

ABSTRACT

Flash sale is an effective promotional strategy for increasing transactions, yet it may trigger product return intention as a post-purchase consequence. This study aims to analyze the effect of flash sale on return intention, both directly and through impulse buying and loss recovery as mediating variables. A quantitative approach was employed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). Data were collected through questionnaires distributed to 90 Generation Z respondents who use Shopee in Semarang City and have shopped through flash sales, selected using purposive sampling. The results show that flash sale has a positive and significant effect on return intention; flash sale has a positive and significant effect on impulse buying; impulse buying has a positive and significant effect on loss recovery; and loss recovery has a positive and significant effect on return intention. The indirect effect testing reveals that impulse buying and loss recovery partially mediate the effect of flash sale on return intention, as both the direct and indirect effects are significant. These findings integrate the Stimulus-Organism-Response theory, Mental Accounting, and Loss Aversion in explaining post-purchase psychological mechanisms, and provide implications for e-commerce platforms and sellers in managing flash sale strategies to reduce product return rates.

Keywords: Flash sale, Impulse Buying, Loss Recovery, Return intention, Shopee, Generation Z

