

Impact of Sales Person's Customer Orientation, In-Store Promotions and In-Store Environment on Impulsive Buying Mediated by Urge: The Moderating Role of Impulsive Buying Tendency

Muhammad Bilal Gulfraz & Xiong Wei

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to examine the Impact of Sales Person Customer orientation, in-store promotions and in-store environment on impulsive buying mediated by urge and the moderating role of impulsive buying tendency. The data was collected through a survey questionnaire on likert rating scale using a sample of 201 consumers from Pakistan and China. Questionnaire data was then analyzed & passed through different statistical analysis on SPSS & different relationship between key variables were observed. Research result indicates that there is a strong impact of sales person's customer orientation, in store promotions and in store environment on impulsive buying. The mediating role of urge has also been approved, and the moderating role of impulsive buying tendency. The sample mainly contained consumers of low income people of Pakistan which possibly limits the generalization of the findings. Future research should include consumers from other income classes. The findings are not only useful to retailers & marketers but also to consumers & product manager's as well. This study will find new ways to predict consumer's decision making specifically in impulsive buying. It will suggest new considerations for the marketers to market their products to the target audience. Further, it will also enrich the existing literature on the subject.

Keywords: Sales Person's customer orientation; in store environment; in store promotions; Impulsive buying tendency; Urge to buy; impulsive buying behavior.



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Introduction

It is accepted all over the world that marketing is nothing without advertising and companies are spending high amounts on ads averaging at least 11% budget towards advertising (Pierre, 2012). Companies are spending huge amounts on advertisements and consumers today are blitzed with very many kinds of promotions (Heilman, Lakishyk, & Radas, 2011). Companies are also trying to identify those factors which impel customers to buy a product (Kiran, Majumdar, & Kishore, 2012). These advertisements help companies to create and maintain a position for their product in the minds of customers. For this they try to follow customer everywhere. In the era of customer relationship marketing, companies are striving hard to extend optimum level of services and support in order to assist customers in their buying (Fam, Merilees, Richard, Jozsa, Li, & Krisjanous, 2011), in-store marketing is one means of doing that. Retailers as well as manufacturers have a strong interest in in-store marketing (Sigue, 2008).

On one side if we are talking about importance on advertising on other side, Ward Hanson has this to say "Really high spending on advertising sales is an admission of failure. I'd much prefer to see investments in loyalty leading to better repeat purchases than millions spent for a Super Bowl ad" (Hanson, 2000). As, the type of relationship that customers possess with the point of sales promotions offered by retail stores is largely based on loyalty levels (Rajagopal, 2008). A recent global study, "Shopper Decisions Made In-Store", by the Ogilvy Group was based on more than 14,000 shopper interviews conducted in 700 retail outlets across 24 markets worldwide spanning five retail channels across six product categories (Cooke, 2008). Not only this study supported the fact that two-thirds of brand decisions for supermarket items were made in the store (Agnew, 1987; McIntyre, 1995) which is high ratio and needs attention to be studied further. This clearly shows that in-store promotions has crucial role in developing the urge to buy impulsively. It has great influence on customer decisions to buy while they are present in store. Impulsive buying behavior is a widely recognized phenomenon & being studied from last 60 years (Muruganantham & Bhakat, 2013). In certain product categories, 60 to 70 % of the purchases are unplanned & spontaneous (Bell, Corsten, & Knox, 2011). Impulsive buying denotes any purchases which a consumer makes but has not planned in advance (Baumeister, 2002). Its importance has been further acknowledged by Coca Cola's CEO Muhtar Kent, he has publicized that more than 70 percent of Coke's sales are due to impulse purchases (Karmali, 2007). Now a day's Marketers & retailers are very much interested & continuously searching the ways to predict Consumer's decision making in impulsive buying (Bell, et al 2011). Consumer's decision making can be predicted accurately when marketers know more about of his target audience (Kidwell, Hardesty & Childers, 2008). Research on impulse buying suggests that people engage in impulsive buying mostly due to affective reasons. Therefore, it is important to understand the ability of a consumer to differentiate between emotions & use emotions to guide thoughts and behavior (Verplanken, Herabadi, Perry & Silvera, 2005). Research available on impulsive buying denotes its many antecedents, including individual characteristics such as impulse buying tendency (Weun et al., 1998), and situational factors such as time and money availability (Beatty and Ferrell, 1998), in-store advertisements (Zhou and Wong, 2003), in-store signage (Peck and Childers, 2006), display (Ghani and Kamal, 2010). Simultaneously much of research on store environment is also available, which explores the influence of its various elements on consumer behavior. For example, it shows that the perceptions about store employees may influence customers' attitudes towards merchandise and service quality (Hu and Jasper, 2006). Similarly, convenience, quality,

variety and value lead to positive attitudes towards private labels (Vahie and Paswan, 2006). However, there is little attention paid to the influence of store environment on impulse buying despite its increasing importance in making the retail “experience” a key differentiator (Hu and Jasper, 2006).

