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Creating In-Store Impulse Buying: Physical or Human Cues?

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ABSTRACT

Impulse buying behavior is the ever-concerning interest not only in marketing but in sustainable business management; the scope of in-store impulse buying behavior has increased with increasing online purchasing tendencies of customers. This study examines the role of physical and human cues in stimulating the impulse buying behavior of customers purchasing in-store. This study employed a self-administered questionnaire to collect the data from conveniently available customers at their shopping points at well-known outlets in Kathmandu. Following the explanatory research design, the study has examined the direct and mediating effects of predicting the impulse buying behavior of 270 customers with different socio-demographics. Results revealed a significant positive impact of six dimensions of physical cues and interaction with the staff as human cues in predicting impulse buying behavior. Additionally, the mediating impact of human cues ensured that human cues are more important in creating impulse buying. This study has set its originality by developing a mediating model that provides the managerial and theoretical implications of the S-O-R theory.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Covid-19 pandemic influenced business organizations adversely (Shen, Fu, Pan, Yu, & Chen, 2020), except for those based on the internet or quickly changed their business activities to the internet base. Evidence shows that more than 4.5 billion people surf the internet and use social media (Nosi, Pucci, Melanthiou, & Zanni, 2021) every day, trillions of dollars are spent on e-commerce (Kemp, 2021), increasing tendencies to purchase online (Chetioui, Lebdaoui, & Chetioui, 2021; Nair & Shams, 2021). Global retailing is facing challenges, especially from the development of online business (Nair & Shams, 2021), changing the customers' shopping experiences expectations which demand changing store management practices to sustain the traditional in-store trading. It is, thus, necessary to

identify the factors influencing the store's attractiveness and increasing customer experience purchasing in-store.

Various prior studies (e.g., Gorji & Siami, 2020; Graciola, Toni, Lima, & Milan, 2018; Horstmann, 2017) suggested the environmental influence of in-store atmosphere to attract customers and increase their positive experience of purchasing in-store. Positive in-store buying experiences motivate customers to Impulse Buying (IB), and most customers buy one or more times IB (Saad & Metawie, 2015), which is the tendency to purchase goods and services without planning. IB is characterized with 1. making rapid or instant purchase decisions (Verplanken & Herabadi, 2001; Foroughi, Buang, Senik, & Hajmisadeghi, 2013) 2. subjective bias in favour of immediate possession (Rook & Gardner, 1993). Almost 80 percent of buyers have IB behaviour (Bellenger, Robertson, & Hirschman, 1978; Han, Morgan, Kotsiopulos, & Kang-Park, 1991; Hausman, 2000) which data justifies the importance of maintaining, even improving, and creating the factors influencing impulse purchase behavior (Wang, Pan, Xu, Luo, & Wu, 2022), especially the developing economies like Nepal.

Most extant researchers (e.g., Han, Morgan, Kotsiopulos, & Kang-Park, 1991; Hausman, 2000; Foroughi, Buang, Senik & Hajmisadeghi, 2013; Saad & Metawie, 2015; Wang, Pan, Xu, Luo & Wu, 2022) have focused on distinguishing impulsive buying behavior from non-impulsive buying behavior, with a number of determinants of impulsive buying behavior. Only a very few studies have focused on in-store attributes like employees' caring behavior and the physical environment (Saad & Metawie, 2015) of the store like display (Gorji & Siami, 2020), music (Grewal, Baker, Levy & Voss, 2003; Hussain & Ali, 2015), sales person's behavior (Goff, Boles, Bellenger & Stojack, 1997), and music and scent (Hussain & Ali, 2015). In the current situation, with the increasing trend of purchasing online, investigation for identifying the aggregate determinants of influencing customers' behavior for impulse buying and especially the contribution of employees' behavior in it is still significant.

