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IMPACT OF FEAR OF MISSING OUT (FOMO) ON CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOUR IN ONLINE TEXTILE RETAIL.

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Abstract: The rapid growth of e-commerce has transformed consumer buying behaviour in the online textile retail sector. This study examines the impact of Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) on consumers' purchasing behaviour in online textile retail. A descriptive and analytical research design was adopted, and primary data were collected from 105 respondents using a structured questionnaire. The data were analysed using percentage analysis, mean score analysis, Pearson correlation, regression analysis, and Cronbach's Alpha reliability test. The findings reveal that social media influence (Mean = 3.63), promotional discounts (Mean = 3.38), and trending fashion campaigns (Mean = 3.29) significantly contribute to FOMO, thereby influencing purchase intention and impulsive buying behaviour. The study further reports a positive correlation ($r = 0.68$) between FOMO and online buying behaviour, while regression analysis ($\beta = 0.72$) confirms that FOMO significantly predicts purchase behaviour. The reliability coefficient (Cronbach's Alpha = 0.925) indicates excellent internal consistency. The findings provide useful implications for online retailers and contribute to the growing literature on digital consumer behaviour in the Indian textile retail sector.

Keywords: Fear of Missing Out (FOMO), Online Textile Retail, Consumer Buying Behaviour, Impulse Buying, Digital Marketing, Social Media Marketing, E-commerce

1.Introduction

The rapid development of e-commerce has transformed traditional retail systems across the world. The textile retail industry, which was historically dependent upon physical inspection, interpersonal selling, and traditional shopping experiences, has increasingly shifted toward digitally mediated retail environments. Online platforms such as Myntra, Ajio, Amazon Fashion, and Flipkart have reshaped the way consumers search, compare, evaluate, and purchase textile products.

The rise of online textile shopping has also intensified the use of digital marketing techniques aimed at influencing consumer emotions and purchasing urgency. E-commerce platforms frequently utilise flash sales, limited-time offers, scarcity messages, influencer promotions, and trend-based advertising strategies to stimulate rapid purchasing decisions. These marketing practices are closely connected to the psychological concept of Fear of Missing Out (FOMO).

According to the India Brand Equity Foundation (IBEF), India's e-commerce market continues to expand rapidly, supported by increasing smartphone penetration, digital payment adoption, and rising consumer confidence in online retail. Within this environment, online textile and fashion retailers increasingly rely on scarcity-based promotional strategies to stimulate purchase decisions.

FOMO refers to the fear or anxiety experienced by individuals when they believe they may miss rewarding opportunities, experiences, or social trends. Within online textile retail, FOMO is activated through urgency-based promotions and fashion trend visibility. Consumers often feel pressured to purchase trending apparel products immediately in order to avoid losing discounts, fashion relevance, or exclusive opportunities.

The relationship between FOMO and online textile retail has become increasingly important because fashion consumption is strongly associated with social identity, peer comparison, and emotional satisfaction. Social media platforms such as Instagram and YouTube continuously expose consumers to influencer-driven fashion trends and digitally curated lifestyle content that encourage comparative consumption behaviour. Although existing research has examined online shopping behaviour, digital marketing, and impulsive buying, limited studies specifically focus on the role of FOMO within online textile retail environments. Most previous studies concentrate on convenience, trust, pricing, and technology adoption while comparatively neglecting psychological urgency and emotional purchasing behaviour. Therefore, the present study seeks to examine the impact of Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) on consumer buying behaviour in online textile retail. The study specifically analyses how limited-time offers, trending fashion promotions, and digital marketing practices influence textile purchasing decisions within e-commerce platforms.

2.Objectives of the Study

1. To examine the influence of Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) on online textile purchase behaviour.
2. To study the role of limited-time offers and trending fashion promotions in creating FOMO among online textile consumers.
3. To analyse whether FOMO leads to impulsive buying decisions in online textile retail.
4. To evaluate consumer responses towards FOMO-based marketing strategies used by e-commerce textile platforms.

3.Research Questions

1. Does FOMO influence online textile purchase behaviour?
2. How do limited-time offers and fashion trend promotions create FOMO among textile consumers?
3. Does FOMO encourage impulsive buying behaviour in online textile retail?
4. How do consumers respond to FOMO-based marketing strategies used by online textile platforms?

4.Hypothesis

H1: Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) significantly influences online textile purchase behaviour.

H2: Limited-time offers and scarcity marketing positively affect impulsive textile buying behaviour.

