

REVIEW PAPER

Comparative Analysis of Impulse Buying Behaviour Across Retail Channels: A Study of Physical Stores, E-commerce Websites and Mobile Shopping Apps

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ABSTRACT

The nuanced dynamics of impulse buying behaviour across diverse retail channels unveil a fascinating interplay between consumer psychology and the unique attributes of physical stores, e-commerce platforms, and mobile shopping apps. Delving into the intricate landscape of impulse buying behaviour across three prominent retail channels, namely physical brick-and-mortar stores, e-commerce websites, and mobile shopping applications, sheds light on how retail environments shape and influence impulsive buying behaviours. Employing a comprehensive research framework that encompasses the realms of behavioural psychology, astute marketing strategies and the nuanced analysis of digital interfaces unveils the underpinnings that drive impulsive purchases in each distinct retail environment. By means of meticulous data collection and rigorous scrutiny, this research discerns the unique determinants of impulsive buying behaviour, encompassing consumer motivations, environmental cues and the pivotal role of technology becomes apparent. The comparative analysis not only enriches understanding of the impulse buying phenomenon but also provides actionable insights for retailers and marketers keen on creating bespoke strategies tailored to the specific attributes of each retail channel. Presenting realistic implications for businesses seeking to optimize consumer engagement and bolster sales in today's multifaceted retail landscape, the recognition of the varied triggers behind impulse buying across different platforms empowers retailers to cultivate precision-targeted approaches that deeply resonate with their intended audience, thereby amplifying the efficacy of their marketing endeavours. Undertaking an exhaustive comparative analysis of impulsive buying behaviour within the realms of physical stores, e-commerce websites and mobile shopping applications, this research aspires to illuminate the catalysts that prompt impulsive buying and explore the variations across these diverse retail avenues. The findings underscore the significant impact of emotional and situational factors on impulsive buying across all channels while highlighting the varying degrees of influence. This underscores the notion that the shopping context, user interface, and retail environment each play pivotal roles in shaping consumers' impulsive buying tendencies. Furthermore, delving into the pivotal role of technology, user experience and convenience in shaping impulsive buying behaviours, mobile shopping applications emerge as distinctive platforms that offer retailers opportunities to stimulate impulsive purchases through personalized recommendations, location-based incentives, and streamlined checkout processes. Imparting worthy insights for retailers and marketers eager to comprehend and harness the dynamics of impulse buying across diverse retail channels, the study contributes to the evolving understanding of consumer behaviour in an increasingly digitized world by pinpointing nuanced triggers and providing actionable insights.

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HIGHLIGHTS

- ❶ Impulse buying, characterized by spontaneous and unplanned purchases, is recognized as a focal point of interest in the ever-evolving retail landscape.
- ❷ Emotional and situational factors are identified as significant determinants of impulsive buying across all channels, with varying degrees of influence.
- ❸ Mobile shopping applications are highlighted as distinctive platforms offering unique opportunities for stimulating impulsive purchases through personalized recommendations, location-based incentives and streamlined checkout processes.
- ❹ The ultimate goal is to provide actionable insights for businesses to understand and harness the dynamics of impulse buying across diverse retail channels, contributing to a more profound comprehension of consumer behaviour in the digital and diverse retail environment.

Keywords: Impulse buying behaviour, Retail channels, Physical stores, E-commerce websites, Mobile shopping applications, Consumer behaviour

Consumer behaviour in the retail landscape has evolved significantly with the advent of digital technology and changing shopping habits. The rise of e-commerce websites and mobile shopping apps has introduced new dynamics into the retail industry. Digital marketing has become a pivotal concept today, emerging as a significant domain within Business Information Sciences. Broadly, it entails the promotion of products and services through Information Technologies or Digital Technologies. It closely aligns with Internet Technology and mobile phones in the contemporary era, sharing similarities with the concepts of E-Commerce and E-Business (Paul *et al.* 2018).

Among the fascinating aspects of consumer behaviour in this context is impulse buying—the act of making unplanned purchases. In the ever-evolving landscape of consumer habits and retail options, the intriguing topic of impulse buying behaviour has become a focal point of interest. This study embarks on an exploration of this phenomenon with a unique approach, opting for a comprehensive comparison across three prominent retail platforms: traditional physical stores, online e-commerce websites and the world of mobile shopping apps.

