

High Profile Sports: Healthy Or Deathly (Financially)?

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Abstract:

The rise of high profile sports (HPS), such as padel, tennis, golf, boxing, and horse riding, continues to increase globally in Indonesia, driven by lifestyle trends, social visibility, and health awareness. This study investigates the determinants of individuals' intention to try HPS by examining the roles of social acceptance, fear of missing out (FOMO), and sport literacy. Primary data were obtained from an online survey involving 211 respondents who were familiar with or interested in high-profile sports. Four variables were measured using Likert scales and analyzed through Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), followed by moderated regression analysis using PROCESS Model 3. The results indicate that social acceptance does not have a significant direct effect on intention to try HPS ($p=0.7724$). However, FOMO significantly moderates the relationship between social acceptance and intention to try ($p=0.0364$), indicating that social acceptance becomes more influential when individuals experience higher levels of FOMO. In contrast, the three-way interaction among social acceptance, FOMO, and sport literacy is not significant ($p=0.5029$), suggesting that sport literacy does not strengthen the moderating role of FOMO. These findings suggest that intention to try HPS is shaped primarily by psychological-social dynamics. Social acceptance alone is insufficient to drive intention unless accompanied by FOMO, while sport literacy does not function as a higher-order moderator in this relationship. This study contributes to a clearer understanding of how social influence operates conditionally in the adoption of lifestyle-oriented sports in the Indonesian context.

Keywords: Social Acceptance; FOMO; Sport Literacy; Intention to Try; High Profile Sports

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, interest in sports participation has increased significantly, both globally and nationally. Based on the report International Tennis Federation (ITF), the number of world tennis players increased from 84.4 million in 2019 to 106 million in 2024, indicating substantial growth in racquet sports participation (ITF, 2024). A similar phenomenon is also found in the sport of padel which is one of the branches with the fastest growth of facilities and players globally in the last five years (Padel FYI Team, 2024). This trend shows that interest in high-profile sports, which is often associated with exclusive facilities, specific communities, and a strong social image, has increased significantly in recent years. High Profile Sports (HPS) refer to sports that structurally demand greater financial investment, utilize exclusive facilities, and are associated with social status and lifestyle consumption, such as tennis, golf, padel, boxing, and horse riding (Richard, et al., 2023; Roh & Chang, 2025).

In Indonesia, people's interest in exercising is also showing positive development. Official data from the Sports Development Index (IPO) released by the Ministry of Youth and Sports (Kemenpora) shows that the level of public participation in sports increased from 0.254 in 2023 to 0.263 in 2024 (Kemenpora, 2024). Meanwhile, Populix's survey report (2025) revealed that 94% of the respondents exercised at least once a week. In line with the findings of Fatmala & Wulandari (2024) which also revealed that the majority of respondents in their study had a frequency of exercise once a week. Although it is not entirely a high-profile sport, this trend illustrates the growing sports culture in society, especially among urban and productive-age groups who represent potential users of HPS.

In addition, in a media article written by Fadhlannisa (2025), it is reported that gyms, fitness studios, community-based fitness groups, and elite paid sports are booming in major

cities in Indonesia. This shows that exercise has shifted toward lifestyle-oriented consumption and organized community engagement. This shift makes High Profile Sports (HPS) increasingly relevant as an object of research on sports behavior, in line with findings that show that sports participation is now increasingly influenced by social, psychological, and cultural factors, rather than merely physical needs (Sirandan, et al., 2025).

High-profile sports participation may be more appropriately explained through the perspective of Social Contagion Theory as introduced by Gustave Le Bon (1895). Le Bon argues that individuals within social environments are highly susceptible to collective influence, imitation, and psychological suggestion. When immersed in a social context, individuals may not act based on purely rational evaluation, but rather through emotional transmission and unconscious imitation of group behavior. In contemporary society, high-profile sports such as padel, tennis, golf, boxing, and horse riding are highly visible within social networks, media exposure, and peer communities. Repeated observation of others engaging in these prestigious activities may generate a contagion effect, in which desire, urgency, and behavioral tendencies spread socially. Thus, intention to try high-profile sports may emerge from collective psychological influence rather than purely individual deliberation.

