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# From Trend Exposure to Identity Construction: FOMO and Generation Z's Fashion Consumption on TikTok Shop

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Fear of Missing Out (FOMO), Generation Z, TikTok Shop, Consumer Behavior, Fashion Consumption.

**Abstract**

**Introduction:** Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) has become a prominent phenomenon among Generation Z, particularly in fashion consumption through TikTok Shop. Previous studies have primarily examined the relationship between FOMO and consumer behavior quantitatively, while limited research has explored how FOMO shapes consumer lifestyles through subjective experiences in digital environments. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the role of FOMO in the formation of Generation Z's consumer lifestyle in fashion consumption on TikTok Shop. **Research Methods:** This study employed a qualitative field research approach involving 15 Generation Z university students at Universitas Islam Negeri Palangka Raya who actively use TikTok and have purchased fashion products through TikTok Shop. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, observation, and documentation, and analyzed using inductive descriptive analysis. **Results:** The findings indicate that FOMO emerges through repeated exposure to viral fashion content, social comparison with peers and influencers, and concerns about being left behind in trends. These experiences encourage impulsive purchasing decisions and normalize online shopping habits. Fashion consumption is increasingly driven by the desire for social recognition, self-expression, and digital identity construction rather than functional needs alone. **Conclusion:** FOMO plays a significant role in shaping the consumer lifestyle of Generation Z on TikTok Shop. Fashion consumption functions not

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| | only as an economic activity but also as a means of gaining social recognition and maintaining relevance in digital communities. These findings highlight the importance of strengthening digital and financial literacy to encourage more rational consumption behavior among Generation Z. |
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## INTRODUCTION

The development of digital technology has brought about a major transformation in social life, particularly for Generation Z, who have grown up alongside the rapid rise of social media (Putra & Hayati, 2025). The presence of social media is no longer merely a means of sharing information, but has evolved into a new social space where individuals build their image, expand their networks, and follow various trends that move at a very fast pace. Amidst these dynamics, Generation Z, having grown up alongside the rapid development of the internet, has become the group most active and most exposed to the flow of digital information (Fitri et al., 2024). The high intensity of social media use among this generation gives rise to various psychological and social implications, one of which is the emergence of the Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) phenomenon.

FOMO refers to a feeling of worry or anxiety when a person feels left out of experiences, information, or trends currently taking place within their social environment. In the context of social media, FOMO often arises when individuals see others' posts about specific activities, achievements, or lifestyles, thereby creating a drive to participate so as not to feel excluded. This condition is not merely an emotional issue, but is also linked to the formation of behaviour and consumption patterns. FOMO is not just a fleeting feeling, but rather part of social dynamics influenced by social media algorithms, popular culture, and peer pressure (Mawaddah et al., 2025).

This is clearly evident in the rapidly growing consumer trends on social media, particularly on TikTok. For example, there has been a rise in purchases of viral products via live shopping features and TikTok Shop, where users are driven to buy immediately due to limited-time offers, influencer reviews, and the high number of viewers, which creates a sense of urgency. Furthermore, consumption trends for specific products such as viral skincare and the latest fashion also demonstrate how FOMO influences Generation Z's consumption decisions. Individuals tend to buy not merely out of necessity, but driven by the urge to follow popular trends to remain relevant within their social circles (Perdana, 2023).

This phenomenon is becoming increasingly important to study because Generation Z is at a stage of life where their social identity is still developing (Maria Valentina Jelita, 2026). At this stage, social recognition, group acceptance, and validation from the environment have a strong influence on individual decisions. As social media becomes the primary space for interaction, the trends circulating within it have the potential to influence how this generation makes choices, including in terms of consumption. The urge to follow trends, buy popular

products, or align one's lifestyle with that of idolised public figures can be part of an effort to avoid feeling left behind.

In a more specific context, the phenomenon of FOMO among Generation Z is increasingly evident in their pursuit of fashion trends emerging through TikTok Shop. Unlike other forms of consumption, fashion products are characterised by being highly dynamic and rapidly changing in line with digital trends. Content such as 'outfit of the day' (OOTD), 'TikTok poison', and product recommendations from influencers make fashion one of the categories most likely to go viral and capture users' attention. Constant exposure to such content creates the perception that following fashion trends is a necessity to remain relevant within one's social circle.

Furthermore, the presence of the TikTok Shop feature reinforces the FOMO experience by allowing users to make purchases directly without having to switch platforms. This ease of access, combined with marketing strategies such as flash sales, limited-time discounts, and "viral product" labels, fosters a sense of urgency among consumers. In this context, Generation Z tends to make spontaneous fashion purchases in response to emotional impulses, rather than purely based on need. Consequently, FOMO functions not only as a psychological feeling but also as a mechanism that directly influences fashion consumption patterns in the digital space.

