

UNRAVELING THE PSYCHOLOGY BEHIND SPONTANEOUS BUYING: THE IMPACT OF VISUAL MERCHANDISING AND HEDONIC SHOPPING MOTIVATION ON IMPULSIVE BUYING BEHAVIOR AMONG ADULTS "

Ayesha Umar^{1}, Rahma Sohail², Ramsha Iqbal³, Tooba Sana Moeed⁴, Zahra Hassan⁵, Nimra Aftab⁶,*

1 Lecturer, Bahria School of Professional Psychology, Bahria University, Islamabad.

2 Lecturer/Clinical Psychologist, Department of Psychology, Shifa Tameer-e-Millat University, Islamabad, Pakistan

3, 4,5,6, BS, Department of Psychology, University of Wah, Wah Cantt, Pakistan

*Corresponding Author: Ayesha Umar

ORCID ID: 0009-0000-2176-2643

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine the role of visual merchandising and Hedonic Shopping motivation in triggering Impulsive buying behavior among young adults. We intended to shed some light on the potential contributors to impulsive buying behavior within Pakistani Population. By focusing on these visual merchandising which includes (window display, mannequin display, Floor merchandising, promotional signage) and hedonic shopping motivation. In this research, 315 young adults (male and female) were taken as participants who were aged between 18-45 years from Rawalpindi, Wah cant and Islamabad. Impulsive buying Questionnaire (IBQ), Visual Merchandising scale (VMS), and Hedonic shopping motivation questionnaire (HSMQ) were applied. Descriptive Analysis, Pearson Correlation, T-test and Mediation were calculated. The results revealed a significant moderate positive correlation between hedonic shopping motivation and impulsive buying behavior, as well as between hedonic shopping motivation and visual merchandising. Process model 4 was used to test the. Mediation analysis, in which results reveal that variable have indirect effect between them which is significant. There is also a significant indirect effect of Visual merchandising on Impulsive buying behavior through Hedonic shopping motivation. The study found that visual merchandising has a positive effect on impulsive Buying behavior among adults, and this effect is mediated by hedonic shopping motivation. It was concluded that visual merchandizing and hedonic shopping motivation have an impact on impulsive buying behavior. The findings of the study can be applied in future by including external factors like marketing and social media and online shopping behavior. Long term studies can also

be conducted and develop strategies to promote responsible consumption and reduce negative effects of impulsive buying.

Keywords: *Visual Merchandising, Hedonic Shopping Motivation, Impulsive buying behavior, young adults*

Introduction

Consumer behavior is the study of consumers' action during searching for, purchasing, using, evaluating and disposing of products and services they expect will satisfy their need. It helps marketers in understanding consumer decision-making processes (Sydorenko N., 2023). Generation Y is emerging as enormous force in U.S. marketplace with its growing expanding power and its member's unique spending patterns. The research used the Mehrabian and Russell (1974) S-O-R model to study the impact of store environments on the impulsive buying behaviors of adult generation Y consumers. Results show that store environments have a significant impact on these consumers' emotional states, including pleasure and arousal, which in turns influence consumers impulse buying behaviors in the store (Xu Y et al., 2007).

Impulsive Buying in addition to having emotional content can be triggered by several factors, including: the store environment, life satisfaction, self-esteem, and the emotional state of the consumer at that time (Gogoi and Shillong, 2020). The buying experience increasingly depends on the interaction between the person and the point-of-sale environment, but it is not just the atmosphere that stimulates the impulsive behavior of the consumer. The sensory and psychological factors associated with the type of products, the knowledge about them and brand loyalty, often end up overlapping the importance attributed to the physical environment (Platania et al., 2016).

The impulse buying causes an emotional lack of control generated by the conflict between the immediate reward and the negative consequences that the purchase can originate, which can trigger compulsive behaviors that can become chronic and pathological (Pandya and Pandya, 2020). Research developed by Aragoncillo and Orús (2018) reveals that 40.0% of consumers spend more money than planned in physical stores compared to 25.0% in online purchases. This situation can be explained by the fact that consumers must wait for the product to be delivered when they buy online, and this time interval may make impulse purchases unfeasible.

