

Dual Pathways of e-WOM toward Perceived Marketing Performance through Brand Reputation and FOMO in Social Commerce

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Abstract

The rapid growth of social commerce has transformed electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) into a critical factor influencing consumer perceptions and business outcomes. This study aims to examine the influence of e-WOM on Perceived Marketing Performance through the mediating roles of Brand Reputation and Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) within the TikTok Shop ecosystem. Drawing on Signaling Theory and the Resource-Based View (RBV), the study proposes a dual-pathway framework consisting of a cognitive-rational pathway represented by Brand Reputation and an affective-social pathway represented by FoMO. A quantitative research design was employed using a survey method. Data were collected from 245 TikTok Shop users in Indonesia through a structured questionnaire and analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The results indicate that e-WOM significantly influences both Brand Reputation and FOMO. Furthermore, Brand Reputation and FOMO were found to have significant positive effects on Perceived Marketing Performance. Mediation analysis reveals that both variables significantly mediate the relationship between e-WOM and Perceived Marketing Performance. However, Brand Reputation emerged as the dominant mediating mechanism, exhibiting a substantially stronger indirect effect than FOMO. The findings suggest that while emotional triggers contribute to consumer evaluations, reputation-based assessments remain the primary mechanism through which e-WOM translates into perceptions of marketing effectiveness. Theoretically, this study advances social commerce research by integrating cognitive and affective pathways into a unified framework. Practically, the findings suggest that social commerce practitioners should prioritize long-term brand reputation management over short-term promotional hype, utilizing e-WOM to reinforce credibility while selectively employing FOMO-driven tactics during live-stream shopping events.

Keywords:

e-WOM; Brand reputation; FOMO; Perceived marketing performance; Social commerce.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary era of hyper-digitization, consumer purchasing behavior has undergone a substantial transformation from conventional electronic commerce toward highly interactive social commerce (s-commerce) ecosystems. The rapid proliferation of platforms such as TikTok Shop has accelerated the emergence of the “shoppertainment” paradigm, which integrates entertainment, social interaction, and purchasing activities within a seamless digital environment (Yutika, 2026). Unlike traditional e-commerce, where transactions are primarily driven by product information and firm-generated communications, social commerce facilitates continuous interactions among consumers, creators, influencers, and brands. Modern

purchasing configurations, particularly among digital-native cohorts, are substantially shaped by decentralized user-generated content known as Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM) (Busalim et al., 2024; Ismagilova et al., 2020). Within this environment, e-WOM has emerged as one of the most influential information sources, substantially affecting how consumers evaluate products, brands, and marketplace offerings (Wang & Shahzad, 2024).

Electronic Word of Mouth encompasses consumer-generated reviews, ratings, recommendations, visual testimonials, and shared consumption experiences disseminated through digital platforms. As a form of user-generated content, e-WOM functions as an important informational resource that assists consumers in reducing uncertainty and evaluating marketplace alternatives. Drawing upon Signaling Theory, e-WOM serves as an informational signal that reduces uncertainty and information asymmetry by communicating consumers' collective evaluations regarding product quality, brand credibility, and marketplace trustworthiness (Maru & Sai Vijay, 2024; Mavlanova et al., 2012). Compared with firm-generated advertising, e-WOM is frequently perceived as more credible because it originates from independent consumers who are presumed to have direct product experience. Consequently, the influence of e-WOM extends beyond purchase-related outcomes and increasingly affects strategic brand-related constructs, including brand image, brand trust, brand reputation, and perceived organizational performance (Handoyo, 2024; Maru & Sai Vijay, 2024).

From a strategic management perspective, the organizational performance can be understood through the Resource-Based View (RBV), which posits that sustainable competitive advantage is derived from valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable organizational resources (Barney et al., 2021). In digital marketplaces, brand reputation represents one of the most critical intangible resources because it accumulates through repeated interactions between firms and consumers across online platforms. Positive e-WOM contributes to the formation and reinforcement of this reputational asset by signaling product quality, reliability, and consumer satisfaction to prospective buyers. Recent studies have demonstrated that digital reputation functions as a strategic resource that enhances business performance, strengthens customer trust, and increases marketplace competitiveness within social commerce environments (Barney et al., 2021; Yutika, 2026).

