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## Scarcity Marketing: The Role of Consumer Behavior in the Rise of the “Anik-Anik” Trend of Pop Mart’s Collectible Blind Box Figurines

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### ABSTRACT

This study analyzes the effect of scarcity marketing in the rise of the “Anik-Anik” trend through consumer behavior toward Pop Mart’s collectible blind box figurines. The researchers utilized a mixed-method approach through a semi-structured survey, in which data were collected from 100 active pop mart buyers in Marikina City, particularly senior high school and college students. The quantitative data revealed that while some consumers were neutral, the overall mean score indicates that scarcity marketing has significantly affected their purchasing behavior which resulted in the “Anik-Anik” trend. The qualitative findings further support and justify the results in quantitative data where responses show significant reactions and expressions through self-identity and culture. Results show that scarcity marketing significantly affects the rise of the “Anik-Anik” trend by triggering consumer behavior, particularly through psychological and behavioral responses: FOMO, impulsivity, overconsumption, hoarding, word of mouth, and social media trends. Lastly, the researchers of this study recommend responsible marketing, especially to Gen Z, broaden the scope of the study, particularly its respondents, and conduct the study on a longer time frame to thoroughly analyze the effect of scarcity marketing on consumer behavior over a long time.

### INTRODUCTION

Pop Mart was founded by Wang Ning in 2010 and started as a small gift shop in Beijing China that sells vinyl toy products and special gifts. However, the company faced challenges with their traditional toys which led them to the innovation of “art toy” or “toy in a blind box” (Prasertsri, 2024). In 2016, Pop Mart launched their first blind box toy series designed by Kenny Wong called “Molly” which boosted and made the company known globally, particularly in Asia. According to Parcinq Magazine (2025), Pop Mart’s growth of 62% in 2024 has caused global recognition, especially with the fashion industries, pop culture, and Generational Z as the company continuously expands its collaboration with famous artists, designers, and brands like Lisa from Blackpink, SKULLPANDA, and Walt Disney.

The idea of a blind box and limited-edition collection of Pop Mart has generated excitement and suspense for collectors and even for first-time consumers (De Asis, 2025), and this is where Pop Mart’s marketing strategy “Scarcity Marketing” plays a vital role in their worldwide success. As Pop Mart’s collectible figurines are released depending on the themes and collection, it generates a sense of FOMO or fear of missing out on customers resulting in a greater demand even with a limited amount of supply available because collectors are targeting to either complete or get the rarest toy. The psychological effect and drive for motivation on consumer behavior because of their desire to join the trend has made the chase to scarcity valuable to Pop Mart (Hoai & Phan,

2025).

With Pop Mart’s global success, the company was also able to penetrate different social media platforms particularly TikTok where their collectible blind box figurines were made as a statement of one’s culture and artistic expression; the rise of the Anik- Anik trend to Filipino Culture (Singh, 2024). “Anik-Anik” is a Tagalog word for “ano- ano” which reflects the culture of many Filipinos to store sentimental items and utilize them to celebrate, remember, and tell stories that hold close to their hearts. While the “Anik-Anik” trend became a staple item in fashion it also created communities that buy, sell, and trade Pop Mart’s collectibles. Meaning, Pop Mart was able to foster a movement where consumers were motivated to buy toys in collectible markets because of their emotional impact on their customers’ lives.

Pop Mart’s strategic approach demonstrates how success is fueled by understanding consumer behavior and the emotional impact of limited-edition products. In this study, the researchers would be able to provide new and existing companies with useful understanding of how scarcity marketing affects customer satisfaction and profitability by analyzing how scarcity marketing affects consumer behavior at Pop Mart that contributed to the emergence of the “Anik-Anik” trend and how the trend continues to grow in a scarce market. Furthermore, only one hundred active Pop Mart buyers in senior high school and college students at Marikina, City, Philippines would participate in this study.

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## LITERATURE REVIEW

### The Relationship between Scarcity Cues, Fear of Missing Out (FOMO), Consumer Impulsivity, and Overconsumption

Scarcity cues are an indication that something or a certain product is limited or difficult to buy (Dahmiri *et al.*, 2023). This cue can trigger fear of missing out or FOMO as the customer may feel that they need to take immediate action before the product runs out. According to Zhang (2022), the emotion “FOMO” is defined as a person’s fear of losing or missing an opportunity that most people experience. This relationship is called the theory of motivation which states that when people see others or their closest ones, they become easily interested because of the psychological desire for recognition and belongingness in a group. Therefore, scarcity cues result in consumers’ FOMO because of the dread it creates and the feeling of needing to experience limited things.

Pop Mart’s knock-up marketing strategy led to many controversies such as hoarding and impulsive buying. The strategy that stands out from Pop Mart’s ability to effectively sell blind boxes to consumers is devising a sense of curiosity and uncertainty to a mystery subject (Diokno *et al.*, 2024). The temptation to make known something that is unknown makes up an interesting trajectory in driving the thrill consumers to impulsively purchase a blind box. According to Diokno *et al.* (2024), this analysis shows that wealthier consumers indulge in impulsive buying, while the lower income would rather prioritize affordability when making choices. However, it still leads to a consumer impulsively purchasing a blind box to satisfy their desire regardless of their essential differences. Hence, consumers develop a confusing point in their purchase decision which makes it complicated for them to decide whether it’s a need or a want.

