



Impulse buying behaviour of consumers in India and abroad: A review of literature

Nitu Kumari¹, A K Singh²

¹ Research Scholar, Department of Commerce and Business Administration, L. N. Mithila University, Darbhanga, Bihar, India

² Head Cum Director, Department of Commerce and Business Administration, L. N. Mithila University, Darbhanga, Bihar, India

Abstract

Impulse buying refers to immediate purchases which are without any pre-shopping objective either to purchase the specific product category or to fulfil a specific need. Researchers and practitioners have been interested in the field of impulse buying for the past seven decades. A good number of previous studies in the area of impulse buying has been surveyed and presented in the paper.

Keywords: Buying behaviour, impulse buying, Indian context, pre-shopping intentions, retail stores

Introduction

The emotional impulsive decision making theory and impulsive buying Impulsive buying is grounded and theoretically underpinned within the emotional or impulsive decision making view to consumer decision-making by Schiffman and Kanuk 2007 ^[19]. This view postulates that consumers are likely to associate some highly involving feelings or emotions such as joy, love, fear, hope, sexuality, fantasy and even some little magic with certain purchases or possessions. Rather than carefully searching, deliberating and evaluating alternatives before buying, consumers are just as likely to make many of these purchases on impulse, on a whim, because they are emotionally driven Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007) ^[19]. Part *et al.* 2005) had even earlier concluded that unless a store has a distinct product offering or pricing strategy, retailers can distinguish their store by building on the relationship between the store's atmosphere and the consumer's emotional state. Even if consumers are in a negative emotional state upon entering a store, they may become emotionally uplifted and spend more than intended. All this implies that impulsive buying may largely be an unconscious buying behaviour driven by an affective force beyond the control of the individual.

Studies on impulsive buying behaviour

Clover 1950) was the first to study impulse buying mix and pointed out that some product categories are more sold on impulse. Stern 1962) ^[27] initially observed that the different aspects of the product which is encountered in the store may affect impulse buying. Kollat and Willett 1967) argued that consumer's characteristics and demographics influence the impulse purchases. Weinberg and Gottwald 1982) emphasised that Impulse buyers show greater emotions such as amusement, enthusiasm, joy and delight when compared to planned buyers. Rook and Hoch 1985) ^[17, 18] argued that impulsive shoppers tend to enjoy shopping more and the impulses is result of consumer's sensation and perception driven by the environmental stimulus.

Rook 1987) ^[17, 18] introduced the concept of consumer impulsion as a lifestyle trait, which can be linked to materialism, sensation seeking and recreational aspects of shopping. Iyer 1989) described impulse buying as a special

case of unplanned buying. O' Guinn and Faber 1989) opined that impulse purchases are more likely to happen when shoppers evaluate the purchase as appropriate. Abratt and Goodey 1990) suggested that in-store stimuli such as POP posters can increase impulse buying behavior. Han *et al.* 1991) introduced the concept of fashion-oriented impulse for buying the new fashion products. Piron 1991) ^[12] defined impulse purchase based on four criteria-Impulse purchases are unplanned, decided "on the spot", stem from reaction to a stimulus and involve either a cognitive reaction, or an emotional reaction, or both.

Hoch and Loewenstein 1991) observed that it is people and not the product that experiences the urge to consume on impulse. Suggested that buying may beget more buying by loss of self-control. Rook and Gardner 1993) ^[17, 18] defined impulse buying as an unplanned purchase that is characterized by relatively rapid decision-making, and a subjective bias in favour of immediate possession. 'Customers' mood states may result in impulse purchase behavior. Rook and Fisher 1995) ^[17, 18] introduced impulsiveness as a personality trait and defined as consumer's tendency to buy spontaneously, non-reflectively, immediately, and kinetically. Dittmar *et al.*, 1996) observed that gender, as a social category, affects impulse buying. Men tend to involve in impulse buying of instrumental and leisure items which projects their independence and activity. Women tend to buy the symbolic and self-expressive goods which are associated with their appearance and emotional aspects of self. Beatty and Ferrell 1998) formulated the definition of Impulse buying as a sudden and immediate purchase with no pre-shopping intentions either to buy the specific product category or to fulfil a specific buying task.

