

Study of Impact of Social Media Influencers on Impulse buying of Generation-Y related to e-commerce

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Abstract - The study gives an insight on how consumer behaviour is rapidly and steadily developing. The generation is growing up in a techy digital era. This can affect eventually how the consumers decide on making their buying decisions. The study aims to examine if the influencers have an effect on consumer impulse buying behaviour within the PCMC, Pune area from a viewpoint of Generation Y customers.

The method used for this study was through the qualitative method, wherein in-depth focus group interview was conducted by the researcher. As, impulse buying is related with hedonic psycho-social motivations instead with rational, decision-making aspects in consumer behaviour. The impulse buying is unintended, because the individual is not actively looking for particular goods and has no plans to buy and is not in the purchase operation and also has no pre-shopping plans to purchase the item. The effect and awareness that social media influencers have recognized to promote the brands and products for online shopping while they peruse on the social media websites which incline them to buy product items outside their specific shopping goals. Market strategy to target demographics especially the Generation Y should be more effective in concern with the traditional marketing methods than the newer methods which gains the credibility of the mass media which includes the advertising, content sponsored by the influencers, trust in them, expertise, attractiveness, social identity, consumer buying decision making process which implies impulse buying.

Keywords: Generation Y consumers, consumer buying decision, Impulse Buying behaviour, Advertising, Social media influencers, trust, expertise, attractiveness, social identity.

I. INTRODUCTION

Most people when they require short-term entertainment, they would prefer to go to the nearest shopping centre or go shopping than somewhere else. The reasons could be:

- Shopping is a social activity and it spends leisure time
- Shopping is also an activity to improve mood

There are 2 shopping attitudes:

- Shopping with planning
- Shopping without any plans or Spontaneous (impulse buying).

Impulse buying can occur when shopping in store as well as online shopping. Store Environment (such as music, scent, touch the product, display etc.) encourage consumers to do impulse buying, but what about the online retail shopping atmosphere? Online impulse buying only provides the product information through the website or internet.

Online atmosphere has a limited effect compared with the atmosphere in the store. Whereas on the other hand while shopping online the Product Involvement is the level of interest and commitment to buy a product with a particular brand while in online shopping as compared to the in-store shopping hence may tend to impulse buy online.

II. CHARACTERISTICS OF GENERATION Y

a) The Consumers Perspective:

The Generation Y which has need to constantly direct their own views and their opinions which also be related to the widespread with social media. The Generation Y have and possess smart phones of very latest technologies and of well-known brands. Their only wish is to own the very latest mobile device which is a symbol of socially being exclusivity that which reflects their personality. Some of the respondents disclosed that their friends and peers would influence their professional, personal purchase decisions.

Moreover, they can influence the purchase decision of their family members.

There are couple of differences between the males and females of this Generation, which are as discussed below:

i. Male Characteristics

Males having a progressive info about the latest technology and these youngsters would like to very much buy them. It is found that the males do not get waved away by their members of their family in making a purchase decision. But this generation help their family members to most of the times decide about the purchase of their products and services.

ii. Female Characteristics

It was found that for the females especially the family opinions 'did influence' their own decisions but it was also further discussed extensively in the family. The respondents in the study remarked that friends in fact are a group of major influencers, when especially the technological or digital products are being purchased by them.

b) The Industry Perspectives:

The Gen-Y is as 'someone who is very tech savvy, always on the social media and very much well versed with the internet'. They are the set of early adopters and also the influencers. The Gen-Y are those consumers who are very much growing with time and they have a strong desire to use the recent technologies, maybe it a mobile phone or also other gadgets. They do not hesitate and have very strong desires to put their independent opinion on the social networking and social media sites like the Facebook or twitter. These are the users who are very much evolved in the digital space not only but are still in the evolving phase.

This Generation also have an attitude, that they would just not believe on a brand as to just because of the emotions, but they would look for practicality. This Gen-Y is not brand loyal but also very practical as they give only some importance to the Brand. This generation need something very different, very creative and very innovative for them to grab their attention and nothing can be imposed on them as these young generation are very particular about the impact, the relevance and the innovative aspects of each and every product.

