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Controlling Impulse Buying in Halal Consumption: A Conceptual Analysis of Self-Control in Psychology and Al-Ghazali's Mujahadah al-Nafs

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Abstract: *Impulse buying has become an issue in contemporary consumer behavior because it may be associated with sudden urges, psychological states, and digital marketing stimuli. In the context of halal consumption, restraint in shopping involves not only the ability to regulate desires but also consideration of needs, benefits, and responsibility in the use of wealth. This study aims to analyze impulse buying by synthesizing the concept of self-control in psychology, halal consumption ethics, and Al-Ghazali's thought on mujahadah al-nafs. It employs library research with a qualitative approach. Data were collected by documenting relevant books and scholarly articles, then analyzed using content analysis and comparative-conceptual analysis. The findings indicate that self-control explains how shopping impulses are regulated, whereas mujahadah al-nafs offers a Sufi perspective on disciplining the soul and controlling desires with a focus on moral development. Integrating these two ideas with halal consumption ethics produces a conceptual framework connecting behavioral regulation, spiritual development, and normative considerations in purchasing decisions. This framework emphasizes needs, benefits, compliance with Islamic law, financial capacity, and the avoidance of excessive behavior. However, it does not yet provide empirical evidence of the effectiveness of mujahadah al-nafs in reducing impulse buying.*
Keywords: *Al-Ghazali, Halal Consumption, Impulse Buying, Mujahadah Al-Nafs, Self-Control.*

INTRODUCTION

Changes in consumer behavior have been influenced by advances in digital technology, particularly the convenience of online shopping, discounts, and promotional offers. Although these developments make it easier for consumers to fulfill their needs, they may also encourage unplanned transactions. One phenomenon associated with this development is *impulse buying*, which refers to purchasing behavior driven by a sudden and strong urge to buy, often accompanied by emotional involvement and limited consideration of its consequences. However, impulse buying should be distinguished from unplanned buying. A purchase made without prior planning is not necessarily impulsive, as it may still involve rational consideration of a genuine need or an attractive price offer. Thus, impulse buying needs to be understood through the psychological processes underlying purchasing decisions (Morozova & Vlaev, 2024).

Impulse buying is closely related to an individual's ability to regulate desires when facing attractive shopping stimuli. Consumers may experience tension between immediate gratification and longer-term goals, such as maintaining financial stability and prioritizing essential needs. In this context, self-control is important for understanding how individuals manage purchasing urges. describe self-control as a process involving the recognition of a need for control, the selection and implementation of strategies, and the monitoring of one's actions. Similarly, Inzlicht et al. (2021) explain that self-regulation helps individuals direct their behavior toward intended goals. Applied to consumption, self-control involves recognizing purchasing urges, evaluating potential benefits and consequences, and deciding whether a purchase is consistent with one's priorities (Werner & Ford, 2023). Similarly, Inzlicht et al. (2021) explain that self-regulation helps individuals direct their behavior toward intended goals. Applied to consumption, self-

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control involves recognizing purchasing urges, evaluating potential benefits and consequences, and deciding whether a purchase is consistent with one's priorities.(Inzlicht dkk, 2021).

Consumption should be directed toward meeting reasonable needs and generating maslahah, understood as benefits that contribute to human well-being. This principle is associated with moderation, avoiding wastefulness, and considering both the permissibility and the wholesomeness of the products consumed. Purchasing decisions should therefore not be based solely on momentary urges or advertising appeal; they should also consider whether an item is genuinely needed, beneficial, and consistent with Islamic values. From an Islamic perspective, consumption should take account of benefits, the priority of needs, and responsibility in the use of wealth.

From an Islamic perspective, consumption should be directed toward fulfilling reasonable needs and achieving *maslahah*, or benefits that contribute to human well-being. Purchasing decisions should therefore consider product permissibility and wholesomeness, the priority of needs, moderation, and responsibility in the use of wealth (Yudha dkk, 2025). study of impulse buying among Muslim e-wallet users in East Java. Their survey of 207 valid respondents found that free-shipping promotions and cashback significantly influenced impulse buying. The study also reported a positive relationship between religiosity and impulse buying, indicating that religiosity alone does not necessarily prevent impulsive purchases. The authors consequently emphasized the importance of *maslahah* and the fulfillment of higher-priority needs in evaluating Muslim consumption behavior.

The regulation of purchasing desires can also be examined through Abu Hamid al-Ghazali's thought on spiritual development and moral transformation. In *Ihya' Ulumuddin*, Al-Ghazali discusses the improvement of character through training, perseverance, and the habituation of good conduct (Al-Ghazali, 2009). This perspective is related to *mujahadah al-nafs*, understood in this article as a sustained effort to discipline desires and resist tendencies that may lead individuals away from good character. In the context of consumption, this concept offers a way to examine purchasing restraint as part of ongoing self-cultivation, including reflecting on needs, delaying impulsive decisions, and practicing moderation. This application is a conceptual development of Al-Ghazali's thought rather than a claim that he directly discussed modern impulse buying.

