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# Impulsive Buying Behavior In Light Of Coved-19 Pandemic

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***Abstract:***
*In this research, the relationship between three of the stress factors generated due to the Corona pandemic and impulsive purchasing behavior will be studied. These three factors are fear of infection, fear of lack of necessities, and lack of control over the situation.*
*100 consumers were surveyed with snowball technique, and results showed that fear of a lack of necessities and lack of control over the situation was positively associated with impulsive buying behavior.*

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## I. Introduction:

Impulsive buying behavior has traditionally been described as behavior related to immaturity or irrationality(Streissler,1990), However, in practice, and for contemporary marketers and behavioral experts, it is an integral part of consumer behavior and is no longer associated, as in the past, with the behavior of people with little awareness.

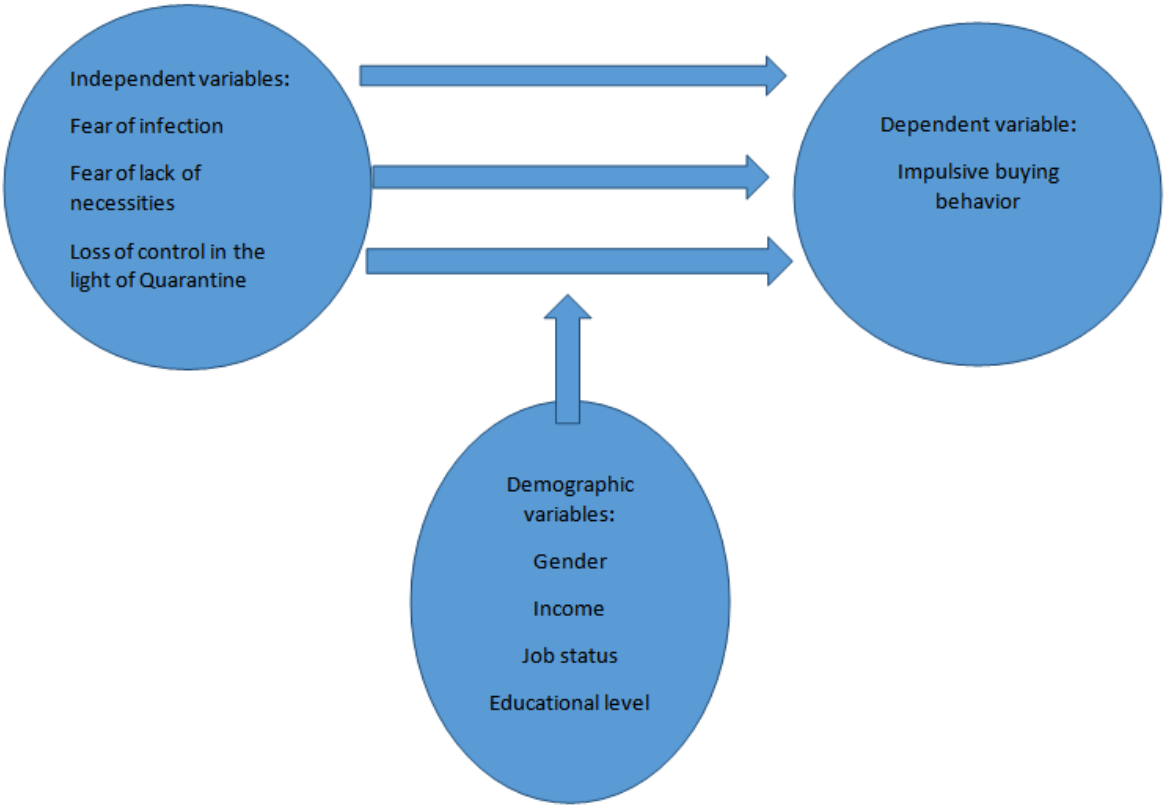
All unplanned purchases or those that are produced as a reaction to a particular circumstance are all part of impulsive buying behavior, for example: buying gum, deodorant, buying quantities exceeding the need due to marketing offers and for example you need 1 kilo Grams of washing powder, but a reduction in the price of a few kilograms may force you to accept the discount and buy an amount that was not planned to be purchased, therefore, a total of I bought it because I saw it might be suitable to correct impulsive purchasing behavior.

