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The Effect of Mood on Impulse Buying Behavior - Case of Algerian Buyers

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Abstract:

The present research aims at studying the effect of mood on impulsive buying behavior. For this, a quantitative study was conducted and a scale of measurement was adapted to the Algerian context to identify the direct and indirect links between these two concepts, namely mood and impulse buying. The results of this study should enable store and point of sale managers to create added value for customers by offering intangible elements that appeal to the customers' emotions and to symbolic evocations as well in order to influence the individual's behavior towards the realization of spontaneous and impulsive purchases.

Keywords: Mood; impulsive purchase; clothing store; Algerian buyer

1. Introduction

Today purchases are made according to the affective and emotional components of the consumer (Filser, 1996; Hetzel, 2002; Lichtlé and Plichon, 2005). Economic reason and rationality have been replaced by passion and ludic irrationality (Bessouh and Ferouani, 2016). Indeed, we have moved from a cognitively dominated vision, with information management-based models, to an emotionally dominated vision (Piron, 1993). Present-day society is characterized by the importance given to the emotional component and to the freedom to choose and buy (Giraud and al, 2005). Consumption has become a means for producing an emotionally *gratifying experience* for the consumer who is looking for hedonism in his act of purchase. These observations corroborate the fact that consumption has become a way of life (Bessouh and al, 2017). Indeed, *impulse buying has become* a more regular occurrence in *today's* society; present-day consumers *show* stronger *impulse purchasing behavior*. Taking into account the affect and emotions has helped to better understand the impulsive buying behavior. Moreover, some authors, such as Bourgeon and Filser (1995), have shown that the consumers' affective states influence the perception of products in stores. Similarly, Hetzel (2002) showed that the consumer's affective states do have an impact on satisfaction. Moreover, Giraud (2002) emphasized the fundamental role of mood in triggering impulse buying. She showed that positive mood may strongly influence individuals to make an impulsive purchase in order to afford something to indulge themselves; this situation will certainly stimulate and develop very strong emotional reactions within the consumers. On the other hand, negative mood could cause individuals to give in to an impulse purchase in order to comfort themselves and cheer themselves up. Indeed, the present study aims at helping, people in general and store managers in particular, to understand the influence of mood on impulse buying in the light of the "affective" tendency. This emotional trend suggests that consumers sometimes try to reach goals other than those strictly utilitarian and they therefore take into account immaterial and non-utilitarian information on the products that are offered to them (Zajonc and Markus, 1991). This new understanding instills a *renewal-theoretical* framework that would certainly lead to a model "experience" searching. It is in this perspective that the following problematic is disclosed:

How does mood influence the Algerian buyers' impulse buying behavior?

Therefore, the first hypothesis may be formulated as follows:

H1: Mood has an impact on impulse buying behavior

H1.1: Good mood (positive mood) encourages the realization of the impulsive purchase

H1.2: Bad mood (negative mood) prevents the realization of the impulsive purchase.

The purpose of the present article is to understand the relationship between mood and impulse buying.

2. Conceptual Framework

2.1. The Role of Affect in Explaining the Buying Behavior

Zajonc (1980) considers that the emotional state is the central element in the decision-making process. Emotions serve as initiators of decision-making (for example, in situations of indeterminacy, emotions can help to decide, and sometimes in an even wiser way than when acting otherwise). In addition, several theoretical studies on impulse buying have so far highlighted the major role of the consumer's affective states in decision-making (Zajonc and Markuz, 1991). The emotional state, in which the consumer finds himself at the point of sale, plays a central role in impulse purchasing; mood is among the emotional components that elicit such behavior. Mood refers to an emotional state or an emotional process that lasts longer than emotion; it has no specific objective; it has only ephemeral intentions that tend to change over time; it is closely related to the environment as a whole. An emotion can turn into a mood; it can lose its intensity and become more diffuse; it is likely to give a particular aspect to the mood of the individual (Schachter, 1964; Lazarus, 1982; Sherman & Smith, 1987; Frijda, 1994). On the other hand, Izard (1977) defines mood taxonomy and cites the nine (9) elements that compose mood, namely interest, joy, anger, disgust, contempt, distress, fear, shame and surprise. For their part, Mehrabian and Russel (1977) define the emotional state as a reaction that the individual expresses towards an environment. For Bitner (1992), the environment is the set of tangible or intangible stimuli that influence the perception and reaction of the individual. The interaction between these different stimuli produces a global atmosphere in which the individual expresses an emotional reaction.

