

# The Influence of Personality Traits on Consumer Impulsive Buying Behaviour

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## ABSTRACT

Consumer behaviour is a complex phenomenon which is evolving according to the time, situations, demographic characteristics of individuals, personality traits, cultural influences etc. The personality of individuals is a unique dynamic organisation of the characteristics of a particular person, physical and psychological, which influence behaviour and responses to the social and physical environment. It gives the impression that consumer buying is always influenced by their personality. Therefore, many marketers make use of personality traits in the advertisement of products and at the same time they enhance their marketing strategy. The marketers always designed different products and target specific market segments which commonly addressed on individual's personality traits. The individual's few personality traits influence consumer for impulsive buying behaviour. The aim of present research is to study the personality traits influence on consumer impulsive buying behaviour as it will help to create opportunities of doing business and dealing with customers. The objectives of this research are: (1) to investigate the influence of personality traits on consumer impulsive buying behaviour, and (2) to identify the role of gender and their personality traits influence on consumer impulsive buying behaviour. To fulfill the purpose of the study, the researchers randomly collected sample and divided them on the basis of gender; 60 males and 60 females. Data were collected from Delhi and NCR region. The data were analysed using statistical applications such as correlation and 't' Test. The result was revealed that the common personality traits have a significant relationship with impulsive buying behaviour that is psychoticism in the case of male and female. The role of gender has significant differences in impulsive buying behaviour. The man showed more impulsive buying behaviour compare to women.

**Keyword:** Personality Traits, Consumer Behaviour, Impulsiveness, Emotional State, Mood, Buying Behaviour

## INTRODUCTION

Personality is one of the most important factors which widely studied in consumer behaviour. It changes through the influence of social, cultural and environmental factors which the person determined. Similarly, personality of an individual depends on his genes. Personality is a unique identification of the person that one individual is different from others not only in the physical aspects, but also in personality types. It is one of the factors that influence one's behaviour in the marketplace. What a consumer buys, when and how he or she purchases are influenced by his personality types. That is why marketers are keen to understand the meaning of personality and traits as well as how these traits affect consumer behaviour (Sarker, Bose, Palit & Haque, 2013).

Impulse buying behaviour is generally influenced by personality traits that are experienced by consumers in his/her purchases. In this context some researchers (Rook & Fisher, 1995; Sharma, Sivakumaran, & Marshall, 2010) have done lots of effort to verify that if people who frequently engage in this behaviour have some common personality traits. Eysenck and Eysenck (1975) modified their personality scale which, according to Rocklin and Revelle (1981), restructured extraversion in a manner that included liveliness and sociability, but excluded impulsivity. As a result, to the revision of their three factor theory of personality Eysenck and Eysenck (1977) further divided impulsivity (labeled broad impulsiveness) into four dimensions: narrow impulsiveness, risk-taking, non-planning, and liveliness. They found that the four impulsivity dimensions correlated differently with extraversion, neuroticism, and psychoticism. The

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factor narrow impulsiveness, had high correlations with neuroticism and psychoticism, but did not correlate with extraversion. However, the other dimensions, risk-taking, non-planning, and liveliness, were more strongly correlated with extraversion. Eysenck and Eysenck's (1985) re-examination of their innovative appointment of impulsivity on extraversion (Eysenck & Eysenck, 1975, 1978) and their suggestion that impulsivity consists of two components: venturesomeness that corresponds to extraversion, and impulsiveness, that corresponds to psychoticism. The aim of this study is to develop on these previous studies by investigating the relationship between impulse buying behaviour and some relevant personality traits on the basis of an Eysenck revised scale. Psychoticism is described by tough-mindedness, nonconformity, hostility, and impulsivity. The physiological basis recommended by Eysenck for psychoticism is testosterone, with higher levels of psychoticism linked with higher levels of testosterone.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Impulse buying is an unplanned buy that is unanticipated prior to the doorway of the shopper into the store (Stern, 1962; Kollat & Wallet, 1969). It is inadvertent, unreflective and immediate ownership of a product by an individual shopper (Rook & Hoch, 1985; Rook, 1987; Rook & Gardner, 1993; Rook & Fisher, 1995). As compared to planned buying behaviour, impulse buying is more exciting, unintended, less calculated, and more tempting. Higher impulsive buyers are more likely to be unreflective, to be emotionally involved to the object with the desire for immediate indulgence (Thompson, Locander, & Pollio, 1990; Hoch & Loewenstein, 1991). Impulse buyer takes quick decision-making subject to the unexpected ownership of the product as compared to the normal buying process. It is more of a spur-of-the-moment than careful in nature and is more untroubled than thoughtful (Lee & Kacen, 2008). Tendai and Crispen (2009) observed that impulsive buying is an unplanned buying tendency that is a consequence of an unstructured and unconscious purchase, though not essentially irrational deviation from a shopping list and is a complex emotional in nature.

