

Impact of Impulsive Personality Traits and Store Environment on Impulse Buying Behavior

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This study was aimed to understand and assess the role of store environment, impulsive buying personality traits, impulsive buying tendency, and urge to buy on impulsive buying. Adopting validated scales from different studies, the survey instrument was developed. Data was collected from 203 respondents and analyzed using AMOS 22.0 software.

Using SEM technique, findings of the study suggested that impulse buying was positively associated with impulse buying tendency and urge to buy. The most important finding of the study is the significant effect of store environment on consumers that ultimately leads to such instinctive buying. The study also suggests that impulsive traits of the consumer do not directly lead to impulse buying. It actually needs some drive such as store environment that would stimulate their impulse buying tendency. However, this study didn't find any effect of demographic variables (gender and income) on impulse buying tendency. The outcomes of this paper suggest a number of implications for mall managers, retailers and marketers. Retailers should focus on store environment elements such as crowd, sales employee, entertainment, lighting, aroma and display etc. to stimulate impulse buying. The managerial implications of the study along with scope of further research have been addressed.

Keywords: Impulse buying, impulsive buying behavior, ward store environment, impulse buying tendency, impulsive buying personality traits, urge to buy, structural equation modeling.

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Introduction

Marketing managers have been acknowledging the importance of impulse buying. In fact, several researches in the west have posited that around 50 percent to 70 percent of consumers buying decisions in supermarkets involve impulsive buying. Studies like Bellenger, Robertson, and Hirschman (1978), Dawson and Kim (2010) and, Heilman, Nakamoto, and Rao, (2002) have noted that this could be around 80 percent in some product types. Research conducted by Coca Cola found that 50 percent of grocery item purchases account for impulse buying (CNBC, 2009). As per Point-of-Purchase Advertising International, seventy-six percent of all shopping decisions in the stores are unplanned (POPAL, 2012). The Indian retail industry, in the last one-decade, has shifted from unorganized to organized retailing (shopping malls). According to a report by KPMG (2014), approximately 70 percent stores of branded products operated in shopping malls. These malls were having maximum footfalls of shoppers from the younger age group (25-35 years). The report also stated that impulse buying in India accounted for approximately forty percent of consumer total purchasing and such impulse behavior was higher in organized retailing than unorganized.

Though it is exhibited in distinctive ways, subject to individual variances like gender, age (e.g., Dittmar, Beattie, & Friese, 1995, 1996; Kollat & Willet, 1967; Verplanken & Herabadi, 2001) or personality trait (Rook & Fisher, 1995; Youn & Faber, 2000), impulse purchasing is a widespread worldwide phenomenon. Impulse buying has received tremendous attention in the literature related to retail and marketing (Beatty & Ferrell, 1998; Rook & Fisher, 1995; Jones et al. 2003; Mohan, Sivakumaran, & Sharma, 2013; Prashar, Parsad, & Vijay, 2015). Previous studies on impulse purchasing uncovered its many variables, including shopper characteristics, for example: impulse buying tendency (Beatty & Ferrell, 1998; Rook, 1987; Rook & Fisher, 1995), product involvement (Jones et al. 2003), and money and time availability as situational factors (Beatty & Ferrell 1998). On the other hand, store environment has emerged as a rising stream of research that assesses the impact of its antecedents on shoppers' buying behavior. Mohan, Sivakumaran, and Sharma (2013) established positive association between store environment and urge to buy. However, there is lack of research on impulse buying literature pertaining to the

combined impact of store environment and traits of shopping impulsiveness on impulse buying.

Endeavoring to address the above stated gap, this study for the first time, combines the store environment and personality traits of buying impulsiveness and their effect on impulse buying behavior. The study also proposes the positive impact of store environment on impulsive buying tendency that leads to urge to buy and finally impulsive purchase. More precisely, the principal objective of this study is to empirically examine, advance and further the present understanding related to the role of store environment, consumer personality traits stimulating impulse buying. This issue is prominent in the area of impulse buying because it will enhance the marketers' understanding of such behavior and will guide them in using store environment and consumer personality traits. Furthermore, this study also makes an attempt to examine the influence of demographic variables on impulse buying tendency and to assess whether they act as mediating variables.

The paper has been organized as follows. After the introduction of impulse buying, a comprehensive review of literature on factors influencing impulse buying behavior has been evolved and hypotheses have been introduced. The next section provides description of research methodology - the sample, data collection process. Later under conclusive research phase, analysis with confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and SEM has been detailed. The paper concludes by deliberating on the results arrived, discussion and conclusion and limitations of the study.

Conceptual Framework and Hypotheses Development

The comprehensive model of impulse buying as proposed in this study comprises of six elements of store environment and personality traits of buying impulsiveness and impulse buying tendency and urge to buy.

