



ENHANCING PRODUCTIVITY THROUGH PSYCHOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES IN THE ERA OF GLOBAL TRANSFORMATION

Faculty of Psychology, Bhayangkara University, Greater Jakarta
Jakarta, 16 December 2025

The Phenomenon of Post-Purchase Buying: A Critical Analysis of Theories and Empirical Findings in Consumer Psychology

Chantika Nurul Wijayanti¹

¹Universitas Bhayangkara Jakarta Raya, Jakarta, Indonesia, chantikanw@gmail.com

Corresponding Author: chantikanw@gmail.com

Abstract: The study titled "The Phenomenon of Post-Purchase Buying: A Critical Analysis of Theories and Empirical Findings in Consumer Psychology" examines the feelings and thoughts that cause regret after making a purchase. It explores how individuals behave during online shopping, especially when exposed to modern marketing methods such as time-sensitive offers, content-based advertisements, and interactive product displays that can prompt immediate buying decisions. The research conducts a systematic review of fifteen articles published between 2017 and 2025. These articles discuss topics like impulsive buying, following trends, exposure to digital content, and emotional intelligence. The findings indicate that making quick purchases is associated with greater regret later on, particularly when influenced by trends, a sense of missing out, or high levels of visual input. In contrast, emotional intelligence is found to lower the likelihood of unplanned purchases. The study emphasizes the importance of understanding how the mind influences buying behavior to better manage urges and advocates for education on emotions and financial decisions to support more thoughtful purchasing choices.

Keywords: Post Purchase Regret, Impulsive Buying

Introduction

The rapid advancement of digital technology has fundamentally reshaped consumer purchasing behavior, creating shopping environments that are faster, more personalized, and emotionally stimulating. Online retail platforms employ persuasive strategies such as limited-time promotions, targeted advertisements, and integrated social media marketing that encourage consumers to make immediate purchase decisions with minimal cognitive deliberation. As a result, these unplanned decisions often fail to align with consumers' actual needs, leading to dissatisfaction and post-purchase regret. Research in consumer psychology.

Indicates that such impulsive purchasing tendencies are driven by emotional processes, including fear of missing out, perceived social pressure, and momentary affective desires. Conversely, emotional intelligence enables individuals to regulate these impulses and reduces the likelihood of regret following a purchase.

Despite the growing body of research on impulsive buying and post-purchase regret, many existing studies rely on cross-sectional designs and samples limited to particular demographic groups, leaving gaps in understanding how emotional, cognitive, and social mechanisms interact within digital consumption contexts. To address these limitations, the present study critically examines theoretical frameworks, methodological approaches, and empirical findings related to impulsive buying, fear of missing out, and post-purchase regret. This review aims to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the psychological determinants underlying digital consumer behavior and to support the development of educational initiatives that strengthen emotional and financial literacy among consumers.

Literature Review

Over the past decade, the expansion of digital commerce has significantly transformed consumer decision-making processes. Online marketplaces such as TikTok Shop, Shopee, and Tokopedia offer rapid and highly personalized shopping experiences; however, these platforms also encourage spontaneous and unplanned purchasing behavior (Sabrina & Revulton, 2025). Marketing stimuli such as flash sales, content-driven promotions, and algorithm-based advertisements exert substantial emotional and social influence, particularly among younger consumers who are deeply engaged with digital platforms (Çelik et al., 2019). Studies like (Hakiki & Yasmin, 2023) suggest that the intensity of post-purchase regret is shaped not only by the purchase itself but also by the emotional and social context in which the decision occurs. For example, stress-induced purchases may temporarily alleviate negative affect but ultimately produce regret when consumers realize the purchase did not resolve the underlying emotional state.

Within consumer psychology, impulsive buying is conceptualized as a rapid, affect-driven response that occurs with minimal cognitive processing Rook & Fisher (1995), as cited in (Chantika & Dwatra, 2025). When a purchase does not meet expectations or genuine needs, individuals frequently experience post-purchase regret, as described Lee & Cotte (2009) in (Putri & Astuti, 2025). Recent evidence indicates that post-purchase regret has broad implications, influencing not only satisfaction but also customer loyalty, future consumption decisions, and overall psychological well-being Przybylski et al. (2013), as cited in (Ningtias et al., 2019).

