

Subliminal Advertising and its impact on Impulsive Buying Paradigms: An Empirical study of young consumers of India

Sarwar Khawaja¹, Fayyaz Hussain Qureshi², Shakeel Ahmad Sofi³

Abstract

The goal of this study is to examine the impact subliminal advertising on the impulsive buying behaviour among youth. Though the concept of subliminal advertising is gaining interest among scholars across the globe but there is still deficiency of literature in this domain. This research is a mix of both exploratory and descriptive designs which were employed to test the study in holistic manner. Both EFA and CFA were employed on 410 consumers and it has been found that subliminal advertising has strong influence on the impulsive buying predispositions and the application of Multi-group-Analysis employed for investigating the relationship between impulsive buying and advertisements while controlling gender and age differences has revealed that males are more susceptible than females and the consumers of younger age group are more vulnerable to subliminal exposure maneuvers.

Keywords: *Subliminal Advertising, Impulsive Buying, Control Variables and Multi Group Analysis.*

Introduction

In the contemporary era, it is very difficult for a corporation to move on without inducing advertising and this landscape has remarkable bearing on the outcome of a buyer's decision making. A consumer is a chunk or mixture of innumerable factors comprising both internal and external. The concept of psychology becomes important from the outfit of advertising and it has the tendency to dislocate the normal decision making of a consumer particularly in young consumers folks. The two important psychological paradigms namely cognition and affection have become epicenter in consumer domain from the behaviour perspective. The cognition is the positivity of rational behaviour and it stands against any irrational advocacy impelled from the external environs. But the affection has opposite connotations and if present in higher amount, it could largely engage consumer in irrational and nuisance impulsive buying behaviour. Impulsive Buying behaviour is something that is treated as mystifying behaviour and has troubled most of the consumer groups across the Globe.

Role of advertisement is to carry message to the far distant onlookers and it is also used to target the scatter mass audience. The role of advertising on sales volume is very important and it is proved to be very essential tool in enhancing the sales of a brand or generic product in some cases. Advertisement is directly linked with the sales of the products (Abiodun, 2011).

Consumers in all over the world are attracted towards the brand and products which are emotionally attached with their behaviors. Various studies have found that emotional attachments put a huge influence on the customers and their buying behavior as people tend to associate themselves with the brand (Samar and Samreen, 2015).

Advertising has always been seen as a decisive maneuver and its association with impulsive cannot be ruled out. However, marketers have been seen using different kinds of advertising and it ranges from simple advertising to extra blasphemous and bareness endeavours such as Subliminal Advertising. Subliminal advertising is kind of advertising which is employed to distort the logical sequence of a consumer when actually he or she is aware about the changes taking place. This results in irrational behaviour which is also as impulsive buying behaviour. Different measures that are widely used in this advertising domain include Metaphor Strategies, Alluring and Bareness in Ads and Celebrity Endorsements. Furthermore, it would be

¹ SK Research- Oxford Business College, Email: sarwar.khawaja@obc.ac.uk

² SK Research- Oxford Business College, Email: fayyaz.qureshi@obc.ac.uk.

³ Research Associate Oxford Business College, Email: Shakeel.Ahmad@obc.ac.uk, (Corresponding Author)

difficult to measure the frequency or the incidence of such advertisements as all the channels like Television and Internet are flooded with those kinds of advertisements. There is no doubt and it won't lead any exaggeration to claim it that the internet is mostly flooded by such Bareness and Blasphemous and Celebrity Endorsements and has established strong roots in Consumer Psychology.

The market in today's world is all frenzied and in this high competition, companies are very much fascinated to use the strategies that can be decisive in capturing market share but the limit of such strategies cannot be professed and not even anticipated. The business is all about making money and to achieve this objective people can use any strategy and subliminal advertising being one of those strategies. Different media organizations are bombarded with subliminal ads with print and TV being on top of the list. Very early in the morning, when people receive an information source called newspaper, the very first page of Greater Kashmir (the Jammu and Kashmir newspaper) contains subliminal ads with seductive and alluring woman promoting hair removal cream (VI-JOHN). Now a days it also contains metaphor type of ads, the example being new advertisement for Honda active in which one young boy who is driving Honda active is carrying behind his girlfriend and few young boys on other roadside are stunned after watching all this, that is subliminal persuasion through metaphor. Different newspapers like Times of India, The Hindu are mostly flooded with these kind of subliminal ads. So this is the story of very information source called newspaper which nowadays is also used to induce people through the means of subliminal persuasion.

Besides newspaper, the dangerous and highly influential source used for subliminal subjugation is none other than internet. Yahoo, Youtube, Facebook are all used for this purpose. How many times people see ads with pornographic pictures, half sexual actions and images on Facebook? Even user may try to block such content but next day he/she again encounters same ads posted on his/her Facebook wall. When a user logs on to www.yahoo.com, "the life line of internet users", the result is the bombardment of subliminal ads and it won't be exaggeration to claim that internet has over shadowed the ancient source of subliminal advertisements i.e. TV. The internet and subliminal ads provide larger scope for research because advertising agencies feel free to use any kind of advertisement on internet which is known to everybody and everyone is screaming today that internet has totally corrupted youth and there are no other reasons but certainly the subliminal messages, actions and others as well.

TV has always been the important source of subliminal ads for all the categories be it pornography, metaphors and Celebrity endorsement. There is greater scope to further strengthen the technique of subliminal persuasion through this medium. Some of the subliminal ads that run on cable television like that of Amul Macho, Axe etc strike an individual's affective dimension to greater extent and induce the viewer towards undesirable sexual relations.

Not only this, such techniques are used to corrupt youth and divert them from their religion as well (Davie Lakhani, 2008). As Davie Lakhani has written in his book that people were thinking to create a technique that will help win wars without using any weapons and that technique is none other than subliminal persuasion itself.

Product placement and idea implementation through movies is important source for advertising agency. The basic question that should be answered by advertising agency is what is it that forces these agencies to use such images, messages and role models in ads? Why to use half sexual actions, pornographic images and celebrities when the advertisement of the product could have been simple as well? Why is the rate of pornography and half sexual actions in ads increasing day by day? Whether it is true that such type of advertisements do actually influence consumer decision making and impulsive buying in particular? How far does it create difference in impulsive buying across different demographic variables? How difficult it is to do away with such advocacies and what could be done to avoid fantasies created by exposure to such advertisements?

The primary objective of this study is to examine the impact of subliminal exposure on impulsive buying predispositions vis-à-vis unplanned buying, positive buying emotions, irresistible urge to buy and cognitive dissonance. The subliminal exposure is categorized into three major types comprising of metaphor advertisements, Alluring and Bareness in advertisements and Celebrity Endorsements. In addition,

advertisement frequency is also taken as a part of subliminal exposure to see the influence of degree of exposure on impulsive buying. In this endeavor, an effort has been to validate the instrument which would prove of immense help to researchers working in the field of subliminal advertising.

This paper is grounded on six sections namely Section 1 which is based on introduction about the study. The section 2 has covered theoretical models and conceptual framework for the study to underscore various research possibilities in the area of advertising and impulsive buying both in quarantine and combined form. The methodology apart is covered in Section 3 which comprehensively highlights approaches adopted in carrying out this research proposal. Furthermore, results and discussion are taken up in section 4 and section 5 is primarily based on conclusion about the study. The study concludes with section 6 which is based on implications part.

