

Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) Marketing and Impulsive Online Buying: Emotional Experiences of Indian Consumers

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Abstract

Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) plays a crucial role in shaping digital consumer behavior. This study explores how FOMO-based marketing influences impulsive online purchases and the emotional outcomes among Indian consumers. Using a mixed-method approach, findings show that urgency cues and social comparison increase impulsive buying. However, such decisions often lead to emotional conflict, including regret and anxiety. The study highlights the need for ethical marketing practices.

Keywords

FOMO, Impulsive Buying, Online Shopping, Consumer Behavior, Digital Marketing

1. Introduction

Digital platforms have significantly transformed how consumers make purchasing decisions. Among various psychological drivers, FOMO has emerged as a strong motivator. It is often triggered through marketing techniques such as limited-time offers and social proof, encouraging quick and impulsive decisions.

2. Literature Review

FOMO is linked to social anxiety and continuous online engagement. Impulsive buying is driven by emotional triggers and situational cues. Research indicates that FOMO enhances impulsive consumption, but such behavior may lead to negative emotional consequences such as regret and dissatisfaction.

3. Methodology

A mixed-method research design was used. Data were collected through surveys and analyzed using descriptive and thematic analysis methods.

4. Results

Findings reveal that urgency, social influence, and emotional conflict are key themes. Participants reported immediate purchasing followed by regret.

5. Discussion

The results confirm that FOMO significantly impacts impulsive buying. While it drives engagement, it also creates emotional imbalance, highlighting the psychological cost of such strategies.

6. Practical Implications

Marketers should apply FOMO strategies responsibly. Consumers should be aware of psychological triggers, and policymakers should consider ethical regulations.

7. Limitations

The study is limited by sample size and self-reported data. Future research should adopt longitudinal designs.

8. Conclusion

FOMO is a powerful driver of online consumer behavior but has emotional consequences. Ethical marketing is essential for sustainable consumer engagement.

References

Przybylski et al. (2013); Rook (1987); Braun & Clarke (2006); Dittmar et al. (2007)