



RELATIONSHIP AMONG BIG FIVE PERSONALITY TRAITS, COMPULSIVE BUYING AND VARIETY SEEKING

DOI: 10.17261/Pressacademia.2017.483

JMML- V.4-ISS.3-2017(3)-p.217-223

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To cite this document

Ercis, A. and M. Unalan (2017). Relationship among big five personality traits, compulsive buying and variety seeking. Journal of Management, Marketing and Logistics (JMML), V.4, Iss.3, p.217-223.

Permament link to this document: <http://doi.org/10.17261/Pressacademia.2017.483>

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ABSTRACT

Purpose- This study examined associations among the Big Five personality dimensions and compulsive buying tendency and variety seeking tendency in Erzurum.

Methodology- Participants ($n=389$) completed a survey that included measures of personality, compulsive buying and variety seeking.

Findings- The results revealed that four personality traits (extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness to experience) were positively correlated with variety seeking tendency. Extraversion was positively related with compulsive buying tendency, and conscientiousness was negatively related with CBT. Finally, compulsive buying tendency was positively related with variety seeking tendency.

Conclusion- Six of eleven hypotheses are accepted in our model. Our study shows that the perception levels of participants in the way of variables, the highest-valued personality factors are agreeableness and conscientiousness, while the lowest-valued personality trait is emotional stability. The perception level of compulsive buying tendency is very low. However, the perception level of variety seeking is high.

Keywords: Big five personality, compulsive buying, variety seeking.

JEL Codes: M31, M10, M50

1. INTRODUCTION

Consumers make decisions after buying some products. Evaluation is essential for next buying decision. Therefore, consumer decisions systems' work is important for brands. The system depends on many variables such as types of consumer, personality, timing, place, memories etc. Behaviors a person depend on its personality. Personality is a key element to learn daily events. Psychological factors effect to consumer behavior. One of the negative consumption behavior is compulsive buying. Compulsive buyers do not control easily their behaviors. Some people try to seek new experiences in their daily life. These people can be called as variety seekers. Variety seeking has relations with variables which can be listes as personality, types of behaviors or buying-decisions process.

Previous research has explored some factors which are interested personality and variety seeking. It can be given the studies such as consumption motivations (Mak et al. 2017), impulsive buying (Olsen et al. 2016), entrepreneurial intentions (Murugesan and Dominic 2013), internet addictions (Celik et al. 2012), mood states (Chien-Huang and Hung-Chou 2012), materialism and money spending (Troisi et al. 2006). Our study, we examined the relations among state Big Five personality dimensions, compulsive buying and variety seeking. Specifically, Fayez and Labib (2016) investigated that big five

personality dimensions on compulsive buying in a sample of Egyptian consumers. However, this paper tries to contribute to filling a gap in the variety seeking literature and to provide a useful insight into personality management in the buying-decision process. This study was carried out in the Turkey context. In Turkey literature, there are very few studies about these relations. Therefore, this paper would be imperative for company managers for understanding consumers' behavior in order to many product categories.

Hence, the rest of this study as follows: First, this study provides a review of the literature about compulsive buying tendency, variety seeking tendency and personality. Second, within this research boundary, this study explores the relations among these variables. Third, with research methodology, this study gives findings after analyzed based on a survey 389 respondents in Erzurum. Afterwards, this study concludes with main results for future research.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES

In the present study, we specifically attempt to understand the relationships among consumers' variety-seeking behaviour, personality dimensions and compulsive buying tendency.

2.1. Compulsive Buying Tendency (CBT)

Compulsive buying has been of interest to consumer researchers for almost four decades (Ridgway et al. 2011, 2008; O'Guinn and Faber 1989; Desarbo and Edwards 1995). There are some definitions of compulsive buying. Compulsive buying is defined as "a response to an uncontrollable drive or desire to obtain, use, or experience a feeling, substance, or activity that leads an individual to repetitively engage in a behavior that will ultimately cause harm to the individual and/or to others" (O'Guinn and Faber 1989, 148). Palan et al. (2011, 83) defined compulsive buying as "an episodic urge to buy". Müller et al. (2015) defined that compulsive buying behavior is shopping addiction or a mental health condition characterized by uncontrollable purchase of products.

Compulsive buying can be a problem such as social, familial, and financial (O'Guinn and Faber 1989) for some consumers. Therefore, shame and guilt feelings appear on the compulsive buying behaviors (Thege et al. 2015). A compulsive buyer has intend to experience more negative affect states than non-compulsive buyers (Miltnerberger et al. 2003). The many studies of compulsive buying show that higher levels of compulsive buying correlate with low self-esteem (Roberts 1998) or high anxiety (Norum 2008). The strongest motivating characteristics associated with compulsive buying appear to be materialistic tendencies (Dittmar 2005) and lack of impulse control (Desarbo and Edwards 1995; Billieux et al. 2008).

