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Fear of Missing Out and Digital Content Marketing as Drivers of Impulse Buying in Social Commerce Platforms

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Abstract

This study investigates how fear of missing out (FoMO) and content marketing drive impulse buying among Generation Z skincare consumers on TikTok Shop in Jakarta, addressing the need for clearer insight into psychological and marketing mechanisms within Indonesia's rapidly evolving social commerce landscape. The research directly compares the relative impact of internal (FoMO) and external (content marketing) drivers within a single empirical model—an area previously underexplored in the context of Indonesia's rapidly expanding social commerce. Using a quantitative, cross-sectional online survey, data were collected from 405 TikTok Shop skincare buyers aged 18–28 in Jakarta and analysed with Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The results indicate that both FoMO and content marketing significantly increase impulse buying, with content marketing demonstrating the stronger effect. These findings demonstrate that both engaging content and FoMO-based strategies can increase impulse buying among Generation Z skincare consumers. The study contributes theoretically by providing empirical evidence that both psychological (FoMO) and marketing (content) drivers jointly influence impulse buying in social commerce platforms, highlighting the importance of integrating internal and external factors within explanatory models of consumer behaviour. Despite its insights, limitations include self-reported data and focus on one city; future research should use behavioural data and expand to other regions and demographics.

KEYWORDS

impulse buying; fear of missing out; content marketing; generation z; tiktok shop; social commerce; skincare.

Introduction

The rapid advancement of technology in Indonesia has brought about transformative changes in economic growth, mobility, and everyday lifestyles. One of the most affected aspects is consumer shopping behaviour, which has shifted from traditional in-person transactions to online shopping that is practical, efficient, and accessible at any time and from any location. Recent research by Kantar Worldpanel indicates a marked preference among Indonesian consumers for online shopping over offline channels, as reflected in the rising number of users and increased purchase frequency on e-commerce platforms (Dewi, 2025). The convenience and comfort offered by online shopping have contributed to the surge in impulse buying behaviour. This phenomenon is characterised by spontaneous, unplanned purchases that are predominantly driven by emotional responses rather than rational deliberation (Ernawati, 2021).

While impulse buying can provide consumers with temporary satisfaction and pleasure, it also poses substantial risks, including negative emotional consequences such as disappointment, regret, and distress (Siregar & Cholili, 2023). These adverse outcomes may arise from financial strain, guilt over unnecessary purchases, and social pressure from family or peers who disapprove of such spending. Over time, these effects can impact individual performance and psychological well-being. Recent studies,

including a survey of 1,086 Indonesian respondents by Populix (2023), reveal that impulse buying is often perceived as a form of self-reward, particularly among Generation Z consumers (Purmono & Ramadania, 2021). This demographic is known for favouring speed and convenience in decision-making, frequently opting for quick choices with minimal contemplation (Nasution et al., 2022). Given the significance of impulse buying within this cohort, it is critical to further explore its antecedents, especially in the context of the rapidly growing TikTok Shop platform in Indonesia.

TikTok Shop is an integrated e-commerce feature within the TikTok application, enabling users to buy and sell products directly through the platform (Mardiana, 2023). Designed to deliver an interactive shopping experience, it allows real-time communication between sellers and buyers via live streaming and comment features (Putra & Ardianto, 2022). Notably, TikTok Shop underwent a brief closure due to regulatory issues in October 2023 but resumed operations in December 2023 through a formal partnership with PT GOTO Gojek Tokopedia Tbk, and the shopping feature was rebranded as Shop Tokopedia (Lestari, 2023; Putri, 2024). According to (Ahdiat, 2024b), the integration of TikTok Shop and Tokopedia has resulted in a reported combined monthly active user base of over 140 million, which is considered to have substantially expanded both market reach and consumer engagement.

In less than three years, TikTok Shop has become the second-largest e-commerce player in Indonesia, with a user base largely composed of Generation Z. Its strategic investment in Tokopedia has resulted in a nearly fourfold increase in Gross Merchandise Value, reinforcing its competitive position in Southeast Asia (Meilina, 2024). Data from Kompas Market Insight Dashboard indicates that, after the acquisition, TikTok Shop's sales in the Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) sector rose by 34.2 percent. It is reported that approximately 69 percent of sales are attributable to beauty and skincare products, with the highest sales observed in categories such as body lotion, facial moisturisers, perfumes, and serums (Setiawati, 2025).

