

# ROLE OF COMPULSIVE BUYING BEHAVIOUR IN GAMING INDUSTRY

## A STUDY OF DEVELOPING COUNTRY

Faize Ali Shah\*  
Vanshika Tandon\*\*

**PURPOSE**  
*THE present paper explores demographic factors affecting compulsive buying behavior among consumers in gaming industry and further investigates the relationship between compulsive buying behavior and customer satisfaction.*

**Design/Methodology/Approach:** *For the purpose of testing proposed hypotheses, gamers were recruited through online mode. Further, data was collected by the aid of self-structured questionnaires from 400 respondents belonging to metro cities of India. For identification of factors affecting compulsive buying behaviour in gaming industry, marital status, age, gender and educational qualification of these respondents were focused upon by the researcher. Testing of the accumulated data was performed through t-test and one way ANOVA, encompassing Levene's test for equality of variance and t-test for equality of means while the relationship between compulsive buying behaviour and customer satisfaction was subjected to two-tailed correlation.*

**Findings:** *Compulsive buying behaviour among gamers purposely affects gaming industry, making it a vital investigative tactic. The findings of this scrutiny indicate that marital status of the respondents affects compulsive buying behaviour among them. It is also found that gender also defines the extent of compulsive buying behaviour. However, the statistical testing results of this study reveal that both age and educational qualification do not vitally dominate compulsiveness among buyers in gaming industry. The exploration of relationship between compulsive buying behaviour and customer satisfaction divulges a strong positive correlation existing between the two. Thus, it can be stated that compulsive buying behaviour positively affects satisfaction among gamers.*

**Research Limitations:** *This study involves a few limitations. Firstly, the statistical analysis is restricted to data collected from 400 respondents. Moreover, due to time constraint, the data was restricted to metro cities of India, however, compulsive buying behaviour might also exist in gamers belonging to other cities as well. So, further studies might entail an expansive data collection framework for more precise scrutiny.*

**Managerial Implications:** *Compulsive buying behaviour, being a psychological phenomenon, is revolutionizing the buying patterns in gaming industry. This study investigates those aspects of Indian buyers which stimulate their buying rationale, ultimately affecting growth of the gaming market and approach of merchandisers towards them.*

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\* Assistant Professor, Agra City, Dayalbagh Educational Institute, (Deemed University), Agra, Uttar Pradesh, India.

\*\* Student, Symbiosis Centre For Distance Learning, Symbiosis Bhawan, Pune, Maharashtra, India.

**Originality/Value:** *The current study scrutinizes compulsive behaviour among buyers which affects their mind set and buying decisions leading to customer satisfaction.*

**Key Words:** *Compulsive Buying Behaviour, Gaming Industry, Customer Satisfaction, Correlation.*

## **Introduction**

Right from the conception of internet, buying patterns of consumers have undergone revolutionary changes in developing countries thereby attracting researchers to understand their buying decisions pertaining to both goods and services. Their resistance to buy has transformed into an optimistic but cautious approach. As shoppers' demands and requirements enhanced with time, their buying behaviour became the focus of many researches. According to Kumar (2016), "Customer buying behaviour is a process by which consumers identify their needs, collect information, evaluate alternatives, and make the purchase decision." It can be identified as a series of dominant choices which they make in order to satisfy their needs and desires. However, it should be interesting to note that intense motivations to purchase increase its frequency (Ridgway, 2011). Due to a steady increase in the availability of goods and services, intensity of buying has also enhanced which has resulted in prevalent compulsive buying among them (Raudsepp et.al, 2015).

In today's modern society, buying cannot be restricted to satisfaction of needs but is often done without giving a lot of thought (Bighiu et. al, 2015). This has given rise to the concept of compulsive buying. As per the point of view of Faber and O'Guinn (1989), "when acquiring, using or experiencing a feeling or material activities, people express an uncontrollable desire or driving force which causes a personal to engage in a repeat behaviour, and people ultimately will trouble themselves or others", compulsive buying behaviour arises. However, Akagün (2010) has further intensified by stating that compulsive buying is a dysfunctional consumer behaviour associated with a continuing failure to control the urge to buy goods and services. It affects the psychology of consumers in such a manner that their mind makes them believe that they require a specific good or service uninterruptedly as Lee and Workman (2015) have also stated it to be a serious psychiatric condition. As compulsive buying is exceedingly becoming common, it becomes vital for the researcher to understand this shopping tendency (Wang et.al, 2016) as it would prove to be beneficial in interpreting contemporary buyer's mind set, thereby making it necessary for the researcher to study this aspect of buying.

