




FROM CLICKS TO IMPULSE: HOW WEBSITE QUALITY AND E-WOM DRIVE PURCHASES VIA SALES PROMOTIONS

Maisa Azizah Asmara ¹, **Mokhamad Adib Sultan**², **Rivaldi Arissaputra**³,
Heri Purwanto⁴, **Ifa Ratifah**⁵

Universitas 'Aisyiyah Bandung^{1,3}

Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia^{1,2,3,4}

Universitas Pasundan⁵

¹ maisa.azizah@unisa-bandung.ac.id

Jl. Palasari No. 9a, Lengkong, Kota Bandung, Jawa Barat 402363, Indonesia

Jl. Tamansari No.6-8, Kota Bandung, Jawa Barat 40116, Indonesia

Jl. Dr. Setiabudhi No. 229, Kota Bandung, Jawa Barat 40154, Indonesia

Abstract

Amid economic deceleration, MSMEs sustained their crucial economic function by accounting for 61.07% of GDP, providing employment for 97% of the national workforce, and making up 60.4% of total investment. This study aims to examine the influence of website quality and e-WoM on impulse buying with sales promotion as a mediating variable, using a quantitative approach. Data were collected through questionnaires distributed to 300 respondents and analyzed using SEM with SmartPLS version 4.0. The findings indicate that website quality and e-WoM do not have a direct effect on impulse buying. However, both variables exert a significant indirect effect through the mediating role of sales promotion. These results highlight the importance of strategic promotional efforts in linking consumers' digital perceptions to spontaneous purchasing behavior, offering valuable insights for MSME practitioners in developing more targeted marketing strategies. These findings also contribute to the literature on stimulus-response theory in the context of digital marketing among MSMEs.

Keywords: impulse buying; website quality; electronic word of mouth; e-wom; sales promotion; MSME

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INTRODUCTION

The important role of MSMEs in the Indonesian economy is evident from their total of 64.2 million units, which contribute 61.07% to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), equivalent to IDR 8,573.89 trillion. Furthermore, this sector absorbs 97% of the national workforce and accounts for up to 60.4% of total investment, as reported by Kementerian Koperasi dan UMKM (Asmara et al., 2024). However, according to Badan Pusat Statistik (BPS), Indonesia's economic growth slowed to 4.95% (yoy) in the third quarter of 2024, which marked the lowest rate in the past year. This growth was slightly lower than the 5.05% recorded in the

second quarter of 2024 and also below the 4.94% posted in the same quarter of 2023. Additionally, household consumption, which accounts for 53.08% of GDP, grew by only 4.91%, falling below the historical average of 5% (Revo, 2024). These indicators suggest a weakening of purchasing power. Given that MSMEs heavily depend on domestic demand, the decline in household consumption could directly impact their performance. This may manifest in reduced sales volumes, decreased revenue, and challenges to business sustainability (Oswaldo, 2024).

This phenomenon highlights the need for businesses to design strategies that sustain consumer spending, particularly by stimulating impulse buying. (Harahap & Amanah, 2022). This behavior tends to be unpredictable and is influenced by emotional pressure or a sense of urgency, leading consumers to buy despite being aware of potential negative outcomes (Gupta et al., 2024). The enjoyment derived from shopping often undermines self-control, resulting in unplanned expenditures (Rossa & Ashfath, 2024). Online shopping platforms further amplify impulse buying by removing traditional shopping barriers such as location, time constraints, and social interaction with staff or other customers (Jamil et al., 2024). These conditions present both a challenge and an opportunity for marketers to optimize digital environments that can ethically harness consumers' impulsive tendencies.

