



## IMPULSE PURCHASE BEHAVIOUR: A REVIEW

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### Abstract

For more than fifty years, researchers have strived hard to form a better understanding of impulse buying (Stern; 1962; Rook *et.al*; 1987; Rook and Fisher; 1995; Peck and Childers; 2006 ; Chang *et.al*; 2011). The purpose of this paper is to provide a detailed account of impulse buying behavior. The content analysis of various research work led to the classification of literature into various factors affecting impulse purchase decisions ,classifying products into impulse and non impulse items, behavior dimensions of impulse buying and Rook and Fisher (1995, p.305) proposed that consumers tend to control their innate impulsive tendencies as they perceive impulse buying as normatively wrong. This paper will be useful for practitioners and researchers towards understanding of impulsive behavior of consumers and will provide a better insight in

**Keywords:** impulse buying, impulse and non impulse items, purchase decisions, behavioral decisions, perceive.



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## 1. Introduction

The increasing amount of spending in today's society has created a new life style that has been integrated and accepted among consumers. Owning of items has become an expression of self identity for a lots of consumers which has increased shopping as a lifestyles (Dittamar *et.al* 1996) and India is rated fifth among the developing countries based upon global retail development index of 30 developing countries drawn up by AT Kearney (2012) reports and retailing in India is expected to grow because of changing life styles and impulse buying becomes critically important for retailers. In this paper we have proposed a comprehensive outline of impulse buying behavior that can be explored and on the basis of which further research can be carried out in future.

## 2. Literature Review

Retailers have realized the power of impulse buying, which is a central points in many purchasing activities and this topic have received considerable research interest in marketing literature(Beatty and Ferrell, 1998;Rook and Fisher,1995;Jones et al.,2003).

### 2.1 Definitions of Impulse Buying

Stern (1962) classified buying behavior as planned and unplanned. As per this classification, planned buying behavior involves a time consuming information search followed by rational decision making (Piron,1991;Stern,1962). Unplanned buying refers to purchases made without advanced planning which involves speedy decision making.

Rook (1987) has quoted kollat and Willet(1969) "impulse purchase is difficult to measure accurately because consumers may be unable or unwilling to articulate their pre purchase intentions".

Rook (1987) has further quoted that "buying impulses are often forceful and urgent, that there isn't much time to think about them. It is a fast experience and It is more spontaneous than cautious...it tend to disrupt the consumer behavior stream."

Piron (1991) uses a conceptualized meaning of unplanned purchasing from et al (1982) saying that "unplanned purchase is a buying action undertaken without a problem having been previously recognized or buying intentions formed prior to entering the store ".

<b>IMPULSE BUYING DEFINITION'S</b>	<b>AUTHORS</b>
Impulse purchase can be defined as any purchase made without advanced planning.	Clover(1950), Kollat and Willet(1967), Bellenger et al.(1978)
Far More Rapid than unplanned buying and based upon behavioral response.	D' Antoni et al.(1973)
Impulse buying is characterized by high emotional activation, low cognitive control and largely reactive behaviour	Weinberg et al.(1982)
Impulse purchase is one in which one makes decision to buy the items while one in store.	Cobb and Hover(1986)
Impulsiveness is defined as a tendency to respond quickly to a given stimulus without deliberation and evaluation of consequences.	Gerbing et al.(1987)
Impulse purchase is powerful and persistent urge to buy something immediately.	Rook(1987)
Impulse purchase is related to store environment and time pressure	Iyer(1989)
Impulse purchase is unplanned buying and hedonically complexed experience	Piron(1991)
An impulse purchase is characterized by relatively rapid decision making and subjective bias in favours of immediate possession.	Rook and Gardner(1993)
An unplanned and sudden buying act, in response to subjective or external stimuli, accompanied by a powerful and persistent urge after the purchase followed by customers emotional, cognitive and behavioral reactions.	Xiao and Nicholson(2012)

**Sources: Compiled by Author**

**Contribution Made By Different Author's**

<b>Author</b>	<b>Contribution</b>
Clover(1950)	First to study impulse buying and suggested that some product categories are sold more on impulse.
Stern(1962)	Stern concluded that there are nine factors that influence impulse buying among consumer which included low prices, mass distribution, self service, mass advertising, prominent store displays, low marginal need, short product life, smaller size and low weights.
Kollet and Willet(1967)	Found that women buy more on impulse than man.
Prasad(1975)	Suggested that unplanned buying may be more a function of situational variable than of individual shopper characteristics.
Bellenger et al.(1978)	He observed no significance relations between gender and impulse buying.
Tversky and Kahneman(1981)	Consumers make decision without watchful consideration of alternatives available, with unsatisfactory information regarding the product or without prior intention of purchasing that product.
Weinberg and Gottwald(1982)	He studied that cognitive deliberation plays a part in the impulse buyer decision; its influence is smaller than that of affective state.



