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# Investigating Status Consumption, Fashion Orientation and Social Comparison as the Trigger Factors of Online Compulsive Buying

*Sanal Kompulsif Satın Almanın Tetikleyicisi Olarak Statü Tüketimi, Moda Yönelimlilik ve Sosyal Karşılaştırmanın İncelenmesi*

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### Abstract

This paper presents a theoretical framework which asserts online compulsive buying as a function of several post-modern consumption pattern like status consumption, fashion orientation and social comparison. For this purpose, aim of this paper is to investigate the role of status consumption, fashion-oriented consumption tendency and social comparison on online compulsive buying behavior among Turkish consumers. In order to realize multiple-regression analysis, necessary data were collected from 601 participants via online questionnaire. According to the findings of the analysis, online compulsive buying is affected by the four dimensions of fashion-oriented consumption, which are anti-fashion attitude, fashion leadership, fashion interest and the importance of being well-dressed. Moreover, status consumption and social comparison has also a significant influence on online compulsive buying This paper discusses the results regarding the marketing applications and consumer research literature.

**Keywords:** Online Compulsive Buying Behavior, Status Consumption, Fashion-Oriented Consumption, Social Comparison.

### Öz

Bu makale, sanal kompulsif satın almayı, statü tüketimi, moda yönelimi ve sosyal karşılaştırma gibi çeşitli post-modern tüketim modelinin bir fonksiyonu olarak ileri süren teorik bir çerçeve sunmaktadır. Bu bağlamda çalışmanın amacı, Türk tüketicilerin sanal kompulsif satın alma davranışında statü tüketimi, moda odaklı tüketim eğilimi ve sosyal karşılaştırmanın rolünü ortaya koymaktır. İstanbul'da ikamet eden 22 yaş ve üzeri üniversite mezunu 601 katılımcıdan elde edilen verilerle gerçekleştirilen regresyon analizinin bulgularına göre sanal kompulsif

satın alma; moda odaklı tüketimin dört boyutu olan moda karşıtı tutum, moda ilgisi, moda liderliği ve iyi giyinmenin öneminden önemli ölçüde etkilenmektedir. Ayrıca, statü tüketimi ve sosyal karşılaştırma da sanal kompulsif satın alma üzerinde olumlu bir etkiye sahiptir. Çalışmanın son kısmında, bulguların pazarlama uygulamaları ve tüketici davranışı literatürü ile ilgili sonuçları tartışılmıştır.

**Anahtar kelimeler:** Sanal Kompulsif Satın Alma Davranışı, Statü Tüketimi, Moda Odaklı Tüketim, Sosyal Karşılaştırma.

## Introduction

Recently, human being has found himself in the midst of the greatest technological revolution -especially in the age of communication and information transactions- in the history. Approximately 4.57 billion people, almost 59 percent of the whole world, were using internet actively as of July 2020 according to Statista statistics (statista.com a) and the expansion of internet has significantly contributed to the transformation of trade. Internet shopping has increased rapidly, and 1.92 billion people shopped online in 2019 (statista.com b) just before Covid 19 Pandemic.

It all happens by the presence of “Add to cart” button which has been in our lives for a while. Logistics companies now assign most of their resources for the online shopping deliveries. Not only women but also men who have been complaining about the scarcity of time seem to find a way to be chic and stylish without spending time at a shopping mall. Everybody who simply has an Internet access can buy everything online, any brand or any local product which they even can not find physically in a mall. The new form of buying is online shopping in this age!

Online shopping provides many advantages to the consumers. However, a consumer may become an online compulsive buyer in some cases. Compulsive buying may be defined as a kind of compulsive consumption, which appears as chronic and repetitive buying pattern happening as a response to the negative feelings or events. Additionally, it reliefs person in the short-run but discomforts at long running (O’Guinn and Faber, 1989, p. 149). After psychology, psychiatry and economics fields, marketing academicians showed interest to compulsive buying behavior barely after 1980’s. Due to its negative consequences like financial collapse

and deterioration in social relationships, compulsive buying behavior has attracted the attention of different parties in the recent years.