Theoretical Framework and Hypotheses Development

Almost every one grows up in the milieu which is flooded with the mass media e.g. television, advertising, films, videos, billboards, magazines, movies, music, newspapers, and internet (Latif & Abideen, 2011). Of all marketing weapons, advertising is renowned for its long lasting impact on viewer's mind, as its exposure is much broader (Katke, 2007). As a promotional strategy, advertising serve as a major tool in creating product awareness in the mind of a potential consumer to make eventual purchase decision. Advertising, sales promotion and public relations are mass- communication tools available to marketers. Advertising through all mediums influence audiences, but television is one of the strongest medium of advertising and due to its mass reach; it has greater scope to influence an individual's attitude, behavior, life style, exposure and the culture of a country (Latif and Abideen, 2011).

In a study it was found that that emotional response of consumer purchase behavior is the variable that results into strong association with the consumer buying behavior. It is true that people purchase those brands with which they are emotionally attached (Zain & Salman, 2011). Again in one more study it was reported that there is positive relationship of emotional response with consumer buying behavior and no relationship between environmental response and consumer buying behavior. From the same study, it was concluded that consumers purchase products by emotional response, rather than by environmental response and purchase those products with which they are emotionally attached. These attachments are created through advertisement as audio, video and text form, which appeals him or her (Niazi, Siddiqui, Shah, Hunjra, 2011).

Advertisements are not only important to an advertiser but to a consumer as well, for the reasons that it is an important source of information for consumers and a technique of generating sales for advertisers. The advertisers have been always seen alert to catch the potential buyers unawareness by igniting their state of mind to feelings and emotions which prompts them to buy the product as the message contained therein is more addressed to psyche than the vision of an individual. Therefore, it can be hypothesized that different forms of advertisements have positive influence on the buying behaviour and impulsive buying behaviour in particular.

H01: Advertisements are positively associated with Impulsive Buying Behaviour

Metaphor

Metaphors merge two seemingly incompatible images or concepts in an effort to create symbolism. Metaphors are frequently used in advertising as a way to enhance the perceived value of a product or to make it appear more personal and it can also help in creating brand image. An advertising metaphor often combines a verbal phrase with a visual image to dramatize the effect.

Tropicana used the metaphor "Your Daily Ray of Sunshine" to promote its orange juice. The metaphor projects an image of health and vitality that is associated with drinking orange juice on a daily basis. It also alludes to the fact that oranges are natural products raised in sunny climates as opposed to man-made products filled with artificial ingredients. Werther's used this metaphor "It's What Comfort Tastes Like" to

associate eating its candy products with "comfort food," to make consumers feel good about eating them. Chocolate and caramel lovers are lured to believe that eating the candy can provide a break from their everyday stresses and be able to experience a pleasurable sensation. Nokia used "Connecting People" as a metaphor to convey the image of connecting people with their mobile phones instead of simply as a means of having a conversation. The message is that not only can you talk to someone who may be hundreds of miles away, you can also make an emotional connection with the person, which enhances the phone's value. Burger King used "Subservient Chicken" as a metaphor to advertise its chicken products. It creates an image of a chicken complying during the preparation process to ensure the consumer's food meets his exact specifications. (Chron, 2017).

Metaphor works because it allows you to take complex ideas and make them penetrable by replacing the troublesome piece with something that people readily recognize. They can make the connection. People can regularly use metaphor in all their speaking and writing to become more persuasive. Metaphor is the fuel that combusts in the engine of persuasion. Advertising agencies also resort to the use of metaphor in ads so as to persuade consumers towards their products when they are actually portraying something different like they may use products to get hold of others as shown in ads (Davie Lakhini, 2008). Take the example of Hero Honda Igniter advertisement, though advertisement is about bike but in this advertisement there are certain things that should be taken into consideration like why in this advertisement an employee who has recently purchased Igniter is shown to have lured a female who incidentally happens to be his boss.

There are number of advertisements and one more such of type advertisement where metaphor is used is an Ad for shoe by Akshay Kumar "the famous Bollywood Star" where he is shown using particular shoe which helps him attracting and kissing a girl. Such types of advertisements like that of Hero Honda Igniter, Shoe ad by Akshay Kumar induce irrationality among consumers as is evident from advertisement messages itself. Therefore, it can be hypothesized that metaphor is significantly and positively related to impulsive buying predisposition.

H02: Metaphor Advertisements are significantly related to Impulsive Buying Behavior

Alluring and Bareness in Advertisements

Half Sexual actions in advertisements or movies are effective in arousing respondents' feelings which then forces them towards undesirable or illegal relations. Some such examples can be: Ad of Mc Dowell's Kerala Club Soda: In this advertisement a romantic and naked girl pulls a boat into the sea and paddles towards the lone lighthouse. The lighthouse is awesome! She walks up the stairs and her clothes fall off. It reveals a sexy tattoo on her thighs. She climbs up to the top to see a man drinking whisky. Oh hey, its water. They both make passionate love together. Similarly, the Amul macho advertisement: This is a vulgar kind of advertisement in which a woman comes to the bank of river and makes suggestive and naughty movements that resemble making love. The Hot International Topless advertisement of Bipashabasu & Vivek Oberoi for New York Lotto: In this advertisement, Bollywood super star Bipasha Basu topless bathing in a water sprinkled with rose petals in this New York Lotto TV commercial. Her husband, Vivek Oberoi, comes to pick her up from her palace in a royal manner. When Vivek sees Bipasha, he remembers his earlier intimate times with her. Somebody starts knocking and Vivek wakes up from his dream or is it? All this is possible with New York Lotto. Furthermore, Axe advertisements where they portrait that the girls show their sexual desire towards guys using such deodorants. Therefore, based on these observations, it can well be hypothesized that bareness in advertisements has significant bearing on the outcome of a purchase decision of an individual being exposed to such advertisements as they tend to persuade people more towards addiction dilemmas

H03: Alluring and Bareness in advertisements has significant influence on Impulsive Buying Behaviour

Celebrity Endorsements

There are two different definitions of celebrity endorser which are used in the literature and it is defined as “any individual who enjoys public recognition and who uses this recognition by appearing with it in an advertisement” (McCracken, G. 1989). “A celebrity endorser is an individual who is known to the public (actor, sports figure, entertainer, etc.) For his or her achievements in areas other than that of the product class endorsed”. For celebrity, it is important to choose an individual who is a known personality in the eyes of people. When the individual is famous, agencies use him/her as celebrity to endorse a product with an objective to increase the sale of the product. Endorsement is the process of endorsing messages, ideas through high profile personalities because most of the consumers are ready to accept the ideas of their role models. Before coming to scene, hardly anyone could have heard Amitab Bachan again renowned Bollywood Star, but now a days he could be seen in advertisements promoting products and most of his followers are ready to accept his messages and ideas because his profile from being simple has changed to high profile personality with people remembering him most of the day while doing any action. The following example explains it further how subliminal persuasion can occur through celebrity endorsement.

New Ad of Mayur Suiting featuring Salman Khan: Makes girls curious about you, here celebrity Salman is promoting Mayur suiting's and the process indirectly explained in this add is since Salman has used this product then there is no harm in using this product and also having used such product will make girls go after you as is shown in this advertisement. Davie Lakhani(2008) has categorized Celebrity endorsement into Subliminal category and people do tend to make purchases without proper planning and has a lot to do in irrational decision making of a consumer. Therefore, based on this phenomena, it can be hypothesized that Celebrity Endorsements are attractive and have the propensity to instill impulsive buying tendencies.

