



The Effect of Scarcity Marketing Strategy on Purchase Urgency through Limited-Edition Products: The Roles of Fear of Missing Out and Sense of Uniqueness

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Abstract

Scarcity marketing through limited-edition products is widely used to stimulate customers to purchase and to create a sense of urgency, especially in digital environments. However, the psychological mechanisms that drive this effect are still unclear. This study seeks to investigate the influence of limited-edition marketing strategies on purchase urgency, as well as to assess the roles of fear of missing out (FOMO) and the sense of uniqueness.

A quantitative research design was utilized through an online questionnaire, yielding 409 valid responses from university students. Descriptive, correlation, and regression analyses were used to analyze the data.

The results indicate that the limited-edition marketing strategy has a significant influence on customer purchase urgency. Both FOMO and a sense of uniqueness are linked to purchase urgency; however, only a sense of uniqueness has a strong effect when all variables are considered at the same time. This indicates that the urgency to purchase is influenced more by perceived exclusivity and differentiation than solely by emotional pressure.

This research enhances the literature by elucidating the impact of scarcity-driven marketing strategies on consumer behavior. The results also have practical implications for marketers because they show the importance of stressing product exclusivity and limited availability in marketing plans.

Keywords: *Limited Edition Marketing Strategy, Scarcity Marketing Strategy, Fear of Missing Out (FOMO), Sense of Uniqueness, Purchase Urgency,*

1. Introduction

In this digitally driven era, technology has become a fundamental part of today's society ranging from basic to advanced tasks. With the advancement of technologies, customers can access extensive information from the internet and social media to evaluate product alternatives, relying on online reviews and recommendations from influencers before making purchase decisions (He, 2024; Leong et al., 2022; Migkos et al., 2024). As a result of this longer decision-making process, businesses have increased the use of sophisticated marketing strategies to influence consumer behavior in today's competitive environment. Thailand, a developing country with a population of roughly 72 million, is the focus of this research, and more than 90% of its population has regular access to the internet (Kemp, 2025). The rapid development of digital connectivity has speeded up the growth of digital marketing and e-commerce, reshaping consumer purchase behavior, especially in younger generations (Ngo et al., 2024).

From an economic perspective, Thailand is still growing steadily, with an estimated purchasing power of \$2.292 trillion in 2025, representing a 2.8 percent increase from the previous year (World Economics, 2025). This economic and technological development makes market competition tougher. This forced businesses to adopt better ways to market themselves in order to capture customer attention and influence purchasing decisions. A marketing strategy is essential for businesses and organizations to recognize and satisfy customer demands through market identification, market segmentation, positioning, and the marketing mix (Sintani et al., 2025). This is a multidisciplinary idea that uses ideas from economics, psychology, and consumer behavior to influence how people make decisions (Czinkota et al., 2021).

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As markets become more digitalized, marketing strategies have shifted from traditional approaches toward psychological techniques to influence consumer perceptions and behavior (Kingsnorth, 2025).

Scarcity based marketing strategies, through the use of limited edition, have become widely adopted as they create a sense of urgency and exclusivity. By providing limited availability through either time or quantity, products become more valuable in people's mind, which helps accelerate purchasing decisions and increase perceived value. Scarcity happens when there is an imbalance between supply and demand in which demand exceeds supply, leading consumers to perceive products as more valuable and desirable (Atchariyakarn & Zhang, 2020; Barton et al., 2022). In practice, scarcity marketing usually takes the form of limited time offers or limited quantity of products, both of which are meant to influence consumer decision making processes (Jang et al., 2025; Amara et al., 2022).

To explain how scarcity influences consumer behavior, this study uses three key theoretical frameworks, which are Scarcity Theory, Fear of Missing Out (FOMO), and Need for Uniqueness. FOMO, or fear of missing out, is the theory that refers to anxiety from the possibility that a person might miss out on an experience. This is often intensified by social media and time-sensitive marketing tactics (Good & Hyman, 2020; Furqan & Nugroho, 2025). This emotion pressures consumers to make quicker decisions to avoid being left out of the experience (Rofiah & Arrahima, 2025). FOMO is a commonly used marketing tool; however, its effectiveness as the main driver of purchase urgency remains debated (Barbu Kleitsch & Drămnescu, 2025).