Visual merchandising refers to the way products are presented and organized for promotional purposes. It is important as it impacts brand image, can increase engagement with customers, and helps to drive sales. A window display is one example of visual merchandising. A window display provides a glimpse of the appearance of the products and can catch the attention of window shoppers. Visual merchandising takes place in many different forms. Some examples of the different types of visual merchandising include window displays, signage and graphics, mannequins, and the store layout (Rogers K. 2023).

The results of the research conducted on visual merchandising suggest that the themes that linked most strongly to purchase intention were merchandise colors, presentation style, awareness of fixtures, path finding, sensory qualities of materials and lighting. Initial findings suggest that liking of display does not totally determine purchase, but does make it four times more likely (Shoona et al., 2003).

As per the findings of the previous research, the window display, forum display, floor merchandising and shop brand name (independent variables) were significantly associated to consumer impulse buying behavior (dependent variable). However, forum display is negatively related to consumer impulse buying and window display, floor merchandising and shop brand name are positively related to consumer impulse buying behavior (Bhatti K. L., 2013).

Hedonic shopping motivation refers to the desire to shop for pleasure and enjoyment rather than for practical reasons. It means you shop to experience positive emotions and fulfill your personal desires. It's like treating yourself to something nice just because it makes you happy. Hedonic shopping motives are similar to the task orientation of utilitarian shopping motives, only the "task" is concerned with hedonic fulfillment, such as experiencing fun, amusement, fantasy, and sensory stimulation (Babin et al., 1994). According to Emrich O. et al., hedonic shopping experience in collectivistic cultures is less strongly associated with self-oriented gratification shopping, yet more strongly associated with others-oriented role shopping (Emrich O. et al., 2014).

Previous literature indicated that impulse buying behavior was significantly related to adventure, gratification, value and idea shopping motivations. The findings of this study can help retailers to gain a useful insight into the shopping motivations that trigger impulse buying behavior. A focus on entertainment, excitement and sales may be an effective retailing strategy to stimulate impulse buying behavior. (Tatic K. et al., 2011). According to Tirtayasa, Hedonic Shopping Motivation

variable had significant effect with Impulse Buying, the Shopping Lifestyle variable has significant effect with Impulse Buying and the Involvement Fashion variable has significant effect with Impulse Buying (Tirtayasa S. et al., 2020).

The big five traits are also likely to be associated with hedonic shopping motivation. The studies shows that the traits, Openness to Experience, Agreeableness, and Extroversion traits are correlated to the Hedonic (i.e., ludic, aesthetic, and epicurean) shopping value whereas, Emotional Stability, and Conscientiousness traits are correlated to the Utilitarian (i.e., functional, task-related, and rational) shopping value (Guido G. 2006).

There may be some gender differences that may affect hedonic shopping motivation and purchase intentions. The studies show that there is no online-gender effect on hedonic shopping motivation and purchase intentions. However, offline-gendered behavior does significantly affect hedonic shopping motivation and purchase intentions for females across all product categories. Findings support the proposition that gender is merely a prosthetic device of the private self and is an intentional manipulation and misrepresentation of the anonymous body. Online gender is a performance that is hidden by the technological veil from the offline space and public self, without social constraints or criticisms (Davis R. 2013).

There is evidence to suggest that impulsive buying is linked to hedonic shopping motivation and also associated with visual merchandising as there are the factors related to the buying behavior but these concepts are being studied in relation with other variables according to the literature. There may be different factors that affect the relationship between our variables. However, there is little research that study the combined relationship between impulsive buying, hedonic shopping motivation and visual merchandising among adults as most of the studies on impulsive buying are conducted on adolescents so there is scarcity of research that impulsive buying on adults and its relationship with hedonic shopping motivation and visual merchandising. There is a gap in literature so we will try to bridge this gap in literature through our research.

