



EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND ITS IMPACT ON IMPULSE BUYING AND POST PURCHASE REGRET AMONG YOUNG WORKING ADULTS

Reshab Barman

Student, Amity Institute of Psychology & Allied Sciences, Amity University

Dr. Sushmita Biswal Waraich*

Associate Professor, Amity Institute of Psychology & Allied Sciences, Amity University *Corresponding Author

ABSTRACT This study investigates how emotional intelligence (EI) influences impulse buying and post-purchase regret in young working adults (18-30 years old). A survey of 120 professionals found that higher EI correlated with less impulse buying and lower post-purchase regret. Interestingly, EI levels and buying behaviors did not differ by gender. These findings suggest that EI can help young adults make more mindful purchasing decisions. By understanding the role of EI in consumer behavior, strategies can be developed to promote EI and potentially reduce impulse buying and regret among young professionals.

KEYWORDS : Emotional Intelligence (EI), Impulse Buying, Post-Purchase Satisfaction, Self-Awareness, Self-Regulation, Social Awareness, Relationship Management, Motivation, Purchase Regret, Planned Buying Behavior, Schutte Self Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT)

INTRODUCTION

The financial independence and increased disposable income of young working adults have made them a significant consumer force. However, this demographic is also susceptible to impulsive buying behaviour, often leading to post-purchase regret and dissatisfaction. Grasping the factors influencing these decisions is crucial for both consumers and marketers. This study investigates the potential of emotional intelligence (EI) to act as a buffer against impulsive buying behaviour and promote greater post-purchase satisfaction among young working adults.

The realm of consumer behaviour is a fascinating and ever-evolving field that delves into the intricate world of why and how people buy. It's a confluence of psychology, marketing, economics, and sociology, all working together to understand the complex motivations that drive us to make purchasing decisions. This comprehensive exploration will dissect these key areas, examining consumer behaviour, consumer psychology, emotional intelligence, impulse buying, post-purchase behaviour, and post-purchase satisfaction.

Consumer Behaviour

Consumer behaviour encompasses the entire decision-making process individuals undergo, from recognizing a need or desire to the post-purchase evaluation. A dynamic web of internal motivations and external pressures weaves its way into consumer decisions, ultimately leading to a purchase or a rejection (Solomon & Bamossy, 2016).

Consumer behaviour refers to the study of how individuals, groups, or organizations select, purchase, use, or dispose of goods, services, ideas, or experiences to satisfy their needs and desires (Solomon & Bamossy, 2016). It encompasses a wide range of activities, including information processing, decision-making, and post-purchase evaluations, influenced by various internal and external factors.

Understanding customer behaviour is essential for businesses to market their goods and services successfully and satisfy the demands of their target market. For instance, research by (Kotler & Armstrong, 2018) emphasizes the importance of analysing consumer preferences and behaviours to develop marketing strategies that resonate with customers and drive sales.

Consumer behaviour is effected by multiple factors, which include psychological, social, cultural, and situational variables. Psychological factors such as motivation, perception, and attitudes shape individuals' preferences and choices (Solomon & Bamossy, 2016). Social factors, such as family, reference groups, and social media, influence consumers' purchase decisions through social influence and peer pressure (Kotler & Armstrong, 2018).

Cultural factors, including values, beliefs, and customs, vary across different societies and impact consumers' consumption patterns and preferences (Solomon & Bamossy, 2016). Additionally, situational factors such as time, location, and mood can influence consumers' decision-making processes (Kotler & Armstrong, 2018).

Consumer behaviour can stem from either Internal Influences or external influences. The bedrock of consumer behaviour lies in identifying needs – physiological or psychological – and the desire to fulfil them. Needs become wants when directed towards specific objects or experiences.

Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence (EI) refers to the ability to perceive, understand, use, and manage one's own emotions in positive ways to achieve one's goals and navigate social relationships (Bar-On, 1997). While traditionally viewed as a personal characteristic, EI also plays a significant role in consumer behaviour and purchase decisions (Ciarrochi et al., 2000). Here's how:

Self-Awareness

High self-awareness in consumers allows them to recognize the influence of emotions on their purchasing choices. This enables them to differentiate between long-term needs and temporary emotional cravings, leading to more rational decisions. An example can be recognizing feelings of boredom and avoiding impulse purchases to fill a temporary emotional void.

