

The Perceived Impulse Buying Behavior of Online Shoppers in Qatar: Basis for Creating a Business Plan

Dr. Julie Ann B. Real^a, Faith Nadine D. Feleo^b, Samantha Fianne M. Medina^c, Naz M. Tamayo^d, Louis Joshua A. Ronquillo^e, Khaleel P. Bacrang^f

julieann.real@psdqatar.com^a, feleo.faith@psdqatar.com^b,
medina.samantha@psdqatar.com^c, tamayo.naz@psdqatar.com^d,
ronquillo.louis@psdqatar.com^e, bacrang.khaleel@psdqatar.com^f
^{a,b,c,d,e,f} Philippine School Doha, Doha, Qatar

Abstract

This study explores impulse buying in Qatar, shaped by demographic factors and accelerated by the growth of e-commerce. Amid Qatar's rapid development, the evolution of its retail sector and the global surge in e-commerce highlight the growing significance of understanding consumer behaviors. Quantitative descriptive research design was used, wherein a survey questionnaire was made and validated. 100 online shoppers living in Qatar were selected using purposive and quota sampling techniques. The study primarily comprised younger participants aged 39 and below, and a balanced ratio of male and female, indicating their greater familiarity with technology. A significant portion were married individuals (76%), suggesting that combined household income may influence impulse buying behaviors. The study revealed that external trigger cues were the most influential factor in impulse buying among online shoppers in Qatar, followed by normative evaluation, impulse buying tendency, and internal trigger cues. While age did not affect the impulse levels of shoppers, it was shown that sex, and marital status influence normative evaluation. It is concluded that the young respondents are more likely to make online impulse purchases than adult online shoppers. Also, shoppers are more likely influenced by marketing stimuli seen online. The result of this study can be used as a basis for a strategic business plan for the business owners.

Keywords: business plan; consumer; impulse buying; online shopping; promotion

1. Introduction

1.1. Background of the Study

Impulse buying is a common practice among consumers that is defined by impulsive, unplanned, and abrupt purchases motivated by immediate emotions or urges. It is frequently linked to joy, excitement, and hedonistic buying tendencies (Karl et al., 2022; Olsen et al., 2021). This practice can lead to excessive spending and the accumulation of unnecessary materials. Retailers frequently utilize a variety of methods to induce impulse purchases, such as positioning merchandise near checkout counters or offering limited-time promotions. Understanding impulse buying can help people make better purchasing decisions and prevent unnecessary spending.

Online impulse buying has become rampant as a result of advances in information technology and the tremendous growth of e-commerce. Due to the relative social anonymity of the Internet, consumers are more likely to feel less inhibited when making this kind of purchase. The process of impulsive buying through online channels, which includes e-shopping and social commerce, begins with the propensity or desire to buy before the actual purchase is made, without taking into account the drawbacks of this behavior (Cavazos-Arroyo & Máñez-Guaderrama, 2022). It is estimated that online impulse buying accounts for approximately 40% of all online consumer expenditures (Liu, et al., 2013). A few factors for the rise in online shopping include technological advancements, the Internet, social media use, and shifting consumer preferences toward convenience (Goel et al., 2022).

As technology advances rapidly, marketers will need more specific studies about consumer behavior to enhance their campaigns and reach their target audiences more effectively. The markets differ and are distinguished by escalating competition, ongoing innovation of current goods and services, and a greater number of businesses operating in the same market (Varadarajan, 2020). Qatar's economic sector is predominantly composed of small businesses. As consumer behavior changes, so do the expectations and demands of the market. It is possible to innovate and satisfy customer expectations by researching the elements that directly affect consumer behavior (Ding et al., 2020; Real, 2023).

Psychological factors can influence the decision of online shoppers to impulse buy. In particular, online shoppers focus on impulsivity, sensation-seeking, and representations of self-identity. Impulsivity is a persistent tendency to behave thoughtlessly in a particular context of consumption. This widely accepted idea captures a relatively enduring consumer characteristic that results in an urge or motivation for actual impulse buying. Sensation-seeking is the desire to pursue new experiences, and self-identity, in the context of impulse buying, refers to the products that allow consumers to express themselves more easily (Iyer et al, 2019).

For many consumers, browsing tends to elicit pleasant emotions or a positive effect. Positive affect is the degree to which a person feels enthusiastic, active, and alert; thus, high positive affect is characterized by a state of high energy, complete concentration, and enjoyable engagement (Chih et al, 2012).

Planned purchases involve thorough research and thoughtful decision-making, whereas unplanned purchases are all choices made while shopping without any prior planning. When it comes to making hasty decisions, impulse buying is distinguished from unplanned buying. An unplanned purchase made on the spur of the moment also involves a sudden, powerful, and uncontrollable urge to buy (Muruganantham et al, 2013).

Some researchers came to the conclusion that impulse buying occurs due to exposure to in-store stimuli while highlighting the importance of environmental cues (Lee et al, 2021). The temptation to purchase frequently emerges in stores or malls. Several variables contribute to this. For example, displaying a 50% price drop that is visually appealing would capture the interest of customers. Consumers will become compelled to acquire the product. The display creates an immediate need for people to purchase the marketed product. Thus, a hedonically complex impulse may cause emotional conflict (Azizah et al, 2022; Chan et al, 2017).

Impulse buying is a complex behavior influenced by various demographic factors, such as age, sex, and civil status. The first demographic factor that influences consumer behavior is age. People's lifestyles change as they age, influencing their values and requirements. As people age, individuals may also develop coping abilities to deal with urges to buy. The ability to adapt and mental toughness become crucial components in dealing with the continuous impulse to purchase an object (Desai, 2018). The age of shoppers and impulse

shopping have an adverse relationship, which means older shoppers have more willpower over their shopping behavior than younger shoppers due to factors like disposable income and younger individuals' susceptibility to marketing tactics (Trivedi et al., 2023). In addition, there is an inverse link between the consumer's age and their impulse buying behavior, which suggests that as individuals get older, there is a tendency for their impulse buying behavior to decrease or be lower (Foroughi et al., 2014). Recent studies found that the younger age group was unwilling to shop online owing to financial limitations and was skeptical about internet shopping suggesting that the key motivations moving older customers to online purchasing were performance expectation and social influence, just as they were for younger customers; nevertheless, the major hurdles included value, risk, and tradition, which differed from younger customers (Braimllari & Nerjaku, 2021).

