

## **Exploring the role of website attributes in satisfaction and online impulse buying behavior**

### **De l'expérience utilisateur à l'achat impulsif : rôle des attributs utilitaires et hédoniques des sites marchands**

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## Abstract

Online impulse buying behavior “OIBB” is a major area of study in consumer behavior due to the exponential growth of e-commerce. Although previous research has mostly concentrated on quantitative analyses, little is known about the experiential aspect of consumers' impulsive online purchases. Using 21 semi-structured interviews with Moroccan consumers who have engaged in OIBB. The study examines the effects of both utilitarian and hedonic website attributes on user satisfaction and OIBB, with a foundation in the Stimulus–Organism–Response (S-O-R) model. Results show that emotional engagement, perceived trust and OIBB are influenced by features like payment options, return policies, navigation features, and product recommendations. When supported by website attributes, satisfaction turns into a mediator that reinforces OIBB. On the other hand, dissatisfaction acts as a barrier to impulsivity. The findings offer theoretical and managerial repercussions since they provide a better understanding of the processes behind online impulse buying behavior. They also recommend that increasing website design and efficiency can be influential for user satisfaction and unplanned purchasing decisions.

**Keywords :** Online Impulse Buying Behavior, User satisfaction, Hedonic attributes, Utilitarian attributes, S-O-R Model.

## Résumé

L'achat impulsif en ligne représente un domaine central en comportement du consommateur compte tenu de l'évolution du commerce électronique. Malgré les recherches existantes, l'aspect expérientiel de l'achat impulsif en ligne reste peu exploré.

Cette étude qualitative fondée sur 21 entretiens semi-directifs avec des consommateurs marocains a pour finalité d'explorer l'effet des attributs utilitaires et hédoniques des sites marchands sur la satisfaction utilisateur et l'achat impulsif en mobilisant le modèle S-O-R.

Cette étude révèle que certains éléments des sites marchands tels que les politiques de retour flexibles, les options de paiement et les avis clients, demeurent une condition cruciale afin de susciter un engagement émotionnel auprès des consommateurs, ce qui mène ainsi vers l'achat impulsif. La satisfaction utilisateur est liée à son tour d'une manière intrinsèque à ce processus. Cette étude met aussi en avant aussi l'importance d'améliorer les attributs utilitaires et hédoniques des sites marchands pour renforcer la satisfaction utilisateur et mener vers des achats impulsifs.

**Mots clés :** Achat impulsif en ligne, Satisfaction utilisateur, Attributs hédoniques, Attributs utilitaires, Modèle S-O-R (Stimulus – Organisme – Réponse).

## Introduction

The growth of e-commerce has led both researchers and practitioners to become interested in understanding online impulse buying behavior.

While impulse purchases were traditionally linked to stimuli found in physical stores (Rook, 1987), the surge in digital platforms has changed the way netizens make purchasing decisions, as they are now exposed to websites and their various attributes (Liu et al., 2013).

Researchers have shown increasing interest in the subject of OIBB, yet most of the existing studies adopt a quantitative approach (Zafar et al., 2020), thereby offering limited insights into the experiences of consumers.

In spite of the growing literature on OIBB, plenty of research gaps still exist given that several studies have focused on defining external website stimuli without exploring the internal mechanisms that influence consumer behavior thus neglecting the influence of mediating elements in OIBB.

The elements above created the need for the adoption of qualitative study and the conduction of semi-structured interviews with a purposive sample that includes individuals who had previously made impulse purchases online. The objective of this method is to collect in-depth insights about the participants' lived experiences and perspectives and investigate how several hedonic and utilitarian attributes of a website lead to both user satisfaction and online impulse buying behavior.

To analyze the insights and data, an interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) was used, thus allowing a deeper understanding of how online consumers explain and respond to various website attributes. The theoretical perspective of the Stimulus-Organism-Response model directed the investigation which enabled the identification of both external stimuli (e.g., hedonic and utilitarian attributes) and internal mediators (i.e., satisfaction) that lead to online impulse buying behavior.

Overall, the study aims to answer the following research question: How do hedonic and utilitarian attributes of e-commerce websites influence user satisfaction and online impulse buying behavior? This is explored through interviews, interpretative analysis and the mobilization of the S-O-R model as the theoretical framework.

From a theoretical perspective, this research contributes to the literature on online consumer behavior through the incorporation of hedonic and utilitarian website attributes into the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) model and it provides a broad understanding of how online stimuli influence consumers' internal states and behaviors. Choosing a qualitative

method allows to bridge the literature gap since studies are predominantly quantitative and often disregard the richness of individual experiences and perceptions in online impulse buying behavior. This study therefore extends the theoretical application of the S-O-R model by offering deeper insights into the mediating internal mechanisms (i.e., satisfaction) that link website attributes to OIBB.