One effective approach is to harness the advancements in internet and information technology, which have substantially reshaped the business landscape (Yuan et al., 2021). This transformation has driven businesses to embrace a multichannel strategy, broadening their reach by expanding from offline to online platforms (Tanriady & Septina, 2022). The research identifies a significant shift in consumer behavior, with a growing preference for online purchase channels as the primary option (O'Hara et al., 2020). This behavioral shift demands businesses, particularly MSMEs, to respond swiftly or risk losing relevance in the market. Despite the advances in digitalization, only 4% to 10% of MSMEs have embraced it (Laziva & Atieq, 2024), suggesting that the bulk of MSMEs remain dependent on offline sales (Mavilinda et al., 2021). This stark contrast between technological potential and actual adoption underscores a critical disconnect that threatens the long-term sustainability of MSMEs. This dependency has made it difficult for many businesses to survive, particularly in sectors that have not adapted to digital technology (Hanim et al., 2022), leading some to cease operations (Elisabeth, 2022). Without strategic interventions, this situation may worsen, particularly for micro and small businesses operating with limited digital capacity. Consequently, business owners must embrace technology (Fauzi et al., 2023) to effectively adapt to the ever-evolving digital business landscape (Subramanian et al., 2021). However, there remains a significant gap between the growing trend of digitalization and the low adoption rate among MSMEs, highlighting the urgency of further investigation. This condition raises a critical question regarding the factors that can accelerate digital transformation in the MSME sector.

In this regard, the integration of a quality website stands out as a pivotal strategy for enhancing the sustainability of MSMEs (Noerchoidah & Nurdina, 2022) by enhancing accessibility, promoting efficient communication (Falcicola et al., 2020), and strengthening competitiveness in the increasingly crowded digital marketplace (Herrada-Lores et al., 2022). A well-designed website streamlines the product search process for consumers (Tandon et al., 2020) and aids decision-making by incorporating features that align products with consumer preferences and expectations (Kim et al., 2023). Additionally, intuitive navigation and engaging website design significantly improve the consumer experience (Pradeep et al., 2024), positioning website quality as a crucial element in defining the level of service offered online (Rahman & Hossain, 2022). In the context of MSMEs, sustainability refers not only to long-term financial viability but also to adaptability in digital marketing, customer retention, and the ability to respond to technological shifts. Website quality plays a central role in these areas by enabling continuous engagement, expanding market reach, and facilitating data-driven improvements in business operations. Given its direct impact on achieving purchasing goals, website quality has become an indispensable focus for digital businesses (Singh & Shukla, 2023) as customer perceptions strongly influence their buying decisions (Morales-Vargas et al., 2020; Ongsakul et al., 2020).

Alternatively, a high-quality website improves the user experience, thereby facilitating the emergence of electronic word of mouth (e-WoM) as a complementary avenue for sharing information (Tanriady & Septina, 2022). Electronic word of mouth (e-WoM) refers to any positive, neutral, or negative statement made

by actual or potential consumers about a product or company, which is made available to a large audience via the internet. The scarcity of detailed product descriptions on websites highlights the importance of consumer reviews and recommendations via e-WoM, which play a vital role in offering more in-depth information to aid purchasing decisions (Aljabari et al., 2023). In contrast to traditional word-of-mouth, (e-WoM) enables consumers to obtain information rapidly and simultaneously from multiple sources, thereby broadening the reach of information distribution (Sun et al., 2021). Positive e-WoM, such as favorable testimonials or high ratings, tends to increase consumer trust and purchase intention. Conversely, negative e-WoM—such as complaints or low ratings—can deter potential buyers, reduce perceived credibility, and harm brand reputation. Neutral reviews, although less emotionally charged, still contribute by providing balanced and detailed insights that assist in more objective decision-making. Positive and negative experiences encourage consumers to share reviews digitally (Saleem et al., 2022), ultimately influencing purchasing decisions (Siripipattanakul et al., 2022). This condition emerges as e-WoM is perceived by consumers as a reliable and credible source of information (Hayes et al., 2018), where digital recommendations from customers hold significant influence and credibility (Israeli et al., 2019).

In addition, consumer purchasing decisions are significantly influenced by sales promotion factors, which provide additional incentives (Pratminingsih et al., 2021). Research by (Artini et al., 2024) revealed that 66% of respondents reported being influenced by sales or promotions, indicating the powerful psychological trigger that promotions can have on buying behavior. Similarly, (Mandolfo et al., 2022) emphasized that strategies such as price reductions, complimentary items, or added value offers are effective in encouraging unplanned purchases. These findings underscore a consistent theme: sales promotions function not only as economic incentives but also as psychological stimuli that can disrupt rational decision-making and foster impulse buying. This is supported by (Iyer et al., 2019; Nurudin, 2020), who noted that sales promotions are structured to attract attention, encourage product trials, and persuade consumers to switch from competitors. Thus, when consumers perceive additional value through promotions (Khan et al., 2019), it increases the likelihood of spontaneous purchases, as confirmed by (Sulisyorini, 2024), who highlighted that impulse buying often occurs without prior planning or deliberate evaluation. Collectively, these studies suggest that sales promotion plays a pivotal role in bridging external marketing stimuli and internal consumer responses that manifest as impulse buying behavior.

