The Impact of In-Store Marketing Stimuli and Post-Purchase Evaluation of Impulse Buying: A Study of Mass Color Cosmetics Retail Market in Bangkok

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Abstract

Impulse buying plays an essential role in consumer buying behavior, and is a crucial source of profitability. Many studies primarily focus on identifying its antecedents while the investigation of its potential consequences remains understudied. Thus, this study employs structural equation modeling to examine the impact of in-store marketing stimuli and post-purchase evaluation of impulse buying from 780 female consumers who were 18 to 45 years old, with the income between 7,501-85,000 baht, and impulsively purchased mass color cosmetics in Bangkok. The data were collected by a person-administered survey, and the results revealed that music, salesperson and acceptance of a credit card, respectively encouraged impulse buying opportunities, but it can be reduced by price promotion. While impulse buying was found to have a positive influence on customer satisfaction, which further encourages positive post-purchase behavioral intentions, cognitive dissonance was found to reduce customer satisfaction. This study thus provides a more complete theoretical comprehension of impulse buying mechanisms by incorporating both antecedents and consequences. Marketing practitioners can utilize the findings in planning compelling marketing strategies.

Keywords: *Impulse Buying, Cognitive Dissonance, Customer Satisfaction, Color Cosmetics*

Introduction

The Thai color cosmetics market is Southeast Asia's largest cosmetics market (Forbes Thailand, 2014) with a value of 14 billion baht (Positioning, 2016). Due to the high growth potential of mass color cosmetics, many luxury brands increasingly extend their products into this market (Reungsinpinya, 2011). These products are commonly available at self-selection stores (Reungsinpinya, 2011), where customers buy inexpensive color cosmetics in a self-service environment, in which they have freedom in selecting a product, and subsequently are urged to make an impulse purchase (Sirhindi, 2010).

Impulse buying plays a crucial role in consumer buying behavior, and is one of the most compelling concept in marketing (Samadi, Monavarian, & Hessamfar, 2016). Approximately 90 percent of consumers occasionally purchase on impulse, which accounts for a great volume of products sold across categories and prices (Hausman, 2000). Clearly, it creates instant selling opportunities (Prakash & Sharma, 2016), and is an essential source of profitability (Brici, Hodkinson, & Sullivan-Mort, 2013). Hence, many studies have given much attention to its antecedents, yet only a few have focused on its consequences. Furthermore, most studies associate impulse buying with cognitive dissonance (George & Yaoyuneyong, 2010), which further motivates dissatisfaction (Kang, 2013). Nevertheless, some studies argue that customers are satisfied with their impulsive purchase (Thanh, Mai, & Khang, 2016). Hence, the relationship between impulse buying and post-purchase evaluation is still unclear and needs further investigation.

The study on the impact of in-store marketing stimuli on impulse buying is indeed pivotal for mass color cosmetics marketers because they have full authority to arrange these influential factors to encourage positive customer responses (Beatty & Ferrell, 1998). Notwithstanding, the study on how impulse buying enhances customer satisfaction and encourages positive post-purchase behavioral intentions is even more appealing because such behavior could yield companies several competitive advantages. This study thus aims to determine the impact of in-store marketing stimuli on impulse buying,

as well as to investigate post-purchase evaluation of mass color cosmetics at self-selection stores in Bangkok.

Literature Review

In-Store Marketing Stimuli and Impulse Buying

Impulse buying has been extensively described as an unplanned purchase (Stern, 1962). Nevertheless, Rook (1987) later suggested that it was beyond unplanned purchase, and also involved other factors. To clarify its conceptualization, Piron (1991) suggested a definition that includes four key components: 1) unplanned purchase, 2) sudden purchase decision, 3) stimulus-driven behavior, and 4) involvement with emotional and/or cognitive reactions. The stimulus-response model was introduced to the impulse buying mechanism by Applebaum (1951) where impulse buying is a response from a highly stimulating in-store marketing factors. Moreover, around seventy percent of unplanned purchases are aroused by in-store stimuli (Duarte, Raposo, & Ferraz, 2013).

In this study, ten in-store marketing stimuli are included as follows:

