



## Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) and Consumer Behavior in the Digital Era: A PRISMA Systematic Review

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**Abstract:** This study synthesizes five empirical investigations on Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) across different digital consumer contexts. The research objects include consumer purchases in the metaverse, tourism experience sharing on social media, influencer-driven purchase intentions, online learning among university students, and SMEs' marketing performance. The main objective is to explore how FoMO shapes decision-making, social interaction, academic well-being, and marketing outcomes. The studies employed quantitative survey-based designs with diverse samples from Europe, South America, Asia, and Africa, analyzed using clustering, non-parametric tests, and structural equation modeling. The results consistently show that FoMO drives impulsive buying, intensifies digital self-presentation, mediates the effect of influencers on purchase intention, contributes to academic burnout, and strengthens the impact of social media advertising on business performance. Overall, FoMO emerges as a critical factor in understanding consumer behavior and digital marketing strategies across global contexts.

**Keyword:** Fear of Missing Out, Influencer Marketing, Social Media Advertising, Consumer Behavior, PRISMA.

### INTRODUCTION

In recent years, digital transformation has fundamentally reshaped how consumers behave, interact, and make decisions. Indonesia, as one of Southeast Asia's fastest-growing digital markets, is a prime example: by early 2025, the country had 212 million internet users (74.6% of the population) and over 143 million social media identities, reflecting a strong digital engagement landscape. This rapid adoption of technology has intensified consumer exposure to online trends, promotions, and peer content. (Datareportal, 2025)

At the same time, consumer behavior trends emphasize digital engagement, personalized experiences, and sustainability as key drivers for 2025. Businesses are now competing not only on price or product but also through curated experiences and emotional connections, which require attention to both rational and psychological dimensions of consumer decision-making. (Ubertrends, 2025)

One such psychological dimension is Fear of Missing Out (FoMO), which refers to the apprehension that others may be experiencing rewarding opportunities without one's

participation. In today's digital environment, constant exposure to curated content and peer activities amplifies FoMO, pushing individuals to remain online and engaged. Psychologists highlight that FoMO is linked to concerns about belonging and missing opportunities that could affect social relationships. (Cornell Chronicle, 2024)

FoMO has been associated with negative outcomes for well-being, including poor sleep and academic stress, especially among youth and college students with heavy social media use. Recent findings confirm that high levels of FoMO-driven social media exposure can exacerbate mental health problems in digital-native populations. (The State News, 2024), (National Library of Medicine, 2024)

In marketing, FoMO is increasingly leveraged by influencers and brands. Research shows that while FoMO among young consumers is linked to lower well-being, attachment to social media influencers can mitigate some of its negative effects and simultaneously drive purchase intentions. This duality highlights FoMO's complex role as both a risk factor and a marketing opportunity in the digital economy. (Ohio State University, 2024)

### Research Questions

1. How does Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) influence consumer behavior across different digital contexts, including purchasing decisions, experience sharing, learning environments, and marketing performance?
2. To what extent can FoMO be considered a unifying construct that explains variations in consumer psychology and digital marketing effectiveness across cultural and industrial settings?

The rapid expansion of digital technologies and social media has profoundly transformed how consumers interact, make decisions, and construct their online identities. Within this environment, Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) has emerged as a critical psychological construct. Defined as the pervasive apprehension that others might be experiencing rewarding opportunities without one's participation (Przybylski et al., 2013), FoMO is particularly salient in digital contexts where individuals are continuously exposed to updates, offers, and peer activities.

Recent research demonstrates that FoMO influences consumer behavior across multiple domains. In virtual environments such as the metaverse, FoMO increases impulsive and speculative purchasing behaviors (Prague University of Economics and Business, 2024). In tourism, FoMO is strongly associated with the Digital Extended Self (DES), driving individuals to intensively share travel experiences on social media to reinforce their online identity (Universidad de Murcia, 2025).

In influencer marketing, FoMO mediates psychological responses that connect influencers' persuasive messages with consumer purchase intentions (Success Culture Press, 2025). In educational settings, FoMO exacerbates the negative effects of nomophobia, thereby contributing to student burnout in online learning environments (Qubahan, 2024). In small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), FoMO strengthens the relationship between social media advertising and marketing performance, especially among smaller firms (Inderscience Publishers, 2024).