Drawing upon dual-process perspectives of information processing, the influence of e-WOM on brand reputation can be explained through a Cognitive-Rational Pathway and Affective-Social Pathway. When exposed to online reviews, ratings, and user generated experiences, consumers systematically assess the credibility, consistency, and diagnostic value of available information before forming judgments about a brand. Through this evaluative process, consumers infer the trustworthiness, competence, and reliability of a firm, which collectively contribute to the formation of brand reputation (Rosario et al., 2019; Walsh & Beatty, 2007). Accordingly, brand reputation may be viewed as the outcome of consumers' cognitive-rational processing of e-WOM information and as a strategic intangible resource that ultimately contributes to superior marketing performance. However, the influence of e-WOM extends beyond cognitive evaluations and strategic resource formation. While consumers may systematically process marketplace information to form judgments regarding brand reputation, the highly interactive social commerce environments, e-WOM may also trigger, engages and exploits the emotional dynamics of the modern consumer through an Affective-Social Pathway. Social commerce platforms expose users to continuous streams of user generated content, public interactions, and visible consumption behaviors that may intensify social pressure and emotional engagement (Dinh & Lee, 2024; Wongkitrungrueng & Assarut, 2020).

Among these responses, Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) has emerged as one of the most prominent psychological mechanisms in social commerce environments. FOMO refers to a pervasive apprehension that others may be experiencing rewarding opportunities from which one is absent (Przybylski et al., 2013). In s-commerce platforms, immediate social proofs, such as shifting livestock metrics, countdown timers, and viral comment streams, generate overwhelming social comparison pressures. For digital natives, this creates a state of heightened emotional reactivity where individuals feel compelled to execute immediate transactional conversions to maintain social alignment and mitigate the anxiety of collective detachment (Yutika & Ratnawati, 2025; Zhang et al., 2020). Consequently, exposure to positive and highly engaging e-WOM may evoke emotional urgency and strengthen consumers' desire to align with prevailing marketplace trends and socially endorsed consumption behaviors (Flecha Ortiz et al., 2024). Through this affective-social pathway, e-WOM may influence perceived marketing performance not only by providing information but also by generating emotional and social signals that reinforce perceptions of marketplace popularity, consumer acceptance, and commercial success.

The ultimate theoretical significance of this study lies in understanding how these cognitive-rational and affective-social mechanisms jointly translate e-WOM into perceptions of organizational success within social commerce ecosystems. Drawing upon the marketing productivity perspective, contemporary marketing performance extends beyond traditional financial outcomes and encompasses the extent to which marketing activities generate customer value, strengthen market-based assets, and enhance competitive positioning (Katsikeas et al., 2016; Morgan et al., 2018). Because consumers do not possess direct access to firms' internal financial information, organizational success is often evaluated through observable marketplace signals, such as brand popularity, customer acceptance, market growth, and competitive standing. Accordingly, perceived marketing performance may be defined as consumers' overall assessment of how effectively a firm transforms its marketing efforts and marketplace interactions into visible indicators of commercial success (Rust, 2020).

From a Resource-Based View perspective, brand reputation represents a valuable market-based asset that contributes to favorable evaluations of organizational performance by signaling reliability, credibility, and sustained customer satisfaction (Barney et al., 2021). Through the cognitive-rational pathway, consumers utilize e-WOM information to infer brand quality and trustworthiness, which subsequently shapes their perceptions of marketplace success (Maru & Sai Vijay, 2024; Rosario et al., 2019). Simultaneously, through the affective-social pathway, FOMO may influence perceived marketing performance by signaling widespread consumer engagement, social endorsement, and market momentum. When consumers observe high levels of participation surrounding a brand, they may interpret such collective behaviors as indicators of popularity and commercial effectiveness, thereby reinforcing perceptions of superior market performance (Dinh & Lee, 2024; Flecha Ortiz et al., 2024; Przybylski et al., 2013).

