

**THE EFFECTS OF ATTITUDES TOWARDS SOCIAL MEDIA
CONTENT AND SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT ON THE
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MATERIALISM AND NEGATIVE
CONSUMPTION BEHAVIOURS**



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ABSTRACT

The ubiquity of Internet, mobile devices, and online social media platforms has undeniably altered consumer lifestyles and business conduct globally. The objective of this study is to test the direct impact of materialism over three negative consumption behaviours within the social media context and secondly understand the relationships between materialism and three negative consumption behaviours—compulsive, conspicuous and impulse buying—by analyzing the mediating effects of both attitudes towards social media content and social media intensity. This deductive quantitative study uses a convenience sample of 400 Thai social media users following the 3 most well-known e-commerce platforms social media pages. The results are analyzed using structural equation modelling and double mediation by using estimands. The study applies the theory of planned behaviour to explain the mediation role of attitudes towards social media content and then uses double jeopardy law to explain how social media intensity may mediate materialism and three negative consumption behaviours. The study found that materialism has a direct significant positive impact on each of the three-negative consumption behaviours. Social media intensity mediates the relationship between materialism the three-negative consumption behaviours better and attitudes alone were often not significant in predicting negative consumption behaviours. One novel finding of this study was that attitudes were a predictor of social media intensity which then translated into negative consumption behaviours. In other words, if social media users enjoy what they are seeing, they are more likely to engage with the content by sharing or commenting on the post. If a post has high engagement from many users, this eventually translates into more negative consumption behaviours. The findings rely on respondents' self-reported cross-sectional data, rather than longitudinal data and this may not reflect changing situations, also all data were collected from Thai users only which limits the generalisability of the findings. From the study emerges future research directions that can be further explored such as the role of users' trust towards ads and brand generated content or whether the double jeopardy law can be applied to social media.

KEY WORDS: Negative Consumption Behaviots / Social Media / Social Media Marketing

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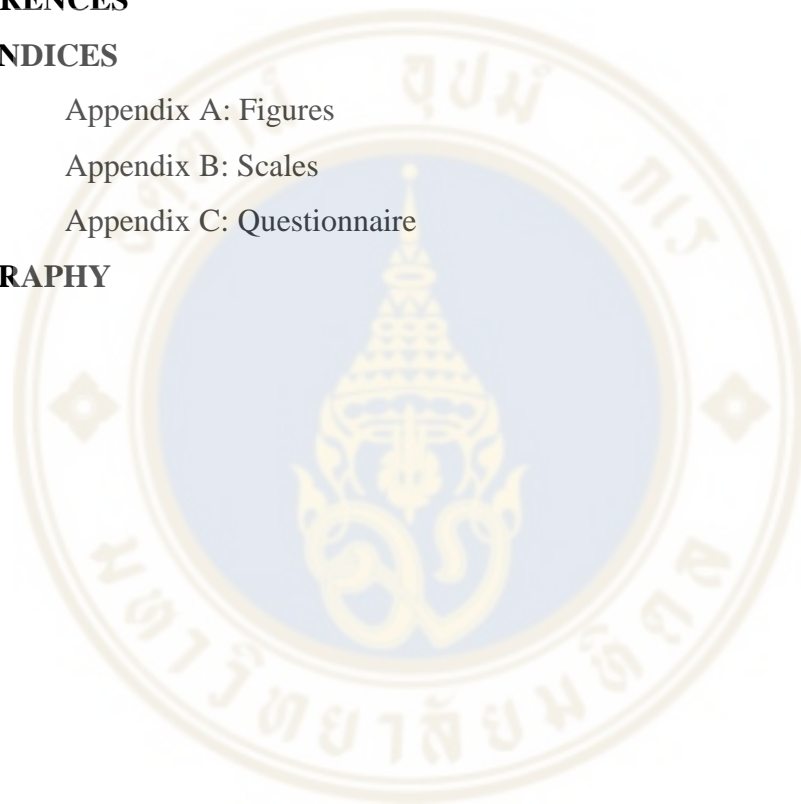
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The study focuses on negative consumption behaviours and how these may result from materialism which is interpreted as a personality trait. The relationship between materialism and negative consumption behaviours is explained by quantitatively analyzing the mediation role of users' attitudes towards social media content and users' engagement with social media platforms. The rationale for carrying out the study is that, as argued by Thaichon et al. (2020), we are now entering into stage 4 of online relationship marketing, where the communication between brands and users is no longer mostly one-way, but interactive. This new technology changes the nature of how advertising and interactions works and consequently it also impacts how companies need to convey the message with customers. The context of the study is e-commerce social media pages which frequently use heavily customized paid ads also known as retargeting ads which according to the literature have well known negative effects on consumption and on the mental well-being of social media users.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

This research aims to explore the relationships between attitudes towards new forms of advertising on social media platforms, social media intensity and negative consumption behaviours. In particular, the objective of the study is to explore the impacts of paid ads in the form of either brand - or user-generated content and social media engagement behaviours on negative consumption patterns. The negative consumption behaviours that will be examined in the study are compulsive, impulse, conspicuous buying behaviour, which are partly driven by the role of materialism.

Materialism has been defined as a value system in which having and owning material commodities is valued excessively (Belk, 1984; Larsen et al. 1999). When the purchase and possession of material goods are at the center of a person's life, they reveal

material values; believing that materialism defines success and that it is necessary for the pursuit of subjective wellbeing (Richins and Dawson, 1992). It is most commonly found as a societal value in developed western countries such as the United States (Burroughs and Rindfleisch, 2002) and emerging markets like China (Awanis et al., 2017), where it has been related to the adoption of western consumer lifestyles (Podoshen et al., 2010). Materialism will be treated in this study as an innate psychological trait, according to well established study (Belk, 1984).

Excessive accumulation of objects is a clear sign of a materialistic personality trait. Such tendencies have negative environmental consequences (Larsen et al., 1999), which have been related to serious environmental and societal issues including peak oil and global poverty (Alexander & Ussher, 2012). Materialism enhances excessive purchases of goods increasing the likelihood that materialistic persons will devote a disproportionate percentage of their financial resources to acquisition of products (Goldsmith et al., 2011), and they will be more prone to indulge in impulse shopping (Podoshen and Andrzejewski, 2012). Furthermore, persons with high material values are more prone to participate in conspicuous spending and purchase luxury goods on a regular basis in order to show their status (Podoshen & Andrzejewski, 2012; Shrum et al., 2013). Conspicuous expenditure is frequently done to gain prestige or status (Podoshen and Andrzejewski, 2012) and materialistic persons in collectivist societies, such as Thailand, frequently consume conspicuously to obtain acceptance and demonstrate in-group affiliation (Kastanakis & Balabanis, 2014). Studies of luxury and status consumption in collectivist societies, such as East Asia, have discovered a proclivity to consume luxury brands for signaling, which has been linked to conformity (Park et al., 2008), self-monitoring (Bian & Forsythe, 2012), and social worth (Lee, Hosanagar, & Nair, 2018). Despite these findings, data suggests that in collectivist societies with more developed consumer awareness, uniqueness might be a driver of conspicuous purchasing (Zhan & He, 2012), which may be especially relevant as developing markets mature. These varied results call for more research into what appear to be paradoxical incentives for luxury consumption in emerging nations, as well as its relationship to materialism. One explanation could be found in the personality qualities that influence conspicuous and impulse consumption, which has been linked to views toward luxury brands. Researchers have discovered that the cultural component of

horizontal (equality across groups) and vertical (hierarchy) orientations, which connect more to competition vs cooperation than individualism and collectivism, may better influence materialistic impulses (Yim et al., 2014).

Social media has been linked to materialism (Debreceeni & Hofmeister-Toth, 2018). Concerns about the impact of social media brand and user generated content on sensitive audience's psychological well-being have been steadily growing (Gritters, 2019). This may be partly due to the prevalence of social comparison on social media, which can lead to individuals' enhanced materialistic views (Gritters, 2019). According to recent research, social comparison with social media celebrities is positively related to increased adolescent materialism, which predicts compulsive shopping (Islam et al., 2018). Social media use moderates the connection between social comparison and materialism during this process, with more social media usage leading to increased materialism (Islam et al., 2018). de Rezende Pinto, Mota, Leite, and Alves (2017) researched Brazilian teenagers (ages 11–18) and found that celebrity attraction, attitudes toward TV commercials, parental, peer, and friend influences, as well as other sociodemographic characteristics, all influence users' materialistic perspectives.

Among the effects of materialism and overly negative consumption behaviours there could be pollution of the air, water and soil resulting from the high exploitation of natural resources and the consequent depletion of the natural environment due to the high production of goods (Farazmand, 2018; Štreimikienė, 2014). Impacts on the society include low satisfactory conditions for the working population forced to work in unhealthy locations and to work longer hours; the lack of principles that guarantee public safety and the protection of nature; the lack of ensuring a fair income while maintaining as much employment as possible; and issues with employees and consumers healthcare (Allard, Takman, Uddin, & Ahmed, 2018). Even financially, these behaviours can have harmful effects, such as low quality and unsatisfactory production performance; direct and indirect effects in the operations phase of energy, water and sewage installations; effects induced due to additional household costs (budget effects) and enterprises (cost effects); decreases in revenues and energy consumption in production; and increasing demand for resources due to the lack of pro-ecological investment (Liu, 2014).

Regarding the consequence on the individuals of the three negative consumption behaviours, debt is among the most impactful. The increasing availability of consumer credit is linked to consumerism and debt. In today's world, having money on hand at the time of purchase is no longer required to receive desired goods or services. Having the possibility to purchase goods and services with credit, people can buy things immediately and pay for them later. People with high degrees of materialism may be more inclined to take on debt in order to meet their strong purchasing desires (Richins & Rudmin 1994), and hence are more likely to have a positive attitude about debt than non-materialistic people. Ponchio and Aranha (2008) discovered that levels of materialism among poor people in Sao Paulo, Brazil, predicted whether or not they had instalment plan booklets, which are the most common form of consumer credit in that area. They employed a materialism scale that was tailored to the demographics of the people they were studying. The findings emphasize an important point: materialistic people were willing to sign costly credit agreements in order to live the material good life reflected in the lives of others who were wealthier.

When related to negative consumption habits, materialism has been considered a system of values harmful to families, especially for what concern family finances (e.g., Dean et al. 2007; Li et al. 2015; Nickerson et al. 2003). Dean et al. (2007) discovered, for example, that high levels of materialism increased the frequency with which perceived financial problems to be an issue. These increases were associated with lower levels of marital satisfaction for both husbands and wives. Carroll et al. (2011) discovered that materialism had a negative impact on marriage quality as couples have a poor relationship with marital quality. Carroll et al. (2011) further found that materialism had a negative association with marital quality, even when spouses were unified in their materialistic values. Specifically, they found that marriages in which both spouses reported low materialism were better off on several features of marital quality, including conflict resolution, problem areas, satisfaction, and stability, when compared to couples where one or both spouses reported high materialism.

Many teenagers associate material prosperity with what it means to live a "good" life. "While several sorts of goal blockage can contribute to delinquency," Agnew (2001) noted, "failure to accomplish monetary... goals is of particular relevance" (p. 325). This problem is exacerbated for people who confront various impediments to

achieving economic goals, such that anything that falls short of their inflated expectations is internalized as personal failure, justifying illicit means of achieving goals. As a result, people who have been involved in criminal behaviours and return their communities with unrealistic or unattainable aspirations, as well as a lack of expectation of the abilities to deal with the inevitable impediments to success, have a higher risk of reoffending (Agnew, 2001).

The majority of the literature in this field focuses on one of the above-mentioned behaviours individually. Additionally, most of the studies on negative consumption and social media tend to concentrate on the amount of time spent by users browsing social networking sites, while neglecting the role of the users' attitudes towards advertising and their engagement when they are using social networking platforms. This research examines the roles of these attitudes and social media intensity in mediating the impact of materialism on the negative consumption behaviours previously identified.

Past research has dealt more with the factors that enhance purchase intention on social media, specifically on how to create value and revenues for companies. However, very few studies have focused on the negative behaviours that social media users may develop as a consequence of more targeted ads (Aragoncillo & Orus, 2018; Czarnecka & Schivinski, 2019). Recent research on Facebook ads group (Chen, Su, & Widjaja, 2016) has shown that the information quality of the advertisements, the consumer's degree of impulsiveness in his personality, and the number of "likes" an ad receives are all factors that can stimulate consumers' urge to buy impulsively. This research will then consider the role played by materialism in trying to explain the reason why attitudes towards social media advertising (both paid and unpaid) and social media engagement have an impact on negative consumption habits in a virtual environment. According to the research of Thourmrunroje (2018), the impact on consumer spending behaviour of materialism and online media attitudes towards both paid and user-generated content is either limited or scattered.

Social media engagement behaviour is another important factor that needs further investigation in the academic world. In particular, how individuals participate in social media and how this participation influences their actions as customers merit further investigation. While this topic has begun to generate the interest of researchers

in recent years, the few studies that have been conducted have mostly been limited to examining the trends of social media usage and their influence on online transactions. Very little less focus has been placed on investigating their effects on the “downside” of consumer behaviour as reflected by the characteristics of compulsive, impulse and conspicuous consumption (Gupta & Vohra, 2019).

Although customers may not be consciously aware of it, their purchasing behaviour is highly impacted by what they see on social media (Nash, 2019). Even though customers are aware that what they see on their newsfeed is dominated by advertising, they show no hesitation in clicking on and exploring what they see (Lulandala, 2020). For example, in their longitudinal study of over 1,000 social media users between the ages of 18-55 in 2019, Blue Fountain Media found that purchase intention was still influenced by deals advertised daily on social media. Seventy percent of users liked clicking on such deals and even made purchases through the platforms (Digital, 2020). According to Wearesocial, a social media marketing agency, Facebook and Instagram are the platforms with the highest percentages of advertisements being clicked on, with 38% and 37% respectively of the advertorial content on these two platforms generating clicks. Seventy percent of social media users say they are more likely to click on advertising in their newsfeed, with 65% claiming that if social media ads do not match their interests, they may not notice them (Survey, 2019).

One of the main reasons why social media advertising is so popular is the desire to purchase discounted products. However, 69% of users want to visit a business website before purchasing a product advertised on a social media page (Chu, Kamal, & Kim, 2013). For these reasons, the author has established the following research questions (Proposition 4 to 12 in Table 1.1) to determine whether attitudes towards social media ads and user-generated content affect the impulse, conspicuous and compulsive buying behaviour of social media users.

These issues are investigated in the context of Thailand, which is a good setting for the research due to the intensive usage of social media in the country. The results of the “Digital Life” survey by TNS, a leading global market research firm, showed that many of the world's most engaged and frequent social media users in South East Asia are from Thailand (Survey, 2019). With an average of 51 million active users from a population of 69 million people, Thailand is the country with the highest number

of users in relation to its population. According to Changchit, Cutshall, Lonkani, Pholwan, and Pongwiritthon (2019), Thais' social media usage between 2015 and 2018 increased from 18 hours to 32 hours per week, while their online spending almost doubled during this period.

1.2 Scope of the Research: Country and Social Context

According to a Bluefountain report (Survey, 2019), Facebook is still the most widespread social media platform worldwide. Trends in user numbers suggest that the platform has already passed the historic 2.5 billion monthly active users mark, with these numbers continuing to grow steadily across most countries throughout 2019. Meanwhile, a survey by Hootsuite (Digital, 2020) revealed that the number of people who can be reached by ads on Instagram is equal to 928 million worldwide. The surge in popularity of these two platforms together with the great variety of targeting tools they have available has, therefore, attracted many marketers. More recently, scholars have also begun to take an interest in order to understand how much social media usage can affect consumer behaviour and identify which values have an impact on negative consumption behaviours.

In Thailand, social media has become an integral part of Thai people's lives over the past decade (Leerapong, 2013). Hootsuite (Digital, 2020) reported that there were 55 million internet users in Thailand in January 2021, while the number of social media users in the country increased by 2.3 million (+4.7%) between April 2020 and January 2021. According to Digital Report 2021, both the number of Internet connections (+7.4%) and active social media users (+5.8%) increased in 2021 compared to the previous year. Digital Report 2021 also revealed that 78% of the total Thai population are active social media users, making Thailand one of the countries with the highest social media engagement rates among its population. Indeed, Thailand ranks fourth globally for social networking engagement, after only Argentina, Brazil and Russia (Lee, Hosanagar, & Nair, 2018).

On average throughout 2020, Thai people spent 8 hours and 44 minutes per day on the internet and 2 hours and 48 minutes per day using social media. This implies serious consequences for heavy users. For instance, the Thai Health Organization

pointed out in a 2020 study that Thai children spent an average of more than 35 hours a week on smartphones or connected to the internet through other devices. The study concluded that children who spend most of their time on smartphones and computers are at risk of developing online purchase addiction, gaming addiction and even violent behaviour.

According to a study from the Thailand Ministry of Electronic Transaction Development Agency (ETDA), 93.8% out of the 23,907 people they surveyed use social media (Thoumrunroje, 2019). Facebook and Instagram are among the top five most used platforms in terms of active monthly users in Thailand. Facebook has a total of 51 million users in Thailand, of whom 49% are males and 51% are females, while Instagram has a total of 16 million users, of whom 38.3% are males and 61.7% are females. Therefore, the social networking platforms that will be taken into account in this study are Facebook and Instagram, which offer avenues for online marketers and create long-term customer relationships in a targeted and engaging manner (Lee et al., 2018).

In Thailand, a large share of all purchases are made online. During 2020, the number of digitally-made or influenced purchases accounted for more than 40% of all products and services sold. Although restrictive measures implemented in response to the Covid-19 pandemic contributed significantly to this high figure, an additional reason is that throughout 2020 a total of 193.2 million USD were spent in Thailand on social media ads with a growth of 8% forecast for 2021. As the number of internet users increases and with tech companies developing multiple ways to integrate the online world into shopping, online retail is expected to grow exponentially in the future years in Thailand. According to GlobalWebIndex, 55% of social media users in Thailand use social media to research products and 71% are more likely to purchase products and services based on social media referrals.

1.3 Thailand and Consumption

Up to 2019, the relevant literature stressed that Thailand's rising incomes were generating purchase optimism within the population and an increase in consumer demand for a broad range of products. Bharadwaj, Chaudhary, Kittikachorn, and

Rastogi (2017) observed that, with the rise in revenues, consumers were spending more on experiences, such as eating out and traveling, especially wealthier individuals. Thailand's online luxury market has also been growing, with the key selling factors being quality and availability of service. Consumers are willing to pay more for their favorite brands, and even when presented with better-priced alternatives, they rarely switch brands (Survey, 2019). In Southeast Asia, Thai consumers are the most brand-conscious and brand-loyal (Survey, 2019). They usually spend more than other Southeast Asian countries, which is reflected in their higher debt levels. Indeed, Thailand is now seeing the highest level of household debt in the past 12 years, and this situation has been exacerbated by the pandemic which started to affect consumer habits in 2020 (Chotewattanakul, Sharpe, & Chand, 2019). Moreover, instead of saving their money, which is typically seen in other Southeast Asian countries, Thai consumers tend to indulge and make lots of impulse purchases (Survey, 2019).

E-commerce is growing rapidly in Thailand, especially through informal commerce venues such as makeshift shops that sell through social media platforms. In 2020, 40% of purchases were digitally influenced, and half of all purchases made in 2019 were made online (Digital, 2021). However, according to Boonchoo and Thoumrungroje (2017), Thai customers tend to shop more conspicuously when shopping in person rather than online. When it comes to luxury purchases, they believe it is difficult to make any buying decisions without seeing the product in person. Trustworthiness is another issue that also needs to be addressed. Although advertising is effective, word-of-mouth recommendations have a significant effect on the credibility of a brand and impact positively on impulse buying decisions, which in turn boost sales (Pakapatpornpob, Vongurai, & Inthawadee, 2017).

Members of the younger generations may be more likely to engage in healthy lifestyles; therefore, they spend impulsively online on nutritious food choices and supplements. Younger cohorts are also very appearance conscious (Cuny & Opaswongkarn, 2017). This is also heavily influenced by social media, and as a consequence, Thais make compulsive purchases of gym memberships, cosmetic treatments, and plastic surgery.

According to Hofstede's analysis of Thai culture, Thailand has a high level of collectivism. This is evident in the long-term commitment to being a member of a

“group”, whether that is a family, an extended family, or extended relationships. Loyalty in a collectivist culture is paramount to the extent that it overrides most other societal rules and regulations. The society fosters strong relationships where everyone takes responsibility for the fellow members of their group (Hofstede, 1984). Thailand is a collectivist country, where “people from birth onwards are integrated into strong, cohesive in-groups, which throughout people’s lifetimes continue to protect them in exchange for unquestioning loyalty” (Hofstede, 2001). The conformity, harmony, and legitimacy gained through group affiliation is of the utmost importance (Kashima et al., 1995); therefore, materialism is often induced by these external forces.

Within individualistic cultures, the majority of people live or tend to live a self-supporting lifestyle, while in collectivistic cultures, people tend to depend on others. Consequently, their purchasing habits, their decisions, and even the products that they typically buy are significantly different (De Mooij & Hofstede, 2010). De Mooij and Hofstede (2010) showed that in collectivistic cultures, people tend to rely on the opinions of many other in-group members when making the same decisions, which can also be gained through social media platforms. In this context the role of influencers and user-generated content is very relevant to enhance negative consumption behaviours. Collectivism also influences the speed of decision making and the consumers’ impulsiveness. In collectivistic cultures, the majority of people avoid acting impulsively because behavioural and emotional control are highly valued, whereas impulsivity and lack of control is frowned upon (Kacen & Lee, 2002). Therefore, when people belonging to a collectivist culture purchase online, they are more eager to spend impulsively due to the absence of external judgements from other members of their group.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The main contribution of this study lies in the fact that through its quantitative analysis, it will be able to determine whether attitudes towards advertising or users’ engagement, also known as social media intensity, with e-commerce pages on social media platforms can mediate the widely-studied relationship between materialism and negative consumption behaviours. Understanding this may open new avenues of intervention for policymakers and practitioners that will better enable to regulate social

media environments and protect from developing serious mental pathologies easily manipulated cohorts of users, such as children.

The reasons for focusing on negative consumption behaviours is that they not only impacts users' lives in the short term through excessive usage of credit cards leading to out-of-control debts, but they can also lead to the development of more serious pathologies such as depression, identity fragmentation, anxiety and fear of missing out (Roberts & David, 2020). The Thailand National Mental Health Survey (TNMHS) in 2019 estimated that around 1.5 million Thai individuals were suffering from mental illnesses, indicating that 3 out of every 100 Thais had experienced depression or other mental pathologies. Depression in Thailand proved to be the number one cause of years of life lost due to disability in 2018 (Katchapakirin, Wongpatikaseree, Yomaboot, & Kaewpitakkun, 2018).

Social media advertising is increasingly becoming a topic of scholar interest. In Thailand, however, there is a lack of knowledge about which of the factors of advertising on social media impact users' behaviours and how these newer and more innovative promotional tools impact individuals' financial lifestyles, potentially leading to harmful consumption behaviours (Tajudeen, Jaafar, & Ainin, 2018). To address this shortfall, researchers could analyze how audiences react to ads in relation to addictive and unsustainable behaviours. Most of the extant literature in this area is focused only on analyzing the impact on a single unsustainable behaviour (Lee, Bahl, Black, Duber-Smith, & Vowles, 2016) in relation to one company or a single product without making comparisons. Furthermore research on social media is currently not paying much attention to the impacts of attitudes towards ads on users' cognitions, effects, and behaviours (Ziyadin, Doszhan, Borodin, Omarova, & Ilyas, 2020). Very few studies have focused on the impact of advertising and users' reactions to it (Um, 2019). Similarly, there is little research on attitudes towards branded and unbranded advertising on social media as a potential mediator of the relationship between materialism and negative consumption behaviours.

Another field which is lacking in research is the study of the "side effects" or unintended harmful behaviours that users of social media may develop as a consequence of their usage. The research by Pashkevich, Dorai-Raj, Kellar, and Zigmond (2012) looked at the detrimental effects of ads on the happiness of users on

the internet. Similarly, an article by Villiard and Moreno (2012) addressed the problem of how social media ads can impact users negatively, particularly vulnerable groups of users. Compared with adults or teenage consumers, younger cohorts of social media users have a lower level of perception of ads (Pollay et al., 1996). Past research has shown that children users do not generally recognize the persuasive purpose of ads (Correa et al., 2019).

The results of studies in this field are often relevant only to specific social media platforms or individual samples and apply only to particular circumstances because they are often not incorporated into a more general theoretical context. It is therefore critical to develop research questions on a more abstract level, and deduce hypotheses using theoretical back up. Lastly, there is an over-reliance on student samples when carrying out research on social media usage. Although students make up a large proportion of social media users (Habes, Alghizzawi, Khalaf, Salloum, & Ghani, 2018), they are not representative of all social media users. For instance, previous research conducted by iStrategy Lab in 2017 (Hetteche, Tupper, & Rooney, 2017) was able to demonstrate that attitudes towards ads may vary according to age and education.

1.5 Research Questions

The main objective of this research is to answer the following questions: Is materialism enhancing the three unsustainable behaviours and is this relationship mediated by the roles of attitudes towards social media advertising, attitudes towards social media brand-generated content and attitudes towards social media user-generated content? A second purpose of this study is to understand whether social media intensity, which is the level of engagement users have while using social media in terms of behaviours, has an impact on unsustainable behaviours. The results of this second question will then be compared with the role of attitudes.

To fill the gap highlighted within the literature, this study has elaborated the following research objectives that, for ease of reference, have been translated into propositions which can be viewed in Table 1.1 and Figure 1.1.

1.6 Research Objectives

The main purpose of the study is to understand whether materialism affects negative consumption behaviours, and whether this relation is better mediated by the role of attitudes towards social media advertising or by social media users' intensity of behaviours.

The first research objective is to investigate the mediating effects of attitudes towards social media advertising, attitudes towards social media brand-generated content, and attitudes towards social media user-generated content in the relationships between materialism and three negative consumption behaviours (impulse, conspicuous and compulsive buying behaviour).

The second research objective is to check the direct impact of attitudes towards social media advertising, attitudes towards social media brand-generated content, and attitudes towards social media user-generated content on three negative consumption behaviours (impulse, conspicuous and compulsive buying behaviour).

The third research objective is to analyze the direct impact of materialism on attitudes towards social media advertising, attitudes towards social media brand-generated content and attitudes towards social media user-generated content.

The fourth research objective is to assess the direct impact of materialism on the three negative consumption behaviours considered in this study (impulse, conspicuous and compulsive buying behaviours).

The fifth research objective is to determine the impact of materialism on social media intensity behaviours and then to observe the impact that the latter has on negative consumption behaviours. The two mediators will then be compared in order to identify whether attitudes towards social media content are a better predictor of engaging in negative consumption or whether social media intensity behaviours are a more reliable predictor.

For instance, if attitudes towards social media ads are found to explain the relationship between materialism and impulse, conspicuous and compulsive buying behaviours, then policymakers may develop measures to tackle the elements which makes advertisements on social media more attractive. This may include, for example, regulating unrealistic videos or pictures, misleading texts, limitation on time limits, "must-have" promotions and multi-product discounts. On the other hand, if users'

engagement on social media platforms is found to lead to enhanced harmful consumption behaviours, the frequency of ads displayed to certain cohorts of users may be restricted or reduced, and sellers may be forced to verify buyers' credentials and their authorization before the purchase is made.

However potential elements contributing to more positive attitudes towards social media advertising or social media intensity may be explored in future qualitative studies if either of the two mediators are found to be significantly mediating the relationship.

1.7 Propositions and Conceptual Framework

Table 1.1 Propositions

Propositions 1	Materialism enhances positive attitudes towards social media advertising	Mishra & Mishra, 2011
Propositions 2	Materialism enhances positive attitudes towards social media brand generated content	Sharif & Khanekharab, 2017
Propositions 3	Materialism enhances positive attitudes towards social media user generated content	Thoumrungroje, 2018
Propositions 4	Positive attitudes towards sponsored ads, lead to higher compulsive buying behaviours.	Islam, Sheikh, Hameed, Khan, & Azam, 2018)
Propositions 5	Positive attitudes towards sponsored ads lead to higher conspicuous buying behaviours.	Müller, Mitchell, Swart, Crosby, & Berg, 2010
Propositions 6	Positive attitudes towards sponsored ads lead to higher impulse buying behaviours.	Podoshen & Andrzejewski, 2012
Propositions 7	Positive attitudes towards branded content lead to higher levels of compulsive buying behaviours.	Diwanji, 2017

Table 1.1 Propositions (cont.)

Propositions 8	Positive attitudes towards branded content lead to higher levels of conspicuous buying behaviours.	Jin & Ryu, 2020
Propositions 9	Positive attitudes towards branded content lead to higher levels of impulse buying behaviours.	Sharda & Bhat, 2018
Propositions 10	Positive attitudes towards user content lead to higher levels of compulsive buying behaviours.	Diwanji, 2017
Propositions 11	Positive attitudes towards user content lead to higher levels of conspicuous buying behaviours.	Schivinski & Dabrowski, 2016
Propositions 12	Positive attitudes towards user content lead to higher levels of impulse buying behaviours.	Schivinski & Dabrowski, 2016
Propositions 13	Materialism directly enhances compulsive buying behaviour.	Tarka, 2020
Propositions 14	Materialism directly enhances conspicuous buying behaviour.	Zakaria, Wan-Ismael, & Abdul-Talib, 2020
Propositions 15	Materialism directly enhances impulse buying behaviour.	Sen & Nayak, 2019
Propositions 16	Materialism enhances social media intensity	Um, 2019
Propositions 17	High usage intensity of social media leads to higher compulsive buying behaviour	Leong, Jaafar, & Ainin, 2018
Propositions 18	High usage intensity of social media leads to higher conspicuous buying behaviour.	Zafar, Qiu, Li, Wang, & Shahzad, 2019
Propositions 19	High usage intensity of social media leads to higher impulse buying behaviour	Zafar, Qiu, Li, Wang, & Shahzad, 2019

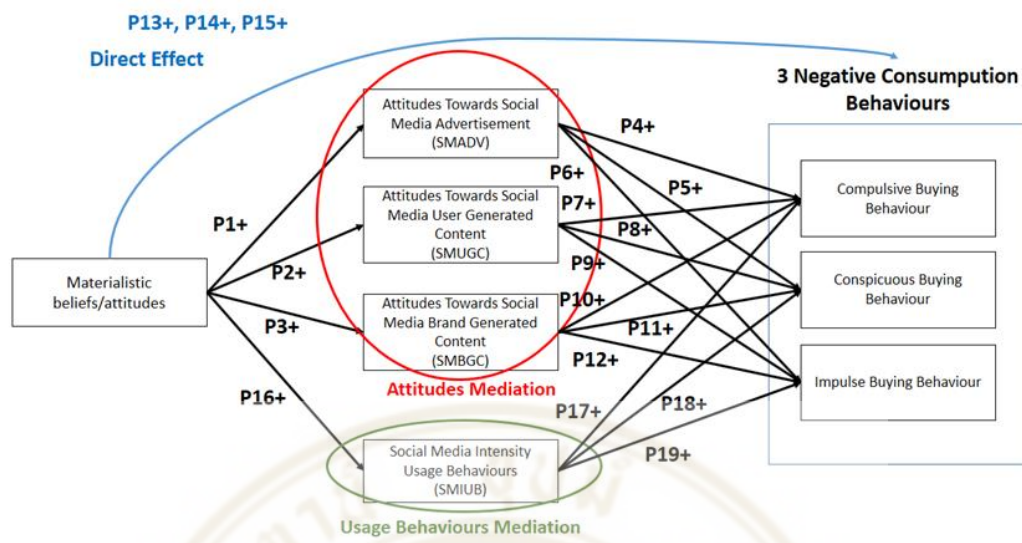


Figure 1.1 Conceptual framework

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This review of literature employs two methods. In the first section, a bibliometric review process is used to provide an empirical analysis of the relevant literature. Then an integrative review is performed to examine conceptualizations of the key variables.

2.1 Bibliometric Literature Review

This study begins with a bibliometric review as the author has observed that the extant studies on materialism and harmful behaviours in online media are either limited in number or scattered in nature (Thoumrunroje, 2018). In order to identify the current literature gaps in the field of social media, materialism, and negative consumption behaviours, the author will carry out a bibliometric literature review that will involve assessing the most prolific authors in the field, the literature's geographic distribution, the intellectual structure of the field, the main schools of thought, and the most popular topics explored. In this review, the author will synthesize the main trends identified in social media, materialism and consumer behaviour literature.

2.2 Method

2.2.1 Identification of Documents

This review was guided by the PRISMA approach (Preferred Reporting Items for systematic Reviews and Meta-Analysis) (Moher, Liberati, Tetzlaff, Altman, & Group, 2010). The first step was to identify the most relevant journal articles, conference papers and books written on social media and materialism. To achieve this, the author inserted the keywords “social media” and “materialism” in the Scopus

Journal directory. From this search, only 56 articles were identified, which highlights the fact that this particular field has only been of recent interest to scholars. The author therefore decided to add all the articles where social media were linked to “consumer behaviour”, which could include the key words “compulsive”, “impulse” or “conspicuous”. This extended search produced a total of 864 documents which allowed the author to carry out a more comprehensive bibliometric research.

As the author proceeded with the screening process with the objective of excluding ineligible documents, documents from the fields of engineering, medicine and mathematics were removed as those articles were not relevant to the present research. This narrowed the list down to a total of 660 documents. The next step was to limit the articles only to journal articles, conference papers, reviews and books and only to ones published in English. Through this process, an additional 34 documents were excluded. The relevance of the remaining articles were then checked by reading the titles, abstracts and keywords. Documents were excluded if social media was only mentioned as background or very generally. Using this approach, an additional 15 documents were excluded leaving the final number of documents at 593.

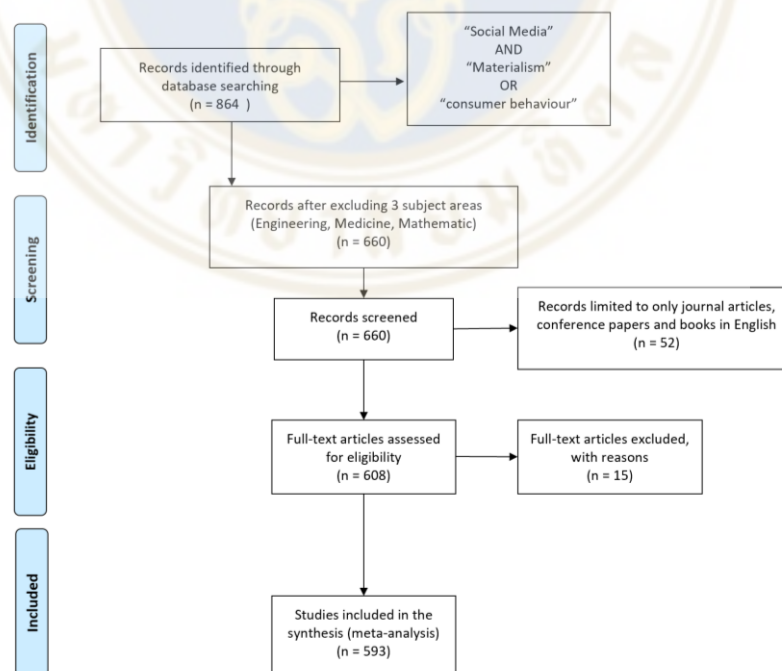


Figure 2.1 PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) chart showing the search procedures used in the review

2.2.2 Data Analysis

After 593 SCOPUS articles were identified, the bibliographic data related to these documents were imported into an Excel file where the authors' names, their affiliations, document titles, keywords, abstracts, and citation figures were analyzed. The author then uploaded the file into VOSviewer in order to commence the bibliometric review process. Descriptive statistics were created to define the whole body of knowledge about social media in relation to materialism and consumer behaviour.

VOSviewer was then used to analyze citations, co-citations and keyword co-occurrences. Citation analysis is applied to measure the influence of documents, authors and journals. According to Zupic and Čater (2015), heavily cited articles are considered the most influential. For this reason, the author also used co-citation analysis to identify similarities between authors, journals and documents. Co-citation is generally defined as the frequency at which two units are cited together within the reference list of third articles (Small, 1973). Lastly, keyword analysis, or co-word analysis as it is also known, is an investigation technique which helps establish relations by counting the words that co-occur more frequently within certain documents. By using this type of analysis, it was possible to build and understand the cognitive structure of the field (Börner, Chen, & Boyack, 2003).

After performing the Scopus-based investigation on the current literature regarding social media, materialism and consumer behaviour, a knowledge base was created consisting of 593 documents, which were comprised of 425 journal articles, 118 conference papers, 27 articles reviews, 12 books and 11 conference reviews.

2.3 Findings of the Bibliometric Analyses

2.3.1 Geographical Distribution of the Literature

The geographical distribution trends of academic publications on social media, materialism and consumer behaviour as highlighted in Figure 2.2 show that the most productive countries are USA (162), UK (68) and China (41), with the 271 articles produced in these three settings equal to 45% of the entire scholar production taken into account in this bibliometric analysis. Unsurprisingly, Anglo-American scholar

production on social media, materialism and consumer behaviour leads the way in this field, while China has been slowly evolving with the growth of the Internet and social media in the country. According to a survey conducted in early 2019, almost seven out of ten adults (69 per cent) in the USA use Facebook. This figure had remained unchanged since April 2016, but was up from 54 per cent in August 2012.

It is also interesting to observe that studies involving materialism and social media and dealing with the “dark side of consumption” are now attracting many researchers in Asian countries, in particular China. For many Chinese people, the use of social media is regarded as a way to enhance impulse shopping behaviours in individuals (Zhang & Lin, 2015). China’s 731 million Internet users in 2016 represented a 42.99 million rise from 2015 (Creemers, 2017). The increased Internet access in China reflects the growing number of devices available in the country. The cell phone is the main means of connecting to the Internet among Chinese people. By the end of 2016, the number of mobile Internet users in China stood at 695 million (Xue & Yu, 2017). The increasing mobile connectivity in China is giving the country’s people more chances to use social media. China had 730 million active social media users in 2016 (Liu, 2017).

As can be observed from the map in Figure 2.2, other Asian countries apart from China with a significant number of academic publications on social media in relation to materialism and consumer behaviour include: India with 41 articles, followed by South Korea and Indonesia with 18 each. The consistent number of articles may also be due to the increasingly important role played by social media as a marketing tool in Asia (Safiullah, Pathak, Singh, & Anshul, 2017).

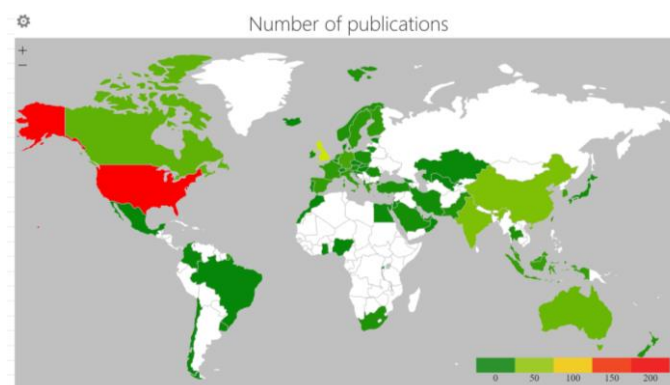


Figure 2.2 Worldwide dispersion of social media in relation to materialism and consumer behaviour literature

2.3.2 Intellectual Structure of the Literature

This part of the study illustrates the “intellectual structure” of the body of literature on social media in relation to materialism and consumer behaviour. To this end, the author carried out an author co-citation analysis (ACA), with the results displayed both in a table, which numerically expresses the co-citations per author, and in a figure that depicts the relationships between the most highly co-cited authors. The study of co-citation assumes that strongly co-cited authors carry some form of intellectual similarity (Nerur, Rasheed, & Natarajan, 2008).

