



The influence of fandom culture, social media and viral marketing on the popularity of the Film Mencuri Raden Saleh which causes Fear Of Missing Out (FOMO) symptoms in Indonesian society

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to investigate the influence of three main factors, namely Fandom Culture, Social Media, and Viral Marketing, on the popularity of the film "Mencuri Raden Saleh" and its impact on the emergence of Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) symptoms among the public. This film has received great enthusiasm from the audience and has become a highly anticipated work of cinema. This research method uses a questionnaire-based survey distributed to film viewers and fans by taking samples using a purposive sampling technique. Respondents consisted of 200 people who had watched the film "Mencuri Raden Saleh" in Indonesia. Data was analysed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) and AMOS software. The findings show that all the independent variables have a positive influence on FOMO. However, the proposed mediating variable, namely Movie Popularity, does not have a significant impact on the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. This research implies that marketers and filmmakers can consider using these variables as strategies to increase the level of audience engagement and enthusiasm for films. Apart from that, it is also necessary to consider other factors that might influence the symptoms of FOMO in the film context.

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1. INTRODUCTION

In today's digital era, information flows easily through online media, thereby creating a dynamic exchange of knowledge (Kovaité et al., 2020) The combination of a strong Fandom Culture, the presence of social media, and the powerful influence of viral marketing has given birth to a phenomenon that transcends the boundaries of traditional marketing in the film industry. Fandom is a group involved in the cultural consumption of a particular star or celebrity (Saraswati & N, 2020) Fandom consists of a series of fan communities that consume, reproduce, and share a variety of entertainment content. However, as the online entertainment industry develops, online fan communities have become the main target for cultural consumption and cultural marketing. This is also inseparable from the ability to accelerate the dissemination of information in social media as

cascading, which is a process in which a particular message is forwarded to the first group of recipients who then pass it on to the next recipient, and so on until a wide network is formed (Dineva et al., 2020)

The emergence of social media platforms has markedly changed the media landscape along with advertising models, as audiences have shifted from their role as content recipients to content creators, distributors, and commentators (Argan et al., 2022). The Internet has become a facilitator of the impression management movement, as it provides an accessible pathway for individuals to create and display self-representations in cyberspace (Maros & Basek, 2022). Recognizing the increasing potential of free content distribution over the internet, marketers believe that through highly engaging advertising content can expand potential reach, a tactic that is cheaper and more credible compared to traditional paid advertising methods (Himmelboim & Golan, 2019). Viral advertising is defined as unpaid, peer-to-peer communication of provocative content originating from a sponsor or company and identified using the internet to persuade or influence the audience to convey the content of the message to others (Himmelboim & Golan, 2019).

This phenomenon is very clearly exemplified in the skyrocketing success of the film 'Mencuri Raden Saleh', a cinematic masterpiece that not only captivated audiences, but also triggered a widespread epidemic of Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) symptoms in society. Fear of Missing Out is a tendency or feeling of fear that someone will miss something important or fun that is happening or is popular. In the context of this article, FOMO refers to the tendency of people to want to engage in discussions or experiences related to the film 'Mencuri Raden Saleh' because of the popularity and buzz created on social media. When this film was released, the fan community and potential viewers quickly and widely shared their information and views on social media. This created a wave of enthusiasm and discussion that many people did not want to miss. The hashtag #MencuriRadenSaleh became a trending topic on social media X, showing how strong the influence of this film was in attracting public attention. On the day of this film's premiere on August 25 2022, social media was quickly filled with discussions about this film, both regarding the attractive performances of the actors, the chemistry between the players, and the interesting storyline. The success of this film can be seen in the number of viewers reaching more than 2 million throughout Indonesia.

The interesting thing about this issue is that in the end the discussion regarding the film Mencuri Raden Saleh spread quickly from one individual to another and became something viral. From monitoring #MencuriRadenSaleh on social media It can be said that this hashtag is not only used by the community of fans of the film Mencuri Raden Saleh, known as the Komplotan, but is also used by social media users X who are not part of the Plot. This can be seen from the contents of the tweets found using the hashtag #MencuriRadenSaleh. This issue has become very widespread in scope, because by just using the hashtag #MencuriRadenSaleh, we can see various kinds of writing that use this hashtag.

