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BEYOND THE BUZZ: DECODING FOMO'S MEDIATING ROLE IN VIRAL MARKETING AND PURCHASE DECISIONS FOR THE MOVIE *JUMBO* IN DENPASAR

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Abstract

Jumbo is an original Indonesian animated film that once held the record as the nation's highest-grossing film of all time. Its remarkable commercial success was driven by an aggressive viral marketing strategy that triggered extensive public discussion. This phenomenon provides a compelling case to explore how psychological triggers like FoMO influence consumer purchase decisions. This research examines and explains the influence of viral marketing on purchase decision, with FoMO as a mediating variable among audiences of Jumbo in Denpasar City. The population consists of audiences of Jumbo in Denpasar City who have watched the film in cinemas, with a total sample of 120 respondents. The sampling method employed was purposive sampling, with data collected through a survey using questionnaires. This research utilizes descriptive and inferential statistical analysis techniques, specifically Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with Partial Least Squares (PLS). Results indicate that viral marketing does not have a significant direct effect on purchase decision. However, viral marketing has a significant positive effect on FoMO, and FoMO has a significant positive effect on purchase decision. Furthermore, findings show that FoMO fully mediates the influence of viral marketing on purchase decision. The theoretical implication of this study is the strengthening of the S-O-R theory in explaining purchase decision behavior. Practically, results emphasize the importance for marketers in the entertainment industry, particularly for local films, to optimize viral marketing strategies to trigger FoMO, which is ultimately expected to enhance consumer purchase decision.

Keywords: ***viral marketing, FoMO, purchase decision, S-O-R model, Movie Jumbo***

INTRODUCTION

The creative industry in Indonesia has witnessed a significant surge in the quality and popularity of local productions, particularly within the animation sector. A monumental achievement in this industry is the release of the animated film *Jumbo*, which has recorded over 10.2 million viewers, positioning it as one of the highest-grossing films in Indonesian cinematic history (Javier, 2025). This commercial success is largely attributed to the strategic implementation of viral marketing on social media, which effectively fostered massive public engagement (Thahirah *et al*., 2024). However, despite the high reach of viral campaigns, academic literature reveals an inconsistency regarding its direct impact on actual purchase decisions, where high digital engagement does not always translate into ticket sales (Riani & Samatan, 2020; Thahirah *et al*., 2024).

This research addresses this gap by employing the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) theory to explore the internal psychological mechanisms of consumers. According to this framework, external stimuli (viral marketing) do not lead directly to a response (purchase decision) but are first processed through the consumer's internal state or "organism" (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974). In the digital era, Fear of Missing Out (FoMO)—the pervasive anxiety that others might be having rewarding experiences from which one is absent—has emerged as a powerful psychological mediator (Przybylski *et al*., 2013). Consumers experiencing FoMO often feel compelled to maintain

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social integration by participating in trending cinematic events *(*Ciersya *et al*., 2023; Tefertiller *et al*., 2020). Therefore, the objective of this study is to examine the influence of viral marketing on purchase decisions through the mediation of FoMO among audiences in Denpasar City. The scope is specifically limited to 120 cinema-goers who have watched *Jumbo*, with data analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM-PLS).

The novelty of this research lies in its focus on the Indonesian animation industry, a sector that remains under-explored compared to live-action films or general consumer goods. By integrating FoMO as a psychological mediator, this study explicitly highlights how the "limited-time" nature of a cinematic release triggers a fear of social exclusion, which eventually dictates purchasing behavior. Theoretically, this research contributes to the expansion of the S-O-R framework in the context of digital entertainment. Practically, it provides insights for film marketers on the importance of managing consumer psychology rather than just maximizing digital reach.

The research results indicate that viral marketing does not exert a significant direct effect on purchase decisions. Instead, a full mediation mechanism was identified: viral marketing significantly intensifies the Fear of Missing Out, which subsequently has a significant positive effect on the decision to purchase movie tickets. The practical implications suggest that marketers should pivot their strategies toward creating "moment-driven" content. To effectively drive conversions, campaigns must move beyond informative content and instead emphasize the social necessity of the experience, ensuring that the film is perceived as a cultural event that consumers cannot afford to miss.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS FORMULATION

Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) Theory

The Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) model, introduced by Mehrabian & Russell (1974), serves as a primary theoretical framework in environmental psychology and consumer behavior research. This theory explains that individuals do not react directly to environmental stimuli; instead, their reactions are mediated by internal psychological states. The framework consists of three integrated components: Stimulus (S), representing the external environmental factors; Organism (O), representing the internal emotional and cognitive processes; and Response (R), which is the final behavioral outcome.