1. *Brand Reputation* - Brand can predict customer response and impulse buying behavior (Husnain & Akhtar, 2016). That is, a well-reputed brand could maximize its brand recall in the retailing environment, and subsequently arouse impulse buying (Duarte et al., 2013).
2. *Price Promotion* - Price promotion strongly promotes impulse buying behavior (Lai, 2017) because a customer tends to be more impulsive when a product is cheap or on sale as it provides the value of saving money (Stern, 1962; Kim, 2014).
3. *Acceptance of a Credit Card* - Compared to cash, a credit card motivates greater impulsivity (Khan, Hui, Chen & Hoe, 2016) because it is a less painful payment method (Karbasivar & Yarahmandi, 2011). Hence, stores are increasing the impulse buying opportunity by accepting credit cards or applying co-promotion with credit card companies (Muruganantham & Bhakat, 2013).
4. *Variety of Products* – A great variety of products provides customers a favorable environment for impulse buying (Stern, 1962) because products are promptly available; subsequently, they can postpone their purchase decision until they are in the stores (Bayley & Nancarrow, 1998).
5. *Prominent Display* - Exposure to eye-catching displays enables customers to notice a product (Desmet & Renaudin, 1998) and enhances the tendency of recalling the need for it (Duarte et al., 2013), which further urges them to purchase it on impulse (Nishanov & Ahunjonov, 2016).
6. *Self-Service* - Self-service encourages impulse buying more than salesperson-service because customers do not have to rely on a salesperson for their shopping experience, and have more freedom to make a purchase decision (Sirhindi, 2010).
7. *Music* - Pleasant music enhances customers' pleasure level with the shopping experience (Morrison, Gan, Dubelaar, & Oppewal, 2011), and subsequently encourages them to spend extra money, where some of which can be spent on impulse (Mohan, Sivakumaran, & Sharma, 2013).
8. *Lighting* - Appropriate lighting creates favorable ambience in the store, encourages customers to explore the store, and subsequently urge them to make an impulse purchase (Mohan et al., 2013).
9. *Layout* – An appropriate layout produces positive emotions by assisting customers to quickly find products (Bitner, 1992; Spies, Hesse & Loesch, 1997). Among store environment factors, Mohan et al. (2013) found that lay out had the highest impact on impulse buying.
10. *Salesperson* - Although self-service may create more impulsivity (Sirhindi, 2010), salespersons are indeed essential. They assist customers in exploring the store, generate emotional attraction to a product, and persuade them to purchase on impulse (Mohan et al., 2013).

Influential Factors and Cognitive Dissonance

Since impulse buying is a spontaneous and uninformed purchase decision (Rook & Fisher, 1995), customers tend to experience post-purchase cognitive dissonance (George & Yaoyuneyong, 2010). Cognitive dissonance is described as the psychologically discomfort resulting from the contradiction between what a customer believes and information that calls it into question (Festinger, 1957). According to Ivy, Hill, and Stevens (1978), the influential factors of cognitive dissonance are associated with three main aspects: product information, the importance of the decision, and product alternatives. In this study, the influential factors on cognitive dissonance include:

1. *Post-Purchase Information* – In the post-purchase stage, dissonant customers either avoid choice-inconsistent information that increases the dissonance (Festinger, 1957), or search for choice-supportive information to downplay such conflicts (George & Edward, 2009). Hence, the provision of post-purchase choice-supportive information will likely reduce cognitive dissonance (Hunt, 1970).
2. *Purchase Involvement* – According to the attribution theory (Heider, 1958), highly involved customers tend to be stable with pre-purchase cognitions (Mittal, 1989), and have high control over post-purchase conflicts (Saleem, Ali, & Ahmad, 2012). Hence, the degree of cognitive dissonance experienced by highly involved customers is less than that experienced by low involved customers (George & Edward, 2009).
3. *Attractive Alternatives* - Consumers who select a product from alternatives tend to experience dissonance when they suspect whether they have made the right choice (Festinger, 1957) or when they realize that they cannot enjoy the favorable aspects of the forgone alternatives (Brehm, 1956).

Level of Satisfaction

Satisfaction has been extensively defined as an affective reaction from the disconfirmation paradigm: if the product performance meets the expectation, a consumer will be satisfied (Oliver, 1980). Unfortunately, its universal applicability is questionable (Wirtz & Bateson, 1999; Shukla, 2004). Moreover, Shukla (2004) indicated that product performance has a sole or dominant influence on satisfaction. Hence, only perceived product performance is concerned in this study, and its definition is based on Wirtz and Bateson (1999) as the evaluative reaction regarding the perceived performance of the product consumption experience.

In the context of impulse buying where the purchase is less deliberative, there is a greater likelihood of cognitive dissonance that further hinders customer satisfaction (Kang, 2013). Nevertheless, Thanh et al. (2016) suggest that impulse buying creates customer satisfaction and, subsequently, customer loyalty.

Product Performance

Previous studies found that color cosmetics are not only consumed due to their functional benefits - the ability to perform the promised results on physical appearance, but also their emotional benefits - the ability to achieve certain emotional experiences (Apaolaza-Ibáñez, Hartmann, Diehl, & Terlutter,2011). In this study, product performance is thus defined as the ability of color cosmetics to perform the promised functional or emotional benefits. As suggested by the rational expectation theory (Yi, 1990), product performance shall has the positive influence on the level of satisfaction (Mwatsika, 2016), while the disconfirmation paradigm (Hoyer & MacInnis, 1997) suggests the negative direct influence of product performance on cognitive dissonance.

Post-Purchase Behavioral Intentions

Post-purchase behaviors are a series of actions taken by customers to evaluate their satisfaction, and act upon such evaluations (Tuu & Olsen, 2009), which is regarded as a multi-dimensional concept, consisting of retention, word-of-mouth, and cross buying (De Wulf, Odekerken-Schröder, & Iacobucci, 2001; Zeithaml, Berry, & Parasuraman, 1996). Post-purchase behavioral intentions thus includes the following dimensions:

1. *Repurchase Intention* – It occurs when a customer puts an effort to purchase the same product again (Goh, Jiang, Hak, & Tee, 2016). It is strongly associated with customer satisfaction; if customers are satisfied with a product, it is highly possible that they will repurchase it (Mao & Oppewal, 2010).
2. *Cross-Buying Intention* – It refers to the probability of buying additional different products from the same brand (Ngobo, 2004). It contributes tremendous competitive advantages to companies, such as increased revenue from existing customers (Kumar, George, & Pancras, 2008).
3. *Word-of-Mouth Intention* – It refers to an evaluation of products without commercial intention, and is initiated via various communication channels, such as face-to-face, social networks, etc. (Kuo, Hu, & Yang, 2013). It has been found to be influenced by customer satisfaction (Mao & Oppewal, 2010).

Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 illustrates how ten in-store marketing stimuli arouse impulse buying, which could further positively influence customer satisfaction. On the other hand, impulse buying can arouse cognitive dissonance. That is, those who purchase on impulse could feel uneasy about their purchase decision as well as the product results. Although an association between cognitive dissonance about the purchase and the satisfaction level was not found, any discomfort about the product could hinder customer satisfaction. Moreover, both aspects of cognitive dissonance could be influenced by post-purchase information, purchase involvement, attractive alternatives, and product performance. Lastly, the level of satisfaction is predicted to encourage post-purchase behavioral intentions.

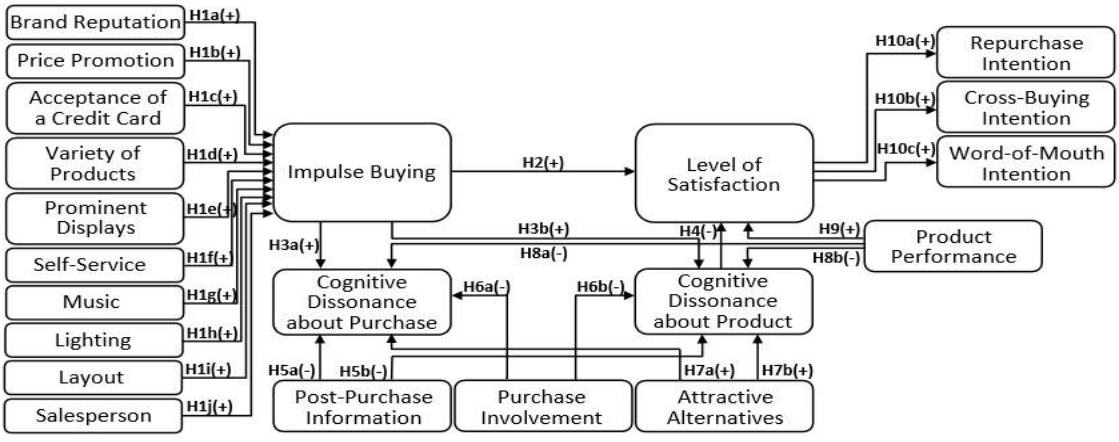

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

The hypotheses are proposed as follows:

H1a-j: In-store marketing stimuli (brand reputation, price promotion, acceptance of a credit card, variety of products, prominent display, self-service, music, lighting, layout, salesperson) positively influences the impulse buying of mass color cosmetics.

H2: Impulse buying positively influences the level of satisfaction for mass color cosmetics.

H3a-b: Impulse buying positively influences cognitive dissonance (purchase decision, product) of mass color cosmetics.

H4: Cognitive dissonance about the mass color cosmetics products negatively influences the level of satisfaction.

H5a-b: Post-purchase information negatively influences cognitive dissonance (purchase decision, product) of mass color cosmetics.

H6a-b: Purchase involvement negatively influences cognitive dissonance (purchase decision, product) of mass color cosmetics.

H7a-b: The availability of attractive alternatives positively influences cognitive dissonance (purchase decision, product) of mass color cosmetics.

H8a-b: Product performance negatively influences cognitive dissonance (purchase decision, product) of mass color cosmetics.

H9: Product performance positively influences the level of satisfaction for mass color cosmetics.

H10a-c: Level of satisfaction positively influences post-purchase behavioral intentions (repurchase intention, cross-buying intention, word-of-mouth intention) for mass color cosmetics.

Research Methodology

This study applied a descriptive research approach, and convenience sampling was employed to approach the target respondents at six shopping centers: Tesco Lotus Rama IV, MBK Center, The Mall Bang Khae, Tesco Lotus Bang Kapi, Big C Chaeng Wattana and Tesco Lotus Suwin Thawong. In this study, target respondents were 18 to 45 year-old female consumers with a household monthly income of between 7,501 and 85,000 Baht, and impulsively purchased mass color cosmetics from self-selection stores, such as drugstores, cosmetics stand-alone stores, cosmetics specialty stores, supermarkets/hypermarkets, and convenience stores, in Bangkok within a month prior to the data collection period.

The sample size assigned by previous studies on impulse buying adopting the SEM technique were in the range of 217 to 733 samples: Beatty and Ferrell (1998) 553 samples, Park, Kim and Forney (2006) 217 samples, Hanzaee and Taherikia (2010) 496 samples, Ltifi (2013) 302 samples, and Mohan et al. (2013) 733 samples. Moreover, Malhotra (2007) suggest that the minimum sample size of marketing research should be 500. Meanwhile, Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, and Tatham (2006) recommend that the minimum sample size is at least five times, preferably ten times, the number of variables. After considering the aforementioned rationales, a sample size of 900 should be acceptable for this study.

The primary data were collected by a person-administered survey. To ensure high quality data and that the target respondents were correctly approached, data collectors and data collection were closely monitored by a supervisor. Once all questionnaires were returned, the data quality was re-checked and entered into the statistical program, and was then cleaned to ensure that the data were well-prepared for the data analysis.

