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INFLUENCE Of CONSUMER CHARACTERISITCS ON IMPULSIVE BUYING BEHAVIOUR AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT
Social media has expanded globally with the increase in number of users using social networking sites. The marketing strategy has quickly changed due to the shift from conventional one-way communication to new ways of connecting with the consumers for a greater reach. The rise of social media can be attributed to creation of opportunities for the consumers to connect and communicate with the company at their convenience. Social media enables the consumers to have a successful two-way communication which engages both the company and the consumers. In this context Customer Engagement has emerged as a vital component of modern social media marketing strategy especially in mobile marketing that has created an interest in both marketers and consumers. Companies are facing the challenge of understanding why and how consumers are engaged with mobile applications which is crucial for mobile marketing. The study intends to investigate the various factors that influence Customer Engagement and the resultant effect which urges the consumers to purchase products of a company even when they do not intend buying them. A survey was conducted by circulating a questionnaire to 425 respondents. Weighted mean, correlation, and SEM analysis were used for analysis. The results showed that there exists a positive effect of Consumer characteristics on Customer Engagement leading to increased impulsive buying behaviour among the mobile application users.
Keywords : Social media marketing, Mobile applications, Customer Engagement

Introduction

Social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Instagram and others are gaining popularity as the number of users are increasing rapidly worldwide. A GlobalWebIndex report 2019 found that digital consumers spend more time in browsing social media apps, approximately 2 hours and 24 minutes per day. The rapid development and prevalent use of digital communication technology allows people to easily disseminate/share information, exchange ideas, express comments, and form conversations with organizations and the mass population (**Wirtz, B. W., Schilke, O., & Ullrich, S. (2010)**. As a result, marketers need to explore ways of interacting with consumers in the digital and electronic commerce platforms. They need to allocate more time and resources to capture these digital consumers to create an interest to buy products offered by them. With the rapid proliferation of mobile technology, customers have witnessed a transformational shift in the way they communicate and interact with the world around them. Today, people heavily depend on their mobile devices to stay connected with friends, family, and colleagues, regardless of their location.**(Joshi et.al, 2016)** Furthermore, the advent of advanced mobile features like augmented reality and virtual assistants has significantly impacted the way people make decisions and even their daily lifestyle choices. For instance, mobile apps have made it easier for people to shop, bank, and make other transactions while on the go, leading

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to a change in consumer behavior. In summary, mobile technology has become an indispensable part of modern life, influencing everything from the way we communicate to the way we conduct business and live our lives. The smartphones facilitate customers to communicate anytime, anywhere without any obstacle using wireless internet connectivity **(Thakur, 2016)**. Customer use mobile devices for various purpose that include preparing shopping checklists, rating, recommending, sharing feedback etc.

Research reveals that around 4000 new apps are being added each day to the existing 5 million apps (**Arora, S., Ter Hofstede, F., & Mahajan, V. 2017)**. In addition, Global Digital Report indicates that the number of active social media users across computer and mobile-based systems worldwide reached 3.484 billion in 2019, among which 93.45% are mobile app users (**Ho, M. H. W., & Chung, H. F. 2020)**. It is also important to consider the level of interactivity of smartphone applications (e.g., mobile shopping), which represent new platforms that help organizations to attract and engage their customers in more effective ways (**Thakur. R, 2016)**. Mobile applications are a useful tool for brands to connect with their customers and manage their customer relationships effectively. When customers engage on social media, it means that they are actively participating instead of just viewing. Communicating with engaged customers take time and energy, but it can have a significant impact on the business. (**Bernhardt, J. M., Mays, D., & Hall, A. K. 2012)**. Personal interest, entertainment, rewards and information acquisition and sharing are the most encouraging motives for customer engagement (**Bylund, I., & Lindgren, S. 2017)**

Customers who are interestingly engaged in media applications tend to purchase products or services online. Convenience has made shopping online easier and saves time. People shop due to the stimuli from online mobile applications that provides attractive offers and encourages greater buying desire. They buy products they have never had before, or want to try new items that create the urge to shop. They are not so focused on the decision-making process that they don't have a plan to buy or they don't really matter. They merely follow their emotions and feelings to buy the things they want **Darmawan, D., & Gatheru, J. (2021**) Due to this Impulse buying behaviour, companies take this as an opportunity to market their products effectively through mobile shopping application.

Review of Literature

Attraction in social media has grown as one of the biggest challenges for marketers to make customers visit their social media pages again and again. Attractive visuals and advertisements endorsed by celebrities or testimonials by loyal customers serves as a base to attract potential customers' attention in social media **(Liew Chee Yoong, Song Bee Lian 2019).** Countless number of new mobile applications are developed and released every day, mobile consumers are using only a few applications more frequently (**Furner et al., 2016**). A study revealed that even though lot of native applications are designed often, smartphone users choose to spend most of their time (84%) using only the top five apps (i.e., Facebook, Google, Amazon, Apple, and Yahoo**(Perez, 2015**)**.** Mobile phone apps provides marketers with the opportunity to deliver a strong emotional connect via mobile platforms. Many consumers view their mobile phones as extensions of themselves. **(Chiaburu Corkum & Chin Xung Lieb 2021).** They spend more time browsing in mobile phones trying to find and gather information about their favourite products. To attract and keep the consumers engaged,

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companies create customized applications where the users can get all information about the products and services on a particular brand.

