

The Relationship Between Price Discounts and Impulsive Purchase: The Mediating Role of Positive Emotions

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Abstract-This study aims to test and analyze the effect of price discounts on impulse buying and positive emotions (PE), as well as the influence of PE on impulse buying. Besides, examining and analyzing the PE to mediate the relationship between price discounts and impulse buying becomes another intention. The population comes from Generation Z, born between 1995 and 2009, who purchased goods in the Yogya Department Store in Bandung City. Moreover, a purposive sampling method is utilized to sample them. Fortunately, this study can collect 207 people based on the survey. Therefore, this study uses a covariance-based structural equation model and Sobel test. After statistical testing is complete, this study demonstrates (1) no effect of price discounts on impulsive buying, (2) a positive influence of price discounts on PE, (3) a positive relationship between PE and impulsive purchase, and (4) the mediating effect of PE on the association between price discounts and impulse buying. Additionally, the R-square in the positive emotion and impulsive models is 0.801 and 0.148, respectively. As an implication, this study suggests that department stores apply price discounts on goods to elevate positive feelings with the help of salespersons providing excellent services, creating impulsive purchases after employees receive salaries.

Keywords: Generation Z; Positive Emotion; Price Discounts; Impulsive Purchase

1. INTRODUCTION

Consumer behavior describes the overall decisions regarding the acquisition, consumption, and disposition of goods, activities, services, people, ideas, and experiences over time (Hoyer et al., 2024). This behavioral research identifies consumption as the purchase, primarily when impulsively conducted. This action is triggered by various internal psychological factors (traits, motives, and norms) and external marketing stimuli (Iyer et al., 2020). It occurs when customers buy goods without planning (Maqsood & Javed, 2019), which may differ from their plan (Atmaja & Edison, 2022). Financially, this situation will benefit retailers by elevating sales revenue (Sjam, 2023) and inventory turnover (Saprudin et al., 2022).

Price discounts are a marketing stimulus the company always utilizes (Huang & Suo, 2021). With these discounts, the company encourages consumers to buy the marketed goods with financial benefits as its attractiveness, where they pay for goods more inexpensively than they should (Maney & Mathews, 2021). When they see it, they think they can save money (Agmeka et al., 2019). Preferably, a positive association between price discounts and impulsive buying should happen, as Saputro (2019), Larasati and Yasa (2021), Dakhi (2022), and Setiawan and Ardani (2023) demonstrate. Conversely, as Ittaqullah et al. (2020), Suryana and Sari (2021), and Yuliarahma and Nurtantiono (2023) exhibit, this arguable inclination occurs, i.e., no relationship between them.

Besides, the company attempts to make the consumers feel positive. Moreover, they will tend to decide positively with these positive emotions, such as happiness, love, pride (Hoyer et al., 2024), enthusiasm, and satisfaction (Chauhan et al., 2023), reflecting their relevant agreement on the offering given (Hoyer et al., 2024). Chauhan et al. (2023) also explain that these emotions will give them less time to think and spend more money on desirable goods. Thus, customers with positive emotions will buy goods impulsively, as proven by Ahmad et al. (2019) from Pakistan, Duong and Khuong (2019) from Vietnam, Saputro (2019), Rahadhini et al. (2020), Larasati and Yasa (2021), Setiawan and Ardani (2022) from Indonesia, Chauhan et al. (2023) from India, and Lee (2023) from Malaysia, Sun et al. (2023) from China, as well as Muhammad et al. (2024) from Turkey. Similarly, using two positive emotional states, i.e., arousal and pleasure, Li et al. (2022) from China demonstrate that both positively influence the impulsive purchase of consumers watching e-commerce live streaming. Unfortunately, these results vary, as presented by Dakhi (2022) from Indonesia, who finds the meaningless tendency of positive emotions toward impulsive shopping.