The rise of the “Anik-Anik” trend can be directed to scarcity marketing as it conveys a significant effect on the responses of consumers (Sun *et al.*, 2022). The analysis cultural dynamics of Dewan (2025), argues that the “Anik-Anik” trend transcend mere consumer behavior and becomes an important part of one’s identity. Historically, scarcity engages to not having enough of an individual’s needs. In a scarce market, it strategizes to seemingly attract consumers to purchase products before the discount, promo, or even the product itself goes away. By limiting stock availability and offering time-sensitive discounts, scarcity marketing encourages consumers to purchase impulsively, leading to increased sales and the rise of collectible trends. This strategy fosters a cycle of continuous demand, where consumers feel compelled to collect and showcase limited-edition items, further reinforcing the market’s success. Thus, drawing attention to a certain product can lead to an increase the sales in the market through limiting the stocks.

H1: Scarcity marketing has a direct impact on consumer psychological responses through the emotion “FOMO” or fear of missing out and impulsivity.

### The Influence of Scarcity Marketing on the Maximalist Hoarding and Notes on Filipino Culture

“Anik-Anik” discourse has come a long way that binds to a pattern of overconsumption of “little nothings” among consumers (Pontejos *et al.*, 2024). Scarcity marketing strategically encourages consumers to compulsively purchase “Anik-Anik” driven by the desire to hoard and over-consume a product. The impulse to fill an entire space with random little things is the motive force of maximalism. According to Japutra *et al.* (2025), the dark side of jumping into the scarcity market leads to negative outcomes such as anxiety and obsessive-compulsive behaviors but for the business, it results in an increase in sales and profit. Thus, scarcity marketing significantly raises the maximalist trend of hoarding and filling up a clear space with “Anik-Anik” to collect and showcase it to the public creating an influencing interest.

Bundang and Simangan (2024) explored the evolving meaning of “Anik-Anik” within Filipino culture, focusing on its connection to sentimentality, maximalism, and socioeconomic context. It found that “Anik-Anik” referred to more than just random objects; it encompassed items imbued with personal meaning and memories, often passed down through generations. The online discourse surrounding “Anik-Anik girlies” revealed a tension between appreciating the sentimental value of diverse collections and recognizing how some collections, particularly of trendy or expensive items, could become markers of social class.

Preview Magazine’s 2024 article talks about the Filipino trend of collecting “Anik-Anik,” which refers to small trinkets, charms, and cute little items. This explains that Filipinos love to collect these items because they allow them to express their creativity, tell personal stories, and showcase their style while holding sentimental value and memories. According to Singh (2024), the “Anik-Anik” trend is a form of sentimental maximalism that transcends cultures rather than a mere accessory. It signifies Filipino culture to hold onto random items that signify an important story of their individuality. Thus, the “Anik-Anik” trend is a cultural connection to remnants of the past, heritage, and the impalpable dimension of the self.

H2: Scarcity-driven trends reinforce hoarding and overconsumption to fill vacant spaces.

### The Impact of Scarcity Marketing on Pop Mart’s Business Growth

Guanhua (2024) explored the reasons why people are drawn to buy Pop-Mart’s blind box collectible figurines, focusing on 200 Pop-Mart consumers in Shanghai, most of whom were white-collar workers. The emotional excitement of opening a blind box without knowing what’s inside triggers a psychological response similar to the thrill of gambling: happy, curious, and tempting. This results in uncertainty and anticipation which creates a rush of dopamine or feel-good hormones, making the experience addictive for some consumers. When addiction

happens, the strong desire to complete a collection comes quickly. Since some figurines are rare, collectors feel motivated to keep purchasing them until they find the ones they're missing. This taps into the human need for a sense of accomplishment and fulfillment, as completing a set provides a feeling of satisfaction and pride. Ma (2022) highlights that scarcity marketing not only increases immediate sales and customer's repeat purchase but also helps build a strong brand image which creates hype or trend. Products become more desirable because they are seen as rare and exclusive. This makes consumers feel proud to own them, which adds emotional value to the purchase. Additionally, scarcity marketing helps Pop Mart maintain higher prices because people are willing to pay more for items they believe are special or hard to find. From a business perspective, this strategy helps Pop Mart

manage its inventory more efficiently. Since products are produced in limited quantities, there's less risk of unsold stock, which saves costs. According to Hasan (2025), adopting digital transformation such as social media platforms, enhances performance and competitive advantage in the market. The excitement around rare items also generates free publicity through word-of-mouth and social media, as customers love sharing their collections and experiences online. This creates a continuous buzz around the brand without spending much on traditional advertising. Overall, scarcity marketing has helped Pop Mart grow rapidly, expand globally, and maintain a loyal customer base. H3: Scarcity Marketing positively impacts Pop Mart by increasing product demand.