While Sherman et al. (1997) explore the influence of store layout, ambience, and sales personnel on unplanned buying they do not consider impulse buying which is different from unplanned buying (Stern, 1962). Beatty and Ferrell (1998) proposed a model of impulse buying including some consumer traits (impulse buying tendency, shopping enjoyment tendency) and situational variables (time and money available) but do not include store-level factors. They even ask “are impulse buyers more vulnerable to store atmospherics?” Similarly, Baker et al. (2002) study the impact of store environment on patronage, but not on impulse buying. Recent research in the domain straddling retail store environment (and its correlates) and consumer behavior finds that store environment is positively related to store trust and leads to more positive evaluations of merchandise (Guenzi et al., 2009). Customers look for fast and efficient billing systems, visual merchandizing, and informative signage within the store and prompt staff (Ghosh et al., 2010). Arousal induced by music and aroma results in increased pleasure levels, which in turn positively influences approach behavior, and satisfaction with the shopping experience (Morrison et al., 2011). In-store marketing has a noticeable effect on visual attention (Chandon et al., 2009). Reviewing past and recent literature has clarified that there is no wide-ranging model that links both personality and situational variables with impulse buying. This paper attempts to come out with a comprehensive model that incorporates both to explain impulse buying. Specifically, this paper addresses this major gap in extant literature by studying the impact of four elements of store environment (music, light, layout, and employees) along with individual characteristic (impulse buying tendency) on impulse buying behavior specially adding sales person assistance in shape of sales person customer’s orientation. In line with prior research, we have included the urge to buy impulsively (Dholakia, 2000) as mediators of the influence of store environment, in-store promotions and sales person’s customer orientation along with individual variables on impulse buying behavior. How much they impact the customer buying decision is an important aspect to know for marketers so that effective planning can be done for in-store promotions and environment. It would also guide to train people if sales’ persons customer orientation can lead to develop urge to buy impulsively is proved. This study will find new ways to predict consumer’s decision making specifically in impulsive buying.

Literature Review

Sales Person’s Customer Orientation

Along the hierarchy of any organization; lower level employees, in direct contact with the customers also known as salesperson, contribute significantly to the accomplishment or collapse of the organization. These employees tend to develop long lasting superior customer value by primarily focusing on and satisfying the current and foreseeing and working on the potential customer needs; (Blocker, Flint, Myers, & Slater, 2011). The successful implementation of a marketing concept largely depends on this customer orientation of Salesforce (Martin and Bush 2006). Customer orientation enhances a number of positive marketing outcomes such as customer contentment (Brady and Cronin 2001) and customer trust (Williams 1998). According to Saxe and Weitz (1982), personal selling is a major component of salesperson’s customer orientation as they directly influence the customer’s purchase decision by applying the marketing concepts and intend to satisfy their needs. Thus

customer orientation primarily focuses on taping customer's needs to make them loyal to the product that satisfies their needs. However, the prime goal of any business is to develop, nurture and retain ever-lasting healthy relationship with their customers (Cannon and Perreault 1999) which further enhances the strong personal bond between customers and salesperson (Price and Arnould 1999).

Considering the nature of the job, a salesperson assumes the role of an actor playing a different part each time while tackling unlike situations and dealing with people of all kinds. This symbolise them to be a role player according to a role theory. Role theory stipulates that individuals tend to act like actors, exhibiting behaviours in response to a peculiar situation. This concept of role theory is supported by a rich history of research supporting in ascertaining the relationship between salesperson and customers in terms of relationship selling. Thus, a salesperson takes up two roles for its customer; one as a professional and other as a social association (Jones,1999). However, which role to assume, depends significantly on the situation. According to Heide and Wathne (2006), a professional association in terms of behaving as a business partner follows a "logic of consequences", focusing on the extrinsic motivation of the salesperson to remain in a relationship. On the other hand, role of a social acquaintance follows "logic of appropriateness" where the customer remains in relationship for intrinsic motives. These varying roles results in stress and vagueness of sales person and customer interactions (Price and Arnould 1999). At times, these roles may become a burden, especially when a customer apprehends the use of social acquaintance for business motives (Grayson 2007). Most importantly, role theory hypothesizes that a situational context primarily determines the type of role the salesperson assumes. Thus, the value of functional and relational customer orientation depends on the situational context. Beatty et al. (1996) further asserts that the outcomes of social and functional advantages yielded from customer and sales person interaction predominantly depends on the value that customers give to those outcomes. Research into the services concept has given rise to another point of view where researchers comprehend that a salesperson interpersonal behaviour is another driving aspect of customer – salesperson orientation i.e. it also includes the salesperson propensity to develop personal bond with the his customers (Brown et al. 2002; Donovan et al. 2004). These efforts by a salesperson's are directed to make customer's buy that is where customer tends to buy impulsively. Thus, relational customer orientation can be characterized as a collection of behaviours intended to develop personal relationship with the customers & resultantly buying tendency. This difference between functional and relational orientation is dependable on the functional and personal power strategies while in contact with the customers (Weitz & Brdford, 1999).