H3: Social media fashion promotions significantly contribute to FOMO among online textile consumers.

H4: FOMO-based marketing strategies positively influence online textile purchase intention.

All hypotheses were tested at a 5% level of significance ($p < 0.05$).

5.Literature Review

1.**Przybylski et al. (2013)** introduced the concept of Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) as a psychological condition associated with social anxiety and fear of exclusion. The study suggested that digitally connected individuals experience stronger emotional pressure to remain continuously engaged with social and online activities.

2.**Kang et al. (2014)** highlighted that fashion consumers are highly influenced by social trends, peer comparison, and emotional identity. The authors argued that fashion consumption is influenced not only by functional utility but also by emotional attachment, symbolic value, and social identity.

3.**Hayran, Anik, and Gürhan-Canli (2017)** explored the antecedents and behavioural consequences of Fear of Missing Out (FOMO). The study found that consumers experiencing FOMO were more likely to make impulsive purchase decisions, particularly when products were perceived as scarce or available for a limited period.

4.**Hodkinson (2019)** analysed the impact of social media on FOMO-driven consumer behaviour. The research concluded that influencer marketing and Instagram-based fashion promotions significantly increase trend anxiety and digital consumption behaviour.

5. Good and Hyman (2020) examined the relationship between Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) and impulsive online purchasing behaviour. The study concluded that scarcity-based promotional messages significantly increase consumers' purchase intention and impulsive buying behaviour in online shopping environments.

6. Good and Hyman (2021) further examined the effectiveness of FOMO-based marketing appeals and reported that scarcity messages, urgency cues, and exclusive promotional offers positively influence consumers' purchase intentions and online buying behaviour.

7. Ilyas et al. (2022) investigated the relationship between social media content and consumer satisfaction. The study reported that engaging promotional content on social media platforms can generate Fear of Missing Out (FOMO), thereby encouraging online purchasing behaviour.

8. Zhang, Jiménez, and Cicala (2022) examined Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) from a marketing perspective and found that scarcity marketing, social influence, and digital engagement significantly affect consumers' online purchase decisions and impulsive buying behaviour.

9. Alfina, Hartini, and Mardhiyah (2023) conducted a systematic literature review on FOMO in the marketing context. The study concluded that FOMO significantly influences online consumer behaviour, purchase intention, impulsive buying, and digital engagement across various e-commerce sectors.

10. Paul and Bhukya (2023) examined the influence of social media marketing on consumers' online purchase behaviour in the fashion industry. The study found that influencer recommendations, user-generated content, and promotional campaigns significantly increased consumers' purchase intentions by creating a sense of urgency and Fear of Missing Out (FOMO).

The reviewed studies consistently indicate that Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) acts as a significant psychological driver of online purchase behaviour. While previous researchers have extensively examined FOMO in relation to social media usage, digital marketing, and impulsive buying, limited empirical evidence exists regarding its influence on online textile retail within the Indian context. The present study extends the existing literature by specifically examining the combined effects of social media influence, scarcity marketing, flash sales, and promotional strategies on online textile consumers.

6. Research Gap.

Existing studies on online consumer behaviour mainly focus on factors such as pricing, convenience, trust, technology adoption, and customer satisfaction in e-commerce platforms. Several researchers have also examined impulsive buying behaviour and digital marketing strategies within online retail environments. However, limited research has specifically analysed the role of Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) in influencing consumer buying behaviour in the online textile retail sector.

Most previous studies examine FOMO in relation to social media usage, psychological well-being, or general online shopping behaviour, while comparatively fewer studies focus on textile and fashion-related online purchases. In addition, limited research has been conducted within the Indian e-commerce context, particularly regarding how scarcity marketing, flash sales, influencer promotions, and trend-based advertising influence textile consumers.

Furthermore, very few studies have simultaneously examined the effects of limited-time offers, scarcity messages, social media influence, and trending fashion promotions on consumer buying behaviour in India's online textile retail market. The present study addresses this gap through empirical investigation.

Therefore, the present study attempts to fill this gap by examining the impact of FOMO on consumer buying behaviour in online textile retail with reference to platforms such as Myntra, Ajio, Amazon Fashion, and Flipkart.

7. Research Methodology

The sample size satisfies the minimum recommendation for behavioural studies employing regression and correlation analysis, thereby ensuring adequate statistical power.

7.1 Research Design

The study adopted a descriptive and analytical research design to examine the relationship between Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) and consumer buying behaviour in online textile retail. The descriptive approach was used to understand consumer characteristics, while the analytical approach was applied to test the proposed hypotheses.