This perspective is related to *mujahadah al-nafs*, understood in this article as a sustained effort to discipline desires and resist tendencies that may lead individuals away from good character. In the context of consumption, this concept offers a way to examine purchasing restraint as part of ongoing self-cultivation, including reflecting on needs, delaying impulsive decisions, and practicing moderation. This application is a conceptual development of Al-Ghazali's thought rather than a claim that he directly discussed modern impulse buying.

Previous studies provide a foundation for examining impulse buying through psychological and Islamic perspectives. Mandolfo and Lamberti show that impulse-buying research involves cognitive, emotional, and behavioral dimensions (Mandolfo & Lamberti, 2021). Morozova and Vlaev istinguish impulse purchases from other forms of purchasing by examining their underlying psychological processes (Morozova & Vlaev, 2024). Werner and Ford (2023), as well as Inzlicht dkk, (2021), contribute to the understanding of self-control and self-regulation when individuals encounter desires that conflict with their goals. Meanwhile, Yudha dkk, (2025) examine Muslim consumption behavior through the value of *maslahah*. Although these studies offer relevant insights, their respective discussions provide a basis for further conceptual examination of the relationship between psychological regulation, spiritual discipline, and Islamic consumption ethics.

The gap addressed in this article is the need to formulate an integrated conceptual relationship among psychological self-control, Islamic consumption principles, and Al-Ghazali's thought on disciplining the soul through *mujahadah al-nafs.* This proposed gap does not imply that no previous study has connected these concepts; rather, it identifies an opportunity for further synthesis based on the literature examined. Accordingly, this study develops a conceptual framework that brings the three perspectives into dialogue to understand impulse buying in halal consumption. Self-control explains the psychological regulation of purchasing urges, *mujahadah al-nafs* provides a Sufi perspective on disciplining desires and cultivating moral character, and Islamic consumption ethics

offers normative guidance based on halal permissibility, needs, *maslahah*, moderation, and financial responsibility. As a literature-based study, this framework represents a theoretical synthesis and does not establish empirical evidence of the effectiveness of *mujahadah al-nafs* in reducing impulse buying.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Impulse buying can be analyzed through psychological self-control and the concept of *mujahadah al-nafs* in Imam Al-Ghazali's thought. Although these perspectives originate from different intellectual traditions, both address the regulation of internal desires that influence individual behavior. In psychology, self-control refers to the capacity to regulate actions and responses in accordance with particular goals. Tangney, Baumeister, and Boone associate self-control with several aspects of personal adjustment and behavioral functioning (Tangney dkk, 2004).

Similarly, Baumeister explains that self-control becomes relevant when individuals encounter immediate desires that may interfere with other priorities or long-term objectives (Baumeister, 2002). In consumer behavior, this perspective helps explain how individuals manage the desire to purchase when it conflicts with essential needs or financial considerations

Impulse buying involves a strong and spontaneous desire to purchase a product. The emergence of a compelling desire to purchase is widely regarded as a defining feature of impulse buying. However, impulse buying should be differentiated from transactions that occur without prior planning. An unplanned purchase may arise from an immediate necessity or an unforeseen circumstance, rather than from an impulsive tendency. In contrast, impulse buying is characterized by an intense and spontaneous purchasing desire, followed by the individual's response to that internal stimulus. From this perspective, self-control offers a useful framework for understanding how consumers become aware of such urges, assess their potential consequences, and manage their choices before making a purchase (Rook, 1987).

From a Sufi perspective, *mujahadah al-nafs* can be understood as a sustained effort to confront and regulate desires that may obstruct moral development. In Ihya' 'Ulumuddin, Al-Ghazali discusses spiritual development and moral improvement through continuous training and habituation (Al-Ghazali, 2009). This perspective suggests that character development entails more than the suppression of immediate impulses. It also requires the gradual formation of stable habits and the orientation of personal desires toward morally commendable behavior. When applied to consumption, Al-Ghazali's thought provides a conceptual basis for understanding how individuals can respond to purchasing impulses with greater awareness and deliberation. Nevertheless, the discussion of impulse buying in this article represents an interpretive application of his ideas, rather than a claim that Al-Ghazali himself developed a theory of contemporary consumer behavior.

Despite their shared concern with the regulation of human desires, *self-control* and *mujahadah al-nafs* emerge from distinct conceptual traditions. Within psychology, self-control refers to the mechanisms individuals employ to restrain impulses and ensure that their behavior remains consistent with predetermined objectives. By comparison, *mujahadah al-nafs* situates the regulation of desires within a wider framework of spiritual cultivation and moral refinement. Examining these concepts together therefore offers an opportunity to understand the management of impulse buying through both psychological and Sufi approaches, without conflating their respective theoretical premises.

