

A Comprehensive Review on The Relation Between Marketing and Impulse Buying Behaviour in Consumers

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Abstract

Purpose: Throughout history marketing professionals, students and researchers have a piqued interest in consumer behaviour, impulse is often one of them. This study aims to provide a comprehensive insight into the factors influencing impulse buying including personal, external, and marketing stimuli thus adding to the understanding of Impulse Buying Behaviour in Consumers.

Methodology/Approach: This study essentially uses the Theoretical literature review approach wherein all the existing data and theories on this topic were investigated and gathered to provide a panoramic understanding of impulse buying and its relation to marketing and other stimuli.

Findings: This study describes impulse stimulants: Internal, External, Marketing and Psychological.

Originality/Value: The study provides relevant information regarding the influencers and stimulants of impulse which can be used to formulate business strategies and add to the understanding of students, marketers, and future researchers.

Keywords: Marketing Practices, Impulse Buying, Consumer Impulsiveness, Online Impulse, Consumer Behaviour, Hedonic Products & Motivation, E-Retailing.

Introduction

E-Retail, Mega-markets, shopping malls, Mini marts and Brand Outlets have become prominent fixtures in the modern retail landscape of major Indian cities and are gradually venturing out to the suburbs and small townships. The retail industry in India has experienced rapid growth, attracting both domestic and international firms. According to the 2023 AT

Kearney report, India ranks First (1st) among the 44 markets and countries (in the AT Kearney report) in terms of retail development (GRDI). Organized retailing in India is expected to expand significantly over the coming years, driven by shifting lifestyles, rising disposable incomes, increased credit facilities and favourable demographic trends. Indian consumers have undergone notable changes in their shopping habits, and buying decisions with impulse buying becoming increasingly prevalent. Understanding the role of impulse buying is crucial for the modern business environment and researchers alike to tap into the most viable way to increase sales and pave a way for future business models and consecutive researches. This paper reviews existing literature on impulse buying behaviour with all the major influencers and sheds light on the most relevant factors of impulse purchases. Additionally, it offers some suggestions for marketing practices, and future research.

Literature Review

Scholars have shown considerable interest in impulse buying over the past seven decades. Abratt and Goodey (1990) highlighted the potential significance of studying impulse buying in supermarkets for manufacturers and businesses globally. Piron (1991) sought to define impulse buying by synthesizing previous research, noting commonality with unplanned purchasing (Clover 1950, West 1951), and emphasized managerial and strategic implications. Early studies primarily focused on purchases rather than consumer traits, with managerial concerns centred on product sales. Researchers have proposed that impulse purchases could be further categorized based on consumers' emotional and/or cognitive responses. In a recent look, researchers and businesses exhibit a considerable amount of interest in the online retail impulses of customers given the high degree of digitalisation in commerce.

a. History and Definitions of Impulse buying:

Prior to Rook's study in 1987, descriptions of impulse buying were mainly centred on the product itself, overlooking or sometimes even neglecting the role of the consumer and their individual traits and preferences in influencing impulsive purchases. Subsequent researchers in the later years shifted their focus towards personal impulsiveness, exploring various behavioural aspects of impulse buying. Rook (1987) contended that during impulse buying and described impulse buying as a sudden, intense, and enduring desire experienced by the consumer. He characterized it as an unintentional, reflexive reaction triggered shortly after

exposure to stimuli within the store or a stimulating environment. Rook and Gardner (1993) defined impulse buying as spontaneous behaviour involving rapid decision-making and a tendency to immediately acquire a product.

Engel and Blackwell (1982) described impulse buying as an action undertaken without prior conscious recognition or buying intention formed before entering the store. Overall, impulse buying involves hedonic purchase decisions made in-store and excludes reminder purchases. Although Engel and Blackwell focused only on the need to visit a physical store it is equitable to modern day visits on shopping platforms and websites.

