

# WHY DID I BUY THIS?

An investigation of the relationship between impulse buying and post-purchase regret – a South African perspective

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*I hereby declare that the Research Report submitted for the Bachelor of Commerce Honours in Management degree to The Independent Institute of Education is my own work and has not previously been submitted to another University or Higher Education Institution for degree purposes.*

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## Abstract

Emerging markets in developing countries have experienced a rapid change in the retail marketplace including the expansion and development of shopping centers, increased availability of international brands, and a greater variety of products. Such changes may lead the consumers of these emerging markets to increasingly indulge in shopping. This may cause an increase in the occurrence of impulsive buying behaviours among the consumers in these developing countries.

The purpose of this study is to determine whether a correlation exists between impulse buying and post-purchase regret for South African consumers. A self-developed, closed-ended questionnaire was utilized to obtain data about buyers' impulsive purchases and whether or not these purchases resulted in regret. A sample of 25 consumers completed the questionnaires for this study. Statistical techniques were used to analyze the numerical data obtained; the researcher used a correlation analysis method as well as basic descriptive statistics. The correlation coefficient was calculated in order to determine whether impulse buying and post-purchase regret were related in some way. From the findings obtained in this study, it can be concluded that there is no relationship between impulse buying and post-purchase regret.

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## **1. Introduction**

### **1.1 Contextualization**

Emerging markets in developing countries have experienced a rapid change in the retail marketplace including the expansion and development of shopping centers, increased availability of international brands, and a greater variety of products (Bilal & Bushra, 2014). Today's retailing marketplace is characterized by hypercompetitive competition and homogenous products that are sold at many retail stores (Ahmad, Khan, & Khan, 2016). According to Nanda (2013) it has been made increasingly difficult for retailers to differentiate themselves; they therefore try to identify and establish new marketing strategies in order to attract and retain customers, as well as achieve a competitive advantage. As a result, the decision-making process has become exceptionally complex for consumers (Shanker, Cherrier, & Canniford, 2006 and Simpson, Siguaw, & Cadogan, 2008, as cited by Saleh, 2012). These marketing strategies often lure in consumers who then purchase their products unintentionally without any advance planning. According to Saleh (2012), after making impulsive purchasing decisions, consumers may doubt the extent to which their decisions were correct or not. This is done by drawing comparisons between the brands and products they have purchased, with the brands and products they could have purchased, but decided against. The consumer is either satisfied or regrets the purchase they have made. (Saleh, 2012). According to Inman, Dyer, and Jia (1997, as cited by Huang & Lin, 2006) regret occurs when the outcome obtained compares unfavorably with an outcome that could have been more favorable, had the individual chosen differently. Furthermore, Inman, Dyer, and Jia, 1997; Taylor & Scheider, 1998; Tsiros & Mittal (2000, all cited by Saleh, 2012) postulate that post-purchase regret results in low-customer satisfaction, which may have detrimental effects on a brand as low-customer satisfaction consequently leads to negative word of mouth, no repurchase intention and brand switching.

### **1.2 Rationale**

According to Kacen and Lee (2002) there is a need to study impulse buying in emerging countries as a result of the current development in retailing; the cutthroat competition and homogeneous products in the retail marketplace which has increased the complexity of consumer decision-making. The researcher believed that identifying whether a positive relationship existed between impulse buying and post-purchase regret would be the first step in creating a foundation that would allow for further studies. The researcher also believed that this study was worth conducting as it would benefit both the brands and consumers of today. If brands were aware of the antecedents responsible for causing regret,

it would assist marketers in reducing the negative effects post-purchase regret has on their brand. If consumers were aware that their impulsive purchasing habits lead to regret, they would hopefully become more cautious when making decisions and implement measures which reduce their tendency to make impulsive purchases.

### 1.3 Problem statement

The hypercompetitive competition and homogenous products which characterize today's marketplace have, as a result, increased the complexity of the decision-making process for consumers. They have also made it difficult for brands to differentiate themselves; they therefore try to identify and establish new marketing strategies in order to attract and retain customers. Consumers are lured in by these marketing strategies and make purchases impulsively without any previous planning. Consumers who regret their impulsive purchases may have detrimental effects on a brand as post-purchase regret results in low-customer satisfaction, which consequently leads to negative word of mouth, no repurchase intention and brand switching. According to Kacen and Lee (2002) there is a need to study impulse buying in emerging countries as a result of the current development in retailing. For this reason, this research study was conducted on South African shoppers as South Africa is a developing country.

### 1.4 Purpose statement

The purpose of this study was to determine whether a correlation existed between impulse buying and post-purchase regret for consumers, through the use of a quantitative questionnaire. The result was a descriptive portrait of the data gathered. The two key variables, impulse buying and post-purchase regret, were defined as follows:

*Impulse buying*: an unplanned behavior involving quick decision-making and propensity for instant acquisition of a product (Rook & Gardner, 1993, as cited by Nanda, 2013).

*Post-purchase regret*: a painful feeling that emerges as a result of comparing "what is" with "what might have been" (Sugden, 1985, as cited by Lee & Cotte, 2009).

### 1.5 Research questions

Is there a correlation between impulse buying and post-purchase regret?

Is a specific gender more likely to experience feelings of regret after making an impulsive purchase?

## 1.6 Hypothesis

There is a positive correlation between impulse buying and post-purchase regret

Ho:  $r = 0$

H1:  $r > 0$

Level of significance will be set at 5%

## **2. Literature Review**

The following literature review comprises two sections; the first section provides a thorough understanding of the theory utilized in this study, it applies the selected theory to the research study and creates an argument of justification. The second section reviews the literature of previous scholars and constructs a logical body of knowledge that links to the research topic and research problem.

### *2.1 Theoretical framework*

#### **Regret Theory**

“Regret theory is based on the intuition that a decision maker choosing between two prospects, is concerned not only about the outcome he receives but also about the outcome he would have received had he chosen differently. When the outcome of the chosen prospect is less desirable than that of the foregone prospect, the decision maker experiences the negative emotion of regret” (Diecidue & Somasundaram, 2017 p. 88).

According to Diecidue and Somasundaram (2017) regret theory is one of the most popular alternatives to expected utility theory. As stipulated by Diecidue and Somasundaram (2017, p. 89) regret theory was formulated by Bell, and Loomes and Sugden who “postulate(d) a continuous real-valued utility function  $u$  and a regret function  $Q$  to represent preferences over prospects”. Camille et al (2004) and Bourgeois-Gironde (2010, both cited by Diecidue and Somasundaram (2017) stipulated that the psychological content of regret in decision making has been explored to a large degree.

For the purpose of this study, it was important to understand regret theory as according to Saleh (2012) post-purchase regret is consequently followed by low customer satisfaction which leads to the following unfavorable circumstances: negative word of mouth about the brand (Garcia & Perez, 2011, as cited by Saleh, 2012), no intention of repurchasing the brand (Tsiros & Mittal, 2000, as cited by Saleh, 2012), and a propensity to switch to alternative brands (Zeelenberg & Pieters, 1999; Bui, 2011; Garcia & Perez, 2011, as cited by Saleh, 2012).

Regret theory assisted the researcher in understanding whether or not the consumer experiences feelings of regret after making a purchase. If it had been established that the customer experienced feelings of regret, the next step would have been to understand the antecedents that cause consumers to experience these feelings. This information would be of considerable importance to marketers and retailers as if they fail to prevent their consumers from experiencing feelings of post-purchase regret, these consumers may become effortless targets for competing brands.

## *2.2 Review of past literature*

The purpose the literature review was to put the research study into perspective. It aimed to establish what previous scholars had ascertained about the topic of impulse purchasing and post-purchase regret. Understanding what previous scholars concluded on this topic assisted the researcher in distinguishing between what had been done from what needed to be done, as well as identify any shortcomings in previous research.

The literature review explored *four* themes. The first theme reviewed literature on the emerging markets in developing countries, and the effect they had on the retail marketplace. The second theme made use of previous literature to establish a concise understanding of the key variables of the study. Thirdly, literature on the negative effects post-purchase regret has on a brand was reviewed. Lastly, the researcher reviewed literature on the existence of gender differences in the decision-making process, and analysed whether the role of gender impacted impulsive purchases and feelings of regret.

### THEME 1: THE EMERGING RETAIL MARKETPLACE IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

Recently, emerging markets in developing countries have experienced a rapid change in the retail marketplace including; the expansion and development of shopping centres, increased availability of international brands, and a greater variety of products (Bilal & Bushra, 2014). Furthermore, emerging markets have noticed an increase in consumer purchasing power. According to Horvath et al (2013, as cited by Bilal & Bushra, 2014) the above-mentioned changes may result in the urban consumers of these emerging markets indulging in shopping based on hedonistic values; this may consequently result in increased impulsive buying behavior among the consumers of these countries.

