



## IMPULSE BUYING BEHAVIOR- THE GAME PLAY OF EMOTIONS NOT COGNITION

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### ABSTRACT

"I went to buy few items but came with a lot more" .This is a common phenomenon which you yourself had experienced many times- The Unplanned purchase or Impulse Buying Behavior. Why being consumer indulge in sudden purchases without having any intention to buy? What factors interplay while making impulse purchase decisions. Through this paper we have tried to explain the concept of impulse buying and consumer- related factors affecting impulse buying decisions. This further evaluates the role that mood, impulse buying tendency, consumer's self- concept, demographic factors including age, cultural factors, retail service quality etc plays while taking spontaneous purchase decisions. It includes the review of literature that already exists and provides a conclusion about the gameplay of various factors influencing impulse buying.

**KEYWORDS:** Purchase, Buying Decisions, E-Commerce, Television Shopping, Impulse Buying

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

In 2009, an impulse shopping survey done by Consumer Reports revealed that three out of five women bought something on impulse in the year 2008 with average impulse purchase of US\$108. The most recent impulsive item were clothes, followed by food and accessories , 25%, 14%, and 6% of respondents,

respectively. A study about impulse buying on e-commerce websites showed that almost two-fifth of the money spent was from unplanned purchases (User Interface Engineering, 2001). Impulse buying cause regret to more than half of respondents (Canadian Press, 2012). Clearly, impulse buying impacts economy and buyers'

emotional and psychological well-being. E-commerce and television shopping channels has simplified consumers' impulse buying. Previous research conducted mainly in the USA and Great Britain has revealed that several factors impacts impulse buying behavior. These include consumers' mood or emotional state (Canadian Press, 2012; Donovan et al., 1994; Jalees, 2009; Rook, 1987; Rook and Gardner, 1993; Weinberg and Gottwald, 1982), trait buying impulsiveness (Rook and Fisher, 1995; Weun et al., 1998), normative evaluation of the appropriateness of engaging in impulse buying (Rook and Fisher, 1995), self-identity (Dittmar et al., 1995), and demographic factors such as age (Bellenger et al., 1978; Wood, 1998), biological sex (Canadian Press, 2012; Dittmar et al., 1995), income (Hultén and Vanyushyn, 2011) and Culture (Tung, 1995). Study by Liet al. (2004), Jalees's (2009) on 180 Pakistani respondents revealed that as compared to individualism, collectivism had more influence on impulse buying behavior. Similarly, Kacen and Lee's (2002) survey of consumers in Australia, the USA, Hong Kong, Singapore, and Malaysia found that both cultural difference (individualism-collectivism) and individual difference (independent-interdependent self-concept) factors affected impulse buying behavior. Higher the independence in their self-concept, higher the impulse buying behavior.

## **1.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The objectives of this paper are:

1. To explore the concept of Impulse buying.
2. To determine the consumer-related factors affecting impulse buying decisions.
3. To analyze the effect of mood on impulse buying decisions.
4. To identify the impact of impulse buying tendency on impulse buying decisions.

5. To determine the impact of Culture on impulse buying decisions of consumers.

## **1.3 DATA AND METHODOLOGY**

The current study attempts to explain the concept of Impulse buying and examine the effect of several consumer-related factors on impulse buying decisions. The nature of research is completely descriptive. It is a conceptual research which is based on review of previously done researches in this area. All the relevant data used in research paper has been collected from secondary sources e.g. e-journals, newspaper and various e-resources.

## **1.4 LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **1.4.1. Concept of Impulse buying:-**

Purchases of new products result more from unplanned purchasing than from prior planning (Sfiligoj,1996). Impulse buying is defined as "an unplanned purchase " that is featured by relatively rapid decision-making and a subjective bias in favor of immediate possession. (Rook & Gardner, 1993, Rook & Hoch,1985). Bellenger et al., 1978 & Cobb and Hoyer, 1986, used the term impulse buying interchangeably with unplanned purchase. However, according to Hawkins and Mothersbaugh (2010), unplanned purchase is segregated into two components, reminder buying and impulse buying. Seeing a product in the store that reminds us of being out-of-stock at home and leads to buying it is reminder buying (Hawkins and Mothersbaugh, 2010) not impulse buying (Beatty and Ferrell, 1998) . In this regard, the consumer has no intention to buy the product before the consumer arrives at the store. In addition to the unplanned aspect of impulse buying, an intense driving force to buy is also inevitable (Baumeister, 2002). Impulse buying may be explained as a quick purchase (Rook, 1987). According to Baumeister (2002), in impulse buying, consumers generally

ignore long-term goals (e.g., saving money), ideals, decisions, and plans. Impulse purchase decision process precludes thoughtful, deliberate consideration of all information and choice alternatives (Bayley Thompson, Locander, & Nancarrow, 1998; Pollio, 1990; Weinberg & Rook 1987; Gottwald, 1982). It is described as more arousing buying behavior less deliberate and more irresistible, hedonically complex purchasing behavior compared to planned purchasing behavior. Unreflective thinking, emotional attraction towards the object and desire for gratification (Hoch & Loewenstein, 1991; Thompson et al., 1990). Pleasurable feelings & unplanned spending have positive relationship with impulse buying (Donovan et al., 1994).

