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Parallel Mediating Role of FoMO and Mental Well-Being Between
Entrapment and Psychological Distress

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Abstract

Individuals may occasionally experience psychological distress and entrapment, which is not a desirable situation. Psychological distress is defined as a state of emotional suffering characterized by symptoms of depression and anxiety, whereas entrapment is defined as negative feelings caused by an unsuccessful struggle and the belief that the defeating situation cannot be resolved or escaped. Currently, rapid developments have brought along with them the fear of missing out on these developments. In order to minimize these undesirable situations in human life, this study aims to test the mediating role of FoMO and mental well-being between psychological distress and entrapment. The relationships between these variables have not been investigated before and this study is the first to investigate the relationships between the mentioned variables. 64 male and 420 female participants over the age of 18 participated in the study voluntarily. To evaluate the related variables, Entrapment Scale, Fear of Missing Out Scale, Mental Well-Being Scale, and the Kessler Psychological Distress Scale were used. Structural Equation Modeling was used to conduct mediation analysis on the study's data. The findings revealed that FoMO and mental well-being acted as parallel mediators of psychological distress and entrapment. In other words, psychological distress predicts entrapment both directly and through fear of missing out and mental well-being. In the model, psychological distress positively predicted entrapment and FoMO, but mental well-being negatively predicted. The direct relationship between psychological distress and entrapment, through related mediators, significantly aids individuals in managing negative experiences such as psychological distress, entrapment, and FoMO more effectively. The current research is a quantitative model explaining the relationship between psychological distress, entrapment, fear of missing out and mental well-being. The findings are discussed within the scope of the relevant literature.

Keywords: Psychological Distress, Entrapment, Fear of Missing Out, Mental Well-Being

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2024, 13 (5), 2319-2336 | Araştırma Makalesi

Sıkışmışlık Hissi ve Psikolojik Sıkıntı Arasında FoMO ve Mental İyi Oluşun Paralel Aracılık Rolü

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Öz

Bireyler zaman zaman arzu edilen bir durum olmayan psikolojik sıkıntı ve sıkışmışlık yaşayabilirler. Psikolojik sıkıntı, depresyon ve anksiyete belirtileriyle karakterize edilen duygusal acı çekme durumu olarak bilinirken, sıkışmışlık ise başarısız bir mücadelenin neden olduğu olumsuz duygular ve karşılaşılan durumun çözülemeyeceği veya kaçılmayacağı inancı olarak tanımlanmaktadır. Günümüzde hızlı gelişmelerin yaşanması bunların yanı sıra bireylerin gelişmeleri kaçırmaktan korkmalarını da beraberinde getirmiştir. İnsan hayatındaki bu istenmeyen durumların incelenmesi ve mental sağlığın geliştirilmesi için bu çalışma, sıkışmışlık hissi ve psikolojik sıkıntı arasındaki ilişkide FoMO ve mental iyi oluşun aracı rolünü araştırmayı amaçlamaktadır. Bu çalışma, söz konusu değişkenler arasındaki ilişkileri araştıran ilk çalışmadır. Çalışmaya katılım gönüllülük esasına dayanmaktadır ve 18 yaş üstü 64 erkek ve 420 kadın katılımcıyı kapsamaktadır. İlgili değişkenleri ölçmek için Sıkışmışlık Hissi Ölçeği, Eksik Kalma Korkusu Ölçeği, Mental İyi Oluş Ölçeği ve Kessler Psikolojik Sıkıntı Ölçeği kullanılmıştır. Çalışmanın verileri üzerinde aracılık analizi yapmak için Yapısal Eşitlik Modellemesi'nden yararlanılmıştır. Bulgular, FoMO ve mental iyi oluşun, psikolojik sıkıntı ve sıkışmışlık arasında paralel araçlar olduğunu ortaya koymuştur. Diğer bir ifadeyle psikolojik sıkıntı hem doğrudan hem de FoMO ve mental iyi oluş dolayısıyla sıkışmışlığı yordamaktadır. Modelde psikolojik sıkıntı, sıkışmışlık ve FoMO'yu pozitif yönde, mental iyi oluş ise negatif yönde yordamıştır. Psikolojik sıkıntı ve sıkışmışlık arasındaki doğrudan ilişki ilgili araçlar vasıtasıyla, bireylerin psikolojik sıkıntı, sıkışmışlık ve FoMO gibi olumsuz deneyimleri daha iyi bir şekilde yönetmelerine önemli ölçüde yardımcı olmaktadır. Literatüre bakıldığı zaman mevcut araştırma psikolojik sıkıntı, sıkışmışlık, FoMO ve mental iyi oluş kavramları arasındaki ilişkiyi açıklayan niceliksel bir model durumundadır. Elde edilen bulgular ilgili literatür kapsamında tartışılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Psikolojik Sıkıntı, Sıkışmışlık Hissi, FoMO, Mental İyi Oluş

