The Impact of Viral Marketing on Emotion and Impulse Buying Behavior: A Case Study of Online Fashion

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Abstract
Impulsive online shopping is becoming a habit for many young consumers, especially for fashion products. This study aims to analyze the influence of viral marketing on emotions and impulsive online shopping behavior of young people for fashion products in Vietnam. The results showed that viral marketing with characteristics such as entertainment, source credibility, visual appeal, informativeness, and irritation all had a significant impact on emotions and impulsive online shopping behavior. Therefore,some suggestions are proposed for applying viral marketing to promote impulsive online shopping behavior for fashion products.
Keywords: Viral marketing, Impulse buying behavior, Online shopping, Emotions, Fashion.

1. Introduction
In the context of the post-Covid-19 pandemic and the development of technology, young consumers from Southeast Asian countries, including Viet Nam are shifting from buying fashion directly to purchasing it online. According to a survey of 1,787 Vietnamese people aged 18-25 about fashion shopping by Facebook and YouGov 2022, up to 79% of surveyed people make online purchases for fashion products. This shift is what makes impulse buying or unplanned buying, the result of exposure to stimuli and being decided on the spot (Parboteeah, 2005), increasingly popular because online shopping websites offer the convenience of comparing products, prices, and time constraints (Phau and Lo, 2004). The author's research paper examines impromptu online shopping behavior from the standpoint of businesses. According to Chen and Chang (2012), impulsive purchasing behavior not only helps businesses increase profits, but it also helps increase brand awareness, resulting in potential loyal customers, particularly in the online fashion industry. However, the reality shows that Vietnamese fashion businesses have not been particularly successful in promoting impulsive online purchasing behavior through the use of marketing tools. As a result, in order to develop a comprehensive strategy to meet customer needs, it is necessary to conduct research and develop more effective marketing theories.

When young customers were making online impulse buying behavior, marketing messages widely spread on online platforms have a strong influence on their emotions and behaviors (Uyan and Hamidi, 2020).This is why fashion businesses need to apply viral marketing to promote sharing behaviors and quickly disseminate messages through social media platforms, specially in the online fashion industry, where consumers' emotions and impulse buying behavior are heavily influenced by how they respond to marketing messages communicated by businesses. (Kulkarni et al., 2012).

There has been numerous research conducted in the world on viral marketing and impulsive internet purchasing behavior. However, these studies only focus on a few aspects of how viral marketing influences online impulse buying behavior without considering the role of emotions in the research model. There have been very few in-depth studies on the influence of viral marketing in Vietnam, and no research has specifically explored the relationship between viral marketing and online impulse purchase behavior with the intermediate role of emotion in the online fashion business. Therefore, the authors conducted a study titled "The impact of viral marketing on emotion and impulse buying behavior: A case study of online fashion purchasing" with the goal of determining the impact of viral marketing characteristics on young people's emotion and online impulse buying behavior. Then, necessary recommendations can be made for fashion businesses to improve the effectiveness of viral marketing campaigns and contribute practical value to the Vietnamese e-commerce industry, which has the highest growth rate in Southeast Asia.

2. Literature Review
2.1. Viral marketing
2.1.1. Overview
In the context of researching online fashion purchasing behavior, the research approached viral marketing from the perspective of information diffusion as defined by Kim and Lowrey (2010) and the aspect of diffusion speed as described by Laudon & Traver (2017) as follows: Viral marketing is a modern marketing tool that encourages

consumers to spread marketing messages from one person to another at a rapid pace.

2.2.2 The factors of viral marketing

Uyan and Hamidi (2020) studied the model of factors in viral marketing including informativeness, entertainment, source credibility, and irritation influencing impulse buying behavior. In addition, some studies (Loiacono, 2002; Wells, 2011) suggested that visual appeal indirectly affects impulse buying behavior through factors such as consumer satisfaction and website quality. Therefore, the researchers decided to add the variable "visual appeal" to the characteristics of viral marketing that affect emotions and online impulse buying behavior.

Inherited from previous research, the authors identified the factors of viral marketing that affect impulsive online buying behavior and emotions as follows: entertainment of message, source credibility, visual appeal, informativeness and irritation.

