

# Determinants of unplanned buying behavior of consumers in self-service stores.

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## **Abstract**

*The purpose of this study is to examine the influencing factors and their impacts on consumer's unplanned buying behavior in self-service stores. A total of 52 walked out consumers of two self-service store (Bhatbhateni and Bigmart located in Kathmandu Valley) served as the sample including both male and female. The methods of analysis employed in this study are independent sample-T test, One Way ANOVA, correlation and regression statistics. The results from the analysis found a significant difference exists between male and female customers on unplanned buying behavior while no significant difference across the age group. Likewise, product display in terms of promotional factors are found to be positively correlated and similar effect has been found with unplanned buying behavior. The proper combination and synergistic effect of the various factors influencing unplanned buying are found to lead toward more sales turnover and, thereby benefit the marketers and retailers. Management of product display is the most critical issues in Nepalese self-service stores. When consumers are exposed to different forms of product displays, they are more likely to make purchase decision on impulse.*

**Key words: unplanned buying behavior, product display, promotional factors.**

## **Introduction**

Researchers have taken interests in impulsive buying for the past sixty years (Stern, 1962; Rook, 1987). The term impulse buying is generally considered to be synonymous with unplanned buying as it describes any purchase which a shopper makes but not planned in advance (Stern, 1962). Piron (1991) attempts to define the impulse buying by reviewing the past research works and found that the earlier studies revealed impulse buying to be very similar to unplanned purchase and forward his findings with managerial interest in mind.

The examination of impulse buying in supermarkets could be of much interest to the manufactures as well as retailer worldwide (Abratt and Goodey, 1990). Impulse buying is defined as a purchase decision made in store with no explicit recognition of a need for such a purchase prior to entry into store (Kollat and willet, 1967). As impulse buying behavior consists of unplanned and sudden purchases, the cognitive and affective forces guiding the purchase are typically initiated at the time and place of purchase (Rook, 1998). An unplanned purchase results from a comparison of alternative purchase intentions with actual outcomes (Kollat and Willett, 1967). The buying decision of impulse buyers is characterized by being unplanned prior to purchase, probably accompanied by information search and alternative evaluate and short decision-making time (Kang, 2013).

Scanty studies have been conducted on impulse buying in developing economies and so is the situation in Nepalese context so far. This study helps predict the unplanned buying behaviors in Nepalese consumers and the findings can be used to formulate marketing strategies and marketing mix to give the effective responses to the competitors in competitive environment for gaining competitive advantages.

## Objectives

Sales and marketing programs are very important issues for marketers and retailers and thus the unplanned buying behavior has received considerable attention by marketers and academicians. The case of unplanned buying behavior of consumer is frequently observed in Nepalese retail stores but no attention has given on this issue to dig out its prospects to realize more benefits. Although this sector is characterized by heterogeneity in composition than other, unplanned buying behavior of consumer is a challenge faced by the marketers. This perhaps is due to lack of insights on factors that influence consumer's unplanned buying behavior. In this contextual reality, this research has been conducted to identify the factors influencing consumer's unplanned buying behavior in self- service stores and to examine the impact of time pressure, perceived crowding, and product display and store promotion scheme on unplanned buying behavior of consumer.

## Literature Review

Unplanned buying is often accompanied by strong affective reactions such as powerful urge to buy or feelings of pleasure and excitement (Rook, 1987). An unplanned purchase results from a comparison of alternative purchase intentions with actual outcomes (Kollat and Willett, 1967). The buying decision of impulse buyers is characterized by being unplanned prior to purchase, probably accompanied by information search and alternative evaluate and short decision-making time (Kang, 2013).

Impulse buying is influenced by a variety of economic, personality, time, location and even cultural factors (Stern, 1962). In store stimuli is also influencing factor (Abrott and Goodey, 1990). The categorization of impulsive buying according to Stern (1962) follows:

i) The most easily distinguished kind of impulse buying is the pure impulse purchase. It is truly impulsive buying, the novelty or escape purchase which breaks a normal buying pattern. ii) Reminder impulse buying occurs when a shopper sees an item and remember that the stock at home is low. iii) Suggestion buying occurs when a shopper sees the product for the first time and visualizes a need for it, even though buyer has no previous knowledge of the item. iv) Planned impulse buying occurs when the shopper enters the store with some specific purchases in mind, but with the expectation and intention to make other purchases that depends on price specials, coupon offers and the like.