From a managerial standpoint, the insights of the study are valuable for practitioners since creating an engaging and efficient online environment is decisive for leading to OIBB. The study defines the specific website attributes that can be used to enhance both the user experience (UX), satisfaction and OIBB. These results are useful for digital marketers, UX designers, and e-commerce strategists, since they provide guidance for their strategies, the research also shows the importance of balancing both hedonic and utilitarian attributes within an e-commerce website.

To attain these objectives, this paper is structured as follows. First of all, a literature review of online impulse buying behavior “OIBB” and the different website attributes present on e-commerce websites was implemented in order to highlight the key research gaps. Secondly, the methodological approach is defined meticulously to explain the qualitative design, the purpose of semi-structured interviews and the application of interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) within the theoretical framework of the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) model. Followed by an in-depth discussion of the findings, demonstrating how hedonic and utilitarian attributes influence user satisfaction and impulsive behaviors in e-commerce. Finally, the paper concludes with theoretical and managerial implications, limitations of the study and directions for future research.

## **1. Conceptual framework**

### **1.1. Impulse buying**

Impulse buying has been a major field of research in consumer behavior since the 50s of the past century. Applebaum (1951) defines impulse buying as an unplanned purchase made immediately due to external and environmental stimuli such as promotions and product displays (Inman et al., 1990). Then, Stern categorizes impulse buying into four separate types: Firstly, there is pure impulse buying, which allows consumers to break their buying pattern.

Next, reminder impulse buying, which is stimulated by the confrontation with the product and stimuli associated with it. Moreover, there is suggested impulse buying, which is heavily influenced by external stimuli, and finally, planned impulse buying can be conceptualized as

an intention to spend that is reinforced by stimuli. Additionally, Rook and Hoch (1985) managed to introduce an affective dimension, suggesting that impulse buying is the consequence of emotional responses to environmental stimuli.

Zafar et al. (2020) define online purchasing as the consequence of a shift in consumers' behavior as well as technological advancement, since the online shopping market worldwide is growing and has reached unprecedented magnitude.

E-commerce has experienced exponential growth worldwide, creating increasingly fierce competition. Businesses are now compelled to understand the dynamics of online consumer experiences in order to design an attractive website or application that enhances customers' purchase intentions. (Boukabiya & Benaceur, 2020). E-commerce websites are considered nowadays an interactive online environment that heavily contributes, through their usability and aesthetics to the user experience (Rose, Clark, Samouel, & Hair, 2012). An optimized user experience can enhance the likelihood of purchase and reinforce trust toward the platform (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016).

It is estimated that impulse buying represents around 40% of consumers' online shopping (The State of Impulse Buying - Statistics & Trends 2025). Liu et al. (2013) unraveled that some website attributes, such as ease of navigation and aesthetic appeal, are significant determinants of online impulse buying behavior.

Furthermore, elements such as personalized recommendations stimulate the impulsivity of online shoppers (Parboteeah, Valacich, & Wells, 2009), and AI tools used on e-commerce websites, including chatbots, help personalize the shopping experience (Zafar et al., 2020).

### **1.2. Elements leading to OIBB**

With the rapid evolution of e-commerce, online impulse buying behavior became a relevant field of research. Based on the S-O-R model and according to research, the impulse buying process is influenced by external elements and internal states as well (Husnain et al., 2019).

Websites represent the shopping environment (i.e., external stimuli) in an online context; they shape the shopping experience. A user-friendly interface can encourage impulse buying decisions (Liu et al., 2013). Moreover, Wu et al. (2016) acknowledge that the visual aspect of a website leads to an engaging browsing experience.

Furthermore, AI-driven tools on a website can provide guidance toward new products (Zafar et al., 2020) and entertainment-related elements on a website can make shopping more stimulating and can result in impulse purchases (Floh & Madlberger, 2013)

In addition, incentives related to shipping can increase the perceived value of a product, thus making impulse buying behavior more likely (Parboteeah et al., 2009).

### **1.3. Website attributes**

#### **1.3.1 Utilitarian attributes**

The main function of utilitarian features on a website is to increase usability and efficiency, hence encouraging online purchase (Kukar-Kinney & Close, 2010). According to Rita et al. (2019), characteristics such as service and information quality elevate the perceived utilitarian value of online stores. Besides, Liu et al. (2013) and Hayu et al. (2023) emphasize that utilitarian attributes (e.g., transaction security, usability) impact consumers' perceptions and thus their purchases. Akram et al. (2018) research highlights that a functionally efficient website leads to impulse purchases.