Good behavior of employees can act as an extraordinary service to consumers. Consumers usually do not enjoy shopping when dealt by overbearing employees (Jones, 1999). Persuasive and friendly employee triggers impulse purchases among consumers (Tendai and Crispin, 2009). Research on the customer orientation primarily focuses on the conditions under which a functional or relational orientation creates the buying urge in the customers. Customer urge may be defined as the propensity and the willingness of the customer to buy a particular product and continue buying it in future (Zeithaml et al.1996). Now considering the characteristics of situation purchase context included in the framework, the effort of sales person is to create urge to buy in his customers. Considering the relational and functional customer orientation side by side, two communication styles are identified; interaction orientation and task orientation. Interaction orientation is defined as a customer's potential

to get acquainted with the salesperson during purchase (Syam and Kumar 2006). Task orientation is identified as customer's propensity to make purchase and to stick to the goal. (Syam and Kumar 2006). Hence, we deduce that sales person's customer orientation is directed towards development of urge to buy in target customers.

Store Environment

Store environment consists of ambient factors such as lighting, scent, and music; design factors such as layout and assortment; and social factors such as the presence and effectiveness of salespersons (Baker et al., 2002). Layout refers to the way in which products, shopping carts, and aisles are arranged; the size and shape of those items, and the spatial relationships among them. Product assortment is the total set of items offered by a retailer. Social factors refer to the people such as other shoppers and salespeople (Baker et al., 2002). Other shoppers were not considered in this study as this factor was not directly under the control of the retailer (unlike all the other factors that were considered). Ward et al. (1992) state that consumers do not perceive a store in piecemeal fashion and it is the total configuration of cues (the Gestalt of consumers' perceptions of stores) that influences their responses (Mattila and Wirtz, 2001). However, most prior studies do not operationalize store environment as an overall construct and instead explore the influence of individual elements of store environment, such as layout and signage (Ang et al., 1997), product assortment (Simonson, 1999), ambience, and salesperson availability (Sharma and Stafford, 2000), music (Dube' and Morin, 2001; Beverland et al., 2006), lighting (Summers and Hebert, 2001), and scent (Mattila and Wirtz, 2001). While Baker et al. (2002) include multiple cues (employee, design and music perceptions) in a single study, they too study only the individual impact of these variables and not the overall effect of store environment. Therefore, this paper defines store environment as a perception of the combination of its elements namely music, lighting, layout and employees. We consider its overall impact on customer perceptions and behavior.

Shoppers respond to music psychologically and behaviorally (Yalch and Spangenberg, 1990). Music is an important, frequently and commonly studied variable that influences affective states (Bruner, 1990). It is a key ambient variable (Bitner, 1992) shaping consumer behavior in retail environments (Yalch and Spangenberg, 1990). The presence of pleasant music produces positive affect (Garlin and Owen, 2006). Well-designed lighting systems can bring an added dimension to an interior, guide the customer's eyes to key sales points, create an atmosphere of excitement and induce positive affect (Smith, 1989). Lighting and music together evoke positive affect (Yoo et al., 1998). Positive experiences arise if the store makes it easy for the consumers to find the product they are looking for, by providing a logical store layout and sufficient signage (Bitner, 1992). Retail layouts are important since they help present product assortments in an effective and positive way (Aghazadeh, 2005). A good layout may produce and enhance positive affect by helping the shoppers find what they want faster (Spies et al., 1997). A good layout may also make the shopping more enjoyable, by reducing the perceived stress in shopping (Baker et al., 2002) and by evoking positive affect (Yoo et al., 1998). Loud music is one of the major irritants of shopping. Improper or loud music may cause physical discomfort (Bitner, 1992) and may induce negative affect. In attempting to create an "appropriate" (i.e. soft lighting) atmosphere, management may adopt a lighting scheme that inhibits shoppers from examining the merchandise, inducing negative affect. Improper illumination levels reduce visual acuity that is needed to complete environmental tasks (Areni and Kim, 1994). Cluttered shelves, narrow and irregular aisles may increase consumers' perception of crowding, which in turn may lead to negative affect. A

poor layout causes negative affect (Jones, 1999). At the retail outlet, affect is induced by the salesperson (Gardner, 1985). A salesperson's actions and behaviors can influence customer satisfaction with him/her as well as the retailer (Oliver and Swan, 1989) and customer satisfaction has an affective basis (Westbrook and Oliver, 1991). This linkage occurs, at least in part, because the salesperson and selling firm are often indistinguishable in the mind of the shopper (Crosby et al., 1990). In fact, absence of salespersons or bad salesmanship may also cause negative affect (Jones, 1999). This conclude that in store environment tends to create urge to buy impulsively.

