

Understanding the role of self-esteem and fear of negative evaluation in impulsive and compulsive buying

Öz saygi ve olumsuz değerlendirilme korkusunun dürtüsel ve kompulsif satın almaki rolünün anlaşılması

İSMAİL GÖKHAN CİNTAMÜR¹ 

ABSTRACT

Impulsive and compulsive buying behaviors have been seen at different rates in different societies and can cause psychological, economic, and sociological problems both individually and socially in the short and long term. Mainly thanks to developing mobile technologies, the internet, and improved economic and financial conditions, consumers can purchase more easily than ever. In such an environment, examining impulsive and compulsive buying behaviors and increasing our knowledge about the factors underlying these behaviors is crucial. In this context, the present study explores the direct and indirect relationships between self-esteem (SE), fear of negative evaluation (FNE), impulsive buying tendency (IBT), and compulsive buying tendency (CBT). With this purpose, data were collected from 356 participants by online survey method with snowball sampling. The data were evaluated via structural equation modeling. Results have shown that consumers' SE decreases FNE and CBT, FNE increases IBT, IBT increases CBT, and SE reduces IBT through FNE.

Keywords: Self-esteem, Fear of Negative Evaluation, Impulsive and Compulsive Buying.

Jel Classification: M30, M31, M39

ÖZ

Dürtüsel satın alma ve kompulsif satın alma davranışları farklı toplumlarda değişik oranlarda görülmekte olup kısa ve uzun vadede hem bireysel hem de toplumsal bağlamda psikolojik, ekonomik ve sosyolojik açıdan çeşitli sorunlara neden olabilmektedir. Özellikle gelişen mobil teknolojiler, internet, iyileşen ekonomik ve finansal koşullar sayesinde tüketiciler, eskiye oranla hiç olmadığı kadar kolay bir şekilde satın alma yapabilmektedir. Böylesi bir ortamda hem dürtüsel hem de kompulsif satın alma davranışlarının incelenmesi ve bu davranışların altında yatan unsurlara ilişkin bilgi birikimimizin artırılması önemlidir. Bu bağlamda mevcut araştırmada, öz saygı, olumsuz değerlendirilme korkusu, dürtüsel satın alma eğilimi ve kompulsif satın alma eğilimi arasındaki doğrudan ve dolaylı ilişkilerin incelenmesi amaçlanmıştır. Bu amacı gerçekleştirmek üzere, kartopu örnekleme yöntemi ile çevrimiçi anket metodu ile 356 katılımcıdan veri toplanmıştır. Toplanan veriler yapısal eşitlik modellemesinden yararlanılarak analiz edilmiştir. Analiz neticesinde; tüketicilerin öz saygısının olumsuz değerlendirilme korkusunu ve kompulsif satın alma eğilimini azalttığı, olumsuz değerlendirilme korkusunun dürtüsel satın alma eğilimini artırdığı, dürtüsel satın alma eğiliminin kompulsif satın alma eğilimini artırdığı ve öz saygının olumsuz değerlendirilme korkusu aracılığı ile dürtüsel satın alma eğilimini azalttığı bulgularına ulaşılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Öz saygı, Olumsuz Değerlendirilme Korkusu, Dürtüsel ve Kompulsif Satın Alma.

Jel Sınıflaması: M30, M31, M39



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1. Dr. Öğr. Üyesi, İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi, İletişim Fakültesi, İstanbul.

CORRESPONDING AUTHOR / SORUMLU YAZAR
İsmail Gökhan Cintamür, İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi, İletişim Tasarımı ve Yönetimi Bölümü, İletişim Tasarımı ve Yönetimi, İstanbul.

E-mail: gokhan.cintamur@bilgi.edu.tr

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1. Introduction

Impulsive and compulsive buying has been considered significant research areas in consumer behavior. The concept of compulsive buying disorder has been identified clinically in the early 20s (Black, 2007, p. 14). Actually, a dysfunctional type of excessive and pervading buying can characterize compulsive buying (CB), and consumers who suffer from this condition have an overwhelming, ongoing desire to shop and spend money. Besides, CB also leads to losing control of consumers on their buying behavior (Biolcati, 2017, p. 1). On the other hand, impulsive buying (IB) is characterized by the occurrence of a spontaneous and compelling urge inside a customer to make an instant purchase (Rook, 1987, p. 191).

Different research has reported various statistics about the prevalence of CB and IB in society and/or the economic value of purchases made as a result of these behaviors (Black, 2007; Dittmar, 2005a, 2005b; Ertelt et al., 2009; Lejoyeux & Weinstein, 2010; Maraz et al., 2015). In this context, all provided statistics have revealed the importance of buying behaviors in terms of individuals, society, and the economy. People who suffer from CB behavior may encounter problems such as; colossal debt, missed payments, legal and financial issues, self-criticism, guilt, etc. (Biolcati, 2017, p. 1). Likewise, it has been demonstrated that people who suffer from IB may have problems such as; financial problems, guilt, dissatisfaction, and fear of criticism (Rook, 1987). Therefore, decreasing the adverse effects of both CB and IB is necessary.

Several factors have contributed to the increase in opportunities for IB, such as the rise of consumer-oriented societies across the globe and the development of e-trade (Lin & Chen, 2012, pp. 353–354). Likewise, CB has been considered a complicated and typical consumer behavior, leading to terrible consequences for not only the person with CB behavior but also other groups like friends, families, and societies (Roberts et al., 2014, p. 147). From this point of view, it would be appropriate to examine CB and IB, especially in the context of the contemporary consumer world, where it is possible to make purchases much more quickly compared to the past and to analyze the mechanisms behind them. On the other hand, SE is an individual's comprehensive assessment of their intrinsic worth as a human being, and it plays a significant role in the cultivation of psychological well-being (Li et al., 2019, p. 32). Compulsive buyers have high levels of desire to obtain a product compared to ordinary people, while they exhibit low levels of willpower. More interestingly, the most basic motivator that drives compulsive buyers to purchase is to reduce tension or anxiety caused by their arousal or to increase their SE beyond possessing an object (O'Guinn & Faber, 1989, p. 150). Research has shown that those who engage in CB behavior have poorer levels of SE compared to those who do not engage in such behavior (Hanley & Wilhelm, 1992; Maraz et al., 2015; O'Guinn & Faber, 1989). Furthermore, research findings have shown the presence of an inverse correlation between SE and CB. (Roberts, 1998). Therefore, it is possible to say that there is a relation between SE and CB, and SE may be effective in realizing CB.

