



**Relationship of Compulsive Buying Behaviour with Materialism, Self-evaluations and
Attitude towards Self among College Going Students**

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ABSTRACT

The occupancy of compulsive buying is deeply rooted in the present scenarios and has been diverted into various aspects that could be materialism, self-evaluation, and attitude towards self. Compulsive buying behaviour gets influenced by other various aspects which are seen in personal vicinity. It has been characterised by both compulsive and impulsive behaviour. Materialism influences a consumer's behaviour by evaluating their life success with other materialistic possessions and weighing them above anything. The comparison with materialistic possessions makes them enter the vicious cycle of repetitive behaviour again. Self-evaluation and attitude toward self can have a great impact with someone's obsession for buying clothes as they both are linked to a person's self-concept. The lower the sense of self the higher probability to attach towards materialistic possessions and finding validation from all the external sources.

The research aimed to study the relationship of compulsive buying behaviour, materialism, self-evaluation and attitude towards self among college going students. Standardised tools were used to measure compulsive buying behaviour with materialism, self-evaluation, and attitude towards self among college going students. A total sample of 100 (50 males, 50 females) in the age 18-25 years were collected. The results showed that compulsive buying behaviour and attitude towards self, materialism and self-evaluation was negatively correlated.

Keywords: Compulsive Buying Behaviour, Materialism, Self-Evaluation, Attitude towards Self, College going Students

Introduction

With the increasing involvement of college students in maximalist, a broad spectrum of behaviours is depicted, which is essentially a predisposition for explaining compulsive behaviours. Their participation is contingent on several factors, such as being influenced by their surroundings, the branding of luxurious and prestigious labels, the fear of missing out (fear of missing out), and many other complexities that bind them, whether consciously or unconsciously.

Compulsive Buying Behaviour

Compulsive buying behaviour is being characterised by the constant preoccupation of getting something which even wouldn't add value, it could even pose issues in accordance with the other aspects of their lives. According to the APA PsyNet (n.d.) as "repetitive and seemingly purposeful behaviours that are performed according to rules or in a stereotyped fashion." Faber

and O' Guinn, (1989) described "compulsive buying can be defined as chronic, repetitive purchasing that is induced by negative events and feelings."

Individuals in O'Guinn and Faber's (1989) study either worked professionally or self-identified as "problem buyers." According to the findings of this seminal study, self-identified problem buyers had higher obsessive-compulsive scores, lower self-esteem scores, and greater fantasy-imaginative levels than consumers in the general population at large. The overall population who did not identify as problem purchasers. Evidence from this original study also showed that obsessive purchasers who have unfavourable financial and emotional effects as a result of their purchasing habits. In addition, results indicate that compulsive purchasers who did not have a larger desire to preserve or own obsessively obtained products than non-compulsive consumers.

In a study done by Rose (2007), narcissism was found to be positively linked to compulsive shopping among college students. Moreover, their findings indicated that compulsive shopping and narcissism are comparable in the sense that both concepts have shown positive associations with materialism and negative relationship with impulse control.

Materialism

Acquired possessions provide an individual a sense of contentment since they get them closer to the imagined ideal self-image and the desired level of life. According to Richins and Dawson (1992) that an individual's attachment to worldly objects in order to reach desired states. Schiffman and Kanuk (2007) defined materialism as the focal point of an individual's identity and achievement.

Researchers such as Belk (1985); Kasser and Ahuvia (2002); Sheldon and Krieger (2014) have consistently demonstrated that materialism has a detrimental association with psychological wellbeing or life happiness. Kasser and Ahuvia (2002) argue that “materialistic ambitions, even when pursued successfully, are relatively empty in terms of potential wellbeing benefits.” According to their findings, extremely materialistic business students in Singapore expressed poor self-actualization, increased sadness, and anxiety. Other scholars are debating whether unhappiness in life is the source or the outcome of materialism. According to Flouri (2004), those who are unsatisfied with their lives may seek satisfaction through materialistic means.

