



TOPIC- STIMULI AFFECTING IMPULSE PURCHASE DECISION - A CASE STUDY OF MOHALI

Yuvika Singh* Dipti*

*Assistant Professor (CBSA), Chandigarh Group of Colleges, Mohali.

Abstract

An impulse purchase or impulse buy is an unplanned decision to buy a product or service, made just before a purchase. One who tends to make such purchases is referred to as an impulse purchaser or impulse buyer. This paper is an attempt to find the variables/factors that effects customer impulse buying behavior .The impact of various impulse buying factors like sales and promotions placement of the product, window merchandising, effective price strategy on customer impulse buying behavior has been analyzed .A study is based on the primary data collected from Mohali. This paper will be useful for marketing practitioners and researchers towards comprehensive understanding of the consumer's impulsiveness. Studies say that a great portion of the purchases in malls are unplanned and that their number increases the amount of an individual's bill.

Key Words: *Impulse Buying, Indian Consumer Buying Behavior, Factors Affecting Impulse Buying.*

I. Introduction

An impulse purchase or impulse buying is an unplanned decision to buy a product or service, made just before a purchase. One who tends to make such purchase is known as an impulse purchaser or impulse buyer. Research findings suggest that emotions and feelings play a decisive role in purchasing, triggered by seeing the product or exposed to a well crafted promotional message.

The main factors which affects Consumer's Impulse Buying Behaviour in market are Advertising, sales promotion, personal selling, and public relations. The importance of impulse buying behaviour is recognized by marketers and researchers all around the world and phenomenon has been extensively studied by researchers during the last 65 years.

Super stores or Malls have become a new dimension for shopping in India. It has opened the modern way to shop in the most comfortable and relaxed shopping environment. It is a different type of shop unlike departmental store or any other type of grocery shop. It is much larger in size and in terms of quantity of products and much greater number of products is available. Impulse purchase or impulse buying means any purchase which a shopper makes, though it was not planned in advance. Impulse buying is defined here as a consumer's immediate response to external stimuli. It is not confined to a specific product category, but excludes the purchase of common household items .Almost everyone makes impulse purchases at one time or another; it would seem that this is relatively simple phenomenon. A consumer sees some item, finds it appealing, and buys it, although he or she had not planned its purchase before entering the store. Researchers and marketers are interested in the dynamics of impulse buying it accounts for a large proportion of purchasing behaviour. Studies say that a great portion of the purchases in malls are unplanned and that their number increases the amount of an individual's bill.

2. Research Methodology

a. Objective of the Study

To find out what are the factors and in what frequencies that affect impulse buying behaviour of the consumer at malls.

b. Sample Size and Research Area

In all, 100 samples were collected from the respondents in and around Mohali, through convenience sampling, from different malls.

c. Data Collection

An empirical investigation is conducted through the development of structured questionnaire that was filled up by 100 respondents. Questionnaire incorporates questions related to general people impulse purchase behaviour and the factors general people think are responsible for impulse purchase.

3. Literature Review

Stern (1962) found that products bought on impulse are usually cheap. Shopping lifestyle is defined as the behaviour exhibited by purchaser with regard to the series of personal responses and opinions about purchase of the products as reported by Cobb and Hoyer (1986).

Positive emotions are defined as affects and moods, which determine intensity of consumer decision-making reported by Watson and Tellegen (1985).



In a research conducted by Cobb and Hoyer (1986), impulse buying was defined as an unplanned purchase and this definition can also be found in the research of Kollat and Willett (1967).

In another research by Rook (1987) reported that impulse buying usually takes place, when a consumer feels a forceful motivation that turns into a desire to purchase a commodity instantly.

Beatty and Ferrell (1998) defined impulse buying as instantaneous purchase having no previous aim or objective to purchase the commodity. They find that shopping life style and impulse buying behaviour are closely related but only in the case of impulse buyers. The study also states that impulse purchasers fell in the middle as of the measurement tools used by the researchers, indicated that purchasers will not pick the first brand they spotted in the shopping mall.

The researches of Beatty and Ferrell (1998); Husman (2000); Rook and Gardner (1993); Youn and Faber, (2000) found that emotions strongly influence buying behaviours, which result into consumer impulse buying.

Indian Consumer Buying Behaviour

The consumer seeks a greater balance of price with quality, convenience, consistency, innovation and shopping experience while going for shopping. The recent economic slowdown has made the Indian consumer's mindset more conservative and behaviour more limited.

