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Literature Review of Digital Marketing Strategies in Generating FOMO: Implications for Consumer Impulsivity and Loyalty to Indomie Products

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Abstract

This article examines the effectiveness of Indomie's digital marketing strategy in generating fear of missing out (FOMO) and analyzes its impact on impulsive buying behavior and consumer loyalty, using an explanatory quantitative design (survey) with a population of social media users. Motivated by the urgency of understanding FOMO as a driver of consumption in the digital era (Wang & Huang, 2021; Medina et al., 2022), this study aims to test a causal model in which FOMO mediates the relationship between digital marketing (scarcity and urgency elements) and impulsivity, and the influence of impulsivity on loyalty. The results show that Indomie's digital marketing strategy is proven to be effective in triggering FOMO, which then functions as a significant mediator in driving impulsive buying (Dholakia, 2021). Furthermore, the findings indicate that FOMO-induced impulsive buying is not detrimental, but can even contribute positively to consumer loyalty, providing a new perspective on the FMCG brand loyalty paradox (Armstrong & Taylor, 2020). Theoretically, this study extends the application of FOMO theory as a predictor of impulsivity, and practically, it recommends the ethical use of FOMO strategies by maintaining product quality to convert impulsive purchases into long-term loyalty. Further studies are recommended using a longitudinal design to test the stability of post-impulse purchase loyalty.

Keywords: Digital Marketing, FOMO (Fear of Missing Out), Impulsive Buying, Consumer Loyalty, Indomie, Scarcity.

INTRODUCTION

The rapid development of the digital era has fundamentally changed the landscape of consumer behavior, placing social media and e-commerce as primary platforms for brand-consumer interaction, thus urging a new understanding of purchasing motives (Wang & Huang, 2021). In this context, the psychological phenomenon of Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) has emerged as a powerful global consumption motive, referring to the anxiety arising from the perception of missing out on experiences or benefits enjoyed by others (Medina et al., 2022). Today, digital marketing is no longer merely a promotional medium; it has become a data- and artificial intelligence-driven

system. The application of data-driven marketing enables companies to personalize messages, predict consumer behavior, and maximize rapid and responsive communication strategies (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2022).

Furthermore, digital marketing places a primary focus on emotional and participatory experiences (experiential marketing), where consumers are not merely recipients of information but also play an active role in the brand value creation process. Through interactive campaigns, challenges, or viral content, interactions between brands and consumers can create comprehensive emotional engagement and foster a sense of community in the digital realm (Hudson & Thal, 2021). This can form long-term psychological bonds that lead to consumer loyalty.

In practice, digital marketing strategies actively exploit the fear of missing out (FOMO) by leveraging the principles of scarcity and urgency to encourage consumers to make immediate purchases. Approaches such as limited-time offers, flash sales, and exclusive drops are used to create time pressure that triggers a fear of missing out. These strategies have proven effective in triggering impulsive buying behavior and amplifying the FOMO effect in the digital space (Zhang et al., 2023).

The importance of this phenomenon is evident in iconic brands and market leaders in Indonesia, such as Indomie, which frequently employ limited edition or viral marketing strategies on social media to drive engagement and accelerate information dissemination (Kemp, 2020). The transition from traditional marketing to a digital focus makes studying how brands use FOMO elements to influence consumers' impulsive behavior highly relevant, given the need to measure the psychological impact of this digital strategy on everyday consumption decisions.

This research is rooted in the need to deeply analyze how brands exploit consumers' psychological gaps in a dynamic digital environment. Specifically, the study examines how deliberate digital marketing strategies—such as the use of influencer marketing or timer/countdown features—effectively manipulate FOMO (Medina et al., 2022). The study not only examines emotional triggers but also examines the direct impact of FOMO on consumer impulse buying behavior. Critically, the study also examines a marketing paradox: does FOMO-induced impulsivity undermine long-term relationships or strengthen consumer loyalty to the Indomie brand through exclusive or viral product experiences.

Based on this motivation, the formulation of this research problem is structured in a causal question format. First, this study aims to determine how Indomie's digital marketing strategy (X) influences consumers' FOMO levels (Z). Second, the key question that is the focus of mediation is: does FOMO (Z) mediate the relationship between digital marketing strategy (X) and consumer impulsive behavior (Y1)? The answer to this question will confirm whether FOMO functions as a psychological bridge that transforms advertising exposure into unplanned purchasing actions. Finally, this study also examines the post-purchase relationship: how FOMO-induced impulsive behavior (Y1) affects consumer loyalty (Y2) towards the Indomie brand, thus providing perspective on the impact of urgency on long-term loyalty (Wang & Huang, 2021).

