

The Impacts of Need for Cognitive Closure, Psychological Wellbeing, and Social Factors on Impulse Purchasing

认知闭合需要, 心理健康和社会因素对冲动购买的影响

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Abstract

Impulse purchasing is defined as an immediate purchase with no pre-shopping intentions. Previous studies of impulse buying have focused primarily on factors linked to marketing mix variables, situational factors, and consumer demographics and traits. In previous studies, marketing mix variables such as product category, product type, and atmospheric factors including advertising, coupons, sales events, promotional stimuli at the point of sale, and media format have been used to evaluate product information. Some authors have also focused on situational factors surrounding the consumer. Factors such as the availability of credit card usage, time available, transportability of the products, and the presence and number of shopping companions were found to have a positive impact on impulse buying and/or impulse tendency. Research has also been conducted to evaluate the effects of individual characteristics such as the age, gender, and educational level of the consumer, as well as perceived crowding, stimulation, and the need for touch, on impulse purchasing. In summary, previous studies have found that all products can be purchased impulsively (Vohs and Faber, 2007), that situational factors affect and/or at least facilitate impulse purchasing behavior, and that various individual traits are closely linked to impulse buying. The recent introduction of new distribution channels such as home shopping channels, discount stores, and Internet stores that are open 24 hours a day increases the probability of impulse purchasing. However, previous literature has focused predominantly on situational and marketing variables and thus studies that consider critical consumer characteristics are still lacking. To fill this gap in the literature, the present study builds on this third tradition of research and focuses on individual trait variables, which have rarely been studied. More

specifically, the current study investigates whether impulse buying tendency has a positive impact on impulse buying behavior, and evaluates how consumer characteristics such as the need for cognitive closure (NFCC), psychological wellbeing, and susceptibility to interpersonal influences affect the tendency of consumers towards impulse buying.

The survey results reveal that while consumer affective impulsivity has a strong positive impact on impulse buying behavior, cognitive impulsivity has no impact on impulse buying behavior. Furthermore, affective impulse buying tendency is driven by sub-components of NFCC such as decisiveness and discomfort with ambiguity, psychological wellbeing constructs such as environmental control and purpose in life, and by normative and informational influences. In addition, cognitive impulse tendency is driven by sub-components of NFCC such as decisiveness, discomfort with ambiguity, and close-mindedness, and the psychological wellbeing constructs of environmental control, as well as normative and informational influences.

The present study has significant theoretical implications. First, affective impulsivity has a strong impact on impulse purchase behavior. Previous studies based on affectivity and flow theories proposed that low to moderate levels of impulsivity are driven by reduced self-control or a failure of self-regulatory mechanisms. The present study confirms the above proposition. Second, the present study also contributes to the literature by confirming that impulse buying tendency can be viewed as a two-dimensional concept with both affective and cognitive dimensions, and illustrates that impulse purchase behavior is explained mainly by affective impulsivity, not by cognitive impulsivity. Third, the current study accommodates new constructs such as psychological wellbeing and NFCC as potential influencing factors in the research model, thereby contributing to the existing literature. Fourth, by incorporating multi-dimensional concepts such as psychological wellbeing and NFCC, more diverse aspects of consumer information processing can be evaluated. Fifth, the current study also extends the existing literature by confirming the two competing routes of normative and informational influences. Normative influence occurs when individuals conform to the expectations of others or to enhance his/her self-image. Whereas informational influence occurs when individuals search for information from knowledgeable others or making inferences based upon observations of the behavior of others. The present study shows that these two competing routes of social influence can be attributed to different sources of influence power.

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The current study also has many practical implications. First, it suggests that people with affective impulsivity may be primary targets to whom companies should pay closer attention. Cultivating a more amenable and mood-elevating shopping environment will appeal to this segment. Second, the present results demonstrate that NFCC is closely related to the cognitive dimension of impulsivity. These people are driven by careless thoughts, not by feelings or excitement. Rational advertising at the point of purchase will attract these customers. Third, people susceptible to normative influences are another potential target market. Retailers and manufacturers could appeal to this segment by advertising their products and/or services as products that can be used to identify with or conform to the expectations of others in the aspiration group. However, retailers should avoid targeting people susceptible to informational influences as a segment market. These people are engaged in an extensive information search relevant to their purchase, and therefore more elaborate, long-term rational advertising messages, which can be internalized into these consumers' thought processes, will appeal to this segment.

The current findings should be interpreted with caution for several reasons. The study used a small convenience sample, and only investigated behavior in two dimensions. Accordingly, future studies should incorporate a sample with more diverse characteristics and measure different aspects of behavior. Future studies should also investigate personality traits closely related to affectivity theories. Trait variables such as sensory curiosity, interpersonal curiosity, and atmospheric responsiveness are interesting areas for future investigation.

Keywords: Affective impulsivity, Cognitive impulsivity, Need for cognitive closure (NFCC), Psychological wellbeing, Susceptibility to interpersonal influences

摘要

冲动购买是指一个没有预先购物意向的立即购买。以往对冲动购买的研究主要集中于营销组合变量, 环境因素, 消费人口和特征相关的因素。在以前的研究中, 营销组合变量如产品种类, 产品类型和氛围, 包括广告, 优惠券, 销售活动, 促销刺激销售点, 和媒体格式都已被用于评估产品信息。有些作者还着重围绕消费者的情境因素。如信用卡的使用, 时间, 产品运输性, 发现购物同伴的存在和数量对冲动购买/冲动趋势有积极的影响。研究也已评估了个体特征的影响, 如年龄, 性别, 以及消费者的教育程度, 以及拥挤的感知, 刺激和接触的需要等因素对冲动购买的影响。概括来说, 以前的研究发现所有的产品都可以被冲动地购买 (Vohs and Faber, 2007), 即环境因素可以影响或至少促使冲动购买行为。最近新的分销渠道的推出, 例如家庭购物渠道, 折扣店和网上商店, 这些24小时都营业的形式增加了冲动购买的可能性。然而, 以前的文献重点关注情境和营销变量, 因此这些研究所考虑的主要特征仍然是缺乏的。为了弥补这个缺陷, 本研究根据研究的第三个惯例并关注个体特质变量, 这些是很少被研究的。更具体地说, 本研究探索了冲动购买趋势对冲动购买行为是否有积极的影响, 并评估了消费者特点例如认知闭合需要 (NFCC),

心理健康和人际敏感性是如何影响消费者冲动购买的趋势。

这项调查结果显示, 消费者的情感冲动, 对冲动购买行为产生积极的影响, 而认知冲动并没有对冲动购买行为的影响。此外, 情感冲动购买倾向是被认知闭合需要的构成因素所推动的, 如果断和模糊不适; 心理健康, 如环境控制和生活的目标, 以及规范和信息的影响。此外, 认知冲动倾向是被认知闭合需要的构成因素所驱动的决断, 模棱两可的不适和密切的态度, 心理健康和环境控制, 以及规范性和信息的影响。

