

EFFECT OF DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS ON CONSUMER IMPULSE BUYING AMONG CONSUMERS OF CALABAR MUNICIPALITY, CROSS RIVER STATE

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ABSTRACT

The study examined the effect of consumers' demographic characteristics on impulse buying. Data were obtained through the administration of 400 copies of questionnaire to consumers in market places, supermarkets and high traffic points across Calabar Metropolis using accidental sampling technique. The multiple regression results revealed that 88% of impulse buying was accounted for by the combination of consumers' demographic characteristics. The ANOVA result indicated that consumers' demographic characteristic had significant influence on impulse buying (F - ratio $_{4, 395} = 754.033, p < 0.01$). The strength of the predictor variables revealed that though education was insignificant, but it exerted the most influence on impulse buying among consumers. The independent samples test result revealed that impulse buying differed significantly between male and female shoppers/consumers ($p < 0.01$), with the phenomenon more common among female shoppers due to their likeness and spontaneous attraction to fanciful products, while the Pearson's correlation result further showed that age of consumers and impulse buying were significantly and inversely related ($p < 0.01$). The study therefore suggested that consumers should order their priorities and always scale off their preferences when making product purchases to avoid buying unplanned products

Keywords: Age, Income, Education, Gender, Impulse Buying, Multiple Regression Analysis, Pearson's Correlation, Independent Samples Test

INTRODUCTION

Impulse buying behaviour is a phenomenon that has attracted research attention mostly in the developed countries. It is reported that impulse buying accounts up to 80% of all purchases, and that the purchases of new products are characteristic of impulse purchasing than from planned expenditure (Kacen & Lee, 2002). Impulse buying behaviour has attracted research investigation because the outcome appears to be a contradiction between what people plan to do or buy and what they finally do or buy (Gutierrez, 2004). Impulse buying according to Kacen & Lee (2002) is an unplanned purchase characterized by relatively rapid decision-making and a subjective bias in favour of immediate possession. In a similar way, Ghani *et al.*, (2011) described impulse buying as the sudden and immediate purchase decision inside a store with no prior intention to buy the specific product or products. From these definitions, it means that impulse buying relates to unplanned and irresistible buying decision of a product due probably to its fanciful design, price among other reasons. However, with the advancements in packaging technologies in the present contemporary society, rapid and unplanned buying decisions are often experienced among consumers whose end result could be satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the product bought.

Several factors have been associated in the literature with impulse buying behaviour among consumers. Factors such as the consumer's mood or emotional state (Weinberg & Gottwald, 1982; Rook, 1987; Rook & Gardener, 1993), trait buying impulsiveness (Rook & Fisher, 1995; Weun *et al.*, 1998), demographic factors (Bellenger *et al.*, 1978; Wood, 1998; Mai *et al.*, 2003; Ghani *et al.*, 2011), cultural and lack of shopping list (Mihic & Kursan, 2010) have been used to examine consumers'

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impulse buying. Interestingly, majority of these studies were carried out in Western and developed economies, but in Africa, such study has not been properly documented. In Nigeria and Cross River State in particular with diverse culture and consumers from different socioeconomic backgrounds, there seems to be paucity of studies that examined consumers' demographic characteristics on impulse buying behaviour. The aim of the study was to understand the influence of demographic characteristics on consumer impulse buying among consumers of Calabar Municipality, Cross River State. The study like earlier ones intends to find out whether demographic characteristics such as age, education, gender and income influence impulse buying among consumers in Cross River State.

HYPOTHESIS

The study hypothesizes that:

1. Consumers' demographic characteristic has significant influence on impulse buying;
2. Impulse buying differs significantly between male and female shoppers/consumers and that
3. Impulse buying behaviour is inversely related to the age of consumers.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Design

The study employed the descriptive cross sectional design to examine the influence of consumers' demographic characteristics on impulse buying among individuals from different socioeconomic backgrounds.

