

IMPACT OF MOTIVES ON IMPULSIVITY AND COMPULSIVITY IN COMPULSIVE BUYING BEHAVIOR

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I explored the impact of people's buying motives on the elements of impulsivity and compulsivity that underlie buying behavior in men and women. Participants in the online survey were 809 adults, of whom 71.8% were women, with a history of compulsive buying. The results revealed that buying motives played a larger role in impulsivity and compulsivity in buying behavior in women than it did in men. The enhancement motive influenced impulsivity in both men and women, but the social motive influenced buying behavior in women only. Although compulsivity in both sexes was significantly influenced by enhancement and coping motives, women were influenced more by the enhancement motive whereas men were influenced more by the coping motive. The results suggest that various motives prompt compulsive buyers' behavior. Theoretical and practical implications are discussed.

Keywords: compulsive buying, impulsive buying, impulsivity, compulsivity, enhancement motive, social motive, coping motive, buying motives.

The causes and consequences of compulsive buying behavior are recognized as important issues for consumer researchers and psychiatrists (Dittmar, 2005; Faber & O'Guinn, 1992; McElroy, Keck, Pope, Smith, & Strakowski, 1994; Mueller et al., 2011). Nonetheless, compulsive buying is on an alarming upward trend as a result of skillful marketing and the rising economy worldwide (Müller, Mitchell, & de Zwaan, 2015).

Compulsive buying refers to chronic and repetitive purchasing behavior that becomes a primary response to negative feelings, and provides immediate

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short-term gratification. However, this behavior ultimately harms the individual and/or others (O'Guinn & Faber, 1989). Compulsive buying behavior is driven by internal needs. It is characterized by repetitive inappropriate spending patterns that interfere with the individual's social relationships, work, or role functioning (McElroy et al., 1994; Schlosser, Black, Repertinger, & Freet, 1994). Faber (2004) suggested that the need to escape from negative self-awareness can trigger compulsive buying. Therefore, the focus in contemporary research has generally been on compulsive buying associated with inappropriate reactions to negative situations or emotions (Faber & O'Guinn, 1992; Kellest & Bolton, 2009; Monahan, Black, & Gabel, 1996).

On the other hand, researchers have suggested that compulsive buying is also related to *impulsivity*, that is, the tendency to buy spontaneously, thoughtlessly, and immediately, and to experience pleasure, gratification, and lack of control over the urge to buy, as distinct from *compulsivity*, which is when individuals, with a preoccupation with buying, chronically and repetitively buy in response to negative events or feelings to reduce distress and anxiety. Individuals who exhibit compulsive buying behavior have higher than average impulsivity (Christenson et al., 1994; McElroy et al., 1994). Researchers have suggested that low impulse control seems to be the motivation leading to the problem of compulsive buying (O'Guinn & Faber, 1989; Ridgway, Kukar-Kinney & Monroe, 2008). Billieux, Rochat, Rebetz, and Van der Linden (2008) highlighted the role of impulsivity in compulsive buying. Consumers with strong buying impulsiveness tend to buy spontaneously, thoughtlessly, immediately, and kinetically (Rook & Fisher, 1995) and are vulnerable to external triggers, such as hedonic desires, and the prospect of having fun and experiencing excitement (Hausman, 2000; Rook & Fisher, 1995).

Although the average consumer can also be impulsive in market settings, buyers who lack impulse control over their buying behavior are more likely to be compulsive buyers (Ninan, Rothbaum, Marsteller, Knight, & Eccard, 2000). Thus, not only is compulsive buying negatively related to compulsivity, but it is also related to the pleasure derived from the impulsivity that is associated with general impulse buying. As impulsivity and compulsivity are both important components of compulsive buying (Dubow, Kausch, Blum, Reed, & Bush, 1989), a discussion and understanding of both will provide data to help prevent addictive behavior such as compulsive buying.