Impulse buying behavior is known as momentous happening in the retail setting. Retailers have recognized the significance of this phenomenon, and endeavored to increase in-store impulsivity of consumers through store layouts, in-store promotions and product packaging (Dholakia, 2000). Unplanned purchase that is unanticipated previous to the entry of the shopper into a store is impulse buying (Stern, 1962).

Controllable promotional techniques, point of sale, self-signs, end of aisle displays and special displays occupied significant place to influence unplanned purchase (Abratt and Goodey, 1990). Buying impulse can be induced when a consumer encounters a relevant visual stimulus in the retail environment or some promotional stimuli (Piron, 1991). In-store advertisements and promotions have been proving records to amplify the magnitude of unplanned purchasing among consumers (McClure and West, 1982; Immanently, 1990; Ali and Hasnu, 2007). Consumers buy impulsively when their attention is engrossed by pleasant goods, attractive in-store advertisement and promotions (Dholkia, 2000; Ali and Hasnu, 2007.)

Prominent store displays as determinant of impulse buying (Stern, 1962). In store environment including store layout may affect emotional states of consumers and direct them to show high level of impulse buying behavior (Mattila and Wirtz, 2001; Ali and Hasnu, 2007).

Supportive and friendly sales person, cheaper price and discount, attractive store display and in store advertisements are significant determinants of impulse buying which focused that in store shopping environment does have influence over the impulsive buying action among the consumers (Ali and Hasnu, 2007).

Madhavaram and Laverie(2004) found that the images, banner advertisement, price and special offer can be stimuli for impulse purchase. Pricing strategies, store characteristics, situational factors and promotional activities mostly influence the superstores in Bangladesh (Tine, 2011). Sales promotional stimuli most likely to trigger impulsive responses among male consumers would often differ substantially from the stimuli likely to trigger analogous responses among female seems reasonable (Zhang and et al, 2007)

On site advertisements and visual displays should have the stronger impact in women's department and on shelves carrying products aimed women (Tifferet and Itevstin, 2012). In addition, taste displays are likely to be more effective for female shopper. Among the numerous other determinants of impulse buying low price exercise the most direct effect (Stern, 1962).Abratt and Goodey (1990) found that price reductions, cost saving discounts or sales promotions can convince buyers to end up in an unintended purchase.

Researchers have given priority for situational factors to understand the unplanned buying behavior. Store environmental stimuli positively affect impulse buying behavior especially when the store environment is perceived as over stimulating and the stimuli in the retail store environment are likely to affect consumer's emotions (Mattila and Wirtz, 2008). They also suggest that perceived friendliness of store employees might mitigate the negative impact of perceived crowding on unplanned purchase which indicated that employee assistance moderate the impact of perceived crowding on impulse buying.

Similarly, perceived crowding systematically affects shopping behaviour and consumer's feelings about retail outlets and shopping trips (Harrell, Hutt, Anderson, 1980). Similarly, shop crowding makes consumer reduce the shopping time (Ali and Hasnu, 2007). Shoppers coming to store on Saturday are more likely to spend more money and purchase more items than shoppers coming to store other days (Anic and Radas, 2006). There are direct and indirect effects of sale staff, crowding and accompaniment

on both pleasure and arousal and on consumer's impulse buying behavior. It is possible that customer's internal states and impulse buying behavior varied depending on the store's characteristics (Aouinti, Mansali and Zghal, 2005).

The amount of time spent in store is positively related to unplanned purchase indicating that the likelihood of in-store decision making increases as time spent in store increases (Inman, Winer and Ferraro, 2009). Situational predictors of impulse buying include the retail location, time of shopping, season and shopping habit (Shapiro, 1962, Muruganantham and Bhakt, 2013). They also suggest that situational factors influencing impulse buying may include actual perceived time available and spending power.