Peña-García et al. (2020) consumers who are more engaged in their favourite brand's application are more enthusiastic to share their knowledge and experiences after using the products purchased with other friends who have similar likes on their social media platforms. **Tiphaine & Géraldine 2020** have inferred that Customers are always motivated by monetary incentives and it is an effective way to stay connected with the company. The ease and convenience at which consumers can place/track their order and trust the safety and security of transacting online influences their attitude towards engaging with the company for future purchases **Joshi & Achuthan, 2016.** Studies show that Impulsive buying behaviour is unintentional, less calculated, more enjoyable and tempting. Impulsive buyers fall for immediate indulgence to shopping **(Khagendra Nath Gangai, Rachna Agrawal2016)**

Need for the study

Due to the advent of internet browsing and as more customers use the Internet for their needs, companies are focusing on developing online channels such as website, online portal, or social networking site to communicate with their customers. Nowadays growing attention is given to social media marketing for facilitating customer engagement with brands. For instance, Facebook has featured animated reactions and GIF buttons to enhance the expressions of feelings in its mobile application platform. When it comes to a branded application, customers appreciate its personality. With repeated interactions, users become more aware of the product's features and services, providing marketers with an opportunity to showcase the product's value. branded application, personification and user benefits from repeated interactions with the application resulting in greater awareness of the product features and service. This provides an opportunity to marketers to showcase the value of its products or services. An empirical study is needed to examine the new form of customer engagement on social media via mobile applications to enable the marketers get a clear idea on how to create its customized mobile application with features that are expected by its customers. The study aims to understand the factors that influence customers to use and interact with their brand's application in order to find out the specific features and functionalities that customers find appealing, as well as the ease of navigation, convenience, and overall user experience. It also aims to investigate the key drivers of customer engagement with brand applications and provide insights that can help organizations optimize their digital platforms to better serve their customers. By conducting thorough research, the study will also uncover the root causes of impulsive purchases and shed light on how individuals can make such purchases without much forethought. This will be useful to explore the factors that contribute to this behavior and the motivations that drive it. By understanding the expectations of the users, marketers can persuade them to buy their product at the moment when it captures their mind.

Objectives

The objectives of the study are :

1. To examine the factors of Consumer Characteristics (Technological, Social, Psychological and Monetary), Customer Engagement & Impulsive Buying behaviour
2. To determine the relationship between
   (a) Consumer Characteristics & Customer Engagement
   (b) Customer Engagement and Impulsive Buying Behaviour
3. To test and validate the SEM model

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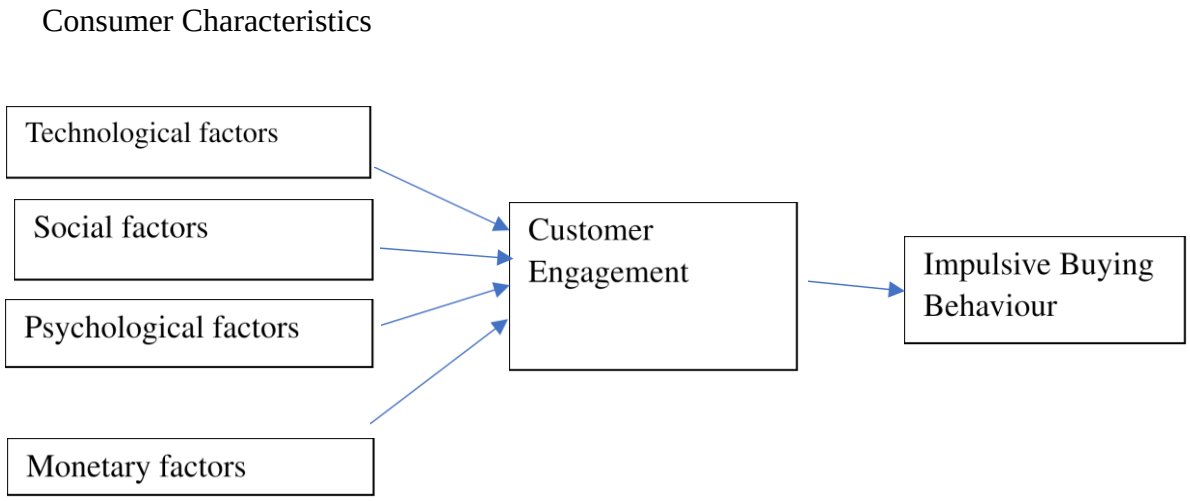
Figure 1 Consumer Characteristics – Impulsive Buying behaviour Model



