

Online Shopping and the Rise of Compulsive Buying: A Critical Review

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Abstract: Online shopping has made life more convenient and provided a greater range of choices for products without leaving home, one can browse and order anything. Online shopping has gained prominence due to secure transactions and delivery options. Online shopping in the digital era is quite influential in compulsive buying behavior due to many reasons, such as accessibility, no limit on choices, and persuasive marketing. The online shopping environment usually intensifies impulsive personalities, resulting in over and at times illogical purchases. This review paper explores the primary psychological drivers of Compulsive Buying Behaviour (CBB), including instant gratification, impulsivity (or low impulse self-control), Fear of Missing Out (FoMO), social comparison, and escapism. It highlights how e-commerce platforms leverage personalized recommendation algorithms, targeted advertising, gamified shopping experiences, and social media marketing to intensify compulsive tendencies. Case studies of Amazon and the House of SamSachi illustrate the contrast between online and traditional retail approaches, emphasizing how digital design and marketing strategies influence consumer decisions. Further, to examine the effects of compulsive buying on consumer mental health and wellness, financial well-being, and ethical responsibilities for online retailers. This paper offers considerations for consumers, businesses, and policymakers to conduct ethical digital practices, educational programming, and to consider regulatory frameworks for responsible consumption.

Keywords: Online Shopping, Compulsive Buying, Electronic Commerce (E-Commerce), Online Retail

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