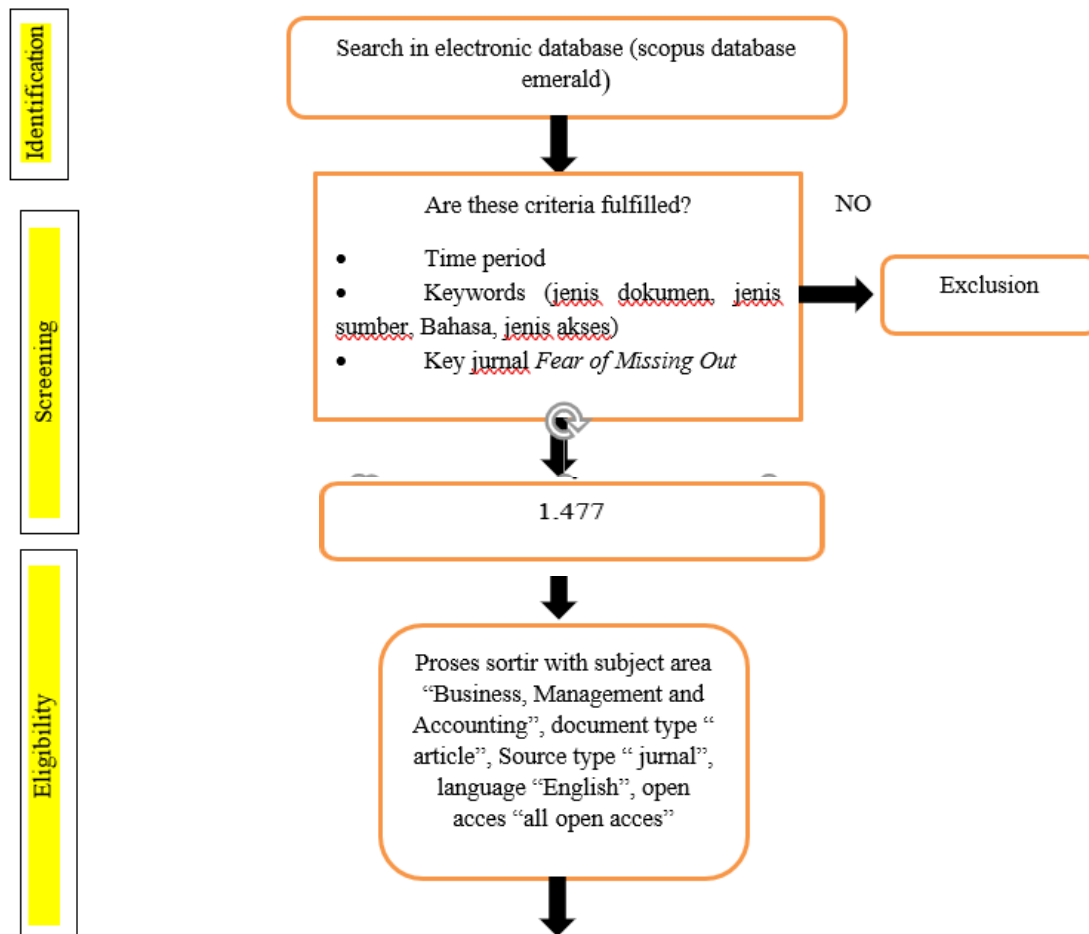
Although FoMO has been explored in these individual contexts, there remains a limited synthesis of its broader implications across cultures and industries. The existing literature highlights FoMO as both a driver of consumer engagement and a source of psychological strain (Oberst et al., 2017; Bright & Logan, 2018). However, its cross-contextual role as a unifying factor in digital consumer behavior is underexplored. This paper addresses that gap by integrating findings from five empirical studies to illustrate how FoMO consistently shapes consumer psychology and decision-making in the digital era. The objective is to provide a holistic understanding of FoMO's role and to emphasize its significance for both academic research and digital marketing strategies.

