Designing a process model for impulse buying in chain stores of Tehran based on grounded theory approach

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ABSTRACT

The present research aimed at designing a process model for impulse buying in chain stores of Tehran based on the grounded theory approach. The statistic population included the connoisseurs, professors, scientific and executive experts in the field of marketing and sales. 15 members were selected as the statistic sample by purposeful judgment method. The data collection tools included the library studies and semi- structured interview with experts. The validity of interview questions and their reliability respectively have been confirmed by the content analysis and retest method (0.921). The data analysis was done with a qualitative approach by the grounded theory method and the coding process was done in three stages of open, axial and selective coding. Accordingly, every component of coding paradigm was interpreted and the process model of impulse buying in chain stores was designed. Finally, the theory was designed based on 9 theorems. Based on the enumerated model, the causal condition (including the economic and psychological factors), category- centered (positive attitude toward impulse buying), bedding (including the factors related to the good or product, personality and behavioral factors), contextual factors (including the environmental, persuasive and demographical factors), strategies (strategies of impulse buying development), and outcomes (including the outcomes related to the customer and sellers) were specified in the paradigm model and ultimately, the relations between them were drawn in the selected model.
JEL classification: C25, M39, M31.
Key words: impulse buying, chain stores, grounded theory.

Introduction

Making decision for the purchase is one of complicated human behaviors in the space of today competitive market. Many studies have been done in this regard that along the recognition, most of purchase behaviors are formed under the influence of mental and factors and emotions (Zheng et al., 2019). These

behaviors known as the consumer purchase behavior may be rational or irrational or have different levels of rationality (Wu et al., 2020). The impulse buying is one of the purchase behaviors that is known as the enjoyable or emotional (Mehrgan et al., 2016). In the impulse buying, the speed of decision making for the purchase prevents any kind of thinking, consideration and study of other options (Liu et al., 2019). Generally, occurs after affecting the individual by an internal or external intensive in very short time (Bahreynizad & Hosseinin, 2018).

The wide expansion of impulse buying behaviors model among wide range of different product categories existing in the domain of consumer's surveys such as the optimality maximization, decision making, and enjoyable behavior effect and meaning transfer has caused this subject be considerably attended in the studies (Lo et al., 2016). The researchers believe that the impulse buying occurs when an individual do a purchase immediately without any intention, and thinking (Hasasi et al., 2018). Therefore, the features such as being unwitting and lack of planning are necessity for the impulse buying. Indeed, it can be said that any impulse buying is done without any intention, but any unintentional buying cannot be necessarily an impulse buying (Nazari & Ghaderiabed, 2011).

The findings reveal that the impulse buying is generally done by the influence of two internal (psychological) and external factors. On one side, based on the internal and psychological criteria, the buyer is affected immediately and without any planning by the market intensives and rapidly decides to purchase without any searching due to the positive feeling created in him/ her (Bellini et al., 2017; Amos et al. (2014)). Therefore, the impulse buying is derived from the enjoyable values, entertainment and emotion (Chan et al., 2017). On the other side, the external factors such as the store space, store layout and physical space, equipment and ancillary services of the store, price, forward purchase intention and so forth are the factors affecting the impulse buying (Bellini et al., 2017; Chang, 2017).

Generally, the results of previous studies reveal that most of 50 percent of the buyers have purchased in the chain stores without any premeditation. Furthermore, about 27 to 62 percent of the store purchases have been occurred impulsively or without any planning (Bahreynirad and Hosseini, 2018). These statistics has doubled the significance of paying attention to having a systematic process in the impulse buying among the marketing connoisseurs. Furthermore, they has persuaded the marketing strategies of most of chain store owners to attract the costumer and sell their goods base on this kind of buying (Bazyar Haghighi, 2017). Accordingly, the perception of reasons of this kind of buying manner of its occurrence, and generally what is done in the buyer's mind during the purchase are of special importance for the marketing connoisseurs and also the chain stores managers.

