

# THE INFLUENCE OF UNPLANNED BUYING TO POST-PURCHASE REGRET AND GENDER AS MODERATING VARIABLE

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## ABSTRACT

*The purpose of this study is to investigate the influence of unplanned buying to post-purchase regret, which is moderated by gender, as well as the influence of sales promotion and visual merchandising to unplanned buying. A survey was conducted among students who have ever experienced unplanned buying. The instruments in this study have the degree of validity and reliability. Regression analysis is used in this study. The study concluded that there is positive influence of unplanned buying to post-purchase regret and this relationship is moderated by gender. A positive association of unplanned buying to post-purchase regret has been found among female consumers, but not among male consumers. Furthermore, sales promotion has positive influence to unplanned buying, but not visual merchandising. Male consumers have more increased influence to unplanned buying than female in this association. Marketers and consumers can benefit from these results and recommendations.*

*(Keywords: Unplanned buying, post-purchase regret, sales promotion, visual merchandising, regression)*

## INTRODUCTION

Studies of consumer purchasing behavior and store patronage have become an important area of research of retail stores. Many factors influence consumer buying process, including consumer characteristics, psychological factors, and also social and cultural. The attractiveness of the studies is on the important influence of store image and physical aspects. And, several studies try to explain the spending patterns differences among consumers. Retail businesses have experienced rapid development due to changes in consumer tastes.

In addition to consumer rational decisions in their purchases, consumers also often purchased without prior planning. Unplanned buying by a consumer is common in a store. When consumers assess that their purchase decision is wrong, they will feel regret. Consumer regret is not a pleasant thing for marketers. Regret is usually characterized by low consumer satisfaction (Tsiros and Mittal, 2000). Low satisfaction makes the absence of buying interest, the tendency to substitute an alternative brand, and word of mouth among consumers is negative (Saleh, 2012).

Therefore, knowing the factors that affect consumer remorse after making a purchase is critical for marketers.

Unplanned buying is also called impulse buying, which typically is very quick in making purchasing decisions and liked least, very biased subjective. Highly impulsive people tend not to think in and very emotional impacted on the object. Also, they desire to have the object immediately. Consumers are often little attention to the potential negative consequences of the result of his actions (Kacen and Lee, 2002). Researchers stated that the behavior of unplanned buying is a component of affection or hedonic (Karbasvar and Yarahmadi, 2011). Impulse buying occurs when consumers experienced an overwhelming urge and conscious to buy something immediately.

To encourage consumers to buy, marketers try to design and control their marketing stimuli. These stimuli not only reach new customers, but also encourage existing consumer to buy items. The situation and structure of stores affect consumer response in the store. Those are sales promotion and visual merchandising.

The literature shows that impulsive buying occurred on items that provide the ideal self or preferred self to one's self. Also, it is influenced by social categories, such as gender. They argue that women rate on their holdings with feeling and social relationships oriented, while men for functional and instrumental reason.

The tendency of impulsive behavior was also associated with age consumers. Past research has stated that there is an inverse relationship between age and impulsive purchases. Consumer age 18 to 35 years is more likely to make impulse buying compared with consumers aged 35 years and over. Young consumers have a high score compared to adult consumers in an impulsive buying, and young consumers are less control than adult consumers (Kacen and Lee, 2002). The culture is also a factor for impulse buying. Asian consumers who are consumer collectivist are less impulsive than Caucasians who are individualist (Kacen and Lee, 2002).

This study begins with a discussion in class about the effect of unplanned buying to consumer regret. The targets of this study are: 1) To examine the effect of unplanned buying to consumer regret and what factors influence it. 2) To develop marketing strategy to overcome the negative effects of post-purchase and also directs consumers to remain vigilant against those impulse purchases. 3) Contribute to the science of consumer behavior.

