

The Role of Mindfulness as a Psychological Shield Against Impulsive Shopping Online in Young Adults**Astri Nur Kusumastuti^{1*}, Devvy Widyawati², Praesti Sedjo³, Kenes Pranandari⁴**

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Abstract: The digital era has increased convenience in daily life, yet it may also intensify impulsive online purchasing when consumers respond automatically to persuasive cues and momentary urges. This study aimed to examine the influence of mindfulness on online impulsive buying among young adults, addressing the growing need to understand psychological factors that can help regulate consumer behavior in digital environments. Using a quantitative, cross-sectional design, data were collected through an online questionnaire from 210 respondents aged 18–30 years who were active users of online shopping platforms (minimum three transactions per month). Mindfulness was measured using the Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire (FFMQ), while online impulsive buying was assessed based on the cognitive and affective aspects proposed by Herabadi. Statistical analysis using SPSS indicated that mindfulness significantly influenced online impulsive buying ($p < .001$). These findings imply that mindfulness-oriented psychological interventions may function as a “digital brake,” supporting more reflective decision-making and reducing unplanned purchases in online marketplaces. The originality of this study lies in bridging cognitive psychology and digital consumer behavior by clarifying the role of mindfulness operationalized through FFMQ facets in explaining online impulsive buying among young adults.

Keywords: Consumer Psychology; Digital environment; Impulsive buying; Mindfulness; Shopping platform

INTRODUCTION

Daily life in the digital era increasingly connects individuals to the internet, and this connectivity continues to rise year by year. In Indonesia, the number of internet users in 2024 reached 221,563,479 people (approximately 79.5% of the population), with internet use dominated by Gen Z (34.40%) and millennials (30.62%) (APJII, 2024; Think, 2026). This expansion of digital access has accelerated the migration of everyday activities communication, entertainment, financial transactions, and consumption into online environments.

Alongside this shift, consumer purchasing has increasingly moved from physical stores to online shopping platforms. While both online and offline shopping involve purchasing products, they differ in process and interaction: offline shopping is conducted directly with sellers, whereas online shopping is mediated through internet-connected devices and digital payment channels ([Nuraini & Evianah, 2019](#)). Online shopping is often perceived as more time-efficient, easier to use, and accessible anytime and anywhere ([Hermawan, 2017](#)). Practical payment options such as e-wallets, COD, and internet banking also strengthen transaction flexibility ([Jakpat, 2024](#)). This context contributes to the growth of platform usage; data from the Ministry of Trade indicates that Indonesia had 58.63 million shopping platform users and that the number is projected to increase substantially ([Ditjen PDN, 2023](#)). In terms of platform preference, Shopee is frequently reported as the most-used platform, followed by TikTok Shop, Tokopedia, Lazada, and others ([Lestari, 2025](#)). Consistently, younger consumers appear to prioritize online shopping particularly on Shopee driven by discounts/promotions, application convenience, fast delivery, and perceived reliability of customer service ([IDN Times, 2024](#); [Muzammil, Utami, & Rista, 2022](#)). These market dynamics may heighten the likelihood of unplanned purchases among young consumers, especially when promotional stimuli are frequent and immediate.

Research on digital consumption highlights that online shopping environments can intensify impulsive buying through marketing and platform mechanisms. Promotions and price incentives are repeatedly associated with impulsive decisions, particularly among younger consumers who respond strongly to discounts and campaign-driven stimuli ([Muzammil, Utami, & Rista, 2022](#)). In addition, marketing strategies such as e-WOM and perceived product quality may facilitate impulse buying by strengthening emotional impulses and reinforcing environmental cues during the purchasing process ([Dewi & Prianthara, 2025](#)). Thus, the online context does not merely replicate offline shopping; it can amplify exposure to stimuli that accelerate decision-making.

Beyond external cues, internal psychological factors are central to understanding why some individuals are more prone to impulsive purchases than others. Prior studies in digital commerce settings have examined variables such as mood and self-control as key predictors of impulsive buying tendencies ([Wahyuningtyas & Ramadhan, 2024](#)). These findings suggest that impulsive online shopping is not solely a product of platform design

or promotional intensity but also reflects individual differences in self-regulation and emotional states during digital transactions.

However, internal psychological resources that may buffer impulsive behavior particularly mindfulness still warrant deeper investigation. Mindfulness is theoretically relevant because it relates to awareness of present experiences and reduced reactivity toward internal impulses, which may shape how individuals respond to marketing cues. Empirically, evidence remains mixed: research in Turkey found that mindful consumers are less likely to engage in impulsive shopping ([Yigit, 2020](#)), while research in India reported that mindfulness did not significantly reduce impulsive shopping behavior. This inconsistency indicates a gap in the literature and supports the need for further empirical testing, especially in different cultural and digital marketplace contexts.

Based on these considerations, the present study aims to examine the effect of mindfulness on online impulsive buying among young adults. By focusing on active users of online shopping platforms, this study seeks to clarify the extent to which mindfulness as an internal psychological factor can influence purchasing decisions in digital environments.

