

Use of social network sites and compulsive buying behavior: Literature review using PRISMA

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Abstract:

Nowadays, it is admitted that buying is not just a simple necessity to fulfill a physical need; it goes beyond that; the buying act also provides satisfaction, pleasure, and instant gratification. In the last decades, purchasing forms have become more differentiated due to the emerging use of the internet and other technological tools. Secondly, with the advent and expansion of social networks, the consumer is facing, during one day, a large flow of information and advertisements that create in him the desire and need to buy, trigger probably the mechanism of self-comparison to others and create confusion about the concept of materialism and identity. These factors mentioned above have been responsible for the purchase decision model (P.Kottler, K.Keller, B.Dubois, D.Manceau, Pearson,2016) and need to be thoroughly followed. This means that these elements can lead to overconsumption and excessive purchases with harmful consequences for some consumers. This paper reviewed compulsive buying and the relationship between social network site use and compulsive purchasing. This review also presented the elements that moderate this relationship. This study aims to shed light on compulsive buying and explore how social network sites can affect consumer behavior and push the individual to make compulsive purchases. The research used a systematic literature review approach based on Scopus, SpringerLink, and Jstor databases with specific inclusion and exclusion criteria.

Keywords: Compulsive buying, social network sites, materialism, identity, consumer

I. Introduction

In 1915, Kraepelin published the first psychiatric book on compulsive purchase under « buying insanity. » Although compulsive buying may give a person short-term euphoric sentiments, it disrupts daily life and has considerable adverse effects (Shahjehan & al, 2012). This type of buying covers life's stresses, lack of confidence, and disappointments. According to Phau and Woo (2008), compulsive buying is constant behavior in buying. Compulsive buying behavior refers to incessant buying without respite to make up for the void created in life due to negative feelings or emotions (Johnson & Attman, 2009). Compulsive consumption is defined by O'Guinn and Faber (1989) as addictive shopping behavior where the consumer cannot significantly moderate. Compulsive buying is « a response to an uncontrollable drive or desire to obtain use or experience a feeling substance, or activity that leads an individual to repetitively engage in a behavior that will ultimately cause harm to the individual and others. » (Faber & O'Guinn,1989). For example, they cite alcoholism, drug abuse, eating disorders, compulsive working, and compulsive exercising; in harmony with this, compulsive buying is not just a second form of impulsive buying (Pradhan

& al,2018). Some psychologists say compulsive buyers behave similarly to those dependent on other addictions. They also attempt to evaluate their self-concept but despise themselves even more after using the product. Through further experimentation, they try to overcome this self-hatred.

In the last decades, the widespread usage of the internet and social networking sites may have impacted compulsive buying behavior. For example, a study by Kand and Lee on a sample of 394 young adults showed that individuals who use social network sites excessively tend to buy compulsively. Furthermore, according to Lee et al. (2016), individuals who buy compulsively exhibit more severe internet use than people who do not. Also, the empty-self theory suggests a link between the excessive use of social media and can be mediated through identity. Social network sites serve as platforms where people create public profiles to share their experiences, post personal information, and connect with others who exchange and have common interests (Cheung & Lee,2010). Social media is a large part of everyday life (Zhang & al,2022). The prevalence of social media has changed how we think about products, services, and materialism. Research has linked the excessive use of social network sites to materialism, which « is often an outward manifestation of deeper unmet psychological needs and insecurities » (Rindfleisch A, Burroughs JE, Wong N,2009). The same survey argued that many social media users replace their deficits in self-concept with attachment to material objects and tend to consume compulsively; in other words, consumers with materialistic attitudes are more prone to make compulsive purchases because they believe that it will have psychological advantages on them. Also, preliminary evidence found a positive relationship between the usage of social media and materialism (Kamal S, Chu S-C, Pedram, 2013). Moreover, Information technology has created new situations, such as social network sites where young people can express and explore their identities [1]. Identity confusion predicts compulsive purchases, which refers to purchasing to get closer to a better or ideal identity [1].

On the other hand, the Internet, especially the social media environment, offers users endless possibilities to develop and explore many identities.

Therefore, this review aims to investigate the relationship between the use of social media networks and compulsive buying and explore factors and elements that can have a mediating role in this link.

II. Search Methodology

We have decided to use the PRISMA systematic review approach for this review. This methodology was initially created for use in the medical field. Later, following Tranfield's work, it was applied to economics and management.

