



The Trigger of Urgency: Analyzing Scarcity Messages and Impulsive Buying through the Lens of FOMO in the Java Region Livestreaming

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ABSTRACT

This research investigates the impact of scarcity messages on impulsive buying behavior, with the Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) acting as a mediating variable, specifically focusing on consumers within the Java region. Utilizing a quantitative approach with Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) via SmartPLS 4, data from the Java sub-sample were analyzed using a 124 Sample. The results indicate that scarcity messages have a significant direct positive effect on impulsive buying 0.359. While the direct paths from scarcity messages to FOMO and FOMO to impulsive buying were marginally above the significance threshold 0.06, the specific indirect effect analysis revealed a significant mediation path 0.205 This suggests that in the Java region, FOMO serves as a vital psychological mechanism that translates promotional urgency into actual purchasing action. These findings offer strategic insights for e-commerce platforms targeting Indonesia's most populous region

Keywords: Scarcity Message, FOMO, Impulsive Buying.

INTRODUCTION

The The digital economy in Indonesia is heavily concentrated in the Java region, where rapid internet penetration has fundamentally altered consumer decision-making processes. In this competitive landscape, the use of Scarcity Messages (SM) marketing tactics that highlight limited time or quantity has become a standard tool for driving Impulsive Buying (IB) behavior. The determinants of mobile application adoption among young adults are increasingly influenced by perceived urgency and social pressure. This impulsivity is often facilitated by the functionality of modern travel and retail apps, which streamline the path from stimulus to purchase

Current state of the art research has begun to examine how livestreaming impact motivation and intent through psychological triggers Gao, M. (2023). A critical psychological intermediary identified in recent literature is the Fear of Missing Out (FOMO), which creates a pervasive anxiety that others are enjoying rewarding experiences in one's absence (While previous studies have utilized the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) to explain general usage, there is a lack of research specifically isolating the Java region to test the complex interplay between scarcity-induced FOMO and impulsive purchasing behavior using

advanced structural modeling.

The novelty of this research lies in its focus on the Wilayah Jawa sub-sample, applying a hybrid PLS-SEM approach to validate the "indirect-only" mediation of FOMO. By utilizing SmartPLS 4 with a specific focus on regional consumer psychology, this study moves beyond generic national trends to provide a granular understanding of how regional digital culture in Java intensifies the impact of scarcity stimuli. This specific focus on the Java demographic provides an empirical foundation for understanding high-density digital markets in developing economies.

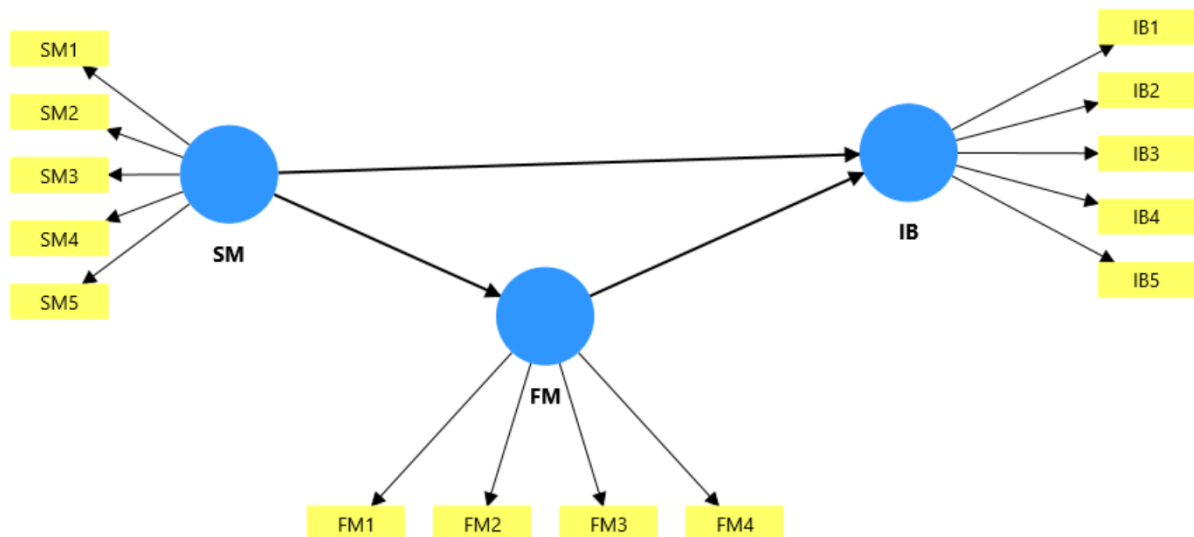
Based on this background, the research problem addresses whether scarcity messages are sufficient to trigger impulsive buying directly or if they rely on the psychological engine of FOMO among consumers in Java. This study tests two primary hypotheses:

(H1): Scarcity messages significantly and directly influence impulsive buying behavior in the Java region.

(H2): FOMO significantly mediates the relationship between scarcity messages and impulsive buying behavior for this specific demographic.

The objective of this article is to analyze and provide empirical evidence for the influence of scarcity messages on impulsive buying through the mediating role of FOMO within the Java region. By clarifying these structural relationships, the study aims to assist e-commerce practitioners in optimizing urgency-based strategies for the most digitally active region in Indonesia.

Figure 1. Conceptual Model



METHODOLOGY

This study employs a quantitative approach with an explanatory research design to examine the causal relationships between marketing stimuli and consumer responses. The focus of this analysis is strictly limited to the (Java Region), representing the primary digital consumer hub in Indonesia. By isolating this demographic, the study ensures that the findings reflect the specific cultural and digital behaviors of consumers in Java.

