

The Influence of Social Proof on Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) and Purchase Behaviour on Online Platforms

Sutheera Munsaen¹ Chat Chuchuen^{2*}
Thatphong Awirothananon² Jakkapong Sukphan³

Abstract

This study develops a theoretically integrated framework that extends the Technology Acceptance Model (hereafter called TAM) by incorporating social proof and fear of missing out (hereafter called FOMO) to explain purchasing behaviour in digital commerce environments. While TAM has traditionally explained technology adoption through cognitive evaluations such as perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use, it offers limited insight into socially induced emotional processes that increasingly characterise online consumption. Addressing this gap, the proposed framework views online platform adoption as an enabling condition that exposes consumers to socially visible cues such as peer reviews, influencers' endorsements, and popularity indicators, which activate FOMO as an effective response. FOMO is conceptualised as a mediating mechanism that translates social validation into urgency-driven behavioural intentions and purchasing outcomes. Drawing on literature in technology acceptance, social influence, and consumer psychology, this study proposes six theoretically derived propositions linking platform adoption, social proof, FOMO, and purchasing behaviour. By integrating cognitive, social, and emotional dimensions within a unified structure, the framework offers a more comprehensive explanation of technology-mediated consumption. The model contributes to digital marketing and information systems research by reconciling rational and affective perspectives and provides strategic implications for designing ethically grounded, socially engaging online platforms.

Keywords: Technology acceptance model, Social proof, FOMO, Online consumer behaviour, Digital commerce

1. Introduction

Digital transformation has fundamentally reshaped the structure of e-commerce, integrating consumption into interconnected, socially visible online environments. The rapid growth of e-commerce and social commerce has accelerated across Southeast Asia, especially since the COVID-19 pandemic, which changed purchasing habits and normalised digital transactions (Naeem, 2021). The region's e-commerce gross merchandise value is expected to reach USD 230 billion by 2026, demonstrating consistent double-digit annual growth (Aaron Aziz et al., 2024). Widespread smartphone use and mobile internet access have further facilitated participation in digital marketplaces, enabling consumers to engage with platforms that combine purchasing, social interaction, and real-time feedback (Source of Asia, 2025). These developments

¹ Ph.D. Candidate, Faculty of Business Administration, Maejo University, Thailand.

² Assistant Professor, Faculty of Business Administration, Maejo University, Thailand.

³ Lecturer, Faculty of Business Administration, Maejo University, Thailand.

* Corresponding Author e-mail: chat@mju.ac.th

illustrate the swift expansion of digital commerce and show that online platforms have evolved from simple transactional tools into socially embedded environments (Yones & Muthaiyah, 2023). Consumers do not just complete purchases on these platforms; they also observe reviews, ratings, endorsements, and social signals (Erkan & Evans, 2018). Therefore, understanding consumer behaviour in digital commerce requires attention not only to technology adoption but also to the social and emotional dynamics operating within these environments (Marikyan et al., 2023).

From a theoretical perspective, these developments have compelled firms (especially small and medium-sized enterprises) to adopt online platforms to align with changing consumer purchasing patterns (Plekhanov et al., 2023). These structural changes have increased scholarly interest in understanding how consumers adopt and interact with online platforms. The Technology Acceptance Model (hereafter called TAM) remains one of the most influential frameworks for explaining technology usage, suggesting that perceived usefulness (hereafter called PU) and perceived ease of use (hereafter called PEOU) influence behavioural intention (Davis, 1989). TAM has been widely validated across digital contexts and expanded to include additional cognitive and motivational constructs (Bedi et al., 2017; Bilal et al., 2023).

Online marketplaces are not merely technological interfaces; they also play as social arenas. Consumers are continuously exposed to peer reviews, influencers' endorsements, visible popularity metrics, and scarcity-based promotions. These socially amplified signals shape not only perceptions of credibility but also emotional responses. Two constructs are particularly salient in this environment: social proof and fear of missing out (hereafter called FOMO). Social proof refers to the tendency to rely on others' actions or evaluations as cues for appropriate behaviour, particularly under conditions of uncertainty (Begho & Liu, 2024; Liu, 2024; Naeem, 2021). In digital contexts, reviews ratings, and influencers' content act as heuristic signals that reduce perceived risk and reinforce trust (Wu et al., 2025). When combined with visibility indicators such as trending tags or real-time purchase counts, social proof amplifies perceived products popularity and desirability (Roethke et al., 2020). In contrast, FOMO captures the anxiety that others might be experiencing rewarding opportunities from which one is excluded (Przybylski et al., 2013). Within online commerce, FOMO is frequently triggered by time-limited promotions, exclusive releases, or highly endorsed products. Empirical evidence suggests that heightened FOMO is associated with impulsive purchasing and urgency-driven decisions, particularly among digitally immersed cohorts (Putranto, 2025). Although both social proof and FOMO have been examined in marketing and consumer psychology research, they are typically studied independently of technology-acceptance frameworks (Alfina et al., 2023). Likewise, TAM research predominantly concentrates on cognitive determinants of platform adoption, with comparatively limited attention paid to socially induced emotional mechanisms. Existing studies show that social proof can intensify purchasing behaviour during periods of uncertainty (Naeem, 2021) and that scarcity-driven appeals heighten purchase likelihood through FOMO activation (Good & Hyman, 2021; Kang et al., 2019). However, the literature lacks a theoretically integrated explanation of how platform adoption, socially visible cues, and emotionally driven urgency interact within a unified structure.

This gap is particularly salient in emerging digital markets such as Thailand, where social commerce, influencer ecosystems, and time-sensitive promotions are deeply embedded in everyday consumption practices (Zhou & Lertattakornkit, 2024). While rapid digital adoption is evident, the interaction between cognitive acceptance mechanisms and psychosocial drivers

remains underexplored. To address this gap, this study develops an integrative conceptual framework that extends TAM by incorporating social proof and FOMO to explain purchasing behaviour in online platform environments. Specifically, the framework conceptualises online platform adoption as an enabling condition that increases exposure to socially visible cues. These cues activate FOMO as an effective response, which subsequently shapes purchasing behaviour. By embedding social-emotional mechanisms within a technology acceptance framework, this study advances a more comprehensive account of digital consumption that reconciles rational evaluation with socially induced emotional urgency. In doing so, this study contributes to digital marketing and information systems literature by clarifying how technological, social, and affective processes jointly shape purchasing decisions in contemporary online marketplaces.

