

A Study on the Influence of Merchandise Attractiveness and Service Factors on Impulse Buying Behaviour of Consumers in Thiruvananthapuram

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ABSTRACT

This study intends to determine how Merchandise Attractiveness and Service factors affect people in Thiruvananthapuram who are between the ages of 18 and 40 who make impulsive purchases both online and offline. Through Convenient sampling, information was gathered from 250 respondents. Data were subsequently analysed using linear regression, and it was discovered that Merchandise Attractiveness and the Service factors have a strong impact on impulse buying in Thiruvananthapuram.

Key words –Merchandise Attractiveness, Service factors, Thiruvananthapuram

INTRODUCTION

In the field of consumer behaviour, impulse buying is an unavoidable type of purchasing. Unplanned purchases made by customers as a result of a strong instinct or desire for a certain goods are known as impulse purchases. This study is concerned with Merchandise Attractiveness and reference groups and how they affect impulsive purchases. Merchandise Attractiveness refers to the use of credit cards, the ability to compare prices, the ability to pay in instalments, and exclusive deals that merchants provide to credit card customers. Having company, friends, and family members while shopping is referred to as being in a reference group.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Scott A. Jeffrey & Rebecca Hodge (2007) Using actual purchasing behavior by visitors to a High School Reunion web store, this study examines the factors that lead to an increased willingness by online consumers to purchase impulse items. Consistent with mental accounting and the psychophysics of prices, it was found that people's purchase of the impulse item increases with the total amount spent on other items. It was also found that linking a US \$1 donation to the impulse item, thereby providing a reason to purchase, increases the frequency of the impulse purchase.

Abdullah J. Sultan, Jeff Joireman & David E. Sprott (2011) In this research, the effects of self-control exercises on impulse buying urges are examined. Drawing on the strength model of self-control (Baumeister and Heatherton 1996, Psychological Inquiry 7:1–15), the present paper aims to shed light on impulsive buying by exploring the impact of enhancement of self-control as a result of repeated physical and cognitive self-control exercises over time. The findings showed that these self-control exercises reduced impulse buying urges. Directions for future research are discussed.

Tibert Verhagen & Willemijn van Dolen (2011) provided insight into the relationships between online store beliefs and consumer online impulse buying behavior. Drawing upon cognitive emotion theory, we developed a model and showed how beliefs about functional convenience (online store merchandise attractiveness and ease of use) and about representational delight (enjoyment and website communication style) related to online impulse buying. The model was tested using survey data from 532 customers of a Dutch online store and results showed significant effects of merchandise attractiveness, enjoyment, and online

Geetha Mohan, Bharadhwaj Sivakumaran & Piyush Sharma (2013) aimed to explore the process by which four store environment (music, light, employee, and layout) and two individual characteristics (shopping enjoyment tendency (SET) and impulse buying tendency (IBT)) influence impulse buying behavior through positive and negative affect, and urge to buy impulsively. The data were obtained using a structured questionnaire from 733 respondents in a mall survey conducted in Chennai, South India. In the structural model tested with AMOS, the authors found that store environment drove impulse buying (IB) through positive affect and urge. Results also showed that the personality variables (SET and IBT) influenced IB through positive affect and urge. This paper did not find support for the relationship between negative affect and urge.

Li Miao & Anna S. Mattila (2013) examined the relationship between individuals' impulse buying behavior and their pre-purchase and post-purchase affective states in the context of restaurant food consumption. The current research experimentally induced consumers' pre-purchase mood followed by a mood-freeze procedure. The findings provide strong evidence that primary food motives (health vs. indulgence) and situational motives (affect regulation) jointly affect impulse buying behavior in food consumption. Results also suggest that pre-purchase mood and affect regulation motives influence post-purchase mood as a result of impulse buying.

Clinton Amos, Gary R. Holmes & William C. Keneson (2014) provided a meta-analysis of the impulse buying literature and examines common antecedents for impulse buying behavior. An exploration of the impulse buying literature results in the establishment of three overarching constructs used as independent variables: dispositional, situational, and sociodemographic variables. The Kruskal–Wallis test was used to assess which variables are shown to have the strongest effect on impulse buying and suggest that the dispositional/situational interaction variables have the strongest relationship with impulse buying followed by dispositional, situational, and sociodemographic main effects, respectively. Specific dispositional, situational, and sociodemographic constructs are explored further along with moderating effects. Implications of the findings are discussed.

Leyla Ozer & Beyza Gultekin (2015) investigated 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.

Objectives of the study

This study aims to find out the influence of Merchandise Attractiveness and Service factors over impulse buying in both online and offline purchases of the people of Thiruvananthapuram city in the age group of 18 to 40.

Hypotheses

Ho 1: There is no significant association between Merchandise Attractiveness and impulse buying in both online and offline purchases in the shoppers of Thiruvananthapuram.

Ho 2: There is no significant association between Service factors and impulse buying in both online and offline purchases in the shoppers of Thiruvananthapuram.