Impulse Buying

Recognized as one of the most influencing factors in retailing, impulsive buying is an unplanned, spur-of-the-moment "urge to buy" instantly (Rook, 1987; Stern, 1962). It is non-reflective, wherein shopper purchases without engaging in information search and alternative evaluation. Shopper engaging in such buying is less likely to think the consequences before purchasing (Rook, 1987). According to Hodge (2004), impulsive shopping is "unplanned, decided on the spot, emanates from spontaneous, unforeseen and unplanned reaction to a stimulus. Emotional conflicts usually get kindled in this hedonically complex urge." In impulse buying individual mainly focuses on the

immediate gratification of its emotional need “urge to buy” rather than on functional need. Rook and Gardner (1993) define impulse buying as “rapid decision-making, and a subjective bias in favor of instant ownership.” Beatty and Ferrell (1998) reformulated the impulse buying definition “as a sudden and immediate purchase with no pre-shopping intentions either to buy the specific product category or to fulfill a specific buying task”.

Store Environment

Various studies have acknowledged that store environment factors like lighting, aroma, sound/music, presence of sales representative, crowd inside the store, store layout, color and display are vital elements that can stimulate the consumer desire to purchase spontaneously (Baker et al., 2002; Mattila & Wirtz, 2008; Rook & Fisher, 1995). Retail layout is defined as the pattern of arrangement of products (including their size and shape), shopping carts and aisles, and the spatial association among them. The store variables create a positive effect on the desire to purchase of shoppers (Kaltcheva & Weitz, 2006; Robert & John, 1982). Wood (1998) observed that around sixty percent of supermarket purchases and fifty-three percent of mass merchandise store purchases were created by in-store cues. Colour used inside the retail outlet is very significant for creating a positive effect on shopper’s impulse buying tendency. Past research illustrates that colour pattern and lighting inside the store impacted the shopping behavior of the consumer (Beverland et al., 2006; Chebat, Chebat, & Vaillant, 2001). Display is another important factor in the store environment. Various studies that analyzed the effects of prominent display reported a significant increase in sales (Dawson & Kim, 2009; Dholakia, 2000; Hultén & Vanyushyn, 2011). Ward, Bitner, and Barnes (1992) established that purchasers are influenced by a total configuration of a store and they do not consider individual elements of the store (Mattila & Wirtz, 2001). Most of past researches have examined the effect of an individual cue of the store environment, such as store layout (Ang, Leong & Lim, 1997), sales representative (Mattila & Wirtz 2008), sound/music (Beverland et al., 2006), lighting (Chebat, Chebat, & Vaillant, 2001), and aroma/scent (Mattila & Wirtz 2001; Chebat & Michon, 2003). While Baker et al. (2002) incorporated various elements - salespersons, store design and music perception, however, they only analyzed the individual elements and not the overall impact of store environment. Later on Mohan, Sivakumaran, and Sharma (2013) used light, music, salesperson and layout as store antecedent variables. The limitation of this study was that it ignored the other store environment variables like color, crowd inside store, display and aroma. Therefore, this paper describes store environment as the amalgamation of sound, aroma, lighting, layout, display, color, crowd and salespersons as antecedent variables.

Store Environment and Impulse Buying Tendency (IBT)

Various studies have analyzed the effects of display and have stated that eye-catching display/spectacle can significantly influence sales. Hultén and Vanyushyn (2011) explored the influence of in-store displays stating that these tools have a direct influence on buyers' impulsive behavior. The influence of retailing and exclusive displays on impulsive shopping behavior is universal phenomenon (Beatty & Ferrell, 1998; Dholakia, 2000; Hultén & Vanyushyn, 2011; Mattila & Wirtz, 2008; Wu, Chen, & Chien, 2013; Xiao & Nicholson, 2011). Sound or background music is a one of the most important variable in retail environment that impacts the purchasers' desire to connect in buyer-seller interactions. Other store environmental clues like smell/ aroma have also been observed to effect buying behavior (Beverland et al., 2006; Chebat, Chebat, & Vaillant, 2001). All these cues of the store create a positive relationship with impulse purchasing (Park & Lennon, 2006). Chang, Eckman, and Yan (2011) indicated that ambience of the store creates a positive emotion among the shoppers. This positive emotion uplifts consumer's pleasure, moods and fulfill hedonic desire, which ultimately influence their IBT. Babin and Attaway (2000) have also posited the positive effect of store ambience on the consumer mind that helps in reducing negative customer value.

According to Spies, Hesse, and Loesch, (1997), retail layouts augment shoppers' experience by helping them to quickly find what they desire. A good layout may reduce the perceived stress associated with shopping and thus make shopping more enjoyable (Baker et al., 2002). Various studies have also discussed the influence of social interaction between buyers and sales personnel in impulse purchasing. As per Stern (1962), such personnel facilitate the creation of urge among the prospective buyers. Store personnel influence store experience of customers (Jones, 1999). Often, subtle aspects in the employee's behavior can be associated with positive feeling for customers, for example being easily available for consumers or just a simple smile can greatly enhance customer experience. In all, it is hypothesized:

H1: A good store environment has a significant positive effect on IBT.

