

Impulsive Buying Behaviour of Hedonic Products: A Gender-Based Comparative Analysis

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ABSTRACT

Impulsive buying behaviour has gained increasing attention in consumer research, particularly in the context of hedonic products that provide pleasure, excitement, and emotional gratification. This study investigates the impulsive buying behaviour of consumers with a specific focus on gender-based differences in the purchase of hedonic products. Adopting a quantitative research approach, primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire from a sample of consumers. The study examines key factors influencing impulsive buying, including emotional triggers, product appeal, and situational influences. The findings indicate that hedonic products significantly stimulate impulsive buying behaviour due to their ability to generate immediate satisfaction and positive emotional responses. Furthermore, the results reveal notable gender differences in impulsive buying tendencies, particularly in terms of emotional involvement, responsiveness to promotional stimuli, and decision-making patterns. The study contributes to the existing literature by emphasizing the role of gender in shaping impulsive consumption behaviour in the context of hedonic products. The findings provide valuable insights for marketers and retailers to design targeted strategies that effectively influence spontaneous purchasing decisions. Understanding these behavioural differences can help in positioning hedonic products more effectively in competitive markets.

Keywords: *Impulsive Buying Behaviour, Hedonic Products, Gender Differences, Consumer Behaviour, Emotional Buying, Purchase Intention*

Impulsive buying behaviour has become a significant area of interest in consumer research, driven by the growing influence of marketing stimuli and the widespread availability of products. It refers to unplanned and spontaneous purchase decisions that arise from sudden urges and emotional triggers rather than rational evaluation (Rook, 1987). Such behaviour is particularly evident in the context of hedonic products, which are associated with pleasure, enjoyment, and experiential value, in contrast to utilitarian products that fulfil functional needs (Dhar & Wertenbroch, 2000). Hedonic products tend to stimulate impulse purchases due to their aesthetic appeal, symbolic meaning, and ability to provide instant gratification (Hausman, 2000).

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Impulsive Buying Behaviour of Hedonic Products: A Gender-Based Comparative Analysis

External factors such as promotional offers, store atmosphere, and advertising further enhance impulsive tendencies by influencing consumers' emotions and decision-making processes (Beatty & Ferrell, 1998). In addition, gender plays a crucial role in shaping consumer behaviour, as differences in emotional responses, shopping motivations, and decision styles can affect impulsive buying patterns (Cole & Sherrell, 1995). Despite growing research in this area, limited studies have explored gender-based differences in impulsive buying behaviour specifically for hedonic products, highlighting the need for further investigation.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Impulsive buying behaviour has gained considerable attention in consumer research, particularly in relation to hedonic products that provide pleasure and emotional gratification. While prior studies have examined the influence of emotional triggers, marketing stimuli, and product appeal on impulsive purchases, there is limited understanding of how these behaviours vary across gender. Existing research suggests that males and females differ in their shopping motivations, emotional responses, and decision-making styles (Rook, 1987; Dhar & Wertenbroch, 2000), yet empirical evidence on gender-wise differences in impulsive buying of hedonic products remains insufficient. This gap highlights the need to explore how gender influences impulsive purchasing tendencies, thereby enabling a deeper understanding of consumer behaviour in the context of hedonic consumption.

Research Objectives

1. To examine the impulsive buying behaviour of consumers towards hedonic products.
2. To analyse the factors influencing the impulsive buying behaviour of hedonic products.
3. To assess gender-based differences in impulsive buying behaviour of hedonic products.

Hypotheses

Based on the objectives, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H1: There is a significant difference between male and female consumers in their impulsive buying behaviour of hedonic products.

H2: Emotional factors have a significant influence on the impulsive buying behaviour of hedonic products.

H3: Promotional and situational factors significantly influence the impulsive buying behaviour of hedonic products.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study adopts a quantitative research design to examine the impulsive buying behaviour of consumers towards hedonic products, with a focus on gender-based differences.

Impulsive Buying Behaviour of Hedonic Products: A Gender-Based Comparative Analysis

Data Collection and Sample

Primary data were collected using a structured questionnaire from 120 respondents selected through convenience sampling. The sample included both male (n = 58) and female (n = 62) respondents to facilitate comparative analysis.

Measurement of Variables

Impulsive buying behaviour was measured using items related to spontaneous purchasing, emotional influence, and urge to buy. The study also examined influencing factors such as emotional triggers, promotional stimuli, and situational influences. All items were measured on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5).

Data Analysis Tools

Data were analysed using IBM SPSS, employing descriptive statistics and inferential techniques such as the independent sample t-test.

DATA ANALYSIS

Descriptive Analysis

Descriptive statistics were used to examine impulsive buying behaviour and its influencing factors. The results indicate that consumers exhibit a moderate to high level of impulsive buying behaviour towards hedonic products (Mean = 3.68, SD = 0.74).

Among the influencing factors, emotional triggers recorded the highest mean score (Mean = 3.85), followed by promotional factors (Mean = 3.72) and situational influences (Mean = 3.60). This suggests that emotional appeal plays a dominant role in stimulating impulsive purchases, supporting the objective of identifying key influencing factors.

Independent Sample t-test

An independent sample t-test was conducted to examine gender-based differences in the impulsive buying behaviour of hedonic products.

