



ORIGINAL CONTRIBUTION

Exploring the Factors Affecting the Online and Offline Impulse Buying Behaviour of the Millennium Generation

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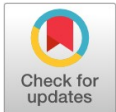
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Abstract— The study aims to explore various elements that affect the impulse buying behaviour of the millennial generation during online and offline purchasing. In this study, data was collected through semi-structured interviews with nine respondents and analyzed through thematic analysis. Results indicate that during offline purchasing attractive product display increases the likelihood of impulse buying, and crowd affects impulse buying both negatively and positively. Physical assessment of the product appeared as the main reason for doing the offline shopping. While on the other hand in a virtual environment, ease of transition increases the likelihood of impulse purchases. The results further disclose that individuals are engaged in buying impulsively without thinking about their economic condition and they do extra purchases when their mood is not good and when they are with friends.

Index Terms— Impulse buying, Store environment, Presence of others, Visual appeal, Situational factors.

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Introduction

The tendency of individuals to make unplanned purchases without much thought or consideration is referred to, in literature, as impulse buying behaviour (Solomon et al., 2012). It is often triggered by emotional impulses, such as a desire for pleasure, a need to alleviate stress, or a feeling of excitement (Armstrong, 2009). Various factors, such as situational and personal factors contribute to the Impulse buying behaviour of an individual. Situational factors include factors such as store environment, time pressure, promotions, and product displays. Personal factors include factors such as personality, mood, and self-control (Bourlakis et al., 2005). Individuals who engage in impulse buying behaviour may experience a temporary feeling of satisfaction or pleasure, but this feeling is often short-lived. Impulse buying behaviour can lead to overspending, debt, and buyer's remorse (Wood, 1998). Therefore, it is very important to be aware of the factors that trigger it and to develop strategies to resist the urge to make unplanned purchases. This can include making a list of items to purchase, setting a budget, avoiding shopping when you are feeling emotional or stressed, and waiting a period before purchasing to determine if it is really necessary (Thompson and Prendergast, 2015).

The researcher has investigated impulse purchase behaviour more in traditional store environments to devise operational methods to overcome the limiting aspects and determine effective factors that rise the likelihood of impulse purchasing (Ahn et al., 2007, Vohs and Faber, 2007). Nevertheless, traditional retail outlets are not the sole selling channels any longer. It was clear in 2003 that with the invasion

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of e-commerce, online sellers will generate extensive alterations in the retail business (Eroglu et al., 2003) by changing significantly the landscape. This study aims to explore various elements affecting an individual's impulse purchase behaviour in the course of online and offline purchase situations.

Literature Review

Impulse buying

Impulse buying is considered an act of making an unintended or spontaneous purchase without fully considering the consequences (Lades, 2014). It is often driven by emotions, such as excitement, desire, or curiosity, rather than rational decision-making. Impulse buying can occur in a variety of settings, such as when shopping in stores, browsing online, or watching advertisements (Verplanken and Sato, 2011). Some of the ways retailers can create an environment that fosters impulse buying include product displays, store layout, and lighting and music (Hausman, 2000). While impulse buying can provide temporary satisfaction, it can also have negative consequences. For example, it can lead to overspending, accumulating debt, and owning items that are not needed or used. Additionally, it can contribute to a cycle of materialism and consumerism that can be harmful to both individuals and the environment. To avoid impulse buying, it can be helpful to set a budget and stick to it, make a list of needed items before shopping, take time to consider purchases before making them and avoid shopping when feeling emotional or stressed (Xiao and Nicholson, 2013).

Factors affecting in-store impulse buying

Store environment: The store environment is an essential decisive element of impulse buying; various microelements chain to form the environment of the store, including salespeople, crowding, music in the background, luminosities, and odours (Tendai and Crispen, 2009). The overall environment in the store can play an important role in encouraging impulse buying. Therefore, to stimulate shoppers' senses and emotions and encourage them to make unplanned purchases, retailers often make use of different techniques to create an attractive and engaging environment inside the stores (Kacen et al., 2012). Besides creating a stimulating environment, stores also motivate their customers to impulse buying through sales promotions (Mattila and Wirtz, 2008, Mohan et al., 2013). Even if someone is entering the outlet with not-so-positive emotions, the ambience of the outlet may generate an encouraging sensation in individuals and consequently, it might encourage them to spend extra money than they had planned (Chang et al., 2011, Kiran et al., 2012, Badgaiyan and Verma, 2015). Therefore, to resist impulse buying, shoppers can be mindful of the store environment's impact on their emotions and decision-making. They can also make a list of what they need before entering the store, stick to a budget, and take a few deep breaths to calm their emotions before making a purchase.

