

## **Comparative Analysis of Consumer's Impulse Buying Behavior with Different Household Incomes : Empirical Evidence from Faisalabad**

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### **Abstract**

In today's highly unpredictable marketing environment, where the consumer demands and behaviors are continuously and rapidly changing therefore various factors of consumer impulse buying behavior are proving to be challenging for the existing and new business organizations. Shopping has become a relaxing and rejoicing activity for the consumers making impulsive buying as a socially acceptable and common practice. So by taking into account all these aspects, the objective of this study was to understand the factors affecting impulse buying behavior of the consumer. Store atmosphere and fashion involvement were selected as independent variables while consumer impulse buying behavior was taken as dependent variable for this study. Likewise, impulse buying behavior of consumers with different monthly household income was also analyzed in this study. Primary data was collected through a questionnaire from 250 respondents of district Faisalabad, and then it was analyzed by using various statistical techniques. The results indicated a significant positive impact of store atmosphere and fashion involvement on consumer impulse buying behavior. The study also revealed that among consumer groups with different household incomes; at least one group differed from others in impulse buying behavior. These results were consistent with previous literature. These results could provide information to the marketers and retailers for planning and execution of various marketing techniques. Moreover, educators could expand on the findings by developing new studies examining consumer impulse buying behavior.

**Keywords:** Impulse Buying Behaviour, Store Atmosphere, Fashion Involvement.

### **1. Introduction**

Impulse buying behavior has been given attention previously regarding its distinguishing nature between impulse and non-impulse buying with respect to its commonly used definitional elements. There have been various arguments about impulse buying behavior phenomenon. When impulse buying behavior is compared to the planned purchasing behavior then it seems to be comparatively less careful, more affecting and wanted buying behavior. Longing for the instant satisfaction, fervently fascinated by the object and unreflective thinking are thought to be attached with those buyers who are highly indulged in impulsive buying and give mild consideration about the possible negative results from their instant unplanned purchasing. Moreover, the times span between the seeing of a

specific product and buying a specific product is short and therefore, that purchase is made instantly on the spot (Rook and Hoch, 1985).

Impulse buying has gained importance in the field of retailing and consumer behavior research and in recent years, it has been approved by many researchers that impulse buying behavior encompasses an affective or hedonic factor (Rook and Fisher, 1995). However, within the marketing world, impulse buying is considered as paradox.

Impulse buying behavior is influenced by various factors that include demographic factors, consumer emotional states (positive or negative), self-identity, personality traits of consumer, external cues, various promotional activities, environmental factors, situational factors, social factors etc.

In today's business, the concept of retail store is gaining popularity. Therefore, store environment also plays an important role in triggering impulse buying because. The concept behind retail store is to provide consumers with emotional and sensory stimuli that cast a psychological effect on the mind of consumer and trigger impulse buying. "Mall culture" is gaining popularity in Pakistan from the last decade due to securing an image of providing a wide range of durable and consumable products at reasonable price under one roof as well as pleasurable shopping experience. In retail store, products of various brands belong to different designers and sometimes addressed to a particular group are placed in such a way that provides consumers with opportunity of examining and buying various mix of items or physical products at a time under one roof.

Store atmosphere is related to an environment that is designed to stimulate five senses. Purchasing behavior is influenced by customer's perceptual and emotional responses that in turn are aroused with the help of store atmosphere. Lighting, color, music and scent are included in store atmosphere.

Within the retailing world, store environment has gained much attention from the last a few years. From the previous studies it has been found that consumers are susceptible to purchase more number of items when they experience pleasurable environment in a store hence, impulse buying is positively influenced by the pleasurable environment (Donovan and Rossiter, 1982).

It has also been explored previously that there is a conditional interaction between pleasure and arousal hence, consumer impulse buying behavior affected by store environment could be studied by applying stimulus-organism-response (S-O-R) model. According to this model, "environment sensory variables (Stimulus) influence affective response (Organism) to the environment, which in turn induces consumers to approach or avoid the environment (Response)" (Mehrabian and Russell, 1974).