According to Tranfield (2003), a systematic review comprises three stages: preparation, implementation, and reporting. In this way, we will use descriptive and thematic analyses. A file concerning data collection will be made to store information such as the paper's title, authors, publication year, problem statement, and results. That will enable us to discuss the findings of each study while identifying similarities and divergences.

Therefore, our literature review is organized by the PRISMA phases. The research followed a systematic search in ScienceDirect, SpringerLink, and Jstor databases with a data abstraction and analysis process, as shown in Figure 1, which presents the PRISMA statement diagram. Only articles published after 2015 until 2023 were selected. As a result, 14 articles were more relevant to our review out of the 50 interesting articles found during the systematic search, as determined by the inclusion and exclusion criteria detailed below.

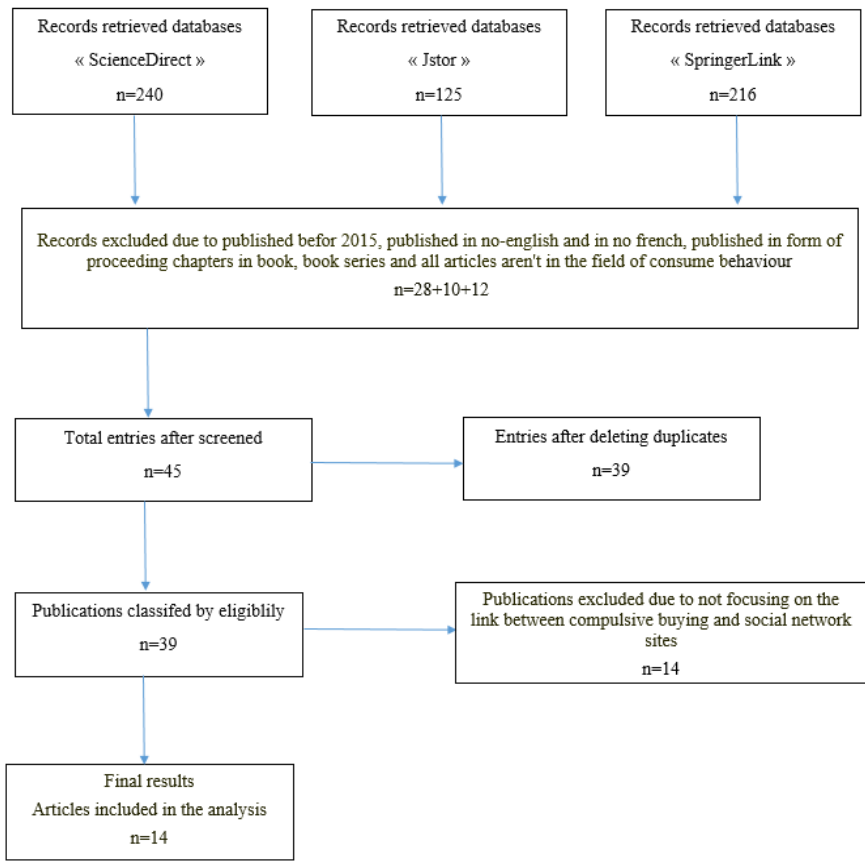


Figure 1: Data Abstraction and Analysis

During our search, the keywords used were: «compulsive buying», « social network sites», «materialism », and « identity».

Table 1: Keywords table

letter	Keyword	Synonym 1	Synonym 2	Synonym 3	Expression	Combinaison
A	Compulsive buying	Compulsive purchasing	Shopping addiction	Compulsive consumption	A-A1-A2-A3	A+B+C+D
B	Social media	Online Social Networking	Social network sites	Social platforms	B-B1-B2-B3	B+C+D
C	Materialism	Materialistic values	-	-	C-C1	C+B+D
D	Identity	-	-	-	D	D+C+B

*A letter represents a keyword.

* A letter followed by a number represents a keyword's synonym.

Once we had predetermined articles containing keywords, we sorted them by exclusion criteria. Table 2 presents specific inclusion and exclusion criteria.

Table 2: Screening Criteria

Criteria	Inclusion	Exclusion
Publication Timeline	2015-20123	2015 and before
Document Type	Articles (research journal, proceeding) and reviews	Book series, book chapters, and books
Language	English and french	Other languages than English and French
Nature of the study	Documents focusing on the link between compulsive buying and social network sites	Documents are not focused on the link between compulsive buying and social network sites.

