



Peer Influence and Impulsive Buying Among Teenagers in Maldives.

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ABSTRACT: The increasing use of online shopping and social media has contributed to a rise in impulsive buying behaviour among teenagers, with peer influence playing a significant role in shaping purchasing decisions. This study examined the relationship between peer influence and impulsive buying behaviour among Maldivian teenagers and determined whether peer influence significantly predicts impulsive buying behaviour. A quantitative cross-sectional research design was employed, and data were collected from 255 teenagers using a structured questionnaire. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics, Pearson's correlation, and simple linear regression. The findings revealed a significant moderate positive relationship between peer influence and impulsive buying behaviour ($r = 0.523$, $p < 0.001$). Regression analysis showed that peer influence significantly predicted impulsive buying behaviour ($\beta = 0.523$, $p < 0.001$), explaining 27.4% of the variance ($R^2 = 0.274$). These results indicate that teenagers who experience greater peer influence are more likely to make spontaneous and unplanned purchasing decisions. The findings support the Stimulus–Organism–Response (S-O-R) Theory and contribute to the limited literature on adolescent consumer behaviour in the Maldives. The study highlights the importance of promoting financial literacy and awareness of peer influence to encourage responsible purchasing behaviour among teenagers.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The rapid growth of e-commerce, social media platforms, and digital technologies has transformed the way consumers search for information, interact with products, and make purchasing decisions. Online shopping has become increasingly convenient, providing consumers with immediate access to a wide range of products through mobile applications, social networking platforms, and digital marketplaces. While these technological advancements have enhanced the shopping experience, they have also increased exposure to persuasive marketing strategies, influencer endorsements, personalized advertisements, and peer-generated content that encourage immediate purchasing decisions (Aragoncillo & Orus, 2018; Wibowo et al., 2020; Singh et al., 2023). Consequently, impulsive buying has become an increasingly prevalent consumer behaviour, particularly among adolescents.

Impulsive buying refers to spontaneous and unplanned purchasing behaviour that occurs without prior intention or careful evaluation of the consequences (Verplanken & Herabadi, 2001). Unlike planned purchases, impulsive buying is driven primarily by emotional responses and external environmental stimuli rather than rational decision-making. Although such purchases may provide immediate satisfaction, excessive impulsive buying may lead to financial difficulties, poor money management, compulsive buying tendencies, and reduced self-control, particularly among young consumers who have limited purchasing experience and financial literacy (Rozman & Hashim, 2023; Bandil, 2025).

Adolescence represents a critical stage of psychological and social development characterised by identity formation, emotional sensitivity, and an increased desire for social acceptance. During this period, teenagers are highly influenced by their social environment and frequently adjust their attitudes and behaviours to gain approval from their peers. Peer relationships become increasingly important as adolescents seek belonging, establish social identity, and develop interpersonal relationships. As a result,

purchasing decisions are often influenced not only by individual preferences but also by peer expectations, conformity, and the desire to maintain social acceptance (Adri et al., 2021; Thürmer et al., 2020).

The influence of peers has become even more pronounced with the widespread adoption of social media. Platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, and other social networking sites enable adolescents to observe their peers' lifestyles, purchasing activities, and product recommendations continuously. This constant exposure strengthens social comparison, increases awareness of current consumption trends, and may encourage teenagers to make spontaneous purchasing decisions in order to fit in with their peer groups or avoid missing out on popular products and experiences (Nguyen et al., 2025; Liu et al., 2025). Consequently, peer influence has evolved beyond traditional face-to-face interactions into a continuous digital experience that shapes adolescents' consumer behaviour.

Previous research has consistently recognised peer influence as an important factor associated with impulsive buying behaviour among young consumers. Studies conducted in different countries have shown that conformity, peer pressure, and social interactions significantly influence adolescents' purchasing decisions (Adri et al., 2021; Rhesa et al., 2023; Bandil, 2025). Similarly, research has highlighted that digital environments further amplify these social influences by facilitating interactions between peers, social media influencers, and online communities, thereby increasing impulsive buying tendencies among young consumers (Aragoncillo & Orus, 2018; Wibowo et al., 2020; Singh et al., 2023).