The results of studies done by the online credit cards market have revealed that about the half of ''impulse buyers'' have repented their purchase (Delgoshayi, 2016). In fact, the buyers and consumers intend to do such purchases less as possible. Therefore, the present research aimed at designing the process model of impulse buying from the consumers' viewpoint and help them to prevent such purchases and do the planned and rational purchases. Generally, a few studies have regarded the circumstances and outcomes of impulse buying and also a few studies have made effort to present the effective strategies for the process of impulse buying and its outcomes by an integrative approach and by regarding the other bedding, contextual and causal conditions which are resulted in the impulse buying. Accordingly, the present study aimed to design the process model of impulse buying in chain stores of Tehran in order to bridge this research gap.

Research theoretical foundations and literature
Impulse buying

In today competitive market, the chain stores would be successful to not only provide their customers; needs and requirements completely at the present time, but also they would be able to analysis the consumers' expected changes and plan to access them (Chen & Yao, 2018). Undoubtedly, the companies should pay attention to the factors effective on the customers' mental picture of store which affects the store selection and final purchase (Lucass & Koff, 2017). To increase the sale share, different psychological strategies and techniques have been regarded for enhancing the impulse buying in the stores (Rahimizadeh et al., 2014).

The impulse buying refers to the unplanned and immediate purchases. The impulse buying behavior often occurs by the immediate and quick persuasive factors (Ozer & Gultekin, 2015). The researchers believe that the impulse buying occurs when an individual do a purchase immediately without any consideration, since this purchase is done when the individual does not look for a good and does has no planning for the purchase and is not involved in that, like buying the gift which is done for satisfying another person (Hasasi et al., 2018). The impulse buying is the latent half of consumer's behavior that the skillful sellers can get that by using different actuators and increase their sale level. All the factors effective on the impulse buying behavior should be detected and studied for more success (Sohrabi et al., 2014). The unwillingness and being unplanned is linked to the impulse buying and it is necessary for categorizing the purchase as the impulse buying; but it is not enough (Zafar et al., 2019).

Although the early studies have introduced the impulse buying as a purchase without planning, the new ones have regarded four properties for that that are: the impulse buying occurs in reaction to a strong intention; the impulse buying involves the conflict between demand and control; making decision for impulse buying occurs by a quick thinking; there is a diminished anxiety about the results and outcomes of impulse buying (Mehregan et al., 2016).

Antedatings and outcomes of impulse buying process

In the studies done so far in the domain of impulse buying, some models have been presented in this regard that that have emphasized generally in the circumstances effective on the impulse buying. These researches have confirmed the effect of several factors on the impulse buying behavior. These factors are categorized into four categories: demographical factors, contextual factors, psychological factors and marketing mix factors (Liu et al., 2019; Locas & Koff, 2017; Ozer & Gultegin, 2015). The studies have revealed that the demographical factors such as income level, age and sex can have effect on the consumers' impulse buying behavior; for instance, the probability of impulse buying behavior is increased by the reduction of consumers' age or increase of their income (Wu et al., 2020). Furthermore, the age as one of the factors effective on the impulse buying was studied by Coley and Burgess (2003). They perceived that the women do the impulse buying considerably more than the men.

Furthermore, the other researches have emphasized the contextual factors such as the purchase environment, going shopping alone, seller's guidance and help and so forth (Bellini et al., 2017; Chan et al., 2017). While, the other researchers have referred to the role of psychological factors such as the self-esteem, individualism, excitability (lack of control on in propensity to purchase) and other factors effective on the customers' impulse buying (Chan & Yahoo, 2018). Some researchers have emphasized the factors related to the marketing mix in the impulse buying process and referred to some factors such as the product price, marketing elevations and other factors in the impulse buying process (Zheng et al., 2019). In addition to four mentioned factors, in some researches, the other external factors of impulse buying process that include the product short life, creation of motivation to purchase in consumer, advertising, latent need, store appearance and environment, economic condition, skillful sellers, good appearance and packaging, store brand layout, store searching, retention maintenance and easy saving and so forth (Wu et al., 2020; Zafar et al., 2019; Hasasi et al., 2018).

