



The Influence of Social Factors, Social Media and Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) on the Use of Makeup Cosmetics at School: A Study of Female Students of State Senior High School 5 Binjai

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to explore and analyze the influence of various factors on the behavior of makeup cosmetics use among female students of SMA Negeri 5 Binjai, specifically highlighting the role of social factors, social media, and the phenomenon of Fear of Missing Out (FoMO). This study uses a quantitative approach, where data is collected at a single point in time to understand the relationship between variables simultaneously. The research sample was obtained through a purposive sampling technique, which allows researchers to reach participants through the respondents' social networks, resulting in a total of 184 female students becoming the sample of this study based on the Taro Yamane formula and completing a questionnaire consisting of 50 questions. Data analysis was carried out using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), which allows researchers to test direct and indirect relationships between the factors studied. The results show that the use of cosmetics among female students of SMA Negeri 5 Binjai is significantly influenced by social media, social factors, and fear of missing out (FoMO), both directly and indirectly, with a pattern of relationships that demonstrates the complexity of adolescent psychosocial dynamics. Social media has been shown to have a direct influence on cosmetic use as well as an indirect influence through FoMO, confirming FoMO's role as an important mediator. While social factors have a direct influence on cosmetic use, these variables do not trigger FoMO, thus FoMO does not act as a mediator in the relationship.

INTRODUCTION

In today's modern era, the demand for appearance has increased and become a crucial component of personal appearance, social status, and income within a social environment. One significant form of appearance expression is the use of cosmetics, which is now popular not only among adults but also among adolescents, including high school students. The phenomenon of cosmetics use among Indonesian teenagers has significantly increased in the development of the national cosmetics industry. According to data from the Ministry of Industry, in 2020, the national cosmetics industry reached 77 percent, and by 2024, it will increase to 83 percent. Indonesia is listed as one of the fastest-growing cosmetics markets in Southeast Asia. The value of the Indonesian cosmetics market in 2025 is expected to exceed \$8.5 billion, with an estimated growth of 4.33 percent. This is certainly in line with the significant contribution of teenagers, who increasingly recognize the importance of a beautiful appearance (Dalimunthe et al., 2025; Ritonga et al., 2025).

The trend of cosmetics use among teenagers is evident, and not only teenagers in large cities in Indonesia, but also small towns in North Sumatra, particularly Binjai, are experiencing an increase in cosmetic use. This phenomenon requires serious attention because it can impact students' skin health, self-confidence, and even academic achievement. Therefore, research on cosmetic use in schools is crucial. Schools and parents need to understand students' knowledge of cosmetics, the types of products used, and their positive and negative impacts. Furthermore, a foundation is needed to develop appropriate policies and education to encourage healthy, safe, and age-appropriate cosmetic use. This ensures a balance between appearance and education in the school environment.

A pre-survey conducted by researchers in 2024 at SMA Negeri 5 Binjai showed that approximately 70% of female students, or approximately 341 out of a total of 500, admitted to regularly using cosmetic makeup on their way to school. This finding occurred despite the school's written rules prohibiting excessive cosmetic use. These rules stipulate that female students are only permitted to use powder, while other cosmetics such as lipstick or lip balm, mascara, blush, and the like are prohibited. The school also regularly conducts raids to enforce cosmetic use on school grounds. However, based on the researcher's observations in the classroom, female students tended to reapply cosmetics after recess or after school.

Interviews with several female students known to use cosmetics revealed that their primary reason for using cosmetics was to enhance their appearance, making them look beautiful, attractive, and fresher. Furthermore, some students stated that their cosmetic use stemmed from peer influence, specifically following friends who had already used cosmetics. Further interviews also explored the timing of their initial cosmetic use. The results revealed a variety of responses, with some students stating they began using cosmetics when they entered high school, while others claimed to have used cosmetics since junior high. Furthermore, the interviews revealed that the funds for cosmetics came from their pocket money, while others admitted to asking their parents directly.

Various cosmetic uses by female students to enhance their appearance were also identified, such as lip balm or soft-colored lipstick to maintain lip moisture and provide a fresher appearance. There are also those who use eyebrow pencils to emphasize the shape of their eyebrows, as well as thin mascara to make their eyes look more alive. There are also students who use facial care products (skincare) such as moisturizer, sunscreen, and facial cleanser before going to school so that their skin stays healthy and protected from sun exposure. The use of various types of cosmetics by female students on school grounds can be considered a violation of school regulations. The school has established specific rules governing their use by adolescent female students, particularly at SMA Negeri 5 Binjai. During adolescence, particularly at the high school level, female students begin to show interest in their appearance, including the use of cosmetics as a form of self-expression and to boost self-confidence. However, the school believes that the use of cosmetics in the educational environment needs to be regulated to ensure that it is not excessive and does not disrupt the learning process. Cosmetic use by female students is permitted within certain limits. For example, excessive or striking makeup that could disrupt learning activities is not recommended. This policy also aims to foster modesty and maintain the image of female students as learners. With these regulations, the school hopes that female students will understand the limits of cosmetic use and continue to prioritize academic activities and self-development while at school. The applicable rules are presented in the appendix (see appendix 6).