Within this contagion framework, the strength of behavioral transmission depends on how strongly an activity is embedded and legitimized in the broader social climate. Social acceptance (SA) in this study refers to individuals' perceptions of the societal endorsement and legitimacy of high-profile sports. When these sports are widely viewed as prestigious, socially valuable, and beneficial for collective well-being, such as promoting equality, community cohesion, economic development, and national pride, they become more visible and normalized within society (De Rycke et al., 2019; Praet et al., 2024). As behaviors that are socially endorsed are more likely to be imitated, stronger perceived social acceptance may increase individuals' intention to align themselves with the collectively valued activity. Therefore, social acceptance is expected to influence individuals' intention to try high-profile sports positively. Accordingly, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1: Social acceptance has a positive effect on intention to try HPS

In addition to social climate factors, individual emotional susceptibility may intensify the process of behavioral contagion. In contemporary digital environments, one prominent manifestation of such susceptibility is Fear of Missing Out (FOMO), defined as the anxiety of being excluded from rewarding experiences enjoyed by others (Humairah et al., 2025). Continuous exposure to socially visible and prestigious sports activities through media and peer networks may heighten individuals' sensitivity to socially trending behaviors. Within the contagion perspective, individuals differ in their responsiveness to collective influence; those with higher levels of FOMO may experience stronger emotional urgency to align themselves with socially endorsed activities in order to avoid perceived exclusion. Consequently, when high-profile sports are perceived as socially accepted and widely valued, individuals with higher FOMO are more likely to translate that social acceptance into intention to participate compared to those with lower FOMO. Therefore, FOMO is expected to strengthen the positive relationship between social acceptance and intention to try high-profile sports. Accordingly, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H2: FOMO positively moderates the relationship between social acceptance and intention to try HPS

Meanwhile, sport literacy reflects an individual's capacity to understand the benefits of exercise, demonstrate basic movement competence, and possess the knowledge, motivation, and confidence necessary for physical activity (Kusuma et al., 2024). This concept aligns with the internationally recognized framework of physical literacy. Previous studies indicate that higher levels of sport literacy are positively associated with sports participation, physical activity engagement, and well-being outcomes (Ihsan, 2022). In addition, Yücekaya et al.

(2025) highlight that social factors may interact with individuals' physical literacy levels in shaping lifestyle behaviors. From a behavioral perspective, individuals who perceive themselves as more capable and competent are more likely to translate social and emotional stimuli into actual behavioral intention. Thus, in the context of high-profile sports, individuals with higher sport literacy may respond more strongly to social acceptance and FOMO because they feel confident in their ability to participate. Conversely, those with lower sport literacy may perceive greater barriers despite experiencing similar social influences. Therefore, sport literacy is expected to strengthen the combined effect of social acceptance and FOMO on intention to try high-profile sports. Accordingly, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H3: Sport literacy positively moderates the interaction between social acceptance and FOMO on intention to try HPS

In understanding whether individuals will actually try a sport, the concept of intention to try becomes central. Intention to try reflects an individual's psychological readiness and willingness to engage in an activity that has not yet been performed (McCaffrey et al., 2021). In the context of high-profile sports, intention to try may be shaped by social considerations, perceived self-competence, symbolic value, and expectations regarding the experience offered (Wang et al., 2023). Recent studies also suggest that intention to try is particularly relevant in trend- and community-based sports, where participation decisions are influenced by social and emotional evaluations (Ilmi et al., 2025; Sulaeman et al., 2024). Given that high-profile sports often require significant cost, specific skills, and strong social visibility, intention to try represents a crucial psychological stage preceding actual participation.

Although the trend of high-profile sports continues to increase, research examining how social acceptance, FOMO, and sport literacy interact in shaping intention to try high-profile sports remains limited in Indonesia. Most previous studies have focused primarily on general exercise motivation rather than high-profile sports associated with specific social status. Therefore, this research aims to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how social and psychological factors, together with sport literacy, shape individuals' intention to try high-profile sports in the Indonesian context.

RESEARCH METHODS

The research method used in this study is quantitative research to analyze the influence of social acceptance (SA), FOMO, and sports literacy (SL) on intention to try (ITT) in the context of high-profile sports (HPS). The population consists of individuals in Indonesia who are familiar with or interested in high-profile sports, such as padel, tennis, golf, boxing, and horse riding. A non-probability sampling technique, specifically purposive sampling, was applied. The inclusion criteria were: (1) domiciled in Indonesia, (2) at least 13 years old, and (3) familiar with or interested in at least one type of high-profile sport. Respondents were screened through preliminary questions to ensure eligibility. Data were collected through an online survey distributed via Google Forms using a 5-point Likert scale. The instrument consisted of 25 items measuring social acceptance, 17 items measuring FOMO, 18 items measuring sport literacy, and 3 items measuring intention to try. From 229 collected responses, a screening question was used to ensure that respondents were familiar with or interested in high-profile sports. A total of 18 respondents who indicated no interest or familiarity were excluded from further analysis. Thus, 211 eligible respondents were retained as the final sample. This sample size is considered sufficient, as Hair et al. (2019) suggest that a minimum of 100-200 respondents is adequate for quantitative analyses. The following section presents the operational definitions of variables.