Sex can also play a role in impulse buying. Impulsive purchasing happens when a person's gender influences their choice of purchases. Men generally take less pleasure in acquiring things than do women. Men tend to engage with customers less when they are out and about, whereas women typically concentrate on more urgent tasks. Buying has unusually cerebral and emotional overtones for a man; it is like rewriting expertise (Akram et al., 2016). However, it was found that biological sex had an effect on consumers' impulse-buying behavior and that females showcased more impulse-buying behavior than males. Men choose things related to money and leisure, whereas women place more importance on products that reflect their inclinations. Academics in the field generally agree that women prioritize certain concerns because of relationships and possessive values. Women tend to purchase instinctively, while men tend to think in detail (Desai, 2018).

Furthermore, a different study found that, compared to male adolescents, female adolescents are more likely to make impulsive purchases. An explanation for this is that females scored higher than males on all measures of emotional states, which suggests that females have a more emotional background than males (Muratore, 2016). The main factors influencing impulsive buying in online stores include product efficiency, ease of use, enjoyment, website communication style, positive effects, and negative consequences. (Asrinta, 2018).

Married individuals are more prone to impulse buying. Civil status has been identified as a significant factor influencing online impulse buying behavior (Othman & Sudarmin, 2022). Rather than being single. Single people with no dependents are more inclined to spend without planning than married individuals. Married individuals with dependent children often have limited means. Employers who are married are more likely to shop without making a purchase, but less likely to buy on impulse (Ugbomhe & Adomokhai, 2021). Relationships have a significant impact on impulse purchases. Certain types of interactions, such as normative appraisals, lead to impulse purchases, and can stimulate impulsive tendencies that lead to impulse buying (Rook & Fisher, 2015).

1.2. Theoretical Framework

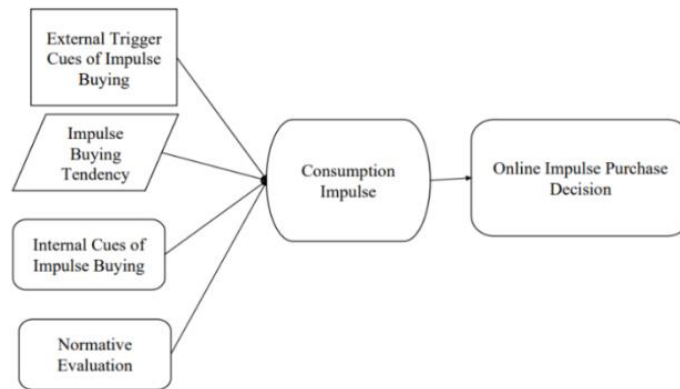


Figure 1: Dawson and Kim's Revised Consumption Impulse Formation Enactment (CIFE) Model (2009)

This study is anchored in Dawson and Kim's Revised Consumption Impulse Formation Enactment (CIFE) Model (2009). This revised model was based on the consumption impulse formation enactment (CIFE) model, which was used to understand consumers' impulse-buying behaviors in online shopping (Dholakia, 2000). The first factor in the revised model is labeled 'external trigger cues of impulse buying' to refer to the marketing stimuli present on a website. The next factor, 'impulse buying tendency', refers to the likelihood of making unintended, immediate, and unreflective purchases. Third, 'internal cues of impulse buying' include a consumer's mood or emotional state while shopping online. Next, normative evaluations refer to consumers' judgments about whether an impulsive purchase is appropriate in a given situation. Finally, 'consumption impulse' is defined as the irresistible urge to consume.

External Trigger Cues of Impulse Buying

External trigger cues for impulse buying are marketing cues or stimuli used to lure consumers into buying impulsively. Examples of these types of external cues are discounts, bonus packs, premiums, loyalty programs, flash sales, rewards, coupons, and advertisements (Akdeniz et al., 2013; Chauhan et al., 2021). All of these external cues, besides advertisements, can be classified as sales promotions. Sales promotions are special offers that aim to stimulate demand for the products. These are encouraged to be included in the business to attract customers to their brands (Karim et al., 2021). To add, the findings of multiple studies reported that the main external trigger cue of impulse buying, sales promotion, significantly influences online impulse buying behavior (Akram et al., 2018; Badgaiyan and Verma, 2015; Mandolfo et al., 2022).

Impulse Buying Tendency

The likelihood that a person may make unintentional, quick, and unconsidered purchases is known as an impulse buying tendency. (i.e., impulse purchases). Impulse buying is when a consumer experiences a sudden, often powerful, and persistent urge to buy something immediately (Iyer et al., 2019). Due to factors including psychological traits, affective and cognitive facets, positive emotions, environmental stimuli, and personal characteristics, the greater the impulse buyer's tendency, the more likely the person is to be influenced by external triggers of impulse such as marketing stimuli like advertisements, visuals, or promotional gifts, which increases shopping and impulsive purchases (Liu et al., 2013). Customers who shop online are liberated

from the restrictions they could encounter in real stores such as travel and movement restrictions (Ngoc & Kriengsinyos, 2020), which in turn raises the possibility of impulse purchases (Chan et al., 2017). Impulse purchasing is thought to be hedonistic which refers to the inclination of individuals to engage in consumption activities to seek pleasure, enjoyment, and emotional gratification, rather than fulfilling practical needs (Zhang & Chen, 2023).