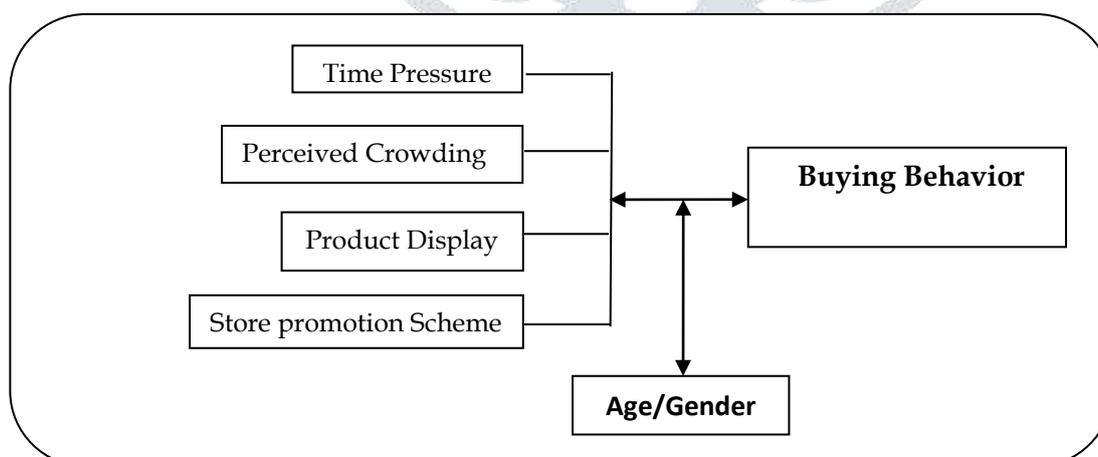
Various variables are associated with unplanned purchasing as number of people living in the household, sex of the shopper, number of shopping trip, distance travelled to the store, day of week, time of day, size of store (Kollat and willett 1967). Time pressure has no significant effect on impulse purchase behavior of the consumers during their shopping experience at the store (Graa, Elkebir and Bensaid, 2014).

Impulse buying differs significantly between male and female, with the phenomenon more common among female shoppers due to their likeness and spontaneous attractions to fanciful products. The age of consumers and impulse, buying are significantly and inversely related (Ekeng, Lifu and Asinya, 2012).

Female gender, younger age, higher family income and lower parental education are all associated with impulse buying (Tifferet and Iterstein, 2012). Age and parental education influence negatively and family income influence positively on impulse buying.

### Theoretical Framework of the Study

**Figure 1. Relationship between Determinants of unplanned buying behavior and buying behavior**



Theoretical framework of the study demonstrating the unplanned buying behavior as dependent variable and time pressure, perceived crowding product display and store promotion scheme as independent variables with age group and gender(sex) as moderating variables.

### **Research Hypothesis**

Based on the contents, methodologies and findings of previous researches conducted in this area, following hypothesis can be developed incorporating variables included in the study.

H1: There is significant relationship between unplanned buying behaviour and time pressure.

H2: There is significant relationship between unplanned buying behaviour and perceived crowding.

H3: There is significant relationship between unplanned buying behaviour and product display.

H4: There is a significant relationship between unplanned buying behaviour and store promotion scheme.

### **Methodology**

The study has used descriptive and analytical research design to test the research hypothesis. It attempts to cover the perceptual and attitudinal aspects of consumers towards unplanned buying decision.

The plan of gathering the information is observation and structured questionnaire. The data and information are collected for the presentation purpose. Sunday, Monday and Saturday have been chosen to collect the data to incorporate all nature of consumer. Selection of particular day is based on finding of (Anic and Radas, 2006) that shoppers coming to store on Saturday are more likely to spend more money and purchase more items than shoppers coming to store other days. Cost of obtaining data has been maintained minimum.

The population of the study constitutes the consumers of five Bhatbhateni and seven BigMart self-service stores operated in Kathmandu valley. Judgment sampling method has been used to undertake the study. Prior to determine the sample size, frequency of gender involved in buying was obtained through self-observations. The sampling technique has focused on those customers who walk out of the store are surveyed with the help of structured questionnaire in 4-point Likert Scale. It has been estimated that the possible non-response rate remains around 20 percent while actual non-response rate has been found 15 percent. Incorporating the possible non-response rate, the total size of sample respondents for the study has been reached to 60 consumers buying in stores.

Required information are collected, edited and entered in the spread sheet. Analysis has been done by using SPSS (18 version). The following tools have been used to analyze the data.

Average, percentage and standard deviation have been used to present the detail overview of respondents' profile in terms of age and gender and education level. Independent sample t-test and One-Way ANOVA have been carried out to test the priori hypothesis on impact of gender, age, education levels differences on unplanned buying behavior.

Correlation analysis has been carried out to examine the relationship between unplanned buying behaviors and identified influencing factors. Multiple regression analysis has been used to examine the impact of independent variables on dependent variables.