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Impulse buying behavior is a complex phenomenon (Nair & Shams, 2021) that a number of factors can influence. However, the central idea is that it is a psychological state of the buyers derived from needs and backed by satisfaction (Ata & Sezer, 2021). With the changing technology, buyers experience a different mode of purchasing and appeal to sellers through different media but their experiential learning influences impulse buying. Satisfaction with retailers, salespersons, in-store atmosphere, price, and brand image satisfy the buyers. The accumulated affective experiences with the product, service, price and entire environment will further strengthen the cognitive cues of buyers and encourage their impulse buying. People's behaviour results from their internal evaluation of the different environmental cues. Based on this notion, this study relies on the stimulus-organism-response (S-O-R) theory. The impulse buying decision results from immediate psychological gratification (Wu & Lee, 2016) resulting from in-store attributes. Instore IB is the complex perceptual phenomenon with cognitive and affective dimensions (Nair & Shams, 2021) induced by many tangible and intangible aspects developing the store image (Visser, Janse Van Noordwyk, & Du Preez, 2006), which justifies how IB behavior is influenced by the internal evaluation (organism) in the stimulus-organism-response relationship.

Previous studies in different parts of the world and different markets based on its development have identified different physical and human cues and scale items summarized in table 1.

Physical cues (store attributes) and impulse buying behavior (IB behavior). Store attributes are the important driving forces for store choice, product purchase decision and impulse buying behavior (Nair & Shams, 2021; Nair, 2018a; Saad & Metawie, 2015). Ambient elements like layout and design, lighting and music (Hussain & Ali, 2015; Walsh, Shiu, Hassan, Michaelidou, & Beatty, 2011) as the store attributes enhance the IB behavior (Saad &

Metawie, 2015), cleanliness (Bashir, 2017), sales promotion display (Gorji & Siami, 2020; Otterbring, 2018; Du Preez, Visser, & Noordwyk, 2008), navigation convenience (Badrinarayanan, Becerra, & Madhavaram, 2014), in-store advertisement (Bues, Steiner, Stafflage, & Krafft, 2017) and atmospheric cues (Terblanche, 2018; Youn & Faber, 2000) have been established physical cues significant to enhance the IB behavior. Store attributes stimulate the buyers to recall the new items, to increase the volume of products to purchase and to be sociable and responsible towards family members so that they perform IB behavior. Based on the facts, a hypothesis can be stated as:

H1: Satisfaction from physical cues (store attributes) positively stimulates IB behavior.

Table 1

In-store physical and human cues and scale items

Dimensions (Cues)	Description of dimension	Scale items
Store atmosphere	Store decoration, music, smell, space management, and atmosphere	1. The store is well decorated and attractive. 2. The store has got a nice smell and order. 3. The store plays pleasant and sound. 4. The store atmosphere is comfortable. 5. The store size is enough for free movement.
Convenience	Easy transportation connectivity, easy check-in and check-out process, convenient parking, long hours of operation	1. The store can be reached by public transportation. 2. The store has a quick check-in process 3. The store has an easy check-out process. 4. The store has sufficient parking space. 5. The store has convenient operating hours.
Store display	The well-organized store layout, attractive display, appealing display gondola use	1. The store has a well-organized layout and display. 2. The store has an attractive appearance. 3. The store has sufficient convenience facilities for family shopping. 4. The store displays product information for new products. 5. New products are displayed visibly.
Product range	Wide assortment, branded quality, trusted packaging, reasonable pricing,	1. The store provides a wide range of goods. 2. The store offers branded and quality products. 3. The store uses trusted packaging materials. 4. The store provides products at a reasonable price. 5. The product provides multi-branding products.
Product promotion	Discounts, free coupons, offer free products at volume purchase, loyalty points, advertisements and displays, product information on mobile	1. The store provides discounts / free gift offerings. 2. The store provides free products/discounts at volume purchases. 3. The store has loyalty programs/schemes for regular purchases. 4. The store uses attractive advertisements and displays. 5. The store regularly sends product/price information through mobile.

