
PRODUCT-RELATED TIKTOK CONTENT STIMULI AND EMOTIONAL MECHANISMS DRIVING GEN Z IMPULSE BUYING

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze external factors influencing the online impulse buying behavior of Generation Z in Indonesia through product-related video content on the TikTok platform, using the Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) theoretical framework. The stimulus variables studied include time pressure, quantity pressure, economic benefits, social influence, visuals, and personalization, while the organism variables consist of arousal and pleasure. The research method uses Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) to test the relationship between variables based on data obtained from Gen Z TikTok users. The results indicate that both time pressure ($\beta = 0.175$; $p < 0.001$) and quantity pressure ($\beta = 0.221$; $p < 0.001$) exert a significant influence on increasing arousal, yet their effects on pleasure are statistically insignificant ($p > 0.05$). These results suggest that such external pressures primarily stimulate emotional arousal rather than enhancing hedonic feelings of pleasure in the shopping experience. In contrast, economic benefits, social influence, visuals, and personalization have a positive effect on both emotional aspects. Furthermore, arousal and pleasure both have a significant influence on online impulse buying behavior, with arousal showing a stronger influence. These findings confirm that psychological mechanisms involving emotional responses play a significant role in driving impulse buying in Gen Z, and provide practical implications for businesses in designing product content-based digital marketing strategies on TikTok.

Keywords: Impulse Buying, Arousal, Pleasure, Product-Related Content Stimuli, TikTok

INTRODUCTION

In the 21st century, online shopping has evolved into a vital component of Indonesia's social, cultural, and economic spheres. This growth is driven by the rapid advancement of digital technology, which has made internet access faster and more convenient. According to a 2024 survey by APJII, Indonesia recorded 221.6 million internet users out of a total population of 278.7 million, a development that drives the growth of e-commerce, which is

projected to reach 99.1 million users by 2029 and further expand to 125.9 million users by 2030, with penetration increasing from 43.7% in 2025 to 48.1% in 2030 (Statista, 2025). This growth is driven not only by more equitable internet access but also by social commerce innovations, one of which is TikTok, which is now a dominant platform by providing an interactive shopping experience based on real-time short video content.

TikTok has emerged as a dominant social commerce platform

with 1.8 billion global users by 2024 (Kalodata, 2024). Indonesia is listed as TikTok's largest market with 157.6 million users, the majority of whom are Generation Z and Millennials (Kompas Tekno, 2024; DataReportal, 2024). The TikTok Shop x Tokopedia feature allows direct transactions from content, thus encouraging the impulse buying phenomenon. This phenomenon is even stronger among Generation Z, known as the "digital-conscious generation" (Reinikainen et al., 2020), as they are raised in a digital era that provides immediate access to technology, information, and online entertainment. Their high level of curiosity makes Gen Z actively engage with digital content, including marketing videos on TikTok, which has been proven to enhance their level of engagement positively (Rahayu et al., 2025). Gen Z is more prone to impulse buying when exposed to creative promotional content on TikTok, in line with findings Leng, (2024) which states that impulsive consumption is positively correlated with short video-based marketing strategies.

However, the increasing phenomenon of impulse buying among Gen Z has raised issues related to unplanned consumption triggered by "toxic TikTok" content, discount promotions, and the influence of digital communities, as has been studied in a number of studies (Mona Liska & Nur Utami, 2023; Gozali & Pamungkas, 2025). This impulsive buying phenomenon among Gen Z occurs through product content on TikTok, which shapes preferences and purchasing decisions through unboxings, hauls, short reviews, and tutorials. By definition, online impulse

buying refers to an unplanned or spontaneous purchase made without any prior intention or preparation (Fitriani et al., 2024). Consumers often make purchases subconsciously because they're attracted to a product, without considering its impact. This phenomenon is further reinforced by the high duration of TikTok usage, where a Jakpat survey recorded that 47% of 1,513 Gen Z respondents accessed social media for more than an hour per session (GoodStats Data, 2024). High usage duration has been shown to increase consumer behavior (Denok Wigati et al., 2022), where the longer someone accesses social media, the greater the chance they will be influenced by marketing content and make a purchase.

The Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) theoretical framework describes the psychological process underlying this behavior, in which external stimuli affect an individual's internal psychological state (organism). This emotional response then drives impulsive buying behavior. Ngo et al., (2024) Identifying various external stimuli such as time pressure, quantity pressure, economic benefits, social influence, visuals, and sounds that influence impulsive behavior through emotional reactions of arousal and pleasure. Previous studies have emphasized the significant role of time pressure, quantity pressure, and economic benefits in triggering impulsive buying (Y. Xu et al., 2023; Tamara, 2024), as well as the importance of visual content and storytelling to increase pleasure. However, the literature shows inconsistencies, particularly regarding the influence of economic benefits on

pleasure and visuals on arousal. Ngo et al., (2024) found that economic benefits increased arousal, thus triggering impulse buying, but did not always have a significant impact on pleasure, while visual stimuli were shown to increase both. Conversely, Lamis et al., (2022) shows that economic benefits can influence pleasure through promotional mechanisms such as flash sales, while visuals have not been shown to influence arousal.

A substantial amount of research has explored the influence of personalization within short-form video content, especially in terms of its capacity to enhance content relevance and stimulate impulse purchasing behavior. Personalization has been found to elevate perceived consumer value by delivering recommendations tailored to individual preferences, thereby increasing the likelihood of unplanned purchases (Kalaighnam et al., 2018; Ho and Lim, 2018). Personalized recommendations significantly influence impulse purchases, underscoring the importance of product customization (Barauskaitė, 2025), thus emphasizing the urgency of adapting products to individual preferences (He et al., 2024). Thus, this study offers novelty by placing personalization as one of the main stimuli in the SOR framework in the context of TikTok product content, and examining its influence on arousal, pleasure, and impulse buying behavior of Generation Z in Indonesia.

Addressing this research gap, the present study seeks to comprehensively investigate the impact of external stimuli—namely time pressure, quantity pressure, economic benefits, social influence, visuals, and

personalization—on arousal and pleasure, as well as their subsequent effects on Generation Z's online impulse buying behavior through the lens of the SOR framework. The novelty of this study lies in its focus on the TikTok platform in Indonesia through the analysis of product-related content videos, which differentiates it from previous studies examining Shopee Video in Vietnam (Ngo et al., 2024). Beyond the variation in geographical context, this study introduces personalization as an additional variable to further explain impulse buying behavior and incorporates demographic control variables to offer a more comprehensive analysis compared to previous research. From a practical standpoint, the findings are expected to provide strategic insights for businesses in developing effective digital marketing strategies tailored to the characteristics of Generation Z, while also contributing to the growing body of literature on digital consumer behavior in the social commerce era.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Stimulus-Organism-Response

(SOR) Theory. According to Mehrabian & Russell, (1974), the Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) Theory states that external stimuli influence emotions (pleasure and arousal) which then shape behavioral responses, after Russell (1980) removed the dominance dimension because it was deemed less relevant. This theory shows the relationship between stimuli (such as external factors) that influence organisms (such as individual emotions) and a person's response to the stimulus (such as individual behavior) (Zheng et al., 2019). Previous research has applied the S-O-R model

to explain impulse buying behavior on the TikTok platform (Tee et al., 2023; Kim et al., 2025). Considering the characteristics of the short video-based online shopping environment, the stimuli in this study consist of time pressure, quantity pressure, economic benefits, social influence, visuals, and personalization. The organism is represented by arousal and pleasure as emotional responses of consumers, while the final response is online impulse buying in Generation Z. This study emphasizes the interrelationship between these variables in explaining the dynamics of impulsive behavior on the TikTok platform. In addition, this research highlights the significance of comprehending the simultaneous interactions among these variables within the setting of product-related video content on TikTok, providing a comprehensive perspective on the mechanisms that drive impulsive buying behavior in today's digital environment.

