

**Shopping is Happiness: Perceptions of People with Compulsive Buying Disorder Regarding its Characteristics, Origins, and Consequences**

Etty Efrat Golan and Anat Zelig

**Introduction**

Individuals diagnosed with compulsive buying disorder (CBD) are described as unable to control the urge to purchase unnecessary items or services, an act that turns the experience of shopping from a simple activity to one that can significantly impair the quality of life of those affected with the disorder – as well as their families and close friends.

**The Current Study**

The current study aimed to understand how compulsive buyers define themselves, as well as describe their shopping behaviour and the accompanying mental processes. We primarily wanted to understand the personal, interpersonal, and legal consequences of the disorder on their lives.

**Conclusions**

Addictive buying is a disorder that appears in normal people who have no criminal or medical background. According to those affected by it, compulsive buying is primarily a compensation for earlier deprivations (economic/medical). This behaviour occupies the addicted individual for many hours of the day, both in terms of performing the behaviour and thinking about it. While the subjects explicitly denied negative mental consequences, the interviews show that this behaviour negatively impacts their family relationships and economic state. As with other addictions, denial clearly enables the condition to be present and persist.

**Method**

The sample included 33 subjects aged 21-68 with a diagnosis of CBD. In the first stage, the subjects filled out the Clinical Screening for Compulsive Buying Questionnaire, developed by Faber and O’Guinn (1992), designed for diagnosing compulsive buying disorder. Only respondents who scored above -1.35 on the scale were included in the sample. Following this, we conducted semi-structured in-depth interviews comprised of 20 questions.

**Primary Findings**

**Addict Profiles** – All study participants reported that they hold a steady job and most earn a higher-than-average salary.

**Reason for Addiction** – Compensation for past suffering.

**Consumer Behavior Characteristics** – Form of purchase (physical or online), duration of involvement in shopping per day, type and necessity of the products purchased.

**Addiction Consequences** – Impact on relationships and financial situation.