In the recent period and in light of the spread of the Corona pandemic and the developments that followed and changed the way of life and the imposition of some countries regulations and laws that were not usual before that led to a change in the behavior of people and inevitably from the behavioral aspects that changed are the purchasing behavior in general, the quantities of purchase have varied as shopping centers witnessed Overcrowding and shortage of supply compared to demand

The pressure generated by changing the conditions of normal life may affect in one way or another the behavior of the consumer, and from these conditions natural disasters such as earthquakes and volcanoes or even the spread of epidemics and pandemics, that is why this study came to know the nature of the change caused by the Corona pandemic in impulsive purchasing behavior because the pressure and tension caused by natural disasters has been associated for some time with impulsive purchasing behavior, so the fear of infection or fear of a lack of fundamentals and necessities and a feeling of not controlling the situation in general may lead to a change in impulsive buying behavior in one way or another.

**Hypotheses:**
H1: there is a significant impact of fear of infection on impulsive buying behavior.
H2: there is a significant impact of fear of lack of necessities on impulsive buying behavior.
H3: there is a significant impact of loss of control in the light of quarantine on impulsive buying behavior.
H4: There is no statistical differences in the impact of independent variables on the dependent variable due to the demographic variables.

**Research model:**




## II. Literature review

A good number of studies have been published to date regarding the Corona epidemic, but most of them are research related to biology, medicine, epidemics, pharmacy and chemistry.

"corona virus problem was raised in late December 2019 in Wuhan and Hubei provinces in China. The hub of the center was Huanan Seafood Wholesale Market and the source of the virus was bat soup. A team at the Wuhan Institute of Virology led by virologist Zheng-Li Shi isolated the virus from a 49-year-old woman, who developed symptoms on 23 December 2019 before becoming critically ill. Doctor, Li Wenliang on 31 December told that an unknown virus has been developed in the province of Wuhan and Hubei provinces as like SARS and MERS. The symptoms were found fever, throat sore and sneezing by woman in the hospital. The Doctor Li has shared the knowledge on E-Chat while police department has declared the rumors against the country and told to Dr.Li to delete the said statement from the E-Chat and keep the data in secrecy while latter on 20, January, 2020 it was announced by government media that Corona Virus has killed many people in the provinces of Wuhan and Hubei . Due to late coverage in the meantime the virus was spread to the whole world which has damaged majority people in their area and emergency was announced by China and world Health Organization. They have sealed majority airports and visas were cancelled by different countries in the world." (Khan &Naushad 2020)

On March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization announced that the new Corona virus is a global pandemic, and that after the number of infections reached 118,000 and the number of deaths reached 4291 and the virus invaded 114 countries around the world and these numbers until the date of March 11,2020.

Few of the researches the researcher was able to reach, which are of a similar nature to this research (impulsive buying behavior in light of corona virus epidemic), but they are not completely identical to this topic. The closest researches to this topic were on topics such as purchasing behavior after natural disasters such as volcanoes, earthquakes, and storms.

Some studies indicated that the stressors generated by the customer for one reason or another may lead to a change in the purchasing behavior of the consumer (Duhachek 2005), Some previous studies included a number of factors that cause the customer to generate pressure and that affects his buying behavior and these factors are: financial, ego, safety and time (Bettman 1973; Roselius 1971). Some other studies have focused on applied aspects of pressure such as: decision-making, options, retail stress, and technological adoption stress (Luce 1998, Sujan et al. 1999, Mick and Fournier 1998).

In addition to that The life event theory also spoke about the impact of some events that happen in the lives of individuals and societies that may lead to a change in their psychological and practical behavior, also

appear in many individual behaviors, including purchasing behavior. Life events may affect negatively or positively or may not have an impact on people's behavior, but there is often a relationship when the event is large.

As some authors (Vinokur&Selzer 1975) (Andersen & Schwartz 1992). classify life events in to 4 categories, and what is important for us are the following two:

1-Desirable and undesirable event: "Events are positive in nature. Events like marriage of a daughter or dependent sister, getting married, outstanding personal achievement, new family member, a pleasure trip on holidays. The undesirable events are negative in nature. They are not welcomed as it gives negative feelings to a person, who experiences it. Events like death of a 31 spouse, extramarital relations of a spouse, divorce, separation, lack of child, robbery, theft, broken love affair etc. are undesirable events. It causes more depression especially when they came all of a sudden. Such events are unpredictable also affecting health.