Table 1. Variable Operational Definition

Variable	Definition	Dimensions	Indicator	Source
Intention to Try	Intention to try is the extent to which a person has the intention or desire to try HPS for the first time (McCaffrey et al., 2021).	-	1. Interest in trying HPS in the near future 2. Knowledge of HPS increases intention to try 3. Willingness to try HPS when invited by a close friend	(McCaffrey et al., 2021)
Social Acceptance	Social acceptance is how society accepts and assesses the social impact of HPS, including its role in increasing equality, strengthening relationships between groups, and creating a more inclusive environment (Praet et al., 2024).	<p>1. Global Reach (GR):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Social equality and inclusion (SEI) - Collective identity, connection, and pride (CICP) - Sports participation and inspiration (SPI) <p>2. Profesional League (PL):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fans and media (FM) - Athletes' quality of life and competences (AQLC) - Economic development and partnerships (EDP) <p>3. Internation al Competitio n (IC):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - International image and political power (IIPP) 	<p>1. Global Reach GR_SEI</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bringing together people from different religions, cultures, and backgrounds - Promote social equality - Reducing inequality between rich and poor - Supporting gender equality - Fight racism <p>GR_CICP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improve social interaction - Build a stronger sense of community <p>GR_SPI</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encourage people to be more physically active - Motivate youth to try sports - Encourage adults to participate in sports <hr/> <p>2. Profesional League PL_FM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Making sports more attractive to the community - Creating something that people love - Provide interesting news - Increase public knowledge about sports - Improve the overall image of sports <p>PL_AQLC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Providing a good quality of life for elite athletes - Provide valuable knowledge to elite athletes - Provide valuable skills for elite athletes - Ensuring the well-being of elite athletes after their sporting careers <p>PL_EDP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide a positive boost to the economy - Provide strong advertising opportunities for the business sector - Strengthening the sports industry <hr/> <p>3. International Competition IC_IIPP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encourage globalization - Increase the international prestige of a country - Have a positive impact on the image of a country, city, or region 	(Yamaguchi et al., 2022); (De Rycke & De Bosscher, 2021); (De Rycke et al., 2019)
FOMO	FOMO is a feeling of anxiety,	1. Need to Belong (NB)	<p>1. Need to Belong (NB)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Feeling sad when you miss an event 	(Sette et al., 2020);

Variable	Definition	Dimensions	Indicator	Source
	anxiety, or discomfort that a person feels for missing out on a rewarding and fulfilling development, experience, or opportunity. (Mazlum & Atalay, 2022)	2. Need to Popularity (NP) 3. Anxiety (AX) 4. Addiction (AD)	- Feeling left behind when you miss an opportunity - Feeling guilty for missing a planned event - Feeling alone when friends are present without you - Feeling ignored or forgotten - Feeling heartbroken at the thought of others having fun without you - Feeling isolated when you decline an invitation	(Mazlum & Atalay, 2022)
			2. Need to Popularity (NP) - Feeling annoyed when listening to other people's stories - Feeling embarrassed despite rejecting an event invitation for legitimate reasons	
			3. Anxiety (AX) - Feeling anxious when you don't know what happened - Feeling confused when there is too much activity - Feeling uncomfortable about missing out on opportunities - Regretting choosing one event over another - Feeling sorry for missing an event - Feeling anxious when you can't follow your friends' plans	
			4. Addiction (AD) - Feeling obsessed when skipping an event - Feeling too curious when you don't get the latest information about a group conversation	
Sport Literacy	Sport literacy reflects a person's ability to access, understand, and interpret a set of knowledge related to sports. (Pill, 2009)	-	- Have basic movement skills - Maintain age-appropriate physical fitness - Apply the motor skills that have been learned to various activities - Showing a positive attitude and interest in sports - Respect for yourself and others who exercise - Applying Physical Education knowledge in the long term - Demonstrate self-management skills for fitness - Demonstrate self-evaluation skills for health - Willing to participate in sports for better health - Have strong communication skills - Have strong social skills - Feel confident in survival in the wild - Effectively address problems and difficulties - Have a lifelong sports mindset - Maintaining exercise as a sustainable habit	(Sum et al., 2016)