Urge to Buy Impulsively:

Urge to buy impulsively (urge) is a state of desire that is experienced upon encountering an object in the shopping environment such as a specific product, model or brand (Dholakia, 2000). It is spontaneous, sudden and clearly precedes the actual impulse action (Beatty and Ferrell, 1998). As consumers browse around in a store, they experience more and more urges, and their likelihood of engaging in an impulse purchase increases (Beatty and Ferrell, 1998). Music is an important non-verbal communication, generally used to enhance store atmosphere and sometimes it may induce unplanned (Turley and Milliman, 2000) and even impulse buying (Mattila and Wirtz, 2001). Music makes people stay longer, spend more time and money than normal (Milliman, 1982); hence it is likely that some of this spending may be unplanned and possibly result in impulse buying. In fact, music and lighting are important triggers that create an urge to purchase impulsively (Eroglu and Machleit, 1993). Good lighting techniques help create the right ambience (as in a restaurant). A store with appropriate lighting may entice shoppers to experience the store and create an urge to purchase. Well-designed lighting systems can bring an added dimension to an interior, guide the customer's eyes to key sales points, create an atmosphere of excitement, induce positive affect, or simply make key approach areas safe and visible (Smith, 1989). Ambient factors including music and lighting have a positive effect on arousal (Sherman et al., 1997) and all these can trigger a desire (urge) to purchase impulsively (Eroglu and Machleit, 1993). An optimal layout gives the ability to facilitate the access to information and aids the shopper in decision-making. Peg boards and end caps induce urge to buy impulsively (Aghazadeh, 2005). A good layout makes even the utilitarian shopper buy additionally by creating an urge in them (Sherman et al., 1997). Salespersons can guide the consumer to explore the store and the product range, thereby inducing the urge to buy impulsively.

Impulse Buying Tendency (IBT)

Broadly in line with Weun et al.(1998) and Beatty and Ferrell (1998), we define impulse buying tendency (IBT) as the tendency to make unplanned purchases and to buy spontaneously, with little or no deliberation or consideration of the consequences. Consumers with higher IBT score are more likely to experience impulsive urges and to buy impulsively in a retail store (Beatty and Ferrell, 1998). Prior research shows a positive association between positive affect and impulse buying. Donovan et al. (1994) found that a pleasant environment contributed to extra time and unplanned shopping. Beatty and Ferrell (1998) also found a positive relationship between positive affect and urge to buy impulsively.

In line with prior research, we assume that positive and negative affect are orthogonal to one another (Beatty and Ferrell, 1998). The effect of negative effect on impulse buying is ambiguous in the literature. One line of research shows that stress reaction (Youn and Faber, 2000) and self-gifting are used to relieve depression (Mick and DeMoss, 1990) i.e. this

suggests that negative affect would have a positive effect on impulse urges. In a retail setting, negative affect generally creates a desire to withdraw from an environment as it makes the consumer perceive the store to be unlikely to solve his/her intended purpose for visiting it (Eroglu and Machleit, 1993). Hence, there is little chance of impulsive urges being generated. Moreover, Youn and Faber (2000) talked about pre-existing negative effect ("I feel low, so will buy something and perk up") and not store-induced affect, which is what we are concerned with in this paper. Since negative affect may cause withdrawal from the store, it is unlikely to lead to impulsive urges. Finally, prior research shows that consumers continuously experience impulsive urge during their shopping trips as they browse around the stores (Rook, 1987; Beatty and Ferrell, 1998), and they are unable to resist many of these impulsive urges despite their best efforts to control or regulate them (Dholakia, 2000). Therefore, as argued earlier, we hypothesize a positive relationship between the urge to buy impulsively and impulse buying.

In Store Promotions:

With retail competition at an all-time high, today's retailers must find new ways to attract consumers and inspire high levels of customer loyalty. Popoi/Du Pont study came out with finding that 65% of all super market purchase decisions were made in-store with 50% of them being unplanned. From simple signage of retailers hoping to promote specials, in-store media has evolved into various incarnations including ads on shopping carts, cart straps, aisles and talking shelves, end-aisle displays, floor signage, kiosks, interactive flat panels, in-store audio and video transmissions (Kotler and Keller, 2009).

Zhou and Wong (2003), classified the in-store shopping environment into two distant effects i.e. the promotional, informative and economic effect, and the atmospheric engagement effect. The promotional effect consists of stimuli like promotional discounts (coupons, multiple-item discounts and gifts) and cheaper prices, while atmospheric engagement effect include stimuli of enjoyment and attractiveness like in-store advertisements, store displays, salesperson, shop crowding etc. Coupon offers increase the likelihood of planned impulse buying (Stern, 1962) found no relationship between food coupons and unplanned purchases of consumers. However, surprise coupons have a psychological income effect on the consumers resulting in increase in the size of shopping basket and number of unplanned purchases (Tendai and Crispen, 2009). Among numerous other determinants of impulse buying *low prices* exercise the most direct effect (Tendai and Crispen, 2009). Price reductions, cost savings, discounts or salespromotions can convince buyers to end up in an unintended purchase (Laroche et al., 2003). Bell et al. (2011) found that exposure to in-store marketing stimuli produce unplanned buying actions, especially when store is chosen for low prices. However, not always low price is found healthier for impulse buying (Kelly et al., 2000). In-store advertisements and promotions have proven records to amplify the magnitude of unplanned purchasing among consumers (Inman et al., 1990). Consumers buy impulsively when their attention is engrossed by pleasant goods, attractive in-store advertisements and promotions (Dholakia, 2000). Exposure to in-store marketing stimuli produces unplanned buying actions, as identified by Bell et al. (2011).

