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Digital Literacy and Digital Detox Intention: The Moderating Roles of FoMO and JoMO

Sena AYDIN[1],* ORCID: 0000-0002-5241-629X

[1] İstanbul Ticaret Üniversitesi, İstanbul, Türkiye.

* *Corresponding author.*

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senaaydin@ticaret.edu.tr

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This study examines whether digital literacy predicts digital detox intention and whether Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) and Joy of Missing Out (JoMO) moderate this relationship.

Design/methodology: A cross-sectional survey design was adopted. Data were collected via Prolific from an approximately gender-balanced sample of 216 UK citizens and analyzed using partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM).

Findings: Digital literacy did not have a statistically significant direct effect on digital detox intention, and neither FoMO nor JoMO significantly moderated this relationship. However, JoMO emerged as a significant positive predictor of digital detox intention, suggesting that individuals who find satisfaction in disconnecting are more likely to intend to engage in digital detox. Given the cross-sectional design and the modest, explained variance, these results describe associations rather than causal effects.

Originality/value: The study examines FoMO and JoMO within the same model and approaches digital detox through proactive competence rather than negative experiences alone. The findings suggest that positive orientations toward disconnection deserve attention alongside digital competence in research on digital well-being.

Keywords: Digital Detox, Digital Literacy, Fear of Missing Out (FoMO), Joy of Missing Out (JoMO), PLS-SEM

Dijital Okuryazarlık ve Dijital Detoks Niyeti Arasındaki İlişkide FoMO ve JoMO'nun Düzenleyici Rolleri

ÖZ

Amaç: Bu çalışma, dijital okuryazarlığın dijital detoks niyetiyle ilişkili olup olmadığını ve Gelişmeleri Kaçırma Korkusu (FoMO) ile Gelişmeleri Kaçırma Keyfinin (JoMO) bu ilişkide düzenleyici rol oynayıp oynamadığını incelemektedir.

Yöntem: Kesitsel bir anket deseni benimsenmiştir. Veriler, Prolific üzerinden cinsiyet açısından yaklaşık dengeli 216 Birleşik Krallık vatandaşından toplanmış ve kısmi en küçük kareler yapısal eşitlik modellemesi (PLS-SEM) ile analiz edilmiştir.

Bulgular: Dijital okuryazarlığın dijital detoks niyeti üzerinde anlamlı doğrudan bir etkisi bulunmamış, FoMO ve JoMO'nun düzenleyici etkileri de anlamlı çıkmamıştır. Buna karşılık JoMO, dijital detoks niyetini anlamlı ve pozitif yönde açıklayan tek değişken olmuştur; bağlantıyı kesmekten keyif alan bireyler daha güçlü detoks niyeti bildirmiştir. Kesitsel desen ve sınırlı açıklanan varyans nedeniyle bulgular nedensellik değil, ilişki düzeyinde yorumlanmalıdır.

Özgünlük: Çalışma, FoMO ve JoMO'yu aynı model içinde ele almakta ve dijital detoksu yalnızca olumsuz deneyimler üzerinden değil, proaktif yetkinlikler üzerinden incelemektedir. Bulgular, dijital iyi oluş araştırmalarında bağlantısızlığa yönelik olumlu yönelimlerin dijital yetkinlikle birlikte dikkate alınması gerektiğini göstermektedir.

Anahtar kelimeler: Dijital Detoks, Dijital Okuryazarlık, Gelişmeleri Kaçırma Korkusu (FoMO), Gelişmeleri Kaçırma Keyfi (JoMO), PLS-SEM

1. Introduction

Digital technologies have become deeply embedded in everyday life. Smartphones, social media platforms, and messaging applications now structure how people communicate, work, and spend leisure time, and the costs of this integration are increasingly visible. Notification fatigue, attention fragmentation, and a persistent sense of being always available have pushed growing numbers of individuals toward intentional disengagement (Radtke et al., 2022; Syvertsen & Enli, 2020). Digital detox, voluntary, temporary withdrawal from digital devices, has emerged as one behavioral response, with empirical work linking it to improved well-being, reduced technostress, and greater perceived control over media use (Gui & Büchi, 2021; Throuvala et al., 2019).