Self-Regulation

Consumers with strong self-regulation can manage their emotions effectively. By managing their emotions effectively, consumers can resist impulsive temptations and make deliberate choices that support their long-term goals. An example can be exercising self-control by putting off an impulsive purchase in favour of saving for a long-desired, higher-value item.

Social Awareness

Consumers with strong social awareness possess an enhanced ability to decipher the emotions of others, including those triggered by marketing messages. This heightened awareness makes them less vulnerable to manipulative tactics often employed in advertising. An example can be recognizing that a fear-based advertisement is trying to exploit their anxieties and making a conscious choice to research the product objectively.

Relationship Management

Consumers with strong relationship management skills can build trust and rapport with brands. They are more receptive to personalized marketing messages and are more likely to become loyal customers. An example of this can be feeling valued by a brand that actively listens to customer feedback and offers exceptional customer service.

Motivation

Consumers with high emotional intelligence can leverage their emotions to stay motivated and make progress towards their goals.

They can use positive emotions like excitement or anticipation to fuel their desire for a product or service. For instance, feeling motivated to buy a fitness tracker because it aligns with a personal goal of leading a healthier lifestyle.

Understanding how emotional intelligence impacts consumer behaviour allows businesses to craft marketing strategies that resonate with consumers on an emotional level. By acknowledging the emotional drivers behind purchase decisions, businesses can create a more meaningful connection with their target audience.

Impulse Buying

Impulse buying is a phenomenon that is characterized by spontaneous and emotionally driven decision-making, where individuals succumb to immediate desires or whims, rather than rational deliberation (Verplanken & Sato, 2011).

Impulsive buying behaviour can be influenced by various factors, including situational triggers, such as in-store promotions or peer influence, as well as individual differences in personality traits and emotional states (Dittmar et al., 1995). Additionally, impulsive buying may be fuelled by psychological factors, such as the need for instant gratification or the desire to alleviate negative emotions (Roy F et al., n.d.).

Despite its spontaneous nature, impulsive buying can have significant implications for consumers' financial well-being and overall satisfaction with their purchases (Rook & Fisher, 1995). Researchers suggest that understanding the underlying motivations and triggers of impulsive buying behaviour is crucial for developing effective strategies to manage and mitigate its negative consequences (Verplanken & Sato, 2011).

Driven by emotions rather than reason, impulse buying involves the unplanned purchase of a product or service due to a surge of feelings or momentary cravings. It's often triggered by environmental cues or internal emotional states. Here's a deeper look:

Emotional Triggers can be a pivotal factor. Certain emotions like excitement, boredom, stress, or frustration can act as catalysts for impulse purchases. Consumers might seek to feel good in the moment, reward themselves, or break out of a mundane routine through unplanned purchases (Rook & Fisher, 1995).

Environmental stressors also trigger impulsive buying, and many organizations tend to target this factor. Physical stores strategically utilize product placement, enticing displays, and even in-store music to create an atmosphere that fuels impulse buying. Online retailers leverage targeted advertising, limited-time offers, and free shipping incentives to trigger impulsive purchases. For instance, we've all experienced the temptation of impulse buying, like grabbing those attractive, discounted shoes near the checkout counter. This can be triggered by several factors.

Sensation Seeking behaviour also leads to impulsive buying. People who crave new and exciting experiences (high sensation seekers) are especially prone to impulse purchases. The thrill of finding something unexpected or the novelty of an unplanned item can be very appealing to them.

Cognitive biases like the endowment effect (overvaluing what we already own) or the sunk cost fallacy (continuing an activity due to past investments) can contribute to impulsive decisions. For example, adding an item to your cart just to qualify for free shipping, even though you weren't planning on buying it. This behaviour can be influenced by several factors. This can lead to decision making biases.

Social influences and social cues, like need to fit in or keep up with the latest trends can trigger impulse purchases. Social media endorsements by celebrities or widely shared online products can create a desire to have those same items, leading to unplanned decisions. For instance, spontaneously buying a product after seeing numerous positive reviews and recommendations from friends on social media.