According to the selection criteria, the article should be focused on compulsive buying and social network site use. Therefore, we opted for a quantitative study to extract the most pertinent articles from the online databases and to be used as a guide to gathering papers related to the research. All collected articles were selected based on the questions presented in Table 3:

Table 3: Analysis questions

Q1	Was the article about compulsive buying and social network sites?
Q2	Were the components of compulsive buying mentioned?
Q3	Is the compulsive buying measured in this article?
Q4	Did the article propose a research model that combined buying and social network site usage?

III. RESULTS

➤ Descriptive analysis

The graph below illustrates the number of articles found concerning compulsive buying and social network use published yearly from 2015 until 2023, with an increase and a peak in references in 2022. This is undoubtedly related to the growing importance given to this topic, especially since the percentage of compulsive purchases rises globally every year. The cause of this may be the overwhelming amount of information that consumers must deal with, along with other personal and individual factors.

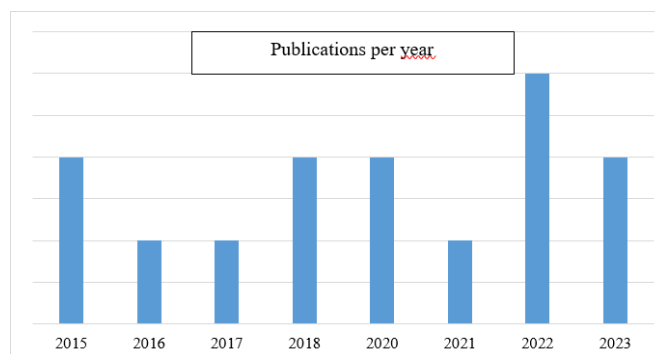
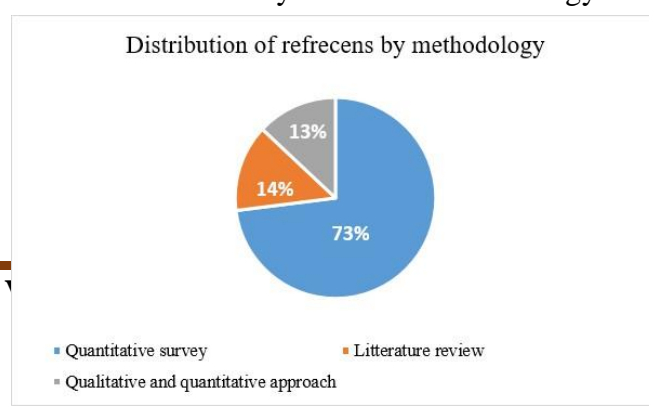


Figure 2: Publications per year

Figure 3 shows the distribution of references by research methodology used; we note that 73% of the



references selected for our systematic review are in the form of a quantitative survey, the percentage of the literature review is 14%, and finally, we have 13% of references that combine quantitative and qualitative approach.

Figure 3: Distribution of references by methodology

➤ **Thematic analysis**

The following table shows the paper’s title, authors, publication year, problem statement, and results.

Paper ID	Authors	Title	Problem statement	Results
A1	[1]	A study of factors of internet addiction and its impact on compulsive buying behavior	What is the degree of association between psychological variables and their degree of impact on internet and social media addiction? How do these contribute to compulsive online purchasing?	Social loneliness is associated with social media use and internet addiction. Respondents who believe they are alone and do not need an external environment prefer to create a virtual environment. As a result, they have low self-esteem, and when they are sad or depressed, they turn to social media and e-commerce to buy what they see on social platforms.

A2	[2]	Compulsive buying and branding phenomena	How do variables such as brand awareness, loyalty, and attachment impact compulsive buying behavior?	18% of the respondents are compulsive buyers, brand variables like brand attachment, brand awareness, and loyalty are loosely related to compulsive buying, but brand symbols, visual imagery, digital communication strategy, and content posted on social media directly affect compulsive buying behavior.
A3	[3]	Heavy social networking and online compulsive buying	Does financial comparison and materialism mediate the relationship between intense social media use and compulsive buying behavior?	The study showed the mediation role of financial comparison and materialism in the relationship between social network site usage and compulsive buying. Young adults who use SNSs heavily are more likely to compare financially with others and have more materialistic values, so they can make many purchases, with many being compulsive.
A4	[4]	How do online shopping platforms shape compulsive buying	What variable influences the most compulsive buying behavior between heavy social networking, emotional shopping, and hedonic shopping experience?	Heavy social networking usage, hedonistic shopping experience, and emotional shopping behaviors simultaneously impact compulsive purchasing.
A5	[5]	Identity confusion and materialism mediate the	How do materialism and identity confusion mediate	This study proved the mediation role of identity confusion and materialism in the relationship between social network site