2. Literature Review

Technology Acceptance Model

The Technology Acceptance Model (hereafter called TAM), originally developed by Davis (1989) and derived from the Theory of Reasoned Action, remains one of the most widely applied frameworks for explaining individual adoption of information systems. At its core, TAM proposes that behavioural intention to use a technology is primarily shaped by two cognitive evaluations: PU and PEOU. PU reflects the extent to which individuals believe that using a system enhances performance, whereas PEOU refers to the degree to which system use is perceived as effortless. Together, these beliefs determine users' willingness to adopt and engage with technological platforms (Kar & Kushwaha, 2023; Marikyan et al., 2023). Extensive empirical studies confirm the predictive power of PU and PEOU across digital contexts, including mobile commerce, financial technologies, and online service platforms (Bajunaied et al., 2023; Marikyan et al., 2023; J. Wang et al., 2022). Functional attributes such as usability, transaction speed, convenience, and perceived security consistently strengthen adoption intentions, particularly among users with lower technological familiarity. In this respect, TAM provides a parsimonious yet robust explanation of why consumers accept digital systems.

Nevertheless, TAM was originally conceptualised as a cognitively oriented model designed to explain system usage decisions. Contemporary digital environments, however, extend beyond functional interaction. Online platforms integrate social visibility, peer-generated content, and algorithmically amplified engagement signals (Yones & Muthaiyah, 2023). As users adopt and interact with platforms, they are exposed to reviews, ratings, influencers' activities, and popularity indicators elements that operate as socially embedded cues (Erkan & Evans, 2018). These cues shape perceptions and responses not fully captured by rational evaluation alone (Marikyan et al., 2023). Accordingly, technology adoption can be reconceptualised as more than a final behavioural outcome. It serves as an enabling condition, increasing exposure to socially influential stimuli within digital ecosystems. While PU and PEOU remain central to initial acceptance, sustained engagement and subsequent purchasing behaviour are increasingly shaped by social and emotional mechanisms operating alongside cognitive appraisal. This broader perspective provides a foundation for integrating socially driven constructs into the technology-acceptance framework.

Social Proof

Social proof refers to individuals' tendency to infer appropriate behaviour by observing the actions and evaluations of others, particularly under uncertain conditions (Robles-Estrada et al., 2020). In digital environments, social proof is embedded in platform architecture and manifests through user-generated content (hereafter called UGC), electronic word of mouth (hereafter called eWOM), ratings, reviews, and influencers' endorsements. These socially visible cues function as heuristic signals that reduce ambiguity, enhance perceived credibility, and reinforce trust towards both platforms and sellers (Begho & Liu, 2024; Wu et al., 2025). Empirical evidence consistently shows that peer recommendations, expert opinions, and influencers' communications shape attitudes towards technology usage and purchasing decisions (Alenizi, 2023; Al-Qaysi et al., 2020). In contexts such as mobile banking and e-commerce, social validation mitigates perceived risks related to privacy and security, thereby strengthening behavioural intention. Importantly, the effectiveness of online reviews depends less on sheer volume and more on perceived source expertise and content quality (Bhagat & Kim, 2023; Tran et al., 2022). Credible social signals influence not only functional assessments of products but also affective brand perceptions, reinforcing emotional attachment and trust.

The relevance of social proof becomes particularly pronounced in digitally saturated environments where consumer actions are continuously visible. During periods of uncertainty, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, socially amplified purchasing patterns demonstrate how individuals imitate others' behaviour as a risk-reduction strategy (Naeem, 2021). In contemporary online marketplaces, consumers increasingly rely on collective feedback and visible engagement metrics as shortcuts for decision-making. Beyond its credibility-enhancing role, social proof has also been discussed in relation to heightened social comparison, perceived desirability, and attention to others' behaviour in digital environments. (Wu et al., 2025). By signalling popularity, desirability, and social acceptance, it creates comparative pressure that extends beyond rational evaluation (Chakraborty & Bhat, 2018). This pressure is closely linked to the emergence of FOMO, positioning social proof not only as an informational cue but also as a catalyst for affective reactions.

Fear of Missing Out

Fear of missing out (hereafter called FOMO) is conceptualised within Self-Determination Theory and reflects anxiety arising from unmet psychological needs for competence, autonomy, and relatedness (Przybylski et al., 2013). It captures the apprehension that others might be experiencing rewarding opportunities from which one is excluded. In digital environments, constant exposure to curated lifestyles, trending products, and real-time engagement intensifies social comparison, making FOMO particularly salient (Argan & Argan, 2019; J. Zhang et al., 2022).

FOMO could be understood both as a dispositional tendency and as a situationally activated emotional state. Individuals with lower life satisfaction, a fragile self-concept, or a heightened social comparison orientation are more susceptible to experiencing FOMO (Alfina et al., 2023; J. Zhang et al., 2022). At the same time, external triggers such as limited-time offers, exclusive releases, influencers' endorsements, and scarcity appeals could activate FOMO even among otherwise stable consumers (Good & Hyman, 2021).

In digital commerce, marketers frequently deploy urgency and exclusivity cues to stimulate comparative awareness. Influencer-driven communication, in particular, heightens visibility of consumption experiences and encourages followers to evaluate their own access to products or opportunities (Dinh & Lee, 2024; Parveen et al., 2022). Empirical studies demonstrate that FOMO increases purchase likelihood, mediates the relationship between perceived scarcity and impulse buying, and strengthens willingness to pay (hereafter called WTP) (Good & Hyman, 2021; Liao et al., 2022; Z. Zhang et al., 2020). Collectively, prior studies view FOMO as an important affective construct in digital environments, particularly where social comparison, scarcity, and promotional intensity are salient. Within online platforms, FOMO operates at the intersection of social validation and individual self-relevance, accelerating decision-making and narrowing deliberation time.

