

## FOMO and Impulse Buying: A Behavioral Study of Gen Z in the Fashion Market

Oak PP<sup>1\*</sup>, Markandeya AA<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1\*</sup> Pooja Prasad Oak, Research Scholar, Pillai College of Arts, Commerce and Science, New Panvel, Maharashtra, India.

<sup>2</sup> Anaya Aditya Markandeya, Associate Professor, Department of Commerce, MES's Mahatma Night Degree College of Arts and Commerce, Chembur, Maharashtra, India.

Easy availability of online platforms has led to an increase in the number of suppliers and competition between businesses. To attract customers, companies have used the fear of missing out (FOMO) effect through advertising messages that stimulate the fear of missing out in each individual, prompting them to make quick purchasing decisions. In recent years, the fashion industry has undergone a significant transformation, driven largely by the rise of digital technology and social media. Among the most influential consumer segments in this landscape is Generation Z (Gen Z). Gen Z means a person born between the mid-1990s and early 2010s. This generation is characterized by its digital connectivity, with a strong affinity for online shopping and social media engagement. As a result, understanding their purchasing behavior, particularly in the context of impulse buying, has become increasingly important for fashion brands and marketers. Additionally, promotional offers play a crucial role in driving impulse purchases. Retailers and fashion brands frequently use strategic discounting, flash sales, limited-time offers, and exclusive deals to create a sense of urgency and scarcity. These marketing tactics leverage the psychological principle of loss aversion, where consumers feel compelled to act quickly to avoid missing out on a good deal. For brands and retailers, there is a significant opportunity to shift away from reliance on aggressive discounting and short-term sales tactics. Instead, they can focus on building long-term relationships with customers by offering rewards for sustainable shopping habits and promoting mindful consumption. Loyalty programs that incentivize conscious purchases, alongside efforts to highlight the environmental impact of fast fashion, can encourage Gen Z to buy with purpose and awareness.

**Keywords:** Fear of Missing Out (FOMO), Digital Transformation, E-commerce, Impulse Buying, Consumer Behavior, Generation Z (Gen Z)

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Pooja Prasad Oak, Research Scholar, Pillai College of Arts, Commerce and Science, New Panvel, Maharashtra, India. Email: <a href="mailto:poojanew26@gmail.com">poojanew26@gmail.com</a>	Oak PP, Markandeya AA, FOMO and Impulse Buying: A Behavioral Study of Gen Z in the Fashion Market. Int J Engg Mgmt Res. 2025;15(3):75-88. Available From <a href="https://ijemr.vandanapublications.com/index.php/j/article/view/1770">https://ijemr.vandanapublications.com/index.php/j/article/view/1770</a>	

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# 1. Introduction

## Impulse Buying

It means a spontaneous, unplanned purchases that are often driven by emotional triggers rather than rational decision-making. It is a widely recognized consumer behavior that plays a significant role in retail and e-commerce industries. In the fashion sector, impulse buying is particularly pronounced due to the fast-paced nature of trends, the emotional appeal of clothing and accessories, and the growing influence of digital marketing strategies. Unlike essential or planned purchases, impulse buying is largely influenced by external stimuli such as promotions, advertising, peer influence, and the accessibility of products through online shopping.

## Generation Z (Gen Z)

They are the key consumer segment with unique shopping behaviors among the various demographic groups. Born between the mid-to-late 1990s and early 2010s, Gen Z is the first generation to have grown up in a fully digital world. Their purchasing decisions are heavily influenced by social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and Snapchat, where fashion trends emerge and evolve rapidly. The visual nature of these platforms, combined with the persuasive power of influencers and peers, creates an environment that fosters unplanned and impulsive buying.

## Fear of Missing Out (FOMO)

FOMO is an anxiety or apprehension that an individual experiences when they believe they are missing out on valuable experiences, events, or opportunities that others are enjoying. One of the primary psychological factors driving impulse buying among Gen Z consumers is the fear of missing out (FOMO). In the context of fashion, FOMO manifests when consumers perceive that a particular trend, item, or promotional offer is temporary and exclusive. This perceived scarcity generates a sense of urgency, compelling individuals to make rapid purchasing decisions to avoid future regret. Social media amplifies FOMO by constantly showcasing new styles, limited-edition drops, and influencer-endorsed fashion items, further encouraging impulse buying behavior.

For Gen Z, who are often budget-conscious yet eager to express their individuality through [1]

fashion, promotional offers serve as strong incentives that can significantly impact their purchasing behavior.

With the increasing integration of artificial intelligence and personalized marketing, brands now can target Gen Z consumers with tailored advertisements and product recommendations. Algorithms analyze user behavior, preferences, and engagement patterns to present consumers with highly relevant fashion items, further fueling impulse purchases. Additionally, the convenience of one-click shopping, digital wallets, and flexible payment options (such as Buy Now, Pay Later services) lowers the barriers to spontaneous buying, making it easier for consumers to act on their impulses immediately. Moreover, the influence of celebrity endorsements, viral fashion challenges, and user-generated content contributes to a heightened desire for immediate gratification. Online reviews and peer recommendations further reinforce purchasing decisions, as Gen Z consumers often rely on social proof before making a purchase. The emergence of sustainability concerns and ethical considerations also plays a role, as brands promoting limited eco-friendly collections create another form of urgency that drives impulse buying. As digital marketing strategies evolve, brands must continually adapt to these ever-changing consumer expectations and behaviors. This research aims to explore the interplay between FOMO, promotional offers, and impulse buying behavior in the fashion industry among Gen Z consumers. By examining how these factors interact, the study seeks to provide valuable insights into the psychological and external motivations behind impulse purchases. Understanding these dynamics can help fashion brands craft more effective marketing strategies that resonate with Gen Z's preferences and behaviors.

