

A Review of Impulse Buying Behavior

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Abstract

Researchers and Practitioners have been interested in the field of impulse buying for the past sixty years (Clover, 1950; Stern, 1962; Rook, 1987; Peck and Childers, 2006; Chang et.al, 2011). The purpose of this paper is to provide a detailed account of the impulse buying behavior by compiling the various research works literature in the field of Retailing and Consumer Behavior. It gives a broad overview of the impulse buying construct and the various behavior related aspects. A wide range of journal databases and books were referred to review the works of various researchers. The content analysis of the various research works led to the classification of literature into different factors influencing impulse buying and further development of research framework. The multiple aspects of the subject are categorized for future research works in the area of impulse buying with the suggestions. The paper will be useful for marketing practitioners and researchers towards comprehensive understanding of the consumer's impulsiveness.

Keywords: impulse buying, impulsiveness, online impulse, consumer behavior, hedonic motivation, retailing

1. Introduction

Hypermarkets, Multiplex malls, Mega marts are the new faces of modern retailing environment in major cities of India. The retail industry in India has emerged as one of the most dynamic and rapidly growing industries with several domestic and foreign players entering into the market. India is rated fifth among the developing countries based upon global retail development index of thirty developing countries drawn up by AT Kearney 2012 reports. The organized retailing in India is expected to grow multifold in the next five years, which is mainly driven by changing lifestyles, increasing disposable income and favorable demographic segmentation. Indian consumers have diametrically changed in terms of their shopping behavior and impulse buying is emerging as a highly noticeable behavior. In this context, the role of impulse buying plays a significant role for modern retailers and hence for researchers. In this paper, we have reviewed the literature on the impulse buying behavior and proposed a comprehensive outline of impulse buying behavior to be explored and empirically tested in future research endeavors. At the end of this paper, we have outlined a set of suggestions related to the impulse buying behavior of consumers to be investigated in the subsequent research works.

2. Literature Review

Research scholars have taken a very keen interest in impulse buying for the past sixty years (Clover, 1950; Stern, 1962; Rook, 1987; Peck and Childers, 2006). Abratt and Goodey (1990) found that the examination of impulse buying in supermarkets could be of much interest to the manufacturers as well as retailers worldwide. Piron (1991) attempted to define the impulse buying by reviewing the past research works and found that the earlier studies revealed impulse buying to be very similar to unplanned purchasing (Clover 1950, West 1951), and forwarded his findings with managerial interests in mind. The managerial interest mainly refers to the focus on the product sales. Therefore in the earlier studies only the purchases were investigated and not the consumers traits. The researchers have suggested that impulse purchases can be further classified depending on the consumer's experiencing emotional and / or cognitive reactions.

2.1 Definitions and Types of Impulse Buying

The descriptions of impulse buying before the study of Rook (1987) were focused on the product while determining an impulse purchase. The earlier studies did not include the consumer and his personal traits as the factor influencing impulse purchases. The later year's researchers aimed on the personal impulsiveness by investigating the various behavioral aspects of impulse buying. Rook (1987) argued that during impulse buying,

the consumer experiences an instantaneous, overpowering and persistent desire. He characterised the impulse buying as unintended, non-reflective reaction, which occurs soon after being exposed to stimuli inside the store. Rook and Gardner (1993) defined impulse buying as an unplanned behavior involving quick decision-making and tendency for immediate acquisition of the product.

Beatty and Ferrell (1998) described that 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. They explained that the impulse buying behavior occurs after experiencing a buying desire by the shopper and without much reflection. The buying of an item which is out-of-stock and reminded during encountering the product are excluded from the purview of impulse buying.

Bayley and Nancarrow (1998) defined impulse buying as a “sudden, compelling, hedonically complex buying behavior in which the rapidity of an impulse decision process precludes thoughtful and deliberate consideration of alternative information and choices.” Hedonic behavior is marked with pleasure; in contrast to the utilitarian behavior where the shoppers seek for functional benefits and economic value in the shopping process.

Block and Morwitz (1999) enunciated the definition of impulse purchase as consumer buying an item with little or no deliberation after the result of a sudden, powerful urge. Kacen and Lee (2002) stated that impulsive behavior are more arousing and irresistible but less deliberative when compared to planned purchasing behavior.

According to Engel and Blackwell (1982) impulse buying is an action undertaken without previously having been consciously recognised or a buying intention formed prior to entering the store. Based upon the different description, we conclude that impulse buying involves hedonic purchase decisions which are made inside a store and excludes the reminder purchasing activities.