2.2. Impulsive Behavior

Studying the impulsive behavior, which is considered as an inconsistent behavior over time, assumes that impulsive decisions are a priori dysfunctional. For this reason, impulsive behavior is considered as part of an area where impulse buying is conceived to be "socially acceptable". Such behavior may even be encouraged and enhanced by marketing actions. Although it is not easy to give a clear definition of impulse purchasing, researchers in consumer behavior do agree on the fact that it is the quick purchase, which is more or less thoughtful and unplanned, of a product which the individual did not need beforehand (Bessouh et al, 2015). This type of purchase is characterized, among other things, by a sudden force that drives the action of buying; the buyer feels a powerful and intense compulsion, an excitement and stimulation, a feeling of being good or bad, and a failure to take into account the consequences.

2.3. Impulse Buying - Definitions and Features

The definition of impulse buying has evolved tremendously. It is only recently that impulse buying has been recognized as a complex hedonic experience (Rook, 1987). For a long time, impulse buying has always been defined as an unplanned purchase. In fact, such an operational definition is easily observable; it tends to discriminate impulse buying by showing the difference between planned purchases and actual purchases. Impulse buying is currently the subject of a great deal of research. Thus, it is important to classify products as impulsive and non-impulsive. In addition, impulse buying has often been recognized as a response to a store stimulus. This approach emphasizes the situational factors that are generally considered as the triggers of impulse buying, while the individual characteristics are neglected. A major criticism has been addressed to studies in this approach, since not all unplanned purchases are necessarily impulse purchases. Therefore, only the experiential approach in the analysis of consumer behavior (Holbrook and Hirshman, 1982) allows a reconsideration of the concept of impulse buying by placing it in a more affective perspective (Rook and Hoch, 1985, 1987). The affective approach seems to have an explanatory scope of impulsive buying. Rook (1987) goes beyond the standard definition of impulse buying as an unplanned purchase; he defines it as a situation where "*the consumer feels an irresistible desire to buy something immediately. This impulse is complex at the hedonic level and can give rise to emotional conflicts. In addition, she often intervenes with a diminished look for the consequences*". As for Leblanc-Maridor (1989), he defines "*mood*" as an important emotional variable; he also describes its disruptive role on the individual's behavior in the purchase. Mood represents the state of the individual at the time of purchase. Leblanc-Maridor (1989) does not include impulse in the definition of emotional impulse buying. He insists particularly on the antecedents and the emotional consequences of this purchase. In the same context, it is worth noting that the most recent research on this theme tends to develop a rather theoretical framework that takes into account the internal psychological mechanisms of the consumer.

2.4. The Role of Mood in Making an Impulsive Purchase

Luminet (2002) considers mood as a purely emotional concept. This conception has generated many works in hedonic psychology dealing with different forms of mood. For Delay (1961), mood is "*a fundamental affective disposition, rich in all the emotional and instinctive instances, which gives each of our states of mind a pleasant or unpleasant finality, oscillating between the two extreme poles of pleasure and pain*". According to Davidson (2003), emotions are short while the mood lasts longer. Cosnier (1994) goes in the same direction to say that mood acts on the emotional regulation because a person who is in a bad mood has less control over his anger. Similarly, Swinyard (1993) indicates that mood has a significant impact on the buying behavior of the consumer. Moreover, it has been established that emotions have a strong impact on behavior, whether they are felt at the point of sale or before visiting the point of sale. Thus, qualitative analyses have been successful in highlighting the

