

UNDERSTANDING THE INFLUENCE OF HEDONIC MOTIVATION AND FEAR OF MISSING OUT (FoMO) ON ONLINE IMPULSE PURCHASE INTENTIONS OF DISCOUNTED PRODUCTS

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Abstract

In the fast-paced world of online commerce, understanding the psychological drivers behind consumers' impulse purchase intentions of discounted products is essential for businesses seeking to optimise their e-commerce strategies and drive sales. This article aims to synthesise key insights into the interplay between hedonic motivation, fear of missing out (FoMO) and other psychological factors influencing online impulse buying behavior. Hedonic motivation, driven by the pursuit of pleasure and enjoyment, plays a central role in shaping consumers' preferences, choices, and purchase decisions. When coupled with the fear of missing out (FoMO), characterised by the fear of being excluded from rewarding experiences or opportunities, hedonic motivation intensifies consumers' desire to act quickly and make impulsive purchases, particularly when presented with limited-time discounts or attractive offers. Discounted products, with their perceived value and scarcity, serve as potent triggers for impulsive buying behavior, as consumers strive to capitalise on the opportunity for pleasure and gratification while avoiding feelings of regret or exclusion. Factors such as social comparison, emotional triggers, and perceived risk further influence consumers' online impulse purchase intentions, driving them to seek validation, relief, or reassurance through their purchasing decisions. Businesses can leverage these insights to design targeted marketing strategies, personalised offers, and compelling shopping experiences that resonate with consumers' hedonic motivations and address their fears of missing out. By employing behavioral nudges, visual appeals, and social proof cues, businesses can create a sense of urgency, enhance perceived value, and mitigate perceived risk, ultimately driving impulse purchases and increasing conversion rates in the competitive digital marketplace. By considering the multifaceted impact of hedonic motivation, FoMO and other psychological factors on consumers' online impulse purchase intentions of discounted products, businesses can create engaging online shopping experiences that foster customer satisfaction, loyalty, and long-term success.

Keywords: hedonic motivation, fear of missing out (FoMO), purchase intention, discount, impulse buying behavior.

1. Introduction

In the digital age, the dynamics of consumer behavior have been significantly influenced by various psychological factors. Two such factors, hedonic motivation and the fear of missing out (FoMO), play crucial roles in shaping consumer decision-making, particularly in the context of online shopping and in the realm of online impulse purchases of discounted products. This paper aims to explore how hedonic motivation and FoMO impact the intention to make impulse purchases of discounted products in online settings.

The hedonic consumption is „a reflection of modern consumption”¹ and it is associated with the fact that the traditional consumer, who primarily sought to meet their needs, has been replaced by the modern consumer, who engages in consumption with the dual objectives of leveraging the act and deriving enjoyment from it¹. The allure of hedonic motivation lies in its ability to tap into individuals' intrinsic desires for pleasure, enjoyment, and emotional gratification. In the context of online shopping, consumers are often drawn to products that promise sensory delight, emotional satisfaction, or experiential enjoyment². Whether it's the thrill of discovering a great deal, the excitement of instant gratification, or the anticipation of owning a coveted item at a discounted price, hedonic motivations play a pivotal role in driving impulse buying behaviors, especially when presented with enticing offers and promotions.

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¹ Akgün & Diktaş, 2017, last consulted on 22.02.2024.

² Srivastava & Maurya, 2023, last consulted on 24.02.2024.

Similarly, the fear of missing out (FoMO) is „a unique term introduced in 2004 and then extensively used since 2010”³ that has become increasingly prevalent in the digital age, fuelled by the pervasive influence of social media and the constant stream of updates showcasing others' experiences, purchases, and lifestyles. This fear of being left out or missing out on rewarding opportunities can lead consumers to engage in impulsive buying behaviors, particularly when presented with time-sensitive discounts or limited-time offers. The fear of regretting not seizing a perceived opportunity drives individuals to make quick, unplanned purchases to avoid feeling excluded or deprived.

Understanding the complex interplay between hedonic motivation and FoMO is essential for unravelling the underlying mechanisms driving online impulse purchase intentions of discounted products. By delving deeper into how these psychological factors interact and influence consumer decision-making processes in the digital marketplace, researchers and marketers can gain valuable insights into designing targeted strategies that effectively stimulate impulse buying behavior and capitalise on consumers' hedonic motivations and FoMO tendencies.

Against this backdrop, this study seeks to explore the nuanced relationship between hedonic motivation, FoMO and online impulse purchase intentions, specifically focusing on the context of discounted products. By examining the underlying mechanisms and boundary conditions governing these psychological factors, this research aims to provide valuable insights into how businesses can leverage consumer psychology to optimise marketing strategies, enhance online shopping experiences, and drive sales in the competitive digital landscape.

The studied matter is important for several reasons. Firstly, understanding the underlying motivations driving consumers' impulse purchases of discounted products is crucial for businesses looking to optimise their online marketing strategies and drive sales. By uncovering the role of hedonic motivation and FoMO, businesses can tailor their promotional efforts and create compelling shopping experiences that resonate with consumers' desires and fears. Secondly, with the rise of e-commerce and the increasing prevalence of online shopping, the study sheds light on the psychological mechanisms shaping consumer behavior in the digital marketplace, contributing to the broader understanding of online consumer psychology.

