

# Sales Promotion and Impulse Buying Behavior Towards Consumer Goods : The Mediating Role of Purchase Intention

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## Abstract

The purpose of the study was to provide empirical evidence of the purchase intention as a mediator in the relationship between sales promotion and impulse buying behavior of the consumer goods offered by the retailing businesses (hypermarkets, malls, and superstores) in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. In this study, the population consisted of the staff members (academicians) working at the King Khalid University in the Tehamat Asir area in the South of the Kingdom. We pretested the questionnaire among 39 academicians. The sample size was set for 220 academicians as reliable shoppers belonging to the University's academic units spread in different places of Muhayil Asir province, Barig province, and Rejal Alma province. Data were collected using a questionnaire, and only 204 valid and usable questionnaires were analyzed. The results showed that the purchase intention partially mediated the relationship between sales promotion and impulse buying behavior among academicians. This study conclusively showed that the purchase intention served as a construct used by retailers to mediate the relationship between sales promotion and impulse buying behavior of consumer goods. In turn, this might help the retailers design the relevant promotional policies that would urge the consumers' purchase intention to fall into impulse buying behaviors and promote the retailing business performance.

**Keywords :** sales promotion, purchase intention, impulse buying behavior, consumer goods, retailing business

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Business retailers use different marketing communications mixes to nudge the consumers' behavior. Shahzad et al. (2020) extrapolated that sales promotion (SP) is among the most plumping communications mix to increase sales tentatively. Moreover, SP is a successful and efficient tool for

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companies to lure consumers into buying products (Shamsi & Khan, 2018). Also, SP motivates the purchase intention (PI) (Santini, Ladeira, Sampaio, & Falcão, 2015), presents a significant relationship with PI (Chang, 2017), and influences a repurchase intention (Cipto & Erdiansyah, 2020). Thus, there seems to exist an urgent need to verify the effect of SP tools in igniting the purchase intention (PI), consequently flaming the impulsive buying behavior (IBB). According to Shrestha (2018), IBB is an instant buying decision taken quickly by a customer to purchase the product without following the known consumer buying process. Therefore, IBB describes the purchase that occurs immediately and spontaneously in a sudden, unplanned, and emotional state. In addition, PI is the future consumer's plan to purchase goods or services (Abumalloh et al., 2018). Therefore, PI is one's inner power to prepare a conscious plan for specific behavior leading to a buying decision.

Various research findings have showcased that types of SP and their impacts remain finite in academic investigations (McNeill et al., 2014). Also, Akram et al. (2018) pointed out that SP research and studies are not keeping up with the usage of SP tools in consumer goods markets, considering behavioral response patterns. Hence, as such, SP is subject to conflicting academic results and debates. Likewise, monumental scientific research efforts have struggled to discover the relationship between theories and empirical behaviors in IP (Mahmoud, 2018). Similarly, many studies have recently been conducted on IBB (Banerjee & Namboodiri, 2018; Sen & Nayak, 2019; Sharma et al., 2020). Accordingly, IBB has become a phenomenon worthy of intensive attention in marketing activity (Iyer et al., 2020), besides being an indispensable research issue (Muruganantham & Bhakat, 2013). Additionally, studies conducted to understand the interrelationships between SP, consumers' PI, and IBB achieved different results. For instance, several studies found a positive impact of SP on PI (Kumar et al., 2019; Santini, Sampaio, Perin, Espartel, & Ladeira, 2015). Other studies confirmed the influence of SP on IBB (Amara & Kchaou, 2014; Mayasari & Arimbawa, 2019; Musadik & Azmi, 2020). However, Weerathunga and Pathmini (2015) affirmed that the loyalty program has the greatest positive significant influence on IBB than other SP techniques and tools.

Connectively, impulse buying is the interplay of internal and external motivators, with the internal motivators contributing more toward producing impulse buying behavior (Kalla & Arora, 2011). Notably, consumers are exposed to visually appealing and well-displayed products and captivating promotions to intrigue impulse buying (Saptono et al., 2019). Accordingly, Badgaiyan and Verma (2015) indicated that SP attempts to instigate rapid decision-making via an individual's desire to own the products in the form of IBB. Further, Akhter et al. (2014) figured out the significant influence of SP on consumers' PI. Furthermore, Wu et al. (2011) have determined PI as a construct indicator for estimating consumer behavior. In addition, some findings of the PI and IBB nexus demonstrated incongruity as IBB served as a moderator in influencing PI (Drossos et al., 2014).

