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## **Review on Online Impulse Buying Behavior in South Asian Context**

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### **Abstract**

This paper discusses impulse buying behavior, focusing on internet-based unintentional purchasing patterns. It talks about emergence in technology, penetration of internet, presence of e-commerce and its role

Paper looks at empirical studies and theories within the domain of unintentional purchasing, internet-based unintentional purchasing, technology and factors driving internet-based unintentional purchasing. Authors follow literature review as the main research strategy and reviews the application of literature through discussions within the South Asian context focusing on Supermarkets industry of Sri Lanka, India, Nepal and Pakistan.

Supermarkets industry was selected because the industry nature demands higher interaction with the end-consumer, hence it is ideal to judge the mass acceptance of the concept

Paper concludes highlighting the significance of online impulse buying behavior using theories, empirical studies and practices. It further recommends future areas of research which can add significantly towards creating new knowledge and encourages to undertake such future researches.

**Keywords:** Impulse buying, Internet, Online impulse buying, South Asia, Technology

## 1.0 Background

Impulse buying is a broadly discussed area for decades. Along with sudden emergence of ICT enabled platforms, internet-based unintentional purchasing has also surfaced to discussion. Moreover, online unintentional purchasing has also gained fame within the international context. In Asia Pacific the popularity of internet-based purchasing has gained fame in contrast to more established geographies like United States, United Kingdom, Europe as well as Japan (Rahman, Islam, Esha, Sultana, & Chakravorty, 2018) If that has been the same within the South Asian context is at question. Reason for internet-based purchasing not rapidly expanding in South Asian context is not studied previously. Hence we wish to explore the conceptual and practice perspectives of internet-based unintentional purchasing behavior in this study, with specific focus on South Asian context.

Let's understand the concept of impulse purchasing prior exploring internet-based impulse purchasing. A Purchase that is impulsive can be thought of as an unintended purchase. Though the customer make a purchase, the purchase is not a planned buying decision of the customer (Stern, 1962). An impulsive purchase goes beyond an accidental purchase as it makes the customer emotionally craves before buying the product. The need to buy the product comes unexpectedly and powerfully and it is difficult to overturn that decision (Ferrell, 1998). According to Luo, 2005, Series of previous studies have found that 62% of sales generated by supermarkets comes through unintentional customer purchases, which has a high contribution to income (Nasreen Khan, 2016). With the introduction of internet, internet-based shopping was enabled as a channel of shopping. 10 years ago internet was a fancy tool but now it has become a platform to distribute content, a way to inform, and allows trading. When electronic commerce was introduced, experts thought of a drastic change in trades as customers might convert to internet-based platform and internet taking the middle man away, might make some traditional businesses, not continue to remain in business. (Thomas G. Brashear, 2009). Even though people buy products from tangible outlets, the customers consider internet-based option as an easy one. This is due to saving time which has a high value for highly work engaged citizens (Rahman et al., 2018) However, in depth penetration of internet alone doesn't mean that the internet buying will also increase, particularly within the global context (Thomas G. Brashear, 2009). According to Korgoankar and Wolin 1999, past studies reveal that people with high consumption of internet are not the most mature, qualified people with grand salaries (Thomas G. Brashear, 2009). This denotes

that the day so called younger generation earns greater amounts of money, the probability of increased online sales could become a reality. Hence, organizations need to be aware of this.

With organizations now using online shopping as a channel of marketing their goods as well as the facilities, this becomes vital to know if such technology driven platforms are gaining momentum among consumers. With the frequency of customers who shop on the internet increasing, the online trading companies will have massive sales development (Engizek, 2014) With internet penetrating across the world and customers from different parts of the world logging into global sellers such as Amazon, unplanned online purchasing is not limited to countries, rather it's a worldwide trend (Kim, 2009). According to Kim 2002, e-commerce permit customers the access to a wide range of offerings, with greater detail about the offerings, moreover customer can enter an e-commerce site any time of the day and the shopper can also match similar offers from online traders around the globe (Engizek, 2014) This suggests that the online shopper might look at the above benefits and perceive that as a convenient platform for shopping. Hence it is important that organizations focus on this technology based trading platforms to increase its sales performance.