Previous researchers have generally focused on female consumers. However, as male consumers are also compulsive buyers (Dittmar, Beattie & Friese, 1995; MacLaren & Best, 2010; Odlaug & Grant, 2010), it is important to explore the influence of impulsivity and compulsivity on the buying motives of both genders so that appropriate solutions to the problem of compulsive buying can be suggested. Therefore, in this study, I examined: (a) compulsive buying behavior

in terms of impulsivity and compulsivity in both men and women, and (b) how this behavior relates to, and affects, their buying motives.

Literature Review and Hypotheses Development

Impulsivity and Compulsivity in Compulsive Buying

Researchers in psychiatric research on impulsivity and compulsivity in compulsive buying have suggested that this behavior is attributable to individuals' impulse control and obsessive–compulsive disorders (Hollander & Allen 2006; McElroy et al., 1994). McElroy et al. reported that 80% of compulsive buyers have high levels of compulsivity, namely, obsessive–compulsive disorders (OCD), and 40% have high impulsivity, namely, impulse control disorders (ICD).

Impulsive features of compulsive buying are evident because compulsive buyers experience irresistible urges, uncontrollable needs, or mounting tension that is relieved only by buying (Christenson et al., 1994). They also experience pleasure after buying (Koran, Faber, Aboujaoude, Large, & Serpe, 2006). As this phenomenon mirrors the patterns of ICD, a lack of impulse control is an important element of compulsive buying.

On the other hand, compulsive buyers with compulsivity traits experience recurrent and intrusive thoughts about buying that can be temporarily reduced by excessive buying (O'Guinn & Faber, 1989). McElroy et al. (1994) described these experiences as OCD that are characterized by obsessive thoughts, preoccupations, and compulsive behavior. OCD causes distress and anxiety and consumes a large amount of time for, and interferes with the everyday functioning of, affected individuals. Therefore, compulsive buying involves both impulsivity and compulsivity.

Buying Motives and Compulsive Buying Behavior

Although researchers have made significant progress in identifying the potential causes of compulsive buying, more research is needed for a deeper understanding of buying motives with regard to compulsive buying behavior. Hassay and Smith (1996) stated that the compulsive consumption motives that have been discussed are physiological (e.g., neurological substrates), environmental (e.g., retail environment), social (e.g., socialization), and psychological (e.g., personality). In addition, Faber and O'Guinn (2008) reported that biological, psychological, and sociological factors can cause compulsive buying. However, these factors are limited in regard to the buying motives of consumers in terms of both impulsivity and compulsivity. Because a unified system that will enable researchers to study compulsivity was lacking, in my study, I used existing research on alcoholism and gambling addictions to establish categories of motives and to access a suitable measure for adaptation. Researchers have used self-reporting questionnaires

such as the Drinking Motives Questionnaire (DMQ; Cooper, Russell, Skinner, & Windle, 1992) and the Gambling Motives Questionnaire (GMQ; Stewart & Zack, 2008) to systematically analyze the factors related to alcoholism and gambling addiction, respectively. Three motives can be used to explain addiction behavior: enhancement (i.e., to increase positive emotions), social (i.e., to increase social affiliation), and coping (i.e., to reduce or avoid negative emotions).

The *enhancement motive* refers to internal positive reinforcement that an individual receives from buying. In particular, the enhancement motive can lead to compulsive behavior to achieve a positive affective state (Cooper et al., 1992; Stewart & Zack, 2008).

The *social motive* refers to external positive reinforcement that an individual receives from buying when socializing with family and friends. The social motive involves buying for social reasons, such as to celebrate a social occasion, or to partake in activities with friends (Stewart & Zack, 2008). Thus, buying that is motivated by social considerations can lead to an increase in quantity and frequency of compulsive buying (Bradizza, Reifman, & Barnes, 1999).

The *coping motive* is associated with buying behavior that is an individual's way of coping with a negative affective state (Cooper et al., 1992; Kuntsche, Knibbe, Gmel, & Engels, 2005; Stewart & Zack, 2008).

