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# Post purchase regret from online shopping amongst Vietnamese teenagers studying under Vinschool ecosystem

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## ABSTRACT

Prior consumer research has widely linked unplanned purchases to post-purchase regret among adults and university students, while adolescent studies have largely focused on platform adoption (e.g., TAM, UTAUT) or pre-purchase triggers without evaluating post-decisional emotional consequences. To address this gap, this study examines the underlying psychological drivers of impulse buying and general online shopping behaviors among high school students within the Vinschool ecosystem. Utilizing a mixed-method structure, our research includes an online survey (n = 65) with both qualitative and quantitative based questions and a structured interview that directly follows the survey structure. Data revealed a marginal, non-significant trend between impulse buying and overall regret (r=.24, p=.056), and a significant correlation between peer influence and decision-specific regret (r=.54, p<.001). Also, social media product browsing time was significantly associated with general regret (r=.34, p<.05). In conclusion, teenagers' online shopping psychology found in Vinschool is most strongly associated with social conformity, which highlights the need for peer-awareness education and financial literacy.

***Keywords:*** *Post-purchase regret, impulse buying, peer influence, social commerce, adolescent consumer behaviour, regret regulation theory.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Due to the rapid expansion of e-commerce and social media, Vietnamese teenagers' purchasing behaviour has changed significantly. Vietnam has become the third-largest e-commerce market in Southeast Asia with a 34.4 per cent year increase, leading to combined sales of US$11.62 billion in the first nine months of the year with four leading platforms (Shopee, TikTok Shop, Lazada, Tiki) (Vietnam Briefing, 2026). Gen Z are playing a significant role in this development, with 53.4 per cent of national shopping activity accounted for by Gen Z, as well as more than 72.5 per cent of Vietnam’s online shoppers in 2025

belonging to Generation Z (under 27) and Millennials (Vietnam Briefing, 2026; YouNet ECI and YouNet MEDIA, 2025).

The rise of 'shoppertainment', which is the merging of entertainment and commerce using short-form videos and live streams, plays a vital role in this change. Shortening the purchase funnel and making teenagers more impulsive in their shopping affects Gen Z, who prefer quick, engaging, and visual experiences (N-Squared eCommerce, 2025). Social media plays a vital role in shopping as 55% of Gen Z consumers check reviews from micro-influencers before purchasing, and 51% say they are buying products based on viral social media trends (YouNet ECI and YouNetMedia, 2025). This is consistent with academic findings that young customers are susceptible to social influence on the Internet, with peer interactions on social media having been shown to create positive brand perceptions that foster impulsive purchasing, which was noted as 'impulsiveness of social networks' by Aragoncillo and Orus (2018) (cited in Sirola et al, 2025).

Vietnamese high school students have a special position in this environment. Due to high household income and digital access, families of Vinschool students have regular and, for some, independent purchasing power using e-wallets, parental accounts, or personal allowances. These conditions, combined with constant exposure to social media, create a place where impulsive purchases are common, which research linking teenagers' social media engagement to fear-of-missing-out (FOMO) reinforces; this concern predicts impulsive buying tendencies among young users (Dhir et al, 2021).

There is much less attention has been paid to what happens after the purchase is completed, compared to the huge amount of research that has examined the factors that drive online purchase intentions among online users, including platform design, promotional triggers, and peer and influencer effects. The negative emotion state arises when a consumer questions whether a purchase decision was correct, called post-purchase regret (Zeelenberg and Pieters, 2007). This is a well-documented phenomenon in research on adult and young-adult consumers, but is still heavily understudied among school-age adolescent populations, particularly in Vietnam.

Currently, non-adolescents and non-Vietnamese people are the main demographic to show the link between impulsive purchasing and regret. For example, Khan and Khan (2014) found a significant relationship between unplanned purchases and post-purchase regret among colleagues, while Sung and Yan (2018) reported that those with more impulsive purchases tend to show greater regret in post-purchase evaluations. Although this creates the possibility of an impulse-regret link, these studies were conducted on adults or university-age individuals rather than high school adolescents, and outside the context of social media, especially TikTok shop commerce, which characterises Vietnamese customers' behaviour.

There are two reasons for this gap. First, regret mechanisms identified in older samples aren't transferred directly to teenagers because adolescents differ from young adults and adults in financial knowledge, impulse control, and susceptibility to peer pressure. Second, many studies predated the appearance of

TikTok shop commerce, which is driving the consumption of youth. This information is yet to be shown in the existing articles.

By examining post-purchase regret among high school students at Vinschool, an area that has high purchasing power and frequent exposure to social media-driven shopping trends, this study will address the gap in regret. This study's purpose is to understand the causes of regret among teenagers, which will be used for financial education and consumer awareness for adolescents.

## 2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

## 2.1 LITERATURE REVIEW

### Impulse buying among teenagers on digital platforms

Impulse buying is generally defined as an unplanned, spontaneous purchase, and it has emerged as a defining trait of Gen Z shopping behavior on social commerce platforms. One study on TikTok's "Shopee Finds" videos found that short-form, algorithmically curated content moderately shaped pure and suggested impulse buying, and strongly shaped reminder and planned impulse buying, among the Gen Z respondents surveyed (Barcelona et al., 2022, cited in the original text as "Budolfinds, 2022"). This finding is consistent with broader industry claims that the compressed purchase funnel associated with "shoppertainment" tends to encourage more impulse-driven shopping among Gen Z consumers (N-Squared eCommerce, 2025).

Academic literature reinforces this pattern. Research has shown that young people face especially high exposure to online marketing and are particularly susceptible to peer influence and social norms on social media, given their dual role as active shoppers and active social media users (Sirola et al., 2025). Separately, it has been demonstrated that adolescent fear of missing out (FOMO), driven by intensive social media engagement, is positively correlated with problematic and impulsive online behavior, a finding directly applicable to populations with high social media exposure, such as Vinschool students (Dhir et al ., 2021). Within the Vietnamese market specifically, industry data indicate that 51% of Gen Z consumers report purchasing products in response to viral social media trends, while 35% report relying primarily on discount codes and promotions (YouNet ECI & YouNet Media, 2025), suggesting that low-deliberation, trend-driven purchasing is widespread within the age group examined in this study.

### Theoretical and empirical foundations of post-purchase regret

Post-purchase regret has been most thoroughly conceptualized through Zeelenberg and Pieters' (2007) regret regulation framework. The theory characterizes regret as a cognitively based negative emotion that arises when an individual compares an actual outcome to a forgone alternative, and proposes that consumers actively engage in strategies intended to minimize anticipated or experienced regret.

Subsequent empirical work has tested this relationship directly. It has been found that unplanned buying, frequently triggered by sales promotions and convenient payment methods, significantly predicts post-purchase regret among college students (Khan & Khan, 2014). Related research on compulsive buying has identified a positive relationship between public self-consciousness, impulse buying, and post-purchase regret, suggesting that the social visibility of a purchase may itself intensify subsequent regret, a point of particular relevance to peer-influenced adolescent shopping (Lee & Workman, 2018). Additional research has examined regret-avoidance behavior in online retail contexts, finding that online shoppers frequently use shopping carts not merely as a purchasing mechanism, but as a means of organizing, comparing, and deliberating over potential purchases, consistent with an effort to avoid future regret prior to finalizing a purchase (Kukar-Kinney & Close, 2010).

**Note on technology adoption frameworks**

A separate body of literature applies technology adoption models, most notably the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and the related Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT), to explain why consumers choose to shop online. It has been found that perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness shape consumers' attitudes toward e-commerce platforms, which in turn shape their behavioral intention to shop online (Lim & Ting, 2012). While influential, this line of research is oriented toward explaining platform adoption and usage intention rather than the emotional experience that follows a completed purchase. TAM and UTAUT-based models therefore account for why teenagers shop on platforms such as Shopee or TikTok Shop, but stop short of explaining their subsequent emotional response, a distinction that informs the theoretical choices outlined in Section 2.2.

