

A Psychological Study of Gender-Wise Relationship Between Personality Traits and Compulsive Shopping

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Abstract

Purpose: Relationships between personality traits and shopping addiction were investigated.

Methodology: A total of 228 people completed a study assessing their personalities and shopping habits.

Findings: Four personality factors positively correlate with compulsive shopping: extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness to experience. It was shown that CBT was favourably associated with extraversion and adversely associated with conscientiousness. In conclusion, impulsive shopping behaviour was associated with several favourable character qualities.

Conclusion- According to the results, extraversion is the most highly regarded personality attribute, while openness to experience is the most poorly appreciated. Women were more likely than males to suffer from shopping addiction.

Keywords: Big five personality, compulsive buying, personality traits.

I. Introduction

As a result of their purchases, consumers form opinions. You must evaluate your previous ones before you go on to your next purchase. Because of this, the function of consumer decision systems is crucial for products. Many factors, including customer demographics, individuality, context, history, and more, play a role in how the system functions. How someone acts is determined by who they are as a person. Learning about life's happenings relies heavily on one's unique character. Consumer behaviour might be affected by psychological variables. Buy-obsessiveness is a poor consumer habit. Shopaholics struggle to rein in their compulsive tendencies. Some make it a point to constantly challenge themselves by trying something new. One term for these individuals is "those who want diversity." Relationships between variety-seeking and other factors may be listed, including personality, behaviour patterns, and purchasing decision-making process. Some elements pique curiosity about personality and the need for novelty have been the subject of previous studies. Research on topics such as consumer attitudes [1], impulse purchases [2], business plans [3], online addictions [4], emotional states [5] and monetary hedonism and spending [6] provide examples. In our research, we looked at how a state's Big Five personality traits correlate with shopping addiction and novelty seeking. To be more precise, Fayez and Labib [7] looked at the influence of the "big five" personality traits on compulsive purchasing.

Researchers studying consumer behaviour have increased interest in compulsive purchasing in recent years (e.g., [8]). This disorder of compulsive shopping is a symptom of deeper emotional issues. Persons who suffer from anxiety or depression may participate in compulsive shopping because they find temporary solace in the act. Thus, compulsive shopping indicates a coping mechanism to alleviate the emotional strain and poor self-esteem resulting from these issues [8]. Affective psychological states (such as pleasure, excitement, discomfort, and guilt) [9] are typically the result of consumers getting what they want. However, when consumers lose control over buying and consume too much, the consequences are broader and include social and budgetary problems [10].

In patients with compulsive purchasing disorder (see [8]), shopping consumes a disproportionate amount of time and energy, and the individual feels an irresistible need to add new items to their collection [11] constantly. The current research looks at the mental causes of compulsive shopping [12]. Specifically, this study investigates the effects of core qualities like hedonistic shopping experiences and cardinal traits like neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, conscientiousness, and agreeableness on a surface feature like compulsive purchasing. We hypothesize that hedonistic shopping experiences [13], a central trait, is the theoretical mechanism behind the

effects of cardinal traits (i.e., neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, conscientiousness, and agreeableness) on the surface trait - compulsive buying (i.e., hedonistic shopping experiences). By delving into the hedonistic aspects of shopping, we account for the sentiments shoppers are likely to be experiencing and the good feelings they will get from making purchases [14]. We acknowledge the diverse ways in which consumers experience pleasure while shopping [13], the innate hedonistic need for experiencing adventure and the excitement sought during shopping, and the irrational and impulsive thinking that often occurs during shopping as we investigate the mediating influence of hedonistic shopping experiences have on compulsive buying. Since hedonic consumption delivers and enhances happy sentiments and desired emotions [15], it is expected to increase compulsive buying [8], as it helps consumers to escape from evil thoughts about self and negative states (such as sadness).

Objectives: -

- Investigate the relationship between personality traits and compulsive shopping.
- Assess the gender-wise impact of personality traits and compulsive shopping.