### Conceptual Framework

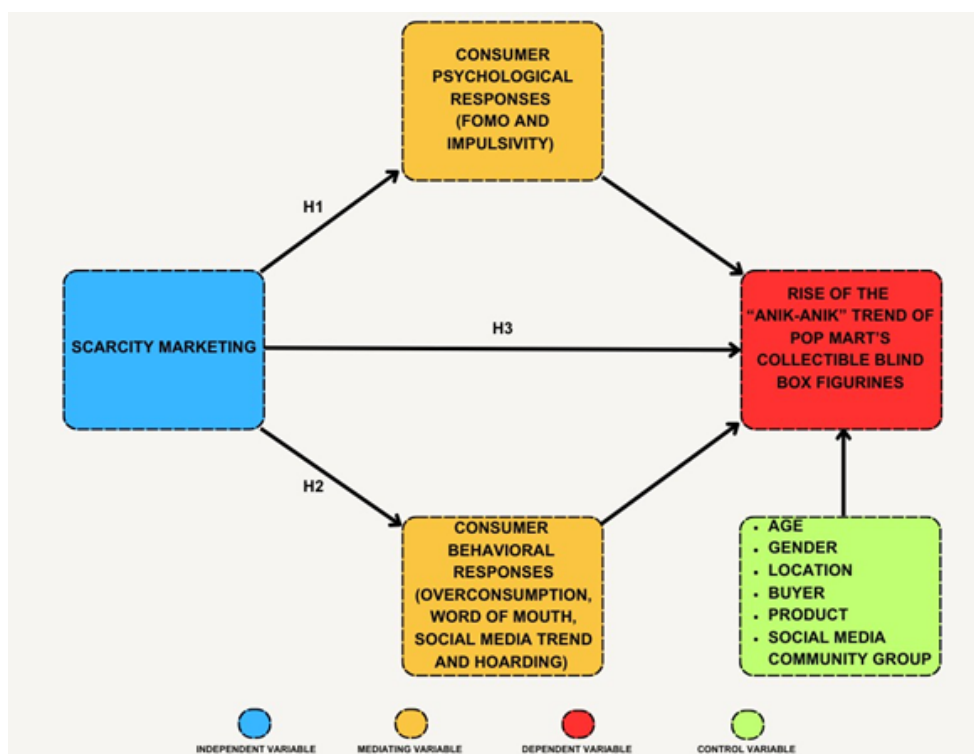


Figure 1: The Mediation Model

A conceptual framework is a visual representation that guides researchers in illustrating the cause and effect of a complex phenomenon (Salomao, 2023). According to Aas and Melle (2017), the mediation model identifies the mechanism between the two variables and how the independent variable affects dependent variable through a mediating variable. The researchers want to provide a clearer explanation of the effect of scarcity marketing on the "Anik-Anik" trend by analyzing and showing the mediator variable as consumer behavior. In this way, the study could analyze and answer the statement of the problem "how" regarding the relationship between scarcity marketing, consumer behavior, and the rise of the "Anik-Anik" trend rather than testing if scarcity marketing affects the "Anik-Anik" trend by a simple "yes" or "no" answer. The independent variable is

scarcity marketing as it is the key variable examined in this study, which affects both consumer responses and the rise of the "Anik-Anik" trend. Furthermore, although the researchers will focus on scarcity marketing and the rise of the "Anik-Anik" trend, analyzing the mediating variables of consumers' responses will allow the researchers to understand how the independent variable influences the dependent variable. Lastly, the control variables are age, gender, location, product, types of buyers, and social media community groups to be kept constant as it will not just reduce biases in this study but also avoid affecting or changing the focus of the study.

### Research Questions

This study aims to analyze the effect of scarcity marketing on the rise of the "Anik-Anik" trend of Pop

Mart's collectible blind box figurines through consumer behavior.

1. How does scarcity marketing affect consumer behavior toward Pop Mart's collectible blind box figurines?
2. How does scarcity marketing raise the "Anik-Anik" trend?
3. How does the "Anik-Anik" trend continuously grow in a scarce market?

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

### Research Locale

This study will be conducted in Marikina City, Philippines. Marikina City is recognized as a growing urban center characterized by a mixed demographic of middle-class to upper-class families. According to the Schools Division Office of Marikina City, there are 39 schools in the city as of 2024 which allows the researchers to target respondents, particularly senior high school and college students aged between 16- 24 years old, who are active Pop Mart buyers. Furthermore, Marikina City consists of a diverse gender population, making it an ideal location for examining the effects of scarcity marketing on a broad demographic.

### Sampling Method

The researchers will utilize purposive sampling, a non-probability sampling where survey respondents will be selected based on the criteria to provide relevant answers to the study's objectives without limiting representation and to reduce selection bias. The study will be paired with a descriptive research design to provide accurate description, results, and analysis on the phenomena. The respondents will first answer the pre-assessment criteria: Has purchased Pop Mart Collectible Blind Box Figurines whether it is from Labubu, Crybaby, Molly, Hirono, and SKULLPANDA collection from previous years and during this year, type of buyers such as casual, regular, or hardcore buyers, and the respondents must be aware of the limited-edition or scarcity marketing strategy of Pop Mart. Thus, the respondents will be 100 active Pop Mart buyers from senior high schools and college students in Marikina City aged between 16-24 years old. The researchers will identify respondents through social media platforms, particularly Facebook groups where Pop Mart collectors interact. Additionally, physical surveying will be conducted in the schools within Marikina City to identify students who can participate in this. The researchers will provide a consent form to ensure participants that the data collected will only be used for the significance of this study.

### Data Gathering Procedure

The researchers will conduct and gather data through semi-structured surveys which include pre-screening criteria, Likert scale, and open-ended questions to identify patterns, and trends, and understand the decision behind the responses of the one hundred senior high school and college students active Pop Mart Buyers aged

16-24 years old in gender diverse population at Marikina City, Philippines. The researchers would first identify the active Pop Mart buyers through social media platforms, particularly Facebook collector groups, and physical surveying of schools in Marikina City which will be answered via Google Forms. The one hundred active Pop Mart buyer respondents would be given a brief discussion regarding the survey and would be given a consent form to ensure confidentiality and ethical concern of data.

The survey would be conducted with a maximum period of two weeks to allow researchers to analyze data behind numbers, specifically the effect of scarcity marketing on consumer behavior, how it results in a trend, and how the trend is growing in a scarce-driven market. The study will utilize a mixed-method approach which allows for quantitative and qualitative analysis of responses. The quantitative data analysis includes closed-ended questions and Likert scale items to be calculated through calculation of mean and standard deviation answers of the respondents. Additionally, the researchers will utilize qualitative data analysis, particularly open-ended questions through thematic analysis to look for key insights and understand the responses behind numerical data.

