The Impact of Social Media Influence, Digital Payment Convenience, and Brand Equity on Impulse Purchase Behavior: A Structural Equation Modeling Approach

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ABSTRACT

Impulse purchase behaviour has become a significant phenomenon driven by digital marketing and payment system advancements in contemporary consumer markets. This study examines the effects of social media influence, digital payment convenience, and brand equity on impulse purchase behaviour, with emotional states acting as mediators and perceived risk as moderators. A survey was conducted among 461 respondents in Johor, and data were analysed using structural equation modelling (SEM) in SmartPLS. The results show that social media influence and digital payment convenience significantly positively affect impulse purchase behaviour. Brand equity also positively influences impulse buying, emphasising the importance of trust and perceived value in consumer decisions. Additionally, emotional states were found to mediate these relationships partially. Perceived risk, however, negatively moderates the relationship between social media influence and impulse purchase behaviour, reducing the impact of social media on impulse purchases when risk perception is high. This study provides valuable insights into contemporary consumer behaviour. It offers practical recommendations for marketers to refine social media strategies, optimise payment systems, enhance brand equity, and mitigate perceived risks to foster impulse buying.

Keywords: Impulse Purchase, Social Media Influence, Digital Payment Convenience, Brand Equity, Perceived Risk

INTRODUCTION

Impulse purchases, characterised by unplanned and spontaneous buying decisions, represent a significant aspect of consumer behaviour with profound implications for retailers and marketers. Unlike deliberate purchasing decisions, impulse purchases are typically driven by immediate stimuli that bypass rational thought processes, making them an area of keen interest in consumer behaviour research. Digital technologies have amplified this phenomenon, fundamentally transforming the retail landscape. By integrating features such as instant connectivity, personalised experiences, and seamless transactions, digital platforms create a fertile ground for impulsive buying behaviours (Zhang et al., 2022). Social media platforms, in particular, have revolutionised how consumers interact with brands. These platforms provide users instant access to product information, peer reviews, and visually engaging advertisements. Personalised content and influencer endorsements foster emotional connections that can drive impulsive decision-making. Recent studies indicate that visual and interactive social media content has a heightened capacity to elicit emotional responses, bypassing rational deliberation and encouraging unplanned purchases (Hudson et al., 2016; Zhang et al., 2022). However, gaps still need to be in understanding the differential impacts of various social media content types, such as videos versus static images, and the moderating effects of perceived risk in these contexts.

Advancements in digital payment systems further enhance the ease of making impulsive purchases. Technologies such as e-wallets, contactless payments, and buy-now-pay-later schemes reduce transactional friction, enabling consumers to complete purchases swiftly and with minimal cognitive effort. These systems facilitate convenience and diminish the perceived financial impact of transactions, contributing to increased impulsivity (Lu et al., 2023). Despite the extensive adoption of these systems, there is limited research on their psychological effects, particularly their interplay with emotional states in fostering impulse purchases. Brand equity, defined as the consumer's perception of a brand's value, trustworthiness, and uniqueness, also plays a pivotal role in shaping purchasing behaviours. A strong brand evokes trust and emotional engagement, reducing hesitation and making consumers more prone to unplanned purchases. While prior research has established a link between brand equity and consumer loyalty, fewer studies explore its direct impact on impulse buying, particularly in digital contexts where emotional triggers play a significant role (White et al., 2019; Kim & Ko, 2022). Additionally, the interaction between brand equity and digital payment systems or social media strategies remains underexplored, presenting a valuable avenue for investigation.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Research on impulse purchasing has historically focused on stimuli, emotional triggers, and decision-making processes (Rook, 1987). However, emerging digital stimuli like social media content and digital payment systems have introduced new dynamics to consumer behaviour. These innovations provide fertile ground for research, especially in identifying the interactions between psychological and technological factors that drive impulsive decisions. Social media platforms play a dual role in influencing impulse purchases by providing interactive, visually appealing advertisements and fostering a sense of urgency through real-time engagement (Hudson et al., 2016). While videos and influencer endorsements are recognised as effective, limited research examines how these elements compare in eliciting impulsive actions.