## Theoretical review and hypotheses formulation

### Post-Purchase Regrets and Unplanned Buying

Post-purchase behavior has attracted marketers and researchers. Researchers tried to identify the dimensions that cause remorse consumer and customer satisfaction, as well as consumer interest to buy back. This study tried to understand the effect of unplanned buying and consumer regret and whether the relationship is moderated by gender. Consumer Regret is defined as a condition of a person's emotions that feel pain because no luck, limitations, loss, deprivation, and make mistakes (M'Barek and Gharbi, 2011). Regret arises when comparing what should be and what is happening. The quality of decision making in the selection process was also regrettable.

Regret is different from disappointed, though often equated. Disappointments are unhappy because there are differences between the expected results and the actual results. Disappointment was also the result of the assessment of post-purchase. The difference is someone who experienced regret tends to rethink about the incident, while the experienced disappointment tends to end a negative experience. Another difference is seen from the level of control. Regret emerged from the mistakes in making decision. Because of this mistake, most people will blame themselves. On the other hand, the disappointment comes as the unfulfilled expectations. Someone will usually blame others or the environment that he considers not support (Lee and Cotte, 2009). Characteristics of the consumers who buy product but they do not plan could be seen from three things, namely: consumers are not familiar with the layout of the store, there is the pressure of time, and when consumers realize that their needs while at the store (Solomon, 2010). Impulsive consumer appears to buy immediately (Schifmann and Kanuk, 2010). Consumers focus on a specific product and a specific time. Impulsive buying is defined as unplanned buying or spontaneous purchases before entering the store. The model proposed in this study can be seen in Figure 1.

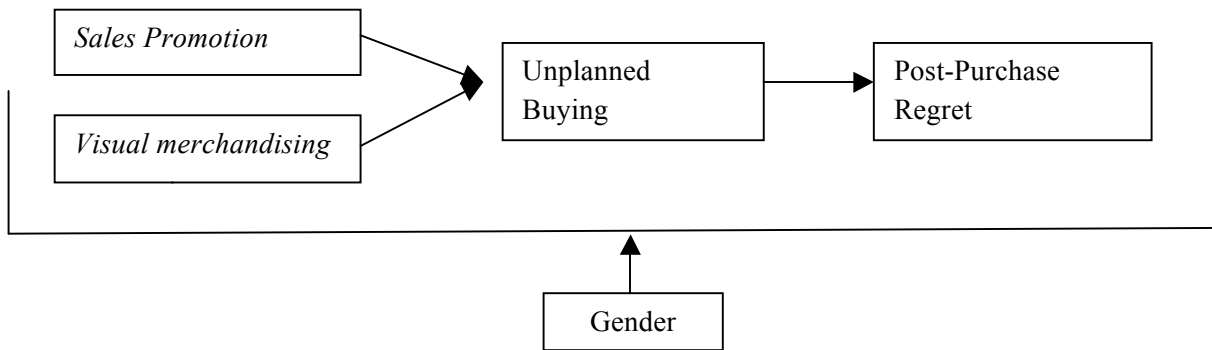


Figure 1. Proposed Model of Unplanned Buying and Post-Purchase Regret

Previous research states that unplanned purchase results in consumer remorse or anger. Consumers with low involvement in purchasing decisions will regret his decision, while consumers who had previously planned to purchase will be greater regret than unplanned buying. It can be understood that consumers who buy at the store will instantly realized his mistake than consumers who have planned well (Saleh, 2012). Because previous studies stating there was a positive impact of unplanned buying to consumer regret, then the first hypothesis:

**H1: Unplanned buying has positive effect on consumer post-purchase regret.**

Previous research examined the influence of gender on the consumer post-purchase regret. In general, women is known to be more emotional than men, indicating that women are more responsive to impulsive purchases (Colley and Burgess, 2003; Lai, 2010). Gender is a moderator of the relationship between unplanned buying to post-purchase regret Studies suggested that females have a higher remorse than men after making an impulsive buying. Consider this, the second hypothesis is:

**H2: Unplanned buying affects more strongly to the post-purchase regret at the female consumer than male consumers.**

#### Sales Promotion

Sales promotion value to consumers so that consumers visit to the store or to buy goods during a certain period. The most common sales promotion is on sale, and other forms are special events, demonstrations, contests, and coupon (Levy and Weitz, 2009). Sales promotion is an

activity undertaken to encourage the targeted market segment to buy the product, which could be money or others. Activities related to money, namely: discounts, coupons, while not directly tangible money is a gift and buy one get one free. Consumers tend to respond better to the discount price, buy one get one free, and coupons (Shi and Prendergast, 2005). While another study found that price discounts, free samples, extra units, and store displays have significant influence on consumer purchase intention, but not the coupon (Ndubisi and Moi, 2005). Likewise, cash discount has a positive relationship with impulsive buying (Kabarsivar and Yarahmadi, 2011).

