The Comparative Analysis of the Impact of Self-Esteem on the Compulsive and Non-Compulsive Buyers in NCR

Dr Hemant Kothari, Dean, P.G. Studies, Pacific University, Udaipur, Rajasthan (India)
Gayatri Mallik, Research Scholar, Pacific University, Udaipur, Rajasthan (India)

Abstract
In the post-modern consumerist economies, the Maslow’s hierarchy of needs is circumvented at a faster pace. As a result of the impact of globalization and the forces of post-modern consumerism, the hierarchy of needs of individual is moving unnaturally, not exactly in the same order as Maslow predicted in the continuum. In the past few decades compulsive buying has moved from anonymity to a frequently mentioned topic in many of our leading institutions ranging from the various forms of media to the courts. In fact, compulsive buying is now commonly recognized and addressed by psychiatrists globally and has become an issue of serious concern. The present investigation is unique in its approach in studying the comparison of the psychological characteristics of compulsive and non-compulsive buyers in an emerging economy, India. The current study aims to address the current knowledge of compulsive buying and address key facets of its social circumstance and construction specifically in the metropolitan region of NCR (New Delhi, India). The current research will help in improving the limited understanding, and examine how self-esteem is a key motivator, which makes individuals more vulnerable to compulsive buying. There is paucity of research on how self-esteem influences compulsive buying behaviour. The current research will be particularly helpful to comprehend the behaviour of young adults of emerging countries like India who are most susceptible to be influenced by globalization and consumerism and are particularly concerned about elevating their self-image and status. Additionally, the present research aims to improve understanding of compulsive buying and better predict this growing consumer phenomenon in emerging economies like India.

Keywords: Compulsive, Non-Compulsive, Consumerism, Self-Esteem, Buyers

Introduction
Shopping/Purchasing products have turned into an activity that has gained approval from the society at large. According to Workman and Paper (2010), while extant literature has recognized compulsive consumption behaviour as a problem with consequential effects, there are significant gaps, which need to be explored to obtain better understanding of consumer behaviour. It is crucial to analyze and study the differences in the behaviour between the compulsive and non-compulsive buyers, under traditional retail formats and under the influence of technological advancements like home shopping, internet, etc. Moreover, it is imperative for marketers also to obtain deeper understanding about consumer behavior in order to improve retail strategy.

Consumer Behaviour Aspects
As established by several academicians it is imperative to study the positive and negative aspects of consumer behaviour in order to obtain extensive knowledge of the different viewpoints and facets of consumer behaviour (Faber &O’Guinn, 1988; Moschis, 1987). Furthermore, an analysis of the negative dimensions is crucial to gain a comprehensive idea about human behaviour and elucidate the critical aspects of an individual’s behaviour.