This paper intends to address this matter by analysing the relationship between hedonic motivation, FoMO and online impulse purchase intentions of discounted products. Through analysis and interpretation of the specialised literature, this paper aims to provide insights into how businesses can leverage hedonic motivation and FoMO to stimulate impulse purchases and drive revenue in the competitive online marketplace.

The paper builds upon existing specialised literature in the fields of consumer psychology, marketing, and e-commerce. It draws on theoretical frameworks and empirical studies that have explored the role of hedonic motivation, FoMO and impulse buying behavior in various contexts. By synthesising and extending existing knowledge, the paper contributes to the ongoing knowledge of online consumer behavior and provides novel insights into the specific dynamics of impulse purchases of discounted products in the digital age.

2. Hedonic motivation and consumer behavior

Currently it is believed that many of the values influencing consumer attitudes and behaviors are undergoing significant changes within the modern marketing paradigm. In simpler terms, the traditional understanding that ‘consumption is a planned behavior’ has been replaced by the idea that ‘consumption is an action pursued for happiness rather than solely as a necessity’⁴.

At its core, hedonism is a consistent „lifestyle devoted to pleasure”⁵, centered on self-indulgence and prioritising personal enjoyment. Therefore, hedonic motivation refers to the desire for pleasure, comfort and entertainment or the avoidance of pain and unpleasant feelings. In the realm of consumer behavior, it often drives individuals to seek gratification, enjoyment from their purchases and overall well-being. When applied to online shopping, hedonic motivation manifests as the pursuit of products that offer sensory pleasure, emotional satisfaction, or experiential enjoyment. In the context of discounted products, consumers may be motivated by the thrill of finding a good deal, the excitement of instant gratification, or the anticipation of owning a desirable item at a lower price.

³ Gupta & Sharma, 2021, last consulted on 10.03.2024.

⁴ Akgün & Diktaş, 2017, last consulted on 22.02.2024.

⁵ Çavuşoğlu *et al.*, 2021, last consulted on 05.03.2024.

Hedonic motivation plays a fundamental role in shaping consumer behavior across various contexts, both online and offline. Hedonic motivations are often contrasted with utilitarian motivations, which are goal-oriented, efficient, deliberate, taken with a conscious attitude⁶ and driven by practical considerations such as functionality, efficiency, and problem-solving.

„Consumer-oriented businesses know that the behavioral intentions of consumers will be affected by the elements that create a hedonic shopping experience” because „consumers expect to gain more than benefits from the product”⁷. Therefore, „businesses try to use hedonic factors that would cause consumers to decide momentarily and that are subjective and impulsive”⁸.

One of the key ways in which hedonic motivation influences consumer behavior is through the consumption of goods and services that provide emotional and sensory enjoyment. This can include indulging in luxury items, treating oneself to experiences such as dining out or travelling, or purchasing products that evoke positive emotions and enhance one's mood.

In the context of online shopping, hedonic motivation manifests in various ways, shaping consumers' preferences, choices, and purchase decisions. E-commerce platforms offer a plethora of products and experiences that cater to hedonic desires, ranging from fashion and beauty items to entertainment products and leisure activities. The convenience and accessibility of online shopping further amplify hedonic motivations, allowing consumers to satisfy their desires for pleasure and enjoyment with just a few clicks.

Moreover, hedonic motivations often intersect with social and psychological needs, driving consumers to seek products and experiences that facilitate self-expression, social identity, and belongingness. For instance, individuals may purchase luxury fashion items not only for their quality and aesthetics but also to signal status, prestige, and belonging to certain social groups. Similarly, consumers may be drawn to experiential products and services that enable them to create meaningful memories, connect with others, and enrich their lives emotionally and socially⁹.

Importantly, hedonic motivation influences not only what consumers buy but also how they perceive and evaluate products and brands. Products that evoke positive emotions, sensory pleasure, and emotional engagement are more likely to be perceived favorably and preferred over utilitarian alternatives. Additionally, hedonic experiences associated with a brand or product can contribute to brand loyalty, repeat purchases, and positive word-of-mouth, as consumers seek to recreate pleasurable experiences and emotional connections over time.

On the other hand, hedonic consumption „can cause unwanted psychological tensions in consumers such as guilt”¹⁰. According to Çavuşoğlu *et al.*, the decision to buy a discounted product is often perceived as a means to alleviate this guilt or cope with the situation. Consequently, it is believed that individuals inclined toward hedonic shopping are more likely to intend to purchase discounted items. Put differently, the positive psychological impact of discounts during periods of heightened shopping activity is expected to influence purchasing intentions.