1. Variables and Operational Definitions

The research model incorporates three primary constructs:

- **Scarcity Message (SM):** Scarcity Message is defined as a message communicated by a company to consumers regarding the possibility that a product will not be available now or in the future (Tang et al., 2025)..
- **Fear of Missing Out (FOMO):** Utilized as the mediating variable, representing the psychological anxiety of missing rewarding social or consumer experiences (Djamhari et al., 2024)
- **Impulsive Buying (IB):** Impulse buying is a hasty, unexpected, exciting, and hedonic buying behavior that does not involve a thorough evaluation of all available information and alternatives (Hung et al., 2022).

2. Data Collection and Instrumentation

Data were collected through a structured questionnaire using a Likert scale to measure consumer perceptions and behavioral tendencies from November 20 to December 30, 2025. To ensure content validity, the instrument items were adapted from validated scales in contemporary marketing literature (Creswell, 2017).

3. Data Analysis Procedures

The data analysis was performed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) via SmartPLS 4 software. The analysis proceeded in two stages:

- **Measurement Model Evaluation (Outer Model):** Evaluated through internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability) and convergent validity (Average Variance Extracted/AVE). For the Java sub-sample, all constructs were required to meet the thresholds of $\alpha > 0.70$ and $AVE > 0.50$.
- **Structural Model Evaluation (Inner Model):** To determine the significance of the path coefficients and the mediation effect within the Java region, This procedure utilized 5,000 subsamples to generate robust p-values for hypothesis testing.

The predictive power of the model was assessed using the coefficient of determination (R^2) and the effect size (f^2), providing a comprehensive view of how scarcity messages and FOMO explain the variance in impulsive buying behavior within the target region.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

1. Measurement Model Evaluation (Outer Model)

The measurement model for the Java region was assessed to ensure the reliability and validity of the constructs before testing the structural relationships. As indicated in the analysis, all constructs demonstrated high internal consistency and convergent validity.

Table 1. Reliability and Convergent Validity for the Java Region

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Impulsive Buying	0.841	0.887	0.611
FOMO	0.892	0.925	0.755
Scarcity Message	0.855	0.896	0.633

Source : Data Analysis Result 2026

The Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability for all constructs in the Java sample exceed the recommended 0.70 threshold, indicating excellent reliability. The AVE values are all above 0.50, confirming that more than 50% of the variance of the indicators is explained by their respective constructs, satisfying convergent validity (Hair et al., 2020).

2. Structural Model and Hypothesis Testing (Inner Model)

The structural model was evaluated to determine the significance of the paths for the Java region using a permutation-based approach.

Table 2. Path Coefficients and Significance (Java Region)

Relationship	β	P-Value	Status
SM - IB	0.359	0.003	Significant
SM- FOMO	0.559	0.062	Not Significant
FOMO - IB	0.366	0.061	Not Significant

Source : Data Analysis Result 2026

While the direct paths SM→FOMO and FOMO → IB were marginally above the 0.05 significance level, the **Specific Indirect Effect** analysis for the mediation hypothesis was statistically significant

- **SM → FOMO → IB (H2):** $\beta = 0.205$, $\rho = 0.017$

The model's predictive power for the Java region is robust, with an R² of 0.410 for Impulsive Buying, indicating that scarcity messages and FOMO explain 41% of the variance in impulsive behavior. Furthermore, Scarcity Messages exerted a large effect size ($f^2 = 0.455$) on FOMO and a medium effect ($f^2 = 0.150$) on Impulsive Buying.

3. Discussion

The results for the **Java region** provide a clear picture of how digital marketing triggers translate into consumer action. The significant direct effect of scarcity messages on impulsive buying ($\beta = 0.359$, $p = 0.003$) supports **H1**, confirming that consumers in Java respond rapidly to perceived limitations in time or quantity. This aligns with the findings of Mehra et al. (2020), who suggest that perceived urgency in digital environments significantly dictates

adoption and immediate behavior.

The most striking finding is the **"indirect-only" mediation** of FOMO. Although the direct links from scarcity to FOMO and FOMO to impulsive buying were marginally non-significant ($p = 0.06$), the total mediation path was highly significant ($\rho = 0.017$). This indicates that in Java's digitally dense culture, the "Fear of Missing Out" serves as a critical internal engine. When scarcity is introduced, it activates an underlying social anxiety that others are securing better deals, which ultimately culminates in an impulsive purchase. This mechanism is particularly effective in high-engagement digital platforms where social validation is paramount.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that Scarcity Messages (SM) are a powerful and direct driver of Impulsive Buying (IB) behavior among consumers in the Java region. The statistical evidence confirms the first hypothesis (H1), demonstrating that the psychological pressure of limited time or quantity directly accelerates unplanned purchasing decisions in Indonesia's most digitally active region.

Furthermore, the research identifies a significant indirect-only mediation role of Fear of Missing Out (FOMO). While the direct individual paths from scarcity to FOMO and FOMO to impulsivity were marginally above the standard threshold, the total mediation sequence was statistically significant. This indicates that for Java-based consumers, scarcity messages function most effectively when they successfully trigger an internal anxiety regarding social or consumer exclusion, which then culminates in impulsive action.

The implications of these findings suggest that e-commerce practitioners in the Java region should focus on crafting high-urgency marketing content that resonates with the social and psychological fears of their audience. Theoretically, this study validates the S-O-R (Stimulus-Organism-Response) framework within a localized digital context, emphasizing that the "organism" (FOMO) is a vital bridge in the modern consumer journey.

Future research is recommended to explore whether these relationships hold true across different product categories (e.g., high-involvement vs. low-involvement goods).

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Motivation and Intention

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