Websites include several navigation features that shape the user's experience. For instance, a well-organized interface leads to positive emotional reactions that are known to lead to a pleasurable user experience, thus facilitating OIBB (Akram et al., 2018). Besides, proper functionality on a website (i.e., intuitive menus, efficient search) guides users in their purchase process through the reduction of cognitive effort, increasing the tendency to make unplanned purchases (Wells et al., 2011).

In addition, the filters provided on a website allow the display of products that suit the online shoppers, which can increase engagement and facilitate the shopping experience (Parboteeah et al., 2009).

Furthermore, security is a principal factor in the website's user journey since it enhances satisfaction and trust and reduces perceived risk in parallel Hasanov et al. (2015). The trust gained through the website's security helps during a rapid decision-making process.

Customer service builds trust as well by providing rapid guidance to users since responsive customer service on a website increases user engagement; a driver of satisfaction and OIBB (Mutambik et al., 2024). AI can also alter the online shopping experience by ensuring both personalization and accessibility. For example, AI-driven chatbots and assistants provide immediate support, contributing to a better experience (Grewal et al., 2020). Such interactions lead to emotional engagement and reduce the decision-making duration (Verhagen & Van Dolen, 2011).

At the point of purchase completion, the following attributes are taken into consideration by online shoppers. Firstly, delivery and its different components (e.g., cost, speed, reliability),

when fitting the consumer's expectations, reduce uncertainty and enhance the perceived value of the product. According to several studies, incentives such as free shipping induce impulse purchases (Hafez et al., 2023).

Secondly, a flexible return policy shapes the customer's perception by reducing the perceived risk linked to the product. Consequently, satisfaction and the inclination to engage in OIBB increase (Dawson & Kim, 2009).

Finally, the payment process is crucial to lowering barriers during the purchase process. Researchers confirm that the use of credit cards removes transactional frictions (Akram et al., 2018).

### **1.3.2 Hedonic attributes**

Hedonic attributes on a website include all of the elements that engage and entertain website visitors such as aesthetic appeal and enjoyment (Fiore et al., 2005) and according to Overby and Lee (2006), those attributes contribute to the creation of hedonic value for the website and shape the consumer's intentions. Eroglu, Machleit, and Davis (2003) and Verhagen and Van Dolen (2011) estimate that enhancing the hedonic shopping experience through the store's atmospherics impacts consumers' OIBB tendencies. Moreover, Wu et al. (2016) highlight how personalized recommendations increase impulse-driven responses.

The role of several hedonic attributes has been discussed in literature. For instance, image quality influences the consumer decision-making process, Jiang et al. (2010) describes how visual content helps with product evaluation and purchase intention. Fiore et al., (2005) reinforce this insight by demonstrating that imagery captures attention as well as creates positive emotional responses. Website colors also adjust the user's perception and behavior. Research by Van der Heijden and Verhagen (2004) proves that colors shape the perception of the website's quality, thus influencing user satisfaction. Moreover, Eroglu, Machleit, and Davis (2003) highlight the emotional impact of colors, since cooler tones evoke trust whereas warm colors stimulate excitement and possibly OIBB.

Additionally, demonstration videos shift consumers' decision-making. Research by Adeelar et al. (2003) confirms that videos help visualize products and their characteristics, increasing the likelihood of unplanned purchases. On the other hand, interactive attributes like games and quizzes influence consumer engagement. Floh and Madlberger (2013) and Eroglu et al. (2003) suggest that these games extend browsing duration and lower decision-making effort, since they are perceived as a form of reward (Aprilia et al., 2024). Furthermore, reviews and testimonials



(i.e., social proof) effectively shape consumers' perceptions and experience (Narimanfar & Ashtiani, 2021). According to Kathuria et al. (2024), positive reviews help consumers align with social norms through purchasing. Mutambik et al. (2024) estimate that positive reviews can significantly increase impulse buying behavior.

Lastly, as stated by Floh and Madlberger (2013), product recommendations help consumers discover new products, have a better shopping experience, and create more engagement, all of which contribute to OIBB. If relevant products are effectively recommended, they can capture the consumer's attention and stimulate impulse purchases (Park et al., 2006).

#### **1.4. Website attributes, satisfaction and OIBB**

Both hedonic and utilitarian attributes of a website (e.g., visual design, responsiveness) positively affect the consumer's satisfaction in online retail settings, as well as enhance customer loyalty and positive e-WOM (Supriyati & Harahap, 2021). Research elaborated by Richard (2005) and Setyaning et al. (2020) confirms that website characteristics are strong predictors of consumer's satisfaction. In an offline context, the hedonic value dimension has a more significant influence on OIBB than the utilitarian value of store visits. (Monglo, 2024). Customer satisfaction is considered an antecedent to impulse purchases. Findings by Zhu et al. (2020) and Liu et al. (2013) support that satisfaction is linked to increased impulse purchases, given that satisfaction lowers perceived risk.