2.2.2.1 Entertainment

Entertainment refers to the level of enjoyment that a conveyed marketing message provides to the consumer (Uyan và Hamidi, 2020). Entertainment is one of the reasons consumers engage with brand-related content on social media, as people share videos out of a "desire for fun, entertainment, and connection." Thus, the study proposes the following hypothesis:

> H1: There is a positive relationship between entertainment of messages and online impulse buying behavior.
>
> H1a: There is a positive relationship between entertainment of message and emotion.
>
> H1b: There is a positive relationship between entertainment of message and online impulse buying behavior through the mediating role of emotions.

2.2.2.2 Source credibility

The reliability of the information source refers to the reliable and recognizable information source in the listener's mind (Bui Thanh Khoa et al., 2021). Marketing messages transmitted by reputable people or through reputable information channels will help the message be transmitted faster, and consumers will also receive that information more easily. Thus, the study proposes the following hypothesis:

> H2: There is a positive relationship between source credibility and online impulse buying behavior.
>
> H2a: There is a positive relationship between source credibility and emotion.
>
> H2b: There is a positive relationship between source credibility and online impulse buying behavior through the mediating role of emotions.

2.2.2.3. Visual appeal

Visual appeal refers to elements of fonts, graphics, and design layouts that enhance the attractiveness of a website to consumers (Nadkarni, 2007). Parboteeah (2005) found that if a website is visually appealing, more pleasure will be elicited when interacting with the website thereby enhancing online satisfaction. Thus, the study proposes the following hypothesis:

> H3: There is a positive relationship between visual appeal and online impulse buying behavior.
>
> H3a: There is a positive relationship between visual appeal and emotion.
>
> H3b: There is a positive relationship between visual appeal and online impulse buying behavior through the mediating role of emotions.

2.2.2.4. Informativeness

Information usefulness refers to the quality of the information contained in the marketing message (Uyan and Hamidi, 2020). According to Siau and Shen (2003), consumers will perceive the usefulness of information when they encounter advertisements that provide complete, accurate, and continuously updated information about products, helping them understand clear advantages over competitors. Thus, the study proposes the following hypothesis:

> H4: There is a positive relationship between informativeness and online impulse buying behavior.
>
> H4a: There is a positive relationship between informativeness and emotion.
>
> H4b: There is a positive relationship between informativeness and online impulse buying behavior through the mediating role of emotions.

2.2.2.5 Irritation

Irritation refer to any negative effect that might go against what users value (Bui Thanh Khoa et al., 2021). In the context of advertising, irritation is defined as unduly annoying, offensive, deceiving, or enticing. Some customers think that they won't like to buy the product because the advertisements appears with high frequency. Thus, the study proposes the following hypothesis:

> H5: There is a negative relationship between irritation and online impulse buying behavior.
>
> H5a: There is a negative relationship between irritation and emotion.
>
> H5b: There is a negative relationship between irritation and online impulse buying behavior through the mediating role of emotions.

2.3. Emotion
2.3.1. Definition of emotions
The research determines that emotion is an intermediary variable, both directly affecting impulsive online purchasing behavior and also affected by viral marketing factors.

Westbrook & Oliver (1991) gave a definition of consumer emotion as follows: "Consumer emotion is a set of overall consumer responses that are specifically elicited during the consumption of a product or experience. experience the buying process".

2.3.2. Impact of emotions on online impulse buying behavior for fashion products
Many studies have shown the relationship between emotions and impulse buying behavior of consumers' online fashion products (Rook & Gardner, 1985; Amos et al., 2014). According to Park & Lennon (2006), consumer decisions become easier when the products they want to buy are fashion products. In addition, research by Deepti Wadera & Vrinda Sharma (2018) mentions that online shopping for fashion can be considered to bring a more sense of enjoyment and improvisation than fashion buying behavior. out directly in stores. From the above studies, the research hypothesized that:

> H6: There is a positive relationship between emotion and online impulse buying behavior for fashion products.