H04: Celebrity Endorsements in advertisements has significant influence on Impulsive Buying Behaviour

Advertisement Watching Habits

Advertisement watching habits have paramount importance in consumer behaviour. Past research advocates that the kind of advertisements an individual watches would determine his/her rational or irrational behaviour. If a young consumer is exposed to metaphor, celebrity endorsements, alluring and bareness in advertisements and other kind of advertisements, he/she is likely to engage in addiction problems (Sofi & Nika, 2014). Furthermore, the rate or frequency or watching habits could well influence buying behaviour of a consumer. The more an individual is exposed to higher frequency of advertisements, the higher the susceptibility. Based on this proposition, it could be hypothesized that

H05: Advertisement Watching Habits (Frequency of Advertisements) are significantly related to Impulsive Buying Behaviour

Gender and Age Differences

Crawford and Kippax (1967) approved that females frequently go for more acquisition of products than that of males and in reality take pleasure in shopping. Despite the fact that the contemporary world abandons any dissimilarity between a male and female, the research in the subject, in recent past has substantiated that both process information in a much different way (Peter & Olson, 1999). They correlate and give significance to bits and pieces possessed in dissimilar mode, pay money for buying dissimilar stuff and for different motives as well and are poles apart in terms of persuaders. In contrast, in a study related to gender differences and impulsive buying, Kollat and Willett (1967), were in favour of contradictory outlook, as they supported the argument that gender differences do not influence buying behaviour. Rather, they proposed that if the number of purchases were invariable, males and females would show the identical measure of vulnerability to accidental buying. In a study conducted by Shakeel and Nika (2014), it was found that Males and Females respond to messages in advertisements in different way and both are poles apart in this regard. Furthermore, in the same study, it was found that age differences have also significant bearing on the information processing among young consumers. Therefore, it could be hypothesized that

Gender and Age differences significantly regulate the relationship between advertisements and the impulsive buying propensities.

H06: Gender Differences are significant in determining the relationship between Advertisements and Impulsive Buying Behaviour

H06: Age are significant in determining the relationship between Advertisements and Impulsive Buying Behaviour

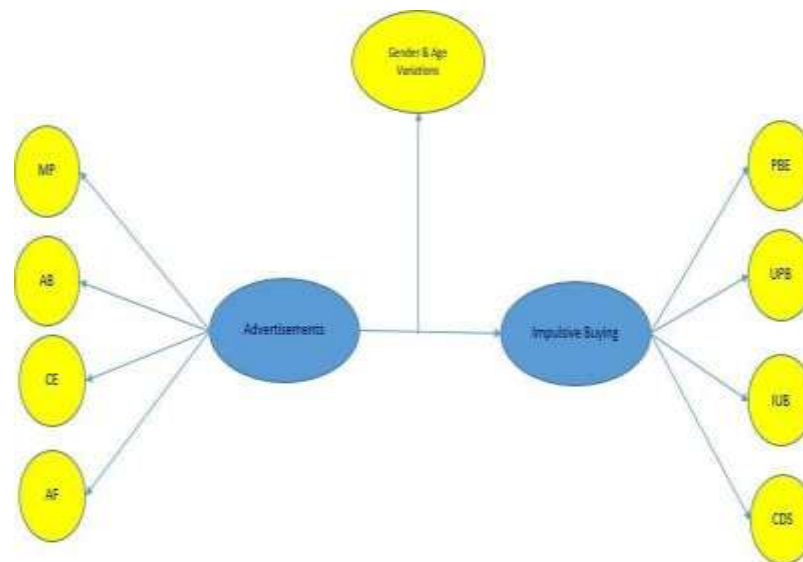


Figure 1: Conceptual Frame Work

MP: Metaphor; AB: Alluring and Bareness in the Advertisements; CE: Celebrity Endorsements;

AF: Advertisement Frequency

PBE: Positive Buying Emotions; CDS: Cognitive Dissonance; UNP: Unplanned Buying; IUB: Irresistible Urge to Buy

Methodology

In view of layer wise spread of population, it was deemed appropriate to use multi stage random sampling. At the very outset, Universities and Colleges were outlined for data collection. Furthermore, Universities were marked alphabetically and then two Universities were chosen randomly. Similarly, five colleges were chosen on the basis of random numbers. Making further inroads in this direction, all the departments of the selected Universities and Colleges were sketched and three departments from all the selected institutions were chosen for next phase. At the final stage, young consumers (students) in the current study were selected randomly on the basis of enrolment numbers with different demographic background. The sample proportion of males was approximately 51 percent along with 49 percent females. Based on the age group differences, 36.70 percent consisted of the age group of 18- 23, the age group of 24-29 composed of 34.15 percent and the consumers in the age group of 30-35 comprised of percent. However, marital status was not significant in a sense that majority of the consumers under study included those which were un-married which was approximately 85.36 percent while rest were married (only 14.63 percent). Last but not the least, majority of the respondents reported their qualification as Undergraduates (approximately 48.78 percent) and Post Graduates (approximately 43.90 percent) and only few in the higher qualification (approximately 7.31 percent)

Every effort was made to get full response from the respondents but to researcher's advantage, students were in ready mood to participate in data collection so as to reduce degree of boredom from routine based curriculum.

In order to figure out the appropriate sample size, certain parameters and available measures were explored. To begin with: a. Sample Size Determination Table (384 as per Krejcie and Morgan, 1970); b. Based on number of item in the ratio of 10:1 (which meant 220 or 410 for 44 items, Hair et al., 2010); c. Rule of Thumb (Roscoe, 1975) were reviewed. All the three perspectives were employed to attain a reliable sample size and sample size of 410 was finally chosen.

Instrument for the Study

Prior to actual data collection at larger scale, questionnaire in the present study was tested for certain anomalies which were removed for purification of the instrument.

Questionnaire was the main tool used for data collection and was drafted specific to the research problem. The research problem and the questionnaire were framed with the help of literature and in consultation with research experts. The questionnaire apart from the details on two important elements of the study that is Perception towards Advertisements and Impulsive Buying also included demographic variables so as to gather background information about the respondents.

To further clarify it, Structured and Validated Instrument used in the study consisted of three sections, Section 'A', included Demographic characteristics of the respondents, Section 'B' comprised of items designed to measure perception regarding advertisements; while as Section 'C' included Impulsive Buying variables. Apart from demographics which consisted of nominal scales, 5- point Likert scale was adopted for rest of the items.

After performing factor analysis on 44 items designed for Advertisement and Impulsive Buying 8 reliable constructs based on EFA (Please refer Table 2) results were retained. Furthermore, based measurement model estimates item I20 was deleted for achieving reliable results and for the reason that it was the case of multi-co-linearity.