Globalization has consequently altered the purchasing trends of consumers. Societies are progressively moving towards a consumer culture; Bushra (2015) describes this as a culture in which most of the consumers eagerly desire, pursue, use and exhibit goods and services. These goods and services are admired for non-utilitarian purposes such as provocation, status, pleasure seeking and envy (Bilal & Bushra, 2014). According to Roberts (2000, as cited by Bilal & Bushra, 2014) a culture such as this will facilitate the dissemination of materialistic values in a society. This occurs in developing countries, to a great extent, as new products that are attractively displayed in new types of markets influence the consumers of these developing countries (Bilal & Bushra, 2014).

According to Strizhakova et al (2008, as cited by Bushra, 2015) as societies evolve from lower to higher socio-economic levels, the symbolic attributes of a brand tend to gain more

importance. As stipulated by Batra et al (2000, as cited by Bushra, 2015) consumers in developing countries are sometimes known to select a brand based on the status symbol that the brand communicates. Batra et al (2000, as cited by Bushra, 2015) further maintain that status display is valuable in developing countries where significant importance is placed on interpersonal relationships.

According to Bharadhwaj and Geetha (2016) today, consumers shop not only to purchase products, but also to satisfy needs such as having fun and striving for originality. According to Wood (1998, as cited by Bharadhwaj, & Geetha, 2016) the increase of impulse purchases could be a part of the cultural transformation associated with changes in consumer buying habits; like that of a decrease in future-oriented and planned purchasing, and an increase in present-oriented and impulse purchasing

In order to progress at the same rate as changes in consumer preferences and technology, the retail industry has changed significantly and become extremely competitive. According to Ahmad, Khan, and Khan (2016) today's retailing structure is characterized by hypercompetitive competition and homogenous products that are sold at almost every retail store. It is increasingly difficult for retailers to differentiate themselves; they therefore try to identify and establish new marketing strategies in order to attract and retain customers, and ultimately achieve a competitive advantage (Nanda, 2013).

Shanker, Cherrier, and Canniford, 2006; Simpson, Siguaw, and Cadogan, (2008, as cited by Saleh, 2012) assert that the large number of alternative brands has resulted in confusion when making purchasing decisions. After making an impulsive purchasing decision, consumers may doubt the extent to which their decision was correct or not; this is done by comparing the brands and products the consumer has purchased with the brands and products the consumer could have purchased but decided not to. The consumer will either be satisfied or regret the purchase they have made (Saleh, 2012).

According to Inman, Dyer, and Jia (1997, as cited by Huang & Lin, 2006) regret occurs when the outcome obtained compares unfavorably with an outcome that could have been more favorable, had the individual chosen differently.

According to Kacen and Lee (2002) there is a need to study impulse buying in emerging countries as a result of the current development in retailing.

## THEME 2: CONCEPTUALIZING IMPULSE BUYING AND POST-PURCHASE REGRET

This theme reviewed the literature on the key variables of this study - impulse buying and post-purchase regret.

### Impulse buying

As argued by Rook (1987, as cited by Nanda, 2013) “during impulse buying, the consumer experiences an instantaneous, overpowering and persistent desire.” He described impulse buying as an unintended, non-reflective reaction, which takes place shortly after being exposed to stimuli within a store (Rook, 1987, as cited by Nanda, 2013). Rook and Gardner (1993, as cited by Nanda, 2013) defined impulse buying as an unplanned behavior involving quick decision-making and propensity for instant acquisition of the product.

Beatty and Ferrell (1998, as cited by Nanda, 2013) postulated that impulse buying refers to instant purchases whereby pre-shopping intention to either purchase the specific product or to satisfy a specific need was not experienced. They further maintained that the impulse buying behavior takes place after the individual experiences a buying desire (Beatty and Ferrell, 1998, as cited by Nanda, 2013).

Bayley and Nancarrow (1998, as cited by Nanda, 2013 p. 170) defined impulse buying as a “sudden, compelling, hedonically complex buying behavior in which the rapidity of an impulse decision process precludes thoughtful and deliberate consideration of alternative information and choices.”

Block and Morwitz (1999, as cited by Bhakat & Muruganam, 2013) expressed the definition of impulse buying in clear terms as a consumer buying an item with little or no deliberation after the result of a sudden, powerful urge. Kacen and Lee (2002, as cited by Bhakat & Muruganam, 2013) stated that impulsive buying behaviors are found to be more arousing and irresistible; and impulsive buying behaviors are less deliberative in comparison to planned purchasing behavior.

The classification of a purchase as either planned or impulsive began with the Stern study in 1962 (Bhakat & Muruganam, 2013). This study provided the basic framework of impulse buying by categorizing a buying behavior as planned, unplanned, or impulse. Planned purchases included a time-consuming search for information and required rational decision-making, whereas unplanned buying referred to all purchasing decisions made without any advance planning (Stern, 1962, as cited by Bhakat & Muruganam, 2013). Stern (1962, as

cited by Bhakat & Muruganam, 2013) further distinguishes impulse buying from unplanned buying in terms of quick decision-making; an impulse purchase also includes experiencing a sudden, strong, and irresistible urge to purchase a product. Iyer (1989, as cited by Bhakat & Muruganam, 2013) further maintained that all impulse purchases are unplanned, but unplanned purchases are not always impulsively decided.

More recently Solomon (2002, as cited by Saleh, 2012) classified purchases that were not planned into three categories, namely; unplanned buying, impulsive buying, and compulsive buying. Solomon (2002, as cited by Saleh, 2012) postulated that unplanned buying occurs when the consumer is not familiar with the layout of the store, is under pressure of time, or when he or she remembers his or her need of something in the store. Solomon (2002, as cited by Saleh, 2012) then defines impulsive buying as a state of urgency to buy which a consumer cannot withstand; impulsive buying focuses on a particular product at a given moment. Lastly, Solomon (2002, as cited by Saleh, 2012) characterises compulsive buyers as consumers who frequently visit stores because of a sense of boredom, distress or anxiety. Compulsive buying is a continuous purchase centered on the buying process itself, and not on purchased goods. Faber & O'Guinn (1992, as cited by Saleh, 2012) further maintains that compulsive buying is a process of chronic purchase that comes as a reaction to events and negative feelings.

Despite the differentiations of some studies between unplanned buying, impulsive buying and compulsive buying, the researcher found no common agreement on this distinction, and often they were used interchangeably. As a result, this study adopted the use of *impulse buying* to express all types of purchases in instantaneous situations.

## Regret

As stipulated by Zeelenberg and Pieters (2006, as cited by Lee & Cotte, 2009) regret is a cognitive emotion people aim to avoid, deny, regulate and suppress when experienced. According to Sugden (1985, as cited by Lee & Cotte, 2009), regret is a painful feeling that emerges as a result of comparing “what is” with “what might have been.” According to Bell 1982; Tsiros and Mittal (2000, as cited by Lee & Cotte, 2009) regret occurs when the outcome obtained compares unfavorably with an outcome that could have been superior, had the individual chosen differently. According to Zeelenberg and Pieters (2006, as cited by Lee & Cotte, 2009), this is known as outcome regret. Post-purchase *outcome* regret is due to an individual's evaluation of the outcomes between what he or she has purchased and what he or she could have purchased. In addition, recent studies have postulated that

the quality of the decision-making process can be regretted (Connolly and Zeelenberg 2002; Zeelenberg and Pieters 2006, as cited by Lee & Cotte, 2009). This is known as *process* regret. Process regret is induced when an individual compares their low quality decision-making process to a more desirable, alternative decision-making process (Lee & Cotte, 2009). Individuals who experience feelings of regret as a result of an inferior process compare the decision processes; for example, the consumer may feel that he or she should have visited more stores before making a purchase (Lee & Cotte, 2009). These two elements of regret are able to take place independently of one another. It is therefore possible for an individual to regret the process, even though the purchase experience resulted in a pleasant outcome.

Self-blame is a significant element of regret (Lee & Cotte, 2009). Van Dijk, van der Pligt, and Zeelenberg (1999, as cited by Lee & Cotte, 2009) postulated that individuals who perceive the decisions they have made as unreasonable tend to feel responsible for making the poor decision. Sugden (1985, as cited by Lee & Cotte, 2009) further maintains that the level of individual responsibility taken, and self-blame influence the intensity of regret. Zeelenberg and Pieters (2006, as cited by Lee & Cotte, 2009) postulate that in order to experience regret, individuals are required to have the ability to construct alternative scenarios other than the current state. According to Kahneman and Miller (1986 as cited by Lee & Cotte, 2009) counterfactual thinking is the process of comparing reality with alternative possibilities by constructing hypothetical scenarios to assess the attractiveness of alternative possibilities. Essentially, counterfactual thinking is not an assessment of the outcome, but rather the thought process of how an outcome could have been averted or modified in order to receive a more positive or a negative outcome (Lee & Cotte, 2009).