The study argues that mindfulness may function as a psychological shield by helping individuals remain fully present, recognize emerging urges, and reduce automatic reactions to emotional impulses and external digital stimuli. In online shopping contexts where promotional prompts are frequent, greater mindfulness is expected to encourage more reflective decision-making rather than spontaneous purchasing. Therefore, this study proposes the hypothesis that mindfulness has a significant (negative) influence on online impulsive buying in young adults ([Yigit, 2020](#)).

RESEARCH METHOD

Participants

The unit of analysis in this study was individuals, specifically young adults who actively use online shopping platforms. A total of 210 participants aged 18–30 years were involved. The inclusion criteria were: (1) aged 18–30 years, and (2) active users of online shopping platforms with a minimum of three transactions per month.

Research Design

This study employed a quantitative approach with a cross-sectional design to examine the effect of mindfulness on online impulsive buying. A cross-sectional design was selected because the research aimed to measure the study variables at a single point in time and statistically test the relationship between mindfulness and online impulsive buying.

Data Source and Procedure

The study used primary data obtained from respondents who met the predetermined criteria. Data were collected by distributing an online questionnaire, which respondents completed voluntarily and without coercion.

Measures

Mindfulness was measured using the Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire (FFMQ) adapted by [Meindy, Djunaidi, and Triwahyuni, 2002](#)) referring to five facets of mindfulness observing, describing, acting with awareness, nonjudging of inner experience, and nonreactivity of inner experience ([Baer et al., 2006](#)). Online impulsive buying was measured using a scale based on ([Herabadi, 2003](#)), covering two dimensions: cognitive aspects (lack of consideration) and affective aspects (strong emotional urges or feelings of urgency).

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using SPSS to test the effect of mindfulness on online impulsive buying. Statistical analysis was performed to determine the significance of the relationship between variables using p-values and to evaluate the proportion of variance explained by the model (e.g., R Square) based on the SPSS output.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Validity and Reliability

Two instruments were used in this study: an online impulsive buying scale and a mindfulness scale. The online impulsive buying scale consisted of 20 items, while the mindfulness scale initially consisted of 43 items. Prior to hypothesis testing, the instruments were evaluated to ensure that they were sufficiently valid and reliable for use with the current sample of young adult online shoppers.

Item evaluation results indicated that the online impulsive buying scale retained all 20 items, suggesting that the items were considered acceptable for measuring the construct in this study context. For the mindfulness scale, 36 out of 43 items were retained, with 7 items removed following the item evaluation process. This refinement was conducted to improve measurement performance and to ensure that the retained items were the most appropriate for the respondent characteristics and the online survey setting.

Reliability analysis using Cronbach's alpha showed strong internal consistency for both scales. The online impulsive buying scale demonstrated excellent reliability with $\alpha = 0.943$, indicating very high consistency among items. The mindfulness scale also demonstrated good reliability with $\alpha = 0.866$, suggesting that the retained items were sufficiently consistent for representing the mindfulness construct. Overall, these results support that both instruments were reliable for subsequent statistical analyses.

Tabel 1. Item Discrimination and Reliability of the Study Scales

Scale	Initial Items	Retained Items	Items Removed	Cronbach's Alpha (α)	Interpretation
Online Impulsive Buying	20	20	0	0,943	Reliability
	43	36	7	0,866	Reliability
Mindfulness					

Hypothesis Testing

The hypothesis to test research regarding mindfulness and online impulsive buying, the results of data analysis conducted on 210 respondents found that Mindfulness had a significant influence on Online Impulsive Buying with a value of 0.000 ($p < 0.005$). Furthermore, the R Square value obtained in this study was 0.184, which means that the influence of mindfulness on online impulsive buying in young adults is 18.4% and the remaining 81.6% is influenced by variables outside the research. The results of hypothesis testing regarding the effect of mindfulness on online impulsive buying can be seen in the table below:

Tabel 2. Hypotesis Test Result

Variable	R	R Square	F	Sig	Note
Mindfulness Online Impulsive Buying	0,429	0,814	46,942	0.000	There is a Significant Influence

DISCUSSION

The present study examined whether mindfulness influences online impulsive buying among young adults who actively use online shopping platforms. The results indicate that mindfulness has a statistically significant effect on online impulsive buying (the reported Sig. = 0.000 should be reported as $p < .001$). In terms of explanatory power, the model accounted for 18.4% of the variance in online impulsive buying ($R^2 = .184$). This suggests that mindfulness is a meaningful psychological factor related to impulsive purchasing in digital contexts, although a substantial proportion of variance remains attributable to other variables outside the model.

A plausible explanation for this finding lies in the self-regulatory function of mindfulness. Mindfulness reflects the capacity to maintain present-moment awareness and to respond to internal experiences (e.g., urges, emotions, thoughts) with reduced automaticity. In online shopping environments where promotional cues, limited-time offers, algorithmic recommendations, and frictionless payment options can rapidly trigger affective impulses individuals may be more prone to “act first, think later.” Mindfulness, particularly facets related to acting with awareness, nonjudging, and nonreactivity, may help individuals notice the emergence of purchasing urges, pause before acting, and reappraise the impulse rather than immediately translating it into behavior (Baer et al., 2006; Meindy et al., 2022). In this way, mindfulness can function as a psychological buffer that reduces impulsive responses to both internal emotional states and external digital stimuli.