Despite growing scholarly interest in e-WOM, brand reputation, and FOMO, an important gap remains within the social commerce literature. Existing studies have predominantly examined cognitive evaluations and affective responses as independent mechanisms, resulting in a fragmented understanding of how consumer-generated interactions create organizational value. Consequently, limited empirical evidence explains how e-WOM simultaneously operates through a resource-based cognitive mechanism, reflected in brand reputation, and an affective-social mechanism, reflected in FOMO, to shape perceived marketing performance in social commerce environments. This limitation is particularly relevant in platforms such as TikTok Shop, where marketplace success is driven not only by the accumulation of strategic intangible assets but also by consumers' emotional and socially influenced responses to highly interactive digital experiences. To address this gap, the present study develops and empirically tests a dual-pathway mediation model that examines the direct and indirect effects of e-WOM on perceived marketing performance through brand reputation and FOMO within the TikTok Shop ecosystem.

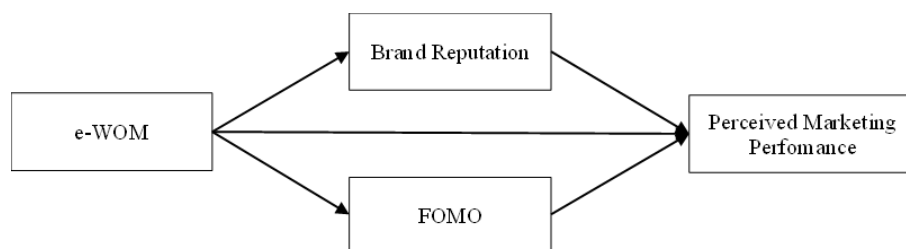


Figure 1. Research Framework

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study deploys a deductive, quantitative approach utilizing an explanatory research design to investigate the structural causal pathways linking Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM), Brand Reputation, the Fear of Missing Out (FOMO), and Perceived Marketing Performance. Explanatory research is uniquely suited for this inquiry as it transcends descriptive boundaries, aiming to establish empirical evidence regarding the direction and significance of hypothesized relationships. The quantitative framework aligns with the primary research objective, which demands a highly objective, statistically rigorous evaluation of a dual-pathway mediation model within the volatile social commerce ecosystem.

The target population encompasses active social commerce users in Indonesia who engage with and purchase from TikTok Shop. Given the infinite nature of this population, a non-probability sampling approach via a purposive sampling technique was instituted. To ensure that the sample possessed sufficient epistemic exposure to the constructs under investigation, strict inclusion criteria were enforced:

- a. Respondents were at least 17 years old and resided in Indonesia.
- b. Respondents had used TikTok actively for a minimum of six consecutive months.
- c. Respondents had completed at least one transaction on TikTok Shop within the preceding three months.
- d. Respondents consulted peer reviews, affiliate video testimonials, or live-stream comments prior to purchase.

A final sample of 245 respondents was successfully obtained for the empirical analysis. This sample size is considered adequate for Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), which is particularly suitable for analyzing complex models involving multiple latent constructs and mediation relationships (Hair et al., 2022). According to contemporary PLS-SEM guidelines, the adequacy of sample size should be evaluated based on statistical power and model complexity rather than relying solely on traditional rules of thumb. In this regard, a sample of 245 respondents exceeds the minimum requirements generally recommended for variance-based structural equation modeling and provides sufficient statistical power for estimating structural relationships within the proposed model (Hair et al., 2022).

Primary data collection was executed through a highly structured, self-administered web-based survey. The measurement scales were adapted from established, validated instruments in digital marketing and behavioral psychology literatures, modified slightly to fit the s-commerce context. All manifest items were evaluated using a 5-point Likert scale. The survey instrument was digitally deployed across major communication. Potential respondents were screened using an initial automated filtering gate based on the pre-established inclusion criteria. Prior to structural analysis, the raw dataset underwent rigorous data cleaning and preparation protocols. Retracted surveys and incomplete responses were automatically expunged during the digital filtering phase. Standard coding procedures were applied, and the dataset was screened for anomalies, missing values, and unengaged responses to ensure statistical hygiene.