Compulsive Buying Disorder
The recognition of compulsive buying disorder goes back to the early 20th century under the term ‘onomania’ or buying mania given by Kraepelin (1915 as cited in O’Guinn & Faber, 2005). Despite the early recognition and diagnosis of a severe buying problem, there was virtually no further mention of compulsive buying until the mid-1980’s when the formation of self-help groups began to gain media attention. A couple of years later articles on compulsive buying began to appear in the academic literature in psychology. Since that time there has been a better understanding of this problem, its complexities, varying contributory causes, the severity of its effects and the size of the problem. But there is still much left to be understood. According to Edwards (1993), compulsive buying has gained considerable interest among the community of economists, researchers and psychologists over the last 20 years (Faber, O’Guinn, and Krych 1987). Investigation into this field has enabled researchers to obtain an insight into the issue of consumer behavior. As explained by Ridgway, et al. (2008) there has been an increase in the number of compulsive buyers. Almost 5.8% of U. S. consumers are prone to compulsive buying (Koran et al. 2006). Extant research indicates that there is a considerable increase in this in most developed countries (Muller and de Zwaan 2004; Neuner, Raab, and Reisch 2005 cited in Ridgway, et al., 2008). Furthermore, the rising incidence of studies dedicated towards analyzing the phenomenon of compulsive buying validates the concerns of the researchers who suggest that compulsive buying behaviour is a cause for concern.
The post-globalized economy offers the consumers in emerging countries with unlimited choice in the product market. The credit market is equally poised to co-exist to the increasing demand, as consumers are on a shopping spree. In countries like India, the economy is growing at an average rate of 7% every year coupled with increasing employment opportunities and disposable income. According to the National Council of Applied Economic Research, India, the Indian middle class has increased growing by some 10 to 12% per year, and estimates its size to reach 300 million people. As an outcome of consumerism, the money that could have been spent on social capital like education, nutrition is spent on dubious items that give no social return. There is an endless quest to purchase newer products and the life is focused on the imaginary world of the unattainable. As a consequence of spending to exhibit wealth, now major life events like weddings and births are transformed into consumer events. The increasing buying frequency leads families to a path of huge debts traps. The above discussion signifies the gravity of the rising problem of compulsive buying in emerging economies like India. However, not much study has been done in this area in India especially because this disorder is still in its initial stage contrary to the west where the people have been engulfed in it for a long time now. The present study attempts to do a comparative study of the psychological characteristics of compulsive and non-compulsive buyers in NCR, India. Apart from the analysis of the psychological characteristics of the buyers, the impact of gender and personality characteristics like self-esteem will also be studied.

Extant research is replete with literature on compulsive behaviour. A study by O’Guinn and Faber (1989) linked compulsive buying with the broader compulsive behaviors like alcohol, drug, substance abuse, eating disorders and gambling.

Workman and Paper (2010) suggested that individuals with compulsive buying usually display several common personality traits. Furthermore, Hirschman (1991) developed a theory stating that individuals who exhibit compulsive behavioral or consumption have certain homogeneous characteristics, which are prompted by identical causes, and they generally follow the same developmental pattern. Compulsive buying is often found in individuals with characteristics like low self-esteem, self-obsessiveness, chronic conditions causing disorders related to mood and substance abuse (d’Astous 1990; De-Sarbo and Edwards 1996). Studies by DeSarbo and Edwards (1996) revealed the compulsive consumers could primarily be classified in two categories. Firstly, a category wherein the individuals are driven by pathological and deep-rooted psychological problems. Secondly, individuals who are driven towards compulsive shopping due to personal circumstances or impulsiveness. According to Dittmar, et al. (2007) there are 3 features of compulsive buying: when individuals feel an overpowering urge to purchase, when the individuals lose control over their buying behaviour, and individuals don’t desist from making purchases despite adverse situations in their personal life.

As explained by Hanley and Wilhelm (1992), most empirical theories of consumer buying behavior suggest that individuals purchase products, which are in conformity with their self-image or what they intend to depict to the others. Moreover, according to extant literature individuals who resort to compulsive behaviors are believed to suffer from low self-esteem and powerlessness (Kruger 1988 cited in Hanley and Wilhelm, 1992). As explained by Orford (1985 cited in Hanley and Wilhelm, 1992), it is believed that purchasing products results in the enhancing an individual’s self-esteem and often this habit becomes reinforced and continuous when it is met with peer approval. In case of individuals who suffer from a low self-esteem, the compulsive buying behaviour often becomes a repetitive cycle because it makes them feel good about themselves, even if it is for a fleeting time. The above implies that self-esteem could easily be considered one of the most significant motives leading to compulsive buying (Rosenberg 1979 cited in Hanley and Wilhelm, 1992).