Impulsive Buying Personality Traits

Past studies signify that impulsive buying behavior is a buyer personality trait (Beatty & Ferrell, 1998; Verplanken & Herabadi, 2001). Clinical and developmental psychologists, education researchers, and criminologists have studied the general trait of impulsiveness and it has been considered as a basic human trait. Impulse buying may be a manifestation of "personality trait" associated with "lack of control". Many researchers indicated that lack of control or loss of self-control is an important dimension of impulsiveness for monitoring impulse (Vohs & Faber, 2007; Youn & Faber, 2000). Consumer's lack of self-

control connotes his/her inability to postpone gratification, which leads to impulse buying. According to Rook and Fisher (1995), "impulsive buyers are more likely to experience spontaneous buying stimuli; their shopping lists are more open and receptive to sudden, unexpected buying ideas." Satisfying hedonic desires through impulse buying has been an important topic of several researches (Piron, 1991; Rook, 1987; Dhar & Wertenbroch, 2000). Verplanken and Herabadi (2001) exhibited that cognitive aspects of shoppers were associated with low need to evaluate, and a lack of conscientiousness. The lack of planning and making thorough evaluations while purchasing products are few of the characteristics of impulse buyers, influencing their IBT. With all these, hypotheses formulated are:

H2: Impulsive buying personality traits is significantly associated with IBT

H3: Impulsive buying personality traits is significantly and positively associated with impulse buying

Impulse Buying Tendency (IBT)

According to psychologists, each and every human has a distinctive tendency to act impulsively. Several studies on consumer buying behavior exemplify that buyers differ in their impulsive shopping proclivity (Beatty & Ferrell, 1998; Rook, 1987; Rook & Fisher, 1995; Rook & Gardner, 1993). Rook (1987) defines "consumer impulsivity as a lifestyle trait." In addition, Rook (1987) express that "the data from this study suggest that people vary in their impulse buying proclivities. It is useful to think of consumer impulsivity as a lifestyle trait." Prior researchers also exhibited that consumers scoring high on IBT express more urges to buy and stimulate spontaneous purchase (Beatty & Ferrell, 1998; Dawson & Kim, 2009; Mohan, Sivakumaran, & Sharma, 2013). On the other side, demographic characters of the consumer such as age, gender, income, education and marital status do influence the shoppers' buying decision. Literature shows that there is a contradiction of finding in the relationship between gender and impulse purchasing; few studies imply that men are less impulsive than women (Dittmar, Beattie, & Friese, 1995) while others say that gender has no impact on impulsive purchasing (Kollat & Willett, 1967). A study by Cobb and Hoyer (1986) established that men show more impulsive buying tendency than women. In contrast, Verplanken and Herabadi (2001) reveal that IBT is not correlated with gender. On the basis of above discussion, the following hypotheses are constructed:

H4: IBT of shoppers significantly influences urge to buy impulsively.

H5: IBT of shopper is positively associated with impulsive purchasing.

H6: Gender of the respondents will influence IBT.

H7: Income of the respondents will influence IBT

Urge to Buy Impulsively and Impulse Purchasing

Consistent with past studies on impulse buying, impulse purchasing has been used as a dependent variable. It includes both actual buying of product or gratification of the urge. If the shopper experiences more urges, it spurs the possibility of an impulse purchase (Beatty & Ferrell, 1998; Mohan, Sivakumaran, & Sharma, 2013; Weinberg & Gottwald, 1982). Previous studies on impulsive shopping imply that browsing-in-the-store generates urges to shop that is hard to control or regulate owing to the physical closeness of the product (Dholakia, 2000; Baumeister, 2002; Beatty & Ferrell, 1998; Mohan, Sivakumaran, & Sharma, 2013; Rook, 1987). According to the KPMG 2014 report approximately 50 percent individual related factors create the urge to explore, which lead to impulse buying. Therefore, the following hypothesis is being proposed.

H8: Shoppers' urge to buy impulsively has a significant positive impact on impulse buying.