本研究具有重要理论意义。第一, 情感冲动对冲动购买行为有巨大影响。以前的研究根据情感和流动理论提出, 低到中等程度的冲动是自我控制减少或自我监管机制失败所造成的。本研究证实了上述观点。第二, 本研究通过确认冲动购买趋势可以看做是情感和认知两个维度的二维概念, 并说明冲动购买行为主要是由情感冲动解释, 而不是认知冲动。第三, 目前的研究有新的概念, 如在本研究的模型中作为潜在影响因子的心理健康和认知闭合需要, 从而对现有的文献做出了贡献。通过多维概念例如心理健康和认知闭合需要, 有关消费者信息过程的多个方面可以被评估。第五, 本研究通过确定规范和信息这两个竞争路线扩展了现有的文献。规范影响发生在个人符合别人的期望或提高他们的自我形象时。而信息的影响发生在个人搜索来自他人知识信息和观察他人行为之后的推论。本研究显示了这两个相互竞争的社会影响力的路线, 可以归因于不同影响力的来源。

目前的研究也有许多实际的启示。首先, 它表明, 公司应该更多关注其首要的目标, 有情感冲动的消费者。这一方面公司可以创造更振奋精神的购物环境。第二, 目前的结果表明, 认知闭合需要与认知方面的冲动有密切相关的。这些人是被不经意的想法所驱动的, 而不是感觉或兴奋。在购买点理性的广告会吸引这些客户。第三, 容易受规范性影响的消费群是另一个潜在的目标市场。零售商和制造商, 通过宣传其产品和/或可用于识别或符合愿望组在对他人期望的产品服务。但是, 作为一个细分市场, 零售商应避免目标消费群易受信息的影响。这些人对有关购买的产品服务进行了广泛的信息搜索, 因此更详细, 长期理性的广告信息可以内化这些消费者的思想过程。

本文的结果有几个原因应慎重解释。这项研究采用了数量较少的便利样本, 而且只调查了两个维度的行为。为此, 今后的研究应包括更多样化特点和衡量行为的不同方面的样本。未来的研究还应该调查与情感作用理论密切相关的个性特征。在以后的研究中, 特征变量会是很另人感兴趣的领域, 如感觉的好奇, 人际敏感性的好奇心, 和气氛反应。

关键词: 情感冲动, 认知冲动, 认知闭合需要(NFCC), 心理健康, 人际敏感性影响

I. Introduction

Impulse purchasing is defined as an immediate purchase with no pre-shopping intentions (Beatty and Ferrell, 1998; Mattila and Wirtz, 2006). Both retailers and manufacturers recognize the importance of impulse purchasing. Unplanned purchases account for approximately 27-62 percent of purchases in a department store context (Mattila and Wirtz, 2006). According to Nichols, Li, Roslow, Kranendonk, and Mandakovic (2001), as much as 70 percent of all grocery items are purchased impulsively. The new economic environment such as home shopping channels, discount stores, and

Internet stores has increased the probability that consumers will buy products on impulse, thereby increasing the importance of impulse purchasing to retailers and manufacturers. Environmental factors such as increased levels of disposable income, ubiquitous credit card usage, and new distribution channels such as home shopping channels, discounters, and Internet stores that are open 24-hours a day have contributed to an increased incidence of impulse purchasing behavior. For example, highly interactive broadband Internet enables consumers to listen to a song while watching the corresponding music video and then instantly purchasing the featured products (Mattila and Wirtz, 2008; Adelaar, Chang, Lancendorfer, Lee, and Morimoto, 2003). The important factors affecting consumer impulse buying behavior need to be evaluated in the context of these recent changes in the consumer environment.

Impulse buying behavior and its antecedents have been intensively investigated. Previous studies have focused primarily on factors linked to marketing mix variables, situational factors, and consumer traits. However, research on critical consumer characteristics is still lacking, even though these characteristics may be even more important in the present ever-changing consumer environment. Accordingly, the current study aims to investigate whether impulse buying tendency has a positive impact on impulse buying behavior, and to evaluate how consumer characteristics such as the need for cognitive closure (NFCC), psychological wellbeing, and susceptibility to interpersonal influences affect consumers' impulse buying tendency.

Following the introduction, Section 2 provides a brief review of previous research related to consumers' impulse buying behavior such as impulse buying tendency, NFCC, psychological wellbeing, and susceptibility to interpersonal influences, and hypotheses to be tested are proposed in this section. Section 3 describes the research methodology used in this empirical study, reports on the test results of the hypotheses, and concludes with a discussion of the results. Section 4 discusses the implications and limitations of the study, and provides suggestions for future research.

II. Literature Review

2.1. Previous research into impulse purchase behavior

Impulse buying behavior is defined as a sudden and immediate purchase behavior with no pre-shopping intentions either to buy the specific product category or to fulfill a specific buying task (Beatty and Ferrell, 1998). The behavior does not include the purchase of a simple reminder item, which is an item that is simply out-of-stock at home. Numerous studies have investigated impulse buying behavior and its antecedents (Rook and Hoch, 1985; Rook, 1987; Beatty and Ferrell, 1998; Silvera et al., 2008; Lin and Lin, 2005). These antecedents in-

clude marketing mix variables, situational contexts, and consumer traits.

Most of these earlier studies have focused predominantly on marketing mix variables. Several studies have related impulse purchasing behavior to product category. Stern (1962) suggested that those products with a low price or a short product life cycle would be more likely to be bought on impulse. Bellenger, Robertson, and Hirschman (1978) also proposed that impulse purchasing varies by product. Dittmar and Beattie (1998) suggested that those goods that project a person's self-image are especially likely to be bought on impulse. Jones, Reynolds, Weun, and Beatty (2003) found that a consumer's impulse purchasing tendency varies according to different product categories and the consumer's involvement. Other studies have suggested that impulse purchase behavior can be induced by atmospheric factors in the shopping environment. Beatty and Ferrell (1998), for example, showed that in-store browsing increases the likelihood of an impulse purchase. Rook (1987), Rook and Hoch (1985), and Abratt and Goodey (1990) found that product and advertising display factors including special displays, end-of aisle displays, shelf signs, and other marketing mix variables such as advertising, coupons, sales events, and promotional stimuli at the point of sale can affect impulse purchasing behavior. Peck and Childers (2006) found that a point-of-purchase sign increases consumers' impulse purchase behavior. Adelaar et al. (2003) suggested that the media format used to present the product information (i.e. displaying the text of the lyrics rather than showing still images of the music video) in an online shopping environment increases impulse purchasing behavior.