Table 2.1 Authors of high impact consumer behaviour papers by co-citations

Rank	Author	School of Thought	Active Period	Co-Cites
1	Bagozzi, R.P.	Digital Marketing and Online Consumption	1992-2020	144
2	Haenlein, M.	Digital Marketing and Online Consumption	2008-2020	120
3	Law, R.	Tourism and Social Media	2004-2020	120
4	Kozinets, R.V.	Digital Marketing and Online Consumption	2002-2020	116
5	Kaplan, A.M.	Social Media and Consumer Behaviour	2008-2020	114
6	Dholakia, U.M.	Digital Marketing and Online Consumption	2002-2020	111
7	Hennig-thurau, T.	Social Media and Consumer Behaviour	2002-2020	108
8	Ajzen, I.	Social Media and Consumer Behaviour	1989-2020	103
9	Fornell, C.	Social Media and Consumer Behaviour	1996-2020	93
10	Gretzel, U.	Tourism and Social Media	2005-2020	90
11	Gefen, D.	Social Media and Consumer Behaviour	2002-2020	88
12	Hair, J.F.	Social Media and Consumer Behaviour	1998-2020	88
13	Wang, Y.	Social Media and Consumer Behaviour	2011-2020	88
15	Kim, Y.	Social Media and Consumer Behaviour	2005-2020	85
14	Walsh, G.	Social Media and Consumer Behaviour	2009-2020	82

Table 2.1 Authors of high impact consumer behaviour papers by co-citations (cont.)

Rank	Author	School of Thought	Active Period	Co-Cites
16	Laroche, M.	Digital Marketing and Online Consumption	1998-2020	80
17	Kim, J.	Social Media and Consumer Behaviour	2010-2020	79
18	Brodie, R.J.	Digital Marketing and Online Consumption	1999-2020	77
19	Belk, R.W.	Social Media and Consumer Behaviour	1990-2020	76
20	Chen, Y.	Social Media and Consumer Behaviour	2001-2020	74

From Table 2.1, the predominance of Anglo-American authors is visible. The school of thought with the highest number of authors as identified in the table is social media and consumer behaviour with 12 authors who started their research in this area before the 2000s. These authors originally focused mainly on traditional marketing tools and have only recently started writing about materialism, social media and its effects on consumers' behaviours. The second school of thought is digital marketing and online consumption. Noteworthy here is the fact that all the authors in the table who belong to this school of thought published their literature after the year 2000, which affirms the recency of this particular branch of marketing and consumer behaviour. Only two authors were in the school of thought of tourism and social media, which appears to be a growing niche topic (Zeng, Huang, & Dou, 2009). Additionally, it can be observed that only seven authors—Belk, Brodie, Laroche, Hair, Fornell, Ajzen and Bagozzi—have been publishing their works since the 90s. This also reconfirms the idea that interest in the topic has increased over the past 20 years.

Figure 2.3 presents an author co-citation map. The nodes represent units of analysis, in this case scholars, and the network ties represent similarity connections. The size of the nodes indicates the number of co-citations received; the bigger the node, the more co-citations they have received. Nodes that are adjacent are considered intellectually similar (Zupic & Čater, 2015).

The author co-citation analysis (ACA) established a co-citation network of 30,006 authors from the reference lists of the 593 documents stored in the analysis'

database. The ACA listed a total of 127 scholars who met the requirement of having at least 40 co-citations. These authors are shown in the map in Figure 2.3. The top five most highly co-cited authors in the literature on social media and consumer behaviour are as follows: Bagozzi (144), Haenleim (120), Law (120), Kozinets (116), and Kaplan (114). Figure 2.3 reveals that social media literature is composed of three clusters or schools of thought.

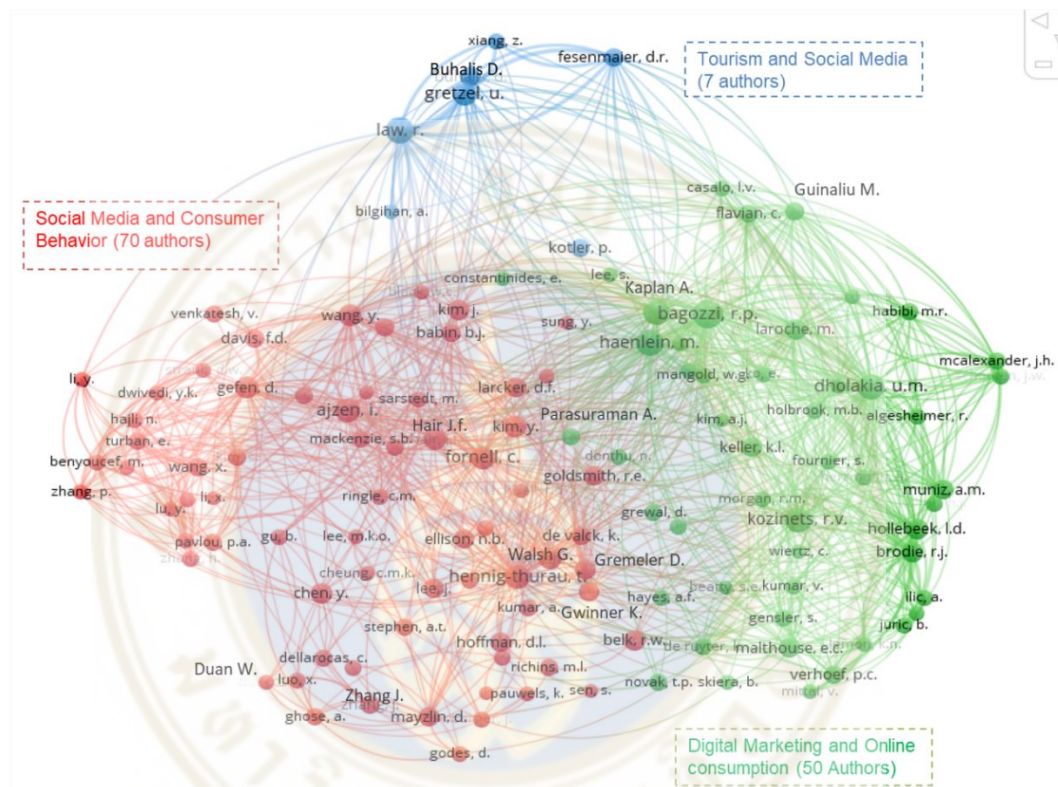


Figure 2.3 Three clusters representing the intellectual structure of social media literature

Scholars whose research is grouped in the light green cluster (Digital Marketing and Online Consumption) have published extensive papers on the impact of materialism over digital marketing tools and how they influence online sales. The findings can then be used to help companies create more effective advertising campaigns and digitally enhance their brands to push consumers to buy more products.

Digital marketing covers a wide area including evolving business models using emerging technologies which reduce costs and grow industry internationally in an intensely competitive marketplace (Kannan, 2017). Digital marketing today has a wide

potential for expanding company's business in the future because consumers are pleased with online shopping, as they generally consider digital marketing far better than conventional marketing although online shopping has seen increasingly higher negative consumption behaviours from users (Stephen, 2016).

One of digital marketing's main contributors to negative consumption behaviours is that it offers consumers the ability to look at the company's product details and to be able to make comparisons quickly and efficiently. This gives the customers far greater freedom of choice and allows them the flexibility to place their orders from anywhere and at any time (Mala, Akash, & Jewel, 2020). There are 50 authors whose work is clustered under this school of thought. Three of the top five co-cited authors belong to this cluster as well: Bagozzi (144), Haenlein (120), Kozinets (116).

The red cluster includes the scholars who have focused their attention on traditional marketing and consumer behaviour concepts in relation to materialism such as brand management, brand equity, consumer attitudes towards purchases, and how these theories have been impacted by the widespread usage of social media. In total, there are 70 authors grouped in this cluster and the top co-cited are: Kaplan (114), Hennig-thurau (108), Ajzen (103).

The last cluster is related with social media and tourism, a niche topic with a growing scholar community. There are seven authors belonging to this school of thought and they focus on how social media can influence hotels and stakeholders in the tourism industry through word of mouth, online reviews and user-generated content (Shin & Xiang, 2020).

2.4 Evolution of Materialism and Consumer Behaviour in Social Media Topics

In order to recap the most frequent co-occurring keywords in each of the themes underlined by VOSviewer, the author created a co-word map which provides semantic analysis of the most frequent word trends. Of the total of 2,798 keywords identified in this way, only 55 passed the threshold of at least occurrences.

The trends that emerged correspond with the clusters previously represented. The first cluster of key-words (Red) in Figure 2.4 focuses on how

materialism and traditional consumer behaviour theories have influenced social media environment. In order to boost marketing efficiency and provide the most suitable products for each market target, scholars have been studying potential predictors and the impact of consumer attitudes when using social media (Alalwan, Rana, Dwivedi, & Algharabat, 2017). However, there is a lack of studies on the influence of attitudes towards advertising on harmful consumption behaviours. The important keywords in this respect are consumer behaviour, social networking sites and e-commerce.

The second cluster (Green) covers advertising and how materialism affects online consumption. Relevant keywords here are advertising, consumer attitude and decision making. In the third cluster (Blue), the keywords that relate to social media marketing and online consumption are revealed. The more frequently occurring keywords here are social media marketing, Facebook and materialism. From this, it is noticeable that social media marketing appears to be an over spanning key phrase that links all three clusters together.

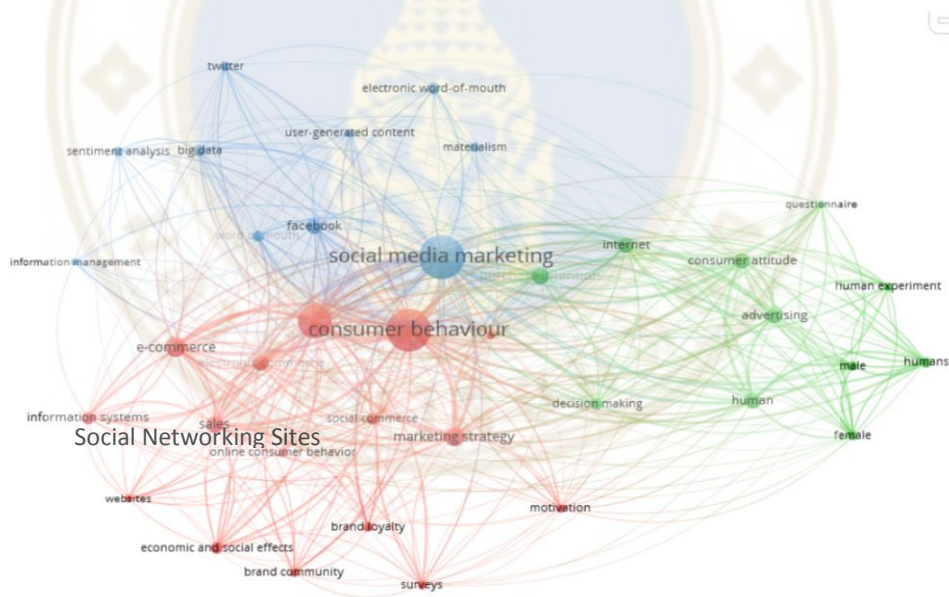


Figure 2.4 Keyword analysis of social media literature

As shown in the co-word map, there is a lack of detailed studies which can explain the role played by attitudes towards advertising in social media and users' engagement in the relationships between materialism and harmful consumer behaviours such as compulsive, conspicuous and impulsive buying behaviours. Therefore, the

present study will focus on investigating the role of both users' attitudes towards advertising content and users' engagement with social media platforms, also known as social media intensity. Increasing the body of research on the impact these constructs on negative consumer behaviour besides can be a valuable contribution, enabling governments and NGOs to better regulate social media and consumers behaviour steering it towards more sustainable approaches (Strähle & Gräff, 2017).

2.5 Integrative Review of Key Constructs

2.5.1 Sustainability and Negative Consumption Behaviours

Sustainability is an “emerging megatrend” (Lubin & Esty, 2010), which in modern marketing literature is also considered a critical and challenging topic (Kotler, 2011). The common core of sustainability concepts is that it is a system that survives or continues (Costanza & Patten, 1995). However, there are many distinct definitions of sustainability. For example, sustainability can be described as the use of resources in a way that allows future generations to live with the same or greater quantity of resources (Environment & Development, 1987).

In the sense of consumer sustainability, recent research proposes not only ecological and social dimensions, but also the value of personal well-being (Lin & Niu, 2018). Moreover, many consumers claim that sustainability has a high importance in their daily consumption habits (Evans, Welch, & Swaffield, 2017). For example, reducing waste and saving natural resources such as water, oil, or tropical rain forests are given increasing consideration in consumers' purchase decisions (Verma, 2019). At the same time, however, the same consumers are also engaged in unsustainable consumer behaviour, such as taking a car instead of public transportation or buying products based on a very resource-intensive manufacturing process (Kammerlander, Omann, Gerold, Mock, & Stocker, 2020).

The dire effects of climate change, biodiversity destruction and contamination of the oceans are examples of current environmental degradation which is increasing and related to negative consumption. Consumption rates continue to deplete the world's natural resources at a far higher pace than its capacity to regenerate

them. Moreover, excessive consumption is also linked to negative socio-economic aspects, such as unacceptable working conditions in globalized value-added chains, which constitute two dimensions of sustainable development, along with environmental aspects (Geiger, Grossman, & Schrader, 2019).

The word “unsustainable” when related to consumption applies to something that cannot be sustained in the future at its present pace of consumption. The consequences of indulging in compulsive, conspicuous or impulse buying behaviours may be economical: higher debts, credit card over usage, mental disorders, addiction – environmental: resource intensive products, pollution, natural resources depletion and social (labor intensive production and labor exploitation). Negative consumption is something we are not able to maintain, and which may hamper the well-being of future generations (Verma, 2019).

Materialism and its impact on compulsive, conspicuous and impulse buying behaviours consumption are viewed as dimensions of the dark side of consumer behaviours and have been the focus of consumer research for several decades (Podoshen & Andrzejewski, 2012). There is a paucity of research on social media and how attitudes towards social media content and users’ engagement can mediate the relationships between materialism and the three consumption behaviours. Studies that have been conducted in this field historically focusing on non-representative small samples university students (Safiullah et al., 2017). Within the online environment, materialistic users that visit social media pages or e-commerce sites, are not attracted to those pages by shopping. It appears that consumers are on social media for social interaction. This concept has been present, even before the internet age, when people went shopping for many other reasons rather than only to buy things, and shopping had a social component, even before it moved online (Arnold & Reynolds 2003). This can explain the fact that highly materialistic users may be more likely to engage with other users or with content present on social media. Materialistic consumers in social media spaces who are continuously engaging in service exchanges with users and/or brands are the outcome of firms establishing and sustaining a strong social media presence (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010, Schau, Muniz & Arnould, 2009). Furthermore, businesses recognize the importance of social media in influencing and altering consumers' spending behaviours, and the possibilities afforded by social media platforms have allowed them to stay

relevant in an increasingly digital business environment (Day, 2011, Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

According to the literature the more positive a person's attitude toward an ad, brand or user generated content is, the more likely he or she is to use it. Conversely, if he or she has a negative attitude, he or she is less likely to use the product (Chiou et al. 2008).

Materialistic users who value status and worldly possessions are more likely to use influencers' pages as they believe they are relevant and authentic (Shiau & Lu, 2010). Users level of pleasure has an impact on whether or not they will continue to use social media pages. The more people consider shopping services on social networking sites as useful and easy to use, the more favourable they feel toward shopping for real things on those social networks. Cha (2009) discovered in his study. Cha discovered, on the other hand, that reported enjoyment had a negative correlation with shopping attitude toward real things on social networking sites.

Although the negative effects of consumption and related principles, such as excessive, impulsive or compulsive consumption, have been discussed in previous studies, the primary emphasis has been on the negative psychological impacts on consumers rather than the negative consumption consequences of materialism (Chatzidakis, Smith, & Hibbert, 2009; O'Guinn & Faber, 1989). Negative consumer behaviours can become deviant if they involve a physical or psychological abnormality, or if it involves illegal action. Taking action as a result of a dependency is referred to as addictive behaviour. Consumers who are addicted to a product or activity have a strong attachment to it and believe that they must use it to fully operate. The inability to quit doing something is referred to as compulsive behaviour. Compulsive shopping can be a very emotional experience. Consumers may participate in compulsive shopping in order to experience a rush, seek attention, or feel as though they are pleasing someone else. However, this euphoric high could lead to major financial and emotional consequences. Impulsive behaviour is non-thoughtful action taken on the spur of the moment. Impulsive buying is an example of impulsive behaviour related to acquisition and consumption. An impulse is a sudden urge to act, such as when you find yourself acting on an emotional whim rather than a rational, non-emotional examination. Consumers can engage in any of these behaviours in terms of acquisition or consumption, with

negative consequences if they do not exercise self-control Moschis, 2017; Manimegalai 2017).

2.6 E-commerce Platforms and Social Media Marketing Issues

When engaging in e-commerce, customers need a search feature to locate a particular product, a cart feature to control their order, and a payment feature system. These are some of the elements that characterize a typical e-commerce platform (Gonçalves, Rocha, Martins, Branco, & Au-Yong-Oliveira, 2018). Recently, these platforms have been increasingly using social media sites, especially Facebook and Instagram, to conduct commercial activities and increase their potential customer audiences. They do so by posting content on their social media pages and running awareness paid ads and retargeting campaigns. In mid-2018, in order to better support e-commerce platforms' need for sales expansion, Instagram introduced its shoppable posts feature, which allows e-commerce profiles to tag items in organic posts which customers can tap on to learn more and eventually make purchases. Many brands, including e-commerce sites, have implemented chatbots on Facebook to enable consumers to submit inquiries regarding products or complete transactions (Dhaoui & Webster, 2021).

E-commerce customers using social media are able to seek more information on the products they are interested in and follow suggestions made by other social media users in their peer network (Kim & Kim, 2018). This process makes social media sites especially useful for e-commerce platforms because of their potential to influence users' future purchasing behaviour (Kim & Kim, 2018). The need for social proof is demonstrated by the fact that people browse social media sites in an effort to ensure that they have made a wise decision and that others have made the same decision (Roethke, Klumpe, Adam, & Benlian, 2020).

The sense of well-being coming from making a certain purchase can definitely be enhanced by social media. In a study by Cai, Wohn, Mittal, and Sureshbabu (2018), 30% of shoppers said e-commerce social media pages affected where they shopped. Branded social media content also influenced 30% of shoppers to take immediate action. According to eMarketer results, social media e-commerce ads

affected 23% of first-time purchase decisions. Consumers, in particular, use e-commerce social media pages to learn more about the goods and promotions available (Stubb & Colliander, 2019).

There were reported to be over 12.1 million online shoppers engaging in e-commerce in Thailand as of 2020 (Digital Report, 2021). According to Stubb and Colliander (2019), making it possible to make purchases directly on e-commerce sites or on social media pages increases the likelihood of purchases made by customers. Potential Thai buyers benefit from social media pages such as Facebook and Instagram because the one-on-one contact with the seller fosters confidence. Buyers who are interested in purchasing goods can receive information in real time through personal messages, which are usually sent via Facebook Messenger chat boxes or Instagram messages.

Another explanation for why e-commerce sites in Southeast Asia are effectively using social media platforms is that credit card ownership is still relatively poor (Hastuti & Jauhari, 2021). Thailand has a credit card transaction rate of 3.70 percent, according to a survey conducted in 2018 (Grohmann, 2018). This low rate of credit card ownership reflects the buyers' apprehension about making online purchases. Direct money transfer via ATMs or mobile apps have become the most common payment mode for completing digital transactions in a scenario where most consumers are wary of making an online payment or may not even have a debit or credit card (Leeraphong & Papasratorn, 2018). Although online payment is becoming more common in Thailand, many e-commerce website users (particularly first-time online buyers) are still wary of online transactions. In these situations, the opportunity to make one-on-one contact means that both the buyer and the seller have the option of choosing a payment method that is preferable to them such as transfers by ATMs or banking applications.

However, it has been found that e-commerce platforms' usage of paid social media marketing tools can contribute to unhealthy consumption behaviours. According to the study of Frick, Matthies, Thøgersen, and Santarius (2020), this mostly stems from re-targeting marketing strategies with the sole purpose of maximizing revenues for the company investing on the chosen social media site.

Retargeting on social media is a personalized type of online advertising based on a user's browsing history. These customized “recommendations” highlight the same items that the user was browsing before leaving a website, usually an e-commerce website, and that have a high chance of being purchased by that user, thus potentially boosting sales (Lambrecht & Tucker, 2013). This strategy has been conceived as consumers who search goods online often leave a website without making a purchase and do not return (Ariffin, Mohan, & Goh, 2018). Dynamic retargeted advertisements use images of the same product that the user previously browsed or related items to reach those users while they are on social media or other web pages. Personalized retargeted ads have been shown to be six times more effective than regular banner ads and four times more effective than generic retargeted ads (Kumar, Wan, & Li, 2020). The following is an example of how this technology is commonly used:

1. Product exposure: The customer visits an e-commerce website and looks at the goods. A pixel tag (i.e., a 1 x 1 image) is downloaded automatically for each product page the consumer views, thereby recording that the consumer was viewing that specific product. This information is usually monitored by cookies and becomes part of the individual user profile kept by the ad network on behalf of the e-commerce platform.

2. Customer targeting: The consumer surfs the web. He or she visits a website whose advertising content is served by a retargeting advertisement network. The advertisement network uses the cookie to determine if the customer has already accessed the e-commerce website.

3. Ad design: In generic retargeting, the ad network uses the individual cookie profile to identify people who have visited the e-commerce website and then shows them generic advertisements for the products from that specific e-commerce platform instead of ads for another firm. These generic advertisements usually feature an image that is broadly related to the products viewed by the user. For example, a travel company might put its logo next to a picture of a smiling air hostess, or an airline might put its logo next to a picture of a beach. In the case of dynamic retargeting, the ad network creates the ad to display the same product the buyer was looking at previously, as well as other similar items sold by the e-commerce company. A customer who was browsing a pair of children's shoes on an e-commerce website could later see an ad that features this same product alongside three others similar products. Standardized formats

are used in dynamic retargeted advertising, in which a predefined space is divided into different areas for photos of particular items. This standardization illustrates the need to integrate a wide range of images and text into an ad in real time using a sophisticated algorithm.

4. Order: The customer makes a purchase on the e-commerce website. This purchase is recorded in the ad network's individual profile, which is linked to any ad exposures. A buyer is usually not retargeted after making a purchase until he or she returns to the website. Normally, the ad network is not disclosed.

The intention of re-targeting paid campaigns is to trigger the user's feeling of urgency, which is emphasized by the high relevancy of customized messages that can eventually lead to harmful consumption behaviours (Macarthy, 2021). According to Milyavskaya, Saffran, Hope, and Koestner (2018), the "fear of missing out" is a strong feeling or belief that others are having more fun, living better lives, or doing better things, which is at the root of social media addiction (Blackwell, Leaman, Tramposch, Osborne, & Liss, 2017). This feeling in online consumer behaviour creates fear in users who do not take certain actions, such as making an online purchase. Fear of missing out is characterized by a strong sense of envy and has a negative impact on self-esteem. Social media platforms like Instagram and Facebook are proven to intensify this issue (Milyavskaya et al., 2018).

Retargeting advertising campaigns that warn customers of limited stocks is a common strategy to pressure social media users into making an impulse purchase. "One day only", "while stocks last", and "limited stock" are just a few examples of phrases that can lead to a compulsive or impulse purchase (Fricker & Deshayes, 2018). See the example of limited time offer in social media re-targeting in Appendix A.

Another re-targeting technique that is commonly used by e-commerce platforms and can cause compulsive purchases is grouping complementary and similar goods together. Complementary goods are those that can be purchased together. If you see a phrase like "Customers who purchased this also liked" followed by a list of suggested items on a website, those are most likely complementary products (Fricker & Deshayes, 2018). See the example of complementary products in social media re-targeting in Appendix A.

Flash sales are another quick way to attract impulse buyers as well as conspicuous customers to make additional purchases (Fricker & Deshayes, 2018). Additional transactions can be triggered by the combination of highly relevant ad content, limited stock and heavy discounts. Flash sales are announced by releasing a post on Facebook or Instagram. See the example of flash sale in social media re-targeting in Appendix A.

Therefore, having identified the widespread usage of social media and the common habit of purchasing through e-commerce platforms in Thailand, the researcher believes it is important to investigate the potential mediating roles of attitudes towards social media content and social media intensity in regulating harmful negative consumption, especially for those Thai social media users who follow e-commerce platforms on both Facebook and Instagram.

2.7 Materialism

There are multiple definitions of materialism. However, the motives underlying this behaviour could be defined as follows: “Materialism is the extent to which individuals attempt to engage in the construction and maintenance of the self through the acquisition and use of products, services, experiences, or relationships that are perceived to provide desirable symbolic value” (Shrum et al., 2013). One definition of materialism divides the concept into socio-political materialism and post-materialism, which were constructed by Inglehart (1981). Socio-political materialism is triggered by a chronic focus on lower order needs. Inglehart claimed that materialists place a higher value on worldly attainment over spiritual attainment. Along with his definition, he developed the theory of post-materialism. Belk (1985) conceived materialism as the manifestation of three personality characteristics: greediness, non-generosity and envy. By quantifying these three features, human materialism can be measured. Possessiveness is defined as the desire to own or control one's own property. Non-generosity is viewed as a reluctance to share one's own belongings with others. Jealousy is defined as a desire for someone else's wealth. The second definition of materialism is called the personal values, which were developed by Richins and Dawson (1992). They argued that materialism is a system of personal values. They used three

concepts of materialism: centrality, happiness, and success. Centrality is a prominent focus on physical objects in a person's life.

According to Tooby and Cosmides (1992) human organisms are inherently empty and materialism acquires meaning in accord with social and cultural teachings, this view is consistent with opinions expressed by Larsen et al., (1999) which see materialism as an individual phenomenon, that label a person who values material objects highly. In other words, individuals who value materialism pursue material possessions and the accumulation of income and wealth. He conceptualized materialism positively related to energy use and conservation. For example, in his materialism conceptualization included dimensions, such as growth in material consumption helps raise the level of civilization and material growth makes for happier living. Larsen et al. 1999. Larsen noted that materialism is not innate, but acquired through cultural teachings. He noted that religious perspective holds that human beings are born corrupt or fallen, with an unholy and unreasonable desire to amass things.

According to Sirgy et al. (2012) materialism may be both good and bad. He developed a model that reconciled these two contrasting viewpoints by asserting that materialism may lead to life dissatisfaction when materialistic people evaluate their standard of living using fantasy-based expectations (e.g., ideal expectations), which increases the likelihood that they would evaluate their standard of living negatively. In turn, dissatisfaction with standard of living increases the likelihood that they would evaluate their life negatively. However, materialistic people who evaluate their standard of living using reality-based expectations are likely to feel more economically motivated than their nonmaterialistic counterparts, and this economic motivation is likely to contribute significantly and positively to life satisfaction.

Shrum et al. (2013) stresses the functions of materialistic goal pursuit, the processes by which these functions are developed and implemented, and their potential consequences. This functional perspective views materialistic behaviour as motivated goal pursuit intended to construct and maintain self-identity, and defines materialism as the extent to which people engage in identity maintenance and construction through symbolic consumption.

This study adopts Belk's definition of materialism, which views it as an ingrained part of an individual that is directly derived from that individual's personality.

The factors that differentiate this concept from those of other scholars are as follows: first, it describes the underlying motivations of materialism with regard to the creation and preservation of self-identity; secondly, it defines materialism in terms of acquisition, which includes not only the purchase but also the acquisition of gifts, inheritances and other forms of non-purchased materialistic gains; thirdly it integrates the use of the materialistic gain by the acquirer, covering not only goods and services, but also activities and experiences, e.g., vacations and sporting events (Belk, 1982), and relationships, e.g., friendships and marriages (Belk, 1982); and lastly, it relates to the symbolic essence of the acquisitions and, thus, to the degree to which the acquisitions were made (Belk, 1985). Although it may be difficult to distinguish personality traits from a person's underlying value system, it is possible to observe that traits such as envy and non-generosity have an affective component which is lacking in the conceptualization of personal values, and materialistic ideals are operationalized as a collection of beliefs rather than emotions. For instance, an item from Richins and Dawson's (1992) happiness subscale reads as follows: "My life would be better if I owned certain things that I don't have," whereas an item from Belk's (1985) envy subscale reads as follows: "When friends have things I cannot afford, it bothers me". This is also in line with how personality traits are operationalized in social science literature. Belk's personality materialism was largely based on gut-level emotional responses. The specific emotional responses making up personality materialism are very plausibly the outcomes of subjective feelings of deprivation—envy, non-generosity, and possessiveness.

2.7.1 Materialism as an Antecedent

Although materialism can have positive economic implications for individuals and societies, when it has been studied as an antecedent, most research has been inclined to emphasize its negative consequences (Abela, 2006). Materialism is associated with reductions in life happiness (Ahuvia & Wong, 2002; Belk, 1985), lower subjective well-being (Burroughs & Rindfleisch, 2002; La Barbera & Gürhan, 1997), negative life satisfaction (Richins & Dawson, 1992; Sirgy, 1999), damaging sense of community (Kasser & Ahuvia, 2002) and concerns regarding environmental issues (Kilbourne & Pickett, 2008; Laroche, Bergeron, & Barbaro-Forleo, 2001).

The majority of the studies which considered materialism as an antecedent focused on the relationship between materialism and subjective well-being, with the latter involving judgments about one's satisfaction with life, positive effects, and the absence of negative effects (Diener & Biswas-Diener, 2002). Research on the relationship between materialism and satisfaction with life has consistently shown that materialism has a negative impact on life satisfaction life (Belk, 1985; Richins & Dawson, 1992; Sirgy, 1998). It appears from the literature that the gaps between the actual and desired standards of living lead materialists to be less satisfied, in general, and have an overall lower level of satisfaction with life in particular (Richins & Rudmin, 1994).

Others scholars explained that materialism, interpreted as the preoccupation to secure material possessions and wealth, can lead to neglecting meaningful domains of one's life such as social relationships and family by creating more erratic and less meaningful social relations (Roberts & Clement, 2007). Kasser and Ahuvia (2002) studied Singaporean business students and discovered that those who had strongly internalized materialistic values also reported higher levels of unhappiness and lower self-actualization. Goldberg, Gorn, Peracchio, and Bamossy (2003) found that young people's heightened focus on materialism in the U.S. led to them having negative attitudes toward school and performing poorly in exams. Goldberg et al. (2003) suggested that high levels of materialism can push teenagers towards more sexually promiscuous behaviours, a greater likelihood of becoming drug addicts and even an increased risk of committing suicide.

Ahuvia and Wong (2002) reported that high levels of material consumption are the driving force behind ecological degradation. Increasing materialism and desire for Western goods in some Third World countries have reduced the consumption of the locally produced goods on which their economy depends, thus increasing unemployment and creating a negative balance of payments

Watson (2003) stated that the numerous desires for material objects, travel experiences and recreational goods can push materialists' savings into the background and cause them to accumulate huge debt from their harmful consumption behaviours. He reported that materialism caused the UK to register household debts of £667 billion in 1999. Similarly, non-mortgage debt in the US stood at \$1.3 trillion in 1998, and

Canada's average personal debt in 1998 was greater than the average individual's disposable income.

Unlike non-materialists, who are content with far less in life and can accept low-paying social service work, materialists have an insatiable desire for higher-paying professions and higher income. Driven by these attitudes, some go to the extent of committing crimes and fraud to increase their wealth. They end up having relatively low levels of well-being and happiness, and are more likely to be depressed. An increased number of consumers filed for bankruptcy because of the inability to settle their debts in the US in 1993 (Roberts & Clement, 2007).

Sheldon and Kasser (2008) contended that materialism is one of the main drivers of the deregulation of the finance industry, as offering highly risky bank loans led to the 2008 economic crisis. When citizens are materialistic, he continues, consumers consume more and borrow money more. As a consequence, bank employees make risky and highly untenable loans to customers. Therefore, this highly competitive form of capitalism with little governmental regulation led to the 2008 economic crunch.

In wealthy societies, such as Iceland, where the per capita GDP in 2007 was \$63,830 compared to \$45,845 in the US, citizens should be able to sustain themselves adequately from their income (Garðarsdóttir & Dittmar, 2012). However, because of materialism and unsecured lending, Icelanders on average were living way beyond their means causing consumer debt to rise to about 255% of aggregate disposable income in 2008 compared to 159% in 2000 (Garðarsdóttir & Dittmar, 2012). Not only does materialism deplete personal income, but it also has negative consequences on the natural environment because nature's resources are used at unnecessarily high rates to satisfy the incessant material wants of materialists (Garðarsdóttir & Dittmar, 2012).

By focusing less on intrinsic values (e.g., caring for others and the society), materialistic people experience higher life dissatisfaction. To test this, Krieger and Sheldon (2014) compared the happiness, income and drinking behaviour of 1,145 service-focused (intrinsic) lawyers and 1,414 materialistic (extrinsic) lawyers. The study found that, compared to the materialistic lawyers, the service lawyers earned far lower incomes, but they were generally happier, had fewer negative feelings and drank less.

There are also positive consequences of materialism, for instance, individuals with high levels of materialism, are perceived as working hard and for longer hours in order to earn more money to satisfy their desire for goods, instead of using that time for leisure activities (Richins & Dawson, 1992). Materialism as an antecedent has positive consequences for individuals, businesses and society (Richins & Rudmin, 1994). Their high levels of production and consumption can thus not only increase businesses' profits, but can also generate capital for research and development. Greater research and development can in turn lead to higher productivity, technological breakthroughs and higher living standards for all (Richins & Rudmin, 1994). Burroughs and Rindfleisch (1997) found that materialism and the consequent acquisition of material objects can be instrumental in reducing the stress children face when parents separate or divorce because the material possessions can restore a sense of stability, permanence, identity, control and a positive self-image.

Goldberg et al. (2003) found that young individuals who were materialistic tended to shop more, as a consequence of having more knowledge about products and services, and they were more responsive to advertising and promotional campaigns. They can, therefore, often be considered early adopters, trendsetters, and opinion leaders among their peers.

Brouskeli and Loumakou (2014) also viewed materialism as a construct capable of reducing stress. Individuals' possessions and attachments help them express their private (emotions, desires, personal values, memories, impulses), public (family relationships, social roles, national, ethnic and religious affiliations) and desired self to others (Webster & Beatty, 1997). A private value of fun and excitement in life, for example, can be perceived by a person's ownership of a large assortment of recreational equipment. Public values like Christianity and marriage can be expressed or deduced by how much a person values his or her Bible or wedding ring respectively.

2.7.2 Materialism as a Mediator

A variety of studies have offered theoretical support for the mediating effect of materialism on compulsive behaviour (Nga, Yong, & Sellappan, 2011; Rose, 2007). Weaver, Moschis, and Davis (2011) tested materialism as a mediator between the independent variables of gender and family and the dependent variable of compulsive

behaviour. Various scholars have thoroughly discussed how sociological factors such as peer pressure, celebrity endorsements in the media, and television commercials are linked to materialism, which then mediates the relationship with compulsive, impulse and conspicuous buying behaviour among adults (Lim, Cheah, Cham, Ting, & Memon, 2020; Muñiz-Velázquez, Gomez-Baya, & Lopez-Casquete, 2017; Schor, 2014). Materialism also plays a mediating role between the sociological factors of peer pressure, media celebrity endorsements, and television advertisements and compulsive and impulse buying behaviour (Islam, Wei, Sheikh, Hameed, & Azam, 2017).

There is theoretical justification for the mediating role played by materialism, especially when regulating subjective well-being and impulsive buying, as materialism is interpreted as a coping mechanism (Kasser, Ryan, Couchman, & Sheldon, 2004; Reeves, Baker, & Truluck, 2012; Segev, Shoham, & Gavish, 2015). As such, it compensates for unfulfilled needs or personal weaknesses, leading to the assumption that materialism potentially mediates the relationship between subjective well-being and impulsive buying tendency.

The conceptualization of compulsive buying as a result of the high level of materialism and the outcome of low self-esteem (O'Guinn & Faber, 1989) also suggests that materialism functions as the mediator in explaining the relationship between subjective well-being and compulsive buying. The relative standards theory is one possible explanation for the relationship between subjective well-being, materialism, and impulsive buying. The findings from the study of Chan and Prendergast (2007) also support the assumption that upward social comparison encourages materialistic aspirations. Thus, literature suggests that the decline of subjective well-being leads to a greater endorsement of materialistic values, which in turn increases the risk of impulsive buying. The relative standards theory posits that subjective well-being is a result of the comparison of certain standards and actual conditions (Diener & Ryan, 2009). The social comparison, as noted by those authors, is a strong predictor of personal satisfaction within various domains of one's life. Materialists tend to compare themselves with people perceived to be more important than them and assess themselves accordingly (Sirgy et al., 2012). They are also more prone to conspicuous and status consumption. A person experiences greater subjective well-being if he feels superior to

others, which he chooses as the comparison standard, or when he surpasses an earlier version of himself in the past.

The indirect support provided by materialism has also been identified in other research. For example, Otero-López and Villardefrancos (2013) reported that certain personality traits of neuroticism (anxiety, depression, and impulsiveness) affect excessive buying behaviours both directly and indirectly through materialism. According to Fan et al. (2014), because people tend to evaluate their economic conditions not according to whether they have enough to live comfortably, but in comparison to others who have more, even relatively wealthy people can feel poor when they compare themselves with those who are richer.

Zhang et al. (2014) argued that such a subjectively perceived relative deprivation increases materialism, because an individual under circumstances like this, is more prone to comparing his financial situation to that of his peers. Then this social comparison, in turn, encourages impulsive consumption with the aim of maintaining one's social status.

2.7.3 Materialism as a Consequence

It has been found that gender differences can affect materialism. Researchers believe that males are more materialistic than females because females are more interested in people while males are more interested in artifacts (Sirgy, 1999). Various researchers have reached the same conclusion that men are more materialistic than women based on their findings (e.g., (Browne & Kaldenberg, 1997; Flouri, 2004; Segal & Podoshen, 2013). According to Roberts and Clement (2007), men are more likely than women to associate material possessions with satisfaction. On the other hand, women have been found to be more materialistic than men when they are unsure of their self-concept (Noguti & Bokeyar, 2014).

Age is another factor that can have an impact on materialism. Materialistic tendencies, according to developmental psychologists Piaget (1973), are a developmental mechanism. Churchill and Moschis (1979) observed a strong correlation between the age of an adolescent and the intensity of materialism in their research. Moschis (1987) stated that as teenagers grow up, they aim for freedom from their parents, based on sociological theory. As a result, they spend more time engaging with

their friends or watching more television, all of which affect the development of materialistic values. Larsen et al. (1999) proposed that children are more materialistic than young adults, and young adults are more materialistic than older adults, based on the fact that children are more possessive, envious, and non-generous. Flouri's (2004) findings also show that there is a positive relationship between age and materialism.