Furthermore, fashion consumption on TikTok Shop cannot be separated from Generation Z's efforts to build their self-identity on social media. Fashion products purchased serve not only as basic necessities but also as symbols of lifestyle and self-representation in the public eye. When individuals see others sporting a particular trendy style, there is a drive to imitate it so as not to feel left behind. This process demonstrates that FOMO in the context of fashion is not merely about the ownership of goods but is also linked to the need for social recognition and digital existence.

A number of previous studies have examined the phenomenon of Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) and consumer behaviour among Generation Z. The study (Przybylski et al., 2013) explains that FOMO is linked to an individual's psychological need to remain connected and accepted within a social environment. Meanwhile, the study ' found that exposure to social media contributes to the emergence of impulsive purchasing behaviour among teenage social media users. The study (Akbar & Surawan, 2025) also indicates that intensive social media use can influence users' psychological aspects, particularly in the formation of self-esteem.

Nevertheless, these studies tend to focus on the relationship between FOMO, social media, and consumptive behaviour in general. Studies that specifically examine how Generation Z's subjective experiences in interpreting FOMO shape a consumptive lifestyle within fashion trends on TikTok Shop remain relatively limited (Ali & Hikmah, 2026). Furthermore, most previous studies have employed a quantitative approach that emphasises relationships between variables, and thus have not been able to provide an in-depth explanation of the social and psychological processes underpinning the formation of such consumerist behaviour. Given this gap, this study aims to examine in greater depth the experiences of Generation Z in dealing with FOMO regarding fashion trends on TikTok Shop.

Using a qualitative approach, this study seeks to uncover the processes underlying the formation of a consumerist lifestyle, the factors influencing it, and how fashion consumption is interpreted as part of the formation of social identity in the digital space.

In Indonesia, research on FOMO and consumerist behaviour among Generation Z is still evolving (Ariyanto & Umam, 2026). Although this issue is frequently discussed within the contexts of psychology or digital communication, research specifically linking the role of FOMO in the formation of a consumerist lifestyle among Generation Z in the social media era remains relatively limited (Anwar & Awang, 2024). Yet, this phenomenon is highly relevant to the social conditions of Indonesian society, which is experiencing significant annual growth in internet and social media users (Safitri et al., 2024). Generation Z are not merely consumers of information, but also the primary target of digital marketing strategies, endorsements, and trend based campaigns.

The phenomenon of consumption within fashion trends on TikTok Shop cannot be understood merely as economic behaviour, but also as a social practice linked to the search for recognition and the formation of identity. Therefore, this study is analysed using the perspective of social consumption theory from Thorstein Veblen and Jean Baudrillard. This approach is used to understand how Generation Z's consumption behaviour is driven not only by need but also by symbolic and social motivations within the digital space.

Against this background, this study aims to critically examine the role of Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) in driving Generation Z's fashion consumption behaviour on TikTok Shop. It explores how exposure to viral fashion trends, the dominance of creator content, and digital marketing strategies shape perceptions and consumption decisions that are no longer entirely rational. Furthermore, this study examines how FOMO transforms into a psychological driver that accelerates impulsive purchasing and constructs a consumptive lifestyle oriented towards trends, self-image, and social validation. Thus, this study seeks to provide a sharper understanding of how fashion consumption in the digital age is not merely a necessity, but rather a part of the social mechanisms shaping Generation Z's identity.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach involving field research, in which data is obtained directly from the research subjects through interaction and observation in their natural environment. This approach was chosen because the study aims to gain an in-depth understanding of Generation Z's experience in interpreting Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) and its link to the development of a consumerist lifestyle in the social media era. The research was conducted among Generation Z students who actively use TikTok Shop, as the primary digital shopping space (Sofiana & Hayu, 2025). Research informants were selected using purposive sampling, i.e. the selection of informants based on specific criteria relevant to the research objectives. The criteria for informants included: (1) belonging to Generation Z, (2) actively using TikTok every day, (3) having purchased fashion products via TikTok Shop, and (4) having been exposed to viral fashion trends on social media. This study involved 15 informants who

were Generation Z students at the State Islamic University of Palangka Raya. Data collection took place in April 2026.

Research data was obtained through semi-structured interviews, observation, and documentation. Interviews were conducted to explore the informants' experiences regarding their perceptions of FOMO, their experiences following fashion trends on TikTok Shop, the purchasing decision-making process, the influence of social media on consumption behaviour, and the significance of fashion consumption in their social lives. Observations focused on patterns of TikTok usage, informants' interactions with viral fashion content, responses to emerging trends, and consumption habits demonstrated in their digital activities. Meanwhile, documentation was obtained from field notes, screenshots of TikTok content relevant to the research, and various literature and supporting documents relating to the FOMO phenomenon and the consumptive behaviour of Generation Z.