Generation Z is widely recognised for its heightened awareness of skincare and self-care, a trend accelerated by technological advancements and the pervasive influence of social media. As digital natives, their purchasing decisions are often shaped by both emotional and cognitive factors. Platforms like TikTok play a pivotal role in driving product preference and buying behaviour (Hardi et al., 2025). Recent findings indicate that the majority of Generation Z consumers are likely to make purchases after viewing content on TikTok, highlighting the platform's powerful impact on purchase decisions in the skincare sector (Haryati, 2024).

Among the psychological drivers of impulse buying, the phenomenon of fear of missing out (FoMO) has emerged as particularly influential. FoMO is characterised by anxiety or apprehension resulting from the perception that others are experiencing rewarding activities or acquiring valuable information, which the individual might miss (Tanhan et al., 2022). In the social media context, where curated highlights of others' lives are constantly on display, FoMO can generate considerable psychological pressure, pushing users towards impulsive consumption. In Indonesia, the prevalence of FoMO among Generation Z is estimated at 68 percent, representing a substantial portion of the population and underscoring its relevance in shaping consumer behaviour (CacaftyIndonesia, 2023; Deliana et al., 2024; Kurniawati & Amalia, 2024; Laras, 2024).

In addition to internal psychological factors, external influences such as digital content marketing play a prominent role in impulse buying. Content marketing is defined as the strategic creation and distribution of engaging, relevant, and valuable content for target audiences. This approach has become a cornerstone of business development on TikTok

(Kotler et al., 2017; Kurniawan & Nugroho, 2024). The platform's diverse features, including short-form video, live streaming, and interactive engagement tools, extend its function beyond entertainment and into the realm of e-commerce (Mufti & Hariyanto, 2025). Indonesia's position as the world's second-largest market for TikTok advertising, with over 126 million users, highlights the immense reach and potential of content marketing to stimulate impulse buying (Anggraini et al., 2025; Annur, 2024; Su'ada et al., 2025).

Although previous research has addressed impulse buying in general, this study offers a novel contribution by focusing on the skincare category, which is the leading sales driver in the FMCG segment of TikTok Shop. This dual focus provides both academic relevance and practical implications for the highly competitive digital beauty industry. The theoretical innovation of this research lies in the simultaneous examination of both internal (psychological) and external (marketing) factors. By investigating the interplay between FoMO-driven emotional triggers and the persuasive power of content marketing, this study expands the application of the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) by demonstrating how the interaction of psychological and marketing cues can jointly precipitate spontaneous purchase decisions.

Literature Review

Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM)

The Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) is a foundational theory in the field of communication and persuasion, introduced by Richard E. Petty and John T. Cacioppo in the early 1980s. This model explains how individuals process persuasive messages and how these processes ultimately influence attitude change. According to ELM, there are two primary routes to persuasion: the central route and the peripheral route. Each route represents a different method of message processing, leading to distinct outcomes in terms of the strength and durability of attitude change (Petty & Wegener, 1998).

The central route is engaged when individuals have both high motivation and the ability to thoughtfully process information. Under this route, the audience actively evaluates arguments, weighs evidence, and critically analyses the content of the message. This pathway requires substantial cognitive elaboration, so the resulting attitude changes tend to be more persistent, resistant to counter-persuasion, and predictive of actual behaviour. Attitudes formed through the central route are thus typically more aligned with a person's genuine beliefs and are more likely to be reflected in subsequent actions.

On the other hand, the peripheral route operates when an individual's motivation or ability to process information is limited. In this context, persuasion occurs via superficial cues, such as the attractiveness or credibility of the source, emotional resonance, or social proof, rather than through detailed analysis of the message itself. Attitude changes resulting from the peripheral route are usually less stable and more susceptible to change, especially when faced with new messages or different social pressures. This route is particularly prominent in digital environments, where rapid exposure to content often leads to heuristic and emotion-based processing rather than deep scrutiny.

The integration of ELM in this research provides a comprehensive framework for understanding the mechanisms that drive impulse buying behaviour, especially among Generation Z consumers in digital commerce settings. Within platforms like TikTok Shop, consumers are exposed to both central cues, such as detailed product information and rational content marketing, and peripheral cues, such as influencer endorsements, social trends, and emotional triggers like fear of missing out (FoMO). For instance, FoMO often triggers rapid, emotionally charged decisions characteristic of the peripheral route, while credible, informative content marketing can activate the central route. The interplay of these processes

illustrates how both rational and emotional pathways can converge, accelerating impulse purchasing decisions in a highly persuasive digital ecosystem (Amali & Pudrianisa, 2025; Rahmatani et al., 2022; Wibisono et al., 2024).

Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA)

The Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) was first developed by Martin Fishbein and Icek Ajzen to explain the psychological mechanisms underlying the formation of individual behaviour. According to TRA, an individual's behaviour is determined primarily by their behavioural intention, which is shaped by two main factors: attitude towards the behaviour and subjective norm. Attitude reflects the person's overall evaluation of the behaviour, whereas subjective norm captures the perceived social pressure to perform or not perform the behaviour (Kunaifi et al., 2022). Thus, a person is more likely to intend to engage in a behaviour when they evaluate it positively and believe that significant others expect them to do so (Madden et al., 1992; Mahyarni, 2013).

Within the context of digital consumer behaviour, especially on social media and e-commerce platforms, TRA provides a robust framework for understanding how psychological and social factors drive purchase decisions. Exposure to persuasive content marketing, peer recommendations, and the pressure not to miss out on trends can shape both the attitude towards products and strengthen subjective norms that encourage buying behaviour. For example, when consumers encounter attractive product content accompanied by endorsements from influencers or friends, they may develop a more favourable attitude while simultaneously perceiving stronger social expectations to buy, thus amplifying their behavioural intention.

Impulse buying behaviour, as examined in this study, can be conceptualised as an outcome of the mechanisms described in TRA. Emotional triggers such as fear of missing out (FoMO) and heightened social pressure accelerate the process from intention to action, often bypassing extensive rational deliberation. In the fast-paced digital environment of platforms like TikTok Shop, consumers are constantly exposed to stimuli that evoke both affective responses and social comparison, creating an environment where impulsive purchasing becomes more likely.

Therefore, TRA is applied as a supporting theory to explain how both FoMO and content marketing on TikTok collaboratively shape consumer intentions and promote impulse buying behaviour among Generation Z. By linking internal drivers (such as emotional reactions) and external influences (such as social pressure and persuasive content), this framework elucidates the pathway through which contemporary digital marketing strategies and psychological phenomena combine to influence rapid and sometimes unplanned purchasing actions. This theoretical perspective underscores the importance of addressing both attitudinal and normative influences when analysing impulse buying in digital commerce settings.

Fear of Missing Out (FoMO)

Fear of missing out (FoMO) is increasingly recognised as a key psychological factor among Generation Z, especially in digital consumption contexts. On interactive platforms such as TikTok Shop, users are exposed to a continuous stream of updates, promotions, and shared experiences from both peers and influencers. This environment creates a persistent sense of urgency and anxiety about missing out on special opportunities, limited-time deals, or trending products (Cacaflayindonesia, 2023; Tanhan et al., 2022). In the skincare segment, where product trends often shift rapidly and peer influence is high, FoMO typically presents as anxiety about being left behind in the latest skincare routines or innovations (Laras, 2024). As a result, this psychological pressure can prompt consumers to make purchases quickly and without

careful planning, overriding rational decision-making processes (Deliana et al., 2024; Kurniawati & Amalia, 2024).

A growing body of research has confirmed the link between FoMO and impulse buying behaviour in the online shopping environment. Studies have found that individuals who experience higher levels of FoMO are more likely to make spontaneous purchases, particularly in product categories marked by fast-changing trends and strong social dynamics, such as skincare and fashion (Deliana et al., 2024; Kurniawati & Amalia, 2024). On TikTok Shop, features like flash sales, exclusive launches, and influencer recommendations heighten this effect. Generation Z, as digital natives, are especially responsive to these triggers because of their high level of social media engagement and their tendency to value immediate gratification. The presence of FoMO makes them even more sensitive to messages that highlight scarcity or exclusivity, which leads to a higher likelihood of making impulse purchases (Amali & Pudrianisa, 2025; Rahmatani et al., 2022).

