

Evaluation of the Influence of Environmental Factors, Personality Traits, Hedonic Consumption and Positive Feeling on Impulsive Purchase

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Received: November 3, 2014

Accepted: January 15, 2015

ABSTRACT

Impulsive purchase is one of the main aspects of consumer behavior and it is a vital concept in the market. As soon as income and purchase power is increased, impulsive purchases also increase and are expressed in the form of a dominating phenomenon in consumer's behavior. According to the literature, if consumers purchase when they need, market economy will fail. This indicates the importance and role of impulsive purchase in consumption markets. The present research is a descriptive survey. Data were collected by means of questionnaire. The questionnaires were distributed among 350 respondents over two weeks in Tajrish Market which is one of the main fashion clothing markets in Tehran. Finally, data were analyzed by means of structural equations modeling in PLS software. Results of the research showed that all hypotheses were verified.

KEYWORDS: environmental factors, personality traits, hedonic consumption, positive feeling and impulsive purchase.

INTRODUCTION

In any organization, whether a production or a service one, customer is the main element in organizational survival. If an organization fails to attract customers' loyalty, it will not guarantee its long-term growth (rahnama et al, 2012). Considering the role of impulsive purchases in in consumption markets and market economy, studies revealed that retailers and salespeople are not aware of impulsive purchases and absence of impulsive purchase promotion instruments can be observed easily. Because impulsive purchases compose a large number of store purchases and considering the fact that selection of appropriate strategy for promotion of customers' impulsive purchase especially in retailers' level, it seems necessary to identify and study variables affecting such purchases so that consumption markets and market economy are improved.

The present research tries to investigate the influence of variables like environmental factors, personality traits and hedonic consumption and positive feeling on impulsive purchase.

THEORETICAL LITERATURE

Impulsive purchase

The term impulsive purchase refers to a kind of sudden, impulsive, complex, involuntary and unnecessary behavior which is done rapidly and lacks thorough investigation of other options. This kind of behavior has lower excitement and higher precision in comparison with pre-planned purchase. The question is "what is impulsive purchase behavior exactly?" Stern (1962) believed that pre-planned purchase is a logical action and requires much time. On the other hand, unplanned purchase does not require such a planning and is called impulsive purchase. Researchers believe that the main difference between impulsive and pre-planned purchase is the relative higher speed of decision-making process in impulsive Peiron (1991) tried to remove defects of definition of impulsive purchase. He presented four elements for definition of impulsive purchase. He said: immediate impulsive purchase takes place in response to a cognitive stimulant or sentimental response or both of them. In spite of the fact that previous papers consider impulsive purchase as a response to supply of cheap products, impulsive purchase is an individual behavior (Vazifehdoost, Rahnama&Mousaviyan, 2014).

Impulsive purchase takes place when a consumer feels a sudden strong tendency to immediately purchase a product. Sudden motivation for purchase is very complex in terms of hedonism and may stimulate emotional conflict. Furthermore, impulsive purchase may take place without enough attention to its consequences (Rook, 1987).

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Definition of impulsive purchase is difficult. Impulsive purchase is not only an unplanned purchase. Purchases may neither be impulsive nor pre-planned. These include habitual (usual) purchases, sudden purchases which solve a present problem or purchases which are simple and unimportant. And do not need thinking and planning. On the other hand, a purchase may be simultaneously impulsive and pre-planned, such as buying a product as a gift for someone or use of store environment as “purchase list” for instance when looking for ingredients of an Italian food. The time spent and purchase situation as a criterion for impulsive purchase does not lead to an exact definition for impulsive purchase (Verplanken & Sato, 2011).

Impulsive purchase is affected by different factors like economic, personality, time and even cultural factors. Stern (1962) differentiated four different types of impulsive purchase:

1. pure impulsive purchase-this type of purchase takes place rarely and for few individuals. This is because most housewives tend to save money and plan for their purchases and this feature makes them efficient (economic) purchasers and does not result in impulsive and unplanned purchase.

2. Reminder Impulse Buying: this takes place when a purchaser sees a product in a store and remembers that the amount of the product at home is reducing or finishing. Moreover, the buyer may make such a purchase due to remembering an ad or remembering the purchase previous decision.