The behaviors of other people may be effective on a person's behaviors. In other words, people can shape their behaviors with reference to others. Among the most prominent reflections of this view are especially showing the moments of consumption of products in social environments and always choosing attractive celebrities to support the products. In this context, other people's opinions about oneself will likely affect one's behavior. As a matter of fact, research has shown that those who have a high receptivity to interpersonal influence and high FNE by others tend to purchase more impulsively than those who do not (Lin & Chen, 2012), and FNE by others is effective in CB (Biolcati, 2017; Roberts et al., 2014). Therefore, it can be stated that the FNE by others is effective in IB and CB.

It is observed that the studies that laid the theoretical foundations of IB and produced empirical findings have been mainly of American or European origin in the early days, and few studies have been conducted in other cultures (Kacen & Lee, 2002). However, cultural differences are likely to influence impulse buying and its relationships with different variables, just as they influence the relationships between other marketing variables. In this context, Kacen and Lee (2002) have revealed that cultural groups (individualism and collectivism) and individual differences (independence and interdependent self) are influential in the relationship between IBT and IB behavior. In addition, the authors have proposed researching IB in different cultures to examine the relationships between variables that may be related to this behavior (Kacen & Lee, 2002). Likewise, Cakanlar and Nguyen (2019) have demonstrated that cultural influences are effective in IB. Kwak et al. (2008) have stated that research on IB and CB should be conducted in different cultures to verify the results of previous studies or to expand or adapt the theories.

Based on the above explanations, it is possible to state that studies conducted in different cultures will contribute to understanding CB and IB. In this direction, in the context of the current research topic, the studies in the national literature on CB and IB are analyzed (Akyüz et al., 2017; Deniz, 2020; Eroğlu, 2016; Özer & Yıldırım Kutbay, 2018; Karahan & Söylemez, 2019; Tabak & Kahraman, 2022; Yüce & Güner, 2014); no research addresses the direct or indirect relationships between SE, FNE, IBT, and CBT together with a holistic approach. Likewise, in international literature, the relationships between SE, FNE, IB, and CB were also examined separately (Biolcati, 2017; Lin & Chen, 2012; Roberts et al., 2014). However, it is possible to see IB and CB together. Since CB is a behavior related to impulse control (Hague et al., 2016), IB likely affects CB. In this direction, it is possible to find studies in the literature showing that IB affects CB (Bilgen Kocatürk & Eroğlu, 2022; Özdemir, 2022; Shehzadi et al., 2016; Tokgöz, 2019). Therefore, the fact that IBT and CBT are not examined together in the context of FNE and SE is a problem regarding the necessity of addressing consumer behaviors holistically in different contexts. Because it is possible to observe both tendencies in a person to a certain extent, in this context, research models that include only IBT or CBT will provide a limited understanding of the subject. Therefore, there is a gap in this field. Consequently, this study aims to holistically contribute to the literature by examining the direct and indirect relationships between SE, FNE, IBT, and CBT. Moreover, this study contributes to the literature by helping to understand the mechanisms that drive consumers to IB and CB.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Self-esteem

SE; *"is a person's overall evaluation of his or her value as a human being"* (Li et al., 2019, p. 32). The concept of SE is highly suitable to be assessed using self-report-based measurement methods. The main reason is that self-acceptance and self-respect are inherent in the concept. In this context, two main approaches measure the concept of SE based on self-report: Global SE and domain-specific SE. Global SE refers to the overall, subjective assessment of oneself. In contrast, domain-specific SE pertains to self-evaluations within certain areas that are significant to one's growth, such as academic talents, peer relationships, and physical attractiveness (Harris et al., 2018, p. 84). Similar to this view, Deci and Ryan (1995) tried to explain the concept of SE under two headings, namely true SE and contingent SE, with their self-determination theory. According to this notion, contingent SE refers to the emotions one has about oneself that arise from, and are reliant upon, meeting a certain level of superiority or fulfilling certain expectations from others or within oneself (Deci & Ryan, 1995, p. 32). Contingent SE states that a person can only continue to live by meeting externally imposed standards to feel valuable, and it includes social comparisons because it is based on the success of the person in meeting these standards compared to others. These

externally imposed standards may be physical attractiveness, financial success, etc. Therefore, people with this kind of SE constantly check whether they meet the standards set by the outside world, and when they fail, their self-confidence is shaken (Deci & Ryan, 1995, p. 32). On the other hand, the concept of true SE is characterized by its stability and its foundation rooted in a strong and unwavering sense of self (Deci & Ryan, 1995, p. 32). In this context, a person's SE does not depend on their success in meeting externally determined standards. Therefore, a person with true SE does not subject themselves to a constant test as to whether they meet the standards imposed from outside. For people with a high level of true SE, empty and narcissistic goals such as obtaining money and fame become unimportant, and achieving such goals has no value in making the person feel valuable (Deci & Ryan, 1995, pp. 32–33).

Global SE is the most studied concept in the field (Harris et al., 2018, p. 85). For this reason, in the current study, the global SE (real SE) approach has been adopted instead of domain-specific SE or, in other words, contingent SE in addressing and measuring the concept of SE.

2.2. Fear of Negative Evaluation

Some consumers can shape their behavior due to other people's evaluations of them. In other words, other people's evaluation of the person themselves may be influential in shaping the consumer behavior of the person. In this context, it has been found that consumers with a high susceptibility to interpersonal influence (high sensitivity to evaluations made by others) tend to buy products and services that will cause others to evaluate them positively. Still, on the other hand, they avoid purchasing products and services that they believe may cause negative evaluations by others (Netemeyer et al., 1992). It is possible to define FNE as another antecedent variable that shapes consumer behavior and is similar to interpersonal influence. FNE is actually a dimension of social anxiety, and it *"reflects fears, concerns, or worries regarding negative evaluations from peers"* (La Greca & Lopez, 1998, p. 86). Likewise, Latimer and Ginis (2005, p. 54) define FNE as *"a construct which represents apprehension about others' evaluations, distress over their negative evaluations, and the desire to seek social approval and avoid disapproval."*

2.3. Impulsive Buying

The increase in the disposable income of consumers and the loans easily provided by credit institutions have been effective in consumers' making more purchases compared to the past. In addition, the fact that products are used more to regulate people's emotions, to build social identity through the meanings they have, etc., has led to an increase in the psychological role of products in people's lives and increased purchasing compared to the past (Dittmar, 2005b, p. 470). On the other hand, the development and widespread use of technologies such as television shopping channels and the internet have made it possible for consumers to access products much more easily compared to the past, making it easier for consumers to make IB and contributing to the widespread use of such purchases (Kacen & Lee, 2002, p. 163).