In the context of digital marketing, the S-O-R model provides a robust structure for analyzing how online marketing cues influence consumer intentions (Sohaib et al., 2022). Recent literature suggests that high-intensity digital stimuli, such as viral content, function as powerful environmental cues (S) that activate specific psychological organisms (O), such as anxiety or social pressure, which ultimately dictate the consumer's final response (R) in the form of a purchase decision (Sohaib et al., 2022). This study utilizes the S-O-R framework to justify the mediating role of psychological variables in the relationship between digital marketing efforts and purchasing behavior in the cinematic industry (Ciersya et al., 2023; Tefertiller et al., 2020).

Viral Marketing

Viral marketing is defined as a digital marketing strategy that leverages word-of-mouth (WOM) mechanisms by encouraging consumers to disseminate company or product information through online platforms (Kotler & Keller, 2020). This approach utilizes electronic network effects to facilitate the rapid and exponential spread of marketing messages to a vast audience (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2016). Unlike traditional marketing, this phenomenon is driven by User-Generated Content (UGC), where the success of a campaign, such as the promotion of the film *Jumbo*, depends on the content's ability to trigger massive social sharing and peer-to-peer distribution (Sari & Darma, 2024; Tefertiller et al., 2020).

To measure the effectiveness of viral marketing as a stimulus, this study adapts indicators from recent empirical research. Kembau & Christanti (2024) identify key triggers such as the messengers, the message, and the environment as essential components of a viral epidemic.

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Furthermore, Thahirah et al. (2024) categorize audience engagement through metrics such as curiosity and content consumption. Based on these recent developments, this study utilizes four primary indicators: The Messengers, The Message, Curiosity, and Content Consumption. These indicators are selected to represent both the structural drivers and the psychological engagement required to sustain viral momentum in the Indonesian cinematic industry.

Fear of Missing Out (FoMO)

Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) is characterized by a pervasive anxiety that others are experiencing rewarding events while one is absent, driving a compulsive need for constant social connectivity (McGinnis, 2020; Sari & Darma, 2024). In a marketing context, this psychological state is utilized to create a sense of urgency through product scarcity or limited-time offers, effectively acting as the internal "organism" (O) within the S-O-R framework that mediates consumer responses (Hodkinson, 2019; Sari & Darma, 2024). This urgency is particularly potent in digital environments where the perceived rarity of an experience compels immediate engagement.

The intensity of FoMO is predominantly fueled by social comparison on digital platforms, where frequent exposure to curated peer experiences leads to heightened social anxiety and doubts regarding one's own consumption choices (Alt & Boniel-Nissim, 2018; Milyavskaya et al., 2018). This study adopts the indicators from Soewarno et al. (2024) to empirically measure this phenomenon, focusing on dependency on social media, social comparisons, impulsive tendencies, and specific psychological anxieties. These metrics are highly relevant for analyzing how viral cinematic trends, such as the movie *Jumbo*, trigger the emotional urgency necessary to drive ticket purchases among audiences who fear being socially isolated or left out of trending cultural conversations.

Purchase Decision

Purchase decision is the pivotal stage of the consumer journey where individuals evaluate multiple factors to select the most optimal alternative (Kotler & Keller, 2020; Mustafa & Setiawan, 2022). In the cinematic sector, this specifically involves the acquisition of film screening services through a process that includes need recognition, information search, and post-purchase evaluation (Diawati et al., 2021; Rajabiyanor et al., 2022). Within the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) framework, this decision acts as the behavioral Response (R), representing the final outcome of the consumer’s internal psychological processing influenced by external marketing stimuli.

While conventional models often emphasize rational evaluation, modern purchasing behavior for trending entertainment is frequently modified by situational emotional influences and social urgency (Milyavskaya et al., 2018; Sari & Darma, 2024). To capture both the evaluative and behavioral aspects of this decision, this research adapts indicators from Mardiana & Sijabat (2022) and Diawati et al. (2021), focusing on purchase conviction, habitual buying patterns, referral tendencies, and post-purchase assessment. These metrics provide a comprehensive framework for analyzing audience responses to "once-in-a-moment" cinematic events, where the decision to purchase is driven by the desire to maintain social relevance in the digital era.