3. Suggestion Impulse Buying: this kind of impulsive buying takes place when a buyer sees a product for the first time and needs for buying it in spite of the fact that he or she does not have any previous knowledge about the product. This kind of purchase differs from reminder impulsive purchase in that in the former kind of purchase, the purchaser does not have any knowledge about the product. Furthermore, suggestion impulsive purchase differs from pure impulsive purchase in that the items purchased in suggestion purchase may be completely rational or functional while pure impulsive purchases take place due to apparent attractions of products.

4. Planned Impulse Buying: although this kind of purchase seems abnormal, it is completely correct and takes place when a purchaser enters a store out of previous intention. However, he or she also expects to make other purchases which depend on special prices of some items like coupon purchase and things like that. This kind of impulsive purchase has been developed recently and is possibly the main kind of impulsive purchase (Abdolvand et al, 2011).

Factors affecting impulsive purchase

Store Environment

John (2003) believed that purchase fields try to attract customers by expressing aesthetic aspects of products. Purchase fields are fantastic environments which provide customers with visual entertainments like music, theater and ... therefore, store environment is designed in a way in which customers experience a pleasing environment. Some researchers believe that purchase can bring pleasant experience for customers. As it was mentioned before, a purchase without previous intention is in fact a kind of unnecessary purchase or consumption the main target of which is acquiring pleasure and satisfaction. Donovan & Rossiter & Marcolyn & Nesdale (1994) found that pleasing environments encourage customers to stay more in purchase centers and make purchase without previous planning. Furthermore, they believed that store environment is a stimulant for impulsive purchase (Abdolvand et al, 2011).

Positive emotion

Mehrabian and Russell (1974), Mehrabian (1980) and Donovan and Rossiter (1982) found that behavior is a result of emotional responses (Adelaar, et al., 2003)

Feelings at purchase time or visiting a store can influence customers' purchase intentions and the cost they want to pay for and also the customers' perception of quality, satisfaction and value (Babin & Babin, 2001). In other words, creation of a positive feeling in customers towards a particular product or even store environment can motivate customers' to do pre-planned purchases.

Positive emotions by Watson and Tellegen (1985) are defined as affects and moods, which determine intensity of consumer decision-making (Tirmizi, rehman, & seif, 2009). Verplanken (2005) stated, when we compare impulsive and non-impulsive consumers, the latter usually follow by rational and utilitarian decisions. Purchasing experience of impulsive consumers is based on high emotions (Virvilaitė, Saladienė, & Žvinklytė, 2011).

Fashion involvement

Fashion-based impulsive purchase has a strong relationship with customers' involvement in fashion. In impulsive purchase literature, the relationship between involvement in fashion and impulsive purchase has been investigated by the following researchers (Park et al, 2006; Pentecost Han et al, 1991; Tirmizi et al, 2009; Phau & Lo, 2004; Andrew, 2010).

In fashion marketing, fashion involvement refers to the extent of interest with the fashion product category (e.g. apparel). Fashion involvement is used primarily to predict behavioral variables related to apparel products such as product involvement, buying behavior, and consumer characteristics (Park, et al., 2006). The findings of Han et al.

(1991) quoted in response to fashion involvement of consumers, that it might enhance fashion-oriented impulse buying behaviors among those who habitually wear fashion outfits(Tirmizi, et al., 2009).

If impulse purchases are attempts to boost self image especially through fashion items such as clothes, then the highly impulsive buyer may be influenced by emotional attraction (irrational) rather than rational judgments (such as price)(Phau & Lo, 2004). Park and et al(2006) found a positive relationship between positive emotions, fashion involvement and fashion-oriented impulse buying. Ko (1993) reported that positive emotions may result into fashion related impulse purchase(Tirmizi, et al., 2009).

Therefore, we can assume that involvement in fashion directly influences fashion-based impulsive purchase and indirectly influences customers' impulsive purchase via positive feeling.

Individual features

Some people are frequent impulse buyers and do this whenever an opportunity arises, whereas others seldom buy anything without thorough deliberation. There may be chronic individual differences in the tendency to buy on impulse. If this is true, impulse buying tendency should correlate with other stable individual differences, such as long-term goals, personality traits, or adherence to particular values (verplanken, 2011).