During the data cleaning process, all 900 questionnaires were completed. However, even though the characteristics of respondents were screened by data collectors and screening questions to ensure that they made an impulse buying of mass color cosmetics, there were some respondents who considered themselves as non-impulsive purchasers by disagreeing or strongly disagreeing with most, if not all, of the impulse buying scale questions. Such behavior could be supported by previous literature, which suggested impulse buying is associated with overspending (Mansfield, Pinto, & Parente, 2003) and various negative traits, such as immaturity, and low-self-esteem (Rook & Fisher, 1995), resulting in being the target of other people's disapproval (Rook, 1987). Specifically, they did not answer the questions based on their true behavior, but rather in terms of appropriateness or what they regarded to be social norm. Finally, there were 780 respondents left which represents 87 percent as the response rate.

Table 1. Constructs and Operational Definitions

Constructs	Operational Definitions	Sources
Brand Reputation	The degree to which a brand name is an important source of product information and quality. The degree to which consumers prefer to the product with well-known brand.	Strizhakova, Coulter and Price, 2008; Thamizhvanan and Xavier (2013).
Price Promotion	The degree to which price promotion makes the shopping worth doing and willingness to purchase arise, and look through the products.	Tung, Kuo, and Kuo, 2011; Kim (2003)
Acceptance of a credit card	The degree of advantage and convenience that a credit card offers. The degree to which a credit card payment makes customers feel like not spending money.	Khare, Khare, and Singh (2012); Awanis and Cui (2014)
Variety of products	The availability of products under the brand, and the frequency in launching new products.	Nguyen, Nguyen, and Barrett (2007)
Prominent displays	The degree of the product display's attractiveness. The degree to which consumers are interested and pay attention to the well-designed display.	Karbasivar and Yarahmadi (2011)
Self-service	The degree of convenience, comfortability, joy and pleasantness that self-service offers.	Ltifi (2013)
Music	The degree of pleasantness, appropriateness and relaxation that music offers.	Mohan, Sivakumaran, and Sharma (2013)
Lighting	The degree to which the store's lighting is well and correctly lit, pleasant, and illuminates the product's true color.	Mohan et al., 2013
Layout	The degree of easiness to move around the store, locate and pick up the product by hand.	Nguyen, Nguyen, and Barlett (2007)
Salesperson	The degree of a salesperson' knowledgeability, friendliness, helpfulness and persuasiveness	Mohan et al., 2013; developed in this study
Impulse buying behavior	The degree to which the purchase is unplanned, spontaneous and irresistible. The degree to which consumers feel a sudden urge to buy a product.	Verhagen & Van Dolen (2011); Chang, Yan, and Eckman (2014)
Post-purchase information	The degree to which consumers seeks product information from public media, opinion from friends, and non-commercial product review to confirm the purchase decision in the post-purchase stage.	Newell, Wu, Titus, and Petroshius (2011)
Purchase involvement	The degree to which the purchase decision is important, relevant, and matters a great deal.	McQuarrie and Munson (1986);
Attractive alternatives	The degree to which consumers perceive products from other brands are better quality, more satisfactory, more beneficial, and better fit their needs.	Kuo, Hu, and Yang (2013)
Product performance	The degree to which the product fits consumers' needs, and do not cause allergic reaction. The consumers' perception that the product is especially designed for them.	Broyles, Ross, and Leingpibul (2009); developed in this study
Cognitive dissonance about purchase	The degree to which consumers feel anxious about their purchase, and wonder whether they should have purchase this certain item, purchase too many items, and make the right choice in the post-purchase stage.	Sweeney, Hausknecht, and Soutar (2000); Newell et al. (2011)
Cognitive dissonance about product	The degree to which consumers wonder whether they did the right thing in buying this certain item, if they really need it and were fooled about the product quality in the post-purchase stage.	Sweeney et al. (2000)
Level of satisfaction	The degree to which the consumption experience is satisfactory, rewarding and pleasant.	McCollough and Gremler (2004)
Repurchase intention	The possibility and intention to continue purchasing this product again	Kuo et al. (2013)
Cross-buying intention	The intention to consider buying other products from this brand.	Ngobo (2004)
Word-of-mouth intention	The intention to say positive things, recommend, encourage, and talk about the product in great detail.	Mourni (2005)

Research Instrument

A questionnaire was utilized as the research instrument. It consisted of five main parts, which were (1) general information on the mass color cosmetics purchasing experience, which were composed of screening questions to ensure that the respondents made an impulse buying of mass color cosmetics; (2) in-store marketing stimuli and impulse buying; (3) post-purchase evaluation; (4) post-purchase behavioral intentions; and (5) personal information, including gender, age, and income. Regarding parts two, three and five, the question items were composed of those responding to measurement constructs, and a five-point Likert scale was utilized, where 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 4 = agree, and 5 = strongly agree. The operational definition of each constructs and the references guiding the measurement development are shown in Table 1.