The analysis further draws upon Islamic consumption ethics, which provide normative criteria for assessing consumer choices. These criteria encompass the halal status of goods, the prioritization of actual needs, the pursuit of *maslahah*, moderation in spending, and accountability in managing personal wealth. Through these principles, purchasing decisions can be evaluated not merely in terms of psychological restraint or spiritual discipline, but also according to their conformity with Islamic teachings. Accordingly, the three concepts perform distinct yet interrelated analytical roles: *self-control* elucidates the psychological regulation of purchasing impulses, *mujahadah al-nafs* emphasizes the spiritual and moral cultivation of desire, while halal consumption ethics establishes the normative direction for responsible purchasing behavior

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Figure 1. presents the theoretical connections between self-control, *mujahadah al-nafs*,

Figure 1 presents the theoretical connections between self-control, *mujahadah al-nafs*, Islamic consumption ethics, and impulse buying. The process is initiated by external shopping stimuli, which may trigger an immediate desire to purchase. Within this framework, self-control functions as a psychological mechanism through which individuals identify and assess these impulses before deciding how to respond, particularly by weighing their potential consequences. Meanwhile, *mujahadah al-nafs* emphasizes the importance of continuous spiritual effort in disciplining personal desires. Islamic consumption ethics complements these dimensions by offering normative considerations concerning product permissibility, actual needs, potential benefits, and the responsible allocation of financial resources. Taken together, these perspectives provide an integrated conceptual basis for examining more thoughtful and responsible consumption behavior. Nevertheless, the framework represents an analytical synthesis derived from the selected literature. It neither demonstrates a direct causal connection among the concepts nor constitutes empirical evidence that *mujahadah al-nafs* is effective in reducing impulse buying.

METHODOLOGY

This research adopts a qualitative library research design with a conceptual orientation. This approach was chosen because the study focuses on examining and interpreting ideas contained in written sources rather than gathering field data or evaluating the outcomes of a particular intervention. (Zed, 2004) library research involves the use of available literature as a primary source of information for addressing research questions. The qualitative perspective enables an in-depth interpretation of self-control in psychological literature and *mujahadah al-nafs* in the teachings of Imam Al-Ghazali, particularly in relation to the regulation of impulse buying.

The study draws upon two categories of literature: primary conceptual references and supplementary secondary sources. Among the primary materials are the works of Al-Ghazali, particularly the translation of Ihya' Ulumuddin prepared by Moh. Zuhri and his colleagues. This text provides the principal reference for examining spiritual development, the discipline of human desires, and the cultivation of moral character (Al-Ghazali, 2009). Original publications concerning self-control theory and impulse buying are also considered primary conceptual materials when directly relevant to the analysis. Secondary sources comprise academic books and journal articles addressing self-regulation, consumer behavior, impulse buying, Islamic consumption principles, and *maslahah*. These materials were selected according to their relevance to the research objectives, bibliographic clarity, and contribution to the conceptual discussion.

Data collection was carried out using the documentation method. This process involved locating relevant written sources, examining their contents, and systematically recording and categorizing the information obtained. The procedure was based on the utilization of documentary materials as sources of data in qualitative research, as discussed by Bowen (2009). The collected information encompassed several aspects, including conceptual definitions, theoretical foundations, the purposes of self-control, individual responses to purchasing impulses, mechanisms of behavioral regulation, and ethical dimensions of consumption. A review of the selected literature was also undertaken to identify recurring arguments and bring together relevant perspectives from different sources. This process provided the foundation for exploring

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the conceptual connections examined in the study (Snyder, 2019).

For data interpretation, the study employed content analysis alongside comparative-conceptual analysis. The content analysis process involved selecting relevant statements and organizing them into four central categories: self-control, impulse buying, Islamic consumption ethics, and mujahadah al-nafs. The information within each category was then examined and interpreted in relation to the research objectives. Subsequently, comparative-conceptual analysis was applied to investigate the points of convergence and divergence between psychological self-control and Al-Ghazali's understanding of mujahadah al-nafs. The comparison focused on their respective purposes, methods of managing desires, approaches to behavioral formation, and underlying principles. These findings were then examined in conjunction with Islamic consumption ethics, particularly the pursuit of benefits, the fulfillment of essential needs, and accountability in the management of wealth. Through this process, the study constructed a conceptual framework for examining the regulation of impulse buying in the context of halal consumption.

The findings constitute a theoretical interpretation developed through the examination and synthesis of relevant literature. Therefore, the study does not seek to establish empirical proof of the effectiveness of *mujahadah al-nafs* as a means of reducing impulse buying.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Impulse Buying As A Self-Control Issue

Impulse buying is purchasing behavior that occurs suddenly because of a strong urge to obtain an item without sufficient consideration. It is not merely a decision to purchase something outside the original plan; it also involves emotional urges and a tendency to seek instant gratification. Through a systematic literature review, Redine et al. show that impulse buying has been examined in various contexts and through different approaches, indicating that it should be understood by considering multiple influencing factors (Redine dkk, 2023).

In online shopping, the motivation to buy may arise when consumers encounter discounts, promotions, attractive product displays, or time-limited offers. Such stimuli can lead consumers to make rapid decisions before considering whether a product is genuinely necessary. Gulfraz et al. examined the relationship between online shopping and spontaneous purchasing behavior. Their study helps illustrate consumer behavior in e-commerce, although unplanned purchases should be distinguished from impulse purchases because the two are not always equivalent (Gulfraz dkk, 2022).

