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# The influence of marketing stimuli and contextual factors on consumers' intention to make impulse purchases in live e-commerce

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## 1. INTRODUCTION AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

With the development of the mobile internet, live e-commerce has broken the bottleneck of traditional e-commerce platforms and become the most convenient and efficient marketing method nowadays. Real-time interaction, rich audio-visual methods, multi-dimensional product display and immersive shopping experience could fully satisfy consumers' social needs in live e-commerce context<sup>[1]</sup>. Multiple external stimuli change customers' internal emotional and cognitive states, making them more likely to make impulse purchases. Thus, how to stimulate consumers to generate impulse purchase intentions has become an crucial concern for enterprises to formulate marketing strategies<sup>[2]</sup>. Throughout previous research, the researches about impulse purchase behavior more than intentions and tendencies<sup>[3-5]</sup>, since behaviors actually occurs and can be identified and measured. But it is worth noting that the occurrence of behavior stems from the activation of purchase intentions, and the results of behaviors can be inferred from individual behavioral intentions to a certain extent. From the emotional and cognitive perspective, impulsive purchase intention refers to the tendency of consumers to spend in haste when their emotions fluctuate, regardless of the consequences. The studies on consumers' psychological states and impulse consumption are not in-depth enough to systematically explain the reasons for consumers' impulse purchase intentions. Furthermore, current research on the flow experience focuses more on pleasure and arousal, and the exploration of concentration and control is not deep enough<sup>[6]</sup>. In live e-commerce, consumers are stimulated by external factors to generate a strong emotional response and increase their urgent purchase needs and ideas<sup>[7]</sup>.

Therefore, this study will conduct a more micro-level analysis of the influence of marketing stimuli and contextual factors on consumers' impulse purchases intention. Our research questions are as follows: (1) How do the two dimensions of marketing stimuli (price discounts and time limits) affect consumers' impulse purchases intention? (2) How do the three dimensions of contextual factors (interaction, opinion leaders and atmospheric cues) affect consumers' impulse purchases intention? (3) How does the flow experience play a role in the consumer's impulse to purchase when stimulated by external stimuli?

## 2. THEORY AND RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

Based on the S-O-R theoretical model and the flow theory, the hypotheses and research framework are proposed herein (Figure 1).

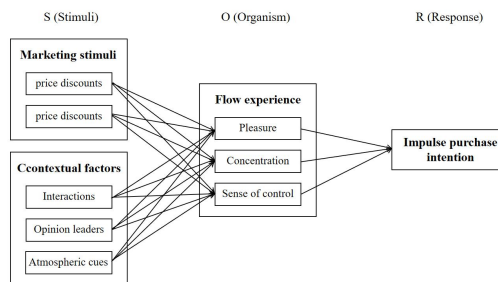


Figure 1. Research framework

The dataset is derived from 512 questionnaires that are collected from August 4, 2022 to August 17, 2022. These interviewees are aged 18 and above who had watched live e-commerce and purchased products in the past two months. The

five-point Likert scale was used to measure, and test our hypotheses through structural equation models constructed by Amos software.

### 3. RESULTS AND MAJOR FINDINGS

This study observed some valuable and interesting findings: (1) In live e-commerce, consumers' internal psychological states are influenced by marketing and situational factors, which ultimately manifest in their motivation and behaviour. Both marketing stimuli (price discounts and time limits) and situational factors (interaction, opinion leaders and atmospheric cues) are positively associated with impulsive purchase intentions; both price discounts and situational factors positively affect consumer pleasure and concentration, and negatively affect consumers' sense of control; while time limits have a no significant effect on consumer pleasure, probably because making decisions in a shorter time is more intensive, consumers are in a tense atmosphere and find it difficult to relax. (2) The flow experience partially mediates the relationship between marketing stimuli and situational factors and impulsive purchase intentions. Pleasure can not mediate between time limits and impulse purchase intentions; pleasure plays a mediating role in the influence of price discounts, interactions, opinion leaders and atmospheric cues on impulse purchase intentions; concentration and sense of control mediate between marketing stimulus and situational factors and impulse purchase intentions.

### 4. CONTRIBUTIONS

Our research not only expands the research perspective on consumer purchasing behaviour in the context of e-commerce, but also enriches the research on the antecedent variables of impulsive purchase intention and its formation mechanism. From a management perspective, the e-commerce platforms should design engaging atmospheric cues and focus on the balance and harmony of the display interface to create an excellent visual experience which could attract the consumer's eye. At the same time, live operators should innovate live broadcast gameplay and optimise incentive mechanisms. Moreover, consumers should use their risk awareness and return to rationality. In addition, we only use external factors as antecedent variables. In the future, the external factors related to products and live broadcasters can be considered as moderating variables to explore more interesting findings.

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