

IMPULSE BUYING BEHAVIOUR IN BRICK AND MORTAR STORES: A LITERATURE REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

Impulse buying behaviour is one of the most fragmented concepts in the literature related to marketing and consumer behaviour. Various researchers have studied and analysed the effects of different factors affecting impulse buying behaviour. This study is based on reviewing the past studies related to impulse buying behaviour of consumers. It provides a broad view of various factors affecting impulse buying behaviour. A comprehensive conceptual framework has been derived from the review of literature.

Keywords: Buying Behaviour, Consumer Behaviour, Impulse Buying Behaviour, Brick and Mortar Stores.

INTRODUCTION

To study consumer behaviour is quite complex as many variables are involved and their tendency to interact with & influence each other is quite difficult to understand. Buyer behaviour involves both simple and complex mental processes (Solomon et al., 2016). Consumer behaviour refers to the dynamic interaction of cognition, behaviour & environmental events by which human beings conduct the exchange aspect of their lives as defined by American Marketing Association. The study of consumer behaviour involves search, evaluation, purchase, consumption and post purchase behaviour. Understanding behavior of consumers is a key to the success of business organizations (Fall Diallo et al., 2013). Marketing personnel are constantly analyzing the patterns of buying behavior and purchase decisions to predict the future trends (Goel et al., 2010; Goldsmith, 2004). Consumer behavior can be explained as the analysis of how, when, what and why people buy (Solomon et al., 2016).

One of the branches of Consumer behaviour is Impulse buying behaviour, which is quite prevalent, now-a-days. Impulse buying means to purchase any product without any pre-planning and/or due to the spur of the moment (Clover, 1950; Stern, 1962; West, 1951). Impulse buying let consumer experience the feeling of spontaneous and overpowering desire (Rook, 1987). Unplanned behaviour of immediate purchase of the product after getting exposure of an in-store stimuli counts as impulse buying behaviour (Rook, 1987). Impulse buying behaviour tends to be more arousing and irresistible but less deliberative when compared to planned purchasing behavior (Lee & Kacen, 2002).

Research Aim

The coupled aim of this study is:

1. To study and review the previous research studies on Impulse buying behaviour in brick and mortar stores.
2. To identify the main stimuli triggering impulse buying behaviour in brick and mortar

stores.

METHODOLOGY

This study is a review of literature on impulse buying behaviour of consumers in traditional brick and mortar stores. The articles studied for review are based on consumer's impulse buying behaviour towards different products. The articles studied are based on both Primary and secondary data. Various studies have been reviewed for this research paper and a conceptual framework has been developed on the basis of main identified stimuli. This paper presents the results of our secondary research on impulse buying behaviour of consumers in traditional stores.

Store Environment

Environmental cues: All the physical and non-physical elements of a retail store, which are controllable by the retailer are known as environmental cues (Sachdeva & Goel, 2015). Environmental cues may include & ambience, music, color scheme and salesperson service. These cues help the retailers to enhance the shopping experience for consumers (Kumar & Kim, 2014). In-store environmental cues are very important aspect for every retail outlet as they serve as a basis for store's image and brand name (Baker, 1994; Hu & Jasper, 2006; Yoo et al., 1998). In today's time, every retail store's success rate depends more on the service and experience offered by it instead of the products (Sachdeva & Goel, 2015). Consumers' purchase behaviour also depends on the environment of the store (Sherman et al., 1997). The concept of atmospheric cues was introduced by Kotler (1973) to induce certain emotional effects in the consumer which may lead to increased chances of purchase. Since then different factors of the in-store environment kept on emerging in various research studies such as colour and lighting (J. Lee & Johnson, 2010; Mohan et al., 2013); music (Kumar & Kim, 2014); aroma (Spangenberg et al., 1995); social factors (Mattila & Wirtz, 2008; Mohan et al., 2013) and point-of-purchase display (Rajagopal, 2008). It can also include ambience, layout, physical infrastructure, window display, floor merchandising and shop brand name (Baker et al., 2002; Bhatti & Latif, 2013; Alijošienė, 2015; Singh & Sahay, 2012; Thayumanavan & Daniel, 2016). Good in-store environment leads to incremental change in time and money spent by the consumers during their shopping trip which in turn increases the chances of increased overall sales (Donovan et al., 1994; Holmqvist & Lunardo, 2015; Xu, 2007).

Salesperson's Service

Salesperson's support and assistance also contribute towards enhancing the shopping experience of consumers and increasing the chances of purchase (Baker et al., 2002; Mattila & Wirtz, 2008). The consumers receiving good service quality by the salespersons of the retail store tend to buy even more than planned. Good assistance provided by the salesperson help the consumers in making correct decisions and it also help to reduce their stress (Scholz et al., 2020).