The significance of this research lies in its potential to inform the marketing and business strategies of fashion retailers looking to engage Gen Z consumers effectively. As this generation continues to shape the future of the fashion industry, brands must adapt to their digital-first lifestyle, social media consumption habits, and psychological triggers. By gaining a deeper understanding of their impulse buying patterns, companies can develop more targeted campaigns, optimize their promotional tactics, and foster stronger brand loyalty.

Ultimately, this study contributes to the broader understanding of consumer behavior in the digital age, particularly in the context of fashion and impulse buying. It sheds light on how technological advancements, social influences, and psychological factors intertwine to drive purchasing decisions. The findings of this research will not only benefit fashion brands but also provide insights for policymakers, economists, and psychologists interested in the evolving patterns of consumer behavior in an increasingly digitalized world.

### The Psychological Effects of FOMO

Experiencing FOMO regularly can have negative psychological effects, such as:

- 1. Anxiety and Stress:** The constant feeling of missing out can lead to overthinking, stress, and even panic attacks.
- 2. Low Self-Esteem:** Comparing your life to others can make you feel like you are not good.
- 3. Dissatisfaction:** Instead of enjoying the present, FOMO makes people focus on what they don't have, leading to chronic dissatisfaction.
- 4. Decision Fatigue:** Trying to keep up with everything can drain mental energy, making decision-making harder.
- 5. Impulsivity:** Acting on FOMO can lead to impulsive decisions, like reckless spending, quitting jobs hastily, or making poor investment choices.

### Impulse Buying in Fashion Industry

Impulse buying in fashion refers to the spontaneous purchase of clothing, accessories, or footwear that is made without prior planning or thoughtful consideration. It's an act driven by immediate emotions, influences from advertisements, social media trends, attractive store displays, or the excitement of limited-time offers. In the fast-paced world of fashion, where trends shift rapidly, consumers often feel compelled to act quickly to stay on top of what's current or to seize a "too-good-to-miss" deal. The fashion industry is especially adept at tapping into the psychology of impulse buying. From high-street stores to luxury brands, the visual presentation of products, the allure of scarcity, and the constant influx of new collections play a pivotal role in encouraging consumers to make purchases in the heat of the moment. In many cases, these decisions are fueled by emotions—whether it's the joy of acquiring something new or the anxiety of missing out on a trend.

Impulse buying has been significantly impacted by the rise of e-commerce and social media, where influencers and online ads constantly feed consumers with the latest "must-haves." The constant exposure to styled outfits, curated looks, and a sense of "urgency" (such as countdowns or limited stock) drives the desire to act quickly and purchase items one might not have needed in the first place. Many online retailers also use psychological triggers such as flash sales, limited-time discounts, and exclusive member deals to create a sense of urgency that leads to impulsive decision-making. Additionally, fashion brands leverage artificial intelligence and data-driven marketing strategies to analyze consumer behavior and personalize advertisements. These targeted approaches ensure that consumers are continually exposed to fashion items that align with their preferences, increasing the likelihood of unplanned purchases. With the integration of features such as "one-click buy" and "buy now, pay later" options, the barriers to making quick purchases have been further reduced, making impulse buying even more prevalent in the digital age. Physical retail stores also play a significant role in encouraging impulse buying. The strategic placement of products, attractive window displays, and limited-edition releases create an environment where consumers feel compelled to buy. The sensory experience—such as background music, lighting, and pleasant fragrances—can also enhance the shopping atmosphere, making consumers more likely to make spontaneous purchases. Retailers often position accessories, trendy items, or discounted products near checkout counters to tempt shoppers into adding last-minute purchases to their carts. One of the key psychological drivers behind impulse buying in fashion is the concept of "instant gratification." Consumers derive pleasure from acquiring new items, often linking their purchases to emotional rewards. Shoppings frequently associated with mood enhancement, stress relief, or self-expression, leading individuals to make unplanned purchases as a way to seek happiness or boost self-esteem.

### Online Fashion Industry in India

The online fashion industry in India has seen explosive growth in recent years, fueled by increasing smartphone penetration, better internet connectivity and the shift in consumer behavior toward e-commerce.

India's online fashion market has attracted both domestic players and global giants looking to tap into the growing digital shopping trend. With the rise of digital payment options and logistics infrastructure, online shopping has become more convenient and accessible to a wider audience. E-commerce platforms offer a vast range of products, from affordable fast fashion to high-end luxury brands, catering to diverse consumer preferences. The availability of multiple payment methods, such as UPI, cash on delivery, and EMI options, has further driven online sales. On the other hand, the growth of e-commerce has revolutionized the way Indian consumers shop for fashion. Platforms such as Myntra, Flipkart, and Amazon have created a digital shopping environment that fosters impulse buying through personalized recommendations, limited-time offers, and flash sales. The integration of artificial intelligence helps these platforms analyze user preferences and showcase products that are most likely to appeal to individual shoppers, further increasing the chances of unplanned purchases. Social media plays a crucial role in shaping impulse buying trends in India. Influencers and celebrities endorse fashion brands on Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok, creating a sense of aspiration and desire among consumers. Many brands collaborate with influencers to launch exclusive collections or offer limited-period discounts, encouraging followers to make instant purchases. The rise of short-video platforms has also led to the popularity of viral fashion trends, prompting consumers to buy trending items quickly before they go out of style. Another factor contributing to impulse buying in India is the emergence of quick commerce platforms that promise fast deliveries. Consumers are more likely to make unplanned purchases when they know they can receive their orders within a few hours. The convenience of services such as same-day delivery and cash-on-delivery options further fuels impulsive behavior among Indian shoppers. While impulse buying contributes to the growth of the fashion industry, it also raises concerns about sustainability. The fast fashion culture in India leads to increased textile waste and environmental degradation. Many consumers are beginning to recognize the impact of their shopping habits, leading to a rise in demand for sustainable and ethically produced clothing. However, the influence of discounts, advertisements, and social media trends continues to drive impulse buying despite growing awareness about mindful consumption.

