

The Role of Sales Promotion in inducing Impulse Purchases

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Abstract- *This paper focuses on promotional impulse buying. It aims at examining the impact of hedonic and utilitarian benefits of promotion on an impulse buying experience. The hypotheses were tested with a sample of 300 consumers doing their shopping in a hypermarket. Data were analyzed using binary logistic regression and structural equations. The results obtained allow us to confirm most of our hypotheses. The different outcomes of this research support the formulation of a number of theoretical, methodological and managerial recommendations.*

Key words- *Impulse buying, Impulsion; Promotion; Utilitarian benefits; Hedonic benefits.*

1. INTRODUCTION

It is becoming clear nowadays producers and retailers' increasing interest to understand consumers purchasing behavior in general and impulse buying in particular. Research on impulse buying is not a recent phenomenon. It has attracted the interest of several disciplines: psychology, economics and marketing. In psychology, researchers consider impulsive behavior as an immature and reckless irrational behavior. It is a sign of loss of control, neglect of risk and waste of resources (Levy, 1956; Solnick et al, 1980). Individuals act impulsively, i.e. quickly and without reflection, which leads to making inappropriate decisions. Until recently, psychological approaches qualified negatively impulsive behavior. It has always been regarded as a primitive and stupid behavior (Bohm Bawerk, 1959), reflecting a weak individual will and limited intelligence (Valencia et al, 1988). However, the work of Dickman (1990-2000) and Dickman and Meyer (1985-1988) represented a new direction in research on impulsive behavior. Thus, acting impulsively can be a source of problems and difficulties in some situations, but can be a source of benefits in other situations. Like psychology, economics associated impulsive behavior with irrational behavior in the sense that it is not preceded by a search for information. Economists (Strotze 1956, Winston, 1980) associate impulsive behavior with irresponsible and inappropriate uneconomical purchases. Moreover, impulsive decisions are synonymous with myopic choices and preferences "inconsistent over time". According to Hoch and Loewenstein (1991), an "inconsistent over time" choice is a choice that would not be made if it has been processed on the basis of a remote and non-passionate manner, it represents a temporary change in tastes". In other words, individuals find themselves between their desires (positive short-term

emotional consequences) and reason (long-term consequences). In marketing, the first work on impulse buying dates back to 50s (Clover, 1950, West, 1951). Ten years later, the Journal of Marketing published a seminal article on impulsive buying written by Stern (1962) who proposes a more accurate examination of impulse buying in terms of a typology. But it was not until 1987, when the Journal of Consumer Research published an essential article on impulse purchases proposed by Rook. Rook highlights "a number of specific characteristics that are probably the first real formulation of the concept" (Derbaix and Bree, 2000). And since then, a few are the studies conducted on impulse buying (Leblanc-Maridor 1989, Piron 1991-1993). Nevertheless, since the 2000s a renewed interest in impulse buying (Youn, 2000; Youn and Faber, 2002; Giraud, 2000.2001, 2003.2005; Essid, 2008). Several studies on impulse purchases, mainly qualitative, leave us to assume that in the process that leads a consumer to impulsively buy and then falls or not to this impulsion, price and promotions play a leading role (Albertini, 2000 - Maridor Leblanc, 1989; Spies et al, 1997. Trigueiro de Almeida, 1992; Youn and Faber, 2000). On the one hand, promotion or the perception of a low price may create positive emotions in consumers and induce the desire to make a good deal. These emotions could lead to impulse buying. On the other hand, a low price or promotion should induce a decision of an impulse purchase. On the one hand, they allow the consumer to rationalise desire and minimize therefore the financial risk associated with the purchase and, consequently the negative emotions that might push consumers to resist this desire (McGoldrick et al. 1999). On the other hand, a consumer trying to buy impulsively a promoted item, if he/she postpone the decision to purchase, and take the risk of missing this opportunity. Postponing the purchase may seem more risky when the product is under sale. More

precisely, it is the set of benefits associated with purchasing a promotional product that could explain why a consumer feels, facing a promotional offer, the desire to make a good deal so that this desire is transformed into an impulse purchase. Chandon et al (2000) define two types of benefits sought when buying a discounted product: utilitarian and hedonic benefits. Utilitarian benefits of promotions for the consumer can be explained by what the promotion offers in terms of monetary savings, purchased product quality improvement through the promotion, cost reduction, information search and decision-making. These benefits help consumers to increase the usefulness of the purchase and increase the effectiveness of their shopping experience. However, the fun and excitement generated by the promotion, stimulation experienced and the ability of the promotion to express consumer values and the self-conception, are classified as hedonic benefits as they relate to emotion and pleasure. The main issue is whether the utilitarian and hedonic benefits of promoted purchases can arouse the desire for a product to the point that this desire becomes an impulse purchase? To answer this question, we present in a first part, the theoretical foundations of our study. After formulating the research hypotheses, the research methodology is described. Then, the results are presented and discussed. Finally, limitations and avenues of future research and managerial implications are presented.

2. THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 The concept of impulse buying

Impulse buying is as important for the study of consumer behavior as for supermarkets. This has triggered the interest of researchers since the 50s. Despite this interest, knowledge of impulse buying is still not thorough, especially its definition. The literature review allowed us to distinguish several research trends which are mainly three: the cognitive which focuses on the cognitive characteristics of impulse buying; the affective which focuses on the emotional component of impulse buying. The reductionism of the definitions proposed by these two trends opens the way for a new multidimensional approach and brings new life to the concept of impulse buying.

2.2 Impulse buying by the cognitive approach

Impulse buying has been studied by two approaches proposed by-Maridor LeBlanc (1989): the "operational" approach and the "behavioural" approach.

2.2.1 The operational approach

For authors of this approach, the criteria for defining impulse buying is where decision is made. Impulsive is any unplanned purchases before entering the store. Early research (Clover 1950 Dupont Studies, 1945, 1949 West 1951) defines impulse buying as an unplanned purchase that has not been processed by the consumer. Applebaum (1951) was the first who suggested that impulsive purchases may result from consumer exposure to a

stimulus in the store. Nesbitt (1959) sees it as a smart purchase since the customer does not plan the purchase but gains an advantage and therefore he/she maximizes his/her purchasing power. Stern (1962) defines impulse buying as "a purchase made although not expected, nor planned in advance".

For the author, the triggering element relates to the product and identifies, for example, new product attributes likely to stimulate an impulse purchase: low price, mass distribution, well seen goods, marginal need for the product, free-service product, mass advertising, small size, perishable and easy to store. Other studies (Willet and Kollat 1967-1969) describe an impulse purchase as the difference between purchase intentions and results. These authors have refined this operational approach, distinguishing several levels of planning (planning to buy the product, class of products, the need to satisfy ... or purchase maturity) Cobb and Hoyer (1986), Engel and Blackwell (1982) define impulse buying as "a purchase made without a problem or a purchase intention made before entering the store". In this definition, impulse buying results from the perception of a stimulus associated with the product. Recognition of the problem takes place when the consumer sees the product. Therefore, search for information is limited in time (duration of the visit) and in quantity (information available in the store and in memory).

2.2.2 The behavioural approach

This approach challenges the criterion of decision-making location as the sole criterion for defining impulse buying. Compared to the preceding approach, this approach has two advantages. On the one hand, it focuses on the behavior of the individual in the definition of impulse buying, whether by the amount of information collected, or by the time spent. Secondly, it extends the notion of impulse buying to all kinds of products and services.

2.2.3 Limitations of the cognitive approach

The operational and the behavioral approaches belong to the cognitive trend. However, these approaches have limitations. Firstly, all the authors who have subscribed to the operational approach define impulse buying based solely on the location of the decision and not the way the decision was made. Under this approach, impulse will therefore be any purchases that are not on the list. Furthermore, Stern (1962) frames impulse buying within some product categories. For him, "impulse purchases relate generally to small products, easy to place, with limited purchase value and a short lifetime." Impulse buying concerns, therefore, confectionery, cigarettes, cosmetics and some small toys. This is not true because impulse buying covers all categories of products and services and is not limited to some products (Verlinden , 1989). D'Antoni and Shenson (1973), the main supporters of the behavioral approach, introduce into their definition of the concept "relative time lapse". It is the ratio of time that was necessary for the consumer to decide to purchase

a specific product in a given situation and the time lapse normally necessary for this the purchase of the product. This reasoning is difficult to establish because the normal time lapse also depends on situational variables. Retaining the speed of decision-making is insufficient to distinguish impulsive purchase from other purchase modes such as routine purchase of loyalty purchase. Therefore, the definitions based on the cognitive and behavioral components have failed to provide a unified view of impulse buying, as it does not distinguish impulse purchases from routine or unplanned purchases. This opens the way for a new line of research that has emerged in the mid- 80s: impulse purchases in terms of the emotions experienced by the buyer.

2.2.4 Impulse buying according to the affective approach

Impulse buying has cognitive and behavioural characteristics described above, namely spontaneity and speed. However, it has an additional emotional component relative to the origins of impulsive behavior. It is an emotion (impulsion) which is the source of the impulsive act. Impulsion is an element of an emotional experience, particularly under the behavioral approach (Berkowitz 1993, Frijda 1988; Plutchik, 1993). The work Weinberg and Gottwald (1982) can be considered as the premise of this approach. These authors focus on the individual's psyche, whose emotion when buying is the centre of interest. They introduce an affective component in their definition, a "strong emotional activation of the consumer". Rook (1987) defines impulse buying as follows: "When the consumer experiences a sudden strong and persistent feeling to buy something immediately. He describes the phenomenon as extraordinary, a faster, more emotional than a rational experience and can take place regardless of its real consequences". Unlike the cognitive approach, Rook and Hosh (1985) make it clear that it is the people who make impulse purchases and not the products that are impulsive. Thompson, Locander and Pollio (1990) extend the definition of Rook: "Although impulse buying is seen as an emotional more than an intellectual experience, this does not necessarily imply irrationality. Insofar as impulse buying stems from a physiognomic-pathic perception, the need for an analytical assessment becomes redundant because the suitability of the product is directly felt. Thus, impulse buying can be considered a reasonable action (as opposed to an irrational action)". Impulse purchases relate to a situation of loss of control where the consumer "falls in love" and "is captivated by the product". Drawing on the work of Rook (1987, 1998), several researchers integrate the affective dimension in their definitions of impulse buying. They emphasize that impulse buying results from impulse purchase. Thus, Bensa (1994) defines impulse buying as a response to emotions (made after an emotional response defined in an experiential perspective). For Wingrove and Bond (1997) "Acting impulsively can be described as the act of

