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Social Proof and Urgency Scarcity can Mediate The Influence of Tiktok Ads on Purchasing Decisions

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ABSTRACT

The rapid development of the social commerce ecosystem has transformed digital consumer behavior, with social media platforms like TikTok shifting towards direct transaction generation. This study aims to empirically analyze and prove the mediating role of Social Proof and Urgency Scarcity in the influence of TikTok Ads on consumer Purchasing Decisions. Employing an explanatory quantitative approach, data were gathered via a structured online questionnaire administered to 285 active consumer respondents who had previously purchased products through the TikTok platform. The sampling technique utilized purposive sampling, and the collected data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) via SmartPLS software. The empirical findings reveal that TikTok Ads have a direct, positive, and significant effect on Social Proof, Urgency Scarcity, and Purchasing Decisions. Furthermore, mediation analysis confirms that both Social Proof and Urgency Scarcity significantly mediate the relationship between TikTok Ads and consumer Purchasing Decisions. Social Proof acts as a driver of psychological trust and social validation, whereas Urgency Scarcity triggers an emotional push through the Fear of Missing Out (FOMO), accelerating the purchase execution process. Practical implications suggest that digital marketers should design TikTok advertising strategies that extend beyond visual appeal by ethically integrating authentic social proof and time-sensitive scarcity triggers to maximize sales conversion rates.

Keywords: *TikTok Ads, Social Proof, Urgency Scarcity, Purchasing Decision, Social Commerce, PLS-SEM.*

PENDAHULUAN

The transformation of the digital industry landscape over the past decade has shifted the marketing paradigm from conventional mass media to an interactive social media ecosystem based on short, visual content (Brodie et al., 2023). The integration of social media features and e-commerce transaction functionality—termed *social commerce* —has created a new landscape where information search, product evaluation, and transaction execution occur simultaneously on a single platform (Lin et al., 2022). Among various global social media platforms, TikTok has emerged as a dominant force with massive monthly active user growth, driven by its *For You Page (FYP) recommendation algorithm based on real-time* user preferences and behavior (Chen et al., 2024). This shift in dynamics requires businesses to re-understand how modern digital advertising stimuli (*TikTok Ads*) can stimulate consumer purchasing decisions, which are often spontaneous and fraught with hidden psychological considerations (Haenlein et al., 2021).

As a *short-form video* digital marketing tool, *TikTok Ads* have unique characteristics that differentiate them from banner ads or static videos on previous generation platforms. The advertising format on TikTok emphasizes the principles of *native advertising*, where ads are designed to blend seamlessly *with other user -generated* content (UGC), thereby reducing *ad fatigue* (Katz & Zhang, 2023). The interactive narrative format, the use of trending audio, and the fast and short message delivery enable *TikTok Ads* to trigger attention *-grabbing* and deeply engage consumers within the first few seconds of viewing (Smith et al., 2023). However, several digital marketing studies have shown that ad exposure *alone* does not necessarily guarantee a direct purchase decision without the psychological factors that bridge the relationship (Dijkstra et al., 2022).

Within the framework of information processing theory (*Information Processing Theory*) and *stimulus-organism-response theory* (SOR), advertising acts as an external stimulus (S) which does not directly result in a response in the form of a purchasing decision (R) mechanistically, but rather processed first through the internal state or psychological organism of the consumer (O) (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974; Zhang et al., 2023). In the context of the TikTok *social commerce platform, the phenomenon of advertising message processing is strongly influenced by the perception of social validation and the sense of urgency generated by the advertising message (Wang & Lee, 2024). The trust barrier* in digital transactions often makes consumers hesitate to condition purchase intentions into real action before they see social proof or guarantees of the popularity of relevant products (Kukar-Kinney et al., 2023). Therefore, the stimulus from *TikTok Ads* requires a mechanism of social proof *and* the creation of conditions of scarcity (*Urgency Scarcity*) to strengthen the driving force of advertising on consumer purchasing decisions (Al-Demand et al., 2024).