Table 2. Results of Measurement Model {Detail of Instrument with CR, AVE and SQR(AVE)}

Constructs	Items	Factors	Item Loadings	Item Errors	CR	(AVE)	SQR AVE
Impulsive Buying	I10	MP	0.90	0.43			
	I12	MP	0.82	0.67			
	I14	MP	0.93	0.33			
	I15	MP	0.84	0.63			
	METAPHOR	I17	MP	0.90	0.42	0.89	0.61
	I24	AB	0.65	1.43			
	I25	AB	0.94	0.28			
	I26	AB	1.00	0.00			
Alluring and BARENESS	I27	AB	0.74	0.98	0.80	0.51	0.72
	I1	CE	0.89	0.46			
	I2	CE	0.79	0.74			

	I7	CE	0.92	0.33			
	I8	CE	0.78	0.78			
Celebrity Endorsements	I9	CE	0.90	0.40	0.87	0.57	0.76
	I5	AF	0.95	0.19			
	I6	AF	0.74	1.02			
Advertisement Frequency	I13	AF	0.92	0.31	0.82	0.60	0.77
	I3	PBE	0.90	0.42			
	I4	PBE	0.91	0.39			
	I11	PBE	0.88	0.47			
	I16	PBE	0.89	0.44			
Positive Buying Emotions	I18	PBE	0.91	0.32	0.91	0.66	0.81
	I21	CDS	0.94	0.25			
	I29	CDS	0.53	1.14			
	I30	CDS	0.70	1.09			
	I41	CDS	0.76	0.93			
	I44	CDS	0.71	1.02			
Cognitive Dissonance	I45	CDS	0.95	0.19	0.82	0.44	0.66
	I22	UPB	0.64	1.37			
	I23	UPB	0.95	0.25			
	I34	UPB	0.76	1.16			
	I35	UPB	0.94	0.32			
	I37	UPB	0.78	1.06			
	I38	UPB	0.83	0.79			
Unplanned Buying	I43	UPB	0.67	1.55	0.83	0.41	0.64
	I19	IUB	0.75	0.72			
	I28	IUB	0.76	0.93			
	I31	IUB	0.65	1.29			
	I32	IUB	0.59	1.27			
	I33	IUB	0.79	0.86			
	I39	IUB	0.60	1.28			
	I40	IUB	0.51	1.67			
Irresistible Urge to Buy	I42	IUB	0.76	0.76	0.77	0.30	0.55

Table 4. Fornell and Larcker

	MP	AB	CE	AF	PBE	CDS	UPB	IUB
MP	.78							
AB	.160	0.72						
CE	.084	.314	0.76					
AF	.163	-.036	-.053	0.77				
PBE	-.033	.107	.306	-.119	0.81			
CDS	.035	.220	.202	-.106	.085	0.66		
UPB	.055	.194	.209	-.133	.030	.173	0.64	
IUB	-.082	.077	.121	.035	.078	.056	.085	0.55

Common Variance Method

Common method variance is a form of systematic error variance capable of affecting the estimates of the factual association among theoretical paradigms by posing problems in questionnaire-based studies especially with respect to conceivable adverse impact on the relevance of Cronbach alpha scores (Gorrell et al., 2011). Thus, common method variance investigations are suggested to recognize the likelihood of such predispositions with a view to treat the effect in case it did impact the study. For this study, first the diagnostic 'Harman's one-factor' test was employed to classify the likely occurrence of errors due to common method. Furthermore, all the factors in the study were exposed to an exploratory factor analysis (using the method of principal axis analysis with varimax rotation) with the extraction being constrained to just one factor. The primary intent was to explore the degree to which the single factor expounded the overall variance. In this regard, the results demonstrated that single factor accounted for just 17.560 of the variance thereby signifying possible absence of common method variance. However, to have a better clarity, all the variables were loaded on one factor to examine the fit of the confirmatory factor analysis model. Results indicated that single-factor model did not fit the data well, with almost all the indicators showing poor fit scores $\chi^2=560$, $p=000$; $GF=.741$; $CFI=.761$; $LI=.562$; and $RMSEA=.142$. Therefore, based on the results associated with one factor extraction and one factor model fit, it was resolved that larger portion of the variance in this data is explained by the specific constructs with study being unaffected by common method variance (Podsakoff et al., 2003).

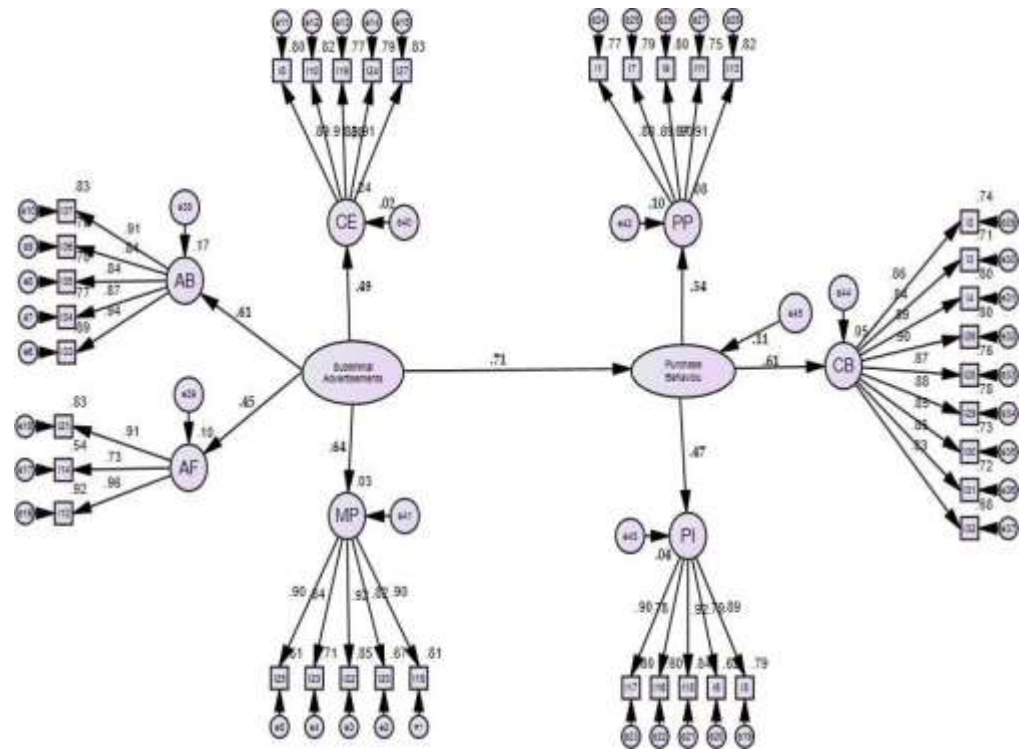
Results and Discussion

In this section an attempt has been made to discuss the results of Structure Equation Modeling employed on exogenous and endogenous variables and on the key results associated with Muti-Group- Analysis applied across advertisements and purchase behaviour while controlling the gender and age differences.

Specify the Structural Model

The structural model was specified based on theoretical frame work that Subliminal Exposure (Advertisement Exposure) sways Purchase Behaviour among young consumers. Through this model, an effort has been made to exhume how advertisements comprising of Metaphor Types, Alluring and Bareness in Advertisements, Celebrity Endorsements and Advertisement Frequency powers the purchase behaviour of a young consumer.

Figure 3. Structural Model



Assess Structural Model Validity

As with measurement model, the proposed model was found to fit the data satisfactorily as the fit values were well within acceptable range [Chi-square=2759.454, $p < .000$, RMR=0.125, GFI=0.953, CFI= 0.931 and RMSE=0.047, NFI=0.950, NNFI=0.952].

Furthermore, from the review of Structural Model Coefficients, it is clear that Subliminal Advertisements be it Metaphor, Bareness in Advertisements, Degree of Exposure to such advertisements and Celebrity Endorsements significantly shape the purchase behaviour as the path estimate for Subliminal Advertisements and Purchase Behaviour (0.642, $p < 0.05$, Table 4) is significant. Therefore, with one percent increase in Subliminal Advertising, there would be 0.642 percent amplification in buying propensity of a consumer which is some significant proportion and that would entice majority of corporate organizations to adopt it as a decisive strategy to corrupt young consumer’s mind and achieve unprecedented sales.