Several research have been performed to examine its structure, reasons and related factors as well as its outcomes. Results reveal that compulsive buying is significantly affected by some factors like low self-esteem (Ridgway, Kukar-Kinney and Monroe, 2008; Olsen, Khoi and Too, 2022), high materialistic values (DeSarbo and Edwards, 1996; Yurchisin and Johnson, 2004; Brougham et al., 2011; Tarka, Harnish and Babaev, 2022), psychological disorders (Ridgway, Kukar-Kinney and Monroe, 2008; Sohn and Choi, 2012), fashion-oriented consumption (Johnson and Attmann, 2009), impulsive buying (DeSarbo and Edwards, 1996; Williams and Grisham, 2012), status and conspicuous consumption (Roberts, 2000).

Although there is an abundance of the studies about compulsive buying, there is still a big gap in online compulsive buying theory. This paper develops a regression model in which status consumption, fashion orientation and social comparison as the important key elements of post-modern age are the predicted variables for online compulsive buying by employing empirical research.

## **Background and Hypotheses Development**

### ***The New Age's Addiction: Online Compulsive Buying***

Recently, a growing number of consumers have preferred to take advantage of online shopping which offers lower prices, variety of goods, time saving and convenience to buy while this favorableness seduces compulsive buyers adversely. Compulsive buying is a form of compulsive consumption which was described by O'Guinn and Faber (1989, p. 148) as a reaction to unmanageable urges or a request to get, employ a material or experience sensations, behaviors or activities which inclines people to do it once and again that behavior eventually damages people and/or others. Some of the compulsive consumption behaviors like drug use, alcoholism or overeating have very harmful physical consequences while some compulsive consumption patterns, e.g., kleptomania, gambling and compulsive buying which don't have direct physical consequences, but they have very crucial psychological, social and financial outcomes (O'Guinn and Faber, 1989).

Likewise, Edwards (1993, p. 67) defined the term as an abnormal shape of buying that bothers people them to have an uncontrollable, chronic and repetitive drive to buy something and spend money to reduce

negative feelings. Indeed, as the incidence of those behaviors rises, they transform into addictions and the people are suffered from the unfavorable feelings and events in the long run. According to another definition, compulsive buying is a tendency to chronically buy products that exceed the individual's needs and resources (Sheth, Mittal and Newman, 1999, p. 377). Since these people do shopping in a way that exceeds their resources, they cause serious economic and financial problems both for themselves and for other people around them.

Recently, with the proliferation of internet users, the tendency for compulsive internet usage and online compulsive buying have been risen. Hence, even though a big gap in the related literature, studies on this topic have also been rising (Dittmar, Long and Bond, 2007; Lee and Park, 2008; Lee, Lee and Park, 2012; Duroy, Gorse and Lejoyeux, 2014; Sharif and Yeoh, 2018; Zheng et.al., 2020). High-materialist consumers desire to improve their feelings and identities through online shopping, indicate the stronger inclines toward online compulsive buying (Dittmar, Long and Bond, 2007; Bhatia, 2019). The study of Vicdan, Chapa and Santos (2007) which analyses compulsive buying regarding sales promotions as well as special offers in internet found that the more compulsive the buyers become, the more they inclined to online sales promotions. Lee and Park (2008) developed an online compulsive buying scale to investigate online compulsive buying tendencies.

Research indicates that low self-esteem (Larosa and Eastin, 2002), all materialism dimensions (Türkyılmaz, Kocamaz and Uslu, 2016), overuse of SNSs (Sharif and Khanekharab, 2017; She et al., 2021), internet addiction (Trotke et al., 2015; Suresh and Biswas, 2020) has positive influence on online compulsive buying. Online compulsive consumers buy their needs from internet and spend money much more than non-compulsive consumers according to a study which was performed among Parisian students (Duroy, Gorse and Lejoyeux, 2014). The survey results show that online buying is preferred due to its attractive offers and favorable experiences it provides. Bighiu and her friends (2015) made a research among students and found out that 13 percent of the participants present characteristics of online compulsive buying.

Although there has been an increase in the reserach on online compulsive buying recently, it has not yet been studied in terms of fashion-oriented consumption, status consumption and comparison theory. In this study, indicating the relationships between online compulsive buying and these variables is purposed.