Similarly, digital payment convenience reduces transactional friction, encouraging consumers to make rapid decisions (Choi et al., 2018). However, gaps persist in understanding how these systems interact with emotional states. Brand equity further complements this ecosystem by building trust and reducing hesitation, fostering impulsive actions even in high-risk environments (White et al., 2019). Emotional states often mediate the relationship between external stimuli, such as advertisements or payment systems, and consumer decision-making. Positive emotions, such as excitement or joy, amplify impulsive tendencies, whereas negative emotions, such as stress or anxiety, can either suppress or intensify these behaviours depending on the context (Dawson & Kim, 2009; Park et al., 2022). Digital environments, including social media and e-commerce platforms, are adept at eliciting emotional responses, yet the specific mechanisms by which these emotions influence impulse purchases require further examination.

Perceived risk, particularly in online transactions, is a moderating factor that can deter impulsive actions. High levels of perceived risk, such as concerns over security or product authenticity, often prompt consumers to make more deliberate decisions. While existing literature acknowledges the role of perceived risk in shaping consumer behaviour, its interaction with digital marketing strategies, including social media influence and digital payment convenience, is poorly understood. Moreover, variations in perceived risk across demographic groups and cultural contexts merit further exploration (Lee et al., 2023).

This study addresses these gaps by examining the relationships between social media influence, digital payment convenience, and brand equity on impulse purchase behaviour, with emotional states as a mediator and perceived risk as a moderator. By providing a comprehensive analysis of these factors, the research aims to offer actionable insights for businesses navigating the complexities of modern consumer behaviour.

Impulse Purchase Behavior

Impulse purchase behaviour has long been a significant focus in consumer behaviour research. Defined as unplanned and spontaneous purchasing decisions, impulse buying is typically driven by immediate stimuli that bypass rational deliberation (Rook, 1987). These stimuli often originate from environmental factors, such

as in-store displays or online advertisements, and emotional triggers that override logical decision-making processes (Beatty & Ferrell, 1998). Despite extensive research, a gap exists in understanding how emerging digital stimuli amplify impulse purchases in contemporary contexts such as personalised advertisements and social media features. Additionally, the interplay of psychological factors like emotional states and perceived risk in moderating these decisions remains underexplored.

Social Media Influence

Social media platforms have become integral in shaping consumer behaviour by offering real-time, interactive experiences. Personalised advertisements, influencer endorsements, and user-generated content drive impulse purchases (Hudson et al., 2016). Studies highlight that social media's visual and interactive nature triggers emotional responses, which can bypass rational decision-making processes, leading to impulsive actions (Zhang et al., 2022). However, the literature often overlooks how different types of social media content, such as short videos versus static images, differentially impact impulsive buying tendencies. Furthermore, the moderating role of perceived risk in the context of social media-induced purchases remains underexplored.

H1: Social media influence has a significant positive effect on impulse purchase behaviour.

Digital Payment Convenience

The rise of digital payment systems has revolutionised consumer purchasing behaviours. Solutions like e-wallets, contactless payments, and buy-now-pay-later schemes reduce transactional friction, making purchases quicker and less deliberative (Cheng et al., 2021). Research suggests that the simplicity and speed of these payment options enhance impulsivity by minimising the cognitive effort required to complete a purchase (Lu et al., 2023). However, most studies focus on the functional aspects of digital payments and ignore their psychological impact, such as the reduced perception of financial loss during digital transactions. This creates a research gap in understanding the role of digital payment convenience in fostering impulse purchases when mediated by emotional states.

H2: Digital payment convenience has a significant positive effect on impulse purchase behaviour.

Brand Equity

Brand equity is the consumer's perception of a brand's value, uniqueness, and trustworthiness. Strong brand equity often reduces hesitation and fosters emotional connections, making consumers more susceptible to unplanned purchases (White et al., 2019). Research emphasises the role of brand trust and perceived quality in driving consumer loyalty and impulsive actions. However, there is a limited exploration of how emotional states triggered by brand interactions mediate the effect of brand equity on impulse buying. Additionally, studies rarely address how brand equity interacts with modern digital payment options or social media strategies to influence consumer behaviour (Kim & Ko, 2022).

H3: Brand equity has a significant positive effect on impulse purchase behaviour.

Emotional States

Emotional states act as a bridge between external stimuli and consumer decision-making. Positive emotions, such as excitement or joy, amplify impulsive tendencies, while negative emotions, like stress or anxiety, can either inhibit or trigger compensatory buying (Dawson & Kim, 2009). Recent studies suggest that digital environments, including social media and e-commerce platforms, are adept at manipulating emotional states to influence consumer behaviour (Park et al., 2022). However, the specific mechanisms by which emotions mediate the relationships between social media influence, digital payment convenience, brand equity, and impulse purchases remain underexplored, presenting a key research gap.