Other authors have focused on situational factors surrounding the consumer (Beatty and Ferrell, 1998; Dittmar and Drury, 2000; Park and Kang, 2002). Beatty and Ferrell (1998), for example, investigated factors such as the availability of credit card usage, time available, transportability of the products, and the presence and number of shopping companions on impulse purchase behavior. All these situational factors were found to have a positive impact on impulse buying and/or impulse tendency. Dittmar and Drury (2000) suggested that situational variables such as the availability of credit or the consumer being confronted with too good a bargain to pass up have an impact on impulse buying.

The third area of research has concentrated mainly on studying the effect of individual characteristics such as the age, gender, and educational level of the consumer, and consumer traits such as perceived crowding, stimulation, and the need for touch, on consumer purchase behavior. Lin and Lin (2005) and Yang et al. (2008) in their investigations of adolescent impulsive traits found that gender (female), age (younger people), and economic independence such as the amount of pocket money available and a part-time job, have a positive effect on impulsive tendency. Rook and Fisher (1996) revealed that consumer's normative evaluations of the purchase moderate the relationship between impulse buying tendency and actual impulse purchase behavior. Mattila and Wirtz (2006), for example,

found that over-stimulation and perceived crowding have a positive and negative impact on impulse purchasing, respectively, and that employee assistance alleviates the negative impact of crowding (the interactional impacts of employee assistance and crowding) on impulse buying. In addition, Peck and Childers (2006) found that consumers with a high autotelic need for touch buy more products impulsively. Yang et al. (2008) found that idolatry, which is defined as the extent to which people have and are influenced by idols in their behavior, has a significant positive impact on adolescent impulse buying tendency. Rook and Gardner (1993) suggested that the combination of mood states such as pleasure, excitement, and power elicits impulse purchase behavior. Baumeister (2002) found that people with low self-regulation are prone to impulse purchasing. Vohs and Faber (2007) demonstrated that participants whose self-regulatory resource is temporarily depleted feel stronger urges to buy, are willing to spend more, and actually spend more money in unanticipated buying situations. Silvera et al. (2008) found that while subjective wellbeing, self-liking, self-confidence, and informational influence of others have a negative impact on affective impulse buying tendency, negative affects and a normative social influence have a positive impact on affective impulse buying tendency.

In summary, the previous studies that concentrated on identifying marketing mix variables concluded, contrary to expectations, that all products can be purchased impulsively (Vohs and Faber, 2007). The second research approach revealed that situational factors affect and/or at least facilitate impulse purchase behavior (Peck and Childers, 2006). In the third approach to investigate impulse purchase behavior, authors attempted to identify various individual traits closely linked to impulse buying. In particular, Rook (1987) and Rook and Hoch (1985) clarified that it is the individual, not the product, who experiences the impulse to consume. The present study builds on this third stream of research and focuses on individual trait variables. With the advancements in shopping environment technology such as cash machines, shop-at-home television programs, and Internet shopping (Vohs and Faber, 2007), research addressing more diverse aspects of consumer tendencies with respect to impulse buying is urgently required. Accordingly, the present study aims to fill this gap in the literature.

Beatty and Ferrell (1998) conceptualized impulse buying behavior as a three-point measure, with a 3 clearly representing an impulse purchase, a 2 representing an unplanned purchase involving less impulsiveness (i.e., low spontaneity and non-reflectiveness), and a 1 representing a reminder purchase, a planned purchase, or no purchase. In the present study, however, impulse behavior is measured as a combined unit measure of the amount of money spent divided by the frequency of impulse buying for the prior six months. The present study extends previous research into consumer traits by including more diverse aspects of consumer characteristics such as impulsivity, NFCC, psychological wellbeing, and susceptibility to interpersonal influences.

Previous studies have mostly used a single dimensional concept. Silvera et al. (2008), for example, investigated the impact of the single dimensional construct of subjective wellbeing on impulsivity. The research model adopted in the current study incorporates multi-dimensional concepts such as a six-factor concept of psychological wellbeing and a five-factor NFCC construct, and may therefore deepen our understanding of consumers with dynamic characteristics who are more prone to impulse purchasing under the extant 24-hour shopping environment. The research model is shown in Figure 1.

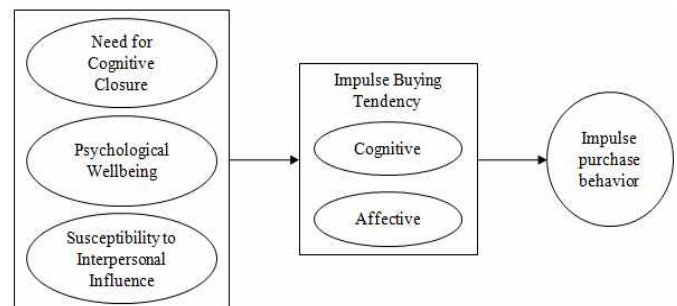


Fig. 1. Research Model.

2.2. Factors affecting impulse purchasing behavior

2.2.1. Impulsivity

Impulsivity is treated as a personality trait. Peck and Childers (2006) defined impulsive buying tendency as a consumer's tendency to buy spontaneously, unreflectively, immediately, and kinetically. Weinberg and Gottward (1982) defined impulsivity as a consumer trait with high emotional activation, low cognitive control, and a largely reactive behavior. Verplanken and Herabadi (2001) conceptualized this impulsive tendency using two facets: an affective dimension associated with feelings of excitement and overpowering urges to buy, and a cognitive dimension related to lack of planning in association with purchase decisions. This conceptualization was adopted by Silvera et al. (2008). In the present study, impulse buying tendency is defined as a spontaneous and unreflective desire to buy without thoughtful consideration of why and for what reason a person should have the product/service. Furthermore, a two-facet concept is used that includes both affective and cognitive impulsivity. The basic assumption is that individuals vary in their proclivity to buy on impulse (Jones, et al., 2003; Weun et al., 1998), which by definition should trigger consumer impulse purchasing (Beatty and Ferrell, 1998).

Most previous studies have failed to address the impact of impulsivity on impulse buying behavior. Beatty and Ferrell (1998), for example, investigated the effects of various situational factors on impulse buying behavior. Other studies, such as that of Silvera et al. (2008), investigated the impact of consumer traits on impulsive tendency. As an exception, Rook and Fisher (1996) showed a positive relationship between impulse buying tendency and actual impulse purchase behavior.

However, studies that investigate the effect of two-dimensional concepts of impulsivity on behavior are needed. Accordingly, the following hypotheses are proposed.