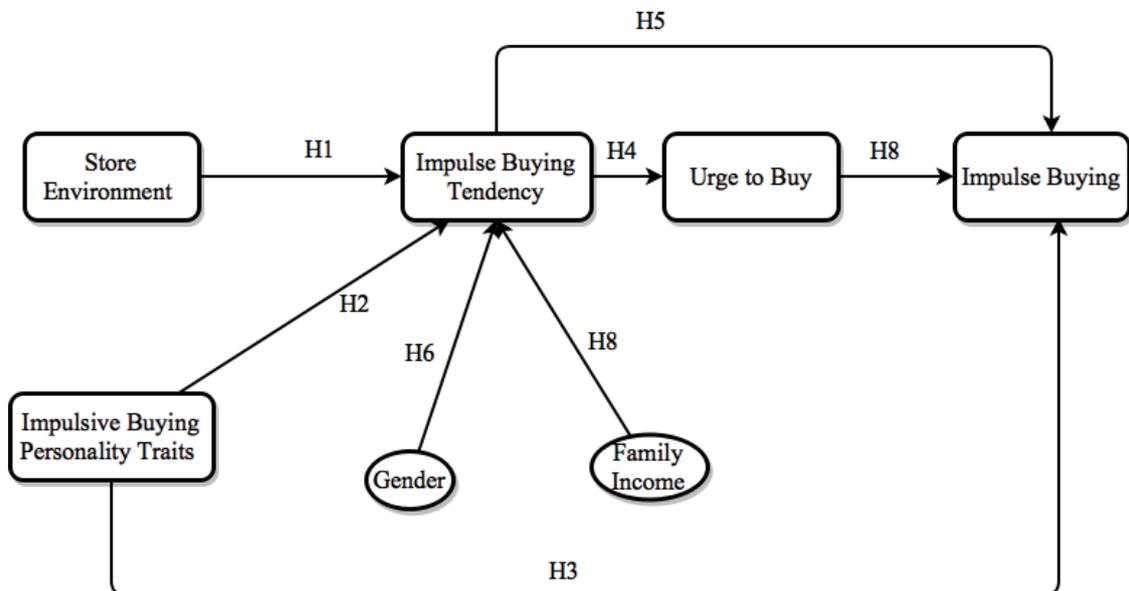


Figure 1. Proposed hypothesized model

Research Methodology

This research paper is an outcome of both exploratory and conclusive phases. Using multi-method research design, this study was cross-sectional in nature. The survey instrument comprises of statements that addressed retail store environmental features, IBT, urge to buy and impulsive buying personality traits. To examine buyers' perceptions of store environmental features, Mohan, Sivakumaran, and Sharma (2013) scale was modified to include music, light, layout and sales person. Other variables of store environment factor were adopted from different studies - colour (Chebat, Chebat, & Vaillant, 2001), crowd (Mattila & Wirtz, 2008). Beatty and Ferrell (1998) scale consisting of three items were used to measure consumers' urge to buy. To examine the impulsive buying personality traits, the scale developed by Rook and Fisher (1995) was used. A seven-point Likert's scale was used to calibrate the responses, where '1' and '7' signified "Strongly disagree" to "Strongly agree" respectively.

Survey method was used for collecting primary data during the period of January 2016. In total two hundred three-business school students took part in the survey. Sixty-eight percent of the sample consisted of male students and thirty-two percent female student. More than eighty percent of the sample lied between 21 and 30 years. Forty percent of them had a monthly family income in between INR 50,000 - 100,000 and approximately thirty-five percent respondents had more than INR 100,000.

Data Analysis and Findings

Using AMOS 22.0, the collected data was analyzed applying a two-stage structural equation modeling approach as recommended by Anderson and Gerbing (1988). The measurement model was analysed with the help of confirmatory factor analysis, followed by testing the structural model using path analysis.

Measurement Model

The proposed model comprised of two exogenous variables (store environment and Impulsive buying personality traits) and three endogenous variables (IBT, urge to buy and impulse buying). Being influenced by perceptions of sales person, crowd, layout, display, music & lighting and colour, store environment were used as a second order formative construct. This is in line with Jarvis, Mackenzie, and Podsakoff (2003) and Mohan, Sivakumaran, and Sharma (2013) who suggested incorporating second order formative construct under such conditions.

Results obtained from measurement model is presented in Table 1 that includes standardized factor loading, critical ratio, average variance extracted (AVE) and construct reliability.

Table 1. Measurement Model (CFA)

Factor and elements	Standardized Loading estimates	C.R.	Average Variance Extracted AVE	Construct Reliability CR
Light & Music			0.78	0.92
<i>Well-lit store</i>	0.72	Fixed		
<i>Pleasant lighting</i>	0.65	11.68		
<i>The background music played</i>	0.69	10.62		
<i>Terrible music</i>	0.77	11.88		
<i>Pleasant music</i>	0.72	11.68		
Sales person			0.62	0.87
<i>Helpful employees</i>	0.90	Fixed		
<i>Well-dressed and groomed employees</i>	0.73	12.41		
<i>Store employees influence my buying decision</i>	0.66	10.75		
<i>Friendly employees</i>	0.84	15.07		
Colour & Aroma			0.73	0.91
<i>Pleasing décor</i>	0.92	Fixed		
<i>Fashionable colors</i>	0.88	18.50		
<i>Pleasing colour scheme</i>	0.82	13.09		
<i>Pleasant odour</i>	0.78	14.62		
Crowd			0.54	0.82
<i>Crowd in the store stimulates me to purchase</i>	0.84	Fixed		
<i>Lot of customers in the store</i>	0.89	13.86		
<i>Store is a little too busy</i>	0.61	9.04		
<i>Fellow shoppers</i>	0.55	8.27		
Layout			0.57	0.73

