

Behavioural Determinants of Impulse Buying – An Empirical Study of a Metropolitan Hub of Pakistan

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Unpredictable shopping expenses take a toll on family's monthly budget in poor economies like Pakistan. Studying the determinants to these uncalled and impulsive shopping urges is of the essence when the objective is to plan for the future. This study explores the main factors affecting consumers' unplanned buying from departmental stores in Pakistan's metropolitan city. The indicators included buying behaviour, customers' emotions, promotion & advertisement, physical environment, and price of products. The objective was set to examine the leading factors influencing customers to buy in departmental stores (Metro Cash and Carry, Al- Fateh and Hyper Star) of Lahore, Pakistan. The survey approach was taken in this study through a convenience sampling design with a sample size of 250. The estimation results of median regression were derived from the conclusion by using the SPSS software. The results support policy makers in developing social and economic regulations that assist individuals in avoiding impulse buying.

Keywords: unplanned buying, emotions, promotional & advertisement, selling behaviour

INTRODUCTION

Impulse buying is something that is usually bought unplanned and in a larger quantity. When a person goes shopping, different factors affect the mental level that compels him to buy on a larger and unplanned scale. Nowadays, it is prevalent as many superstores up and running, where people often go for pleasure and leisure purposes. This has become a trend in society which is forcing people to go shopping often on impulse. One who shops to make such leverage is mentioned as a nervous impulse vendee or impulse

consumer. According to major research findings, emotional feelings play a very impactful role in unplanned buying and product advertisement. Furthermore, this is extensively exploited by marketers and retailers, making people buying products unintentionally (Verma & Badgaiyan, 2015). Mostly these products are related to the general need of people like clothing, accessories, food, etc. Impulse buying takes over the rational decision-making of the buyer, taking away the planned savings. The only prevention of impulse buying is to decide a budget before going out shopping. After reviewing several international research studies, few factors have been selected for the work. Hausman (2000) explained that some state of affairs and retail ambiance influence both memory reaction and the consumers' future depot choice decision. Because of the changing and dynamic nature of expectations, orientation, and behaviour. In-Store promotions (Gutierrez, 2004), people (Ghosh et al., 2010), advertisement (Srinivasan, 2008), lighting (Areni & Kim, 1994; Summers & Hebert, 2001; Magnum, 1998), and other factors like music, fragrancy, eight senses of colour, etc. Several internal factors induce the consumers to buy unintentionally. It includes moods and emotions (Watson & Tellegen, 1985; Beatty & Ferrell, 1998; Hausman, 2000; Rook et al., 1993; Youn & Faber, 2000), self-image (Sirgy, 1982), culture and regret (Piron, 1991), and shopping enjoyment (Beatty & Ferrell, 1998; Stern, 1962). These studies realized that the merchandise which is purchased impulsively often has cheap damage. Lastly, the concept of advertisements that trigger the buyer's impulsive buying behaviours was initially designed to generate extra revenue out of rich customers. Unfortunately, most poor customers are trapped in impulsive buying because of the awareness difference between rich and poor customers.

