



WOMEN AND CONSUMERISM (IMPULSIVE BUYING)

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ABSTRACT

Consumerism is the belief that personal wellbeing and happiness depends to a very large extent on the level of personal consumption, mainly on the purchase of material goods. The idea does not simply mean that wellbeing depends upon a standard of living above some threshold, but that at the center of happiness is consumption and material possessions. Female consumers devote a great deal of time to the very thought of shopping. It sounds their favorite necessity and hobby. That's why its affects can be immense in terms of affecting demand and market. This paper studies female consumerism particularly impulsive buying. Factors' affecting buying behavior of women has been studied. Impulsive buying in females is a crucial aspect of female consumerism. Females here are categorized into working and house wives.

Objectives

- To know female consumerism.
- Factors affecting female buyer.
- To compare working women and house wives in impulsive buying.
- Impulsive buying : reasons

KEYWORDS

female shoppers, impulsive buying, female consumerism, consumerism.

1. INTRODUCTION

Consumer behavior is how consumer behaves in a particular situation. Consumer behavior is the study of when, why, how, and where people do or do not buy a product. It attempts to understand the buyer decision making process and study characteristics of individual consumers as well as groups in an attempt to understand people's wants and needs. Consumer behavior research is the scientific study of the processes consumers use to select, secure, use and dispose of products and services that satisfy their needs. Female consumers constitute a larger chunk of society. They are not shoppers of comforts and luxuries but necessities in particular. Knowledge of female consumer behavior directly affects marketing strategy (Anderson et al, 2005). Female consumers play a pivotal role in today's society. It is rightly said that "Men buy, women shop". Demand is largely got affected by gender differences. Female are keen of shopping. They enjoy doing shopping. Impulse buying in females is also an important determinant of demand segment. Usually female account for unplanned buying.

2.1 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Immense literature is there to review female consumerism. Researchers found factors influencing buying behavior of females. To help explain why women place such importance on appearance-enhancing products, previous research has examined how women's shopping is influenced by a variety of factors. For example, early research found that younger women and women from higher socio-economic classes spend more time shopping for fashion than older women or women of lower socio-economic classes (Rich and Jain 1968).

Women also shop more on make-up and clothes regardless of income or social status (Schaninger 1981). Lunt and Livingstone (1992) and later Miller (1998) came out with a case that the actual act of shopping seemed to be much more part of the woman's domain, while the man's role was to take care of monetary issues. Others have found that women tend to use clothing to enhance their mood and social self-esteem (Kwon and Shim 1999).

An analysis showed that going through hours of beautifying so that companies can make billions out of 'women's carefully cultivated disgust with their own bodies' (Greer, 1999). Further the media feed on women's insecurities selling them

things and surrounding them with messages like "Kelly Osborne "Being fat is worse than being a drug addict". He researched that gender has specific effect on impulse buying such as women tend to be more impulsive than men. Good mood of buyer lead to reward themselves more generously and tend to be more impulsive (Giraud, 2001). The thought of materialism is an indicator that individuals who use product acquisition as a self-completion strategy tend to be more impulsive (Dittmar, 2001).

Goldsmith et al studied the real self-image of female fashion leaders and found that leaders have a unique self-image compared to later buyers. The fashion leaders feel themselves as more comfortable, pleasant, contemporary, formal, colorful, and vain than later adopters. He also examined the personal characteristics of frequent clothing buyers and developed the four psychological constructs a) innovativeness, b) knowledge, c) involvement, d) and opinion leadership and found that they are were also associated with heavy use of clothing purchases spend considerably more time searching for fashion-related items and cosmetics) Goldsmith et al (1999, 2002)

It was found that females spend a significantly greater amount of income on clothes, jewelry, and other fashion accessories (Chiger 2001; Kim and Kim 2004; Zollo 1995). Young female consumers have been influenced by several environmental factors that separate them from older shoppers. Young females have been conditioned into consuming earlier than previous generations and have been socialized into shopping as a form of leisure. They have been developed in an environment that provides more reasons and opportunities to shop as well as additional consumption opportunities such as television, the internet, and traditional catalog based shopping. Furthermore, young females are more suitable to have become accustomed to media that depict affluent and opulent lifestyles (Bakewell & Mitchell, 2003). Culture has an influence on impulse buying both at the regional and the individual levels (Mai et al., 2003).