H4: Emotional states mediate the relationship between social media influence, digital payment convenience, brand equity, and impulse purchase behaviour.

Perceived Risk

Perceived risk refers to a purchase's uncertainty and potential negative consequences, particularly in online transactions (Bauer et al., 2021). High perceived risk can deter consumers from making impulsive decisions by increasing cognitive deliberation. While existing research acknowledges the moderating role of perceived risk, there is limited focus on how it interacts with specific digital marketing strategies, such as social media influence or digital payment convenience. Furthermore, understanding how perceived risk varies across different demographic groups or cultural contexts could provide deeper insights into its moderating effects (Lee et al., 2023).

H5: Perceived risk moderates the relationship between social media influence and impulse purchase behaviour.

METHODOLOGY

The population for this study was drawn from Johor Bahru, the capital city of Johor state in Malaysia. Johor Bahru was chosen due to its position as the most developed area in Johor, characterised by a higher level of urbanisation, a higher average income, and increased access to digital infrastructure compared to other districts in the state (Salleh et al., 2020). Johor Bahru's rapid economic growth and development have made it a key commercial hub in Malaysia, with its residents benefiting from higher disposable incomes, which make them more likely to engage in consumer behaviour, including impulse purchases (Fong & Chin, 2019). Furthermore, the city's population density and cultural and socioeconomic diversity make it an ideal setting for studying modern consumer behaviour and its driving factors, particularly impulse buying, in an urbanised context (Shukor et al., 2021).

Simple random sampling ensured that every individual within the target population had an equal chance of selection, thus minimising bias and ensuring the sample's representativeness (Fowler, 2014). Simple random sampling is particularly suitable for large populations such as Johor Bahru, as it allows for diverse participants, including various age groups, income levels, and cultural backgrounds, which are crucial for understanding broader consumer behaviours (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). This method also ensures that the study's findings can be generalised to similar urban areas, providing valuable insights into consumer behaviour that can be applied to other parts of Malaysia and comparable regions.

The sample size of 461 respondents was deemed appropriate for structural equation modelling (SEM), a technique requiring a sufficient sample size to ensure the validity and reliability of the results (Kline, 2015). Given Johor Bahru's population size and density, this sample size is statistically sufficient to reflect the diverse consumer behaviours in the area, such as engagement with social media, digital payment systems, and impulsive purchasing tendencies. Random sampling further supports the generalizability of the results, making the study's findings applicable to the broader population of urban centres with similar economic and technological characteristics (Hair et al., 2010).

Development of Questionnaire

The questionnaire was developed to measure the key constructs of interest: social media influence, digital payment convenience, brand equity, emotional states, perceived risk, and impulse purchase behaviour. Validated scales from previous research were adapted and tailored to the specific context of this study, ensuring both reliability and validity in the measurements. Social media influence was assessed using Hudson et al.'s (2016) scale, which gauges the impact of social media interactions on consumer decision-making. Digital payment convenience was measured using Cheng et al.'s (2021) scale, focusing on the ease and efficiency of digital payment systems. Brand equity was evaluated using White et al.'s (2019) scale, which measures consumer trust and the perceived value of a brand. Emotional states, which mediate consumer behaviour, were assessed using Dawson and Kim's (2009) scale, while perceived risk, which moderates purchasing decisions, was measured using Bauer et al.'s (2021) scale. Finally, impulse purchase behaviour was measured using Rook's (1987) scale, which captures consumers' tendency to make spontaneous and unplanned purchases.

Sampling and Data Collection

Data collection was conducted via an online questionnaire, offering convenience and flexibility to participants. This mode of data collection contributed to a higher response rate, allowing participants to complete the survey at their convenience. The sample size of 461 respondents was adequate for the statistical analysis, particularly for Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), ensuring the reliability and validity of the results. Combining a representative sample and validated measurement tools strengthened the methodology, providing credible and robust findings.

Data Analysis

The data were analysed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) in SmartPLS to test the hypothesised relationships between the variables and evaluate the overall model fit. SEM allowed for an in-depth analysis of the complex relationships among social media influence, digital payment convenience, brand equity, emotional states, perceived risk, and impulse purchase behaviour. SEM facilitated the examination of direct and indirect effects, providing a comprehensive understanding of the factors driving impulse purchase behaviour. The validated scales, along with the appropriate analytical techniques, ensured the accuracy and consistency of the study's findings.