Given the increasing engagement of teenagers with online shopping and social media, understanding the influence of peers on impulsive buying behaviour has become increasingly important. Such understanding can provide valuable insights into adolescent consumer behaviour and support the development of strategies that encourage responsible purchasing decisions and financial wellbeing among young people.

Problem Statement

Impulsive buying among teenagers has become an increasing concern due to the widespread use of online shopping platforms and social media, where purchasing decisions are often influenced by interactions with peers. During adolescence, peer relationships play an important role in shaping attitudes and behaviours, making teenagers particularly susceptible to conformity, peer pressure, and social comparison. These social influences may encourage adolescents to make spontaneous purchasing decisions that are driven by the desire for acceptance rather than actual need, potentially resulting in poor financial management and unhealthy consumption habits.

Despite the increasing engagement of Maldivian teenagers with social media and online shopping, there is limited empirical evidence examining the relationship between peer influence and impulsive buying behaviour within the Maldives. Addressing this gap is important for understanding adolescent consumer behaviour and for developing strategies that promote responsible purchasing practices.

Therefore, this study aims to examine the relationship between peer influence and impulsive buying behaviour among Maldivian teenagers and determine whether peer influence significantly predicts impulsive buying behaviour.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Peer Influence and Impulsive Buying

Previous studies consistently identify peer influence as one of the strongest social determinants of impulsive buying behaviour among adolescents. As teenagers become increasingly dependent on their peers for social acceptance, identity formation, and a sense of belonging, they are more likely to make purchasing decisions that reflect group expectations rather than individual needs. Consequently, peer interactions have become an important factor influencing adolescents' consumer behaviour. Empirical evidence demonstrates a positive relationship between peer influence and impulsive buying behaviour. Adri et al. (2021) found that conformity significantly predicts impulsive buying among adolescents purchasing fashion products through online marketplaces. Similarly, Rhesa et al. (2023) reported that adolescents with stronger conformity tendencies are more likely to engage in impulsive purchases, suggesting that social approval plays a central role in consumption decisions. Thürmer et al. (2020) further demonstrated that peer influence can automatically trigger impulsive buying behaviour, although self-regulation strategies, such as implementation intentions (if-then planning), may reduce this effect. These findings collectively indicate that adolescents frequently make purchasing decisions to gain peer acceptance and strengthen social relationships rather than to satisfy actual consumption needs. Research conducted in different cultural contexts provides further evidence supporting this relationship. Bandil (2025) identified peer pressure as one of the strongest determinants of impulsive buying among Generation Z consumers in the fast-fashion industry, where purchasing behaviour is closely associated with trends, appearance, and social identity. Similarly, Panasea (2024) found that peer pressure significantly contributes to compulsive buying behaviour alongside fashion involvement and self-esteem, indicating that continuous exposure to peer expectations may encourage excessive purchasing. Rozman and Hashim (2023) likewise reported that peer influence significantly predicts impulsive buying among Malaysian university students, suggesting that interpersonal relationships continue to influence purchasing behaviour beyond adolescence. Collectively, these studies demonstrate that peer influence consistently contributes to impulsive buying behaviour across different age groups and cultural settings.