II.Literature Review

Stress, unhappiness, and despair are exacerbated in those who shop compulsively [16], which may contribute to emotional instability [17]. A more comprehensive range of unpleasant emotions are experienced by the less emotionally stable (e.g., insecurity, failure, and embarrassment; [16]). They are less content with their lives [18] and more inclined to complain [19]. As a "compensatory technique" [20] for dealing with distressing emotions, compulsive purchasing is joint among those who experience it regularly [21]. A higher propensity for compulsive purchasing [14] may be expected in neurotic people, given that neuroticism is associated with emotional fragility and instability [22].

In addition to being a significant predictor of variety seeking [23] and characterizing persons through a lens of curiosity and imagination [24], openness to experience also leads to the development of consumers' enhanced love for purchasing activities [25]. The need for novelty and an inability to find satisfaction in the things one currently has may lead to compulsive shopping. This is because a need for novelty [26] and aesthetic stimulation [20], such as when perusing a shop full of visually beautiful objects, are linked to a need for new intellectual experiences. Accordingly, several other sensory inputs may later serve as cues for impulsive purchases. Interestingly, customers who are more receptive to new experiences are more susceptible to their emotions [27]. These shoppers are already restless and impatient due to their need for novelty and new experiences [28]. Those more receptive to new experiences have a greater need for novelty and a greater appreciation for the aesthetic qualities of things. As a result, they are more likely to make frequent purchases (e.g., [29]).

Andreassen et al. [20] and Mowen and Spears [16] found a negative correlation between conscientiousness (defined as responsibility, accuracy, self-discipline, and competence) and compulsive shopping. Indeed, highly conscientious people who do not suffer from compulsive shopping tend to shop less impulsively [25]. Contrarily, a person's level of compulsive shopping may increase if they are not very competent. According to this theory, irresponsible consuming habits are at the root of compulsive shopping (e.g., consumers do not carefully plan buying activities or control their financial budgets). This is because people who are not conscientious put little stock on meeting their own and other people's duties [20].

Furthermore, such people are unable to plan ahead [30], have a reduced degree of self-control [21], and put off important tasks until later [31–32]. The extent to which such actions result in compulsive purchasing depends on the individual's capacity for self-regulation [33]. Similarly, being careful about your spending may help you save money in the long run. Consequently, agreeableness is inversely connected with compulsive shopping, and the more conscientious a consumer is, the less likely they are to shop impulsively. Compulsive shoppers may be more likely to avoid arguments than the general population; nonetheless, their actions go counter to the most fundamental features of agreeableness, like compassion, politeness, and friendliness ([34] see also [20]). Being agreeable (as opposed to hostile) may help you avoid developing harmful behavioural addictions. Charming people, who are more driven to maintain positive social relationships, should show less of a propensity for compulsive shopping, given that excessive buying is not socially acceptable conduct [35]. (see [36]). On the other hand, those with a tendency for compulsive shopping tend to be less pleasant in general, regarding traits like trust, altruism, openness, and humility. Low levels of agreeableness should exacerbate compulsive purchasing due to

the low levels of kindness in relationships and the lack of directness and humility in persons with low agreeableness.

Strong fantasizing [14] and seeking thrill [37] in the purchase process are linked to compulsive buying. Therefore, obsessive purchasers get personal value from their shopping [14]. For similar reasons, hedonistic shoppers "[purchase] so that they may [38] shop, not shopping so that they can buy" [39]. Compulsive shoppers seek out hedonistic shopping experiences bolstered by the elevated level of arousal and emotions, including the urge to daydream [40]. Hedonic value [13] is created by the act of purchase itself, which acts as a 'climax' to the buying process [41]. Buying occurs not out of a genuine or practical need for the goods but somewhat out of an illogical yearning for the hedonic pleasure of shopping. That is to say, customers who place a high value on novelty, excitement, and gratification when shopping or who shop primarily for the hedonic experience it provides are more prone to develop a shopping addiction [42]. Retail therapy is a kind of hedonism for obsessive shoppers [14]. Those who appreciate the good emotions associated with shopping are most likely to react favourably to visual cues like advertisements and photos of items (see [43]). As a result, they may be more prone to develop shopping addictions.