Sampling Technique

Purposive sampling technique was used to sample 400 customers in the area who came to the market/shops for shopping, while the accidental sampling technique was used to administer the questionnaire. The researcher with the aid of six trained field assistants stood at strategic positions or entrances to as well as exits from the market and shops (supermarkets) to administer questionnaire to individual consumers they came in contact with. The two predominant and existing markets in the Metropolis (Marian Market and Watt Market), ten supermarkets and six high traffic points across the Metropolis were used for the survey. Two hundred and fifty copies of the questionnaire were administered to consumers that came for shopping in the two markets, while the remaining one hundred and fifty copies were administered to consumers in selected shops and traffic points across the Metropolis. In all, 400 copies of questionnaire were successfully administered and retrieved.

Data Collection Procedure

Respondents (consumers) were accidentally intercepted in market places, supermarkets as well as in high traffic areas, in accordance with literature on consumer research (Veloutsou *et al.*, 2004; Laforet, 2011). However, to avoid loss of questionnaire, after consent was got from the respondent, the questionnaire was administered and collected at the spot. The instrument (questionnaire) was divided into two sections. Section A measured consumers' demographic characteristics, while Section B contained 6 item designed to measure consumer impulse buying behaviour using a 5 – point Likert Scale with responses ranging from Strongly Agree= SA (5); Agree = A (4); Undecided (3); Disagree = D (2); and Strongly Disagree = SD (1).

Analytical technique

Data obtained from the administered questionnaire were analysed using tables, simple percentages Pearson's correlation, independent samples test and multiple regression analysis. However, in order to effectively carryout this test, items such as gender and education coded for descriptive analysis were transformed or recoded into dummy variables. For instance, questions like gender with two options were transformed into one dummy variable of 1 as female and 0 as male; educational with five options were transformed or recoded into one dummy variable of no education as 0 and educated as 1 and so on. Analysis was carried out using SPSS 17 software for Windows.

RESULTS

Demographic Characteristics of Consumers

Table 1 gives information on the demographic characteristics of consumers. Majority of the respondents were females constituting 55.8%, while males constituted 44.2%. The predominance of females to males is expected as they go more on shopping for domestic and cosmetic among others than their male counterparts. The table also shows that majority of the consumers were within the ages of 20 - 40 years (68.6%), while 21.4% representing 126 consumers were within the ages of 41 and above. Information on the education of consumers depicts that 9.8% had no formal education, 23.8% had primary school education, 29.8% had post-primary education, and 31% had post-secondary education, while 6.8 had postgraduate qualifications. This implies that majority (90.2%) of the respondents are literates, as such are able to respond effectively to the questions raised on the questionnaire. The occupational information shows that students and traders as well as civil servants dominated the market environment.

Table 1. Demographic characteristics of consumers

Demographic Variables	Options	Consumers	Percentage (%)
Age	20 – 30yrs	129	32.3
	31 – 40yrs	145	36.3
	41 – 50yrs	92	23
	>50yrs	34	8.5
Sex	Male	177	44.2
	Female	223	55.8
Education	No education	39	9.8
	Primary	91	23.8
	Secondary	119	29.8
	Tertiary	124	31
	Others	27	6.8
Occupation	Student	118	29.5
	Trading	91	22.8
	Civil service	88	22
	Teaching	66	16.5
	Others	37	9.3
7 Monthly Income	<N50	75	18.8
	N50 – N100	138	34.5
	N101 – N150	117	29.2
	>N150	70	17.5

Effect of Consumers' Demographic Characteristics on Impulse Buying

Multiple regression analysis was used to test the hypothesis that consumers' demographic characteristic has significant influence on impulse buying (Table 2). The result of the multiple regression analysis shows that consumers' demographic characteristic (monthly income, age, gender and education) had a strongly positive relationship (0.94) with impulse buying. The coefficient of multiple determinations (R^2) indicated that 88% of impulse buying of a particular product was

accounted for by the combination of consumers' demographic characteristics. The ANOVA result further indicated that consumers' demographic characteristic had significant influence on impulse buying (F- ratio 4, 395 = 754.033, $p < 0.01$). In addition, the significance of the predictor variables (monthly income, age, gender and education) showed that monthly income, age and gender of consumers significantly exerted immense influence on impulse buying ($P < 0.01$), while education was observed not to influence impulse buying behaviour among consumers ($p > 0.01$) (Table 2).

