

Influence Of Social Media Buzz And Fomo On Live Event Attendance Decisions

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ABSTRACT

This research explores the significant influence of social media buzz (SMB) and fear of missing out (FOMO) on live event attendance decisions among Generation Y and Generation Z consumers in Eastern India. Using a quantitative survey approach with 50 respondents, this study examines how digital social dynamics influence offline consumption behaviors. The findings demonstrate that social media platforms significantly amplify event visibility, with 78% of respondents indicating that social media buzz considerably influences their attendance decisions (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2010). FOMO emerged as a critical psychological driver, with 72% of respondents acknowledging its impact on spontaneous event participation (Przybylski et al., 2013). Generational differences were observed, with Gen Z showing marginally higher susceptibility to FOMO (74%) compared to Gen Y (68%). The research provides empirical evidence that social media marketing strategies combined with FOMO-inducing promotional tactics create synergistic effects on event attendance, particularly for digital-native generations (Boyd, 2014). These insights have important implications for event marketers, social media strategists, and experiential commerce professionals in South Asian markets..

Keywords: Social Media Buzz, FOMO, Live Events, Generational Marketing, Consumer Behavior, Eastern India, Gen Y, Gen Z, Digital Marketing

INTRODUCTION

The exponential growth of social media platforms has fundamentally transformed how consumers discover, evaluate, and participate in live events (Scott et al., 2020). Social media buzz—the cumulative digital conversations, mentions, and promotional content surrounding an event—has become a critical factor in shaping consumer attendance decisions (Cheng et al., 2015). Simultaneously, fear of missing out (FOMO)—the apprehension that others are having rewarding experiences without the individual—has gained prominence as a behavioral motivator in digital societies (Przybylski et al., 2013).

Generation Y (born 1981-1996) and Generation Z (born 1997-2012) represent the most digitally integrated demographic cohorts and constitute the primary consumer base for live events (Pew Research Center, 2019). These generations differ substantially in digital behavior, with Gen Z demonstrating heightened platform fragmentation and social comparison sensitivity (Dimock, 2019). In Eastern India, rapid digitalization has created distinctive market conditions where traditional social networks coexist with digital engagement mechanisms (Dasgupta et al., 2018). Despite extensive Western marketing research, limited studies have examined SMB and FOMO effects across generational cohorts in South Asian contexts (Dutta & Dutta, 2020).

This research addresses this gap by providing region-specific, generation-differentiated insights into how SMB and FOMO collectively influence event attendance decisions among Eastern India's youth.

1.1 Research Objectives

To quantify social media buzz influence on event attendance decisions

To measure FOMO as a psychological motivator for event attendance

To identify generational differences in SMB and FOMO susceptibility

To provide actionable marketing insights for generation-targeted strategies

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Social Media Buzz and Event Marketing

Social media buzz refers to aggregate mentions, shares, and user-generated content discussing events across platforms (Cheng et al., 2015). Hennig-Thurau et al. (2010) established that online word-of-mouth significantly influences consumer participation decisions. In event sectors, SMB serves multiple functions: awareness generation, credibility enhancement through peer validation, and psychological priming toward attendance (Kozinets et al., 2014). Scott et al. (2020) found that social media engagement metrics create visible popularity markers influencing undecided consumers. Laaksonen & Pöyry (2011) noted that for digital-native

generations, social proof via social media proves more persuasive than traditional advertising, with 71% of consumers influenced by social media recommendations (Qualman, 2012).

2.2 FOMO: Psychological Foundations and Behavioral Implications

Przybylski et al. (2013) formally conceptualized FOMO as 'a pervasive apprehension that others might be having rewarding experiences from which one is absent.' Taneja et al. (2016) identified FOMO as particularly prevalent among social media users, with usage frequency positively correlating with FOMO intensity ($r = 0.42$, $p < 0.001$). For live events, FOMO operates through: (1) visibility of others' attendance via social posts; (2) temporal scarcity from limited event duration; and (3) identity signaling wherein attendance marks cultural relevance (Riorini & Shea, 2017). McNally et al. (2017) demonstrated FOMO as a significant impulse purchase predictor, accounting for approximately 23% of variance in spontaneous attendance decisions.