We can learn that a social media influencer on social media who has established credibility in a specific industry which has access to a large number of audience and can persuade others by virtue of their authenticity and reach.

1. Major Social Media Influencers: Network quality, Product, Involvement, variety of product, credit card, cash on delivery, sales promotion, virtual-atmosphere, display, experience. Social media influencers are known as third parties which through their recommendations, images and other content on social media, can shape opinions, attitudes

and actions of consumers and thereby influence their purchase decisions.

III. IMPULSE BUYING

The impulse buying which is unintentional, because the individual is not very active looking for the particular goods and also does not have any plans to buy and is not in the purchasing the operation and also no pre-shopping plans to purchase the item. Four types of impulse buying behavior

- Pure Impulse:** an unplanned novelty purchase, e.g. casually browsing and buying a handmade ceramic sculpture you like
- Reminder Impulse:** seeing a product and remembering that you need it, e.g. buying batteries to power a gadget you just bought
- Suggestive Impulse:** seeing a product and visualizing a need for it, e.g. purchasing socks after seeing them listed that sells shoes
- Planned Impulse:** taking advantage of a promotional offer with an unplanned purchase, e.g. adding an item to your cart to reach a free shipping threshold

	Boomers	Gen X	Gen Y	Gen Z
Born	1946-1964	1965-1980	1981-1995 Age group 23-35	1996-2009
Size	78 Million	48 Million	80 Million	57 Million
Characteristics	Hard-working, competitive, loyal, confident	Anti-authority, individualistic, self-reliant	Confident, needy, digital thinkers, entitled	Realistic, creative, hyper-connected
Why they are the way they are	Healthiest, wealthiest, largest generation of time	Children of workaholics & divorce, cable/internet	Micromanaged, rewarded for participation, technologically connected	Raised in culture of fear, mobile technology, helicopter parents
Communication Styles	Prefer detailed dialogue in person or via phone, appreciate meetings, believe no news is good news	Prefer concise communication, without clichés or over-explaining, email	Prefer frequent feedback and problem-solving via technology instead of phone calls or meetings	Prefer visual communication via technology, expect to communicate whenever/wherever they want
Problems	Dwindling retirement funds, job dislocation, rising healthcare costs or inadequate healthcare	Debt, caring for aging parents and young children, balancing life/career, stuck in middle management	Debt, unemployment, difficulty transitioning to career, negative stereotypes	Finding identity, lack of job opportunities, falling apart of American Dream,
Flaws	"Been there, done that," attitude, not open to new ideas	"Wait and see" approach, difficulty committing	"What's in it for me," high demands, short attention spans	Need for structure, want quick results, lack interpersonal skills

Fig 1.: Generation Chart Source:

<http://www.ourknowledge.asia/blog-posts--articles/understanding-and-managing-the-gen-y-gen-x-baby-boomers-and-traditionalists-in-your-organization>