Purchasing Behaviour

Consumers' purchasing behaviour encompasses the cognitive, emotional, and social processes involved in searching for, evaluating, acquiring, and reflecting on products or services (Laudon & Traver, 2021). In digital contexts, these processes unfold within environments characterised by transparency, algorithmic visibility, and constant exposure to peer-generated content (Wu et al., 2025; Yones & Muthaiyah, 2023).

Research on digital purchasing identifies multiple behavioural outcomes, including purchase intention, impulsive buying, purchase likelihood, and WTP (Liao et al., 2022; Z. Zhang et al., 2020). Emotional mechanisms play a central role in shaping these outcomes. In particular, FOMO is consistently associated with urgency-driven purchases and impulse buying, especially in contexts involving scarcity or social endorsement (Parveen et al., 2022). Anticipated regret and self-enhancement motives further strengthen the link between emotional arousal and purchasing action (Pusenius, 2023). Heightened FOMO is also associated with increased WTP, as consumers seek to avoid perceived social or experiential losses (Liao et al., 2022; Z. Zhang et al., 2020). Scarcity-based promotions shared within close social networks intensify this effect, amplifying both purchase intention and action immediacy (Ruvio & Belk, 2013).

Taken together, these findings indicate that purchasing behaviour in digital environments is influenced by a combination of cognitive, social, and emotional factors. Prior studies highlight the roles of technology-related evaluations, socially generated information, and affective responses in shaping consumer decision-making. This suggests the importance of considering multiple dimensions when examining purchasing behaviour in socially embedded digital marketplaces.

Table 1 Synthesis of consumer purchase behaviour variables

Researchers	Consumer buying			
	Impulsive buying	intention towards a product	Purchase likelihood	Willingness to pay
Khetarpal and Singh (2024)	✓			✓
Widjaya et al. (2024)			✓	
Z. Zhang et al. (2020)				✓
Lavuri et al. (2022)	✓	✓		
Alfina et al. (2023)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Naeem (2021)		✓		
Leong et al. (2021)			✓	

3. Research Conceptual Framework Propositions

3.1 Online Platform Adoption and Fear of Missing Out

Online platform adoption is commonly explained through the TAM (Marikyan et al., 2023), which emphasises cognitive evaluations of PU and PEOU as primary drivers of technology acceptance (Davis, 1989). However, digital consumption environments increasingly involve social visibility, real-time interaction, and promotional intensity, which could not be fully captured by purely rational models. Consequently, recent studies extend technology-acceptance frameworks by incorporating psychological and affective factors such as computer anxiety and technology addiction, improving explanatory power in online settings (Mariani et al., 2022; Paiman & Fauzi, 2024; Zoraifi et al., 2024).

Within this broader view, platform acceptance not only enables functional use but also increases consumers' exposure to socially embedded stimuli, such as peer activity, influencers' content, and limited-time promotions (Aaron Aziz et al., 2024; Hmurovic et al., 2023). Sustained engagement strengthens social comparison processes and heightens sensitivity to scarcity cues, thereby increasing the likelihood of FOMO (Bright & Logan, 2018; Hmurovic et al., 2023). As users become more active on digital platforms, they observe others' purchases, experiences, and endorsements, which could create anxiety about missing out on exclusive opportunities and trigger FOMO (Przybylski et al., 2013).

This mechanism is particularly visible in influencer-led contexts, where followers compare themselves with idealised reference figures. Such comparisons intensify FOMO towards products and experiences promoted by influencers, ultimately shaping consumers' motivational states before purchase decisions occur (Dinh & Lee, 2024).

Evidence from emerging digital experiences also supports the argument that post-adoption engagement amplifies affective responses. For example, in augmented reality (AR) shopping, hedonic and experiential value, supported by vividness, interactivity, and immersion, enhance perceived information quality and realism, strengthening continued engagement and exposure to promotional cues (Caboni & Hagberg, 2019; Vonkeman et al., 2017). This sustained, socially saturated engagement context increases the likelihood of FOMO.

Overall, platform acceptance increases consumers' contact with social comparison and scarcity signals, which are central antecedents of FOMO and urgency-related motivation in online environments (Dinh & Lee, 2024). As consumers adopt and spend more time on online platforms, they are increasingly exposed to socially visible content, real-time engagement, and promotional cues. This repeated exposure intensifies social comparison processes and heightens awareness of others' activities and consumption experiences. Consequently, individuals might perceive a greater risk of missing out on socially valued opportunities, which triggers affective responses associated with FOMO. Therefore, previous studies lead to the following proposition:

P1: Online platform adoption is positively associated with FOMO.

3.2 Online Platform Adoption and Social Proof

Beyond usability and usefulness, technology usage is shaped by perceived credibility, trust, and risk, especially in online commerce, where uncertainty and information asymmetry are salient (Kim & Park, 2024). Even when consumers hold favourable attitudes towards technology, adoption might not translate immediately into sustained use unless trust and reassurance are sufficiently established (Mun, 2025). In platform-based commerce, adoption is therefore closely

tioned to the social information environment surrounding the platform, including real-time interaction, payment convenience, and visible consumer engagement (Yones & Muthaiyah, 2023).

Under the stimulus–organism–response (SOR) framework, platform characteristics (stimuli) such as performance expectations and ease of navigation shape internal states (organism), including satisfaction and trust, which subsequently influence behavioural responses such as engagement and purchase (Aung, 2020; Lamis et al., 2022). As consumers interact with a platform, they encounter UGC reviews, narratives, blogs, and ratings, which provide diagnostic information and reduce perceived risk when the content is clear, balanced, and credible (Erkan & Evans, 2018). Such content also shapes brand perceptions and strengthens behavioural intentions, particularly when consumers could visualise real-life product use through authentic accounts (Leong et al., 2021; Yones & Muthaiyah, 2023). Recommendations from close contacts or experts further accelerate acceptance by offering social validation that lowers security and privacy concerns (Alenizi, 2023).

