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## **RESEARCH ARTICLE**

# **AN INVESTIGATION OF ONLINE COMPULSIVE BUYING BEHAVIOR WITH EMOTIONS AMONG POST GRADUATION STUDENTS WITH REFERENCE TO BHARATHIAR UNIVERSITY, INDIA**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Compulsive buying is usually considered as an abnormal consumer behavior on buying things or an irresistible urge to buy beyond someone's need. In the high tech environment compulsive buying turned into online compulsive buying due to more advanced aspects. The aim of this study is to identify the impact of online compulsive buying behavior on positive and negative emotions. A survey was conducted among 388 post graduation students by using convenient sampling technique. The result shows that there is a moderate positive relationship for both positive and negative emotions on online compulsive buying. Further research and suggestions will be discussed.

## **INTRODUCTION**

In this recent scenario online shopping have the attention among the young consumers. The high usage of the internet makes the internet users to try on the online shopping and it insists them to utilize the convenience which internet offers. In this circumstance, it is not surprising to see the unusual behavior exist with consumer that is said to be as compulsive buying behavior. The buying behavior on online shopping has been done by numerous studies. So, here the researcher intends to identify the facts among atypical form of behavior on online buying. It is also related to more spending than the required with the guilty feeling of an undesirable outcome after purchase. Compulsive buying is a pushing feeling that insisting to engage in an activity which against individual own spirit and compelled by a force which cannot be restricted. "The study of compulsive buying as a clinical syndrome can be traced at least as far back as a 1915 textbook on psychiatry, which was described by Emil Kraepelin as buying mania or oniomania" (as cited in black, 1996). Compulsive buying has been described as "chronic, repetitive purchasing that becomes a primary response to negative events or feelings" O'Guinn and Faber (1989) who were researchers originally defined compulsive buying in their framework of compulsive consumption behaviors in abroad. Compulsive buying is a chronic and repetitive behavior, which in turn react because of negative actions and feelings.

In the recent study, the researcher proposed that compulsive buyers were highly obsessed with buying activities and their behavior occurs because of negative emotions. The results are provided as an evidence for an association between compulsive buying and anxiety A.weinstein *et al* (2015). Elif Akagun Ergin (2010) argued compulsive buying is a dysfunctional behavior among consumer, it is a chronic failure to control, which is insist to buy products and services. Georgiana Bighiu *et al* (2013) analyzed and found 13 % of the studied sample and which in reality presents the characteristics of this disorder. It is proven by many international studies that the compulsive buyers are mostly found in women. Hui-Yi Lo and Nigel Harvey (2010) found in their study that compulsive shoppers in Taiwan were more compulsive than those in the United Kingdom; it is proved that many of symptoms were presented of compulsive buying more significantly. Laurence claes *et al* (2010) explores the relationship between compulsive buying and reactive and regulative temperament at the time of controlling for depression and materialism. Compulsive buying was proved by high materialism, high levels of behavioral activation and low levels of effortful controlling because of depressive symptoms. Lee Matthew Lawrence *et al* (2014) suggests that compulsive buying is closely related to the fact and which is associated with addiction to a certain extent than the obsessive-compulsive or depression symptoms. Therefore, many studies is an evidence for compulsive buying is more related to emotions to understand this fact the current study has been conceded. Selim said eren *et al.* (2012) revealed the attention towards excessive buying defined as addictive buying or compulsive buying.

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However, it is most of the international research was increased towards online compulsive buying behavior, but unfortunately only a few studies exist on Indian compulsive buying behavior. In order to know the answer for this question the researcher interested in this area.

### Formulation of hypothesis

Based on the existing literature review the researcher is intending to frame the following null hypothesis.

- H1:** There is no relationship between positive emotions in online compulsive buying behavior.
- H2:** There is no relationship between negative emotions in online compulsive buying behavior.
- H3:** There is no significant difference among gender of the respondents and online compulsive buying
- H4:** There is no significant difference among gender of the respondents and positive emotions
- H5:** There is no significant difference among gender of the respondents and negative emotions

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

**Research objective:** The current study is to investigate the relation to online compulsive buying behavior and their emotions among postgraduate students. It also identifies the gender difference in online compulsive buying and with emotions (both positive and negative).

