

ABSTRACT

In digital marketing, SEO metadata plays a crucial role in shaping a website's visibility on search engine results. One element that is increasingly adopted is the use of emoji, which is believed to attract user attention. However, the effectiveness of emoji in SEO metadata remains underexplored in academic research. This is despite the fact that leading e-commerce companies such as Zalora and Footlocker have already adopted this strategy and outperformed JD Sports Indonesia in terms of traffic share, highlighting a gap in optimization.

This study aims to analyze the impact of using non-face emoji (👍) in SEO metadata on increasing click and purchase intention on the JD Sports Indonesia website. The research focuses on user responses to two metadata versions: one using emoji and one without. The study is also motivated by JD Sports Indonesia's relatively low position in national fashion e-commerce traffic share, indicating untapped optimization potential.

A quantitative A/B testing method was employed. The experiment was conducted on four landing pages representing different brands (Nike, Hoka, Adidas, Puma), with each assigned to either the emoji or non-emoji group. All metadata was equally optimized, with no major promotional interventions, and the testing period was controlled. Data were collected through Google Search Console (for user clicks) and Google Analytics (for add to cart as a proxy for purchase intention).

The findings reveal that metadata using emoji resulted in a 36% increase in user clicks and a 20% increase in purchase intention compared to the non-emoji version. These results support theories of visual communication and consumer behavior, which suggest that simple visual cues like emoji can improve visibility and enhance user perception during the early stages of online product discovery.

This study contributes to the SEO literature by providing empirical evidence on the role of emoji in metadata optimization. It recommends that e-commerce platforms consider incorporating visual cues in their SEO strategies and encourages future research with broader datasets and experimental coverage.

Keywords: A/B testing, Search Engine Optimization , emoji, click, purchase intention, JD Sports