When IB behavior was first defined, it was expressed as unplanned buying behavior. However, later on, this definition was criticized by various researchers, and it was emphasized that IB includes spontaneous behavior, but it is more than that. In particular, it was mentioned that the person experiences a situation that pushes them to buy through a sudden and difficult-to-resist impulse (Beatty & Ferrell, 1998, p. 170).

Beatty and Ferrell (1998, p. 170) conceptualize IB as an impulsive and spontaneous buying made without any prior plan to shop for a particular product category or to satisfy a certain purchase duty. According to the authors, IB happens when a person has the urge to purchase something, and

is often done on the spur of the moment and does not require much thought; in other words, it is impulsive. Therefore, simply remembering and purchasing a product not at home should not be considered IB. Again, according to this definition, in IB, the shopper should not intend to buy the product before entering the shopping area. In this respect, it is possible to state that fulfilling a planned task, such as buying a gift for someone, is not IB (Beatty & Ferrell, 1998, p. 170). On the other hand, IB is not only a behavior that we encounter in physical purchasing environments, but it is one of a type that we can come across in online purchasing environments (Temel & Armağan, 2022).

IB is an exciting phenomenon that contradicts the view that humans are economic creatures. There are many different psychologically based explanations in the literature on how IB works, some of which support each other and some contradict each other. These approaches are consistent within themselves to explain the purposes of IB. For this reason, it would be appropriate to state that it would not be a proper approach to state that only one of these approaches is correct and the others are wrong (Verplanken & Sato, 2011, p. 207).

2.4. Compulsive Buying

When consumers purchase products and services, they are mostly not interested in the economic or utilitarian values they will obtain from them but rather consider the psychological benefits they will gain from having these products and services. Besides, a striking feature of modern consumer behavior is that the person purchases to improve their image, SE, or relationships with others and that this purchase is actually psychologically motivated. Of course, the benefits of such psychologically motivated consumer purchases cannot be denied. However, such purchases may become uncontrolled and excessive purchasing behaviors, leading individuals to face severe psychological distress and other negative consequences, including debts. A behavioral disorder with such extreme, uncontrolled, and harmful consequences is often referred to as CB (Dittmar, 2005a, pp. 832–833).

Emil Kraepplin and Eugen Bleuler first proposed the concept of CB around the turn of the twentieth century. (Lejoyeux & Weinstein, 2010, p. 248). Periods of repetitive, unnecessary, and excessive purchasing situations are expressed as characteristic features of CB. Furthermore, it is also seen that the negative mood experienced during these periods is tried to be reduced by CB (Ertelt et al., 2009, p. 213). Therefore, it is possible to state that as a result of CB, the person's negative mood improves for a certain period, but as time passes, this good mood decreases.

Purchasing behavior is actually an ordinary activity of life for most people. However, this action, which is ordinary for many people, means that compulsive buyers cannot restrain an irresistible urge to buy, which permeates every aspect of their lives. Of course, this inability to control the situation leads to significant and sometimes severe consequences (O'Guinn & Faber, 1989, p. 147). Hence, individuals with compulsive buying tendencies often exhibit impulsive, repetitive, and superfluous purchasing patterns, intrusive urges to engage in buying activities, unsuccessful efforts to regulate their buying behavior and expenditure, frequent and prolonged shopping excursions or avoidance of shopping altogether, as well as adverse outcomes associated with their buying habits, including significant distress, marital discord, accumulation of credit card debts, and other financial challenges (Kyrios et al., 2004, pp. 241–242).

Hirschman (1992) has divided compulsive consumers into distressed compulsive consumers and sociopathic compulsive consumers. The author evaluates the CB behavior of distressed compulsive consumers as a behavior they exhibit to cope with a negative situation. Such consumers struggle with self-doubt and feelings of personal inadequacy. When praised or

promoted, they ignore such positive developments and experience negativities such as performance anxiety, depression, and isolation and feel that their inadequacies will somehow come to light. Therefore, feeling that they cannot manage their emotions internally, they turn to an external substance or behavior to help them eliminate their anxiety and feel they have control. In fact, this is a search for external support and may be shopping, under-eating, overeating, exercising, or using a chemical substance. Suppose the substance or behavior can decrease their anxiety and raise their sense of self-control. In that case, a link is established between using the substance or performing the behavior and feeling good. Thus, when distressed, the consumer learns to resort to this self-soothing behavior (Hirschman, 1992, p. 159). Therefore, CB is a chronic, repetitive behavior that reacts to adverse events and emotions. The basis of this behavior is the desire to eliminate the feeling of discomfort caused by negative emotions. Although CB provides relief in the short term, it leads to negative consequences in the long term. In fact, once CB develops, it is challenging to resist this behavior, even though the individual personally experiences how dire consequences this behavior actually leads to (O'Guinn & Faber, 1989, p. 149).