Moreover, numerous studies focus on the relationship between price discounts and positive emotions. Idyllically, its positive tendency occurs, as demonstrated by Saputro (2019), Larasati and Yasa (2021), Dakhi (2022), and Setiawan and Ardani (2023) from Indonesia. In contrast, Yi and Jai (2019) from China and Hidayah and Marlina (2021) from Indonesia find that these discounts do not affect positive emotions. Finally, the mediating role of positive emotion attracts the scholars to study. Ideally, this emotion is expected to mediate the association between price discounts and impulsive shopping, as Saputro (2019), Larasati and Yasa (2021), and Setiawan and Ardani (2022) conclude in their study. This condition contradicts Dakhi (2022), showing no mediation effect mirrored by the insignificant influence of positive emotions on impulsive shopping in his estimated research model.

Generation Z (Gen-Z) was born between 1995 and 2009 (Mothersbaugh et al., 2020). Nowadays, almost all related people are in the adult stage and have jobs (Dwidienawati et al., 2021). Therefore, they have extraordinary purchasing power (Guo & Luo, 2023), which is more advanced than others (Su et al., 2019). When shopping, they can

combine the online and offline worlds (Kotler & Armstrong, 2021). As a consequence, they quickly consume goods or services that are less necessary or unnecessary (Arda & Andriany, 2019). Therefore, this study intends to prove and analyze three matters related to onsite impulsive purchasing, especially for Gen-Z: (1) the influence of price discounts and positive emotions on impulsive buying, (2) the impact of price discounts on positive emotions, and (3) the mediating effect of positive emotions on the association between price discounts and impulsive buying.

The Yogya Department Store is one of the modern retail firms in Indonesia with numerous branches, and it has become the top of the mind of the West Java society (Ratnafuri et al., 2022). In Bandung, this department store has 36 locations (Fahmi, 2023). It frequently applies cash discounts to lower prices, elevating the decision of the customers to buy the products (Nurfitriani & Oktini, 2022). Therefore, its customers become the target of marketing research (Febriyanti et al., 2021; Januar & Gaffar, 2022; Nurfitriani & Oktini, 2022).

2. RESEARCH METHODS

2.1 Basic Research Framework

The kind of this research is quantitative. Furthermore, Sugiyono (2022) explains that this quantitative research is based on deductive thinking and aims to verify hypotheses statistically. In this research context, the hypothesis utilized is causal. Causal refers to cause-and-effect relationships. Because of latent variables, price discounts, positive emotions, and impulsive purchasing are drawn as the oval, as enlightened by Ghozali (2017) (see Figure 1). By mentioning Ong et al. (2023), the complete and dotted lines refer to the direct and indirect effects, respectively (see Figure 1).

