

Impact of Cultural Values and Life Style on Impulse Buying Behavior: A case study of Pakistan

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Abstract

The main purpose of this study is to predict the impact of cultural values and life styles on impulse buying behavior of Pakistani customers. Survey methodology was used to collect the data by adopting convenient sampling technique. An empirical method was used to analyze the data. The T-test indicates that gender role is the only one variable of cultural values and life style of Pakistani customers where significant difference exists between male and female customers while making impulse buying behavior. Correlation test is used to analyze the relationship among the variables of cultural values and life style; the results suggest that there exist significant relation among all the variables of cultural values and life styles. The results also suggest that impulse buying behavior is predicted by security, life satisfaction, gender role, financial satisfaction, in group contact and life style variables of cultural values and lifestyles of Pakistani consumers.

Key words: *cultural values, buying behavior, life style, Pakistani Customers.*

Introduction

In recent years, with the advancement of economic status and self-conscience, impulsive buying has increased. Impulsive purchasing is generally defined as the unplanned buying behaviour of the consumers (Kollat and Willett, 1967). Impulsive buying behavior is an instantaneous purchase process when there is no aim to purchase the commodity (Beatty and Ferrell, 1998).

Therefore, it is important to learn the factors which determine consumers' impulsive purchases (Yang, Huang and Feng, 2011). Buying impulsiveness is affected by different kinds of factors such as personal, temporal, economic and as well by cultural factors. These factors remain same in all situations whether the shopper is buying the same items or different situations (Stern, 1962), and so it is frequently assumed that personal and situational factors are significant. Chen (2001), described four factors which influence impulse buying, such as external stimuli (buying frequency, store displays, promotions and advertising, atmosphere in the store and retailers), internal perceptions (lifestyle, personality, emotion, money and time pressure), buying behaviour (price, the time of purchasing, payment) and demographic variables (age, gender, income, occupation, marital status, education, household income and social status). Ahmad (2011) studied the impulsive buying behavior of the Indian consumers in FMCG sector, considering the retail

market of the India. According to him various factors like placement of products, effective price strategy, promotion and window merchandising have impact on the impulse buying behavior of the consumers.

The consumer which was thought to be rational is now considered to driven by something other than rationality. Sarkiet al., (2012) found out that buying is more emotional rather than rational. Their research also found that there are different things that effect buying that includes culture and lifestyle as they drive consumers towards the product that they actually buy. A research on china gave the facts about the purchase pattern of a different culture. Culture in china is more of collective in nature, so the research found that collectivist values influence their purchasing decision more than anything (Yan Luo, 2009). Another researcher Sun et al. (2004) found difference in the consumer's lifestyle between the individualistic and collectivist culture at ethic-level. The finding of the research were quite amazing by describing that individuals seem to be more satisfied with their life than people living in collectivist society, financially satisfied and they do more travel and people from collectivist culture. Lengand Botelho (2010) found the impact of national culture on a consumers buying decision and purchasing pattern. According to findings it seemed that national culture tend to form a purchasing behavior in that country.

To understand the cultural values and lifestyles of the customers Hofstede (1991) study is followed by several researchers. He described five dimensions to understand the cultural values of any country which are power distance, uncertainty avidness, long term orientation, masculinity and collectivism/individualism. In this study only one dimension collectivism/individualism is used to understand the impact of cultural values and lifestyles on impulse buying behaviour of the Pakistani customers.

Hofstede (1991) defined collectivism as members of society or groups which look after each other and try to help the group members and vice versa. It has been observed by studies that eastern societies have the collectivist culture while the western countries have the individualistic culture (Markus and Kitayama, 1991). In order to understand the consumer decision making process, it is important to differentiate the collectivist and individualistic societies (Masheswaran & Shavitt, 2000). Although a research has been done by Sarki, Bhutto, Arshad and Khuhro (2012) to analyze the impact of Pakistani cultural values and lifestyle on meaning of brands but there is no research to understand the impact of cultural values and lifestyle on impulsive buying behaviour of Pakistani customers, so it become necessary to do a research on this topic.