The allure of impulse buying, marked by spontaneous and unplanned purchases, has consistently captured the curiosity of both scholars and industry professionals. Yet, in today's diverse and rapidly expanding retail arena, understanding the intricacies of impulsive purchasing across different platforms has become paramount. Our research seeks to unravel the distinctive features of impulse buying within each of these retail avenues, illuminating the nuanced drivers governing impulsive purchase

decisions and delving into how they diverge among the various channels. By adopting a multifaceted research framework that synthesizes insights from behavioural psychology, strategic marketing and the analysis of digital interfaces, this inquiry aims to provide a comprehensive, in-depth examination of impulse buying behaviour. Through a meticulous examination of consumer motivations, environmental cues, and the influence of technology, we aspire to unveil the inner mechanisms of impulsive purchasing within the realms of physical stores, e-commerce websites, and mobile shopping apps.

The ultimate objective of this study extends beyond academic inquiry; it strives to furnish actionable insights for retailers and marketers striving to adapt their strategies to the distinctive characteristics of each retail channel. By discerning the diverse triggers of impulse buying across these distinct platforms, businesses can craft precise, audience-aligned approaches that, in turn, elevate the efficacy of their marketing endeavours. In this manner, this research contributes to a more profound comprehension of consumer behaviour in today's increasingly digital and diverse retail environment, offering businesses a blueprint for navigating this dynamic landscape effectively.

Objectives

- ♦ To compare the frequency and prevalence of impulse buying in physical stores, e-commerce websites, and mobile shopping apps.
- ♦ To identify the key factors driving impulse buying in each retail channel, including consumer motivations, environmental cues and technological influences.

- ♦ To analyse the impact of emotional and situational factors on impulse buying in these channels and assess their varying degrees of influence.
- ♦ To provide actionable recommendations for retailers and marketers to tailor their strategies to each retail channel, thereby optimizing consumer engagement and sales.
- ♦ To contribute to a deeper understanding of consumer behaviour in the digital age by uncovering nuanced triggers and variations in impulse buying across diverse retail channels.

Impulse Buying: A Multifaceted Phenomenon

Impulse buying, a phenomenon of great complexity and intrigue, is the outcome of a multifaceted interplay of factors rooted in psychology, environment, and individual circumstances. Traditionally, this spontaneous purchasing behaviour was primarily associated with the in-store shopping experience, where consumers encountered alluring displays, strategically placed products, and persuasive sales tactics that spurred impulsive decisions. However, the rise of e-commerce and mobile shopping apps has significantly broadened the horizons in which impulse buying can occur, fundamentally reshaping the consumer behaviour and purchasing patterns landscape.

Comprehending the Study

The research undertaking aims to unravel impulsive buying nuances in physical stores, e-commerce websites, and mobile shopping apps. It delves into key inquiries to provide a comprehensive understanding of impulsive buying in these diverse retail contexts.

- ♦ What fuels impulsive buying in physical stores?
In physical stores, consumers navigate a sensory environment influenced by visual merchandising and social factors. This study delves into the psychology of in-store shopping, exploring how these elements collectively drive impulsive buying and shape the overall shopping experience.
- ♦ How do e-commerce websites shape impulsive buying behaviour?

The rise of online shopping has significantly shaped impulsive buying habits on e-commerce

websites. This study explores the profound influence of online elements, including product recommendations, user-generated reviews, and personalized shopping experiences. The aim is to uncover how these factors drive impulsive purchases and differentiate from the in-store shopping experience.

- ♦ What elements contribute to impulsive buying through mobile shopping apps?

Mobile shopping apps introduce a new dimension to the shopping experience with features like one-click purchasing and real-time notifications. This study explores how these unique features impact consumers' inclination for impulsive purchases. It also examines the role of technology, user experience, and convenience in shaping impulsive buying behaviours within the mobile app environment.

This study aims to deeply understand impulsive buying behaviour and offer actionable insights for retailers and marketers. These insights empower the crafting of strategies aligned with each retail channel's distinct attributes, enhancing consumer engagement and driving sales. In the evolving retail landscape, this research contributes significantly to understanding consumer behaviour in the digital world, providing businesses with a roadmap for navigating contemporary commerce.

Mobile Shopping Trends

In the realm of mobile shopping, we find a dynamic landscape marked by an ever-evolving interplay of technological advancements, shifting consumer preferences, and intense market competition. This fusion of factors has given rise to a series of noteworthy trends that are reshaping the shopping experience for consumers worldwide. Here, we delve into these pivotal mobile shopping trends:

The widespread adoption of smartphones has reshaped the landscape of e-commerce, catapulting mobile commerce (m-commerce) to the forefront of online shopping. Social media platforms have seamlessly integrated shopping features, enabling direct purchases within these apps. The influence of influencer marketing on these platforms is substantial, significantly impacting sales. Voice shopping has emerged as a convenient trend, facilitated by virtual assistants such as Amazon's

