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Role of intrinsic factors in impulsive buying decision: An empirical study of young consumers

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ABSTRACT

The primary aim of the current research was to study the effect of various intrinsic factors on consumer decision making vis-à-vis impulsive buying tendencies. After employing EFA and CFA on 630 consumers in the different parts of Jammu and Kashmir, results showed that intrinsic factors significantly influence the Impulsive Buying Decision. The application of Structural Equation Modeling disintegrated intrinsic factors into positive and negative influencers of impulsive buying behaviour. The present study has significant bearing in consumer world as it has highlighted through a model for how intrinsic factors shape the buying tendencies of a young consumer. Through the application of Multi Group Analysis, a comparison has been drawn between impulsive buying behaviour and various intrinsic factors across males and females taken as two different consumer groups. Overall results have been found significant and could well be adopted for strategy making by various stakeholders in the field of consumer psychology and consumer behaviour to figure out the effects of intrinsic factors on buying behaviour.

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1. Introduction

Generally, in majority of the decision-making circumstances, consumers hardly entertain the adequate degree of information exploration. Rather, it would become tiresome practice if all buying decisions entail the need for extensive effort. Furthermore, if all the purchases were made customarily, then they would most often have the propensity to be boring, monotonous and would hardly bring enjoyment or freshness to a buyer. The degree of an exertion that a consumer exercises for getting to the bottom of problem largely depends on the level of his/her precision for the selection criteria, the scope of information he/she is already having about the product beforehand, and the accessibility to the number of substitute options (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007).

Impulsive buying is basically defined as an unplanned buying (Dittmar, Beattie, & Friese, 1995). Applebaum (1951) stated that impulsive buying is an outcome of promotional stimuli and that buying items are not decided in advance in consumer's mind before starting a shopping trip. According to Kollat and Reed (2007), impulsive buying behavior is realistically accidental behavior when it is associated to emotional preferences in shopping. However, role of interior elements cannot be neglected and in this context, impulse buying is described as an outcome of in store behaviour and that consumers do not have any objective to shop for any particular item before entering any shop (Cobb & Hoyer, 1986). Rook (1987) re-conceptualized the idea of impulsive buying and

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defined it as a spontaneous process that occurs when consumer experiences an unexpected and unrelenting push for attaining something instantaneously. The desire to purchase on impulse is hedonically complex and largely encourages emotional conflict and more so impulsive buying occurs with diminished regard for its consequences. In other words, consumers after having gone through impulsive purchase do not give any importance to future short comings arising as a result of spontaneous buy. He also stated that the occurrence of impulsive buying behaviour often go together with negative consequences such as being let down, finding one-self to be blameworthy and distressed about financial tribulations associated with it. From his viewpoint, impulse buying is often concentrated and forceful.

Furthermore, impulse buying is defined as “an unintentional purchase” that is characterized by relatively rapid decision-making and a subjective bias in favour of immediate possession” (Gardner & Rook, 1988). It is described as more arousing, less deliberate and more irresistible buying behaviour compared to planned behaviour. High impulsive buyers are likely to be unreflective in their philosophy, to be emotionally attracted to the object, and to desire immediate gratification. These consumers often pay little attention to potential negative consequences that may result from their actions (Hoch & Loewenstein, 1991). Rook and Hoch (1985) came up with improved research work on impulse buying wherein they identified interior psychological stages that pressurize a consumer to spontaneity. Cognitive and emotional responses which create a beam of imbalance and that shoppers go through during spontaneous buying were centre of attention of their study and through this study they recognized five distinguishable factors that trigger impulsiveness that is: (1) feeling a sudden and spontaneous desire to act; (2) being in a state of psychological disequilibrium; (3) experiencing psychological conflict and struggle; (4) reduction in cognitive evaluation of the product; and (5) disregard for the future consequences (Rook & Hoch, 1985). Hoch and Loewenstein (1991) proposed impulse buying as a conflict between the two psychological processes of affect and cognition. They revealed that the emotional elements produce forces of crave ensuing in spontaneity, whereas the cognitive elements facilitate self-control or determination and these two are by no means free from one another. Any variation in either feelings or cognition can cause the shopper to swing above/below the buying bar, thereby forcing a purchase. It is for this reason that when an individual is found deficient of self-control over his buying crave, spontaneous buying becomes apparent (Youn & Faber, 2000).

The scuffle that enrages between the interior arousing craves to purchase and the in house strength of will not to purchase is akin to a balance beam that has the propensity to change over at a flash. Merely a trivial modification is necessary in majority of the cases so as to transpire the consumer buying behaviour from that of being resistant to purchase decision. Research in past has recognized that the emotional desires and cognitive willpower strive against each other and produce an irregular beam of impulsivity and self-control. It is not that consumer's cognitive or affective processing can only pressurize the end user to impulsiveness but there are other characteristics that need to be taken into consideration. Kempf (1999) proposed that the dependence on affective or cognitive processing may also be stimulated by the nature of items for consumption. She disagreed with the conception that useful product evaluations are expected to be dependent on cognitive characteristics of a consumer, whereas hedonic goods are more prone to be judged on the basis of emotional responses. Contrary to it, Shiv and Fedorikhin (2002) disapproved and impressed that when privileged possessions are limited, actions of a consumer are determined by the lower-order developments that persistently scrutinize the environs for experiencing the emotional significance. In case of gender differences, research in the past has proven that whilst two females go for shopping in joint, they repeatedly squander more time and money than females who go for shopping whilst unaccompanied by others (Underhill, 2001). Underhill (2001) also put forward his view, that the money a consumer pays is direct consequence of how much time they consume in the shopping mall.

It was observed that females frequently go for more possession of products than that of males and in reality take pleasure in shopping. Despite the fact that the contemporary world abandons any dissimilarity between male and female, the research on the subject in past has substantiated that both process information in much different way (Peter, Olson, & Grunert, 1999).

The important questions that should be investigated and have paramount importance in the subject of consumer behaviour largely enfold whether intrinsic factors have any role in determining impulsive buying tendencies? Does the degree of emotions override the rational decision making? Can irrational decision making be controlled through more self management? Can psychological aspects of a consumer be identified for exploring its impact on buying tendencies? Whether gender differences are significant in determining the association between interior aspects of an individual and impulsive buying tendencies. And more importantly what needs to be done to do away impulsive buying tendencies? This study focuses mainly on the influence of intrinsic factors on impulsive buying tendencies. Intrinsic factors for the current study have been identified through past literature, exploratory factors analysis and through expert opinion. Impulsive buying behaviour has several perspectives but from consumer welfare outlook, it is more a curse that has troubled majority of consumer groups and young consumers in particular. In this direction, it is important to uncover the effects of interior elements deep ingrained in consumer dogma so that possible interventions could be suggested to overcome irresistible fantasies. The impulsive buying behaviour is an enigma that most of the consumer groups encounter and always seek to eradicate it. Therefore, researcher felt it as a social responsibility to work on this mystery so as to bring in various measures that could do away this everyday puzzle.

Thus the study through structure models aims to explore the impact of interior factors on impulsive buying tendencies which is based on six intrinsic factors (acting as influencers) and one output variable in the form of buying tendencies. With an obvious dearth in literature pertaining to intrinsic factors and impulsive buying behaviour, the findings of the study could be used by different stake holders like sales managers, academicians and consumer welfare advocates for the welfare of consumers at large. Though a plethora of research has been conducted on the impulsive buying behaviour but such studies lack the application of higher order statistics requisite for obtaining reliable results. Furthermore, the current study was conducted through the application of structured questionnaire that has been missing in past research. The application of multiple group analysis for

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