Most existing research frames detox as a reaction to negative experiences: burnout, social media fatigue, and addiction-adjacent symptoms. This framing has produced a reasonably consistent body of evidence, but it leaves an important question unanswered: What proactive competencies might equip individuals to disengage deliberately, before distress sets in? Digital literacy is a plausible candidate. Research in adjacent domains suggests that individuals with stronger digital competencies exercise greater agency over their media environments and engage in more self-regulated online behavior (Livingstone & Helsper, 2010; Van Deursen et al., 2016). Whether this translates into detox intention, however, has not been directly tested. The few studies that touch on this boundary tend to treat literacy as a control variable rather than a primary antecedent, and findings remain fragmented (Jones & Mitchell, 2016).

Psychological orientations toward digital absence add a further layer of complexity. Fear of Missing Out (FoMO), consistently linked to compulsive platform monitoring and resistance to disengagement (Przybylski et al., 2013; Wolniewicz et al., 2018), suggests that emotional barriers may condition the extent to which competence translates into intention. Joy of Missing Out (JoMO), by contrast, represents a positive orientation toward periods of disconnection that may independently shape detox-related behavior (Barry et al., 2023). These two constructs have rarely been examined within the same model, and their respective roles, whether as moderators, direct predictors, or both, remain empirically unresolved.

The present study addresses these gaps. It examines whether digital literacy predicts digital detox intention and whether FoMO and JoMO play a role in this process. Data were collected via Prolific from a gender-balanced sample of UK citizens. The results contribute to the digital well-being literature by probing the boundary conditions under which literacy-based competencies translate into intentional disengagement, and by clarifying the distinct roles of FoMO and JoMO in this context. Implications for research on digital well-being are discussed considering the study's limitations.

2. Literature review and hypothesis development

2.1. Digital detox intention

Digital detox intention refers to an individual's conscious plan to temporarily reduce or suspend the use of digital devices and online platforms. Unlike involuntary disconnection, it is a motivated behavioral decision that precedes and shapes actual usage patterns (Syvertsen & Enli, 2020). This intentional character is what makes the construct theoretically useful: it captures the point at which dissatisfaction with digital habits becomes a purposeful commitment to change.

The theoretical basis for treating intention as a distinct unit of analysis draws on Ajzen's (1991) Theory of Planned Behavior, which positions intention as the most immediate predictor of action. In the digital context, users who form a clear intention to disengage are more likely to follow through, even when

platform design actively discourages it. Qualitative work by Throuvala et al. (2019) identified several motivational processes underlying social media engagement, including emotional regulation and the need for control, and suggested that FoMO and nomophobia may reinforce compulsive patterns of use.

Empirically, digital detox intention has been linked to technostress, social media fatigue, and diminished perceived control over one's online behavior (Radtke et al., 2022). Less examined, however, is the role of digital competencies, what users know and can do, rather than merely what they feel about their digital lives. The present study takes this as its starting point.

2.2. Digital literacy

Digital literacy is broadly defined as the ability to locate, evaluate, create, and communicate information through digital technologies in meaningful and responsible ways (Gilster, 1997). Rather than a single skill, it is a multidimensional construct spanning technical, social, and ethical domains of competence (Eshet, 2004; Van Dijk, 2005).

The technical dimension refers to functional proficiency, operating devices, managing platform settings, and deploying digital tools with purpose. The social dimension concerns how individuals navigate interpersonal dynamics online: reading platform norms, managing self-presentation, and maintaining boundaries around responsiveness and visibility. The ethical dimension, perhaps the least examined of the three, captures awareness of the moral implications of digital participation, data privacy, digital footprint, and the responsibilities that come with being connected (Floridi et al., 2018; Ribble & Bailey, 2011).