H1-1 People with a high affective impulsive tendency are more likely to purchase a product/service impulsively

H1-2 People with a high cognitive impulsive tendency are more likely to purchase a product/service impulsively

2.2.2. Need for Cognitive Closure

Need for cognitive closure (NFCC) is defined as the desire for a finite answer on some topic - any answer as opposed to confusion and ambiguity (Kruglanski, Webster, and Klem, 1993). According to Calogero, Bardi, and Sutton (2009), people with high NFCC show distinct predispositions in five different ways. First, people with high NFCC show a high preference for structure to maintain order in their life and avoid disorder. Second, people with high NFCC show a high preference for predictability to ensure consistency across circumstances and avoid change. Third, people with a high NFCC show discomfort with ambiguity. Fourth, people with high NFCC are close-minded to secure knowledge and avoid challenges to knowledge. Fifth, people with high NFCC prefer decisiveness in order to decide quickly and avoid indecision. The five predispositions listed above comprise the primary cognitive-motivational forces underlying NFCC.

People high in NFCC tend to base their final judgments on earlier information that facilitates quick closure while neglecting later information, ambiguous information, or otherwise difficult-to-process information that delays closure. As NFCC increases, people consider less evidence and belief-inconsistent information, and draw snap conclusions that have obvious and immediate implications. However, attaining closure does not necessarily mean less elaborate or less effortful information processing. Rather, attaining closure can require either limited or extensive processing. When closure can be attained easily, information processing decreases as NFCC increases. However, when closure is difficult to attain and if the initial evidence does not support any conclusion, information processing increases as NFCC increases. An empirical study confirmed that people with a high NFCC value prefer stability, conformity, and maintenance of the status quo, whereas people with a low NFCC value prefer novel experiences, creativity, and independent thoughts and actions (Calogero et al., 2009).

Previous studies have shown that NFCC is a moderator variable in most cases. According to Kardes, Fennis, Hirt, Tormala, and Bullington (2007), variables such as the primacy effect, stereotyping, anchoring, in-group bias, and selective information processing increase as NFCC increases. For example, Houghton and Grewal (2000) showed that individuals that attach strong importance to products such as cars and TVs (high IPS) and those with high NFCC search for the least amount of information. Kardes et al. (2004) showed that the effect of the disrupt-then-reframe influence (a technique involving confusing consumers with a disruptive message and then reducing

ambiguity by reframing the message) increases as NFCC increases, and that disruption motivates consumers to embrace a reframed message that facilitates closure by reducing ambiguity. Kardes et al. (2007) also showed that the degree to which price is used as a basis for inferring quality is reduced when NFCC is low, providing that information load is high and is presented randomly. According to Houghton and Grewal (2000), consumers with high NFCC and a preference for a brand are likely to maintain a positive image of that brand and unlikely to search for an alternative. They also suggested that consumers with high NFCC discount and ignore negative information about the brand, as this conflicting information would frustrate closure. These authors also showed that when NFCC is high, consumers focus selectively on belief-consistent information and neglect belief-inconsistent information that could delay closure. When NFCC is low, consumers are more likely to consider the judgmental implications of belief-inconsistent evidence. Silvera et al. (2008) suggested that people sometimes find it aversive to be self-aware and thus seek means by which to avoid self-awareness, which involves narrowing the cognitive and/or perceptual field to avoid global thoughts associated with self-awareness. This narrowed cognitive/perceptual field might limit the products considered for purchase on impulse. Among the five factors of NFCC, a factor related to preference for structure was not included in this study, because of measurement problems encountered in a pilot study. Factors such as a preference for predictability, decisiveness, discomfort with ambiguity, and close-mindedness were surveyed in this study, and are expected to have positive effects on impulsivity.

NFCC provides a useful framework for analyzing consumer information processing. This concept has implications for many issues related to consumer research including information processing, the influence of context, and the consumer choice process (Houghton and Grewal, 2000). Studying NFCC in the context of impulsivity is relevant with regard to the introduction of new technology and media such as 24-hour TV home shopping channels and Internet stores, all of which increase the availability of information linked to products.

From a theoretical perspective, several authors have suggested that consumer impulsivity is triggered by the failure of self-regulatory mechanisms (Baumeister, 2002; Silvera et al., 2008; Matilla and Wirtz, 2008). Impulsivity is prominent when the consumer feels excitement and overstimulation, which leads to a momentary loss of self-control. Baumeister (2002) showed that people's ability to resist temptation is at its lowest level at the end of the day due to progressive depletion of resources during the day. Self-control failure occurs in three different ways: conflicting goals and standards, failure to keep track of one's own behavior, and depletion of a resource. Accordingly, the present study proposes that as the consumer lowers his/her willingness to process information (high NFCC), the likelihood of impulsive purchasing tendency is greatly enhanced.

H2 People with high NFCC, that is, people with high pref-

erence for predictability (H2-1), decisiveness (H2-2), discomfort with ambiguity (H2-3) and close-mindedness (H2-4), are more likely to have a high tendency for affective impulsivity.

H3 People with high NFCC, that is, people with a high preference for predictability (H3-1), decisiveness (H3-2), discomfort with ambiguity (H3-3), and close-mindedness (H3-4), are more likely to have high tendency for cognitive impulsivity.

2.2.3. Psychological wellbeing

Psychological wellbeing is a construct that includes aspects of an individual's satisfaction with specific aspects of his/her life such as work and family, and global judgments of life satisfaction (Silvera et al., 2008). Although this concept has been widely researched in psychology and has important implications for the acquisition of material goods by consumers, few studies have investigated psychological wellbeing in marketing, especially with respect to consumer behavior.

People with high psychological wellbeing have high self-acceptance, positive relations with others, autonomy, environmental mastery, a sense of purpose in life, and personal growth (Ryff, 1989; Ryff, and Keyes, 1995). This definition suggests that psychological wellbeing is a six-dimensional concept. A detailed definition of this concept can be found in Ryff (1989). An individual's sense of self-acceptance is defined as the extent to which an individual accepts his/her self and his/her past life. People with a sense of self-acceptance are characterized by self-actualization, good mental health, optimal functioning, and maturity. An individual's feeling of positive relations with others is defined as the degree to which a person perceives warm, trusting interpersonal relations with others and his/her ability to love others. An individual with a feeling of personal growth thinks he/she is mature, and has the ability to give guidance and direction to others. Autonomy is defined as the extent to which an individual perceives that he/she possesses self-determination, independence, and regulation of behavior within. Individuals with autonomy tend to function autonomously, resist enculturation, do not follow norms and laws of the masses, and have an internal locus of control by personal standards. Environmental mastery is defined as the extent to which an individual perceives he/she has the ability to choose or create environments suitable to his/her psychic conditions. People with environmental mastery tend to have the ability to manipulate and control complex environments, take advantage of environmental opportunities, advance in the world, and change it creatively through physical or mental activities. A person's sense of purpose in life can be defined as the extent to which an individual perceives that he/she possesses a purpose in life that has meaning. A person with a sense of purpose in life tends to have a clear comprehension of life's purpose, a sense of directedness and intentionality, be productive and creative, and have achieved emotional integration. An individual's sense of personal growth is defined as the extent to which a person feels that he/she

can achieve his/her life goals and continue to develop his/her potential to grow and expand as a person. People with personal growth potential are more likely to have the need to actualize themselves, realize their potentialities, confront challenges and tasks at different periods of life, be open to experience, and continually develop and become. However, this concept of personal growth was not included in the present study because of measurement problems encountered in a pilot test. In sum, people with high psychological wellbeing have a high level of self-acceptance, positive relations with others, autonomy, control over their environment, and purpose in life. With respect to impulse purchasing, people with high psychological wellbeing are not likely to engage in impulse purchasing because they feel in control of their environment.

