

# Retail Therapy in the Pandemic: How Loneliness, Materialism, Escapism and Impulsive Consumption Shape Shopping Habits

**Monica Mendini**

University of Applied Sciences and Arts of Southern Switzerland

**Pia Furchheim**

ZHAW School of Management and Law

Cite as:

Mendini Monica, Furchheim Pia (2024), Retail Therapy in the Pandemic: How Loneliness, Materialism, Escapism and Impulsive Consumption Shape Shopping Habits. *Proceedings of the European Marketing Academy*, 53rd, (119031)

Paper from the 53rd Annual EMAC Conference, Bucharest, Romania, May 28-31, 2024



# Retail Therapy in the Pandemic: How Loneliness, Materialism, Escapism and Impulsive Consumption Shape Shopping Habits

## **Abstract**

The COVID-19 pandemic has created numerous challenges for individuals and organizations around the world due to social distancing measures. This study investigates the impact of loneliness caused by social distancing on shopping escapism, impulsive consumption, and the mediating role of materialism. Using data collected during the 2020 COVID-lockdown period in the UK, the results of a structural equation model analysis show that loneliness increases materialism, improving shopping escapism and impulsive consumption behavior. In addition to materialism, gender has a positive effect on shopping escapism.

**Subject Areas:** *Attitude, Consumer Behaviour, Electronic Commerce and Internet Marketing, Intention-Behavior Link, Retailing*

**Track:** Consumer Behaviour