These dimensions are not independent layers; they interact to shape how deliberately individuals engage with and disengage from digital environments. Research consistently shows that digitally literate individuals exercise greater agency over their media environments: they recognize problematic usage more readily, are better equipped to act on that recognition, and are more attuned to the costs of perpetual connectivity (Jones & Mitchell, 2016; Livingstone & Helsper, 2010). Van Deursen et al. (2016) found that higher digital skill levels were associated with more self-regulated online behavior. This body of evidence suggests that digital literacy provides the cognitive and practical resources needed to form a genuine intention to disengage. Hence, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1. Digital literacy has a positive effect on digital detox intention.

2.3 Fear of Missing Out (FoMO)

Fear of Missing Out, FoMO, is defined as a pervasive apprehension that others are having rewarding experiences from which one is absent, coupled with a persistent urge to remain connected to avoid that sense of exclusion (Przybylski et al., 2013). Psychologically, it reflects unmet needs for relatedness and competence. High-FoMO individuals monitor feeds compulsively and experience genuine discomfort when offline; absence itself feels threatening, regardless of whether connectivity brings any real enjoyment (Alt, 2015).

FoMO is relevant here because it may interfere with disengagement even when users recognize the costs of excessive platform use and possess the means to limit it. Wolniewicz et al. (2018) found that FoMO was strongly related to problematic and social smartphone use and mediated relationships between fear of evaluation and problematic smartphone use. Similarly, Dempsey et al. (2019) found that FoMO was associated with problematic Facebook use and mediated the relationship between social anxiety and problematic Facebook use. Montag et al. (2019) further discussed how design features of social media and messaging platforms can encourage persistent engagement. Taken together, this literature suggests that FoMO is closely linked to problematic digital engagement and provides a rationale for examining whether it

conditions the extent to which digital literacy translates into digital detox intention. Thus, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H2. FoMO negatively moderates the relationship between digital literacy and digital detox intention.

2.4 Joy of Missing Out (JoMO)

Joy of Missing Out (JoMO) refers to the enjoyment that individuals may experience during periods of disconnection from others or from social demands (Barry et al., 2023). Rather than simply representing the absence of FoMO, JoMO captures positive experiences associated with stepping back from continuous social and digital engagement. However, existing evidence also suggests that JoMO should not be treated as uniformly beneficial, as its associations with well-being and social functioning appear to vary across individuals (Barry et al., 2023).

This orientation may nevertheless be relevant to digital detox intention. Individuals who experience periods of disconnection positively may be more willing to translate their awareness of the costs of excessive digital engagement into an intention to reduce or regulate their use. In this sense, JoMO may provide a psychological context in which digital competencies are more readily directed toward intentional disengagement.

Empirical research on JoMO remains relatively limited. Barry et al. (2023) found that JoMO was associated with social media use, life satisfaction, mindfulness, and social anxiety, while also reporting mixed patterns regarding its broader implications for well-being. More recent evidence indicates that JoMO may be associated with healthier patterns of digital engagement: Kantar et al. (2025) found that JoMO was negatively associated with social media addiction through lower loneliness and psychological distress. Together, these findings provide a basis for examining JoMO as a potentially relevant psychological orientation in digital disengagement, while leaving open the question of whether it strengthens the relationship between digital literacy and digital detox intention. Thus, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H3. JoMO positively moderates the relationship between digital literacy and digital detox intention.

Figure 1 shows proposed research model.