Bahreynizad and Hosseini (2018) have categorized in a comprehensive study the antedatings and outcomes of impulse buying process. In this research, the most important antedatings recognized for the customers' impulse buying include the contextual, psychological, personality, and environmental factors related to the good or product and demographical factors related to the marketing mixes. Furthermore, in this research, the outcomes and outcomes of impulse buying also were emphasized that include: the positive outcomes of impulse buying such as the high energy, high concentration, sense of pleasure, satisfaction after purchase, general self- esteem, satisfaction of entertainment, social and emotional needs, sufficient enthusiasm and so on and the negative outcomes of impulse buying such as the social reactions, sense of dissatisfaction and anger, sin and fear, to look immature, to act in a crude way, determination weakness, social distortion and so on.

Generally, the study of related literature reveals that only some antedatings and outcomes were attended in these studies that were mentioned in this section. However, a few researches have made effort to consider

with a comprehensive approach the other antedating, contextual and causal conditions which result in the impulse buying in the chain stores. The effective strategies in the impulse buying process were specified and its outcomes were clarified. Accordingly, to bridge the research gap, the present study aimed at designing the process model of impulse buying in chain stores of Tehran based on the grounded theory. The methodology and the problem solving of the study

Research Methodology

The present research is a developmental- applied descriptive exploratory study; since in addition to describing the process of impulse buying, it aims to design the process model of impulse buying in chain stores of Tehran due to lack of enough information in this regard. The data collection was done in two forms of library and field study by using the semi-structured interview. Therefore, the present study is recognized as a qualitative research. Furthermore, it is temporally a cross-sectional study.

The statistic population includes the connoisseurs, professors, scientific and executive experts of marketing and sale in chain stores. The sampling was done with a purposeful judgement approach by the snowballing method to achieve the theoretical saturation of data. 15 connoisseurs were selected as the statistic sample and were interviewed. As it was mentioned, the semi- structured interview done with the statistic sample was used as the data measurement tools in addition to the deep library studies.

The specific criteria of qualitative research including the credibility and confirmability were used to guarantee the accuracy of reliability and validity of results obtained from the interview process. The review methods were used by the participants during the interview to increase the credibility. For this purpose, the researchers paraphrased the speech and discourse obtained during the interview and summarized the interviewees' statements, then, a perfect text of accomplished conclusions along with the handwritings of early interview and firs level codes were submitted to the interviewees to be confirmed or edited. All of them were confirmed and their proposed opinions were taken into account. In addition, the retest method has been applied for final calculation of the interview. In this regard, three interviews were selected from among the accomplished interviews and were codified by the researchers in the interval of 14 days. The results obtained from these codifications were represented in the table 1.

Table 1- final calculation of retest (fixed index)

Row	Interview title	Total number of codes	Number of agreements	Number of disagreements	Retest reliability
1	IN1	23	10	3	%86.95
2	IN5	25	12	1	%96
3	IN11	28	13	2	%92.85
Total		76	25	6	%92.10

As it is observed in the table 1, the amount of retest reliability has been calculated 92 percent. This indicates that the interview expressions corresponded to each other more than 92 percent in two different periods. This indicates the reliability of process of coding the interview statements done by the researcher.