### THEME 3: THE NEGATIVE EFFECTS POST-PURCHASE REGRET HAS ON A BRAND

Research has provided evidence that impulse buying is a subject that could become of more interest to both retailers and marketers across the globe, as it is a factor that contributes to an increase in sales volumes as well as increases in the bottom line of organisations. (Kumar, Raju, & Raju, 2015). However, studies by Hoch & Loewenstein, (1991, as cited by Saleh, 2012) have identified that impulse buying leads to a sense of post-purchase regret. Consumers compare the brands and products they have purchased with the brands and products they could have purchased, but decided not to (Loomers and Sugden, 1982; Landman, 1987; Boles & Messick, 1995; Shanker et al., 2006; Simpson et al., 2008). According to Landman, 1987; Tsiros & Mittal, 2000; Heitmann, Lehmann, and Herrmann

(2007, as cited by Saleh, 2012) often, the result of such comparison is a state of grief and psychological pain that known as post-purchase regret

Numerous studies have investigated the impact of impulse buying and post-purchase regret. Wood (1998, as cited by Saleh, 2012) assessed the literature of this correlation and concluded that the majority of impulse purchases consequently resulted in anger and regret. Hoch and Loewenstein (1991, as cited by Saleh, 2012) further maintain that impulse buying occurs as a result of low consumer involvement in the decision-making process and results in a sense of post-purchase regret.

While not all purchases result in regret (Sweeney, Hausknecht, & Souter, 2000, as cited by Saleh, 2012) post-purchase regret is not advantageous to marketers whose consumers have bought their brands and regret having made the decision to purchase their products. As postulated by Inman, Dyer, and Jia, 1997; Taylor & Scheider, 1998; Tsiros & Mittal (2000 all cited by Saleh, 2012) post-purchase regret is consequently followed by low customer satisfaction which leads to the following unfavorable circumstances: negative word of mouth about the brand (Garcia & Perez, 2011, as cited by Saleh, 2012), no intention of repurchasing the brand (Tsiros & Mittal, 2000, as cited by Saleh, 2012), and a propensity to switch to alternative brands (Zeelenberg & Pieters, 1999; Bui, 2011; Garcia & Perez, 2011, as cited by Saleh, 2012). According to Bui et al (2011, as cited by Saleh, 2012) understanding the antecedents that cause consumers to experience post-purchase regret is therefore of importance to marketers as consumer approval of a brand is a step forward in terms of building brand loyalty.

Because of the negative effects of post-purchase regret experienced by both consumers and marketers, it is of crucial importance that marketers are aware of the factors associated with consumer attitudes and feelings of post-purchase regret. Marketers should attempt to strengthen the competitive positioning of their brands, and increase the loyalty of their consumers (Saleh, 2012). According to Ahmad, Khan & Khan (2016) marketers can do this by establishing a need for their products. Having a thorough understanding of the organisation's environmental factors, marketers are able to improve the status and attractiveness of their products and thus achieve a competitive advantage as well as an increased level of sale.

If both retailers and marketers do not prevent their consumers from experiencing feelings of post-purchase regret, these consumers will become effortless targets for competing brands.

According to George and Yaoyuney (2010, as cited by Saleh, 2012) at the stage of post-purchase regret, minimal effort is required by competitors to convert consumer loyalty to their brands (Saleh, 2012). Consumers who are aware of the factors responsible for feelings of regret may, in future, be more rational when making purchasing decisions. Marketers' understanding of these factors may also be useful in developing marketing strategies that both satisfy and retain their customers.

#### THEME 4: GENDER DIFFERENCES IN POST-PURCHASE REGRET

According to Mitchell and Walsh (2004, as cited by Bharadhwaj & Geetha, 2016) gender differences exist in the decision-making process in consumer behavior. However, literature is inconsistent with respect to the role of gender on impulse buying. Bellenger, Robertson, and Hirschman (1978); Kwon and Armstrong (2002, as cited by Bharadhwaj & Geetha, 2016) stipulated that gender does not have an effect on impulse buying; however, Lin and Lin (2005, as cited by Bharadhwaj & Geetha, 2016) argued that gender is associated with impulsive buying tendency. Based on their observations, Dittmar et al (1996, as cited by Bhakat & Muruganam, 2013) further maintain that gender, as a social category, affects impulse buying. Based on their research they postulated that males make impulsive decisions when purchasing instrumental and leisure items that convey their independence and activity, whereas females are more likely to make impulsive decisions when purchasing symbolic and self-expressive products that are associated with their appearance and emotional self-aspects.

Richins and Dawson, 1992; Dittmar et al, 1995; Rindfleisch, Burroughs et al, 1997; Wood, (1998, as cited by Bharadhwaj & Geetha, 2016) stipulated that female consumers exhibit impulse buying more frequently than males. Coley & Burgess (2003, as cited by Saleh, 2012) further maintain that female purchasing behavior is thought of as being more emotional than that of male purchasing behavior, therefore suggesting that women are more likely to engage in impulsive purchasing. Researchers have discovered that females practice this kind of purchase more frequently than males (Roberts, 1998; Coley & Burgess, 2003, Shoham & Brencic, 2003; Yurchisin & Johnson, 2004; Lin & Lin, 2005; Muller et al, 2007; Norum, 2008; Lai, 2010, as cited by Saleh, 2012). According to Rook & Hoch, 1985; Dittmar, Beattie, and Friese, (1996, as cited by Saleh, 2012) this was attributed to females' propensity to shop more habitually than males. Starrels (1994, as cited by Bharadhwaj & Geetha, 2016) further maintains that because women are more involved in household

shopping than men, they therefore are more inclined to make impulsive purchasing decisions, simply because they are exposed to shopping more often than men. Conversely, American Enterprise (1994, as cited by Bharadhwaj & Geetha, 2016) argues that women are more likely to compare the advertised prices of products, and make use of coupons, as well as engage in other “bargain hunting” strategies than men.

Chang, Yan & Eckman (2014, as cited by Ahmad, Khan, & Khan, 2016) investigated the direct and indirect impacts of apparel store environmental features and female consumers’ positive response to impulsive buying in retail stores. This study was conducted in the western region of the United States of America and identified that the direct effects of apparel store environment on female consumers’ positive emotional response induces impulsive buying.

As regards the effect of gender as a moderator of the relationship between unplanned buying and post-purchase regret, a study by Coley & Burgess (2003, as cited by Saleh, 2012) exhibited that females were more likely than males to display feelings of regret when making an impulsive buying decision. George and Yaoyuneyong (2010, as cited by Saleh, 2012) further maintain that women make regular visits to the stores in a week, therefore; the probability making impulsive purchases is increased. Gradually, over time, women become accustomed to impulse buying, and as a result feel less regret.

The research on gender and post-purchase regret displayed mixed results. This study aimed to uncover whether there was a gender difference in post-purchase regret in a South African context.

## Conclusion

After critically reviewing past literature on impulse buying and post-purchase regret, the researcher identified a need to study impulse buying in emerging countries as a result of the current development in retailing. Additionally, the researcher discovered a variation of results with respect to the role of gender on post-purchase regret, which the researcher aimed to uncover from a South African context. Lastly, in reviewing the literature of previous scholars, the researcher obtained a thorough understanding of the key variables of this study.

### **3. Methodology**

#### **3.1 Research design**

##### **3.1.1 Research paradigm**

The aim of this study was to establish a correlation between two variables - impulse buying and post-purchase regret - in order to better comprehend the concepts involved in the study. For this reason, the researcher believed that a positivistic paradigm was most appropriate as positivism considers objective, observable and verifiable facts when attempting to understand and explain phenomena (Du Plooy-Cilliers, Davis and Bezuidenhout's 2014). Mertens (2005, as cited by Al-Bargi and Shah, 2013) further supports the researcher's belief that the positivistic paradigm is most relevant to this study as positivists implement scientific methods, in order to study a phenomenon. Grix (2010, as cited by Al-Bargi and Shah, 2013) postulated that positivist researchers adopt approaches that integrate scientific methods with human affairs. This study was quantitative in nature, therefore a hypothesis was formulated by the researcher which, based on empirical evidence obtained through careful observation and testing of objects, would either be accepted or rejected.

#### **Position**

##### **Axiology**

According to Du Plooy-Cilliers, Davis and Bezuidenhout, (2014), the axiological position refers to the study of values and value judgments. Objective and value free research that is not tainted by personal bias is valued (Du Plooy-Cilliers, Davis and Bezuidenhout, 2014). Therefore, honesty and personal integrity is valued. It is important that positivists are able to trust that the findings they have obtained in their research study are an accurate reflection of an objective reality (Du Plooy-Cilliers, Davis and Bezuidenhout, 2014).

