

The Relationship between Impulsive Buying Behavior and Personality Traits among Indian Consumers

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to explore the relationship between personality traits and consumer's impulsive buying behavior. The total sample size was 61, comprising of males and females. Out of them (n=22) were males and (n=39) were females. The age range of the participants was 19 years -35 years. The sample of participants are from different regions of India. The instruments used to administer this study were "Ten Item Personality Inventory" developed by Gosling, Rentfrow, and Swann in 2003 and "Impulsive Buying Scale" was used in this study developed by Rook and Fisher (1995). This study was based on a quantitative, correlational research design and conducted during COVID-19. The study revealed that there exists significant relationship between personality traits and consumer's impulsive buying behavior of India.

Keywords: Personality traits, Impulsive Buying Behavior, Consumer, Consumer Behavior, COVID-19

A consumer is a person who identifies a need or desire, makes a purchase, and then disposes of the product during the three stages of the consumption process. The field of consumer behavior covers a lot of ground: It is the study of the processes involved when individuals or groups select, purchase, use, or dispose of products, services, ideas, or experiences to satisfy needs and desires. **According to Engel, Blackwell, and Mansard**, 'consumer behavior is the actions and decision processes of people who purchase goods and services for personal consumption'. **According to Louden and Bitta**, 'consumer behavior is the decision process and physical activity, which individuals engage in when evaluating, acquiring, using or disposing of goods and services'.

Variation among consumers:

1. Age
2. Gender
3. Family Structure
4. Social Class and Income
5. Race and Ethnicity
6. Geography
7. Lifestyles

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The Relationship between Impulsive Buying Behavior and Personality Traits among Indian Consumers

All these various factors are associated with the consumer's wants and demands.

Consumer buying behavior is the study of individuals, groups, or organizations and the processes they use to select, secure, use, and dispose of products, services, experiences, or ideas to satisfy needs and the impacts that these processes have on the consumer and society. Marketing success or failure of a company depends on target consumers' individual and group reactions expressed in the form of buying patterns. Since customer is the reason why any organization exists, it is necessary to understand the customer and study the pattern of his buying behavior. **According to Frederick Webster-** "Consumer buying behavior is all psychological, social and physical behavior of potential customers as they become aware of, evaluate, purchase, consume and tell other people about products and services."

A special form of consumer buying behavior involves impulsiveness of a consumer. This is called **impulsive buying behavior**.

Rook and Gardner (1993) defined impulse buying as an unplanned behavior involving quick decision-making and tendency for immediate acquisition of the product. **Beatty and Ferrell (1998)** described that Impulse buying refers to immediate purchases which are without any pre-shopping objective either to purchase the specific product category or to fulfill a specific need. They explained that the impulse buying behavior occurs after experiencing a buying desire by the shopper and without much reflection. The buying of an item which is out-of-stock and reminded during encountering the product are excluded from the purview of impulse buying. **Bayley and Nancarrow (1998)** defined impulse buying as a "sudden, compelling, hedonically complex buying behavior in which the rapidity of an impulse decision process precludes thoughtful and deliberate consideration of alternative information and choices." Hedonic behavior is marked with pleasure; in contrast to the utilitarian behavior where the shoppers seek for functional benefits and economic value in the shopping process. **Block and Morwitz (1999)** enunciated the definition of impulse purchase as consumer buying an item with little or no deliberation after the result of a sudden, powerful urge. **Kacen and Lee (2002)** stated that impulsive behavior are more arousing and irresistible but less deliberative when compared to planned purchasing behavior. **According to Engel and Blackwell (1982)** impulse buying is an action undertaken without previously having been consciously recognized or a buying intention formed prior to entering the store. Based upon the different description, we conclude that impulse buying involves hedonic purchase decisions which are made inside a store and excludes the reminder purchasing activities.

Thus, **Impulsive buying** is the tendency of a customer to buy goods and services without planning in advance. When a customer takes such buying decisions at the spur of the moment, it is usually triggered by emotions and feelings.

The term **personality** has been derived from Latin word "persona" which means 'to speak through'. This Latin term denotes the masks which the actors used to wear in ancient Greece and Rome. Thus, personality is used in terms of influencing others through external appearance. However, mere external appearance. Though may be important for personality characteristics, does not make the whole personality.

According to Ruch (1963), personality should include:

- External appearance and behavior or social stimulus value;

The Relationship between Impulsive Buying Behavior and Personality Traits among Indian Consumers

- Inner awareness of self as a permanent organizing force; and
- The particular pattern or organization of measurable traits, both inner and outer.

