



Fear of Missing Out in the Digital Age: A Quranic Perspective on Qanaah

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Article Information:

Received May 9, 2026

Revised June 15, 2026

Accepted July 14, 2026

Keywords: *Fear of missing out, qanaah, Quranic perspective, digital well-being, Islamic mental health*

Abstract

The rapid growth of digital technology and social media has intensified Fear of Missing Out, a psychological condition characterized by anxiety arising from the perception of being excluded from others' experiences, achievements, or activities. This phenomenon promotes excessive social comparison and may undermine psychological well-being. This article aims to analyze Fear of Missing Out from a Quranic perspective and examine the concept of *qana'ah* as a spiritual framework for addressing psychological challenges in the digital age. The study employs a qualitative approach using content analysis and thematic (*maudu'*) exegesis. Primary data consist of Quranic passages addressing *qana'ah* and their interpretations in classical and contemporary *tafsir* literature, while secondary data are drawn from scholarly works on psychology, mental health, and digital culture. Data were collected through documentation techniques and analyzed descriptively by integrating Quranic exegesis with contemporary psychological perspectives. The findings reveal that Fear of Missing Out is closely associated with materialistic orientations, the pursuit of social recognition, and excessive social comparison. In contrast, *qana'ah*, encompassing contentment, gratitude, *tawakkul*, and self-restraint, functions as a spiritual mechanism that reduces anxiety, strengthens psychological well-being, and enhances mental resilience. These findings highlight the relevance of Quranic values for promoting digital well-being and mental health in contemporary Muslim society.

INTRODUCTION

The dynamic evolution of information and communication technology in the digital age has fundamentally transformed the landscape of social interaction. The internet has not only accelerated the exchange of information but also created a virtual communication space that allows individuals to interact without being limited by time or place. In Indonesia, internet penetration rates continue to show significant growth. Data from the Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association (APJII) The development of information and communication technology in the 21st century has fundamentally transformed patterns of human social interaction (Fathimah et al., 2025). Social media no longer serves merely as a means of exchanging information

How to cite:	Husna, S., Putra, B., Derjati, S., Zulkefli, N. A. B. (2026). Fear of Missing Out in the Digital Age: A Quranic Perspective on Qanaah. <i>Al-Fanar: Jurnal Ilmu Al-Qur'an dan Tafsir</i> , 9(2), 113-127.
E-ISSN:	2622-4658
Published by:	Department of Qur'anic and Tafsir Studies, Faculty of Ushuluddin and Dakwah, Institut Ilmu Al-Qur'an (IIQ) Jakarta

but has evolved into a space for identity construction, self-actualization, the pursuit of social recognition, and an arena for intense social comparison (Agma, 2025). Easy access to a wide range of information about others' lives, achievements, and experiences creates new psychological dynamics that influence how individuals view themselves (Heriyanto et al., 2025). One psychological phenomenon that has become increasingly prominent in this context is the Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) a feeling of anxiety and worry that arises when someone feels left out of experiences, activities, or achievements enjoyed by others (Rosjayani et al., 2024). This phenomenon has developed alongside the increasing intensity of social media use, which allows individuals to continuously monitor others' social activities in real time (Aulia & Aprianis, 2025; Przybylski et al., 2013; Rusli & Fatra, 2026).

Conceptually, Fear of Missing Out is understood as anxiety arising from the perception that others are having experiences that are more meaningful, more enjoyable, or more valuable than one's own (Przybylski et al., 2013; Purnami et al., 2026). This condition drives individuals to stay constantly connected to social media to ensure they do not fall behind on the latest information and trends. Various studies indicate that FOMO is correlated with excessive social media use, low life satisfaction, increased anxiety, impaired psychological well-being, and a decline in mental health (Afiyah et al., 2025; Kosen et al., 2026). This phenomenon is becoming increasingly relevant among adolescents and young adults who spend the majority of their social interactions in digital spaces.

When viewed from the perspective of the Quran, the phenomenon of Fear of Missing Out is closely linked to the human tendency to become attached to the allure of worldly life, social competition, and the pursuit of fleeting recognition. The Quran repeatedly reminds us that worldly life is a testing ground that often creates illusions of happiness and success that are not permanent. In this context, Surah Al-Ḥadīd, verse 20, serves as a crucial foundation because it describes worldly life as a game (*la'ib*), entertainment (*lahm*), adornment (*zīnah*), a venue for boasting (*tafākhur*), and a competition to accumulate wealth and offspring (*takāthur*) (Sandimula et al., 2024). This description indicates that an excessive focus on worldly indicators has the potential to breed dissatisfaction, anxiety, and social comparison which, in substance, bear a resemblance to the characteristics of the Fear of Missing Out.