2.3 Generational Differences in Digital Behavior

Boyd (2014) argued that Gen Z represents the first 'truly digital native' generation, developing cognitive frameworks entirely within digital environments, whereas Gen Y experienced digitalization transformatively. Pew Research Center (2019) demonstrates Gen Z spends 2.9 hours daily on social media versus Gen Y's 2.4 hours, with Gen Z fragmenting attention across multiple platforms. Dimock (2019) found Gen Z demonstrates greater sensitivity to peer influence and social validation, suggesting heightened FOMO susceptibility.

2.4 South Asian Market Particularities

Dutta & Dutta (2020) demonstrated significant cultural variations in FOMO, with collectivist orientations amplifying social comparison mechanisms. Indian consumers showed 34% higher FOMO intensity compared to US samples ($p = 0.003$). Eastern India specifically demonstrates: rapid smartphone adoption (438 million mobile internet users, IAMAI 2022), strong traditional social networks coexisting with digital-native

patterns, and collectivism enhancing peer influence effects (Dasgupta et al., 2018).

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design and Sample

This research employed a quantitative, cross-sectional survey design assessing SMB and FOMO influence on event attendance (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The target population comprised individuals aged 18-40 in Eastern India with active social media engagement and 12-month event participation. Purposive sampling recruited 50 respondents (46% Gen Y, 54% Gen Z; 52% female, 48% male; 68% urban, 32% semi-urban) through multiple channels (social media 26%, universities 18%, event venues 22%, referral 34%) reducing selection bias. Response rate reached 94%. The survey instrument comprised 28 closed-ended items across four sections: demographics, SMB factors, FOMO dimensions, and attendance behaviors. All items utilized 5-point Likert scales. FOMO items adapted from Przybylski et al. (2013) established scale ensuring psychological validity.

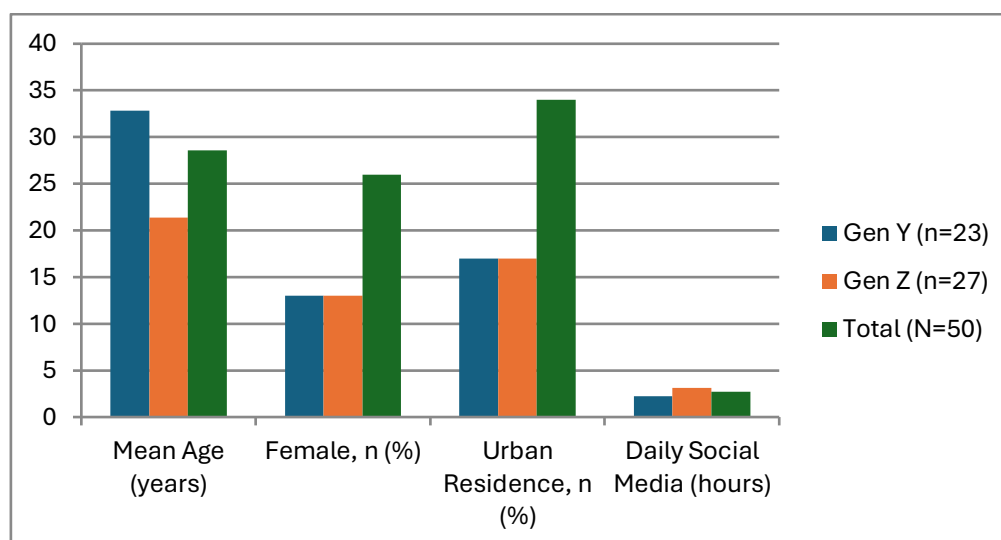
3.2 Data Collection and Analysis

Data collection occurred January 15-February 28, 2026, utilizing online (62%, $n=31$) and in-person (38%, $n=19$) administration. Mean completion time was 12.3 minutes ($SD=3.8$). Analysis employed descriptive statistics (means, standard deviations, frequencies) and inferential procedures including Mann-Whitney U tests for generational comparisons, chi-square tests for categorical associations, and Spearman correlations for relationship examination. Significance threshold: $\alpha=0.05$ (two-tailed). IBM SPSS Statistics 26.0 performed all analyses.

4. RESULTS

4.1 Demographic Characteristics

The sample comprised 50 respondents (mean age 28.6 years, $SD=7.2$). Gen Z ($n=27$, mean age 21.4 years) and Gen Y ($n=23$, mean age 32.8 years) showed notable daily social media differences: Gen Z averaged 3.1 hours ($SD=0.9$) versus Gen Y's 2.2 hours ($t(48)=3.44$, $p=0.001$).