3. Theoretical Background and Development of Hypotheses

3.1. Relationships between SE, IB, and CB

Psychologically, it is possible to state that people tend to seek pleasure and avoid pain. In this context, IB may contribute to this search by causing positive emotions, feeling pleasure and happiness, even for a short time. Besides, IB itself is considered an enjoyable process. However, IB is not only linked to positive emotions; it may serve as a prevention-oriented self-regulation strategy to eliminate negative emotions or overcome the adverse effects of low SE. Of course, such a strategy has a short-term impact, providing short-term relief (Verplanken & Sato, 2011, pp. 202–206). As a matter of fact, it has been revealed in the literature that there is a negative relationship between low SE and IBT (Silvera et al., 2008; Verplanken et al., 2005). Therefore, in light of the explanations mentioned earlier, it is assumed that a person with high SE will react less to impulsive stimuli from within or from the environment to buy something to fix a negative emotional state and to switch to a positive emotional state (to cheer up, to be happy, etc.) when experiencing a negative emotional state compared to a person with low SE and that there will be a decrease in the tendency to IB. Thus, it is possible to form the following hypothesis:

H1: Consumers' level of SE reduces their IBT

If we consider purchasing behavior a continuous bipolar structure, one polar of this structure is "*normal purchasing*" motivated by typical psychological reasons. In contrast, the other opposite is "*abnormal purchasing*" based on the effort to build an improved self-identity by acquiring material assets to reflect the desire to improve one's mood. This abnormal behavior is CB (Dittmar, 2005b, p. 470). It is possible to define CB as "*one of chronic, repetitive purchasing that becomes a primary response to negative events or feelings*" (O'Guinn & Faber, 1989, p. 155). CB "*is linked to some individual psychological characteristics such as; dependence, denial, depression, lack of impulsive control, low SE, approval seeking, anxiety, escape coping tendencies, general compulsiveness, materialism (envy), isolation, excitement seeking, perfectionism*" (DeSarbo & Edwards, 1996, p. 232). Among the constructs mentioned here, SE is one of the compulsive buyers' most prominent characteristics.

It is seen that high SE provides significant protection against anxiety, is associated with positive mental outcomes, is effective in coping with stress, reduces depression, increases happiness, provides better quality of life, increases academic success in adolescents, facilitates adaptation to the social environment and is effective in providing emotional stability. On the other

hand, low SE is related to somatic complaints such as physical pain and exhaustion, and it has been observed that people with low SE are more prone to alcohol and cigarette addiction, suicide, loneliness, and alienation (Li et al., 2019, p. 32). As can be understood from here, high SE reduces anxiety and stress in the person, while low SE is related to the person's tendency toward various addictive behaviors that reduce anxiety and stress. Especially when CB is considered a coping mechanism for the negative mood, it is very likely to change depending on the level of SE that the person has.

Dittmar (2005a: 836-837), based on the symbolic self-completion theory (Wicklund & Gollwitzer, 1981), has argued that compulsive buyers are motivated to eliminate the difference between their actual selves and their ideal selves, and as a result of this motivation, they buy and display material assets to eliminate the difference between these two selves. In other words, people with CB behavior are much more likely to base their unstable SE on others' judgments of them and often buy things to impress others (Biolcati, 2017, p. 2). CB is a chronic condition and can be seen as a behavior that attempts to repair a mood state (Roberts et al., 2014, p. 147). However, the role of mood in CB may depend on the SE of the affected person. In particular, people whose SE is based on the approval of others are more likely to exhibit CB behavior due to fluctuations in mood (Roberts et al., 2014, p. 148). One of the most characteristic features of compulsive buyers is their low SE (Hanley & Wilhelm, 1992; Maraz et al., 2015; O'Guinn & Faber, 1989). Moreover, it has also been shown that there is a negative relationship between SE and CB (Roberts, 1998). Based on this, it is possible to form the following hypothesis.

H2: Consumers' level of SE reduces their tendency towards CB.

It is possible to define compulsive consumption as; *"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/or to others"* (O'Guinn & Faber, 1989, p. 148). With such a definition, it is possible to consider many addictions or excessive behaviors, such as eating disorders, gambling, and kleptomania, as a form of compulsive consumption. In this respect, CB is also a form of compulsive consumption (O'Guinn & Faber, 1989, pp. 148–149). Therefore, as can be understood from the definition, one of the driving forces underlying CB is the failure in impulse control. CB is a concept related to impulse control, and compulsive buyers generally fail in impulse control compared to non-compulsive buyers (Hague et al., 2016).

On the other hand, IB is characterized by the occurrence of a spontaneous and compelling desire in a customer to make an instant purchase (Rook, 1987, p. 191). Thus, it is possible that having strong impulses to buy, i.e., an increase in the tendency to IB, may cause a person who fails to control such impulses (compulsive buyer) to increase their tendency to CB. As a matter of fact, some studies have revealed that IBT has a positive effect on CBT (Bilgen Kocatürk & Eroğlu, 2022; Özdemir, 2022; Shehzadi et al., 2016; Tokgöz, 2019). As a result, it is possible to form the following hypothesis based on the above discussion:

H3: Consumers' IBT increases their CBT.

3.2. Relationships between SE, FNE, IB, and CB

Suppose the two definitions shared under the literature review title about the FNE by others are carefully examined and considered together. In that case, the FNE corresponds to the state of anxiety, worry, and distress caused by the anxiety, worry, and fear that other people have negative thoughts or evaluations about the person. In a sense, CB is a coping mechanism to

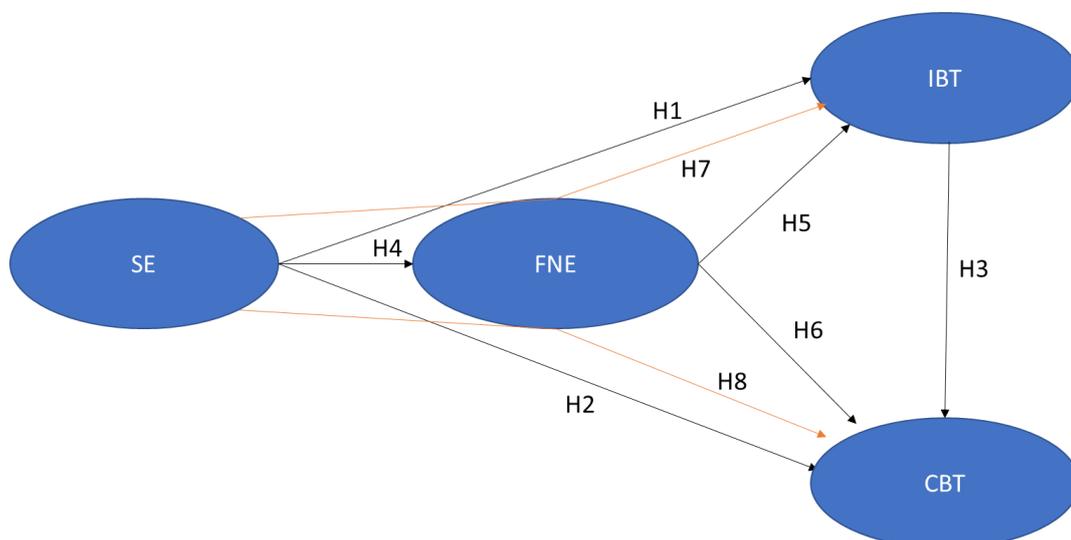
eliminate the negative situation, stress, and anxiety that the person is in (DeSarbo & Edwards, 1996, p. 238). At this point, the negative mood and distress caused by the FNE by others may lead to compulsive behaviors (such as buying) to get rid of this negative situation and relax. Therefore, the FNE may increase the tendency to CB. Indeed, there is evidence in the literature that FNE increases the tendency to CB (Biolcati, 2017; Roberts et al., 2014). Likewise, it is possible to consider IB as a prevention-oriented self-regulatory strategy to eliminate a negative emotional state (Verplanken & Sato, 2011). Therefore, it may be possible for a person whose mood is disturbed by the FNE to make IB to feel better by succumbing to impulses from the environment or within. In the literature, it has been shown that adolescents with high IBT have a higher FNE by others than those who do not (Lin & Chen, 2012).