This study will be beneficial for different national and multinational companies doing business in Pakistan. This study will investigate the impact of cultural values and lifestyle on impulsive buying behaviour of Pakistani customers and it will be beneficial for the marketers to target their customers in an effective manner. Through the use of this study sales managers can enhance their sales rapidly by targeting and segmenting the potential customers. This study will also be beneficial for the students and instructors while discussing the concepts of decision making styles of consumers in their marketing classes and will enhance their knowledge. Moreover this study will provide a guide line for future researches in this field of marketing.

Literature Review

Over the last forty year, marketing researchers tried a lot to understand and define the underlying concept of impulse buying behavior. The findings of the some researchers are discussed here. Impulse buying behavior of the customers are defines as the purchasing of the commodity without planning (Cobb and Hoyer, 1986; Kollat and Willett, 1967). Cha (2001) describes in his research while studying the impulse buying behavior is based on the repetition emotions.

Purchasing and buying pattern has changed over the time periods. The consumer which was thought to be rational is now considered to driven by something other than rationality. Sarki, Bhutto, Arshad, & Khuhro (2012) found out that buying is more emotional rather than rational. This research also found that there are different things that effect buying that includes culture and lifestyle as they drive consumers towards the product that they actually buy. Customers regardless of the culture go through a five well defined steps of making a purchase decision such as search information, need recognition, purchase and post purchase decisions and evaluation of alternatives, and at every stage culture is a major force that influences it. A research on china gave the facts about the purchase pattern of a different culture. Culture in china is more of collective in nature so the research found that collectivist values influence their purchasing decision more than anything (Yan Luo, 2009).

Another researcher Sun et al (2004) found difference in the consumer's lifestyle between the individualistic and collectivist culture at ethic-level. The finding of the research were quite amazing by describing that individuals seem to be more satisfied with their life than people living in collectivist society, financially satisfied and they do more travel and people from collectivist culture. Lengand Botelho(2010) found the impact of national culture on a consumers buying decision and purchasing pattern. According to findings it seemed that national culture tend to form a purchasing behaviour in that country. A study conducted in Singaporean and Jung (2004) stated that the consumption behaviors of the consumers are easily identified by the consumer's culture. As Singapore's people are tend to shop as per their culture.

View of the self also plays a major role while people tend to make purchase decisions. Markus (1991) defined two divergent construal of the self an independent view(individualistic)and an interdependent view(collectivist) the study showed differences and showed that people of European countries tend to be more individualistic western consumers decision making is totally different than that of other regions of the world. They are more independent and they tend to try those new innovations more than people of collectivist cultures.

Talking about Pakistan, Hakim and Aziz (1998) found that Pakistan is majorly divided into four cultures (Sindhi, Punjabi, Pakhtoon and Balouch),there is a lot of differences from ethnic values to languages and way of living and even moral values differ and also found out that Pakistan's culture is more of collectivism. Traditional values lifestyles norms and behaviors of people living in India are changing and they are on their journey of transformation towards the west.

ShahJehan et al (2011) found that five major traits of personality (extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, openness and neuroticism) had a positive impact on impulse buying. As the consumer will be more extrovert he/she will be more impulsive buyer and the guy with low agreeableness will be more impulse and so the other traits. It was positively co-related. That proved another fact that personality dimensions even play a role in decision making.

However still there are many other factors that affect the impulse buying behavior. One research conducted by Jeffrey and Hodge (2007) shows that online system of purchase is also one of the factor among those factors that help people decided an impulse purchase and found that impulse purchase has positive correlation with amount spent on the website. He found the impact of store location on consumers 'impulse purchase decision. He also concluded that location of a store is one of the main factors that influence a lot in impulse decision.

Baumeister (2002) studied a question, "what can be other reasons for a person to make an impulse purchase". He found that impulse buying is a fun. Similarly Yang et al. (2011) who studied three characteristics (ambient, design, social) of a retail environment and consumer response that affect impulse buying. They used Stimulus-Organism-Response model to see the relationship of these characteristics with consumer response towards these factors and used hedonic motivation. They found that consumers show a positive response to these characteristics of a retail environment either directly or indirectly. Many other researches were also conducted that found consumer life style as one of the major factor that affect impulse buying decisions.