### Research Procedure

Selim said Eren *et al* (2012) considered in his study college students characterized as a profit targetable market. In the study, the researcher found their compulsive buying tendencies through their materialistic and hedonic values. In the current study the researcher conducted among 388 postgraduate students from Bharathiar University in India. This study adopts the convenient sampling technique for collecting the data. Those who have practice of buying in online and pursuing final year in their post graduation were asked to fill the questionnaires. The participant in this study was done by the volunteer students. The Questionnaire was distributed by using the interview method and online questionnaire. Initially 420 questionnaires were distributed among them only 388 had got valid response; the rest of the questionnaire was incomplete.

### Research Instruments

The study was conducted by using a semi structured questionnaire and it contains three sections. The first section it includes with the demographic information of respondents (student's profile). The second section contains compulsive buying scale it was introduced by Valence, d' Astous and Fortier 1988: two separate but interrelated domains is identified, online compulsive buying has 3 items and online buying intention has 3 items, which was updated and it is to measure the online compulsive buying. The scores were measured on a Likert scale ranging from 1 "strongly disagree" to 5 "strongly agree". The validity of the questionnaire was measured by using (Cronbach's Alpha)  $\alpha = 0.855$ . The third section includes emotional management EM; Monique Moore, (2009), James A.Roberts, (2004) and Carlos Mondragon, (2011), EM scale was developed and measures the emotions influencing on compulsive buying using 20 items rated on a 5

point Likert scale. Two separate but interrelated domains have been identified: positive emotions and Negative emotions in online buying. Reliability value 0.803 for (Positive emotions: proud; happy and excited) and 0.75 for (Negative emotions: Bored; Anxious; Sad/depressed and Hurt).

### Data analysis

The analysis includes with two parts 1) The descriptive analysis is carried out to understand the sample characteristics 2) the inferential analysis is conceded to find the relationship between (both positive and negative) emotions and online compulsive buying behavior were carried by using SEM through AMOS 20.0 3) To find out the difference on gender with (both positive and negative) emotions and online compulsive buying were tested by using SPSS 21.0.

## FINDINGS

**Descriptive analysis:** The socio-demographic factors of the students were mentioned below to understand the sample characteristics.

**Summary of student's profile:** From the table 1 it represents the demographic profile of the students, including their gender, age, family type, course, household income and decision making. It is observed from the sample characteristic outline of 388 respondents, 54% of them were male. The majority 41% of the respondents age ranging between 22-24yrs. As for considering the family type concern 57% of the students lies in the nuclear family type. In addition to that 20% of the students belonging to MBA course. In terms of household income level, 36 % of the students were ranging from >Rs.50000. The majority of the students makes their decision by themselves for their buying's.

Table 1. Summary of student's profile

Socio-Demographic Factors	Option	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	210	54.1%
	Female	178	45.9%
Age	21yrs & below	128	33%
	22-24	159	41%
	25 yrs & above	101	26%
Family type	Nuclear family	222	57.2%
	Joint family	166	42.8%
Course	MCA	63	16.5%
	M.Com	64	16%
	M.A. Economics	58	15%
	MBA	76	20%
	MSC Maths	67	17%
	MSC Physics	60	15.5%
Household Income	>Rs.50000	138	36%
	Rs.50000-100000	134	34%
	<Rs.100000	116	30%
Decision making	Myself	164	42.3%
	Parents	103	26.5%
	Both	121	31.2%

