SOCIAL MEDIA BEAUTY MARKETING IN SHANGHAI: HOW INTERNET CELEBRITY CHARACTERISTICS AND SOCIAL COMPARISON DRIVE PURCHASE INTENTIONS THROUGH FOMO

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Abstract

This study examines the intricate relationship between internet celebrity characteristics, social comparison, fear of missing out (FOMO), and beauty product purchase intentions among Shanghai residents on social media. Through quantitative survey data and structural equation modeling, the research reveals that internet celebrity reputation, image consistency, and interactivity have a significant impact on consumer decisions, with FOMO acting as a key mediator. Notably, a reputable influencer fosters trust, image consistency enhances authenticity, and interactivity deepens emotional bonds, all of which drive purchase behaviors. Results confirm that social comparison amplifies FOMO. Suggesting effective strategies: build credible influencers, a consistent image, and leverage FOMO. In summary, the results contribute to the understanding of social learning theory.
Keywords: FOMO, Internet Celebrity, Purchase Intention, Social Comparison, Social Media Marketing

Introduction

The rapid rise of social media platforms, fueled by the digitalization wave, has significantly transformed the landscape of communication, interaction, and marketing. These platforms have become essential tools for both individuals and businesses, offering new avenues for self-expression and brand promotion. Central to this evolution is the emergence of internet celebrities, who have captivated large audiences through their personal appeal and expertise. In particular, the beauty industry has undergone a substantial shift, with beauty influencers utilizing their charm and expertise to foster consumer trust and influence purchasing decisions. Through dynamic interactions, such as live sessions, tutorials, and product reviews, internet influencers not only enhance the consumer experience but also reshape traditional marketing models by focusing on trust and resonance rather than conventional advertisements. As internet celebrities continue to expand their influence, they are redefining the connection between brands and consumers, enabling businesses to reach targeted audiences with more personalized and effective marketing strategies. This trend is evident in the substantial growth of the beauty influencer market, as evidenced by the increasing number of beauty influencers and the corresponding rise in sales linked to their recommendations. However, despite the burgeoning influence of internet celebrities, limited research has explored how specific characteristics of these internet influencers' reputation, image consistency, and interactivity affect consumer purchasing decisions, particularly within the context of the psychological phenomenon of FOMO.

Literature Reviews

Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), developed by Albert Bandura, has become a foundational framework for understanding human behavior and learning. It posits that behavior is shaped by the interplay between personal cognitive factors, environmental influences, and behavioral actions, a concept known as triadic reciprocal causation. SCT emphasizes observational learning, where individuals acquire new behaviors by observing others, rather than solely through direct experience (Bandura, 1965). This theory emphasizes the importance of self-efficacy, the belief in one's ability to perform a specific task, which significantly impacts motivation and decision-making (Bandura, 1977). In recent years, SCT has been adapted to digital environments, with studies showing that social media platforms function as virtual spaces where individuals observe and replicate behaviors, especially those of influencers or opinion leaders (Kim & Kim, 2020; Sakdapat et al., 2025). The theory has been applied to various fields, including health promotion and education, but its application in digital marketing, particularly influencer marketing, has garnered significant attention. Observational learning through social media platforms has profound implications for consumer behavior, influencing everything from lifestyle choices to purchasing decisions. Bandura's SCT thus provides valuable insights into the mechanisms driving consumer behavior in digital contexts.