Research by Sabrina & Utomo, (2025) and Dankwah et al., (2024) demonstrates that psychological factors such as fear of missing out and indulgence significantly increase impulsive buying tendencies. In contrast, emotional intelligence functions as a protective psychological mechanism that mitigates these tendencies and reduces the likelihood of regret (Barman & Waraich, 2024). Additional studies reveal that exposure to digital marketing content and celebrity endorsements directly influences both impulsive buying behavior and post-purchase regret (Ly & Tang, 2025).

Despite these insights, the majority of existing research remains restricted to cross-sectional designs and culturally specific populations, such as female students or employees within a single region. This limitation highlights the need for broader conceptual development that integrates psychological, social, and digital marketing perspectives to deepen understanding of post-purchase regret in modern consumer environments (Masinambow & Pangemanan, 2019).

Theoretically, the present review contributes to consumer psychology by incorporating emotional variables (fear of missing out, indulgence), cognitive variables (emotional intelligence), and social variables (digital marketing exposure and endorsement influence) into a more comprehensive framework. Furthermore, recent literature indicates a

shift in consumption patterns from primarily economic considerations to complex, multidimensional emotional processes, underscoring the importance of examining these dynamics within contemporary digital contexts.

This review therefore seeks to critically evaluate theories, methodologies, and empirical findings concerning impulsive buying, fear of missing out, and post-purchase regret. The analysis is expected to provide a more integrated understanding of the psychological mechanisms that contribute to post-purchase regret and to serve as a conceptual foundation for community education efforts aimed at improving emotional and financial literacy.

Research Methods

This study employed a systematic narrative review approach to synthesize empirical findings on psychological factors influencing post-purchase regret in consumer behavior. The data consisted of synthesized results from 16 national and international empirical articles published between 2017 and 2025, identified through academic databases such as Google Scholar, Semantic Scholar, Connected Papers, and Research Rabbit. The search process utilized key terms including post-purchase regret, impulsive buying, fear of missing out, content marketing, indulgence, and emotional intelligence.

The article selection procedure involved three stages: identification, screening, and eligibility assessment. Studies were included if they met the following criteria: (1) they were empirical research articles, (2) they examined one or more variables related to impulsive buying or post-purchase regret, and (3) they involved consumer samples or users of digital platforms. Conceptual papers, non-empirical studies, duplicate publications, and articles unrelated to consumer behavior were excluded from the review.

Across the reviewed studies, a consistent pattern emerged indicating that impulsive buying represents the strongest and most frequent predictor of post-purchase regret. Emotional and situational factors such as fear of missing out, indulgence tendencies, and exposure to persuasive digital content were found to increase consumers' susceptibility to making spontaneous purchases. Digital shopping environments further facilitate emotionally driven decision-making through mechanisms such as limited-time promotions, influencer endorsements, and targeted marketing strategies that encourage rapid, unplanned buying behavior.

Conversely, individual psychological characteristics particularly emotional intelligence serve as protective factors that help regulate impulsive tendencies and reduce the likelihood of regret. Although several studies exhibited methodological limitations, such as small sample sizes and non-probability sampling techniques, the overall evidence consistently demonstrates that post-purchase regret arises from the interplay of emotional, cognitive, and social influences within contemporary digital consumption contexts.

Result and Discussion

A review of the 16 articles analyzed in this study demonstrates a consistent pattern that post-purchase regret emerges as a psychological consequence of impulsive purchasing decisions, particularly in the context of digital commerce, which is rife with emotional and social stimuli. Most studies emphasize that the modern online shopping environment—with its intensive promotional features, personalization algorithms, and engaging visual content—encourages consumers to make quick purchases without adequate cognitive evaluation. This

situation increases the risk of a mismatch between purchase expectations and post-purchase satisfaction, thus triggering regret.

Overall, the literature review shows that post-purchase regret is the result of an interaction between emotional (FoMO, indulgence), social (digital exposure, trend pressure), and cognitive (emotional regulation, need evaluation) processes. The digital environment amplifies these three factors through the speed of information, engaging visualizations, and marketing strategies designed to trigger rapid responses. Meanwhile, consumers with strong emotional regulation skills are able to resist these impulses and make more rational purchases. Thus, the study's findings demonstrate that post-purchase regret cannot be understood solely from the perspective of consumer behavior but must be viewed as a multidimensional phenomenon influenced by psychological, social, and technological dynamics. These findings underscore the importance of emotional and financial literacy education to help consumers develop more adaptive and controlled purchasing behavior.