The present findings are consistent with evidence suggesting that mindful consumers are less likely to engage in impulse buying because they can better regulate hedonic motivations and momentary mood shifts during shopping (Yigit, 2020). At the same time, prior work has not always found a robust protective role of mindfulness; for example, research in India reported that mindfulness did not significantly reduce impulsive shopping behavior, inconsistencies across studies may reflect differences in cultural consumption norms, the intensity and form of digital marketing exposure, sample characteristics (e.g., age group and shopping frequency), or measurement approaches (e.g., item modification and instrument versions) (Baer et al., 2006; Herabadi, 2003; Meindy et al., 2022). Importantly, the current study’s R^2 value indicates that mindfulness is only one part of a broader explanatory framework. Prior literature highlights that mood and self-control are influential predictors of e-impulsive buying (Wahyuningtyas & Ramadhan, 2024), and

marketing-related factors such as promotions, e-WOM, and perceived product quality can strengthen impulsive tendencies among younger consumers (Dewi & Prianthara, 2025; Muzammil et al., 2022). Therefore, mindfulness likely operates alongside rather than replacing other psychological and situational determinants of impulsive purchasing.

From a broader perspective, the findings underscore that online impulsive buying among young adults cannot be fully explained by platform features and marketing incentives alone. In Indonesia, where internet penetration is high and digital engagement is concentrated among younger cohorts (APJII, 2024), online shopping is increasingly normalized as a convenient, time-efficient consumption route (Hermawan, 2017; Nuraini & Evianah, 2019). The expansion of flexible payment methods further reduces friction in completing purchases (Jakpat, 2024), potentially making impulse-driven decisions more frequent. Within this environment, mindfulness represents a relevant internal resource that may support healthier and more reflective consumption decisions, particularly when users are repeatedly exposed to emotionally salient and time-pressured promotional stimuli.

At the same time, the practical meaning of the findings should be interpreted cautiously. Because the study used a cross-sectional design, the results support an association/effect within the tested model rather than definitive causal conclusions. Moreover, the remaining unexplained variance suggests that interventions focused solely on mindfulness may have limited effectiveness if they do not also address other determinants such as mood regulation, self-control capacity, financial literacy, and the structure of persuasive digital marketing exposures (Dewi & Prianthara, 2025; Wahyuningtyas & Ramadhan, 2024). In other words, mindfulness appears beneficial, but it is unlikely to be a stand-alone solution.

These results provide several actionable implications. First, brief mindfulness-based micro-interventions (e.g., “pause–breathe–check” routines before checkout) can be integrated into educational settings, counseling services, or financial literacy programs for young adults to encourage a decision-making pause when urges arise (Baer et al., 2006). Second, “mindful shopping” education can be developed to help users identify emotional triggers, recognize promotional persuasion tactics, and apply reflective steps before purchasing especially given the prominent role of promotions and convenience in shaping young consumers’ shopping decisions (Muzammil et al., 2022; Hermawan, 2017). Third, platform-level design strategies could support reflective purchasing by providing spending summaries, budget reminders, friction-increasing prompts for repeated purchases in short

time windows, or optional cooling-off features prior to payment, particularly in environments where payment flexibility reduces transactional barriers (Jakpat, 2024). Finally, broader consumer protection and digital literacy initiatives may help mitigate impulsive purchasing risks by promoting transparency in promotional messaging and encouraging responsible marketing practices aimed at younger users (APJII, 2024).

CONCLUSION

This study highlights a central lesson: mindfulness is meaningfully associated with lower online impulsive buying among young adults. The findings indicate that young adults who are more capable of staying fully present and less reactive to emotional impulses tend to make more deliberate decisions during digital transactions, thereby reducing unplanned purchasing behavior. In other words, mindfulness appears to function as a protective psychological resource in online shopping contexts that are often saturated with persuasive cues and rapid decision triggers.

In terms of scientific contribution, this research strengthens the evidence that internal psychological factors specifically mindfulness should be considered alongside external marketing stimuli when explaining online impulsive buying. By focusing on active young adult users of online shopping platforms, the study adds empirical support to the view that mindful awareness and nonreactivity can be relevant mechanisms for self-regulation in digital consumption. This contribution is particularly important for refining theoretical models of impulsive buying in online environments and for informing the development of behavioral interventions such as “mindful shopping” strategies.

Several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the cross-sectional design restricts the ability to draw strong causal conclusions about mindfulness preventing impulsive buying over time. Second, reliance on self-report questionnaires may introduce response bias and common method variance. Third, the model explains a limited proportion of variance, suggesting that other determinants such as demographics, self-control, mood, impulsive buying tendency, and platform-related factors remain influential. Future studies should therefore use longitudinal or experimental designs, incorporate additional predictors, and consider comparative analyses across generations to provide a more comprehensive understanding of online impulsive buying in the digital era.

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