		relationship between compulsive buying and SNS usage.	the relationship between SNS usage and compulsive buying behavior?	usage and compulsive buying. Young adults who use social networks intensively are likely to have more materialistic values and experience identity confusion, so they can make many purchases, with many being compulsive.
A6	[6]	Impact of Subliminal Advertising on compulsive consumer behavior	What is the impact of subliminal advertising on consumer buying behavior?	Subliminal advertising on social network sites disrupts the rational decision-making of young adult consumers. All predictive variables are essential to compulsive buying, so subliminal advertisements push consumers partially to compulsive buying behavior.
A7	[7]	The antecedents of compulsive purchasing behaviors: the influence of marketing practices	What are marketing practices that can influence consumer behavior? Can digital marketing practices influence compulsive consumption?	Compulsive buying results from a combination of variables such as anxiety, genetic, familial, situational factors, and biological dysfunction, except that marketing and marketing digital practices impact these vulnerable consumers and push them to make compulsive purchases.

A8	[8]	Materialistic values, brand knowledge, and the mass media	How is brand knowledge linked to mass media and SNS use? Moreover, what variables that mediate this relationship can affect compulsive buying behavior?	Internet usage and materialistic values are positively associated with brand identification tasks. Furthermore, Internet and social media use is linked to compulsive buying. According to the survey, compulsive buying is defined by SNS usage, materialism, and brand knowledge and identification.
A9	[9]	Online compulsive buying-shopping disorder and social networks-use disorder	How SNS addiction and shopping addiction can be measured? What are the similarities and differences between SNS addiction and compulsive buying?	People with compulsive buying and social networking addictions have typical symptoms of functional discomfort and stress as a result and cause of their online behavior. However, there are differences in materialistic values, frequency of checking an influencer's posts, and the effects of chronic stress, all of which contribute to the intensity of compulsive buying behavior.
A10	[10]	Predictors of online compulsive buying: the role of personality and mindfulness	What are the personality traits that influence compulsive buying? Moreover, what is the relationship between these variables?	Higher anxiety, especially cognitive anxiety, is related to compulsive buying behavior, and sensitivity can be partially a precursor to compulsive purchasing, but impulsivity is the strongest personality predictor. Also, mindfulness has a mediating role in the relationship between the impulsivity trait of personality and compulsive buying behavior.
A11	[11]	The mediating role of consumer conformity in E-compulsive	What is the role of conformity in online compulsive buying?	The study approved the relationship between compulsive buying and normative and informative conformity in virtual communities. But while informative

		buying		conformity positively impacts compulsive buying behavior, normative conformity does not affect obsessive purchasing tendency.
A12	[12]	Understanding student's compulsive buying	What is the link between depression, other individual factors, SNS usage, and compulsive buying behavior?	Results show a strong link between depression and compulsive buying tendencies, especially in clothing; buyers with low self-esteem also have short-term urge control and obsessive buying tendencies. Excessive SNS use is the second important factor, but this study shows that materialism has no relationship with CBB.
A13	[13]	Upward social comparison and state anxiety mediators between passive social network site usage and online compulsive buying among women	Is SNS use affect social comparison and compulsive buying behavior? Moreover, how can anxiety be an essential element in this relationship?	This study proved that using social network sites is essential to compulsive buying. Also, it's a social comparison and anxiety that mediate this relationship.
A14	[14]	Cyber addiction and its impact on post-purchase regret: FOMO	How can Fomo results from internet and SNS addiction influence compulsive buying behavior?	Internet and the use of social networks are currently crucial elements in a proportion of compulsive purchases. 95% of respondents have experienced the fear of missing out (FOMO), which further stimulates their urge to make compulsive buying, even more so among those who share an emotional void and spend more time on social networks. 90% of respondents experience post-purchase regret.