##### **Epistemology**

The epistemological position deals with the nature of knowledge (Du Plooy-Cilliers, Davis and Bezuidenhout, 2014). It is believed by positivists that valid knowledge can only be obtained from objective, observable evidence (Du Plooy-Cilliers, Davis and Bezuidenhout, 2014). The aim of this research study was to investigate whether a relationship between two variables existed. This required the researcher to obtain the evidence necessary to reject or accept the hypothesis. According to Guba and Lincoln (1994 as cited by Al-Bargi and Shah, 2013) both the researcher and the object under investigation exist as independent entities; the researcher is required to study the object whilst ensuring neither entity has an influence on one another. Cohen et al (2007, as cited by Al-Bargi and Shah, 2013) stipulate that the

function of the researcher is therefore to ensure a distant and non-interactive position.

## Ontology

According to Guba and Lincoln (1994 as cited by Al-Bargi and Shah, 2013, p. 254) the “positivist paradigm takes realism as its ontological stance, assuming that reality exists and is driven by immutable natural laws and mechanism.” According to Du Plooy-Cilliers, Davis and Bezuidenhout, (2014), the ontological position is the study of being, existence, or reality and includes the assumptions that are made about certain phenomena. It is believed by positivists that reality is observable and measurable (Du Plooy-Cilliers, Davis and Bezuidenhout, 2014). Cohen et al (2007 as cited by Al-Bargi and Shah, 2013, 2013, p. 254) stipulated that positivist researchers consider the world as an “external” and “objective” reality whereby observers are considered independent. Cohen et al (2007 as cited by Al-Bargi and Shah, 2013, 2013) further maintains that positivists believe that the world is able to be known through the exploration of quantitative methodologies; positivists view the world as a valuable object when it is engaged with and made sense of by human beings.

### 3.1.2 Conceptual approach and design

#### Research approach: Quantitative

According to Leedy and Ormrod (2010) quantitative research methods are research methods dealing with numbers and anything that is measurable in a systematic way of investigation of phenomena and their relationships. A quantitative research approach is used to answer questions on relationships within measurable variables with an intention to explain, predict and control a phenomena (Leedy 1993). As this was the aim of this research study; to determine whether a relationship exists between two variables, quantitative research methods were employed. A quantitative approach is relevant to this study since positivism is “the approach of the natural sciences” (Du Plooy-Cilliers, Davis and Bezuidenhout, 2014, p. 24). Because positivists consider objective, observable and verifiable facts when attempting to understand social phenomena, they therefore depend on quantitative research.

#### Line of reasoning: Deductive

The line of reasoning for this study was deductive. According to Du Plooy-Cilliers, Davis and Bezuidenhout, (2014) deductive theorizing is referred to as top-down theorizing and involves reasoning from general assumptions to more specific assumptions. In deductive research a theory is constructed before a study is carried out. The researcher starts by exploring broad

and general aspects of a theory and then applies these to a more specific topic under investigation. Deductive theorizing tests existing theories through the implementation of research studies (Du Plooy-Cilliers, Davis and Bezuidenhout, 2014).

This research study followed a deductive line of reasoning as general theories on the related topic were utilized to generate information which linked the research proposal with a specific conclusion.

Type of approach: Correlational research

According to Kumar (2011, as cited by Du Plooy-Cilliers, Davis and Bezuidenhout, 2014) the aim of correlational research is to establish whether a relationship, association or interdependence between two or more aspects of a situation exists. Because this research study looked at the relationship between two variables, impulse buying and post-purchase regret, a correlational research study was therefore most suitable.

Time-dimension: Cross-sectional

This study made use of a cross sectional design. Cross sectional survey designs are used to create an overall picture of a phenomenon at a point in time. Data is collected from the respondents only once, this is not repeated or done over an extended period of time (Du Plooy-Cilliers, Davis and Bezuidenhout, 2014).

This research study possessed the characteristics of a cross-sectional time dimension, as it required respondents to complete a questionnaire that was collected immediately after completion. Another reason for the use of a cross-sectional design was because the data was only collected from respondents once before undergoing analysis, not over intervals of time.

## 3.2 Research plan

### 3.2.1 Population

*Unit of Analysis:* Individuals

*Target Population:* Individual shoppers in South Africa

*Accessible Population:* Individual shoppers who were in The Pavilion between 9am and 5pm on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> July and Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> July and were willing to complete a survey.

### *Population Parameters:*

*The nature of the population* – Individual shoppers in The Pavilion over the age of 18

*The unique characteristics of the population* - Individual shoppers over the age of 18 who were in The Pavilion between 9am and 5pm on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> July and Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> July.

### 3.2.2 Sampling

#### Non-probability Sampling

Non-probability sampling is used when it is impossible to establish who the total population is or when it is difficult to access the whole population (Du Plooy-Cilliers, Davis and Bezuidenhout, 2014). When using non-probability sampling, not all elements in the population will have an equal chance of being selected to form part of the sample (Du Plooy-Cilliers, Davis and Bezuidenhout, 2014).

Because it would have been difficult, laborious and costly to include every individual shopping in The Pavillion in this study, a non-probability sampling method was used. Only 25 respondents who were shopping at The Pavillion on the chosen date, and who were willing to complete the questionnaire formed part of the research study. Therefore, not every element in the population had an equal chance of being used in this study.

#### Sample Method: Accidental Sampling

The method of sampling used for this study was accidental sampling. Accidental sampling consists of elements that are included in the study because they happen to be in the right place at the right time (Du Plooy-Cilliers, Davis and Bezuidenhout, 2014). For the purpose of this study this included individuals who happened to be at the right place (The Pavilion) at the right time (between 9am and 5pm) and were willing to answer the researcher's questionnaire. According to Du Plooy-Cilliers, Davis and Bezuidenhout (2014) this sampling method is risky as generalizing the outcome to the rest of the population is not possible; this is because some factors may be left out, and the location may be biased towards a particular portion of the population. The sample will differ depending on the time of day and the day of the month (Du Plooy-Cilliers, Davis and Bezuidenhout, 2014).

#### Sample Size: 25 individuals

The population is often made up of many elements that would take great time and be too costly to reach or analyse; for this reason, the population is reduced to a number that is more manageable (Du Plooy-Cilliers, Davis and Bezuidenhout, 2014).

For this study, 25 elements were needed to form the sample size. Dealing with a smaller sample size kept both the costs and timeframe low in order to complete the research study promptly.

### 3.2.3 Data collection method

#### Data collection method: Questionnaire

For this research study, a self-developed questionnaire was used to obtain data about buyers' impulsive purchases and whether or not these purchases resulted in regret (See Annexure A). The researcher believed that a questionnaire was the most appropriate data collection method as firstly, this study required individuals to answer a number of basic questions about their shopping habits and post-purchase attitudes in order to determine correlations and basic statistics. Secondly, this study aimed to target a larger sample, therefore a questionnaire was most suitable as it allowed for an extensive amount of data to be obtained. Debois (2016) has identified various disadvantages associated with the use of questionnaires.

#### *Dishonesty*

Respondents may not answer the questionnaire truthfully; they may instead provide answers which they think are more socially desirable (Du Plooy-Cilliers, Davis and Bezuidenhout). The researcher therefore stipulated the need for all questions to be answered truthfully in the introduction of the questionnaire (Annexure A). Another reason participants may provide dishonest answers is to protect their privacy (Debois, 2016). The researcher therefore assured participants that their responses would remain anonymous; this was stipulated in the non-disclosure agreement (Annexure C).

#### *Differences in understanding and interpretation*

Participants may have trouble understanding the meaning of a question which may seem clear to the researcher and as a result, this miscommunication may lead to skewed results (Debois, 2016). In order to avoid differences in understanding and interpretation, the researcher ensured that the questions asked in the questionnaire were understandable. This was done by avoiding the use of jargon and complex vocabulary. The researcher pretested the questionnaire before conducting the research study in order to ensure that the questions were understandable. The researcher was also present during the time participants completed the questionnaire; therefore, should they have had any questions, the researcher was able to assist them.

### *Skipped questions*

When using questionnaires, there is a possibility that participants may ignore some questions (Debois, 2016). In order to avoid this, the researcher ensured that the questionnaire was short (comprising only 10 questions) and uncomplicated.