III. Method

Using the Google form platform, an online survey measuring the "Five Big" personality traits, compulsive buying, and measures of selected demographic characteristics was conducted in India between November and December of 2022. In the research, purposive random sampling was employed. Further, 250 responses were gathered, of which 228 were used in the study. The response rate of the collected data was 91.2% of 54 questions. The average age of the sampled respondents was between 31 and 40 years (38.6%), followed by 21 to 30 years (24.6%), 41 to 50 years (19.7%), and over 50 years (17.6%). There were 72.8% of men and 27.2% of women present. Most of these respondents (48.2%) were from joint families, while 42.1% were from nuclear families. There were only 9.6% of responders who were single. In addition, the annual income of 83.3% of respondents falls between 10 and 20 lakhs.

IV. Results

The study adopted multivariate regression analysis to assess the relationship between personality traits and compulsive shopping. Additionally, the split method was adopted to evaluate gender impact on the association between the five big personality traits and compulsive buying. For results computation, SPSS software was adopted. The study used exploratory factor analysis to assess the factors associated with the big five personality traits. According to the results, the KMO value of the 44 statements on big five personality traits was 0.904, higher than the tolerance limit of 0.70 (Watkins, 2018) (Marley Wayne Watkins, 2018). If the KMO value is lower than 0.50, it is considered unacceptable (Hair et al., 2010). Further, the chi-square value of the Bartlett test was 7492.695 with a significance value of 0.000, Lower than the tolerance limit of 0.05. Hence the data was found acceptable for factor identification.

Table 2. KMO & Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		0.904
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	7492.695
	df	903
	Sig.	0.000

Principal component analysis was used to generate rotated component matrices later in the research. From 44 statements, five significant factors were extracted. Neuroticism (NEUT) was the first factor of the big five personality traits, with a loading of 80.7% and reliability of 0.931. The second component was open to experience (OTE), with a loading of 77.3 and a reliability of 0.90. The third factor, agreeableness (AGB), had a loading of 74.6 per cent and reliability of 0.929. The fourth and fifth factors were conscientiousness (CON) and extraversion

(EXTV), with factor loadings of 73.4% and 72.2%, respectively. Overall the data could explain 65.6% of the variance. The eigenvalue of the listed five factors was higher than 1.

Table 3. Component Matrix of Big 5 Personality Trait Factors

Statements	AGB	CON	NEUT	EXTV	OTE	Variance Explained	Factor Loading	Reliability
Is sometimes rude to others	0.799					12.90%	74.6%	0.929
Is generally trusting	0.795							
Can be cold and aloof	0.792							
Tends to find fault with others	0.791							
Is helpful and unselfish with others	0.775							
Starts quarrels with others	0.765							
Is considerate and kind to almost	0.750							
Likes to cooperate with others	0.648							
Has a forgiving nature	0.600							
Can be somewhat careless		0.802				12.71%	73.4%	0.932
Is a reliable worker		0.778						
Makes plans and follows through with them		0.778						
Does a thorough job		0.771						
Tends to be lazy		0.765						
Perseveres until the task is finished		0.732						
Does things efficiently		0.711						
Is easily distracted		0.646						
Tends to be disorganized		0.627						
Is depressed, blue			0.843			13.92%	80.7%	0.931
Can be moody			0.834					
Gets nervous easily			0.830					
Worries a lot			0.813					
Is emotionally stable, not easily upset			0.813					
Remains calm in tense situations			0.791					
Is relaxed and handles stress well			0.782					
Can be tense			0.745					
Generates much enthusiasm				0.816		12.53%	72.6%	0.916
Tends to be quiet				0.783				
Has an assertive personality				0.780				
Is talkative				0.775				
Is outgoing, sociable				0.773				