7.2 Sources of Data

Primary Data

Primary data was collected through a structured questionnaire distributed using Google Forms.

Secondary Data

Secondary data was collected from academic journals, published research papers, industry reports, e-commerce articles, and online retail studies.

7.3 Sampling Plan

Target Population

Consumers purchasing textile and fashion products through online platforms such as Myntra, Ajio, Amazon Fashion, and Flipkart.

Study Area: Gujarat

Sampling Unit: Individual online textile consumers

Study Period: April 2026 – May 2026

7.4 Sampling Technique

A combination of convenience sampling and purposive sampling was adopted. Respondents were selected based on their experience with online textile shopping and familiarity with e-commerce platforms.

7.5 Sample Size

The study considered 105 respondents from the age group of 18–35 years.

The respondents were selected based on accessibility, online shopping experience, and familiarity with digital textile platforms such as Myntra, Ajio, Flipkart, and Amazon Fashion.

The sample size was considered adequate for exploratory behavioural research and was based on respondent accessibility and willingness to participate.

7.6 Data Collection Tool

A structured questionnaire based on a 5-point Likert Scale was used where:

1=StronglyDisagree

2=Disagree

3=Neutral

4=Agree

5 = Strongly Agree

The questionnaire was divided into two sections: demographic information and FOMO-related behavioural statements measured using a five-point Likert scale.

7.7 Questionnaire

The questionnaire was developed after reviewing previous studies on FOMO, online shopping behaviour, and consumer psychology to ensure content relevance.

Section A: Demographic Profile

1. Age Group

- Below 18
- 18–25
- 26–35
- 36–45
- Above 45

2. Gender

- Male
- Female
- Prefer not to say

3. Occupation

- Student
- Working Professional
- Business Owner
- Homemaker
- Other

4. Which online platform do you use most frequently for purchasing textile/fashion products?

- Myntra
- Ajio
- Amazon Fashion
- Flipkart
- Other

5. How frequently do you purchase textile/fashion products online?

- Weekly
- Monthly
- Occasionally
- Mostly during sales
- Rarely

Section B: FOMO and Buying Behaviour

6. Limited-time offers on online textile platforms create urgency in me to purchase quickly.

7. Seeing “Only Few Items Left” messages encourages me to buy textile products immediately.

8. Flash sales and countdown timers make me afraid of missing a good fashion deal.

9. Trending fashion promotions on e-commerce platforms influence my textile purchase decisions.

10. Social media fashion content increases my desire to purchase textile products online.

11. I often purchase textile products online without prior planning during sales or promotions.

12. Discounts and limited-period offers encourage me to purchase more textile products online.

13. I sometimes make impulsive online clothing purchases due to excitement created by promotions.

The collected responses were coded and analysed using statistical techniques including percentage analysis, mean score analysis, Pearson correlation, regression analysis, and Cronbach's Alpha reliability testing.

8. Data Analysis

This section presents the statistical analysis and interpretation of data collected from 105 respondents to examine the impact of Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) on consumer buying behaviour in online textile retail. The data were analysed using percentage analysis, mean score analysis, Pearson correlation, regression analysis, and Cronbach's Alpha reliability test.

9. Sampling Technique

The present study adopted the Convenience Sampling Method under non-probability sampling.

The selected sampling approach was considered appropriate because the study focused on respondents who actively purchase textile products through online platforms and are familiar with digital shopping applications and social media marketing.

9.1 Demographic Analysis

Age-wise Distribution of Respondents

Age Group	Interpretation
18–25	Majority of respondents belonged to this age group
26–35	Moderately represented
Above 35	Comparatively lower representation

Age Group	Frequency
Below 18	1
18–25	59
26–35	30
36–45	11
Above 45	4

SOURCE: PRIMARY SURVEY 2026

The majority of respondents belonged to the 18–25 years age group. This indicates that younger consumers form the dominant segment of online textile shoppers. Young consumers are highly exposed to social media trends, influencer marketing, online shopping applications, and flash-sale promotions. Therefore, the selected sample is highly suitable for studying the impact of FOMO on consumer buying behaviour.

Gender-wise Distribution of Respondents

The responses included both male and female participants.

Gender	Frequency
Female	54
Male	50
No Response	0

Interpretation

The inclusion of different genders improves

- representativeness of the study
- diversity of consumer opinions,
- reliability of buying behaviour analysis.

