Journeys of a shopaholic, discussions about compulsiveness during the consumer journey

Abstract

Compulsiveness is a topic that has been extensively discussed in the literature since the 1980s and it has been the main topic of discussion of hundreds of different articles in different areas such as Marketing, Psychology, Sociology, amongst others. Most discussions, however, are focused on the decision and the act of purchase. When applying the consumer journey framework to analyze how the discussion on compulsiveness has developed throughout the consumption journey, it is possible to perceive areas where few studies have been developed and, based on this analysis, propose an agenda for future studies on compulsiveness, considering the complete consumer journey. Our analysis showcases that post-purchase activity such as binge-watching, and compulsive use of social media are areas in need of further research about compulsiveness.

Keywords
Compulsive buying, compulsiveness, consumer journey, binge behavior

Introduction

Released in 2000, the movie Confessions of a Shopaholic became a worldwide hit and in the following years it became a novel series of eight sequel books, and it was adapted to a Hollywood film. This series of novels tell the stories of Rebecca Bloomwood, a journalist that loves fashion and shopping. She buys compulsively and the main plot of the story revolves around her relationship with the addiction to shopping. One possible explanation for the instant and large success of this novel is the identification readers may feel in situations that Rebecca had been through. Shopping addiction has been a phenomenon studied in Marketing literature since the '80s.

Compulsive consumption is a phenomenon that has been studied from different perspectives in Marketing literature, as a buying impulse (Rook, 1987), as a compulsive buying behavior – CBB (R. Faber, O'Guinn, & Krych, 1987; O'Guinn & Faber, 1989; Valence, d'Astous, & Fortier, 1988), and as a shopping addiction (Hirschman, 1992). Maccarrone-Eaglen & Schofield (2017) posit that CBB presents both compulsive and impulsive traits and there is no agreement where disorder may be placed. These characteristics array the complexity of compulsiveness in consumption, which can be magnified if we pounder that compulsiveness is a topic extensively explored by other areas of research, such as Psychology, Addiction, Information technology, amongst others (for examples, please see Lawrence et al., 2014; Maraz, Griffiths, & Demetrovics, 2016; Nataraajan & Goff, 1992).

The main objective of this paper is to propose a research agenda of topics that need further investigation in consumer behavior literature. To help us navigate through the long list of articles about compulsive buying, we decided to adopt a broader perspective of consumer behavior, using the Consumer Journey (Court, Elzinga, Mulder, Vetvik, & Others, 2009; Lemon & Verhoef, 2016) framework that presents the buying process not as a fragmented flow in the process of buying, but as a complex process where consumers have multiple touchpoints to interact with brands and products. The consumer

journey has three main phases during the buying process: PrePurchase, Purchase, and PostPurchase, as consumers tend to present different flows in their process of buying with multiple touchpoints in their journey. This framework allows us to capture a broader perception of how compulsiveness is being discussed during the whole journey consumers take in their lives. This approach permitted us to see beyond the discussions around the purchase stage, where most of the research in consumer behavior literature lies.

We used keywords related to compulsive consumption to capture, analyze, and select the published papers to be used in this study. Two databases were used: EBSCO and Google Scholar. We used three criteria as filters: to be selected, a paper must have been published in an indexed journal by Scimago, the paper must have been cited by at least 5 other papers, and the central theme of the paper must be related to marketing or consumer behavior (e.g. excluding papers that focus on treatment or medicine). Data collection finalized in 2020, so papers that were published in 2018, 2019, and 2020 did not have the imposition of being cited by other papers. Using these filters, we were able to narrow down the number of articles from 808 to 270.

The number of articles found about compulsiveness shows that this topic is extensively discussed in Marketing and other areas. It is paramount to emphasize, however, that the objective of this article is to propose a research agenda about compulsiveness taking into account the whole consumer journey, and not to perform a literature review about compulsiveness, which was done previously by some scholars (i.e. Gupta, 2013; Workman & Paper, 2010), discussing theories and dimensions of compulsiveness. Instead, we use the consumer journey framework as a tool to assess which parts of the consumer journey needs attention when discussing compulsiveness, in an attempt to help researchers extend the discussions about this relevant topic in Marketing and consumer behavior literature. With this framework, we present for each stage of the consumer journey the main topics discussed in compulsiveness literature and propose areas that may be explored in future studies. We were able to segregate the 270 articles into 25 different topics that are distributed in the three stages of the consumer journey.

From this analysis, we present four topics of compulsiveness that needs more attention from researchers in consumer behavior: compulsive SNS (social network site) usage, binge-watching, the role of brand in compulsive consumption and compulsive browsing. The first two topics are related to the PostPurchase stage, where topics like Hoarding and Game Addiction has been widely studied (Claes, Müller, & Luyckx, 2016; Ladouceur, Sévigny, Blaszczynski, O'Connor, & Lavoie, 2003; Maycroft, 2008; McKinnon, Smith, & Keith Hunt, 1985; Rose & Dhandayudham, 2014) but few studies address the compulsive use of contemporary media, including social media and media-streaming. The third topic is related to the Purchase stage, and it discusses the role of brand in compulsive buying behavior, and the latter one is related to the PrePurchase stage, a stage where academics previously identified as in need of more attention in consumer behavior literature (Chen, Hsu, & Lin, 2010; Jiang, Luk, & Cardinali, 2018), and no research has found about the possibly compulsive browsing behavior. In the last part of this article, this research agenda is presented with details.