The research contributes to the theoretical development of media and cultural studies by investigating the intricate relationships among Fandom Culture, Social Media, Viral Marketing, Movie Popularity, and the Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) phenomenon within the specific context of Indonesian society. It advances understanding of these complex dynamics and emphasizes recognizing cultural specificity in media effects research. The study specifically explores the mediating effects Fandom Culture, Social Media, Viral Marketing on Movie Popularity, providing insights that contribute to the broader field of mediation theory. Moreover, the research findings offer practical implications for filmmakers and marketers in Indonesia, suggesting strategies such as identifying influencers, creating shareable content, and leveraging fandom communities to engage audiences effectively. The study also provides practical approaches to mitigate FOMO symptoms related to movie popularity, including creating inclusive experiences, offering exclusive content, and utilizing social media to build community. Policymakers in the media and entertainment industry can use the research insights to shape regulations and policies, particularly in content promotion, intellectual property, and ethical use of social media. Additionally, the research highlights the importance for international filmmakers and marketers to adapt strategies to different cultural contexts, applying lessons from the Indonesian case study to regions with distinct cultural dynamics.

Several previous studies have examined various marketing strategies that contribute to the popularity of certain brands (Al-Sheikh & Hasanat, 2018; Hutabarat & Surya, 2022; C. K. Kim & Chung, 1997; Lopez & Leenders, 2019; Sasmita & Achmadi, 2022) but there is still little research that specifically considers how brand popularity can be taken as a marketing strategy to increase the popularity of a film. This has become increasingly important as the use of social media increases, which has become a platform where individuals, including fans of celebrities and works of art such as music and films, can interact easily. This phenomenon also has the potential to make a film's name spread quickly and even become something viral and can lead to symptoms of "Fear of Missing Out" (FOMO) which can affect individuals significantly. By examining these variables, the author attempts to understand what drives the popularity of the film *Mencuri Raden Saleh* and how this causes symptoms of Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) in society in depth. This research, with various perspectives, tries to reveal the interesting marketing strategies used in the film *Mencuri Raden Saleh* so that it becomes more than just a film, but also has a big impact on the Indonesian entertainment industry. The meeting between the variables Fandom Culture, Social Media, and Viral Marketing can change the way we see and enjoy entertainment in this digital era.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

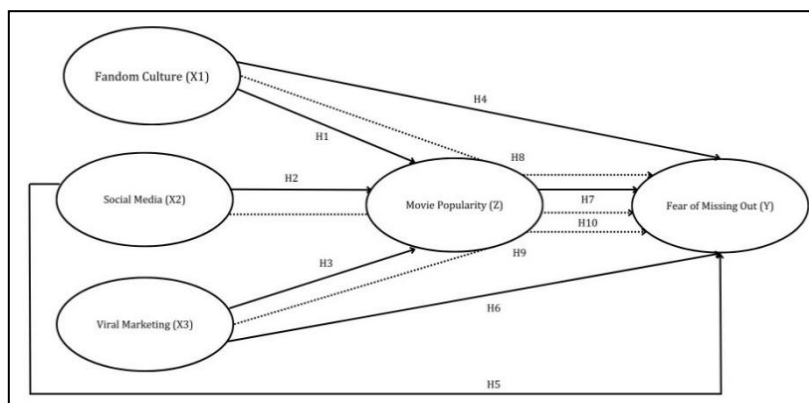


Figure 1. Research Framework

2.1 The relationship between Fandom Culture, Social Media, and Viral Marketing on Movie Popularity

Fandom Culture and film popularity have a mutually influencing relationship (Yang, 2022). Strong fandom can contribute to a film's box office success by generating pre-release excitement and filling theaters on opening weekend (Wright & Smith, 2021). Additionally, fandom can extend a film's popularity long after its release. Fans' creative contributions, such as fan art and theories, also provide promotional opportunities for film studios (Bangun, 2019). Successful fandoms often lead to sequels and expanded franchises. Additionally, fandom provides a direct line of communication between filmmakers and their audiences, allowing for interactive collaboration (Saputra & Candraningrum, 2019)

Social media plays an important role in building the popularity of films (Sawhney & Goodman, 2021). This platform allows film studios to interact directly with audiences, share promotional content and get valuable feedback (Huang et al., 2023). In addition, social media platforms offer data and analysis that helps refine marketing strategies (Feng et al., 2023). Interactive campaigns and contests on social media also foster a sense of togetherness and increase brand popularity.