There is also evidence to show that self-esteem affects materialism. Chaplin and John (2007) made this connection, and observed that it drops dramatically at around ages 12-13 before rebounding with the approach of late adolescence. Thus, it is the change in self-esteem across different age groups which accounts for materialism and not the age differences per se. Chaplin and John (2007) highlighted how socialization agents like peer groups, media and family, which are often thought to affect the development of materialistic values in young people, yield their influence indirectly through their impact on self-esteem.

Differences in birth order can also play a role in an individual's level of materialism. Reviewing research on the privileges that firstborn children have over their younger siblings, Churchill and Moschis (1979) proposed that the exclusive affection which firstborn children receive from their parents may cause them to model themselves after parental or family consumption values and orientations. This orientation, they claim, is usually an economic or rational consumption orientation. Conversely, younger siblings more frequently interact with peers who may socialize them toward a social or materialistic orientation. According to Rink (2010), firstborn children are more likely to become materialistic because their parents tend to be overprotective of their firstborn and, in the process, frustrate the child's need for independence. Growing up being dependent and lacking a point of reference, firstborns may become anxious, affiliate with peers. For self-evaluation, they may use the process of social comparisons, all of which are drivers of materialism.

Consumer socialization is yet another factor that has been found to impact materialism. While biological factors play a role in predicting materialism, certain views on the development of materialistic values, especially in young adults, are primarily based on socialization. Peers, the media, and family may all be sources of socialization. Ward (1974) defined consumer socialization as "processes by which young people acquire skills, knowledge, and attitudes relevant to their functioning as consumers in the

marketplace” (p. 193). Ward (1974) went on to add that through consumer socialization, consumers acquire consumption-relevant skills (like budgeting, pricing), knowledge (of brand attributes and shopping outlets), and attitudes (toward products, brands, and sales people) that are necessary for the direct and indirect (purchase through motivators) enactment of the consumer role.

Materialism can also be affected by television viewing. For example, television is said to play an important role in socializing consumers into materialism. Watching television and being exposed to advertising through this medium reinforce materialistic values, especially in young people (Churchill & Moschis, 1979; Pollay, 1986). In his study, Roberts (1998) observed that adolescents spend an average of 21 hours a week watching television. Affluence, lavish surroundings and trendy brands are all portrayed on television as part of a desirable lifestyle. The discrepancy between the appearances, surroundings, and belongings depicted on television and the viewers' actual state can lead to feelings of deprivation and a desire to compensate through material acquisition and possessions (Roberts, 2008).

Through the consistent delivery of messages that project goods as solutions to problems, watching television can also promote the creation of materialistic ideals. Some ads convince audiences that material possessions will provide self-worth (Goldberg et al., 2003; Roberts, 1998). Considering that young people and the poor watch more television than other age and income groups respectively, Larsen et al. (1999) proposed that young people and the poor are likely to be more materialistic.

According to the research conducted by Moschis (2007), young people's duration and frequency of exposure to consumption-rich portrayals through television shows and characters may affect the strength of their orientations toward materialism. Advertising has thus received more attention and criticism for being the biggest potential cause or promoter of materialism.

The role of peer influence on materialism has also been studied. Chaplin and John (2007) and Moschis (1987) both found peer influence to be another source of knowledge and role models to be emulated, especially among young people. Duh et al. (2015) observed that materialistic habits are instilled in young people by their peers. They described the degree of consumer susceptibility to peer influence as the predisposition to identify with or enhance one's image in the opinion of peers through

the acquisition and use of products and brands. This will however depend on the consumer's self-confidence, self-monitoring and frequency of communication with peers regarding consumption matters. People who lack self-confidence and have low self-esteem are more likely to be susceptible to peer influence and, as a result, they may adopt materialistic values (Goldberg et al., 2003). High self-monitors (individuals with a greater sensitivity to notice and modify their behaviour from external cues) are more susceptible to peer influence (Goldberg et al., 2003) and more likely to be materialistic (O'Cass, 2004).

According to Chaplin and John (2010), peer and parental influences on materialism are important, especially among adolescents, because of the degree to which they improve self-esteem through emotional and psychological support. It is therefore believed that family and interpersonal contact have the greatest impact on developing consumer socialization into materialism (Moschis, 1985).

Research on the role of the family in consumer socialization has focused on the processes through which young people acquire skills, values, attitudes, and behaviours from their parents. This includes the role of the family communication processes (Benmoyal-Bouzaglo & Moschis, 2010); Moschis, 1985) and how the frequency of shopping with children (co-shopping) affects consumption orientations such as materialism (Kim, Yang, & Lee, 2015). According to Churchill and Moschis' (1979) report, adolescents who frequently communicate with parents about consumption matters are more likely to adopt a rational or economic consumption orientation. Preadolescents learn their consumption beliefs, standards, and behaviours from their parents and siblings, while adolescents and teens are more likely to look to their peers for appropriate consumption behaviour. The consumption orientation that teenagers ultimately adopt from their families is determined by the frequency with which they shop together and how often they communicate with their parents regarding consumption issues (Goldberg et al., 2003).

There is a lot of evidence that some parenting styles can either encourage or discourage the creation of materialistic ideals in children. The self-determination theory developed by Ryan and Deci (2000) stated that some environments are more effective than others at meeting people's psychological needs and allowing them to develop. Kasser et al. (2002) took this view when proposing that people's psychological needs

for autonomy and relatedness are well satisfied when the environments in which they grow up provide love, encouragement, and acceptance of their unique perspectives and desires in life. People whose need for autonomy is satisfied, grow up holding intrinsic values like self-expression, self-actualization, intimate relationship with others, and community support more important than extrinsic values like financial success and materialism. Children whose parents' communication style was cold, controlling, and rejecting with a lack of opportunities for intimacy and self-expression grow up attaching more importance to extrinsic values like materialism compared to those whose parental style was warm and democratic, (Kasser et al., 2002). If parents are materialistic, their children will tend to be materialistic as well (Goldberg et al., 2003). Cohen and Cohen (2013) looked at the gaps in materialism between children from low- and high-income families. They found that lower-income children were more likely to be concerned with materialistic ideals based on emotional vulnerability and a desire to please others.

Cross-cultural differences also play a role in materialism. Consumer research studies commonly view materialism as an individual phenomenon, but there are differences in materialism within and across various cultures (Clarke & Micken, 2002). Because of their cultural tradition of valuing material prosperity, Turkish consumers were found to be more materialistic than American and European consumers (Ger & Belk, 1990). Larsen et al. (1999) described a materialistic culture or nation as one in which most people value material possessions highly. To illustrate why there are cross-cultural variations in materialism, a variety of variables have been used.

According to some researchers, cross-cultural disparities in materialism can be attributed to socioeconomic disparity (Roth, 1995), individualistic or collectivist cultural ideals (Kitayama, Markus, Matsumoto, & Norasakkunkit, 1997) and a country's political philosophy, religious views and affiliations, and advertising content (Larsen et al., 1999). Larsen et al. (1999) suggested that people in nations which place a relatively higher value on economic freedom than a redistributionist ideology are more likely to be materialistic. This happens because there is no restriction on the quantity and quality of properties and material objects people can own. Larsen et al. (1999) also claimed that Protestant countries are more materialistic than Catholic ones because protestants see material blessings as a symbol of God's favor, to the point where they diligently seek material resources. Catholic countries, on the other hand, have long regarded a monastic

way of life as a spiritual ideal. People in countries that allow high levels of advertising, especially the transformational (involving symbols of social status, wealth and conspicuous consumption) advertisements, are likely to be more materialistic (Larsen et al., 1999).

East Asian consumers' attraction to high image, high status advertisements and products like Chanel, Gucci, Louis Vuitton have raised the suspicion that they may be more materialistic than their Western counterparts (Ahuvia & Wong, 1995). This is particularly true because there is a connection between materialism and status consumption (Eastman et al., 1997). Webster and Beatty (1997) compared the levels of materialism among Thai and American consumers in an empirical analysis. Their findings showed that Thai consumers were more materialistic than American consumers. Although American consumers place greater value on possessions that represent their private selves, their Thai counterparts were found to place more value on possessions that reflect their public selves. This may be because Thailand values collectivism as a cultural value (Komin, 1990) as opposed to Americans who are individualists (Kitayama & Markus, 1992).

Burroughs and Rindfleisch (2002), however, reported that there is a negative relationship between materialism and collective-oriented values. They also identified a positive relationship between individualism and materialism. Thailand, according to Ger and Belk's (1996) cross-cultural study of twelve nations, was one of the least materialistic of the countries they studied. This raises questions about Webster and Beatty's (1997) claim of Thais being more materialistic, when they are collectivists.

Meanwhile, Clarke and Micken's (2002) cross cultural comparison of materialism consistently found Mexicans to be the least materialistic because they embrace collectivist cultural values (followers of social norms, form relationships, make decisions, and initiate behaviours dependent of others) as opposed to individualistic cultural values (a tendency to value personal and individual time, freedom, experiences, and to make decisions independent of others' values) (Roth, 1995).

Socio-economic growth is yet another factor that influences materialism. Different regions of the world have been rated socioeconomically based on their "modernity", which Roth (1995) described as a measure institutions and organizations apply when providing life experiences for members of a community. One part of

modernity that has to do with consumption is disposable income, which is the amount of money consumers have available to spend on goods and services after essential bills and expenditures have been met (Roth, 1995). When resources are scarce, customers are said to use only products and services that meet their most basic, practical needs. Consumer willingness to spend money on goods that meet more symbolic and sensory needs increases as resources increase (Roth 1995).

Contrary to this common view, Ger and Belk (1996) found that because of a demonstration effect, less economically developed nations tend to imitate the more extravagant and symbolic consumption of economically developed consumers. Modernity promotes more independent and self-aware ideals, which are linked to needs for self-improvement, personal fulfillment, and materialism (Roth, 1995). Ger and Belk's (1996) exploration of materialism in twelve countries found Romania to be the most materialistic country, followed by the USA, New Zealand, Ukraine, Germany and Turkey, while Sweden was the nation with the lowest score for materialism. One explanation provided for the high level of materialism in Romania, Ukraine and Turkey was the dramatic and sudden change in these countries' economic and political environments. (Batra, Ramaswamy, Alden, Steenkamp, & Ramachander, 2000) observed that the demonstration effect is more prominent when regions become more modern and their exposure to material culture increases. As a result, people are motivated to desire things they see being consumed in Western cultures as well as to buy items associated with other cultures and societies.

Research findings suggest that consumer materialistic desires are stimulated not only by relative socioeconomic deprivation and insecurities (Chaplin & John, 2010; Ger & Belk, 1996; Inglehart, 1981), but mainly by the psychological problems they create. For example, Whitbeck et al. (1991) looked into the direct and indirect effects of family economic deprivation on adolescent self-esteem. They discovered that early adolescent self-esteem was harmed by the family's economic difficulties, not because of the economic condition per se, but because the economic difficulty reduced the psychological support these children received from their parents.

In terms of psychological predictors of materialism, money attitudes affect materialism and people's attitudes about money change as they grow up. Some people are born with a strict budget, and others are born with a loose budget. The growth of

materialistic impulses may be aided or hampered by these monetary attitudes (Tatzel, 2003). Contemporary consumer behaviour seems to be largely geared toward the purchase of goods and services not for economic and utilitarian purposes but for psychological benefits (Dittmar, 2005).

However, only a few studies have looked at how money perceptions affect materialism. Durvasula and Lysonski (2010) assessed the relationship between money attitudes and materialism among US and Chinese students respectively. They commonly found that money attitudes clearly have an effect on materialism, with the power-prestige money attitude dimension having the greatest impact, followed by the anxiety dimension. Durvasula and Lysonski (2010) explained that the Chinese subjects who saw money as a tool of power had greater tendency to acquire and possess material goods to demonstrate their social power. Anxiety set in when there was a perception that money in possessions was not enough to achieve their materialistic goals.

Life satisfaction can be either an antecedent or consequence of materialism. However, studies on the psychological correlations of materialism have mainly focused on the psychological consequences rather than the causes. Researchers have repeatedly shown that materialism has a detrimental impact on psychological well-being and life satisfaction (Belk, 1985; Kasser & Ahuvia, 2002; Sheldon & Krieger, 2014). In the Australian setting, Ryan and Dziurawiec (2001) found that the adults who were rated to be the most materialistic were less satisfied with their 'life as a whole' and with specific life domains such as standard of living and family life (satisfaction with spouse/partner/children) than the less materialistic individuals. Kasser and Ahuvia (2002) also go so far as to say that materialistic goals, even when achieved effectively, are relatively hollow in terms of future well-being benefits. According to their results, highly materialistic Singaporean business students also reported low self-actualization, increased unhappiness, and more cases of anxiety.

A materialist, according to Richins and Dawson (1992), is one who seeks happiness through the acquisition and possessions of material objects. Sharma and Malhotra (2010) suggest that happiness originates from social support, economic and physical well-being, and individual characteristics such as personality traits, self-esteem, and a sense of humor. Out of these determinants of happiness, self-esteem, has

been consistently labelled as a powerful predictor of materialism (Burroughs & Rindfleisch, 1997; Chaplin & John, 2007; Moschis, 2007; Richins & Dawson, 1992).

People who have a low sense of self-worth become materialistic. According to Richins and Fournier (1991) and Richins and Dawson (1992), this is because they are trapped in an endless cycle of accumulating material things in the hope that acquiring material objects may compensate for their feelings of insecurity and seeking happiness. Self-esteem is described as the tendency to view oneself as being competent enough to cope with life's problems and worthy of happiness based on a person's positive or negative assessment about his or her self-worth (Adediwura, 2007).

If low self-esteem is a predictor of materialism, Kasser et al. (2004) suggested looking at interactions that trigger feelings of insecurity and low self-esteem to learn more about how materialistic values evolve. Dittmar (2005) used Gollwitzer, Wicklund, and Hilton (1982) self-completion theory to explain the causes of self-discrepancies or a lower sense of self-worth. Gollwitzer et al. (1982) theory of self-completion was defined by Dittmar (2005) as the act of measuring one's self-worth in terms of competences in some self-identified domains. Self-definition is the theory behind this process. Self-definition can reveal self-discrepancies, which Dittmar (2005) defined as the difference between how a person sees herself or himself (the actual self) and how she or he would like to be (ideal self).

One of the strategies that individuals use to compensate for self-discrepancies is by acquiring and using material goods that symbolize those aspects that seem to be lacking (Noguti & Bokeyar, 2014). As one example, beginner tennis players who were committed to the game were found to be more likely to indulge in purchasing branded tennis clothing than expert players as a way to convince themselves and others of their competence. The larger the perceived gap between the ideal self and actual self, the greater the level of materialism (Dittmar, 2005).

Disruptive family outcomes, such as a reduction in family resources (less food, clothes, and emotional support) and tension (reorganization of family roles caused by parental divorce), according to the family psychologists Hill, Yeung, and Duncan (2001), are factors that erode emotional stability and self-esteem. Thus, consumer researchers who have modeled the impact of family disturbance on materialism have typically hypothesized that children raised in stressful disrupted homes with insufficient

family support become materialistic because their self-esteem is harmed (Burroughs & Rindfleisch, 1997; Moschis, 2007; Rindfleisch et al., 1997; Roberts et al., 2006;).

Moschis (2007) observed that the models designed to explain materialism concentrated on the drivers at a given point during a person's lifetime, without taking into account the effects of childhood experiences and circumstances. He saw this approach as flawed in market research and proposed studying consumer behaviour and consumption orientations, including materialism, using the life-course approach. The life-course approach employs a multi-theoretical and interdisciplinary (e.g., sociology, history, family and consumer psychology) framework to examine the effects of childhood experiences on later-life behaviours (including behaviours in schools, workplace and in consumption). Moschis (2007) suggested the use of three life-course theoretical perspectives—human capital, stress and socialization—to better explain consumption orientations such as materialism and compulsive purchasing behaviour. These three life-course theoretical perspectives indicate various socio-psychological mechanisms that relate to changes in childhood family structure (e.g., from an integrated two-parent family to a fragmented single-parent family) and associated events that change consumption orientations.

Moschis' (2007) three life-course theoretical perspectives provided various explanations for how early-life family experiences affect later-life consumption orientations. Considering that the three life-course theoretical perspectives are relatively new paths to understanding consumption orientations, Moschis (2007) recommended their cross-cultural testing for validity. They were thus tested in the US (Baker et al. 2013), Australia (Weaver et al., 2011), France (Benmoyal-Bouzaglo & Moschis, 2010), Brazil (Moschis, Mathur, Fatt, & Pizzutti, 2013), Japan (Moschis, Ong, Mathur, Yamashita, & Benmoyal- Bouzaglo, 2011), Malaysia (Moschis, Hosie, & Vel, 2009), Thailand (Nguyen et al., 2009) and South Africa (Duh et al., 2014). These studies discovered several cross-cultural similarities and variations in how the life-course theoretical framework describes materialism. In Thailand, Malaysia, Brazil, South Africa, and France, for example, peer communication about consumption during childhood (the socialization perspective) was frequently found to be a predictor of young adults' materialism. In Western cultures such as the United States and France, heavy television viewing during childhood (the socialization perspective) was found to

have a clear and important effect on young adults' materialism, but not in Eastern cultures such as Japan and Malaysia.

The stress theoretical perspective was tested in Australia by Weaver et al. (2011), who discovered that perceived stress from disruptive childhood family experiences had a positive effect on materialism in young adulthood. Baker, Moschis, Ong, and Pattanapanyasat (2013) conducted research in the United States, Brazil, and France on the human capital life course theoretical perspective of materialism and they discovered that having access to family support as a child mediated the relationship between childhood family disturbances and materialism in young adulthood.

2.7.4 Materialism and Sustainability

Materialism has been linked in the past with sustainability by the concepts of green buying which refers to the purchase of products designed to limit environmental impacts during their lifecycle and any other harmful consequences. Such options attract consumers who aim to reduce the harm of their purchases without disrupting their lifestyle (Strizhakova & Coulter, 2013). However, Helm, Serido, Ahn, Ligon, and Shim (2019) implied in their recent study that reducing the volume of consumption is the only viable long-term resource-saving behaviour.

In another study, Cleveland, Laroche, and Papadopoulos (2009) stated that the values of materialism may differ across the context of consumption, as branded products assume different meanings for different people. Such disparities can be due to varying financial, political, and systemic influences (Palalic, Ramadani, Gilani, Gërguri-Rashiti, & Dana, 2020). In another study, Tarka (2020) found that while consumers expressed similar responses to materialism and the consumption of luxury goods across different cultural and economic environments, the respondents differed in terms of their levels of materialism based on their nationality. According to Rakrachakarn, Moschis, Ong and Shannon (2015), religiosity was another factor mediating materialism and life satisfaction. The study was based on a large-scale study in Malaysia which included several religious subcultures (mainly Muslims, Buddhists, and Hindus).

2.7.5 Materialism in Thailand

When taking into account materialism and its presence within Thai society, Sangkhawasi and Johri (2007) highlighted that Thai senior citizens (older than 60 years) and low-income people were most susceptible to materialism, especially regarding products from which people can perceive status. This trend is not unusual as, compared to working age people, senior citizens have more leisure time to pay attention to and seek meaning from items around them. These materialistic senior citizens are therefore easily susceptible to “status” brand strategy.

Low-income urban people also aspire to gain a higher status and are more motivated to own products which increase their standing in society, especially because they cannot afford buying high-priced goods. The brand strategy attached to status easily appeals to materialistic urban people with low incomes. It is common in Thailand to find low- and middle-income people emulating the consumption behaviours of people belonging to richer socio-economic segments.

Furthermore, it is worth noting that items symbolizing high status easily influence Thai citizens with a higher education especially from high profile colleges. As they typically belong to a higher class, these people have greater chances of being exposed to these high-status symbol items than others. Their basic need for “social affiliation” is also greater and is characterized by the possession of status symbols at every stage of their mobility upwards in Thai society. Within these classes, the materialists must search for certain status signals to indicate their moving status.

Working groups (employees) are also among the most vulnerable categories affected by status-symbol materialism. Like educated people from the high-profile schools, people in occupations that require contact between colleagues, supervisors or subordinates and business associates tend to be more in need of “belonging to a particular class” and need to be “recognized and accepted” in the higher status class.

2.7.6 Materialism and Social Media

The literature on materialism in relation to social media and online consumption behaviour reveals that social networking sites provide outlets for customers to access, distribute and exchange information of different kinds regarding

products and experiences. Given the increasing popularity of these sites, marketers employ them to communicate with their potential consumers.

While prior literature has already documented the influence of traditional media on materialism (Churchill & Moschis, 1979; Ger & Belk, 1999), research into the online relationship between social media and materialism has been limited. Kamal, Chu, and Pedram (2013) recently looked at this relationship and discovered that customers appear to have higher rates of materialism when their social network intensity of usage increases. Likewise, Bush and Gilbert (2002) found that consumers who spend more time on social media have higher levels of materialism than those who spend time reading newspapers. While studying more recent research, it is necessary to understand that social media users build an identity that portrays themselves in order to encourage engagement from other users (Haferkamp & Krämer, 2011).

Unlike television, social media usage occurs mainly individually and in more private environments. Social networking discussions can be as genuine as people's conversations (Mangold & Faulds, 2009). Therefore, the impact of advertising content on social media is more personal than on television (Fournier & Avery, 2011). With customers always having access to social media through smartphones, in different contextual settings of time, place, and even state of mind, messages from brands or users can reach users anytime.

Television programming prepares the audience for when they will see the ads by showing them between shows, whereas social media advertising messages have various degrees of ad placements impacting the users more profoundly depending on their emotional state of mind (Joyce & Harwood, 2014). Thus, social media marketing practices target the individual users directly, in an intimate and personal setting, and have potentially higher levels of impact on creating materialistic desires, resulting in subsequent increase in consumption patterns in the market.

2.7.7 The Antecedent Role of Materialism in this Study

In this study, the author has adopted Belk's definition of materialism as an innate tendency to have high-level commitment towards material objects (Belk, 1985) and therefore the construct has been placed an antecedent of three negative consumption behaviours.

Within the literature, when materialism was studied as an antecedent far-reaching repercussion have been discovered on both an individual and societal level (Larsen et al., 1999). The harmful implications of materialism as an antecedent are well-documented in general (Scott, 2009).

Materialism is linked to a variety of psychological illnesses (e.g., paranoia and depression) (Kasser & Ryan, 1993), marital conflicts (Poduska, 1992), a proclivity for shoplifting (Larsen et al., 1999), a more favorable attitude toward borrowing (e.g., excessive use of credit cards), and a lower likelihood of saving money (Larsen et al., 1999). According to Kasser (2002), materialistic teenagers are more prone to engage in undesirable activities such as drinking and consuming drugs.

Happiness studies concentrating on materialism as a predictor have discovered a negative association between materialism and subjective wellbeing. For example, Wright and Larsen (1993) did a meta-analysis research to investigate the association between materialism and life satisfaction, and discovered that people with a materialistic mindset had lower life satisfaction. Several academics have reported similar conclusions.

Several academics have pointed out the detrimental societal effects of materialism. For example, "the myth of materialism" i.e., the prevalent notion that the greatest way to get happiness is to make and spend money, (Martin, 2008) is partly to blame for the high frequency of sadness, loneliness, and shyness (Dill & Anderson, 1999). It has been said that loneliness affects 26% of the people in the modern materialistic United States at any given time (Dill & Anderson, 1999). Materialistic principles, according to Kasser (2002), are at odds with many interests, such as making the world a better place and wanting to contribute to equality and justice. As a result, according to Ghadrian (2010), materialism is linked to a decline in morality in human cultures. He pointed out that materialism contributes to a variety of socioeconomic issues such as child labor, human trafficking, and forced labor.

Furthermore, materialism, which leads to overconsumption, has been identified as a fundamental hindrance to long-term consumption. Kasser (2002) also found that materialistic societies are less concerned about environmental and ecological challenges. According to Ghadrian (2010), eighty-six percent of the world's products

are consumed by twenty percent of the world's population residing in industrialized (also materialistic) countries.

Materialism as an antecedent has also been proved to have positive consequences on individuals, corporations, and society (Richins & Rudmin, 1994). Materialistic persons are seen as people that work hard and for longer hours in order to acquire more money to satisfy their demand for stuff, rather than spending that time doing things they enjoy (Richins & Dawson, 1992). Their high levels of production and consumption can thereby boost earnings for firms while also providing funds for research and development. Greater productivity, technical advances, and higher living standards can all result from increased research and development (Kasser et al., 2007; Richins & Rudmin, 1994). According to Goldberg et al. (2003), materialistic teens buy more, know more about products and services, and are more susceptible to advertising and promotional efforts. As a result, they have the potential to be early adopters, trend setters, and opinion leaders among their peers.

Within the sense of self needs for support to a considerable degree, we are what we have. (Tuan, 1980). This idea is used by Belk (1988) to argue that possessions assist adolescents and adults in managing their identities and creating or maintaining a sense of self. Materialism, according to Wong et al. (2011), can also be used to meet self-related needs such as belonging, distinctiveness, efficacy, and self-esteem. They argue that materialistic people may have increased self-esteem. This is because they believe that financial belongings and acquisitions will make them more socially appealing, or because the desire is a situational response to a danger to their self-esteem, especially when they feel socially ostracized.

Material things, according to Burroughs and Rindfleisch (1997), can help children cope with stress when their parents separate or divorce because they can provide a feeling of stability, permanence, identity, control, and a positive self-image. Materialism, according to Richins and Dawson (1992), can also be used to relieve stress. Human self-concept or identity, according to Claxton and Murray (1994), is found more in highly valued objects than in humans.

Material goods and attachments are a way for people to convey their private emotions, desires, values, memories, impulses, public (family relationships, social roles, national, ethnic, and religious affiliations), and desired self to others (Webster & Beatty,

1997). A person's private value of pleasure and excitement in life, for example, might be gauged by their possession of a diverse range of recreational equipment. How highly a person appreciates his or her Bible or wedding ring might be used to convey or derive public values like Christianity and marriage (Richins, 1994).

Other psychological theories in social sciences confirm the view that materialism can be an innate personality trait. For instance, in evolutionary psychology, according to the endowment effect certain individuals tend to dislike losing objects they own since their births. This trait, known as the endowment effect, is likely to have been passed down by evolution, as it is visible cross-culturally and in non-human primates as well. The endowment effect can be explained through the lenses of the attachment theory which suggests that the material ownership of an object creates a non-transferable valence association between the individual's self and the object itself (Dingus, 2014). Material objects are incorporated into the self-concept of the owner, becoming part of his or her identity and imbuing it with attributes related to the owner's self-concept.

Self-associations may take the form of an emotional attachment to the object. Once an attachment has been formed, the potential loss of the object is perceived as a threat to the self (Beggan, 1992). As such, loss aversion is another theory which can help us explain the attachment that materialists feel towards material goods. In this case the possibility of risking an object for a potential reward cannot compensate for the pain of giving up an endowment. As a result, people who present this innate personality trait attach high values to material possessions. They would not separate themselves from these material objects but they would rather try to accumulate more goods and belongings without risking the ones already owned (Tversky & Kahneman, 1991).

For example, in the study by Peske, Liu, Johnson, Kauffman, and Kardos (2001), it was found that teachers worked harder to ensure they maintained their qualification for a bonus that had already been provisionally awarded, rather than they did for a higher bonus that they could earn in the future. Such a finding can be explained by the psychological inertia theory (Samuel & Jablow, 2010), which states that individuals prefer a state of "no change"—including keeping possession of things they already own—unless they are offered a significant incentive to change their lives' status quo.

In a classic experiment conducted to confirm the endowment effect (Knetsch, 1989), participants were given a mug and then asked if they were willing to trade it for some Swiss candy that actually had a higher retail value. Despite this fact, 80% of the participants were unwilling to make the trade. The consequences of the endowment effect are frequently assumed to be related to loss-aversion psychology—a theory that states that people ascribe a higher value to losing something than they do to obtaining something.

Interestingly, research suggests that certain cultures discourage this evolutionary trait in the individuals who have it, whereas other societies enhance it. In the study by Ger and Belk (1996), Romanians were found to be the most materialistic, followed by those from the USA, New Zealand, Ukraine, Germany, and Turkey. These results suggest that materialism is neither unique to Western countries nor directly related to income and a nation's spending power. Instead, they show that where there is social, economic, and political turmoil, rather than clinging to the security of traditional ways of consumption, individuals turn to new and more expansive consumption desires as an internal psychological response (Ger & Belk, 1996).

2.8 Social Media Advertising (SMADV)

Social media advertising is aimed at increasing website traffic and access to certain brands across various social networking platforms. Its objective is to inspire users to share content with their peers through their social media networks (Shareef, Mukerji, Dwivedi, Rana, & Islam, 2019), possibly making the content viral. In the Merriam-Webster dictionary, "viral" is described as "spreading very rapidly to many people, particularly through the Internet". In terms of social media advertising, viral content will spread to large numbers of people worldwide, and even to people who were not originally part of the targeted audiences regarding paid advertising. Therefore, user engagement is a key factor in today's digital and social media marketing environment. It is important that businesses compete in the online market not only in producing interesting content that users may share but also by actively engaging consumers as they have the power to determine where they will spend their time and money from a large number of options.

Van Doorn et al. (2010) indicated that customer engagement behaviours go beyond purchases and can result in motivational drivers. Engaged customers can become extremely positive or negative, and this can be transformed into positive or negative financial and non-financial effects for the company. It can involve activities such as electronic word-of-mouth reviews, more formal reviews and supporting other customers. Engagement is a repeated experience that affirm a client's financial, psychological or physical interest in a brand (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2012).

2.8.1 Attitudes Towards Advertising Content on Social Media

Attitudes towards advertising traditionally were defined by Armstrong and Kotler (2000) as any paid form of non-personal presentation and promotion by an identified sponsor of ideas, products or services. Belch and Belch (2003) asserted that there are three attitudinal components: cognitive (an individual's beliefs regarding an object), affective (an individual's feelings towards the object that may be positive or negative) and behavioural (an individual's readiness to respond to the object in the form of behaviour). These constructs are introduced based on the theory of planned behaviour elaborated by Ajzen and Fishbein (2011). According to this perspective, people's attitudes are produced spontaneously and consistently from their beliefs accessible in their memory, which then guide their corresponding behaviours.

Dibb, Simkin, Pride, and Ferrell (1991) observed that there is still controversy over how a positive attitude towards an ad can influence customer behaviour that leads them to make unsustainable purchases. The authors believed that both consumer attitudes towards an ad and the products advertised greatly influenced the success or failure of a firm's sale strategy. Whether an individual's attitude towards an ad will affect his or her purchase behaviour depends on factors such as level of involvement, knowledge and experience, accessibility of attitudes, situational factors and also personality variables (Hoyer, MacInnis, & Pieters, 2001). Similarly, Carvalho (2015) reported that the role of attitudes as significant predictors of purchase behaviours was also dependent on additional factors.

Hyun Jung Park and Lin (2018) found that over 20% of the consumers in their study believed that the attitudes they had towards social media content were important to their final purchase decision, while another 20% stated that their attitudes

helped them decide what to purchase. Verma, Chandra, and Kumar's (2019) research among undergraduate students revealed that attitudes towards social media advertising aided in making the purchase decision and resulted in more competitive prices.

Traditional ads on both broadcast and print media have severe limitations. They are costly, one-way methods of communication with limited targeting strategies. Subsequently, due to certain features that enable advertisers to transcend the limitations of conventional mass media, advertising is increasingly shifting from the traditional media to the World Wide Web (Mulhern, 2009). The introduction of the Internet and digital advertising, also known as Advertising 2.0, has influenced today's advertising industry enormously (Stelzner, 2014). This is partly because, in an online platform characterized by user freedom, control and dialogue, advertising 2.0 utilizes enhanced features that enable two-way (or multi-way) communication. It features a new degree of interactivity and customer engagement in advertising applications (Blackshaw & Nazzaro, 2004).

In addition, most of the shortcomings of traditional advertising media (i.e., print and broadcast media), such as the one-way nature of communication and its costly nature, have been fixed by Web 2.0 and social media advertisement (Stelzner, 2014). Among both individuals and organizations, social media use was found to have increased to at least once a day among a majority (59%) within the sample considered (Shareef, Mukerji, Dwivedi, Rana, & Islam, 2019). While the study was limited in terms of its scope, it still provided companies with vital information on how they can advertise their products and services through social media.

2.9 Social Media Brand-Generated Content (SMBGC)

In order to distribute their copyrighted content, corporations have started to use social network websites as their preferred advertising media (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Mangold and Faulds (2009) defined it as a form of communication which is carefully designed by the organization to display its business values, as such, it is viewed as a powerful and on-budget social media marketing tool (Brodie, Ilic, Juric, & Hollebeek, 2013). Also, Goyal (2014) described purchase intention to portray the idea of consumers' retention, a situation when consumers promise themselves to buy a

particular product on the next trip to the shop. Brand-generated content (BGC) was described by Schivinski and Dabrowski (2016) as one form of advertisement that is produced and managed entirely by the brand. Through the combination of firm-initiated communication and consumer-implemented relations, BGC enables businesses to develop, retain and improve their relationships with their target customers. BGC can improve the learning process of customers by enhancing brand engagement on social media (Schivinski & Dabrowski, 2016). BGC can also be used to manipulate consumers' brand expectations and to promote their purchasing intention (Cheng & Khan, 2017). Diwanji (2017) defined purchase intention as a motivational factor which encourages consumers to be willing to engage in more purchases. At the same time, it can be seen to have a powerful positive impact on sales and profits. In addition, BGC also helps create a brand's reputation (Poulis, Rizomyliotis, & Konstantoulaki, 2019).

2.10 Social Media User-Generated Content (SMUGC)

In contrast to BGC, UGC creates additional sources for consumers who are searching for product-related information (Berthon, Pitt, & Campbell, 2008). Social media encourages customers to express themselves through sharing posts, creating and maintaining discussions, and sharing their ideas through the creation of their own content (Jansen, Zhang, Sobel, & Chowdury, 2009). User-Generated Content (UGC) is the standard term for content that is produced by users and consumers. Bolin Olsson and de Vries (2015) identified UGC as content generated by online users to boost engagement or lead to conversations. Three UGC requirements were identified: 1) UGC content is published on the Internet, either on a public website or on social networking sites; 2) UGC involves a creative effort to construct a new work as opposed to only re-posting the content of others; and 3) UGC must be created outside of professional practices.

UGC is perceived by consumers to be more trustworthy than BGC because users not only provide a personal message, but also tend to share the negative side of products or services as well (Cheng & Khan, 2017). According to Pongpaew, Speece and Tiangsoongnern (2017) (p. 274) even if users are strong brand enthusiasts, it is the

community of other enthusiasts on brand or influencers pages with whom they ultimately wish to engage.

Creating testimonials about their interactions and experiences with brands expressed through audio-visual content, also called Consumer-Generated Advertising (CGA), drives consumers to generate indirect advertisements (Busser & Shulga, 2019). Visiting brand pages or groups dedicated to certain products and services on social media favors users' interaction and value co-creation which in turn enhances or reduce the attitudes towards certain products and brands and users appreciate the facilitator role played by social media platforms (Zadeh et al. 2019). CGA was described by Yahyazadehfar, Kamareh, and Tahmasebi Roshan (2020) as any public consumer content which focuses on educating others about a specific service or product.

2.11 Materialism's Relationship with Attitudes To Advertising Content on Social Media

According to the findings of a study by Osmonbekov, Gregory, Brown, and Xie (2009), materialism-addictive buying behaviour is explained by attitudes towards advertising. Therefore, in order to determine whether materialism affects attitudes towards social media advertising, attitudes towards social media branded content and unbranded content, this study will assume in its first propositions (Proposition 1, 2 and 3) that higher levels of materialism are related to higher attitudes towards social media ads, branded content and user-generated content.

2.12 Materialism and Attitudes Towards Social Media Advertisement (SMADV)

In the relevant literature, materialism is linked to consumption behaviours that have been positively correlated with the high consumption of media. For instance, a positive association between materialism and television viewing has been identified in many studies (Churchill & Moschis, 1979; Richins, 1987). Other studies have found

that materialism was related to the reading symbols, cues, and appeals used (Belk, 1985) in national and international journals.

Richins and Rudmin (1994) and subsequently others such as Harmon (2001) have observed that users with high materialistic views often engage in comparison between themselves and “idealized” messages that are found in social media ads. Two important features of this social comparison theory include peer communication and idealized media images (Schiffman & Kanuk, 1991), both of which can be found on social media platforms. While Internet-based marketing communications have traditionally been used as an information-centric tactic, new applications are increasingly being used for brand building on online platforms in a way that conveys brand symbolism or consumption-related attitudes (Belch & Belch, 2003).

Other researchers, such as Hye- Jung Park, Burns, and Rabolt (2007), found that for consumer attitudes and behaviours towards Internet advertising, materialism was an important motivational factor. Past analysis has also suggested that individuals with higher levels of materialism appear to be heavier consumers of media. Chang and Zhang (2008) more recently expanded the structure of materialism to the field of virtual space, noting that materialism was a positively contributing factor towards the attitudes and motivations of users for purchasing online gaming. Consequently, they also tend to have more positive attitudes towards advertising and sponsored content.

Just as with advertising on television, social networking sites allow ads with rich media formats, such as content that combines visual elements, sound, and video. Unlike advertising on television, however, ads on social network sites also include consumer interaction and feedback. Moreover, many users identify with and seek support from online ads (Caplan & Turner, 2007; Steinkuehler & Williams, 2006). Lehdonvirta (2010) argued that social media ads have increasingly become places where material possessions and consumption styles are virtually shared between users. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that individuals with high materialistic levels have more positive attitudes towards social media advertising content.

2.12.1 Materialism and Attitudes To Social Media User-generated Content (SMUGC)

Sharing social media user-generated content is a way to spark and create brand desire. Research suggests that materialistic individuals pursue short-term rewards at the expense of long-term goals (Dittmar & Bond, 2010) because they have strong brand desire and they need immediate gratification (O'Donoghue & Rabin, 2000). In particular, luxury items that are widely promoted online by user-generated content are an object of immediate gratification that generates jealousy and envy in other users. People with high levels of materialism hold a myopic view of life, ignoring long-term negative consequences for the self in favor of focusing on short-term benefits. Materialists own and possess primarily to enhance their social status in society (Fitzmaurice & Comegys, 2006). Therefore, luxury brands are particularly engaging to the materialists in the social media arena as they can help them signal their wealth, success and status. This is especially true for tourism and lifestyle brands, as it can be powerful in showcasing a destination through a visitor's lens (Dahl, 2018).

According to the Global Confidence in Advertising report by Nielsen (2019), which surveyed more than 28,000 Internet respondents in 56 countries, 92% of customers around the world said they placed more trust in user-generated content on social media. Posts are more relevant if they are shared by friends or acquaintances. The second most trusted source of brand information on social media is online consumer reviews (eWom), with 70% of global consumers surveyed online indicating that they trusted this form of review. When making purchases, materialist place great consideration on the opinions of others, because they like to compare themselves to others, especially on social media (Donnelly, Ksendzova, Howell, Vohs, & Baumeister 2016). Therefore, it is assumed that people with high levels of materialism will be more inclined to enjoy social media user-generated content.