### 3.2.4 Data analysis methods

#### Data Analysis Method: Statistical Analysis

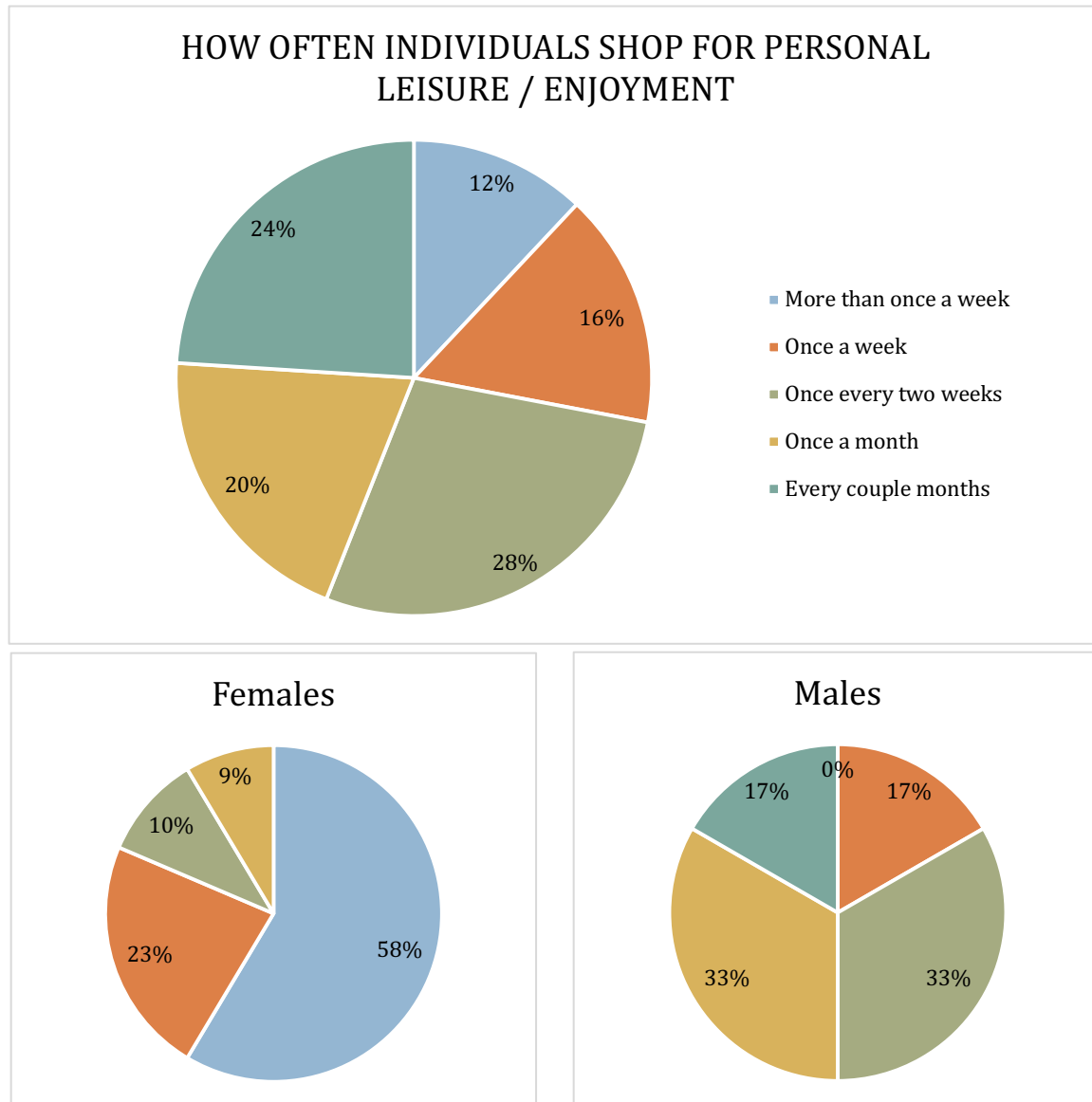
In order to analyze the numerical data obtained and support the decision-making process, statistical techniques were used. For this research study, the researcher used a correlation analysis method as well as basic descriptive statistics.

The correlation coefficient was calculated in order to determine whether two values are related in some way. The most common measure of correlation in statistics is the Pearson Correlation which is represented by the symbol  $r$ .

The correlation analysis was used to determine the strength of the relationship between the two variables under investigation (impulse buying; post-purchase regret). Descriptive statistics were also used to describe the characteristics of the data obtained as well as provide a summary of the sample and the measure.

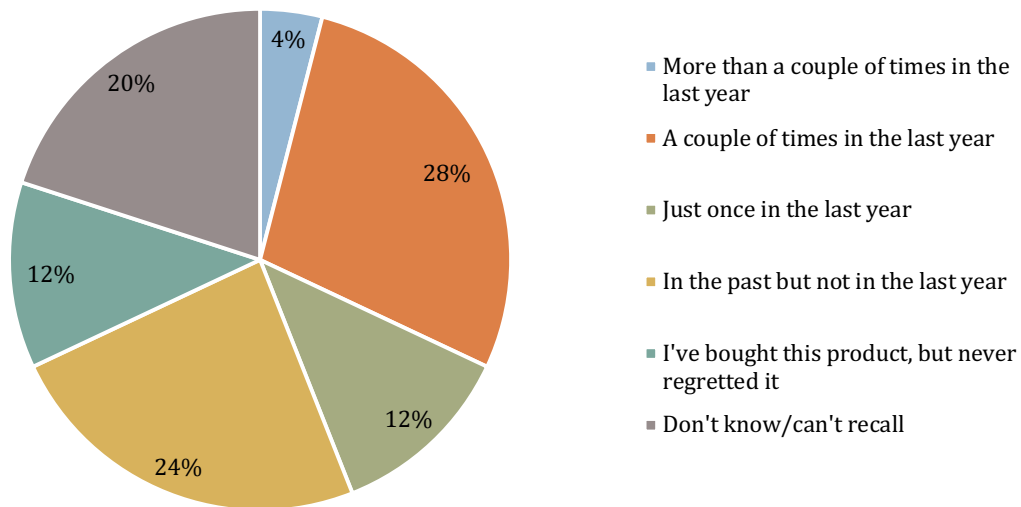
## 4. Findings

### 4.1 Findings & interpretation of findings

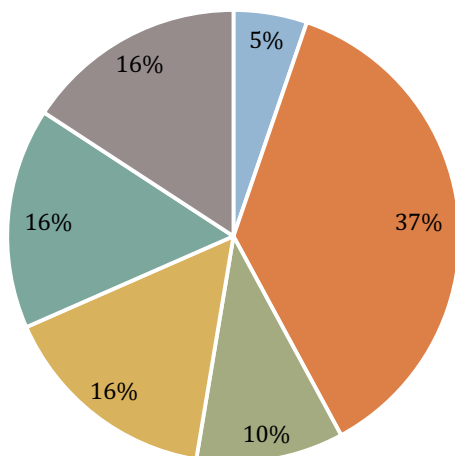


From the research study conducted, it was found that 23% of the female participants shop for personal leisure or enjoyment once a week, while majority of females (58%) shop for leisure or enjoyment more than once a week. On the other hand, zero male participants were found to shop more than once a week, and only 17% shop for personal leisure or enjoyment once a week. 66% of the male participants were found to shop either once every two weeks or once a month. It is therefore evident that females shop more frequently for personal leisure and enjoyment than males.

