STABILITY
Journal of Management & Business
Vol. 8 No.2 Years 2025
http://journal.upgris.ac.id/index.php/stability

CAUGHT IN THE SCROLL: WHEN FOMO, SOCIAL MEDIA ADDICTION, AND SOCIAL ANXIETY LEAD TO IMPULSIVE BUYING AND POST PURCHASE REGRET AMONG GEN Z

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Article Information

Article History:
Submission : December 2025
Accepted : December 2025
Published : December 2025

Keywords:
Post Purchase Regret;
FOMO;
Social Media Addiction;
Impulsive Buying;
Gen Z.

INDEXED IN

SINTA - Science and Technology Index
Dimensions
Google Scholar
ReseachGate
Garuda

Abstract

This study examines digital anxiety in the era of technology and social media, which causes consumer confusion in purchasing decisions, especially among Generation Z (born 1997-2012) in Indonesia. This generation is susceptible to Fear of Missing Out (FOMO), social media addiction (consisting of weak behavioral control and dysfunctional behavior), and social anxiety, which can trigger impulsive buying and post-purchase regret. The main objective is to analyze the influence of FOMO, social media addiction, and social anxiety on impulsive buying and the influence of impulsive buying on post-purchase regret. The method uses a quantitative approach with Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) based on Partial Least Square (PLS) version 3.0, involving a minimum of 209 Generation Z respondents who are active on social media and have shopped online through purposive sampling in Indonesia. The results show that FOMO, weak behavioral control, and dysfunctional behavior have a significant positive effect on impulsive buying, while social anxiety is not significant. Impulsive buying also has a significant positive effect on post-purchase regret. The implications of the research include understanding the negative impacts of social media on consumer well-being, as well as recommendations for digital platforms and governments to create regulations and awareness campaigns to prevent regret in Generation Z.

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OPEN ACCESS
ISSN :2621-850X
E-ISSN : 2621-9565

DOI : http://dx.doi.org/10.26877/58qnf458

INTRODUCTION

Modern technological developments have facilitated the rapid flow of information, no longer limited to time-consuming conventional methods. Now, information and knowledge can be obtained from various countries around the world, not just from one region (Kurniati, 2022). In a contemporary market full of brands, consumers feel quite perplexed while selecting which product to purchase (Simpson et al., 2008). Being an active participant in the decision-making process with regard to choosing the best option is very important for consumers in order to achieve maximum satisfaction and utilize the scarce resources efficiently (Zeelenberg & Pieters, 1999). However, even though individuals try to convince themselves that the decision made was right, pros and cons are always there, especially when the purchased product is compared with the rejected one (Shankar et al., 2006). It is during this comparative phase that negative feelings in the form of post-purchase regret arise, where the customers realize their choice has gone wrong (Heitmann et al., 2007). Not all purchases are followed by regret (Sweeney et al., 2000), but it is a negative emotion linking current purchasing to possible future re-purchasing. It arises due to the comparative aspect between the selected option and the ones that have been abandoned. Regret is expressed as a reverse of satisfaction (Tsiros & Mittal, 2000).

Though the literature on regret in decision-making is abundant, empirical research that focuses on post-purchase regret caused by impulsive buying is still scant (Kumar et al., 2020). It was reported that 80% of consumers experience negative effects from their purchases, which vary depending on the situational context (Rook & Fisher, 1995). Moreover, the modern era has been accompanied by the emergence of the phenomenon of FOMO, or the fear of missing out, which makes the younger generation worry about falling behind the latest trends (San et al., 2019). On the psychological level, FOMO can trigger impulsive buying or panic buying without rational control (Mudjiyanto et al., 2025). As a form of a spontaneous act, impulsive buying, including panic buying behavior by hoarding goods, has become a frequent psychological phenomenon in Indonesia. Empirical findings show that FOMO has the potential to encourage impulsive buying through consumers' urge to follow trends, maintain social image, and respond to limited-time promotions (Putri et al., 2024). This research is urgently needed because this phenomenon is intensifying with the digital era, as it accelerates information on trends and increases the risk of regret, thus disturbing psychological well-being, especially that of the young and vulnerable to digital influences.

The research subjects are chosen to be Generation Z, born between 1997 and 2012, due to its group being the most active on social media and vulnerable to phenomena such as FOMO, social media addiction, and social anxiety. Generation Z is the demographic that spends the most time connected with social media every day (Nurlina et al., 2022), making them ideal subjects for research on the impact of digital technology on impulsive buying and post-purchase regret. They differ from similar subjects like Generation Y or

general consumers in terms of the intensity of using social media, which for Generation Z is not only for educational purposes but also for the affirmation of existence (Nurlina et al., 2022). Thus, this generation becomes more vulnerable to social comparison and anxiety than other generations that may have been exposed less intensely to the digital trend. Selection was also influenced by findings that Generation Z often experiences social anxiety due to excessive use of social media (Pertiwi et al., 2022), which differentiates them from other age groups, whose coping mechanisms against online social pressure are different.