In-Store Promotional Strategies

Various promotional strategies including point-of-sale promotion used by retailers help in acquiring new customers and retaining the existing loyal customers. Promotional strategies such as price discounts, free samples, buy-one-get-one free deals and loyalty coupons positively affects the buying behaviour of consumers (Weerathunga & Pathmini, 2016). Price promotions either monetary or percentage, both serve the purpose of attracting buyers' interest and thereby increasing

the chances of purchases (Lehtimäki et al., 2019; Li et al., 2007). Buy-one-get-one free deals also help in triggering the impulse buying behaviour of consumers (Gordon-Hecker et al., 2020). Loyalty programmes such as loyalty points and coupons also stimulates the urge to buy impulsively (Weerathunga & Pathmini, 2016).

Situational Factors

Consumers' purchase decisions are highly influenced through active situational factors while shopping (Badgaiyan & Verma, 2015). Situational factors refers to social surroundings, purchase objective, temporal factors and antecedent conditions (Borges et al., 2010; Chebat et al., 2014; Merrilees & Miller, 2019; Zhuang et al., 2006).

Social Surroundings

Social surroundings refer to companion at shopping (Zhuang et al., 2006). Shopping is a social activity and company of another person enhances shopper's shopping experience (Borges et al., 2010; Chebat et al., 2014; Lindsey-Mullikin & Munger Jeanne, 2011; Luo, 2005; Nicholls, 1997; Wenzel & Benkenstein, 2018). Shopping companion can be anyone of peers, friends or family members (Borges et al., 2010; Luo, 2005). Shopping companions have a great influence on consumers' purchase decision (Borges et al., 2010; Luo, 2005; Nicholls, 1997; Wenzel & Benkenstein, 2018). Consumers shopping with companions enter more stores and spend more time on shopping as compared to solitary shoppers (Nicholls, 1997). Consumers shopping with peers and friends are more likely to purchase more as compared to solitary shoppers and consumers shopping with family members (Zhang et al., 2018). There are also such consumers who buy impulsively only when they are shopping with their family members (Ghosh & Karandikar, 2012). Literature also states that consumers shopping with a companion of opposite gender are more likely to buy impulsively (Cheng et al., 2013). Consumers may feel confused and stressed while making purchase decisions (Mattila & Wirtz, 2008). Their stress may reduce if they are shopping with a companion having similar shopping preferences. Salesperson's good service quality can also help alleviate stress level of the consumers (Scholz et al., 2020).

Task Definition

Task definition refers to the reason of purchase (Belk, 1975; Nicholson et al., 2002; Rosa Diaz, 2011). The reason of purchase also plays an important role in consumers' purchase decision-making (Yoon Kin Tong et al., 2012). Consumer can shop for either personal use or for gift purpose. The reason for purchase can also be distinguished on the basis of intent to shop being 'utilitarian' or 'status symbol' (Belk, 1975). Consumers' purchase behaviour varies according to the reason of purchase (Nicholson et al., 2002). Consumers' positive emotional responses are moderated by the reason of purchase. This moderation can lead to impulse buying behaviour (Chang et al., 2014).

Temporal Factors

Literature supports that time perspective has a significant influence on buying behaviour of consumers (Nicholls, 1997; Park et al., 1989). The amount of time spent inside the store plays a crucial role in impulse purchases made by consumers. The longer the time spent inside the store, the larger will be the chances of buying more than planned products (Stilley et al., 2010). The shortage of time availability on the part of consumers may lead to reduced planned as well as unplanned purchases (Park et al., 1989). Temporal factors also include the occasion while shopping.

Consumers tend to buy more at times of festivals and family functions (Shang et al., 2020).

Money Availability

In addition to time, the availability of money also serves as an important facilitator in consumers' purchase decision-making. The amount of money available with consumers while doing shopping affects their purchasing power. The more the money available, the greater will be the chances of consumer buying more than planned products (Chang et al., 2014).

Personal Factor

Extreme moods (both positive and negative) have a great influence on buying behaviour of consumers (Kyrios et al., 2013). Especially, consumers' pre-purchase mood plays a very important role in their purchase decision-making. Literature also supports that consumers' negative/depressed mood leads to excessive purchases by them (Kyrios et al., 2013). Consumers with flexible and growing mindsets have great tendency to buy impulsively and more than planned (Japutra & Song, 2020). Not only consumers' own mood, but mood of the salesperson also have impact on consumers' tendency to buy impulsively (Furnham & Milner, 2013). Salespeople with positive mood at work are supposed to provide better quality of service to consumers (George, 1998; Swinyard, 2003). Positive mood at work is positively influenced by sense of achievement, rewards, recognition and leader's attitude towards salespeople (George, 1998). Another important factor having influence on impulse buying behaviour of consumers is hedonic pleasure (Hashmi et al., 2020; Kaur & Singh, 2007). Young consumers seek hedonic pleasure from their shopping activity (Eren et al., 2012). Hedonic pleasure also serves as a moderating variable between in-store environment and impulse buying behaviour (Hashmi et al., 2020).