2.12.2 Materialism and Attitudes Towards Social Media Brand Generated Content (SMBGC)

Social Media Brand Generated Content (SMBGC) has been discussed in the literature in terms of its effects on purchase intention (Diwanji, 2017; Ertimur & Gilly, 2012; Schivinski & Dabrowski, 2016). Various studies have clarified how SMBGC is

viewed by consumers and what effects it has. In this respect, research has shown that customers see BGC as equally relevant to UGC in their pre-purchase assessments.

Perceived expertise can give positive influence and reduce uncertainty, which can increase consumer purchase intention (Adjei, Noble, & Noble, 2010), specifically, consumers view BGC as providing more expertise-related content than UGC (Cheng & Khan, 2017). The perceived reputation of the source of the knowledge can influence customer product consent and help the brand positively influence the intention to buy (Bahtar & Muda, 2016). The credibility of the information source can affect consumer consent about the product and help the brand to enhance consumer purchase intention (Bahtar & Muda, 2016). Therefore, it is assumed that people with high levels of materialism will be more inclined to enjoy social media brand generated content (Kamal, Chu, & Pedram 2015).

2.13 Social Media Intensity Usage Behaviour (SMIUB)

Social media intensity is defined as a social media user's level of activity and engagement with social media (Ellison, Steinfield, & Lampe 2007). Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) classified social media platforms based on media theories related to social presence, media richness and self-presentation. This concept was introduced to test the "double jeopardy" principle in the social media environment. Double Jeopardy was ideated by McPhee in 1960 and applied to marketing to explain predictable patterns in research findings by Ehrenberg, Goodhardt, and Barwise (1990). They affirm that a brand's market penetration (or market share) and frequency to buy are strongly related. Large brands have a double advantage: they enjoy more customers (first jeopardy) as they appear more frequently and are well known and therefore enjoy more buying frequency (second jeopardy) from customers. This applies well with social media advertising which, by targeting specific audiences effectively, allows companies' products and services to appear very frequently and therefore influence the purchasing behaviours of social media heavy users.

This concept is in contradiction to the theory of planned behaviour proposed by Ajzen (1985) in which attitudes are used to predict and understand behaviours. It posits that behaviours are immediately determined by behavioural intentions, which in

turn are determined by a combination of three factors: attitude toward the behaviour, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control.

The intensity of using Facebook can be distinguished from the user's time spent on Facebook, number of friends, and number of community memberships on Facebook, because the latter does not necessarily reflect on the emotional connection while using social media platforms. One may passively spend hours on Facebook, or one may have 4,000 friends belonging to many communities. However, membership of communities does not necessarily emphasize the involvement of the user on Facebook.

We assume that the concept of Ellison et al. (2007) can uncover deeper notions of Facebook involvement and re-evaluate the facets that may be relevant considering the huge number of diverse users who integrate Facebook use into their everyday life. The emotional connection between the individual and Facebook may not be discovered by studies analyzing only Facebook habits, but there is a need to understand users' behaviours while they are surfing on social media (Alhabash, Park, Kononova, Chiang, & Wise, 2012).

Facebook intensity differs from motivations (Aladwani, 2014). Motivations primarily illustrate why individuals use Facebook, while Facebook intensity grasps the user's degree of participation. In terms of pathology, we distinguish Facebook addiction from Facebook intensity: Facebook intensity is not inherently a problematic activity, and it does not extend to Facebook addiction (Masur, Reinecke, Ziegele, & Quiring, 2014). Social media intensity refers to the strength of involvement in the activity itself and it intends to grasp the extent to which social media platforms are integrated into people's everyday lives.

2.13.1 Social Media Intensity Usage Behaviour and Negative Consumption Behaviours

When reviewing empirical studies on the link between social media intensity and compulsive buying, it was discovered that the literature on the subject is limited, and thus only few of those features have been investigated.

Bighiu, Manolică, and Roman (2015) specified a gender specific difference stating that females were more likely to be suffering from online compulsive buying. Trotzke, Starcke, Müller, and Brand (2015), attempted to establish a link between social

media intensity and compulsive buying behaviour by claiming that the former provided an outlet for those who already have a tendency to flee in the form of shopping to alleviate negative situations or circumstances, implying that social media intensity does have an impact. Authors such as Rose and Dhandayudham (2014), have concentrated on the effects of compulsive shopping in an online environment and have successfully profiled the features of such subjects. The study recognizes a gap in identifying potential predictors of Online Shopping Addiction (OSA) and establishes it as a dependent variable of the following sub-functions: Low self-esteem, poor self-control, unpleasant emotion, pleasure, gender, social anonymity, and cognitive overload are all factors to consider. OSA is separated into stages such as salience, euphoria, tolerance, withdrawal symptoms, conflict, and relapse, according to the study, each of which is influenced by the elements listed above. As a result, this study has successfully provided a clearer understanding of how to detect a shopping addiction in an online environment. The study's drawback was that OSA was not identified as either compulsive or impulsive, which resulted in generalizing all results, which may not always be accurate. Hartston (2012) looked at the link between excessive Internet use and compulsive shopping among respondents, demonstrating that technological advancements and marketing tactics have brought the modern population closer together over the virtual world, thereby eliminating social contact and resulting in excessive Internet usage that has served as an escape route from real life. This is one of the few associations that corresponds to what our study is attempting to establish through the investigation. According to Shanmugam (2011), the relationship between an individual's self-regulation levels and access to information is likely to lessen online Compulsive Buying levels. However, he believes that the combination between emotional and mood enhancement and online activity level will increase the likelihood of the respondent becoming an e-compulsive buyer. This supported the claim that social media high engagement could be a sign of someone suffering from compulsive shopping in an online environment.

Gonzales and Hancock (2011) discovered that social media boosts users' self-esteem. People that use social networking have more control over the information that is shared, so they are more likely to communicate good information about themselves with their circle of friends (Gonzales & Hancock, 2011). Positive feedback

frequently follows such positive information, which boosts one's self-esteem and leads to a variety of positive social advantages and well-being (Ellison, Steinfield & Lampe 2007). Wilcox and Stephen (2013) found that higher self-esteem resulting from online social network use (e.g., Facebook) is likely to lower a person's self-control, leading to more indulgent behaviour (Wilcox, Kramer, & Sen, 2011) such as unhealthy food consumption. If a consumer had experienced a prior altruistic or virtuous act that established a favorable self-concept, Khan and Dhar (2006) discovered that hedonic and opulent product selections outweigh utilitarian product choices. Similarly, Wilcox et al. (2011) discovered that high self-esteem encourages more indulgent behaviour. When people feel good about themselves, their self-esteem rises, they are more prone to lose control of their actions and act on instinct or indulgence rather than rationalization. Because conspicuous products are ones that flaunt riches through lavish spending that satisfies a person's demand for prestige (Podoshen, & Andrzejewski, 2012), their consumption serves a hedonistic rather than a utilitarian or necessity reason. Based on previous research on the impact of social networking on self-image and self-control (Khan & Dhar 2006); Wilcox et al. 2011), the frequency with which people use social media causes them to make irrational decisions by increasing their spending on luxurious goods, also known as conspicuous goods.

The literature on social media engagement and impulse buying behaviour reveals that the majority of study in this topic focuses on customers' cognitive and affective responses to customized material. Despite their limitations, a few research has provided empirical data that suggests customization does influence online impulse purchase (Dawson & Kim, 2010; de Kervenoael et al., 2009; Koufaris et al., 2001). The social media environment is said to encourage impulse purchases. For example, LaRose (2001) claims that electronic commerce might undermine customers' purchasing constraint by luring them in with features like appealing product stimuli, point programs, and chat rooms, leading to impulse purchases. Previous study has found a number of factors that influence online impulse purchases, including: photos of products, banner ads, as well as low prices and exclusive deals (de Kervenoael et al., 2009).

Other studies have looked into whether social media engagement and online impulse purchase is a mental state or a personality trait (Wells et al., 2011). Zhang et al.

(2006), for example, established the importance of impulsivity in an individual's propensity of making online impulse purchases. Furthermore, the impact of environmental signals (such as website quality) on people's propensity of engaging in online impulse purchase has been investigated (Parboteeah et al., 2009; Wells et al., 2011). As previously stated, the fundamental idea of personalization is to relate messages to certain elements of one's self (Kalyanaraman & Sundar, 2006). The question of whether personalized adverts influence customers' online impulse purchases is based on previous research that demonstrates the self and impulse purchases are intimately linked (Dittmar & Drury, 2000; Kacen & Lee, 2002; Phau & Lo, 2004). Self-concept, self-identity, cultural values, and other aspects of the self have been shown to influence impulse buying (Dittmar & Drury, 2000; Kacen & Lee, 2002; Phau & Lo, 2004).

The abundance of personal data due to the high usage of social media platforms allows for the construction of social media adverts that use complex targeting possibilities. For online merchants, this is a promising channel for generating online sales. These shops may take use of these targeting capabilities, which ensure that the social media ads that are given to individuals are relevant in a way that is unrivaled by other forms of advertising (Ganguly, 2015). Given the increased chances for self-expression provided by social media, it is expected that customers' perceptions of personalization of social media ads will impact their online impulse buying tendency in this study. This study aims to see what elements related with customization have an impact on customers' online impulse purchase behaviour.

2.13.2 Materialism and Social Media Intensity Usage Behaviour (SMIUB)

Social media networks offer avenues for different types of information to be gathered, posted, and exchanged by potential customers. Given the growing success of social media, advertisers have embraced it in order to communicate with their potential customers. While the impact of materialism on traditional media may have already been vastly documented in prior literature (Ger & Belk, 1999), there has been minimal investigation of the materialism-social media relationship (Thoumrungrroje, 2018). However, when Kamal et al. (2013) explored this relationship, they discovered that

when people are heavy users of social networking sites, these same people appear to have higher degrees of materialism. Likewise, Bush and Gilbert (2002) found that heavy consumers of internet media had higher levels of materialism than those who only read newspapers. Building on this research stream, it is assumed that more materialistic individuals will be more active and engaged users of online social networking platforms.

2.13.3 The Role of Social Media Intensity Usage Behaviour in Mediation

Social media intensity can become unhealthy and excessive in highly engaged users. This is characterized by a lack of control over behaviour which may become continuous despite having a negative impact on life wellbeing (Franchina, Vanden Abeele, Van Rooij, Lo Coco, & De Marez, 2018). According to the gratification theory, users utilize social media to fulfil specific needs such as seeking online emotional support, which may lead to psychological dependency on social media (Wang & Wang, 2013). The more online emotional support a user receives from social media, the higher the frequency and intensity of their online interactions. Similarly, the more emotional support users gain, the more they will use social media to maintain this status and to increase their level of emotional support (Brailovskaia, Schillack, & Margraf, 2018). Empirical studies indicate that heavy online social media usage is positively linked with negative consumption (Wang & Wang, 2013), materialism (Brailovskaia, Margraf, & Köllner, 2019), and addiction to social networking sites (Liu & Ma, 2018).

The main rationale for using social media intensity as a second mediator of the relationship between materialism and harmful consumption behaviours may be explained by the theory of social proof elaborated by Cialdini (1987). The theory states that if an action is compatible with what others seem to be thinking, it is more likely to be done. Social proof is a psychological and social law wherein people copy the actions of others in an attempt to undertake behaviour in a given situation. According to Cialdini (2007, p. 597), we view a behaviour as “more correct in a given situation to the degree that we see others performing it”. Consequently, in situations where users are uncertain about what to do, they would assume that experts, celebrities, or close friends would have more knowledge and therefore should know what is better to do.

Social media users making judgments based on other people’s behaviours is also known as the halo effect by the psychologist Edward Thorndike (Cherry, 2016).

For instance, the content provided by experts is useful as they are perceived to be more knowledgeable in their area of specialization. Endorsers or celebrities manage to sell as users want to emulate them. Lastly, the reviews shared by other users are considered salient as they have experienced the product or service before.

In an attempt to explain the social proof effects, an experiment by Asch (1956) showed that people would accept that one line corresponded to the length of a clearly different line, even though they were visibly different, if another person said the same. His enforcement findings have been widely repeated in a number of countries, with the result that more collectivist societies appear to be much more vulnerable to social proof (Cialdini, Wosinska, Barrett, Butner, & Gornik-Durose, 1999).

Social norm rules provide expectations about appropriate behaviour in a given context and represent an implicit social consensus and therefore individuals act following the same mechanism (Miller & Prentice, 2016). An explanation for this need of users to obtain social proof may be linked with the herding behaviour which refers to an alignment of thoughts or behaviours of individuals in a group (Earls, 2009). Herding refers to the phenomenon where people follow other people's decisions or actions. The term is used in marketing to describe how consumers imitate other customers' purchasing decisions.

Decisions are generally communicated in social media through electronic word of mouth, in posts or through pages. Social media provides consumers with new types of real-time information that can potentially enhance demand for products or services. In particular, showing sales information or positive reviews from experts, influencers and close friends to customers can increase their certainty about product quality, inducing them to make the same purchase.

Modern online retailing practices provide consumers with new types of real-time information that can potentially increase demand. This effect can be particularly relevant for service experiences such as entertainment, music, and restaurants since their quality is inherently uncertain. Social media word-of-mouth reviews can increase product awareness as product information spreads through users' networks, increasing demand directly while amplifying existing quality signals such as high numbers of likes, positive comments and favorable reviews (Voramontri & Klieb, 2019).

Therefore, this study assumes that highly materialistic individuals who are frequent users of social media and tend to compare themselves to other users will be more engaged while using social media platforms, spending more time on them and contributing their own content. Users spending more time and being more engaged are more likely to be exposed to experts, influencers or other users' messages, comments, posts and reviews, which could trigger the desire to acquire social proof under the assumption that the greater the number of people who find an idea or a product valuable, the more this will be correct. In this way, materialists engage in more harmful consumption behaviours as they try to emulate the unique experiences of influencers or by buying products that are widely popular in social media communities, displayed by a multitude of users, or suggested by well-established experts. In this case users are influenced not necessarily by the quality of the ad. They make purchases which are driven by emotions based on the suggestions that if they make the purchase, they will be more popular and gain social acceptance. Uses and Gratifications Theory

Uses and gratifications theory allows in this study the researcher to better understand the link between attitudes towards social media content and social media engagement. The theory states that users actively seek out a certain media content to meet their demands (Severin & Tankard, 1997). The uses and gratifications theory was developed in 1944 and it is often used to determine why users choose specific content within media (Katz et al., 1973). It was first used in 1954 as an extension of the needs and motivation theory (Katz et al., 1973), it was then used to understand people's intents to watch specific television shows (Katz et al., 1973) and how they perceived mass media content (Katz et al., 1973). Uses and gratifications theory has become a popular theoretical framework for explaining the reasons behind the use of various forms of media since the 1980s (Katz et al., 1973).

Uses and gratifications theory has also been used to analyse the motivations for teenagers' ongoing use of social media (Mäntymäki & Riemer, 2014) and the negative repercussions of social media usage on consumption behaviours (Mäntymäki & Islam, 2016). More recently, the theory has been applied to a variety of technology adoption contexts, including Internet use (Dhir et al., 2015, Dhir et al., 2016, Dhir et al., 2017, Dhir et al., 2017b), online photo sharing (Malik et al., 2016), photo tagging (Dhir et al., 2017a;), social media (Bui, 2014; Liu et al., 2013; Zhang et al., 2016). The current

study has applied the uses and gratifications theory for two reasons. Firstly, the uses and gratifications theory is a well-known and well-proven theoretical framework that analyze people's intention to watch and choosing certain media content. Secondly, scholars have effectively applied uses and gratifications theory in a variety of situations, including social media and other forms of electronic commerce. Furthermore, uses and gratification theory helps us justify the link that has been established between attitudes towards social media content and social media engagement. The theory sees users as active searchers of information while obtaining viewing content on social media platforms, therefore if they see content that exactly answers their needs or demands, they will be much more likely to engage with that by clicking share, like and comment.

2.14 Compulsive Shopping Behaviour

Compulsive shopping behaviour was defined by O'Guinn and Faber (1989) as a chronic habit of purchasing goods repeatedly and excessively. It is characterized by excessive or poorly controlled preoccupations, urges or behaviours regarding shopping and spending, which then lead to adverse consequences. This has increased steadily among young adults in recent decades (Müller, Arikian, De Zwaan, & Mitchell, 2013) and according to the studies of Dittmar and Drury (2000) and Xu (2008), it can be provoked by sociological, psychological and biological factors. Compulsive buyers reveal their materialistic tendencies through their excessive involvement in uncontrollable purchasing (Chang, Yan, & Eckman, 2014). Compulsive buyers purchase goods not only for utilitarian purposes but also to gain social status as a material symbol (Nga et al., 2011).

According to the literature on compulsive behaviour, there are many different kinds but the most well studied are hoarding, eating disorders, and gambling. Hoarding has been associated with problems of impulse control, particularly marked by acquisitions such as compulsive purchasing, kleptomania and the excessive acquisition of free items (Mueller, Mitchell, Crosby, Glaesmer, & de Zwaan, 2009). Frost, Steketee, and Tolin (2015) found that half of the hoarding cases in their research sample had compulsive buying tendencies, while 86% of the sample had at least mild acquisition issues when the propensity to acquire free stuff excessively was included.

According to the Medical Association of America, binge eating disorder is also referred to as a compulsive behaviour. Scientifically known as bulimia nervosa, the common feelings associated with binge eating are guilt, depression and self-disgust (Mitchell, Specker, & de Zwaan, 1991). The problems arising from bulimia are higher levels of depression (Mitchell et al., 1991), anxiety (Williamson, Davis, Duchmann, McKenzie, & Watkins, 1990) and lower self-esteem (Mitchell et al., 1991), all symptoms which can be found in compulsive buyers.

There are a number of major similarities between compulsive buyers and people affected by binge eating disorders. Bulimic people are much more likely than the general population to consume alcohol and abuse substances (Luce, Engler, & Crowther, 2007). Secondly, they have an inability to control the desire to overconsume and tend to have problems related to the regulation of impulses.

Compulsive buyers, serial gamblers, and binge eaters share several traits. One characteristic that has been associated with all three groups is greater impulsivity (Cassin & von Ranson, 2005). Impulsivity has also been related to particular genetic factors and neurobiological indices, with greater comorbidity (Waxman, 2009), poorer psychological functioning (Duncan et al., 2005), less effective coping strategies (Nagata, Kawarada, Kiriike, & Iketani, 2000) and poorer treatment outcomes (Sohlberg, Norring, Holmgren, & Rosmark, 1989). In general, all these behaviours are characterized by a failure to resist an impulse, motivation, or urge to commit an act that is harmful to the individual and/or others (Potenza, 2014). The enhancing impact of gambling, purchasing, or binge eating supports the theory that these conditions are related to dysfunctions in the reward system of the brain (Probst & van Eimeren, 2013).

Getting into the specifics of compulsive buying behaviour, O'Guinn and Faber (1989) described it as chronic habit of repeatedly purchasing items that becomes a primary response to unpleasant events or emotions and whose primary aim is to restore a positive mood. Other scholars also agree that compulsive shopping reflects an uncontrollable buying impulse (d'Astous, 1990). Faber (2004) attributed compulsive purchasing behaviour to an attempt to escape self-consciousness. Dittmar (2005a) found teenagers were more likely to be compulsive compared to adults. A popular aspect of most definitions of compulsive purchasing is that it entails uncontrolled, negative buying impulses (Koran, Faber, Aboujaoude, Large, & Serpe, 2006). Compulsive

purchasing as a condition can be seen as a persistent propensity to buy goods well beyond one's own desires and resources (Mittal, Huppertz, & Khare, 2008).

Faber used the escape theory (Carver, Scheier, & Weintraub, 1989) to explain why many people participate in potentially self-destructive behaviour. The escape theory suggests that certain people may experience harmful results deriving from self-awareness (Baumeister, 1991) and in order to restore positive mood, they prefer to escape from their feelings by engaging in destructive behaviours. Such individuals concentrate their attention on a single item to prevent negative feelings. In this way, they can block out negative thoughts and feelings about themselves by being immersed in the purchasing behaviour.

Shopping and spending are an all-consuming task for compulsive shoppers who have little concern for the long-term negative consequences of such actions (e.g., little or no savings; credit card and other interpersonal problems; and feelings of shame, guilt, remorse, and hopelessness) (Faber, 2004). It is clear from the above definitions that compulsive buying is likely associated negatively with life satisfaction.

2.14.1 Materialism and Compulsive Shopping Behaviour

Materialism has consistently been linked to compulsive buying behaviour in various studies (Burroughs & Rindfleisch, 2002; DeSarbo & Edwards, 1996; Dittmar, 2005; Friese, 2000; Mick & DeMoss, 1990; Mowen & Spears, 1999; Mueller et al., 2011; Selim et al., 2012; Taherikia & Ramezanzadeh, 2016; Yurchisin & Johnson, 2004). Furthermore, compulsive shopping is linked to compulsive hoarding in a substantial way (Frost, Steketee, & Williams, 2002; Kyrios et al., 2004). Similarly, Dittmar (2005) identified materialistic tendencies as the primary driver of compulsive shopping. Materialistic impulses are higher in compulsive consumers than in non-compulsive shoppers (Dittmar et al., 2007; Mowen & Spears, 1999). Consumers are obsessed with stuff (Krugger, 1998) and see material possessions as a form of compensation for their mood and identity (Dittmar, 2005). Some research investigations have shown a link between materialism and online compulsive buying. According to Sathyapriya and Mathew (2015)'s findings, consumerism and social comparison have an impact on young people's online compulsive purchase. Dittmar et al. (2007) discovered that social psychological motivation, particularly materialism ideals, has an

impact on online compulsive purchase behaviour. As a result, it's critical to research young people's materialistic ideals and how they relate to compulsive buying impulses in India, because materialistic inclinations are on the rise among Indian youth (Nguyen, 2003)

Mazalin and Moore (2004) found that excessive internet use impacts the development of identity among young male adults. Excessive social media intensity usage results in significant identity “fragmentation” which triggers more extreme online compulsive buying (i.e., to fill the gaps between their current fragmented identities and their ideal identities to which they are aspiring).

2.14.2 Compulsive Shopping Behaviour in Relation to Social Media

Past research has shown that compulsive buying is significantly affected by intense internet usage, especially of social media (Kukar-Kinney et al., 2009; Lee et al., 2016; Sharif & Khanekharab, 2017). By following the theory of social comparison (Festinger, 1954), social networking sites are where the youth can examine and compare aspects of their lives with those of their peers. Social identity formation is greatly impacted by the individual's association with role models and/or membership of desirable communities (Tajfel, 1981). This is often done for self-evaluation and self-improvement, possibly to create their desired identity (Weinstein, 2017). Indeed, the concept that one's self-idea is profoundly affected by what other significant people think dates back over a century.

2.14.3 Attitudes and Compulsive Shopping Behaviour

Social media users' attitudes are increasingly being influenced by companies' messages (Heinonen, 2011). As a result, recent study has looked into how social media content influence customer views and motivations. Chu (2011) investigated the relationship between Facebook ads, brand generated content within group participation, advertising reactions, and psychological characteristics such as self-disclosure and opinions among Facebook group members and non-members.

For instance, users who are members of Facebook groups are more likely to divulge personal information than non-members. Because users publicly show their connections with Facebook groups and promote businesses or items when they pass on

advertising to their friends, Chu (2011) notes that group involvement and engagement with online marketing requires a higher level of personal information. “Facebook groups, as well as passing on viral content about businesses to their social contacts, provide routes that consumers perceive valuable when seeking self-status in a product category” (Chu 2011, p. 40). Chu (2011) discovered that users who are members of Facebook groups have a more positive attitude toward social media advertising and brand generated content. Users with a more favorable attitude toward advertising and brand generated content are more inclined to join a brand's or retailer's Facebook group to get promotional messages and eventually are more likely to be involved in compulsive shopping to demonstrate their status to others. Chu (2011) concludes that there is a correlation between users’ attitudes and involvement in group on social media sites based on this finding.

Cox (2010) looked into the age-attitude relationship and discovered that social network users' attitudes about online advertising and brand generated content forms (such as blogs, videos, and brand channels or pages) varied to some extent across age groups. She noted that people between the ages of 18 and 28 had overwhelmingly good feelings about blogs, video, and brand channel ad formats which led to enhanced purchases and in some cases even compulsive shopping behaviour. Users regarded these ad layouts to be eye-catching, educational, and entertaining. A recent study on ad formats on video and brand channels found out that videos were favored by the 35-54 age group because they were more eye-catching, educational, and had better placement within the online page structure. They generally appreciate online advertising formats that have favorable features; nevertheless, users dislike ads that are invasive or interfere with online social networking activities, such as pop-up, expandable, or floating structured ads (Cox 2010).

Users attitudes towards ads and brand generated content differed based on the social network, according to Chi (2011), user incentives for online social networking may be important in determining consumer responses to social media marketing. The technology acceptance model (TAM) was also employed by Harris and Dennis. TAM, on the other hand, was employed by Harris and Dennis (2011) as a loose framework that incorporated trust and TAM-related characteristics (i.e., perceived enjoyment, ease of use, and usefulness). When using social media sites like Facebook, the TAM discovered

that customers, particularly students, have a higher level of trust in ads and social media brand generated content which can translate into enhanced online purchases.

Social media users trust their friends first, rather than Facebook friends, expert blogs and independent review sites, celebrities and e-commerce sites, and finally celebrities and e-retailer sites (Harris & Dennis 2011). Di Pietro and Pantano (2012) used the TAM to conduct additional study and discovered that enjoyment is the most important aspect that drives consumers' attitudes towards social media content assisting in their purchasing decisions. They discovered that Facebook's fun factor, as well as the ability for users to ask for suggestions in a simple and engaging manner, encourages people to pay more attention to the products featured on the site. Facebook encourages consumers to share their experiences and build a common understanding of products and services; on the other hand, it provides management with a direct channel for connecting with customers through a business to consumer approach (Di Pietro & Pantano 2012). Adding games, contests, and interactive applications to an e-commerce Facebook page can help attract more consumers to shop (Di Pietro & Pantano 2012).

Some researchers specifically recognized the distinctive impact of different social media platforms by emphasizing the need for more empirical work to deepen our understanding of the effects of these pervasive contexts on the identities of young adults (Davis & Weinstein, 2017). Valkenburg and Peter (2011) suggested that the SNS environment could erode the ability of young adults to develop a "unified" identity. This is because young adults can adopt or attempt to portray different personalities when interacting with diverse people in an online environment. Such a phenomenon is more popularly referred to as fragmentation identity (Israelashvili, Kim, & Bukobza, 2012) and can lead to identity confusion.

The concept is based on the view that individuals are continuously competing in contemporary consumer-centered societies in terms of communicating their identities through consumption (Roberts & Sepulveda M, 1999). Therefore, they can be viewed as having an "empty self" that needs to be "fulfilled" by material consumption of both goods and services (i.e., their self is derived from what they own/consume). Similarly, in endorsing this empty-self-conception, (Reeves et al., 2012) empirically demonstrated that compulsive buying is apparent in young people with a

poorly developed sense of identity as they attempt to achieve fulfilment through the continual purchase of goods.

2.15 Conspicuous Buying Behaviour

Buying luxury products is often labelled as conspicuous consumption and a first theory on this was initially framed and developed by Veblen (1899)'s research. Conspicuous buying consumption behaviour is defined as the act of showing off expensive and luxury items or services (Sundie et al., 2011) motivated by social factors such as impressing others, improving one's social status and gathering prestige through objects rather than quality features (Nunes, Drèze, & Han, 2011).

Prior literature acknowledged the influence of social factors that push people to consume products conspicuously in this way (Shukla, 2008). In particular, two main factors are typically regarded as the drivers behind people's appreciation of material goods and therefore their willingness to spend money on conspicuous products. The first element refers to feelings of insecurities, whereas the second shifts towards individuals' materialistic consumption attitudes. In light of the substantial theoretical and empirical similarity between conspicuous consumption and materialism (Podoshen & Andrzejewski, 2012), it is reasonable to assume that both constructs are strictly interrelated.

Conspicuous consumption is a behaviour where an individual displays wealth through a high degree of luxury items and service expenditure (Trigg, 2001). Consumers buy certain goods in the hope that society will see them more favorably (Podoshen & Andrzejewski, 2012). The behaviour started being scientifically examined in the 1950s and 1960s as consumers tried not to be outdone by their peers, particularly comparing themselves with close neighbors living nearby. Positional goods have high signaling potential (Carlsson, Johansson- Stenman, & Martinsson, 2007). After the sixties, the focus of the comparison changed to the upper middle-class lifestyle and only later to the wealthier classes. Truong (2010) noted that individuals who engage in conspicuous consumption compare themselves to the group of people socially situated above them.

In addition, signaling effects do not have equivalent explanatory power for all product groups (Mujcic & Frijters, 2015). Examples of positional goods, which are the objects described as signaling products by Kamakura and Du (2012), include jewelry, vehicles, clothing, old paintings, and houses. Clearly, a precondition for signaling one's product choice to others is that they are conscious of the product choice, which is the difference between public and private use (Heffetz, 2011). Other persons, in the community, must at least see or recognize the person who wishes to signal their consumption behaviour. In order to do this, there are two options: using a product physically visible to others or implicitly visible when people talk in a face-to-face situation or using social media to post and share their product of choice.

Richins (1994) characterized materialism as a perspective in which one's life revolves around possession and the process of acquisition, materialistic orientation are strengthened by the need for commodities that satisfy one's drive for prestige. The process of acquiring goods is not only important to the consumer's happiness on an individual level, but it's also important to others' reactions—the goods being purchased aren't just consumed for personal satisfaction, but also for an increase or maintenance of social status, in which others may make attributions based on specific possessions that act as matrimony (Heisley & Cours 2007).

Materialists, according to Belk (1985) and O'Cass (2001), use possessions to portray and manage impressions. Materialists are also shown to participate in self-indulgent purchase activities and have a higher proclivity to maintain rather than dispose their belongings (O'Cass 2001). Furthermore, according to O'Cass (2001), consumers with stronger materialistic tendencies utilise clothes for impression management, putting it in the center of their lives and utilizing stylish apparel to express success to others. Given Goldschmidt's (1990) findings that the acquisition and display of status-oriented materials play a role in Western social structures, the accumulation of specific conspicuous goods persists. In a consumption-based society, consumers may be taught to believe that owning particular visible items is necessary for upward social mobility.

Tatzel (2002) gives a framework that leads us to assume that there is a strong link between free-spending materialism and conspicuous consumption, and she claims that the drive to consume is fueled by a notion that success is tied to consuming in a "showy, exhibiting manner." Materialists who are prone to spending big sums of money,

according to Tatzel, "thingify" experiences and become preoccupied with public meaning. They also enjoy the "stylishness and/or technological prowess" of their belongings because they believe it attracts people's respect.

The consumption of products that was seen by only a few in the past is now made visible to all by social media. Holidays are a clear example of how, over time, this mechanism has changed. The only clear signal of a holiday in the past was to send a postcard or chat about it later, while people today send tweets or display regular Facebook posts from their holiday destination (Bronner & de Hoog, 2018).

Visibility is clearly an important aspect of conspicuous consumption, but what individuals wish to communicate to others through their consumption habits is at least as important. The definition of the dimensions of conspicuous consumption captures what individuals are seeking to communicate in this way. The theories of conspicuous consumption are closely intertwined with the scales used by scientists to calculate these dimensions of conspicuous consumption.

In the 90s, Marcoux, Filiatrault, and Cheron (1997) originally created a scale that was used by several writers interested in calculating conspicuous consumption quantitatively. In their analysis, they investigated consumer tastes in Eastern European post-socialist countries. They divided conspicuous behaviour into five dimensions: materialistic hedonism (buying products that feel unique and trendy), communication of belonging (buying products wanted by others), social status demonstration (buying products that are a symbol of success and wealth), interpersonal mediation (buying products that induce respect from others), and ostentation (buying a product because of its high price). Chen, Yeh, and Wang (2008) referred to Marcoux's scale as the only existing scale to measure conspicuous consumption for about 10 years.

Chen et al. (2008) stated that showing who you are and indicating wealth are constructs that play a crucial role in the definition of conspicuous consumption. Conspicuous consumption does not only mean the ostentation of wealth, but also the orientation of something symbolic to specific reference groups in order to gain their recognition. For example, to identify what individuals were attempting to communicate through the conspicuous consumption of their vacations on social media, Correia, Kozak, and Reis (2016) based their study on the role of Marcoux's five items. They found that four dimensions instead of the five were significant. Ostentation was omitted

due to its low reliability. The regression results revealed that interpersonal mediation, status demonstration, and materialistic hedonism were the most important dimensions influencing the intention to show vacations conspicuously over social media platforms.

2.15.1 Conspicuous Buying Behaviour in Relation to Social Media

Previous research has demonstrated a strong positive association between television viewing and materialistic consumption through various contexts (Churchill & Moschis, 1979). Empirical research and theoretical models on the impact of social media usage and conspicuous consumption are scarce (Ismail, Nguyen, & Melewar, 2018). Following the same concept, it is assumed that the intensity of social media usage can lead consumers to make irrational choices by increasing their expenditure on luxury goods (i.e., conspicuous use).

Similarly, consumers share products and brands that display wealth and satisfy a person's need for prestige through their social media accounts (Podoshen & Andrzejewski, 2012). This information will make them feel good about themselves and more accepted among their friends (Gonzales & Hancock, 2011). It will attract positive feedback, which enhances a person's self-esteem and ultimately provides several positive social benefits and well-being (Taylor & Strutton, 2016). Attitudes and Conspicuous Buying Behaviour

Scholars have frequently employed social comparison theory (SCT) as a theoretical lens through which they have attempted to analyse the relationship between attitudes towards social media ads, brand and user generated content and conspicuous buying. Users frequently engage in comparisons between themselves and "idealized" themes found in mass media channels, according to Richins (1995) and others such as Harmon (2001). Peer communication and idealized media images (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2004) are two major forms of social comparison, both of which may be found within the social media format.

While traditional Internet-based marketing communications have been utilized to deliver information, new applications of online platforms are increasingly being used to convey brand symbolism or consumption-related attitudes in brand building (Belch & Belch, 2009). Marketers may supply users with material that blends sight, sound, and motion, similar to television, but with the added benefit of customer

involvement and feedback, thanks to Internet mediums that support rich media formats, such as social media. Furthermore, as social media usage increases, many users identify and seek support from online peer groups (Caplan & Turner, 2007; Steinkuehler & Williams, 2006), as well as incorporate offline social relationships and lifestyle facets into their online identities (Caplan & Turner, 2007; Steinkuehler & Williams, 2006). Lehdonvirta (2010) suggested that online arenas have increasingly become a location where users virtualize their material assets and consuming practices which eventually develop conspicuous digital consumption.

Shukla (2008) discovered that factors such as attitudes towards a brand, self-concept and brand image congruency, brand familiarity, and brand-aroused sensations influence conspicuous consumption among middle-aged consumers. However, there have been few empirical investigations and theoretical models on the impact of attitudes towards social media content on conspicuous consumption. Traditional media content, programming, and advertising were once regarded to foster conspicuous spending (Schor, 1998; Veblen, 1965) and develop material values (Gerbner et al., 1980; Schor, 1998; Veblen, 1965).

Previous research has found a strong link between television viewing and conspicuous consumption in a variety of settings (Cheung & Chan, 1996; Churchill & Moschis, 1979; Shrum et al., 2004). Following the same line of reasoning, frequent use of social media can lead to customers making illogical decisions, such as increasing their spending on expensive goods (i.e., conspicuous consumption). Materialistic consumers may also exchange things and brands for which they have a positive attitude and that demonstrate wealth and satisfy a person's desire for prestige (Podoshen & Andrzejewski, 2012). Such knowledge makes people feel good about themselves in front of their peers (Gonzales & Hancock, 2011) and encourages positive feedback, which boosts self-esteem and leads to a variety of positive social advantages and well-being (Ellison et al., 2007). When young people adopt advertising content and personalities as role models, they may not only identify with them, but also want to look and buy like them. The influence of vicarious role models, such as favorite entertainers, on adolescents' purchasing intentions is shown to be favorable in empirical evidence (Martin & Bush, 2000).

When advertising information and characters are chosen by young people as their role models, they may not only identify with them but also intend to emulate them in terms of how they dress, which will influence what young people will buy. Hence, it is argued that social media may create the possibility of conspicuous consumption which will increase the possibility that consumers prefer purchasing what they perceive as high-status products.

2.16 Impulse Buying Behaviour

Impulse purchasing is considered a consumption behaviour that results from the immediate representation of the stimulus and includes no deliberate consideration of the potential purchase outcomes (Rook, 1987). Applebaum (1951) was the first to suggest that impulse purchasing may stem from the consumer's exposure to a stimulus while in the store. The various stimuli inside the shop directly or indirectly influence the customer. Store atmosphere is influenced by attributes such as lighting, layout, presentation of merchandise, fixtures, floor coverings, colors, sounds, odors, and the dress and behaviour of sales and service personnel.

With Stern (1962)'s research, the classification of a purchase as either planned or impulse began. He presented the fundamental structure of impulse purchasing by categorizing a purchasing action as planned, unplanned, or impulse. Planned purchases require time-consuming information-searching with reasonable decision-making, whereas unplanned purchases were made without any advance preparation for the shopping decisions taken.

In terms of fast decision-making, impulse buying is differentiated from unplanned purchasing. An impulse purchase often involves feeling a sudden, heavy, and overwhelming urge to buy in addition to being unplanned. Stern's (1962) classification of the impulse mix in the form of fashion goods was updated by Oliver and Mahoney (1991) who divided impulse buying into four forms: i) scheduled impulse purchasing, ii) reminded impulse purchasing, iii) suggestion or fashion-oriented impulse purchasing, and iv) pure impulse purchasing. Scheduled impulse purchasing is partly planned, but the shopper does not determine the products or categories that he or she will purchase at the particular time. The impulse purchase will be largely determined by the various

sales promotions within the store. Reminded purchasing takes place when the customer is reminded of the need for the product when noticing it in the store.

Before the analysis of Rook (1987), the definitions of impulse buying centered on the product when assessing an impulse purchase. The earlier studies did not include the consumer and his or her personal characteristics in the impulse behaviour definition. Later researchers concentrated on personal impulsiveness by exploring the different behavioural dimensions of the impulse purchasing. Rook (1987) argued that the customer experiences an instantaneous and constant desire during impulse buying. He defined the purchasing of impulses as an unintended, non-reflective reaction that occurs inside the store soon after the consumer is exposed to certain stimuli.

Later on, Rook and Gardner (1993) described the behaviour as an unplanned activity involving fast decision-making and a propensity to purchase the product immediately. Beatty and Ferrell (1998) concurred with this by defining impulse buying as immediate transactions made either to buy the specific product category or to satisfy a particular need without any pre-shopping plan.

Meanwhile, Bayley and Nancarrow (1998) considered impulse buying to be a sudden, compelling, hedonically complex buying behaviour in which the speed of an impulse decision process precludes thoughtful and deliberate consideration of alternative information and choices. In comparison to the utilitarian behaviour in which shoppers seek practical and economic benefits, hedonic behaviour is marked by pleasure. Block and Morwitz (1999) enunciated the idea of impulse purchasing as a sudden, strong desire in a customer to buy an object with little or no deliberation. Kacen and Lee (2002) suggested that impulsive conduct is more irresistible and thrilling but less deliberative when compared to planned purchasing behaviour.