Social Conformity, Peer Pressure, and Consumer Behaviour

One of the primary mechanisms through which peer influence affects purchasing behaviour is social conformity. Adolescents often modify their attitudes and behaviours to align with group expectations, avoid social exclusion, and strengthen their social identity. During adolescence, acceptance by peers becomes increasingly important, making teenagers more likely to imitate the purchasing behaviours of their friends and social groups. Previous studies consistently demonstrate that conformity and peer pressure significantly influence impulsive buying behaviour. Adri et al. (2021) concluded that adolescents frequently make impulsive purchases because they perceive such behaviour to be consistent with group norms. Likewise, Rhesa et al. (2023) found that higher levels of conformity increase adolescents' likelihood of making spontaneous purchasing decisions. Bandil (2025) similarly reported that peer pressure strongly influences impulsive buying among Generation Z consumers, particularly within the fast-fashion industry where trends rapidly spread through social networks. Panasea (2024) further demonstrated that peer pressure contributes to compulsive buying behaviour, suggesting that repeated attempts to satisfy social expectations may encourage excessive purchasing. These findings indicate that peer influence extends beyond simple recommendations from friends. Instead, adolescents often experience psychological pressure to conform to group norms and purchasing trends, increasing the likelihood of impulsive buying. This evidence suggests that conformity and peer pressure represent important behavioural mechanisms linking peer influence with impulsive consumer behaviour.

Digital Peer Influence and Social Media

Recent research suggests that peer influence has expanded beyond traditional face-to-face interactions through the widespread adoption of social media platforms. Digital environments allow adolescents to observe their peers' purchasing activities, product recommendations, and lifestyle choices continuously, thereby increasing opportunities for social comparison and impulsive purchasing. Several studies have highlighted the influence of social media on impulsive buying behaviour. Aragoncillo and Orus (2018) found that social media significantly increases impulsive buying by exposing consumers to product-related content and facilitating interactions among users. Similarly, Kaur (2018) reported that social media marketing activities positively influence online impulse buying behaviour by increasing consumers' purchase intentions. Wibowo et al. (2020) further demonstrated that social media marketing activities enhance customer experiences, which subsequently influence purchasing behaviour. More recently, Singh et al. (2023) confirmed that social media engagement significantly predicts impulsive buying, while Zafar et al. (2025) reported that influencer-generated content strengthens consumer engagement and encourages purchasing behaviour through credible online communication. Collectively, these studies suggest that social media functions not only as a marketing platform but also as an important channel through which peer influence is transmitted. The visibility of peers' purchasing behaviour, combined with influencer marketing and user-generated content, creates a digital environment that encourages spontaneous purchasing decisions among adolescents.

Psychological Mechanisms Underlying Peer Influence.

Beyond direct social influence, recent studies have examined the psychological mechanisms through which peer interactions contribute to impulsive buying behaviour. These studies suggest that emotional attachment, social comparison, and fear of missing out (FOMO) explain how peer influence translates into purchasing behaviour. Nguyen et al. (2025) found that peer interactions on social media strengthen consumers' emotional attachment to products, increasing the likelihood of impulsive purchases. Similarly, Liu et al. (2025) reported that continuous exposure to peer-generated content promotes impulsive buying through emotional engagement and social comparison. Pham et al. (2026) further confirmed that observing peers' purchasing behaviour on social media strengthens impulse buying tendencies among young consumers. Research has also demonstrated that social commerce environments intensify these psychological processes. Abdelsalam et al. (2024) proposed an integrated theoretical model showing that social interaction, trust, emotional responses, and social influence jointly explain online impulsive buying behaviour. Likewise, Alawiah and Hayu (2025) found that peer pressure, celebrity endorsements, testimonials, and social media marketing activities significantly encourage online impulse buying. Rahmawati and Primanto (2023) similarly reported that peer influence, online reviews, and viral marketing positively affect impulsive buying behaviour, although the strength of these relationships varies across gender groups. Together, these findings suggest that impulsive buying is shaped not only by direct peer interactions but also by emotional and psychological responses stimulated through digital environments.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is underpinned by the Stimulus–Organism–Response (S-O-R) Theory proposed by Mehrabian and Russell (1974). The S-O-R framework explains that external environmental stimuli influence individuals' internal psychological and emotional states, which subsequently determine behavioural responses. In the present study, peer influence represents the external stimulus that shapes adolescents' cognitive and emotional processes, ultimately leading to impulsive buying behaviour. The applicability of the S-O-R framework has been supported by several recent studies. Abdelsalam et al. (2024) demonstrated that social interactions within online environments stimulate emotional responses that increase consumers' purchase intentions. Similarly, Kathuria and Bakshi (2024) reported that promotional activities influence purchasing behaviour by stimulating impulse buying tendencies, while Liu et al. (2025)

found that social comparison and emotional engagement serve as important mechanisms linking external social influences with impulsive buying behaviour. Collectively, these findings support the use of the S-O-R framework to explain how peer influence contributes to impulsive buying among teenagers.