This model is based on the conceptual model of Sharma, D. R. where the author studied on Customer Engagement in service sector through mobile applications in Delhi NCR (2021). The study considered the factors under Consumer Characteristics namely: Technological, Social-Psychological, Cultural and Monetary factors; Customer Engagement; Repeat Purchase Behaviour and Potential Customers recommendations. However, only Technological, Social, Psychological and Monetary factors and Customer Engagement were used in the context of the present study. Hence a new model has been developed to determine the relationship amongst Consumer Characteristics, Customer Engagement and Impulsive buying behaviour

Research Methodology:

The present study is an empirical study to analyze the influential factors of consumer characterisitcs that engage customers in mobile shopping applications. Primary and secondary data has been used for the study. Purposive sampling technique was used to collect data from the respondents. Primary data was collected from 425 college students in Chennai who are interested in social media and have purchased products through mobile application.

A structured questionnaire was prepared and circulated online. The population chosen for the purpose of the study were respondents who are engaged and interactive in using social media platforms especially through popular mobile applications. The first part of the questionnaire measured the Consumer Characteristics, Customer Engagement and Impulsive buying behaviour on a five point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Agree (5) to Strongly Disagree (1). The second part sought details about the demographic profile of the respondents. Secondary data was derived from journals, articles and research papers. Weighted Mean, Correlation and SEM analysis were used to analyse the data

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Analysis

The demographic profile of the respondents is depicted in Table.1

Table 1 - Demographic Profile

S.No.	Age (In Years)	No.	Percentage (%)	Gender	No.	Percentage (%)
1.	18 – 20	233	54.8	Male	164	38.5
2.	21 – 23	192	45.2	Female	261	61.4
S.No.	**Education Level**	**No.**	**Percentage (%)**	**Stream**	**No.**	**Percentage (%)**
1.	Pursuing Under Graduation	233	54.8	Aided	222	52.2
2.	Pursuing Post Graduation	192	45.2	Self Supporting	203	47.8
S.No.	**Family Monthly Income**	**No.**	**Percentage (%)**	**Individual Monthly Income**	**No.**	**Percentage (%)**
1	Less than Rs.50,000	176	41.4	Nil	289	68
2	Rs.50,000 - up to Rs.1,00,000	137	32.2	Less than Rs.20,000	47	11.1
3	Rs.1,00,000 – up to Rs.1,50,000	50	11.8	Rs.20,000 - up to Rs.40,000	53	12.5
4	Above Rs.1,50,000	62	14.6	Rs.40,000 – up to Rs.60,000	9	2.1
				Above Rs.60,000	27	6.4

Source : Primary data

It can be seen from the above Table1, majority (54.8%) of the respondents belong to the age group 18-20 years, followed by 45.2% of them belonging to the age group of 21-23 years. Majority (61.4%) of the respondents were female, while 38.5% of them were male. 54.8% of the respondents are pursuing their Under graduation and 45.2% of them are pursuing their Post Graduation.

52.2% of the respondents belong to the Aided stream and 47.8% of them were from the Self Supporting stream. 68 % of the respondents had Nil Individual income, 11.1% earn less than Rs.20,000 monthly, 12.5% earn between Rs.20,000 to Rs.40,000, 2.1% earn between Rs.40,000 to Rs.60,000 and 6.4% of the respondents earn more than Rs.60,000 monthly. Majority of the respondents (41.4%) have less than Rs.50,000 as Family monthly income, 32.2% of the respondents have Family monthly income between Rs.50,000 to Rs.1,00,000

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lakh, 11.8% have Family monthly income between Rs.1,00,000 to Rs.1,50,000 and 14.6% have more than Rs.1,50,000 as Family monthly income.

The weighted mean scores of the Consumer characteristics (Technological, Social, Psychological and Monetary factors), Customer Engagement and Impulsive Buying Behaviour are depicted in Table 2

Table 2
Consumer Characteristics, Customer Engagement and Impulsive buying behaviour

S.No.	Factors	Weighted Mean
	Consumer Characteristics	
1.	**Technological Factors**	**4.00**
2.	Social Factors	3.53
3.	Psychological Factors	3.64
4.	Monetary Factors	3.63
	Customer Engagement	3.73
	Impulsive Buying behaviour	3.35

Source: Primary Data

It can be seen from the above Table 2 that, with respect to the Consumer Charateristics, the weighted mean score was found to be higher for Technological factor (4.00). This indicates that the respondents have agreed with all the statements related to technological factors. The reason for this could be that students are mostly influenced by the advanced information search, touch screen, and safe transaction features present in the mobile application. However, the weighted mean score of the Psychological factors (3.64), Monetary factors (3.63) and Social factors (3.53) are above 3 which implies that the respondents have moderately agreed with the statements measuring the above-mentioned factors. Students have reported enjoying the mobile app, and appreciate receiving rewards and connecting with like-minded individuals.