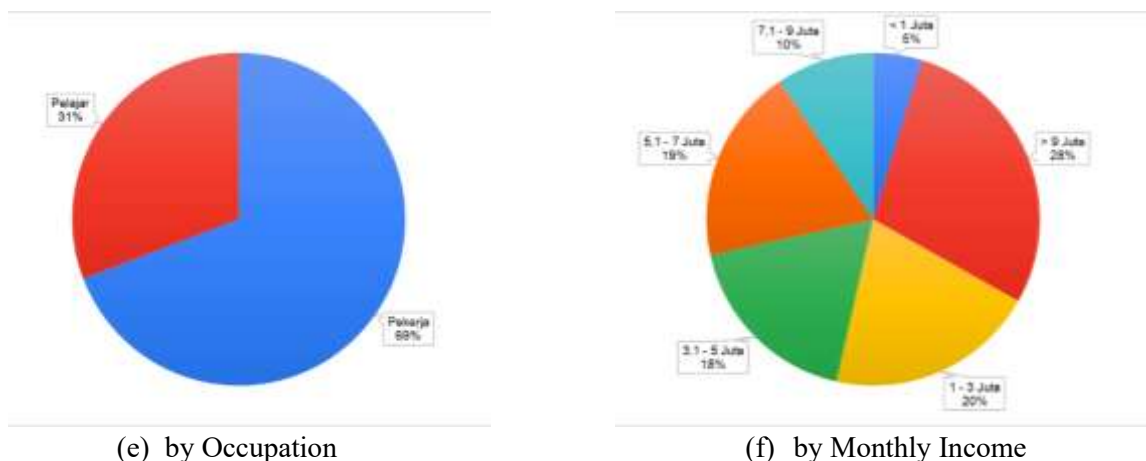


Figure 1. Percentage of Respondents

Based on the graphs presented in Figure 1, the descriptive analysis illustrates the characteristics of the respondents. The sample was slightly dominated by female respondents compared to males. In terms of age, most respondents were within the young adult category, particularly those aged 18-23 years, followed by the 24-29 and 30-35 age groups, while other age categories showed minimal representation. Regarding domicile, most of the respondents resided in Java, with smaller proportions distributed across other regions of Indonesia. Exercise intensity data indicate that respondents generally engaged in physical activity one to four times per week, whereas fewer respondents reported irregular or very frequent exercise patterns. Based on occupation, most respondents were workers, while the remainder were students. Furthermore, in terms of monthly income, most respondents were classified in the higher-income category.

Research Instrument Testing

The instrument test stages in this study were carried out through two testing stages, namely validity test and reliability test.

1. Validity Test

The validity test involved 63 statement items analyzed in two stages: Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). In the EFA stage, Principal Component Analysis (PCA) with varimax rotation was applied. Item validity was assessed using factor loadings in the rotated component matrix; items with loadings > 0.40 and loading on a single component were considered valid for a sample size of 200 (Hair et al., 2019). The following table shows the results of the EFA stage validity test.

Table 2. Rotated Component Matrix EFA Stages

Variables	Item	Component			
		1	2	3	4
Social Acceptance	GR_SEI 1		0.437		
	GR_SEI 2				0.544
	GR_SEI 3				0.466
	GR_SEI 5				0.481
	GR_CICP 1		0.505		
	GR_CICP 2		0.570		
	GR_SPI 1		0.643		
	GR_SPI 2		0.572		
	GR_SPI 3		0.469		

Variables	Item	Component			
		1	2	3	4
	PL_FM 1		0.534		
	PL_FM 3		0.490		
	PL_FM 4		0.550		
	PL_FM 5		0.579		
	PL_AQLC 1		0.650		
	PL_AQLC 2		0.587		
	PL_AQLC 3		0.676		
	PL_AQLC 4				0.533
	PL_EDP 1				0.640
	PL_EDP 2		0.703		
	PL_EDP 3		0.672		
	IC_IIPP 1		0.558		
	IC_IIPP 2		0.729		
	IC_IIPP 3		0.744		
Intention to Try	ITT 1			0.509	
	ITT 2			0.603	
	ITT 3		0.533		
FOMO	NB 1	0.831			
	NB 2	0.854			
	NB 3	0.714			
	NB 4	0.837			
	NB 5	0.853			
	NB 6	0.893			
	NB 7	0.879			
	NP 1	0.899			
	NP 2	0.865			
	AX 1	0.848			
	AX 2	0.799			
	AX 3	0.832			
	AX 4	0.796			
	AX 5	0.868			
AX 6	0.867				
AD 1	0.868				
AD 2	0.845				
Sport Literacy	SL 1			0.618	
	SL 2			0.639	
	SL 3			0.545	
	SL 4			0.611	
	SL 6			0.648	
	SL 7			0.697	
	SL 8			0.669	
	SL 9			0.650	
	SL 10			0.599	
	SL 11			0.669	
	SL 12			0.589	
	SL 13			0.614	
	SL 14			0.691	