From 1950 to 2013, many researches have been made on impulsive buying. Recent researches of impulse purchasing are found very interesting in which researchers often observe some common variables such as time & life

style (Beatty and Ferrell, 1998), materialism (Dittmar, 2001), young generation & Culture (Mai, Jung, Lantz, & Loeb, 2003), Gender (Giraud, 2001; Chien-Wen, 2010; Lai, 2010; Pentecost & Andrews, 2010; Chavosha, Halimi, & Namdar, 2011; Bashir, Zeeshan, Sabbar, Hussain, & Sarki, 2013) etc. Similarly, few researchers found that availability of money is a facilitator (Mai *et al.*, 2003), product price (Wong & Zhou, 2003), propensity to buy impulsively (Jones, Reynolds, Weun, & Beatty, 2003), shopping enjoyment (Sharma & Sivakumaran, 2004), presence of others (Luo, 2004), etc. are responsible for impulsive buying.

But yet to discover there is another important dimension of impulsive buying of consumer behaviour that is personality traits and which personality traits are affecting more impulsive buying behaviour. The personality traits of individuals are governing decision making process for whether it is a plan purchasing or impulsive purchasing. Psychologists have proved that there exists a common trait of impulsivity (i.e. some people are more prone towards impulsive behaviours than others) and Rook and Fisher (1995) believe that buying impulsiveness can be looked into as a specific sub-trait of this. Similarly, other traits of individuals are related to impulsivity may also play an important role in facilitated shopping behaviour. Sharma *et al.* (2010) investigated that those individuals who have high in the trait of 'Optimal Stimulation Level' were more likely to indulge in impulsive buying behaviours, as a way of getting their optimal levels of stimulation via the "emotionally charged experience" of shopping on impulse.

When the individual tendencies to increases in impulsive buying behaviour, it has been observed that it occurs due to negative feelings such as depression (Sneath, Lacey, & Kennett-Hensel, 2009) or low self-esteem. Some individuals who shop for such reasons explain that they do so to fill a void or gain control over their life. Certainly, research suggests that there is in fact a link between shopping (especially getting good deals) and the release of mood-boosting endorphins. The researches of Beatty and Ferrell (1998); Husman (2000); Rook and Gardner (1993); Youn and Faber, (2000); Weinberg and Gottwald (1982); Giraud, 2001 found that emotions strongly influence buying behaviour, which result in consumer impulse buying. The similar studies have been done by, Hoch and Loewenstein (1991) explained the impulse buying as a struggle between the psychological forces of desires and willpower.

Punj (2011) and Verplanken and Herabadi (2001) found out that the impulse buying tendency is embedded in personality traits, and it is a stable individual personality characteristics. Some researchers (Altman & Rogoff, 1987; Jones *et al.*, 2003; Verplanken & Herabadi, 2001; Yi & Baumgartner, 2011) said that impulse buying tendency is related to an expression of broader personality patterns.

Consumer’s characteristics consist of individual characteristics or personality traits that develop a consumer’s tendency to show impulsive behaviour (Weun, Jones, & Beatty, 1998; Young & Faber, 2000; Lin, 2006; Rook & Fisher, 1995). In the past literature of impulse buying in psychology, many studies have given importance to impulse buying of an individual’s personal trait. Individuals are accountable for impulse buying as compared to before product-centered think of researchers (Jalees, 2009). Chavosha, Halimi, and Namdar (2011) acknowledged a significant relationship between the consumer’s personality characteristic and impulse buying.

The psychologists have studied the general trait of impulsiveness and impulse control (Eysenck & Eysenck, 1978; Eysenck, Pearson, Easting, & Allsopp, 1985). Trait impulsiveness is characterised by unreflective actions (Eysenck *et al.*, 1985) and is significantly correlated with risk-taking (Weun *et al.*, 1998), and the psychological need to uphold a relatively high level of stimulation (Gerbing, Ahadi, & Patton, 1987).