Beatty and Ferrell (1998) explained that impulse buying entails immediate purchases without any pre-shopping objective or specific need fulfilment. It occurs when a shopper experiences a sudden desire to buy without much reflection, excluding purchases prompted by out-of-stock items or reminders. Block and Morwitz (1999) characterized impulse purchase as those made with practically zero thought, driven by an unexpected, strong desire. Kacen and Lee (2002) noted that impulsive behaviour is more arousing and irresistible but less deliberative than planned purchasing. Among the above three thoughts, a common factor and ground is the lack of thought and much consideration before making a purchase.

Bayley and Nancarrow (1998) defined impulse buying as a “sudden, compelling, hedonically complex behaviour where rapid decision-making precludes thoughtful consideration of alternatives.” Hedonic behaviour emphasizes pleasure, contrasting with utilitarian behaviour focused on functional benefits and economic value, the impulse buying decisions as the name suggests are quick and often don't carry much thought along with them.

Stern (1962) at first characterized this purchasing conduct as expected, impromptu, or drive, with arranged buys including broad data search and normal independent direction. Impromptu purchasing includes all choices made without earlier preparation, while motivation purchasing is described by fast direction and an unexpected, solid, overpowering inclination to purchase. Stern also presented the thought of idea motivation buys, wherein new items are bought in view of self-idea without related knowledge. Han et al. (1991) explained this idea with regards to design situated drive purchasing, where purchases are inspired by self-idea to get new style things. In such cases, the customer needs knowledge related to the elegant item. Mattila and

Enz (2002) later contended that design arranged motivation purchasing can be affected by the customer's positive feelings while shopping.

Iyer (1989) made a further distinction, stating that all impulse purchases are unplanned, yet not all unplanned purchases are necessarily made impulsively. Han et al. (1991) adapted Stern's (1962) classification of impulse buying specifically for fashion products, expanding it into four types: Planned impulse buying, Reminded impulse buying, Suggestion impulse buying and Pure impulse buying.

In the case of planned impulse purchases, where specific products or categories are not established by consumers and instead influenced by a variety of promotions in stores, partial planning takes place. When a consumer is reminded of the need to buy a product after noticing it in the store, reminded impulse buying occurs. Pure impulse buying refers to novel or escape purchases where the shopper deviates from their usual shopping patterns and makes quick decisions regarding the purchase.

b. Internal Factors Prompting Impulse Buying:

Since 1950 various researchers have conducted many studies focused on the factors influencing or promoting the Impulse buying behaviour and tendencies in consumers. The most common classification is Internal and External Stimulus.

According to Beatty and Ferrell (1998), individuals who have more **time** available tend to spend a greater amount of time browsing the shopping environment. Situations where consumers feel **time-constrained** can lead to impulsive buying as they make quick decisions to avoid missing out on perceived opportunities (Verplanken & Sato, 2011), thus it can be said that impulse decisions show an inverse relation with time available. Giraud (2001) suggests that **gender** plays a specific role in impulse buying, noting that women tend to exhibit higher levels of impulsivity compared to men. Additionally, Giraud (2001) proposes that consumers in a **positive mood** are more likely to indulge themselves and engage in impulsive behaviour, although positive and joyful moods can prompt impulses, negative mood or stress can also have a significant degree of stimulating impulses as suggested by Baumeister (2002), additionally It is noted that stress and negative emotions can reduce an individual's ability to delay gratification, leading to more frequent impulse buying as a form of emotional regulation and

satisfaction. Dittmar (2001) introduces the concept of materialism, indicating that individuals who view product acquisition as a means of self-completion are inclined to be more impulsive. Mai et al. (2003) assert that the younger **generation** tends to display greater impulsiveness, with individuals aged 18 to 40 exhibiting higher levels of impulsivity. Furthermore, Mai et al. (2003) suggested that **culture** influences impulse buying tendencies both at regional and individual levels.