Impulse buying is related to an individual's ability to regulate urges when momentary desires conflict with needs and long-term goals. In such situations, self-control is a relevant psychological concept for explaining how people manage desires before making decisions. Individuals who consider the consequences of their actions have an opportunity to evaluate their needs, a product's benefits, and the effect of a purchase on their financial situation. Inzlicht et al. discuss self-regulation as a process involving motivation, emotion, and cognition in directing behavior. Thus, self-regulation can help explain how consumers attempt to align purchasing urges with their goals (Inzlicht dkk, 2021).

In the context of halal consumption, purchasing decisions should take account of needs, benefits, responsibility in managing wealth, and the avoidance of excess. Islamic consumption ethics address not only the permissibility of products but also needs, public and personal benefit, and moderation in shopping (Mohamed Nasir, 2022). The discussion of impulse buying can therefore be extended through a Sufi perspective, particularly Al-Ghazali's concept of *mujahadah al-nafs*, to understand the regulation of desire as part of spiritual and moral development (Al-Ghazali, 2009).

Accordingly, this study positions impulse buying as a consumer-behavior issue that can be analyzed through two complementary perspectives. Psychology is used to explain the regulation of urges and behavior through self-control, while Sufism is used to examine the

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discipline of the lower self through mujahadah al-nafs. Combining these perspectives is a conceptual synthesis proposed by this study, not evidence that mujahadah al-nafs has been empirically proven to reduce impulse buying.

2. self-control and self-regulation in psychology

In psychology, self-control is the ability to regulate one's urges, desires, and actions so that they align with intended goals. It is particularly important when an individual faces a conflict between the desire for immediate gratification and longer-term needs. Werner and Ford describe self-control as a dynamic process involving several stages identifying the need for regulation, choosing an appropriate strategy, implementing that strategy, and evaluating the outcome. Self-control therefore involves more than suppressing desire; it also includes identifying a problem and determining how to address it (Werner & Ford, 2023).

Self-control is also related to self-regulation, the process through which individuals direct their thoughts, feelings, and actions toward particular goals. Self-regulation can be understood through the interaction of goals, conflict, emotions, and cognitive functions. In other words, a person's choices are shaped not only by existing desires but also by how the person evaluates the situation, regulates emotional reactions, and considers intended goals. In consumption, this process matters when a consumer must decide whether to act on the desire to buy immediately or postpone the purchase to meet a more pressing need (Inzlicht dkk, 2021).

In consumer behavior, self-control helps explain why some individuals are better able than others to resist shopping temptations. In a systematic review of consumer self-regulation, Francke and Carrete identified self-control as one of the elements examined in studies of consumption regulation. Their review also identified impulse buying as one behavioral outcome associated with self-regulation. This suggests that purchasing decisions should be understood not only in terms of product characteristics or marketing stimuli, but also in terms of consumers' ability to regulate urges and maintain financial goals (Elena Francke & Carrete, 2023).

One psychological factor associated with impulse buying is a person's emotional state during a purchase. Arruda Filho and Oliveira examined the relationship between mood and impulsive online shopping. Their study indicates that emotional conditions should be considered when explaining purchasing urges. The desire to shop may therefore arise not only from a need for a particular product but also from an individual's psychological state (Arruda Filho & Oliveira, 2023). In this context, self-control can be understood as the ability to regulate one's response before a desire becomes an actual behavior.

In addition to emotional states, marketing stimuli may contribute to purchasing urges. Sun dkk, (2023) examined impulse buying in online group-buying contexts by considering customer reviews, promotional countdowns, emotions, and self-control. Their findings suggest that several shopping stimuli are associated with impulse-buying urges or tendencies, while self-control moderates some of the relationships tested. The role of self-control should therefore not be understood as invariably eliminating the effects of marketing stimuli; rather, it must be interpreted in relation to the specific relationships examined. These findings reinforce the relevance of examining how consumers respond to shopping stimuli before making purchasing decisions (Sun dkk, 2023).

Consistent with the importance of regulating responses, self-regulation is also associated with the tendency to buy impulsively. Yuniasanti and Azaria found a strong negative relationship between self-regulation and impulse buying of skincare products among women who shop online (Azaria & Yuniasanti, 2024). This result indicates that higher self-regulation was associated with a lower tendency toward impulse buying in the group studied. However, self-regulation in psychology does not automatically encompass all the moral and spiritual dimensions of Sufism. Self-control and *mujahadah al-nafs* should therefore be compared according to their respective functions rather than treated as entirely equivalent concepts.

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In the context of impulse buying, self-control can be understood through the stages that precede a purchasing decision. Consumers may first identify the urge that has arisen, consider whether the item is genuinely needed, assess whether its price is compatible with their financial capacity, and decide whether the purchase should be made or postponed. This is a conceptual application of self-control frameworks to consumption, not a sequence followed by every consumer in every situation. Fennis's study of self-control, self-regulation, and consumer well-being also highlights the importance of understanding the relationship between self-regulatory capacity and the consequences of consumption behavior (Fennis, 2022).