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Introduction

Depression is a timeless and enduring subject in human history, with references to it appearing in ancient biblical texts, Greek, Roman, and Chinese classics, Shakespearean plays, and Russian novels (Hammen, 2018). Depression is distinguished by a depressed mood, feelings of sadness, and a lack of interest in activities that were previously enjoyable (American Psychological Association, n.d.). It is primarily a response to a variety of challenges or stressful life experiences that many individuals will encounter at some point, despite the fact that it can cause significant stress and impairment in life (Reevy et al., 2010). Those who are both depressed and helpless are more likely to have suicidal thoughts, according to a study of university students that examined the relationship between the severity of depression, feelings of helplessness, and suicidal ideation (Garlow et al. 2008). Depressed individuals may experience intense anger (fighting) and a desire to flee, as demonstrated by prior research. However, the suppression of these "fight/flight" defenses can result in an increase in stress (Gilbert and Gilbert, 2003). The negative emotions that result from an individual's experience of a "failed struggle" and the perception that the defeating situation cannot be resolved or fled are referred to as entrapment, with the primary theme being the desire to act and escape (Gilbert & Allan, 1998). Suicidal ideation and entrapment are also known to have a substantial positive correlation with depression. Psychological and emotional distress were found to be significantly and positively associated with entrapment by researchers (Chabbouh et al., 2024; Taliaferro et al., 2020). For instance, Uchitomi et al. (2003) found that psychological distress is linked to depression in Japanese individuals with lung cancer. A state of emotional suffering characterized by signs of depression (loss of interest, sadness, hopelessness, etc.) and anxiety (restlessness, feelings of tension, etc.) is referred to as psychological distress (Mirowsky and Ross 2002). Given the link between entrapment and psychological distress, depression, and suicidal ideation, it seems prudent to investigate these two concepts concurrently.

Another focus of the current research is on the mental health development of individuals. For this purpose, it is important both to contribute to a higher level of mental health and to evaluate the advantages that can be obtained as a result. Psychological distress and entrapment should be taken into account in the context of mental health. According to Oyekcin et al. (2017), suicidal ideation is highly correlated with depression and anxiety symptoms, perceived mental health, and feelings of hopelessness. Suicidal thoughts are negatively associated with mental health, according to Banerjee and Chatterjee (2016). Additionally, longitudinal studies are conducted to examine the correlation between mental well-being and psychological distress. Studies have shown that mental well-being reduces the likelihood of developing psychological issues in the future (Lamers et al., 2015), while low mental well-being increases the likelihood of developing depression in the future (Schotanus-Dijkstra et al., 2017; Wood & Joseph, 2010). Griffiths et al. (2014) found that individuals' perceptions of defeat and entrapment were associated with elevated levels of anxiety and depression 12 months later. They also found that altering individuals' perceptions of defeat and entrapment increased the probability of their behaviors and thoughts changing, thereby reducing psychological distress and promoting well-being. Consequently, it would be advantageous to examine the relationship between psychological distress and mental well-being through depression, in addition to the direct relationship between the two. Additionally, entrapment is

associated with stress, stress-related mental health symptoms, suicidal thoughts, and other adverse consequences (Siddaway et al., 2015; Cheon, 2012). According to a study conducted by Cramer et al. (2019), entrapment is linked to both positive mental health symptoms and suicidal thoughts and behaviors. It was also discovered in another study that subjective well-being and depression are significantly predicted by perceived entrapment (Cheon 2011). It is evident that entrapment and psychological distress are concepts that require additional research, as previously mentioned, when examining the relationship between mental well-being and depression, suicidal ideation, and mental health.