responding to a stimulus or event based on an immediate emotional reaction, such as a desire or anger, with little or no regard for consequences in the longer term".

2.2.5 Impulse buying in the multidimensional approach

In view of the weaknesses of the two types of definitions (cognitive and affective) several authors have attempted to provide a definition that includes various aspects of impulse buying mentioned in the existing definitions.

Weinberg and Gottwald (1982) define impulse buying in terms of three components:

- An affective component (a strong emotional activation of the consumer);
- A cognitive component (low intellectual control over the purchasing decision);
- A reactive component (largely automatic behavior triggered by a specific stimulus).

Through a survey conducted in 1980, replicated in 1985, studying consumers attitudes using a questionnaire, LeBlanc Maridor reaches the following conclusions:

- A Cognitive Dimension: An impulsive purchase is a purchase for which the decision process is significantly different from the theoretical process expected for this type of product or purchase situation.
- An Emotional Dimension: An impulsive purchase is the purchase of a product whose possession can meet the psychological needs of the individual.
- A Product-related Dimension: impulse buying relates generally to cheap products.

LeBlanc- Maridor (1989) provides a summary of the above approaches and proposed the following definition: "impulse buying is an unplanned purchase, made quickly and without comparison, specific to cheap product, and made only for himself, made at a time when the individual is more fit or more depressed than usual". In his definition, LeBlanc- Maridor insists only on factors (made when one is more fit and more depressed than usual) and consequences (satisfying psychological states), which does not describe accurately and completely an impulse purchase.

For Verlindin (1989), there are several forms of impulsive buying:

- The first impulsion: Should- have to: this purchase is sometimes for others, it is stimulated by a point of sale.
- The second impulsion: Pleasure - sin "I would like to" : this purchase is for rather oneself, it rests on a strong and sudden desire, but there is a limit.
- The third impulsion: Pleasure - Pleasure "I want": this is the strongest impulsion degree, the most irrational. The purchase is for oneself and there are no limits.

Sermet (1999) defines impulse buying with the following dimensions:

- No planning: impulse buying is not thoughtful, is spontaneous, sudden, and immediate. There is no intention to buy the product before entering the store.

- Felt Emotions: impulse buying results from a sudden desire, powerful and urgent to buy a product, an outcome of stimulation.
- Lack of premeditation in the decision: impulse buying is made without careful consideration of product attributes.
- A non- repetitive or excessive behavior otherwise it is a compulsive buying behavior.

For Youn (2000), impulse buying is defined according to three components:

- A connotative component: speed and responsiveness;
- A cognitive component: low processing, little consideration for the future and unplanned;
- An emotional component: an irresistible desire to buy, emotional conflict, tendency to feel emotions.

Essid (2008) retains the following features in the definition of impulse buying :

- A connotative feature: an unplanned purchase of a product before entering the store;
- A reactive feature: impulse buying results from external stimuli and / or internal to the consumer;
- An emotional feature: impulse buying is motivated by an impulse purchase;
- A cognitive feature: impulse buying is preceded by a reduced cognitive processing.

Moreover, the definition adopted is part of this multidimensional approach to impulsive purchase which is "an unplanned purchase, decided in the point of sale and carried without much thought. It results from an impulsion born out of exposure to one (or more stimuli)" (Kchaou, 2010).

According to this definition, the act of impulse buying is not considered in isolation but as the final stage of an impulse buying experience, which in itself includes impulsion and an impulsive purchase decision. Indeed, impulsion is defined as "an emotional activation accompanied by a tendency to action" (Giraud , 2002). It is a "shock" response to a stimulus causing impulse buying. It is characterized, therefore, by a strong tendency to action (willingness to buy). Impulsion will thus be considered as a pre-consumer behavioural response. Impulse buying then derives from impulses triggered in respect of products. According to Derbaix and Pham (1989), impulse buying is considered an approaching behavior: the consumer makes a purchase act. Here the act of impulse buying is not considered in isolation but as the final stage of the impulsive buying experience, which in itself includes impulsion and an impulsive purchase decision. We therefore propose the following hypothesis:
H1: The higher the impulsion, the greater the consumer is required to make an impulsive purchase.

