

The Influence of Extreme Emotions on Consumer Overconsumption

Zihan Wang *

Beijing No.80 High school, Beijing, 100102, China

* Corresponding Author Email: leightoi@nwfsc.edu

Abstract. This present study aims to explore the influence of extreme emotions on consumer overconsumption behavior. With the increasing complexity of consumer behavior in modern society, emotions have become an important factor in influencing purchasing decisions. This paper mainly talks about the cause of the extreme emotions, the reason that the extreme emotions can lead to overconsumption, how to prevent the extreme emotions. Moreover, the study highlights the importance of emotional regulation in mitigating these impulsive behaviors. Emotional regulation strategies can be effectively utilized to reduce the occurrence of overconsumption. Consumers who practiced emotional regulation made more deliberate purchasing decisions and were less likely to engage in impulsive buying. This research underscores the critical role of emotional management in reducing overconsumption and lays the groundwork for future studies in this field, particularly in exploring the long-term effects of emotional regulation on consumer spending and the broader economic implications of emotion-driven overconsumption.

Keywords: Extreme emotions; consumer behavior; overconsumption; emotional impact.

1. Introduction

In today's modern consumer society, overconsumption has become a pressing issue, one that extends beyond simple purchasing habits to affect individuals' financial stability and well-being. While much of consumer behavior can be attributed to practical needs and desires, an increasing body of research suggests that emotional states play a crucial role in influencing consumption patterns. Specifically, extreme emotions, both positive and negative, have been shown to significantly impact consumers' decisions to spend, often leading them to make impulsive or irrational purchasing choices. Emotions plays an important role in deciding consumers' behavior. Many of the researches talked about the rational consumers, but people can't ignore the role of extreme emotions in deciding consumers' behavior. The extreme emotions are when people receive the stimuli from outside world, they perform angry, anxiety, excited and depressive. People under this condition will be impetuous and impulsive, they will buy a lot of things without consider whether it is useful and helpful or not. And this phenomenon was called the Emotional Consumption. Therefore, this paper is going to talk about the influence of extreme emotions on consumer 's behavior.

2. Impact of Extreme Emotions

2.1. The Reasons that Extreme Emotions Cause People to Overspend

When emotions are intense, the brain's reward system is activated, and consumers look for quick ways to regulate their emotions. Also, consumers make decisions only by following their gut feeling. Shopping or consumption can usually bring pleasure or satisfaction in a short period of time, and this instant satisfaction motivates consumers to continue to consume. Another term is when people are under a serious pressure, they might tend to buy more things in order to relieve and relax the pressure. Buying can offer people a very good emotions and those emotions are instant and instantaneous. Another condition is people are experienced a very upset and irritative circumstance, they prefer to buy lots of stuff which are useless and superfluous [1,2]. Extreme Emotions also effected by the cognition of their brain. The extreme emotions will lead people to lose their rational and inclusive the ability of evaluation. For instance, People with extreme emotions are more likely to be stimulated by

advertisements or tempted by discounts. In this case, consumers will be tempted and persuaded to buy more useless things. The extreme emotion has two “extreme” one is very happy & fortunate; another one is very sad & upset. Those two extremes both will cause the overconsumption. When people got a great progress or achieved a personal goal, they tend to buy some luxury and extravagant stuff to satisfy themselves so that they reward themselves with unnecessary purchases. And when that happiness reaches its peak, they will overspend.

In the other hand, when people are frustrated or face some difficulties, they often buy the luxuries to make them up. The act of buying something new becomes a way to quickly satisfy an unmet need, offering a quick emotional release [3,4]. However, this behavior can be detrimental in the long term, as it reinforces the cycle of relying on material purchases for emotional relief, further contributing to impulsive buying patterns.

2.2. The Cause of Extreme Emotions

People’s emotions can be really unpredictable, and they are influenced by a lot of different factors, like psychological, physiological, and environmental ones. The present study this paper going to break it down and talk about each one in detail. To begin with, this study will explore the biological factors. When the chemicals in the brain or the way it’s wired gets out of balance or it can increase the likelihood of extreme emotions like anxiety or anger. Also, some people are just born with genes that make them more easily irritable or quick to anger, so they’re naturally more likely to extreme emotions [5]. Previous studies have shown that the brain mechanism of emotion is mainly in the prefrontal cortex and limbic system, indicating that emotion is related to the old cortex and the new cortex. The layers all have extensive connections. The brain mechanisms of emotion are also inconsistent in function between the two hemispheres, with different brain regions for positive and negative emotions. The left Prefrontal Cortex is associated with positive feelings and the right PFC is associated with negative feelings. The asymmetry of PFC and amygdala activation is the physiological basis of individual differences in emotion Base. The hippocampus plays an important role in the background regulation of emotions. The formation of emotional brain neural circuits is closely related to the environment, indicating that central circuit of emotions is plastic. So, differences in brain structure can also lead to differences in emotional control. It is not just from a biological standpoint.