Stern (1962) acknowledged prominent store displays as determinant of impulse buying. In-store environment including store layout may effect emotional states of consumers and direct them to show high level of impulse buying behavior (Mattila and Wirtz, 2001). Retailers today

are actively engaged in increasing the magnitude of impulse purchases through product and store displays, product mixture and packaging designs (Tendai and Crispen, 2009).

Impulsive Buying Behavior:

Impulse buying has been defined as *"a consumer experiences a sudden, often powerful and persistent urge to buy something immediately."* (Rook, 1987, p. 191). Impulsive buying behavior is a widely recognized phenomenon & being studied from last 60 years (Muruganantham, et al 2013). In certain product categories, 60 to 70 % of the purchases are unplanned & spontaneous (Bell, et al 2011). Marketers & retailers are very much interested & continuously searching the ways to predict Consumer's decision making in impulsive buying (Bell, et al 2011). This concept has been used by the marketers to control stimulation that can increase impulse buying. There are some stimulation that can be controlled by the marketers, such as the product and packaging, window display, visual merchandising, the position of the product in aisle, store ambience and design, and also the store attendant (Bharwada, 2010).

According to Bell, Corsten, and Knox (2010), retailer's strategy towards their products also has a big influence to customer impulse buying behavior. For examples, the customer impulse buying behavior will increase in low prices store, as they feel that it is fine to purchase more in low price product (Rook and Fisher, 1995). Other strategy like wide assortments store can distort customer main goals and stimulate to do more impulse buying (Bell, et al 2010). Good services also increase the convenient and pleasure for customers and make customer more confidence to do more impulse buying (Pornpitakpan and Han, 2013). What has been mentioned above are the factors that can be controlled or influenced by the Retailers. However, there are also some factors that cannot be controlled by the retailers that come whether from environment or from the individual itself. Those external factors also have high correlation to customers' impulse buying behavior (Tinne, 2011). Those factors include the popularity of products, reference group of each individual customer, the income level, festival season requirements (Tinne, 2011), and time available (Muruganantham, et al 2013).

Research Methodology:

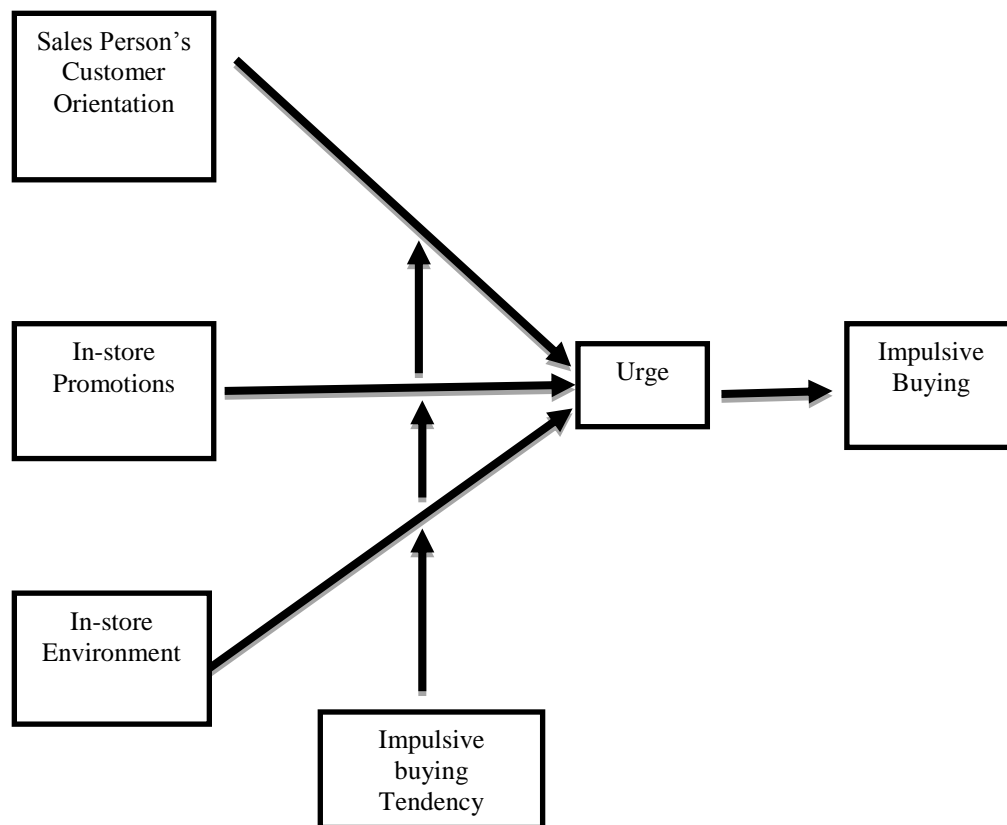
Data was analyzed and passed through different statistical analysis on SPSS & relationship between key variables was observed. Demographics of the respondents were also checked using correlation & regression analysis on SPSS.