On the other hand, the Islamic intellectual tradition offers the concept of *qanā'ah* as an ethical and spiritual tool for overcoming various forms of anxiety stemming from a materialistic orientation. Terminologically, *qanā'ah* refers to an attitude of acceptance, contentment, gratitude, and resignation to Allah's decree without diminishing the drive to strive and improve oneself. From the perspective of Islamic psychology, *qanā'ah* is not a passive attitude that hinders productivity, but rather a mechanism of self-control that enables a person to achieve a balance between effort, hope, and acceptance of the results obtained. Therefore, *qanā'ah* has the potential to serve as a relevant conceptual framework for explaining how individuals can manage the social anxiety that arises from exposure to digital media and an increasingly intense culture of social comparison.

Research on Fear of Missing Out has grown rapidly in the fields of psychology, digital communication, and social media studies. Fahsya & Junaidi, (2025) explain that Fear of Missing Out stems from unmet psychological needs, particularly the need for social relationships and self-affirmation. These findings are supported by (Rahardjo & Soetjningsih, 2022), who demonstrated a positive correlation between the intensity of social media use and levels of FOMO among college students. Afiyah et al., (2025) found that FOMO contributes to digital stress and psychological exhaustion (social media fatigue), while Lasmi et al., (2026) confirmed that social media dependence increases an individual's vulnerability to social anxiety and life dissatisfaction. Further research by Elhai et al., (2020) indicates that FOMO

correlates with problematic smartphone use, compulsive social media checking, and a decline in psychological well-being (Hasanuddin et al., 2024). In general, these studies indicate that Fear of Missing Out is a psychological consequence of a culture of digital connectivity characterized by the need for social validation, recognition, and continuous connection.

Meanwhile, research in the field of Islamic psychology and spirituality indicates that religious values play a significant role in building an individual's psychological resilience. Fitra, (2025) found that Islamic spirituality contributes positively to psychological well-being and an individual's ability to cope with life's stresses. Melati et al., (2025) demonstrated that *qanā'ah* is positively correlated with life satisfaction, self-control, and psychological resilience. Research by Budiman et al., (2024) explains that the values of gratitude, tawakal, and self-acceptance play a significant role in reducing social anxiety and improving mental health. These findings are reinforced by Rahman, (2025), who asserts that concepts from Islamic psychology hold great potential to be developed as mental health intervention models for the digital society. However, these studies still tend to discuss the Fear of Missing Out and *qanā'ah* separately. To date, there have been very few studies that integrate the phenomenon of the Fear of Missing Out with the concept of *qanā'ah* through a thematic exegetical approach to the Quran, particularly by using Surah Al-Ḥadīd, verse 20, as the basis for analysis.

Based on a review of the literature, research on the Fear of Missing Out is still dominated by perspectives from psychology, digital communication, and social media usage behavior. On the other hand, studies on *qanā'ah* have largely focused on the dimensions of ethics, Sufism, and Islamic psychology without directly linking them to the psychological phenomena arising from the development of digital technology. Thus, there remains an academic gap between contemporary psychological theories on Fear of Missing Out and the utilization of Quranic concepts as a conceptual framework for understanding and addressing this phenomenon. Furthermore, there has been little research employing a *mandū'ī* exegetical approach to connect the Quran's descriptions of worldly life with the psychological dynamics of modern digital society.

A search of the Scopus database for studies on Fear of Missing Out in the Digital Age yielded 83 documents from 2020 to 2026. The analysis clearly shows that no studies have yet been found related to fear of missing out in the digital age: a quranic perspective on *qana'ah*. The following is a VOSviewer bibliometric analysis visualization based on the themes of fear of missing out, *qana'ah*, Quranic perspective and digital well-being.