Internal Cues of Impulse Buying

The internal cues that trigger impulse buying are the affective and cognitive states of a person. The affective state is an emotion a person feels that can lead to impulse buying. The cognitive state is how a person thinks or reacts. Impulsive buying happens when the affective state is more dominant than the cognitive state. Impulse buying tendency is positively related to the experience of negative mood (Iyer et al., 2019). It is more probable for female consumers than male consumers to experience higher levels of positive or negative emotional states, which in turn increases their likelihood of impulse buying (Chen et al., 2015). It has also been proposed by researchers that arousal and pleasure have a positive relationship with impulsive online shopping. Arousal, pleasure, positive emotion, and negative emotion are the most extensively researched affective stimulus components (Zhao et al., 2021).

Normative Evaluation

Normative evaluation in the context of impulse buying refers to the assessment of the desirability or acceptability of impulsive purchasing behavior based on societal norms or personal values. It involves evaluating whether engaging in impulsive buying is considered appropriate or desirable according to established norms or standards. The normative assessment of impulse buying varies from situation to situation. As an example, impulse buying may be considered socially acceptable as a way to buy from an online store with a flash sale. In contrast, it may still be considered inappropriate as a way to dispose of savings. Consumers' judgments about the appropriateness of making an impulsive purchase in a particular situation are called normative evaluations. Negative views arise about impulse buying, such as viewing impulsive behavior as "irrational, immature, wasteful, and risky". It can also be viewed as normatively neutral or even positively sanctioned behavior. Acts such as giving gifts, paying for a meal unexpectedly, or taking advantage of a deal are ways that impulse buying can represent practical and kind activities. When impulse buying is motivated by virtue, it is more likely to gain positive evaluations. (Rook and Fisher, 2015). A buyer's purchases can be categorized as impulsive when they satisfy three conditions: firstly, the choice is made spontaneously and without prior planning. Secondly, the buyers show minimal concern for the outcomes of their buying choices. Thirdly, the buying decision is prompted by compelling and challenging-to-restrain temptations of a dispositional, situational, or sociodemographic nature (Gulfranz et al., 2022).

1.3. Research Questions

The objective of this study is to investigate the perceived impulse buying behavior of online shoppers. Specifically, this research aims to answer the following questions:

1. What is the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of:
 - 1.1. age;
 - 1.2. sex; and
 - 1.3. civil status?
2. What are the respondents' consumption impulse levels in terms of:
 - 2.1. external trigger cues of impulse buying;
 - 2.2. impulse buying tendency;
 - 2.3. internal cues of impulse buying; and
 - 2.4. normative evaluation?
3. Is there a significant difference in the consumption impulse levels of the respondents when grouped according to their demographic profile?

1.4. Hypothesis

H0: There is no significant difference in the respondents' demographic profile with their consumption impulse levels.

2. Methodology

2.1. Research Design

This study utilized the descriptive design of the research. The descriptive research approach is a systematic process of identifying a research problem based on trends in the field or the need to explain occurrences (Özyer, 2022). In this study, the phenomenon that was investigated was the perceived impulse buying behavior of online shoppers in Qatar. The descriptive research design was the most compatible with the objective of the study and in gathering the necessary data needed to accomplish it. The quantitative method was used during data collection through survey questionnaires and the analysis of results. A variety of techniques are included in quantitative research, which is concerned with using statistical or numerical data to systematically examine social phenomena (Watson, 2015).

2.2. Research Locus and Sample

This study was conducted in Doha, State of Qatar. A total of one hundred online shoppers in Qatar were chosen as respondents in this study. The researchers applied quota and purposive sampling techniques to select the respondents. This combined sampling technique involves the identification and selection of individuals or groups of individuals who are proficient and well-informed about a phenomenon of interest within a given quota.

The respondents were purposely chosen based on the individual's identity as an adult online shopper with at least one year of work experience in Qatar since it is only with their knowledge and experience that they

would be able to answer the survey questionnaire reliably. Purposive sampling, also known as judgment sampling, is a deliberate and nonrandom technique used in research to select participants based on specific qualities they possess (Etikan et al., 2016). A total of one hundred online shoppers in Qatar were chosen as respondents in this study through quota sampling, which is a widely used non-probability sampling method characterized by the pre-determination of specific quotas for various subpopulations within the overall target population (Iliyasu et al., 2021).

After acquiring the respondents' consent, proper protocols were observed in obtaining the consent of authorities and respondents in performing this research.

2.3. Research Instrument

A researcher-made survey questionnaire anchored on Dawson and Kim's Revised Consumption Impulse Formation Enactment (CIFE) Model (2009) was developed to meet the objective of this study. It has closed-ended questions and is based on primary and secondary sources. The researchers followed several steps for the purpose of using a valid instrument. The first part of the instrument includes the letter to the respondents; the second part is the demographic profile of the respondents; and the third part contains the four levels of consumption impulse: External trigger cues of impulse buying; Impulse buying tendency; Internal cues of impulse buying; and Normative evaluation.

2.4. Development and Validation of the Instrument

STEP 1 – Content Validation

In this stage, a pre-research was conducted to get the necessary data, which was included in the questionnaire. The questions were based on the theoretical framework of Dawson and Kim's Revised Consumption Impulse Formation Enactment (CIFE) Model (2009).

STEP 2 – Face Validation

The test items were examined and judged to see if they were valid for measuring the variable being studied. The questionnaire was checked by experts in the field and revised based on the recommendations of the validators.

STEP 3 – Reliability Test

The research instrument was tested for reliability. The reliability tests were administered to the 30 selected online shoppers that are not part of the sample size, and Cronbach's Alpha was utilized. Cronbach's alpha is a statistic commonly quoted by authors to demonstrate that tests and scales that have been constructed or adapted for research projects are fit for purpose (Taber, 2018). The computed alpha using the data for internal consistency of study was 0.815 interpreted as good.