**Research gap**

Taken together, the existing literature comprises several only partially connected bodies of knowledge: technology-adoption models (TAM, UTAUT) explaining why young consumers engage with e-commerce platforms; consumer psychology research linking unplanned or compulsive buying to post-purchase regret, conducted primarily on university-age or general adult samples (Khan & Khan, 2014; Lee & Workman, 2018); and adolescent-specific research on social-media-driven impulsivity (Dhir et al., 2021; Sirola et al., 2025) that documents the behavioral drivers of teenage impulse buying without measuring its emotional aftermath. Few studies have examined the post-decisional, emotional consequences of teenage online shopping directly within a single sample, that is, whether the specific behavioral drivers of youth consumption (impulse buying, peer influence, social media exposure) translate into measurable patterns of post-purchase regret among adolescents themselves. This gap is particularly pronounced within the Vietnamese context, where empirical attention has concentrated primarily on purchase drivers and platform adoption rather than post-purchase emotional outcomes within this demographic. Because this study does not directly compare adolescents to adults, adolescent psychological factors are examined as potential contextual explanations rather than definitive comparative conclusions. This study is positioned to address that gap directly.

## 2.2 THEORETICAL BASIS

### REGRET THEORY (ZEELENBERG & PIETERS, 2007)

This study adopts regret regulation theory as its primary theoretical foundation. The theory holds that regret arises from counterfactual thinking, the cognitive comparison between an outcome actually obtained and the outcome that would have resulted from an alternative choice. Regret intensifies under two conditions: first, when the decision is perceived as having been within the individual's control, since impulsively made decisions involve minimal deliberation and are therefore particularly susceptible to subsequent regret, as the decision-maker can more readily imagine an alternative course of action; and second, when a forgone alternative is psychologically salient, such as when a purchase was made primarily because of social conformity, which renders the alternative of not purchasing easy to imagine in retrospect.

Applied to this study, regret regulation theory suggests a direct theoretical link between impulse buying and regret, supported empirically by the finding that unplanned buying is significantly associated with post-purchase regret (Khan & Khan, 2014): because impulsive purchases involve minimal deliberation, they leave greater room for post-hoc counterfactual comparison once initial excitement subsides, increasing the likelihood that the buyer will perceive the decision as avoidable or mistaken.

### COGNITIVE DISSONANCE THEORY

As a complementary lens, this study draws on Festinger's (1957) theory of cognitive dissonance, which holds that individuals experience psychological discomfort when their actions conflict with their values, intentions, or self-concept, for example, a student who values saving money but makes an unplanned purchase. This framework offers a plausible account of why impulse buying might be associated with regret: the misalignment between a rapid, low-deliberation purchase and the buyer’s more considered financial values may produce dissonance, which can be experienced subjectively as regret and may prompt dissonance-reduction behaviour such as returning the item, avoiding the platform, or retrospectively rationalizing the purchase. This mechanism may be reinforced by the social visibility of peer-influenced purchases: it has been found that public self-consciousness is positively associated with both impulse buying and post-purchase regret, suggesting that purchases made to align with peers may produce a particularly pronounced value-action conflict once the social motivation fades (Lee & Workman, 2018).

This study deliberately does not adopt technology-adoption models such as TAM (Lim & Ting, 2012) or UTAUT as part of its core theoretical framework. These models are well suited to explaining why

teenagers choose to shop on a given platform, but their core constructs, perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, performance expectancy, are not designed to explain emotional outcomes following a purchase. As discussed in Section 2.1, this conceptual mismatch between adoption-focused theory and the post-decisional phenomenon of regret constitutes part of the research gap this study addresses.

## CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The proposed conceptual model positions three independent variables: impulse buying frequency, social media shopping exposure, and peer influence, as antecedents that are in relation to the dependent variable, post-purchase regret. These antecedents are proposed to relate to post-purchase regret through the explanatory mechanism of counterfactual thinking (Regret Theory), and value-action conflict (Cognitive Dissonance Theory); these mechanisms are offered as theoretical explanations for the associations tested in this study, not as mediating variables formally tested through mediation analysis. Monthly allowance, grade level, and gender are treated as control variables for subgroup comparison rather than as causal antecedents.

## HYPOTHESES

+ $H_1$: Post-purchase regret is associated with the frequency of impulsive purchases.
+ $H_2$: Post-purchase regret is associated with social media purchasing exposure (weekly product browsing time on platforms like TikTok or Instagram).
+ $H_3$: Post-purchase regret is associated with peer impact on purchasing decisions.

(In line with the quantitative framework described in Part 3.6, these are presented as directed hypotheses to be addressed using descriptive statistics and Pearson correlation analysis.)

## 3. METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

This study uses a mixed-methods sequential exploratory design, which involves collecting and analysing quantitative data using Pearson correlation analysis and descriptive statistics, followed by a qualitative phase to expand on the initial statistics (Dawadi et al., 2021; Toyon, 2021). The survey, titled "Post-Purchase Regret in Teenage Online Shoppers-A Study of Vinschool High School Students", is organised into 4 parts: Demographic Information, Online shopping habits, Post-Purchase Regret scale with 5-point Likert items adapted from Zeelenberg and Pieters' regret regulation framework, and an optional open-ended response (Zeelenberg and Pieters, 2007). The interview guide for the qualitative part is built around the correlation observed from a single interview (being used as an illustrative case study) and the survey results to illustrate and contextualize.

### 3.2 PARTICIPANTS AND SAMPLINGS

The target sample includes high school students (Grades 9, 10, 11) who are currently studying at Vinschool in Vietnam. The population is chosen because students aged 15-18 represent a big market for the mobile device online customers segment and the demographic most exposed to the 'Budol' shopping trends documented on TikTok shop and Shopee (Barcelona et al, 2022). A random sampling design is applied across the three grade levels to ensure proportional representation and to limit selection bias (Fazil et al, 2023).

The minimum sample size for the quantitative survey is calculated using Yamane's formula at a 91% confidence level and a 9% margin of error, with a realistic sample size of 100-120 respondents (Fazil et al, 2023; Suyanto et al, 2025). The inclusion criteria prescribed in the survey require at least one online purchase in the past three months to ensure respondents have a meaningful shopping experience to reflect on (Phan et al, 2024). For the second phase, purposely chosen for a semi-structured interview, a student who showed a great amount of sorrow served as an informative case study to illustrate patterns(Fazil et al, 2023; Islam et al, 2021).

## 3.3 INSTRUMENTS

This study uses a primary instrument for data collection: a structured online survey questionnaire.

The survey questionnaire consisted of four sections. Section A collected demographic information including grade level, gender, monthly allowance, and preferred e-commerce platform. Section B measured online shopping habits, capturing frequency of purchases, average spending per transaction, device usage, and impulse buying behavior. Section C contained the core post-purchase regret scale, comprising ten Likert-scale items, divided into three sub-scales: GR – General Regret (Q17–Q21, 5 items), DSR – Decision-Specific Regret (Q22–Q25, 4 items), and CONS – Consequences (Q26–Q28, 3 items). These items were adapted from Zeelenberg and Pieters' (2007) regret regulation framework and modified to reflect the online shopping context of Vietnamese high school students. Section D included one optional open-ended question inviting respondents to describe a personal experience of post-purchase regret in their own words.

The study also involves an interview conducted with a grade 9 interviewee. The interview serves as an example for a real case explained in full detail with the person. This offers an explanation into why the results were presented like it was in the survey, what really caused the respondents' mistakes. The interview includes additional post-regret responses which are: hiding the purchase from parents, and keeping the item rather than returning it. This shows the survey didn't account for all possible consequences of post-purchase regret.