Impulse buying is an integral part of the fashion industry, driven by psychological, social, and marketing factors. In India, both online and offline retailers capitalize on consumer emotions and shopping trends to encourage unplanned purchases. While impulse buying can be exciting and rewarding, it also has long-term implications for sustainability, financial management, and personal consumption patterns. As the fashion industry continues to evolve, a balance between impulsive trends and conscious consumerism will be key to shaping a more sustainable future for fashion in India and beyond. Social commerce, where consumers discover and purchase fashion products through social media platforms, has also gained popularity. Platforms like Instagram, Facebook, and WhatsApp have become significant shopping channels, allowing small businesses and influencers to reach their target audience directly. Livestream shopping events and influencer-driven sales campaigns create a sense of engagement and urgency, encouraging impulse purchases. The introduction of artificial intelligence and augmented reality (AR) in online shopping has enhanced the consumer experience.

### Drivers of Online Fashion in India

**1. Booming E-Commerce Platforms:** Online shopping platforms like Myntra, Flipkart, Ajoio, and Amazon have become household names. These platforms offer a wide variety of fashion products ranging from casual wear to luxury brands, and even ethnic wear. Myntra, in particular, has become synonymous with online fashion shopping in India, thanks to its broad brand portfolio and exclusive online-only collections.

**2. Technology-Driven Shopping:** One of the standout features of online fashion in India is its heavy reliance on technology. From virtual try-ons using augmented reality to AI-driven product recommendations, e-commerce platforms are using cutting-edge tech to make online shopping more personalized and convenient.

**3. Social media and Influencers:** Social media platforms like Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok (before their ban in India) have significantly influenced fashion trends in India. Influencers and celebrities often partner with online fashion brands, driving sales through their recommendations and fashion tutorials. This has led to the rise of influencer-led fashion lines and collaborations.

**4. Convenience and Price Sensitivity:** Online shopping offers the ease of browsing through an extensive range of options from the comfort of home. With multiple payment options, easy return policies, and frequent sales, it caters to price-sensitive consumers. Flash sales, discounts, and festive offers (like the Great Indian Festival on Amazon or Myntra's End of Season Sale) attract millions of shoppers.

**5. Growth of Niche Fashion Segments:** Online platforms have also provided a space for niche fashion markets, such as sustainable fashion, plus-size clothing, and custom-made garments. Smaller, independent labels and designers are able to showcase their work to a larger audience without the high cost of running a physical store.

### Buying Behavior of Generation Z

Generation Z (Gen Z), typically defined as individuals born between the mid-1990s and early 2010s, represents a unique cohort of consumers that is reshaping the marketplace. As the first generation to grow up with the internet and digital technology as integral parts of their lives, Gen Z exhibits distinct buying behaviors influenced by their upbringing, values, and the digital landscape. Gen Z consumers prioritize authenticity, sustainability, and brand values when making purchasing decisions. They are highly informed and research-driven, often reading reviews, watching influencer recommendations, and comparing products before making a purchase. Unlike previous generations, they prefer personalized shopping experiences and expect brands to engage with them through social media, interactive campaigns, and ethical business practices.

Social media plays a crucial role in shaping Gen Z's buying behavior. Platforms like Instagram, TikTok, and Snapchat serve as major influencers, with trends spreading rapidly through viral content. The concept of "instant gratification" is strong among Gen Z, leading to impulse purchases driven by social media trends, peer recommendations, and limited-time offers. Moreover, Gen Z consumers are budget-conscious yet willing to spend on experiences and products that align with their identity. They favor sustainable fashion and ethical sourcing, pushing brands to adopt more transparent and environmentally friendly practices. Understanding these behaviors is crucial for brands and marketers aiming to engage this demographic effectively.

Companies that align with Gen Z's values and leverage digital marketing strategies will have a competitive edge in capturing their attention and loyalty. Impulse buying is an integral part of the fashion industry, driven by psychological, social, and marketing factors. In India, both online and offline retailers capitalize on consumer emotions and shopping trends to encourage unplanned purchases. As the fashion industry continues to evolve, a balance between impulsive trends and conscious consumerism will be key to shaping a more sustainable future for fashion in India and beyond.

**1. Preference for Experiential Retail:** Gen Z consumers are drawn to shopping experiences that go beyond just purchasing products. They appreciate immersive retail experiences, interactive pop-up shops, and in-store events that provide entertainment and engagement. Retailers that offer unique experiences, such as customization stations or virtual try-ons, can attract and retain Gen Z shoppers.

**2. Ethical and Sustainable Consumption:** Environmental consciousness plays a significant role in Gen Z's purchasing decisions. They prefer brands that prioritize sustainability, ethical sourcing, and transparency in their supply chains. Companies that adopt eco-friendly packaging, fair labor practices, and circular fashion initiatives appeal to this socially aware generation.

**3. Preference for Convenience:** Gen Z consumers value convenience and efficiency in their shopping experiences. Features like fast shipping, seamless checkout processes, and easy return policies influence their purchasing decisions. Brands that offer subscription services, same-day delivery, or in-app purchasing options cater well to this preference.