Mostly female more likely to go for shopping to pass time, browse around, or just as an escape (Mitchell and Walsh 2004; Wheeler and Berge 2007). Accordingly, women's fashion purchases can often include impulse buys, which means women are more likely to make such purchases when they

lack the cognitive resources to exercise self-control (Faber and Vohs 2004; Vohs and Faber 2007). A work by Stoel, Wickliffe, & Lee found that the mall environment does affect the buying behavior of the female respondents. The mall atmospherics positively influence hedonic shopping value and approach behavior among all female shopper fashion clusters. Satisfaction with mall attributes also increased hedonic and utilitarian shopping value derived from visiting the mall (Stoel, Wickliffe, & Lee (2004). Shopping enjoyment is another variable, whereby individuals consider shopping as a form of recreation, do not stick to a buying list, and therefore, tend to make many impulsive purchases (Sharma and Sivakumaran, 2004).

Female shoppers depict a change in their buying behavior and value when the mall environment is different. Girls with a high degree of self-confidence still expressed a lot of concern in dealing with salespeople and engaging in impulsive shopping behavior (Mallalieu & Palan, 2006).

Swarna Bakshi found that Marketers need to figure out gender based tendencies in order to better satisfy the customers. He concluded where men are more externally focused women tend to be internally focused people who tend to talk in order to connect with others unlike men who talk to others more often than not in order to inform. Women are more subjective and intuitive men tend to be more analytical and logical who make their opinion based on other peoples purchase rather than trying it themselves. Men tend to value quality and efficiency the most while women value emotional connect and relations. Further, where men tend to make purchases based on the immediate needs women look at purchase as a long term decision. (Swarna Bakshi).

PLMA survey surveyed that in the wake of personal and professional advances across the board, women are able to do as much as they ever did. All things considered, and judging by the results of the PLMA survey, they are in fact doing more. As for today's young women, they may be just as likely to be both traditional homemakers as well as catch the commuter train to the city and work late at the office. Whatever their daily guise, they still mind the home much as June Cleaver did, finding time, somehow, to shop, cook, clean and launder. (PLMA 2009)

An analysis has concluded that T.V. advertising have great impact on buying behavior of women customers. It has been also found that Maximum no. of women consumers are attracted towards the marketing strategy through advertising and Maximum no. of consumers from Chandrapur city spends monthly more than 2000 rupees on purchasing FMCG products. (Geeta Sonkusare 2013)

2.2 FACTORS INFLUENCING CONSUMER BEHAVIOR AND DEMAND PATTERNS OF FEMALES OR IMPULSIVE BUYING

In recent years, with the advancement of women's economic status and self-conscience, impulsive buying has increased. Therefore, it is important to know the factors which determine female consumers' purchases. It is vital to investigate factors affecting buying behavior of females. The purpose of this study is to investigate the factors affecting impulsive buying. Impulsive buying is tendency to buy spontaneously, unreflectively and immediately. Females vary tremendously in age, income, education, tastes, and other factors. The behavior of consumer while engaging in a purchase decision is influenced by these characteristics. Consumer characteristics include four major factors and these factors are majorly responsible for the different types of behaviors depicted by the consumers. Though it does not mean that people of same, age or gender or social background are similar, because there is a lot of influence of the psychological factors that is different from person to person. Following factors can influence the Buying decision of the female buyer. Impulse buying is influenced by a variety of economic, personal, temporal, spatial and even cultural factors.

- These vary not only between different shoppers considering purchasing the same item, but also for the same shopper buying the same item in different situations (Stern, 1962), and so it is frequently assumed that personal and situational factors are significant.
- In accordance with Chen (2001), this article describes the factors which influence impulse buying, such as external stimuli (buying frequency, store displays, promotions and advertising, atmosphere in the store and retailers), internal perceptions (lifestyle, personality, emotion, money and time pressure), buying behavior (price, the time of purchasing, payment) and demographic variables (age, gender, income, occupation, marital status, education, household income and social status). It is important for marketers to be aware of these four factors so that they can make a complete and functional marketing plan.
- Cultural: Culture is the crucial and fundamental determinant of a person's wants and behaviors acquired through socialization processes with family and other key institutions.
- Social: Consumer Behavior is also influenced by social factors like reference groups, family, social role and status. Personal: A buyer's decisions are majorly influenced by personal characteristics like gender, age, stage in lifecycle, occupation, income, and lifestyle.
- Psychological: Psychological factors like motivation, perception, beliefs & attitudes of consumers also have a deep impact on the buyer decision.

