

# ROLE OF SELF-CONTROL IN THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ONLINE SHOPPING ADDICTION AND COMPULSIVE BUYING BEHAVIOR AMONG YOUNG ADULTS

Hijab Shabbir<sup>1</sup>, Laraib Tahir<sup>2</sup> & Neelam Bibi<sup>3</sup>  
 Rawalpindi Women University<sup>1,2</sup>  
 Rawalpindi Institute of Cardiology<sup>3</sup>  
[Hijabshabbir49@gmail.com](mailto:Hijabshabbir49@gmail.com)



## Abstract

This study investigated self-control role in the relationship between online shopping addiction and compulsive buying behavior among young adults. Using the Online Shopping Addiction Scale (Zhao et al., 2017), Compulsive Buying Behavior Scale (Valence et al., 1988), and Brief Self-Control Scale (Tangney et al., 2004), a cross-sectional correlational design was applied to a sample of 300 young adults (aged 18-44, gender distribution) from various universities. Findings revealed a positive correlation between online shopping addiction and compulsive buying, both negatively associated with self-control. Significant variations were noted across demographics and shopping frequency. A strong total effect (.54) and direct effect (.52) indicated that self-control minimally mediates the relationship. This study can provide insights into the development of effective interventions and strategies to promote healthy online shopping behaviors among Young adults

## Introduction

### Online Shopping Addiction

Online shopping addiction refers to an inability to control the impulse to make online purchases, despite its negative consequences on an individual's financial, emotional, and physical well-being (Suresh & Biswas, 2020).

### Compulsive Buying Behavior

Compulsive buying behavior (CBB) is characterized by an inability to control a powerful inner impulse to repeatedly make purchases in order to alleviate emotional discomfort (Roberts et al., 2014).

### Self Control

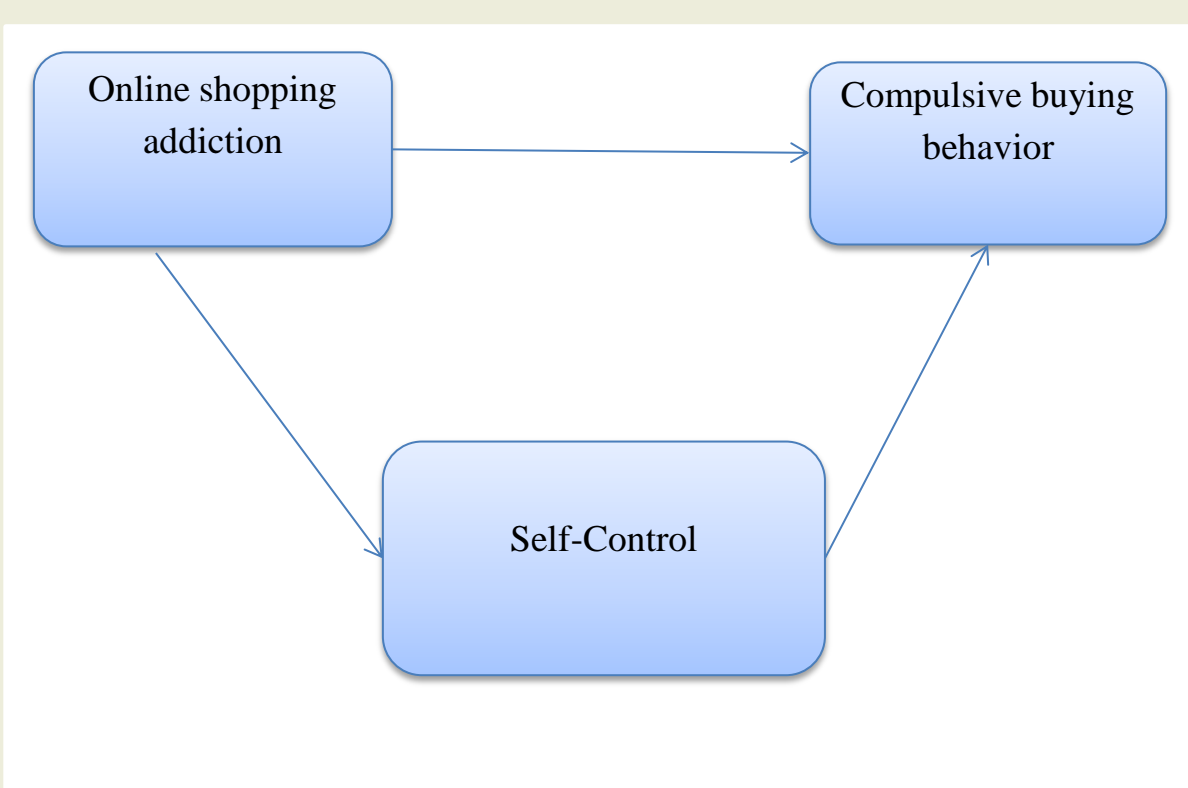
Self-control is the ability to resist one's innermost desires to achieve a better outcome (Jiang & Shi, 2016).