Article 15 states that "female students are prohibited from wearing jewelry of any kind to school and are not permitted to wear lipstick or other makeup," indicating clear restrictions on the use of cosmetics on school grounds. This rule was created to maintain simplicity and neatness, as well as to create an orderly and conducive learning environment. However, in practice, schools still tolerate certain reasonable limits, including the use of very simple makeup, such as powder, to maintain students' neatness and cleanliness. This reasonable standard is intended to ensure that female students maintain a reasonable appearance without excessive or flashy makeup. The policy emphasizes that the use of cosmetics in schools must reflect the students' identity as learners who uphold the values of simplicity, discipline, and ethical behavior in the educational environment.

Social factors have been identified as predictors of cosmetic use among adolescent girls (Aleyda Noor et al., 2024; Utama et al., 2021). Social factors refer to personal or group support that shapes how people think, behave, and develop. The most common social factors influencing individual behavior are family, reference groups, and the roles and statuses played by individuals (Potluri et al., 2024). Social factors are crucial in shaping social patterns, relationships, and social structures. They influence interactions between people and collective coexistence, shaping all areas of human activity. Social factors have been found to significantly impact cosmetic purchases among adolescent girls (Hayat et al., 2021). For example, peers, family, and online video tutorials are sources of learning to use cosmetics among adolescent girls. Cosmetic use can boost self-

confidence by covering acne and reducing the appearance of dullness, and by feeling more beautiful than usual (Fauziyah et al., 2021).

Anxiety about not being visible in the community encourages students to use cosmetics at school. The term "fear of missing out" (FoMO), referring to the fear of missing out or not existing, appears to be a common experience and has recently become part of everyday language, frequently mentioned on social media. Students experiencing FoMO can experience increased negative affect, fatigue, stress, physical symptoms, decreased sleep quality, poor concentration, and dependency (Alutaybi et al., 2020; Milyavskaya et al., 2018). Teenagers are highly susceptible to experiencing FoMO when using social media. Closely related to social media addiction, this phenomenon depends not only on individual characteristics but is also influenced by the family environment. Family structure, the quality of parental relationships, and parenting styles are factors that influence adolescent media use and therefore likely contribute to the development of FoMO among adolescents (Bloemen & De Coninck, 2020a). FoMO has been found to be a strong predictor of cosmetic purchase intentions and usage among Gen Z (Az-zahra & Faiz, 2024).

Although previous researchers have proposed the influence of these factors on cosmetic use among adolescent girls, the specific mechanisms by which social factors and social media influence cosmetic use among school adolescents through FoMO remain underexplored. To address this research gap, the primary objective of this study is to investigate the interactive effects of social factors, FoMO, social media, and cosmetic use among school adolescents, thereby providing a holistic understanding of the interplay between these factors. Furthermore, this study seeks to examine the mediating role of FoMO in the influence of social factors and social media on cosmetic use among adolescents. By examining this mediation pathway, this study seeks to elucidate the underlying mechanisms of the influence of social factors and social media on cosmetic use. This study differs from previous research in that it investigates the mediating role of FoMO in the influence of social factors and social media on cosmetic use among adolescents within an integrated conceptual framework, contributing to a deeper understanding of the factors predicting cosmetic use among school adolescents.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Social Factors, Social Media Use, and Fear of Missing Out (FOMO)

In studies of developmental psychology and adolescent behavior, social factors not only play a role as risk factors but also as protective factors that can reduce the emergence of negative psychological phenomena such as Fear of Missing Out (FOMO). FoMO itself is a form of social anxiety characterized by the fear of missing out on social experiences or information if not connected to the social environment, especially through social media. Previous research has shown that perceived social support is negatively related to levels of FoMO, with adolescents with high levels of social support tending to experience lower levels of FoMO. One study found that social support was significantly negatively correlated with FoMO in college students, meaning that the greater the perceived social support, the lower the likelihood of individuals experiencing anxiety about

missing out on information or social activities (Abdel et al., 2016). These findings suggest that social support, whether from family, peers, or the school environment, provides a sense of security, connectedness, and fulfillment of basic psychological needs that can reduce social anxieties such as FoMO. Thus, the researcher proposes hypothesis 1.