The concept of *Social Proof*, defined as an individual's psychological tendency to look to the behavior and opinions of others for clues in determining the correct course of action in questionable situations, plays a crucial role in TikTok's advertising environment (Cialdini, 2021). *TikTok Ads* often utilize *influencer* collaboration features, the presentation of real testimonials, the number of likes, positive comments, and simulated sales volumes to build the perception *of Social Proof* (Cheung et al., 2023). When potential consumers see that a product advertised on TikTok has received a positive response and has been purchased by many people or figures they admire, the level of uncertainty *and* perceived risk *in* consumers will decrease significantly (Nugroho & Rahayu, 2024). This reduction in psychological risk further encourages a strong sense of trust, which ultimately triggers an acceleration in purchasing decisions for the advertised product (Li et al., 2023).

In addition to social validation, another psychological mechanism often integrated simultaneously into *TikTok Ads* strategies is the urgency of scarcity. Scarcity Theory *states* that goods, services, or offerings perceived as limited in quantity or duration are perceived as more valuable and desirable by consumers (Brock, 1968; Aggarwal et al., 2022). TikTok ads leverage this principle by displaying countdown timers, limited-time discount offers during live shopping sessions, or interactive *limited stock alerts within their ad content (Tan & Santos, 2024). The presence of Urgency Scarcity* presented in

TikTok Ad messages has been shown to activate an emotional response in the form of anxiety about missing out (*Fear of Missing Out* / FOMO), thus forcing consumers to execute purchasing decisions quickly without delay (Pratama & Kurniawan, 2023).

Although theoretical research on digital advertising has advanced rapidly, there is an empirical research gap *regarding* how *Social Proof* and *Urgency Scarcity* work simultaneously as dual mediating variables *in* explaining the influence *of TikTok Ads* on purchase decisions. Most previous literature tends to examine the influence of *TikTok Ads* directly on purchase intentions or purchase decisions without considering the complex psychological mediation pathways (e.g., Anderson et al., 2022; Hermansyah & Wijaya, 2023). On the other hand, separate studies examining *Social Proof* or *Urgency Scarcity* generally isolate these two constructs as partial independent variables, rather than as intervening variables *that* convert advertising stimuli into behavioral purchase responses on short-duration platform characteristics (Grewal et al., 2023; Susanto et al., 2024). The uncertainty regarding which variable provides a stronger mediating contribution in predicting purchase decisions in *social commerce* environments requires a more comprehensive causal correlation test.

The urgency to research this issue is growing with the high cart abandonment rate *and* intense competition between brands for the attention *economy* of digital consumers (Ritz et al., 2023). Understanding how *TikTok Ads* can be optimized through the appropriate and ethical creation of *Social Proof* and *Urgency Scarcity* conditioning is crucial for marketing practitioners to avoid the negative impacts of promotion fatigue or consumer distrust due to excessive persuasion (manipulative *scarcity*) (Doyle & Palfrey, 2024). This in-depth investigation into the mediating role of *Social Proof* and *Urgency Scarcity* not only contributes to the development of digital marketing management and consumer behavior literature but also provides an applicable empirical foundation for designing more effective conversion intelligence-based advertising strategies.

Based on the conceptual background, business phenomena, and research gaps outlined above, this scientific research focuses on empirically testing and analyzing the role of *Social Proof* and *Urgency Scarcity* as mediating variables *in* the pathway of influence between *TikTok Ads* and consumer purchasing decisions. The results of this study are expected to provide theoretical clarity regarding the structure of *social commerce* message processing and present a strategic framework for marketers in optimizing the performance of their *TikTok Ads* campaigns through the utilization of measurable social validation and scarcity incentives.