Viral marketing has great potential to increase the popularity of the film (Yu et al., 2020). Content or campaigns that go viral can expose a film to a huge audience in a short period of time. Viral marketing creates buzz and generates anticipation for upcoming films (Afifah et al., 2022). The viral nature of social media also amplifies the visibility and popularity of a film through fan-generated content (Kohli et al., 2021). A successful viral marketing campaign can have a direct

impact on a film's box office performance, increasing interest and viewership. H1: There is a significant relationship between Fandom culture and the popularity of the film *Mencuri Raden Saleh*. H2: There is a significant relationship between Social Media and the popularity of the film *Mencuri Raden Saleh*. H3: There is a significant relationship between Viral Marketing and the popularity of the film *Mencuri Raden Saleh*.

2.2 The relationship between Fandom Culture, Social Media, Viral Marketing, and Movie Popularity on Fear of Missing Out (FOMO)

Fandom Culture and Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) have a mutually influencing relationship (Lee & Na, 2023). Fandoms provide a sense of belonging and community for individuals with similar interests, raising concerns about missing out on experiences and discussions within the fandom (Gracella et al., 2022). FOMO reinforces the need for social validation, especially in the expression of identity through fandom (Azzahra & Halimah, 2023). Factors like exclusive content, events, and merchandise within a fandom further exacerbate the fear of missing out (Gracella et al., 2022). Involvement and commitment in fandoms is increasing as individuals want to ensure that they are not missing out on important experiences (Azzahra & Halimah, 2023).

According to (Opsenica Kostić et al., 2022), Social Media and FOMO have a very significant relationship. Social Media platforms provide the latest information in real-time, encouraging individuals to continually check their feeds to avoid missing out (Alutaybi et al., 2020). The influence of peer pressure on social media also plays a role, as individuals want to get involved in trending activities and events (Roberts & David, 2020). Activity notifications on social media create a constant need to engage so as not to miss out. Social Media has also become the main source of information about cultural trends and global news, which triggers a person's fear of missing out even greater (Shen et al., 2022).

Viral Marketing and FOMO also have a close relationship (Sargin, 2022). Viral campaigns can create social proof and exclusivity, fueling the fear of missing out on a perceived benefit or experience (Gupta & Sharma, 2021). Viral marketing content is designed to create anticipation and a sense that something exciting is happening (Wen et al., 2023). Seeing posts and discussions about viral campaigns reinforces the fear of missing out (Chu et al., 2022). Viral marketing represents something that is relevant and interesting today, encouraging the fear of missing out (Ortega-Barón et al., 2023).

The popularity of a film has a big impact on FOMO (Tefertiller et al., 2019). The hugely popular film created a cultural phenomenon, sparking widespread buzz and discussion (Afifah et al., 2022). Exclusive events, such as premieres, also trigger a fear of missing out. The involvement of famous actors or directors can motivate audiences to watch a film (Elberse, 2007). Word of mouth recommendations also influence viewing decisions ((Sindhu & Shamsi, 2023). Overall, brand popularity in the film industry drives the fear of missing out, driving audience engagement and attendance (Yu et al., 2020).

H4: There is a significant relationship between Fandom culture and the Symptoms of Fear of Missing Out (FOMO).

H5: There is a significant relationship between Social Media and the Symptoms of Fear of Missing Out (FOMO).

H6: There is a significant relationship between Viral Marketing and the Symptoms of Fear of Missing Out (FOMO).

H7: There is a significant relationship between the popularity of the film *Mencuri Raden Saleh* and the symptoms of Fear of Missing Out (FOMO).