Alexa and Apple's Siri, empowering consumers to make purchases through voice commands. Retailers capitalize on artificial intelligence (AI) to deliver personalized shopping experiences, employing AI-driven recommendations and chatbots that offer tailored advice to shoppers. Augmented Reality (AR) technology is revolutionizing shopping experiences, providing immersive opportunities for virtual try-ons in clothing, visualizing furniture, and previewing cosmetics before making a purchase decision. Mobile wallets like Apple Pay and Google Pay are transforming payment methods, ensuring secure and contactless transactions. Retailers are prioritizing the enhancement of mobile apps to provide seamless shopping experiences, with in-app shopping gaining popularity due to its intuitive nature and personalized features. Consumers are increasingly interested in ethical and sustainable practices, prompting mobile apps and websites to integrate features that offer insights into a product's ecological footprint and ethical sourcing.

To meet the growing demand for swift deliveries, retailers are investing in logistics for expedited and same-day delivery options. However, the surge in mobile transactions underscores the critical importance of robust security measures and stringent data privacy practices to safeguard consumers' personal and financial information in this rapidly evolving digital landscape.

Impacts of mobile app features

Mobile app features significantly influence consumer behaviour and business dynamics, enhancing digital interactions. They establish direct communication channels through personalized recommendations, in-app messaging, and push notifications, fostering lasting connections. Loyalty programs, exclusive offers, and reward points drive customer loyalty and brand advocacy.

Streamlining the shopping journey, mobile apps introduce features like virtual try-ons, barcode scanning, and one-click purchasing, enhancing user satisfaction. Personalization utilizes user data and AI for tailored content and recommendations, elevating the user experience. Mobile-exclusive discounts, flash sales, and targeted promotions contribute to revenue growth with exclusive offers. Mobile apps provide valuable consumer behaviour insights through analytics, increasing brand

visibility with constant reminders through app icons. Effective customer support is facilitated by FAQs, chatbots, and in-app chat, empowering users. Geographically targeted content delivery informs localized promotions based on users' location.

Payment simplification reduces cart abandonment rates, and features like content downloads and offline access add convenience. Brand credibility is enhanced, signalling a commitment to modern experiences, providing a competitive edge, especially in industries with limited app presence. Mobile app features also foster community building through social elements, encouraging engagement and trust.

Factors influencing impulse buying on mobile apps

Mobile applications possess a unique capability to trigger and encourage impulsive buying, and several factors like user-friendly interface design, personalized product recommendations, limited-time offers and discounts, social media integration, in-app reviews and ratings contribute significantly to this behaviour.

Mobile apps have become powerful catalysts for impulsive buying behaviour by combining intuitive and user-friendly interfaces, personalized product recommendations, time-sensitive promotions, social media integration, and in-app reviews. The seamless and user-friendly interfaces prevalent in mobile apps streamline the shopping process, creating an effortless experience for consumers to explore and engage in impulsive purchases. Leveraging sophisticated algorithms, many apps suggest products tailored to users' preferences and browsing history, leading to unplanned purchases as consumers discover appealing items they may not have actively sought. Introducing time-sensitive promotions and discounts within mobile apps induces a sense of urgency, compelling impulsive buying decisions as consumers fear missing out on attractive deals. Social media integration further amplifies impulsive buying tendencies, enabling users to share purchases, seek opinions, and receive feedback from their social networks, thus influencing their decisions. In-app reviews and product ratings provided by other users play a significant role, swaying consumers towards immediate purchases as positive feedback instills confidence in the product's quality and appeal based on shared

experiences. In essence, mobile apps strategically capitalize on usability, personalization, urgency, social engagement, and user feedback to shape and enhance the impulsive buying experience.

Impulse buying behaviour on mobile shopping apps

In the dynamic domain of the retail industry, mobile shopping apps have emerged as transformative forces, leveraging features such as push notifications and personalized deals to tap into consumers' impulse buying tendencies. The unparalleled portability and instant access offered by these apps have redefined the e-commerce landscape, revolutionizing the way consumers engage with and make purchases in the digital era.

The surge in mobile shopping trends is a testament to the ubiquity of smartphones and the growing importance consumers place on user-friendly experiences. As consumers increasingly prioritize convenience, the usage of mobile apps continues to soar, shaping the way people shop and interact with brands. Impulse buying, deeply rooted in psychological triggers, is a phenomenon characterized by unplanned purchases driven by emotions, the pursuit of instant gratification, the allure of novelty, and the validation of social influences. This review embarks on a comprehensive exploration of the dynamics surrounding impulse buying within the realm of mobile shopping apps. By delving into this intricate world of consumer behaviour, the review aims to shed light on the nuanced interplay between psychology and digital shopping in an era where instant access and personalized experiences are paramount.