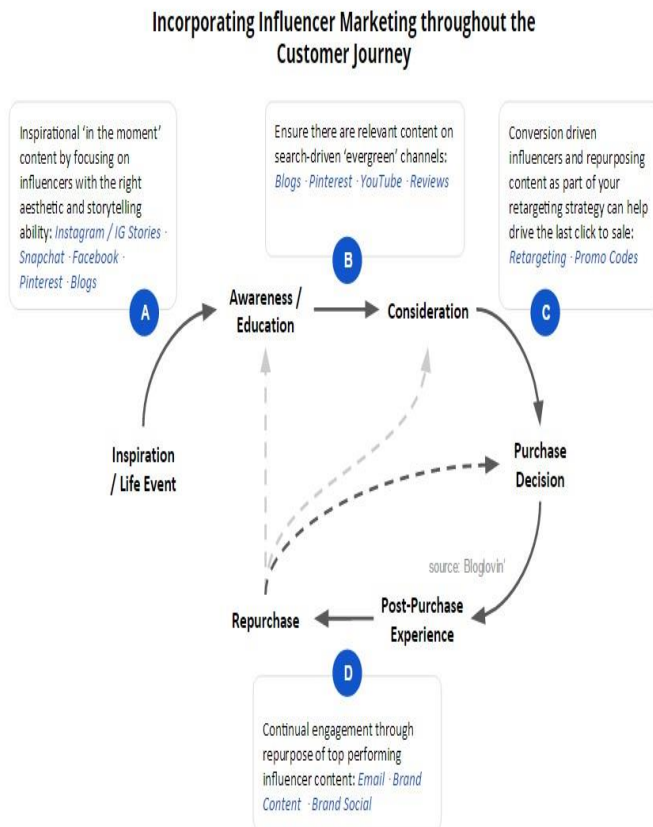


Fig 2.: Incorporating influencer Marketing throughout the Customer journey

Source: Bloglovin'/McKinsey Consumer Decision Journey

IV. REVIEW OF LITERATURE SURVEY

There are several studies which indicated the significance of a growing trend towards unplanned purchasing.

1. Serapin, Elizabeth J., Title: An investigation of impulse buying attitudes among different age -generational cohort groups. Capella University, Proquest dissertations publishing, (year 2005). ISBN no. 9780496144778, 0496144774 How do impulse buying habits differ among age-generational cohort groups? The results of this study are useful in enhancing knowledge development in marketing strategies to target market the different generational groups.
2. Cinjarevic, Merima, Title: Cognitive and affective aspects of impulse buying. Journal name: Sarajevo business and economics review volume 30, pp 168-184 (year 2010). The purpose of this paper is to: 1) determine the roles of cognitive and affective components in the impulse buying; 2) establish the relation between impulse buying and change seeking and 3) test differences in the impulse buying behavior regarding the demographic characteristics (gender, age, marital status) of respondents.
3. Kalla, Supriya M and Goyal, Anita, Title: Can search for happiness lead to impulse buying? A multi-method investigation of happiness' as an internal motivator to impulse buying. Journal name: Journal of business and retail management research; London volume 05, issue 1, pp 53-64 (year Oct 2010). Ephemeral positive emotions like fun, excitement and pleasure have been associated with the phenomenon of impulse buying
4. Kathy ning Shen and Khalifa, Mohamed, Title: System design effects on online impulse buying: Internet research; Bradford volume 22, issue 4, pp 396-425 (year 2012) The purpose of this paper is to construct and empirically test a model that examines online impulse buying as a phenomenon triggered by system design factors.
5. Pornpitakpan, Chanthika and Han, Jie Hui, Title: The effect of culture and salespersons' retail service quality on impulse buying. Name of Journal Australasian Marketing Journal: Amj; St. Lucia volume. 21, issue. 2, pp 85 (May 2013).
6. Francesco Massara, Robert D. Melara and Sandra S., Title: Impulse versus opportunistic purchasing during a grocery shopping experience Marketing letters published by Springer volume 25, issue 4, pp. 361-372 (December 2014)
7. Aruna, S and Santhi, P, Title: Impulse purchase behavior among generation-Y Name of Journal: Iup journal of marketing management; Hyderabad volume 14, issue 1, pp 21-38 (Feb 2015). The empirical study on impulse purchase behavior of Gen-Y was conducted with a sample size of 150 respondents from Coimbatore, India.
8. Chuang, Chun-ling; Tian, Hong-lin; lin, Rong-ho. Xing Xiao Ping Lun, Title: Applicability of prospect theory on impulse buying intention and relationship between impulse buying tendency and impulse buying intention. Marketing Review / Xing Xiao Ping Lun. Volume 12 Issue 1, pp 99-127 (spring 2015). This study verifies two point effecting (certainty effect; ce, and isolation effect; ie) on ibi, and to examine that impulse buying tendency (ibt) makes influence on ibi for public and unique products.
9. Chen, Yi-fen; Wang, Ruo-Yu, Title: Are humans rational? Exploring factors influencing impulse buying intention and continuous impulse buying intention. Journal of consumer behaviour; London volume 15, issue 2, pp 186 (Mar-Apr 2016). This study investigates the effects of consumers' impulsivity traits, option framing, product type, and cash refund promotion on consumers' online impulse buying intention.
10. Kalla, Supriya, Title: Impulse buying: what instills this desire to indulge? Internal motivating factors of impulse buying: a qualitative study in the Indian context, Journal of business and retail management research; London volume 10, issue 2, (Apr 2016)