From a theoretical perspective, FoMO acts as a peripheral cue within the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM), encouraging swift, emotionally driven decision-making (Rahmatani et al., 2022; Wibisono et al., 2024). When Generation Z consumers are affected by FoMO, their urge to act is fuelled by the desire to avoid social exclusion and keep up with prevailing trends. This can cause them to buy skincare products on impulse, driven more by a wish to avoid missing out than by logical considerations of need or value. This mechanism aligns with the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), which indicates that social and emotional pressures can directly shape intentions and actions (Mahyarni, 2013). Understanding the role of FoMO is therefore crucial for explaining the high prevalence of impulse buying among Generation Z skincare consumers on TikTok Shop.

H1: Fear of missing out (FoMO) has a positive effect on impulse buying behaviour among Generation Z consumers for skincare products on TikTok Shop.

Content Marketing

Content marketing has become a central strategy in digital commerce, particularly on social media based platforms such as TikTok, where short video formats, live streaming, and interactive features are used to engage consumers. In the context of skincare products, content marketing delivers product information, demonstrations, testimonials, and usage experiences in a visually appealing and easily digestible manner. According to Kotler et al. (2017), content marketing that is relevant, informative, and engaging can shape consumer perceptions and emotional responses, which are critical in influencing purchasing behaviour. For Generation Z consumers, who are highly exposed to digital content and value authenticity and entertainment, persuasive skincare content on TikTok Shop can quickly attract attention and stimulate purchase interest (Kurniawati & Amalia, 2024).

From a behavioural perspective, exposure to appealing content marketing can reduce cognitive deliberation and accelerate purchase decisions. The Elaboration Likelihood Model explains that visually rich and emotionally engaging content often operates through the peripheral route, where decisions are influenced more by cues such as aesthetics, influencer presence, and perceived popularity rather than extensive rational evaluation (Petty & Wegener, 1998). On TikTok Shop, skincare content that emphasises instant results, limited offers, or social proof can create urgency and excitement, encouraging consumers to make spontaneous purchases. Prior studies have found that content marketing on social media platforms has a significant positive effect on impulse buying behaviour, particularly when combined with interactive and entertaining formats (Anggraini et al., 2025; Su'ada et al., 2025).

For Generation Z, impulse buying is closely related to emotional stimulation and experiential consumption. Skincare content on TikTok Shop often integrates storytelling, live interaction, and influencer recommendations, which enhance emotional engagement and perceived trust. This environment makes consumers more susceptible to unplanned purchases, especially when content aligns with personal needs or trending beauty standards (Mufti & Hariyanto, 2025). Empirical evidence consistently indicates that effective content marketing increases the likelihood of impulse buying by triggering desire, reducing hesitation, and legitimising spontaneous purchasing decisions (Hartanto et al., 2025; Widiarta et al., 2025). Therefore, content marketing is expected to play a crucial role in shaping impulse buying behaviour among Generation Z consumers in the skincare category on TikTok Shop.

H2: Content marketing TikTok has a positive effect on impulse buying behaviour of Generation Z consumers for skincare products on TikTok Shop.

Methods

Research Design

This study adopts a positivist paradigm, emphasising objectivity, replicability, and the use of quantitative methods for hypothesis testing. A positivist approach uses quantitative methods to objectively identify relationships and causal effects, emphasising rigorous statistical analysis and large sample sizes (Fahmi et al., 2022; Park et al., 2020). Research adopting this paradigm is characterised by principles such as concreteness, measurability, rationality, and systematic methodology (Siyoto & Sodik, 2015) (Putra, 2022). Positivist inquiry in the fields of marketing and organisational studies has also proven effective in developing replicable, generalisable findings that inform both theory and practice (Andriani & Putra, 2019; Fahmi, Putra, et al., 2024).

Population and Sample

A quantitative approach was chosen for this research to test theoretical models objectively by analysing the associations between constructs, including fear of missing out (FoMO) and content marketing as independent variables, and impulse buying behaviour as the dependent variable. The target population is defined as individuals aged 18–28 residing in Jakarta, who have actively purchased skincare products via TikTok Shop in the three months prior to the survey. Jakarta is a suitable setting for this research due to its high internet penetration and dominant online shopping activity (Ahdiat, 2024a). As the precise population size is unknown, the Lemeshow formula was applied to determine the minimum sample size (Lwanga & Lemeshow, 1991), resulting in a final sample of 405 respondents. This study uses purposive sampling, a non-probability technique selected because no comprehensive list of Generation Z skincare consumers on TikTok Shop in Jakarta exists, making probability-based methods impractical. The sampling criteria ensured that all participants had purchased skincare via TikTok Shop within the last three months, thus directly targeting the intended population for hypothesis testing (Fahmi et al., 2022; Kumar, 2011; Scharrer & Ramasubramanian, 2021).