fact that buyers often make impulsive purchases when they feel particularly well or particularly bad (Gardner and Rook, 1988; Betty and Ferrell, 1998). Impulse buying is more often done to "fight a feeling of blues" (Piron, 1993). On the other hand, it is noted that a happy mood could remind a consumer the pleasure he could have by making purchases; it tends to activate the individual's desire to buy. A consumer who wants to escape a negative mood may also feel the desire to engage in a fun and entertaining activity. Indeed, impulse purchasing turns out to be an often-effective technique to overcome an undesirable mood. It seems that impulse buying occurs in two situations; the first is a situation of good humor where the individual seeks to indulge himself or to reward himself for this good humor; the second is a situation of bad mood where the person seeks to console himself in order to get rid of depression or chase the bad mood away. A particularly good or particularly bad mood is a variable often mentioned in circumstances giving rise to impulse purchases. The following table summarizes the results that have been highlighted.

	Positive Affective State	Negative Affective State
Leblanc-Maridor (1989)	In better shape than usual	More depressed than usual
Beatty and Ferrell (1998)	Positive humor	
Spies et al. (1997)	Positive mood change	
Reydet (1999)		In need of comfort
Trigueiro d'Almeida (1992)		Depressive state
Youn and Faber (2000)	Happy, self-indulgent, self-satisfied	Anger

Table 1: Mood Favors Impulse Buying
Source: Giraud M (2002), p 131.

3. The Empirical Study of Research

An empirical study was conducted in order to validate the relationship between mood and impulse buying.

3.1. Sampling and Measurement Scale

The sampling process adopted, as well as the measurement scale used, is presented as follows. In this study, the survey was conducted by self-administered questionnaire with a convenience sample consisting of 590 visitors of clothing stores (women and men) in the Province (Wilaya) of Tlemcen (Algeria), during the months of April and May of the year 2015. In fact, our sample consists of 380 impulse buyers. Most of these buyers are women (57%), the rest are men (43%). It is important to mention that among these buyers 29% are employees, 22% are students, 36% are traders, 10% are retirees and 3% are unemployed. In addition, 23% of these buyers were under the age of 25, 29% between 25 and 34, 24% between 35 and 44, 17% between 45 and 54, and 7% were more 55 years old. Most of these impulse buyers, more exactly 64%, are single and have monthly incomes below 40 000 Algerian Dinars (around € 210 in December 2017). When a consumer is an impulsive buyer, one gets interested in variables related to his personality (mood) and situational variables that are likely to facilitate impulse buying. The present study aims to determine the factors that could influence the impulse purchasing behavior of Algerian buyers, by asking the following question (see Table 2).

What do you think can influence the making of an impulse purchase? Please put a cross (X) in the selected box (5 answers maximum).	
Low price	Interesting price offer
Quality of product	There are fashion products
Store interior design	Branded products
Items are easy to find	Good speed of payment
Wide variety of choices	Warm welcome
Good store atmosphere	Special Events (Wedding - Anniversary - Religious Festival - Start of school year)
Crowded and uncrowded place	Colors of objects
Music	Light

Table 2: The Factors Influencing Impulse Buying

In order to validate our empirical study, it was decided to use the Brief Mood Introspection Scale (BMIS), developed by Mayer and Gaschke (1988), which consists of 16 constructs. This scale, which has been translated into French, was chosen because it offers an exhaustive list of moods and is easy to administer. It represents a tool that uses introspection since the individual can evaluate his own mood state. This scale has 8 positive emotional states and 8 negative emotional states; it allows the respondent to estimate the state of mood he is in. Thus, the opinions of the interviewees are evaluated on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from "Strongly disagree" to "Totally agree". Theoretically, the big interest in measuring mood is to know whether people are likely to be influenced by affective mechanisms, such as mood, or by cognitive inference mechanisms, such

as assessing the quality of the store interface (music, pleasant smell, design layout). It is also about assessing the post-purchase satisfaction of our impulse buyers.