The American Psychological Association defines personality as “individual differences in characteristic patterns of thinking, feeling, and behaving.” Personality has many meanings. In consumer studies, personality is defined as consistent responses to environmental stimuli or we can also say patterns of behavior that are consistent and enduring. An individual’s personality helps marketers to describe consumer segments as it provides for orderly and coherently related experiences and behavior.

Personality characteristics may be a basis for product positioning. For example, one segment of the market may die because they want to stick to the group norms and therefore uses diet product. In contest another segment is on diet because of internal need. Therefore, company’s positioning strategies will be different for both. For the first segment, they will portray group approval as a result of product use, whereas positioning for the second segment would portray individual achievement.

Trait Theory

Trait factor theory presents a qualitative approach to study the personality. This theory postulates that an individual’s personality is composed of definite pre-dispositional attributes called traits. A trait may be defined as any distinguishable, relatively enduring way in which one individual differs from another. Thus, traits can be considered as individual variables.

There are basically three assumptions of this theory:

- Traits are common to many individuals and vary in absolute amounts between individuals.
- Traits are relatively stable and exert fairly universal effects on behavior regardless of the environmental situation. Thus, a consistent functioning of personality variables is predictive of a wide variety of behaviours.
- Traits can be inferred from the measurement of behavioral indicators.

Big Five Personality Traits

In recent times, researchers have identified five fundamental traits that are specially relevant to all the fields including organizations. Because these traits are so important and they are currently receiving so much attention, they are now called the big five personality traits. These five traits are as follows:

1. Agreeableness
2. Conscientiousness
3. Emotional stability
4. Extroversion
5. Openness

Each of these five personality traits has two extreme points-high and low.

Degree of personality traits	
High	Low
Agreeableness	
Compassionate, warm, trusting, eager to cooperate and to avoid conflicts.	Hard-headed, cold, proud, competitive, disagreeable, antagonistic

**The Relationship between Impulsive Buying Behavior and Personality Traits
among Indian Consumers**

Degree of personality traits	
High	Low
Conscientiousness	
Conscientiousness, well-organized, systematic, careful, thorough, persistent, strong desire for getting results.	Pursuing many goals at a time, easy going, not very well organized, impersistent, lack of strong desire for getting results
Emotional stability	
Emotionally stable. Poised, calm, confident, independent, secure.	Emotionally unstable, day-dreamer, anxious, nervous, dependent, insecure
Extroversion	
Extrovert, gregarious, outgoing, to be around people, sociable	Introvert, reserved, timid in public interaction, tendency to have limited friends
Openness	
Prone to accept new ideas, curious, artistically sensitive, imaginative.	Resistant to new ideas, down to earth, less creative and imaginative

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Sofi, S. (2020) examined the effect of intrinsic attributes on impulsive buying behaviour among young consumers with special reference to Indian context. In the current study, some of the select personality attributes comprising of expressive propensity, pleasure-seeking propensity and sociableness have been found to have positive effect on impulsiveness while other factors, namely, emotional stability, conscientiousness and conserving propensity have negative effect on the impulsiveness. These findings are paramount both from the perspective of consumer welfare advocates and corporates and could largely support them in their respective endeavours.

Shahjehan, A., & Qureshi, J. (2019) conducted a study on personality and impulsive buying behaviors. Results showed that for lower-level impulsive buying behaviours an individual's conscientiousness is necessary, for medium level agreeableness, extraversion and openness become necessary conditions, while conscientiousness is a complementary necessary condition. Lastly, neuroticism is necessary for highest levels complemented by other personality traits. Application of NCA fundamentally changes our understanding regarding personality traits and impulsive buying behaviour relationship. Practically focusing on necessary conditions would be more effective than focusing on general predictors that only partially explain the outcomes.

Ratnawat R.G. & Borgave S. A. (2019) studied the Impact of Big-Five Personality on Impulsive Buying Behaviour. The impact of Big-five personality traits on impulsive buying behaviour of 178 (89% response rate) was examined on a random sample in Mumbai and Pune area in India. While Agreeableness and Neuroticism were found to be significantly correlated with impulsive buying behaviour, Extraversion, Openness and Conscientiousness practically did not have correlations with Impulsive buying behaviour.