Sirgy (1999) stated that male's stronger interest and females' greater interest in people, lead academics to believe that males are more materialistic than females. Men are more materialistic than women (Browne & Kaldenberg, 1997; Eastman et al., 1997; Flouri, 2004; Segal & Podoshen, 2013). According to Roberts and Clement (2007), males place a higher value on material belongings than women do. But Noguti and Bokeyar (2014), when women are unsure about their self-concept, they outperform males in materialism.

Core Self-Evaluation

Self-evaluation refers to one's perceived social assessment of oneself. It is the ongoing process of defining personal growth and advancement, which can be influenced by the actions of others. Tesser (1988) developed the self-evaluation maintenance hypothesis.

According to Judge (1997), core self-evaluation is a person's subjective bottom line judgement on their total self-worth, talents and competences.

Moreover, Bandura (1986); LaRose and Eastine (2002), the buying behaviour is categorised as impulsive, compulsive or addictive based on self-regulation tendencies. The lowest amount of self-regulation results in the greatest degree of consumer sensitivity to purchasing, which is categorised as addiction. It is the most dangerous. The highest degree of self-regulation tendencies corresponds to the lowest amount of consumer receptivity to purchasing, which is impulsiveness. This is the least dangerous.

Lucas and Koff (2013) assesses how likely people with high levels of self-perceived beauty were to participate in impulse purchases. High levels of self-perceived beauty, in particular, were found to be connected with a lack of premeditation purchasing on the spur of the moment. It would be interesting to study by evaluating the association of self-perceived beauty with compulsive purchasing as a key variable rather than impulsive buying behaviours are similar, prospective findings may differ across the two scenarios.

Attitude towards Self

Attitude towards oneself and others is a significant predictor of social adjustment. A favourable attitude towards oneself in terms of acceptance of oneself and acknowledgment results in positive attitude towards others such as things, situations and people. It also leads to the growth of appropriate social skills.

According to Eagly and Chaiken (1993), an attitude is a psychological tendency expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favour or disfavour. Mowen and Spears (1999) stated that compulsive shopping frequently causes emotional instability and increases anxiety, melancholy and depression. Less emotionally stable persons also feel a broader range of

unpleasant emotions such as-insecurity, failure etc. They are more unsatisfied with life and are more inclined to complain.

According to social attention theory (Ashton et al., 2002), extraversion is a human tendency to attract, keep and enjoy the attention of other people in society. Extraverted people seek possible social benefits and display positive feelings such as happiness, enthusiasm and excitement more strongly. Such people have a craving for attention and reactions from others, which motivates them to engage in more extraverted behaviour. When persons seek excessive social or external stimulation, extraverted behaviour can lead to compulsive behaviour.

Methodology

Purpose

The purpose of the research is to study compulsive buying behaviour, materialism, attitude towards self and self-evaluation among college going students.

Hypothesis

- Compulsive buying behaviour is expected to be significantly positively correlated with materialism and self - evaluation.
- Compulsive buying behaviour is expected to be significantly negatively correlated with attitude towards self.
- Materialism is expected to be significantly positively correlated with self-evaluation & attitude towards self.

- Self-evaluation is expected to be significantly positively correlated with attitude towards self.

Sample

The sample consists of college going students including undergraduate and postgraduate. In the age range of 18-25 years, the participants are from Chandigarh, Mohali and Panchkula. The sampling technique of the present research is of random sampling technique, a form of probability sampling approach is simple random sampling. When constructing a basic random sample, each unit has an equal chance or probability of being chosen from the population being researched.

Measures

Richmond Compulsive Buying Scale: The questionnaire was developed by Richmond (2008). The scale has 6 items. The responses are given on a 7-point Likert - type scale. Ranging from 7 - Strongly agree to 1 - Strongly Disagree.

Materialism Scale: The questionnaire was developed by Richins and Dawson (1992). There are 18 items, and it measures subdimensions such as success, centrality and happiness. The responses are given on a 5-point Likert - type scale ranging from 5 - strongly agree to 1 - strongly disagree. Some of the items are reverse scored.

Attitude Towards Self (ATS): The questionnaire was developed by Carver (1988). There are 10 items, and it has three constructs holding overly high standards, the tendency to be self-critical at any failure to perform well and the tendency to generalise from a single failure to the broader

sense of self-worth. The responses are given on a 5-point Likert - type scale ranging from 5 - strongly agree to 1 - strongly disagree. Some of the items are reverse scored.