## Literature Reviews

- Previous study conducted by Lerman et al. (2022) found that online shopping addiction is positively associated with compulsive buying behavior, implying that individuals who engage in excessive online shopping may be more likely to exhibit compulsive buying patterns.
- Jiang et al. (2017) investigated the relationship between self-control and online shopping addiction, revealing a significant negative correlation. This suggests that individuals with lower self-control tend to exhibit higher levels of online shopping addiction. The findings highlight self-control as a protective factor against excessive online shopping behavior.
- The findings of previous research demonstrated that self-control plays a crucial mediating role in mitigating the impact of addictive behaviors on compulsive purchasing. This suggests that individuals with higher self-control are better able to manage the compulsive buying tendencies associated with online shopping addiction (Hoffmann et al., 2016).
- Another study revealed significant gender differences in online shopping addiction and compulsive buying behavior, with female participants exhibited higher levels of online shopping addiction and compulsive buying behavior compared to their male counterparts (Durrani et al., 2023).

## Conceptual framework

## Objectives

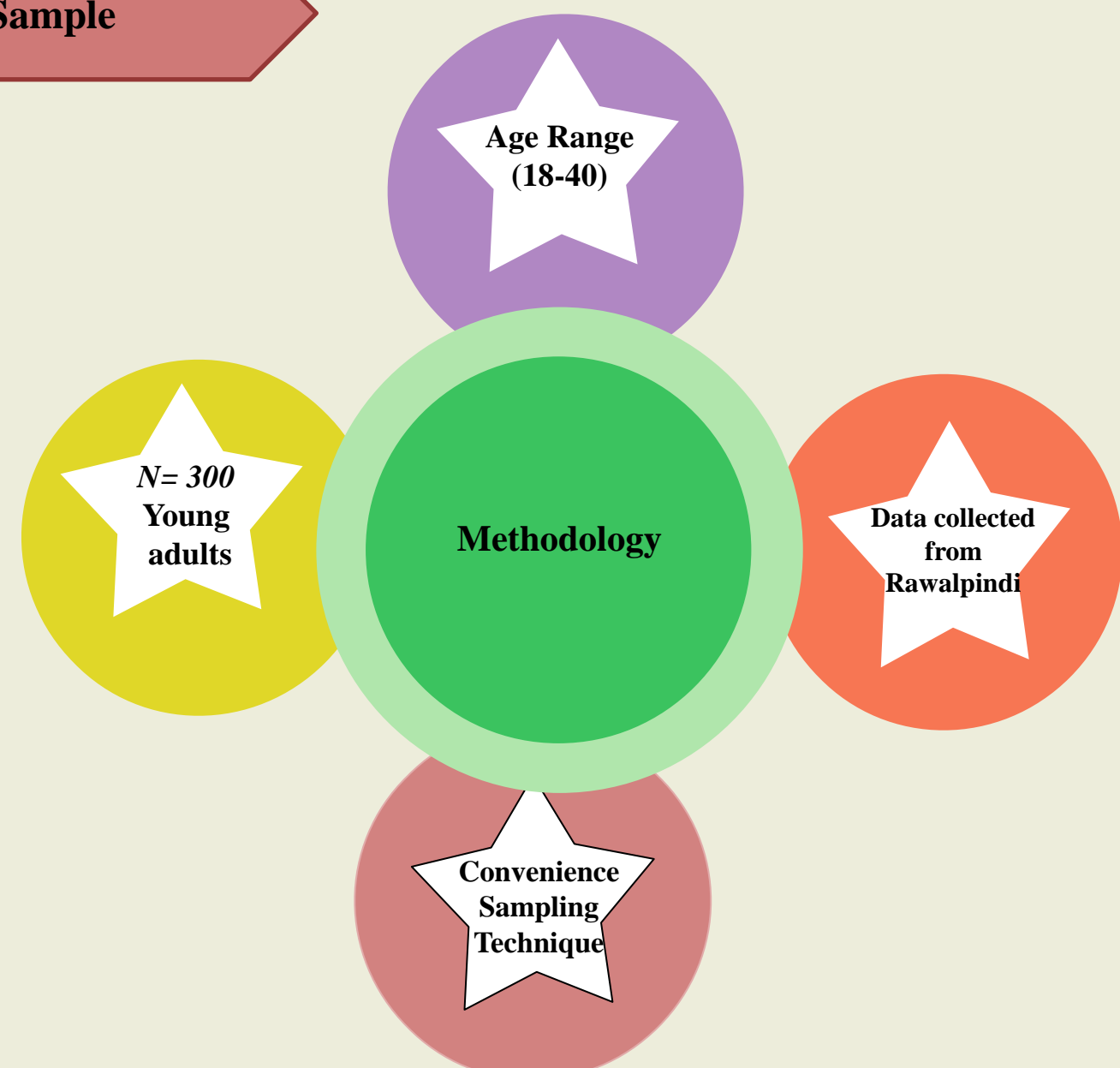


1. To investigate the relationship between online shopping addiction and compulsive buying behavior among young adults
2. To explore the mediating role of self-control in the relationship between online shopping addiction and compulsive buying behavior among Young adults.
3. To investigate the mean differences across gender in the relation to online shopping addiction, compulsive buying behavior and self-control.

## Hypotheses

1. Online shopping addiction is positively correlated with compulsive buying behavior among Young adults.