Salesperson behaviour: Salesperson behaviour can also motivate shoppers to do impulse buying. A skilled salesperson can influence a customer's emotions and decision-making by using various sales techniques (Pornpitakpan and Han, 2013). Salespeople may create a sense of urgency by suggesting that a product is in high demand or that a sale is ending soon. Salespeople can build rapport with customers by providing personalized attention and engaging in a friendly conversation. This way, a customer feels more valued and consequently the chances of him making a purchase increase. They may recommend additional products that complement or enhance the customer's original purchase (Zeithaml et al., 1996). This technique can make customers feel like they are getting a good deal and increase the likelihood of impulse buying. Salespeople may use persuasive language to influence a customer's emotions and decision-making (Ozen and Engizek, 2014). For example, they may use positive language to describe the benefits of a product or use fear of missing out (FOMO) to encourage customers to make a purchase. To resist impulse buying influenced by salesperson behaviour, customers can be aware of these tactics and stay focused on their needs and budget (Tendai and Crispen, 2009). They can also politely decline offers or take time to think about their purchase before making a decision. It is important to remember that the final decision to buy rests with the customer and not the salesperson.

Product display: Product display is among those factors that influence buyers most effective manner to encourage impulse buying in a retail environment. By strategically displaying products, retailers can catch customers' attention and create a sense of desire or urgency, leading them to get involved in unplanned purchases (Ailawadi et al., 2009, Mehta and Chugan, 2013). Retailers often use creative and eye-catching displays to draw customers' attention to specific products. For example, using bright colours or unique props to create an eye-catching display can create a sense of curiosity and desire to explore the product. Retailers often place small, low-priced items near the checkout counter to encourage last-minute impulse purchases (Edwards and Shackley, 1992). This technique takes advantage of customers' waiting time in line and their sense of convenience (Kerfoot et al., 2003). Offering limited-time promotions, such as a buy-one-get-one-free offer or a discount for a short period, creates a sense of urgency and encourages impulse buying. To resist impulse buying influenced by product displays, customers can be mindful of their needs, and budget, and focus on the products they originally intended to buy (Moavery et al., 2014). They can also take a few deep breaths to calm their emotions and avoid being caught up in the

moment. As a result, the attractive display of retail stores possibly will affect the reaction of the individuals positively and will influence the impulse buying behaviour of individuals positively.

Crowding: The phenomenon of crowding is multifaceted as well as important for the atmosphere of the store (Michon et al., 2005). Crowds can also influence impulse buying. Being in a crowded environment can create a sense of urgency and excitement, leading customers to make unplanned purchases (Hui and Bateson, 1991). Seeing others make purchases can create a sense of social proof, leading customers to believe that the product is popular and desirable. This can create a desire to buy the product without much thought or consideration (Eroglu and Harrell, 1986). In a crowded environment, customers may feel like they are competing for the same products. This competition can create a sense of urgency and lead customers to make unplanned purchases to avoid missing out (Wakefield and Blodgett, 1994). Customers may be bombarded with various stimuli, such as bright lights, loud music, and overwhelming product displays (Machleit et al., 2000). This sensory overload can lead to impulse buying, as customers feel overwhelmed and make purchases to relieve stress (Eroglu et al., 2005). This indicates that the presence of a crowd in a store can affect an individual both positively as well as negatively, depending on the individual's opinion about crowding.

Presence of others : The presence of others can have a substantial influence on impulse purchase behaviour. It has been observed that people are further expected to make impulsive purchases when they are in the company of others, especially in social situations where they feel the need to conform to the behaviour of the group (Aribarg et al., 2002). One reason for this is that the presence of others can create a sense of urgency and excitement, which can increase the desire to buy (Baumeister, 2002). Additionally, the social pressure to conform to the behaviour of the group can lead individuals to make impulsive purchases they may not have made otherwise (Rook and Fisher, 1995). In addition, research has shown that the physical presence of others can also influence impulse buying behaviour (Childers and Rao, 1992). For example, studies have found that chances of impulsive purchases increase when customers are in a crowded store or when they are close to other shoppers. Overall, the presence of others can be a powerful factor leading to impulse buying behaviour, and retailers often use this knowledge to their advantage by creating social and crowded shopping environments to encourage impulsive purchases.

Factors affecting online impulse buying behaviour

Visual Appeal: Similar to the role played by the attractiveness of a brick-and-mortar outlet on consumers' impulse behaviour, a visually appealing website can generate a positive emotional response in the online buyer, which enhances the likelihood of impulse buying (Parboteeah et al., 2009). One way that visual appeal can influence impulse buying behaviour is with attractive product images (Turkyilmaz et al., 2015). High-quality images that highlight the product in a visually appealing way can create a desire in the user to own the product, leading to impulse buying (Forsythe and Shi, 2003). Additionally, the layout and design of a website can also influence impulse buying behaviour. A well-designed website with clear navigation and easy-to-find product information can create a positive user experience and enhances the prospects of impulse buying (Ahn et al., 2007). The use of colour can also influence impulse buying behaviour. Research has shown that certain colours can evoke specific emotions and behaviours, and retailers often use this knowledge to create a sense of urgency or excitement in the user (Atici and Bati, 2010). For example, red is often associated with urgency and can be used to generate a sense of urgency to buy. The visual appeal of a website can be a powerful factor in influencing impulse buying behaviour, and retailers often use this knowledge to their advantage by creating visually appealing websites that encourage impulse purchases.