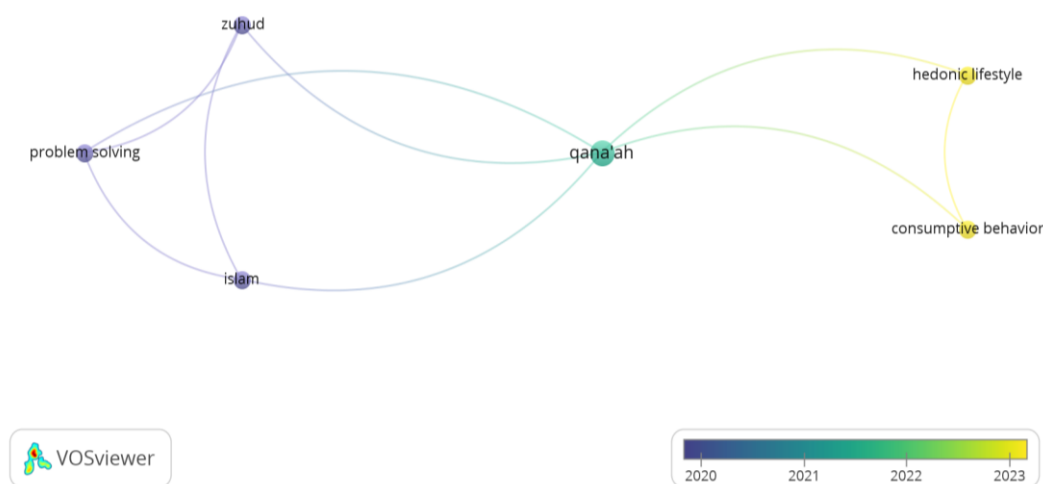


Fig 1. VOSviewer visualization analysis related to studies on fear of missing out in the digital age (Scopus database, 2020–2026)

The novelty of this article lies in its attempt to integrate contemporary psychological research on the Fear of Missing Out with the concept of *qanā'ah* through a *mandū'ī* exegetical approach to Surah Al-Ḥadīd, verse 20. Unlike previous studies that examined Fear of Missing Out and *qanā'ah* separately, this article constructs an interdisciplinary analytical framework that combines the study of Quranic exegesis, digital psychology, and Islamic psychology to explain the psychological roots of Fear of Missing Out, the meaning of *qanā'ah*, and the conceptual relationship between the two. Through this approach, this article offers a new perspective on the relevance of Quranic values in addressing mental health issues that are emerging in the digital age.

Theoretically, this article contributes to the development of thematic exegetical studies that are more responsive to contemporary psychological issues and enriches the body of Quran-based Islamic psychology. Practically, the research findings can serve as a foundation for the development of Islamic counseling models, character education, and digital literacy programs aimed at strengthening mental health. Furthermore, the concept of *qanā'ah*, constructed through the perspective of Quranic exegesis, can serve as a spiritual framework for reducing anxiety caused by social comparison, enhancing psychological well-being, and strengthening the mental resilience of Muslim communities as they face the increasingly complex pressures of digital culture.

METHODS

This article aims to analyze the phenomenon of Fear of Missing Out from the perspective of the Quran and to examine the concept of *qanā'ah* as a spiritual framework for responding to psychological challenges in the digital age. To achieve these objectives, this article employs a qualitative approach using qualitative content analysis. This approach was chosen because it allows the author to systematically identify, categorize, interpret, and synthesize the meanings contained in Quranic verses and various scientific literature, thereby yielding a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between the Fear of Missing Out and the concept of *qanā'ah* (Akem et al., 2025; Engkizar et al., 2025; 2026; Krippendorff, 2022; Saminu et al., 2025). Methodologically, this article integrates the study of Quranic exegesis and contemporary psychology from an interdisciplinary perspective to explain the relevance of Quranic values to mental health issues in the digital age (Creswell & Creswell, 2017; Desky et al., 2025; Engkizar et al., 2024).

Methods and Types

This article employs a qualitative approach using qualitative content analysis. This method is used to analyze and interpret the meanings contained in verses of the Quran as well as various scholarly works related to Fear of Missing Out and *qanā'ah*. Content analysis was chosen because it allows for the in-depth and systematic identification of themes, patterns, and conceptual relationships found in textual data (Krippendorff, 2022). In its implementation, this article applies the *mawḍū'ī* (thematic) exegesis method, which involves compiling Quranic verses based on specific themes for comprehensive analysis, thereby producing a coherent and contextual conceptual framework (Alkhaldi, 2024; Dasrizal et al., 2025; Engkizar et al., 2026; Hidayat, 2020).

Data Sources

The data sources in this article consist of primary and secondary data. Primary data includes verses from the Quran related to the concept of *qanā'ah*, specifically Surah Al-Ḥadīd, verse 20, along with their interpretations in various exegetical works, such as *Jāmi' al-Bayān* by Al-Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr al-Qurān al-'Aẓīm* by Ibn Kathīr, *Al-Jāmi' li Ahkām al-Qurān* by Al-Qurṭubī, *Tafsīr al-Marāghī* by Aḥmad Muṣṭafā al-Marāghī, and *Fī Zīlāl al-Qurān* by Sayyid Quṭb. In addition, this article also draws upon

classical Islamic literature that discusses the concept of *qanā'ah*, such as *Iḥyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn* by Al-Ghazālī, to strengthen the conceptual framework developed (Al-Ghazali, 2005; Maraghi, 2001).