In summary, hedonic motivation plays a central role in driving consumer behavior, shaping preferences, choices, and purchase decisions in both offline and online settings. By understanding the underlying drivers of hedonic motivation and its implications for consumer behavior, businesses can design tailored marketing strategies, product offerings, and shopping experiences that resonate with consumers' desires for pleasure, enjoyment, and emotional gratification, ultimately driving engagement, satisfaction, and loyalty in the competitive marketplace.

3. Fear of missing out (FoMO) and consumer behavior

FoMO is a pervasive psychological phenomenon and feeling, characterised by the fear of being left out or missing out on rewarding experiences or opportunities that others are enjoying¹¹. In the context of online shopping, FoMO arises from the constant exposure to social media, where individuals witness their peers' purchases, experiences, and lifestyle updates. „FoMO is characterised by the desire to stay continually connected

⁶ Novela *et al.*, 2020, last consulted on 12.03.2024.

⁷ Çavuşoğlu *et al.*, 2021, last consulted on 05.03.2024.

⁸ *Ibidem*.

⁹ Srivastava & Maurya, 2023, last consulted on 24.02.2024.

¹⁰ Çavuşoğlu *et al.*, 2021, last consulted on 05.03.2024.

¹¹ Gupta & Sharma, 2021, last consulted on 10.03.2024.

with what others are doing”¹². This fear can drive consumers to engage in impulsive buying behaviors to avoid the regret of not seizing a perceived opportunity, especially when products are offered at discounted prices for a limited time. FoMO is fueled by the constant stream of social media updates, where individuals are exposed to curated snapshots of others' lives, experiences, and purchases. This perpetual exposure to the highlights of others' activities can create „a range of negative life experiences and feelings, such as a sense of social inferiority, loneliness”¹³, inadequacy, insecurity, and anxiety, as individuals compare their own lives and possessions to those portrayed online. The fear of missing out on exciting events, trendy products, or exclusive deals can drive individuals to engage in impulsive behaviors, including unplanned purchases and excessive consumption, in an attempt to alleviate feelings of exclusion or regret.

In the context of consumer behavior, FoMO has profound implications for individuals' attitudes, motivations, and decision-making processes, particularly in relation to online shopping and discounted products. Discounted products, with their limited-time offers and perceived scarcity, are particularly potent triggers for FoMO-driven behaviors. The fear of missing out on a bargain or losing out on a valuable opportunity can intensify consumers' motivation to act quickly and make impulse purchases. Time-limited discounts create a sense of urgency and competition, heightening consumers' anxiety about missing out on a good deal if they hesitate or delay their purchase decisions.

FoMO has been „found to be associated with various problematic behaviors, such as compulsive social media use and online social comparisons”¹⁴. Moreover, the social aspect of FoMO plays a significant role in influencing consumer behavior in the context of discounted products. Consumers are often motivated to purchase discounted items not only for the practical benefits of saving money but also for the social validation and status associated with scoring a great deal. Sharing one's purchases on social media platforms can serve as a form of self-expression, social currency, and validation-seeking behavior, as individuals seek affirmation and recognition from their peers for their savvy shopping decisions.

Additionally, the fear of missing out on a discounted offer can lead consumers to engage in herd behavior, where they follow the actions and choices of others in order to avoid feeling left behind or excluded. This herd mentality can result in a surge of impulse purchases, as consumers perceive discounted products as desirable and valuable simply because others are buying them.

In summary, fear of missing out (FoMO) exerts a powerful influence on consumer behavior, particularly in the context of online shopping and discounted products. The fear of being excluded from rewarding experiences or opportunities drives individuals to engage in impulsive behaviors, seek social validation, and make quick purchase decisions to alleviate feelings of anxiety and regret. By understanding the psychological mechanisms underlying FoMO-driven behaviors, businesses can design targeted marketing strategies, create compelling offers, and leverage social proof to capitalise on consumers' fear of missing out and drive sales in the competitive retail landscape.

4. Impact of hedonic motivation and FoMO on online impulse purchase intention

The interaction between hedonic motivation and FoMO creates a potent catalyst for online impulse purchases of discounted products. „Consumers with a tendency to hedonic consumption display more unplanned buying behavior” and their decisions “are largely spontaneous”¹⁵. „Discounts and discounted products affect hedonic shopping”¹⁶. Therefore, consumers driven by hedonic motivation are inclined to seek out products that promise immediate pleasure or gratification, making them susceptible to impulse buying behaviors, particularly when presented with discounted offers. Additionally, the fear of missing out amplifies the sense of urgency and scarcity associated with limited-time discounts, further motivating individuals to make impulsive purchase decisions to avoid feeling excluded or deprived.

The interplay between hedonic motivation and fear of missing out (FoMO) exerts a significant influence on consumers' online impulse purchase intentions, particularly when it comes to discounted products. Impulse purchase intentions are affected by many different factors, such as: „psychological effects, socio-cultural

¹² Gupta & Sharma, 2021, last consulted on 10.03.2024.

¹³ *Ibidem*.

¹⁴ Jabeen *et al.*, 2023, last consulted on 15.03.2024.

¹⁵ Çavuşoğlu *et al.*, 2021, last consulted on 10.03.2024.