2.3 The relationship between Fandom Culture, Social Media, Viral Marketing, on Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) with Movie Popularity as mediation

Fandom Culture full of enthusiasm significantly increases the popularity of a film and triggers the Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) phenomenon in society (Soeharli & Wibowo, 2022). A dedicated fan community serves as loyal brand promoters, both online and offline, creating a powerful word-of-mouth effect (Yang, 2022). They also initiated Viral Marketing campaigns and

drove demand for related merchandise, strengthening the film's presence in fans' lives (Wright & Smith, 2021).

Social Media acts as a community platform and plays an important role in fueling the popularity of a film (Huang et al., 2023). They create widespread anticipation for the film by providing a space for fans to interact and share related content (Usero et al., 2022). FOMO arises because individuals want to engage in discussions and trends related to popular films, driving active engagement and strengthening brand impact (Sawhney & Goodman, 2021).

Viral Marketing in the film industry plays a key role in increasing the popularity of a film and triggering FOMO (Nandiasa & Mukadis, 2021). This marketing campaign quickly spread the film's content through fan communities on social media, increasing recognition and interest in the film (Nandiasa & Mukadis, 2021). FOMO arises because individuals want to be part of conversations and trends related to popular films, encouraging active engagement and increasing the influence of a film (Yu et al., 2020). H8: There is a significant relationship between Fandom Culture and Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) symptoms with Movie Popularity as mediation. H9: There is a significant relationship between Social Media and the Symptoms of Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) with Movie Popularity as mediation. H10: There is a significant relationship between Viral Marketing and the Symptoms of Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) with Movie Popularity as mediation.

Causal research is the design chosen in this research. This research uses a questionnaire that is distributed to respondents online who are deemed to meet predetermined criteria. The questionnaire uses a Likert scale of 1 to 5 with categories: Strongly agree has a score of 5; Agree has a score of 4; Fairly Agree has a score of 3; Disagree has a score of 2; Strongly disagree has a score of 1. The population in this study were people who had watched the film *Mencuri Raden Saleh*. The number of samples in this research was 200 respondents. The sampling technique used was purposive sampling with the following criteria: 1) Indonesian citizen; 2) Minimum age 17 years; 3) Have social media; 4) Have you ever watched the film *Mencuri Raden Saleh*. Based on the relationships between variables contained in this research, the most appropriate model to use to analyze data and test hypotheses is Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) and AMOS software.

The variable from Fandom Culture in this research refers to the concept (Oplustilova et al., 2022; Perbawani & Nuralin, 2021) which is based on 6 indicators: Enthusiasm, Passion, Involvement, Attachment, Commitment, and Loyalty. Then the Social Media variable is measured based on 5 indicators: Entertainment, Customization, Trendline, Connecting, Communication Building (Gurnelius, 2011; A. J. Kim & Ko, 2012). Meanwhile, the variables of Viral Marketing are measured based on 3 indicators: Messenger (message conductor), Message (message delivery), Environment (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2011; Ristania & Justianto, 2013). The mediating variable Brand Popularity in this research refers to the concept (Duan et al., 2008; Karpinska-Krakowiak & Modlinski, 2020; Usero et al., 2022; Xu & Fu, 2014) which is measured based on 4 indicators: Social Media Engagements; Ratings and Reviews; Sales; Number of Likes, Shares, Comments. Meanwhile, the dependent variable Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) is measured based on 6 indicators: Fears, Worries, Anxieties, Inadequacy, Irritability, and Self-Esteem (Ilyas et al., 2022; Przybylski et al., 2013).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

3.1 Results

a. Respondent Characteristics

Respondent characteristics data totaling 225 respondents. In this research, gender is dominated by the population with an age range of 21 to 30 years (66.6%), women (80%), last education high school (54.6%), working as a student (57.7%), domiciled in Java (53.7%), The majority of respondents have monthly income > IDR 2 million - IDR 4 million (16.4%), allowance per month > IDR 1 million – IDR 1.5 million (20.8%).

b. Measurement Model

The results of the validity and reliability tests show that the indicators of the model built meet the valid and reliable criteria. Existing indicators have a Standardized Stress Sactor (SLF) value above 0.50. This means that all indicators are declared valid and adequate to measure the

composition of the entire model produced, also indicating that all instruments are reliable and can consistently measure the structure throughout the model built. This is shown by the Avariance Extracted (AVE) of all indicators gaining value ≥ 0.50 and the Construct Reliability (CR) test value is more than 0.70.

