

# Beyond the Cart: Understanding Online Browsing's Role in Alleviating Tension and Fulfillment of Consumer Needs

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Acknowledgements:  
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Cite as:

Sandes Fabio, Komarova Loureiro Yuliya, Botelho Delane (2025), Beyond the Cart: Understanding Online Browsing's Role in Alleviating Tension and Fulfillment of Consumer Needs. *Proceedings of the European Marketing Academy*, 54th, (126482)

Paper from the 54th Annual EMAC Conference, Madrid, Spain, May 25-30, 2025



## **Beyond the Cart: Understanding Online Browsing's Role in Alleviating Tension and Fulfillment of Consumer Needs**

As digital platforms reshape retail, online browsing has emerged as a distinct consumer behavior, offering flexibility and accessibility beyond offline browsing's limitations, such as physical travel, time constraints, and social pressures. While prior research emphasizes online browsing's link to purchasing, it often neglects its psychological dimensions, such as tension relief and fantasy fulfillment. Drawing on psychoanalytic theories and frameworks like hedonic consumption and escapism, this study reframes online browsing as an emotional, standalone behavior rather than merely transactional.

This research has two objectives: to explore motivations and outcomes of online browsing using qualitative analysis, and to validate its differences from offline browsing through quantitative methods. Insights from consumer interviews and cross-national surveys in Brazil and the U.S. reveal its broader experiential role and offering valuable implications for marketers.

*Keywords: online browsing, motivation browsing, browsing*

*Track: Consumer Behavior*