This study investigates the effects of FOMO, Social Media Addiction, and Social Anxiety on Post Purchase Regret, using Impulsive Buying as a mediating variable. FOMO, which is the main independent variable, motivates people to make impulsive purchases so that they are not left behind, thereby increasing the chances of post-purchase regret (Özen & Hus, 2025). Social Media Addiction reinforces impulsive tendencies through the usage of social media out of compulsion, which in turn brings forth spontaneous purchase and, hence, regret (Nikolinakou et al., 2024). Social Media Addiction has two major factors, namely weak behavioral control, which makes it very difficult for the individual to keep his usage of social media in order with respect to time and intensity, and dysfunctional behavior which involves the maladaptive use of social media to satisfy emotional or social needs. Such emotions increase the risk of impulsive buying. Social Anxiety will interact with both variables to result in an individual getting dependent on social media to cope with anxiety; such a situation enhances impulsive buying as a way of coping with the problem (Gao et al., 2022). Impulse Buying serves as a mediator connecting the independent variable to Post-Purchase Regret, wherein such impulsive purchases most of the time create regret among buyers due to a lack of rational thinking (Kumar et al., 2020). This interaction demonstrates that FOMO and Social Anxiety aggravate the effect by compelling an individual to follow trends and recommendations, while Social Media Addiction results in excessive and obsessive use of social media (Özen & Hus, 2025).

Although FOMO, social media addiction, and impulsive buying have been discussed in previous literature, such as the study by Özen & Hus (2025) which found that the influence of FOMO and social media addiction on impulsive buying and regret, as well as Nikolinakou et al. (2024) looking at the impact of social media addiction on impulsive buying, the research gap in this study is related to not specifically delving into the mediating role of Impulsive Buying within the scope of Generation Z in Indonesia. Recent studies like Saibaba (2024) investigated the relationship between smartphone addiction, social media, FOMO, and compulsive buying; it has not integrated Social Anxiety as an additional variable and Post Purchase Regret as the main outcome. Previous studies, such as Putri et al. (2024) and Nurmalasari et al. (2024), discuss FOMO and impulsive buying but do not include a comprehensive analysis of the interaction of the

three independent variables with mediation in the Generation Z population. This study strives to fill that gap with a more holistic approach.

This gap in research emerged from the limitation of previous studies that have not fully integrated FOMO, Social Media Addiction, Social Anxiety, Impulsive Buying as mediation, and Post Purchase Regret in Generation Z, especially in the Indonesian context. The uniqueness of this study is a comprehensive mediation approach with a focus on digital psychological interaction among Generation Z; this is different from previous studies, which were often separate or less specific for this population. This research will add value by increasing knowledge about the negative impact of social media on consumer welfare, which can be used as a basis for developing regulations or social awareness campaigns by digital platforms and governments and helping consumers avoid post-purchase regret. This study aims to find out how FOMO, Social Media Addiction, Social Anxiety, Impulsive Buying, and Post Purchase Regret interrelate, thus providing evidence-based insights into the influence of digital technology on contemporary consumerism and testing the hypothesis that the three independent variables positively influence Impulsive Buying, which in turn increases Post Purchase Regret. Hence, this research attempts to enrich consumer behavior literature and propose pragmatic recommendations for mitigating psychological risks in the digital era.

Based on those phenomena, the research is essential to analyze a variety of factors influencing post-purchase regret, especially among Generation Z in Indonesia, who are highly active in using social media. The following hypotheses are thus proposed for testing in this study:

The relationship between FOMO and impulsive buying

FOMO is the level of anxiety social media users undergo when they perceive that they are missing opportunities or are not connecting with others in the ways that they potentially should be (Alutaybi et al., 2019). The feeling of being left behind, incomplete, and without experience has also been interpreted as the meaning of this concept (Özbakir, 2021). Psychologically, FOMO is a state of anxiety described by one's constant worry about the potential loss of connection to the various events, experiences, and social interactions occurring around an individual (Lau et al., 2023). This fear of missing out drives many individuals to make impulsive purchases, which are unplanned purchases (Kamalia et al., 2022). Research on FOMO (Fear Of Missing Out) consistently describes it as a form of anxiety arising from the perception of missing social opportunities, connections, and experiences, often leading to feelings of being left behind or incomplete, and driving impulsive purchasing behaviors. Based on these findings, this study hypothesizes that:

Hypothesis 1: FOMO has a positive effect on impulsive buying

The relationship between Social Media Addiction and Impulsive Buying

Social media addiction is an important factor that significantly influences impulsive buying behavior, defined as excessive use of platforms to the point of forming habitual patterns (Zivnuska et al., 2019). This addiction is characterized by two main components, namely weak behavioral control, where individuals find it difficult to control the duration and frequency of social media use and experience high anxiety (Hou et al., 2019), and dysfunctional behavior, where excessive use begins to interfere with other important aspects of life. The higher intensity of interaction with online content, which is an effect of addiction, significantly increases an individual's tendency to make impulsive purchases. The literature consistently supports that social media addiction has a positive effect on impulsive buying behavior (Nikolinakou et al., 2024), even acting as a mediating variable in this relationship. Research indicates that social media addiction, characterized by excessive use forming habitual patterns, weak behavioral control leading to difficulty managing usage and heightened anxiety, and dysfunctional behaviors that disrupt daily life, significantly boosts impulsive buying behavior through increased online content interaction, with literature confirming its positive impact and potential mediating role in related relationships. Based on these findings, this study formulates the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 2.1: Weak Behavioral Control has a positive effect on Impulsive Buying
Hypothesis 2.2: Dysfunctional Behavior has a positive effect on Impulsive Buying