On the other hand, SE can be regarded as an individual's comprehensive assessment of their intrinsic worth as a human being, and it plays a significant role in the cultivation of psychological well-being (Li et al., 2019, p. 32). In this case, if a person has negative views and evaluations about themselves, in other words, if they have low SE, they may think that others also have negative evaluations of them (Kocovski & Endler, 2000, p. 349). Based on this idea, Kocovski and Endler (2000) have found that SE affects FNE, which mediates the relationship between SE and fear of social anxiety. Thus, Roberts et al. (2014) and Biolcati (2017) have suggested that FNE may mediate the relationship between SE and CBT, proving this effect. In this context, it is hypothesized that the same mediating effect may also be valid for IB, which has similar psychological bases to CB. Therefore, FNE may mediate the relationship between SE and IB. As a result, in light of the discussion made so far, it is possible to formulate the following hypotheses:

- H4: Consumers' SE level decreases consumers' FNE.
- H5: Consumers' FNE increases consumers' IBT.
- H6: Consumers' FNE increases consumers' tendency to CB.
- H7: Consumers' SE level affects consumers' IBT through FNE.
- H8: Consumers' level of SE affects consumers' tendency to CB through FNE.

All research hypotheses are included in the research model in Figure 1. Black arrows in the research model correspond to direct relationships between variables, while colored arrows indicate indirect relationships between variables.

Figure 1: Research Model



4. Methodology

4.1. Sampling and Procedure

This study collected data using the snowball sampling method, characterized by a non-random sampling method (Malhotra, 2010, p. 381). In this context, firstly, a feed sample of potential participants within the scope of the study near the author was obtained and asked to answer the questionnaire. Then each participant who answered the questionnaire was asked to forward the link to potential participants aged 18-65 who they thought were eligible to answer the questionnaire. This way, data collection continued until the aimed sample size was obtained (Salganik & Heckathorn, 2004, p. 196).

In determining the minimum sample size, the analysis techniques to be used in the study are taken into account, and this approach is used as one of the criteria for determining the sample size when non-random sampling methods are used (Malhotra, 2010, p. 374). Accordingly, Hair et al. (2019, p. 632) suggest examining some areas to determine sample size in SEM analysis, such as multivariate normality, estimation technique, model complexity, missing data amount, and average error variance between reflective indicators. In this context, according to model complexity, since the research model contains four latent variables, each with more than three indicators, the minimum required sample size was determined as 100 participants. However, considering the possible multi-normality deviation of the data and possible missing data situations, the minimum required sample size was targeted as 300 participants (Hair et al. 2019, p. 633).

The data were collected between April 2023 and May 2023 through the Survey Monkey website using the online survey method. Survey links created through the website were sent to potential respondents through various applications that allow interpersonal messaging and messaging features of various social media sites.

Consumers between the ages of 18-65 living in Turkey were included in the scope of the research, and in this context, the answers of 1 person who was determined not to be in this age range among the respondents were excluded. On the other hand, 398 people answered the questionnaire, but 41 participants left the questionnaire halfway through and provided incomplete data. As a result, 356 valid questionnaires were used in the analyses by excluding the missing responses and the response of participant who was not included in the scope of the research. Table 1 presents the sample profile.

4.2. Measurements

The measures used in this study were acquired from previously published research and were structured as a 5-point Likert scale. Participants' SE was measured using a four-item scale adapted from Harris et al. (2018) as 1= really sad, 5= really happy, and FNE was measured using an eight-item scale adapted from La Greca and Lopez (1998) as 1= not at all, 5= all the time. IBT was measured using a five-item scale developed by Rook and Fisher (1995) and adapted from the shortened and simplified version by Fenton-O'Creedy et al. (2018) as 1=strongly disagree, 5=strongly agree, while CBT was measured using a seven-item scale adapted from Faber and O'Guinn (1992) as 1= never, 5= very often. Appendix 1 includes all items.

A parallel translation approach was used to translate all scales from English into Turkish. Accordingly, a three-person translation team consisting of the author and two marketing academics fluent in both languages was formed, different translation alternatives were discussed, and changes were made until a consensus version was obtained (Malhotra et al., 2006, p. 24).

Then, to prevent possible loss of meaning or misunderstanding, the questionnaire was pre-tested on a group of 28 students, and there were no problems in understanding the statements, and the field application was started.

The questionnaire form included six different parts. The initial part included the informed consent form. The second part included five questions on demographic variables, while the third included four questions to evaluate participants' SE. In the fourth part, eight questions measured the FNE, while the fifth part measured the IBT of the participants with five questions. The sixth and last part included seven questions to evaluate the participants' tendency to CB.