### **Status Consumption**

According to Csikzentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton (1981, p. 29), status is a shape of power consisting of the respect, regarding and jealousy of others. One of the endeavors of consumers for demonstrating their social status is to buy certain products and show them to other people. Consumption of products that consumers can show their social status is called as status consumption. Chao and Schor (1998, p. 111) defined status consumption as purchasing and consuming status products and brands socially or visibly by consumers who desire these products and brands highly. According to Heaney, Goldsmith and Jusoh (2005, p. 83), status consumption shows individual differences regarding at which level consumers buy to acquire social status. It is a motivational process that people expand their social status via using products conspicuously which transfer the status to others (Eastman, Goldsmith and Flynn, 1999, p. 42). Status consumption has been found related to conspicuous consumption (Assimos et al., 2019; Klabi, 2020)

Several researches have been performed to analyze the structure and related factors of status consumption. Results reveal that status consumption is correlated with some factors like watching television watching, movie consumption, reading magazines (Yang, 2006, p. 146). Status consumption is significantly affected by socio-psychological factors, brand-related factors and situational factors (Shukla, 2009, p. 114).

O’Cass and Frost (2002a, p. 76) found out that young consumers’ status consumption perceptions are about the symbolic features of the brand, self-image and brand-image congruency and the strength of emotions about the brand. In another study by O’Cass and Frost (2002b, p. 3373) it was revealed that susceptibility to interpersonal influence affects status consumption. Besides, status consumption disposition affects the status connected to some brands and the perceived value of a brand.

Roberts (1998, p. 307) explored that perceived association of social status with buying is positively correlated with compulsive buying. Compulsive buyers take status indicators of the products they buy into account and the stores where they shop when compared to non-compulsive buyers. In another study by Roberts (2000, p. 85) positive correlation was revealed between status consumption and compulsive buying. Also in some studies in Turkey, it is determined that the status consumption has an influence on compulsive buying (Bilgen, 2014; Eroğlu, 2015). In the light of these studies, since it is thought that status consumption has an effect on also online compulsive buying, the below-mentioned

hypothesis is developed.

*H1: Status consumption has a significant positive influence on the online compulsive buying tendency.*

### ***Fashion-Oriented Consumption***

According to Easey (2009, p. 3) fashion basically is a substitution in which short-term trends alternate. From this point of view, any activity of individuals may be related with fashion from medical treatments to music. In other words, fashion includes eating behaviors, wearing patterns, furnishing styles, communicating shapes and also thinking styles other than daily consumption decisions (O’Cass, 2001; O’Cass and McEwen, 2004: 26). Fashion behavior has been studied in various aspects by social analysts and moral critics, etc. (Sproles, 1974, p. 463). As well as in related areas, fashion has an important place in various subdivisions of marketing, especially consumer behavior.

Easey (2009: 7) defined fashion marketing as the utilization of a bunch of methods and a business thinking employing of customer apparel and apparel-related goods to achieve objectives of the companies. The study by Gutman and Millis (1982) is one of the most important studies in literature on fashion orientation concept which they define as a consumer’s concerns about others’ attitudes towards his/her clothing. The study identified of four dimensions of fashion-orientation; fashion interest, fashion leadership, importance of being well-dressed and anti-fashion attitude.

Today’s fashion marketplace is attractive especially for compulsive buyers. When consumers show compulsive buying tendency, fashion retailers become seducing for him/her, since compulsive consumers know that the clothing products will be available for themselves all the time (Johnson and Attman, 2009, pp. 395-396). Baumgarten (1975) found out that innovative communicator type of consumers spend more money for clothing, specialize on clothing styles and fashion brands, read popular fashion magazines. Innovative communicators carry out both roles fashion innovators (have a desire to be a pioneer of a new fashionable product use) and fashion opinion leaders (persuade other consumer to try new fashion products). When compared to other consumers, innovative communicators own more different styles; they are more impulsive and exhibitionistic. Tigert, Ring and King (1976) revealed that the higher fashion-involved consumers tend to shop more and buy more expensive items.