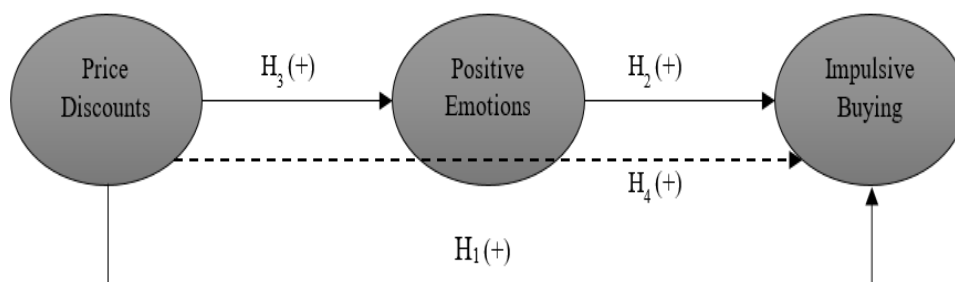


Figure 1. Research Framework

Based on the ideal situation, as demonstrated by preceding scholars, which shows a positive relationship between price discounts and impulsive purchasing (Dakhi, 2022; Larasati & Yasa, 2021; Saputro, 2019; Setiawan & Ardani, 2022), positive emotion and impulsive purchasing (Ahmad et al., 2019; Chauhan et al., 2023; Duong & Khuong, 2019; Larasati & Yasa, 2021; Lee et al., 2023; Li et al., 2022; Muhammad et al., 2024; Rahadhini et al., 2020; Saputro, 2019; Setiawan & Ardani, 2022; Sun et al., 2023), price discounts and positive emotions (Dakhi, 2022; Larasati & Yasa, 2021; Saputro, 2019; Setiawan & Ardani, 2022), as well as the mediating impact of positive emotions on the association between price discounts and impulsive purchasing (Larasati & Yasa, 2021; Saputro, 2019; Setiawan & Ardani, 2022), four formulated hypotheses are as follows.

H₁: Price discounts positively influence impulsive buying.

H₂: Positive emotions positively influence impulsive buying

H₃: Price discounts positively influence positive emotions.

H₄: Positive emotions mediate the association between price discounts and impulsive buying.

2.2 Variable definition

Based on the research framework, this study utilizes the exogenous and endogenous variables. Price discounts become exogenous. Meanwhile, positive emotions and impulsive buying perform as endogenous.

Table 1. Operational definition of the research variables

Research Variable	Position	Indicator	Source
Price discounts (PD)	Exogenous variable	This department store presents the goods at a cheaper price (PD1). After a discount, the price of the goods in this department store becomes inexpensive (PD2). On average, the price of this department store's goods is reasonable (PD3).	Zhang et al. (2021)
Impulsive buying (IB)	Endogenous variable	I often buy goods spontaneously (IB1). Sometimes, I am hasty when buying goods (IB2).	Chein et al. (2020)

Research Variable	Position	Indicator	Source
Positive emotions (PE)	Endogenous and mediating variable	Purchasing the goods now and thinking about the consequences later reflects on me (IB3). I often purchase goods without thinking (IB4). When I find my desirable good in this department store, I purchase it directly (IB5). The price of goods in this department store makes me joyful (PE1). I am satisfied with the price of goods in this department store (PE2). I like the price of goods in this department store (PE3).	Cakici & Tekeli (2022)

2.3 Sampling Technique and Data Collection Method

The population of this research is the consumers from Generation Z of Yogya Department Store in Bandung. The total samples used are above 200 people. This number follows the theory verification rule based on a structural equation model with a covariance basis, as Ghozali (2021b) suggests. Furthermore, the consumers as the sample are taken by purposive sampling based on some criteria (Hartono, 2014). The intended criteria are that they must (1) be born between 1995 and 2009 and (2) have buying transactions in the last 24 months. After that, this study surveys the related samples by distributing the questionnaire with the 5-point Likert scale, as Sugiyono (2022) explains: One and five show the maximum disagreement and agreement levels, respectively. Providentially, this study efficaciously obtained 207 consumers as the samples.

2.4 Method to analyze the response

This study has several steps to analyze the collected responses. Firstly, the validity and reliability examination. The valid answers of respondents are determined based on the confirmatory factor analysis. The accurate response exists if the loading factor and average variance extracted are higher than 0.5 (Hair Jr. et al., 2019). Furthermore, the reliable responses are analyzed using composite reliability and Cronbach Alpha with a 0.7 cut-off point (Ghozali, 2021a; Hair Jr. et al., 2019). The reliability test is achievable if their value exceeds 0.7 (Ghozali, 2021a; Hair Jr. et al., 2019). Secondly, the goodness of fit model is detected based on several measurements like Chi-Square/DF, Goodness of Fit Index, Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (Dash & Paul, 2021), Root Mean Square Residual, and Normed Fit Index (Shah et al., 2023). Furthermore, their essential cut-off point is obtainable in Table 2.