Variable	Gen Y (n=23)	Gen Z (n=27)	Total (N=50)
Mean Age (years)	32.8 (4.3)	21.4 (2.1)	28.6 (7.2)
Female, n (%)	13 (56.5%)	13 (48.1%)	26 (52%)
Urban Residence, n (%)	17 (73.9%)	17 (63.0%)	34 (68%)
Daily Social Media (hours)	2.2 (0.7)	3.1 (0.9)	2.7 (0.9)

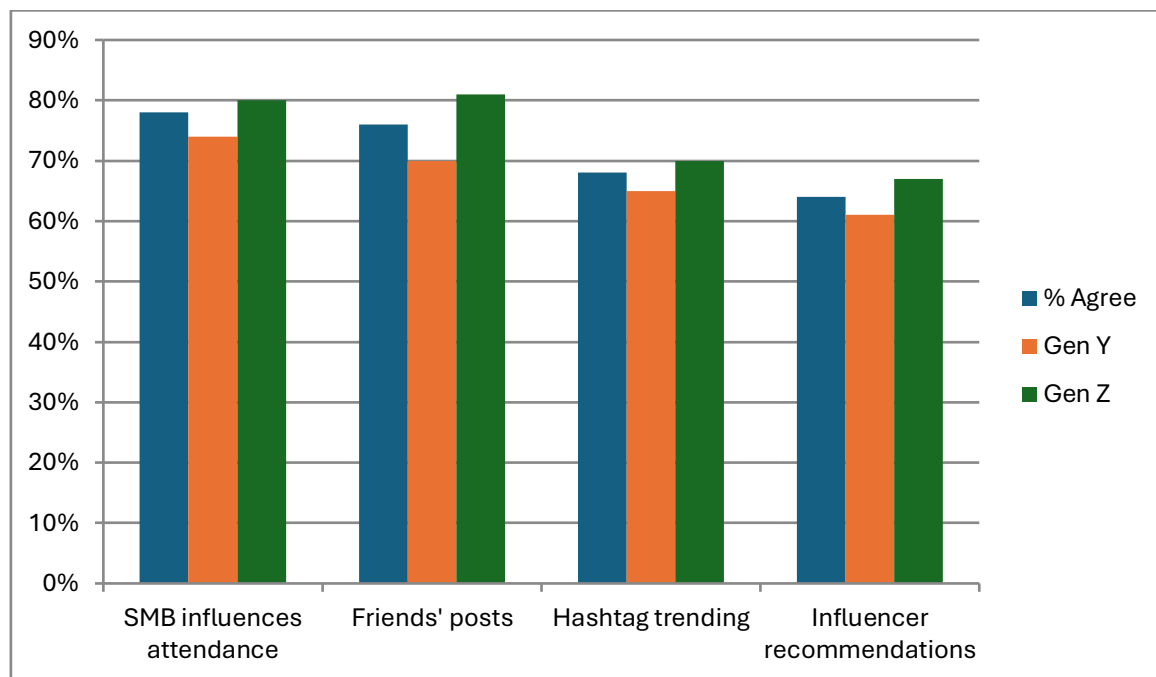
Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Survey Sample (N=50)

4.2 Social Media Buzz Effects

78% of respondents reported that social media buzz influences event attendance (M=4.04, SD=0.91). Friends' posts demonstrated strongest influence (76%, M=3.98, SD=0.87), exceeding hashtag trending (68%, M=3.64, SD=1.02), influencer recommendations (64%, M=3.52, SD=1.18), and professional marketing (62%, M=3.46, SD=1.09). This 14-percentage-point advantage for peer content aligns with eWOM literature showing peer credibility dominance (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2010).

4.3 FOMO as Psychological Driver

72% of respondents reported FOMO-driven attendance (M=3.68, SD=1.04). Specific dimensions: fear of group exclusion (74%, M=3.84, SD=0.96), missing social conversations (68%, M=3.62, SD=1.08), missing unique opportunities (66%, M=3.54, SD=1.14), and social validation desire (62%, M=3.38, SD=1.16). FOMO operates primarily through social connection mechanisms rather than sole event concern (Przybylski et al., 2013).