#### **1.4.2. Consumer-related factors affecting impulse buying decisions**

It is necessary for organizations to determine the consumer-related factors affecting impulse buying decisions and to satisfy customers affected by these factors and to identify who buy on impulse. Cognitive and affective factors and processes impacts Customer satisfaction level (Kim and Mattila, 2010; Mattila and Wirtz, 2000). Affective factors include moods & emotions. Mood can affect consumers' post-purchase evaluations (Kim and Mattila, 2010). Positive consumer mood can affect customer satisfaction positively (Kim and Mattila, 2010; Mattila and Enz, 2002; Meng and Sirakaya Turk, 2010). Schiffman and Kanuk (2004) explained that those alternatives are preferred that maximize individual's level of satisfaction. Another factor influencing impulse buying behavior is consumer's Self- concept. Self- Concept is defined as individual's thoughts and feeling having reference to him/herself as an object (Rosenberg, 1979). Self- concept includes cognitive, affective and behavioral component. It can be divided into

interdependent and independent self- concept. Singelis (1995) defined an interdependent self- concept as one emphasizing "(a) external, public features such as statuses, roles, and relationships, (b) belonging and fitting in, (c) occupying one's proper place and engaging in appropriate action, and (d) being indirect in communication and reading others' minds.". While, Independent self concept is one which emphasizes "(a) internal abilities, thoughts, and feelings; (b) being unique and expressing the self; (c) realizing internal attributes and promoting one's own goals; and, (d) being direct in communication"

Kacen & Lee, (2002), explained that age negatively impacts impulse buying to greater extent for collectivists compared to individualists in their early adult ages. Emotional factors of pleasure & arousal that characterize Impulse Buying Behavior is more positively related to Impulse Buying Tendency among Individualists than among collectivists. According to Varadarajan (1996) explains that salespersons' retail service quality also affects impulse buying. 'Retail service quality' is defined as consumers' evaluations of the overall excellence or superiority of the service from a retail store (Parasuraman et al., 1988). It comprises of five dimensions: physical aspects, reliability, personal interaction, problem solving, and policy (Dabholkar et al., 1996). In a retail setting, salespeople make up a part of the ultimate touch point that consumers encounter before making purchases and therefore their behavior can draw consumers toward or away from a purchase. Salespersons' retail service quality includes salesperson's personal interaction, pleasantness, courtesy, perceived friendliness, attentiveness to customers and willingness to help customers. Culture may moderate the impulse buying behavior of collectivists by using the concept of face and

favor creation and reciprocation. 'Face' refers to the respect and honor of others. 'Favor' refers to a kind action that a person does for someone or an advantage that a person gives to someone (Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary). Favor reciprocation means rewarding kind actions. Favor reciprocation & favor received can be in different magnitude. The feelings of favor reciprocation and face preservation work together to overrule the tendency to control impulses for collectivists when service quality is good.

### 1.4.3. Examination of mood's effect on consumer impulse buying decisions:-

Ozer & Gultekin,( 2014) This study revealed that consumer impulse buying tendency and pre-purchase mood encourage impulse buying positively. In addition, it is found that impulse buying has no influence on post-purchase mood. Moreover, satisfaction has a partial mediator role between pre -purchase mood and post-purchase mood. It is stated that affect, mood, emotions, and feelings are effective at all levels of the process of consumer decision making (Puccinelli et al., 2009). Mood has an intense and complex role in impulse buying. Comparison and evaluation of products (Swinyard, 1993) and brands (Gardner, 1985), searching for information (Gardner, 1985), which product to buy and with whom (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2004; Swinyard, 1993), amount to be spent (Murray et al., 2010; Spies et al., 1997), and time allocation for shopping (Swinyard, 1993) are influenced by consumer's mood. Positive mood have positive relationship with impulse buying (Beatty and Ferrell ,1998). Individuals who have positive pre-purchase mood recall more information than individuals who have negative pre -purchase mood (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2004). Consumers may buy on impulse to maintain (Swinyard, 1993), improve, or change mood (Faber and