Is reserved				0.743					
Is sometimes shy, inhibited				0.707					
Is full of energy				0.681					
Is curious about many different things				0.675					
Values artistic and aesthetic experiences					0.809	13.58%	77.3%		
Prefers routine work					0.798				
Likes to reflect, play with ideas					0.788				
Has an active imagination					0.785				
Is sophisticated in art, music, or literature					0.780				
Is original, comes up with new ideas					0.771				
Has few artistic interests					0.730				
Is inventive					0.722				
									0.907

Further, to assess the relationship between personality traits and compulsive buying, multivariate regression analysis was adopted wherein personality traits such as AGB, CON, NEUT, EXTV, and OTE were the predictor variables. Compulsive buying (CB) was a dependent variable. In the study results, the effect of personality traits on CB was 92%. However, individually, except for CON, all other personality traits had shown a significant impact on CB. Here in the results, the highest effect was from extroversion (73%), followed by openness to experience (22.9%), agreeableness (13%), and neuroticism (9.6%) (table 4). Here data also infers that if a consumer puts 1% effort into EXTV, compulsive shopping will go up to 76%.

In the same way, if a consumer puts 1% of effort into OTE, then compulsive shopping will go up to 24.4% and so on. According to (Kiran et al., 2016) social attention theory, the critical characteristic of extraversion is the desire to attract, maintain, and enjoy social attention. Fundamental to social engagement is the possibility of receiving a reward. Therefore, if a person expresses positive feelings such as passionate and eager enjoyment, vitality, and excitement, they are viewed positively and attract the attention of others. This favourable response from others motivates extraverts to participate in other extraverted conduct, which may eventually lead to impulsion and then compulsion, which further leads to buying.

On the other hand, OTE is associated with compulsive purchasing because these individuals are more impulsive. In theory, given by (Kiran et al., 2016), neuroticism, openness to experience and agreeableness are the only three personality traits related to CB. However, the results declared the fourth personality trait, i.e., EXTV, which is also an essential component of compulsive buying.

Conscientiousness means being cautious or diligent. It is the desire to perform a task well and take responsibility. These individuals are typically productive and organized instead of being laid-back and disorganized. These people are less inclined to make rash decisions. According to (Fayaz et al., 2021), conscientious purchasers are more circumspect and organized and score lower on compulsive buying.

Further, a study by (Joshnloo et al., 2012) revealed that conscientious people could regulate impulse feelings and delay gratification. According to (Petter et al., 2003), a negative correlation exists between compulsive buying and conscientiousness. Hence this skill discourages them from engaging in desired shopping. Therefore the research revealed a relationship between the five big personality traits and compulsive shopping, except for conscientiousness.

Table 4. Significant 5 Personality Trait impact on Compulsive Buying

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	F	Sig.	R-Square
	B	Std. Error	Beta					
(Constant)	-0.651	0.146		-4.448	0.000	245.61	0.000	0.920
EXTV	0.760	0.033	0.730	23.376	0.000			
AGB	0.128	0.034	0.130	3.765	0.000			
CON	0.048	0.034	0.050	1.381	0.169			
NEUT	0.104	0.031	0.096	3.378	0.001			
OTE	0.244	0.032	0.229	7.653	0.000			

In addition, according to the gender-level impact of the link between the five major personality traits and compulsive buying, women were more likely to be compulsive buyers than men. At a significance level of 5%, the r-square value for men was 91.5%, whereas, for women, it was 98.7%. According to the results, women were more prone to obsessive purchasing than men. The F-value value for males was 164.142, and for females was 407.811 with a significance value of 0.000. Besides that, data also revealed that 97.3% of females with extroversion personality traits did compulsive buying, compared to other personality traits such as agreeableness, neuroticism, openness, and conscientiousness. In all cases, extroversion was found to be more strong personality trait when it comes to compulsive buying, followed by openness to experience, agreeableness, and neuroticism.