2.4. Online impulse buying behavior
Parboteeah (2005; based on Piron, 1991) analyzed the concept of impulse buying behavior presented by scientists and gave a comprehensive definition of impulse buying: "Impulsive buying is buying behavior. unplanned, is the result of exposure to the stimulus and is decided on the spot." Researchers have argued that the online shopping environment is now more conducive to spontaneous shopping behavior than offline, as the online shopping environment frees consumers from the constraints they might otherwise have. encountered in actual shopping activities.

The research approaches the definition of online impulse buying behavior based on two aspects "spontaneous" and "online" as follows: Online impulse buying is a sudden and immediate purchase behavior without purchase intention when consumers are exposed to stimuli from the online environment.

2.5. Research model
Based on the model of Uyan and Hamidi (2020), the authors used 4 independent variables from that model and proposed one more variable suitable for the category, and at the same time combined the S-O-R model with Stimulus (S)): viral marketing, Subject (O): emotion, Response (R): impulsive online buying behavior. The research model developed by the authors is as follows:
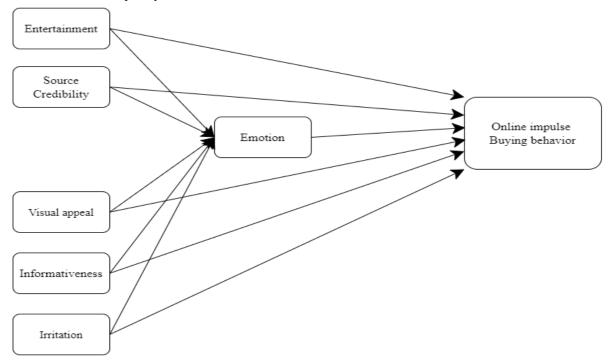

Figure 1: Proposed research model

Source: Recommended by the author team

3. Methodology

The research team used qualitative and quantitative research methods. Qualitative research was conducted through in-depth interviews on 20 subjects who are students, working people aged 18-25 and marketing experts in order to complete the scale measure. The scales are inherited from previous studies, presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Scale of variables

Independent variables	Sign	Observed variables	Source of scale	Adjustment
Entertainment of message	ENT1	I find the marketing messages received from businesses via mail very interesting	Adjusted from Uyan and Hamidi's scale (2020)	The authors adjusted the scale by reducing the original scale from 6 clauses to 5 clauses derived from the opinions of experts and a group of students who said that SMS advertising is not suitable for the Vietnamese context.
	ENT2	Following the fan pages of fashion businesses on social networking platforms is very attractive and interesting		
	ENT3	The fact that people come together to share their views on services and products makes me excited to follow		
	ENT4	Interesting and humorous elements of businesses make advertising messages more attractive		
	ENT5	I find interesting things when I shop online		
Source credibility	SC1	I trust the reviews of acquaintances	Adjusted from the scale of Cheung et al (2009)	The authors decided to combine two clauses with the phrases "Celebrity" and "People who have experience in using the brand" to become the SC5 clause in the opinion of the students when they think that these two phrases are similar in research context..
	SC2	I trust people who have left reviews on shopping sites who are knowledgeable in assessing the quality of a product		
	SC3	I trust the people who have used the product		
	SC4	I believe in product information on fan pages with blue ticks, many likes, followers, ..		
	SC5	I trust the reviews of celebrities, KOLs, people with expertise in the field,...		
Informativeness	INF1	Fanpage on social network of fashion enterprises continuously update information about products/services	Adjusted from Uyan and Hamidi's scale (2020)	The authors reduced the 4 original clauses to 3 clauses based on the opinions of experts and student groups that blogs of companies are no longer an important source of information in Vietnam. In addition, the research team proposes to replace the clause with the element that the e-commerce floor is suitable for the current buying trend.
	INF2	Fashion business email marketing messages give me a lot of insights about best selling products		
	INF3	Viral marketing messages on the website of a fashion business provide a lot of useful information		
	INF4	E-commerce trading platforms of fashion businesses are an important source of information		

