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Beyond Payment Convenience: The Effects of Affordability, Hedonic BNPL Adoption, and Financial Relief on Consumer Financial Control

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Abstract: ***Buy Now, Pay Later (BNPL) services have significantly impacted consumer buying habits by offering flexible, interest-free instalment payment options. BNPL has introduced new financial challenges for consumers in terms of financial decision-making and spending discipline, but it has also made the purchase journey more convenient and financially easier. This study examines how Affordability, BNPL Adoption, and Financial Relief influence BNPL users' financial control. The primary data were collected from 232 respondents, and the proposed conceptual model was tested using Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) with the Diagonally Weighted Least Squares (DWLS) estimation method. The structural model results indicated a positive relationship between BNPL Adoption and Financial Relief ($\beta = 0.229$, $p < 0.001$) and Financial Control-related behaviours ($\beta = 0.689$, $p < 0.001$). At the same time, Affordability showed a significant negative relationship ($\beta = -0.194$, $p < 0.001$).***

Keywords: Buy Now Pay Later (BNPL), Affordability, BNPL Adoption, Financial Relief, Financial Control, Consumer Behaviour, Structural Equation Modelling.

Nomenclature:
BNPL: Buy Now, Pay Later
FinTech: Financial Technology
EFA: Exploratory Factor Analysis
SEM: Structural Equation Modelling
DWLS: Diagonally Weighted Least Squares
PLS: Partial Least Squares
PAF: Principal Axis Factoring
AVE: Average Variance Extracted
CR: Composite Reliability
HTMT: Heterotrait–Monotrait Ratio
SRMR: Standardised Root Mean Square Residual
RMSEA: Root Mean Square Error of Approximation
TAM: Technology Acceptance Model
NBER: National Bureau of Economic Research
ORCID: Open Researcher and Contributor ID
α (Alpha): Cronbach's Alpha
ω (Omega): McDonald's Omega
CI: Confidence Interval

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I. INTRODUCTION

Financial technology (FinTech) has rapidly developed and revolutionised the financial services industry worldwide by providing products and services based on digital payment systems that boost customer convenience and access. One notable innovation is the Buy Now Pay Later (BNPL) payment method, which lets consumers buy now and repay through short-term, interest-free payments. The credit card alternatives offered by BNPL services are typically not as cumbersome to apply for, do not require passing through the credit card verification process, and do not incur interest penalties if payments are made on time; BNPL services are especially appealing to younger consumers and online shoppers (Di Maggio et al., 2022; Maesen & Ang, 2025; Liu et al., 2025) [1][2][5]. Recent evidence also indicates that BNPL has emerged as one of the fastest-growing types of short-term consumer credit and has had an important impact on the retail payment landscape and digital commerce.

The rise in ecommerce penetration, mobile banking and financial services, and consumer preference for flexible payments have contributed to BNPL's rapid growth. Growth in ecommerce penetration, mobile banking and financial services, and consumers' desire for flexible payments have all driven rapid BNPL adoption. BNPL makes products more affordable by breaking purchases into smaller chunks and lets shoppers buy without paying outright. As a result, more and more retailers are implementing BNPL at checkout because it can boost customer satisfaction, lower cart abandonment rates, and increase conversions. Experimental evidence suggests that BNPL availability can also significantly affect consumers' purchase intentions and reduce purchase abandonment relative to traditional immediate-payment options.

While BNPL offers significant financial flexibility, concerns about its behavioural and financial impacts have increased from both researcher and policy perspectives. Behavioural finance theory suggests that separating consumption from payment can reduce the pain of paying and increase impulsive buying, hedonic consumption, and excessive spending. The streamlined application and delayed payment system could erode consumers' budget discipline, reduce awareness of future repayments, and make them

more financially vulnerable, especially younger and less well-off consumers (Di Maggio et al., 2022) [1].

Recent empirical literature shows that the availability of BNPL boosts consumer spending not only through traditional liquidity-constraint arguments, but also through a psychological channel. Likewise, research shows that BNPL significantly improves access to credit for consumers with limited access to traditional financial services, as well as retail spending and the adoption of digital credit.

BNPL has also drawn significant regulatory interest and scrutiny, especially as these options become more popular. Financial regulators in multiple jurisdictions have begun taking measures to strengthen regulation of BNPL service providers, such as conducting affordability assessments and implementing disclosure requirements and consumer protection measures to curb the potential issues of overborrowing and multiple BNPL commitments. These changes come against a backdrop of growing concerns about the sustainability of rapidly growing digital credit markets and responsible lending.