Among one of the fastest growing developing economies, India has the largest retail outlet density in the world. Propelled by the lifestyle changes, increase in spending power and growth of India’s middle and high-income population at a rapid pace of over 10% per annum, the India Retail Industry has witnessed tremendous growth. The Indian consumer is increasingly focusing on value, convenience, variety and a better shopping experience. The increase in variety, quality, and availability of products, as well as an increase in spending power has resulted in consumers increasingly using supermarkets for their personal shopping. With factors like emergence of more educated women entering the workforce, increase in double-income households, higher rate of usage of plastic money, shift in the format of the retail sector from unorganized to organized have paved the way for a globalized, consumerist economy in India. The careful analysis of the literature indicates that compulsive buying is an increasing and over powering phenomenon globally. In the case of India there is ample scope for more in depth study because not much work has been done on this topic here, as the disorder is still evolving in the country along with the changing lifestyle of the people. Most of the studies referred to; highlight compulsive buying in a product specific or age specific context, particularly focusing on the younger generation or college students. A comparative analysis of the psychological characteristics of compulsive and non-compulsive buyers will give a new dimension to the study. In the present study, an attempt is made to inves-
tigate the difference between the psychological traits of compulsive and non-compulsive buyers and also the impact of personality characteristics like self-esteem and demographic characteristic like gender on the buying behaviour of an individual. This research will shed light on the best predictors of compulsive buying from the psychological perspective and study its impact on the society and the life of the people living in N.C.R (India).

**Method**

**Participants**

With regards to this study, the sample size was 5000 men and women from colleges and different organizations within the age group of 20 – 60 years, who were selected from the NCR region.

This research uses primary data as well as secondary data from diversified sources; that are comprised of Renault, magazines, Text books, websites and journals from diversified variables of researches. Questionnaires are used for the derivation of information attained from respondents under sampling unit.

**Procedure**

Appropriate standardized psychological test were used to identify from amongst them a quota sample of 1000 compulsive and non-compulsive buyers (500 in each category). Appropriate standardized psychological tests were administered on them to compare the psychological characteristics of compulsive and non-compulsive buyers.

**Results**

In this study hand-distributed questionnaire were used as a primary data collection instrument, predominantly based on the idea that it would reflect unbiased information and alleviate problems caused due to the interviewer bias. Data for the current study was collected through the use of a questionnaire which included the Rosenberg New York Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg 1979) and the Faber and O’Guinn (1992) scale for measuring compulsive buying and demographic variables including age, gender, income, education, marital status, occupation, and family size. The Rosenberg New York Self-Esteem Scale (NYSES) comprises of 10 items, which enable to assess whether, and to what extent an individual feels positive or negative about himself/herself. The NYSES has a reported Coefficient of Reproducibility of 92 % and a Coefficient of Scalability of 72 % (Rosenberg 1979). The Faber and O’Guinn scale is the most ubiquitously used scale to measure compulsive buying (Manolis and Roberts, 2008). Faber and O’Guinn (1992) devised the seven-item clinical screener for compulsive buying in order to discern/identify/differentiate compulsive buyers from non-compulsive buyers within the general population (Faber & O’Guinn, 1989; Faber, O’Guinn, & Krych, 1987). According to Faber and O’Guinn (1992) their scale depicted uni-dimensionality and expounded that “hope this was accomplished by their use of preliminary qualitative and survey studies, a psychiatric literature review, and consultation with psychiatrists and therapists experienced in dealing with compulsive buying and impulse control disorders” (Faber & O’Guinn, 1992, p. 464).

The data collected from the questionnaire has been given below:

H1: Women are more prone to compulsive buying as compared to men

In order to test whether there is significant difference between the sexes regarding their buying behavior, a chi square test for equal proportions has been applied using SPSS.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group * Sex Crosstabulation</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compulsive</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>335</td>
<td>500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Sex</td>
<td>33.0%</td>
<td>67.0%</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-compulsive</td>
<td>335</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Sex</td>
<td>67.0%</td>
<td>33.0%</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Sex</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Chi-Square Tests**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)</th>
<th>Exact Sig. (2-sided)</th>
<th>Exact Sig. (1-sided)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Chi-Square</td>
<td>115.600</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuity Correction</td>
<td>114.244</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likelihood Ratio</td>
<td>117.937</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fisher’s Exact Test</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linear-by-Linear Assoc</td>
<td>115.484</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N of Valid Cases</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 250.00.
b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

From the table above we can observe that 67% of the women were compulsive buyers compared to 33% of males. The chi square statistic is 115.600 and its corresponding p value is 0.000<0.05. Since the p value is less than 0.05, we can conclude that women are more prone to compulsive buying compared to men.