Noticeably, many researchers have developed empirical studies in different countries with different social and economic backgrounds to identify the determinants of IBB. Those studies pointed out external and internal factors influencing IBB. In turn, these external and internal factors to IBB continuously remain under scrutiny concerning variables, situations, and places in the retailing business, since their results are not generalized. However, in the retailing business of some countries, there has been little or no study done to determine the ability of sales promotion techniques with more direct measures involving price discounts, coupons, and free samples to influence the PI and IBB of consumer goods.

Accordingly, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) needs to be under investigation as the largest market in the Arab world (Schwab et al., 2017), and the international business reports assured the accelerated growth of retail business in KSA with the sales of \$114 billion in 2017 (Moriarty et al., 2017). It is worth noting that retail businesses in hypermarkets, malls, and superstores in KSA have rapidly grown in recent years. They are encountering overlapping economic, social, and cultural factors. Also, KSA adopts open economy practices in which retailers struggle in competitive markets to satisfy the buying needs of financially well-off consumers, whose per capita income is reported to be \$20,150 (Schwab et al., 2017).

However, in the first half of 2019, the Saudi General Authority for Statistics estimated a considerable number of residents as expatriates (13,100,000 persons forming a substantial percentage equal to 39.3% of the population) who behave like thrifty persons. Hence, this group of consumers may resist their intentions to buy but may tend to fall into impulse buying behavior. In addition, KSA enjoys a very conservative society with unique Islamic values. For example, there is a strict social practice for lonely women shopping. Also, the retailers close their stores at once when Islamic Azan is prayed. Prospectively, the compulsorily relaxed and limited durations affect the shopping process. Hence, the ability of sales promotion to influence PI and IBB may be uncertain. In turn, retailers of hypermarkets, malls, and superstores have to exert additional efforts in making SPs innovative to urge consumers' PI and make them behave irrationally in the IBB way.

Therefore, a conspicuous lacuna needs to be filled in the relationship between SP and IBB and the possibility of PI to mediate such a relationship in KSA. Perhaps the conclusion from the above discussions is mismatched when they are drawn to the retailing business promotional practices in hypermarkets, malls, and superstores and to consumers' intentions and behaviors in dealing with consumer goods. Also, the variables of the present study regarding consumer goods need continuous verification, specifically in the Tehamat Asir area as a great shopping center in the South of KSA, wherein no studies have tackled such variables. Therefore, the purpose of the present study is to cover the research gap and test the mediating impact of purchase intention in the relationship between sales promotion and impulse buying behavior.

## **Literature Review**

### ***Sales Promotion (SP) Concept***

Sales promotion is a substantial motif in marketing via which marketers design promotional campaigns and various techniques to achieve remarkable sales figures. In an extension to this view, SP enfold incentive tools, mostly short-term, designed to stimulate quicker or greater purchases by consumers or the trade (Kotler et al., 2013). In addition, Peng et al. (2019) outlined that SP is the extra value or reward that the consumers receive from their purchase of products (goods or services). Therefore, SP represents the intended efforts retailers make and direct to get the desired acceptable responses from the customers.

SP mix consists of several techniques, like price discounts, epitomized to reduce prices against offered products for increasing purchase quantities. Thus, a discounted price is a specific percentage reduction of a given original price to motivate consumers to make a purchase decision (Ramadania et al., 2022). Therefore, the price discount offers consumer goods at a reduced price. Furthermore, the definition by Kotler and Armstrong (2010) of a coupon tool is a certificate entitling the bearer to a stated saving on the purchase of a specific product. Accordingly, marketers use coupons to stimulate consumers to save money while purchasing products. As for free samples, Ferrell and Hartline (2008) concluded that free samples are a tool to offer products (especially new ones) to customers at less or no cost. These free samples are sent to the consumers directly via mail or other types of correspondence for an experimental test or to try the product to increase awareness which may affect buying behavior in the future. Accordingly, it is a witty technique to donate consumers free products directly or via communication media to strengthen future loyalty of consumers to the retailers.

