



Pre- and post-purchase stage in impulse buying: The role of mood and satisfaction



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ABSTRACT

The objective of this study is to investigate the influence of impulse buying tendency and pre-purchase mood on impulse buying. The study further considers the effect of impulse buying on post-purchase mood. In this context, this research examines how pre-purchase mood affects post-purchase mood, with customer satisfaction as a mediating variable. The results reveal that consumer impulse buying tendency and pre-purchase mood encourage impulse buying positively. In addition, it is found that impulse buying has no influence on post-purchase mood. Moreover, satisfaction has a partial mediator role between pre-purchase mood and post-purchase mood.

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1. Introduction

Impulse buying occupies a crucial place in consumer behaviour research. Fully three-quarters of decisions to buy are made on store premises (Liljenwall, 2004). In the United States, up to 62% of total supermarket sales by value, and for some product lines, as much as 80% of sales by value are impulse purchases (Strack et al., 2006). Thus, most consumer purchases may be unplanned either at the point of purchase or in the store (Bell et al., 2011; Inman et al., 2009).

Although more than half of buying decisions are made at the store, Hui et al. (2013) find that the probability of a consumer visiting every aisle is low; the average store customer visits less than half of store aisles (Hui et al., 2013). Thus, there are factors aside from the in-store context, for example, impulse buying tendency and pre-purchase mood, that encourage unplanned buying (Bell et al., 2010). Understanding these factors may help guide marketing strategies and help ensure customer satisfaction.

The main focus of modern marketing philosophy is the needs and wants of consumers. Based on this approach, Kotler and Armstrong (2012) state the importance of consumer needs and wants and of satisfying customers better than competitors in terms of reaching organizational goals. It is also more important for firms to generate profits over the long term by satisfying the

customer than to make profit in the short run by selling products only once via marketing efforts. Accordingly, it has become critical to understand the consumer-related factors that drive impulse buying. It is also important for firms to determine the factors affecting impulse buying decisions and to satisfy customers affected by these factors and who buy on impulse. In this context, understanding the effect of pre-purchase mood on satisfaction and the effect of satisfaction on post-purchase mood would make a contribution to understanding impulse buying.

Examination of mood's effect on consumer impulse buying decisions is critical in terms of determining the direction of investments to be made in marketing activities. In this regard, the objective of this research is threefold: (1) to investigate customer-related factors such as impulse buying tendency and pre-purchase mood affecting impulse buying behaviour; (2) to examine the effect of impulse buying on post-purchase mood; and (3) to consider the mediating role of customer satisfaction between pre-purchase mood and post-purchase mood.

Hence, we first review the literature on impulse buying. Then, impulse buying tendency and mood affecting impulse buying are examined. In addition, the influence of impulse buying behaviour on post-purchase mood and the effect of pre-purchase mood on post-purchase mood are specified as customer satisfaction mediating variable. This paper fills a gap in the literature by analyzing the role of mood and satisfaction on impulse buying and by examining the post-purchase stage. In this way, this paper investigates the mediating role of satisfaction between pre-purchase mood and post-purchase mood, a topic given sparse treatment in the impulse buying literature.

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2. Conceptual framework and hypotheses

2.1. Pre-purchase stage and impulse buying

Some researchers (Bellenger et al., 1978; Cobb and Hoyer, 1986) use the term *impulse buying* interchangeably with *unplanned purchase*. However, according to Hawkins and Mothersbaugh (2010), the notion of unplanned purchase is divided into two components, reminder buying and impulse buying. Buying a product when seen in the store that is out-of-stock at home is not defined as impulse buying (Beatty and Ferrell, 1998) but reminder buying (Hawkins and Mothersbaugh, 2010). The present study aims to focus on impulse buying. Impulse buying is a sudden, immediate urge to purchase (Beatty and Ferrell, 1998) with no pre-laid intention or plan to buy the product (Baumeister, 2002; Beatty and Ferrell, 1998; Wood, 1998); impulse buying is accompanied with intense feelings (Wood, 1998). In this regard, the consumer has no intention to buy the product before the consumer arrives at the store. Stern (1962) explains impulse buying as follows: consumers transfer their purchase-related plans from their homes to stores. Therefore, cases in which the consumer goes shopping to buy a gift are not defined as impulse buying, since there is an intention to buy a product before arriving at the store (Beatty and Ferrell, 1998). In addition to the unplanned aspect of impulse buying, there is also a strong want or other intense driving force to buy (Baumeister, 2002). Similarly, impulse buying may be defined as a quick purchase, as if seizing the product (Rook, 1987). According to Baumeister (2002), in impulse buying, consumers decide to buy without carefully and fairly considering long-term goals (e.g., saving money), ideals, decisions, and plans.