Shakaib Farid, Dania; Ali, Mazhar (2018) studied effects of Personality on Impulsive Buying Behavior: Evidence from a Developing Country, Marketing and Branding Research. Results indicated significant effects of Openness, Extraversion, Conscientiousness and Neuroticism and insignificant effect of Agreeableness on Impulse Buying Behavior.

The Relationship between Impulsive Buying Behavior and Personality Traits among Indian Consumers

Gangai, K. (2016) studied the influence of personality traits on consumer impulsive buying behaviour. The result was revealed that the common personality traits have a significant relationship with impulsive buying behaviour that is psychoticism in the case of male and female. The role of gender has significant differences in impulsive buying behaviour. The man showed more impulsive buying behaviour compare to women.

METHODOLOGY

Objective

To study the role of gender and their personality traits on Indian consumer's impulsive buying behavior.

Hypothesis

- (H0) There exist no significant relationship between personality traits and consumer impulsive buying behavior among Indian consumers.
- (H1) There exist a significant relationship between personality traits and consumer impulsive buying behavior among Indian consumers.

Sample

A total of 61 participants were randomly taken as sample for this study. Out of them (n=22) were males and (n=39) were females. The age range of the participants was 19 years -35 years. The sample of participants are from different regions of India. In total 80 participants were asked to participate in the research and 61 obliged.

Design

This research was structured in quantitative research design, descriptive in nature. A questionnaire method was used. With the purpose of exploring the relationship between personality traits and consumer impulsive buying behavior. Mean scores and standard deviation on personality traits of both males and females were carried out Pearson's correlation was used to see the relationship between personality traits and impulse buying behavior among consumers.

Material

- **Impulse Buying Behavior-** "Impulsive Buying Scale" was used in this study developed by Rook and Fisher (1995). Impulsive buying scale comprises of 9 items and it is measured with a five-point Likert scale. During the assessment of each answer by the participants, 5 points were given to "Strongly agree", 4 points to "Agree", 3 points to "Neutral", 2 points for "Disagree" and 1 point for "Strongly disagree". Thus, the highest score would be 45 and lowest would be 9.
- **Personality Traits-** "Ten Item Personality Inventory" was used to in this study developed by Gosling, Rentfrow, and Swann in 2003. TIPI is a brief assessment of the Big Five personality dimensions: (1) Extroversion, (2) Agreeableness, (3) Conscientiousness, (4) Emotional stability, (5) Openness to experience. Items are rated on a scale from 1, disagree strongly, to 7, agree strongly. Example item include, "I see myself as extraverted, enthusiastic" (Extraversion).

Procedure

A descriptive method was used in the present study. The two sets of the standardized questionnaire (Impulsive buying behavior and Ten Item Personality Inventory) were given to 62 participants randomly to provide an appropriate response. The participants were

The Relationship between Impulsive Buying Behavior and Personality Traits among Indian Consumers

approached at random and questionnaires were mailed to them with the knowledge that all information was anonymous, there was no obligation to complete the questionnaires. When the participants had completed the questionnaire, they were thanked and informed that results will be made available to them if they wish to know, once all research is completed. Each participant was asked their willingness to continue or not.

Data Analysis

The study followed by a descriptive statistic using Mean, SD, Correlation and were calculated using Microsoft Excel 2007. Data were compared between male and female to see the difference between impulsive buying behavior and personality traits. Also, to see the relationship between variables.

Table1: Demographic Variables

Items	Detail	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	22	36.07
	Female	39	63.93
Job- status	Student	49	80.33
	Professional/jobholder	8	13.12
	Business	4	6.55
Age	19-22	43	70.49
	23-26	15	24.59
	27-30	2	3.28
	31-34	1	1.64
Monthly income/pocket money	<5,000	37	60.66
	<20,000	13	21.31
	<35,000	6	9.84
	<50,000	4	6.55
	<60,000	1	1.64
Marital status	Single	59	96.72
	Married	2	3.28

RESULTS

Table 2 showing mean scores of The Ten Item Personality Inventory among males

Sub Scales	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Agreeableness	22	9.143	2.175
Conscientiousness	22	9.858	2.198
Openness to experience	22	10.191	2.945
Emotional stability	22	9.048	1.775
Extroversion	22	7.715	2.629

22 males participated in the study, their mean scores was Agreeableness (n=22, M=9.143, SD=2.175), Conscientiousness (n=22, M=9.858, SD=2.198), Openness to experience (n=22, M=10.191, SD=2.945), Emotional stability (n=22, M=9.048, SD=1.775), Extraversion (n=22, M=7.715, SD=2.629).