Viral Marketing and Purchase Decision

Viral marketing has been extensively studied for its positive and significant influence on purchase decisions across various industries by enhancing electronic word-of-mouth (E-WOM) and consumer product familiarity (Praditya & Purwanto, 2024; Thahirah et al., 2024). Recent empirical evidence indicates that high-engagement social media platforms, such as TikTok and Instagram, significantly facilitate this relationship by allowing viral content to serve as a credible social trigger (Haryanto et al., 2021; Razali et al., 2023). In these digital ecosystems, consumers often transition from passive viewers to active brand advocates, effectively accelerating the collective decision to acquire products or services (Artanti et al., 2019; Hisbullah et al., 2023).

However, inconsistencies in recent literature suggest a research gap, as some studies find that viral campaigns do not always exert a direct impact on the final purchase decision (Riani & Samatan, 2020; Sari & Darma, 2024). These findings indicate that in certain contexts, viral marketing

may require psychological intermediaries to effectively drive behavior. Despite these conflicting results, this study aligns with the prevailing consensus that high-reach digital stimuli act as a primary driver of purchase conviction and referral tendencies. Therefore, within the specific context of the Indonesian animation industry, it is posited that widespread digital exposure directly motivates audiences to acquire cinema tickets.

H_1: Viral marketing has a positive and significant influence on purchase decisions.

Viral Marketing and Fear of Missing Out (FoMO)

Viral marketing serves as a primary driver of the Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) phenomenon in the digital era by creating a pervasive perception that a specific product or experience is an unmissable trend (Abdillah et al., 2025; Ciersya et al., 2023). Within the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) framework, the massive and rapid dissemination of marketing messages acts as an external stimulus (S) that activates the consumer's internal emotional state (O) (Sari & Darma, 2024). Consistent exposure to viral content reinforces the emotional drive to remain "up-to-date," thereby intensifying the audience's susceptibility to FoMO as they fear being excluded from rewarding collective experiences (Abdillah et al., 2025; Ciersya et al., 2023).

Recent empirical evidence indicates that the intensity of communication on platforms such as TikTok significantly correlates with increased levels of social anxiety regarding missing trends, particularly among younger demographics (Khasanah & Maftukhah, 2025; Tondang & Dwita, 2025). As brands implement more aggressive viral marketing strategies, the psychological response of FoMO among consumers tends to escalate (Dewi & Martini, 2025). Collective findings from Sari & Darma (2024) and Soewarno et al. (2024) reaffirm that widespread trend-driven content serves as a potent stimulant that compels individuals to maintain their social relevance through engagement with viral phenomena.

H_2: Viral marketing has a positive and significant influence on Fear of Missing Out (FoMO).

Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) and Purchase Decision

Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) is established as a significant psychological determinant influencing purchase decisions across various digital platforms and product categories (Sari & Darma, 2024; Septiana et al., 2024). Social pressure to remain synchronized with environmental trends drives consumers to adopt specific purchasing behaviors to ensure continued integration within their social groups (Ditha et al., 2025; Solaiman & Pangaribuan, 2024). This phenomenon is particularly prominent among younger demographics, such as Generation Z, where the anxiety of being left behind serves as a primary motivator for consumption and acquisition (Borshalina et al., 2021; Rahmatullah & Hermeindito, 2025).

Psychologically, FoMO operates by creating a sense of apprehension regarding the loss of valuable experiences or interactions shared by others (McGinnis, 2020). Frequent exposure to peer experiences on social media platforms triggers an emotional urgency that prompts individuals to make immediate purchases to maintain their social relevance (Chandra, 2025; Soewarno et al., 2024). While minor variations in the efficacy of FoMO may exist across specific fashion niches (Mahmud et al., 2023), the prevailing consensus highlights this variable as a substantial driver of consumer decision-making in response to massive social trends (Laili et al., 2025).

H_3: Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) has a positive and significant influence on purchase decisions.