### Proposed regression model

$$Y = a + b_1x_1 + b_2x_2 + b_3x_3 + b_4x_4 + e$$

where,

a= constant

b<sub>1</sub>= beta coefficient of product display

x<sub>1</sub>= product display

b<sub>2</sub>= beta coefficient of store promotion scheme

x<sub>2</sub>= store promotion scheme

b<sub>3</sub>= beta coefficient of perceived crowding

x<sub>3</sub>= perceived crowding

b<sub>4</sub>= beta coefficient of time pressure

x<sub>4</sub>= time pressure

e= error term

### Analysis and Discussion

The whole analysis has been carried out using 22 questions including both dependent and independent variables. According to Guilford (1965) suggestion, when Cronbach alpha is greater than 0.7, it shows the high internal reliability of the instruments used. The results of the study show that Cronbach's  $\alpha$  is higher than 0.7 (i.e. 0.821). It indicates that the reliability of the questionnaire is sufficient.

The total sample of the respondents is 52 consumers in two self-service stores including 21 respondents (40.4%) are male and 31 (59.6%) are female. In terms of age group, majority of the respondents are between the 15 to 25 years of age and almost similar in 26 to 40 and 41 and above consisting 46.2, 28.8 and 25 percent respectively.

Female customers have the higher average values of mean and lower standard deviation and standard error of the mean (8.5806, 2.17216 & 0.39013) than that of male customers (7.1905, 2.31558 & 0.50530) for unplanned purchase factor in self-service stores indicating that unplanned buying behaviour in female is more with the comparison to male.

Customers with the age of 41 and above have higher averaged values for mean, standard deviation and standard error of mean (8.9167, 2.02073 & 0.58333) than those who are the customers with 15 to 25 (7.4, 2.29129 & 0.45826) and 26 to 40 (8.3333, 2.41030 & 0.62234) in age for unplanned purchase factors in

self- service stores and can be concluded that customers with 41 and above age group has the more involvement on unplanned purchase.

**Table 1. Relationship between Determinants of unplanned buying behavior and buying behavior**

	Unplanned purchase	Product display	Store promotion scheme	Perceived crowding	Time pressure
Unplanned purchase	1	0.433**	0.006	0.121	0.206

\* significant at 0.05 level of significant

\*\* significant at 0.01 level of significant

In the result of Pearson correlation test, a significant correlation has shown between product display and unplanned buying behavior at 1 percent level of significance ( $p < .01$ ). This finding also validates the findings of previous researches conducted by (Abratt and Goodey, 1990) and (Carter, Mills and Donvan, 2009).

In the result of a Pearson correlation test, a significant correlation has not found between store promotion scheme and unplanned buying behavior. This finding is not with the line of previous findings of (Ali and Hasnu, 2007) and (Mehta and Chugan, 2013).

Similarly, in the result of Pearson correlation test, a significant correlation has not shown between perceived crowding and unplanned buying behavior which is not within the line of previous researches undertaken by various researchers as (Ali and Hasnu, 2007), (Mehta and Chugan, 2013) and (Mttila and Wirtz, 2006).

Results of a Pearson correlation test presents insignificant correlation between time pressure and unplanned buying behavior this finding does not reflect similar result as concluded by (Hasnu and Ali, 2007) but this result seems to be compatible with the research conducted by (Graa, Elkebir and Bensaid, 2014).

Correlation coefficient between dependent and independent variables have not reflected satisfactory relations, only one relation is found to be significant and remaining is insignificant. So, regression analysis can be carried out just by taking the variable with significant correlation. In addition to this the validity of the findings of correlation can be proved through regression analysis.

The concrete result of regression shows that the regression model on unplanned buying behavior and product display is significant with the value of  $F = 7.123$ , Hence, there is sufficient evidence, at the 5% level of significance, that there is a linear relationship between product display and unplanned buying behavior of consumers.

Value of  $R^2$  of 0.123 conveys that the independent variable used under this study: product display explained only 12.3 percent variation in the unplanned buying behavior of consumers.

Beta coefficients of product display shows the significant at 5 percent level of significance ( $p$ -value $<0.05$ ). The positive value of beta coefficient reveals that product display has positive impact on unplanned buying behavior of consumer as a positive correlation between these two variables and it substantiates the decision of researcher regarding the use of regression analysis. This result is similar with the findings of (Hasnu and Ali, 2007), (Carter, Mills and Donovan, 2009) and (Mehta and Chugan, 2013).