Time Pressure. Time Pressure is a condition when someone feels pressured by time due to the limited duration available to analyze information or make decisions. Zinn, (2008) states that time pressure makes consumers anxious and rushed, so they rely on instinct and experience to make decisions Binbin et al., (2023) shows that under time pressure, consumers simplify decisions by prioritizing important attributes and ignoring less relevant information. Time pressure creates a perception among consumers that opportunities to obtain discounted products are scarce, prompting them to make rapid purchase decisions to secure the offer. This heightened sense of urgency stimulates impulsive

buying behavior, driven by the fear of missing out on potential benefits. Time pressure increases impulse buying, as evidenced by live streaming with limited promotions that create a sense of urgency (Sun et al., 2023). In product-related content videos, consumers are also motivated by time-limited promotions.

Quantity Pressure. Quantity pressure is consumer pressure due to limited product availability, which triggers a sense of urgency and prompt purchases without rational consideration. In marketing, this concept is related to scarcity marketing, a strategy that leverages the perception that scarce products are of higher value. Heriyanto et al., (2021) found that a limited-quantity scarcity strategy increases consumers' perceived value and purchase intentions. Worchel et al., (1975) suggests that limited goods are perceived as more valuable than abundant goods. This quantity pressure triggers strong emotional reactions in consumers, encouraging impulse purchases due to the fear of missing out on the opportunity to own the product. Lynn (1991), in his quantitative review of commodity theory, found that scarcity tends to increase the perceived value or attractiveness of a good. Consumers perceive scarce products as more valuable and desirable.

Economic Benefits. Economic benefits refer to consumers' perceptions of financial benefits, such as discounts, cashback, free shipping, coupons, bundling, or limited-time offers. In digital marketing, particularly on TikTok, economic benefits play a key role in attracting consumers, providing direct added value. As part of

utilitarian value, the higher the perceived economic benefits, the stronger the consumer's purchase decision (Adabina & Millanyani, 2025). Promotional strategies are designed to increase the perception of economic value while triggering a positive emotional response (Huang et al., 2018). Research also shows that promotions, positive emotions, motivation, and price perception significantly increase impulse buying (Nuryani et al., 2022), while the combination of product elements, promotion and price can increase consumer satisfaction which ultimately drives purchasing decisions (Aryani et al., 2024).

Social Influence. Social influence can be defined as the extent to which an individual's purchasing decisions and consumption behaviors are affected by the social environment, encompassing interactions with peers, family members, online communities, and opinion leaders or credible sources. According to Ngo et al., (2024) Positive reviews from friends, coworkers, and social media influencers increase impulse buying. Social influence has been shown to be a significant explanatory variable in consumer purchasing behavior (Shrestha, et al. 2023). In the digital ecosystem, consumer reviews or online consumer reviews have a significant influence on impulse purchases (Salsabila et al., 2023). Positive reviews increase the likelihood of Gen Z making impulse purchases driven by social validation. Hu et al., (2019) found that peer influence drives impulse buying through the acceptance of social norms and information. The use of influencers on TikTok increases consumer purchase intention for the

products they promote, particularly through product reviews in clear and relevant visual video content (Anggoroningtyas & Adha, 2024).

Visual. In digital marketing, visuals include elements that consumers can see, such as images, graphics, and videos, to convey product or service information. Based on the findings Rafijevas & Razbadauskaite-venske, (2021), identifying key sensory characteristics—such as image clarity, visual quality, and aesthetic appeal—that directly contribute to the creation of an appealing product image. According to (Ngo et al., 2024) The use of high-quality visual assets, such as product photos and videos, is a crucial strategy for meeting consumer expectations and enhancing the online shopping experience. TikTok leverages engaging visual content—effects, music, stickers, and text—to increase user engagement and engagement. Social media usage and visual content significantly influence product purchasing decisions (Vieri & Sarah, 2024). Effective content combines engaging visuals and emotional storytelling to build a positive product image (Galingging et al., 2025). This mechanism fosters the development of a positive cognitive evaluation of the product, which emerges even before the consumer engages in the actual purchase decision-making process.

Personalization. The development of digital technology has transformed the way individuals access information and consume content, with personalization being one of the key innovations. In digital marketing, personalization utilizes recommendation system-based

technology and virtual assistants to deliver customized promotional content that feels most relevant and engaging to each user (Gao et al., 2023). AI-based personalization is defined as the application of sophisticated algorithms and machine learning methodologies to customize content, product recommendations, and overall user experiences in alignment with individual preferences and behavioral patterns (Raji et al., 2024). Study Boeker & Urman, (2022) showed that all tested factors influenced TikTok content recommendations, with the follow feature being the strongest influence, followed by viewing duration and the like feature. Research by He et al., (2024) found that recommendation systems relevant to shopping intentions—both exploratory and targeted—contributed to increased feelings of “feeling right,” which led to satisfaction and decreased psychological resistance. Thus, in the context of Gen Z on TikTok, personalization on video product content acts as a powerful emotional stimulant.

Arousal and Pleasure. According to M. Huang et al., (2017), pleasure refers to the level of pleasure felt by consumers in a consumption experience, whereas arousal describes the level of emotional arousal of consumers, from active to passive conditions. Arousal is the level of emotional arousal an individual experiences in response to external stimuli. Arousal, defined as the degree of sensory activation, physiological energy, or emotional excitement experienced by an individual, serves as a critical determinant in influencing and shaping consumer behavior. The

higher the arousal, the more active or stimulated a person's feelings are (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974). Pleasure, which describes feelings of pleasure, satisfaction, and happiness, serves as a positive reinforcement that encourages consumers to continue pursuing pleasurable experiences, including in the form of impulse purchases (Hausman, 2000; Hussain et al., 2024). On the other hand, arousal refers to the state of emotional arousal that arises from exposure to environmental stimuli, such as limited promotions, product scarcity, or attractive visual and audio designs (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974; Lamis et al., 2022). Arousal and pleasure have been shown to play an important role in influencing impulse buying decisions (Ngo et al., 2025). This indicates that proper management of internal factors can stimulate emotions that trigger spontaneous consumer behavior.

Online Impulse Buying. Online impulse buying is the sudden, unplanned purchase of a product, triggered by an emotional impulse or environmental stimulus. From a marketing perspective, an impulse purchase is a product made suddenly and immediately without careful planning or consideration of other options or future consequences (Zhang et al., 2022; Iyer et al., 2020). Online impulse buying is understood as the act of buying suddenly on an online platform without any prior planning or intention to shop. According to Stern (1962), impulse buying is an urgent, unplanned, and hedonistic behavior that occurs as a spontaneous response to a stimulus. Rook, D.W. (1987), states that impulse buying is a quick and spontaneous purchasing decision,

influenced more by momentary emotions than rational considerations, and triggered by external stimuli. Impulsive consumers exhibit a surge of positive emotions that prompts a quick purchase, influenced more by feelings and emotional urgency than by logical considerations. As explained by Verplanken & Herabadi (2001), that affective aspects dominate impulsive buying behavior, overriding the cognitive mechanisms of planned buying.