It has also been suggested that consumer impulsivity is triggered by the failure of self-regulatory mechanisms (Baumeister, 2002; Silvera et al., 2008; Matilla and Wirtz, 2008). Consumers with high psychological wellbeing are less likely to deplete a cognitive resource that operates like strength or energy, and may have consistency in garnering resources and make self-control more effectively than those with low psychological wellbeing. Accordingly, the present study proposes that as the consumer is not depleted of controllability over life (high psychological wellbeing), the likelihood of impulsive purchasing tendency is low.

H4 People with high self-acceptance (H4-1), positive relations with others (H4-2), autonomy (H4-3), environmental mastery (H4-4), and purpose in life (H4-5) are less likely to have a high tendency for affective impulsivity.

H5 People with high self-acceptance (H5-1), positive relations with others (H5-2), autonomy (H5-3), environmental mastery (H5-4), and purpose in life (H5-5) are less likely to have a high tendency for cognitive impulsivity.

2.2.4. Consumer susceptibility to interpersonal influences

As Rook and Fisher (1996), Zhang et al. (2007), Yu, Dutta, and Pysarchik (2007), and Nguyen et al. (2009) have pointed out, a consumer's significant others can influence the consumer's impulse purchasing. Consumer susceptibility to interpersonal influences is a general trait that varies across individuals (Bearden, Netemeyer, and Teel, 1989). Susceptibility to interpersonal influences is defined in the present study as a need to identify or enhance one's image with significant others through the acquisition and use of products and brands, the willingness to conform to the expectations of others regarding purchasing decisions, and/or the tendency to learn about products and services by observing others and/or seeking information from others (Bearden et al., 1989).

Park and Lessig (1977) and Park and Lennon (2004) showed that consumer susceptibility to interpersonal influences is a distinct three-dimensional concept comprising informational, utilitarian, and value-expressive influence dimensions. Specific definitions of consumer susceptibility to interpersonal influence can be found in the study of Bearden et al. (1989).

Utilitarian influence is defined as an individual's attempts to comply with the expectations of others to achieve or avoid punishment, and this influence operates through the process of compliance. Compliance occurs when individuals conform to the expectations of others to gain rewards or to avoid punishments mediated by others. Value-expressive influence is defined as a person's desire to enhance his/her self-image by association with a reference group. Value-expressive influence operates through the process of identification, which occurs when an individual adopts a behavior or opinion of another because the behavior or opinion is associated with satisfying a self-defining relationship. Informational influence is defined as the tendency of an individual to accept information from others as evidence about reality. Informational influence may occur in two ways. Individuals may either search for information from knowledgeable others, or make inferences based upon observations of the behavior of others. Informational influence operates through the process of internalization, which occurs if information from others increases the individual's knowledge about some aspect of the environment. In the study of Bearden et al. (1989), susceptibility to interpersonal influence was operationalized as a two-dimensional concept. Utilitarian and value-expressive influences can be aggregated to represent normative influence. In the present study, the conceptualization of Bearden et al. (1989) was adopted. A normative influence is defined in the present study as an individual's attempts and/or desire to comply with the expectations of others or to enhance his/her self-image by compliance to or association with the expectations of the reference group. The other construct is informational influence, which is defined as an individual's tendency to accept information from others.

Consumer susceptibility to interpersonal influence has been found to be related to product selection and/or choice decisions that differ in consumption conspicuousness and product evaluations (Bearden et al. 1989; Park and Lessig, 1977). Park and Lennon (2004) showed empirically that para-social interactions with shopping hosts is positively associated with impulse purchases. Luo (2005) suggested that the presence of peers increases the urge to purchase, and the presence of family members decreases it. This difference is greater when the group (peers or family) is cohesive and when participants are susceptible to social influence. Bearden et al. (1989), Park and Lessig (1977), and Park and Lennon (2004) demonstrated that people who are susceptible to informational influence are more likely to engage in active information searches about potential purchases. This notion contradicts the cognitive aspect of impulse buying tendency, which involves purchasing without seeking or even considering information relevant to the purchase. However, people who are susceptible to normative influence are more likely to use purchases to identify with, or enhance their image in the eyes of significant others, and have a willingness to conform to the expectations of others in making purchase decisions. Accordingly, two competing hypotheses are proposed.

H6 People susceptible to informational influence are less likely to have a high tendency for affective (H6-1) and cognitive (H6-2) impulsivity.

H7 People susceptible to normative influence are more likely to have a high tendency for affective (H7-1) and cognitive (H7-2) impulsivity.

III. Methodology and Data Analysis

3.1. Measures

Table 1. Constructs, number of items in each construct, and sources.

| Concept | | No. of items | Mean | Reliability | Sources |
|---|--|----------------|---------|-------------|--------------------------------|
| Impulsive purchasing behavior | Frequency of impulse purchases | 1 | 2.62 | - | - |
| | Amount of impulse purchase | 1 | \$ 1454 | - | - |
| Consumer impulsive tendency | Affective dimension | 10 | 3.0288 | .885 | Verplanken and Herabadi (2001) |
| | Cognitive dimension | 10 | 2.6351 | .888 | |
| NFCC | Preference for predictability | 4 | 3.1261 | .837 | David and Rajdeep (2000) |
| | Decisiveness | 4 | 2.7261 | .729 | |
| | Discomfort with ambiguity | 4 | 3.4296 | .840 | |
| | Close-mindedness | 4 | 2.3783 | .797 | |
| Susceptibility to interpersonal influence | Normative influence | 8 | 2.7698 | .832 | Bearden et al. (1989) |
| | Informational influence | 4 | 3.5601 | .834 | |
| Psychological wellbeing | Autonomy | 5 | 3.2645 | .879 | Ryff & Keyes (1995) |
| | Environmental control | 5 | 3.3529 | .857 | |
| | Positive interpersonal relations | 5 | 3.8255 | .805 | |
| | Self-acceptance | 5 | 3.6217 | .891 | |
| | Purpose in life | 5 | 3.4891 | .888 | |
| Demographics | Gender, age, profession, marital status, income, and education | 1 item in each | - | - | - |

The questionnaire for the present study was adopted from the previous literature and validated with a pilot test. All responses to questions were made using a five-point Likert-type scale (1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree) with the exception of demographics and impulse purchase behavioural measures. The questionnaire's constructs, number of items for each construct, mean values, and sources are shown in Table 1.