While the literature on BNPL is expanding, previous research has largely focused on technology adoption, payment convenience, consumer satisfaction, purchase intention, and regulatory issues. Compared with the other two, few studies have investigated the effects of perceived affordability, hedonic BNPL adoption behaviour, and financial relief on consumers' financial control after BNPL adoption. This evidence calls for an integrated behavioural model that clarifies consumers' spending behaviour and budgeting discipline in light of their financial perceptions and emotional shopping motivations.

To address this gap, the present study proposes and tests a behavioural model consisting of four latent constructs: Affordability, BNPL Adoption, Financial Relief, and Financial Control. Affordability is defined as consumers' perception that taking a BNPL instalment makes it easier to buy and leads them to use it more. BNPL Adoption refers to emotional and hedonic motives related to BNPL, such as excitement, indulgence, spontaneous purchase, and shopping enjoyment. Financial Relief relates to consumers' beliefs that BNPL lowers immediate financial stress and helps them budget. Finally, Financial Control Measures consumers' capacity to control their spending habits, consider repayment commitments, and adhere to a budget when using deferred payment services.

Based on the above considerations, the study uses partial least squares (PLS) regression, namely Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) with Diagonally Weighted Least Squares (DWLS) estimation, using survey data from 232 respondents who use BNPL services. By combining insights from behavioural finance and consumer behaviour, the study contributes to the growing literature on digital consumer finance. It highlights how affordability perceptions, hedonic shopping motivations, and financial relief affect consumers' financial control when using BNPL.

The results provide valuable theoretical and practical contributions. Theoretically, the study builds on the growing body of research on BNPL by creating a unified behavioural model that captures affordability perceptions, adoption behaviour, financial relief and financial control. In practice, the results could help fintech companies and retailers encourage responsible BNPL use without promoting impulse buying or financial overextension, as well as financial institutions, regulators, and consumer protection agencies.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

A. Buy Now, Pay Later (BNPL): A New Paradigm in Consumer Finance

Buy Now Pay Later (BNPL) is among the fastest-rising virtual payment innovations in the FinTech space. Unlike traditional credit cards, BNPL lets shoppers buy products now and pay over time in a series of small, typically interest-free payments. The ease of sign-up and the quick process for approval have contributed to a rise in the number of consumers using these technologies, including young consumers and online shoppers (Di Maggio et al., 2022; Maesen & Ang, 2025; Liu et al., 2025) [1][2][5]. As e-commerce grows worldwide, BNPL payment options are gaining traction because they're believed to increase purchase conversion rates, lower shopping cart abandonment rates, and boost average order value (Bian et al., 2023) [3].

While BNPL offers consumers more flexibility and makes buying easier, researchers say deferred payment options can change how consumers make financial decisions. The "pain of paying" is a behavioural finance phenomenon that suggests a psychological penalty for paying bills or making transactions immediately, which can lead people to consume more and buy more impulsively. In this context, BNPL is emerging as a crucial area of study for understanding how digital credit affects consumers' decision-making, extending beyond loans. As a result, BNPL has become a growing focus of research to understand the effects of digital credit on consumer behaviour beyond loans.

B. Affordability and Financial Control

Affordability reflects consumers' perception of BNPL instalment plans as a way to purchase something without a high upfront cost. Small payments enable consumers to purchase goods they might not be able to afford at once. Thus, one of the key reasons for the adoption of BNPL is considered to be affordability (Maesen & Ang, 2025; Liu et al., 2025) [2][5]

However, from a behavioural angle, perceived affordability may also lead customers to estimate the costs of deferred payments as less than they actually are. According to Behavioural Life-Cycle Theory, consumers often distinguish between consumption today and payment later; as a result, they feel their self-control is diminished. Likewise, consumers' brains may treat instalment payments differently from lump payments, making them feel they are getting a better deal than they actually are.

Empirical research in recent years has shown that deferred payment increases the spendable amount of people's purchases and decreases budget consciousness, thus promoting spending (Di Maggio et al., 2022; Maesen & Ang, 2025) [1] [2]. If consumers think it's very affordable, they may be less aware of future repayments and lose financial

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control.