Table 2. The required cut-off of the goodness of fit model

Measurement	The Required Condition
Chi-Square/DF (CMIN)	CMIN < 3 or 5 (Dash & Paul, 2021)
Root Mean Square Residual (RMSR)	RMSR < 0.08 or 0.05 (Shah et al., 2023)
Goodness of Fit Index (GFI)	GFI > 0.90 (Dash & Paul, 2021)
Normed Fit Index (NFI)	NFI > 0.90(Shah et al., 2023)
Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA)	RMSEA < 0.08 (Dash & Paul, 2021)

Thirdly, after passing the goodness-of-fit model detection, the estimation of path coefficient and probability (2-tailed) is conducted by the AMOS program to test the formulated hypotheses. If the probability (1-tailed) is less than 5% significance level (α), the first, second, and third hypotheses are acceptable. Finally, the Sobel test is performed to prove the mediating impact of positive emotion. If the probability (2-tailed) of the Z-statistic of Sobel is less than $\alpha = 5\%$, this effect is statistically proven (Sahabuddin & Hadianto, 2023). Using the explanations of Hair et al. (2021) applied in this research, complete mediation exists if the indirect impact of positive emotions is significant (probability is below 5%), supported by the insignificant direct impact of price discounts on impulsive buying (probability is above 5%). Partial mediation occurs if both effects are statistically meaningful (each probability is less than 5%).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 The feature of respondents

The data were collected by employing an online questionnaire through Google Forms from April to May 2004 and obtained 207 people, achieving the criteria set in the purposive sampling technique. Additionally, the features of respondents are accessible in Table 3. In this table, the uppermost group based on the year of birth is between 2000 and 2004 (74.4%), the gender is female (63.3%), and the occupation is employee (48.8%). Conversely, the bottommost group based on the year of birth is between 2005 and 2009 (6.3%), the gender is male (36.7%), and the occupation is a freelancer (0.5%).

Table 3. The features of the respondents

Feature	Sub-feature	Total	Portion (%)
Year of birth	1995-1999	40	19.3
	2000-2004	154	74.4
	2005-2009	13	6.3
Gender	Male	76	36.7
	Female	131	63.3
Occupation	Senior high school student	9	4.3
	College Student	92	44.4
	Employee	101	48.8
	Entrepreneur	2	1
	Unemployed	2	1
	Freelancer	1	0.5

3.2 The testing result of validity and reliability

Table 4 depicts the testing result of validity, reflected by the loading factor (LF) and average variance extracted (AVE). For price discounts, the LF for PD1, PD2, and PD3 is 0.876, 0.638, and 0.765, with an AVE of 0.587. For impulsive buying, the LF for IB1, IB2, IB3, IB4, and IB5 is 0.538, 0.577, 0.851, 0.842, and 0.669, with an AVE of 0.501. For positive emotions, the LF for PE1, PE2, and PE3 is 0.837, 0.852, and 0.873, with an AVE of 0.730. Because their value is above 0.5, the validity test is achieved.

Table 4 also exhibits the reliability testing result, as demonstrated by composite reliability (CR) and Cronbach Alpha (CA). For price discounts (PD), CR and CA are 0.807 and 0.797. For impulsive buying (IB), CR and CA are 0.829 and 0.824. For positive emotions (PE), CR and CA are 0.890 and 0.890. Because they exceed 0.7, a reliable answer exists.

Table 4. The testing result of validity and reliability

Indicator	Loading Factor	Average Variance Extracted	Composite Reliability	Cronbach Alpha
PD1	0.876	0.587	0.807	0.797
PD2	0.638			
PD3	0.765			
IB1	0.538	0.501	0.829	0.824
IB2	0.577			
IB3	0.851			
IB4	0.842			
IB5	0.669			
PE1	0.837	0.730	0.890	0.890
PE2	0.852			
PE3	0.873			

3.3 The detection result of the goodness of fit

Table 5 displays the detection result of the goodness of fit model, i.e., CMIN of 1.858, below 3 or 5. Besides, the RMSR is 0.038, less than 0.05. Additionally, GFI and NFI are 0.937 and 0.938, more significant than 0.90, and RMSEA is 0.065, lower than 0.08. These values are at the acceptable cut-off point; hence, the empirical data support the model.