As shown in Table 1, all 55 measures adopted in the study were entered into an exploratory factor analysis with the criterion of an Eigen value greater than 1. The results generated 13 factors as expected, and explained 70.834% of the total variance. As can be observed in Table 1, all the measures in the current study had reliability values greater than 0.729, and thus showed good internal consistency. The discriminant validity of the measures was checked by evaluating correlation coefficients among the constructs (Kim and Ock, 2008). Correlation coefficients of less than 0.8

Table 2. Correlation coefficients among the constructs.

| Constructs | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) | (8) | (9) | (10) | (11) | (12) |
|-----------------------------------|---------|---------|--------|---------|---------|---------|---------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Affective impulsivity (1) | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Cognitive impulsivity (2) | .557** | 1 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Preference for predictability (3) | .101 | .126* | 1 | | | | | | | | | |
| Decisiveness (4) | .154** | .241** | .055 | 1 | | | | | | | | |
| Discomfort with ambiguity (5) | .319** | .264** | .275** | -.097 | 1 | | | | | | | |
| Close-mindedness (6) | .117* | .312** | -.115* | .332** | -.208** | 1 | | | | | | |
| Normative influence (7) | .528** | .320** | .154** | .068 | .201** | .081 | 1 | | | | | |
| Informational influence (8) | .114* | -.051 | .044 | -.163** | .379** | -.304** | .313** | 1 | | | | |
| Autonomy (9) | -.116* | -.251** | -.115* | .164** | -.212** | -.089 | -.221** | -.102 | 1 | | | |
| Environmental control (12) | -.155** | -.332** | -.007 | -.046 | .096 | -.288** | -.039 | .168** | .268** | 1 | | |
| Positive relations (11) | .058 | -.154** | -.117* | -.039 | .169** | -.255** | .071 | .266** | .236** | .403** | 1 | |
| Self-acceptance (12) | .041 | -.252** | -.068 | .027 | -.010 | -.201** | .063 | .189** | .430** | .403** | .615** | 1 |
| Purpose in life (13) | -.040 | -.240** | -.044 | .093 | .034 | -.153** | .090 | .189** | .412** | .498** | .519** | .581** |

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$

between the constructs indicates that the constructs compared are conceptually distinct and have discriminant validity (Noh and Seo, 2009; Oh and Yoon (2009). As can be seen in Table 2, the strongest correlation coefficient is 0.615; no correlation coefficients were greater than 0.80. Correlation analysis showed that the constructs are conceptually distinct and all have discriminant validity.

3.2. Survey and Sample

The survey was conducted for approximately four weeks from August 2009 to September 2009. The sample comprised individuals with experience of both on-line and off-line shopping in the prior six months. Respondents were solicited around several campuses and from offices in a major city in South Korea. Of the 400 questionnaires distributed, 341 valid completed questionnaires were collected and used for analysis, a valid response rate of 85.3%. The respondents were evenly distributed between males (49.9%) and females. Most of the respondents were in their twenties (84.8%) and thirties (11.7%). Two hundred fifty-two respondents (73.9%) had completed an undergraduate education and were unmarried (72.1%), while 306 respondents (89.7%) had experienced impulse purchasing in the last 6 months, and had purchased products impulsively from their primary Internet shopping stores (44.9%), followed by discount retail stores (17.3%) and department stores (16.7%). The most frequent number of impulse purchases for the prior six months was twice (27.6%), followed by once (21.7%), three times (19.9%), five times (17.5%), and four times (5.3%). The products purchased impulsively included fashion products (62.3%), groceries (11.3%), and home appliances (9.9%).

3.3. Testing of hypotheses and discussion

Three regression models were run to test the hypotheses proposed in the current study, which are listed in Tables 3, 4, and 5. All three regression models were statistically significant.

H1 predicted that people with high affective (H1) and cog-

nitive impulsivity (H2) are more likely to purchase products impulsively. The results of the regression analysis to test these hypotheses are found in Table 3. While H1-1 is fully supported (standardized coefficient 0.254, $p < 0.000$), H1-2 is not (-0.042 , $p > 0.541$). The result from H1 as a whole is consistent with previous studies (Silvera et al. 2008; Verplanken et al., 2005); authors of these prior studies suggested that the overall predictive power of the regression model for affective impulse tendency is substantially stronger than that for cognitive impulse tendency. Accordingly, the insignificant effect of cognitive impulsivity on impulse purchasing behaviour should not be surprising. According to Silvera et al. (2008), impulsive buying at low to moderate levels can be an enjoyable pastime driven by the pursuit of hedonic motives. This can be translated into a proposition that the impulse buying model is more relevant to affective rather than cognitive impulsivity. These results suggest that affective impulsivity driven by feelings of excitement and an overpowering urge to buy determines the actual impulse buying behavior.

Table 3. Regression results for hypotheses H1-1 and H1-2.

| ANOVA | | R2 | | Coefficients (Dependent var.: Cognitive Impulsivity) | | | | | | |
|-------|------|------|---------|--|--------|-------------|-------|---------|------|--|
| F | Sig. | R2 | Adj. R2 | Independent Var. | Coeff. | Std. Coeff. | Error | t-value | Sig. | |
| 8.201 | .000 | .055 | .049 | Affective Impulsivity | 2.370 | .254 | .634 | 3.736 | .000 | |
| | | | | Cognitive Impulsivity | -.422 | -.042 | .722 | -.613 | .541 | |

H2 predicted that people with high NFCC, that is, people with high preference for predictability (H2-1), decisiveness (H2-2), discomfort with ambiguity (H2-3), and close-mindedness (H2-4), are more likely to have a high tendency toward affective impulsivity. The test results in Table 4 indicate that while coefficients from decisiveness (0.114, $p < 0.016$) and discomfort with ambiguity (0.316, $p < 0.000$) were significantly associated with affective impulsivity, coefficients from preference for predictability (-0.046 , $p > 0.325$) and close-mindedness (0.044, $p > 0.386$) were not significantly related to affective impulsivity. Thus, although H2-2 and H2-3 are supported, H2-1 and H2-4 are not. Accordingly, H2 is partially supported. H3 proposed that people with high NFCC, that is, people with a high preference for predictability (H3-1), decisiveness (H3-2), discomfort

with ambiguity (H3-3), and close-mindedness (H3-4), are more likely to have a high tendency for cognitive impulsivity. The test results in Table 5 show that while decisiveness (0.184, $p < 0.000$), discomfort with ambiguity (0.314, $p < 0.000$), and close-mindedness (0.186, $p < 0.000$) have a significant impact on cognitive impulsivity, preference for predictability (0.006, $p > 0.883$) did not have a significant impact on cognitive impulsivity. Thus, though H3-2, H3-3, and H3-4 are supported, H3-1 is not.

