Impulsive Buying Behavior of Consumers at Bhatbhateni Supermarket in Damak, Jhapa

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Abstract

Impulsive buying behavior, characterized by spontaneous and unplanned purchases, presents a significant area of interest in consumer research. This study explores the factors influencing impulsive buying behaviors among consumers in supermarkets located in Damak, Nepal. Drawing upon a quantitative approach, data was collected from 144 respondents using a structured questionnaire. The study investigates the relationships between impulsive buying behaviors and various demographic and situational factors including location, income, and store environment. Results reveal moderate positive correlations between buying behavior and location (r = 0.356), income (r = 0.281), and store environment (r = 0.378), indicating that these factors influence consumer purchasing habits to some extent. Hypothesis testing confirms significant relationships between location, income, store environment, and impulsive buying behavior. The findings underscore the importance of understanding consumer demographics and shopping habits for businesses seeking to influence consumer behavior and design effective marketing strategies. This study contributes to the existing literature by providing insights into the complex interplay of factors shaping impulsive buying behaviors in the context of supermarket shopping in Damak, Nepal.

Key words: Impulsive Buying Behavior of Consumers, Product Category, Location, Income, Store Environment, POS Terminal

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Introduction

An impulsive purchase occurs when a buying decision is made spontaneously, just before the transaction takes place. It involves acquiring a product or service without prior planning or intention regarding that specific product category or completing a particular purchasing task. An impulse shopper, or buyer, is someone prone to frequently making spontaneous purchases. The typical decision-making processes in consumers' minds are disrupted by impulsive buying. Instead of following a logically ordered course of behavior, consumers succumb to irrational moments of self-indulgence during impulsive purchases. (Beatty & Ferrell, 1998). Research conducted in both the United States and Great Britain has revealed that impulsive buying tendencies are impacted by a multitude of factors. These include consumer mood, emotional state, national culture, and demographic characteristics. However, this behavior has also seen a rapid increase in Asian countries such as China, India, Singapore, Hong Kong, Thailand, and Pakistan. Various factors contribute to this rise in impulsive purchasing, including prevalent advertising and marketing trends. Furthermore, the widespread use of credit cards and debit cards facilitates impulsive buying by offering quick and convenient payment methods. Additionally, the availability of 24-hour commerce and the growth of online shopping platforms provide consumers with constant access to products, further encouraging impulsive purchases (Rehman, 2014).

Impulse buying behavior refers to the inclination of consumers to make spontaneous purchases without extensive planning or consideration. This behavior manifests when an individual decides impulsively to obtain a product or service upon encountering it, often without fully evaluating the consequences. (Zafar et al., 2021a). Hence, it's important for consumers to be mindful of the factors influencing their impulsive buying habits and to make informed decisions regarding their purchases. Similarly, companies should be

aware of these factors and endeavor to promote their products ethically and responsibly (Amos et al., 2014).

Ekeng et al., (2012) found that demographic factors significantly influenced impulsive purchasing behavior. Gender differences were evident, with women often showing a higher tendency for impulse shopping, driven by their preference for upscale products. Additionally, adolescents, not burdened by familial responsibilities, tended to be less concerned about their spending habits, leading to a negative correlation between age and impulse buying behavior. As income levels rose, consumers became more inclined toward frivolous spending, while those with higher education levels were often influenced by societal status. Furthermore, the widespread adoption of cellular phone communication reshaped consumer interactions and preferences, contributing to the evolution of impulsive purchasing behaviors (Noel, 2009).

Duarte and Raposo (2013) highlighted its prevalence, suggesting that it accounts for a substantial portion of purchases in certain product categories and contributes significantly to supermarket sales. James et al. (2014) emphasize the role of environmental factors, such as store atmosphere, layout, and promotions, in stimulating impulse buying behavior. Unplanned purchases, including impulse buying, are characterized by quick decision-making prompted by external stimuli (JIYEON, 2000). Given the current retail landscape, impulse purchases remain relevant, necessitating innovative sales strategies, compelling messaging, and effective utilization of technology (Schiffman, 2010; Muruganantham & Bhakat, 2013).

