



ENHANCING PRODUCTIVITY THROUGH PSYCHOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES IN THE ERA OF GLOBAL TRANSFORMATION

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A Literature Study on the Influence of Flash Sales on Impulse Buying with Positive Emotions as a Mediator Among Shopee Application Users

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Abstract: This study examines literature discussing the influence of flash sales on impulsive buying behavior with positive emotions as a mediating variable, specifically among Shopee application users from a consumer psychology perspective. Through a review of various academic sources, it was found that flash sale marketing strategies consistently prove effective in increasing consumers' tendency to make spontaneous purchases. This occurs because flash sales present a combination of urgency, limited time, and perceived economic benefits that encourage consumers to act quickly without deep rational consideration. Positive emotions play an important role as a mediator in this relationship. The increased intensity of flash sales has been shown to trigger positive emotional responses such as excitement, enthusiasm, and satisfaction from obtaining products at lower prices. These emotional states subsequently weaken consumers' self-control, making impulsive purchasing decisions more likely to occur. Referring to the Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) model, the findings of this literature review emphasize that flash sales as a stimulus can influence the organism, in the form of consumers' psychological states, which ultimately produce a response manifested in impulsive buying behavior. The practical implications of this review indicate that companies need to design promotional strategies that not only focus on offering large discounts but also consider consumers' emotional experiences. The use of appealing visual elements, interfaces that evoke positive feelings, and interactive promotional mechanisms can enhance the effectiveness of digital marketing campaigns while creating more sustainable consumer engagement.

Keywords: Flash Sale, Impulse Buying, Positive Emotion, Consumer Behavior, Market Place

Introduction

The rapid development of the e-commerce industry has made flash sale strategies one of the most popular methods for attracting consumer attention and increasing sales within a short period of time. In simple terms, a flash sale is a promotional strategy that offers large

discounts on certain products, but only for a very limited time. This approach creates a sense of urgency and scarcity, making consumers feel the need to act quickly before the opportunity disappears. This can be seen on the Shopee platform, which frequently displays flash sale offers on its main page. Such promotions create time pressure and a fear of missing out, thereby encouraging consumers to make quick purchase decisions with minimal deliberation.

The phenomenon of impulse buying itself refers to the act of purchasing something suddenly without prior planning. In the context of online shopping, this behavior has become increasingly common due to factors such as ease of access, appealing user interface designs, and abundant visual stimuli and enticing promotions. With just a few taps, consumers can complete a transaction without having the chance to think it through.

Literature Review

From a consumer psychology perspective, this behavior is strongly influenced by the positive emotions that arise when individuals interact with such promotions. Positive emotions such as happiness, satisfaction, or excitement often appear when consumers encounter attractive deals or feel fortunate to obtain a product at a lower price. These pleasant feelings then strengthen the intention to purchase, even when the product is not urgently needed. In many cases, positive emotions make an individual feel more satisfied and enthusiastic, ultimately driving spontaneous purchase decisions. Thus, the success of a flash sale strategy does not rely solely on the discount itself, but also on the promotion's ability to evoke positive emotional responses that trigger impulsive actions from consumers (Indri & Siagian, 2018).

Shopee is one of the largest e-commerce platforms in Indonesia, established in 2015, and frequently conducts scheduled flash sales to attract users. For example, flash sale events on Shopee are prominently displayed to draw consumer attention. Various marketing studies (Lamis et al., 2022) have shown that flash sale promotions can generate a surge in short-term sales through psychological mechanisms such as urgency and perceived gains.

The rapid development of e-commerce in Indonesia has driven a shift in people's consumption patterns toward online shopping. One of the most dominant platforms is Shopee, which, according to Databoks data from 2021, ranks at the top with the largest user share (approximately 89 percent) compared to competitors such as Tokopedia or Lazada. This dominance reflects Shopee's success in meeting the needs of digital consumers who seek convenience, quick access, and personalized shopping experiences. Shopee, for instance, received around 129 million monthly visitors in 2021, higher than other platforms (Rahmania et al., 2023). Its status as the largest platform provides an important context for this study, as the dynamics of promotions and consumer behavior on Shopee are broadly representative of Indonesia's e-commerce environment.

In this context, flash sales have become a highly attractive promotional strategy. A flash sale offers products at significant discounts for a very short time. These flash deals are often supported by countdown timers and stock availability indicators, leveraging the principles of urgency and scarcity. By offering the lowest possible prices within a short timeframe, flash sales encourage consumers to wait for and pursue the best deal. This strategy effectively creates a sense of urgency, potentially triggering unplanned purchase decisions (impulse buying). For example, a Katadata survey (2022) shows that flash sales are among the top three most appealing promotional types during national shopping events.