Based on these facts, the objectives set by this study are to find out how different factors affect consumers for unplanned buying. This study will focus on the customers of big departmental stores of Lahore, Pakistan, which include Metro Cash and Carry, Al-Fateh, and Carrefour. The idea behind this is that Pakistan is becoming a consumer-oriented economy where most consumption expenditures are directed to imports-based commodities. Exploring the means to induce impulse buying, which the wholesale and large retail vendors exploit, could help create awareness to curb these means to extract unplanned incomes out of the low-income buyers. This study would suggest means for individuals and policymakers to stabilize the consumption expenditure patterns at the micro-level. At the macro-level, this study will help the country curtail import-based consumption, which will reduce the devaluating pressures on the national currency and minimizing the burden of debt because of exchange rate devaluation.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The main issue this study discussed and understood is buying behaviour through impulse. According to Tremblay (2005) and Baumesiter (2002), impulse buying is any intention to purchase a shopper; without purchasing a product, someone feels the urge to buy it. On the other hand, if we see Pakistani consumers' behaviour pattern, they are most likely to buy impulsively when there is a sale or bundle buy products offered by a shipping store (Raheem & Vishnu, 2013). The window of income level visualizes that merchandising's impact significantly influences consumers' behaviour when the store's environment is pleasant, calm, and decorated along with its surroundings (Verma & Badgaiyan, 2015; Prajapati & Thakor, 2012). The most subconscious consumer's objective is to assign the values to a product based on its packing, shape, colour and known awareness of the raw materials used (Arshed, Alamgir, et al., 2017; Arshed, Riaz, Hassan, et al., 2017; Ghaffar et al., 2020; Grant, Croteau, et al., 2019a). This is because different elements of packing have different implications on users mind along with various demographic variables like age, education, gender, and professional environment (Valaei, & Nikhashemi, 2017; Badgaiyan, Vrama, & Dixit, 2016; Vyas, 2015; Vrama, & Badgaiyan, 2015; Bhakat & Muruganatham, 2013; Hasnu & Ali, 2013). Instead of that, the need for online impulse buying study on the internet is also increasing the importance of this medium to gain optimum level sale through this channel (Khawaja, 2018; Parsad et al., 2017; Prashar et al., 2017). Around two-thirds of the population in European countries make an online purchase due to the influence of impulse buying. This purchase pattern is mostly focused on the clothing, sports garments, and fashion industries because it rationally urges the buying behaviour (Mahalakshmi, & Kathiravan, 2019; Ali & Sudan, 2018; Ahmad et al., 2019). However, the rational choices of decision

making are consumer's trends to search for important information to make their final buying decisions, and the influence of impulse buying on consumers behaviour increase the values of departmental stores as well, due to their advertisements while providing up to date information to their target consumers (Ahmad et al., 2019; Ali & Sudan, 2018; Atulkar & Kesari, 2018; Pornpitakpan, Yuan & Han, 2017).

The main objective of packing the product is to help the consumers identify, choose, and show an impression regarding the purchase and repurchase of any product. It shows a positive influence on consumer's responses about the product, which leads the consumer towards impulsive buying. It also helps in distinguishing between different brands (Ferguson, Chatfield, Brimblecombe, Liberato, Gunther, Ball, & Leach, 2017; Cho et al., 2014). While browsing in-store and identifying consumers' positive mood are the main sturdiest predictors of influencing impulse buying behaviour (Grant, Croteau, et al., 2019b; Hanif et al., 2020; Tara et al., 2020). As the positive mood inspires them to move and search-in the store with intend to buy. It encourages individual consumers to have referenced friends, with whom the shopping is mostly done like friends, family, and peers. And respond to more favourably to surroundings products to evaluate the stimulus exposure (Truong, & Buaphiban, 2017; Azim, 2013). Consumers mostly have a high proneness attitude while dealing at the presence of a good energetic environment of the store that makes an impulse purchase. To increase consumers' buying behaviour, retailers keep a pleasant store environment for their consumers inside their store place to attract the right consumers (Bashir et al., 2013). Different products' packaging strategies exert influence while purchasing as they communicate about a brand or promote a brand. The lifestyle and cultural values influence impulse buying behaviour in the case of Pakistani consumers positively. The relationship among all the cultural variables and lifestyles is significant (Arshed et al., 2020; Aziz et al., 2020; Grant, Aziz, et al., 2019). It suggests that the impulse buying behaviour is predicted by life satisfaction, security, financial satisfaction, gender role, group contact and lifestyles of cultural values as well as the lifestyles of Pakistani consumers (Truong & Buaphiban, 2017; Alauddin, Hossain, Ibrahim, & Hoque, 2015; EKeng et al., 2012). According to Saraswat (2012) and Chen (2008), demographic characteristics have a strong impact on impulse buying. It differs primarily for male and female shoppers because female shoppers do this due to their likeness and spontaneous attraction to colorful fancy products.

