Section 5

Conclusion, Suggestions and Limitations
Chapter 8
Conclusion, Suggestions and Limitations

8.1 Introduction
It is intended through this chapter to draw some general conclusion that could serve as guidelines for researchers and professionals dealing situations of in-store impulse purchase behavior. This chapter also throws light on certain limitations of this research work and possible directions for future research in this discipline.

8.2 Conclusion and Recommendations:
8.2.1 Impulse purchase is a specific behavior exhibited by shoppers. A number of researchers in the past attempted to evaluate the impact of demographics on consumers purchase behavior. In first section of the present study, factor taken up was influence of gender on impulse purchase. Shopper’s impulse purchase behavior is found to be independent with respect to gender. Male shoppers score 3.31 on impulse purchase scale and female shoppers score little higher 3.25 on same scale. The small visible deference is negligible and statistically insignificant. The retail organizations must acknowledge the specific need of both genders in their product offerings but fine tuning of retails interiors and in-store factors may not bring measurable benefits to them. Gender specific in-store planning may not be warranted and retailers should follow generalized in-store planning.

8.2.2 Life stage and cycle are known to influence the purchase behavior. (Kotler, 2005; Shiffman & Kaunak, 1998). Earlier studies had shown shoppers purchase impulses are driven by personal and societal factors (Dittmar et al., 1995; 1996; Wicklund & Gollwitzer, 1982). The present study shows that shoppers of all age groups visit large scale organized shopping centers but the impulse purchase behavior differs among shoppers of different age groups. Retailers must creatively divide the market on the basis of age. It would be fruitful to design in-store attributes and target retail markets segmented on the basis of age profile of shopper’s. Shopper’s impulse purchase initially increases with increase in age. It seems teenagers with lack of disposable
income and tight pocket money exhibit more controlled and well deliberated purchases in comparison to those at higher age bracket. Social norms allow us to assume safely that people get settled over time. Those in age bracket of forty to fifty show maximum impulse purchase tendency. This may happen due to less settlement worries and psychological sense of urgency towards consumption, though not examined in this research. It is worth mentioning that people do not consistently show increase impulse purchase behavior with age. After age of 50 which is found to be peak of impulse purchase, it starts declining, subsequently making senior citizens unworthy segment to focus on for impulse purchase.

8.2.3. Shopping list is traditionally known to stymie the impulse purchase. This has been verified in current research, the mean score, of impulse purchase proportion, of those carrying shopping list is high in comparison to those not carrying a shopping list. A significant difference has been observed between impulse purchase behavior of those carrying shopping list and those not carrying it.

It has also been observed that shoppers in general show reluctance towards carrying shopping list and shoppers without shopping list are more prone to impulse purchase. This supports the finding that overall impulse purchase is quite high, about 77.76 percent of all purchases!

Since impulse purchase occurs subconsciously, on spur of movement, a significant portion of those shoppers carrying shopping list also fail to abstain from impulse purchase though they show lower impulse purchase behavior.

Therefore it can be concluded that a substantial portion of all consumer retail purchases are impulsive and retailers can not afford to overlook the contribution of revenue generated through impulse purchases.

8.2.4 Surroundings and shopping situations are found to be influential in shaping impulse purchase decisions. This finding is in line with previous research indications which describe Impulse purchasing is an outcome of emotional, personal, societal and situational influence on spontaneous purchase decision (Beaty & Ferrel, 1998; Rook, 1987; Rook & Gardner, 1993; Statt, 1997; Wood, 1998).
An exploratory enquiry backed by statistical analysis gave rise to ten important factors that are capable of influencing impulse purchase. Out of ten factors, nine factors affirmatively influence in-store purchase decisions to purchase products without any pre-purchase intentions. Hence these nine factors positively influence impulse purchase. One factor ‘Trailability’ had detrimental effect on impulse purchase. Stores with amicable trail facility just positively shape impulse purchase intentions but in practice offer scope of rationality while making purchase decision reducing chances of impulse purchase.