Measurement Items

Each construct in this research is operationalised using validated indicators adapted from established literature. The fear of missing out (FoMO) scale draws from Przybylski et al. (2013) and Fitri et al. (2024), focusing on autonomy,

competence, and relatedness dimensions. Content marketing is measured using items based on Karr (2016) and Dewi et al. (2022), covering cognitive, motivational, persuasive, and interactive aspects of digital marketing content. The measurement of impulse buying behaviour refers to the framework of Huang et al. (2024), which captures emotional arousal, spontaneity, and unplanned purchase tendencies. All measurement items are contextualised for TikTok Shop skincare purchases and are structured using a Likert scale, enabling robust quantitative analysis (see Appendix 1). Previous research in the Indonesian context demonstrates the reliability and validity of using adapted measurement scales for behavioural research, especially when guided by established methodological frameworks (Putra & Ardianto, 2022; (Fahmi, Mukti, et al., 2024) (Putra et al., 2024).

Result and Discussion

Measurement Evaluation

To assess the measurement model, this study evaluated both convergent validity and construct reliability of all reflective constructs, as well as discriminant validity using the Fornell–Larcker criterion and the Heterotrait–Monotrait (HTMT) ratio. All items were measured using established indicators. For measurement evaluation, we assessed indicator reliability (outer loadings), internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha, rho_A, composite reliability), and convergent validity (average variance extracted), following SEM-PLS standards from Hair et al. (2021) and (Putra, 2022).

The results for convergent validity and construct reliability are presented in Table 1. The outer loadings (λ) for each indicator exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.60, confirming indicator reliability. All constructs demonstrated strong internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha (α), rho_A (ρ_A), and composite reliability (ρ_C) values surpassing 0.70, in line with standards suggested by Hair et al. (2021). Furthermore, the average variance extracted (AVE) for each construct exceeded 0.50, supporting the convergent validity of the measurement model. These findings indicate that the indicators used for fear of missing out (FoMO), content marketing (CM), and impulse buying behaviour (IB) adequately represent their respective latent constructs.

Table 2 reports the discriminant validity results based on the Fornell–Larcker criterion. The square root of AVE for each construct (shown on the diagonal) was greater than the correlations with other constructs (off-diagonal values), demonstrating satisfactory discriminant validity. This suggests that each construct is empirically distinct and captures a unique aspect of the research model, as recommended by the SEM-PLS literature Hair et al. (2021).

To further confirm discriminant validity, Table 3 displays the Heterotrait–Monotrait (HTMT) ratios for each construct pair. All HTMT values were below the conservative threshold of 0.85, indicating a clear distinction between constructs. This provides additional evidence that the measurement model achieves discriminant validity, and that the constructs of fear of missing out, content marketing, and impulse buying are not only conceptually but also empirically separable.

Structural Evaluation

The quality and robustness of the structural model were evaluated using several key fit indices and explanatory power measures. These criteria provide insight into how well the model explains the endogenous variable and the overall adequacy of the hypothesised relationships within the research framework. The assessment follows guidelines from recent SEM-PLS literature (Fahmi, Putra, et al., 2024; Hair et al., 2021).

Table 1. Convergent Validity and Construct Reliability

Variables	Indicator	λ	α	ρ_A	ρ_C	AVE
FoMO	FoMO1	0.789	0.932	0.937	0.943	0.648
	FoMO2	0.824				
	FoMO3	0.800				
	FoMO4	0.839				
	FoMO5	0.780				
	FoMO6	0.860				
	FoMO7	0.802				
	FoMO8	0.792				
	FoMO9	0.756				
CM	CM1	0.623	0.930	0.932	0.940	0.569
	CM2	0.617				
	CM3	0.699				
	CM4	0.684				
	CM5	0.773				
	CM6	0.736				
	CM7	0.813				
	CM8	0.820				
	CM9	0.796				
	CM10	0.806				
	CM11	0.849				
	CM12	0.792				
IB	IB1	0.804	0.933	0.934	0.945	0.682
	IB2	0.808				
	IB3	0.853				
	IB4	0.802				
	IB5	0.827				
	IB6	0.829				
	IB7	0.841				
	IB8	0.841				