Compulsive buying behaviour is dominant in many sectors of marketplaces, particularly, the internet. As per Black (2007), it can be witnessed primarily wherever there is ease of approach and availability of an assortment of goods and services which can be purchased or subscribed easily. Today's stressful and busy life has urged shoppers to opt for those services that might rejuvenate them, making it their guilty pleasure. As a result of which, they are opting for not only satisfying their needs but also approaching leisureliness for mental relief, elimination of stress and feeling of contentment even if it is associated with addiction (Roser, et.al, 2016). As consumer necessities have become multi-fold, their leisureliness has also materialized (June and Ratneshwar, 2003). They can obtain this tranquillity through consumption of edible products unnecessarily, which provides satisfaction (Davenport et.al, 2012), buying apparels linked to high fashion interest (Johnson and Attmann, 2009), opting for healthy and nutritious items which provide happiness (Mrad and Cui, 2020) and even playing games (Yau et.al, 2012) for fun and a feeling of excitement.

The gaming industry has gained a lot of impetus in recent times, making it an eminent part of gamers' lives, giving rise to compulsive buying behaviour among them. Gaming is one such industry which is steadily contributing to increment of compulsive buying behaviour among shoppers by trying to target buyers from all across India, making it a USD one billion opportunity by 2021 (KMFG, 2017), thereby the researcher has opted this expanding industry for investigation of compulsive buying behaviour as it is a continuously mounting phenomenon and is attracting many prospective gamers. The concept of

games, though brings recreation in the lives of buyers, may also become important as a result of ineffective time management skills (Wood, 2008). However, Hamari et.al (2017) have scrutinized that playing unobstructed, desire for social interaction and tendency to compete also make players engrossed. As many research analysts have investigated compulsive buying behaviour being a serious psychological disorder, it was found necessary by the researcher to focus on some of its factors and effects thereby linking it to customer satisfaction (Teng, 2010) in order to accomplish the objectives of this study.

Customer satisfaction dominantly emphasises the tendency of a buyer to involve in repurchase. It can be regarded as a summary of response pertaining to varying intensity, having specified time duration and concentrating on item acquisition or consumption (Giese and Cote, 2000). As gaming industry is on a steady growth now a days, it can be regarded as the effect of service and service quality on the buying decisions of consumers (Wadud, 2012) and their tendency to consistently repurchase or re-subscribe. Though, there are many factors affecting this concept, they might be broadly distinguished into provocative psychological determinants (Mulyono and Rusdarti, 2020), societal influences (Moon et. al, 2017) and even many other motivational influences (Cleghorn and Griffiths, 2015), but the impact of demographic variables was found the most vital by the researcher as these variables affect the buying decisions to greater extent. According to Wu (2014), the merchandisers of the gaming industry rely on perceived usefulness and enjoyment antecedents for identifying the level of customer satisfaction. But, it should not be foregone that innate psychology of buyers or subscribers has to be investigated for understanding how satiated they are while opting for gaming consoles (Shieh et. al, 2007) so that the link between compulsive buying behaviour among online gamers and their satisfaction levels can be thoroughly analysed.

## **Review of Literature**

Bueso et al., (2020) have stated that there are numerous risk factors leading to compulsive buying behaviour among adolescent online gamers. This paper vividly focuses on personality traits such as forcefulness, self-demeaning attitude, introversive nature, dolefulness and the like. Furthermore, through cluster analysis, psychiatric comorbidity among these buyers was investigated so that their mentality can be understood. It was found that both experience and problematic behavioural characteristics are diverse in buyers suffering from compulsiveness to devote their time and money on various online gaming consoles. It was also recommended that owing to socio-demographic and customer centric approach, such people can be successfully dealt with and policies can be formulated accordingly.

Interestingly, Chou and Ting (2004) admit that consumers are inclined towards behaving in a certain manner even if they realise that whatever they are doing, might not be in their best interest but are not able to control themselves and become addicted towards gaming. The researcher also discussed the aspects of enjoyment and distortion of perception that provokes them to become loyal gamers through flow experience. Compulsive buying behaviour resulted from repetition of activities that become one's favourite over a specified period of time. The scrutiny of this aspect of an experienced buyer's life might lead to a deeper understanding of the relationship between frequency of their purchases and addictive levels.

However, Kuss (2013) enlisted prominent demographic determinants affecting the lives of frequent online gamers, marital status being one of the most important. The researcher justified that a married person's life is affected far more than an unmarried one. It was suggested that excessive gaming of a married individual might lead to disrupted family time, consistent craving for a virtual world leading to anxiety and stress. At the same time, it was found by the researcher that an unmarried consumer's self-esteem was heightened due to online gaming due to an evolving social life and increased optimistic attitude towards handling of situations, justifying no symptom of any disorder or compulsion to buy gaming consoles.