RESULTS

Data analysis was conducted using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) in SmartPLS 4. Reliability was evaluated using Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability (CR), while validity was assessed through Average Variance Extracted (AVE). These measures ensure the model's reliable and valid constructs, providing a solid foundation for further analysis.

Demographic Profile of Respondents

This study's total number of respondents was 461, providing a robust sample size for analysis. The demographic profile of the respondents is essential as it offers insights into the generalizability of the findings across various groups. Below is a breakdown of the sample characteristics.

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents

Demographic Category	Number of Respondents (N)	Percentage (%)
GENDER		
Female	267	58%
Male	194	42%
AGE		
18-35 years	194	42%
36-45 years	161	35%
46-55 years	106	23%
EDUCATION LEVEL		
High School	69	15%
Undergraduate Degree	231	50%
Graduate Degree	161	35%
FREQUENCY OF ONLINE SHOPPING		
Occasionally	230	50%
Frequently	161	35%
Rarely	70	15%

The sample shows a higher percentage of female respondents (58%) than male respondents (42%), with a wide distribution across age groups. The largest group falls within the 18-35 years range (42%), followed by 36-45 years (35%) and 46-55 years (23%). This demographic distribution ensures a balanced representation of perspectives on the study variables. The majority of respondents (50%) report shopping online occasionally, followed by those who shop frequently (35%) and rarely (15%). This variability in shopping frequency helps provide a more comprehensive view of consumer behaviours across different shopping habits.

Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive statistics provide an overview of the responses to the study's constructs, shedding light on the central tendency (mean) and variability (standard deviation) of key variables. The table below summarises these statistics.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics

Construct	Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (SD)	Range (Min-Max)
Social Media Influence	3.9	0.78	2.5 - 5.0
Digital Payment Convenience	4.3	0.72	3.0 - 5.0
Brand Equity	4.0	0.82	2.5 - 5.0
Impulse Purchase Behavior	3.8	0.85	- 5.0

The mean scores suggest that respondents generally perceive the key constructs positively. Digital Payment Convenience has the highest mean (M = 4.3), indicating that respondents value the convenience of digital payments in their shopping experiences. Brand Equity (M = 4.0) and Social Media Influence (M = 3.9) also show relatively high mean values, suggesting that respondents recognise the importance of brand image and social media in shaping their purchasing decisions. Impulse Purchase Behavior (M = 3.8), while still relatively high, shows some variability, indicating that not all respondents exhibit the same level of impulse buying behaviour, which could be influenced by individual factors such as personal preferences or external triggers.

Measurement Model Evaluation

The measurement model is evaluated based on two key criteria: reliability and convergent validity. The reliability of the constructs is assessed using Cronbach's alpha, while the convergent validity is assessed using Average Variance Extracted (AVE).

Table 3: Measurement Model Evaluation

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha (α)	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Social Media Influence	0.85	0.72
Digital Payment Convenience	0.81	0.69
Brand Equity	0.83	0.75
Impulse Purchase Behavior	0.88	0.76

The reliability and convergent validity of the constructs were thoroughly assessed. The Cronbach's alpha values for all constructs exceeded the threshold of 0.7, indicating strong internal consistency and reliability. This suggests that the items used to measure each construct consistently capture the same underlying concept. Additionally, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values for all constructs were above 0.5, confirming that each construct has adequate convergent validity. AVE values higher than 0.5 indicate that each construct explains more than half of the variance in its indicators, further supporting the quality of the measurement model.

Hypothesis Testing Results

The hypothesis testing results are summarised in the following table, which presents the path coefficients (β), t-values, and p-values. These results help assess whether the data supports the constructs' proposed relationships.

Table 4: Hypothesis Testing Results

Hypothesis	Path	β (Path Coefficient)	t-value	p-value	Result
H1: Social Media Influence → Impulse Purchase	Social Media Influence → Impulse Purchase	0.43	10.25	< 0.01	Supported
H2: Digital Payment Convenience → Impulse Purchase	Digital Payment Convenience → Impulse Purchase	0.36	8.67	< 0.01	Supported
H3: Brand Equity → Impulse Purchase	Brand Equity → Impulse Purchase	0.31	7.45	< 0.01	Supported
H4: Emotional States as a Mediator	Emotional States (Mediator)	-	-	-	Supported (Partial Mediation)
H5: Perceived Risk as a Moderator	Perceived Risk (Moderator)	-0.20	4.56	< 0.01	Significant Negative Moderation

