

THE INFLUENCE OF FOMO ON PURCHASE INTENTION THROUGH BRAND ENGAGEMENT ON TIKTOK AMONG GENERATION Z

DECODING FOMO: SOCIAL ANXIETY AND PURCHASE INTENTION THROUGH BRAND ENGAGEMENT ON TIKTOK

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Abstract: This study aims to analyze the impact of social anxiety due to Fear of Missing Out on purchase intention through consumer brand engagement on TikTok among Generation Z. The study involved 250 respondents who actively use TikTok and have online shopping experience. Using a quantitative approach and multiple regression analysis, the results indicate that social anxiety significantly affects purchase intention, both directly and indirectly through brand engagement. The regression model explains 58.2% of the variance in purchase intention. These findings provide insights for marketers to develop more interactive and psychologically driven marketing strategies to enhance brand engagement and purchasing decisions.

Keywords: Fear of Missing Out; Social Anxiety; Brand Engagement; Purchase Intention; TikTok

I. INTRODUCTION

The development of digital technology has changed people's consumption patterns, especially in the use of social media as an effective marketing tool (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). TikTok, as one of the social media platforms that has developed very rapidly, and has attracted the attention of Generation Z with its interactive and creative short video content features, allows users to not only consume information but also participate in trends, challenges, and direct interactions with brands (Islam et al., 2022; Fauziah, 2021). One of the psychological phenomena that emerges in the context of social media is Fear of Missing Out (FOMO), which can be interpreted as a feeling of anxiety or fear of being left behind from interesting or useful social experiences enjoyed by others (Przybylski et al., 2013). In the digital environment, FOMO is often reinforced by exposure to content that shows valuable experiences shared by others, including product trends and recommendations from influencers (Putra, 2023; Indawan, 2023). From a consumer psychology perspective, individuals with high levels of FOMO are more prone to experiencing social anxiety that drives them to engage in greater consumption activities, especially in the digital context (Dhir et al., 2021; Husna & Mairita, 2022). Generation Z, as the most active group on social media, often shows higher brand engagement, which also has a direct impact on increasing purchase intentions. Previous studies have shown that individuals who experience FOMO are more likely to interact with brands digitally and show higher purchase intentions

compared to those who do not experience FOMO (Islam et al., 2022; Liu et al., 2021).

From a consumer psychology perspective, the FOMO phenomenon is closely related to behavioral psychology and decision-making theories. Consumers who experience social anxiety due to FOMO often make impulsive and less rational purchasing decisions due to the psychological urge to stay connected with social trends (Dhir et al., 2021). Consumption psychology explains that emotional factors, such as anxiety and social pressure, can influence consumer engagement with brands and shape their purchasing decision patterns (Husna & Mairita, 2022). Therefore, in the context of digital marketing, understanding these psychological mechanisms is also very important for marketers in developing effective strategies to increase brand engagement and drive purchase intentions through social media platforms such as TikTok. Although several studies have discussed FOMO and its impact on consumer behavior, there is still a gap in understanding the role of brand engagement as a mediator in the relationship between social anxiety and purchase intentions. The majority of previous studies have emphasized individual and psychological aspects without considering how digital interactions with brands can strengthen purchase intentions (Brodie et al., 2011; Rahayu & Setiawan, 2023). Furthermore, more recent research highlights that TikTok has an algorithm that can increase user engagement with brands through personalization-based marketing strategies. However, there are still few studies that specifically explore the relationship between FOMO, social anxiety, brand engagement, and purchase intention in the

context of TikTok (Wijaya & Santoso, 2023; Sari & Prasetyo, 2023). Therefore, this study also aims to fill the gap by analyzing the relationship between these variables and exploring the role of brand engagement as a mediator in the digital ecosystem using the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) (Ajzen, 1991), which explains that a person's behavioral intention is influenced by attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control; Brand Engagement Theory, which highlights the emotional relationship and interaction between consumers and brands (Hollebeek et al., 2014); and Social Anxiety Theory which describes how an individual's fear of negative judgment can trigger involvement in digital-based consumption (Leary, 1983). Thus, this study aims to analyze the effect of social anxiety due to FOMO on purchase intention on TikTok, examine the role of brand engagement as a mediator in the relationship between social anxiety and purchase intention, and provide insights for marketers to form a more effective marketing strategy design according to the psychological aspects of consumers. It is hoped that the results of this study can also enrich academic literature, help marketing practitioners in designing strategies based on consumer psychology, and increase awareness of social media users regarding the impact of FOMO on their consumption patterns.