The strength of the predictor variables (using the unstandardized regression coefficient) revealed that though education was insignificant, but it exerted the most influence on impulse buying (0.18), this was followed by age of consumers (0.17), monthly income (-1.12) and gender of consumers (-0.67). The result further indicated that a unit increase in the education of consumers holding other variables constant would result in 0.18 or 18% increase in impulse buying among consumers; on the other hand, a unit increase in the age of consumers holding other variables constant would result in 0.17 or 17% increase in impulse buying, while a unit increase in the gender of consumers holding other variables constant would result in -0.67 or 67% decrease in impulse buying among consumers (Table 2). The result further revealed that age and gender of consumers and impulse buying behaviour were related. Hence, the result implies that the age of consumers and their level of education have tremendous influence on consumer's impulse buying behaviour. This is evident as females are often victims of impulse buying, due to their emotional state and spontaneous likeness for attractive products.

Table 2. Summary of multiple regression result

Variables	Coefficients		
	b	B	t-value
Monthly income	-1.12	-0.80	-26.379*
Age of consumers	0.17	0.12	5.656*
Gender of consumer	-0.67	-0.24	-7.793*
Education level	0.18	0.04	1.884 ⁺
Test results			
F- value	754.033*		
R	0.94		
R ²	0.88		
Constant	5.95		63.189*
Std. Error	4.73		

*Significant at 1% significance level; ⁺Insignificant at 1% significance level

Analysis of the Difference in Impulse Buying Between Males and Females

The difference in impulse buying between male and female was tested using independent samples test. The t-test result in Table 3 shows that calculated t-value of 26.607 was less than the p-value of 0.000, meaning that impulse buying differed significantly between male and female shoppers/consumers. Studies on this issue remain contentious, as some studies reported high impulse buying behaviour among females (Lin & Lin, 2005; Ghani *et al.*, 2011) than males, while others reported the contrary (Cobb & Hoyer, 1986; Wood, 1998; Mai *et al.*, 2003).

Table 3. Independent samples test of the difference in impulse buying

Variables	N	Mean	SD	t-cal	Sig	df
Impulse buying among Males	177	4.59	0.49	26.607*	0.000	398
Impulse buying among Females	223	2.36	1.02			

*Difference between means is significant at 1% alpha level

Analysis of the Association between Impulse Buying Behaviour and Age of Consumers

Pearson's correlation was used to investigate the association between impulse buying behaviour and the age of consumers. The test result is presented in Table 4. From the table, the correlation coefficient (r-value) shows there was a low negative association between impulse buying and consumer's age (-0.28) which is significant (0.00) at 1% level of significance. With this, the hypothesis that impulse buying behaviour was inversely related to the age of consumers was upheld. The result further indicated that age of consumers and impulse buying were related in that an increase in the age of consumers would bring about a corresponding decrease in impulse buying and vice versa. This is obvious as impulse buying behaviour may be high among adolescents who have no responsibility in raising families, this category of people do not bother about the way they spend money on luxurious goods which in most instances are unplanned. They cannot control their emotions when in contact with new and attractive products, compared to married adults who are constrained by family needs; as such could order and control their buying behaviour.