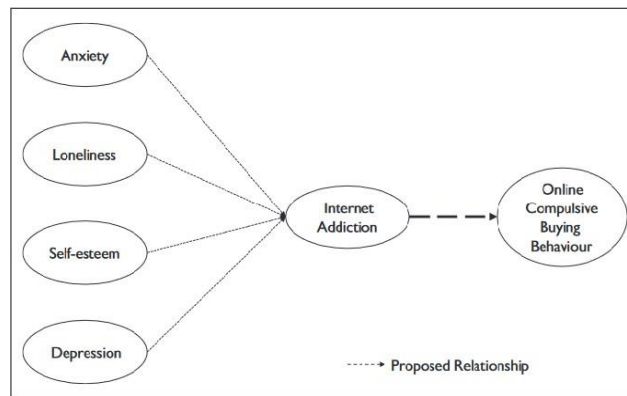
IV. Discussion

This section discusses the different results of the articles and research papers selected and used for our systematic review.

According to (Suresh & Biswas, 2020) a key feature of compulsive buying is the fact that users tend to visit e-commerce sites more often than other consumers when online; those users find that being online relieves depression, mood swings, and anxiety, and helps them cope with the external environment, and increases their escapist tendencies. In addition, they tend to feel depressed and have a strong sense of anxiety due to their FOMO. Compulsive buying behavior is also characterized by the ability to shop without considering price, quantity, and quality (Suresh & Biswas, 2020).

Suresh (2020) and Biswas (2020) proved that social loneliness is associated with internet addiction; lonely respondents prefer to create a virtual environment for themselves; they spend too much time on Social networks and e-commerce sites. Also, they find the internet, SNS, and e-commerce sites helpful when sad, anxious, or depressed (Suresh & Biswas, 2020).

A schema model developed by (Suresh & Biswas, 2020) shows the relationship between psychological variables such as depression, anxiety, low self-esteem, loneliness, internet addiction, and compulsive buying, and their study verified that.

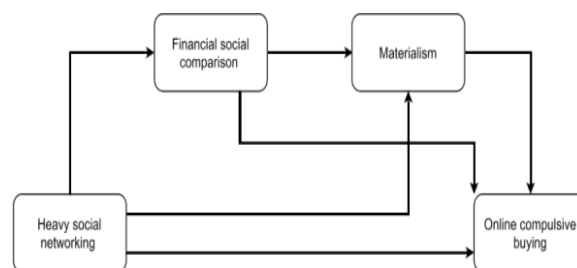


Biswas, Anindya (2020)

Figure 4: A proposed relationship model between psychological variables, internet addiction, and compulsive buying

In the same way, According to (Lee & Workman, 2015) there is a positive relationship between excessive SNS use and compulsive buying; people who use intensive social network sites are exposed to numerous identities, which can trigger identity confusion; these individuals have more materialistic values and seek to have an ideal identity and to cope with this identity confusion, they may turn to material consumption, which can lead to compulsive purchases, psychological analysis aimed that the young adults are more suggested to experience that (Lee & Workman, 2015). In other words, there is a positive relationship between materialism and excessive SNS use, between materialism and identity confusion, and between materialism and compulsive buying. Therefore, heavy SNS usage can effectively impact compulsive buying behavior; this supports the results found by Lee et al (2015). Furthermore, Lee (2015) and Workman's (2015) model research proved that materialism and identity confusion mediate the relationship between excessive SNS usage and CBB.

This report is contradictory to the results of Rai et al. (2020). According to Morrison (2015), there is a strong link between depression and compulsive buying, especially in clothing shopping; this aligns with past studies showing that depression has a significant relationship with compulsive buying behavior (Mueller et al.,2010). Furthermore, buyers who experience more negative internal feelings cannot control their urge to buy and their pulsions; according to Ased Shahjen (2012), compulsive buying is closely related to impulsive buying and has been defined as an impulse disorder. The point of contradiction is that Morrison (2015) confirms that there is no relationship between having materialistic values and compulsive buying. The results of the Kearney & Stevens (2012) study agree with EL Ashbourne & Hamad (2023). This study proposed a research model to assess the link between social networking site use and compulsive buying, and the authors included financial comparison and materialism as elements that mediate this relationship.



Pahlevan Sherif et al (2022)

Figure 5: A proposed relationship model SNS heavy use, OCB, materialism, and financial and social comparison

According to [4], there is a strong relationship between SNS heavy use and compulsive buying; this result is consistent with the above studies that proved specific usage of internet characteristics and the excessive time spent on the internet twist people's alarm to make a click and buy compulsively (Dittmar et al.,2007; M.griffiths,2000; Kukar-Kinney et al., 2009; Lee, Jolles, et al., 2016; Pahlevan Sharif & Khanekharab, 2017; Zhenf, Yang, Liu, et al. 2020). In line with (EL Ashbourne & Hamad, 2023). this study confirms the link between materialism and compulsive buying by proving that young adults with materialistic values are likelier to engage in financial or social comparison. Therefore, materialism and financial comparison explain the effect of heavy use of SNS on Compulsive buying. Individuals have a high possibility of making social

comparisons with others in the online environment, and it leads to the value of « having material possessions» of their peers or celebrities on social media (Chan et al., 2015).