Further, It can also be seen from the above table that, the weighted mean scores of Customer Engagement (3.73) and Impulsive buying behaviour (3.35) are above 3 indicating that the respondents have moderately agreed to the aforesaid factors. This may be because students are highly engaged in the mobile application as they spend a lot of time in browsing and they seem to enjoy to like, comment or share ideas among others. They are also used to the habit of buying spontaneously whenever they find a good and attractive offer.

The next part of the analysis deals with determining the relationship between the factors of the study using Correlation.

Relationship between Consumer Characteristics (Technological, Social, Psychological, Monetary factors) and Customer Engagement

The Hypotheses framed for the study are

Hypothesis H_{01}: There exists a significant relationship between Technological Factors and Customer Engagement

Hypothesis H_{02}: There exists a significant relationship between Social Factors and Customer Engagement

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Hypothesis H_{03}: There exists a significant relationship between Psychological Factors and Customer Engagement

Hypothesis H_{04}: There exists a significant relationship between Monetary Factors and Customer Engagement

Hypothesis H_{05}: There exists a significant relationship between Customer Engagement and Impulsive Buying behaviour.

Table 3
Relationship between Consumer Characteristics and Customer Engagement

S. No	Factors	r value
1	Technological Factor & Customer Engagement	0.517**
2	Social Factor & Customer Engagement	0.553**
3	Psychological Factor & Customer Engagement	0.599**
4	Monetary Factor & Customer Engagement	0.549**

Source: Primary data

***** denotes significant at 1% level**

It can be inferred from the above Table 3 that, $p < 0.01$ for all the Consumer Characteristics namely Technological factor ($r = 0.517$), Social Factor ($r = 0.553$), Psychological Factor ($r = 0.599$), Monetary Factor (($r = 0.549$) at 1% level of significance. Therefore the hypotheses (H_{01} to H_{04}) are accepted. Thus a significant positive relationship was found to exist between Consumer Characteristics and Customer Engagement. This may be because mobile application offers a user-friendly platform where the respondents can search for the information they need and also join various social networking sites to be familiar with the product information which keeps them more engaged. Amongst the Consumer characteristics, the Psychological factor ($r = 0.599$) was found to be highly correlated with Customer Engagement.

Table 4
Relationship between Customer Engagement and Impulsive Buying Behaviour

S.No.	Factors	r value
1	Customer Engagement & Impulsive Buying Behaviour	0.518**

Source : Primary data

It can be seen from table 4 that since $p<0.01$, Customer Engagement (r value = 0.518) depicted a significant positive relationship with Impulsive Buying behaviour at 1% level of significance. Thus the hypothesis H_{05} is accepted. This may be because products shown in mobile application is interesting and trendy which persuades the students to buy things spontaneously.
The next part of the analysis deals with testing and validating the proposed model using SEM

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STRUCTURAL EQUATION MODEL (SEM) ON IMPULSIVE BUYING BEHAVIOUR

Basic Introduction on SEM

Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) is a technique applied to identify the relationships between unobserved variables or constructs and observed variables or indicators. It is used to investigate the complex patterns of relationships among the constructs in a conceptual model. SEM is a combination of factor analysis and path analysis with two primary components: the Measurement model and the Structural model. This is a multivariate technique used to test whether models fit data in a confirmatory rather than exploratory manner **(Kumar, 2012).** Unlike other analytical methods that overlook measurement error, SEM entails estimating the variance parameters for both independent and dependent variables, thereby taking such errors into account. This comprehensive approach is achieved by considering the measurement model and the structural model together, which is known as the composite or full structural model. By incorporating both measurement error and structural models into the analysis, SEM offers a more complete and accurate understanding of the relationships between variables.

Measurement Model:
Measurement Model establishes the connection between observed variables and the construct or constructs. It can be shown using path diagrams. Measurement Model evaluates how well observed variables combine to analyze the hypothesized factors as latent variables. **(Weston, R., & Gore Jr, P. A. (2006)**. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) is used in testing the measurement model, and the hypothesized factors are referred to as latent variables. The measures chosen by the researcher define the latent variables in the measurement model. A latent variable is defined more accurately to the extent that the measures that define it are strongly related to one another.