The majority of informants were students within the Generation Z age range who habitually accessed TikTok for several hours each day (Dewi et al., 2025). The data obtained were then analysed using descriptive analysis techniques with an inductive approach. The analysis process was carried out through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. In the initial stage, the interview data was transcribed and then coded to identify key themes emerging from the informants' experiences. Subsequently, these codes were grouped into several categories, such as perceptions of FOMO, social comparison, impulsive purchasing decisions, symbolic consumption, and identity construction.

Data saturation was achieved when the interview process no longer yielded new information or themes relevant to the research focus. This indicated that the data obtained was sufficient to answer the research questions. To ensure data validity, this study employed source triangulation by comparing information obtained from interviews, observations, and documentation. Furthermore, this study also took research ethics into account. Prior to the interviews, all informants were provided with an explanation of the research objectives and asked to give their voluntary consent to participate in the study. The informants' identities were kept confidential by using specific codes or initials to protect their privacy and the confidentiality of their personal data.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Generation Z's Perceptions of Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) in Fashion Trends on TikTok Shop

The rapid development of information and communication technology has brought about significant changes to the social, cultural, and psychological aspects of human life. Generation Z has grown up alongside the internet, smartphones, and various digital applications, meaning that much of their social interaction and activities take place in virtual spaces (Dara et al., 2025). From a number of Gen Z respondents, it emerged that Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) is no longer an unfamiliar term in their daily lives. They understand FOMO as the fear of missing out on information, trends, or experiences that are currently trending on social media. For them, FOMO is not merely a popular term, but a real experience that frequently arises in their daily digital activities.

Based on the interview results, the majority of informants interpret Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) as the fear of missing out on information, trends, or fashion products that are currently popular on social media. This feeling arises when informants see a product repeatedly featured through TikTok content, TikTok Shop promotions, or posts by influencers they follow. Constant exposure to this content makes informants feel the need to stay informed and keep up with trends so as not to be seen as out of touch with the times. One informant stated: "If a fashion item keeps popping up on my For You Page, I get curious. Sometimes I'm afraid of missing out on a trend if I haven't heard of it or don't own the item everyone's wearing." (Informant). Another informant revealed: "I often see friends and influencers wearing the same products. If I don't know about it or haven't joined that trend, it feels like I'm less up-to-date than them." (Informant) Furthermore, another informant explained: "TikTok spreads trends so quickly. If I don't open the app often, I feel like I'm missing out on information and end up not knowing which products are currently popular" (Informant).

The informants' statements above indicate that consumption decisions are no longer based solely on a product's utility, but also on the symbolic value attached to it. The desire to buy the same fashion items as one's friends reflects an individual's effort to demonstrate shared identity and social status within their social circle. This finding aligns with Jean Baudrillard's view that in a consumer society, individuals often consume the symbols and meanings attached to an item, rather than merely its function. Consequently, FOMO has become one of the factors reinforcing consumptive behaviour among Generation Z. Platforms such as TikTok are accessed almost every spare moment, whether upon waking, during breaks between lectures, or before going to bed at night. This high intensity of use means they are constantly exposed to various content showcasing attractive lifestyles, the latest products, and entertainment venues that are currently trending. This repeated exposure gradually shapes the perception that there is always something happening that needs to be followed (Sabila & Tawaqal, 2025).

In this context, FOMO is understood as the urge to stay connected and not fall behind the flow of information. One informant revealed that they felt uncomfortable when they did not open TikTok for several hours because they were worried they might miss out on a new trend (Noviani et al., 2026). One informant stated: "When I see my friends posting about their activities or buying the latest fashion items on social media, I feel like I want to buy them too so I don't feel different from them." (Informant). This statement indicates that social media plays a role in shaping consumption impulses through the influence of one's social circle. The desire to purchase the same fashion products is not solely based on need, but also on the desire to fit in with a social group so as not to feel different or left behind. In this context, FOMO drives individuals to consume as a means of maintaining their social identity and gaining acceptance from their social circle.

Based on the interviews conducted, the majority of Generation Z also revealed that they are aware of the phenomenon of Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) when following fashion trends on TikTok Shop. One informant stated that they often feel tempted to buy fashion items

when they see them appearing repeatedly on the For You Page (FYP). They admitted that although they initially had no intention of buying, the constant exposure to content sparked curiosity and a desire to try it out. Gen Z mentioned that receiving positive responses such as 'likes', comments, or reactions from friends can provide a sense of satisfaction and validation. When seeing others receive greater attention, a desire arises to do the same so as not to feel socially left behind.