Even though shopping can be considered a hobby, it can also result in negative consequences, such as debt, stress, and anxiety (Podoshen & Andrzejewski, 2012). Impulse buying typically takes place naturally when a person's desire competes with his or her super-ego which seeks to overcome the short-term impulse to purchase goods without purposeful thought (Podoshen & Andrzejewski, 2012).

Due to an increase in disposable income, change in social status, and higher access to credit, consumers have appeared to show more impulse buying behaviours in the last few decades (Dawson & Kim, 2009). Other variables affecting impulse

consumptions are shopping time constraints (Shoham & Brenčič, 2003), gender (Segal & Podoshen, 2013), product quality (Jeffrey & Hodge, 2007), emotional state (Coley & Burgess, 2003), and level of familiarity with the layout of the store (Shoham & Brenčič, 2003). These factors have all been found to trigger impulse buying behaviours.

External variables affecting impulse buying are related to marketing signals or triggers regulated by marketers in an effort to draw customers into purchasing actions (Youn & Faber, 2000). The shopping and marketing environment is synonymous with external stimuli. Retail environments include store size, ambience, architecture and formats, while the different sales and advertising practices constitute the marketing climate. When a customer experiences a related visual stimulus in the shopping environment or other advertising stimulus, purchasing impulses may be triggered (Piron, 1991). Creative sales promotions that employ various technologies are considered significant and appropriate uses of technologies in retail stores (Schiffman, Kanuk, & Wisenblit, 2010).

2.16.1 Materialism and Impulse Buying Behaviour

There is a definite correlation between materialism and impulse purchase, according to previous research. Tatzel's (2002) work implies that materialism and the impulse to spend are linked, and that individuals who are materialistic and "loose" with money are more likely to make "exhibitionist" purchases. Tatzel also believes that these customers will have a favorable attitude about debt as well as hasty purchases. Watson (2003) discovered that persons with a high level of materialism were more inclined to spend money, were more likely to have positive opinions toward borrowing money for luxury products, and were less likely to save, based on survey research of Americans living in Pennsylvania. According to Belk (1995), materialists may become fascinated or addicted to spending.

The author proposes that being very materialistic can lead to a "buy now, pay later" approach to consuming, based on previous research. High-impulse purchases differ from low-impulse purchases in terms of self-expression and function, according to Dittmar, Beattie, and Friese (1995). Dittmar et al. (1995) believe that material items are consumed not just for functioning but also as symbolic identifiers, with these products often purchased impulsively to represent self-identity, in line with Bourdieu

(1984), Featherstone (1991), and McCracken (1988). Their findings also show that, when compared to strictly functional commodities, identity-relevant things are more likely to be high impulsive. Consumers have a larger drive to buy when acting on impulse is socially appropriate and contextually sensible, as revealed by Rook and Fisher (1995). According to Luo (2005), the norms and values of the reference or peer group have an impact on impulse purchase.

For the materialist, who lives in an economy where material gain is the norm, believing that commodities offer favorable consequences may lead to the idea that impulsive spending can lead to goods that can display status, thus increasing power. When it's considered that the group approves of spontaneity and the pursuit of hedonic goals, peer group members may even see impulse purchase as a desirable trait (Sharma, Sivakumaran, & Marshall 2010). Following these findings, we will investigate the role of impulse buying in the context of a society (or a reference group within a community) that places material acquisition at its core.

Many people measure their success based on the amount and quality of belongings they acquire, according to Richins and Dawson (1992), and those with a high level of materialism place a larger value on items that can be worn or seen in public. This, combined with Belk's (1985) belief that consumers are jealous or envious of others who have more possessions, and Kilbourne and Pickett's (2008) belief that material desire is rewarded and reinforced within Western culture, leads us to believe that materialism and impulse buying have a positive relationship. We believe that someone who lives in a society or culture that values material objects (and where material objects signify social status) will be constrained in their ability to acquire a wider range of possessions in order to presumably further anchor (or attempt to enter) a specific social stratum, with debt being an afterthought or not even a consideration. As a result, it is sensible for consumers to buy on impulse and continue to cultivate hedonic aspirations when the goal is to climb up the ranks or maintain social standing.

Mattila and Wirtz (2008) found that a store's environmental stimuli positively affect impulse buying behaviour, especially when the environment is perceived to be over-stimulating. Stimuli in the retail store environment are likely to affect consumer emotions, which are other variables that have been found to affect the making of impulse purchases (Zhou & Wong, 2004). Gupta, Heng, and Sahu (2009)

suggested that that the size of the store, product displays and product prices were the major in-store stimuli. For small-sized stores, product price was the main factor that attracted impulse purchases.

The comfort of choosing a product by simply “clicking” on it can amplify the temptation in users and thus increase the likelihood of impulse buying (Greenfield, 1999). Various researchers have argued that the internet may lessen consumers’ capacity to control their buying impulses. For example, LaRose (2001) found that the internet had few characteristics which empowered consumers to control their buying impulses, compared to those that weakened such control.

On the other hand, some scholars have noted that online transactions made by customers are less impulsive than offline purchases (Kacen, 2003). Most e-commerce research has found online purchasing decisions to be logical processes based on problem solving and data analysis (Verhagen & van Dolen, 2011). McCabe and Nowlis (2003) suggested in the specific sense of their study that items for which touch is necessary, such as clothes, are purchased more impulsively in physical stores rather than online, because the internet prohibits customers from touching and trying on clothing.

The transformation of the internet and social media has fundamentally changed the way customers and businesses connect and perform transactions. It has been noted that social media purchases is an e-commerce field that integrates the use of social media in all kinds of commercial activities (Xiang et al., 2016). In this context, 65% of social media users in one survey stated that their shopping processes were affected by social networks, while almost half of them said social media encouraged their online purchases (IAB Spain, 2016; PWC, 2016). Previous research has shown that at the time of purchasing a product, consumers are influenced by the thoughts of others, and this effect can be greater online than offline (Riegner, 2007). Therefore, social media can represent a powerful tool to boost impulse buying.

2.16.2 Impulse Buying Behaviour in Relation to Social Media

According to the literature in this field, social media have a strong influence on individual behaviours, especially impulse consumption (Aragoncillo & Orus, 2018). Social networking users share a wide variety of perspectives, ranging from what they are in the mood to do that day, to a rigorous evaluation of the goods and services they

consume (Sharma, Sivakumaran, & Marshall, 2010). This behaviour tends to be influenced by customers who manipulate others by sharing pictures of their transactions and by offering suggestions. Such acts incentivize unplanned and impulse purchases (Xiang, Zheng, Lee, & Zhao, 2016). In addition, guidelines and views are not limited to influences on buying behaviours, but also helps to create favorable brand images which in turn helps stimulate impulse buying (Kim & Johnson, 2016).

2.16.3 Attitudes and Impulse Buying Behaviour

Social media communications help to improve customer attitudes towards social media content, build brand equity, and increase e-WoM. (Cambria et al., 2012). According to Chi Yeh and Yang (2009), perceived brand quality modulates the relationship between perceived value and consumer impulse buying behaviour. Products that are connected with a recognized brand name have influence of consumers considering the brand as high quality, thereby relating value altogether, which influences on impulse purchases (Chi et al., 2009). According to Halim and Hameed (2005), consumers' attitudes influence their purchase intentions to buy impulsively, implying that the higher the value, the higher the purchasing decision. Brand participation, brand image, product quality, brand loyalty, product attributes, brand awareness, and product quality are all factors that impact impulse buying decisions as stated in another study by Chen (2008). Finally, employing social media platforms to create, increase post, and manage various sites to engage customers leads to increased awareness, product interest, and is likely to influence impulse purchases (Batra & Keller, 2016).

Customers use social media knowledge to get new ideas which can then turn into purchasing actions; for instance, after seeing clothes on social media, customers can also search for more information about the items and then buy them either online or in a physical store. In addition, previous work has shown that due to suggestions and photographs showing transactions on social media, information coming from other users is the most relevant feedback (Xiang et al., 2016). Therefore, social media can be considered a method of inspiring shopping and a stimulus that triggers the desire to acquire the product without further deliberation.

2.17 The Role of Attitudes in Mediation

The full set of propositions imply that attitudes towards social media advertising, branded content and user-generated content mediate the impacts of materialism on all three negative consumption behaviours. Therefore, this study aims to examine the mediating role of attitudes towards social media advertising, branded content and user-generated unbranded content between materialism and negative consumption behaviours. According to the literature in this field, materialism functions as a mediator for negative consumption behaviours (Islam et al., 2017). However, as noted by Sirgy et al. (2012), materialism's role in relation to advertising is still not well defined and needs further investigation. According to Gilovich and Gallo (2020), materialistic people tend to spend more time watching ads and they are also more likely to enjoy advertising content more. In the social media environment, it has been demonstrated that people who like ads tend to engage more in impulse buying behaviour (Sharma, Mishra, & Arora, 2018).

In order to highlight the importance of investigating the mediating role of attitudes towards social media advertising between materialism and negative consumption behaviours, researchers like Ger and Belk (1996) and Richins and Dawson (1992) could not find a direct relationship between materialism and negative consumption behaviours such as impulse buying. However, some studies (Dittmar, 2005a) (Mowen, Fang, & Scott, 2009) have associated materialism directly with behavioural addictions (notably, pathological gambling and addictive buying).

In recent years, the association between possessing material objects and negative consumption buying has become one of the most important and most promising aspects of research on addictive buying (Dittmar, 2005a, 2005b; Mowen & Spears, 1999). Negative consumption is identified as a behavioural style with a strong impulsive-compulsive component that is of a chronic nature and which utilizes buying as an attempt to face up to negative emotionality and find more satisfactory, cognitive-emotional states (Otero-López & Villardefrancos, 2013).

Empirical evidence often states that materialism is positively associated with acquisitive disorders, along with other determining factors, such as anxiety, depression, impulsiveness, and sensation seeking (O'Guinn & Faber, 1989; Troisi, Christopher, & Marek, 2006). Furthermore, materialism has been confirmed as a

powerful predictor of compulsive buying (Banerjee & Dittmar, 2008). Typically, however, materialism has been considered an antecedent variable, with some determinants like stress (Sneath, Lacey, & Kennett-Hensel, 2009), anxiety (Otero-López & Villardefrancos, 2013), depression (Claes, Müller, & Luyckx, 2016) and emotion regulation (Dittmar & Kapur, 2011) postulated as mediator variables between materialism and addictive buying.

Given the prominence of social media in the advertising industry the following articles studied customers' perceptions and attitudes towards social media content: Chang et al., 2015, De Vries et al., 2012, Hill & Moran, 2011, Jung et al., 2016, Lee & Hong, 2016, Lee et al., 2016, Lin & Kim, 2016, Lugmayr, 2012, Mangold & Faulds, 2009, McCaughey et al., 2016, Okazaki & Taylor, 2013, Powers et al., 2013, Powers et al., 2013). For example, according to Duffett (2015), the efficiency and efficacy of social media advertising activities are heavily influenced by customers' attitudes and how they formulate their opinions toward such activities. Similarly, Carrillat et al. (2014) stated that in order to achieve good consumer sentiments, hedonic aspects of social media promotional activities must be properly addressed in order to provide customers with a more intimate and enjoyable experience. Furthermore, as Mir (2012) observed, buyers who formed favorable attitudes towards social media content had an enhanced electronic consumer buying behaviour.

Bannister et al. (2013) found that American students' attitudes towards Facebook advertising were negative since the commercials were not directly tied to the customers' needs and values. As a result, those students were more likely to reject such promotions; according to the same study by Bannister et al., their purchasing decisions were not represented by Facebook marketing (2013). According to Chandra et al. (2013), who studied the attitudes of postgraduate and undergraduate students, while advertisements on social media networks have a positive impact on buying behaviour, resulting in more competitive prices, advertisements had a negative impact on both cognitive and affective aspects of customers' attitudes. According to Kodjamanis and Angelopoulos (2013), who conducted a quantitative study in the United Kingdom, advertising complaints on Facebook had no effect on behavioural intention to purchase or purchasing habits, as stated by more than 535 survey participants. According to Bannister et al. (2013) and Taylor et al. (2013), the influence of Facebook advertising

on customers' willingness and attitudes was not modified by demographic parameters (i.e., age and gender). Social Media scholarly production has also focused in more recent years on the influence attitudes has towards users' interest in influencing consumers' preferences by shaping ultimately their behaviours. The influence of the internet, especially via social networking, on people's interests and then on their purchasing behaviour has grown over the years (Aladwani, 2017). Retailers, who depended on traditional stores to drive sales, have found that social media extends their visibility dramatically. Besides, a friendly, interactive presence on a social network or chat room can greatly improve brand image and help the company gather extremely useful, unstructured data on their target customers (Saha et al., 2021).

However, there is a lack of previous research in which materialism and attitudes towards social media advertising content have been included in a model of negative buying behaviour. Thus, the present research tested a model in which attitudes towards social media advertising content were postulated as mediating variables of the influence of materialism and its impact on negative consumption behaviour.

The main rationale for using attitudes towards social media content as a mediator of the relationship between materialism and harmful consumption behaviours may be explained through the lens of the cognitive balance theory introduced by Heider (1946). The objective of Heider's (1946) theory was to explain how people resolve inconsistencies within their interpersonal affects. According to the theory if an individual likes a certain advertisement or endorser, then this person will also tend to like the brand and the products they make. In general, such triadic relations are balanced when all three relations are positive or two of the three relations are negative.

Applying this concept to the advertising world of social media we can assume that the cognitive balance theory can be useful to explain for instance how social media influencers' endorsement affect users attitudes toward advertised goods (Knoll & Matthes, 2017). If a person likes a social media influencer or a certain brand page and believes that the celebrity likes the product advertised, the person will like the product more in order to maintain psychological balance and therefore will be more inclined to purchase it.

Advertisement within the literature has been shown to leave lasting product impression on consumers' mind as it is an effective extrinsic cue that indicates the

quality of a product (Knoll & Matthes, 2017). Heavy advertisement investment shown in form of celebrity endorsers or special effects indicates that the company is investing in the products' quality, and therefore has a higher quality product (Chenavaz & Jasimuddin, 2017) which can lead to enhanced purchases. Advertisement-created familiarity with a brand within social media is another significant factor that enhance customer purchasing behaviour.

Hwang, Oh, and Scheinbaum (2020) conducted a consumer analysis to look at the effects of background music ads in online platforms and consumer behaviour. Consumers expressed higher purchase intention for goods with familiar songs, and a substantial relationship between the degree of familiarity with the songs in the ads and the purchase of goods was confirmed. Ads influence individual life styles and the degree to which an individual attempt to portray himself or herself in a socially acceptable manner. Advertising content, especially through social media influencers, advertising content which is perceived to be more familiar to normal users offers an image of the lifestyle in addition to the goods and services, which can lead to emulation and eventually to greater sales. Advertising promotes social messages and lifestyles by demonstrating the ideal consumer's status and encouraging social action to encourage product purchase.

Advertising spending perception also creates positive attitudes towards a brand in the minds of the consumers. Keller and Brexendorf (2019) found a positive relationship between advertising investment and perceived product quality. Hence, investment in advertising from the brand is positively related to perceived product quality. This then leads to a greater amount of purchase as consumers generally prefer to purchase from a well know brand in order to avoid disappointments over quality. On the other hand, if the users already disliked the ad or its endorser, they could begin to hate the brand and consequently the product as well in order to maintain psychological equilibrium and this can negatively impact both the brand and the influencer.

Therefore, this study assumes that highly materialistic individuals who are frequent users of social media will be positively attracted by advertising content which conveys the idea of luxury and whose ads reflect high quality and prestige. This is especially the case for ads that receive substantial investment from brands where the endorsers are often celebrities who showcase luxury items and exclusive lifestyle

experiences which tend to be envied by materialistic persons who see a successful and meaningful lifestyle in material possessions and exclusive objects. Hence, by enjoying the ad and its features (endorsers, entertaining content and music, visual effects), consumers increasingly like the brand and its products. This increases their purchase intention and can consequently enhance the possibility of engaging in harmful purchase behaviours.

2.18 Attitudes Towards Social Media Advertising

The question of users' attitudes towards social media advertising is an issue that still needs to be answered. The emergence of social media (also referred to as consumer-generated media) has ominously changed the medium by which organizations communicate to their target audience (Mangold & Faulds, 2009). Previous studies have shown that the attitudes of consumers towards advertising influence their behavioural responses, especially their purchasing intentions (Mitchell & Olson, 1981). Li, Edwards, and Lee (2002) concluded that the behavioural reactions of consumers, such as avoiding online ads, are due to their negative advertising perceptions. This negative attitude may be the product of online advertising's perceived disruptive and upsetting nature (Li et al., 2002).

On the other hand, (Li et al., 2002) also found that consumers develop a positive attitude towards online advertising and react favorably to it when it is relevant to them. Many companies now use social media in their marketing campaigns. For instance, Boateng and Okoe (2015) found that social media is used by telecommunications companies in Ghana to handle customer product/service awareness. In the marketing practices of corporations, this means that social media is very relevant. Fox and Rooney (2015) indicated that social media platforms have helped businesses develop and establish partnerships and increase their market share with their consumers. Several businesses have also begun to integrate social media into their management processes for customer relationships (Trainor, Andzulis, Rapp, & Agnihotri, 2014). Zhan, Sun, Wang, and Zhang (2016) illustrated a major relationship between the attitude of customers towards online ads and customer perceptions in the USA and China. Chu, Kamal, and Kim (2019) also analyzed the attitude of young

consumers towards social media ads and their behavioural reactions. They noted that brand recognition affected the attitudes of users towards social media advertising, which in turn influenced their behavioural responses. From these findings, we can assume that there is a major connection between the attitudes of customers towards ads in social media and their behavioural responses.

2.18.1 Attitudes Towards Advertising Content in Social Media's Relationship with Negative Consumption Behaviours

The definition of "consumers' attitudes towards advertisements" can be explained as the willingness to respond to a specific advertising stimulus in a favorable or unfavorable way during a specific exposure occasion (MacKenzie & Lutz, 1989). The theory of planned behaviour suggests that a person's behaviour is determined by their intention to perform the behaviour and that this intention is, in turn, a function of their attitude toward the behaviour and their subjective norms (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). The definition applied in this study is that attitudes are regarded as an indicator of the actions of consumers and their behaviours (MacKenzie & Lutz, 1989). For example, the attitude of consumers towards advertising has been found to be one of the key predictors of advertising effectiveness (Mehta, 2000) and of consumer behaviour (Tsang, Ho, & Liang, 2004).

In marketing literature, Mitchell and Olson (1981) and Shimp (1981) were among the first researchers to highlight the importance of the definition of the attitudes of consumers towards advertising. They argued that consumers' attitudes towards advertisements affected their attitudes towards brands by changing their perception. These studies were supported by later work which showed that consumers' negative attitudes towards advertisements can lead to an avoidance behaviour towards advertising and accordingly to a negative attitude towards the advertised brands (Speck & Elliott, 1997).

The gratification theory is a useful tool for understanding which factors influence attitudes towards social media content. This theory has its origins in the theory of needs and motivation. The latter argues that, through guided behaviour, people seek to fulfil their hierarchal needs (Maslow, 1981). In the field of mass communication, the Maslow hierarchy of needs concepts were used by Katz and Blumler (1985) to describe

how people used various media to meet their needs. This hypothesis indicates that individuals have different uses and benefits from their use of different media and that their behaviour is goal-directed. Thus, in empirical mass communication studies, the usage and satisfaction approach is commonly applied to describe people's incentives for embracing mass media to fulfil their needs (Katz, 1959).

In general, the negative effects of social media advertising content, as in conventional media (Levine & Murnen, 2009), have been linked to the social comparison process. Indeed, it has been argued that social comparison is particularly applicable to social media because, in contrast to the models featured in fashion magazines or on television, the comparison targets are essentially peers (Tiggemann & Zaccardo, 2018). According to the theory of social comparison (Festinger, 1954), the search for self-evaluation leads people to look for similarities with those who are identical to them rather than with those who are dissimilar. Social media users, however, prefer to upload only their "best" images, which are videos or images that have been carefully taken and chosen in order to optimize their appeal and that can be further enhanced by filters and digital modification (Chua & Chang, 2016).

In this way, social media users participate in a reciprocal mechanism named by Marwick (2012) as "social surveillance", whereby individuals are not only closely reviewing the material posted by others but also objectively examining their own posts from the points of view of other individuals. Such social surveillance is relevant because users come to "formulate a perception of what is common, approved, or unaccepted in the group" (Marwick, 2012). When viewing content created by others, it is often the case for social media users to change their own posts accordingly. The end result is that social comparisons are often upward in direction. The images of peers on both Facebook and Instagram (Fardouly, Pinkus, & Vartanian, 2017) contribute to discontent with the social media user's own body, appearance, well-being and the possibility of engaging in negative consumption to cope with the stress generated. In support of this, some experimental studies have shown that social comparison mediates the observed effects of idealized social media images on life satisfaction (Brown & Tiggemann, 2016). Another concept relevant especially in Asia is the effect that a collectivistic culture may have on individuals. Most Southeast Asian countries are collectivistic, where "self" is viewed as interdependent of others in one's group (Markus & Kitayama, 1991).

According to the findings of Dittmar and Drury (2000), compulsive buyers have a greater belief than normal buyers that expensive objects are essential for gaining happiness and success in life. Both Facebook and Instagram are social media platforms whose posts are highly populated by luxury goods and services and these posts often become the reference materials for materialistic users. Researchers have concluded that high levels of compulsive buying behaviour might be developed from materialism, peer communication, television advertisements, and media exposure (Halliwel, Dittmar, & Howe, 2005). Dittmar and Drury (2000) suggested as well that adults who have a significant tendency toward materialism are also likely to exhibit compulsive buying behaviour that leads to uncontrolled buying.

Previous research on television advertising has revealed that advertisements stimulate negative consumption patterns such as compulsive buying behaviour especially among young adults (Buijzen & Valkenburg, 2005). The findings of earlier studies have also shown that advertisements positively influenced impulse buying behaviour because ads in social media are intended to stimulate a desire for certain products or services (Yang & Ganahl, 2004).

Social media usage and viewership is directly linked with increased impulse buying behaviour among adolescents. (Zafar, Qiu, Li, Wang, & Shahzad, 2019) identified a positive relationship between attitudes toward social media advertisements and conspicuous buying behaviour. Social media advertisements aim to create a culture that encourages the audience to seek success, happiness, status, and popularity as well as embracing social stereotypes (Opree, Buijzen, & Valkenburg, 2012). Buijzen and Valkenburg (2005) study of adolescents found that social media advertisements have both short and long-term effects on impulse and compulsive buying behaviour.

In a study by Jin and Ryu (2020), where Instagram influencers' user-generated posts were analyzed, the envy of users towards the images portrayed had a positive impact on buying intention among male consumers. This positive relationship was even stronger in selfies. As the relationship between user-generated social media content envy and higher impulse purchase intention was stronger in males than in females, this implies that males are more competitive especially when it comes to attitudes toward same-sex others (Buunk & Massar, 2012). This envy then presumably triggers impulse buying behaviour for the coveted products. It also resonates with the

evolutionary perspective on males' stronger intrasexual competition (Buunk & Fisher, 2009).

Impulse buying behaviour is another major consumer activity that must be considered by social media marketers. Different factors such as ease of access to goods, page or profile content quality, and virtual cues (Floh & Madlberger, 2013; Jeffrey & Hodge, 2007; Wells, Parboteeah, & Valacich, 2011) are just some of the factors that can be attributed to enhanced impulse buying behaviour as a positive response to social media advertising content (Wells et al., 2011).

In the online world, impulse purchasing is prevalent (Wells et al., 2011). Due to the benefits it can offer of wider product versatility, extended product lines, quicker transactions and ad personalization, the prevalence of e-commerce promotes the ease of making purchases as well (Srinivasan, Anderson, & Ponnayolu, 2002). Moreover, e-commerce goods and services often tend to be available at reduced prices (Grandon & Pearson, 2004). All these factors can persuade individuals to engage in impulse buying behaviour.

According to Charoennan and Huang (2018), conspicuous purchasing and the consumption of luxury products are no longer limited to the exclusive lifestyles of the elites. Due to the increased usage of social media, conspicuous consumption has become more prevalent and established in mass society (Kastanakis & Balabanis, 2014). Because of technological advancements, consumers can now share their purchase and consumption experiences freely and widely (Ki & Kim, 2016). According to Duan and Dholakia (2017), posting a product or an exclusive service on social media can be considered as a new form of conspicuous consumption as the users are presenting their own wealth in the attempt to maintain or gain social status though publicly showing their consumed products.

Furthermore, conspicuous consumption can be boosted within social media platforms, especially with user-generated content. First, as users can adjust their photos or videos with filtering programs, this enables them to engage in enhancing their self-image by manipulating the attractiveness of the purchases (Duan & Dholakia, 2017). Secondly, posts are available on social media for an indefinite period of time as they form the personal virtual history of the user (Hung & Li, 2007). Thirdly, social media allows consumers to undertake a less directed communication without targeting a

specific audience; the response rate and social support then subsequently increase (Berger & Iyengar, 2013). These characteristics of posting online have a greater impact on interpersonal relationships and on an individual's happiness (Thomas & Millar, 2013).

According to the social comparison theory elaborated by Festinger (1954), human beings are believed to have an essential urge to compare themselves with others. Subsequent studies on the effects of social comparison among TV viewers were carried out by Churchill and Moschis (1979) and Nguyen, Moschis, and Shannon (2009). In the virtual environment, the social comparison theory was used by Islam et al. (2018) to demonstrate that users' comparisons may indeed be helpful in explaining users' attitudes, and their relation with materialism. They showed that because social comparisons in social media play a role in attitudes, they may be helpful in understanding attitudes towards sponsored ads, branded content and user-generated content, which then translated into higher levels of negative consumption behaviours.

Regarding compulsive buying behaviour, it is a mental health condition characterized by the chronic, repetitive and uncontrollable purchasing of goods despite serious psychological, social, occupational, and/or financial consequences (Müller, Mitchell, Swart, Crosby, & Berg, 2010). From the findings of Mazalin and Moore (2004), compulsive behaviour was found to be common in young persons who are depressed or lack self-confidence. Their study showed that young people who were depressed or lacking in self-confidence often enjoyed watching advertising that represented their "idealized" version of the self. Then in order to restore their positive mood, they were more likely to engage in compulsive purchases.

Therefore, this study intends to determine, in propositions 4, 8 and 10, whether attitudes towards social media ads, branded content and user-generated content enhance compulsive buying behaviours. Conspicuous consumption is the practice of buying products or services in order to display wealth publicly and for impressing others rather than to cover essential needs (Podoshen & Andrzejewski, 2012). Social media users try to emulate their role models and internet influencers by purchasing the goods they advertise in order to impress others and improve their social status. Therefore, in propositions 5, 9 and 11, this study seeks to demonstrate that attitudes towards social

media advertising, branded content and user-generated content have an impact on conspicuous consumption.

Impulsive buying is generally defined as the customer's propensity to purchase goods and services without planning in advance. When a consumer makes impulsive purchase decisions, these are generally driven by emotions and feelings (Bashar, Ahmad, & Wasfiq, 2013). As demonstrated by Zafar et al. (2019), social media ads are often a method used to inspire impulse shopping by triggering the user's desire to acquire the product without further deliberation through the high relevancy and customization of their ads as well as the call to action. Therefore, in proposition 6, 19 and 12, this study aims to demonstrate that attitudes towards social media ads, branded content and user-generated content have an impact on impulse consumption.

2.19 The Theory of Planned Behaviour

The theory of Planned Behaviour has been tested in this study through the construct of attitudes towards social media content. This was done as, in new highly interactive media, attitudes may have an impact over behaviours. For the past three decades, the Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 1985), which is an extension of the Theory of Reasoned Action (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975), has dominated research on consumption behaviours.

According to the TPB, volitional human behaviour is determined by the attitudes towards certain behaviours and perceived behavioural control (PBC). Theoretically, intention is influenced by attitudes toward the behaviour, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control. PBC's ability to influence behaviour directly (rather than indirectly through intention) is thought to be proportional to the degree of actual control over the behaviour. Attitudes, subjective norms, and PBC are thought to be based on the strength and evaluation of behavioural, normative, and control beliefs. The TPB also proposes three mediation ideas. To begin, the effect of attitude and subjective norm on behaviour is seen to be totally mediated by intention, while the effect of PBC on behaviour is thought to be somewhat mediated by intention. Finally, the TPB is thought to moderate the effects of all other biological, social, environmental,

economic, medicinal, and cultural variables (sufficiency assumption; Ajzen, 1985; Sutton, 2002).

The TPB has sparked a great deal of empirical online purchase behaviour research. To study cross-sectional and prospective connections between TPB cognitions and behaviour, the great majority of studies have used correlational approaches (Noar & Zimmerman, 2005). The TPB accounted for 19.3% of variability in purchase behaviour, according to a recent systematic evaluation of 237 independent prospective assessments, with attitudes being the best predictor (McEachan, Conner, Taylor, & Lawton, 2011). When studies utilized a longitudinal rather than a cross-sectional design, or participants who were not university students, and when outcome measures were taken objectively rather than as a self-report, the TPB was found to be much less predictive of behaviour.

The TPB has very few experimental testings, and those that have been undertaken have not validated the theory's assumptions. Hardeman and colleagues (2002) conducted a systematic review and discovered 24 research studies in which the TPB was employed in the formulation and/or assessment of an intervention, concluding that the data was insufficient to reach a firm conclusion about the theory's utility. Factorial experimental tests of the TPB with interventions targeting one or all of the theory's cognitive predictors have either failed to change the theoretical target variables (McCarty, 1981), or when successful in changing cognitions, these changes did not translate into changes in behaviour (McCarty, 1981). (Chatzisarantis & Hagger, 2005).

Sniehotta (2009) utilised a 2*2*2 factorial design to assign students to persuasive messages that addressed key behavioural, normative, and/or control attitudes about using their university's sports facilities. The behavioural belief intervention changed attitudes after the intervention but had no effect on intention or behaviour. Subjective norm and intention were enhanced by the normative belief intervention, but not behaviour. The control belief intervention had no effect on PBC or intentions, but it did have an effect on behaviour as measured objectively by sports facility attendance (Sniehotta, 2009).

Attitudes are defined in the study as how much Facebook and Instagram users feel positive or negative about content in social media. Previous research in a variety of online environments has discovered a substantial link between attitude and

purchase behaviour (Al-Debei et al. 2013; Baker & White 2010; Crespo & Del Bosque 2008; Heirman & Walrave 2012; Leng et al. 2011; Wang et al. 2007) have shown that the more positive an individual's attitude toward a behaviour is, the more likely the individual is to establish a Behavioural Intention to perform the certain action. As a result, it's reasonable to predict that having a favorable attitude toward social media content can increase the likelihood of forming a behavioural intent to engage in consumption.

Several studies have revealed a non-significant link between subjective norms and behaviours in previous TPB investigations (Al-Debei et al. 2013; Crespo & Del Bosque 2008; Heirman & Walrave 2012; Truong 2009). The same authors have shown that the more subjective norms an individual perceives to encourage the performance of a behaviour, the more likely the individual is to form an intent to perform the behaviour (Al-Debei et al. 2013; Crespo & Del Bosque 2008; Heirman & Walrav). Subjective norms on social media are not expected to lead to a significant enhancement of negative consumption behaviour and therefore they are not included.

Attitudes in social media may contribute for fostering trust. Trust has been considered one of the most significant factors in business dealings, message sharing, and building new connections in daily life and one-on-one communication (Coppola, Hiltz, & Rotter, 2004; Ejdys, 2018; Piccoli et al., 2003), and it is deemed critical for SNS (Metzger, 2004). In the internet service sector, trust is critical since it is a strong predictor of actual consumer behaviour. A high level of trust between internet service providers and users will ensure a long-term relationship (Suh et al., 2003). According to Papadopoulou (2007), there is a considerable negative relationship between attitudes and trust fostered in users which translate into reduced consumption (Shih, Lai, & Cheng, 2013; Shin, 2010). Furthermore, Shih et al. (2013) performed a survey to investigate online communication, and their findings revealed that users' opinions toward social media content were highly influenced by their level of trust, which was generally lower in branded messages. Others (Shin, 2010; Warner-Sderholm et al., 2018) have looked into other user generated content and found that trust was more positive and more positively impacted users' consumption. Suh et al. (2003) found that customer opinions toward using the internet for business purposes were significantly influenced by trust.

Because Facebook is a collective network based on connections, and 'friendvertising' (when one Facebook user informs others of what they like by 'liking,' 'sharing,' or 'commenting' on brand posts or advertisements – paid or organic) greatly influences subjective norms, subjective norms are particularly important to the study of advertising on Facebook (Logan 2014; Maurer & Wiegmann 2011). It's also the phenomenon of 'friendvertising,' which blurs the lines between paid and unpaid ads for users, encouraging them to interact with ads that weren't meant for them by advertisers.

2.20 Materialism's Direct Relationship with Negative Consumption Behaviours

Materialism has been linked with compulsive (Dittmar, 2004; Gupta, 2011; Khare et al., 2012; Pradhan et al., 2018; Tarka, 2020), conspicuous (Segal & Podoshen 2014; Vohra, 2018; Zakaria, Wan-Ismael, & Abdul-Talib, 2020), and impulse (Dittmar et al., 1995; Featherstone, 1991; Mukhtar, Abid, Rehmat, Butt, & Farooqi, 2021; Podoshen & Andrzejewski, 2012; Ramanathan & Menon, 2006; Sen & Nayak, 2019; Tatzel, 2002; Ubel, 2009) buying behaviours. Therefore, in proposition 13, 14 and 15, this study wants to test whether materialism has a direct impact on compulsive, conspicuous and impulse buying behaviour.

2.20.1 Materialism and Compulsive Buying Behaviour

Materialism, as described by Belk (1985), is the value consumers give to the treasures of the earth. It is a concept that is characterized by non-generosity and envy, which are negatively associated with happiness and life satisfaction. When the materialistic ideals hold the most important role in the value system of the individual, it can lead to dangerous implications such as low self-esteem, low life satisfaction, low sense of well-being and particularly high compulsive purchasing behaviour. Research has revealed that people with compulsive buying tendencies exhibit more intense levels of materialism. Therefore, materialists will experience more dissatisfaction with their own standard of living than non-materialists will, and this sense of dissatisfaction will then penetrate into the whole life of the materialist.

Other research has shown that people with high materialistic attitudes experience higher levels of anxiety, shame, and other negative emotions compared to individuals with lower materialism, and as such, they often alleviate these feelings by purchasing more (Richins, McKeage, & Najjar, 1992). Dittmar (2005a) stated that compulsive consumers perceive material items often as mood compensation. In his research, he identified a clear positive link between the concepts of materialism and compulsive purchasing behaviour. Individuals with high levels of materialism assume that acquisition and consumption are important ways means f bringing fulfilment to their everyday lives. Increased consumption will make them feel happier, even if they inevitably develop compulsive purchasing behaviours. However, as compulsive buyers often do not want anyone to know their buying habits, they are more likely to purchase online instead of in conventional stores.

2.20.2 Materialism and Conspicuous Buying Behaviour

The empirical research of Richins and Rudmin (1994) found that those who are particularly materialistic prefer to put a greater value on goods that can be worn or used in public. Their findings indicated that such materialistic individuals may also derive more gratification from displaying the good to other individuals than actually using it. Materialists think that these goods are fundamental to acquiring social status and influence their life satisfaction as well. These findings offer a connection into the realm of conspicuous consumption, which is a behaviour in which an individual displays wealth through a high degree of luxury expenditures on consumption and services (Trigg, 2001).

From a social viewpoint, people are driven to retain status (Levy, 1999). Materialists judge themselves and those around them based on outward appearances and possessions (Chatterjee & Hunt, 1996). Chatterjee, Hunt, and Kernan (2000) observed that, in essence, these status symbols are instruments that are used as part of an external reference structure in the hegemonic process of maintaining social order (Heisley & Cours, 2007). This process then ultimately connects these objects to sustaining the social status of the individuals who own and display them (Goldschmidt, 1990).

Marcoux et al. (1997) found that social status was always identified as a significant factor in stimulating conspicuous consumption. It is also claimed that the

desire for social status is one of the most significant factors affecting conspicuous consumption, and one way of attaining social status is by purchasing luxury goods. As was observed by Podoshen and Andrzejewski (2012), gaining luxury goods is an attempt to be viewed more favorably in the social hierarchy. Souiden, M'Saad, and Pons (2011) revealed that as conspicuous consumption directly and positively influences social status even in different cultures, consumers' conspicuous behaviour might be explained by their desire for social status.

More recent research has found that consumers with high materialistic values assume that satisfaction or its achievement is synonymous with possessing material objects, and that using these objects means improving their individual social status and success (Lim, Phang, & Lim, 2020; Wang, 2016). Materialism is closely linked to the consumption of luxury goods and brands because materialistic consumers claim that the source of happiness is possessing luxury goods which signal wealth, achievement and social status (Sharda & Bhat, 2018). Recent studies have further shown that materialistic value and perception affect luxury consumption behaviour (Ajitha & Sivakumar, 2017; Hudders & Pandelaere, 2012; Sharda & Bhat, 2018). Young customers purchase luxury labels for their goods in a similar vein. Teens who frequently use social media show an attitudinal inclination towards luxury consumption (Sharda & Bhat, 2018).

2.20.3 Materialism and Impulse Buying Behaviour

A strong relationship between materialism and impulse buying behaviour has been reported in previous literature. Tatzel (2002) suggested that those who have high levels of materialism and are "loose" with cash are predisposed to buy impulsively. She also argued that these customers would exhibit a positive attitude towards debt and a positive attitude towards impulsive purchases. Expanding on these findings, it may be that highly materialistic individuals follow a "buy now, pay later" consumption strategy. Adding to this dimension, Rook and Fisher (1995) demonstrated that consumers have a greater urge to buy when acting on impulse, considering such behaviour socially appropriate and contextually rational.

Belk (1995) suggested that it was also possible for materialists to feel obsessed with money or addicted to it. Living in an economy where material possessions

are the norm may result in individuals assuming that products carry positive outcomes. This can then lead to the conclusion that impulsive buying helps such individuals to showcase good that lead to increased power. Members of a peer group can also see impulse purchasing in a positive light when the group is assumed to look favorably at spontaneity and hedonic pursuit objectives (Aragoncillo & Orus, 2018). This recent result was in line with the findings of much earlier studies which also highlighted the importance of social context in enhancing impulse buying behaviour.

2.20.4 Indirect Effects of Materialism on Negative Consumption Behaviours

The following examples explain how, in different academic disciplines, different mediation variables help explain the indirect relationship between materialism and negative consumption behaviours. Amato (1993) studied the negative outcomes of divorce from parental-conflict perspectives and how these constructs mediate the relationship between materialism and compulsive consumption. He showed that this relationship was mediated by divorce stress in children, where material possessions acquired compulsively served as replacements for the loss of family resources that accompanied a stressful divorce. On the other hand, children who had experienced a low stress divorce showed less compulsive behaviour. This example explains how, in different disciplines, different mediation variables can explain the relationship between materialism and negative consumption behaviours.