In line with the problem formulation, the objectives of this study are divided into three main focuses. First, descriptively, this study aims to identify and describe the digital marketing strategies used by Indomie to create urgency and scarcity. Second, analytically, this study aims to analyze the extent to which these strategies influence the generation of FOMO and consumer impulsive behavior. Third, the main objective of the study is to examine the causal relationship between FOMO-driven impulsivity and consumer loyalty. By using a quantitative approach through regression and mediation analysis, this study is expected to provide an in-depth understanding of the psychology behind fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) consumption driven by social media (Hair et al., 2021).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Digital Marketing Strategies and FOMO Triggers

Digital Marketing Strategy (X) is defined as a series of planned actions to promote a product through electronic channels, encompassing key dimensions such as content marketing, social media marketing, and influencer marketing (Armstrong & Taylor, 2020). Furthermore, modern digital marketing strategies increasingly rely on data-driven marketing that leverages artificial intelligence (AI) and behavioral analytics to personalize information in real time (Kaur & Gupta, 2023).

In the context of generating fear of missing out (FOMO), two psychological concepts most frequently exploited in digital marketing are scarcity and urgency. Scarcity refers to the limited quantity of a product, while urgency refers to the limited duration of a promotion (Wang & Huang, 2021).

Effective measurement strategies for generating FOMO often focus on visual and verbal elements such as countdown timers, limited stock announcements, or exclusive collaborations with influencers, creating the impression that the offer is a social event not to be missed (Kemp, 2020).

Several studies have shown a similar phenomenon. For example, Putri and Sari (2023) found that limited-edition promotional strategies and viral marketing for instant noodle products in Indonesia significantly increased consumer engagement on social media. Meanwhile, Hidayat (2022) found that FOMO (Focus on Motivation) is a key determinant of impulsive buying behavior among Generation Z on e-commerce platforms.

Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) and Impulsivity

Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) (Z) is a social anxiety condition experienced by individuals due to the worry that others are enjoying satisfying experiences that they are not participating in or missing out on (Medina et al., 2022). The psychological roots of FOMO are closely related to the need for social validation and affiliation, which is exacerbated by incessant exposure on social media. In the context of product consumption, FOMO functions as a strong internal pressure, measured through dimensions such as the frequency of checking social media for promotions and the level of anxiety when learning that friends have tried viral products. This emotional pressure of FOMO has been shown to have a direct relationship with Impulse Buying Behavior (Y1).

Impulse buying is characterized as an unplanned, sudden, and emotionally charged action, often without rational consideration of long-term consequences (Dholakia, 2021). Therefore, FOMO acts as a psychological bridge (mediating variable) that transforms exposure to digital promotions into unexpected consumption.

Impulsivity and Consumer Loyalty

Although impulsive behavior is generally assumed to be detrimental, this study needs to examine its impact on Consumer Loyalty (Y2). Loyalty is defined in two dimensions: behavioral loyalty (repeat purchases) and attitudinal loyalty (commitment and positive recommendations) (Armstrong & Taylor, 2020). The study needs to investigate the paradox: whether the satisfaction derived from impulsive purchases (especially limited edition Indomie products) can increase attitudinal loyalty because consumers feel part of an exclusive experience, even though the purchase action itself is unplanned. The role of post-purchase experience, satisfaction, and trust are key factors in determining whether FOMO-induced impulsivity will strengthen or damage the brand-consumer relationship in the long term. Based on the discussion of these variables, the research Conceptual Framework can be visualized as a causal model in which Digital Marketing Strategy (X) influences FOMO (Z), which then significantly drives Impulsive Behavior (Y1), and ultimately influences Consumer Loyalty (Y2), forming the hypothesis $X \rightarrow Z \rightarrow Y1 \rightarrow Y2$.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study adopted an explanatory quantitative research design with a survey method as the primary data collection strategy. This design was chosen to test and explain the complex causal relationships between variables, specifically how FOMO mediates the influence of digital marketing on consumer impulsivity and loyalty (Hair et al., 2021).