This research gap arises from the inconsistency observed in previous studies regarding the factors that influence impulse buying. Some studies (Kathuria & Bakshi, 2024) suggest that website quality affects impulse buying, while others (Adhi & Aliffia, 2022) did not find a significant impact. Similarly, sales promotions are shown to affect impulse buying in research (Atmaja et al., 2023), whereas studies (Sungkono & Maskur, 2023) did not report a significant effect. This study also examines e-WOM, where research (Hasim & Lestari, 2022) suggests that e-WOM does not influence impulse buying, which contradicts other studies (Mubalus, 2024). Meanwhile, studies (Jamil et al., 2024) suggest that e-WOM influences impulse buying, although the effect is indirect or negative. These inconsistencies may stem from variations in cultural settings, theoretical frameworks, research methodologies, or consumer segmentation across studies. To address these gaps, this study aims to re-examine the influence of website quality, sales promotion, and e-WOM on impulse buying, specifically in the context of Indonesian MSME consumers. By employing a more robust analytical approach using SEM-PLS and incorporating perceived benefits as a mediating variable, this research seeks to uncover potential mechanisms that explain the mixed findings in prior literature. Thus, the study positions itself not only to confirm previous findings but also to extend current models by introducing mediation effects that may clarify the nature of these relationships in an emerging market context.

This research focuses on MSMEs in the West Java region, as this province has the highest number of e-commerce businesses, with approximately 642,672 businesses (Arissaputra et al., 2024), and also records the highest economic growth rate (Jabar, 2023). The distinct contribution of this study is its integrated examination of these variables within one comprehensive model, alongside the finding that e-WoM exerts either an indirect or adverse impact on impulse buying behavior. Furthermore, this research emphasizes MSMEs in Indonesia, providing relevant local context, and offering new insights into the development of marketing theory and practice, while helping MSME practitioners formulate more effective e-commerce strategies.

In this regard, the main contribution of this research lies in recognizing website quality and e-WoM as key factors influencing impulse buying, with sales promotion serving as a mediator that strengthens this relationship. The findings offer valuable insights for businesses to optimize website quality and e-WoM strategies, supported by effective sales promotions, to drive impulse buying behavior. Furthermore, this research opens avenues for further exploration of the integration of these variables into MSME business development strategies.

Based on Figure 1, the model in this study explores the intricate connection between website quality, e-WoM, sales promotion, and impulsive buying. This study utilizes a quantitative approach by distributing a structured questionnaire through Google Forms. A Likert scale, with a range from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), was employed to measure the participants' responses. The questionnaire was distributed in the West Java region, with the sample criteria being respondents who had transacted on MSME websites. The study uses purposive sampling, a nonprobability sampling method where participants are selected based on criteria that align with the research goals (Hair & Brunsveld, 2019). Hypothesis:

- H₁ : Website Quality Significantly Affects Impulse Buying
- H₂ : E-WoM Significantly Affects Impulse Buying
- H₃ : Sales Promotion Significantly Affects Impulse Buying
- H₄ : Website Quality Significantly Affects Impulse Buying Through Sales Promotion
- H₅ : E-WoM Significantly Affects Impulse Buying Through Sales Promotion

