. Within the scope of the research, it is seen that FoMO has been studied in several different contexts, but its relationship with literature has not been analysed enough. It is hoped that it will bring a different perspective into the literature on FoMO, and shed light on future studies, which will research FoMO and its relationships with other works of art.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION

“The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest”.

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