Independent variables	Sign	Observed variables	Source of scale	Adjustment
Visual Appeal	VA1	Fashion shopping website with visual design	Adjusted from Liu, Li and Hu's scale (2013)	We added the VA4 clause based on the respondents' sharing that the layout of the website is an important factor contributing to attracting young consumers.
	VA2	Fashion shopping site that have design appeals to me		
	VA3	Fashion shopping website have attracting design		
	VA4	The layout of the fashion shopping website is very appealing to me		
Irritation	IRR1	I get too many fashion ads on different platforms	Adjusted from the scale of Bui Thanh Khoa et al (2021)	We selected this scale to match the research context in Vietnam and the development of online businesses after the pandemic. The adjustment of the scale from the situation of the social network Facebook to the case of the online fashion industry to fit the research topic.
	IRR2	I delete ads from fashion brands without reading		
	IRR3	I don't visit websites with ads that interrupt me while I'm shopping		
	IRR4	When I shop online, I notice a fashion product that is used by too many people		
Emotion	EMO1	I feel happy when I see meaningful fashion messages	The proposal is based on the PAD scale of Mehrabian and Russell (1974).	The adjustment of the scale comes from the opinion of experts conducting in-depth interviews that in this research context, the factor "Domination" is almost not shown by consumers when making impulse purchases, therefore, the research team removed the emotional statements belonging to this group.
	EMO2	I get excited when I see new fashion ads		
	EMO3	I feel satisfied when I watch celebrities review fashion products		
	EMO4	I feel calm when there are ads constantly interrupting while shopping		
Online impulse buying behavior	OIB1	I buy quickly as soon as I see fashion products appear on the online shopping platform	Adjusted from the scale of Youn and Faber (2000)	Based on the results of in-depth interviews and experts' opinions, the authors decided to shorten confusing clauses 3 and propose OIB4 clauses to match the current buying trend of young customers.
	OIB2	I buy interesting products on the website without thinking about the consequences		
	OIB3	There are fashion items I buy spontaneously on the online platform		
	OIB4	I used to randomly buy fashion products when interacting with the business's online sales platform		

Source: Summary of the research team's results

After completing the in-depth interviews, the next step is to conduct quantitative research. Observations are measured on a 5-point Likert scale. We carried out the survey using a convenient non-probability sampling

method with a scale of 430 observations. The research subjects are young consumers, aged 18-25 living in Hanoi, who have been buying fashion products online. According to data from ComScore - of more than 30 million internet users in Vietnam, about 71% of people aged 18-25 have been using social networks, of which up to 30.7% of young users use social networks. using social networks as a tool for online shopping (Do Thi Anh Phuong, 2021). Therefore, we decided to choose young people as the research object.

The majority of survey respondents were Female (75.3%). Besides, in terms of usage of online shopping platforms: e-commerce platforms such as Shopee, Lazada, Tiki, Sendo .. are the most preferred choice by consumers with an overwhelming rate of 92.3%. For the frequency of online fashion purchases, the answer with a purchase rate of more than 15 orders per year accounted for the highest proportion with 55.8%. In addition, 71% of respondents responded to impulse purchases a handful of times among online fashion purchases.

The obtained results have been used by the research team through SPSS software to perform descriptive statistical analysis, testing Cronbach's Alpha scale, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), then we use AMOS software to perform Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), Structural Equation Modeling (SEM).

4. Results
4.1. Emotion and online impulse buying behavior for fashion products
When surveying emotion and impulse buying behavior for online fashion products, the results showed that the level of agreement with emotional statements ranged from 3.27 to 3.6, with an average value of 3.45, indicating that the respondents were displaying relatively positive emotions. Specifically, the level of agreement with the statement "I feel satisfied when watching review fashion products of celebrities" reached the highest level of 3.6, indicating that consumers feel satisfied when accessing videos or posts of reviewing fashion products from reputable and influential celebrities in the fashion industry.

In addition, the results showed that the level of improvement with impulsive buying behavior statements ranged from 3.5 to 3.9, with an average value of 3.71. This shows that young people today have a relatively high tendency to engage in online impulsive shopping behavior. Specifically, the level of agreement with the statement "When I see something really interesting, I buy it without thinking about the consequences'' reached a highest value of 3.9, indicating that consumers tend to be attracted to unique fashion products leading to impulse buying behavior.