Control Variable. Control variables are variables used to control the influence of external factors that are not the main focus of the research, but have the potential to influence the relationship between independent and dependent variables (Memon et al., 2024). In this context, control variables act as a control or filter to ensure that the relationship between the main variables being studied is pure, without distortion from other external factors. The control variables in this study include age, education level, and gender. These three were selected based on theoretical studies showing that these demographic characteristics are related to impulse buying tendencies (Desai, 2020). By controlling these three variables, it is hoped that the main influence of the independent variables on impulse buying can be analyzed more accurately without bias from differences in individual characteristics.

In quantitative research, control variables are used to isolate the influence of the main variable by restraining potential interference from external factors, namely variables that are believed to influence the measurement or existence of the

theoretical construct being studied (Spector, 2021). On the other hand, Memon et al., (2024) present a systematic guide on how control variables can improve the internal validity and precision of a model. They group the functions of control variables into three approaches: (1) purification, which purifies the main relationship from external influences; (2) adjustment, which adjusts the influence of the main variable to avoid bias; and (3) incremental prediction, which tests whether the addition of control variables significantly increases the predictive power of the model.

The Effect of Time Pressure on Arousal and Pleasure. Time pressure is a psychological factor that plays a significant role in driving impulse buying behavior, particularly in online shopping on video-based platforms like TikTok. From a SOR perspective, time pressure functions as a stimulus in the form of limited promotional time. This pressure affects the organism (the consumer's internal state) by increasing arousal in the form of emotional tension and the urge to act quickly, and generating pleasure in the form of satisfaction from being able to respond immediately. Consumers feel rushed to buy because of limited time, so they make quicker decisions with minimal consideration, triggering strong emotions and impulsive buying (Binbin et al., 2023). This time pressure can increase emotional arousal, which contributes to increased impulse buying behavior (Sun et al., 2023). For example, flash sales take advantage of limited time to increase emotional response and encourage impulse buying, with promotional intensity commensurate with the consumer's

emotional involvement (Martaleni et al., 2022; Lamis et al., 2022). Besides arousal, time pressure can also affect pleasure. Pleasure drives individuals to choose options that provide hedonic experiences, including the satisfaction of quick decision-making. The emotional and psychological gratification derived from the shopping experience enhances consumers' hedonic value, rendering the activity more enjoyable and engaging. This underscores the significance of emotional involvement as a key driver of impulsive buying behavior. Accordingly, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1: Time pressure is thought to have a positive effect on arousal.

H2: Time pressure is thought to have a positive effect on pleasure.

The Effect of Quantity Pressure on Arousal and Pleasure. Quantity pressure refers to the perception of limited product quantities, encouraging consumers to buy quickly to avoid running out. Within the SOR framework, quantity pressure acts as a stimulus in the form of product scarcity, triggering an organism to experience arousal in the form of alertness and fear of loss. This emotional state then transforms into pleasure when consumers successfully acquire a product perceived as rare or exclusive. Hamilton et al., (2019) states that limited product availability creates uncertainty, encouraging impulsive behavior due to the perception of scarcity. Scarcity leverages consumers' inherent fear of missing out, eliciting a cognitive and affective response that diminishes rational deliberation and promotes immediate purchase intentions as a means of mitigating

perceived loss or deprivation. Research shows that promotions that emphasize product scarcity create a sense of urgency for consumers (Kristofferson et al., 2016). In addition, quantity pressure also increases consumer motivation to pursue hedonic satisfaction. Kivetz & Zheng, (2017) found that consumers pursuing hedonic goals such as pleasure are more motivated to buy when products are limited, especially utilitarian products. This quantity pressure increases consumer pleasure, thus encouraging impulsive buying. The urgency caused by quantity pressure drives consumers to seek immediate gratification, reinforced by the pleasure of acquiring scarce goods (Y. Xu et al., 2023). Therefore, the hypothesis proposed is as follows:

H3: Quantity pressure is thought to have a positive effect on arousal.

H4: Quantity pressure is thought to have a positive effect on pleasure.

The Effect of Economic Benefits on Arousal and Pleasure. Economic benefits are financial advantages experienced by consumers, such as discounts or promotions, that encourage purchasing decisions. Promotions and discounts not only provide financial benefits but also create a strong psychological effect. Referring to the SOR theory, economic benefits act as external stimuli that influence the organism by creating arousal in the form of enthusiasm for shopping due to the feeling of benefit, as well as pleasure in the form of emotional satisfaction due to the assessment of smarter and more economical shopping decisions. According to Lamis et al., (2022) Economic benefits influence

arousal, meaning that the financial benefits of flash sales play a role in stimulating consumers to make purchases. This is also supported by studies. Ngo et al., (2024) shows that economic benefits have a positive and significant effect on impulse buying behavior. CC Chen & Yao, (2018) states that promotions that provide economic benefits, such as reducing consumer spending, can generate significant feelings of pleasure. Consumers feel emotionally satisfied after receiving a discount or promotion because the perception of savings increases arousal and pleasure, encouraging impulsive purchases. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H5: Economic Benefits are thought to have a positive effect on arousal.

H6: Economic Benefits are thought to have a positive effect on pleasure.

The Effect of Social Influence on Arousal and Pleasure. Social influence is an external influence obtained by individuals through opinions, recommendations, or reviews, which in the SOR framework acts as a social stimulus that shapes the emotional response of consumers. This exposure affects the organism by creating arousal in the form of emotional movement to follow trends, as well as pleasure in the form of satisfaction due to feeling validated and socially recognized. Reviews that evoke emotion (arousal) have a greater influence on the sale of hedonic products than simply the number of reviews or whether the reviews are positive/negative (Ren & Nickerson, 2019). Emotional arousal makes the review feel more useful because the

reader feels the writer's real experience (Xu et al., 2025). The use of influencers on TikTok increases consumer interest in the products they promote, especially through product reviews in clear and relevant visual video content (Anggoroningtyas & Adha, 2024). According to Ngo et al., (2024), Endorsements and favorable evaluations originating from friends, peers, and social media influencers enhance consumers' affective responses, such as pleasure and arousal, thereby highlighting the essential role of social proof in stimulating impulsive purchasing tendencies. Wang et al., (2021) develops a theoretical understanding of how digital influencers influence consumers' social shopping intentions by considering the roles of social power and consumer satisfaction. Favorable evaluations provided by friends, peers, and social media influencers enhance consumers' emotional responses, particularly in terms of pleasure and arousal, thereby underscoring the pivotal role of social proof in stimulating impulsive buying behavior. Accordingly, the following hypotheses are formulated:

H7: Social influence is thought to have a positive effect on arousal.

H8: Social influence is thought to have a positive effect on pleasure.

The Effect of Visual on Arousal and Pleasure. According to SOR, visuals act as a stimulus that works through the attractiveness of video displays, colors, or product designs Yansahrita et al., (2023), video presentations effectively utilize visual elements to encourage impulsive buying behavior. This exposure influences the organism by increasing

arousal in the form of attention and curiosity, and generating pleasure in the form of enjoyment from the aesthetic experience. An online shopping environment designed with an attractive visual display, accompanied by clear product details and realistic images, is able to provide more accurate and useful purchasing information, thereby encouraging increased customer satisfaction in interactions (Y. Liu et al., 2020). This is in line with research Wardhani & Hasan, (2023) which argues that visual elements such as color, composition, and object placement are utilized to convey messages while attracting audience attention. Product presentation videos on the TikTok platform strategically employ visual stimuli to exert a substantial influence on impulsive buying behavior, particularly among Generation Z consumers. The incorporation of vibrant color schemes and aesthetically appealing product displays in these videos not only captures viewers' attention but also elicits emotional engagement, thereby enhancing the propensity for impulsive purchases. Through the effective utilization of visual design elements, TikTok fosters a more immersive and interactive shopping experience that successfully appeals to the visual and emotional preferences of Generation Z. Based on these findings, visual elements in TikTok videos not only function as aesthetic appeal, but also as triggers of emotional engagement that lead to impulsive behavior. Thus, the proposed hypothesis is as follows:

H9: Visuals are thought to have a positive effect on arousal.