The relationship between Social Anxiety and Impulsive Buying

Social anxiety is a cognitive response that can be defined by excessive fear and embarrassment when interacting with people one does not know well. Individuals with this disorder tend to compare themselves with other people and feel unable to rise to their standards. Anxiety, as a form of negative emotion, triggers impulsive buying behavior. Consumers often relieve anxiety through impulsive buying. For instance, Ferraro et al. (2005) found that anxiety can increase the urge to buy goods or consume. Similarly, Gao et al. (2022) stated that anxiety makes consumers prone to impulsive buying. Research on social anxiety, characterized by excessive fear, embarrassment in unfamiliar social interactions, and self-comparison leading to feelings of inadequacy, indicates that this negative emotion acts as a trigger for impulsive buying behavior, with consumers often using such purchases to alleviate anxiety, as supported by studies showing anxiety increases the urge to buy and makes individuals more prone to impulsive consumption. Therefore, based on the findings presented above, this study hypothesizes that:

Hypothesis 3: Social Anxiety has a positive effect on Impulsive Buying

The relationship between Impulsive Buying and Post Purchase Regret

After purchase, consumers evaluate the suitability of the product's benefits to the price paid (Hoyer & MacInnis, 2010). Post-purchase regret occurs when the product's performance does not meet expectations or is considered worse than alternative products that were not chosen. This regret is even stronger if the decision is perceived as

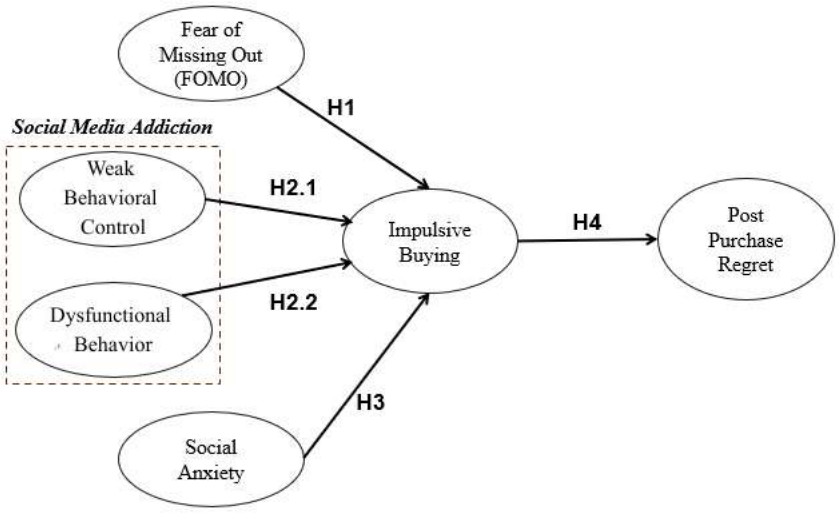
irreversible or has negative consequences (Ratnaningsih & Halidy, 2022). Impulsive purchases are often associated with regret due to a lack of careful consideration. After an impulsive purchase, consumers evaluate their satisfaction and regret (Kumar et al., 2020). The majority of consumers experience negative effects, such as financial risk and guilt (Rook, 1987), which lead to dissatisfaction and regret (Ahmad et al., 2019). In fact, a survey shows that 62.2% of consumers are dissatisfied with their impulsive purchases (Hung et al., 2007). In general, the higher the intensity of impulsive buying, the greater the regret and the lower the satisfaction felt by consumers. Research on post-purchase regret highlights that consumers evaluate product suitability after buying, experiencing stronger regret when performance falls short of expectations or alternatives, especially in irreversible decisions, with impulsive purchases often leading to dissatisfaction, guilt, financial risks, and regret due to lack of consideration, as evidenced by high dissatisfaction rates and a direct link between impulsive buying intensity and increased regret alongside decreased satisfaction. Based on these findings, this study formulates the following hypothesis:

Hipotesis 4: Impulsive Buying has a positive effect on Post Purchase Regret

METHOD

This research has been designed to objectively measure and find the relationships among variables. The quantitative approach is used to discover how FOMO, social media addiction, and social anxiety have an impact on post-purchase regret, evaluating the influence of impulse buying on post-purchase regret. The research population targeted Generation Z, those born between 1997 and 2012. Non-probability sampling with a purposive sampling technique was used in this study, with the determination of respondents based on criteria such as belonging to the Gen Z category, having been actively using social media for approximately one month, and having conducted online purchases at least twice a week. Minimum targeted sample size is 209 respondents, where the consideration in determining sample size follows Hair et al. (2022) recommendations stating that the minimum sample size of SEM is 5 to 10 times the number of indicators in the research instrument. Data analysis used variance-based SEM through Partial Least Squares version 3.0. Measurement modeling in this study is applied to establish the validity and reliability of the items used, while a structural model is applied to examine the causality by testing the hypotheses through a predictive framework. This allows a deep exploration of the psychological mechanisms driving digital-age consumer behavior.