2- Ambiguous events: Events like change in working conditions, birth of a daughter, change in eating habit, wife / husband begins or stops working, begin or end schooling are not very much specific in nature. Such events are like stressful as compared to unpredictable and undesirable events.

In addition to that, perceived lack of control and loss of possessions contribute directly to stress, and event-induced stress impacts depression. Depressive states, in turn, lead to impulsive and compulsive buying behaviors. (Lacey & Kennett-Hensel 2009)

Two of Hurricane Katrina victims said:

""I started buying items that I knew were ruined by flood water, and I started to buy because I felt like I didn't have any control over the situation. I bought the top of the line Whirlpool front loading washer and dryer because I knew mine were destroyed, and I justified it because I needed some control over my life."

"It seems as if I am trying to fill a void and can't face what happened—so I numb myself by different methods including buying comfort items that are not necessarily essential."

- Hurricane Katrina victims (interviewed April 2006)" (Lacey & Kennett-Hensel 2009)

Consumer Buying Behavior refers to the buying behavior of the ultimate consumer. Many factors, specificities and characteristics influence the individual in what he is and the consumer in his decision making process, shopping habits, purchasing behavior, the brands he buys or the retailers he goes. A purchase decision is the result of each and every one of these factors. (Rani,2014)

In the past, impulsive behavior was associated with terms such as immaturity, lack of awareness and lack of intelligence and even with criminal behavior. As for consumption and consumer behavior, its association was with terms such as self-esteem, and with negative post-purchase results such as personal finance, and post-purchase satisfaction. (Rook & Fisher 1995)

Impulsive buying has been defined as the spontaneous or sudden desire to buy something, and when compared to more contemplative approaches to decision-making, is considered emotional, reactive, It may also be a way to reduce depression or a psychological way out to reduce stress and even satisfy hedonic needs. (Sneath, Lacey, Kennett-Hensel 2009)

There are three characteristics of impulse purchase stated in the above definition, namely (1) unplanned purchases, (2) purchases which are hard to control, and (3) purchases guided by emotional responses. It should be noted that impulse buying is not merely an unplanned purchase. It is possible that an unplanned purchase is not impulsive, such as a habitual purchase, an unexpected purchase that solves a problem or a purchase that does not require planning. On the other hand, planned purchases can be impulsive; for example, searching a gift for someone (Verplanken& Sato, 2011).

**Research methodology**

This research, like many research in the field of management and business, is applied research , all of the study population where collected by using a snowball technique, the questionnaire was distributed electronically using Google forms , therefore the sample is the same as the unit of analysis consisting of 100 questionnaires that are valid for analysisgoodness of questionnaire The questionnaire was approved by Dr. Yasser al-abdi who is marketing professor at Talal Abu-Ghazaleh university college for innovation.

**Scale validity**

The internal consistency of research scale was tested using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, results of reliability test are shown in Table (1):

**Table (1) Scales reliability**

| Variable | Cronbach's Alpha |
|---|---|
| **Fear of infection** | **0.688** |
| **Fear of lack of necessities** | **0.806** |
| **Loss of control in the light of quarantine** | **0.707** |
| **Impulsive buying behavior** | **0.864** |

Table (1) represents the Cronbach' Alpha values foe the research instruments, the values range from (0.688-0.864) which indicates acceptable Cronbach' Alpha value for each dimension, therefore the instruments used are suitable for this study purpose.

**STATISTICAL ANALYSIS**

The purpose of this chapter is to present the results of the statistical analysis, analytical description of the data was provided, followed by showing an expanded and comprehensive analysis of questions and hypotheses.