By comprehending the factors that lead to impulse buying, organizations can develop strategies to encourage these purchases when it aligns with their objectives. However, it's equally important to consider ethical implications and ensure consumers don't make impulsive decisions they might regret later.

Post-Purchase Behaviour

Post-purchase behaviour encompasses all the actions and feelings a consumer experiences after making a purchase. It's a crucial stage that influences brand loyalty and future purchase decisions. Consumers'

actions and attitudes following a purchase are referred to as post-purchase behaviour. It encompasses activities such as product evaluation, satisfaction or dissatisfaction, repurchase intentions, and word-of-mouth communication about the product or service (Kotler & Armstrong, 2018).

Once a consumer has completed a purchase, their experience with the product or service becomes crucial in shaping their future behaviour. For instance, if the consumer feels satisfied with their purchase, they are more likely to exhibit positive post-purchase behaviour such as repeat purchases and positive word-of-mouth recommendations (Oliver, 1999). Conversely, if the consumer experiences dissatisfaction, they may engage in negative post-purchase behaviours such as product returns, complaints, or negative word-of-mouth, which can adversely affect the brand's reputation and future sales (Richins, 2017).

Post Purchase Regret

Post-purchase regret, also known as buyer's remorse, is a feeling of regret or uncertainty that consumers may experience after making a purchase. This psychological discomfort is often associated with impulse purchases, where the decision to buy is made spontaneously, without thorough consideration of the product's necessity or value (Kumar et al., 2020). This arises when the buyer's beliefs and their purchasing decisions do not match, and this causes them to ponder whether they made the right choice or not, which later creates the sense of regret after purchases.

When a purchase is made against one's needs, expectations, or ideals, it can cause dissonance and leave one feeling regretful. This occurrence can be explained by the cognitive dissonance theory, which suggests that humans have an innate drive to avoid having their ideas and behaviours be inconsistent.

In summary, post-purchase regret is a complex emotion that stems from the psychological tension between what was bought and what could have been, often exacerbated by impulsive buying behaviour and the subsequent realization that the purchase may not have been necessary or valuable.

Post-Purchase Satisfaction

Post-purchase satisfaction can be stated as the opposite of post purchase regret, low levels of regret can also be an indicator for the presence of satisfaction levels. Post purchase satisfaction refers to a customer's feelings regarding a product or service following their purchase and use of it. It reflects the degree to which the consumer's expectations regarding the product or service have been met or exceeded, and it plays a crucial role in shaping future purchase intentions and brand loyalty (Oliver, 1999).

According to (Oliver, 1999), post-purchase satisfaction is influenced by various factors, including the consumer's pre-purchase expectations, the actual performance of the product or service, and the discrepancy between expectations and performance. Additionally, factors such as perceived quality, value for money, and after-sales support can also impact post-purchase satisfaction.

Post-purchase satisfaction is not only determined by the objective features of the product or service but also by the consumer's subjective perceptions and experiences (Oliver, 1999). For example, even if a product meets its functional requirements, the consumer may still feel dissatisfied if the overall shopping experience was negative or if the product did not meet their emotional or psychological needs.

Furthermore, post-purchase satisfaction has significant implications for consumer behaviour, as satisfied customers are more likely to become repeat purchasers, recommend the product or service to others, and maintain long-term relationships with the brand (Oliver, 1999). Post-purchase satisfaction refers to a consumer's emotional state after acquiring and using a product or service. It reflects the extent to which the product or service met or exceeded their expectations.

Perceived value is the consumer's subjective assessment of the benefits received compared to the price paid. A product offering high perceived value, exceeding expectations in terms of features, functionality, or experience, leads to greater satisfaction. For example, feeling satisfied with a product that offers a high-quality user experience despite having a lower price point compared to similar products.

Rationale

Researchers and marketers have paid close attention to the phenomenon of impulsive buying and its after effects, including post-purchase regret. Although there are many variables that influence impulsive purchasing behaviour, emotional intelligence stands out as a significant but little-researched element. The purpose of this study is to investigate the connection between emotional intelligence and impulse buying behaviours, as well as the consequences for young working adults' post purchase regret. Since emotional intelligence is relevant to many facets of human behaviour, it has attracted a lot of attention in recent years. People are often impacted by their emotions, social influences, and cognitive processes when making purchases. It's critical for marketers, merchants, and politicians to comprehend how emotional intelligence influences customer behaviour, especially when it comes to impulsive buying and post purchase regret.