Usability : Convenience in using and navigating a website leads to a positive user experience and increases the likelihood of impulse buying. Usability can influence impulse buying behaviour with clear product information and easy-to-use shopping carts (Éthier et al., 2006). When users can easily find the products they are interested in and navigate the checkout process, they are more likely to make a purchase. Moreover, the speed of a website can also influence impulse buying behaviour. Slow-loading pages or a clunky checkout process can frustrate users and discourage impulse purchasing (Verhagen and Dolen, 2011). When an online platform is difficult to browse will result in developing adverse emotions and will limit individuals from getting involved in an online transaction (Smith and Sivakumar, 2004). On the other hand, a fast-loading website with a streamlined checkout process can create a sense of ease and convenience, and increase the likelihood of impulsive purchase (Bressolles et al., 2007). The use of mobile-friendly design can also affect impulse buying behaviour. With the rise of mobile devices, more and more users are browsing and shopping on their phones (Dawson and Kim, 2010). A website that is optimized for mobile devices can create a positive user experience and increase the likelihood of impulse buying (Lavie and Tractinsky, 2004). Therefore, the usability of a website can be an influential factor in inducing impulse buying behaviour, and retailers often use this knowledge to their advantage by creating user-friendly websites that encourage impulse purchases.

Security : Security during online purchasing includes safeguarding individuals from fraud and financial losses, it also makes sure the security of individuals' information and guarantees not to reveal personal data. Such features appear to be mainly applicable during online purchase circumstances (Bressolles et al., 2007). As Corbitt et al. (2003) emphasized, even extremely driven impulse buyers can be affected by elements such as information celerity and security. Chances of an impulsive purchase increase when website users feel secure in providing their payment information (Madhavaram and Laverie, 2004). When users are browsing a website and considering making

an impulsive purchase, they want to feel confident that their personal and financial information is secure (Jeffrey and Hodge, 2007). If the website does not have proper security measures in place, users may be hesitant to enter their payment information and make a purchase (Forsythe and Shi, 2003). Furthermore, the fear of identity theft or credit card fraud can cause users to abandon their shopping cart and choose not to make a purchase. This fear can be particularly strong when making a quick, impulse purchase, as users may not have taken the time to fully evaluate the website's security measures before making the purchase (Cho and Lee, 2006). Therefore, retailers need to prioritize security measures on their websites to encourage impulse buying behaviour. Providing users with clear information on their security measures can increase user's confidence in making impulsive purchases. Additionally, offering secure payment options can further enhance users' trust in the website's security measures and encourage impulse buying.

Factors affecting offline and online impulse buying behaviour

Mood : Individuals can experience either positive or negative moods during a purchase decision and mood at that specific instant might influence a purchase decision (Foroughi et al., 2012). The mood is a significant factor that can affect impulse buying behaviour. A positive mood in a person often boosts the brighter side of the utility of a product and consequently, they are more likely to make an impulsive purchase (Dittmar et al., 1996). Conversely, when a person is in a negative mood, they often ignore the positive aspects or view the products negatively and thus are less likely to make an impulsive purchase. Positive moods can be activated by a variety of factors, such as seeing a favourite brand, being exposed to pleasant scents, or hearing upbeat music (Hausman, 2000). When a user is in a positive mood, they may be more likely to make an impulsive purchase because they are feeling good and want to maintain that positive feeling. For example, seeing an attractive product displayed in a store or on a website may trigger positive emotions and lead to an impulsive purchase. Conversely, negative moods, such as stress or anxiety, can make a person less likely to make an impulsive purchase. Negative moods can be generated by factors such as waiting in a long line or having a negative interaction with a salesperson (Vohs & Faber, 2007). When a person is in a negative mood, they may be less likely to make an impulsive purchase because they are not feeling good and want to avoid further negative experiences. Retailers can use knowledge of mood to their advantage to encourage impulse buying behaviour (Ozer and Gultekin, 2015). For example, offering pleasant scents or playing upbeat music in a store or on a website can help to create a positive mood and enhance the probability of an impulse purchase. Alternatively, minimizing negative experiences, such as long wait times or unpleasant interactions with staff, can help to prevent negative moods and increase the possibility of impulse acquisition (Huang and Kuo, 2012, Kiran et al., 2012).