Critically, platform adoption is not only an individual decision but also a collective signal. As more users adopt and interact, they create observable traces such as ratings volume, review density, and trending indicators that function as social proof and reinforce perceived popularity and reliability (Roethke et al., 2020). Consequently, platform adoption not only reflects individual usage but also facilitates the creation and amplification of social proof within digital ecosystems. Hence, the following proposition:

P2: Online platform adoption is positively associated with social proof.

3.3 Online Platform Adoption and Purchasing Behaviour

Online platform adoption is consistently associated with purchasing behaviour because it lowers friction and increases transactional confidence. When consumers perceive platforms as easy to use, convenient, secure, and credible, they report stronger buying intentions and a greater tendency towards impulsive purchasing (Y. Wang et al., 2020). Evidence also shows that adopting embedded payment systems facilitates immediate purchase decisions by reducing procedural barriers at the point of transaction (Nigam et al., 2023).

Emerging technologies further strengthen this adoption–purchase link by improving diagnostics and confidence. For example, AR-based virtual product trials could stimulate immediate purchasing, particularly for tactile categories such as cosmetics and apparel, by reducing uncertainty and enabling more vivid product evaluation (Le & Van Nguyen, 2025). Similarly, AI-based recommendation features increase purchase intention when they improve perceived personalisation and product–consumer fit (Y. Wang et al., 2024). In parallel, platform trust often functions as a key mechanism through which acceptance translates into purchasing outcomes (Alfina et al., 2023).

Finally, adoption could shape not only purchase incidence but also economic valuation. When platform credibility is strengthened by verification mechanisms such as blockchain-enabled provenance, consumers might exhibit greater WTP, particularly for products requiring authenticity assurance (Fajer et al., 2023). Taken together, platform adoption enhances both the immediacy and intensity of purchasing responses through usability, trust, and technology-enabled confidence. Therefore, previous studies lead to the following proposition:

P3: Online platform adoption is positively associated with purchasing behaviour.

3.4 Social Proof and FOMO

Social proof is a key antecedent of FOMO because it increases the salience of what others are doing, owning, or endorsing, thereby intensifying social comparison and perceived opportunity loss (Dinh & Lee, 2024; Przybylski et al., 2013). When consumers receive recommendations from friends, peers, or influencers, they not only infer credibility but might also experience urgency-driven motivation to avoid missing out on socially validated opportunities (Chakraborty & Bhat, 2018). Social proof reduces perceived risk and increases perceived value through informational reassurance, making products and platforms feel both credible and socially desirable (Noor, 2024; Palamidovska-Sterjadovska et al., 2025).

In digital marketing, UGC and eWOM amplify these effects by making popularity cues visible at scale such as review volume, ratings, “most purchased” signals, and trend metrics thereby increasing consumers’ attention and urgency (Hilverda et al., 2018; Pooja & Upadhyaya, 2024; Roethke et al., 2020). These cues are especially influential when they communicate “collective endorsement,” which not only validates quality but also frames the opportunity as time-sensitive or scarce. As a result, social proof becomes a psychological trigger that intensifies FOMO and accelerates decision-making. Thus, the foregoing studies lead to the following proposition:

P4: Social proof is positively associated with FOMO.

3.5 Social Proof and Purchasing Behaviour

Social proof also directly shapes purchasing behaviour by functioning as a heuristic that reduces uncertainty and shortens deliberation (Li et al., 2021; Y. Wang et al., 2024). In online environments, consumers often infer product quality and platform reliability from others’ actions, especially when personal evaluation is costly or risky (Li et al., 2021). During the COVID-19 pandemic, for example, panic buying was amplified by social-media-based evidence of others’ purchasing behaviour, demonstrating how social proof could shift both risk perception and action propensity (Naeem, 2021).

Consumers rely on multiple sources of social proof, such as peer reviews, experts’ opinions, influencers’ endorsements, and support from close social groups to justify decisions and reduce perceived risk (J. Wang et al., 2022). As digital networks expand and information becomes more socially visible, social proof increasingly guides both purchase intention and actual buying behaviour by signalling credibility, popularity, and normative appropriateness. This leads to the following proposition:

P5: Social proof is positively associated with purchasing behaviour.

3.6 Relationship Between FOMO and Purchasing Behaviour

FOMO is grounded in unmet psychological needs and social comparison processes, which make individuals sensitive to exclusion and perceived opportunity loss (Sha et al., 2019). Research identifies multiple psychosocial antecedents linked to FOMO, including life satisfaction, self-concept insecurity, fear of rejection, and the desire for social acceptance (Ilyas et al., 2022; Z. Zhang et al., 2020). In digital environments where social information is continuous and public, these antecedents are frequently activated by trending content, influencers’ lifestyles, and scarcity-based promotions.

Consequently, marketers increasingly operationalise FOMO through time-limited offers, promotional notifications, and exclusivity messaging that heighten urgency and engagement

(Cengiz & Şenel, 2024). FOMO shapes consumer responses across affective, cognitive, and behavioural pathways. It could intensify emotional attachment and arousal, alter cognitive evaluations through constant information monitoring (sometimes leading to fatigue), and ultimately provoke impulsive purchases or premium WTP to avoid missing opportunities (Bright & Logan, 2018; Parveen et al., 2022). In this framework, FOMO represents a proximal motivational mechanism that translates social stimuli into purchasing outcomes, consistent with consumer-behaviour perspectives that position affective and cognitive reactions as drivers of behaviour in response to environmental cues (Alenizi, 2023; Alfina et al., 2023; Hodgkinson, 2019). Hence, the following proposition:

P6: FOMO is positively associated with purchasing behaviour.

