
Editorial: Impulsive behaviour among consumers and buying decisions

Rajagopal

EGADE Business School,
Tecnologico de Monterrey,
Carlos Lazo 100, Santa Fe, 01389, Mexico City, Mexico
Email: rajagopal@itesm.mx

Biographical Notes: Rajagopal is Professor of Marketing at Graduate Business School (EGADE), Monterrey Institute of Technology and Higher Education (ITESM), Mexico, and Visiting Professor at Boston University, USA. He is Life Fellow of the Royal Society for Encouragement of Arts, Manufacture and Commerce, London. His biography has been listed in various international directories since 2008. He obtained his PhD from Ravishankar University, India. He has been conferred SNI III- the highest recognition of National Researcher, National System of Researchers, National Council of Science and Technology, Government of Mexico. He has several scholarly books and research papers on marketing to his credit.

Buying behaviour of consumers is affected by intrinsic and extrinsic factors. The growing prominence of social media, collective intelligence, and face-to-face interactions with peers develops psychodynamics among consumers on a product, service, portfolio, or on the firm. It generates grapevine effect and builds cognitive ergonomics embedding both exploratory and descriptive arguments for the desired products and services in consumers. Such cognitive perception drives consumers towards any specific decisions. Impulse is a socio-psychological condition among consumers that occurs around an urge, seeking for an abrupt decision. Emotional involvement with a brand, communication, or an experience drives stronger consumer self-image congruence on brands and generates affective and hedonic behaviours. The peer and social consciousness play positive role in driving consumer-brand congruence (Kim et al., 2012). Though impulsive behaviour is a normal and fundamental human thought processes, it is an unpredictable, and might be a persistent, behaviour in the long-term leading to obsessive-compulsive behavioural disorder, borderline personality disorder, or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. One variant of impulsive behaviour is observed in the tendency of buying among consumers. Impulsive buying is a consequence of promotional incentives and unplanned buying decision. Impulsive buying is widely associated with neuroticism (emotional instability exhibiting anxiety, moodiness, irritability and sadness) (Shahjehan et al., 2012).

Consumer personality is one of the intrinsic factors that affect consumption behaviour. Personality dimensions of a consumer are central to the consumer cognition and decision-making process. The personality attributes radically change when the consumer experiences an unexpected and unrelenting thrust for attaining something instantaneously, causing an impulse in buying. Impulsiveness in behaviour alters consumer beliefs and inflicts rationale of a planned buying behaviour (Sofi and Najar, 2018). Anthropomorphic perceptions (perception of identifying self with desired human

entity) and self-image congruence also are strong predictors of intrinsic impulsiveness among consumers. In addition, credit cards have overridden all other store-bound buying stimuli to inculcate easy buying behaviour among consumers. There are many extrinsic factors including communication and advertisements, brand appeal and endorsements, promotional stimuli, and fear of running out of stock. The in-store factors often function as cognitive drivers in the minds of consumers. These factors are contextual to sales promotions, value for money, shared values, store ambience, and the time available for shopping (Dholakia, 2000). Exclusive commercial channels describing the products and services on television play significant role in inculcating interest in innovative products, and thereby, creating impulsive emotions among consumers.

The TV shopping-channels and virtual stores have significantly altered the conventional wisdom of consumers and enhanced the scope of impulsive purchasing opportunities. Impulsive consumers are extensively driven by the visual merchandising strategies, user generated contents, do-it-yourself kiosks, augmented reality experience, and crowd psychodynamics in the brick-and-mortar or virtual marketplaces. Consumers with impulsive emotions often pay little attention to potential negative consequences that may result from their actions in short and long-term. Behavioural disposition of consumers and store ergonomics contribute significantly in stimulating impulsive emotions and purchase intentions. The customer-centric companies build ambidextrous retail infrastructure to stimulate customer behaviour (brick-and mortar and online stores) by understanding the psychology of senses through dark and attractive colours (visual), vibrant music (hearing), appealing fragrance (smell), store surfaces (touch in case physical stores), and free food sampling (taste in case of physical stores). As the impulsiveness is linked to emotional arousal, it is linked to the state of mind than the demographic factors such as age, gender, occupation, and income in principle (Kacen and Lee, 2002). Companies tend to change the reference points that guide the buying decision of consumers by drawing their attention to dynamic marketing-mix strategy on product (innovation), price (competitive with value for money advantage), place (delivery satisfaction in the context of cost, time, risk and convenience), promotions (competitive offers), packaging (sustainability), and pace (being the first). The consumer impulses in both brick-and-mortar and online stores are endorsed by the current philosophy of knowing, doing, and believing the products and services. Such factors associated with the impulsive behaviour not only offer myopic satisfaction but also inculcate product or brand loyalty in the long-term (Strack et al., 2006).

Impulsiveness is observed in the buying behaviour of both utilitarian and hedonic products and services. The desire to buy hedonic products with an impulsive emotion is complex, and it largely encourages emotional, economic and social conflicts. Impulsive buying occurs with closed cognitive rationale and is driven by extrinsic influences. Such state of the mind results into spontaneous buying. Cognitive and emotional responses create imbalance in decision-making, which causes spontaneity among consumers towards buying at a particular situation. The impulsiveness triggers in the mind of consumers an unplanned desire, a state of psychological volatility, cognitive conflicts and struggle, rational thinking at a given moment, and neglecting the consequences (e.g., Sofi and Nika, 2017). Customer-centric companies analysing the neuro-marketing indicators can better evaluate their retailing strategies by playing idiosyncratically with the state-of-the-mind of consumers during their in-store or online buying process.

This issue of the journal includes six research papers geographically spread across the USA, India, and Mexico that address impulsive buying behaviour and purchase

intentions, besides financial and international business topics. The papers included in this issue of the journal broadly discuss contemporary research on consumer behaviour, innovations in services, and developments in international business. I hope the collection of research papers appearing in this issue will enrich the existing literature on the topic and stimulate future research.

References

- Dholakia, U.M. (2000) 'Temptation and resistance: an integrated model of consumption impulse formation and enactment', *Psychology and Marketing*, Vol. 17, No. 11, pp.955–982.
- Kacen, J.J. and Lee, J.A. (2002) 'The influence of culture on consumer impulsive buying behavior', *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, Vol. 12, No. 2, pp.163–176.
- Kim, K.H., Ko, E., Xu, B. and Han, Y. (2012) 'Increasing customer equity of luxury fashion brands through nurturing consumer attitude', *Journal of Business Research*, Vol. 65, No. 10, pp.1495–1499.
- Shahjehan, A., Qureshi, J.A., Zeb, F. and Saifullah, K. (2012) 'The effect of personality on impulsive and compulsive buying behaviors', *African Journal of Business Management*, Vol. 6, No. 6, pp.2187–2194.
- Sofi, S.A. and Najar, S.A. (2018) 'Impact of personality influencers on psychological paradigms: an empirical-discourse of big five framework and impulsive buying behavior', *European Research on Management and Business Economics*, Vol. 24, No. 2, pp.71–81.
- Sofi, S.A. and Nika, F.A. (2017) 'Role of intrinsic factors in impulsive buying decision: an empirical study of young consumers', *Arab Economic and Business Journal*, Vol. 12, No. 1, pp.29–43.
- Strack, F., Werth, L. and Deutsch, R. (2006) 'Reflective and impulsive determinants of consumer behavior', *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, Vol. 16, No. 3, pp.205–216.