The classification of a purchase as planned or impulse began with the Stern (1962) study where he provided the basic framework of impulse buying by categorizing a buying behavior as planned, unplanned, or impulse. Planned purchases involve time-consuming information-searching with rational decision making, whereas unplanned buying refers to all shopping decisions made without any advance planning. Impulse buying is distinguished from the unplanned buying in terms of quick decision making. In addition to being unplanned, an impulse purchase also involves experiencing a sudden, strong, and irresistible urge to buy.

Iyer (1989) further distinguished that all impulse purchases are unplanned, but unplanned purchases are not always impulsively decided. Han et al. (1991) modified the Stern (1962) classification of impulse mix in context of fashion products and developed as four types of impulse buying:

- i) Planned impulse buying
- ii) Reminded impulse buying
- iii) Suggestion or fashion-oriented impulse buying
- iv) Pure impulse buying

Planned impulse buying is partially planned but specific product or categories are not decided by the shopper. They are further determined on the basis of the different sales promotions inside the shop. Reminder impulse buying occurs when the buyer is reminded of the need of the product noticing it in the shop. Pure impulse buying is a novelty or escape purchase which a shopper breaks the trend of usual shopping.

Stern (1962) introduced the concept of suggestion impulse purchase as the purchase of new product on the basis of self suggestion but without any prior experience. Han et.al, (1991) described fashion oriented impulse as a type of suggestion impulse where the purchase is motivated by self-suggestion to buy the new fashion product. In case of fashion oriented impulse buying, shopper has no previous experience with the new and fashionable product. Mattila and Enz (2002) later argued that fashion-oriented impulse buying can be influenced by shopper's own positive emotions when shopping.

Table 1. Chronological study of impulse buying

| Author | Year | Contribution |
|-----------------------|------|--|
| Clover | 1950 | First to study impulse buying mix and pointed out that some product categories are more sold on impulse. |
| Stern | 1962 | Defined impulse buying behavior by classifying as planned, unplanned, or impulse, also suggested that some product-related factors that might predict 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 | 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 | 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. |
| 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 | 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 | 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 | Introduced impulsiveness as a personality trait and defined as consumer's tendency to buy spontaneously, non-reflectively, immediately, and kinetically. |
| Dittmar et.al, | 1995 | Found that gender influences the impulse buying and purchase of a product impulsively could be motivated by the self concept. |
| 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. |
| Youn 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. |

| | | |
|---------------------|------|--|
| 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 | 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 | 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. |
| 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. |
| 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 | Hedonic shopping value of an individual lead to impulse purchases and are inextricably related to each other. |
| Sharma et. al, | 2010 | Studied the variety seeking behavior of impulse buying. They found the variety seeking individuals are more prone to impulse purchases. |
| Chang et .al | 2011 | Observed that the positive emotional responses of consumer to the retail environment result in impulsive purchases. |

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2.2 Factors Influencing Impulse Buying

Impulse buying of the shopper is influenced by number of factors which could be either related to the shopping environment, shopper's personal traits, product itself and the diverse demographic and socio-cultural aspects.

2.2.1 External Stimuli and Store Environment

External factors of impulse buying refer to marketing cues or stimuli that are placed and controlled by the marketer in an attempt to lure consumers into purchase behavior (Youn and Faber, 2000). External Stimuli are related to the shopping and the marketing environment. The shopping environments include the store size, ambience, design and formats while the marketing environment is the various sales and advertising activities. Buying impulses can be induced when a consumer encounters a relevant visual stimulus in the retail environment, or some promotional stimuli (Piron, 1991). 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, 2010).

Applebaum (1951) was the first to suggest that impulse purchasing may stem from the consumer's exposure to a stimulus while in the store. The various stimuli inside the shop directly or indirectly influence the customer. Store atmosphere is influenced by the attributes such as lighting, layout, presentation of merchandise, fixtures, floor coverings, colours, sounds, odours, and dress and behavior of sales and service personnel. Highly stimulating and pleasant store environments lead to enhanced impulse buying (Hoyer and Macininer, 1999). Product appearance and background music were important external influences on the customer (Verplanken and Herabadi, 2001).