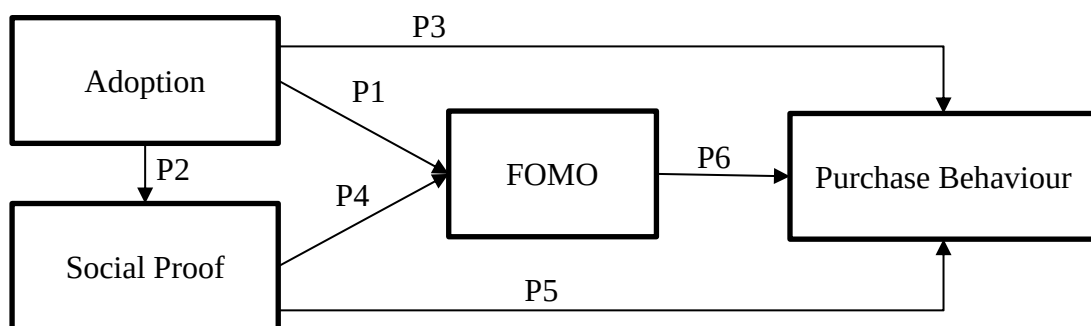


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 presents a conceptual framework that extends the TAM by integrating psychosocial and affective mechanisms that are increasingly central to consumer decision-making in digital commerce environments. While TAM explains online platform adoption primarily through rational evaluations (e.g., PU and PEOU), contemporary online consumption is also shaped by socially embedded cues and emotion-based urgency that could accelerate behavioural responses (Davis, 1989; Przybylski et al., 2013). Accordingly, the framework incorporates FOMO and social proof as core explanatory constructs linking online platform adoption to purchasing behaviour. FOMO reflects an anxiety-driven motivation to avoid missing valued opportunities and is frequently activated in digital contexts through scarcity appeals, temporal urgency cues (e.g., flash sales), and intensified social comparison, particularly via influencer-generated content and highly visible peer activity (Dinh & Lee, 2022; Good & Hyman, 2021). These triggers could heighten arousal and shorten deliberation, thereby strengthening engagement and increasing purchase likelihood.

In parallel, social proof, operationalised through peer evaluations, expert endorsements, ratings, and UGC, functions as a credibility and reassurance signal that reduces perceived risk and strengthens trust in both the platform and product offering (Erkan & Evans, 2018; Mavlanova et al., 2016; Robles-Estrada et al., 2020). Beyond its direct effect on purchase intentions, social proof could intensify FOMO by making popularity, trends, and others' behaviour more salient, thereby amplifying perceived opportunity loss and urgency. The model is theoretically anchored in the stimulus–organism–response (SOR) framework: digital marketplace stimuli (e.g., UGC volume, influencers' endorsements, scarcity messages) influence internal organism states (e.g., trust,

perceived risk, affective urgency/FOMO), which in turn translate into behavioural responses such as platform engagement and purchasing behaviour. Taken together, the proposed framework offers a coherent lens for analysing how technology acceptance, social influence mechanisms, and psychological motivators converge to explain purchasing behaviour in online platform contexts.

4. Method

A theory-driven systematic literature review was adopted in this study to construct an integrative framework linking social proof, FOMO, online platform adoption, and purchasing behaviour. The review followed a structured protocol designed to ensure transparency and conceptual rigour. Peer-reviewed articles were retrieved from the Scopus and Web of Science databases using combinations of the keywords: Technology Acceptance Model, TAM, social proof, electronic word of mouth, FOMO, scarcity, online purchasing behaviour, and social commerce. The search focused on publications in marketing, information systems, and consumer psychology journals from 2000 to 2025. Articles were screened based on (1) theoretical relevance to digital consumption, (2) empirical robustness or conceptual contribution, and (3) citation impact within their respective domains.

Following screening, an iterative thematic synthesis was conducted. Recurring mechanisms were identified, including credibility-enhancing signals (e.g., reviews and endorsements), social comparison processes (e.g., influencers' visibility), and scarcity-induced urgency. These mechanisms were organised into higher-order constructs and integrated within a stimulus–organism–response (SOR) structure to clarify directional relationships. Online platform adoption was conceptualised as an enabling condition, social proof as an external stimulus, and FOMO as an affective mediator influencing purchasing behaviour. To enhance empirical applicability, established measurement traditions for TAM constructs (Davis, 1989), FOMO (Przybylski et al., 2013), and related social proof variables (Mavlanova et al., 2016) were reviewed to inform future operationalisation. The resulting framework advances theoretically derived propositions and provides a foundation for subsequent quantitative validation.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

5.1 Discussion

These findings underscore the central role of social proof in shaping purchasing behaviour through affective mechanisms. Specifically, the analysis suggests that social proof exerts its strongest influence indirectly, by activating FOMO, which in turn drives urgency-based purchasing responses. Visible indicators of popularity, such as peer endorsements, influencers' recommendations, and engagement metrics, heighten consumers' sensitivity to social comparison and perceived opportunity loss (Dinh & Lee, 2022; Mun, 2025). This psychological pressure translates into increased purchase intention, impulsive buying, and responsiveness to scarcity cues. In this respect, social proof functions not only as a cognitive signal of credibility but also as an emotional trigger that accelerates decision-making through affective pathways (Alfina et al., 2023; Przybylski et al., 2013).

From a theoretical standpoint, these insights extend the TAM by embedding psychosocial dynamics within its traditionally rational structure. TAM explains why consumers adopt digital platforms by evaluating their usefulness and ease of use (Davis, 1989). However, once adoption occurs, consumers enter socially saturated environments where exposure to reviews,

endorsements, and visible consumption patterns shapes internal emotional states. By integrating these processes within an SOR framework, the present study clarifies how digital stimuli (social proof cues) influence organismic states (FOMO, urgency, perceived trust), which subsequently produce behavioural outcomes. This layered explanation advances digital marketing theory by reconciling cognitive adoption mechanisms with socially induced emotional responses in online commerce settings.

These findings also carry important managerial implications. Social proof strategies could enhance trust and engagement when grounded in authenticity. Transparent UGC, credible endorsement partnerships, and accurate visibility metrics strengthen perceived legitimacy and long-term brand equity (Jaworski, 2024). Conversely, artificially amplifying popularity signals might generate short-term attention but risks undermining credibility and post-purchase satisfaction. Firms deploying scarcity-based promotions and urgency-driven messaging should ensure alignment between emotional appeals and actual value delivery. Ethical consistency between communication strategies and consumer experience is essential for sustaining trust and repeat purchasing behaviour.