Significant rises in individual discretionary **incomes** and the accessibility of credit have led to a widespread adoption of impulse buying in retail settings among consumers (Dittmar et al., 1996). Socioeconomically, individuals with lower household incomes often prioritize immediate gratification, favouring immediate indulgence such as daily savings and sensory experiences over delayed gratification. The availability of **funds** facilitates impulse buying (Mai et al., 2003) by increasing an individual's purchasing power, Conversely, a lack of funds may deter individuals from entering shopping environments altogether; this suggests that a person's capability to manage their funds also affects their impulsive tendencies. Consumers exhibit a natural inclination towards impulsive purchases (Jones et al., 2003), with browsers often making more unplanned purchases compared to non-browsers (Crawford and Melewar, 2003) hence consumers with more disposable time tend to display more impulsive buying behaviour. Product **pricing** is another significant factor influencing impulse buying behaviour, with consumers being more inclined to act impulsively in the presence of sales, discounts, low marginal need, short product life, smaller sizes, and easy storage options (Wong and Zhou, 2003) as these factors birth a sense of benefits attained at low expenses. Moreover, the likelihood of impulse purchases varies across product categories, with **hedonic products** often triggering impulsive buying due to their symbolic and personal significance (Mai et al., 2003). Impulse buying is often driven by the anticipation of **pleasure** or **gratification** associated with the purchase. Consumers may seek immediate pleasure or excitement from acquiring a desired product (Solomon, 2014).

Products perceived as scarce or with limited **availability** can trigger impulsive purchases as consumers fear missing out on the opportunity to acquire them (Verplanken & Sato, 2011), thus a consumer's perception on need and wants is a key factor in their purchase decisions.

Impulse purchases are often driven by consumers' desire to express their self-identity or to fulfil a need for **self-expression**. Buying certain products can serve as a means of defining or

enhancing one's identity (Dittmar, 2001), when a consumer comes across something that may help them express themselves and enhance their identity they show a high level of impulsivity moreover Individuals with higher levels of **materialism**, i.e. who place a strong emphasis on acquiring material possessions, are more likely to engage in impulsive buying behaviour (Dittmar, 2001). The presence of others, especially peers or influencers, can stimulate impulsive buying as individuals may be influenced by social norms or the desire to **fit in** with a particular group (Solomon, 2014), this suggests the ownership of a certain product by a certain group which has a substantial influence on others, may increase the probability of uncontrolled impulses in others, that is their peers. Lee et al (2023) suggested that emotional factors, such as stress and the need for instant gratification, continue to play a crucial role in impulse buying. During times of heightened emotions, consumers are more prone to make unplanned purchases as a way to cope with their feelings. This behaviour is further amplified by the immediate availability of products through online shopping channels or by simply coming across something that seems attractive in the traditional store setup.

Shopping **enjoyment** also influences impulse buying, as individuals who perceive shopping as a form of recreation and do not adhere strictly to shopping lists tend to make more impulsive purchases (Sharma and Sivakumaran, 2004). The presence of others can increase the likelihood of impulse purchases, as observed in group settings where individuals tend to consume more (Luo, 2004). Additionally, individuals who perceive a **self-discrepancy** may seek to compensate by purchasing material goods impulsively (Luo, 2004). These variables collectively prompt consumers to engage in spontaneous impulse purchases.

Consumers who feel a sense of **control** over their environment and choices are more likely to engage in impulsive buying as they believe they can handle the consequences of their actions (Verplanken & Sato, 2011).

(Keywords: time, mood, generation, culture, convenience, process, layout, type of store, income, funds, gratification, availability, materialism, peers, norms, self-discrepancy.)

c. External Factors and Environment Influencing Impulse Buying Behaviour:

External factors influencing impulse buying are marketing cues or stimuli strategically placed by marketers to attract customers towards making purchases or are simply a coincidental stimulus i.e. not planned, thus External stimuli can be a planned one or an unplanned one.