H10: Visuals are thought to have a positive effect on pleasure.

The Effect of Personalization on Arousal and Pleasure. In the highly competitive digital era, personalization has become a key factor influencing the user experience on social media, particularly TikTok. Within the SOR framework, personalization is a technology-based stimulus that delivers content tailored to consumer preferences. This impacts the organism by generating arousal in the form of higher emotional engagement, and pleasure in the form of personal satisfaction from feeling cared for by the platform. Personalization allows platforms to tailor content based on user behavior, preferences, and interaction history, creating a more relevant and emotionally engaging experience. TikTok's algorithm significantly influences purchasing decisions (Putri & Nurhayati, 2024). Personalization not only increases user satisfaction, but also enhances the addictive effects of emotionally pleasurable content, triggering flow states and impulsive reactions. In line with this, research by Jo & Baek, (2023) also shows that flow states and habits significantly contribute to addictive behavior in the use of digital platforms. Boeker & Urman, (2022) showed that all tested factors influenced TikTok content recommendations, with the follow feature being the strongest influence, followed by viewing duration and the like feature. Research by Y. Liu et al., (2020) shows that personalization has a significant positive impact on consumer arousal and pleasure. Furthermore, personalization plays a role not only in increasing content relevance but also in

shaping deep user emotional experiences. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H11: Personalization are thought to have a positive effect on arousal.

H12: Personalization are thought to have a positive effect on pleasure.

The Effect of Arousal on Pleasure. Based on S-O-R, arousal is an organism's internal reaction formed by various external stimuli. High arousal intensity strengthens the emergence of pleasure, a positive emotion that increases satisfaction in shopping. Arousal, driven by factors such as scarcity and promotional stimuli, significantly influences pleasure and the likelihood of impulse buying (Lamis et al., 2022). Research has shown that increasing levels of arousal have a positive effect on pleasure in various contexts, and both significantly positively influence impulse buying (Y. Liu et al., 2020). Research by Rafaeli & Revelle, (2006) shows that high levels of arousal can have a positive impact on pleasure. Given the close relationship between the two, the higher the level of arousal felt by consumers, the more intense the level of pleasure experienced. Therefore, the proposed hypothesis is as follows:

H13: Arousal are thought to have a positive effect on pleasure.

The Effect of Arousal and Pleasure on Online Impulse Buying. Arousal and pleasure are important in driving unplanned, rapid purchases, where pleasure reflects pleasure and excitement, while arousal reflects interest and alertness to environmental stimuli (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974). In S-O-R, arousal, as an internal state of the organism, plays a role in driving responses in the form of online impulse buying. When arousal increases,

consumers are encouraged to act quickly, making spontaneous purchasing decisions without careful planning. On the other hand, pleasure also plays a key role in online impulsive shopping, where positive emotions such as joy or excitement drive impulse buying higher than regular shopping habits (Hussain et al., 2024). Referring to the S-O-R framework, pleasure, as a positive emotion from the organism, drives responses in the form of online impulse buying. Consumers who experience the pleasure of shopping tend to maintain this affective state through impulsive buying behavior. Consumers who feel happy and satisfied when shopping tend to make impulsive purchases, with arousal and pleasure proven to be significantly positive related to this behavior (Hausman, 2000; Lin & Lo, 2015). This is in line with the research results from Y. Xu et al., (2023) which showed that pleasure and arousal significantly influence impulsive buying intentions, with pleasure slightly stronger than arousal. Thus, the proposed hypothesis is as follows

H14: Arousal are thought to have a positive effect on online impulse buying.

H15: Pleasure are thought to have a positive effect on online impulse buying.

Control Variable. This study also used several control variables. These variables include age, gender, and educational background. These three were selected based on theoretical studies showing that these demographic characteristics are related to impulse buying tendencies (Desai, 2020). Gender and age consistently emerge as dominant factors influencing

impulsive buying behavior, primarily due to differences in emotional aspects and levels of self-control between groups. Tarka et al., (2022) and Ngo et al., (2025) studies show that women are more compulsive and prone to impulse buying than men, primarily due to a stronger hedonic orientation, which in turn influences the pleasure of shopping more strongly. Furthermore, education is an important factor shaping consumers' information processing patterns in purchasing decisions. According to Rana et al., (2011), education has a significant relationship with impulsive buying tendencies. This means that respondents with low education are more impulsive in making purchasing decisions than customers with high education (Mohiuddin & Iqbal, 2018). However, impulsive buying behavior does not differ significantly between consumer groups with different education levels.

This study adopts a research model that examines how product-related content in TikTok videos influences impulse buying behavior among Gen Z consumers. Specifically, external stimuli such as time pressure, quantity pressure, economic benefits, social influence, visuals, and personalization act as stimuli within the SOR framework. These stimuli influence the consumer's internal state (organism), namely arousal and pleasure, which then drive a response in the form of online impulse buying. This differs from previous research that focused on the Shopee Video Platform (Ngo et al., 2024), this study focuses on product-related content in TikTok's short video format, where personalization elements collectively shape consumers' emotional reactions and impulsive purchasing decisions. Control variables such as age, gender, and education are also considered to capture demographic differences in online impulse buying tendencies.

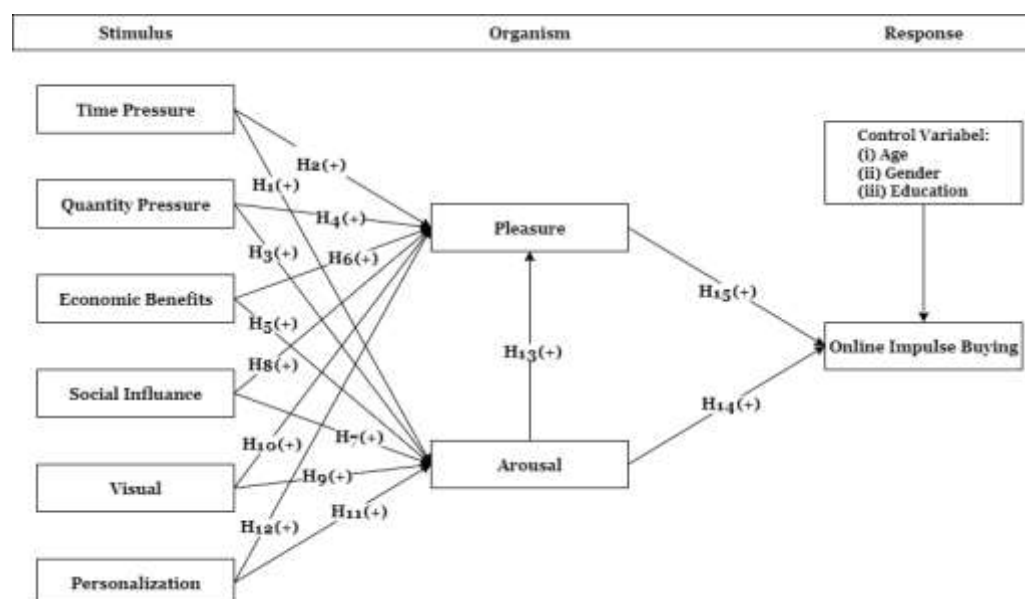


Figure 1. Research Model
Source: Research Results, 2025

METHOD

Research Design. This study employs a quantitative research design to objectively analyze the relationships between variables relevant to online impulse buying behavior. Specifically, the research investigates the effects of time pressure, quantity pressure, economic benefits, social influence, visuals, and personalization on arousal and pleasure, which subsequently influence online impulse buying behavior (Huang et al., 2018). In addition, this study also analyzes the role of control variables consisting of age, gender, and educational background in the relationship between attitudes and impulse buying behavior among Generation Z TikTok users in Indonesia.