Positive emotions are affective feelings that shape a consumer's experience. These emotions include feelings such as happiness, satisfaction, enthusiasm, and interest, which typically arise when consumers encounter appealing deals or feel successful in obtaining better value as noted in the study by Ramadhan and Wardi (2025). Positive emotions also enhance hedonic motivations in shopping, which is the desire to spend money for pleasure and enjoyable emotional experiences, as added in the study by Rahmania et al. (2023). Several studies show that positive emotions tend to increase the frequency of unplanned purchase decisions such as impulse buying. For instance, when a person is in a good mood, they are more likely to make spontaneous purchase decisions without thoroughly considering the outcomes. In digital marketing strategies, elements that stimulate positive emotions such as enjoyable shopping experiences can strengthen a consumer's tendency to spend impulsively.

Research Methods

This study employs a literature review method to analyze the influence of flash sales on consumer impulsive buying behavior on Shopee, with positive emotion serving as a mediating factor in this relationship. To collect data, the author examines various scholarly sources such as national and international journals, research articles, and academic publications relevant to the selected keywords. The chosen articles are studies that specifically discuss the relationship between flash sale promotions, consumers' emotional dynamics, and impulsive purchasing behavior. In conducting the literature analysis, the author reviews several consumer psychology theories that underlie this phenomenon, including the Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) theory, hedonic motivation theory, and cognitive balance theory. This method is used to achieve the research objectives, namely to explain the impact of flash sales on increasing impulsive purchases, explore the role of positive emotions as a mediator, analyze the phenomenon within the framework of consumer psychology theories, and provide practical recommendations for relevant stakeholders such as business actors and consumers based on findings from previous studies.

From the perspective of consumer psychology, impulsive buying behavior can be analyzed through the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) model. This model explains that external factors, such as flash sale promotions, function as stimuli that trigger changes in consumers' internal conditions in the form of emotional reactions, which ultimately lead to behavioral responses, namely impulsive buying. In the context of flash sales, factors such as urgency cues and large discounts act as stimuli that heighten adrenaline and generate positive emotional responses in consumers. These emotional responses include feelings of joy and enthusiasm, which influence consumer decision-making processes by reducing rational barriers to making a purchase. Ramadhan and Wardi (2025) explain that positive emotions increase the appeal of hedonic shopping, whereby consumers feel immediate pleasure when obtaining attractive offers. Positive emotional states can also serve as a coping mechanism for unpleasant feelings, encouraging consumers to "reward themselves" through shopping. This can be observed when consumers feel proud or happy for successfully obtaining discounted products during a flash sale, and such positive feelings subsequently trigger the desire to purchase more. For example, Rahmania et al. (2023) found that flash sales motivate millennial consumers to engage in impulsive buying through the increase of positive emotions. Consumers in a positive mood tend to overlook long-term financial risks in favor of short-term satisfaction. Conversely, consumers experiencing negative emotions (such as stress or frustration) are generally less inclined to make spontaneous purchases.

Thus, promotional strategies that create positive experiences (engaging visuals, entertaining sequences of offers) increase the probability of impulsive buying. Flash sales meet these criteria by creating a short-term bargain-hunting experience that produces a thrill, reinforcing positive associations with the platform.

Result and Discussion

Shopping motivation also plays a role, as flash sales attract consumers with both hedonic motives, such as the pleasure of obtaining discounts, and utilitarian motives, such as the desire to gain economic value. Both motivations contribute to impulsive behavior. Hedonic consumers seek enjoyment, while utilitarian consumers focus on economic benefits; however, both can be triggered by similar psychological mechanisms within the context of flash sales. Additionally, the Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) becomes an additional psychological factor. Limited time and stock availability create a sense of worry that if consumers do not purchase immediately, they may lose the opportunity, increasing the urgency to buy.

Many empirical studies have examined the relationship between flash sales, consumer emotions, and impulsive buying. Martaleni et al. (2022), in the journal *Innovative Marketing*, found that flash sale strategies implemented by e-commerce platforms (in this study, Shopee) have a direct effect on increasing consumers' positive emotional intensity. These heightened positive emotions then significantly influence the increase in impulse buying. The study reported that flash sales do not have a direct significant effect on impulsive buying; instead, the effect is indirect through increased positive emotions. In other words, positive emotions are proven to mediate the influence of flash sales on impulsive buying. These findings confirm that consumers' affective elements play a crucial role in the relationship between flash promotions and purchasing behavior.

In contrast, Ramadhan and Wardi (2025) in the *Journal of Business Economic Informatics* reported that flash sales have a positive and significant effect on impulsive buying both directly and indirectly through positive emotions. In the context of a sample of university students in Indonesia, flash sales directly encouraged impulsive purchases, while the indirect influence through positive emotions was also significant. Furthermore, they found that positive emotions have a strong direct influence on impulsive buying decisions. Both findings support the S-O-R model, in which flash sales as stimuli trigger positive emotions in individuals, which then drives impulsive buying behavior. Yacob and Aurora Lubis (2025) similarly found different results; in the case of Shopee users in Jambi, flash sale programs alone did not have a significant influence on impulse buying or positive emotions unless supported by additional discount programs. This indicates that economic elements such as discounts or free shipping are often required to strengthen positive sensations.