It is important to investigate buying motives in both genders, because men and women display different compulsive buying characteristics. Women tend to have a positive attitude toward shopping and the social interaction associated with buying (Campbell, 2000). Dittmar et al. (1995) reported that women tend to buy symbolic and self-expressive items associated with their appearance and emotional aspects of self (e.g., for pleasure, to cheer themselves up), whereas men tend to impulsively buy instrumental and leisure goods that are associated with independence and activity.

Demographic Variables and Compulsive Buying

O'Guinn and Faber (1989) found a negative association between age and compulsive buying in a sample of U.S. adults. Dittmar (2005) also described this negative relationship in a survey of British consumers, and Otero-López and Pol (2013) reported a slightly negative association between age and compulsive buying in Spanish consumers. In regard to marital status, Khare (2013) found that consumers who are not married are likely to purchase products to indicate their social status, and may be careless in their purchase decisions. Marriage confers responsibility on the individual and curbs impulsive tendencies (Khare, 2013).

Education and income have also been identified as important factors affecting compulsive buying (Khare, 2013; O'Guinn & Faber, 1989). Education and income are related and positively affect consumers' propensity to purchase products to demonstrate their social status (Khare, 2013). Therefore, I proposed the following hypotheses:

Hypotheses 1a-1b: Levels of buying impulsivity (a) and compulsivity (b) will be significantly higher in women than they will be in men.

Hypotheses 1c-1e: Levels of the buying motives of enhancement (c), social (d), and coping (e) will be significantly higher in women than they will be in men.

Hypotheses 2a-2b: The enhancement motive will have a positive effect on buying impulsivity in men (a) and women (b).

Hypotheses 3a-3b: The social motive will have a positive effect on buying impulsivity in men (a) and women (b).

Hypotheses 4a-4b: The enhancement motive will have a positive effect on buying compulsivity in men (a) and women (b).

Hypotheses 5a-5b: The coping motive will have a positive effect on buying compulsivity in men (a) and women (b).

Method

Participants and Procedure

The South Korean participants were recruited through notices on websites and men and women ≥ 19 years were eligible to take part in the survey. Of the 841 respondents who completed the survey, 809 (96.2%) fulfilled the inclusion criteria and were informed that there would be no financial incentive. When participants had read the consent form and passed the screening process, they answered demographic questions and completed the appropriate scales. The use of an online survey provided the opportunity to evaluate a large number of potential participants for possible compulsive buying behavior. Recent leading compulsive buying researchers have also used this type of survey (Mueller et al., 2011). The study protocol was approved by the Research Ethics Committee of Dongguk University.

To recruit participants who frequently displayed compulsive buying behavior, I used the following screening criterion in the survey: experiencing two or more major frequencies of buying activities, defined as buying episodes in which the individual had, during the previous 4 weeks, spent an amount equivalent to US\$50 in a sheer rush of desire without considering the negative consequences (Ridgway et al., 2008; Yi, 2013). Ridgway et al. have stated that a score of 25 on the Compulsive Buying Index (CBI) is an appropriate cut-off value to determine compulsive buying. As the frequency of buying increases dramatically when the CBI score reaches 25 (Ridgway et al, 2008), the self-reported frequency of this type of buying also increases dramatically. As the frequency of buying is thus a meaningful criterion to analyze the level of compulsive buying, in this study, I gave priority to the frequency of episodes of buying to measure compulsive buying behavior.