Based on this, it is hypothesized that:

H1: *Affordability has a significant negative effect on consumers' financial control when using Buy Now, Pay Later services.*

C. BNPL Adoption and Financial Control

BNPL adoption reflects consumers' preference for deferred payments. For the current study, BNPL adoption is defined as hedonic shopping motives, such as excitement, indulgence, spontaneous buying and shopping fun.

The TAM states that users adopt new financial technologies when they believe they are useful and easy to use. However, consumer behaviour literature indicates that emotional and hedonic reasons strongly influence consumers' payment decisions when shopping online, alongside utilitarian reasons.

BNPL helps minimise payment friction and allows consumers to focus on enjoying the shopping experience rather than the implications of what they are buying. The concept of 'payment salience' suggests that lowering payment salience leads to more impulsive purchases, as consumers feel less opposed to the purchasing process. Empirical research also shows that consumers with BNPL have higher impulse, discretionary, and nonessential spending than those without BNPL (Di Maggio et al., 2022; Maesen & Ang, 2025) [1][2].

Thus, higher uptake of BNPL driven by hedonic motives is likely to lead to more financially risky purchasing behaviour and less financial discipline among consumers.

H2: *BNPL adoption has a significant positive effect on consumers' financial control-related behaviour.*

D. Financial Relief and Financial Control

Financial relief is consumers' sense that BNPL helps to alleviate immediate financial pressure by breaking up payments over time and allows them to budget. Consumers often see instalment-based payment systems as ways to improve short-term cash flow and ease financial strain (Maesen & Ang, 2025; Liu et al., 2025) [2][5].

Liquidity Constraint Theory predicts that when consumers have a tight budget, they may use delayed payment systems to smooth consumption over time. This flexibility may lessen the short-term financial burden. Still, repeated use of deferred payment arrangements could lead to greater spending as consumers become more confident in their ability to pay for future purchases (Di Maggio et al., 2022) [1].

Prospect theory also suggests that people tend to view immediate gains more favourably than future losses. This can lead consumers to focus primarily on desired products and possibly underestimate their repayment obligations, thereby compromising their financial discipline.

Empirical evidence shows that consumers who believe BNPL helps alleviate financial stress are more likely to spend more at their discretion and delay financial planning (Maesen & Ang, 2025; Liu et al., 2025) [2][5]. While BNPL can provide short-term convenience, it can also lead to long-term financial challenges if consumers become too reliant on these services.

Based on this, it is hypothesized that:

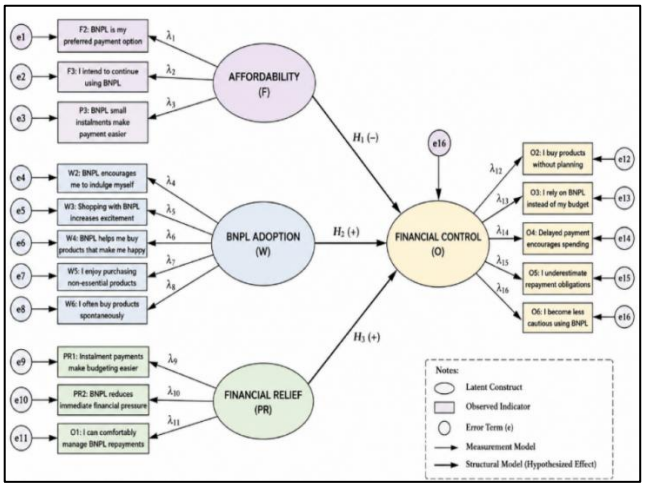
H3: *Financial relief has a significant positive effect on consumers' financial control-related behaviour.*

E. Conceptual Framework

The study suggests that, based on behavioural finance theory, mental accounting theory, behavioural life-cycle theory, and technology acceptance theory, Affordability, BNPL Adoption, and financial relief are important antecedents of Financial Control among BNPL Users. It is assumed that consumers' perceived affordability of payment, their emotional reasons for using BNPL, and their perceived financial relief together relate to increased spending discipline and financial decision-making.

The conceptual model suggested is shown below:

- **H1:** Affordability → Financial Control (Negative)
- **H2:** BNPL Adoption → Financial Control (Positive)
- **H3:** Financial Relief → Financial Control (Positive)



[Fig.1: Showing Conceptual Framework of the Study]

Source: *Author's own Collected Data*

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A. Research Design

The present study uses a quantitative, cross-sectional research design to explore the effect of Affordability, BNPL Adoption, and Financial Relief on customers' financial control in relation to Buy Now Pay Later (BNPL) services. A quantitative method was chosen because it uses statistical techniques to test hypothesised relationships between latent constructs and allows for empirical examination of those relationships. The study used a positivist research paradigm; data collection used a structured questionnaire, and data analysis used multivariate statistical methods.