2.2. Variety Seeking Tendency (VST)

The last seven decades, variety seeking behavior is in academic literature (Olsen et al. 2015). The marketing researchers have studied this topic because of a large number of choices for consumers with many areas (Olsen et al. 2015). Variety seeking is "the tendency of individuals to seek diversity in their choices of services and goods" (Kahn 1995, 139). Literature also defines variety seeking based on its antecedents such as internal personal motivations and external, or derived, driving forces based on external situations (Kahn 1995). Ratner and Kahn (2002, 246) pointed out that "consumers often choose considerable amounts of variety when allowed to select more than one item from a choice set, even when they are given the option of repeating consumption of favored items". This study defines variety seeking as an individual's (internal) tendency to seek variety in daily routines and activities (Olsen et al. 2016).

Variety seeking can be motivated by impression management (Ratner and Kahn 2002), a need for stimulation (Kahn and Isen 1993), a desire to relieve boredom (Fishbach et al. 2011), and a preference for stability (Liberman et al. 1999). When consumers want to buy a product, they try to look different brands because change feels good (Van Trijp et al. 1996). The reasons of some things such as boredom with choice task, relief of attribute satiation, variety seeking behavior is positively valued by consumers (Van Trijp et al. 1996). Schwartz (2004) point out that too many choices lead to less satisfaction with the decision. Knox and Walker (2001) point out that high sensation of variety seekers are purchasers with low brand commitment. In the study of Helm and Landschulze (2009), variety seekers interested familiar brands instead of new brand alternatives. Møller Jensen and Hansen (2006) found that situational factors such as alternative brands influence to variety seeking tendency positively. Van Trijp et al. (1996) proved that variety seeking intensity differs across the categories of product.

2.3. Personality

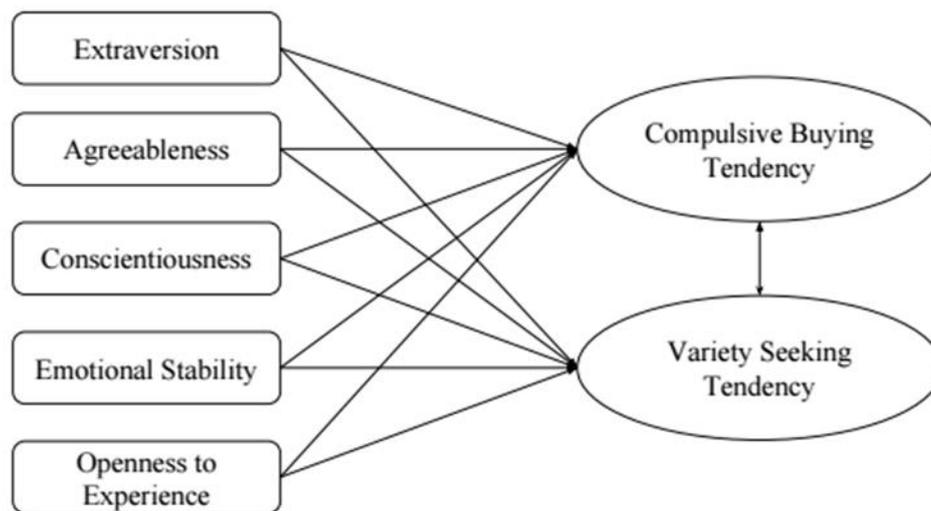
Personality is a small set of stable characteristics (Dant et al. 2013). Depend on personality, every individual acts differently in situations. The intersection of emotional, interpersonal and attitudinal processes is personality (Tommasel et al. 2015). In order to measuring personality traits, the most widely used approach in last years is the "Big Five" (Tommasel et al. 2015; Quintelier 2014). The Big-Five framework is a hierarchical model of personality traits with five broad factors, which

represent personality at the broadest level of abstraction (Gosling et al. 2003). The “Big Five” personality factors are; extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability, openness to experience (Wolff and Kim 2012).

Chudzikowski et al. (2011) defined Openness to Experience as being intellectually curious, having creative and imaginative cognition styles, and open to new ideas. The definition of Conscientiousness from Bozionelos (2004) is the tendency to be productive, achievement oriented, obedient and disciplined. According to Wolff and Kim (2012), extraversion refers to the general tendency of an individual to approach social situations. Chudzikowski et al. (2011) identified Agreeableness as an individual’s concern for social harmony and cooperation with others. Chudzikowski et al. (2011) proved that Emotional stability is excessive worry that leads to mental distress, inability to deal with daily life activities, and emotional suffering.

2.4. Research Model and Hypotheses

Figure 1: Research Model



Summary of hypotheses:

- H1a. Extraversion is positively related to CBT.
- H1b. Extraversion is positively related to VST.
- H2a. Agreeableness is positively related to CBT.
- H2b. Agreeableness is positively related to VST.
- H3a. Conscientiousness is negatively related to CBT.
- H3b. Conscientiousness is negatively related to VST.
- H4a. Emotional stability is positively related to CBT.
- H4b. Emotional stability is negatively related to VST.
- H5a. Openness to experience is positively related to CBT.
- H5b. Openness to experience is positively related to VST.
- H6. Compulsive buying tendency is positively related to VST

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Our method of research consists of three major parts which can be listed as research goal, participants and measures.

Research Goal -In this survey we aim to examine to relation between compulsive buying and variety seeking on the perspective based on personality. To test the propositions, a field survey using questionnaires was conducted.