Conceptual Framework

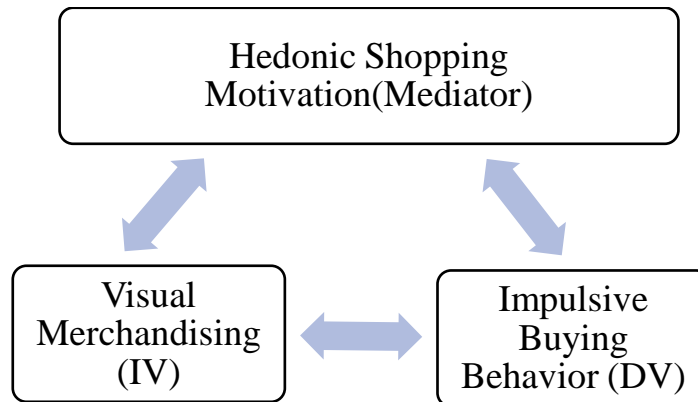


Figure 1

Conceptual Framework representing the impact of visual merchandising on impulsive buying behavior having mediating role of hedonic shopping motivation

Methodology

This study was based on a cross-sectional correlational research design.

Sample

The sample of the study consisted on 315 adults' age range (18-45). It was obtained through purposive sampling technique. This study was conducted on adults aged from 18-45 (Young and middle adults) who are mentally and physically sound. This study was excluded the people with any psychological problem. People with financial issues and ones who are uneducated are also excluded.

Instruments

Demographic information was obtained through demographic sheet, concerning the Information about participant's age, years of formal education, gender, family system, marital status, monthly income and financial dependency. The demographics variables are measured through T-test and one-way ANOVA.

Impulsive Buying Behaviour was measured by using the impulsive buying Questionnaire (IBQ) by Rook and Fisher (1995). Visual Merchandising scale (VMS) by (Beatty Ferrel, 1998; Han, 1987; Rook & Hoch, 1985; Weun, Jones, & Betty, 1997; Youn & Faber, 2000) and Hedonic shopping motivation questionnaire (HSMQ) by Arnolds and Reynolds (2003).

Ethical Considerations

Participants must be clearly informed about the purpose of the study, how their data was be used, and their right to withdraw from the study at any time. Participants' identities and personal information must be kept confidential. Participants' privacy should be respected throughout the study. The study should not cause any physical or psychological harm to participants. Participants should be debriefed after the study, informing them about the results and answering any questions they may have.

Procedure

Participants were informed about the nature, purpose and the importance of the study, Firstly, the informed consent taken from the adults before the conduction of study in order to maintain the confidentiality and understanding of study ie, benefits and harms the study may come with. Then, the participants were asked to fill out the given questionnaire. After completing the questionnaire, the participants were thanked and appreciated for their cooperation in our research.

Statistical analysis: SPSS was used for statistical analysis.

Results

Table 1

Descriptive characteristics of descriptive variable (N=315)

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Age		
18-25	232	73.7
26-35	52	16.5
35-45	31	9.8

Gender		
Male	98	31.1
Female	217	68.9
Monthly income		
10k-30k	166	52.7
30k-50k	58	18.4
50k-100k	91	28.9
Family system		
Nuclear	214	67.9
Joint	101	32.1
Marital status		
Single	82	26.0
Married	233	74.0
Financial dependency		
Parents	202	64.1
Spouse	24	7.6
Independent	73	23.2
Other	16	5.1

Note: f= frequency, %= percentage

Table 1 explains the frequency and percentage of demographic variables of the participants included in the study.

Descriptive Analysis

Table 2

Descriptive statistics and alpha reliability coefficient for study variable (N=315)

Variable	K	a	(S.D)	Range		Skewness	Kurtosis
				Actual	Potential		
Vm	14	.849	42.03(9.34)	15-70	14-70	.081	.578
Hsm	18	.889	58.15(12.42)	26-95	18-90	-.105	-.391
Ibb	9	.761	27.36(6.00)	9-42	9-45	-.228	-.101

Note K= number of items, α = Cronbach's alpha reliability, SD= standard deviation, VM =visual merchandising, HSM =hedonic shopping motivation, IBB =impulsive buying behavior, α =Cronbach alpha

Table 2 Illustrate the number of items, Cronbach alpha, mean, standard deviation, range, skewness and kurtosis for the scales. Mean and standard deviation were computed to determine the general average scores of participants on particular scales used in the study, the values for reliability coefficients are between 0 and 1 which shows reliability falls in acceptable range and skewness and kurtosis values are less than 2 which shows that data is in normal range and normally distributed. The reliability of impulse buying is moderately and The reliability of visual merchandising and hedonic motivation is high moderate.

