

The Relationship of Anxiety, Depression and Low Self-Esteem on the Tendency to have Compulsive Buying-type Behaviors

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Background

Compulsive Buying is characterized by:

- shopping not done in moderation
- preoccupation to buy
- uncontrollable urge to buy
- leading to significant social and financial problems

Compulsive Buying is:

- Not officially recognized as a psychological disorder by APA
- Associated with impaired functioning.
(Gallagher et al, 2017)
- More likely in women than in men
(Granero et al, 2016)

“Retail therapy” is:

- engaged in by people with the primary purpose of improving their mood
- considered the first phase of shopping addiction
(Sohn et al, 2013)

Common factors in people with Compulsive Buying Behaviors:

- Psychiatric history
- Mood disorders
- Legal problems
(Harvanko et al, 2013)

Hypotheses

Compulsive-buying-type behaviors will be more common for individuals with:

- 1) higher levels of depression.
- 2) higher levels of anxiety.
- 3) lower self-esteem.

Method

Materials

- Richmond Compulsive Buying Scale
- Tano General Anxiety Scale
- Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale
- Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale

Participants

- Recruited via email and Facebook posts
- 90 completed surveys (14 male, 76 females)

Procedure

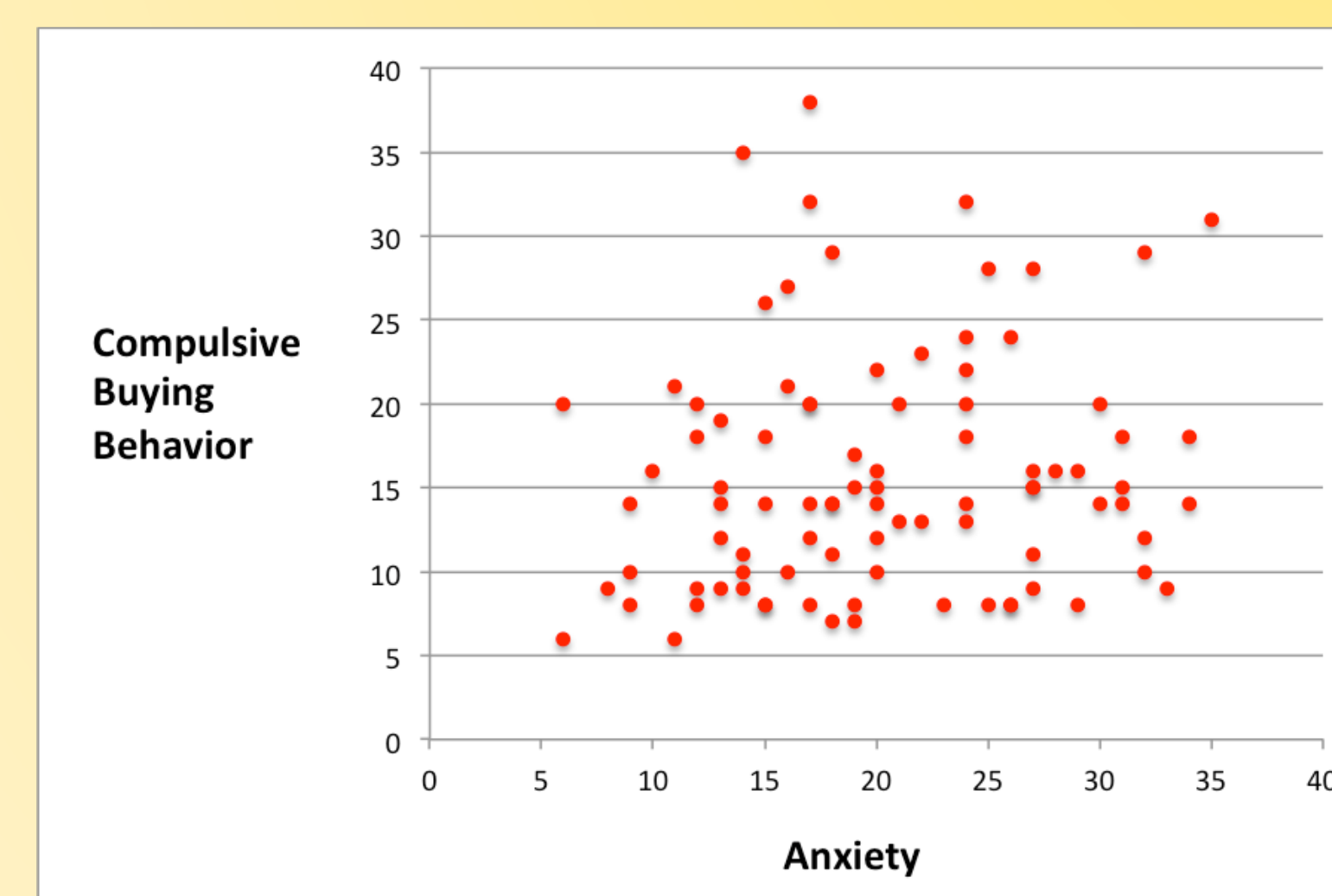
- Participants completed an anonymous online survey

Results

Hypothesis #1 was supported.