On the other hand, the need for uniqueness shows an individual's desire to stand out or to be differentiated from others through the consumption of unique or exclusive products (Abosag et al., 2020). Limited edition products fulfill the need by providing rarity and symbolic value, which allows consumers to express their identity and social distinction. Previous studies suggest that consumers with a strong desire for uniqueness are more likely to react favorably to scarcity-based marketing, as limited availability enhances perceptions of exclusivity and desirability (Wang et al., 2022). This perception emphasizes that consumers' responses to scarcity may be influenced not solely by emotional pressure but also by identity-related incentives.

Even though scarcity marketing is extensively used, the literature shows inconsistent results regarding the relative influence of FOMO and the need for uniqueness. Some studies underscore FOMO as a dominant factor influencing urgent purchasing behavior, particularly in time-sensitive contexts, whereas others highlight a more significant impact of uniqueness on consumer preferences for limited edition products (Abdrabbo et al., 2025). Furthermore, these psychological constructs are frequently examined separately, resulting in inadequate comprehension of how various psychological mechanisms simultaneously affect purchase urgency.

This issue is particularly relevant when focusing on university students as a distinct consumer segment. Students, especially those in Generation Z, are highly influenced by digital environments, peer interactions, and social media trends, which may intensify both FOMO and the desire for uniqueness (Wandhe, 2024). Rangsit University in Thailand is a valuable research context as it has more than 28,000 students enrolled in a wide range of academic programs (Edarabia, 2025). These students exhibit diverse purchasing power and are highly active on digital platforms, making them a proper group for examining the effects of scarcity-based marketing strategies.

This study aims to examine the impact of a limited-edition marketing strategy on purchase urgency while simultaneously assessing the comparative effects of FOMO and the need for uniqueness within a unified framework. This research integrates these constructs into a single model, resulting in a clear and comprehensive understanding of the psychological mechanisms which underlie scarcity-based marketing strategies, contributing to both theoretical frameworks and practical marketing applications.



2. Objectives

There are two main research objectives in this research, which are as follows:

1. To examine the effect of limited-edition marketing strategy on purchase urgency.
2. To evaluate the relative influence of fear of missing out (FOMO) and need for uniqueness on purchase urgency.

As there are research objectives, the following research questions are derived for this study:

- 1.1. What is the relationship between a limited-edition marketing strategy and purchase urgency?
- 1.2. How does a limited-edition marketing strategy influence consumers' purchase urgency?
- 1.3. To what extent do limited-edition marketing strategies predict purchase urgency?
- 2.1. How does fear of missing out (FOMO) influence purchase urgency?
- 2.2. How does fear of missing out (FOMO) influence purchase urgency?
- 2.3. Which factor has a stronger influence on purchase urgency: FOMO or the need for uniqueness?

The hypotheses for this research are as follows:

H₁: Limited-edition marketing strategy has a significant positive effect on purchase urgency.

H₀₁: Limited-edition marketing strategy has no significant effect on purchase urgency.

H₂: Fear of missing out (FOMO) has a significant positive effect on purchase urgency.

H₀₂: Fear of missing out (FOMO) has no significant effect on purchase urgency.

H₃: Sense of uniqueness has a significant positive effect on purchase urgency.

H₀₃: Sense of uniqueness has no significant effect on purchase urgency.

