Examining The Relationship Between Fear Of Missing Out And Online Impulse Buying Behaviour Among Beauty Care Consumers

Dr. Vinod Kumar[1], Dr. S. S. Maniraja[2]
[1]*Associate professor, Department of Business Administration, Kalagnar Karunanidhi Government Arts College, Tiruvannamalai*
[2]*Associate Professor, Research Supervisor & Guide, PG & Research Department of Commerce, Muthurangam Government Arts College (Autonomous), Vellore*
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Abstract*—Online beauty shopping is shaped by emotion at least as much as by planning. This study looked at how fear of missing out (FoMO) relates to online impulse buying among beauty care consumers, with social media engagement tested as a mediator and promotional and scarcity cues as a moderator. A cross-sectional survey was conducted in Vellore district, Tamilnadu, using a stratified quota sample of consumers aged 18–37 years who had purchased beauty care products online at least twice in the previous three months. Of the 430 questionnaires circulated, 384 usable responses were analysed using reliability and validity checks, independent-samples t tests, one-way ANOVA, Pearson's correlation, hierarchical regression, bootstrapped mediation and simple-slope analysis. FoMO showed a strong positive link with online impulse buying (r = .48; β = .38 in the full model, p < .001) and emerged as the strongest predictor among the variables examined. Social media engagement partly mediated this link (indirect effect b = .077, 95% CI [.044, .115]), while promotional and scarcity cues made it stronger (interaction β = .10, p = .020). Female consumers reported higher FoMO than male consumers, but neither FoMO nor impulse buying differed significantly across age groups. The results suggest that beauty brands and platforms should use urgency cues responsibly and that consumers need support in recognising FoMO-driven purchases.

***Index Terms*—Fear Of Missing Out, Online Impulse Buying, Beauty Care Products, Social Media Engagement, Scarcity Cues, Consumer Behaviour**

I. INTRODUCTION

Beauty care, spanning skincare, haircare, make-up, fragrance and personal grooming, is now among the busiest categories in Indian online retail. Beauty-specialist apps, general marketplaces, social commerce pages and quick-commerce services all chase the same shopper, using frequent launches, flash sales, countdown timers and influencer endorsements. Under these conditions, a good share of purchases happen on the spot and with little forethought. Impulse buying is classically described as an unplanned purchase triggered by a sudden, often forceful urge (Rook, 1987), one that is shaped by normative and emotional factors as well as by the shopping environment (Beatty & Ferrell, 1998; Rook & Fisher, 1995).

Fear of missing out (FoMO), the persistent worry that other people are enjoying rewarding experiences without oneself (Przybylski et al., 2013), is one emotional influence that has drawn increasing interest. Social media puts this worry in front of consumers daily, as they watch peers and influencers try the latest serum, palette or fragrance. Marketers also exploit it on purpose through limited-edition drops and "last few hours" messages (Hodkinson, 2019). Beauty care suits this topic well: appearance is socially visible, trends move quickly, and prices are fairly low, so acting on an urge costs the shopper very little.

Earlier work on online impulse buying has looked at website features and store beliefs (Park et al., 2012; Verhagen & van Dolen, 2011) and at social commerce influences (Xiang et al., 2016). Chan et al. (2017) notes in their literature analysis that psychological antecedents have received less attention than technological ones. Studies that tie FoMO directly to impulse purchases of beauty products, and that explain how and under what conditions the tie holds, are

scarce, particularly for consumers outside India's large cities. This study therefore (i) measures the association between FoMO and online impulse buying, (ii) tests social media engagement as a mediating mechanism, (iii) tests promotional and scarcity cues as a boundary condition, and (iv) compares consumers by gender and age.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Fear of missing out

Przybylski et al. (2013) ground FoMO in self-determination theory: when the need for relatedness goes unmet, people keep themselves constantly tuned in to what others are doing. They also built a widely used scale to measure it (see also Deci & Ryan, 2000). Social comparison theory adds that people judge themselves by looking at others (Festinger, 1954), and beauty content feeds directly on this tendency. In a marketing context, Hodkinson (2019) proposes that FoMO appeals work through social comparison and scarcity, and Good and Hyman (2020) report that FoMO is linked to a higher likelihood of purchase.