Method

To select which papers were going to be analyzed, we focused on looking for papers published in academic journals, taking into consideration only publications that were published in peer-reviewed journals. We decided to use two main databases: EBSCO and Google Scholar, as they are two of the main databases used in academic research. We searched for articles using the keywords, related to Compulsive behavior, such as Compulsive Buying, Shopping Addiction, Couponing, Hoarding, among others. Table 1 presented below presents the keywords used in this first stage that returned relevant articles to be explored.

Table 1 - List of keywords x quantity of papers found

Keyword	**Number of articles**
Couponing	14
Compulsive Buying	319
Impulsive Buying	52
Compulsive Shopping	47
Shopping Addiction	37
Gaming Addiction	70
Social Media Addiction	73
Binge Eating	41
Binge Consumption	34
Hoarding Behavior	34
Dating App	32
Compulsive Hoarding	28
Binge Watching	15
Compulsive Gaming	12
Total	**808**

As the objective of this study is to address how compulsiveness in being discussed in marketing and consumer behavior literature, we excluded articles that were focused on treatments, and other medical-related research about compulsiveness and addiction. We also identified 98 articles that were duplicated in the database, as they had been suggested with different keywords (the most common case we found were duplicated articles that appear both in "compulsive buying" and "impulsive buying" keywords which could also be an indication that authors often treat them as synonymous). When we found a duplicate, we analyzed the article and defined which keyword was more appropriate, and then keep the register in this keyword. In the end, We were able to find 336 articles about compulsiveness in peer-reviewed journals that addressed compulsive behavior in consumption. As we did not impose published date filters, we found articles from 1985 until 2018.

The next step was to analyze the relevance of the articles found. We excluded articles that were published in a journal that was not indexed by Scimago, and also articles that have not been cited by at least 10 other papers. The number of citations was collected in June 2020 and this criterion did not consider articles published from 2018, considering two years for an article to be cited.

Main information about the articles considered

The 270 articles chosen for the analysis in this study can be grouped into 25 different main topics, that we divided into the three stages of the consumer journey. Altogether, these 270 articles were cited by other 37,801, an average of 11 citations per article. Topics that were allocated in the post-purchase stage were the most cited (15.3 citations per article), and it held the two topics with most citations per article: binge-watching (29.7 citations per article) and compulsive social media usage (27.1 citations per article). The purchase stage had the three least cited topics in the group: the influences of Young Age (4.6 citations per article), Depression (5.6 citations per article), and Anxiety (5.9 citations per article).

These articles were published in several journals from the Marketing and Psychology research areas, and the average citation per article in these journals is 140. Journal of Behavioral Addictions and Psychiatry Research had the most articles published (12 each), while the Journal of Consumer Research presented the most cited in average per article (1,117 citations), followed by the Journal of Consumer Psychology (407) and American Journal of Psychiatry (331). The list of journals shows that there is a mixture of Marketing/consumer behavior with Psychology and Addictions perspectives in these journals. This happens because when we analyzed the 270 articles published about compulsiveness in consumer behavior, we often found constructs that are discussed in both areas of research, where this topic attracts the attention of researchers. More specifically, they show congruency of discussions when the article is exploring the motivation of compulsive behavior in consumption, e.g. the role of effect (Faber and Christenson, 1996; Thompson and Prendergast, 2015), or how family structure drives compulsive behavior (Baker *et al.*, 2013; Maraz, Griffiths and Demetrovics, 2016), and also the outcomes, e.g. anxiety, (Black, 2001; Davenport, Houston and Griffiths, 2012) and consequences on consumer wellbeing (Dittmar, 2005; Hartston, 2012). It is important to disclose that the filters used to evaluate the articles excluded articles that discussed therapies, treatment, drugs, and specific addiction discussions, so the 270 remaining articles used in this analysis that are related to Psychology are related to motivations(e.g. Kopetz *et al.*, 2012), characteristics (e.g. Gray and Watson, 2007), personality traits(e.g. Mueller *et al.*, 2010) about compulsive behavior in consumers.

The 270 articles were then grouped for the topic and also for the main area of research. If the main discussion was about consumer behavior, marketing or business area - e.g. how personal goals influence consumer behavior in compulsive buyers (Roberts and Pirog, 2004) – it was classified as a Marketing discussion, but if it is related to a more psychological / personality matter like in the case of how intrinsic and extrinsic goals interplays with life aspirations and compulsive buying (Otero-López and Villardefrancos, 2015), then it was classified as a Psychology discussion. It is interesting to realize that the articles were almost half for each area, with a little more for Psychology (142) than Marketing (128). The number of citations in Marketing, however, is greater than in Psychology articles: 21,501 citations versus 16,300 but when we consider the citations/year of publications, they are also almost the same between the two areas: 11.9 citations/year in Marketing articles and 11.2 in Psychology articles. This information shows that compulsiveness is a relevant topic for both areas of research, and the proposed research agenda in this article may be valuable for their researchers. Table 2 summarized the information of articles and citations by topic in each area.