Secondary data were obtained from reputable international and national journal articles discussing the Fear of Missing Out, social media, mental health, positive psychology, Islamic psychology, psychological well-being, and digital literacy. Additional supporting data came from academic books, scientific proceedings, and previous research findings relevant to the focus of this study (Albab & Fatah, 2026; Fauziyah, 2026; Riadi et al., 2025; Siagian & Is, 2025).

Instruments

The primary instrument in this article is the author (human instrument), who plays a role in determining the focus of the study, collecting data, selecting sources, interpreting data, and drawing conclusions based on the results of the analysis. In qualitative research, the researcher serves as the primary instrument that determines the quality of the research process and results (Creswell, 2018; Sugiyono, 2019). To support this process, auxiliary instruments are used, such as documentation sheets, data cards, thematic categorization matrices, and reference management tools, which serve to systematically organize and group the data.

Data Analysis Tools

The analytical tool used in this article is the *mawḍū'ī* interpretive approach as the primary framework for identifying and linking Quranic verses relevant to the research theme. In addition, this article utilizes the Fear of Missing Out theory (Przybylski et al., 2013), Social Comparison Theory (Festinger, 1954), Psychological Well-Being (Ryff, 1995), and Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 2012) as analytical tools to explain the causal factors, characteristics, and psychological implications of the Fear of Missing Out phenomenon. The use of this interdisciplinary approach facilitates a conceptual dialogue between the text of the Quran and the social reality of contemporary digital society (Rahman, 2025).

Data Collection Techniques

Data collection was conducted using the documentary study method. This technique involves the processes of identifying, cataloging, selecting, classifying, and organizing various documents related to the focus of the study. Subsequently, the collected sources were selected based on their level of relevance, scientific credibility, and the recency of the information. The obtained data was then extracted, recorded, and grouped into categories related to Fear of Missing Out, *qanā'ah*, worldly life in the Quran, and mental health from an Islamic perspective (Bowen, 2009).

Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis is conducted through four interrelated stages. First, content analysis to identify and understand the meaning of Quranic verses and interpretations related to the concept of *qanā'ah*. Second, thematic analysis using the *mawḍū'ī* exegetical approach to identify the main themes present in the verses under study. Third, comparative analysis by comparing findings in exegetical literature with contemporary psychological theories regarding the Fear of Missing Out. Fourth, an integrative synthesis the process of formulating a conceptual framework that explains the relevance of *qanā'ah* as a spiritual mechanism for responding to anxiety, self-dissatisfaction, and the tendency toward social comparison, which are the main characteristics of Fear of Missing Out. Through these stages, this article provides a comprehensive understanding of the contribution of Quranic values to strengthening mental health and psychological well-being in the digital age (Krippendorff, 2022).

Data Validity

Data validity is ensured through source triangulation by comparing various exegetical texts, contemporary psychological literature, and relevant previous research findings. Furthermore, this article applies the principles of credibility, dependability,

internal coherence, and consistency of interpretation to ensure that the findings possess strong academic validity and are scientifically accountable (Creswell, 2018; Sugiyono, 2019). Thus, the results of the analysis not only provide a descriptive understanding of the phenomenon under study but also offer a solid conceptual foundation for the development of studies in Quranic exegesis and Islamic psychology in addressing the mental health challenges of contemporary digital society.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Exegesis of Surah Al-Hadid, Verse 20, and Its Relevance to the Phenomenon of FOMO

Quran Surah Al-Hadid verse 20 is a verse that provides a profound understanding of the reality of life in this world. This verse not only reflects the transitory nature of this world but also explains various human tendencies that can lead people far from the true purpose of life. By mentioning the elements of *la'ib* (play), *lahw* (distraction), *zīnah* (ornamentation), *tafakhur* (mutual boasting), and *takatsur* (competition in accumulating wealth and offspring), the Quran highlights patterns of human behavior that often become entangled in worldly matters (Ilyas & Nurjannah, 2026). Al-Ṭabari, (2000) argues that the mention of these elements serves as a warning against making worldly life the ultimate goal, but rather to use it as a stepping stone to prepare for the afterlife. A similar interpretation is offered by (Ibn Katsir, 2010), who explains that all worldly pleasures will eventually fade away and therefore should not be the primary measure of happiness.