On the other hand, an increase in the income level of consumers makes them more prodigal while spending and influencing to buy those products which are not included in the plan. Also, different variables such as an advertisement on print media, visual media, advertising 3-D effect, advertising celebrities, pamphlets and hoarding of different products through organizing events affect the majority of respondents. It influences positively onto impulse buying that reflects a pivotal bonding among respondents like impulse advertising campaign and impulse buying behaviours to enhance the impulse purchase decisions (Cham, Ng, Lim, & Cheng, 2018; Baker, Moschis, Rigdon & Fatt, 2016; Jamal, & Lodhi, 2015; Giovannini, Xu, & Thomas, 2015; Aruna, & Santhi, 2015; Bakirtas, Bakirtas & Cetin, 2015). The type of product plays an important role in impulse buying, especially among the young generation. Also, for computer peripherals, a higher tendency to impulse buying involves predicting as good for different brands products. Another major finding outlines that the internet is competing for a new way of marketing to introduce products while having impulse buying behaviour in mind (Chen, 2008; Applebaum, 1951). According to Rook (1987), impulse buying behaviour with descriptors like intense, exciting, spontaneous, urge to buy with purchaser often ignores the consequences of further research development. In the present study, discuss impulse buying behaviour as a trait rather than a purchase decision classification (Arshed et al., 2019; Arshed, Riaz, Khan, et al., 2017). Without previous knowledge of a new intention or product to purchase a certain item, a buyer must be exposed to suggestions or stimuli connected to the satisfaction of a need or want from that purchase. This identifies different kinds of environmental/sensory and internal stimuli that indicate activating impulse buying. Internal indications may include positive and negative respondents' feeling situations and environmental/sensory include retail setting, marketing mix and marker-controlled indications (Husnain et al., 2019; Cham et al., 2018; Sangalang & Siochi, 2017; Badgaiyan et al., 2016; Turkeyilmaz, Erdem, & Uslu, 2015; Cho, Ching, & Luong, 2014; V.R, 2014; Youn & Faber, 2000; Puri, 1996; Rook & Fisher, 1995).

METHODS

As the objective of the study is to find out the different factors which affect consumers for unplanned buying in departmental Stores of Lahore, so we have taken impulse buying as a depended variable while Physical Environment, Promotional & Advertisement, Emotions, Selling Behavior and Price are best possible independent variables.

Sample Data

The sample represents the target customers that are addressed in the whole study. The target population was 250 different customers at three different departmental stores in Lahore; 150 questionnaires are distributed to different customers in Hyperstar, Metro cash & carry and Al-Fateh. Around 13 of our collected samples were discarded due to incompleteness and other errors. It finds the phenomenon studied in this study of unplanned buying behaviors, and the questionnaire identifies the dependent variables. The questionnaire on impulse buying is directly related to the theoretical framework

Questionnaire

Based on extant literature and the hypotheses developed through the theory generation phase of this research, a 30-item multi-indicator questionnaire was developed. The initial questionnaire was assessed for clarity, face validity, and necessary completion time by authors who had been involved in the quantitative data gathering phase of this research. The factors enclosed in the questionnaire are stated below; the questionnaires are adapted from these studies.

External Factors

Hausman (2000) explained that some situations and retail atmosphere influence both in-store responses and the consumers' future store choice decisions because of the changing and dynamic nature of expectations, preferences, and behavior. These environmental variables are merchandising (Han et al., 1991), In-Store promotions (Gutierrez, 2004), People (Ghosh et al., 2010), Advertisement (Srinivasa, 2008), Lightning (Areni & Kim, 1994; Summers & Hebert; 2001; Magnum, 1998), and other factors like music, fragrance, colors etc.

Internal Factors

Several internal factors drive consumers to buy unintentionally. Moods, and Emotions (Watson & Tellegen, 1985; Beatty & Ferrell, 1998; Hausman, 2000; Rook et al., 1993; Youn & Faber, 2000), Self-Image (Sirgy, 1982), Culture and Regret (Piron, 1991), Shopping Enjoyment (Beatty & Ferrell, 1998).

Price Effect

Stern (1962), in his studies, realized that the products which are purchased impulsively often have a low price.

