

Impact of Attachment Styles, and Emotional Contagion on Compulsive Buying of Young Adults

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Abstract: This study sought to examine how Attachment Styles, and Emotional Contagion on people's compulsive Buying habits. A sample of 120 individuals was taken through the survey method, emotional contagion scale, Richmond compulsive buying scale, and the adult attachment style scale was utilized. Other than this, available literature was taken into concern for analyzing the research already been done on this particular topic. The findings of the study will help mental health professionals when identifying and treating compulsive buying disorder, they will consider a person's attachment style and early experiences. They can better customize their therapy strategy to meet each patient's unique needs by being aware of the underlying reasons for compulsive buying.

Index Items - Attachment styles, Emotional contagion, Compulsive buying.

1. INTRODUCTION

Attachment Styles

Attachment styles are defined by different ways of participating and responding in close relationships. These attachment patterns are centered on early interactions between young children and their parents. In maturity, patterns of attachment in intimate relationships are described by means of attachment styles. Attachment is a type of emotional relationship that involves the sharing of comfort, caring, and pleasure. John Bowlby intensively investigated the concept of attachment, which he characterized as a "long-term psychological bond between human beings." Bowlby agreed with the psychoanalytic theory that early life experiences have a significant influence on subsequent behavior and development. He said, "The tendency to form deep emotional attachments to certain individuals is a basic feature of human nature." Two types of Attachment Styles that are discussed in the study are:

a) *Anxious* -The partner is typically the "better half" for individuals who possess an anxious

attachment style. The prospect of living alone or without a companion causes a great deal of anxiety. Those experiencing this type of connection usually have negative evaluations of themselves but positive perceptions of others.

b) *Fearful Avoidant*- The unstable personality type is characterized by irregular and ambiguous social behaviors. For those with this attachment type, the person and the connection itself are frequently sources of both desire and disgust. People who feel intimidated and avoidant crave intimacy and closeness, but they also find it difficult depending on and trust people.

Carvalho, et al. (2013) published in the journal "Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin" found that individuals with a secure attachment type were less likely to become emotionally contagious than those with an unstable relationship style. The researchers hypothesised that this could be related to secure people's higher capacity to manage their emotions and keep control over their own affective states.

Emotional Contagion

Emotional contagion, a form of social contagion, is the unintentional spread of emotions and the corresponding actions. Such emotional convergence can take place within a larger group as well as amongst different people. People can become emotionally contagious through social contact, which results in behavioral synchronization. Emotions are transient, powerful feelings that arise in response to events, objects, or people. Emotions are feelings that can change the psychological, physiological, and behavioral patterns that prepare us for action. For example, when we are happy, our eyes soften and our grins widen, which influences how we treat others. Numerous studies claim that many facial expressions, such as a sorrowful frown, are universal; nevertheless, social standards and individual upbringing also

influence our behavioral responses. In the manifestation of love, for example, cultural and individual variances exist.

Moorthy, et al. (2022) said that social commerce networks are an effective medium for the propagation of both good and destructive emotional contagion, which impacts users in several ways, including psychology, attitude, and purchasing behavior. The concept of emotional contagion occurs when one person's feelings and behaviors cause other people to experience the same emotions or act in the same ways. This study suggests a model for examining the variables affecting emotional contagion, which in turn affects consumer attitudes, trust in brands, and brand engagement. A structured questionnaire was employed in this study as a survey methodology. 174 internet shoppers from social media were the source of the primary data. With the use of multiple regression analysis, the proposed model was evaluated. The findings showed that compelling material, whether visual or text-based, influences consumers' attitudes and builds trust, which in turn fosters brand engagement.

Compulsive Buying Behavior

Compulsive purchasing (CB) is a client's tendency to purchase goods and services without prior planning. Compulsive Buying refers to the actions that are solely concerned with obtaining goods or services, and it includes the dynamic cycles that precede and follow these activities. In this way, the advertising message appears to have a specific mental influence that stimulates people to seek and then acquire a specific item/service (Wertebroch et al., 2020).