METHODS

This study uses an explanatory quantitative approach *with* a correlational survey design to test and analyze the causal relationships and mediating roles *between* the constructs studied. The population in this study is all digital consumers in Indonesia who actively use the TikTok application and have made product purchases through the *TikTok Shop* feature or advertising links (*TikTok Ads*). The infinite population *is* accommodated through a *purposive sampling* technique with the following inclusion criteria: at least 18 years old, actively accessing TikTok for at least 1 hour per day, and having made a product purchase transaction at least once in the last three months. The sample size was determined at 285 respondents, which meets the ideal limit of *Structural Equation Modeling* (SEM) analysis of at least 5 to 10 times the number of variable indicators used (Hair et al., 2021). Primary data collection was conducted online using a structured *online* questionnaire distributed through the Google Forms platform.

A demographic summary of 285 respondents is presented in the profile description to strengthen the external validity of the study. Based on gender, the majority of respondents were female at 64.2% (183 respondents), while males at 35.8% (102 respondents). In terms of age, respondents were dominated by the 18–25 age group at 58.6% (167 respondents) and 26–35 age group at 31.2% (89 respondents), while the remaining were aged over 35 at 10.2% (29 respondents). Based on domicile, most respondents were located in Java (62.1%), Sumatra (21.4%), and other regions of Indonesia (16.5%). In terms of usage intensity, 72.3% of respondents admitted to accessing the TikTok application for more than 2 hours a day with an average frequency of shopping through the TikTok platform 2–4 times a month. Details of the respondents' demographic profiles are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Respondent Demographic Profile

Demographic Characteristics	Category	Frequency (N=285)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Man	102	35.8%
	Woman	183	64.2%
Age	18–25 years	167	58.6%
	26–35 years	89	31.2%
	> 35 years	29	10.2%
Domicile	Java Island	177	62.1%
	Sumatra	61	21.4%
	Other Regions	47	16.5%
TikTok Access Duration/Day	< 1 hour	24	8.4%
	1–2 hours	55	19.3%
	> 2 hours	206	72.3%

The research instrument was measured using a 5-point Likert Scale (from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree) adopted from previous research that has been tested for validity and reliability. The *TikTok Ads* variable was measured through indicators of visual appeal, information clarity, and *interactivity* (Katz & Zhang, 2023); *Social Proof* was measured through indicators of consumer review validation, *influencer* recommendations , and product popularity (Cheung et al., 2023); *Urgency Scarcity* was measured through indicators of limited offer time, limited stock, and urge to act quickly (Aggarwal et al., 2022); and Purchase Decision was measured through indicators of purchase certainty, transaction speed, and choice satisfaction (Lin et al., 2022). Data analysis was carried out using the *Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling* (PLS-SEM) technique using SmartPLS software. Model evaluation consists of two main stages: measurement *of the outer model* (convergent validity test, discriminant validity through *HTMT, and Composite Reliability* test) and *the inner model* (convergence validity test). R^2,f^2,Q^2, as well as path significance testing using the *bootstrapping* method with 5,000 random samples) (Hair et al., 2021).

Based on the theoretical review and causality framework, the research hypotheses tested are formulated as follows. First, *TikTok Ads* have a positive and significant effect on *Social Proof* (H_1), *Urgency Scarcity* (H_2), and Purchase Decision (H_3). Second, *Social Proof* (H_4) and *Urgency Scarcity* (H_5) has a positive and significant effect on Purchase Decisions. Third, *Social Proof* significantly mediates the influence of *TikTok Ads* on Purchase Decisions (H_6). Finally, *Urgency Scarcity* significantly mediates the influence of *TikTok Ads* on Purchase Decisions (H_7).

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LITERATURE REVIEW

Within the framework of information processing theory (*Information Processing Theory*) and *stimulus-organism-response theory* (SOR), advertising acts as an external stimulus (S) which does not directly result in a response in the form of a purchasing decision (R) mechanistically, but rather processed first through the internal state or psychological organism of the consumer (O) (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974; Zhang et al., 2023). In the context of the TikTok *social commerce platform, the phenomenon of advertising message processing is strongly influenced by the perception of social validation and the sense of urgency generated by the advertising message (Wang & Lee, 2024). The trust barrier* in digital transactions often makes consumers hesitate to condition purchase intentions into real action before they see social proof or guarantees of the popularity of relevant products (Kukar-Kinney et al., 2023). Therefore, the stimulus from *TikTok Ads* requires a mechanism of social proof *and* the creation of conditions of scarcity (*Urgency Scarcity*) to strengthen the driving force of advertising on consumer purchasing decisions (Al-Demand et al., 2024).