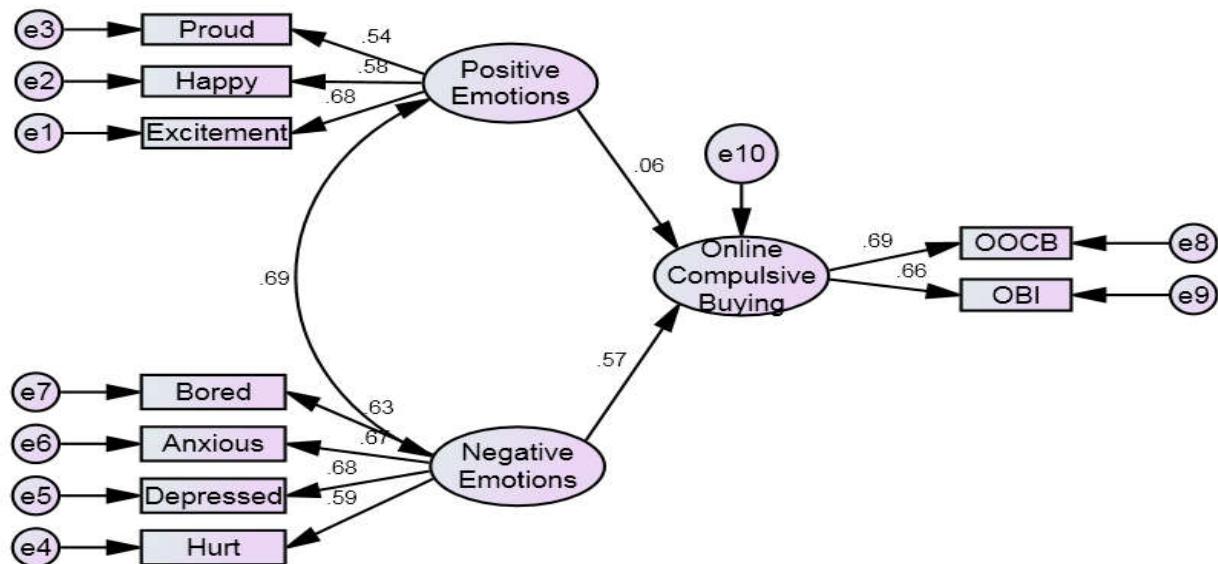
Note: n=388

**Inference analysis:** To test the gender difference on online compulsive buying with emotions among college students.

**Showing the difference on gender with emotions and online compulsive buying:** From the above Table: 2 the mean difference between male and female are subjected to compare with one another.

**Table 2.** *z - Test on gender with emotions and online compulsive buying*

Constructs	Gender	Mean	SD	Z-value	Two-tailed P value	Results
Positive emotions	Male	18.69	4.05	-2.43	0.016*	(H4) Rejected
	Female	19.70	4.07			
Negative emotions	Male	34.55	7.50	-1.06	0.293 <sup>②</sup>	(H5) Accepted
	Female	35.32	6.94			
Online compulsive buying	Male	48.38	9.38	-2.52	0.012*	(H6) Rejected
	Female	50.80	9.45			

**Figure 1.** Proposed model

The p-value of positive emotion is 0.016 and online compulsive buying is 0.012. So it is clear that H4 and H6 is rejected and proved, there is a significant difference between male and female on these constructs at 5% significance level. Whereas in the case of negative emotion, it is not significant, the p-value is greater than the 0.05. Hence H5 is accepted, we can conclude male and female have a difference in the positive emotion and online compulsive buying among students but they react same in the case of negative emotion.

## DISCUSSION

The current study intends to examine the relationship between positive and negative emotions on online compulsive buying. Ronald J. Faber and Gary A. Christenson (1996) carried out the study on compulsive buyers with experienced extreme moods (both positive and negative), at the time of shopping. The result shows compulsive buyers were more prone to move from negative to positive moods. Hence the findings suggest that compulsive buyers may be using buying behavior to manage undesirable mood states. However, in this current study the result shows that positive and negative emotions were positively influenced on online compulsive buying. In addition to that the influencing of negative emotion is more than the positive emotions towards online compulsive buying. Adhwa Hasmin hussain (2012) in the recent study carried with 100 postgraduate students at University Utara Malaysia to investigate differences in demographic factors on online compulsive buying behavior. The result shows that there is no significant difference on all demographic factors. Finally, in this current study the gender difference in online compulsive buying and positive emotions were not having the similarity in their buying intentions Postgraduate students.

Whereas the form of negative emotions, which is having similarity in their buying intentions. This study is limited due to some methodological concerns. Hence, this result cannot be generalized but it provides an outline on this concern. Further studies can be conducted on developing countries because of limited studies were concentrated on this issues. Lastly, the outcome of the current study is expected that it helps in the e-marketer point of view, whereas of the college students it creates awareness on this matter.

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