In the context of exegesis, life in this world is not viewed as something to be disregarded, but rather as a trust that must be managed well (Qolbi & Sassi, 2026). (Al-Qurthubi, 2006) states that the prohibition in this verse does not refer to worldly activities themselves, but rather to the attitude of people who make the world the center of everything and forget their responsibilities to Allah. On the other hand, (Al-Maraghi, 1946) interprets that human desires to pursue luxury, status, and social recognition are part of life's trials that can lead to negligence if not balanced by faith and spiritual awareness. In other words, this verse conveys a moral message urging people to place the world in its proper perspective without becoming trapped in a materialistic mindset. Allah says:

اعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا لَعِبٌ وَهْوُ وَزِينَةٌ وَتَفَاخُرٌ بَيْنَكُمْ وَتَكَاثُرٌ فِي الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَوْلَادِ كَمَثَلِ غَيْثٍ أَعْجَبَ الْكُفَّارَ نَبَاتُهُ ثُمَّ يَهْبِجُ فَتَرَاهُ مُصْفَرًّا ثُمَّ يَكُونُ حُطَامًا وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ عَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَرِضْوَانٌ وَمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا مَتَاعُ الْغُرُورِ

Meaning: *Know that the life of this world is but amusement and diversion and adornment and boasting to one another and competition in increase of wealth and children - like the example of a rain whose [resulting] plant growth pleases the tillers; then it dries and you see it turned yellow; then it becomes [scattered] debris. And in the Hereafter is severe punishment and forgiveness from Allah and approval. And what is the worldly life except the enjoyment of delusion.* (QS. Al-Hadid: 20)

The connection between this verse and the phenomenon of Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) becomes increasingly clear in the context of today's digital life. FOMO is a psychological condition characterized by anxiety when a person feels left out of experiences, activities, or achievements enjoyed by others (Kusumaningrum et al., 2026). According to Hidayati & Nasution, (2025), FOMO arises from a psychological need to connect with social activities, causing individuals to feel compelled to constantly monitor social media. As a result, people may more easily engage in social comparison, feel dissatisfied with their own lives, and experience anxiety if they are unaware of current developments. This phenomenon demonstrates that advances in digital technology have reinforced the human tendency to seek recognition and

validation from those around them.

This tendency was actually described by the Quran more than 1,400 years ago in Surah Al-Hadid, verse 20. The practice of showcasing one's lifestyle, success, wealth, or achievements on social media is a modern manifestation of the attitudes of *tafakbur* and *takatsur* described in that verse. According to Sayyid Qutb in *Fi Zilal al-Quran*, worldly life often deceives people with the allure of pleasures that appear captivating on the surface, even though they are all temporary and can divert people from the true purpose of life. Therefore, the phenomenon of FOMO can be understood not only as a psychological issue but also as a spiritual problem rooted in a life orientation that is overly focused on worldly matters.

According to the interpretations of exegetes, it is clear that Surah Al-Hadid, verse 20, provides a conceptual framework that is highly relevant to explaining the phenomenon of FOMO in the digital age. The Quran not only reminds humanity of the transient nature of the world but also elucidates the process by which the tendency to pursue entertainment, social recognition, and validation from others arises. Thus, an examination of each element in this verse is crucial for understanding how the Quran offers comprehensive insights into the phenomenon of FOMO while simultaneously laying the foundation for the attitude of *qana'ah* as a spiritual solution capable of bringing inner peace amid the overwhelming influence of social media. According to Al-Tabari, (2000), the mention of the elements *la'ib*, *lahw*, *zinah*, *tafakbur*, and *takatsur* serves as a form of moral education to prevent people from becoming trapped in excessive worldly orientation. This interpretation demonstrates that the Qur'an has provided a conceptual framework for understanding various human behaviors related to attachment to the world.

Meaning of *La'ib*: The term *la'ib* (لعب) in Surah Al-Hadid, verse 20, derives from the root word *la'iba*, which literally means "to play" or "to engage in an activity that is entertaining but offers no lasting benefit." In the context of this verse, the term *la'ib* is not intended as a prohibition against playing, but rather as a warning that some people treat worldly life merely as an arena for seeking momentary pleasure without heeding the purpose of their creation as servants of Allah the Almighty. According to Al-Tabari, the mention of the word *la'ib* indicates that many people spend their time on things that please the heart but offer no benefit for the Hereafter. Therefore, play that distracts one from remembering Allah is a way of life that is inconsistent with the values taught by the Quran (Al-Tabari, 2000).

The Meaning of *Lahw*: The word "*lahw*" in Surah Al-Hadid, verse 20, refers to all forms of activity that can distract people from the true purpose of life, which is to worship Allah the Almighty. According to Ibn Katsir, (2010), "*lahw*" is not merely entertainment, but anything that causes a person to neglect remembering Allah, postpone their obligations, and prioritize worldly pleasures over the interests of the Hereafter. Al-Qurthubi, (2006) also explains that such negligence can take the form of an excessive attachment to worldly affairs, thereby diminishing the quality of a person's faith and piety.