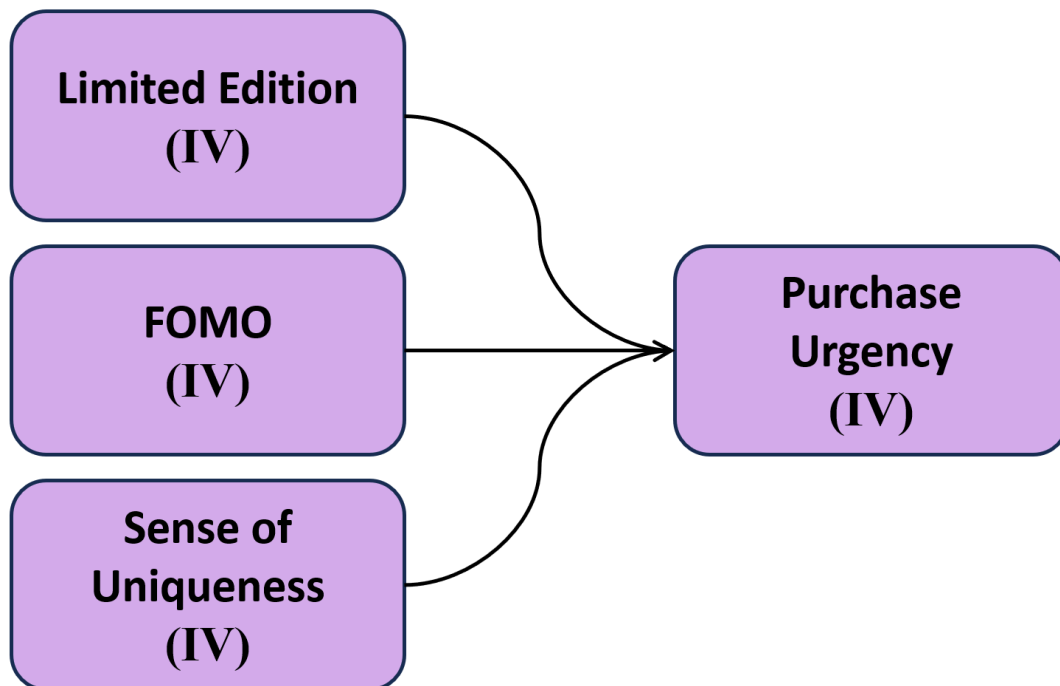


Figure1 Conceptual framework

This study is important for a number of different groups of people. First, the findings give businesses and marketers ideas on how to use scarcity-based strategies to influence consumer behavior. Second, this study improves consumers' understanding of how limited-edition products influence their perceptions and purchasing decisions. Finally, from an academic perspective, this research contributes to the existing literature and serves as a foundation for future studies in the field of marketing and consumer behavior.



3. Research methodology

This section focuses on how the research was conducted to examine the effect of scarcity marketing strategies on purchase urgency in the context of limited-edition products. The content will cover the research design, population and sample, research instruments, data collection, and data analysis of this study.

This study adopts a descriptive quantitative research design, which is appropriate for examining the relationships among limited-edition marketing strategy, fear of missing out (FOMO), need for uniqueness, and purchase urgency (Hair et al., 2022). This design enables the study to provide empirical evidence of how scarcity-based marketing influences consumer behavior. The target population of this study consists of university students, and a total of 409 valid responses were collected. Simple random sampling was used to avoid bias and ensure that participants had an equal chance of being selected.

The online survey, consisting of twenty-one questions, was conducted to measure limited edition marketing strategy, purchase urgency, FOMO, and sense of uniqueness. The first twenty questions are quantitative, using a numeric scale from one to five, representing the following: one = strongly disagree, two = disagree, three = neutral, four = agree, and five = strongly agree. This scale is commonly used to capture attitudes and perceptions in behavioral research. (Joshi et al., 2015). It takes about five to ten minutes to complete the questionnaire.

Both reliability and validity were checked to make sure that the measurement tool was of good quality. The reliability of the constructs was assessed using Cronbach's alpha. The results showed that the constructs were internally consistent at levels that were acceptable, with values ranging from 0.63 to 0.67. These values are a little lower than the commonly accepted cutoff of 0.70, but they are still acceptable for exploratory research (Hair et al., 2022). This indicates that the measurement items are adequately consistent for the objectives of this study. As for validity, the content validity was ensured by adapting measurement items from established literature on scarcity marketing, FOMO, and sense of uniqueness. Additionally, construct validity was supported through correlation analysis, where the relationships among variables were consistent with theoretical expectations (Henseler et al., 2015)

The process of data collection is as follows: first, the questionnaire was developed and randomly given to the participants, with clear information provided about the purpose of the questionnaire, and informed consent obtained for ethical considerations.