Correlation Analysis

Table 3

Correlations between variables of interest

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
VMT	1	.785**	.805**	.700**	.810**	.509**	.457**
VMWD		1	.539**	.386**	.537**	.408*	.336**
VMMD			1	.455**	.480**	.405**	.385**
VMFM				1	.424*	.287**	.352**
VMPS					1	.460**	.350**
HSMT						1	.600**
IBBT							1

Note: VMT=visual merchandising, VMWD (VMT subscale) = Influence of window display, VMMD (VMT subscale) = influence of mannequin display, VMFM (VMT subscale) = Influence of floor merchandising, VMPS (VMT subscale) = Influence of promotional signage, HSMT= hedonic shopping motivation, IBBT= Impulsive Buying.

Correlation analysis is performed to assess the correlation between impulsive buying, hedonic shopping motivation and visual merchandising. Visual merchandising and its subscales are significantly correlated with hedonic shopping motivation and impulsive buying ($P > .01$). Moreover, hedonic shopping motivation is moderately significantly correlated with impulsive buying and visual merchandising at the level of 0.01. It means that our variables of interest are moderately significantly correlated with each other.

T-test across Gender Differences

Table 4

Comparison of Adults on basis of gender across impulsive buying and visual merchandising

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Male</i>		<i>female</i>		<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>95% CI</i>		<i>Cohen's D</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>			<i>LL</i>	<i>UL</i>	
IBBT	28.5	5.941	26.8203	5.97060	2.399	.017	.31336	3.16854	2.95
VM	57.5	12.511	58.4055	12.40264	-.538	.591	-3.79179	2.16440	2.95

Note: *IBBT*= Impulsive buying, *VM*= visual merchandising

Table displays the mean, standard deviation, t and p values of males and females on all study variable. The results indicate the significant mean differences in males and females across our variables of interest that indicates females have more tendencies for impulsive buying than males

Mediation Analysis

Table 5

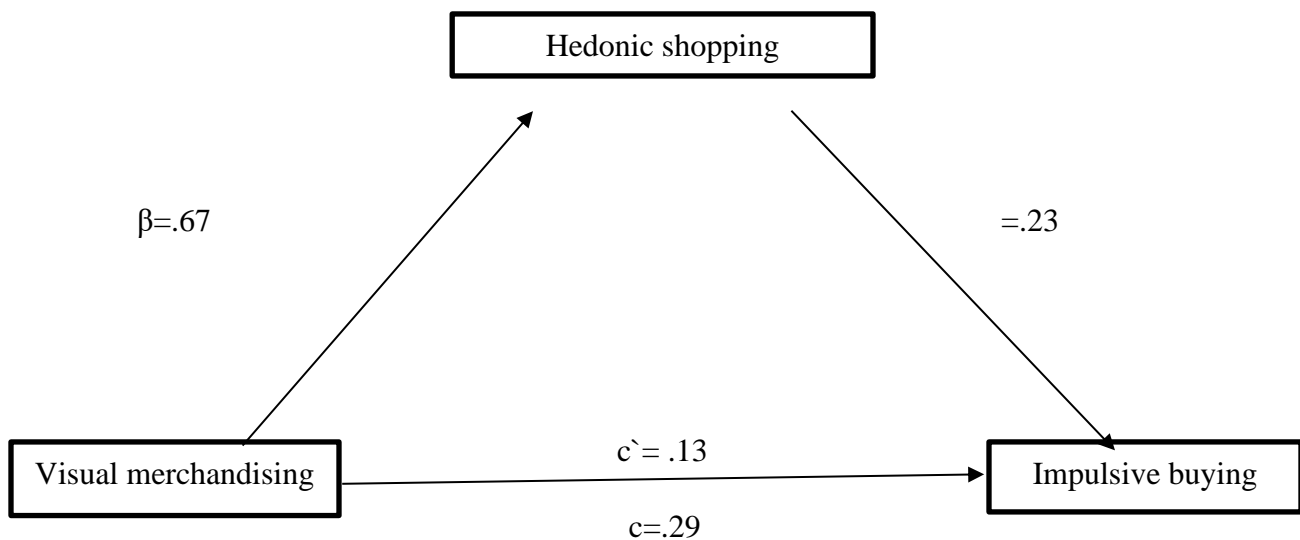
Sample mediation effect of Hedonic shopping motivation between visual merchandising and impulsive buying behavior among adults (N=315)