Sales promotions : According to Duarte et al., (2013), individual buying behaviour is influenced by special offers, as such promotional events help individuals to fulfil their psychological needs. Sales promotions can have a substantial effect on impulse purchasing behaviour (Park et al., 2012). When a user sees a limited-time offer or a discount, they may be more likely to make an impulsive purchase. Sales promotions create a sense of urgency and scarcity, which can encourage users to make an impulsive purchase before the promotion ends (Virvilaite et al., 2009). For example, a user may see a sale for 20% off a product for a limited time only and decide to make an impulsive purchase before the promotion ends. Additionally, sales promotions can be designed to create a sense of reward for the user, which can increase the chances of impulsive buying. For instance, a user may receive a gift with a purchase or earn loyalty points for making a purchase, which can create a sense of excitement and encourage an impulsive purchase. Retailers can also use the concept of bundling to encourage impulse buying behaviour (Xu and Huang, 2014). By offering a package deal that includes multiple products at a discounted price, retailers can create a sense of value for the user and increase the likelihood of an impulsive purchase. Overall, sales promotions can be a powerful tool in encouraging impulse buying behaviour (Badgaiyan and Verma, 2015). By creating a sense of urgency, reward, and value, retailers can enhance the probability of impulse buying and boost sales (Dawson and Kim, 2010).

Time available: The amount of time a user has available can influence on their impulse purchasing behaviour (Badgaiyan and Verma, 2015). When an individual is pressed for time, they may be further expected to make an impulsive acquisition, moreover, when an individual is in a rush or has limited time, they may not have the opportunity to fully evaluate the product or consider the purchase (Masouleh et al., 2012). This can lead to a more impulsive decision, as the user may feel that they need to make a quick decision and may not have time to fully weigh the pros and cons. Additionally, limited-time offers or promotions can create a sense of urgency and encourage an impulsive purchase (Beatty and Ferrell, 1998). When a user sees a promotion or sale that is only available for a limited time, they may feel pressure to make a quick decision before the opportunity expires. On the other hand, when a user has ample time to consider a purchase, they may be less likely to make an impulsive decision (Lin and Lin, 2013). They may take the time to research the product or compare prices before making a decision. Therefore, retailers can use knowledge of the user's available time to their advantage to encourage impulse buying behaviour (Mohan et al., 2013). By offering limited-time promotions or creating a sense of urgency, retailers can further boost the likelihood of an impulse acquisition when the user is pressed for time (Wu and Huan (2010). However, when the user has ample time, retailers may need to use other tactics, such as highlighting the product's unique features or benefits, to encourage a purchase.

Availability of money: The presence of sufficient money, at the customer's disposal during a specific trip, is another important factor that can influence impulse buying behaviour (Lin and Lin, 2013). When a user has more disposable income or credit available, he tends

to purchase impulsively, especially when an excess amount of money is available, they may feel more comfortable purchasing without fully considering the cost or value of the product (Kumar and Mishra, 2012). This can lead to more impulsive buying behaviour, as the user may feel that they have the resources available to purchase without significant financial consequences. Additionally, the availability of credit can also influence impulse buying behaviour (Luo, 2005). When individuals have a high credit limit or access to credit cards, they may feel that they can afford to make a purchase even if they do not have the cash available (Beatty and Ferrell, 1998). This can lead to more impulsive buying behaviour, as the individual may not fully consider the impact of the purchase on their overall financial situation (Foroughi et al., 2012). On the other hand, when limited funds are available or are experiencing financial strain, they are less likely to make purchases impulsively. They may be more cautious about their spending and may prioritize their purchases based on their financial needs (Wood, 1998). Therefore, retailers can use knowledge of the user's financial situation to their advantage to encourage impulse buying behaviour. By offering financing options or highlighting the affordability of a product, retailers can make the chances of an impulsive purchase higher when the customer has more disposable income or credit available. However, individuals have limited funds available; retailers may need to use other tactics, such as highlighting the product's long-term value or providing payment plan options, to encourage a purchase.

Research Methodology

Data collection and analysis

A sample of nine students was selected through a purposive sampling technique. For this research, data were collected through semi-structured interviews. Interviews were carried out at a selected location that was convenient to the respondents. This was done to ensure that the interview must happen where the respondents feel relaxed. Thematic analysis was used to analyze the transcribed data, and NVivo was used for data analysis, which was collected through interviews.

Findings and Discussion

First level analysis

A significant amount of time was spent identifying the right themes. Several themes were developed, revised and refined. Revision of themes was carried out in two stages. In the first stage, all themes at the level of coded data extracts were re-examined and studied again to ensure if a reasonable pattern exists or not. Whereas at the next stage, the rationality of every theme was re-examined to verify that the thematic map accurately indicates the sense presented in the data set.

Defining and naming themes

Once the thematic map of the study was reviewed the themes were defined and refined further; here defining and refining signifies categorizing what each theme is about (Braun and Clarke, 2006), and determining what aspect of the data each theme describes. Three over-arching themes have been identified, namely offline impulse buying, online impulse buying, and situational factors. Within each theme, various sub-themes were identified. Website aesthetics, security, and ease of navigation were a few sub-themes in the online impulse buying theme. The sub-themes for offline subthemes were store environment, tangible influence, and presence of others. And subthemes that were part of the situational factors theme included sales promotion, mood, availability of time and money.