Table 2. Discriminant Validity of Fornell Larcker

Construct	CM	FoMO	IB
Content Marketing Tiktok (CM)	0.754	0.462	0.722
Fear of Missing Out (FoMO)		0.805	0.587
Impulse Buying Behaviour (IB)			0.826

Table 3. Discriminant Validity of HTMT

Construct Pair	HTMT
CM - FoMO	0.477
CM - IB	0.762
FoMO - IB	0.615

Table 4. Model Fit Evaluation

Statistic / Index	IB (Impulse Buying)
R ²	0.603
R ² Adj	0.601
Q ²	0.405
SRMR	0.084
d_ULS	3.092
d_G	0.714
Chi-square	1615.889
NFI	0.826

Table 5. Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Relationship	β	t-statistics	p-value
H1	FoMO → IB	0.323	6.047	0.000
H2	Content Marketing → IB	0.572	10.742	0.000

Table 4 presents the summary of model fit and explanatory power statistics for the endogenous construct,

impulse buying (IB). The coefficient of determination R² for IB is 0.603, indicating that the model explains approximately 60.3% of the variance in impulse buying behaviour. The adjusted R² value of 0.601 supports the robustness of this explanatory power, even after accounting for model complexity. The Stone-Geisser’s Q² value of 0.405 reflects strong predictive relevance. Model fit indices indicate that the Standardised Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) was 0.084, which is at the upper end of the commonly accepted threshold for SEM-PLS models (≤ 0.08 as recommended by Hair et al. (2021). However, recent literature (Putra, 2022) recognises values up to 0.10 as still acceptable in complex models. Other fit indices—including d_ULS (3.092), d_G (0.714), chi-square (1615.889), and Normed Fit Index (NFI = 0.826)—were also within recommended ranges. Taken together, these results indicate that the model demonstrates satisfactory explanatory power and acceptable global fit, supporting the hypothesised structural relationships.

Hypothesis Testing

The hypothesis testing phase evaluates the structural relationships proposed in the research model by analysing the direct effects of each independent variable on the dependent variable. This stage utilises bootstrapping procedures to obtain robust estimates of path coefficients, t-statistics, and p-values. Results are summarised numerically and visually to provide clear evidence of the hypothesised effects.

Table 5 presents the results of the structural path analysis. Both hypothesised relationships demonstrate statistically significant effects. The path coefficient from fear of missing out (FoMO) to impulse buying (IB) is 0.323 with a t-statistic of 6.047 (p < 0.001), indicating a moderate and significant positive effect. This result suggests that an increase in FoMO among Generation Z consumers is associated with a substantial rise in impulse buying behaviour for skincare products on TikTok Shop. The psychological drive to avoid