## **2. Theoretical Framework**

The S-O-R model (Stimulus–Organism–Response), developed by A. Mehrabian and J. Russell (1974), represents the theoretical framework of this study since it ensures the explanation of the role of the website's hedonic and utilitarian attributes in shaping users' organism (i.e., internal state) and behavioral response.

The website quality attributes, such as service and information, and the digital elements (i.e., visual appeal, interactivity), have a large impact on consumers' decision-making (Chang et al., 2014). Offering an effortless navigation and appealing visuals on a website stimulates positive emotions, thus enhancing the likelihood of impulse purchases (Eroglu et al., 2003).

This study also relies on the PAD (Pleasure–Arousal–Dominance) model, developed by A. Mehrabian and J. Russell (1974) as well, which represents the foundation for the emotional responses of these consumers (i.e., organism). The research will focus on the pleasure dimension since it demonstrates how shopping can be perceived as both enjoyable, thus aligning



closely with satisfaction, which can be defined as a post-usage evaluation and fulfillment response (Oliver, 2010).

Researchers confirmed that netizens' satisfaction regarding a website aligns with feelings of pleasure, which asserts that satisfaction can be a form of pleasure caused by the environment (i.e., the website) (Eroglu et al., 2003).

By utilizing the S-O-R model, this study provides a structured vision about the role of hedonic and utilitarian website attributes on satisfaction and OIBB. In this structure, stimuli is the functional and emotional attributes of an e-commerce website (e.g., ease of navigation, interactivity and visual appeal). The organism refers to the emotional responses of the consumer (i.e., satisfaction), which has a mediating role between the stimulus and the behavioral outcome. Finally, the response is the consumer's online impulsive buying behavior. By applying this model, the study explains how and why website attributes lead to satisfaction and OIBB which provides a response to the research question. This theoretical framework offers a comprehensive understanding of the internal mechanisms behind OIBB in digital environments.

To sum up, the adopted approach in this research will highlight the role of website attributes (i.e., stimulus) on consumers' satisfaction (i.e., organism) and how it can lead to OIBB (i.e., response).

### **3. Methodology**

This section provides a detailed description of the methodological approach adopted for this study, from the data collection method to the sampling technique. A qualitative approach is employed through semi-structured interviews in order to explore in depth the role of website attributes on satisfaction and OIBB, as qualitative research remains well suited for providing in-depth, human-centered insights that quantitative methods may overlook (Lim, 2024). Semi-structured interviews provide a flexible exploration of the subject at hand (Kallio et al., 2016) and a holistic understanding of the motivations, attitudes, and beliefs (Adam, 2015).

Accordingly, twenty-one semi-structured interviews were conducted, allowing to reach meaning saturation, which typically requires 16 to 24 interviews in qualitative research (Hennink et al., 2017). A pretest was conducted with two people prior to the study interviews to ensure that the questions were well understood and engaging. Participants were selected using a purposive sampling method to ensure relevance to the study, the goal was to select participants that had previously engaged in OIBB, and were aged between 17 and 34 years

which is a demographic that's known for its high digital literacy and regular exposure to e-commerce environments. This age range was relevant since it includes both Gen Z and young Millennials who are more likely to buy online due to their familiarity with e-commerce websites.

Despite the efforts to ensure diversity, the sample was not strictly balanced in terms of gender (12 women and 9 men). This overrepresentation of women confirms existing research highlighting that women are more inclined to online impulse buying (Dittmar et al., 2004). The sample also included consumers with varying frequencies of online purchases (occasional, regular, and frequent) in order to capture a large spectrum of behaviors and motivations.

This methodological design allows the study's to link hedonic and utilitarian website attributes to emotional reactions and OIBB.

Regarding the analysis of participants' responses, interpretative phenomenological analysis was adopted, as it grants detailed examination of the lived experiences of participants, in our case, those who had previously made impulsive online purchases. IPA allows for a deep engagement with the participants' perspectives since it goes beyond mere description by interpreting how individuals perceive specific website stimuli and how their perceptions influence their satisfaction and impulsive decisions and it also allows to adopt a double hermeneutic stance through the interpretation of the participants' own interpretations thus contributing to a better understanding of the mechanisms behind OIBB.

The MAXQDA software was used to identify and extract emerging themes and to highlight the verbatim statements related to user satisfaction and online impulse buying behavior (OIBB).