**4. Brand Loyalty Through Authenticity:** Unlike previous generations, Gen Z is less influenced by traditional brand loyalty and more by authenticity. They prefer brands that communicate honestly, engage with their audience in a relatable way, and uphold their brand values consistently. Companies that maintain transparency and a strong brand identity are more likely to build trust with this demographic.

**5. Multi-Channel Shopping Behavior:** Gen Z seamlessly integrates online and offline shopping. They may research products online but purchase them in-store, or vice versa. They expect a consistent experience across multiple channels, including social media, mobile apps, physical stores, and e-commerce websites.

**6. Short Attention Span and Instant Gratification:** With access to a vast amount of content at their fingertips, Gen Z has a shorter attention span than previous generations. They expect quick responses, instant customer service, and fast delivery Brands that can cater to this need for instant gratification through efficient service and communication will have a competitive edge.

**7. Trust in Peer Reviews and Influencer Endorsements:** Traditional advertisements have less impact on Gen Z compared to peer reviews and influencer recommendations. This generation places significant trust in user-generated content, testimonials, and influencer marketing. They rely on real-life experiences shared by others before making a purchase

### Role of Social Media in Impulse Buying in Fashion

social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter use algorithms to show users targeted ads based on their browsing history and interests. This means that users are constantly exposed to ads and messages that are tailored to their preferences, making it even harder to resist the urge to buy on impulse. Social media plays a crucial role in influencing impulse buying behavior in the fashion industry, particularly among Gen Z consumers. The key ways social media drives impulse purchases include:

- **Influencer Marketing** – Social media influencers and fashion bloggers showcase trendy outfits, styling tips, and brand collaborations, creating a strong desire among followers to purchase similar products instantly.
- **FOMO (Fear of Missing Out)** – Limited-time offers, exclusive drops, and trending styles create urgency, making consumers feel they need to buy immediately.
- **Social Proof & Peer Influence** – Likes, comments, and shares on product posts reinforce their desirability, encouraging impulsive decisions.
- **Personalized Ads & AI Recommendations** – Platforms like Instagram, TikTok, and Facebook use algorithms to show personalized fashion ads based on user behavior, making it easier for consumers to buy on impulse.

- **Seamless Shopping Features** – Social commerce tools, such as **Instagram Shops, TikTok Shop, and Facebook Marketplace**, allow instant purchases without leaving the platform, reducing hesitation and increasing impulse buying.
- **Gamification & Engagement** – Brands use interactive content like quizzes, spin-to-win discounts, and giveaways to keep users engaged and encourage purchases.

## 2. Social Media Platforms Driving Impulse Buying

- 1. Instagram** – Uses **shoppable posts, influencer collaborations, and targeted ads** to encourage quick purchases. Stories and countdown timers create urgency.
- 2. TikTok** – Short-form video content, **viral fashion trends, and hashtag challenges** create FOMO, pushing users toward impulsive buying decisions.
- 3. Facebook** – Marketplace, live shopping, and **flash sale promotions** drive spontaneous
- 4. Pinterest** – Acts as a **visual discovery tool**, inspiring users to buy fashion items they see in curated collections and mood boards.
- 5. Snapchat** – Uses **AR try-on filters and brand promotions** to enhance engagement and encourage impulse shopping.
- 6. YouTube** – Influencer **haul videos, unboxings, and sponsored content** create excitement and emotional engagement, leading to impulse purchases.

## 3. Review of Literature

### 1. The Emotional Impact of Flash Sales on Gen Z (Ghosh, 2021)

Ghosh investigates the emotional triggers, particularly the excitement generated by flash sales, and how this leads to increased impulse buying behavior in Gen Z fashion consumers. It explores the emotional impact of flash sales on Gen Z fashion consumers, highlighting how excitement, urgency, and FOMO drive impulse buying. The study reveals that limited-time offers, countdown timers, and exclusive discounts create a psychological rush, making consumers feel they must act quickly or miss out. Gen Z shoppers experience a dopamine boost when securing a "deal," reinforcing impulsive purchasing habits.

Brands leverage scarcity tactics and real-time notifications to heighten emotional engagement, leading to unplanned spending and reduced decision-making time in fast fashion retail.

## **2. The Power of Urgency in Digital Fashion Retail (Patel & Shah, 2021)**

Patel and Shah explore the psychological mechanisms behind urgency tactics in digital retail, such as countdown timers and "only a few left" notifications, which trigger FOMO and lead to impulse

buying in Gen Z consumers. The study finds that online retailers strategically use countdown timers, low-stock alerts (e.g., "Only 2 left!"), and flash sale reminders to create a sense of scarcity and time pressure, prompting immediate purchases. These tactics reduce decision-making time, making consumers act on impulse rather than rationally evaluating their need for the product. The research also highlights that real-time shopping notifications, such as "10 people are viewing this item" or "Limited stock available", reinforce social proof, making Gen Z feel they might miss out on a popular trend if they don't act quickly. Furthermore, brands use limited-time influencer discount codes, early-access sales, and VIP member exclusives to intensify urgency, encouraging spontaneous spending. Patel & Shah conclude that the combination of digital urgency tactics and Gen Z's social-media-driven shopping habits makes urgency-based marketing one of the most effective strategies for driving impulse purchases in the fashion industry.