The evolving landscape of mobile shopping apps not only reflects changing consumer preferences but also presents a unique opportunity for businesses to understand and harness the impulsive nature of purchasing behaviour. As these apps continue to shape the retail industry, the review seeks to uncover insights that not only enrich our understanding of consumer behaviour but also provide practical knowledge for businesses aiming to thrive in the ever-evolving digital marketplace. Mobile shopping apps, with their ability to cater to impulse buying tendencies, stand at the forefront of innovation, offering a seamless and engaging

shopping experience for the modern, digitally-driven consumer.

Factors influencing impulse buying in E-commerce websites

On e-commerce platforms, various factors like web design, product recommendations, limited-time deals and discounts, convenient checkout, mobile optimization, user tracking, cross-selling and upselling, user engagement and notification contribute to impulse buying.

In the dynamic landscape of digital commerce, the interplay of various elements within mobile apps has significantly shaped and amplified the phenomenon of impulsive buying. Engaging product displays, user-friendly navigation, and captivating visuals work in tandem to encourage unplanned purchases by providing a seamless and visually appealing shopping experience. The integration of algorithms that suggest products based on users' history not only enhances personalization but also triggers impulse buying as users discover appealing items that align with their preferences. Time-sensitive strategies, such as flash sales and temporary price reductions, create a sense of urgency, motivating quick purchasing decisions and capitalizing on consumers' fear of missing out on attractive deals.

Social validation emerges as a powerful influencer, as user-generated content, including reviews, plays a crucial role in instilling confidence in product quality and influencing impulsive buying behaviour. A smooth and hassle-free checkout process minimizes hurdles, making it easier for users to complete impulsive transactions, enhancing the overall user experience. Optimizing for mobile platforms is imperative, given the higher impulsivity observed among mobile users. The emotional appeal is harnessed by websites that tap into users' emotions through compelling narratives, effectively triggering impulsive buying decisions. Continuous monitoring of user behaviour enables re-engagement strategies with targeted offers, reigniting the impulse to purchase and sustaining customer interest.

Additionally, offering related products and premium options during the shopping journey serves as a strategic tactic to encourage additional impulsive purchases. Push notifications and email alerts

strategically remind users of products, capitalizing on their initial intent and fostering impulsive buying behaviour. In this intricate dance of elements, mobile apps emerge as powerful tools that not only facilitate transactions but also strategically leverage usability, personalization, urgency, social validation, emotional appeal, and re-engagement to shape and enhance the impulsive buying experience in the digital age.

Impulse buying behaviour on E-commerce websites

Navigating e-commerce impulse buying involves exploring key factors driving spontaneous purchases. Product presentation, featuring high-quality images and detailed descriptions, triggers unforeseen impulses. Personalized recommendations based on behaviours and preferences entice additional unplanned purchases, enhancing the shopping journey. Technology plays a crucial role in seamlessly merging tangible and intangible aspects to foster the well-being of organizations, businesses, and enterprises. The adoption of cutting-edge technologies is essential for effective information management, facilitating faster and more efficient development of business entities and informed decision-making (Paul *et al.* 2023). Limited-time deals with short-lived discounts create urgency, guiding consumers to swift decisions. Social validation from reviews builds trust for impromptu purchases. A seamless checkout process ensures efficient, user-friendly, and frictionless

experiences, facilitating impulsive moments. Cart abandonment strategies use reminders or incentives to reignite impulse. Cross-selling and upselling enrich purchases, while gamification elements add fun and interactivity, fostering an environment for impulsive buying. Timely notifications highlight limited-stock items, prompting impulsive actions.

A data-driven approach involves analysing user behaviour as a compass for potential impulse buyers. Understanding and cultivating impulse buying behaviour through continual data analysis ensure strategies align with the e-commerce platform specifics.