## 3.4 PILOT TEST

The pilot survey (n = 32) was administered to an initial sample of Vinschool students to assess instrument clarity and response distribution before main data collection. Most of the respondents were grade 9 students (62.5%), slightly female-leaning, and mostly on allowances under 500,000 VND, with Shoppe as the dominant platform (59.4%). Shopping frequency was moderate and impulse buying was present, with 25% reporting unplanned purchases often or almost always, driven mainly by Tiktok/Instagram sightings,

flash sales, and peer recommendations. On the regret scale, direct regret expressions were low while opportunity cost thinking was more common. The strongest trigger was overpaying, which is consistent with expectations from the literature. Based on these results, the instrument was confirmed as suitable for main distribution, with minor phrasing revisions made to selected Likert items before Wave 2.

## 3.5 PROCEDURE

Phase 1 - Pilot Survey

In the first phase, the bilingual survey questionnaire was distributed digitally via Google Forms to an initial group of 29 Vinschool students across Grades 9, 10, and 11. The survey link was shared through class group chats and peer networks. Participation was entirely voluntary, and respondents were informed at the beginning of the form that all responses were anonymous and would be used solely for academic research purposes. Only students who had made at least one online purchase in the past three months were eligible to respond, in line with the study's inclusion criterion.

The pilot phase served to assess the clarity of question wording, the suitability of response options, and the overall flow of the instrument. Based on the pilot results, minor revisions were made to the Vietnamese phrasing of selected Likert-scale items before the main survey distribution.

Phase 2 - Main Survey Distribution

Following the revisions informed by the pilot, the finalized survey was redistributed to a wider sample of Vinschool students targeting 80 - 120 respondents across Grades 9 to 11. The survey was distributed digitally via Google Forms through class group chats and school communication channels over a two-week period. The same anonymity and inclusion criteria from the pilot phase had been maintained.

## 3.6 DATA ANALYSIS

This data will be analysed using qualitative triangulation, descriptive statistics, and Pearson correlation analysis.

Descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations) summarising demographic information and shopping habits, followed by collective scores on the Regret Experience, Triggers, and Emotional-Behavioural Response subscales, is the method used for qualitative analysis (Fazil et al, 2023). Cross-tabulation examines associations between platform preference, unplanned purchase frequency, and the three regret subscales (Dunn et al, 2015). Group means comparison is used for differences in regret intensity across grade, gender and allowance bands, consistent with comparable studies of young urban platform users (Su et al, 2024; Suyanto et al, 2025).

Qualitative analysis applies Braun and Clarke’s six-step thematic analysis to both the optional open-ended responses and to the interview transcripts (Ahmed et al, 2025; Humble and Mozelius, 2022). Initial data are applied to the affective, cognitive, and behavioural regulation components of regret, as presented by

Zeelenberg and Pieters (2007). The two parts are then integrated through methodological triangulation to contextualize the survey findings with the experiences reported in the interviews (Fazil et al, 2023).

To analyze a qualitative data of regret, we convert them to quantitative value of GR(General regret) and DSR(Decision-specific regret) and CONS(consequences):

+ GR (General Regret) = average of 5 items: (Wave 2: Q17-Q21)
+ DSR (Decision-Specific Regret) = average of 4 items: (Q22-Q25)
+ CONS (Consequences) = average of 3 items: (Q26-Q28)

For any further findings about correlations, relationships between two variables, and their relevancy, we adapted "pearson-r correlation" and "p-value". Pearson correlation coefficients were calculated using Google Sheets (CORREL function), with statistical significance set at $p<.05$.

This study presents the Pearson R coefficient and its corresponding p-value for every correlation analysed in order to assess statistical significance. It is common in social media research to treat the fundamental items as interval-level data for Pearson correlation analysis, even though they are 5-point Likert scale rather than continuous measures. This is especially true once sample size passes n=30, which this study's combined sample (n=65) surpasses.

## 3.7 ETHICAL STANDARDS STATEMENT

This study did not get a documentation of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) or equivalent ethics approval, because it was done in a secondary/high-school framework. However, ethics standards are being held throughout the whole duration of the research, strictly following established guidelines for collecting data from minors.

Informed consent: When the survey was sent out, participants were told that completing our survey is voluntary and completely anonymous. All of the 65 respondents have answered in accordance with their own will.

Parental consent: Because of the data group being minors (under 18), our research team has obtained parental consent alongside each respondent's own agreement before collecting any information. This follows established guidance on research with adolescents (Crane & Broome 2017; Singh et al. 2019).

Confidentiality and anonymity: The survey only asked for simple demographics data like grade level, school campus, monthly allowance, and their favourite e-commerce platform. In addition, interview transcripts were anonymized before any further analysis, and there are zero participant names in the final report.

Right to withdraw: Participants knew from the start that they could quit whenever they please, either stop answering the google form or leaving the interview.

Minimal burden: Both the survey and the interview are low effort, taking only a few minutes of their time. 5-8 minutes for the survey and 15-20 minutes for the interview. Both the interview environment and the interviewer have a relaxed, easygoing tone.

Data security: All data is stored on personal G-mail with passwords and safer, more complicated two-steps verification, and is only accessible to the research team.

## 4. RESULT AND ANALYSIS

This section presents the results yielded from an online survey about impulse-buying, social media usages, and post-purchase regret. The research comes in 2 waves, with the questions being related to the topic but not exactly identical. The first wave( n = 32) acts as a pilot. Despite bringing in valuable information and providing a huge amount of respondents, we could not pool the data together. For this research, all of our data will be based on the second wave (n = 65).
The chapter follows a distinct structure. 4.1 addresses the demographics of attending respondents. Sections 4.2 through 4.4 report descriptive results for each part of the survey, context and budget (Section A), impulse buying and peer influence (Section B), and post-purchase regret (Section C), before analysing correlations and linking them together. Section 4.5 ends with the qualitative themes and further attempts at evaluating data drawn from respondents' open-ended answers.

### 4.1. DEMOGRAPHICS

The sample lands amongst the middle grade. 32 (49.2%) of them are currently studying in 10th grade, with 22 (33.8%) from grade 9 and 11 (16.9%) from grade 11. Gender was fairly balanced, with 34 (52.3%) of them being male, 28 (43.1%) being female 3 of them preferred not to say. The majority, 55 (84.6%) of them are studying in the Vinschool Harmony campus, 4 (6.2%) from Vinschool Times City, 3 (4.6%) from Vinschool Smart City and Vinschool Metropolis.

Shoppe was the most common e-commerce platform used, 39 (60%), followed by Tiktok Shop, 11 (16.9%). The rest 15 respondents picked other platforms, some of which mentioned Lazada, Instagram and Facebook, or they just haven’t directly used any e-commerce platforms. The majority (49, 75.4%) used mobile phones as their primary device, 7 (10.8%) used tablets and 9 (13.8%) of them used both.