In studies of adolescent consumer behavior, social factors, including peer pressure, group norms, and the influence of the social environment on social media, have been identified as important determinants in purchasing decisions for beauty products, including cosmetics. Research in the adolescent context shows that peers contribute significantly to cosmetic purchasing decision-making patterns. The stronger the social influence an individual perceives, the greater their tendency to follow the product choices chosen or used by their peer group. For example, empirical research shows a positive relationship between peer group function and cosmetic purchasing decisions among adolescents, with peers and social interactions tending to be the primary sources of information and motivation for cosmetic purchases (Salsabilah & Lubis, 2023). Furthermore, other research suggests that social pressure from peers and social media jointly influence cosmetic purchasing decisions, such as lip cream; this study also found that both variables partially have a positive impact on cosmetic purchasing decisions (Falajunnah et al., 2024). This hypothesis is also theoretically supported by literature stating that the social environment, including peers and social standards shared on social media, shapes adolescents' preferences and consumer behavior, which has implications for increased cosmetic use as a means of achieving social status or acceptance within certain social groups. Therefore, the researchers proposed a second hypothesis.

Social media is seen as a significant factor influencing the emergence of Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) because these platforms allow individuals, particularly adolescents, to continuously monitor the activities, achievements, and social experiences of others in real time. FoMO is defined as the fear of missing out on the enjoyable or meaningful experiences of others, which is generally triggered by the need for social connectedness (Przybylski et al., 2013). Among high school adolescents, high levels of social media use increase the likelihood of social comparison and exposure to content highlighting the lives of peers, thus reinforcing social anxiety and the urge to stay involved in popular trends. Several empirical studies have shown that the more frequently adolescents access and engage with social media, the higher their perceived levels of FoMO, as social media reinforces the need to stay connected and the fear of missing out on important moments in their social environment. Exposure to social content and adolescent trends, including appearance and lifestyle trends, has the potential to increase concerns about falling behind peers, so theoretically and empirically, it can be assumed that social media has a positive effect on FoMO levels. Therefore, the researchers proposed a third hypothesis. Social media has become a primary means for adolescents to obtain information, construct self-identity, and form perceptions of ideal appearance standards. Theoretically, social comparison theory explains that individuals tend to compare themselves to others when exposed to visual representations on social

media, especially those related to beauty and physical appearance, thus giving rise to a drive to conform to standards deemed attractive and socially acceptable. Research shows that the intensity of social media use is positively associated with increased body image concerns and beauty product usage behavior in adolescent girls, as they are constantly exposed to cosmetic content, such as makeup tutorials, product reviews, and posts from influencers and peers (Almudimeegh et al., 2024b; Pasadina, 2016). Empirically, various studies have also found that cosmetic advertisements and content on social media, particularly Instagram and TikTok, significantly influence adolescent girls' attitudes and consumer behavior toward cosmetic products (Utama et al., 2021). The high intensity of social media use and strong exposure to digital beauty trends make social media a factor that rationally and empirically has the potential to encourage cosmetic use. Therefore, researchers propose a fourth hypothesis.

Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) is a psychological condition characterized by feelings of anxiety and fear of being left behind by the experiences, trends, or social activities of others, particularly in the context of social interactions and social media. This condition is particularly relevant during adolescence, when adolescents are searching for their identity and seeking social acceptance. Przybylski et al. (2013) explain that FoMO arises from the basic human need for social connectedness, so individuals with high levels of FoMO tend to be driven to conform to prevailing standards and trends in their environment to avoid feeling left out. FoMO can manifest itself in behaviors related to physical appearance, such as the use of cosmetics, in an effort to follow beauty trends and meet social expectations. Research by Mora (2017) shows that FoMO plays a significant role in encouraging adolescents to conform to dominant social norms, including consumer behavior related to self-image and appearance. Similarly, several studies on adolescent consumer behavior have found that individuals with high levels of FoMO are more likely to engage in purchasing and using popular products as a way to maintain a sense of social engagement and boost self-esteem (McCoy et al., 2024). Thus, the researchers propose a fifth hypothesis.

The Role of Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) as a Mediator

The phenomenon of fear of missing out (FOMO) is understood as a psychological condition characterized by feelings of anxiety when an individual feels left out of the experiences, trends, or social activities of others, particularly in the context of social interactions and social media exposure (Przybylski et al., 2013). During adolescence, social factors play a significant role in shaping cosmetic use behavior as a means of adapting to the social environment. However, theoretically, FOMO does not always strengthen the influence of social factors on consumer behavior; instead, it can act as a psychological mechanism that weakens this relationship. When FOMO is intense, adolescents tend to experience psychological conflict in the form of excessive anxiety and dissatisfaction. Previous studies have shown that although FOMO is related to consumer behavior, its role as a mediator can be negative or debilitating when individuals begin to question the social value of their consumer behavior or experience psychological exhaustion due to repeated social pressures (Dhir et al., 2018). This situation becomes even more relevant due to school regulations

restricting cosmetic use. Therefore, FoMO does not directly encourage compliance with social pressure, but rather has the potential to reduce the influence of social factors on cosmetic use due to external regulation and student self-control. Therefore, the researchers proposed the sixth hypothesis:

