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The Effect Of Viral Marketing And Fear Of Missing Out (Fomo) On Impulsive Buying Of Clothing Products Through Perceived Value As An Intervening Variable (A Study On Gen Z Consumers In Tiktok Shop)

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Abstract

The development of TikTok Shop as a social commerce platform makes it easier for consumers to obtain information and purchase clothing products. Various viral content and emerging trends on the platform often influence Generation Z's purchasing behavior. This study aims to analyze the influence of viral marketing and Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) on impulsive buying through perceived value as an intervening variable in Generation Z consumers on TikTok Shop. This study used a quantitative method with a purposive sampling technique on 112 respondents. Data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with the help of AMOS 24. The results showed that viral marketing and FOMO had a positive and significant effect on perceived value and impulsive buying. However, perceived value did not have a significant effect on impulsive buying and was unable to mediate the influence of viral marketing and FOMO on impulsive buying. The research findings indicate that impulsive buying behavior among Generation Z consumers on TikTok Shop is more influenced by viral marketing and FOMO than by perceived value.

Key Word: viral marketing, fear of missing out, perceived value, impulsive buying

INTRODUCTION

The development of digital technology and social media has changed the way people shop, from direct marketing to e-commerce which offers easy access and fast transactions (Tondang & Dwita, 2025). E-commerce users in Indonesia are projected to increase from 58.63 million in 2023 to 73.06 million in 2025 and 99.1 million in 2029

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(Putri, 2025). Generation Z is the most active group of e-commerce users, with more than 70% of consumers coming from the age group under 35 years (Untari, 2025), and this group tends to be easily influenced by trends, which encourages impulsive buying, namely unplanned purchases and decided on the spot due to exposure to stimuli (An et al., 2023; Riadi & Septiani, 2025).

TikTok Shop has become one of the most influential social commerce platforms on Generation Z's shopping behavior. TikTok Shop usage increased from 12.20% in 2024 to 27.37% in 2025 (Lestari, 2025), with clothing being the most purchased category, reaching 43.74% of all product categories (Muhamad, 2025). One of the viral fashion products, cutbray pants, recorded sales of IDR 1.83 billion for 16.81 thousand units (Kalodata, 2025), but this high sales were also followed by many negative consumer reviews regarding product inconsistencies with expectations, which indicates low perceived value felt after impulsive purchases due to viral content and FOMO.

This phenomenon suggests a link between viral marketing, a compelling content-based marketing strategy spread through electronic media (Wati et al., 2021), and Fear of Missing Out (FOMO), a psychological state that drives someone to fear missing out on an opportunity (Abdillah et al., 2025), and consumers' perceived value and impulsive buying. However, previous research on the relationship between these variables has yielded mixed and inconsistent results. Some studies have found that viral marketing and FOMO have a positive effect on both impulsive buying and perceived value, while others have found a negative effect (Tondang & Dwita, 2025; Wati et al., 2021). This discrepancy also applies to the effect of perceived value on impulsive buying, with some studies reporting a significant effect while others found no such effect (Shafqat et al., 2025).

The existence of this research gap is the basis of this research, which aims to analyze the influence of viral marketing and Fear of Missing Out on impulsive buying of clothing products through perceived value as an intervening variable in Generation Z consumers in TikTok Shop.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

This research is based on the Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) theory, which explains that environmental stimuli influence an individual's evaluation process before generating a response (Wirawan et al., 2023). In this context, viral marketing and FOMO act as stimuli received by consumers through promotional content on TikTok Shop,

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which are then processed into perceived value (organism) before resulting in impulsive buying (response) (Abidin & Abidin, 2021).

Viral marketing is a way to disseminate product information through digital media to attract potential customers and share the information with others (Theresia & Parameswari, 2022), with indicators of informativeness, entertainment, source credibility, and intention to share (Theresia & Parameswari, 2022). Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) is a psychological condition characterized by the fear of missing out on an opportunity in the digital environment (Abdillah et al., 2025), measured by indicators of fear, worry, social anxiety, and the desire to connect with others. Perceived value is the consumer's assessment of a product's benefits relative to its costs (Umboh et al., 2024), with indicators of emotional value, social value, quality-performance value, and price/value for money (Lystiawan et al., 2024). Impulsive buying is the act of buying spontaneously without planning, minimal consideration, and driven by emotions, measured through indicators of spontaneity, power/compulsion/intensity, excitement and stimulation, and disregard for consequences (Ernestivita et al., 2023).