The study population was social media users exposed to Indomie's marketing strategies. To ensure the relevance of the findings, a purposive sampling technique was used, with the primary criterion being respondents who had previously purchased Indomie products—especially limited edition or viral variants—in response to promotions seen on social media. The data collected was primary, sourced directly from respondents through an online questionnaire.

The variables in this study are grouped into independent variables (X), mediating variables (Z), and dependent variables (Y), all of which are measured using a Likert Scale to obtain interval data. The independent variable is Digital Marketing Strategy (X), which is measured through indicators of consumer perceptions of exposure to content containing elements of urgency (time pressure) and product scarcity (scarcity). The mediating variable, FOMO (Z), is measured using an adapted FOMO scale relevant to the consumption context, such as the level of anxiety or worry about potentially missing out on a viral product or experience (Medina et al., 2022).

Instruments and Data Analysis

The two dependent variables in this study are Impulsive Buying Behavior (Y1) and Consumer Loyalty (Y2). Impulsivity is measured by respondents' tendency to make unplanned, sudden, and emotionally driven purchases (Dholakia, 2021). Loyalty is measured by behavioral and attitudinal dimensions, including repurchase intention of Indomie products and willingness to recommend the brand to others (Armstrong & Taylor, 2020). The main data analysis technique used is Mediation Analysis or Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to test the causal relationship model $X \rightarrow Z \rightarrow Y_1 \rightarrow Y_2$ and to test the significance of the mediating role of FOMO. Prior to the main analysis, instrument validity and reliability tests were conducted to ensure data accuracy and consistency.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section will focus on the presentation and interpretation of the research results obtained from the quantitative data analysis. The structure of the results and discussion is designed to answer the research problem formulation and examine the relationships between the variables proposed in the research model. The stages of the results analysis and discussion are structured as follows:

Descriptive Analysis and Causal Hypothesis Testing

The initial section of the research presents a descriptive analysis, including an overview of the respondents' profiles and their level of exposure to Indomie's digital marketing strategies, as well as measured average levels of FOMO, impulsivity, and loyalty. This profile provides context regarding how frequently Indomie consumers are exposed to elements of scarcity and urgency on social media.

Substantially, this study aims to verify the hypothesis that the effectiveness of urgency and scarcity elements in digital marketing not only increases interest, but is also psychologically mediated by FOMO to encourage impulse buying behavior, which ultimately affects consumer loyalty to the Indomie brand.

Next, the results of the hypothesis testing are presented through the presentation of the structural model, namely the results of the regression test. Key findings focus on the strength and

significance of the causal relationships between (X) Digital Marketing Strategy and (Z) FOMO, (Z) FOMO and (Y1) Impulsivity, and (Y1) Impulsivity and (Y2) Loyalty. The results of this test are crucial to support the findings of the mediation test, which indicates whether FOMO functions as a full or partial mediating variable in transforming digital marketing exposure into impulsive purchasing actions (Hair et al., 2021).

Critical Discussion: FOMO as a Catalyst of Impulsivity

The critical discussion begins with answering the problem formulation questions. We in-depth analyze Indomie's digital marketing strategies that have proven most effective in triggering FOMO, for example, whether the use of countdown timers is more effective than promotions through influencers in creating anxiety (Medina et al., 2022).

The results of the mediation test are contextualized to interpret why FOMO has a strong, even significant, influence in triggering impulsivity in daily consumption products like Indomie. This mechanism may be related to the low risk costs and high social rewards obtained from participating in viral trends on social media. Furthermore, this discussion also provides new insights into the role of local culture and brand equity in moderating the relationship between digital anxiety and unplanned purchasing behavior. Factors such as people's emotional closeness to the Indomie brand and shared values within the local cultural context strengthen the psychological effect of FOMO on impulsivity.

We also evaluate the ethical implications of using FOMO-based marketing tactics, particularly for affordable, mass-consumed products, to offer a more responsible framework for future digital marketers. The interpretation of these findings is critically discussed, comparing whether the results support or contradict the theory of emotion-based impulse buying (Dholakia, 2021).