Picture 1. Conceptual Structure



RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Respondent Characteristics

Data collection in this study was conducted through an online survey method using a questionnaire distributed through the Google Forms platform. The questionnaire was distributed directly to respondents through social media, specifically targeting Generation Z who actively participate in these platforms and have experience shopping online. Based on the results of the questionnaire distribution, data was successfully obtained from 209 respondents. Of the total, female respondents dominated with 125 people (59.8%). The survey results of 209 respondents showed that the majority of respondents were born in the 2003–2007 range, with a percentage of 75.6%. This birth year group was the most dominant in the survey. The 1997–2002 birth year group ranked second with a percentage of 17.7%, followed by the 2008–2012 birth year group with a percentage of 6.7%. In terms of occupation, the data indicated that the majority of respondents, with a percentage of 63.3%, were students. Civil servants (PNS) ranked second with a percentage of 10%. Other job categories, such as private employees, entrepreneurs, and other occupations, each accounted for less than 10% of the respondents in this study, thus not contributing significantly to the composition of the respondents in this study. This indicates that the respondents were predominantly students. Income data from 209 respondents indicates that the majority of respondents have incomes below IDR 500,000 (36.4%), which most likely came from the Student group. Financial limitations coupled with high exposure to social media make this group more vulnerable to FOMO, social anxiety, and impulsive purchasing behavior that can result in post-purchase regret. However, the same pattern of behavior was also found in those with higher incomes, showing that the effect of social media on impulse buying occurs at all levels of buying power among Generation Z.

Table 1. Respondent Characteristics

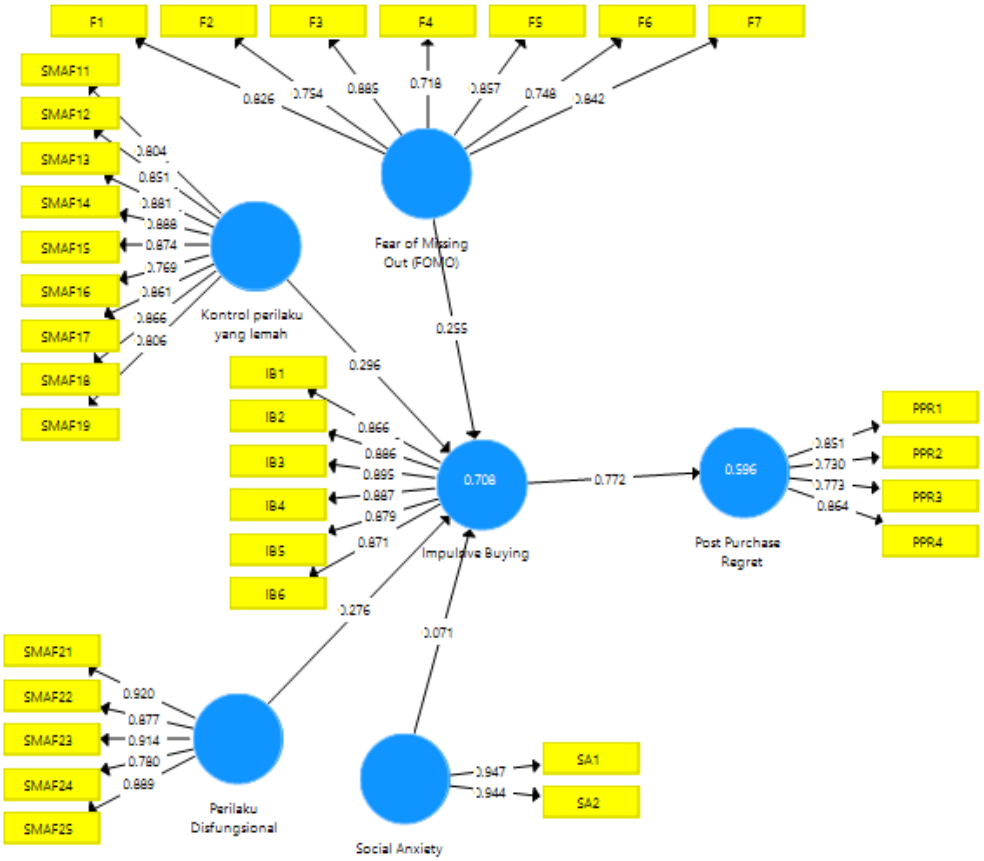
Characteristics	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Man	84	40,20%
	Female	125	59,80%
Year of Birth	1997 - 2002	37	17,70%
	2003 - 2007	158	75,60%
	2008 - 2012	14	6,70%
Work	Students	133	63,60%
	Civil servant	21	10%
	Entrepreneur	18	8,60%
	Private sector employee	33	15,80%
	Other	4	1,90%
Monthly Income	< Rp. 500.000	76	36,40%
	Rp. 500.000 - Rp. 1.000.000	42	20,10%
	Rp. 1.000.001 - Rp. 2.000.000	38	18,20%
	Rp. 2.000.001 - Rp. 3.000.000	15	7,20%
	Rp. 3.000.001 - Rp. 3.500.000	38	18,20%

Source: Processed data, 2025

Evaluation of the Reflective Measurement Model (Outer Model)

Construct Validity

Picture 2. Measurement Model Output Display



Convergent Validity

Convergent validity is related to the principle that each indicator used to measure a construct should have a high level of correlation with each other. A construct is declared to meet convergent validity if the factor loading value is greater than 0.7 and the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value exceeds 0.5. Based on the results of the convergent validity test, all indicators in this study showed valid results because they had factor loading values above 0.7 and AVE above 0.5, as shown in Table 2 and Table 3 below:

Table 2. Loading Factor

Variabel	Faktor Loading	Information	Variabel	Faktor Loading	Information
Fear of Missing Out (FOMO)	0,826 0,754 0,885 0,718 0,857 0,748 0,842	Valid	Weak behavioral control	0,804 0,851 0,881 0,888 0,874 0,769 0,861 0,866 0,806	Valid
Social Anxiety	0,947 0,944	Valid	Post Purchase Regret	0,851 0,730 0,773 0,864	Valid
Impulsive Buying	0,866 0,886 0,895 0,887 0,879 0,871	Valid	Dysfunctional Behavior	0,820 0,875 0,813 0,836 0,824	Valid