2.3 Perceived benefits of promotion

All theorists speak of the customer's desired value and agree on the fact that the benefits sought by the consumer can be utilitarian (extrinsic) or hedonic (intrinsic) (Furse and Stewart, 1986 Holbrook, 1994). Previous studies have

shown that many consumption activities produce hedonic and utilitarian values and that individuals actively seek these types of outcomes (Fischer and Arnold , 1990; Sherry, 1990 in Roy and Tai , 2003). Babin, Darden and Guffin (1994) suggest that this distinction can be applied to the purchase act as long as this activity provides utilitarian benefits (helping consumers to find and buy the best products efficiently) as well as hedonic benefits creating entertainment and generating self-esteem . In the same vein, Wansink and Laurent (2000) classify the perceived benefits of promotion as utilitarian insofar as it increases the purchase value and its effective shopping experience. Beyond the utilitarian benefits, promotion stimulates a rich emotional experience of pleasure and fun, exploration and self-esteem.

2.3.1 Perceived utilitarian benefits of promotion

An individual will be more interested in a promoted product if they perceive the opportunity to achieve a financial gain. However, economic benefits are not the only utilitarian benefits that customers gain from their promoted purchases. Promotion helps consumers maximize utility and effectiveness of their purchases (Chandon et al, 2000). It helps to easily find the products they want or to recall the products they needs. Simplifying the act of purchase is therefore a strong incentive for consumers who are increasingly in a hurry (Reynolds and Beatty , 1999). In this regard, utilitarian benefits of promotion can be explained by:

- Money savings offered by the promotion. Analytical and econometric models on consumer behavior towards promotions assume that financial savings is the main advantage that motivates the individual to buy promoted products. According to Raghurir et al (2004), the economic mode of promotion evaluation refers to financial gains and losses that promotion produces to the consumer (Chandon et al , 2000).
- Improving the quality of the purchased product: promotion allows some consumers to buy high quality products by reducing the price of other expensive products. "It is the quality that I get against the price I pay".
- Convenience: This is an informational and functional benefit. Promotion is likely to reduce costs in terms of cognitive effort. In particular, price promotion allows consumers to reduce the scope of its decision-making process by providing a justification for the purchase (Parguel, Zaaraoui, Desmet, De Pechpeyrou, 2006). According to D'Astous et al (2005), sales promotion can be useful in facilitating decision making when information prior to purchase is limited.

2.3.2 Perceived hedonic benefits of promotion

Benefits go beyond utility to include a hedonic dimension. Furthermore, hedonic benefits are independent of functional goals and the valuation depends on consumer experience and associated emotions like pleasure and appreciation of the environment. Applying the concept on

promotion, hedonic benefits relate to the affective mode assessing a promotion. These are the feelings and emotions that can be experienced after consumer exposure to promotion, a purchase in promotion or missing a promotion (Raghubir et al, 2004). The general benefit relates to the pleasure of making a deal, a more specific benefit relates to the buyer's awareness (smart shopper) (Schindler, 1989 Chandon et al, 2000). Therefore, fun and excitement caused by promotion, stimulation and the ability of the promotion to express consumer values and self-conception are the perceived benefits of the promotion as long as they relate to emotion and pleasure. The hedonic aspect therefore results in:

- **Entertainment:** This is the fun and aesthetics of some promotions. The literature on hedonic consumption assumes that the enjoyment and fun are often associated with shopping in promotion experiences (Arnold and Reynolds, 2003; Schindler, 1989; Chandon et al, 2000). Participating in a game or contest, enjoy a product, etc.. induces
- **Exploration:** Promotions are used to associate the need for exploration, variety and curiosity stimulation (Chandon et al, 2000). Trying new products or seeking information to meet the needs of cognitive stimulation are examples of exploratory behavior (Baumgartner and Steenkamp, 1996).
- **The expression of the ego:** According to Schindler (1989), obtaining a low price is an expression of the ego function which results in a sense of pride and a sense of intelligence and skill. Buying discounted products allows the consumer to socially manifest their ability to intelligently buy and be a completed and aware buyer. For Chandon, Wansink and Laurent (2000), promotions allow some consumers to "win social recognition" appearing as an intelligent buyer.

2.4 Impact of benefits of promotion on an impulse buying experience

A low price was often associated with products impulsively purchased (Maridor Leblanc, 1989; Albertini, 2000; Giraud, 2002). Moreover, too high a price is not only psychological but also a material limit (anticipation of hardware problems) that might influence a consumer to resist an impulsion. Spies et al. (1997) suggest that impulsive purchases are mostly low-priced products.

If the price is being promoted, not only it will not be a limitation, but it may stimulate the desire by making a purchase more probable (Hoch and Loewenstein, 1991). A promotion price may also be used as a means to rationalize the purchase and justify recalling that "it was a good deal" (Mk Goldrik, 1999). It may be the triggering element of the purchase. Trigueiro De Almeida (1992) show that promotions affect impulse purchases to the extent that a price reduction induces a loss of individual control. In the same vein, Schindler (1989) postulates that price reductions induce positive emotions allowing savings and

the purchase of additional products. Perceiving a promotion or a perceived low price may create positive emotions in the consumer related to a desire to make a good deal. In this regard, we formulate the following hypothesis:

H2 -1: Utilitarian benefits of promotion give rise to an impulse purchase.