CONFIRMATORY FACTOR ANALYSIS

CFA of Technological Factor

Figure 2 – Technological Factor

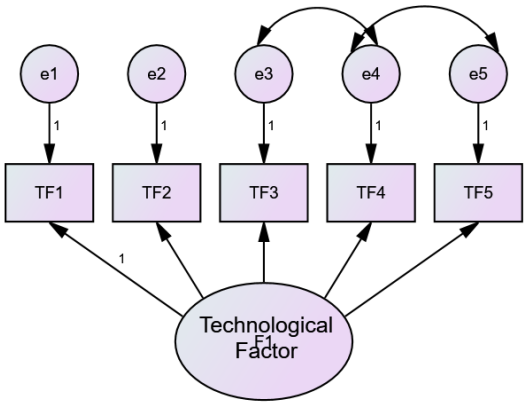

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Table 5
Model fit Indices of Confirmatory Factor Analysis for Technological Factor

Indices	Value	Threshold	Interpretation
CMIN	8.373	-	
DF	3	-	
CMIN/DF	2.791	<5	Excellent
CFI	0.989	>0.95	Excellent
RMR	0.016	<0.08	Excellent
RMSEA	0.065	<0.08	Excellent
PClose	0.254	>0.05	Excellent
CR	0.738	>0.6	Acceptable
AVE	0.364	>0.5	Acceptable

From the above table it is found that the calculated CMIN/DF = 2.791, CFI **(**Comparative Fit Index) = 0.989, RMR (Root Mean Square Residuals) = 0.016, RMSEA **(**Root Mean Square Error of Approximation) = 0.065. Though PClose = 0.254 and AVE = 0.364 are less than the threshold values, but since CR = 0.738 it is acceptable (**Lam, L. W. (2012)**. Since the calculated indices are within the threshold values, as shown in the table, the model has a good fit.

CFA of Social Factor

Figure 3 – Social Factor

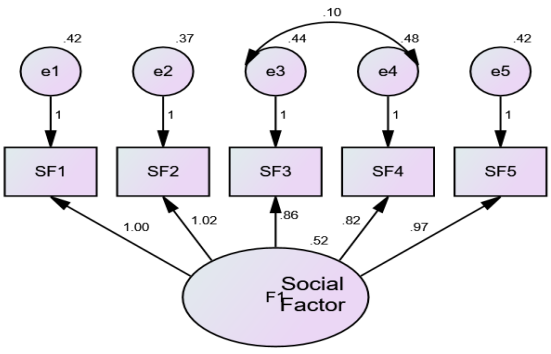

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Table 6
Model fit Indices of Confirmatory Factor Analysis for Social Factor

Indices	Value	Threshold	Interpretation
CMIN	5.317	-	
DF	4	-	
CMIN/DF	1.329	<5	Excellent
CFI	0.998	>0.95	Excellent
RMR	0.012	<0.08	Excellent
RMSEA	0.028	<0.08	Excellent
PClose	0.679	>0.05	Excellent
CR	0.843	>0.6	Acceptable
AVE	0.519	>0.5	Acceptable

From the above table it is found that the calculated CMIN/DF =1.329, CFI **(**Comparative Fit Index) = 0.998, RMR (Root Mean Square Residuals) = 0.012, RMSEA **(**Root Mean Square Error of Approximation) = 0.028, PClose = 0.679, CR = 0.843 and AVE = 0.519. Since the calculated indices are within the threshold values, the model has a good fit.

CFA of Psychological Factor

Figure 4 – Psychological Factor

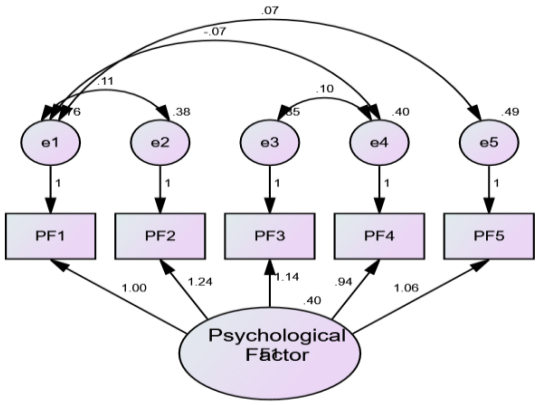

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Table 7
Model fit Indices of Confirmatory Factor Analysis for Social Factor

Indices	Value	Threshold	Interpretation
CMIN	1.950	-	
DF	1	-	
CMIN/DF	1.950	<5	Excellent
CFI	0.999	>0.95	Excellent
RMR	0.006	<0.08	Excellent
RMSEA	0.047	<0.08	Excellent
PClose	0.365	>0.05	Excellent
CR	0.843	>0.6	Acceptable
AVE	0.519	>0.5	Acceptable

From the above table it is found that the calculated CMIN/DF =1.950, CFI **(**Comparative Fit Index) value = 0.999, RMR (Root Mean Square Residuals) = 0.006, RMSEA **(**Root Mean Square Error of Approximation) = 0.047, PClose = 0.375, CR = 0.843 and AVE = 0.519. Since the calculated indices are within the threshold values as given in table, the model has a good fit.