**Table 1. Demographic Profile of Survey Respondents**

| Characteristic | Category | n | % |
|---|---|---|---|
| Grade | Grade 9 | 22 | 33.8% |
| | Grade 10 | 32 | 49.2% |
| | Grade 11 | 11 | 16.9% |
| Gender | Male | 34 | 52.3% |
| | Female | 28 | 43.1% |
| | Prefer not to say | 3 | 4.6% |
| Campus(n = 65 reported) | Harmony | 55 | 84.6% |
| | Metropolis | 3 | 4.6% |
| | Times City | 4 | 6.2% |
| | Smart City | 3 | 4.6% |
| Device used to shop | Smart Phone | 49 | 75.4% |
| | Both smartphone and laptop/tablet | 9 | 13.8% |
| | laptop/tablet | 7 | 10.8% |

*Source: Compiled by authors*

Smartphones were the dominant shopping device by a wide margin, used by nearly three-quarters of respondents. This matters for interpreting the impulse-buying results later in this chapter: a smartphone-first shopping habit puts purchasing one swipe away from browsing, a condition plausibly associated with impulse buying, though this study did not directly test device type as a predictor of impulse purchasing behaviour

## 4.2. DESCRIPTIVE FINDINGS: CONTEXT AND BUDGET

### 4.2.1. SHOPPING HABITS OVERVIEW

Section A provided information about shopping platform, frequency, spend per purchase, and monthly allowance. Shopping frequency was moderate, surprisingly not as heavy as we predicted: 29 respondents (44.6%) said they only shop once a month or less, then 25 respondents (38.5%) would shop 2-3 times monthly. Only 6 of them (9.2%) shop once a week or more, and 5 of them (7.7%) never shopped.
Money was also pretty tight in this second wave. 34 (52.3%) reported that they would only receive 500,000 VND (€ 16.54) for their monthly allowance. 18 others (27.7%) have 500,000 - 1,000,000 VND (€ 33.08), 6 (9.2%) of them with a monthly allowance of 1,000,000 - 2,000,000 VND, and the other 7 (10.8%) with 2,000,000 VND or more.

**Table 2. Online Shopping Habits and Monthly Allowance Distribution**

| Variable | Category | n | % |
|---|---|---|---|
| Shopping frequency | Never | 5 | 7.7% |
| | Once a month or less | 29 | 44.6% |
| | 2-3 times a month | 25 | 38.5% |
| | Once a week or more | 6 | 9.2% |
| Typical spend per purchase | Under 100,000 VND | 17 | 26.2% |
| | 100,000-300,000 VND | 34 | 52.3% |
| | 300,000-500,000 VND | 8 | 12.3% |
| | Over 500,000 VND | 6 | 9.2% |
| Monthly Allowance | Under 500,000 VND | 34 | 52.3% |
| | 500,000-1,000,000 VND | 18 | 27.7% |
| | 1,000,000-2,000,000 VND | 6 | 9.2% |
| | Over 2,000,000 VND | 7 | 10.8% |

*Source: Compiled by authors*

### 4.2.2. CORRELATION BETWEEN BUDGET, SPEND PER PURCHASE, AND SHOPPING FREQUENCY

Before turning to regret, it's worth checking whether the three budget-related variables in Section A move together the way a straightforward spending pattern would predict. They do. Monthly allowance correlates significantly with both typical spend per purchase ($r = .47$, $p < .001$) and shopping frequency ($r = .32$, $p < .001$), and spend per purchase and shopping frequency correlate with each other as well, though more weakly ($r = .52$, $p < .001$).

**Table 3. Mean Spend per Purchase and Shopping Frequency by Monthly Allowance Bracket**

| Monthly allowance | n | Avg. spend per purchase | Avg. shopping frequency |
|---|---|---|---|
| Under 500,000 VND | 34 | 1.76 | 2.32 |
| 500,000 VND - 1,000,000 VND | 18 | 2.11 | 2.61 |
| 1,000,000 - 2,000,000 VND | 6 | 2.00 | 2.00 |
| Over 2,000,000 VND | 7 | 3.29 | 3.43 |

*Source: Compiled by authors*

How to read these numbers. The spend and frequency questions were multiple-choice, respondents picked one of four ranges rather than typing in an exact figure, so there is no raw currency amount in the data to average directly. To make comparison across groups possible, each option was assigned a number from 1 (lowest range) to 4 (highest range), for spend per purchase. For example, the number assigned with the "Under 500,000 VND" of 1.76 means that the 34 respondents in the under 500,000 VND of allowance category typically spend closer to 100,000 - 300,000 VND(Scale from the quantified data) .

This approach is standard for summarizing ordinal survey categories, but it has one limitation worth noting: the highest option in each question ("Over 500,000 VND," "Once a week or more") has no upper limit, so a shift from 3 to 4 may represent a larger real-world gap than the shift from 1 to 2. These scores are therefore reliable for ranking and comparing groups against each other, which is how they are used throughout this chapter, but should not be read as precise estimates of how much more, in VND, one group spends than another.

The increase is fairly gradual through the middle brackets and then steps up sharply at the top: students with over 2,000,000 VND a month spend noticeably more per purchase and shop meaningfully more often than everyone else, while the two middle brackets sit close together. In practical terms, allowance

does what a budget constraint should do, students with more money to spend both spend more per transaction and shop more often, which is a useful check that these three variables behave the way real spending data should before they're used elsewhere in the analysis.

## 4.3 DESCRIPTIVE FINDINGS: IMPULSIVE BUYING AND LEVEL OF REGRET

Descriptive and correlational data about the frequency of impulsive purchases and the corresponding level of post-purchase regret in the sample (n=65) are presented here. There was a small but noticeable amount of impulsive buying. On the 5-point unplanned purchase frequency scale (Q11: 1=Never; 2 =Rarely, 3=Sometimes, 4=Often, 5=Almost always), the mean impulsive buying frequency (M=2.35) falls between "Rarely" and "Sometimes". Question 5 (about shopping frequency) measures how frequently customers shop online regardless of whether the purchase is intended or unexpected, is different from this question. 20% (13 respondents) said they never made unplanned purchases, 40% (26 respondents) said they did it rarely, 27.7% (18) said they did it occasionally, 9.2% (6 respondents) said they did so frequently, and 3.1% (2 respondents) said they did it usually.

Respondents were exposed to several purchase triggers at the same time, with an average of about 2.2 different triggers for each person. Flash-sales notifications, product appearances on TikTok or Instagram, boredom scrolling, and peer recommendations were the most often approved indicators, as shown in the multiple-response checkbox and open-ended answers.

**Table 4. Frequency of Self-Reported Impulse Purchase Triggers**

| Triggers | n | % |
|---|---|---|
| Seeing a product on Instagram/Tiktok | 35 | 54.7% |
| A friend recommended it | 28 | 43.8% |
| Flash sale or time limited discount | 36 | 56.3% |
| Watching a shopping livestream | 12 | 18.8% |
| Boredom/scrolling out of habit | 21 | 32.8% |
| KOL/influencer review | 11 | 17.2% |
| Others | 3 | 4.7% |

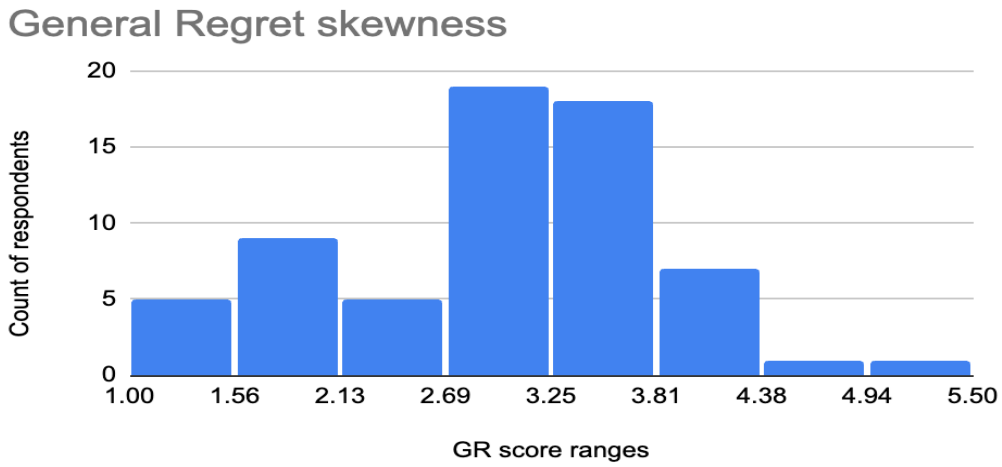
*Source: Compiled by authors*

In this scenario, regret emerged as a notable feature of the sample. The average score on the 1-5 scale for the 5-item General Regret (GR) was about 3.02, which shows the desire to reverse their purchase, feelings