Significance

Emotional intelligence plays a pivotal role in shaping consumer behaviour, particularly when it comes to impulse buying and subsequent feelings of regret. As young working adults navigate the complex landscape of purchasing decisions, their ability to recognize, understand, and manage emotions significantly influences their buying patterns. Impulse buying, characterized by spontaneous and unplanned purchases, often stems from emotional triggers such as excitement, stress, or desire. However, post-purchase regret can follow swiftly, leading to feelings of cognitive dissonance and dissatisfaction. By investigating the interplay between Emotional Intelligence, impulse buying, and regret, this study sheds light on how emotional awareness impacts consumer choices. Moreover, understanding these dynamics can inform marketing strategies, enhance consumer well-being, and guide interventions to mitigate post-purchase remorse.

Aim

To study the effect of emotional intelligence in consumer behaviour: implications for impulse buying and post purchase regret.

Objective

- To study the relationship between emotional intelligence and impulse buying among young working adults.
- To study the relationship between emotional intelligence and post purchase regret among young working adults.
- To study the relationship between impulse buying and post purchase regret among young working adults.
- To explore potential gender differences in emotional intelligence levels of young working adults
- To explore potential gender differences in impulse buying habits of young working adults
- To explore potential gender differences in post purchase regret felt by young working adults

Hypothesis

- H1a: There will be a significant relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Impulsive buying among young working adults.
 H2a: There will be a significant relationship between Emotional Intelligence and post purchase satisfaction among young working adults.
 H3a: There will be a significant relationship between Impulse buying and Post purchase regret
 H4a: There will be a significant gender difference in Emotional Intelligence levels of male and female young working adults.
 H5a: There will be a significant gender difference in Impulse buying tendencies of male and female young working adults.
 H6a: There will be a significant gender difference in Post purchase regret of male and female young working adults.

Method

Research Design

This study looks at how emotional intelligence influences impulse buying and post purchase satisfaction using quantitative research methods. The research seeks to explore how emotional intelligence influences impulse buying and post purchase satisfaction through the analysis of numerical data and statistical information. To guarantee objective insights of young working professionals, data is collected from a large sample, frequently using survey questionnaires.

Variables

Independent Variable- Emotional Intelligence
 Dependent Variables- Impulse buying, Post purchase satisfaction/regret

Sample

120 people make up the study's sample, 58 of whom are men and 62 of whom are women. The age range of the study's participants was 18 to 30. The sample was gathered by sending out Google Forms to employees of various companies.

Sampling

This method of sampling was purposive sampling. It is non-probability sampling strategy. The selection of the participants was based on certain attributes pertinent to the study's goals.

A Google form was created specifically for this experiment and handed out to employed individuals who met specific characteristics or qualities relevant to the research objectives. Based on their individual experiences these professionals were asked to complete the questionnaire. They were also urged to distribute the form to other employees who fulfilled the pre-established requirements in order to guarantee a specific and narrowly focused sample for the research.

Procedure

The study was conducted in online mode, for which a google form was formulated that comprised of questions from The Schutte Self-Report Inventory (SSEIT), Impulsive buying scale and Purchase regret scale. The Google form consisted of a total of 55 questions. After being briefed about the study, the participant's consent was taken to partake in the study. Every participant received an explanation of the research ethics. The questionnaire was given to the participants after a brief rapport-building session. The participants were given the link to the questionnaire, which they were asked to complete as honestly as possible. Following the completion of data collection, the results were scored and analysed.

Description of tools

Schutte Self Report Inventory (SSEIT)

"The Schutte Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT)" is a test that measures the general Emotional Intelligence (EI). It is based on the EI model that was proposed by (Mayer et al., 1999). The SSEIT is designed to evaluate a number of emotional intelligence competencies, such as the capacity to recognize emotions, use emotions to promote cognition, comprehend emotions, and regulate emotions in both oneself and others. The test consists of 33 items and uses a 5 point Likert scale which ranges from 1 ("strongly disagree") to 5 ("strongly agree") for responses. Developed by (Schutte et al., 1998), the reliability rating of SSEIT is reported to be 0.90, indicating a high level of consistency in the measurement of emotional intelligence.