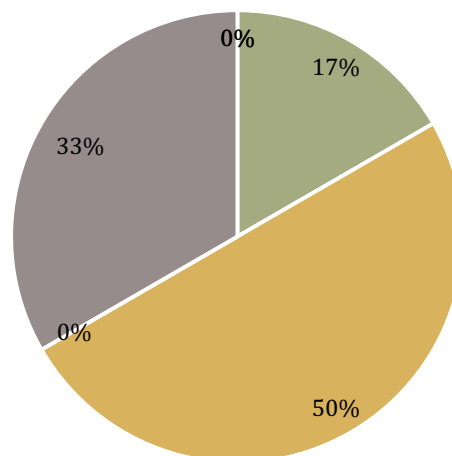
### HOW OFTEN INDIVIDUALS REGRETTED PURCHASING AN ITEM OF CLOTHING



#### Females

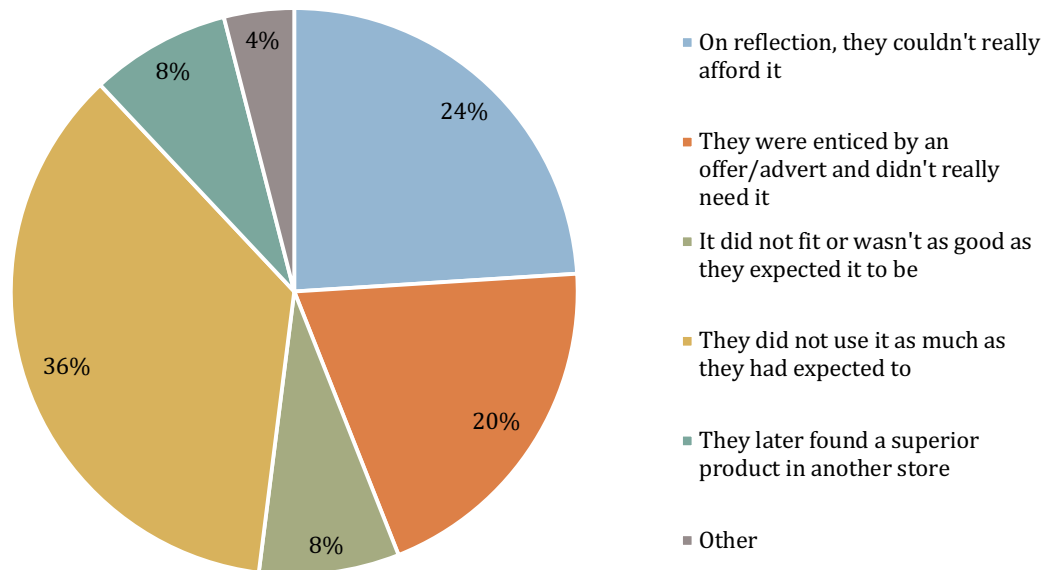


#### Males

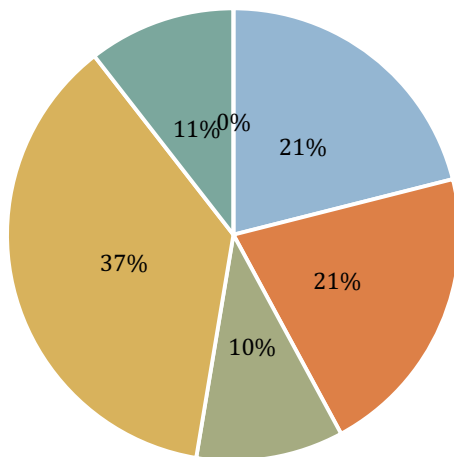


The majority of females (37%) regretted purchasing an item of clothing a couple of times in the last year. Although this was the result for the female majority, 0% of males regretted making a purchase this often. The majority of male participants (50%) regretted making a purchase in the past, but not in the last year. No males regretted purchasing an item of clothing more than a couple of times in the last year, while 5% of female participants did. 16% of female participants purchased a product and did not regret it, however, this was the response of 0% of males.

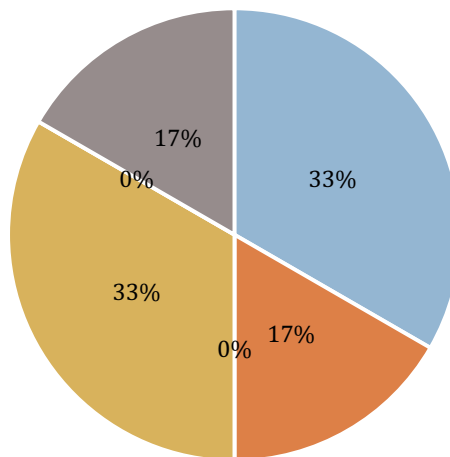
## REASONS INDIVIDUALS REGRETTED A PURCHASE



### Females



### Males



The main reason both males and females regretted purchasing an item of clothing was because they did not use it as much as they had expected to – females 37% and males 33%. The second reason both males and females regretted making a purchase was because, on reflection they could not afford it – females 21% and males 33%. 21% of female participants were enticed by an offer or advert and felt they need not have made the purchase, while only 17% of male participants were enticed by an offer or advert. No males regretted making a purchase as a result of finding a superior product in another store, while this was the reason for 11% of females. Again, no males regretted making a purchase because the item of clothing did not fit or was not as good as they had expected it to be, however this was the reason for regret for 10% of females. No females selected the “other”

option, while one male did. His specification was that he never makes impulsive decisions, and therefore does not feel regret.

#### Pearson's r

The results from question 3 and question 8 were utilized by the researcher to calculate the Pearson's R correlation coefficient for the study. Question 3 asked participants if they found themselves purchasing items in a store without having any previous intention. The question was measured utilising a 5-point Likert-scale ranging from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*. Question 8 asked participants whether or not they felt regret after making an impulsive purchase. This question was also measured utilising a 5-point Likert-scale ranging from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*. From the results, the Pearson's R correlation coefficient was found to be  $r = 0$ . Therefore, from this study, it can be concluded that there is no correlation between impulse buying and post-purchase regret. (Annexure G)

#### Descriptive analysis of study variables

Annexure H Displays means, standard deviations and coefficients of variation for all questions asked in the questionnaire which utilized a 5-point Likert scale. The Likert scale ranged from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*.

The overall mean of South African (SA) consumers who enjoy shopping even when they are not looking for anything in particular is 4.04. From this statistic it can be concluded that both genders enjoy shopping as an activity.

The overall mean for SA consumers who feel a sense of excitement when making an impulsive purchase is 3.56. The mean is higher for female consumers (3.95) than male consumers (2.33). From this statistic it can be deduced that female consumers feel a sense of excitement when making impulsive purchases, while male consumers do not.

When compared to females, males are more cost conscious (males = 4.0 and females 3.63), and when exposed to a good offer they find it less difficult to control their urges (males = 2.67 and females 3.16) and are less likely to purchase more than they had anticipated (males = 3.33 and females = 3.63).

The overall mean for SA consumers who feel regret after making an impulsive purchase is 3. This result is neutral, however, when comparing the mean of male consumers to female consumers it can be found that males are more likely to regret making an impulsive purchase (3.17) than females (2.95).

#### 4.2 Discussion of findings

American Enterprise (1994, as cited by Bharadhwaj & Geetha, 2016) argue that women are more likely to compare the advertised prices of products, make use of coupons, as well as engage in other “bargain hunting” strategies than men. The results of this research study concur with this statement as females are less cost conscious than males (females 3.63 and males = 4.0). When exposed to a good offer, they find it more difficult to control their urges (females 3.16 and males = 2.67) and are more likely to purchase more than they had anticipated than males (females = 3.63 and males = 3.33).

According to Rook (1987, as cited by Nanda, 2013, p. 170) “during impulse buying, the consumer experiences an instantaneous, overpowering and persistent desire.” The results of this research study support Rook’s statement as the mean of females who feel a sense of excitement when making an impulsive purchase is 3.56.

According to Bell 1982; Tsiros and Mittal (2000, as cited by Lee & Cotte, 2009) regret occurs when the outcome obtained compares unfavourably with an outcome that could have been superior, had the individual chosen differently. According to the findings of this research study, no males regretted making a purchase as a result of finding a superior product in another store, while this was the reason for 11% of females.

Studies by Hoch & Loewenstein, (1991, as cited by Saleh, 2012) have identified that impulse buying leads to a sense of post-purchase regret. According to the research study conducted, no correlation was identified between impulse buying and post-purchase regret.

A study by Coley & Burgess (2003, as cited by Saleh, 2012) exhibited that females were more likely than males to display feelings of regret when making an impulsive buying decision.

According to the research study conducted, the overall mean for SA consumers who feel regret after making an impulsive purchase is 3. The result is neutral, however, when comparing the mean of male consumers to female consumers, it was found that males are

more likely to regret making an impulsive purchase (3.17) than females (2.95). Therefore, the results of this study concur with the results obtained by Coley and Burgess.

According to George and Yaoyuneyong (2010, as cited by Saleh, 2012) women make regular visits to the stores in a week. The findings of this research study concur with the research of George and Yaoyuneyong, as it was found that 23% of the female participants shop for personal leisure or enjoyment once a week, while majority of females (58%) shop for leisure or enjoyment more than once a week. George and Yaoyuneyong believe that the frequent visits of women to shopping centres as a result increases the probability of them making impulsive purchases. Richins and Dawson, 1992; Dittmar et al, 1995; Rindfleisch, Burroughs et al, 1997; Wood, (1998, as cited by Bharadhwaj & Geetha, 2016) too believe that female consumers exhibit impulse buying more frequently than males. According to the research study conducted, females are more likely than males to purchase an item without having any previous intention to purchase that item (females = 3.79 and males = 3.5). Females' frequent visits to the stores as well as their increased likelihood to make purchases without previous intention are both in conjunction with the belief of George and Yaoyuneyong. Therefore, it can be said that a possible reason for the impulsive purchases made by females is their repeated store visits.

#### 4.3 Validity and reliability

According to [Tavakol & Dennick, 2011, as cited by Mohajan, 2017] *validity* and *reliability* are important concepts in modern research, as they are used for enhancing the accuracy of the assessment and evaluation of a research work. The researcher conducted research methods which generated measurable, numerical and statistical results. The results obtained from the study were both valid and reliable, therefore, should a different researcher wish to repeat the research study, he or she should come to a similar result.