Compulsive buyers have a high level of concern about how they look like to others. They feel empty inside and they shop compulsively to fill this emptiness and restore a depleted self (Krueger, 1988, p. 580). In most of the studies on compulsive buying (Lee, Lennon and Rudd, 2000; Yurchisin and Johnson, 2004) it was revealed that compulsive buyers are inclined to buy apparels which related to their appearance like clothes and shoes. Because they attach great importance to their outer appearance and they are sensitive about their self-esteem (O'Guinn and Faber, 1989, p. 154; Scherhorn, Reisch and Raab, 1990, p. 355). Park and Burns (2005) revealed that fashion interest has a significant and direct role on compulsive buying. The results of such research suggest that there may be a relationship between compulsive buying and fashion orientation. In addition, it may be necessary to consider other variables such as fashion-related variables in order to comprehend the fundamental elements of compulsive buying tendency (Park and Burns, 2005, p. 135).

Johnson and Attmann (2009, p. 402) found that there are connections among fashion interest and compulsive clothing buying, neuroticism and compulsive clothing buying. Trautmann-Attmann and Johnson (2009, p. 271) found out that fashion interest has a significant influence on compulsive clothing buying. On the other hand, online shopping, and especially the increase in the online sales of clothes or fashion products, has enabled the studies to be done in this regard. Nirmala and Dewi (2011) found out that various buying related issues like shopping enjoyment, price perception, consumer innovativeness, online buying experience and gender has an influence on online fashion product buyers.

The above-mentioned studies clearly show the relationship between fashion orientation and compulsive buying. In some studies, fashion-oriented consumption has been found to be predictor for the compulsive buying behavior (Bilgen, 2014; Eroğlu, 2015). In the light of these findings in the literature, it is thought that fashion-oriented consumption may also affect online compulsive buying behavior. Accordingly, the following hypotheses have been developed in this study to determine the effect of sub-factors of fashion-oriented consumption on online compulsive buying:

*H2: Fashion interest has a significant positive influence on the online compulsive buying tendency.*

*H3: Anti-fashion attitude has a significant positive influence on the online compulsive buying tendency.*

*H4: Fashion leadership has a significant positive influence on the online compulsive buying tendency.*

*H5: Importance of being well-dressed has a significant positive influence on the online compulsive buying tendency.*

### **Social Comparison**

Social comparison theory developed by Festinger (1954, p. 117) asserted that there is an urge in individual being to assess his/her thinking and abilities. Because of this urge, people tend to compare themselves with other people to assess themselves. If objectives are not available, they will be more inclined to assess their thinking and talents with other people (Festinger, 1954, p. 118). They can acquire information about their selves with social comparison (Gibbons and Buunk, 129). The information they acquired helps to develop performance and increase their self-esteem (Schneider and Schupp, 2014, p. 767). Although the social comparison topic has mostly been investigated in social psychology area, it is also seen to be working in the field of marketing.

Social comparison has been dealt with in two contexts: social comparison with friends and with media characters (Chan and Prendergast, 2007). Social comparisons with friends are seen in families that evaluate their children's behavior under the skin of perceived influence on others. Television usually exhibits popular celebrities and encourages followers to compare their lives with these celebrities' lives (Chan and Prendergast, 2007). Today, not only television but also other media tools like social media take on this function. Richins (1991, p. 71) suggested that idealized features of advertising increased comparison criteria for attractiveness and lower satisfaction with one's own attractiveness.

Chang and Prendergast (2007) found out that social comparison is positive predictor of materialism. It was also asserted that social comparison has a significant influence on attitude towards purchasing luxury fashion goods (Zhang and Kim, 2012; Sharda and Bhat, 2018). The results of studies on social comparison in consumer behavior lead to the idea that social comparison may also have an effect on the nonfunctional types of buying such as compulsive buying. Furthermore the use of social comparison as a means to increase self-esteem, and the fact that social comparison is a precursor of materialism, leads to the possibility that social comparison may also be related to compulsive buying. Therefore the following hypothesis can be developed:



H6: Social comparison has a significant positive influence on the online compulsive buying tendency.

## **Research Methodology**

The proposal of this research is that status consumption, fashion orientation and social comparison have significant effect on online compulsive buying. The initial aim of the research is to comprehend of all independent variables on online compulsive buying. Validating each scale of predictor variables and online compulsive buying scale using Turkish consumers is the other purpose.