FOMO is a psychological condition characterized by anxiety or fear of being left behind by the experiences, activities, and trends of others, particularly those exposed through social media (Przybylski et al., 2013). Among adolescents, high levels of social media use increase the frequency of exposure to peer and influencer content that displays standards of appearance, lifestyle, and the latest beauty trends, thus fostering social comparison and the need to remain socially relevant. Several studies have shown that social media use is positively associated with FoMO levels, as social media enhances individuals' awareness of what others are doing or possessing (Ryanda, 2022). FoMO acts as a psychological mechanism that bridges social media exposure with consumer behavior, where individuals are driven to purchase or use certain products in an effort to reduce social anxiety and increase feelings of connectedness (Wijayanti, 2021). In the context of cosmetics, the ever-changing beauty trends that go viral through social media make FoMO a crucial trigger for adolescent girls to use cosmetics to avoid feeling left behind by their peers or social standards. Therefore, the researchers proposed the seventh hypothesis.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a quantitative research design to examine the relationships among several variables related to the behavior of female students in using decorative cosmetics at school. Quantitative research is a method used to investigate a specific population or sample by collecting data through structured research instruments and analyzing the data statistically in order to test predetermined hypotheses (Sugiyono, 2019). This approach allows researchers to explain social phenomena objectively by identifying relationships and causal influences among variables. In this study, the quantitative approach was used to analyze the influence of social factors and social media usage on the use of decorative cosmetics among female students, with Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) acting as an intervening variable. The research was conducted at SMA Negeri 5 Binjai, located at Jalan Jambi No. 2, Rambung Dalam Village, South Binjai District, Binjai City, North Sumatra Province, Indonesia. The selection of this research site was based on strong empirical considerations related to the phenomenon being studied. Preliminary observations indicated that many female students tended to use decorative cosmetics at school even though the school had implemented clear regulations restricting such practices. Compliance with school rules is not solely determined by the existence of formal regulations but is also influenced by psychological and social factors. Adolescents at the high school level are generally in a developmental stage characterized by increased attention to physical appearance, identity exploration, and a strong need for social acceptance. In this context, the use of cosmetics can be interpreted as a form of self-expression and an attempt to conform to peer norms and social expectations. The presence of school regulations and periodic cosmetic inspections at SMA Negeri 5 Binjai further strengthens the relevance of this

research setting, as cosmetic usage behavior continues despite formal control mechanisms. Therefore, SMA Negeri 5 Binjai provides an appropriate and representative context for examining the phenomenon of cosmetic usage among female high school students and contributes empirically to the study of adolescent behavior in educational environments.

The population of this study consisted of all female students of SMA Negeri 5 Binjai who use decorative cosmetics at school, totaling 341 students. Population refers to the entire group of individuals or objects that possess characteristics relevant to the research objectives (Tazkiyatunnisa, 2019). Because it was not possible to study the entire population, a sample was selected to represent the population. The sampling technique used in this study was purposive sampling, a non-probability sampling method in which participants are selected based on specific criteria relevant to the research objectives. The criteria used in selecting respondents were: female students of SMA Negeri 5 Binjai, students who use decorative facial cosmetics at school, and students who are active on social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, or other digital platforms. To determine the appropriate sample size, this study applied the Taro Yamane formula (1973) with a precision level of 5%. Based on this calculation, the sample size obtained was 184 students, which were considered representative of the population. These respondents were selected because they met the predetermined criteria and were expected to provide accurate information related to the research variables.

Data in this study were collected using a questionnaire as the primary research instrument. Questionnaires allow researchers to obtain information regarding respondents' attitudes, behaviors, and perceptions in a systematic manner. The questionnaire items were measured using a Likert scale, consisting of five response categories: strongly agree (score 5), agree (score 4), neutral (score 3), disagree (score 2), and strongly disagree (score 1). The research instrument was adapted from previously validated scales to ensure measurement accuracy and reliability. The measurement of cosmetic usage behavior was adapted from the scale developed by Zahroh & Sholichah. (2022), consisting of seven items that measure students' behavior in using decorative cosmetics. The Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) variable was measured using the FoMO Scale, consisting of ten items that assess the level of anxiety experienced by individuals when they perceive that others are having more rewarding experiences, particularly through social media exposure. The social media usage variable was measured using the Outside School Social Media Behavior Scale (OSSMB) developed by Lu et al. (2019). This scale consists of four dimensions: consuming (4 items), communicating (6 items), creating (6 items), and sharing (5 items), resulting in a total of 21 measurement items. Meanwhile, the social factor variable was measured using an adapted version of the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS) developed by Zimet (1988). This scale includes three dimensions of social support, namely family support, support from significant others, and peer support, each consisting of four items.