Another informant stated that: "if my friends are discussing products or trends that are going viral on TikTok and I don't know about them, I feel out of the loop and a bit behind them." (Informant). Gen Z acknowledge that they feel out of the loop if they are unaware of topics that are currently trending. In everyday conversation, topics originating from TikTok Shop often become the main talking points. Furthermore, feelings of FOMO frequently arise when they do not attend an event or do not own an item that is currently the talk of the town. The informant's statement indicates that FOMO is not only related to the desire to own a product, but also to the need to remain relevant in social interactions. The desire to know what trends are popular arises because individuals do not want to feel left behind by their peer group. This suggests that social media acts as both a source of information and a shaper of social standards that influence Generation Z's perceptions and behaviour

Furthermore, it was found that Generation Z's perceptions of FOMO on TikTok Shop are not entirely negative (Diandono et al., 2025). Some Gen Z members view FOMO as something normal in the digital age. They consider curiosity about new trends to be part of the ever-evolving dynamics of social life. Another informant stated that: "When I see my friends already wearing the fashion items that are currently viral, I feel like I'm falling behind. Sometimes I feel uncomfortable because I don't have that item yet, so I end up wanting to buy it immediately. In fact, I've even bought clothes simply because they were trendy and many others were wearing them, not because I actually needed them" (Informant).

This informant's statement indicates that FOMO can arise from social comparison occurring through both direct interaction and social media. The feeling of discomfort when seeing friends already using a viral fashion item drives individuals to consume as a way of reducing that sense of being left behind. In this context, purchasing decisions are no longer based on functional needs, but rather on the desire to follow trends and fit in with their social environment. This finding suggests that FOMO acts as a driving factor behind consumptive behaviour among Generation Z, where ownership of a product serves as a symbol to remain relevant and accepted within their social circle. These findings also align with Thorstein Veblen's view that consumption is often undertaken to gain social recognition, as well as Jean Baudrillard's notion that individuals in a consumer society tend to consume the meanings and symbols attached to an item, rather than merely its utility.

Interestingly, some Gen Z individuals demonstrate an awareness of this phenomenon. They realise that content on TikTok often only showcases the best aspects of a person's life. Nevertheless, this awareness does not always eliminate the feeling of FOMO that arises (Kamaly et al., 2025). This indicates a gap between cognitive understanding and emotional response. Viewed rationally, they know that social media is selective, but emotionally they

still feel the urge to participate. Other findings suggest that perceptions of FOMO are also influenced by one's social circle. Gen Z individuals in social groups that actively follow trends tend to feel greater pressure to conform. Conversely, Gen Z individuals in environments that are more relaxed about trends report relatively lower levels of FOMO (Zahroh & Furqon, 2025). All of this suggests that social context plays a role in shaping how Generation Z interprets and responds to FOMO.

From the perspective of social consumption theory, this phenomenon can be explained through the concept of conspicuous consumption put forward by Thorstein Veblen. Veblen explains that consumption is often undertaken as a means of gaining social recognition, rather than merely to satisfy functional needs. In this context, Generation Z tends to purchase trendy fashion items to demonstrate that they are keeping up with the times and remain relevant within their social circles. Ownership of popular fashion items serves as a symbol that can boost self-confidence whilst demonstrating a connection to a particular social group. Consequently, consumption no longer functions merely as the fulfilment of personal needs, but also as a means of constructing social identity and gaining acceptance from one's surroundings. This phenomenon demonstrates that Generation Z's consumption behaviour is heavily influenced by social factors, particularly in situations where trends and lifestyles are constantly disseminated via social media.

Furthermore, according to Jean Baudrillard, consumption in modern society is no longer oriented towards use value, but towards sign value. Fashion products purchased by Generation Z on TikTok Shop serve not only as clothing, but also as symbols of identity, such as a trendy, modern image that keeps pace with the times. Thus, FOMO not only reflects a fear of missing out but also acts as a social mechanism in the formation of self-identity within the digital space. This situation indicates that owning specific fashion items serves as a means for Generation Z to project their desired identity to their social circle. The more popular a product is on social media, the higher the symbolic value attached to it. Consequently, purchasing decisions are often based on a desire to gain social recognition and align with emerging trends. In this context, social media acts as a medium that reinforces identity formation through consumption activities. Therefore, FOMO not only influences consumption behaviour but also how Generation Z constructs, affirms, and presents their self-image in the digital space.

Generation Z's perception of Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) within fashion trends on TikTok Shop indicates a shift in the meaning of consumption from mere fulfilment of needs to a component of social identity construction. In this context, fashion is no longer viewed as a basic necessity, but rather as a symbol of self-representation that must be constantly updated in line with the dynamics of digital trends. Exposure to repetitive fashion content, such as haul videos, OOTDs, and product recommendations from influencers, shapes the perception that viral trends are a standard that must be followed. (Tri et al., 2025) explains that Generation Z's perception of FOMO in the use of TikTok Shop can be categorised into three main forms. Firstly, FOMO is perceived as a drive to remain connected and relevant within a social environment. Secondly, FOMO is understood as social pressure arising from comparing

oneself with others. Thirdly, FOMO is viewed as a natural phenomenon in digital life, although it has the potential to influence decisions and behaviour.