Several directions for future research emerge. Longitudinal studies are needed to assess whether FOMO-driven purchases lead to durable satisfaction or subsequent regret, thereby clarifying the long-term consequences of urgency-based marketing strategies. Future research should also examine boundary conditions by testing moderating variables such as cultural orientation, digital literacy, and personality traits, which might influence susceptibility to social proof and FOMO. Finally, differentiating among types of social proof—peer-generated, influencer-generated, and algorithmically curated popularity signals—would provide greater precision in understanding how various forms of social validation shape emotional and behavioural outcomes. Such an inquiry would strengthen the model's generalisability and contribute to a more nuanced understanding of digital persuasion across diverse market contexts.

5.2 Conclusion

This study develops a conceptual framework that integrates social proof and FOMO within a technology-acceptance perspective to explain purchasing behaviour in digital environments. The model proposes that socially visible cues such as peer recommendations, influencers' endorsements, and UGC function as external stimuli that enhance perceived credibility and popularity. Exposure to these signals heightens FOMO, understood as an anxiety-driven motivation to avoid missed opportunities (Przybylski et al., 2013). FOMO, in turn, operates as an affective mechanism that translates social validation into urgency-driven purchasing responses. By conceptualising FOMO as the mediating link between social proof and behavioural outcomes, this study extends TAM (Davis, 1989) beyond its traditional cognitive foundations. While TAM explains initial platform adoption through PU and ease of use, the present framework clarifies how post-adoption engagement within socially saturated platforms activates emotional processes that shape decision-making. In doing so, this study reconciles rational evaluation with socially induced affect, offering a more comprehensive account of technology-mediated consumption. From a practical standpoint, these findings underscore the importance of deploying social proof strategies responsibly. Transparent engagement metrics, authentic reviews, and credible endorsements could strengthen trust and perceived value. However, urgency-based tactics that trigger FOMO might be aligned with genuine product quality and operational reliability to sustain long-term customer

relationships. Overall, this study provides a theoretically grounded foundation for future empirical investigation and contributes to a deeper understanding of how social influence and emotional urgency interact within contemporary digital marketplaces.

6. Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

This study is conceptual, and the proposed framework has not yet been subjected to empirical testing. Future research should validate the model using quantitative approaches such as structural equation modelling to examine mediation effects and assess the robustness of the proposed relationships. Experimental designs might further clarify causal mechanisms, particularly in testing how different forms of social proof and scarcity cues activate FOMO and influence purchasing behaviour. Secondly, the framework does not explicitly account for potential boundary conditions. Susceptibility to social proof and FOMO might vary across cultural orientations, generational cohorts, levels of digital literacy, platform types, and product categories. Multi-group and cross-cultural analyses would enhance the model's generalisability and clarify contextual differences in digitally mediated purchasing processes. Thirdly, although established scales exist for TAM and FOMO (Davis, 1989; Przybylski et al., 2013), measurement refinement might be required to reflect evolving digital features, including algorithm-driven popularity indicators, live commerce environments, and immersive technologies. Careful scale adaptation and validation would be essential for future empirical applications. Finally, longitudinal study is needed to determine whether FOMO-driven purchases generate sustained satisfaction or lead to post-purchase regret. Incorporating additional psychological variables such as trust, perceived risk, and anticipated regret might deepen understanding of how social influence and emotional urgency interact over time. Together, these directions offer a structured agenda for advancing socially and emotionally informed models of digital purchasing behaviour.

References

- Aaron Aziz, Yuna Yuna, & Jimmy Choo. (2024). E-commerce Adoption and Consumer Behavior in the Post-Pandemic Era: A Case Study of Southeast Asia. *Proceeding of The International Conference on Economics and Business*, 3(1), 47–53.
<https://doi.org/10.55606/iceb.v3i1.465>
- Alenizi, A. S. (2023). Understanding the subjective realities of social proof and usability for mobile banking adoption: Using triangulation of qualitative methods. *Journal of Islamic Marketing*, 14(8), 2027–2044.
- Alfina, Hartini, S., & Mardhiyah, D. (2023). FOMO related consumer behaviour in marketing context: A systematic literature review. *Cogent Business & Management*, 10(3), 2250033.
- Al-Qaysi, N., Mohamad-Nordin, N., & Al-Emran, M. (2020). Employing the technology acceptance model in social media: A systematic review. *Education and Information Technologies*, 25(6), 4961–5002.
- Argan, M., & Argan, M. T. (2019). Toward a new understanding of FoMO: 'Fomsumerism'. *Pazarlama Teorisi ve Uygulamaları Dergisi*, 5(2), 277–302.
- Aung, Y. T. Z. (2020). The Stimulus-Organism-Response (Sor) Framework For Cosmetics Brand Management As Suggested By Consumer Brand Perceptions Stimulated By