Concepts, Theories, and Past Research Related to Social Learning Theory

Social Learning Theory (SLT), also introduced by Albert Bandura, extends the behaviorist model of learning, arguing that individuals learn not only through direct experience but also by observing others and the outcomes of their behaviors. This process of observational learning is central to SLT, which identifies four stages: attention, retention, reproduction, and motivation. The theory posits that people are more likely to imitate behaviors they observe in role models, especially when they see those behaviors being rewarded. SLT underscores the role of vicarious reinforcement, where individuals observe the consequences of others' actions and adjust their behavior accordingly (Bandura, 1965). In the context of social media and influencer marketing, SLT explains how consumers mimic the behaviors of influencers, shaping their attitudes and purchasing decisions. By observing influencers' endorsements and lifestyle choices, followers are motivated to replicate those behaviors, driven by the perceived rewards

or status associated with them. This model has been widely applied in various domains, including education, health, and media influence. Recent research shows that SLT is particularly effective in explaining consumer behavior on social media platforms, where influencers serve as powerful role models (de Veirman et al., 2017; Yuangngoen et al., 2025). By understanding SLT, marketers can develop more effective strategies that tap into the power of social learning to shape consumer behavior.

Impact of Internet Celebrity Reputation on FOMO

Internet celebrity reputation is a multidimensional concept, covering three key elements: popularity, credibility, and attractiveness. Popularity refers to the recognition of internet celebrities in the public eye, typically characterized by a large fan base and significant social influence. Credibility involves the authenticity and reliability of the information provided by internet celebrities, which is crucial for consumers to build trust. Attractiveness reflects the personal charm of internet celebrities, including appearance, personality, and values, which helps attract fans and establish emotional connections. These factors work together to shape the complexity of internet celebrity reputation and present their importance in different ways on various social media platforms. For example, image and video platforms may emphasize attractiveness and performance, while text and comment platforms may prioritize credibility and professional knowledge (Wang et al., 2022). Thus, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1: Internet celebrity reputation is significantly correlated with FOMO.

Impact of Image Consistency on FOMO

In the process of shaping brand image, image consistency is a core concept that concerns the coherence of the brand's presentation in different contexts. This consistency is reflected not only in the brand's visual elements, such as its logo, colors, and design, but also in deeper dimensions, including brand language style, communication methods, and brand storytelling. Image consistency is crucial for consumers to form a clear brand perception and establish brand loyalty (Fan et al., 2024). By maintaining consistent brand information and image, companies can establish a unique position in consumers' minds, thereby influencing consumers' cognition, emotions, and behavior. Furthermore, image consistency is demonstrated in different industries through aspects such as product design, choice of spokespersons, and customer service, conveying the brand's core values and beliefs (Wang et al., 2023). Thus, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H2: Image Consistency is significantly correlated with FOMO.

The Impact of Interaction on FOMO

Interactivity is a core concept in consumer behavior research, describing the depth and quality of two-way communication between consumers and brands or products. This communication is not limited to channels such as social media, customer service, and product feedback mechanisms, but is crucial for enhancing consumer engagement (Wei et al., 2022). High interactivity can significantly enhance consumer loyalty and purchase intention towards a brand, as it makes consumers feel that they have a substantial impact on the brand or product, thereby increasing their sense of involvement and a sense of belonging to the community. Thus, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H3: Interactivity is significantly correlated with FOMO.

The Impact of Social Comparison on FOMO

Social Comparison Theory, proposed by Festinger in 1954, is a key concept in psychology that explains how individuals evaluate their own abilities and opinions by comparing themselves to others. In consumer behavior research, this theory is used to explain how consumers make purchasing decisions by comparing them with others. Consumers evaluate their consumption choices by engaging in upward comparison, comparing themselves to individuals with higher social status or abilities, or downward comparison, comparing themselves to individuals with lower social status or abilities, which influences their brand preferences and purchase intention

(Servidio et al., 2021). There are significant differences in the application of social comparison across different cultural backgrounds. For instance, individuals in collectivist cultures tend to compare themselves to other members within the group, whereas individuals in individualistic cultures focus more on personal achievements and independence (Karlsson et al., 2005). Thus, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H4: Social comparison is significantly correlated with FOMO.