From the study of environmental psychology literature related to the stimulus-organism-response (S-O-R) paradigm, there are approach and avoidance behaviors so shoppers respond to one of them. Therefore, shopping malls are built by considering the different dimensions like family shopping, time saving, making shopping comfortable that in turn creating the shopping experience rejoicing.

Within and outside the academic arena, shopping as a phenomenon of getting pleasure and enjoyment has long been recognized. In today's retailing era, where fashion has gained much importance due to different fashion-oriented products, styles and designs, consumers have also become conscious about the latest fashion and this extent of their interest with the fashion-oriented product is termed as fashion involvement. "Involvement is the motivational state of arousal or interest evoked by a particular stimulus or situation, and displayed through properties of drive" (O' Cass, 2004). Involvement concept is related to psychology proposed by Sherif and Cantril in 1947. From the previous studies, fashion involvement was found to be the most predictive of purchase behavior and laid at the heart of the person-object relationship (Martin, 1998). Therefore, impulse buying behavior in relation to fashion involvement and positive emotions has gained attention from the last a few years (Jones et al., 2003).

Moreover, in today's unpredictable environment, household income is also one of the major factors influencing impulse buying behavior. From the past studies it was concluded that among the demographics, income also influences buying behavior of consumers (Li et al., 1999). Likewise, in another study related to Vietnam consumers, it was found that impulse buying behavior of Vietnamese consumers was significantly related to income, age and individualism (Mai et al., 2003).

In marketing research although there has been given much attention on the impulse buying behavior of the consumer and its determinants but unfortunately, few studies have been conducted so far on impulse buying in developing nations like Pakistan. Therefore, behavior of consumer related to impulse buying has become an interesting phenomenon not only for the researchers but also for the marketers in Pakistan since last few years.

In Pakistan, although behavior of consumer deviates according to the situation, available environment, appealing climate and variety of products yet some well-known departmental stores of District Faisalabad are selected for this study because of its emerging trends from the last decade. Departmental stores are considered suitable for this research because it is considered as large stores, offers a variety of "soft" and "hard goods" at reasonable average prices, assorted in huge amounts, often displayed in broad range of categories and offer considerable customer service.

Increasing competition, emerging trends of mega malls and departmental stores, variety of products in local markets, credit facilities, dramatic variations in disposable income and difference in per capita income has been observed in Pakistan as a result of political, social and economic changes. Therefore, a clear change in purchasing behavior has been observed in Pakistan from the last decade. Consumer impulse buying in the presence of such behavior is still an addressed and retailers of the departmental stores need to conduct a detailed study on various factors resulting in impulse buying.

Therefore, this study is an effort to determine the factors related to store as well as fashion that affect and trigger impulse buying behavior of consumers in District Faisalabad. Based on the explanation of the background, the research objectives formulated as follows: 1) To determine the impact of store atmosphere and fashion involvement on consumer impulse buying behavior in District Faisalabad. 2) To analyze the impulse buying behavior of consumers with different monthly household incomes.

The present study will enhance the knowledge of marketers, designers, owners, investors and retailers about the purchasing trends, buying capacity and also the approach-avoidance behavior of consumers. It will also serve as guidance to the educators and will make them able to get directions for the conduction of research related to other areas in Pakistan.

## **2. Theoretical Background**

### **2.1. Impulse Buying**

Specifically, impulsive buying involves the consumer unintentional, unexpected and rapid desire to purchase something that he has not planned previously. There have been various arguments about impulse buying behavior phenomenon. Rook (1987) narrated that impulse buying behavior was frequently made by those consumers who did not pay much attention towards the consequences of their purchases and thus did not bother much about their assessment as well as calculations for that purchase. However, studies on the types of impulse buying behavior had also been conducted previously. Odabasi and Baris (2002) discussed various types of impulse buying behavior such as pure impulse, reminder impulse, suggestion impulse and planned impulse (unplanned buying caused by planned buying). Likewise, Sharma et al. (2010) proposed a conceptual framework focusing on consumer impulsiveness (CI), optimum stimulation level (OSL) and self-monitoring (SM) in order to understand the gap related to similarities and differences between impulse buying behavior.