Point of purchase (POP) has become most important for the retailers. Hence, smart brands and retailers spend more effort in-store in terms of improving not only store interiors but also the overall shopping experience, even if they are high value-seeking ones. So far as shopping behaviour is concerned, earlier there was a trend of going shopping with 'family' which now have transformed into impulse buying. Shopping together saves time for the family while also providing some additional time together. Modern retail which offers all the articles under one roof optimizes the core consumers with many dimensions including saving of time, enhanced shopping experience, and combining shopping with leisure and recreation.

When different brands compete under one roof in modern retail outlets (malls) sensory marketing plays a vital role. It changes brand perception positively when the stimulus is congruent with the other brand elements. It can thus be seen as a suitable tool for reinforcing the Value of a brand. A strong stimulus influences the consumer on an unconscious level and can affect preference positively hence triggering impulse buying behaviour. Adding a sensory dimension to the marketing strategy can strengthen the brand equity implying a stronger bond between the brand and the consumer. The use of sensory branding is growing rapidly and it ultimately is predicted to be the future of strategic branding.

Factors Affecting Impulse Buying

In the recent past, several researchers have highlighted various factors that can trigger the impulsive buying behaviour of a consumer.

a) Internal Factors

The internal cues refer to consumers' self-feelings, moods, emotional states and personality traits Consumers' emotions and personality traits have been regarded as important components of internal triggers for impulse buying. It has been speculated that impulsive buyers are more likely to be responsive to their emotional conditions than non-impulsive buyers

- **Emotional States**

Emotions can be defined as, "a mental state of readiness that arises from cognitive appraisals of events or thoughts; has a phenomenological tone; is accompanied by physiological processes; is often expressed physically.

- **Personality Traits**

The strength or intensity, direction or symptom, and quality or content of an emotion highly depend on the personality traits of the customer.

b) External Factors

Though emotional states and personality traits are important ingredients for impulsive purchase, these factors in most circumstances are activated or triggered by the external cues. The impulsive behaviour is viewed to be directly controlled by stimulus and though a large part of individual's reaction depends on his or her personality traits a major role is played by the external factors as the initiator of impulse.

- **Demographics**

Several researchers have found that demographics play a very important role in the purchasing and consumption decisions of consumers Variables like gender and education level make a significant difference to consumer impulsiveness and in the number of impulse purchase transactions completed.



- **Socio-Economic**

In the past, impulse buying behaviour had been considered socially wrong and economically superfluous and people tried to suppress their natural impulse instinct in accordance with social norms. With time the consumption pattern has changed and people now consume conspicuously to express a sense of self-identity and make an impression in the social world, making shopping a leisure and lifestyle activity.

- **Ambient Factors**

Music is capable of evoking complex affective and behavioural responses in consumers in retail environments. The consumer is likely to stay longer in an environment where the music is being played to his preference, compared to, the environment where the music is not up to his/her taste.

- **In-store Factors**

Scent has been divided along three different dimensions, the affective quality of the scent, its arousing nature, and its intensity. Ambient scent is different from non-ambient scent, as it does not originate from any particular object but is present in the environment. It affects individuals' perception about the store and the products.

- **Design factors**

Retailers have used colour to put consumers in the buying mood. The use of warm colours like, red or yellow, on packaging, and the use of cool colours, like blue or violet, on the background and walls, draws customer attention, thereby, influencing the consumer behaviour in the store.

- **Social Factors**

The density and behaviour of consumers and employees in a retail environment has a major impact on consumers' decision making processes. With an increase in the number of consumers and employees in an environment the atmosphere gets crowded and reduces pleasure for consumers. In a crowded surrounding individuals will have less control over the environment and the satisfaction would be less.

- **Other Factors**

A few other factors like price and in-store sales promotions, act as major initiators of impulse purchases.

Data Analysis and Findings

By the analysis of data of 100 respondents the following results were being found

1. Comparison between the Demographic Profiles of Impulse & Not Impulse Buyers

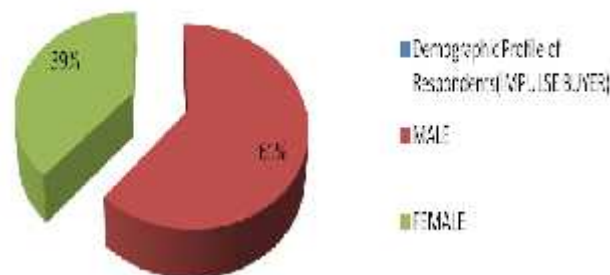


Figure 1: Demographic Profile of Impulse Buyers

Figure 1 shows that 61 % of the impulse buyers are males while 39 % of impulse buyers are females.