According to Jain (2019), various factors can influence consumer behavior during the purchase process. While some purchasing decisions may be straightforward, others may require extensive research and consideration before a choice is made. Individuals may differ in their ability to quickly assess and decide on a product based on their familiarity and past experiences, with

some needing more time to evaluate options thoroughly. The level of engagement plays a vital role in determining how significant a product is to a consumer and the amount of information they require before making a purchasing decision. Understanding consumer behavior across different levels of involvement can enable businesses to tailor their strategies and better meet customer needs. This study aims to investigate how consumers navigate purchasing decisions in both high- and low-involvement contexts.

The objective of this study is to deepen comprehension of impulse buying within grocery stores, environments characterized by pervasive impulse purchases and heightened consumer decision fatigue and reduced willpower compared to other frequently studied retail settings (Lord et al., 2023). The aim is to illustrate how variables known to impact impulse buying in diverse environments influence consumer behavior in grocery shopping scenarios. Additionally, the study seeks to identify and characterize consumer segments based on these variables and elucidate how the distinct characteristics of these segments contribute to variances in impulse buying behavior.

Sah et al., (2023) on their study found retailers highly value the effectiveness of in-store stimuli in driving additional sales because it helps differentiate their shops from those of competitors. This study explores the factors influencing impulsive purchasing decisions among youth shoppers in fashion stores. Although the impulsive shopping habits of young customers in the fashion retail sector were well-established, more attention needed to be given to situational environment issues. Correlation analysis highlighted a strong link between situational and personal factors and the impulsive shopping habits of young customers in the fashion retail sector. Multiple regression analysis further indicated a significant relationship between Generation Y consumers' impulsive shopping behavior and situational factors.

However, this relationship was insignificant when it came to personal factors. Customer behavior can vary depending on a store's reputation, product variety, pricing, level of trust, and website usability (Sah, 2021). Given recent developments in the retail sector, research on impulsive purchases is more necessary in developing countries than in developed ones.

Shrestha, (2024) seeks to deepen the understanding of impulsive buying behavior by integrating a wide array of research and literature from the fields of retailing and consumer behavior. A content analysis approach is used in this study, which involves reviewing a broad range of journal databases and books to collect diverse research on impulsive buying behavior. The literature is then categorized based on different aspects influencing impulsive buying, ultimately contributing to the creation of a research framework. The content analysis uncovered several key factors influencing impulsive buying behavior, such as psychological triggers, situational factors, and individual characteristics. These insights provide a clearer picture of the impulsive buying construct and its behavioral components.

The empirical review highlights numerous aspects of impulsive buying behavior, providing a rich understanding of the topic across different contexts. Ekeng et al., (2012) identified the significant influence of demographic factors, such as gender, age, income, and education, on impulsive purchasing. Duarte and Raposo (2013) and James et al. (2014) emphasized the role of environmental factors like store atmosphere and layout, while Jain (2019) discussed consumer behavior in the context of varying levels of engagement. Lord et al., (2023) focused on grocery stores, exploring impulse buying's impact on consumer behavior. Sah and Pokharel (2023) further examined the effectiveness of in-store stimuli among youth shoppers in fashion stores, highlighting situational factors as a significant influence. Shrestha (2024) synthesized diverse research, categorizing impulsive buying influences into psychological triggers, situational factors, and individual characteristics.

However, despite these comprehensive studies, a gap exists in the specific context of Bhatbhateni Supermarkets in Damak, Jhapa. While previous research has broadly covered various factors influencing impulsive buying behavior, there is limited analysis of how specific variables like product category, store location, income levels, store environment, and the use of POS terminals interact to affect impulsive buying in a localized retail setting. This gap is particularly pertinent given the unique consumer dynamics and retail environments in developing regions like Nepal. Thus, this study aims to fill this gap by analyzing the relationship between these variables and impulsive buying behavior among consumers in Bhatbhateni Supermarkets, providing insights that could help tailor retail strategies in similar settings.