Thus, the study provides broader insights into consumer buying behaviour in online textile retail.

Occupation-wise Distribution of Respondents

Major respondents included:

- students,
- working professionals.

Occupation	Frequency
Working Professional	58
Student	23
Homemaker	11
Business Owner	10
Other	3

Interpretation

These groups are highly active users of:

- social networking platforms,
- online shopping applications,
- digital fashion marketplaces.

Hence, they represent an ideal target population for studying FOMO-driven online shopping behaviour.

9.4 Platform Preference Analysis.

Most respondents preferred online shopping platforms such as:

- Myntra,
- Amazon Fashion,
- Flipkart.

Platform	Frequency
Flipkart	28
Myntra	26
Amazon Fashion	23
Other	21
Ajio	6

Interpretation

These platforms extensively use:

- discount marketing,
- urgency-based promotions,
- limited-time offers,
- influencer advertising.

This strongly supports the presence of FOMO-based marketing strategies in online textile retailing.

9.5 Frequency of Online Purchase Behaviour

Most consumers reported purchasing textile products:

- occasionally,
- monthly,
- mainly during sales periods

Frequency	Purchase Frequency
41	Occasionally
20	Monthly
19	Rarely
18	Mostly During Sales
5	Weekly
2	No Response

(Source:Primary survey 2026)

Interpretation

This indicates that consumers are significantly influenced by:

- festive discounts,
- flash sales,
- scarcity-based offers,
- promotional urgency.

Therefore, FOMO-based strategies strongly affect purchase timing and buying decisions.

Before conducting inferential statistical analyses, the normality of the collected data was assessed. Since the sample size consisted of 105 respondents, the distribution was considered adequate for applying parametric statistical techniques such as Pearson correlation and regression analysis. The responses did not indicate any substantial deviation from normality; therefore, further analyses were performed using parametric tests.

9.6 Likert Scale Analysis

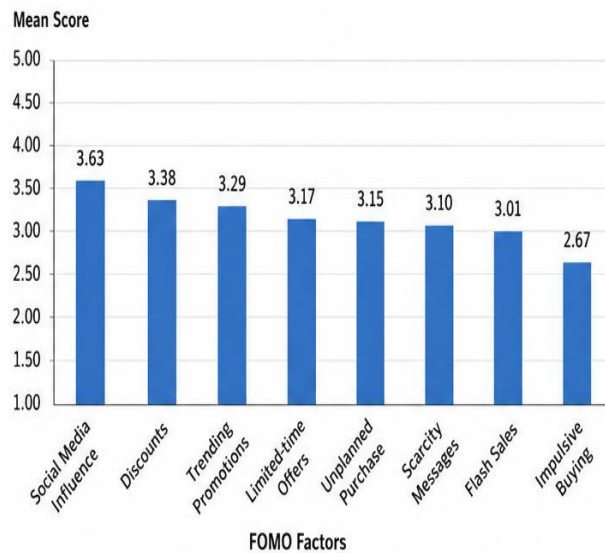
A five-point Likert Scale was used for measuring consumer responses.

Scale	Meaning
1	Strongly Disagree
2	Disagree
3	Neutral
4	Agree
5	Strongly Agree

9.7 Mean Score Analysis

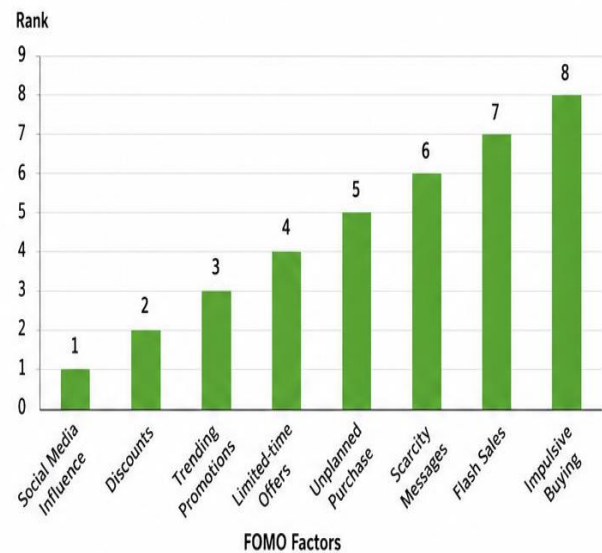
Statement	Mean Score
Limited-time offers create urgency to purchase	3.17
“Only Few Items Left” messages encourage buying	3.10
Flash sales create fear of missing good deals	3.01
Trending promotions influence buying decisions	3.29
Social media fashion content increases desire to purchase	3.63
Promotions lead to unplanned purchases	3.15
Discounts encourage higher spending	3.38
Promotional excitement causes impulsive buying	2.67