Online impulse buying

Rook (1987) characterises the buying impulse as spontaneous, compelling and often hedonically complex. Rook and Fisher (1995) show that whether a shopper acts on the urge depends partly on a normative judgement about whether buying on impulse is acceptable. Beatty and Ferrell (1998) name the urge to buy and positive affect as key precursors. Online, little effort separates desire from payment, and Verhagen and van Dolen (2011) found that beliefs about an online store shape the urge to buy impulsively. The stimulus–organism–response framework (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974) is commonly used to interpret such results: environmental stimuli act on the consumer's internal state, which then produces a behavioural response. Here, FoMO is treated as the internal state, social media content and promotional cues as the stimuli, and impulse buying as the response.

Social media engagement and promotional cues

Research on social commerce indicates that interacting with creators and communities encourages impulse buying (Xiang et al., 2016), and that the value and credibility of a message determine how consumers react to influencer content (Lou & Yuan, 2019). Consumers high in FoMO tend to watch social platforms more closely, so they are likely to engage more with beauty content, and that engagement in turn exposes them to more triggers for unplanned purchases. Scarcity and urgency are well-known principles of persuasion (Cialdini, 2009); online they take the form of limited-time offers, low-stock alerts and countdown timers. Such cues should make buying more tempting for everyone and be most effective for consumers who already fear missing an opportunity (see Aiken & West, 1991, for the logic of testing such interactions).

III. HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

- *H_1:* FoMO has a positive effect on online impulse buying behaviour.
- *H_2:* FoMO has a positive effect on social media engagement.
- *H_3:* Social media engagement has a positive effect on online impulse buying behaviour.
- *H_4:* Promotional and scarcity cues have a positive effect on online impulse buying behaviour.
- *H_5:* Social media engagement mediates the relationship between FoMO and online impulse buying.
- *H_6:* Promotional and scarcity cues positively moderate the relationship between FoMO and online impulse buying.
- *H_7:* FoMO and online impulse buying differ significantly between female and male consumers.
- *H_8:* FoMO and online impulse buying differ significantly across age groups.

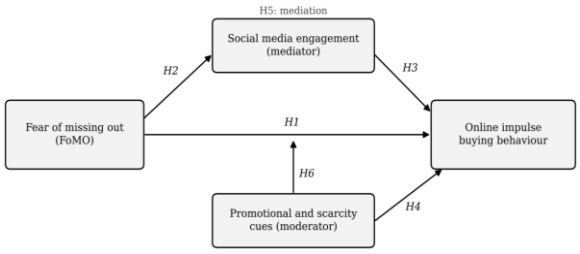


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of the Study

IV. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To assess the levels of FoMO, social media engagement, promotional and scarcity cues and online impulse buying among beauty care consumers.

- To examine how FoMO is related to online impulse buying behaviour.
- To test whether social media engagement mediates that relationship.
- To test whether promotional and scarcity cues moderate it.
- To compare FoMO and online impulse buying by gender and age group, and to propose practical measures.

V. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research design

This study followed a descriptive and explanatory cross-sectional survey design with a quantitative approach. All constructs were measured in a single survey, and the hypothesised relationships were tested through correlation, regression, mediation and moderation analysis.

Study area and population

The study was carried out in Vellore district, Tamil Nadu. The target population consisted of consumers aged 18–37 years who (a) had bought beauty care products online at least twice in the previous three months, (b) used social media daily, and (c) were willing to participate.