Population & Sample:

Data was collected from the individuals through self-administered questionnaire using convenience sampling. These respondents were the earning hands in their family & were independent in making their purchase decisions. Almost 225 questionnaires were distributed among respondents, out of which 201 questionnaires found correct in all aspects, so the response rate was 89.33%. Respondents' general demographic information consists of, age, gender, income level, & education.

Measures & Scales:

The survey was conducted using a 51 item questionnaire, and response was taken through likert scale of 1-5 points, which is directed from strongly disagree to strongly agree with a neutral as a midpoint.



Theoretical Model

Hypotheses Statements

- H1: sales person's customer orientation effects impulse buying behaviour positively
- H2: in-store promotions will effects impulse buying behaviour positively
- H3: in store environment has positive effect on impulsive buying
- H4: Impulsive buying tendency has positive effect on impulsive buying
- H5: the positive relationship between sales person's customer orientation and impulse buying behaviour will be strengthen such that impulsive buying tendency is there.
- H6: the positive relationship between in-store promotions and impulse buying behaviour will be strengthen such that impulsive buying tendency is there
- H7: the positive relationship between in-store environment and impulse buying behaviour will be strengthen such that impulsive buying tendency is there.
- H8: the positive relationship between sales person's customer orientation and impulse buying behaviour is mediated by urge to buy.
- H9: the positive relationship between in-store promotion and impulse buying behaviour is mediated by urge to buy.
- H10: the positive relationship between in-store environment and impulse buying behaviour is mediated by urge to buy.
- H11: the positive relationship between Impulsive buying tendency and impulse buying behaviour is mediated by urge to buy.
- H12: sales person's customer orientation effects urge to buy positively
- H13: in-store promotions will effects urge to buy positively
- H14: in store environment has positive effect on urge to buy
- H15: Impulsive buying tendency has positive effect on urge to buy
- H16: urge to buy has a positive relationship with impulsive buying

Sales Person's Customer Orientation:

This questionnaire was developed by Michaels & Day (1985), Consisting of 6 items, measured on Likert rating scale. A sample question includes, "This salesperson tries to help us achieve our goals."

In-Store environment:

This questionnaire contained items for Music ,light , employee and layout . Scales opted for music was developed by Morin and Chebat (2005), for Light Smith, (1989) , Areni and Kim, (1994); Summers and Hebert, (2001) and for Employees Dickson and Albaum, (1977).The questionnaire contained 9 items, measured on Likert rating scale. A sample question include "The store had pleasant music."

In store promotion:

This questionnaire was developed by Lam et al., 2001; Sit and Merrilees, 2005; Marti'nez-Ruiz et al., 2006; Grewal et al., 2009; Fam et al., 2011; Leischnig et al., 2011; Barone and Roy, 2010) Consisting of 19 items, measured on Likert rating scale. A sample question include "I prefer malls that provide a range of promotions at different stores."

Impulsive Buying Tendency:

This questionnaire was developed by Weun et al., (1998) Consisting of 5 items, measured on Likert rating scale. A sample question include "When I go shopping, I buy things that I had not intended buying."

Urge to Buy:

This questionnaire was developed by Beatty and Ferrell (1998) Consisting of 3 items, measured on Likert rating scale. A sample question includes "I experienced many sudden urges to buy unplanned items."

Impulsive Buying:

This questionnaire was developed by Rook, & Fisher (1995) Consisting of 9 items, measured on Likert rating scale. A sample question include "I see it, I buy it" describes me.

Table 1 is showing the mean and standard deviation values of demographics and study variable. Cronbach alpha of all the study variables is shown in parenthesis. This table also shows the correlation analysis between all the study variables. The value of correlation between Sales person's customer orientation (SPCO) & in store promotion (ISP) is (0.356**). It means that SPCO & ISP have a significant relationship with them. In store environment have significant relationship with SPCO & ISP. The value of correlation between in store environment & impulsive buying tendency is (0.532) which is significant. "Urge to buy" has significant relationship. Further, dependent variable "IB" has significant relationship with all study variables.