Population and Sampling Methods. The population in this study comprises Generation Z individuals in Indonesia who actively use TikTok, consume product-related video content, and have engaged in impulse purchases via the platform. The sampling technique used was non-probability sampling with purposive sampling, a method of selecting samples based on specific criteria or considerations to obtain relevant data that aligns with the research objectives (Memon et al., 2025; Bhardwaj, 2019). The inclusion criteria are: (1) active TikTok users, (2) belonging to Generation Z (born in 1997–2012) with an age range of 13–28 years, (3) having watched product content on TikTok, and (4) having made impulsive purchases influenced by such content. The selection of these criteria is considered capable of reflecting adequate experience in using the platform, so that the data obtained is more representative of consumer

behavior. This study involved a total of 403 respondents as a research sample which is considered quite representative in describing the behavior of Gen Z in Indonesia.

Method of collecting data. This study uses primary data sources. Data collection was conducted through a survey method using an online questionnaire in the form of Google Forms distributed through social media and to the general public. The measurement instrument used a 5-point Likert Scale for all main variables, respondents were asked to provide an assessment ranging from "strongly disagree" (score 1) to "strongly agree" (score 5) and a non-Likert scale, namely ordinal for control variables such as gender described as a dummy variable (0 = male, 1 = female), age grouped in ordinal ranges according to the Gen Z category, and education positioned as an ordinal variable based on level. Hair et al., (2021) explains that although the PLS-SEM algorithm generally requires the use of variables measured on a metric scale (ratio or interval), this method can still be used for ordinal scale data that is treated as quasi-metric, as explained by (Sarstedt & Liu, 2024; Hair et al., 2021).

The sample size in this study was determined based on guidelines from (Hair et al., 2019) For PLS-SEM, the recommended sample size is at least 5 times the number of indicators in the model. With a total of 37 indicators in this study, the minimum sample size is $5 \times 37 = 185$ respondents. This study was conducted from May to July 2025. The sample size used in this study was 403 respondents. This number not only meets but also exceeds the recommended minimum limit, thus

increasing the reliability of model estimates, strengthening the validity of generalizability of findings, and reducing the risk of potential bias (Kock & Hadaya, 2018; Hair et al., 2019). All constructs in this study are measured using indicators that have been adapted from research Ngo et al., (2024), Y. J. Kim & Han, (2014) dan Barauskaitė, (2025.). Adapted to the research, the time pressure variable is measured using four indicators, while quantity pressure is also measured using four indicators. Economic benefits are measured using five indicators, while social influence is measured using four indicators. Furthermore, visual and personalization are each measured using four indicators. The arousal and pleasure variables are each measured using four indicators, as is the dependent variable, impulse buying, which consists of four indicators. In addition, this study also includes control variables including gender, age, and educational background to strengthen the validity of the analysis adapted by Ampadu et al., (2022).

Data Analysis Methods. The research data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with the help of SmartPLS 4.1.1.2. This method was chosen because it is capable of handling complex research models with diverse latent variable

interactions, and allows for testing of causal relationships, whether direct, indirect, mediation, or moderation. According to Sarstedt et al., (2021), PLS-SEM consists of two main components: a measurement model (external or measurement model) that explains the relationship between constructs and the indicators that represent them, and a structural model (internal or structural model) that describes the interrelationships between constructs in the study. Constructs in PLS-SEM can be divided into exogenous and endogenous. Exogenous constructs act as independent variables because they do not receive arrow directions from other constructs, while endogenous constructs function as dependent variables, indicated by the presence of arrows pointing towards them. However, under certain conditions, endogenous constructs can also act as independent variables when placed between two other constructs. The PLS-SEM analysis in this study was conducted in three stages: outer model analysis to evaluate the validity and reliability of indicators in measuring each variable, inner model analysis to assess the structural relationship or causality between variables, and hypothesis testing to determine the significance of the influence between variables based on the research model (Hair et al., 2019).

RESULT

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Demographic Variables	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Man	175	43.4
	Woman	228	56.6
Age	13–17 years	94	23.3
	18–22 years	168	41.7

Demographic Variables	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Domicile	23–28 years	141	35.0
	Sumatra	184	45.7
	Java	86	21.3
	Bali & Nusa Tenggara	40	9.9
	Kalimantan	37	9.2
	Sulawesi	33	8.2
	Maluku & Papua	23	5.7
Last education	Junior High School/Equivalent	94	23.3
	High School/Equivalent	136	33.7
	Diploma	48	11.9
	Bachelor	84	20.8
	Postgraduate	41	10.2
	Students	203	50.4
Employment Status	Civil Servants/State-Owned Enterprises/TNI/Polri	36	8.9
	Private employees	100	24.8
	Self-employed	63	15.6
	Other	1	0.2
	≤ Rp1,000,000	116	28.8
	Rp1,000,001 – Rp2,000,000	114	28.3
Income	Rp2,000,001 – Rp3,000,000	59	14.6
	Rp3,000,001 – Rp4,000,000	70	17.4
	≥ Rp4,000,001	44	10.9
TikTok Access Frequency per Week	1–2 times	88	21.8
	3–5 times	129	32.0
	6–10 times	111	27.5
	>10 times	75	18.6
Average Time on TikTok per Session	<1 hour	42	10.4
	1–2 hours	100	24.8
	3–4 hours	154	38.2
	>4 hours	107	26.6
Frequency of Impulse Purchases on TikTok (Last 3 Months)	<3 times	62	15.4

Demographic Variables	Category	Frequency	Percentage
	3–5 times	205	50.9
	6–10 times	94	23.3
	>10 times	42	10.4

Source: Research Results, 2025

Table 1. shows the demographic characteristics of the respondents who participated in this study. Of the total respondents, the majority of respondents in this study were women (56.6%), who tend to be more active in online shopping activities than men (43.4%), this can be explained because women are generally more active in online shopping activities and are often the main targets of promotions on digital platforms. Based on age, the largest number of respondents were in the 18–22 year range (41.7%), followed by the 23–28 year age group (35%) and the 13–17 year age group (23.3%), which is a characteristic of Generation Z who are exposed to digital trends and are more susceptible to impulse buying. In terms of domicile, most respondents came from Sumatra (45.7%) and Java (21.3%), while the rest were spread across Bali & Nusa Tenggara (9.9%), Kalimantan (9.2%), Sulawesi (8.2%), and Maluku & Papua (5.7%). In terms of education, the majority of respondents still have high school/equivalent status (33.7%), followed by bachelor's degree (20.8%), junior high school/equivalent (23.3%), diploma (11.9%), and postgraduate (10.2%).

With employment status dominated by students (50.4%), it

shows that the majority of respondents are in the productive age group who are currently studying and actively use social media. Most have an income of ≤ Rp2,000,000 (57.1%), so limited purchasing power actually encourages them to be attracted to price promotions, discounts, or flash sales on TikTok. TikTok usage activity is also quite intense, where 32% of respondents access it 3–5 times per week with the maximum duration of 3–4 hours per session (38.2%). This condition shows that the dominance of female, young, and student users with high TikTok usage intensity is a major factor that increases vulnerability to digital marketing stimuli that trigger impulsive purchases.