FoMO is the fear that others have more useful experiences or information than you (Przybylski et al., 2013). FoMO is linked to entrapment and psychological distress. Entrapment, a complex cognitive-affective construct, is defined by an emotional desire to escape or eliminate undesirable self-focused or socially defined conditions (Gilbert & Allan, 1998). Depressive symptoms are more common among socially isolated people (Ge et al., 2017). As a result, these people may overlook important or enjoyable activities (Steger & Kashdan, 2009). At this point, FoMO may come into play. Research indicates that FoMO is a significant predictor of the psychological effects of social media use, especially depression and anxiety (Ibrahim et al., 2022; Kartol & Gündoğan, 2020; Leung et al., 2021). Research indicates that those with a higher fear of missing out are more likely to experience depression symptoms (Baker et al., 2016; Öztürk et al., 2020). In contrast, Upreti and Musalay's (2018) study found a significant positive relationship between FoMO and entrapment in the online context, implying a link between the two factors and depression. On the other hand, studies have discovered significant positive relationships between psychological distress and FoMO (Sanghai, 2023; Malik et al., 2023). Furthermore, because depression and anxiety are linked to social isolation, one study proposes that FoMO is also linked to depression and anxiety (Elhai et al., 2020).

Many studies in the literature have found that psychological distress, entrapment, mental well-being, and FoMO all share a common denominator: depression. While studies have linked these concepts to depression, they have also looked directly at their interactions. As a result, we decided to focus our current research on the relationships between these concepts.

H1. There is a positive relationship between psychological distress and entrapment.

H2. FoMO has a mediating role between psychological distress and entrapment.

H3. There is a mediating role of mental well-being between psychological distress and entrapment.

H4. FoMO and mental well-being have a parallel mediating role between psychological distress and entrapment.

Method

Participants and Procedure

The study includes 484 participants, 64 males and 420 females, from 48 different cities across Turkey. When the distribution of the participants according to age is analyzed, 431 participants (89%) were between the ages of 18-24, 40 participants (8.3%) were between 25-34, and 13 participants were between 35-44. When the distribution of the participants

according to age is analyzed, 431 participants (89%) were between the ages of 18-24, 40 participants (8.3%) were between 25-34, and 13 participants were between 35-44. Data were collected online and through social media announcements. The study only included voluntary participants, who were required to carefully read the informed consent in the scale sets.

Measures

K-10 Psychological Distress Scale

The scale evaluates the psychosocial distress dimension, which is a state of emotional harm characterized by symptoms of anxiety and depression, as well as individuals' levels of agitation, irritability, and psychological fatigue over the past four weeks. A scale for measuring psychological distress was developed by Kessler et al. (2002), and Altun et al. (2019) adapted it into Turkish. It comprises one sub-dimension and ten items. The scale's internal consistency is quantified by Cronbach's alpha coefficient, which is 0.95. The response options are categorized on a five-point Likert scale, with 1 representing "never" and 5 representing "always." The scale, which is intended for use with adult samples, has a minimum score of 10 and a maximum score of 50. Increased psychological distress is indicated by higher scores.

