

# Mapping the Relationships between Price Discount, Perceived Quality, and Intention to Purchase Impulsively via e-Commerce

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## ABSTRACT

**Objective** – The study aimed to analyze the relationships between price discounts, impulsive purchasing behavior, and perceived quality.

**Methodology** – This study collected primary data from respondents via questionnaires. Using the Smart PLS tools, this study uses the t-test and data regression to validate the hypothesis.

**Findings** – The perceived quality factor performed an essential mediating effect in the relationship between price discounts and impulsive buying. When the direct effect of price discounts on impulsive buying was investigated, it was discovered that price discounts have no effect on people's impulsive purchase. However, when perceived quality served as a mediator, the feelings created by a price discount led to a positive perception of product and give significant impact on impulsive buying behavior.

**Novelty** – A literature extension by examining price discount, perceived quality, and impulse buying intention.

**Keywords:** *price discount, perceived quality, impulsive buying, e-commerce*

**JEL Classification:** L15, L81, P22, D91

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## I. INTRODUCTION

The development of e-commerce in Indonesia experienced significant growth last year (Syamruddin et al., 2021). According to Populix (2020), the highest intensity of online shopping by age group is contributed by 18–21 years old with 35% and 22–28 years old with 33% of the vote. The 29–38 years old group was in third place with 18% of the vote. Followed by age group below 18 years old that got 9% of the vote. Finally, the age group of 39–55 years old contributed only 5% of the vote. Influential factors that make e-commerce popular are trust, perceived usefulness, and information quality (Maia et al., 2018).

According to Fatta et al. (2018), discounts and free shipping collaboration during the sale season will positively impact e-commerce conversion rates. The shifting from traditional to online shopping creates a new shopping habit for everyone (Ayuni, 2019). In online shopping, people cannot touch and feel the product they planned to buy. As online shopping is more intangible and difficult to judge, customers are inclined to rely on recommendations from experienced customers before making a purchase (Wu et al., 2018). However, when it comes to the product with discount prices, consumers perceive the product with

the highest discounts as lower quality (Lee & Chen-Yu, 2018). This expectation might create since consumers cannot predict the product quality before buying it, such as when they do not know the brand or have no review of the products. Hence, they would expect quality based on their pay price (Gani & Oroh, 2021). When consumers receive a significant price discount that other stores do not give, they are more likely to assume that the product is of poor quality (Lee & Chen-Yu, 2018).

Hence, this research investigates the relationships between the discounted price mediated by perceived quality toward impulsive buying behavior. Findings will be valuable to academics and e-commerce as they will demonstrate current preferences from their consumers and businesses and may potentially highlight areas of improvement that could be implemented to generate future discounts or promo offerings.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### The Price–Quality–Value Model

Finding the optimal quality dimension might be difficult because research quality is a multidimensional notion (Suyatman & Lertwachara, 2022). Monroe and Krishnan's (1985) price-quality–value model has been frequently utilized to explore the relationship between price and customer perceptions of items. The price-quality-value model describes the link between price, perceived quality, sacrifice, value, and willingness to buy. According to the model, the cost is one of the exterior qualities of a product that customers perceive as a stimulus. Customers' opinions of paying the price are measured by perceived sacrifice. Monroe and Krishnan (1985) hypothesized that consumers have varied pricing perceptions; some may see the accurate price as high, while others see it as low. Consumers' opinions of product quality and financial sacrifice are based on their price perceptions. Consumers believe that a higher price suggests a higher rate but that a higher price also indicates a more significant financial investment in purchasing the product. Hence, perceived value results from the trade-off between perceived quality (i.e., gain) and perceived sacrifice (i.e., loss). Finally, buyers make purchasing decisions based on their perceptions of value, and their readiness to buy grows as their sense of worth grows.

### Price Discount

Price discount has always been an excellent strategy to attract customers through online and offline stores. According to Wieseke et al. (2014) price discount is a reduction in the price of a product from the regular price in a certain period. As one of the promotion strategies, price discounts aim to stimulate purchase intention and increase sales. Consumers respond to the incentive of saving when they see products are being sold at a lower price and increase their purchase intention. Since consumers usually make an immediate purchase when being seduced by economic incentives, the greater the promotion is, the more response it generates (Razy & Lajevardi, 2015).

### Perceived Quality

The perceived quality is defined as the consumer's perception of the overall components of a product or service, including tangible and intangible values, which bridge the business organization and customer in the service interaction (Vuong & Rajagopal, 2017). The consumer's subjective opinion regarding a product's overall excellence or superiority is another definition of perceived quality by Zeithaml (1988). According to Pangaribuan et al. (2018), product quality does not affect brand loyalty in the food context. Furthermore, according to Yoo et al. (2000), perceived quality is not only the actual quality of a product or service but also the consumer's assessment of that product or service from a business standpoint; personal product experience, unique needs, and consumption situation can all influence the consumer's subjective evaluation of quality.