Validity Test. Figure 2 presents a measurement model that illustrates how various product content stimuli on TikTok—such as time pressure, quantity pressure, economic benefits, social influence, visual appeal, and personalization—influence emotional states of arousal and pleasure, which in turn drive Gen Z's impulsive buying behavior. This model emphasizes the central role of arousal and pleasure as the primary organisms in the SOR framework, which serve as emotional pathways to translate external stimuli into impulsive buying decisions.

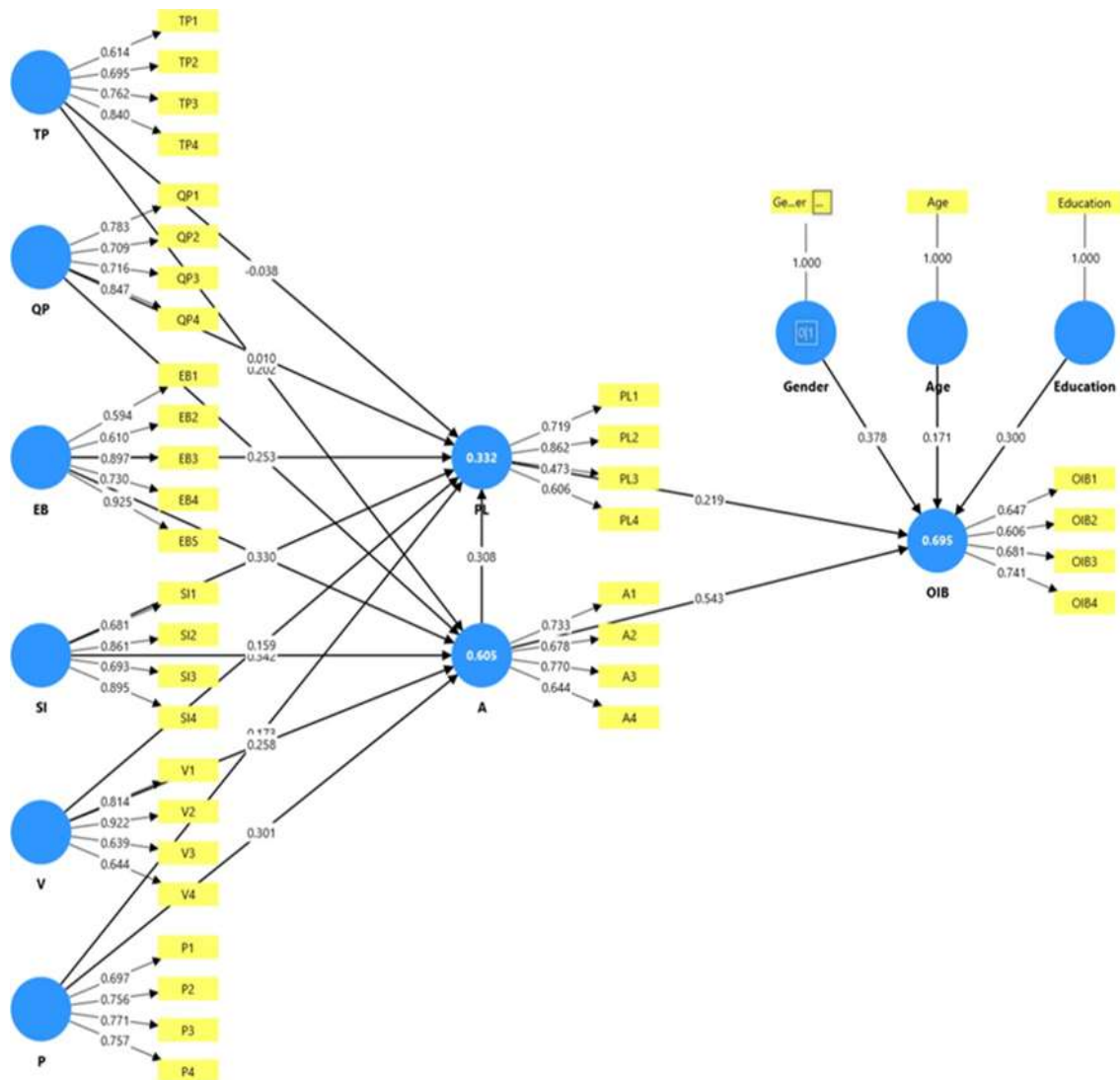


Figure 2. Bootstrapping Test Results

Source: Research Results, 2025

Convergent validity testing aims to ensure that a number of indicators represent the same latent construct. This is evaluated using two main metrics: loading factor and Average Variance Extracted (AVE). An indicator demonstrates acceptable convergent validity if its loading factor value is >0.70 and its AVE value is >0.50 (Hair, et al, 2021). As shown in Table 2, all

indicators across all constructs have loading factor values > 0.70 , indicating that these indicators are valid in measuring the constructs in this study. In general, high loading factor values reflect that the indicators used are able to strongly reflect the construct, thus supporting the achievement of convergent validity in the analyzed model.

Table 2. Convergent Validity Based on Loading Factor

Item	Time Pressure	Quantity Pressure	Economic Benefits	Social Influence	Visual	Personalization	Arousal	Pleasure	Online Impulse Buyin
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	g			
TP1	0.784			
TP2	0.806			
TP3	0.810			
TP4	0.828			
QP1		0.817		
QP2		0.813		
QP3		0.823		
QP4		0.865		
EB1			0.776	
EB2			0.792	
EB3			0.835	
EB4			0.818	
EB5			0.857	
SI1				0.830
SI2				0.858
SI3				0.844
SI4				0.852
V1				0.839
V2				0.850
V3				0.800
V4				0.824
P1				0.826
P2				0.819
P3				0.801
P4				0.822
A1				0.805
A2				0.777
A3				0.809
A4				0.770
PL1				0.858
PL2				0.774
PL3				0.714
PL4				0.735
OIB1				0.751
OIB2				0.742
OIB3				0.797
OIB4				0.773

Source: Research Results, 2025

Based on the validity test results in Table 3, it can be seen that the AVE values for each construct are mostly above the minimum limit of 0.50, namely Time Pressure (0.537), Quantity Pressure (0.586), Economic Benefits

(0.583), Social Influence (0.622), Visual (0.584), Personalization (0.556), and Arousal (0.501). Only the Pleasure (0.463) and Online Impulse Buying (0.450) constructs showed AVE values slightly below 0.50. However, because

the indicators for both constructs have loading factors above 0.70 and adequate reliability values, the constructs can still be maintained (Hair et al., 2019).

Table 3. Convergent Validity Based on AVE

Variables	AVE
Time Pressure	0.823
Quantity Pressure	0.849
Economic Benefits	0.876
Social Influence	0.869
Visual	0.849
Personalization	0.834
Arousal	0.800
Pleasure	0.779
Online Impulse Buying	0.766

Source: Research Results, 2025

Discriminant validity testing was conducted to ensure that each construct in the model could be clearly distinguished from the other constructs. The approach used was the Fornell-Larcker criterion, where the square root of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for each construct must be higher than the correlation between the constructs (Larcker, 2016). Based on Table 3, it can be seen that the square root value of AVE shown on the diagonal (TP = 0.807; QP = 0.830; EB =

0.816; SI = 0.846; V = 0.828; P = 0.817; A = 0.790; PL = 0.772; OIB = 0.766) is higher than the correlation value between constructs in the same row and column. This result indicates that all constructs in the research model can be empirically distinguished from each other so that they meet the criteria for discriminant validity. Thus, the results of this study confirm that all constructs have met the criteria for discriminant validity.