How do you feel when you make this impulsive purchase? (circle the number that matches your opinion)					
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Happy	1	2	3	4	5
Exasperated	1	2	3	4	5
Calm	1	2	3	4	5
Melancholic	1	2	3	4	5
Nervous	1	2	3	4	5
Satisfied	1	2	3	4	5
High-spirited	1	2	3	4	5
Affectionate	1	2	3	4	5
Sad	1	2	3	4	5
Energetic	1	2	3	4	5
Benevolent	1	2	3	4	5
Sleepy	1	2	3	4	5
Agitated	1	2	3	4	5
Grouchy	1	2	3	4	5
Tired	1	2	3	4	5
Active	1	2	3	4	5

Table 3: The Brief Mood Introspection Scale (BMIS) by Mayer and Gaschke (1988)

3.2. Results and Discussions

The first part of our study gives the descriptive analysis of our survey. This analysis allows us to determine the highest rates associated with the different modalities of the variables to be investigated. The factors that influence the decision to make an impulse purchase among Algerian buyers are presented first. Then, the qualitative results, pertaining to the relation between the mood and the impulsive purchase, are discussed.

3.2.1. Variables Influencing Impulse Buying

From this table, which summarizes the results obtained, it was found that the main variables, which reflect the chance that a consumer makes an impulse purchase, are the low price (16.62%), low price offers (14.55%), interior design of the store (11.43%), quality of products (11.17%) and special events (7.27%), such as weddings, birthdays, religious holidays.

3.2.2. The Impulsive Purchase/Mood Relationship

The descriptive results in Table 4 indicate that when buyers make an impulse purchase, they are in a good mood (positive mood). This is confirmed by the opinions relating to several states (affectionate, satisfied, benevolent, high-spirited, agitated, excited, energetic and active). The second part concentrates on the analysis of the reliability of the scale used in this study. This step of the investigation allows analyzing the results obtained in order to verify the two hypotheses suggested and to answer our problematic.

Variables	Strongly disagree	Strongly agree	Neither agree nor disagree
Happy	103	197	85
Exasperated	63	257	65
Calm	104	193	88
Melancholic	262	10	113
Nervous	258	54	73
Satisfied	48	308	29
High-spirited	70	287	28
Affectionate	46	324	15

Variables	Strongly disagree	Strongly agree	Neither agree nor disagree
Sad	276	38	71
Energetic	46	241	98
Benevolent	59	302	24
Sleepy	228	4	153
Agitated	63	286	36
Grouchy	180	71	134
Tired	290	26	69
Active	102	196	87

Table 4: Mood Measurement of an Impulse Buyer When Making Impulse Purchases

3.2.2.1. Brief Mood Introspection Scale (BMIS) results used to measure the impulsive buying / mood relationship

After performing a Principal Component Analysis (PCA) on the 16 items of the scale, it was possible to highlight 2 axes; the first one returns 16% of the information and the second 15%. Table 5 displays the PCA results used to measure mood. The results of the perceptual map indicate that the impulsive buyers' mood is rather positive (Happy, Satisfied, High-spirited, Affectionate, Energetic, Benevolent, Active); this will certainly exert a positive influence on the judgments that are based on impulsive behavior.

The results given by this scale explain the individual's tendency to make favorable impulse purchases. It can therefore be said that impulse buying is experienced by Algerian consumers as a pleasant and exciting experience. Moreover, impulse buyers are rational buyers, since the emotional benefits associated with the buying experience are part of utility; these impulse purchases are attracted to bargains, sales, interesting price offers, etc. In addition, it is possible that these impulse buyers spend their money solely in a reasonably wise way. Yet, it seems more likely that these individuals know how to profit from their impulse purchases. This means that most of our impulse buyers make favorable impulse purchases; they seem to be well able to master their impulses. Therefore, the Brief Mood Introspection Scale (BMIS) confirms the existence of a relationship between mood and impulse buying. The hypothesis according to which the mood favors the realization of impulsive purchases is thus validated. The empirical validation of the relationship between mood and impulse buying constitutes a further corroboration of what has been reported in several research studies.