Another study concluded that the sales promotion, especially the sale of instant-reward has a significant positive effect on the unplanned buying. It is also stated that the package of attractive products and price discount can increase unplanned buying by the consumer (Liao, et. al., 2009). From this illustration, we developed third and fourth hypothesis:

**H3: Sales promotion has positive effect on the unplanned buying**

**H4: The effect of sales promotions on unplanned purchases of female consumer stronger than male consumers.**

### Visual Merchandising

Retail stores encourage impulsive buying behavior. Expected consumers make informed decisions when they are in the store. Stores use the point-of-sale displays to attract the attention of consumers. And retail stores have recognized that the most valuable real estate in the store is the point of purchase (Levy and Weitz, 2009). Visual merchandising is the presentation of the store and merchandise to consumers by the team's work shop can sell goods and services. Visual merchandising is not just making things look attractive to consumers, but it is a visual tool to make the sale happen. Visual merchandising is often called the display, is a tool of how a product or brand is visually communicated to consumers and also, how this message can be received well and the effect on the psychological aspects and behavior. Then, ultimately consumers buy produk (Kerfoot et. al., 2003). Previous studies show that visual merchandising influence impulsive buying behavior (Khandai et. al, 2012).

Visual merchandising is composed of technical and artistic components such as color, texture, lighting, mannequins, fixtures, graphics, signs, and others. Visual merchandising areas include: display window and interior displays, promotional signs, store layout and display of

goods on the shelves and walls. Seock and Lee (2013) examined the importance of visual merchandising and store the image on shopping behavior. Other studies showed no relationship between the window display and promotional activities (discounts and free product) with impulsive buying behavior (Karbasivar and Yarahmadi, 2011). Mehta and Chugan (2013) states that the window displays, in-store display form, floor merchandising, and promotional signage effect on impulsive purchases. While Bhatti and Latif (2014) states that the merchandising and shop floor brand name positively associated with impulsive buying behavior. Hypotheses drawn from the study: H5: Visual merchandising has positive effect on the unplanned buying. H6: The influence of visual merchandising to unplanned buying is more powerful female than male.

## RESEARCH METHODS

### Determination of Sample and Data Collection Methods

Samples are students who ever make unplanned buying. Young consumers more easily influenced by unplanned buying. Shopping behavior under the age of 35 years is more likely to make impulse purchases compared with consumers aged 35 years and over (Kacen and Lee, 2002). Survey was conducted. And, convenience sampling is chosen because of its simplicity and flexibility.

### Instrument Development

Research questions developed from literature review, discussions with students and colleagues. Construct measured using Likert Scale. This scale tries to give weight to the perception of the object studied most suited to conditions at the time of respondents gave the answer (Sunyoto, 2002). This study uses 33 indicators of research questions.

Research questions adapted from several previous studies (Saleh, 2012; Mehta, et. al, 2013; Seock and Lee, 2013). Post-purchase regret variables is measured by five indicators. Unplanned buying is measured by 11 indicators. Six indicators is used for sales promotion variable. And, 11 indicator for visual merchandising

### Reliability and Validity

Pre-test was performed to test the validity and reliability of measurement. To test the validity of the measurements used confirmatory factor analysis (Ghozali, 2011). Confirmatory factor analysis was used to test whether a construct has unidimensionality or whether the indicators used can confirm a construct. If each of the indicators measuring a construct, it will

have a value higher loading factor. In this analysis, the initial principle is varimax rotated factor matrix to reach a final solution. This analysis classifies each indicator into several factors. It will be grouped into one with a high loading factor. If the item instrument indicates the minimum value of the loading factor of 0.5, then it is said to be valid (Ghozali, 2011). A total of 25 indicators declared valid as shown in the table 1, while eight indicators are not valid.

