

Research Article

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The influence of store environment and shopping enjoyment tendency on impulse buying behavior: Mediating role of urge

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Abstract

The study had been planned to investigate the effect of four components of retail store environment (light, employees, layout and music) and shopping enjoyment tendency on impulse buying behavior of the people in the area of Faisalabad during the year 2016. The data were recorded using convenient sampling technique from 214 respondents. The results of the study showed that store environment drove impulse buying through urge. However individual variable shopping enjoyment tendency influenced on impulse buying through urge. Moreover, this research had some limitation as list of antecedents of impulse buying, and to the outcomes of store environment. At the end it is concluded that, retail managers should invest in improving the store environment to increase the level of impulse buying in their stores. Specifically, they need to focus on enhancing friendliness of store employees, playing appropriate music, designing proper layouts and having well-lit stores to encourage impulse buying.

Introduction

Mega retail stores are becoming new trend of shopping in Pakistan. Today's intense competition of retail environment, store managers grab consumer's attraction by facilitating ever most diversified range of products and services(8). Similarly, retailers are facing an increasingly competitive marketplace and realizing that it is challenging to differentiate their store on the basis of price, location, retail environment and promotions. The trend of impulse buying is now getting popular around the global environment due to the emergence of new inventions for purchasing products e.g. twenty four hours retailing, electronic, mobile commerce, credit or debit cards, free home delivery, shopping networks and online retail stores. The results of U.S. statistics revealed

that impulse buying behavior for a maximum of 62% of different retail stores and 80% of all other purchases of various products (28). The researchers revealed that unplanned purchases can be considered as impulse buying. They investigated that impulse buying purchases were between 27% and 62% of the total sale of the departmental store (27, 28, 31). Furthermore a Canadian grocery chain recorded that its profitability would increase by more than 40% if each customer purchased an additional item on impulse (18). The advertisement through social media (face book, YouTube, twitter and bloggers) create urge to purchase unplanned products (24).The research worked on situational variables affect impulsive purchase behavior and revealed the outcome

that availability of cash in hand, credit card use and pleasant behavior of store employees positively associated with “urge to buy impulsively” (5). The researcher had examined that the background music in the store can boost up the flow of shopper and ultimately increase sales of retail store (21). Saad and Metawie (2015) stated that, situational and personality variables that affected consumer behavior. Pham (2015) stated in their research that shopping enjoyment tendency can be called as the pleasure that a customer obtains in the shopping process and a customer who enjoyed shopping during the shopping trip can be referred as recreational shoppers. This research investigated the effect of four components of retail store environment which are light, employees, layout and music along with one individual characteristic factor that is shopping enjoyment tendency on impulse buying behavior. The mediator variable i.e. urge to buy impulsively mediates between store environment and impulse buying behavior. Moreover, urge also mediates between two independent variables shopping enjoyment tendency and impulse buying behavior. The researcher also believes that comprehensive understanding of impulse buying may help retail store managers to find out factors that influence shoppers that create urges for impulse buying. In a retail store environment cum atmospheric factors such as music, fragrance and lighting; design factors include product assortment and layout of store; and social factors include the availability of shoppers in the retail stores and lastly the salesperson’s effectiveness (20). According to Mihi (2010) internal factors of the shopping area comprised of interior designing with colors, flashing lighting, decent fragrance and adequate music. Similarly, other factors are demonstration of merchandising, proper place for sale promotional materials. Furthermore, inside temperature of retail store and existence of shoppers should be looked after for unplanned buying (9). Nevertheless, a segment of social buyers may also considered for impulse shopping as they stay long and there are more chances of impulse (17, 33, 29). Sometime shopper’s negative mood can reduce the desire of purchase (30, 13). Some promotional strategies in store stimuli can generate more shopping (12). When there is plenty of time, the probability of unplanned purchasing was increased (22, 2). If no specific purchasing task exists, it was further higher (7). Some other factors of motivation of unplanned buying occur due to price discounts offer (23, 29). Ghani and Kamal (2010) investigated that well placed display of products and extra off-rack presentation added to effective marketing and lead to impulse purchase of products in store. Beatty and Ferrell (1998) described the impulse buying, “an immediate