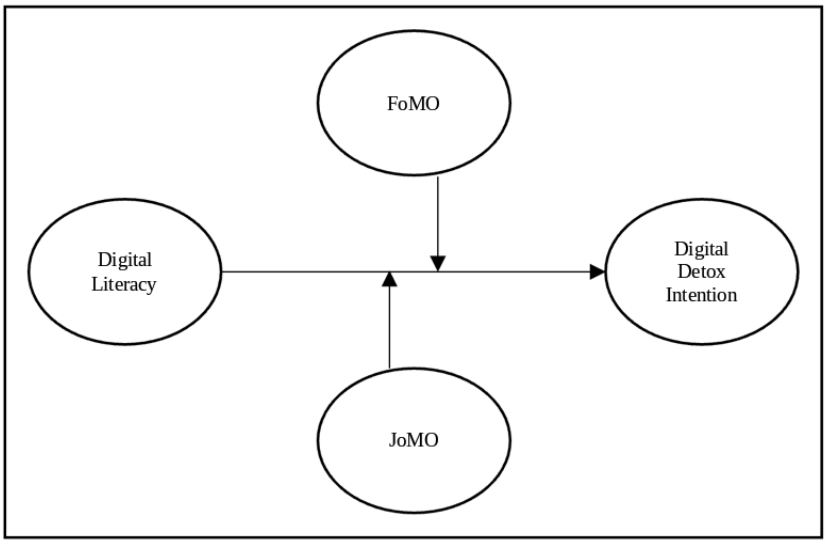


Figure 1. Proposed Research Model

3. Methods

3.1 Research design

This study employed a quantitative, cross-sectional survey design to examine the relationships among digital literacy, FoMO, JoMO, and digital detox intention. A survey-based design was considered appropriate because the study aimed to measure respondents' self-reported digital competencies, psychological experiences related to digital media use, and behavioral intentions at a single point in time.

Data were collected through Prolific, an online participant recruitment platform commonly used in behavioral and social science research. Prolific was selected because it provides access to a large pool of verified participants and allows researchers to apply prescreening criteria before data collection. Participants on Prolific complete an onboarding and identity verification process, which strengthens the reliability of the participant pool and helps reduce the likelihood of duplicate or fraudulent responses. Data collection took place on 17 May 2026. The survey link remained open until the predetermined quota of 216 gender-balanced respondents was reached.

A quota sampling strategy was adopted to obtain a gender-balanced sample from the United Kingdom. The eligibility criterion was based on citizenship rather than residence. Specifically, participants were recruited from individuals who reported UK citizenship. UK citizenship was used as a practical prescreening criterion to define the target sample consistently within Prolific. It was not intended to serve as a direct proxy for native English proficiency, long-term residence, or degree of cultural embeddedness. Before completing the questionnaire, participants were presented with an informed consent statement explaining the purpose of the study, the voluntary nature of participation, the anonymity of responses, and the academic use of the data. After providing consent, respondents completed scale items measuring digital literacy, FoMO, JoMO, and digital detox intention, followed by demographic questions. The collected data were subsequently analyzed using PLS-SEM, which is suitable for testing theoretical models involving multiple latent constructs and structural paths (Hair et al., 2019). The study was conducted in accordance with the Declaration of Helsinki and approved by the Institutional Review Board of İstanbul Ticaret University (protocol code 05-28, approval date: 30 April 2026). Written informed consent was obtained electronically from all participants before they began the questionnaire.

3.2 Measurement instruments

The response formats followed those of the adapted measures. FoMO items were assessed on a seven-point Likert-type scale, while JoMO, Digital Literacy, and Digital Detox Intention items were assessed on five-point Likert-type scales. Higher scores indicated higher levels of the corresponding constructs. PLS-SEM estimation was performed using standardized indicator scores.

Digital Literacy was initially measured with 15 items adapted from Ng's (2012) Digital Literacy Scale. Of the 17 items in the original instrument, 15 were included in the present questionnaire. Two context-specific items concerning teachers'/lecturers' use of ICT and ICT-supported peer collaboration were omitted to better align the measure with the individual-level focus of the present study. Minor wording adaptations were also made to improve contextual relevance while preserving the substantive meaning of the original items. For example, references to "university work" were expressed more generally as "learning activities," examples of mobile technologies were updated, and examples of issues related to web-based activities were adapted to include cybersecurity, copyright, and research ethics. The administered items covered attitudes toward ICT-supported learning as well as technical, cognitive, and social-emotional aspects of digital literacy. FoMO was initially measured with nine items adapted from the Fear of Missing Out Scale reported by Zhang et al. (2020).