The data analysis has been done by the grounded theory approach. In the basic conceptualization method, the discovery or production of theory is done based on the existing facts and by systematic gathering of the data and by regarding all the potential aspects related to the research subject. The collected data convert to a theory by three stages of open, axial and selective codification. At first, the key points of data are detected and one code is specified for every point. Then, the codes are compared and a number of codes which have common aspect of studied phenomenon are categorized as a concept and then, a number of concepts are represented as an element. Ultimately, a number of elements are categorized as a theory. This process has been represented in the figure 1.
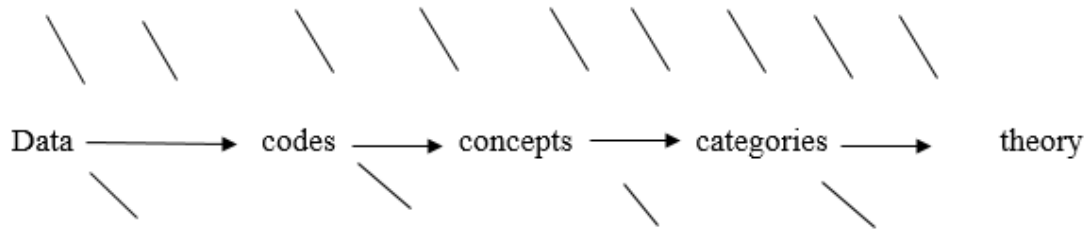
Figure 1: Process of theory perfection in grounded theory approach

Research data analysis

After collecting the data and accomplished interviews, the efforts were made to formulate the related theory by the grounded theory approach based on three open, axial and selective codification. To continue, these three steps have been explained.

First step: open coding: the open coding deals with the nomination and categorization of the phenomenon as the data were represented. It requires asking some questions and doing some comparisons. Based on the findings of this section, 156 codes (selective concepts) were recognized that were categorized in 30 categories. To continue, the minor categories were located in 8 major categories. The results of open coding are represented in the table (2).

Table 2: Open coding of results obtained from the interview

Main categories	Minor categories	Primary concepts
Economic factor	Enough income	- Individuals' income - High income - Customers' high income More income - - Enough income
	Appropriate price	- Probability of increase of goods price in future - Low price of products - low price in comparison to the other places - appropriate price of product - goods price
	Sales discount	- to enjoy the discounts - applied discounts - purchase discounts - discounts of store - enough discounts - discounts of goods - discounts of products - elevator tools
	Accessible money	- accessible money - enough money - contextual factor of money - access to money - lack of feeling the need or difficulty - lack of need for radical good
	To have emotion	- instigation of buyers' excitements - fast and emotional decision making - not studying the financial information during the purchase - lack of rational decision - to have temptation and excitement - to have more excitement in purchase
	Tendency to purchase	- intention and enthusiasm for purchase - intention for pre-purchase - general tendency to purchase

Psychological factors	To enjoy purchasing	- severe intention (pleasure and emotions) - positive feelings of costumers - making pleasure - purchase for enjoyment - tendency to purchase pleasure - enjoying - individual's looking for pleasure
	Entertainment and motivation	- motivation for pleasure - identical motivation - creation of motivation - for entertainment - due to enthusiasm - amusement -purchase for entertainment - purchase in amusement - purchase for entertainment - purchase in trip - to be happy and make happy
Environmental factors	Environment hygiene	- Being hygienic of store environment - store environment
	Internal decoration	- persuasive environment for purchase - being persuasive of store environment - appropriate and attractive environment for the buyer - store environment and appropriate path - store light - store space
	Store path	- store façade and appearance - internal space of store
	Store appearance	- Appropriate appearance of store - store façade - attractive façade of store
	Appropriate layout	- good layout of store - good layout of products - appropriate layout of store - kind of good layout and decoration - manner of goods layout - manner of products exhibition - good's exposure to costumer's view
Demographical factors	Age	- to have lower age, teenagers
	Sex	- The women buy impulsively more than the men.
	Marital status	- The singles buy impulsively more than the married individuals
Persuasive factors	Waste of time	- waste of time - to stroll in market for wasting the time
	Lack of intention and program	- lack of intention and program - without determination or unwillingly - to purchase without prior determination - lack of intention and purpose in purchase - sudden purchase - to purchase without planning - unsystematic and unplanned purchase - lack of planning for purchase - sudden and severe feeling
	Satisfaction of needs	- to present new products based on the customer's need - to satisfy the social needs - to satisfy the emotional needs - to satisfy a strong and emotional need - to answer the costumer's needs - to provide the costumers' cognitive needs - to have spontaneous need - latent need