Table 2– Articles published in Marketing and Psychology per topic and consumer journey stage

	Marketing / Consumer Behavior / Business			Psychology, Addiction		
	Articles	**Sum of citations**	**Average cit/year**	**Articles**	**Sum of citations**	**Average cit/year**
PrePurchase	**3**	**116**	**7,55**			
Couponing	3	116	7,55			
Purchase	**104**	**19581**	**11,29**	**103**	**11298**	**9,63**
Affect	5	1939	29,27	5	302	8,33
Anxiety	1	58	14,50	3	34	3,10
Big Five				6	604	13,69
Brands	5	114	12,24			
Compulsive buying	18	7567	16,36	21	2590	9,94
Credit Card	11	2080	12,84	1	91	10,11
Cultural values	15	650	4,89	6	2244	24,74
Depression				6	276	5,60
Family Structure	7	1189	10,38	1	259	11,77
Gender	2	8	2,50	6	924	14,04
Goals	1	73	4,56	2	138	9,60
Impulsivity	5	3325	25,52	16	1373	7,70
Materialism	8	267	5,64	11	927	8,54
Online Shopping	7	645	8,17	5	503	11,00
Scales	2	450	17,00	7	444	5,41
Self Esteem	3	314	8,58	3	402	6,63
Young Age	14	902	5,06	4	187	3,21
PostPurchase	**21**	**1804**	**15,41**	**39**	**5002**	**15,29**
Binge Eating	4	470	6,83	6	374	5,90
Binge Watching	4	498	37,69	3	133	18,94
Compulsive gambling	2	138	3,11			
Compulsive gaming	1	45	11,25	1	124	15,50
Compulsive SNS usage	6	332	16,36	5	1085	40,12
Consequences	3	292	9,32	4	348	10,16
Hoarding	1	29	1,93	20	2938	12,37
Total Geral	**128**	**21501**	**11,88**	**142**	**16300**	**11,18**

If we analyzed the years of publication, we see that the number of articles published is increased over time, with the peak in 2014 where 23 articles were published, and if we look at the number of citations, we see that articles published in 1987, 1992, 1995, 2007 and 2008 were the peak of citations, showing that the work published in these years were more cited by other researchers.

In the following section, we are going to first present a conceptual discussion about impulsive buying, compulsive buying, and shopping addiction, as these concepts are key elements in the discussions about compulsiveness, and it is important to demonstrate how these concepts vary and differ in these discussions. Then, we present briefly the main concepts in the consumer journey, as this is the framework used in this article. In the following section, we portray the discussions on each of the three stages of the consumer journey, scrutinizing the topics contained in each stage. As a result of the review of discussions on each topic, we propose a research agenda with topics that need to be further discussed about compulsiveness in marketing and consumer behavior.

Impulsive buying, compulsive buying, and shopping addiction

What are the differences between impulsive buying, compulsive buying, and shopping addiction? Although this is a simple question, the answer is sort of complex. Rook (1987) focused on finding a clear definition of the buying impulse. Critical to the narrow vision of the concept of impulsive buying as things consumers bought without preliminary planning, Rook aimed to enlarge the understanding of this concept and proposed a broader definition as something that "occurs when a consumer experiences a sudden, often powerful and persistent urge to buy something immediately. The impulse to buy is hedonically complex and may stimulate emotional conflict" (Rook, 1987, p. 191). The continuous occurrence of impulsive buying may lead consumers to a CBB that was first defined as "inappropriate type of consumer behavior, excessive in itself, and disturbing for the existence of individuals who seem to be prone to impulsive consumption" (Faber et al., 1987, p. 132). Darrat et al. (2016) specifically discussed the differences between compulsive and impulsive buying. The authors affirmed that the main difference is that impulsive buying is related mainly to unreflective and unplanned purchases which may happen to anyone at any point in their consumption history, while compulsive buyers experience an "urge to buy continuum", "an extreme urge to buy".

The situations used by Faber et al (1987) to describe a compulsive shopper resembles the situations that Rebecca Bloomwood, from the Shopaholic novel series, face: someone who buys “identical sweaters in different colors because he simply "has to" or because, “We felt good in it," "(Faber et al, 1987, p.132). This compulsive behavior then leads consumers to social embarrassment and "normal activities such as opening the mail or answering the phone take on new meanings. For many compulsive shoppers, there is a constant fear of being confronted by another large bill, or angry creditor" (Faber et al, 1987, p.132). These characteristics are similar in characteristics of addictive behavior. In a concise and largely used by scholars definition of addiction in literature, Goodman (1990 p.1404) defines addiction as a behavior that is "characterized by (1) recurrent failure to control the behavior (powerlessness) and (2) continuation of the behavior despite significant negative consequences (unmanageability)." Building on a similar way of thinking, Hirschman (1992) proposed a general theory to study Compulsive Consumption. She begins her theory defining five characteristics of impulsive buying: (1) sudden, spontaneous desire to act, (2) psychological conflict between buying and resisting, (3) consumers feeling out of control, (4) a lowering of utility-maximizing criteria for product evaluation, and (5) a disregard for negative consequences.