Another example comes from Moran (2015), whose study of online impulse purchase tendencies revealed that materialism does not always have a direct impact on impulse buying behaviour especially if it is in an online environment. The findings showed that consumers under stress displayed a higher online impulse-buying tendency after viewing images with aggressive discounts and strict time limits. Those consumers under no stress with similar materialistic levels had less impulse purchase behaviour, implying that there may be other factors mediating or moderating the impact of materialism on impulse buying behaviour. Therefore, since there are still mixed results within the literature, it would make sense to explore the mediation effects that attitudes towards advertising content, both paid and unpaid, can have in the relationship between materialism and negative consumption behaviours.

The literature is still mixed on whether materialism has a direct (from proposition 13 to 15) or a mediating impact on negative consumption behaviours. Thus, one objective of this study is to determine the extent of the mediating effect of attitudes towards social media advertisement and social media intensity between materialism and negative consumption behaviours. From proposition 4 to 12, the researcher aims to determine whether attitudes towards social media advertising, branded content, and user-generated content lead to enhanced impulse, conspicuous and compulsive buying behaviour in the selected context. Then, from proposition 13 to 19, the researcher intends to determine whether the intensity of social media usage leads to enhanced negative consumption behaviour.

2.21 Social Media Intensity Usage Behaviour (SMIUB)'s Relationship with Negative Consumption Behaviours

Higher social media intensity has been found to increase user's self-esteem (Gonzales & Hancock, 2011). When users are engaged on social media, they can control the information to be shared. Therefore, they are likely to present positive information about themselves among their network of acquaintances (Gonzales & Hancock, 2011). To achieve this, users have to engage in conspicuous buying behaviour to signal their status and success to their virtual friends. Such positive information usually solicits positive feedback, thereby enhancing the user's self-esteem (Ellison, Steinfield, & Lampe, 2007).

The study conducted by Wilcox and Stephen (2013) not only confirmed this finding, but also discovered that higher self-esteem as a consequence of heavy online social network use is likely to lower a person's self-control. This subsequently leads to more impulsive or indulgent behaviour such as purchasing unhealthy food choice and spending excessively (Wilcox, Kramer, & Sen, 2011). Wilcox et al. (2011) also found that users with higher self-esteem levels tend to have more indulgent behaviour while online. They observed that when people are comfortable about themselves, they are more likely to lose control of themselves and may act on the basis of impulse or indulgence rather than rationalization.

Displaying conspicuous products and luxurious objects as a show of wealth can satisfy a person's need for prestige (Podoshen & Andrzejewski, 2012). The consumption of these items is more of a hedonic and indulgent display rather than a utilitarian act of necessity. Building on the findings of prior studies on the impact of social networking, self-image, and self-control, (Wilcox & Stephen, 2013) proposed that high social media intensity can lead users to irrational consumption choices, such as increasing their expenditures on luxurious goods and buying more impulsively and also compulsively to restore their positive mood.

2.22 The Gap Between Compulsive, Conspicuous and Impulse Buying Behaviour

Testing and examining the three different negative consumption behaviours is justified in this study as we want to have a comprehensive overview of the impact of materialism, attitudes and social media intensity over different types of consumption behaviours. Regarding compulsive and impulse buying behaviour the researcher decided to include them, as scholars contend that both behaviours are complementary in the users' online shopping experience and both have an impact on individual's consumption in different ways (DeSarbo & Edwards 1996).

Impulse buying is more associated with external triggers (Wang, 2015) that stimulate an individual's impulsive nature, resulting in an impulse to buy. Ads customization, promotion, sales, and shopping environment all contribute to an increase an individual's impulsive nature, leading to an urge to buy. This is often the case for online consumers browsing social media who are constantly exposed to promotion and heavily customized advertising materials.

According to Yang (2008) materialism is among the main triggers of compulsive buying behaviour, which results in a similar desire to buy. According to DeSarbo and Edwards (1996), despite the fact that both buying habits lead to the same result, theoretically the behaviours "differ in the underlying emotional motivations for excessive shopping and spending" (p. 233).

Users buying impulsively online are usually goal-oriented, product-focused or situation-specific, but the actions linked to compulsive buying behaviour are

frequently repetitive and troublesome, and it is frequently portrayed as a coping mechanism to traumatic events or emotions. It is possible that both behaviours may co-exist in the same person at the same time and therefore it is important to test whether the constructs have effects on both variables.

Researchers have recently focused on impulsive purchasing as an energizing and emotionally draining experience to a high level of emotion and spontaneity, in which the rapidity of the habit prevents thoughtful consideration of options (Jones et al. 2003). On the other hand, compulsive buying behaviour has been linked to potential causes that are "biochemical, psychological, or societal in nature" (Faber & Christenson 1996, p. 804). Compulsive buying behaviour is characterized by "uncontrolled and excessive purchasing" (Billieux et al., 2008, p. 1432) and "excessive or poorly controlled preoccupations, urges, or behaviours regarding spending" (Black 2001, p. 17) triggered by internal tension, often involving frustration that can "only be relieved by purchases" (Billieux et al. 2008, p. 1433). Consumers may obtain a short-term and transient benefit after being rewarded for their actions, a surge of pleasant affect provides compulsive purchasers with a means of modifying and improving their purchasing mood states, at least for the time being.

The link between impulse buying behaviour and compulsive buying behaviour is backed up by studies on mood and shopping. Consumers are motivated to prolong specific mood states that they find desirable (Faber, O'Guinn, & Krych 1987). Mood states often impact typical consumer emotions and behaviours to the point that consumers are compelled to prolong specific mood states that they find appealing. Many scientists agree that affect can be classified as positive or negative (Beatty & Ferrell 1998; Dube & Morgan 1998; Jones et al., 2007; Mano & Oliver, 1993; Phillips & Baumgartner, 2002; Westbrook, 1987). Beatty and Ferrell (1998) define positive affect as a person's enthusiasm, vitality, and excitement, whereas negative affect is defined as distress, anger, fear, or anxiety (Watson & Tellegen 1985). Advertising plays a critical role in imparting important consumer culture codes to society. This may be especially true because compulsive and impulsive customers' opinions about advertising are more favorable than non compulsive purchasers', stressing image rather than product benefits (D'Astous & Bellemare, 1989).

Conspicuous buying behaviour was included next to compulsive and impulse buying behaviour, as it has been shown to be often related with social media users, who often consume following herd behaviour to gain social proof from their peers and constantly compare themselves with influencers and their peers. Impulsive buyers appear to be buying products also conspicuously as they tend to buy flashy products they had previously seen from influencers or other users deemed experts in their product category.

This is particularly relevant in the tourism industry as tourists may now order travel products online, regardless of time or location, thanks to the widespread use of tourism e-commerce and mobile payment technology. Within this sector this convenience has significantly facilitated impulse travel decisions (Laesser & Dolnicar, 2012). Impulse travel, often known as unexpected travel, highlights the short time span between having an impulsive desire to travel and departing (Laesser & Dolnicar, 2012; Park & Roehl, 2016). Impulsive travel has become increasingly popular on social media, and it can occur in a variety of situations. Posts on Zhihu.com (the Chinese Quora) shed light on this, with one user asking, "Under what circumstances will you take an impulsive trip?" A love break-up is one of the most common responses, as is becoming bored with day-to-day life; nevertheless, the most common stimulation is seeing vacation experiences shared on social networking sites (SNSs). Tourists' posts of conspicuous travel overwhelm social media platforms (Narangajavana et al., 2017). Sharing travel experiences on SNSs is often thought to offer the potential for showcasing conspicuous consumption (hereafter referred to as "conspicuousness" for simplicity) because it can carry more symbolic significance (of wealth, social status, and happiness) than the travel itself (Bronner & De Hoog, 2019; Dedeoglu et al., 2020). Viewers are therefore influenced to make impulsive purchases if the experience has a conspicuous feature (Zhou & Wong, 2010).

The need for a highly defined position in social hierarchy is positively correlated to a materialistic set of values, while these values are correlated to conspicuous consumption (Babin, Darden, & Griffin, 1994). Elliot (1994) showed that buyers who scored high on compulsive buying had self-esteem that is significantly below average, which led them to be more inclined towards purchasing products that will make them more socially visible. Likewise, Roberts (1998) showed a correlation

between conspicuous buying behaviour and compulsive buying behaviour. In the same manner, Roberts and Manolis (2000) implied and found evidence that status consumption can become compulsive if people lose control over their purchasing habits which is something very often happen to social media users.

According to Thoumtungroje (2014) on social media e-Wom can influence conspicuous consumption. User generated content on social media has instead being more often linked with emulation and conspicuous consumption. Within the same study the author stated that in social media EWOM can influence conspicuous consumption. According to Caitlin (2016), social media and user generated content can enhance ostentatious consumption as a way for increasing self-esteem. Conspicuous behaviour can also be defined as an act of spending money with the purpose of attracting attention. To impress others, users spend money on unnecessary luxury items (Heugel, 2015). Many countries have investigated conspicuous consumption in social media around the globe (Taylor & Strutton, 2016). Souiden et al.'s (2011) research investigated the link between ostentatious usage of consumer wants to express social status and self-esteem through branded accessories. Conspicuous consumption is an action based on how people use social media (Yenicioğlu & Suerdem, 2015). As a result, the opinions of other customers influence consumers' brand attitudes, beliefs, and judgments (Myers & Sar, 2011). The bandwagon effect, or simply going along with a visible majority, is another term for this form of social influence (Burnkrant & Cousineau, 1975; Myers, & Sar, 2011). There are two sorts of social proof information, according to Cheung et al. (2014): action-based and opinion-based social proof information. Following other people's activities, or so-called herd behaviour, is an example of action-based information. The amount of followers, views, and downloads visible to the consumer is an outstanding example of this (Cheung et al., 2010, 2014). Consumer opinions, judgments, and experiences about products or services are offered as eWOM (Cheung et al., 2008, 2014).

Influencers are a good example of opinion-based social proof information in marketing. Companies pay well-known endorsers to spread positive information about their brands or a specific product in an attempt to influence consumers by disseminating positive social opinion data in the hopes of speeding up the decision-making process. Advertising cues can be characterized as intrinsic or extrinsic,

according to the cue use theory (Espejel, Fandos, & Falián, 2007). The social proof theory which has been recognized as the main trigger behind conspicuous-impulsive consumption behaviours on social media was proposed by psychologist Robert Cialdini, who claimed that when a person is unsure about what to do in a certain scenario, they turn to other people's answers and emulate them to guide their own actions (Cialdini, 1984). This implies that people get inspiration for their own activities from the actions of others (Cialdini, 1984). People assume they are doing things correctly because everyone else is doing it the same way, especially for what concern social media. This theory is also known as informational social influence theory since it focuses on the importance of social influence. Social proof theory is made up of four components (Cialdini, 1984). For all the above listed reasons and in order to have a better understanding of the relationships dominating consumption in social media the researcher has decided to include compulsive, conspicuous and impulse buying behaviour.

2.23 Hypotheses

As outlined in the study carried out by Ducoffe (1996), web advertising provides users with updated information and users' perceptions will revolve around the usefulness and informativeness of the ads. Previous studies reviewed in this research have indicated that individuals with high levels of materialism tend to be heavy users of social media and to be more positively open to social media sponsored content. Therefore, this study's first hypothesis states that:

H1: *“Individuals with higher materialistic values will have more positive attitudes towards social media ads (SMADV)”*.

Materialists compare themselves with those who appear to have more money than them and place great stock in what these people say and display, creating feelings of inequality, injustice, frustration or envy (Sirgy, 1998). According to both sociology and marketing literature, a friend in a social network is a reliable source of information. Furthermore as the research from Bass (1969) showed that word of mouth (WOM) is a standardized form of interpersonal influence created by a network of consumers who are linked to each other. This therefore implies that what social media

friends or others show on social media in terms of both products and experiences may be considered reliable and may positively influence users' attitudes. Therefore, this study assumes that individuals who hold materialistic views have a tendency to compare themselves to peers more than people with non-materialistic values. It is therefore hypothesized that:

H2: *“Individuals with higher materialistic views will have a more positive attitude towards user generated content (SMUGC)”*.

Yoon (1995) identified a positive correlation between materialism and general attitudes towards brands advertisements, suggesting the theory that more materialistic people may have more positive attitudes towards advertising. The present study supports Yoon's views on the positive relationship between materialism and positive attitudes towards social media brand generated content, but also embraces the assumptions of Richins and Dawson (1992) and of Wang (2006) that materialism is a permanent personal value that is likely to affect attitudes such as advertising attitude in general. This study therefore hypothesizes that:

H3: *“Individuals with higher materialistic views will have a more positive attitude towards brand generated content (SMBGC)”*.

According to the social comparison theory (Festinger, 1954), individuals have a fundamental desire to determine their own beliefs and abilities by comparing themselves to others. There can be upward or downward comparisons. The upward comparisons with “better” others lead to negative self-assessments, while downward comparisons with “worse” others lead to self-enhancement and more self-confidence. Since advertising content is mostly filled with idealized images, exposure to advertising messages may result in negative comparisons and in an increased need to acquire the advertised products or services (Lee, Lennon, & Rudd, 2000). As a result of social comparison through sponsored content, brand posts and users' reviews, users will have a negative self-evaluation and may also end up more likely to buy advertised products. Therefore, this study expects the following relationships:

H4: *“Individuals with more positive attitudes towards social media advertising (SMADV) will have higher scores for compulsive buying”*.

As advertising is known to increase willingness to pay and also the willingness to be part of a group, which is especially true for brand names, this study also assumes the following relationship:

H5: *“Individuals who have positive attitudes towards social media ads (SMADV) will tend to display more conspicuous buying behaviour”*.

According to LaRose, Mastro, and Eastin (2001), the online environment stimulates impulse buying. E-commerce can undermine customer purchase restraints through its high engagement features with enhanced product stimuli, loyalty programs and chat rooms, steering customers towards impulse purchases. The perception of watching customized social media ads, created by studying customers' online profiles and habits and then matching ad content to the users' identified preferences, interests, or history of browsing, is a factor affecting impulse buying behaviours. Therefore, as many studies have revealed, when consumers are highly engaged with a media vehicle, they can be more responsive to brand advertisements (Bronner & Neijens, 2006; Wang, 2006). This study therefore can assume that:

H6: *“Individuals with more positive attitudes towards social media advertising (SMADV) will have higher scores for impulse buying”*.

Similarly, following the social comparison theory (Festinger, 1954), individuals have a fundamental desire to determine their own beliefs and abilities by comparing themselves to what others present on social media and they also have a tendency to emulate the role models in their circle of virtual acquaintances. Therefore, this study hypothesizes that users with positive attitudes towards user-generated content will have high scores for compulsive behaviour.

H7: *“Individuals with more positive attitudes towards social media user-generated content (SMUGC) will have higher scores for compulsive buying”*.

In his research, Trigg (2001) stated that a significant factor influencing conspicuous consumption was a form of individual emulation of a social group perceived to be in a higher place in the social hierarchy. Facebook and later Instagram usage has boomed partly because both platforms allow their users to present attentively crafted presentations of their idealized selves to others (Ellison, Heino, & Gibbs, 2006). The idealized self is linked to the possessions and the experiences showcased in the users' profiles. Conspicuous consumption provides a symbolic representation of a

prestigious position within the social network, providing a psychological advantage to individuals during the consumption process. Therefore, it can be assumed that since people who are affected by conspicuous buying behaviour showcase their unique experiences, products or achievements in an effort to be part of certain social class while at the same time keeping a feature of uniqueness, the following relationship can be expected:

H8: *“Individuals who have a positive attitude towards social media user-generated content (SMUGC) will tend to display more conspicuous buying behaviour”.*

When a Facebook or Instagram post has a high number of “likes”, there will be reactions and comments delivering a cascade of information. Users viewing viral posts or ads can experience the same positive effect and stimulate their urge to buy impulsively, which is also called the herding effect. This will occur when consumers see other individuals behaving in a certain way and then attempt to mimic those behaviours, perhaps even ignoring their own thoughts to do so (Banerjee, 1992). Other consumers will be influenced by the positive perceptions signaled by a high number of “likes” and thus become engaged in herd behaviour. For these reasons, this study hypothesizes that:

H9: *“Individuals with more positive attitudes towards social media user-generated content (SMUGC) will have higher scores for impulse buying”.*

Positive attitudes towards branded messages on social media reinforce the desire to acquire the advertised objects (Brown & Stayman, 1992). In individuals with low self-esteem, these positive attitudes can increase compulsive buying behaviour. Therefore, this study hypothesizes that:

H10: *“Individuals with more positive attitudes towards social media brand generated content (SMBGC) will have higher scores for compulsive buying”.*

Many consumers purchase goods because of the symbolic meanings they attach to those goods (Tutgun-Ünal, 2020). On social media, people want to make sure their conspicuous consumption behaviour is visible by their circle of friends and their followers. Brand generated content, especially from luxury brands, is known to induce emulation in social media users. Therefore, people tend to emulate the images they see while on social media, purchase the luxury goods they can afford to buy, go to the

interesting places they can visit, and then show this to people through social media. This study therefore hypothesizes that:

H11: *“Individuals who have a positive attitudes towards social media brand generated content (SMBGC) will tend to display more conspicuous buying behaviour”*.

In the social media environment, impulse buying behaviour is prevalent (Dawson & Kim, 2010; Wells et al., 2011). The predominance of relevant and customized ads promoting special deals makes unplanned purchases very likely (Alalwan, 2018). This is largely because of the benefits of shopping online, such as wider versatility, extended product ranges, quicker transactions and customization (Srinivasan et al., 2002). Moreover, the goods and services are often available at reduced prices when purchased online (Grandon & Pearson, 2004). All these factors can, under the right circumstances, such as improving their social image, push individuals to participate in online impulsive purchasing behaviour. Impulse shopping refers to the immediacy of the buying behaviour, and e-commerce provides people with the potential to invest the least time and effort in their buying behaviour. This study therefore hypothesizes that:

H12: *“Individuals with more positive attitudes towards social media brand generated content (SMBGC) will have higher scores for impulse buying”*.

Materialism is one determinant factor in compulsive buying (Yurchisin & Johnson, 2004). It influences the buying decisions of consumers. Materialism is among the main causes giving rise to compulsive buying tendencies (Dittmar 2005; Richins, 2004). This study therefore hypothesizes that:

H13: *“Individuals with high materialistic scores will have higher scores for compulsive buying”*.

O’cass and Frost (2002) found that customers with stronger materialistic impulses were using clothing to control impressions, placing trendy clothing in a central role in their lives and using it to communicate their success to others. Furthermore, the research findings of Arndt, Solomon, Kasser, and Sheldon (2004) showed that the acquisition and display of status-oriented materials play a role in Western social structures, thereby reinforcing the links between buying behaviour and society. Consumers may be led to believe that the possession of certain conspicuous goods is important for their upward social mobility. Therefore, this study hypothesizes that:

H14: *“Individuals with high materialistic values will tend to display more conspicuous buying behaviour”*.

Troisi et al. (2006) showed that highly materialistic people have higher impulse buying tendencies. In addition, they argued that materialistic people buy goods because of the positive sensation it provides. Different working lines indicate that materialism is a technique to minimize adverse effects of unmet psychological needs by enhancing self-esteem (Dittmar, Beattie, & Friese, 1996). Therefore, this study hypothesizes that:

H15: *“Individuals who score high in materialistic values will have higher scores for impulse buying”*.

Materialistic individuals make more social comparisons between their own and others' standards of living. These comparison in turn drive them to increased social media usage, since social media provides users with access to the information of friends and acquaintances (Haferkamp & Krämer, 2011). This study, therefore, hypothesizes that:

H16: *“Individuals who score high in materialistic values will have higher scores for social media intensity usage behaviours (SMIUB)”*.

In an effort to resolve identity fragmentation caused by the images seen on social media, heavy social media users who experience anxiety and lower self-esteem may resort to more compulsive buying behaviour (Tutgun-Ünal, 2020). Therefore, this study hypothesizes that:

H17: *“Individuals with high social media intensity usage behaviours (SMIUB) will have a higher score for compulsive buying”*.

Khan and Dhar (2006) found that being an heavy users of social networking sites can enhance the users' self-esteem while also influencing their self-control. The enhancement in the self-esteem may result in an individual's choice of placing themselves higher in the social hierarchy through the purchase of luxury goods online, thereby giving rise to consumers' indulgent behaviour. This study therefore hypothesizes that:

H18: *“Individuals with high levels of social media intensity usage behaviours (SMIUB) will tend to display more conspicuous buying behaviour”*.

The findings of Khuong and Tran (2015) showed that consumers' social media usage intensity becomes a strong factor behind indulging in impulse purchases. Naa and Wu (2018) developed a conceptual model to determine the predictive power of social media on impulse buying tendency and found a positive influence. This study therefore hypothesizes that:

H19: *“Individuals with high levels of social media intensity usage behaviours (SMIUB) will have higher scores for impulse buying”.*

Attitudes towards advertising in social media are often related to the concept of luxury and exclusiveness. The advertisements that represent high quality and prestige positively attract materialistic individuals (Czarnecka & Schivinski, 2018). This is particularly true of advertisements that receive significant investment from advertisers and where endorsers are celebrities who often display expensive goods and exclusive lifestyle experiences. These ostentatious displays are often envied by materialistic people who place high value and meaning on material possessions and exclusive things. Such advertising shapes the attitudes and purchase intention of users, which then eventually translates into purchases, as described by the theory of planned behaviour (Ajzen, 1991). This study therefore hypothesizes that:

H20: *“The relationship between materialism and the three negative consumption behaviours will be positively mediated by the role of attitudes towards social media ads, attitudes towards social media brand generated content and attitudes towards user-generated content”.*

Engaged social media users compare themselves to other users. As a result, they spend more time and contribute more in terms of content creation. Users who invest more time and are more interested are more likely to be exposed to texts, comments, tweets, and reviews from experts, influencers, and other users. This exposure can then push them to gain more social proof, believing that the greater the number of people who find an idea or a product interesting, the more likely it is to be true. By observing popular trends and products, heavy users are more likely to purchase what appears more popular in accordance with the double jeopardy theory. Furthermore, heavily engaged social media users tend to make purchases that are more driven by emotions and by what other users are doing or showing rather than making a rational purchase decision. This study therefore hypothesizes that:

H21: “The relationship between materialism and the three negative consumption behaviours will be positively mediated by the role of social media intensity, and the mediating effect of social media intensity will be stronger than the mediating effect of attitudes”.

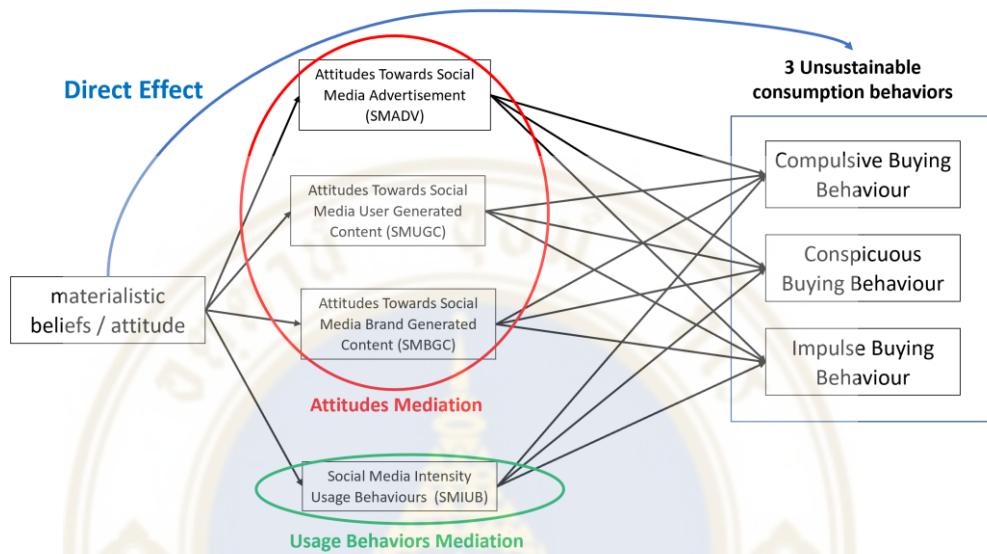


Figure 2.5 Conceptual framework

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

This study adopts a deductive quantitative method to test whether social media users' levels of materialism, attitudes towards advertising materials and social media usage intensity have an impact on their negative consumption behaviours (Groves et al., 2011; Jansen & Corley, 2007; Moran, 2015).

The methodology used in this study is explained in this chapter. The research design and the theoretical analysis should follow a clear methodological direction based on the study's research purpose and framework. The proposed framework (Figure 2.5) applies scientific research to measure the proposed paths of mediation between materialism and the three negative consumption habits. As a result, the objective of this research is to quantify the impacts of various variables. Therefore, the objectives of this chapter are to:

1. Justify the quantitative methods within a research approach and examine their strengths and weaknesses;
2. Provide a brief explanation of the quantitative research approach;
3. Justify and explore the quantitative research methodology to be used in this study.

The conceptual framework seeks to quantify the data (Malhotra, Agarwal, & Peterson, 1996) for the purpose of explaining the relationships. The approach for this investigation is explanatory and comprises quantitative research tools and techniques.

The quantitative method is conventionally based on a positivist approach to test relationships among constructs. This also underlies the deductive model which shows the hypothesized relationships. The proposed relationships seek to quantify an observable consequence through running a statistical experiment to gather results that determine whether the hypothesized relationships hold or not (Aaker, Benet-Martinez, & Garolera, 2001). More specifically, Granger (1969) asserted that in respect to

interpreting hypothesis, the direction is obvious from the nature of the variables. Hypothesis testing is most well-suited to studies where a research approach seeks to discover the underlying assumptions of the scientific observation and the challenge is to uncover the unknown (Kuhn, 1970). This research approach provides concrete scientific answers to the research questions which are defined in an objective way and measured through statistical tools and techniques (Rovai, Baker, & Ponton, 2013).

However, the researcher is aware that a quantitative approach also has its inherent limitations. As this research approach is not designed to reveal rich details of individual phenomena, it may not always be justifiable to compound and derive more complex observable situations that may be discovered through a qualitative approach. Additionally, this research method is limited to the objectivist approach and is not suitable for subjective experiments or information where statistical analysis is not required for detailed discussion of the situation (Yilmaz, 2013).

3.1.1 Justification of Quantitative Approach

Quantitative techniques can measure specific characteristics from a large representative sample through structured data collection procedures so that the results can be generalized to the entire population (Shields & Twycross, 2008). As mentioned earlier in this chapter, the main strength of this research approach is its ability to provide concise answers to the research questions through the acquisition and analysis of information that can be aggregated from the survey data (Yilmaz, 2013). The quantitative/empirical results can also be generalized, where a certain context only is relevant to the area of study. For example, the empirical setting tested in a developing country can be inferred in another similar context which could be another developing or developed country. In addition, this research design underlies the deductive models that confirm hypothesized relationships or the consequences of the relationships.

The following sections of this chapter discuss the population of the study, response rate, unit of analysis, informant selection, measurements, research instruments data collection, and data analysis.

3.1.2 Data Sampling

This study is among one of the few focusing on harmful consumption behaviours in the social media domain. As a result, the researcher decided to restrict the interacting variables to a uniform environment. The rationale for selecting a single country context rather than a multi-country study was to eliminate the macro environmental diversity that exists among countries (Garvin, 1987; Yang & Ganahl, 2004). The collection of data in a fairly homogeneous environment is expected to facilitate further the control of impacts arising from uncontrollable external variables (Kielhofner & Coster, 2006). The rationales for selecting Thailand as a context were that Thailand is among the countries with the highest levels of both social media engagement and social media penetration among its population in the world (Katchapakirin, Wongpatikaseree, Yomaboot, & Kaewpitakkun, 2020).

As shown in the studies analyzed in the bibliometric review, the size of the samples in the extant studies reviewed in this research ranged from a low of 97 to a high of 859 respondents, who were mainly undergraduate students. The standard and sophisticated methods of statistical analysis, including structural equation modeling, recommend a sample size of 200 as a fair number and 300 as a good number of respondents (Tabachnick & Fidell, 1996). In addition, Hair, Anderson, Tatham, and William (1998) recommended a sample size of 200 to test a model using SEM because 200 is a “critical sample size” (Hoelter, 1983) that can be used in any common estimation procedure to generate valid results. Wolf, Harrington, Clark, & Miller (2013) in their sample size requirements study for structural equation models suggested that four to five respondents per each item contained within each scale is an acceptable number to get reliable data.

The approach of using a sample size comparable and similar to extant studies is, however, recommended as a guide (Aaker et al., 2001) with a satisfactory level of reliability. A number of related social media studies (Ahmed, Rahim, Alabdullah, & Thottoli, 2019; Arpaci, 2020; Roshandel-Arbatani, Kawamorita, Ghanbary, & Ebrahimi, 2019) used a sample size of less than 400 and close to 300 with a response rate of 14.59% to 22%. These studies also used structural equation modeling as a tool of analysis. The response rate for any social science study in Thailand is relatively low, and 20% could be optimistic. Therefore, this study attempted to yield

approximately 400 or above respondents which would be more than sufficient to satisfy the statistical recommendation for the proposed testing tools and analysis.

The individuals in the sample must meet the criteria of being Thais and regularly using social media as their primary source of data. The sample frame was developed by using Audience Insights, a tool designed to help marketers learn more about their target audiences, including aggregate information about geography, demographics, purchase behaviour and various other relevant criteria. This is a reliable source of information as Facebook and Instagram were selected as the two platforms from which this study's sample of respondents would be collected. Both of these social media platforms are among the top 5 most-used platforms in Thailand in terms of the percentage monthly active users.

For the data sample source, this study was based on the e-commerce platforms that are currently more popular in Thailand and from which users tend to be more likely to purchase products. Higher numbers of likes in a Facebook page or followers in an Instagram page were deemed as the factors identifying the larger and more influential e-commerce platforms (Arora, Bansal, Kandpal, Aswani, & Dwivedi, 2019).

Compulsive and impulse buyers purchase such items as clothing, shoes, craft items, jewelry, gifts, makeup, and compact discs/DVDs (Ismail et al., 2018; Sundie et al., 2011; Trigg, 2001). Men who are compulsive buyers tend to buy more electronic devices, automotive tools, and hardware items than women. "Compulsive shoppers often display a great fashion sense and have an intense interest in new clothing styles and products" (Black, 2007, p. 205). The types of items purchased compulsively also often have emotional significance, which may fulfil personal and social identity needs (Dittmar, 2007; Richards, 1996). Conspicuous consumption in social media has been observed in previous studies to be related to expensive brand name clothes, jewelry, and cars as well as exclusive experiences such as luxury hotels, restaurants and holidays.

According to the study by Sangkhawasi and Johri (2007), status brand strategy inspires a moderate level of materialism in Thailand. The researchers believed this indicates that Thai consumers do not generally seek status from material goods. Older people and low to middle income groups appear most influenced by such strategies and there is evidence that people in higher education are also responsive to

this phenomenon. Products that facilitate consumer self-expression are more likely to be bought impulsively, because they represent a preferred or ideal self (Dittmar et al. 1995; Dittmar & Bond 2010). Products with high expressiveness also suppress the effects of norms.

Purchasing clothes or beauty accessories is a popular and common way to spend money online. According to Sundström, Hjelm-Lidholm, and Radon (2019), buying beauty products and clothes is said to be an impulse purchase because shoppers do not realize that they are buying more than they would at the physical store. Online buyers tend to spend extra money to save time since they are more accustomed to the concept of convenience shopping online. This spurs them further to drop extra items into their shopping cart without comparing costs. Online shoppers tend to be more open-minded to this when they are online due to the vast range of choices and the easiness of shifting between brands. Online shoppers are freer to explore their choices to fulfil their needs. In Thailand the advantages of online shopping are mostly due to good customer service, on-time home delivery, convenient shopping, and options for same-day-delivery.

For this study, the author has chosen Lazada, Shopee and Chillindo because all of these e-commerce platforms offer products from numerous independent brands, however for what concern the brand generated content construct we will refer to the messages posted by the e-commerce platforms and not the brands sold on their webpages. This minimizes the effects of brand-specific factors such as brand reputation, their own social media activities, and brand-influencers that can potentially bias the interpretation of the results (Townsend, Kang, Montoya, & Calantone, 2013). Those three e-commerce platforms also carry a similar variety of brands, while they all operate both internationally and domestically within Thailand.

Because of the wide variety of products offered by these platforms, the researcher will invite all the Thai users who insert reactions in the Facebook and Instagram posts of the Lazada, Shopee and Chilindo social media pages on both Facebook and Instagram platforms, to participate in the survey. The researcher made sure the invited users were Thai by opening each profile and checking whether the user wrote in Thai and whether their city location was in Thailand. Lazada Thailand counts more than 31 million followers and it has the second largest Facebook page in Thailand

based on the number of likes and followers, while it also has more than 428,000 followers on Instagram (200 users were selected from Lazada Facebook and Instagram profiles). Shopee's Thailand Facebook page has more than 20 million followers and its Instagram profile has 545,000 followers (132 users were selected from Shopee Facebook and Instagram profiles). Chilindo's Thailand Facebook page counts more than 10 million followers and its Instagram profile has 108,000 followers (68 users were selected from Chilindo Facebook and Instagram profiles). These three Facebook and Instagram profiles have been chosen for the study as they have been recognized to be the three most popular e-commerce websites in Thailand in terms of purchases made in 2020 (Digital Report, 2021).

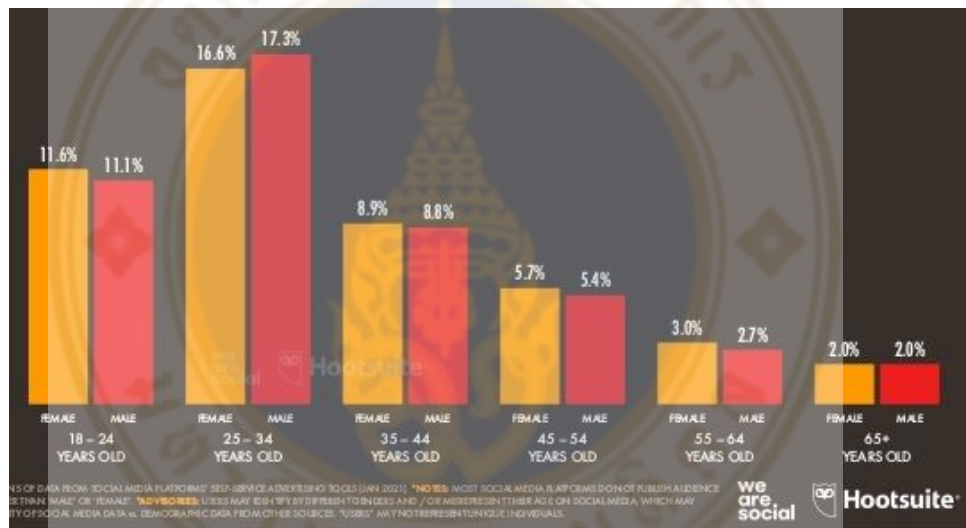


Figure 3.1 Social media audiences in Thailand according to age and gender (Digital Report, 2021)

The sampling strategy used in this study was convenience quota sampling. This method was applied as five age- and gender-based subgroups of users were encountered from the overall Thai social media user population of 55 million users (Digital Report, 2021). The three age categories were as follows: 18 to 34 years (56.5%) of whom 28.4% were females and 28.1% were males; 35 to 54 years (28.8%) of whom 14.6% were females and 14.2% were males; and over 55 years (14.7%) of whom 7.5% were females and 7.2%.

Quota sampling involves extracting proportionate representations of multiple groups of users considered in the research (Reynolds, Simintiras, & Diamantopoulos, 2003). Therefore, disproportionate quota sampling was considered more appropriate for producing more efficient estimates (Churchill, 1991). The rationales for using this sampling strategy were to increase accuracy without increasing costs and to reduce the sample variation. The technique offers an opportunity to reduce sampling error while at the same time increasing the level of confidence (Churchill, 1991). This was also ensured by the representation of five user categories with pertinent sample characteristics that accurately reflected the Thai social media population (Yilmaz, 2013). Each group included Thai users that facilitated the systematic sampling procedure (Churchill, 1991; Malhotra, 2002). Every fifth user who had posted a like or reaction under the posts of the Facebook pages was selected and every seventh Instagram follower from the selected Instagram pages was drawn systematically for initial contact. If any of the users identified were non-Thai, the researcher would select the next Thai user available. This method yielded an initial sample of more than 3,000 users whose participation in the study could then be further solicited.

However, as Hair, Risher, Sarstedt and Ringle (2019) pointed out, there is also a need for a pilot test in order to develop and ensure good initial understanding of the analyzed concepts and to determine whether the respondents are able to understand and interpret the questions in the online surveys correctly. Furthermore, it is also necessary to confirm that the concepts presented in the questionnaire transfer well into the Thai context as the majority of the measurements scales for all the constructs proposed have been developed in western countries. How attitudes towards advertising work depends on context (Liu-Thompkins, 2019), and culture is a key contextual factors that can affect this (Czarnecka & Schivinski, 2019). A pilot test was therefore fundamental to understanding how the constructs were interpreted when they were analyzed in a new context, rather than risking having the results invalidated by contextual differences (Doz, 2011).

3.2 Questionnaire Development and Construct Measures

Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, and Podsakoff (2003) stated that common process variance may have a significant effect on the observed relationships between predictor and dependent variables in social science behavioural research. This research carefully considered some primary issues with respect to process bias (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Cross-sectional research is the most suitable way to determine the prevalence and the associations of multiple exposures and outcomes. The subjects are neither deliberately exposed nor treated; thus, there are seldom ethical difficulties. Cross-sectional studies are done through questionnaires as in this research which allows researchers to reach a large sample of the population of interest in an efficient way (Wang & Chen, 2020). In this study a cross sectional approach was used, where both materialism and negative consumption behaviours were calculated at the same time. Second, collecting measurements of the dependent variable (in this case, negative consumption behaviours) from various sources can be a way to reduce traditional method bias in a survey (Podsakoff et al., 2003).

The reliability and validity of the measures proposed have been assessed and their Cronbach's alpha scores are all above the .70 threshold (Nunnally, 1975). Content validity involves the subjective assessment of the measurement scales or items included in the variables (Malhotra, 1981). The content domain was well defined and reflected (Sirgy, 1999) in each of the construct measures. For this study, almost all of the construct measures were derived from scales used in published studies with a Cronbach's alpha reliability of no less than .70. The content validity of the questionnaire was also overseen by a panel of three academic scholars. For measuring each theoretical construct in the proposed model, the measurement variables are briefly discussed below:

3.2.1 Materialism

Materialism is conceptualized as an innate personality trait. This definition is drawn from Belk's three measures of materialistic traits which are possessiveness, nongenerosity, and envy. Possessiveness is the inclination and tendency to retain control or ownership of one's possessions (Belk 1983). In this case, the possessions may include certain experiences (e.g., last year's vacation – "I've been there/done that"), tangible assets (e.g., money, contracts, monetary obligations and interests, and land), owned

symbols (e.g., a name, coat of arms, or title), and even other persons (where some identification with and mastery or control over these persons exists, e.g., my employee/friend/child/legislator)” (Belk 1982).

Nongenerosity involves an unwillingness to give possessions to or share possessions with others. This is often referred to in the literature as avariciousness (Coblentz, 1965; Meagher 1967). Envy has been defined as an interpersonal attitude involving displeasure and ill-will at the superiority of another person in terms of their happiness, success, reputation, or possession of anything desirable (Schoeck, 1966).