4.2. Influence of viral marketing on emotion and online impulse buying behavior for fashion products
4.2.1. Measuring the reliability scale
The reliability of the scale was assessed by Cronbach's Alpha analysis (Table 2) through the official quantitative survey sample. All scale satisfy the criteria and can be used for EFA

Table 2: Cronbach's Alpha Result

Factor	Sign	Cronbach's Alpha	Corrected Correlation
Entertainment of message	ENT	0,82	[0,504 – 0,904]
Source credibility	SC	0,913	[0,666 – 0,783]
Informativeness	INF	0,8	[0,488 – 0,696]
Irritation	IRR	0,852	[0,672 – 0,714]
Visual appeal	VA	0,769	[0,545 – 0,608]
Emotion	EMO	0,817	[0,651 – 0,776]
Online impulse buying behavior	OIB	0,918	[0,796 – 0,871]

Source: Summary of the research team's results

4.2.2: Exploratory factor analysis EFA and confirmatory factor analysis CFA
Next, the research team conducted Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) using the principal component analysis method with Promax rotation to reduce the observed variables into a set of different structures. Moreover, the KMO coefficient = 0.778 > 0.5, indicating that EFA is appropriate. In the Bartlett test, Sig. = 0.00, less than 0.05, indicating that all observed variables are correlated. At the same time, the load coefficient of all items is significant and greater than 0.5. All scales in this study have convergent validity.

After performing EFA to determine the factors for the dataset, along with appropriate observed variables, the team continued to perform Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) to draw conclusions about the quality of the scale for testing research hypotheses.

The results of CFA showed that the CMIN/df ratio = 2.153 < 3, which according to Hair et al. (1998), is considered a good model. Along with CMIN/df, other indices such as GFI, CFI are greater than 0.8, which are considered a good fit. RMSEA < 0.08, indicating that the model is usable (Taylor et al., 1993).

4.2.3: Structural Equation Modeling analysis (SEM)

The authors used the technique of Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to analyze the multidimensional relationship between independent variables and the intermediate variable "Emotion" (EMO) and the dependent variable "Online Impulse Buying Behavior" (OIB). The results are presented in Figure 2, Table 3 and 4. It can be seen that all viral marketing factors have impacts on emotion and online impulsive buying behavior (Table 4). Moreover, viral marketing factors also affect impulse buying behavior online through the intermediating role of emotion. The P-value (sig) of all variables is <0.05, so the proposed hypotheses are accepted. The unstandardized regression coefficients of entertainment, source credibility, visual appeal, and informativeness are positive, indicating positive effects of these variables on the intermediate and dependent variables. The unstandardized regression coefficient of emotion to impulse buying behavior also shows a positive relationship. The unstandardized regression coefficient of irritation is negative, indicating a negative effect of noise on emotion and impulsive buying behavior. The results of the SEM model testing accept all proposed hypotheses.
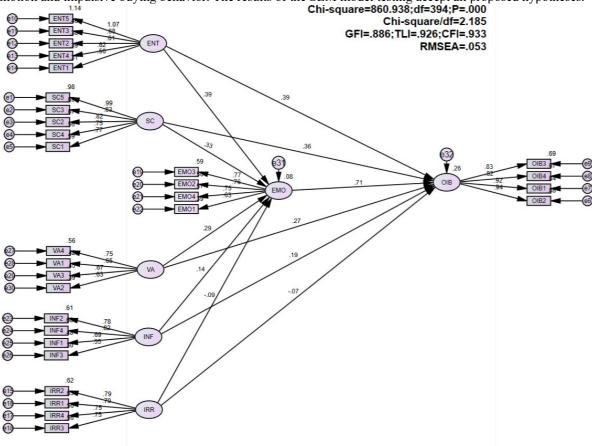

Figure 2: Structural Equation Modeling Result

Source: Summary of the research team's results

Table 3: Summary of SEM result

Hypothesis (Hs)		Unstandardized Estimate	Standardized Estimate	P-value (Sig)	Evaluation
H1	OIB <- ENT	0,384	0,388	0,000	Accept
H2	OIB <- SC	0,325	0,355	0,000	Accept
H3	OIB <- VA	0,264	0,268	0,000	Accept
H4	OIB <- INF	0,183	0,194	0,000	Accept
H5	OIB <- IRR	-0,042	-0,074	0,010	Accept
H1a	EMO <- ENT	0,309	0,386	0,000	Accept
H2a	EMO <- SC	0,217	0,334	0,000	Accept
H3a	EMO <- VA	0,251	0,288	0,000	Accept
H4a	EMO <- INF	0,131	0,142	0,000	Accept
H5a	EMO <- IRR	-0,032	-0,091	0,010	Accept
H6	OIB <- EMO	0,852	0,711	0,000	Accept