	Strolling	- to stroll in market - to walk in market - to stroll in streets - to purchase while strolling
Factors related to the product	Good name of food and product	- good name of good and store - good name of store - reputability and good brand
	Product kind and quality	- product kind - good type - Kind of good presentation - products quality - Good application of products
	Product attractiveness	- to attract buyer - to attract the buyer by product or good - products appearance attractiveness - to attract the costumer - use of attractive designs in products packaging - beautiful packaging of products
	Products coloring	- colorful products - motivators such as the light, voice and color - Coloring
Behavioral factors	Skillful seller	- use of skillful manpower - skillful seller's use of different actuators - skillful sellers - skillful and connoisseur seller
	Advertising	- Further advertising - advertising - store advertisings - sellers' advertisings - spontaneous advertising
	Appropriate behavior	- correct behavior of sellers - seller's honest behavior - appropriate behavior - appropriate behavior of sellers - good tempered sellers - type of seller's behavior and appearance - seller's appearance and deportment - seller's high insistency - seller's high insistency with respect - seller's appearance - sellers' appearance - seller's guidance - sellers' good behavior - seller's friendly behavior - sellers' behavior and insistency - sellers' speech and good temper - seller's appropriate appearance
Personality factors	Attractiveness	- attractiveness of product in store - attractiveness of store space - attractiveness of product - attractiveness of products for the buyer - attractive layout of stores - to be affected by the entourage
	Effectiveness	- to be affected by the thoughts - to be affected by the others' thinking - to be affected by the sellers' speech - to be affected by the friends and family - to be affected by the others - to be affected spontaneously - to be affected by the entourage
	Lack of thought	- lack of thinking - lack of reflection and thinking - not thinking about the kind, quality and price of goods

Second step: axial coding: the aim of this section is to establish the relationship between dimensions (categories) produced in the stage of open coding that is done based on a comprehensive and popular model known as the paradigm model and helps the theorist to develop the studied theory easier (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).
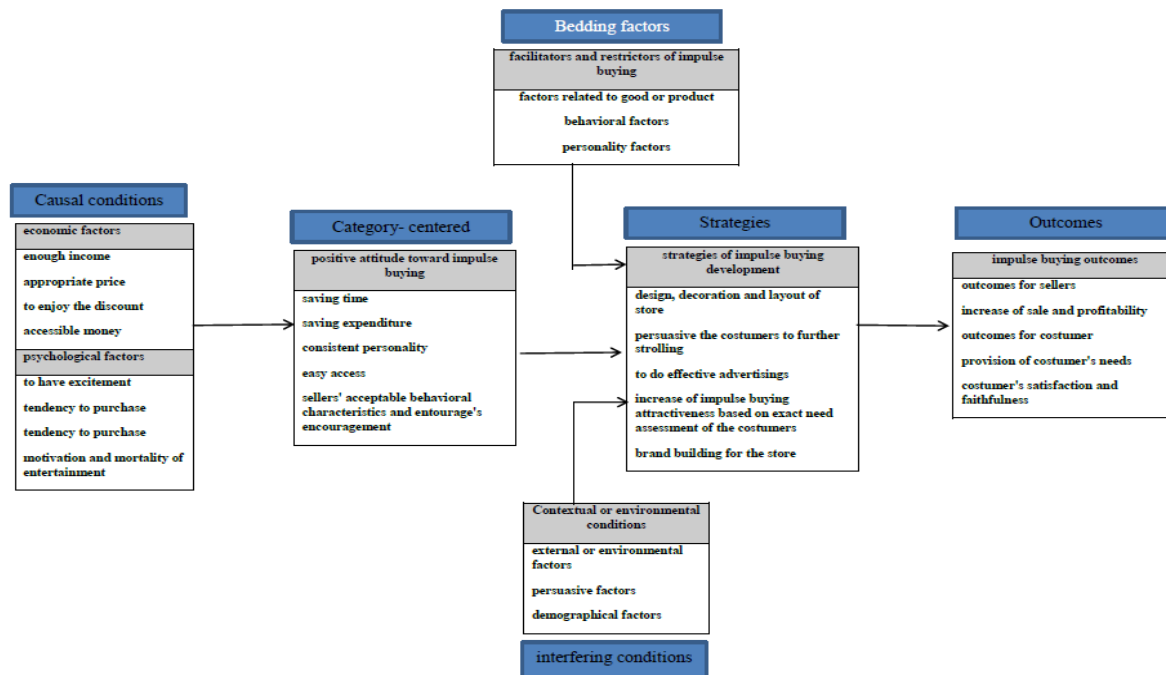
Bedding factors