Below is the scale used in interpreting the alpha (Salkind, 2012):

Cronbach's alpha	Internal consistency
$\alpha \geq 0.9$	Excellent
$0.9 > \alpha \geq 0.8$	Good
$0.8 > \alpha \geq 0.7$	Acceptable
$0.7 > \alpha \geq 0.6$	Questionable
$0.6 > \alpha \geq 0.5$	Poor
$0.5 > \alpha$	Unacceptable

STEP 4-Final Administration

The respondent questionnaires were facilitated for the selected online shoppers during the month of March 2023.

2.5. Data Gathering Procedure

The data were collected in the following manner: First, the number of respondents was determined through quota and purposive sampling techniques. Second, only then were the instructions thoroughly explained, along with the purpose of the questionnaire, and they were asked if they would be willing to participate in the study. Once the respondents had no more questions and completely understood and agreed, they signed and answered the questionnaire with the assistance of the researcher, such as translating the words that the respondents had trouble understanding into simpler terms. The third step was the actual administration of the questionnaire to the respondents, followed by its retrieval. The data was then tallied and analyzed.

2.6. Statistical Treatment of Data

This study used percentage, frequency count, and weighted mean as the statistical tools to be applied to the collected data to determine the answers posited in this study.

1. To determine the demographic profile of the respondents, frequency count, and percentage distribution were used.

2. To determine the respondents' consumption impulse levels in terms of external trigger cues of impulse buying, impulse buying tendency, internal cues of impulse buying, and normative evaluation, the weighted mean was used.

The following mean range with the corresponding verbal interpretations

Weighted Means/Equivalent	Corresponding Remarks
3.28-4.00	Very High Level
2.52-3.27	High Level
1.76-2.51	Low Level
1.00-1.75	Very Low Level

3. To determine the significant difference in the consumption impulse levels of the respondents when grouped according to the aforementioned demographic profile, a t-test assuming equal variances and unequal variances was used, using the Excel sheet.

3. Results

Impulse buying among online shoppers is a complex phenomenon that is described as the unplanned and abrupt purchase of goods triggered by various factors. This study aimed to describe the perceived impulse buying of online shoppers in Qatar. It aimed to describe the profile of the respondents, their consumption impulse levels, and if there is a significant difference in the consumption impulse levels of the respondents when grouped according to their demographic profile.

Table 1. The profile of the respondents in terms of age ($n = 100$)

Age	Frequency	Percentage (%)
18–39 years old	51	51%
40–61 years old	49	49%
Total	100	100%

Table 1 exhibits the profile of the online shoppers according to their age. Out of one hundred (100) respondents, there are 51 or 51% respondents with the ages of 18–39 and 49 or 49% of the respondents with the ages of 40–61.

The two age ranges are separated into two categories, people who are 39 years old and under are young adults, and people who are 40 years old and over are adults. Young adults generally refer to individuals aged 18 to 39 years. An example of this was the study on COVID-19 vaccination coverage that highlights the age group of 18–39 years as young adults (Baack et al., 2021). The age range of 18–39 years was also supported by the literature on alcohol interventions, where the distinction is made between adolescents and young adults of college age who can legally drink (Smith & Lipsey, 2015). The distinctions between young adults and adults have been the subject of in-depth research in several fields. There are variations in cognitive and behavioral characteristics between young adults and adults, as older adults are less skilled at correcting unintentional acceleration (Hasegawa et al., 2020). Additionally, research has shown that age affects how people perceive emotions and what is socially acceptable. Adults have been found to have different tastes for humor and to be less adept at identifying proper behavior than younger adults (Halberstadt et al., 2011). Older adults have been found to exhibit lower cognitive processing speed and slower skill acquisition compared to younger adults (Tam et al., 2014). In connection with online shopping, younger consumers have greater drive and fewer barriers compared to their older counterparts (Lian & Yen, 2014).

In this study, most of the respondents fall under the younger age. Though, their financial status varies. Some have stable incomes and financial stability, while others are still establishing their careers or facing financial challenges (Wang & Chapa, 2022). In addition, a study found that most online grocery shoppers were between 30–39 years old, indicating a strong inclination toward online shopping within this age group (Zatz et al., 2021).

Table 2. The profile of the respondents in terms of sex ($n = 100$)

Sex	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	50	50%
Female	50	50%
Total	100	100%

Table 2 exhibits the profile of the respondents according to their sex. Out of one hundred (100) respondents, 50 or 50% are males and 50 or 50% are females. It was ensured that there was no gender bias when conducting the study.

Recent research on gender has revealed that females are more likely than males to make impulsive purchases and that females possess stronger impulse-buying tendencies (Chen et al., 2015). Another study observed that females found internet shopping enjoyable because it allowed them to pass the time while shopping in a safe virtual environment (Akhlaq & Ahmed, 2016). It was discovered in another study that females enjoyed browsing the online catalog and shopping, whereas males found little pleasure in doing so. As a result, females were more likely to adopt e-commerce compared to males, who only shopped when supplies ran low or were considered essential (Jonyo & Oduor, 2019). Male consumers make impulsive purchases with less involvement and make purchasing choices quickly. This supports the claim that females possess stronger impulse-buying tendencies than males, which leads the latter to feeling discomfort or regret experienced after making a purchase (Utama et al., 2021; Jain & Khanna, 2015). Females take longer to shop than males, connecting to the statement that females tend to take pleasure in surfing online catalogs and shopping more than men do. In comparison with female online shopping behavior, it is found that male online shoppers do not interact with online shops as much as female online shoppers (Chen et al., 2015).

Table 3. The profile of the respondents in terms of civil status ($n = 100$)

Civil Status	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Single	24	24%
Married	76	76%
Total	100	100%

Table 3 exhibits the profile of the respondents according to their civil status. Out of one hundred (100) respondents, there are 76 or 76% of the respondents who are married, and 24 or 24% of the respondents are single. The majority of respondents are married, indicating that married people purchase online the most.