Of the participants who completed the scales and supplied demographic information, 71.8% ($n = 581$) were women. Because previous researchers have shown that age, marital status, educational background, and monthly income affect compulsive buying, I included them as control variables in this study. Of the participants, 53.2% ($n = 430$) were aged in their 20s, 29.4% ($n = 238$) were in their 30s, and 17.4% ($n = 141$) were older than 40 years. In regard to participants' educational background, 21.6% ($n = 175$) had a high school diploma or less education, 36.1% ($n = 292$) were currently attending college or university, and 42.3% ($n = 342$) held a bachelor's degree or postgraduate academic qualification. With respect to participants' marital status, 59.3% ($n = 480$) were not living with a spouse or a partner. With regard to participants' monthly income, 18.2% had a monthly income equivalent of \leq US\$2,000, 43.3% ($n = 350$) earned between US\$2,001 and US\$4,000 monthly, 25.8% ($n = 208$) had a monthly income of between US\$4,001 and US\$6,000 and 12.9% ($n = 104$) earned more than US\$6,001 per month.

Measures

Impulsivity and compulsivity in compulsive buying behavior. As compulsive buying involves both impulsivity and compulsivity (Hollander & Allen, 2006), I evaluated both dimensions using Ridgway et al.'s (2008) CBI. Buying impulsivity was assessed with three items, namely, "I buy things I don't need," "I buy things I did not plan to buy," and "I consider myself an impulse purchaser," to determine the degree of irresistibility of the buying impulse. Buying compulsivity was also assessed with three items, namely, "My closet has unopened shopping bags in it," "Others might consider me a shopaholic," and "Much of my life centers around buying things," to assess the degree of obsessive preoccupation with buying. All items were measured on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*. Cronbach's α were .85 for impulsivity and .81 for compulsivity in the scale.

Buying motives. To analyze buying motives, I used the three-dimensional GMQ (Stewart & Zack, 2008) to evaluate the enhancement, social, and coping motives. There are five items for each motive (Table 1). All items were measured on a 4-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = *never* to 4 = *almost always*. Cronbach's α for the three subscales are shown in Table 1.

Data analysis. A t test was used to detect differences in impulsivity, compulsivity, and buying motives between men and women. Effect size was also assessed by calculating Cohen's d (0.20 = small; 0.50 = medium; 0.80 = large). Next, hierarchical regression analysis was used to investigate the factors affecting buying motives that could influence the elements of compulsivity and impulsivity in each gender during a compulsive buying episode. Analyses were performed using STATA 13.0.

Table 1. *Buying Motive Variable Descriptions and Cronbach's Alpha Values*

| Buying motives | Items | Cronbach's α |
|--------------------|---|---------------------|
| Enhancement motive | Because you like the feeling | .865 |
| | Because it's exciting | |
| | To get a "high" feeling | |
| | Because it's fun | |
| | Because it makes you feel good | |
| Social motive | As a way to celebrate | .796 |
| | Because it's what most of your friends do when you get together | |
| | To be sociable | |
| | Because it is something you do on special occasions | |
| | Because it makes a social gathering more enjoyable | |
| Coping motive | To relax | .904 |
| | To forget your worries | |
| | Because you feel more self-confident or sure of yourself | |
| | Because it helps when you are feeling nervous or depressed | |
| | To cheer you up when you're in a bad mood | |

Results

Comparison of Impulsivity, Compulsivity, and Buying Motives by Gender

The descriptive statistics for impulsivity, compulsivity, and the three buying motives by gender are summarized in Table 2. As shown, the influence of each buying motive on women was significantly greater than it was on men.

The average buying impulsivity score for women was significantly higher than that for men. On average, the compulsivity score for women was significantly higher than that for men.

These gender differences are also shown in buying motives: Women obtained significantly higher scores than men did for the enhancement, social, and coping motives, with a small effect size for each.