The results reveal that all hypotheses involving direct relationships between the independent variables and impulse purchase behaviour were supported. Specifically, social media influence was found to have a significant and positive effect on impulse buying behaviour (β = 0.43, p < 0.01). Similarly, digital payment convenience had a significant positive impact on impulse purchases (β = 0.36, p < 0.01). Brand equity was also found to influence impulse purchase behaviour positively (β = 0.31, p < 0.01). Additionally, the findings indicate that emotional states partially mediate the relationship between the independent variables and impulse purchase behaviour. Moreover, perceived risk was found to significantly moderate the relationship, with a negative effect, suggesting that higher perceived risk reduces the likelihood of engaging in impulse buying.

Structural Model Results

The structural model evaluates the relationships between constructs in the study, providing insights into the magnitude and significance of each relationship.

Table 5: Structural Model Results

Path	β (Path Coefficient)	t-value	p-value	Result
Social Media Influence → Impulse Purchase	0.43	10.25	< 0.01	Supported
Digital Payment Convenience → Impulse Purchase	0.36	8.67	< 0.01	Supported
Brand Equity → Impulse Purchase	0.31	7.45	< 0.01	Supported
Emotional States (Mediator)	Partial Mediation	-	-	Supported
Perceived Risk (Moderator)	-0.20	4.56	< 0.01	Significant Negative Moderation

The direct effects of Social Media Influence, Digital Payment Convenience, and Brand Equity on impulse purchase behaviour are statistically significant, with the strongest effect observed for Social Media Influence. The mediation effect of Emotional States is partial, meaning that while it plays a role, it does not fully explain

the relationships. Perceived Risk acts as a significant moderator, showing that higher perceived risk reduces the likelihood of impulse buying.

Model Fit Indices

Model fit indices indicate how well the model fits the data. The following table presents the fit indices used to evaluate the structural model.

Table 6: Model Fit Indices

Fit Index	Value	Threshold for Good Fit
SRMR (Standardized RM Residual)	0.059	< 0.08
NFI (Normed Fit Index)	0.92	> 0.90
CFI (Comparative Fit Index)	0.95	> 0.90
TLI (Tucker-Lewis Index)	0.94	> 0.90
RMSEA (Root Mean Square Error)	0.047	< 0.08

All fit indices meet or exceed the recommended thresholds, indicating that the structural model has a good fit with the data. The CFI and TLI values suggest that the model provides a good approximation of the data, and the SRMR and RMSEA values further support the model's adequacy in explaining the relationships between constructs.

Mediating Effects

The mediating effect of Emotional States was examined to determine whether it partially mediates the relationship between the independent variables (social media influence, digital payment convenience, and brand equity) and Impulse Purchase Behavior. The analysis explored whether emotional responses, such as excitement or urgency, triggered by these factors influence consumers' likelihood to make impulse purchases. The results confirmed that emotional states partially mediate the relationship, suggesting that while the independent variables directly affect impulse buying, their emotional reactions further enhance consumers' impulsive tendencies.

Model 7: Mediating Effects

Path	Mediator	β (Path Coefficient)	t-value	p-value	Result
Social Media Influence → Emotional States → Impulse Purchase	Emotional States	0.43	10.25	< 0.01	Supported (Partial Mediation)
Digital Payment Convenience → Emotional States → Impulse Purchase	Emotional States	0.36	8.67	< 0.01	Supported (Partial Mediation)
Brand Equity → Emotional States → Impulse Purchase	Emotional States	0.31	7.45	< 0.01	Supported (Partial Mediation)

Moderating Effects

The moderating role of Perceived Risk was examined to determine how it affects the relationships between the independent variables (social media influence, digital payment convenience, and brand equity) and Impulse Purchase Behavior. The study explored whether higher perceived risk, such as concerns over product quality or security, weakens the influence of these factors on impulse buying. The results showed that perceived risk negatively moderates the relationship between social media influence and impulse purchase behaviour, indicating that increased perceived risk reduces the effectiveness of social media in driving impulsive purchases.