Factors influencing impulse buying in physical stores

Price Influence, Visual Appeal, Social Persuasion, Convenience Facets plays a very significant role in promoting strategies to leverage impulse buying in physical stores. The pricing of a product significantly affects impulse buying behaviour. When consumers perceive a product as being offered at a discounted or attractive price point, they are more inclined to engage in impromptu purchases. Sales, discounts, or time-limited offers evoke the sensation of securing a great deal, prompting impulsive buying decisions. The presentation of a product wields a substantial impact on impulse buying. Striking packaging, captivating visuals, and distinctive product displays have the ability to seize a shopper's attention and ignite impulsive purchases. Companies often invest

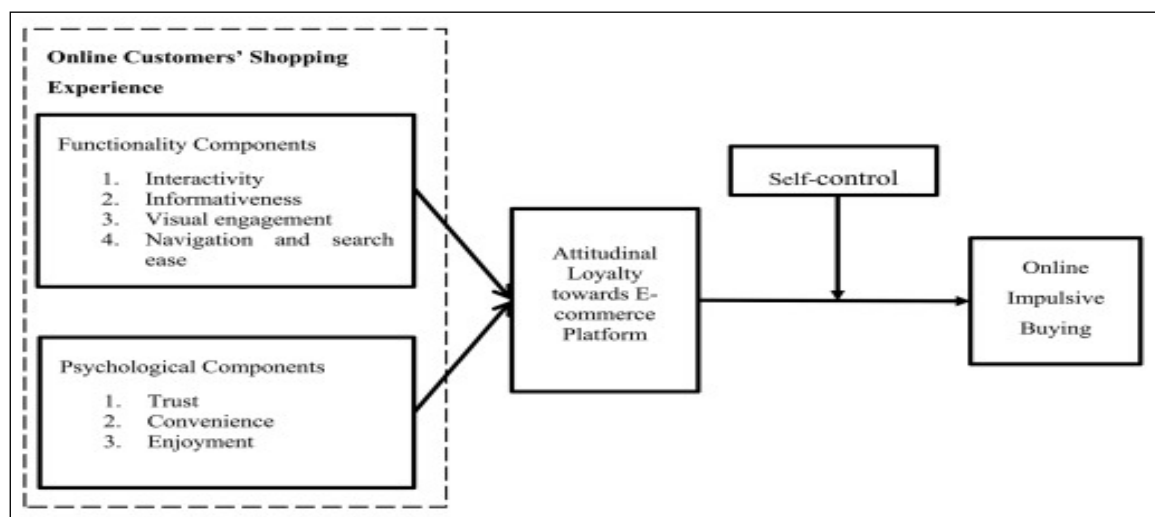


Fig. 1: Functional and psychological dimensions of the Online Customer's Shopping Experience (OCSE) influencing online impulsive buying

in alluring packaging and in-store exhibitions to stimulate this behaviour.

Social dynamics, including endorsements from friends, family, or influential figures on social media, hold the power to steer impulse buying. Witnessing others endorse or utilize a product can sway consumers into making impulsive purchases to align with trends, belong to a social group, or gain approval from their social circle. The ease and simplicity of making a purchase are additional drivers of impulse buying. Online shopping, one-click purchase options, and mobile apps provide consumers with convenient avenues to swiftly and impulsively make buying decisions. Furthermore, the proximity of desired products can also spur impulsive purchases, as accessibility fosters instant gratification.

These factors often intermingle and manifest differently from one individual to another. Businesses leverage these insights to craft marketing strategies and store layouts that cultivate and nurture impulse buying, ultimately leading to increased sales.

Impulse buying behaviour in physical stores

In traditional retail, impulse buying is an artful dance orchestrated by various elements within brick-and-mortar stores. Displays, strategically placed and visually captivating, lure passersby into the realm of unplanned delight. Urgency is cast through sales and promotions, promising irresistible bargains. Shopping with friends or family adds a social dimension that can lead to spontaneous purchases. Checkout areas strategically place products for last-minute discoveries, and interactive experiences, such as trying out products, deepen the connection with items.

Sensory experiences, from the aroma of baked goods to the touch of quality fabrics, play a pivotal role, creating impulsive urges. The store's ambiance acts as a guide, shaping emotional backdrops that lead to spontaneous purchases. The allure of immediate satisfaction thrives on the proximity of possession. Knowledgeable salespeople become guides, leading customers on journeys of unexpected discoveries.

This intricate ballet of impulse buying in physical stores is a meticulously orchestrated performance blending retail strategies, ambiance, and human

behaviour. Retailers aim to craft environments that invite serendipity, ensuring delightful and memorable experiences for each visitor. In this dance of impulse, shoppers take centre stage, guided by the enchanting allure of the physical store.