The Meaning of *Zinah*: The term "*zinah*," found in Surah Al-Hadid, verse 20, reflects the human tendency to adorn their lives with various forms of beauty and luxury. Al-Maraghi, (1946) explains that beauty is fundamentally a gift from Allah that should be enjoyed, provided it does not lead to arrogance or shift one's focus in life from the Hereafter to this world. Exposure to such content can lead individuals to compare their lives with those of others and feel dissatisfied with what they have. Budiman et al., (2024) explain that the intensity of social comparison on social media is associated with decreased self-esteem and life satisfaction. Therefore, the concept of *zinah* teaches the importance of viewing beauty as a trust, not as a tool for seeking social recognition. Consequently, Islam does not prohibit individuals from possessing wealth or an attractive appearance, but emphasizes that these things should not be

the primary measure of a person's worth.

The Meaning of *Tafakbur*: The word *tafakbur* in Surah Al-Hadid, verse 20, refers to boasting about one's advantages whether in terms of status, wealth, lineage, or other achievements. According to Al-Qurthubi, (2006), this behavior arises when a person regards worldly advantages as a measure of nobility, thereby feeling superior to others. In line with this, Sayyid Qutb, in Fi Zilal Quran, explains that the attitude of boasting is a form of excessive attachment to worldly life that can erode the values of sincerity and gratitude toward Allah. Therefore, the Quran warns people not to make worldly pride the purpose of life, as all such pleasures are temporary. The phenomenon of *tafakbur* is increasingly common in the age of social media. Various digital platforms allow individuals to showcase their achievements, lifestyles, and material possessions to the public. This often fuels a culture of "flexing" the tendency to flaunt wealth or success to gain social recognition. Research by Vogel et al., (2014) shows that exposure to others' posts can increase the tendency to engage in social comparison, which leads to decreased self-satisfaction. In this context, *tafakbur* becomes one of the factors that reinforces the emergence of the Fear of Missing Out (FOMO), as individuals feel they must live up to the standards of living displayed by others so as not to be seen as left behind.

The Meaning of *Takathur fi al-ammwal wa-al awlad*: According to Al-Tabari (2000), this competition is considered harmful if it leads people away from obedience to Allah and encourages arrogant behavior. Dalimunthe, (2015) also emphasizes that wealth and family are blessings from Allah for which one should be grateful, not used to belittle others or judge a person's worth. In the modern era, the concept of *takathur* is not only related to wealth but also encompasses the pursuit of fame, the number of followers on social media, the number of likes, and recognition from the online community. Often, individuals feel they must constantly improve their achievements to gain recognition in the digital world. Therefore, Quranic Surah Al-Hadid, verse 20, teaches that the measure of a Muslim's success does not lie in the amount of wealth or fame, but rather in piety and good deeds (Syawal et al., 2025).

The Concept of *Qanaah* as a Spiritual Response to FOMO

The phenomenon of Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) reflects the fact that many people feel anxious due to the desire to constantly keep up with others' news and successes. This situation drives individuals to constantly compare themselves to others, thereby creating dissatisfaction with the lives they lead. From an Islamic perspective, this trait can be addressed by instilling the value of *qana'ah* a willingness to wholeheartedly accept the blessings Allah has bestowed, without losing the drive to continually strive and improve oneself. Therefore, *qana'ah* is viewed not only as a moral principle but also as a spiritual value that maintains a balance between worldly needs and an orientation toward the hereafter.

The concept of *qana'ah* is closely linked to the challenges faced by modern society. Easy access to social media means that individuals are constantly exposed to a variety of information about the successes, lifestyles, and achievements of others (Umam & Munana, 2025). If not accompanied by self-control, this situation can lead to feelings of envy, anxiety, and the urge to constantly seek social recognition. Thus, *qana'ah* is one of the core values in Islam that can foster inner peace while reducing the tendency to engage in excessive social comparison.

Etymologically, the term *qana'ah* derives from the Arabic word قناعة (*qana'ah*), which refers to a sense of contentment, sincere acceptance, and satisfaction with what Allah has provided. In the context of Islam, *qana'ah* is not a passive attitude devoid of effort, but rather signifies acceptance of the results obtained after exerting one's utmost effort (Vikri, 2026). Al-Ghazali, in his work *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din*, explains that *qana'ah* is one of the praiseworthy behaviors that reflects a soul free from greed, envy, and excessive attachment to worldly things. This attitude makes it

easier for a person to be grateful for Allah's blessings and to avoid the desire to obtain things through improper means (Al-Ghazali, 2005). This concept illustrates that *qana'ah* encompasses both spiritual and psychological dimensions. From a spiritual perspective, *qana'ah* reinforces the belief that every provision has been predetermined by Allah the Almighty, while from a psychological standpoint, *qana'ah* helps individuals achieve inner peace by refraining from constantly comparing their lives to those of others. Meldi et al., (2025) explain that people who adopt an attitude of *qana'ah* tend to have higher levels of life satisfaction, are better able to control their desires, and find it easier to be grateful for all the blessings they possess.