### ***Purchase Intention (PI) Concept***

The word intention is a specificity to act assuredly (Ramayah et al., 2010). Accordingly, purchase intention is the antecedent that stimulates and drives consumers' purchases of products and services (Hawkins & Mothersbaugh, 2010). Moreover, a consumer's PI refers to attempts to buy a product or service (Diallo, 2012). Noticeably and constantly, the interest of marketing researchers in PI comes from its association with buying behavior.

### ***Impulse Buying Behavior (IBB) Concept***

Generally, impulsive purchase is the consumer response toward low-cost and low-involvement product offerings. IBB is sudden or on-the-spot decision-making (Badgaiyan & Verma, 2015). Also, IBB is an instant purchase with little thought process with no intentions of pre-shopping either to buy the specific product category or to fulfill a specific buying task (Beatty & Ferrell, 1998). Besides, IBB is a potent, persistent, and unplanned urge to buy products with little consideration for the risks (Ramadania et al., 2022). However, Stern (1962) classified IBB into four types: pure impulse buying, reminder impulse buying, suggestion impulse buying, and planned impulse buying. Therefore, IBB is an instantaneous and abrupt consumer behavior that irrationally drives the consumers' attitudes to perform a swift unplanned buying decision in stores when exposed to promotional marketing tools. The stimulus directs the consumers' behavior out-store when mobilized by their intention to act impulsively.

### ***Sales Promotion and Impulse Buying Behavior***

Impulse buying is suited to today's shopping scenarios inspired by the sales promotions in retail stores (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010). It is worth noting that studies presented various constructs that influence IBB, such as sales promotion as an external factor (Akbar et al., 2020; Memon et al., 2019; Prastiwi & Iswari, 2019; Wu & Chien, 2019). Besides, Bell et al. (2011) assured the influences of various factors on unplanned buying behavior, like sales promotion. Further, the researchers' results displayed that promotions of stores magnetize consumers and induce them to buy impulsively (Risqiani, 2015). Furthermore, Muruganantham and Bhakat (2013) affirmed that sales promotions attract customers to impulse buying in supermarkets. Finally, Nurcaya and Rastini (2018) consolidated the above findings on modern retail.

Thus, several studies discussed the statistical correlations and impacts of sales promotion on consumer buying decisions. Also, the literature reveals that price discounts, free samples, buy one get one, and loyalty programs are the most used promotional techniques to cause IBB in retailing (Weerathunga & Pathmini, 2015). For more details, in one package or individual, various promotional activities influence IBB (Tendai & Crispen, 2009) like price discounts (Iyer et al., 2020; Zhou & Gu, 2015), free product samples (Alimpić et al., 2020), and coupons (Asil & Özen, 2015; Heilman et al., 2002; Shahzad et al., 2020). However, Jain et al. (2018) found no significant relationship between coupon proneness and impulse purchases, and neither do Ramadania et al. (2022) and Xu and Huang (2014) for discounts.

### ***Purchase Intention and Impulse Buying Behavior***

Customers' PI is a precedent step for actual buying behavior (De Magistris & Gracia, 2008). In addition, intention is a prime predictor of future behavior (Wu & Lo, 2009). Besides, Mat Dawi et al. (2021) expressed that the theory of reasoned behavior (TRA) assumes intention is the quoin predictor of actual behavior. It is noteworthy that consumer behavior studies have lately presented presumed changes in the decision-making process and, accordingly, effects of purchase intention (Stankevich, 2017). Thus, the stronger the intentions of performing a specific behavior, the higher the possibility that the consecutive behavior is performed (Haque et al., 2015). Therefore, the buying intention is an antecedent step in indulging in the actual buying behavior (De Magistris & Gracia, 2008). Accordingly, Verhagen and van Dolen (2011) found IBB analogous to rational decision-making. Therefore, PI may probably influence consumers to behave impulsively.