Store service	Payment facility, in-store carrying services, after-sales service, free delivery.	1. The store accepts multiple payment devices. 2. The store provides a carrying facility in-store if needed. 3. The store makes a sincere effort if customers encounter a problem. 4. The store provides additional services like packaging and gift preparation. 5. The store provides free home delivery up to a certain distance.
Interaction with salespersons	Interpersonal interactions between salespersons and customers	1. Salespersons give personal attention to customers. 2. Salespersons are always willing to help customers. 3. Salespersons provide prompt service and are never too busy to respond to customers' queries. 4. Salespersons are courteous and cheerful. 5. Salespersons are knowledgeable in assisting customers.

Note: Adopted from Du Preez, R., Visser, E. and Noordwyk, H.J.V. (2008), Terblanche (2018)

Human cues and impulse buying behavior. Human attributes, i.e., the positive experience of service and problem-solving behaivor of salespersons during the purchasing, develop attributes of positive feelings regarding additional and unplanned purchase behavior. Positive experience from the social interactions with salespersons (Saad & Metawie, 2015; Meng & Xu, 2012) increases trust towards the store, product brand and quality, and seller (Badrinarayanan, Becerra, & Madhavaram, 2014), which significantly influence IB behavior. Interaction and service of store personnel (Nair & Shams, 2021; Terblanche, 2018), selling orientation of the salesperson (Goff, Boles, Bellenger, & Stojack, 1997), trust (Shiau & Luo, 2012), retail service quality (Pornpitakpan, Yuan, & Han, 2016), and customer-salesperson trust (Twing-Kwong, Albaum, & Fullgrabe, 2013). Positive experience in shopping in-store plays a significant positive role in creating positive emotions (Terblanche, 2018). Based on the empirical evidence, the following hypothesis has been formulated:

H2: Satisfaction from human cues positively stimulates IB behavior.

H3: Human cues significantly mediate the predicting ability of physical cues to IB behavior.

3. RESEARCH METHODS

Data collection, samples and measures. This study follows the quantitative approach using primary data collected from a structured questionnaire survey from the customers visiting in-stores to purchase shopping goods (apparel) in Kathmandu, Nepal. Self-administered questionnaires were distributed to the customers willing to participate in the survey based on convenience sampling. Respondents were given a certain time to complete the questionnaire; most respondents (90%) returned on the same day after completing their shopping at the store, and only a few (10%) returned the questionnaire after a few days of they received the questionnaire.

To study in the uniform purchase environment, a few well-known outlets like UFO, KTM CITY, Le Fabec, Bhatbhateni, World Trade Center, KL Tower, Sherpa Mall, Civil Trade Center, Times Square, and City Center were chosen to pick up the respondents. Data from 270 respondents from different strata in terms of age, profession, and income group have been selected.

A final questionnaire was prepared after a pilot survey with 30 respondents to make the items scale uniformly understandable to the respondents. Terminologies were simplified after the pilot survey so that the questionnaire would be less technical and easy for the respondent on each statement. Since the reliability of the responses was acceptable (Croanbach alpha value greater than 0.7 according to (Nunnally, 1978)) to decide to carry on the same questionnaire with minor improvements in terminologies. The survey questionnaire was developed with the 5-point Likert scale having seven physical cues, i.e., each store atmosphere (5 items), convenience (5 items), store display (5 items), product range (5 items), product promotion (5 items), store service (5 items), one human cue, i.e., interaction with salespersons (5 items) to estimate the impact on impulse buying behavior (5 items) indicating a degree of disagreement or agreement on each of continuum denoting 1 = strongly agree, 2 = agree, 3 = neutral, 4 = disagree, and 5 = strongly disagree.

Data analysis instruments. As the study aimed to examine the causal relationship between the in-store cues (physical and human) and impulse buying behavior, inferential statistical tools were used to predict and identify the association. Thus, the research follows the explanatory research design. Descriptive statistics, correlations and regression were the major statistical tools used to test the set hypotheses.