facilitators and restrictors of impulse buying

factors related to good or product

behavioral factors

personality factors

Causal conditions

economic factors

enough income

appropriate price

to enjoy the discount

accessible money

psychological factors

to have excitement

tendency to purchase

tendency to purchase

motivation and mortality of entertainment

Category- centered

positive attitude toward impulse buying

saving time

saving expenditure

consistent personality

easy access

sellers' acceptable behavioral characteristics and entourage's encouragement

Strategies

strategies of impulse buying development

design, decoration and layout of store

persuasive the costumers to further strolling

to do effective advertisings

increase of impulse buying attractiveness based on exact need assessment of the costumers

brand building for the store

Outcomes

impulse buying outcomes

outcomes for sellers

increase of sale and profitability

outcomes for costumer

provision of costumer's needs

costumer's satisfaction and faithfulness

Contextual or environmental conditions

external or environmental factors

persuasive factors

demographical factors

interfering conditions

Figure 2- paradigm model of impulse buying process in chain stores

Third step: selective coding: the main goal of grounded theory is to produce the theory not to describe the phenomenon. The concepts should be regularly related to each other in order to convert the analyses to a theory. The selective coding is the main stage of theorization which produces the theory based on the results of two previous stages of coding (that as the elementary and contextual stages for theorization, produce the categories and elementary relations as the structures and main doctrines of the theory) (Creswell, 2004). As it was mentioned, in this research, the impulse buying process in chain stores of Tehran was studied and surveyed. In studying this phenomenon, new categories were observed that the open coding tables were adjusted based on them; then, in the axial coding, based on the paradigm model and with the centrality of category, the "positive attitude to impulse buying" as a main category has been considerably developed in comparison to the other ones and there developed some relationships between them and the axial category. The selective model has been represented in the figure (3).