Hirschman (1992) suggests that two kinds of personality engage in compulsive consumption: Distressed users that aim to compensate negative feelings, such as depressions, anxiety, and Sociopathic users that look for gratification, with low levels of regret and guilt. She also highlights some interesting characteristics: compulsive consumers often exhibit compulsiveness in other categories of products, when they are under restriction they tend to change from one addiction to another (e.g. someone that is not using drugs, may start drinking of binge eating), this consumer exhibits a higher level of compulsiveness in moments of stress (e.g. new job, split-ups), and when this consumer is no longer consuming there is a great chance of relapsing and return to consumption when they face stressful events. As we can see, there is a mixture of addiction characteristics in the concepts presented above, which challenges our discussion of what are the limits between impulsive, compulsive, and addiction in consumer behavior. Maccarrone-Eaglen & Schofield (2017) highlighted this mixture of concepts in the CBB as they posit that CBB presents both compulsive and impulsive traits and there is no agreement where disorder may be placed. Then they discuss that some scholars consider

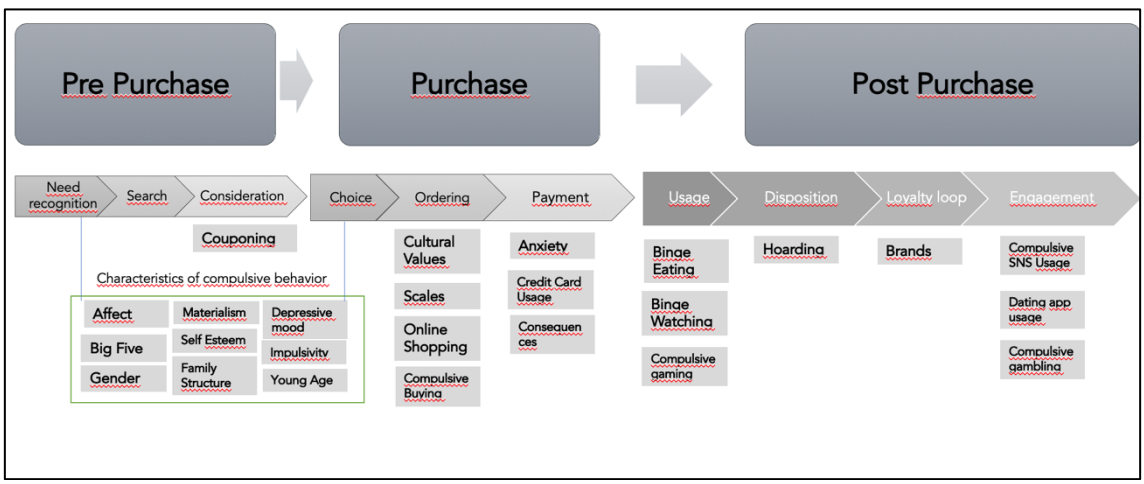
CBB as an Impulse Control Disorder: ego-synthonic, consistent with the individual self-perception and with a degree of rational response to an external stimulus, while other scholars consider CBB as an Obsessive Compulsive Disorder: ego-dystonic, inconsistent with self-perception where consumers find a solution to their anxiety by compulsively buying.

Maccarrone-Eaglen & Schofield (2017) posit that CBB presents both compulsive and impulsive traits and there is no agreement where disorder may be placed. They discuss that some scholars consider CBB as an Impulse Control Disorder (ICD): ego-synthonic, consistent with the individual self-perception and with a degree of rational response to an external stimulus, while other scholars consider CBB as an Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD): ego-dystonic, inconsistent with self-perception where consumers find a solution to their anxiety by compulsively buying. Hirschman (1992) also highlights one meaningful characteristic of compulsive consumers: they often exhibit compulsiveness in other categories of products, when they are under restriction they tend to change from one addiction to another (e.g. someone that is not using drugs, may start drinking or binge eating).

The consumer journey

Recently, the buying process has been studied under the lights of a new framework: The Consumer Journey, a concept created by Court et al (2009) that has been discussed and used by both professional (Richardson, 2010) and academic (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016) Marketing fields. This concept is a contemporary framework of the classical model of customer buying processes where the authors propose that we should focus on the journey a consumer takes to buy a product. This perspective allows Marketing professionals to take into consideration three main stages related to consumer experience in the consumer journey: (i) Pre Purchase, when consumers are recognizing their needs, searching for information about a product or service, and pondering the options; (ii) Purchase, when consumers choose, order, and pay for their products and/or services, and (iii) Post Purchase when consumers use, consume, engage with the product or service, generates word-of-mouth, and discard the product. If we use the concept of Consumer Journey as a framework to assess CBB, we can explore and discuss how compulsiveness is being discussed throughout these stages, allowing us to gather a more precise and cohesive view of the discussion in the literature.

Figure 1 - A proposed framework for discussions about compulsiveness in the consumer journey



From the analysis of the 270 selected articles, we were able to identify 25 topics that could be distributed in the three stages of the consumer journey. We propose a framework combining the three stages of consumer journey with the 25 selected topics about compulsiveness in literature, to ease the visualization of discussions about compulsiveness in the consumer journey. This framework is presented in Figure 1. We can see in Figure 1 that there is a box connecting 9 topics with Choice in the Purchase stage with Need Recognition in the Pre Purchase stage. If we consider the content of the discussions on these articles, we can see that there is an interplay of these different parts of the consumer journey. Usually, these topics would be classified into the Purchase stage, as most of the discussions are related to the purchase act per se, but some of the discussions focused on the need to buy compulsively and therefore could be interpreted as a PrePurchase activity. In the framework, we propose the connected box to highlight the dual character of these topics, however, for analysis, we decided to include these topics into the Purchase stage, as they mostly discuss the act of purchasing and not the act of recognizing needs. As the Purchase is the stage where the buying actually happens, it concentrates most of the topics about compulsiveness. The use of the things that are bought are in the PostPurchase stage, and it also has several topics. PrePurchase is a stage of recognizing needs, searching, and consider before entering the purchase stage. This is a stage with very few researches, a discussion we continue on the proposed research agenda.