From a psychological perspective, when people have gone through certain experiences or have strong emotional associations from earlier in life, they can instinctively feel extreme emotions. Also, when people go through certain life phases or cycles, their bodies can naturally trigger extreme emotions (such as climacteric and puberty), which might have to do with hormones. Sleep is also a big factor. If people do not get enough sleep or if the quality of individuals’ sleep isn’t good, it can weaken individuals’ ability to regulate emotions, making people more likely to get irritated [6]. According to an experiment to investigate the sleep quality and emotional control ability of psychiatric nurses in Shaoguan city, the results of this study showed that the sleep of psychiatric nurses was worse than that of the general population in previous surveys, which may be related to the working environment. The 20-53 years old age group and the middle and young vocational groups at the level of secondary school education or above are in the stage of career development and life care, and are under a lot of pressure from society and family. So, they are often in a state of stress and prone to sleep problems. Previous studies have found that in the case of persistent sleep problems, the problem itself may constitute a stressor for the parties and result in a stress process” Thus, it shows that the sleeping quality is a significant factor of emotional controlling. Life stress, how people handle relationships, and individuals’ current situation also play a big role in whether someone’s emotions stay stable. If a person is dealing with a lot of pressure, like work stress or conflicts with others, they’re more likely to become easily annoyed and angry. The researchers from China also mentioned that” It has been well accepted by the public that parental relationships are the most significant bond for everyone in the world, and they are exactly associated with personality cultivation. However, sometimes inappropriate parental relationships may create underlying stress for students.” Therefore,

in a family, it is very important to sustain a good relationship between family members.” they found out that there was a significant correlation between parental control and alexithymia, indicating that inappropriate parental psychological control indeed has negative influences on students' interpersonal relationships. “According to this research, parents indeed play a very essential role in the emotion control of their children. At last, if individuals use illegal drugs or substances, they can overstimulate individuals' brain, make it harder to control. This can lead to increased irritability and a loss of control over individuals' emotions.

2.3. Overconsumption as a Dependent Behavior

Overconsumption is often linked to emotional needs. Individuals may engage in overconsumption as a way to manage stress, anxiety, or negative emotions. Dependency, in this context, refers to a behavior that is driven by the need for emotional relief, psychological comfort, or avoidance of discomfort. For example, when a person feels overwhelmed or unable to cope with their emotions, they may turn to behaviors like binge eating, excessive shopping, or substance abuse as a form of temporary relief. Overconsumption can also be a way to avoid discomfort or difficult emotions. Instead of confronting a stressful situation or emotional pain, individuals may engage in behaviors that temporarily distract them from their problems. People may buy things not to actually own things but to enjoy the pleasure of buying things [7,8]. However, the pleasure of buying things is not lasting and it doesn't address the underlying factors so it gets people into a vicious cycle because people overconsume and get pleasure all the time. Overconsumption is not solely driven by individual emotional needs; it is also heavily influenced by societal factors. In consumer-driven societies, people are constantly exposed to advertising, marketing, and social media messages that encourage excessive consumption. For example, the fashion industry promotes the idea that new clothes, accessories, and trends are necessary for happiness and success. For example, seasonal fashion campaigns often feature influencers showcasing the latest collections, creating a sense of urgency and desire among consumers to purchase items to feel trendy or accepted. Similarly, social media platforms often highlight material wealth, appearances, and lifestyles that encourage individuals to spend more money or consume more products. For instance, platforms like Instagram are filled with posts of influencers flaunting luxury brands and extravagant lifestyles, which can pressure followers to emulate these experiences through their own purchases. These societal pressures create a cycle where individuals feel compelled to consume in order to meet perceived social expectations or achieve an idealized version of happiness. This external pressure can exacerbate tendencies toward overconsumption, leading individuals to engage in behaviors that provide temporary satisfaction but do not address their deeper emotional needs [9].

In addition to personal psychological mechanisms, societal influences play a significant role in encouraging overconsumption. Modern societies, often equate consumerism with happiness and success. Advertising, social media, and cultural norms reinforce the idea that owning the latest products, achieving a perfect lifestyle, or maintaining a certain physical appearance is necessary for social acceptance and personal fulfillment. This external pressure leads individuals to overconsume in order to align themselves with these societal expectations.

“The study therefore concludes that the idealized images portrayed in the media, whether body-related or not, negatively impact young women's body image and particularly increase appearance anxiety and body shame, which is consistent with previous research.” According to this theory, people can know that social media will produce some negative effects on people's anxiety, and people will be more inclined to relieve this anxiety through consumption to obtain short-term comfort. “Additionally, while Social Media Use may not directly and strongly impact life satisfaction, its influence on mediators like self-esteem and loneliness plays a critical role in shaping individuals' overall assessment of Life Satisfaction. Based on these findings, the paper suggests that SM platforms should limit the promotion of idealized images and instead actively advocate for body positivity and inclusivity. Besides, platforms should encourage meaningful social interactions to address feelings of isolation and low self-esteem.” Thus, excessive emphasis on appearance on social media (SM) can

heighten anxiety and depression. Although SM use (SMU) might not directly affect life satisfaction (LS), its impact on self-esteem and loneliness significantly shapes LS. To reduce these effects, SM platforms should reduce the promotion of idealized images and advocate for body positivity.