## **3. Fear of Missing Out in Digital Fashion Marketing (Reddy, 2021)**

This paper investigates the effect of FOMO in digital marketing campaigns for fashion brands. Reddy et al. conclude that FOMO-driven campaigns, often including exclusive offers and time-bound deals, drive impulse buying in Gen Z. The study finds that brands leverage limited-time discounts, exclusive product drops, and social media countdowns to create urgency, making Gen Z shoppers feel pressured to buy before the opportunity disappears. The research highlights that email alerts, push notifications, and influencer endorsements amplify this effect by continuously reminding consumers of fleeting deals. Additionally, social proof tactics, such as showing live purchase counts, "X people are viewing this" messages, and customer reviews,

reinforce the idea that others are taking advantage of the offer, further increasing the likelihood of impulsive purchases. The study also finds that interactive content like Instagram polls, flash sale announcements, and limited-edition collaborations heighten excitement and trigger instant decision-making. Reddy concludes that FOMO-driven digital marketing campaigns are one of the most effective strategies for fashion brands targeting Gen Z, as they tap into their social media habits and desire for exclusivity and trend participation.

## **4. The Influence of Time-Sensitive Offers on Gen Z Fashion Shoppers (Mehta & Sharma, 2021)**

This study finds that time-sensitive offers (like 24-hour discounts) have a particularly strong influence on Gen Z's impulse buying in fashion, making them more likely to purchase items they didn't initially intend to buy. It also explores how time-sensitive offers, such as 24-hour flash sales,

countdown deals, and one-day-only discounts, significantly impact Gen Z's impulse buying behavior in the fashion industry. The study finds that these offers create a sense of urgency and scarcity, making consumers feel they must act immediately or risk losing a good deal. This urgency reduces rational decision-making time, leading Gen Z shoppers to purchase items they didn't originally plan to buy. The research also highlights that limited-time promotions trigger FOMO (Fear of Missing Out), as shoppers believe others are taking advantage of the deal. Additionally, the psychological appeal of "exclusive savings" makes consumers feel they are getting a rare opportunity, even if they don't need the product. The study further reveals that e-commerce platforms strategically use countdown timers, push notifications, and flash sale banners to keep Gen Z engaged and drive last-minute purchases. Overall, Mehta & Sharma conclude that time-sensitive offers are one of the most effective marketing tools for influencing Gen Z's spontaneous fashion shopping habits.

## **5. Price Sensitivity and FOMO in Fashion Purchases (Sharma & Mehra, 2020)**

Sharma and Mehra explore how FOMO affects Gen Z's sensitivity to price when it comes to fashion purchases. They find that Gen Z consumers are more likely to overlook price considerations when faced with time-limited offers.

The study finds that when faced with flash sales, exclusive discounts, and limited-stock alerts, Gen Z consumers experience a psychological urgency that overrides rational price evaluation. Instead of comparing prices or considering affordability, they prioritize securing the deal before it's gone. The research highlights that social media promotions, influencer collaborations, and e-commerce countdown timers intensify this effect by making shoppers feel they are part of an exclusive opportunity. Additionally, brands often frame discounts in a way that minimizes perceived financial loss, such as using BOGO (Buy One, Get One Free) deals or highlighting savings rather than actual spending. Sharma & Mehra conclude that FOMO-driven marketing strategies make Gen Z consumers more impulsive and less price-sensitive, leading them to prioritize trend participation and exclusivity over cost considerations in fashion shopping.

#### **6. Gamification and Impulse Buying in Fashion (Sengupta & Agarwal, 2020)**

Sengupta and Agarwal analyze how gamification elements in online fashion retail (e.g., unlocking discounts through challenges) contribute to impulse buying among Gen Z, with FOMO playing a central role. The study finds that e-commerce platforms increasingly use interactive challenges, spin-the-wheel discounts, limited-time reward points, and tier-based loyalty programs to make shopping feel like a game. These strategies create a sense of excitement, competition, and urgency, making Gen Z consumers more likely to make spontaneous purchases. The research highlights that feature like "unlock exclusive deals by spending more" or "earn a surprise discount by completing a purchase within 10 minutes" manipulate shoppers into acting quickly before missing out. Additionally, limited-edition digital collectibles, achievement-based discounts, and social sharing incentives further reinforce FOMO by making purchases feel like rare opportunities. Sengupta & Agarwal conclude that gamification not only increases engagement but also lowers Gen Z's hesitation toward impulse purchases by framing shopping as an enjoyable, rewarding experience rather than just a transaction.

#### **7. Influence of Social Media and Offers on Gen Z's Fashion Choices (Patel & Desai, 2020)**

This research explores how social media platforms like Instagram and TikTok,

combined with promotional offers, drive impulsive fashion purchases among Generation Z. It reveals that offers tailored to Gen Z preferences amplify their FOMO. The study by Patel & Desai (2020) examines how social media and promotional offers influence Gen Z's fashion choices and impulse buying behavior. Platforms like Instagram and TikTok, along with influencer marketing and peer influence, create a strong desire to follow trends. Promotional strategies such as limited-time discounts, exclusive drops, and AI-driven personalized offers amplify FOMO (Fear of Missing Out), making Gen Z more likely to buy impulsively. The study highlights that fast fashion brands effectively use social media exposure, urgency tactics, and instant gratification to drive purchases, shaping Gen Z's shopping habits.