Research Design

Initially Pilot study was conducted with the sample of 25 respondents. Then Reliability test was conducted and the Exploratory factor analysis was also done. Then the primary data were collected from 250 respondents from the age group of 18 to 40 among the shoppers in Thiruvananthapuram through convenient sampling method. Data were further analysed using linear regression.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Reliability Analysis

Table 1

Factors	No. of items	Cronbach's alpha (α)
Merchandise Attractiveness	5	0.937
Reference group	5	0.928

Cronbach's alpha values such as 0.934 and 0.928 for Merchandise Attractiveness and Service factors respectively, reveals that there were strong internal consistency exists among the data of each factor.

Exploratory Factor Analysis

Table 2 Factors influencing consumer shopping- Merchandise Attractiveness

Merchandise Attractiveness	Factor Loading Value	Total Variance Explained
Merchandises were tidily arranged which influenced my behavior of buying	.921	9.273
Enough product information leaflets or information throughout the website /store urge to buy	.916	
Merchandises were clearly located which urged to buy the product I want	.881	
Store /website layout made it easy to get the merchandise, or easy to navigate that influenced my behavior	.880	
Store / Website lighting or color influenced my behaviour of buying	.850	

This analysis has grouped 5 items for the factor named as ‘Merchandise Attractiveness’. Factor loading value of this factor is ranged from 0.850 to 0.921; it indicates that all these 5 items are highly correlated with this factor along with 9.273 percent of variation.

Table 3- Factors influencing consumer shopping- Service Factors

Service factors	Factor Loading Value	Total Variance Explained
The easy and quick delivery methods would urge to buy	.921	7.197
If a shopper requires me to create an account in order to complete the checkout process, I usually leave the site	.895	
Good after sales service would urge to buy more unplanned items	.864	
Free Shipping increases the likeliness of buying an unplanned item	.850	
If the online or offline checkout process is too long, I will abandon my purchase	.834	

This analysis extracted 5 items for the factor named as ‘Service factors. Factor loading value of this factor is ranged from 0.834 to 0.921; it indicates that all these 5 items are highly correlated with this factor along with 7.197 percent of variation.

Regression Analysis

Hypothesis 1

Ho 1: There is no significant association between Merchandise Attractiveness and impulse buying in both online and offline purchases in the shoppers of Thiruvananthapuram.

Table 4: Association between Merchandise Attractiveness and impulse buying in online and offline purchases in the shoppers of Thiruvananthapuram

Mode		Unstandardized Coefficients		Adjusted R-square	F-change	t-value	p-value
		Beta	S.E				
Online	(Constant)	3.570	0.143	0.006	3.420	24.951	0.000
	Merchandise attractiveness	0.063	0.034			1.849	0.065
Offline	(Constant)	3.312	0.117	-0.002	0.141	28.259	0.000
	Merchandise attractiveness	0.011	0.029			0.375	0.708

Dependent Variable: Impulse buying

Table 4 shows association between merchandise attractiveness and impulse buying. In this analysis, impulse buying is considered as dependent variable and merchandise attractiveness is considered as independent variable. The significant values of merchandise attractiveness in online ($p=0.065>0.05$) and offline ($p=0.708>0.05$) specify that there is no association between merchandise attractiveness and impulse buying in online and offline shopping.

So, the hypothesis (Ho1) “There is no significant association between Merchandise Attractiveness and impulse buying in both online and offline purchases in the shoppers of Thiruvananthapuram” is Accepted.

Hypothesis 2

Ho 2: There is no significant association between Service factors and impulse buying in both online and offline purchases in the shoppers of Thiruvananthapuram.

Table 5: Association between Service factors and impulse buying in online and offline purchases in the shoppers of Thiruvananthapuram

Mode		Unstandardized Coefficients		Adjusted R-square	F-change	t-value	p-value
		Beta	S.E.				
Online	(Constant)	3.447	0.147	0.015	7.076	23.462	0.000
	Service factors	0.099	0.037			2.660	0.008**
Offline	(Constant)	3.359	0.127	-0.003	0.001	26.365	0.000
	Service factors	-0.001	0.033			-0.028	0.977

Dependent Variable: Impulse buying, **p<0.01

Table 5 presents association between service factors and impulse buying using linear regression analysis. In this analysis, impulse buying is considered as dependent variable and service factor is considered as independent variable. In the online shopping mode, the value of impulse buying will change only 2 percent ($R^2=0.015$) due to the service factors. The significant value ($p<0.01$) reveals that impulse buying is depending upon service factors in the online shopping. Also, for every unit increase in service factors, 0.099 unit would increase in impulse buying in online shopping mode. However, there is no association between service factors and impulse buying in the offline shopping mode ($p=0.977>0.55$). So the Hypothesis Ho2 ‘There is no significant association between service factors and impulse buying behavior’ is rejected in online shopping, and accepted in offline shopping.

CONCLUSION

This study reveals that Merchandise Attractiveness doesn’t influence impulse buying behaviour. The Service factors are influencing the impulse buying significantly in online, but not in offline purchases in Thiruvananthapuram.

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