Roles of FOMO Between Internet Celebrity Reputation and Purchase Intention

FOMO, as a consumer emotional state, refers to the anxiety individuals experience due to worrying about missing out on important information or novel events. This type of anxiety is particularly prominent in the social media environment, as consumers can see others' recent news and achievements in real-time through the internet. In the context of beauty product consumption, FOMO may manifest as consumers worrying that if they do not purchase popular products recommended by internet celebrities, they will miss the opportunity to become more beautiful or keep up with current trends. This feeling of anxiety may prompt consumers to make purchase decisions hastily without full consideration, thereby affecting their willingness to buy (Chung et al., 2025). Thus, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H5a: FOMO plays a mediating role between internet celebrity reputation and purchase intention.

FOMO in the Role of Image Consistency and Purchase Intention

Image Consistency refers to the degree of match between the personal image presented by internet celebrities on social media and the products they recommend. This consistency is reflected not only in visual elements, such as dressing style and color matching, but also in the words and deeds of internet celebrities and their lifestyles, thereby influencing consumers' perceptions of internet celebrities and the products they recommend. Internet celebrities with high image consistency can more effectively establish trust with fans, as consumers tend to perceive such internet celebrities as more authentic and trustworthy. Conversely, inconsistency in image may weaken consumers' trust, increase their uncertainty in purchasing decisions, and lead to FOMO (Watkins et al., 2016). Thus, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H5b: FOMO plays a mediating role between image consistency and purchase intention.

FOMO in the Role Between Interaction and Purchase Intention

The interaction of internet celebrities describes the frequency and quality of communication and interaction between internet celebrities and fans. This interaction not only includes responses from internet celebrities to fan comments but also encompasses real-time interactions through live streaming, Q&A sessions, and other forms. Internet celebrities with high interaction can more effectively establish a close connection with fans, enhancing fans' sense of participation and belonging. This instant, two-way communication helps fans feel that their voices are heard and valued, deepening their trust and loyalty to internet celebrities. Conversely, suppose the interaction of internet celebrities is low. In that case, fans may feel neglected, which could increase their FOMO as they worry about missing opportunities to interact with internet celebrities or missing product information recommended by them (Kim et al., 2021). Thus, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H5c: FOMO plays an intermediary role between interaction and purchase intention.

Impact of FOMO on Purchase Intention

Purchase intention, as a core concept in marketing research, is a crucial indicator of consumers' intentions and likelihood to purchase products or services. It is a multidimensional construct, deeply influenced by individual characteristics such as age, gender, income level, and cultural background. Additionally, product characteristics such as quality, design, brand image, as well as pricing strategy and perceived value, play key roles in shaping consumers' purchase intention (Ajzen, 1991). In consumer behavior, FOMO can serve as a driving force for consumers to make quick purchase decisions in order to avoid missing out on buying opportunities. However,

this anxiety may also lead to adverse effects, such as impulsive purchases made by consumers without sufficient consideration (Fornell, 1992). Thus, the following hypothesis is proposed:
H6: FOMO is significantly correlated with purchase intention.

The Impact of Perceived Value on Purchase Intention
Purchase intention, a key variable in consumer behavior research, is a crucial indicator for predicting the market acceptance of products or services. Multiple factors, including individual characteristics, product features, pricing factors, and promotional strategies influence it. Individual characteristics, such as age, gender, income level, and cultural background, have a profound impact on consumers' value judgments and choice preferences. Perceived value, as a comprehensive value judgment formed by consumers when evaluating products or services, is another core variable that influences purchase intention. It encompasses multiple dimensions, including economic value, functional value, social value, and emotional value, reflecting consumers' subjective evaluations of product features, quality, performance, brand image, and user experience (Gardner, 1974). Thus, the following hypothesis is proposed:
H7: Perceived value is significantly correlated with purchase intention.