### *Sampling and Data Collection Instrument*

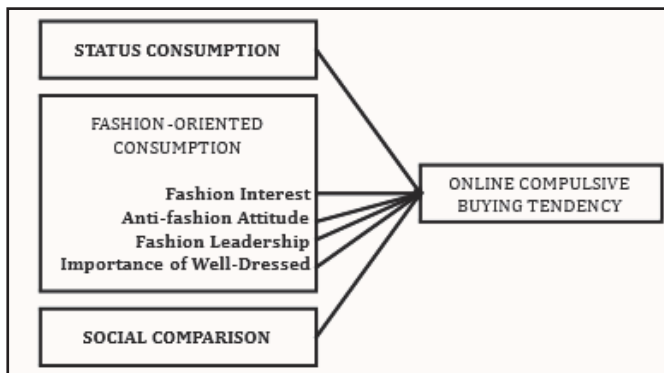
In order to collect data, online survey method which was handled by a research company was employed. The sample consists of participants living in Istanbul with a university degree and online shopping experience. The research was limited with the sample of Istanbul residents because of the fact that Istanbul residents have a chance to shop in big malls and they can find anything nearly they want in Istanbul. So, online shopping is a choice for them. However, consumers are usually constrained to shop online to find a product they want in smaller towns. The survey was proceeded during November 2017. With almost 60 percent rate of return, 601 valid surveys were obtained. Socio-demographic profile of the participants shows that males are a little bit superior to the females (52%), between 23-40 years-old (nearly 63%), employee (75%) and having income between 3.000 and 7.000 TL (63%).

### *Research Model*

Based on the literature and aim of the study, a model proposal showing hypotheses established is presented below. Table 1 shows the proposed model. The model summarizes that status consumption, fashion-oriented consumption and social comparison are significant predictors of online compulsive buying. Fashion-oriented consumption has four dimensions as fashion interest, anti-fashion attitude, fashion leadership and importance of being well-dressed.

**Table 1**

*The Model of the Study*



Source: Authors

**Measurement Instrument**

The questionnaire consists of three sections. First of all, participants were asked whether they have online shopping experience or not. If they answered this question as “yes”, they continue to the survey. In the second section, there were scales for measuring the study concepts. In the last section, demographic questions were asked to the participants as well as the frequency of their online shopping behavior. The second section includes multi-item scales which belong to validated instruments. Five-point Likert-type scale (1-strongly disagree, 2- disagree, 3-neither agree nor disagree, 4-agree, 5-strongly agree) was employed to measure the items. Status consumption was assessed by using Eastman, Goldsmith and Flynn (1999)’s Scale; fashion orientation was assessed via Gutman and Mills (1982)’s Scale; social comparison was assessed via Chan and Prendergast (2007, adapted from Lennox and Wolfe, 1984)’s Scale. In order to assess participants’ online compulsive buying tendency, Lee and Park (2008)’s scale is employed. All items of the scales were originally generated in English. Therefore, all items of the scales were initially translated into Turkish, and then Turkish items were translated back into English and the last English forms of the items were compared with the original items to see if a mistake has been made in the translations. After that, three academicians studying on marketing evaluated the scales for the face validity and a pilot study was carried out with 12 graduate students in Business Administration to correct incomprehensible items.



There are also other questions to find out the participants profile like gender, income and there is a question about the frequency of online shopping behavior. All the scales used in the research are shown in Table 2.

**Table 2**

*Scales of the Questionnaire*

Status Consumption	Eastman, Goldsmith and Flynn (1999)
Fashion Orientation	Gutman and Mills (1982)
Social Comparison	Chan and Prendergast (2007) (adapted from Lennox and Wolfe-1984)
Online Compulsive Buying	Lee and Park (2008)

Source: Authors

## Analysis

### *Reliability Analysis with Cronbach's Alpha*

It was carried out to evaluate the goodness of data and also questioning whether items in each factor were free from errors to develop consistent outcomes. Cronbach's Alpha values are between 0 and 1,00. As the values get closer to 1.00, they show higher consistency. Values higher than 0,70 are evaluated as acceptable and it means good reliability if it is higher than 0,80 (George and Mallery, 2003). Here, the Cronbach's Alpha indicators are between 0,789 to 0,888, means the scales has at least acceptable reliability. (Online Compulsive Buying: 0,865; Status Consumption: 0,838; Fashion Orientation: 0,845; Social Comparison: 0,824). One of items of online compulsive buying (OCB6) and status consumption (SC5) were deleted to increase reliability scores. Cronbach's Alpha is 0,941 for the whole scale.