These external stimuli encompass aspects of both the shopping environment, such as store size, ambience, design, and layout, as well as marketing activities like sales promotions and advertising. Impulse buying can be triggered when consumers encounter relevant visual or promotional stimuli in the retail environment (Piron, 1991). Rook and Hoch (1985) further explained that impulses and impulse purchases actually begin with a consumer's perception driven by the external stimuli and are followed by a sudden urge to make a purchase. In today's retail landscape, impulse buying remains relevant due to the implementation of innovative sales promotions, creative messaging, and the effective utilization of technology within retail stores (Schiffman, 2010).

Applebaum's landmark study in 1951 reveals that the stimuli a customer experiences in stores can be linked with the concept of impulse buying. The variety of stimuli present within the store directly or indirectly impact the customer. The ambience of the store is shaped by factors such as **lighting, layout, merchandise presentation, fixtures, flooring, colour schemes, auditory cues**, fragrances, and the demeanour of sales and service staff. Environments that are highly stimulating and pleasant tend to promote increased impulse buying (Hoyer and Macinnis, 1999) an example of this is a carnival, bright colours and pulsating lights, music, parades, rides and varieties of food tend to over stimulate an individual and drive up their impulsivity. **Product presentation and background music** were identified as significant external influences on customers (Verplanken and Herabadi, 2001). A well-designed store layout can enhance the convenience and attractiveness of the shopping environment, encouraging impulse purchases (Crawford and Melewar, 2003), well designed store also includes what is the expected flow of customers through the stores and how they will interact with: staff, marketing cues, product placement and much more throughout their experience in the store.

The **ambience** of the store has shown to play a crucial role in stimulating impulse purchases, prompting corporations to consider various environmental design elements to enhance stimulation (Crawford and Melewar, 2003). In the opinion of Mattila and Wirtz (2008), store environmental cues have a beneficial impact on impulse buying behaviour, particularly when the setting is perceived to be overstimulating (enthusiastic and stimulating). Stimuli in the retail store **environment** are likely to influence consumer emotions and decisions (Donovan and Rossiter, 1982), which are the other variables that have been found to affect the impulse purchases (Rook 1987; Zhou and Wong 2003). Baumeister (2002) claimed that arousal and

stimulation impairs the ability of people to regulate themselves, thus reducing their ability to think by means of action which can in turn lead to an increased likelihood of impulse purchasing. Ambience and store stimuli are also subjective to the business type, consider a bookstore, a light and calm environment would make the customers stay and browse longer, whereas a pub would likely have a more energizing and livelier ambience. This suggests that an appropriate ambience for prompting impulse should also consider the type of customer needs the business is attracting and catering to. There is an emphasis on the importance of a well-designed **store layout** to enhance consumer **convenience** (Crawford and Melewar, 2003). Additionally, well-trained salespeople can alleviate frustration by assisting consumers through the purchasing **process**, thereby encouraging impulse buying behaviour (Crawford and Melewar, 2003). Furthermore, the propensity for impulsiveness may vary depending on the **type of store** (Wong and Zhou, 2003), with grocery stores being a notable setting for many impulse purchases. Super markets and any store that offers a wide variety of products and product choices often make the customer spend more time in the store exploring and experimenting.

Gupta et.al, (2009) suggested that when size and type of the store is concerned product display and product prices were the main in-store stimuli in large stores and businesses. The price of products was the most important stimulus in attracting impulsive shopping for smaller stores. A consumer is instantly motivated to buy a product by retail advertising and prices offered.