From the above explanation, findings indicate that FOMO is not merely a buzzword among Generation Z, but a real and recurring experience in their daily lives. However, an individual's level of awareness and capacity for reflection also determine how they interpret and manage this experience. Therefore, Generation Z's perception of FOMO is not entirely negative. FOMO in the context of fashion on TikTok Shop functions not only as an emotional response but also as a social mechanism that shapes how Generation Z interprets consumption, identity, and existence in the digital age. These findings also indicate that social media plays a significant role in shaping Generation Z's perceptions and consumption behaviours. Exposure to the ever-emerging fashion trends on TikTok Shop creates a drive to constantly keep up with what is currently popular. In this context, consumption is no longer viewed merely as the fulfilment of needs, but also as a means of gaining social recognition and maintaining a sense of belonging within social circles. Consequently, FOMO becomes one of the factors reinforcing consumption trends among Generation Z whilst influencing how they express their personal identity and build their social presence in the digital space.

**Experiences of FOMO in the Decision-Making Process for Fashion Product Consumption among Generation Z on TikTok Shop**

Based on field findings, the experience of Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) has a fairly strong correlation with the consumption decision-making process among Generation Z (Kurniawati et al., 2025). Although Gen Z rarely explicitly state that purchasing decisions are triggered by FOMO, deeper analysis reveals that this impulse is present in forms that are often unrecognised. Consumption decisions do not always stem from a clear need, but rather from repeated exposure to content on social media that sparks curiosity, interest, and ultimately a desire to own (Febriansyah & Rahmawati, 2024).

The decision making process for purchasing fashion products among Generation Z generally does not begin with a clear need, but rather with continuous exposure to content on social media. Based on interview results, the majority of informants admitted to frequently viewing 'outfit of the day' (OOTD) videos, haul videos, product recommendations, and live shopping streams featuring various fashion products that are currently trending on TikTok. The repeated appearance of the same products on their feeds makes them increasingly eye catching and memorable to users. Most Gen Zers admit that they have purchased a product because it was trending or widely used by peers or influencers. The products in question vary, ranging from clothing with specific styles to shoes that are currently in vogue, particularly those popular on social media platforms like TikTok. Based on the research findings, the FOMO experienced by Generation Z has a significant influence on the consumer decision-making process. Informants tend to make impulsive purchases after seeing viral products on TikTok, particularly when those products are frequently used by influencers or appear repeatedly in content.

Repeated exposure to content then sparks curiosity about the products shown. Informants revealed that: “If a product appears frequently on TikTok and receives a lot of positive feedback, I become curious to find out more. Usually, I look at reviews, read comments, and search for other videos discussing the product before deciding whether I’m interested in buying it or not” (Informant). They explained that when a product appears repeatedly on the timeline, a growing sense of curiosity emerges. Such exposure creates the impression that the product is important to own or at least try. In the process, purchasing decisions often occur spontaneously (Safarida & Midesia, 2023).

Once interest has been sparked, the next step is social comparison. The informant stated: “I often compare myself with friends or influencers I see on TikTok. When they wear fashion items that are going viral and look appealing, I want to have the same items. I usually start to take an interest after seeing OOTD videos that frequently appear on my For You Page. Because I often see the same items being worn by lots of people, over time I feel like I want to try them too. Sometimes I feel afraid of being seen as out of touch with trends if I haven’t followed what’s currently popular. Besides that, I also trust products recommended by content creators I regularly follow more, especially if there are lots of positive comments from other users. This makes me even more certain to buy products that are currently viral." (Informant).

The informant’s statement indicates that Generation Z’s consumption decisions are influenced not only by personal needs but also by a process of social comparison with peers and influencers on social media. Repeated exposure to fashion content creates an interest in trending products, which then develops into a desire to own the same products so as not to feel left behind by their social circle. This situation reflects the presence of Fear of Missing Out (FOMO), which is the fear of missing out on experiences or trends that others are currently following. Furthermore, trust in content creators’ recommendations and the abundance of positive feedback from other users further reinforce the conviction to make a purchase. Consequently, the consumption process is no longer based solely on rational considerations, but is also influenced by the need for social acceptance, the desire to be part of a trend, and the wish to maintain one’s presence in the digital space.