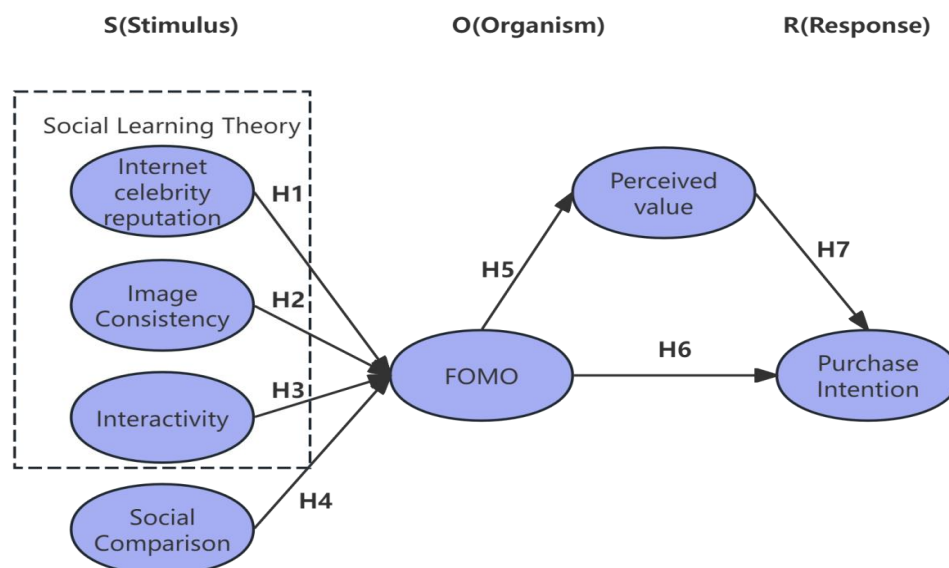Based on the above information, this study developed the research conceptual model, as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

Research Methodology
Sample, Sampling, and Data Collection
This study employs a quantitative research methodology to investigate the influence of internet celebrities on consumer purchasing behavior regarding beauty products on social media. The research targets consumers who are active on platforms such as Weibo, WeChat, Douyin, and Xiaohongshu, with a particular interest in those who engage with internet celebrities endorsing beauty products. To ensure methodological rigor, the study employed a structured questionnaire survey as its primary data collection method, which was approved under ethics certification HREC079/2024. The questionnaire was designed to measure indicators including FOMO, social comparison, purchase intention, perceived value, image consistency, interactivity, and internet celebrity reputation, all of which were assessed using a seven-point Likert scale to quantify consumer attitudes and behaviors. A pre-survey was conducted in advance to test the instrument's reliability and validity, utilizing Cronbach's Alpha and exploratory factor analysis (EFA) to assess internal consistency and construct validity. The

sample size was determined using a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error, resulting in a minimum required sample size of 385 participants. Convenience sampling was employed due to accessibility constraints, as distributing the questionnaire online allowed for reaching a broad audience within a limited timeframe. Although the study's focus is on consumers in Shanghai, the online nature of data collection means it is not possible to confirm that all participants reside in the target area. This geographic limitation introduces potential bias and should be transparently acknowledged in the research. Data collection is scheduled over a period of 30 days, aiming to capture diverse perspectives within the defined population. The combination of structured sampling logic, validated instruments, and acknowledgment of limitations enhances the study's overall credibility, providing a robust foundation for analyzing consumer behavior influenced by internet celebrity endorsements. By collecting sample IP addresses through online questionnaires, the study confirmed that all respondents were from Shanghai.

Data Analysis

The target population for this research is primarily social media users in Shanghai, a city known for its diverse consumer base and high acceptance of internet celebrity endorsements. The sample size was determined using Cochran's formula, a 95% confidence level, and a 5% margin of error. Stratified sampling was utilized to ensure diversity across different demographic groups, including age, gender, and income. After filtering out incomplete or inaccurate submissions, a final sample of 426 responses was used for the analysis. Data analysis was conducted using SmartPLS software to evaluate the relationships between variables proposed in the research framework. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was employed to assess both measurement and structural models, examining how internet celebrity characteristics influence purchase intention through mediating variables, such as FOMO and social comparison.