2. Self-control is negatively correlated with online shopping addiction and compulsive buying behavior among Young adults.
3. Self-control mediates the relationship between online shopping addiction and compulsive buying behavior among Young adults.

## Sample



## Instruments

Scales	Authors	Subscales	No. of Items	Response Options	α
Online shopping addiction scale (OSAS)	Zhao et al. (2017)	1. Silence 2. Tolerance 3. Mood Modification 4. Withdrawal 5. Conflict 6. Relapse	18	5-point Likert Scale	.95
Compulsive Buying Scale (CBS)	Valence et al. (1988)	No Subscales	16	5-point Likert Scale	.84
Brief Self-control Scale (BSCS)	(Tangney et al. (2004)	No Subscales	13	5-point Likert Scale	.85

## Procedure

After obtaining approval from the target sample, the researcher explained the procedure to participants. After signing consent forms, participants were given a booklet containing three confidential questionnaires. These measured online shopping addiction (OSAS), compulsive buying behavior (CBS), and self-control (BSCS) among young adults.

## Results

Table 1

Pearson correlation between Online shopping addiction and its subscales, Compulsive buying behavior and Self-control (N=300)

variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. OSA	-								
2. SI	.85**	-							
3. TO	.90**	.81**	-						
4. MM	.87**	.72**	.74**	-					
5. WD	.90**	.65**	.72**	.71*	-				
6. RE	.90**	.68**	.79**	.76*	.74**	-			
7. CO	.90**	.66**	.76**	.71*	.81**	.82**	-		
8. CBB	.84**	.72**	.75**	.73*	.73**	.76**	.76**	-	
9. BSC	-.27**	-.17*	-.19*	-.20*	-.32**	-.19*	-.33**	-.32**	-

Note: OSAD= Online Shopping Addiction; SI= Silence; TO= Tolerance; MM= Mood Modification; WD= Withdrawal; RE= Relapse; CO= Conflict; CBB= Compulsive Buying Behavior; SC= Self-

Table 2

The direct and indirect Effects of Self-control on Online shopping addiction and Compulsive buying behavior (N=300)

Effect	B	S.E	CI	%
			LL	UL
Total	.54	.02	.49	.60
Direct	.52	.00	.47	.58
Indirect	.01	.00	.00	.03

