



Compulsive buying: Does it matter how it's measured?

Chris Manolis^{a,*}, James A. Roberts^{b,1}

^a *Xavier University, Williams College of Business, Department of Marketing,
3800 Victory Parkway, Cincinnati, OH 45207-3214, United States*

^b *Baylor University, Hankamer School of Business, Marketing Department, Waco, TX 76798-8007, United States*

Received 22 September 2006; received in revised form 13 August 2007; accepted 20 October 2007

Available online 30 October 2007

Abstract

The primary purpose of the present study is to compare and contrast the validity and reliability of the Faber and O'Guinn [Faber, R. J., & O'Guinn, T. C. (1992). A clinical screener for compulsive buying. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 19, 459–469] and Edwards [Edwards, E. A. (1993). Development of a new scale for measuring compulsive buying behavior. *Financial Counseling and Planning*, 4, 67–84] compulsive buying scales within a nomological network. Although both psychometric scales were designed to measure compulsive buying, the two instruments appear to be distinct in how they conceptualize the compulsive buying phenomenon. The seven-item compulsive buying scale developed by Faber and O'Guinn (1992) is the most commonly used scale for measuring compulsive buying. The Edwards scale in contrast is not as well-known. Empirical results of the present study suggest that the two compulsive buying scales may be capturing either separate constructs, or different dimensions of the same compulsive buying construct. Edwards (1993) compulsive buying scale, for instance, is correlated with materialism but not with attitudes toward money while the Faber and O'Guinn scale is not correlated with materialism but is correlated with attitudes toward money. The present study's results suggest, among other things, that it does in fact appear to matter how compulsive buying is measured.

© 2007 Elsevier B.V. All rights reserved.

JEL classification: M31; M39

PsycINFO classification: 3230; 2229; 2200; 3920; 3900

* Corresponding author. Tel.: +1 513 745 2046; fax: +1 513 745 3692.

E-mail addresses: manolis@xavier.edu (C. Manolis), jim_roberts@baylor.edu (J.A. Roberts).

¹ Tel.: +1 254 710 4952; fax: +1 254 710 1068.

Keywords: Consumer behavior; Compulsive buying; Obsessive-compulsive; Psychometrics; Validity

1. Introduction

Compulsive buying can be thought of as a chronic tendency to purchase products far in excess of a person's needs and resources (Mittal, Holbrook, Beatty, Raghurir, & Woodside, 2008). This tendency among consumers appears to be on the rise (Benson, 2000). Estimates of compulsive buying among young adults, for example, range from 6% to 12.2% (Hassay & Smith, 1996; Roberts, 1998; Roberts and Jones, 2001). This is considerably higher than previous estimates of compulsive buying among adults where compulsive buying was thought to range from 1% to 6% of the population (Faber & O'Guinn, 1989, 1992; Trachtenberg, 1988). Compulsive buying among consumers is not the only thing on the rise; scholarly empirical research on compulsive buying has increased as well (Ridgway, Kukar-Kinney, & Monroe, 2006). A critical issue of empirical investigation in this area concerns how to measure or operationalize compulsive buying.

Measuring compulsive buying is not a straightforward process, yet the ability to accurately measure it is important if researchers are to clearly understand and perhaps predict this growing consumer phenomenon (Hassay & Smith, 1996). The primary purpose of the present study is to empirically compare two extant compulsive buying scales: the Faber and O'Guinn (1992) and Edwards (1993) compulsive buying scales. These two psychometric scales are the most widely known if not only scales utilized to measure compulsive buying among adults, and, to this point, have not been directly empirically compared to one another. Accordingly, the contribution of the current research is decidedly technical in nature. A valid measure of compulsive buying will allow researchers to more accurately (1) estimate the size of the phenomenon, including understanding whether incidence of the behavior is increasing or not (2) identify those affected, and (3) address the causes and consequences of compulsive buying such that extant consumer behavior theory can be improved and the ability to predict this tendency enhanced.

The Faber and O'Guinn scale is by far the most commonly used scale to measure compulsive buying (Roberts, Manolis, & Tanner, 2003). The profile of the compulsive buyer that has emerged from the literature is based largely on studies using the seven-item clinical screener for compulsive buying (Faber & O'Guinn, 1992). Although the Faber and O'Guinn scale has served an important function measuring a significant consumer behavior phenomenon, we raise the question of whether or not this scale should be the primary measure used in this capacity. Is our current understanding of compulsive buying and its proposed antecedents and consequences a function of the scale utilized, or does it reflect true underlying relationships between the compulsive buying construct and its proposed antecedents and consequences? And, how do alternative compulsive buying measures perform when compared with the Faber and O'Guinn scale?

Currently, we investigate the Faber and O'Guinn scale in juxtaposition to the Edwards' compulsive buying scale in an attempt to better understand this oftentimes inscrutable consumer construct. Unlike the Faber and O'Guinn scale, the Edwards scale utilizes thresholds for compulsive buying that were developed based on statistical rationale and can place consumers on a continuum from normal (non-compulsive), recreational, borderline, and compulsive to addicted spenders (Edwards, 1992, 1993). Together, the Faber and

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/885531>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/885531>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)