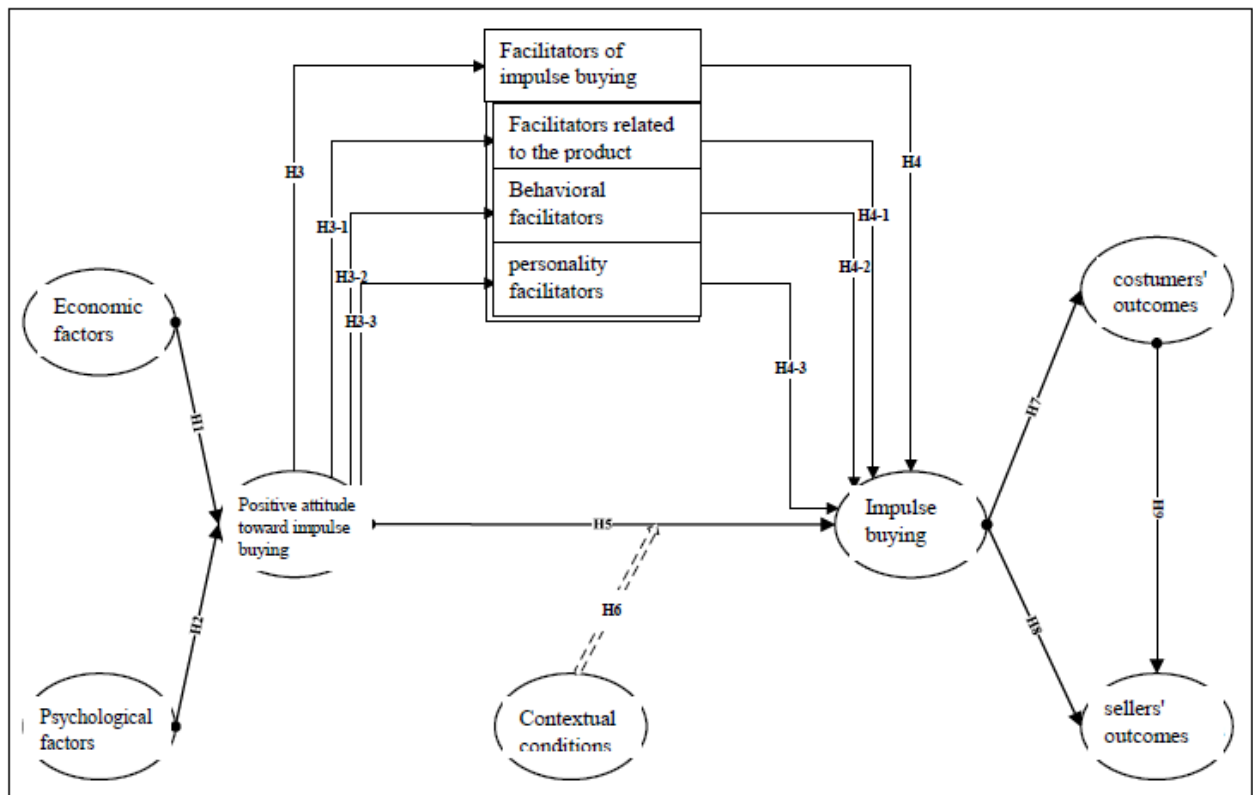
Figure (3)- final model of impulse buying process in chain stores

Theoretical propositions

The theoretical propositions are indicative of general relationships between the axial category and other categories, in such a way that it would be concluded in the final result and outcome. The propositions include the relations and conceptual structure which were mentioned in the theory stated in the figure (3) and 9 propositions are expressed as following:

Proposition 1. The economic factors are regarded as one of the antedatings of creation of positive attitude toward impulse buying in chain stores.

Proposition 2. The psychological factors are regarded as one of the antedatings of creation of positive attitude toward impulse buying in chain stores.

Proposition 3. Positive attitude toward impulse buying in chain stores facilitates the impulse buying process.

Proposition 4. The impulse buying facilitators cause the execution of impulse buying process in chain stores.

Proposition 5. The positive attitude toward the impulse buying leads to the execution of impulse buying process in chain stores.

Proposition 6. The contextual factors such as the environmental, persuasive and demographical factors moderate the relationship between the positive attitude toward impulse buying and the execution of impulse buying process in chain stores.

Proposition 7. The impulse buying in chain stores would have positive outcomes for the costumers and buyers.

Proposition 8. The impulse buying in chain stores would have positive outcomes for the sellers.

Proposition 9. The positive outcomes of the costumers resulted from impulse buying in chain stores would have positive outcomes for he sellers.

Whereas the grounded theory leads to the production of conceptual relationships, every one of mentioned propositions can be studied in the future studies. These propositions are early guesses about the relationship between the research model components that are exposed to be invalidated for the purpose of quantitative testing.