Table 1. Validity Test Results

| Items                                                                          | Factor loading |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|
| Post-Purchase Regret                                                           |                |
| Q1. I was disappointed after buying which is previously unplanned              | 0,558          |
| Q2. Unplanned buying makes me have a little benefit                            | 0,661          |
| Q4. Purchase without a plan makes me unsatisfied.                              | 0,705          |
| Unplanned Buying                                                               |                |
| Q7. I immediately buy without thinking whether it's needed or not.             | 0,703          |
| Q8. I convince myself "buy now and think later".                               | 0,585          |
| Q9. I buy things spontaneously (without plan).                                 | 0,713          |
| Q10. I often buy things that are not really I needed.                          | 0,728          |
| Q11. I often buy something not usual.                                          | 0,631          |
| Q12. After the purchase, I questioned again why I bought that.                 | 0,524          |
| Q13. I often buy and do not use all of these items.                            | 0,722          |
| Q14. I often shop to be feeling better.                                        | 0,539          |
| Sales promotions                                                               |                |
| Q17. I am often surprised to find discount prices at the store.                | 0,553          |
| Q18. The shop I visited was always giving free samples.                        | 0,726          |
| Q19. When visiting the store, I always find the contest.                       | 0,501          |
| Q20. Store gives reward that exceeded the value of certain purchases.          | 0,696          |
| Visual Merchandising                                                           |                |
| Q23. Stores adjust the display of goods and become the center of my attention. | 0,721          |
| Q24. New goods presented attract my attention.                                 | 0,704          |
| Q26. The aisle between goods is quite freely to move.                          | 0,622          |
| Q27. Store structured is fine and easy to find items.                          | 0,688          |
| Q28. Display items do not overlap.                                             | 0,655          |
| Q29. A place to organize items filled proportionally.                          | 0,742          |
| Q30. Coordinating colors create a pleasant atmosphere of the shop.             | 0,792          |
| Q31. Presentation of goods is very creative.                                   | 0,780          |
| Q32. Specific item and discounted items arranged in a certain area.            | 0,628          |
| Q33. The signs are very clear to give identity to the items.                   | 0,541          |

Reliability measures that the instruments are completely free of errors so as to produce consistent results. The internal consistency of items is shown by Cronbach alpha ( $\alpha$ ). According

Nunnally, the items will be reliable if more than 0.6. The test show reliable indicators and are shown in table 2.

Table 2. Reliability Test Result

| Variable             | Cronbach Alpha |
|----------------------|----------------|
| Post Purchase Regret | 0,648          |
| Unplanned Buying     | 0,797          |
| Sales Promotion      | 0,781          |
| Visual Merchandising | 0,867          |

## RESEARCH RESULT

### Description of Data

The collected questionnaires processed a total of 207 respondents. Respondents aged between 18-23 years which is a group of young consumers. The number of respondents consisted of 100 men (48.3%) and 107 women (51.7%). Samples were students in Yogyakarta. Table 4.1 The following is a description of the overall respondent data. The mean of Post-Purchase Regrets is 3.3122, Unplanned Buying is 2.9831, Sales Promotion is 3.3007 and Visual Merchandising obtained mean 3.8353.

### Regression Analysis

#### Unplanned Buying to Post-Purchase Regret

Regression analysis was performed first with the regression of the entire sample of both men and women with post-purchase regret as the dependent variable and unplanned buying as independent variables. The results are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Unplanned Buying to Post-Purchase Regret of Total Gender

| Independent Variable                                        | Beta  | t-value | Significance | Notes      |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|-------|---------|--------------|------------|
| Constant                                                    | 2,766 | 12,010  | 0,000        | Sig < 0,05 |
| Unplanned Buying ( $X_1$ )                                  | 0,183 | 2,431   | 0,000        | Sig < 0,05 |
| R=0,167, $R^2$ =0,028, F=5,910, sig=0,016, p<0,05, DW=2,022 |       |         |              |            |
| Dependent var.: Post purchase regret (Y)                    |       |         |              |            |

Regression analysis of unplanned buying to purchase consumer regret has 0.183 beta, significant at  $p = 0.000$ . This means supporting the hypothesis 1 that the unplanned buying has positive effect on consumer post-purchase regret.