These items captured respondents' anxiety and negative feelings when they were unable to remain active or connected on social media. JoMO was initially measured with 13 items adapted from the Joy of Missing Out Scale (Kaya et al., 2025), reflecting the positive experience of disconnecting from social or digital environments and enjoying time away from constant online engagement. Finally, Digital Detox Intention was measured with four items adapted from Sihombing and Juliana (2026), who operationalized digital detox intention using behavioral intention wording based on prior intention research (Peña-García et al., 2020).

All items were initially entered into the measurement model. Following the first-stage outer loading assessment, indicators with loadings below .60 were removed and the model was subsequently re-estimated. The final measurement model consisted of seven Digital Literacy indicators, five FoMO indicators, three JoMO indicators, and four Digital Detox Intention indicators. The specific indicators removed and their initial loading values are reported in Section 4.2. No reverse-coded items were included in the final questionnaire.

3.3 Data screening and analysis strategy

Before the main analysis, the dataset was screened for missing values, incomplete responses, careless responding, and potential outliers. Responses that did not meet the predefined quality criteria were excluded from the final dataset. Descriptive statistics were then examined to assess the general characteristics of the data and to identify any irregular response patterns.

The proposed model was analyzed using PLS-SEM with SmartPLS. PLS-SEM was considered appropriate for this study because it enables the simultaneous estimation of measurement and structural models and is suitable for testing models involving latent constructs, interaction effects, and prediction-oriented relationships (Hair et al., 2019). Since the research model included two moderation effects, interaction terms were created to examine whether FoMO and JoMO moderated the relationship between digital literacy and digital detox intention. The analysis followed a two-step approach. First, the reflective measurement model was evaluated by examining indicator loadings, internal consistency reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity. Internal consistency was assessed using Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability, while convergent validity was evaluated through average variance extracted (AVE). Discriminant validity was assessed using the Fornell-Larcker criterion and the heterotrait-monotrait ratio of correlations (HTMT) (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Henseler et al., 2015). Second, the structural model was assessed by examining collinearity, path coefficients, coefficient of determination (R^2), and the significance of the hypothesized direct and moderation effects. Variance inflation factor (VIF) values were inspected to assess potential collinearity problems among indicators and predictor constructs. The significance of the structural paths was tested using a bootstrapping procedure with 5,000 subsamples, following common recommendations for PLS-SEM analysis (Hair et al., 2019).

3.4 Use of generative AI tools

During the preparation of this manuscript, the author used Claude (Anthropic) for language editing, proofreading, improving clarity and readability, and ensuring stylistic and formatting consistency. All AI-assisted revisions were reviewed and approved by the author. The tool was not used to generate research data, conduct statistical analyses, or independently interpret the study findings. The author takes full responsibility for the final content of the manuscript.

4. Results

4.1 Sample characteristics

Respondents' observed ages ranged from 20 to 80 years (M = 39.37, SD = 12.05). For descriptive presentation in Table 1, age was grouped into five age bands. Although the youngest respondent in the sample was 20 years old, the lowest reporting category was labelled 18-24 and therefore comprised respondents aged 20-24 in the present sample (n = 20, 9.3%). The largest proportion of respondents was between 25 and 34 years old (30.1%), followed by those aged 35-44 (28.7%). Participants aged 45-54 accounted for 18.1% of the sample, while those aged 55 and above represented 13.9%. Table 1 summarizes the demographic characteristics of the sample.

Table 1. Respondents' Demographic Profile (N = 216)

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Female	109	50.5%
	Male	105	48.6%
	Prefer not to say	2	0.9%
Age	18-24	20	9.3%
	25-34	65	30.1%
	35-44	62	28.7%
	45-54	39	18.1%
	55 and above	30	13.9%

4.2 Measurement model assessment

Before assessing the final measurement model, an initial outer loading analysis was conducted using all indicators administered in the questionnaire. A minimum outer loading criterion of .60 was applied for indicator retention. Indicators with loadings below .60 were removed because they showed insufficient contribution to their intended latent constructs in the initial measurement model. The model was then re-estimated using the retained indicators.