Conclusion and Suggestions

The present research aimed at designing the process model of impulse buying in chain stores of Tehran. In this respect and with regard to the very limit theoretical literature existing about the impulse buying in chain stores, the present research made effort to create a theory in this regard based on the grounded theory approach. The process model of impulse buying in chain stores of Tehran was presented based on the mentioned approach and three open, axial and selective coding stages. Ultimately, 9 theoretical propositions were created that are required to be validated in future studies in the form of research hypotheses by using the quantitative methodology based on the structural equation modeling.

According to the research findings, the antedatings of positive attitude in costumers toward impulse buying in chain stores include: the economic factors (such as enough income, appropriate price, to enjoy discount, accessible money) and the psychological factors (such as costumers' excitement, tendency to purchase, enjoying the purchase, high motivation and having the mortality of entertainment). Bahreynizad and Hosseini (2018) have stated in their study the psychological factors, income level and other factors in impulse buying process. Furthermore, the other findings of this research indicated that the costumers' positive attitude toward impulse buying is regarded as a axial category and it might be due to the different reasons such as the saving the time, saving the expenditure, having personality consistent with the impulse buying, easy access, sellers; acceptable behavioral characteristics, entourage's encouragement and so forth. Wu et al. (2020) and Ozer and Gultingen (2015) have stated in their researches the role of sellers' behavioral characteristics and emotions resulting from the entourage's presence in the positive attitude toward impulse buying.

On the other side, the recognized factors in the model indicated that the criteria such as the good or product features (like having good brand and high quality, attractive coloring and design and packaging with high quality and so forth), behavioral criteria (such as the existence of skillful sellers in the store, use of effective advertising and progressive processes, having appropriate and competent behavior with the costumer and so on) and also the personality criteria (such as attractiveness of purchase for the costumer, being affected by the store space, seller and entourage, lack of rational thinking about the product price and quality and so on) are the most bedding factors and facilitators of impulse buying in the chain stores. The findings of this research correspond to the findings of studies done by Liu et al. (2019) and Bellini et al. (2017). They also have referred to the effectiveness of some external factors in the impulse buying process that include: advertising, latent need, store appearance and environment, economic condition, skillful sellers, appearance and packaging of product, store brand layout, store searching, capability of easy retention and saving and so forth,

Furthermore, the findings revealed that the contextual factors including the environmental factors (such as environment hygiene, internal decoration, store path, store appearance, appropriate layout), persuasive factors (such as to stroll in market due to waste of time, lack of intention and program, satisfaction of need) and the demographical factors (such as age, sex, and marital status) have a moderating role in the attitude toward impulse buying and execution of impulse buying process. The findings of this section correspond to the results of studies done by Chan et al. (2017) and Chan and Yahoo (2018). They have referred to the role of external factors such as the store environment hygiene, store path, attractiveness of store space, demographical criteria and other factors in the impulse buying from chain stores.

With regard to the detected strategies in this research, it is suggested to take the following measures in order to perform the impulse buying process in the chain stores: 1) it is necessary to design the decoration with appropriate space for creating the attractiveness among the costumers for impulse buying; 2) it is necessary to create the appropriate spaces in order to persuade the consumers for further strolling and

instigating the sense of searching in them; 3) it is required to perform the effective advertisings and progressive activities; 4) it is necessary to do an exact need assessment along with the exact marketing studies to provide the persuasive goods and products in the chain stores so that the costumers' sense of searching and strolling be increased; 5) it is required to create an appropriate brand for the store based on its effective activities.

Finally, it should be referred that although the present research made effort to design a process model for impulse buying in chain stores of Tehran with a qualitative approach by using the grounded theory approach, it is necessary to validate the hypotheses detected form the theoretical propositions in a studied population in order to increase the generalization of obtained findings. In this respect, with regard to the limitation of temporal domain of this research, it is suggested to test the expressed hypotheses in future studies based on a quantitative methodology by using the structural equation modeling.

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