### Instrument

The instrument to be utilized in this study will be a semi-structured survey questionnaire through Google Forms Survey that contains Likert scale and open-ended questions to collect both quantitative and qualitative data. The study will have pre- screening criteria and demographics to be followed by the Likert-scale items to assess the psychological and behavioral responses of respondents regarding their perception of the "Anik-Anik" trend. Lastly, to provide reliable and detailed explanations of respondents' insights into why and how Pop Mart's scarcity marketing affects their consumer behavior resulting in the rise of the "Anik-Anik" trend.

### Statistical Treatment of Data

The data analysis of this study will be conducted through an approach of both quantitative and qualitative analysis. The quantitative analysis will consist of responses from Likert-scale items which will be calculated through calculation of mean and standard deviation of ungrouped formula to analyze similarities, patterns, frequency of responses, and how strongly scarcity marketing affects consumer behavior. On the other hand, the responses to open-ended questions will be done through thematic analysis to further analyze the influences behind consumer behavior which increases the growing popularity of the "Anik-Anik" trend.

### Scope and Limitations

The researchers targeted 100 active Pop-Mart buyers from senior high schools and college students in Marikina City aged between 16-24 years old which will be conducted with a maximum period of two weeks. The study focuses on how scarcity marketing affects the rise of the

“Anik-Anik” trend among these students. Additionally, the study will provide mediating variables to analyze consumer psychological and behavioral responses which relate both to scarcity marketing and the “Anik-Anik” trend. Although this study is limited by its one hundred respondents, biases in survey responses, and short time frame, the findings would still be relevant because of the specified sample surveyed. This will allow the researchers to analyze data behind numbers relevantly, specifically the effect of scarcity marketing on consumer behavior, how it results in a trend, and how the trend is growing in a scarce-driven market. Through the combined findings, the researchers would be able to analyze how scarcity marketing strategy affects consumer behavior resulting in the rise of the “Anik-Anik” trend.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Results

The researchers focused on analyzing the effect of scarcity marketing on the rise of the “Anik- Anik” trend of Pop Mart’s collectible blind box figurines through consumer behavior. This study utilized a mixed-method approach, consisting of quantitative and qualitative data to analyze key insights and understand the responses behind numerical data. A total of 100 active pop mart buyers in Marikina City were surveyed using purposive sampling to ensure that the data are relevant and accurate. The following table, graph, and analysis present the key results observed:

### Respondents

The study was composed of 100% active Pop Mart buyers from Marikina City.

ACTIVE POP MART BUYERS

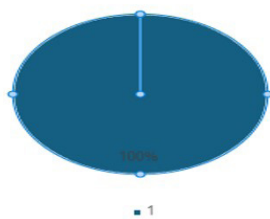


Figure 2: Active pop mart buyers

### Product Types

Most of the respondents are Hirono buyers, comprising 43%, followed by Labubu buyers at 26%, Crybaby at 13%, Skullpanda at 8%, Molly at 7%, and others at 3%.

PURCHASED POP MART COLLECTIBLES

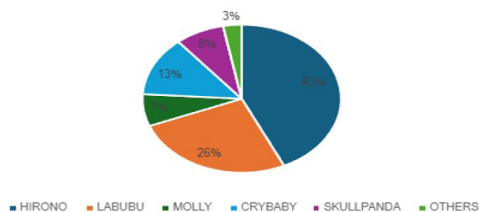


Figure 3: Purchased pop mart collectibles

### Type of Buyers

Casual buyers comprise 71%, regular buyers with 22%, and hardcore buyers with 7%.

TYPE OF BUYERS

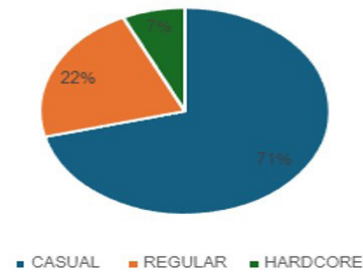


Figure 4: Type of buyers

### Age

Age 16-18 consists of 11% and age 19-24 consists of 89%.

AGE

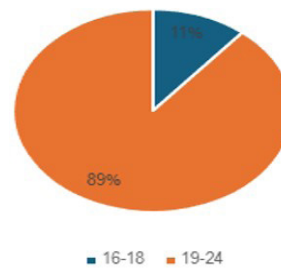


Figure 5: Age

### Academic Level

College students consist of 90% and senior high school students have 10%.

ACADEMIC LEVEL

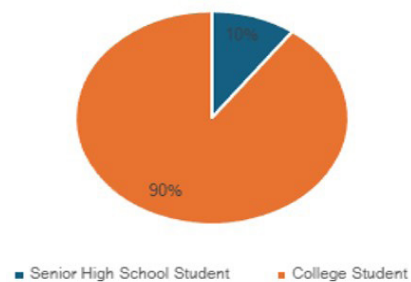


Figure 6: Academic level

### Quantitative Data

Table 1 shows how does scarcity marketing affects consumer behavior, with an overall mean of 3.39 and a standard deviation of 1.18, resulting to a neutral interpretation.

Table 2 shows how scarcity marketing raises the “Anik-Anik” trend, with an overall mean of 3.80 and a standard deviation of 0.96, resulting in an agreed interpretation.