Christenson, 1996; Rook, 1987). Gardner and Rook,1988, state that after impulse buying most of the individuals found improvement in their moods. Mood maintenance and mood management describes the relationship between pre-purchase mood and post-purchase mood (Kim and Mattila, 2010). Mood maintenance means that individuals want to maintain their present mood and try to avoid those factors that may impact their mood negatively (Kim and Mattila, 2010). Mood management means that individuals engage themselves in activities that make them feel better and try to overcome their negative mood. Entertainment, fantasy, social and emotional needs influences how and what consumers buy (Hausman, 2000). Consumer get entertainment, content, enthusiasm, and happiness from sudden purchases (Weinberg and Gottwald, 1982). (Swinyard, 1995) Credible salespeople in terms of their evaluation of salesperson, intention to purchase and intention to search for the salesperson positively impacts individuals with positive mood and consumers do consider this fact in their next purchase. Pre-purchase mood is found to be an antecedent of satisfaction Kim and Mattila, 2010; Mattila and Enz, 2002; Meng and Sirakaya Turk, 2010) and post-purchase mood (Kim and Mattila, 2010; Gardner and Rook, 1988). Moreover, post-purchase mood is found be a consequence of satisfaction (Hill and Gardner, 1987). Satisfaction acts as a mediator & explain the influence of pre-purchase mood on post-purchase mood in more clearer terms. 81 out of 100 participants who bought on impulse are satisfied with the products they bought. Thus customer satisfaction level has improved post-purchase mood not impulse buying. It is necessary to evaluate consumer satisfaction level together with the mood of individuals (Meng and Sirakaya Turk, 2010).

#### **1.4.4. Impact of impulse buying tendency on impulse buying decisions:-**

According to Weun et. al,1998, impulse buying tendency is the degree of the possibility of sudden buying with no intention to buy. Consumers with impulse buying tendency may experience difficulties in preventing their behavior, and therefore end up buying on impulse frequently and consistently (Park and Lennon, 2006). According to Jones et al.(2003), product-specific impulse buying tendency explains impulse buying behavior better than general impulse buying tendency. Involvement impacts consumer tendencies to purchase products of a particular product category on impulse (jones et.al, 2003). Unreflective actions, Thrill seeking and trait impulsiveness are correlated ( Eysenck et al.,1985, Weun et al.,1998). Rook & Fisher,1995 found that impulse purchasing and social acceptability have positive relationship. Individual's impulse behavior tendencies and demographic characteristics have non-monotonic relation between the ages of 18 & 39 Impulse buying rises slightly and thereafter falls (Wood,1998).

#### **1.4.5. Impact of culture on consumer's impulse buying decisions:-**

Culture refers to the dynamic process that occurs within a given society and which creates the cognitive map of beliefs, values, meaning, and attitudes that drive people's perception, thoughts, reasoning, actions, responses, and interactions (Tung, 1995). Kacen & Lee, 2002, explained that cultural factors moderate the consumer's impulsive buying behavior tenets which includes self- concept, normative influences, control of emotions and the postponement of instant gratification. As per the conclusion of multi-country survey of consumers show that both regional level factors (individualism-collectivism) and individual

cultural difference factors (independent – interdependent self-concept ) have systematic impact on impulsive buying behavior. Collectivism - A social pattern that consists of individuals who see themselves as an integral part of one or more groups. While, Individualism – A social pattern that consists of individuals who see themselves as autonomous & independent (Triandis, 1995). Culture determines expression of one's feelings & influences one's emotional experiences (Mc Conatha,1993). Culture impacts both the feelings rules and display needs. 'Feeling Rules'- how an individuals interprets the environment & 'Display needs'- which emotions are expressed & how they are expressed (Ekman,1972). Collectivist culture leads to an ability to repress the internal attributes and people are able to shift their impulse buying behavior due to the tendency to focus on group interests (Kacen & Lee, 2002). Attitude-Intention & Attitude-behavior relationships are weaker in the collectivists cultures that the individualists .Trait buying impulsiveness and impulse buying behavior is stronger among individualists compared to collectivists.( Kacen & Lee, 2002)

Pornpitakpan & Han (2013), investigates the effect of culture and salespersons' retail service quality on impulse buying and provides evidence that service quality moderates the effect of culture on impulse buying. The experiment uses a 2 (culture of participants: Singaporean versus American) by 2 (retail service quality: poor versus good) between-subjects factorial design. It found that for both cultures, good service leads to higher impulse buying than does poor service. The significant interaction between culture and service quality on impulse buying indicates that when service is good, Singaporeans show higher impulse buying than do Americans. In contrast, when

service is poor, Singaporeans reveal lower impulse buying than do Americans. The implication of this study is that multinational companies should invest in creating and assuring good service quality when they do business in collectivist cultures but might give relatively higher weight to other kinds of competitive advantages like investing in brand-building activities, integrated marketing, communication campaigns, and research and development in order to create higher quality products at lower costs etc. when they do business in individualist cultures.

### 1.5 CONCLUSION

Our Research paper has gone through various aspects of Impulse buying, its concept and the interplay of many factors like mood, impulse buying tendency, consumer's self-concept, demographic factors including age, cultural factors, retail service quality etc. Age negatively impacts impulse buying to greater extent for collectivists compared to individualists in their early adult ages. Cultural factors moderate the consumer's impulsive buying behavior tenets which includes self-concept, normative influences, control of emotions and the postponement of instant gratification. Collectivist culture leads to an ability to repress the internal attributes and people are able to shift their impulse buying behavior due to the tendency to focus on group interests. Involvement impacts impulse buying tendency. After impulse buying most of the individuals found improvement in their moods. So, it is necessary for organizations to determine the consumer-related factors affecting impulse buying decisions and to satisfy customers affected by these factors and to identify who buy on impulse.

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