If we analyze the discussions per topic, Compulsive buying, Impulsivity, Online Shopping, Materialism, and Hoarding are the topics with most articles published. Self-esteem, compulsive gaming, and goals are the topics with the least articles published about compulsiveness so far. To ease visualization of the articles published per topic, we assembled a word cloud with the topics, taking into consideration the number of articles published per topic. This word cloud is presented in Figure 2.

Figure 2 – Word cloud of articles per theme about compulsiveness



Discussions about compulsiveness in the PrePurchase stage

Some interesting facts can be discussed in the Pre Purchase stage. With the advancement of electronic commerce, consumers can engage in multiple ways to research a product or service. According to Statista statistics (2018) in 2017, the revenue of electronic commerce was U$ 2.3 trillion worldwide, and it represented a 76% in the revenue of 2014 (U$ 1.3 trillion), showcasing that this type of commerce is growing in a fast pace. Also according to these statistics, the world has more than 2 billion digital

consumers (people who have bought something online), almost one-third of the world population. Euromonitor International (2017) advocates that consumers are buying more consciously, evaluating more the choices they have before shopping, and are also prioritizing options that save time, such as buying products online.

Even though these interesting facts about the PrePurchase stage, we could only found one topic discussed in this stage in compulsiveness: couponing, a phenomenon when the savvy shopper, a consumer that is excited when getting a bargain (Schindler, 1989) becomes compulsive, in a phenomenon called Couponing, the habit of collecting and using coupons to get discounts (Bawa & Shoemaker, 1987). This habit has characteristics of addictive behaviors and it has even been the subject of TV reality shows such as "Extreme Couponing" from TLC, including the use of electronic coupons in both brick and mortar and online retail stores (Ieva et al, 2016, Dickinger & Kleinjnen, 2008). Couponing in itself is considered a compulsive type of consumption as it is related to the compulsive act of looking for bargains and opportunities, and with the advancement of electronic commerce (Dickinger & Kleinjnen, 2008; Ieva et al., 2016) several studies discussed if electronic coupons or mobile electronic coupons have the same effect on consumers. Couponing is a retail strategy used in some countries and it is related to the promotion of sales. With the advancement of browsing tools, we expected that consumers would also engage in some type of compulsive browsing or compulsive searching, but interestingly enough, we had not identified research on compulsive browsing or compulsive search behavior related to consumer behavior, which might be a gap in the literature about compulsiveness in consumer behavior.

Discussions about compulsiveness in the Purchase stage

As the purchase stage comprehends the act of buying per se, the decisive moment, where consumers order, choose, and pay, discussions about compulsiveness are centered in this stage. The main topics discussed are related to impulsive buying, compulsive buying, and shopping addiction, but there are other topics related to the antecedents, demographics, and consequences of this compulsiveness behavior. In consumer behavior literature, the conceptual papers about compulsiveness are from the late '80s and early '90s with Rook (1987), Faber et al (1987), O'Guinn, and Faber (1989), and Hirschmann (1992). There are several streams of research in the Purchase stage, ranging from the definition and use of scales (Claes et al., 2010; Valence et al., 1988), demographics (Hassay & Smith, 1996; Johnson & Attmann, 2009; O'Guinn & Faber, 1989), cross-cultural (Clark & Calleja, 2008; Trautmann & Johnson, 2007; Wang & Yang, 2008), and several other aspects of compulsive and addictive behavior related to the purchase stage.

- **Affect:** researchers to affect study how positive and negative sentiments, moods relate to compulsive behavior. Flight, Rountree, & Beatty (2012) analyzed how impulsiveness and compulsiveness behave differently when the affect-arousing stimulus is present, and they found out that the positive sentiments mediate the relation of impulsive buying traits in the urge to buy a consumer might have while negative sentiments mediate the relation of compulsive buying trait in the urge to buy. Rose & Segrist (2014) also studied the impact of negative and positive moods in compulsive buyers, and they realized that when in urgent situations, where individuals act rashly, both negative and positive moods result in compulsive buying episodes.