Figure 1

Comparison of Online shopping Addiction by Gender with Mean Scores

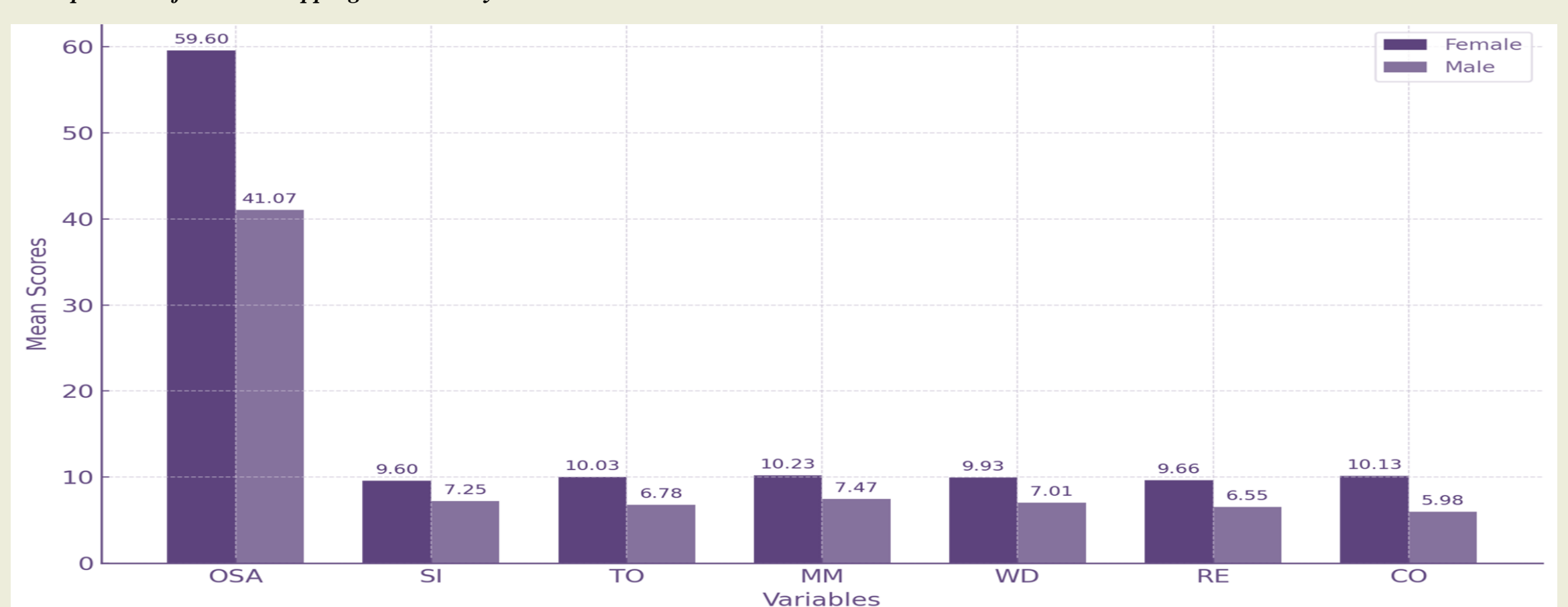


Figure 2

Comparison of Compulsive Buying Behavior by