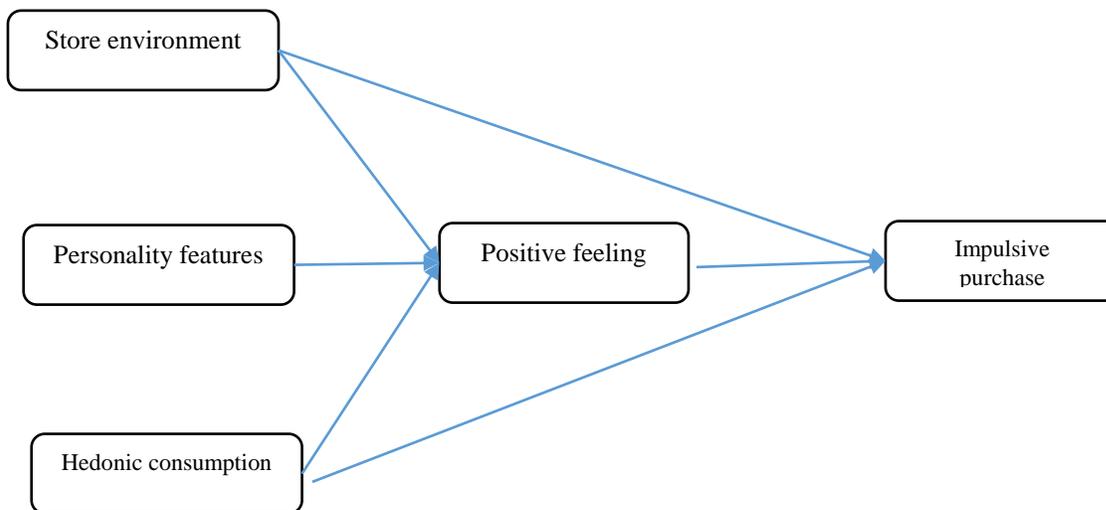
Tendency to hedonic consumption

Hedonic consumption refers to those behavioral aspects which are related to multi-sentimental, imaginary and sentimental consumption which are affected by benefits like entertainment with having a product and attraction of bargaining and haggling which are two pleasures related to purchase (Sherry, 1990). This shows that purchase experience may be more important than receiving the product (Hirschman and Holbrook, 1982).

Hedonic consumption has been defined as pleasure with product purchase, emotional appeal and the ability of a product to provide pleasure for individuals. They proposed that products are on a spectrum one end of which is utilitarianism (benefit-based products) and the other end of which is hedonism (pleasure-based products). They believe that hedonism results in commitment or loyalty to brand (Heidarzadeh, Khoshpanjeh and Rahnama, 2011).

Impulsive purchase plays an important role in hedonic tendencies which are related to hedonic consumption. This role indicates a conceptual link between hedonic purchase motivation and impulsive purchase behavior. in other words, consumers make impulsive purchases possibly when they have hedonic tendencies or non-economic reasons. These tendencies may be entertainment, imagination or feeling. Since purchase xperience aims to satisfy hedonic needs, products which are bought during these circulations are apparently bought without previous planning. This shows an impulsive purchase event. Impulsive purchase behavior which is concentrated on fashion is stimulated by means of new fashions and brands which direct customers towards hedonic purchase (Goldsmith and Emmert, 1991).

Research conceptual model



The present research aims to investigate factors affecting impulsive purchase. The research is a descriptive study in terms of data collection. Further, the research is a correlation study in terms of data analysis. Structural equations modeling method was used for data analysis.

Data collection instrument

Questionnaire was used for data collection. The questions were based on five-point Likert scale. After preparation of the questionnaire, 30 questionnaires were distributed among respondents in Tehran Tajrish fashion clothing market as a pretest and for investigation of reliability. Cronbach’s alpha was above 0.7 for total questionnaire (Cronbach’s alpha values for the variables and total questionnaire and questions of the questionnaire have been summarized in table 1). Moreover, content validity of the questionnaire was also verified by experts. Therefore, the questionnaire had enough validity and reliability for being distributed among statistical population members.

Research variables	questions	Calculated Cronbach's alpha
Store environment	1-5	0.78
Personality traits	6-11	0.76
Tendency to hedonic consumption	12-14	0.82
Positive feeling	15-18	0.79
Impulsive purchase	19-23	0.86

The sample

Sample members were selected from customers who referred to Tehran Tajrish market. To this end, 350 questionnaires were distributed among respondents over two weeks and finally 294 complete questionnaires were returned. Table 2 indicates demographic information of the respondents.