In the first-stage analysis, four FoMO indicators fell below the .60 criterion: FoMO6 (.396), FoMO7 (.397), FoMO8 (.346), and FoMO9 (.425). Ten JoMO indicators also fell below the criterion: JoMO1 (.274), JoMO3 (.363), JoMO5 (.076), JoMO6 (.411), JoMO7 (.485), JoMO8 (.246), JoMO10 (.160), JoMO11 (.300), JoMO12 (.376), and JoMO13 (.592). For Digital Literacy, eight indicators showed outer loadings below .60: LIT2 (.438), LIT3 (.291), LIT4 (.428), LIT5 (.143), LIT6 (.375), LIT7 (.535), LIT8 (.537), and LIT9 (.528). These indicators were therefore removed before re-estimating the measurement model.

The measurement model was then re-estimated using the retained indicators. In the second-stage analysis, all retained indicators exceeded the .60 criterion. Outer loadings ranged from .797 to .885 for FoMO, from .689 to .744 for JoMO, from .625 to .848 for Digital Literacy, and from .841 to .882 for Digital Detox

Intention. The final measurement model therefore consisted of five FoMO indicators, three JoMO indicators, seven Digital Literacy indicators, and four Digital Detox Intention indicators.

4.2.1 Reliability and convergent validity

After the removal of low-loading indicators, the reliability and convergent validity of the final measurement model were assessed using Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability, and AVE. As shown in Table 2, FoMO and digital detox intention demonstrated strong internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha values of .905 and .893, respectively. Digital literacy also showed satisfactory reliability, with a Cronbach's alpha of .858 and composite reliability of .860. The JoMO construct showed relatively low internal consistency according to Cronbach's alpha (.558) and rhoA (.560). However, its composite reliability (.769) exceeded the recommended .70 threshold, and its AVE (.527) exceeded .50. The three retained JoMO indicators also showed acceptable outer loadings, ranging from .689 to .744. Given that the final JoMO construct consisted of only three indicators, the lower alpha-based reliability estimates were interpreted cautiously. The construct was retained in the model because its composite reliability and convergent validity remained acceptable. Nevertheless, the relatively low Cronbach's alpha and rho_a values should be considered when interpreting the structural relationship between JoMO and Digital Detox Intention. Convergent validity was assessed using AVE values. FoMO (.723), digital detox intention (.751), and JoMO (.527) exceeded the recommended .50 threshold, indicating adequate convergent validity. The AVE value for Digital Literacy was .471, slightly below the conventional .50 threshold, indicating limited convergent validity. The retained indicators showed outer loadings ranging from .625 to .848. Although several loadings remained below .70, all exceeded the .60 retention criterion applied in the present study. At the same time, the construct demonstrated satisfactory internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha of .858, rhoA of .811, and composite reliability of .860. Considering the satisfactory reliability estimates and the relatively small deviation from the .50 AVE criterion, Digital Literacy was retained in the model. Nevertheless, its comparatively weaker convergent validity should be considered when interpreting the structural relationships involving this construct.

Table 2. Construct Reliability and Convergent Validity

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability (rho_c)	AVE
FoMO	.905	.919	.929	.723
Digital Detox Intention	.893	.930	.923	.751
JoMO	.558	.560	.769	.527
Digital Literacy	.858	.811	.860	.471

4.2.2 Discriminant validity

Discriminant validity was assessed using the Fornell-Larcker criterion and HTMT. According to the Fornell-Larcker criterion, the square root of each construct's AVE should be greater than its correlations with other constructs (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). As shown in Table 3, the diagonal values for FoMO, digital detox intention, JoMO, and digital literacy were higher than the corresponding inter-construct correlations, indicating that each construct shared more variance with its own indicators than with other constructs.