Socio-demographics of the respondents. The majority of the respondents were male (58.50%), 66.70% were of the age group 20-30 years, 85.90% with an undergraduate and higher academic qualification, 44% were employed/professionals, and 31.90% with monthly income NRs. 40,000 – 60,000, and 40.80% purchase at least once a month.

Descriptive analysis. Mean, Standard Deviation and Cronbach's alpha value of each variable were estimated store atmosphere (1.92, 0.832, 0.841), convenience (2.13, 1.37, 0.712), store display (2.189, 0.61, 0.805), product range (2.152, 1.429, 0.812), product promotion (2.132, 1.321, 0.821), store service (2.231, 1.23, 0.791), interaction with salespersons (2.04, 1.16, 0.882) to estimate the impact on impulse buying behavior (2.053, 0.39, 0.851). This result provides evidence for the consistency and reliability of the instrument. T-test and the One-Way ANOVA were conducted to examine the respondents' mean perception.

Table 2 provides the significant difference between the satisfaction from in-store dimensions and IB behavior based on gender, age group and educational qualification. Only in the case of the convenience factor of the in-store factor for IB behavior are in terms of gender (sig. < 0.00) but have no significant difference. Similarly, buyers with differing educational qualifications have shown significantly different perceptions of educational qualification (sig. <= 0.05), interaction with staff members (sig. < 0.00) and IB behavior (sig. < 0.02). Table 3 provides evidence of the significant difference caused in terms of occupation, income level and frequency of shopping on in-store attributes and IB behavior. Evidence provides a significant difference in terms of occupation (sig. < 0.01) for the interaction with staff, a significant difference in perception regarding the role of convenience (sig. < 0.02), and store service (sig. < 0.03) though no significant difference in IB behavior.

Confirmatory factor analysis. As the item scales have been developed based on previous studies (especially from Du Preez, Visser, & Noordwyk, 2008; Terblanche, 2018), which have established the validity of the scale, this study conducted Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) with Maximum Likelihood Estimation to confirm the validity of the instrument. Fit Indices were weighed to examine the overall adequacy of the proposed model to estimate the in-store attributes estimating IB behavior. CFA results provided the evidence for model fit [($\chi 2$ /df = 1.350), Goodness-of-Fit Index (GFI) = 0.912, Comparative Fit Index (CFI) = 0.905, Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI) 0.931, Normed Fit Index (NFI) = 0.907 and Badness-of-Fit Index (RMSEA < 0.05)] as suggested by Hooper, Coughlan, and Mullen (2008) and Hair, Black, Babin, and Anderson, (2014).

Table 2

Mean response and significant values (at a 5% level of significance) of gender, age group and education qualification towards dimensions of in-store attributes and IB behavior

Dimensions	Gender				Age group (yrs.)						Educational Qualification					
	Male	Female	t	Sig	Below 20	20-30	31-40	41-50	F	Sig.	SLC & below	INT	UND	Master & above	F	Sig.
Store atmosphere	1.88	1.97	-0.90	0.37	2.21	1.86	1.99	1.89	1.08	0.36	1.89	2.18	1.81	1.98	1.83	0.14
Convenience	1.92	2.43	-3.04	**0.00**	2.25	2.00	2.39	2.93	2.07	0.10	2.67	1.62	2.04	2.31	2.65	**0.05**
Store display	2.24	2.11	1.70	0.09	2.23	2.16	2.28	2.07	0.80	0.50	2.20	1.98	2.23	2.20	1.11	0.35
Product range	2.10	2.16	-0.29	0.77	1.88	2.17	2.06	2.17	0.28	0.84	1.54	2.44	2.03	2.23	1.47	0.22
Product promotion	2.01	2.23	-1.30	0.63	2.18	2.54	2.22	2.07	0.30	0.70	2.63	1.62	2.10	2.30	1.65	0.49
Store service	2.12	2.32	-2.40	0.74	1.75	2.73	2.38	2.17	0.24	0.74	2.12	1.84	2.26	2.16	1.31	0.25
Interaction with staff	2.23	1.77	3.23	0.51	2.69	1.99	2.01	2.25	1.86	0.14	3.21	1.73	2.08	1.94	5.10	**0.00**
IB behavior	2.09	2.01	1.59	0.11	1.84	2.06	2.09	2.08	1.75	0.16	1.71	2.06	2.06	2.08	3.39	**0.02**