Despite extensive research examining peer influence and impulsive buying behaviour, empirical evidence from the Maldivian context remains limited. In addition, previous studies have largely focused on university students or Generation Z consumers rather than adolescents. Therefore, further research is needed to determine whether peer influence significantly predicts impulsive buying behaviour among Maldivian teenagers.

Hypotheses

Based on the reviewed literature, the following hypotheses were formulated:

H1: There is a significant positive relationship between peer influence and impulsive buying behaviour among teenagers.

H2: Peer influence significantly predicts impulsive buying behaviour among teenagers.

III. METHOD

Research Design

This study adopts a quantitative research approach to examine the relationships between peer influence and impulse buying among teenagers. A quantitative approach is considered appropriate because it allows the researcher to collect numerical data and statistically test the proposed hypotheses (Creswell, 2018). Specifically, the study employs a cross-sectional survey design in which data are collected from respondents at a single point in time. This design is suitable for identifying relationships among variables. The use of a structured questionnaire enabled the collection of standardized responses from a large number of participants, thereby enhancing the reliability and generalizability of the findings.

Sampling

The target population of this study consists of teenagers aged between 13 and 19 years who actively have experience purchasing products or services online. Teenagers were selected as the focus of the study because this age group is highly influenced by peer interactions and has a strong tendency to seek a sense of belonging within their social groups, which may affect their purchasing decisions. A non-probability convenience sampling technique is employed to select respondents. This sampling method allows the researcher to collect data from participants who are readily available and willing to participate in the study (Creswell, 2018). The questionnaire is distributed electronically through social media platforms, educational institutions, and youth-related online communities. A total of 255 responded to the questionnaire survey.

Research Instrument

Data for this study were collected using a structured self-administered questionnaire. The questionnaire consists of two main sections. The first section gathers demographic information, including respondents' age, gender, and online shopping frequency. The second section measures the study constructs: peer influence and impulse buying. The items measuring peer influence and impulse buying were adopted from previous studies to ensure content validity and reliability. All items were measured using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), allowing respondents to indicate their level of agreement with each statement.

Ethical Considerations

Participation in the study was voluntary, and respondents were informed about the purpose of the research before completing the questionnaire. Informed consent was obtained from all participants. For participants under the age of 18, parental consent was obtained prior to completing the questionnaire. Confidentiality and anonymity were ensured by not collecting any personally identifiable information, and all data were used solely for academic and research purposes.

Data analysis

Data collected through online survey questionnaire was exported to SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) for data analysis. The data set was screened for any missing values or data entry errors.

Descriptive statistical analysis

Descriptive analysis was done to summarize the data and provide an overview of teenagers' peer influence and impulse buying behaviour along with the demographic data. Measures such as means and standard deviation were calculated for the variables, including the means score for both variables.

Inferential Analysis

Inferential statistical analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between peer influence and impulsive buying behavior among teenagers. Skewness and kurtosis values indicated that both variables were approximately normally distributed. Therefore, Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient (Pearson r) was deemed appropriate for assessing the strength and direction of the

linear relationship between the two continuous variables (Pallant, 2020). Pearson correlation analysis was performed using SPSS to compute the correlation coefficient (r) and the associated significance value (p -value). The analysis examined whether there was a statistically significant relationship between peer influence and impulsive buying behavior among teenagers.