¹⁶ *Ibidem*.

determinants, demographic parameters, situational effects and effects of marketing efforts”¹⁷. Understanding this impact is crucial for businesses seeking to leverage psychological drivers to stimulate sales and drive revenue in the competitive online marketplace.

The relationship between hedonic motivation, FoMO and online impulse purchase intention of discounted products can manifest in various forms, such as:

- **Heightened sense of urgency.** Discounted products, often accompanied by limited-time offers or countdown timers, create a sense of urgency and scarcity that amplifies consumers' fear of missing out¹⁸. The combination of a perceived opportunity for pleasure (hedonic motivation) and the fear of losing out on a good deal (FoMO) prompts consumers to act quickly and make impulsive purchase decisions before the offer expires. This heightened sense of urgency can significantly boost online impulse purchase intentions, as consumers feel compelled to seize the opportunity while it lasts.

- **Increased perceived value.** The presence of discounts and promotional offers enhances the perceived value of products in the eyes of consumers. When consumers perceive that they are getting a bargain or a special deal, it activates their hedonic motivation by offering the promise of pleasure and gratification at a lower cost. Moreover, the fear of missing out on such a valuable opportunity further intensifies consumers' desire to make the purchase, as they strive to avoid feelings of regret or loss associated with passing up a discounted offer. This heightened perception of value can lead to impulsive buying behavior, as consumers are motivated to capitalise on the perceived benefits of the discount before it's too late¹⁹.

- **Impulse buying triggers.** Triggers play an important role since „impulse buying is a shopping behavior that occurs unplanned, emotionally interested, where the decision-making process is done quickly without thinking wisely and consideration of the overall information and alternatives”²⁰. The combination of hedonic motivation and FoMO serves as powerful triggers for impulse buying behavior in online environments. Hedonic motivations prompt consumers to seek out products that offer immediate pleasure, enjoyment, or emotional gratification, while FoMO creates a sense of urgency and anxiety about missing out on rewarding experiences or opportunities. When presented with discounted products that align with their hedonic desires and trigger their fear of missing out, consumers are more likely to succumb to impulsive impulses and make unplanned purchases without careful consideration of the consequences.

- **Role of emotional triggers and escapism.** Emotional triggers and escapism also play a significant role in influencing online impulse purchase intentions of discounted products. In hedonic consumption „buying behavior is carried out with emotions rather than senses”²¹. Consumers may turn to online shopping as a form of emotional coping mechanism or stress relief, seeking temporary distraction or gratification from their worries or anxieties. Also, according to Westbrook and Black (1985) „consumers often engage in hedonic consumption with the motivation to escape from reality and move away from the routine of life”²². The allure of discounted products can provide a welcome escape from the pressures of everyday life, offering consumers a brief respite and a sense of excitement or pleasure. By tapping into consumers' emotional states and offering discounted products that cater to their desires for relaxation, indulgence, or self-care, businesses can effectively stimulate impulse purchases and create positive shopping experiences that resonate with consumers' hedonic motivations and emotional needs.

- **Influence of trust signals and proofs.** Social proof, in the form of user reviews, ratings, and testimonials, can play a crucial role in influencing online impulse purchase intentions, particularly in the context of discounted products. When consumers see others taking advantage of a discounted offer or expressing satisfaction with their purchases, it validates the attractiveness and credibility of the deal. This social validation reinforces consumers' hedonic motivations by signalling that the discounted product is desirable and worth purchasing. Additionally, the fear of missing out on a popular or highly recommended product can further drive impulse buying behavior, as consumers seek to align themselves with the preferences and behaviors of their peers. Trust signals, such as secure payment options, trust badges, and customer reviews, help build credibility and reassure consumers about the reliability and legitimacy of the discounted offer. Positive reviews and testimonials from

¹⁷ Durmaz, Özgüner & Özkan, 2022, last consulted on 21.03.2024.

¹⁸ Tiemessen, Schrafenberger & Acar, 2023, last consulted on 20.02.2024.

¹⁹ *Ibidem*.

²⁰ Tirtayasa, Nevianda & Syahril, 2020, last consulted on 16.03.2024.

²¹ Akgün & Diktaş, 2017, last consulted on 22.02.2024.

²² *Ibidem*.

satisfied customers serve as social proof, indicating to potential buyers that others have had positive experiences with the product or brand²³.

- **Impact of social comparison and social influence.** According to Tauber (1972) hedonic consumption motivations are divided in two distinct categories: personal and social reasons²⁴. Social comparison and social influence play significant roles in shaping online impulse purchase intentions, especially in the context of discounted products. Consumers often engage in social comparison by comparing their own purchases and possessions to those of others, particularly on social media platforms where they are exposed to curated images of others' lifestyles and purchases. This comparison can fuel feelings of inadequacy or envy, driving consumers to make impulse purchases in an attempt to keep up with or surpass their peers. Additionally, social influence from friends, family, influencers, and online communities can further amplify consumers' fear of missing out and influence their impulse purchase decisions²⁵. Positive endorsements, recommendations, and testimonials from trusted sources can create social proof and validate the attractiveness of discounted products, motivating consumers to act quickly to avoid missing out on a perceived opportunity.