Impulsive Buying Scale

(Rook & Fisher, 1995) developed the "Impulse Buying Scale" in 1995 is a psychological tool designed to measure the trait of impulsiveness in consumer purchasing behaviour. The scale consists of 9 items and utilizes a 5-point Likert scale format, where 1 represents 'strongly disagree' and 5 represents 'strongly agree'. They developed this scale by drawing on 35 questions from the literature on broad measures of impulsiveness and from earlier studies on the phenomenology of impulse purchase. A sample of undergraduate business students was used for the pre-testing of the items, and through the use of statistical methods like confirmatory factor analysis, correlational testing, and exploratory factor analysis, the scale was refined to the final 9-item measure.

With a chi-square statistic of 49.45 (df= 27; p <.01), an adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI) of .92, a comparative fit index (CFI) of .97, and a normed fit index (NFI) of .94, the confirmatory factor analysis of the Impulse Buying Scale revealed an adequate model fit. Every lambda coefficient had a significant and big value, and every t-value was greater than 9.0 (p <.001). The scale has a reported mean score of 25.1 and a standard deviation of 7.4. Its Cronbach's alpha of .88 indicates that it has strong internal consistency.

Purchase Regret Scale

The 12-item Purchase Regret Scale developed by (Bloch, 1995) is a tool used to measure the level of regret a consumer feels after making a purchase. The scale assesses both cognitive and emotional aspects of regret, including disappointment, frustration, and feelings of missed opportunities. It is designed to help researchers and marketers understand the factors that contribute to post-purchase regret and how it affects consumer behaviour and satisfaction. The reliability rating is reported to be 0.82, indicating a high level of consistency in the

measurement of emotional intelligence.

On a 5-point Likert scale, respondents are asked to rank each item according to how much they agree or disagree with statements about their feelings of regret about the purchase. The scale measures the intensity of regret and identify the specific aspects of the purchase that led to such feelings.

Statistical analysis

Software: IBM SPSS Statistics Version 26 and Microsoft Excel 2016. Correlational design was used because it examines the relationship between two or more variables. The study's design was chosen because all three variables are related to one another, making correlational research the best technique for examining the strength of the association between variables.

The research also examines the gender disparities in the three variables using the "t-test". This method of statistics is utilized to find out if there is a significant difference between the means of two groups. While testing hypotheses, it is commonly used to compare sample means from different populations. There are two primary kinds: independent samples paired samples t-test for comparisons within groups and Independent t-test for distinct groups. The t-test determines the significance by calculating a t-value, which measures the difference between means relative to variation within groups. The p-value that corresponds to this t-value is usually 0.05.

Results and Interpretation

The responses filled by the participants were recorded, and the data was converted in the form of MS excel sheets. After this the Correlation, and t-test were calculated respectively with the help of the SPSS software. The result obtained are showcased in the below tables:

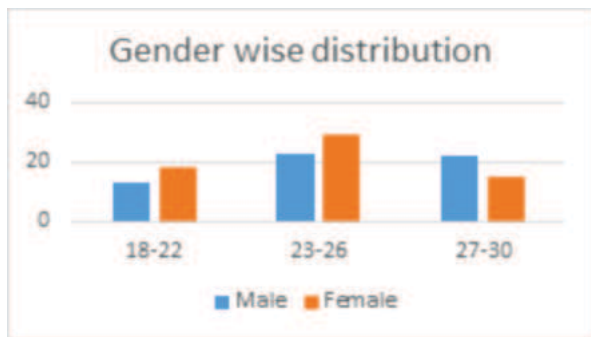


Figure: 1 Distribution of Gender based on Age group

Table 1: Pearson Correlation between Emotional Intelligence and Impulsive Buying

		Emotional intelligence	Impulsive Buying
Emotional intelligence	Pearson Correlation	1	.338**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	120	120
Impulsive Buying	Pearson Correlation	-.338**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	120	120

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The results in Table 1 shows a significant negative correlation (p < 0.001) between emotional intelligence and impulsive buying behaviour. This indicates that higher emotional intelligence scores tend to coincide with lower impulsive buying tendencies.

