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### **ABSTRACT:**

*“This paper analyzes the effects of short videos on social media (TikTok, Instagram Reels, YouTube Shorts) and the impetuous buying tendencies of Generation Z. It analyzes the original survey data of 250 consumers 18-27 years old that identifies psychological triggers and purchase friction elements leading to unplanned purchases. It is argued that of the following factors FOMO, trust in the influencer, and social proof, FOMO is the largest psychological factor (68%), trust in the influencer is 62%, and social proof is 58% (Y, et. al.,2023). Using Pearson's correlation, the anticipated value of impulsive buying and the amount of videos viewed was shown to have a strong positive correlation (self-reported impulsive buying;  $r = 0.68, p < 0.01$ ). Additionally, 52% of the surveyed consumers found the one-click buying option to be a buying incentive. This paper concludes with actionable insights to the businesses and the platforms on the ethically transparent marketing”.*

### **I.I BACKGROUND:**

The retail landscape has shifted from brick-and-mortar stores to algorithm-driven digital feeds, and short-form videos have become a major driver of product discovery. For Gen Z, entertaining “scroll-first” content can blur the line between browsing and buying, especially when shopping links and payments are integrated into the same flow. This environment makes impulse buying—unplanned purchases driven by emotion and cues—more likely to occur during everyday social media use.

### **I.II PROBLEM STATEMENT:**

Algorithmic feeds deliver hyper-personalized, high-engagement visuals (for example, unboxing hauls, reviews, and flash-sale clips) that prioritize virality over careful evaluation. This can encourage quick, emotion-led decisions where users purchase trendy products with limited research, sometimes leading to regret and overspending. The concern is not only commercial; it also raises questions about transparency, user well-being, and responsible marketing practices in short-form video commerce.

### **I.III OBJECTIVES:**

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- *Identify triggers like influencer credibility, discounts, and FOMO.*
- *Quantify video usage frequency (e.g., daily hours) and its link to buys.*
- *Map drivers (e.g., social proof) against barriers (e.g., buyer's remorse).*
- *Propose ethical strategies for brands.*

#### **I.IV SCOPE AND SIGNIFICANCE:**

Focused on Gen Z respondents (18–27 years) recruited through Lucknow-based college networks and online social media outreach, this study contributes evidence on short-form video-driven impulse buying in a North Indian context. Because the sample is convenience-based, the findings are indicative rather than nationally representative, but they offer actionable insights for brands and platforms operating in social commerce.

#### **II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE:**

##### **II.I THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS:**

The theory of impulse buying, based on Stern's (1962) classification (pure, reminder, suggested, planned) continues to evolve. Rook (1987) suggests that impulse buying is "a sudden, strong urge, with little premeditation." Thus, impulse buying is also the result of situational variables that lead to the purchase.

##### **II.II SHORT-FORM VIDEOS AND GEN Z BEHAVIOUR:**

Familiarity with technology and social communication of Gen Z, i.e., social media likes, comments, shares, and credibility of the content creator, boosts buying impulse in short-form video content. Most previous studies have concentrated on the FOMO and social proof and their contributions to impulse buying. However, studies within the territory of India and its neighbours, especially in regard to the ethics of a gamified engagement loop, remain decidedly under examined. The focus of the present study aims to fill that void, concentrating on drivers, blockers, and protective measures.

##### **II.III KEY GAPS:**

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There is a wealth of global studies that have determined links between short-form and live video commerce and buying behaviour. However, there is a dearth of research in India/North India on the impulse buying behaviour of Gen Z, especially concerning repeated exposure, trust in creators, and engagement loops. Furthermore, the majority of studies concentrate on the rate of conversion, leaving the ethical implications of manipulative cues to create a sense of urgency, the quality of disclosure, and the after-purchase regret.

Key Studies	Focus	Findings
Stern (1962)	Impulse types	Videos trigger "suggested" impulse via visuals.
Akram et al. (2020)	TikTok & FOMO	55% impulse buys from trends.
Deloitte (2024)	Gen Z shopping	Social proof boosts conversion by 30%.