- **Impact of pricing strategies.** Pricing strategies play a crucial role in influencing consumers' online impulse purchase intentions of discounted products. Businesses employ various pricing tactics, such as dynamic pricing, price bundling, and psychological pricing, to influence consumers' perceptions of value and trigger impulsive buying behavior. Dynamic pricing adjusts prices in real-time based on factors such as demand, inventory levels, and consumer behavior, creating a sense of urgency and scarcity that motivates consumers to make impulsive purchases. Price bundling combines multiple products or services into a single package at a discounted price, appealing to consumers' desire for value and encouraging impulse buying. Psychological pricing techniques, such as using odd or charm prices (e.g., 9.99 instead of 10), create the perception of a better deal and trigger impulsive purchases by appealing to consumers' subconscious biases and heuristics.

- Discounts and reduced-price items significantly influence hedonic shopping, particularly during specific times of the year or on particular days or occasions (Black Friday, Christmas or Easter period etc.)²⁶. During these periods, it is observed that consumers prioritise shopping and consequently increase their purchases.

- **Influence of personalization and targeting.** „Consumers' online impulsive buying activity accounts for 40% of total internet consumption”²⁷. Therefore, personalised marketing tactics, such as tailored recommendations and targeted advertisements, are a necessity and can further amplify the impact of hedonic motivation and FoMO on online impulse purchase intentions of discounted products. By leveraging data analytics and machine learning algorithms, businesses can identify consumers' preferences, interests, and past purchase behaviors to deliver personalised offers and promotions that resonate with their hedonic desires and fear of missing out. For example, offering exclusive discounts or limited-time offers based on a consumer's browsing history or previous purchases can create a sense of exclusivity and urgency, motivating them to act impulsively to secure the deal before it expires.

- **Role of visual and emotional appeals.** Visual and emotional appeals play a crucial role in capturing consumers' attention and stimulating their hedonic motivations and FoMO. Eye-catching visuals, vibrant colors, and engaging multimedia content can evoke positive emotions and sensory pleasure, enhancing the appeal of discounted products and triggering consumers' desire to make an impulse purchase. Additionally, emotional storytelling and persuasive messaging can tap into consumers' aspirations, desires, and fears, compelling them to act quickly to avoid missing out on the emotional rewards associated with the discounted offer. By leveraging visual and emotional appeals effectively, businesses can create immersive online shopping experiences that drive impulse purchase intentions and increase conversion rates²⁸.

- **Influence of behavioral nudges.** Behavioral nudges can also play a significant role in shaping online impulse purchase intentions, especially in the context of discounted products. Techniques such as scarcity tactics (e.g., „only 3 items left in stock”), urgency prompts (e.g., „sale ends in 24 hours”), and social proof cues (e.g., „bestseller”) capitalise on consumers' psychological biases and cognitive shortcuts to encourage impulsive

²³ Arulanandam, Malini & Oktaningtias, 2020, last consulted on 28.02.2024.

²⁴ Akgün & Diktaş, 2017, last consulted on 22.02.2024.

²⁵ Deliana *et al.*, 2024, last consulted on 01.03.2024.

²⁶ Çavuşoğlu *et al.*, 2021, last consulted on 10.03.2024.

²⁷ Fadillah & Kusumawati, 2021, last consulted on 12.03.2024.

²⁸ Dwiputrianti *et al.*, 2023, last consulted on 11.03.2024.

buying behavior²⁹. For instance, scarcity tactics trigger consumers' fear of missing out by creating the perception of limited availability, while urgency prompts activate their hedonic motivations by emphasising the time-sensitive nature of the offer.

- **Impact of cognitive biases and decision heuristics.** These biases and heuristics, such as availability bias, confirmation bias, and scarcity heuristic, influence how consumers perceive and evaluate discounted offers, ultimately driving impulsive buying behavior³⁰. For example, availability bias leads consumers to overestimate the prevalence or importance of discounted products they have recently encountered, increasing their likelihood of making impulsive purchases. Confirmation bias causes consumers to seek out information that confirms their preexisting beliefs or desires, leading them to interpret discounted offers in a way that supports their impulse buying intentions. The scarcity heuristic, on the other hand, causes consumers to assign greater value to items that are perceived as scarce or in high demand, prompting impulsive purchases in response to limited availability or time-sensitive discounts.

- **Impact of environmental and situational factors.** Environmental and situational factors can also influence consumers' online impulse purchase intentions of discounted products. Factors such as time pressure, mood, and social context can shape consumers' decision-making processes and increase their susceptibility to impulsive buying behavior. For example, consumers may be more likely to make impulsive purchases when they are in a hurry or feeling stressed, as they seek quick solutions or rewards to alleviate their discomfort. Similarly, positive mood states, such as excitement or anticipation, can enhance consumers' hedonic motivations and increase their willingness to make impulsive purchases of discounted products. Social context, including the presence of peers or influencers, can also influence consumers' impulse purchase intentions by providing social validation and reinforcement of the discounted offer³¹. By understanding these environmental and situational factors, businesses can tailor their promotional strategies and create optimal shopping environments that facilitate impulse purchases of discounted products.