Data analysis was carried out using Structural Equation Modeling - Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) via the SmartPLS 4. This variance-based technique was selected due to its superior predictive capabilities and its high flexibility in handling complex, simultaneous mediation models without requiring strict multivariate normality assumptions (Hair et al., 2022). The evaluation followed a two-tiered analytical framework:

- a. Evaluation of the Measurement Model (Outer Model): Construct validity and internal consistency reliability were tested using standardized loading factors (> 0.70), Average Variance Extracted (AVE > 0.50), Cronbach's Alpha (> 0.70), and Composite Reliability (> 0.70). Discriminant validity was verified using both the Fornell-Larcker criterion and the Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio (HTMT < 0.90).
- b. Evaluation of the Structural Model (Inner Model): Path coefficients (β), coefficients of determination (R^2), and predictive relevance were analyzed. To determine the statistical significance of the direct and indirect mediation paths (H1 through H5), a non-parametric bootstrapping procedure was executed using 5,000 resamples to generate stable t-statistics (> 1.96) and p-values (< 0.05) at a 95% confidence interval.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Results

3.1.1. Respondent Characteristic

A total of 245 valid responses were included in the analysis. As shown in Table 1, the sample was dominated by female respondents (67%), while male respondents accounted for 33%. In terms of age, most participants belonged to Generation Z (68%), followed by respondents under 18 years old (19%) and Millennials (13%). Regarding occupation, students constituted the largest proportion of respondents (72%), followed by employees in the public and private sectors (24%).

With respect to TikTok Shop usage, the majority of respondents reported shopping one to two times per month (59%), while 29% purchased products three to four times monthly. This profile indicates that the sample primarily consisted of young and digitally connected consumers who are highly exposed to social commerce interactions, making them an appropriate population for examining the effects of electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM), brand reputation, and Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) within the TikTok Shop ecosystem.

Table 1. Respondent Profil

Characteristic	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	81	33
	Female	164	67
Age	Under 18 years	47	19
	18-27 years (Generation Z)	167	68
	28-43 years (Millennial)	31	13
Education	Junior High School or Equivalent	9	4
	Senior High School or Equivalent	169	69
	Diploma	4	2
	Bachelor's Degree	24	10
	Postgraduate Degree	39	16
Occupation	Unemployed/Job Seeker	4	2
	Freelancer	6	2
	Private Employee/Government Employee	58	24
	Student	177	72
Shopping Frequency on TikTok Shop	Rarely (1-2 times/month)	144	59
	Occasionally (3-4 times/month)	71	29
	Frequently (5-6 times/month)	22	9
	Very Frequently (>6 times/month)	8	3

3.1.2. Measurement Model Evaluation

The measurement model was assessed by examining indicator reliability, convergent validity, and internal consistency reliability. As presented in Table 2, all indicator loadings exceeded the recommended threshold of

0.70, ranging from 0.717 to 0.894. These results indicate that all indicators adequately represent their respective latent constructs. Convergent validity was further supported by the AVE values of all constructs, which exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.50. The AVE values were 0.691 for e-WOM, 0.680 for Brand Reputation, 0.726 for FOMO, and 0.680 for Perceived Marketing Performance. These findings suggest that each construct explains more than 50% of the variance in its indicators, confirming satisfactory convergent validity.

The reliability assessment also demonstrated strong internal consistency across all constructs. Composite Reliability values ranged from 0.927 to 0.941, while Cronbach's Alpha values ranged from 0.905 to 0.924, substantially exceeding the minimum acceptable value of 0.70. Among the constructs, FOMO exhibited the highest reliability (CR = 0.941; α = 0.924), followed by e-WOM (CR = 0.931; α = 0.910), Brand Reputation (CR = 0.927; α = 0.915), and Perceived Marketing Performance (CR = 0.927; α = 0.905). Overall, the results indicate that the measurement model possesses satisfactory convergent validity and internal consistency reliability. Therefore, all constructs and indicators were retained for subsequent structural model analysis.