Data Analysis

Table 2. Explanatory Factor Analysis, Cronbach's Alpha and Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Construct	Name of Items	EFA Factor Loadings	Cronbach's Alpha	CFA Factor Loadings
Brand	Brand1–Brand4	.784-.859	.850	.475-.980
Price promotion	Promo1–Promo4	.967-.975	.985	.961-.982
Acceptance of a credit card	Credit1–Credit4	.844-.940	.942	.779-.941
Variety of products	Variety1–Variety4	.816-.893	.895	.753-.910
Prominent display	Display1–Display4	.841-.881	.939	.840-.918
Self-service	Self1–Self4	.852-.870	.955	.887-.933
Music	Music1–Music4	.641-.874	.859	.490-.905
Lighting	Light1–Light4	.790-.815	.911	.831-.866
Layout	Layout1–Layout4	.828-.867	.915	.808-.894
Salesperson	Sales1–Sales4	.821-.853	.949	.859-.927
Post-purchase information	Info1-Info4	.841-.894	.921	.821-.901
Purchase involvement	Involve1–Involve5	.485-.913	.897* (.966)	.876-.971
Attractive alternative	Attract1–Attract4	.870-.910	.972	.922-.963
Product performance	Perform1–Perform4	.761-.894	.903	.811-.903
Impulse buying	Impulse1–Impulse5	.598-.768	.701	.273-.885
Cognitive dissonance (purchase)	Cdpur1–Cdpur5	.830-.859	.951	.873-.926
Cognitive dissonance (product)	Cdpro1–Cdpro5	.829-.866	.959	.904-.918
Level of satisfaction	Sat1–Sat4	.885-.923	.950	.883-.942
Repurchase intention	Repur1–Repur4	.656-.833	.889	.721-.907
Cross-buying intention	Cross1–Cross4	.759-.798	.885	.641-.928
Word-of-mouth intention	Wom1–Wom4	.836-.884	.940	.881-.910

Remark: * The Corrected Item – Total Correlation of 'Involve4' was .280, which was lower than the recommended value of .33 (Ho, 2006). When the item was deleted, Cronbach's alpha of 'Purchase Involvement' became .966.

Descriptive Data

The respondents consisted of 780 female color cosmetics consumers. Almost one quarter of them (24.2%) were 40-45 years old, and the rest were 18-24 years old (22.2%), 35-39 years old (20.1%), 30-34 years old (18.5%), and 25-29 years old (15.0%). Moreover, more than half of them had the monthly household income between 18,001 and 50,000 Baht (61.8%), the rest had an income between 50,001 and 85,000 Baht (28.2%) and between 7,501 and 18,000 Baht (10.0%). In addition, all respondents purchased

mass color cosmetics from self-selection stores within the last 30 days. Based on their last purchase, most of them (73.2%) neither had a plan nor an intention to purchase anything, but they ended up purchasing some items; and even though the rest of them (26.8%) had a shopping plan, they purchased differently or more items than they had planned. Moreover, the stores they visited were drugstores (30.3%), stand-alone stores (21.3%), specialty stores (18.7%), supermarkets/ hypermarkets (17.1%), and convenience stores (12.7%). In addition, the top-five color cosmetics they purchased were powder (26.4%), lipstick (25.9%), foundation (21.0%), mascara (16.3%), and eye liner (15.4%).

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and Scale Reliability

EFA was tested to reduce the large number of measures to a few representative factors (Ho, 2006). Four EFA models were conducted and extracted by Principle Component Analysis, and rotated by Varimax with Kaiser Normalization with no cross-loading item. These four models were:

1. *In-store marketing stimuli of impulse buying* - The outputs revealed KMO and Bartlett's test of sphericity values of .879 and χ^2 (df = 780) = 31607.033, ρ <.001. Ten factors were extracted with Eigen values greater than one, which accounted for 82.34% of the total variance explained.
2. *Post-purchase information, purchase involvement, attractive alternatives, and product performance* - The outputs revealed KMO and Bartlett's test of sphericity values of .901 and χ^2 (df = 136) = 14188.008, ρ <.001. Four factors were extracted with Eigen value greater than one, which accounted for 82.75% of the total variance explained.
3. *Impulse buying, cognitive dissonance (purchase), cognitive dissonance (product), and level of satisfaction* - The outputs revealed KMO and Bartlett's test of sphericity values of .913 and χ^2 (df = 171) = 13574.537, ρ <.001. Four factors were extracted with Eigen value greater than one, which accounted for 76.06% of the total variance explained.
4. *Post-purchase behavioral intentions* **-** The outputs revealed KMO and Bartlett's test of sphericity values of .924 and χ^2 (df = 66) = 8213.638, ρ <.001. Three factors were extracted with Eigen value greater than one, which accounted for 79.86% of the total variance explained.

After the EFA results revealed which items formed the factors, the scale reliability was tested by Cronbach's alpha. They ranged from .701 to .985 (Table 2), which exceeded the recommended value of .70 (Hair et al., 2006). Therefore, all constructs were considered to be reliable.

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

Multiple CFA was employed and included 21 variables and 87 items. The results of absolute fit measures were: $\frac{\chi 2}{df}$ = 2.236, ρ <.001, GFI = .814 and RMSEA = .040, while incremental fit measures were: NFI = .896, RFI = .887, IFI = .940, TLI = .934 and CFI = .939. The results indicated that most indices indicated good fits, except GFI, NFI and RFI, yet they were approaching the recommended values of 0.9 (Ho, 2006). The standardized factor loading of all constructs are presented in Table 2 ranging from .273 to .982, and all of them were significant at .001 level, which meets the minimum requirement for factor loading suggested by Hair et al. (2006).