The concept of *Social Proof*, defined as an individual's psychological tendency to look to the behavior and opinions of others for clues in determining the correct course of action in questionable situations, plays a crucial role in TikTok's advertising environment (Cialdini, 2021). *TikTok Ads* often utilize *influencer* collaboration features, the presentation of real testimonials, the number of likes, positive comments, and simulated sales volumes to build the perception *of Social Proof* (Cheung et al., 2023). When potential consumers see that a product advertised on TikTok has received a positive response and has been purchased by many people or figures they admire, the level of uncertainty *and* perceived risk *in* consumers will decrease significantly (Nugroho & Rahayu, 2024). This reduction in psychological risk further encourages a strong sense of trust, which ultimately triggers an acceleration in purchasing decisions for the advertised product (Li et al., 2023).

In addition to social validation, another psychological mechanism often integrated simultaneously into *TikTok Ads* strategies is the urgency of scarcity. Scarcity Theory *states* that goods, services, or offerings perceived as limited in quantity or duration are perceived as more valuable and desirable by consumers (Brock, 1968; Aggarwal et al., 2022). TikTok ads leverage this principle by displaying countdown timers, limited-time discount offers during live shopping sessions, or interactive *limited stock alerts within their ad content (Tan & Santos, 2024). The presence of Urgency Scarcity* presented in *TikTok Ad* messages has been shown to activate an emotional response in the form of anxiety about missing out (*Fear of Missing Out* / FOMO), thus forcing consumers to execute purchasing decisions quickly without delay (Pratama & Kurniawan, 2023).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Evaluation of the Outer Model (Measurement Model)

Before conducting hypothesis testing to prove the relationship between constructs, *an outer model* (measurement model) evaluation is first conducted to ensure that the research instrument meets the criteria for statistical validity and reliability. *Outer model* evaluation in *Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling* (PLS-SEM) analysis includes convergent *validity*, discriminant validity, and construct reliability tests (Hair et al., 2021).

Convergent validity is measured based on the *outer loading* value of each indicator and *the Average Variance Extracted* (AVE) value. An indicator is declared to meet convergent validity if it has an *outer loading value.* $\geq 0{,}70$and the AVE value for each variable exceeds the threshold$0{,}50$(Hair et al., 2021). The results of the convergent validity and reliability tests of the instrument can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1

Results of Convergent Validity and Construct Reliability Evaluation

Variables / Constructs	Indicator	Outer Loading	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
TikTok Ads (TA)	TA1	0.842	0.885	0.921	0.698
	TA2	0.855			
	TA3	0.812			
	TA4	0.832			
Social Proof (SP)	SP1	0.861	0.892	0.925	0.713
	SP2	0.874			
	SP3	0.820			
	SP4	0.822			
Urgency Scarcity (US)	US1	0.845	0.876	0.915	0.729
	US2	0.862			
	US3	0.854			
Purchasing Decision (KP)	PD1	0.830	0.901	0.931	0.728
	PD2	0.865			
	PD3	0.871			
	PD4	0.847			

Description: *Primary data was processed using SmartPLS 4 ($N = 285$).*

Based on the data in Table 1, all indicators for *the TikTok Ads*, *Social Proof*, *Urgency Scarcity*, and Purchase Decision constructs have *outer loading* values above$0{,}70$. The AVE values for all variables are in the range$0{,}698$until$0{,}729$, which means it has exceeded the minimum limit$0{,}50$This indicates that more than 50% of the indicator variance can be explained by its master construct. The reliability test measured through *Cronbach's Alpha* and *Composite Reliability* produced values above $0{,}70$ for all variables, which confirms that all instruments are free from internal consistency problems and have very high reliability (Hair et al., 2021).