- Logistics-Marketing Mix Antecedents: Implications For New Start-Up Lanadene. Nimitmai Review Journal, 3(2), 36–48.
- Bajunaied, K., Hussin, N., & Kamarudin, S. (2023). Behavioral intention to adopt FinTech services: An extension of unified theory of acceptance and use of technology. *Journal of Open Innovation: Technology, Market, and Complexity*, 9(1), 100010.
- Bedi, S. S., Kaur, S., & Lal, A. K. (2017). Understanding web experience and perceived web enjoyment as antecedents of online purchase intention. *Global Business Review*, 18(2), 465–477.
- Begho, T., & Liu, S. (2024). Does social proof and herd behaviour drive food choices of consumers? *British Food Journal*, 126(3), 1050–1064.
- Bhagat, S., & Kim, D. J. (2023). Examining users' news sharing behaviour on social media: Role of perception of online civic engagement and dual social influences. *Behaviour & Information Technology*, 42(8), 1194–1215.
- Bilal, M., Zhang, Y., Cai, S., Akram, U., & Luu, N. T. M. (2023). Unlocking luxury purchase intentions in China: A study of consumer attitude, perceived value, and the moderating effect of perceived enjoyment. *Acta Psychologica*, 240, 104048.
- Bright, L. F., & Logan, K. (2018). Is my fear of missing out (FOMO) causing fatigue? Advertising, social media fatigue, and the implications for consumers and brands. *Internet Research*, 28(5), 1213–1227.
- Caboni, F., & Hagberg, J. (2019). Augmented reality in retailing: A review of features, applications and value. *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, 47(11), 1125–1140.
- Cengiz, H., & Şenel, M. (2024). The effect of perceived scarcity on impulse-buying tendencies in a fast fashion context: A mediating and multigroup analysis. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management: An International Journal*, 28(3), 405–425.
- Chakraborty, U., & Bhat, S. (2018). Credibility of online reviews and its impact on brand image. *Management Research Review*, 41(1), 148–164.
- Davis, F. D. (1989). Perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, and user acceptance of information technology. *MIS Quarterly*, 319–340.
- Dinh, T. C. T., & Lee, Y. (2022). “I want to be as trendy as influencers”—how “fear of missing out” leads to buying intention for products endorsed by social media influencers. *Journal of Research in Interactive Marketing*, 16(3), 346–364.
- Dinh, T. C. T., & Lee, Y. (2024). Social media influencers and followers' conspicuous consumption: The mediation of fear of missing out and materialism. *Heliyon*, 10(16).
- Erkan, I., & Evans, C. (2018). Social media or shopping websites? The influence of eWOM on consumers' online purchase intentions. *Journal of Marketing Communications*, 24(6), 617–632.
- Fajer, K., Alm, L., & Gerth, A. (2023). Building Blocks for a Better Buyer Experience: Consumer Perceptions of Blockchain Authentication Methods in Second-Hand Luxury E-Commerce.
- Good, M. C., & Hyman, M. R. (2021). Direct and indirect effects of fear-of-missing-out appeals on purchase likelihood. *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, 20(3), 564–576.
- Hilverda, F., Kuttschreuter, M., & Giebels, E. (2018). The effect of online social proof regarding organic food: Comments and likes on Facebook. *Frontiers in Communication*, 3, 30.

- Hmurovic, J., Lamberton, C., & Goldsmith, K. (2023). Examining the efficacy of time scarcity marketing promotions in online retail. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 60(2), 299–328.
- Hodkinson, C. (2019). ‘Fear of Missing Out’(FOMO) marketing appeals: A conceptual model. *Journal of Marketing Communications*, 25(1), 65–88.
- Ilyas, G., Rahmia, S., Tamsah, H., & Yusriadi, Y. (2022). Does fear of missing out give satisfaction in purchasing based on social media content? *International Journal of Data and Network Science*, 6(2), 409–418.
- Jaworski, B. (2024). The gestalt of customer centricity. *AMS Review*, 14(3–4), 297–297. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13162-024-00287-5>
- Kang, I., Cui, H., & Son, J. (2019). Conformity consumption behavior and FoMO. *Sustainability*, 11(17), 4734.
- Kar, A. K., & Kushwaha, A. K. (2023). Facilitators and barriers of artificial intelligence adoption in business—insights from opinions using big data analytics. *Information Systems Frontiers*, 25(4), 1351–1374.
- Khetarpal, M., & Singh, S. (2024). “Limited time offer”: Impact of time scarcity messages on consumer’s impulse purchase. *Journal of Promotion Management*, 30(2), 282–301.
- Kim, H., & Park, M. (2024). When digital celebrity talks to you: How human-like virtual influencers satisfy consumer’s experience through social presence on social media endorsements. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 76, 103581.
- Lamis, S. F., Handayani, P. W., & Fitriani, W. R. (2022). Impulse buying during flash sales in the online marketplace. *Cogent Business & Management*, 9(1), 2068402.
- Laudon, K. C., & Traver, C. G. (2021). *E-commerce 2020-2021: Business, technology, society*. Pearson.
- Lavuri, R., Jindal, A., & Akram, U. (2022). How perceived utilitarian and hedonic value influence online impulse shopping in India? Moderating role of perceived trust and perceived risk. *International Journal of Quality and Service Sciences*, 14(4), 615–634.
- Le, G. H. K., & Van Nguyen, K. (2025). The impact of augmented reality on impulse buying of makeup products on e-commerce platforms. *Ho chi minh city open university journal of science-economics and business administration*, 15(4).
- Leong, C.-M., Loi, A. M.-W., & Woon, S. (2021). The influence of social media eWOM information on purchase intention. *Journal of Marketing Analytics*, 10(2), 145.
- Li, J., Qi, J., Wu, L., Shi, N., Li, X., Zhang, Y., & Zheng, Y. (2021). The continued use of social commerce platforms and psychological anxiety—The roles of influencers, informational incentives and FoMO. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 18(22), 12254.
- Liao, C., Qiao, L., Wang, X., & Lu, S. (2022). Exploring food waste prevention through advent food consumption: The role of perceived concern, consumer value, and impulse buying. *Frontiers in Sustainable Food Systems*, 6, 988260.
- Liu, X. (2024). The impact of digital economy and digital transformation on corporate competitiveness. *International Journal of Social Sciences and Public Administration*, 4(1), 27–35.
- Mariani, M. M., Perez-Vega, R., & Wirtz, J. (2022). AI in marketing, consumer research and psychology: A systematic literature review and research agenda. *Psychology & Marketing*, 39(4), 755–776.