##### Reliability

According to Mouton (1996, as cited by Du Plooy-Cilliers, Davis and Bezuidenhout, 2014, p. 254) "reliability refers to the fact that different research participants being tested by the same instrument at different times should respond identically to that instrument". Reliability measures the consistency, precision, repeatability, and trustworthiness of a research study (Chakrabartty, 2013, as cited by Mohajan, 2017). The reliability of a measure is achieved when it consistently, without bias, measures the concepts it is supposed to measure

(Sekaran, 2003, as cited by Dikko, 2016). A reliable study can have positive implications for other fields, improve the standard of the research, and determine whether the results can be used to conduct further research (Mohajan, 2017)

### Validity

Validity determines whether or not the research study measured what it was supposed to measure (Du Plooy-Cilliers, Davis and Bezuidenhout, 2014). Punch (1998, as cited by Priest, Roberts & Traynor, 2006)

P. 43) defines validity as “the extent to which a measure accurately represents the concept it claims to measure”. There are two broad measures of validity: external validity and internal validity. External validity addresses the ability to apply with confidence the findings of the study to other people and other situations and ensures that the 'conditions under which the study is carried out are representative of the situations and time to which the results are to apply' (Black 1999, as cited by Priest et al, 2006). Internal validity addresses the reasons for the outcomes of the study, and helps to reduce other, often unanticipated, reasons for these outcomes (Priest et al, 2006).

However, not all research is reliable and valid, errors may occur and as a result affect the data. Sahifa (2015) has identified factors which may decrease the validity and reliability of a research study, these include: unclear direction, vocabulary and sentence structure, ambiguity, mood of the participant and homogeneity of the sample.

### Unclear direction

The validity and reliability of the research study would be affected if participants were not provided with clear, understandable instructions (Sahifa, 2015). Therefore, the aim of the study as well as what the participants were required to do were both stipulated on the questionnaire to ensure participants were aware of what the study entailed and what was required of them. The researcher was also present during the time participants completed the questionnaire; therefore, should they have had any questions, the researcher was able to assist them.

### Vocabulary and sentence structure

The validity and reliability of the research study would be lowered if the participants did not understand the questions (Sahifa, 2015). The researcher therefore ensured that the questions asked in the questionnaire were understandable. This was done by avoiding the

use of jargon and complex vocabulary. The researcher also pretested the questionnaire before conducting the research study in order to ensure that the questions were understandable.

#### Ambiguity

Ambiguous questions may lead to misinterpretation, differing interpretation and confusion of participants and as a result may reduce the validity and reliability of the research study (Sahifa, 2015). The researcher therefore avoided the use of ambiguous questions. This was ensured by firstly having the researcher's supervisor observe the questionnaire and secondly by pretesting the questionnaire before conducting the data collection method.

#### Participants' mood

The mood of participants' is another crucial factor in obtaining valid and reliable answers. Certain personal factors may influence participants' responses and invalidate the manner in which they interpret the questions asked (Sahifa, 2015). Factors such as tiredness, disinterest and lack of time may have an effect on participant's responses and therefore decrease the validity and reliability of the research study.

#### Homogeneity of the group

A diverse sample is an authentication that the research study is valid and reliable (Sahifa, 2015). The researcher therefore took into account factors such as age, sex and cultural background when selecting participants to form part of the research study.

## 5. Conclusion

The findings of this research study were obtained through the conduction of a quantitative research study which made use of a self-developed, closed-ended questionnaire. From the results of this research study, it can be concluded that there is no correlation between impulse buying and post-purchase regret. The research goal was not achieved as the researcher will reject the hypothesis (H1) and will not reject the null hypothesis (H0). Furthermore, there is insufficient evidence to suggest that a relationship exists between impulse buying and post-purchase regret, therefore, the research problem was not solved. The researcher believes that in order to obtain more accurate results, the research study should be implemented on a larger scale. This can be done by increasing the sample size, collecting data over a longer period of time, as well as collecting data from more than one shopping mall.

### 5.1 Implications of findings for future practices

The researcher believes that a variety of factors should be considered for future research on this topic. Firstly, the research could be expanded to include demographic subcultures, social classes and lifestyle factors. Future research could also explore impulse buying within television, internet, telemarketing, direct mail shopping, and other non-store formats. Another consideration for future research could be to investigate how impulse buyers justify their behaviour. Lastly, future research could investigate how various marketing factors affect impulse buying and identify which have the strongest influence.

This research study anticipated to make the following contributions to society:

#### *Marketing*

This research study hoped to contribute to the marketing field. The researcher believed that knowing the antecedents responsible for causing regret would assist marketers in reducing the negative effects post-purchase regret has on a brand. The researcher also believed that understanding whether a specific gender is more likely to make an impulsive decision which results in regret could be beneficial to marketers in developing market segmentation, targeting and positioning strategies.

#### *Consumers*

This research study also hoped to assist consumers. If consumers were aware that their impulsive purchasing habits lead to regret, they would hopefully be more cautious when

making decisions and implement measures which reduce their ability to make impulsive purchases, such as; making fewer visits to shopping malls, preparing a list of needed items, avoiding the use of credit cards and researching before making a purchase.

#### *Contribution to the existing body of knowledge*

As there is a need to study impulse buying in emerging countries, this research study hoped to fulfil this need by contributing to the existing body of knowledge. The researcher hoped to do this by expanding on the knowledge that had previously been obtained, from a South African perspective. The researcher believed that determining whether a positive correlation exists between impulse purchasing and post-purchase regret would be the first step in creating a foundation that would allow for future studies.

## 5.2 Ethical considerations

The researcher took into consideration the following ethical issues which may have had an effect on the *participants* in the process of conducting the research study:

#### *Informed consent*

The researcher ensured that the participants were made aware that they were taking part in a research study. They were formally notified and gave consent. It was necessary that all participants understood what was required of them, whether and how their identities would be protected, as well as how the research results would be used (du Plooy-Cilliers et al, 2014).

For the purpose of this research study, participants signed a formal document (consent form) explaining what would be required of them, how their identities would be protected as well as what their answers would be used for. (See Annexure B). The purpose of the research study was also stipulated in the introduction of the questionnaire, providing respondents with a further understanding of the research study they were participating in. The researcher also obtained ethical clearance from the Independent Institute of Education (IIE) as well as gatekeeper permission from The Pavilion management allowing the distribution of questionnaires (See Annexure D).

#### *Collecting data from participants*

The physical and psychological comfort of the participants was prioritized when collecting the data (du Plooy-Cilliers et al, 2014). The researcher ensured the comfort of the

participants by stipulating the protection of their identities and personal information in the consent form previously mentioned. The participants' time was not wasted; the researcher ensured this through the successful organization of documentation. The questionnaire had been pretested to estimate the time it would take to complete; this time was stipulated on the questionnaire in order to ensure that the participants were aware of the amount of time they would be sacrificing.

### *Anonymity*

This concept refers to the protection of the identity and personal information of respondents by guaranteeing them that their responses will be kept private (du Plooy-Cilliers et al, 2014). For the purpose of this study, it was stipulated in both the consent form and the introduction of the questionnaire that the participants would remain anonymous. A sample of respondents were required to answer the questionnaire which did not ask for their names or any other identifying information. After completion, the questionnaires were analysed and there was no way of linking the respondent's identities to the answers in the questionnaires. The researcher's supervisor, too, had access to the raw data obtained. However, the participant's identities remained anonymous and untraceable to both the researcher and the researcher's supervisor.

The researcher took ethical behaviour into consideration when analysing and reporting the data. This was ensured through avoiding unethical behaviours such as:

### *Falsifying information*

According to du Plooy-Cilliers et al (2014) falsifying information can be defined as deliberately fabricating or changing data. For the purpose of this study, the researcher did not take any short cuts or falsify facts and was honest with all the results obtained in the research study. Sufficient time was given to complete this study in order to ensure that the researcher did not run out of time and falsify the information.

### *Bias*

According to du Plooy-Cilliers et al (2014) bias is the desire or expectation of achieving a particular result. The researcher set aside his/her opinions and beliefs to ensure that the data collection process and data interpretation was not influenced.

### *Misusing information*

According to du Plooy-Cilliers et al (2014) the data collected from participants for the research study may only be used for other purposes if they have given permission for the researcher to do so. For the purpose of this research study, no personal information (name, cellphone number etc.) Was required from participants. All data collected for the purpose of this research study was not used for any other reasons. This was stated in the consent form which the participants read and gave consent to before taking part in the research study.