The model suitability test (model fit test) shows that the model suitability requirements are accepted, and suitability can be stated. Six measurements showed good agreement. If there are 3-4 measurements with a good level of agreement or above the cut-off value, then the research model configuration can be declared adequate and accepted.

c. Hypothesis testing

The results of testing the influence of the relationship between variables in the study configuration built in this research can be presented as follows.

Table 1. Hypothesis testing

Hypothesis	Path	Estimate	S.E	CR	P
H1	Fandom_Culture --> Movie_Popularity	0.182	0.058	3,120	0.002
H2	Social_Media --> Movie_Popularity	0.199	0.062	3,218	0.001
H3	Viral_Marketing --> Movie_Popularity	0.175	0.059	2,969	0.003
H4	Fandom_Culture --> Fear_of_Missing_Out_(FOMO)	0.222	0.099	2,242	0.025
H5	Social_Media --> Fear_of_Missing_Out_(FOMO)	0.19	0.082	2,336	0.019
H6	Viral_Marketing --> Fear_of_Missing_Out_(FOMO)	0.191	0.086	2,214	0.027
H7	Movie_Popularity --> Fear_of_Missing_Out_(FOMO)	0.174	0.082	2,118	0.034

Based on the results of the hypothesis test in table 4.4, it can be explained that the first hypothesis states that Fandom Culture has a significant positive impact on Movie Popularity. The t-value and p-value support the proof of the hypothesis. The t-value for the Fandom Culture and Movie Popularity variables is 3.120, indicating a more significant gain than the t table value of 1.96. Likewise, the p-value shows a number greater than 0.05 ($\alpha = 0.05$). The results of the second hypothesis are also accepted. Social Media has a significant positive impact on Movie Popularity. The t-value for the Social Media variable on Movie Popularity is 3.218, indicating a value that is greater than the t-table value of 1.96. Likewise, the p-value shows a number greater than 0.05 ($\alpha = 0.05$). The third hypothesis was also proven valid. Viral Marketing significantly impacts Movie Popularity. The t-value of the Viral Marketing and Movie Popularity variables reached 2.969. This shows that the value obtained exceeds the t-table value of 1.96. Likewise, if the p-value is less than 0.05 ($\alpha = 0.05$).

Hypothesis four shows valid results. Fandom Culture has a significant positive impact on Fear of Missing Out (FOMO). The t-value for the Fandom Culture variable against Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) is 2.242, shows a value that is greater than the t-table value of 1.96. Likewise, the p-value shows a number greater than 0.05 ($\alpha = 0.05$). The results of the fifth hypothesis are also accepted. Social Media has a significant positive impact on Fear of Missing Out (FOMO). The t-value for the Social Media variable against Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) is 2.336, shows a value that is greater than the t-table value of 1.96. Likewise, the p-value shows a number greater than 0.05 ($\alpha = 0.05$). The sixth hypothesis was also proven valid. Viral Marketing significantly impacts Fear of Missing Out (FOMO). The t-value of the Viral Marketing variable and Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) reach the numbers 2.214. This shows that the value obtained exceeds the t-table value of 1.96. Likewise, if the p-value is less than 0.05 ($\alpha = 0.05$). The same thing also happens in hypothesis seven, namely that Movie Popularity has a positive impact on Fear of Missing Out (FOMO). The t-value for the Movie Popularity variable against Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) is 2.118, shows a value that is greater than the t-table value of 1.96. Likewise, the p-value shows a number greater than 0.05 ($\alpha = 0.05$).

To confirm the indirect influence of the influence of the inherent mediating variables, we present Table 5, which is obtained from the results of the Sobel test.