Everyone engages in compulsive buying occasionally. Compulsive purchasing can be more serious, necessitating the assistance of a therapist in order to handle the underlying emotions that lead to the activity. According to the DuPont Consumer Buying Habits Study, which was conducted between 1948 and 1965, the initial definition of a "Compulsive buy" was an impulsive purchase made by the consumer. The idea of "drive purchasing" was subsequently revisited; it refers to the intense urge that a consumer feels when they must buy something right now, which regularly causes the client emotional anguish. As a result, the customer became more important than the item in the definition. Since then, it has been said that the need to buy is brought on by a person's drive to satisfy such

demands, which conflicts with their own reasonable and self-administrative views. The rise of consumerism has also been connected to an increase in impulsive purchases, which often results in consumers overspending or making hasty, foolish purchases.

2. METHODOLOGY

A sample of 120 individuals, within the age range of 18 – 27 years was taken through *Convenience Sampling* design. The tools used in this research were: The Emotional Contagion Scale, Richmond Compulsive Buying Scale, and the Adult Attachments Style Scale was utilized.

The Emotional Contagion Scale (Doherty, 1997): It is a unidimensional evaluation of the degree to which people are sensitive to the emotions of others as a result of afferent input brought on by mimicry. A 15-item scale that measures the mimetic inclination to five fundamental emotions was created through iterative validation processes (love, happiness, fear, anger, and sadness). The ratings range from Never to Always on a 5-point scale. It has a unidimensional measure of susceptibility and reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha = .90$).

Richmond compulsive buying scale (1990): The Richmond Compulsive Buying Scale (RCBS), a six-item self-reporting instrument that has been validated globally was designed. Items are scored on a scale of 1 to 7, with the total scale score determined as the sum of the items. A score of 25 or higher indicates compulsive buying. Cronbach's alpha was 0.78 across the entire scale.

Adult Attachment Scale (Collins, 1996): The following scale is focused with how we feel in general about essential relationships that are important in our lives. This scale is divided into two subscales: ANXIETY and AVOIDANCE. Internal consistency reliability, discriminating validity, and construct-related validity are all present. Cronbach's alpha coefficients are more than 0.7 in the normal group.

Statistical Analysis for the Social Sciences IBM (SPSS) 23 is used for evaluation. For the research, Pearson Correlation and Multiple Regression was utilized to find the relationship between Attachment Styles, Emotional Contagion, and Compulsive Buying.

HYPOTHESIS

H 1: Anxious Attachment Style and Compulsive Buying will have a substantial link.
 H 2: Avoidant Attachment Style and Compulsive Buying will have a substantial link.
 H 3: There will be an inverse correlation between Emotional Contagion and Compulsive Buying.
 H 4: Anxious Attachment Style and Emotional Contagion will have a substantial relationship.

H 5: Avoidant Attachment Style and Emotional Contagion will have a significant relationship...
 H 6: Anxious Attachment Style, Emotional Contagion, and Compulsive Buying in Young Adults will have a substantial relationship.
 H 7: Avoidant Attachment Style, Emotional Contagion, and Compulsive Buying in Young Adults will have a significant relationship.

3. RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Table 1 - Mean and Standard Deviation of Attachment Style (Anxiety and Avoidant), Emotional Contagion and Compulsive Buying.

	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Standard Deviation</i>	<i>N</i>
<i>Attachment Styles (Anxiety)</i>	18.27	6.592	120
<i>(Avoidant)</i>	37.25	7.306	120
<i>Emotional Contagion</i>	48.05	9.230	120
<i>Compulsive Buying</i>	20.23	9.674	120

From Table 1, it can be observed that for Anxiety Attachment Style, mean is 18.27 and standard deviation is 6.592; for Avoidant Attachment Style, mean is 6.592 and standard deviation is 7.306; for

Emotional Contagion, mean is 48.05 and standard deviation is 9.230; and for Compulsive Buying, mean is 20.23 and standard deviation is 9.674.