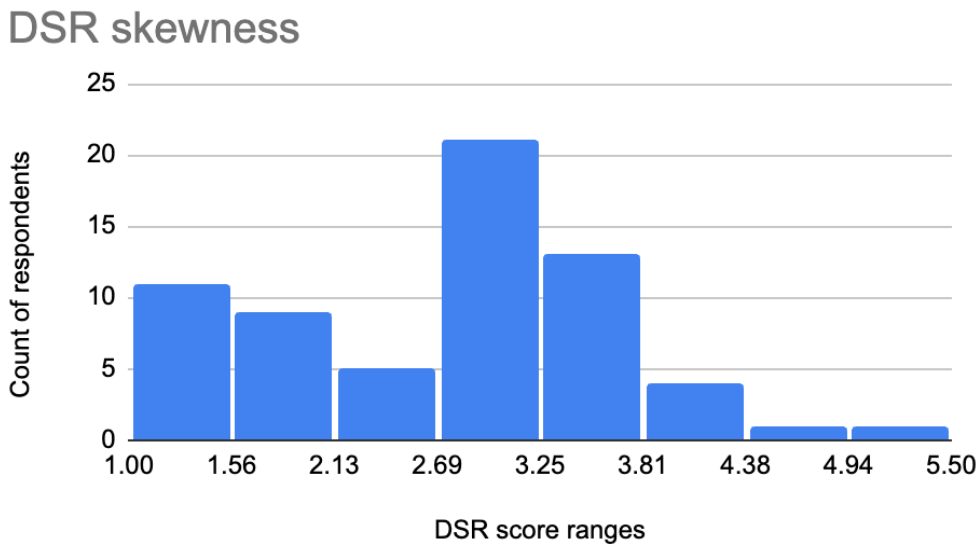
of making a poor decision, and thinking over alternative spending, displeasure over product mismatching, and perceived overspending. The average score was 2.73 (SD=0.94) on the 4-item Decision-Specific Regret scale (DSR: Q22-25), which measures regret associated with particular purchasing circumstances such as friend recommendations, peer-influenced purchasing, impulsive decisions, and speed of decision making. DSR is conceptually different from the Consequences Index (CONS), which measures behavioral and emotional reactions after regret, and General Regret (GR), which measures a more general retrospective dissatisfaction with a purchase. The slightly lower DSR mean compared to GR (3.02) shows that general regret in this sample was somewhat stronger than regret related to particular choice conditions. Similar to the overall regret level, the 3-item Consequences index, which measures post-regret self-frustration, hesitancy, and future caution, averaged 2.86.

Impulsive buying frequency had a positive correlation with Decision Regret ($r=.32$, $p<.05$). Teenagers who made more impulsive purchases showed more regret on the scale. There was a modest negative relationship with DSR ($r=-.045$) and CONS ($r=-.054$) and a slight positive correlation with General Regret ($r=.082$) for general daily social media use (Q8). The study did not find enough evidence to draw the conclusion that overall daily social media use is linearly related to any of the three regret measures because none of these connections reached statistical significance (all $p>.05$). However, the data do not provide enough evidence to indicate a correlation($p > .05$), so this finding should not be considered as evidence that there is no relationship.

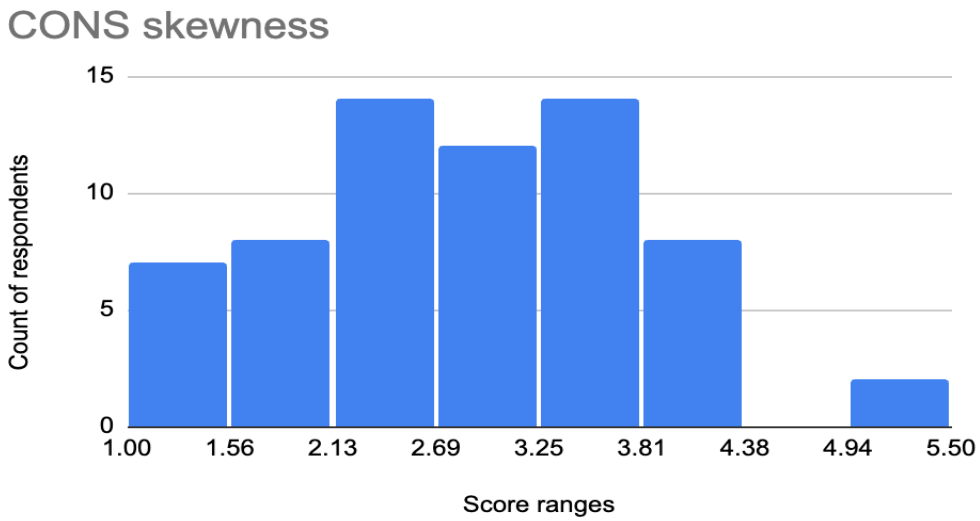
*GR skewness*




*DSR skewness*




*CONS skewness*




In addition, regret had observable behavioural consequences. The General regret (GR) and Consequences (CONS) had a correlation ($r=.4$, $p<.05$). This pattern is consistent with self-driven dissatisfaction, temporary avoidance of the offending platform, and self-reported alertness in future purchases being associated with regret, whether that regret follows from an impulsive purchase or one influenced by peers – two related but distinct patterns in this study's data. These qualitative trends were mirrored in the qualitative descriptions of regretted purchases (question 29), when respondents identified livestream-driven purchases, midnight impulsive orders, and things that didn't match online descriptions as major sources of disappointment. Interpretations were supported by the analysis done on peer and social influence, which showed the strongest correlation with the 4-item Decision Regret scale and the

PEER value (r=.54, p<.001). This is consistent with, though it cannot on its own confirm, peer-influenced purchases being an important source of post-purchase regret in this sample.

## 4.4 DESCRIPTIVE FINDINGS: SECTION C (POST-PURCHASE REGRET)

This section looks at how peer pressure and social media activity affect impulsive purchases and the regret that follows it. This section's statistics are all based on the primary sample (N=65). Passive product exposure had a short duration but a large signal density throughout the entire sample (N=65). Weekly scroll hours, which are measured as the amount of time spent browsing product content on social media without intending to make a purchase, ranged from 'less than an hour' to '1-3 hours' on average (M=1.66). The range of purchase triggers that students experienced, on the other hand, was significantly greater; respondents accepted about 2.2 trigger categories on average, such as flash sales and product findings on TikTok or Instagram, shopping livestreams, boredom scrolling, KOL or influencer reviews, and peer recommendations. There was a somewhat positive correlation (r=.32, p<.05) between trigger count and the frequency of impulsive purchases. The study found insufficient evidence to reach a conclusion that a higher number of trigger types is linearly associated with higher General Regret in this group, as the correlation between trigger count and General Regret was weak and did not reach statistical significance (r = .13, p = .29). This indicates that although exposure to more trigger types is linked to more frequent impulsive purchases, there is insufficient evidence in the data to conclude that trigger diversity on its own leads to increased regret. There was a significant zero-order correlation between weekly scroll hours and both impulse buying frequency (r=.27, p=.03) and general regret (r=.34, p=.006). This suggests that passive browsing may not only increase purchase incidence but also foster regret through increased social comparison or unmet expectations.