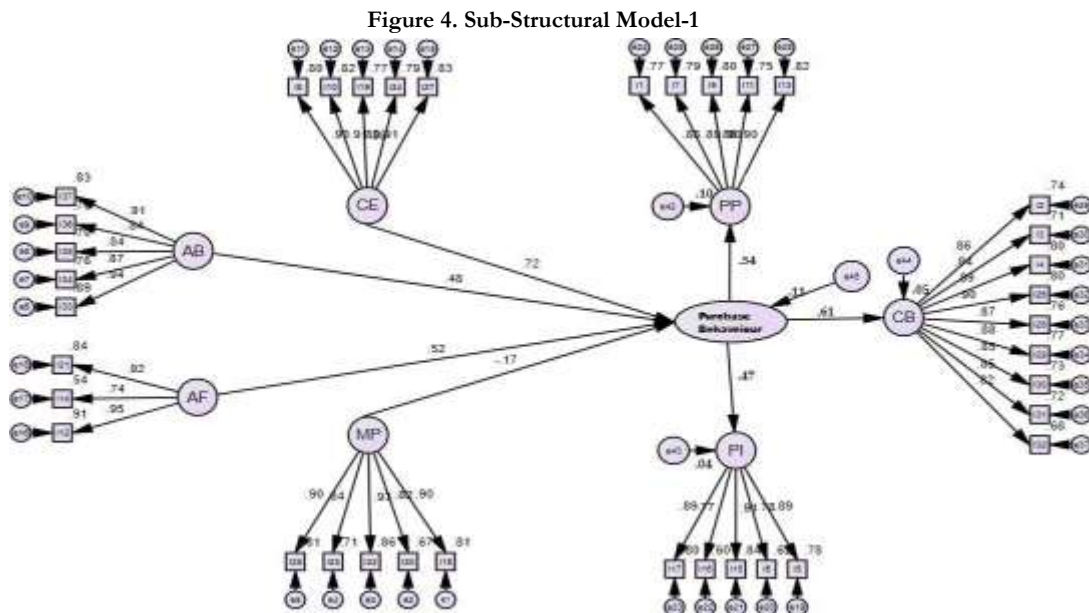
Table 4. Structural Coefficients(Main Model)

			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
Purchase-Behaviour	<---	Subliminal Advertisements	.642	.246	2.675	***
CE	<---	Subliminal Advertisements	.739	.184	4.016	***
AB	<---	Subliminal Advertisements	.545	.153	3.562	***
AF	<---	Subliminal Advertisements	.613	.212	2.891	***
MP	<---	Subliminal Advertisements	.516	.212	2.431	***
PP	<---	Purchase_Behaviour	.761	.148	5.141	***
CB	<---	Purchase_Behaviour	.382	.120	3.173	***

The magnitude and significance of the loading estimates clearly indicates that all the four constructs of subliminal advertising consisting of Celebrity Endorsements, Bareness in Advertisements, Metaphor, and Advertisement Frequency are significant predictors of subliminal advertising. Furthermore, the underlying constructs including Positive Buying Emotions, Irresistible Urge to Buy, Unplanned Buying and Cognitive Dissonance are also significant predictors of the endogenous variable Outcome or impulsive buying in the present model (Please refer Table 4).

Specific Advertisement Indicators and Purchase Behaviour

To make further inroads in the direction of current problem and to examine how on individual basis, predictors of subliminal advertising affects the overall purchase behaviour/impulsive buying, a Sub-Structural Model (figure 4) was tested for this purpose. As with main Structural Model, fit indices comprising of goodness of fit indices and badness of fit indices were within acceptable limits. [Chi-square=3384.245, $p < .000$, RMR=0.124, GFI=0.943, CFI= 0.921 and RMSE=0.057, NFI=0.940, NNFI=0.932].



Furthermore, from the review of Sub-Structural Model Coefficients (Table 5), it is clear that Subliminal Advertisements be it Metaphor, Bareness in Advertisements, Degree of Exposure to such advertisements and Celebrity Endorsements respectively and significantly shape the purchase behaviour as the path estimates for all the factors are significant. Therefore, with one percent increase in Celebrity Endorsements, there would be 0.818 percent amplification in buying behaviour of a consumer which is again some substantial proportion and has significant bearing in consumer domain. Furthermore, with one percent increase in bareness in advertisements, it would lead to 0.544 percent change in purchase behaviour in positive direction.

Table 5. Structural Model Coefficients (Sub Model 1)

Table 5: Structural Model Coefficients (Sub Model 1)						
			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
Purchase Behaviour	<---	CE	.818	.351	2.330	***

Purchase Behaviour	<---	AB	.544	.261	2.069	***
Purchase Behaviour	<---	AF	.729	.301	2.422	***
Purchase Behaviour	<---	MP	.341	.091	3.747	***

In addition, Metaphor is also noteworthy factor as its coefficient is positive significant in the current problem. It clearly indicates that with one percent change in metaphor advertisements, it will result in 0.729 change in purchase behaviour. Last but not the least, Advertisement Frequency or the degree of exposure a young consumer has to the subliminal advertisements is seen as a significant predictor of purchase behaviour. In other words, the higher the exposure to subliminal advertisements, the larger the impulsive buying behaviour that is compulsive buying, purchase intention and purchase privacy.

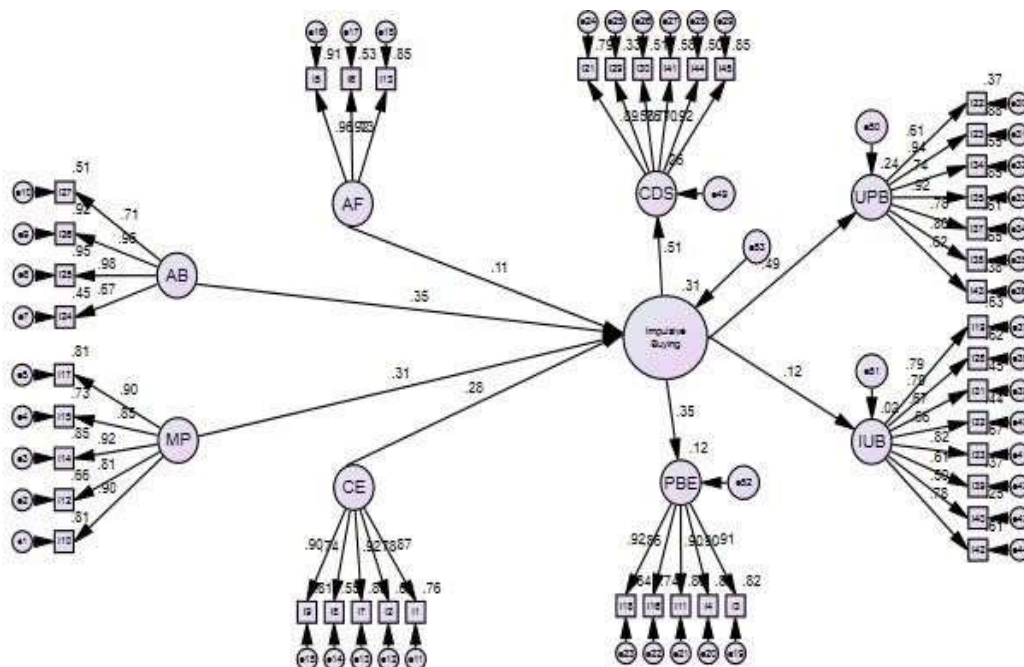
Subliminal Advertisements, Purchase Behaviour and Gender Differences

In order to ascertain, how male and female consumers differ with respect to the relationship between advertisement effects and purchase behaviour, Multi-Group Analysis was employed.