In 2001 Underwood et.al conducted a study, this research delves into the attentional effects of **product imagery on packaging**. It investigates how certain visual elements on packaging can capture consumers' attention and influence their purchasing decisions, including impulse buying behaviour. Similarly in 2009, Hausman, A. V., & Siekpe, J. S. researched the effects of online webpage and their effects on the consumer buying behaviour and explores how different features of web interfaces and **web designs** influence consumers' online purchase intentions. While not directly focused on packaging, it provides insights into how design elements affect consumer behaviour in the online and e-retail context, which can be extrapolated to offline packaging design. Both these studies found that packaging, designs and layout have a huge impact on purchase decisions and have a prominent influence on impulse buying. This indicates audio-visual stimulation promotes the impulsive tendencies in consumers by making them feel more engaged, excited and thus driving up their interest regardless of the purchase being made online or offline.

Consumers may feel a sudden desire to make impulsive purchases upon seeing visual cues like **promotional offers**, as noted by Dholakia (2000); consumers will tend to buy more in the pretext of getting more for less. Sales, discounts, and promotions can also create a sense of urgency and incentivize impulse buying behaviour among consumers (Wong and Zhou, 2003). Xu (2007) suggested that the atmosphere of a store can impact consumers' emotions, potentially prompting them to engage in impulse buying while inside. Offering product demonstrations or **samples** can pique consumers' **interest** and lead to spontaneous purchases (Hoch and Loewenstein, 1991). Consumer's probability to purchase on impulse receives a further increase when they see an item on **sale** or with some kind of promotion (Ramaswamy and Namakumar, 2009). Hulten & Vanyushyn (2011) suggested that impulsive buyers are observed to put more attention to the in-store displays offerings, discounts, and bundles of any kind. This behaviour can also be noticed in e-retail purchases made by clicking on digital ads and marketing, the customer is attracted to the offered discounts and bundles and thus finds themselves needing to buy the product regardless of their needs ie. wants to get the best deals.

Kaur and Singh (2007) studied the buying behaviour of Indian youth and observed that sensory stimulants such as the **odour or feel** of the products play a pivotal role in shaping the shopping decisions of these individuals and could influence impulse buying in them. Dave (2010) pointed out that retail stores in Indian settings and discovered that all of the in-store measures taken by the retailer affect the impulse stimuli of the customers and therefore pushes towards conversion into sale, but overall, the promotional mix can act as base for differentiating a store from others and attracting customers to it. Mattila and Wirtz (2008) emphasized the impact of social factors on impulse buying, distinguishing between two main types: interactions with store employees and the presence of other customers. They found that **social factors**, such as the friendliness of employees, directly affect impulse purchasing. To mitigate the negative impact of crowded conditions, store managers could potentially train their employees to be exceptionally welcoming during busy periods and how to effectively handle customer queries and tend to their needs.

Receiving positive **feedback** from others, whether it's from a salesperson or friends while shopping, can increase the likelihood of impulse purchases (Yu and Bastin, 2010). Luo's (2005) study on the "influence of shopping companions on impulsive buying" revealed that the presence of peers heightens the desire to make impulsive purchases, whereas the presence of

family members tends to decrease it. Contrastingly, Rook and Fisher (1995) suggested that anonymity can also foster impulse buying, as shoppers feel more inclined to explore new items, styles, and indulge in fantasies in a self-service environment where they remain anonymous and avoid the fear of judgement.

Harmanciouglu (2009) proposed that marketing managers can enhance the inclination to make impulsive purchases of new products by placing emphasis on creating a sense of excitement, enjoyment, and diversity in their promotional campaigns. Up selling and **cross-selling strategies** have been observed to have an effect on impulse buying as stated by Dawson and Kim (2009). Yu and Bastin (2010) analysed the effect of in-store Point of Purchase (POP) posters and advertisements in supermarkets and other retail establishments and found that they induced impulse purchase behaviours. In-store stimuli are promotional techniques strategically employed to stimulate impulse purchases made by customers. Some examples of these techniques include in-store settings, on-shelf positioning, discounting, availability of samples, POP displays (influences last minute impulse buying), coupons or vouchers, and in-store demonstrations. Quick, easy and streamlined checkout processes, including one-click and mobile payment options, reduce friction and make impulse buying more hassle-free for consumers (Naylor et al., 2012). This has been one of the reasons for the development of quick and easy or hassle-free payment options on e-retail sites. Lee et al (2023) observed that, with the adoption of e-wallets has been shown to facilitate impulse buying among Generation Y and Z. This behaviour is driven by the ease and convenience of using digital payment methods, which reduces the friction of the purchasing process. The perceived enjoyment and satisfaction of using these platforms further enhance the likelihood of impulsive purchases

(Keywords: environmental cues, ambience, presentation, offers, prices, samples, interest, feedback, promotions, strategies, design, packaging.)