## **4. Results & Discussion**

### **4.1. Utilitarian attributes**

#### **4.1.1 Navigation features**

Navigation features influence the user's emotional response significantly and lead in several cases to OIBB. The main attributes that were repeatedly mentioned were page loading speed, fluid navigation, intuitive menus, and mobile compatibility. On one hand, H.B.(17) noted, "Everything was very well organized. So, each time, I would start with a certain type of product. It was more appealing... I ended up taking more than I initially wanted" and I.K. (28) added, "The design of the site is attractive and well thought out... It makes browsing more enjoyable for me." Also, H.B.(33) stated, "It's fast... you don't have any difficulty exiting and re-entering, or selecting multiple items" and O.N. (28) mentioned, "The site was so well organized... I

ended up buying not only the desk I needed but also a chair... and a mic stand.” Similarly, S.A.(26) noted, “If it’s smooth, it works. You click... your intention leads you to buy right away.” Therefore, easy navigation increases emotional engagement and impulsivity as well (Chen & Yao, 2018).

On the other hand, a poor navigation experience may hinder OIBB, especially for moderate online shoppers such as H.M.(34), who said, “When a website is badly organized or hard to browse, I give up” and O.M.(19), who stated, “If there are too many ads, I might accidentally click something, open a new window... It's annoying. I just leave.” This illustrates Verhagen and Van Dolen's (2011) research, proving that poor website usability creates cognitive stress, which can limit impulsivity.

#### 4.1.2 Filters

Based on the results and insights of our study, filters positively influence user satisfaction, yet they can be a double-edged sword when it comes to OIBB, either encouraging or reducing it based on the consumer’s perspective.

Moderate and frequent online shoppers confirmed that filters optimized their discovery process and occasionally led to OIBB. H.B.(33) explained, “I often use filters... you’ll definitely find something you like because you’ve already used filters based on your personal criteria,” and H.M.(34) stated, “Yes, for example, I applied a price filter, let’s say between 150 and 200 MAD and a product appears if it’s a good-quality product, I might buy it even if I wasn’t thinking about that product in the first place.” A.C.(26) added, “I filter... a good quality-price ratio pushes me directly towards an impulsive purchase.” As supported by Gao et al. (2021), smart filtering lowers cognitive overload, which enhances satisfaction.

On the other hand, other respondents such as Y.E.(27) explained, “I use filters to make wiser choices and avoid buying products that I don’t initially need,” and R.Y.(27) stated, “I prefer not to limit choices with filters; I want a broader view of opportunities,” meaning that filters reduce the probability of OIBB.

#### 4.1.3 Website security

Website security impacts user satisfaction; however, it clearly does not directly influence OIBB, despite research suggesting that a reduced perceived risk enhances the possibility of unplanned purchases (Zhou, Dai, & Zhang, 2007). The respondents rely on interface design and professionalism to determine a site's security. For instance, M.O.(23) states “The process must

be fluid, secure, and easy to use... that helps me make purchases easily” confirming that perceived security impacts trust, which is linked to satisfaction (Kim, Ferrin, & Rao, 2008).

Moderate online shoppers expressed their suspicion regarding websites and how it can disrupt their purchasing behavior. For example, O.M.(19) shares, “Sometimes, you're even afraid that these sites might be fraudulent and could steal your personal information. Personally, I don't take risks. I don't enter my personal information on just any website.” Similarly, I.A.(23) explains, “I gave up on a product because the site didn't look professional... I thought it was spam. Nowadays, there are lots of scammers on online shops. Especially on Moroccan online shops, like, you place your order, then you go back to the site just to leave a review, and you find that the website is no longer available.” To sum up, while security does not trigger impulsivity, it is an antecedent to satisfaction and purchase in general.

#### **4.1.4 Customer service**

Customer service plays a significant role when it comes to website satisfaction, yet its role remains indirect when it comes to OIBB.

The respondents explained, “I feel that my opinion matters” W.Z(24), and N.K.(22) stated, “They responded to me in a genuinely human way. [...] I was so satisfied with the service” confirming that proper customer service is a driver of trust and satisfaction in an online context (Rafiq et al., 2013).

As for its influence on OIBB, no respondent purchased impulsively because of the customer service. On the contrary, it has led some of them to deter purchases, such as C.Z.(21) who mentioned, “I asked, but I didn't get any response, so I gave up.”

These statements reinforce that responsive customer service is key to building satisfaction and brand trust (Homburg, Wieseke, & Hoyer, 2009) and that it serves only as a catalyst to OIBB.

#### **4.1.5 Artificial intelligence**

The insights collected from this study prove that AI features do not play a big role in user's satisfaction but can influence OIBB since AI is rarely present in the respondents' online shopping journeys.

Sixteen out of the twenty-one respondents never came across AI technologies such as VR, AR or virtual assistants and as stated by Y.E.(27), “I haven't experienced these technologies on websites” and H.B.(17), “I've never seen any. Chatbots, for example, to get help. I've never actually used them, to be honest.”