The Mediating Role of Fear of Missing Out (FoMO)

Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) is identified as a significant mediating variable that explains the internal mechanism through which viral marketing influences purchase decisions. This psychological state acts as a conduit, connecting external marketing exposure to the final consumer behavior through the creation of intense emotional pressure (Sari & Darma, 2024; Septiana et al., 2024). In the digital era, FoMO functions as a psychological bridge that strengthens brand perception and accelerates the consumer’s decision-making process by emphasizing the social necessity of the experience (Laili et al., 2025).

Recent empirical evidence confirms that viral marketing exerts a positive and significant influence on purchase decisions specifically when mediated by FoMO as an intervening variable

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(Dewi & Martini, 2025; Khasanah & Maftukhah, 2025). While minor variations exist in certain niche industries where FoMO may not serve as a consistent mediator (Chandra, 2025; Mahmud et al., 2023), the prevailing consensus supports its critical role when driven by aggressive viral strategies (Solaiman & Pangaribuan, 2024). Consequently, effective digital marketing in contemporary markets relies heavily on managing the consumer's psychological state, utilizing FoMO to transform viral stimuli into tangible purchasing actions (Mustafa & Setiawan, 2022; Rahmatullah & Hermeindito, 2025).

H_4: Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) mediates the relationship between Viral Marketing and Purchase Decision.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study utilizes a quantitative approach with a causal-associative research design to investigate the relationships between viral marketing, FoMO, and purchase decisions. The target population consists of cinema-goers in Denpasar City who have watched the movie *Jumbo*. Given the unidentified total number of viewers, the study is categorized under an infinite population. A sample size of 120 respondents was determined based on a ratio of ten times the number of research indicators. The sampling was conducted using a non-probability purposive sampling technique. Specific criteria for respondents include being at least 17 years old, residing in Denpasar, having watched *Jumbo* at least once, and being an active user of social media platforms such as Instagram or TikTok. Data collection was performed through an online survey via Google Forms, divided into two phases: a pilot test conducted from March 20 to March 22, 2026, and primary data collection from March 28 to April 16, 2026.

The material specification for this research is a structured questionnaire developed using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from "Strongly Disagree" (1) to "Strongly Agree" (5). The instrument consists of 12 indicators: four for Viral Marketing, four for FoMO, and four for Purchase Decision. The tool specification for data processing is SmartPLS 4. This software was selected for its sophistication in performing variance-based Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), which is highly effective for predictive modeling and does not require a normal distribution of data.

The validity check for the research results was conducted through two stages of evaluation using SmartPLS 4. The measurement model (outer model) assessment confirmed that all indicators reached the required thresholds, with outer loadings ≥ 0.7 and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) ≥ 0.5. Discriminant validity was also verified using the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) with values below 0.90. Following the validity and reliability confirmation, the data were analyzed using inferential statistics to evaluate the structural model (inner model) and test the research hypotheses.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Respondent Profile

The demographic characteristics of the 120 respondents who participated in this study are summarized in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Respondent Characteristics

Characteristic	Classification	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	23	19.2%
	Female	97	80.8%
Age	17-19 years old	3	2.5%
	20-24 years old	106	88.3%
	25-29 years old	9	7.5%
	≥30	2	1.7%

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Education	Senior High School	74	61.7%
	Diploma	5	4.2%
	Bachelor's Degree	40	33.3%
	Master's Degree	1	0.8%
Profession	Student/college student	89	74.2%
	Government/Private employees	16	13.3%
	Freelancer	12	10%
	Self-employed	3	2.5%
Income/Pocket Money per Month	< Rp1.500.000	30	25%
	Rp1.500.000 – Rp3.000.000	49	40.8%
	Rp3.000.001 – Rp5.000.000	19	15.8%
	> Rp5.000.000	22	18.3%
Most Frequently Used Social Media	TikTok	75	62.5%
	Instagram	37	30.8%
	X/Twitter	7	5.8%
	YouTube	1	0.8%

Source: Primary Data Processed (2026)

In this research, data was analyzed from 120 respondents residing in Denpasar, Bali. Analysis of the research data begins with identifying the descriptive characteristics of the respondents in terms of gender, age, education level, profession, monthly income or pocket money, and social media usage. This is conducted to understand how diverse backgrounds may influence the perception of indicators previously presented in the questionnaire regarding the movie *Jumbo*. The analysis results show that the majority of the respondents are female, representing 80.8% of the total sample. The dominant age range is 20–24 years old, which covers 88.3% of the respondents, indicating a strong representation of the younger demographic. In terms of education, the majority of participants are Senior High School graduates (61.7%), with the most common profession being students or college students, accounting for 74.2% of the total. Furthermore, a significant portion of respondents (40.8%) report a monthly income or pocket money between Rp1,500,000 and Rp3,000,000. Notably, TikTok is identified as the most frequently used social media platform among the respondents, with a percentage of 62.5%.