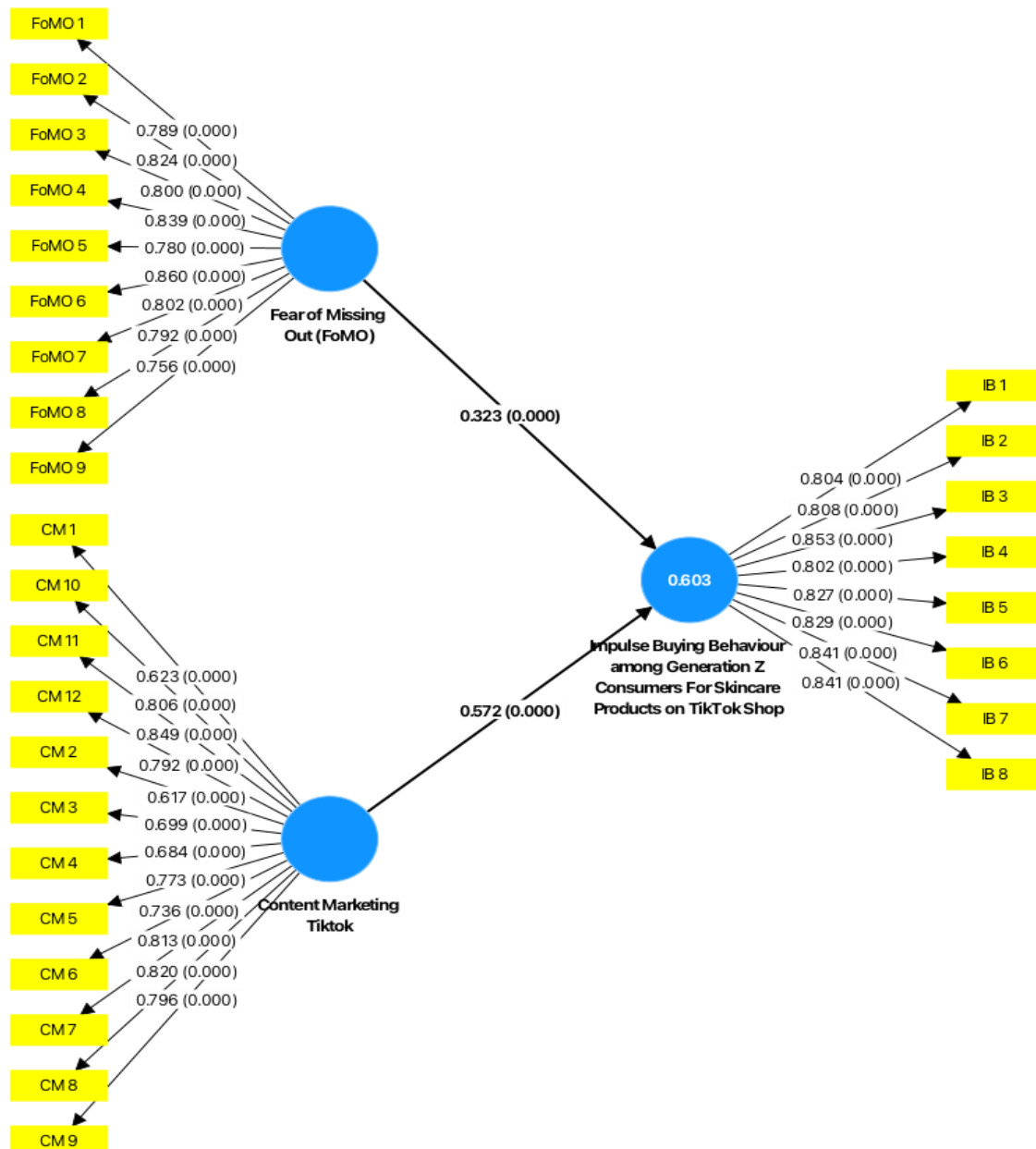


Figure 1. Bootstrapping Results

missing out on trends, experiences, or social belonging appears to play a notable role in spontaneous purchasing decisions within this digital context.

Similarly, the path from content marketing to impulse buying yields a coefficient of 0.572 with a t-statistic of 10.742 ($p < 0.001$), suggesting a strong positive effect. This coefficient, which is notably higher than that of FoMO, highlights the persuasive power of content marketing strategies on TikTok Shop in stimulating unplanned purchases. The finding aligns with the theoretical expectation that persuasive, visually engaging, and interactive content can reduce cognitive resistance and accelerate consumer decision-making, particularly for Generation Z, who are highly receptive to social media marketing.

The statistical significance of both paths is supported by high t-statistics and p-values well below the conventional 0.05 threshold, providing robust empirical support for the research hypotheses. The model explains 60.3% of the variance in impulse buying behaviour, as shown by the R^2 value, indicating substantial explanatory power. Overall, these results demonstrate that both internal psychological triggers (FoMO) and external marketing stimuli (content marketing) jointly shape the impulse buying tendencies of Generation Z

consumers on TikTok Shop, with content marketing exerting the stronger influence in this study. This insight is particularly valuable for practitioners aiming to optimise digital marketing strategies to drive purchase behaviour in highly dynamic and trend-sensitive markets.

Interpretation of Key Findings

This study demonstrates that both fear of missing out (FoMO) and content marketing exert significant positive effects on impulse buying behaviour among Generation Z skincare consumers on TikTok Shop. The empirical results show that content marketing is not only the stronger predictor based on the standardised path coefficient ($\beta = 0.572$) but also exerts a large effect on impulse buying ($f^2 = 0.648$). In contrast, FoMO, while statistically significant ($\beta = 0.323$), demonstrates a medium to large effect size ($f^2 = 0.206$) according to established guidelines (Hair et al., 2021; Putra, 2022). The overall model explains 60.3% of the variance in impulse buying behaviour ($R^2 = 0.603$). These findings confirm that engaging digital content has a particularly strong impact on unplanned purchasing decisions, while FoMO acts as a substantial emotional driver. By reporting both standardised path coefficients and effect sizes, this study provides a robust

empirical basis for understanding and prioritising the psychological and marketing factors that drive impulse buying in the social commerce context.