Source: Processed data, 2025

Table 3. AVE value

Variabel	AVE	Information
Fear of Missing Out (FOMO)	0,650	Valid
Weak behavioral control	0,714	Valid
Dysfunctional Behavior	0,770	Valid
Social Anxiety	0,893	Valid
Impulsive Buying	0,776	Valid
Post Purchase Regret	0,650	Valid

Source: Processed data, 2025

Discriminant Validity Test

Cross Loading

A good research model must have good discriminant validity if each indicator's loading value for a latent variable has the highest loading value compared to other latent variables. Therefore, it can be concluded that all indicators comprising each variable in this study have the highest outer loading value for the variable they form. The discriminant validity test is considered valid if the cross-loading value is >0.70 (Ghozali, 2021). The results of the discriminant validity test can be seen in Table 4 below:

Table 4. Cross Loading

	Fear of Missing Out (FOMO)	Impulsive Buying	Weak behavioral control	Dysfunctional Behavior	Post Purchase Regret	Social Anxiety
F1	0.826	0.709	0.718	0.791	0.728	0.546
F2	0.754	0.656	0.723	0.703	0.699	0.928
F3	0.885	0.686	0.715	0.784	0.699	0.576
F4	0.718	0.492	0.561	0.61	0.548	0.462
F5	0.857	0.643	0.662	0.763	0.671	0.552
F6	0.748	0.615	0.592	0.625	0.586	0.442
F7	0.842	0.66	0.664	0.735	0.678	0.514
IB1	0.705	0.866	0.706	0.701	0.666	0.595
IB2	0.648	0.886	0.703	0.669	0.651	0.632
IB3	0.729	0.895	0.713	0.755	0.696	0.574
IB4	0.744	0.887	0.708	0.755	0.682	0.544
IB5	0.706	0.879	0.716	0.714	0.716	0.587
IB6	0.672	0.871	0.657	0.681	0.667	0.499
PPR1	0.662	0.639	0.683	0.67	0.851	0.573
PPR2	0.482	0.474	0.506	0.515	0.73	0.495
PPR3	0.598	0.605	0.804	0.69	0.773	0.501
PPR4	0.847	0.735	0.77	0.902	0.864	0.645
SA1	0.667	0.623	0.651	0.661	0.665	0.947
SA2	0.687	0.604	0.663	0.638	0.642	0.944
SMAF11	0.686	0.674	0.804	0.718	0.688	0.564
SMAF12	0.694	0.653	0.851	0.717	0.709	0.581
SMAF13	0.800	0.711	0.881	0.795	0.758	0.607
SMAF14	0.773	0.724	0.888	0.771	0.767	0.606
SMAF15	0.764	0.707	0.874	0.782	0.723	0.574
SMAF16	0.598	0.633	0.769	0.653	0.699	0.672
SMAF17	0.643	0.646	0.861	0.705	0.73	0.575
SMAF18	0.692	0.685	0.866	0.763	0.756	0.605
SMAF19	0.603	0.608	0.806	0.695	0.77	0.501

SMAF21	0.866	0.749	0.781	0.92	0.856	0.651
SMAF22	0.8	0.689	0.719	0.877	0.721	0.527
SMAF23	0.811	0.784	0.797	0.914	0.795	0.551
SMAF24	0.652	0.595	0.691	0.78	0.691	0.671
SMAF25	0.771	0.718	0.820	0.889	0.787	0.635

Source: Processed data, 2025

Fornell-Larcker Criterion

The Fornell-Larcker Criterion is a method used to assess discriminant validity. This method compares the square root of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE). The square root of the construct's AVE > the correlation of the latent variables. Therefore, all variables can be declared valid, as can be seen in Table 5.

Table 5. Fornell-Larcker Criterion

Variabel	Fear of Missing Out (FOMO)	Impulsive Buying	Weak behavioral control	Dysfunctional Behavior	Post Purchase Regret	Social Anxiety
Fear of Missing Out (FOMO)	0.806					
Impulsive Buying	0,797	0,881				
Weak behavioral control	0,804	0,796	0,845			
Dysfunctional Behavior	0,802	0,810	0,809	0,877		
Post Purchase Regret	0,801	0,772	0,807	0,880	0,806	
Social Anxiety	0,716	0,649	0,687	0,687	0,691	0,945

Source: Processed data, 2025

Construct Reliability

The next analytical test is to test the outer model by examining the construct reliability of the latent variables. A reliability test can be considered valid if the Cronbach's alpha value is > 0.60, the composite reliability value is > 0.70, and the rho_A value is > 0.70 (Ghozali, 2021). The Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability, and rho_A values for the variables Fear of Missing Out (FOMO), Impulsive Buying, Weak Behavioral Control, Dysfunctional Behavior, Post-Purchase Regret, and Social Anxiety can be seen in Table 6, and all variable values can be considered reliable.