Measurement Model Analysis (Outer Model)

The measurement model (outer model) evaluation is conducted to ensure the validity and reliability of the constructs before proceeding to structural testing, as presented in the following tables.

Table 2. Outer Loading and AVE

Variabel	Indikator	Outer Loading	AVE
Viral Marketing (X)	The messengers (X1)	0.850	0.645
	The message (X2)	0.836	
	Curiosity (X3)	0.803	
	Content consumption (X4)	0.717	
FoMO (M)	Dependency on social media (M1)	0.805	0.650
	Social comparison (M2)	0.770	
	Impulsive tendencies (M3)	0.797	
	Anxiety (M4)	0.851	
Purchase Decision (Y)	Purchase conviction (Y1)	0.790	0.677
	Habitual buying patterns (Y2)	0.823	
	Referral tendencies (Y3)	0.839	

Post-purchase assessment (Y4)	0.838

Source: Primary Data Processed (2026)

Table 3. Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)

	FoMO (M)	Viral Marketing (X)	Purchase Decision (Y)
FoMO (M)			
Viral Marketing (X)	0.395		
Purchase Decision (Y)	0.441	0.267	

Source: Primary Data Processed (2026)

Table 4. Construct Reliability

	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability
FoMO (M)	0.821	0.881
Purchase Decision (Y)	0.842	0.893
Viral Marketing (X)	0.820	0.879

Source: Primary Data Processed (2026)

The outcomes of the convergent validity examination, as depicted by the loading factor values in Table 2, reveal that each construct possesses a loading factor exceeding 0.7 (Hair et al., 2022). This suggests that each indicator effectively elucidates the research constructs of Viral Marketing, Fear of Missing Out (FoMO), and Purchase Decision. In addition to the loading factor value, convergent validity is also gauged by considering the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value. The anticipated AVE value for each variable is a minimum of 0.5 (Hair et al., 2022). As shown in Table 2, the AVE values for all variables exceed 0.5, with the lowest being 0.645 for Viral Marketing, indicating that convergent validity has been successfully met.

To evaluate discriminant validity, this study utilizes the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio. According to Hair et al. (2022), the model possesses satisfactory discriminant validity if the HTMT values between constructs are below the threshold of 0.85 or 0.90. As depicted in Table 3, all HTMT ratios are well below 0.85, with the highest value being 0.441 between FoMO and Purchase Decision. This denotes that each construct is empirically distinct and fulfills the discriminant validity criteria.

The reliability of the constructs is evaluated through two methods: Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability. Both Composite Reliability and Cronbach's Alpha in Table 4 exhibit values exceeding the 0.7 threshold for all variables, including Viral Marketing, FoMO, and Purchase Decision (Hair et al., 2022). These results suggest a substantial level of internal consistency and reliability for the measurement model used in this study.

Structural Model Analysis (Inner Model) and Hypothesis Testing

The structural model is evaluated by examining the coefficient of determination (R^2), predictive relevance (Q^2), and effect size (f^2) to ensure the model's robustness, as summarized in the following tables.

Table 5. R-Square (R^2)

	R-square	R-square Adjusted
FoMO (M)	0.115	0.108
Purchase Decision (Y)	0.153	0.138

Source: Primary Data Processed (2026)

Table 6. Q-Square predict($Q^2predict$)

	$Q^2predict$
FoMO (M)	0.094
Purchase Decision (Y)	0.030

Source: Primary Data Processed (2026)

Table 7. F-Square (f^2)

	FoMO (M)	Viral Marketing (X)	Purchase Decision (Y)

FoMO (M)		0.113
Viral Marketing (X)		
Purchase Decision (Y)	0.130	0.017

Source: Primary Data Processed (2026)

The determination coefficient is employed to evaluate the precision of predictions. Generally, an R^2 value of 0.75 is regarded as having high approximation correctness, 0.50 suggests moderate, and 0.25 indicates low approximation correctness (Hair et al., 2022). Based on Table 5, the R^2 value for the Purchase Decision model is 0.153, which is categorized as low. This indicates that Viral Marketing and FoMO influence 15.3% of the Purchase Decision for the movie *Jumbo*, while the remaining 84.7% is impacted by other factors beyond the scope of this research model. Similarly, the R^2 value for the FoMO construct is 0.115, suggesting a low approximation correctness where 88.5% of the variance is influenced by external variables not accounted for in the model.