<i>Easy to locate</i>	0.70	Fixed		
<i>Easy to move around</i>	0.81	7.55		
Display			0.56	0.72
<i>Exclusive displays</i>	0.65	Fixed		
<i>Attractive product displays</i>	0.84	4.87		
Impulse buying tendency			0.68	0.89
<i>I had not intended to buy</i>	0.70	Fixed		
<i>I am a person who makes unplanned purchases</i>	0.91	12.54		
<i>I buy it without considering the consequences</i>	0.83	11.36		
<i>Fun to buy spontaneously</i>	0.85	11.62		
Urge			0.66	0.85
<i>Sudden urges to buy</i>	0.90	Fixed		
<i>Tempted to buy many items</i>	0.87	17.21		
<i>I experience no sudden urge to buy</i>	0.64	-4.82		
Impulse buying			0.71	0.83
<i>Buying more than I had planned to buy</i>	0.90	Fixed		
<i>I spend more money than I had originally planned</i>	0.78	13.70		
Impulsive buying personality traits			0.55	0.88
<i>Buy things spontaneously</i>	0.78	Fixed		
<i>Buy things according to how I feel at that moment</i>	0.63	9.31		
<i>Carefully plan most of my purchases</i>	-0.52	-7.61		
<i>"I see it, I buy it"</i>	0.72	10.93		
<i>I am a bit reckless about what I buy</i>	0.70	10.63		
<i>"Just do it"</i>	0.83	13.00		
<i>I often buy things without thinking</i>	0.78	12.15		
<i>I feel like buying things on the spur-of-the-moment</i>	0.85	13.45		
<i>"Buy now, think about it later"</i>	0.78	12.13		

The factor loading for all the items were more than 0.50, average variance extracted (AVE) was also more than 0.50 and construct reliability values were greater than 0.70 indicating individual reliability of the constructs (Netemeyer, Bearden, & Sharma, 2003). After analyzing the reliability and validity of the model, goodness-of-fit statistics were checked for the proposed model to examine the fit of the model with the data. The ratio of chi square minimum to degree of freedom (CMIN/DF) was 2.12, which is lower than cut-off criterion of 3.00 (Hair et al. 2006), indicating a good fit between the postulated model and the data. Hair et al. (2006) suggested that other indices like goodness-of-fit index (GFI), comparative fit index (CFI), incremental fit index (IFI) and Tucker-Lewis index (TLI) value should be greater than 0.9. From the study, the following values were obtained for various fit indices: GFI (= 0.830), IFI (= 0.932), CFI (= 0.941), Normed Fit Index (NFI) (= 0.892) and TLI (= 0.948). Root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) was found to be 0.085, which is less than 0.1 (Hair et al. 2006)

Structural Model: Hypothesis Testing

The proposed research model was empirically tested using SEM technique. The model includes two exogenous factors, three endogenous elements, and gender and family income as mediating variables. The endeavor was to discover the strength of the proposed model and acceptance of the stated hypotheses. The structural model had a good fit CMIN/DF = 1.836, root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) = 0.064, comparative fit index (CFI) = 0.986, goodness of fit index (GFI) = 0.976, adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI) = 0.933, normed fit index (NFI) = 0.971; incremental fit index (IFI) = 0.987; Tucker-Lewis index (TLI) = 0.972. All the indices were found to be above the recommended cut-off it implies that the proposed research model shows a good fit with the data. The final model along with the structural path coefficients is shown in Figure 2.