Methodology

A quantitative approach was employed in this study to examine the impulsivity of shoppers based on a representative sample, aiming for generalizability of findings. Primary data collection was conducted from a limited number of individuals. Probability sampling was the primary sampling method, with respondents randomly selected from the population. The population of interest consisted of customers of supermarkets. A questionnaire was devised and distributed to residents of Damak who patronize supermarkets for their shopping needs. A sample size of 144 respondents was surveyed for this study. The questionnaire, a printed self-report form, was utilized to gather information through written responses from participants. While similar to interviews in gathering information, questionnaires typically offer less depth in questioning (Burns & Grove, 1993). Likert scale (e.g., 1 to 5, where 1 = very poor, 5 = excellent) or through factor scores derived from survey data for measurement of variables. Descriptive statistics, correlation analysis and hypothesis testing were employed to analyze the collected data for research purposes. Reliability of the various questionnaire items was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha.

Table 1: Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0.819	17

Source: SPSS output

Cronbach's Alpha is a coefficient used to assess the internal consistency, or reliability, of a set of survey items. A value closer to 1 indicates that the items are more reliable and measure the same underlying construct. In this case, the Cronbach's Alpha of 0.819 suggests an acceptable level of reliability.

Results and Findings

Relationship Between Dependent and Independent Variables:

In the context of the study on impulsive buying behavior in Bhatbhateni Supermarkets in Damak, Jhapa, the following provide insight into how location, store environment, Income and buying behavior are measured:

Location Measurement:

The measurement of location in this study likely involves categorizing stores based on their geographic positioning within Damak, Jhapa. This could include proximity to key landmarks or transportation hubs, and ease of accessibility. These measurements can be coded on a Likert scale (e.g., 1 to 5, where 1 = very poor, 5 = excellent) or through factor scores derived from survey data.

Store Environment Measurement:

The store environment is typically measured using a combination of objective and subjective metrics. Objective measures might include store layout, lighting, music, cleanliness, parking and staff assistance. These measurements can be coded on a Likert scale (e.g., 1 to 5, where 1 = very poor, 5 = excellent) or through factor scores derived from survey data.

Income Measurement :

By employing a Likert scale (e.g., 1 to 5, where 1 = very poor, 5 = excellent) to measure income-related statements, researchers can

systematically analyze how income levels and perceptions of income affect consumer behavior, particularly in the context of impulsive buying and budgeting in supermarket settings.

Buying Behavior Measurement:

Impulsive buying behavior is measured by assessing the frequency and nature of unplanned purchases made by consumers. This could involve tracking the number of impulse purchases during a specific period, the proportion of impulse buys to total purchases, or the value of these purchases. be coded on a Likert scale (e.g., 1 to 5, where 1 = very poor, 5 = excellent) or through factor scores derived from survey data.

By using these measurement techniques, the study aims to comprehensively analyze the relationship between these variables and impulsive buying behavior, ensuring the data accurately reflects consumer experiences and tendencies.

Table 2: Correlations

Variables		Buying Behavior	Location	Income	Store Environment
Buying Behavior	Pearson Correlation	1	.356**	.281**	.378**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000	0.001	0.000
	N	144	144	144	144
Location	Pearson Correlation		1	.644**	.955**
	Sig. (2-tailed)			0.000	0.000
	N			144	144
Income	Pearson Correlation			1	.725**
	Sig. (2-tailed)				0.000
	N				144
Store Environment	Pearson Correlation				1
	Sig. (2-tailed)				
	N				144

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Sources: SPSS output

In this analysis, the relationships between buying behavior and three other variables—location, income, and store environment—have been examined using Pearson correlation coefficients. The correlation between location and buying behavior is r=0.356r = 0.356r=0.356, which is statistically significant (p=0.000p = 0.000p=0.000). This moderate positive correlation suggests that consumers who prioritize convenience and proximity to the supermarket are more likely to exhibit impulsive buying behavior. This finding indicates that shoppers who prefer stores that are close to their home or within walking distance tend to spend more impulsively. Their preference for easy access likely translates into more frequent shopping trips and spontaneous purchases. The correlation between income and buying behavior is r=0.281r = 0.281r=0.281, which is statistically significant (p=0.001p = 0.001p=0.001). This positive correlation, though weaker than the location correlation, indicates that higher income levels are associated with increased impulsive buying behavior. Consumers with higher incomes tend to spend more when shopping, have a higher purchase ratio with increased income, and may spend their earnings more quickly. However, the lower correlation with the statement about budgeting suggests that while income influences impulsive spending, it might not strongly impact adherence to budget constraints. The correlation between store environment and buying behavior is r=0.378r = 0.378r=0.378, which is statistically significant (p=0.000p = 0.000p=0.000). This moderate to strong positive correlation indicates that consumers who are influenced by store ambience, layout, parking, and staff assistance are more likely to exhibit impulsive buying behavior. A well-designed store environment that offers a pleasant shopping experience and convenient amenities can enhance consumers' propensity to make unplanned purchases.