B. Population and Sampling

The target population comprised people who have used Buy Now, Pay Later (BNPL) services for goods/services in the past. A complete sampling frame of BNPL users was not available; instead, we used non-probability convenience sampling. This sampling method has been extensively used in research on digital financial services and online consumer behaviour.

We distributed 250 questionnaires online and offline. We excluded 23 of 232 questionnaires because they were incomplete or inconsistent, and retained 232

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questionnaires for analysis, giving a response rate of about 92.8%. (Hair et al. 2022) [4] asserted that the number of observations is sufficient when it reaches more than 200, which is the case in this research. The sample size is considered adequate for Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) with more than 200 observations, as reported in (Hair et al. 2022) [4].

C. Instrument Development

A structured questionnaire was developed from previously validated scales in the literature and adapted to the BNPL context to collect primary data. Items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale, from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree.

Table I: Measurement Items and Sources of the Constructs

Construct	No. of Items	Sample Measurement Items	Adapted From
Affordability	4	• BNPL is my preferred payment option. • I intend to continue using BNPL • BNPL small instalments make payment easier. • I feel I can afford more products through BNPL.	(Maesen & Ang, 2025; Liu et al., 2025) [2][5]
BNPL Adoption (Hedonic Adoption)	5	• BNPL encourages me to indulge myself. • Shopping with BNPL increases excitement. • I use BNPL to buy products that make me happy. • I enjoy purchasing non-essential products through BNPL. • I often buy products • spontaneously using BNPL.	Di Maggio et al. (2022); Bian et al. (2023) [1][3]
Financial Relief	3	• Instalment payments make budgeting easier. • BNPL reduces immediate financial pressure. • I can comfortably manage • BNPL repayments.	Di Maggio et al. (2022) Maesen & Ang, 2025; Liu et al., 2025 [1][2][5]
Financial Control	5	• I buy products without much planning because BNPL makes payments manageable • I often rely on BNPL instead of considering my actual budget. • Delayed payment encourages me to spend more. • I underestimate future repayment obligations. • I become less cautious when • BNPL is available.	Di Maggio et al. (2022) [1]

Source: Adapted from previous literature and modified for the BNPL context.

D. Data Collection Procedure

The researchers gathered data from active BNPL users through self-administered questionnaires distributed online and face-to-face. Respondents were not required to complete the survey, and they were assured that their responses were anonymous and would not be disclosed without their consent.

The researchers followed informed consent, confidentiality, and voluntary participation throughout the data collection process, in line with ethical guidelines.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

A. Respondent Profile

The study was based on responses from respondents who had previously used Buy Now Pay Later (BNPL) services to buy goods/services. The study sent out 250 questionnaires (online and offline). After discarding incomplete and inconsistent forms, the researchers analysed 232 questionnaires, accounting for 92.8% of the total. The respondents thus served as the empirical basis for exploring the relationship between Affordability, BNPL Adoption, Financial Relief, and Financial Control.

The demographic profile should report key respondent characteristics, including gender, age, educational qualification, occupation, monthly income, and frequency of BNPL use. These characteristics provide an overview of the sample composition and help set the study's findings in context. The respondent profile is therefore highly relevant to understanding the characteristics of the consumers represented in the present study, as it specifically examines BNPL users.

B. Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)

To determine the underlying factor structure of the measurement items, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was first carried out using Principal Axis Factoring

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(PAF) and Varimax rotation. EFA helps clarify whether observed variables are good indicators of the proposed latent constructs and to assess construct validity. To test the adequacy of factor extraction, values of communalities, eigenvalues and percentage of variance explained were calculated, as well as values of rotated factor loadings. Items that had factor loadings of > 0.60 were included in further analyses.