Variables	Item	Component			
		1	2	3	4
	SL 15			0.600	
	SL 16		0.557		
	SL 17			0.526	
	SL 18			0.458	

Based on Table 2, only indicators with factor loadings ≥ 0.40 are presented, as they have met the validity criteria at the EFA. Subsequently, CFA was conducted on the retained items to reconfirm that each item adequately represented its intended construct. Items were considered valid if they had factor loadings greater than 0.40, loaded on a single component, and exhibited no cross-loading (Hair et al., 2019). The following table summarizes the results of the CFA validity test:

Table 3. CFA Component Matrix

Variables	Item	Component	Information
		1	
Social Acceptance	GR_SEI 1	0.607	Valid
	GR_CICP 1	0.591	Valid
	GR_CICP 2	0.693	Valid
	GR_SPI 1	0.636	Valid
	GR_SPI 3	0.586	Valid
	PL_FM 4	0.690	Valid
	PL_FM 5	0.714	Valid
	PL_AQLC 1	0.682	Valid
	PL_AQLC 2	0.727	Valid
	PL_AQLC 3	0.753	Valid
	PL_EDP 2	0.717	Valid
	PL_EDP 3	0.725	Valid
	IC_IIPP 1	0.648	Valid
IC_IIPP 2	0.735	Valid	
IC_IIPP 3	0.787	Valid	
Intention to Try	ITT 1	0.886	Valid
	ITT 2	0.843	Valid
	ITT 3	0.865	Valid
FOMO	NB 1	0.839	Valid
	NB 2	0.858	Valid
	NB 3	0.727	Valid
	NB 4	0.864	Valid
	NB 5	0.865	Valid
	NB 6	0.899	Valid
	NB 7	0.885	Valid
	NP 1	0.901	Valid
	NP 2	0.888	Valid
	AX 1	0.863	Valid
	AX 2	0.805	Valid
AX 3	0.839	Valid	
AX 4	0.831	Valid	

Variables	Item	Component	Information
		1	
Sport Literacy	AX 5	0.879	Valid
	AX 6	0.885	Valid
	AD 1	0.876	Valid
	AD 2	0.850	Valid
	SL 1	0.685	Valid
	SL 2	0.706	Valid
	SL 4	0.709	Valid
	SL 6	0.616	Valid
	SL 7	0.788	Valid
	SL 8	0.776	Valid
	SL 9	0.755	Valid
	SL 10	0.759	Valid
	SL 11	0.756	Valid
	SL 12	0.732	Valid
	SL 13	0.729	Valid
	SL 14	0.782	Valid
	SL 15	0.659	Valid
	SL 16	0.721	Valid
SL 17	0.692	Valid	
SL 18	0.658	Valid	

2. Reliability Test

Items were considered reliable if Cronbach’s alpha ≥ 0.70 (Hair et al., 2019). The following is a summary table of the reliability test results:

Table 4. Reliability Test Results

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Information
Social Acceptance	0.923	Reliable
FOMO	0.977	Reliable
Sport Literacy	0.983	Reliable
Intention to Try	0.829	Reliable

Goodness of Fit Test (F Test)

Test goodness of fit or the F test in this study is used to determine the influence of independent variables simultaneously on dependent variables (George & Mallery, 2019). The research hypothesis will be accepted if the value of $F > F\text{-table}$ or $p\text{-value} < \alpha$ (0.05). The results of the F test are presented in Table 5 as follows:

Table 5. F Test Results

F	df1	df2	p-value
121.337	7	203	0.000

Based on Table 5, the value of F (121.337) $>$ F-table (2.055) and the p-value (0.000) $<$ 0.05, indicating that the predictor variable simultaneously influenced the response variable.

Determination Coefficient Test

The R² test can also be used to measure the degree of significance of the moderation effect. The following determination test results are presented in Table 6.