Within the minority of respondents that experienced AI tools in their online shopping experiences, it is confirmed that they reduce uncertainty, as stated by N.K.(22), “I started buying other things I didn’t really need... I was so pleased with the AI assistant that I bought even more.” Likewise, A.L.(27) emphasized, “It was a robot that was answering... it was better than the sellers.”

This aligns with Puntoni et al.'s (2021) findings suggesting that AI-driven responsiveness stimulate impulse purchases but this conclusion cannot be drawn in the Moroccan context due to the lack of exposure

#### **4.1.6 Payment methods**

Payment methods are heavily influential when it comes to OIBB and user satisfaction. Most of the respondents prefer cash on delivery as a payment method since it provides both reassurance and convenience. R.T.(23) stated “Cash on delivery, because I can see the item before paying,” and I.A.(23) “But normally, in online shops, I prefer the cash-on-delivery payment option.”. There is also C.Z.(21) who explains that he prefers “cash on delivery, for products I don’t really trust, like perfumes... Basically to check the product and its quality before paying” and H.B.(33) “If you pay on delivery and the product doesn’t arrive, you don’t pay anything, you’re at ease.” A.L.(27) confirms: “You verify the product in real life, and if you’re not interested, you don’t pay.” Therefore, the cash-on-delivery method is thus proven to be a measure adopted by consumers to ensure delayed financial commitment and mitigate risk. This aligns with Ariffin et al. (2018) who stated that perceived control and transaction security stimulate satisfaction.

Payment methods can also be an obstacle to satisfaction and OIBB if they do not meet users’ expectations. For instance, F.E.(25) noted “I gave up on my shopping cart because they asked for an international card, which I didn’t have”. O.M. (19) added “I only purchased from websites that offer the payment methods that I have.”

#### **4.1.7 Delivery**

The delivery process plays a significant role in customer satisfaction and a free or flexible delivery option can also lead to OIBB.

Concerning the satisfaction, I.A.(23) declares “Yes, I bought an anime necklace... it was said that the delivery won’t take much time either, and I really liked the price.” and Y.E.(27) emphasizes “I always pay attention to delivery, for it to be fast... it matters along with the quality and customer reviews.” which confirms the research results established by Esper et al.

(2003) stating that rapid delivery is a key factor in consumer satisfaction in an e-commerce context.

Regarding the OIBB, A.C.(26) illustrates this perfectly “I ended up buying four things... and at the same time, since it tells me... delivery is free too.” A.L.(27) mentions “I added a second product... since it did help me get free delivery.” O.M.(19) reinforces the point by stating “No delivery fees at all... that pushed me to buy.”

Moreover, frequent shoppers such as N.K.(22) mentioned “If the delivery fees are complicated or too expensive, I just don’t buy from that site.” S.A.(26) confirmed “...there are comments from people saying the delivery was late, or it wasn’t the right product... I don’t go further.” thus reflecting the role of perceived risk in delivery in reducing purchase intention.

#### **4.1.8 Return policy**

The return policy plays a facilitating and positive role in both customer satisfaction and OIBB. The respondents consider it an element that builds trust, especially among regular and moderate consumers. H.B.(33) explains “Because I know that if I don’t like it, I’ll have the possibility to return it easily... it motivates you, because you tell yourself, if I don’t like it, I’ll just return it, no problem, and I’ll get my money back.” Similarly, R.Y.(27) notes “It’s the first question I ask before making a purchase... It creates a climate of trust between the buyer and the seller.” Therefore, the return policy increases user satisfaction by lowering post-purchase risk.

When it comes to OIBB, M.O.(23) explains: “When you make an impulsive purchase, you don’t really know the product... I prefer to be able to return it easily if I don’t like it.” I.A.(23) confirms “Yes, thanks to an easy return policy.” H.B.(17) adds: “Yes, it’s important for me to have a good return policy, especially when I’m buying clothes.” These responses align with Herhausen et al. (2015) suggesting that if the consumer perceives their purchase as reversible, it lowers their psychological obstacles to buying.

All of these statements support that return policies contribute to perceived service quality and reduce the cost of regret, thereby enhancing overall satisfaction and increasing impulsivity.

### **4.2. Hedonic attributes**

#### **4.2.1 Quality of images**

Regarding user satisfaction, image quality contributes to user satisfaction as stated by the respondents such as H.B.(17) “Yes, a beautiful photo definitely attracts me more...” and M.O.(23) “The website was well designed, with colors and clear, precise images.”

More than two-thirds of the participants stated that clear and professional product photos helped them trust and be satisfied regarding the website and the products, consolidating the idea that rich multimedia content increases satisfaction and perceived website quality (Kim & Lennon, 2008).