Core Self Evaluation Scale: The questionnaire was developed by Judge (1997). There are 12 items. The responses are given on 5-point Likert - type scale ranging from 5 - strongly agree to 1 - strongly disagree. Some of the items are reverse scored. The scale has good psychometric properties.

Procedure

To investigate the relationship between compulsive buying behaviour, materialism, attitude towards self and self-evaluation among college going students, the sample was selected. Informed consent was taken and proper instructions were given to collect data. Standardised psychological tests were administered to the participants.

Analysis of Data

The raw scores were tabulated and subjected to various statistical analyses by using Jamovi. Keeping in view the objectives of the study, statistical analysis was conducted. Means, standard deviations correlation analysis t test was carried out.

Result

Table 1

Mean and Standard Deviation of 100 college going students with variables compulsive buying behavior, materialism, self-evaluation and attitude towards self with their respective sub dimensions

	Mean	Standard Deviation	N
Compulsive Buying Behaviour	18.4	8.11	100
Attitude Towards Self	34.1	7.25	100
Self-Criticism	10.4	2.73	100
High Standards	11.0	2.90	100
Generalisation	12.5	3.42	100
Self-Evaluation	38.3	7.38	100
Self Esteem	10.3	2.79	100
Neuroticism	7.15	1.74	100
Generalised Self Efficacy	10.8	3.01	100
Locus of Control	10.1	3.33	100
Materialism	52.4	7.01	100
Success	16.3	3.78	100
Centrality	20.6	3.37	100
Happiness	15.6	2.28	100

Table 2

Correlation Matrix of compulsive buying behavior, materialism, self-evaluation and attitude towards self with their respective sub dimensions

	CB B	ATS	HS	SC	SE	SE (2)	N (2)	GS	LO C	M	SS	CS	H P
CB B	—												
AT S	- 0.09 7	—											
HS	- 0.09 1	0.58 ** 3 *	—										
SC	- 0.11 7	0.84 ** 0 *	0.30 * 3 *	—									
SE	- 0.02 8	0.07 4	0.07 4	0.02 9	—								
SE (2)	0.00 6	0.08 6	0.09 1	0.00 0	0.82 ** 2 *	—							
N (2)	- 0.00 6	0.04 1	- 0.05 7	0.05 2	0.42 ** 9 *	0.29 ** 6	—						
GS	- 0.10 5	- 0.04 8	- 0.08 2	- 0.00 5	0.66 ** 2 *	0.37 ** 4 *	0.17 7	—					

LO	0.03	0.10	0.19 *	0.03	0.70 **	0.49 **	0.01	0.15	—			
C	0	6	7	2	2 *	5 *	6	5				
M	0.06	0.02	0.18	0.00	0.00	0.02	0.06	-	-	—		
	4	3	9	9	5	4	3	0.03	0.01			
								0	9			
SS	-	0.03	0.18	-	0.01	-	-	0.02	0.01	0.80 **	—	
	0.02	8	4	0.00	5	0.00	0.01	9	4	5 *		
	3			4		4	4					
CS	0.06	0.01	0.13	0.03	0.09	0.13	0.15	0.03	-	0.79 **	0.44 **	—
	4	7	8	3	2	2	1	7	0.01	9 *	2 *	
									7			
HP	0.13	-	0.06	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.53 **	0.15	0.23 *
	3	0.01	7	0.01	0.13	0.10	0.00	0.18	0.05	8 *	7	8
		6		3	9	9	6	6	2			

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Discussion

The results found that attitude towards self has a positive correlation with high standards ($r = 0.583$, $p < .001$) self-criticism ($r = 0.840$, $p < .001$). Moreover, high standards is positively correlated to self-criticism ($r = 0.303$, $p < .01$) and locus of control ($r = 0.197$, $p < .05$). In addition to this, self-evaluation and self-esteem ($r = 0.822$, $p < .001$), neuroticism ($r = 0.429$, $p < .001$), generalised self-efficacy ($r = 0.662$, $p < .001$) and locus of control ($r = 0.702$, $p < .001$) are positively correlated to each other.