The Qur'anic and Hadith foundations of *qana'ah*: the values it embodies are extensively explained through verses that command people to be grateful, to avoid excess, and not to become fixated on worldly pleasures. One such verse is the word of Allah.

وَلَا تَمُدَّنَّ عَيْنَيْكَ إِلَىٰ مَا مَتَّعْنَا بِهِ أَزْوَاجًا مِنْهُمْ زَهْرَةَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا لِنَفْتِنَهُمْ فِيهِ يَرْزُقُكَ رَبُّكَ حَيْرٌ وَأَبْغَىٰ

Meaning: *And do not extend your eyes toward that by which We have given enjoyment to [some] categories of them, [its being but] the splendor of worldly life by which We test them. And the provision of your Lord is better and more enduring.* (QS. At-Thaha: 131)

According to Ibn Kathir, this verse teaches that a believer should not let the worldly pleasures enjoyed by others become a reason to feel inadequate or envious. Instead, people are commanded to prioritize the blessings granted by Allah and to strengthen their gratitude for what they already possess. This value is at the core of *qana'ah*, which safeguards the heart from materialistic tendencies. In addition to the Quran, the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, also emphasized the value of *qana'ah* through his saying: “Look at those below you and do not look at those above you, for this is more appropriate so that you do not belittle the blessings Allah has bestowed upon you.” (Narrated by Al-Bukhari and Muslim).

This hadith provides guidance so that a Muslim does not constantly compare himself to individuals who lead better lives. Such an attitude is one of the factors that give rise to feelings of dissatisfaction and anxiety, including the phenomenon of FOMO in this digital age.

The Relevance of *Qana'ah* as a Solution to FOMO

The phenomenon of Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) indicates a tendency for people to constantly compare themselves to others, which in turn leads to anxiety, dissatisfaction, and a fear of missing out on various experiences or social achievements. From an Islamic perspective, this is not merely viewed as a psychological issue but is also linked to weak self-control and a lack of gratitude for the blessings bestowed by Allah SWT. Therefore, the value of *qana'ah* serves as a relevant alternative, as it teaches believers to accept their sustenance with an open heart, be grateful for what they have, and not use others' lives as a measure of happiness (Al-Ghazali, 2005; Nashori, 2023; Qomaria, 2025).

Qana'ah does not mean rejecting progress or ceasing to strive, but rather instilling the belief that every individual has a different provision of sustenance, abilities, and life path. This attitude encourages individuals to continue striving to the best of their ability without being influenced by envy or the desire to constantly compare themselves to others' achievements. According to Akip et al., (2025), spiritual values in Islam such as gratitude, *tawakal*, and *qana'ah* play a significant role in fostering mental well-being by reducing the psychological stress caused by excessive social demands. Thus, *qana'ah* supports individuals in achieving life satisfaction that is not dependent on the recognition or judgment of others.

In the use of social media platforms, *qana'ah* serves as a moral shield that encourages individuals to use technology wisely. A person who embodies *qana'ah* is not easily influenced by the culture of showing off, trends of excessive consumption, or the image-driven content widely circulating online. Instead, they are able to view

various information critically without feeling inferior or compelled to imitate every lifestyle displayed by others. Research by [Alvanzy & Prima, \(2026\)](#) shows that the higher a person's level of FOMO, the greater the likelihood that they will use social media excessively. Therefore, reinforcing the principle of *qana'ah* serves as a preventive measure that can help mitigate the negative effects of social media use on mental health.

Furthermore, *qana'ah* also affirms that true happiness does not depend on the amount of wealth, fame, or social recognition, but rather on an individual's closeness to Allah the Almighty. This value aligns with Quranic Surah Al-Hadid, verse 20, which emphasizes that life in this world is merely a temporary pleasure. By understanding this truth, Muslims will be better able to control their desires, avoid consumerist behavior, and use social media as a productive tool rather than as a measure of happiness. Therefore, *qana'ah* is not only an ethical teaching in Islam but also a relevant solution for overcoming mental challenges in the digital age.

A Contextual Analysis of Quranic Surah Al-Hadid, Verse 20, Regarding the Phenomenon of Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) from the Perspective of Fazlur Rahman's "Double Movement"

The "Double Movement" approach formulated by Fazlur Rahman emphasizes that understanding the Quran requires not only a textual reading but also an examination of the historical context in which the verse was revealed and its relevance to contemporary realities. [Aisyah, \(2025\)](#) argues that interpretation occurs in two stages. The first stage aims to grasp the meaning of the verses by referring to the social context during the period of revelation, while the second stage expresses the universal values contained in the verses so that they can address the issues faced by modern society. This approach ensures that the Quran remains relevant as a guide for life in an ever-changing era.