Business activities such as marketing has increased its reliance on information technology. As per a study in 2012, Gardner Consultancy Company foresee 2017 and thinks an organizations head of marketing would invest more than the organizations head of information technology would (McLellan, 2014) This suggests that even organizations are now having a serious look at adopting technology to meet the changes of consumer behavior in the marketplace. With electronic trading and marketer functions expanding to displace conventional business methods, knowing modern business methods have become vital. Fund allocations for digital trading has increased beyond single figures and top executives consider business-technology fund allocation as the most useful business fund allocation the organizations could consider (McLellan, 2014)

Though unplanned purchasing patterns and conditions driving them have been reviewing with detail, it is still not clear if the organizations have identified the internet-based unplanned purchasing patterns of the consumers, especially within South Asian context. Access to internet is active even in small cities of India. The younger generation has the highest contribution to electronic based shopping in India. (Mathew, 2016) Similar to most Asians, within Bangladesh the youth tend to discover latest methods to shop, hence internet-based shopping has gained fame among youth of Bangladesh (Rahman et al., 2018) However why this market is not so popular among majority of South Asian shoppers, is a question

worth asking. There are different views to it. Although internet is largely available, shoppers in India has lack of trust on this platform of shopping (Mathew, 2016) However there might be other reasons also that contributes to lack of online shopping adaptation within the South Asian Context. This is what the current read will explore, within the context of this investigation.

### **1.1 Context of the Study**

While internet-based impulse buying behavior was studied to some extent on global context across different industries, this study specifically looks into online impulse buying behaviors among supermarket customers of South Asia. Since not all supermarkets in South Asia facilitates online shopping, majority of the major players have online shopping facility made available to their shopper within South Asia.

However, international examples will be used to explain theoretical and empirical aspects on internet-based purchasing patterns as well as technology consumption. In all discussions the examples will be brought within the South Asian context, which will bring newness to the body of knowledge.

### **1.2 Purpose and Objective of the Study**

Since Supermarkets industry has a high level of interaction with the end-consumer, it is an attractive environment for businesses to interact with consumer. Hence involving technology as a platform will make the process of shopping a value added activity. The purpose of this study is to identify how the concept of online impulse purchasing takes place within the South Asian Context. The objective of the study will be to Identify, evaluate and explain main factors contributing towards Internet-based unintentional purchasing patterns within the South Asian Supermarkets sector. Also further research areas have been mentioned at the end of the paper.

### **1.3 Methodology**

This paper will follow a deductive approach where different arguments on Internet-based unintentional purchasing patterns will be reviewed, discussed and applied to the context of the study. Literature Review will be the main research tool deployed to obtain an empirical and theoretical understanding. Discussions will be based on the South Asian Context, using examples from countries such as Sri Lanka, India, Nepal and Pakistan. Upon conclusion future research areas will also be recommended.

## 2.0 Literature Review

Internet penetrating fast, people embracing it positively and businesses trading through multiple platforms, customers are regularly attracted to cues that enhance unplanned, unintentional purchasing (Kim, 2009) Therefore, identifying consumer buying patterns may help understand the consumer better so online impulse buying can be harnessed. Tangible shopping environments allow the consumer to assess products. Therefore buying isn't the same with new functionalities. There is doubt, security concerns, and shopper doesn't have a full grip of the shopping process online (Kaur & Khanam Quareshi, 2015) However internet based trading is gaining popularity and it can be useful to further look at unintentional buying so that unintentional buying patterns can be identified well in traditional and electronic shopping platforms (Sreedhar Rao Madhavaram, 2004). If the online trader has a good credibility, the shopper might trust shopping in there electronic platform even without considering the price, although price is important, if the transaction is safe, it is more vital for the shopper than price (Kaur & Khanam Quareshi, 2015) The above denotes that despite the easy access associated with internet-based shopping, the shoppers also seek for secure shopping environments when shopping online. Mostly customers tend to purchase products on electronic platforms, particularly on events. Often during an electronic purchase the buying intention forms as unplanned. Quick tap purchasing, comfortable reach to goods, the level of product detail available and clock convenience can make the commitment to unintentional electronic purchasing (Umair Akram, 2017)