- **Anxiety:** research regarding anxiety and compulsive buying discuss how impulsiveness and compulsiveness aspects of individuals interplay with anxiety, possibly altering their compulsive buying behavior. Darrat, Darrat, & Amyx (2016) studied how impulsiveness and compulsiveness have a different relationship with consumers' anxiety and escapism, showcasing that the traits compulsiveness and impulsiveness have different impacts on consumer behavior The authors suggest a hybrid perspective of these traits, where impulsiveness is connected with desire, a positive affect, while compulsiveness is connected with willpower and negative affect. Together these different traits behave in a complementary way: impulsiveness increases anxiety in consumers, and consumer escapism seems to deter the conversion of anxiety into compulsive buying. Gallagher, Watt, Weaver, & Murphy, (2017) found that anxiety predicted the tendency to buy compulsively, while depression was related to post-purchase guilt. When experiencing negative affect, and consumers experience anxiety related to physical and cognitive concerns, compulsive buying behavior is enhanced, but when the concerns are social, no significant effect was found.
- **Big Five**: researchers interested in discussing the big five personality traits (neuroticism, extraversion, openness, agreeableness, and consciousness), aiming to verify how these different traits are connected with the compulsive buying behavior. Mueller et al. (2010) analyzed the profile of 68 compulsive buyers seeking treatment and found 2 groups of individuals, one that rated high on the big five personality traits, while the other group rated high only on neuroticism. This group of people showed a higher severity of compulsive buying, a lower degree of control over symptoms, and were more anxious than members of the first group. Consistent with this finding, Otero-López & Villardefrancos Pol (2013) found that individuals that rated higher in compulsive buying, also rated higher in neuroticism, suggesting that this facet may be more the more relevant of the big five personality traits.
- **Consequences:** some researchers focus on finding empirically consequences of compulsive buying behavior. Zhang, Brook, Leukefeld, De La Rosa, & Brook (2017) performed a longitudinal study with 543 participants, assessing and following their lives from childhood to adult life. In their analysis, they found a significant association of compulsive buying and quality of life, suggesting that there is a significant monetary cost that impacts the lives of compulsive buyers. Although the measures used in their study do not indicate specifically that individuals with compulsiveness had lower quality of life due to their compulsiveness, as it is not possible to isolate this effect in longitudinal studies like this, the regression analysis does show a tendency that compulsive buyers have a lower income, and lower quality of life than the rest of the individuals analyzed. Jung & Yi, (2016) concluded that, in addition to compulsive buyers, there are also individuals that present a moderate compulsive behavior with buying lapses that may also be detrimental to their financial lives. They surveyed 809 individuals with buying lapses episodes and concluded that there is an intermediate group that might be overlooked by researchers.
- **Cultural influences:** the studies that analyze cultural influences in compulsiveness aim to verify how cultural aspects influence the impulsive buying behavior in consumers. In that sense, Kacen & Lee (2002) studied how intercultural and interpersonal values impact the impulsive buying trait behavior by analyzing differences of impulsive buying behavior taking into consideration the individualistic x collectivistic cultures, and independent and interdependent

personality traits, by administrating a study with individuals from 4 different countries (Australia and the United States – caucasian, individualistic; Malaysia, and Singapore, Asian, collectivistic). Amongst the 2 studies, they obtained valid responses from 938 individuals. Results showcase the indeed individuals from individualistic countries present a higher impulsive buying behavior characteristic than individuals in the collectivistic countries. One interesting finding in this study is that for individuals from collectivistic countries, the independent personality trait did not impact the impulsive buying behavior, but for individuals from individualistic countries, the personal level of independence did lead to a more impulsive buying behavior. Similarly, Zhang, Howell, & Howell (2016) studied if living on a more wealthy neighborhood led individuals to engage in a more maladaptive type of consumption, using the impulsive buying behavior, materialistic values, and saving behavior as variables, and they found out that indeed the wealth present around the consumer increases their tendency to increase their materialistic value, and engage in more impulsive buying, and fewer savings behavior, especially if the neighborhood is an increase in consumers' consumption standards.

- **Credit Card Misuse:** one topic that is also studied by researchers is the misuse of credit cards and compulsive buying. (Palan *et al.*, 2011) surveyed 260 American students, analyzing if self-esteem, risk-taking, and power-prestige could relate to credit card misuse and compulsive buying. The authors found that only power-prestige, which was defined as the use of money to influence and impress others, symbolizing success – was directed connected to compulsive buying. They also found out that credit card misuse is directly related to compulsive buying, and the effect of power-prestige on compulsive buying behavior is mediated by credit card misuse.
- **Scales:** one topic that is constantly evolving in compulsiveness research is the development and analysis of scales to assess compulsive buying behavior. In 1992, Faber & O'Guinn, (1992) proposed a scale that would help identify compulsive buying behavior amongst the population. The scale was a result of depth analysis of compulsive behavior in clinical conditions, that used a survey with 388 compulsive buyers and 292 non-compulsive buyers to validate the proposed scale. A year later, Edwards (1993) proposed a different, more complex scale that would rate individuals into non-compulsive, recreational, to compulsive, addicted, grouping items into 5 factors: the tendency to spend, drive to spend, feeling joy about shopping, dysfunctional spending, and post-purchase guilt. Both scales were used by researchers. In 2008, Manolis, Roberts, & Kashyap (2008) compared both scales, verifying the studies that used them on the assessment of compulsive buying in research. The authors concluded that these scales are assessing separate constructs or different dimensions of the compulsive buying concept. Ridgway, Kukar-Kinney, & Monroe (2008) proposed an expanded scale for compulsive buyers, including both impulsive control and obsessive-compulsive dimensions, and which also exclude consequence effects, and income-related items, resulting in a more breadth instrument to assess compulsive behavior.
- **Materialism:** Materialism is a construct that is often used in compulsive behavior studies, as part of the constructs used in the analysis, but some researchers include materialism in the center of the research. Otero-López, Pol, Bolaño, & Mariño (2011) studied 469 women in Spain and concluded that life satisfaction influences two dimensions of materialism (facets of success and happiness) and these

dimensions are positively related with addictive buying behavior. Reeves, Baker, & Truluck (2012) found that life dissatisfaction is an underlying motive to buy, as a response to the search for an ideal self. They also found that materialism and compulsive buying are correlated with celebrity worship, and these three concepts – celebrity worship, compulsive buying, and materialism – are significantly related to lower levels of well-being. Focusing on adolescents, Islam, Wei, Sheikh, Hameed, & Azam (2017) collected data from a survey with 219 undergraduate students from Pakistan and concluded that three facts of materialism are indeed significant antecedents of materialism: the influence of peers, celebrity endorsement and tv advertisement. These three antecedents influence materialism, that influences compulsive buying.