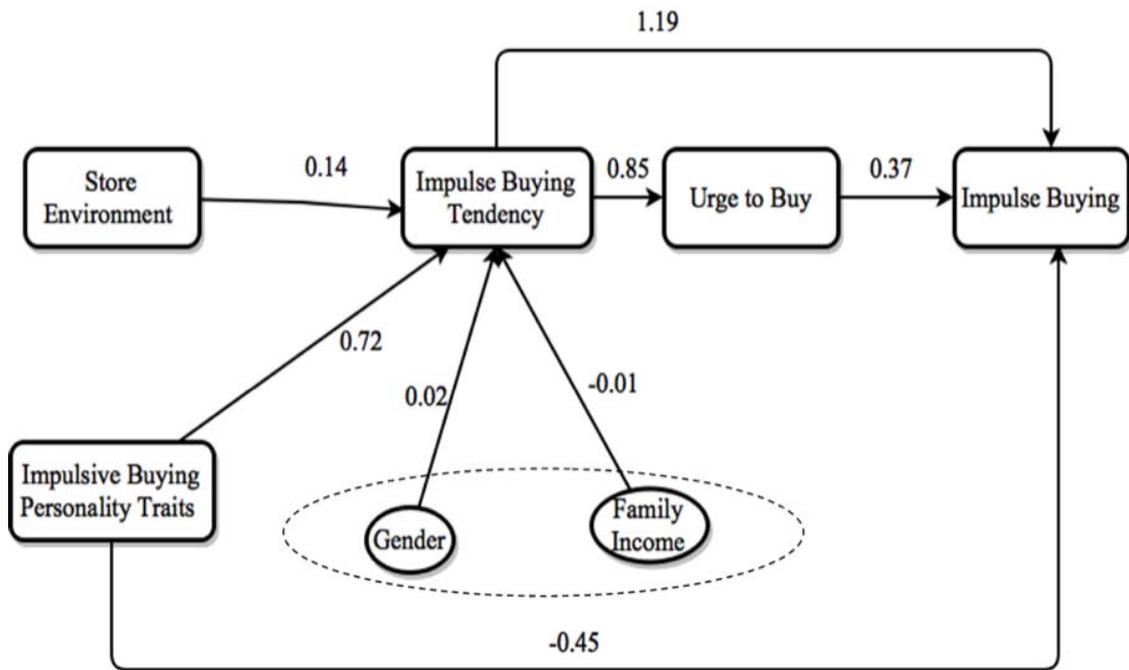


Figure 2. Structural Model

The hypotheses and corresponding results have been summarized in Table 2.

Table 2. Hypotheses and results

Hypotheses	Estimate β	t-value	P \leq	Result
A good store environment has a significant positive effect on IBT	.144	2.269	.023	Accepted
Impulsive buying personality traits is significantly associated with IBT	.719	15.493	.001	Accepted
Impulsive buying personality traits is significantly and positively associated with impulse buying	-.447	-1.326	.185	Not Accepted
IBT of shoppers significantly influences urge to buy impulsively	.850	3.328	.001	Accepted
IBT of shopper is positively associated with impulsive buying.	1.189	3.328	.001	Accepted
Gender of the respondents will influence IBT.	-.006	-.183	.855	Not Accepted
Family income of the respondents will influence IBT	.024	.742	.458	Not Accepted

Hypotheses	Estimate β	t-value	P \leq	Result
Urge to buy impulsively of shoppers has significant positive impact on impulse buying.	.366	2.796	.005	Accepted

Particularly, the findings of the study show that the overall perception of store environment significantly influences IBT of shopper ($\beta=0.144$, $p \leq 0.05$), supporting the first hypothesis (H_1). In addition, it was also observed that impulsive buying personality traits exerts a significant effect on IBT (supporting H_2). Though its direct impact on impulse buying was not significant. Therefore, the third hypothesis (H_3 : impulsive buying personality traits have a positive effect on impulse buying) was rejected. Moreover, the study didn't find any impact of gender and family income on IBT. Hence, the hypothesis (H_6 and H_7) were not accepted. The results showed the positive effect of IBT on the urge to buy impulsively. Thus hypothesis four was accepted. Similarly, it was observed that urge to buy impulsively has a direct significant influence on impulse buying, thus H_8 was accepted. Additionally, to examine the effects of store environment, impulsive buying personality, IBT and urge to buy traits on impulse buying, the direct, indirect and total effects of the predictor variables on the latent variables were decomposed and analyzed. In the proposed research model, the two exogenous variables explained sixty-two percent of total variation in IBT, fifty-two percent of total variation in urge to buy and thirty-five percent variation in impulse buying via urge to buy (Table 3)

Table 3. Direct, Indirect and Total Effects

Predictor variables	Impulse buying tendency			Urge to buy Effect			Impulse Buying		
	Indirect	Direct	Total	Indirect	Direct	Total	Indirect	Direct	Total
Store Environment	-	.139	.139	.118	-	.118	.088	.130	.219
Impulsive buying personality	-	.722	.722	.611	-	.611	.458	.172	.630
IBT	-	-	-	-	-	-	.122	.513	.635
Urge to buy	-	.846	.846	-	-	-	.000	.144	.144
R^2			.63			.52			.35

The proposed research model explained significant (35 percent) variation associated with impulse buying via urge to buy. Most of the observed variables exhibited

significant direct and/or indirect effect on the latent variables. Among all predictor variables, IBT exhibited the strongest direct effect ($\beta = 0.513$) with respect to the total effects of all the predictor variables on impulsive shopping, followed by impulsive buying personality ($\beta = 0.630$). As expected, IBT shows a strong direct effect on such shopping ($\beta = 0.513$), but when we look at indirect effect of impulsive buying personality on impulse buying, we notice that impulsive buying personality has strong direct effect on IBT ($\beta = 0.722$). This is the main cause of impulsive buying personality exhibiting strong indirect effect. This signifies the presence of both direct and indirect effect of the variables on impulse buying through IBT.