Table 2. Measurement Model

Variabel	Indikator	Loading Factor	AVE	Composite Reliability	Cronbach's Alpha
e-WOM	EWOM1	0.801	0.691	0.931	0.910
	EWOM2	0.811			
	EWOM3	0.769			
	EWOM4	0.883			
	EWOM5	0.876			
	EWOM6	0.843			
Brand Reputation	BR2	0.717	0.680	0.927	0.915
	BR3	0.831			
	BR4	0.752			
	BR5	0.873			
	BR6	0.879			
	BR7	0.879			
FOMO	FOMO1	0.887	0.726	0.941	0.924
	FOMO2	0.875			
	FOMO3	0.861			
	FOMO4	0.884			
	FOMO5	0.833			
	FOMO6	0.764			
Perceived Marketing Performance	PMP1	0.894	0.680	0.927	0.905
	PMP2	0.832			
	PMP3	0.843			
	PMP4	0.866			
	PMP5	0.752			
	PMP6	0.752			

According to the Fornell-Larcker criterion, the square root of AVE values for Brand Reputation (0.824), e-WOM (0.831), FOMO (0.852), and Perceived Marketing Performance (0.825) were all greater than their corresponding inter-construct correlations. For example, the square root of AVE for Brand Reputation (0.824) exceeded its highest correlation with Perceived Marketing Performance (0.772). Similarly, the square root of AVE for FOMO (0.852) was greater than its strongest correlation with Perceived Marketing Performance (0.706). These findings indicate that each construct shares more variance with its own indicators than with other latent constructs, thereby confirming satisfactory discriminant validity based on the Fornell-Larcker criterion.

To provide a more rigorous assessment, Table 3 shows discriminant validity was further evaluated using the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT). The HTMT values ranged from 0.363 to 0.824, all of which were below the conservative threshold of 0.85 and substantially below the liberal threshold of 0.90. Specifically, the highest HTMT value was observed between Brand Reputation and Perceived Marketing Performance (HTMT = 0.824), while the lowest value was found between e-WOM and FOMO (HTMT = 0.363). Since all HTMT values remained below the recommended cut-off values, discriminant validity was successfully established for all constructs.

Table 3. Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)

	BR	EWOM	FOMO	PMP
BR				
EWOM	0.659			
FOMO	0.566	0.363		
PMP	0.824	0.625	0.774	

Taken together, the results of indicator reliability, convergent validity, internal consistency reliability, and discriminant validity demonstrate that the measurement model satisfies all recommended PLS-SEM criteria. Therefore, the constructs were deemed valid and reliable, allowing the analysis to proceed to the assessment of the structural model and hypothesis testing.

3.1.3. Structural Model Evaluation

Before assessing the hypothesized relationships, collinearity diagnostics were examined. All Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values were below the recommended threshold of 5.0, ranging from 1.787 to 4.798, indicating the absence of multicollinearity concerns and confirming the suitability of the structural model for further analysis (Hair et al., 2022). The explanatory power of the model was assessed using the coefficient of determination (R^2). As shown in Table 4, e-WOM explained 35.5% of the variance in Brand Reputation ($R^2 = 0.355$) and 11.8% of the variance in FOMO ($R^2 = 0.118$). Furthermore, Brand Reputation and FOMO jointly explained 71.5% of the variance in Perceived Marketing Performance ($R^2 = 0.715$). According to Hair et al. (2022), the explanatory power for Perceived Marketing Performance can be considered substantial, indicating that the proposed model possesses strong predictive capability.

Table 4. R-Square Results

Variabel	R-Square	R-Square adjusted
Brand Reputation	0.355	0.352
FOMO	0.118	0.114
PMP	0.715	0.713

The effect size (f^2) analysis further revealed that e-WOM exerted a large effect on Brand Reputation ($f^2 = 0.549$) and a medium effect on FOMO ($f^2 = 0.134$). In addition, Brand Reputation ($f^2 = 0.760$) and FOMO ($f^2 = 0.420$) demonstrated large effects on Perceived Marketing Performance, highlighting the importance of both mediating mechanisms in explaining consumers' evaluations of firms' marketing performance within the TikTok Shop ecosystem.