## METHOD

### Objectives

- a. To investigate the influence of personality traits on consumer impulsive buying behaviour.

- b. To identify the role of gender and their personality traits influence on consumer impulsive buying behaviour.

### Hypothesis

The following hypothesis were formulated for the study:

- a. There is a significant correlation between personality traits and consumer impulsive buying behaviour.
- b. There is a significant difference of personality traits between gender and their impulsive buying behaviour.

### Sample

A total of 120 participants were randomly taken as sample for this study. Further the sample was categorized into gender, in which n1=60 were male and n2=60 were females. The data were collected from Delhi and NCR region.

### Materials

The primary data were collected usage of following questionnaires:

#### The Impulsive Buying Behaviour Questionnaire

The impulsive buying behaviour questionnaire was based on closed ended questions and Likert’s rating scale. Total 11 questions were acknowledged for the impulsive purchase and buying behaviour of consumers. Responses were measured using a five-point Likert scale,

**Table 1: Empirical Support for the Questionnaire**

Questions	Empirical Support (Question Number)
1. I often buy things spontaneously	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Taushif and Gupta, 2013; Rook and Fisher (1995) (1-6)</li> <li>• Youn and Faber, 2000 (7-9)</li> <li>• Han et al., 1991; Rook and Hoch, 1985; Weun et al., 1998; Youn &amp; Faber, 2000 (10)</li> <li>• Beatty &amp; Ferrel, 1998; Youn &amp; Faber 2000 (11)</li> </ul>
2. “Just do it” describe the way I buy the thing.	
3. I often buy things without thinking	
4. Sometimes I feel like buying things on the spur of the moment	
5. Sometimes I am a bit reckless about what I buy	
6. If I see something I want, I buy it	
7. I go shopping to change my mood.	
8. I feel a sense of excitement when I make an extra purchase.	
9. After I make an extra purchase I feel regret.	
10. I have difficulty controlling my urge to buy when I see a good offer.	
11. When I see a good deal, I tend to buy more than that I intended to buy.	

which ranged from Never=1 to Very Frequently=5. These questions were developed through references to previous studies on impulse buying. Questions 1 to 6 were taken from previous researched by Taushif and Gupta (2013); Rook and Fisher (1995). Questions 7 to 11 were taken from previous researched by Kim (2003), Beatty and Ferrel (1998); Han, Morgan, Kotsiopulos, and Kang-Park (1991); Rook and Hoch (1985); Weun *et al.* (1998); Youn and Faber (2000).

### Eysenck's Personality Questionnaire-R (Eysenck & Eysenck, 1977)

The Eysenck Personality Questionnaire-Revised (EPQ-R) measures three major dimensions of personality that account for most of the variance in personality. The EPQ-R Scales consists of four parameters such as E (Extraversion); N (Neuroticism); P (Psychoticism) and Lie scale. The total numbers questions are 90. The reliability of the questionnaire is 0.80 to 0.90.

### Procedure

A descriptive method was used in the present study. The two sets of the standardised questionnaire (Impulsive Buying Behaviour & EPQ-R) were given to 120 participants randomly to provide an appropriate response. Impulsive Buying Behaviour Questionnaire incorporates questions related to general people impulse purchase behaviour and factors general people think responsible for impulse purchase and other one was three dimension personalities such as psychoticism, neuroticism & extraversion developed by Eysenck. Whenever the participants were confused or in doubt, researchers helped them. The scoring process followed the use of the answer sheet and scoring key for the respective form for the EPQ-R. Further, EPQ-R all the raw scores

were converted into stanine scores and the factors were determined accordingly and Likert's scale was used in Impulsive Buying Behaviour Questionnaire.

### Data Analysis

Both descriptive and inferential statistics using Mean, SD, Correlation, and Student's 't' test were calculated dividing the data for male, female and total participants using SPSS 16.0. Data were compared between male and female for each of personality factors with impulsive buying behaviour.