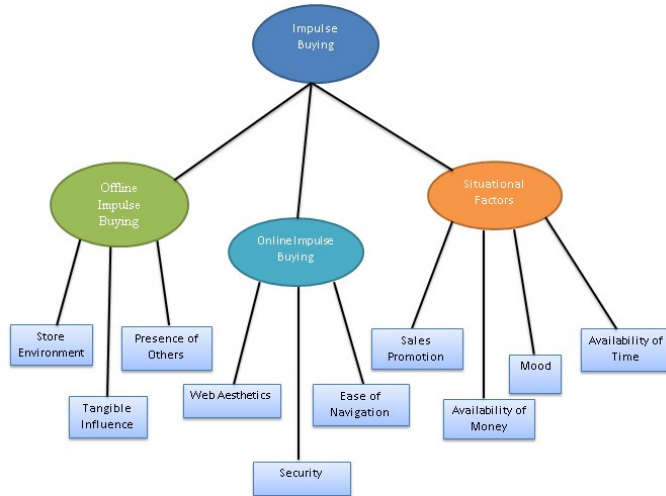


Fig. 1. Thematic map

Second level of analysis

Offline impulse buying

Environmental features of a store motivate and compels individuals towards the product most of the time. In an offline shopping situation, individuals have opportunities to examine the products physically and this may lead to impulse purchasing. The study revealed how various store environmental factors influence impulse buying behaviour during offline purchasing such as product display, salespeople, presence of others, and touch.

Table I
Offline factor

	KT	LA	NE	RK	SB	SD	SJ	TK	ZB
Crowd									
Negative Effect of Crowd	6	4	9	1	1	3	3	0	3
Positive Effect of Crowd	1	2	1	8	6	3	4	0	0
Presence of Others									
Presence of Family	2	2	3	1	2	0	2	1	7
Presence of Friends	2	0	5	2	3	3	2	2	5
Store Environment									
Colour Scheme of Store	2	0	2	3	2	0	4	0	2
Product Display	8	4	7	7	7	3	2	4	4
Store Layout	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	4
Store Lighting	3	0	2	2	0	1	0	0	1
Salesperson	3	2	5	2	3	3	2	0	4
Tangible Influence									
Likes to Try	2	5	0	2	1	3	3	0	4
Touch	2	4	1	3	2	4	3	0	5

Store environment : In a store environment, various stimuli exist that will increase the chances of impulse buying and it is an important element that conclusively affects individuals’ buying intentions. The store environment comprises several features, which include the layout of the store, colour combination, product display, and salespeople. Among all store environment stimuli product display appeared to be an influencing factor in impulse buying. The following response from a participant provides an example of how environmental stimuli affect impulse purchasing. He said:

“Display is one of the reasons why I am going into a shop. It draws me in specifically when they display new things then I start thinking let me just have a look, then it just starts from and I end up buying it”. (RK)

This suggests that noticeable store displays can affect the response of the individual positively, as a result, the likelihood of impulse purchases will also increase.

After receiving the attention of individuals because of eye-catching displays and elegant store layouts, now salespeople have to convince individuals. The role of salespeople can be essential while offering services to consumers, decent behaviour of sellers increases the likelihood of revisits of an individual to the store:

"If salespeople are helpful there are more chances that I am going to buy something and if staff won't bother and answer my questions I tend not to shop there". (RK)

It suggests that the role of a sales assistant is not only to provide product-related information but also to offer guidance as their decent conduct can help an individual in quicker decision-making or can change his actual views and choices.

However, most of the time individuals get irritated by obsessive sale person as buyers want to look after themselves and only seek help when they need it from the salesperson, as revealed by one of the respondents:

"If they come to ask me if I need help or anything it distracts me it irritates me so I prefer to be left alone just wander around and the store and make my own decisions without their influence". (SJ)

This suggests that the presence of the sales assistant must be somewhere near and has to be prepared to offer assistance when required.

Some individuals do not want to be in a jam-packed retail outlet and for them, it can create adverse consequences as they perceived that they are not getting enough attention from the sales assistant, as a result, they will try to escape crowded outlets:

"I wouldn't like that because firstly you can't walk through it properly and secondly if I like some product I won't be able to get reviews from salespeople so I wouldn't like the crowded stores". (NE)

In contrast, for some customers, shopping in a store that is full of people develops the feeling in them that the commodities provided by that store are of good quality and value:

"I like busy stores when it is hustle and bustle everyone is buying. When it is a bit busy it draws my attention more since if everyone is buying it must be good". (RK)

The above-mentioned examples thus indicate that a crowd in a store can play both a positive or negative effect depending on the customer's perception of the crowd in an outlet.

Tangible Influence : Assessing an item physically and examining its composition emerged as one of the main inducing aspects and one of the essential reasons for offline purchasing. The result of the study suggests that most of the time individuals like to check the items physically before deciding on any purchase. This is especially the case when an individual is buying apparel products, he wishes to put on, as mentioned by one of the respondents:

"For clothes, I will never buy online because I want to wear them I want to see whether the fittings are good whether it looks good on me or not, and also I want to see and feel the material". (SB)

It depicts that while purchasing offline individuals will have the advantage of checking the actual product and they can check the material that will influence their impulse purchases.