Table II:

Communalities		
	Initial	**Extraction**
BNPL encourages me to indulge myself (do something you enjoy).	.887	.807
Shopping with BNPL increases the excitement of shopping.	.945	.857
I use BNPL to buy products that make me happy	.892	.685
I enjoy purchasing 2n essential products through BNPL	.954	.879
I often buy products spontaneously using BNPL.	.900	.771
I buy products without much planning because BNPL makes payments manageable.	.891	.662
I often rely on BNPL instead of considering my actual budget.	.878	.912
Delayed payment encourages me to spend more.	.883	.731
I underestimate future repayment obligations.	.892	.734
I become less cautious when BNPL is available.	.772	.744
Instalment payments make budgeting easier.	.902	.883
BNPL reduces immediate financial pressure.	.842	.752
I can comfortably manage BNPL repayments.	.850	.690
BNPL is my preferred payment option	.835	.693
I intend to continue using BNPL	.867	.728
BNPL small instalments make payment easier.	.652	.590
I feel I can afford more products through BNPL	.716	.649
Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring.		

Communalities indicate how much of each item's variance the extracted factors account for:

Generally,

1. above 0.50 = acceptable
2. above 0.70 = excellent

The communalities of the items in your questionnaire range from 0.590 to 0.912, indicating that the extracted factors represent all items well.

Examples

- W3 (Shopping with BNPL is more exciting) = 0.857
- It has 85.7% of its variance accounted for by the factor structure.
- 0.912 = O3 (I often use BNPL instead of taking my budget into account)
- This is one of the best indicators.
- Avoiding the need for a down payment (P3, BNPL small instalments make payment easier) = 0.590
- It is still below the acceptable level, although much less than the other.

Communalities ranged from 0.590 to 0.912, indicating that all items measured by the obtained factors were adequately represented in the communality matrix. All items were kept for further analysis, as all items exceeded the recommended value of 0.50.

Table III:

Total Variance Explained									
Factor	**Initial Eigenvalues**			**Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings**			**Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings**		
	Total	**% of Variance**	**Cumulative %**	**Total**	**% of Variance**	**Cumulative %**	**Total**	**% of Variance**	**Cumulative %**
1	9.091	53.476	53.476	8.864	52.139	52.139	3.893	22.902	22.902
2	2.466	14.505	67.981	2.154	12.671	64.810	3.674	21.609	44.511
3	1.279	7.522	75.503	1.060	6.235	71.044	2.634	15.496	60.008
4	.912	5.367	80.870	.693	4.074	75.118	2.569	15.110	75.118
5	.690	4.061	84.931						
6	.468	2.754	87.685						
7	.436	2.568	90.253						
8	.390	2.294	92.546						
9	.280	1.650	94.196						
10	.254	1.493	95.690						
11	.215	1.264	96.954						
12	.157	.924	97.878						
13	.150	.882	98.761						
14	.093	.548	99.309						
15	.070	.414	99.723						
16	.029	.170	99.893						
17	.018	.107	100.000						

Source: Author's Own Data

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Table IV:

The four extracted factors account for 75.12% of the total variance in BNPL consumer behaviour and therefore provide good construct validity.

	Factor			
	1	2	3	4
BNPL encourages me to indulge myself (do something you enjoy).	.842			
Shopping with BNPL increases the excitement of shopping.	.884			
I use BNPL to buy products that make me happy	.801			
I enjoy purchasing 2n essential products through BNPL	.883			
I often buy products spontaneously using BNPL.	.846			
I buy products without much planning because BNPL makes payments manageable.	.796			
I often rely on BNPL instead of considering my actual budget.	.817			
Delayed payment encourages me to spend more.	.721			
I underestimate future repayment obligations.	.735			
I become less cautious when BNPL is available.	.762			
Instalment payments make budgeting easier.	.789			
BNPL reduces immediate financial pressure.	.678			
I can comfortably manage BNPL repayments.	.774			
BNPL is my preferred payment option		.778		
I intend to continue using BNPL.		.788		
BNPL small instalments make payment easier.				
I feel I can afford more products through BNPL.				