However, with the passage of time, investigation on the behavioral dimensions regarding impulse buying also gained attention such as impulse buying behavior encompasses an affective or hedonic factor (Rook and Fisher, 1995). Bitner (1992) claimed that the behavior (approach or avoidance) of the consumer was influenced by the cognitive, emotional and physiological responses that in turn were provoked by the physical environment of a store. It had been observed previously that impulse buying behavior was influenced by various factors that include demographic factors, consumer emotional states (positive or negative), self-identity, personality traits of consumer, external cues, various promotional activities, environmental factors, situational factors, social factors etc.

Kumar and Mishra (2012) concluded that among the various elements that affected or triggered impulse buying behavior were the special offer or discount, advertisement, brand of product, time spent in market or shopping mall, special displays that enhanced impulse buying behavior. Alagoz and Ekici (2011) examined the ins and outs of impulse purchasing behavior in addition to the distinctive structure of consumers who were engaged in impulse purchasing. They summarized that sometimes people do shopping without considering their needs and the outcomes. Hence, it was found that impulse buying behavior was provoked, stimulated, influenced and triggered by various factors (Turley and Milliman, 2000).

### **2.2. Impact of Store Atmosphere on Consumer Impulse Buying Behavior**

Within the retailing world, store environment has gained much attention from the last a few years and many studies had been conducted so far to examine the influence of store atmosphere on impulse buying. Mehrabian and Russell (1974) proposed stimulus-organism-response (S-O-R) model and discussed three emotional responses (pleasure-displeasure, arousal-disarousal and dominance-submissiveness) in their study. This model occupied an important position in literature for the study of store environment impact on shopping behavior. Hence, it was concluded that consumer experience any of those three emotions while their visit to a specific store (environmental stimuli).

Donovan and Rossiter (1982) found that consumers were susceptible to purchase more number of items when they experienced pleasurable environment in a store hence, impulse buying was positively influenced by the pleasurable

environment. Additionally, Virvilaite et al. (2011) conducted study to identify the influence of various factors including external and internal stimuli on impulse purchasing of outfit goods. It was found that shop environment and hedonic motives among external stimuli were the most influencing factors that triggered impulse buying of outfit goods.

Abideen and Saleem (2011) investigated about effective advertising and its influence on consumer buying behavior in Pakistan and explained that impulse buying was influenced by environmental response. Banat and Wandebori (2012) examined the effect of store design and store atmosphere on the customer sales per visit and concluded that store design and store atmosphere both played an important and major role in making the shopping experience attractive and comfortable that in turn increased the customer sales per visit.

Hence, this study incorporates the influence of store atmosphere on consumer impulse buying behavior.

### **2.3. Impact of Fashion Involvement on Consumer Impulse Buying Behavior**

Fashion-oriented impulse buying behavior in relation to fashion involvement and positive emotions has gained attention from the last a few years (Jones et al., 2003). Fairhurst et al. (1989) narrated that fashion-oriented impulse buying was more susceptible to be performed by those consumers who were highly engaged in fashion. Han et al. (1991) examined fashion-oriented impulse buying within the clothing context. They concluded that an innovative or new style and design when come in the market and a person become aware of it or he made a perception about its fashionability attributes then it was related to fashion-oriented impulse buying.

O' Cass (2004) found that purchasing decisions made by the consumer confidence were influenced by the fashion knowledge and personal characteristics (i.e. female and younger). Park et al. (2006) proposed that fashion-oriented impulse buying behavior was positively affected by both fashion involvement and positive emotions however; greatest effect was observed by fashion-involvement.

Likewise, Ashutosh and Amit (2012) conducted study related to the purchasing intentions of high and low involvement products in addition to the influence of payment mechanism and shopping situation. They concluded that in contrast to low involvement products, consumers showed more variation in shopping situation and payment mechanism that in turn were related to purchasing intention for high involvement products.

Therefore, on the basis of previous studies, it could be narrated that fashion involvement plays an important role in provoking impulse buying behavior.

### **2.4. Impact of Household Income on Consumer Impulse Buying Behavior**

In today's unpredictable environment, impulse buying behavior is affected by various factors and household income is one of them. Li et al. (1999) examined the online buying behavior of consumers. From the study it was concluded that among the demographics, income also influenced online buying behavior of consumers.