IV. RESULTS

Table 1: Demographic data

Variable		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Gender	Female Male	180 75	70.6 29.4	70.6 29.4	70.6 100.0
Age	13-15 15-17 18-19	5 63 187	2.0 24.7 73.3	2.0 24.7 73.3	2.0 26.7 100.0
Frequency of Online Shopping	Frequently Rarely Sometimes Very frequently	32 98 118 7	12.5 38.4 46.3 2.7	12.5 38.4 46.3 2.7	12.5 51.0 97.3 100

A total of 255 teenagers participated in the study. The majority of respondents were female (70.6%), while males represented 29.4% of the sample. Most participants were aged 18–19 years (73.3%), followed by those aged 15–17 years (24.7%). Regarding online shopping frequency, 46.3% reported shopping online sometimes, while 38.4% reported shopping rarely. Overall, the sample was predominantly composed of older female teenagers who engaged in online shopping on an occasional basis.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics and Reliability Analysis

Variable	Mean	Std.Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis	Cronbach's Alpha
PI Total	2.63	0.77	0.313	0.116	0.834
IMP Total	2.90	0.87	0.111	-0.241	0.768

The table presents the descriptive statistics, normality assessment, and reliability analysis for the two main study variables: Peer Influence (PI_Total) and Impulsive Buying (IMP_Total). The results show that the mean score for peer influence is $M = 2.63$ ($SD = 0.77$), indicating a moderate level of perceived peer influence among respondents. Similarly, impulsive buying behavior has a mean of $M = 2.90$ ($SD = 0.87$), also reflecting a moderate tendency toward impulsive purchasing among teenagers. The standard deviation values indicate a reasonable spread of responses, suggesting variability in participants' perceptions. Skewness values for both variables ($PI = 0.313$; $IMP = 0.111$) and kurtosis values ($PI = 0.116$; $IMP = -0.241$) fall within the acceptable range of ± 1 , indicating that the data are approximately normally distributed. This supports the assumption of normality required for parametric tests such as correlation and regression.

Additionally, Cronbach's alpha values demonstrate good internal consistency reliability for both constructs. Peer influence shows a reliability coefficient of $\alpha = 0.834$, while impulsive buying shows $\alpha = 0.768$, both exceeding the acceptable threshold of 0.70. This indicates that the measurement items reliably measure their respective constructs.

Table 3: Correlation and Regression Analyses

Hypothesis	Analysis	Statistics	Result
H1: There is a significant positive relationship between peer influence and impulsive buying behaviour among teenagers.	Pearson Correlation	$r = .523, p < .001$	Supported
H2: Peer influence significantly predicts impulsive buying behaviour among teenagers.	Simple Linear Regression	$\beta = .523, t = 9.768, F(1,253) = 95.417, R^2 = .274, p < .001$	Supported

H1: Relationship between Peer Influence and Impulsive Buying Behaviour

The Pearson correlation analysis revealed a significant moderate positive relationship between peer influence and impulsive buying behaviour among teenagers ($r = .523, p < .001$). This indicates that higher levels of peer influence are associated with higher levels of impulsive buying behaviour. Therefore, H1 was supported.

H2: Impact of Peer Influence on Impulsive Buying Behaviour

The simple linear regression analysis showed that peer influence significantly predicted impulsive buying behaviour ($\beta = .523, t = 9.768, p < .001$). The regression model was statistically significant, $F(1, 253) = 95.417, p < .001$, and explained 27.4% of the variance in impulsive buying behaviour ($R^2 = .274$). Therefore, H2 was supported.

V. DISCUSSION

The present study found that peer influence has a significant positive relationship with impulsive buying behaviour among teenagers. The correlation analysis revealed a moderate positive association ($r = 0.523, p < 0.001$), indicating that teenagers who experience greater peer influence are more likely to engage in spontaneous and unplanned purchasing behaviour. Furthermore, the regression analysis demonstrated that peer influence significantly predicts impulsive buying behaviour ($\beta = 0.523, p < 0.001$), accounting for 27.4% of the variance ($R^2 = 0.274$). These findings suggest that peer influence is an important determinant of teenagers' purchasing behaviour, although other psychological and environmental factors also contribute to impulsive buying.