Table 2. Sobel Test - Significance of Mediation

Item	Sobel test statistics	Two-tailed probability
Fandom_Culture --> Movie_Popularity --> Fear_of_Missing_Out_(FOMO)	1,757	0.078

Social_Media --> Movie_Pooularity --> Fear_of_Missing_Out_(FOMO)	1,770	0.076
Viral_Marketing --> Movie_Pooularity--> Fear_of_Missing_Out_(FOMO)	1,725	0.084

Based on the Sobel test results in Table 5, in hypothesis eight the Sobel test statistical value is 1.757 with a p-value of 0.078. The statistical value of the Sobel test is smaller than the t-table value of 1.96. Likewise, the p-value is greater than 0.05 ($\alpha = 0.05$). These results show an insignificant indirect effect of Fandom Culture on Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) through Movie Popularity. Furthermore, in hypothesis nine, the Sobel test statistical value was 1.770 with a p-value of 0.076. The statistical value of the Sobel test is smaller than the t-table value of 1.96. Likewise, the p-value is greater than 0.05 ($\alpha = 0.05$). These results show an insignificant indirect effect of Social Media on Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) through Movie Popularity. The same thing also happened in the tenth hypothesis, the Sobel test statistical value was 1.725 with a p-value of 0.084. The statistical value of the Sobel test is smaller than the t-table value of 1.96. Likewise, the p-value is greater than 0.05 ($\alpha = 0.05$). These results show an insignificant indirect effect of Viral Marketing on Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) through Movie Popularity.

It can be seen from the analysis of the Sobel test results involving Movie Popularity as a mediating variable that connects three independent variables and one dependent variable, showing that the Movie Popularity variable as a mediating variable with consistency has no relationship between these variables. This implies that the mediating variable does not play a significant role in explaining the relationship between the independent and dependent variables.

3.2 Discussion

Research on the influence of Fandom Culture, Social Media, and Viral Marketing on the popularity of the film "Mencuri Raden Saleh" and its impact in causing symptoms of Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) in society provides very valuable insight. These findings suggest that a combination of factors, including an engaged and dedicated fandom, strategic utilization of social media platforms, and effective Viral Marketing strategies, significantly contributed to the film's rise in popularity. This approach has proven successful in attracting interest from the target audience, creating a buzz and generating substantial interest.

Results on the first hypothesis is that Fandom Culture has a direct influence on Movie Popularity which is strengthened by previous research from (Lopez & Leenders, 2019; Mathys et al., 2016; Thompson et al., 2018). These results mean that brands that have a strong fan base will gain additional exposure through positive recommendations and testimonials from members of that community. The second hypothesis is that Social Media has a direct influence on Movie Popularity, strengthened by previous research from (Aggrawal et al., 2017; Al-Sheikh & Hasanat, 2018; M. Y. Kim et al., 2019; Sardjono et al., 2021). These results mean that, when brands have an active and engaging presence on social media, it can increase brand awareness, expand reach and increase customer engagement. The third hypothesis which states that Viral Marketing has a direct influence on Movie Popularity, is strengthened by previous research from (Puriwat & Tripopsakul, 2021; Wibowo & Syafuddin, 2023). These results mean that, when content or a campaign goes viral, it can lead to a drastic increase in brand awareness and create a buzz around it. Viral Marketing helps brands reach a wider audience and allows brands to gain positive attention.

Hypothesis four has results that are strengthened by previous research which suggests that Fandom Culture has a direct effect on the symptoms of Fear of Missing Out (Azzahra & Halimah, 2023; Fauzia & Diantina, 2020; Gracella et al., 2022; Lee & Na, 2023). This result means that the higher a person's contribution to a fandom, the higher the fear of missing out on new information or discussions related to that fandom. In the fifth hypothesis, namely that the Social Media variable also has a direct influence on the symptoms of Fear of Missing Out (FOMO), which is confirmed by research from (Alutaybi et al., 2020; Ilyas et al., 2022; Opsenica Kostić et al., 2022; Roberts & David, 2020; Xi et al., 2022). This result means that individuals who actively use social media will experience Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) if they miss news that is currently a hot topic on social media. A similar thing happens in hypothesis

six, namely Viral Marketing has a direct influence on Fear of Missing Out (FOMO), which is strengthened by research from (Chu et al., 2022; Sargin, 2022; Satrio et al., 2020; Wen et al., 2023). These results mean that Viral Marketing can create a sense of anxiety among consumers by marketing content as something very popular and exclusive. The same thing also happens in hypothesis seven, namely that Movie Popularity has a positive impact on Fear of Missing Out (FOMO). These results are strengthened by research from (Tefertiller et al., 2019) which means that popular films are often used as content on social media such as memes, fan art, or become trending topics. People who don't want to miss out on this exciting content ultimately feel interested in watching the film.