Married people spend more money since their incomes are merged. Married individuals tend to spend more, with a 24% increase in expenditure, particularly on public goods (Zhao, 2023). In relation, a study reported that married individuals spend more on a single transaction than single shoppers (Kalia, 2018). Studies suggest that higher income reduces financial constraints and perceived risk, thus increasing the likelihood of impulse buying between married individuals who have combined income (Sen & Nayak, 2021).

Table 4. Consumption Impulse Levels of the Respondents in Terms of External Trigger Cues of Impulse Buying (n = 100)

Items	WM	VI
1. Online products that are “BUY 1, GET 1 FREE” catch my attention.	3.08	High Level
2. I shop online so that I can claim REWARD POINTS (Shukran, Aura, etc.)	2.59	High Level
3. I buy online products based on the attractiveness of an advertisement.	2.75	High Level
4. I buy online products that are on SALE and PROMOTION.	3.38	Very High Level
5. I purchase an online product when the advertisement constantly pops up on the screen.	2.24	Low Level
Overall Weighted Mean	2.81	High Level

Legend:

WM (Weighted Mean) ; VI (Verbal Interpretation)

3.28-4.00 (Very High Level); 2.52-3.27 (High Level); 1.76-2.51 (Low Level); 1.00-1.75 (Very Low Level)

Table 4 shows the consumption impulse levels of the respondents in terms of external trigger cues of impulse buying. The statement “I buy online products that are on SALE and PROMOTION.” got the highest weighted mean of 3.38, which is verbally interpreted as Very High Level. The statements “Online products that are “BUY 1, GET 1 FREE” catch my attention.”, “I buy online products based on the attractiveness of an advertisement.”, and “I shop online so that I can claim REWARD POINTS (Shukran, Aura, etc.)”, have weighted means of 3.08, 2.75, and 2.59 respectively, and are verbally interpreted as High Level. Lastly, the statement “I purchase an online product when the advertisement constantly pops up on the screen.” has a weighted mean of 2.24, and is verbally interpreted as Low Level. The overall weighted mean is 2.81 and is verbally interpreted as High Level.

Based on the result, online products that are on sale and promotion have the highest correlation with the impulse buying of consumers. Shoppers are more inclined to make immediate purchases, particularly in the presence of numerous attractive discounts (Daulay, 2022). The preference for discounted products is influenced by various promotional techniques such as discounts, free samples, and prize draws, which encourage consumer purchasing behavior and motivate the frequency of purchases (Vigna & Mainardes, 2019). Multiple studies reported that online sales and promotions have a significant role in increasing impulse buying behavior (Akram et al., 2018; Badgaiyan and Verma, 2015; Mandolfo et al., 2022).

Table 5. Consumption Impulse Levels of the Respondents in Terms of Impulse Buying Tendency (n = 100)

Items	WM	VI
1. "I LIKE IT, I BUY IT" describes me whenever I shop digitally.	2.72	High Level
2. I make unplanned online purchases.	2.31	Low Level
3. When I'm shopping online, I buy things on the spur of the moment.	2.20	Low Level
4. I buy things online according to how I feel at the moment.	2.46	Low Level
5. I carefully plan most of my online purchases.	1.77	Low Level
Overall Weighted Mean	2.29	Low Level

Legend:

WM (Weighted Mean) ; VI (Verbal Interpretation)

3.28-4.00 (Very High Level); 2.52-3.27 (High Level); 1.76-2.51 (Low Level); 1.00-1.75 (Very Low Level)

Table 5 shows the consumption impulse levels of the respondents in terms of impulse buying tendency. The statement, "I LIKE IT, I BUY IT" describes me whenever I shop digitally." got the highest weighted mean of 2.72, which is verbally interpreted as high level. Then, the statements "I buy things online according to how I feel at the moment.", "I make unplanned online purchases.", "When I'm shopping online, I buy things on the spur of the moment.", and "I carefully plan most of my online purchases." got weighted means of 2.46, 2.31, 2.20, and 1.77 respectively, and are verbally interpreted as low level.

The overall weighted mean of Table 5, which discusses the consumption impulse levels of the respondents in terms of impulse buying tendency, is 2.29 and is verbally interpreted as low level. Based on the data, online shoppers frequently plan their purchases and buy what they like, which shows that both hedonistic and utilitarian values can be seen as consumers shop online. Impulse buying is characterized by sudden cravings to make impulsive purchases and acting on these emotions without carefully considering the implications (Zafar et al., 2020). Individuals with low impulse buying tendencies are less likely to engage in impulsive purchase behavior, particularly in online shopping environments (Styvén et al., 2017). Consumers with low impulse buying tendencies have stronger cognitive control and are less likely to participate in impulse purchases than those with high impulse buying tendencies (Lee et al., 2021).

Table 6. Consumption Impulse Levels of the Respondents in Terms of Internal Cues of Impulse Buying (n = 100)

Items	WM	VI
1. I shop online when I feel sad.	1.73	Very Low Level
2. I shop online when I feel stressed.	1.78	Low Level
3. I shop online when I feel bored.	1.94	Low Level
4. I shop online when I feel happy.	2.48	Low Level
5. I shop online to make myself feel better.	2.47	Low Level
Overall Weighted Mean	2.08	Low Level

Legend:

WM (Weighted Mean) ; VI (Verbal Interpretation)

3.28-4.00 (Very High Level); 2.52-3.27 (High Level); 1.76-2.51 (Low Level); 1.00-1.75 (Very Low Level)

Table 6 shows the consumption impulse levels of the respondents in terms of Internal cues of impulse buying. The statement “I shop online when I feel happy”, “I shop online to make myself feel better.”, “I shop online when I feel bored.”, and “I shop online when I feel stressed.” got weighted means of 2.48, 2.47, 1.94, and 1.78 respectively, which are verbally interpreted as low level. The statement “I shop online when I feel sad.” has a weighted mean of 1.73, and is verbally interpreted as very low level.