Aragoncillo and Orus (2018) pointed out that IBB has excited the attention of researchers and organizations to measure it and comprehend the psychological props of such behavior. However, it seems that the diversity of purchasing defense behavior bears witness to the necessity of verifying their relationships with the intention of

purchasing. For example, in his famous testimony, Stern (1962) explained that planned impulse buying happens when the consumers step inside the stores to buy some specific products intentionally but contemplate making other purchases of products relying on the exceptional special offers and promotions in the stores. Consequently, the assumption here is that PI occurs before behaving impulsively in buying products. Thus, impulse buying occurs as a part of a broader psychological function, particularly in the form of self-regulatory behavior (Verplanken & Sato, 2011).

### ***Sales Promotion and Purchase Intention***

In general, Teck Weng and Cyril de Run (2013) ascertained SP's impact on behavioral intention, however, many authors have performed studies on the theme of the relationship between SP and PI. Ordinarily, retailers use diversified SP techniques, such as price discounts, coupons, and free samples, to inspire one's intentions and swiftly instigate attitudes and behavior into an impulsive state. Additionally, in terms of price discounts, free samples, and coupons, it was found that there were partial and total influences of SP on PI (Genchev & Todorova, 2017). Also, Kaveh et al. (2021) consolidated the effect of discounts on PI. In addition, Kumar et al. (2019) found an influence of SP on PI in an organized retail industry. Over and above, in the adjacent field, considering the tourism industry, Chang (2017) corroborated a significant correlation between sales promotion and purchase intention. Generally, retailers make SP campaigns to lure consumers into buying goods and services. Therefore, the SP served rationally as stimuli to PI. Still, it will be further interesting to dig into the PI and investigate its relation with impulsive behavior.

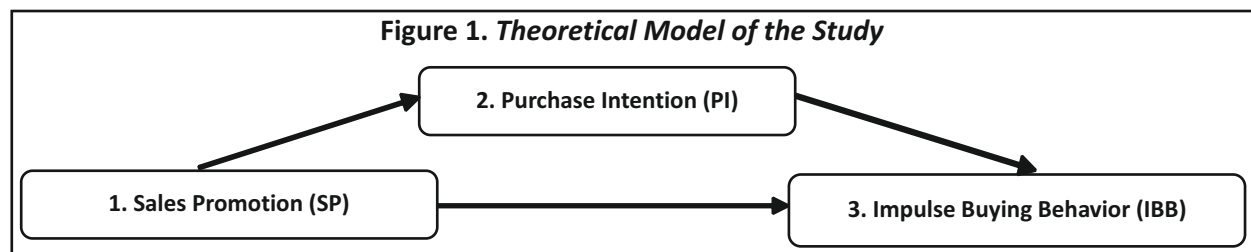
## **Theoretical Model and Hypotheses**

The previous findings provide the theoretical basis for the hypothesis presenting the mediating role of purchase intention on sales promotion and impulse buying behavior. The theoretical model in Figure 1 reclines the relevant literature that illustrates the hypothetical relationships between sales promotion and impulse buying behavior with purchase intention as a mediator. Thus, to analyze such relationships, three main hypotheses have been derived from the theoretical framework.

### ***Hypotheses***

The following hypotheses are crystallized reclining on the demonstrated literature:

- ✦ **H<sub>1</sub>** : There is a significant impact of sales promotion on impulse buying behavior.
- ✦ **H<sub>2</sub>** : There is a significant impact of sales promotion on purchase intention.
- ✦ **H<sub>3</sub>** : The purchase intention mediates the relationship between sales promotion and impulse buying behavior.





## **Research Methodology**

### ***Method***

The descriptive-analytical methods, besides the quantitative analysis, were used as they were fit for this conclusive and descriptive study.

### ***Sample Size and Data Collection***

The total population of the present study consisted of 244 academic staff members (academicians) working at the academic units in the King Khalid University (KKU) located in the Tehamat Asir area in the South of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA). The mentioned academic units are the faculty of sciences and arts, the community college (both for boys) in Muhayil Asir province, the faculty of sciences and arts in Baring province, and the community college in Rejal Alma province (both for girls). According to the population size, the guidance of Sekaran and Bougie (2016) suggests the sample size of this study should include at least 152 academicians approximately. According to the Richard Geiger equation, the sample size should consist of at least 150 academicians. To secure the generalization, the researchers used the probability sampling design of a simple random technique. The sample size was expanded to cover 220 people for greater credibility, exceeding the suggested sample size guidelines (150–152).