Table 3. Fornell-Larcker Discriminant Validity

Construct	FoMO	Digital Detox Intention	JoMO	Digital Literacy
FoMO	.850			
Digital Detox Intention	-.154	.867		
JoMO	-.247	.297	.726	
Digital Literacy	-.022	.165	.172	.686

Discriminant validity was further evaluated using HTMT. Values below .85 indicate adequate discriminant validity under a conservative criterion, while values below .90 are also considered acceptable in many applied PLS-SEM studies (Henseler et al., 2015). As reported in Table 4, all HTMT values were below .85. Therefore, discriminant validity was supported.

Table 4. HTMT Discriminant Validity

Construct	FoMO	Digital Detox Intention	JoMO
Digital Detox Intention	.151		
JoMO	.360	.401	
Digital Literacy	.135	.118	.306

4.2.3 Collinearity assessment

Collinearity was assessed using variance inflation factor (VIF) values. The VIF values for the retained indicators ranged from 1.115 to 4.612. The highest values were observed for INT4 (4.612), INT3 (3.942), and FoMO3 (3.854). Although these values exceeded the more conservative threshold of 3.3, all retained-indicator VIF values remained below the commonly accepted upper threshold of 5.00. The VIF values for both interaction terms, FoMO × Digital Literacy and JoMO × Digital Literacy, were 1.000. Overall, the results did not indicate a critical collinearity problem.

4.3 Structural model assessment

After confirming the adequacy of the measurement model, the structural model was assessed to test the hypothesized relationships. The evaluation focused on the coefficient of determination (R^2), model fit indices, path coefficients, and the significance of the direct and moderation effects.

The model explained 11.5% of the variance in Digital Detox Intention (R^2 = .115; adjusted R^2 = .094), indicating relatively modest explanatory power. Thus, a substantial proportion of the variance in Digital Detox Intention remained unexplained by the predictors included in the present model. The saturated model SRMR was .093 and the estimated model SRMR was .094, both exceeding the more conservative .08 criterion. In addition, the NFI value was .729. Taken together, these results indicate that overall model fit and explanatory power should be interpreted cautiously. Accordingly, greater emphasis was placed on the

estimated path coefficients and their statistical significance rather than on strong claims regarding overall model performance.

Bootstrapping results showed that digital literacy did not have a statistically significant direct effect on digital detox intention (β = .108, t = .841, p = .400). Therefore, H1 was not supported. The moderating effect of FoMO on the relationship between digital literacy and digital detox intention was also not significant (β = −.055, t = .690, p = .490), indicating that FoMO did not significantly weaken the effect of digital literacy on digital detox intention. Thus, H2 was not supported. Similarly, the interaction between JoMO and digital literacy was not statistically significant (β = .045, t = .565, p = .572), suggesting that JoMO did not significantly strengthen the relationship between digital literacy and digital detox intention. Therefore, H3 was not supported. Table 5 summarizes the estimated structural paths and the corresponding hypothesis decisions.

Although not included as a formal hypothesis, JoMO showed a significant positive direct effect on digital detox intention (β = .256, t = 3.812, p < .001). This result suggests that individuals who experience greater enjoyment from disconnecting are more likely to report stronger digital detox intention. In contrast, FoMO had a negative but non-significant direct effect on digital detox intention (β = −.085, t = 1.257, p = .209).

Additionally, as a robustness check, age was included as a control variable predicting digital detox intention. Age was not significantly associated with digital detox intention (β = −.004, t = .054, p = .957), and the substantive pattern and significance of the hypothesized relationships remained unchanged.

Table 5. Structural model results

Path	β	t-value	p-value	Decision
Digital literacy → Digital detox intention (H1)	.108	.841	.400	Not supported
FoMO × Digital literacy → Digital detox intention (H2)	−.055	.690	.490	Not supported
JoMO × Digital literacy → Digital detox intention (H3)	.045	.565	.572	Not supported

The final SmartPLS structural model output is presented in Fig 2. As shown in the figure, JoMO had the strongest positive association with digital detox intention, whereas the direct effect of digital literacy and the two moderation paths were not statistically significant.