Presence of Others: While shopping, the company of an accompanying person will either motivate or demotivate individuals; such influences may take place regardless of whether the accompanying person is his colleague, family member or associate. As mentioned by one respondent:

"My mom (with a big smile) doesn't like me spending (she laughed) always restricts me and asks me to save and they will ask you and allow you to get only what you need. When I am with my friends there is no restriction because of the same age and same kind of level and same thinking so I just buy whatever I want to buy". (ZB)

Hence, individuals love to go shopping with their colleagues' friends, as with their friends and colleagues, they will not experience any sort of stress or limitation from them. While, in contrast, the company of a family member can pressurise them, and they derive enjoyment and get maximum benefits from their shopping trip and most possibly, they will make normal purchases.

Online Impulse Buying

Due to the internet and developments in information technology, individuals are getting involved in online purchasing in numbers. It has been evidenced in the data that potential benefits associated with online shopping encourage customers to make impulse purchases and convenience and other factors presented in Table 2 also have a role to play.

Table II
Online Factors

	KT	LA	NE	RK	SB	SD	SJ	TK	ZB
Security									
Security of online purchasing	4	5	4	0	4	4	0	0	2
Uncertainty about online purchasing	1	4	2	4	2	2	3	5	3
Delivery Time of online purchasing	2	2	5	0	0	2	0	3	1
Visual Appeal									
Web Aesthetics	1	0	1	0	0	2	3	2	1
Graphics and Pictures	3	1	2	3	0	0	0	4	0
Quality of web page	1	0	3	1	2	1	0	3	1
Recommendations on Website	4	2	4	1	2	1	0	6	2
Usability									
Web Sites difficult to use	1	0	0	4	0	0	3	1	2
Websites easy to use	1	0	5	3	1	0	2	4	3
Browsing	3	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0

Individuals show concern about the uncertainty of their purchases and undesirable outcomes after purchasing online. Because of this, they are less likely to make online purchases, as mentioned by a respondent:

“Product seems different online when it comes through the post is something different slightly different or is not as what you thought it would be so that puts me off doing online shopping”. (ZB)

This suggests that the factor of uncertainty associated with online purchasing restricts individuals from making online purchases.

Similarly, security appeared to be another feature of websites for which individuals have shown concern. It has been mentioned by respondents that they will use the website for their purchases only if they sense security:

“Security is very important but mostly when I am purchasing something I don't look at the security that much unless I receive something on email like that which gets quite scary at the end”. (KT)

This shows customers are attracted to those websites that assure them of security. This means, if online retailers offer security to their customers, this will attract individuals to their website and this will ultimately lead to impulse purchases.

Except for software, music tracks, and movies where delivery is instantaneous, all other purchases have a positive delivery lead time as physical items are often far distant from the buyers. This delay is inevitable and challenging, especially considering that a great number of purchases are based on impulse, as mentioned by a respondent:

"Because the delivery time is not always the next day or sometimes you have to wait for a week." (LA)

Particularly, during online shopping immediate gratification is delayed due to the delivery time of the product and customers, therefore, customers achieved immediate satisfaction for purchase transactions rather than getting the product.

Several website-related characteristics, for example, perceived ease of use make online impulse shopping easier. It seems that individuals prefer to visit easy-to-use websites and avoid websites which are not very user-friendly for their purchases:

“I am not a very technological person if the website is very difficult to use and navigate through then I just won't bother I like quick and easy and you know I like to be able to navigate to the page that I want to go to find what I am looking for”. (RK)

The findings of the study propose that occurrences of impulse purchasing can be increased during online shopping by recommending substitute, optional or additional products to the customers and by posting reviews about different products:

“I have a habit of buying additional items when for example I am purchasing a powder and let's see it is a Mac powder and they recommend something else like Mac lipstick and Mac nail polish that makes me buy them as well”. (NE)

Situational factors : A summary of situational factors in Table 3 indicates that situational factors can be grouped into internal and external factors. The first group includes the state and mood of an individual and represents the internal factors; whereas, time, money and the presence of others are external factors.

Table III
Situational factors

	KT	LA	NE	RK	SB	SD	SJ	TK	ZB
Availability of Time	3	1	6	5	4	0	2	5	7
Availability of Money									
Availability of Enough Money	0	1	1	0	0	1	4	2	3
Availability of Less Money	3	0	4	2	1	0	0	2	1
Mood									
Negative Mood	5	1	3	9	1	1	3	1	4
Positive Mood	3	1	3	5	3	0	2	0	1
Sales Promotion									
Discounts	5	2	6	7	7	2	7	1	7
Perception about Discounts	4	0	4	4	2	2	0	0	2

Availability of time : While purchasing, regardless if someone is using an online or offline platform, availability of time is deemed an essential factor. Availability of time will have an encouraging impact on impulse buyers, and the possibility of extra purchases will become greater:

“When I have enough time I subconsciously look for different things and I enjoy shopping and when I am in a rush I don’t feel like I want to buy something”. (KT)

This signifies that if a customer spends extra time in a shopping environment, then the portability of impulse purchasing increases.