H2: Young adults are more prone to compulsive buying behaviour

In order to test whether there is significant difference between the age group regarding their buying behavior, a chi square test for equal proportions has been applied using SPSS.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age * Group Cross tabulation</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Compulsive</th>
<th>Non-compulsive</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18 to 30</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% within Group</td>
<td>21.4%</td>
<td>25.4%</td>
<td>23.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 to 40</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>367</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% within Group</td>
<td>38.8%</td>
<td>34.6%</td>
<td>36.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41 to 50</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>299</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% within Group</td>
<td>28.8%</td>
<td>31.0%</td>
<td>29.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51 to 60</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% within Group</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61 to 70</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% within Group</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% within Group</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chi-Square Tests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Chi-Square</td>
<td>4.427</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>.351</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likelihood Ratio</td>
<td>4.432</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>.351</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linear-by-Linear Association</td>
<td>.926</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.336</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N of Valid Cases</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the table above we can observe that 38.8% and 34.6% of the respondents belonging to 31 – 40 years age group were compulsive and non-compulsive buyers respectively. The chi-square statistic is 4.427 and its corresponding p value is 0.351>0.05. Since the p value is more than 0.05, we can conclude young adults are not prone to compulsive buying behaviour.

A 2X4 ANOVA will be used to test the hypotheses for respondents on whom the O Guinn and Faber test was used for identification of 500 Compulsive and 500 non-compulsive buyers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20-30 years</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-40 years</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-50 years</td>
<td>46.7%</td>
<td>34.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-60 years</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identified male compulsive buyers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identified female compulsive buyers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age * Sex * Group Crosstabulation</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18 to 30</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>17.0%</td>
<td>23.6%</td>
<td>21.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 to 40</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>46.7%</td>
<td>34.9%</td>
<td>38.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41 to 50</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>26.1%</td>
<td>30.1%</td>
<td>28.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51 to 60</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>10.3%</td>
<td>9.9%</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61 to 70</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>.0%</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Step 2: Mean and Standard deviation, T test to identify the scores of the 1000 respondents, in terms of the high and low scores and the average age of the respondents. We would need Mean and SD of the higher sample and the Mean and SD of the lower sample. T test with the high and low level groups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18 to 30</td>
<td>Mean self-esteem score</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>2.1505</td>
<td>.29441</td>
<td>.02846</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Compulsive</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non-compulsive</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>2.1465</td>
<td>.26271</td>
<td>.02331</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 to 40</td>
<td>Mean self-esteem score</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>2.2191</td>
<td>.27296</td>
<td>.01960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Compulsive</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non-compulsive</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>2.2514</td>
<td>.27293</td>
<td>.02075</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41 to 50</td>
<td>Mean self-esteem score</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>2.3750</td>
<td>.25268</td>
<td>.02106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Compulsive</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non-compulsive</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>2.3948</td>
<td>.27107</td>
<td>.02177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51 to 60</td>
<td>Mean self-esteem score</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>2.4540</td>
<td>.20224</td>
<td>.02860</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Compulsive</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non-compulsive</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>2.4525</td>
<td>.22417</td>
<td>.03544</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61 to 70</td>
<td>Mean self-esteem score</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.6000</td>
<td>.10000</td>
<td>.04472</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Compulsive</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non-compulsive</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.6200</td>
<td>.27749</td>
<td>.12410</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Independent Samples Test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Mean self-esteem score</th>
<th>Levene's Test for Equality of Variances</th>
<th>t-test for Equality of Means</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Sig.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 to 30</td>
<td></td>
<td>.919</td>
<td>.339</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Equal variances assumed</td>
<td>.109</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 to 40</td>
<td></td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.981</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Equal variances assumed</td>
<td>.113</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41 to 50</td>
<td>Mean self-esteem score</td>
<td>.400</td>
<td>.527</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Step 2: Mean and Standard deviation, T test to identify the scores of the 1000 respondents, in terms of the high and low scores and the average age of the respondents. We would need Mean and SD of the higher sample and the Mean and SD of the lower sample. T test with the high and low level groups.
Step 3: Self-esteem is the dependant variable of the study here