Test of Mediator

Examining the influence of IBT and urge, as mediators, this study adopted the technique suggested by Iacobucci, Saldanha, and Deng (2007). In the first instance, we examined the model through a direct-path between store environment and impulse buying and an indirect-path via impulse buying and urge. The model with the data was measured with the help of various fit indices. Since chi-square statistics is influenced by the sample size, we used CMIN/df to check the model's appropriateness. The following results were obtained: (CMIN/DF = 2.726, RMSEA = 0.092, CFI = 0.972, GFI = .965). This framework showed a good fit to the data. It was also observed that no direct path coefficients had significant values. This implies that the observed variables do not affect the latent variable directly. On the other hand, the coefficients for the indirect paths were all significant (Figure 3). This suggests the presence of some mediation effect. In the second step, the relative size of the mediated versus direct paths were explicitly computed by using the z-value formula $z = x*y/(x^2 + y^2 + Sx^2 + Sy^2)^{1/2}$, where x (0.24) is the unstandardized regression coefficient of store environment, standard error denoted by Sx (0.072) is the mediator, y (0.504) is the unstandardized regression coefficient and the corresponding standard error is Sy (0.033). With the help of the formula stated above, z-value (2.16, $p \leq 0.01$) was obtained. This indicated that the indirect influence of independent variable (store environment) on the dependent variable (impulsive buying) through the mediator, is significantly different from zero. The finding of our paper is in the line with Iacobucci, Saldanha, and Deng (2007) who suggested the presence of full mediation model.

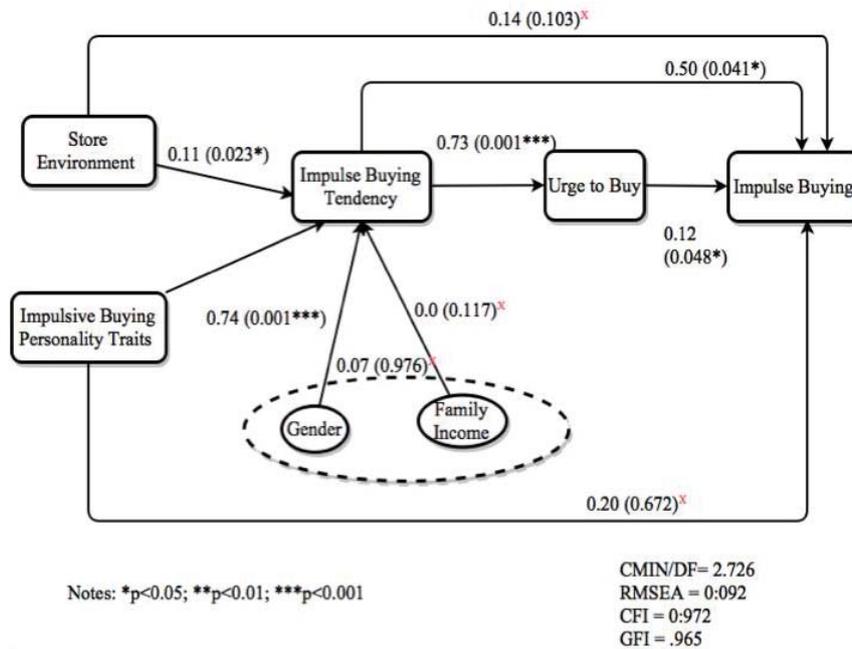


Figure 3. Structural Model (with direct and indirect effects)

Discussion

Analysis of the model through SEM showed a good fit between the model and data. Five of the stated hypotheses were accepted while remaining three hypotheses were rejected. The results of this study reveal the fact that impulse buying is influenced by store environment through IBT and urge. However, there was no support for any direct impact of store environment on impulsive shopping.

The present paper made numerous contributions to the existing body of knowledge and on impulse buying literature. The research framework developed by Beatty and Ferrell (1998) considered and explained impulse buying behavior. However, their work didn't take into account the effect of store variables. In the same line Mohan, Sivakumaran, and Sharma (2013) extended Beatty and Ferrell study (1998) by adding "urge to buy" as a new construct. It established the positive relationship between store environment and urge to buy. Various other studies have identified the need of incorporating store level variables as most of the impulsive decisions are taken inside a store (Peck & Childers, 2006; Zhou & Wong, 2004).

Many western studies have found that most consumer decisions at the point of purchase are impulsive. (Dawson & Kim, 2010; Heilman, Nakamoto, & Rao, 2002). Hence, by extending Mohan, Sivakumaran, and Sharma (2013), the paper significantly adds to

the existing body of knowledge on impulsive shopping, by addressing the above-stated gap. The study is unique and pioneer in examining the combined effect of various store environment cues (i.e. sound, well-lit, layout, and sales representative, crowd, display, aroma) and impulsive buying personality traits along with IBT and urge to buy impulsively on impulsive shopping behavior. Previous researchers have taken into account different retail environment cues individually on the consumers' decision-making behavior. In contrary, this study pioneered by developing an impulse buying framework incorporating characteristics related to shoppers' impulsive personality as well as store environment. As in case of study by Mohan, Sivakumaran, and Sharma (2013), store environment is taken as a formative one in this research model too.