Proposed Theoretical model comprising of six significant in-store factors explains about 53% of shopper’s tendency to indulge in impulse purchase. Hence a substantial portion of shopper’s impulse purchasing tendency is being explained by in-store factors. From the proposed Applied model it is evident that there are four more factors that additionally influence impulse purchasing but shoppers are not aware of them.

Models explained in previous chapter indicate shopper’s are conscious of only those six factors which are components of Theoretical Model, remaining factors act covertly and influence subconscious mind of shoppers. These remaining four factors along with six factors of Theoretical model collectively appear in Applied model making it a comprehensive model. Thus Applied model being comprehensive has more relevance to managers in the retail industry.

It is found in this research that in-store factors significantly influence impulse purchase behavior of shoppers. Affect, known to have prominent role in shaping impulse purchase decisions, is shopper’s positive or negative feeling about some thing based on ambience (zajonc, 1980). In earlier research it has been found that feelings and emotions get quickly activated by stimuli in comparison to reasoned based action towards same stimuli (Pham et. al, 2001). According to Baron and Kenny (1986) a moderator variable may be a qualitative or quantitative variable that affects direction or strength of relation between dependent and independent or predictor variable. Since in-store factors are important component of shoppers ambience it may be concluded (but only with limited empirical support) that influence of affect on impulse purchase behavior is moderated by in-store factors (Figure 8.1). we accept the above hypothesis, the role
of in-store factors, for their ability to determine feelings and emotions, becomes more important in influencing impulse purchase behavior.

![Diagram](Image)

**Figure 8.1** In-store factors moderating influence of Affect on impulse purchase

Source: Moderator Model; Baron and Kenny (1986)

Factors that act overtly influence Impulse purchase behavior:

- *Discount and Festive offer*
- *Visual Merchandising*
- *Staff Attitude*
- *Store Design*
- *In store Promotion*
- *Retail Scape - (Retail service scape)*

Factors in addition to above mentioned factors that covertly influence Impulse purchase behavior:

- *Reference and Suggestions*
- *Availability of Complimentary Products*
- *Store convenience and Image*
- *Trailability*

8.2.5 Impulse purchase was found to be influenced by shopping duration but the nature of influence is not linear. Impulse purchase was found to be high during short
shopping trips (i.e. less than 15 minutes) and shopping durations of about one hour. People exhibit low impulse purchasing when shop for medium (i.e. 30 to 45 minutes) and very long shopping durations (i.e. more than 1 hour).

It was also found through testing hypothesis 3(c) that shopping duration gets influenced by in-store factors. Hence one could induct that shopping duration’s influence on impulse purchase behavior is partially mediated by in-store factors. The relationship is shown below figure 8.2 below

![Diagram showing the relationship between in-store factors, shopping duration, and impulse purchase behavior.]

Figure 8.2 In-store factors intermediating influence of shopping duration on impulse purchase
Source: Moderator Model; Baron and Kenny (1986)

8.2.6 Finally, analysis and findings from third hypothesis revels that shoppers who perceived the influence of in-store factors on impulse purchase ‘high’ also had proportion of impulse purchase ‘high’ in their bill. This allows to make another significant conclusion that shoppers are not avers of in-store factors and knowingly allow in-store factors to act on them.

8.3 Suggested Practicing Model

**Impulse Purchase under influence of In-store factors.**
Figure 8.3 Wheel of Impulse Purchase under influence of In-store factors.

8.4 Precaution and limitations:

1. About 53% of variance of impulse purchase behavior is explained by ten in-store factors identified in this research, yet about 47% is being attributed to some other reasons or factors not explored in this research. Hence role of in-store factors in influencing impulse purchase behavior is not absolute and role of other factors should be considered.