However, it should be noted that the proposed mediating variable, Movie Popularity, in hypotheses eight, nine, and ten did not produce significant effects on the independent and dependent variables. These interesting results suggest that, in the context of this research, Movie Popularity may not be the primary mechanism influencing fandom culture, social media, and Viral Marketing into increased popularity and FOMO symptoms within the community. This nonsignificant effect encourages further investigation into potential alternative mechanisms or variables that might mediate this relationship more effectively. This raises questions about the specific preferences of Movie Popularity in the context of this film, and the extent to which it plays an important role in shaping audience perceptions and behavior. Although the absence of a significant mediating effect requires careful consideration, it is important to acknowledge potential limitations of this study, such as the specific operationalization of Movie Popularity or the potential influence of unmeasured variables. Additionally, the dynamic nature of audience behavior in the digital era can give rise to complexities that require further exploration.

According to Baron and Kenny's (1986) theory, mediation cannot act as a mechanism through which the independent variable influences the dependent variable, it is possible that there are other unmeasured variables that influence the relationship. These unaccounted for factors may be more important in explaining the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. The mediating variable may not have been measured accurately, leading to a lack of significant effects. This can be caused by problems such as inappropriate measurement tools or inadequate operationalization of variables. The lack of significance may be specific to the sample used in this study. Relationships between variables may exist in the wider population but not in the sample studied. If the sample size is too small, it may not have the statistical power to detect a significant effect even if a true relationship exists. The relationships between variables may be nonlinear, which can make it difficult to detect mediation effects. It is possible that mediating variables influence relationships in unclear or nonlinear ways. The effectiveness of mediating variables can depend on context. These variables may play an important role in certain situations or under certain conditions, but not in others. This study may not have adequately established a cause-and-effect relationship. Establishing causal relationships is critical to mediation analysis, and if these assumptions are not met, it can lead to insignificant results. The initial theoretical framework may need to be reevaluated. It is possible that the conceptual model linking these variables has weaknesses, and a different approach or selection of variables is needed.

4. CONCLUSION

This article examines the influence of Fandom Culture, social media involvement, and Viral Marketing on the popularity of the film "Mencuri Raden Saleh". Although there are symptoms of Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) in the community, film popularity does not significantly mediate the relationship. This research provides valuable insights into the complex relationships between these factors, offering practical implications for filmmakers, marketers, and policymakers. Using innovative methodologies and comparative analysis across different films enhances the study's contribution, potentially revealing broader patterns applicable beyond the specific film studied. Despite its focus on a particular context, the research's insights may have broader applicability, contributing to the advancement of media studies on a global scale.

Suggestions for the film industry are to use diverse marketing strategies, interact with fan communities, utilize social media, focus on marketing strategies that can connect with audiences, and analyze data to understand audience preferences more deeply. By adopting this strategy, the

film industry can expand its reach, build a loyal fanbase, and support the growth of local films. This study has limitations on the variables and objects studied. Future research should consider the following when exploring mediation effects such as, investigating alternative variables that may significantly mediate the relationship between Fandom Culture, Social Media, Viral Marketing, Movie Popularity. Conduct comparative studies across different movies and genres to understand how various factors affect popularity and FOMO symptoms in different contexts—extending research to other forms of entertainment (e.g., music, literature) to uncover broader trends in audience engagement and FOMO induction. With these considerations in mind, future research can provide a more comprehensive understanding of mediation effects and their implications across different contexts and conditions. This approach will contribute to a more nuanced understanding of the interactions between independent, dependent, and mediating variables.

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