We looked at authors who have classified impulse buying to enhance the understanding of online unintentional purchasing. *"In 1962, Stern outlined 4 different categories for unintentional purchasing: pure purchasing, reminded purchasing, suggested purchasing and intentional unplanned purchasing"* (Sreedhar Rao Madhavaram, 2004, p. 59) *"Pure unintentional buying takes place if a customer commits an unintentional transaction after seeing an encouraging item"* (John D. Wells, 2011, p. 34) During an electronic shopping environment, unintentionally surfing iTunes for time passing, with no planned purchasing intention, then buying a music track can be classified as a purely impulsive transaction (John D. Wells, 2011). *"reminder unintentional purchasing can happen when a shopper commit a transaction solely having realized the need to purchase after sighting that item or something reminding that particular item"* (John D. Wells, 2011, p. 34) This implies in a context where someone browse the web, see sugar and realize that he or she has also run out of sugar. Then you make a decision and makes an impulse purchase. To further clarify, a customer buying a

perfume while shopping online, spotting the product online and remembering that the shopper has not enough of that perfume and therefore buying the product can be classified as a reminder unplanned transaction (John D. Wells, 2011) "*Suggestion-driven unintentional buying takes place in a context where the shopper imagines the requirement of the item upon initially sighting that item*" (John D. Wells, 2011, p. 34). This type of purchases happen if you see a review of a hotel that you have not visited, but when you see the review it triggers you to pay a visit. There you commit the impulse purchase. As an example unintentionally buying a new arrival item at an online shopping site after seeing an endorsement of the site can be thought of as a suggestive unintended transaction (John D. Wells, 2011) "*planned unintentional buying happens when a shopper does not have a plan to buy a specific product, however browses, sights and commit the purchase by the attraction of the offer*" (John D. Wells, 2011, p. 34). This applies to a situation where you see a special offer of an item and thinks buying the item can be a good idea, given the attractiveness of the deal. If we further clarify, a person enters a shop with set of items to buy, however the motive of buying depends on vouchers or special offers (John D. Wells, 2011)

Though the work of Stern dates back to 1962, we still see his four distinct types on online shopping sites as well. On an e-commerce setting marketing experts often introduce advertising approaches encouraging sales through item endorsements, recommended products, key products, regular selling products and different special offerings. Because supplementary and enhanced products gets picked unintentionally, unintentional transactions on internet is a vital activity for both sellers and customers (Kim, 2009).

We try to gather the motive behind online impulse buying to further enrich the study. Deploying reason feeling principle as an academic framework research suggests a experiential design which address e-commerce shopper values on product display appeal, user-friendliness of the website, shopper pleasure and online content writing quality to touch shopper unplanned purchasing habits, intervened through shopper feelings (Tibert Verhagen, 2011). What above denotes is that even the design of the website can play a role in harnessing internet-based unintentional purchasing. There are two important state of mind leading to an online impulse buying behavior. Initial method goes unintentional with lesser reasoning debate. The method gets activated after seeing an item when searching for products, it also doesn't create a mentally arranged approach or thought process (Tibert Verhagen, 2011). This suggest a pure online buying decision being taken place. In the next method, feelings become dominant when the unintended purchase happens (Tibert Verhagen, 2011). The second

instant denotes that the impulsive purchasing happens after battling with certain level of cognitive emotions. Such emotions can be in favor or against the buying decision as well. Furthermore, though we see a buying decision as instant call for action from the outset, a lot of thinking happens prior converting the decision to a purchasing action, impulsively.

According to (Jeffrey & Hodge, 2007) there are two cognitive factors leading into an impulse purchase. 'Mental accounting and impulse purchase' is one. Instead of selecting products which is increasingly useful to meet the need, shoppers frequently decide their purchase intention by having a fund allocation in mind and comparing that with the balance funds set in their mind for a purchase.(Jeffrey & Hodge, 2007). This implies that even if you want to buy a pair of shoes, you might end up buying a pair of socks because the cost associated in your mental account can only afford the pair of socks though you want a pair of shoes. Further (Jeffrey & Hodge, 2007) identifies 'Specific reason to purchase' as the second cognitive factor leading into an impulse purchase. Studies around motive driven selection have seen customers wanting a valid motive, backing the buying intention (Jeffrey & Hodge, 2007). This implies that you might not want to buy a packet of biscuits but you still buy that since part of the profit from that product goes for charity. In that sense, the charity was the reasoned factor leading into the purchase.