Research Design

The research design is the master plan of a research study (Hair et al., 2003). It lays out the structure, procedures, and data analysis of the research (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). The purpose of the study is exploratory because our objectives are to show that such type of study has not been studied more clearly before. Exploratory research helps us to examine the best results to meet our study's objectives, further in this study, correlational and regression-based investigation were used to check the association and relationship between 1 dependent and multiple independent variables, the interference toward this research is minimal because its research the natural environment of the organization with minimum interference and the study is more accurate because it is set a non-contrived study in all stores and distributed the questionnaire in a natural environment of stores. Further, we have operationalized our study to measure the psyche of buyers toward impulse buying to get such results. The survey approach has been taken in this study through convenience sampling. We had distributed 250 questionnaires to different customers in

Hyper star, Metro cash & carry and Al-Fateh. Customers were asked to complete the questionnaire immediately, and the customer answered the questions accordingly.

Lastly, since all the indicators are on the Likert scale, this study estimates median regression, which is more appropriate for ordinal variables. A similar study assessing the shopping trends using the quantile regression method for robust estimates (Lin & Lin, 2007).

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The Cronbach's alpha reliability test checks whether the respondents' response is consistent with that of the construct. The minimum value for the variables is above 0.7. The results are indicating that all scales are accepted because the value of the reliability test is 0.831, closer to 1 (Calluna, Vulgaries, & Nasuridin, 2010). Hence, the measures used in this study were considered highly reliable.

Table 2 provides the descriptive statistics of the variable used in the study. Here we can see that all the variables' mean value is higher than the standard deviation, which means that all the variables are under dispersed and scattered closely around their mean values. While observing the skewness and kurtosis value, it can be seen that none of the variables is normally distributed. Figure 1 and 2 confirms that the dependent variable is not normally distributed. Table 2 of correlation coefficients confirm that all the proposed independent variables are positively and significantly correlated with the impulse buying behavior of individuals. Figure 3 compares the gender-wise frequency of impulse buying, and here we can see that males are more prone to impulse buying than females in our sample.

**TABLE 1
DESCRIPTIBE STATISTICS**

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Dev.	Skewness		Kurtosis	
						Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
IMPULSE BUYING	250	1.00	5.00	3.3088	.70637	-.079	.154	-.047	.307
PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT	250	1.00	5.00	3.1872	.69709	-.138	.154	.156	.307
PROMOTIONS & ADVERTISEMENTS	250	1.00	4.60	3.1432	.72509	-.717	.154	.429	.307
EMOTIONS	250	1.00	5.00	3.3368	.66005	-.211	.154	.392	.307
SELLING BEHAVIOUR	250	1.40	5.00	3.3024	.71860	-.276	.154	.054	.307
BUYING BEHAVIOR	250	1.20	5.00	3.5552	.74849	-.365	.154	.359	.307
Gender	250	1	2	1.50	.501	-.016	.154	-2.016	.307
Age	250	1	2	1.20	.404	1.478	.154	.186	.307
Marital Status	250	1	4	1.36	.686	2.033	.154	3.718	.307