Table 5. Gender-wise Big 5 Personality Trait Impact on Compulsive Buying

Gender		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	F	Sig.	R-square	
		B	Std. Error	Beta						
Male	1	(Constant)	-0.908	0.182		-4.991	0.000	164.14	0.000	0.915
		EXTV	0.699	0.038	0.671	18.292	0.000			
		AGB	0.174	0.043	0.181	4.068	0.000			
		CON	0.041	0.044	0.043	0.940	0.349			
		NEUT	0.170	0.037	0.157	4.545	0.000			
		OTE	0.302	0.041	0.256	7.312	0.000			
Female	1	(Constant)	0.132	0.125		1.019	0.294			
		EXTV	1.016	0.033	0.973	30.943	0.000			

AGB	-0.017	0.027	-0.016	-0.641	0.524	407.81	0.000	0.987
CON	-0.023	0.028	-0.024	-0.830	0.410			
NEUT	-0.048	0.026	-0.043	-1.827	0.073			
OTE	0.034	0.026	0.038	1.349	0.183			

V. Discussion

Even though personality is a significant factor in consumer purchases and decision-making (e.g., [2]), the importance of personality characteristics in explaining compulsive purchasing behaviour [14], significantly as amplified by hedonistic shopping experiences (see [13]), has been understudied. In response to this need, the current study employs a hierarchical model of personality [44] to examine the specific relationships between the "Big Five Factors" (the "cardinal characteristics") and the "surface trait" (compulsive purchasing) of hedonism in shopping (the "central trait"). By doing so, we build upon previous studies [20] that found a clear correlation between several prominent personality qualities and the need to shop. However, European studies (e.g., [20]) tested the personality-compulsive buying relationship in a clinical- or community-based sample of women or students. They found that compulsive buying is positively associated with neuroticism and negatively associated with agreeableness and conscientiousness. Other Asian investigations did not support these results (see [45]).

Another important finding of this research is the recognition of gender as a moderating factor in the connections under scrutiny. In particular, we build on prior studies showing that gender differences exist in the setting of compulsive purchase behaviour, including materialistic ideals, financial perspectives, and pleasure (e.g., [46]). Faithful women show more compulsiveness while shopping than men [46], are more likely to make impulsive purchases to control their emotions and moods [47], and have a more pronounced propensity for hedonistic purchases. According to our mediational hypothesis, hedonistic retail experiences are significant in this setting. Men are less affected by neuroticism, extraversion, and openness to experience, which makes women more susceptible to the pleasure and satisfaction of shopping. This conclusion is consistent with the idea that shopping is something that women, but not men, should take pleasure in, as was said above. A collection of universal psychological qualities (i.e., neuroticism, extraversion, and openness to experience) promote hedonistic shopping experiences, particularly for women, and lead to compulsive purchasing, regardless of gender standards. In this setting, women's compulsive purchasing behaviour benefits from the uplifting and energizing effects of hedonistic shopping experiences. Thus, women and men have distinct purchasing priorities and habits, in addition to their inherent differences in character. Women, according to a new analysis of gender differences, are more receptive and sensitive to communication processes and marketing messages, and they buy with less caution than men do. Because of this, they are more likely to engage in hedonistic purchasing and develop a compulsive need to shop. The present study builds on this understanding by investigating the link between customers' personalities, hedonic shopping experiences, and compulsive purchasing, focusing on the role played by a mediating mechanism (i.e., consumers' hedonic shopping experiences).

VI. Conclusion

This research aimed to see whether there was a connection between certain personality traits and compulsive shopping. According to the results, extraversion is the most highly regarded personality attribute, while openness to experience is the most poorly appreciated attribute. Women were more likely than males to suffer from shopping addiction.

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