Ahmad (2011) studied the effect of impulsive consumer style and unhealthy eating. They found that Impulsive consumer style plays a vital role on consumer buying patterns. Not only consumer impulsive style but different personality traits are also affecting impulse buying decision. Youn &Faber (2000) studied different personality traits and found a relationship between impulse buying and personality traits and cues. In terms of psychological function, impulsive buying is defined as a particular form of self-regulation and also Verplanken and Sato (2011) examined that impulse buying is a psychological function. When impulse behavior was studied many in-store stimuli were considered.

A study was conducted by Welles (1986) who stated the reality that most shoppers focus on impulsive buying. Research conducted by Jones et al.,(2003) described that impulse buying behaviour is better predicted by product specific conceptualization. Not only these factors but also there are some other factors

like different demographic factors (age, gender, family background) and many other that affect impulse behaviour. Coley and Burgess (2003) studied that gender differences play a vital role in cognitive and affective impulse buying. They found that Gender affects differently on buying decisions, because male and female have different psyche to do things, hence, they make decisions in different styles. A related research was conducted by Yang et al. (2011) who studied about other demographic factors mainly income, age and education. They found that demographic factors have impact on impulse buying decisions. Another related research was conducted by Ahmad (2011) who studied different demographic variables, he found that males are doing more impulse buying than female, and people below age 20 have significant lower impulse buying behaviour than another age group, and people below income of 2 lakh has lower impulse buying behaviour.

Hence these studies show that not only culture, life style but many other factors influence the consumer impulse buying behaviour. Tirmiziet al. (2009) defined that only the pre-decision stage affect the impulse buying and show a weak association with others factors like fashion involvement, consumer's life style and post decision stage of consumer behaviour. A recent research was conducted by Yang et al (2011) find that different buying situations lead to different impulse buying behaviours like as when consumers enjoy shopping, they go for more impulse buying or if they have a lot of time, they go for more impulse buying. On the basis of the literature, following hypotheses were made.

H₁: There is significant relationship between the variables of cultural values and lifestyles of Pakistani customers.

H₂: There exist significant gender differences among the cultural values and lifestyles of Pakistani customers.

H₃: Cultural values and lifestyles of Pakistani customers have significant impact on impulsive buying behaviour of Pakistani customers.

Data and Methodology

The purpose of this research is to understand the impact of cultural values and life styles on impulsive buying behaviour of Pakistani customers. For this a questionnaire was developed to collect the data. First part of the questionnaire was taken from the study of Sun et al. (2004) to measure the cultural values and lifestyles of the Pakistani customers while the second part of questionnaire was taken from the study of Rook and fisher (1995) to measure the impulsive buying behaviour. The data was collected from the students of 2 different universities aged (18-30 years) and convenient sampling technique was used. The rationale behind selecting university students for studying the impact of cultural values and life styles on impulsive buying behaviour is based on the four reasons as discussed by Grant and Waite (2003) has identified four reasons to do research on the young consumers. First, young consumers form their own attitude and consumption pattern to create identity. Secondly, young consumer can influence the purchase decision of the others. Thirdly, they are the one that can transform the culture and society. Finally in a marketing perspective they are the particular segment with powerful spending ability in their own way.

A total of 450 questionnaires were distributed and only 400 useable responses were collected back for the analyzing the data. There were 52% male respondents and 48% were female. Average age of the respondents was 24 years. The sample characteristics are somewhat different from those samples which are normally witnessed in Western studies in terms of gender distribution and age. For the analyses of data statistical software SPSS 16 was used.

Results and Discussion

Reliability

Reliability is defined as the uniformity of results while measuring the items of research repeatedly (Kim et al, 2004). Later on, Hair et al. (2007) suggests different acceptable values of Cronbach's alpha for the measurement of reliability of the scale. According to him the value of $\alpha < 0.06$ is poor, the value of α ranges from 0.60 to < 0.70 is moderate, the value of α ranges from 0.70 to < 0.80 is good, the value of α ranges from

0.80 to <0.90 is very good and the value of α more than 0.90 is excellent. The table 1 is showing the value of α which is 0.765, depicting the good reliability of the scale.