The overall weighted mean of Table 6, which discusses the consumption impulse levels of the respondents in terms of internal cues of impulse buying, is 2.08 and is verbally interpreted as low level. Impulse purchases can be utilized as a coping method to make a person feel better. Personal and situational factors can influence emotions and mood, subsequently leading to impulse buying (Spinelli & Farahani, 2016). Happiness, joy, and excitement have been found to increase the tendency for impulse buying (Zuo & Lian, 2022). Negative emotions can lead to affective impulsive buying behavior, indirectly influencing impulsive buying tendencies (Wang et al., 2022).

Table 7. Consumption Impulse Levels of the Respondents in Terms of Normative Evaluation (n = 100)

Items	WM	VI
1. I purchase online products that I feel are useful.	3.49	High Level
2. I buy online products to keep up with the latest trends.	2.34	Low Level
3. I buy online products that I think can be useful for my family and friends.	3.32	Very High Level
4. I feel a strong urge to make impulsive purchases when I come across a limited-time sale offering because I fear missing out on the deals.	2.44	Low Level
5. Seeing others' posts about their online shopping sprees leads me to unplanned online purchases to fit in a group.	1.86	Low Level
Overall Weighted Mean	2.69	High Level

Legend:

WM (Weighted Mean) ; VI (Verbal Interpretation)

3.28-4.00 (Very High Level); 2.52-3.27 (High Level); 1.76-2.51 (Low Level); 1.00-1.75 (Very Low Level)

Table 7 shows consumption impulse levels of the respondents in terms of normative evaluation. The statement “I purchase online products that I feel are useful.” got the highest weighted mean of 3.49, and is verbally interpreted as a very high level. It is followed by the statement “I buy online products that I think can be useful for my family and friends.” with a weighted mean of 3.32, which is verbally interpreted as a high level. Then, the statements “I feel a strong urge to make impulsive purchases when I come across a limited-time sale offering because I fear missing out on the deals.”, “I buy online products to keep up with the latest trends.”, and “Seeing others' posts about their online shopping sprees, leads me to unplanned online purchases to fit in a group.” got weighted means of 2.44, 2.34, and 1.86 respectively, and are verbally interpreted as low level.

The overall weighted mean of Table 7, which discusses the consumption impulse levels of the respondents in terms of normative evaluation, is 2.69 and is verbally interpreted as a high level. Based on the result, respondents are more likely to purchase products that they feel are useful. A study shows that this is because products that provide more utility are high quality and can be reliable in situations when they are needed and are highly sought after when looking for certain products (Mahamud et al., 2017). Consumers exhibit positive behavior, particularly when the products are perceived to solve their problems (Ferdousi, 2017). Another study found that goods that provide potential gratification are purchased because of the products' perceived and probable usefulness (Kaur et al., 2020).

Table 8. *Consumption Impulse Levels of the Respondents in Terms of Internal Cues of Impulse Buying*

Consumption Impulse Levels	Overall WM	VI
1. External trigger cues of impulse buying	2.81	High Level
2. Impulse buying tendency	2.29	High Level
3. Internal cues of impulse buying	2.08	Low Level
4. Normative evaluation	2.69	High Level

Legend:

WM (Weighted Mean) ; VI (Verbal Interpretation)

3.28-4.00 (Very High Level); 2.52-3.27 (High Level); 1.76-2.51 (Low Level); 1.00-1.75 (Very Low Level)

Table 8 shows the summary of the consumption impulse levels of the respondents. Among the four consumption impulse levels, external trigger cues of impulse buying got the highest overall weighted mean of 2.81, which can be verbally interpreted as high level. Next, normative evaluation and impulse buying tendency got weighted means of 2.69 and 2.29 respectively, and are also verbally interpreted as high level. Lastly, internal cues of impulse buying got a weighted mean of 2.08 which is verbally interpreted as low level.

The results of this study revealed that external trigger cues of impulse buying such as promotional incentives, advertisements, and website design significantly influence the impulse buying behavior of online shoppers. Multiple studies have also reported that online sales and promotions have a significant role in increasing impulse buying behavior (Akram et al., 2018; Badgaiyan and Verma, 2015; Mandolfo et al., 2022).

Table 9. *Significant Difference in the Consumption Impulse Levels of the Respondents when grouped according to their Age (n = 100)*

Consumption Impulse Levels	Computed t	P-value	Significance at 0.05	Status of Hypothesis
1. External trigger cues of impulse buying	-0.002	0.139	Not Significant	Accepted
2. Impulse buying tendency	0.164	0.870	Not Significant	Accepted
3. Internal cues of impulse buying	1.648	0.103	Not Significant	Accepted
4. Normative evaluation	0.698	0.487	Not Significant	Accepted

Table 9 shows the significant difference in the consumption impulse levels of the respondents when grouped according to their age. For all items in the consumption impulse level, all the P-values have scores above 0.05. Therefore, it was found that there was no significant difference in all aspects of the consumption impulse levels of the respondents when grouped according to their age.

Age was found to have a negative correlation with impulse buying, with eight significant effects (Amos et al., 2014). To understand age-related impulse buying triggers, both external and internal cues must be considered. Various things have been found in research as potential triggers for impulse buying behavior. Marketing stimuli, customer resources, and environmental cues have all been shown to have a substantial influence in motivating impulse purchases (Iyer et al., 2019). Promotions, sales, store layout, and product attractiveness are examples of triggers that might impact consumers' desire to buy impulsively, especially in online environments (Adnan & Osman, 2022). Based on the result, there is a link between age and impulse purchase. Studies have revealed a higher frequency of impulse purchase behavior amongst younger customers, with a drop in this tendency as age increases (Cho et al., 2014). To summarize, the causes of impulsive purchases are diverse, encompassing both external and internal cues. While marketing stimuli and contextual cues can

drive impulsive purchases, internal factors such as personality traits and emotions are equally important. Understanding how these triggers interact regarding age can provide useful insights into customer behavior and guide customized marketing campaigns.