Consumer behavior has been described also from an experiential perspective (Hirschman and Holbrook, 1982). The latter considers the consumer as hedonist "engaged in funny leisure activities, sensory pleasure, daydreams, aesthetic pleasure and emotional responses". This emotional arousal quest may qualify as an impulsion. The pleasure of a making a deal is one of those pleasant and exciting emotions that a shopping experience may provide (Schindler, 1989). Arnold and Reynolds (2003) suggest that consumers take pleasure in "hunting" a deal, to seek promotions and find items at low prices. Rook and Filser (1995) suggest that promotions may affect the desire to buy something impulsively. Proximity of the consumer to the product awakens the temptation to experience emotions and feelings and may induce an impulse purchase. Hosh and Loewenstein (1991) assume that physical proximity of a product can stimulate impulsions because it reminds consumers of past pleasant experiences, or because it promotes mental projection of a future consumption experience and an anticipation of positive emotions associated with that experience.

In this sense, Shiv and Fedorikhin (1999) show that real product presentation induces more impulsion than figurative presentations, because it promotes the awakening of desire and makes it harder to resist. Free access to products and especially the opportunity to touch and try encourage impulse buying. Therefore, the fact of being in a mall or in a "favourite store" also encourages impulse buying (Youn and Faber, 2000). Valuing the product in the stores may attract consumers' attention and trigger their desire (as it is staged and located in a context of evocative tastes and olfactory sensations, etc..). For Chandon and Laurent (1998), valuing products is used in high-sensitive categories (the percentage of households buying the product) and high-purchase frequency for impulse products. According to M. Giraud (2002), an impulsion will be more intense than what consumer anticipated.

Moreover, awakening buyer's senses may be a way of enabling them to plan for the purchase or consumption: hunger makes taste taste food, enjoy smells makes him feel emotions related to consumption, etc. It is about giving a "pre-taste of consumption". Research (Ramanathan and Menon, 2002; Joann Pecka and Terry Childersb, 2006) suggest that touching the product may result in impulse purchases. Underhill (1999) reported that almost all unexpected are the result of touching, smelling or tasting any product in the point of sale. Honea and Dahl (2004) suggest that monetary and non-monetary promotions

induce emotions such as excitement, pleasure, happiness etc. All these emotions could lead to impulse buying. We therefore formulate the following hypothesis:

H2 -2: Hedonic benefits of promotion give rise to an impulse purchase.

A consumer invaded by an impulse purchase is torn between their short-term desire and long-term interest (Hosh and loewenstein, 1991). Giraud (2005) reports that a consumer trying to buy impulsively a promotional item, takes the risk of missing this opportunity forever, if they postpone their purchase decision. Regret theory (Bell, 1982.1983; Loomes and Sugden, 1982) refers to an unpleasant experience when realizing the possibility of not retaining a choice would have given a better result. These are in fact regrets or opportunity cost. Individuals experience more regret and feel more responsible if they postpone a decision or action and miss an opportunity like a price reduction (Simonson, 1992). Therefore, postponing a purchase may seem more risky when the product is under promotion. The author also adds that the location of the "good deal" aisles may be effective in leading a buyer tempted by the desire to buy not to leave the store "empty handed".

Several promotional techniques may encourage consumers to more easily yield to their desire. Sales, for example, stimulate impulse purchases because consumer excitation level increases in connection with the prospect of concluding a good deal. Limited in time and quantity, this will create a sense of competition and urgency (Mc Goldrick et al, 1999). Thus, it is noteworthy that offers limited in time increase perceived risk of not being able to buy the product later if the decision to purchase is postponed. Giraud (2003) suggests that the transition from impulsion to an impulse purchase is however not straightforward. Therefore, it is possible to conduct actions based price. At the time of purchase, the consumer mentally feels pleasure associated with consumption and displeasure related to payment. Promotion price should facilitate transition from impulsion purchase an impulse purchase. Two hypotheses in this regard can be formulated:

H3-2: Perceived utilitarian benefits of a promoting moderate the relationship between impulsion and impulse buying.

H3-2: Perceived hedonic benefits of promotion moderate the relationship between impulsion and impulse buying.

It is from these relationships and those mentioned above we propose to test a model shown in the figure in Annexure.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

To test the hypotheses proposed in this study, a field study was conducted on 300 individuals visiting the Giant Hypermarket in Tunis and having made purchases on promotion. The administration of the questionnaire was

carried out at different times and without any special promotion period to minimize biases at the time of data collection.

