

The Effects of Fashion Involvement and Product Presentation on Consumers' Online Impulse Buying Behavior

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Background. The buying and selling of goods online (i.e., e-commerce) has grown significantly in recent years and is expected to grow by 9.4% between 2020 and 2027 (Grand View Research, 2020). Despite the cost of living surging post-pandemic, online shoppers increasingly make impulse purchases (Dickler, 2022). Impulse purchases refer to “unplanned buying and all purchases made without such advance planning” (Harmancioglu et al., 2009, p. 28). With the rapid advancement of technology and increased use of smart devices, e-commerce activities have become prevalent. Due to minimal social pressure from sale staff and lack of time constraints, the e-commerce environment allows consumers to search and compare products more frequently and efficiently (Eroglu et al., 2001). Prior studies found that environmental factors (e.g., Parboteeah et al., 2009) and consumer characteristics (e.g., Wood, 1998) induce consumers to buy impulsively in e-commerce. Chan et al. (2017) noted numerous studies examining the impact of website stimuli and consumer characteristics on online impulse buying, however the context-specific website stimuli which prompt consumers' online impulse buying behavior has yet to be explored. To fill this gap, this study examines how online product information and recommendations affect consumers' impulse buying behavior. As online product recommendation sources influence consumers' online product choices (Senecal & Nantel, 2004), product recommendations may affect their impulse buying behavior. This study focuses on consumers' online impulse buying behavior for fashion products. Researchers found that fashion involvement can enhance the tendency for impulse buying (Han et al., 1991; Liapati et al., 2015; Park et al., 2006). Few studies have investigated online impulse buying behavior from a perceived value perspective (Yang et al., 2021). Perceived value refers to the individuals' evaluation of products or services (Zeithaml, 1988) which is a multidimensional construct (Grönroos, 1997). Researchers have commonly used hedonic and utilitarian value perceptions to explore consumer purchase behavior (Babin et al., 1994; Huang, 2016) and online impulse buying behavior (Yang et al., 2021). Accordingly, this study views hedonic and utilitarian value perceptions as the two main drivers of online impulse buying behavior.

Theoretical Framework. This study adopts the stimulus-organism-response (SOR) model proposed by Woodworth (1929) to explore consumers' impulse buying behavior. The SOR model has been used as a theoretical framework for studies that seek to understand factors driving online impulse buying (Chen-Yu et al., 2022; Goel et al., 2022; Nam et al., 2021). The theory posits that a stimulus (S) serves as a cause that changes the internal states of a consumer

(O), which further results in a response (R) (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974). In the current study, the stimulus is a website that provides product information and recommendations (hereafter called online product presentation). The organism is perceived value that reflects hedonic and utilitarian values. Responses are the outcome of the consumer's internal states influenced by various stimuli, which is online impulse buying in this study. Drawing on the SOR model, this study examines the effect of consumers' fashion involvement and online product presentation on perceived value, which, in turn, influences consumers' online impulse buying.

Method. An online survey was conducted to collect data through Amazon Mechanical Turk. The sample comprised of adults living in the U.S. and over 18 years old who have purchased fashion products from online stores. Participants viewed a mock-up website that presents Nike leisure wear worn by male and female models. The website demonstrates product information and recommendations. A total of 570 Amazon Mechanical Turk workers participated in the survey. After discarding incomplete responses, 506 valid responses were used for the data analysis. The majority of participants (92.6%) were Caucasian Americans who earned a Bachelor's degree. Most of the participants (93.5%) were between 18 and 39 years old in 2023. The median annual household income level of the sample was between \$50,000-75,000. Reliable and valid scale items were adopted and modified to measure the five variables (i.e., fashion involvement, product presentation, hedonic value, utilitarian value, and online impulse buying). For example, five scale items measuring fashion involvement were adapted from Fairhurst et al. (1989) and Kang & Park-Poaps (2010). Sixteen scale items measuring online product presentation were adapted from Li et al. (2022) and Chen-Yu et al. (2022) (e.g., the website shows products in all available colors, the website shows good quality photos of products, and the website shows images that coordinated various items). Five scale items measuring hedonic value and five scale items measuring utilitarian value were adapted from Park et al. (2012) and Zheng et al. (2019). Five scale items measuring online impulse buying were adapted from Park et al. (2012). Seven-point Likert scales ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7) were used for all items. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), and structural equation modeling (SEM) were conducted in *Mplus 7.0* to run the measurement and structural models for hypothesis testing.

Results. CFA confirmed the factor structure of each variable. All factor loadings were greater than .59 and were highly significant ($p < .001$). The results of CFA showed that scale items measuring hedonic and utilitarian value are loaded on one construct (i.e., perceived value). Cronbach's alpha values were above .84 for each measure, which supports acceptable internal consistency ($> .70$; Netemeyer et al., 2003). The four-factor measurement model yields a satisfactory fit to the data: [$\chi^2 = 691.08$ ($df = 224$), $p < .001$], CFI = .95, RMSEA = .06, and SRMR = .03. The structural model had a good fit (see Figure 1). Results provide support for H1; fashion involvement positively influenced perceived value. Results also confirmed that product presentation positively influenced perceived value (H2), which influenced online impulse buying (H3).

Discussion and Conclusions. This study broadens the understanding of factors enhancing online impulse buying for fashion products. The significant impact of fashion involvement on perceived value is consistent with previous findings (Liapati et al., 2015; Park et al., 2006).

The results showed that online product information and recommendations directly influence consumers' perception of hedonic and utilitarian value. The impact of fashion involvement was stronger than that of online product presentation on perceived value. To enhance consumers' value perception for purchasing fashion products online, marketers should provide product information along with recommendations. Perceived value predicts online impulse buying for fashion products. Thus, marketers should include product attributes (e.g., diverse angles of photos) and non-product features (e.g., product recommendations) on the website to enhance the consumer's hedonic and utilitarian value perception.

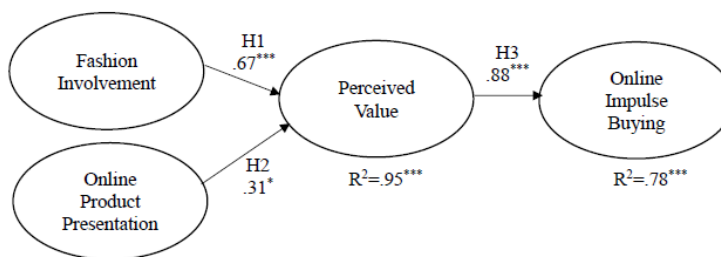


Figure 1. Structural model path coefficients and model fit for the proposed model.
 Note: $\chi^2 = 693.36$, $df = 226$, CFI = .94, RMSEA = .06, SRMR = .03, $p < .05$, $**p < .01$, $***p < .001$.

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