Table 4. Discriminant Validity Based on the Fornell-Larcker Criterion

	TP	QP	EB	SI	V	P	A	PL	OIB
TP	0.807								
QP	0.271	0.830							
EB	-0.079	0.101	0.816						
SI	0.055	-0.009	0.058	0.846					
V	0.054	0.019	-0.019	0.051	0.828				
P	0.078	0.043	0.076	0.002	0.013	0.817			
A	0.262	0.309	0.326	0.327	0.245	0.300	0.790		
PL	0.067	0.118	0.263	0.213	0.211	0.245	0.417	0.772	
OIB	0.159	0.243	0.215	0.133	0.165	0.123	0.518	0.373	0.766

Source: Research Results, 2025

Table 5. R-square Value

Variabeles	R Square
Arousal	0.432

Pleasure	0.240
Online Impulse Buying	0.481

Source: Research Results, 2025

The inner model test involves assessing the R-square value to determine the extent to which the constructs in the model explain the dependent variable. In marketing research, the coefficient of determination (R^2) value for endogenous latent variables in a structural model is generally interpreted as a rule of thumb: a value of 0.75 indicates substantial explanatory power, a value of 0.50 reflects a moderate level, and a value of 0.25 indicates a weak level (Hair *et al.*, 2011). Based on Table 4, the direct effect model shows that the R^2 value for the endogenous variable Pleasure is 0.240 and the endogenous variable Arousal is 0.432. This means that the constructs in the model are able to explain 24% of

the variation in Pleasure and 43.2% of the variation in Arousal. Referring to the R-square interpretation criteria according to (Hair *et al.*, 2011), a value of 0.240 for Pleasure is included in the weak category, while a value of 0.432 for Arousal is in the moderate category. Meanwhile, the Online Impulse Buying variable has an R-square value of 0.481, which is also categorized as moderate, indicating that almost half of the variation in impulse buying behavior can be explained by the constructs in the model. Thus, the model has quite good explanatory power for Arousal and Online Impulse Buying, but is still limited in explaining Pleasure, so there may be other factors outside the model that have a significant influence on this variable.

Table 6. Reliability Test

Variables	Composite Reliability	Cronbach's Alpha
Time Pressure	0.823	0.821
Quantity Pressure	0.849	0.849
Economic Benefits	0.876	0.871
Social Influence	0.869	0.866
Visual	0.849	0.845
Personalization	0.834	0.833
Arousal	0.800	0.800
Pleasure	0.779	0.767
Online Impulse Buying	0.766	0.765

Source: Research Results, 2025

Reliability testing is used to measure the extent to which a measuring instrument or test is consistent and reliable in measuring a construct. Composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha values are used, with values > 0.70 (Hair., et al, 2021). Based

on the results shown in Table 5, all constructs showed Composite Reliability (CR) values above 0.70, with a range between 0.766 and 0.876. Likewise, the Cronbach's Alpha (CA) values for all constructs exceeded the threshold of 0.70, indicating good

internal consistency. These results used in the study has high reliability in indicate that the measuring instrument describing the latent constructs.

Table 7. Hypothesis Testing

Path	Original Sample (O)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
Time Pressure → Arousal	0.175	4,471	0.000
Time Pressure → Pleasure	-0.018	0.372	0.710
Quantity Pressure → Arousal	0.221	5,339	0.000
Quantity Pressure → Pleasure	0.023	0.529	0.597
Economic Benefits → Arousal	0.273	7,359	0.000
Economic Benefits → Pleasure	0.152	3,078	0.002
Social Influence → Arousal	0.302	8,463	0.000
Social Influence → Pleasure	0.124	2,579	0.010
Visual → Arousal	0.220	6,449	0.000
Visual → Pleasure	0.147	2,933	0.003
Personalization → Arousal	0.250	6,749	0.000
Personalization → Pleasure	0.158	3,332	0.001
Arousal → Pleasure	0.244	3,825	0.000
Arousal → Online Impulse Buying	0.424	10,029	0.000
Pleasure → Online Impulse Buying	0.216	5,197	0.000
Gender → Online Impulse Buying	0.360	5,186	0.000
Age → Online Impulse Buying	0.158	1,960	0.050
Education → Online Impulse Buying	0.250	2,728	0.006

Source: Research Results, 2025

In the stimulus-organism relationship, time pressure significantly affects arousal ($\beta = 0.175$; $t = 4.471$; $p < 0.001$) but not pleasure ($\beta = -0.018$; $t = 0.372$; $p = 0.710$). Similarly, quantity pressure has a significant effect on arousal ($\beta = 0.221$; $t = 5.339$; $p < 0.001$) but not on pleasure ($\beta = 0.023$; $t = 0.529$; $p = 0.597$). In contrast, economic benefits significantly influence both arousal ($\beta = 0.273$; $t = 7.359$; $p < 0.001$) and pleasure ($\beta = 0.152$; $t = 3.078$; $p = 0.002$). Likewise, social influence positively affects arousal ($\beta = 0.302$; $t = 8.463$; $p < 0.001$) and pleasure ($\beta = 0.124$; $t = 2.579$; $p = 0.010$). Visual stimuli also show significant effects on

arousal ($\beta = 0.220$; $t = 6.449$; $p < 0.001$) and pleasure ($\beta = 0.147$; $t = 2.933$; $p = 0.003$). Finally, personalization positively and significantly influences arousal ($\beta = 0.250$; $t = 6.749$; $p < 0.001$) and pleasure ($\beta = 0.158$; $t = 3.332$; $p = 0.001$). At the organism-response stage, arousal significantly affects pleasure ($\beta = 0.244$; $t = 3.825$; $p < 0.001$), and both arousal and pleasure positively drive online impulse buying. Notably, the effect of arousal on impulse buying ($\beta = 0.424$; $t = 10.029$; $p < 0.001$) is stronger than that of pleasure ($\beta = 0.216$; $t = 5.197$; $p < 0.001$). These results highlight that external stimuli strongly shape Gen Z's emotional responses,

with arousal serving as the dominant trigger of impulsive buying behavior in TikTok product-related video content. The findings also reveal that control variables—gender ($\beta = 0.360$; $t = 5.186$; $p < 0.001$), age ($\beta = 0.158$; $t = 1.960$; $p = 0.050$), and education ($\beta = 0.250$; $t = 2.728$; $p = 0.006$)—have a positive and significant effect on online impulse buying, indicating that demographic factors contribute to shaping Gen Z's purchase behavior on TikTok.

DISCUSSION

In quantitative research, control variables are used to ensure that the main relationships between variables are not biased by demographic factors. (Memon et al., 2024) The research findings found that most of the control variables, including gender, age, and educational background, had a significant influence on the overall model, where women were more prone to impulsive buying behavior than men (Ebrahim Basalma, 2024), young consumers tend to be more impulsive than older consumers because they are influenced by new things, lifestyles and modern trends (Abdul & Awan, 2015), and consumers with higher education are relatively better able to control impulsive behavior even though they remain responsive to promotions, in line with the findings Ampadu et al., (2022) regarding the significant influence of education on e-impulse buying.

These results indicate that impulse buying behavior is influenced not only by external stimuli, but also by other factors such as gender, age, and education level. However, although demographic factors also influence, the main relationship between stimulus, organism, and impulse buying remains

robust, so it can be emphasized that promotional stimuli and emotional responses are the main determinants of impulsive behavior in Gen Z on TikTok. In the context of Generation Z, these three factors are even more prominent, considering that this group is dominated by young, digitally savvy consumers, and is highly responsive to visual content and personalized videos, making them the segment most susceptible to impulsive buying behavior.