Hypothesis Test

Hypothesis testing is a fundamental concept in research that involves making statistical inferences about a population based on sample data. It's a

systematic way of evaluating whether there is enough evidence in the data to support or reject a hypothesis about a population parameter.

Table 3: Hypothesis Test

Variable	Hypothesis	Sig value	Remarks
Location	There is no significant relationship between location and impulsive buying behaviors of consumers.	0.000	H_1 Accepted
Income	There is no significant relationship between income and impulsive buying behaviors of consumers.	0.001	H_1 Accepted
Store Environment	There is no significant relationship between store environment and impulsive buying behaviors of consumers.	0.000	H_1 Accepted

Sources: SPSS Output

The hypothesis test results indicate the following relationships between the variables and impulsive buying behaviors of consumers:

Location: The p-value of 0.000 indicates that the relationship between location and impulsive buying behavior is statistically significant. This result supports the alternative hypothesis, suggesting that location does indeed have a significant impact on impulsive buying behaviors. This finding aligns with previous research indicating that consumers are more likely to make impulse purchases when the store is conveniently located or within walking distance from their homes. The significance of this relationship highlights the importance of store location in influencing consumer spending patterns, as proximity can lead to more frequent and spontaneous shopping trips.

Income: The p-value of 0.001 signifies a statistically significant relationship between income and impulsive buying behavior. This result supports the alternative hypothesis, indicating that income does influence impulsive buying behaviors. This finding is consistent with previous research suggesting that as income increases, consumers tend to spend more impulsively. Higher income levels are associated with increased spending in

supermarkets and a higher tendency to make unplanned purchases. However, while the correlation with budgeting behavior was weaker, the overall impact of income on impulsive buying is evident.

Store Environment: The p-value of 0.000 indicates a statistically significant relationship between store environment and impulsive buying behavior. This supports the alternative hypothesis, suggesting that the store environment does have a significant effect on impulsive buying behaviors. This finding is in line with previous research that emphasizes the role of store ambience, layout, and amenities in enhancing impulsive purchasing tendencies. A favorable store environment, including good lighting, music, and easy-to-navigate layouts, can significantly influence consumers' propensity to make spontaneous purchases.

Conclusion

The study examines the key elements that have a substantial impact on impulsive purchase behaviour at Bhatbhateni Supermarkets in Damak, Jhapa. The correlation coefficient (r = 0.356) between Location and impulsive buying suggests a moderate positive relationship. This means that being closer to the store increases the chances of making impulsive purchases. The results of hypothesis testing indicate that the association between convenient locations and impulsive buying behaviour is statistically significant (p = 0.000), highlighting the strong influence of handy locations on impulsive purchase behaviour.

Higher income levels have a positive link (r = 0.281) with more impulsive expenditure. The hypothesis test confirms this discovery, demonstrating a statistically significant connection (p = 0.001). This indicates that individuals with higher financial means are more susceptible to making impulsive purchases, even when their budgeting habits may differ.

The store environment has a significant positive connection (r = 0.378) with impulsive buying, highlighting the impact of favourable retail settings. The hypothesis testing has established a substantial association (p = 0.000)

between store atmosphere, layout, and staff help, and their impact on encouraging impulsive purchases. In summary, the study finds that the factors of location, income, and store atmosphere have a substantial influence on impulsive buying behaviour.

Implications

This provides valuable information for retailers to improve the shopping experience and encourage unplanned purchases. Retailers should prioritize selecting store locations that are easily accessible and convenient for consumers. Offering promotions, discounts, or loyalty programs that cater to different income levels can capitalize on the increased spending propensity of higher-income consumers. Retailers should focus on factors such as store ambience, layout, and staff assistance to foster an inviting shopping experience. Well-designed store spaces that are aesthetically pleasing and easy to navigate can stimulate impulsive purchases. Investing in customer service and creating a comfortable shopping atmosphere can lead to increased sales and customer satisfaction.

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