Conceptual Framework of the Study

Figure 1 presents the conceptual model derived from the review of past studies. It shows that impulse buying behaviour is triggered through three main independent variables i.e., store environment, situational factors and personal factors.

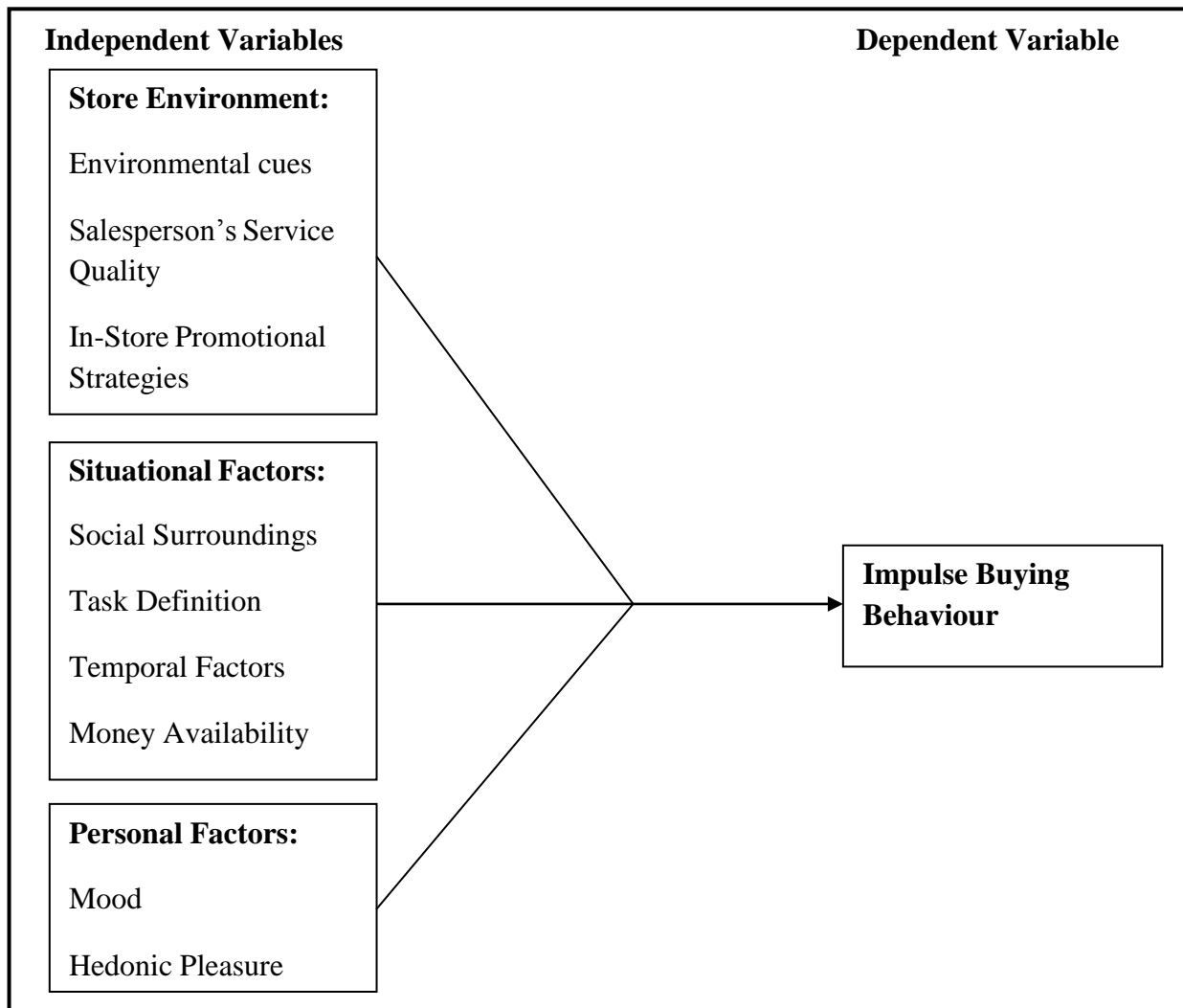


FIGURE 1
CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

Limitations and Future Scope of the Research

The study is based on limited review of literature. Study does not take into account a particular area and product. The study has been undertaken by reviewing limited journals and articles. Future research may focus on particular product or service area.

CONCLUSION

This study presents review of past studies related to impulse buying behaviour in retail outlets. Review of literature supports that store environment stimulates the urge to buy impulsively in the consumers through various cues such as display, layout & ambience, salesperson's service and various promotional strategies. Impulse buying behaviour can also be induced by the presence of particular shopping companion. Adequate time and money availability and specific occasion while shopping also trigger the urge to buy impulsively. Consumer's mood and hedonic pleasure provided by the product also plays a significant role in purchase decision. Hence, we have derived store environment, situational factors and personal factors as the main stimuli affecting impulse buying behaviour of the consumers.

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