Sampling design and sample size

A stratified quota sampling design was adopted. The district was split into three residence strata: Vellore city (urban), municipalities and town panchayats (semi-urban), and village panchayats (rural). A proportional quota of 50:28:22 was set, giving targets of 192, 108 and 84 respondents. In each stratum, trained investigators approached eligible consumers at colleges, workplaces, beauty outlets and residential areas, and an online link was also shared through personal networks. Since no list of online beauty shoppers exists, selection within the strata was non-probability. Cochran's (1977) formula for an unknown proportion (p = 0.5, 95% confidence, ±5% error) gives $n = (1.96^2 \times 0.5 \times 0.5) / 0.05^2 = 384.2$, so 430 questionnaires were distributed to allow for incomplete responses. After incomplete and patterned responses were removed, 384 usable questionnaires (89.3%) remained. This met the required size and gave 19 respondents per questionnaire item, above the 10:1 guideline (Hair et al., 2019).

Instrument and data collection

Data were collected with a structured questionnaire. Part A covered demographic and shopping details, and Part B held four five-item scales (Table 1) rated on a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). Items were adapted from earlier studies and reworded for beauty care. A pilot with 40 consumers (excluded from the sample) gave Cronbach's alpha above .70 for every scale. Secondary data came from journals, books and industry sources.

Table 1: Measurement Instrument

Construct	Items	Sample item	Adapted from
Fear of missing out (FoMO)	5	"I feel left out when my peers talk about a beauty product I have not tried."	Przybylski et al. (2013); Good & Hyman (2020)
Social media engagement (SME)	5	"I spend a lot of time viewing beauty reels, tutorials and reviews."	Xiang et al. (2016); Lou & Yuan (2019)
Promotional and scarcity cues (PSC)	5	"Flash sales and countdown timers create a sense of urgency."	Cialdini (2009); Park et al. (2012)
Online impulse buying (OIB)	5	"I buy beauty products online on the spur of the moment."	Rook & Fisher (1995); Verhagen & van Dolen (2011)

Source: Compiled by the author.

Data analysis techniques

Data were coded and analysed using statistical software. Percentage analysis profiled the sample, while mean scores and ranks summarised the items. Scales were assessed through Cronbach's (1951) alpha, composite reliability (CR) and average variance extracted (AVE) (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). Group comparisons used Welch's t test and one-way ANOVA, with Cohen's (1988) d and η^2 as effect sizes. Relationships were tested through Pearson's correlation and hierarchical multiple regression, with the interaction term built from mean-centred variables. Mediation relied on 5,000 bootstrap resamples (Hayes, 2018; Preacher & Hayes, 2008), and the interaction was probed through

simple slopes at ±1 standard deviation of the moderator (Aiken & West, 1991).

Ethical considerations and limitations

Participation was voluntary, informed consent was taken, and responses were kept anonymous. The study is limited to a single district, uses quota-based non-probability sampling and self-reported data, and its cross-sectional design shows association rather than proven causation. Female respondents also dominate the sample, as is common in beauty care research.

VI. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table 2: Demographic Profile of Respondents (N = 384)

Basis	Category	Frequency	Per cent
Gender	Female	262	68.2
	Male	122	31.8
Age (years)	18–22	118	30.7
	23–27	126	32.8
	28–32	86	22.4
	33–37	54	14.1
Residence	Urban (Vellore city)	192	50.0
	Semi-urban	108	28.1
	Rural	84	21.9
Education	Higher secondary or below	38	9.9
	Undergraduate	178	46.4
	Postgraduate	134	34.9
	Professional / doctoral	34	8.9
Occupation	Student	152	39.6
	Private employee	98	25.5
	Government employee	22	5.7
	Self-employed / business	58	15.1
	Home-maker	36	9.4
	Others	18	4.7
Monthly income (₹)	Up to 25,000	128	33.3
	25,001–50,000	140	36.5
	50,001–75,000	72	18.8
	Above 75,000	44	11.5
	Below 1,000	96	25.0
Monthly spending on beauty care (₹)	1,000–2,000	142	37.0
	2,001–3,000	88	22.9
	Above 3,000	58	15.1

Source: Calculated by the author from primary data.