This study included three types of variables: independent variables, a dependent variable, and an intervening variable. The independent variables

were social factors (X1) and social media usage (X2), which were assumed to influence other variables in the research model. The dependent variable was the use of decorative facial cosmetics at school (Y), representing the behavioral outcome being studied. The intervening variable was Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) (Z), which mediates the relationship between social factors, social media usage, and cosmetic usage behavior. Social factors refer to the influence of social environments, including family members, peers, and significant others, who provide support and shape students' attitudes and behaviors. Social media refers to digital communication platforms used to share information related to cosmetic trends, beauty products, and lifestyle. Fear of Missing Out refers to the anxiety experienced by individuals when they feel excluded from experiences enjoyed by others, often triggered by social media exposure. Cosmetic usage refers to the behavior of female students in using decorative facial cosmetics during school activities.

The data analysis in this study was conducted using Structural Equation Modeling Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) with the assistance of SmartPLS version 4.0 software. SEM is a multivariate statistical analysis technique that allows researchers to simultaneously examine complex relationships among multiple variables, including both direct and indirect effects (Ghozali et al., 2021). The analysis procedure followed the approach recommended by, which includes evaluating the measurement model (outer model) and the structural model (inner model). The measurement model evaluation includes testing the reliability and validity of the measurement indicators. Indicator reliability is assessed through outer loading values, which ideally exceed 0.70. Convergent validity is evaluated using the Average Variance Extracted (AVE), which must be greater than 0.50. Reliability is tested using Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability, both of which should exceed 0.70. Discriminant validity is examined using the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT), which should be below 0.90. Additional tests such as the Fornell-Larcker Criterion and cross-loading analysis are also conducted to ensure that each indicator correlates more strongly with its respective construct than with other constructs. The structural model (inner model) is evaluated to examine the relationships between latent variables in the research model. The strength of the model is assessed through the R-square value, which indicates the proportion of variance in the dependent variable explained by the independent variables. Hypothesis testing is conducted through bootstrapping procedures to determine the significance of the relationships between variables. A hypothesis is accepted if the p-value is less than 0.05, indicating that the relationship between variables is statistically significant. Through this analytical approach, the study aims to identify the factors that significantly influence the use of decorative cosmetics among female students and to understand the mediating role of Fear of Missing Out in shaping this behavior.

RESEARCH RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Social Factors Have No Effect on FOMO

Research findings showing that social factors have no significant effect on FOMO can be understood through a sociological and cultural perspective, which

places symbolic and media pressures as dominant factors over interpersonal relationships. Within Erving Goffman's framework, in his work, **The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life**, social life is understood as a process of presenting oneself to an audience. Goffman explained that individuals strategically manage impressions to maintain a certain image in social interactions. In the context of social media, the audience becomes much broader and is not limited to family or close friends. This situation amplifies performative anxiety, namely the concern that one is not attractive enough or that one is falling behind others (Goffman, 1959). Therefore, FOMO is more relevantly explained as a result of the pressures of public representation in digital spaces rather than a lack of interpersonal social support.

This explanation aligns with the concept of body image proposed by Thomas F. Cash and Thomas Pruzinsky in **Body Image: A Handbook of Theory, Research, and Clinical Practice**. Both assert that body image is formed through self-evaluation influenced by social standards and the media, as well as a continuous process of social comparison. Cash & Pruzinsky (2002) stated that visual media plays a significant role in shaping body dissatisfaction through the internalization of ideal standards. In this context, FOMO can arise because individuals feel left behind by the beauty standards or lifestyles displayed online, rather than due to a lack of support from family or friends.

Furthermore, Naomi Wolf's perspective in *The Beauty Myth* states that modern beauty standards are ideological constructs produced by industry and the media to maintain symbolic control over women. Wolf (1991) argues that beauty myths operate as a form of systemic, internalized social pressure, not simply a result of direct social interactions. Thus, FOMO can be understood as a response to broader cultural pressures to consistently conform to ideal standards, thereby diminishing the influence of micro-level social factors. This view is reinforced by Jean Baudrillard's theory of consumer society in *The Consumer Society*. Baudrillard (1998) states that in modern society, consumption is no longer based on need, but rather on the value of signs and status symbols. Individuals consume to construct identity and social position through the symbols attached to certain goods or lifestyles. In this logic, FOMO emerges as an anxiety about being left behind by the symbolic flow constantly produced by the media and industry. This pressure is structural and collective, so it is not directly determined by the quality of social support within the family or peer group.

Social Factors Positively Influence Cosmetic Use

From Erving Goffman's perspective, in his work, *"The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life"*, social life is understood as a stage where individuals actively manage impressions to create a desired self-image for an audience. Goffman (1959) explained that individuals engage in impression management to be accepted and positively evaluated by their social environment. In this context, cosmetic use can be understood as part of a self-presentation strategy to project an attractive, well-groomed identity that meets social expectations. Support from family, peers, and significant others can strengthen this motivation because

individuals perceive appearance as an important part of gaining social recognition.