At the time Surah Al-Hadid, verse 20, was revealed, Arab society tended to measure honor by wealth, lineage, and social status. The Qur'an challenges this mindset by emphasizing that all worldly pleasures are temporary and cannot serve as the primary measure of success in life. According to [\(Al-Ṭabarī, 2000; Kathīr, 2000\)](#), the core message of this verse is to encourage people not to become trapped in worldly pursuits that neglect their responsibilities to Allah the Almighty. The value it seeks to convey is not a rejection of the world, but rather the creation of a balance between life in this world and the Hereafter.

Through the second step in the Double Movement concept, the message contained in Surah Al-Hadid, verse 20, can be applied to the phenomenon of Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) that has emerged in this digital age. Whereas in the past people competed to display their status and background directly, today this competition is largely visible on social media through posts about lifestyle, academic achievements, careers, or material possessions. Changes in the way we communicate do not alter the core issue, namely the tendency of individuals to seek social recognition and compare themselves to others. Therefore, FOMO can be understood as a tangible manifestation of the behaviors of *tafakbur* and *takatsur*, which are warned against in Quranic Surah Al-Hadid, verse 20.

Fazlur Rahman's approach demonstrates that the essence of Surah Al-Hadid, verse 20, is not merely to explain the transient nature of the world, but also to foster a moral consciousness so that people do not make the world the primary focus of their lives. These values remain relevant despite advancements in information technology that have introduced various forms of social competition in the digital realm. Therefore, the application of the values of *qana'ah*, gratitude, and self-control becomes part of the actualization of the Quran's message in facing the challenges of the modern era. This approach demonstrates that Islamic teachings are universal and can provide solutions to various psychological issues arising from the development

of technology and social media.

CONCLUSION

This article examined the concept of *al-kehidā'* in *Tafsīr al-Marāghī* and analyzed its relevance to the phenomenon of *catfishing* in the digital era. The findings reveal that *al-kehidā'* is not merely an act of deceiving others but a multidimensional behavior rooted in a crisis of moral consciousness and sustained through processes of *self-deception*, image construction (*tazwīn*), and the development of a false sense of security. From Al-Marāghī's perspective, such behavior ultimately leads to the erosion of personal integrity, psychological disorientation, and social harm. These findings demonstrate that *al-kehidā'* encompasses theological, ethical, psychological, and social dimensions, making it a relevant Quranic framework for understanding contemporary forms of deceptive behavior in digital environments.

The study further concludes that *catfishing* constitutes a contemporary manifestation of *al-kehidā'*, particularly through the fabrication of virtual identities, misleading self-representation, and the exploitation of trust for emotional, social, or financial gain. The novelty of this article lies in its interdisciplinary analytical framework that integrates the Quranic concept of *al-kehidā'* in *Tafsīr al-Marāghī* with theories of *cognitive dissonance*, *self-deception*, and *self-defeating behavior* to explain identity manipulation in digital spaces. This approach offers a new perspective by positioning *catfishing* not only as a communication or psychological issue but also as an ethical and spiritual problem viewed through the lens of Quranic teachings. The findings contribute theoretically to the development of interdisciplinary studies linking Quranic exegesis, social psychology, and digital communication. Practically, they highlight the importance of strengthening Quran-based digital ethics, particularly the values of *al-ṣidq* (truthfulness), *amānah* (integrity), and moral responsibility, as essential foundations for fostering trustworthy, ethical, and socially responsible digital interactions.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We would like to express our deepest gratitude to everyone who contributed to the success of this research.

DECLARATIONS

Author contribution

Sasmita Husna: data curation, writing-original draft preparation, analysis, **Bilfahmi Putra:** conceptualization, methodology, **Syakia Derjati & Nur Akashah Binti Zulkefli:** visualization, and editing.

AI Statement

The data and the grammatical structure in this article have been validated and verified by English language experts and no AI-generated sentences are included in this article.

Funding statement

The author(s) declare that no financial support was received for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Conflict of interest

The authors declare that this research was conducted without any conflict of interest in the research.

Ethical clearance

The research company has agreed to carry out the research and is willing if the results of this research are published.

Publisher's and Journal's Note

Department of Qur'anic and Tafsir Studies, Faculty of Ushuluddin and Dakwah, Institut Ilmu Al-Qur'an (IIQ) Jakarta in collaboration with Asosiasi Ilmu al-Qur'an dan Tafsir (AIAT) as the publisher and Editor of Al-Fanar: Jurnal Ilmu Al-Qur'an dan Tafsir state that there is no conflict of interest towards this article publication.

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