Table 5. The Goodness of Fit Model Testing Result

Measurement	Value	The Required Condition	Description
Chi-Square/DF (CMIN)	1.858	CMIN < 3 or 5 (Dash & Paul, 2021)	The model is suitable for empirical data
Root Mean Square Residual (RMSR)	0.038	RMSR < 0.08 or 0.05 (Shah et al., 2023)	
Goodness of Fit Index (GFI)	0.937	GFI > 0.90 (Dash & Paul, 2021)	
Normed Fit Index (NFI)	0.938	NFI > 0.90 (Shah et al., 2023)	
Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA)	0.065	RMSEA < 0.08 (Dash & Paul, 2021)	

3.4 The estimation result of the structural equation model

Table 6 exhibits the estimation results of the structural equation model based on the variance, i.e., the probability of critical ratios related to hypothesis testing. For the first hypothesis, the probability (1-tailed) is 0.244, more substantial than the 5% significance level; hence, this hypothesis is rejected. Hence, price discounts (PD) do not affect impulsive buying (IB). For hypotheses two and three, the probability is 0.019 and <0.001, lower than 5%; therefore, they are acceptable: The higher the positive emotions (PE), the higher the inclination of the customers to buy goods impulsively

(IB). Then, the higher the purchase discounts (PD), the greater the tendency for positive emotions (PE) to happen. Based on the R-square, the contribution of PD and PE to IB is only 0.148. Meanwhile, the contribution of PD to PE is 0.801.

Table 6. The estimation result of the structural equation model based on covariance

Hypothesis	Directional Hypothesis	R-square	Path Coefficient	Standard Error	Critical Ratio	Probability	
						Two-tailed	One-tailed
One	PD → IB	0.148	-0.124	0.179	-0.693	0.488	0.244
Two	PE → IB		0.426	0.205	2.073	0.038	0.019
Three	PD → PE	0.801	0.794	0.065	12135	<0.001	<0.001

Table 7 depicts the Sobel testing result with the Z-statistical probability (2-tailed) for the indirect effect of 0.0496, lower than the 5% significance level; hence, positive emotions can mediate the association between price discounts and impulsive buying. Comparing the insignificant direct impact of PD on IB with the significant indirect effect of PD → PE → IB, this study shows that good emotions perform as a full mediator, as Hair et al. (2021) elucidate. Based on this fact, the fourth hypothesis is accepted.

Table 7. The Sobel test results: Mediating effect of the positive emotions on the relationship between price discounts and impulsive buying (PD → PE → IB)

Hypothesis	The relevant relationship	Path Coefficient (PC)	Standard Error of PC	Indirect Effect	Standard error of Sobel	Z-statistic	Probability (2-tailed)
Four	PD → PE	0.794	0.065	0.338	0.166	2.042	0.0496
	PE → IB	0.426	0.205				

3.5 Discussion

By mentioning the first hypothesis testing result, this study demonstrates that price discounts do not affect impulsive buying. This situation indicates that the customers are indifferent to marketer discounts. They perceive discounts as somewhat communal because their percentage is not too considerable. Therefore, it supports Ittaquillah et al. (2020) after studying 100 undergraduate students of Halu Oleo University as users of online shopping platforms in Indonesia, i.e., Tokopedia, Shopee, Bukalapak, Lazada, Blibli, and JD.ID. Also, this insignificant tendency aligns with Suryana and Sari (2021) investigating 100 consumers of Ace Hardware in Sidoarjo and Yuliarahma and Nurtantiono (2023) studying 97 customers of Oriflame products in Sukaharjo.