#### **8. Offer Framing and Impulse Purchases (Nguyen & Tran, 2019)**

Nguyen and Tran examine the effect of how fashion deals are presented on Gen Z impulse buying. Their study concludes that framing offers significantly boost spontaneous purchases. It explores how the way promotional offers are framed affects Gen Z's impulse buying behavior in the fashion industry. The study finds that specific deal structures, such as "Buy 1 Get 1 Free" (BOGO), "Limited-Time Only," and "X% Off", significantly increase spontaneous purchasing by creating

a perceived sense of urgency and value. Gen Z consumers are more likely to respond to BOGO and threshold discounts (e.g., "Spend \$50, Get 20% Off") because these deals make them feel they are maximizing benefits while minimizing costs. The research also reveals that loss aversion plays a key role—when deals are framed as "Don't Miss Out" instead of "Save More," consumers feel pressured to act fast. Psychological pricing tactics, like rounding discounts (e.g., \$19.99 instead of \$20) and highlighting savings instead of cost, further push impulsive decisions. The study concludes that effectively framed offers not only attract buyers but also encourage bulk purchases, benefiting fashion brands targeting Gen Z.

#### **9. Social Comparison and FOMO in Online Shopping (Kumar, 2019)**

Kumar investigates the role of social comparison in online shopping, showing how Gen Z's exposure to peers' fashion choices on social media leads to FOMO,

which in turn drives impulse buying behavior. It examines how social comparison on social media platforms influences Gen Z's online shopping behavior, particularly through FOMO (Fear of Missing Out). The study highlights that when Gen Z consumers see their peers or influencers wearing trendy outfits, they experience a psychological need to keep up, leading to impulsive purchasing decisions. Social media features like Instagram Stories, TikTok trends, and influencer hauls create a sense of exclusivity and urgency, making users feel that they must buy quickly to stay relevant. The study also finds that peer validation plays a crucial role—likes, comments, and shares reinforce the idea that certain fashion choices are desirable, further increasing purchase intent. Additionally, Kumar emphasizes that real-time shopping notifications (e.g., "X people bought this today") and user-generated content (e.g., customer reviews and unboxings) amplify FOMO, making Gen Z more likely to engage in spontaneous, emotion-driven shopping. Finally, the research suggests that brands strategically use social proof, influencer partnerships, and personalized recommendations to trigger social comparison and drive impulse buying in online fashion retail.

#### **10. Influence of Influencer Marketing on Fashion Impulse Purchases (Tandon & Soni, 2019)**

Tandon and Soni's research emphasizes the growing influence of influencer marketing in fashion and its impact on impulse buying. They show that Gen Z is more likely to make impulse purchases after viewing fashion content from influencers. The study explores the influence of influencer marketing on Gen Z's impulse buying behavior in fashion, revealing that social media influencers play a crucial role in shaping purchasing decisions. The study finds that Gen Z consumers are highly engaged with platforms like Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube, where influencers showcase outfits, style tips, and brand collaborations. Seeing influencers wear and endorse fashion items creates a sense of trust, relatability, and aspiration, making followers more likely to purchase impulsively. The research highlights that limited-time influencer discount codes, haul videos, and unboxing content further increase the urgency to buy. Additionally, peer validation and social proof (e.g., likes, comments, and shares on influencer posts) reinforce the perception that a product is trendy and desirable.

The study also finds that Gen Z shoppers experience FOMO (Fear of Missing Out) when influencers promote exclusive collections or time-sensitive deals, leading to spontaneous purchasing decisions.

## **4. Objective of the Research**

Research objectives are specific statements that outline the goals and aims of a study. They serve as a roadmap for the research process, guiding the researcher in data collection, analysis, and interpretation:

1. To assess the impulse buying behavior among Gen Z consumers in the fashion
2. To examine the increasing FOMO (Fear of Missing Out) tendencies among Gen Z about
3. To assess the impact of promotional offers (e.g., discounts, limited-time sales) on impulse buying behavior in fashion.
4. To suggest corrective measures for FOMO and impulse buying among Gen Z consumers

## **5. Hypothesis of the Study**

### **Hypothesis 1**

**H1:** There is a relationship between FOMO (Fear of Missing Out) and impulse buying behavior among Gen Z consumers in the fashion industry.

**H0:** There is no relationship between FOMO (Fear of Missing Out) and impulse buying behavior among Gen Z consumers in the fashion industry.

### **Hypothesis 2**

**H1:** Promotional offers (e.g., discounts, limited-time sales) have positive effect on impulse buying in fashion among Gen Z.

**H0:** Promotional offers have no significant effect on the likelihood of impulse buying in fashion among Gen Z.

## **6. Scope of Study**

The study explores the impact of FOMO (Fear of Missing Out) and promotional offers on impulse buying behavior among Gen Z consumers in the fashion industry. With Gen Z being highly active on digital platforms, they are frequently exposed to social media trends, influencer marketing, and time-sensitive discounts, which significantly influence their purchasing decisions.

The study focuses on understanding how FOMO-driven urgency, peer influence, and exclusive offers encourage unplanned fashion purchases. It examines the psychological factors behind impulse buying, such as excitement, anxiety, and the pressure to keep up with trends. Additionally, the research analyses the role of social media platforms like Instagram, TikTok, and online fashion retailers, which use targeted ads, countdown timers, and real-time purchase alerts to create urgency.

**Target Population**

The study focuses on Generation Z (born between 1997 and 2012), as they are highly active online shoppers, heavily influenced by social media trends, and more prone to FOMO-driven purchasing decisions.

**7. Research Methodology**

- 1. Primary data is collected through** structured questionnaires.
- 2. Secondary Data** To get more inputs on the study undertaken, various articles, research papers, reports, books, reference books are taken into consideration.
- 3. Population and Sampling technique** The Population of the study to consist the 127 Viewers in Thane Region. The sampling method adopted is Simple Random sampling.
- 4. Research Design** The study is Analytical and Descriptive in nature.