Results showed a moderate positive linear relationship between depression and compulsive buying type behaviors.

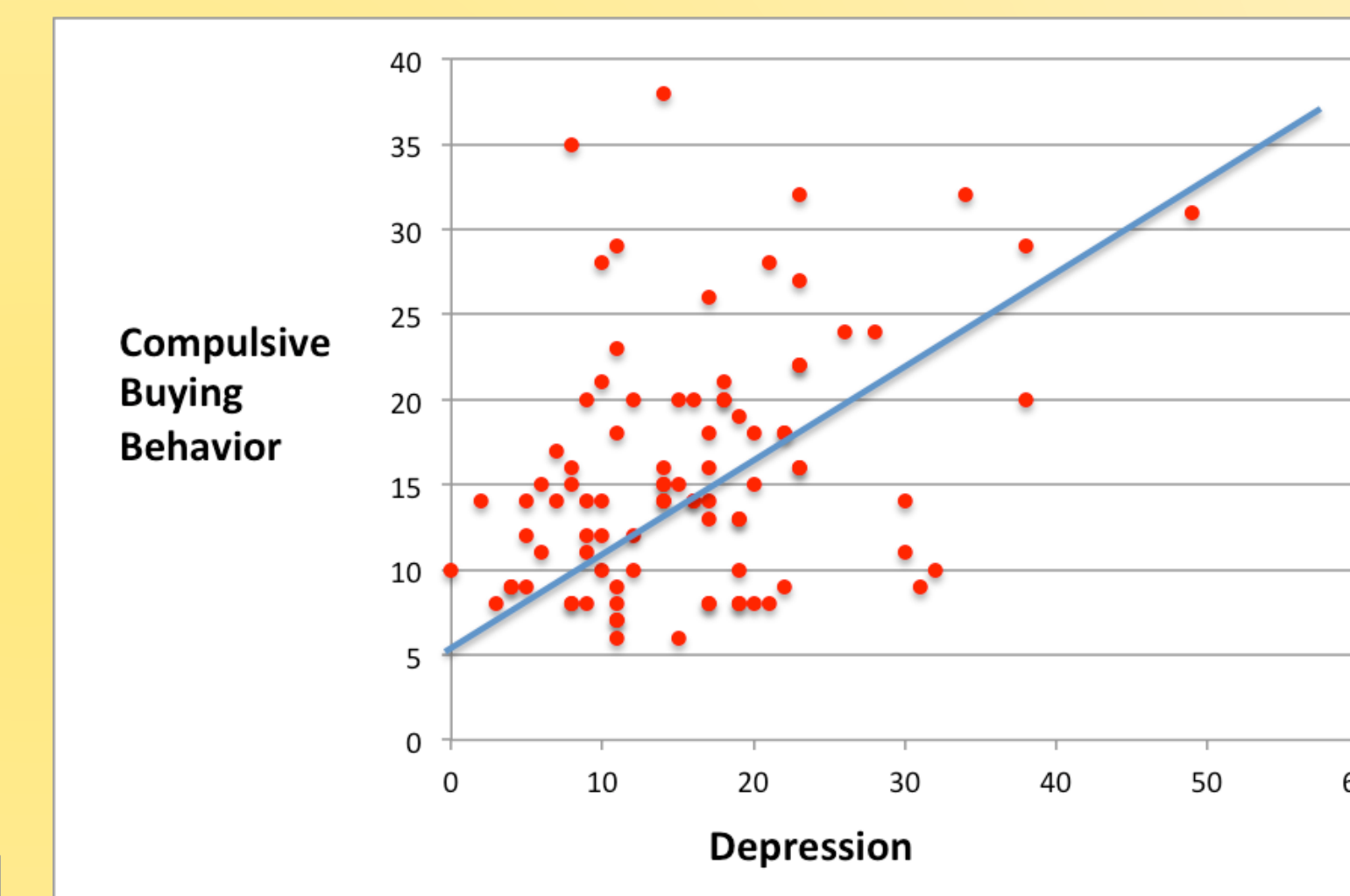
$$r = + 0.36 \quad p = 0.05\%$$



Hypothesis #3 was not supported.

Results showed the predicted negative linear relationship between self-esteem and compulsive buying type behaviors.