## RESULT & DISCUSSION

The overview of inter correlation matrix (Table 2) personality traits such as psychoticism, neuroticism, extraversion & impulsive buying behaviour of male consumers reveals that the variables of psychoticism shares a significant relationship with the variable of neuroticism score ( $r=0.36$ ) of EPQ-R scale followed by the variable of impulsive buying behaviour ( $r=0.48$ ), but in the case of extraversion it shows that there is negative correlation with psychoticism ( $r= -0.021$ ). In this regard it can be said that psychoticism, neuroticism, and impulsive buying behaviour are highly correlated among the male consumers where as extraversion is not correlated psychoticism. Similarly the neuroticism score and impulsive buying behaviour are highly correlated ( $r=0.52$ ), but extraversion and neuroticism among male participants are not correlated with each other ( $r=0.008$ ). Further the result indicated that extraversion and impulsive buying are not correlated with each other ( $r=0.193$ ) among the male participants. The impulsive buying behaviour of male consumers indicated in this study that the major influence personality traits are psychoticism and neuroticism. The

**Table 2: Inter Correlation Between Personality Traits and Impulsive Buying Behaviour of Male Participants (n1=60)**

<i>Parameters</i>	<i>Psychoticism</i>	<i>Neuroticism</i>	<i>Extraversion</i>	<i>Impulsive Buying Behaviour</i>
Psychoticism	1	.369**	-.021	.481**
Neuroticism		1	.008	.520**
Extraversion			1	.193
Impulsive Buying Behaviour				1

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

neuroticism personality individuals are characterised by depressed, low self-esteem, moody which sometimes the individuals try to change their emotions through shopping that may sometimes lead to impulsive buying behaviour of consumers (Sneath *et al.*, 2009).

Table 3 gives a glimpse of inter correlation matrix between personality traits among impulsive buying behaviour of female participants. The result shows that in case of female consumers the personality traits of psychoticism is highly correlated with impulsive buying behaviour ( $r=0.373$ ). Similarly, personality traits of psychoticism is highly correlated with extraversion ( $r=0.292$ ) in the case of female participants. But in the case of neuroticism, it is not correlated with psychoticism ( $r=0.133$ ). It can be said that among other personality traits, psychoticism is a major factor to influence consumer impulsive buying behaviour. The score of neuroticism is also correlated with the impulsive buying behaviour of female consumers ( $r=0.282$ ), but the personality traits between neuroticism and extraversion is found negative correlation ( $r=-0.137$ ). Further, the score extraversion is a negative correlation with impulsive buying behaviour ( $r=-0.031$ ). In case of female consumers, the high impulsive buying behaviour is majorly influenced by the personality trait that is psychoticism and low with neuroticism, but a negative correlation with extraversion. The similar results were found by Delafrooz, Taleghani and Farahzad, (2013) that extraversion has a negative and meaningful effect on impulsive buying, and they have a linear and an inverted relation; it means with an increase in extraversion, impulsive buying reduces and neuroticism does not have a meaningful relation with impulsive buying.

The inter-correlation between personality traits and impulsive buying behaviour of total participants ( $N=120$ ) is shown in Table 4 which indicates that there is a highly significant correlation between psychoticism and impulsive buying behaviour ( $r=0.436$ ). The similar results have

been found between neuroticism and impulsive buying behaviour ( $r=0.446$ ), likewise between psychoticism and neuroticism ( $r=0.261$ ). On the other hand, there is no significant correlation between extraversion and impulsive buying behaviour ( $r=0.029$ ), as well as between extraversion and psychoticism ( $r=0.115$ ). But, there is a slightly significant between neuroticism and extraversion ( $r=-0.188$ ) at 0.05 levels and also it shows a negative correlation between two variables.

In the present study, impulsive buying behaviour has a significant relationship with personality traits such as psychoticism & neuroticism (Table 2, Table 3 and Table 4). Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted. There are many researches (Weun *et al.*, 1998; Rook & Fisher, 1995; Young & Faber, 2000; Lin, 2006) that have proved that individual's personality traits are influenced for impulsive buying behaviour. But very few researchers have described about that which personality traits are more accountable for impulsive buying behaviour in different standpoint (Altman & Rogoff, 1987; Jones *et al.*, 2003; Verplanken & Herabadi, 2001; Sneath *et al.*, 2009; Yi & Baumgartner, 2011) like the present study has conducted.

The overview of Table 5 is a comparison between male and female consumers in relation to their personality traits such as psychoticism, neuroticism, extraversion and impulsive buying behaviour. The present table scores signify, mean score, standard deviation, t-test and p value. It has been found that there is no significant difference of psychoticism between male and female participants ( $t=1.06$ ,  $df$  58 at  $\alpha$  level 0.01 and  $\alpha$  0.05,  $P = 0.290$ ) between male ( $85.83 \pm 12.52$ ) and female ( $83.33 \pm 13.23$ ).