Availability of money : The availability of money during a purchase situation plays an important role. Many respondents mention that they disregard their financial situation when it comes to impulse purchasing, as mention by respondents that;

"Irrespective of even if I have money in the bank or not, even if do not have enough money, it doesn't cross my mind because when I think I am getting a good deal and if I don't get it now then I am going lose out". (RK)

This shows that lack of money is not restricting individuals from doing impulse purchases; however, the chances of impulse purchases increase when money is available at their disposal.

Mood: While deciding on the purchase of a product, customers may be experiencing or undergoing a specific mood that can either motivate or demotivate their impulsive buying behaviour, as confirmed by one of the respondents:

"If I am feeling a bit lonely it is when it influences my impulse purchase rather than when I am excited or really happy. When I am excited I know that I just need to go and buy whatever I need and just come back". (SJ)

Similarly, another response said,

“Yes to boost my mood I go shopping every single day and I purchase different items which I even didn't know why I am purchasing it all the time so I could feel a little bit of lifted I felt worth something". (RK)

As moods are short-term and can be influenced easily by minor events hence by being involved in impulse acquisitions individuals are altering their moods. *Sales Promotion*: Promotional activities at stores have emerged as an influencing feature during both offline and online buying conditions.

“Even if it is something you don't have any intention of buying but when you see those signs of discounts it attracts and you start thinking that I am getting something that I can use later on.” (ZB)

This suggests that individuals are not immune to sales-boosting activities and if they find an opportunity appealing and beneficial to them, they are highly likely to avail of that deal even though they had no intention to make that purchase initially.

Discussion

In this research, factors that affect the impulse buying behaviour of the millennial generation in online and offline settings are explored. Many researchers have defined impulse buying as any unintended and unplanned purchasing that an individual does due to the influence of internal or external stimuli (Stern, 1962, Cobb and Hoyer, 1986). As explained by Rook and Hoch (1985), individuals show impulse purchase behaviour due to an unforeseen urge that makes people purchase a product on an immediate basis without pondering upon the consequences. Since no deliberate thought is given and individuals sometimes feel disappointed after making an impulse purchase, it is considered a negative behaviour. In summary, impulse purchasing is when an individual purchases anything without having any intentions or plans before arriving in brick and mortar or online outlet.

The examination of the research data suggests that vendors are utilizing in-store sensory stimuli to promote impulse buying. In this study, store layout, product display, salespeople, and tangibility of products appeared as influencing factors. Whereas, the way products

are displayed appears to be the factor that influences the most among all other factors. Respondents have mentioned that they get attracted when they find a beautiful product on the display in a store. Once they enter a store, the presence of other stimuli motivates them to make impulse purchases.

In meeting sales targets, salespeople play a very vital role by building and maintaining long-term and good buyer-seller relationships through high-quality service (Mattila and Wirtz, 2008). However, our research suggests that most of the respondents don't like to be approached by salespeople. Many respondents mentioned that they would not purchase if the salespeople would try to sell anything to them. However, they said they would seek help from sales staff only while purchasing an expensive or beauty-related product. It is the responsibility of the sales staff to determine the client's needs and recommend products that best fulfil those particular desires (Park and Lennon, 2006).

Humans use their sensual features to make judgements. Touch is one of the main sensual features that humans use to do physical interaction (Lindstrom, 2005). The eye alone may not be sufficient while evaluating a product's features, therefore, humans use touch to complement their eye-based judgement decisions. (Hultén and Vanyushyn, 2014). The result of the study suggests that by touching a product, a consumer can make a better judgement and hence his purchasing intentions are influenced by it. In contrast to offline shopping, during online purchasing individuals have to rely completely on the picture and information provided on the website to make their judgement about their purchases.

One of the factors that can affect the likelihood of impulsive buying either positively or negatively is the presence of an accompanying person during a shopping trip (Luo, 2005). Findings suggest that the company of friends contribute positively to impulse purchasing. In contrast, the presence of a family member (often elders and people higher in the family hierarchy) reduces the chances of impulse purchasing. Few respondents mention that when they are alone and are without any restrictions, they make more impulse purchases. Similar results are reported by Rook and Fisher (1995) and according to them, there are more chances of impulse purchasing when an individual is alone in a purchase environment.

The Internet has become a necessary part of everyone's life in the modern world. It has brought many advantages and influenced our daily lives including shopping behaviours (Dawson and Kim, 2009). As a result of its ubiquity, more and more individuals are engaging in online shopping as they can save time and can purchase all kinds of things while staying in the comfort of their homes. Website user-friendliness, elegant design, and maximum navigability are the features that lead to increased online impulse purchases (Liu et al., 2013). Of these features, ease of use also called user-friendliness is the feature that contributes to impulse purchases the most. Ease of use is described as the level to which an individual uses a website with less effort (Wang et al., 2010). An inadequately created website generates navigation problems and is equivalent to a retail outlet with a puzzling physical layout. These are considered equivalent as both lead to lower sales.