### Regression Model

$$Y=5.616 + 0.106 x_{1+e}$$

Where, Y=Dependent variable (unplanned purchase)

a= 5.616 (constant value)

b1= 0.106 (beta coefficient of product display)

$X_1$ =Independent variable (product display)

Similarly, to know the difference in opinion of male and female on unplanned buying behavior, independent sample t-test was carried out. Result of independent sample t test shows that the t value is significant at 5 percent level of significance ( $p<0.05$ ) which reflects that there is significant difference between male and female on unplanned buying behavior. The result has sufficient evidence for that there is significant difference in the opinion on unplanned buying behavior between the male and female customers. This finding seems to follow the previous researches (Coley and Burgess, 2003), (Tifferet and Herstein, 2012) and (Ekeng, Lifu and Asinya, 2012).

The One-Way ANOVA has been used to examine the association of unplanned buying behavior across different age groups. Following table shows the result of this test.

Result of one-way ANOVA test suggests that the unplanned buying behaviour across different age group is insignificant at 5 percent level of significance ( $p$ -value $>0.05$ ). The data has the sufficient evidence for establishing the similar opinion across the different age group on unplanned buying behaviour. This finding seems to be compatible with the research conducted by Kang (2013).

### Conclusion

Taking Nepalese scenario on the consumer's behavior at test, the study has been undertaken with the objective of identifying determinants of unplanned buying behavior and their impacts on buying decisions of consumers taking the reference of two leading self-service stores located in Kathmandu valley.

As a part of conceptualizing and theorizing the issues, this study has tried to review literatures on unplanned buying behavior of consumers and their dimensions. In this context books, empirical findings of international journal articles, dissertation were reviewed in related issue.

While dealing with the data, the study analyzes the opinions of 52 consumers of self-service stores located in Kathmandu valley. Data required for the study has been obtained from the questionnaire and observation method. Analysis has been done using a combination of data analysis tools encompassing descriptive, correlation, regression, independent sample-t test and One-Way ANOVA analysis.

Boiling down the analysis, the study has found that involvement of female customers in unplanned buying is more than male customers in self- service stores located in Kathmandu valley. Likewise, the analysis of compare mean shows that female customers have the more influence of product display, store promotion scheme, perceived crowding and time pressure than male customers. In addition to this female shows the higher tendency in unplanned buying behavior.

Independent sample t-test finds that significant difference exists between male customers and female resulting difference in the opinion towards unplanned buying behavior. One-wayANOVA suggests that no significant difference exists across age group indicating similar opinion they have towards unplanned buying behavior.

Correlation analysis reveals that Product display is positively and significantly correlated with unplanned buying behavior and the finding of regression analysis reflects that there is a positive effect of product display on unplanned buying behavior.

With these facts generated from the analysis, it is quite convenient to substantiate the basic human nature of being never satisfied. Consumer buying decision is one important indicator for the actual impulse buying from customers in the market place and is influenced by various factors.

Keeping this in mind, the universal nature of impulse buying, it can be capitalised by retailers to benefit their respective businesses. The proper combination and synergistic effect of the various factors influencing unplanned buying could lead to more sales turnover therefore benefiting the marketers and retailers. Researchers and retailers alike can better understand the conditions under which abnormal buying (compulsive and impulsive buying) is more likely to take place. This too may aid policy makers as the social concern for abnormal increase in purchasing habit.

Although challenges are persistent in relation to management of all factors, management of product display is the most critical issues in Nepalese self-service stores. When consumers are exposed to different forms of product displays, they more likely make purchase decision on impulse.

Nepalese consumers have dramatically changed in terms of their shopping behavior. Unplanned buying has been emerging as a highly noticeable behavior. In this context, the scope of unplanned buying plays a significant role for modern retailers and researchers. Adjusting successfully the relationship changes among the variables have enormous implications for sustained competitive advantage based on the ability to access and retain committed consumers.

### **Implications and Scope for Future Research**

Review of literature in the study area shows that many research works have been conducted in the field of the determinants of unplanned buying behavior. Consumer researchers have mainly focused on identifying the different factors that induce unplanned buying in various developed countries. In the emerging economies, there is a need to study the impulse buying due to recent developments in retailing and huge cultural differences compared to developed economies (Kacen and Lee, 2002).

Considering all dimensions included in this study, it is essential to undertake the inclusive research in sufficient sample size taking specific product by incorporating more demographic characteristics to develop new and concrete insight in the issue of unplanned buying behavior of consumers. The share of unplanned purchases in total purchases is more and more increasing. The growing interest in understanding the mechanisms underlying impulse purchase decisions reveals the importance and, therefore, researchers and practitioners need to further work on its different dimensions.

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