Table V: Rotated Component Matrix

Factor				
	1	2	3	4
BNPL encourages me to indulge myself (do something you enjoy).	.765			
Shopping with BNPL increases the excitement of shopping.	.763			
I use BNPL to buy products that make me happy	.657			
I enjoy purchasing 2n essential products through BNPL	.798			
I often buy products spontaneously using BNPL.	.707			
I buy products without much planning because BNPL makes payments manageable.				
I often rely on BNPL instead of considering my actual budget.		.812		
Delayed payment encourages me to spend more.		.780		
I underestimate future repayment obligations.		.769		
I become less cautious when BNPL is available.		.705		
Instalment payments make budgeting easier.			.815	
BNPL reduces immediate financial pressure.			.784	
I can comfortably manage BNPL repayments.			.617	
BNPL is my preferred payment option				.831
I intend to continue using BNPL.				.810
BNPL small instalments make payment easier.				.698
I feel I can afford more products through BNPL.				.696
Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.				
a. Rotation converged in 5 iterations.				
Factor Transformation Matrix				

Source: Author's own collected data

The factor analysis results show four factors, and the factor loadings are greater than 0.5. All questionnaire items have factor loadings ranging from 0.617 to 0.831, all above the minimum level of 0.60. This indicates an appropriate relationship between each item and its corresponding underlying construct. The first factor reflects BNPL Adoption (hedonic behaviour), the second reflects financial control, the third reflects financial relief, and the fourth reflects affordability. A stable factor structure with an interpretable factor loading structure was found with the Principal Axis Factoring method with Varimax rotation after five iterations. Overall, the results are satisfactory in terms of the measurement instrument's construct validity.

C. Validity and Reliability

Table VI: Validity and Reliability

Variable α	Ordinal α	ω_1	ω_2	ω_3	AVE
affordability 0.823	0.850	0.819	0.819	0.827	0.688
Adoption0.949	0.963	0.953	0.953	0.970	0.861
STRESS0.904	0.930	0.904	0.904	0.921	0.845
Financial control 0.925	0.942	0.926	0.926	0.943	0.784

Source: Author's own collected data

Generally, the Cronbach's alphas and omegas for the items in the table exceed the recommended 0.70. AVE scores for the four constructs (0.688–0.861) are higher than the threshold of 0.50, indicating good convergent validity for all constructs.

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D. Discriminant Validity

Table VII:

Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) Ratio of Correlations				
	affordability	Adoption	STRESS	Financial Control
Affordability	1.000	0.407	0.263	0.145
Adoption	0.407	1.000	0.792	0.784
STRESS	0.263	0.792	1.000	0.706
Financial control	0.145	0.784	0.706	1.000

Multiple reliability and validity tests were carried out to assess the adequacy of the measurement model: Cronbach's alpha, Composite Reliability (CR), Average Variance Extracted (AVE), and the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio. As per (Hair et al. 2022) [4], Cronbach's alpha and Composite Reliability values of 0.70 or more indicate good internal consistency, while AVE values above 0.50 indicate convergent validity. The HTMT values obtained in this study were below 0.85, indicating discriminant validity among the constructs.

E. Structural Equation Modelling (SEM)

After EFA, another statistical technique, Structural Equation Modelling (SEM), was used to validate the measurement model and test the proposed structural relationships among the constructs. Because the questionnaire responses were ordinal Likert-scale data, the Diagonally Weighted Least Squares (DWLS) estimation method was chosen. When the assumption of multivariate normality is violated, DWLS is recommended for SEM with ordinal data because it provides more accurate parameter estimates and robust standard errors.

Table VIII:

Fit Indices					
95% Confidence Intervals					
Type	**Srmr**	**Rmsea**	**Lower**	**Upper**	**RMSEA p**
Classical	0.080	0.141	0.130	0.153	<.001
Robust	0.066				
Scaled	0.066	0.151	0.139	0.162	<.001

Source: Author's own collected data

A clean, four-factor solution was obtained with varimax rotation. Factor loadings for all items were high (all > 0.60), and there was no significant cross-loading, suggesting the four latent variables were distinct.

Table IX: Overall Test

Model Tests			
Label	**X²**	**df**	**p**
User Model	551	98	<.001
Baseline Model	56943	120	<.001
Scaled User	613	98	<.001
Scaled Baseline	14074	120	<.001

Source: Author's own collected data

The model fit indices are excellent (CFI = 0.992, TLI = 0.990, and SRMR = 0.066), although RMSEA (0.151) is slightly high, as shown in the table below. Overall, the model obtained an acceptable level of fit as evidenced by most fit indices.