2. Comparison of the Impulse Buyers on the Basis of Age Group

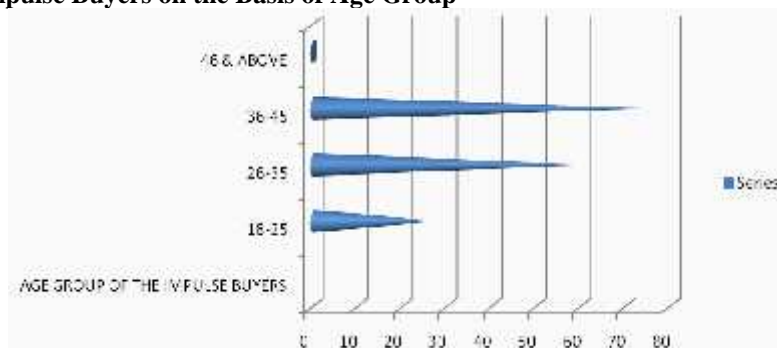


Figure 2: Age Group of the Impulse Buyers



Figure 2 shows that the maximum number of impulse buyers is in the age group of 36-45 years while minimum are 46 years and above.

3. Occupation of the Impulse Buyers

From the following chart (Figure 3) we can see that mainly the impulse buyers are the service people who are not having much time for themselves.

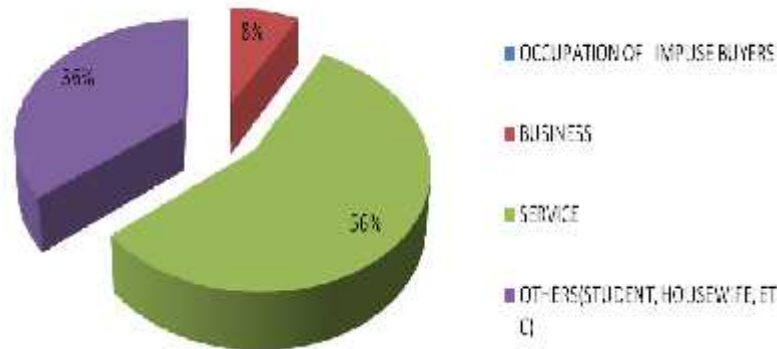


Figure 3: Occupation of the Impulse Buyers

4. We Can See (Fig 4) that the Research Shows that about 67% People Spend Very Less Time on Shopping While 31% People Go for Long Shopping Hours

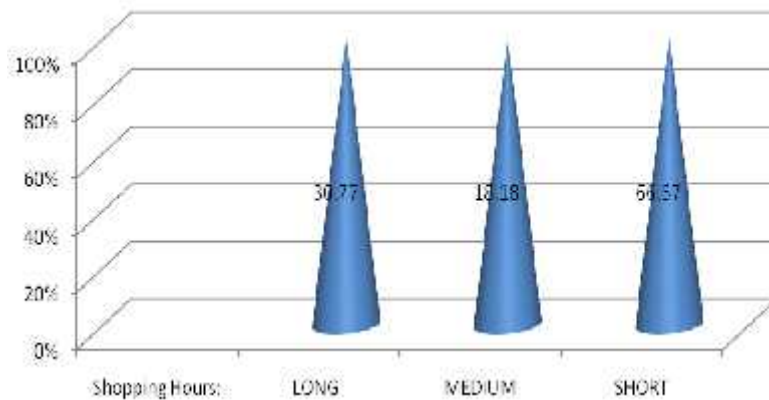


Figure 4: Shopping Hours Spent

5. Maximum Customers Don't Plan before Going for Shopping for the Apparels as Compared When they Go for Shopping for Grocery, Footwear or FMCG