## Impulsive Buying

Impulsive buying is a purchase made when a person sees something they want and decides to buy it right away (Arnold & Reynolds, 2003). According to Manning and Reece (2001), impulsive buying is one of the variables that encourages potential buyers to act based on the appeal of particular emotions or passions. Furthermore, Mowen and Minor (2002) stated that impulsive buying is an action conducted without any prior difficulties or purchasing intentions/intentions made before visiting the store. Impulse buying refers to people's proclivity to make purchases on the spur of the moment without giving it any thought (Ardin, 2020).

## Hypothesis Development

### *The Relationship between Price Discount and Perceived Quality*

In previous research, it is suggested that price discounts have a negative relationship with perceived quality as customers sometimes assume that a discounted product is of poor quality, especially when they obtain a considerable price discount that other stores do not provide (Lee & Chen-Yu, 2018; Raghurir et al., 2004). However, according to Huang et al. (2014), price reductions may improve perceived quality. Customers use quality as a benchmark to judge a product or service by assigning points, merits, or qualities (Radavičienė et al., 2019). This study will examine the influence of price discounts on the perceived quality of a product from online buying activity. Accordingly, hypothesis one of this study is:

*H1: Price discount has a negative influence on perceived quality.*

### *The Relationship between Perceived Quality and Impulse Buying*

Zhang et al. (2021) found that perceived value positively influences consumers' impulsive purchasing habits. This means that the higher the perceived value of products, the more whimsical the consumers will be, which also applies to a product's perceived quality. However, according to a study in Surabaya, product quality has no significant effect on impulse purchases because the existence of good product quality in health products sold during a pandemic does not have an impact on unplanned purchases by consumers in e-commerce (Septiana & Widyastuti, 2021). This study will examine the perceived quality of impulsive buying behavior for online shopping activity. Accordingly, hypothesis two of this study is:

*H2: Perceived quality has a positive relationship with impulse buying.*

### *The Relationship between Price Discount and Impulse Buying*

Impulse buying, also known as unplanned purchases, is when a person purchases without planning ahead of time. To encourage unplanned purchases, appropriate techniques are required, one of which is to offer a discount on the product and a prominent marking (Noor, 2020). According to a study involving Bengkulu State Polytechnic students, price discount affected the 100 students' online impulse buying (Roviqoh & Supriati, 2022). This study will examine the relation of price discounts to impulsive buying behavior in online shopping activity. Accordingly, hypothesis three of this study is:

*H3: Price discounts have a positive relationship with impulse buying.*

## III. METHODOLOGY

The questionnaires were distributed via Google forms and can only be filled out by respondents who have internet access, as this study was carried out amid the COVID-19 pandemic. This study employed quantitative research methodologies to examine the critical aspects that may impact impulse purchases of discounted products. The participants in this study ranged from under 25 to 45 years old. This strategy is used to collect data numerically and statistically to show the relationship between the theory and the

variables to be evaluated. Furthermore, the method will demonstrate how powerful and significant the variables are in this problem's testing. People under the age of 25 make up the most significant online category, including most college students. People under 25 years old (teenagers, college students, and new graduates) were chosen because of their social media activity and propensity to shop through e-commerce. This study employs samples from the general population from various regions and occupations. The questionnaire was distributed to approximately 214 respondents inside and outside Sampoerna University, representing customers from multiple cultural backgrounds to ensure that the data analysis was fair. The admissions system matches respondents based on their online purchasing experience, which becomes the filter question. The questionnaire also inquires about respondents' identities, including gender, age, occupation, monthly online shopping spending levels, e-commerce utilized for online shopping, and social media account (Instagram). This basic background knowledge could lead to more detailed test findings for the variables that may influence impulsive purchasing behavior. The minimal sample size for this study is 140 respondents and this study managed to obtain a total sample size of 214.

A questionnaire was employed to collect data for each variable in this study. There are different survey items for each variable. The questionnaire was made available online to make the questionnaire more accessible to the responders. The questionnaire was chosen for this study because it provides more accurate and efficient data collecting than the other data collection methods. According to Bird (2009), questionnaires could allow for more systematic data collecting because the results will only include the most relevant information based on the survey items presented.