### 5.3 Limitations

According to du Plooy-Cilliers et al (2014) a limitation can be described as a constraint or limit in a research study that cannot be controlled such as time, financial resources and access to information. A limitation may redefine the scope of the research. The following identified limitations may have had an effect on this research study:

#### *Access to population*

Due to the fact that the data collection method was restricted to The Pavilion, the researcher may have had difficulty accessing the required population for this study.

#### *Time*

The researcher was restricted to 2 days (between 9am and 5pm on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> July and Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> July) in which to find participants who were willing to take part in the research study. All the necessary information was obtained in this timeframe. During the data collection this was viewed as a limitation as the researcher may have failed to find 25 participants who were willing to complete the questionnaire within the timeframe. Had the researcher failed to find 25 participants to complete the questionnaires, he/she would have had to extend the timeframe until all 25 questionnaires were completed.

#### *Budget*

There was no budget for this research study. This was therefore viewed as a limitation.

#### *Honesty*

Participants in the research study may have not accurately answered each question in the questionnaire; they may have provided the researcher with answers that they thought he/she wanted to know, rather than give their own personal opinions. If the participants did not answer honestly, the results of the research study would not be accurate. By informing

participants that their responses would remain anonymous, it was hoped that they would therefore be encouraged to provide the researcher with honest answers.

#### *Skills of the researcher*

The researcher had no prior experience in conducting a research study, therefore, he/she may have not had the skills necessary to conduct the research study. This may have resulted in the misinterpretation of important information which the participants provided in the questionnaires. The researcher addressed this issue by making use of his/her supervisor's knowledge and experience. The researcher's supervisor has conducted previous research studies, and his/her knowledge and expertise aided the researcher in developing the necessary skills required to conduct this study.

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Annexure A:  
Questionnaire

The aim of this questionnaire is to determine whether a relationship exists between impulse purchasing and post-purchase regret. This questionnaire consists of ten closed questions and completion time is estimated at 10 minutes. Please answer all questions to the best of your ability, answering each question truthfully. Your answers will be kept confidential and will be used only for the purpose of this research study.

Age \_\_\_\_\_

Gender \_\_\_\_\_

1. I shop \_\_\_\_\_ for personal leisure/enjoyment? \*Note: shopping is an activity that does not necessarily result in the purchase of a product.

More than once a week

Once a week

Once every two weeks

Once a month

Every couple months

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements:

|                                                                                                                        | Strongly<br>Disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly<br>Agree |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|----------|---------|-------|-------------------|
| 2. I enjoy shopping, even when I am not looking for something in particular                                            | 1                    | 2        | 3       | 4     | 5                 |
| 3. When I go to the store, I find myself purchasing things without having any previous intention to purchase that item | 1                    | 2        | 3       | 4     | 5                 |
| 4. I feel a sense of excitement when I make an impulse purchase                                                        | 1                    | 2        | 3       | 4     | 5                 |

Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Neutral    Agree    Strongly Agree

|                                                                               |   |   |   |   |   |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5. I'm conscious of cost and finding the cheapest option is a priority for me | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. I have difficulty controlling my urge to buy when I see a good offer       | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. When I see a good deal, I tend to buy more than I had anticipated          | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8. I feel regret after making an impulsive purchase                           | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

9. How often, if ever, have you regretted purchasing an item of clothing?

More than a couple of times in the last year

A couple of times in the last year

Just once in the last year

In the past but not in the last year

I've bought this product, but never regretted it

Don't know/can't recall

10. What are the main reasons for regretting a purchase?

On reflection, I couldn't really afford it

I was enticed by an offer or an advert and didn't really need it

It did not fit or wasn't as good as I expected it to be

I did not use it as much as I expected to

I later found a superior product in another store

Other, please specify

Annexure B:  
Participant consent form

I agree to participate in the research conducted by Natasha Grey. This research has been explained to me and I understand what participation in this research will involve.

I understand that:

1. I agree to complete a questionnaire for this research.
2. My anonymity will be ensured. My name and personal details will not be asked of and my answers will not be able to be traced.
3. My participation in this research is voluntary and I have the right to withdraw from the research at any time. There will be no repercussions should I choose to withdraw from the research.
4. I may choose not to answer any of the questions that are asked in the questionnaire

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Signature

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Date

Annexure C:  
Non-disclosure agreement

Date: 7<sup>th</sup> July 2018

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Annexure D:  
Concept Document

Annexure E:  
Ethical Clearance

Annexure F:  
Gatekeeper Permission

Annexure G:  
Pearson's r

|      | x    | y | SUM((x-xbar)(y-ybar)) | SUM((x-xbar)^2*(y-ybar)^2) |
|------|------|---|-----------------------|----------------------------|
|      | 5    | 1 | -2,56                 | 6,5536                     |
|      | 3    | 3 | 0                     | 0                          |
|      | 2    | 2 | 1,72                  | 2,9584                     |
|      | 2    | 3 | 0                     | 0                          |
|      | 4    | 3 | 0                     | 0                          |
|      | 3    | 3 | 0                     | 0                          |
|      | 2    | 2 | 1,72                  | 2,9584                     |
|      | 4    | 4 | 0,28                  | 0,0784                     |
|      | 4    | 4 | 0,28                  | 0,0784                     |
|      | 4    | 4 | 0,28                  | 0,0784                     |
|      | 5    | 4 | 1,28                  | 1,6384                     |
|      | 5    | 3 | 0                     | 0                          |
|      | 3    | 2 | 0,72                  | 0,5184                     |
|      | 3    | 3 | 0                     | 0                          |
|      | 4    | 3 | 0                     | 0                          |
|      | 5    | 3 | 0                     | 0                          |
|      | 4    | 3 | 0                     | 0                          |
|      | 5    | 3 | 0                     | 0                          |
|      | 5    | 3 | 0                     | 0                          |
|      | 1    | 5 | -5,44                 | 29,5936                    |
|      | 4    | 4 | 0,28                  | 0,0784                     |
|      | 3    | 1 | 1,44                  | 2,0736                     |
|      | 4    | 3 | 0                     | 0                          |
|      | 4    | 3 | 0                     | 0                          |
|      | 5    | 3 | 0                     | 0                          |
|      |      |   |                       |                            |
| Xbar | 3,72 |   | 0                     | 46,608                     |
| Ybar | 3    |   |                       | 6,8270052                  |
|      |      |   |                       |                            |
| r    | 0    |   |                       |                            |

Annexure H:  
Descriptive analysis of study variables

| Variables                                                                                                           | Mean | Standard Deviation | Coefficient of variation |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|--------------------|--------------------------|
| I enjoy shopping, even when I am not looking for something in particular                                            | 4.04 | 0,92               | 22.77                    |
| When I go to the store, I find myself purchasing things without having any previous intention to purchase that item | 3.72 | 1.11               | 29.84                    |
| I feel a sense of excitement when I make an impulse purchase                                                        | 3.56 | 1.13               | 31.74                    |
| I'm conscious of cost and finding the cheapest option is a priority for me                                          | 3.72 | 1,11               | 29.84                    |
| I have difficulty controlling my urge to buy when I see a good offer                                                | 3.04 | 1.04               | 34.21                    |
| When I see a good deal, I tend to buy more than I had anticipated                                                   | 3.56 | 1.02               | 28.65                    |
| I feel regret after making an impulsive purchase                                                                    | 3    | 0.89               | 29.67                    |

- MEN (Unshaded)
- WOMEN (Shaded)

| Variables                                                                                                           | Mean | Standard deviation | Coefficient of variation |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|--------------------|--------------------------|
| I enjoy shopping, even when I am not looking for something in particular                                            | 4.17 | 0.37               | 8.87                     |
|                                                                                                                     | 4    | 1.03               | 25.75                    |
| When I go to the store, I find myself purchasing things without having any previous intention to purchase that item | 3.5  | 1.26               | 36                       |
|                                                                                                                     | 3.79 | 1.06               | 27.97                    |
| I feel a sense of excitement when I make an impulse purchase                                                        | 2.33 | 0.75               | 32.19                    |
|                                                                                                                     | 3.95 | 0.94               | 23.80                    |
| I'm conscious of cost and finding the cheapest option is a priority for me                                          | 4    | 1.15               | 28.75                    |
|                                                                                                                     | 3.63 | 1.09               | 30.03                    |
| I have difficulty controlling my urge to buy when I see a good offer                                                | 2.67 | 1.37               | 51.31                    |
|                                                                                                                     | 3.16 | 0.87               | 27.53                    |
| When I see a good deal, I tend to buy more than I had anticipated                                                   | 3.33 | 0.75               | 22.52                    |
|                                                                                                                     | 3.63 | 1.09               | 30.03                    |
| I feel regret after making an impulsive purchase                                                                    | 3.17 | 1.21               | 38.17                    |
|                                                                                                                     | 2.95 | 0.76               | 25.76                    |

Annexure I:  
Originality Report