### **III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:**

#### **III.I RESEARCH DESIGN:**

A descriptive, cross-sectional survey design was used to capture patterns of short-form video usage and self-reported impulse buying without manipulating exposure. The study reports primarily quantitative results (frequencies, means, and correlation).

#### **III.II DATA COLLECTION:**

Primary data were collected through a structured Google Forms questionnaire with 25 questions: 15 Likert-scale items (1–5 agreement), 5 multiple-choice items on viewing and shopping habits, and 5 open-ended items to capture context. A pilot test (n = 30) was conducted, and reliability for the Likert-scale items was acceptable (Cronbach's alpha = 0.87). A total of 250 usable responses from Gen Z participants (18–27 years) were collected through Amity networks, Instagram outreach, and local college groups. The sampling approach was convenience-based. Basic cleaning removed duplicate submissions and incomplete responses.

#### **III.III TOOLS AND ANALYSIS:**

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SPSS for descriptives (means, percentages); correlation via Pearson's r. Ethical nods: Informed consent, anonymity.

***Sampling Breakdown (as reported by respondents):***

- Platforms used most often for short-form content: TikTok (45%), Instagram Reels (35%), YouTube Shorts (20%).*
- Age split: 18–21 (55%), 22–27 (45%).*

**IV. DATA ANALYSIS & FINDINGS:**

**IV.I DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE:**

72% reported watching short-form videos daily (typically 1–2 hours), and 65% reported making 1–3 impulse purchases per month.

**IV.II KEY TRIGGERS (LIKERT MEAN SCORES, 1–5):**

**FOMO: 4.2**

- FOMO: 4.2
- Influencer trust: 4.1
- Discounts: 3.9
- Social proof: 4.0

Pearson's r shows a strong positive association between video usage frequency and self-reported impulse buying ( $r = 0.68, p < 0.01$ ).

***Figure 1: Impulse Triggers (Percentage Influence)***

Trigger	% Respondents
FOMO	68%
Influencer credibility	62%
Social Proof	58%

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Trigger	% Respondents
Ease of checkout	55%
Visual appeal	50%

### **IV.III PLATFORM PREFERENCES AND PRODUCTS**

Across the sample, Instagram Reels and TikTok were the two most cited platforms for short-form exposure, with YouTube Shorts following. The most common impulse-buy categories were Fashion (35%), Beauty (28%), and Electronics/Gadgets (20%).

#### **Figure 2: Product Categories Bought Impulsively**

- Fashion: 35%
- Beauty: 28%
- Electronics: 20%
- Food/Snacks: 12%
- Others: 5%

*Integrated shopping links and low-friction checkouts appear to reduce the effort needed to complete a purchase; 52% of respondents cited “one-tap buy” as a pivotal factor.*

## **V. STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **V.I FOR BRANDS**

- *Prioritize authentic creator collaborations (for example, smaller creators can be perceived as more relatable, depending on category and audience).*
- *Ethical tactics: "Pause & Reflect" prompts before checkout; transparent discount disclosures.*
- *Example: Nykaa could add "Real Reviews" carousels post-video.*

### **V.II FOR PLATFORMS:**

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Implement FOMO mitigators like usage timers or "algorithm transparency" badges showing why a video appeared.

### **V.III LONG-TERM FOCUS:**

Shift from high-production ads to user-co-created content. Educate via in-app tips on mindful spending.

### **Recommendation Matrix:**

Stakeholder	Action	Expected Impact
Brands	Authentic collabs	Higher trust and better conversion quality
Platforms	Transparency tools	Lower regret risk; improved transparency
Consumers	Awareness campaigns	More mindful habits

### **VI. CONCLUSION:**

Short-form video platforms are increasingly functioning as storefronts, and the findings here suggest that Gen Z impulse buying is strongly linked to cues such as FOMO, influencer credibility, and social proof, along with low-friction checkouts. While these formats can help consumers discover products quickly, they can also encourage unplanned spending and post-purchase regret when urgency cues and limited information dominate the decision. A balanced approach is recommended: brands should disclose partnerships and offers clearly, platforms should support transparency and user controls, and consumers should be nudged toward more mindful purchasing. Future research can strengthen these findings by using larger representative samples and longitudinal designs to test long-term effects.

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