This study extends the existing knowledge base by establishing the significance of internal motivating factors of 'impulse buying' - happiness, narcissism, freedom and novelty.

11. Mittal, Sheetal; Chawla, Deepak and Sondhi, Neena, Title: Impulse buying tendencies among Indian consumers: scale development and validation. Journal of Indian business research; Bingley volume 8, issue 3, pp 205-226 (year 2016). The purpose of this paper is to conceptualize, develop and validate the measurement of impulse buying tendency India, an emerging market in Asia.
12. Muratore, Isabelle, Title: Teens as impulsive buyers: what is the role of price? International journal of retail & distribution management; Bradford volume 44, issue 11, pp 1166-1180 (year 2016). This paper investigates the relationships between the positive (prestige sensitivity, price quality schema) and the negative (price consciousness, value consciousness, sales proneness) role of price in teens' impulse buying.
13. Dey, Dipanjan kumar; Srivastava, Ankur, Title: Impulse buying intentions of young consumers from a hedonic shopping perspective Journal of Indian business research; Bingley volume 9, issue 4, pp 266-282 (year 2017).

Theoretical work suggests that impulsive buying can function as a form of different hedonic shopping value dimensions such as fun, social interactions, novelty, escapism and outside appreciation.

Study was conducted to determine whether individual cultural values can influence consumers' **impulse buying** tendencies among Indian consumers. The factors that were under investigation in this study were power distance, uncertainty avoidance, collectivism, masculinity and long-term orientation.

V. RESEARCH GAPS IDENTIFIED

The present study would analyse the impulse purchase behavior of the youth segment of the population which is high.

1. In June, Walmart had acquired 5 per cent stake in JD.com, China's second-largest ecommerce marketplace for about USD 1.5 billion.
2. Walmart acquired 77% stake in the homegrown e-commerce firm-FLIPKART with a buyout of \$16 billion. Japan's SoftBank decided to sell its over 20 % stake to Walmart for an estimated \$ 4 billion. SoftBank invested \$ 2.5 billion in Flipkart last year. Company like Naspers, venture fund Accel Partners and eBay has agreed to sell their shares also. Founder Sachin Bansal sold his 5.6% stake for \$1 Billion to Walmart.

3. Competition to offline like Big Bazaar, D-Mart etc. Small competitors like the Shop clues, Snap deal, paytm mall may close down. Walmart would be the biggest direct competitor for Amazon. This investment is of immense importance for India and will help to deepen the connection with buyers and sellers and to create the next wave of retail in India, while ecommerce is still a relatively small part of retail in India, which has a great potential to grow.

VI. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To analyse the effect of Social Media Influencers on Impulse Buying of Generation Y customers in PCMC, Pune Region.
2. To evaluate the role of e-commerce on Impulse Buying of Generation Y customers in Pune Region.

VII. HYPOTHESIS

- H1: Types of Impulse buying behavior is positively associated with the Socioeconomic Profile of the Generation Y.
- H2: There is significant impact of Social Media Influencers that encourages impulse buying among the Gen Y.