3.1 The Procedure

- The investigator first, asks the participant's shopping list before entering the point of sale;
- The participant shops alone without the presence of the investigator not to change their behavior (greater attention to the environment, behavior, etc.).
- At the end of shopping, the participant is asked to list all their purchases.
- The investigator compares the before list and the final list to look for unplanned promotional purchases.
- Two scenarios face the interviewer:
 1. The individual has not made any promotional purchase. He would not respond to the questionnaire.
 2. The individual has completed one or more promotional purchases, therefore he/she is asked to choose the one he/she likes to talk about. It is this product that will be the subject of the questionnaire.

3.2 Measurement of variables

3.2.1 Measurement of impulse buying

Impulse buying is the dependent variable in our research model. The dependent variable is a dichotomous variable (producing at least one impulse purchase vs non-fulfillment of an impulse purchase).

Measuring impulse purchase

Several researchers (Piron, 1995; Beatty and Ferrell, 1998; Giraud, 2002) have shown that impulse purchases (measured as unplanned purchases decided in less than five seconds after exposure) differ significantly from planned and unplanned purchases on four items reflecting the powerful and irresistible character of impulse purchases:

- When you saw this product, you suddenly had the urge to buy it,
- When you saw this product, you wanted to buy it immediately
- I immediately felt excited by the idea of buying this product
- When I saw this product, I could not resist the desire to buy it.

Measuring promotional benefits

Operationalising the concept of promotional benefits was made by a scale developed by Kchaou (2009). This scale distinguishes two types of benefits related to promotion, namely utilitarian benefits and hedonic benefits. The tool measuring perceived benefits of promotion consisted of 14 items:

- A promotional purchase allows me to make significant gains.
- I like to buy under promotion,
- A promotional purchase allows for making significant savings

- Promotion allows me to buy a premium product at the same price
- A promotional purchase helps me to deepen my thoughts on new products
- A promotional purchase allows me to try new products
- The promotion facilitates my decision
- Promotion allows me to shop quickly
- Promotion can guide my choices of a product category
- Promotion allows me to buy the best brand
- I would be happy to take advantage of this offer.
- A promotional purchase is pleasant
- It is an offer I would advise for my entourage
- A promotional purchase gives me the feeling of being an accomplished consumer.

3.3 Purification and validation of the measurement scales

Examination of the scales factor structures was performed with an exploratory factor and a confirmatory factor analyses. Reliability and validity of the scales are, therefore, considered generally good from a statistical point of view. The results are detailed in the Appendix.

3.4 The Results and Discussion

Effect of impulsion on impulse buying

To test the effect of impulsion on making an impulse purchase, we used a logistic regression applying the Maximum Likelihood method after transformation of the dependent variable into a logit variable (the natural log of the probability of the dependent variable occurring or not). The table 3 in Annexure indicates that impulsion has a significant positive effect on making an impulse buying ($\beta = 1.980$, $\chi^2 = 76.298$ wald $p = 0.000$). This result allows us to suggest that the more impulsion is more powerful, the more the individual tends to buy impulsively. **Exp (β)** shows probability sensitivity of the explanatory factor: the dependent variable is more sensitive to the tested predictor than the exponential coefficient β , distant from one. The high coefficient of sensitivity (7.246) tells us that the probability of achieving a promotional impulse purchase is very sensitive to impulsion. Thus, we can conclude by validating H1. These results confirm the work of Beatty & Ferrell (1998) and that of Giraud et al (2005) which indicate that the more a consumer experience impulse buying in a store, the more he/she will be difficult to resist the temptation to buy. Impulsion is a phenomenon of a "strong emotional arousal" (Weinberg and Gottwald, 1982) the more impulsion is powerful, the more consumers focus on the acquisition of the product. In extreme cases, the desire becomes an obsession (Giraud, 2005) and the consumer is unable to control and resist. Moreover, his/her control capabilities are exhausted, which makes them more vulnerable to a subsequent temptation (Baumeister and Heatherton, 1996) This result can be explained also by the

fact that some consumers use their emotions to guide their purchasing decisions. These individuals feel an urgent and overwhelming desire to buy a product "done for them" to the point they feel bad if they do not purchase the product immediately.