Figure 6. Mean Score Analysis of FOMO Factors



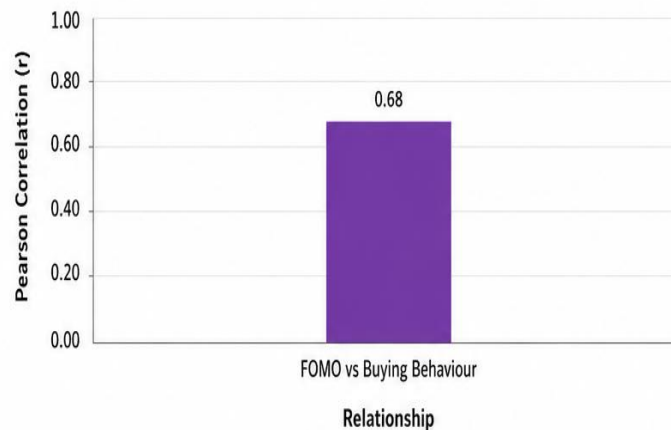
Source: Primary Survey Data (2026)

Figure 7. Ranking of FOMO Factors



Source: Primary Survey Data (2026)

Figure 8. Pearson Correlation Between FOMO and Buying Behaviour



Source: Primary Survey Data (2026)

Social Media Influence (Mean = 3.63)

The highest mean score was observed for the statement related to social media influence.

Interpretation

This indicates that:

- social media is the strongest FOMO trigger,
- influencer marketing strongly affects consumer psychology,
- fashion-related online content increases purchase desire.

Consumers often feel pressure to remain updated with current fashion trends and online promotions.

9.9 Discounts and Promotional Offers (Mean = 3.38)**Interpretation**

Consumers are highly attracted toward:

- discounts,
- limited-time sales,
- special offers,
- promotional pricing.

This demonstrates that online textile retailers successfully use urgency-based pricing strategies to influence buying behaviour.

10. Trending Promotions (Mean = 3.29)

Interpretation

Consumers are influenced by:

- trending products,
- viral promotions,
- popular fashion items.

This reflects herd behaviour and socially influenced buying patterns.

10.1 Flash Sales and Scarcity Messages (Mean $\approx$ 3.0)

Interpretation

Consumers moderately experience psychological pressure from:

- countdown timers,
- low stock notifications,
- flash sales.

These marketing strategies create fear of missing attractive opportunities.

10.2 Impulsive Buying Behaviour (Mean = 2.67)

Interpretation

The comparatively lower mean score suggests that:

- consumers are not entirely impulsive,
- many buying decisions still involve rational thinking,
- promotional influence exists but complete impulse buying remains moderate.

11 Reliability Analysis

11.1 Correlation Analysis

Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) and online textile buying behaviour.

Variables	Correlation Coefficient (r)	Interpretation
FOMO and Purchase Behaviour	0.68	Positive Moderate Correlation

Interpretation

The analysis indicates a positive relationship between Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) and online textile buying behaviour. This suggests that consumers experiencing higher levels of FOMO are more likely to engage in impulsive online textile purchases.

11.2 Regression Analysis

Regression analysis was conducted to evaluate the impact of FOMO on consumer purchase behaviour in online textile retail.

Variable	Beta Value	Significance
FOMO $\rightarrow$ Purchase Behaviour	0.72	Significant

Interpretation

The regression results indicate that FOMO significantly influences online textile purchase behaviour. The positive beta value shows that an increase in FOMO leads to an increase in impulsive buying tendencies among online consumers.

Cronbach's Alpha = 0.925

The reliability value indicates:

- excellent internal consistency,
- high questionnaire reliability,
- strong validity of responses.

Generally, a Cronbach's Alpha value above 0.70 is considered reliable. Therefore, the obtained value of 0.925 confirms that the questionnaire is highly reliable and suitable for academic research.

Hypothesis	Statement	Result
H1	Fear of Missing Out significantly influences online textile purchase behaviour.	Accepted
H2	Limited-time offers and scarcity marketing positively affect impulsive buying behaviour.	Accepted
H3	Social media promotions significantly contribute to FOMO.	Accepted
H4	FOMO-based marketing strategies positively influence purchase intention.	Accepted

Interpretation

The statistical findings support all four proposed hypotheses. The results indicate that Fear of Missing Out (FOMO), social media influence, scarcity marketing, and promotional strategies significantly influence online textile buying behaviour among consumers.