To evaluate predictive relevance, the Q -square (Q^2) value is utilized. A Q^2 value greater than zero indicates that the model possesses good predictive relevance, meaning the level of observation in the study is high (Hair et al., 2022). Based on Table 6, the values for FoMO (0.094) and Purchase Decision (0.030) are both above zero, confirming that the proposed model has adequate predictive power for the movie *Jumbo*.

Finally, f-square analysis is employed to ascertain the effect size of the relationship between variables. Typically, a value of 0.02 is deemed a small effect size, 0.15 indicates moderate, and 0.35 denotes a substantial effect size, while values below 0.02 may be disregarded or deemed insignificant (Hair et al., 2022). Based on the test results in Table 7, the influence of Viral Marketing on FoMO ($f^2 = 0.113$) and the influence of FoMO on Purchase Decision ($f^2 = 0.130$) are categorized as having a small effect size. Notably, the influence of Viral Marketing on Purchase Decision ($f^2 = 0.017$) is considered insignificant or ignored as the value is below 0.02.

The structural model's path coefficients and their significance levels are assessed to test the proposed hypotheses. The results of the direct and specific indirect effects are presented in Tables 8 and 9.

Table 8. Direct Effect

Hypothesis	Variable	Original Sample (O)	T Statistic	P Values	Result
H1	Viral Marketing (X) → Purchase Decision (Y)	0.127	1.388	0.165	Not Supported
H2	Viral Marketing (X) → FoMO (M)	0.153	4.625	0.000	Supported
H3	FoMO (M) → Purchase Decision (Y)	0.329	4.434	0.000	Supported

Source: Primary Data Processed (2026)

Table 9. Specific Indirect Effect

Hypothesis	Variable	Original Sample (O)	T Statistic	P Values	Result
H4	Viral Marketing (X) →FoMO → Purchase Decision (Y)	0.112	2.931	0.003	Supported

Source: Primary Data Processed (2026)

Structural model coefficient analysis is employed to examine the hypotheses and determine which relationships exert a noteworthy impact. The conditions for a hypothesis to be accepted depend on the $p - value < 0.05$ or $t - statistic < 1.96$; in that case, the connection is considered meaningful.

Based on the results of hypothesis testing in Table 8, it can be seen that the influence of Viral Marketing on Purchase Decision has an original sample (O) of 0.127 with a $t - statistic$ value

of $1.388 < 1.96$ and a $p - value$ of $0.165 > 0.05$. Consequently, H1 is rejected (not supported). The effect of Viral Marketing on Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) is 0.153 with a $t - statistic$ value of $4.625 > 1.96$ and a $p - value$ of $0.000 < 0.05$, which means it has a positive and significant effect, thus H2 is accepted. Furthermore, the influence of FoMO on Purchase Decision shows an original sample of 0.329 with a $t - statistic$ value of $4.434 > 1.96$ and a $p - value$ of $0.000 < 0.05$, indicating a significant positive effect, so that H3 is accepted.

To evaluate the mediating role, the specific indirect effect was analyzed as shown in Table 9. The results indicate that the influence of Viral Marketing on Purchase Decision mediated by FoMO has an original sample (O) of 0.112 with a $t - statistic$ of $2.931 > 1{,}96$ and a $p - value$ of $0.003 < 0.05$. This confirms that FoMO successfully mediates the relationship between Viral Marketing and Purchase Decision for the movie *Jumbo*, meaning H4 is accepted.