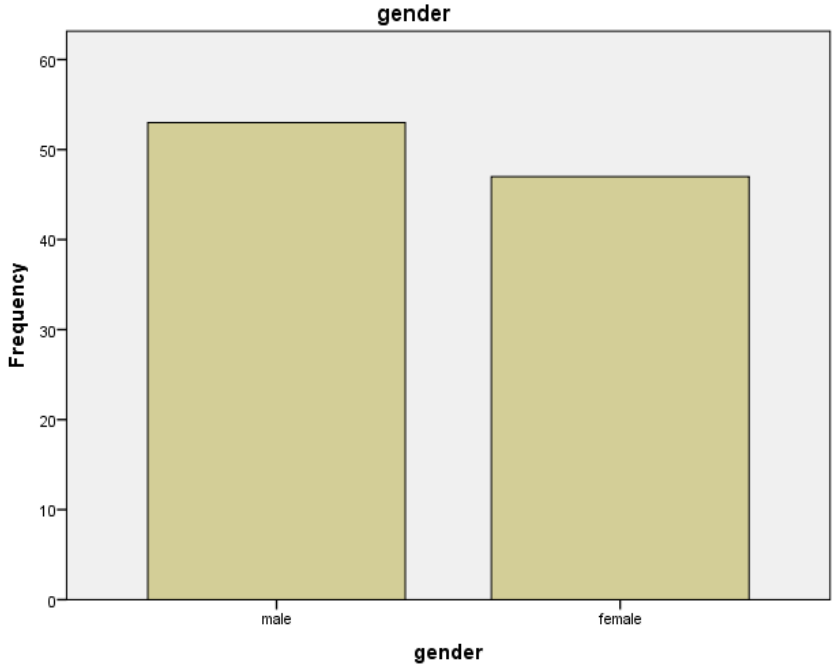
Demographic Analysis

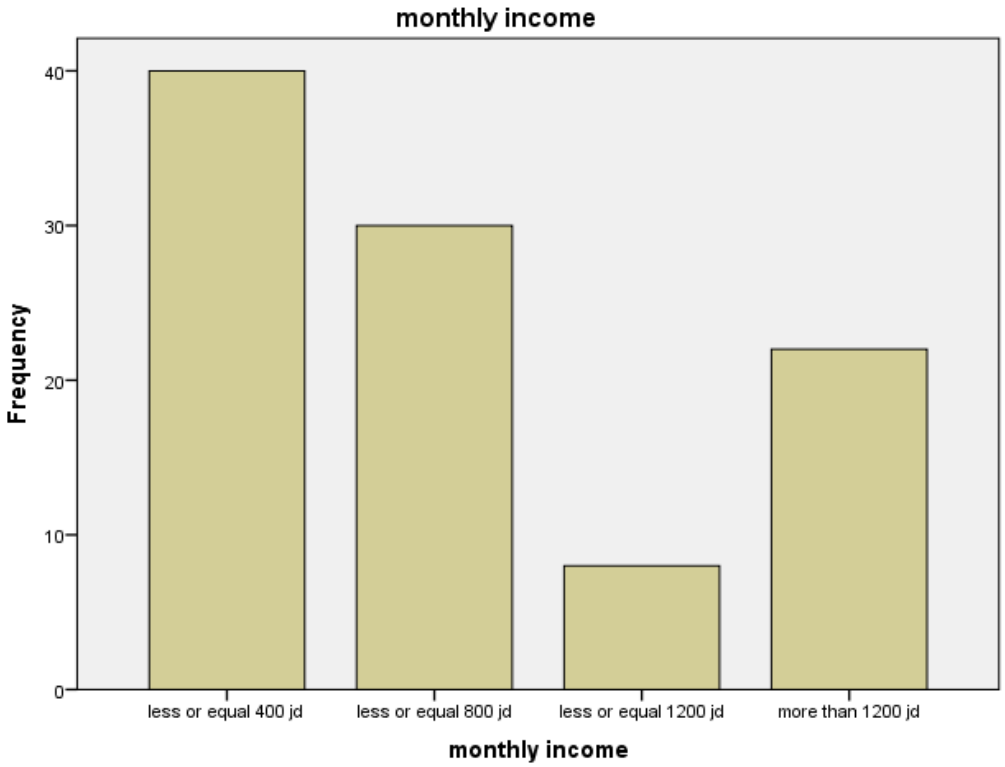
The respondents were asked to fill four demographic and occupational variables, the frequency and the percentage of the answers are provided in table 2.