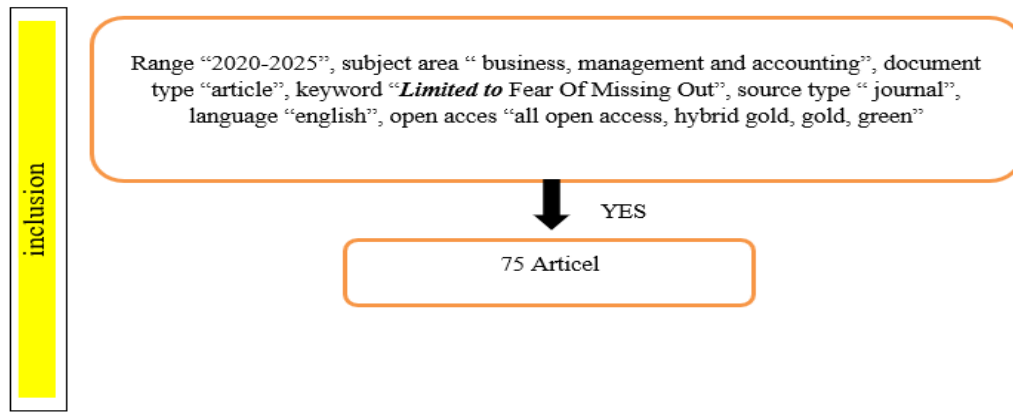
## METHOD

The research employed a two-stage analysis, namely bibliometric analysis and literature review using multidimensional scaling techniques with Scopus and the PRISMA method. Reference data were collected from international publications indexed in Scopus from the Emerald database related to FoMO (Fear of Missing Out). Figure 1 illustrates the research process, which involved several stages, beginning with the search for the variables "FoMO (Fear of Missing Out)" The retrieved data were then filtered based on the field of business and management.

The dataset consisted of scholarly articles published in the Scopus database, accessed between September 23–30, 2025, using the keywords "FoMO (Fear of Missing Out)" with the following search criteria: publication years "2020-2025", document type "article", source type "journal", article language "English", and access type "all". With these criteria applied, a total of 1.477 articles were obtained. However, after filtering by subject area "Business, Management and Accounting", document type "article", source type "journal", language "English", and open access "all open access", 75 articles remained. The search was then further refined with the following criteria: 1. Publication years: 2020–2025, subject area: business, management and accounting, document type: article. 2. Keyword: Fear Of Missing Out. After applying these refined criteria, only 75 articles were finally obtained

**Figure 1: PRISMA Flowchart of the study**





## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the summary table above, the following are the findings from each of the articles reviewed : 1.AI FoMO in the Workplace (Méndez-Suárez et al., 2025): AI-driven FoMO raises stress and disrupts work-life balance, but also speeds up tech adoption. 2.Social Media Addiction and Stress (Coker et al., 2025): Addiction to TikTok and Facebook heightens stress, with TikTok creating stronger social pressure.

3.FoMO & FoBO in YouTube Consumption (Park & Kim, 2025): FoMO increases video viewing for connection, while FoBO reduces satisfaction through comparison 4.Walking Away from FoMO Appeals (Morsi et al., 2023): FoMO ads backfire on FoMO-prone consumers, causing resistance and emotional exhaustion. 5.The Green Fintech Paradox (Ashrafi & Akhter, 2025): Green branding boosts adoption but skepticism persists without transparent proof of sustainability. 6.Social Media’s Sway on Impulse Travel (Kumar & Kumar, 2025): Social comparison raises FoMO, sparking spontaneous travel through positive emotions.

7.Indians’ Visit Intentions to Ram Mandir (Kala & Chaubey, 2025): Spirituality, cultural pride, and government support drive temple visit intentions. 8.Radiant Living through Wellness Tourism (Yudhistira et al., 2025): Wellness tourism improves well-being, but FoMO makes tourists chase social validation. 9.FoMO & the Thrill of Sales (Bok et al., 2025): FoMO heightens excitement-seeking, fueling attraction to flash sales and limited offers.

10.Sports Identification & eFootball Live-Streaming (Chethan Kumar et al., 2025): Strong team identity strengthens intent to watch eFootball via emotional bonds. 11.The Dark Side of Brands (Japutra et al., 2025): FoMO fuels obsessive brand passion, leading to compulsive buying. 12.Influencers & Purchase Intentions (Nguyen & Nguyen, 2025):

Influencer stimuli shape trust and emotions, driving buying intent. 13.Intrinsic Motivation & Modest Fashion Impulse Buying (Sholihah et al., 2025): Motivation boosts trust and positive attitudes, increasing impulsive purchases. 14.Souvenir Coolness & Travel Intention (Wang et al., 2025): “Cool” souvenirs raise travel intent, especially with destination awareness. 15.FoMO & the Digital Extended Self (De Souza et al., 2025): FoMO pushes tourists to share experiences as part of digital identity. 16.FoMO in Postpandemic Festivals (Tan et al., 2025):