Notably, the study selected the academicians due to their ease of access and high expected cooperation probability in the research process. Besides, they tend to shop and buy when exposed to promotional campaigns. Also, there is proper synchronization of some common characteristics among the academicians. For example, they enjoy good financial positions and continuity in work, which assures their financial well-being and ease of understanding the questionnaire items.

The quantitative research design was employed using a questionnaire instrument to collect data from the study conducted in 2019. In addition, to see the initial reliability of questionnaire items, the items were pretested on a sample of 39 respondents of some researchers in relevant fields. Based on the feedback, a few questionnaire items were rephrased and deleted to achieve the final version of the questionnaire. Moreover, the study used Cronbach's alpha coefficient to enhance the initial reliability test. It showed a value of 0.913, which gave a positive signal for utilizing and distributing 220 questionnaires to collect data for the field study in 2019. There were 204 valid and usable questionnaires representing 92.8% of the distributed questionnaire and 83.6% of the total population.

### ***Statistical Techniques***

Several types of statistical analysis were employed to achieve the study objectives by testing the hypotheses and the reliability of Cronbach's alpha. Also, the study used the means and standard deviations to describe the sample and variables, following the measures of levels: 1–1.80 (*Very Low*), 1.81–2.40 (*Low*), 2.41–3.20 (*Average*), 3.21–4.20 (*High*), and 4.21–5 (*Very High*). Also, the study used regression analysis and path analyses to test the different impacts and the mediating effect of purchase intention on the relationship between sales promotion and impulse buying behavior. In addition, the study used structural modeling to test the fit of the model to the data.

### ***Goodness of Measurement***

In this study, the model variables were mainly measured and primarily adopted from the literature devoted to several previous studies and then arranged and developed to suit the study's purposes. Those variables included

three main variables of SP, PI, and IBB. The development of the questionnaire items of this study relied on certain previous studies. For SP components, the development of their items reclined on Gilbert and Jackaria (2002). For PI components, the development of the questionnaire items depended on Chen et al. (2021). Subsequently, for IBB components, the development of the questionnaire items relied on Beatty and Ferrell (1998). Finally, the measure of the questionnaire responses was 5 points Likert scale in which a one-point mark denoted a *strongly disagree*, and a five-point mark denoted a *strongly agree*.

## Analysis and Results

### Reliability Analysis

The study used Cronbach's  $\alpha$  (coefficient) to measure the internal consistency of the questionnaire. However, Hair et al. (2014) propose 0.70 for the lower limits of Cronbach's  $\alpha$  coefficient; the measure will accept the value of 0.60. Sekaran and Bougie (2016) mentioned that above 0.80 is a good level. According to the achieved results, the overall scale coefficient value was greater than 0.80 ( $\alpha = 0.9501$ ). Besides, the subscale coefficient values were greater than 0.80 ( $\alpha = 0.878$  for SP,  $\alpha = 0.852$  for PI, and  $\alpha = 0.958$  for IBB). Eventually, the calculated coefficients are above the generally accepted value of 0.70. Therefore, all reliability scales proved acceptance at good levels.

### Sample Description

The respondents' profile displayed that 75% of the participants were male. However, people who were not of Saudi nationality dominated the studied sample (70.6%). Also, 61.8% of the respondents belonged to the age group of 30–50 years. Besides, the majority were married with children (80%). Lastly, 60.3% of the participants were Assistant Professors.

### Variables Description

In Table 1, the means of SP (independent) and IBB (dependent) variables are at a high level, whereas PI (mediator) is at a very high level.

### Hypotheses Testing

Table 2 revealed that the regression analysis was employed to test hypotheses  $H_1$  and  $H_2$ . Accordingly, the analysis of the results showed that SP influenced IBB positively and significantly. The  $R^2$  of the regression model was 0.383, indicating that SP explained 38.3% of the variance in IBB. Further, the beta coefficient revealed that SP affected IBB ( $\beta = 0.614$ , Sig. = 0.000  $p < 0.05$ ,  $F = 125.132$  at Sig. = 0,000). Hence, the result of hypothesis  $H_1$  is

**Table 1. Means and Standard Deviations of the Studied Variables**

Variables	No. of Questions	Means	Standard Deviations	Levels
SP	9	3.82	0.817	High
PI	14	4.35	0.563	V. High
IBB	13	3.46	1.039	High