Gender differences are noticeably visible in the domain of consumer behavior specifically impulse buying. Few of the prominent studies observed that males tend to buy less frequently than females (Dittmar, Beattie, & Friese, 1995, 1996; Wood, 1998). The findings from this study are quite contrary to those of many other studies. The results suggested that there was no significant gender difference on IBT. Also, in line with previous research, income was found to have no effect on impulse buying (Kollat & Willett, 1967). The findings from the present research cemented this (no significant income difference was found on IBT). Similarly, association between impulsive buying personality and IBT is observed to be stronger; this indicates that personality traits are more important in determining the impulse tendency than income or gender. Finding from our study strongly suggests that the tendency of impulsive shopping is ingrained in personality.

The results also reveal that IBT significantly influences impulse buying. This in turn shows that as shoppers' IBT escalates, the occurrence of their impulsiveness increases. This finding is in line with the work of Rook and Fisher (1995), which highlighted the importance of IBT in identifying consumers' impulse buying behavior. Similarly, we find that urge to buy affects impulse buying behavior. As consumer feel more urge to buy, impulse buying increases. This finding is in line with Beatty and Ferrell (1998) and Mohan, Sivakumaran, and Sharma (2013) who show that consumer urge to buy influences impulse buying.

The most important outcome of our paper is that consumers' impulsive buying personality traits (internal cue) are alone not sufficient for impulse buying and that some external factors such as store environment, are also needed to create an urge to buy. These external cues act as a driver for impulsive buying. Retail store manager must understand the importance of these cues for encouraging shoppers to make extra purchases or unplanned purchases.

With store atmospherics getting into prominence, retail outlets of all formats including the conventional "mom and pop" stores have initiated efforts to create attractive store layouts and displays (Business Line, 2008). This is being endeavored to

create urge that shall result into immediate and profitable impulsive shopping. In the long-term, the same is expected to build loyalty among core customers. Accordingly, the companies invest large sum of amount in upgrading the stores formats aimed at extending 'desired experience' for shoppers. This contrasts with the traditional culture where retailers had been axing costs by underplaying the significance of store environmental factors. Wang (2004) observed that companies even didn't spare hygiene factors like temperature and lighting in the store. There are stances where they resort to switching off 'extra' light or 'unwanted' air-conditioning. Studies have pointed that such efforts eroded the possibility of impulsive shopping at the outlets leading to lose of patronage (Baker et al., 2002) and shoppers' loyalty (Sirgy & Samli, 1985). This necessitates the strategic and operational view of retailers on the store atmospheric factors. Instore variables not only need strategic planning and investment but also trigger actions on ongoing basis. Altering store layout, displays and merchandising gives shoppers reasons for visiting the outlets again, spending more time in perusing the products and offers. Eye-catching displays, customer-driving events, friendly sales force, enticing aromas, appropriate lighting and ease in vertical circulation inspire customers and lift their mood and momentum leading to buying without much mental deliberation.

It is equally desired that sales personnel at the store and not only punctual but proactive too in connecting with the shoppers. Their behavior has direct implication in soliciting the additional sales by creating urge among the shoppers for the products they may not have planned. This warrants special skills for which they must be trained on regular basis. These all generate impulsive desires (Mattila & Wirtz, 2008). Foregoing atmospheric variables may result in loss of impulsive shoppers.

The present study gives impetus to the retailers' strategy of creating impulsiveness. The study posits the relationship between impulse buying and impulse buying tendency. Retailers must develop marketing and communicational cues aimed at eliciting impulsive urges (Chien-Huang & Hung-Chou, 2012). It becomes pertinent for marketers and retailers to plan towards creating blissful shopping experience (Badgaiyan & Verma, 2014).

Conclusion and Limitations

Despite being the fifth largest preferred retail destination and witnessing exponential growth, not many studies have been under taken to understand and comprehend Indian consumers' impulse buying behavior. This present paper contributes to the existing literature in many ways. This study develops an all-inclusive model incorporating, not only IBT, impulsive personality traits and urge to buy in evaluating impulse buying but also suggests considering the variables of store environment. This argument justifies deliberation not only because empirical results support constructs in influencing buying behavior, but also considering the driver of generating urge to buy.

Another significant finding is the revelation that gender has no impact on IBT, indicating that intrinsic factors have similar influence on both the genders in context of their effect on impulsive shopping.

Lastly, from the study we found that the store environment exhibits impressive direct effect on impulse buying (0.130). This is a good indicator for the retailers, since all store environment cues are under their mechanism. Since different segments of shoppers have varying expectations from retailers, they must conceptualize, store design & layout, display, music, light and sales person and implement these store environment variables keeping their target shoppers in consideration.

Every research is characterized by limitations, which define the boundary for its finding and its generalizability. The prominent limitation of this paper is the population from which the sample has been selected. The data pertains to only one emerging market India, therefore the findings of this paper may not be representative of young shoppers across the world. Hence, similar research could include data from customer groups from different emerging and developed economies. This will examine the validity and reliability of the finding. Also, the data was collected for the study from various types of retail environments and formats like grocery stores, super markets, departmental stores, shopping malls and company owned outlets. Further studies may assess the extent to which the impulsive behavior differs across different retail environments.

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