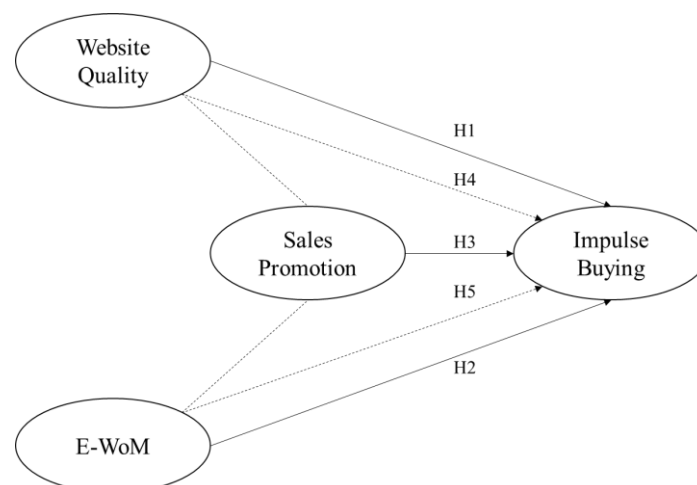


Figure 1. Research Conceptual Framework

METHOD

In this study, the sample size was calculated by multiplying the number of instruments by a factor of 10 (Hair & Brunsveld, 2019) resulting in 30 items for variable measurement and a minimum of 300 respondents for hypothesis testing. The study applied Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) using SmartPLS version 4.0 for data analysis. The analysis was carried out in two primary phases: first, the outer model evaluation to assess the relationship between observed variables and latent constructs, and second, the inner model examination to identify relationships between latent constructs. SEM was used to test hypotheses, validate existing theories, and identify significant relationships between latent variables (Hair & Brunsveld, 2019). This method offers an in-depth insight into the phenomenon being studied.

Prior to hypothesis testing, instrument quality was assessed through outer model evaluation. Convergent validity was tested using indicator loadings and Average Variance Extracted (AVE), while discriminant validity was examined using the Fornell-Larcker criterion. Reliability was evaluated using Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability to ensure internal consistency of the measurement constructs, following standard threshold recommendations.

The statements in the questionnaire are based on several dimensions used to measure website quality, including usefulness, ease of use, entertainment, and complementary relationships (Adhi & Aliffia, 2022; Akram et al., 2018). These dimensions aim to evaluate various aspects of the user experience that can influence consumer decisions in online transactions. Meanwhile, the dimensions for measuring e-WoM consist of two main categories: Positive and negative e-WoM, which evaluate how consumer reviews influence perceptions and buying decisions (Arissaputra et al., 2024; Sun et al., 2021). The dimensions used to measure sales promotions include couponing, refunds or rebates, and price-off deals, which focus on strategies designed to attract consumers and influence purchasing behavior (Sya'diyah & Dwiridotjahjono, 2022).

RESULTS

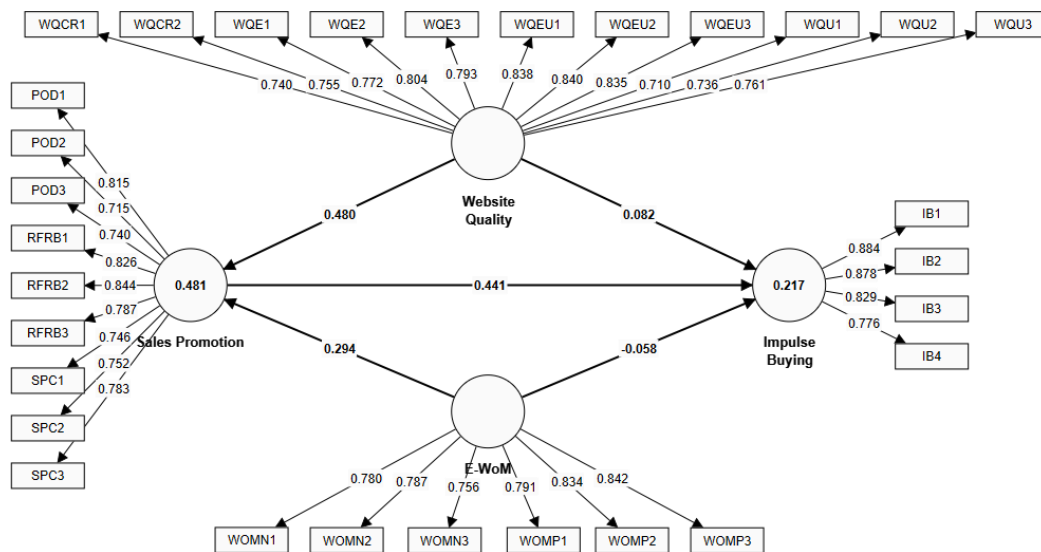


Figure 2. Outer Model Result
Source: Data Processed 2024

Table 1. Fornell Lacker Criteria

	E-WoM	Impulse Buying	Sales Promotion	Website Quality
E-WoM	0.799			
Impulse_Buying	0.242	0.843		
Sales Promotion	0.573	0.461	0.780	
Website Quality	0.580	0.335	0.651	0.782