Mai et al. (2003) conducted study on the consumers belonging to the urban areas of Vietnam. It was found that impulse buying behavior of Vietnamese consumers was significantly related to income, age and individualism. Although the nature of Vietnam consumers was collective yet most commonly purchased items were personal-use products. Seiders et al. (2005) determined that convenience, customer involvement, competitive intensity and household income served as moderators in between customer satisfaction and repurchase behavior relationship.

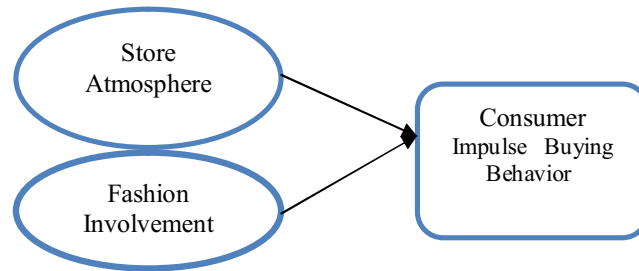
## **3. Conceptual Framework**

On the basis of previous literature, following hypothesis has been proposed for the current study.

H1: There is a significant impact of store atmosphere on consumer impulse buying.

H2: Fashion involvement has a significant influence on consumer impulse buying behavior during shopping.

H3: Among consumer groups with different household incomes at least one group differs from others in impulse buying behavior.



**Figure 1:** Conceptual Framework of the Study

## 4. Methodology

Both Primary and secondary data were used in this study according to the requirement of the objectives.

### 4.1. Sample and Data Collection

A structured questionnaire based on 5 point Lickert scale containing 17 multiple choice questions was constructed for demographic, independent and dependent variables.

Questionnaire was floated among the target individuals (consumers of the target departmental stores. Data collection was carried out during the month of June 2013. Overall, from the 270 questionnaires distributed, 250 responses (consisting 50.8% of Men & 49.2% of Women) were complete enough to be considered for further analysis and to test for hypothesis.

### 4.2. Measures

There were two independent variables used in structured questionnaire (i.e. store atmosphere and fashion involvement. Store atmosphere relevant to departmental stores included four items. It was measured using 5-Lickert scale (1. Strongly disagree to 5. Strongly agree). Example of items included "The store has a pleasant atmosphere". The store atmosphere was assessed by four items adapted from Baker et al., (1994). Fashion involvement included four items. It was measured using 5-Lickert scale (1. Strongly disagree to 5. Strongly agree). Example of items included "I usually have one or more outfits of the very latest style ". The same type of questionnaire was developed by Fairhurst et al., (1989).

For dependent variable i.e. consumer impulse buying behavior 5 point Lickert scale (1. Strongly disagree to 5. Strongly agree) was used. The impulse buying tendency was assessed by nine items adapted from Rook and Fisher (1995). A sample item is "I often buy things spontaneously".

The reliability and consistency of questionnaire by applying Cronbach's alpha was 0.698. Convenience sampling was used to collect data. There was no need to translate the Questionnaire into native language as English is taught in Pakistan from school level so except for entry level jobs, almost all individuals could understand it.

## 5. Findings

This chapter includes two sections. First section explores impact of selected variables on consumer impulse buying behavior. In second section ANOVA is used to compare different household income groups regarding consumer impulse buying behavior.

All the data collected for this study were processed and analyzed by using statistical software package for social sciences (SPSS). To test the formulated hypothesis, linear multiple regression was used by taking store atmosphere and fashion involvement as independent variables and consumer impulse buying behavior as dependent variable. For the comparison between consumers having different household incomes independent samples T test was applied.

### 5.1. Factors affecting Consumer Impulse Buying Behavior

**Table 1: Multiple Regression Model Summary**

Model	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	Std. Error of Estimate
1	.722 <sup>a</sup>	.522	.518	.38193

a. Predictors: (Constant), IV\_FI, IV\_SA

b. Dependent Variable: Consumer Impulse Buying Behavior

In above table, the value of R2 also known as coefficient of determination in the analysis was 0.522 which stated that all independent variables i.e. store atmosphere (SA) and fashion involvement (FI) jointly explained 52.2% variation in dependent variable i.e. consumer impulse buying behavior (CIBBe). The value of adjusted R2 in the analysis was 0.518.