Table 6. Determination Coefficient Test Results

R	R ²
0.7234	0.5232

Based on Table 6, it can be seen that the value of R (correlation coefficient) produced in this research model is 0.7234 which indicates that the correlation rate between variables in the research model is 72.34%. The determination coefficient is 0.5232. This shows that all independent and moderation variables in the research model were able to explain the ITT variable by 52.32%. Meanwhile, other variables outside this research model were able to explain the dependent variables in this study by 47.68%.

Partial Test (t-test)

The partial test (t-test) in this study was conducted to identify the influence of individual or partial predictor variables on the response variable (George & Mallery, 2019). The research hypothesis will be accepted if the significance value $|t| > t\text{-table}$ (1.97) or $p\text{-value} < \alpha$ (0.05). The results of the partial test are presented in Table 7 as follows:

Table 7. Partial Test Results

Variable	Coeff	SE	t	p-value
Constant	-0.3145	0.9196	-0.3420	0.7327
SA	-0.1376	0.4750	-0.2896	0.7724
FOMO	-0.0257	0.2683	-0.0956	0.9239
SL	1.2671	0.4911	2.5799	0.0106
SA × FOMO	0.3290	0.1562	2.1062	0.0364
SA × SL	-0.0103	0.0957	-0.1081	0.9140
FOMO × SL	-0.2428	0.1509	-1.6095	0.1091
SA × FOMO × SL	-0.0177	0.0264	-0.6711	0.5029

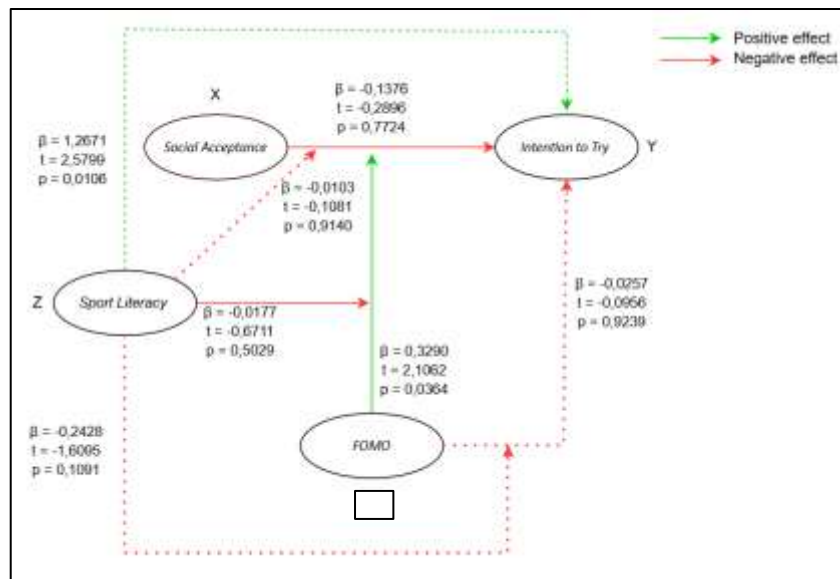


Figure 2. Research Model Results

Based on Table 7 and Figure 2, it was found that there was a significant influence between the variables of SL and ITT because the value $|t|$ (2.5799) $>$ $t\text{-table}$ (1.97) and $p\text{-value}$ (0.0106) $<$ 0.05. Meanwhile, SA and FOMO variable partially had no significant effect on the ITT because the $|t|$ values were 0.2896 and 0.0956 respectively smaller than the t table (1.97) and the $p\text{-value}$ was 0.7724 and 0.9239 respectively more than $\alpha = 5\%$.

Moderation Test

The moderation analysis in this study uses the MRA (Moderated Regression Analysis) method which is processed using the Hayes Model 3 PROCESS to process the higher-order moderation or moderated moderation research model. This analysis uses a conceptual

framework that has independent variables (X), dependent variables (Y), moderation variables (M), and second-level moderator variables (Z). Based on Table 6, the interaction between social acceptance and FOMO (SA × FOMO) had a significant effect on intention to try ($|t| = 2.1062$; $p = 0.0364$), which means that FOMO moderates the relationship between social acceptance and intention to try. However, the three-way interaction among social acceptance, FOMO, and sport literacy (SA × FOMO × SL) was not significant ($|t| = 0,6711$; $p = 0.5029$), meaning that sport literacy did not play a role as a second-level moderator in social acceptance's relationship to intention to try via FOMO.