Source: Data Processed 2024

Based on Figure 2, the loading factor values for all items are > 0.70 , indicating that all items satisfy the requirements for convergent validity. This value reflects a strong relationship between each indicator and the construct being measured (Mardiana & Faqih, 2019). It ensures that indicators such as website quality, e-WoM, sales promotion, and impulse buying are significantly interrelated and accurately represent the latent constructs in accordance with the theory, thus improving the accuracy and reliability of the research model. Furthermore, as presented in Table 1, the square root of the AVE (Average Variance Extracted) for each variable, including website quality, e-WoM, sales promotion, and impulse buying, exceeding the correlation between the constructs, indicating that each variable meets the criteria for discriminant validity.

Table 2. Composite Reliability dan Cronbach's Alpha Result

	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Result (>0.7)
E-WoM	0.887	0.914	Valid
Impulse_Buying	0.864	0.907	Valid
Sales Promotion	0.919	0.933	Valid
Website Quality	0.936	0.945	Valid

Source: Data Processed 2024

The composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha values for all variables in this study are > 0.7 , indicating that the measuring instruments meet the criteria for good reliability. Composite reliability assesses the consistency between indicators that measure the same variable, while Cronbach's alpha evaluates the correlation between items in the instrument (Hair & Brunsveld, 2019). These values confirm that the measurements for website quality, e-WoM, sales promotion, and impulse buying variables are reliable and consistent. This ensures that the relationships between variables, including the indirect effect of website quality and e-WoM on impulse buying through sales promotion, can be trusted and remain consistent if the research is replicated.

Table 3. R-Square Test Result

	R-square	R-square adjusted
Impulse_Buying	0.217	0.209

Source: Data Processed 2024

The R-Square value of 0.217 for the impulsive buying variable indicates that website quality, e-WoM and sales promotion explain only 21.7% of the variation in impulsive buying. This suggests a weak contribution, with the remaining 78.3% being influenced by factors outside the research model (Hair & Brunsveld, 2019).

Table 4. F-Square Test Result

	Impulse_Buying
E-WoM	0.003
Impulse_Buying	
Sales Promotion	0.128
Website Quality	0.004

Source: Data Processed 2024

Table 4 shows that the effect of website quality on impulsive buying is 0.004, the effect of e-WoM is 0.003, and the effect of sales promotion is 0.128. Although the effect of sales promotion is greater than that of the other two variables, all three variables can be categorized as having a weak influence on impulsive buying (Hair & Brunsveld, 2019).

Table 5. Hypothesis Test Result

	T statistics (> 1.96)	P values (< 0.05)	Label
E-WoM → Impulse_Buying	0.781	0.435	Rejected
Sales_Promotion → Impulse_Buying	6.340	0.000	Supported
Website_Quality → Impulse_Buying	1.107	0.268	Rejected
E-WoM → Sales_Promotion → Impulse_Buying	4.096	0.000	Supported
Website_Quality → Sales_Promotion → Impulse_Buying	4.783	0.000	Supported

Source: Data Processed 2024

The hypothesis testing results suggest that website quality and e-WoM do not significantly influence impulse buying behavior directly, with p-values of 0.435 and 0.268, both above the 0.05 threshold. Therefore, hypotheses H1 and H2 are rejected. Nevertheless, these results indicate that sales promotion plays a crucial mediating role in the connection between website quality, e-WoM, and impulse buying. The mediating effect is significant, with p-values of 0.000, which is less than 0.05, for both paths: e-WoM → sales promotion → impulse buying and website quality → sales promotion → impulse buying. Therefore, sales promotion enhances the connection between e-WoM, website quality, and impulse buying behavior, emphasizing its role in influencing consumers' impulse buying decisions. Therefore, H3, H4, and H5 are supported with significance values < 0.05 .

Table 6. GoF Test Result

	AVE	R-Square
Website_Quality	0.611	
E-WoM	0.638	
Sales Promotion	0.608	
Impulse_Buying	0.710	0.217

Source: Data Processed 2024

$$\begin{aligned}
 \text{Equation GoF} &= \sqrt{AVE \text{ average } \times R - \text{Square Average}} \\
 &= \sqrt{0.642 \times 0.217} \\
 &= 0.373
 \end{aligned}$$

According to the calculation, the GoF value is substantial (> 0.36), suggesting that the model used in this study is appropriate and demonstrates strong explanatory power regarding the phenomenon being examined (Darwin & Umam, 2020). This large GoF value suggests that while website quality and e-WoM do not exert a direct impact, they can significantly affect impulse buying through the mediation of sales promotion. The model effectively illustrates how these factors interact to influence consumer behavior.