To see whether gender as a moderating factor, further regression analysis performed for each subgroup. The results showed that the regression coefficient 0.136 of men and insignificant, whereas for women's obtained regression coefficient 0.167 with a significance of  $p = 0.078$ . This means that women consumers feel remorse after buying when they purchase without a plan in advance, but not male consumers. These results do not support the second hypothesis which states that the unplanned buying has stronger influence on post-purchase regret at the female consumer than male consumers. The results showed that having bought with no previous plan, female consumers feel regret while male have no regret. This indicates that gender is a moderating factor the relationship between the unplanned buying to post-purchase regret. Summary results of both genders as well as total gender are shown in table 4.

Table 4. Regression Coefficients of Unplanned Buying to Post-Purchase Regret both Subgroup and Total Gender

| Independent Variable | Beta (total gender) | Sig.   | Beta (male) | Sig.     | Beta (female) | Sig.   |
|----------------------|---------------------|--------|-------------|----------|---------------|--------|
| Unplanned Buying     | 0,183               | < 0,05 | 0,136       | not sig. | 0, 167        | < 0,10 |

The effect of sales promotion and visual merchandising to unplanned buying

The next test is to see the effect of sales promotion and visual merchandising to unplanned buying. Sales promotion variable has a beta coefficient of 0.319 and significant with  $p = 0.000$ . Visual Merchandising variable has beta -0.077 and is not significant. These results support the third hypothesis, which states that sales promotion has positive effect to unplanned buying. It is not like sales promotion, visual merchandising does not significantly affect unplanned buying. So, the fifth hypothesis is not fulfilled.

To see whether gender is a moderating factor of the relationship between sales promotion and visual merchandising at unplanned buying, each subgroup was analyzed. In the subgroup, the effect of sales promotion to unplanned buying showing that male consumer has a beta coefficient greater than female consumer. Male beta coefficient is 0.340 and 0.230 for female. This means that the effect of sales promotion on the unplanned buying of male consumer is stronger than the effect of sales promotion on unplanned buying of female consumer. This result does not support the hypothesis 4, which states that the effect of sales promotions on unplanned buying stronger at female consumers than male consumers.

Another analysis of visual merchandising found that the influence of this variable on the unplanned buying showing insignificant result, both in total gender and each subgroup. So, the fifth and sixth hypotheses are not met. The fifth hypothesis states that the visual merchandising has positive influence on unplanned buying. And, a sixth hypothesis states that the effect of visual merchandising to unplanned buying more powerful female than male consumers. These hypotheses are not supported by the results of this study. Table 5 shows the beta coefficient results of the influence sales promotion and visual merchandising on unplanned buying for total gender and subgroup.

Table 5. Regression Coefficients between Sales Promotion and Visual Merchandising to Unplanned Buying for the Subgroup and Total Gender

| Independent Variable | Beta<br>(total<br>gender) | Sig.       | Beta<br>(male) | Sig.       | Beta<br>(female) | Sig.       |
|----------------------|---------------------------|------------|----------------|------------|------------------|------------|
| Sales Promotion      | 0,319                     | Sig < 0,05 | 0,340          | Sig < 0,05 | 0,230            | Sig < 0,05 |
| Visual Merchandising | -0,077                    | Not sig.   | -0,201         | Not sig.   | 0,119            | Not sig.   |

## DISCUSSION

The result showed that unplanned buying has positive effect on consumer post-purchase regret, supporting previous studies. This proves that the purchase without a plan previously caused consumers not satisfied. Consumers feel irrational and the decision is only triggered by marketers. Post-purchase regret could be happened for everyone, because of certain factors in a given time. For instance, when they feel little or no product benefits gained when using the product, or when there is the thought that the product will be useful later, or when the products have been bought is not really needed. Remorse can arise because alternative options available can be compared, because of how significant that product, because of lack in consideration and information, and because of little effort and time to purchase (Lee and Cotte, 2009).