After collecting the data, the results were checked and cleaned to be used as the dataset for statistical analysis. The first step is to find out about the demographic profile of the participants. Secondly, descriptive analysis was used to summarize the main variables of this research. The correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationships between the variables. The final step was multiple regression analysis to predict the dependent variable based on the independent variables. The analysis was conducted by using the PSPP software.

4. Results & Discussion

4.1. Results

This section discusses the results of the data analysis from the questionnaire conducted to examine the effects among RSU students of scarcity marketing through limited edition products, as well as the mediating roles of fear of missing out (FOMO) and sense of uniqueness. This research included a total of 409 questionnaire respondents, with demographic information such as age, gender, education level, and monthly allowance.

The age distribution of the participants shows that the majority were aged 21–23 (40%), followed by those aged 18–20 (24%), 24–26 (22%), and 27 and above (14%). This analysis shows that most of the participants are in their early twenties, which is typical for students studying for a bachelor's degree. As for gender, the majority of the participants were female, with 212 (52%) respondents, followed by 121 (30%) male respondents, and 77 (19%) who preferred not to tell the gender. This indicates that female participants had higher engagement with the questionnaire than male participants. As for the education level of the



participants, 317 (78%) were bachelor's degree students, while 92 (22%) were master's degree students. This suggests that there were more undergraduate students participating in the questionnaire. In terms of monthly allowance, the largest proportion of the participants had a monthly allowance between 10,001 and 15,000 THB, with 137 (33%) of the total participants, followed by those earning 15,001–20,000 THB with 119 (29%) participants. Moreover, 79 (20%) of participants earned more than 20,000 THB, while 73 (18%) earned less than 10,000 THB. Overall, this indicates that most of the participants had a moderate monthly allowance.

Table 1 Demographic profile of the respondents

Demographic	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Q1. Age Group	18-20	98	24%
	21-23	162	40%
	24-26	92	22%
	27 and above	57	14%
	Total	409	100%
Q2. Gender	Male	121	30%
	Female	212	52%
	Prefer not to say	77	19%
	Total	409	100%
Q3. Education Level	Bachelor's Degree	317	78%
	Master's Degree	92	22%
	Total	409	100%
Q4. Monthly Allowance	Below 10,000 THB	73	18%
	10,001-15,000 THB	137	33%
	15,001-20,000 THB	119	29%
	More than 20,000 THB	79	20%
	Total	409	100%

Descriptive analysis

Table 2 shows the descriptive statistics used to summarize the main variables in this study, which are limited edition products, purchase urgency, FOMO, and sense of uniqueness. The results show that the participants had a moderate level of interest in limited edition products, as indicated by the mean score of 3.14 ($SD=0.73$), suggesting a generally positive perception of limited-edition products. Purchase urgency showed a high mean score of 7.16 ($SD=1.99$), indicating that the participants often experience a sense of urgency when purchasing limited edition products. Moreover, FOMO had a mean score of 10.03 ($SD=2.54$), reflecting that the participants are concerned about missing out on limited edition products. Similarly, sense of uniqueness recorded a mean score of 9.93 ($SD=2.79$), showing that participants value product uniqueness, although there were differences in individual perceptions. Overall, these results suggest that RSU students are influenced by limited edition marketing, accompanied by purchase urgency and FOMO, while a sense of uniqueness is presented but varies in its influence among students.

Table 2 Descriptive analysis of limited edition, purchase urgency, FOMO and sense of uniqueness

	N	Mean	Std. Dev	Minimum	Maximum
Limited Edition	409	3.14	.73	1.00	5.00
Purchase Urgency	409	7.16	1.99	2.33	11.67
FOMO	409	10.03	2.54	3.25	16.25
Sense of Uniqueness	409	9.93	2.79	3.25	16.25



Correlation analysis

Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationships among limited edition, purchase urgency, FOMO, and sense of uniqueness. The results indicate that all variables were significantly and positively correlated with each other ($p < .001$), suggesting that *****something missing here

Table 3 Correlation

	Limited Edition	Purchase Urgency	Sense of Uniqueness	FOMO
Limited Edition	1.000	.599	.396	.390
Purchase Urgency	.599	1.000	.336	.326
Sense of Uniqueness	.326	.326	1.000	.400
FOMO	.396	.336	.400	1.000

Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between limited edition, purchase urgency, FOMO, and sense of uniqueness. The results indicate that all variables were significantly and positively correlated with each other ($p < .001$). (repeated?????) Limited edition products show a strong correlation with purchase urgency ($r = .599$, $p < .001$), indicating that products that are more limited tend to create greater purchase urgency. Limited edition products also have moderate positive correlations with FOMO ($r = .390$, $p < .001$) and sense of uniqueness ($r = .336$, $p < .001$), suggesting that limited availability is associated with both FOMO and sense of uniqueness, although these constructs are distinct from each other. Moreover, purchase urgency is moderately correlated with FOMO ($r = .326$, $p < .001$) and sense of uniqueness ($r = .336$, $p < .001$), indicating that higher levels of FOMO and sense of uniqueness are associated with greater purchase urgency. Finally, FOMO and sense of uniqueness are moderately and positively correlated ($r = .400$, $p < .001$), suggesting that these psychological factors tend to coexist. Overall, the correlation results provide initial evidence that limited edition products, purchase urgency, FOMO, and sense of uniqueness are related to each other.

Multiple regression analysis

Table 4 Model Summary

R	R Square	Adjust R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
0.61	.037	~0.36	1.58

Table 5 Anova Results

	Sum of Square	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	609	3	203	81.28	0.000
Residua	1011.47	405	2.50		
Total	1620.46	408			

Table 6 Coefficients

	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	1.34	0.41	0.00	3.28	0.001
Limited Edition	1.44	0.12	0.53	11.94	0.000
Uniqueness	0.07	0.03	0.09	2.08	0.039
FOMO	0.06	0.03	0.08	1.83	0.068

The results of the multiple regression analysis indicate that the overall model is statistically significant ($F = 81.28$, $p < .001$). The model explains approximately 37% of the variance in purchase urgency ($R^2 = 0.37$), indicating a moderate level of explanatory power. The correlation coefficient ($R = 0.61$) suggests a strong relationship between the independent variables and purchase urgency.

The coefficient table shows that limited edition products have a positive and significant effect on purchase urgency ($B = 1.44$, $\beta = 0.53$, $p < .001$), indicating that greater perceived scarcity increases purchase



urgency. Sense of uniqueness also has a positive and significant relationship with purchase urgency, although the effect is small ($B = 0.07$, $\beta = 0.09$, $p = .039$). On the other hand, FOMO does not show a significant effect on purchase urgency ($B = 0.06$, $\beta = 0.08$, $p = .068$). These results show that purchase urgency among RSU students is driven by limited edition products, with a minor contribution from sense of uniqueness, while FOMO does not independently predict purchase urgency in the presence of the other variables.

The findings of this study provide support for the effectiveness of limited-edition marketing in increasing purchase urgency among RSU students. Consistent with scarcity marketing theory, limited edition products were found to be the strongest predictor of purchase urgency, indicating that limited availability encourages purchase urgency. This result supports the view that consumers respond strongly to scarcity, particularly students and young consumers.

Although limited edition products were positively associated with FOMO, the regression results indicate that FOMO did not independently predict purchase urgency when other variables were considered. This suggests that students may experience FOMO, but it is insufficient to drive purchase urgency without the presence of perceived scarcity.

A sense of uniqueness showed a small but significant effect on purchase urgency, suggesting that the desire to be different from others contributes moderately to consumers' motivation to purchase limited edition products. However, the weaker effect size indicates that uniqueness is not a primary driver of urgency among RSU students. Overall, the findings suggest that purchase urgency in this context is mainly driven by scarcity-based marketing strategies rather than psychological factors alone. These results contribute to the literature on scarcity marketing by clarifying the relative influence of limited-edition perception, FOMO, and sense of uniqueness on purchase urgency among university students.

4.2. Discussion

This study investigates the effect of limited-edition marketing strategy on purchase urgency and evaluates the influence of FOMO and need for uniqueness. The discussion analyzes these findings through relevant theoretical frameworks to enhance understanding of the psychological mechanisms underlying scarcity-based marketing.