Table 2: Pearson Correlation between Emotional Intelligence and Post Purchase Regret

		Emotional Intelligence	Post Purchase Regret
Emotional Intelligence	Pearson Correlation	1	.259**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.004
	N	120	120
Post Purchase Regret	Pearson Correlation	.259**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.004	
	N	120	120

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The results from table 2 indicates a significant negative correlation (p < 0.001) between emotional intelligence and post-purchase regret. This suggests that higher emotional intelligence scores are associated with lower levels of post-purchase regret.

Table 3: Pearson Correlation between Post Purchase Regret and Impulsive Buying

		Post Purchase Regret	Impulsive Buying
Post Purchase Regret	Pearson Correlation	1	.551**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	120	120
Impulsive Buying	Pearson Correlation	.551**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	120	120

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 3 shows that impulsive buying had a very positive significant correlation with post purchase regret (.551) at 0.01 level indicating that an increase in the impulsive buying resulted in increase of post purchase regret.

Table 4: Independent Sample T- test on the opinion of the male and female Respondents towards Emotional Intelligence

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error mean	T- test	Sig. (2-tailed)
Emotional Intelligence	Male	58	1.7	.82	.10779	-.026	.729
	Female	62	1.7	.82	.10434		

NS. Correlation is not significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 4 shows that there is no difference between the male and female young adults in the case of Emotional Intelligence.

Table 5: Independent Sample T- test on the opinion of the male and female Respondents towards Impulsive buying

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t- test	Sig. (2-tailed)
Impulsive Buying	Male	58	1.4	.50	.066	.401	.689 ^{NS}
	Female	62	1.5	.50	.064		

NS. Correlation is not significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 5 shows that there is no difference between the male and female young adults in the case of Impulse Buying.

Table 6: Independent Sample T- test on the opinion of the male and female Respondents towards Post purchase regret

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t- test	Sig. (2-tailed)
Post Purchase Regret	Male	58	1.5	.50	.066	.187	.852 ^{NS}
	Female	62	1.5	.50	.064		

NS. Correlation is not significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 6 shows that there is no difference between the male and female young adults in the case of Post purchase Regret.

DISCUSSION

This research explores the connections between emotional intelligence (EI), impulsive buying behaviour, and post-purchase satisfaction in a sample of 120 young working adults. The participants completed surveys that assessed their emotional intelligence, tendencies towards impulsive buying, and experiences with post-purchase regret.

Analysis of the emotional intelligence scores suggests that a significant portion of the respondents might have higher emotional intelligence across various domains, including "self-awareness", "self-regulation", "social awareness", "relationship management", and "motivation". In the impulse buying scale, the majority of respondents exhibited planned and thoughtful buying behaviour. However, a minority acknowledged occasional impulsive purchases and a tendency towards recklessness in spending.

Analysis of post-purchase satisfaction scores revealed that while most respondents reported low regret and negative emotions after purchases, a significant portion felt they could have used the money better, suggesting lingering doubts.

The Pearson correlation analysis between emotional intelligence and impulsive buying revealed a significant relationship. Therefore, hypothesis 1 was accepted. The data indicated a negative correlation between emotional intelligence scores and impulsive buying tendencies. This indicates that individuals with higher levels of EI are less prone to act on impulse when making purchases. This finding aligns with previous research indicating that emotional intelligence can play a role in self-regulation and decision-making processes, leading to more deliberate and controlled buying behaviours (Tariq et al., 2021).

Correlation analysis between emotional intelligence and post purchase regret also revealed a significant relationship. Hence, hypothesis 2 was also accepted. The study also found a negative association between emotional intelligence scores and levels of post-purchase regret. This implies that individuals with higher emotional intelligence may experience fewer regrets after making a purchase, possibly due to their ability to better anticipate the outcomes of their decisions and manage any negative emotions that may arise (Kumar et al., 2020).