Gender with Mean Scores

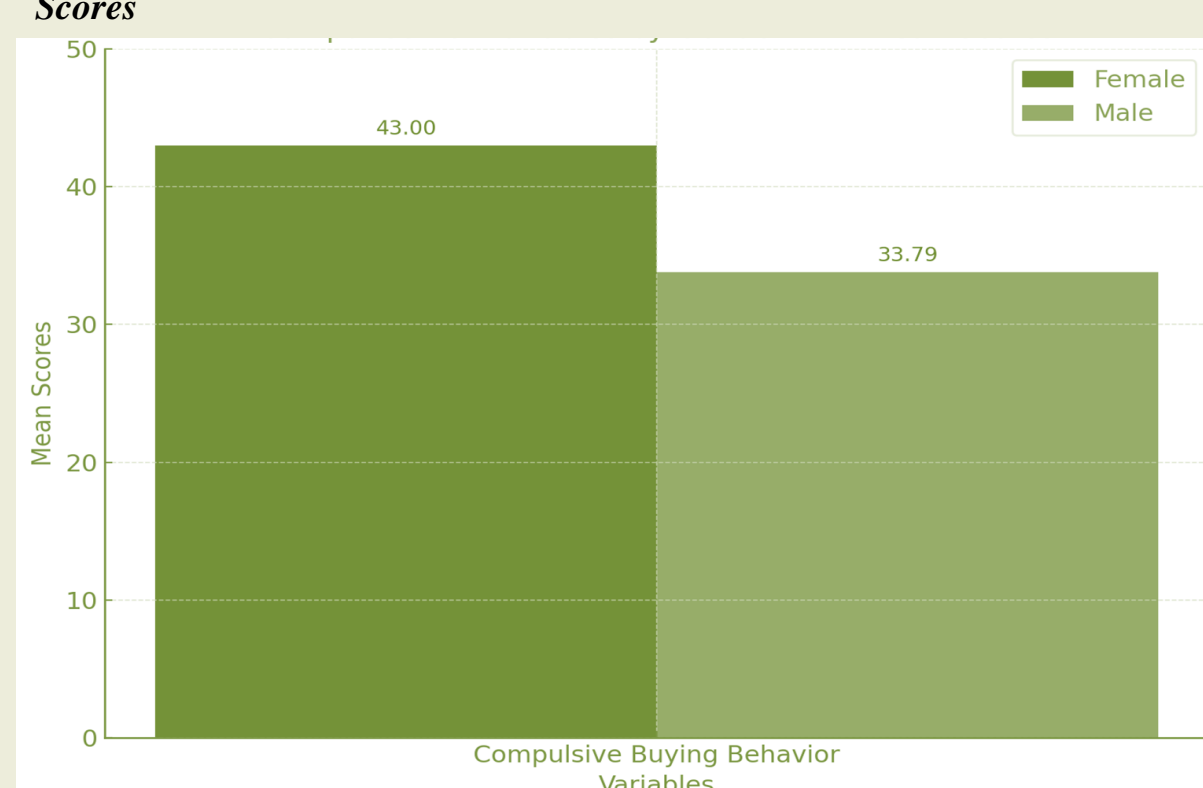


Figure 3

Comparison of Self-Control by Gender with Mean Scores

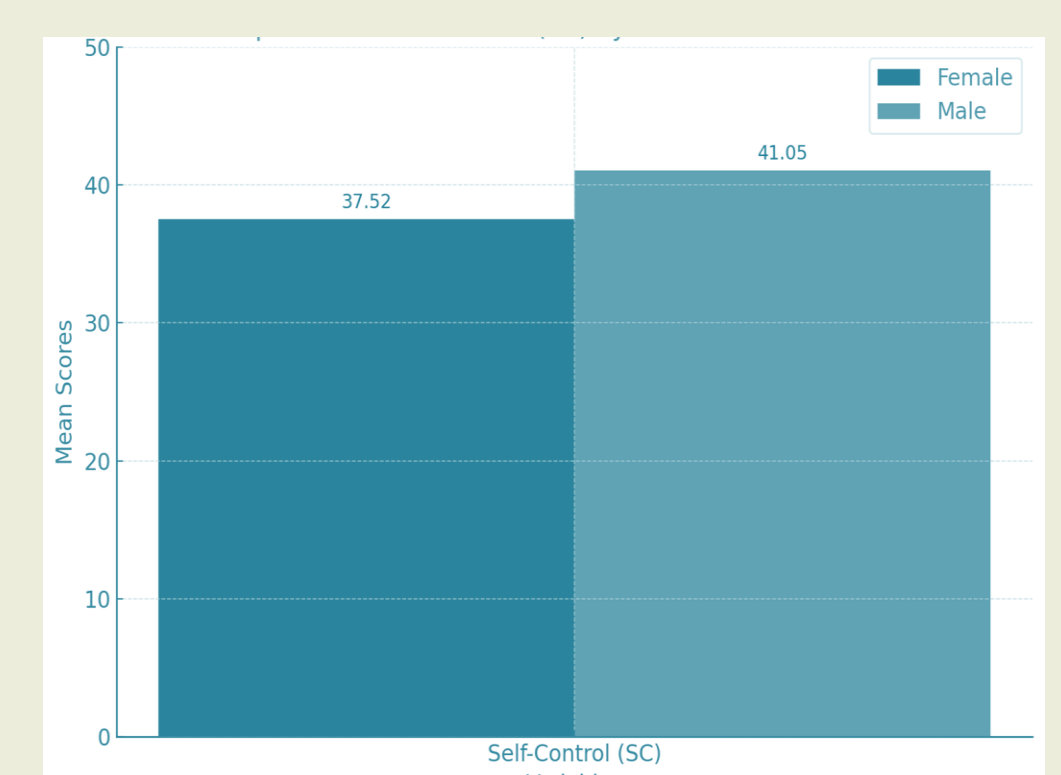