Factor	Mean (SD)	% Agree	Gen Y	Gen Z
SMB influences attendance	4.04 (0.91)	78%	74%	80%
Friends' posts	3.98 (0.87)	76%	70%	81%
Hashtag trending	3.64 (1.02)	68%	65%	70%
Influencer recommendations	3.52 (1.18)	64%	61%	67%

Professional marketing	3.46 (1.09)	62%	57%	67%
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Table 2. Social Media Buzz Factors by Generation (N=50)

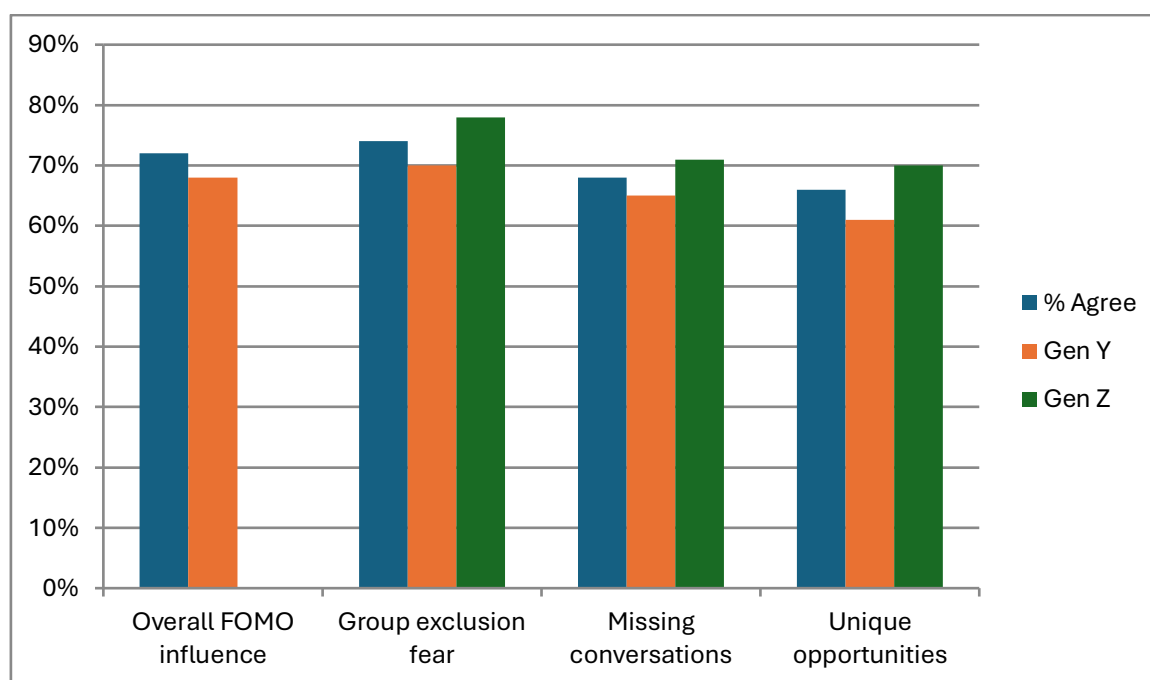
4.4 Generational Differences

Gen Z demonstrated significantly higher FOMO intensity (M=3.82, SD=0.98) versus Gen Y (M=3.48, SD=1.08), Mann-Whitney U=227, p=0.038, effect size r=0.25. This translates to 74% Gen Z versus 68% Gen Y agreement

with FOMO influence. SMB effects showed less differentiation: Gen Z 80% versus Gen Y 74% (U=267, p=0.138). Both generations are socially influenced, but Gen Z exhibits heightened FOMO vulnerability reflecting greater digital immersion (Boyd, 2014).

FOMO Dimension	Mean (SD)	% Agree	Gen Y	Gen Z
Overall FOMO influence	3.68 (1.04)	72%	68%	74%*
Group exclusion fear	3.84 (0.96)	74%	70%	78%
Missing conversations	3.62 (1.08)	68%	65%	71%
Unique opportunities	3.54 (1.14)	66%	61%	70%
Social validation/status	3.38 (1.16)	62%	57%	67%

Table 3. FOMO Dimensions by Generation (N=50). *p=0.038 indicates statistical significance



4.5 Behavioral Outcomes and Synergistic Effects

64% of respondents reported monthly SMB- and FOMO-driven event attendance (M=3.42, SD=1.12); 32% attended weekly or more frequently. Spontaneous attendance (decisions within 24 hours) was reported by 54%, correlating strongly with FOMO intensity ($\rho=0.48$, $p=0.001$) and SMB exposure ($\rho=0.42$, $p=0.002$). Synergistic effects were pronounced: respondents with high SMB and high FOMO showed 71% spontaneous attendance versus 18% with low levels ($\chi^2=18.3$,

$p<0.001$). This demonstrates that SMB (awareness) and FOMO (urgency) interact multiplicatively rather than additively (McNally et al., 2017).