Table 4. Pearson's Correlations between age of consumers and impulse buying

Statistics	Age of consumers	Impulse buying
Pearson Correlation	1.00	-.284**
Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
N	400	400

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

DISCUSSION

The result obtained reveals that consumer's demographic characteristic has significant influence on impulse buying. The demographic characteristics of consumers reveal that age and education of consumers have significant association with impulse buying, while income and gender are inversely related to impulse buying. This is obvious as increase in income may make consumers prodigal in spending and may be influenced to buy products not initially planned for, since the money is readily available. But on the contrary, consumers with low income may order their spending, as they only spend money on products already planned for; and even when the desire comes to mind, they are limited by the resources at their disposal. This assertion confirms those of Mai *et al.*, (2003) when they argued that consumers with higher income have less constraint in acting on their impulses as they have less difficulty in making payments for them. In a similar way, Abratt & Goodey (1990) also found a positive relationship between income and impulse buying and they pointed out that one of the reasons for more impulsive buying by consumers in US than the other countries is the higher income level of American consumers; while Lin & Lin (2005) found a positive relationship between the adolescents' pocket money and their impulse behaviour, as the impulse purchases increased with the increase in their pocket money.

Furthermore, education of consumers is inversely related to impulse buying, as impulse behaviour decline with increase or decrease in educational level attained. This is contentious, but can be said to be common among the more educated consumers, as they are influenced by their position and placement in the society, as such are more influenced by fanciful products since they have the purchasing power, but illiterates can control their excesses and would only spend money on products initially thought and planned for. In addition, it is also logical to argue that more educated consumers are well exposed and placed on a higher societal or social class than the uneducated; hence they are influenced by their social class. Therefore would want to boost their ego (Lifu, 2003). This is so as educational qualification of consumers determines their level of grading on the salary scale, this influences consumers' attitude towards fanciful packaging. It goes to show that consumer who are well placed in terms of position and salary earned are more influenced by fanciful packaging than those with lower or no qualification and low salary grades. The multiple regression result also shows that the gender of consumers exert tremendous influence on impulse buying behaviour. This is evident as females are common victims of impulse buying, due to their emotional state and spontaneous

likeness of attractive products/commodities than their male counterpart. This corroborates the finding of Lin & Lin (2005), when they conducted a study on the impulse behaviour of adolescents' in Taiwan and found that female adolescents had a higher tendency to impulsive buying than the male adolescents.

Furthermore, the study reveals an inverse association between impulse buying behaviour and the age of consumers (Pearson's correlation result). This is true as impulse buying behaviour and phenomenon decreases with the age of the consumers. Consumers who are adults and are saddled with numerous responsibilities of catering for the family are more prudent in spending than their counterparts who are adolescents. Adult consumers are more concerned about the well being of their children, as such may buy products according to the list drawn, but adolescents who do not have people to feed and take care of, are extravagant in their spending and cannot control their emotions when they come in contact with new and attractive products. In this regards, impulse buying behaviour is a recurrent phenomenon among young people. In addition, the study through the result of the independent samples test indicates that impulse buying differs significantly between male and female shoppers/consumers, with the phenomenon more common among female shoppers/consumers. Studies according to Ghani *et al.*, (2011) several studies have found that there exists a relationship between gender and impulse buying, though the findings are inconclusive, as some as some reported high impulse buying behaviour among females (Lin & Lin, 2005; Ghani *et al.*, 2011) than males, while others reported the contrary (Cobb & Hoyer, 1986; Wood, 1998; Mai *et al.*, 2003). Ghani *et al.*, (2011) in their study reported that female shoppers in Pakistan are more involved in impulse buying than the male shoppers.

CONCLUSION

The study shows that consumer's demographic characteristics have significant influence on impulse buying behaviour, while impulse buying phenomenon decreases with the age of the consumer. In addition, it shows that impulse buying differs significantly between male and female shoppers/consumers, with the phenomenon more common among female shoppers due to their likeness and spontaneous attraction to fanciful products. Education in this study is observed to exert tremendous influence on impulse buying, because higher positions in the society are determined by consumers' educational qualification which in turn affects their salary scale, thereby boosting their ego to purchase products which could be planned or unplanned for as a result of the purchasing power of money. Based on the findings of this study, the study suggests that consumers should order their priorities and always scale off their preferences when making product purchases to avoid buying unplanned products.

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