### *Construct Validity via Factor Analysis*

It is a group of techniques to define which variables are related to each other and can be grouped into a factor so different related-items are grouped into separate factors (Abdullah and Asngari, 2011). Hair and

his friends (2009) asserted that if the standardized factor loadings are acceptable if it is 0,70 or higher. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) value is crucial and it was found to be 0,778 for status consumption; 0,825 for fashion orientation; 0,728 for social comparison and 0,874 for online compulsive buying, of whole values are acceptable (Kaiser, 1974).

Analyses show that status consumption has one factor with four items explaining 67,520 % of the total variance. Fashion orientation has four factors explaining 64,472 % of the total variance with 16 items. Two of items of fashion orientation were deleted to increase factor reliability scores (FO7 and FO12). When the factor structures are examined, it is seen that the scale shows a similar distribution to its original structure. According to this, the first factor is called “fashion interest”, the second factor is “anti-fashion attitude”, the third factor is “fashion leadership” and the fourth factor is “importance of being well-dressed”. Social comparison has one factor with 4 items explaining 66,147 % of the total variance. Online compulsive buying has one factor with six items explaining 60,796 % of the total variance.

After the factor analysis, reliability analysis was repeated. According to the results of the fashion orientation scale in which two items were dropped during the factor analysis, all dimensions’ reliabilities exceed 0,60 (Fashion Interest: 0,754; Anti-fashion Attitude: 0,638; Fashion Leadership: 0,753; Importance of Being Well-Dressed: 0,681) and the reliability score of overall fashion orientation scale is 0,848.

**Multiple Regression Analysis to Test Hypotheses**

For the analysis, “online compulsive buying” variable was set as dependent variable and the other three predictive variables; “status consumption”, “fashion orientation” and “social comparison” were set as independent variables. Table 3 presents F statistics results.

**Table 3**

*Regression Analysis Test Summary Table*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	,593a	0,352	0,345	0,80921310	,352	53,712	6	594	0,000

Source: Authors

As F statistics results show that setting this regression model is significant. R square means that 35,2 percentage of the variation of dependent variable is explained by status consumption, fashion orientation and social comparison. Meanwhile, the regression assumptions have been checked. Multicollinearity was checked with VIF value and it is expected to be lower than 10 (Hair et al., 2009). VIF values in this analysis are between 1,146 and 2,095. Condition index values vary between 1,000 and 2,815 which is lower than 15 show that multicolleration assumption is verified. Table 4 presents beta values of independent variables.

**Table 4**

*Multiple Regression Analysis Coefficients Table*

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	9,758E-	,033		,000	1,000
Status Consumption	,122	,043	,122	2,857	,004
Fashion Interest	,154	,042	,154	3,634	,000
Anti-Fashion Attitude	,348	,039	,348	8,949	,000
Fashion Leadership	,164	,037	,164	4,467	,000
Being Well-Dressed	,130	,035	,130	3,663	,000
Social Comparison	,113	,048	,113	2,358	,019

Source: Authors

On the Coefficients Table, Beta values are assessed as long as the variable's contribution is significant ( $p < ,05$ ) and the larger the Beta value, the more it contributes to the dependent variable. (Pallant, 2005). Anti-fashion attitude has the highest Beta value ( $\beta = 34,8\%$ ) and fashion leadership follows it ( $\beta = 16,4\%$ ) at the significance level of 0,000 ( $\beta = 34,8\%$ ;  $p < ,05$ ). Fashion interest ( $\beta = 15,4\%$ ;  $p < ,05$ ), being well-dressed ( $\beta = 13\%$ ;  $p < ,05$ ),

status consumption ( $\beta = 12,2\%$ ;  $p < ,05$ ) and social comparison ( $\beta = 11,3\%$ ;  $p < ,05$ ) follow them respectively.