Male Group

At the preliminary stage, both Goodness of Fit Indices and Badness of Fit Indices were ascertained for this model and it is clear that fit indices are within acceptable limits and support the evaluation of Structure Model Coefficients.[Chi- square=3255.245, p<.000, RMR=0.034, GFI=0.915, CFI= 0.931 and RMSE=0.051, NFI=0.910, NNFI=0.941].

Figure 5. Sub Structural Model Male



From the review of Structural Model Coefficients (Table 6), it is clear that that the types of advertisements have varying influence on the degree of purchase behaviour. With male respondents, it is MP i.e. Metaphor advertisements that has higher influence on Purchase Behaviour followed by Alluring and Boreness in advertisements, Celebrity Endorsements and Advertisement Frequency.

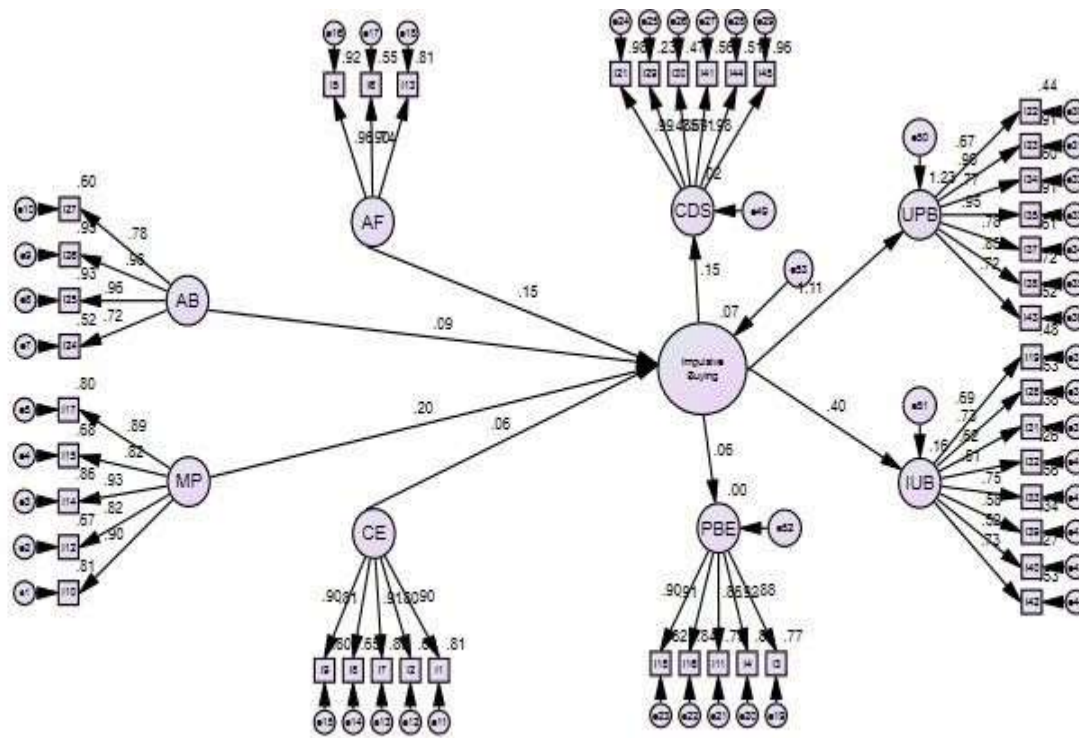
Table 6. Structural Coefficients/Male

			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
Impulsive_Buying	<---	AF	.535	.217	2.465	***
Impulsive_Buying	<---	AB	.751	.321	2.340	***
Impulsive_Buying	<---	MP	.803	.330	2.433	***
Impulsive_Buying	<---	CE	.599	.201	2.980	***

Female Group

In order to ascertain, how female consumers differ with respect to the relationship between advertisement effects and impulsive buying behaviour, Multi-Group Analysis was again utilized for this purpose. Both Goodness of Fit Indices and Badness of Fit Indices were well within acceptable limits and supported the appraisal of Structural Model Coefficients. [Chi-square=3145.245, $p < .000$, RMR=0.054, GFI=0.925, CFI=0.941 and RMSE=0.052, NFI=0.930, NNFI=0.931].

Figure 6. Sub Structural Model Female



From the evaluation of Structural Model Coefficients/Female (Table 7), it is apparent that that the types of advertisements have varying influence on the extent of purchase behaviour in the case of control variable i.e.

females as well. But with female respondents, it is Celebrity Endorsements that have higher influence on Purchase Behaviour followed by Alluring and Bareness in advertisements, MP i.e. Metaphor messages in advertisements and then finally Advertisement Frequency.

Table 7. Structural Coefficients/Female

			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
Impulsive_Buying	<---	AF	.122	.045	2.721	***
Impulsive_Buying	<---	AB	.293	.092	3.185	***
Impulsive_Buying	<---	MP	.160	.046	-3.520	***
Impulsive_Buying	<---	CE	.513	.212	2.420	***

Subliminal Advertisements, Purchase Behaviour and Age Differences

In this case, the control variable used was age difference with three age groups namely Age Group (18-23), Age Group (24-29) and Age Group (30-35) to examine their impact on the relationship between the four categories of advertisements and impulsive buying behaviour.

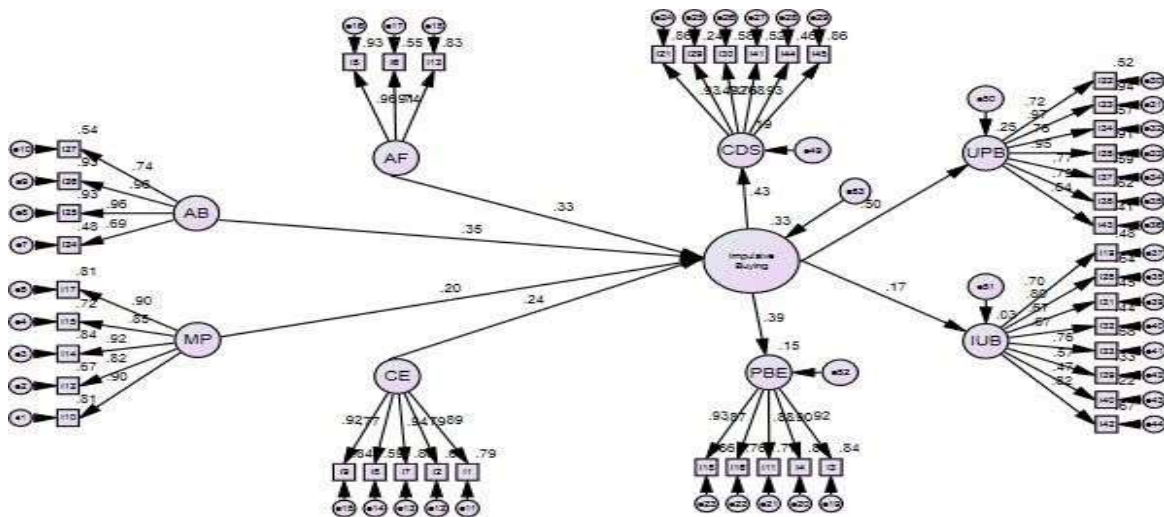
Age Group (18-29)

As with the other Structure Models used in the current study, Goodness of Fit Indices and Badness of Fit Indices were assessed and were found well within acceptable level in this case [Chi-square=4245.245, p<.000, RMR=0.059,

GFI=0.951, CFI= 0.901 and RMSE=0.057, NFI=0.920, NNFI=0.935]. Therefore, it is reasonable to

examine structural model coefficients associated with the advertisements and purchase behaviour while controlling age group (18-23).