Image quality also leads to impulse buying as confirmed by Wells, Valacich, and Hess (2011), who found that clear imagery enhances impulsivity, as did the respondents. For instance, Y.E.(27) states “Generally, yes, because you can see the actual quality of the products in the images” and A.M.(23) shares, “I don’t plan to buy an item, but when I see the photos and they are good and show the product clearly, I’m convinced.”

However, more regular shoppers expressed post-purchase disappointment because the product didn’t match the photos, such as W.Z.(25) “When I received it after 3 days, it wasn’t the same product as in the pictures. I was deceived.” and A.L.(27): “It’s not real and I don’t trust it because it’s often done with professional cameras in studios with effects. It’s not 100% real.”

To conclude, quality of imagery leads to both satisfaction and OIBB.

#### **4.2.2 Demonstration videos**

Demonstration videos are one of the visual cues that have no direct impact on the satisfaction of online shoppers, yet they lead to OIBB since respondents, especially frequent shoppers, confirmed being more confident regarding the product and buying it impulsively due to those demonstration videos.

For example, R.Y.(27) noted “Sometimes, [...] it’s a demo that can really make you see the product, how to use it and everything. And it can either encourage or discourage you from buying.” and S.A.(26) added “I saw a video of how to use it and I bought it even though it’s of no use to me.” There are also other statements such as N.K.(22) “The massage tool looked amazing. Watching how to use it, people placing it on the back, and relieving pain made me want it. So, I bought it. But I only used it once, and I didn’t like it. Since then, it’s been lying around in my closet.” To sum up, the analysis suggests that videos increase emotional engagement and impulsivity as well (Mikalef et al., 2013; Park et al., 2012)

#### **4.2.3 Website colors**

The website colors have a limited role in consumer satisfaction regarding a website and no direct link to OIBB.

Respondents seem to prefer harmonious color schemes, as stated by H.B.(17) “I like everything that’s basic. When the website is neutral, it doesn’t clutter the mind with too many colors” and



N.K.(22) “When there are too many colors like black, yellow, or gold, it tires my eyes.” The female respondents also seemed to prefer clear and joyful colors, statements that align with studies suggesting that color harmony increases the user's positive emotional responses (Bonnardel, Piolat, & Le Bigot, 2011).

Several respondents also confirmed being drawn to certain colors, which led them to spend more time browsing the websites. For instance, A.L.(27) explained “Red and orange... they are cheerful colors... that often make me spend more time on the site” and C.Z.(21) “When I see a site... in orange... I go for that one... I'll check it out.” Yet, more than three-quarters of the respondents confirmed not being influenced by the website colors when buying impulsively. To summarize, colors can improve browsing experiences but do not directly support OIBB.

#### 4.2.4 Games

Games have a rather limited influence on both user satisfaction and OIBB. Contrary to existing studies, Moroccan consumers do not tend to be incentivized by games.

On one hand, some of the interviewees liked the entertaining aspect of these games, such as H.B.(17) and Y.E.(27) who stated “It's more playful; it's more dynamic. I like it, so yes” and “There are daily quizzes you can take part in, and you earn points [...] it encourages me to come back regularly,” respectively. On the other hand, most of the consumers didn't encounter these games or expressed their lack of interest towards these games and quizzes, such as A.C.(26), who declared, “I think it slows down the shopping process [...] I don't like quizzes,” and F.E.(25), who confirmed, “I'm not interested in games when browsing a website. Not at all. Because it really bothers me.” These responses partially confirm the finding by Hamari et al. (2014) that rewarding and optional gamification can satisfy users of the website, yet it also aligns with the research by Xu et al. (2017), stating that intrusive gamification can degrade the user's experience.

Concerning OIBB, C.Z.(21) was the only participant who reported buying impulsively due to games: “The wheel landed on a code that gave a 90% discount. So, I got the towel for only 20 dirhams.” These results align with Herhausen et al. (2019), who state that gamification can foster engagement and can lead to OIBB only when combined with another incentive.

#### 4.2.5 Reviews

Customer reviews can be considered one of the most influential attributes, as they increase users' satisfaction and also lead to OIBB. As stated by Filieri (2015), reviews act as social proof that reduces perceived risk, thereby creating greater confidence in online purchases.

Most participants consult reviews and are heavily influenced by those containing pictures and detailed experiences. These reviews serve both as a trigger and a filter when buying impulsively.

R.Y.(27) explained, “I can spend hours and hours reading reviews,” A.C.(26) confirmed that reviews “create the reliability and honesty of a website” and H.B.(17) stated, “I prefer to read reviews and see the photos before getting the product.” These real-life photos can result in impulse purchases, as confirmed by H.B.(33) “When I see someone talking about it and I can see real pictures, it makes me want to try it as well” and A.L. (27), who pointed out that “It can create a need that didn’t exist before.”