Role of Marketing Practices in Impulse Purchases

In this age of fast-moving trends and ever-changing wants, for a business, Marketing is one of the most effective ways to stimulate impulse buying behaviour in customers. By using persuasive strategies and tactics, marketers can create the optimum environment for consumers to make impulse purchases. From personalized recommendations to short-term offers and engaging visual cues, marketers can try to capture the emotions, wants, and needs of potential

buyers. Social proof, feedback, and easy checkout processes can simplify the buying process, making it easier for consumers to make an impulse purchase. Additionally, shopping convenience and cross-selling tactics make impulse buying even more attractive. By understanding consumer behaviour, marketers can create a compelling environment that takes advantage of impulse buying tendencies, driving up sales and revenue, and building brand loyalty in a highly competitive digital and retail environment alike.

Consumers are more influenced to shop in stores with **attractive displays, product placement, or attractive signs**. This leads to much higher impulse purchases. Stimulating multiple senses through in-store experience or product experience can increase emotional responses and drive impulse purchases (Krishna, 2012).

Discounts and **Time-limited promotions** create a sense of urgency, pushing consumers to make an impulse purchase to take advantage of the perceived benefits (Chandon et al., 2009).

Social Proof (being influenced by someone to make a purchase) **and FOMO** (Fear of Missing Out); Social media influencers, customer **reviews**, and testimonials may create a sense of social proof, triggering FOMO and encouraging impulse buying (VanMeter, 2020). Creating a perception of scarcity or urgency through phrases like "limited time offer" or "**while supplies last**" taps into consumers' fear of missing out (FOMO), thus increasing impulse purchases (Li et al., 2018). A study on the psychological triggers of impulse buying, emphasizing the role of scarcity and urgency. The research showed that limited-time offers and flash sales are powerful motivators for impulse purchases, tapping into consumers' fear of missing out (FOMO) (Roy, R., & Naidoo, V., 2023). **Cross-selling and upselling** strategies, such as bundling complementary products or suggesting upgrades and combo deals, capitalize on impulse buying tendencies by enticing consumers with additional offerings and savings (Verhoef et al., 2014). Social media advertising and influencers can trigger impulse buying through **peer influence** or pressure and validation. (Smith, A. N., Fischer, E., & Yongjian, C. (2012). **Emotional advertising** appeals, such as those evoking happiness, excitement, or nostalgia, can trigger impulsive buying behaviour through bypassing rational decision-making processes thus driving sales (Baumeister et al., 2008). Neuromarketing studies often investigate how social factors influence neural responses related to decision-making, shedding light on the mechanisms underlying social influence in marketing (Falk et al., 2012).

E-commerce platforms often use **algorithms** to provide personalized product recommendations based on past purchases or browsing history. These recommendations can trigger impulse purchases by appealing to the consumer's interests and preferences (Kowal & Fortunato, 2019). Positive reviews, testimonials, and social proof in the form of **likes, shares, and ratings** can enhance the perceived value and credibility of a product, leading to impulsive buying behaviour (Huang & Benyoucef, 2013). With the increasing use of smartphones, mobile-optimized websites and apps offer consumers the convenience of shopping anytime, anywhere, leading to impulsive buying behaviour, especially during idle moments (Kowal & Fortunato, 2019). Tailoring marketing messages and offers to individual preferences and behaviour patterns can increase the likelihood of impulse purchases. Research by Verhagen et al. (2015) emphasized the effectiveness of personalized marketing strategies in driving impulse buying. Lee et al (2023) noted, more than 35% of consumers in the United States reported being likely to make impulse purchases online. This trend is attributed to the increased accessibility of e-commerce platforms and targeted advertising that appeals directly to consumers' preferences and browsing history. In contrast, traditional in-store impulse buying is driven by strategic product placements and in-store promotions