Fear of Missing Out Scale – FoMOs

A development study for the scale was conducted by Przybylski et al. (2013). The scale, which has been translated into Turkish by Can and Satıcı (2019), is suitable for the use of samples of students, employees, and pensioners. The Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient of the scale is .79. The Fear of Missing Out Scale is a ten-item self-report scale that is a single factor. Each item is rated on a five-point scale, with one indicating that it does not reflect the respondent at all and five indicating that it fully reflects the respondent. The scale has a total score that ranges from 10 to 50. The scale indicates that individuals who achieve higher scores are more apprehensive about missing out. The scale demonstrated a satisfactory fit, as evidenced by the fit values of GFI = 0.95, CFI = 0.91, SRMR = 0.050, and RMSEA = 0.069.

Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale Short Form

The scale, which is a fundamental concept of positive psychology, was developed by Tennant et al. (2007) to assess mental well-being. Demirtaş and Baytemir (2019) applied it to Turkish. High mental well-being is indicated by high scores on the scale, which participants are required to complete by evaluating their last two weeks of life. The seven-item scale, which is suitable for adult samples, is composed of positive statements in a five-point Likert type (1: never, 2: rarely, 3: sometimes, 4: frequently, and 5: always). CFI=.99; NFI=.97; GFI=.96; AGFI=.91; RMSEA=.065; SRMR=.040; and AGFI=.91 were the fit values of the scale.

Entrapment Scale Short-Form (E-SF)

De Beurs et al. (2020) carried out the research that led to the development of the scale, and it is now available in the published literature. A five-point Likert scale is employed to evaluate responses on this scale, comprising four items and two dimensions: internal and external entrapment. The scale ranges from 0 (not at all suitable for me) to 4 (completely suitable for me). It is also known that the scale showed a good fit with fit

indices $\chi^2 = 4.582$, $df = 1$, $p < .05$; $\chi^2/df = 4.58$; $RMSEA = .08$; $CFI = .99$; $IFI = .99$; $GFI = .99$; $NFI = .99$; $TLI = .98$; $RFI = .97$; $SRMR = .010$. In their translation of the scale into Turkish, Turk et al. (2024) obtained a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .88 through their work. It is appropriate to use this scale with adult samples because it allows individuals to experience a greater degree of entrapment as their score on the scale increases.

Data Analysis

This study examined the relationship between psychological distress, entrapment, fear of missing out, and adult mental well-being using normality, descriptive, reliability, and correlation analysis. Since there was a quantitative imbalance between genders in the research sample, a t-test was conducted. These analyses were done with SPSS, JASP, and AMOS. Then a SEM analysis was performed. Because it allows multi-parameter decision-making, the structural equation model (SEM) is a powerful quantitative analysis tool (Kline, 2011). Kline (2011) recommended a two-stage structural equation model for the study. First, we validated the measurement model, which examines indicator-latent variable relationships. The hypothetical structural model was tested immediately after measurement model validation. We assessed structural equation modeling (SEM) results using Hu and Bentler's (1999) goodness of fit indices. We calculated GFI, RFI, CFI, NFI, IFI, TLI, SRMR, RMSEA, chi-square ($<0 \times 7 E > 2$), and degrees of freedom. χ^2 to degrees of freedom ratio of less than 5, GFI, RFI, CFI, NFI, IFI, and TLI values above .90, and SRMR and RMSEA values below .08 are considered critical. (Hu & Bentler, 1999; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001). In contrast, we used AIC, ECVI, and the chi-square difference test to choose the best SEM model. We prefer the model with the lowest AIC and ECVI (Akaike 1987; Browne and Cudeck 1993).

SEM psychological distress, entrapment, FoMO, and mental well-being are one-dimensional, so item parcellation was used. The parcellation method in personality trait concepts reduces observed variables, improves reliability, and allows scales to have a normal distribution (Nasser-Abu Alhija and Wisenbaker, 2006). Each concept gained two dimensions through parcellation.

Bootstrapping and SEM were used to support mediation's importance (Preacher & Hayes, 2008). With bootstrapping, the sample size was increased to 10,000, and confidence intervals (C.I.I.) were calculated. Non-zero confidence intervals indicate that the tested mediation is significant.

Results

The results of correlation analysis and descriptive statistics are initially presented in this section. Next, the structural model and measurement model results are presented. Finally, the bootstrapping process's outcomes are illustrated.