To sum up, online reviews enhance trust, satisfaction, and purchase intentions (Park, Lee, & Han, 2007; Filieri, 2015).

#### **4.2.6 Product recommendation**

Based on the analysis of the responses provided by the participants, product recommendations are a key trigger for user satisfaction and unplanned purchases. The respondents confirm that these suggestions simplify their shopping experience, make it more personalized and adequate to their needs and make them more inclined to buy impulsively. As A.C.(26) perfectly illustrates “I was planning to buy just a coat, but I, through suggestions, came across a nice shirt with jeans and shoes right away. So, I ended up buying 4 items instead of just one.” In addition, H.B.(17) shares that “Sometimes I don’t really know how to match different pieces... it’s easier when there’s an option [...] it helps me put together a nice outfit and I don’t have to rack my brain.” M.L.(22) states “The purchase I made was on ‘X’. I had a lot of recommendations for matching items. I bought several things because of that” and I.A.(23) adds, “If they didn’t recommend it, I wouldn’t have thought about it nor got it” All of these statements align with findings in the literature, confirming that personalized recommendations increase relevance, hence leading to impulse purchases (Verhagen & Van Dolen, 2011).

#### **4.3. Satisfaction**

Satisfaction can be a mediating factor and influence OIBB. As stated by the respondents, once they are satisfied by elements such as recommendations, reviews, navigation, or images, they are more likely to make impulse purchases. As mentioned by H.B.(33), “Yes, yes. [...] The speed, also the way products are displayed. Easy to see. [...] That’s probably what interests me the most about websites. [...] And that’s what leads to an impulsive purchase.” However, satisfaction is not sufficient on its own to drive OIBB, especially for moderate online shoppers.

For instance, R.T.(23) and M.O.(23) explicitly confirmed that they didn't make an impulse purchase solely due to their satisfaction with the site.

Conversely, dissatisfaction with a website can lead to cart abandonment and may be more impactful than satisfaction. As explained by H.B.(17), "I can't really understand the site. It's not well organized. I can't find my way around and so I just give up." A.C.(26) adds "They focus more on subscriptions or ads that are useless when all I want is to buy and move on." These statements align with prior research, which found that poor website functionality increases friction and deters users from completing a purchase (Chang & Hsu, 2016).

To sum up, while satisfaction can lead to OIBB when supported by credible site attributes, dissatisfaction is often a more decisive element that acts as a barrier to impulsive online buying behavior.

## **Conclusion**

This study reveals that utilitarian and hedonic website attributes influence OIBB. Utilitarian attributes, by enhancing usability, foster a sense of trust that supports OIBB. Attributes such as navigation features, return policies, delivery and payment methods (cash on delivery in particular) are identified by respondents since they influence emotional engagement, satisfaction, and reduce perceived risk, thereby facilitating OIBB (Herhausen et al., 2015). However, attributes such as customer service and website security influence satisfaction and OIBB indirectly.

Hedonic attributes such as high-quality images, reviews, and recommendations are efficient stimulators of satisfaction and OIBB since it helps with perceived enjoyment and lead to increased impulsivity (Filiberti, 2015; Verhagen & Van Dolen, 2011). Other hedonic elements, such as website colors, demonstration videos, and gamification, had limited effects.

When analyzing participant responses, the verbatims prove that satisfaction is a facilitator of OIBB but not a direct cause. Satisfaction does not ensure impulsive behavior by itself; but, when combined with specific website attributes, it reinforces buying decisions. Conversely, dissatisfaction proves to be a decisive barrier to OIBB, confirming previous research that highlights the importance of usability and trust in online consumer behavior (Chang, Cheung, & Lai, 2011; Kim, Ferrin, & Rao, 2008).

These findings have implications for both practitioners and researchers, as they identify the key elements that must be considered to encourage impulsive purchases among website users.

Despite the insights provided by the study, several limitations should be acknowledged. First of all, this qualitative study provides rich and context-specific insights yet the transferability of its results remains moderately limited in light of the small and purposive sample of 21 Moroccan consumers. Consequently, the findings cannot be generalized but can be transferred only to similar e-commerce contexts that share the same cultural, technological or behavioral characteristics.

Secondly, the semi-structured interviews might be subject to biases such as social desirability. The study also only focuses on the pleasure element and doesn't take into consideration both arousal and dominance from the P-A-D model.

Future research can adopt a mixed method to ensure the generalization of results, it can also include a broader sample and explore the role of elements like arousal and dominance and analyze other data like purchase history to obtain more insights.

In addition, comparative and longitudinal studies can provide valuable insights through the exploration of the role of cultural differences across countries and the evolution of website design or consumer habits on website attributes, user satisfaction, and OIBB.

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