

Factors Influencing Online Impulsive Buying Behaviour

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Abstract

Online shopping is the order for the day. The phenomenon of Impulsive Buying Behavior is to make purchases on the spur of the moment and has created interest among the researchers as well as retailers to study about such consumer behavior. Impulsive purchasing is an integral part of consumer society as more time is spent in shopping environments. Online shopping environment has gained a significant position in the shopping arena as consumers make an increasing ratio of their purchase online. This paper tries to identify the various factors that motivate the consumers to make online Impulsive shopping. These factors are identified based on six main dimensions which are generally used for all purposes of research. This paper contributes theoretically by increasing understanding of consumer Impulsive Behavior in general and especially the factors that motivate them to do so. Brick and Mortar stores attracted more impulsive consumers in those days but now due to the development in retailing and marketing environment, online shopping environment involves more impulsive purchasing than the former.

Keywords : Consumer Behavior, Impulsive Buying, Shopping Behavior, etc.

Introduction

Online marketing and shopping of products has become the most common thing in this era. Brick and Mortar stores have been overtaken by the online sellers through their attractive, varied and spontaneous service for their customers. Online shopping is the latest fashion for shoppers as it symbolizes and differentiates people in the society. Traditional shopping methods have been overtaken by impulsive shopping practices. Impulsive shopping means an unplanned purchase of products by a consumer which occurs “*on the spur of a moment*”. Online Impulsive Buying denotes the unplanned and spontaneous purchase of products through online shopping websites. Impulsive shopping is encouraged by various motivating factors that induce people to buy products instinctively which increase day by day. This paper elaborates the factors that motivate the consumers to make online impulsive shopping.

Importance of Impulsive Buying

Impulsive buying means sudden shopping of products without any intention of buying. The spontaneous decision of shopping taken by consumers is due to various motivational factors like external stimuli, internal stimuli, psychological factors, demographic factors, socio-cultural factors, situational factors and hedonic consumption. These factors and their components are identified from various secondary sources and reviews. They help us to know the actual aspects that induce the consumers to make impulsive shopping online. Triggering of consumers’ mind is not an easy job; it involves varied methods of marketing of products and services. To induce someone to do something, we need to do something interesting, attractive and striking. Impulsive buying is such a thing that involves eye-catching display of products, attractive offers, striking features and mind blowing way of marketing. This paper attempts to focus or culminate the various factors / motives of online Impulsive Shopping.

Scope of the study

Impulsive Buying Behavior is a concept that has been studied for the past five decades. Online Impulsive buying is one of the recent concepts which tries to explore the spontaneous decision making of consumers based on certain criteria for shopping. These criteria include the motives of impulsive buying which are generally psychological in nature and a socio-cultural to an extent. This study is a descriptive study and furthermore study can be done by relating each factor with one other, and to find out the most dominating factor of impulsive buying. There is more scope for people to explore this topic by attempting a psychological survey of impulsive consumers to know their experience during shopping and their post-purchase behavior after using the product. Many consumers regret for making impulsive shopping due to various reasons and those reasons can alone be studied from their view. This will help the sellers to improve their marketing environment and retain consumers for a longer period of time.

Statement of the problem

Online shopping plays a vital role in today’s shopping environment. Impulsive shopping is very common nowadays that many people buy products on the spur of the moment. This paper explores the various factors influencing consumers to buy products instinctively online. Sudden purchase of products requires some inducing motives that act as the driving force from within the consumers. These factors are categorized under six main dimensions and are

studied theoretically. This study helps people to know the driving force behind the impulsive consumers and their behavior there upon making unprompted shopping decisions.

Objectives of the study

1. To explore the motivational factors of Online Impulsive Buying Behavior.
2. To analyze the problems faced by the consumers making impulsive purchases.

Research Methodology

Exploratory research design is adopted here as it is flexible in its approach and involves a qualitative investigation in most cases. It is the simplest and most well structured method of research. Secondary sources of data are used here that are previously collected findings which have been authenticated and published.

Factors Influencing Online Impulsive Buying

Psychological Factors	Situational Factors	Demographic & Socio-Cultural Factors	Internal Stimuli	Hedonic Consumption
Personality traits 1. Openness 2. Conscientiousness 3. Extraversion 4. Agreeableness 5. Neuroticism Self esteem Drive Lifestyle traits Self-regulations External Factors Store image Display of products Ambience POP impulsive purchase (temptation) Credit card payment Rewards for shopping Loyalty programs	Spending power Actual / perceived time available Shopping seasons (utilizing the festival offers) Shopping habits	Age Gender Family circumstances Education & income Social appreciation (liking for status) Individualism & Independence	Irresistible urge to buy Emotional state Mood for shopping Positive buying emotions Mood management Sensational feelings	Pleasure & happiness Shopping enjoyment Delight, joy & fun Excitement & ecstasy Sensation seeking Recreational aspects Pursuit of pleasure Symbolic & self-expressive goods

The above table depicts the various factors influencing Online Impulsive Buying Behavior of consumers. These factors highly motivate the buying behavior of consumers on various grounds, and are explored in detail.

Psychological Factors

Consumers' mind keeps changing every moment, and keeps oscillating as they come across various products that can satisfy every need. Human psychology is tough to be studied but consumer psychology is hard to be understood. Psychological factors include personality traits, self-esteem, lifestyle traits, self-regulations and drive. Self-esteem denotes the honor and high reward received from the society by the people. Human mind always longs for the appreciations and regards from others which plays an encouraging role in their day to day life. Self-regulations and lifestyle traits denote the daily life issues and self-discipline followed by the people in the society. Drive is the initiative by the people which creates an urge inside them to do something. This drive is an important factor in motivating the consumers to buy the products without pre-intentions of shopping.