This social comparison then gives rise to emotional pressure linked to the phenomenon of Fear of Missing Out (FOMO). Informants admitted to feeling anxious about being seen as out of touch with trends if they did not follow popular products. Furthermore, they felt uncomfortable when unable to join in discussions about products that were the talk of their social circles. This situation indicates that FOMO acts as a driving factor for individuals to remain relevant within their social circles. There is a sense that if they do not join in immediately, they will be left behind and miss out on the moment. It is this feeling that implicitly reflects the experience of FOMO in consumption decisions. This situation demonstrates that the social comparisons made by individuals subsequently develop into emotional pressure in the form of a fear of being left behind by their social circle. They describe a sense of urgency, particularly when the product is associated with terms such as “limited edition”, “limited stock”, or “currently trending” (Sungkono, 2024). This situation

demonstrates that the FOMO experience accelerates the decision-making process, which should otherwise involve consideration of needs and financial capacity. The role of influencers is also significant in this experience (Gunawan & Andara, 2025). Gen Z state that recommendations from public figures they follow often become a primary consideration. In this context, consumption decisions are driven not only by personal needs but also by the desire to align with the image projected by these figures.

This emotional pressure subsequently develops into an intention to make a purchase. After seeing many people using the same product and receiving positive feedback on social media, informants begin to develop a desire to buy the product. This desire grows stronger when the product is accompanied by promotions, discounts, or limited-time offers, creating the impression that the opportunity must not be missed. Interestingly, some Gen Zers revealed that they did have second thoughts before buying. On the one hand, they realised that the item was not a primary necessity. On the other hand, however, a strong emotional urge to join the trend emerged. Some even admitted to having delayed the purchase, but eventually went ahead with it after seeing more and more people sharing positive experiences regarding the product. This indicates that the decision-making process is not entirely rational, but is influenced by emotional and social factors. Furthermore, peer pressure reinforces the decision to buy. Some Gen Zers explained that when the majority of classmates already own or have tried a product, they feel uncomfortable being the only one who hasn't joined in. This feeling drives them to make a purchase to remain on equal footing within the group.

In some instances, the intention to buy leads to an impulse purchase. An informant revealed: "I once bought a fashion item straight away after seeing a promotion on TikTok Shop. I was just browsing at first, but because the product was trending and everyone was talking about it, I became tempted to buy without giving it much thought. At the time, I felt that if I didn't buy it immediately, I'd miss out on the trend compared to friends who already had the product." Only after buying it did I realise that I didn't actually need the item that much." (Informant). The informant's statement shows that purchasing decisions are often made spontaneously without careful consideration. This behaviour is influenced by a combination of the promotions offered by TikTok Shop and the desire to follow emerging trends. The fear of being left behind by others drove the informant to make an immediate purchase even though the product was not a primary necessity. This finding indicates that the FOMO phenomenon plays a role in driving impulsive purchasing behaviour, where consumption decisions are based more on emotional impulses and social pressure than on rational consideration of actual needs. However, not all consumption decisions are made without consideration (Rumbayan et al).

Interestingly, after the purchase was made, some informants went through a process of reflection. Some of them felt satisfied because they had successfully followed the emerging trend and felt more confident when using the product. However, there were also informants who admitted to feeling regret upon realising that the product they had bought was rarely used and not entirely necessary. This experience demonstrates that consumption decisions influenced by FOMO often lead to a re-evaluation after the purchase has been made. Some

informants revealed that this experience made them more cautious when making subsequent purchasing decisions. They began to realise that not all viral products align with their personal needs. This realisation prompted them to consider the product's benefits, their financial situation, and the urgency of the purchase before following emerging trends. Thus, post purchase reflection becomes a crucial process that helps individuals re-evaluate consumption behaviour influenced by FOMO.

This behaviour indicates a socially driven impulse to consume, as explained in Veblen's theory that individuals are driven to consume certain goods to gain recognition and avoid social exclusion. In this context, the purchase of fashion products is no longer a purely rational individual decision, but rather the result of social pressure shaped through digital media. Meanwhile, according to Jean Baudrillard, consumption in modern society is more oriented towards 'sign value' than 'use value'. Fashion products purchased by Generation Z serve not only as clothing but also as symbols of identity, modernity, and connection to emerging trends. Thus, the experience of FOMO in the fashion consumption decision-making process can be understood as a sequence of processes beginning with exposure to content, social comparison, emotional pressure, and culminating in a purchasing decision that is often impulsive.

From the perspective of social consumption theory, this phenomenon can be explained through the concept of conspicuous consumption put forward by Thorstein Veblen. Veblen explains that consumption is often undertaken to gain social recognition, rather than merely to satisfy functional needs. Meanwhile, according to Jean Baudrillard, consumption in modern society is more oriented towards sign value than use value. Fashion products purchased by Generation Z serve not only as clothing but also as symbols of identity, modernity, and connection to emerging trends. Thus, the experience of FOMO in the fashion consumption decision-making process can be understood as a series of processes beginning with exposure to content, social comparison, emotional pressure, and culminating in a purchasing decision that is often impulsive.

Overall, the Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) experience in Generation Z's fashion consumption decision-making process does not arise suddenly, but rather through a gradual and repetitive process. In the context of TikTok Shop, continuous exposure to fashion content such as outfit videos, haul videos, and product recommendations from influencers creates an initial stimulus that sparks interest. Thus, the FOMO experience in fashion consumption on TikTok Shop can be understood as a series of processes involving content exposure, social comparison, emotional drives, and often impulsive purchasing decisions. This process demonstrates that Generation Z's consumption behaviour is influenced not only by economic needs but also by social and psychological dynamics within the digital space.