The findings are consistent with previous studies that have identified peer influence as one of the strongest social determinants of impulsive buying. Adri et al. (2021) reported that conformity significantly predicts impulsive buying among adolescents purchasing fashion products online, while Rhesa et al. (2023) similarly found that adolescents with stronger conformity tendencies are more likely to make impulsive purchases. Thürmer et al. (2020) further demonstrated that peer influence can automatically trigger impulsive purchasing behaviour, suggesting that many buying decisions occur with limited conscious deliberation. Collectively, these studies support the present findings by indicating that adolescents frequently make purchasing decisions to gain social acceptance, strengthen peer relationships, and conform to group expectations.

The findings also support previous research examining peer pressure and social conformity. Bandil (2025) identified peer pressure as one of the strongest predictors of impulsive buying among Generation Z consumers in the fast-fashion industry, where purchasing behaviour is strongly influenced by trends and social identity. Similarly, Panasea (2024) found that peer pressure contributes significantly to compulsive buying behaviour, suggesting that continuous exposure to social expectations can encourage excessive purchasing. Rozman and Hashim (2023) likewise reported that peer influence significantly predicts impulsive buying among Malaysian university students. Together, these findings indicate that conformity and peer pressure consistently influence purchasing behaviour across different age groups and cultural settings.

The results may also be explained by the increasing role of social media in strengthening peer influence. Contemporary adolescents spend substantial amounts of time on platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, and other social commerce applications, where they are continuously exposed to their peers' purchasing activities, lifestyle content, and product recommendations. This constant exposure increases opportunities for social comparison and encourages purchasing decisions that are motivated by social acceptance rather than actual need. Aragoncillo and Orus (2018) found that social media significantly increases impulsive buying by exposing users to product-related content and peer interactions. Similarly, Kaur (2018), Wibowo et al. (2020), and Singh et al. (2023) concluded that social media marketing activities positively influence purchasing behaviour by shaping consumers' attitudes, intentions, and emotional engagement. More recently, Zafar et al. (2025) demonstrated that influencer-generated content strengthens consumer engagement and purchasing intentions, further reinforcing the influence of digital peer interactions.

Recent studies also suggest that peer influence affects impulsive buying through several psychological mechanisms. Nguyen et al. (2025) reported that peer-generated content on social media strengthens emotional attachment to products and increases impulsive purchasing through social validation and fear of missing out (FOMO). Likewise, Liu et al. (2025) found that social comparison, emotional engagement, and continuous exposure to peer consumption significantly increase impulsive buying tendencies among young consumers. Pham et al. (2026) similarly observed that social media environments encourage young consumers to develop stronger impulse buying tendencies through continuous interaction with peer-generated content. These findings suggest that peer influence extends beyond direct interpersonal interactions and operates through digital environments that continuously reinforce consumption-related social norms.

The present findings are further supported by the Stimulus–Organism–Response (S-O-R) Theory (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974), which proposes that environmental stimuli influence individuals' internal psychological states, ultimately leading to behavioural responses. Within this framework, peer influence functions as an external stimulus that shapes adolescents' emotions, attitudes, and purchasing motivations, thereby increasing impulsive buying behaviour. Abdelsalam et al. (2024) supported this explanation by demonstrating that social interactions within online communities influence emotional arousal and purchase intentions through integrated social and psychological mechanisms. Similarly, Kathuria and Bakshi (2024) showed that external promotional stimuli

influence buying behaviour by stimulating impulse buying tendencies, providing further evidence that environmental influences shape consumers' emotional responses before purchasing decisions are made.

Although peer influence significantly predicted impulsive buying behaviour, it explained only 27.4% of the total variance. This indicates that impulsive buying is a multidimensional behaviour influenced by additional psychological, social, and marketing-related factors. Previous studies have identified self-control (Adri et al., 2021), personality traits (Rozman & Hashim, 2023), fashion involvement and self-esteem (Panasea, 2024), promotional activities (Kathuria & Bakshi, 2024), social media marketing (Wibowo et al., 2020; Singh et al., 2023), influencer endorsements (Zafar et al., 2025), and online testimonials and viral marketing (Alawiah & Hayu, 2025; Rahmawati & Primanto, 2023) as important determinants of impulsive buying. These findings suggest that peer influence should be considered alongside broader psychological and digital marketing factors when explaining adolescents' purchasing behaviour.