Consumers can experience an urge to buy impulsively when visually encountering cues such as promotional incentives (Dholakia, 2000). Xu (2007) stated that store environments influence the consumers' emotional states which may further lead to impulse buying inside the store. Rook and Hoch (1985) emphasised that buying

impulses actually begin with a consumer's sensation and perception driven by the external stimulus, and are followed by a sudden urge to buy (I see I want to buy).

Mattila and Wirtz (2008) found that store environmental stimuli positively affect impulse buying behavior especially when the store environment is perceived as over-stimulating (excitement and stimulation). Stimuli in the retail store environment are likely to affect consumer emotions (Donovan and Rossiter, 1982), which are other variables that have been found to affect the impulse purchases (Rook 1987; Zhou and Wong 2003). Baumeister (2002) argued that high arousal and overstimulation lessens people's self regulation and also tends to reduce people's ability think through their actions which could further increase the chances of impulse buying.

Kaur and Singh (2007) studied the buying behavior of Indian youth and found that sensory stimulants such as the background music, odour, or feel of the products play an important role in shaping the shopping exercise of these individuals and could set off impulse buying activity in them. Dave (2010) 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.

Gupta et.al, (2009) suggested that when size of the store is concerned product display and product prices were the major in-store stimuli in large stores. For small-sized stores, product price was the main factor that attracted impulse purchases. Retail merchandising instantly motivates a consumer to buy a product. Merchandising activities act as a silent salesman in the retail outlet (Muruganatham and Kaliyamoorthy, 2005). Zhou and Wong (2003) described that informative and experiential aspect of POP poster may influence impulse buying. Consumer's propensity to purchase on impulse receives a further impetus when they see an item on sale (Ramaswamy and Namakumar, 2009). Hulten & Vanyushyn (2011) also observed that impulsive buyers are giving more attention to the in-store displays and combo offerings.

Harmanciouglu (2009) suggested that to promote the impulse buying urge and behavior of new products, marketing managers may emphasise excitement; fun and variety in their promotional activities. Dawson and Kim (2009) observed that impulse buying is linked to up and cross-selling strategies. Yu and Bastin (2010) studied the effect of in-store Point of Purchase (POP) posters in supermarkets and found them to induce impulse purchase behaviors and cost-effective. In-store stimuli are promotional techniques employed to increase impulse buying of products. Some examples of these techniques include in-store settings, on-shelf positions, price-off promotions, sampling, POP displays, coupons, and in-store demonstration.

With the growth of technology such as self service, innovative display of product in airports has accustomed shoppers to do more impulse buying (Michael et al, 2010). Omar et.al, (2001) 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, co-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 and Lennon, 2004). Dawson and Kim (2009) 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.

2.2.2 Internal Stimuli

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.

One of the path breaking researches by Rook and Hoch (1985) highlighted that it is people and not the product, which experience the consuming impulses during a shopping spree. Weinberg and Gottwald (1982) initially established that impulse buyers exhibited greater feelings of amusement, delight, enthusiasm, and joy. Chang et.al, (2011) argued that consumers who had more positive emotional responses to the retail environment were more likely to make impulsive purchases.

Rook (1987) suggested that consumer impulsivity is a lifestyle trait which can be linked to materialism, sensation seeking, and recreational aspects of shopping. Rook and Fisher (1995) introduced the concept of

buying impulsiveness trait which shows a person's tendency to involve in impulsive shopping. Hawkins et al. (2007) stated that buyers seek variety and differences which may be a major reason for brand switching as well as impulse purchasing. Variety seeking behavior was found to be associated with impulse buying in a study of (Sharma et al, 2010).

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). Impulse purchases are more likely to happen when shoppers evaluate the purchase as appropriate (O'Guinn and Faber, 1989). Youn and Faber (2000) pointed out that impulse buying may originate from consumer traits such as impulsiveness and optimum stimulation level, shopping enjoyment, or lack of self-control. Shen and Khalifa (2012) observed that cognition of the consumer moderates the relationship among buying impulse and the actual impulsive behavior.

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). Sinha (2003) 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.

Sneath et al. (2009) have argued that impulse buying can also be induced because of depression of an individual and an attempt to improve the mood. Verplanken and Herabadi (2001) found the similar results in his studies and stated that impulse buying is often associated with individuals who want to escape from negative psychological perceptions such as low self-esteem, negative feelings, or moods. The various autistic stimuli which are self generated such as consumer's own thoughts and emotions are also responsible for impulse buying (Hirschman, 1992).