Research Results

Descriptive Analysis

The descriptive analysis of the survey data offers a comprehensive overview of the demographic characteristics and behavioral tendencies of the respondents, revealing patterns that are highly relevant to understanding consumer dynamics in the beauty industry. Notably, individuals working in the information technology and internet sector constituted the largest share of participants at 20.42%, suggesting that tech-savvy professionals may be more engaged with online platforms and digital marketing content, including internet celebrity endorsements. This segment of the population is likely more familiar with social media trends and may respond more actively to the influencer-driven marketing campaigns. In terms of income distribution, a significant portion of respondents (30.75%) reported a monthly income ranging from 10,000 to 20,000 yuan, indicating a relatively strong purchasing power and suggesting that mid-to-high-income consumers are a key demographic for beauty brands seeking to market through social media.

Social media usage data reinforces this digital orientation, with an overwhelming majority of participants indicating frequent use of Weibo (99.53%) and WeChat (97.89%). These platforms emerge as primary channels for consuming and interacting with beauty-related content, highlighting their strategic value for influencer-based marketing efforts. Their near-universal adoption among respondents highlights the profound integration of social media into everyday life and its significant role in shaping consumer awareness and purchase intentions.

Moreover, consumer engagement with beauty products appears to be both high and frequent, with 35.45% of respondents purchasing beauty products at least once a week. This statistic reflects a strong habitual demand, suggesting that beauty consumption is not merely occasional, but rather a regular part of many consumers' routines. Such behavior highlights the importance

of developing and implementing consistent and persuasive marketing strategies that sustain consumer interest over time. Overall, this demographic and behavioral data provides essential context for interpreting how consumers perceive and respond to internet celebrity endorsements, enabling a more nuanced understanding of the factors that drive purchasing decisions in the social media age.

Reliability and Validity Assessment

The study conducted a comprehensive reliability and validity analysis to ensure the robustness of the measurement scales used. In terms of reliability, Cronbach's alpha coefficients for the dimensions of FOMO, social comparison, purchase intention, perceived value, image consistency, interactivity, and internet celebrity reputation were all above the acceptable threshold of 0.7, with values ranging from 0.772 to 0.957. Specifically, the FOMO dimension exhibited a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.957, indicating exceptional internal consistency. Similarly, the social comparison scale had an alpha of 0.889, and the purchase intention dimension showed a high reliability with an alpha of 0.885. These values confirm the high reliability of the scales used in the study.

The validity of the data was assessed using KMO and Bartlett's tests, which further supported the appropriateness of the data for factor analysis. The KMO value was 0.923, significantly above the minimum threshold of 0.6, indicating excellent data suitability for factor analysis. Bartlett's test yielded a chi-square value of 1879.130 with a p-value of 0.000, confirming the validity of the correlation matrix and supporting the factor analysis approach. The factor analysis revealed that the seven factors collectively explained 76.276% of the total variance after rotation, which is well above the threshold of 50%, further affirming the scale's structural validity.

Measurement and Structural Model Analysis

The results of the measurement and structural model analysis indicate that the constructions used in the study exhibit strong construction validity, convergent validity, and discriminant validity. The confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) revealed that all observed variables significantly loaded on their corresponding latent variables, confirming the appropriateness of the measurement model. The standardized loadings for the five social comparison items ranged from 0.901 to 0.999, demonstrating high internal consistency and strong convergent validity. Similarly, the FOMO scale demonstrated a high standardized loading, ranging from 0.785 to 0.862, further supporting its aggregate validity. The AVE values for most variables, including interactivity, image consistency, and FOMO, were above the threshold of 0.5, indicating strong convergent validity. The only exception was the purchase intention, which had an AVE of 0.55, still within an acceptable range.

For discriminant validity, the HTMT matrix and Fornell-Larcker criterion tests confirmed that most constructions were distinct, with HTMT values below 0.90, demonstrating that each construct measures a unique aspect of consumer behavior. The AVE square roots for all variables, including FOMO (0.888) and social comparison (0.903), were higher than their correlations with other constructs, further confirming their discriminant validity.