Correlation analysis between impulse buying and post purchase regret also revealed a significant relationship. Hence, hypothesis 3 was accepted. Impulsive buying was found to positively correlate with post-purchase regret, suggesting that people who frequently make impulsive purchases are more likely to feel regret after making those purchases. This supports the notion that impulsive buying, often driven by immediate gratification, can lead to negative emotional consequences like regret once the initial excitement wears off (Kumar et al., 2020).

The current study's investigation into gender differences within the context of consumer behaviour has yielded noteworthy insights. The independent sample t-test results indicate no significant gender-based differences in post-purchase regret, impulse buying, and emotional intelligence among customers. These findings challenge some of the traditional stereotypes and assumptions about gender-specific behaviours in the marketplace.

The analysis revealed no significant difference between male and female customers regarding post-purchase regret. Therefore, hypothesis 4 was rejected. This finding is consistent with the research by (Akç & Kiliç, 2016), which suggested that "while there may be variations in the levels of regret experienced, the overall incidence of regret does not significantly differ between genders".

Similarly, the study found no significant difference between male and female young working adults in the case of impulse buying. Hence, hypothesis 5 was rejected. This result aligns with the findings of (Büyüker & Atilla, 2013), who reported that "while there may be differences in the affective and cognitive components of impulse buying, the overall tendency does not significantly differ between men and women".

The data also indicated no significant difference between male and female customers concerning emotional intelligence. Therefore, hypothesis 6 was also rejected. This supports the research by (Fischer et al., 2018), which found that "gender differences in emotional intelligence are not as pronounced as previously thought and that any differences observed are often mediated by other factors such as age".

This suggests that gender may not be as influential a factor in determining consumer behaviour as traditionally believed. It highlights the importance of considering individual differences beyond gender when examining consumer behaviour patterns.

These findings underscore the importance of emotional intelligence in the context of consumer behaviour. By fostering higher levels of EI, individuals may be able to reduce impulsive buying and the subsequent regret, leading to more satisfying and rational purchasing decisions. It can help us comprehend how emotional intelligence, impulsive buying, and post purchase regret interact better. This study paves the way for future research on interventions and tactics that can improve emotional intelligence and encourage more thoughtful consumer decision-making by emphasizing the safeguarding role of emotional intelligence.

Limitations and suggestions for future research

In examining the relationship between emotional intelligence and its impact on impulse buying and post-purchase regret among young

working adults, this study encountered several limitations that future research could address.

Firstly, the cross-sectional nature of the research design limits the ability to establish causality. Longitudinal studies could provide deeper insights into how emotional intelligence influences purchasing behaviours over time.

Secondly, the reliance on self-reported measures may introduce bias; incorporating objective assessments of emotional intelligence could enhance the validity of findings.

Thirdly, the sample was restricted to young working adults in a specific geographic area, which may not be representative of the broader population. Future studies could expand the demographic and geographic scope to increase generalizability.

The study did not explore the specific types of products purchased, which might influence impulse buying and post-purchase satisfaction.

The definition of "reckless spending" in the survey was not provided. Investigate strategies to improve emotional intelligence and its impact on financial decision-making

Suggestions for future research include exploring the moderating effects of cultural differences on the studied relationship, as cultural norms significantly influence emotional expression and consumer behaviour. Additionally, investigating the role of digital literacy, as online shopping becomes increasingly prevalent, could offer valuable perspectives on impulse buying tendencies. Lastly, further research could examine the impact of interventions aimed at enhancing emotional intelligence on mitigating impulse buying and post-purchase regret, thereby contributing to the development of more effective consumer education programs.

CONCLUSION

This study suggests that emotional intelligence plays a crucial role in managing impulse buying and promoting post-purchase satisfaction among young working adults. Individuals with higher Emotional Intelligence may be better equipped to make thoughtful decisions, regulate emotions, and avoid impulsive purchases that can lead to regret. By recognizing the role of emotional intelligence in consumer decision-making, businesses can develop targeted strategies to enhance consumer well-being and satisfaction, ultimately fostering long-term relationships with their customers. Through a deeper understanding of these relationships, policymakers, marketers, and practitioners can work towards creating environments that support more mindful and deliberate consumer choices, leading to improved consumer welfare and societal well-being.