Participants- The survey of this study is conducted on 389 participants during August-September 2016 in Erzurum in Turkey. Questionnaires obtained from 17 participants are eliminated. Data obtained from those 389 questionnaires were analyzed through the SPSS statistical packet program and the hypotheses were tested through correlation analyses.

Measures

Big Five Personality- Personality scale is adapted from Gosling et al. (2003), which uses 10 items to measure five dimensions (extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability, openness to experience) of personality. All

items were measured with a 7-point Likert scale at 1 (strongly disagree) and 7 (strongly agree). Five items of the TIPI were reversed scored.

Compulsive Buying- To measure compulsive buying tendency, 6 item-scale of Ridgway et al. (2008) is used. Responses were measured on a seven-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree). Composite scores of Compulsive buying ($\alpha = 0.76$) was calculated by averaging the appropriate items.

Variety Seeking- In order to measure variety seeking tendency, this study used five reflective items selected from the Change Seeking Index Scale developed by Steenkamp and Baumgartner (1995) and frequently used to assess variety seeking tendency (Sharma et al. 2010). Composite scores of Variety seeking ($\alpha = 0.74$) was calculated by averaging the appropriate items.

4. DATA ANALYSIS

A total of 389 valid responses were analyzed to study the relations among big five personality, compulsive buying and variety seeking. Participants completed questions requesting information about their gender, age, education, and monthly income. The demographic profile of the respondents can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1: Demographic Information

	Number	Percentage		Number	Percentage
Total (N = 389)			Total (N = 389)		
<i>Gender</i>			<i>Age</i>		
Males	213	45.2	17-24	176	45.2
Females	176	54,8	25-34	191	49.1
			35-49	18	4.6
			50 and over	4	1.0
<i>Education Level</i>			<i>Income(TL)</i>		
High school			Less than 1000		
College	34	8.7	1001-2000	156	40.1
Undergraduate	14	3.6	2001-3000	62	15.9
Postgraduate	216	55.5	3001-4000	60	15.4
	125	32.1	4001-5000	48	12.3
			5001 Lira +	43	11.1
				20	5.1

We recruited 389 participants (54.8% female) from university settings and public places in Erzurum, Turkey. Participants ranged in age from 17 to 50 years and over years (49.1% aged between 25 and 34; 45.2% aged between 17 and 24). Regarding educational qualification, 34 participants had a high school diploma, 14 had a college degree, 216 had a bachelor's degree, and 125 had a master's and doctorate degree. Most of the respondents (about 40.1 percent) were in the monthly income group of less than 1000 TL. Participation was voluntary.

Table 2: Correlations between the Big Five personality Traits, VST and CBT

	M	SD	CBT	VST
E	4.64	1.39	.230**	.291**
A	5.53	1.21	.022	.115*
C	5.47	1.16	-.130**	.184**
ES	3.94	1.31	-.085	.042
OE	4.92	1.14	.020	.285**
CBT	2.89	1.32	1	.229**
VST	5.07	1.09	.229**	1

Notes: N=389, E = extraversion, A = agreeableness, C = conscientiousness, ET = emotional stability, OE = openness to experience, M = mean, SD = standard deviation (*p < 0.05., **p < 0.01.)

The means, standard deviations and correlation matrix are shown in Table 2. Correlation analyses indicated a number of significant relationships (see Table 2). Specifically, consistent with our predictions, extraversion was positively related with compulsive buying tendency and variety seeking tendency, agreeableness was positively related with variety seeking tendency, and conscientiousness were negatively related to compulsive buying tendency. Finally, compulsive buying tendency was positively related with variety seeking tendency. It is interesting that four personality traits (extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness to experience) were positively correlated with VST.

Table 3: Testing of Hypotheses

	Correlations	Result
H1a	.230**	Accepted
H1b	.291**	Accepted
H2a	.022	Rejected
H2b	.115*	Accepted
H3a	-.130**	Accepted
H3b	.184**	Rejected
H4a	-.085	Rejected
H4b	.042	Rejected
H5a	.020	Rejected
H5b	.285**	Accepted
H6	.229**	Accepted

Notes: * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$.

5. CONCLUSION

The present study investigated relationship among Big Five personality factors, compulsive buying tendency, and variety seeking tendency in Erzurum in Turkey. Six of eleven hypotheses are accepted in our model (see Table 3).

Our study shows that the perception levels of participants in the way of variables, the highest-valued personality factors are agreeableness and conscientiousness, while the lowest-valued personality trait is emotional stability. The perception level of compulsive buying tendency is very low. However, the perception level of variety seeking is high.

The results of this study suggest that the most important personality factors characterizing compulsive buyers are high extraversion and low conscientiousness. On the other side, the most considerable personality traits identifying variety seekers are high openness to new experience and extraversion.

The present research reveal that compulsive buying tendency and variety seeking are positively correlated at 1% level of significance. Emotional stability does not significantly predict either compulsive buying and variety seeking.

6. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This research has several limitations that should be acknowledged. Due to time and money constraint only Erzurum in Turkey was selected. In the future, studies may be carried out expanding the areas and also increasing the number of respondents.

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