Next, discriminant validity testing is conducted by evaluating *the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio of Correlations* (HTMT) value. Discriminant validity is perfectly met if the HTMT value between constructs is below the threshold.$0{,}90$(Henseler et al., 2015).

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Table 2

Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) Values Between Constructs

Construct	TikTok Ads	Social Proof	Urgency Scarcity	Buying decision
TikTok Ads	-			
Social Proof	0.642	-		
Urgency Scarcity	0.588	0.612	-	
Buying decision	0.715	0.764	0.732	-

The test results in Table 2 show that all HTMT values between variables are in the range$0{,}588$until$0{,}764$(all below$0{,}90$). Thus, it can be concluded that each construct in this research model is truly proven to be unique and conceptually different from each other (*empirically distinct*).

Evaluation of the Inner Model (Structural Model)

After the measurement model is proven valid and reliable, an evaluation of *the inner model* (structural model) is conducted to assess the predictive power and causal relationships between variables. *The inner model* evaluation is conducted by measuring the Coefficient of Determination (R^2), *Effect Size* (f^2), and the *Predictive Relevance* test (Q^2) through a *blindfolding* procedure (Hair et al., 2021).

Table 3

Determination Coefficient Value (R^2) and Predictive Relevance (Q^2)

Endogenous Variables	R-Square (R2)	R-Square Adjusted	Q-Square (Q2)	Model Strength Category
Social Proof	0.388	0.386	0.271	Moderate
Urgency Scarcity	0.324	0.322	0.230	Moderate
Buying decision	0.678	0.674	0.488	Strong

Based on Table 3, the value$R^2$for the Purchase Decision variable is$0{,}678$This indicates that 67.8% of the variance in the Consumer Purchasing Decision variable can be explained simultaneously by the *TikTok Ads*, *Social Proof*, and *Urgency Scarcity* variables, while the remaining 32.2% is explained by other factors outside this research model.$R^2$for *Social Proof* ($0{,}388$) and *Urgency Scarcity* ($0{,}324$) falls into the moderate category. In addition, the value$Q^2$for all endogenous variables is above zero ($0{,}230 - 0{,}488$), which proves that the structural model has excellent *predictive relevance to endogenous constructs (Hair et al., 2021).*

Testing the Direct Effects Hypothesis

Testing the direct effect hypothesis was conducted using the *bootstrapping* method with 5,000 resamples (*5,000 subsamples*). The hypothesis acceptance criteria were assessed from the value$t$-statistics$> 1{,}96$and value$p$-value$< 0{,}05$at the 5% significance level ($\alpha = 0{,}05$) (Hair et al., 2021).

Table 4

Results of Direct Effects Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	**Path Relationship**	**Path Coefficient (β)**	**t-Statistics**	**p-Value**	**Effect Size (f2)**	**Decision**
H1	TikTok Ads→Social Proof	0.623	12,845	0,000	0.634	Accepted
H2	TikTok Ads→Urgency Scarcity	0.569	10,412	0,000	0.479	Accepted
H3	TikTok Ads→Buying decision	0.245	4,215	0,000	0.112	Accepted
H4	Social Proof→Buying decision	0.382	6,589	0,000	0.248	Accepted
H5	Urgency Scarcity→Buying decision	0.321	5,471	0,000	0.185	Accepted

Based on the analysis results in Table 4, the five direct influence hypotheses were proven to be significantly accepted: 1). The Influence of TikTok Ads on Social Proof (H_1): *TikTok Ads* have a positive and significant impact on *Social Proof* ($\beta = 0{,}623; t = 12{,}845; p = 0{,}000$). 2). The Influence of TikTok Ads on Urgency Scarcity (H_2): *TikTok Ads* have a positive and significant impact on *Urgency Scarcity* ($\beta = 0{,}569; t = 10{,}412; p = 0{,}000$). 3). The Influence of TikTok Ads on Purchasing Decisions (H_3): *TikTok Ads* have a positive and significant influence on Purchasing Decisions ($\beta = 0{,}245; t = 4{,}215; p = 0{,}000$). 4). The Influence of Social Proof on Purchasing Decisions (H_4): *Social Proof* has a positive and significant influence on Purchasing Decisions ($\beta = 0{,}382; t = 6{,}589; p = 0{,}000$). 5). The Effect of Urgency Scarcity on Purchasing Decisions (H_5): *Urgency Scarcity* has a positive and significant influence on Purchasing Decisions ($\beta = 0{,}321; t = 5{,}471; p = 0{,}000$).