FoMO drives festival participation, enhancing engagement and community bonds.17.FoMO & Crypto Investment (Epelbaum, 2025): Despite risk disclosure, FoMO strongly drives crypto investment.18.Crypto Adoption in India (Prasad et al., 2025): FoMO significantly boosts crypto adoption, especially among Gen Z and Millennials.19.FoMO & Hedonic Buying (Fitrianna et al., 2025): FoMO drives hedonic purchases, reinforced by reputation, media, and self-congruity.20.Streamer Attractiveness & Impulse Buying (Li et al., 2024): Attractive streamers heighten impulse buying in live-stream shopping.21.FoMO & Charitable Crowdfunding (Su et al., 2024): FoMO drives active donations to avoid missing. 31. .FoMO & Minimalist Consumption (Lu & Sinha, 2023): FoMO and social media undermine minimalist lifestyles.32.Social Gamification Fatigue (Yang et al., 2023): Over-gamification creates fatigue, reducing effectiveness

.33.Digital Hoarding Behavior (Vinoi et al., 2024): FoMO and regret foster digital hoarding; rational factors can limit it.34.Compulsive Social Media Consumption (Lervik-Olsen et al., 2023): Motivation and habits fuel compulsive social media use.

35.FoMO & Unsustainable Fast Fashion (Bläse et al., 2024): FoMO increases buying despite environmental concerns.36.FoMO, Social Comparison & Buying (Kumar & Kumar, 2023): FoMO and comparison drive compulsive use and buying; self-esteem weakens it.37.FoMO & Metaverse Purchases (Kopřivová & Bauerová, 2024): FoMO triggers quick, less-considered purchases in virtual worlds.38.FoMO & SME Marketing in Ghana (Asamoah et al., 2024): Social media ads work best in small firms with high FoMO.39.FoMO, FoBO & Consumer Intent (Flecha-Ortiz et al., 2023): Fear factors and social media addiction boost purchase intent.40.Limited-Time Offers & Impulse Buying (Khetarpal & Singh, 2024): Time scarcity messages raise urgency and impulsive buying.

41.FoMO, Sensation Seeking & Leisure (Argan et al., 2023): FoMO mediates between thrill-seeking and leisure participation.42.Work Social Media Use & Outcomes (Bodhi et al., 2023): Boosts connectivity but also stress; effects depend on context.43.Dark Side of Influencer Marketing (Barari, 2023): Human and virtual influencers reduce well-being via social comparison.44.Live-Streaming Commerce & Compulsive Buying (Sun & Bao, 2024): Interactivity and urgency fuel compulsive shopping.45.FoMO & Compulsive Buying, Moderated by Mindfulness (Hussain et al., 2024): FoMO raises compulsive buying, but mindfulness weakens it.46.FoMO, Sensation Seeking & Event Consumption (Dursun et al., 2024): FoMO drives conspicuous event-based consumption for social status.

47.Internet Search Intensity & Stock Returns (Tajdini, 2023): Search spikes can predict stock price movements.48.Why Share Fake News? (Kumar et al., 2024): Trust, norms, and motivations explain fake news sharing.49.FoMO, Addiction & Self-Disclosure (Sultan, 2023): Addiction and FoMO amplify oversharing risks on social media.50.Digitalization's Dark & Bright Sides (Dhir et al., 2023): Boosts productivity but increases technostress, FoMO, and fatigue.51.Social Media Use, FoMO & Academics (Akram et al., 2024):

Excessive use triggers FoMO, anxiety, and lower performance.52.Digital Nudging & Decision-Making (Schneider et al., 2023): Effective but raises ethical issues; transparency needed.53.FoMO & Young Consumers' Online Shopping (Zhang et al., 2024): FoMO drives impulsivity and purchase intentions in flash sales.54.Social Media Addiction, FoMO & Well-Being (Prakash & Mehta, 2023): FoMO worsens anxiety, depression, and lowers life satisfaction.55.Gen Z Online Shopping: FoMO + TAM (Le & Tran, 2024):

FoMO plus ease-of-use factors increase Gen Z buying intentions.56.FoMO, Mobile Media & Travel (Wang et al., 2024): FoMO makes tourists choose popular destinations for social display. 57.FoMO & Limited-Time Offers (Chen et al., 2023): High-FoMO consumers make faster, less rational purchase decisions. 58.FoMO, Comparison & Adolescent Well-Being (Park & Lee, 2023):

Social comparison heightens FoMO, lowering well-being over time. 59.From FoMO to JOMO (Thompson & Hall, 2023): Digital detox reduces FoMO, improving offline well-being. 60.FoMO, Personality & Smartphone Addiction (Fauzi et al., 2023): FoMO mediates between traits (neuroticism, extraversion) and addiction. 61.FoMO & Social Media Fatigue (Tandon et al., 2023): FoMO triggers stalking, comparisons, and fatigue on social media. 62.FoMO as a Cultural Construct (Karimkhan & Chapa, 2023):