3.1.4. Hypothesis Testing

The bootstrapping results demonstrate that all hypothesized relationships are positive and statistically significant (Table 5). Specifically, e-WOM has a strong positive effect on Brand Reputation ($\beta = 0.595$, $t = 12.153$, $p < 0.001$), supporting H1. This finding indicates that positive user-generated reviews and consumer interactions significantly contribute to the development of favorable brand reputation within social commerce environments. Similarly, e-WOM significantly influences FOMO ($\beta = 0.343$, $t = 5.381$, $p < 0.001$), supporting H2. This result suggests that exposure to user-generated content, reviews, and social interactions on TikTok Shop stimulates consumers' fear of missing out on products, trends, or purchasing opportunities. Brand Reputation was found to exert a significant positive effect on Perceived Marketing Performance ($\beta = 0.551$, $t = 12.554$, $p < 0.001$), supporting H3. Among all direct relationships, this path exhibited the strongest coefficient, indicating that consumers primarily evaluate a firm's marketing success through the reputational signals accumulated in digital marketplaces. Furthermore, FOMO significantly affects Perceived Marketing Performance ($\beta = 0.410$, $t = 10.586$, $p < 0.001$), supporting H4. These finding highlights that emotional and social pressures generated through social commerce interactions also contribute substantially to consumers' perceptions of organizational marketing effectiveness.

Table 5. Structural Path Results

Relationship	β	t-value	p-value	Result
e-WOM $\rightarrow$ Brand Reputation	0.595	12.153	0.000	Supported
e-WOM $\rightarrow$ FOMO	0.343	5.381	0.000	Supported
Brand Reputation $\rightarrow$ PMP	0.551	12.554	0.000	Supported
FOMO $\rightarrow$ PMP	0.410	10.586	0.000	Supported
e-WOM $\rightarrow$ Brand Reputation $\rightarrow$ PMP	0.328	8.362	0.000	Supported
e-WOM $\rightarrow$ FOMO $\rightarrow$ PMP	0.141	4.289	0.000	Supported
e-WOM $\rightarrow$ PMP	0.469	9.650	0.000	Supported

The mediation analysis revealed that both indirect effects are statistically significant. Specifically, Brand Reputation significantly mediates the relationship between e-WOM and Perceived Marketing Performance ($\beta = 0.328$, $t = 8.362$, $p < 0.001$). Likewise, FOMO significantly mediates the influence of e-WOM on Perceived Marketing Performance ($\beta = 0.141$, $t = 4.289$, $p < 0.001$). Interestingly, the indirect effect transmitted through Brand Reputation is substantially stronger than the indirect effect transmitted through FOMO. This finding suggests that while emotional mechanisms remain important in social commerce environments, consumers' evaluations of organizational marketing performance are influenced more strongly by cognitive assessments of brand credibility and reputation than by emotional pressures associated with missing out on marketplace opportunities.

In addition to the specific indirect effects, the total indirect effect of e-WOM on Perceived Marketing Performance was also found to be positive and significant ($\beta = 0.469$, $t = 9.650$, $p < 0.001$). This finding confirms that e-WOM influences consumers' perceptions of marketing performance through the combined mediating mechanisms of Brand Reputation and FOMO. The magnitude of the total indirect effect further suggests that the impact of e-WOM on marketing performance perceptions is primarily transmitted through these mediating processes rather than occurring independently.

3.2. Discussion

3.2.1. E-WOM as a Driver of Brand Reputation and FOMO in Social Commerce

The findings reveal that e-WOM significantly influences both Brand Reputation, confirming its dual role within social commerce environments. The strong positive effect of e-WOM on Brand Reputation suggests that consumers rely heavily on user-generated reviews, recommendations, and shared experiences when forming evaluations of a brand. This finding is consistent with the growing body of e-WOM literature emphasizing that online reviews constitute one of the most influential sources of marketplace information because consumers often perceive peer-generated content as more credible and trustworthy than firm-generated communications. Rosario et al. (2019) argued that e-WOM affects consumer outcomes through exposure, evaluation, and information-processing mechanisms, while Verma & Dewani (2021) highlighted that e-WOM credibility serves as a fundamental driver of trust formation in digital environments.