Table 2: research demographic variables

Frequency percentage	frequency	dimensions	variable
47	138	male	gender
53	156	female	
19	56	21-30	age
40	117	31-40	
28	83	41-50	
13	38	51 and above	
24	71	High school	education
20	58	Associate's degree	
40	116	Bachelor degree	
16	49	Master and above	

Data analysis and hypotheses test

Because the research model evaluates relationships among several latent variables simultaneously, we used structural equations modeling method for data analysis and hypotheses test. This is a statistical technique which embraces several other techniques like multivariate regression, factor analysis and path analysis and its main emphasis is on latent variables which are defined by measurable indices and obvious variables. The advantage of this method over other methods is that this method evaluates relationships among variables simultaneously.

PLS method -which is a variance-oriented path modeling technique and allows for simultaneous investigation of theories-, was used for testing the conceptual model of the research (Fronell and Lacker, 1981). Contrary to covariance-oriented methods, this method also applies to small samples and cases in which variables distributions are not normal. Data analysis calculations and hypotheses tests were conducted by means of smart-pls software.

Outer model

Two models are investigated in PLS models. The outer model corresponds to measurement model and the inner model is the equivalent of structural model in structural equations models. Inner model indicates factor loadings of the observed variables. In outer model, internal consistency of the model or level of reliability is measured by calculating composite reliability (Pc). If we want all model structures to have high composite reliability, all calculated values for composite reliability coefficients must be higher than the criterion value 0.6 (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988). Composite reliability coefficients have been presented in table 3. As it can be observed, all composite reliability coefficients are above 0.6. Therefore, the model has a high internal consistency.

Average variance extracted (AVE) index was used to investigate convergent validity (Azar et al, 2012: 162). Convergent validity means that representatives can explain their main construct. To put it more simply, each index only measures its own construct and all constructs are separated well from each other. Results of AVE for all variables have been summarized in table 3. Results showed that all studied constructs have AVE indices above 0.5 (Fornell and Larker, 1981).

Table 3. Outer model of research and AVE & P_c coefficients

P _c	AVE	Significance number (t)	Factor loading	Index sign	Construct
0.817627	0.577476	18.6717	0.243444	q1	Store environment
		4.659026	0.167918	q2	
		10.67255	0.203873	q3	
		7.024003	0.162431	q4	
		16.4081	0.222334	q5	
0.8686	0.525401	12.70003	0.180331	q6	Personality traits
		13.20748	0.169552	q7	
		10.61579	0.166195	q8	
		10.90783	0.163926	q9	
		8.625968	0.145469	q10	
0.811608	0.590355	19.88174	0.174528	q11	Tendency to hedonic consumption
		14.89243	0.385386	q12	
		8.541687	0.301301	q13	
0.872694	0.631571	13.08566	0.313313	q14	Positive feeling
		16.5327	0.261252	q15	
		15.27773	0.245686	q16	
		19.90425	0.242498	q17	
0.88355	0.655358	17.74908	0.250564	q18	Impulsive purchase
		13.59695	0.238653	q19	
		20.4152	0.272192	q20	
		25.75395	0.248839	q21	
		16.62585	0.240317	q22	

Considering the table, all indices have t values above 1.96. Therefore, they provide appropriate factor loadings for measuring dimensions of the model. Further, AVE values and composite reliability are in allowable ranges.

Inner model after testing the outer model, it is necessary to investigate the inner model which indicates relationships among latent variables of the research. Research hypotheses can be evaluated by means of the inner model.

The tested conceptual model has been presented in figure 2. Numbers which are written on the lines are beta coefficients resulted from regression equation which are the very path coefficients. Numbers inside circles indicate R² values of the model the predicting variables of which are entered that circle via arrows.