While we analyze the thought process of an online shopper, it is equally important to figure out the reasons why people shop or don't shop online. According to Thomas G, Brashear, 2009, Easy accessibility, newness, avoiding the riskiness, Variety Pursuing, Suddenness, Product Loyalty, and Price Sensitiveness seems to be things people consider when shopping online. Not that different to other purchasing types, online purchasing is encouraged by its convenient nature (Thomas G. Brashear, 2009) Jarvenpaa & Todd, 1997 also agrees on this and states the following. Not like the conventional purchasing, the main difference with web-based purchasing can be the convenient nature, hence have discovered as a key reason for customers to purchase online (Kuan-Pin Chiang, 2003) According to SRI International 1995, Newness is a main contributor of an electronic customer groups consisting actualized buyers and experiential buyers (Thomas G. Brashear, 2009) As per research, online purchasing has its fair share of concerns too. Online purchasing has been perceived as a risky task, especially due to information security worries, personal information and bank card robbery as well as insufficient order completions are all rated as worries (Thomas G. Brashear, 2009) Since searching online is much easier than searching offline, internet shoppers might do extensive searches than conventional customers would (Thomas G. Brashear, 2009). This denotes that

online shopping allows better product comparisons but also has concerns over the safety of the transaction which might be one disadvantage. As per Alba et al., 1997 also explores this area, hence it becomes vital to think of product features so that product categorization can be done within the product examination. Underlying logic is that trading arrangements change considerably with its ability to disclose details regarding item components preferred to usage gains (Kuan-Pin Chiang, 2003). This suggests that even the way products are organized on a website can have an impact on the purchasing decision. Donthu and Garcia (1999) states main entities who trade products online to shoppers are stable and recognized organizations. Such organizations already has a great reputation for its products (Thomas G. Brashear, 2009) Advantage realizing from lower cost of searching as well as visibility of prices is the customer being able to identify the best price offered for any given item online (Thomas G. Brashear, 2009). It is further highlighted by other researches as well. A key factor encouraging customers to purchase over internet is the assurance that internet buying can save some money (Kuan-Pin Chiang, 2003) The above denotes that some shoppers tend to perceive internet-based shopping as a cost effective option in addition to being convenient.

Although Thomas G. Brashear states Easy accessibility, newness, avoiding the riskiness, Variety Pursuing, Suddenness, Product Loyalty, and Price Sensitiveness are affecting online shoppers it is clear that factors such as Convenience were strongly backed by other researches as well. Even ability to easily compare products can be seen as another dimension to define convenience in the context of product comparisons.

Electronic marketing professionals who can clearly separate electronic buying environments, which has a good ability to enhance unplanned buying decisions will surely have the edge over the competition – subject to said marketing professionals executing their actions advantageously using the available depth of information (Xiaoni Zhang, 2007) These seem to recommend electronic unplanned purchasing as productive domain for companies to look at. Provided the growth of the technology driven economics, with purchasing ease offered with information interactions, people can aim more impulsive consumers to shop on electronic platforms (Xiaoni Zhang, 2007) In 1999, Steyer discusses the underlying state-trait theory. As per state-trait theory, individual conduct activities based on personal qualities, external conditions and collaboration among both these (Ceyda Aysuna Turkyilmaz, 2015)

Mental state has been reviewed by researches previously. Psychological conditions relating with environment related factors, might even influence personal actions (Ceyda Aysuna Turkyilmaz, 2015) If we apply this into an online shopping context, frame of the online site,



images used, content written, propping screens, ability to search, instant purchasing, use of hyperlinks, media sizes, as well the website outline are site components that lead towards activating electronic unplanned buying, a level further (Ceyda Aysuna Turkyilmaz, 2015). This denotes a point where the complete outlook of the e-commerce site could impact internet-based unintentional purchasing pattern of a shopper.