Table 1:

Means , Standard Deviations, Correlations & Reliabilities

S.No		MEAN	S.D	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	Age ^a	1.88	0.44										
2	Gender ^b	1.36	0.55	.135									
3	Qualification ^c	3.60	0.91	.105	-								
4	Income ^d	1.78	1.25	.025	.041	.029							
5	SPCO ^e	3.55	0.61	.093	.048	.167*	-	(0.63)					
6	ISP ^f	3.54	0.41	.185**	.068	-	.041	.356**	(0.76)				
7	ISE ^g	3.78	0.52	.042	.128	.076	.006	.289**	.399**	(0.73)			
8	IBT ^h	3.38	0.79	-.113	.172*	.061	.065	.152*	.161*	.136	(0.70)		
9	URGE	3.29	0.88	-	-	-	.171*	.512**	.209**	.226**	.538**	(0.65)	
10	IB ⁱ	3.14	0.67	.174*	.024	.015	-	.090	.591**	.532**	.146*	.607**	.602** (0.82)
						.133							

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

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Note: n=201'alpha reliabilities are given in parenthesis.

a. Age 1= below 20, 2= 20 -30, 3= 31-40, 4= 41-50, 5=51-60. b. Gender; 1=male, 2=female. c. qualification; 1=matriculation, 2=intermediate, 3=bachelor degree, 4=master degree, 5=MS,

6= PhD/others. d. income(in thousands) ; 1= less than 20, 2= 21-40, 3= 41-60, 4= 61-80, 5= above 80.

e. SPCO=sales person's customer orientation. f. ISP=in store promotions. g. ISE=in store environment. h. IBT= impulsive buying tendency. i. IB= impulsive buying.

The table 2 shows the results of moderated regression analysis. The R² value of Sales person's customer orientation (SPCO), in store promotions (ISP), In Store Environment (ISE) & Impulsive buying tendency (IBT) is 0.382, The R²value of all interaction terms is 0.399. The ΔR^2 for all independent & moderating variables is 0.321; the ΔR^2 change for all Interaction terms is 0.017.

Moderation Analysis:**Table 2**

URGE			
Predictors	B	R ²	ΔR^2
STEP 1			
SPCO ^a	0.131	0.382	0.321
ISP ^b	0.259		
ISE ^c	0.268**		
IBT ^d	0.571***		
STEP 2			
SPCOxIBT	0.323**	0.399	0.017
ISPxIBT	0.473*		
ISExIBT	0.413*		

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

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Note: a. SPCO=sales person's customer orientation. b. ISP=in store promotions. c. ISE=in store environment. d. IBT= impulsive buying tendency.

Moderated regression analysis, as shown in table 2, reveal that the interaction term (SPCOxIBT) in the second step was significant ($\beta 0.133$) which shows that Impulsive buying tendency moderates the relationship between Sales person's customer orientation & urge to Buy. Hypothesis of moderation developed in this study (H5) is accepted in this case. Hence, Impulsive buying tendency (IBT) moderates the relationship between Sales person's customer orientation (SPCO) and Urge to Buy. The interaction term (ISPxIBT) in the second step was significant ($\beta 0.243$) which shows that Impulsive buying tendency moderates the relationship between In store promotions (ISP) & urge to Buy. Hypothesis of moderation developed in this study (H6) is accepted in this case. Hence, Impulsive buying tendency (IBT) moderates the relationship between In Store Promotions (ISP) and Urge to Buy. The last interaction term (ISExIBT) developed in this moderation table was also significant ($\beta 0.223$) which shows that Impulsive buying tendency moderates the relationship between In store Environment (ISE) & urge to Buy. Hypothesis of moderation developed in this study (H7) is accepted in this case. Hence, Impulsive buying tendency (IBT) moderates the relationship between In Store environment (ISE) and Urge to Buy.

TABLE 3

Regression Analysis for Mediation Effect

	URGE			Impulsive Buying		
	Beta	R2	R2 Change	Beta	R2	R2 Change
Direct Effect						
Step 1						
SPCO ^a	0.1311			0.062*		
ISP ^b	0.259	0.382	0.321	0.028**	0.415	0.382
ISE ^c	*0.268			0.121*		
IBT ^d	***0.571			0.529***		
Mediation effect						
Step 1						
URGE				0.466***	0.383	0.349
Step 2						
SPCO				0.024**		
ISP				0.046*	0.503	0.12
ISE				0.043*		
IBT				0.364*		

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

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Note: a. SPCO=sales person's customer orientation. b. ISP=in store promotions. c. ISE=in store environment. d. IBT= impulsive buying tendency.

To test the mediating role of urge towards impulsive buying, Baron and Kenny's (1986) procedures were applied. The results showed that two of total four independent variables i.e. sales person customer orientation and In store promotions are not significantly related to mediator i.e. urge ($\beta = .01311$, $p = .144$; $\beta = 0.259$, $p = .068$) thus rejecting H12 and H13, but these two are significant with dependent variable i.e. impulsive buying ($\beta = .062$, $p = .02$; $\beta = .0287$, $p = .025$) thus accepting H1 and H2. One of the four independent variables i.e. in store environment is positively significantly related to mediator i.e. urge ($\beta = .268$, $p = .013$) and also with dependent variable i.e. impulsive buying ($\beta = .121$, $p = .031$) which approves H14 and H3. One of the independent variables i.e. impulsive buying tendency has significant relation with dependent variable i.e. impulsive buying ($\beta = .529$, $p = .000$) accepting H4. The mediator urge is significantly related to dependent variable i.e. impulsive buying ($\beta = .466$, $p = .000$) proving H16 is true. When the independent variables and mediator are simultaneously included in the regression model, the mediator's influence is significant with impulsive buying tendency ($\beta = .364$, $p > .000$) that holds true with respect to our hypothesis i.e. H15. Application of Baron and Kenny's (1986) model suggests that partial mediation is proved in case of impulsive buying tendency as it is significant when mediator i.e. urge is controlled ($\beta = .364$, $p = .000$), which accepts H11. As sales person customer orientation, in store promotion and in store environment are not significant at first step so mediation is also proved for all of them accepting H8, H9 and H10.