**H1: High compulsive buyers show low self-esteem as compared to low compulsive buyers.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group Statistics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compulsive Mean self-esteem score</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compulsive Mean self-esteem score</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Independent Samples Test**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Mean self-esteem score</th>
<th>Levene's Test for Equality of Variances</th>
<th>t-test for Equality of Means</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Sig.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compulsive Mean self-esteem score</td>
<td>Equal variances assumed</td>
<td>14.838</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compulsive Mean self-esteem score</td>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td>-29.213</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In order to test whether there is a significant difference between the self-esteem scores of high and low compulsive buyers; an independent sample t test was applied using SPSS.
The mean value of self-esteem scores for low compulsive buyers was 1.7729 and High compulsive buyers were 2.3586. Above table shows that t value was -22.723 and its corresponding p value is 0.000<0.05. Since p value is less than 0.05, we can conclude that there is a significant difference between self-esteem scores of high and low self-esteem scores.

H2: Women have low self-esteem as compared to men.

The mean value of self-esteem scores for males was low with 2.2438 and females had high scores of 2.32. The t value statistic for the difference was -4.346 and its corresponding p value is 0.000<0.05. There is a significant difference between the self-esteem scores of males and females. But females had high self-esteem scores compared males.

H3: young adults have lower self-esteem as compared to the older age groups.

A 2x2x4 will be used.
Validity
Validity can be measured in different ways by using statistical procedures. Valid measure in a research is one which, measures what is supposed to be measured. Thus, validity often refers to getting the results that accurately reflect the concept being measured. Validity is considered in terms of content or face validity as well as in terms of the construct validity during the examination of psychometric properties.

Face validity was addressed by using the experts in the field. A correlation procedure was used to evaluate the items in the questionnaire. The aim of the procedure was to gauge the validation of index operationalization in measuring an underlying concept. Each of the indicators in the questionnaire was correlated with other indicators in the section. This analysis helped the researcher to indicate significantly bivariate relationships in the anticipated direction pointing to the assessment of construct validity.

Principal Component Analysis (PCA)
Principal component analysis assumes no unique or error variance and is concerned with establishing which linear components exist within the data and how a particular variable might contribute to the component. Varimax orthogonal rotation was employed in order to produce factor solutions because it simplifies the interpretation of factors and attempts to maximize the dispersion of loadings within factors.

Factor Analysis
Factor analysis is a data reduction method that is used as a tool in an attempt to reduce a large set of variables to a more meaningful smaller set of variables. Because each variable was measured by multi-item constructs, factor analysis with varimax was adopted to check the unidimensionality among items. The researcher conducted two types of principal component analyses. In the first case, the factors were extracted naturally which show how the variables load to each factor regardless of the existing literature. In that case, an explanatory factor analysis was conducted; where specific factors were extracted according to specific data set. Factors were extracted according to how certain variables describe each construct. In this case, factors were extracted according to how respondents perceive certain constructs. The factor analysis constructs of the constructs determining mean self-esteem score was able extract four components. The factor loadings for most of the constructs were above 0.4. The explained variance was almost 72%.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Factor loadings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>On the whole, I am satisfied with myself</td>
<td>.903</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At times, I think I am no good at all</td>
<td>.821</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel that I have a number of good qualities</td>
<td>.904</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am able to do things as well as most other people</td>
<td>.898</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel I do not have much to be proud of</td>
<td>.895</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I certainly feel useless at times</td>
<td>.955</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others</td>
<td>.750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I wish I could have more respect for myself</td>
<td>.662</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure</td>
<td>.956</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I take a positive attitude toward myself</td>
<td>.587</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