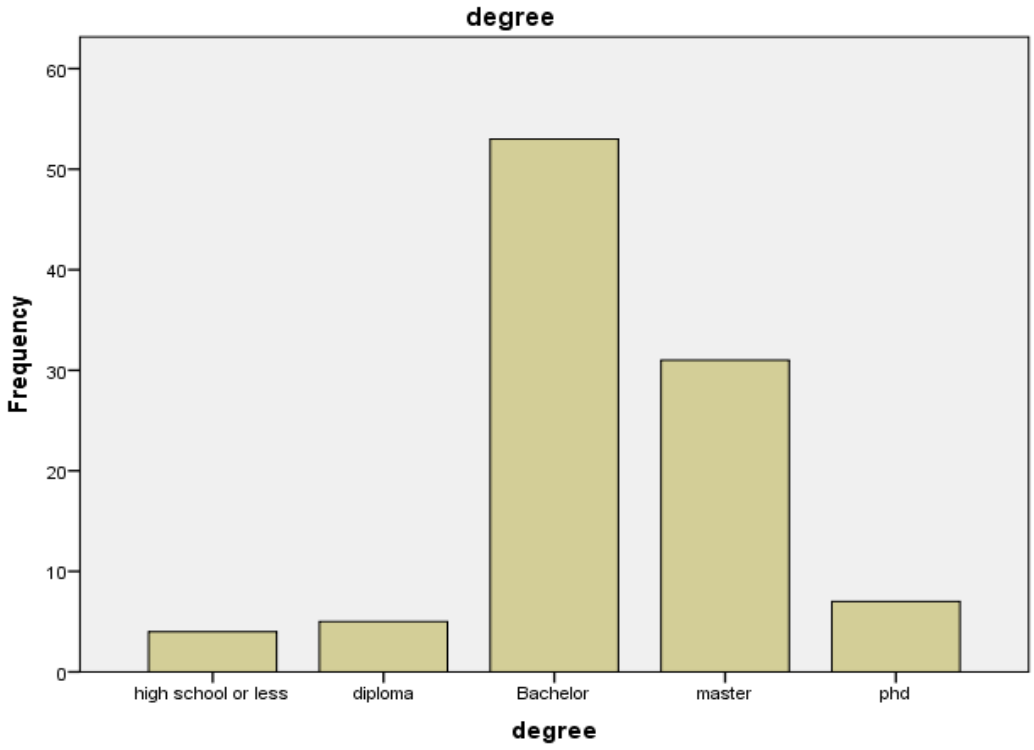
**Table (2) Sample descriptive characteristics (n=100)**

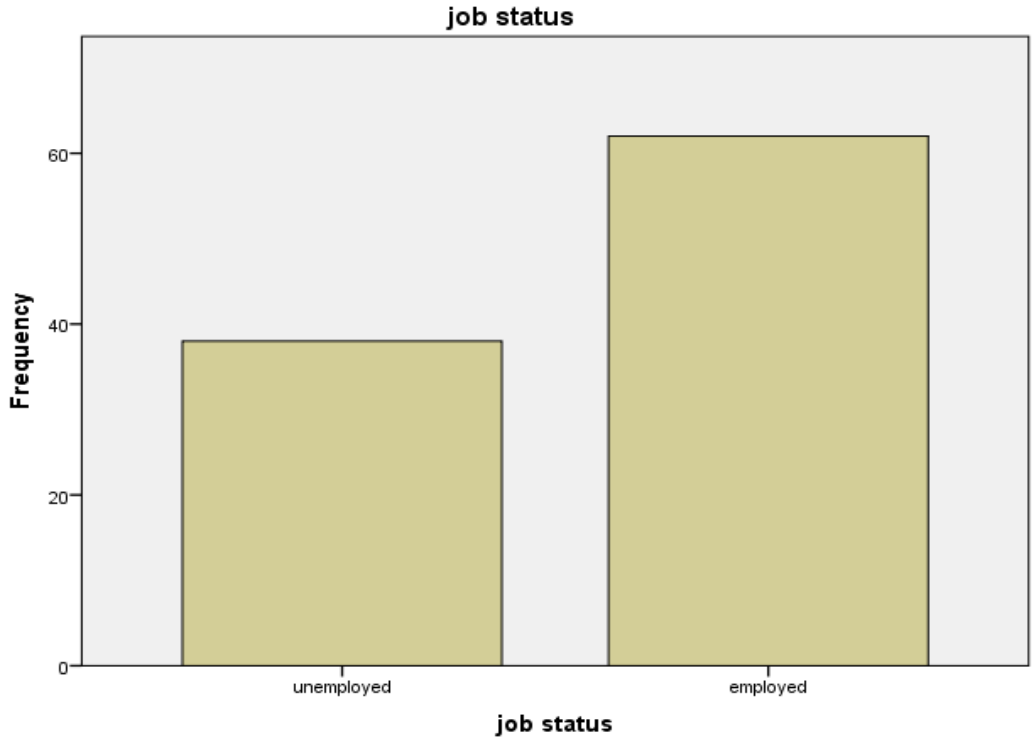
| Variable | Classification | Frequency | Percentage % |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Gender** | Male | 53 | 53.0 |
| | Female | 47 | 47.0 |
| | **Total** | 100 | 100.0 |
| **Income** | Less than 400 JD | 40 | 40.0 |
| | 400-800 JD | 30 | 30.0 |
| | 800-1200JD | 8 | 8.0 |
| | more than 1200 | 22 | 22.0 |
| | **Total** | 100 | 100.0 |
| **Job status** | On the job | 62 | 62.0 |
| | Unemployed | 38 | 38.0 |
| | **Total** | 50 | 100.0 |
| **Educational level** | High School or less | 4 | 4.0 |
| | diploma | 5 | 5.0 |
| | Bachelor | 53 | 53.0 |
| | master | 31 | 31.0 |
| | PhD | 7 | 7.0 |
| | **total** | 100 | 100.0 |