Table 1 Descriptive statistics and correlation coefficients for study variables

Variable	1	2	3	4
1. Distress	–			
2. Mental Well-being	-.38**	–		
3. FoMO	.35**	-.10*	–	
4. Entrapment	.67**	-.42**	.44**	–
Mean	29.83	25.01	26.42	7.95
SD	9.09	5.70	8.37	4.56
Skewness	.128	-.101	.204	-.024
Kurtosis	-.337	-.269	.012	-.762

McDonald ω	.913	.872	.852	.883
Cronbach α	.912	.870	.862	.880
Guttman λ_6	.920	.861	.891	.865

** $p < .001$; Mental WB: Mental Well-being; FoMO: Fear of Missing Out

The variables' descriptive statistics and correlations are illustrated in Table 1. The following statistics are included: the arithmetic mean, standard deviation, skewness, and kurtosis. The variables' skewness (ranging from $-.101$ to $.204$) and kurtosis (ranging from $-.762$ to $.012$) satisfy the normality criteria stipulated by Finney and DiStefano (2006), as illustrated in Table 1. The skewness and kurtosis values are ± 2 and ± 7 , respectively.

Table 1 illustrates substantial positive correlations between psychological distress and entrapment ($r = .67$ $p < .001$), psychological distress and fear of missing out ($r = .35$ $p < .001$), and fear of missing out and entrapment ($r = .44$ $p < .001$). However, there was a negative correlation between psychological distress ($r = -.38$ $p < .001$), fear of missing out ($r = -.10$ $p < .05$), and entrapment ($r = -.42$ $p < .001$) and mental well-being in this study.

Once the significance of the relationships between the concepts was established, the measurement model was launched. The measurement model includes four latent variables: psychological distress, entrapment, fear of missing out, and mental well-being. In addition, there are eight observed variables, two for each latent variable. Table 2 shows the fit values, which correspond to the results. Fit values can be considered satisfactory. Furthermore, it is widely acknowledged that the factor loadings vary from 68 to 95. Thus, it is possible to conclude that the quantifiable values correspond to the underlying variables.

The structural model first tested the hypothesis that fear of missing out and mental well-being serve as full mediators between psychological distress and entrapment. The full mediation model does not establish a direct link between psychological distress and entrapment, but it does address how psychological distress predicts entrapment through fear of missing out and mental well-being. Table 2 shows the fit values for the model that completely mediates fear of missing out and mental well-being. We found the best mediator model by testing one that partially mediates between fear of missing out and mental well-being. The partial mediation model demonstrates a direct relationship between psychological distress and entrapment, with fear of missing out and mental well-being also mediating. Table 2 shows the fitted values for the test results. Although the partial mediation model has acceptable fit values, not all of the fit values in the full mediation model are acceptable. Chi-square difference test results as well as AIC and ECVI values determine which model to use.

Table 2 SEM fit indices

	Measure	Partial Mediator Model	Full Mediator Model
CMIN/DF	3.951	3.701	9.592
GFI	.973	.972	.932
NFI	.973	.973	.924
RFI	.945	.945	.867
IFI	.979	.979	.932
TLI	.959	.962	.880
CFI	.979	.980	.931
RMSEA	.07	.07	.13
SRMR	.04	.04	.07
AIC	-	97.5	193.4
ECVI	-	.20	.40

** $p < .001$

Which model, in which mental well-being and fear of missing out are full or partial

mediators, is more suitable, as determined by the chi-square difference test results? It is evident that the model is significantly enhanced by the inclusion of a direct connection between psychological distress and entrapment. The chi-square difference test suggests a substantial correlation between psychological distress and entrapment ($\Delta\chi^2 = 97.955$, $sd = 1$, $p < .001$), with fear of missing out and mental well-being serving as full or partial mediators. In addition, the partial mediation model's AIC and ECVI values are lower than those of the full mediation model. The model that utilized fear of missing out and mental well-being as partial mediators between psychological distress and entrapment was the preferred model across all of these findings. Figure 1 illustrates the path coefficients for this model.