**Note.** \* $p < 0.10$ , \*\* $p < 0.05$ , \*\*\* $p < 0.001$

**Table 2. Regression Analysis Results of the Studied Variables**

Variable	Beta	T	Sig.	R <sup>2</sup>	F	Sig.	Decision
SP on IBB	0.614	11.186	0.000	0.383	125.132	0.000	Accept
SP on PI	0.633	11.630	0.000	0.401	135.251	0.000	Accept

**Note.** \* $p < 0.05$ , \*\* $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\* $p < 0.001$

accepted. Table 2 shows that the results of simple regression analysis proved SP has an influential significant positive impact on the PI.  $R^2$  for the regression model was 0.401, indicating that 40.1% of SP explained the variance in PI. Further, the beta coefficient revealed that SP affected PI ( $\beta = 0.633$ , Sig. = 0.000  $p < 0.05$ ,  $F = 135.251$  at Sig. = 0.000). Accordingly, the result of hypothesis  $H_2$  is accepted.

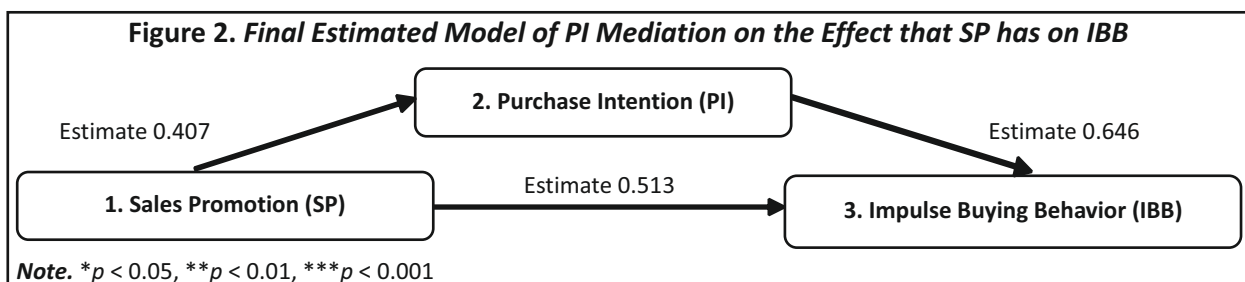
This study used structural equation modeling to examine the individual and collective contribution of a set of predictors (independent) variables that entered into the equation with the outcome (dependent) variable. Therefore, the analysis of structural equation modeling using AMOS showed that the structural model is fit, which means that the model fits the data as  $\chi^2$  (CMIN) = 224.673 ( $p < 0.05$ ,  $df = 3$ ), relative  $\chi^2$  (CMIN/ $df$ ) = 74.891, AGFI = 0.140, GFI = 0.570, comparative fit index (CFI) = 0.972, incremental fit index (IFI) = 0.979, Tucker – Lewis index (TLI) = 0.969, and root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) = 0.603. Byrne (2010) suggested that RMSEA should be  $< 0.8$ , and according to Hair et al. (2010), if any 3–4 of the goodness-of-fit indices are within the threshold limit, then the entire model is fit. Therefore, based on this reason, the structural model for this study fits the data.

As shown in Table 3 and Figure 2, the final estimated model illustrates that the sales promotion has a significant nexus with impulse buying behavior;  $\beta = 0.409$ , SE = 0.084, estimate = 0.513, CR = 6.071, and  $p < 0.001$ . This result supports  $H_1$ , pointing out that SP leads to IBB. Likewise, sales promotion has a significant nexus with purchase intention;  $\beta = 0.633$ , SE = 0.057, estimate = 0.646, CR = 11.659, and  $p < 0.001$ . This result supports  $H_2$ , pointing out that SP causes PI. Finally, the last path represents that purchase intention has a significant nexus with

**Table 3. Results of PI Mediation in Relationship Between SP and IBB**

Construct	Paths	Estimate	SE	$\beta$	CR	P	Decision
<b>Mediation Model</b>	SP → IBB	<b>0.775</b>	<b>0.069</b>	<b>0.614</b>	<b>11.214</b>	<b>*** (0.001)</b>	<b>Supported</b>
	SP → PI	0.513	0.084	0.409	6.071	*** (0.001)	Supported
	PI → IBB	0.407	0.057	0.633	11.659	*** (0.001)	Supported
	PI → IBB	0.646	0.132	0.590	4.907	*** (0.001)	Supported