Discussion

Out of total 16 hypothesis developed in this study, only two of them has been disapproved through data analysis. Among the approved ones, one of them (i.e. H4) is Impulsive buying tendency has positive effect on impulsive buying behavior. This has been approved by our study along with other three hypothesis narrating that the positive relationship between impulsive buying tendency and impulsive buying behavior is mediated by urge to buy (H11), impulsive buying tendency has positive effect on urge to buy (H15) and urge to buy has positive relationship with impulsive buying (H16). These findings are in line with previous researches as consumers with higher IBT score are more likely to experience impulsive urges and to buy impulsively in a retail store (Beatty and Ferrell, 1998). It has also been proved that consumers continuously experience impulsive urge during their shopping trips as they browse around the stores (Rook, 1987; Beatty and Ferrell, 1998), and they are unable to resist many of these impulsive urges despite their best efforts to control or regulate them (Dholakia, 2000; Baumeister, 2002). The mediation of urge to buy has been proved with study variables for impulsive buying tendency. The moderation effect of impulsive buying tendency has also been proved for all independent variables (SPCO, ISP and ISE). The major reason for these findings are the chemistry of respondents involved in this study. Among the total respondents of 202, there were 166 respondents with in the age bracket of 20-30 years, most of them were students at bachelor level. 131 respondents reported their income below 20000PKR. Mai, et al. (2003) observed that individual income level or money available can influence individual purchasing power that will lead to the increasing of impulse buying behavior. According to Beatty and Ferrell (1998) provided evidence that available money influences impulse buying decisions. Past research has also shown that impulsive buying is positively correlated with the percentage of personal income saved (Romal and Kaplan 1995)..

Implication for Managers:

As we mentioned in our discussion that most of the respondents were having income less than twenty thousands. So, we suggest that marketers should not indulge in excessive advertisement because that leads to higher cost of products/services which ultimately leads to low impulsive buying due to budgetary constraints. We don't claim that people do not buy impulsively but we claim that people buy impulsively but they prefer low cost products while buying impulsively. Beside this, it is important for the managers to increase Sales person customer orientation by training and focus on in store environment and in-store promotions to increase the impulsive buying among the customers. This may include the music, atmosphere, promotions and decorations with in stores.

Limitations and Directions for Future Research:

This study has been done in Pakistan and China, so results are depicting Asian culture, it should be replicated in other regions & cross-cultures. Sample size was of the study was also small, so it is recommended to conduct this study on large scale to test its generalizability. In this research we used survey method to collect data so future research may use other methods (say, field experiments) to test the generalizability of our findings, using a wider variety of goods and services.

It is recommended that moderating role of other factors e.g. products categories, time & price should be examined in future research. One of the most important future contribution would be to analyze the moderating role of money availability also. Secondly, in this study the concentration was only on dependent variable, "Impulsive Buying", so future research should be focused on different type of impulsive buying in different context.

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Appendix 1:

Hypotheses statements	RESULT
H1: sales person's customer orientation effects impulse buying behaviour positively	Accepted
H2: in-store promotions will effects impulse buying behaviour positively	Accepted
H3: in store environment has positive effect on impulsive buying	Accepted
H4: Impulsive buying tendency has positive effect on impulsive buying	Accepted
H5: the positive relationship between sales person's customer orientation and impulse buying behaviour will be strengthen such that impulsive buying tendency is there.	Accepted
H6: the positive relationship between in-store promotions and impulse buying behaviour will be strengthen such that impulsive buying tendency is there	Accepted
H7: the positive relationship between in-store environment and impulse buying behaviour will be strengthen such that impulsive buying tendency is there.	Accepted
H8: the positive relationship between sales person's customer orientation and impulse buying behaviour is mediated by urge to buy.	Accepted
H9: the positive relationship between in-store promotion and impulse buying behaviour is mediated by urge to buy.	Accepted
H10: the positive relationship between in-store environment and impulse buying behaviour is mediated by urge to buy.	Accepted

H11: the positive relationship between Impulsive buying tendency and impulse buying behaviour is mediated by urge to buy.	Accepted
H12: sales person's customer orientation effects urge to buy positively	Rejected
H13: in-store promotions will effects urge to buy positively	Rejected
H14: in store environment has positive effect on urge to buy	Accepted
H15: Impulsive buying tendency has positive effect on urge to buy	Accepted
H16: urge to buy has a positive relationship with impulsive buying	Accepted

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