Overall platform immersion and product-specific scrolling differed significantly, according to the statistics. A significant percentage of respondents said they spent more than 4 hours a day on Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok combined, which is significantly more than the weekly averages for product browsing. A four-item score (Q13-16) was used to implement peer and social influence as a combined index, measuring (1) the frequency of purchasing a product because a friend recommended it (Q13), (2) the frequency of purchasing because friends also bought it (Q14), (3) the likelihood of considering a product after a friend mentioned it (Q15), (4) and whether respondents felt pressure to buy something to fit in (Q16). The peer-influence index is conceptually different from passive product browsing (Q9), which measures exposure to product content with no social cause, and impulsive buying frequency (Q11), which measures unplanned purchases without social context. Throughout the survey, peer/social influence showed the strongest association with regret of any predictor measured. This is consistent with peer influence being associated with post-purchase regret in a way distinct from impulsivity or browsing duration, though this correlational design cannot establish a cause-effect pathway. It had a significant relationship with the Consequences index (r=.37, p=.0022), the entire four-item Decision Regret scale (r=.54, p <.001), and General Regret (r=.35, p=.0045). These quantitative trends were supported by qualitative descriptions. Respondents specifically mentioned friend recommendations, TikTok product

sightings, and streaming distractions as factors associated with regretted transactions. A respondent recounted how he ordered fast food after getting hooked on a livestream, only to later discover that a home-cooked dinner would be enough. Another mentioned that purchasing a Gundam figure after seeing social media turned out to be a hoax, and another regretted buying makeup during a flash sale after finding a less expensive alternative. As a whole, the results show that teenage online shoppers are exploring a huge digital world where peer norms and algorithmic product exposure meet. Trigger-filled scrolling is associated with a higher likelihood of impulsive purchases, and social influence, friend recommendations, peer consumption patterns, and the need to fit in show the strongest associations with the severity of post-purchase regret."

## 4.5 QUALITATIVE THEMES AND ANALYSIS

A semi-structured interview was carried out with a 9th grade male student from Vinschool the Harmony to attempt complementing the data shown throughout 4.1 to 4.4. The interview covers 6 areas: shopping habits, impulse buying, social influence, post-purchase regret experiences, and reflection and financial awareness

**Shopping Habits:**

The participant's shopping behavior closely mirrors the broader sample. Shopee was his primary platform, consistent with 60% of all respondents. The participant found Tiktok's item that he later thought about purchasing. The second most popular trigger for impulsive purchases, according to the survey, was seeing a product on TikTok or Instagram (53.8% of respondents), only surpassed by flash sales or limited discounts (55.4%). In contrast to general product browsing or passive scrolling, which measures the amount of time spent checking product content without intending to purchase, trigger endorsement highlights the signs respondents identify with their impulsive purchases. His near-exclusive smartphone use aligns with the sample's 75.4% primary smartphone rate, which is relevant because smartphone-first browsing places purchasing one tap away from discovery, a key condition for impulse buying.

**Impulse Buying:**

The participant's Gundam purchase illustrates the impulse buying pathway quantitatively identified in the data. It was triggered by a flash sale with artificial scarcity cues, decided within five minutes, and followed by immediate post-purchase doubt. This maps onto the average frequency of impulsive purchases, which is 2.35 (between Rarely and Sometimes), suggesting Moderate impulsivity. His two-phase emotional arc (excitement, then doubt roughly an hour later) is consistent with the level of moderate general regret (M=3.02, SD=0.93), where regret emerges gradually rather than immediately. His acknowledgment that he still buys impulsively despite knowing better reflects the partial behavioral correction captured in C3, where "becoming more careful" scored 3.31, above neutral but well below the ceiling.

**Social and Peer influence:**

The participant described two peer influence modes: direct recommendation (mechanical keyboard) and social conformity (pen purchase). Notably, he downplayed the pressure behind the pen purchase, "I didn't feel super pressured", despite clearly buying something he didn't need because classmates had it. This self-minimization is consistent with the quantitative gap between reported social pressure (72.3% say never or rarely) and actual conformity behavior captured by The Peer-influence Index. It suggests peer influence operates more subtly than students consciously recognize. His description of influencer effects as idea-planting rather than direct persuasion also aligns with the broader trigger data, where KOL/influencer reviews ranked sixth out of six triggers (15.4%), present but not dominant.

**Post-Purchase Regret Experience:**
The participant's primary regret centered on product mismatch. The received item looked nothing like the listing photos. Product mismatch was the single strongest regret trigger in the quantitative data (Question 20 Mean=3.15). His emotional response was disappointment and embarrassment rather than anger or guilt, in line with the moderate General Regret score (M=3.02, SD=0.93). Two behavioral responses not captured by the Likert scale emerged here: hiding the purchase from parents to avoid judgment, and keeping the item in a drawer rather than returning it due to process friction. Neither concealment nor behavioral inertia was measured in C3, suggesting the survey's regret consequence items (platform avoidance, self-frustration, future caution) do not fully capture the range of post-regret behaviors students actually exhibit.

**Reflection and Financial Awareness:**
The participants independently arrived at corrective strategies, reading photo reviews, checking negative reviews first, imposing a personal 24-hour waiting period that directly mirrors the quantitative finding that higher regret is linked to quicker decision making (Q25 mean=3.05). His final remark that he had no idea how much he spent monthly until reviewing his transaction history points to a gap the survey did not measure: active financial tracking. Given that 52.3% of the sample makes less than 500,000 VND a month, untracked spending within a tight budget may amplify regret in ways the Likert scale alone cannot capture, and suggests financial literacy as a meaningful variable for future research.

## 5. DISCUSSION

### 5.1. INTERPRETATION OF KEY FINDINGS

The main wave (n = 65) information provided a focused test of three hypotheses about impulse buying, post-purchase regret and online shopping in general amongst Vinschool students (grade 9,10,11). General regret averaged 3.02, Decision-specific regret averaged 2.73, and Consequences (CONS) averaged 2.86.
The first hypothesis: Post-purchase regret is positively connected with the frequency of impulsive purchases. Higher impulse buying frequency was significantly associated with Decision-Specific Regret ($r = .32$, $p < .05$) and showed a positive but only marginally significant association with General Regret ($r = .24$, $p = .056$). This suggests that the Consequence index (behavioral/emotional reactions like self-frustration, platform avoidance, or increased caution) is less consistently linked to impulsive buying

frequency than Decision-Specific Regret (regret related to the circumstances of a particular purchase decision, such as buying too quickly or buying because of a friend's recommendation). It is crucial to remember that Decision-Specific Regret measures regret associated with particular purchasing contexts, such as both impulsive and peer-influenced decisions. These two concepts are measured by different items within the DSR scale and should not be used interchangeably with the frequency of impulsive purchases.

The second hypothesis: Post-purchase regret is positively connected with social media purchasing exposure (weekly product browsing time on platforms like TikTok or Instagram). There is a positive linear connection between GR ($r = .34$, $p < 0.05$) and DSR ($r = .26$, $p < 0.05$). Student's exposure to purchase-related cues such as advertisements, livestreams and KOL reviews may be increased by passively browsing product's content. There is a conceptual difference between passive product browsing (Q9) and impulsive buying frequency (Q11), which measures how often unplanned purchases occur, and trigger count, which measures how many different trigger types respondents endorse. Despite the context in which triggers are encountered, browsing is not equivalent to either trigger or resulting purchase behaviour.

The third hypothesis: $H_3$: Post-purchase regret is positively connected with peer impact on purchasing decisions. Peer influence showed the strongest association with regret of any variable measured in Wave 2. Correlation between all GR, DSR, and CONS with PEER is the strongest amongst them all. This shows that regret after purchases are heavily correlated with peer-influences like friends. recommendations or peer-pressure. In addition, the data showed that DSR and PEER have the strongest correlation, which is consistent with peer pressure and friend recommendations being the factor most strongly associated with the online shopping decisions students later regret.