FIGURE 1
BOX & WHISKER PLOT

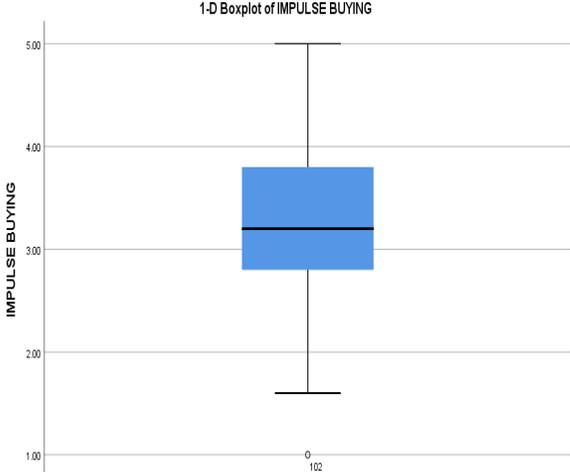


FIGURE 2
HISTOGRAM

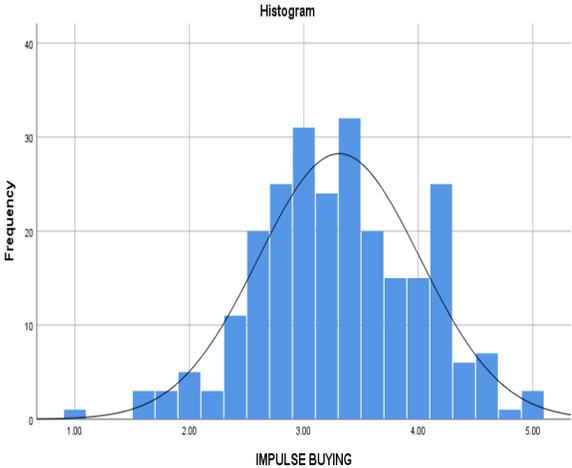


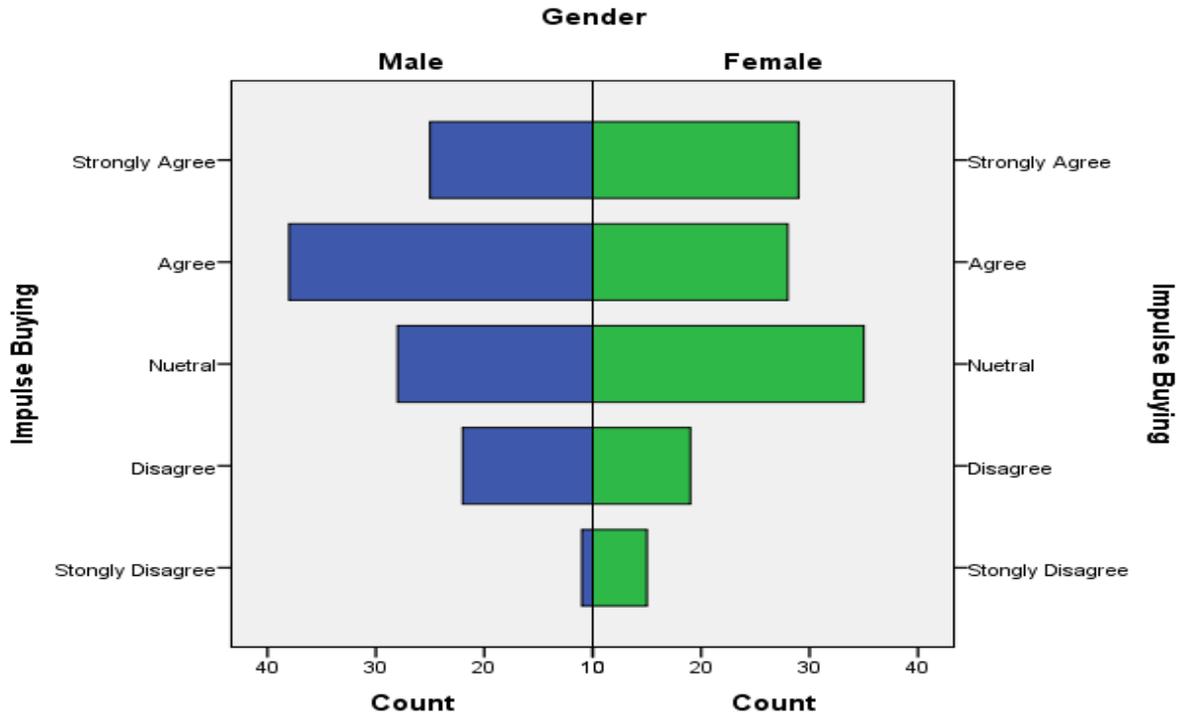
TABLE 2
CORRELATIONS

	IMPULSE BUYING	PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT	PROMOTIONS & ADVERTISEMENTS	EMOTIONS	SELLING BEHAVIOUR	BUYING BEHAVIOR
IMPULSE BUYING	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.371** .000 250	.201** .001 250	.289** .000 250	.139* .028 250	.181** .004 250
PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.371** .000 250	.225** .000 250	.364** .000 250	.285** .000 250	.378** .000 250
PROMOTIONS & ADVERTISEMENTS	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.201** .001 250	1 .000 250	.253** .000 250	.465** .000 250	.374** .000 250
EMOTIONS	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.289** .000 250	.253** .000 250	1 .000 250	.416** .000 250	.399** .000 250
SELLING BEHAVIOUR	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.139* .028 250	.465** .000 250	.416** .000 250	1 .000 250	.438** .000 250
BUYING BEHAVIOR	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.181** .004 250	.374** .000 250	.399** .000 250	.438** .000 250	1 .000 250