In contrast to previous studies, the results of this research show that female consumers are more sensitive and emotional than male when they buy impulsively. Unplanned buying makes women feel guilty about spending money. Women may feel exited when buying without think about it, but finally they felt sorry when it realized not really need or beyond their hopes. Male consumers may experience post-purchase regret lower than female consumer. Male consumer may be more prepare themselves than female in the case of wrong purchase decision.

Male consumers are more tolerant of emerging risks and much more practical than female, so they don't feel regret deeply.

Subsequent research results indicate that there is positive effect of sales promotion on unplanned buying. It can be understood that the sales promotion can save more consumer spending. Sales promotion makes consumers think to take advantage of the promotional period. Consumers consider spending will be more efficient, would like to try an alternative product or brand offered in the sales promotion, and even bought a package of products, some of which are required. Male consumers are more affected by this than female consumers. Because of economic considerations as well as the opportunity, consumer is trying to rationalize their purchase. Even they decide to purchase while they are in the store, they consider that the decision is correct. Male consumer try more varied over the choice of products. Female consumers also are triggered by their sales pitch, but at the same time they might be postpone their purchases. In their thoughts, they must allocate their available funds for other products. Female consumers try to rationalize not to fully use the opportunity of sales promotion. They try to save their spending wisely by buying what is only needed.

Marketers take advantage of this situation to increase their sales ability by sales promotion strategies. It is interesting to learn that the average consumer is often looking for new variations on offer that saves their expenses. Marketers can arrange periodic promotional offers for their goods and also the value of savings that can be rationalized by consumers. In contrast to sales promotion, visual merchandising has insignificant effect on impulsive buying. This shows that the design in the store does not trigger consumers to buy impulsively. The arrangement of items and the presentation of the goods are not attractive enough. Ease to move inside the store as well as the ease of getting goods is not adequate, so it does not influence consumers to buy immediately. Specific information of items is still not well in every product category, such as new products or discounts. Marketers need to increase store sales by improving the physical aspects of the store. Customer convenience and customer satisfaction are very important when shopping. A cozy atmosphere and orderly will attract consumers to stay in the store longer.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMENDATION

This study has investigated the influence of unplanned buying on the consumer regrets, as well as the effects of sales promotion and visual merchandising on unplanned buying. The study states that there is a positive effect of unplanned buying on the consumer regrets. Post-purchase regret could appear when consumers have the experience of impulse purchase. Consumers feel that is not a good purchase when decide irrationally. Thus, irrationality will cause regret. Consumers feel that the product has been purchased less useful. They try to compare the return on the previous selection. The discrepancy between the expectation and the fact will cause consumer regret.

The further research also explained that there are positive effects of unplanned buying on post-purchase regret at the female consumer, while not at male consumers. This indicates that female consumers make fast decision without considerations first and do not seek more information on the options. Even male consumers make spontaneous decisions in the store, but it did not make them feel regret on what they decided. Male consumers are more able to manage their emotions to accept the consequences of their choice.

Another results showed that there is positive effect of sales promotion on unplanned buying, whereas no effect of visual merchandising. It is important for marketers to deliver compelling sales promotions stimuli that can trigger impulse buying of consumers. Sales promotion effect on spontaneous purchases on male is greater than female consumers. It shows that male consumers are more enthusiastic to sales promotion programs. They make rational decisions on the acquisition of products that can save their expenses. Female consumers also respond to a sales promotion, but they consider of the benefits and take selection of products.

This research could be developed to investigate the factors of consumers regret. Remorse can arise when consumers compare among the options with other alternatives available, reassess how important products for themselves, as well as a lack of consideration.

In addition to gender, other moderating factors could be tested further, as their comparative social factors and the characteristics of an optimistic or pessimistic person. Also, respondents selected can be developed, such as work or elderly age group. Another factor that may affect the unplanned buying is a way of payment offered.

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