Conclusion

The findings of this review demonstrate that post-purchase regret consistently emerges as a psychological consequence of impulsive and affect-driven purchasing behavior within digital consumer contexts. The reviewed literature indicates that emotional drivers such as fear of missing out, indulgence tendencies, and social pressures embedded in digital media environments substantially increase the likelihood of unplanned purchases, while insufficient emotional regulation heightens susceptibility to regret. These findings extend the theoretical understanding of the interplay between emotional and cognitive processes in consumer decision-making and highlight the significance of emotional regulation as a moderating mechanism that can reduce adverse post-purchase outcomes. Overall, the review concludes that post-purchase regret represents a multidimensional construct shaped by the interaction of emotional impulses, social influences, and reflective cognitive appraisal, emphasizing the importance of strengthening emotional awareness and decision-making literacy to support more adaptive consumer behavior.

Bibliography

- Anggita Amanda Putri, & Puji Astuti. (2025). Peran Impulsive Behavior dan E- Marketing Exposure Terhadap Post Purchase Regret Saat Berbelanja Online. *Economic Reviews Journal*, 4(2), 1–12. <https://doi.org/10.56709/mrj.v4i2.669>
- Barman, R., & Waraich, S. B. (2024). Emotional Intelligence and Its Impact on Impulse Buying and Post Purchase Regret Among Young Working Adults. *Indian Journal of Applied Research*, 12(5), 54–59. <https://doi.org/10.36106/ijar/3410627>
- Çelik, I. K., Eru, O., & Cop, R. (2019). The Effects of Consumers' FoMo Tendencies on Impulse Buying and The Effects of Impulse Buying on Post- Purchase Regret: An Investigation on Retail Stores*. *BRAIN. Broad Research in Artificial Intelligence and Neuroscience*, 10(3), 124. <https://doi.org/10.70594/brain/v10.i3/13>
- Chantika, L. A. D., & Dwatra, F. D. (2025). Kontribusi Impulsive Buying terhadap Post Purchase Regret Produk Skincare di TikTok Shop pada Mahasiswi Kota Padang. *Tsaqofah*, 5(3), 21–39. <https://doi.org/10.58578/tsaqofah.v5i3.5684>
- Dankwah, J. B., Kwakwa, P. A., & Ibrahim Nnindini, S. (2024). Why did I buy this? Examining the relationship between consumer ethnocentrism, celebrity endorsement and post-purchase regret. *Cogent Business and Management*, 11(1). <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311975.2024.2381865>

- Hakiki, R. K., & Yasmin, M. (2023). Hubungan Impulsive Buying dengan Post- Purchase Regret Produk Make Up secara Online pada Pegawai Wanita. *Jurnal Riset Psikologi*, 6(3), 145. <https://doi.org/10.24036/jrp.v6i3.15159>
- Ly, T. D., & Tang, S. M. (2025). The mediating role of student-post purchase regret in brand switching intention. *Journal of Development and Integration*, 79(79), 1–9. <https://doi.org/10.61602/jdi.2024.79.01>
- Masinambow, C. H., & Pangemanan, S. S. (2019). Investigating the Post-Purchase Regret of Consumers in Manado Menginvestigasi Penyesalan Pasca- Pembelian Dari Konsumen-Konsumen Di Manado. *Pandowo 5235 Jurnal EMBA*, 7(4), 5235–5244.
- Ningtias, A. R., Daryanti, S., & Putri, I. S. (2019). Antecedent Factors of Self-Gifting Behavior and Its Influence toward Post-Purchase Regret of the Millennial Generation. 72(Icbmr 2018), 129–134. <https://doi.org/10.2991/icbmr-18.2019.22>
- Sabrina, A., & Revulton, A. (2025). Pengaruh impulsive buying dan jenis kelamin terhadap post-purchase regret pada karyawan pengguna shopee paylater di Indonesia. *Cognicia*. 246. <https://doi.org/10.22219/cognicia.v13i2.40863>
- Sabrina, N. H., & Utomo, H. S. (2025). The Effect of Content Marketing and Fear of Missing Out to Post-Purchase Regret Mediated by Impulsive Buying. *International Journal of Human Research and Social Science Studies*, 02(07), 440–450. <https://doi.org/10.55677/ijhrsss/04-2025-vol02i7>