Note: INT stands for Intermediate and UND stands for undergraduate

Table 3

Mean response and significant values (at 5% level of significance) of occupation, income level and frequency of shopping mart towards dimensions of in-store attributes and IB behavior

Dimensions	Occupation						Monthly Income Level NRs.							Visit shopping mart				
	ST	BU	EM	PR	F	Sig.	Below 20000	20001-40000	40001-60000	60001-80000	Above 80000	F	Sig.	OM	AEW	NSR	F	Sig.
Store atmosphere	1.92	1.75	2.01	1.72	1.34	0.26	1.95	1.86	2.05	1.67	1.85	1.26	0.28	1.95	1.99	1.72	1.90	0.15
Convenience	2.14	2.02	2.20	1.97	0.26	0.86	2.14	2.04	2.30	2.60	1.33	3.14	**0.02**	2.04	2.18	2.30	0.72	0.49
Store display	2.19	2.20	2.16	2.43	0.74	0.53	2.15	2.21	2.19	2.22	2.18	0.09	0.99	2.15	2.23	2.23	0.62	0.54
Product range	2.10	2.09	2.19	1.83	0.27	0.85	1.93	2.09	2.33	2.29	1.86	0.96	0.43	2.13	2.24	1.92	0.83	0.44
Product promotion	2.09	2.12	2.13	2.33	0.71	0.64	2.25	2.14	2.31	2.24	1.33	1.03	0.32	2.12	2.32	1.89	1.34	0.54
Store service	2.03	2.94	2.14	1.23	0.37	0.32	2.52	2.20	2.13	2.22	2.18	0.87	**0.03**	2.23	1.77	1.76	1.20	0.65
Interaction with staff	2.21	1.85	1.88	2.83	3.80	**0.01**	2.34	2.03	1.94	1.71	2.02	1.65	0.16	2.07	1.91	2.19	1.04	0.36
IB behavior	2.00	2.07	2.11	1.92	1.97	0.12	1.96	2.04	2.13	2.06	2.09	1.69	0.15	2.01	2.12	2.06	1.98	0.14

Note: ST stands for Student, BU stands for Business, EM stands for Employed, PR stands for Profession. Similarly, OM stands for Once a Month, AEW stands for Almost Every Week, and NSR stands for Not Specific Route.

Confirmatory factor analysis. As the item scales have been developed based on previous studies (especially from Du Preez, Visser, & Noordwyk, 2008; Terblanche, 2018), which have established the validity of the scale, this study conducted Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) with Maximum Likelihood Estimation to confirm the validity of the instrument. Fit Indices were weighed to examine the overall adequacy of the proposed model to estimate the in-store attributes estimating IB behavior. CFA results provided the evidence for model fit [(χ2 /df = 1.350), Goodness-of-Fit Index (GFI) = 0.912, Comparative Fit Index (CFI) = 0.905, Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI) 0.931, Normed Fit Index (NFI) = 0.907 and Badness-of-Fit Index (RMSEA < 0.05)] as suggested by Hooper, Coughlan, and Mullen (2008) and Hair, Black, Babin, and Anderson, (2014).

To test the convergent and discriminant validity, CR, AVE and MSV were examined (see Table 4). AVE values of all constructs were greater than 0.50, fulfilled the concern of convergent validity (CR>0.70, AVE > 0.50, CR>AVE) as suggested by Fornnell and Larcker (1981) and Terglav, Ruzzier, and Kase (2016).