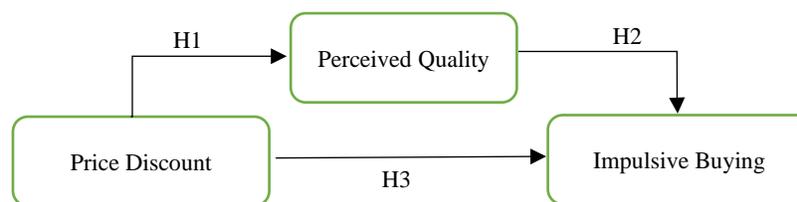


Figure 1. Framework Model

### Data Collection

This research paper used the quantitative analysis approach done by t-test and regression analysis. Regression was used to show the relationship between the dependent and independent variables in this research framework and its significance. For the statistical calculation, this research uses the t-test inferential to find the sample distribution and the significant difference in each variable. The survey results were analyzed using the SmartPLS software, and the analysis included all the variables used in this research framework. Five interval scales measure each variable used in the survey items (Table 1). Using the odd-number Likert-type scale, respondents could express whether they agree, disagree, or are neutral with a statement (Chyung et al., 2017).

The questionnaire in Table 1 contained 14 items linked to the studied variables as a construct in the conceptual framework model: five items to measure price discounts adapted from Chao and Liao's (2016) study, five items to measure perceived quality adapted from Grewal et al.'s (1998) and Lee and Chen-Yu's (2018) studies, and four items to measure impulsive buying behavior adapted from Badgaiyan et al.'s (2016) study. The measurement items on each variable are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Survey Items

No.	Construct	Survey Items
1.	Price Discounts (Chao & Liao, 2016)	Discounted prices are attractive Discounted prices give me the feeling of value Discounted price is very cost-effective Discounted prices make me feel the value of purchase Discounted price will give me real benefits
2.	Perceived Quality (Grewal et al., 1998; Lee & Chen-Yu, 2018)	This pair of jeans would be reliable This pair of jeans would be dependable This pair of jeans would be durable The workmanship on this pair of jeans would be good This bicycle appears to be of quality
3.	Impulsive Buying Behavior (Badgaiyan & Verma, 2014)	I sometimes buy things because I like buying things, rather than because I need them I buy what I like without thinking about consequences. I buy products and services according to how I feel at that moment. It is fun to buy spontaneously.

#### IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results presented in Table 2 show that all of the measurement items, are greater than the required value of outer loading, which is greater than 0.6. It indicates all of the measurement items are reliable. In addition, the Cronbach’s Alpha and composite reliability on each variable meet the criteria, where the minimum value of Cronbach’s Alpha is 0.7 and Composite Reliability is above 0.7, indicating variable tested in this study are internally consistent and reliable.

For the validity, the average variance extracted (AVE) value of price discounts, perceived quality, and impulse buying are 0.853, and 0.835, respectively. The results of AVE on the tested variables are greater than the minimum required value of greater than 0.6, suggesting that all variables tested are valid.

Table 2. Operational Model

Variable	Items	Loadings	Alpha	CR	AVE	VIF
Price Discount	PD1	0.740	0.820	0.873	0.762	1.586
	PD2	0.780				1.657
	PD3	0.675				1.515
	PD4	0.789				2.005
	PD5	0.817				2.022
Perceived Quality	PQ1	0.844	0.906	0.930	0.853	2.330
	PQ2	0.844				2.317
	PQ3	0.919				3.902
	PQ4	0.850				2.662
	PQ5	0.802				2.233
Impulsive Buying	IB1	0.800	0.855	0.902	0.835	1.654
	IB2	0.831				2.036
	IB3	0.854				2.200
	IB4	0.853				2.123

In Table 2, we can see the results of the multicollinearity test on each variable, where the variance inflation factor (VIF) value of less than 6 to show that multicollinearity is not a concern. Otherwise, if the VIF is greater than 5, the variable should be removed. The VIF values of all variables of Price Discount (D1, D2, D3, D4, D5) are 1.586, 1.657, 1.515, 2.005, and 2.022, suggesting that the price discount variable

is free of multicollinearity. Accordingly, other variables (Impulsive Buying and Perceived Quality) have value of less than 6. All VIF values are less than 6. Hence, it implies that multicollinearity between the exogenous variables is not present. As a result, the VIF values statistically show that multicollinearity is not a problem for all exogenous variables. It is also possible that the correlation between exogenous variables will not cause instability in the regression analysis that follows.

Table 3. R Square

Construct	R <sup>2</sup>	R <sup>2</sup> Adjusted
Perceived Quality	0.155	0.151
Impulse Buying	0.163	0.147

From Table 3, it is seen that the R-Square values were 0.155 and 0.163 for the perceived quality and impulse buying variables, respectively. This shows that price discount can affect perceived quality by 15.5% and perceived quality altogether with price discount can affect impulse buying by 16.3%. So, it can be concluded that the research model is in the less than moderate category.

Table 4 displays the t-test results for the variable price discount toward perceived quality. Based on the results, the t-value, p-value, and coefficient beta of variable price discount on perceived quality are 7.583, 0.000, and 0.394, respectively. Since the t-value of variable price discounts on perceived quality is greater than the t-table ( $7.583 > 1.962$ ) and the p-value of variable price discounts on perceived quality is less than alpha ( $0.000 < 0.050$ ), the null hypothesis (H0) should be rejected, and the alternate hypothesis (H1) accepted, indicating that price discounts have a significant influence on perceived quality with each increase in the price discounts will also increase the perceived quality score by 0.394.

