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The Effect of Impulsive Buying in Paylater Usage on Psychological Well-Being in Students

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Abstract. The development of financial technology, particularly the paylater feature, makes it easier for students to make transactions, but also has the potential to increase impulsive buying behavior. This study aims to examine the effect of impulsive buying on the psychological well-being of students who use paylater. A quantitative method was used with a causal-comparative design. The research sample consisted of 342 students aged 18–25 who used paylater services, selected through purposive sampling. The research instruments included the Impulse Buying Tendency Scale (Verplanken & Herabadi, 2001) and the Psychological Well-Being Scale (Ryff, 1989). Data analysis used Pearson's correlation and simple linear regression. The results showed a strong and significant negative relationship between impulsive buying and psychological well-being ($r = –0.907$, $p < 0.001$). Regression analysis showed $R^2 = 0.822$, which means that 82.2% of the variation in psychological well-being is explained by impulsive buying. The higher the level of impulsive buying, the lower the psychological well-being of students. These findings emphasize the importance of financial literacy and self-control in the use of paylater services.

Keywords: Impulsive Buying, Paylater, Psychological Well-Being, Students.

1. Introduction

The development of financial technology has made it way easier to access financial services, like through the Paylater feature, which lets people buy stuff or services without paying right away. This service is popular among students because it offers instant gratification in shopping (Almilia & Kristijadi, 2022). However, this convenience often leads to new consequences, such as an increase in impulsive buying behavior, which is purchasing made spontaneously without careful planning (Rook, 1987).

This phenomenon is a concern because uncontrolled consumptive behavior can have an impact on students' psychological aspects. Several studies show that the use of Paylater is closely related to an increase in impulsive buying tendencies among the younger generation. Rosyada & Herlambang (2023) found that Paylater services significantly influence students' impulsive behavior. Another study by Izzati & Adillah

(2023) also shows that low financial literacy increases the tendency for impulsive consumption with Paylater.

Uncontrolled consumption behavior can trigger psychological pressures such as financial stress, anxiety, guilt, and loss of self-control (Heshmat, 2019; Fernandes et al., 2020). This is even more relevant when linked to students as a group of young adults who are prone to irrational financial decisions due to emotional instability (Claudia & Setiawan, 2020). The psychological impact of impulsive behavior is deeply studied in psychological well-being, which is an important aspect of forming healthy, resilient, and productive human resources.

To gain an initial understanding of the situation, the researchers surveyed 46 students who use Paylater. The survey contained 10 questions divided into two aspects, namely cognitive (e.g., spontaneous decision-making, lack of consideration) and affective (e.g., driven by emotions, satisfaction, regret after shopping). The survey results showed that most respondents tended to have impulsive behavior in purchasing, especially from the affective side. As many as 72% of respondents stated that they felt happy when they could use Paylater to buy goods immediately, and 74% of respondents stated that they would feel emotionally driven to buy goods using Paylater. However, as many as 93% of respondents also stated that they often felt guilty or regretful after impulsive shopping. The average emotional score of respondents was

0.65 on a scale of 1, which was higher than the cognitive score of only 0.53. This shows that even though some respondents still consider decisions rationally, emotional impulses remain the main factor in impulsive use of Paylater (Survey, June 12, 2025).

This study aims to examine in depth how impulsive buying behavior in the use of Paylater affects the psychological well-being of students. By focusing on psychological aspects, this study is expected to contribute to building a younger generation that is more aware, mentally healthy, and capable of making wise consumption decisions.

2. Methods

This study used a quantitative method with a causal-comparative design. The research subjects were 342 active students aged 18–25 years in Indonesia who had used or were currently using paylater services.

The research instruments consisted of two scales, namely the Impulse Buying Tendency Scale (Verplanken & Herabadi, 2001) and the Psychological Well-Being Scale (Ryff, 1989). Data were collected through an online questionnaire and analyzed using validity and reliability tests, Pearson's correlation, and simple linear regression with the help of a statistical application called JASP.

3. Result

The majority of respondents were female (63.16%), while males accounted for 36.84%. All respondents were Indonesian students aged 18–25 years old who were currently or had previously used various paylater platforms such as ShopeePay Later, TikTok Paylater, and Kredivo.

The instrument test results showed that the Impulsive Buying scale with 20 items was proven to be valid with a factor loading ≥ 0.30 and very high reliability ($\alpha = 0.979$).

The Psychological Well-Being scale with 42 items was also proven to be valid after CFA modification, with an overall reliability of α = 0.975.

Statistical analysis showed that this research model met the basic assumptions of regression, including normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity. Pearson's correlation test produced a value of $r = -0.907$ ($p < 0.001$), indicating a very strong negative relationship between impulsive buying and psychological well-being. In addition, simple linear regression analysis yielded an R^2 value of 0.822, meaning that 82.2% of the variation in psychological wellbeing can be explained by impulsive buying. The regression coefficient $\beta = -0.509$ ($p < 0.001$) indicates that each one-unit increase in impulsive buying reduces students' psychological well-being by 0.509 points. Thus, it can be concluded that impulsive buying has a significant negative effect on students' psychological well-being.

Table 1. Summary of Linear Regression Analysis Predicting Y from X

Model		Unstandardized	Standard Error	Standardized	t	p
M_0	(Intercept)	2.756	0.049		56.57	< .001
M_1	(Intercept)	5.12	0.063		81.12	< .001
	Variabel X	-0.509	0.013	-0.907	-39.63	< .001

4. Discussion

The results of this study show that impulsive buying using paylater has a significant negative effect on students' psychological well-being. In other words, the more often students make impulsive purchases using paylater, the lower their psychological well-being. These results support the concept of Verplanken & Herabadi (2001), which divides impulsive buying into cognitive aspects (lack of rational consideration) and affective aspects (momentary emotional impulses). Students who use paylater are more likely to be driven by affective aspects, namely momentary feelings of pleasure and satisfaction, but these are followed by regret, guilt, or financial stress.

The impulsive behavior often experienced by students can be explained through the Psychological Well-Being model proposed by Ryff (1989). This model emphasizes six main dimensions of psychological well-being, namely autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations with others, purpose in life, and selfacceptance. Students who are trapped in impulsive behaviors, such as excessive shopping, tend to experience a decline in several aspects of psychological well-being. They may feel a loss of control over themselves (autonomy), difficulty in managing finances and daily responsibilities (environmental mastery), and a decline in selfacceptance due to guilt or regret after making impulsive purchases. Imbalances in these dimensions can have a negative impact on overall psychological well-being.

The results of this study are also consistent with Sari's (2021) study, which found that the use of paylater encourages consumptive behavior that leads to stress. Although impulsive purchases can provide momentary satisfaction, as stated by Rook and Gardner (1993), the longterm effects of such behavior have been proven to be detrimental to students' psychological well-being. This emphasizes the importance of financial literacy education and self-control skills for students in the digital age.

5. Conclusion

This study proves that impulsive buying has a significant negative effect on the psychological well-being of students who use paylater services in Indonesia. The higher the level of impulsive buying, the lower the level of psychological well-being felt by students. These results emphasize the importance of efforts to improve financial literacy so that students are wiser in using paylater services and able to control their consumptive urges. In addition, strengthening self-control is also an important factor in preventing the negative effects of impulsive behavior. Universities and paylater service providers can play a role in providing education and information about financial risks, so that students can use digital financial services in a healthier and more responsible manner.

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