**Table 2: ANOVA**

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean	Square F	Sig.
Regression	39.27	2	19.64	134.63	.000 <sup>a</sup>
Residual	36.03	247	.146		
Total	75.31	249			

a. Predictors: (Constant), IV\_FI, IV\_SA

b. Dependent Variable: Consumer Impulse Buying Behavior

The ANOVA table as a whole showed the significance of model (F = 19.640, p .01 or 1%) which showed that the regression model is a good fit for the data and explained the overall appropriateness of model.

**Table 3: Coefficients Table**

Independent Variables	(β)	(t)	(sig)
Constant	-.049	-.255	.799
Store Atmosphere	.559	12.51	.000
Fashion Involvement	.283	7.74	.000
Dependent Variable: Consumer Impulse Buying Behavior			

Significance at 0.05 level of confidence

The results showed a significant positive impact of store atmosphere on consumer impulse buying behavior (β = .559, p .01). This finding was consistent with the previous research that among the various external stimuli such as shop environment, shop staff and integrated marketing communication; shop environment was the most influencing factors that triggered impulse buying of outfit goods (Virvilaite et al., 2011). Likewise, it was found that emotional states (pleasure and arousal) of consumer were significantly affected by the store environment that results in the stimulation of impulse buying behavior (Xu, 2007). Therefore, H1 hypothesis was accepted.

Fashion involvement (β = .283, p .01) proved to have significantly positive impact on consumer impulse buying behavior. This finding was also consistent with the previous research that fashion-oriented impulse buying behavior was positively affected by both fashion involvement and positive emotions however; greatest effect was observed by fashion-involvement (Park et al., 2006). Furthermore, fashion involvement was more likely to be examined as the antecedent of fashion-oriented impulse buying therefore; those consumers who were influenced by the fashion knowledge and personal characteristics (i.e. female and younger) were more involved in fashion clothing and felt more confidence in making purchasing decisions (O'Cass, 2004). Hence, H2 hypothesis was accepted.

## 5.2. Analysis of third Hypothesis

The descriptive table showed house hold income level group of 5000-15000 had N = 55, M = 2.89 and SD = 0.64. In income level group of 16000-25000 number of consumers were N = 61, M = 3.11 and SD = .46. Under income level group of 26000-35000, 63 respondents were present with M = 3.07 and SD = .63. 22 consumers had 36000-45000 income level (M = 3.11 and SD = .50). In the last income level group i.e. 46000 or above, number of consumers were N = 49, M = 3.22 and SD = 0.38.

**Table 4:** Descriptives

Monthly Household Income (Rs.)	N	Mean	S.D
5000-15000	55	2.89	.637
16000-25000	61	3.11	.466
26000-35000	63	3.06	.634
36000-45000	22	3.10	.502
46000 or above	49	3.22	.381
Total	250	3.07	.549

**Table 5:** Test of Homogeneity of Variances in Monthly Household Income of Respondents

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
4.385	4	245	.002

The above table displayed the result of the Levene test for homogeneity of variances. The significance level ( $p = .002$ ) was lesser than  $p = .05$ . So assumption for the homogeneity of variances was violated leading to the acceptance of H3 which was that among consumer groups with different household incomes at least one group differs from others in impulse buying behavior.

**Table 6:** ANOVA

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	3.07	4	.768	2.606	.036
Within Groups	72.237	245	.295		
Total	75.310	249			

In above table results of a one-way ANOVA (analysis of variances) were displayed. By looking at significance column of F-test ( $p = .036 < .05$ ) the results revealed that all household incomes had significant impact on consumer impulse buying behavior  $F(4, 245) = 2.606, p = .036$ . The results were consistent with the previous results that impulse buying behavior of Vietnamese consumers was significantly related to income, age and individualism (Mai et al., 2003). Likewise, convenience, customer involvement, competitive intensity and household income served as moderators in between customer satisfaction and repurchase behavior relationship (Seiders et al., 2005).