To make it clear that the information in Table (2)will be clarified through the charts below:




monthly income
Frequency
40
30
20
10
0
less or equal 400 jd
less or equal 800 jd
less or equal 1200 jd
more than 1200 jd
monthly income


degree
Frequency
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
high school or less
diploma
Bachelor
master
phd
degree




Hypothesis:
The relationship between the data in this study is a simple linear regression relationship. Therefore, the most appropriate test for the hypothesis test is the simple linear regression test.

H1: there is a significant impact of fear of infection on impulsive buying behavior.

There is no statistically significant relationship at the level of significance 0.001 or 0.05 where the correlation coefficient equals 0.150, so the hypothesis 1 should be rejected as shown in the tables below.

**Descriptive Statistics**

| | Mean | Std. Deviation | N |
|---|---|---|---|
| impulsive buying | 2.6700 | 1.00720 | 100 |
| fearofinfection | 4.3600 | .58542 | 100 |

**Correlations**

| | | impulsive buying | Fear of infection |
|---|---|---|---|
| Pearson Correlation | impulsive buying | 1.000 | .150 |
| | fearofinfection | .150 | 1.000 |
| Sig. (1-tailed) | impulsive buying | . | .068 |
| | fearofinfection | .068 | . |
| N | impulsive buying | 100 | 100 |
| | fearofinfection | 100 | 100 |

**Model Summary**

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate | Change Statistics | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | R Square Change | F Change | df1 | df2 | Sig. F Change |
| 1 | .150[a] | .022 | .012 | 1.00089 | .022 | 2.251 | 1 | 98 | .137 |

a. Predictors: (Constant), fearofinfection

**ANOVA[a]**

| Model | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Regression | 2.255 | 1 | 2.255 | 2.251 | .137[b] |
| | Residual | 98.175 | 98 | 1.002 | | |
| | Total | 100.430 | 99 | | | |

a. Dependent Variable: impulsive buying
b. Predictors: (Constant), fearofinfection

**Coefficients[a]**

| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| 1 | (Constant) | 1.546 | .756 | | 2.045 | .043 |
| | fearofinfection | .258 | .172 | .150 | 1.500 | .137 |

a. Dependent Variable: impulsivebuying

H2: there is a significant impact of fear of lack of necessities on impulsive buying behavior.
There is statistically significant positive relationship at the level of significance 0.05 where the correlation coefficient equals 0.253, so the hypothesis 2 should be accepted as shown in the tables below.