Discussions about compulsiveness in the Post Purchase stage

This is the stage in the consumer journey where we could also different topics of compulsiveness in the consumer journey. we can see there are two main research streams: binge consumption and hoarding. The concept of binge consumption is investigated in the medical literature, mostly related to alcohol and other substances abuse, such as drugs. As we aim to discuss compulsiveness consumption in this article we opted to consider the binge eating stream of research as a representative of binge consumption of substances as this was the topic that presented more connection with discussions in marketing literature. Binge eating can be defined as the consumption of a large amount of food, without control (R. J. Faber, Christenson, de Zwaan, & Mitchell, 1995; Lee, Lennon, & Rudd, 2000; Trautmann & Johnson, 2007) and it has been vastly studied as a way to illustrate consumers 'addiction (R. J. Faber et al., 1995). Besides the consumption of substances, recently we have observed that other types of binge consumption were observed with the latest advancement of technologies. One example of a new form of binge consumption is binge-watching, a phenomenon that has also been called "The Netflix effect" (Jenner, 2016; Matrix, 2014) which is the binge consumption of video watching from a stream video provider. This binge-watching is similar to CBB as it is related to the consumption of episodes of a certain TV show or series in a compulsive, continuum way. Samuel (2017) explored these contemporary changes in television-viewing habits and concluded that the advent of online streaming has disrupted the television-viewing experience, and Conlin, Billings, and Averset (2016) included in this discussion the presence of a phenomenon called FOMO (fear-of-missing-out), a sort of apprehension that a viewer may feel when they do not watch episodes available compulsively. Flayale, Maurage & Billeux (2017) performed a focus group analysis to investigate the binge-watching phenomenon and realized that participants recognized themselves as addicted to binge-watching content on media online streaming.

Compulsive gaming could be classified as binge consumption because it related to the act of gaming without control (Kim et al, 2017), but compulsive gaming is a matter that has been discussed in marketing and psychology literature (Han et al, 2016, Hellman et al, 2013, Ladouceur et al., 2003; Mahajan & Muller, 1998), as it is entailed with addiction behavior consumers may present, but such as the differences presented in compulsive and addicted buyers, it is possible to discuss if there is a distinction when researching about compulsive and addictive gaming. From what we could find in our research, the research about compulsive gaming is very similar to the results found in addictive related topics. Hellman et al (2013) performed a cross-disciplinary theoretical study to assess if compulsive gaming can be considered an addiction, and the authors

concluded that, indeed, there are similarities of compulsive gaming with the core concept and the phenomenon of addiction behavior, but this similarity must be parsimoniously addressed as there is a difference in magnitude with other types of addiction (like.addiction to drugs). Other published researches about Compulsive Gambling treat the topic as Addiction behavior, in studies like Kim et al (2017) that characterized Internet Gaming Disorder (IGD) as a loss of control and preoccupation with Gaming on a repetitive behavior, and found connections of IGD with Obsessive Compulsive Disorder, and Han et al (2016) that found a link between excessive gaming behavior and depression.

Another type of binge consumption is related to the advancement of social media use. According to WeAreSocial (2018), there were over 3 billion active users in social media in the world, almost half of the population, with people spending an average of more than 2 hours daily on social media only in countries like the United States of America, Brazil, and Mexico. we could found in our research two types of binge consumption about social media use by consumers: social media addiction and dating apps use. Regarding social media addiction, we found that research is more related to the addictive components of social media usage. Neumann (1998) in a past century article discussed the possibilities of addiction from computer usage, and the author proposed that, in addition to internet gambling, other areas could develop addiction-related behaviors in consumers, such as online gaming, browsing for products, and chat rooms. Of course, by then, the author could not predict that the chat rooms would evolve to Social Network Sites (SNS) and therefore generate addictive behavior usage. Almost 20 years later, Hormes, Kearns, and Timko (2014) concluded that the use of SNS is potentially addictive, as they investigated that SNS use seems to arise as part of a cluster of symptoms of poor emotion regulation skills that resembles what is found in Addictive behavior. Turel and Osatuyi (2017) discussed the influence of peers in promoting compulsive use of SNS and Sharif and Khanekharab (2017) analyzed if people with identity confusion that are compulsive users of SNS are more prone to engage in online compulsive buying, and the authors found that indeed that is a connection of adolescence, stage of life where identity confusion is more present, with online compulsive buying. A more specific type of Social Media app is the Dating App, which is a geosocial networking application that connects users that are close to each other (Shapiro et al, 2017). Research on Dating Apps usage is usually related to sexual behavior like the use of condoms, nonconsensual sex relationships, and relationship expectancies, divided by sexual preferences (Tang, 2017, Griffin, Canevello, and McAnulty, 2018), and we also realized they are fairly new. we could not find research about addictive behavior in dating apps, such as Tinder, Grinds, and others.