	Comp.1	Comp.2	Comp.3	Comp.4	Comp.5
Standard Deviation	1.626779	1.5498592	1.22212750	1.14488645	1.06262950
Proportion of Variance	0.168007	0.1524948	0.09482077	0.08321379	0.07168598
Cumulative Proportion	0.168007	0.3205018	0.41532255	0.49853634	0.57022231

	Comp.6	Comp.7	Comp.8	Comp.9	Comp.10
Standard Deviation	0.98814526	0.94089340	0.88129268	0.84403220	0.80609808
Proportion of Variance	0.06198863	0.05620194	0.04930725	0.04522603	0.04125212
Cumulative Proportion	0.63221095	0.68841289	0.73772014	0.78294617	0.82419829

	Comp.11	Comp.12	Comp.13	Comp.14	Comp.15
Standard deviation	0.78537488	0.74721216	0.73761251	0.66082920	0.57570390
Proportion of Variance	0.03915836	0.03544527	0.03454037	0.02772355	0.02104112
Cumulative Proportion	0.86335665	0.89880192	0.93334229	0.96106585	0.98210696

	Comp.16
Standard deviation	0.53089276
Proportion of Variance	0.01789304
Cumulative Proportion	1.00000000

Table 5: PCA Results for the Measurement of the Impulse Buyer's Mood

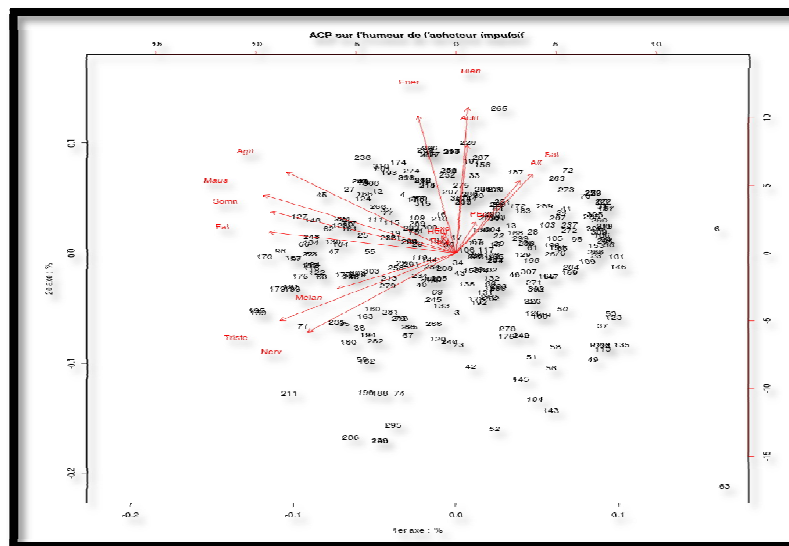


Figure 1: Graphical Representation of the Principal Component Analysis (PCA) for the Impulsive Buyer's Mood

4. Conclusion

Results from this study, on the effect of mood on impulsive buying behavior, indicate that individuals who are in a good mood seek to stay in this state by making an impulsive purchase to indulge themselves, to reward themselves because for them buying impulsively is a way to change their minds, to combat feelings of discomfort and moodiness, and also to reward themselves by buying something. Hypothesis H1.1 is thus validated. On the other hand, no relation was found between bad mood and impulsive buying for individuals with a negative mood, which does not allow validating hypothesis H1.2.

These findings corroborate the fact that the consumer's humor arouses the desire to buy impulsively. In this respect, the commercial actions of store managers must be targeted in such a way as to provide hedonic benefits. Nowadays, many consumers give more importance to affectivity and grant more consideration to pleasure than price. Therefore, store managers have every interest in adapting to new consumer buying practices. Finally, the results of this study caution owner-managers of stores to better understand the expectations of their customers in order to develop more efficient impulse buying strategies.

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