The results found in H2 and H3 are consistent with those found in an empirical study by Silvera et al. (2008), who demonstrated that individuals who have strong tendency toward impulse purchasing have a low need to evaluate. The number of components of NFCC affecting cognitive impulsivity exceeds that of the number of components of NFCC influencing affective impulsivity. This can be explained by the fact that NFCC is driven primarily by cognitive information processing, which in this context is closely related to lack of planning in association with purchase decisions (Verplanken and Herabadi, 2001). The results found when testing H2 and H3 as a whole suggest that NFCC is closely related to cognitions such as lack of prior planning rather than affective components such as the excitement and pleasure associated with impulse purchasing.

H4 proposed that people with high psychological wellbeing, i.e. people with high self-acceptance (H4-1), positive relations with others (H4-2), autonomy (H4-3), environmental mastery (H4-4), and purpose in life (H4-5), are less likely to have a high tendency for affective impulsivity. The results are found in Table 4. While environmental control (-0.150, $p < 0.000$) and purpose in life (-0.121, $p < 0.044$) had a significant impact on affective impulsivity, self-acceptance (0.109, $p > 0.080$), positive interpersonal relations (0.049, $p > 0.407$), and autonomy (0.062, $p > 0.239$) did not have a significant impact on affective impulsivity and are therefore not applicable in the context of impulse buying. Thus, though H4-4 and H4-5 are supported, H4-1, H4-2, and H4-3 are not. The results found here suggest that people with high environmental control and with a strong purpose in life do not have high affective impulsivity.

Table 4. Regression results for hypotheses H2, H4, and H6.

| ANOVA | | R2 | | Coefficients (Dependent var.: Affective Impulsivity) | | | | | | |
|-------|------|-----|---------|--|--------|-------------|-------|---------|------|--|
| F | Sig. | R2 | Adj. R2 | Independent Var. | Coeff. | Std. Coeff. | Error | t-value | Sig. | |
| 19.95 | .000 | .40 | .38 | Preference for predictability | -.047 | -.046 | .047 | -9.87 | .325 | |
| | | | | Decisiveness | .137 | .114 | .057 | 2.414 | .016 | |
| | | | | Discomfort with ambiguity | .338 | .316 | .054 | 6.314 | .000 | |
| | | | | Close-mindedness | .051 | .044 | .059 | .868 | .386 | |
| | | | | Self-acceptance | .124 | .109 | .071 | 1.758 | .080 | |
| | | | | Positive interpersonal relations | .063 | .049 | .076 | .831 | .407 | |
| | | | | Autonomy | .067 | .062 | .057 | 1.179 | .239 | |
| | | | | Environmental control | -.171 | -.150 | .059 | -2.897 | .004 | |
| | | | | Purpose in life | -.126 | -.121 | .062 | -2.023 | .044 | |
| | | | | Informational influence | -.117 | -.109 | .055 | -2.108 | .036 | |
| | | | | Normative influence | .549 | .503 | .053 | 10.423 | .000 | |

H5 proposed that people high in psychological wellbeing,

i.e. people with high self-acceptance (H5-1), positive relations with others (H5-2), autonomy (H5-3), environmental mastery (H5-4), and purpose in life (H5-5), are less likely to have a high tendency for cognitive impulsivity. The results in Table 5 show that while the coefficient from environmental control (-0.197, $p < 0.000$) is statistically significant, coefficients from self-acceptance (-0.093, $p > 0.137$), positive interpersonal relations (0.058, $p > 0.333$), autonomy (-0.027, $p > 0.609$), and purpose in life (-0.108, $p < 0.075$) are not significant and therefore these factors do not have a significant impact on affective impulsivity. Thus, though H5-4 is supported, H5-1, H5-2, H5-3, and H5-5 are not. These results suggest that people with high environmental control are not likely to engage in impulse purchasing.

Considering the results for H4 and H5 together, people with a purpose in life and the ability to control their environment have low impulsivity. The results for H4 and H5 are inconsistent with the previous proposition that psychological wellbeing is negatively associated with impulse buying tendency (Silvera et al., 2008). The results show that self-acceptance, autonomy, and positive relationship aspects of psychological wellbeing rarely have a statistically significant relationship with impulse buying, with the exceptions of control of the environment and a sense of purpose in life. These results challenge the theories that self-esteem and disposition negatively affect affective impulsivity. Self-esteem theory suggests that impulsivity is driven by avoidance of negative psychological states or dispositions. These inconsistent results may be explained by the fact that negative and positive measurements of individual trait differences do not necessarily evaluate the same concept. In the present study, positive aspects of psychological wellbeing were measured, which may explain why the factors included in the current study were not as significant as expected.

Table 5. Regression results for testing hypotheses H3, H5, and H7.

| ANOVA | | R2 | | Coefficients (Dependent var.: Cognitive Impulsivity) | | | | | | |
|-------|------|-----|---------|--|--------|-------------|-------|---------|------|--|
| F | Sig. | R2 | Adj. R2 | Independent Var. | Coeff. | Std. Coeff. | Error | t-value | Sig. | |
| 18.84 | .000 | .39 | .37 | Preference for predictability | .006 | .007 | .042 | .148 | .883 | |
| | | | | Decisiveness | .194 | .184 | .050 | 3.865 | .000 | |
| | | | | Discomfort with ambiguity | .294 | .314 | .047 | 6.202 | .000 | |
| | | | | Close-mindedness | .186 | .182 | .053 | 3.539 | .000 | |
| | | | | Self-acceptance | -.093 | -.093 | .062 | -1.489 | .137 | |
| | | | | Positive interpersonal relations | .065 | .058 | .067 | .970 | .333 | |
| | | | | Autonomy | -.026 | -.027 | .050 | -.512 | .609 | |
| | | | | Environmental control | -.196 | -.197 | .052 | -3.752 | .000 | |
| | | | | Purpose in life | -.099 | -.108 | .055 | -1.789 | .075 | |
| | | | | Informational influence | -.107 | -.114 | .049 | -2.182 | .030 | |
| | | | | Normative influence | .250 | .262 | .047 | 5.362 | .000 | |

H6 proposed that people susceptible to informational influence are less likely to have a high tendency for affective (6-1) and cognitive (H6-2) impulsivity. The results are found in Tables 4 and 5. Both affective impulsivity (-0.109, $p < 0.000$) and cognitive impulsivity (-0.114, $p < 0.030$) were impacted by

information influence (the coefficients were both negative and significant). Thus, H6, including H6-1 and H6-2, is supported.

H7 predicted that people susceptible to normative influence are more likely to have a high tendency for affective (H7-1) and cognitive (H7-2) impulsivity. The results are found in Tables 4 and 5. Normative influences affected affective impulsivity (0.503, $p < 0.000$) and cognitive impulsivity (0.262, $p < 0.000$) significantly. Thus, H7, including both H7-1 and H7-2, is supported.