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)

SEM was adopted to determine the hypothesized relationships. The absolute fit measures of the path model were: $\frac{\chi^2}{df}$ = 2.482, ρ < .001, GFI = .791 and RMSEA = .044, and the incremental fit measures were: NFI = .881, RFI = .875, IFI = .926, TLI = .921, and CFI = .925. Even though GFI, NFI and RFI are below acceptable thresholds, they were close to the recommended value of 0.9 (Ho, 2006). Such results thus indicated an acceptable fit for the hypothesized model. In addition, the squared multiple correlations suggested that the predictors accounted for 8.4% of the variance associated with impulse buying, 28.4% of the variance associated with cognitive dissonance about the purchase decision, 31.5% of the variance

associated with cognitive dissonance about the product, 55.3% of the variance associated with the satisfaction level, 57.7% of the variance associated with repurchase intention, 43.3% of the variance associated with cross-buying intention, and 34.9% of the variance associated with word-of-mouth intention.

Hypothesis Testing Results

Table 3. A Summary of Hypothesis Testing Results

	Hypotheses and Paths in the Model	β	C.R.	ρ-Value
H1a	Brand reputation → Impulse buying	.041	1.029	.303
H1b	Price promotion → Impulse buying	-.111	-2.842	.004**
H1c	Acceptance of a credit card → Impulse buying	.083	2.062	.039*
H1d	Variety of products → Impulse buying	.082	1.953	.051
H1e	Prominent display → Impulse buying	.005	.091	.928
H1f	Self-service → Impulse buying	-.008	-.150	.881
H1g	Music → Impulse buying	.113	2.507	.012*
H1h	Lighting → Impulse buying	.052	.934	.351
H1i	Layout → Impulse buying	-.022	-.446	.656
H1j	Salespersons → Impulse buying	.107	2.035	.042*
H2	Impulse buying → Level of satisfaction	.100	3.488	***
H3a	Impulse buying → Cognitive dissonance (Purchase)	-.009	-.266	.791
H3b	Impulse buying → Cognitive dissonance (Product)	-.012	-.356	.721
H4	Cognitive dissonance (Product) → Level of satisfaction	-.106	-3.534	***
H5a	Post-purchase information → Cognitive dissonance (Purchase)	.266	7.039	***
H5b	Post-purchase information → Cognitive dissonance (Product)	.191	5.195	***
H6a	Purchase involvement → Cognitive dissonance (Purchase)	-.090	-2.459	.014*
H6b	Purchase involvement → Cognitive dissonance (Product)	-.138	-3.849	***
H7a	Attractive alternatives → Cognitive dissonance (Purchase)	.256	5.962	***
H7b	Attractive alternatives → Cognitive dissonance (Product)	.278	6.614	***
H8a	Product performance → Cognitive dissonance (Purchase)	-.089	-2.069	.039*
H8b	Product performance → Cognitive dissonance (Product)	-.143	-3.409	***
H9	Product performance → Level of satisfaction	.675	18.643	***
H10a	Level of satisfaction → Repurchase intention	.760	23.091	***
H10b	Level of satisfaction → Cross-buying intention	.662	17.788	***
H10c	Level of satisfaction → Word-of-mouth intention	.590	17.000	***

Remarks: 1) β = Standardized Regression Weight; C.R. = Critical Ratio

2) Significant Levels: *** significant at the .001 level, ** significant at the .01 level, and * significant at the .05 level

The results revealed that acceptance of a credit card (C.R. = 2.062; ρ < .05), music (C.R. = 2.507; ρ < .01) and salesperson (C.R. = 2.035; ρ < .05) significantly encouraged impulse buying. Interestingly, price promotion (C.R. = -2.842; ρ < .01) significantly reduced the impulse buying opportunity. While other in-store marketing stimuli did not influence impulse buying. Therefore, H1c, H1g and H1j were supported; and H1a, H1b, H1d, H1e, H1f, H1h and H1i were not supported.

Moreover, impulse buying significantly and positively influenced the level of satisfaction (C.R. = 3.488, ρ > .001). Therefore, H2 was supported. Nevertheless, impulse buying did not significantly influence cognitive dissonance about the purchase decision (C.R. = -.266, ρ > .05) and the products (C.R. = -.356, ρ > .05). Hence, H3a and H3b were not supported. On the other hand, the results revealed that cognitive dissonance about the products significantly and negatively influenced the level of satisfaction (C.R. = -3.534, ρ < .001). Therefore, H4 was supported.

In addition, post-purchase information had a significant positive impact on cognitive dissonance about the purchase decision (C.R. = 7.039, ρ < .001) and the products (C.R. = 5.195, ρ < .001), instead of having negative impacts. H5a and H5b were thus not supported. On the other hand, purchase involvement had a significant negative influence on cognitive dissonance about the purchase decision (C.R. = -2.459, ρ < .05) and the products (C.R. = -3.849, ρ < .001). Hence, H6a and H6b were supported. Similarly, attractive alternatives significantly and positively influenced cognitive dissonance about the purchase decision (C.R. = 5.962, ρ < .001) and the products (H7b: C.R. = 6.614, ρ < .001). Therefore, H7a and H7b were supported. Furthermore product performance significantly and negatively influenced cognitive dissonance about the purchase decision (H8a: C.R. = -2.069, ρ < .05) and about the products (C.R. = -3.409, ρ < .001). Hence, H8a and H8b were supported.