Implications for retailers

In the contemporary retail landscape, maximizing impulse buying potential involves a focused effort on optimizing mobile applications. Retailers seeking to capitalize on spontaneous purchases should take a comprehensive approach, refining app design, fine-tuning recommendation algorithms, and creating compelling marketing campaigns. The aftermaths for retailers extend beyond the digital domain. The swift evolution of technologies brings forth diverse needs for the effective harnessing of the benefits of information science across various contexts. Ensuring the proper utilization of these advantages is essential for fostering robust development in both society and organizations (Paul *et al.* 2021). Encouraging impulse buying necessitates a delicate fusion of strategies within both the online and physical spheres. Herein lie critical considerations:

Tactics to Promote Impulse Buying

In the intricate design of physical retail spaces, strategic store arrangement serves as a potent tool for retailers aiming to harness the appeal of impulse buying. Placing high-margin or impulse-triggering items strategically, especially near checkout counters or in bustling areas, leverages the psychology of in-person shopping, subtly guiding attention to enticing products and prompting unplanned purchases that inject spontaneity into the shopping journey.

Time-limited offers, such as flash sales or “today only” deals, introduce excitement and urgency, intensifying the shopping experience. This tactic cultivates a heightened sense of urgency among shoppers, encouraging immediate purchases driven by the desire to seize exclusive and fleeting opportunities. Cross-selling and upselling contribute to guiding customers through an enriched shopping voyage. The finesse of suggesting complementary products or enticing customers with higher-priced alternatives encourages expanded spending, enhancing the overall customer experience and

strategically influencing them to explore additional items, fostering a deeper connection between the retailer and the consumer.

Loyalty programs underscore retailers' commitment to building enduring connections with their customer base. By rewarding frequent shoppers with loyalty points or exclusive discounts, retailers not only stimulate repeat business but also nurture impulsive purchases. This dynamic interplay between loyalty programs and impulse buying adds an extra layer to the consumer-retailer relationship, fostering a sense of connection and appreciation beyond mere transactions. In this carefully orchestrated dance of retail strategies, each element plays a vital role in creating a shopping experience that is not only strategic but also beautifully enriching for both the retailer and the consumer.

Marketing and Promotion Techniques

Navigating the dynamic landscape of retail, successful businesses employ a multifaceted approach to capitalize on the impulsive tendencies of consumers. Social media partnerships with influential figures expand product reach, leveraging the impulsive buying inclinations of their followers. Recent changes in traditional marketing and business strategies are attributed to the globalization of data. This digital transformation has had a significant impact on various sectors, including businesses, healthcare, corporate entities, and governance. The increasing use of IT applications in business is expediting activities and related affairs to strategically leverage opportunities (Paul *et al.* 2018). Simultaneously, tailored email marketing strategies seamlessly bridge virtual and physical domains, presenting personalized recommendations and time-sensitive offers that entice customers into impromptu online purchases. In physical stores, captivating displays and attention-grabbing signage serve as visual cues, guiding customers toward specific products with an artistic touch. Mobile apps play a crucial role in engaging customers on the move, using push notifications to provide real-time updates on special promotions or new products, nurturing impulsive tendencies.

Retailers face the challenge of skilfully balancing these diverse strategies to maximize sales without overwhelming customers. Understanding the factors influencing impulse buying is pivotal for crafting

effective retail marketing strategies that resonate with the ever-changing preferences of consumers. Meanwhile, responsible mobile app usage for consumers involves setting spending limits, maintaining mindfulness of in-app advertising, and regularly reviewing purchase history. As the retail landscape continues to evolve, researchers are encouraged to delve deeper into the dynamics of mobile app impulse buying, providing insights that can shape more informed and ethical consumer practices in the digital era.

Ethical considerations

The ethical considerations within the notion of mobile shopping apps extend to issues surrounding data privacy, consumer manipulation, and the potential for addiction. These concerns highlight the delicate balance required between fostering user engagement and ensuring responsible usage. Striking this equilibrium is crucial in addressing the ethical dilemma faced by retailers. While engaging users is a vital goal for retailers seeking success in the digital landscape, ethical responsibility must guide the design and implementation of mobile apps. This ethical imperative emphasizes the importance of conducting comprehensive studies that delve into the intricate dimensions inherent in these multifaceted dynamics. Facts substantiate the need for ethical scrutiny, as instances of data breaches and controversies related to user manipulation underscore the urgency of understanding and mitigating these ethical challenges. Navigating these complexities with sensitivity ensures that the evolution of mobile shopping apps aligns with ethical standards, fostering consumer trust and upholding integrity in the increasingly digitalized retail environment.