Table 10. *Significant Difference in the Consumption Impulse Levels of the Respondents when grouped according to their Sex (n = 100)*

Consumption Impulse Levels	Computed t	P-value	Significance at 0.05	Status of Hypothesis
1. External trigger cues of impulse buying	1.003	0.318	Not Significant	Accepted
2. Impulse buying tendency	0.518	0.606	Not Significant	Accepted
3. Internal cues of impulse buying	-0.240	0.811	Not Significant	Accepted
4. Normative evaluation	2.414	0.018	Significant	Rejected

Table 10 shows the significant difference in the consumption impulse levels of the respondents when grouped according to their sex. For all items in the consumption impulse level, all the P-values have scores above 0.05 other than in terms of normative evaluation, which has a score of 0.018. Therefore, it was found that there was no significant difference in all aspects of the consumption impulse levels of the respondents, except for the normative evaluation aspect, when grouped according to their sex.

When grouped according to sex, the consumption impulse levels of the respondents in terms of the external trigger cues of impulse buying are limited. It has been found in another study that impulse buying is not often triggered by pure impulsiveness (Iyer et al., 2019). However, another study discovered that promotions, such as ideas, sales, promotions, and product marketing, are external trigger cues that significantly influence impulse buying (Tanveer et al., 2022). Other external factors have been found to affect one's shopping habits, such as visual merchandising and TV/Media. TV/Media specifically has been discovered to have a greater influence on women, compared to other social media. That is because TV can make an impact on people's subconscious minds, even if the person is aware of it (Rizvi et al., 2023).

As for the aspect of impulse buying tendency, it has been found that consumers' impulse buying behavior did not differ according to sex, indicating that it does not significantly affect impulse buying tendency. It was discovered, however, that biological sex affects people's gender identity on consumers' impulse buying behavior (Akçay & Özdemir, 2019). However, another study suggests that sex does not have a major influence on impulse buying tendency (Lin & Lin, 2013).

Though the research on this aspect has been inconclusive, the impact of internal cues vary depending on sex. These methodologies included gender differences in the examination of cognitive and affective impulse buying (Hidayat, 2023). Additionally, other studies suggest that male and female consumers differ in their impulsive buying tendencies, driven by situational factors and consumer traits (Atulkar & Kesari, 2018). However, research has found that sex does not significantly affect impulse-buying tendencies (Badgaiyan & Verma, 2015).

In this study, it was revealed that normative evaluation is significantly affected by a person's sex, although some studies say otherwise. Although the research did not show any noticeable influence on biological sex, researchers discovered that normative evaluation is a mediator in online impulse buying behavior (Cavazos-Arroyo & Máyne-Guaderrama, 2022). Normative judgment is an essential factor in impulse buying intention since it influences consumers' perceptions of whether it is appropriate to engage in impulsive buying, which in

turn moderates an individual's trait of impulsiveness (Chen & Wang, 2015). Studies indicate that although normative evaluation might impact online impulse purchases, sex may not have a significant effect on this type of behavior (Akçay & Özdemir, 2019).

Table 11. *Significant Difference in the Consumption Impulse Levels of the Respondents when grouped according to their Civil Status (n = 100)*

Consumption Impulse Levels	Computed t	P-value	Significance at 0.05	Status of Hypothesis
1. External trigger cues of impulse buying	-0.641	0.526	Not Significant	Accepted
2. Impulse buying tendency	0.679	0.498	Not Significant	Accepted
3. Internal cues of impulse buying	1.249	0.220	Not Significant	Accepted
4. Normative evaluation	2.536	0.015	Significant	Rejected

Table 11 shows the significant difference in the consumption impulse levels of the respondents when grouped according to their civil status. For all items in the consumption impulse level, all the P-values have scores above 0.05 other than in terms of normative evaluation, which has a score of 0.015. Therefore, it was found that there was no significant difference in all aspects of the consumption impulse levels of the respondents, except for the normative evaluation aspect, when grouped according to their civil status.

The influence of civil status on external triggers of impulse buying is not well-established. However, previous studies have shown that impulse buying is influenced by factors such as external stimuli, internal perceptions, buying behavior, and demographic variables (Risqiani, 2017).

Though this study shows the aspect of impulse buying tendency, it has been found that a person's civil status does affect their impulse buying behavior. A study found that demographic characteristics, including civil status, have a significant relationship with impulse buying behavior (Ugbomhe & Adomokhai, 2021). But was otherwise significantly affected by the characteristics of women's impulsiveness, particularly when they had more money, which suggests that individual financial capacity may be a more influential factor than civil status (Azizah et al., 2022).

The impact of internal cues on civil status contrast the study due to internal cues such as psychological factors like motivation and the perception have been found to play a crucial role in shaping consumer behavior and purchase decisions because they can affect the opinion and attitude of the consumer towards the products (Daga & Indriakati, 2022). Additionally, online shopping values such as utilitarian value which refers to the practical benefits derived from online shopping, and hedonic value which pertains to the emotional and experiential aspects, including enjoyment and gratification (Singh et al., 2021), have been shown to affect purchase behavior, indicating the impact of psychological factors on consumer decisions (Prashar et al., 2017). Furthermore, benefit perception analysis and risk perception which is the belief about the perceived likelihood of a negative event occurring, and hedonic motivation, are a few of the psychological factors that have been found to influence online shopping purchase decisions (Prastiwi & Fitria, 2021).