Based on a review of previous theories and research, the hypothesis proposed in this study is as follows:

H1: Viral marketing has a positive and significant effect on perceived value.
H2: Fear of missing out has a positive and significant effect on perceived value.
H3: Viral marketing has a positive and significant effect on impulsive buying.
H4: Fear of missing out has a positive and significant effect on impulsive buying.
H5: Perceived value has a positive and significant effect on impulsive buying.

METHOD

This study uses a quantitative approach with an explanatory research type to test hypotheses regarding the relationship between variables (Mangkey et al., 2018). The study population is TikTok Shop e-commerce users of Generation Z whose exact number is unknown. The sample was determined using a nonprobability sampling technique with a purposive sampling type based on the following criteria: (1) TikTok users who have made transactions on TikTok Shop at least twice in the last six months, (2) at least 17 years old and belong to Generation Z (born 1995-2010), and (3) have purchased clothing products spontaneously on TikTok Shop. The number of samples was determined based on the number of indicators (16 indicators) multiplied by seven, resulting in 112 respondents (Hair et al., 2019).

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Data were collected through an online questionnaire (Google Form) with a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). This study involved four variables, namely viral marketing (X1) and fear of missing out (X2) as exogenous variables, perceived value (Z) as an intervening variable, and impulsive buying (Y) as an endogenous variable. The research instrument was tested using convergent validity, average variance extracted (AVE), and discriminant validity, as well as construct reliability (CR) reliability testing (Ghozali, 2017). Data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with the help of the AMOS 24 program, including normality tests, goodness of fit tests, regression weights analysis, hypothesis testing, and direct effect, indirect effect, and total effect analysis to test the mediating role of perceived value.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Respondent Characteristics

Of the 112 respondents, the majority were female (75%) compared to male (25%). Based on age, respondents were predominantly in the 20-22 age group (73.9%), and based on occupation, the majority were students (83%). In terms of income, the majority of respondents had an income of ≤ Rp1,000,000 per month (64.3%), indicating that the majority of respondents were young consumers with limited purchasing power but actively shopped on TikTok Shop.

Validity and Reliability Test

The results of the convergent validity test show that all indicators have factor loading values above 0.5, thus they are declared valid. In the AVE test, the variables Fear of Missing Out (0.845), Perceived Value (0.671), and Impulsive Buying (0.829) have values above 0.50, while Viral Marketing has an AVE value of 0.433 which is below the ideal limit but is still acceptable because it is supported by an adequate composite reliability value (Fornell & Larcker, 1981), and is consistent with the findings of Dewi & Indra (2024) who also reported AVE values below 0.50 but are still suitable for use. The reliability test shows that all variables have construct reliability values above 0.70 (Viral Marketing 0.753; FOMO 0.956; Perceived Value 0.951; Impulsive Buying 0.890), so all constructs are declared reliable.

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Goodness of Fit Test

Goodness of Fit Index	Cut-off Value	Model Results	Information
Chi-square (df=98)	< 122,108	123,800	Marginal fit
Significance Probability	≥ 0.05	0.040	Marginal fit
CMIN/DF	≤ 2.00	1,263	Fit
GFI	≥ 0.90	0.883	Marginal fit
AGFI	≥ 0.90	0.838	Marginal fit
TLI	≥ 0.90	0.978	Fit
CFI	≥ 0.90	0.982	Fit
RMSEA	≤ 0.08	0.049	Fit

Source: AMOS Output Analysis Results (2026)

Most of the indices (CMIN/DF, TLI, CFI, and RMSEA) showed good fit, while Chi-square, Significance Probability, GFI, and AGFI were in the marginal fit category. According to Ghozali (2017), SEM model evaluation was conducted comprehensively by considering various indices, so that the model remains acceptable and can be used for hypothesis testing, in line with research by Akbar (2023),who also accepted the model even though some indices were in the marginal fit category.