% of explained variance (with rotation): 71.760%

T test
From the following table I can observe that, compulsive buying behavior group had a mean self-esteem score was 2.2766 and the non-compulsive group had mean mental score of 2.29.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group Statistics</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean self-esteem score</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compulsive</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>2.2766</td>
<td>28516</td>
<td>0.01275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-compulsive</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>2.2890</td>
<td>28758</td>
<td>0.01286</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Discussion
Low self-esteem is frequently considered to be the cause behind compulsive buying. A study by Mittenberger et al. (2003), discovered that prior to a shopping trip, around 50% of the individuals stated that they were sad. Post finishing their buying, 42% stated they felt guilty. This proves those who indulge in compulsive buying are more inclined to make purchases when they encounter adverse feelings. It was also seen that women and men are both plagued by emotions related to low self-esteem which drives them towards making compulsive purchases. People, who are compulsive buyers, are motivated to shop and spend. This need continues to build...
which finally compels them to make purchases which are not needed. Another chief cause to indulge in buying compulsively is that people want to escape the pain, the suffering and stress. For many, buying is merely a way to feel important. Furthermore, people who have a low self-esteem feel happy when they are treated as important individuals in the stores they make purchases from (Sharma). Dittmar and Drury (2000), identified that there was a direct link amongst self-esteem (self-image) and purchasing. He discovered that making purchases assists in improving not only the self-image but also the confidence.

As per a latest investigation undertaken by the Stanford University School of Medicine, the number men who are compulsive buyers are equivalent to women who make purchases regularly. In fact, in men, compulsive buying is manifested when men indulge in binge shopping which results in financial problems. This is reiterated by an October 2011 issue of the American Journal of Psychiatry according to which men are also compulsive buyers.

Thus, it may be stated that there does exist a difference in the self-esteem levels of both men and women who are compulsive and non-compulsive buyers.

Furthermore, when we contrast the self-esteem levels of compulsive and non-compulsive buyers it is proved that compulsive buyers do suffer from low self-esteem while that is not the case in non-compulsive buyers.

Summary
Compulsive buying in men and women both indicate adverse affective conditions as compulsive buying is generally an indicator of low self-esteem (Marlatt et al., 1988; Nowmesky, 1998). It is usually seen that compulsive buying behaviour are endeavours to momentarily block or defeat feelings of low-esteem. Thus, it may be inferred that while compulsive buyers suffer from poor self-esteem, people who do not shop on a compulsive basis have no issues with their self-esteem levels.

It is also seen that there is no major difference amongst the self-esteem levels of both men and women, in both compulsive and non-compulsive buyers. It is a mistaken belief that only women indulge in shopping. While it is common to see women indulge in shopping, men have taken to shopping in a big way especially shopping online. A research undertaken in 2006, recommended that men and women both can be compulsive buyers. It is a proven fact that poor self-esteem is often the main cause of compulsive buying. It is seen that both the genders use a different metric based on which they shop. While women generally tend to shop for items like apparels, cosmetics and jewellery, men are inclined to buy electronic and sports machines. Furthermore, men and women have different perspectives to what they buy. While women shoppers are emotional, men make purchases if they think the products would serve some function.

India is one of the most rapidly growing economies of the world. It also has one of the largest populations with a large disposable income. All this has helped the retail trade in the nation to boom. Indian consumers today are demanding more and more value, convenience, variety and superior shopping experiences. More and more variety, superior quality and presence of several companies coupled by the additional spending power have driven Indian consumers to the several malls which have mushroomed across cities – big and small. India has seen a rapid increase in usage of credit cards, increasing number of women in the marketplace, double-income households, nuclear families and organization of the retail sector in a big way.