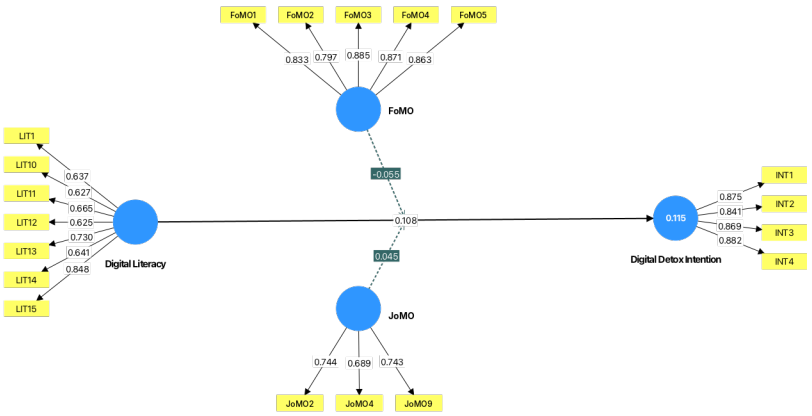


Figure 2. SmartPLS Output

7. Conclusion

This study examined whether digital literacy is associated with digital detox intention and whether FoMO and JoMO moderate this association. The hypothesized direct association between digital literacy and detox intention was not statistically significant, and neither moderation effect reached significance. These results indicate a lack of statistical support for the proposed relationships in the present sample; they should not be read as evidence that such relationships are absent. Several features of the study, discussed below, may have made these associations harder to detect.

The one substantive association observed was a positive direct relationship between JoMO and digital detox intention. Participants who reported greater satisfaction with stepping back from digital streams also reported stronger detox intention, after accounting for digital literacy and FoMO. This association was not hypothesized in advance. It makes JoMO a relevant construct for further research, although its role should be interpreted cautiously considering the measurement limitations noted below.

Several limitations temper these conclusions. The cross-sectional design precludes causal inference. The modest, explained variance (R^2 = .115), together with the SRMR values (.093–.094) and NFI (.729), indicates that the model has limited explanatory and overall fit, and the structural findings should therefore be interpreted cautiously. The slightly below-threshold AVE for Digital Literacy also indicates limited convergent validity, which warrants caution when interpreting structural relationships involving this construct. The relatively low Cronbach's alpha and rhoA values for JoMO indicate a measurement limitation, and its significant positive association with digital detox intention should therefore be interpreted with appropriate caution. Recruitment through Prolific may also have introduced self-selection bias. In addition, the use of UK citizenship as an eligibility criterion does not necessarily capture native-language status, duration of residence, or cultural immersion. This should be considered when interpreting the extent to which the sample represents the broader UK population. Because participation in an online research platform requires a certain level of digital familiarity, the sample may have included respondents with relatively similar levels of digital competence, potentially restricting variability in Digital Literacy and limiting the generalizability of the findings. Future research would benefit from longitudinal designs, broader construct operationalization, and samples drawn from more diverse cultural contexts.

From a practical perspective, the findings indicate that psychological orientations toward disconnection warrant consideration alongside digital competence in research and practice related to digital well-being. Given the cross-sectional design, however, these findings should not be interpreted as evidence that interventions targeting JoMO would be more effective than those focused on digital literacy.

Declarations

Author contributions	The author is solely responsible for the conceptualization, methodology, data collection, analysis and writing of this study draft.
Ethics approval	Ethical approval was obtained from the Istanbul Ticaret University Ethics Committee at its meeting held on April 30, 2026, under Decision No. 05-28.
Conflict of interest	The author declares no financial or non-financial conflicts of interest.
Funding	This research received no external funding.

Author contributions	The author is solely responsible for the conceptualization, methodology, data collection, analysis and writing of this study draft.
Data availability	The data that support the findings of this study are available from the author upon reasonable request.
Use of generative AI	Claude (Anthropic) was used to assist with language editing and proofreading of the manuscript.

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