It was also revealed that product performance significantly and positively influenced the level of satisfaction (H9: C.R. = 18.643, ρ < .001). Hence, H9 was supported. Lastly the level of satisfaction significantly and positively influenced repurchase intention (C.R. = 23.091, ρ < .001), cross-buying intention (C.R. = 17.788, ρ < .001) and word-of-mouth intention (C.R. = 17.000, ρ < .001). Hence, H10a, H10b and H10c were statistically supported. A summary of the hypothesis testing results is shown in Table 3 and Figure 2.

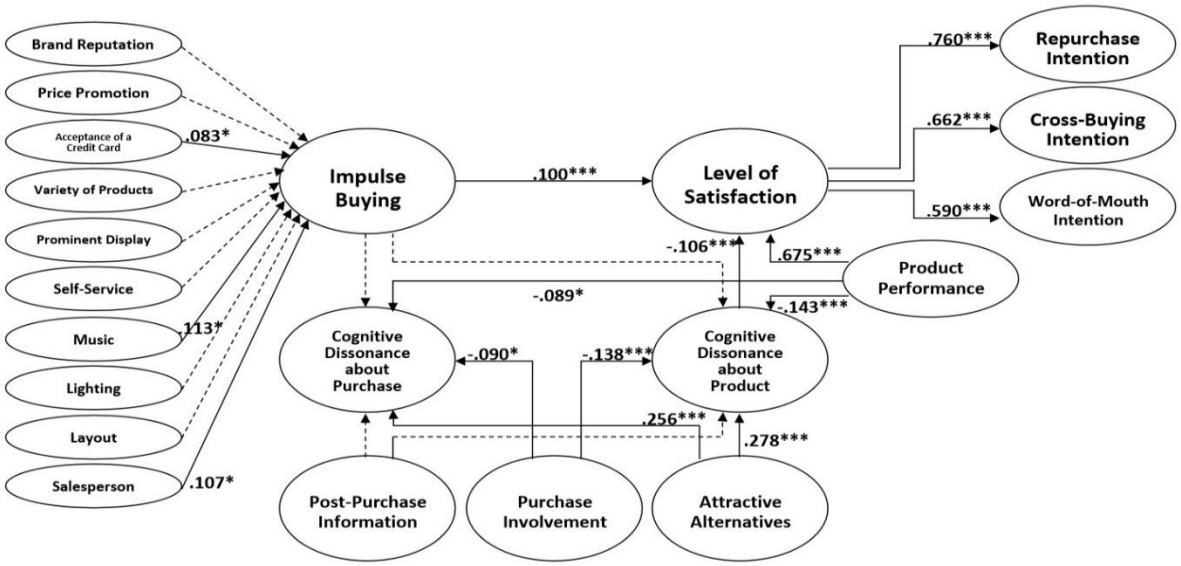

Figure 2. A Summary of Hypothesis Testing Results

Discussion

The results indicated that music (Mohan et al., 2013), salesperson (Mohan et al., 2013), and acceptance of a credit card (Khan et al., 2016) respectively aroused impulse buying of mass color cosmetics, and such results were supported by the aforementioned previous studies. Surprisingly, price promotion reduced impulse buying opportunities, which could be supported by certain previous studies that indicated the negative impact of price promotion on purchase decisions (Ong, 1999; Drozdenko & Jensen, 2005). These studies support the idea that customers are suspicious of incentives, or some prefer small price promotions due to concerns about product quality.

The finding about the insignificant influence of brand reputation on impulse buying was consistent with some previous studies (Zhang & Wang, 2010; Bessouh, Iznasni, & Benhabib,2015), which found that only a few cosmetics customers were influenced by brand reputation because they were more quality conscious (Reungsinpinya, 2011; Desai, 2014). In addition, the study of Koski (2004) also lends support to the insignificant impact of a great variety of products on impulse buying while other studies (Iyengar &

Lepper, 1999; Kim & Drolet, 2003) found that a great variety of products is less preferable in collectivist cultures. Hence, a wide range of color cosmetics may not play a significant role in the collectivist culture of Thailand. The insignificant influence of prominent display could be the result of the large number of prominent displays to which a customer is repeatedly exposed in the current competitive market; they then become insensitive to these prominences (Sirhindi, 2010). With the increased number of self-service shopping environments in Bangkok, customers can become familiar with the process of selecting a product by themselves so that self-service may not significantly influence impulse buying behavior (Joseph, 2010). The insignificant impact of self-service is also evidenced in the studies of Lee, Podlaseck, Schonberg, and Hoch (2001) and Hodge (2004). Lastly, even though lighting and layout (Bessouh et al., 2015) create a favorable store environment, they do not have a strong impact on impulse buying across various product categories.

Moreover, previous studies also support the significant positive influence of impulse buying on the level of satisfaction (Thanh et al., 2016). George and Yaoyuneyong (2010) also explained the insignificant influence of impulse buying on both aspects of cognitive dissonance that impulsive buyers can be more risk tolerant and take cognitive dissonance more lightly. Moreover, many studies also suggested that these buyers are more self-attributed, and experience less degree of cognitive dissonance when they perceive that a failed purchase is a result of their less deliberative purchase decision (Miller & Ross, 1975; Stone & Cooper, 2003). Nevertheless, the results revealed that the more a customer questions the product results, the less likely they would be satisfied about the item, which was supported by previous studies (Kang, 2013).