Furthermore, the concept of body image, according to Thomas F. Cash and Thomas Pruzinsky in their book, "Body Image: A Handbook of Theory, Research, and Clinical Practice," emphasizes that body image is formed through self-evaluation influenced by social interactions and cultural standards. Cash & Pruzinsky (2002) explain that body assessments are often socially comparative, meaning individuals compare themselves to others and to prevailing norms. In situations where the social environment places significant emphasis on appearance, individuals tend to use cosmetics as a means of enhancing their body image satisfaction. Positive social support for grooming practices or the use of cosmetics can reinforce these behaviors as a form of adaptation to group norms. Naomi Wolf's perspective in *The Beauty Myth* also provides an important explanation. Wolf (1991) argues that modern beauty standards are social constructs that operate through cultural pressures and social institutions. Beauty myths are not only produced by the media and industry but also reproduced in everyday conversation, compliments, and social expectations. Thus, social factors play a role in reinforcing the internalization of these standards. Individuals use cosmetics not solely out of personal choice, but because of social expectations to appear in accordance with legitimated beauty standards within their social environment.

Furthermore, Jean Baudrillard's theory of consumer society in *The Consumer Society* states that consumption in modern society is driven by the value of signs and status symbols (Baudrillard, 1998). Cosmetic products not only function utilitarianly but also possess sign value that signifies a particular lifestyle, social class, and identity. Within this framework, social support can reinforce cosmetic consumption because these products become symbols of social acceptance and participation in consumer culture. Individuals are encouraged to use cosmetics to demonstrate conformity to prevailing norms and trends within their social group. The findings of this study indicate that social factors have a positive influence on cosmetic use, indicating that these consumption practices do not stand alone as individual decisions, but are embedded within a network of social relations and cultural structures. Social support provides legitimacy, reinforcement, and even normative pressure on the importance of appearance. In a society that emphasizes self-presentation, internalization of beauty standards, and symbolic consumption, cosmetic use becomes a primary means of gaining recognition and maintaining social standing.

Social Media Positively Influences FOMO

In Erving Goffman's framework, published in his work, "The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life," social interaction is understood as a process of self-presentation to an audience. Goffman (1959) explained that individuals engage in impression management to control the impressions received by others. Social media significantly expands this stage because individuals are not only dealing with a limited audience but also with a vast and constantly active network. This

situation heightens self-awareness about how one is perceived, giving rise to an anxiety to always be involved, visible, and keep up with others' activities. In this context, FOMO can be understood as a logical consequence of the increasing performative pressures in the digital space (Purba et al., 2025; Dalimunthe et al., 2025). The concept of body image proposed by Thomas F. Cash and Thomas Pruzinsky in "Body Image: A Handbook of Theory, Research, and Clinical Practice" further supports this explanation. Cash & Pruzinsky (2002) assert that body image is heavily influenced by social comparison and the internalization of ideal standards, largely mediated by the media. Social media, replete with visual representations of ideal bodies, glamorous lifestyles, and personal achievements, creates conditions for intense and repetitive social comparison. When individuals are continually exposed to these idealized images, anxiety about falling behind arises, both in appearance and lifestyle, which then manifests as FOMO.

Naomi Wolf's perspective in *The Beauty Myth* explains that modern beauty standards are ideological constructs reinforced by the media and industry. Wolf (1991) argues that beauty myths operate through the internalization of standards that are continually reproduced in popular culture. Social media accelerates this reproduction process by enabling the rapid, visual, and interactive dissemination of beauty standards. In this environment, individuals feel compelled to continuously follow evolving trends and standards to avoid social exclusion, thus reinforcing FOMO. Furthermore, Baudrillard's (1998) theory of consumer society states that consumption in modern society is based on the value of signs and status symbols, not simply functional needs. Social media serves as a distribution space for these signs, where lifestyles, products, and experiences are constructed as symbols of identity and prestige. In this logic, FOMO emerges as an anxiety about being left behind in the symbolic flow that is constantly being produced and displayed. Individuals feel the need to stay connected to remain part of this system of meaning.

Social Media Positively Influences Cosmetic Use

Research findings showing that social media positively influences cosmetic use can be understood through a number of complementary theoretical perspectives. Within the dramaturgical framework proposed by Erving Goffman, social life is viewed as a stage where individuals consciously manage impressions to shape the self-image desired by the audience (Goffman, 1959). Social media expands the "front stage" space, making self-presentation more curated, visual, and oriented toward social recognition. In this context, cosmetics function as symbolic instruments to reinforce the desired identity. Therefore, the more intense the exposure and interaction on social media, the greater the urge to use cosmetics as part of an impression management strategy.