**The Relationship between Impulsive Buying Behavior and Personality Traits
among Indian Consumers**

Table 3 showing mean scores of The Ten Item Personality Inventory among females

Sub Scales	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Agreeableness	39	9.949	2.585
Conscientiousness	39	9.589	2.972
Openness to experience	39	10.052	2.743
Emotional stability	39	8.769	2.699
Extroversion	39	8.410	2.927

39 females participated in the study, their mean scores was Agreeableness (n=39, M=9.949, SD=2.585), Conscientiousness (n=39, M=9.589, SD=2.972), Openness to experience (n=39, M=10.052, SD=2.743), Emotional stability (n=39, M=8.769, SD=2.699), Extraversion (n=39, M=8.410, SD=2.927).

Table 4 showing scores on Impulsive Buying Behavior Scale among males and females

Scale	Gender	Mean	Standard Deviation
Impulsive buying behavior	Male	28.09	4.576
	Female	25.051	4.936

61 participants took part in this study where (n=22) were males and (n=39) were females. The mean score for males was (n=22, Mean=28.09, SD=4.576) and for females (n=39, Mean=25.051, SD=4.936).

Graphical Representation of Mean Scores

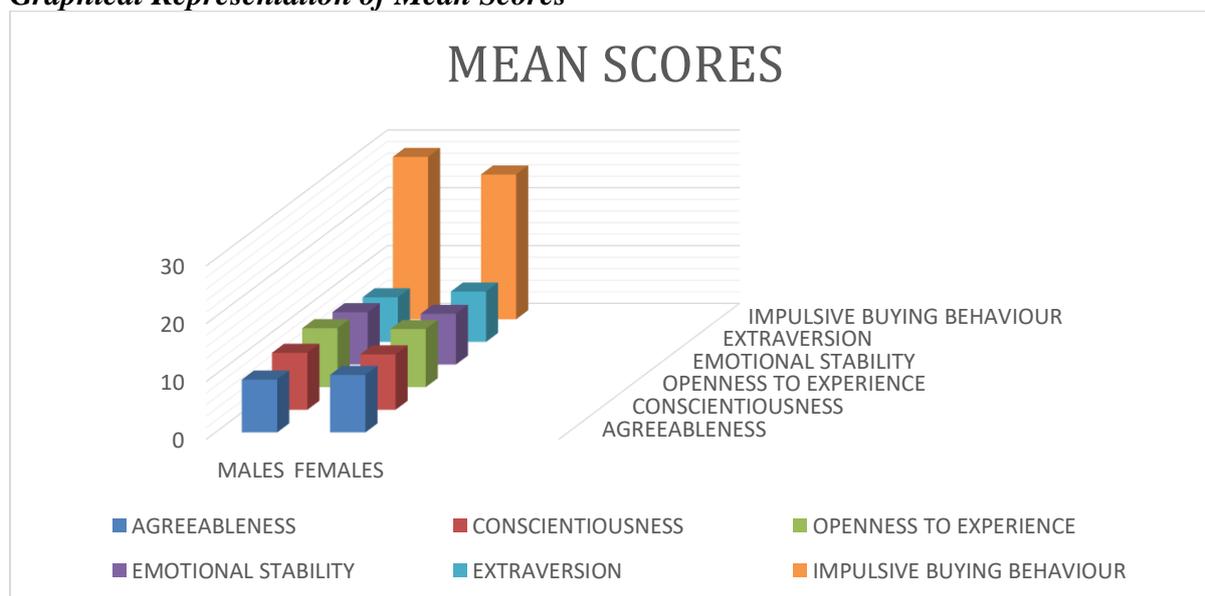


Table 5 showing Coefficient of Correlation (r) between personality traits and impulsive buying behavior among males

Personality traits	Agreeableness	Conscientiousness	Openness to experience	Emotional stability	Extroversion
Impulsive buying behavior	-0.507	-0.226	-0.403	0.201	0.127

The Relationship between Impulsive Buying Behavior and Personality Traits among Indian Consumers