DISCUSSION

The hypothesis testing results show that website quality does not significantly affect impulse buying behavior. This outcome aligns with the study by Wiranata & Hananto (2020), which concluded that website quality does not directly affect consumer decisions to engage in impulse buying. To better understand this phenomenon, the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) model can be used as a theoretical foundation (Cao et al., 2024). In this model, website quality serves as a stimulus (S), while consumers' emotional states and cognitive evaluations represent the organism (O), and the resulting impulse buying behavior is the response (R). Emotional stimuli, such as e-WoM and promotional offers, tend to influence the organism more strongly than technical aspects like layout or navigation ease, thereby producing a stronger response in the form of impulse purchases. This explanation is supported by findings from previous studies, which emphasize the role of emotional and psychological triggers over purely technical features (Milakovi & Ahmad, 2023).

While website quality is important, it is not sufficiently robust to drive impulse buying without the support of other emotional or psychological factors. According to (Lo et al., 2016), if a website fails to meet hygiene standards, such as unclear or confusing information, consumers tend to become more cautious. As a result, even when a website offers an attractive design or sales promotions, these elements alone may not trigger impulse purchases because consumers feel uncertain or uncomfortable.

However, these results are in contrast with several earlier studies, including those conducted by (Arissaputra et al., 2024), which that website quality significantly influences impulsive purchasing behavior. In this study, the dimensions of website quality include ease of use, entertainment, and complementary relationships. Previous research suggests that high-quality websites, characterized by attractive design, intuitive navigation, and relevant content—can create a positive user experience and strengthen the connection between consumers and the website (Akram et al., 2018). This, in turn, reduces hesitation and uncertainty, encouraging consumers to make impulse purchases. Furthermore, the emotional connection established through a positive user experience enhances consumers' decisions to engage further with the site and make spontaneous purchases, thereby increasing the likelihood of impulse buying.

This result aligns with the findings reported in the study by (Puspita et al., 2023), which also found that e-WoM does not directly affect impulse buying behavior. Although consumers increasingly rely on online reviews, testimonials from other users, and recommendations from social media as references for making purchase decisions, these studies indicate that e-WoM is not strong enough to drive spontaneous purchases (Ernestivita et al., 2022). This finding can be explained through the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) (Wang et al., 2024), which suggests that consumers with a high need for information (high involvement) tend to process e-WoM through the central route. In this route, individuals carefully evaluate the message content in a rational and deliberate manner. As a result, they are less likely to be influenced by spontaneous emotional

responses and more likely to engage in reasoned decision-making, which weakens the effect of e-WoM on impulse buying. This may be due to the way consumers assess and process information received through online platforms, along with differences in how effective e-WoM is, which may vary based on context, product category, and the degree of trust in the source of information.

In contrast, research by (Destari et al., 2020) shows that e-WoM has a significant influence on impulse buying behavior, with reviews and recommendations from social media often affecting spontaneous purchasing decisions. The presence of positive e-WoM, both from users and influencers, is believed to strengthen consumers' intention to make unplanned purchases, as they feel more confident in the experiences shared by others (Arissaputra et al., 2024). However, based on the ELM framework (Wang et al., 2024), such an effect is more likely to occur when consumers process e-WoM via the peripheral route—relying on surface cues such as source attractiveness, message repetition, or social popularity—rather than deep message scrutiny. This can trigger a quicker and more emotional reaction, increasing the likelihood of impulse purchases. While e-WoM has the potential to influence consumer decisions, it is not strong enough to drive impulse purchases without the support of other factors, such as attractive promotions, tempting price offers, or emotional influences. This suggests that impulse buying depends not only on online recommendations but also on other psychological and situational factors (Yan et al., 2019).

This study aligns with (Artini et al., 2024), showing that sales promotions significantly influence impulse buying, particularly through strategies such as discounts and bonus offers that trigger emotional responses and urgency (Lee et al., 2023; Yang et al., 2021). The similarity in findings may stem from comparable respondent characteristics and product types that are highly sensitive to promotional offers.