CFA of Monetary Factor

Figure 5 - Monetary Factor

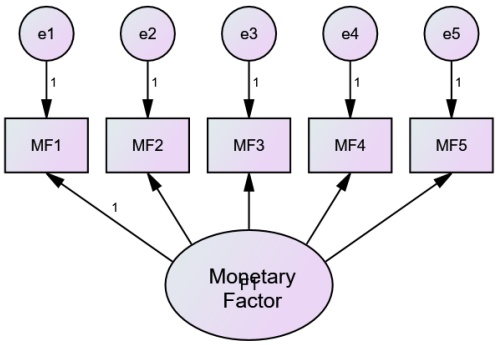

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Table 8
Model fit Indices of Confirmatory Factor Analysis for Monetary Factor

Indices	Value	Threshold	Interpretation
CMIN	15.318	-	
DF	5	-	
CMIN/DF	3.064	<5	Excellent
CFI	0.989	>0.95	Excellent
RMR	0.019	<0.08	Excellent
RMSEA	0.070	<0.08	Excellent
PClose	0.172	>0.05	Excellent
CR	0.860	>0.6	Acceptable
AVE	0.551	>0.5	Acceptable

From the above table it is found that the calculated CMIN/DF = 3.064, CFI **(**Comparative Fit Index) = 0.989, RMR (Root Mean Square Residuals) = 0.019, RMSEA **(**Root Mean Square Error of Approximation) = 0.070, PClose = 0.172 . CR = 0.860 and AVE = 0.551. Since the calculated indices are within the threshold values as given in table, the model has good fit.

CFA of Customer Engagement

Figure 6– Customer Engagement

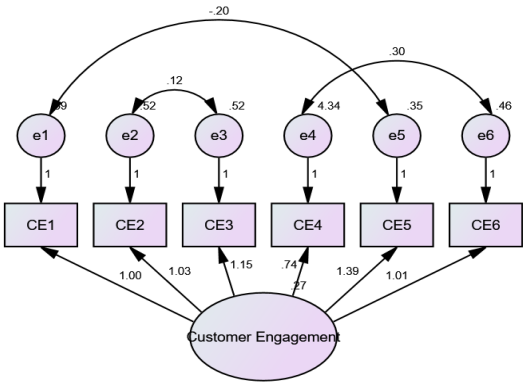

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Table 9

Model fit Indices of Confirmatory Factor Analysis for Customer Engagement

Indices	Value	Threshold	Interpretation
CMIN	8.859	-	
DF	6	-	
CMIN/DF	1.476	<5	Excellent
CFI	0.995	>0.95	Excellent
RMR	0.035	<0.08	Excellent
RMSEA	0.034	<0.08	Excellent
PClose	0.681	>0.05	Excellent
CR	0.743	>0.6	Good
AVE	0.347	>0.5	Acceptable

From the above table it is found that the calculated CMIN/DF =1.476, CFI **(**Comparative Fit Index) = 0.995, RMR (Root Mean Square Residuals) = 0.035, RMSEA **(**Root Mean Square Error of Approximation) = 0.034 , PClose = 0.681. Though AVE = 0.347 is less than threshold value but since CR = 0.743 it is acceptable, (**Lam, L. W. (2012)**. Since the calculated indices are within the threshold values as given in table, the model has a good fit.

CFA of Impulsive Buying Behaviour

Figure 7 – Impulsive Buying Behaviour

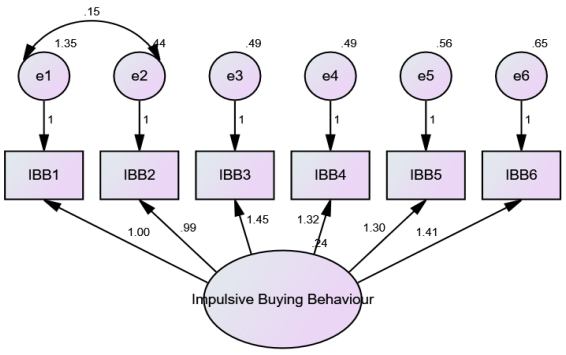

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Table 10

Model fit Indices of Confirmatory Factor Analysis for Impulsive Buying Behaviour

Indices	Value	Threshold	Interpretation
CMIN	12.870	-	
DF	8	-	
CMIN/DF	1.609	<5	Excellent
CFI	0.992	>0.95	Excellent
RMR	0.021	<0.08	Excellent
RMSEA	0.038	<0.08	Excellent
PClose	0.661	>0.05	Excellent
CR	0.783	>0.6	Acceptable
AVE	0.383	>0.5	Acceptable

From the above table it is found that the calculated CMIN/DF =1.069, CFI **(**Comparative Fit Index) = 0.992, RMR (Root Mean Square Residuals) = 0.021, RMSEA **(**Root Mean Square Error of Approximation) = 0.038, PClose = 0.661. Though AVE = 0.383 is less than threshold values, but since CR = 0.783, it is acceptable (**Lam, L. W. (2012)**. Since the calculated indices are within the threshold values as given in table, the model has a good fit.