As the operational definition specifies, the items were extracted from Belk’s (1985) study where alpha reliability was reported as .73. The scale was appropriate to the study as it defines materialism as an endogenous personality trait of individuals which is the main conceptualization adopted in this study. Some items (Renting or leasing a car is more appealing to me than owning one / It makes sense to buy things with a friend and share it) were modified to better fulfil the domain of the measurement after conducting the pilot test. The scale showed high construct reliability and was tested in a dimension similar to that of the study (Chu, Windels, & Kamal, 2016). Other studies have also used these items (Ahuvia & Wong, 1995; Hofmeister & Neulinger, 2013; Ryan & Dziurawiec, 2001). The questionnaire items are exhibited in the appendix.

3.2.2 Attitudes Towards Social Media Advertising

Attitudes towards advertising is defined as “a learned predisposition to respond in a consistently favorable or unfavorable manner toward advertising in general” (MacKenzie & Lutz, 1989, p. 49). Similarly, Ajzen (1991) defined attitude as an individual’s favorable or unfavorable assessment of using a particular service. Attitude towards social media advertising can therefore be defined as a consumer’s like or dislike of social media advertising. The items were extracted from the study of Ling, Chai, and Piew (2010). The scale was selected as the study used the Theory of Planned Behaviour adapted to the social media environment and it had high Cronbach’s alpha scores. Some items were modified after the pilot test to better fulfil the measurement requirements in the domain of social media. The full scale may be seen in the appendix.

3.2.3 Attitudes Towards Social Media Brand-Generated Content

Brand-generated content was defined by Schivinski & Dabrowski (2016) as one type of advertising that is entirely created and controlled by the company, while attitudes towards social media brand-generated content can be described as a consumer's like or dislike for such content on social media. The items used in this study's survey were extracted from the research by Schivinski, Christodoulides, and Dabrowski (2016). Some items were modified after the pilot test was conducted to better fulfil the measurement requirements in the domain of social media in the domain of social media. The full scale may be seen in the appendix.

3.2.4 Attitudes Towards Social Media User-generated Content

User-generated Content is any content—text, videos, images, reviews, etc. created by people, rather than brands. And brands will often share UGC on their own social media accounts, website, and other marketing channels. Therefore, attitudes towards user-generated content can be defined as a consumer's like or dislike for social media user-generated content. The items were extracted from Schivinski, Christodoulides, and Dabrowski's (2016) study where alpha reliability was reported as .91. Some items were modified after the pilot test to better fulfil the domain of the measurement in the domain of social media. The full scale may be seen in the appendix.

All the attitudes towards social media advertisement, brand generated and user generated content have been summated, the argument which sees summated scale as less reliable than multiple items scales has been disproven in several scholarly publications: focusing, for example on predictive validity, Bergkvist and Rossiter (2007) showed that single-item measures are equally as valid as multiple-item measures and theoretical tests and empirical findings would be the same if single-item measures are used instead of multiple-item measures. The authors noted that two of the most widely employed constructs in advertising and consumer research, attitude toward advertisement and brand generated content attitude are doubly concrete constructs, which should be validly measurable by a single item. Bergkvist and Rossiter (2007) demonstrated that for both constructs the single-item measure was equally high predictive validity as the multiple-item measure, not supporting the classic psychometric argument that multiple-item measures are more valid than single-item measures for all

types of constructs. In this specific case, when multiple-item measures are used to measure doubly concrete constructs, they do not appear to have better discriminant results reliability.

3.2.5 Social Media Intensity

This measure captures a user's level of engagement with social media platforms. It achieves this not by simply measuring the amount of time the user spends on the platform or the number of followers the user has but rather it measures his or her level of contribution on the platform. As this measure aims to understand the frequency with which users make certain actions while on social media, this study uses four-point Likert scales, where respondents were asked to score their actions from the following choices: 1 Not at All (never or not more than 5 times), 2 Not Often (from 6 to 15 times), 3 Often (from 16 to 30 times) and 4 Very Often (more than 30 times). The items used in the survey were extracted from the studies by Li, Lau, Mo, Su, Wu, Tang, and Qin (2016) and Schivinski, Christodoulides, and Dabrowski (2016), in which alpha reliability coefficients were reported as .86 and .91, respectively. Some items were modified to better fulfil the measurement requirements in the domain of social media in the domain of social media.

3.2.6 Compulsive Buying Behaviour

Compulsive buying behaviour refers to the making of continued and repeated purchases despite adverse consequences. Compulsive buying is characterized by excessive preoccupation with or poor impulse control over shopping, leading to severe adverse social and economic consequences. The items used in the survey were extracted from the study by Faber and O'Guinn (1989), in which alpha reliability was reported as .87 and it is currently the most well-known and widely used scale on the subject. Some items were modified to better fulfil the measurement requirements in the domain of social media in the domain of social media.

3.2.7 Conspicuous Consumption

Conspicuous consumption is the purchase of goods or services for the specific purpose of displaying one's wealth. It is a means of showing one's social status,

especially when the publicly displayed goods and services are too expensive for other members of a person's class. The items for this measurement were extracted from the work of Eastman, Goldsmith, and Flynn (1999), in which alpha reliability was reported as .86. Some items were modified to better fulfil the measurement requirements in the domain of social media in the domain of social media.

3.2.8 Impulse Buying Behaviour

Impulse buying behaviour is an unplanned decision by a consumer to buy a product or service. The decision is made right before making the purchase. Price discounts are powerful triggers of impulse buying. Consumer resources such as time and money also affect impulse buying. The items for this measurement were extracted from the study by Rook and Fisher (1995), in which alpha reliability was reported as .88. This scale has been recognized as a highly reliable scale in the literature on impulse buying behaviour (Mandolfo & Lamberti 2021). Some items were modified to better fulfil the measurement requirements in the domain of social media in the domain of social media.

While there is a lack of consensus in the literature about the most appropriate scales for measuring the proposed constructs, this study integrates existing measures and duly adjusts them to better reflect the context in which the study takes place. Apart from using existing measurement scales, minor improvements were made in the terminology and accuracy, as the conceptual and operational meanings indicate. As a result, in addition to developing existing measures, in some cases, existing scales were combined in novel ways and incorporated into new items in order to create new measures for a new empirical context. This has undoubtedly increased the risk to some of these operational measures' reliability and validity, which necessitated rigorous pre-testing.

Variants of scales were common in social media studies but a majority used 7-point scales to measure the variables. Using a 4-point Likert scale results in the ideal precision of judgement being integrated as it "forces" respondents to have an opinion (Miller, 1956). There is no "neutral" option and this scale is therefore useful for getting specific responses. This scale is also universally adaptable, relatively insensitive and statistically sophisticated (Malhotra, 2002).

3.3 Data Collection

The researcher prepared an online survey that was submitted to selected Facebook and Instagram users who met the eligibility criteria. Those criteria had to do with the fact that users must be Thai and must be actively using one of the two social media platforms taken into account either Facebook or Instagram. The questionnaires were assessed by three experts, all of whom are management-level faculty members who are active in survey research and practitioners. These stages helped assure the scale's validity within the context of this study. Then a small pilot test was conducted with 50 respondents to assess the statistical reliability of the measures for the concepts. These are standard procedures common in most careful survey work (Creswell, 2014).

The proposed research focused on Facebook and Instagram users who may be affected by negative consumption spending behaviours. Given that the research objective of this study is to understand the mediating impact of attitudes towards advertising and social media intensity between materialism and negative consumption behaviours, the unit of analysis was set to be individuals. Both genders were included in the survey in accordance with the population proportions. The online survey included regular social media users to provide enough statistics reliability, it was possible to get 400 social media users.

The respondents were Thai regular social media users (Facebook and Instagram) who were following and interacting with the posts of the three e-commerce social media pages. This does not have to be users who buy exclusively on the three e-commerce social media pages selected, but rather people who are involved in clicking, commenting and sharing content on social media. The rationale for selecting the three e-commerce social media pages is that they use heavily customized advertisement messages known as retargeting campaign which are thought to severely influence online consumption. Two main screening questions were proposed; "Are you a regular social media user, using platforms on a daily basis?" "Which of the following social media platforms do you most regularly use?"

Among the answers there were: Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Line, Whatsapp and others. Individuals whose social media experiences were particularly suitable for this study's research topic (e.g., individuals with a long history of making online purchases through social networking sites) were also approached. Through the

online survey method, the results yielded more than 2,500 results. However, some of the respondents were not suitable as they were not regularly using social media platforms or they submitted incomplete questionnaires, therefore after the screening process the researcher was able to select 400 valid respondents.

During the initial contacts with suitable users, the researcher provided a description of the study in the instructions of the survey. Users were also asked to fill-in a brief survey, indicating their availability and willingness to participate in the study, and whether they regularly spent time on any social media platforms. Moreover, the researcher included a statement illustrating the potential benefits (e.g., implications for users' social media privacy, how to better protect themselves from ubiquitous social media advertising content) for respondents participating in the study in order to incentivize more quality responses. For this research topic, researchers typically expect a very low response rate from the potential informants (Reynolds et al., 2003), particularly in relationship-based cultures where in-group favoritism and collectivism are high.

Furthermore, potential informants were assured that their data would be managed under conditions of strict anonymity and confidentiality. Ethics approval was secured ahead of the study, and the researcher followed relevant research ethics policy throughout the data collection and analysis process.

The study's main data sources were from online survey results, primarily with regular social media users. The data collection and interview templates were shared and agreed among all members of the research teams and were subject to minor adjustments. The deductive nature of this research requires the researcher to enter the research field with an open mind, for instance, on whether the effect of materialism on negative consumption behaviours is direct or mediated by other factors.

3.3.1 Translation of Questionnaire and Pre-testing

Before pre-testing, an expert panel checked the original English version of the questionnaire. The questionnaire was then updated and changed in accordance with the reviewers' suggestions. This revised version was pre-tested on a limited sample of 50 Thai social media users to check for clarification and scale reliability. In response to pilot test feedback, the wording of some questionnaire elements was slightly changed.

The questionnaire was then translated into Thai, the respondents' native language, to facilitate swift responses. Using a Thai version of the questionnaire was intended to ensure direct contact with the respondents, as we cannot assume that English is commonly used among Thai social media users. It is necessary to ensure that a translated survey is identical in both versions when performing research in a foreign country. Direct translation (Brislin, 1970) was used to translate the questionnaire into Thai. In this step, a bilingual trained business academic translated the questionnaire directly from the original English language version into Thai.

Furthermore, as recommended in the literature (Brislin, 1970), the principal supervisor and a panel analyzed the translated questionnaire. The panel included a PhD faculty member specialized in Thai linguistics (a Thai native) and a senior academic from the CMMU Mahidol University (also a Thai native), as well as the researcher himself. For the finalization of the translated Thai version of the questionnaire and for its accuracy, the panel discussed better Thai terminologies and expressions for each questionnaire item.

The draft Thai version of the questionnaire was pre-tested among Thai social media users to gain more clarity, and it was revised for better flow in terms of understanding. The pilot test was conducted with a small group of sample respondents to fine-tune the measurement instrument before final online submission (Cooper, Schindler, & Sun, 2006).

3.3.2 Data Collection Procedures

Distributing a self-administered online survey through Facebook and Instagram was deemed the most appropriate data collection methodology for a widespread research program in the domain of social media (Malhotra, 1993; Zikmund, 2000). The main strengths of this method are respondent anonymity, confidentiality, users' freedom of expression and real time responses (Topp & Pawloski, 2002). This approach also facilitates the avoidance of inadequate record keeping and helps to generate uniform data from different respondents (Sutton, 2000) as all data are contained within Google Forms. Another important advantage of this method is the minimal cost compared to other methods.

All things considered, the widely used online survey method was utilized in this study for its ability to collect data efficiently in a short period of time from physically scattered individuals. However, it cannot be completely claimed that among all data collection methods, one is the best, and the selected method is not without its limitations. The experiences of past researchers suggest that this method suffers from a low response rate for different reasons including survey fatigue. Keeping this in mind, measures were taken to increase the response rate toward reducing response bias and increasing the validity of the statistical inference (Churchill, 2002). To achieve that objective, out of the verified initial sample of 400, 3,000 potential users were contacted through Facebook and Instagram following the random selection process highlighted earlier (Toepoel, 2017). This process further enabled the researcher to check the accuracy of the names of respondents, build rapport and solicit participation in the survey. This digital contact was critical to identify persons willing to participate in the survey (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, 2014).

Within the instructions of the survey, information was provided to explain and support the research and to encourage participation in the survey. It was stressed that the study was being conducted only for academic purposes, and that participation in this study was completely voluntary, anonymous and confidential. Access to the supplied information would be limited to the university researchers only. It was envisaged that this process would maximize the usable responses.

Finally, 3,000 invitations to the survey were sent to the agreed participants and a further follow-up message yielded 154 complete responses (85 Males and 91 Females) within four weeks of the surveys being sent out. A second message and further follow-up produced an additional 246 (112 Males and 112 Females) responses. The total responses after two digital contacts and follow up messages were 400. Table 3.1 shows the age and gender breakdown of the participants who agreed to participate in the survey.

Table 3.1 Respondent demographic data

Age	Males	Females	Total
18-34	112	114	226
35-54	57	58	115
55 +	28	31	59
Total	197	203	400

3.4 Data Analysis

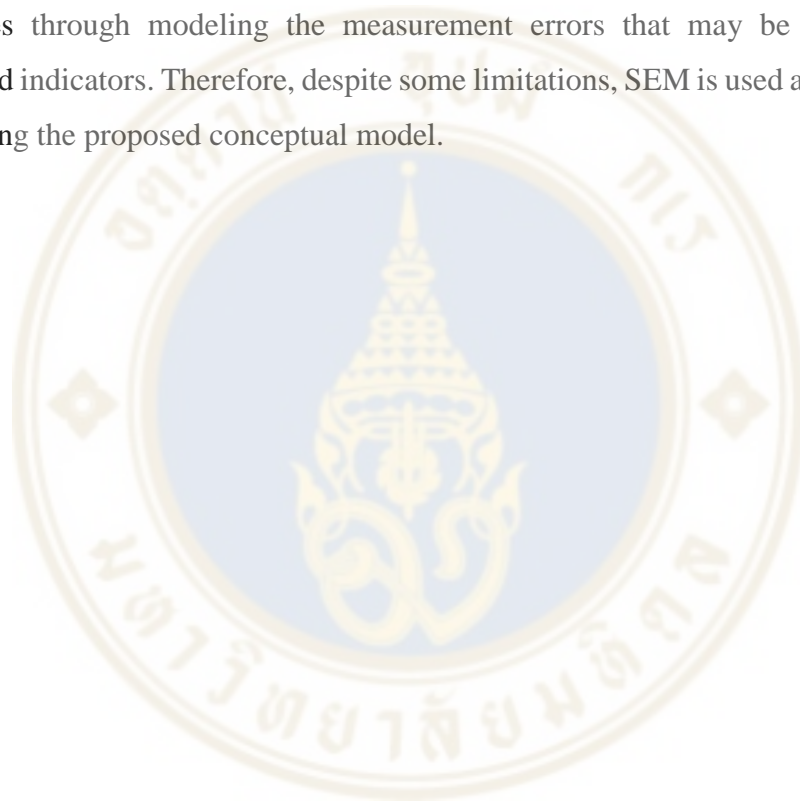
Structural equation modeling with aggregated variables was chosen as the primary data analysis tool for its ability to analyze simultaneous relationships between many latent constructs, each of which is evaluated by many items contained in each measurement scale (Bollen, 1989). In this study, the relationships between the constructs describe the relationships between latent constructs irrespective of measurement error (Bollen, 1989).

The data extracted from the cross-sectional information of Thai social media users are analyzed in the results chapter, where the construct measures and the hypotheses set forth in the conceptual model are tested. The adopted construct measures require measurement of scale reliability and validity. Relevant descriptive statistics of the sample are reported in the results section. The Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) technique was used for the confirmatory factor analysis using Amos version 26 followed by specification and estimation of the structural model (Lei & Lomax, 2005). SEM is a powerful quantitative data analytical technique which estimates and tests theoretical relationships between/among latent and/or observed variables and also combines regression and factor analysis (Tabachnick & Fidell, 1996). SEM is also a path analysis method for handling multiple relationships and assessing relationships from exploratory analysis to confirmatory analysis (Hair et al., 1994). It has also been used in similar studies for examining the impacts of the predictors of materialism and overconsumption (Alzubaidi, Slade, & Dwivedi, 2021; Lang & Armstrong, 2018; Lu, Gursoy, & Del Chiappa, 2016; Segev et al., 2015).

The overall sample's socio-demographic characteristics were utilized as control variables in the analysis. Gender and age were used as independent factors to

see if the connection between materialism and negative consumption behaviours in social media differed by these two variables. Gender was the first demographic control variable. Male was coded as 1 and female was coded as 0. Age was a continuous variable in the statistical analysis and was asked as an open-ended question.

Through SEM, this study estimates a series of relationships and shows parameter estimates as well as path links among variables in the conceptual model. SEM also estimates multiple regression equations simultaneously through specifying the structural model. This model allows the identification and measurement of latent variables through modeling the measurement errors that may be associated with observed indicators. Therefore, despite some limitations, SEM is used as a pertinent tool for testing the proposed conceptual model.



CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The research methodology and research design were thoroughly discussed in the previous chapter. This section describes the respondents' profiles, as well as the sample characteristics, data screening, measurement model evaluation, and structural model fit.

These objectives of this section are to:

1. Describe the composition of the survey, as well as the attributes of the respondents
2. Examine the data processing method, including the treatment of missing data, as well as the assessment and identification of outliers
3. Using AMOS, examine fit indices in structural equation modeling and discuss them
4. Evaluate and analyze the overall fit of the measurement model
5. Examine the relevant validity of the constructs
6. Evaluate the proposed original and competing models to determine which is the most logically feasible

4.1 Data Screening and Sample Demographics

The sample used in this analysis was diverse in terms of respondent and platform characteristics. In this section, the respondents' profiles and the platform usage behaviours are examined as part of the data analysis. Social desirability bias (Hyman, 1955) was an issue in this study since the researcher had little influence over how the questionnaire was performed and also because users may intend to appear more socially desirable (Grimm, 2010). However, this bias was addressed by assuring the participants that their responses would be completely anonymous. In the following section, applicable data screening strategies will be discussed, such as descriptive statistics, missing data, and finding outlier events.

4.1.1 Profile and Social Media Habits of the Respondents

The social media platform and respondent characteristics vary widely in terms of sample demographics (Stern, Bilgen, McClain, & Hunscher, 2017) and are listed in this section. Sex, educational credentials, age, income, marital status and work status in the organization are all examples of valid personal information. Furthermore, the length of time users have been engaging on social media platforms, the number of friends or followers they have, the devices they use to access social media content, and amount of the time spent daily using social media platforms are all important user characteristics. Although demographic data have no bearing on the study's level of research, this reporting may provide a broad picture of social media users' involvement in purchasing products or services online.

The survey respondents were comprised of 49.3% males and 50.8% females as shown by Figure 4.9. The age groups of the respondents were reported as follows: 18 to 34 years (58%), 35 to 54 years (28%) and over 55 years (14%) as shown in Figure 4.10. This gender and age breakdown is in line with the relevant proportions of the total number of social media users in Thailand as indicated in the research conducted by Digital Report 2021, which found that male and females' social media users in Thailand were split 49% and 51% respectively, and that the age groups are as confirmed in the following figures. In the sample the top three most used social media platforms are respectively Facebook, Instagram and Line as indicated by Figure 4.1 and confirming what stated in the Digital Report 2021. Among the data sample the most commonly used device for accessing digital information are mobile phones that are used by 78% of the whole sample as indicated in Figure 4.2. More than 50% of the respondents spend at least 2 hours on a daily basis on either Facebook, Instagram or both platforms and more than 80% access these platforms on a daily basis as shown in Figures 4.3, 4.4, 4.5 and 4.6. The employment status of the respondents in the sample is 39% composed by part-time workers, 28% students and 18% self-employed as shown in Figure 4.7. Income wise the sample is rather diversified with almost half of the respondents (184) earning at least 90,000 THB on a monthly basis, for more details check Figure 4.8 and Table 4.1. Regarding the education level of the respondents 70% have at least a Bachelor Degree or more as shown in Figure 4.11.

Which of the following social media platforms do you regularly use the most?
(n=400)

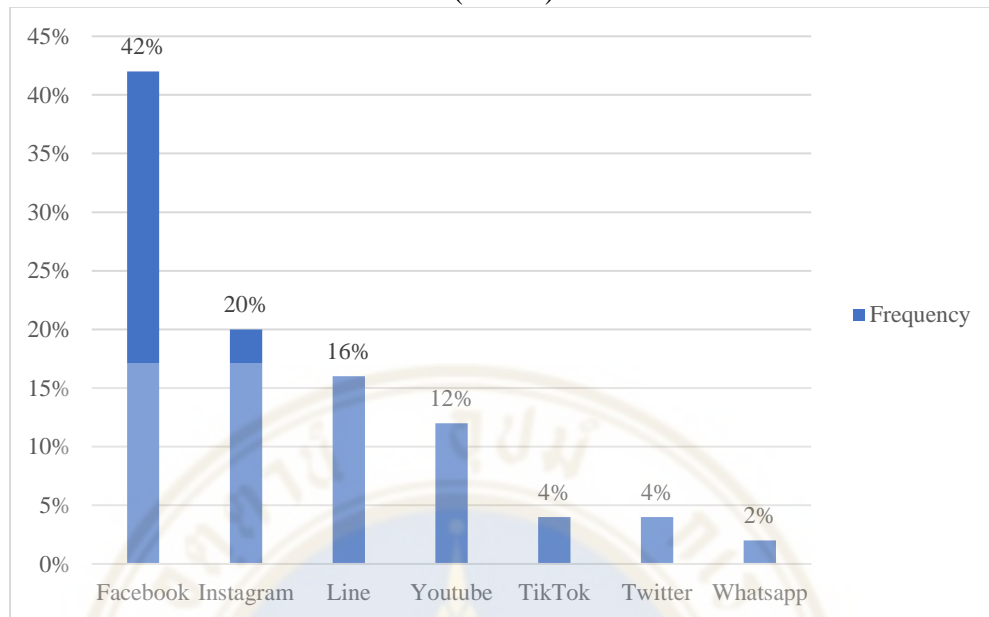


Figure 4.1 Most widely used social media platforms in the sample

Which device do you commonly use when accessing social media platforms?
(n=400)

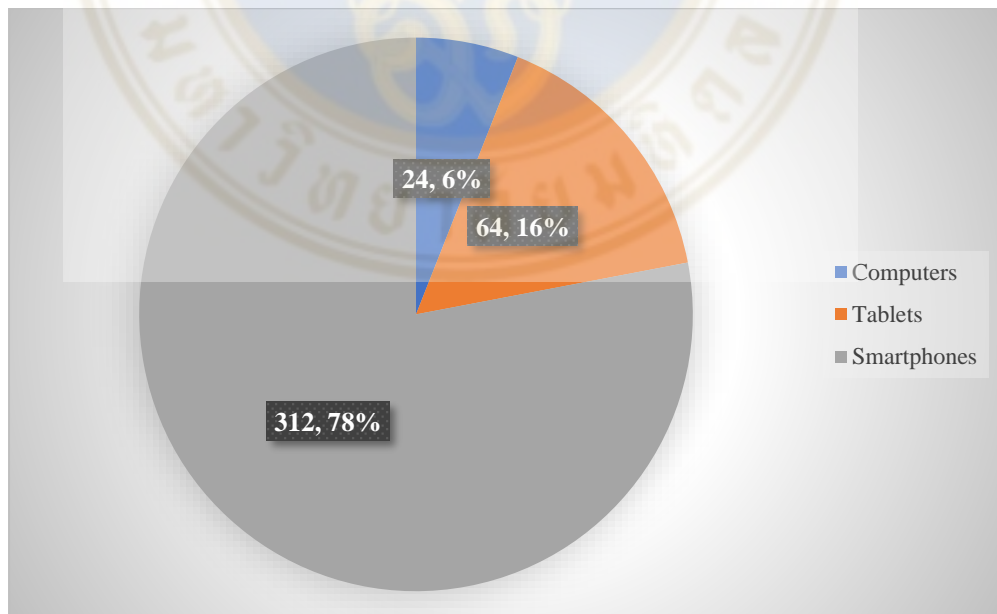


Figure 4.2 Most commonly used devices for accessing social media platforms in the sample

How much time per day do you spend on Facebook? (n=400)

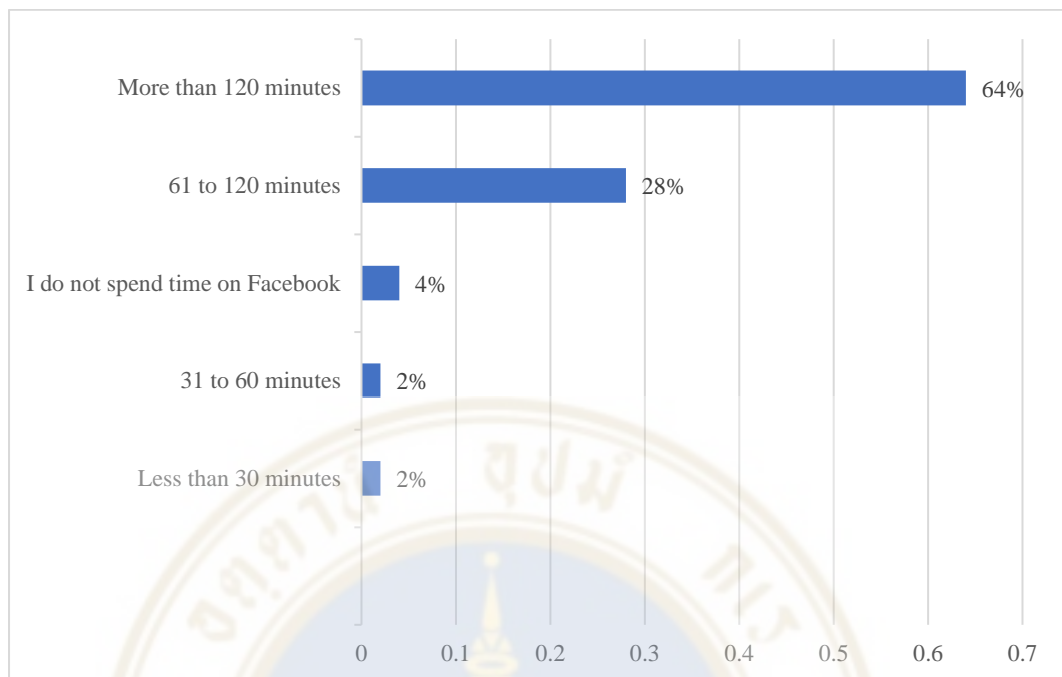


Figure 4.3 Time spent daily on Facebook by respondents in the sample

How much time per day do you spend on Instagram? (n=400)

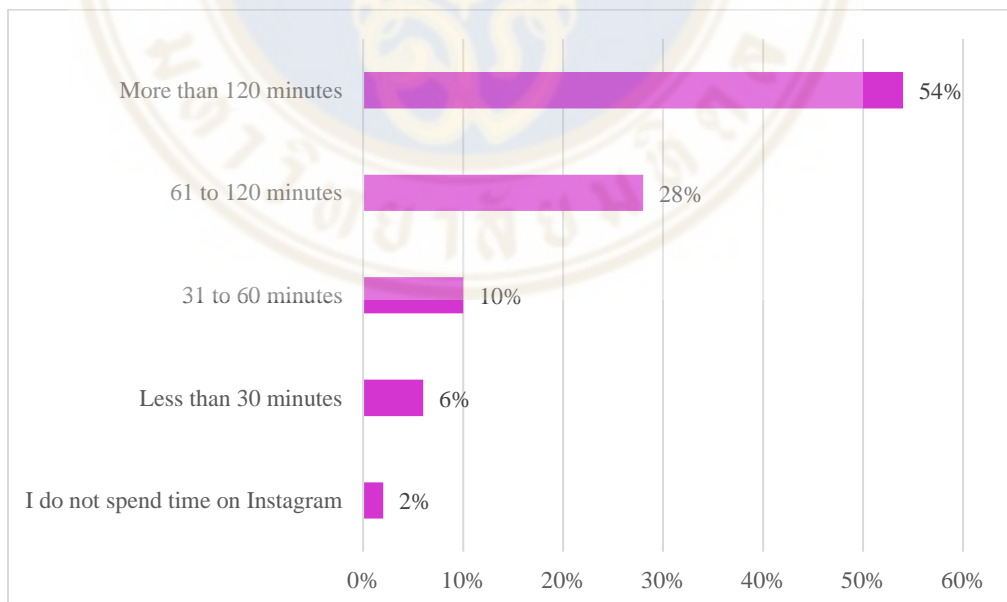


Figure 4.4 Time spent daily on Instagram by respondents in the sample

How many days per week do you access Facebook? (n=400)

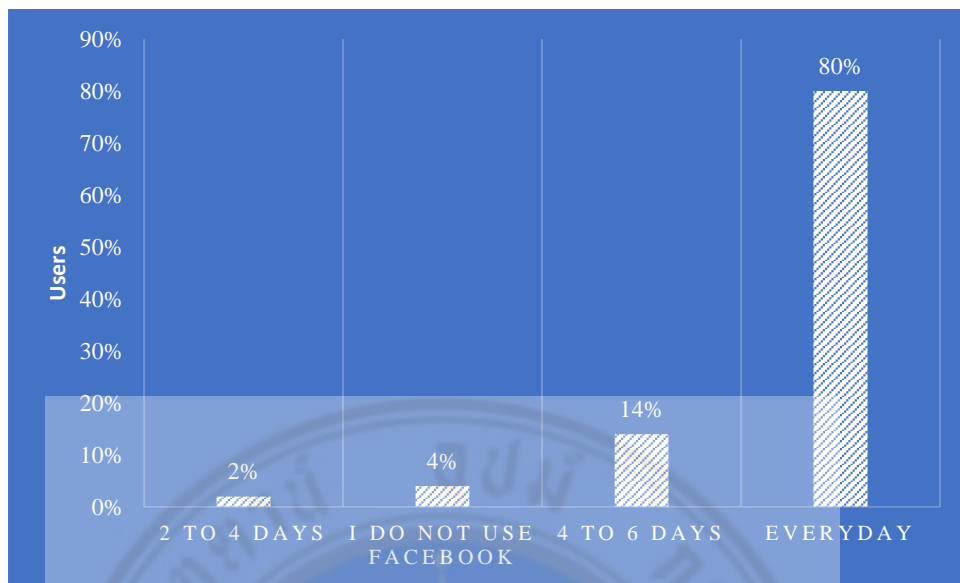


Figure 4.5 Days per week accessing Facebook by respondents in the sample

How many days per week do you access Instagram? (n=400)



Figure 4.6 Days per week accessing Instagram by respondents in the sample

What is your current employment status? (n=400)

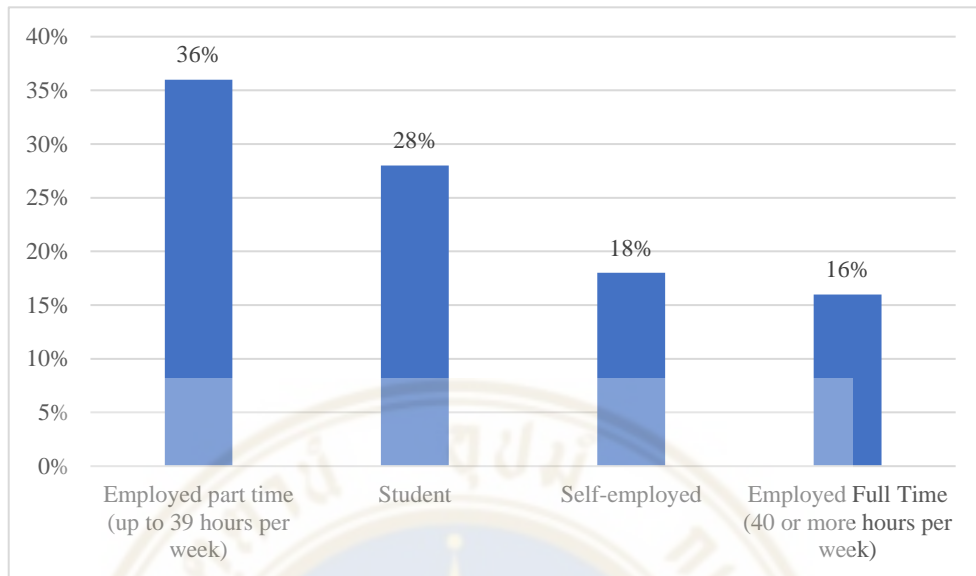


Figure 4.7 Employment status of the respondents in the sample

What is your average monthly income? (In THB; n=400)

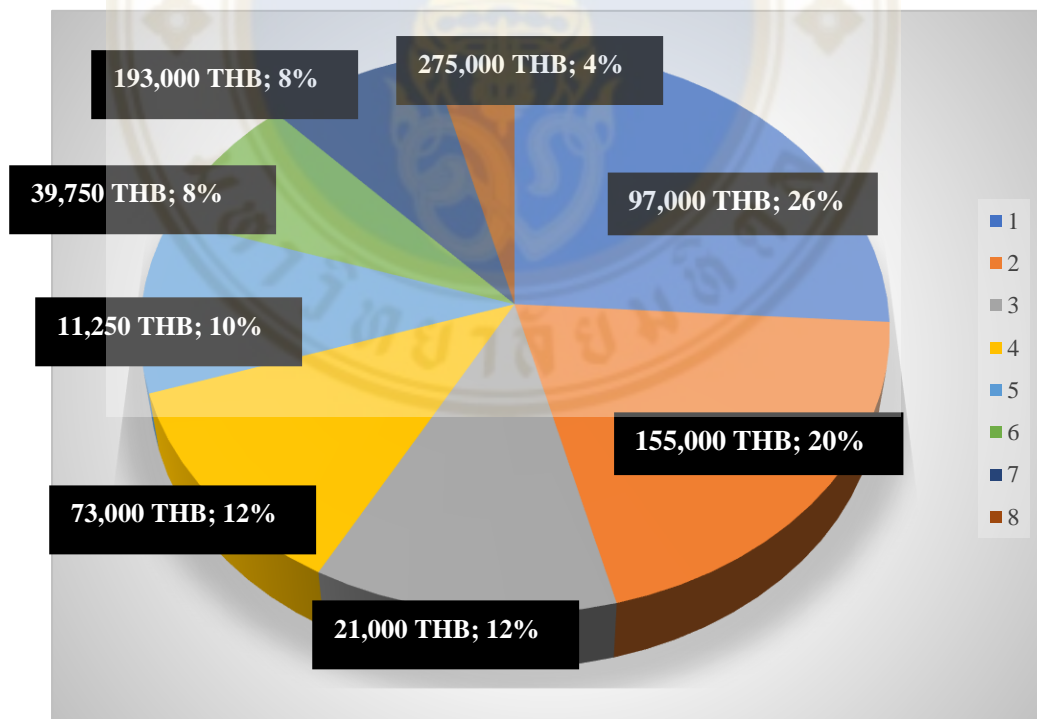
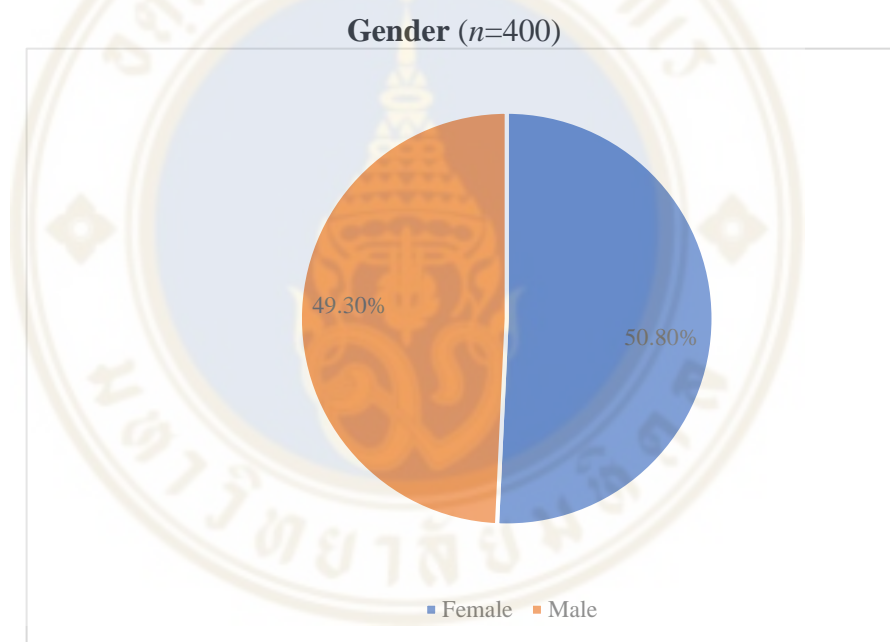


Figure 4.8 Average monthly income of the respondents in the sample

Table 4.1 Monthly income of the respondents in the sample

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Less than 15,000 THB (5)	40	10.0	10.0	10.0
	15,001 – 25,000 THB (3)	48	12.0	12.0	22.0
	25,001 – 49,999 THB (6)	32	8.0	8.0	30.0
	50,000 – 89,999 THB (4)	48	12.0	12.0	42.0
	90,000 – 119,999 THB (1)	104	26.0	26.0	68.0
	120,000 – 179,999 THB (2)	80	20.0	20.0	88.0
	180,000 – 200,000 THB (7)	32	8.0	8.0	96.0
	Over 200,000 THB	16	4.0	4.0	100.0
	Total	400	100.0	100.0	

**Figure 4.9 Gender distribution of the respondents in the sample**

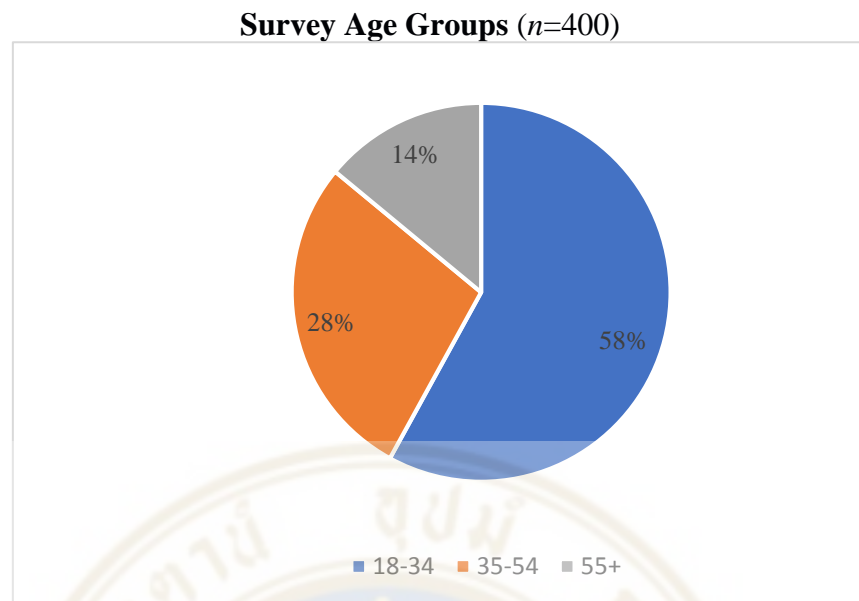


Figure 4.10 Age distribution of the respondents in the sample

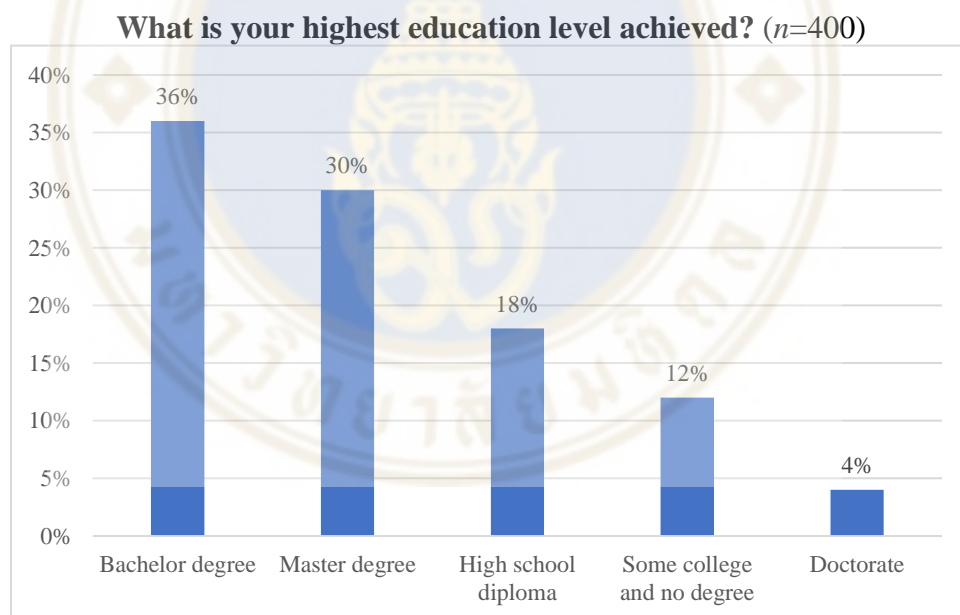


Figure 4.11 Education level of the respondents in the sample

Figure 4.11 shows that the majority of users in this sample have at least a university-level education with majority of respondents with a bachelor's or master's degree (66 %). As reported in Figure 4.1, the top three most used social media platforms are Facebook in first place, followed by Instagram and Line. This confirms the double jeopardy theory which states that the most well-known brands will eventually be

purchased or in this case used. A significant majority (78%) of users claim to access social media content through smartphones. In addition, most of the respondents spend more than two hours a day on Facebook (68%) and on Instagram (54%) with more than 80% percent accessing both platforms on a daily basis.