**Table 1:** Marketing affects on consumer behavior

<b>PART I</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
I have purchased multiple Pop Mart blind boxes at once impulsively to increase my chances of getting a rare figurine.	3.28	1.15	Neutral
I have spent more money than expected on Pop Mart collectibles due to their limited availability.	3.43	1.10	Agree
The fear of missing out (FOMO) makes me check for new Pop Mart releases more frequently.	3.09	1.23	Neutral
I sometimes buy Pop Mart collectibles even if I do not really need them.	3.55	1.09	Agree
I feel anxious or pressured to buy Pop Mart blind boxes when I see others purchasing them due to their limited availability.	2.92	1.24	Neutral
Seeing Pop Mart collectibles featured in social media trends (e.g., unboxing videos, viral posts) by influencers or celebrities increases my desire to buy them.	4.05	0.93	Agree
<b>Overall mean</b>	<b>3.39</b>	<b>1.18</b>	<b>Neutral</b>

**Table 2:** Marketing raises the “Anik-Anik” trend

<b>PART II</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
The idea of limited supply or scarcity marketing directly affects my consuming behavior.	3.69	1.00	Agree
My consuming behavior aids the rise of the "Anik-Anik" trend.	3.84	0.95	Agree
Limited availability and exclusivity of the "Anik-Anik" items encourage me to buy more.	3.77	1.03	Agree
The "Anik-Anik" trend is not just toys for me they are also a representation of my personal style and culture.	4.04	0.84	Agree
Rare and time-limited collectibles make me participate in the "Anik-Anik" trend even more.	3.68	0.99	Agree
The rise of the "Anik-Anik" trend has greatly affected my purchasing behavior.	3.75	0.91	Agree
<b>Overall mean</b>	<b>3.80</b>	<b>0.96</b>	<b>Agree</b>

**Table 3:** The “Anik-Anik” trend

<b>PART III</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
Pop Mart's marketing strategy contributes to the growing popularity of the "Anik-Anik" trend.	4.12	0.86	Agree
I have joined online communities (e.g., Facebook groups, TikTok trends) to stay updated on Pop Mart collectibles.	3.43	1.21	Agree
Seeing others collect Pop Mart figurines encourages me to buy more for myself.	3.75	0.99	Agree
The excitement of unboxing a Pop Mart blind box makes me want to buy more even if I am not sure of what is inside.	4.02	0.93	Agree
I prefer buying Pop Mart blind boxes in bulk to increase my chances of getting rare items.	3.13	1.23	Neutral
I am willing to spend extra money to get a rare Pop Mart figure from resellers.	3.22	1.30	Neutral
<b>Overall mean</b>	<b>3.61</b>	<b>1.16</b>	<b>Agree</b>

Table 3 shows how the “Anik-Anik” trend continuously grows in a scarce market, with an overall mean of 3.61 and a standard deviation of 1.16, resulting in an agreed interpretation.

**Qualitative Data**

**Theme 1: The Consumer Behavior to Scarcity Marketing**

Emotionally intense reactions were common among respondents encountering limited edition Pop Mart figurines such as feelings of urgency, anxiety, and a fear of

missing out (FOMO). Respondent 17 stated that “When I see it’s limited, I feel like I have to buy it immediately,” and respondent 14 also said that “I have a fear of missing out, so I usually tend to buy the limited edition one.” These reactions show how scarcity marketing triggers emotional urgency and impulsivity among consumers as most of the responses reflected impulsive buying behaviors like “I panic buy” and “I don’t think, I just buy.” That is why after buying, most respondents felt satisfaction and pride, while a smaller portion felt regret with the respondents

stating positive and negative emotions particularly: “I’m happy I got it,” “I’m proud of my collection,” “I spent too much,” and “I didn’t need it, but I bought it anyway.” This shows that the utilization of scarcity marketing techniques successfully creates FOMO and impulse buying among customers of Pop Mart which increases the psychological perception of value and the propelling force to take actions, such as making purchases, even when not contemplating actual usage or consumption.

### **Theme 2: Scarcity Marketing Raise the “Anik-Anik” Trend**

Pop Mart figurines in blind boxes evoke an emotional response tendency in the consumer, especially inclination towards such behaviors which include “impulsive buying”, “fear of missing out (FOMO)” like attitudes, with “urgency”, and even “excitement”. Such crowd moves tend to cause a demand upsurge and enhance its trend as respondent 23 expressed, “Every time I see that there are few stocks left, I panic and feel like I need to buy immediately,” and respondent 67 shared, “Knowing that it’s limited makes it more valuable. I feel proud when I complete my collection.” This means buyers act fast and spontaneously purchase that rare item to meet such demands. Under the “Anik-Anik” trend, buyers go on to fashion collections that express emotional elements of nostalgia, individuality, and belongingness. Most of the respondents answered that their “Anik-Anik” are reflection of themselves and identity, particularly respondent 94 which said, “I choose figurines that remind me of my childhood. It feels personal.” Hence, scarcity marketing drive sales and at the same time strengthens emotional bond and makes this collection meaningful rather than material through self-identity and emotional expression.

### **Theme 3: Scarcity Marketing in a Scarce Market**

Most participants believe the “Anik-Anik” trend will continue growing due to market visibility and active online engagement which was seen through respondent 67 “I think it will keep growing because there are always new designs.” Although a few respondents anticipate eventual decline, respondent 72 said, “Trends don’t last forever, maybe after a few years it will disappear too.” The visual appeal and artistic design of figurines capture collectors’ interests. People are attracted by beauty, uniqueness, and the decorative function of Pop Mart items, respondent 59 stated “I love the story behind the designs; they’re art pieces to me.” This affects consumers behavior to explore brands and respond to hype which will motivate Filipinos to engage in the “Anik-Anik” trend since it fuels the desire to collect and keep seeking more items, resulting to its continuous growth as respondent 58 clearly stated that “It’s part of our culture now, not just a hobby.”