Rook and Hock(1983)	Identified five crucial elements in impulse buying-a sudden and spontaneous desire to act, a state of psychological disequilibrium, the onset of psychological conflict and struggle, a reduction in cognitive evaluation and lack of regards for the consequences of impulse buying.
Cobb and Hoyer(1986)	They observed in a study that women are less impulsive than man because women usually plan their shopping before entering into store.
Rook(1987)	He studied that age is among imperative factors that predict impulse buying behavior in consumer.
Iyer and Ahlawat (1987)	Consumer tendency of being impulsive is different in different stores. For example impulse purchase results more in grocery shop
Iyer(1989)	Contributed that all impulse buying is at least unplanned but all unplanned purchases are not necessarily.
Abratt and Goodey(1990)	Contributed those High income shoppers more likely to show higher impulsive behavior.
Piron(1991)	He contributed that impulse buying is a purchase that is unplanned and it results as an exposure to a stimulus and decided on the spot.



Babin et al. (1994)	Introduced that impulse buying has been found more commonly in case of Hedonic products.
Dittmer et al.(1995)	Concluded that man are likely to purchase instrumental and leisure products on impulse while women on the other hand are likely to purchase symbolic and self expressive products.
Dittmer et al.(1996)	Concluded that individual who perceives self discrepancy tries to use material goods to compensate the discrepancy, having impulse buying tendencies.
Beatty and Ferell(1998)	Concluded that individual affective state or mood has been found to be an important determinant in impulse buying.
Betty and Ferell(1998)	Concluded that time and money a consumer has for shopping determines whether he or she will be impulsive.
Schiffman and Kanuk(2007)	Suggested that store entering interview about shopper purchase plan might condition their in store purchase behavior; the interview might force shoppers to commit themselves to fulfill their purchase plan.
Hausman(2000)	Suggested that consumers shop not only to buy but to satisfy their different needs.



Youn and Faber(2000)	Suggested that both positive and negative of consumers are potential motivators for impulse purchasing.
Kacen and Lee(2002)	Studied the impact of cultural forces on impulse purchase. People engage in impulse purchase who used to have independent self concept.
Crawford and Malewar(2003)	Suggested that marketers should promote a good store layout to maximize the convenience of consumers.
Zhou and Wong(2003)	Suggested that retail store environment could affect the impulse buying.
Luo(2005)	Suggested that product price is an important determinant of impulse buying

Parboteeah (2005)	Suggested that individual characteristics like individual age, gender, culture, mood, materialism, shopping enjoyment and perceived degree of self discrepancies enhances consumers tendency to show impulsive tendency.
Park et al.(2006)	Studied fashion and hedonic aspects of impulse purchase.
Peck and Childer (2006)	Suggested that point of purchase, signs, displays, packaging encourages product touch which may increase impulse purchase.