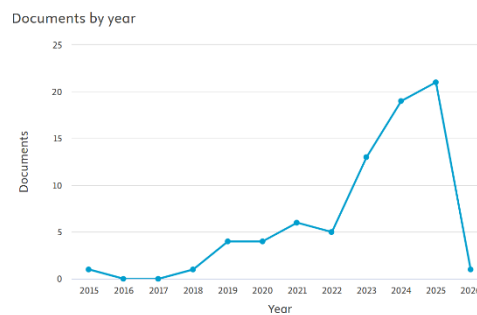
Collectivist cultures show stronger FoMO effects on behavior. 63.FoMO, Flow & Smartphone Addiction (Fauzi et al., 2024): FoMO strengthens the link between flow experience and addiction. 64.Fake News Sharing & TPB (Pundir et al., 2023): Attitudes, norms, and control predict sharing; education can reduce it. 65.Tourists' Work Smartphone Use (Tan & Chen, 2024): Smartphones let tourists mix work and leisure, boosting integration but reducing detachment. 66.FoMO Scale & Self-Concept (Zhang et al., 2020): New FoMO scale links strongly with low self-esteem and fragile identity.

67. Food Waste on Cruises (Li & Wang, 2020): Hedonic attitudes, limited dining time, and mismatched food drive waste. 68. Loneliness & Facebook Use (Berezan et al., 2020): Active use reduces loneliness; passive use worsens it. 69. Social Identity & Life Satisfaction (Dutot, 2020): Social media identity can raise life satisfaction, but overuse harms well-being. 70. FoMO & Investment Apps (Clor-Proell et al., 2024): FoMO makes investors react quickly to push notifications, sometimes rashly. 71. #DeleteFacebook Backlash (Bright et al., 2024): Fatigue, mistrust, and privacy concerns drive platform exit.

72. FoMO & Symbolic Brands (Kang et al., 2018): FoMO strengthens desire for symbolic, culturally meaningful brands. 73. FoMO, Loneliness & Academic Performance (Lemay et al., 2023): FoMO heightens loneliness and lowers student performance. 74. FoMO, Fatigue & Well-Being (Dhir et al., 2023): FoMO fuels compulsive use, fatigue, anxiety, and depression. 75. SNS Continuance Intention (Yin et al., 2023): Privacy risks discourage SNS use, while usefulness drives continuance.

**Table 1: 75 journal data Articles per ear**

Source: processed researcher data 2025



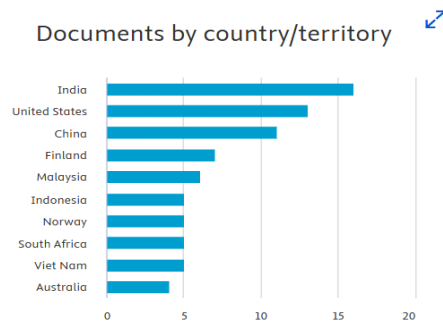
**Figure 2: Documents by year**

The "Documents by year" graph provides a detailed narrative of the research area's lifecycle, beginning in near-obscurity before ascending to a period of intense focus. The initial years, from 2015 to 2018, represent a phase of minimal activity, where the output was negligible, with the document count consistently remaining at zero or one, suggesting the topic had yet to gain significant traction within the academic sphere.

This was succeeded by a moderate yet stable upward trend stretching from 2019 through 2022, where the annual publication volume stabilized in the mid-single digits, reporting four documents in both 2019 and 2020, six in 2021, and five in 2022, signaling a healthy and growing, though not explosive, interest. However, the research saw a dramatic, exponential acceleration starting in 2023, as the document count nearly tripled from the previous year to reach 13 publications.

This upward trajectory gained even more momentum in 2024, pushing the total output to 19 documents, before ultimately peaking in 2025 with an impressive 21 documents published, making it the most prolific year for the field. The trend concludes with a sharp, near-vertical drop to only 1 document in 2026; this final collapse in the line is almost certainly indicative of incomplete data collection for the current year, which is typical for recent figures, rather than an accurate reflection of a sudden cessation of research.