Relationship	Coefficient	CI		T	P
		LL	UL		
VM→HSM	.67	.54	.80	10.44	.00

HSM→IBB	.23	.19	.28	9.67	.00
(Direct effect) VM→IBB	.13	.06	.19	3.9	.00
(Indirect effect) VM→HSM→IBB	.61	.11	.21	-	-
Total effect (C)	.29	.23	.35	9.09	.00

The table shows that there is a significant positive relationship between visual merchandising and Hedonic shopping motivation (coefficient = .67, $p < .001$), and between Hedonic shopping motivation and Impulsive buying behaviour (coefficient = .23, $p < .001$). There is also a significant indirect effect of Visual merchandising on Impulsive buying behaviour through Hedonic shopping motivation (coefficient = .61, $p < .001$). This means that Visual merchandising leads to increased Hedonic shopping motivation, which in turn leads to increased Impulsive buying behavior. The study found that visual merchandising has a positive effect on impulsive buying behavior among adults, and this effect is mediated by hedonic shopping motivation.

Figure 2



Discussion

The results of our study are in accordance with the literature. As there factors that might impact the relationship between our variables of interest. However, the findings indicate that gender and age do not have a significant influence on online impulsive purchasing behavior. (Basalma, E. (2024).

The hypothesis that there is a significant positive relationship between visual merchandising and impulsive buying behavior among adults. The results shows this correlation and is evidenced by the literature. The results of a study reveals that certain dimensions of visual merchandising do affect impulse purchase. Hence, visual merchandising is important for strategic marketing decisions to increase the sales of the stores. (Mehta, D. N., & Chugan, P. K. (2013). The result of another study proves that there is a pivotal relationship between college students' impulse buying behaviors and two type of visual merchandising practices that is instore form/mannequin display and promotional signage. (Kim, J. (2003).

The study hypothesis that there is a mediating role of hedonic shopping motivation in the relationship between visual merchandising and impulsive buying behaviour among young adults. Results support the hypothesis that Hedonic shopping motivation has a significant indirect effect of Visual merchandising on Impulsive buying behaviour. The results were consistent with the study hedonic Shopping Motivation variable had significant effect with Impulse Buying, the Shopping Lifestyle variable has significant effect with Impulse Buying and the Involvement Fashion variable has significant effect with Impulse Buying (Tirtayasa S. et al., 2020). Another study shows that there is no significant effect of the Hedonic Shopping Motivation variable on Impulse Buying of TikTok Shop consumers. This means that the lower the hedonic shopping motivation, the more it will affect the impulse buying of a customer who uses TikTok Shop to shop for products online. The findings of this study contradict the research of Nurtanio et al., (2022), which found that hedonic shopping motivation has a significant impact on impulse buying, where in increasing impulse purchases to consumers by using hedonic shopping motivation. (Nurtanio et al., (2022)Another research Statistical test results show that Hedonic Shopping Motivation has a significant effect on Impulsive Purchases. This is in line with research conducted by Wahab et al. (2018), which states that Hedonic Mopping Motivation has a significant effect on

Impulsive Purchases and, Park et al (2013) which states that Impulsive Purchases often occur due to Hedonic Shopping Motivation.

The hypothesis that there are significant differences in the relationship between visual merchandising and impulsive buying behaviour among people of different age groups. Age (Helmers et al., 1995; Wood, 1998) also, has an impact on impulse buying. Kacen and Lee (2002). Also, in a study conducted by (Mai et al., 2003), it was shown that age of buyers from 18 to 40 are generally impulsive. According to Usman Ghani and Farzand Ali Jan, (2010), the association between demographic elements and the impulse purchase habits of metropolitan city's customers of Pakistan shows that age alone has a substantial negative relationship with impulse purchasing habits of customers. This means that youth are more involved in impulsive purchases compared to aged customers. (Kumar, A., Khan, J., Khan, M. F., Hussain, S., & Shahid, M. (2023).) Young adults were chosen as the research subjects because the rapid digitalization of consumption environments has affected young people the most (e.g., Nyrhinen et al., 2023). Prior research shows that younger consumers may be more likely to buy impulsively while older ones may be better able to engage in self-control (Iyer et al., 2020).