However, neuroticism ($r = 0.296$, $p < .01$), generalised self-efficacy ($r = 0.374$, $p < .001$) and locus of control ($r = 0.495$, $p < .001$) are positively correlated to self-esteem. Materialism is positively correlated with success ($r = 0.805$, $p < .001$), certainty ($r = 0.799$, $p < .001$) and happiness ($r = 0.538$,

$p < .001$). Success is positively correlated with certainty ($r = 0.442$, $p < .001$) and certainty is correlated to happiness ($r = 0.238$, $p < 0.5$).

According to Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg Halton (1981), the researchers believed that there is not enough if things draw our attention excessively. There is enough cerebral energy remaining to nurture engagement with the rest of the world. The danger of focusing solely on a goal of physical consumption – or materialism – is that one neglects the cultivation of the self, relationships with others, or larger objectives that affect life.

In contrast to popular studies that emphasised a positive and substantial relationship between materialism and compulsive buying behaviour such as those of Dittmar (2005) and Ruvio et al. (2014), the study found that such a correlation is minor except for the happiness sub component. This means that customer's materialistic ideals may not necessarily lead to addictive behaviour. Furthermore, this study demonstrated that there is a negligible and negative relationship between compulsive buying behaviour and life satisfaction. According to this study, when consumers focus their aspirations on belongings or see them as evidence of success, it may not affect their overall life pleasure or motivate them to buy more products, as Dittmar (2005) suggests.

Conclusion

Compulsive buying behaviour is deeply rooted in today's scenarios which have various generational gaps and has been in another way leading to the path of materialism, self-evaluation and attitude towards self. Compulsive buying behaviour is characterised by constant thought or compulsive factor towards buying something which wouldn't be a necessary purchase while materialism is weighing life possessions with materialistic possessions which would be greatly influenced by how they perceive themselves and how it would be creating an impact on finding

happiness, defining satisfaction, and definitely bringing changes in their buying behaviour. The research was aimed to study the relationship between compulsive buying behaviour with materialism, self – evaluation and attitude towards self among college going students. Standardised tools were opted to measure compulsive buying behaviour with materialism, self-evaluation and attitude towards self among college going students. A total sample 100 (50 males, 50 females) in the age 18 - 25 years were collected. The results found out compulsive buying behaviour and attitude towards self, materialism and self-evaluation are negatively correlated, whereas materialism and attitude towards self are positively associated.

The sample size which was opted was only restricted to one vicinity which could have been expanded to the other surroundings also giving a wider view, the area chosen for study was only restricted Chandigarh, Mohali and Panchkula. The sample size which was chosen should have extended a little which would have provided greater insight in studying the gender differences. The sample population which was targeted was of college going students, but the sample should have been received from those who were earning and those who weren't so that the consumer behaviour could have been understood in the resourceful manner. The predictors weren't studied in the study, but could have provided a better insight.

The methods which could be opted for making people overcome their compulsive buying behaviour is through identifying triggers such as what factor could lead to walking towards buying something which would not be able to add something valuable. It could be expressed in emotional triggers and environmental triggers. Emotional triggers consist of a constant state of worriedness or episodes of worry, anxiety and boredom while environmental triggers include

shopping malls and internet markets. Individuals can learn to avoid or manage triggers if they are identified in a good course of time. Mindfulness techniques are largely adopted as it helps people control their thoughts, feelings and impulses. Meditation and yoga are practised so that people are able to divert their energy into something channelizing resources, even this will help them rationalise their thoughts and act upon them accordingly. Monetizing money only comes when the expenditure is being managed, so it is told to them to have a cap of their budget so they do not end up spending too much money and again getting involved in the loop hole of compulsive and impulsive buying. These people should definitely look out for help for therapists, family and friends. Therapists can help regulate compulsive shopping and address any underlying emotional issues. Therapists largely opt for CBT as it helps people transform their negative thoughts and behaviour. The various temptations which are present in the surroundings such as avoiding online suffering which can eventually turn into buying something online only. Resisting from the thoughts of spending while being in some exposure such as visiting a shopping mall. Compulsive buying demands a mix of emotional and behavioural techniques. Compulsive buyers can improve their wellbeing with time, effort and assistance.

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