### **Discussion**

The findings of this study indicate that scarcity marketing significantly affects consumer behavior, particularly on

Pop Mart’s collectible blind boxes, which resulted in the “Anik-Anik” trend in Marikina City. The researchers utilized a mixed-method approach which reveals that psychological and behavioral responses to scarcity are major drivers of consumer behavior in this niche market. The demographic data displayed that many of the respondents are college students aged 19–24, suggesting that the Anik-Anik trend is predominantly embraced by the youth who are likely influenced by social media, particularly Facebook and TikTok, and peer trends. Most of the buyers identified themselves as casual buyers, which has a percentage of 71%, which means that they may not be deeply invested, indicating that while they may not be deeply invested and committed to collecting, they are still highly influenced by Pop Mart’s scarcity marketing strategies and influencer promotions. In terms of active Pop Mart buyers’ product preference, the collection, Hirono, with 46% and Labubu with 23%, dominate among the collectible figurines, which means that specific characters and collections may carry greater psychological, behavioral, and aesthetic appeal to produce and grow a trend such as the “Anik-Anik.”

The findings in Table 1 of quantitative data indicate that scarcity marketing has a moderate influence on Pop Mart’s consumer behavior since it has an overall mean of 3.39 and a standard deviation of 1.18, which can be interpreted as neutral. This means that while some Pop Mart consumers are affected by the scarcity marketing strategies, the effect is not fully intense on all the respondents. The highest mean score was the sixth statement, “Seeing Pop Mart collectibles featured in social media trends by influencers or celebrities increases my desire to buy them,” which has a mean of 4.05 and a standard deviation of 0.93, which was interpreted as agree. This suggests that social media platforms, particularly Facebook and TikTok, play a significant role in affecting consumers’ behavior, especially when figurines are visibly seen as limited-edition. This supports the study’s claims that social media strengthens the effect of scarcity marketing strategies on consumers. The fourth statement, “I sometimes buy Pop Mart collectibles even if I do not really need them,” was the second with a high mean of 3.55 and a standard deviation of 1.09, interpreted as agree, further supports that scarcity marketing causes impulsivity. The second statement, “I have spent more money than expected on Pop Mart collectibles due to their limited availability,” with a mean of 3.43 and a standard deviation of 1.10, indicates agree, which means that consumers spent more money than they had planned to result in overconsumption. The first, third, and fifth statement all indicates neutral, “I have purchased multiple Pop Mart blind boxes at once impulsively to increase my chances of getting a rare figurine,” has a mean of 3.28 and a standard deviation of 1.15, “The fear of missing out (FOMO) makes me check for new Pop Mart releases more frequently,” has a mean of 3.09 and a standard deviation of 1.23,” and I feel anxious or pressured to buy Pop Mart blind boxes when I see others purchasing them

due to their limited availability,” has a mean of 2.92 and a standard deviation of 1.24. This means that although impulsivity, overconsumption, hoarding, FOMO, word of mouth, and social media trends affect consumer behavior towards Pop Mart’s “Anik-Anik” trend, consumers are neutral or moderately affected by scarcity marketing, depending on the psychological and behavioral responses they generate while buying.

Table 2 demonstrates that scarcity marketing raises the “Anik-Anik” trend, with an overall mean of 3.80 and a standard deviation of 0.96, interpreted as agree. This means that participants agreed that scarcity marketing affects the consumer behavior that resulted in the rise of the “Anik-Anik” trend. Item number four has the highest mean which states the following, “The “Anik-Anik” trends are not just toys for me; they represent a fashion and culture of which I am a part,” with a mean of 4.04 and standard deviation of 0.84, interpreted as agree. This emphasizes the view of the consumers that these collectibles become a way of self-expression and personal identification, which further supports the hypothesis that scarcity marketing results in emotional attachment to the products. Next is the second highest of the above, which is the following statement: “My consuming behavior aids the rise of the “Anik-Anik” trend.” The mean score is 3.84 with a standard deviation of 0.95, interpreted as agree. This actually means that buyers realize their actions in purchasing Pop Mart’s collectibles as contributing to the popularization of the trend. The third statement, “The limited availability and exclusivity of the “Anik-Anik” items encourage me to buy more,” got a mean of 3.77 and a standard deviation of 1.03, interpreted as agree. This, therefore, explains that scarcity encourages more fear of lost purchases such as FOMO which results in overconsumption and impulsivity. With a mean score of 3.75, derived from a standard deviation of 0.91, interpreted as agree. The fifth statement says, “The emergence of an “Anik-Anik” trend has affected my purchasing behavior quite a lot,” which further supports the idea that scarcity marketing strategies affects consumer behavior. Furthermore, the very first statement, “The thought of limited supply or scarcity marketing really impacts my consuming behavior,” got an average score of 3.69 and a standard deviation of 1.00, interpreted as agree; thus, the principle of scarcity is said to affect the behavioral patterns and decisions of consumers. Lastly, the sixth statement is that “Rare and time-constrained collectibles make me participate more in the “Anik-Anik” trend”. It has the lowest mean at 3.68 and a standard deviation of 0.99 but is interpreted to agree, strengthening the point that scarcity marketing is still a motivation to participate.