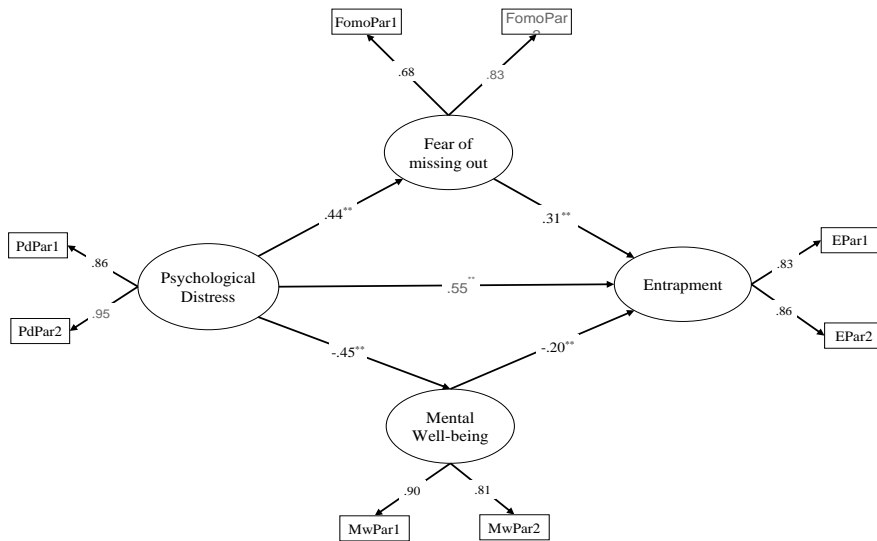


Figure 1. Standardised factor loadings for the partially mediated structural model. Note. $N = 484$; ** $p < .001$; EPar parcels of entrapment; FomoPar parcels of fear of missing out; MwPar parcels of mental well being; PdPar parcels of psychological distress

Bootstrapping was performed to support and strengthen the research. As a result, it is understood that all direct path coefficients are significant. The results are given in table 3.

Table 3 Bootstrapping results

Path	Coefficient	95% CI	
		LL	UL
Psychological distress → Fear of missing out → Entrapment	.126	.078	.193
Psychological distress → Mental well-being → Entrapment	.088	.043	.142
Psychological distress → Mental well-being → FoMO → Entrapment	.036	.156	.297
Total effect	.019	.264	.338
Direct effect	.214	.168	.262
Total indirect effect	.087	.060	.117

CI confidence interval, LL lower limit, UL upper limit

Within all these results, it can be said that fear of missing out and mental well-being levels play a partial mediating role between psychological distress and entrapment. In addition, there is a parallel mediation between fear of missing out and mental well-being between psychological distress and entrapment.

Upon reviewing table 4 for the t-test results conducted to address the gender imbalance, it is evident that there is no significant difference in mental well-being and FoMO between male and female participants. Conversely, a notable disparity exists between genders regarding distress and entrapment.

Table 4 Independent sample t-test results between groups

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	SD	T	p
Distress	Male	64	31.21	11.22	.831	<.001
	Female	420	30.00	8.73		
Mental well-being	Male	64	25.84	6.01	1.255	.998
	Female	420	24.88	5.65		
FoMO	Male	64	28.40	8.86	2.040	.439
	Female	420	26.12	8.26		
Entrapment	Male	64	7.70	5.26	-.411	.026
	Female	420	7.98	4.45		

Discussion

Negative emotions, such as feeling trapped or psychological distress, are common. How these unfavorable circumstances are related and how other ideas influence them is important in human life. Entrapment and psychological distress have many meanings. This study examined how fear of missing out (FoMO) and mental well-being mediate the relationship between entrapment and psychological distress. The analyses showed psychological distress and entrapment mediation. Fear of missing out and mental health-mediated. Thus, psychological distress predicted entrapment by linking mental health to FoMO. The current study's hypotheses and findings were discussed in light of relevant literature.