Samo et al., (2019) discussed that young buyers have a tendency to turn into obsessive addicts owing to a continuous compulsive buying behavioural pattern, particularly on the web. The study also relates those facets on which a marketer needs to work by providing them souvenirs or gifts, motivating them to buy for the people close to them or in order to gain valuable information and ideas so that their compulsive motivations can become the causes of optimistic personal relationships rather than stressful lives. The researcher has also recommended that a merchandiser needs to design a product or service in adventure and gratification seeking manner for a positive effect on the lives of their clients who are much more satisfied rather than role and value shopping which leads to further distress.

Tesgim (2004) studied many literatures for investigating the factors that affect compulsive buying behaviour to a great extent. The examination focussed on many aspects, old age being one of the parameters. It was suggested by the researcher that youth is more susceptible to buying compulsively rather than an older generation as old age can be interpreted as the age of realization where a shopper is much more cautious in spending. A person gains maturity at a certain mean age, recommended to be 37 in latest researches, after which, his/her mind can differentiate between the extent of spending on necessities, luxuries, leisurely activities and the like.

Chumbley and Griffiths (2006) concentrated on effective responses of buyers during game-play in relation to their personalities as well as gender. The personality make-up of an individual incites or repels their urge to buy. This study also aided the research analyst in identifying the extent to which males and females differ in their playing choices, inclinations and dedicative spirit, through one way ANOVA. The study resulted in highlighting that males are more persistent players as compared to females, though the prior are exposed to more frustration and. It was also interesting to note that mastering controls during the process of buying was found to be 'tricky' for both the genders. This study helped in constructing an effective framework for dealing with these buyers.

Yeboah and Prempeh (2017) have initiated that both consumer and product related factors affect compulsive buying behaviour among shoppers. They mainly investigated the price, quality and origin of the item or service for analysing compulsive buying behaviour among them based on varied determinants including educational qualification, financial credibility, availability of time etc. It was scrutinized that people having high educational qualification did not experience a constant longing to spend when paralleled with those who are comparatively less qualified. This might be a result of a wider perspective towards life and lack of materialistic requirements as a person gains more satisfaction and which lacks in less educated individuals who often misuse their money drastically.

Manchiraju et al., (2017) studied that now a days, people are spending most of their time buying goods and services through the web, necessitating the need for formulation of a compulsive online shopping scale and its validation for achievement of complete satisfaction. The researcher has categorized compulsive buying as an addictive behavioural disorder leading to immense mental satisfaction. For apt investigation, the effect of demographic and psychological factors on compulsive buying was found to be the most prominent, ultimately contributing to increased customer satisfaction. It was also mentioned that an intense form of such behaviour has negative impacts on both personal life and the society at large.

Moreover, Chen et al., (2008) specified that online gamers basically look for life satisfaction while playing, making it a major hub of amusing activities. For interpreting the customer satisfaction intensities among gamers, their personalities and lifestyles need an obligatory scrutiny. The statistical analysis of the relationship was conducted between customer-specific traits and their satisfaction. It was observed that though neuroticism affects the relationship pessimistically, open mind and high diligence are quite optimistic in promoting this relationship. The author(s) suggested that such investigation might help in inferring the concept of leisurely activities among buyers.

Compulsive buying behaviour in the gaming industry is a phenomenon which is progressively acquiring a lot of stimulus and profitability (Ferreira de Souza and Ferreira de Freitas, 2017). Through the above citation, researcher has exemplified the vitality of studying the demographic profile of the respondents which affects the compulsive buying behaviour in the gaming industry. Further, the relationship between compulsive buying behaviour and customer satisfaction has been studied for a better understanding of how much satisfied compulsive customers are. This study would aid present and future research enthusiasts as well as merchandisers to formulate effective marketing policies in gaming industry, especially in the market of developing countries.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The formulation of pre-set objectives is very important and primary requirement ((Schwegler and Shamoon, 1982) for conducting a successful research. As per Denicolo and Becker (2012) they direct the analyst towards specificity rather than ambiguousness. The researcher has aimed for understanding the determinants linked to compulsive buying behaviour in gaming industry. For conducting analysis in an effective manner, the researcher focused on two major objectives. The current study aims to identify the factors affecting compulsive buying behaviour in gaming industry. Further, it also determines the relationship between compulsive buying behaviour and customer satisfaction so that those behavioural traits of gamers can be understood that compel them to buy compulsively and experience a sense of satisfaction.