Figure 4

Comparison of Study Variables by Frequency of Occurrences with Mean Scores

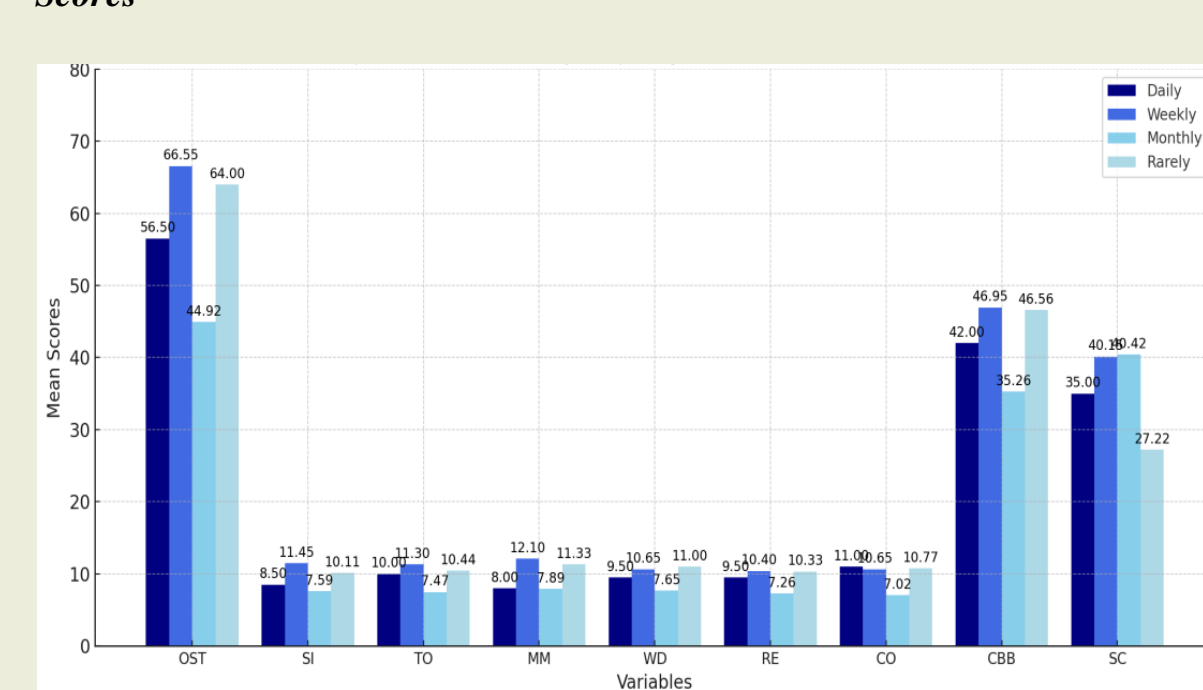
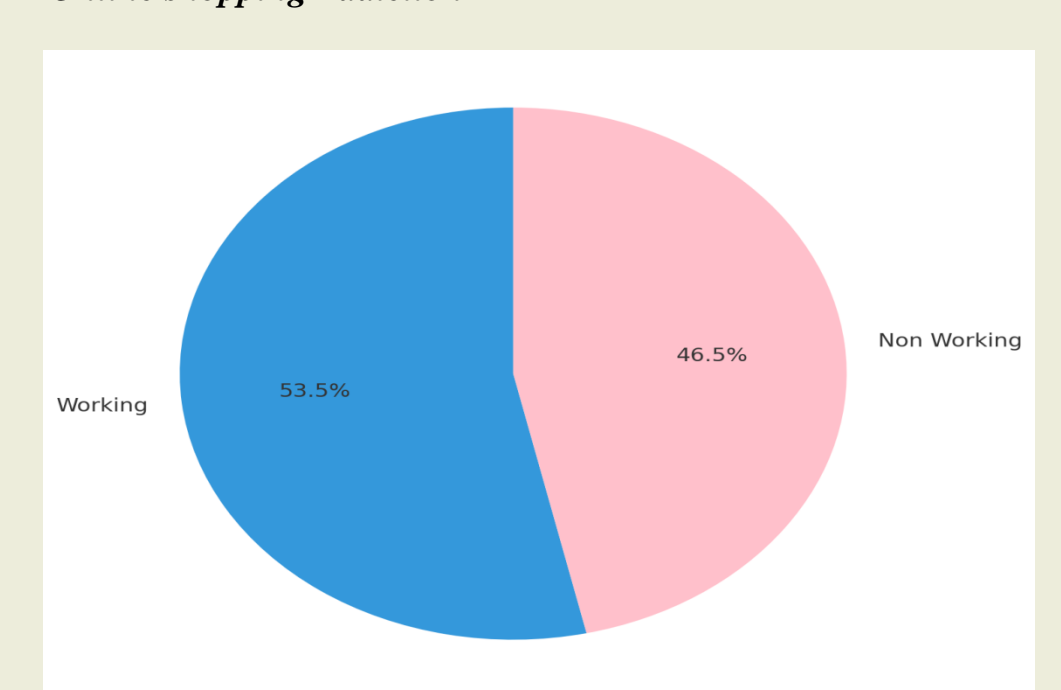


