


# Chapter 6


## Unraveling Compulsive Buying Disorder: A Comprehensive Review of the Causes, Impact, and Treatment of Compulsive Buying Disorder

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### ABSTRACT

*This chapter examines Compulsive Buying Disorder (CBD), a behavioral addiction characterized by uncontrollable purchasing despite adverse consequences. Prevalence rates (2-8%) highlight disproportionate impacts on women and youth, driven by impulsivity, digital retail access, and emotional dysregulation. Neurobiological mechanisms link CBD to striatal hyperactivity and dopaminergic dysfunction, paralleling substance addiction. Diagnostic challenges stem from exclusion in DSM-5/ICD-11 and overlaps with OCD/impulse-control disorders. Evidence-based treatments prioritize cognitive-behavioral therapy and pharmacotherapy, though*

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*relapse remains common. Sociocultural drivers, including materialism and digital marketing, underscore the need for holistic interventions. The chapter advocates standardized diagnostic criteria and integrated approaches to address CBD's multifactorial etiology.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

In the modern era, shopping has evolved far beyond its utilitarian roots. Fueled by advances in technology, the global expansion of consumer culture, and shifting psychological norms, it has become embedded in everyday life as a recreational activity, a form of identity expression, and, for some individuals, a means of emotional escape. This cultural transformation has coincided with increasing reliance on mobile devices and social media, exposing users to relentless digital marketing tactics. As a result, many people—especially younger demographics—are drawn into compulsive purchasing behaviors, which can strain both their mental well-being and financial stability.

Compulsive Buying Disorder (CBD), also known as shopping addiction or onomania, is a behavioral condition marked by an irresistible drive to make purchases, often in disregard of actual need or financial limitations. Despite its widespread impact, CBD often remains under-recognized due to societal norms that glorify consumption and material success. Similar to other behavioral addictions, CBD is typified by a cycle of impulsivity, loss of control, temporary psychological relief, and subsequent guilt or distress, which often reinforces the compulsion. The emergence of online retail platforms has amplified this behavior, offering 24/7 access to shopping opportunities. Research suggests that CBD disproportionately affects women, a pattern possibly linked to social expectations, emotional engagement with consumption, and media-driven standards of appearance and lifestyle (Sathya et al., 2023).

### **Defining Compulsive Buying Disorder**

Historically, compulsive buying was identified as a form of pathological impulse—grouped with conditions like kleptomania and pyromania (Bleuler, 1930). Benson (2000) coined the term “Spendaholism” to capture the compulsive nature of this behavior and its ties to self-concept and personal identity. While CBD is not formally recognized as a distinct diagnosis in the DSM-5 (5th ed.; DSM-5; American Psychi-

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