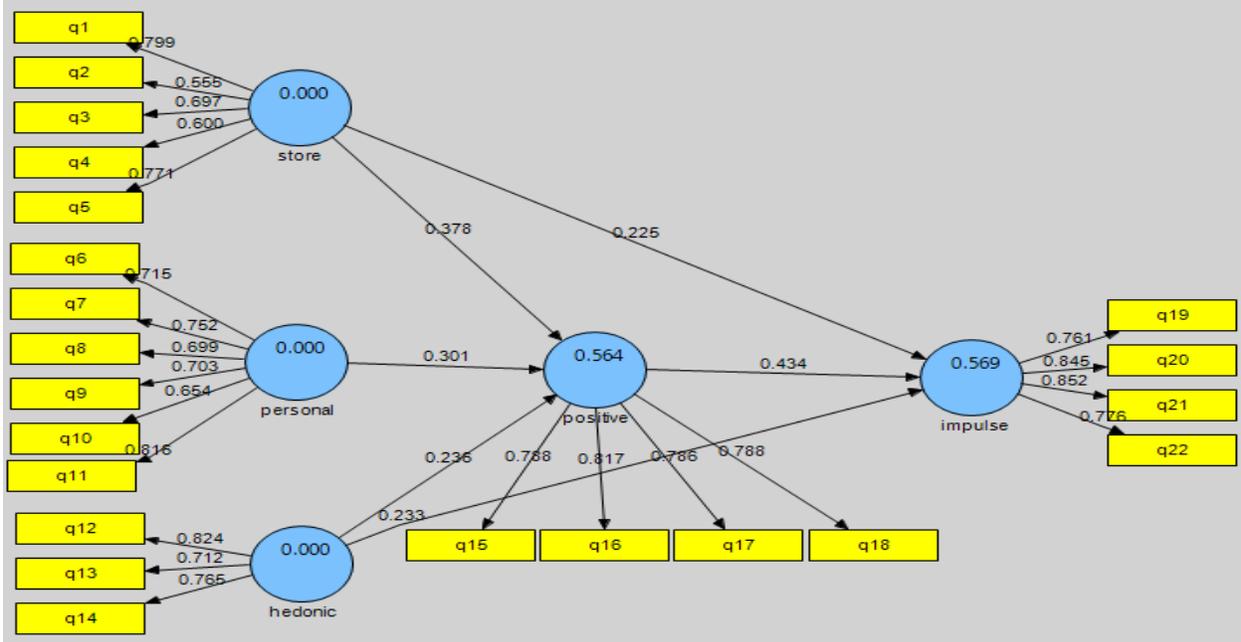


Figure 2: research tested model in Smart-PLS software

Table 4 indicates standard beta values and significance numbers of relationships among variables which indicate research hypotheses.

Table 4: beta values and significance values for inner section of the model

Relationships among variables	Factor loading	T value	result
Store environment---impulsive purchase	0.225	2.579771	supported
Store environment----positive feeling	0.378	4.405956	supported
Personality traits----positive feeling	0.301	3.213575	supported
Tendency to hedonic consumption----impulsive purchase	0.233	2.470157	supported
Tendency to hedonic consumption---positive feeling	0.236	3.282743	supported
Positive feeling----impulsive purchase	0.434	4.26429	supported

Considering the fact that certainty level is 0.95 for testing the hypotheses, all hypotheses the significance numbers of which are out of (-1.96, +1.96) range are accepted. According to data analysis and results presented in table 4, all research hypotheses are verified. In other words, store environment, personality traits and tendency to hedonic consumption have direct impacts on positive feelings of customers. Furthermore, furthermore, store environment and tendency to hedonic consumption influence directly and indirectly -via crating a positive feeling-onimpulsive purchase of customers. Customers' personality traits indirectly affect impulsive purchase via inspiring positive feelings in customers. Furthermore, R-squared values show that 56.9% of variance of impulsive purchase can be predicted both directly and indirectly by means of store environment, personality traits, tendency to hedonic consumption and positive feeling. Furthermore, 56.4% of the variance of the mediating variable "positive feeling" is predicted by store environment, personality traits and tendency to hedonic consumption.

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

All of us may experience purchase of products without any advance planning. The present research aimed to investigate the influences of personality traits, store environment, tendency to hedonic consumption and positive feeling on customers' purchases. The present research can help both salespeople and researchers. Investigations showed that store environment and tendency to hedonic consumption influence customers' impulsive purchases both directly and indirectly-viainspiration of positive feelings-. Moreover, personality traits can influence impulsive purchase indirectly via inspiration of positive feeling. Considering the results of the research, we can make some recommendations which contribute to impulsive purchase. Salespeople should pay attention to customers' feelings

when visiting their stores because pleasing experiences of customers can stimulate their feelings while visiting stores and in such conditions, they may make impulsive purchases. Salespeople must emphasize on entertaining, interest attraction and excitement of customers as much as fashion products display and appropriate prices. Salespeople should strengthen impulsive purchase possibility by virtue of store design, products packaging, fashionable decoration, products display and ... Purchasers which spend a lot of time in a store may also spend a lot of money there. When customers are satisfied with colors and lighting system of a store, they may spend more time and money in that store. When customers are filled with unpleasant feelings and stresses of daily hard work, they may receive positive feelings when they enter stores with good music and illumination system and make purchase. Impulsive purchases may increase in such conditions.

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