Figure 5

Distribution of Working vs Non-working Participants Across Online shopping Addiction



## Discussion

- The current research explored the relationship between online shopping addiction and compulsive buying behavior among young adults, specifically examining how self-control affects and mediates this relationship.
- The current study employed correlation analysis to investigate the relationship between online shopping addiction and compulsive buying behavior. Consistent with prior research (Lerman et al., 2022), the findings revealed a significant positive correlation between these variables, indicating that individuals with online shopping addiction are more prone to compulsive buying behavior.
- Current study results highlighted that self-control is negatively correlated with both online shopping addiction and compulsive buying behavior. The findings revealed negative correlation between self-control and online shopping addiction, which is in-lined with the result of previous research that also demonstrating an inverse relationship between self-control and online shopping addiction. Individuals with lower self-control and higher impulsivity are more prone to engage in online shopping addiction and compulsive buying (Jiang et al., 2017).
- The correlation analysis further revealed a negative relationship between self-control and compulsive buying behavior. These findings are consistent with prior research, which also identified a negative correlation between self-control and compulsive buying behavior. The results indicated that self-control is a significant negative predictor of compulsive buying, with individuals exhibiting higher levels of self-control reporting fewer issues with compulsive buying compared to those with lower levels (Achtziger et al., 2015).
- Mean analysis revealed significant mean differences across gender for all variables. These findings are consistent with previous literature, which also reported that female students scored high on compulsive buying behavior and online shopping addiction as compared to their male counterparts (Durrani et al., 2022).
- Moreover, mediation analysis revealed that self-control was explored as mediator in relationship between online shopping addiction and compulsive buying behavior. The results indicated that self-control significantly mediated the relationship between online shopping addiction and compulsive buying behavior. These findings are consistent with previous studies which highlighted the mediating role of self-control in reducing the impact of online shopping addiction on compulsive buying (Luo et al., 2018).

## Conclusion

- The current study examined the relationship between online shopping addiction, compulsive buying behavior, and role of self-control among young adults.
- The findings of the present study revealed a positive relationship between online shopping addiction and compulsive buying behavior, whereas self-control was negatively correlated with both online shopping addiction and compulsive buying behavior.
- These findings can provide insights into the development of effective interventions and strategies to promote healthy online shopping behaviors among young adults.

## Limitations

- Exclusive use of quantitative methods may have limited insights into complex dynamics.
- Qualitative methods, like focus groups, could offer deeper understanding of self-control's impact on impulsive shopping.
- The study sample was limited to young adults from Rawalpindi and Islamabad, which may restrict the generalizability of findings to broader populations.

## Implications

Enhancing self-regulation skills can aid practitioners in addressing compulsive shopping behaviors.

Educational programs on financial literacy and responsible shopping can empower informed decision-making

This study can provide insights into the development of effective interventions and strategies to promote healthy online shopping behaviors among Young adults.