VIII. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1. **Sampling:** Non – probability sampling method – convenience sampling method.
2. **Data :**
Primary Data:
 - i. Interviews to be conducted.
 - ii. **Pre-Survey:** Focused group interviews: Gen Y – 20 people interviewed in a focus group on their opinions about their views on the impulse buying.
 - iii. **Pilot Study:** 25 people of Gen Y to be randomly selected. The fundamental purpose of conducting a pilot study is to examine the feasibility of an approach that is intended to ultimately be used in a larger scale study.
 - iv. **Questionnaire** as per the objectives and hypothesis to be framed. The study would be based on the primary data collected with the help of structured questionnaire by survey method.
 - v. **Survey** to be conducted to collect the data on the online impulse buy of the people age between 23 to 35. Area chosen for the study: Pune region.
3. **Sample Size:** India's current population is around 1.324 billion and Gen Y is 64% of its total population. Pune has an estimated population of 3.99 million and 62% of it's the Gen-Y i.e. 2473800
4. Sample size : 70
5. **Products** of Impulse purchase by Gen-Y to be studied – Branded clothes, shoes, game equipment, flowers, music, food, interior decoration, movies, accessories, hygiene articles.

Secondary Data: Books, Journals, Periodicals, Articles, Reviews, Conference material, Internet.

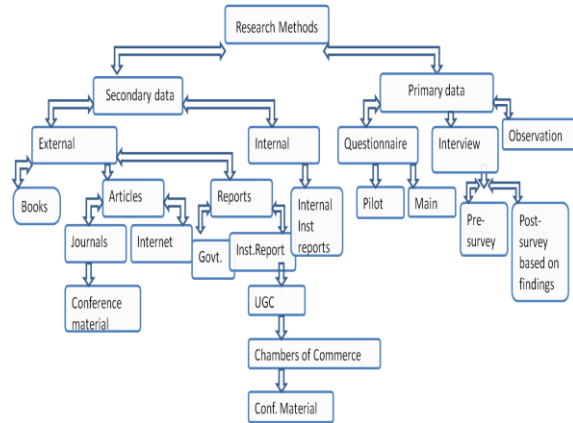


Fig 3.: Research methods

Source : Self

Table 1 a: Respondents data details

Inference: Majority of the Respondents were having full time occupation category				
Qualification	12th	6	9	Inference: Majority of the respondents were Post Graduates
	UG	10	15	
	PG	43	61	
	PhD	11	15	
Income Per month	Below25 K	20	28	Inference: Majority of the customers were having income 35-50 K per month
	25-35 K	13	19	
	35-50 K	29	41	
	50-100 K	5	7	
	100-150 K	3	5	

Table 1b: Data details

	Category	Count	%	
Do you use online shopping?	Yes	52	74	Inference: 74% of the respondents were doing Online shopping
	No	18	26	
Social media	Instagram	9	13	Inference: 57% of the respondents were using social media platform for shopping the products
	Facebook	40	57	
	Twitter	6	9	
	LinkedIn	8	11	
	All	7	10	
Do you have an interest to watch Social Media influencers of any kind?	Yes	52	74	Inference: 74 % of the respondents have interest to watch Social Media Influencers of any kind.
	No	18	26	
Frequency of access social media account	Always available	3	4	Inference: 52% of the respondents are using social media account only weekends.
	4 or 5 hours in a day	3	4	
	Only Weekends	36	52	
	Monthly	28	40	

Tools used in the Study

1. Statistical tools used to study the analysis of the data
Descriptive statistics: Mean & Standard deviation method
2. Inferential statistics: Pearson's correlation coefficient is a measure of the correlation between 2 variables (X) independent and (Y) dependent variables, which gives a value between +1 and -1"

Inference: Majority of the respondents were Male respondents.