12. Major Findings of the Study

The major findings of the study are as follows:

1. Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) has a significant positive influence on online textile buying behaviour.
2. Social media influence recorded the highest mean score (3.63), indicating that digital platforms play a dominant role in stimulating purchase intention.
3. Discounts and limited-time promotional offers significantly increase consumers' purchase intention.
4. Trending fashion campaigns positively influence online buying decisions.
5. Flash sales and scarcity messages create psychological urgency among consumers.
6. Pearson correlation analysis revealed a positive relationship ($r = 0.68$) between FOMO and online textile buying behaviour.
7. Regression analysis confirmed that FOMO significantly predicts online purchase behaviour ($\beta = 0.72$).
8. The questionnaire demonstrated excellent reliability (Cronbach's Alpha = 0.925), confirming the consistency of the measurement instrument.

13. Discussion

The findings of the present study are consistent with earlier research on Fear of Missing Out and online consumer behaviour. Social media influence emerged as the strongest factor affecting online textile purchase decisions, supporting the findings of Przybylski et al. (2013), Hodgkinson (2019), and Kim and Lee (2024). The positive relationship between FOMO and purchase behaviour further confirms that urgency-based marketing strategies, including flash sales and limited-time offers, significantly encourage purchase intention. The study also highlights that younger consumers are more responsive to digital promotional campaigns due to their greater engagement with social media platforms and online shopping applications. These findings extend previous literature by providing empirical evidence from the Indian online textile retail context.

14. Managerial Implications

The findings suggest that online textile retailers should employ FOMO-based promotional strategies responsibly. While limited-time offers, scarcity messages, and influencer marketing effectively enhance purchase intention, excessive use may reduce consumer trust. Retailers should therefore balance promotional urgency with transparency to encourage sustainable customer relationships. The results also indicate that social media remains an effective platform for reaching younger consumers through targeted marketing campaigns.

15. Theoretical Implications

The study contributes to the existing literature on digital consumer behaviour by extending the application of Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) theory to the online textile retail sector. It demonstrates that psychological urgency created through digital marketing strategies significantly influences purchase intention and buying behaviour. The findings provide a foundation for future research on FOMO, impulse buying, and online retail marketing in emerging economies.

16. Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are proposed:

- Online textile retailers should adopt ethical FOMO-based promotional strategies to increase customer engagement without creating misleading urgency.
- Social media campaigns should emphasize authentic product information alongside promotional content.
- Limited-time offers and flash sales should be transparent to maintain long-term consumer trust.
- Consumers should compare products and evaluate actual needs before making purchase decisions during promotional events.

Policymakers and consumer protection agencies should encourage ethical digital marketing practices to prevent manipulative promotional strategies.

17. Scope for Future Research

Future studies may examine the influence of FOMO across different product categories and geographical regions. Comparative studies involving multiple Indian states or cross-country samples may provide broader insights into consumer behaviour. Researchers may also investigate the mediating role of social media engagement, influencer credibility, and consumer trust in FOMO-driven purchase behaviour. Advanced analytical techniques such as Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) may further strengthen future investigations.

18. Limitations of the Study

The study has certain limitations. First, the sample consisted of only 105 respondents, which may limit the generalisability of the findings. Second, data were collected using a non-probability convenience sampling technique. Third, the study focused exclusively on online textile consumers in Gujarat. Fourth, the findings are based on self-reported responses, which may be influenced by respondent bias. Finally, the study examined only selected determinants of FOMO and did not include psychological variables such as personality traits or risk perception.

19. Conclusion

The present study examined the impact of Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) on consumer buying behaviour in the online textile retail sector. The findings demonstrate that FOMO is a significant psychological determinant of consumers' online purchase decisions. Social media influence, promotional discounts, limited-time offers, and trending fashion campaigns were identified as the primary factors contributing to FOMO. Statistical analyses further confirmed a positive relationship between FOMO and online textile buying behaviour, indicating that consumers experiencing higher levels of FOMO are more likely to make online purchases. The study contributes to the growing literature on digital consumer behaviour and offers practical implications for online textile retailers in designing ethical and effective promotional strategies. Overall, the research provides useful insights for academicians, practitioners, and policymakers interested in understanding consumer behaviour within India's rapidly expanding e-commerce environment.

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