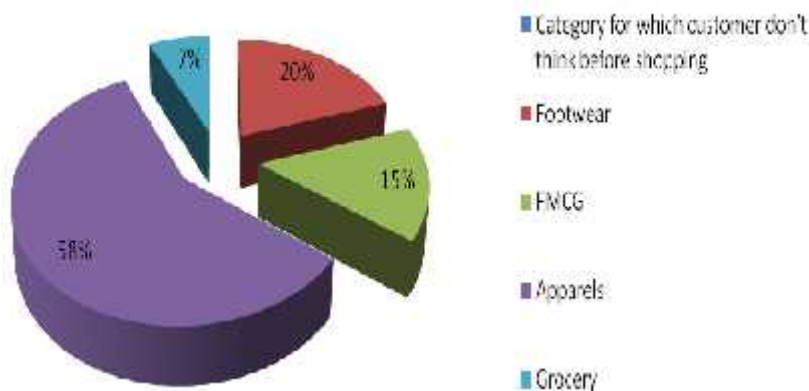


Figure 5: Category for Which Customer Don't Plan before Shopping



6. Following Table shows the different frequencies of individual stimuli influencing the buying behavior:

Table 1: Frequencies of Individual Stimuli Influencing Buying Behaviour

Stimulus	Not At All Important	Low Importance	Slightly Important	Neutral	Moderately Important	Very Important	Extremely Important
Price & Discount	(8%)	(2%)	(0%)	(16%)	(24%)	(30%)	(20%)
Display	(4%)	(8%)	(16%)	(24%)	(28%)	(14%)	(4%)
Offer/Scheme	(12%)	(20%)	(28%)	(16%)	(10%)	(8%)	(8%)
Salesperson	(38%)	(18%)	(18%)	(8%)	(2%)	(4%)	(8%)
Reference Group	(22%)	(36%)	(22%)	(12%)	(2%)	(4%)	(0%)
Quality/Brand	(8%)	(10%)	(6%)	(16%)	(18%)	(18%)	(24%)
Popularity	(8%)	(6%)	(10%)	(8%)	(16%)	(22%)	(36%)
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

- Table 1 show that it was found that the price and discount plays a very important role in impulse purchase as maximum people found it very important while shopping.
- It was found that maximum respondents say that display of the items is responsible for their impulse purchase.
- It was found that very few respondents found offer band schemes important for any kind of purchase.
- About 38 % people said that the role of a salesperson is very less in their impulse purchase.
- It was found that the reference groups are least important in the impulse purchase.
- Quality or Brand of the products most important irrespective of price for the customers.
- Popularity of the product is extremely important for the customers for any kind of purchase.

Conclusion

The research presents an interesting and fascinating area for consumer research and this study attempts to provide a deeper understanding of the interaction between consumers buying behaviour and in-store stimuli with respect to impulse purchase decisions. The study helped determine that majority of consumers either never or only sometimes plan their purchases, thereby rendering themselves more susceptible to stimuli that encourage impulse buying behaviour. The most effective stimuli that trigger impulse buying in consumers was found to be price and discounts offered along with any sale or clearance sign, which majorly influence the purchase intentions of the customer. It can be said with some understanding that sensory cues play a crucial role in predicting the impulse buying behaviour of the customers. It can be said with some degree of confidence that the visual merchandising as well as other sight cues prove to be fairly successful in determining the consumer buying behaviour. Impulse buying behaviour plays a very important role in studying the purchase behaviour of the customers.

References

1. Burroughs, J. E. (1996). "Product Symbolism, Self Meaning, and Holistic Matching: The Role of Information Processing in Impulsive Buying", *Advances in Consumer Research*.
2. Cobb, C.J., & Hoyer, W.D. (1986). Planned versus impulse purchases behaviour. *Journal of Retailing*, 62 (4).
3. Gardner, M. P. And Rook, D. W. (1988). "Effects of Impulse Purchases on Consumers" Affective States", *Advances in Consumer Research*.
4. Hoch, S. J., & Loewenstein, G. F. (1991). Time-inconsistent preferences and consumer selfcontrol. *Journal of Consumer Research*.
5. J. Stávková, L. Stejskal, Z. Toufarová (1008). Factors influencing consumer behaviour. *Agric. Econ. – Czech*.
6. Piron, F. (1991). Defining impulse purchasing. *Advances in Consumer Research*.
7. Puri, R. (1996). Measuring and modifying consumer impulsiveness: A cost–benefit accessibility framework. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*.
8. Rook, D. W. (1987). The buying impulse. *Journal on Consumer Research*.
9. Rook, D.W., & Fisher, R.J. (1995). Normative influences on impulsive buying behaviour. *Journal of Consumer Research*.
10. Rook, D.W., & Gardner, M.P. (1993). In the mood: impulse buying affective antecedents. *Research in Consumer Behaviour*.
11. Verplanken, B., Sato, A (2011). The Psychology of Impulse Buying: An Integrative Self Regulation Approach. *J Consum Policy*.
12. Vyas (1007). Sales Promotion Practices in Apparel Retail Sector and Challenges Ahead. W.P. No.1007-11-02. November 1007. IIM –A.