Discussion

The empirical results of this study provide a comprehensive understanding of the consumer decision-making process within the digital cinema landscape in Denpasar. The most pivotal discovery is the confirmation of full mediation provided by Fear of Missing Out (FoMO), which serves as the indispensable psychological bridge between digital marketing stimuli and actual purchase behavior. The finding for H1 shows that Viral Marketing has a positive but non-significant direct effect on Purchase Decision ($p = 0.165 > 0.05$; $f^2 = 0.017$). This result is aligned with the research conducted by Sari & Darma (2024), which suggests that in the dynamic entertainment industry, mere exposure to viral content is insufficient to trigger immediate ticket sales without an internal psychological catalyst. This indicates that while the promotional campaign for the movie *Jumbo* successfully generated awareness, it did not possess enough direct "push" to bypass the psychological state of the audience.

Within the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) framework, Viral Marketing acts as the external Stimulus that initiates the process. The analysis of indicators reveals that "the messengers" which the individuals or users spreading the content, obtained the highest average score. This suggests that the audience in Denpasar perceives information shared by peers and social media influencers as more credible and engaging than official advertisements. When these messengers mass-distribute content, they create a widespread curiosity that transforms the stimulus into an Organism state, specifically FoMO. The significant positive influence of Viral Marketing on FoMO (H2) found in this study is consistent with the findings of Ciersya et al. (2023), Abdillah et al. (2025), and Tondang & Dwita (2025), which emphasize that rapid and massive content dissemination strengthens the perception of a prevailing trend, thereby fostering a sense of social urgency.

Furthermore, the relationship between FoMO and Purchase Decision (H3) is deeply rooted in the audience's dependency on social media, which was the most prominent indicator for the FoMO construct. In the social context of Denpasar, high social media reliance facilitates a continuous feedback loop of social comparison and anxiety. Respondents feel a compulsion to follow cultural trends, such as watching the movie *Jumbo*, to maintain their social relevance and avoid the discomfort of being "out of the loop." This significant positive relationship is aligned with the research of Septiana et al. (2024), Rahmatullah & Hermeindito (2025), and Ditha et al. (2025), confirming that social pressure and the need to remain socially connected are dominant drivers in modern cinema-going behavior.

The confirmation of full mediation (H4) signifies that Viral Marketing's influence on Purchase Decision is entirely dependent on its ability to trigger FoMO. This aligns with the findings of Khasanah & Maftukhah (2025), Dewi & Martini (2025), and Setiawan et al. (2025), highlighting that FoMO is the key psychological mechanism in the digital era. Practically, this implies that filmmakers and marketers must pivot from "broadcasting" to "strategic psychological triggering."

Based on the empirical evidence from the *Jumbo* case study, promotional strategies for future local film releases should prioritize cultivating organic "messengers" and incentivizing user-generated content, as these are perceived as more authentic signals of popularity. Furthermore, marketing narratives should intentionally emphasize the "social currency" and "exclusivity" of the

viewing experience to effectively leverage the audience's social media dependency. By highlighting real-time enthusiasm and creating a sense of urgency, marketers can convert passive viral attention into actual ticket sales in similar future contexts. Ultimately, this research underscores that the success of a movie campaign depends less on the volume of the noise it creates and more on its ability to make the audience feel that missing the experience is a social risk they cannot afford to take.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that viral marketing alone is insufficient to drive ticket purchase decisions for local animated films without a psychological trigger. The results demonstrate a full mediation mechanism where viral marketing acts as an external stimulus that significantly intensifies the Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) among audiences. It is this psychological state of FoMO that subsequently serves as the primary driver for purchase decisions toward the movie *Jumbo*. Without the mediation of FoMO, viral marketing does not exert a significant direct influence on the final decision to buy a ticket.

The practical implications of this research suggest that film marketers should shift their focus from mere digital reach to the creation of "moment-driven" content. To effectively drive ticket sales, marketing campaigns must strategically craft narratives that evoke a sense of social urgency. By positioning the film as a cultural event that consumers cannot afford to miss, marketers can leverage the consumer's psychological need to remain socially relevant within their circles.

However, this research has several limitations. First, the sample is limited to 120 respondents, which may not fully represent the broader population of Indonesian cinema-goers. Second, the geographic scope is restricted to Denpasar City, potentially limiting the generalizability of the findings to other regions with different consumer behaviors. Lastly, the study focuses exclusively on the animated film genre, which may have different engagement dynamics compared to other film genres.

Based on these limitations, future research is suggested to expand the sample size and include respondents from diverse geographic locations to enhance the representativeness of the data. Furthermore, subsequent studies could incorporate additional variables, such as Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM) or brand image, to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing purchase decisions in the creative industry.

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