Women make up 68.2% of the sample and men 31.8%. The 23–27 age group is the largest (32.8%), followed by 18–22 years (30.7%), and the sample is young overall, with 85.9% aged 32 or below. Half of the respondents live in Vellore city (50.0%), 28.1% in semi-urban and 21.9% in rural areas, in line with the quotas. Undergraduates (46.4%) and students (39.6%) are the biggest education and occupation groups, and 36.5% earn a personal monthly income of ₹25,001–50,000. The most common monthly spend on beauty care is ₹1,000–2,000 (37.0%), and 38.0% spend more than ₹2,000.

Table 3: Beauty Products Bought and Platforms Used Online (Multiple Response)

Rank	Category / platform	Frequency	Per cent
A. Beauty products bought online in the last three months			
1	Skincare	301	78.4
2	Haircare	276	71.9
3	Make-up and cosmetics	244	63.5
4	Personal grooming and hygiene	188	49.0
5	Fragrances	142	37.0
6	Nail care	96	25.0
B. Platforms used for buying beauty products			
1	General marketplaces (e.g., Amazon, Flipkart)	291	75.8
2	Beauty-specialist apps and websites	258	67.2
3	Social commerce (Instagram shops, Meesho)	177	46.1
4	Fashion and lifestyle apps	164	42.7
5	Quick-commerce apps	132	34.4
6	Brand websites	109	28.4

Source: Calculated by the author from primary data. Percentages are of 384 respondents and exceed 100 in total.

Skincare (78.4%) and haircare (71.9%) are the most frequently bought categories, followed by make-up

(63.5%). General marketplaces (75.8%) and beauty-specialist platforms (67.2%) lead as channels, although social commerce (46.1%) and quick-commerce apps (34.4%) already serve a sizeable share of shoppers.

Table 4: Reliability and Convergent Validity of the Constructs

Construct	Items	α	CR	AVE	Loading range
Fear of missing out (FoMO)	5	.888	.918	.691	.81–.84
Social media engagement (SME)	5	.877	.910	.670	.80–.86
Promotional and scarcity cues (PSC)	5	.869	.905	.656	.78–.84
Online impulse buying (OIB)	5	.867	.904	.653	.78–.82

Source: Calculated by the author from primary data. CR = composite reliability; AVE = average variance extracted; loadings from a one-factor solution for each scale.

All scales are reliable (α = .867–.888; CR above .90), and AVE values (.653–.691) exceed .50, which supports convergent validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The square root of each AVE (about .81–.83) is higher than the largest inter-construct correlation (.48), supporting discriminant validity. The first unrotated factor explained only 32.3% of the variance across the 20 items, well under 50%, so serious common method bias is unlikely (Podsakoff et al., 2003); the variance inflation factors of the predictors were also no higher than 1.18.