Independent sample T- test was used to understand the differences among the customer's cultural values and lifestyle as indicated in table 1.

Table 1: Independent sample t-test:

	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig.</i> (2-tailed)
Life Satisfaction	3.344	.068	.528	405	.598
Financial Satisfaction	.008	.930	1.428	406	.154
Lifestyle	.000	.992	-.504	404	.615
Group Influence	.295	.587	1.362	404	.174
Family Orientation	.050	.822	-.123	404	.902
Gender Roles	.887	.347	6.632	406	.107
Security and Stability	.533	.466	1.373	405	.171

* Significant at 0.05 level (two tailed).

The T-test table indicates that gender role is the only one variable of cultural values and life style of Pakistani customers where significant difference exist between male and female customers while making impulse buying behaviour which is significant at $p < .001$. Coley and Burgess (2003) studied that gender differences play a vital role in cognitive and affective impulse buying. They also found that Gender affects differently on buying decisions, because male and female have different psyche to do things, hence, they make decisions in different styles

A simple correlation test was used to understand the relationship among the constructs of cultural values and life styles of Pakistani consumers as shown in table 2.

Table 2: Correlation

Collectivist and Individualist Lifestyle/Values		Life satisfaction	Financial satisfaction	Life Style	Group influence	Family orientation	Gender roles	Security
Life satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	1						
Financial satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	.256**	1					
Lifestyle	Pearson Correlation	.273**	.259**	1				
In -Group influence	Pearson Correlation	.150**	.190**	.178**	1			
Family orientation	Pearson Correlation	.179**	.029	.128*	.124*	1		
Gender roles	Pearson Correlation	.090	.145**	.048	.231**	.174**	1	
Security	Pearson Correlation	.252**	.125*	.237**	.102*	.211**	.235**	1

* Correlation is significant at 0.05 levels (two tailed). ** Correlation is significant at 0.01 levels (two tailed).

A simple Pearson Correlation test is used to analyze the relationship among the variables of cultural values and life style, the results suggests that there is significant relationship among all the variables of cultural values and life styles. All variables are significant at the 0.01 level and 0.05 levels (2-tailed) as shown in table 2.

Multiple regression analysis was used to analyze the impact of cultural values and life styles on impulse buying behaviour of Pakistani customers. The results are shown in table 3.

Table 3: Regression Analysis

Collectivist and Individualist Lifestyle/Values	Standardized coefficients		
	β	t	Sig.
Constant		3.479	.001
Life satisfaction	.104	2.158	.032
Financial satisfaction	.170	3.569	.000
Life Style	.182	3.766	.000
In Group contact	.141	3.013	.003
Family Orientation	.057	1.217	.224
Gender roles	.093	1.972	.049
Security	.121	2.521	.012
R ²	.235	17.069	P ≤ .000
Adjusted R ²	.221		

Note. Dependent variable is impulsive buying behavior

The results suggest that impulse buying behaviour is predicted by security, life satisfaction, gender role, financial satisfaction, in group contact and life style. The results table 3 are indicating the strength of security ($\beta=0.121$; $P<0.05$), life satisfaction ($\beta=0.104$; $P<0.05$), gender roles ($\beta=0.093$; $P<0.05$) financial satisfaction ($\beta=0.170$; $P<0.001$), in group contact ($\beta=0.141$; $P<0.05$), and Life style ($\beta=0.182$; $P<0.01$), and in predicting the impulse buying behaviour among Pakistani university students. Most of these variables are also predicted by Sarki et al., (2012) while predicting the cultural values and lifestyle on meaning of branded products.

Conclusion

The purpose of the research was to understand the influence of Pakistani university student's individualist and collectivist values and life styles impulse of buying behaviour. This research concludes that the some constructs such as Gender role construct of cultural values and lifestyles of Pakistani university students vary across genders. This clarifies that role of gender is clearly described in Pakistani culture.

The results indicated that cultural values and lifestyles of Pakistani university students had significant relationship among all the variables of reference group influence.

The study also found that constructs of the cultural values and lifestyles (life satisfaction, financial satisfaction, life style, in group contact, gender role and security) had significant impact on the impulsive buying behaviour of Pakistani consumers.

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