From the perspective of the body image concept developed by Thomas F. Cash and Thomas Pruzinsky, body image is a psychological construct formed through social experiences, self-evaluation, and social comparison (Cash & Pruzinsky, 2002). Social media is replete with representations of beauty standards that are often idealistic and visually curated. Repeated exposure to these images can heighten self-awareness of physical appearance and lead to

comparative evaluations, ultimately leading individuals to use cosmetics as a form of self-correction and to enhance their body perception. Thus, the positive influence of social media on cosmetics use can be understood as a response to the dynamics of body image formation and evaluation in the digital space. The feminist perspective put forward by Naomi Wolf in *The Beauty Myth* also explains this phenomenon by highlighting how beauty standards function as a mechanism of social control reinforced by the media (Wolf, 1991). In the digital age, social media not only reproduces beauty myths but also accelerates and expands their distribution through influencers, tutorial content, and competitive visual culture. As a result, women in particular are encouraged to conform to these standards, and the use of cosmetics becomes a means of fulfilling these constantly reproduced social expectations.

Furthermore, within the framework of Jean Baudrillard's theory of consumer society, consumption is no longer merely a functional need but has become a symbolic practice for constructing meaning and social status (Baudrillard, 1998). Cosmetics in consumer society are produced and marketed not only as a means of beautifying oneself but also as a sign of lifestyle, modernity, and identity. Social media reinforces this logic by normalizing consumption into visible and visible content. Thus, the positive influence of social media on cosmetics use reflects the internalization of symbolic values and a culture of consumption that are intensely reproduced in digital spaces.

FOMO Positively Influences Cosmetic Use

Research findings showing that FOMO positively influences cosmetic use can be understood as a consequence of the dynamics of self-presentation, body image construction, pressures of beauty standards, and the logic of symbolic consumption in modern society. From Erving Goffman's dramaturgical perspective, social life is understood as a stage where individuals actively manage the impression they wish to project to audiences (Goffman, 1959). FOMO, as the anxiety of being left behind in the social experiences of others, reinforces the drive to consistently appear relevant and accepted in social interactions, particularly in the digital space. When individuals fear being left behind by emerging trends or standards, cosmetic use becomes part of an impression management strategy to maintain a self-image that aligns with social expectations. In the body image framework proposed by Thomas F. Cash and Thomas Pruzinsky, body image is not simply a physical perception but a psychological construct formed through self-evaluation and social comparison (Cash & Pruzinsky, 2002). FOMO is often triggered by exposure to visual representations perceived as more attractive, more successful, or more ideal. This social comparison process can increase dissatisfaction with one's appearance, prompting individuals to use cosmetics as a means of boosting self-confidence and improving their body perception. Thus, FOMO functions as a psychological mechanism that reinforces the need for conformity through cosmetic practices. Naomi Wolf's perspective in *The Beauty Myth* explains that modern beauty standards operate as a subtle yet powerful form of social pressure, leading women to continually strive for physical perfection (Wolf, 1991). In the context

of FOMO, the fear of missing out is not only related to social experiences but also to achieving beauty standards continually reproduced by the media and popular culture. Individuals experiencing FOMO tend to feel the need to follow the latest beauty trends to remain perceived as up-to-date and socially appropriate, making cosmetic use a response to this normative pressure.

Meanwhile, in Jean Baudrillard's theory of consumer society, consumption is understood as a symbolic practice related to the production of meaning and identity, not merely a functional need (Baudrillard, 1998). FOMO accelerates this consumption logic because individuals are compelled to quickly adopt popular products or trends to maintain their symbolic position within a social group. Cosmetics, in this case, serve as a sign representing modernity, attractiveness, and participation in trend culture. Therefore, the positive relationship between FOMO and cosmetics use reflects how social anxiety and consumer culture intertwine in shaping individual behavior.

FOMO Does Not Mediate the Influence of Social Factors on Cosmetic Use

The research findings showing that FOMO does not significantly mediate the influence of social factors on cosmetic use suggest that social pressures operate more directly than through the anxiety of missing out mechanism. From Erving Goffman's dramaturgical perspective, individuals continually regulate their appearance and behavior to create a certain impression in the eyes of others (Goffman, 1959). Social factors such as group norms, peer expectations, and social environmental standards can directly encourage individuals to use cosmetics as part of a self-presentation strategy. Thus, cosmetic use is not always preceded by a fear of missing out, but rather by the need to maintain an image that aligns with social demands. According to the body image concept developed by Cash and Pruzinsky, body image is formed through a process of self-evaluation influenced by social experiences and internalized cultural standards (Cash & Pruzinsky, 2002). If beauty standards have become part of an individual's belief system, the decision to use cosmetics is a direct response to this self-evaluation. In this situation, FOMO does not play a strong mediating role because individuals do not act solely due to situational anxiety, but rather out of a drive to maintain a positive perception of their body in accordance with prevailing social standards. Naomi Wolf's view in *The Beauty Myth* also emphasizes that modern beauty standards function as a social mechanism that regulates women's behavior through the internalization of norms (Wolf, 1991). When these standards are accepted as normal, cosmetic use becomes an almost automatic practice, a form of compliance with cultural expectations. This means that the influence of social factors on cosmetic behavior can occur directly without the need for mediation by FOMO experiences.