Table 5: Item-Level Mean Scores and Ranks

No.	Statement	Mean	SD	Rank
Fear of missing out (FoMO) (construct mean 3.43, SD 0.75)				
1	I fear that others are enjoying beauty products and trends that I am missing out on.	3.51	0.89	2
2	I get anxious when I see others using new beauty products that I do not own.	3.53	0.91	1
3	I feel left out when my peers talk about a beauty product I have not tried.	3.33	0.89	5
4	I worry that a beauty deal or limited launch will end before I act.	3.40	0.94	3
5	I keep checking beauty content online so that I do not miss anything new.	3.36	0.88	4
Social media engagement (SME) (construct mean 3.59, SD 0.73)				
1	I follow beauty influencers or brands on social media.	3.65	0.87	2
2	I spend a lot of time viewing beauty reels, tutorials and reviews.	3.71	0.92	1
3	Influencer posts make me want to try new beauty products.	3.60	0.88	3
4	I often see beauty products recommended by people I follow.	3.50	0.89	5
5	I interact (like, comment, save or share) with beauty content regularly.	3.52	0.88	4
Promotional and scarcity cues (PSC) (construct mean 3.68, SD 0.69)				
1	Limited-time offers push me to buy beauty products quickly.	3.76	0.83	1
2	"Only a few left" messages make me act at once.	3.63	0.93	4
3	Flash sales and countdown timers create a sense of urgency.	3.76	0.83	2
4	Free delivery or coupons tempt me to add beauty products I had not planned to buy.	3.69	0.85	3
5	Exclusive launches and early-access offers make me want to buy immediately.	3.54	0.83	5
Online impulse buying (OIB) (construct mean 3.28, SD 0.71)				
1	I often buy beauty products online without planning to.	3.31	0.85	2
2	I buy beauty products online on the spur of the moment.	3.34	0.91	1
3	I feel a sudden urge to purchase when I see a beauty product online.	3.17	0.86	5
4	I add products to my cart and complete payment without much thought.	3.29	0.90	3

No.	Statement	Mean	SD	Rank
5	I sometimes buy beauty products online that I later realise I did not need.	3.28	0.88	4

Source: Calculated by the author from primary data. Rank is within construct.

Promotional and scarcity cues recorded the highest construct mean (3.68), followed by social media engagement (3.59) and FoMO (3.43). Online impulse buying had the lowest mean (3.28), indicating that respondents see their impulse purchasing as moderate rather than habitual. The top-rated statement is "Limited-time offers push me to buy beauty products quickly." (3.76), showing how strongly time-limited offers resonate with shoppers, while the lowest is "I feel a sudden urge to purchase when I see a beauty product online." (3.17).

Within FoMO, anxiety on seeing others use new products (item 2, 3.53) and the fear that others are enjoying trends the respondent is missing (item 1, 3.51) are expressed most strongly, whereas feeling left out when peers discuss an untried product rank last (3.33). Within impulse buying, buying on the spur of the moment ranks first (3.34) and the sudden urge on seeing a product ranks last (3.17).

Table 6: Differences in FoMO and Online Impulse Buying by Gender and Age

Variable	Female *M* (*SD*)	Male *M* (*SD*)	Welch *t*	*p* (*d*)	18–22 *M*	23–27 *M*	28–32 *M* / 33–37 *M*	ANOVA *F*, *p* (η^2)
FoMO	3.50 (0.74)	3.26 (0.74)	2.98	.003 (.33)	3.53	3.42	3.32 / 3.39	1.43, .233 (.011)
Online impulse buying	3.31 (0.73)	3.21 (0.67)	1.32	.188 (.14)	3.36	3.28	3.25 / 3.13	1.40, .241 (.011)

Source: Calculated by the author from primary data. Gender: n = 262 female, 122 males. Age: n = 118, 126, 86 and 54. ANOVA df = 3, 380.

Female consumers scored significantly higher than male consumers on FoMO (3.50 vs 3.26; $t = 2.98$, $p = .003$, $d = .33$, a small-to-medium effect), but the gender gap in impulse buying was not significant (3.31 vs 3.21; $p = .188$). Across age groups, FoMO was highest among the youngest respondents (3.53) and impulse buying was lowest in the oldest group (3.13), yet neither difference reached significance ($p = .233$ and .241; $\eta^2 = .011$ for both). H_7 is therefore partly supported and H_8 is not supported.