Do you follow one or more Influencers?	One	27	39	Inference: Majority of the respondents are following only one type of Influencers mostly but difference between the frequency for using simultaneously two is very less.
	Two	15	21	
	three	12	17	
	> 5	7	10	
	NA	9	13	
Have you ever bought products that have been marketed by Social Media influencers?	Yes	46	66	Inference: 66% of the respondents bought products that have been marketed by Social Media influencers.
	No	24	34	

Table 2: Social Media Influencer

	I do not agree at all	Probably not agree	Moderately agree	Probably agree	I strongly agree
I get inspiration to buy by influencers on Instagram/ Facebook/ twitter/ others	26	27	24	20	3
I have positive associations to influencers sponsored posts	10	33	33	17	7
I have negative associations to influencers sponsored posts	40	20	20	9	11
I find influencers sponsored post of value for me	27	24	24	23	1
I think influence sponsored posts to often	14	27	20	17	21
Influencers have impact on my fashion purchases	23	20	16	31	10
Influencers impact me if they are famous	19	13	31	13	24
Influencer impact me if the pictures are of high quality	24	16	17	23	20
Influencer impact me if they have knowledge about a product	16	7	30	31	16
Influencers impact me if they have a good style	6	30	23	14	27
Influencers impact me if I already trust them	19	7	29	21	24

Table 3: Types of impulse buying that influence me

	I do not agree at all	Probably not agree	Moderately agree	Probably agree	I strongly agree
If I get inspired by an influencer- pure impulse	21	36	14	20	9
If I have a need and get reminded of a product-reminder impulse	26	24	26	21	3
When I have experience & knowledge about a product-suggestion impulse	4	11	33	19	33
If there exist a discount code-planned impulse	11	14	10	39	26

Table 4: Internal stimuli influence that influence me

	I do not	Probably	Moderately	Probably agree	I strongly agree
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	agree at all	not agree	agree		
My purchases are affected by my mood	40	13	9	27	11
My purchases increase if I am in a good mood	46	7	14	24	9
My purchases increase if I am in a less good mood	36	31	13	7	13
I shop products as I think it is fun	47	16	11	6	20
I shop products as I have a need for it	16	26	13	16	30

Table 5: Technological use

	I do not agree at all	Probably not agree	Moderately agree	Probably agree	I strongly agree
I execute my fashion purchases on my mobile phone because it is easy	34	9	20	11	26
I execute my fashion purchases on my computer because it has a bigger screen	30	11	24	16	19
I start an activity on my computer/tablet and then finalize it on my mobile phone	46	23	17	3	11

Table 6: Qualitative: Focus Group Questions

	I do not agree at all	Probably not agree	Moderately agree	Probably agree	I strongly agree
What social media platforms would you use most often?	33	31	16	16	4
Does Social media has an effect on your purchase behaviour?	7	23	47	10	13
Do influencers effect your brand choice or E- shopping behaviour?	27	20	24	19	10
How often would you participate or engage with influencers' blog?	43	33	9	13	3
Do you feel a connection to influencers through social media?	34	10	39	6	11
Do influencers increase brand awareness?	17	19	33	16	16
Do you judge the trustworthiness of the influencers you follow?	23	29	26	10	13

IX. DISCUSSION

1.The respondents have very much agreed that, although that they have different views and opinions and also are not very much hesitant to voice them, they being a part of the real society and they respect its rules.

2.The respondents of this generation acknowledged that they are very much tech-savvy, and love experiments in a new and innovative way in a technological manner.

3.The female respondents decided to cite that they are not tech-savvy, but were easy with technological products. A female respondent mentioned that they are not very well aware of all the feature of any of the products but that does not mean that they have less craving to own it.

4.This generation is also very digitally evolved set of the generation and have high end exposure to all the various mediums.

X. CONCLUSION

Social media influencers within the PCMC area Pune market easily effect consumers who follow influencers. Therefore, availing of the influencers in promoting the products is extremely helpful and beneficial for smaller businesses and also to them those who are finding it difficult to establish their place within the marketplace. Moreover as per the findings of the study situational variable and variety seeking also effects the customer to purchase impulsively. So Impulse buying is a purchase which is done by a customer immediately or just, behind this some factors exists those attract customers for impulse purchase. Social media influencers have established to promote the brands and products for online shopping while customers browse on the social media websites which incline them to buy product items outside their specific shopping goals.

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