Wood 1998) stated that a socio-economic factor of individuals such as low levels of household income indulges into impulse buying. Bayley and Nancarrow 1998) suggested that impulse buying behavior is a complex buying process and the rapid decision process during shopping, prevents deliberate consideration of alternative information and choices. Hausman 2000) proposed that shopping experience may encourage emotions such as feeling uplifted

or energized. Consumers shop not only to buy but to satisfy their different needs. Young and Faber 2000) suggested that both positive and negative feeling states of consumer are potential motivators for impulse buying. Kacen and Lee 2002) described that cultural forces could impact impulse purchasing of Individuals. People having Independent self-concept engage more in impulse buying. Zhou and Wong 2003) found that retail store environment such as POP could affect the impulse buying. Jones et, al. 2003) empirically tested that product-specific impulse buying is affected significantly by product involvement and it is an important factor supporting impulse buying tendencies. Sinha 2003) [25] stated that Indian customers are orientated towards shopping because of the entertainment that can be derived out of it. According to him, the majority of the Indian population can be characterized as young, working class, with higher purchasing power. They seek more of the emotional value from shopping than the functional value and they value convenience and variety.

Luo 2005) found that the presence of peers increases the urge to purchase, and that the presence of family members decreases it. Verplanken *et al.* 2005) [33] proposed that negative rather than positive affect is a driving force behind chronic impulse buying. The impulse buying could further result in curing negative state of mind. Park *et al* 2006) [10, 11] studied the fashion and hedonic aspects of impulse buying. Hedonic consumption has an indirect effect on fashion-oriented impulse buying. Fashion oriented people are pleasure and enjoyment seeking. Peck and Childers 2006) found that touch increases impulse purchasing as the distance between product and consumer decreases proximity). Suggested that point-of-purchase signs, displays, and packaging encouraging product touch may increase impulse purchasing. Kaur and Singh 2007) studied the impulse buying aspects of Indian youths and found that shopping enjoyment and the sensory stimulants influences impulse buying.

In today's marketing context, which is characterized by growing levels of aspiration, willingness to spend on the part of consumers, influence of westernization and the availability of products, marketers and retailers have several opportunities to make use of impulse buying Kumar, 2007). Kumar 2007) suggested that impulse buying concept is applicable to durables apart from FMCG. Mattila and Wirtz 2008) found that store environmental stimuli such as social factors perceived employee friendliness) positively affect impulse buying behavior.

Silvera *et al.* 2008) studied the impact of emotions and inferred that impulse buying is influenced by the 'affect' or emotions of the consumer. Dawson and Kim 2009) studied the affective-cognitive aspects and found significant relationship between a person's affective and cognitive state and their online impulse-buying behavior. Sneath *et al.* 2009) [26] have argued that impulse buying can also be induced because of depression of an individual and an attempt to improve the mood. Harmancioglu *et al* 2009) first to study Impulse buying of new products and suggested in case of new product: product knowledge, consumer excitement and consumer esteem – drive impulse buying behavior. Yu and Bastin 2010) concluded that Hedonic shopping value of an individual lead to impulse purchases and are inextricably related to each other. Sharma *et al* 2010) [21, 22] studied the variety seeking behavior of impulse

buying. They found the variety seeking individuals are more prone to impulse purchases. Internal Stimuli are related to the different personality related factors which characterises an individual rather than the shopping environment or stimuli. Internal factors of impulse buying denote the individual's internal cues and characteristics that make him / her engage in impulse buying. The involvement with the products may also vary during impulse buying when compared to general buying. Impulse buying or purchasing with little or no advance planning is also a form of low-involvement decision making Michael *et al.*, 2010) [6]. Impulse buying is considered as relevant in today's shopping scenario with the innovative sales promotions, creative messages and appropriate use of technologies in the retail stores Schiffman and Kauczek, 2010) [19]. Chang *et al* 2011) observed that the positive emotional responses of consumer to the retail environment result in impulsive purchases. Dave 2011) pointed out that retail stores in Indian settings and found that all of the in-store measures taken by the retailer affects the impulse stimuli of the customers and therefore contributes towards conversion, but overall the promotional mix can act as base for differentiating a store from others and attracting customers to it.