- **Impact of trust and reputation.** Trust and reputation play a crucial role in influencing consumers' online impulse purchase intentions of discounted products. Consumers are more likely to make impulsive purchases from brands and retailers they trust, as they perceive them as reliable and credible sources. Positive reviews, ratings, influencers and testimonials can enhance consumers' confidence in the discounted products and alleviate any concerns about quality, authenticity, or reliability³². Conversely, negative reviews or a lack of trustworthiness can deter consumers from making impulsive purchases, as they may perceive the discounted offer as too risky or unreliable. By building and maintaining trust through transparent communication, exceptional customer service, and consistent delivery of high-quality products, businesses can instill confidence in consumers and drive impulse purchases of discounted products.

- **Impact of perceived risk and uncertainty.** Perceived risk and uncertainty can also influence consumers' online impulse purchase intentions of discounted products. Consumers may hesitate to make impulsive purchases if they perceive the discounted offer as too good to be true or if they have concerns about the quality, authenticity, or reliability of the product or seller. Additionally, uncertainty about the future availability of the discount or the potential consequences of the purchase (e.g., regret, financial strain) may deter consumers from acting impulsively. Businesses can mitigate perceived risk and uncertainty by providing transparent information, clear return policies, and assurances of product quality and authenticity, thereby instilling confidence and reducing barriers to impulsive buying behavior.

- **Impact of cognitive load and decision fatigue.** Cognitive load and decision fatigue can significantly influence consumers' online impulse purchase intentions of discounted products. Cognitive load refers to the mental effort required to process information and make decisions, while decision fatigue occurs when individuals experience mental exhaustion from making repeated choices. In the context of online shopping, consumers are often bombarded with numerous options and information, leading to cognitive overload and decision fatigue³³. As a result, consumers may resort to impulsive buying behavior as a way to simplify their decision-making process and alleviate cognitive strain. Businesses can capitalise on consumers' cognitive load and decision fatigue by presenting discounted products in a clear, concise manner and minimising decision-making barriers, such as

²⁹ Tiemessen, Schrafenberger & Acar, 2023, last consulted on 20.02.2024.

³⁰ *Ibidem*.

³¹ Mahmud et al., 2023, last consulted on 15.03.2024.

³² *Ibidem*.

³³ Logan, Bright & Grau, 2018, last consulted on 15.03.2024.

excessive options or complex pricing structures. By streamlining the shopping experience and reducing cognitive demands, businesses can increase the likelihood of impulsive purchases and drive sales of discounted products.

- **Impact of mobile shopping and instant gratification.** The proliferation of mobile shopping apps and on-the-go browsing has further intensified the impact of hedonic motivation and FoMO on online impulse purchase intentions. With smartphones enabling instant access to e-commerce platforms and real-time notifications about discounts and promotions, consumers are constantly exposed to opportunities for spontaneous purchases. The convenience and immediacy of mobile shopping cater to consumers' desire for instant gratification, making them more susceptible to impulsive buying behaviors, especially when presented with attractive discounts and limited-time offers. By optimising their mobile shopping experiences and leveraging push notifications and in-app promotions, businesses can capitalise on consumers' hedonic motivations and fear of missing out to drive impulse purchases and boost sales of discounted products.

- **Impact of technological innovations.** Technological innovations, such as augmented reality (AR), virtual reality (VR), and artificial intelligence (AI), are increasingly shaping consumers' online shopping experiences and influencing their impulse purchase intentions of discounted products. AR and VR technologies allow consumers to visualise and interact with products in immersive virtual environments, enhancing their engagement and satisfaction with the shopping experience. AI-powered recommendation engines analyse consumers' browsing and purchase history to offer personalised product recommendations and promotions tailored to their preferences and interests, increasing the likelihood of impulsive purchases. By embracing these technological innovations and integrating them into their e-commerce platforms, businesses can create innovative and engaging online shopping experiences that drive impulse purchases of discounted products while providing value and convenience to consumers.

- **Impact of behavioral economics principles.** Behavioral economics principles play a significant role in influencing online impulse purchase intentions of discounted products. Concepts such as loss aversion, anchoring, and scarcity bias can shape consumers' decision-making processes, particularly in response to limited-time offers and attractive discounts³⁴. Loss aversion theory suggests that individuals are more motivated to avoid losses than to acquire gains, making them particularly sensitive to the fear of missing out on a discounted opportunity. Anchoring bias occurs when consumers use the original price of a product as a reference point, perceiving the discounted price as a significant savings and prompting impulsive purchases. Scarcity bias leads consumers to place greater value on items that are perceived as scarce or in high demand, driving impulse purchases in response to limited availability or time-sensitive offers. By leveraging these behavioral economics principles, businesses can strategically frame their discounts and promotions to capitalise on consumers' cognitive biases and drive impulse buying behavior.