Hausman (2000) argued that impulse buying is a hedonic need predominantly motivated by achievement of higher order needs loosely grouped around Maslow's 'hierarchy of needs'. Efforts to satisfy the higher order needs in this hierarchy lead to different types of impulse buying behavior. Sharma et.al, (2010) categorized impulse buying as hedonic behavior that is associated with feelings and psychosocial motivations instead of thinking and functional benefits. Beatty and Ferrell (1998) suggested that impulse purchasing is associated with sensory stimulation and hedonic motivation.

2.2.3 Situational and Product Related Factors

Shapiro (1992) stated that situational predictors of impulse buying include the retail location, time of shopping, seasons and shopping habits. Situational factors influencing impulse buying may include actual or perceived time available and spending power (Beatty and Ferrell, 1998). Hoch and Loewenstein (1991) suggested that buying may result in more buying and it can form momentum in which impulsive desires are likely to be acted upon.

The more the time spent in the store prior to seeing an impulse item, the more is the chance to buy impulsively (Jeffrey & Hodge, 2007). Relationship between the store environment and the consumer's impulsive moods is moderated by the situational factors such as time pressure (Xu, 2007). In-store browsing appears to be positively affected by one's available time and one's impulse buying tendency, and in turn, has a positive impact on one's positive feelings and impulse buying urge (Beatty and Ferrell, 1998).

Stern (1962) initially observed that the different aspects of the product which is encountered in the store may affect impulse buying. Functional benefits can also trigger the impulse buying phenomenon (Schiffman et.al, 2010). Yu and Bastin (2010) found that impulse buying varies across a broad range of product categories which include clothes, books and equipments for exercises. Crawford and Melewer (2003) found that confectionery is the most sold impulse product which has seen unprecedented annual growth in the travel retail sector, outperforming categories. Impulse products are purchased on impulse, without any planning or search effort. Kumar (2007) suggested that impulse buying concept is applicable to durables apart from FMCG. In case of new products, Harmancioglu et al. (2009) found that knowledge about the new product drive impulse buying intentions and behavior which is determined by the word-of-mouth and compliance with social norms.

According to Jones et al. (2003), product-specific impulse buying is result of product involvement and impulse buying tendencies of the shopper. Han et al., (1991) studied impulse buying of fashion clothing's and found variety of patterns such as pure, reminded, emotional, and fashion-oriented impulse. Fashion-oriented impulse is

stimulated by new fashion styles and brands which drive consumers to impulse buying. Park et al, (2006) found that fashion involvement affected fashion-oriented impulse buying when shopping.

Experiential products such as apparels have symbolic meanings and are purchased impulsively because of emotional preferences of shoppers. Tauber (1972) suggested that characteristics of the apparel itself, such as colour or style that are incorporated into store displays may influence the likelihood of impulse buying.

2.2.4 Demographics and Socio-Cultural Factors

Kollat and Willett (1967) found that the characteristics of consumers and their demographics influence the impulse purchasing. Local market conditions and various cultural forces could also impact the way consumer; go for impulse purchasing (Vohs and Faber, 2007).

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.

Dramatic increases in personal disposable incomes and credit availability have made impulse buying in retail environments prevalent consumer behaviour (Dittmar et al., 1996). From a socioeconomic point of view, individuals with relatively low levels of household income tend to enjoy immediate indulgence (such as day-to-day savings and sensory stimulation) as opposed to delay-of-gratification. Internal, personal-related factor like educational experience influences the act of impulse buying (Wood, 1998).

Mattila and Wirtz (2008) highlighted that social factors influence impulse buying. Social factors include two types: store employees and other customers. Social factor (e.g. employee friendliness) was found to directly influence impulse buying. Store managers might be able to reduce the negative effect of crowding by training their employees to be extra friendly at busy times.

Praise from others, such as salesperson, friends during the shopping may increase the chances of impulse purchase (Yu and Bastin 2010). Luo (2005) research work about “influence of shopping with others on impulsive purchasing” revealed that the presence of peers increases the urge to purchase but the presence of family members decreases it. Rook and Fisher (1995) suggested that anonymity might encourage impulse purchasing. Shoppers tend to try on new things, styles and fantasize, wrapped in the anonymity of a self-service environment.

Kacen and Lee (2002) argued that in a cultural context, the theory of individualism and collectivism gives important insights about consumer’s impulsive behaviour. Cultural aspect’s study can further assist both academics and practitioners in developing a better understanding of the impulsive buying phenomenon. Individuals who are more independent engage themselves in greater impulse-purchase behaviour than those who are interdependent in self-concept. In the similar lines, the collectivist consumers are found to engage themselves in less impulse purchase behaviour than the individualist consumers.