Given the heavy influence of **psychological factors** promoting impulse purchases it is often seen that psychological and neuro marketing also cause impulsive behaviours in purchase decisions. **Anchoring and Decoy Pricing** wherein presenting a high-priced item next to a slightly less expensive option can anchor consumers' perception of value, making the latter seem more attractive and prompting impulse buys (Zhang et al., 2016). Highlighting potential losses or missed opportunities rather than gains can nudge consumers towards impulsive purchases to avoid regret (Jin et al., 2017). Subtle cues or **priming techniques**, such as using words associated with speed or spontaneity, can activate impulsive decision-making tendencies in consumers (Guerreiro et al., 2017). Behavioural economics examines how psychological factors influence economic decisions. **Neuromarketing** complements this by providing neuroscientific insights into these decision-making processes. For instance, both fields explore concepts like loss aversion and scarcity, which can be leveraged to stimulate impulse buying (Kenning & Plassmann, 2005). Neuromarketing studies emphasize the importance of emotional engagement in advertising. Emotional appeals trigger impulse buying by tapping into consumers' feelings rather than rational decision-making processes (Heath 2012). Neuromarketing insights into consumer perceptions of pricing influence psychological pricing strategies. Pricing techniques such as **charm pricing** (\$9.99 instead of \$10.00) exploit

cognitive biases, stimulating impulse buying by altering consumers' perceived value (Grewal 2019)

Neuromarketing principles emphasize the power of **storytelling** in advertising. Compelling narratives trigger emotional responses, fostering connections with brands and influencing impulse buying behaviour (Morgan 2019). Visual marketing strategies, including product packaging and design. Stimulating visuals can trigger emotional responses and impulse buying behaviour. (Lindstrom, M. (2008)

During the Covid-19 Pandemic, an increase in impulsive behaviour among customers was noted and various researchers observed its causes and effects. A study published by Prentice, C. et al. (2020) observed a significant rise in impulse buying during the COVID-19 pandemic. The research attributes this to increased stress, anxiety, and the uncertainty of the situation, which led consumers to seek immediate gratification through spontaneous purchases . On the other hand some used shopping as a coping mechanism as noted by Zheng et. al (2020), and found that the pandemic-induced isolation and stress had a direct correlation with increased impulse buying. The study noted that consumers turned to shopping as a coping mechanism to manage negative emotions and fill the void left by reduced social interactions. A study published in 2023 (Chen, S., & Lin, Y.) focused on the effects of post-pandemic consumer behaviour on impulse buying. It found that while the initial surge in impulse buying during the pandemic has levelled off, the convenience of online shopping and the habit of seeking instant gratification continue to drive impulse purchases.

In 2017, Sohn, S. Y., & Tadisina, S. K; conducted a study focusing primarily on Indian consumers, this study analyses the determinants of impulse buying behaviour in online shopping. It examines factors such as **website design**, consumer characteristics, and situational factors to provide insights into what drives impulse purchases in the online environment and found that the above factors have high degree of impulse stimulation. While not directly addressing impulse buying Chen, Y. H., & Yang, H. L. (2010) conducted a study investigating the effect of online store atmosphere on consumers' **emotional responses**. Emotional responses play a significant role in impulse buying behaviour, and understanding how the online environment influences these responses can provide valuable insights for e-retailers, thus emphasized on the emotional responses of consumers. While in 2012, Huang, M. H., & Chang, C. H. employed structural equation modelling to understand the determinants of online impulse buying behaviour. It examined various factors such as website characteristics and design,