Cross-channel comparison and Comparatives analysis

Comparing impulse buying behaviour across retail channels reveals nuanced differences. Physical stores evoke sensory experiences, e-commerce emphasizes convenience, while mobile apps combine both elements. The fusion of Business Studies and Management with Informatics results in the provision of solutions for both business information and technological aspects (Paul *et al.*, 2017). A comprehensive examination of impulse buying

behaviour across three significant retail channels - physical stores, e-commerce websites, and mobile shopping apps - unveils unique characteristics and driving factors within each channel:

Physical Stores

In physical stores, a combination of in-store stimuli strategically induces impulse buying. The art of visual merchandising, strategic product placement, and store layout work synergistically to create striking displays and position items near checkout counters, effectively engaging shoppers and prompting unplanned purchases. The presence of friends or family in physical stores introduces a social influence that can sway impulsive purchases, as shoppers seek social validation and engage in collective decision-making. Additionally, the allure of immediate possession, a hallmark of physical stores, aligns seamlessly with the human craving for instant rewards, heightening impulsive buying tendencies. This dynamic interplay of in-store elements caters to various psychological triggers, creating an environment where visual appeal, social dynamics, and the promise of immediate gratification converge to stimulate and capitalize on impulsive buying behaviours.

E-commerce Websites

A convergence of strategic elements stimulates and amplifies impulsive buying tendencies. Recommendation algorithms employed by e-commerce platforms leverage sophisticated technologies to propose products intricately tailored to users' preferences and browsing history, creating personalized suggestions that spark unplanned purchases. The presentation of time-sensitive promotions, exemplified by flash sales, heightens the sense of urgency for online shoppers, compelling swift and impulsive decision-making to seize exclusive opportunities. Moreover, the convenience and accessibility inherent in e-commerce websites, offering the flexibility to shop from anywhere at any time, further contribute to impulsive buying tendencies. Features like one-click purchases and effortless price comparison enhance the ease of the online shopping experience, providing an environment conducive to impromptu decision-making and reinforcing the allure of instant gratification in the digital shopping

landscape. Together, these strategic components seamlessly intertwine, shaping the e-commerce domain into a dynamic space where personalized recommendations, time-sensitive promotions, and user-friendly features synergistically foster and capitalize on impulsive buying behaviours.

Mobile Shopping Apps

Mobile apps, characterized by user-friendly design, intuitive interfaces, and well-crafted functionalities, streamline the impulsive buying process and play a pivotal role in promoting spontaneous purchases. These apps leverage push notifications to alert users about limited availability, exclusive promotions, or recent arrivals in real-time, fostering impulsive tendencies within the mobile platform. Additionally, the personalization and convenience offered by mobile shopping apps contribute to a highly individualized shopping experience. By recommending products based on user behaviour and location, these apps facilitate impulsive purchases by presenting users with appealing items they might not actively seek. In this comparison, while impulse buying is a universal phenomenon, its manifestation varies across channels. Physical stores engage consumers through sensory stimulation, e-commerce prioritizes convenience and personalized recommendations, and mobile apps utilize user-friendly interfaces for real-time engagement. Recognizing these distinctions is crucial for retailers and marketers seeking to tailor strategies and optimize impulsive purchases in each unique retail context, ultimately enhancing the overall shopping experience across diverse platforms.

Literature review

Numerous studies have explored impulse buying in various contexts. Past research has provided insights into the triggers and consequences of impulse buying in physical stores, e-commerce websites and mobile shopping apps.

Kempf and Smith (1998) defined perceived diagnosticity as the degree to which consumers perceive that their direct product experience is useful to assess the quality or values of products. In the context of ecommerce services, perceived diagnosticity occurs when consumers directly

experience in evaluating the product's attributes (Jiang and Benbasat, 2005).

First proposed by Kempf and Smith (1998) in a study on product trials, perceived diagnosticity was defined as the extent to which consumers perceive their shopping experience as helpful in evaluating a product or service.

There has been considerable increase and shift in online shopping behaviour changes as customers have started using Internet-enabled multi-devices (Wagner *et al.* 2013). Verhoef *et al.* (2009) highlight the importance of the holistic nature of customer experience. They propose that customer experience is of a cognitive, social, affective and physical nature. Customer experiences not only are connected with hedonic consumption but also are a part of utilitarian value (Vargo and Lusch, 2006).

Marketers and retailers traditionally utilize external stimuli, such as in-store promotions and advertising, to trigger impulse shopping (Grigsby *et al.* 2021; Yi & Jai, 2020).

It is for this reason that considering the shopping reality in a virtual environment is significant, as some of these senses are to some extent restricted and this sensory deficit often needs to be offset with extra input and enhanced features so as to give the consumer a pleasant experience with hedonic purchases also in this channel (Jang *et al.* 2018).

Technological advances concerning ease of use, new features and increasingly sophisticated security and reliability in the online environment have made new tech more acceptable to users. All this has driven research and development with a view to further technological progress for improving the shopping experience, which is undoubtedly a driver of e-commerce as an alternative or complement to traditional retail channels. In this regard, new graphic environments, improved hardware and software performance and greater internet bandwidth allow hyperrealist environments (in 3D) to be created such as till now were reserved for physical stores (Hassouneh and Brengman, 2015).