Table 3 shows how the “Anik-Anik” trend continuously grows in a scarce market, with an overall mean of 3.61 and a standard deviation of 1.16, resulting in an agree interpretation. This suggests that respondents may not be strongly favorable, but the scarcity marketing strategy of Pop Mart was still effective in growing the “Anik-

Anik” trend with an opportunity for improvement. The highest mean score is found in the first statement, “Pop Mart’s marketing strategy contributes to the growing popularity of the “Anik-Anik” trend with a mean of 4.12 and a standard deviation of 0.86, interpreted as agree. This underscores the significant influence of scarcity marketing strategies to affect the behavior of the consumer leading to the “Anik-Anik” trend. Next is the fourth statement, “The excitement of unboxing a Pop Mart blind box makes me want to buy more even if I am not sure of what is inside,” with a mean of 4.02 and standard deviation of 0.93, interpreted as agree. This indicates that the strong appeal of mystery and emotional thrill encourages repeated purchases due to the element of surprise which reinforced consumers behavior to buy the product. The third highest is the third statement “Seeing others collect Pop Mart figurines encourages me to buy more for myself,” with a mean of 3.75 and standard deviation of 0.99, interpreted as agree. This shows that peer influence plays a role in stimulating consumers’ purchasing behavior, driven by social and shared interests which also influence “Anik-Anik” trend, though it is not a primary factor in influencing this behavior. Following this is the second statement, “I have joined online communities (e.g., Facebook groups, TikTok trends) to stay updated on Pop Mart collectibles,” with a mean of 3.43 and standard deviation of 1.21, interpreted as agree. This implies that digital engagement supports the development of consumer communities which may contribute to purchasing a Pop Mart blind box collectible, but it is not the primary factor influencing “Anik-Anik” trend. The fifth and sixth statement was interpreted as neutral: “I am willing to spend extra money to get a rare Pop Mart figure from resellers,” received a mean score of 3.22 and standard deviation of 1.30 and “I prefer buying Pop Mart blind boxes in bulk to increase my chances of getting rare items,” got the lowest mean of 3.13 with a standard deviation of 1.23. This displays a neutral observation which may be due to consumers’ selectiveness and approach in the way they purchase Pop Mart collectibles in line with their customer category.

On the other hand, for the first part of the qualitative analysis, the common theme of the respondent’s response is that their consumer behavior is intense, specifically, feelings of urgency, anxiety, and a fear of missing out (FOMO). More than 60% of the respondents said that they tend to buy quickly or even make impulse purchases when they know that a Pop Mart figurine is a limited-edition collectible. Responses such as “I panic buy”, “I don’t think, I just buy”, and “I buy even if I don’t need it yet” show a great deal of impulsivity. Notably, FOMO or Fear of Missing Out was directly mentioned by many, stating that “I’m afraid they’ll run out,” “I don’t want to miss a chance,” “Knowing it’s rare makes me want it more.” This result aligns with the 20% responses of feeling pressure to act fast or spend money which they did not initially plan to; implies an emotional urgency because of scarcity marketing strategies. There is also an emotional

reaction after their purchase, majority reported positive emotional payoffs, such as: “Satisfied and happy,” “Proud of my collection,” “I feel like I accomplished something.” But of course, there is also a negative reaction stated by the respondents: “I spent too much,” “I didn’t really need it,” “I bought it just to avoid missing out.” Active Pop Mart consumers are clearly motivated by the fear that items will run out or become unavailable, which leads to quick, emotionally driven decisions. The spontaneous and often unplanned nature of purchases shows that scarcity effectively shortens the decision-making process, leading consumers to buy before they fully reflect. And because of these responses, the study has a strong qualitative support for hypothesis 1, revealing that scarcity-based decisions are emotionally charged; that scarcity marketing has a direct impact on consumer psychological responses through the emotion “FOMO” or fear of missing out and impulsivity.

For part 2 of the qualitative analysis, the common themes from the 100 active pop mart buyers are “hype,” “thrill,” “want,” “people,” “Anik-Anik,” “represent,” and “personality.” Respondents generally agree that there is a sense of excitement between urgency and a sense of being caught up with others due to the scarcity and of course, because of the power of influencers and social media platforms to make a trend. Many also agreed that limited supply makes these seem much more desirable, which attracts more people into compulsiveness, causes people to buy in bulk, or even to jump into the hype without even knowing what it is all about and what will they get if they purchase a blind box. For many respondents, they felt that the trend indeed reflects what and who they are, stating that “It shows my personality,” which further supports that the “Anik-Anik” trend is meaningful rather than a mere material. This indicates that scarcity marketing affects the consumer behavior and identity expression of young Pop Mart buyers. Such limited availability of Pop Mart blind box figures triggers a psychological and behavioral reaction such as urgency or excitement, fear of missing out (FOMO) which then leads to overconsumption, hoarding, and impulsivity to fill vacant spaces. But at this point, the “Anik-Anik” trend becomes an identity formation of consumers as they connect their purchases to their personal preferences; mirroring their unique personality. The cultural value attached to the figurines serves as symbols of Filipino individualism, fashion, social belonging, and our tendency to hold onto things such as “Ano-Ano” or “Anik-Anik” and thus support that scarcity marketing raise the “Anik-Anik” trend through the limited nature of the strategy and by creating a cultural movement that empowers identities and communities.