Structural Model :

Structural Model connects the constructs which indicates the dependent or endogenous constructs as linear functions of the independent or exogenous constructs. It describes the interrelationships among constructs.

The Hypotheses framed for the model are

Hypothesis H_{06} : Technological Factor significantly influences Customer Engagement

Hypothesis H_{07} : Social Factor significantly influences Customer Engagement

Hypothesis H_{08} : Psychological Factor significantly influences Customer Engagement

Hypothesis H_{09} : Monetary Factor significantly influences Customer Engagement

Hypothesis H_{10}: Customer Engagement significantly influences Impulsive Buying Behaviour

Th variables used in the structural equation model are

I. Observed, endogenous variables
1. Customer Engagement
2. Impulsive Buying Behaviour

II. Observed, exogenous variables
1. Technological Factor
2. Social Factor
3. Psychological Factor
4. Monetary Factor

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III. Unobserved, exogenous variables

1. e1: Error term for Customer Engagement
2. e2: Error term for Impulsive Buying Behaviour

Hence number of variables in the SEM are

Number of variables in this model	8
Number of observed variables	6
Number of unobserved variables	2
Number of exogenous variables	6
Number of endogenous variables	2

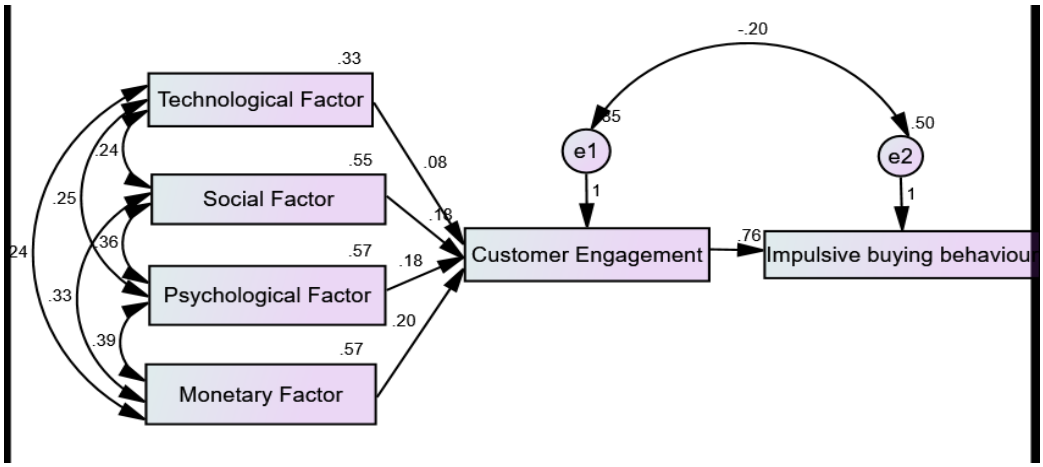

Figure 8 Consumer Characteristics – Impulsive Buying behaviour Model

Table 11 Model fit Indices of Structural Equation Model

Indices	Value	Suggested value
Chi-square value	4.969	-
DF	3	-
Chi-square value/DF	1.656	< 5.00 (Hair et al., 1998)
P value	0.174	> 0.05 (Hair et al., 1998)
GFI	0.996	> 0.90 (Hu and Bentler, 1999)
AGFI	0.973	> 0.90 (Hair et al. 2006)
CFI	0.998	> 0.90 (Daire et al., 2008)
RMR	0.006	< 0.08 (Hair et al. 2006)
RMSEA	0.039	< 0.08 (Hair et al. 2006)

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From the above table 11 it is found that the calculated P = 0.174, GFI (Goodness of Fit Index) = 0.996, AGFI **(**Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index) = 0.973, CFI **(**Comparative Fit Index) = 0.998, RMR (Root Mean Square Residuals) = 0.006 and RMSEA **(**Root Mean Square Error of Approximation) = 0.039. Since the calculated indices are within the threshold values as given in table, the model was found to have a good fit.

Table 12 Variables in the Structural Equation Model Analysis

Variables			Unstandardised co-efficient	S.E	Standardised co-efficent	t value	P value
Customer Engagement	<---	Technological Factor	0.081	0.059	0.065	1.363	0.173
Customer Engagement	<---	Social Factor	0.176	0.050	0.183	4.047	<0.001 **
Customer Engagement	<---	Psychological Factor	0.179	0.052	0.190	3.462	<0.001**
Customer Engagement	<---	Monetary Factor	0.201	0.048	0.213	3.643	<0.001**
Impulsive Buying Behaviour	<---	Customer Engagement	0.764	0.087	0.776	8.828	<0.001**

Note: ** denotes significant at 1% level

From the table no.12, it is evident that, p > 0.01 for the Technological Factor at 1% level of significance. Thus H_{06} is rejected. This means that there is no significant influence of Technological factor on Customer engagement. This may be because the technological features such as the search option, safe and trustworthy transactions that is available in mobile applications needs to be improvised and be more user-friendly. The coefficient of **Technological factor** (0.081) represents the partial effect of the Technological factor on Customer Engagement, holding the other variables as constant. Since the estimated value is positive, it implies that Customer Engagement has a positive effect that would increase by 0.081 for every unit increase in Technological factor.