### **Research Methodology**

Research methodology elucidates the conduct of research procedure (Goundar, 2012) and helps in analysing the data collected (LibGuides, 2020) through both primary and secondary means. The source of data collection is primary. The data was collected through self-structured questionnaires from metro cities of India, sample size being 400. For analysis and interpretation of the data, one way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was selected by the researcher as aided by Levene's test for equality of variance and t-test for equality of means. Further, the statistical technique of two-tailed correlation was applied as it is apt when null hypothesis has to be tested (Salkind, 2010). This section has been further sub-divided into three sections. The first consists of information regarding proposed hypotheses followed by statistical analysis and testing results.

#### **Hypotheses**

In order to conduct an effective research, a tentative statement representing a proposed solution of a problem (Kabir, 2016) has to be mentioned so that its validity can be put to test. It is such a statement representing a fact, which can be falsified (Glass and Hall, 2008). The present study also entails two proposed hypotheses which aided in further investigation. The proposed hypotheses are stated below:

H<sub>01</sub>: There is no significant difference in the factor affecting compulsive buying behaviour.

H<sub>02</sub>: There is no significant relationship between compulsive buying behaviour and customer satisfaction.

#### **Statistical Analysis**

For identification of the factors affecting compulsive buying behaviour in gaming industry, the researcher focused on the demographic profile of 400 respondents belonging to metro cities of India. The demographic factors were proposed to be prominent in affecting the compulsive buying behaviour among gamers. The following table gives information regarding detailed analysis conducted on the marital status, age and gender of the respondents, by the application of Levene's test for equality of variance and t-test for equality of means. However, educational qualification was subjected to testing through one way ANOVA.

**Table No. 1:  $H_{01}$ : There is No Significant Difference in the Factor Affecting Compulsive Buying Behaviour**

Demographic Profile		t-test			
		Levene's test for Equality of Variance		t-test for Equality of Means	
		F	Sig.	T	Sig.
Marital Status	Married	0.536	0.458	-0.359	0.705
	Unmarried				
Age	Young	0.322	0.865	-0.388	0.532
	Old				
Gender	Male	0.762	0.523	-0.560	0.868
	Female				
<b>One way ANOVA</b>					
		Levene's test for Equality of Variance		t-test for Equality of Means	
		F	Sig.	T	Sig.
Educational Qualification	Post Graduate				
	Under Graduate	0.336	0.857	0.495	0.657
	Other				

Note: p value is significant at 0.05 level.

Further, the relationship between compulsive buying behaviour and customer satisfaction was scrutinized through the statistical technique of two-tailed correlation, aided by Pearson correlation statistical tactic. This procedure was ultimately conducted in order to successfully attain the objectives of this study. The subsequent table summarizes this testing procedure numerically.

**Table No. 2:  $H_{02}$ : There is No Significant Relationship between Compulsive Buying Behaviour and Customer Satisfaction**

		Compulsive Buying Behaviour	Customer Satisfaction
Compulsive buying behaviour	Pearson Correlation	1	
Customer satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	0.705	1

Note: p value is significant at 0.05 level.

## Results

After the scrutiny of customer demographics, vital results were deduced. When the marital status of the respondents was subjected to test, the hypothesis was failed to reject ( $t = -0.359$ ,  $p = 0.705$ ). So, it can be clearly stated that marital status of the respondents affects their compulsive buying behaviour. Further, the testing of the age of both young and old consumers as a primary factor also gave identical results thereby gaining acceptance ( $t = -0.388$ ,  $p = 0.532$ ) that age affects their compulsive buying

tendencies. As the value of p is standardized and significant at 0.05 level, testing on the basis of gender resulted in failing to reject ( $t = -0.560$ ,  $p = 0.868$ ) the proposed hypothesis. When educational qualification of the residents based on post graduates, under graduates and others belonging to metro cities of India was tested through one way ANOVA, it was clearly observed that how educated the gamers are, affects their compulsive buying behaviour vitally ( $t = 0.495$ ,  $0.657$ ). The analysis based on two tailed correlation for investigating the relationship between two variables, it was found that the value deduced was 0.705 which indicated the existence of a strong positive relationship between compulsive buying behaviour and customer satisfaction.

## Discussion and Conclusion

This study was conducted in order to investigate the effect of demographic factors on compulsive buying behaviour among gamers and extent of its relationship with customer satisfaction so that the role of compulsive buying behaviour on gaming industry of a developing country like India can be demarcated. It was evident that marital status and gender are very significant in affecting their compulsiveness to purchase. This would undoubtedly aid the marketers to develop distinguished marketing strategies (Zhang and Huang, 2019) for compulsive buyers based on these factors. Further, results justifying the relationship between compulsive buying behaviour and customer satisfaction indicate that their compulsive buying patterns are linked to strong satisfaction levels. This would also help merchandisers and research enthusiasts in pre-analysing their enhanced purchases (Koivumaki, 2001) so that their requirements can be successfully dealt with.

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