- Marikyan, D., Papagiannidis, S., & Stewart, G. (2023). Technology acceptance research: Meta-analysis. *Journal of Information Science*, 01655515231191177.
- Mavlanova, T., Benbunan-Fich, R., & Lang, G. (2016). The role of external and internal signals in E-commerce. *Decision Support Systems*, 87, 59–68.
- Mun, I. B. (2025). A study of the impact of ChatGPT self-efficacy on the information seeking behaviors in ChatGPT: The mediating roles of ChatGPT characteristics and utility. *Online Information Review*, 49(2), 373–394. <https://doi.org/10.1108/OIR-01-2024-0051>
- Naeem, M. (2021). The role of social media to generate social proof as engaged society for stockpiling behaviour of customers during Covid-19 pandemic. *Qualitative Market Research: An International Journal*, 24(3), 281–301.
- Nigam, A., Behl, A., Pereira, V., & Sangal, S. (2023). Impulse purchases during emergency situations: Exploring permission marketing and the role of blockchain. *Industrial Management & Data Systems*, 123(1), 155–187.
- Noor, N. (2024). Technology acceptance model in halal industries: A systematic literature review and research agenda. *Journal of Islamic Marketing*, 15(11), 3156–3173.
- Paiman, N., & Fauzi, M. A. (2024). Exploring determinants of social media addiction in higher education through the integrated lenses of technology acceptance model (TAM) and usage habit. *Journal of Applied Research in Higher Education*, 16(3), 776–803.
- Palamidovska-Sterjadovska, N., Rasul, T., Lim, W. M., Ciunova-Shuleska, A., Ladeira, W. J., De Oliveira Santini, F., & Bogoevska-Gavrilova, I. (2025). Service quality in mobile banking. *International Journal of Bank Marketing*.
- Parveen, H., Ajina, A., Habbas, N., Al-Faryan, M. A. S., & Habbas, A. (2022). Buy now or regret later: Social media-induced panic buying of medical supplies during COVID-19. *Innovative Marketing*, 18(3), 197–206.
- Plekhanov, D., Franke, H., & Netland, T. H. (2023). Digital transformation: A review and research agenda. *European Management Journal*, 41(6), 821–844.
- Pooja, K., & Upadhyaya, P. (2024). What makes an online review credible? A systematic review of the literature and future research directions. *Management Review Quarterly*, 74(2), 627–659.
- Przybylski, A. K., Murayama, K., DeHaan, C. R., & Gladwell, V. (2013). Motivational, emotional, and behavioral correlates of fear of missing out. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 29(4), 1841–1848.
- Pusenius, A. (2023). Effects of fomo marketing appeals on the likelihood of impulse buying.
- Putranto, P. (2025). The Application of Behaviorist Theory in Changing FoMO (Fear of Missing Out) Behavior in Generation Z. *American Journal of Economic and Management Business (AJEMB)*, 4(2), 115–123.
- Robles-Estrada, C., de la Torre-Enríquez, D.-I., & Suástegui-Ochoa, A.-A. (2020). The Trust on Social Networks and the Increased Social Commerce. *The future of work*, 121.
- Roethke, K., Klumpe, J., Adam, M., & Benlian, A. (2020). Social influence tactics in e-commerce onboarding: The role of social proof and reciprocity in affecting user registrations. *Decision Support Systems*, 131, 113268.
- Ruvio, A. A., & Belk, R. (2013). *The Routledge companion to identity and consumption*. Routledge.

- Sha, P., Sariyska, R., Riedl, R., Lachmann, B., & Montag, C. (2019). Linking internet communication and smartphone use disorder by taking a closer look at the Facebook and WhatsApp applications. *Addictive Behaviors Reports*, 9, 100148.
- Source of Asia. (2025, January 22). E-Commerce Market in Southeast Asia 2025-2026. <https://www.sourceofasia.com/e-commerce-market-in-southeast-asia-2025-2026/>
- Tran, V. D., Nguyen, M. D., & Luong, L. A. (2022). The effects of online credible review on brand trust dimensions and willingness to buy: Evidence from Vietnam consumers. *Cogent Business & Management*, 9(1), 2038840.
- Vonkeman, C., Verhagen, T., & Van Dolen, W. (2017). Role of local presence in online impulse buying. *Information & Management*, 54(8), 1038–1048.
- Wang, J., Shahzad, F., Ahmad, Z., Abdullah, M., & Hassan, N. M. (2022). Trust and consumers' purchase intention in a social commerce platform: A meta-analytic approach. *Sage Open*, 12(2), 21582440221091262.
- Wang, Y., Hasan, H., & Mohd Nor, N. H. (2024). Trust as a Mediator in Live Streaming Marketing: An Investigation of its Influence on Purchase Intention in the Context of Influencer Marketing Factors. 312–317.
- Wang, Y., Wang, S., Wang, J., Wei, J., & Wang, C. (2020). An empirical study of consumers' intention to use ride-sharing services: Using an extended technology acceptance model. *Transportation*, 47, 397–415.
- Widjaya, S. L., Prathivi, M. D. G., & Juniarto, A. (2024). Social Media Fear of Missing out (Fomo) to Gen Z: The Role of Green Marketing Communication And Social Influence to Purchase Intention. *Media Bina Ilmiah*, 18(11), 2893–2900.
- Wu, B., Liu, C. Z., & Zhu, H. (2025). Online creators' strategic cooperation in two-sided synchronous UGC market: Empirical evidence from a livestreaming platform. *Information & Management*, 62(2), 104095.
- Yones, P. C. P., & Muthaiyah, S. (2023). eWOM via the TikTok application and its influence on the purchase intention of something products. *Asia Pacific Management Review*, 28(2), 174–184.
- Zhang, J., Jiang, N., Turner, J. J., & Pahlevan-Sharif, S. (2022). The impact of scarcity on consumers' impulse buying based on the SOR theory. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 13, 792419.
- Zhang, Z., Jiménez, F. R., & Cicala, J. E. (2020). Fear of missing out scale: A self-concept perspective. *Psychology & Marketing*, 37(11), 1619–1634.
- Zhou, X., & Lertatthakornkit, T. (2024). Influence Mechanism of Influencer Marketing through Perceived Value and Purchase Intention on Consumers' Cosmetics Purchase Behavior. *Nakhonratchasima College Journal (Humanities and Social Sciences)*, 18(1), 285–301.
- Zoraifi, R., Agung, I. W. P., & Arifin, S. (2024). Exploring the Impact of Fear of Missing Out on Perceived Ease of Use and Usage Decisions in Digital Platforms. *Journal of Advanced Studies in Management*, 1(2), 81–88.