- **Impact of ethical and legal considerations.** Ethical, regulatory and legal considerations also play a role in influencing consumers' online impulse purchase intentions of discounted products. Consumer protection laws and regulations govern various aspects of online commerce, including pricing practices, advertising disclosures, and consumer rights. Businesses must comply with these regulations to ensure transparency, fairness, and trust in their marketing and promotional activities. Failure to do so can undermine consumers' confidence in the discounted offers and deter them from making impulsive purchases. By adhering to ethical and legal standards and providing clear and accurate information about discounted products, businesses can build trust and credibility with consumers, facilitating impulse purchases and fostering long-term relationships in the digital marketplace.

- **Post-purchase satisfaction and regret.** The impact of hedonic motivation and FoMO extends beyond the point of purchase to influence consumers' post-purchase satisfaction and regret. While hedonic motivations may initially drive consumers to make impulsive purchases of discounted products, the subsequent experience of ownership and consumption plays a crucial role in shaping their overall satisfaction and perceived value. If the product fails to meet consumers' expectations or fails to deliver the anticipated hedonic benefits, it may lead to feelings of post-purchase regret and dissatisfaction. Conversely, if the product exceeds expectations and delivers on its promised benefits, it can reinforce consumers' positive perceptions and increase their likelihood of repeat purchases and brand loyalty. Thus, businesses must carefully manage consumers' post-purchase experiences to mitigate potential regrets and maximise long-term satisfaction and loyalty.

- **Impact of post-purchase rationalisation and cognitive dissonance.** After making an impulse purchase

³⁴ Tiemessen, Schrafenberger & Acar, 2023, last time consulted on 20.02.2024

of a discounted product, consumers may engage in post-purchase rationalisation to justify their decision and alleviate any feelings of cognitive dissonance. Post-purchase rationalisation involves reinterpreting or downplaying any negative aspects of the purchase and emphasising its positive attributes to maintain a positive self-image and reduce feelings of regret. For example, a consumer who impulsively buys a discounted item may rationalise the purchase by convincing themselves that they saved money, received good value for their purchase, or treated themselves to a well-deserved reward. By understanding the role of post-purchase rationalisation in consumers' decision-making processes, businesses can design post-purchase communications and follow-up interactions to reinforce consumers' positive perceptions of their impulse purchases and minimise any potential regrets or doubts.

By considering these factors, businesses can gain deeper insights into the complex interplay between hedonic motivation, FoMO and other psychological drivers influencing consumers' online impulse purchase intentions of discounted products. In conclusion, the impact of hedonic motivation and FoMO on online impulse purchase intentions of discounted products is influenced by a multitude of factors, including personalization, visual appeals, perceived value, social proof, behavioral nudges, trust and reputation, behavioral economics principles, pricing strategies, technological innovations, mobile shopping, regulatory considerations, ethical considerations, post-purchase rationalisation, and cognitive dissonance. By recognizing and leveraging these psychological drivers effectively in their e-commerce strategies, businesses can create compelling online shopping experiences that drive impulse purchases, increase conversion rates, and foster long-term customer loyalty in the competitive digital marketplace.

5. Conclusions

This paper has delved into the nuanced interplay between hedonic motivation, characterised by the pursuit of pleasure and enjoyment, and the fear of missing out (FoMO), a pervasive anxiety stemming from the desire to stay connected and informed. By synthesising existing literature and empirical studies, several key insights have emerged. Understanding the interplay between hedonic motivation and FoMO sheds light on the underlying mechanisms driving online impulse purchase intentions of discounted products. Marketers and retailers can leverage these insights to design targeted strategies that capitalise on consumers' desire for pleasure, excitement, and fear of missing out. By creating engaging online shopping experiences, offering attractive discounts, and leveraging social proof, businesses can effectively stimulate impulse buying behavior and capitalise on consumers' hedonic motivations and FoMO tendencies in the digital marketplace.

Based on all the aspects mentioned above, marketers can take into consideration the following practical implications and marketing strategies:

- **Create a sense of urgency.** Utilise limited-time offers, countdown timers, and flash sales to create a sense of urgency among consumers. Highlight the scarcity of discounted products and emphasise that the offer is available for a limited time only, tapping into consumers' fear of missing out and driving impulse purchase intentions.
- **Offer exclusive deals and rewards.** Reward loyal customers with exclusive discounts, early access to sales, or special promotions. By offering exclusive deals, businesses can enhance consumers' hedonic motivation and sense of privilege, encouraging them to make impulsive purchases to access these exclusive benefits.
- **Leverage social proof and user-generated content.** Encourage satisfied customers to share their experiences with discounted products through reviews, ratings, and testimonials. Utilise user-generated content on social media platforms to showcase real-life examples of consumers enjoying the discounted products, building trust and social proof to stimulate impulse purchase intentions. By incorporating trust signals and social proof into their e-commerce platforms, businesses can alleviate consumers' concerns and increase their confidence in making impulsive purchases of discounted products. Additionally, leveraging influencer marketing and user-generated content can further enhance social proof and encourage impulse buying behavior among consumers.
- **Implement personalised recommendations.** Use data analytics and machine learning algorithms to deliver personalised product recommendations and promotions based on consumers' browsing history, purchase behavior, and preferences. Tailor discounts and offers to align with consumers' interests and past interactions, increasing the relevance and appeal of discounted products and driving impulse purchases.
- **Optimise mobile shopping experience.** Optimise the mobile shopping experience to cater to

consumers' on-the-go browsing habits and desire for instant gratification. Streamline the checkout process, minimise friction points, and utilise push notifications to alert consumers about new discounts or promotions, facilitating impulse purchases of discounted products on mobile devices.

