

Chapter 12

How Social Commerce Characteristics Influence Consumers' Online Impulsive Buying Behavior in Emerging Markets

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ABSTRACT

With the rapid development of social commerce, consumers may easily purchase products they did not plan to purchase or do not really need when they surf social networking websites and browse posts. However, the literature on social commerce pays little attention to the extant knowledge of online impulse buying behavior (OIBB), especially in emerging markets. This study investigates the role of social commerce characteristics in shaping consumers' online impulsive buying behavior. Data was collected from 240 Vietnamese consumers with experience in online shopping. Using a Partial Least Square 3.0 analysis, the results indicated that socialization and availability of information significantly influence the urge to buy impulsively, but do not influence impulsive behavior. In contrast, personalization and product selection influence both the urge to buy impulsively and impulsive behavior. The findings also indicated that gender and age do not impact online impulsive buying behavior. Study outcomes offer useful insights to both academicians and practitioners.

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INTRODUCTION

Consumers often act impulsively when making online decisions. Online shoppers have easy access to products, ease of purchasing, a lack of social pressures, and an absence of delivery efforts. Therefore, about 40% of all online expenditures occur as a result of impulsive buying (Verhagen & Van Dolen, 2011a). With the rapid development of social commerce, consumers, when surfing social networking websites and browsing posts, such as Facebook, Twitter, and Pinterest, may easily purchase products they had not planned on purchasing or that they do not really need. Consumers can find interesting links to shopping websites on these platforms. Under these circumstances, impulsive buying is unavoidable, especially with regard to social commerce (Huang, 2016). Surprisingly, the literature on social commerce pays little attention to the extant knowledge of online impulse buying behavior (OIBB), especially in emerging markets.

Social commerce (s-commerce) has changed the role of the customer as well. Consumers become the central focus for companies when they can interact, get trustworthy advice, search and purchase goods and services, and hence become the uniqueness of s-commerce (Kim & Park, 2013). However, many questions on how customers behave in social commerce environments remain practically unanswered (Hajli, Sims, Zadeh, & Richard, 2017; Li, 2017). To the authors' knowledge, there are several studies about online impulsive buying behavior in social commerce. For instance, Leong et al. (2018) investigated the effects of utilitarian-, hedonic-, and trust-motivations on participation that influences the urge to purchase and, ultimately, impulsive purchasing in social commerce environments. Chung et al. (2017) examined the impact of shopping value on the urge to buy restaurant products and services. However, this present study differs from the extent literature in a significant way: it is focused on how social commerce characteristics shape online impulsive buying behavior.

Additionally, considering the effect of other factors on consumer behavior, one should pay attention to the conditions of local market and diversity cultural forces, which could influence the way consumers behave when impulse buying (Yu & Bastin, 2010). However, impulsive buying has been much studied in the context of Western countries, while the Asian context has largely remained oblivious (Badgaiyan & Verma, 2015). Impulsive buying behavior is of specific interest in emerging economies, such as like India (Mittal, Sondhi, & Chawla, 2015). Several researchers have indicated that Asian consumers may engage in less impulsive purchasing than do consumers in Western countries (Hoyer et al., 2012). Yu and Bastin (2010) indicated that impulse buying in emerging markets would contribute to the literature because Southeast Asian countries are regions that have the most active social media users in the world. Vietnam represents an emerging country and is ranked seventh among the countries with the largest number of Facebook users and the highest e-commerce adoption rate in Southeast Asia (Tung, 2017). However, the behavior of Vietnam consumers is rarely understood. Therefore, another emerging research gap is to empirically investigate the influence of predictor variables on impulse buying within the Vietnam context, which can significantly contribute to the existing literature of social commerce.

The originality of the current study rests on answering the limitations by: (1) investigating the influences of unique characteristics on OIBB and, (2) analyzing the relationship between the urge to buy impulsively and impulsive buying behavior within emerging markets. Consequently, this study seeks answers to the research gaps.

Accordingly, this study is posed to examine the following research question: "How do social commerce characteristics influence consumers' online impulsive buying behavior in emerging markets?" To this end, the primary goal of this study is to provide a better understanding of factors of the social

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