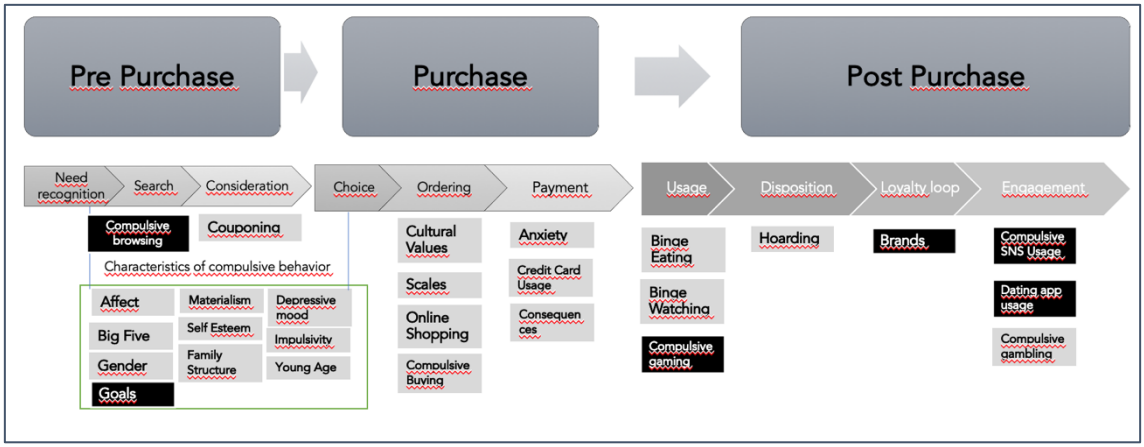
Hoarding refers to the behavior of acquisition of and failure to discard large numbers of possessions, and it has been identified as addictive behavior and it has been largely studied both in Psychology and consumer behavior (Claes et al., 2016; Lawrence, Ciorciari, & Kyrios, 2014; Maycroft, 2008; McKinnon et al., 1985; Shoham et al., 2017). In the same way as Couponing, the compulsive behavior in Hoarding attracts attention in the media with specific TV shows about this compulsiveness, such as "Hoarders: Buried Alive", and Bravo documentary "Hoarders". Several studies address hoarders as compulsive behavior, and we observed that most of them treat compulsive hoarders as an addictive individual, with main research varying from the age where the problem started (Grisham et al, 2006), problems with memory that might be related to hoarding behavior (Hartl et al, 2004), or the nature of this behavior, as the work of Coles et al (2003) that

investigated the hoarding behavior of more than 500 college students aiming to find the origin of the hoarding behavior.

Proposed research agenda

As we could see so far in the literature research performed about compulsiveness in consumer journey there are several research streams present in marketing and consumer behavior literature. The adoption of the Consumer Journey as a framework to organize how this discussion is being conducted in the consumer behavior literature was interesting as we could observe how compulsiveness may appear during their consumption journey. Figure 3 below presents the proposed research agenda

Figure 3 - Proposed Research Agenda for Compulsiveness in the consumer journey



In the PrePurchase stage, we suggest exploring the binge consumption characteristics in the searching or browsing stage of purchasing. we pointed out that there is some research about binge-watching, a phenomenon that became popular with streaming services such as Netflix. This can be noticed in streaming services such as Netflix where people spend lots of time looking for options to watch before buying that they end up watching nothing at all. we think that this effect could also occur in the browsing stage for different types of consumption, ranging from services, like travel/vacation related services (i.e. airline tickets, hotel bookings), to common products buying (i.e. clothes, books), to specialized products, such as collectible items, and also house hunting (rental or buying apartments). we could not find a keyword related to this type of compulsion in browsing, so we suggest a term that is related to Compulsive Browsing (it could be also named as Binge Search).

In the Purchase stage, all topics are extensively discussed in consumer behavior literature. This is the stage where it is possible to find most of the discussions about compulsiveness in the consumer journey. Also, all these topics are discussed in other areas of research, such as Psychology, so exploring avenues of research in the Purchase is a challenge.

In PostPurchase stage, we realized that the SNS Addiction (Social Network Site Addiction) needs further investigation from researchers as it is a phenomenon that has been exponentially growing with the fast advancement of social media, and their several social media websites, such as Twitter and Instagram. More specifically in the SNS

addiction, we think that little research has been done with dating apps addiction. A dating app is a social media app that is focused on finding dates or sexual partners, like Tinder and Grindr. The addiction to this type of app has been studied mostly on the Psychology and Sociology fields, but this behavior, especially the compulsiveness of this behavior, has an impact on the way a consumer behaves, and therefore, should be better investigated by consumer behavior scholars. The binge-watching effect, also known as the Netflix effect, also needs more attention from researchers, as it is a phenomenon that is directly related to the streaming services of media, which is changing the way consumers access and watch movies and series in their routines. By releasing all episodes at once, streaming services like Amazon, Netflix, and Fox, allow consumers to decide when to view all episodes of their favorite series, which often results in marathons, binge-watching episodes when consumers watch a whole season in one or two days (dedicating several hours of their time in this task). This marathon/binge-watching behavior is stimulated and also expected from consumers, which has been studied by researchers in several areas of knowledge, but in marketing and consumer behavior, we believe that it still needs to be further explored by academics.

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