Table 6. Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability & rho_A

Variabel	***cronbach's alpha***	***composite reliability***	**Rho_A**	**Information**
Fear of Missing Out (FOMO)	0,909	0,928	0,915	reliable
Impulsive Buying	0,942	0,954	0,943	reliable

Weak behavioral control	0,924	0,957	0,951	reliable
Dysfunctional Behavior	0,924	0,943	0,932	reliable
Post Purchase Regret	0,821	0,881	0,840	reliable
Social Anxiety	0,881	0,944	0,881	reliable

Source: Processed data, 2025

Collinearity Statistics (VIF)

In the Collinearity Statistics test, the criterion used is that the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) value must be less than 5. Based on the VIF calculation results, it can be concluded that all variables in this study do not experience multicollinearity problems. These results can be seen in Table 7 below:

Table 7. Collinearity Statistics (VIF)

	VIF		**VIF**		**VIF**
F1	2,527	IB1	3,159	SMAF11	2,367
F2	1,769	IB2	3,499	SMAF12	3,164
F3	3,366	IB3	3,885	SMAF13	4,427
F4	2,508	IB4	3,461	SMAF14	4,234
F5	3,775	IB5	3,100	SMAF15	3,757
F6	2,258	IB6	3,133	SMAF16	2,139
F7	3,119			SMAF17	3,907
				SMAF18	3,324
				SMAF19	2,591
PPR1	2,126	SA1	2,628	SMAF21	4,332
PPR2	1,653	SA2	2,628	SMAF22	3,261
PPR3	1,609			SMAF23	3,691
PPR4	1,991			SMAF24	1,943
				SMAF25	3,123

Source: Processed data, 2025

Structural Model Evaluation (Inner Model)

R2 Test

The R2 value has three levels: 0.75 is considered strong, 0.50 is considered moderate, and 0.25 is considered weak (Ghozali, 2021). Table 9 shows that the R2 value for the Impulsive Buying variable is 0.730, indicating a relatively strong relationship between the exogenous and endogenous variables. This indicates that the Post Purchase Regret variable can be influenced by the Impulsive Buying variable by 0.596, or 59.6%.

Table 8. R2 Test

	R^2	Information
Impulsive Buying	0,708	Moderate
Post Purchase Regret	0,596	Moderate

Source: Processed data, 2025

F^2 Test

The F2 value can indicate whether the latent variable indicator has a large, medium, or weak influence at the structural level. Ghozali (2021) states that the value has three levels: 0.02 is small, 0.15 is medium, and 0.35 is large. The F2 test values can be seen in Table 9 below:

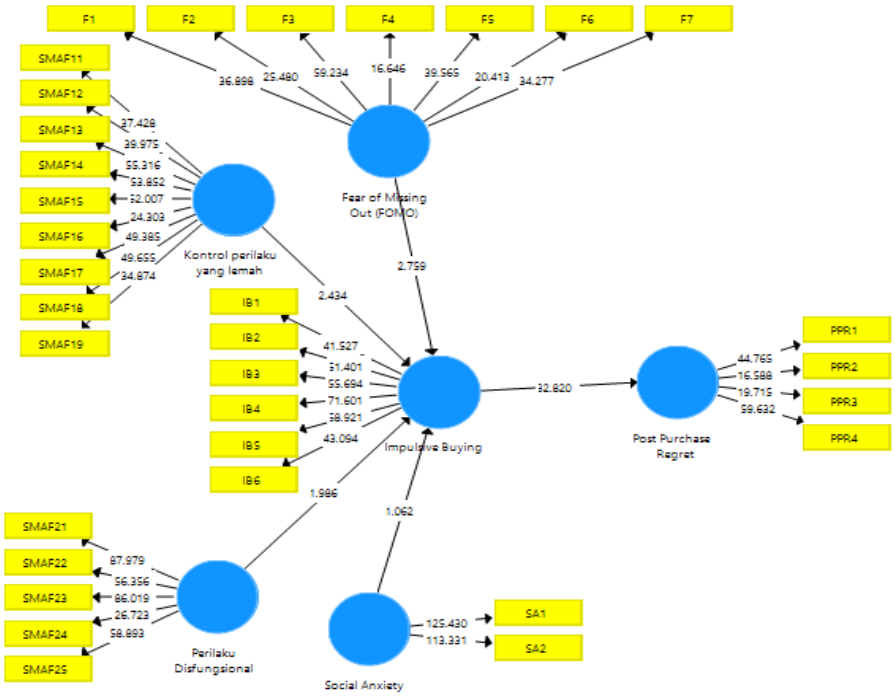
Table 9. F^2 Test

Influence of variables	F^2	Keterangan
Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) - Impulsive Buying	0,040	strong
Weak behavioral control - Impulsive Buying	0,066	strong
Dysfunctional Behavior - Impulsive Buying	0,039	strong
Social Anxiety - Impulsive Buying	0,008	weak
Impulsive Buying - Post Purchase Regret	1,476	strong

Source: Processed data, 2025

Hypothesis Testing

Picture 3. Structural Model Output Results



Direct Effect

Ghozali (2021) stated that hypothesis testing can be seen from the results of data analysis. The hypothesis will be accepted if the t-statistic value is > 1.96 and the P-value is < 0.05%. Table 10 shows that the direct relationships between FOMO and Impulsive Buying, Weak Behavioral Control and Impulsive Buying, Dysfunctional Behavior and Impulsive Buying, and the relationship between Impulsive Buying and Post-Purchase Regret are significant and accepted because they meet the existing requirements. Meanwhile, the direct relationship between Social Anxiety and Impulsive Buying is declared insignificant and rejected because it does not meet the existing requirements.