A study conducted by Rahmania (2023) on Generation Y also shows similar results. In this study on Shopee users, it was found that both flash sales and positive emotions have significant influences on impulsive buying among Generation Y, and positive emotions mediate the influence of flash sales on impulsive purchases, as recorded in himjournals.com. This further reinforces a consistent pattern: millennial consumers' exposure to flash sale promotions elevates their positive mood, which then drives spontaneous purchase decisions. Thus, flash sale promotions influence not only cognitive aspects but also emotional aspects, both of which are important in predicting impulsive behavior.

Quantitative research in Indonesia, specifically from Diponegoro University, also supports the role of positive emotions. Wulandari and Prihatini (2023) examined the influence of positive emotions and sales promotions in general on impulsive buying among

Shopee consumers, and found that positive emotions have a significant positive effect on impulsive behavior. This study notes that Shopee users who experience positive moods tend to make spontaneous purchases. Although the research did not focus specifically on flash sales, the findings strengthen the argument that positive emotions are a critical variable in impulsive behavior on the Shopee platform. A study sourced from ResearchGate examining flash sales and impulse buying with positive emotion mediation by Azizah and Indrawati (2022) emphasizes that the urgent nature of flash sales affects consumer psychology through emotional drives.

The definition and characteristics of flash sales are also frequently discussed in theoretical literature. For example, Pratiwi et al. (2024) describe flash sales as promotional events offering large discounts within a very short timeframe. They also state that flash sales are usually conducted during specific moments to attract consumer attention. They emphasize that flash sales make consumers willing to wait in order to obtain extremely low prices, sometimes even free products. Additionally, Lamis et al. (2022) add that flash sales involve limited product quantity and duration, creating a sense of scarcity that triggers consumer enthusiasm and satisfaction. This can lead to impulsive buying responses. These statements align with Martaleni (2022), who describes flash sales as a marketing strategy designed to build urgency and direct consumers toward impulsive purchases.

Further conceptual studies such as Rahmania et al. (2023) highlight the importance of emotional experience in consumer behavior. According to the PAD theory by Mehrabian and Russell, a pleasant shopping environment increases feelings of pleasure, which can trigger spontaneous purchases. When consumers feel happy during shopping, they tend to make purchase decisions more quickly without much rational consideration. Research also shows that the impact of flash sales may operate through this mechanism: visual stimuli and significant discounts generate pleasure, making consumers more easily tempted to buy. Additionally, internal consumer factors such as personality and self-control are also noted in the literature by Loudon and Bitta (2010). However, overall, scholars agree that flash sales as external stimuli can enhance hedonic and emotional motivations, while positive emotions act as a mediator that drives impulsive behavior. The combination of these sources forms a strong theoretical framework in which flash sales stimulate the emotional and cognitive aspects of consumers, with positive emotions functioning as the key link between promotion and impulsive action.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of various literature reviews, the author understands and concludes that a flash sale is not merely a promotional strategy offering large discounts within a short period, but also a strong trigger for impulsive buying behavior. When individuals encounter an attractive offer with a limited timeframe, a spontaneous urge often arises to purchase immediately without much thought. Interestingly, this effect does not occur solely because of price or time factors, but also due to the positive feelings that emerge during the flash sale moment. Consumers tend to feel happy, satisfied, and even excited when seeing a rare opportunity to obtain products at lower prices. These feelings then become the key link between the promotion and impulsive purchasing decisions. In this context, the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) theory helps explain how a stimulus in the form of a flash sale can influence a person's psychological state, which subsequently leads to spontaneous purchase actions.

From a practical standpoint, the author believes that these findings offer important insights for business actors, especially e-commerce platforms such as Shopee. When designing flash sale campaigns, companies should not only focus on offering large discounts, but also pay attention to how users' emotional experiences can be shaped. This can be achieved through visually appealing interfaces, energetic color schemes, interactive elements such as games or simple quizzes, as well as social features that allow users to participate or compete with others. All of these elements can generate feelings of joy and excitement, making consumers more easily tempted to buy. Promotional strategies that incorporate psychological aspects not only boost sales but also create emotional connections between consumers and the shopping platform.

However, behind all these strategies, companies also need to consider the ethical aspects of flash sale promotions. Although such promotions can increase sales in a short time, frequently encouraging impulsive buying may have long-term negative impacts on consumers, such as regret or excessive consumption. Therefore, it is important for companies to maintain a balance between business goals and customer well-being. A good marketing strategy is not only one that yields economic benefits, but also one that considers consumers' psychological health and helps them shop responsibly.

From an academic perspective, the author hopes that future research will expand its scope by examining other psychological factors that may influence the relationship between flash sales and impulsive buying. For instance, the feeling of fear of missing out (FoMO), perceptions of product value, or even an individual's level of self-control. Each person has different characteristics when facing online shopping temptations, so research involving various consumer segments will enrich the understanding of this phenomenon. With such insights, both researchers and business practitioners can design more accurate and human centered approaches, focusing not only on increasing profits but also on creating healthier, more enjoyable, and more responsible digital shopping experiences for all users.

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