A notable contribution of this study is its examination of peer influence within the Maldivian context. The present findings extend existing literature by confirming that peer influence remains a significant predictor of impulsive buying among Maldivian teenagers despite differences in cultural and social environments. Given the rapid expansion of social media usage and online shopping in the Maldives, these findings provide timely evidence regarding the influence of peer relationships on adolescent consumer behaviour. Overall, the study confirms that peer influence is a significant determinant of impulsive buying behaviour among teenagers. The findings reinforce previous evidence that adolescents' purchasing decisions are shaped not only by personal preferences but also by conformity, peer pressure, social comparison, and digitally mediated interactions. The study therefore contributes to the growing body of literature on adolescent consumer behaviour while providing empirical evidence from a context that has received limited research attention.

VI. CONCLUSION

This study examined the relationship between peer influence and impulsive buying behaviour among teenagers in the Maldives. The findings revealed that peer influence has a significant positive effect on impulsive buying behaviour, confirming that teenagers who experience greater peer influence are more likely to make spontaneous and unplanned purchasing decisions. The regression analysis further showed that peer influence explained 27.4% of the variance in impulsive buying behaviour, indicating that peer relationships play an important role in shaping adolescents' consumer decisions.

The findings suggest that adolescents are highly responsive to social cues, conformity, peer pressure, and group norms during a developmental stage where identity formation and social acceptance are highly valued. However, as a substantial proportion of impulsive buying behaviour remains unexplained, the results indicate that additional psychological and environmental factors, such as self-control, personality traits, emotional regulation, social media engagement, and marketing stimuli, also contribute to teenagers' purchasing behaviour. Overall, this study highlights the importance of peer influence in adolescent consumer behaviour and contributes empirical evidence from the Maldivian context, where research on this topic remains limited.

Implications of the Study

This study contributes to the growing body of literature on adolescent consumer behaviour by confirming that peer influence is a significant predictor of impulsive buying behaviour among teenagers. The findings support previous research on social influence and conformity and reinforce the Stimulus–Organism–Response (S-O-R) Theory, demonstrating that external social stimuli, such as peer influence, can shape adolescents' behavioural responses. Furthermore, the study extends the existing literature by providing empirical evidence from the Maldivian context, where research on peer influence and impulsive buying remains scarce.

The findings have important practical implications for parents, educators, policymakers, and marketers. Parents should encourage open discussions about spending habits and help teenagers develop critical thinking skills to resist peer pressure and make informed purchasing decisions. Schools can incorporate financial literacy and consumer education into educational programmes to improve adolescents' awareness of impulsive buying and responsible money management. Policymakers may consider implementing awareness campaigns that promote responsible consumer behaviour among young people. Additionally, marketers and social media influencers should adopt ethical marketing practices by providing transparent and responsible promotional content that encourages informed purchasing decisions rather than exploiting adolescents' susceptibility to peer influence.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Educational institutions should integrate financial literacy and consumer education programmes that increase teenagers' awareness of impulsive buying behaviour and its financial consequences. Parents should actively guide adolescents' spending habits by encouraging open communication, budgeting practices, and critical evaluation of peer influence and online purchasing trends. Schools and community organisations should implement peer-based awareness programmes that promote responsible consumer behaviour and reduce the negative effects of peer pressure.

Future studies should examine additional factors that may influence impulsive buying behaviour, including self-control, emotional intelligence, financial literacy, personality traits, parental influence, and social media usage. Researchers are also encouraged to

investigate the combined effects of peer influence and digital marketing variables to develop a more comprehensive understanding of adolescent consumer behaviour.

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