Conclusion

The study was primarily focused on exploring the impact of visual merchandising and hedonic shopping motivation on impulsive buying behavior. This research study was conducted in a quantitative methodology. The research design was cross-sectional correlational research design. Visual merchandising has a positive effect on impulsive buying behavior among adults, and this effect is mediated by hedonic shopping motivation. The study found significant differences in impulsive buying behavior across age and financial dependency groups. Visual merchandising and its subscales are moderately to highly correlated with hedonic shopping motivation and impulsive buying behavior. The reliability of the scales used in the study was found to be acceptable, with Cronbach's alpha values ranging from moderate to high.

References

- Aragoncillo, L., and Orús, C. (2018). Impulse buying behaviour: na online-offline comparative and the impact of social media. *Spanish J. Market.* 22, 42–62. Doi: 10.1108/SJME032018007
- Bastow-Shoop, H., Zetocha, D., &Passewitz, G. (1991). *Visual Merchandising: A guide for small Retailers*. Lows : University Publication
- Basu, R., Paul, J., & Singh, K. (2022). Visual merchandising and store atmospherics: An integrated review and future research directions. *Journal of Business Research*, 151, 397- 408.
- Bhatti, K. L., & Latif, S. (2014). The impact of visual merchandising on consumer impulse buying behavior. *Eurasian Journal of Business and Management*, 2(1), 24-35.
- Cinjarevic, M ., Tatic, K., & Petric, S. (2011). See it , like it, buy it! Hedonic shopping motivation and impulse buying. *Economic Review: Journal of Economics and Business*, 9(1), 3-15.
- Coley, A., & Burgess, B. (2003). Gender differences in cognitive and affective impulse buying. community middle class on online shopping. *IOSR Journal of Business and Management*, 20(8), 8-11.
- Dey, D. K., & Srivastava, A. (2017). Impulse buying intentions of young consumers from a hedonic shopping perspective. *Journal of Indian Business Research*, 9(4), 266-282
- Diamond, J., & Diamond, E. (2003). *Contemporary Visual Merchandising Environmental* (3rd ed.).
- Ding, Y., DeSarbo, W., Hanssens, D., Jedidi, K., Lynch, J., and Lehmann, D. (2020). The past Present, and future of measurements and methods in marketing analysis. *Market.* 175–186. Doi: 10.1007/s11002-020-09527-7
- Ebster, C., & Garaus, M. (2011). *Store Layout and Visual Merchandising*. New-York: Business Expert press.
- Ekambareswarar, N. K., Boomika, D., & Kumar, R. D. (2021). A study about gender differences *Journal EMBA : Jurnal Riset Ekonomi, Manajemen, bisni dan Akuntandi*, 1(4).

- Evanschitzky, H., Emrich, O., Sangtani, V., Ackfeldt, A. L., Reynolds, K. E., & Arnold, M. J (2014). Hedonic shopping motivations in collectivistic and individualistic consumes cultures. *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, 31(3), 335-338.
- Falebita, O., Ogunlusi, C., and Adetunji, A. (2020). A review of advertising management and its impact on consumer behaviour. *Int. J. Agri. Innov. Technol. Global.* 1, 354–374. Doi: 10.1504/IJAITG.2020.111885
- Gogoi, B., and Shillong, 1. (2020). Do impulsive buying influence compulsive buying? *Acad. Market. Stud. J.* 24, 1–15.
- Guido, G. (2006). Shopping motives, big five factors, and the hedonic/utilitarian shopping value: An integration and factorial study. *Innovative Marketing*, 2(2), 57-67.
- Hashmi, H., Attiq, S., & Rasheed, F. (2019). Factors affecting online impulsive buying behavior: A stimulus organism response model approach. *Market forces*, 14(1).