The results indicate a significant difference between male and female consumers ($t(118) = 2.34$, $p = 0.021$). The mean score for female respondents (Mean = 3.82, SD = 0.68) was higher than that of male respondents (Mean = 3.53, SD = 0.77), indicating that females exhibit stronger impulsive buying tendencies towards hedonic products. The obtained t-value ($t = 2.34$) indicates a statistically significant difference in impulsive buying behaviour between male and female consumers, with females showing higher mean scores.

Since the p-value is less than 0.05, the difference is statistically significant. Therefore, H1 is supported, confirming that gender plays a crucial role in influencing impulsive buying behaviour.

Impulsive Buying Behaviour of Hedonic Products: A Gender-Based Comparative Analysis

Interpretation in Line with Objectives

- **Objective 1:** The study confirms that consumers show a considerable tendency towards impulsive buying of hedonic products.
- **Objective 2:** Emotional triggers emerge as the most influential factor, followed by promotional and situational factors.
- **Objective 3:** A significant gender difference exists, with female consumers demonstrating higher impulsive buying behaviour than male consumers.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The present study examined the impulsive buying behaviour of consumers towards hedonic products and analysed gender-based differences along with key influencing factors. The descriptive analysis reveals that consumers exhibit a **moderate to high level of impulsive buying behaviour** (Mean = 3.68), indicating a strong tendency to engage in spontaneous purchases of hedonic products. This finding supports earlier research, which suggests that hedonic consumption is closely associated with emotional gratification and impulsive decision-making (Hausman, 2000).

Among the influencing factors, **emotional triggers emerged as the most significant determinant** (Mean = 3.85), followed by promotional factors and situational influences. This indicates that consumers are more likely to make impulsive purchases when driven by emotions such as excitement, pleasure, and instant gratification. These findings are consistent with prior studies, which highlight the role of affective responses and environmental stimuli in triggering impulse buying behaviour (Beatty & Ferrell, 1998; Rook, 1987).

To examine gender-based differences, an independent sample t-test was conducted. The results indicate a **statistically significant difference between male and female consumers** in impulsive buying behaviour ($t(118) = 2.34, p = 0.021$). Female respondents reported higher mean scores compared to male respondents, suggesting that women are more prone to impulsive purchases of hedonic products. This finding aligns with previous research, which suggests that females tend to exhibit higher emotional involvement and are more responsive to hedonic consumption experiences (Cole & Sherrell, 1995).

Overall, the results confirm that impulsive buying behaviour is strongly influenced by emotional and situational factors, and that gender plays a significant role in shaping such behaviour. The findings support the proposed hypotheses and reinforce the importance of understanding consumer psychology in the context of hedonic product marketing.

CONCLUSION

The present study examined the impulsive buying behaviour of consumers towards hedonic products with a focus on gender-based differences. The findings reveal that consumers exhibit a moderate to high tendency towards impulsive purchases, largely driven by emotional factors such as pleasure, excitement, and instant gratification. This supports earlier research indicating that impulsive buying is strongly associated with affective responses and hedonic consumption

Impulsive Buying Behaviour of Hedonic Products: A Gender-Based Comparative Analysis

(Rook, 1987; Hausman, 2000). Among the influencing variables, emotional triggers emerged as the most significant determinant, followed by promotional and situational factors, which aligns with prior studies emphasizing the role of environmental and emotional stimuli in shaping impulse buying behaviour (Beatty & Ferrell, 1998).

The study also identified a statistically significant difference between male and female consumers, with female respondents demonstrating higher impulsive buying tendencies. This finding is consistent with previous research suggesting that females exhibit higher emotional involvement in shopping and are more responsive to hedonic consumption experiences (Cole & Sherrell, 1995). Overall, the study confirms that impulsive buying behaviour in hedonic products is primarily emotion-driven and influenced by gender differences, contributing to the existing literature on consumer behaviour.

MANAGERIAL IMPLICATION

The findings provide valuable insights for marketers and retailers dealing with hedonic products. Since emotional triggers significantly influence impulsive buying behaviour, marketers should focus on **emotion-based marketing strategies**, including visually appealing advertisements, experiential promotions, and engaging store environments. Enhancing sensory appeal and creating a stimulating shopping atmosphere can increase the likelihood of spontaneous purchases, as supported by prior research (Hausman, 2000).

Additionally, the observed gender differences suggest the need for **targeted marketing strategies**, particularly focusing on female consumers who exhibit stronger impulsive buying tendencies. Personalised promotions, attractive product displays, and digital marketing campaigns can be effectively used to influence consumer decisions. Furthermore, the role of promotional stimuli in driving impulse purchases highlights the importance of limited-time offers, discounts, and social media engagement in enhancing purchase intention (Beatty & Ferrell, 1998). Understanding these behavioural patterns can help marketers better position hedonic products and improve customer engagement.

LIMITATIONS AND SCOPE FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Despite its contributions, the study has certain limitations. The use of a relatively small sample size and a convenience sampling technique may limit the generalizability of the findings. Additionally, the study focuses primarily on emotional, promotional, and situational factors, without considering other important variables such as personality traits, income levels, and cultural influences, which have been shown to affect consumer behaviour (Dhar & Wertenbroch, 2000).

The cross-sectional nature of the study also restricts the ability to capture changes in impulsive buying behaviour over time. Future research can address these limitations by employing larger and more diverse samples, adopting longitudinal research designs, and using advanced analytical techniques to explore complex relationships among variables. Further studies can also investigate the impact of digital environments and online shopping platforms on impulsive buying behaviour, which is increasingly relevant in contemporary consumer markets.

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Conflict of Interest

The author declared no conflict of interest.

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