Although related, self-control in psychology must be distinguished from mujahadah al-nafs in Sufism. Self-control primarily explains the psychological mechanisms through which urges and behavior are regulated in line with particular goals. In Al-Ghazali's thought, mujahadah al-nafs concerns the struggle against lower desires and the cultivation of the soul toward better character. The former helps explain behavioral regulation, while the latter offers an ethical and spiritual dimension for understanding the mastery of desire. The regulation of shopping desires can also be examined through the concept of maslahah in Al-Ghazali's thought, which helps frame purchasing decisions in terms of benefits and the good to be achieved rather than desire alone. Purchasing decisions should therefore consider needs and the purpose for which resources will be used. Although maslahah and mujahadah al-nafs may complement each other in analyzing consumption, they remain distinct concepts maslahah deepens the ethical analysis of consumption, whereas mujahadah al-nafs provides the principal framework for discussing the struggle against desire and the cultivation of the soul.

3.Al-Ghazali's Mujahadah al-Nafs as Spiritual Formation in Consumption

The term *mujāhadah* is etymologically rooted in the Arabic *jāhada–yujāhidu*, a verb form denoting the act of striving, exerting serious effort, and mobilizing one's capacities. Within the Sufi tradition, the concept denotes an individual's endeavor to combat the lower self's (*nafs*) desires alongside other tendencies capable of hindering spiritual growth and nearness to Allah. Accordingly, *mujāhadah al-nafs* may be construed as a persistent and earnest undertaking aimed at self-discipline, the restraint of detrimental impulses, and the orientation of one's behavior toward virtue (Amin, 2020).

Within Al-Ghazali's framework of thought, self-discipline is inextricably linked to the cultivation of the soul (*riyāḍat al-nafs*), the refinement of character (*tahdhīb al-akhlāq*), and the remediation of maladies afflicting the heart. In *Ihyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn*, Al-Ghazali examines how the soul's condition relates to the character that becomes manifest in human conduct. The discussion elucidates that virtuous character is bound up with dispositions firmly entrenched within the soul, from which good deeds may arise spontaneously and without undue deliberation. By contrast, negative character traits are capable of steering individuals toward improper conduct. This exposition implies that moral betterment demands attention not solely to observable behavior but equally to the inner dispositions from which such behavior originates (Imam al-Ghazali, 1963).

In this discussion, *mujāhadah al-nafs* and *riyāḍat al-nafs* are understood as related but conceptually distinguishable aspects of spiritual formation. *Mujāhadah al-nafs* emphasizes the earnest struggle against undesirable inclinations and desires that may lead individuals away from virtuous conduct. Meanwhile, *riyāḍat al-nafs* refers to the process of training and habituating the soul through continuous practice. Thus, *mujāhadah* highlights the effort involved in confronting and restraining negative inclinations, whereas *riyāḍah* emphasizes the cultivation of the soul through repeated discipline and practice. In Al-Ghazali's framework, these aspects can be understood as complementary in the process of moral improvement, since the struggle against negative tendencies requires consistent spiritual training to cultivate virtuous dispositions.

Moreover, Al-Ghazali's exposition concerning the remediation of the heart's

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maladies underscores the centrality of spiritual training and the progressive refinement of human character. Accordingly, self-discipline cannot be reduced to the suppression of a particular desire at a given moment. Rather, it entails the cultivation of virtuous dispositions and the diminution of negative inclinations through sustained effort and repeated practice. Viewed from this standpoint, *mujāhadah al-nafs* may be construed as a process of spiritual and moral formation wherein individuals acquire the capacity to recognize, restrain, and redirect their desires in conformity with religious and ethical values (Imam al-Ghazali, 1963).

Within the domain of consumption, this concept furnishes a Sufi lens through which to comprehend how individuals respond to purchasing impulses. Upon encountering appealing products, discounts, or promotional offers, consumers may undergo an immediate urge to buy. Viewed through the prism of *mujāhadah al-nafs*, individuals are exhorted not to yield to every transient desire but rather to deliberate on whether a purchase is truly necessary and advantageous. Such an application constitutes a contemporary conceptual reading of Al-Ghazali's thought, rather than an assertion that he directly addressed modern impulse-buying behavior. Consequently, *mujāhadah al-nafs* affords a spiritual and moral dimension for grasping consumption restraint, thereby complementing psychological accounts of self-control.

Conceptually, self-control and *mujahadah al-nafs* share the view that regulating desire is essential to shaping behavior. In psychology, self-control concerns the capacity to manage responses when temporary desires conflict with goals or values considered more important. Inzlicht et al. explain that self-regulation involves several processes, including conflicts among motivation, emotion, and cognition in the pursuit of goals (Inzlicht dkk, 2021). In Al-Ghazali's thought, *mujahadah al-nafs* concerns persistent efforts to train and regulate the soul so that personal urges can be directed toward good conduct. Analyses of Al-Ghazali's thought also highlight the importance of sustained effort, good habits, and personal development in character formation (Yazaki, 2024). Thus, the two concepts can be brought together in discussing urge regulation and behavioral formation, although they arise from different intellectual foundations.