As per past work on unintended internet purchasing it is probable to site individual characteristics (Ceyda Aysuna Turkyilmaz, 2015). These traits are in addition to the mental states discussed above. *“McCrae and Costa, (1990) presents Big Five Model, which is identified as a key guideline defining the characteristic literature of personalities”* (Ceyda Aysuna Turkyilmaz, 2015, p. 101). *“The Big Five Element can be categorized into extraversion, ability to agree, awareness, neuroticism, and open state of mind to understand”* (Ceyda Aysuna Turkyilmaz, 2015, p. 101). If you are one of those outgoing, energetic personalities, who like to express yourself then you are likely to fall into extraversion. The next trait is called ability to agree. *“People who are able to agree seems to trust people, forgive people, care about people, warm-hearted, Collaborative and they are seldom selfless”* (Ceyda Aysuna Turkyilmaz, 2015, p. 101). This suggests they may buy their time to build trust with an online transaction and move on with the purchase once comfortable. Another trait is being aware about happenings. *“Awareness category looks at possibilities to achieve, believe in hard work, believe being responsible and you can depend on them”* (Ceyda Aysuna Turkyilmaz, 2015, p. 101). This denotes that these type of people may spend time going into detail before the actual purchase takes place, as they look at the return they retrieve. *“Neurotic people display uneasiness, display fear, feel depressing and lacks situational mood adaptation”* (Ceyda Aysuna Turkyilmaz, 2015, p. 101). This suggests that the neuroticism trait personalities can have a fear towards the purchasing decision due to the battling instincts of the personality trait. Openness to experience trait suggests this type of people can be the care free, typical online impulse buying personality. What denotes by going through the state-trait theory is that the state of mind and the five personality traits can have an impact on internet-based unintended purchasing patterns.

In addition to the theories discussed above there might be a role that social commerce play in harnessing online impulse buying behavior. Facebook is used for trading by most users, they upload commercials in pages and trade product among people (Jengchung Victor Chen, 2016). How this can apply to online impulse buying among supermarket consumer of South Asia is by maintaining social commerce material such as Facebook groups or pages as a

supporting element to drive the online sales. This can lead social commerce users to get redirected to the website and then shop through online shopping platforms.

Through the paper we looked at what unintended buying patterns are, how internet-based unintended buying patterns has come to light and the drivers influencing an electronic unintentional buying decision. Though additionally internet-based shopping platforms being developed, people have mind sets and personality traits that could lead to the online impulse buying behavior. Hence organizations might need to master the digital landscape to be successful in online impulse buying behavior enhancement.

Studies conducted with top management revealed their utmost danger this year is digitally transforming the company. Still 7 out of 10 digital efforts failed. Precisely from 1,300 million invested in 2018, 0.9 billion was wasted (Behnam Tabrizi, 2019) Principally DT efforts harness productivity and consumer care. However humans also have to have a positive approach in refining the defects of the current processes, otherwise digital technology can highlight those defects (Behnam Tabrizi, 2019). This denotes that despite the popularity that online shopping has gained, the organizations need to approach online trading with the right mind set to become successful and to show their customers the value it offers to them. The day internet-based shopping captures the entire value proposition of the shopper, we might see this platform gaining further acceptance.

### **3.0 Case Review**

It was identified in the literature that internet usage is fast gaining popularity. Supportively, according to (Miniwatts Marketing Group, 2019) internet penetration in South Asian Countries have gained popularity, with the Internet penetration population in Bangladesh is at 57.2%, Bhutan 48.1%, India 40.9%, Maldives 81.9%, Nepal 54.1%, Pakistan 35% and Sri Lanka 34.1% (Miniwatts Marketing Group, 2019) This suggests that with internet gaining popularity, the possibility of online shopping could also gain popularity. According to the Chairman of Cargill's Ceylon PLC, A leading supermarket chain in Sri Lanka, supermarkets has potential to grow, on estimate grocery items backs one fifth business progression (Page, 2019) however there online presence is limited to a static website. On the other hand Keells Supermarkets, another leading Supermarket in Sri Lanka has one of the best online shopping platforms which has products classified to great detail and processing of transactions are also user-friendly. LAUGFS Super, another Sri Lankan Supermarket has branded there online shopping site as 'Grocery Pal' without directly associating its physical brand, which suggests

that they are focused on expanding the online presence under a different brand name itself. The reason why we discussed three supermarkets within the same country, Sri Lanka, is to show that even in one given country, the way organizations look at online shopping can differ.