3. Prevention for Excessive Consumption Behavior Brought about by Extreme Emotions

Different Emotions have many triggers. Environment, situation, relationship, even climate can play a significant role in individuals' emotion control. The first thing that people need to do is to recognize and identify which type of the emotion people are experiencing. If individuals know what mood individuals are in it would help individuals control individuals' behavior. For example, if individuals know individuals are very angry, individuals will consciously control themselves not to fight and shout against others when individuals is in the library. Therefore, the same pattern, when individuals's feeling that individuals is in the high mood, individuals need to consciously control individuals' overconsumption and stay rational. It is also important to learn how to regulate individuals' emotions. When people feel that their emotions are out of control or irrational, people need to find ways to calm individuals' emotions such as hang out with friends, watch a movie, playing piano and do some sports. In addition to external distractions, practicing mindfulness or engaging in meditation can also be beneficial for emotional regulation. Mindfulness techniques help individuals become more aware of their emotions. Everyone has their fit way to settle their mood. So, people need to change the way people regulate individuals' emotions from overconsumption to something else and forget using consumption to calm individuals' mood. Money regulation and management is a mandatory ability in order to prevent from overconsumption. people can make a list or sheet to assign and allocate money for each part of individuals' daily life. Every time people want to buy something which is unnecessary to buy it, those sheet and list will help people to mention that individuals's money is well-allocated, so people will not be such impulsive to buy something [10]. When people are in a very extreme emotional state people tend to buy more and overspend intensively. At that time, people need to find the experts and doctors for help. They can help individuals address underlying emotional problems and build better coping strategies. people need to keep individuals' sense of Gratitude that people should learn to appreciate and cherish all the time so that people will feel grateful and thankful for individuals' current situation so that people will not have additional desire to buy and greedy behavior.

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, the influence of extreme emotions on consumer overconsumption is a multifaceted phenomenon that highlights the intricate relationship between psychological states and purchasing behaviors. This paper has explored how emotions such as joy, sadness, anger, and anxiety can significantly drive consumers to engage in excessive buying, often as a means of coping or seeking validation. Similarly, anger may drive impulsive buying as a form of rebellion or self-assertion. These emotional triggers not only influence the quantity of purchases but also impact the types of products consumers choose, often favoring items that provide immediate gratification or a sense of escapism. The implications of these findings are profound for marketers and businesses. Understanding the emotional drivers behind consumer behavior presents an opportunity to tailor marketing strategies that resonate with consumers on a deeper emotional level. However, this also raises ethical concerns regarding the responsibility of marketers to avoid exploiting vulnerable consumers who may be susceptible to overconsumption due to their emotional states. It is essential for brands to strike a balance between engaging consumers emotionally and promoting a culture of responsible consumption.

Moreover, this research highlights the importance of consumer awareness. By gaining insight into how emotions influence their buying decisions, consumers can develop healthier shopping habits and

make more informed choices. Educational initiatives that promote emotional intelligence and mindfulness in purchasing can empower individuals to recognize their emotional triggers and avoid impulsive buying.

References

- [1] Zhang S N. (2013). The impact of addictive consumption on values. *Business Times*, (21), 30-31.
- [2] Li Xiaoling, (2024). Why do young people like to pay for emotional value? *Journalist Observation* (22),84-85.
- [3] Sun Yonghua. (2023-07-28). "Emotions" in shopping cart? . *IT times*, 005. The doi: 10.28404 / n.c. Nki nitsd. 2023.000342.
- [4] Zhang S N. (2013). The impact of addictive consumption on values. *Business Times*, (21), 30-31. LiGD. (2009). Making consumers "addicted" to consumption. *New Finance and Economics*, (2), 55- 55.
- [5] Ma Q X, & Guo D J. (2003). Advances in the study of emotional brain mechanisms. *Advances in Psychological Science*, 11(3), 6.
- [6] Cao Zheliang & Zhang Chengd. (2013). A survey on sleep quality and emotional control of 180 psychiatric nurses in Shaoguan City. *Modern Medicine and Health* (08),1186-1188.)
- [7] Lei Xuan, (2024). The deep driving force of "emotional consumption". *Chinese Quality Miles* (01),24-27.
- [8] Liu Xuying. (2024-10-14). Consumption of emotional value has gradually become a new craze. *International business newspaper*, 005. Doi: 10.28270 / n.c. Nki NGJSB. 2024.003001.
- [9] Song Chao-ying, Zhu Jian-Ming, & Cui Jing-jing. (2010). Behavioral economic analysis of overconsumption
- [10] Min F. (2023). How to prevent emotional "heat stroke". *Life and Disasters* (07),22-23.