The current study intended to answer the following investigative queries:

a) Is compulsive buying a disorder?
b) Do buyers make purchases as per their self-image?
c) Is self-esteem a crucial impacting aspect driving the compulsive buyers to make purchases?
d) Are non-compulsive buyers not influenced to buy thing to boost their self-esteem?

Compulsive buying is considered to be an ailment in many nations. In the words of Lejoyeux et al., (1996, p. 1527) compulsive buying is a “significant feature” of today’s modern society, which is primarily driven by consumerism. According to Belk (2000, p. 76) “we are what we have and possess.” In today’s modern economies, needs of individuals do not advance as per the hierarchy of needs proposed by Maslow. The hierarchy of needs is showing unnatural movement as a result of internationalization and the influence of post-modern consumerism.

While earlier people talked about compulsive purchasing in hushed tones, it is only recently that researchers have begun investing the topic seriously. It has been proved that majority of the consumers who have poor self-esteem are easily prone to make compulsive purchases. Compulsive purchasers are ones who actually buy goods without any real use for such products. They majorly buy goods merely because they appear to be nice, or are priced modestly or because some of their friends or relatives possess the same articles. However there are cases wherein compulsive buyers purchase goods which they cannot afford merely because they cannot stop themselves from making the purchase.

As per the analysis which was undertaken it was clearly evident that there are many people who suffer from low
self-esteem. They feel that purchasing goods would improve their standing in society. Many people also feel they are good for nothing. Such people become compulsive shoppers. They try to improve their self-esteem by buying more and more goods. There are also people who feel that they are failures. To get rid of such adverse feelings, they go shopping. Making purchases makes them feel as if they have the power to achieve something. Such people are one who actually may buy expensive goods merely because they feel powerful while paying huge bills. People also become compulsive buyers when they are depressed or lonely or when they feel they are not at par with others. To feel liked to feel positive and also to draw the attention of others, such people indulge in shopping often buying goods which they do not need.

Thus, the current study undertaken made it evident that the core factor was self-esteem. People may have a good job, great families and a wonderful circle of friends. Yet, if they have an issue related to their self-esteem it is likely they would turn to shopping to feel better. People generally prefer shopping as it is the quickest way to start feeling better. New clothes, new household articles and the like all make an individual feel extremely good. This phenomenon however, is no longer limited to the developed nations. It is evident even in the developing countries across the globe. While earlier only the rich and famous were considered to be compulsive purchasers, even the middle class man in the developing nations is fast falling prey to this menace. People really need to self-introspect to try and identify if they are compulsive shoppers. If people do realise that they suffer from self-esteem issues they can deal with the problem of compulsive shopping in an effective manner.

Limitations
The research was hindered by several limitations that restricted operation as well as activities of the research. The limitation included financial restraints, geographical location and time factor.

a) The study was restricted to the NCR region. This restricted the area of the study since the study could have been undertaken in varied cities in other developing nations.

b) The finances available for the study were limited. This was the reason why the study could not be undertaken in other areas.

c) The time available for the study was short and consequently all the activities related to the study and their scopes were restricted as per the available time.

Further Recommendations
It is proposed that any further studies related to the same theme must be conducted on a larger scale. It is also proposed that future studies must also include children as in the current times; children majorly influence the shopping pattern in any household. It is likely that parents themselves may not be compulsive buyers, but children may force parents to make purchases on a regular basis. Further individuals belonging to the older generation must also be included as part of the study. The reason being there is a possibility that on account of the enhanced disposable income available today people belonging to the older age group are also compulsive buyers. Future studies must also include people belonging to other nationalities as the opinions of people in other nations may vary considerably.

References