Source: Summary of the research team's results

Table 4: Mediator analysis result

Hypothesis		S.ES	Sig
H1b	OI <- EMO <- ENT	0.479	0.000
H2b	OIB <- EMO <- SC	0.365	0.005
H3b	OIB <- EMO <- VA	0.342	0.004
H4b	OIB <- EMO <- INF	0.318	0.003
H5b	OIB <- EMO <- IRR	-0.289	0.005

Source: Summary of the research team's results

5. Discussion
5.1. Conclusion

The study uses data from 430 valid answer sheets collected through an online questionnaire to determine the factors of viral marketing that affect emotion and online impulse buying behavior of young consumers. The results show that the level of the influence of independent variables on emotion is in descending order: entertainment ($\beta = 0.386$), sources credibility ($\beta = 0.334$), visual appeal ($\beta=0.288$), informativeness ($\beta=0.142$), irritation ($\beta= -0.091$) were evaluated as having the opposite effect on emotion. The analysis results also show that emotions have a positive effect on online impulsive buying behavior of fashion products ($\beta = 0.852$), along with that, all viral marketing factors have been proven to have influences on online impulse buying behavior through the intermediate role of emotion. In addition, the result is also a new point that complements previous studies on the impact of viral marketing on the impulse buying behavior of Uyan and Hamidi (2020) and Muhammad Bilal Ahmad, Hafiz Fawad (2019).

However, our research still has limitations: undiversified sample structure of the group; lacks of viral marketing factors; only focus on research on one aspect of the factor affecting buying behavior: viral marketing, as well as only in fashion products and the age gap is from 18 to 25 years old.

Although limitations still exist, this is also an opportunity for the topic to be developed and further studies on the online buying behavior of Vietnamese consumers. Other research groups can completely conduct similar

studies in the future with different scales and spaces to complete the research in more detailed ways. Moreover, the following studies can further investigate the buying behavior from many different aspects; at the same time explore many other influencing factors to make the research model more complete: "viral time of marketing messages", and "availability of money"... for the intermediate variable affected by stimuli, the authors propose to study "online trust", "the buying intention"... because there are very few research papers on these factors both at home and abroad.

5.2. Recommendations

Based on research analysis results, the authors would like to propose some recommendations to promote the process of consumer behavior orientation to help fashion businesses improve the effectiveness of viral marketing. First, fashion businesses should focus on building highly entertaining messages on online platforms by using trending humorous images, and sayings… to make a positive impact on customers' emotion, thereby stimulating consumers to support the product. Moreover, fashion businesses may consider selecting messages that are easy to remember and easy to read, highly suggestive, or arouse the curiosity of consumers to create a viral bomb on online platforms.

Second, fashion businesses can improve consumers' trust by partnering with experts in the fashion industry, or people who have had good experiences with their product… since those reviews are the best tool to create product credibility, increase business reputation, and strengthen consumers' trust in products. Moreover, it is necessary to avoid posting irrelevant content, and unverified information to attract attention.

Third, fashion businesses had better pay attention to the visuals of websites that provide viral marketing messages, because the attractive design of buying websites will help fashion products and the image of the business to be deeply imprinted in consumers' minds, and at the same time express its own imprint and characteristics of the business.

Fourth, the viral marketing messages published by fashion businesses should include useful information for the customer's buying process. It is essential for fashion businesses to build information on their website carefully. Their websites that provide viral messages can include fashion-related information, experience-sharing articles, instructions on how to choose clothes, and product information.

Fifth, to reduce consumers' irritation, fashion businesses need to limit the transmission of marketing messages since the pervasive and repetitive transmission results in negative emotions from customers. Moreover, it is necessary to restrict the advertising interrupting consumers' purchases on businesses' shopping platforms since those may cause uncomfortable feelings in customers and then stop their buying processes.

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