Based on Table 7, regression equations can also be formed which include the moderation variables and second-level moderators as follows:

$$Y = -0,3145 - 0,1376X - 0,0257M + 1,2671Z + 0,3290XM - 0,0103XZ - 0,2428MZ - 0,0177XMZ$$

Description:

Y : Intention to Try (dependent variable)

X : Social Acceptance (independent variable)

M : FOMO (moderating variable)

Z : Sport Literacy (second-level moderator variable)

The following is the interpretation of the regression equation formed:

1. The coefficient of social acceptance (X) is -0.1376 and is not statistically significant ($p > 0.05$), indicating that there is no empirical evidence of a direct effect of social acceptance on intention to try.
2. The coefficient of FOMO (M) is -0.0257 and is not statistically significant ($p > 0.05$), suggesting that FOMO does not show a direct effect on intention to try within this model.
3. The coefficient of sport literacy (Z) is 1.2671 and is statistically significant ($p < 0.05$). This indicates that sport literacy has a positive direct association with intention to try.
4. The interaction between social acceptance and FOMO (XM) is 0.3290 and statistically significant ($p < 0.05$), indicating that FOMO moderates the relationship between social acceptance and intention to try.
5. The interaction between social acceptance and sport literacy (XZ) is -0.0103 and not significant ($p > 0.05$), meaning there is no evidence that sport literacy moderates the direct relationship between social acceptance and intention to try.
6. The interaction between FOMO and sport literacy (MZ) is -0.2428 and not statistically significant ($p > 0.05$).
7. The three-way interaction (XMZ) is -0.0177 and not statistically significant ($p > 0.05$), indicating that sport literacy does not act as a second-level moderator in this model.

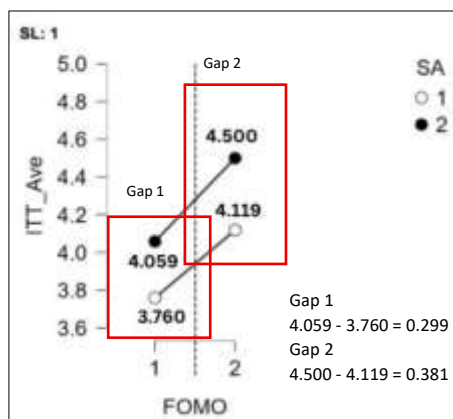


Figure 3. Plot the Significance of FOMO with Low SL

Figure 3 illustrates the interaction between social acceptance (SA) and FOMO on intention to try (ITT) under conditions of low sport literacy (SL). At low levels of FOMO, individuals with high SA show a higher ITT score of 4.059, compared to 3.760 among those with low SA, resulting in a difference (Δ) of 0.299. As FOMO increases, ITT rises in both SA groups: ITT increases to 4.500 for high SA and to 4.119 for low SA, widening the gap (Δ) to 0.381. The slope appears steeper for individuals with high SA. This pattern suggests that under low SL conditions, FOMO strengthens the relationship between SA and ITT. Individuals with limited sport-related competence may rely more heavily on social cues when forming behavioral intentions. In this context, emotional sensitivity to social trends, reflected in FOMO, appears to intensify the translation of perceived social legitimacy into intention to try. The increase in predicted ITT differences between low and high FOMO conditions (Δ rising from 0.299 to 0.381) further supports this tendency, indicating a stronger conditional effect when SL is low. However, this interpretation remains descriptive and should be considered alongside the overall regression results, where only the two-way interaction (SA \times FOMO) reached statistical significance.