Normative evaluation is significantly affected by a person's civil status. Quality, price, location, promotion, and corporate image have been identified as factors that positively and significantly influence customers' purchase decisions (Rachmawati et al., 2019). Additionally, the importance of personal relevance, social importance, and environmental significance in influencing consumers' decisions to buy green products

has led to more purchases (Kumar & Ghodeswar, 2015). Furthermore, online reviews of a product can have a profound impact on the purchase decisions of potential consumers, allowing potential consumers to judge the utility of a product (Kang et al., 2022). It has been reported that allowing online reviews to be seen by consumers to see the experiences other customers had with the product will have a positive and significant direct influence on purchasing decisions (Fahrozi et al., 2022).

4. Hypothesis

The null hypothesis for this study posits that there is no significant difference in the respondents' demographic profile and their consumption impulse levels. It was found that there was no significant difference in any of the aspects of consumption impulse levels among the respondents when grouped according to age. Age did not play a significant role in determining consumption impulse levels among the respondents. However, as for the significant difference in the consumption impulse levels of the respondents when grouped according to sex and civil status, it was found that normative evaluation was affected. This suggests that sex and civil status may influence how respondents evaluate norms related to consumption behavior, thereby impacting their consumption impulse levels.

5. Discussion

This study describes the perceived impulse buying behavior of online shoppers in Qatar. Impulse buying is a common practice among consumers who make unplanned and abrupt purchases. The impulse buying behavior of online shoppers is detailed in the study, specifically in terms of age, sex, and civil status. This research details the respondents' consumption impulse levels in terms of external trigger cues of impulse buying, impulse buying tendency, internal cues of impulse buying, and normative evaluation. External trigger cues of impulse buying are marketing cues; impulse buying tendency is the likelihood that a person may make an unplanned and unintentional purchase; internal cues of impulse buying are the cognitive and affective states of a person; and normative evaluation is the assessment of the acceptability of impulsive purchasing behavior. This study also discusses the significant difference in the consumption impulse levels of the respondents when grouped according to their demographic profile.

Based on the result of the study, out of one hundred respondents, 51% of them are younger online shoppers, while 49% were older online shoppers. This study maintained an equal ratio of male and female respondents. Out of 100 respondents, it was ensured that there were 50% males and 50% females, so that there was no gender bias in the result of the study. Data on the civil status of the respondents was also sought in this paper. 76% of respondents were married, while 24% were single.

Among the four consumption impulse levels, external trigger cues of impulse buying got the highest overall weighted mean of 2.81, which can be verbally interpreted as high level. Next, normative evaluation got a weighted mean of 2.69 which is verbally interpreted as high level. Then, impulse buying tendency got a weighted mean of 2.29 which is verbally interpreted as low level. Lastly, internal cues of impulse buying got a weighted mean of 2.08 which is verbally interpreted as low level.

Focusing on the most influential aspect of the consumption impulse levels of the respondents, the external trigger cues of impulse buying, the impulsive buying tendencies of online shoppers are greatly

influenced by a variety of environmental, situational, and marketing cues. Retailers invest in marketing stimuli, a form of an external trigger cue, to encourage impulse shopping (Iyer et al., 2019). Aspects that have been found to significantly influence online impulsive buying are virtual ambient signals, website quality of the online shop, and product advertising (Adnan & Osman, 2022; Akram et al., 2018; Tanveer et al., 2022).

The second aspect of the consumption impulse levels of the respondents that also came in as 'high level', is normative evaluation. Normative evaluations have a significant influence on customers' impulsive buying behavior, as shown by the subjective assessments that consumers make (Nayebzadeh & Jalaly, 2014). When searching for certain products, consumers are particularly drawn to those that offer greater utility, are of higher quality, and can be relied on when needed (Mahamud et al., 2017).

The third aspect of the consumption impulse levels of the respondents, that came in as low level', is the impulse buying tendency. Individuals may exhibit a low impulse buying tendency due to various factors that influence their behavior and decision-making processes. The possession of effective budgeting skills contributes to a decrease in impulsive buying tendencies since individuals who are conscious of their financial constraints are more capable of resisting impulsive desires and engaging in more intentional and thoughtful purchasing choices (Fenton-O'Creevy et al., 2018). When individuals prioritize fulfilling fundamental needs and preserving financial stability, they tend to make choices based on necessity rather than desire which reduces impulsive buying tendencies (Zhang & Shi, 2022). Impulse buying is linked to situational factors, being time and money. Shoppers tend to have utilitarian values that involve financial planning and ease of use (Zhang & Chen, 2023; Yu et al., 2018).

The final aspect of the consumption impulse levels of the respondents, and got the lowest level is the internal cues of impulse buying. The respondents were not strongly influenced by their emotions when it came to shopping. The individual characteristics of the respondents are strongly correlated with the external factors, being the external trigger cues of impulse buying (Chen et al., 2021).

The significant difference in the consumption impulse levels of the respondents when grouped according to their demographic profile was also discussed in this paper. It was found that there was no significant difference in any of the aspects of consumption impulse levels among the respondents when grouped according to age. However, as for the significant difference in the consumption impulse levels of the respondents when grouped according to both sex and civil status, it was found that normative evaluation was affected.

6. Conclusion

Based on the findings, it is concluded that the younger shoppers are more likely to make online impulse purchases than those who are considered adults. In addition, the external trigger cues of impulse buying served as the most prominent factor in the consumption impulse levels of online shoppers. This indicates that shoppers are more likely to be influenced by marketing stimuli seen online. Online shoppers are more inclined to make immediate purchases, particularly in the presence of numerous advertisements of price discounts, *Buy 1 get 1 free* promotions, reward points, sale, and other attractive promotions.

As a recommendation, this study can be used by the business owners in creating a business plan, wherein married individuals and younger online shoppers should be the primary target, and older online

shoppers as the secondary targets, since these demographics have been observed to be more likely to impulse buy online. The result can also be used for marketing purposes, as it has been found that external trigger cues attract and encourage shoppers to make impulsive purchases. Lastly, future researchers may use this study as a guide to assist them with their research related to online shoppers' impulse buying behaviors.

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