### Country of Origin of the Studies



This figure shows the distribution of documents by country or region. The horizontal axis (X) represents the number of documents, while the vertical axis (Y) indicates the countries or regions. Detailed explanation:

Top-heavy global distribution of research, with India leading decisively with approximately 16 documents, closely followed by the United States (around 13), and China securing the third spot (about 11 publications). This geographical hierarchy is strongly reflected in the document themes, where India’s dominance is reinforced by its localized research focus, including studies on social comparison among Indian millennial tourists, cryptocurrency investment adoption by Indian Gen Z and millennials, and factors influencing visit intentions to the Ram Mandir.

The United States' contribution features research on platform-specific issues like the connection between social media addiction (facebook and tiktok) and stress in US consumers, while countries lower down the ranking, such as Indonesia and Viet Nam, also contribute highly contextualized studies. For example, documents focus on the impact of health appliance scarcity on impulsive purchases in Indonesia during the pandemic and the effect of social media influencers on purchase intent among vietnamese consumers.

Overall, the data reveals that the research activity is highly concentrated in a few key territories but the published work frequently addresses consumer behavior, technology adoption, and psychological phenomena that are specific to the national and regional contexts of the contributing countries.

### CONCLUSION

The review of 75 recent articles (2020–2025) demonstrates that Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) has become a significant psychological phenomenon influencing marketing, consumer behavior, digital technology, and individual well-being. The findings can be summarized into five key insights: 1. FoMO as a Driver of Consumerism Numerous studies confirm that FoMO triggers impulse buying, compulsive buying, and risky investment behaviors (e.g., cryptocurrency, ICOs, fast fashion, live streaming commerce). Marketing tactics such as scarcity, limited-time offers, and brand symbolism amplify these effects. 2. FoMO in Social Media and Digitalization Social media platforms serve as the primary medium for FoMO, producing dual effects:

Positive: enhanced technology adoption, social participation, and community connectedness. Negative: increased stress, anxiety, social media addiction, digital fatigue, stalking, and reduced well-being.

#### FoMO in Tourism and Leisure

Within tourism, FoMO encourages travelers to visit popular destinations, engage in experience sharing, and participate in wellness or festival tourism. However, motivations are

often driven by social recognition rather than intrinsic satisfaction.

### FoMO and Broader Psychological Aspects

Several studies highlight FoMO's connections with self-concept, personality traits (e.g., neuroticism, extraversion), trust, cultural values, and digital identity. Counter-concepts such as JOMO (Joy of Missing Out) have emerged as potential strategies to mitigate FoMO's negative impacts. In conclusion, FoMO is a multidimensional phenomenon that shapes consumer behavior, marketing strategies, and psychological well-being. Recent research also emphasizes the role of moderating and mediating factors (e.g., mindfulness, trust, cultural values, self-regulation) in strengthening or weakening FoMO's effects.

This study strengthens the role of FoMO (Przybylski et al., 2013) as a cross-contextual psychological construct influencing consumer behavior, education, and digital investment. The findings highlight the applicability of multiple theoretical frameworks—such as the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) model, the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), and the Digital Extended Self (Belk, 2013)—in explaining FoMO-driven behavior.

Cultural variation in FoMO effects (collectivistic vs. individualistic contexts) advances the theoretical understanding of cross-cultural consumer psychology. The emergence of JOMO (Joy of Missing Out) as a counter-concept provides a new dimension to digital well-being and coping strategy literature.

### Managerial Implications

Marketers and brand managers may apply scarcity-based strategies (limited-time offers, exclusivity) to trigger consumer urgency, but must balance them to avoid digital fatigue. Tourism and leisure industries can leverage FoMO-driven promotion of popular destinations and events while encouraging travelers to share experiences online.

SMEs and e-commerce platforms can enhance marketing performance by integrating FoMO-oriented tactics (flash sales, influencer endorsements) to drive engagement and purchase intention. Educational institutions and organizations should recognize that FoMO also increases stress and burnout. Therefore, digital adoption must be complemented with mindfulness or digital wellness programs to safeguard well-being.

### Recommendations for Future Research

Investigate FoMO across generations (Gen Z, Millennials, Gen Alpha) to explore differences in digital consumer behavior. Examine the relationship between FoMO and sustainable consumption, as limited research exists on whether FoMO amplifies or hinders pro-environmental behavior.

Explore the role of emerging technologies (AI, metaverse, AR/VR) in shaping or intensifying FoMO among consumers. Develop context-specific FoMO measurement scales (e.g., FoMO in live streaming commerce, crypto trading, wellness tourism). Analyze coping strategies such as JOMO, mindfulness, and digital detox as potential moderators to mitigate the negative impacts of FoMO.

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