- **Utilise visual and emotional appeals.** Leverage engaging visuals, vibrant colors, and emotional storytelling to capture consumers' attention and stimulate their hedonic motivations. Utilise imagery and messaging that evoke positive emotions and sensory pleasure, enhancing the appeal of discounted products and triggering impulsive buying behavior.

- **Offer bundled deals and add-on incentives.** Offer bundled deals or add-on incentives to increase the perceived value of discounted products and incentivize impulse purchases. For example, offer complementary products or services at a discounted price when purchased together, encouraging consumers to take advantage of the bundled offer and make impulsive purchases.

- **Provide clear and transparent pricing.** Ensure that pricing information is clear, transparent, and easy to understand to build trust and credibility with consumers. Avoid hidden fees or surcharges and provide upfront information about discounts, savings, and any terms or conditions associated with the offer, reducing uncertainty and increasing consumers' confidence in making impulsive purchases.

- **Foster a sense of community and exclusivity.** Create online communities or loyalty programs where customers can engage with each other and feel a sense of belonging. Offer exclusive perks, such as access to member-only events or early product launches, to reward loyal customers and make them feel valued. By fostering a sense of community and exclusivity, businesses can tap into consumers' desire for social connection and status, driving impulse purchase intentions of discounted products.

- **Provide social sharing incentives.** Encourage customers to share their purchases on social media platforms by offering incentives such as discounts, rewards, or entry into giveaways. User-generated content shared by satisfied customers can serve as powerful social proof and influence others' impulse purchase decisions. By incentivizing social sharing, businesses can amplify the reach of their discounted products and stimulate impulse purchases among a broader audience.

- **Use influencer marketing.** Partner with influencers or brand ambassadors who resonate with the target audience to promote discounted products authentically. Influencers can create engaging content, such as unboxing videos or product reviews, that showcases the benefits and appeal of discounted products. Their endorsement can enhance consumers' trust and confidence in the offer, driving impulse purchase intentions and increasing sales.

- **Implement retargeting strategies.** Utilise retargeting ads to reach consumers who have previously visited the website or shown interest in specific discounted products but did not complete a purchase. Remind them of the offer and highlight its benefits to rekindle their interest and encourage them to make an impulse purchase. By staying top-of-mind with retargeting efforts, businesses can capitalise on consumers' previous engagement and drive conversions.

- **Offer easy returns and hassle-free experiences.** Provide a seamless and hassle-free shopping experience, including easy returns and flexible payment options, to alleviate consumers' concerns and reduce barriers to impulse purchases. Assure customers that they can shop with confidence and easily return or exchange discounted products if they are not satisfied, enhancing their trust and willingness to make impulsive purchases.

- **Monitor and analyse consumer behavior.** Continuously monitor and analyse consumer behavior, including browsing patterns, cart abandonment rates, and conversion metrics, to identify opportunities for optimising discount strategies and improving the online shopping experience. Use data-driven insights to refine targeting, messaging, and promotional efforts, ensuring that they resonate with consumers' hedonic motivations and FoMO.

By implementing these practical marketing strategies, businesses can effectively leverage the influence of hedonic motivation and fear of missing out to drive online impulse purchase intentions of discounted products, increase conversion rates, and foster long-term customer loyalty in the competitive digital marketplace.

Further research in this area could explore the moderating effects of individual differences, such as personality traits and demographic factors, on the relationship between hedonic motivation, FoMO and online impulse purchase intentions. Additionally, investigating the role of contextual factors, such as the presentation

of discounts, social influence cues, and the perceived credibility of online retailers, could provide deeper insights into the mechanisms driving impulsive buying behavior in online environments.

Moreover, longitudinal studies could offer valuable insights into the long-term effects of hedonic motivation and FoMO on consumer purchase behavior, including post-purchase satisfaction, repeat purchase intentions, and brand loyalty. Understanding how these psychological factors influence the entire consumer decision-making process, from initial attraction to post-purchase evaluation, can help businesses develop more holistic and effective marketing strategies tailored to meet the evolving needs and preferences of online shoppers.

In conclusion, the influence of hedonic motivation and FoMO on enhancing online impulse purchase intentions of discounted products underscores the importance of understanding and leveraging consumer psychology in digital marketing efforts. By tapping into consumers' desires for pleasure, excitement, and social connection, businesses can create compelling online shopping experiences that drive impulse purchases and foster customer engagement and loyalty in the competitive online marketplace.

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