The findings confirm that limited-edition marketing strategy is the most significant predictor of purchase urgency, aligning with scarcity theory. Scarcity theory suggests that limited-edition product availability enhances perceived value, thereby increasing consumers' urgency to act quickly (Barton et al., 2022). The Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) framework further supports this finding. In this framework, limited edition marketing acts as a stimulus that influences individuals' internal psychological states and leads to a behavioral response in the form of purchase urgency (Zhang et al., 2022). This indicates that consumers are particularly responsive to external factors such as limited quantity or time, which directly creates a sense of urgency in decision making.

In terms of psychological factors, the results indicate that the need for uniqueness has a significant but comparatively weaker influence on purchase urgency. This aligns with the need for uniqueness theory, which explains that individuals are driven to differentiate themselves via exclusive or distinctive products (Abosag et al., 2020). Limited edition products serve as a means for them to stand out socially, which helps them to achieve their desire for uniqueness (Wang et al., 2022). However, the modest effect size indicates that uniqueness influences behavior, but does not independently drive urgency as strongly as scarcity cues. This means that motivations related to identity may motivate and enhance consumers' interest but are not sufficient to create immediate purchasing pressure.

Conversely, the findings reveal that FOMO does not have a significant effect on purchase urgency when analyzed alongside other variables, which contrasts with prior studies that identify FOMO as a major driver of impulsive buying behavior (Good & Hyman, 2020; Barbu Kleitsch & Drănescu, 2025). One possible explanation is that FOMO represents an emotional response that may not always lead to actual purchasing behavior unless there are stronger external factors such as scarcity. In this context, consumers may experience FOMO, but they still base their purchasing decisions on more concrete cues such as limited availability or the idea that something is exclusive. This finding suggests that the influence of FOMO may be



context dependent and may be less significant when directly compared with other psychological and situational factors.

Overall, the findings indicate that scarcity-based marketing strategies influence purchase urgency primarily through perceived exclusivity and limited availability rather than emotional pressure. This provides a more complex understanding of consumer behavior by illustrating that not all psychological mechanisms exert equal influence. Importantly, this study significantly enhances the literature by integrating multiple theoretical perspectives within a single framework, allowing a direct comparison between FOMO and the need for uniqueness. This fills a major gap in previous studies, where these ideas were often examined separately rather than together.

5. Conclusion

This research investigated the impact of scarcity marketing strategies utilizing limited-edition products on purchase urgency, focusing on the influences of fear of missing out (FOMO) and the desire for uniqueness. Utilizing a quantitative methodology and data collected from 409 university students, the study provides empirical evidence on the impact of scarcity-based marketing on consumer behavior in a digital environment.

The results demonstrate that a limited-edition marketing strategy has a significant influence on purchase urgency, validating the effectiveness of scarcity-based strategies in speeding up consumer decision-making. Although both FOMO and the need for uniqueness were positively correlated with purchase urgency, only the need for uniqueness exhibited a statistically significant effect in the regression model. This indicates that consumers are more influenced by their desire for exclusivity and differentiation than by the emotional pressure associated with fear of missing out.

These findings enhance the current literature by explaining the comparative effects of psychological factors in scarcity marketing. The study emphasizes that perceived scarcity is the principal trigger of purchase urgency, whereas psychological factors like FOMO and the need for uniqueness serve as secondary influences. This offers a more cohesive understanding of consumer behavior by combining these factors within a single analytical framework.

From a practical standpoint, the results indicate that marketers should concentrate on highlighting product exclusivity, limited availability, and uniqueness in the formulation of marketing strategies. Emotional appeals like FOMO may get consumers to pay more attention, but they are less effective in driving immediate purchase intention unless clear scarcity cues are present.

Although this study contributes to the body of knowledge, it has several limitations. It is confined to a single university setting, which may limit the generalizability of the results. Moreover, the cross-sectional design fails to reflect temporal variations in consumer behavior. It is recommended that future research broaden the sample to include multiple institutions, adopt longitudinal designs, and investigate additional psychological or contextual factors that may affect purchase urgency.

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