



COMPARATIVE STUDY ON IMPULSIVE BUYING ATTITUDE OF CONSUMERS ON THE IMPACT OF E-COMMERCE IMAGES WITH REFERENCE TO INDIA

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Abstract

The evolution of e-commerce has redefined consumer shopping behavior, especially in terms of impulsive buying. A significant driver of this behavior is the visual representation of products online. This study investigates the comparative impact of e-commerce images on consumers' impulsive buying attitudes in India. The research employs quantitative methods to analyze consumer responses, aiming to understand the visual stimuli's psychological influence. The findings highlight how different image types—high-quality, lifestyle, zoomable, or user-generated—affect impulsive purchases across gender, age, and income categories. Implications for marketers and e-commerce platforms are discussed, with recommendations for optimizing image strategies.

Keywords: *Impulsive Buying, E-commerce, Consumer Behavior, Product Images, Visual Marketing, India.*

1. Introduction

The digital transformation of retail, especially through e-commerce, has redefined how Indian consumers shop. Visual content, particularly product images, plays a pivotal role in influencing consumer purchase decisions. According to Statista (2024), over 74% of Indian online consumers reported being influenced by product images during their purchase journey. This impulsive buying behavior—defined as an unplanned purchase triggered by stimuli—is heightened by compelling visuals, especially in fashion, electronics, and lifestyle categories.

This study aims to compare how different types of product images affect consumers' impulsive buying behavior across demographics and shopping platforms in India. The paper focuses on the psychological triggers involved, the role of design, color, and presentation, and their impact across age groups and genders.

2. Review of Literature

2.1 Impulsive Buying Behavior

Rook and Fisher (1995) define impulsive buying as a sudden, compelling, and hedonically complex purchasing behavior. Beatty and Ferrell (1998) emphasize the emotional aspect of impulsivity, highlighting how visual cues can act as immediate triggers.

2.2 E-Commerce and Visual Marketing

Chae and Kim (2013) demonstrate that high-resolution images improve customer trust and engagement. Park et al. (2018) note that product visualization significantly affects user experience and purchase intention. Indian studies by Kumar and Joseph (2020) support the notion that visuals are more persuasive than text descriptions for Indian online consumers.

2.3 Psychological Influence of Images

According to Mehrabian and Russell's PAD model (1974), pleasure, arousal, and dominance mediate the effect of environmental stimuli. Product imagery often induces arousal and pleasure, leading to impulsive action.



2.4 E-commerce Platforms and Cultural Relevance

In India, platforms like Flipkart and Amazon localize imagery to appeal to regional audiences (Chatterjee, 2022). This increases emotional resonance and impulsivity.

3. Research Gap

While international studies have explored visual cues and impulsivity, few have addressed cultural, regional, and platform-based variations in India. Furthermore, comparative analysis across image types (studio shots vs. user-generated content) remains limited in Indian research contexts.

4. Objectives of the Study

1. To evaluate the impact of different e-commerce image types on consumers' impulsive buying behavior.
2. To compare impulsive responses based on gender, age, and income groups in India.
3. To identify which type of product imagery most influences impulse purchases.
4. To offer recommendations for e-commerce platforms and marketers.

5. Hypotheses

1. **H1:** There is a significant difference in impulsive buying behavior based on the type of e-commerce image presented.
2. **H2:** Visual imagery impacts impulsive buying behavior differently across gender groups.
3. **H3:** High-quality and lifestyle images significantly trigger more impulsive responses than generic product shots.

6. Research Methodology

6.1 Research Design

Quantitative research using a structured questionnaire was conducted across five Indian metro cities. The survey included visual stimuli (images) and Likert-scale responses.

6.2 Sample Design

1. **Sample Size:** 400 respondents.
2. **Sampling Method:** Stratified random sampling.
3. **Demographics:** Age (18–45+), Gender, Occupation, Income levels.

6.3 Data Collection Tools

1. Google Forms distributed via email and social media.
2. Visuals used: high-definition studio shots, lifestyle images, and user-generated product photos.

6.4 Data Analysis

SPSS was used to conduct descriptive statistics, t-tests, ANOVA, and regression analyses.

7. Data Analysis and Interpretation

7.1 Descriptive Statistics

1. 65% of respondents admitted to buying impulsively at least once a month.
2. 72% cited product images as a primary reason for impulsive purchases.



7.2 Image Type vs. Impulsive Response (ANOVA)

Image Type	Mean Impulse Score	Std. Dev	p-value
Studio Image	3.6	0.89	0.002
Lifestyle Image	4.3	0.77	
User-Generated	3.8	0.85	

Interpretation

Lifestyle images had the highest impulsive scores ($p < 0.05$), supporting H1 and H3.

7.3 Gender Comparison (t-test)

Gender	Mean Impulse Score	Std. Dev	p-value
Male	3.7	0.82	0.03
Female	4.2	0.76	

Interpretation

Females reported significantly higher impulsivity due to image cues.

7.4 Regression Analysis

Dependent Variable: Impulsive Purchase.

Independent Variables: Image Clarity, Color Attractiveness, Product Context, Review Photos.

$R^2 = 0.67$, indicating a strong model. All variables were statistically significant ($p < 0.01$), affirming that visual elements are predictors of impulsive buying.

8. Findings

1. Lifestyle-oriented images create stronger emotional engagement, leading to higher impulse purchases.
2. Women show higher impulsivity toward visually appealing product images.
3. User-generated images build trust but are less effective in triggering impulse buying compared to professionally designed visuals.
4. Image features like zoom, 360-degree view, and realistic context significantly enhance purchase probability.

9. Limitations

1. The study was limited to online respondents in metro areas.
2. The product categories were limited to fashion and electronics.
3. Visual stimuli might produce biased responses due to aesthetic preferences.

10. Conclusion

E-commerce imagery has a profound impact on the impulsive buying attitudes of Indian consumers. Particularly, lifestyle images appeal more to emotions and create a higher likelihood of unplanned purchases. Gender and age play roles in moderating this impact. The study emphasizes the need for e-commerce platforms to invest in strategic visual content for marketing.

11. Recommendations

1. Use contextual lifestyle images for high-engagement products.
2. Provide zoomable, multi-angle images to increase visual interaction.
3. Tailor visuals based on gender and age targeting.
4. Blend user-generated photos for credibility with lifestyle photos for emotional triggers.



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