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

FIGURE 3
POPULATION PYRAMIDS COUNT OF IMPULSE BUYING BY GENDER



While moving to the median regression, the statistics show that its R Squared is 0.126, indicating that the proposed variables are explaining 12.6% of the variation in the impulse buying behavior. Table 3 reports the coefficients of the median regression. Here we can see that only the indicators like physical environment, promotions & advertisements, and emotions have a significant positive effect on impulse buying. Out of these indicators, the physical environment is most effective in increasing impulse buying. Surprisingly, this study points out that the indicator for gender, age and marital status of the individuals are not a significant factor in determining impulse buying. This points to the fact that the customers in Lahore are following the herd or word of mouth such that their individual characteristics are not explaining the impulsive buying behavior.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

For a developing country like Pakistan, if impulse buying behavior is predominant, especially when the buying is mainly related to imported goods, then it takes a toll on the economy. At the micro-level, it will disturb the monthly balance of the households. It will disturb the country's balance of payments at the macro-level, leading to an exchange rate devaluation-based debt burden. Consequently, there will be an increase in market prices as exchange rate devaluation leads to an increase in import-based commodities. To curtail the major issue, this study focuses on the micro-level issue that, if not handled, in aggregation causes the macro-level issue. The regression analysis idea is to identify the causes of impulse buying behavior so that government can focus on the awareness and policies that curb the unethical or illegal impulse buying inducement by the shopping superstores.

TABLE 3
MEDIAN REGRESSION

Parameter Estimates (q=0.5)^{a,b}

Parameter	Coefficient	Std. Error	t	df	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
(Intercept)	1.398	.4614	3.030	239	.003	.489	2.307
PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT	.286	.0756	3.783	239	.000	.137	.435
PROMOTIONS & ADVERTISEMENTS	.184	.0750	2.452	239	.015	.036	.332
EMOTIONS	.177	.0828	2.135	239	.034	.014	.340
SELLING BEHAVIOUR	-.076	.0813	-.938	239	.349	-.236	.084
BUYING BEHAVIOR	.085	.0765	1.117	239	.265	-.065	.236
[Age=1]	-.171	.1608	-1.061	239	.290	-.487	.146
[Age=2]	0 ^c	.	.	.	.	.	.
[Gender=1]	.009	.0981	.089	239	.929	-.185	.202
[Gender=2]	0 ^c	.	.	.	.	.	.
[Marital Status=1]	-.134	.3506	-.382	239	.703	-.825	.557
[Marital Status=2]	-.147	.3537	-.416	239	.678	-.844	.550
[Marital Status=3]	.273	.3905	.699	239	.486	-.497	1.042
[Marital Status=4]	0 ^c	.	.	.	.	.	.

a. Dependent Variable: IMPULSE BUYING

b. Model: (Intercept), PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT, PROMOTIONS & ADVERTISEMENTS, EMOTIONS, SELLING BEHAVIOUR, BUYING BEHAVIOR, Age, Gender, Marital Status

c. Set to zero because this parameter is redundant.

This research study investigated the impact of physical environment, promotion & advertisement, emotion, buying behavior and selling behavior on Impulse buying. Literature has indicated them as major inducing factors which are causing impulse buying. The correlation and regression estimates explained that there is a positive link between the proposed independent variables and impulse buying behavior. Hence it allows us to study how these independent variables are being used by the shopping superstores and curb any unethical or illegal means.

For the case of the physical environment, regulators must ensure that there should not be extravagant expenditures on the surrounding and ambiance which are inducing the impulse buying. These expenditures to increase attractiveness via physical environment are levied from the buyers in terms of profit. Similar is the case with promotions and advertisements. These expenses, even though they motivate buyers to buy, but are charged from his pocket. Hence, there should be a limit to what a shopping superstore could spend on designing the store so that their cost of providing the service should be curtailed, causing price inflation.