Table 2. *Comparison of Impulsivity, Compulsivity, and Buying Motives Between Male and Female Consumers*

| Variables | Total | Men | Women | <i>t</i> | Cohen's <i>d</i> |
|--------------------|---|---|---|----------|------------------|
| | (<i>N</i> = 809) <i>M</i> (<i>SD</i>) | (<i>n</i> = 228) <i>M</i> (<i>SD</i>) | (<i>n</i> = 581) <i>M</i> (<i>SD</i>) | | |
| Impulsivity | 3.90 (1.28) | 3.46 (1.34) | 4.07 (1.22) | -6.28*** | 0.49 |
| Compulsivity | 3.21 (1.36) | 2.95 (1.37) | 3.32 (1.35) | -3.48*** | 0.27 |
| Enhancement motive | 1.87 (0.68) | 1.79 (0.69) | 1.91 (0.67) | -2.32* | 0.19 |
| Social motive | 2.08 (0.62) | 1.99 (0.65) | 2.11 (0.60) | -2.40* | 0.20 |
| Coping motive | 1.88 (0.73) | 1.75 (0.73) | 1.93 (0.73) | -3.08** | 0.25 |

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$. Two-tailed *t* tests between men and women.

Factors Contributing to Buying Impulsivity by Gender

Hierarchical regression analysis results for the relative effect of the factors related to impulsivity are shown in Table 3. A regression model was computed for each gender.

Age, marital status, educational background, and monthly income were recoded as dummy variables. Age was coded as 0 for 20–29-year-olds as a reference category and 1 was used for 30–39 and 40–49-year-olds as comparison categories. Living with a partner or spouse was coded as 1 for marital status. Education was recoded as a dummy variable, with a high school diploma or less education used as a reference category, and currently attending college or university or holding a bachelor's degree or postgraduate academic qualification were comparison categories. For monthly income, earnings of US\$2,001–US\$4,000, US\$4,001–US\$6,000, and more than US\$6,001 were coded as 1.

Regression Step 1 included the control variables only (age, marital status, educational background, and monthly income). Step 2 included buying motives and their influence on impulsivity while controlling variables. As expected, impulsivity scores for both men and women were strongly linked to the enhancement motive, which had the greatest effect on impulsivity in men and women. The social motive also emerged as an independent significant predictor for impulsivity scores for women, but not for men. The model accounted for 40.5% of variance in men and 29.6% in women.

Table 3. Results of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Impulsivity in Buying Behavior by Gender

| Variables | | Men (<i>n</i> = 228) | | Women (<i>n</i> = 581) | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|
| | | Step 1 β | Step 2 β | Step 1 β | Step 2 β |
| Age | 1 = 30–39 years | -.053 | .000 | -.017 | .046 |
| | 1 = 40–49 years | -.101 | -.030 | -.170** | -.088 |
| Marital status | 1 = Living with a partner or spouse | .032 | -.001 | -.031 | -.062 |
| Education | 1 = University students | .113 | .093 | .027 | .014 |
| | 1 = University graduate | .203 | .129 | .065 | .038 |
| Monthly income | 1 = \$2,000–\$4,000 | -.037 | -.055 | .014 | -.004 |
| | 1 = \$4,001–\$6,000 | .049 | -.001 | .139* | .058 |
| | 1 = \$6,001 or more | .212* | .078 | .131** | .069 |
| Enhancement motive | | | .470*** | .244** | |
| Social motive | | | .016 | .185** | |
| Coping motive | | | .143 | .111 | |
| Adjusted <i>R</i> ² | | .045 | .405 | .048 | .296 |
| <i>F</i> | | 2.35* | 15.07*** | 4.66*** | 23.21*** |

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

Factors Contributing to Buying Compulsivity by Gender

Hierarchical regression analysis results for the relative effect of the factors related to compulsivity are shown in Table 4. Regression Step 1 included the control variables only. Step 2 included buying motives and their influence on compulsivity while controlling variables.

Results showed that for men the coping motive had the greatest effect on compulsivity, and the enhancement motive had the second highest effect. In contrast, for women, the enhancement motive had the greatest effect on compulsivity, and the coping motive had the second highest effect. The model accounted for 53.4% of variance in men and 38.1% in women. Thus, the coping and enhancement motives increased buying compulsivity for both men and women.