Despite these similarities, self-control and *mujahadah al-nafs* should not be treated as identical terms. Self-control in psychology is primarily used to explain how people regulate their responses and behavior to align with particular goals. By contrast, *mujahadah al-nafs* in Al-Ghazali's Sufism concerns spiritual development, the discipline of the soul, and moral improvement. Psychological self-control may be evaluated in terms of an individual's ability to manage urges and behavior, whereas *mujahadah al-nafs* also considers the moral and spiritual dimensions of that process. Dzulkifli et al.'s discussion of Al-Ghazali's understanding of the soul highlights the relevance of his thought to modern studies of human beings and behavior, but it does not make his concept of the soul identical to contemporary psychological constructs. The relationship between the two concepts is therefore better understood as a complementary conceptual dialogue rather than as an equivalence of theories (Mariam Adawiah Dzulkifli dkk, 2026).

In impulse shopping, this distinction offers a deeper perspective for understanding consumer behavior. Self-control helps explain how consumers recognize the urge to shop, evaluate financial consequences, *and determine whether* a purchase meets their needs (Redine dkk, 2023). Mujahadah al-nafs, in turn, can be understood as the effort to train oneself not to follow every passing desire and to cultivate more deliberate and responsible consumption habits. For example, when a consumer wants to buy a product because of a promotion or discount, self-control is reflected in assessing the need and financial capacity, while mujahadah al-nafs encourages reflection on resisting desire and cultivating balanced consumption. This example is a conceptual application of Al-Ghazali's thought to contemporary consumption, not a claim that he directly discussed digital impulse buying. Integrating the two perspectives can deepen the analysis of impulse-buying control in halal

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consumption, although its effectiveness still requires empirical verification.

Dimension	**self-control in Psychology**	***Mujahadah al-nafs Al-Ghazali's Thought***
Conceptual basis	Psychological mechanisms of behavioral regulation and goal-directed action	Spiritual and moral discipline based on Al-Ghazali's thought
Main focus	Regulation of urges, responses, and behavior	Training the soul and regulating lower desires.
Goal	Aligning behavior with intended goals and priorities	Cultivating spiritual development and moral improvement
Proses	Recognizing urges, evaluating consequences, and regulating responses before acting	Sustained effort to resist negative inclinations and cultivate good character
orientation	Psychological and behavioral regulation	Spiritual formation and moral development
Application to consumption	Considering needs, budget, and purchasing consequences before buying	Training oneself not to follow every momentary desire and encouraging balanced consumption
Contribution to understanding impulse buying	Explains the psychological mechanisms involved in regulating purchasing urges	Provides a Sufi perspective on spiritual discipline and the regulation of desires

Beyond considering a product's benefits, consumers need to distinguish the enjoyment of shopping from genuine need. Artadita and Firmialy examined the relationship between shopping enjoyment, self-control, and impulse buying among Generation Z online gamers. Their findings showed that shopping enjoyment significantly affected impulse buying, while the overall direct effect of self-control was not significant. However, the cognitive-control dimension had a significant negative effect on impulse buying. These findings show that the relationship between self-control and impulse buying must be examined in greater detail because not all dimensions of self-control have the same relationship with the behavior. From the perspective of *mujahadah al-nafs*, this issue can be further examined as an effort to regulate desire so that consumption decisions are not driven solely by momentary enjoyment (Artadita & Firmialy, 2024).

In Islamic consumption ethics, regulating desire is not merely a way to save money; it is also connected to the values that underpin consumption behavior. Pusparini and colleagues examined frugal living through the framework of Islamic consumption ethics. Their study identified common ground between frugality and Islamic consumption, particularly in avoiding materialism and encouraging sustainable consumption. Islamic consumption, however, is also grounded in faith, devotion to God, and a balance between individual and social interests (Martini Dwi Pusparini dkk,

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2026). *Mujahadah al-nafs* can therefore be considered a framework for self-cultivation that supports simplicity and responsible consumption.

Responsibility in consumption is also linked to efforts to avoid waste. Lubis et al. investigated factors influencing food-waste behavior among Muslim households in Indonesia. Their findings showed that shopping routines and eating habits were positively associated with waste, while several awareness-related and religiosity factors were negatively associated with it (Lubis dkk, 2024). These findings underscore the importance of using resources responsibly in everyday life. Although food waste is not identical to impulse buying, the study supports the broader argument for avoiding excessive consumption.

Halal consumption ethics also requires attention to the status of the products purchased. Fathoni and colleagues examined decisions to purchase halal food through digital platforms, considering halal awareness and other factors. Their findings indicate that halal awareness helped explain purchasing decisions in the model tested. However, halal awareness should not be equated with the ability to control purchasing urges. Controlling impulse buying therefore requires attention to a product's halal status as well as need, financial capacity, and deliberation before a transaction *(Fathoni & Sari, 2023).*

4.Halal Consumption Ethics in Controlling Impulse Buying

Halal consumption ethics concerns not only the selection of products that comply with religious norms but also the personal considerations involved in shopping decisions. Pradana and colleagues studied the intention to purchase internationally branded halal food among young Muslim consumers in Indonesia. Their findings showed that attitude and subjective norms significantly influenced the intention to purchase halal food. This suggests that the intention to buy halal products is associated with individual evaluations and the influence of the social environment. However, the intention to purchase halal food does not directly reflect a consumer's ability to resist buying unnecessary items. In the context of impulse buying, the choice of halal products must therefore be distinguished from the ability to assess needs and regulate shopping desires (Pradana dkk, 2024).