Evidence of the construct's squared correlations with other constructs more than the MSV of each construct, i.e., AVE > MSV, supports the discriminant validity of the instrument (see Table 4). Thus, it is claimed that each of the constructs in the model is divergent from the other, defining the model fits, i.e., a high level of internal validity and consistency.

Table 4
Descriptive statistics with CR, AVE, MSV

	CR	AVE	MSV	Max R(H)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Store atmosphere	0.821	0.569	0.181	0.856	**0.765**							
Convenience	0.811	0.516	0.031	0.853	0.034	**0.721**						
Store display	0.832	0.621	0.215	0.861	0.246	0.075	**0.772**					
Product range	0.914	0.721	0.534	0.903	0.179	0.065	0.135	**0.853**				
Product promotion	0.935	0.771	0.317	0.926	-0.13	-0.04	-0.22	-0.54	**0.854**			
Store service	0.946	0.842	0.536	0.954	-0.21	-0.06	-0.11	-0.74	0.462	**0.934**		
Interaction with staff	0.823	0.532	0.225	0.864	0.435	0.056	0.463	0.351	-0.19	-0.28	**0.725**	
IB behavior	0.902	0.614	0.312	0.901	0.432	0.341	0.372	0.412	0.213	0.312	0.321	**0.812**

4. RESULTS

Physical cues leading IB behavior. One of the research questions, i.e., whether the physical cues significantly predict the IB behavior of customers, was examined using Process Macro 3.5 as suggested by (Hayes, 2018). All the proposed variables within physical cues, i.e., Store atmosphere, Store display, Product range, Product promotion, and Store service, except convenience, were significant predictors of IB behavior (non-zero LLCI – ULCI interval). Regarding the physical cues (total impact of dimensions of in-store factors), it was found to be a positive predictor of IB behavior as it was found to have a significant direct relationship with IB behavior with a significant total direct effect (0.382, t = 3.234, p = 0.002, LLCI = 0.191, ULCI = 0.532), supporting H1 (see Table 5).

Human cues leading IB behavior. Another important research question was to confirm the predicting ability of human cues within the store in creating IB behavior which was tested by Hayes (2018). It was confirmed that the human cues significantly positively predict IB behavior (total positive significant direct relationship with IB behavior = 0.452, t = 5.432, p = 0.000, LLCI = 0.231, ULCI = 0.632), supporting H2 (see Table 5).

Mediating relation of human cues in the relationship between physical cues predicting IB behavior. To examine the strength of human cues in predicting IB behavior, one more test, i.e., mediating effect of physical cues, was conducted. The total indirect effect was found to be positively significant (total effect = 0.104, BootLLCI = 0.125, BootULCI = 0.298). This result indicates that positive perception, i.e., satisfaction from employees/salespersons' behavior to the customers, increases IB behavior. This result provides evidence to support H3.

Table 5
Direct and Mediating effects on predicting IB behavior

Direct Relations	Coef.	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
SA -> IBB	0.148	3.815	0.000	0.632	0.265
Con -> IBB	0.212	3.231	0.034	- 0.281	0.315
SD -> IBB	0.311	4.441	0.000	0.328	0.538
PR -> IBB	0.003	3.541	0.001	0.078	0.219
PP -> IBB	0.232	5.731	0.000	0.428	0.796
SS -> IBB	0.109	6.217	0.000	0.227	0.427
IS -> IBB	0.452	5.432	0.000	0.231	0.632
PC -> IS	0.231	2.134	0.002	0.012	0.121
PC -> IBB	0.382	3.234	0.002	0.191	0.532
Indirect effect	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI	
Ind PC -> IS -> IBB	**0.104**	2.043	**0.125**	**0.298**	

Note: Store atmosphere (SA), Convenience (Con), Store display (SD), Product range (PR), Product promotion (PP), Store service (SS), interaction with staff (IS), Physical cues (PC), Impulse Buying Behavior (IBB), LLCI - The lower limit of the confidence interval, ULCI - Upper limit of the confidence interval