It is inferred from the table no.12 that, p <0.01 for Social factor at 1% level of significance. Thus H_{07} is accepted. This means that there exists a significant influence of Social factor on Customer engagement. This means that the users of mobile applications feels connected and inspired while interacting with like-minded people. They like to provide useful information to other members through the application. The coefficient of **Social factor** (0.176) represents the partial effect of the Social factor on Customer Engagement, holding the other variables as constant. The estimated positive sign indicates that Customer Engagement has a positive effect that would increase by 0.176 for every unit increase in Social factor .

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It is also evident from the table no.12, that p <0.01 for the Psychological factor at 1% level of significance. Thus H_{08} is accepted. This means that there exists a significant influence of Psychological factor on Customer engagement. This may be because the respondents felt more enthusiastic and excited while using their favourite mobile application. The coefficient of the **Psychological factor** (0.179) represents the partial effect of the Psychological factor on Customer Engagement, holding the other variables as constant. The estimated positive sign implies that such effect is positive and that Customer Engagement would increase by 0.179 for every unit increase in Psychological factor.

It can be seen from the above table no.12, that p <0.01 for the Monetary factor at 1% level of significance. Thus H_{09} is accepted. This means that there exists a significant influence of Monetary factor on Customer engagement. This means that the special discount and loyalty rewards received through mobile applications will enable the users to save money and explore high-end products. The coefficient of the **Monetary factor** (0.201) represents the partial effect of the Monetary factor on Customer Engagement, holding the other variables as constant. The estimated positive sign shows that there is a positive effect of Customer Engagement that would increase by 0.201 for every unit increase in Monetary factor.

From the table, p < 0.01 for Customer Engagement at 1% level of significance. Thus H_{10} is accepted. This means that there exists a significant influence of Customer Engagement on Impulsive Buying Behaviour. This may be because the contents shown in mobile application is trendy and interesting. The users lose track of time while using it and consider it as the most enjoyable time. The coefficient of **Customer Engagement** (0.764) represents the partial effect of Customer Engagement on Impulsive Buying behaviour, holding the other variables as constant. The estimated positive sign implies that such effect is positive and that Impulsive Buying behaviour would increase by every unit increase by 0.764 for every unit increase in Customer Engagement.

1.7 Limitations of the study

1. The study was conducted among College students only in Chennai.
2. The study considered the respondents belonging to the age category of 18-20 and 21-23 years.
3. The study considered respondents pursuing their UG and PG

1.8 Scope for further study

1. The study can be extended to respondents belonging to other age groups
2. The influence of consumer characterisitcs on buying behaviour amongst the respondents other than college students can also be studied.
3. The study can be done in other cities as well as rural areas.
4. Future research can explore additional factors and assess their impact on customer engagement and its outcome towards Impulsive buying Behaviour.

1.9 Conclusion

Due to the rise of social media marketing, digital consumers especially young consumers are more prone to get influenced by peer activity in online platforms to the extent that one customer influences another customer to like, discuss, interact, shop, learn and play games online. Digital consumers co-create value by providing useful information about desires which can be assessed through the users' settings, app-usage history (e.g., which products the customer views on the app), and products that the user likes, saves, or adds to a shopping cart or wish list, allowing the companies to customize the application experience to

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the specific user. The study focused on college students aged between 18 and 23, who are more likely to experiment with new applications. Young consumers are valuable for marketers because they tend to refer more potential customers to the firm. The reason why consumers are more likely to engage with branded mobile applications is due to the positive influence of consumer characteristics such as technological, social, psychological, and monetary features. Among these features, psychological factors such as enjoyment in browsing, receiving quick responses, being unique from others, and curiosity about how the product works after purchase have a highly significant positive relationship with customer engagement. Branded apps are effective because they offer a high level of user engagement, both informational and experiential. Social media customer engagement is a crucial factor in arousing impulsive purchase intentions among consumers. The study found that consumer characteristics have a positive effect on customer engagement, and customer engagement has a positive effect on impulsive buying behavior. This means that based on individual charateristics of the people, they get influenced and engaged to the various features available in the mobile applications. This in turn creates an urge to buy products spontaneously while browsing their favourite mobile application. In the virtual environment, firms need to be proactive and innovative in building profitable and long-lasting relationships with their customers. Therefore, marketers who use innovative strategies to engage with their customers through digital devices will have an advantage over their competitors.

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