Regression Weights Analysis and Hypothesis Testing

Variable Relationship	Estimate	CR	P	Information
Viral Marketing → Perceived Value	0.509	3,584	0.001	Positive, significant
FOMO → Perceived Value	0.250	2,430	0.015	Positive, significant
Viral Marketing → Impulsive Buying	0.374	2,937	0.003	Positive, significant
FOMO → Impulsive Buying	0.535	6,190	0.001	Positive, significant
Perceived Value → Impulsive Buying	0.050	0.493	0.622	Positive, not significant

Source: AMOS Output Analysis Results (2026)

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The hypothesis is accepted if the CR value is > 1.645 and the probability is < 0.05 (Ghozali, 2017). Based on the test results, H1, H2, H3, and H4 are accepted, while H5 is rejected because perceived value does not have a significant effect on impulsive buying. The R^2 value shows that viral marketing and FOMO are able to explain 43.5% of the variation in perceived value, while the three variables together are able to explain 65.6% of the variation in impulsive buying.

Analysis of Direct Effect, Indirect Effect, and Mediating Role

Influence through Perceived Value	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	Total Effect	Information
Viral Marketing → Impulsive Buying	0.976	0.067	1,045	Unable to mediate
FOMO → Impulsive Buying	0.466	0.011	0.477	Unable to mediate

Source: AMOS Output Analysis Results (2026)

The greater direct effect value compared to the indirect effect in both pathways indicates that perceived value is unable to mediate the influence of viral marketing or FOMO on impulsive buying. This indicates that Generation Z consumers tend to make impulse purchases directly driven by viral content and the fear of missing out, without thoroughly evaluating the product's value.

DISCUSSION

Viral marketing has a positive and significant effect on perceived value (H1 is accepted), indicating that viral content helps consumers become more familiar with a product, leading to a more favorable evaluation. This finding aligns with Yassaroh et al. (2023). FOMO also has a positive and significant effect on perceived value (H2 is accepted); consumers who avoid being left behind tend to perceive popular products as having higher value, in line with Lazuardi & Usman (2025).

Viral marketing has a positive and significant effect on impulsive buying (H3 is accepted), in line with Tondang & Dwita (2025), who showed that interesting and widespread marketing content encourages spontaneous purchases in Generation Z. FOMO has a positive and most dominant effect on impulsive buying (H4 is accepted, coefficient 0.535), in line with Suryani & Cordova (2023) and Rahma et al. (2025); the

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fear of being left behind encourages consumers to prioritize wants over needs, thereby increasing the chance of impulsive purchases.

Conversely, perceived value did not significantly influence impulsive buying (H5 was rejected), in line with Koroh & Roring (2026). This indicates that consumers who assess a product as having good value do not always immediately make a purchase, as impulsive purchases are more driven by momentary emotional impulses, such as viral trends or limited-time promotions, rather than a rational evaluation of the product's value. This finding also explains why perceived value is unable to mediate the influence of viral marketing or FOMO on impulsive buying, as both stimuli directly drive a purchase response without going through a deep value evaluation process.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that viral marketing and Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) have a positive and significant effect on perceived value and impulsive buying among Generation Z consumers using TikTok Shop. Conversely, perceived value has no significant effect on impulsive buying and is unable to mediate the influence of viral marketing or FOMO on impulsive buying. These findings suggest that impulsive buying behavior among Generation Z is driven more directly by viral marketing stimuli and the psychological pressure of FOMO, rather than through the process of evaluating product value.

For businesses on TikTok Shop, it is recommended to continue developing creative and trend-driven marketing content and utilize FOMO strategies through limited-time promotions or special offers to encourage purchase intention. For Generation Z consumers, it is recommended to be more discerning in considering their needs and financial capabilities before making a purchase. Further research is recommended to add other variables such as hedonic shopping motivation, shopping lifestyle, flash sales, live shopping, social influence, or electronic word of mouth, increase the sample size, and refine research indicators to obtain more optimal goodness of fit results.

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