The positive influence of e-WOM on Brand Reputation provides strong support for Signaling Theory Connelly et al. (2011). Consumers operating in digital marketplaces often face substantial information asymmetry and therefore rely on observable marketplace signals when evaluating brands. Recent studies suggest that digital signals play a critical role in trust formation and risk reduction in online environments (Chen et al., 2024; Sharma & Klein, 2025), a recent systematic review concluded that Signaling Theory remains one of the most relevant theoretical lenses for explaining consumer decision-making in digitally mediated markets (Shahid et al., 2024). Accordingly, positive e-WOM serves as a credible signal that communicates brand quality, reliability, and trustworthiness, thereby strengthening brand reputation. This interpretation is further supported by recent research suggesting that digital reputation increasingly emerges through consumer interactions, engagement behaviors, and social media conversations rather than solely through traditional brand communication efforts (Dwivedi et al., 2021).

The findings further indicate that e-WOM significantly stimulates FOMO. This result is consistent with prior studies showing that social media interactions and consumer-generated content can trigger anxiety related to missing desirable opportunities, products, or experiences. Hodkinson (2019) argued that continuous exposure to digitally mediated social information intensifies social comparison tendencies, whereas Dhir et al. (2018) demonstrated that social commerce participation and influencer-related interactions can amplify FoMO among consumers. Similarly, Good & Hyman (2021) found that FOMO-based stimuli significantly increase purchase-related responses by creating psychological urgency and perceived scarcity. Recent literature further confirms that FOMO is closely associated with social media engagement and consumers' desire to remain connected with emerging trends and peer activities (Alfina et al., 2023; Latupeirissa & Cistadewi, 2025). Within TikTok Shop, highly visible interactions such as livestream purchases, viral comments, and limited-time promotions may amplify these perceptions, making e-WOM an important psychological trigger that drives FOMO among consumers.

Collectively, these findings suggest that e-WOM operates simultaneously through a cognitive mechanism that strengthens brand evaluations and an affective mechanism that triggers emotional reactions. This dual-function perspective extends existing social commerce literature, which has often examined informational and emotional consequences of e-WOM separately.

3.2.2. The Influence of Brand Reputation and FOMO on Perceived Marketing Performance

The results demonstrate that both Brand Reputation and FOMO significantly enhance Perceived Marketing Performance. Among the two predictors, Brand Reputation exhibits the stronger effect, indicating that consumers primarily assess a firm's marketing success through their evaluation of brand credibility, reliability, and overall standing within the marketplace. This finding is consistent with the Resource-Based View (RBV), which identifies reputation as a valuable and difficult-to-imitate intangible asset capable of generating sustainable competitive advantage (Barney et al., 2021). In digital marketplaces, brand reputation functions as a strategic resource that helps consumers evaluate a firm's credibility, reliability, and overall market standing under conditions of uncertainty. Recent studies have shown that a favorable brand reputation enhances consumer trust, strengthens brand evaluations, and contributes positively to brand performance and market outcomes (Tsai & Lu, 2023; Yuliana et al., 2023). Through these evaluations, consumers develop perceptions regarding a firm's ability to execute effective marketing activities and maintain competitiveness within the marketplace. Therefore, firms with stronger reputational capital are more likely to be perceived as successful in attracting customers, delivering value, and sustaining market performance. This finding extends previous literature by demonstrating that brand reputation not only influences behavioral outcomes such as purchase intention and loyalty but also serves as an important antecedent of consumers' perceived marketing performance.

The significant influence of FOMO on Perceived Marketing Performance also provides important insights into contemporary consumer behavior. This finding supports emerging evidence suggesting that emotional arousal and social pressure increasingly shape consumer evaluations within digital environments (Dhir et al., 2018; Li et al., 2021). In social commerce contexts, highly visible engagement metrics, viral trends, and scarcity-based promotional tactics can create a perception that a brand is popular, successful, and widely accepted by the market. Consequently, consumers may interpret these signals as indicators of effective marketing performance. These results suggest that consumers evaluate marketing performance using both rational and emotional criteria. While reputation contributes through credibility and trust, FOMO contributes through perceptions of popularity, urgency, and social relevance. Together, these mechanisms provide a more comprehensive understanding of how consumers assess firm performance in social commerce environments.