Table 7: Correlation Matrix (N = 384)

Variable	FoMO	SME	PSC	OIB
FoMO	1	.37***	.15**	.48***
SME	.37***	1	.06	.37***
PSC	.15**	.06	1	.33***
OIB	.48***	.37***	.33***	1

Source: Calculated by the author from primary data. SME = social media engagement; PSC = promotional and scarcity cues; OIB = online impulse buying. * p < *.05*, ** p < *.01*, *** p < *.001 (two-tailed).*

FoMO correlates most strongly with online impulse buying ($r = .48$, $p < .001$). It is also positively related to social media engagement ($r = .37$) and, more weakly, to promotional and scarcity cues ($r = .15$, $p = .004$). Social media engagement ($r = .37$) and promotional cues ($r = .33$) are likewise significantly related to impulse buying. The two are practically unrelated to each other ($r = .06$, $p = .248$), so they act as separate influences.

Table 8: Hierarchical Regression Predicting Online Impulse Buying (Standardised β)

Predictor	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
FoMO	.48***	.36***	.38***
Social media engagement (SME)	–	.22***	.22***
Promotional and scarcity cues (PSC)	–	.27***	.26***
FoMO × PSC	–	–	.10*
R^2 (ΔR^2)	.23	.35 (.11)	.35 (.009)
Model *F* (df)	116.12 (1, 382) ***	66.79 (3, 380) ***	52.03 (4, 379) ***
Δ*F* (df)	–	32.54 (2, 380) ***	5.42 (1, 379) *

*Source: Calculated by the author from primary data. The interaction term uses mean-centred FoMO and PSC. * p < .05, *** p < .001.*

FoMO on its own explained 23.3% of the variance in online impulse buying (Model 1, β = .48). Once social media engagement and promotional cues were added, R^2 rose to .35 (ΔF = 32.54, p < .001), and all three predictors were significant: FoMO was strongest (β = .36), followed by promotional cues (β = .27) and social media engagement (β = .22). H_1, H_3 and H_4 are therefore supported. In Model 3 the FoMO × PSC interaction was significant (β = .10, p = .020) and added 0.9 percentage points to the explained variance, so H_6 is supported, although the moderating effect is small.

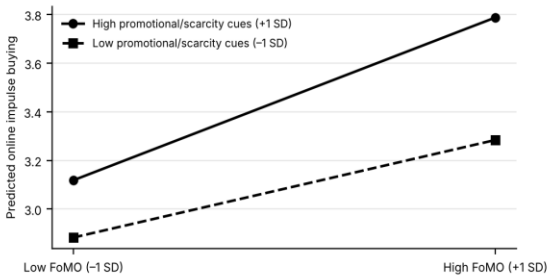


Figure 2: Interaction of FoMO and Promotional and Scarcity Cues

The simple-slope tests (Figure 2) show that FoMO predicted impulse buying at every level of promotional cues, but the slope was steeper when cues were high (B = .446, p < .001) than when they were low (B = .267, p < .001); the slope at the mean level was .357. Urgency cues thus strengthen the link between FoMO and impulse buying without creating it.

Table 9: Bootstrapped Mediation Analysis (FoMO → SME → OIB, 5,000 resamples)

Path	*B*	Boot SE	95% bootstrap CI	Result
FoMO → SME (a)	.360	.047	[.264, .449]	Significant
SME → OIB (b)	.215	.043	[.131, .299]	Significant
Indirect: FoMO → SME → OIB	.077	.018	[.044, .115]	Significant
Direct: FoMO → OIB (c′)	.343	.041	[.262, .423]	Significant
Total: FoMO → OIB (c)	.421	.040	[.343, .498]	Significant

Source: Calculated by the author from primary data. Unstandardised coefficients on 1–5 composites; PSC was controlled. An effect is significant when its 95% CI excludes zero.

FoMO significantly raised social media engagement (B = .360), and engagement in turn raised impulse buying (B = .215). The indirect effect (B = .077, 95% CI [.044, .115]) accounts for about 18% of the total effect (.421), and the direct effect stays significant (.343). Social media engagement is therefore a partial mediator, which supports H_2 and H_5: FoMO leads to impulse buying mostly directly and, to a lesser degree, through the extra time spent with beauty content.