## 5.2. COMPARISON WITH PRIOR LITERATURE

The first hypothesis lines up with Khan and Khan (2014), who found unplanned buying is associated with post-purchase regret among college students, and with Lee & Workman, 2018, who linked impulsivity to stronger regret in post-purchase evaluations. Both studies found a cleaner, more uniform effect than this one does. Neither distinguished between regret's experiential side and its behavioral aftermath the way GR, DSR, and CONS do here, which may be exactly why their results read as more consistent. It is uncommon to split regret into these three components in previous adult-consumer studies, and doing it suggests that impulsive buying may not be associated with regret at the same level as in those two studies. Due to the fact that this study does not directly compare teenagers and adults respondents, this observation should be interpreted as a possible interpretation rather than a developed difference.

The second hypothesis outcome connects to Sirola et al. (2025) and Dhir et al. (2021), both of which tie social media engagement to impulsive behavior in young people. Neither paper isolates product-browsing time from general platform use the way this study's Q9 does, so this result adds a level of specificity that broader exposure measures can't offer. It also explains something those studies leave open: general social

media use is not associated with regret in this sample, while the narrower measure of product-browsing time is, which suggests future research in this space should measure exposure at the behavior level rather than treating platform time as one undifferentiated variable.

H3's result goes further than what the literature would predict on its own. Lee & Workman, 2018found that public self-consciousness was associated with both impulse buying and regret, implying that socially visible purchases carry extra emotional weight. That's consistent with what shows up here, but the size of the gap between H3 and H1 wasn't something either reviewed study anticipated. For this sample, social pressure shows a stronger association with regret than individual impulsivity does. This may point toward a difference between adolescent and adult consumer psychology, though this study did not directly compare the two populations and cannot confirm that interpretation.

Zeelenberg and Pieters' (2007) regret regulation theory still fits the overall shape of these results better than any single empirical study reviewed above. Their framework separates regret's cognitive and affective experience from its behavioral regulation, and that split shows up directly in the data: GR and DSR respond fairly consistently to all three hypothesized predictors, while CONS barely responds to anything except peer influence. Festinger's cognitive dissonance theory offers a plausible explanation for the GR side specifically. A gap between an impulsive action and a more considered self-image may produce discomfort that surfaces as regret, whether or not that discomfort ever turns into a change in behavior.

## 5.3 THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS

Theoretically, the clearest findings of this research is that Regret Regulation Theory's stages do not move together as a single block in this population. H1 and H3 are associated with the experience and attribution of regret (GR, DSR) considerably more consistently than they are linked with its behavioral regulation (CONS), the non-significant, almost zero association (r=-.043, p=.734) with the Consequence index is the clearest example. This suggests the transition from feeling regret to regulating it may depend on factors this study didn't measure, such as financial literacy, parental involvement, or how easy a given platform makes returns or complaints, a testable extension of Zeelenberg and Pieters' (2007) framework for future adolescent-focused research.

As peer influence correlated more with Decision-Specific Regret than impulse buying frequency did, it is possible that post-purchase regret models built around individual impulsivity, which dominates much of the adult-consumer literature reviewed in Chapter 2, may not fully account for the role of social comparison in high school students. Whether this reflects a developmental difference specific to adolescents in a context-specific feature of the Vinschool sample cannot be determined without a direct comparison group, and this interpretation should be viewed as a direction for further research rather than a conclusion based on the current data.

Practically, the H2 refinement argues against blanket "reduce screen time" interventions and toward targeted media literacy: helping students distinguish passive product-browsing from other social media use, and recognize how feed algorithms are built to blur that distinction. The H3 finding argues that financial literacy programs focused on individual spending discipline are less well-matched to what is most strongly associated with regret in this sample than programs addressing peer pressure and social comparison directly. And because DSR was the outcome most consistently and strongly associated with the three hypothesized predictors, it may be the most useful compact indicator for schools or platforms wanting an early signal.

## 5.4 LIMITATIONS

The Consequences index only captures half of what Zeelenberg and Pieters (2007) actually mean by regret regulation. Their framework splits the response to regret into two separate strategies. One is behavioral: returning an item, avoiding a platform, changing how you shop next time. The other is psychological: rationalizing the purchase, telling yourself it wasn't a big deal, quietly lowering your own expectations so the discomfort fades. This study only asked about the first kind.Q27(wave 2) asks whether students avoid the platform afterward; Q28 (wave 2) asks whether they become more careful. Nothing in the instrument asks whether a student instead just talks themselves into feeling okay about it. So CONS, as built, measures behavioral regulation. It isn't the fuller construct the theory describes, and every finding involving CONS in this study should be read that way.

The main survey (Wave 2, n=65) employed a different instrument than the pilot survey (Wave 1, n=32). As a result, Wave 1 wasn't combined with Wave 2 in the primary analysis and was only utilized for instrument testing (Part 3.4). This limits the statistical power of the main sample to 65 respondents. In particular, there was no statistically significant correlation between the frequency of impulsive purchases and general regret ($r=.24$, $p=.056$). The current data do not offer enough evidence to support a correlation, even though a larger sample might be able to find a minor effect. The finding should not be seen as evidence that there is no correlation, but rather as a lack of sufficient evidence. A study that had planned to use both waves as real data from the start would have run one consistent instrument across both.

A few standard limitations still apply on top of these two. The design is correlational and cross-sectional, so nothing here proves impulse buying, exposure, or peer influence actually cause regret, only that they move together in this sample, at this one point in time. The sample still leans heavily on one campus and skews toward Grades 9 and 10, which caps how far any campus or grade comparison can be generalized. And this study's qualitative component was restricted to one illustrative case study; in order to have an in-depth thematic analysis, future research should include 6 to 10 semi-structured interviews. The open-ended survey question gives some texture, but it isn't a stand-in for that.

## 5.5. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

5 key directions should be used in future research to address the limitations found in this study. First, given the initial grade-level inequalities seen here, longitudinal designs are required to monitor how regret patterns change as students grow financially and developmentally. Second, more research should be done on the psychological regulation stage of the regret regulation framework. To explain why impulse buying predicts regret experience but not behavioural consequences, studies should include measures of financial literacy, parental supervision, and platform return-policy accessibility. Third, despite students' underreporting of social pressure, peer influence turned out to be the biggest regret cause; future research should use experimental or diary approaches to capture subconscious conformity mechanisms that surveys miss. Fourth, in order to maximise sample size and comparability, future research should begin with a single, consistent instrument instead of mixing a pilot wave with a main wave that has different item content. Finally, generalizability is limited by the small campus and the socioeconomic concentration of this sample; replication across public schools and rural Vietnamese adolescents using developmentally appropriate measures for behaviours like return inactivity and purchase concealment would clarify whether these findings extend beyond high-income urban contexts.

## CONCLUSION

The main finding of this study is that among the 65 Vinschool teenagers asked, peer pressure was more strongly linked to post-purchase regret than impulsive shopping. When compared to impulsive buying frequency ($r=.32$, $p<.05$), peer influence demonstrated the greatest correlation with Decision Regret ($r = .54$, $p<.001$). Additionally, there was a correlation between peer influence and Consequences ($r=.37$, $p=.0022$) and General Regret ($r=.35$, $p=.0045$). Although there was a positive correlation ($r=.24$, $p=.056$) between impulse purchase frequency and general regret, the study did not discover enough evidence to support a significant linear connection between these two variables at the .05 level. The results demonstrate that socially driven purchasing is a particularly significant pathway to regret in this teenage group, with General Regret averaging 3.02 and Decision Regret 2.73.

The results are in favour of financial education that tackles both spending discipline and social pressure. This is especially important as 52.3% of respondents said they made less than 500000 VND a month, 43.8% said friend recommendations, and 56.3% said flash deals or time-limited discounts were what fueled purchases. Therefore, rather than decreasing total screen time, media literacy could support students in identifying peer compliance, social comparison, and digital commerce signals. In addition, the study discovered a correlation between weekly product browsing time and both general regret ($r=.34$, $p=.006$) and impulsive purchase ($r=.27$, $p=.03$). Checking reviews, postponing purchases, keeping eyes on expenses, and considering if a purchase is motivated by social pressure or personal requirements might all be emphasised in education.