The importance of distinguishing religious understanding from its application in consumption behavior is illustrated by research by Nuning Nurna Dewi, Achmad Fathoni Rodly, Maris Wahidatul 'Ailah, Relita Rofiqoh, and Maslahatus Saidah on halal understanding and halal awareness among Muslim consumers in Surabaya. The study found that respondents had good knowledge of product halal status, including ingredients, sourcing, and processing. However, this understanding was not always applied consistently, particularly when checking halal labels during purchases. The findings suggest a gap between understanding halal principles and applying them in everyday life. In this article, these results inform the discussion of how important it is to apply one's values in consumption decisions. Nevertheless, inconsistency in checking halal labels cannot be directly equated with impulse buying or poor self-control, because those constructs were not specifically measured in the study (Dewi dkk., 2022).

The relationship between self-control and impulse buying is also supported by studies focusing specifically on Muslim consumers. Febriandika and colleagues examined impulse-buying tendencies among users of online food-delivery services in Indonesia. Their findings indicated that self-control was significantly and negatively associated with the tendency to buy impulsively, while religiosity was positively associated with self-control in the model tested (Febriandika dkk, 2024). This provides empirical evidence that the ability to regulate urges is associated with Muslim consumers' tendency toward impulse buying. In addition, Maryati et al., in a literature review, emphasized the importance of religiosity and spirituality in self-control to help prevent impulse buying (Maryati et al., 2021). Together, these studies enrich the discussion of halal consumption ethics by showing that consumer behavior relates not only to product knowledge but also to impulse regulation and personal values. Nevertheless, these findings cannot be interpreted directly as evidence of the effectiveness of Al-Ghazali's *mujahadah al-*

nafs, which requires separate analysis based on Sufi sources.

These studies suggest that halal consumption ethics and the control of impulse buying are related but distinct aspects. Halal consumption ethics guides the evaluation of whether a product complies with religious requirements, while self-control concerns the ability to consider urges and consequences before deciding to purchase. Responsible consumption should therefore consider not only a product's halal status but also need, benefit, and financial capacity. In Al-Ghazali's Sufi perspective, *mujahadah al-nafs* provides a conceptual framework for describing the effort to regulate oneself rather than continually yielding to temporary desires. This relationship is a conceptual synthesis developed in this article, not empirical proof that halal consumption ethics or *mujahadah al-nafs* directly reduces impulse buying.

5. Synthesizing Self-Control, Mujāhadah al-Nafs, and Halal Consumption

Self-control, *mujahadah al-nafs*, and halal consumption ethics can be connected to understand impulse-buying control from the perspectives of psychology, Sufism, and Islamic ethics. All three emphasize the need to direct actions rather than simply give in to momentary impulses. In psychology, self-control concerns the ability to regulate impulses and actions according to particular goals or considerations. In Al-Ghazali's thought, *mujahadah al-nafs* concerns training and improving the soul so that behavior is not dominated by lower inclinations. Halal consumption ethics provides a normative basis for making consumption choices in accordance with religious rules and moral values. These concepts can be used together to develop an analytical framework for impulse buying without conflating their distinct foundations and orientations.

In Al-Ghazali's thought, spiritual formation involves sincere and sustained practice. In Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din, the section on the possibility of changing character through training (*riyadhah*) explains that moral improvement requires struggle, practice, and spiritual education. His discussion of anger and sensual desire also highlights the importance of directing personal tendencies so that they do not become excessive (Al-Ghazali, 2009). This account provides a basis for understanding *mujahadah al-nafs* as a process of self-cultivation that goes beyond suppressing a momentary urge and includes the formation of better habits and character. In this article, Al-Ghazali's concept of mujahadah al-nafs is used as a distinct Sufi perspective that complements the psychological explanation of self-control by emphasizing spiritual discipline and moral cultivation in regulating desires.

The relationship between *mujahadah al-nafs* and self-control is evident in their shared concern with regulating motivations that influence behavior. Febriandika et al. found that self-control was significantly and negatively associated with impulse-buying tendencies among Muslim consumers using online food-delivery services in Indonesia (Febriandika dkk, 2024). This indicates that self-control is related to a person's tendency to buy impulsively. Al-Ghazali's view of spiritual training, meanwhile, offers a perspective for understanding the regulation of desire as part of personal and moral development. Self-control can thus explain the regulation of urges from a psychological perspective, while *mujahadah al-nafs* provides a Sufi basis for discussing the spiritual and ethical orientation of self-regulation. This is a conceptual synthesis, because Febriandika and colleagues did not specifically test Al-Ghazali's concept of *mujahadah al-nafs*.

In halal consumption, self-control should be combined with consideration of the product and the reasons for purchasing it. Pradana et al. found that attitude and subjective norms significantly influenced young Muslim consumers' intention to purchase foreign-branded halal food (Pradana dkk, 2024). Dewi et al. found that Muslim consumers' halal awareness in Surabaya was not always consistently reflected in practice, particularly in checking halal labels (Dewi dkk, 2022). These studies demonstrate the importance of distinguishing intention, understanding, and the application of values in consumer behavior. However, neither study directly tested the relationship between halal consumption ethics and impulse buying. This article therefore

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extends the discussion by emphasizing self-control as a consideration in purchasing decisions.