The other dimension which is significantly explaining impulsive buying behavior is emotions. The questionnaire highlights that the motions are drawn from happiness, family, society and brand image. The only way to minimize the effect of emotion on impulse buying is to increase the awareness of household budget management economics. The knowledge regarding the composition of assets and liabilities of the household explains how their present and future income affects their welfare. The government should provide voluntary and accessible financial literacy to the masses to channel any idle savings channeled to investments rather than impulsive consumption. This way, the economy will benefit in two ways; first, there will be a decrease in consumption, reducing inflationary pressures on products. Second, there will be a

boost in production, which will reduce inflation and dependency on imported products. The above-mentioned policy suggestions would eventually lighten the pressure on the household earner's income and ease the balance of payment & debt burden on the economy.

This study also recommends expanding the scope of the study to other shopping hubs of the country and bifurcate the impulse buying in terms of import-based goods and local goods to be targeted separately and efficiently.

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APPENDIX

This questionnaire is for a research paper designed to access the factors affecting consumer impulse buying (unplanned buying) behavior in Lahore (Departmental store). Your information will be kept confidential, and the responses will be aggregated for analysis. We appreciate your participation.

PERSONAL DETAILS						
Gender:	Male	Female				
Age:	_____					
Occupation:	Private	Govt.				
Monthly Income	_____					
Marital Status	Single	Married	Divorced			
Who Influence Your Buying Decision?	Kids	Wife	Husband/Parents	Myself		
SD=Strongly Disagree	DA=Disagree	N=Neutral	A=Agree	SA=Strongly Agree		
Sr	Statement	SD	DA	N	A	SA
IMPULSE BUYING						
1	I buy things unplanned	1	2	3	4	5
2	Because of my active lifestyle, I need a variety of clothes	1	2	3	4	5
3	I often buy things spontaneously (suddenly)	1	2	3	4	5
4	I desire to buy in this store	1	2	3	4	5
5	“Buy now, think about it later” describes me	1	2	3	4	5
PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT						
6	Layout of metro is well-structured so that the consumers have no difficulty finding their way	1	2	3	4	5
7	I am more likely to buy a product, if it has an eye-catching window display	1	2	3	4	5
8	If I like the music inside the metro, my chances of unplanned buying become greater	1	2	3	4	5
9	I am more likely to make unplanned buying if the store smells good	1	2	3	4	5
10	If I see an interesting offer on in-store signs of Metro, I am more likely to buy it	1	2	3	4	5
PROMOTIONS & ADVERTISEMENTS						
11	Information through hording and pamphlets of product motivates me in unplanned buying	1	2	3	4	5
12	I am more likely to buy a product through promotional stalls	1	2	3	4	5
13	I am more likely to buy a product by watching recent ad. (to try latest)	1	2	3	4	5
14	I am more likely to buy bundle promotion offer	1	2	3	4	5
15	I am more likely to buy in-store promotion activities involving both gender products	1	2	3	4	5

EMOTIONS						
16	I am more likely to do unplanned buying for brands which has my family trust	1	2	3	4	5
17	I buy unplanned products if the brand has a good image in market	1	2	3	4	5
18	I buy unplanned things that make me feel (happy, superior, joy)	1	2	3	4	5
19	I am more likely to buy unplanned products by seeing others buying	1	2	3	4	5
20	I am more likely to buy unplanned products when I am depressed over situations					
SELLING BEHAVIOR						
21	If the behavior of the sales person is friendly, it helps me in unplanned buying	1	2	3	4	5
22	I am more intended to buy online if the selling technique sounds reasonable/ website	1	2	3	4	5
23	I am more willing to make impulse buying if staff attitude and willingness to help	1	2	3	4	5
24	I am more into impulse shopping if brand offers Liberal Exchange and refund policy	1	2	3	4	5
25	I am more into impulse buying if the salesperson's product knowledge is more relatable	1	2	3	4	5
BUYING BEHAVIOR						
26	I am more likely to buy products unplanned if the discount is available	1	2	3	4	5
27	Credit/ Debit cards makes me buy unplanned things more often	1	2	3	4	5
28	Various schemes like (buy 1 get 1 free) affect makes me buy more	1	2	3	4	5
29	I buy unplanned deals on different occasions (Ramadan, Eid, Weddings offers)	1	2	3	4	5
30	I am more into impulse buys if the product catches my eye.	1	2	3	4	5