Table 1: Sample Profile

Gender		N	%
	Female		216
Male		134	37.6
I don't want to state		6	1.7
Total		356	100
		N	%
Education	Primary School	5	1.4
	High School	61	17.1
	Associate Degree	71	19.9
	Undergraduate	127	35.7
	Master Degree	69	19.4
	Ph.D.	23	6.5
	Total	356	100
		N	%
Age	18-24	92	25.8
	25-35	79	22.2
	35-44	118	33.1
	45-54	39	11.0
	55-64	28	7.9
	Total	356	100
			N
Occupation	Private Sector Employee	144	40.4
	Public Employee	43	12.1
	Tradesmen	8	2.2
	Self-Employment	24	6.7
	Retired	22	6.2
	Housewife	35	9.8
	Student	60	16.9
	Other	20	5.6
	Total	356	100
		N	%
Personal Income	Under 10.000 TL	87	24.4
	10.000-15.000 TL	82	23.0
	15.001-20.000 TL	76	21.3
	20.001-25.000 TL	31	8.7
	25.001-30.000 TL	32	9.0
	30.000-35.000 TL	10	2.8
	35.001 TL above	38	10.7

Total	356	100
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5. Results

5.1. Preliminary Data Analyses

Before testing the measurement model (MM), exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was utilized to identify possible cross-factor loadings and, thus, statements that might compromise discriminant validity. EFA was conducted using the maximum likelihood (ML) method and promax rotation in the SPSS 28 program. Since there are four first-level reflective constructs in the research model, the analysis was applied with all variables together, and the number of factors was limited to four, which is the number of constructs in the research model. EFA allows the researcher to determine the number of factors before the analysis (Malhotra, 2010, p. 643). Furthermore, the EFA was repeated until the ideal factor and variable structures were obtained by removing variables with factor loadings below 0.5 (Hair et al., 2010, p. 118) and cross-loadings below 0.2.

As a result of the first EFA, the KMO value was 0.898, and Barlett's test was significant ($p < 0.00$). These values showed that the data set and structure were sufficiently sized and suitable for factor analysis (Hair et al., 2010, p. 104). According to the results of the first analysis, the four factors together explained 55.025% of the total variance. When the structure matrix was examined, one variable of the FNE factor was below the factor loading value of 0.50 (0.330). Moreover, the fourth (0.336), sixth (0.417), and seventh (0.476) variables of the CBT factor cross-loaded the IBT factor, and the factor loadings of these statements were below 0.50. Accordingly, the relevant variables were removed, and the analysis was repeated.

As a result of the second analysis, again, the KMO value (0.885) and Barlett's test results ($p < 0.00$) showed that the data were sufficient and appropriate for factor analysis (Hair et al., 2010, p. 104) and the four factors explained 60.247% of the total variance. When the structure matrix was examined, it was seen that none of the variables produced over 0.2 cross-factor loading, and the factor loading values ranged between 0.546 and 0.909. In this context, SE was transferred to the test of the MM consisting of four variables, FNE was assigned to seven variables, IBT was transferred to five variables, and CBT was transferred to four variables.

5.2. Testing of Measurement Model (Testing of MM)

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and AMOS 28 program were used to evaluate the validity and reliability of the MM. Before conducting CFA, whether the data met the univariate and multivariate normality assumptions were checked. In this context, the skewness and kurtosis values of the variables were examined for the univariate normality assumption, and it was found that the skewness values were between -0.630 and 1.558, while the kurtosis values were between -.990 and 1.828. Since none of these numbers exceeded the values recommended in the literature in absolute terms (for skewness [3], for kurtosis [7]), it was determined that there was no problem in terms of univariate normality (Byrne, 2016, p. 123; Kline, 2005, p. 50). On the other hand, it was observed that the calculated multivariate normality value (Mardina's score) was considerably higher (102,809) than the recommended value (< 5). Thus, it was determined that the data violated the assumption of multivariate normality (Byrne, 2016, p. 123). In this context, bootstrapping is one of the methods proposed to overcome this problem (Byrne, 2016, p. 367). Accordingly, a bootstrapping method was used in the CFA and structural model (SM) testing analysis process with a sample size of 2000 and a 95% confidence interval. On the other hand, it would be appropriate to mention that

a two-stage approach was utilized by first testing the MM and then testing the SM (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988).

The first CFA analysis was tested over 2000 bootstrap samples using the ML estimation method; 95% confidence intervals were established for all parameter estimates and acceptable fit indices ($\chi^2_{(221)} = 408,237$; $p < .000$; $\chi^2/df = 2,498$; CFI=0,940; TLI=0,931; IFI=0,940; $RMSEA_{0.057-0.073}=0,065$, SRMR= 0,0494) were obtained for the MM. However, it was found that the standardized factor loading of one of the CBT construct variables (0.46) was below the minimum recommended value of 0.50. When the necessary control was made with the thought that the variable in question might damage the convergent and discriminant validity of the model, it was seen that the related construct was problematic in terms of both convergent and discriminant validity. Therefore, the variable in question was removed, and the analysis was repeated. On the other hand, acceptable modifications were also examined to increase the fit indices, and in this context, it was seen that if a relationship was defined between the errors of the sixth and seventh variables and the errors of the first and fourth variables of the FNE construct, the chi-square (χ^2) value would decrease by 58.595 and 44.729, respectively. The related modifications were made because they were between the observed variables of the same construct and did not harm the principle of unidimensionality.

As a result of the second CFA, the MM produced excellent fit indices ($\chi^2_{(221)} = 253,757$; $p < .000$; $\chi^2/df = 1,762$; CFI=0,972; TLI=0,967; IFI=0,973; $RMSEA_{0.037-0.059}=0,046$, SRMR= 0,0433), and none of the confidence intervals for all standardized factor loadings did not contain zero values, and all of them were statistically significant. Table 2 presents the results and summary findings of the validity and reliability analyses.

According to Table 2, the standardized factor loadings of all observed variables were above the value recommended in the literature (0.50) (Bagozzi et al., 1991). Likewise, the average explained variance values of all latent constructs were above 0.50 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981), and all of the composite reliability values were greater than the minimum recommended threshold (0.60) (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988). In this context, the MM provided sufficient convergent validity. On the other hand, Cronbach's Alpha coefficients of all latent constructs were greater than the minimum acceptable value (0.70). In this respect, it is possible to say that the scales had sufficient reliability (Nunnally, 1978).