Testing the Mediating Hypothesis (Specific Indirect Effects)

To analyze the mediating role of *Social Proof* and *Urgency Scarcity, specific indirect* effect testing was conducted using a *bootstrapping* approach with the procedures of Zhao et al. (2010) and Hair et al. (2021). The results of the mediation hypothesis testing are summarized in Table 5.

Table 5

Results of Indirect Effects Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	**Mediation Path**	**Indirect Influence (β)**	**t-Statistics**	**p-Value**	**Total Influence (β)**	**The Nature of Mediation**	**Decision**
H6	TikTok Ads→Social Proof→Buying decision	0.238	5,821	0,000	0.483	Partial Mediation	Accepted

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H7	TikTok Ads→Urgency Scarcity→Buying decision	0.183	4,632	0,000	0.428	Partial Mediation	Accepted

Based on the data in **Table 5**, both mediation hypotheses are proven to be significant:

1. The Role of Social Proof Mediation (H_6): *Social Proof* significantly mediates the influence *of TikTok Ads* on Purchase Decisions ($\beta = 0{,}238\,; t = 5{,}821\,; p = 0{,}000$). Due to the direct influence H_3 is also significant, then the nature of *Social Proof* mediation is partial (*partial mediation / complementary mediation*).
2. The Role of Urgency Scarcity Mediation (H_7): *Urgency Scarcity* significantly mediates the influence of *TikTok Ads* on Purchase Decisions ($\beta = 0{,}183; t = 4{,}632; p = 0{,}000$). The nature of *Urgency Scarcity mediation* is also categorized as partial mediation.

Discussion of Research Results

The Impact of Direct TikTok Ads on Social Proof and Urgency Scarcity

The results of statistical tests prove that exposure to *TikTok Ads* has a strong and positive association in forming *Social Proof* ($\beta = 0{,}623$*) and Urgency Scarcity* conditioning ($\beta = 0{,}569$*This finding aligns with the short -form video* ads framework, where *native* advertising formats integrated with *User-Generated Content* (UGC) are able to transfer social signals naturally (Katz & Zhang, 2023). TikTok's ad content presentation, which includes *creator reviews*, displays of product sales figures, and interactive *comment sections,* creates instant public validation. When consumers see realistic advertising messages from fellow users, their skepticism of marketing claims decreases and is replaced by a perception of *Social Proof* (Cheung et al., 2023).

Furthermore, these findings reinforce *Scarcity Theory* (Brock, 1968; Aggarwal et al., 2022) in the context of *social commerce*. *TikTok Ads* that utilize *countdown timer* sticker integration, limited-time offer announcements during *live streaming*, and special *flash sale* prices have been proven to successfully execute *Urgency Scarcity* conditioning. TikTok's fast-paced and dynamic visual media format reinforces this scarcity effect, as users realize that the opportunity for attractive offers can be lost simply by swiping *to* the next video (Tan & Santos, 2024).

The Role of Social Proof Mediation in Driving Purchasing Decisions

Hypothesis testing H_6 empirically proves that *Social Proof* acts as a key mediating channel that strengthens the influence of *TikTok Ads* on Purchasing Decisions ($\beta = 0{,}238\,, p = 0{,}000$). In the Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) Perspective, the advertising message (S) processed by consumers through psychological risk evaluation (O Social validation derived from positive user reviews and product popularity in advertisements lowers perceived risk *and* builds a high level of trust *in* consumers (Li et al., 2023; Nugroho & Rahayu, 2024).