## Findings

In order to test the research model, regression analysis was carried out. Initially, reliability and validity of the scales was checked. Cronbach's Alpha values and factor structures of the scales were evaluated. After doing necessary adjustments, multiple regression analysis was conducted. The results show that status consumption, all four factors of fashion orientation as fashion interest, anti-fashion attitude, fashion leadership, being well-dressed and social comparison has a significant influence on online compulsive buying. For this reason, H1, H2, H3, H4, H5 and H6 are all supported. Anti-fashion attitude has the highest Beta value ( $\beta: 0,348$ ).

## Discussion and Conclusion

Online compulsive buying has become one of the most crucial, jeopardous, worth-stressing issues of the new age, which just a few people have noticed pitifully the negative outcomes that it will cause. Widespread of Internet and online shopping opportunities make individuals be capable of shopping everywhere and any time they want. Abundance of products, easiness of buying process, 7/24 shopping opportunity from anywhere are the attractive features of online shopping which provides an important, favorable advantage for consumers with normal buying drive in a good manner. On the other hand, online shopping is a seducing tool for the consumers with nonfunctional buying habits like compulsive buying which may cause destructive results for both these consumers and their families as well as the whole society. For this reason, understanding the motivations that incline consumers to online compulsive buying has the greatest importance for both practioniers and theorists.

In this context, this study aims to discover the influence of status consumption, fashion-orientation and social comparison on online compulsive buying. Through an online survey, 601 complete and valid questionnaires were received and subjected to regression analysis. Results show that four dimensions of fashion-orientation, also status consumption and the social comparison has a significant effect on online compulsive buying, which reveal the regression model seems a functional model. Fashion orientation has the greatest influence, then the status consumption is following it and the social comparison has

the less effect on online compulsive buying. Bhatia (2019) found that the fashion interest has a significant influence on online compulsive buying so the present results support this finding. There has been no direct evidence which indicates the influence of either the social comparison or status consumption on online compulsive buying in the literature so the results of this paper provide a precursor proof for the significant effect of these two variables as the predictors of online compulsive buying. So the results are hoped to enhance the related literature.

Moreover, it is actually an unexpected result that anti-fashion attitude dimension of fashion orientation was found as the most important independent variable for online compulsive buying in this model. It is surprising because anti-fashion attitude dimension targets the participants' attitudes against fashion-related issues and the general averseness to the fashion patterns which are imposed by fashion industry. The results show that the increase in anti-fashion attitude substantially affects the increase in online compulsive buying. The authors think that this stems from the sample used in the research. Big city resident and higher educated participants may tend to show their self-reliant and independent characters which are not impressed from the fashion industry although they make online buying compulsively. They may shop online and buy something just because they desire whether the product is fashionable or not. They have also interest in fashion, fashion leadership and being well-dressed but the results show that anti-fashion attitudes predominated. The same model with a different sample may give different results so studying the same model with different samples are recommended to the future research.

Social comparison which has been intensively studied in psychology discipline and status consumption have been occasionally associated through materialism, luxury product consumption and consumers' need for uniqueness in the literature (Sharda and Bhat, 2018). Consumers may tend to buy online compulsively due to their status and social identity concerns. Lots of study supported the idea that the roots of the compulsive buying behavior are relieving the painful feelings and removing the negative situations. Status-seeking and identity-enhancing efforts are highly associated with acquiring material possessions and in the advanced chronic level of this process, it becomes a compulsive buying behavior. The outcomes of this research also expand our understanding of status consumption and social comparison literature.

Brands which serve an online shopping opportunity to the customers

should be aware of the results of the high-level anti-fashion attitudes of online compulsive buyers. Consumers' fashion interest, fashion leadership, being well-dressed and social comparison concerns as well as their status seeking efforts significantly influence their online compulsive buying tendency. Brands may take into consideration all these results to develop correct and profitable online marketing strategies. Brands, at this point, actually walk a thin line between a very profitable business and ruin results from the compulsive buyers who buy much more than their needs and financial limits then get into debt and face to harmful financial and social outcomes. Both brands and consumers with higher compulsive buying tendency should be aware of the danger which waits for them under the "clicks" and both sides are kindly asked to show the necessary sensitivity to the issue.

### **Declaration**

In all processes of the article, TESAM's research and publication ethics principles were followed.

There is no potential conflict of interest in this study.

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The authors contributed equally to the study.

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