2. In order to measure the impulse purchase tendency of shoppers, a fourteen item five point Likert type scale was used where as one could always argue that a more exhaustive scale could help to improve the outcomes.
3. Thirty three variables were selected for factor analysis after going through the available literature on impulse purchase to generate in-store factors. It may possible to locate more variables for factor analysis leading to emergence of new factors.

4. The current research is limited in terms of population considered for conducting the study. Sample comprise of shoppers from shopping malls of Lucknow and NCR territory. Hence generalization of findings must be done with caution.

5. Shopper’s behavior is known to be influenced by culture and social norms. (Woods, 1998; Young & Faber, 2000; 2002). This research has not categorized respondents on this basis and influence of culture and social norms has been over looked while sampling due to cost and resource constraints. Again it is known that consumer culture changes from place to place and sample of this research consists of shoppers from north India. (Baudrillard, 1988; Bourdieu, 1984; Lury, 1996, Kotler & Keller, 2009). Therefore interpretation of findings must be done with caution and under awareness of this limitation of the study.

6. Not all cells had minimum 5 frequencies while applying chi-square test in hypothesis 2 and 3(b) and hence it poses limitation in interpretation of chi-square value and probable value.

7. Usually shoppers showed hurry to go back to their home or next activity after shopping and they were persuaded to participate in the survey.

8.5 Summary of recommendations and suggestions

1. Ten in-store factors identified through factor analysis, collectively explain about 53% variance in impulse purchase behavior of shopper’s, making them quite important for retailers from revenue perspective.

2. Retailers should not develop gender specific plans to influence impulse purchase behavior through in-store factors.

3. It is recommended to consider age aspect of shoppers while planning in-store factors with respect to impulse purchase behavior.
4. A very good and ample trail facility could decrease impulse purchase of shoppers because ‘trailability’ had negative regression coefficient with impulse purchase. Retailers must be cautious from impulse purchase point of view while offering ‘trailability’ in their stores.

5. Retailers could encourage for express/quick shopping by providing special facility as shoppers in hurry (shopping for less than or about 15 minutes) had high impulse purchase proportion in their bill.

6. Retailers should make effort to extend shopping duration of only those shoppers who had already spent about 45 minutes in the store; this is because impulse purchase is lowest during 30 to 45 minutes of shopping duration and then increases up to one hour.

7. Retailers should discourage shopping durations more than an hour from impulse purchase point of view as impulse purchase decreases after one hour of shopping duration.

8.6 Directions for future research

1. It is found that consumers in age bracket of forty to fifty shows very high impulse purchase tendencies. It in plausible to explore what situations are responsible for such behavior among elderly shoppers.

2. Mediating effect of in-store factors on affect needs to be analyzed in a detailed manner. Future researchers could include relationship between affect and in-store factors in their research objectives.

3. As already discussed in chapter 2, many attempts had been made to understand the antecedents of impulse behavior. Earlier research has helped us to understand it up to some extent, but impulse purchase behavior being such a subtle aspect of consumer decision making that all researchers taken together still leaves room for more research enquiries.

4. As described earlier as much as 47 percent of variance of impulse purchase behavior was not accounted by the ten in-store factors identified in this dissertation work, leaving immense scope for future researchers to focus on this
unexplained variance in impulse purchase behavior. This opens up directions for further research in this discipline.

5. Future researchers could take more exhaustive scales for measuring relevant attitudes of this study.

6. This research focuses primarily on in-store factors in explaining impulse purchase behavior of shopper’s. Future researchers could add new dimension along with in-store factors, such as influence of mass marketing or lifestyle etc.

7. A cross-cultural research on similar lines could help us to understand the differential impact of in-store factors on impulse purchase behavior among consumers from different cultures.

8. Current study has been categorized is diagnostic cum causal research design and causation is being investigated through regression analysis, where as many authors insist causal design is suitable only for experimental research((Gaur & Gaur, 2007; Cooper & Schendlar, 2004, Malhotra and Das, 2009).