Table X:

User Model Versus Baseline Model	
Model	
Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	0.992
Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI)	0.990
Bentler-Bonett Non-normed Fit Index (NNFI)	0.990
Relative Noncentrality Index (RNI)	0.992
Bentler-Bonett Normed Fit Index (NFI)	0.990
Bollen's Relative Fit Index (RFI)	0.988
Bollen's Incremental Fit Index (IFI)	0.992
Parsimony Normed Fit Index (PNFI)	0.809

Source: Author's own collected data

Several goodness-of-fit indices were used to assess model fit: Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI), Normed Fit Index (NFI), Standardised Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR), and Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA). Hair et al. (2022) [4] identified values above 0.90 for CFI, TLI, and NFI as a good model fit, while SRMR values under 0.08 were regarded as a good model fit.

Table XI: Estimates of Parameters

Estimates								
Parameters estimates								
				95% Confidence	Intervals			
Dep	**Pred**	**Estimate**	**SE**	**Lower**	**Upper**	**β**	**z**	**p**
Financial control	affordability	-0.229	0.0596	-0.346	-0.113	- 0.194	-3.85	<.001
Financial control	Adoption	0.683	0.0567	0.572	0.794	0.689	12.04	<.001
Financial control	STRESS	0.224	0.0422	0.142	0.307	0.229	5.32	<.001

Source: Author's own collected data

Affordability negatively predicts financial control (Estimate = –0.229, β = –0.194), while both the adoption (Estimate = 0.683, β = 0.689) and the stress (Estimate = 0.224, β = 0.229) have positive predictive effects on financial control, while affordability has a negative predictive effect (Estimate = –0.229, β = –0.194). These coefficients are highly statistically significant (p < .001), and their confidence intervals do not include zero, suggesting strong evidence for these effects.

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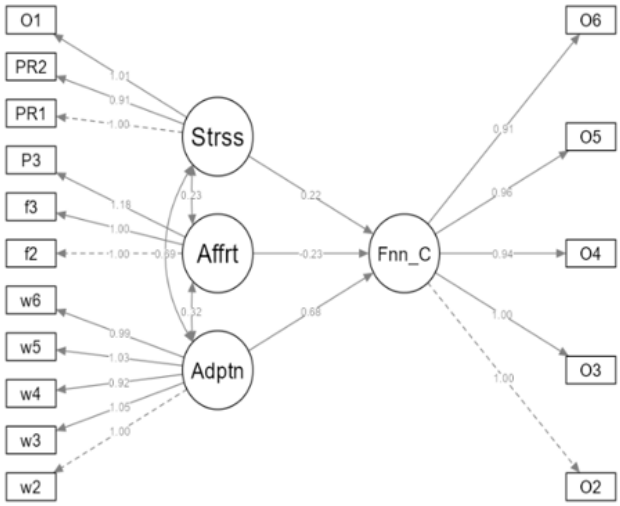
F. Path Model



[Fig.2: Showing the Statistical Relationship Among the Dependent and Independent Variables]

Source: *Jamovi project 2024[6],[7],[8],[9],[10]*

Table XII: Summary of Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Relationship	β	z-value	p-value	Decision
H1	Affordability → Financial Control	– 0.194	–3.85	<0.001	Supported
H2	BNPL Adoption → Financial Control	0.689	12.04	<0.001	Supported
H3	Financial Relief → Financial Control	0.229	5.32	<0.001	Supported

V. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

Table XIII: Discussion of Results

Hypothesis	Result	Discussion	Supporting Literature
H1: Affordability → Financial Control	**Supported** (β = −0.194, p < 0.001)	The findings indicate that perceived affordability significantly reduces consumers' financial control. When consumers perceive BNPL instalments as affordable, they become less cautious about future repayment obligations and are more likely to spend beyond their planned budgets. This suggests that affordable instalment options weaken financial discipline and increase reliance on deferred payments.	*The finding confirms the studies of Di Maggio et al. (2022), Maesen & Ang (2025), and Liu et al. (2025) [1][2][5], which reported that BNPL reduces the perceived cost of purchases and encourages higher spending. It is also consistent with Mental Accounting Theory and Behavioural Life-Cycle Theory, which explain that consumers mentally separate instalment payments from total purchase costs, thereby reducing self-control.*
H2: BNPL Adoption → Financial Control	**Supported** (β = 0.689, p < 0.001)	The results reveal that greater BNPL adoption significantly increases financial control-related behaviour. Since the financial control construct captures behaviours such as impulse buying, underestimating repayment obligations, and reduced spending caution, the positive relationship indicates that higher BNPL adoption is associated with greater financially risky behaviour. Consumers who frequently use BNPL for hedonic shopping are more likely to engage in impulsive and discretionary purchases.	*This finding supports Di Maggio et al. (2022) and Bian et al. (2023) [1][3], who found that BNPL encourages impulse buying and discretionary spending by reducing the psychological pain of paying. The result also aligns with the Technology Acceptance Model, which suggests that consumers readily adopt convenient payment technologies. At the same time, behavioural finance literature explains that lower payment salience encourages impulsive purchasing decisions.*
H3: Financial Relief → Financial Control	**Supported** (β = 0.229, p < 0.001)	The findings demonstrate that perceived financial relief significantly influences financial control-related behaviour. Consumers who believe that BNPL reduces immediate financial pressure tend to rely more on deferred payment mechanisms, which may encourage increased spending and reduce long-term financial discipline. Although BNPL improves short-term liquidity, excessive dependence on it may increase financially risky behaviour.	*This finding is consistent with* **(Maesen & Ang, 2025; Liu et al., 2025**; ***Di Maggio et al., 2022;*** *and* ***Bian et al., 2023)[2][5][1][3]****, who concluded that BNPL provides temporary financial relief but also increases consumers' dependence on instalment financing. The result further supports* ***Liquidity Constraint Theory*** *and* ***Prospect Theory****, which explain that consumers prioritize immediate consumption benefits over future repayment obligations.*

Source: - *Based on Table No. 11 and Literature*

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

First, retailers should promote responsible, not impulsive, buying. They should not use marketing tactics that pressure buyers to

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buy immediately. Instead, they must provide clear details about BNPL repayments and repayment requirements. The retailer's checkout system should also show the monthly payment amount and total repayment cost so customers have the information they need to make an informed payment decision.

Secondly, policymakers and financial regulators need a more detailed regulatory framework for BNPL services. Providers should be required to conduct affordability checks, make terms and conditions clear and transparent, track consumers with multiple accounts, and implement centralised credit reporting systems to encourage responsible lending and reduce over-indebtedness.

Third, financial literacy programs in educational institutions, financial organisations, and consumer protection institutions should be enhanced. These initiatives need to provide consumers with information on budgeting, debt management, repayment plans, and the potential impact of overusing BNPL. They should also raise awareness of behavioural biases like impulsive purchases and the reduced psychological 'pain of paying' to promote rational financial choices.

Fourthly, consumers need to view BNPL as a tool to manage their money—not as extra money. They must consider their income, current financial obligations, and ability to repay before opting for BNPL. Keeping a personal budget, limiting BNPL loans to a few, checking the balance of the rest, and using BNPL for planned and essential purchases can help maintain long-term financial stability.

Last but not least, further studies are needed to examine other behavioural and psychological factors that could impact BNPL usage, including financial literacy, self-control, perceived risk, trust, materialism, financial anxiety, and digital payment practices. The researcher should also explore the impact of other demographic variables such as age, gender, income, financial experience, and culture. Longitudinal and/or cross-country studies could advance research on BNPL use and its effects on financial health.

VII. CONCLUSION

The study brings a novel integrated behavioural model to explain consumers' financial behaviour when using BNPL services and empirically tests it in the growing literature on digital consumer finance. This study not only highlights the importance of affordability perceptions after adopting BNPL, but also reveals that the combination of three factors—hedonic shopping motives, financial relief, and affordability perceptions—explains consumers' financial control following BNPL adoption. The study therefore builds on previous work by integrating concepts from behavioural finance and consumer behaviour into a framework for understanding BNPL use. Overall, the results suggest that although BNPL can provide significant payment flexibility and easier access to finance, continued BNPL use can affect consumers' financial discipline if they do not maintain financial awareness and responsible borrowing practices. Therefore, BNPL services must balance payment convenience with responsible financial practices to remain sustainable.

DECLARATION STATEMENT

After aggregating input from all authors, I must verify the accuracy of the following information as the article's author.

- **Conflicts of Interest/ Competing Interests:** Based on my understanding, this article has no conflicts of interest.
- **Funding Support:** This article has not been funded by any organizations or agencies. This independence ensures the research is conducted objectively, without external influence.
- **Ethical Approval and Consent to Participate:** The content of this article does not necessitate ethical approval or consent to participate, with supporting documentation.
- **Data Access Statement and Material Availability:** The resources in this article are publicly accessible.
- **Author's Contributions:** The authorship of this article is contributed equally to all participating individuals.

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