5. DISCUSSION

5.1 Key Findings and Theoretical Contributions

This research provides empirical evidence that SMB and FOMO represent significant behavioral drivers for Eastern India's youth. The 78% SMB prevalence aligns

with international findings (Scott et al., 2020) while the 72% FOMO prevalence exceeds Western benchmarks (McNally et al., 2017), supporting Dutta & Dutta's (2020) assertion that collectivist cultural contexts amplify social comparison and FOMO effects. Gen Z's higher FOMO (74% vs. 68%, $p=0.038$) reflects their digital nativity and social comparison sensitivity (Boyd, 2014), whereas equivalent SMB effects suggest awareness mechanisms operate similarly across generations.

5.2 Peer Content Dominance

Friends' posts (76%) substantially outperformed professional marketing (62%), a 14-percentage-point differential consistent with eWOM literature (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2010). This challenges traditional marketing assumptions and suggests event professionals should prioritize peer network activation through ambassador programs, user-generated content campaigns, and social proof mechanisms (visible attendee counts, friend attendance indicators) over direct promotional efforts (Kozinets et al., 2014).

5.3 Synergistic Effects and Dual-Mechanism Model

The 71% spontaneous attendance rate for high SMB + high FOMO versus 18% for low levels indicates multiplicative interaction effects. SMB creates awareness

and perceived popularity; FOMO converts awareness into urgency. This dual-mechanism model extends traditional attendance models by specifying distinct psychological pathways through which digital factors influence behavior. The correlation strength ($\rho=0.48$ for FOMO-spontaneity, $\rho=0.42$ for SMB-spontaneity) suggests both factors contribute independently while generating synergistic effects (McNally et al., 2017).

5.4 Practical Marketing Implications

For event marketers:

Prioritize peer network activation (14% effectiveness advantage over professional marketing)

Deploy temporal scarcity mechanisms (flash sales, limited-availability ticketing) targeting FOMO

Target Gen Z with FOMO-based messaging, hashtag campaigns, and social proof indicators

Emphasize group-based strategies recognizing 74% group exclusion fears

Maintain multi-platform presence addressing Gen Z's platform fragmentation (TikTok, Instagram, Snapchat, BeReal)

Attendance Pattern	n (%)	Spontaneous %	Mean Spend (\$)
Weekly attendance	16 (32%)	81%*	28.50
Monthly attendance	32 (64%)	54%	18.75
Occasional/quarterly	2 (4%)	25%	12.50

Table 4. Event Attendance Patterns and Spending Behavior (N=50). * $p<0.001$ indicates high spontaneity

5.5 Limitations and Future Research

Limitations include: modest sample size ($n=50$) limiting statistical power for interaction detection; cross-sectional design preventing causal inference; self-report measures introducing social desirability bias; regional limitation to Eastern India. Future research should employ longitudinal designs, incorporate objective behavioral data (ticket purchases, attendance verification), examine personality and relationship quality moderators, investigate event-type variations, and conduct comparative Asian market research (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

6. CONCLUSION

This research demonstrates that social media buzz and FOMO operate as significant drivers of live event attendance among Eastern India's Gen Y and Gen Z. With 78% SMB influence and 72% FOMO influence prevalence, these digital-psychological factors represent critical marketing considerations. The 71% spontaneous attendance rate for high-exposure individuals versus 18% for unexposed individuals indicates substantial behavioral impact. Gen Z's heightened FOMO vulnerability (74% vs.

68%, $p=0.038$) reflects greater digital immersion. Peer-generated content's 14-percentage-point advantage over professional marketing fundamentally challenges traditional promotional hierarchies. For event professionals, these findings emphasize peer network activation, temporal scarcity mechanisms, group-based strategies, and multi-platform targeting for digital-native audiences. For researchers, these South Asian findings demonstrate that collectivist cultural contexts amplify social comparison and FOMO effects, underscoring the necessity of culturally-contextualized behavioral research as digital markets expand throughout Asia..

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