Initial research examined psychological distress and entrapment. Positive correlations were found between psychological distress and entrapment. Both ideas were positively correlated with suicidal ideation, self-harm, and depression in several independent studies. Entrapment occurs when a person wants to leave an intolerable situation but believes there is no way out (Chabbouh et al., 2024). Suicidal ideation, anxiety, depression, and PTSD are all widely predicted by entrapment (Siddaway et al., 2015). Russell et al. (2016) found that self-harmers scored higher on defeat and entrapment. Some scored significantly lower. This means that high levels of entrapment carry a risk that can only be associated with other negative constructs, such as self-harm. Therefore, it is necessary to examine it from various aspects. The same study states that self-harm behavior, depression, anxiety, and stress are all associated with entrapment. In addition, it has been revealed that non-suicidal self-harm behavior has a positive and significant relationship with psychological distress and depression (Williams & Hasking, 2009; Heath et al., 2016; Baetens et al., 2015). Lin et al. (2018) found that distress tolerance and depression predict non-suicidal self-harm one year later using full mediation of depression. Suicidal ideation, entrapment, and psychological distress are positively correlated (Turk et al., 2024; Flett, 2023; Chabbouh, 2024). Given these factors, the current research findings, which show a positive and significant relationship between entrapment and psychological distress, can be supported by previous research. Since these difficult circumstances are linked to psychological distress and entrapment, it is generally accepted that people should experience less of both to create more conducive living conditions.

The study also found that fear of missing out (FoMO) mediates psychological distress

and entrapment. Analysis showed that fear of missing out (FoMO) mediates psychological distress and entrapment. Riordan et al. (2020) define FoMO as the belief that others are having a fulfilling experience that the individual is not. This feeling has other names. As the definition implies, it is not a state that would be desired or satisfied by people who are afraid of missing out, but it can cause discomfort to the person who experiences it. According to the study (Liang et al., 2022; Malik et al., 2023), psychological distress positively predicts fear of missing out. Fear of missing out (FoMO), entrapment, and psychological distress are positively related to depression (Taylor et al., 2009), supporting the current study's findings (Elhai et al., 2016; Dempsey, 2019). Elhai et al.'s 2020 and Oberst et al.'s 2017 studies found that fear of missing out (FoMO) mediates anxiety, depression, and problematic phone use. Elhai et al. (2018), Wolniewicz et al. (2018), and Sampasa-Kanyinga & Lewis (2015) found that people with high psychological distress and poor mental health use social media more. Those in severe psychological distress may be able to anticipate their fears of entrapment and missed opportunities and take precautions.

Another hypothesis that was tested and proved to be correct is the mediating role of mental well-being in the relationship between psychological distress and entrapment, and the analysis revealed that mental well-being is a partial mediator in the relationship between these two. Mental well-being partially mediates this relationship, according to the analysis. Entrapment has been linked to suicidal ideation, stress, mental health symptoms, and other negative outcomes (Siddaway et al., 2015; Cheon, 2012). Entrapment was linked to mental health and well-being by MaMaher (2018). However, longitudinal studies by Lamers et al. (2015), Schotanus-Dijkstra et al. (2017), and Wood & Joseph (2010) have shown that mental health negatively affects psychological distress. Psychological distress, a mood disorder with depression and anxiety symptoms, is semantically linked to mental health (Drapeau et al., 2012). These factors suggest that psychological distress predicts and mediates entrapment through mental well-being. Low psychological distress is important and desirable because it inversely affects mental well-being and entrapment.