**The Formation of a Consumerist Lifestyle Among Generation Z Due to Exposure to Fashion Trends on TikTok Shop**

The formation of a consumerist lifestyle among Generation Z does not happen instantly, but rather through a process that occurs gradually and repeatedly. Constant exposure to social media trends is one of the factors that gradually shapes the mindset and

consumption habits of (Ria Novi Rahma Lestari, 2026). The Gen Z participants in this study admitted that social media has become an integral part of their daily routine, almost inseparable from their activities. The relatively high average usage time keeps them constantly connected to the latest information and trends.

Repeated exposure to trends creates a normalisation of consumption behaviour. Gen Z revealed that buying fashion online now feels like a normal part of life and no longer requires lengthy consideration. Recommendation features, user reviews, and promotions that frequently appear on their feeds further simplify the process (Felicia et al., 2025). Some Gen Z members even stated that they often open the TikTok Shop app just to browse, which then leads to impulse purchases. Some Gen Zers mention that initially they only used TikTok for entertainment and to interact with friends. However, over time, this function has evolved into a primary source of reference for determining fashion styles. The constant stream of content creates certain standards regarding what is considered attractive, modern, and worth owning. Unconsciously, these standards begin to be internalised and influence personal preferences.

Along with increased exposure to fashion trends, an emotional urge linked to the Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) phenomenon emerges. Informants revealed that: “When I see lots of people already wearing a product that’s going viral, I feel left behind. Eventually, the desire to buy that product arises, even though I don’t really need it yet" (Informant). In this context, FOMO acts as an emotional driver influencing Generation Z’s consumption behaviour. FOMO makes individuals feel the need to follow trends to remain accepted within their social circles. Furthermore, the ease of access via TikTok Shop also accelerates the consumption process. Users do not need to switch apps to purchase products; a transaction can be completed with just a few clicks. Additionally, promotions such as discounts, free delivery, and live selling with limited-time offers further reinforce the urge to make impulsive purchases.

Repeated exposure to content, the FOMO effect, and the social validation following a purchase gradually shape recurring consumption habits. Generation Z has become more accustomed to buying trendy fashion items, even if not always based on urgent needs. This habit then evolves into a lifestyle where consumption becomes an integral part of daily activities. Thus, a consumerist lifestyle is formed through a gradual process, from exposure to trends to the establishment of recurring consumption habits. In interviews with Gen Z, it was revealed that: “I feel happy when I manage to buy an item that’s going viral. Especially if I upload it to TikTok and get lots of likes or positive comments from friends. That makes me feel satisfied and sometimes encourages me to follow the next popular trend” (Informant). This process demonstrates a reciprocal relationship between consumption and digital presence. The items purchased serve not only a practical purpose but also reflect one’s identity. Gen Z admit to paying more attention to their appearance and keeping up with trends because they realise that every post on social media will be seen by many people. In this context, consumption becomes part of the effort to build one’s image in the digital space.

Furthermore, Gen Z are also aware of the changes in their lifestyle. They acknowledge that the frequency of shopping has increased compared to before. Whereas purchases were once made out of specific need, buying decisions are now often triggered by a desire to follow

trends or simply out of curiosity. Some informants mentioned that: “If there are promotions or discounts frequently appearing on social media, I find it hard to ignore them. It feels like a waste not to buy when the price is low. "I used to buy things because I actually needed them, but now I buy more often because I’m drawn to promotions or because the item is trending. Without realising it, online shopping has become a habit I frequently engage in" (Informant). The FOMO experienced by Generation Z not only influences purchasing decisions but also shapes consumption patterns that tend to be impulsive and trend-oriented. This informant demonstrates a tendency to buy products repeatedly even when they aren’t strictly necessary, simply because the product is currently popular.

Some Gen Z members also expressed a dilemma. On the one hand, they enjoy following trends and the social satisfaction they bring. On the other hand, they are beginning to realise the impact on their personal finances. Some admitted to feeling that their monthly spending had increased without them realising it. This realisation prompts reflection that the lifestyle they lead is not entirely based on need, but more on the urge to fit in with the digital environment. Nevertheless, not all informants experience the same level of consumerism. Some have started trying to limit their exposure by reducing the time spent on social media or being more selective about which accounts they follow. However, they acknowledge that such efforts are not always easy, as social media has become an integral part of daily social interaction.