Table 4. Results of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Compulsivity in Buying Behavior by Gender

| Variables | Men (<i>n</i> = 228) | | Women (<i>n</i> = 581) | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|
| | Step 1 β | Step 2 β | Step 1 β | Step 2 β |
| Age | | | | |
| 1 = 30–39 years | -.052 | -.003 | -.039 | .029 |
| 1 = 40–49 years | -.025 | .048 | -.147** | -.056 |
| Marital status | | | | |
| 1 = Living with a partner or spouse | .014 | .004 | .038 | .002 |
| Education | | | | |
| 1 = University student | .184 | .159* | .050 | .038 |
| background | | | | |
| 1 = University graduate | .304** | .225** | .139* | .109* |
| Monthly | | | | |
| 1 = \$2,000–\$4,000 | .045 | .023 | .025 | .004 |
| income | | | | |
| 1 = \$4,001–\$6,000 | .048 | -.013 | .125* | .029 |
| 1 = \$6,001 or more | .214* | .052 | .173*** | .104* |
| Enhancement motive | | .384*** | | .368*** |
| Social motive | | -.065 | | .043 |
| Coping motive | | .399*** | | .199** |
| Adjusted R^2 | .052 | .534 | .051 | .381 |
| <i>F</i> | 2.56* | 24.73*** | 4.91*** | 33.57*** |

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

Discussion

My main objective in this study was to examine how buying motives influenced compulsivity and impulsivity in compulsive buying behavior among men and women. The results showed that scores for both factors were higher in women than in men. Therefore, women are more likely than men are to exhibit compulsive buying behavior. I also examined differences in buying motives between men and women in regard to their buying behavior. I found that women were more heavily influenced by buying motives than men were. Thus,

Hypotheses 1a to 1e were supported. These results are consistent with those of Coley and Burgess (2003), who found that the urge to buy was more irresistible for women. They exhibited positive emotions toward buying and made more unplanned purchases than men did. Schlosser et al. (1994) also reported that women exhibited compulsive buying much more often than men did.

I found that, for both men and women, the enhancement motive had the strongest positive effect on buying impulsivity during compulsive buying when other sociodemographic factors were controlled. Therefore, Hypotheses 2a and 2b were supported. These results suggest that the influential motive for impulsivity can increase the enjoyment that buyers get from making purchases and can also have a positive effect on their mood. These results are in line with those of Dittmar, Long, and Bond (2007), who reported that some individuals buy impulsively to feel excited and happy. Beatty and Ferrell (1998) also reported that a positive mood can facilitate impulsive buying. Therefore, the enhancement motive affects individuals' impulsivity, which can lead to excessive buying and, eventually, compulsive buying.

Although I found that the social motive had a significant effect on impulsivity in women, this motive was not instrumental in impulsivity in men. Therefore, Hypothesis 3a was supported but Hypothesis 3b was not supported. Thus, the stronger social motive among women made them more prone to impulsivity, which is observed in consumer activity when women shop with one another and value celebrating special occasions. This observation was based on the social motive variable description result in this study. Campbell (2000) stated that women tend to have a positive attitude toward social interaction associated with buying. In addition, Hart, Farrell, Stachow, Reed, and Cadogan (2007) reported that women generally visit more shops per shopping trip than men do, and that they place a higher value on social interaction. As women shop to express their love for their family and for others (Hart et al., 2007), the social atmosphere created by shopping can motivate impulsivity in women.