**Descriptive Statistics**

| | Mean | Std. Deviation | N |
|---|---|---|---|
| impulsivebuying | 2.6700 | 1.00720 | 100 |
| fearoflackofnessecities | 3.4633 | .98233 | 100 |

**Correlations**

| | | impulsivebuying | fearoflackofnessecities |
|---|---|---|---|
| Pearson Correlation | impulsivebuying | 1.000 | .253 |
| | fearoflackofnessecities | .253 | 1.000 |
| Sig. (1-tailed) | impulsivebuying | . | .006 |
| | fearoflackofnessecities | .006 | . |
| N | impulsivebuying | 100 | 100 |
| | fearoflackofnessecities | 100 | 100 |

**Model Summary**

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate | Change Statistics | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | R Square Change | F Change | df1 | df2 | Sig. F Change |
| 1 | .253[a] | .064 | .054 | .97945 | .064 | 6.688 | 1 | 98 | .011 |

a. Predictors: (Constant), fearoflackofnessecities

**ANOVA[a]**

| Model | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Regression | 6.416 | 1 | 6.416 | 6.688 | .011[b] |
| | Residual | 94.014 | 98 | .959 | | |
| | Total | 100.430 | 99 | | | |

a. Dependent Variable: impulsivebuying
b. Predictors: (Constant), fearoflackofnessecities

**Coefficients[a]**

| Model | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| 1 (Constant) | 1.772 | .361 | | 4.915 | .000 |
| fearoflackofnessecities | .259 | .100 | .253 | 2.586 | .011 |

a. Dependent Variable: impulsivebuying

H3: there is a significant impact of loss of control in the light of quarantine on impulsive buying behavior. There is statistically significant positive relationship at the level of significance 0.05 where the correlation coefficient equals 0.253, so the hypothesis 3 should be accepted as shown in the tables below.

**Descriptive Statistics**

| | Mean | Std. Deviation | N |
|---|---|---|---|
| impulsivebuying | 2.6700 | 1.00720 | 100 |
| lossofcontrol | 3.9967 | .77343 | 100 |

**Correlations**

| | | impulsivebuying | lossofcontrol |
|---|---|---|---|
| Pearson Correlation | impulsivebuying | 1.000 | .253 |
| | lossofcontrol | .253 | 1.000 |
| Sig. (1-tailed) | impulsivebuying | . | .006 |
| | lossofcontrol | .006 | . |
| N | impulsivebuying | 100 | 100 |
| | lossofcontrol | 100 | 100 |

**Model Summary**

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate | Change Statistics | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | R Square Change | F Change | df1 | df2 | Sig. F Change |
| 1 | .253[a] | .064 | .054 | .97946 | .064 | 6.686 | 1 | 98 | .011 |

a. Predictors: (Constant), lossofcontrol

**ANOVA[a]**

| Model | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Regression | 6.414 | 1 | 6.414 | 6.686 | .011[b] |
| | Residual | 94.016 | 98 | .959 | | |
| | Total | 100.430 | 99 | | | |

a. Dependent Variable: impulsivebuying
b. Predictors: (Constant), lossofcontrol

**Coefficients[a]**

| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| 1 | (Constant) | 1.355 | .518 | | 2.615 | .010 |
| | lossofcontrol | .329 | .127 | .253 | 2.586 | .011 |

a. Dependent Variable: impulsivebuying

H4: There is no statistical differences in the impact of independent variables on the dependent variable due to the demographic variables.

The fourth hypothesis of applying the test (Independent Samples T-Test) was tested on the answers of the members of the study sample according to the variable (Job status, gender), as was the analysis of (ANOVA) on the answers of the members of the study sample according to the variables (Income, Educational level), and the results are presented below:

Gender:

**Group Statistics**

| | gender | N | Mean | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| impulsivebuying | male | 53 | 2.8113 | .96350 | .13235 |
| | female | 47 | 2.5106 | 1.04158 | .15193 |

**Independent Samples Test**

| | | Levene's Test for Equality of Variances | | t-test for Equality of Means | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | | | | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference | |
| | | F | Sig. | t | df | Sig. (2-tailed) | Mean Difference | Std. Error Difference | Lower | Upper |
| impulsivebuying | Equal variances assumed | .027 | .870 | 1.499 | 98 | .137 | .30068 | .20054 | -.09729- | .69865 |
| | Equal variances not assumed | | | 1.492 | 94.277 | .139 | .30068 | .20149 | -.09937- | .70073 |

The results show that there were no differences in the opinions of the study sample individuals according to the variable (T), as all the values of (gender) were not statistically significant.