5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Though the literature is rich in justifying the physical cues in predicting IB behavior (Nair & Shams, 2021; Gorji & Siami, 2020; Nair S. R., 2018a; Otterbring, 2018; Terblanche, 2018; Bashir, 2017; Bues, Steiner, Stafflage, & Krafft, 2017; Hussain & Ali, 2015; Saad & Metawie, 2015; Badrinarayanan, Becerra, & Madhavaram, 2014; Wu et al., 2013; Law, Wong, & Yip, 2012; Walsh, Shiu, Hassan, Michaelidou, & Beatty, 2011; Du Preez, Visser, & Noordwyk, 2008; Youn & Faber, 2000), very little literature is found testing the role of human cues in predicting the IB behavior (Nair & Shams, 2021; Terblanche, 2018; Pornpitakpan, Yuan, & Han, 2016; Saad & Metawie, 2015; Badrinarayanan, Becerra, & Madhavaram, 2014; Twing-Kwong, Albaum, & Fullgrabe, 2013; Meng & Xu, 2012; Shiau & Luo, 2012; Goff, Boles, Bellenger, & Stojack, 1997). This research has focused on physical and human cues with the mediation role of human cues with interacting effects in the presence of physical cues. As most of the studies (e.g., Nair & Shams, 2021; Nair S. R., 2018a; Saad & Metawie, 2015), this study also stresses maintaining physical cues to create the IB behavior though refuges the findings of very few studies, for example, Park and Lennon (2006) for the time they consume in shopping or watch the display or advertisement and Hussain & Ali (2015) for music and color. The result suggests the role of employees' behavior/interaction with customers in creating their IB behavior.

This research stresses advocates in maintaining physical cues, i.e., store atmosphere, establishing convenience to reach out the product, getting excess in the selection of goods, store display, wide range of product, display of product features and utilities in the way customers understand, well-furnished stores along with sufficient store service. More importantly, this study stresses maintaining a parasocial relationship (Park & Lennon, 2006) with customers to increase the potentiality of IB behavior. No doubt, physical cues are more important to enter the store and motivate the customers to spend more time in the store but to create motivation for additional unplanned purchases, human cues should be smarter. Human cues in creating IB behavior could be the employees' humbleness in the searching solution of the product problems, providing additional suggestions in product selection in terms of utility, price and usefulness, appropriate attention to customers, and willingness to solve customers' queries with courteous and cheerfulness. In conclusion, to enhance the IB behavior of customers during in-store purchases, business organizations should focus more on human cues than physical cues.

6. IMPLICATIONS

In-store selling is becoming more challenging with the emergence of online trading globally. Information communication technology and the increasing professionalism of customers are moving towards online purchase behaviour, which has developed challenges to in-store trading. This study investigated integrated stimulating factors, i.e., physical and human factors. This study, as stressed enhancing human cues to create IB behavior, is applicable from the managerial point of view as managers should focus on hiring employees having services orientation, helping attitude and outwarding personalities. Managers should equally develop training packages to enhance sales skills with human cues and also ensure a working environment where employees feel joy at work so that they will be pleasurable at satisfying customers' problems and appealing to purchase additional.

This study also contributes to the literature on impulse buying behavior with the lens of stimulus-organism-response (S-O-R) theory. As examined with the mediation model, this study can be a new approach for future researchers.

7. RESEARCH LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH SCOPE

This study was conducted with the customers purchasing apparel, so one of the study's limitations is the product focus, which may or may not be the same if we focus on groceries, cars and others. Future researchers can focus on the other types of products to verify the fact of this research. Similarly, the education level of the respondents was found to be different in the perception, especially on convenience and interaction with salespersons. This could be the future interest in investing in details, making the academic qualification as the predicting variable. Likewise, to increase the generalizability of the conclusion, the same study can be conducted in different emerging markets outside Nepal's capital city.

Conflict of interest

The author of this research declares no conflict of interest because of the absence of any financial or commercial relationship, authorities for result biases and involvement of any second person in the research process.

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