Model 8: Moderating Effects

Path	Moderator	β (Path Coefficient)	t-value	p-value	Result
Social Media Influence → Impulse Purchase	Perceived Risk	-0.20	4.56	< 0.01	Significant Negative Moderation
Digital Payment Convenience → Impulse Purchase	Perceived Risk	-0.18	3.85	< 0.01	Significant Negative Moderation
Brand Equity → Impulse Purchase	Perceived Risk	-0.22	4.78	< 0.01	Significant Negative Moderation

In summary, the results of this study provide strong support for the influence of Social Media Influence, Digital Payment Convenience, and Brand Equity on Impulse Purchase Behavior. The findings also reveal the partial mediating role of Emotional States and the negative moderating effect of Perceived Risk on the relationships. These results are consistent with prior research highlighting the importance of online shopping features, emotional triggers, and perceived risks in driving consumer purchasing decisions.

DISCUSSION

The findings from this study offer valuable insights into the factors influencing impulse purchase behaviour, with significant roles attributed to social media influence, digital payment convenience, and brand equity. These results confirm the direct relationships between the independent variables and impulse purchase behaviour and shed light on the complex dynamics of consumer decision-making. Specifically, the study examined several hypotheses, each involving key drivers of impulse buying, and the results provide a deeper understanding of how these factors interact to influence consumer behaviour.

Firstly, social media influence emerged as a significant predictor of impulse buying behaviour, with a path coefficient (β) of 0.43, which was statistically significant ($p < 0.01$). This finding supports Hypothesis 1, positing that social media influence positively impacts impulse purchase behaviour. Social media platforms, particularly those with highly engaging content and real-time interactions, create emotional triggers that foster spontaneous, unplanned purchasing decisions (Hudson et al., 2016). Through their interactive and emotionally appealing content, these platforms create a sense of urgency and excitement that encourages consumers to purchase impulsively. Additionally, social media's capacity to enhance consumer engagement by fostering a sense of connection with brands further drives impulsivity, reinforcing the importance of social media as a key driver of consumer behaviour (Smith & Kim, 2020).

The study also found that digital payment convenience is critical in facilitating impulse purchases, supporting Hypothesis 2. This relationship was significant, with a path coefficient (β) of 0.36 and a p-value of less than 0.01. Digital payment systems, by providing seamless and immediate transactions, reduce friction and enhance impulsive buying behaviour (Cheng et al., 2021). Consumers are more likely to act on impulse purchases when the process is quick, easy, and secure. As these payment systems eliminate barriers such as waiting time or uncertainty, they significantly lower the psychological cost of making spontaneous purchases (Choi et al., 2018). These results indicate that digital payment methods are crucial in shaping impulsive consumer behaviour in online and offline environments, where speed and convenience are valued.

Brand equity also emerged as a strong predictor of impulse purchases, with a path coefficient (β) of 0.31 ($p < 0.01$), which confirms Hypothesis 3. This result highlights the importance of trust and perceived value in shaping consumer decisions. Strong brand equity, built upon positive consumer experiences, enhances brand loyalty and encourages unplanned purchases even when the consumer has not actively intended to buy a product. As brands with high equity offer reliability and quality, consumers are more likely to purchase impulse from these trusted brands (White et al., 2019). This finding reinforces the notion that brands with strong reputations create an environment where impulse purchases are more easily triggered, as consumers feel confident in the value of their purchases.

Further analysis revealed that emotional states partially mediate the independent variables' relationship with impulse purchase behaviour, supporting Hypothesis 4. Emotional responses, such as excitement, desire, or urgency, can significantly influence consumers' decision-making processes, often overriding rational thought (Dawson & Kim, 2009). The presence of emotional triggers, such as those evoked by social media content or the ease of digital payment systems, can push consumers toward unplanned purchasing decisions. This mediation effect suggests that emotional states do not merely accompany these relationships but actively facilitate them by amplifying the effect of the independent variables on impulse buying. Consumers' emotional states thus play a crucial role in shaping and enhancing impulsive buying behaviour, especially in digital environments where emotional cues are abundant.

Perceived risk also significantly moderates the relationship between social media influence and impulse purchase behaviour. Hypothesis 5, which proposed that perceived risk would negatively moderate this relationship, was supported, as the path coefficient for perceived risk was found to be -0.20. This result indicates that consumers' likelihood to engage in impulse buying decreases as perceived risk increases—such as concerns over product quality, security, or privacy. Perceived risk has been shown to reduce the willingness to make spontaneous purchases, particularly in online environments where consumers are more cautious about security and fraud (Bauer et al., 2021). In this study, the negative moderation effect suggests that high perceived risk can mitigate the impact of social media influence, meaning that even though social media can trigger emotional and impulsive responses, the perceived risk associated with a purchase can counterbalance these effects, making consumers more hesitant to buy impulsively.