**Notes.** Estimate = Regression weight ; SE = Standard error ;  $\beta$  = Standardized regression weights ; CR = Critical ratio ;  $p$  = Significance value.





impulse buying behavior;  $\beta = 0.590$ ,  $SE = 0.132$ , estimate = 0,646,  $CR = 4.907$ , and  $p < 0.001$ . The result points out that PI has a direct impact on IBB.

For a concrete testimony, the study tested the mediation of PI in the relationship between SP and IBB in Table 3 and Figure 2. The mediation model was compared with the direct model to test the mediation effect of PI. The prime purpose of this comparison is to determine whether the beta ( $\beta$ ) and the significance of the direct path in the model ( $SP \rightarrow IBB$ ) would be reduced and become insignificant in the mediation model. The indirect effects of SP on IBB via PI were significant ( $p < 0.05$ ). Accordingly, the result indicated that  $\beta$  in the mediation model was low and significant at a value of 0.409 compared to  $\beta$  in the direct model, equal to 0.614. Thus, the partial mediation effect appeared accordingly, and the result of hypothesis  $H_3$  is accepted.

## Discussion

The study results support all suggested hypotheses to the extent that the conclusion vouchsafes that purchase intention partially mediates the relationship between sales promotion and impulse buying behavior. Also, the results show that SP positively correlates with a significant impact on IBB. It means the use of SP by retailers as a promotional tool ignited IBB. Generally, this result concurs with Musadik and Azmi (2020), Mayasari and Arimbawa (2019), Memon et al. (2019), Prastiwi and Iswari (2019), Wu and Chien (2019), Nurcaya and Rastini (2018), and Risqiani (2015). The interpretation of the result is that the studied sample persons were reasonably financially well-off and constantly planned scheduled shopping in retail outlets. The retail outlets work hard in continuous promotions at known times and national and religious occasions to influence consumer behavior. They emphasize selling low-value categories of consumer goods, such as consumer durables and non-durables goods, that do not require much knowledge, thinking, and information, leading consumers to impulsive buying behavior.

The results also show that sales promotion correlates with purchase intention and positively influences consumers' purchase intention. This result implies that the effective implementation of SP by the retailers can work as a starter to the consumer PI. This result agrees with the studies of Kumar et al. (2019); Genchev and Todorova (2017); Santini, Ladeira, Sampaio, and Falcão (2015); and Santini, Sampaio, Perin, Espartel, and Ladeira (2015). Additionally, this result is due to the weekly determined promotional campaigns and planned sales promotion on certain days that make the consumers intentionally plan their shopping.

The results reveal that the purchase intention correlates with impulse buying behavior and significantly impacts IBB. The result implies the ability of PI to work as a catalyst for IBB. Thus, this result may be due to the habitual and routine nature of consumer goods imprinted within consumers' intentions that automatically form impulsive actions when they practice scheduled shopping. To some extent, the result goes in line with the idea that the buying intention is an antecedent step in indulging in the buying behavior (De Magistris & Gracia, 2008). Also, Verhagen and van Dolen (2011) sided with the previous claim, indicating that impulse buying behavior is similar to rational decision-making. However, Drossos et al. (2014) reversed that impulse buying behavior acts as a moderator between product engagement and PI. The interpretation of the result is that the persons involved in the study sample were financially well-off and constantly planned scheduled shopping in retail outlets (supermarkets and malls). Despite assumptions of no pre-intention status that encourages impulse buying behavior, Ali et al. (2019) said IBB could also happen when the consumer has planned to buy in advance.

Eventually, the results show that PI partially affects the relationship between SP and IBB; hence, it serves as a mediator. Therefore, the result indicates the ability of PI to partially support SP in urging IBB. This claim might come from the planned promotional campaigns implemented by retailers (hypermarkets, malls, and supermarkets). These campaigns rationally ignited consumers' intentions, characterized as financially well-off and money-saving oriented, to plan shopping for habitual and routine products categorized as low-value and involvement products. In turn, they irrationally act impulsively.