This study shows that optimistic emotion positively affects impulsive buying by denoting the second hypothesis testing result. By having good emotions, the consumers stay in the department store longer and purchase goods simultaneously. Hence, this study confirms Ahmad et al. (2019), studying 300 customers in Lahore, Pakistan; Duong and Khuong (2019), learning about 327 domestic tourists in Ho Chi Minh City in Vietnam; Saputro (2019), researching 180 consumers of minimarket in Yogyakarta; and Rahadhini et al. (2020), after investigating 130 respondents buying fashion products in Ramayana Mall in Salatiga, followed by Larasati and Yasa (2021), who investigate 110 customers of Indomaret in Denpasar; and Setiawan and Ardani (2022), utilizing 85 customers of Cocomart in Denpasar, and Muhammad et al. (2024) who learn about 210 international students of the Cyprus University in Turkey. Also, this evidence is supported by Lee (2023), declaring a positive relationship between positive affection and the urge to impulsively buy the products by surveying 245 Malaysians as their participants; Li et al. (2022), who demonstrate the positive impact of arousal and pleasure as positive emotional states on 189 Chinese consumers watching e-commerce live streaming; and Chauhan et al. (2023), studying 569 respondents in the central India regions. Likewise, this fact confirms Sun et al. (2023), demonstrating that these positive emotions positively affect affective and cognitive impulsive shopping of 337 consumers of e-commerce broadcasts featuring various products in China.

By mentioning the third hypothesis testing result, this study displays that price discounts positively affect positive emotions. This situation means that this department store effectively touches customer feelings because customers can buy goods at a lower price than the ideal one. In other words, the more frequent the price discounts, the more positive the emotions the customers have when shopping. Thus, this study affirms Saputro (2019), Larasati and Yasa (2021), and Setiawan and Ardani (2022). Additionally, this fact confirms Dakhi (2022), who studied 116 consumers of Alfamidi in South Nias, Indonesia.

Finally, this study exhibits complete mediation of the good emotions on the relationship between price discounts and impulsive purchasing, without the impact of price discounts on this buying. This circumstance means that Gen Z does not easily buy goods impulsively with price discount stimulus because the related people compare the prices of goods before and after the discounts in some places (Mothersbaugh et al., 2020). Still, when discounts can raise positive moods because of helpful and well-meaning services from salespersons, they will be glad and directly purchase the mentioned goods. Indeed, this full mediating impact differs from Saputro (2019) and Setiawan and Ardani (2022), which depict partial mediation, where the direct effect of price discounts on impulsive buying and the indirect effect of positive emotion happens. This complete mediation effect is an academic contribution to consumer behavioral research in marketing management.



3.6. Managerial Implication

Based on these facts, this study recommends that marketing leaders in Yogya Department Store apply price discounts as a marketing strategy by empowering salespersons. Salespersons must make consumers, especially Gen-Z, joyful by providing meaningful services when offering goods with price discounts to create impulsive buying. On average, price discounts should be given at the beginning of the month after employees receive their salary. For weekly workers, the discounts should be provided at the end of the week after they get their wages.

4. CONCLUSION

The increase in business competition and dynamic consumer behavior encourage companies to survive by implementing appropriate marketing strategies to stimulate consumers to purchase. This research tries to prove the effect of price discounts on impulsive purchases, price discounts on positive emotions, positive emotions on impulsive purchases, and positive emotions as a mediating factor for the association between price discounts and impulsive purchases based on the standpoint of 207 Yogya Department Store consumers from generation Z born between 1998 and 2009 in Bandung City shopping goods in the last 24 months. After conducting a survey from April to May 2024 and analyzing their response statistically, this research concludes that price discounts positively affect positive emotions, and positive emotions influence impulse buying. On the other hand, price discounts do not directly affect impulsive buying. This situation demonstrates the full mediating effect of positive emotion. Academically, this study has two limitations, i.e., (1) narrow location scope and (2) only one mediating factor. Hence, this study suggests that subsequent scholars enlarge the areas besides Bandung, i.e., other provincial capitals in Java, like Serang, Jakarta, Semarang, Yogyakarta, and Surabaya, to get more excellent samples. Besides, the related scholars should consider the other mediating factors of the relationship between price discounts and impulsive shopping, such as purchasing urgency, price satisfaction, and hedonic stimulus, in their research model.

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