Table 4. t-Test Results

Path	Beta	T Statistics	P Values
H1: Price Discount → Perceived Quality	0.394	7.583	0.000
H2: Perceived Quality → Impulsive Buying	0.229	2.555	0.011
H3: Price Discount → Impulsive Buying	0.084	0.870	0.385

In addition, the t-value, p-value, and coefficient beta of variable perceived quality on impulsive buying are 2.555, 0.011, and 0.229, respectively. Since the t-value of variable perceived quality on impulsive buying is greater than the t-table ( $2.555 > 1.962$ ) and the p-value of variable perceived quality on impulsive buying is less than alpha ( $0.011 < 0.050$ ), the null hypothesis (H0) should be rejected, and the alternate hypothesis (H2) accepted, indicating that perceived quality have a significant influence on impulsive buying with each increase in the perceived quality will also increase the impulsive buying score by 0.229.

Finally, the t-value, p-value, and coefficient beta of price discount on impulsive buying are 0.87, 0.385, 0.084, respectively. Since the t-value of variable price discount on impulsive buying is less than the t-table ( $0.870 < 1.962$ ) and the p-value of variable price discounts on impulsive buying is more than alpha ( $0.385 > 0.050$ ), the alternate hypothesis (H3) should be rejected, and null hypothesis (H0) accepted, indicating that price discounts do not have a significant influence on impulsive buying.

## V. CONCLUSION

The existence of price discount promos can generate high purchase decisions and increase the sales of a business. Today, where people’s activity is mainly done through the internet, the traditional way of giving the offline price discounts promo (e.g., offline bazaar, clearance sale, offline midnight sale) seems not to

be effective anymore. Several tools can be used besides e-commerce applications in an online marketing strategy, such as the website, social media, and online ads. However, putting a price discount promo seems to be the best strategy among other tools since it gives a tremendous significant value by stimulating the consumers to buy the product impulsively.

The relation between price discounts and the perceived quality shows a similar result to the past research by Huang et al. (2014) and Lee and Chen-Yu (2018). They claimed that perceived quality might positively evaluate price discounts if the consumers can expect the product quality. The consumer can get through Google to assess the brand or see the brand's social media testimonials to determine the product quality. Moreover, on the OCR (online customer review) feature, consumers can view product descriptions, photos, ratings, and reviews of consumers who have made purchases rather than seeing the price discounts offered. If the brands give illogical price discounts promo (e.g., huge price discounts up to almost 100%) with the store that lacks reviews and testimonies, the consumers might take several things in deciding to buy the product. Hence, it is better for the marketers and business companies to give the 'logic value' of price discounts promo and provide several proofs of testimonies to consumers since they can evaluate the product's value more freely from now on.

The unique findings were found on the relation between price discounts and impulsive buying. According to this research, price discounts do not impact consumers' impulsive buying behavior. This finding is in line with Subagio's (2021) study that shows no significant effect between price discounts and purchase intention since consumers are less concerned with pricing when acquiring a product as long as the product offers the quality and service they desire. However, when the subject of quality is involved in the equation, it significantly adds value to impulsive buying.

Although price discount still makes the consumers sure about the product, they cannot stimulate consumers to buy it impulsively. These results are supported by Kusumah's (2015) study asserting that consumers who already trust and are familiar with the online business are not driven by the transaction right away because they must examine other factors first, e.g., price, reviews, and store credibility. On the other hand, the perceived quality of the product with price discount positively affect the consumer's impulse buying. According to Lee and Tsai (2014), when consumers use their emotions rather than cognition to evaluate products or make purchase decisions, they pay less attention to details and instead focus on their affective experience, which can shift the effect of price discounts on perceived performance quality from negative to positive. In online shopping activities, the consumer's attitude or emotion is stimulated by the attractive phrase of price discount promotion or the nuance created by many people that are excited about the promos. According to the information provided in this study, the agency company will be better able to determine which price discounts strategy best matches the brand image of the product and company. Consequently, it is vital to preserve and assist in protecting the firm's marketing strategy, as price discounts will impact the consumers' impulsive buying and affect the brands' sales.

Due to variances in message modality across different platforms, online shoppers may have varied beliefs/attitudes toward price discount on other e-commerce platforms, depending on their e-commerce preferences. Future research could focus on specific e-commerce platforms that offer price discounts. It could be essential to investigate the impact of consumer trust on the future development of online shopping platforms. Future research may investigate more characteristics connected to e-commerce and source aspects covered in this study because each e-commerce platform has its approach and customer buying behavior. Finally, future studies can focus only on specific brand or type of product sold in e-commerce platform.

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