Demographic and Socio-Cultural Factors

Demography is the study of people in the society with reference to their Age, Gender, Education, Employment, Monthly Income, Family Type (nuclear / joint), etc. Socio-cultural factors are the customs and traditions followed by the people with no compromise as these traditions are being valued high by them. These customs are considered to be their pride as they convey some values and ethics. Education and monthly income decides the spending pattern of the people. People give importance for savings rather spending in the present. Impulsive buying behavior has changed this concept of saving more for future because impulsive consumers enjoy their spontaneous shopping of goods a lot.

Family type highly influences shopping behavior as people in a joint family have less decision making power than in a nuclear family. Nuclear family helps in developing individualism among the members and also they are highly independent than members in a joint family. Independency and individualism induces a person to make quick decision regarding shopping as he/she is authorized to take decision anytime without an interference by a third person. Countries like India follow Joint Family System and the eldest person of a family becomes the decision maker in the family, business, etc. Nuclear family has got only parents with one or two kids and here the kids, decide things faster than the elders.

Situational Factors

Situational factors include the domestic and personal habits of people. Retailers provide different kinds of offers, discounts, festive sale, clearance sale, etc. to attract more consumers. These offers are

properly utilized by the people based on their spending capacity and the seasons for shopping. Habits of shopping vary with people as some people will enjoy heavy discounts and others will buy products in original price. Spending power of consumers vary highly because earning people's shopping pattern will differ from kids' shopping as they are dependent on their parents. Online Impulsive Shopping is induced by the time available for shopping because it involves spontaneous discretions of buying products in a short period of time which includes time consumed to know about the products, and its promotions like price, offers, etc.

Internal stimuli

Internal Stimuli of consumers are identified by their urge, emotional state, positive and negative moods, etc. Some people go for shopping to change their negative mood to positive mood. Some researchers have found that shopping helps in changing the negative moods of people by providing an enjoyment and pleasure which in turn relaxes the mind of consumers. There are also consumers who will have an irresistible urge during shopping to buy certain products irrespective of their nature and use. This kind of urge arises from within the consumers due to attractive nature of the products which includes color, texture, odor, offers, social status, etc. People also go for shopping when they are angry. Emotions of people are highly counted during Impulsive Shopping of goods.

External Stimuli

The most attractive feature of Impulsive Buying is the spontaneous selection and purchase of products by the consumers. This is possible only when the products are arranged / displayed in an eye-catching way. In retail outlets, the products are assorted according to their category, size, color, quantity, price, brands, etc. Online shopping websites also display the products accordingly that the consumers feel easy to select the products. The striking feature of online shopping is the attractive show case of products which induces the consumers to make impulsive shopping of goods. The display of products includes POP (Point of Purchase) displays too wherein the consumers buy products while making payments for other transactions. Credit card payment facility is also an external stimuli experienced by the consumers because online shopping highly requires e-payments most of the time. The payment is made secured by various security options and software to make sure that the accounts and payment passwords are not copied and reused by the hackers. Ambience and other display options also attract more impulsive consumers in various ways.

Hedonic Consumption

Hedonic consumption means the pleasure of consuming products. Some consumers make shopping a habit, some will enjoy shopping, some will derive happiness from shopping and some will get entertained during shopping. Shopping makes the consumers feel delighted in various number of ways through pleasure giving, joy, zest / zeal excitement, ecstasy and sensation seeking, etc. Women always make Impulsive Shopping of goods that are symbolic and expressive of their nature and appearance (accessories, handbags, etc.). Women also deserve social appreciation for the way they carry themselves amongst a social gathering. Impulsive Shopping is made by the people who seek pleasure and excitement in shopping and they also enjoy and participate in the recreational aspects of shopping.

Hedonic consumption by people gives them immense pleasure out of shopping that makes them feel happy and contented. Those people love shopping and they are crazy about doing it. Impulsive Shopping gives consumers happiness out of shopping which makes shopping a repetitive one.

Drawbacks of Impulsive Buying

1. Impulsive buying behavior of consumers is an instinct decision making process which may lead to regret for taking hasty decisions made at times.
2. It makes the consumers go crazy behind shopping that may lead to dumping of products.
3. It also leads the consumers to regret after shopping the goods that they might feel the products shopped become unnecessary.
4. Consumers regret for online impulsive shopping of goods because they may not get the products ordered i.e., color or texture or quality or size gets changed when the product is delivered.
5. Product return policy do not work at times and it might lead them to feel agony of improper decision making.
6. Impulsive Buying Behavior is considered as an addiction and it should not be practised in the long run.
7. Secured payments are impossible during certain transactions due to hacking and password insecurity which are encountered by the consumers.

Conclusion

Impulsive buying has been a challenge for market researchers due to its complex nature. The proper combination and synergistic effect of the various factors influencing impulsive buying leads to more

sales turnover hence benefiting the marketers and retailers in their respective businesses. The above explained factors clearly depicted the various situations the consumers undergo while making online impulsive shopping. Many people hesitate to make impulsive shopping of goods as they feel that they might regret after buying the products. Post-purchase behavior of people varies at different levels because it gives every person a varied experience. Some may be delivered with the actual products they have ordered and some might find difference between the products ordered and the products delivered. These kinds of problems arise at times and make the consumers regret for making Impulsive Shopping. Impulsive Shopping gives pleasure to many consumers and people really relish it as shopping has become a habit for many Indians as in western countries. Spontaneous decision making by the consumers in shopping shows their strong decision making capacity in the spur of the moment. Marketers should understand the minds of the impulsive consumers and try to retain them as loyal consumers.

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