2.3 Methodology and data analysis

Questionnaire method is used to collect primary source of information. 50 female respondents have been asked to fill the questionnaire. They have been divided into two categories working women and house wives consisting of 25 each. Their impulsiveness is decided on the basis of **positive responses** for ten indicators of impulsive buying that is discount, schemes, promotional activities, offers, display of product, salesman behavior, product popularity, reference group comments, income status and requirements of product during festival. Some general information regarding customers is asked in questionnaire like Name, age, type etc. The next part of the questionnaire is designed on Likert Scale (Strongly Agree = 5, Agree = 4, Neutral = 3, Disagree = 2 and Strongly Disagree = 1) where female consumers are asked to put tick mark on ten statements. These ten questions are selected on the basis of variables that are **found in previous researches of impulse purchasing**. At the end consumers are asked to put the products name which they have bought mostly as impulse or unplanned purchase. In case of working women 168 has come out with agree and strongly agree responses whereas house wives have 93 such responses. As far as strongly disagree and disagree is concerned It is 28 and 122 respectively for working women and house wives. Their impulsiveness for buying is decided on the basis of these statements. Chi-square is calculated manually.

Table 1 Profile of Respondents

Occupation	Impulse Buyer	Not Impulse Buyer	Total
Working women	16(64%)	09(36%)	25(100%)
House wife	08(32%)	17(68%)	25(100%)
Age group			
18-25	07(70%)	03(30%)	10(100%)
26-35	13(76.4%)	04(23.6%)	17(100%)
36-45	09(75%)	03(25%)	12(100%)
46 and above	04(36.36%)	07(63.64%)	11(100%)
Shopping Hours			
Long	12(80%)	03(20%)	15(100%)
Medium	11(73.4%)	04(26.6%)	15(100%)
Short	11(55%)	09(45%)	20(100%)

Source: Questionnaires

As far as data analysis is concerned overall working women are more impulse buyer than house wives. This ratio is 64% in case of working women and 32% for house wives indicating the summary of study. As far as age is concerned female between the age group of 26-35 is more impulse regardless of their working and house wife status. Impulsiveness on the basis of time shows that long hour contributes towards this attribute of female. But time feels less important factor for this.

Ho: There is significant indifference of all the factors affecting impulse buying decision

H1: There is significant difference of all the factors affecting impulse buying decision

Table 2 : Chi-square Test Analysis

	Agree	Disagree	Marginal Row Totals
Working Women	168 (124.47) [15.23]	28 (71.53) [26.49]	196
House Wives	93 (136.53) [13.88]	122 (78.47) [24.15]	215
Marginal Column Totals	261	150	411 (Grand Total)

The Chi-square statistic is 79.7505. The P value is 0. This result is significant at $p < 0.01$

The value of Chi-square test (79.7505 with significance level 0.01) signifies the rejection of null hypothesis. It means there is a significant difference between the factors affecting impulse buying decisions.

3. Summary and Conclusion

This paper comes out with the summary that working women are more impulse than house wives. Age factor is also important for the same. As far as spending hours are concerned impulsiveness is less affected by how much time female used to spend in market. Only for those who spent short span of time is less impulse. Even chi-square analyzed that the factors that affect impulsive buying are significantly different from each other. Impulsiveness in working women and house wives also got impacted by so many other things. Working women has an edge over house wives with regular income, time and availability of online shopping etc. whereas house wives are dependent for money. Working women usually buy clothes, shoes and cosmetics whereas house wives mostly home accessories and kids items.

Limitations

This study has been conducted on 50 females only. Sample size is relatively small. And it also analysis working women in a particular working place. And also factors like time and online shopping are not taken into account.

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Appendix Questionnaire

This questionnaire is for a research paper designed to assess Female consumer impulse buying behavior between working and house wives. This information will be kept confidential and the responses will be aggregated for analysis.

Name:

1.Age:

1. (18 - 25) 2. (26 - 35) 3. (36 - 45) 4. (45 - Above)
2. Type 5. Display of product in store attracts your attention.
6. Behavior of sales pe
1. Working women 2. House wives
3. Your Spending Shopping Hours mostly?
1. Long 2. Medium 3. Short
In the following scale, SA defines Strongly Agree, A defines Agree, N defines Neutral, D defines Disagree and SD defines Strongly Disagree. Please put one mark for each statement.
SA A N D SD
1. Discount price on product you buy.
2. Various schemes (like buy 1 get 1 free)
3. Various promotional activities
4. Any offer organized by superstores
erson.
7. Popularity of products increases recall value and help in unplanned buying.
8. Comments of reference group
9. Your income status.
10. Requirements of product in festival seasons prompt you to buy.
Write down the products name which you bought mostly as unplanned purchase

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