The development of a consumerist lifestyle is also influenced by the social environment (Monica et al., 2022). When the majority of peers have a habit of following trends and regularly sharing their consumption experiences, such behaviour comes to be seen as the norm. The informant stated that: "Products that are currently viral on TikTok often become a topic of daily conversation with friends. When many friends already know about or own the product, I feel the need to follow the trend so as not to be seen as out of touch. Because trends on TikTok change very quickly, I also feel I have to keep updating my information about products that are currently popular." (Informant). This creates a repetitive cycle of consumption: a new trend emerges, a desire to try it arises, a purchase is made, it is shared on social media, and then the next trend emerges. A consumerist lifestyle ultimately takes shape due to a combination of social influence, technological convenience, and psychological drives.

In Veblen’s theoretical analysis, this consumption pattern reflects an orientation towards social status, where individuals strive to maintain their position within a group by following emerging trends. Consumption becomes a tool to demonstrate engagement with the prevailing popular culture. Meanwhile, according to Baudrillard, this situation indicates that society has entered a phase of hyperreality, where the boundary between need and desire becomes blurred. Fashion products are no longer judged by their primary function, but by the image and symbols constructed through social media. Consequently, consumption becomes a repetitive activity without consideration of actual needs.

From Thorstein Veblen’s perspective, this consumption pattern indicates a tendency towards conspicuous consumption that is, consumption undertaken not merely to fulfil

functional needs, but also to gain social recognition. Generation Z consumes trending fashion products as a means of demonstrating their engagement with popular culture and maintaining their place within their social group. Meanwhile, according to Jean Baudrillard, the consumption practised by Generation Z is no longer oriented towards utilitarian value, but rather towards symbolic value (sign value). The fashion products purchased become symbols of identity, self-image, and representations of social status in the digital space. Thus, the consumerist lifestyle shaped through TikTok Shop is not merely about economic activity, but is also part of the process of identity formation and social recognition in the digital age.

Overall, the emergence of a consumerist lifestyle among Gen Z is the result of the interplay between exposure to trends on TikTok, the need for social recognition, and the dynamics of their social circles. This process does not occur abruptly, but rather through small, repeated habits that eventually shape a specific lifestyle. TikTok serves as a space that not only provides information but also shapes social standards that influence how individuals perceive themselves and their surroundings. The emerging consumerist lifestyle is not merely driven by economic factors, but also by interrelated social and psychological factors. Exposure to fashion trends on TikTok Shop does indeed have a significant influence on Generation Z's consumption behaviour. The process begins with interest, is then reinforced by social factors and ease of access, and ultimately forms shopping habits that tend to be impulsive. Nevertheless, individual awareness also plays a crucial role in controlling such behaviour. Based on the research findings, the formation of a consumerist lifestyle among Generation Z is influenced by repeated exposure to fashion content on TikTok Shop, the normalisation of online shopping, emotional drivers such as FOMO, and the social validation gained following a purchase. These factors are interrelated and form a cycle of repeated consumption habits, thereby driving the emergence of a consumerist lifestyle among Generation Z.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings, it can be concluded that the consumerist lifestyle among Generation Z is formed through a gradual process, beginning with exposure to fashion trends on social media, the emergence of the feeling of Fear of Missing Out (FOMO), and culminating in purchasing decisions that tend to be impulsive. In this context, TikTok Shop functions not only as a marketplace but also as a social space that shapes standards, preferences, and the ways in which Generation Z expresses their identity in the digital environment. This phenomenon indicates that Generation Z's consumption behaviour is no longer entirely based on rational needs, but is influenced by social pressures. From the perspective of Thorstein Veblen's theory of social consumption, this behaviour can be understood as a form of conspicuous consumption, wherein individuals consume products not only for their function, but also to gain social recognition and maintain their standing within a group. In this context, FOMO acts as a mechanism driving individuals to keep up with trends to avoid social exclusion. Furthermore, drawing on Jean Baudrillard's ideas, Generation Z's fashion consumption places greater emphasis on symbolic value (sign value) than on utilitarian value. Fashion products that go viral on TikTok Shop serve as representations of identity, self-

image, and symbols of connection to emerging trends. Thus, consumption is no longer merely an economic activity but also serves as a means of social communication in shaping and affirming identity within the digital space. Nevertheless, this study also found that some members of Generation Z are beginning to demonstrate awareness of their consumption patterns. This awareness indicates that amidst the strong currents of symbolic consumption and social pressure, individuals still possess the potential to control their consumption behaviour through self-reflection and the enhancement of digital and financial literacy.

Based on these findings, the researchers suggest that future studies should expand the scope of informants to include those from different social backgrounds and regions in order to obtain a more diverse picture. For the general public, particularly Generation Z, the results of this study are hoped to serve as material for reflection on using social media more wisely. The realisation that not all trends need to be followed is the first step towards establishing more rational consumption patterns that align with personal needs. Social media can still be utilised as a space for expression and information, provided individuals are able to maintain a balance between the desire to appear relevant and the ability to manage themselves responsibly.

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