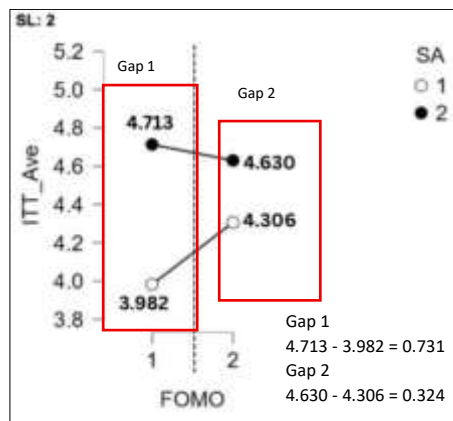


Figure 4. Plot the Significance of FOMO with High SL

Figure 4 presents the interaction pattern when sport literacy (SL) is high. At low levels of FOMO, individuals with high SA exhibit an ITT score of 4.713, compared to 3.982 among those with low SA, producing a difference (Δ) of 0.731. However, as FOMO increases, ITT among the high SA group slightly decreases to 4.630, while ITT among the low SA group increases to 4.306, narrowing the gap (Δ) to 0.324. The slopes appear less differentiated, indicating a weaker conditional effect. This convergence pattern suggests that when individuals possess higher sport literacy, the moderating role of FOMO becomes less pronounced. Individuals with stronger sport-related knowledge, competence, and confidence may rely less on socio-emotional cues when forming intentions. Instead, their evaluations may be guided more by internal assessments of capability and relevance. The decrease in Δ from 0.731 to 0.324 under high SL conditions indicates that changes in FOMO do not systematically strengthen the SA-ITT relationship. This visual interpretation aligns with the regression findings, where the three-way interaction (SA \times FOMO \times SL) was not statistically significant. Therefore, sport literacy does not function as a statistically supported higher-order moderator within this model.

Discussion

Hypothesis 1: The Effect of Social Acceptance on Intention to Try High-Profile Sports

The results show that social acceptance (SA) does not have a significant direct effect on intention to try (ITT). This indicates that perceiving high-profile sports as socially valued,

prestigious, or beneficial does not automatically lead individuals to intend to try them. From the perspective of Social Contagion Theory by Le Bon (1895), behavioral diffusion requires more than collective visibility or legitimacy. Contagion becomes effective when individuals are psychologically receptive to social influence. In this study, although respondents recognized the societal value of high-profile sports, that recognition alone was not sufficient to trigger intention. This finding suggests that social acceptance operates as a background social climate rather than a direct behavioral driver. The result is also consistent with Liao et al. (2022), who found that social environmental factors do not always directly predict voluntary sport participation intentions.

Hypothesis 2: The Influence of FOMO in Moderating the Relationship Between Social Acceptance and Intention to Try High-Profile Sports

The interaction between social acceptance and FOMO is positive and significant. This indicates that FOMO strengthens the influence of social acceptance on intention to try. Within the contagion framework, emotional susceptibility determines how strongly individuals adopt socially visible behaviors. FOMO reflects anxiety about missing rewarding experiences (Mazlum & Atalay, 2022; Sette et al., 2020). Individuals with higher FOMO are more sensitive to trending and socially endorsed activities. When high-profile sports are perceived as socially accepted, individuals with high FOMO are more likely to translate that perception into intention. In contrast, individuals with low FOMO do not respond as strongly to the same social signals. This finding aligns with Kim et al. (2020) and Hwang & Lee (2019), who show that FOMO functions as an extrinsic motivational mechanism in sport-related behavior.

Hypothesis 3: The Influence of Sports Literacy in Moderating the Influence of FOMO on the Relationship Between Social Acceptance and Intention to Try High-Profile Sports

The three-way interaction among social acceptance, FOMO, and sport literacy was not significant, indicating that sport literacy does not significantly alter the moderating role of FOMO in this model. Although sport literacy reflects competence, confidence, and knowledge related to sport participation (Sum et al., 2016; Ihsan, 2022), the results suggest that differences in sport literacy levels do not systematically change how social acceptance and FOMO interact in shaping intention to try. FOMO is conceptually linked to social comparison and emotional contagion processes, which operate primarily at the affective level. When social acceptance cues are salient, individuals may experience concerns about exclusion regardless of variations in sport-related competence or knowledge. In this context, sport literacy does not appear to function as a higher-order regulatory factor within the contagion mechanism examined in this study. This finding is consistent with Edwards et al. (2016) and Valle-Muñoz (2025), who indicate that literacy contributes to participation patterns but does not necessarily regulate socio-emotional dynamics.

CONCLUSION

This study finds that social acceptance does not directly influence intention to try high-profile sports, indicating that social legitimacy alone is insufficient to generate participation intention. However, FOMO significantly strengthens the relationship between social acceptance and intention to try, suggesting that behavioral intention emerges conditionally when individuals are emotionally responsive to social trends. In contrast, sport literacy does not significantly modify this moderating effect, implying that competence and sport-related knowledge do not substantially alter the socio-emotional mechanism identified in this model. Overall, the findings highlight the importance of emotional susceptibility within the process of social influence in high-profile sports participation.

This study is limited by its cross-sectional design, which restricts causal interpretation among variables, and by the use of self-reported measures that may be influenced by perception

bias. Future research may further explore interpersonal social influence processes to provide a deeper understanding of how participation intentions are shaped within social environments.

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