Table 1 Result of Hypothesis Tests

	Interactivity	Image Consistency	Perceived Value	Social Comparison	Internet Celebrity Reputation	Purchase Intention	FOMO
Interactivity	0.726						
Image Consistency	0.683	0.775					
Perceived Value	0.397	0.514	0.785				
Social Comparison	0.349	0.333	0.433	0.903			
Internet Celebrity Reputation	0.795	0.345	0.373	0.353	0.914		
Purchase Intention	0.411	0.404	0.633	0.557	0.42	0.739	
FOMO	0.288	0.267	0.348	0.229	0.304	0.427	0.888

Table 1 presents the results of hypothesis tests, highlighting the correlations among key variables in the study. Notably, internet celebrity reputation exhibits a strong positive relationship with interactivity (r = 0.795) and a very high correlation with itself (r = 0.914), emphasizing its central influence in shaping consumer responses. Image consistency is closely related to both interactivity (r = 0.683) and perceived value (r = 0.514), suggesting that a coherent brand image enhances consumers' valuation of the product. Social comparison exhibits the highest correlation with itself (0.903) and demonstrates moderate associations with purchase intention (0.557) and perceived value (0.433), indicating its significant role in influencing consumer behavior. Purchase intention is most strongly associated with perceived value (r = 0.633), indicating that how consumers perceive product value plays a pivotal role in driving buying decisions. FOMO exhibits a moderate correlation with purchase intention (r = 0.427) and high internal consistency (α = 0.888), supporting its role as a mediator in the model. Overall, the results confirm strong internal consistency and logical relationships among the constructs, supporting the hypothesized model.

Hypotheses Testing

The hypothesis testing results provide significant insights into the relationships between internet celebrity characteristics, social comparison, and consumer purchase intentions, with FOMO acting as a mediator. The variable correlation analysis showed strong associations between several key constructs. For example, the correlation between internet celebrity reputation and interactivity (r = 0.795) highlighted the importance of active engagement in building credibility. At the same time, perceived value was positively correlated with purchase intention (r = 0.633), indicating that consumers' perception of a product's value drives their purchasing decisions. Social comparison also had a moderate positive relationship with purchase intention (r = 0.557), suggesting that observing others' behaviors influences consumers to follow suit.

The path analysis revealed that internet celebrity reputation has a positive effect on FOMO (β = 0.308), and image consistency also has a positive influence on FOMO (β = 0.229). Furthermore, interactivity was found to have a negative relationship with FOMO (β = -0.147), suggesting that greater interaction between influencers and followers reduces the anxiety of missing out. FOMO was also positively correlated with purchase intention (β = 0.234), supporting the idea that consumers make faster purchasing decisions to avoid missing out on opportunities. Additionally, perceived value had a substantial positive impact on purchase intention (β = 0.552), underlining its central role in driving consumer decisions.

FOMO played a mediating role, with path coefficients of 0.348 for perceived value and 0.234 for purchase intention, indicating that FOMO amplifies the effects of internet celebrity characteristics and perceived value on purchase intention. These findings provide empirical evidence supporting the significant impact of FOMO, internet celebrity reputation, image consistency, and interactivity on consumer behavior, particularly in the beauty industry. The results align with existing literature on social learning and consumer behavior, offering valuable implications for digital marketing strategies.