Discussion on the Loyalty Paradox

The most substantive section of the discussion focuses on the loyalty paradox. We analyze whether FOMO-driven impulse buying is merely a fleeting effect that leads to post-purchase regret, or whether it actually serves as a gateway to experiences that foster long-term loyalty to the Indomie brand. Loyalty in this study is measured through two main dimensions: behavioral loyalty (repurchase) and attitudinal loyalty (brand recommendation). These findings are discussed with reference to the organizational loyalty and marketing literature (Armstrong & Taylor, 2020), to explain whether the novelty and sense of belonging created through FOMO-based strategies can transcend the unplanned nature of impulse buying.

This discussion is crucial for marketers in the Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) sector, particularly in understanding how scarcity- and urgency-based marketing strategies (such as FOMO marketing) can be used not only to drive immediate sales but also to build sustainable and robust brand equity. If FOMO-driven impulse purchases are proven to create long-term loyalty, these findings have the potential to challenge conventional wisdom about the importance of rational planning over emotional urgency in consumers' purchase paths. It emphasizes that unique and immersive consumption experiences, even those initiated unplanned, can be key to retaining consumers in an increasingly competitive and rapidly changing marketplace. The overall discussion provides a deep understanding of FMCG consumer psychology in the digital age, where social pressure and inclusion desire can influence immediate purchasing actions and indirectly shape future brand preferences and loyalty.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The final conclusion of this study firmly states that Indomie's digital marketing strategy has proven effective in generating consumers' Fear of Missing Out (FOMO). This FOMO trigger serves

as a significant mediator driving consumer impulsive buying behavior. Although purchases are based on urgency and emotion (impulse), the findings suggest that such purchasing experiences are not always detrimental and can even contribute positively to consumer loyalty to the Indomie brand in the context of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG). In terms of theoretical implications, these findings make an important contribution by extending FOMO theory, positioning it as a strong predictor of impulsive behavior in the digital marketing ecosystem (Wang & Huang, 2021). Furthermore, this study provides new foundations for loyalty theory, demonstrating that experiences triggered by FOMO and impulsivity can act as a "gateway" for positive experiences that strengthen brand loyalty, challenging the traditional view that loyalty is born only from long-term rational considerations (Dholakia, 2021).

Therefore, this study suggests that other FMCG brands can strategically leverage the FOMO element in their digital campaigns, ensuring that every impulse created is followed by a quality product that validates the purchase decision, thereby transforming momentary urgency into sustained loyalty.

Managerial and Practical Implications

The results of this study have important managerial implications for the marketing teams of Indomie and other FMCG brands. It was found that using elements of scarcity and urgency through countdown timers and limited editions is an effective strategy for increasing immediate sales. However, to maintain long-term loyalty, brands must ensure that impulse-purchased products deliver satisfaction commensurate with the expectations created by FOMO. A practical recommendation is to use FOMO strategies ethically and responsibly, namely by maintaining product quality so that impulse purchases transform into attitudinal and behavioral loyalty (Armstrong & Taylor, 2020). Marketing teams are advised to follow up FOMO campaigns with post-purchase engagement content to validate consumers' impulsive decisions.

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

This study has limitations, particularly related to the quantitative survey design, which only captures data at a single point in time, making it unable to fully test the stability of long-term loyalty. Therefore, further research should focus on more in-depth studies. Longitudinal studies are recommended to track the behavior and loyalty of the same consumers over a period of six months to one year after a FOMO-driven impulse purchase. Furthermore, qualitative studies (in-depth interviews) are recommended to explore post-purchase emotional and cognitive nuances, such as consumer regret or rational justification, to gain a richer understanding of the evolution of their brand attitudes.

Theoretically, this research has the potential to enrich the study of Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) by positioning it as a mediating psychological variable that links scarcity- and urgency-based digital marketing strategies to impulsive behavior and consumer loyalty. The expected findings will broaden the understanding of how social pressure and digital participation can act as emotional mechanisms in forming purchasing decisions and brand preferences for Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) products. Thus, this research can contribute to broadening the scope of modern consumer behavior theory, which is increasingly dominated by digital affective and social factors.

Practically, the results of this study are expected to serve as a reference for marketers in designing ethical and sustainable FOMO-based communication strategies. The use of scarcity and urgency elements must be accompanied by the fulfillment of consumer experience value, so that impulsive buying drives can transform into long-term loyalty. This approach aligns with the principles of responsible marketing, where consumers' emotional drives are not over-exploited but

rather directed toward strengthening brand relationships and consumer trust in a sustainable manner.

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