**8. Data Analysis & Interpretation**

The questions are interpreted using Chi-Square test and Pie Diagrams.

Testing of the Hypothesis

**Hypothesis 1**

**Null Hypothesis (H<sub>0</sub>):** There is no significant relationship between FOMO (Fear of Missing Out) and impulse buying behavior among Gen Z consumers in the fashion industry.

**Alternative Hypothesis (H<sub>1</sub>):** There is a significant positive relationship between FOMO and impulse buying behavior among Gen Z consumers in the fashion industry.

Observed	Expected	Difference (O-E)	
32	62.14	-30.14	14.62
63	43.63	19.37	8.60
132	114.36	17.64	2.72
9	15.87	-6.87	2.97
84	66.88	17.12	4.38
45	46.96	-1.96	0.08
114	123.09	-9.09	0.67
11	17.08	-6.08	2.16
72	58.98	13.02	2.87
24	41.41	-17.41	7.32
100	108.55	-8.55	0.67
28	15.06	12.94	11.12
			58.20

**Chi-Square Test**

	Value
Calculated Chi-Square Value	58.20
Tabulated Chi-Square Value (at 0.05 significance level)	12.59

If the calculated Chi-square value is greater than the tabulated value, reject the null hypothesis (H<sub>0</sub>).

**Interpretation:**

There is strong statistical evidence of a significant positive relationship between FOMO and impulse buying behavior among Gen Z consumers in the fashion industry. Interpretation:

There is strong statistical evidence of a significant positive relationship between FOMO and impulse buying behavior among Gen Z consumers in the fashion industry. Using a Chi-square test, the calculated value (58.20) was found to be substantially higher than the tabulated value (12.59) at a 5% significance level, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. This indicates that Gen Z individuals who experience higher levels of FOMO are more likely to make unplanned, impulsive fashion purchases.

**Hypothesis 2**

**Null Hypothesis (H<sub>0</sub>):** Promotional offers have no significant effect on the likelihood of impulse buying in fashion among Gen Z consumers.

**Alternative Hypothesis (H<sub>1</sub>):** Promotional offers have a positive effect on impulse buying behavior in fashion among Gen Z consumers.

Chi-Square Test -	Value
Calculated Chi-Square Value	87.32
Tabulated Chi-Square Value (at 0.05 significance level)	9.48

If the is **greater than** the **tabulated value**, **reject** the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ),  $87.32 > 9.48$ , we reject the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ).

**Interpretation:**

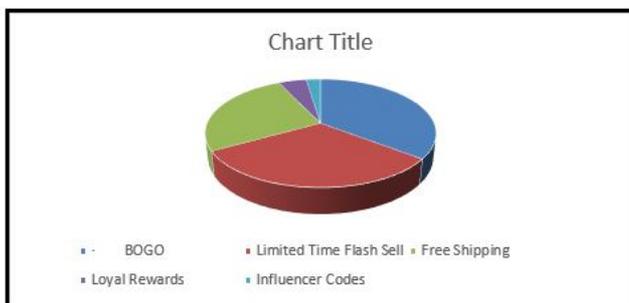
There is strong statistical evidence that promotional offers significantly influence and increase impulse buying behaviour among Gen Z consumers in the fashion industry. Promotional offers such as discounts and limited-time sales **strongly encourage** Gen Z consumers to make impulsive fashion purchases. The results of this study demonstrate a significant positive effect of promotional offers on impulse buying behaviour among Gen Z consumers in the fashion industry. Through Chi-square testing, the calculated value (87.32) was found to be much greater than the tabulated value (9.48) at the 5% significance level, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. This indicates that promotional strategies such as discounts and limited-time sales strongly influence Gen Z consumers, making them more likely to engage in impulsive fashion purchases.

**3. Which types of offers make you most likely to buy on impulse?**

Percentage Distribution

(Total responses: 127)

- BOGO: ~35.4%
- Limited-time flash sales: ~31.5%
- Free shipping: ~26.0%
- Loyalty rewards / cash back: ~4.7%
- Influencer codes: ~2.4%



**Interpretation:**

It clearly highlights that **B[5]OGO** and **Limited-time flash sales** dominate the impulse buying behavior. BOGO offers are the most compelling for impulse buying, making up over a third of all responses.

Limited-time flash sales are a close second, showing that urgency strongly influences buying behaviour, Free shipping is also a strong motivator, often seen as a psychological "win" in online shopping. Loyalty rewards and influencer discounts are less impactful in prompting impulse buys, though they may serve better in long-term retention or brand alignment.

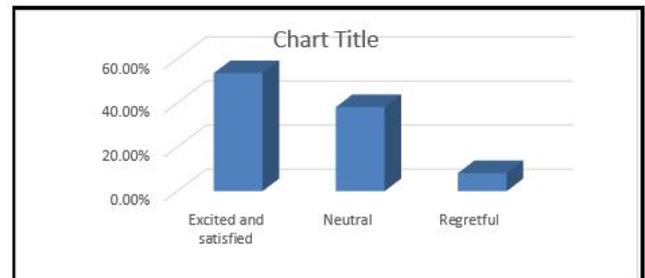
- Promotions that create a sense of urgency or tangible value (like a second item or free shipping) are the most effective at triggering impulse behaviour.
- Marketers can benefit from combining limited-time offers with BOGO deals or free shipping to maximize conversions.

**4. After an Impulse Purchase, How Do You Usually Feel?"**

Percentage Distribution

(Total responses: 127)

- **Excited and satisfied:** ~53.6%
- **Neutral:** ~38.2%
- **Regretful:** ~8.2%



**Interpretation:**

More than half of respondents feel positive (excited and satisfied) after an impulse purchase, suggesting that impulse buying often reinforces positive feelings.