Literature also looked into the types of buying behavior with specific attention towards online buying behavior. *“In 1962, Stern outlined 4 different categories for unintentional purchasing: pure purchasing, reminded purchasing, suggested purchasing and intentional unplanned purchasing”* (Sreedhar Rao Madhavaram, 2004, p. 59). By browsing through various online supermarket websites in South Asia, it was found that ‘pure buying’ can be possible in those platforms as anyone can unintentionally make an online impulse purchase. ‘Reminder buying’ is also possible as most websites advertises new arrivals on their online shopping sites and it can become a cue to the shopper. For example METRO Supermarket Pakistan has online offers (METRO Pakistan (Pvt) Limited, 2019) the moment you land on the home page and such a cue can trigger an online impulse purchase. ‘Suggestion buying’ is not directly made possible on the online shopping sites as none of the websites allowed blogging. However this can happen in their Social Commerce platforms such as Facebook groups or pages, which might trigger a suggestive buying decision. ‘Planned impulse buying’ is possible as most of the websites have shown advertisements or special promotions on the home page itself, meaning it can trigger a purchase. Spencer Supermarkets in India for example has highlighted the promotional offers as best buys (Spencer's, 2019) on the home page and categories are listed on the side bar making the navigation easier. The ‘one click’ checkout button is on the top right hand corner which the consumer will only focus when they are done with browsing and when adding the product into the cart.

Overall, in order to trigger online impulse purchase, online shopping sites uses pop-ups of promotions, categorize products based on the nature of the product and enable one click online payments with the intension of generating an online impulse purchase. Even though we discussed the state-trait theory, the factors contributing towards internet-based unintentional purchasing patterns and thought process of a customer during an online impulse buying decision takes place, we cannot review them from the surface by observing the design of the website. However prior to designing a website, organizations should consider such factors, thought processes and types of consumers. That way the organisation can increase the effectiveness of their online shopping platform.

According to (Jeffrey & Hodge, 2007) there are two cognitive factors leading into an impulse purchase. 'Mental accounting and impulse purchase' is one. For example anyone visiting Softlogic Glomark online supermarket will have an approximate amount that they wish to spend on the website based on how they have stored money in their 'mental account'. Further (Jeffrey & Hodge, 2007) identifies 'Specific reason to purchase' as the second cognitive factor leading into an impulse purchase. For example anyone visiting Sri Lanka's Softlogic Glowmark Supermarket website will see "*Credit Cards 20% off on total bill, every Wednesday & Friday*" (Softlogic Glowmark, 2019, p. 1). Anyone visiting Nepal's Bhat-Bhateni supermarket will see "*25% cash back for your first transaction*" (BHAT-BHATENI, 2019, p. 1). Hence they can become valid reasons for them to shop online with such supermarkets. Furthermore, anyone visiting Sri Lanka's Keells Super will see "*We believe local tastes better*" (Jaykay Marketing Services (Pvt) Ltd, 2019, p. 1) and "*We are fresh, because of you*" (Jaykay Marketing Services (Pvt) Ltd, 2019, p. 1) which gives the shopper a valid reason to shop in those online supermarkets.

Literature also stressed the convenience offered on online shopping sites as a reason for people to purchase online. "*Different to conventional purchasing, mainly identified difference in electronic shopping is the easy accessibility which was a valid reason for shoppers to shop in internet-based platforms*" (Kuan-Pin Chiang, 2003, p. 178). This was true to all e-commerce websites referred during the research and discussions.

As per the state-trait theory, the state of mind the online shopper forms by looking at the design of the website can create a perception, but it is subjective. The traits are of course in-built into the personality, hence not able to physically review as we browse through the website.

However when designing a website, all the physiological theories we discussed throughout should be taken into consideration by the business leaders. Then the online impulse buying behavior of the shopper can help organizations further growth in this platform.

For instance as we explored the online supermarkets we didn't find an online retailer who capture 'big data' of the online shoppers, analyze online shopper patterns and offer suggestions. Electronic traders has information on buying behavior of the items they trade. Sites like google identify what customers surf, however it may not be equivalent to what the consumer eventually buy (Harrison, 2019) we also didn't see an online supermarkets website with chat bots, who are interacting with the online user on a real-time basis.