Table 10: Summary of Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Statistical evidence	Decision
H1	β = .36, p < .001 (Model 3)	Supported
H2	B = .360, 95% CI excludes 0	Supported
H3	β = .22, p < .001	Supported
H4	β = .27, p < .001	Supported
H5	Indirect B = .077, 95% CI excludes 0; direct effect remains	Supported (partial mediation)
H6	Interaction β = .10, p = .020	Supported
H7	FoMO: p = .003; impulse buying: p = .188	Partially supported
H8	FoMO: p = .233; impulse buying: p = .241	Not supported

Source: Compiled by the author from Tables 6 to 9.

VII. DISCUSSION, SUGGESTIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

The findings identify FoMO as the most influential psychological correlate of online impulse buying in beauty care among the variables studied. This fits the argument that FoMO appeals work through social comparison and scarcity (Hodkinson, 2019) and the

evidence that FoMO increases purchase likelihood (Good & Hyman, 2020). The partial mediation by social media engagement is in line with social commerce research on impulse buying (Xiang et al., 2016) and with stimulus–organism–response logic: FoMO pulls consumers toward beauty content, which then supplies further stimuli. The significant interaction supports the persuasion principle of scarcity (Cialdini, 2009), but because its size is small, the main driver remains the consumer's own emotional state. Impulse buying had the lowest mean, meaning respondents describe it as moderate rather than habitual, and this leaves room for self-regulation and awareness efforts.

Suggestions. Beauty brands and platforms should present urgency messages honestly and avoid fake countdowns and false "low stock" claims, since these play on the very anxiety identified here. Platforms could add optional cooling-off features such as a "save for later" prompt, spending summaries and easy return policies. Influencers should disclose sponsorships and show realistic use, and brands should favour informative content over pressure. Colleges and consumer organisations can run awareness programmes that help young shoppers spot FoMO-driven purchases, and consumers themselves can limit exposure by curating their feeds and setting a waiting period before buying.

Theoretical implications. The study carries the FoMO literature beyond social media use to a concrete shopping behaviour. Within a single model it brings together an emotional antecedent (FoMO), a behavioural mechanism (social media engagement) and a situational boundary condition (promotional and scarcity cues). In doing so, it responds to calls for more attention to psychological antecedents in online impulse-buying research (Chan et al., 2017).

Table 11: Summary of Findings and Recommended Actions

Stakeholder	Relevant finding	Recommended action
Beauty brands	FoMO is the strongest predictor of impulse buying (β = .38)	Use limited-edition and early-access offers honestly; avoid manufactured scarcity
E-commerce and beauty platforms	Urgency cues strengthen the FoMO effect (interaction β = .10)	Provide "save for later" options, spending summaries and easy returns
Influencers and agencies	Social media engagement carries part of the effect (indirect *B* = .077)	Disclose sponsorships; show realistic, informative product use
Educators and consumer bodies	Female consumers report higher FoMO (*d* = .33)	Hold awareness sessions on spotting FoMO-driven purchases
Consumers	Impulse buying has the lowest mean of the four constructs (3.28)	Curate feeds and pause before paying for unplanned items

Source: Compiled by the author from the findings of this study.

Future research. Later studies could draw probability samples from several states, include more male and non-binary consumers, add trait variables such as impulsiveness and materialism, collect actual purchase data, compare platforms, and adopt longitudinal or experimental designs to establish causation.

VIII. CONCLUSION

This survey of 384 beauty care consumers in Vellore district shows that fear of missing out is strongly and positively associated with online impulse buying behaviour. Part of the effect operates through heavier engagement with social media beauty content, and it grows stronger when promotional and scarcity cues are intense. Female consumers report higher FoMO, whereas age makes no significant difference. For brands and platforms, the implication is that urgency tactics work best on consumers who are already anxious about missing out, so responsible design is an ethical as well as a commercial matter. Since the study is cross-sectional and uses quota sampling in a single district, its findings should be generalised with caution.

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