This study investigated how fear of missing out (FoMO) and mental well-being mediate psychological distress and entrapment. Results showed that fear of missing out (FoMO) and mental well-being mediate psychological distress and entrapment. Besides studies showing direct correlations, these concepts have been studied independently in various studies. Examples of direct associations include studies demonstrating a positive correlation between psychological distress and entrapment, a positive correlation between psychological distress and FoMO, and a negative correlation between psychological distress and mental well-being (Chabbouh et al., 2024; Malik et al., 2023; Schotanus-Dijkstra et al., 2017). Depression, suicidal ideation, and self-harm behavior can support the current study's findings when examined in relation to each other. Entrapment and FoMO had a positive correlation with depression, according to Baker et al. (2016) and Taylor (2009). Poor mental health is linked to depression, according to Wood and Joseph (2010). To better understand the relationship between psychological distress and entrapment, individuals should reduce psychological distress, improve their mental well-being, and consider FoMO's effects.

The gender imbalance in the research sample leads to t-test findings indicating that entrapment and distress vary by gender, although mental well-being and FoMO do not.

The data indicate that men encounter greater entrapment, whereas women suffer heightened distress. A review of the relevant literature showed that entrapment did not have a significant relationship with gender in the U.S. sample, but women in the England group reported more cases of internal entrapment (Cramer et al., 2019). This scenario contrasts with the findings derived from the present study on entrapment. Nonetheless, this disparity may be attributable to cultural factors. The results found in the aforementioned study varied between the two countries. Research indicates that women endure greater distress, corroborating the findings of the present study (Matud et al., 2015; Viertiö et al., 2021). Considering well-being, it can be asserted that there is no substantial disparity in the well-being levels of women and men, and gender is not a critical factor of well-being (Kasapoğlu & Kış, 2016). Finally, Rozgonjuk et al. (2021) supported that there is no gender difference in FoMO experience.

Conclusion

According to the findings of the study, fear of missing out (FoMO) and mental well-being play a role in mediating the relationship between psychological distress and entrapment. To put it another way, psychological distress predicts entrapment directly, whereas fear of missing out and mental well-being predict it indirectly. Psychological distress has been identified as a factor that can contribute to an increase in FoMO (fear of missing out) and a decline in mental well-being, both of which can lead to increased entrapment. Psychological distress, a quantitative model that explains the relationship between entrapment, fear of missing out, and mental well-being, has been discussed in academic literature. Individuals suffering from psychological distress may have a negative impact on their well-being, and they may believe that they are missing out on life's activities and developments in the outside world at any time while in this gloomy state. Being a part of this situation can make one feel trapped. Individuals now have the opportunity to strengthen their psychological resilience and participate in programs that promote their well-being. People, on the other hand, can contribute to living a more mindful life while they are already conscious, rather than focusing on other aspects of their lives that they ignore. As a result, it is possible to exert some control over how individuals are entrapped.

Limitations and Future Research

Despite the fact that the research findings contribute to the field, there are a few limitations to consider. First and foremost, the data for this study were gathered using self-reported measurement tools. This means that the data obtained can only explain the variables that are covered by the measurement tools used. In future studies, in addition to self-report-based measurement tools, various methods such as observation, interview, peer evaluation, and so on may be used. An additional limitation stems from the research methodology. Despite the fact that the study used structural equation modeling, which is capable of producing robust results from quantitative methods, and bootstrapping to increase the number of samples to 10,000, it is critical to exercise caution and care when utilizing the cause-and-effect link that arises from the nature of the quantitative method and the cross-sectional nature of the sample. Despite the fact that the structural equation model predicts a wide range of outcomes, including psychological distress, fear of missing out, and mental well-being, longitudinal and experimental studies are required to fully reveal these causal sequences. Another limitation is that it is only applicable to

the variables mentioned above. It is possible to investigate the extent to which different concepts mediate the relationship between psychological distress and entrapment. Individuals can, however, experience a wide range of emotional states throughout their lives. At this point, it is possible to conduct research on the factors that contribute to psychological distress in individuals, as well as studies to develop preventative measures before the factors become apparent. On the other hand, it is possible to develop programs that promote positive well-being. On the subject of FoMO, studies can be conducted with the scenarios of remaining present in the moment and remaining with oneself as the subjects. Finally, the disparity in the sample size, with fewer males than women, can be identified as a weakness of the research.

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