

Research Article

# The Relationship Between Lifestyle and Impulsive Purchasing Behavior of Students When Shopping Online

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**Abstract:** Advancements in modern technology have reshaped people's lifestyles, including how individuals carry out their daily activities. These changes have influenced individuals to make less realistic decisions in an effort to align themselves with their desired lifestyle. This study aims to examine whether college students with certain lifestyle tendencies are more likely to engage in impulsive buying when shopping online. The study involved 392 college students residing in Surabaya, East Java, selected through a random sampling technique. Data were collected using a Google Form-based questionnaire containing measurement instruments developed by the researcher: (1) the Impulsive Buying Scale (15 items;  $\alpha = 0.858$ ) and (2) the Lifestyle Scale (22 items;  $\alpha = 0.898$ ). Multiple linear regression was used to analyze the data. The findings reveal a significant positive relationship between lifestyle and impulsive buying. The stronger an individual's consumerist lifestyle tendency, the more likely they are to make impulsive purchases.

**Keywords:** Lifestyle, Impulsive Buying, Students.

## 1. Introduction

The rapid development of digital technology has significantly transformed consumer behavior, particularly in the context of online shopping (Simanjuntak, 2019). The increasing accessibility of e-commerce platforms allows individuals to browse, compare, and purchase products with greater convenience, often without spatial or temporal limitations. This ease of access has contributed to changes in lifestyle patterns, especially among students, who tend to adopt more dynamic, trend-driven, and consumption-oriented behaviors (Plummer, 1974; Mowen & Minor, 2002). While digital platforms offer efficiency and flexibility, they also create an environment that encourages unplanned purchases driven by emotional responses, visual stimuli, and promotional exposure (Beatty & Ferrell, 1998; Amos, Holmes & Keneson, 2014).

Students represent a consumer group that is highly active in digital environments and susceptible to impulse-driven decisions (Ebitu & Tom, 2015). Many students report spending beyond their initial budgets, purchasing items due to visual appeal or promotional offers, and experiencing regret after making spontaneous purchases. Impulsive buying is typically characterized by spontaneous decision-making, limited cognitive deliberation, and strong emotional impulses (Rook, 1987; Verplanken & Herabadi, 2001). These tendencies may intensify when individuals are influenced by lifestyle factors that emphasize enjoyment, trend adoption, and self-expression (Anitha, 2016; Chusniasari, 2015).

Lifestyle has become one of the key internal factors shaping individuals' purchasing behaviors (Sathish & Rajamohan, 2012). A lifestyle oriented toward social visibility,

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enjoyment, and frequent engagement in leisure activities can increase the likelihood of impulsive purchases (Japariato & Sugiharto, 2011). As digital environments continue to blur the boundaries between needs and desires, understanding how lifestyle influences impulsive buying among students becomes increasingly important.

Although prior studies have explored factors that contribute to impulsive buying (Bhakat & Muruganatham, 2013; Mai et al., 2003), research focusing on the specific role of lifestyle within online shopping among Indonesian students remains limited. This study addresses that gap by examining the relationship between lifestyle and impulsive buying behavior among students who engage in online shopping.

## 2. Literature Review

The rapid advancement of digital technology has reshaped consumer behavior by creating online shopping environments that are accessible, persuasive, and saturated with promotional stimuli (Miranda, 2016). Students are particularly responsive to these conditions. Their purchasing behavior is shaped not only by platform-based triggers but also by internal psychological factors, especially lifestyle orientations (Plummer, 1974).

Lifestyle is conceptualized as a pattern of activities, interests, and opinions (Mowen & Minor, 2002). Among students, lifestyle often reflects the pursuit of social visibility, trend adoption, enjoyment, and self-expression (Anitha, 2016). Digital platforms intensify these tendencies through constant exposure to trends, social comparison, and personalized recommendations (Sholihah & Kuswardani, 2009).

Impulsive buying is characterized by spontaneous, emotionally driven decisions (Rook, 1987; Stern, 1962). Online shopping reduces cognitive barriers, increases convenience, and exposes users to time-limited promotions, amplifying impulsive buying (Silvera, Lavack & Kropp, 2008).

Although many studies report a positive relationship between lifestyle and impulsive buying (Chung, Song & Koo, 2015; Bashir et al., 2013), others report inconsistent findings, suggesting variations across cultural and technological contexts. Research focusing on Indonesian university students remains insufficient (Yahmini, 2019).

## 3. Methods

This study employed a quantitative research approach with descriptive and verification designs (Sugiyono, 2014). The descriptive component provided an overview of students' lifestyle tendencies and impulsive buying behaviors, while the verification component tested the relationships between variables.

Sampling followed established quantitative guidelines (Sugiyono, 2014), and a structured questionnaire was used as the primary instrument. Measurement constructs followed established behavioral and psychological scale development principles (Azwar, 2011; Azwar, 2015).

Validity and reliability testing ensured that the instrument accurately captured the constructs measured (Azwar, 2009). Data analysis, including coding, scoring, normality testing, linearity testing, and regression, was conducted using standard quantitative procedures (Sugiyono, 2014).