The score of neuroticism shows that there is a highly significant difference between male and female participants ( $t= 6.95$ ,  $df$  58 at  $\alpha$  level 0.01 and  $\alpha$  0.05,  $P = 0.000$ ) between male ( $71.16 \pm 14.27$ ) and female ( $53.16$

**Table 3: Inter-Correlation Between Personality Traits and Impulsive Buying Behaviour of Female Participants (n2=60)**

<i>Parameters</i>	<i>Psychoticism</i>	<i>Neuroticism</i>	<i>Extraversion</i>	<i>Impulsive Buying Behaviour</i>
Psychoticism	1	.133	.292*	.373**
Neuroticism		1	-.137	.282*
Extraversion			1	-.031
Impulsive Buying Behaviour				1

\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). \*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

**Table 4: Inter-correlation between personality traits and impulsive buying behaviour of total participants (N=120)**

Parameters	Psychoticism	Neuroticism	Extraversion	Impulsive Buying Behaviour
Psychoticism	1	.261**	.115	.436**
Neuroticism		1	-.188*	.446**
Extraversion			1	.029
Impulsive Buying Behaviour				1

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). \* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

**Table 5: Male vs Female Comparison between personality traits and impulsive buying behaviour**

Parameter	Categories	Mean	SD	t	P-Value
Psychoticism	Male	85.83	12.52	1.06	0.290
	Female	83.33	13.23		
Neuroticism	Male	71.16	14.27	6.95*	0.000
	Female	53.16	14.08		
Extraversion	Male	47.00	15.87	2.79 *	0.006
	Female	55.33	16.82		
Impulsive Buying Behaviour	Male	72.15	11.13	2.24*	0.027
	Female	67.81	10.00		

\* $\geq 0.05$  and 0.01 level of significance ( $\alpha 0.05=2.00$  and  $\alpha 0.01=2.66$  at  $df=58$ )

$\pm 14.08$ ). The result is identical with the extraversion between males and females ( $t= 2.79$ ,  $df 58$  at  $\alpha$  level 0.01 and  $\alpha 0.05$ ,  $P = 0.006$ ) between male ( $47.00 \pm 15.87$ ) and female ( $55.33 \pm 16.82$ ). The impulsive buying behaviour has significant difference between males and females ( $t= 2.24$ ,  $df 58$  at  $\alpha$  level 0.01 and  $\alpha 0.05$ ,  $P = 0.027$ ) between male ( $72.15 \pm 11.13$ ) and female ( $67.81 \pm 10.00$ ). The role of gender has a significant difference in this study. It has been observed that man shows more impulsive buying than women. The null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted in case of gender. Supporting this result, the pervious studies (Cobb & Hoyer, 1986; Mai *et al.*, 2003) have found that in case of gender, men show more impulse buying than women because women carefully plan their purchases.

## CONCLUSION

This study was done with the aim of discussing the influence of personality traits on impulsive buying behaviour. The common personality trait like psychoticism may be divided into narrower traits such as impulsivity and sensation-seeking. The impulsivity may be divided into narrow impulsivity (unthinking responsivity), risk taking, non-planning, and liveliness. Sensation seeking has also

been analysed into a number of separate facets which has a more significant relationship to the impulsive buying behaviour of consumers. Similarly, personality traits such as neuroticism influence impulsive buying behaviour when the individual tries to change his negative moods/emotions and low self-esteem. The personality trait extraversion is found to have no correlation with male consumers and negative correlation with females. The previous study (El Meniawy, 2012) results show that lack of control, extrovert, innovativeness, and involvement with the product; hedonic shopping and the impulse buying tendency would moderate relationships between store environment and impulsiveness of a purchase. The gender and their personality traits play significant role in consumer impulsive buying behaviour. The outcomes of the research will be helpful for marketers to understand the impulsive buying behaviour of consumers and their personality traits which influence in decision making to impetuous purchases.

## THE IMPLICATION OF FUTURE RESEARCH

Future researches may explore personality traits with other factors that influence impulsive buying. The findings of the present study have indicated that gender and personality

traits such as psychoticism are a major influence in triggering impulse purchases. Therefore, future work can include the other demographic variables like age, marital status, income level, and other environmental stimuli as a part of the model. Although previous researches have explored the influence of personality traits, but there is less number of supportive study or literatures are available specifically to personality traits like extraversion, neuroticism and psychoticism.

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