Another vital feature of an online store is the security of provided information during a purchase situation. The security of a website is the level to which a user senses confidence that the website will protect customer information (Ahn et al., 2007). The findings of the study suggest that individuals prefer those websites which give them a sense of security w.r.t. protection of classified information such as credit card and other personal details.

In terms of situational factors, time available, sales promotion, mood, and available money appeared as features of this category. The study results indicate that individuals will get involved in impulse purchases if they have more time. Most of the respondents in this study clearly expressed that discount signs in a retail outlet attract them. Finding suggest that these discount signs make them realize that they are availing a decent bargain and consequently they purchase extra even though there was no need or prior intention to purchase that specific product. These promotional drives assist in making impulsive purchasing and more essentially lead to repeat future impulse purchases. (Liao et al., 2009).

The financial situation of customers is another factor that influences purchase decisions. While making a purchase, people always consider the financial situation in their mind (Beatty and Ferrell, 1998). This proposes that the likelihood of an individual for an impulse purchase may increase once they have extra or enough money and vice versa. However, the results of our study differ from the past studies, as our results indicate that financial condition does not affect impulse buying. This difference in results could be due to the selected sample of our study which is focusing on millennium generation only.

Past studies indicate that individuals go shopping when they want to raise their mood but the chances of impulse buying are low (Rook and Gardner, 1993). However, our findings show that individuals make impulse purchases regardless of their mood being low or high. When feeling low or unhappy, they purchase more and do impulse purchases to boost their moods.

Proposed Conceptual Framework

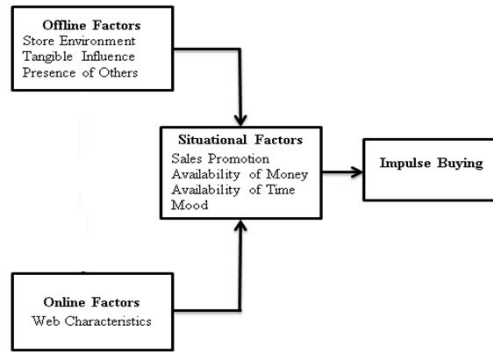


Fig. 2. Conceptual framework

Conclusion

This research explores factors influencing the impulse buying behaviour, in online and offline settings, of the millennial generation. While purchasing when individuals act spontaneously, they are showing impulse behaviour comprised of purchase intentions and impulse buying tendencies. The insights of the study will be helpful for retailers to have a better understanding and to forecast the influence of these identified factors on individuals’ buying behaviour. Attractive product display at physical stores generates favourable emotions and encourages customers to enter the retail outlet, which results in impulse purchases. Furthermore, an organized layout of the store helps an individual to sail through the buying experience very smoothly in an offline store environment. However, in a store where the layout is not well organised, individuals feel uncomfortable and they depart from the store very quickly. It also appears that in-store crowding can either attract or repel the customer. Those who are attracted view crowding as a sign that the store should be offering something good. However, those who consider crowding tantamount to long queues, untidy arrangements, and less privacy are repelled by it.

The finding of the study indicates that the courteous attitude of salespeople might or might not affect the purchasing behaviour of individuals, because some individuals do not want to interact with salespeople. One of the factors that seem to motivate individuals towards offline shopping and leads to impulse buying is the opportunity to touch the product and feel its material and other features. The presence of family might restrict individuals from impulse purchases but when they are with friends, they tend to behave otherwise. Therefore, the store environment should be planned in a way that will attract parents with their children and extend their stay in the store will foster purchasing.

When it comes to impulse purchases, most millennials tend to ignore their financial condition. The more time spent in the store, the higher the chances are of responding impulsively for millennials. It appears that individuals involve themselves more in impulsive buying when they are not in a good mood by doing so they want to change their mood. Promotional tactics especially price discounts are considered a nice way to attract customers to buy impulsively, but sometimes they create a negative impact in the customer’s mind as they may consider it to be out of date or an inferior quality product.

The study will develop an understanding of online and offline factors that affect the impulse-buying behaviour of the millennial generation and will contribute to the impulse-buying literature. To validate results, future researchers can replicate the study in different socio economical contexts. The finding of the study could be useful for marketers who develop strategies to make sure the use of online stimuli encourages individuals to purchase impulsively. Retailers are needed to design their outlets in such a way that customers feel important and comfortable in the store. It is important because the good behaviour of salespersons, and sales promotional activities increase the impulse-buying tendency of the customers. In the absence of a good shopping environment, customers may reduce their shopping time and postpone their purchase decision. Retailers must continuously improve the store environment through attractive store displays and the use of in-store advertisements, and they should make the atmosphere of the store entertaining will motivate the customer to get involved in impulse buying.

Limitations of the Research

In this study, the research has not examined the different types of impulse buying behaviours separately such as pure, planner, reminder, and suggestive impulse buying. Therefore, in future, researchers should consider studying these buying behaviours separately.

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