## 4. Results

The results of the study were obtained from 392 respondents. Descriptive analysis showed that impulsive buying scores ranged from 28 to 51, with a mean of 39.31 (SD = 2.92), indicating a moderate tendency among students. Lifestyle scores ranged from 48 to 96, with a mean of 65.35 (SD = 8.88), also reflecting moderate levels overall. Categorization further indicated that most students fell within the moderate category for both variables. Prior to hypothesis testing, assumption checks were conducted. The normality test using the Kolmogorov–Smirnov method confirmed that the data were normally distributed ( $p = 0.180$ ), and linearity testing showed that the relationship between lifestyle and impulsive buying was linear ( $F = 1.294$ ;  $p = 0.113$ ), thereby fulfilling the assumptions for parametric analysis.

Inferential analysis demonstrated a significant positive correlation between lifestyle and impulsive buying ( $r = 0.179$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ). This was supported by the regression model, which was statistically significant ( $F = 7.510$ ;  $p = 0.001$ ), indicating that lifestyle contributed meaningfully to variations in impulsive buying behavior. Based on these results, the hypothesis proposing that lifestyle significantly influences impulsive buying was accepted. Overall, the data suggest that students with more active, expressive, and consumption-oriented lifestyles tend to show higher levels of impulsive purchasing in online settings.

## 5. Discussion

The findings showed that lifestyle significantly influenced impulsive buying, aligning with previous literature stating that lifestyle contributes to emotional and spontaneous purchasing decisions (Japariato & Sugiharto, 2011; Chusniasari, 2015).

The emotional and experiential features of online shopping environments are consistent with earlier findings that visual stimuli and ease of access enhance impulsive decisions (Beatty & Ferrell, 1998; Silvera, Lavack & Kropp, 2008). These tendencies are further strengthened among individuals with strong lifestyle orientations toward trends and enjoyment (Anitha, 2016; Tambuwun, 2016).

While the hypothesis was supported, the modest correlation indicates the presence of other contributing variables such as self-control (Marsela & Supriatna, 2019), emotional regulation (Ningrum et al., 2019), and peer influence (Putri & Aulia, 2018), as suggested in prior studies.

## 6. Conclusion

The present study examined the influence of lifestyle on impulsive buying behavior among university students in online shopping contexts. The findings demonstrate that lifestyle plays a significant role in shaping students' tendencies to make spontaneous and unplanned purchases. Students with more active, trend-oriented, and consumption-driven lifestyles were more likely to engage in impulsive buying. These results highlight the importance of understanding personal lifestyle characteristics as a psychological factor contributing to digital purchasing patterns.

This study contributes to the broader literature by providing empirical evidence from an Indonesian student population, reaffirming that lifestyle remains a relevant predictor of consumer behavior in modern digital environments. The findings underscore the need for greater awareness of responsible consumption among students and offer insights for educators, policymakers, and digital marketers who seek to promote healthier financial decision-making.

Despite its contributions, this study is not without limitations. The use of self-reported questionnaires may introduce response bias, as participants could overestimate or underestimate their actual behaviors. Additionally, the cross-sectional design restricts causal interpretations, limiting the ability to determine whether lifestyle directly leads to impulsive buying or whether other psychological factors mediate this relationship. The sampling frame, focused solely on university students, may also reduce the external validity of the findings, as the results may not generalize to other age groups or consumer segments. These limitations relate primarily to methodological constraints, measurement accuracy, and participant representativeness.

Future research could address these limitations by employing longitudinal designs, incorporating multiple data collection methods, or expanding the sample to include broader demographic groups. Further studies may also explore additional predictors- such as self-control, emotional regulation, peer influence, or digital marketing exposure- to provide a more comprehensive understanding of impulsive buying behavior in online settings.

## 7. Limitation

This study, while providing meaningful insights into the relationship between lifestyle and impulsive buying among university students, is subject to several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the use of self-reported questionnaires may introduce response bias, as participants might intentionally or unintentionally misrepresent their actual behaviors. This limitation could affect the accuracy of the measured levels of lifestyle tendencies and impulsive buying, potentially leading to either inflated or underestimated results.

Second, the cross-sectional research design restricts the ability to establish causal relationships. Although lifestyle was found to be significantly associated with impulsive buying, the design does not allow inferences regarding the direction of influence or the possibility of reciprocal effects. This limitation may reduce the internal validity of the conclusions drawn from the study.

Third, the sample was drawn exclusively from university students, which limits the generalizability of the findings. Students tend to have unique consumption patterns influenced by academic environments, peer interactions, and financial constraints. As a result, the findings may not fully represent other consumer groups such as working adults, adolescents, or older populations, thereby affecting the external validity of the study.

Fourth, the relatively modest strength of the correlation suggests that other unexamined variables- such as self-control, emotional regulation, financial literacy, or exposure to digital

marketing strategies—may play a meaningful role in shaping impulsive buying behavior. The absence of these variables in the model may reduce the explanatory power of the findings.

Lastly, the study relied on quantitative measures alone, which may not capture the deeper psychological or contextual nuances underlying students' purchasing decisions. The lack of qualitative insights might limit the depth of interpretation regarding why certain lifestyle characteristics lead to impulsive buying.

Despite these limitations, the study offers valuable empirical evidence and serves as a foundation for future research aimed at exploring additional predictors, employing longitudinal designs, or expanding to more diverse populations.

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