The results found for H6 and H7 are consistent with previous research. Bearden et al. (1989) demonstrated that informational influence has a negative impact on impulsivity, whereas normative influence has a positive impact on impulsivity. In addition, Luo (2005) suggested that the presence of peers increases the urge to purchase, while the presence of family members decreases it. The results found in Luo (2005) imply that if the sources of social influence are different, the impacts will also be different. The current study confirms the finding that informational influence has a different impact from normative influence on impulsivity. Park and Lessig (1977) and Park and Lennon (2004) suggested that normative influence occurs through an individual's compliance and identification; however, informational influence occurs through internalization. Internalization requires a more effortful thinking process for the consumer with the adoption of values and norms of important others compared to compliance and identification, which can be attained at a purely superficial level.

IV. Implications and directions for future studies

The current study investigated whether impulse buying tendency has a positive impact on impulse buying behavior, and investigated how consumer characteristics such as NFCC, psychological wellbeing, and susceptibility to interpersonal influences affect impulse buying tendency. While consumer affective impulsivity has a strong positive impact on impulse buying behavior, cognitive impulsivity has no impact on this behavior. In contrast, affective impulse buying tendency is driven by sub-components of NFCC such as decisiveness and discomfort with ambiguity, psychological wellbeing constructs such as environmental control and purpose in life, and by normative and informational influences. Furthermore, cognitive impulse tendency is driven by sub-components of NFCC such as decisiveness, discomfort with ambiguity, and close-mindedness, and the psychological wellbeing constructs of environmental control, as well as normative and informational influences.

The present study has significant theoretical implications for academics. First, it contributes to the extant literature by confirming the previous proposition that affective impulsivity has a stronger impact on behavior than cognitive impulsivity. Previous studies based on affectivity and flow theories proposed that low to moderate levels of impulsivity are driven by reduced self-control or the failure of self-regulatory

mechanisms. Baumeister (2002) suggested that people choose to sacrifice self-control and allow themselves to make impulse purchase if they think such purchases might make them feel better. Rook and Gardner (1993) and Verplanken et al. (2005) insisted that the primary function of impulse buying might be a self-regulatory mechanism aimed at reducing negative emotions and/or feeling. The present study confirms the above propositions. Second, the present study also contributes to the literature by confirming that the impulse buying tendency can be viewed as a two-dimensional concept, as proposed by Verplanken and Herabadi (2001) and Silvera et al. (2008). The current study identified the two dimensions of impulsivity (affective and cognitive), and demonstrated that impulse purchasing behavior is explained mainly by affective impulsivity, not by cognitive impulsivity. These results suggest that affectivity, rather than cognition, is a better predictor of impulsive buying. Third, the current study contributes to the existing literature by accommodating new constructs in the research model that have rarely been included in previous studies. The present study incorporated psychological wellbeing and NFCC as potential influencing factors, and revealed that while decisiveness, discomfort with ambiguity, and close-mindedness aspects of NFCC are more closely associated with the cognitive component of impulsivity than the affective component, only the psychological wellbeing components of environmental control and purpose in life are significantly related to both affective and cognitive impulsivity. These results suggest that when measuring an individual's psychological trait variables related to impulsive buying, it would be better to measure the negative traits. That is, the current study suggests that negative and positive measurements of individual personality traits do not necessarily represent opposite sides of the same concept, and thus the negative side of personality traits is more preferable for studying consumer impulsive buying tendencies and behaviors. Fourth, the present study contributes to the literature by incorporating multi-dimensional concepts such as psychological wellbeing and NFCC. Silvera et al. (2008) investigated the impact of a single measure of subjective wellbeing on consumer impulsivity. The current study adopted a five-dimensional concept of psychological wellbeing and a four-dimensional concept of NFCC as predictors. These multi-dimensional concepts allow the interpretation of more diverse aspects of consumer information processing. Fifth, the current study also extends the existing literature by confirming the two competing routes of normative and informational influences. The results showed that while informational influence has a negative effect on impulse buying behavior, normative influence has a positive effect on impulse buying (Bearden et al., 1989; Park and Lessig, 1977; Park and Lennon, 2004). The present study shows that the effects of these two competing social influences on impulse purchasing behavior can be attributed to different sources of influence power. While internalization requires a more effortful thinking process that involves extensive searches for information and accumulation of relevant information, compliance and identification can be attained at the superficial lev-

els of an identifiable appearance and agreement with others.

The current study also has many practical implications. First, it suggests that people with affective impulsivity may be a primary target that companies should pay closer attention to. People with affective impulse tendency tend to exhibit feelings and traits associated with excitement, an irresistible urge to buy, and carelessness. Cultivating a more amenable shopping atmosphere and elevating the shopping mood will appeal to this consumer segment. Second, the present results indicate that NFCC is closely related to the cognitive dimension of impulsivity. People high in NFCC are easily attracted to purchases without prior meditation. These people are driven by careless thoughts, not by feelings or excitement. Rational advertising at the point of purchase will attract these customers. More specifically, succinct, confirmed, objective product information will attract people in this segment. Third, people susceptible to normative influence are another target market. These people tend to conform to the expectations of and try to identify with important others. Retailers and manufacturers could appeal to this segment by advertising their products and/or services as tools to identify with or conform to the expectations of others in the aspiration group. However, retailers should avoid targeting people susceptible to informational influence. These people are engaged in extensive information searches relevant to their purchases; more elaborate, long-term rational advertising messages, which can be internalized into the consumers' thought processes, will appeal to this segment.

Despite this study's theoretical and practical implications, the current findings should be interpreted with caution for several reasons. First, a small convenience sample was evaluated. The respondents were derived from pools of young office workers and university students, thus individuals of markedly different ages or employed in different professions were not included; our sample is thus unlikely to be representative of all consumers. Future studies should investigate consumers with more diverse backgrounds and demographic characteristics. Second, the behavioral indicator included in the present study was measured using two scales: frequency of impulse purchasing, and amount of money spent on impulse purchases. More accurate behavioral measures reflecting diverse aspects of impulse purchasing behavior need to be developed. Future studies similar to the present one should incorporate more diverse aspects of impulse purchase buying when measuring impulse behavior. Lastly, the current study showed that impulse purchases are driven mainly by affectivity. Accordingly, future studies should investigate personality traits closely related to theories that incorporate affectivity. Trait variables such as exploration and variety-seeking have been extensively explored in the context of impulse buying. Personality traits such as sensory curiosity, which is directly linked to seeking sensory experience (Litman, Roberts, and Spielberger, 2005), interpersonal curiosity (Litman and Pezzo, 2007), and atmospheric responsiveness (Eroglu et al., 2003), should be areas of future investigation. In particular, studies that investigate the interactional impact of personality traits and marketing variables on

impulse purchasing may increase our understanding of consumer behavior in this context.

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