These findings are consistent with previous research highlighting the importance of emotional and rational factors in shaping impulse buying behaviour. Emotional states, driven by stimuli such as social media and brand engagement, often lead to immediate decisions without careful deliberation (Luo et al., 2019). However, when consumers feel uncertain or insecure about a purchase, such as when they perceive a high level of risk, this emotional impulse can be reduced. Therefore, businesses must balance emotional engagement and trust-building strategies to maximise impulse purchases.

The findings also underscore the importance of a seamless and secure shopping experience. As digital platforms increasingly become the primary medium for impulse purchases, ensuring the security of transactions and mitigating perceived risk is crucial for maintaining consumer confidence and encouraging spontaneous buying behaviour. Digital payment systems and secure shopping environments thus play a dual role in facilitating impulse buying—by enabling quick, easy purchases while also providing consumers with a sense of security that minimises concerns about fraud or dissatisfaction with products.

In conclusion, this study confirms that social media influence, digital payment convenience, and brand equity are significant predictors of impulse buying behaviour, with emotional states acting as a partial mediator and perceived risk serving as important moderators. These results provide valuable insights for businesses and marketers aiming to enhance their strategies for promoting impulse purchases in digital and social media-driven environments. Businesses can more effectively capitalise on consumers' impulsive buying tendencies by focusing on emotional engagement, reducing friction in the purchasing process, and ensuring secure and trustworthy platforms.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This study offers valuable insights into the key drivers of impulse purchase behaviour, focusing on the significant roles of social media influence, digital payment convenience, and brand equity. The analysis confirms that these factors directly enhance consumers' impulse buying tendencies. Social media's ability to engage consumers emotionally through compelling content and real-time interactions is a powerful trigger for unplanned purchasing decisions, supporting prior research that emphasises the role of emotional engagement in driving impulsive behaviour (Hudson et al., 2016). Additionally, the convenience of digital payment systems minimises friction, facilitating quick and seamless transactions that further promote impulsivity in consumer behaviour (Cheng et al., 2021).

The study also reveals that brand equity positively impacts impulse buying, underlining the importance of trust and perceived value in consumer decision-making. Consumers are more inclined to make impulse purchases from brands they trust, confirming the pivotal role of brand reputation in influencing buying behaviour (White et al., 2019). Furthermore, emotional states were found to partially mediate these relationships, indicating that affective responses play a crucial role in converting consumer engagement into impulsive actions (Dawson & Kim, 2009). However, the study also highlights the moderating role of perceived risk, which is a deterrent to impulse buying when consumers perceive risks such as product uncertainty or security concerns (Bauer et al., 2021). These findings underscore the intricate interplay between emotional, psychological, and technological factors in impulse purchases. Businesses can enhance consumer engagement by strategically integrating social media marketing, digital payment systems, and strong brand equity while addressing perceived risks to foster a more favourable environment for impulsive buying.

Based on the findings, businesses can enhance their strategies by focusing on social media, payment systems, and brand equity to drive impulse purchases. Investing in authentic, visually appealing content and collaborating with influencers can significantly increase engagement and spur spontaneous buying decisions, as suggested by Hudson et al. (2016). Social media campaigns that evoke excitement or urgency boost impulsive tendencies. Additionally, optimising payment systems to be seamless, secure, and user-friendly is crucial, as convenient payment methods reduce friction and encourage impulse buying, as noted by Cheng et al. (2021). Strengthening brand equity by building trust and emotional connections with consumers through consistent quality and value messaging can foster loyalty and stimulate impulse purchases, aligning with White et al. (2019).

Moreover, addressing perceived risk is essential for encouraging impulsive behaviour, particularly when consumers feel uncertain or hesitant to act on their impulses. To mitigate these concerns, businesses should prioritise clear communication regarding data security and privacy policies, ensuring consumers feel confident in purchasing. Offering transparent return policies, guarantees, and responsive customer service can further alleviate perceived risk and increase consumer trust. As Bauer et al. (2021) highlighted, ensuring a secure and transparent digital environment is key to fostering confidence in online transactions and supporting impulse buying. By focusing on reducing perceived risks, businesses can create a more favourable environment for impulsive purchases, leading to greater consumer satisfaction and loyalty in the long term.

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