The study of Sharif et al (2022) proposed a research model that shows the mediating role of social comparison and the state of anxiety in the link between social network site use and compulsive buying.

One of the key variables influencing state anxiety is social comparison, according to social comparison theory (Festinger, 1954). Social comparison leads to negative self-evaluations. Moreover, SNS use can induce users into this comparison. As a result, they will try to fill the resentment of inferiority by making purchases, leading them to a compulsive buying tendency.

In our review, other variables have been studied in their relationship to compulsive buying: brand-related variables such as brand awareness, attachment, and loyalty. According to Luciana & Febrianti (2022), compulsive buyers are likelier to experience brand attachment and loyalty than consumers who make rational purchases; compulsive buyers can easily get attached to a brand, especially if they feel that they are associated with their ideal self. at this sense, it is also an identity matter. In addition, previous studies have found that a psychological attachment was linked to compulsive consumption, such as Bell (2010); Sacramento and Flight (2014.)

It has been proven that compulsive buyers are more sensitive to brands' logos, symbols, and visual images (Luciana & Febrianti, 2022). In agreement with that, Jin (2020) and Ryu (2020) agree that marketing practices can positively affect compulsive buying. According to Faber and O'Guinn (1998), advertising produces a specific kind of virtual reality of well-being that gives people the impression that the actual world concurs with the reality depicted by the advertisements. Furthermore, these adverts push individuals to compare their social circumstances to others in the media, believing that their purchases would put them in a similar social appearance, leading to compulsive behavior. This is precisely the financial and social comparison that Kearney & Stevens (2012) talked about. Other studies have proven the critical impact of advertising on compulsive buying tendencies (EL Ashbourne & Hamad, 2023). This study shows that all subliminal advertising is an essential determinant of compulsive purchasing, accounting for most consumers' undesirable purchasing tendencies (EL Ashbourne & Hamad, 2023). Today young people are generally exposed to subliminal advertising in social media and across the internet; therefore, they are sensitive to irrational buying patterns (EL Ashbourne & Hamad, 2023).

All previous studies confirmed that compulsive buying is linked to personal variables like self-esteem, values, and psychiatric state. For EL Ashbourne & Hamad (2023)., compulsive buying may also be linked to genetic factors. Biological dysfunction can sometimes trigger compulsive buying behavior due to a lack of chemical substances produced during stimulation of brain activity (Faber et al., 1987); sociocultural environment and advertising campaigns are distant causes; we will suddenly have other variables that mediate the relationship between them and compulsive buying.

V. Conclusion

This review shows that buying is more complex than procuring a good product or service. Instead, it is a form of entrainment, becoming a tool for expressing the consumer's feelings deep down inside. Furthermore, the results of our review show that there is a range of individual and personal variables that undoubtedly impact consumer's compulsive behavior, such as family-related factors and other external elements, such as excessive exposure to social networks sites, digital marketing campaigns, and marketing practices that have a significant role in the compulsive buying (Jin & Ryu, 2020).

The Internet and social network sites are currently a big part of our lives; it is leading consumers to change and evolve (Hremann, 2011). For this reason, it was essential to understand the relationship between social network use and compulsive buying behavior, as well as variables that mediate this relationship, such as FOMO, materialistic values, online social and financial comparison, consumer anxiety, and other psychological variables.

This research has enabled us to define compulsive buying behavior precisely and to highlight the various factors that can have a role in triggering it. Furthermore, the results underline the role played by social networks, advertising, and marketing practices adopted by brands and companies and the need for empirical studies to determine the influence of these elements on compulsive buyers and psychological variables. Finally, the empirical research to be carried out must extend to emerging, developing countries that are beginning to show a tendency towards over-consumption. The literature has examined many factors

inducing compulsive buying behavior, but it has yet to be without limitations, and the absence of empirical results bears witness to this. To our knowledge, studies have yet to be carried out in the Moroccan context. Still, it is necessary to investigate this area to prevent and manage the harmful consequences of compulsive buying.

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