The last part of the qualitative analysis displays the common theme of the respondents such as their psychological and behavioral drivers, aesthetic value, trend dynamics, and cultural representation. These relate to how and why people buy as their primary reason under consumer behavior and motivation is because of the

hype, which is the effect of curiosity in the presence of a rising trend. Collections such as Labubu, Hirono, and Molly were mentioned as some of the most common collectibles being explored by collectors, influencers, and even well-known artists today. Many respondents mentioned impulse buying often in a negative light as they felt “Budol”, a Filipino casual term for being persuaded to buy something due to marketing, peer pressure, and social media trends. These motivators reflect internal feelings such as excitement, curiosity, satisfaction, and psychological and behavioral responses that affect the consumer behavior of an individual. The growth of the “Anik-Anik” trend in a scarce market reflects a form of sentimental maximalism that transcends a mere accessory to a cultural connection to heritage, memory, and personal identity which is very common to many Filipinos, as stated by the respondent a couple of times “It’s part of our culture now, not just a hobby.” This reflects the importance of Pop Mart’s product value as people buy products that they can relate to. This is the main reason why the “Anik-Anik” trend is continuously growing in a scarce market because of the internal responses it evokes to consumers: FOMO, impulsivity, overconsumption, hoarding, word of mouth, and social media trend. Thus, these are the main factors that fuels demand and contribute to Pop Mart’s growth in the long run.

## CONCLUSION

This study analyzes the effect of scarcity marketing on the rise of the “Anik-Anik” trend of Pop Mart’s collectible blind box figurines through the consumer behavior of 100 active Pop Mart buyers in Marikina City. This study draws its results by using a mixed-method approach of both quantitative and qualitative findings which concludes that scarcity marketing significantly affects the rise of the “Anik-Anik” trend by triggering consumer behavior, particularly through psychological and behavioral responses: FOMO, impulsivity, overconsumption, hoarding, word of mouth, and social media trends, aligning directly with hypothesis 1 which states that “Scarcity marketing has a direct impact on consumer psychological responses through the emotion “FOMO” or fear of missing out and impulsivity.”

The study also concludes that scarcity marketing has significantly contributed to the rise of the “Anik-Anik” trend by making Pop Mart collectible blind box figurines a symbol of personal and cultural identity, particularly Filipino culture to hold onto random items that signify an important story of their individuality. This results in consumers hoarding or keeping their “Anik-Anik” even if they no longer need it, and overconsuming more than they need, which affirms hypothesis 2 “Scarcity-driven trends reinforce hoarding and overconsumption to fill vacant spaces.” Additionally, the study shows that Pop Mart’s scarcity marketing strategy, specifically its limited-edition nature has significantly increased product demand which helps sustain the continuous growth of the “Anik-Anik” trend in a scarce market. This supports hypothesis

3 which states “Scarcity Marketing positively impacts Pop Mart by increasing product demand.”

Despite a neutral interpretation in Table 1 of quantitative data, the overall mean, recurring themes, and patterns on both quantitative and qualitative responses have dominantly agreed that scarcity marketing has a significant effect on the rise of the “Anik-Anik” trend through affecting consumer behavior.

### Recommendations

The study analyzes how scarcity marketing strategies, particularly Pop Mart affect consumer behavior and create cultural phenomena like the “Anik-Anik” trend. The results give an in-depth understanding of consumer psychological and behavioral responses such as fear of missing out (FOMO), impulsiveness, overconsumption, word of mouth, social media trends, and hoarding that motivate consumers’ purchasing decisions. Based on the results and conclusions drawn, it is recommended that businesses and marketers must responsibly exploit scarcity marketing by balancing exclusivity with ethical marketing practices, especially when Pop Mart targets the youth. Second, Pop Mart should continue with limited edition launches while maintaining a strong online community engagement, such as Facebook groups and TikTok trends to maintain momentum in collectible markets. They could also work towards enhancing collaborations with local and international artists to strengthen the sentimental and cultural appeal of collectible items, particularly for markets such as the Philippines, where sentimental maximalism is a strong cultural factor. For future researchers, a long-term study should be conducted to further understand how prolonged exposure to scarcity marketing can impact consumer behavior in the long run, as well as the mental health effects, since, based on the results of this study, it drives psychological and behavioral responses. Furthermore, the sample demographic should be expanded outside Marikina City to explore the differences across regions, students, and income groups, which will help in validating and increasing the generalizability of the findings. Additionally, a longer time frame is highly recommended to seek active Pop Mart buyers and thoroughly analyze the effect of scarcity marketing on these consumers, which resulted in a trend. Lastly, a consumer education program must be made to raise awareness among young consumers regarding the psychological and behavioral effects of scarcity marketing to induce mindful and informed purchasing decisions.

### Compliance with Ethical Standards

The researchers conducted this study in full compliance with established ethical research standards to ensure the credibility, integrity, and transparency of the research process. Participation in the study was strictly voluntary with a pre-assessment criterion to ensure the relevance of the responses, and the respondents were informed about the purpose, scope, and nature of the research before providing their consent. Throughout the study, the

utmost care was taken to ensure the confidentiality and anonymity of the respondents. No Personally Identifiable Information (PII) was captured unless consent was given through explicit agreement. Data collected as part of this research study was managed with due regard to the Privacy Act of 2012 (RA 10173) to ensure adequate control, protection, and confidentiality of the personal details of the respondents. The plagiarism policy was closely monitored by the researchers in terms of proper citation to all quotation texts and providing due attribution. In the collection, analysis, and reporting processes, the researchers maintained the highest levels of integrity and accountability. The researchers were honest that there would be no outcome misrepresentation or manipulation deceit, ethical conduct, allowed others to build upon, and could be validated through follow-up studies. Lastly, verifiable professional standards were honored in all aspects including the subjects and the field.

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