Job status:

**Group Statistics**

| | job status | N | Mean | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| impulsivebuying | unemployed | 38 | 2.7737 | 1.13440 | .18402 |
| | employed | 62 | 2.6065 | .92468 | .11743 |

**Independent Samples Test**

| | | Levene's Test for Equality of Variances | | t-test for Equality of Means | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | | | | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference | |
| | | F | Sig. | t | df | Sig. (2-tailed) | Mean Difference | Std. Error Difference | Lower | Upper |
| impulsivebuying | Equal variances assumed | 3.103 | .081 | .804 | 98 | .423 | .16723 | .20787 | -.24529- | .57975 |
| | Equal variances not assumed | | | .766 | 66.575 | .446 | .16723 | .21830 | -.26855- | .60302 |

The results show that there were no differences in the opinions of the study sample individuals according to the variable (T), as all the values of (Job status) were not statistically significant.

**Income**

**ANOVA**

impulsivebuying

| | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Between Groups | 3.084 | 3 | 1.028 | 1.014 | .390 |
| Within Groups | 97.346 | 96 | 1.014 | | |
| Total | 100.430 | 99 | | | |

The results show that there were no differences in the opinions of the study sample individuals according to the variable (F), as all the values of (Income) were not statistically significant.

**Educational level:**

**ANOVA**

impulsivebuying

| | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Between Groups | 5.739 | 4 | 1.435 | 1.439 | .227 |
| Within Groups | 94.691 | 95 | .997 | | |
| Total | 100.430 | 99 | | | |

The results show that there were no differences in the opinions of the study sample individuals according to the variable (F), as all the values of (Educational level) were not statistically significant.

## III. Conclusions

The spread of the novel Corona virus Covid-19 and its declaration as a pandemic threatening the lives of millions of people on Earth led to the emergence of new behaviors and changes in the way of life, this is clear and obvious, and among the factors that change accordingly are the factors that drive human behavior such as fear, stress and pressure.

This study has shown a noticeable increase in the people's fear of their opinions about the lack of essentials from food, drink, clothing and even from the lack of appropriate quantities for them from these basics.

Likewise, the feeling of not controlling the situation in an appropriate manner, whether it is the financial situation, on the part of freedom, or the lack of control over the situation at work, and the inability to anticipate what is coming are all increasing after declaring the virus as a pandemic threatening humanity.

The above mentioned sides have been positively related to impulsive purchasing behavior, as it emerged through an analysis of the relationship between fear of lack of necessities and lack of control over the situation and a study of their impact on impulsive purchasing behavior that the increase in each of them leads to an increase in impulsive purchasing behaviors, which gives an important indication of business redesign Its marketing message to address consumer concerns.

And also one of the important aspects of this study was to confirm the correlation of stress forms generated after natural disasters on impulsive buying behavior, and this study may be considered one of the first studies to study the impact of the Corona pandemic on impulsive purchasing behavior.

The major contribution of this study from the researcher's point of view is to help understand the impulsive purchasing behavior of people in light of the spread of this pandemic as it will help if used optimally to improve people's lives and reassure the consumer and provide them with their requirements by understanding consumer’s motivations and impetuses.

**Limitations**

One of the biggest obstacles that the researcher faced in conducting this study was the curfew imposed by the Jordanian government, as it limited its ability to reach a large number of people Where the researcher had to use the snowball sampling technique to collect data related to this study and to access many references found in major libraries in Jordan.

This research was conducted in a relatively short period of time, which is one semester, that is, approximately three months only, Also, the absence of a specialist in statistics to provide advice and guidance to the researcher has led to a doubling of effort in the statistical analysis process for this study.

The lack of previous studies in this topic forced the researcher to research more about the best way to conduct this type of research, as the most relevant research in this topic was not following one clear logic, the same applies to the study questionnaire, which the researcher had to establish from scratch after a hard effort.

## IV. Recommendations

One of the recommendations that this study may provide for future research is to study more stress and tension factors that may change impulsive purchasing behavior among consumers in the light of the Corona pandemic. Also, an analytical study to understand the aspects of impulsive purchasing behavior more clearly may constitute an original contribution in this field, in addition to that more demographic variables should be included in such papers for this research to differentiate and divide the surveyed population because this study shows that none of the used demographic variables have a significant impact when it comes to the relationship between the three independent variable with the dependent variable.

Also, one of the recommendations that may be taken from this study for companies and businesses is that companies, especially consumer ones, must focus more and more on offers and technologies that stimulate impulsive buying in light of the spread of the Corona pandemic, taking into account the moral and legal aspect and not to exploit consumers.

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