Figure 7. Sub Structural Model Age Group (18-23)



From the review of coefficients (Table 8), it is evident that the types of advertisements have varying influence on the extent of purchase behaviour with regard to age group 23-29. Here in this case that is control variable age group 18- 23, it is Alluring and Bareness in advertisements that has higher influence on Purchase Behaviour followed by MP

i.e. Metaphor messages in advertisements, Advertisement Frequency, Alluring and Bareness, and then finally Celebrity Endorsements.

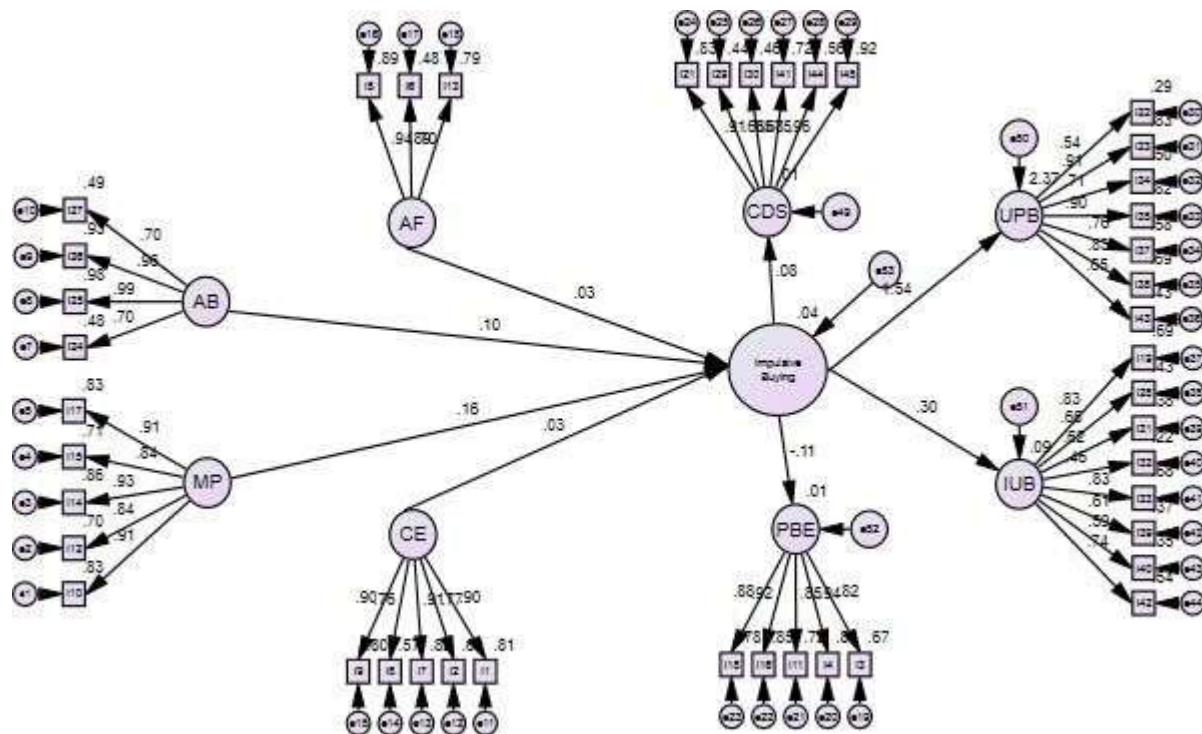
Table 8. Structural Coefficients/Age Group (18-23)

			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
Impulsive_Buying	<---	AF	.528	.123	4.292	***
Impulsive_Buying	<---	AB	.779	.256	3.043	***
Impulsive_Buying	<---	MP	.579	.202	2.867	***
Impulsive_Buying	<---	CE	.440	.129	3.411	***

Age Group 24-29

Here in this case, Goodness of Fit Indices and Badness of Fit Indices were again found well within acceptable range and therefore, it is reasonable to examine Structural Model Coefficients associated with the advertisements and purchase behaviour while controlling age group (24-29).

Figure 8. Sub Structural Model Age Group (24-29)



From the review of Structural Model Coefficients (Table 9), it is evident that the types of advertisements have varying influence on the extent of purchase behaviour vis-à-vis impulsive buying behaviour with regard to age group 24-29. Here it is again Alluring and Bareness in advertisements that has higher influence on Purchase Behaviour followed by MP i.e. Metaphor messages in advertisements, Advertisement Frequency and then finally Celebrity Endorsements.

Table 9. Structural Coefficients/Age Group (24-29)

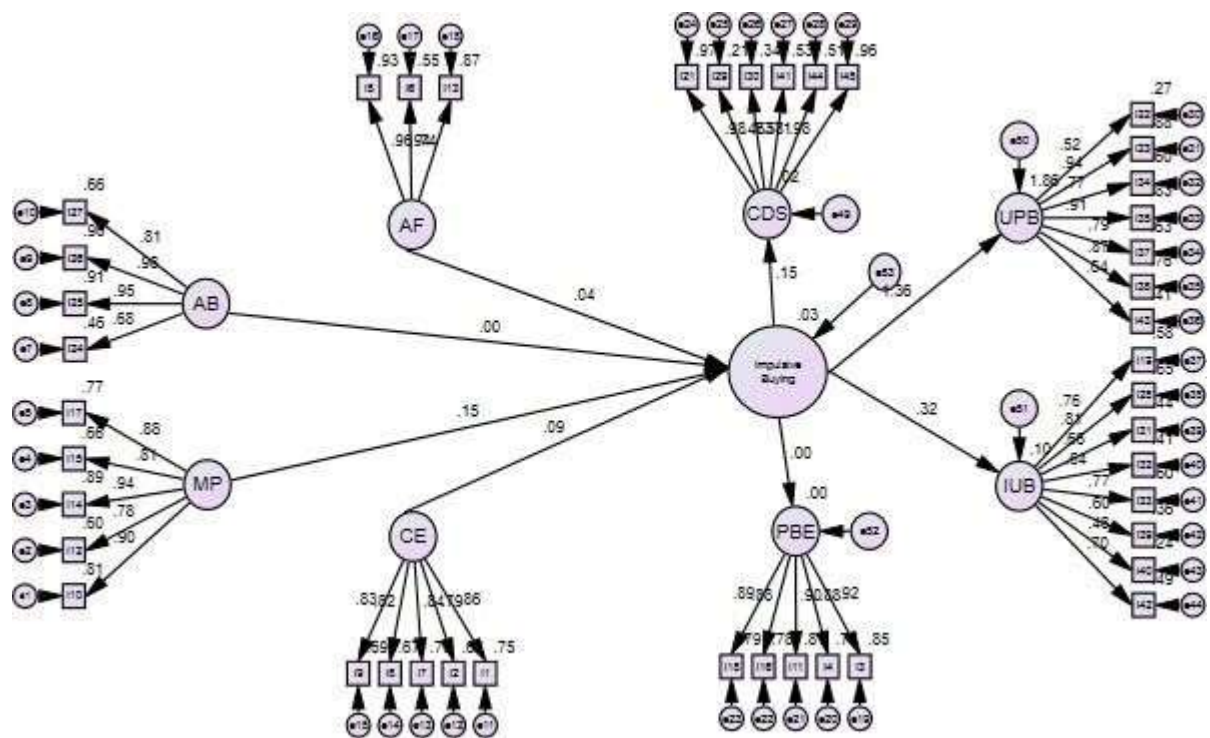
			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
Impulsive_Buying	<---	AF	.421	.196	2.148	***