Regarding the influential factors on cognitive dissonance, the results indicate the positive impact of post-purchase information on cognitive dissonance, which is also supported by Hunt's (1970) study. It claimed that customers become more dissonant when they receive post-purchase information due to suspicion about the seller's ulterior motive. Furthermore, the significant negative impact of purchase involvement can be explained by attribution theory (Heider, 1958), which states that higher purchase involvement leads to higher self-attribution to the purchase failure and a biased justification to overcome the cognitive dissonance (George & Edward, 2009). The negative impact of attractive alternatives is also supported by various studies (Festinger, 1957; Inman, Dyer, & Jia, 1997), which found that when a customer is aware of an advantage of a forgone alternative, they will inevitably feel dissonance. Lastly, the negative influence of product performance is also evidenced in the disconfirmation paradigm (Hoyer & MacInnis, 1997).

In addition, the better the mass color cosmetics performs, the more the customer is satisfied with the product, which is consistent with rational expectation theory (Yi, 1990), and is also well documented in various studies across product categories (Yi, 1990; Shukla, 2004; Patterson, 1993). Lastly, it is also widely recognized that the more a customer is satisfied with the product, the greater the possibility that they will repurchase (Mao & Oppewal, 2010), cross-buy (Ngobo, 2004; Kumar et al., 2008) and spread positive word-of-mouth (Mao & Oppewal, 2010; Kuo et al., 2013).

Theoretical and Managerial Implications

This study provides a more complete theoretical understanding of impulse buying mechanisms with the integration of its antecedents and consequences. It also extends the knowledge on the characteristics of impulse buying behavior by suggesting that it is not always irrational, and does not always lead to cognitive dissonance. That is, customers can be satisfied with the product they purchase on impulse. This study also extends the existing theories related to cognitive dissonance by dividing it into two aspects: about the purchase decision and about the products. Furthermore, this study not only confirms the well-documented influence of post-purchase information, purchase involvement, and attractive alternatives on cognitive dissonance, but also suggests the additional influence of product performance. In addition, this study confirms the influence of cognitive dissonance about the product and product performance on

the level of satisfaction, as well as enlarging on the well-known strong influence of customer satisfaction on positive post-purchase behavioral intentions in the area of mass color cosmetics.

This study also provides several practical implications for mass color cosmetics marketers. It illustrates the relative importance of in-store marketing stimuli on impulse buying. Hence, resource allocation should be prioritized on music, salesperson, and acceptance of a credit card. Since these factors can be controlled by marketers, the findings are thus pragmatic for marketing practitioners in planning resource allocation and developing compelling marketing strategies as follows:

1. *Music* – Mass color cosmetics companies should create catchy advertising jingles to remind customers of a brand whenever they hear it, and to create a positive effect by increasing their pleasure level with the shopping experience (Morrison et al., 2011), and subsequently inducing them to spend extra time and money in the store (Mohan et al., 2013).
2. *Salesperson* – A company should invest in sales training programs to introduce salespersons to the techniques to sell in a way that they can create emotional and rational attraction to a product, and subsequently persuade customers to make an impulse purchase without being pressured.
3. *Acceptance of a credit card* – It is interesting to utilize co-promotions with credit card companies, such as zero percent interest, point redemption, etc., to enhance impulse buying opportunities.
4. *Price promotion* – Price promotion should be kept at a moderate level so that a customer would perceive the monetary value of the promotion and not be suspicious of product quality.

However, it is crucial that marketers do not overlook other in-store stimuli because impulse buying is stimulus-driven, so they should constantly create a pleasant and stimulating shopping environment. Since the reduction in cognitive dissonance leads to customer satisfaction, which further predicts positive post-purchase behaviors, it is thus essential for marketers to actively intervene in the dissonance reduction process by being cautious and conducting an extensive pretest of communication programs before launching any marketing activities designed to reduce cognitive dissonance. They should also embark on customer care programs by actively providing customers, especially highly-involved ones, with both functional and emotional product support, and continuously enhancing product quality through research and development, as well as the emotional product performance by identifying and providing emotional support to customers.

Limitations and Future Research

It was revealed that only three in-store marketing stimuli significantly motivated impulse buying. Furthermore, the squared multiple correlation of impulse buying was low. Hence, other types of factors, especially internal factors, should be considered to enhance the prediction of impulse buying. Moreover, due to the specific characteristics of mass color cosmetics, the generalization of the results might be limited.

Since this study included only in-store marketing stimuli due to the anticipated managerial contributions, it would also be interesting to study the influence of both internal and external stimuli so that the quality of impulse buying predictors could be enhanced. It is also intriguing to divide customer satisfaction into two aspects: towards the purchasing experience and product performance. That is, an impulsive buyer may find the purchasing activity to be satisfactory due to the exciting environment, but the product performance to be unsatisfactory due to insufficient product information. Consequently, the mechanism of post-purchase evaluation of impulse buying could be explained in more detail. Lastly, it is essential to test the robustness of this study's model in other product contexts, and to conduct studies in other countries for comparative purposes.

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