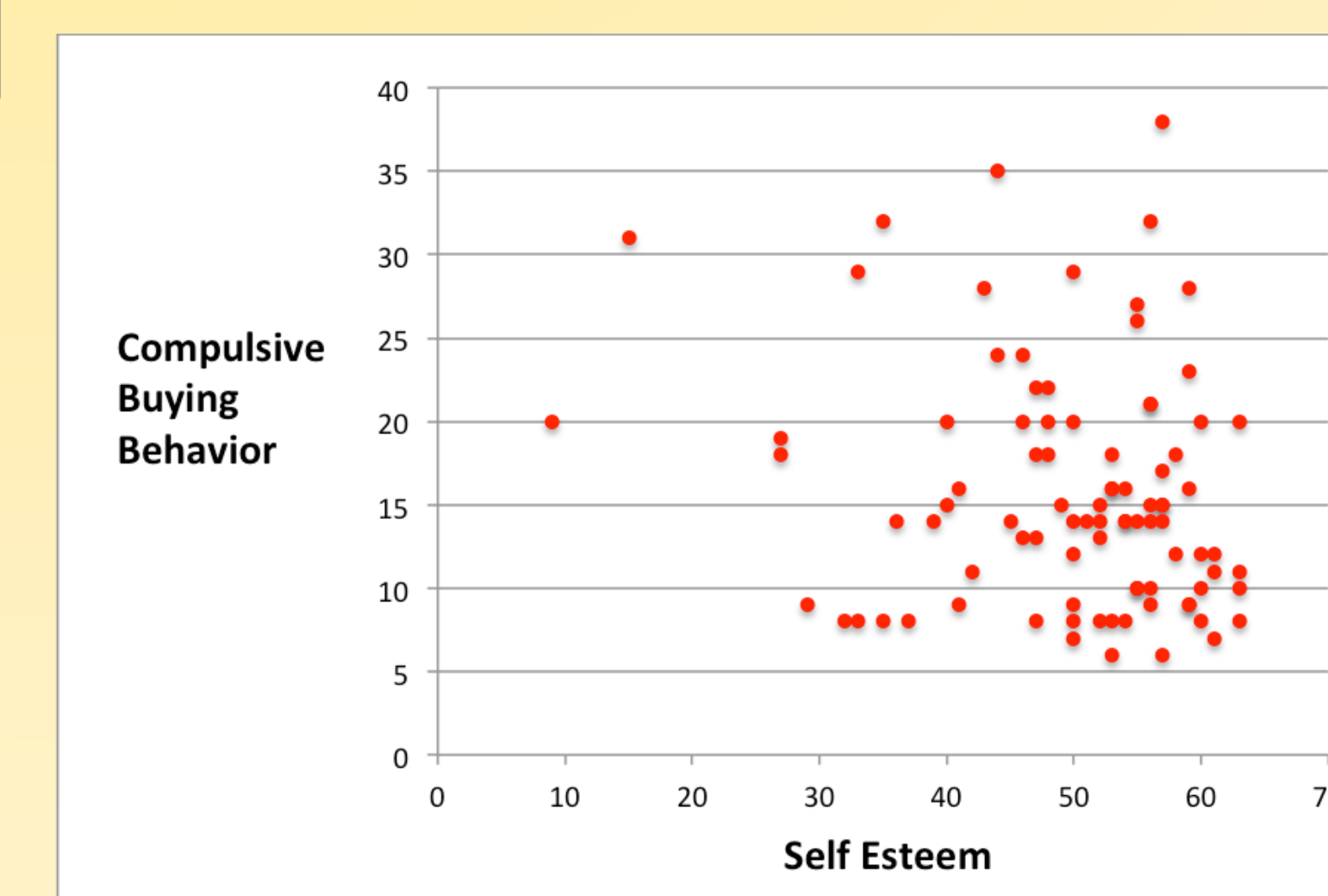
$$r = - 0.19 \quad p = 7\%$$



Hypothesis #2 was not supported.

Results suggest a possible weak linear relationship between general anxiety traits and compulsive buying type behaviors, as predicted.

$$r = + 0.14 \quad p = 17\%$$



Additional Evaluations

- Comparison of male and female groups on CB scale using two-tail t-test showed no significant gender difference in compulsive-buying-type behaviors.

t-Test:

Two Sample Assuming Equal Variances

	Male	Female
Mean	14.8	16.0
Std Dev	3.8	4.0
P(T<=t) two-tail	58%	

Conclusions

- Compulsive Buying was significantly more common among participants who were depressed than those with anxiety.
- Self-esteem is negatively related to Compulsive Buying behaviors, but was too weak to be statistically significant.
- Presence of all three factors is not required to increase the inclination of individuals to Compulsive Buying.
- Compulsive Buying is not higher in women than in men.
- People can behave in ways consistent with compulsive buying from time-to-time without meeting the diagnosis for a mental illness.
- Future studies might benefit from examining the role(s) of:
 - income levels
 - materialism
 - online shopping
 - stress