Shen and Khalifa 2012) [23] observed that cognition of the consumer moderates the relationship among buying impulse and the actual impulsive behavior. Ordun 2015) explores the shopping examples of the recent college grads and their image reliability. The examination investigations the brand dedication of twenty to thirty year olds and its relationship with some other components identified with buying conduct. El-Adly & Eid 2016) used structural equation modelling SEM) to investigate the relationships between the shopping environment, customer perceived value, customer satisfaction, and customer loyalty in regard to malls in the United Arab Emirates UAE). The results indicate that the mall environment is an antecedent of the customer perceived value of malls and customer satisfaction. Purchasers are currently more intrigued by decadent advantages that incite joy, delight, and fun from intuitive encounters and diversion; and utilitarian advantages that are remunerating on the grounds that they assist one with achieving outside points or objectives, for example, social or financial increase Parker and Wang, 2016).

Yeoman *et al.* 2017) recognize client personal conduct standard of patterns, which can affect marking to retail procedure like versatile living, evaluating, enormous information innovation, attendant living, is steadfastness dead, limiting always, overseeing multifaceted nature, and decision and expanding conduct. At last, the examination closes and suggests that the examples are driving specifically, devotion, transitory lastingness, arrangements and worth. Jiang *et al.* 2018) directed experimental examination to incorporate the hypothesis of brand touch points and the brand insight to explore the joined impact of pre-utilization and utilization experience on buyer saw esteem. The discoveries of Slaton *et al.* 2020) propose that the brand insight of a little, stock free retail arrangement can be viable in encouraging customer based brand value CBBE), and affects buy expectation and buyer conduct. The examination likewise suggests industry experts in distinguishing systems that appeal to changing inclinations of the present buyer.

Summing-up

The retailing sector has grown rapidly and its purchasing power is increasing in the recent years (Sharma & Levy, 1995) [21, 22]. Retailing is the final destination in the distribution process and it is one of the most sensitive sectors. India has been doing extremely well in the Global market. The country has witnessed a huge foreign investment in the retail sector. Due to the globalization process, Indians are getting attracted to multinational brands. There is a need to work hard and understand the consumers' decision-making styles to meet their growing demands (Montoya-Weiss *et al.*, 2003). The major retailers function besides selling is to know how consumers behave and determine their decision making style (Jun *et al.*, 2004). Studying the behaviour of consumers involves identification of their perception and acquisition of products and services. (Omar *et al.* 2001) [9] suggested that impulsive shopping at the airport is promoted by environmental influences. Exclusive availability of certain products, clean ambience, spacious formats and anonymity are some of the reasons that could increase the impulse buying at airport retail shops. Credit cards and its incentive for extra shopping, promotion with particular retailer provides an opportunity for shoppers to make frequent visits to retail outlets which may result in increased impulsive purchase. The external stimuli are available across the shopping channels. There are studies conducted in different shopping environments. Yet most of the previous researches have focused on impulse-buying behavior in traditional brick and mortar shopping and television shopping (Park & Lennon, 2004). Dawson and Kim (2009) [10, 11] have predicted that with the tremendous growth potential of online shopping, there is scope for consumers to get involved in online impulse buying. Credit cards and its incentive for extra shopping give the opportunity for online shoppers to make frequent visit to online retail shops which may result in increased impulsive buying.

Finally, we may conclude that impulse buying is an unplanned behaviour involving quick decision-making and tendency for immediate acquisition of the product. The impulsive behaviour are more arousing and irresistible but less deliberative when compared to planned purchasing behaviour. Keeping in the mind the universal nature of impulse buying, it can be capitalised by retailers to benefit their respective businesses.

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