The coefficient of correlation between two variables was calculated with the help of Pearson's Correlation method. It is evident from the above table that both positive and negative coefficient of correlation were obtained. It can be concluded from the above table that the first factor of the ten-item personality inventory that is Agreeableness which involve how people treat relationships with others significantly negatively correlated to impulsive buying behavior ($r=-0.507$, $p>0.05$). The second factor of this inventory is Conscientiousness describes a person's ability to regulate their impulse control in order to engage in goal-directed behaviors is significantly negatively correlated to impulsive buying behavior ($r=-0.226$, $p>0.05$). The third variable of this inventory is Openness to Experience which refers to one's willingness to try new things as well as engage in imaginative and intellectual activities is significantly negatively correlated to impulsive buying behavior ($r=-0.403$, $p=>0.05$). The fourth factor of this inventory involves Emotional Stability is the dimension which relates to one's emotional stability and degree of negative emotions is significantly positively correlated to impulsive buying behavior ($r=0.201$, $p=>0.05$). The fifth factor of this inventory involves Extraversion which reflects the tendency and intensity to which someone seeks interaction with their environment, particularly socially is significantly positively correlated to impulsive buying behavior ($r=0.127$, $p>0.05$).

Table 6 showing Coefficient of Correlation (r) between personality traits and impulsive buying behavior among females

Personality traits	Agreeableness	Conscientiousness	Openness to experience	Emotional stability	Extroversion
Impulsive buying behavior	-0.186	-0.184	-0.191	0.269	0.148

The overview of Table 6 reveals that the factor of the ten item personality inventory, that is Agreeableness is significantly negatively correlated to impulsive buying behavior ($r=-0.186$, $p>0.05$). The second factor involves Conscientiousness has been found to be significantly negatively correlated to impulsive buying behavior ($r=-0.184$, $p=>0.05$). The third factor involves Openness to Experience has been found significantly negatively correlated to impulsive buying behavior ($r=-0.191$, $p=>0.05$). The fourth factor involves Emotional Stability is significantly positively correlated to impulsive buying behavior ($r=0.269$, $p=>0.05$). The fifth factor involves Extraversion is significantly positively correlated to impulsive buying behavior.

DISCUSSION

The primary aim of the study was to study the role of gender and their personality traits on Indian consumer's impulsive buying behavior. Two standardized questionnaires were distributed among various consumers from different places, with (N=61) participants in total. Personal data consist of demographic information was also collected.

Vyas (2015), Consumers subconsciously assign subjective values to package based on their color, shape and basic materials. Thus, different packaging elements have functional implications on users' mind. Also, different demographic variables like gender, age group, professional involvement and educational status influence the response in packaging. Packing helps consumer to choose, get an impression about the product and repurchase the product. It influences consumer response towards the product, lead to impulsive buying and differentiate

The Relationship between Impulsive Buying Behavior and Personality Traits among Indian Consumers

the brand. Packaging strategies exert an influence on time taken for purchase, brand promotion and communicate about the brand.

Saraswat and et al. (2012), middle income group in Noida city, India is more likely to do impulsive buying because of economic reasons as promotional offers help in getting monetary benefits. Different dynamics of advertisement like advertisement of product in print and visual media, advertisement by celebrities, advertisement using 3-D effect, hoarding and pamphlets of product and event organized by the organization positively affect majority of respondents into impulse buying. This reflects a pivotal relationship between respondents' impulse buying behaviors and impact of advertising campaign used in practice to enhance impulse purchase decisions.

Oehler et al. (2017) analyzed the effects of extraversion and neuroticism degrees on decision making processes in the experimental asset market. The authors found that extraversion and neuroticism significantly affected individuals' behaviours in the experimental entity market. Less extroverted individuals buy less assets and pay lower prices for financial assets. Less neurotic individuals have more risky assets in their financial portfolios than more neurotic individuals.

The results were obtained from the Persons Correlation Method and the findings were that there exists a significant relationship between personality traits and consumers impulsive buying behavior tendency. Thus, the author accepts alternative hypothesis that there exists a significant relationship between personality traits and consumer impulsive buying behavior among Indian consumers and reject null hypothesis which state that there exists no significant relationship between personality traits and consumer impulsive buying behavior among Indian consumers.

CONCLUSION

The results denoted that there is a relationship between personality traits and consumer impulsive buying behavior among Indian consumers.

Limitations and Implications

- It is recommended, for future research, the number of participants should be large in number.
- The finding of this research is that it can use to get a better understanding of the impulsiveness of the Indian consumers.

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The Relationship between Impulsive Buying Behavior and Personality Traits among Indian Consumers

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The Relationship between Impulsive Buying Behavior and Personality Traits among Indian Consumers

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Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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