individual characteristics, that influence impulse buying in e-commerce context and suggested web pages and their designs have a positive influence the consumer buying behaviour. With an interesting approach to consumer tendencies, Kim, J., & Forsythe, S. (2008) conducted a study which while not focused specifically on impulse buying, this research explored the adoption of virtual try-on technology in online apparel shopping (clothes, cosmetics, eyewear). **Virtual try-on** tools can stimulate impulse purchases by enhancing the online shopping experience and reducing perceived risk associated with purchasing clothing items without trying or testing them. To examine consumer usage and buying **patterns** in both traditional and online stores, (Kacen, J. J., Hess, J. D., & Chiang, W. K. 2013) contributed to understanding the dynamics of multichannel retail. The findings are relevant to exploring how consumers navigate between different channels and make impulse purchases online and offline by understanding their purchase patterns where **algorithms** can be of great help. that explored how digital marketing and social media influence impulse buying. Xu, Y., & Huang, J. (2023) conducted a research and found that personalized advertisements and social media influencers significantly increased impulse purchases by enhancing product visibility and perceived value.

(Keywords: signage, promotions, social proof and fomo, algorithms, psychological factors, neuro marketing, patterns, emotional response, web design and environment.)

Framework and Future Research

After a comprehensive look into the existing literature and studies on impulse purchase and impulsive consumer behaviour and how each stimuli affects the consumer behaviour (with respect to impulse), I suggest the following factors and stimuli to be studied and considered for research:

- i. Consumer Personality.
- ii. Consumer Needs.
- iii. Promotions.
- iv. Social Factors.
- v. Digital Payment Mode.

Conclusions

Exploring impulse buying has been a challenge for market researchers due to its intricate nature which differs from person to person. According to Hausman (2000), impulse buying is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon that contributes significantly to the volume of products sold annually. The main objective of consumer research has been to determine the different elements that lead to impulsive purchases in developed countries. However, in emerging economies, there is an urgent need to study impulse buying due to recent developments in retailing and substantial cultural disparities compared to developed nations (Kacen and Lee, 2002). The substantial rise in personal disposable income, changes in lifestyle, and increased access to credit have made impulse buying prevalent across various retail formats. Enhancing sales through unplanned purchases requires the creation of an appealing physical shopping environment and in-store stimuli (Abratt and Goodey, 1990). The current retail environment in India offers ample opportunities for consumers to engage in impulsive buying both offline and online across different product categories.

Considering the universal occurrence of impulse buying, retailers can leverage it to enhance their business prospects. By strategically combining and harnessing the influence of various factors affecting impulse buying, retailers stand to increase their sales turnover, thus benefiting marketers and retailers alike. Through a comprehensive content analysis of existing literature, it became feasible to elucidate the concept of impulse buying, its diverse dimensions, and its correlation with consumer behaviour. Furthermore, this analysis facilitated the formulation of research propositions aimed at advancing knowledge in consumer research. Given the evolving market dynamics in developing economies, it is conceivable that impulse buying will emerge as a burgeoning area of research and activities, transcending various forms of retailing.

After the comprehensive review and analysis of a diverse set of existing literature on purchasing decisions, impulse buying, consumer behaviour, marketing practices and their effects on consumer , psychological factors in buying decisions and various others, it is clear that Impulse Buying Behaviour although heavily influenced by Internal and External Stimuli along with Socio-cultural norms and Psychological factors, Marketers can use these stimuli effectively for increasing sales and driving up revenue. Impulse buying behaviours in consumers also provides a good opportunity for introducing new products and ranges given judicious use of the above stated factors and stimulus. Given the rise of digital retail and attractive stores both online and offline marketing can efficiently target impulse buying tendencies of customers to drive up sales and brand recognition. Impulse buying also births further recommendations to peers and social groups which may enhance brand awareness and consumer bases.

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