- A large neutral group (38%) suggests that many impulse purchases neither strongly excite nor cause regret — they are emotionally "safe."
- Only a small fraction (8%) feels regretful, indicating that buyer's remorse is relatively rare among this audience.

Positive reinforcement from impulse buying might encourage repeat behaviour repeat customers). Since negative emotions (regret) are low, brands can leverage "feel-good" messaging around impulsive buying without a significant risk of backlash. Understanding the neutral group could be key — with the right post-purchase engagement,

brands might convert neutral feelings into satisfaction. These reactions will help brands in Fashion industry to decide the offers and understand customers emotions particularly after availing offers.

### Recommendations and Suggestions

As Gen Z shoppers continue to navigate the fast-paced, trend-driven world of fashion, both consumers and brands must foster a mindset of mindfulness and intentional purchasing. Encouraging consumers to be more thoughtful about their shopping habits can not only mitigate the negative effects of impulse buying but also contribute to long-term emotional well-being, financial health, and a more sustainable fashion culture. Below are expanded suggestions that can guide both Gen Z consumers and retailers toward more conscious shopping behaviors.

#### 1. Encourage Mindful Shopping Practices

Create a Shopping List Gen Z can be encouraged to develop the habit of creating a shopping list before browsing online. By listing only those items they genuinely need or desire, shoppers can reduce the temptation to make impulse buys. Shopping lists allow consumers to focus on intentional purchases, thus helping them to avoid being swept up by fleeting trends or discounted items that don't align with their style or needs.

#### 2. Smart Discounts and Promotions

Personalized Offers Over Flash Sales Rather than relying on broad flash sales or last-minute discounts, retailers can focus on providing more personalized offers that are tailored to a shopper's preferences or previous purchase behavior. For example, if a consumer has been browsing sustainable or high-quality clothing options, personalized discounts on similar items can encourage intentional shopping without promoting unnecessary impulse buying. Personalization ensures that discounts are more relevant and that shoppers are more likely to purchase items they truly want or need.

#### 3. Raising Awareness of FOMO and Marketing Tactics

Educate About Psychological Triggers An essential aspect of reducing impulse buying is helping Gen Z understand the psychological triggers used by marketers to influence their purchasing decisions. FOMO, social media trends,

and influencer endorsements are powerful tools that often exploit feelings of inadequacy or the desire to fit in. Retailers and platforms can run awareness campaigns that educate consumers on how these tactics work, helping them recognize when they are being manipulated into buying something they don't need.

#### 4. The Power of Pause

Encouraging Gen Z to take a brief pause before making any purchase is a simple yet effective strategy. Before pulling the trigger on a buy, taking a few minutes to reflect on why they want the item can reveal whether it's a genuine need or a fleeting desire driven by emotions.

#### 5. Mindful Questions

Promoting questions that force individuals to assess their desires critically can help them resist impulsive purchases. For example: "Do I need this item?" A simple question that shifts focus from "I want this" to "Is this a necessary addition to my wardrobe or lifestyle?" "Will I use or wear this often?" Encouraging consumers to think about the frequency of use can help them assess the value of the chase.

## 9. Conclusion

As Gen Z becomes more financially literate, the entire fashion industry can begin to shift toward a more thoughtful and sustainable consumption model. The rise of responsible spending habits not only benefits individual consumers but also has a positive impact on the environment and the economy. By focusing on financial empowerment and mindful consumption, Gen Z can lead the way toward a more conscious and ethical fashion culture, making decisions that prioritize their financial well-being, emotional fulfillment, and the planet's future. This shift has the potential to reshape the fashion industry, creating a more sustainable and responsible environment for generations to come. Impulse buying in fashion, particularly among Gen Z, is a fascinating and multi-layered phenomenon driven by various psychological, social, and economic factors. Gen Z, being the first truly digital-native generation, is uniquely positioned to experience the convergence of multiple forces that push them toward impulsive and emotionally charged shopping decisions. Understanding the intricacies of impulse buying behavior among this generation requires an exploration and research on

the key factors such as FOMO (Fear of Missing Out), targeted marketing strategies, social media influence, and emerging payment options like "Buy Now, Pay Later" (BNPL).

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## Footnote:

[1] Gen Z are the people are typically between 13 and 26 years old in 2025 and are characterized by a strong connection to technology and social media. Generation Z also known as Zomer's, is the demographic cohort succeeding Millennials and preceding Generation Alpha.

[2] UPI - is a system that powers multiple bank accounts into a single mobile application (of any participating bank), merging several banking features. It isa system that powers multiple bank accounts into a single mobile application Most of the GEN Z prefer payment through UPI rather than using Cash.

[3] Augmented reality (AR) is an interactive experience that overlays 3D computer-generated content onto a portion of the real world through a handheld device. It isthe integration of digital information with the user's environment in real time. AR users experience a real-world environment with generated perceptual information overlaid on top of it.

[4] Influencer Endorsement is leveraging the influence of individuals with large online followings to promote brands and products. This approach has become increasingly popular as consumers look to social media for fashion inspiration and advice.

They have democratized fashion, making it more accessible, diverse, and fast-paced than ever before. Its very popular in online shopping and young generations following it very much.

[5] BOGO is an abbreviation for buy one get one. It is used in shops to mean that if you buy something, you get another of the same thing for no extra cost. It's a promotional offer where a customer receives another item of the same kind, either free or at a reduced price, when purchasing one. It attracts the customers quickly and quick sale.

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