3.2.3. The Dominance of the Cognitive-Rational Pathway

The mediation analysis provides the most important insight of this study. Both Brand Reputation and FOMO were found to significantly mediate the relationship between e-WOM and Perceived Marketing Performance. However, the magnitude of the indirect effects differed substantially. The indirect effect transmitted through Brand Reputation was considerably stronger than the indirect effect transmitted through FOMO, indicating that consumers primarily evaluate marketing performance through cognitive assessments of brand credibility, trustworthiness, and marketplace standing. This finding extends prior social commerce research, which has predominantly examined reputation-based mechanisms and FOMO-based mechanisms separately. While previous studies have demonstrated the importance of brand reputation in shaping consumer trust and marketplace evaluations (Tsai & Lu, 2023; Verma & Dewani, 2021), and others have emphasized the role of FOMO in stimulating consumer engagement and purchase-related responses (Alfina et al., 2023; Good & Hyman, 2021), the present study demonstrates that both mechanisms operate simultaneously within social commerce environments. More importantly, the findings reveal that these pathways do not contribute equally. Consumers place greater weight on reputation-related evaluations than on emotionally driven reactions when assessing a firm's marketing performance.

The findings also align with recent social commerce research suggesting that trust and reputation remain the most influential determinants of consumer responses despite the growing prevalence of entertainment-oriented shopping features. For example, (Mou & Benyoucef, 2021), through a meta-analysis of social commerce behavior, found that trust-related mechanisms consistently exert strong effects across multiple stages of consumer decision-making. The dominance of the cognitive-rational pathway also offers an important insight into contemporary social commerce practices. Although platforms such as TikTok Shop increasingly utilize entertainment-oriented content, livestream shopping, and scarcity-based promotions to stimulate consumer engagement, the findings indicate that sustainable perceptions of marketing performance continue to depend primarily on the accumulation of reputational capital. In other words, emotional stimuli may accelerate short-term marketplace responses, but brand reputation remains the more influential factor in shaping long-term evaluations of organizational marketing effectiveness. Therefore, integrating cognitive and affective mechanisms provides a more comprehensive understanding of how e-WOM contributes to organizational success in digital marketplace environments.

4. CONCLUSION

This study confirms that e-WOM significantly influences Perceived Marketing Performance in the TikTok Shop ecosystem through a dual-pathway mechanism. While both paths are statistically significant, Brand Reputation (cognitive-rational pathway) serves as the primary mediating mechanism, accounting for approximately 70% of the indirect effect, whereas FOMO (affective-social pathway) plays a complementary, secondary role. These findings demonstrate that while short-term emotional triggers generate immediate consumer interest, long-term perceptions of marketing success are fundamentally anchored in brand credibility and reputational capital. Theoretically, this study contributes to social commerce literature by demonstrating that e-WOM operates through two complementary pathways: a cognitive-rational pathway represented by Brand Reputation and an affective-social pathway represented by FOMO. The results further extend the application of Signaling Theory and the Resource-Based View in explaining how consumer-generated content shapes perceptions of organizational marketing effectiveness. From a managerial perspective, practitioners operating on TikTok Shop must move beyond relying solely on high-pressure sales tactics. To translate e-WOM into sustainable performance, brand managers should adopt a dual strategy that balances long-term reputation with short-term engagement. Primarily, firms must prioritize reputation-centric e-WOM by curating authentic user-generated content, collaborating with transparent affiliate creators, and leveraging TikTok's post purchase review incentives to build durable brand equity. Secondarily, tactical FOMO mechanisms, such as real-time countdown vouchers, live-stream discounts, and limited-stock alerts, should serve as ethical, secondary conversion triggers during live shopping sessions rather than core branding pillars. Several boundary conditions of this study point to future research directions. First, the cross-sectional survey design captures consumer states at a single point in time, limiting temporal causality. Future studies should employ longitudinal

or experimental approaches to monitor reputational effects across extended product life cycles. Second, the sample was restricted to TikTok Shop users in Indonesia. To enhance generalizability, subsequent research should conduct comparative cross-platform analyses involving other social commerce ecosystems such as Shopee Live and Instagram Shopping.

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