Future studies should look at financial literacy, parental supervision, and return policy accessibility; apply longitudinal designs, consistent survey instruments, and larger, more diverse samples; capture peer conformity using experimental or diary methods; and include interviews to understand better how teenagers manage regret. Replication among Vietnamese teenagers in rural areas and public schools should determine whether the results hold outside of Vinschool-the setting of this study.

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## APPENDIX

**Interview:**

***Q1. Last thing you bought online?***

I bought a phone case from Shopee like two weeks ago. It was one of those transparent ones with a design on it. I saw it on TikTok and thought it looked really cool. I used Shopee because it was cheaper there and had free shipping.

***Q2. How do you usually decide whether to buy something online?***

Honestly it depends. Sometimes I check the reviews and look at the rating, like if it's below 4 stars I usually don't buy it. But sometimes I just see something and buy it without really thinking. I don't always compare prices unless it's something expensive.

***Q3. What usually makes you interested in buying something online?***

Mostly TikTok. I'll be scrolling and then suddenly see a video of someone using something and I think "oh that's actually really useful" or "that looks cool." Discounts also get me, like if I see a flash sale countdown I feel like I have to buy it now or I'll miss it.

***Q4. A time you bought something without planning to?***

Yeah, there was this time I was on Shopee just browsing and I saw a Gundam model kit on sale. I didn't plan to buy anything but the discount was like 40% off and it said only 3 left in stock. I just added it to the cart and checked out in maybe 5 minutes. I didn't really think about it.

***Q5. What kinds of posts make you want to buy something?***

Livestreams actually work on me a lot. When the seller is showing the product live and people in the comments are buying it, I feel like I need it too. Also unboxing videos and "things you need to buy" TikTok compilations. Flash sales with the timer also stress me into buying.

***Q6. How do you feel immediately after an impulsive purchase?***

Right after I feel kind of excited, like I'm looking forward to it arriving. But then maybe an hour later I start thinking "Wait, did I actually need this?", especially when I check my balance and realize I spent like 200k on something I didn't plan for.

***Q7. Have friends influenced something you bought online?***

Yeah, my friend bought this mechanical keyboard and kept telling me how good it was. I ended up looking it up and almost bought one, but it was too expensive. But for cheaper stuff yeah, if a friend says something is good I'll usually check it out. There was a time the whole class was buying the same type of pen and I bought it too.

***Q8. Ever bought something mainly because other students had it?***

The pen thing, yeah. I didn't really need it, I had pens already. But everyone had it and I felt a bit weird being the only one who didn't. I didn't feel super pressured but it was just like... I wanted to have it too.

***Q9. Do influencers affect your shopping decisions?***

Kind of. I don't directly buy something just because an influencer said so, but if I see a KOL using something in a video and it looks good, I'll search it up. I think they plant the idea in my head and then the next time I see it on Shopee I remember it and consider buying.

***Q10. An online purchase you regretted?***

The Gundam model I mentioned. When it arrived, the quality was really bad. The plastic felt cheap and some parts didn't fit properly. It looked nothing like the pictures. I realized pretty quickly after opening the box that I'd wasted my money.

***Q11. Why do you think you regretted it?***

Mainly because it was different from the advertisement, the photos on Shopee looked like a high quality kit but what I got was clearly a fake or a very cheap version. Also I bought it too quickly without reading enough reviews. And I didn't really need it, I just wanted it in the moment.

***Q12. How did you feel after realizing you regretted it?***

Disappointed mostly. A bit embarrassed because I felt like I should have known better. The price was suspiciously low. I didn't tell my parents because I didn't want them to know I spent money on something useless.

***Q13. Did the regret affect what you did afterward?***

I still have it, I kind of just put it in a drawer. I didn't return it because the return process on Shopee seemed complicated and I didn't think I'd get my money back anyway. I just left it there.

***Q14. Has regretting a purchase changed how you shop now?***

A little. Now I look at reviews more carefully, specifically the ones with photos because I know the product photos on the listing can be fake. I also read the negative reviews first. But I still sometimes buy impulsively, I haven't completely changed.

***Q15. What would you do differently?***

I would have searched the exact product name on Google to see if there were any complaints about it, and I would have compared the price to other sellers. If something is 40% cheaper than everywhere else, that's probably a red flag.

***Q16. Advice to other Vinschool students?***

Don't buy something just because it's on sale or because the timer is running out. That's a trick. Read the reviews with photos, not just the star rating. And wait like a day before buying something if you still want it the next day, it's probably not just an impulse.

***Q17. Why do many teenagers regret online purchases?***

I think because we're easily influenced by TikTok, by friends, by discounts. We also don't have much experience shopping so we don't know what red flags look like. And we have limited money so when we waste it, it hurts more.

***Q18. What could platforms do to help?***

Maybe add a “cool down” button like you add something to cart and the app makes you wait 24 hours before you can check out. Or show more honest reviews first instead of just the 5-star ones. Shopee should also make it clearer when a product listing is from a third-party seller.

***Q19. Anything else important?***

I think a lot of us don't really track our spending. I had no idea how much I spent on Shopee in a month until I looked at my transaction history and it was way more than I thought. Maybe schools should teach us more about managing money, not just academics.

**Data spreadsheet:** **Post-Purchase Regret in Teenage Online Shoppers | Cảm Giác Hối Hận Sau Mua Sắm Trực Tuyến (Responses)**

**Pilot Wave:**

*Demographics:*

+ Grade 9 dominant (62.5%), Grade 10 (31.2%), Grade 11 (6.2%)
+ 50% female, 40.6% male
+ 43.8% on allowance under 500,000 VND

*Shopping habits:*

+ Shopee most used (59.4%), TikTok Shop second (21.9%)
+ 71.9% use smartphones as primary device
+ 40.6% shop once a month or less; 21.9% shop weekly or more
+ 31.2% spend 300,000 - 500,000 VND per purchase
+ 18.8% never impulse buy; 25% do so often or almost always

*Regret scale:*

+ Highest: more careful next time (3.69), impulse trigger (3.19), overpaying (3.16)
+ Lowest: wrong decision (2.09), peer influence trigger (2.19), wish hadn't purchased (2.25)

*Open-ended (10 responses):*

+ Themes: counterfeit products, items not matching descriptions, flash sale and livestream impulse purchases

**Wave 2 (n = 65):**

*Demographics:*

+ Grade 10 dominant (49.2%), Grade 9 (33.8%), Grade 11 (16.9%)
+ 52.3% male, 43.1% female
+ 52.3% on allowance under 500,000 VND

*Shopping habits:*

+ Shopee most used (60%), TikTok Shop second (16.9%)
+ 75.4% use smartphones as primary device
+ 44.6% shop once a month or less; only 9.2% shop weekly or more
+ 52.3% spend 100,000 - 300,000 VND per purchase
+ 20% never impulse buy; 12.3% do so often or almost always
+ 44.6% spend more than 4 hours daily on social media; 58.5% spend under 1 hour per week passively browsing products
+ 72.3% of respondents said they never or never experience social pressure to fit in.

*Regret scale:*

+ Highest: opportunity cost thinking (3.31), more careful next time (3.31), product mismatch (3.15)
+ Lowest: peer copy regret (2.38), friend recommendation regret (2.54), hesitant to use platform again (2.60)

**Survey Results:**
Post-Purchase Regret in Teenage Online Shoppers | Cảm Giác Hối Hận Sau Mua Sắm Trực Tuyến (Responses)