The values on the diagonal in Table 3 were the square roots of the average explained variances of the latent constructs, and none of the correlation values between any two latent constructs exceeded these values. Accordingly, it was possible to say that discriminant validity was achieved (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

Table 2: CFA summary results for the measurement model

Structures (Factors)	Variables	Mean	SD	SFL	CI %95		p	AVE	CR	CA
					Low	Up				
Sel-esteem	SE1	3.441	0.900	0.821	0.762	0.871	0.001	0.725	0.913	0.913
	SE2	3.494	0.932	0.877	0.830	0.914	0.001			
	SE3	3.328	0.913	0.883	0.834	0.920	0.001			
	SE4	3.314	0.956	0.824	0.765	0.870	0.001			
Fear of Negative Evaluation	FNE1	2.469	0.970	0.693	0.626	0.752	0.001	0.594	0.910	0.914
	FNE2	2.092	0.992	0.892	0.847	0.924	0.002			
	FNE3	1.955	1.019	0.884	0.840	0.917	0.002			
	FNE4	2.221	1.006	0.818	0.768	0.864	0.001			
	FNE5	1.671	0.850	0.648	0.549	0.721	0.001			
	FNE6	1.783	1.024	0.728	0.633	0.798	0.001			
	FNE8	1.721	0.960	0.692	0.604	0.765	0.001			
Impulsive Buying Tendency	IBT1	2.502	1.035	0.666	0.582	0.747	0.001	0.557	0.862	0.856
	IBT2	2.747	1.157	0.632	0.551	0.705	0.001			
	IBT3	2.106	1.039	0.807	0.735	0.859	0.001			
	IBT4	1.924	0.974	0.814	0.738	0.870	0.002			
	IBT5	1.845	1.059	0.793	0.711	0.850	0.002			
Compulsive Buying Tendency	CBT1	1.839	0.949	0.782	0.649	0.871	0.002	0.552	0.786	0.785
	CBT2	1.682	1.014	0.776	0.687	0.856	0.001			
	CBT3	1.685	1.051	0.666	0.561	0.761	0.001			
Fit Indices	$(\chi^2_{(221)} = 253.757; p < .000; \chi^2/df = 1.762; CFI = 0.972; TLI = 0.967; IFI = 0.973;$ $RMSEA_{0.037-0.059} = 0.046. SRMR = 0.0433)$									

SD: Standard deviation, SFL: Standardized factor loading, CI: Confidence Interval, p: Significance level, AVE: Average variance Extracted, CR: Composite Reliability, CA: Cronbach's Alfa

Table 3: Values for discriminant validity

Latent Variables (Dimensions)	SE	FNE	IBT	CBT
SE	0.852			
FNE	-0.385	0.770		
IBT	-0.040	0.241	0.746	
CBT	-0.141	0.232	0.687	0.743

Table 4: Summary Findings on Structural Model and Hypothesis Tests

Effect Type	Paths	Standardized Path Coefficients	%95 Confidence Interval		Significant Level	Results
			Lower Limit	Upper Limit		
Direct Effects	SE → IBT	0.062	-0.072	0.193	0.337	H1 Rejected
	SE → CBT	-0.103	-0.208	-0.001	0.05	H2 Accepted
	IBT → CBT	0.676	0.572	0.771	0.001	H3 Accepted
	SE → FNE	-0.385	-0.500	-0.261	0.001	H4 Accepted
	FNE → IBT	0.265	0.131	0.413	0.001	H5 Accepted
	FNE → CBT	0.029	-0.103	0.155	0.665	H6 Rejected
Indirect Effects	SE → FNE → IBT	-0.089	-0.165	-0.039	0.001	H7 Accepted
	SE → FNE → CBT	-0.011	-0.059	0.036	0.641	H8 Rejected

$$(x^2_{(221)}) = 253.757; p < .000; x^2/df = 1.762; CFI=0.972; TLI=0.967; IFI=0.973;$$

$$RMSEA_{0.037-0.073} = 0.046; SRMR = 0.0433$$

The *Amos program requires user-defined estimand macros to test for specific indirect effects, and the path coefficients generated in this way are presented as unstandardized values in the form of classical regression coefficients.

5.3. Testing of Structural Model (Testing of SM)

The SM test preserved all changes and improvements made in the MM, and the model test was carried out over 2000 bootstrap samples by creating 95% confidence intervals for model parameter estimates. The results obtained are as in Table 4.

Table 4 shows that the SM provided excellent fit indices ($x^2_{(221)} = 253,757; p < .000; x^2/df = 1,762; CFI=0,972; TLI= 0,967; IFI= 0,973; RMSEA_{0.037-0.059} = 0,046, SRMR= 0,0433$) (Hu & Bentler 1999; Hair et al. 2010). Furthermore, Table 4 contains the regression coefficients for both direct and indirect effects between the variables in the research model, the confidence intervals, and the significance levels of these coefficients. When these values were examined, hypothesis H1 ($B=0.062; p < 0.337$), which states that the level of SE of consumers reduces their IBT was rejected. On the other hand, the H2 hypothesis ($B=-0.103; p < 0.05$), which states that the level of SE of consumers reduces their CBT, and the H3 hypothesis ($B=0.676; p < 0.001$) claiming consumers' IBT increases their CBT were accepted. Likewise, hypothesis H4 ($B=-0.385; p < 0.001$), which suggests that consumers' SE level reduces their FNE, was accepted. Another accepted hypothesis is H5, which states that consumers' FNE increases their tendency to IBT ($B=0.265; p < 0.001$). However, hypothesis

H6, which states that consumers' FNE increases their tendency to CB, was rejected ($B=0.029$; $p<0.665$).

Since the FNE in the model tested within the scope of the research is a mediating variable between SE and IBT, and CBT, it was suggested that there might be mediating effects between the relevant variables, and these effects were tested again using structural equation modeling test and with a bootstrapping method. The results obtained are as in Table 4. When this table is examined, it is understood that hypothesis H7, which states that the level of SE of consumers affects the IBT of consumers through the FNE, was accepted ($B=-0.089$; $p<0.001$). However, hypothesis H8, which states that the level of SE of consumers affects the CBT of consumers through the FNE, was rejected ($B=-0.011$; $p<0.641$).

6. Conclusion

This study examines the direct and indirect relationships between consumers' SE, FNE, IBT, and CBT. In this context, the SE variable has been considered an antecedent variable, while FNE, IBT, and CBT are modeled as outcome variables. More specifically, it has been argued that consumers' SE may have direct effects on consumers' FNE, IBT, and CBT, while consumers' FNE may directly affect their IBT and CBT. It has also been suggested that consumers' IBT directly affects their CBT. On the other hand, consumers' SE may indirectly affect IBT and CBT through FNE.