## Conclusion

This study focuses on the mediation effect of purchase intention in the relationship between sales promotion and impulse buying behavior toward consumer goods. The studied variables of the problem were investigated in 2019 in the Tehamat Asir area in the South of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to bridge the gap in academic research. The academicians of KKU were selected to represent a sample for this study. Generally, KSA is a very fertile land for research as it is a strong emerging economy in which many different national and international retailing businesses struggle to survive in a highly competitive market characterized by financially well-off consumers continuously exposed to promotional campaigns. These retail businesses mainly use price discounts, coupons, and free samples to increase sales by stimulating the consumers' purchase intention. They plan promotions to trigger an irrational behavior represented by impulse buying behavior toward consumer goods. This paper attempts to fill the gap in the existing literature and body of knowledge by providing empirical evidence that the purchase intention mediates the relationship between sales promotion and impulse buying behavior; accordingly, retailers plan strategies vigilantly to promote the studied constructs.

## Implications

The findings of this study can contribute to a better understanding of the sales promotion (price discount, coupons, and free samples) and impulse buying behavior nexus mediated by the purchase intention regarding consumer goods. Moreover, the results have expanded the given academic studies and the knowledge of similar research fields. Therefore, the findings pave the way for the researchers to make deeper investigations considering various tools of SP, as well as to differentiate between the types of impulse buying behavior and determine which type is preceded by PI. In addition, the findings may encourage the researchers to deal with other sample categories and goods and services in different areas in KSA and other Gulf countries. Finally, the originality/value of this study is that it is the first study in the KSA to conspicuously look jointly at the three variables of sales promotion, purchase intention, and impulse buying behavior. Practically, the findings of the study alert retailers in KSA to take carefully into consideration while planning their marketing campaigns the roles of the promotional tools (price discount, coupons, and free samples) in inspiring the consumers' purchase intention rationally and, in turn, flame the irrational behavior in the form of impulse buying behavior.

## Limitations of the Study and Scope for Future Research

This study's results broaden our perceptions of the partial mediating role of purchase intention in the relationship between sales promotion and impulse buying behavior toward consumer goods and allow potential studies to appear in the future. However, this study suffers from limitations that may affect its generalization as long as it focuses only on consumer goods. Besides, it concentrated only on investigating the price discount, coupons, and free samples. It ignored other components related to SP, like bonus packs, loyalty programs, contests, price packs, buy-one-get-one, superstore offers, and promotional signage. However, despite the unique culture which KSA enjoys and the number of expatriates living there, the study does not examine the personal characteristics of the sample to test their impacts on the mediation model. Also, the studied sample was directed only to the academicians and ignored the non-academicians in KKU. Further, the study was conducted only in the Tehamat Asir area in the South of KSA and disregarded others in KSA. Accordingly, future research should replicate this model considering other promotional tools and various types of products with different large sample categories in different areas and accompanying the personal characteristics of the sample.

## Authors' Contribution

Farah Yasin Abdelkhair presented the research idea with the assistance of Mamoun Yaseen Babekir. Dr. Farah Yasin and Dr. Mamoun Yaseen together developed and conceptualized the idea. Dr. Farah Yasin wrote the first draft together with Dr. Mamoun Yaseen. Dr. Farah Yasin and Dr. Mamoun Yaseen invited Dr. Sara Suliman and Dr. Abiad to join the proposal group and participate in the first draft discussion. All authors surveyed the literature to develop the theoretical model. Dr. Farah Yasin and Dr. Abiad developed the methodology and research design plan verified by Dr. Mamoun Yaseen and Dr. Sara Suliman. Dr. Mamoun Yaseen and Dr. Sara Suliman administrated the field study of the project to collect and enter data using SPSS under the supervision of Dr. Farah Yasin. Again, Dr. Farah Yasin and Dr. Abiad performed the formal analysis and interpretation. All authors discussed the results and suggested improvements. Dr. Farah Yasin wrote the first version of the manuscript with the consultation and assistance of all authors. All authors reviewed and edited the final manuscript of the project.

## Conflict of Interest

The authors certify that they have no affiliations with or involvement in any organization or entity with any financial or non-financial interest in the subject matter or materials discussed in this manuscript.

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