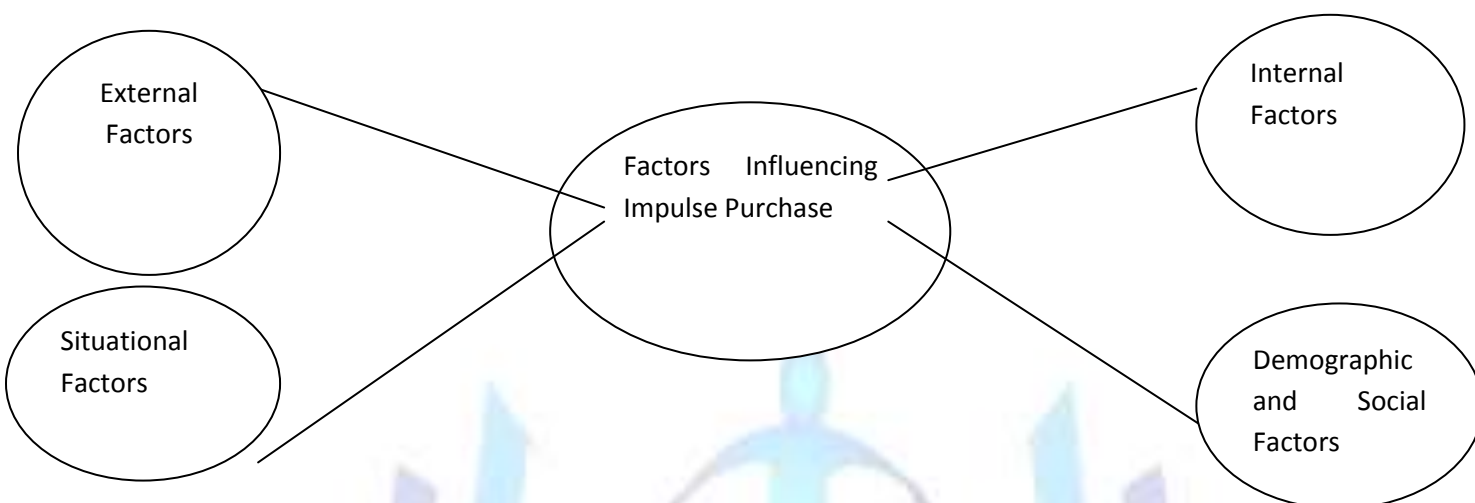
Kathleen and Ronald(2007)	Explained that impulse buying is resulted from the depletion of common but limited resources that govern by self control.
Kaur and Singh(2007)	Studied the impacts of impulse purchasing tendency of Indian youth
Dhar(2007)	Studied that Packaging plays an important role at impulse purchase.
Mattila and Wirtz(2008)	Found that store environment factors such as social factors have a positive impact on impulse buying behavior.
Dawson and Kim(2009)	Studied affective cognitive aspects and found a significant relationship between a person affective and cognitive state.
Harmancioglu et al.(2009)	Suggested that in case of new product, product knowledge, consumer excitement and consumer esteem drives impulse buying behavior.
Sharma et al.(2010)	Studied the variety seeking behavior of impulse buying.
Dong-jenn yang et al.(2011)	Studied affective cognitive aspects and found a significant relationship between a person affective and cognitive state.
Minal et al.(2012)	Found that display is a very important driver of impulse behavior.

**Sources: Compiled by Author**



### Factor Influencing Impulse Purchase

A consumer impulse purchase tendency is being affected by internal as well as external factors (Wansink, 1994). Increased exposure to certain external stimuli increases the impulse buying tendency (Iyer, 1989).



#### External Factors of Impulse Buying:

Refers to all those factors that are placed and controlled by the marketers in attempt to lure consumers into purchase behavior (Youn and Faber, 2000). Consumers experiences an urge to impulsively purchase when visually encountering cues such as promotional activities (Dholakia, 2000; Rook 1987).

External marketing cues not only attract new customers but also promotes up selling and cross selling

(Dawson and Kim, 2009). In store employees are promotional techniques employed to increase impulse buying of products. Some examples of this techniques in-store setting, on-self positions, price-off promotions, sampling, coupons and in store displays.

Exclusive availability of certain products, clean ambience and spacious formats are some of the factors that enhance the impulse purchase tendency. Ease in the mode of payments like credit cards and incentives for doing extra shopping can also increase an impulse purchase.

#### Internal Factors of Impulse Buying

It depends entirely upon the individuals. Internal factors constitute internal cues and characteristics of individual that make them involve in impulse buying behavior. Such factors involve consumer's personality traits which determine the degree of impulse buying tendency, internal cues such as emotional states.

Researchers have provided theoretical framework for examining impulse buying related to psychological variables, hedonic variables and situational variables in a shopping context. Internal stimuli are being processed by consumers and when a consumer feels an irresistible urge to buy, he/she feels compelled for impulse purchase. Several researchers have suggested that consumer's personality traits help in determining the degree of impulse buying tendency.

#### Situational Factors of Impulse Buying

Situational Factors refers to those external factors which come from the shopping environment when buyers come into contact with certain kind of visual stimuli.

According to Belk(1974), situation comprises of all the factors "particular to a time and place of observation which do not follow from a knowledge of personal and stimulus attributes, which have a systematic and demonstrable effect on current behavior". Thus it involves elements like Physical Surrounding, Social Surrounding, Time and Shopping Task.

#### Demographic and Social Factors

From the literature review, it is clearly understood that majority of the individuals are females who are involved in impulse purchase and large part of consumer base are literate with higher disposable income.

Social Factors also influences impulse buying and it involves store employees and other customer's. Store employees friendliness has a direct impact on the impulse purchase intentions of the customer and friends accompanying the customers also increase the chances of impulse purchase.

#### Scope of Future Research

Further research can be carried out how promotional tools affect old and young people.





Further study can be done on the impact of the impulse purchase tendency of young women.

Future research could be extended to study the impact of promotional tools like cross selling and up selling.

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