These results confirm Cialdini's (2021) observation that humans tend to seek out cues from others' behavior when faced with uncertain product choices in the digital space. When *TikTok Ads* not only unilaterally showcase product advantages but are also reinforced by tangible evidence of other consumers' participation (*social validation*), consumer purchase intentions will effectively accelerate into actual transaction decisions.

The Mediating Role of Urgency Scarcity in Triggering Purchase Decisions

Hypothesis testing resultsH_7proving the mediating role *of Urgency Scarcity* in bridging *TikTok Ads* towards Purchasing Decisions ($\beta = 0{,}183, p = 0{,}000$The use of time and stock scarcity signals in advertising messages has been shown to trigger an emotional response in the form of anxiety about missing out on attractive opportunities, or *Fear of Missing Out* (FOMO) (Pratama & Kurniawan, 2023).

Psychological perspectives show that when a sense of urgency is presented in an advertising message, consumers' rational evaluation process slows down (*heuristic processing*), while the affective urge to act quickly becomes more dominant (Al-Demand et al., 2024). *Urgency scarcity* converts the passive interest generated by *TikTok Ad* visuals into an active urge to immediately press the transaction button before the promotional deadline ends (Susanto et al., 2024).

Dual-Mediation Integration and Strategic Implications

This dual-mediation finding provides important theoretical insight: *Social Proof* and *Urgency Scarcity* work complementary ways to influence consumer purchasing decisions on *social commerce* platforms. *Social Proof* operates on the **cognitive and** trust - *building* domains, while *Urgency Scarcity* operates on the **affective and** action - *oriented triggers*. The combination of the two creates a synergistic effect that drastically enhances the effectiveness of digital advertising campaigns (Grewal et al., 2023).

Practically, the implications of this research emphasize that designing successful *TikTok Ads* is not enough to focus solely on visual aesthetics or narrative creativity. Digital marketers must ethically insert authentic *Social Proof* elements (such as real transaction statistics or honest user reviews) and combine them with honest and measurable *Urgency Scarcity signals (such as limited-time coupons) to optimize sales conversion* rates without damaging consumer reputation and trust in the brand in the long term (Doyle & Palfrey, 2024).

CONCLUSION

This scientific research has successfully proven empirically that *Social Proof* and *Urgency Scarcity* play a crucial role as partial mediating variables *in* explaining the path of influence between *TikTok Ads* on consumer Purchasing Decisions. The results of the *Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling* (PLS-SEM) analysis show that all hypotheses are directly proven significant, where visual and interactive stimuli from *TikTok Ads* provide a direct positive contribution to the formation of social validation, time scarcity conditioning, and the determination of consumer transaction decisions. The constructed structural model has very strong predictive power, where the combination of *TikTok Ads*, *Social Proof*, and *Urgency Scarcity* is able to explain 67.8% of the variance of the Purchase Decision variable.

The dual- mediation role identified in this study presents complementary psychological mechanisms for converting digital advertising stimuli into actual purchases. *Social Proof* operates on the cognitive front by reducing uncertainty and building consumer trust *through* authentic reviews and product popularity. Meanwhile, *Urgency Scarcity* operates on the affective front by triggering fear of missing out *(*FOMO), which compels consumers to expedite their purchase decisions. This synergy between cognitive trust and emotional motivation is key to successful sales conversions in short-term *social commerce* ecosystems like TikTok.

The practical implications of this research suggest that digital marketers and business owners should not rely solely on visual aesthetics or one-sided promotional narratives when designing *TikTok Ads*. Marketing strategies should be integrated with the presentation of authentic social proof (such as honest user reviews and real sales statistics) and ethical and measurable time or stock constraints. Theoretically, these findings enrich the literature on digital marketing management and consumer behavior related to the application of the Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) framework in the era *of social commerce*. Further research is recommended to explore moderating variables such as *brand reputation* or differences in product involvement levels *to* broaden understanding of the dynamics of digital purchasing decisions.

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