Table 2 Results of Hypothesis Tests

Hypothesis	Original Sample	Standard deviation	T statistics	P values	Results
H1: Internet celebrity reputation is positively correlated with FOMO	0.308	0.096	3.215	0.001***	Support
H2: Image consistency was positively correlated with FOMO	0.229	0.086	2.674	0.000***	Support
H3: Interactivity was negatively associated with FOMO	-0.147	0.045	3.245	0.000***	Support
H4: Social comparisons were positively associated with FOMO	0.096	0.032	2.985	0.003**	Support
H5: FOMO plays an intermediary role between Internet celebrity reputation, image consistency, interaction, and purchase intention	0.348 (perceived value), 0.234 (purchase intention)	0.068 (perceived value), 0.068 (purchase intention)	5.112 (perceived value), 3.452 (purchase intention)	0.000*** (perceived value), 0.000*** (purchase intention)	Support
H6: FOMO was positively correlated with purchase intention	0.234	0.075	3.124	0.000***	Support
H7: Perceived value is positively correlated with purchase intention	0.552	0.056	9.847	0.000***	Support

The results from Table 2 indicate significant relationships between various factors and purchase intentions. Hypothesis 1 (H1) reveals a positive correlation between internet celebrity reputation and FOMO, with a t-statistic of 3.215 and a p-value of 0.001, confirming that a reputable internet celebrity enhances consumers' FOMO. Hypothesis 2 (H2) similarly finds that image consistency is positively related to FOMO, evidenced by a t-statistic of 2.674 and a significant p-value of 0.000. On the other hand, Hypothesis 3 (H3) suggests a negative relationship between interactivity and FOMO, with a t-statistic of 3.245 and a p-value of 0.000, implying that higher interactivity between influencers and their audience can reduce FOMO. Hypothesis 4 (H4) supports a positive correlation between social comparisons and FOMO, with a t-statistic of 2.985 and a p-value of 0.003, indicating that social comparisons to influencers amplify feelings of FOMO. Furthermore, Hypothesis 5 (H5) confirms that FOMO mediates the relationship between internet celebrity characteristics and purchase intention, with a significant effect on both perceived value and purchase intention. Lastly, Hypotheses 6 (H6) and 7 (H7) indicate that FOMO has a positive influence on purchase intention, while perceived value

strongly correlates with purchase intention, both yielding highly significant results (p-value < 0.001). These findings underscore the significant impact of FOMO, influencer characteristics, and perceived value on shaping consumer behavior.

Conclusion and Discussion

This study provides a comprehensive examination of how specific characteristics of internet celebrities, namely their reputation, image consistency, and interactivity, alongside psychological processes such as social comparison and FOMO, collectively influence consumer purchasing intentions in Shanghai's beauty industry. The results indicate FOMO acts as a key mediating mechanism that intensifies the relationship between influencer attributes and consumer behavior. The findings underscore that consumers are inclined to emulate individuals they admire, particularly those who are perceived as socially or aesthetically superior, which confirms Bandura's Social Learning Theory (2004). In the context of beauty products, internet celebrities who exemplify idealized standards of attractiveness and success become powerful agents of influence, especially when their online persona aligns closely with the aspirational values held by consumers. Reputation emerges as a foundational element in shaping consumer trust and receptivity. A high-reputation influencer is seen not only as a credible source of information but also as a trustworthy figure whose endorsement carries implicit assurance of product quality and efficacy, thus confirming Ren & Zeng (2024), who indicate that a strong personal brand enhances the persuasive power of celebrity endorsements. Furthermore, the consistency between an internet celebrity's image and the products they endorse is shown to enhance perceived authenticity.

When there is congruence between the influencer's lifestyle and the product's identity, consumers are more likely to form favorable evaluations and engage more deeply with the brand. The results also align with those of Rifon et al. (2023) and Lim et al. (2022), who found that perceived fitness between endorsers and brands is a crucial determinant of consumer engagement. When influencers respond to comments, share behind-the-scenes content, or demonstrate honest product use, they humanize their online presence and bridge the psychological distance with followers. This frequent interaction not only boosts authenticity but also deepens the emotional bond between consumer and influencer, where high levels of interactivity contribute to more positive consumer attitudes toward both the influencer and the products they promote. Social comparison plays a pivotal role in shaping consumers' internal motivations. As users are exposed to curated, idealized lifestyles portrayed by internet celebrities, they naturally compare their own realities with those projected online. These comparisons often generate a desire to reduce perceived gaps in lifestyle or appearance, which motivates purchasing behavior aimed at emulating the influencer's image. This psychological mechanism is rooted in Bandura's social learning framework, which posits that individuals adopt behaviors observed in those they perceive as role models, particularly when those behaviors appear to yield social or personal rewards. FOMO serves as a critical psychological driver that intensifies these dynamics by introducing a sense of urgency and anxiety. Consumers often fear being left behind or excluded from desirable trends or exclusive product launches, especially when such experiences are prominently featured in influencer content. This aligns with Przybylski et al.'s (2013) finding that individuals feel compelled to stay constantly informed and involved to avoid missing potentially rewarding opportunities.