3. Research Framework and Future Research

After the comprehensive review of the literature and content analysis we have derived some predictions for the future research endeavors in the field of impulse buying. In this paper, we therefore propose a framework to increase the understanding of impulse buying. After analysing the various factors studied in the past studies we conceptualised four different groups which could accommodate the various factors. Therefore we have categorized the various factors under the broad categories of “External stimuli”, “Internal stimuli”, “Situational and product related factors”, and “Demographics and Socio-cultural factors”.

We have also observed the various factors influencing the impulse buying and some moderating traits such as cognition and traits. Our review shows that the impulse buying is actually a result of the interaction of various internal and external stimuli. There are aspects such as personality traits and socio-cultural traits that could be studied further in detail to better understand the impulsiveness of the consumers.



Figure 1. Different factors influencing impulse buying behavior

Source: Compiled by authors - Muruganatham and Bhakat

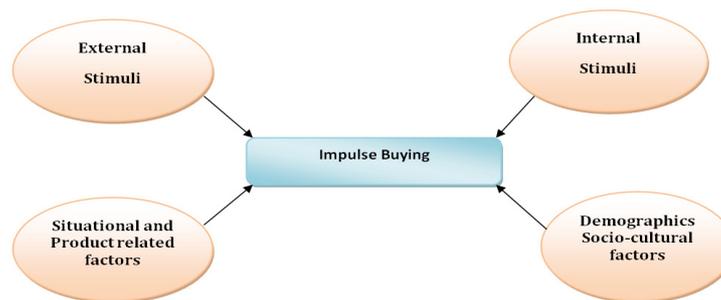


Figure 2. Framework for impulse buying behavior

Source: Compiled by authors - Muruganatham and Bhakat

Based on the literature review, we now produce a set of research propositions that could help in developing the knowledge on this area of consumer behavior. Our proposed model captures the different aspects of impulse buying of the consumers. In this part of our literature review, we have explored four propositions that arise from the derived model. The future researches could be done under the following lines:

- P1-** Effect of various external stimuli on the impulse buying behavior
- P2-** Effect of various internal stimuli on the impulse buying behavior
- P3-** Effect of the situational and product related factors on impulse buying behavior
- P4-** Effect of Demographics and socio-cultural aspects on impulse buying behavior

These four dimensional frameworks could be further hypothesized in the future research attempts and studied through empirical testing and exploratory studies. Among these four lines of research, the most challenging implication of our research is the effect of the external stimuli (market and store related factors) on the consumer's impulse buying. With the technological development of the retailing formats, this aspect is fully under the control of the marketers. External stimuli could be leveraged by the retailers by framing suitable retail strategies to tap the potential consumers inside the store. Future research studies could be extended in this field by analysing the interactive effects of the various stimuli and the shopper's personal traits.

4. Conclusion

Impulse buying has been a challenge for market researchers due to its complex nature. Hausman (2000) mentioned that impulse buying is a complicated and multifaceted phenomenon which accounts for a huge volume of the products sold each and every year. Consumer researchers have mainly focused on identifying the different factors that induce impulse buying in various developed countries (Bayley & Nancarrow, 1998). In the emerging economies, there is a need to study the impulse buying due to recent development in retailing and huge cultural differences when compared to developed economies (Kacen and Lee, 2002). Dramatic increases in personal disposable income, life style and credit availability have made impulse buying a widespread phenomenon across the different retail formats. Creating an attractive physical shopping environment and in-store stimuli is important to enhance the sales through the unplanned buying (Abratt and Goodey, 1990). Current Indian retailing environment will provide lot of scope for consumer to become impulsive in offline as well as online retail situation for different product categories.

Keeping in mind the universal nature of impulse buying, it can be capitalised by retailers to benefit their respective businesses. The proper combination and synergistic effect of the various factors influencing impulse buying could lead to more sales turnover hence benefiting the marketers and retailers. After the content analysis of the literature, it was possible to clarify the Impulse buying concept, its various dimensions, and its relationship with the consumer, and also to present some research propositions for the development of the knowledge in the field of consumer research. Based upon the changing trends of the market in the developing economies it is possible to infer that impulse buying may turn into a growing area of research and could be seen across the various forms of retailing.

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