Impulsive_Buying	<---	AB	.621	.213	2.916	***
Impulsive_Buying	<---	MP	.423	.152	2.783	***
Impulsive_Buying	<---	CE	.297	.121	2.455	***

Age Group (30-35)

In this closing age group of the study i.e. age group 30-35 was taken as control variable to examine its impact on the relationship between advertisement types and impulsive buying. Furthermore, both Badness of Fit Indices and Goodness of Fit Indices were again found well within acceptable limits and it is reasonable to scrutinize the structural model coefficients in this case.

Figure 9. Sub Structural Model Age Group (30-35)



From the review of Structural Model Coefficients (Table 10), it is evident that the types of advertisements have again varying influence on the extent of purchase behaviour with regard to age group 30-35. Here it is again Alluring and Bareness in advertisements that has higher influence on Purchase Behaviour followed by Advertisement Frequency, Celebrity Endorsements and then finally MP i.e. Metaphor messages in advertisements.

Table 10. Structural Coefficients/Age Group (30-35)

			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
Impulsive_Buying	<---	AF	.285	.087	3.28	***
Impulsive_Buying	<---	AB	.324	.075	4.32	***

Impulsive_Buying	<---	MP	.214	.054	3.96	***
Impulsive_Buying	<---	CE	.226	.057	3.96	***

Conclusion

To start with and based on the application of Structural Equation Modelling, a number of theoretical relations were tested and it is explicitly shown in table 4 that all the determinants of Subliminal Advertisements significantly determine the Impulsive Buying Behaviour. Furthermore, the test findings associated with sub model 1 are significant as well. The important part of the present study that is impact of gender and age differences on the relationship between impulsive buying and advertisements has brought to fore significant findings. The results are again remarkable and gender differences and age differences show varying influence on the relationship between the two variables. Male consumers show higher influence than females and are more susceptible to subliminal exposure maneuvers. Similarly, young people are more vulnerable to subliminal endeavors as is reported by the structural model coefficients (age group sub models).

Therefore, higher the degree of subliminal exposure higher would be impulsive buying as its coefficient is positive significant. Furthermore, it would lead to higher disequilibrium in the state of positive buying emotions, unplanned buying behaviour, irresistible urge to buy and cognitive dissonance. This largely emphasizes the significance of the types of advertisements that would determine the degree of buying propensity which in return lays strong foundation for the fact that subliminal advertising are strong in enforcing impulsive buying which is largely irrational behaviour. The Structural Model Coefficients provide an inclusive picture of various independent and dependent variables that shape the buying behaviour of a consumer.

Overall, results show the relevance of personality in explaining impulsive buying behaviour, and on one hand, these findings substantiate results from some past studies, while on the other hand, endow with scope for validation of the current study through associated future endeavors.

Considering the potential of young consumers and with the paucity of literature pertaining to impulsive buying behaviour from psychological perspective, the current endeavor has many things to offer. First it pertinent to make allowances for the fact that the type of Structural Model that was adopted in the current study stands unique in itself. Furthermore, inclusion of age and gender differences as control variables is comprehensive in nature and stands innovative in its approach.

The present model of Subliminal Advertisements and Impulsive Buying Behaviour has been found significant in a sense that all the predictors of subliminal advertising influence impulsiveness of a consumer (Please refer to Structural Model). This has supplemented the marketers with enough evidence that apart from other factors such as income, culture, there are other external factors like advertisements that significantly determine buying tendencies of consumers at large. Therefore, to set off impulsive buying tendencies among young consumers, marketers will be required to resort to indirect approach of influencing cognition and affection through promotional and advertising techniques. Both the general advertising and subliminal advertising could be employed to distort the cognition and persuade the affection of a consumer.

Theoretically present research contributes in numerous ways. In wider perspective, this work supplements scientific community of consumer researchers with further insights in consumer impulsive buying behaviour and particularly into consumer buying impulses across subliminal advertising.

The present model of subliminal advertising and Impulsive Buying Predispositions can be of creditable importance to consumer welfare sponsors who can take cognizance from the findings of the study to examine how impulsive buying behaviour can actually be controlled and disfigured. Rather the subliminal advertising, impulsive buying is a phenomenon that most of the consumer groups come across and consequently look for alternatives to eradicate it. As from the examination of findings of the study, it is

apparent that external factors are plausible to influence impulsive buying tendencies of a young consumer and need better execution for rational decision making.

Implications

From the review of previous studies and as has been shown in the current study that subliminal advertisements do dislocate normal decision making of a young consumer. Furthermore, the after effect generated by subliminal exposure has been found to have significant effect on overall impulsive buying behaviour of a young consumer and it is also consistent with past findings. Subliminal Advertisements studied in the present study namely Metaphor, Celebrity Endorsements, Boreness in Advertisements and Frequency of advertisements have profound impact the purchase behaviour and this could largely supplement the advertising agencies who could utilize the findings of the study to generate higher sales. The application of sub structural model has further revealed that all the predictor variables are significant determinants of the purchase behaviour which could be the reason for undesirable buying tendency shown by most of the young consumers in the present era. Furthermore, higher the intensity of Boreness, Celebrity Endorsements, Metaphor and Frequency of Advertisements higher would be impulsive buying and purchase behaviour on the whole. It is pertinent to mention here that in today's circumstances most of the young people get exposed to subliminal ads be it through Print and Electronic Media or Internet at large and therefore, are always susceptible to irrational buying behaviour patterns.

Subliminal ads be it through subconscious mechanism or indirect advertising as reported in this study and also in many other studies do effect consumer buying behaviour. The authors like Dave Lakhani(2008) and Vallance Pakard (2007), inflated it to some higher extent as they claimed that subliminal ads are used as a technique not only to increase sales but are employed to divert youth and involve them in such type of behaviour which is only perilous to the them.

Advertisements are good source of information for consumers that too available at cheaper rates and it is because of these advertisements that one has to pay only a little amount on newspapers. In addition, business organizations use advertisements for generating sales which is their legitimate goal and can do it as per Standards of Advertising Councils but restrictions have been imposed against number of messages that used to be part of advertisements and no moral society would bear representation of products, messages, actions, celebrities in such a manner which is widespread across the Globe. Advertisements have to be there but regulations such as described in the ASCI (Advertising Standard Council of India) needed to be followed not only for the legal purposes but for societal concerns as well.

World is abuzz about sustainable development but the important aspect of such development is what the next generations are going to have and so does the consumer, but the subliminal exposure is only going to collapse the consumer which needs to be given a deeper thought.

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