Table 2 - Correlation between Attachment Styles (Anxious and Avoidant), Emotional Contagion and Compulsive Buying.

		Anxiety	Avoidant	Emotional Contagion	Compulsive Buying
Anxiety	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	1 120	.103 .261 120	.082 .373 120	.155 .090 120
Avoidant	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.103 .261 120	1 120	.330** .000 120	.188** .040 120
Emotional Contagion	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.082 .373 120	.330** .000 120	1 120	.251** .006 120
Compulsive Buying	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.082 .373 120	.188* .040 120	.251** .006 120	1 120

Table 2 shows that when the scores are analyzed using the Pearson correlation method, an insignificant correlation is found between Anxiety Attachment Style and Emotional Contagion ($r = 0.082, p > 0.01$); a significant correlation is found between Avoidant Attachment Style and Emotional Contagion ($r = 0.330^{**}, p < 0.01$); an insignificant correlation is found between Anxiety Attachment Style and Compulsive Buying ($r = 0.155, p > 0.01$); a significant correlation between Avoidant Attachment Style and Compulsive Buying ($r = 0.188^*, p < 0.05$) and Emotional Contagion and Compulsive Buying ($r = 0.251^{**}, p < 0.01$).

Table 3 - Multiple regression among Attachment Styles (Anxiety, and Avoidant), Emotional Contagion, and Compulsive Buying.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.302 ^a	.091	.068	9.341

According to Table 3, there is a weakly positive and statistically significant link between Attachment Styles (Anxiety and Avoidant), Emotional Contagion, and Compulsive Buying ($r = 0.302, p < 0.01$).

According to Table 2, there is a substantial association between Attachment Styles (Anxiety, and Avoidant), Emotional Contagion and Compulsive Buying. The results have been obtained upon running the Pearson correlation method for Anxiety Attachment Style and Emotional Contagion, where ($r = 0.082, p < 0.05$) and insignificant relationship; For Avoidant Attachment Style and Compulsive Buying, results are ($r = 0.115, p < 0.05$) and significant relationship; For Emotional Contagion and Compulsive Buying, results are ($r = 0.251, p < 0.01$). Research shows compulsive buying is frequently associated with unpleasant feelings such as anxiety, depression, and low self-esteem. Individuals may compulsive shopping to deal with negative feelings or seek pleasure and reward. Hence, Hypothesis 1, 4, 6 is not accepted but Hypothesis 2, 3, 5, and 7 is accepted.

From Table 3, it can be seen that Attachment Styles, Emotional Contagion, and Compulsive Buying have a marginally significant and positive association ($r = 0.302, p < 0.01$). Hence, the hypothesis is accepted which stated that there will be a significant relationship between Attachment Styles, Emotional Contagion and Compulsive Buying among young adults.

A relationship between Attachment Styles (Anxious, and Avoidance), and compulsive shopping has also

been discovered in multiple types of researches. Individuals with an anxious attachment style, for example, may be more likely to engage in compulsive purchasing to cope with negative emotions or to seek comfort and reassurance. According to multiple studies, Attachment Styles (Anxiety and Avoidant), Emotional Contagion, and Compulsive Buying are all interconnected and can impact one another. Understanding these links can aid in the development of effective therapies and treatments for people suffering from compulsive buying and other associated concerns.

4. CONCLUSION

Thus, it can be concluded that there are weakly positive and insignificant relationships between Anxious Attachment Style and Emotional Contagion; Anxious Attachment Style and Compulsive Buying. There are weakly positive and significant relationships between Avoidant Attachment Style and Emotional Contagion; Avoidant Attachment Style and Compulsive Buying; Emotional Contagion and Compulsive Buying among Young Adults.

5. LIMITATIONS

- The generalizability of the results to larger populations may be constrained by the small sample sizes used in the study.
- Although the study implies that attachment types, emotional contagion, and compulsive purchase habits may be related, causality cannot be concluded from the data. It's probable that additional elements, such as personality qualities or contextual variables, also had a role in the emergence of compulsive purchasing behaviors

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