Table 10. *Direct Effect*

Hypothesis	coefficient	t-statistic	p-value	sig	note
Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) - Impulsive Buying	0,255	2,759	0,006	significant	accepted
Impulsive Buying - Post Purchase Regret	0,772	32,820	0,000	significant	accepted
Weak behavioral control - Impulsive Buying	0,296	2,434	0,015	significant	accepted
Dysfunctional Behavior - Impulsive Buying	0,276	1,986	0,048	significant	accepted
Social Anxiety - Impulsive Buying	0,071	1,062	0,289	not significant	rejected

Source: Processed data, 2025

The following are the test results for each hypothesis based on the Beta Coefficient, t-statistic, and p-value. These can be seen in Table 11 below:

Table 11. Hypothesis Testing Results

Hypothesis		Information
H1	FOMO has a positive effect on impulsive buying	Supported
H2.1	Weak behavioral control has a positive effect on impulsive buying.	Supported
H2.2	Dysfunctional Behavior has a positive effect on Impulsive Buying	Supported
H3	Social Anxiety has no positive effect on Impulsive Buying	Not supported
H4	Impulsive Buying has a positive effect on Post Purchase Regret	Supported

Source: Processed data, 2025

DISCUSSION

H1: FOMO has a positive effect on Impulsive Buying

The analysis test results show that the FOMO variable has a positive effect on the Impulsive Buying variable. With a beta coefficient value of 0.255 (positive); a t-value of 2.759 > 1.96; and a p-value of 0.006 < 0.05 (significant). Therefore, it can be concluded that the first hypothesis is supported. These results are in agreement with and further support the conclusions of a comprehensive global literature review by Kamalia et al. (2022), who reviewed many studies dealing with the effects of FOMO on consumer behavior. Their analysis brought forward that FOMO is indeed one of the significant drivers of impulsive purchases, especially within digital environments where social cues lead to strong feelings of missing out. Because this research lends further weight to prior

studies of this nature, the current findings extend its general applicability to the dataset analyzed herein and further reinforce the generalizability of FOMO as a key factor in modern consumer psychology. Overall, this hypothesis support contributes to a growing body of evidence that FOMO not only influences individual behaviors but also has broader implications for marketing strategies, mental health interventions, and economic decision-making. Additional hypotheses or variables tested in the full discussion could apply similarly detailed breakdowns to test the statistical robustness and theoretical backing.

H2.1: Weak behavioral control has a positive effect on impulsive buying

The results of the analysis test show that the weak behavioral control variable has a positive effect on the Impulsive Buying variable. With a beta coefficient value of 0.296 (positive); t-value 2.434 > 1.96; and p-value 0.015 < 0.05 (significant). So it can be concluded that the hypothesis of the first two factors is supported. These findings align closely with and support research conducted by Hou et al. (2019), who looked into the interplay between behavioral control and consumer impulsivity in social media. Their study showed that when self-regulation is deficient, as expressed in difficulties in controlling the duration and frequency of use, individuals suffer increased anxiety and are more prone to impulsive purchases. Validating this previous work, the current results support the idea that Weak Behavioral Control represents a critical mediator in digital environments, where unregulated online habits amplify impulsive tendencies. This speaks to broader issues of behavioral economics and digital well-being, implying that treatments geared toward increasing self-control (e.g., mindfulness apps or usage limits) may help mitigate such risks. In the context of the entire hypothesis discussion, these outcomes build on the earlier FOMO findings and represent additive, interlinked psychological factors driving impulsive buying; they emphasize the importance of integrating behavioral control measures into consumer behavior models to give better insights. If further hypotheses involving additional variables were analyzed, similar detailed assessments would be needed to evaluate their relative influence and theoretical underpinning.

H2.2: Dysfunctional behavior has a positive effect on impulsive buying

The results of the analysis test indicate that the Dysfunctional Behavior variable has a positive effect on the Impulsive Buying variable. With a beta coefficient value of 0.276 (positive); t-value 1.986 > 1.96; and p-value 0.048 < 0.05 (significant). Therefore, it can be concluded that the second hypothesis of the second factor is supported. These findings thus support and extend the work of Hou et al. (2019), who explored the interrelation between social media addiction and consumer impulsivity. In fact, Hou et al., in a study released in the Journal of Business Research, noted that excessive use of social media when it begins to interfere with daily life-be it at work, in relationships, or personal well being fuels more intense interactions with online content. Such intensification, as a manifestation of addiction, significantly enhances an individual's propensity to buy impulsively, often by means of increased exposure to promotion stimuli or reduced cognitive restraint. Our findings align closely with this: the positive beta coefficient and statistical significance echo the empirical evidence brought by Hou et al. (2019). that dysfunctional behaviors strengthen the risks of impulsive buying. Besides this, it endorses the broader literature on behavioral addictions, such as the works of Kuss & Griffiths (2017) on internet addiction; these highlight how compulsive online behaviors

disrupt executive functions and promote impulsive actions, including spending. Thus, our findings provide further evidence for prior studies, adding to a growing body of evidence linking digital dysfunction to real-world consumer outcomes and emphasizing the need for interventions targeting the overuse of social media to mitigate impulsive buying tendencies. Overall, this supported hypothesis points out the importance of monitoring dysfunctional behavior in digital contexts in order to avoid negative economic and psychological consequences.