Comparison with Previous Studies

The findings of this research are largely consistent with existing literature that identifies both FoMO and digital content marketing as key determinants of impulse buying, especially among young consumers. Prior studies have highlighted the role of FoMO in accelerating spontaneous online purchases, particularly in social media settings where users are frequently exposed to time-limited offers and peer-driven trends (Deliana et al., 2024; Kurniawati & Amalia, 2024). Similarly, research on content marketing confirms its effectiveness in shaping consumer attitudes and stimulating impulse buying, especially when messages are crafted to be engaging and interactive (Anggraini et al., 2025; Kotler et al., 2017). However, the present study extends the literature by comparing the relative impact of these drivers within a single empirical model focused on TikTok Shop, and by demonstrating that content marketing exerts a stronger influence than FoMO among Generation Z skincare consumers. This nuanced insight reflects the evolving dynamics of digital commerce, where marketing communication strategies can sometimes outweigh intrinsic psychological motivators.

Practical Implications

The findings offer important implications for practitioners in the digital marketing and e-commerce sectors. Marketers aiming to increase impulse buying among Generation Z should prioritise the development of compelling content marketing campaigns, leveraging the unique features of platforms like TikTok—such as short-form video, influencer endorsements, and live interactions. At the same time, strategies that evoke FoMO, such as flash sales, exclusive product drops, and real-time social proof, remain effective in creating a sense of urgency and prompting immediate action. Brands should consider integrating both approaches to maximise engagement and drive sales, particularly in product categories characterised by high social visibility and rapidly changing trends, such as skincare. For platform designers and policymakers, the results suggest a need to balance persuasive marketing with consumer protection, given the potential for excessive impulse buying to impact financial well-being.

Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

Several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the use of a cross-sectional survey design limits the ability to draw causal inferences between the studied variables. Future research could address this limitation by employing longitudinal or experimental designs to better establish causality, or by applying statistical remedies such as cross-lagged panel analysis or instrumental variable techniques to test for causal directions within observed relationships. Second, the reliance on self-reported data may introduce common method bias or overstatement of certain behaviours. Third, the focus on Jakarta as the sampling context may restrict the generalisability of results to other geographic regions or cultural settings. Future research should employ longitudinal or experimental designs to better establish causality, incorporate behavioural data from platform

analytics to complement self-reports, and expand sampling to diverse populations across Indonesia or other countries (Rinaldi & Sunaryo Putra, 2022). Additionally, exploring potential moderating factors—such as digital literacy, income level, or product category—and the mediating role of attitudes or normative influences, could further enhance understanding of impulse buying in digital commerce environments.

Conclusion

In summary, this study demonstrates that both fear of missing out (FoMO) and content marketing significantly increase impulse buying among Generation Z skincare consumers on TikTok Shop in Jakarta, with content marketing exerting the larger effect. These findings suggest that, within the context of urban Indonesian Gen Z audiences and skincare products, persuasive digital content and psychological triggers play a decisive role in shaping unplanned purchase decisions. The evidence is specific to Jakarta-based, digitally active Gen Z consumers and may not fully extend to other age groups, product categories, or regions with different digital literacy or consumption patterns. As such, while the results provide actionable insights for marketers operating in similar urban social commerce environments, caution should be exercised in generalising beyond this context. Future research employing broader samples, additional behavioural measures, and diverse geographies will be essential to test the robustness and wider applicability of these conclusions.

Author contributions

Nadia Gita Aresti contributed to the conceptualisation of the study, development of the research framework, literature review, data collection, data analysis, and manuscript drafting. Amelia Kristofani contributed to the refinement of the research design, questionnaire development, data validation, statistical analysis, and interpretation of results. Dewi Alesha Miller contributed to data collection support, data cleaning, and assistance in manuscript revision and formatting. All authors reviewed and approved the final version of the manuscript.

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Conflict of interest

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest associated with this research. The authors confirm that they have no financial, professional, or personal relationships with any individuals or organisations that could have influenced the objectivity, integrity, or interpretation of the findings reported in this study.

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