Meanwhile, in Jean Baudrillard's theory of consumer society, consumption is understood as a sign system related to identity and social differentiation (Baudrillard, 1998). Cosmetics are used not merely for aesthetic purposes, but as a symbol of participation in the social order and culture of consumption. Once individuals are embedded within this symbolic consumption structure, cosmetic use becomes part of an established social routine. Therefore,

the insignificant role of FOMO as a mediator indicates that social pressure and consumption logic are strong enough to influence behavior directly, without the need to go through the mechanism of anxiety about being left behind.

FOMO Positively Mediates the Influence of Social Media on Cosmetic Use

Research findings indicating that FOMO plays a positive role as a mediator between social media and cosmetic use can be explained as a multistep process involving exposure, psychological responses, and consumption. Social media presents an intense stream of visual information regarding beauty trends, appearance standards, and lifestyles. This exposure not only shapes perceptions but also triggers anxiety when individuals feel left behind by what is currently popular. Within Erving Goffman's dramaturgical framework, individuals constantly strive to manage their impressions before a social audience (Goffman, 1959). Social media expands this performance space, intensifying the need to appear attractive. FOMO emerges as a response to concerns about not being able to meet these expectations, then encourages the use of cosmetics as a strategy to maintain a desired self-image. From the perspective of Cash and Pruzinsky's body image concept, body image is formed through a process of self-evaluation influenced by social experiences and comparisons with others (Cash & Pruzinsky, 2002). Social media provides a nearly limitless space for comparison. When individuals see representations of beauty that are considered more ideal, a fear of falling behind in appearance arises. FOMO, in this context, amplifies dissatisfaction with one's own body or face and encourages efforts to enhance one's appearance through the use of cosmetics. Thus, FOMO bridges the influence of social media on beauty product consumption decisions.

Naomi Wolf's perspective in *The Beauty Myth* emphasizes that modern beauty standards function as a value system continuously reproduced by the media and industry (Wolf, 1991). Social media accelerates the reproduction of these standards through influencers, promotional content, and a competitive visual culture. Individuals experiencing FOMO feel the need to keep up with constantly changing beauty standards and trends to avoid social exclusion. In this situation, cosmetics become a means of adapting to evolving symbolic demands in the digital space. In Jean Baudrillard's theory of consumer society, consumption is understood as a practice laden with symbolic meaning and linked to social identity (Baudrillard, 1998). Cosmetic products serve not only utilitarian functions but also signify participation in modern culture and a particular lifestyle. Social media accelerates the circulation of these signals, while FOMO reinforces the urge to adopt them immediately to stay on top of trends. Therefore, the positive mediation relationship suggests that social media indirectly influences cosmetic use through the experience of FOMO, which acts as a psychological mechanism for internalizing social pressure and consumption culture.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results of this study, it can be concluded that cosmetic use among female students of SMA Negeri 5 Binjai is significantly influenced by social media, social factors, and fear of missing out (FoMO), both directly and

indirectly, with a relationship pattern that shows the complexity of adolescent psychosocial dynamics. Social media is proven to have a direct influence on cosmetic use as well as an indirect influence through FoMO, which confirms the role of FoMO as an important mediator in bridging visual content exposure, beauty standards, and cosmetic consumption behavior. Conversely, although social factors have a direct influence on cosmetic use, this variable does not trigger FoMO, so FoMO does not play a mediator in the relationship. These findings indicate that FoMO is more triggered by symbolic pressure and ideal representations constructed by social media than by supportive social relationships. Theoretically, the results of this study strengthen Erving Goffman's self-presentation theory which explains cosmetic use as an impression management strategy, in line with Cash and Pruzinsky's body image concept which places social media as a primary source of self-evaluation, as well as Naomi Wolf's critique of beauty myths that create anxiety about falling behind ideal standards. In addition, this finding also reflects the logic of Jean Baudrillard's consumerist society, where cosmetics are consumed not only as a functional need, but as a social symbol to maintain existence and self-acceptance in the digital social space.

ADVANCED RESEARCH

This study finds that cosmetic use is mainly influenced by social media and FoMO, with FoMO acting as a key mediator, while social factors have only a direct effect. The results highlight cosmetics as tools of identity and social validation in digital contexts.

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