The results also showed that, in both men and women, the enhancement and coping motives had a strong effect on compulsivity when other sociodemographic factors were controlled. Therefore, Hypotheses 4a and 4b and Hypotheses 5a and 5b were supported. The coping motive was the most influential factor for men, whereas the enhancement motive was the most influential for women. Therefore, the results showed that compulsivity involves a psychological desire for continued pleasure and is a way for individuals to cope with negative situations. These findings are consistent with those of Jung and Yi (2014), who reported that some compulsive buyers buy predominantly to alleviate negative affect, whereas others buy predominantly to seek excitement from the acquisition. Therefore, compulsivity is not only the result of individuals' desire to cope with negative situations (Faber, 2004), but it also involves a constant desire to seek

positive stimulation. Dittmar (2005), for example, stated that compulsive buying is motivated by individuals' search for pleasure and excitement via material acquisition. Thornhill, Kellett, and Davies (2012), in their study on compulsive buyers, identified in their results two groups, each of which was associated with a different motive. The motive of one group was related to the pleasurable and exciting aspects of shopping, labeled the *appetitive motive*, whereas the motive for other group was associated with escaping a negative effect via shopping, labeled the *avoidance motive*. Miltenberger et al. (2003) showed that compulsive buyers' intensity of boredom or excitement prior to a buying spree was comparable to the intensity of the negative emotions that they experienced.

Although the enhancement motive has typically been found to affect positive emotions and impulsivity, it can also affect compulsivity in both men and women if the pursuit of stimulation strongly persists. Thus, the quest for excitement should not be overlooked as a motive when managing impulsivity and compulsivity in compulsive buyers. The aim of researchers should therefore be to find ways to increase the self-control of compulsive buyers. Guidance for compulsive buyers is required to stimulate rational reactions instead of emotions when they are presented with opportunities such as appealing displays in shops, deceptive advertising, and discount promotions. Indeed, consumers in general should learn to recognize that retailers are constantly working to create an attractive shopping environment that will encourage consumers to make more purchases (Coley & Burgess, 2003).

As the social motive plays a primary role in women's compulsive buying, female compulsive buyers should make an effort, such as planning a monthly budget or sharing their financial goals with friends. They can then balance their consumption and social environment, instead of overspending for social reasons. Consumers should not believe that material consumption is an indicator of success and happiness in social relationships. On the contrary, it is important that they realize that social satisfaction stems from a genuine relationship rather than from consumption itself. Consumers can have relationship-based experiences that involve inviting friends to dinner rather than holding a big party, or setting goals with friends and keeping one another updated. These initiatives can lead to positive consumption behavior and a reduction in social comparisons (Howell & Hill, 2009).

As has been previously shown, compulsivity develops primarily when individuals try to resolve negative feelings, but emotions must be managed from within. In particular, because the men in this study scored the coping motive the highest as the cause of their compulsive buying, psychological reflection and treatment will be crucial to resolving this coping reliance on compulsive buying. The cause of the negative emotions must be identified in situations where the coping motive plays a large role. In other words, a treatment process designed to

assess and reduce deep-rooted negative emotions can help to reduce compulsive buying tendencies. Instead of attempting to avoid negative situations temporarily by buying compulsively, consumers should focus on finding an appropriate positive solution, such as exercising and hobbies.

There are several limitations in this study. I relied on participants' recollection of the past using a one-time self-report. Recollections of past activities can be erroneous. Therefore, a more accurate method is needed to identify buying motives for making compulsive purchases. In addition, the term compulsive buying requires a more precise and detailed definition. I based the screening criterion for identifying buying as compulsive on the frequency of buying episodes in which a specified sum of money was spent. However, an additional examination of consumers' behavior, such as their hiding purchases and having negative feelings associated with purchases, is needed. Moreover, because I collected data through an online survey and made two or more episodes of buying a criterion for participant inclusion, it is possible that the respondents were people who used online shopping facilities more frequently than others. Therefore, future researchers should take into account whether or not participants' shopping habits are through online facilities or offline shops, so that compulsive buying behavior can be discussed in depth, namely, buying motives that depend on shopping methods.

My conclusions in this study provide a positive impetus to move forward. By identifying which tendencies swayed impulsivity and compulsivity in men and women, I demonstrated the particular buying motive that affected their compulsive buying. How individual consumers are influenced by enhancement and coping motives will affect their reactions. It is important to clearly identify the motives that lead to compulsive buying, because an individual solution must be provided for each compulsive shopper.

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