The results of the study indicate that time pressure has a significant positive effect on arousal, but not on pleasure. The mechanism can be explained through the SOR theory. Time pressure, as an external stimulus, creates a sense of urgency and limited time, which then stimulates the organism, namely the consumer's emotional state. The findings of this study are consistent with previous studies that confirmed that limited-time offers can increase consumer arousal because the resulting urgency encourages individuals to react more quickly in decision-making (TY Chen et al., 2021). Furthermore, it was found that time pressure not only increases anxiety but also emotional energy, thereby strengthening impulsive drives. This heightened state of arousal is frequently attributed to the fear of missing out (FOMO), which compels consumers to engage in immediate purchasing behavior without thorough cognitive evaluation, driven by the desire to avoid potential regret associated with missed opportunities. Furthermore, the analysis revealed that time pressure does not exert a significant positive influence on the experience of pleasure. This finding

suggests that time pressure encourages consumers to act quickly, but does not increase pleasure, because limited time creates more anxiety than positive feelings when shopping. This finding is consistent with Y. Xu et al., (2023), which shows that time pressure can increase anxiety and decrease shopping enjoyment.

Quantity pressure also showed a positive and significant effect on arousal. This means that the more limited the product availability, the greater the psychological urge for consumers to make a purchase immediately. This finding is consistent with the results of other research. Lamis et al., (2022) and , which confirms that product scarcity can increase consumer arousal levels, encouraging impulsive purchasing behavior. On the other hand, quantity pressure does not have a significant effect on pleasure, because limited product quantities tend to cause anxiety and fear of loss, so they are not strong enough to create feelings of pleasure or satisfaction. This finding is consistent with Kristofferson et al., (2016) which suggests that scarcity and heightened quantity pressure may induce feelings of competition and psychological stress, thereby diminishing the overall sense of enjoyment derived from the shopping experience.

The findings of this study also revealed that economic benefits have a significant and positive effect on arousal. This suggests that economic benefits such as discounts and promotions serve as stimuli that increase consumers' emotional arousal. Research shows that promotions or discounts enhance the influence of affective states such as arousal, making

consumers more enthusiastic about economic offers (Zhou et al., 2018;X. Liu et al., 2021). The financial benefits of flash sales have been shown to increase consumer arousal and pleasure, thus triggering the urge to make a purchase (Lamis et al., 2022). In the context of Generation Z, financial benefits in online transactions encourage Gen Z to feel satisfaction and excitement, thus increasing the tendency to make a purchase immediately. This contrasts with previous findings. Ngo et al., (2024) shows that the impact of economic benefits on pleasure is not statistically significant.

Furthermore, the findings indicate that social influence exerts a positive and significant impact on both arousal and pleasure, highlighting the intricate interrelationship between emotional responses in shaping online impulsive buying behavior. Positive reviews from friends, colleagues, and social media influencers increase consumer pleasure and arousal, especially for Gen Z, who are highly influenced by user-generated content. As digital natives, Gen Z is highly influenced by user-generated content such as comments, testimonials, or influencer recommendations. The research Arnold & Reynolds, (2003) show that shopping with friends or family increases emotional arousal. Ngo et al., (2024) supports this finding by stating that social influence can influence pleasure. Such forms of social interaction not only stimulate purchase intentions but also foster the tendency of consumers to emulate the purchasing behavior of their peers (To et al., 2007;C. Liu et al., 2024). Online social interactions, such as sharing shopping experiences,

encourage purchases and imitate the behavior of peers.

The results of this study also indicate that visual elements have a positive and significant impact on arousal. Aesthetic, brightly colored, and creative TikTok content increases consumer attention and emotional engagement. This result is consistent with the studies of Goel et al., (2024) and Sun et al., (2023), which demonstrate that visual attractiveness can enhance levels of arousal. On TikTok, the entire video content—editing, filters, transitions, and storytelling—helps evoke emotional arousal in consumers. Furthermore, visuals also significantly influence pleasure; aesthetic, clear, and creative TikTok content increases consumer emotional satisfaction.

Personalization of TikTok content demonstrates a significant positive influence on both arousal and pleasure. Content that is tailored to consumer preferences provides unique and relevant recommendations, which in turn enhance curiosity, engagement, and emotional energy, thereby triggering impulsive responses. Within the Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) framework, personalization operates as a stimulus that activates the organism—reflected in consumers' emotional states, namely heightened arousal and increased pleasure. Arousal emerges from emotional stimulation and curiosity, while pleasure arises as consumers perceive themselves to be “understood” by the platform and experience greater enjoyment in the shopping process. The interplay of arousal and pleasure subsequently drives the response, namely impulse buying behavior. For

Generation Z, who are particularly receptive to digital novelty and personalized experiences, personalization amplifies emotional engagement, enhances motivation to act, and ultimately increases the likelihood of impulsive purchasing.

Empirical findings reveal that arousal has a positive and significant impact on pleasure. This suggests that higher emotional arousal triggered by product-related TikTok content leads to greater feelings of enjoyment and satisfaction. Emotional arousal can be stimulated by various elements within TikTok videos, such as limited-time offers, visually engaging displays, or messages emphasizing product scarcity. These stimuli evoke excitement that transforms into pleasurable experiences, strengthening consumers' emotional connection with the product. Furthermore, the results demonstrate that arousal significantly and positively influences online impulse buying, meaning that the more aroused consumers feel, the stronger their inclination to make spontaneous purchases. Pleasure also shows a positive and significant relationship with online impulse buying, indicating that increased enjoyment and satisfaction during shopping directly heighten the likelihood of unplanned buying behavior. Overall, these findings highlight the crucial role of emotional processes in shaping impulse purchasing behavior and offer valuable implications for social commerce strategies. Marketers can leverage these insights by crafting TikTok product videos that deliberately integrate sensory cues to evoke arousal and pleasure, thereby enhancing consumer

engagement and encouraging impulsive buying tendencies.

CONCLUSION

This research seeks to examine the factors that affect online impulse buying behavior among Generation Z by analyzing product-related video content on the TikTok platform, using the Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) theoretical framework as the foundation. Using PLS-SEM analysis techniques, this study tests a model to determine how external factors such as time pressure (TP), quantity pressure (QP), economic benefits (EB), social influence (SI), visual (V), and personalization (P) influence online impulse buying (OIB) through emotional responses of arousal (A) and pleasure (PL). The results indicate that time pressure and quantity pressure significantly affect arousal but not pleasure, while economic benefits, social influence, visuals, and personalization positively influence both. Arousal and pleasure were found to drive impulse buying, with arousal exerting a stronger effect. These findings highlight that rapid and intense emotional arousal plays a more dominant role in impulsive buying behavior than mere feelings of pleasure.

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This study offers theoretical contributions by expanding the Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) framework through the inclusion of personalization, which has a significant influence on arousal and pleasure, ultimately driving impulse buying behavior. From a practical standpoint, the results underscore the importance of implementing digital marketing strategies that incorporate elements such as time pressure, quantity pressure, economic benefits, social influence, and creative personalized visual content to enhance emotional engagement among Generation Z on TikTok. Nonetheless, this research is limited to Gen Z respondents in Indonesia and focuses exclusively on the TikTok platform, which may constrain the generalizability of the findings. Therefore, future studies are encouraged to involve other generational cohorts, examine diverse social commerce platforms, and integrate additional theoretical perspectives—such as the Theory of Planned Behavior or Dual-Process Theory—to deepen the understanding of the psychological mechanisms underlying impulse buying behavior in the digital era.

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