If leaders of the digital era can focus on these areas, e-commerce organizations might make greater returns through online shopping sites, and it may also increase online impulse shopping purchases as well. In fact there is empirical evidence that indicates an arrival of new generation leaders with specific skills enabling digital transformation. Fresh kind of leaders are seen with digital technology emergence: a role similar to business technology expert. *CMT are partially strategists, partially creatives, partially high-techs, and they are partially lecturers*” (McLellan, 2014, p. 3). Hence in future if physical outlets gets outperformed by the online counterparts, we should not be surprised.

#### **4.0 Conclusion**

Unintentional purchasing patterns have been discussed by researches for years. Triggered by an urge, impulse buying creates a desire within a person’s mind to commit for an unplanned purchase. Unintentional purchasing is identical with impulsive purchasing – this refer to any product bought but the shopper never planned it prior (Stern, 1962)

Previously customers didn’t buy products from any location, within various time frames with a tap on a button (Kuan-Pin Chiang, 2003) with the introduction of the internet and its rapid penetration around the world has surfaced a new discussion in online impulse buying behavior. *“The amount of customers using internet-based platforms to shop have risen with and income deriving through that channel to internet-based retailers also increase quickly”* (Engizek, 2014, p. 78) Though in the global context there are researches carried in internet-based unintentional buying patterns, we focus the current paper only to internet-based unintentional purchasing specific towards the South Asian countries, which contributes to new knowledge.

In order to understand the subject domain we used literature review as the main research strategy. We used the deductive approached and identified empirical arguments relating towards internet-based unintentional buying patterns and growth of technology. We also explored the theories associated with internet-based unintentional purchasing such as state-trait theory and also considers different factors contributing towards an online impulse buying decision.

We also conducted a discussion based on the literature and reviewed how the said literature is applied within the practical context of internet-based purchasing patterns, with special focus directed at the South Asian market. Sri Lanka is referred as a trendy context for online purchasing mechanisms in different industries (Gayana Nayanajith, & Dissanayake, 2019).

Practical examples were brought into discussions using South Asian Supermarket chains from countries such as Sri Lanka, India, Nepal and Pakistan. Through the discussions, it was found that online shopping, just as internet penetration is rapidly gaining popularity in Sri Lanka. Siriwardena & Dissanayake, 2018). Social Customer Relationship Management (SCRM) in Contemporary Business Era. International Journal of Business Management 9(1), 58-64. Hence the use of this platform can increase in the years to come. Also organizations need to consider the impulse buying behavior theories and empirical studies when designing the e-commerce strategy for the organisation. That way the organisation can get the best out of this modern approach to shopping.

Despite the popularity online shopping has gained, some supermarkets still refrain from trading online. While some organizations have seriously seen the opportunity and capitalized on it. LAUGFS Super powered Grocery Pal for example has a separate subsidiary in “Lfinity” (Lfinity (Pvt) Ltd, 2019) which focuses on their online shopping customer.

Furthermore, even the supermarkets who have given serious thought into online shopping such as Metro in Pakistan, Spencer in India, Keells and LAUGFS Grocery Pal in Sri Lanka are yet to explore the ‘big data’ of online shoppers and predict or suggest products on their online platforms. If such initiatives are to take place, we think leaders need to think deeply about providing strategic directives to increase sales through online platforms. Fresh kind of leaders are seen with digital technology emergence: a role similar to business technology expert. *CMT can be partially a strategist, partially a creative, partially a high-tech, and partially a lecturer”* (McLellan, 2014, p. 3). This denotes that the day marketers seriously look at online shopping is not too far even within the South Asian context. Initiatives such as suggesting products by analysing online buyers buying behavior using ‘big data’ and tailoring offers specific to the individual shopper, will take online shopping into a different level which might even challenge the mere existence of its physical counterparts.

It is clear that online shopping is no longer a concept but it is in practice, as well it is gaining in popularity. Hence online shopping is becoming a major channel of revenue generation at a much lower cost than that of physically operated outlets.

Although we identified the work done within internet-based unplanned purchasing patterns with reference to South Asian markets, the contributors leading internet-based unplanned purchasing patterns and role technology plays within the context, we did not explore the role a leader directs in optimizing internet-based unplanned purchasing patterns within South Asian Markets.

Hence the part that leader does to enhance internet-based unplanned purchasing patterns can be explored with specific focus to South Asian markets, as future areas of research, which will bring further newness to the knowledge base.

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