Moreover, the study reveals that perceived value significantly moderates the relationship between FOMO and purchase intention. When consumers believe that a product holds high value—be it due to its quality, scarcity, aesthetic appeal, or social desirability—they are more likely to act on FOMO and proceed with a purchase. This is particularly true in the beauty industry, where trends, peer influence, and the credibility of influencers often shape value perception. These findings support Kasser's research on consumer value orientation,

suggesting that the higher the perceived benefit associated with the product, the stronger the motivation to buy, especially under the psychological pressure induced by FOMO. In summary, the research underscores how internet celebrity characteristics, when combined with mechanisms of social comparison and emotional triggers such as FOMO, can significantly influence consumer purchasing behavior in the digital age. For marketers in the beauty industry, the implication is clear: strategically selecting influencers with strong reputations, aligning their image with the brand, fostering genuine interactivity, and integrating FOMO-driven tactics can synergistically enhance consumer engagement and drive sales.

Theoretical Implication

This study makes a significant theoretical contribution by advancing the application of Social Learning Theory within the contemporary context of digital consumer behavior, particularly in the dynamic and highly visual beauty industry. These attributes do not operate in isolation but are deeply embedded in the psychological framework of social comparison, whereby consumers evaluate themselves in relation to idealized portrayals of beauty and lifestyle as projected by influencers. Through these comparisons, consumers adopt behaviors they associate with aspirational figures, which is a direct extension of Bandura's original theory into the digital domain. Furthermore, this study deepens the theoretical understanding of the emotional mechanisms underpinning digital influence by incorporating the mediating role of FOMO. This inclusion adds a nuanced layer to Social Learning Theory by highlighting how social media platforms not only facilitate observational learning but also trigger affective responses. The emotional intensity induced by FOMO creates a fertile environment in which the persuasive power of internet celebrities becomes even more effective, ultimately shaping consumer decision-making in more immediate and sometimes impulsive ways. The research contributes to academic literature by proposing an integrated conceptual model that captures the complex interactions between influencer attributes, consumer psychological processes, and purchasing intentions. Ultimately, the study contributes to the theoretical foundation for understanding and leveraging the mechanisms of digital influence in contemporary marketing practice.

Practical Implication

As digital influencers continue to serve as powerful intermediaries between brands and consumers, beauty companies must recognize the pivotal role that influencers and their reputation play in shaping consumer perceptions. Consumers are more likely to accept recommendations from influencers they perceive as authentic and reputable, thereby increasing the likelihood of conversion from passive viewers to active purchasers. By engaging in two-way communication, influencers can cultivate a community-like environment that enhances consumer loyalty and responsiveness. These interactions humanize the influencers and transform passive content consumption into active relationship-building, which in turn increases consumers' willingness to follow purchase suggestions. Furthermore, the strategic use of FOMO as a psychological level can be particularly effective in driving immediate consumer action and boosting marketing performance. Finally, strong influencer reputation, brand-image alignment, high interactivity, and FOMO-based messaging—beauty brands can construct a comprehensive and psychologically informed social media marketing strategy. This approach not only enhances the authenticity and relatability of promotional efforts but also directly translates into increased consumer engagement, stronger brand loyalty, and improved sales outcomes in a highly competitive digital marketplace.

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