II. RESEARCH METHOD

This study implements a quantitative approach using a survey method to analyze the relationship between Social Anxiety (X1), Consumer Brand Engagement (X2), and Purchase Intention (Y). The sample of this study consisted of 250 respondents who were selected and also used appropriate sampling techniques in order to optimally represent the population. Respondents in this study were determined according to criteria relevant to the objectives of this study, such as their online shopping experience and involvement with certain brands. The sample was taken using a purposive sampling technique, which could allow this study to obtain participants who match the characteristics needed. The data in this study were also collected using a questionnaire distributed online. This questionnaire includes a series of questions measuring the level of Social Anxiety, Consumer Brand Engagement, and Purchase Intention. The instruments in this study, before being used, had been tested for validity and reliability to ensure that each item in the questionnaire had good quality in measuring the intended construct. Validity is tested by looking at the significance of the relationship between items and the total score of the variable using a p-value <0.05 , while reliability is tested by calculating the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, with a value above 0.60 as the minimum acceptable limit.

The statistical analysis techniques used in this study include the classical assumption test consisting of the normality test, multicollinearity test, and heteroscedasticity test. The normality test is carried out using the Normal P-P Plot graph to ensure that the data is normally distributed. The multicollinearity test is carried out by looking at the tolerance and VIF values to ensure that there is no high linear relationship between the independent variables, which can interfere with the

accuracy of the regression model. Meanwhile, the heteroscedasticity test is carried out using the Scatterplot to see if there is a certain pattern in the residual distribution.

After the classical assumption test is carried out and the model is declared feasible, multiple linear regression analysis is used to see the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. Multiple linear regression allows this study to identify how much influence each independent variable has on Purchase Intention. Furthermore, the T test is used to test the significance of the influence of each independent variable on the dependent variable individually, while the F test is used to test the significance of the influence of independent variables simultaneously on the dependent variable. In addition, the coefficient of determination (R^2) is used to measure the extent to which the independent variables can explain the dependent variable in this study. With a research method that has been designed systematically, this study is expected to provide valid and reliable findings. All procedures in this study are explained in detail so that they can be replicated by further research, so that the results can be verified and further developed in similar studies.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The results of this study include descriptive statistical analysis, classical assumption tests, and hypothesis tests, where descriptive analysis provides an overview of the data collected, validity and reliability tests show that all items in the Social Anxiety (X1), Consumer Brand Engagement (X2), and Purchase Intention (Y) variables are valid with a p-value <0.05 and high reliability based on Cronbach's Alpha values of 0.843, 0.741, and 0.776, respectively, while the classical assumption test shows that the data meets the normality assumption based on the Normal P-P Plot graph, does not experience multicollinearity with tolerance values X1 and X2 of 0.946 (>0.10) and VIF 1.057 (<10), and there is no heteroscedasticity based on the Scatterplot graph, with multiple linear regression results showing that every one unit increase in Social Anxiety increases Purchase Intention by 0.210, while a one unit increase in Consumer Brand Engagement increases Purchase Intention by 0.734, supported by the results of the T test which shows that Social Anxiety and Consumer Brand Engagement have a significant influence on Purchase Intention with $p < 0.001$, the F test indicates that both variables simultaneously influence Purchase Intention with a significance of <0.001 , and the coefficient of determination (R^2) of 58.2% indicates that variables X1 and X2 explain the variability of Purchase Intention, while 41.8% is influenced by other factors not studied

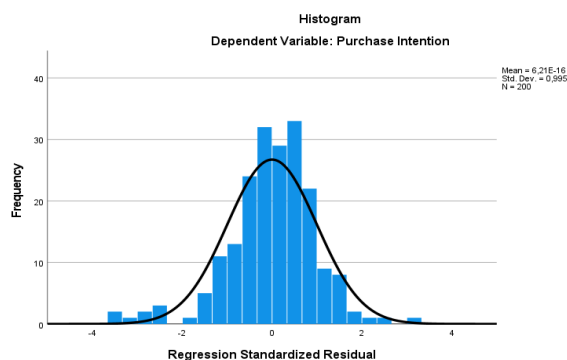


Figure 1.

Referring to the image presented, the Normal P-P Plot of Regression Standardized Residual graph reflects data spread across the diagonal line and also the direction of distribution follows the diagonal line on the graph, then the normality assumption has been met by the regression used in the regression.

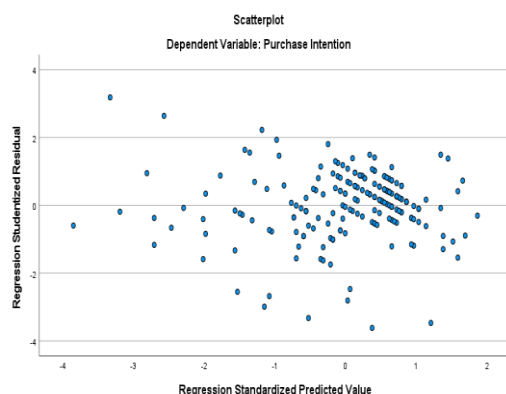


Figure 2.