Implications

It is expected that the results of this study will advance theoretical understanding as well as real-world applications in the domains of marketing and consumer psychology. This study can guide the development of focused interventions geared at encouraging more adaptive consumer choice making processes and reducing young adults' post purchase regret after making impulsive purchases, by clarifying the role of emotional intelligence in this behaviour.

REFERENCES

- Akç, Y., & Kiliç, K. (2016). An Analysis of Post-Purchase Consumer Regret and the Resulting Consumer Responses. *Journal of Business Research*.
- Bar-On, R. (1997). *The emotional quotient inventory (EQ-i): A user's guide*. Multi-Health Professions Press Inc.
- Bloch, P. H. (1995). Seeking the Ideal Form: Product Design and Consumer Response. *Journal of Marketing*, 59(3), 16–29. <https://doi.org/10.1177/002224299505900302>
- Büyüker, D., & Atilla, G. (2013). Gender Differences in impulse Buying. 2(1), 519–531.
- Ciarrochi, J. V., Chan, A. Y. C., & Caputi, P. (2000). A critical evaluation of the emotional intelligence construct. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 28, 539–561.
- Dittmar, H., Beattie, J., & Friese, S. (1995). Gender identity and material symbols: Objects and decision considerations in impulse purchases. *Journal of Economic Psychology*, 16(3), 491–511. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0167-4870\(95\)00023-H](https://doi.org/10.1016/0167-4870(95)00023-H)
- Fischer, A. H., Kret, M. E., & Broekens, J. (2018). Gender differences in emotion perception and self-reported emotional intelligence: A test of the emotion sensitivity hypothesis. *PLOS ONE*, 13(1), e0190712. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0190712>
- Kotler, P., & Armstrong, G. (2018). *Principles of marketing (17e, global edition ed.)*. Pearson.
- Kumar, A., Chaudhuri, S., Bhardwaj, A., & Mishra, P. (2020). IMPULSE BUYING AND POST-PURCHASE REGRET: A STUDY OF SHOPPING BEHAVIOUR FOR THE PURCHASE OF GROCERY PRODUCTS. *INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF MANAGEMENT*, 11(12). <https://doi.org/10.34218/IJM.11.12.2020.057>
- Mayer, J. D., Caruso, D. R., & Salovey, P. (1999). Emotional intelligence meets traditional standards for an intelligence. *Intelligence*, 27(4), 267–298. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0160-2896\(99\)00016-1](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0160-2896(99)00016-1)

11. Oliver, R. L. (1999). Whence Consumer Loyalty? *Journal of Marketing*, 63, 33. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1252099>
12. Richins, M. L. (2017). Materialism pathways: The processes that create and perpetuate materialism. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 27(4), 480–499. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jcps.2017.07.006>
13. Rook, D. W., & Fisher, R. J. (1995). Normative Influences on Impulsive Buying Behavior. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 22(3), 305. <https://doi.org/10.1086/209452>
14. Roy F, B., Kathleen D., V., & Dianne M., T. (n.d.). The Strength Model of Self-Control. 351-355. <https://doi.org/doi:10.1111/j.1467-8721.2007.00534.x>
15. Schutte, N. S., Malouff, J. M., Hall, L. E., Haggerty, D. J., Cooper, J. T., Golden, C. J., & Dornheim, L. (1998). Development and validation of a measure of emotional intelligence. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 25(2), 167–177. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0191-8869\(98\)00001-4](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0191-8869(98)00001-4)
16. Solomon, M. R., & Bamossy, G. J. (2016). *Consumer behaviour: A European perspective* (Sixth Edition). Pearson.
17. Tariq, M. Z., Ali Bhatti, G., Khan, N. A., & Qadir, M. (2021). Impact of Consumer Emotional Intelligence on Satisfaction With Life During the COVID-19 Pandemic: The Mediating Role of Impulsive Buying Behavior. *European Journal of Psychology Open*, 80(3), 125–132. <https://doi.org/10.1024/2673-8627/a000013>
18. Verplanken, B., & Sato, A. (2011). The Psychology of Impulse Buying: An Integrative Self-Regulation Approach. *Journal of Consumer Policy*, 34(2), 197–210. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10603-011-9158-5>