However, the results of this study differ from the findings reported in the research by (Handayani & Rahyuda, 2020), which indicate that although sales promotions can attract consumers' attention, other factors, such as personal preferences, prior experience, or situational factors, are more dominant in determining purchasing decisions. Some consumers may not feel compelled to make impulse purchases despite promotions, especially if the products offered do not align with their needs or desires. Additionally, psychological factors, such as the tendency to delay purchases or budget considerations, may play a more significant role than the promotions themselves (Ismail & Siddiqui, 2019). These findings suggest that sales promotion is not universally effective in driving impulse buying, but rather depends on psychological and contextual moderators. Thus, it should be complemented with targeted segmentation and emotionally engaging strategies to increase its impact.

The results of this study suggest that website quality does not directly impact impulse buying. However, when sales promotions act as a mediator, website quality is found to significantly affect impulse buying behavior. This means that although website quality, which includes aspects such as an attractive design, ease of navigation, and relevant information, can attract consumers' attention, its influence on impulse buying becomes stronger when accompanied by attractive sales promotions (Mandolfo et al., 2022). Promotions, such as deep discounts, additional gifts, or special offers, can trigger emotional impulses in consumers, accelerating unplanned purchase decisions (Khan et al., 2019).

Once sales promotion is present as a mediator, factors that influence impulse buying, such as a sense of urgency and the inability to delay purchasing desires, are further strengthened. In this context, sales promotion provides additional incentives that reinforce consumers' intention to make an immediate purchase (Gorji & Siami, 2020). Good website quality serves as an initial trigger, but without the support of attractive promotions, the impulse for impulse buying weakens. Therefore, although website quality can attract attention and increase consumer interest, its effect on impulse buying behavior is only significant when sales promotion acts as a determining factor that accelerates spontaneous purchasing decisions.

These findings offer important implications for MSME owners and e-commerce managers, suggesting that investments in website quality should be strategically integrated with strong promotional efforts in order to maximize their impact on impulse buying behavior.

Similarly, the e-WoM variable, as indicated in this study, shows that the effect of e-WoM on impulse buying behavior was tested separately and found to be insignificant when assessed independently. However, when moderated by sales promotion, the relationship between e-WoM and impulse buying became statistically

significant. Although e-WoM, including both positive and negative reviews, has the potential to capture consumer attention and influence purchasing decisions, its impact becomes significantly stronger when combined with other external factors, specifically sales promotions (Yan et al., 2016, 2019). Additional analysis reveals that sales promotion tends to be more effective when interacting with negative e-WoM rather than positive e-WoM, as negative reviews can evoke curiosity or urgency, which is then amplified by limited-time offers or discounts. This suggests that while information from other users on online platforms can attract consumers' attention, its influence is enhanced when paired with stimuli that encourage quick purchasing decisions.

Sales promotions act as an emotional trigger, enhancing the impact of e-WoM in stimulating impulse buying (Milakovi & Ahmad, 2023). Within this context, sales promotions can generate a feeling of urgency, motivating consumers to make quick purchases without thorough consideration (Kaveh et al., 2021). The existence of sales promotions adds to the appeal of e-WoM, as consumers feel they are receiving more benefits, which encourages them to follow reviews found online. In terms of consumer characteristics, impulsive buyers tend to exhibit high emotional reactivity and lower self-control, making them more responsive to external cues like promotions and peer influence. These consumers are particularly susceptible to social proof and urgency-based stimuli, meaning that e-WoM—especially when emotionally charged—can serve as a persuasive input, but it is the sales promotion that acts as the final push to trigger the purchase. Without the support of such promotions, the influence of e-WoM alone remains limited. Therefore, while e-WoM has the potential to influence purchasing decisions, its effect is more powerful and actionable when combined with sales promotions that provide a compelling reason to make an immediate purchase.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that website quality and e-WoM do not directly influence impulse buying but become significant when mediated by sales promotion. Sales promotions serve as emotional triggers that enhance the impact of digital stimuli on spontaneous purchasing behavior.

This research enriches the literature on digital impulse buying and provides practical guidance for MSMEs to integrate emotional promotion strategies into their digital marketing. The study is limited to specific respondent characteristics and product types. Future research should examine other factors such as consumer traits or platform differences to broaden the understanding of impulse buying dynamics.

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