Based on the literature synthesis, controlling impulse buying in halal consumption can be understood through three dimensions that have different but complementary functions. First, self-control in psychology explains the mechanisms of urge regulation, consequence evaluation, and behavioral management when individuals encounter shopping stimuli. Second, *mujahadah al-nafs* in Al-Ghazali's thought offers a Sufi perspective on the sustained struggle against lower inclinations through self-discipline and moral cultivation. Third, halal consumption ethics provides a normative basis for evaluating purchases in terms of product permissibility, need, benefit, reasonable expenditure, and responsibility in the use of wealth. The synthesis treats these not as identical concepts but as analytical dimensions that address different questions how urges are regulated, how personal inclinations are cultivated, and which values should guide consumption decisions.

Within this framework, impulse buying is understood not merely as a purchase made outside an original plan, but also as a problem involving responses to urges and consideration of consumption consequences. Self-control helps explain the psychological processes involved, while mujahadah al-nafs extends the discussion to spiritual formation and moral orientation. Halal consumption ethics and maslahah provide a basis for evaluating whether a purchase aligns with need and benefit. The article's conceptual contribution therefore lies in developing an integrative framework that distinguishes while connecting psychological mechanisms, spiritual cultivation, and normative considerations in understanding impulse buying. This framework is a synthesis of the literature and has not yet been empirically validated.

By integrating self-control, mujahadah al-nafs, and Islamic consumption ethics, this study offers a theoretical extension to prevailing discussions of impulse buying and Islamic consumer behavior. Earlier psychological accounts largely frame impulse-buying control in terms of an individual's capacity to regulate urges, weigh consequences, and manage purchasing decisions. The present study moves beyond that account by introducing mujahadah al-nafs as a spiritual dimension that treats the regulation of desires as part of sustained self-discipline and moral development. Islamic consumption ethics, in turn, supplies a normative dimension through which purchasing decisions may be assessed beyond personal preferences and immediate gratification. Together, these three perspectives constitute a complementary framework: psychological regulation accounts for how purchasing impulses are managed, spiritual cultivation explains why desires ought to be disciplined, and Islamic consumption ethics establishes the values that should steer consumption decisions. Such integration widens the theoretical understanding of Muslim consumer behavior by linking psychological regulation with spiritual development and Islamic moral responsibility. Nevertheless, the framework remains conceptual and calls for further empirical investigation.

6. Practical Implications

The conceptual framework proposed here carries several practical implications for consumer education, responsible purchasing behavior, and halal marketing practices. First, with respect to consumer education, combining psychological self-control with mujahadah al-nafs can yield an educational perspective that merges behavioral awareness with spiritual development. Consumer education may prompt individuals to recognize purchasing urges, assess the consequences of consumption, and build habits of self-restraint. Seen from an Islamic standpoint, such education can additionally instill the value of disciplining desires, practicing moderation, and attending to the moral responsibility attached to the use of wealth.

Second, the framework can guide responsible purchasing behavior by urging Muslim consumers to weigh several considerations prior to making a purchase. These encompass whether a product is halal, whether it satisfies a genuine need, whether it delivers meaningful benefit (maslahah), and whether its price aligns with their financial capacity. The psychological dimension of self-

control underpins the evaluation of purchasing impulses, whereas mujahadah al-nafs stresses the cultivation of discipline in responding to transient desires. Taken together, these perspectives furnish a conceptual basis for more deliberate and responsible consumption decisions.

Third, the framework may supply ethical considerations for halal marketing practices. Halal businesses and marketers can promote products by furnishing accurate information on halal status, product quality, and benefits, while refraining from promotional strategies that excessively exploit consumers' emotional impulses or induce unnecessary purchases. Marketing practices can thus be oriented not solely toward boosting sales but also toward fostering informed consumer choices and responsible consumption. In this respect, halal marketing ought to embody the ethical values of transparency, moderation, and consumer responsibility.

These practical implications constitute conceptual recommendations drawn from the literature synthesis rather than outcomes tested through empirical implementation. Further empirical research is required to examine how the proposed framework can be applied in consumer education programs, purchasing behavior, and halal marketing strategies.

CONCLUSION

This study contributes theoretically by developing an integrative framework that accounts for impulse-buying control through three mutually reinforcing dimensions: psychological self-regulation, spiritual self-discipline, and Islamic consumption ethics. By placing self-control in dialogue with Al-Ghazali's concept of *mujahadah al-nafs* and with Islamic consumption principles, the study broadens the understanding of impulse buying among Muslim consumers, moving it beyond behavioral regulation to encompass spiritual formation and moral responsibility. The framework underscores that responsible consumption entails not merely restraining immediate purchasing urges but also cultivating disciplined desires and grounding decisions in halal permissibility, needs, benefits, moderation, and financial capacity. Nonetheless, because the study relies on library research, the proposed integration does not establish the empirical effectiveness of *mujahadah al-nafs* in reducing impulse buying. Empirical investigations are therefore warranted to examine how these dimensions operate in actual Muslim consumer behavior.

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