### 5.3. Robust Tests of Equality of Means

**Table 7:** Consumer Impulse Buying Behavior

	Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Welch	2.751	4	96.77	.032
Brown-Forsythe	2.721	4	193.97	.031

a. Asymptotically F distributed

The above table showed the Welch and Brown-Forsythe F's. Welch and Brown-Forsythe significance values are used because both tests adjust F and the residual degrees of freedom to combat problems arising from violations of the homogeneity of variance assumption. In Welch test Welch's F adjusts F and the residual degrees of freedom to combat problems arising from violations of the homogeneity of variance assumption (Field, 2009). As Levenes test results showed violation of homogeneity of variances. So the results of both of these tests revealed that F's of both had significance values less than .05. So our conclusion remained the same that that the impact of different household incomes on consumer impulse buying behavior is different.

**Table 8:** Multiple Comparisons

(I) household Income	(J) householdIncom	Mean Difference (I-J)	Sig.
5000-15000	16000-25000	-.22202	.220
	26000-35000	-.17435	.574
	36000-45000	-.21515	.525
	46000 or above	-.33358*	.013
16000-25000	5000-15000	.22202	.220
	26000-35000	.04768	.989
	36000-45000	.00687	1.000
	46000 or above	-.11156	.642
26000-35000	5000-15000	.17435	.574
	16000-25000	-.04768	.989
	36000-45000	-.04080	.998
	46000 or above	-.15923	.472
36000-45000	5000-15000	.21515	.525
	16000-25000	-.00687	1.000
	26000-35000	.04080	.998
	46000 or above	-.11843	.860
46000 or above	5000-15000	.33358*	.013
	16000-25000	.11156	.642
	26000-35000	.15923	.472
	36000-45000	.11843	.860

\* The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.



In above table results of Games-Howell post-hoc test were reported. This test was used because the results of Levene's test violated the assumption of homogeneity of variance. It was used to determine which group(s) differ. Test results revealed that statistically significant difference ( $p = .013 < .05$ ) existed between consumer group having 5000-15000 household income and consumer group with income level of 46000 or above. Consumers with income 46000 or above ( $M = 3.22$ ,  $SD = 0.38$ ,  $SE = 0.05$ ) showed more impulse buying behavior than consumer with income level of 5000-15000 ( $M = 2.89$ ,  $SD = 0.63$ ,  $SE = 0.09$ ). However, there were no significant differences between other groups. Therefore it is proved that there is an impact of income on impulse buying behavior and it is consistent with the previous research that young people with high income in Rawalpindi and Islamabad also had higher impulse buying tendency compared with people in general (Tirmizi et al., 2009).

## 6. Conclusion

Impulse buying behavior has been given attention previously regarding its distinguishing nature between impulse and non-impulse buying. However, within the marketing world, impulse buying is still considered as paradox.

There exists a scarcity of research in under developing countries like Pakistan. Therefore, the purpose of the study was to determine the determinants of consumer impulse buying behavior in District Faisalabad. Following conclusions were drawn from the results:

The results showed a significant positive impact of store atmosphere on consumer impulse buying behavior. It means that an increase in store atmosphere would increase consumer impulse buying behavior. Likewise, an attractive and satisfactory store atmosphere will influence consumers to perform unplanned purchases on the spot.

Likewise, by realizing the importance of fashion needs in current setup, this study also focused on fashion involvement construct. Fashion involvement proved to have significantly positive impact on consumer impulse buying behavior. So consumers more concerned and interested in fashion product category are more likely to perform impulse buying behavior related to fashion. Likewise, impulse buying related to new style or the latest and current fashion that just came out would likely to be performed by those consumers who possess high fashion involvement.

Similarly, one of the objectives of this study was to analyze the impulse buying behavior of consumers with different monthly household incomes. It was concluded that among consumer groups with different household incomes at least one group differs from others in impulse buying behavior.

Hence, the present study will enhance the knowledge of marketers, designers, owners, investors and retailers about the purchasing trends, buying capacity and also the approach-avoidance behavior of consumers. It will also serve as guidance to the educators and will make them able to get directions for the conduction of research related to other areas in Pakistan.

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