strong urge or desire to obtain without pre-purchase purposes either to get some specific merchandise category or to accomplish acquiring task”. When buyer interacts with the item or advertising package and it creates an urge to buy are considered as situational factors which can also appear as externally provoked. At this time the buyer purchases that product under the need or urge which arises within them (32). Many factors influenced on impulsive trend of purchasing products for instance size of a retail store, image of retail store, branded products availability, variety seeking and different promotional along with discount offer in the retail store (1). Effect of environmental elements of store arises from brand association, luminosity and ambient odor (3). These elements derived or modified from the explanation as observation which influenced obvious and step by step existing attitude of buyer specifically from the time and place perspective because it had no effect of personal and available alternative aspects (27). During the shopping trip in which a shopper gains pleasure can be described as shopping enjoyment tendency (7). In the shopping tour the shoppers procure pleasure and enjoyment (4). According to early marketing literature, impulse buying means unexpected purchasing (16). So it gives many things to be changed and condemned (25, 26). Shoppers were more likely to purchase impulsively when they see the colorful surroundings and calm environment (14). Therefore the study had been planned to evaluate the effect of store environment i.e. light, employees, layout, music and shopping enjoyment tendency on impulse buying behavior of the people in the area of Faisalabad.

Materials and Methods

A research design included the data which was collected and the questionnaires filled from the consumers on the basis of research instrument adapted and investigated in Faisalabad during the year 2016. The research instrument was divided into two parts. In first part, demographic information was included and second part comprised study variables with their items. Moreover, demographic portion had six questions such as age, gender, education, occupation, marital status and family income. The total number of items was 27 in the second part. Each item was measured on the basis of “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree”. The data were collected from people visiting mega stores in different locations of Faisalabad region. The data were obtained using convenient sampling technique from 214 customers. Mall intercept survey was used to collect data from different retail stores in the city of Faisalabad (20). This can be considered as convenience sample from point of this

research because the selection of respondents is not made on any personal interest. The reason behind the collection of data from these stores is because they are functioning in most populated areas and these stores are most famous in Faisalabad. Researcher was selected ten mega stores located in most populated and amongst the posh areas from the whole population of Faisalabad. Through interviews with retail store managers (Table1) population was assumed. Moreover, population was estimated on the basis of normal days and peak days. Most of the customers

visit the retail store on peak days such as Friday, Saturday and Sunday. So, peak days were 12 and normal 18 days in a month (total 30 days a month). Both were multiplied separately with their daily visit data and total population for this research is shown in table 3.1. Total estimated shoppers who visited the retail stores for the purpose of shopping were estimated to be three hundred thousand. The target population was believed to be urban adult shoppers (11, 20).

Table 1 showing population of shoppers

Population Size of Different Stores of Faisalabad on Monthly Basis				
Sr.#	Store Name	Shoppers In Normal Days*	Shoppers In Peak Days**	Monthly Shoppers
1	E-Mart	700-800	1500+	32,400
2	SB Store	800-900	1800+	37,800
3	Bambino Store	350-450	1000+	20,100
4	City Mega Mart	600-700	1000+	24,600
5	Saleemi Home Plus	650-750	900+	24,300
6	Family Mart (D-Ground)	700-800	1900+	37,200
7	Family Mart (Millat Chowk)	500-600	1000+	22,800
8	Saeed Mart	300-400	800+	16,800
9	Metro Cash & Carry Faisalabad	1000-1200	2000+	45,600
10	Al-Fatah Faisalabad	700-800	2000+	38,400

* (Monday-Thursday, 18 days in a month)

** (Friday-Sunday, 12 days in a month)

SPSS 20.0 software version was used for data analysis. Different statistical methods such as Frequency Distribution, Correlation, Regression analysis and Cronbach alpha were used for analyzing the data in this research. The mediation analysis was conducted by Baron and Kenny, 1986.

Results and Discussion

The table 4.7 explained respondent's frequency towards the retail stores in Faisalabad. Most of the shoppers like to purchase from Al-Fetah 32.2% as this store is located in the city area and this store is providing vast variety of products under same place.

In second position among the top retail stores of Faisalabad, Metro cash and carry having 21.5% because this store facilitates the shoppers with vast variety of products at discounted rates. In the third higher percentage SB store having 10.7% and at fourth position in the frequency distribution table E-Mart was having 8.4%. Moreover, Family Mart (Millat Chowk) having 7.0%, City mega mart having 5.1% and Saleemi Home Plus was having 4.7%. Family Mart (D-Ground) and Bambino Stores were examined in this study both having 3.7% each. At the end was having the lowest in this study with 2.8% that is Saeed Mart retail store.