Gerbing et al. (cited in Beatty and Ferrell (1998)) defined impulse buying tendency as a quick reaction to a stimuli without evaluation or reflection. According to Weun (cited in Park and Lennon (2006)), impulse buying tendency is the degree of the possibility of quick buying with no reflection or intention to buy. In this regard, impulse buying is described as a consumer trait (Park and Lennon, 2006; Rook and Fisher, 1995). Consumers that have impulse buying tendency may experience difficulties in preventing their behaviour, and therefore may frequently and consistently buy on impulse (Park and Lennon, 2006). Therefore, impulse buying tendency as a consumer trait may be related to impulse buying behaviour (Park and Lennon, 2006; Peck and Childers, 2006; Silveira et al., 2008). Rook and Fisher (1995) also state that consumers having high impulse buying tendency buy on impulse more than other consumers. According to Jones et al. (2003), product-specific impulse buying tendency explains impulse buying behaviour better than general impulse buying tendency.

H1. Impulse buying tendency positively affects impulse buying behaviour.

It is stated that affect, mood, emotions, and feelings are effective at all levels of the process of consumer decision making (Puccinelli et al., 2009). Mood is taken as feeling state (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2004) and listed under the concept of affect (Gardner, 1985; Swinyard, 1993). Mood is not intense and continuous; however, it might also be regarded as a general feeling state (Gardner, 1985; Swinyard, 1993). Besides, mood is not directed toward a specific object and is not intense.

Rook and Gardner (cited in Beatty and Ferrell (1998)) state that mood has an intense and complex role in impulse buying. Mood may affect consumers' styles of comparing and evaluating products (Swinyard, 1993) and brands (Gardner, 1985), searching for information (Gardner, 1985), decisions to buy which product and

with whom (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2004; Swinyard, 1993), spending amount (Murray et al., 2010; Spies et al., 1997), and decisions about time allocated for shopping (Swinyard, 1993).

It is claimed that the consumers having positive mood spend more (Murray et al., 2010; Spies et al., 1997). Also, Beatty and Ferrell (1998) state that positive mood causes more impulse buying than does negative mood. The fact that 85% of consumers who buy on impulse have positive mood supports this view. In parallel, Hill and Gardner (1987) state that consumers with positive mood decide more quickly, perform less evaluation of product features, consider less information, and demand less additional information. This may be caused by the fact that individuals who have positive pre-purchase mood remember more information than individuals who have negative pre-purchase mood (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2004, p. 553). The information remembered might reduce the time spent for buying and be helpful in deciding to buy (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2004, p. 553). According to Youn and Faber (2000), both positive and negative mood may be possible triggers of impulse buying.

Therefore, mood may affect consumer reaction and behaviour toward marketing activities, although mood is under the control of firms in only a limited way (Faber and Christenson, 1996; Meng and Sirakaya Turk, 2010; Schiffman and Kanuk, 2004; Swinyard, 1993). Based on these points, our second hypothesis is as follows:

H2. Pre-purchase mood positively affects impulse buying.

2.2. Impulse buying and post-purchase stage

Gardner and Rook (1988) state that the relationship between pre-purchase mood and post-purchase mood should be investigated. It is claimed therefore that it is possible to determine whether impulse buying causes a change in mood (Gardner and Rook, 1988).

Consumers may buy on impulse to maintain (Swinyard, 1993), improve, or change mood (Faber and Christenson, 1996; Rook, 1987). Individuals with positive mood wish to maintain this mood (Faber and Christenson, 1996; Swinyard, 1993). Therefore, positive mood at the point of purchase directs consumers toward any behaviour whose results are positive and draws them away from negative behaviour (Gardner, 1985). Consumer desire to maintain positive mood is reflected in their behaviour (Faber and Christenson, 1996).

This perspective may be related to the large body of research that focuses on the hedonic aspect of buying (Piron, 1993; Rook and Fisher, 1995). Consumers may buy on impulse to satisfy their needs; this is not in line with the economic benefit theory (Hausman, 2000). Consumers may buy to satisfy their entertainment and fantasy needs as well as their social or emotional needs (Hausman, 2000). In other words, impulse buying may become a source of entertainment, content, enthusiasm, and happiness for the consumer (Weinberg and Gottwald, 1982). For this reason, after impulse buying, consumers may feel better and energetic (Gardner and Rook, 1988; Rook, 1987). This is caused by the fact that impulse buying transforms consumers' negative mood into positive mood (Gardner and Rook, 1988; Rook, 1987). Gardner and Rook (1988) state that most of participants' post-purchase mood is more positive after impulse buying. Hence, consumers feel better after impulse buying.

The relationship between pre-purchase mood and post-purchase mood can be explained via the concepts of mood maintenance and mood management (Kim and Mattila, 2010). Mood maintenance means that individuals having positive mood avoid factors that threaten their mood, so as to maintain their present mood (Kim and Mattila, 2010). Mood management, on the other hand, means that individuals having negative mood tend to participate in activities that make them feel better. In other words,

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