Impulse buying is a sudden response to a stimulus which results in an unplanned purchase of product or service (Rook, 1987). The consumer usually experiences a positive affective response and less information processing ability during impulse buying (Chan, Cheung, & Lee, 2017).

Impulsive buying denotes a rather fast and hedonically complex purchasing behaviour by which is meant that the impulse leading to the purchase being made omits any careful, deliberate evaluation of alternative or future consequences (Sharma *et al.* 2010).

Key findings

The study anticipates uncovering valuable insights into impulse buying behaviour across retail channels. These findings can have profound implications for retailers, marketers, and policymakers. Understanding what triggers impulsive purchases in different contexts can lead to more effective marketing strategies, product placements, and consumer engagement tactics.

- ♦ Impulse buying, a multifaceted phenomenon influenced by various factors like psychology, environment, and individual circumstances, has transcended its traditional confines in physical stores to embrace e-commerce websites and mobile shopping apps.
- ♦ In brick-and-mortar stores, elements such as captivating visual merchandising, social influence, and the appeal of immediate ownership prominently drive impulsive purchases.
- ♦ E-commerce platforms harness personalized product recommendations, time-sensitive promotions, and the convenience of online shopping to stimulate impulsive buying behaviour.
- ♦ Mobile shopping apps exploit their user-friendly interfaces, push notifications, personalized shopping experiences, and convenience to trigger impulsive buying tendencies.
- ♦ Impulse buying can be motivated by various factors like price attractiveness, visual allure, social influence, and shopping ease within physical stores.
- ♦ Responsible mobile app usage for consumers encompasses setting spending limits and staying vigilant about in-app advertising.

Implications

Recognizing the intricate nature of impulse buying, retailers must tailor their approaches to align with

the distinctive attributes of each retail channel. For those operating physical stores, the focus should be on crafting visually enticing displays that captivate customers, leveraging social dynamics, and highlighting the instant gratification associated with acquiring a product in-store. E-commerce businesses, on the other hand, can enhance impulsive tendencies by investing in advanced recommendation algorithms, introducing time-bound special offers, and ensuring a user-friendly interface that encourages spur-of-the-moment purchases online. Retailers with mobile apps should prioritize intuitive design, real-time notifications, and personalized customer experiences to effectively incite impulse buying on their platforms.

Strategic utilization of these factors, such as creating compelling in-store displays and providing time-limited deals, becomes imperative for retailers looking to foster impulsive purchasing across various channels. However, consumers using mobile shopping apps should exercise mindfulness to prevent excessive spending, understanding the influence of real-time notifications and personalized recommendations on their impulsive behaviour. Researchers play a crucial role in persistently examining how mobile apps impact impulse buying behaviour and how this influence evolves over time, contributing to a deeper understanding of consumer behaviour in the ever-evolving retail landscape.

Ultimately, retailers should adapt their strategies to each retail channel, striking a delicate balance between online and physical strategies to effectively capture consumer attention and resources. This approach ensures a harmonious integration of visual appeal, technological innovation, and consumer psychology, creating a seamless and enriching shopping experience that caters to the diverse needs and behaviours of consumers across different retail platforms.

CONCLUSION

In the swiftly evolving retail industry, it's crucial for businesses to grasp impulse buying behaviour across various platforms to thrive and adapt. This comprehensive study is set to illuminate the unique elements that influence impulse purchases in physical stores, e-commerce websites, and mobile shopping apps. By unravelling the complexities of consumer behaviour in these contexts, retailers can

fine-tune their strategies to meet the diverse needs of today's shoppers.

The study underscores the pivotal role of emotional and situational factors in driving impulsive purchases, noting variations in influence across different retail channels. It highlights the significance of technology, user experience and convenience, particularly in the realm of mobile apps, in shaping impulsive buying behaviours. Mobile apps, in particular, offer distinct opportunities through personalized recommendations, location-based incentives, and simplified checkouts.

The practical implications for businesses are distinctive that is possible by customizing strategies for each retail channel, they can significantly boost consumer engagement and sales. This research deepens our comprehension of consumer behaviour in the digital retail landscape, providing actionable insights for retailers and marketers to excel in the multifaceted world of modern commerce. Focusing on the understanding of impulse buying across channels, with a strong ethical foundation, empowers businesses to navigate the intricate dynamics of consumer behaviour and stand out in a highly competitive retail environment.

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