3.5 Effect of benefits of promotion on impulsion

At this level, we test hypotheses H2-1 and H2-2. These hypotheses assume that perceived hedonic and utilitarian benefits may give rise to impulsion. The analysis of the structural model showed a good fit to the data. All indices range from good to excellent. GFI is greater than 0.9. The AFM is slightly less than 0.9, this value is acceptable (Didellon and Valette-Florance, 1996). RMSEA is less than 0.08, which can be described as acceptable as well (Didellon and Valette-Florance, 1996). The table 4 reports the factor inputs and multiple correlations of hypothesized relationships in the structural model. The Test of the direct effect of benefits on impulsion shows one significant relationship. Utilitarian benefits have no significant effect on an impulse purchase as the test is not significant ($t < 1.96$). a Non- significant relationship rejects then hypothesis H2- 1. Nevertheless, hedonic benefits have a significant and positive effect on impulse buying ($t = 2.018$, $\gamma = 0.344$). Hypothesis H2 -2 is then validated. The perception of utilitarian benefits of promotion cannot trigger an impulse purchase. This corroborates the emotional approach which assumes that impulse purchases cannot result from purely functional reasons. Several explanations can be forwarded. Impulsion does not result from a genuine "good deal", but rather it would be a way to rationalise - unconsciously a general desire to buy (Giraud et al, 2005). It also happens that a consumer can feel attracted to the product not because of benefits but because of the pleasant emotions at the time of purchase. Another explanation is that the consumer can infer from the promotion a lower product quality which justifies why commercial benefits of promotion do not generate excitement or emotion (including impulsion). However, perceived hedonic benefits can trigger an impulse purchase. "By purchasing the product, the consumer does not try to solve a specific problem, but looks for hedonic benefits (search for pleasure, stimulation and novelty, entertainment, an experience through the consumption of the product, etc.)", Essid (2008). This is what Piron (1991) calls experiential impulse buying. According to the emotional approach, an impulse purchase derives primarily from hedonic motivation. Hedonic benefits will project the consumer into a pleasant eating experience that should lead him to release his personal control and thus trigger an impulse purchase. Hausman (2000) argues that consumers often buy impulsively for hedonic reasons such as looking for fun, entertainment, novelty, excitement, escape, variety, etc. These hedonic motives are the main sources of satisfaction and value for the buyer who makes a purchase (Hausman, 2000).

3.6 The moderating effect of perceived benefits of promotion

To test the moderating effect of perceived benefits of promotion, we rely on the definition of Baron and Kenny (1986) of moderating variables. These authors suggest the existence of a moderating effect if there is a significant interaction between the independent variable (impulsion) and the potentially moderating variable (hedonic and utilitarian benefits) on the dependent variable (making an impulse purchase). Applying the same approach (step-wise likelihood method), the variables that significantly affect the achievement of an impulse purchase directly or through interaction with impulsion are shown in the table in Annexure. This regression confirms the direct influence of impulsion on achieving an impulse purchase (significant effect of this value only). The results indicate that utilitarian benefits, hedonic benefits intervene as moderators of the influence of impulsion on achieving an impulse purchase. Baron and Kenny (1986) suggest that if, in addition to this interaction, the moderator variable also has a direct effect, it is a "quasi-moderator" variable. Otherwise, it is a "perfect moderator". In table 5, it seems that 76.5% of impulse promotional purchases are explained by impulsion and utilitarian and hedonic benefits, as evidenced by Nagelkerke R^2 . The results also indicate that perceived utilitarian and hedonic benefits have a direct effect on inducing impulse promotional purchases. These two variables are considered, therefore, as "quasi-moderating" variables. The results validate hypotheses H3 and H3 -1 -2. Hedonic and utilitarian benefits make, therefore, the creation of an impulse promotional purchase easier. A consumer feeling a desire for a product is torn between two opposite forces: positive forces that push them to yield to their impulses through the acquisition of the product and negative forces that inhibit the achievement a possible purchase. Hedonic and utilitarian benefits are used to boost the desire or rationalise and facilitate the transition to making a purchase. Moreover, financial risk is a significant obstacle that could retain a consumer trying to buy impulsively, buy discounted products reduces this risk and rationalise the purchasing decision. However, if the consumer does not anticipate any risk associated with the purchase, nothing would stop their desire. Impulsion prevails and the consumer has no reason to resist it (Giraud, 2005). Moreover, if consumers postpone their decision, they may not find the product in the same conditions (limited time offer). It is obvious therefore that they will fall more easily to their desire to prevent missing a unique opportunity. In other words, impulsions are much more intense in a way the consumer has impression that the satisfaction of their desire, if possible immediately, cannot stay for long (Giraud, 2002). Fun, pleasure and discovering new trends and pride of making a good deal are all advantages provided by the promotional purchase which may make resistance to a sudden impulsion harder as impulse

purchases are extremely hedonic purchases (Giraud, 2005). In other words, consumers can buy impulsively a special offer for the fun and excitement in the experience. Hedonic and utilitarian benefits allow consumers, tempted by an impulse purchase, to protect the image they have of themselves or that they want to give to others (give the image of a rational and intelligent buyer).

4. CONCLUSION

This study aimed at showing that perceived benefits of promotion can stimulate the achievement of an impulse purchase. The results indicate that hedonic benefits such as pleasure seeking, variety seeking and expression of values are important motives that give rise to impulse buying and promote the transition from a desire to achieve an impulse purchase. However, utilitarian benefits utilities, namely saving money, convenience and superior quality are insufficient to induce an impulsion but can accelerate the achievement of an impulse purchase for a consumer tempted by impulsion.

5. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This study has a number of limitations which can all be avenues of research. The first limitation is that we did not take into account some variables that could help explain consumers promotional impulsive behavior in supermarkets. For simplicity, we limited ourselves to the variables we think critical. Thus, we excluded the variable "promotional techniques" that could have an explanatory effect on achieving an impulse promotional purchase on the one hand, and a significant relationship with the assessment of hedonic and utilitarian benefits of promotional purchases, on the other. Finally, it would be interesting to extend this study to the theme of product classes, age or gender.

6. MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

Our study may provide practical recommendations. The empirical results highlight the role of hedonic benefits in the experience of impulse buying. Some consumers make promotional impulse purchases to engage themselves in sensory, pleasant and exploratory experiences. In this regard, hypermarket leaders can target their promotional activities, and choose promotional techniques that provide hedonic benefits (such as bonuses, gifts, specimen and technical test, etc.). Touching a product, seeing, feeling, and tasting food are all promotional techniques that may project consumers in exciting experiences and thus arouse desire for a product to the point that it becomes an impulse purchase. Research indicates that at the time of the purchase, consumers mentally feel pleasure to purchase the product and displeasure to pay. Thus, price reductions may be effective in driving consumers tempted by the desire to buy not to leave the store with "empty hands". Refunds

and warranties give buyers the possibility of being wrong if they feel an irresistible desire for a product, and are therefore a way to encourage consumers to yield more easily to impulses. Offers limited in time and quantities are also ways that accelerate the purchase decision of consumers who experience an impulsion.

7. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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ANNEXURE

Figure 1: The Model

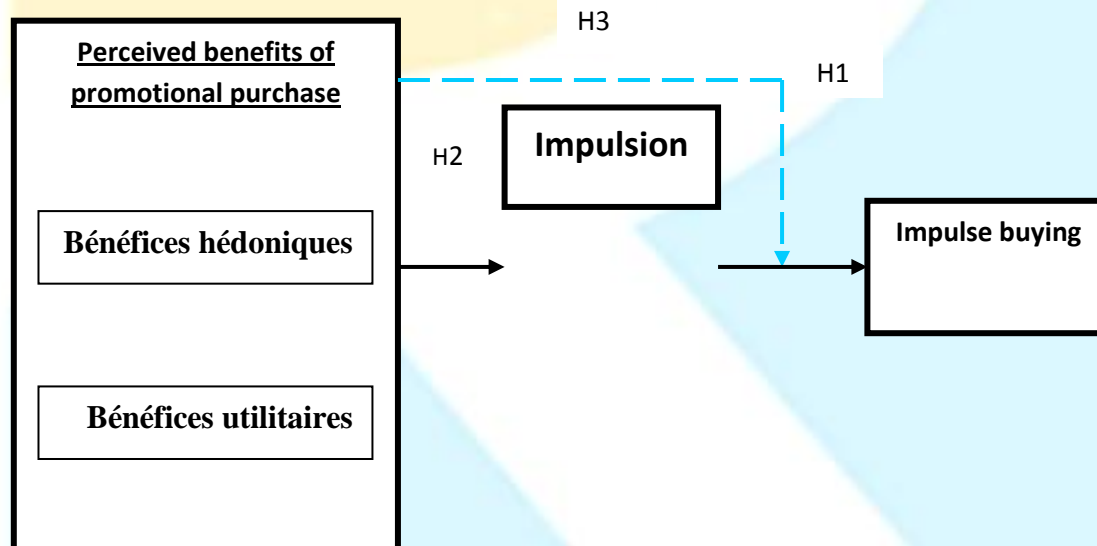


Table 1: Variables in the equation

	β	E.S	Wald	df	sig	Exp (β)
Impulsion → impulse purchase	1,980	0, 227	76,298	1	0 ,000	7,246

Table2: Fit indices of the structural model
Effect of benefits on impulsion

X^2/df	GFI	AGFI	RMR	RMSEA	TLI	NFI	CFI
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2,782	0,927	0,884	0,126	0,077	0,947	0,941	0,961
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Table 3: Results of the structural model of the effect of benefits of promotion on impulsion

	γ	SE	C.R	P
Impulsion \leftarrow Utilitarian benefits	-0,175	0,117	-1,501	0,000
Impulsion \leftarrow Hedonic benefits	0,344	0,170	2,018	0,000

**Table 4: Binary Logistic Regression on achieving an impulse purchase
(Interaction effects)**

	β	E.S	Wald	df	Sig
<i>Impulsion</i>	1,856	0,409	20,555	1	0,000
<i>Impulsion*utilitarian benefits</i>	-0,134	0,053	6,396	1	0,011
<i>Impulsion* hedonic benefits</i>	0,196	0,073	7,244	1	0,007
Constant	-10,610	1,374	59,757	1	0,000
Cox & Snell $R^2 = 55,4\%$ Nagelkerke $R^2 = 77,7\%$					

**Table 5: Binary Logistic Regression on making an impulse promotional purchase
(direct effects)**

	β	E.S	Wald	df	Sig
<i>Impulsion</i>	2,1	0,251	69,889	1	0,000
<i>Utilitarian benefits</i>	-0,436	0,235	3,448	1	0,04
<i>Hedonic benefits</i>	0,717	0,381	3,543	1	0,05
Constant	-12,042	2,438	24,398	1	0,000
Cox & Snell $R^2 = 54,5\%$ de Nagelkerke $R^2 = 76,5\%$					