According to the study's results, there has not been an expected negative direct effect between consumers' SE and IBT. Although at first glance, this finding does not seem to coincide with the findings of other studies (Silvera et al., 2008; Verplanken et al., 2005), suggesting a negative correlation between low SE and IBT. However, a closer examination of these findings is essential for understanding the current study results. Silvera et al. (2008) and Verplanken et al. (2005) have defined SE as a two-dimensional construct of self-liking and self-competence, and both studies have found a negative correlation between the emotional dimension of IBT and the SE as mentioned earlier dimensions. However, regression or structural equation modeling analyses found no direct effects between these constructs. Therefore, the current study's finding in this context supports the findings of Silvera et al., (2008) and Verplanken et al., (2005).

According to another result of the study, it has been observed that the expected effect of SE on CBT exists. It is stated in the literature that among the essential characteristics of compulsive buyers they have low SE (Hanley & Wilhelm, 1992; Maraz et al., 2015; O'Guinn & Faber, 1989). Moreover, the two variables negatively correlate (Roberts, 1998). Consequently, this result is consistent with the literature.

Another result of the study is that IBT increases CBT, and this finding is in line with the results of some previous studies in the literature (Bilgen Kocatürk & Eroğlu, 2022; Özdemir, 2022; Shehzadi et al., 2016; Tokgöz, 2019). Accordingly, it is possible to state that a consumer whose IBT increases will have a higher tendency to purchase compulsively. This finding proves that seeing IB and CB together may be possible. Indeed, since CB is a behavior related to impulse control (Hague et al., 2016), IB likely affects CB.

Another result of the current research, which supports the findings in the literature, is that there is evidence that consumers' SE reduces consumers' FNE (Kocovski & Endler, 2000). Accordingly, as consumers' SE increases, their FNE by others decreases.

As an important result of the study, it has been found that consumers' FNE increases their tendency to IB. In the literature, it has been shown that adolescents with high IBT have a higher FNE than those who do not (Lin & Chen, 2012). However, no research reveals such a direct effect

between FNE and IB. In this context, the current study contributed to the literature by revealing a positive and direct effect between both variables. On the other hand, a result contrary to the expectation has been reached: consumers' FNE does not increase their CBT. This finding does not coincide with the findings (Biolcati, 2017; Roberts et al., 2014), which indicate a positive effect between the two variables. At this point, considering that the researchers mentioned above' models include only CB may seem like a reasonable explanation for reaching this inconsistent conclusion because both the present study and the results of other studies have revealed that IB and CB can be observed at the same time (Bilgen Kocatürk & Eroğlu, 2022; Özdemir, 2022; Shehzadi et al., 2016; Tokgöz, 2019). Therefore, it is possible to say that considering IBT and CBT together means more realistic modeling of consumer behavior. In this context, it is possible to say that the current study contributes to the literature by addressing both IB and CB together.

Finally, regarding indirect effects, consumers' FNE has a mediating effect between consumers' SE and IBT. This result is consistent with the expectation of the study and overlaps with the findings that FNE has a mediating role between various variables (Biolcati, 2017; Kocovski & Endler, 2000; Roberts et al., 2014). On the other hand, this result is a new finding in the literature. Therefore, the current study contributes to the literature by revealing that consumers' FNE mediates the relationship between consumers' SE and IBT. Accordingly, consumers' SE reduces their FNE, reducing their tendency to buy impulsively. However, as expected, it has not been found that FNE mediates the relationship between SE and CBT. This finding is inconsistent with the results of some studies in the literature (Biolcati, 2017; Roberts et al., 2014). At this point, it would be a starting point in explaining the possible reasons for this contradiction to point out that the current research addresses both IB and CB together, while other studies focus only on CB.

Despite the valuable results of the current study, it is possible to state that it has some limitations. In this respect, it is possible to make recommendations for future research by considering the current study's limitations. One of the most important limitations of the study is the use of the convenience sampling method. Therefore, the results obtained are valid only for the study sample. In this context, future research should retest the research model using one random sampling method if possible. Furthermore, if the same model is renewed on another sample, it will contribute to the theory to discuss the results obtained by comparing them with the current research and other research results in the literature.

Another significant limitation of the study is that the scope of the research is limited only by the variables included in the research model. However, as the current research shows, developing previous models by adding new variables and modeling real life more holistically contributes to obtaining results that do not overlap with the previous findings in the literature. It thus contributes to redoubt about the mechanisms explaining consumer behavior. In this context, future research may be recommended to test more holistic models by adding new variables that are known or thought to be effective on both IB and CB.

Another study limitation is not including control variables when testing the research model. The main reason for this is the increase in the number of survey questions and the difficulty in finding participants with increasing questions. In this context, future studies should test the research model by adding control variables to the extent possible and comparing the results with the current study results.

Another significant limitation of the study is that the research model was tested with one-time data. However, Roberts (1998, pp. 297–298) states that low SE increases the likelihood of people making compulsive purchases, that this purchase may cause the person to feel guilt and fear

due to the failure to control the purchase behavior, and that another compulsive purchase, in this case, is likely to be caused by the desire to reduce or prevent the negative mood experienced by the person, even if temporarily. Thus, SE can be both an antecedent and a consequence of CB. In this context, it may be advisable for future studies to revise the current research model by collecting longitudinal data and examining the existence of such a situation.

Appendix 1

Self-esteem (SE)
How do you feel about yourself?
How do you feel about the kind of person you are?
When you think about yourself, how do you feel?
How do you feel about the way you are?
Fearn of Negative Evaluation (FNE)
I worry about what others say about me
I worry that others don't like me.
I'm afraid that others will not like me.
I worry about what others think of me
I feel that others make fun of me.
I worry about being teased.
I feel that peers talk about me behind my back.
If I get into an argument, I worry that the other person will not like me.
Impulsive Buying Tendency (IBT)
I often buy things spontaneously
"Just do it" describes the way I buy things.
I often buy things without thinking.
"I see it, I buy it" describes me.
"Buy now, think about it later" describes me.
Compulsive Buying Tendency (CBT)
Bought things even though I couldn't afford them.
Felt others would be horrified if they knew of my spending habits.
Wrote a check when I knew I didn't have enough money in the bank to cover it.
If I have any money left at the end of the pay period, I just have to spend it.
Made only the minimum payments on my credit cards
Felt anxious or nervous on days I didn't go shopping.
Bought something in order to make myself feel better.

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