H3: Social Anxiety has no positive effect on Impulsive Buying

The results of the analysis test show that the Social Anxiety variable has a positive effect on the Impulsive Buying variable. With a beta coefficient value of 0.071 (positive); t-value 1.062 < 1.96; and p-value 0.289 > 0.05 (not significant). So it can be concluded that the third hypothesis is not supported. This contradicts the findings of Ferraro et al. (2005), who identified that anxiety-in a wider sense, possibly including social anxiety-can trigger or amplify impulsive buying behaviors. With its basis possibly in psychological theories such as escape theory, where individuals engage in shopping to cope with negative emotions, their study suggested a causal relationship where anxiety serves as a motivator for consumption. However, no meaningful evidence for this is evident from the current results, and thus suggests possible limitations in the findings of Ferraro et al., such as small effects, specific cultural contexts, or methodological differences-for example, their study may have made use of anxiety measures or experimental designs that can enhance the effect. Instead, these findings align more strongly with research that questions or fails to find a strong, direct relationship between anxiety and impulsive buying. For example, they support studies like those by Rook & Fisher (1995) who emphasized that impulsive buying is often driven by situational factors (e.g., store environments, promotions) or personality traits (e.g., low self-control) rather than emotional states like anxiety in isolation. More recent work, such as the meta-analysis by Amos et al. (2014) on consumer impulsivity, similarly found inconsistent evidence for anxiety as a key predictor, with many studies reporting non-significant or weak associations, especially when controlling for moderators like gender or income. This would suggest that the results presented here add to a growing body of literature that treats anxiety's role in impulsive buying as context-dependent and not universally applicable; this perhaps supports researchers who favor complex, multifactor models of consumer behavior over simplistic emotional triggers. In sum, while Ferraro et al. (2005) advanced anxiety as a driver of impulsive buying, the nonsignificant findings here support studies downplaying its influence and call for further investigation into alternative predictors or moderators to advance the understanding of impulsive buying dynamics. If this is part of the discussion of a greater hypothesis, similar in-depth breakdowns could be carried out for other variables, so that consistency exists.

H4: Impulsive Buying has a positive effect on Post Purchase Regret

The results of the analysis test show that the Impulsive Buying variable has a positive effect on the Post Purchase Regret variable. With a beta coefficient value of 0.772 (positive); t-value 32.820> 1.96; and p-value 0.000 < 0.05 (significant). Therefore, it can be concluded that the fourth hypothesis is supported. The results confirm and extend the study conducted by Hung et al. (2007) on consumer dissatisfaction due to impulsive purchases. In a study published in the Journal of Consumer Affairs, these researchers surveyed consumers and reported that 62.2% felt dissatisfied or regretful after indulging

in impulsive buying behavior. This falls directly in line with the present findings, as both studies illustrate how impulsivity generates post-purchase dissonance, which gives validity to the fact that rash, emotional choices lead to low satisfaction and high regret. Similarly, the present findings support broader literature, including Rook (1987), where it is stated that such impulsive activities often induce negative affective experiences, such as guilt and regret. Also, more contemporary research, such as that conducted by Verplanken & Herabadi (2001), further supports this in stating that impulsive buyers are susceptible to regret due to cognitive dissonance, in which the incongruence between impulsive acts and reflective considerations enhances negative feelings. Overall, this body of research, ranging from seminal theories to empirical confirmations, provides a strong basis for interpreting the current hypothesis as supported, drawing on the continuing connection between impulsivity and regret in consumer psychology.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

This study analyzes the impact of digital psychological factors, namely Fear of Missing Out (FOMO), Social Media Addiction (Weak Behavioral Control and Dysfunctional Behavior), and Social Anxiety, on Impulsive Buying and Post-Purchase Regret in Generation Z. The main results indicate that digital triggers have a significant influence on impulse buying. Specifically, FOMO and two factors of Social Media Addiction (Weak Behavioral Control and Dysfunctional Behavior) have a positive and significant influence on Impulsive Buying. This finding underscores how anxiety due to the fear of missing out and compulsive social media use are proven to strongly drive Generation Z to make unplanned purchases.

Next, this study examined the impact of these purchasing behaviors on emotional consequences. The results indicate that Impulsive Buying has a positive and significant influence on Post-Purchase Regret. This means that the more frequently Generation Z makes impulse purchases, the greater their post-purchase regret. Conversely, Social Anxiety was found to have no significant influence on Impulsive Buying. The conclusions of this study indicate that impulsive buying behavior is a crucial link connecting digital pressure to the detriment of consumer psychological well-being (post-purchase regret), making it a key focus for risk mitigation in Generation Z.

For future research, it is recommended to expand the population coverage to include Generation Y groups and consumers across countries, and to employ probabilistic sampling techniques such as stratified random sampling to increase external validity and generalizability of the findings. The use of a longitudinal design is considered relevant for monitoring the temporal dynamics of consumer behavior and identifying long-term causal relationships. The addition of moderating variables such as self-esteem and hedonic motivation, as well as investigating the influence of time-limited promotions, has the potential to enrich understanding of the psychological mechanisms underlying consumer behavior. Integrating quantitative methods with qualitative approaches, such as in-depth interviews or big data analysis from social media, can minimize biases arising from self-report techniques. Furthermore, a focus on intervention studies, such as experiments to evaluate the effectiveness of educational campaigns or the implementation of social media access restriction technology, is expected to produce more applicable policy recommendations for stakeholders, including regulators and digital platform providers.

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