Table 2 showing monthly store visit frequency

Stores	Frequency	Percentage	Valid (%)	Cumulative (%)
E-Mart	18	8.4	8.4	8.4
SB Store	23	10.7	10.7	19.1
Bambino Stores	8	3.7	3.7	22.9
City Mega Mart	11	5.1	5.1	28.0
Saleemi Home Plus	10	4.7	4.7	32.7
Family Mart (D-Ground)	8	3.7	3.7	36.4
Family Mart (Millat Chowk)	15	7.0	7.0	43.4
Saeed Mart	6	2.8	2.8	46.3
Metro Cash & Carry Faisalabad	46	21.5	21.5	67.7
Al-Fateh Faisalabad	69	32.2	32.2	100.0
Total	214	100	100	

Pearson correlation method used to investigate relationship between the independent and dependent variables it showed the strength of relationship among

the variables (Table 3). All the relationships are presented in Pearson correlation table.

Table 3 Showing Pearson Correlation

	Shopping Enjoyment Tendency	Urge	Impulse Buying Behavior	Store Environment
Shopping Enjoyment Tendency	1			
Urge	.487**	1		
Impulse Buying Behavior	.386**	.443**	1	
Store Environment	.335**	.563**	.429**	1

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

In this table correlation coefficient between store environment and impulse buying behavior is $r=.429$. This relationship is highly significant and both are positively correlated at $p=.000$. Moreover, the relationship between shopping tendency and impulse buying showed significant result at $p=.000$ and positively correlated with value $r=.386$. The store environment and urge having positive correlation $r=.563$ and highly significant at $p=.000$. The maximum value of correlation coefficient in the table 3 indicated that the shopping environment showed highest relationship in increasing the urge of shoppers. Along with that shopping enjoyment showed positive correlation with the urge $r=.487$ and also significant at $p=.000$. The urge and impulse buying showed highly significant and positive correlation showed values of $r=.443$ and significant value $p=.000$.

Both independent variable directly linked with the mediating urge on dependent variable impulse buying (7, 20, 27, 14). Analyzing relationship among retail store environment on urge the findings indicated that positive relationship existed between them. These results are in accordance to Mohan et al., (2013) who reported that store environment had a direct effect on urge. The results indicated that there is significant relationship between urge and impulse buying. The outcomes of this study are also in accordance to Mohan et al., (2013) who reported that urge to purchase unplanned items from the store influenced by store environment factor. Moreover, five direct hypotheses were investigated and all established significant results as predicted. Then two hypotheses were proposed to examine the mediation of impulse buying. This research concluded significant partial mediation of urge between the relationship of

store environment and impulse buying. Moreover, this study also shown significant partial mediation of urge between the relationship of shopping enjoyment tendency and impulse buying. The outcome after empirical investigation showed that both the hypotheses were supported with partial mediation.

The findings revealed that store environment drove impulse buying through urge. Results also showed that individual variable shopping enjoyment tendency influenced impulse buying through urge. This research also reveals the impact of store environment (music, light, layout and employees) on impulse buying with mediator urge is more than the variable shopping enjoyment tendency because the dimensions of store environment created unexpected direct impact on shoppers' decision making. These four dimensions of store environment showed highest effect on variable urge which generated impulse buying (20). Moreover, this research has some limitation as list of antecedents of impulse buying, and to the outcomes of store environment.

Managerial Implications and Future Research

From a managerial viewpoint, retail managers should invest in improving the store environment to increase the level of impulse buying in their stores. Specifically, they need to focus on enhancing friendliness of store employees, playing appropriate music, designing proper layouts and having well-lit stores to encourage impulse buying. Sometimes shoppers believed that the products which they are purchasing were more than their hedonistic desire along with their physical desire, then customer satisfied with their impulse buying decision (27).

Along with that widening gap observed in this study which was between the urban and rural areas in Pakistan (27) . So, future study may be useful to analyze impulse buying behavior separately for urban area and separately for rural area to get better results. However, store environment is used as situational variable however future study may be used some experimental design to examined different environmental cues and analyze their effect on real impulse purchases and also examine the other situational variables such as type of shopping trip of a shopper and browsing in the store. Furthermore, in future research store environment may be determined by influence on other retail characteristics such as apparel products, personal products, and personal electronics (15). Future research may take same model

as used in this study and check applicability in different geographic area and different industry sector. Moreover, a research on in-store environment factors with respect to particular product categories would be helpful for retailers to build communication strategies accordingly. At the end, the future research might be examined the effect of demographics variables such as age, gender, education, marital status, occupation and income impact on other variables.

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