Referring to the Scatterplot graphic image presented to test heteroscedasticity, it displays a random distribution of points and no clear pattern is formed and the distribution of points is below and above the number 0 on the Y axis. This indicates that there is no occurrence of heteroscedasticity in the regression mode, so it is appropriate for the regression model to be used in predicting the Purchase Intention (Y) variable.

The results of this study are also in line with previous findings indicating that social anxiety plays a role in online purchasing decisions. Individuals who have high levels of social anxiety tend to make more impulsive purchases and are more active in interacting with brands on social media, especially on TikTok. The higher the consumer's involvement with the brand, the greater their tendency to make purchases in a dynamic digital environment.

This study also strengthens the study conducted by Alif (2020), which revealed that personality factors, including social anxiety, can influence impulsive buying behavior in the context of e-commerce. Furthermore, this finding also supports the research of Saragih and Pusvitasari (2022), which shows that an individual's anxiety level contributes to their tendency to

make impulsive purchases on online platforms, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.

However, there are also differences in the impact of age on the relationship between anxiety and impulsive buying behavior. Saragih and Pusvitasari (2022) found that anxiety had a stronger impact on younger individuals than on older individuals. Meanwhile, in this study, social anxiety remained an important factor in purchasing decisions across age groups. This finding provides additional insight into the relationship between psychological factors and digitalization in consumption behavior. Therefore, marketers are advised to develop more effective marketing strategies, by targeting consumers with high social anxiety and increasing brand engagement to encourage more strategic and ethical purchasing decisions.

This opinion is also in line with the view of Perner (2018) who stated that social anxiety functions as a trigger for individuals to seek comfort and control in online purchasing decisions, because they feel safer from direct social judgment. This is relevant in the context of platforms like TikTok, where users feel they can interact with brands more informally, which in turn influences their purchasing decisions. For example, interactions that occur on TikTok are often more personal and create a greater sense of closeness between consumers and brands.

Furthermore, Lee and Choi (2019) also added that social anxiety can encourage individuals to be more involved in purchasing products that they perceive can improve their self-image in the digital world. Consumers with social anxiety tend to feel more comfortable shopping online because they do not have to deal with direct social interactions, which can influence them to make larger impulse purchases.

In addition, research by Park and Lee (2020) showed that in the context of digital marketing, brands that are able to reduce consumers' social anxiety through a more inclusive and empathetic approach, as seen in TikTok marketing campaigns, tend to increase consumer loyalty and satisfaction. Therefore, in marketing strategies, it is important for marketers to recognize social anxiety as a factor that influences consumer behavior and adjust their messages and interactions in a more friendly and empathetic manner.

In addition, Koller et al. (2021) also highlighted that social anxiety can cause consumers to be more likely to seek social confirmation through online purchases. Consumers who feel socially anxious may seek validation from others through products or brands that are popular on social media, such as TikTok, which can lead to impulsive purchasing decisions. This further strengthens the argument that intensive social media engagement is directly related to increased impulsive purchasing behavior. In addition, according to research conducted by Zhou and Li (2021), social anxiety can also make consumers more susceptible to external influences, including advertisements and promotions carried out by brands on digital platforms. This social anxiety can affect how consumers respond to marketing messages, especially if the message creates a sense of urgency or scarcity, which drives impulsive purchasing decisions.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

This study shows that social anxiety due to Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) plays a significant role in influencing purchase intention, both directly and through brand engagement on TikTok. Generation Z who experience social anxiety are more active in engaging with brand content, which ultimately increases their purchase intention. This finding confirms that brand engagement is a mediating factor in the relationship between social anxiety and purchase decisions. Therefore, in the ever-evolving world of digital marketing, social interaction and emotional strategies are key elements in attracting and retaining consumers. The implications of this study highlight the need for a more ethical and psychology-based marketing approach, taking into account the psychological impact of FOMO-based marketing strategies. Marketers need to create content that encourages positive engagement, such as online challenges, influencer collaborations, and community-based campaigns, to increase customer loyalty without applying excessive social pressure. Furthermore, future research can expand the scope of the study by considering other factors and moderating the relationship between social anxiety, brand engagement, and purchase intention, such as the level of trust in the brand or individual preferences for certain types of content. Comparative studies across social media platforms can also provide greater insight into how this phenomenon develops in diverse digital ecosystems.

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