Slightly more than a half of the respondents in this sample (about 54%) are either part-time employed or self-employed. This may indicate that the respondents have enough spare time to spend engaging with social media platforms. In terms of job position and income, almost 60% of the respondents earn more than 100,000 THB on a monthly basis. The respondent's overall income signifies the high likelihood for making purchases, as high income and low education have been shown to be positively correlated with increased purchases, both online and offline (Hult, Sharma, Morgeson Iii, & Zhang, 2019).

Although there was no hypothesized relationship between income, education and harmful consumption behaviours, the relationships were checked with ANOVA testing. However, no values were found to be significant, implying that negative consumption habits were present or not regardless of the respondents' education and income levels.

4.2 Data Entry and Missing Data Analysis

The researcher continued the data review by checking the data entry process and dealing with missing data. This is extremely important in order to obtain important insights into the data characteristics and interpret them accurately (Hair et al., 1998). For this reason, a double check was conducted in order to achieve a high degree of accuracy in the data entry phase. All entries were checked on a case-by-case basis as a first step, and then descriptive statistics such as frequency distribution, mean, and standard deviation were performed and verified as a second check. The frequency distribution statistics revealed two errors in the data entry process and guaranteed data entry accuracy. The data entry accuracy in the data collection was approximately 99.25%.

When the returned questionnaires were examined for completeness, it was discovered that 11 of them had missing data for some of the measurement components.

In 21 of the questionnaires, at least 10% of the total questionnaire was unanswered. The preliminary review did not include those events (Hair et al., 1998).

It is worth noting that a mixture of Likert and frequency scales were used to minimize traditional process bias in the responses. Missing answers to the frequency scale sections were found in 15 of the 21 questionnaires. Furthermore, it was discovered that four survey respondents had missing data in income scales due to a perceived concern about data confidentiality. A few responses were discovered to be missing at random in another eight surveys, and those missing values were replaced using a maximum likelihood function (Enders & Bandalos, 2001). As a result of the deletion of 21 cases, the database was left with 400 available samples (a response rate of 40.17%) for further investigation of normality and outliers.

4.2.1 Outliers and Normality Evaluation Test

The assumption of normality in the data is often used in the estimation process (Bai & Ng, 2005). Non-normality is indicated either by a strongly distorted data distribution or by a high kurtosis, which has random effects on specification or estimation (Wang & Serfling, 2005). The existence of outlier cases in the data set could explain the non-normality. As defined by Tabachnick and Fidell (2001), an outlier is a case of a highly unusual value for one variable (a univariate outlier) or an unusual combination of scores for two or more variables (a multivariate outlier). As a result, an effort was made to determine the data's normality and look for outlier cases. From the analysis mean score of the components of dependent and independent variables, it was found that no variable had a Kurtosis scores above 3.

Table 4.2 Descriptive Statistics

	N	Range	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Deviation	Var.	Skewness		Kurtosis	
								Stat.	Std. Error	Stat.	Std. Error
matsummated	400	2.53	1.23	3.76	2.5794	.75827	.575	-.127	.122	-1.191	.243
SMADV	400	2.78	1.22	4.00	2.7906	.80375	.646	-.764	.122	-.872	.243
SMBGC	400	2.30	1.50	3.80	2.7420	.49528	.245	-.730	.122	-.286	.243
SMUGC	400	2.30	1.20	3.50	2.3308	.54876	.301	.403	.122	-.972	.243
smisummated	400	1.84	1.59	3.43	2.7537	.46328	.215	-.950	.122	-.576	.243
csummated	400	3.53	1.00	4.00	2.7893	.79844	.637	-.743	.122	-.854	.243
consummated	400	2.59	1.00	4.00	2.8130	.83761	.702	-.768	.122	-.828	.243
impsummated	400	3.79	1.00	4.00	2.7295	.59600	.355	-.512	.122	-.112	.243
Valid N (listwise)	400										

The results summarized in Table 4.2 confirm that univariate normality was evidenced in the data set because no kurtosis score for any variable exceeded the maximum level of normality range (≤ 3). A further attempt was made to identify the specific outlier cases with extreme values. Before commencing this process, univariate outliers were identified by looking for standardized z scores of ± 3.00 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001). The statistical diagnostics in Table 4.2 revealed seven cases of extreme univariate outliers. These cases were checked one by one to interpret the rationale behind these outliers and determine whether their exclusion would limit generalizability.

One explanation could be related to the respondents' strong beliefs regarding observed relationship in terms of materialism and conspicuous buying behaviours. For example, some of the cases indicated that the respondents had high levels of materialism but then they declared not really being interested in products with status. As only seven cases were found to have an insignificant number in terms of the ratio of the variables (Hair et al., 1998), the exclusion of those cases may not limit the generalizability of the findings. Apart from these, this sample size also satisfied the recommendation of Hulland et al. (1996) that there should be 200 or more in a sample for any complex structural model analysis.

Initial responses totaled 411 (a 43.67% response rate). Four responses were found to be unusable during the data screening and refinement phase, and they were eliminated. The outlier cases were identified using the remaining 407 responses. Data normality was verified during this process, and seven univariate outlier cases were detected using standardized z scores. With those seven outlier cases removed, the available final sample size for confirmatory factor analysis and structural model testing was 400.

4.3 Measurement Development

The researcher continued evaluating the fit with interrelated statistical techniques commonly used to analyze the data as a supporting stream. In this respect, the reliability scores for each one of the measures created are investigated in this section, followed by confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). The reliability tests look at the internal consistency of a measure's item to determine whether each observed variable should be kept or whether any should be excluded. This procedure is followed by the development of a measurement model named CFA and an overall measurement model to verify the construct's dimensionality and measure validity.

4.3.1 Fit Indices

In social science literature, the use of structural equation modeling (SEM) has gradually increased, and different types of SEM have been established. SEM is often applied to study first measure models, followed by structural models (McQuitty, 2004). It is a quantitative data analysis technique used for defining, estimating, and testing theoretical relationships between observed endogenous variables and latent, unobserved exogenous variables (Byrne, 2001). Although SEM does not refer to a single statistical technique but rather to a group of related procedures that include covariance structure analysis, it also includes regression and factor analysis.

The SEM method begins with model definition, which connects the variables that are supposed to influence other variables and the directionalities of those effects (Kline, 2011). The specification is a method of visualizing substantive (theoretical) theories and a measurement scheme that includes a specific theory, data,

and, eventually, an established model (Diamantopoulos, Siguaaw, & Siguaaw, 2000). SEM generates regression weights, variances, covariances, and correlations in the estimation process, and its iterative procedures converge on a collection of parameter estimates (Holmes-Smith et al., 2004).

Fit indices should be analyzed during the estimation process to determine whether the proposed model is a good fit for the data or if any changes are needed to improve fit. Absolute fit indices, incremental fit or comparative fit indices, and model parsimony indices are all examples of fit indices. From the different fit indices, there are general guidelines for the appropriate minimum level of score/value for good fit (Byrne, 2001).

Many different fit indices have been found to have some problems in the evaluation process (Kline, 2005), since different fit indices are mentioned in different papers, and different reviewers of the same manuscript recommend different indices (Ping Jr, 2004). For example, Kenny and McCoach (2003) claimed that there was no universal norm for determining whether a model is suitable, and they only mentioned CFI, GFI, and RMSEA as fit indexes that are widely used. To assess the mediating effect of their proposed model, (Steenkamp, Batra, & Alden, 2003) used CFI and GFI as fit steps. McQuitty (2004) also established goodness-of-fit statistics that are less affected by sample size. TLI was proposed by Marsh et al. (1988), while IFI, TLI, and CFI were proposed by Bentler (1990), and RMSEA, CFI, and TLI were proposed by Fan et al. (1999).

As a result, it is impossible to find all of those fit indicators in a report, as recommended by Holmes-Smith et al. (2004) and Hulland et al. (1996); however, a subset or sample of fit indices from significant categories has been identified in this analysis to determine the degree of overall fitness of the measurement model and the structural model. In this study, $2/df$ (CMIN/DF), IFI, TLI, CFI, and RMSEA are considered for evaluating fit indices since they are widely used and recorded in the literature, taking sample sensitivity and model complexity impact into account (Hulland et al., 1996).

Table 4.3 Structural equation modeling fit indices

Level of Model Fit	Overall Model Fit				
Model Fit	Model Comparison				
Fit Measures	CMIN/DF	RMSEA	GFI	GFI	CFI
Recommended for Further Analysis if	>2	> .08	< .90	<.90	< .90
Acceptable Scale for Good as well as Adequate Fit	≤ 2	< .06 (Reasonable fit up to .08)	$\geq .90$	$\geq .90$	$\geq .90$

Source: Adopted from Byrne (2001), Holmes-Smith et al. (2004), Hulland et al. (1996), and Kline (2005)

The Chi-square represents the absolute difference between the matrix of inferred variances and covariances and the matrix of sample variances and covariances. This statistical tool determines whether the inferred matrix differs substantially from the observed matrix. This figure is very sensitive to sample size and model complexity: the more complex the model, the larger the Chi-square, which makes it more likely to reject the given model (Kenny & McCoach, 2003). If the sample size is large, the Chi-Square test will show that the data are significantly different from those predicted results on a given theory even though the difference may be so small as to be marginal or unimportant on other criteria (Gulliksen & Tukey, 1958).

In light of these complexities, some researchers have suggested and favored the use of “normed” 2, where two is divided by the degrees of freedom to produce a two-measure per degree of freedom with an index of model parsimony (Holmes-Smith, 2002). Normed 2 = 2/df has been defined as an excellent model fit when a value of normed two is greater than one and smaller than 2 (Aaker et al., 2001; Hair et al., 1998; Holmes-Smith, 2002).

The incremental fit index (IFI) proposed by Bollen (1989), the Tucker Lewis Index (TLI) known as the non-normed fit index (NNFI) proposed by Tucker and Lewis (1973), and the comparative fit index (CFI) and Goodness of Fit (GFI) proposed by Bentler (1990) are indices in SEM that are commonly used to measure the relative

change in model fit in baseline comparisons. The proposed model is compared to specific baseline model fit parameters to determine model fit.

All of these indices are aimed at determining how well the predicted model matches the observed results. NFI, IFI, and CFI are supposed to be between zero and one, but a value close to one (e.g., .90 to .95) implies an acceptable fit and a value greater than .95 indicates a very well-fitting model (Hulland, Chow, & Lam, 1996). A value close to zero, on the other hand, means that the stated model is not superior to the independence model. In other words, a value near one (.90 to 1.00) is considered sufficient for evaluating the model's total fitness (Holmes-Smith et al., 2004; Kline, 2005). Due to the limitations of two statistics for evaluating structural model fit (Bentler, 1990), CFI was chosen for baseline comparison and was used to test and report model fit.

For the extraordinary relative power of its combination of properties, the RMSEA is one fit index that has attracted the interest of researchers. This fit statistic is also recognized as one of the most informative criteria in covariance structure modeling (Byrne, 2001). Since it is a parsimony-adjusted index, it accounts for approximation error that is unaffected by sample size. It relaxes the strict condition of Chi-Square that the model holds in the population. As a result, it is known as a population-based index (Holmes-Smith et al., 2004; Kline, 2005).

A value of less than .05 indicates a good fit, while more than .08 indicates fair approximation errors in the population (Browne & Cudeck, 1993; Byrne, 2001). According to MacCallum et al. (1996), RMSEA values between .08 and .10 indicate mediocre fit, whereas values greater than .10 indicate poor fit. Hulland et al. (1996) suggested that RMSEA values of .05 to .10 are often considered a good match. The initial measurement models and the final structural model reported in the following sections are evaluated using these model fit indices.

4.3.2 Initial Measurement

This section of the thesis discusses all the significant results related to the initial measurement model fit and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). The strength of CFA is that it integrates unidimensionality testing and tests a dataset by confirming the underlying structure on theoretical grounds (Hancock & Mueller, 2013). This also

implies that the measurement model can be simplified, modified, and refined as required for theory testing and evaluating the degree of fit.

As the dependent and independent variables were associated and some used similar measurement scales, traditional common method bias may affect the respondents' answers. Attitudes and social media intensity were measured differently to avoid similar measurement issues. As a result, the current study used 4-point Likert scales as well as frequency scales in the questionnaire, which included some reverse-worded items. For seven construct measures, the respondents were asked to score their perceptions of questionnaire items on 4-point Likert scales ranging from 1 "strongly disagree" to 4 "strongly agree"; a frequency scale was used for the remaining construct measures. When comparing the predictor variables and the dependent variables, however, combining two different types of measurement scales minimized measurement bias. In order to ensure unbiased answers, this method differentiated the two mediators from the other variables (Podsakoff et al., 2003).

Furthermore, an attempt was made to collect objective information regarding the social media usage habits from this study's sample, their favorite social media platforms, and their demographic details. These factors were assumed to be indications of a high commitment to certain social media platforms, and highly engaged users are considered more likely to engage in harmful consumption behaviours (Bogolyubova, Panicheva, Tikhonov, Ivanov, & Ledovaya, 2018).

Modification and standardized loadings (standardized regression weights) in AMOS output were used for checking the dimensionality of the measurement or the model fit, even though CFA needs model recognition. Variances, covariance, and regression weights made up the modification indices (MIs). These indices were examined during the model fit evaluation to determine the direction of adjustment, such as whether to unconstraint or incorporate parameters between or among unobserved variables if needed to improve model fit. According to Anderson and Gerbing (1988), deleting items from the model is a simple way to rectify the model in the case of undesirable outcomes. This means that deleting items and introducing a new path indicator are the best ways to improve the model's fit. In this iterative method, any additions or deletions of items cause changes in the parameters and model fit statistics.

As a result, the measurement models for each build measure are addressed in the parts that follow, keeping the mentioned issues in mind.

4.4 Materialism: Initial Findings

Materialism was measured using three items which were summated variables following the scale of Belk (1985). In this way, materialism was measured by the three underlying concepts of possessiveness, non-generosity and envy. All three scales were subjected to an exploratory factor analysis terminated with a scale validity, and all constructs had a Cronbach's alpha score of higher than 0.9, indicating high reliability:

Possessiveness is covered in all questions from M1 to M9 and shows a Cronbach's alpha of 0.95, which is well above the 0.7 threshold.

Table 4.4 Scale validity analysis for Possessiveness

EFA Component Matrix Possessiveness		
Number	Item	Loadings
M1	Renting or leasing things is not more appealing to me than owning	.846
M2	I tend to hang on to things I should probably throw out	.842
M3	I get very upset if something is stolen from me, even if it has little monetary value	.815
M4	I get particularly upset when I lose things	.838
M5	I usually lock things up	.838
M6	I would rather buy something I need than borrow it from someone else	.838
M7	I worry about people taking my possessions	.827
M8	When I travel, I like to take a lot of photographs	.840
M9	I never discard old pictures or snapshots	.821

Table 4.5 Scale reliability analysis for Possessiveness

Reliability Statistics Possessiveness			
Cronbach's Alpha		Number of Items	
.950		9	
Item Statistics			
Item	Mean	Std .Deviation	N
Renting or leasing things is not more appealing to me than owning	2.56	.902	400
I tend to hang on to things I should probably throw out	2.57	.918	400
I get very upset if something is stolen from me, even if it has little monetary value	2.59	.859	400
I get particularly upset when I lose things	2.61	.901	400
I usually lock things up	2.58	.895	400
I would rather buy something I need than borrow it from someone else	2.57	.902	400
I worry about people taking my possessions	2.56	.856	400
When I travel, I like to take a lot of photographs	2.57	.907	400
I never discard old pictures or snapshots	2.55	.866	400

4-point Likert scales ranging from 1 “strongly disagree” to 4 “strongly agree”

Non-Generosity is covered in all questions from M10 to M18 and shows a Cronbach’s alpha of 0.95, which is well above the 0.7 threshold.

Table 4.6 Scale validity analysis for non-generosity

EFA Component Matrix Non-Generosity		
Number	Item	Loadings
M10	I do not enjoy having guests stay in my home	.836
M11	I do not enjoy sharing what I have	.843
M12	I don't like to lend things, even to good friends	.848
M13	It does not make sense to buy things with a friend and share	.842
M14	I prefer not to give rides to those who don't have a car	.842
M15	I don't like to have anyone in my home when I'm not there	.855
M16	I do not enjoy donating things	.836
M17	I am bothered when I see people who buy anything they want	.854
M18	I know at least one person whose spouse or steady date I would like to have as my own	.837

Table 4.7 Scale reliability analysis for Non-Generosity

Reliability Statistics Non-Generosity			
Cronbach's Alpha		Number of Items	
.954		9	
Item Statistics			
Item	Mean	Std .Deviation	N
I do not enjoy having guests stay in my home	2.54	.903	400
I do not enjoy sharing what I have	2.59	.894	400
I don't like to lend things, even to good friends	2.59	.924	400
It does not make sense to buy things with a friend and share	2.57	.909	400

4-point Likert scales ranging from 1 "strongly disagree" to 4 "strongly agree"

Table 4.7 Scale reliability analysis for Non-Generosity (cont.)

Reliability Statistics Non-Generosity			
Cronbach's Alpha		Number of Items	
.954		9	
Item Statistics			
Item	Mean	Std .Deviation	N
I prefer not to give rides to those who don't have a car	2.57	.909	400
I don't like to have anyone in my home when I'm not there	2.57	.923	400
I do not enjoy donating things	2.60	.893	400
I am bothered when I see people who buy anything they want	2.62	.940	400
I know at least one person whose spouse or steady date I would like to have as my own	2.59	.908	400

Envy is covered in all questions from M19 to M23 and shows a Cronbach's alpha of 0.91, which is well above the 0.7 threshold.

Table 4.8 Scale validity analysis for envy

EFA Component Matrix Envy		
Number	Item	Loadings
M19	When friends do better than me in competition, it usually makes me unhappy	.844
M20	People who are very wealthy often feel they are too good to talk to average people	.853
M21	There are certain people I would like to trade places with	.824
M22	When friends have things I cannot afford, it bothers me	.830
M23	When actors or prominent politicians have things stolen from them, I do not feel sorry for them	.854

Table 4.9 Scale reliability analysis for Envy

Reliability Statistics Envy			
Cronbach's Alpha		Number of Items	
.918		5	
Item Statistics			
Item	Mean	Std .Deviation	N
When friends do better than me in competition, it usually makes me unhappy	2.63	.915	400
People who are very wealthy often feel they are too good to talk to average people	2.60	.937	400
There are certain people I would like to trade places with	2.58	.866	400
When friends have things I cannot afford, it bothers me	2.57	.884	400
When actors or prominent politicians have things stolen from them, I do not feel sorry for them	2.57	.921	400

4-point Likert scales ranging from 1 “strongly disagree” to 4 “strongly agree”

No items had lower than usual loadings and therefore the researcher decided to keep the original scale directly taken from the work of Belk (1985).

4.5 Attitudes Towards Social Media Content

Attitudes towards social media content were measured by 29 items. The initial Exploratory Factor Analysis revealed that item B10 (“I am overall more engaged

with content posted by brands rather than content posted by users or ads”) was relatively poorly correlated with all other items in the scale. The expected change in communalities suggested misspecification associated with ‘U10’ (“I am overall more engaged with content posted by users rather than content posted by brands or ads”) and the measurement model fit showed a better fit. The factor analysis divided the remaining items into three factors which corresponded to attitudes towards social media advertising, attitudes towards social media brand-generated content, and attitudes towards social media user-generated content. Attitudes towards Social Media Advertising is covered in all questions from A1 to A9 and shows a Cronbach’s alpha of 0.92, which is well above the 0.7 threshold.

Table 4.10 Scale validity analysis for attitudes towards social media advertising

EFA Component Matrix Attitudes Towards Social Media Advertisement		
Number	Item	Loadings
A1	Advertising on social media is trustworthy	.958
A2	Advertising on social media is a valuable source of information about products and services	.977
A3	Advertising on social media tells me which brands have the features that I am looking for	.937
A4	Advertising on social media is more enjoyable than advertising on other media	.977
A5	Advertising on social media is funny	.953
A6	I consider advertising on social media good as it promotes the latest products	.957
A7	I consider advertising on social media good as it allows me to enjoy the best deals	.958
A8	Advertising on social media plays an important role in my buying decisions	.977
A9	My opinion on advertising on social media is favorable	.937

Table 4.11 Scale reliability analysis for Attitudes Towards Social Media Advertisement

Reliability Statistics Attitudes Towards Social Media Advertisement			
Cronbach's Alpha		Number of Items	
.929		9	
Item Statistics			
Item	Mean	Std .Deviation	N
Advertising on social media is trustworthy	2.81	1.056	400
Advertising on social media is a valuable source of information about products and services	2.83	1.010	400
Advertising on social media tells me which brands have the features that I am looking for	2.78	1.035	400
Advertising on social media is more enjoyable than advertising on other media	2.75	.964	400
Advertising on social media is funny	2.77	1.020	400
I consider advertising on social media good as it promotes the latest products	2.77	1.002	400
I consider advertising on social media good as it allows me to enjoy the best deals	2.79	1.015	400
Advertising on social media plays an important role in my buying decisions	2.78	.970	400
My opinion on advertising on social media is favorable	2.85	.992	400

4-point Likert scales ranging from 1 “strongly disagree” to 4 “strongly agree”

Attitudes towards Social Media Brand-Generated Content is covered in all questions from B1 to B9 and shows a Cronbach’s alpha of 0.701, which is slightly above the 0.7 threshold.

Table 4.12 Scale validity analysis for attitudes towards social media brand-generated content

EFA Component Matrix Attitudes Towards Social Media Brand Generated Content		
Number	Item	Loadings
B1	Brand pages on social media are trustworthy	.885
B2	I think brand pages on social media are a valuable source of information about products and services	.86
B3	I believe brand pages on social media tell me which brands have the features that I am looking for	.812
B4	I think brand pages on social media are more enjoyable than other types of content	.889
B5	Brand pages on social media are entertaining to follow	.848
B6	I consider brand pages on social media good as they promote the latest products	.898
B7	I consider brand pages on social media good as they allow me to enjoy the best deals	.915
B8	Brand pages on social media play an important role in my buying decisions	.789
B9	I prefer brand pages to users' pages on social media	.91

Table 4.13 Scale reliability analysis for Attitudes Towards Social Media Brand-Generated Content

Reliability Statistics Attitudes Towards Social Media Brand-Generated Content			
Cronbach's Alpha		Number of Items	
.801		9	
Item Statistics			
Item	Mean	Std .Deviation	N
Brand pages on social media are trustworthy	2.76	.966	400
I think brand pages on social media are a valuable source of information about products and services	2.73	.926	400
I believe brand pages on social media tell me which brands have the features that I am looking for	2.75	.907	400
I think brand pages on social media are more enjoyable than other types of content	2.77	.914	400
Brand pages on social media are entertaining to follow	2.82	.918	400
I consider brand pages on social media good as they promote the latest products	2.77	.909	400
I consider brand pages on social media good as they allow me to enjoy the best deals	2.67	.907	400
Brand pages on social media play an important role in my buying decisions	2.68	.954	400
I prefer brand pages to users' pages on social media	2.76	.885	400

4-point Likert scales ranging from 1 "strongly disagree" to 4 "strongly agree"

Attitudes towards Social Media User-Generated Content is covered in all questions from U1 to U9 and shows a Cronbach's alpha of 0.764, which is slightly above the 0.7 threshold.

Table 4.14 Scale validity analysis for attitudes towards social media user-generated content

EFA Component Matrix Attitudes Towards Social Media User Generated Content		
Number	Item	Loadings
U1	Users' content on social media is trustworthy	.603
U2	Users' content on social media is a valuable source of information about products and services	.796
U3	Users' content on social media tells me which brands have the features that I am looking for	.794
U4	Content posted by users on social media is more enjoyable than other types of content	.792
U5	Users' content on social media is entertaining	.618
U6	I consider users' content on social media good as it promotes the latest products	.763
U7	I consider users' content on social media good as it allows me to discover the best deals	.833
U8	Users' content on social media plays an important role in my buying decisions	.753
U9	I am overall more engaged with content posted by users rather than by brands or ads	.774

Table 4.15 Scale reliability analysis for Attitudes Towards Social Media User-Generated Content

Reliability Statistics Attitudes Towards Social Media User-Generated Content			
Cronbach's Alpha		Number of Items	
.764		9	
Item Statistics			
Item	Mean	Std .Deviation	N
Users' content on social media is trustworthy	2.35	.956	400
Users' content on social media is a valuable source of information about products and services	2.34	.920	400
Users' content on social media tells me which brands have the features that I am looking for	2.31	.951	400
Content posted by users on social media is more enjoyable than other types of content	2.33	.917	400
Users' content on social media is entertaining	2.34	.976	400
I consider users' content on social media good as it promotes the latest products	2.39	.962	400
I consider users' content on social media good as it allows me to discover the best deals	2.38	.913	400
Users' content on social media plays an important role in my buying decisions	2.29	.958	400
I am overall more engaged with content posted by users rather than by brands or ads	2.25	.937	400

4-point Likert scales ranging from 1 "strongly disagree" to 4 "strongly agree"

In terms of both items B10 and U10 ("I am overall more engaged with content posted by brands rather than content posted by users or ads" and "I am overall more engaged with content posted by users rather than content posted by brands or ads"), they seemed not to be adequately perceived aspects/factors of attitudes towards social media content. Although both items covered a specific additional aspect of

attitudes, some researchers (Ismail et al., 2018; Lu et al., 2016; Stubb & Colliander, 2019) have chosen not to include them in the measure. Therefore, deleting these items does not lose any important element that should be retained in the measure and will not affect the content and face validity of this construct.

4.6 Social Media Intensity

Social media intensity was measured by 38 items. The initial exploratory factor analysis revealed that ‘items I19’ (“Commented on pictures posted by other users (not friends) on social media”) and I29 (“Commented on friends’ statuses, logs, and photos”) were relatively poorly correlated with other items in the scale. After deleting these items, the factor analysis could respect the four factors suggested by the scales, and the measurement showed better fit. The factor analysis divided the remaining items into four factors which corresponded to the factors usually associated with social media intensity. Social Media Content Viewing was covered in the following items: I1, I2, I3, I14, I16, I30, I36, and I15. These had a Cronbach’s alpha score of 0.69, which is very close to the 0.7 threshold.

Table 4.16 Scale validity analysis for social media content viewing

EFA Component Matrix Social Media Intensity – Content Viewing		
Number	Item	Loadings
I1	I read posts made by brands while on social media	.785
I2	I watch pictures/videos or graphics posted by brands on social media	.785
I3	I follow new brand pages on social media	.763
I14	I read posts made by users (Not friends) while on social media	.527
I15	I watch pictures/videos or graphics posted by users (Not friends) on social media	.618
I16	I follow users or influencers reviewing products or services on social media	.763
I30	I browse other users’ logs/ photos/ statuses/ albums	.733
I36	I watch videos/listen to music	.753

Table 4.17 Scale reliability analysis for Social Media Content Viewing

Reliability Statistics Social Media Content Viewing			
Cronbach's Alpha		Number of Items	
.696		8	
Item Statistics			
Item	Mean	Std .Deviation	N
I read posts made by brands while on social media	2.69	.935	400
I watch pictures/videos or graphics posted by brands on social media	2.78	.917	400
I follow new brand pages on social media	2.77	.924	400
I read posts made by users (Not friends) while on social media	2.76	.920	400
I watch pictures/videos or graphics posted by users (Not friends) on social media	2.82	.926	400
I follow users or influencers reviewing products or services on social media	2.79	.933	400
I browse other users' logs/ photos/ statuses/ albums	2.75	.918	400
I watch videos/listen to music	2.70	.909	400

4-point Likert scales ranging from 1 "Not at all" to 4 "Very Often"

Social Media Content Engagement was covered in the following items: I7, I8, I9, I10, I20, I21, I22, I23, I28, I35, I37, and I38. These had a Cronbach's alpha score of 0.79, which is above the threshold.

Table 4.18 Scale validity analysis for social media content engagement

EFA Component Matrix Social Media Intensity – Content Engagement		
Number	Item	Loadings
I7	I click like on videos posted by brands on social media	.785
I8	I click like on text only posts made by brands on social media	.749
I9	I click like on pictures posted by brands on social media	.835
I10	I share content posted by brands on social media	.827
I20	I click like on videos posted by other users (Not friends) on social media	.724
I21	I click like on posts made by other users (Not friends) on social media	.821
I22	I click like on pictures posted by other users (Not friends) on social media	.720
I23	I share content posted by other users (Not friends) on social media	.819
I28	I chat with friends via instant messaging function)instant messaging)	.817
I35	I access entertainment or news content	.713
I37	I play games/applications on social media	.710
I38	I buy products or services directly on social media	.707

Table 4.19 Scale reliability analysis for Social Media Content Engagement

Reliability Statistics Social Media Content Engagement			
Cronbach's Alpha		Number of Items	
.797		13	
Item Statistics			
Item	Mean	Std .Deviation	N
I click like on videos posted by brands on social media	2.79	.881	400
I click like on text only posts made by brands on social media	2.79	.951	400
I click like on pictures posted by brands on social media	2.76	.924	400
I share content posted by brands on social media	2.72	.900	400
I click like on videos posted by other users (Not friends) on social media	2.80	.954	400
I click like on posts made by other users (Not friends) on social media	2.72	.949	400
I click like on pictures posted by other users (Not friends) on social media	2.78	.933	400
I share content posted by other users (Not friends) on social media	2.76	.918	400
I chat with friends via instant messaging function (instant messaging)	2.70	.977	400
I access entertainment or news content	2.78	.908	400
I play games/applications on social media	2.72	.901	400
I buy products or services directly on social media	2.75	.911	400

4-point Likert scales ranging from 1 "Not at all" to 4 "Very Often"

Social Media Content Creation was covered in the following items: I12, I25, I32, I33, I31, I34, I24, I11, I26, I13, I14, I15, I16, I17, I18, and I19. These had a Cronbach's alpha score of 0.81, which is well above the threshold.

Table 4.20 Scale validity analysis for social media content creation

EFA Component Matrix Social Media Intensity – Content Engagement		
Number	Item	Loadings
I11	I tag brand pages in my posts	.802
I12	I post picture related to brands on social media	.799
I13	I write reviews on brand pages on social media	.798
I14	I read posts made by users (Not friends) while on social media	.795
I15	I watch pictures/videos or graphics posted by users (Not friends) on social media	.793
I16	I follow users or influencers reviewing products or services on social media	.793
I17	I comment on videos posted by other users (Not friends) on social media	.792
I18	I comment on posts made by other users (Not friends) on social media	.787
I19	I comment on pictures posted by other users (Not friends) on social media	.887
I24	I tag other users (Not friends) in posts	.785
I25	I post pictures related to other users (Not friends) on social media	.785
I26	I write reviews on users' forums or fan pages on social media	.781
I31	I update my social media status	.875
I32	I post photos/videos on personal profile	.873
I33	I write posts	.773
I34	I update my personal profile (change image/contact information/privacy setting)	.866

Table 4.21 Scale reliability analysis for Social Media Content Creation

Reliability Statistics Social Media Content Creation			
Cronbach's Alpha		Number of Items	
.797		13	
Item Statistics			
Item	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
I tag brand pages in my posts	2.76	.910	400
I post picture related to brands on social media	2.73	.928	400
I write reviews on brand pages on social media	2.76	.920	400
I read posts made by users (Not friends) while on social media	2.70	.909	400
I watch pictures/videos or graphics posted by users (Not friends) on social media	2.82	.926	400
I follow users or influencers reviewing products or services on social media	2.78	.929	400
I comment on videos posted by other users (Not friends) on social media	2.75	.938	400
I comment on posts made by other users (Not friends) on social media	2.73	.905	400
I comment on pictures posted by other users (Not friends) on social media	2.77	.882	400
I tag other users (Not friends) in posts	2.71	.892	400
I post pictures related to other users (Not friends) on social media	2.74	.933	400
I write reviews on users' forums or fan pages on social media	2.80	.945	400
I update my social media status	2.81	.921	400
I post photos/videos on personal profile	2.78	.932	400
I write posts	2.73	.924	400
I update my personal profile (change image/contact information/privacy setting)	2.70	.928	400

4-point Likert scales ranging from 1 "Not at all" to 4 "Very Often"

In terms of both items I19 and I29 ("Commented on pictures posted by other users (not friends) on social media" and "Commented on friends' statuses, logs, and

photos”), they did not seem to be adequately perceived aspects/factors of social media intensity. Therefore, the researcher proceeded to delete these items. Without the items, the survey does not lose any important element that should be retained in the measure, nor will their removal affect the content and face validity of this construct.

4.7 Negative Consumption Behaviours

The behaviour of compulsive buying was measured by 7 items, taken from the O’Guinn and Faber (1989) scale. The following is the scale’s Cronbach’s alpha:

Table 4.22 Scale validity analysis for compulsive buying behaviour

EFA Component Matrix Compulsive Buying Behaviour		
Number	Item	Loadings
C1	If I have any money left at the end of the pay period, I just have to spend it	.813
C2	I often feel others would be horrified if they knew my spending habits	.807
C3	I often buy things online even though I can’t afford them	.816
C4	I take on debts even if I know I do not have enough money in my bank to cover	.866
C5	I often buy things online in order to feel better	.831
C6	I feel nervous on days I do not shopping	.734
C7	I make only minimum payments with my credit card	.747

Table 4.23 Scale reliability analysis for compulsive buying behaviour

Reliability Statistics Compulsive Buying Behaviour			
Cronbach's Alpha		Number of Items	
.902		7	
Item Statistics			
Item	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
If I have any money left at the end of the pay period, I just have to spend it	2.79	.939	400
I often feel others would be horrified if they knew my spending habits	2.77	.976	400
I often buy things online even though I can't afford them	2.83	.953	400
I take on debts even if I know I do not have enough money in my bank to cover	2.80	.899	400
I often buy things online in order to feel better	2.77	.910	400
I feel nervous on days I do not shopping	2.74	.875	400
I make only minimum payments with my credit card	2.82	.957	400

4-point Likert scales ranging from 1 "strongly disagree" to 4 "strongly agree"

The scale shows a Cronbach's alpha score of 0.90, which is well above the threshold. Therefore, all the items were kept.

Conspicuous buying behaviour was measured by 5 items. The scale used in this study was developed by Eastman, Goldsmith, and Flynn (1999). The following is the scale Cronbach's alpha:

Table 4.24 Scale validity analysis for conspicuous buying behaviour

EFA Component Matrix Conspicuous Buying Behaviour		
Number	Item	Loadings
CON1	I would buy a product online just because it has status	.830
CON2	In social media, I am interested in products with status	.830
CON3	I would pay more for products if they had status	.821
CON4	The status of a product is irrelevant to me	.812
CON5	A product is more valuable to me if it has some snob appeal	.792

Table 4.25 Scale reliability analysis for conspicuous buying behaviour

Reliability Statistics Conspicuous Buying Behaviour			
Cronbach's Alpha		Number of Items	
.876		5	
Item Statistics			
Item	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
I would buy a product online just because it has status	2.85	.924	400
In social media, I am interested in products with status	2.81	.938	400
I would pay more for products if they had status	2.89	.910	400
The status of a product is irrelevant to me	2.74	.996	400
A product is more valuable to me if it has some snob appeal	2.79	.957	400

4-point Likert scales ranging from 1 “strongly disagree” to 4 “strongly agree”

Also, in this case, the scale shows a Cronbach’s alpha score of 0.87, which is well above the threshold. Therefore, all the items were kept.

Impulse buying behaviour was measured by 5 items. The scale used in this study was developed by Rook and Fisher (1995). The following is the scale’s Cronbach’s alpha:

Table 4.26 Scale validity analysis for impulse buying behaviour

EFA Component Matrix Impulse Buying Behaviour		
Number	Item	Loadings
IMP1	I make unplanned purchases online	.792
IMP2	When I see something that interests me on social media, I buy it without considering the consequences	.739
IMP3	It is fun to buy spontaneously	.828
IMP4	I avoid buying things I have not planned to buy	.825
IMP5	I make unplanned purchases online	.793

Table 4.27 Scale reliability analysis for impulse buying behaviour

Reliability Statistics Impulse Buying Behaviour			
Cronbach's Alpha		Number of Items	
.732		5	
Item Statistics			
Item	Mean	Std .Deviation	N
I make unplanned purchases online	2.73	.936	400
When I see something that interests me on social media, I buy it without considering the consequences	2.75	.959	400
It is fun to buy spontaneously	2.70	.917	400
I avoid buying things I have not planned to buy	2.73	.957	400
I make unplanned purchases online	2.74	.916	400

4-point Likert scales ranging from 1 “strongly disagree” to 4 “strongly agree”

This scale shows a Cronbach’s alpha score of 0.73, which is slightly below the threshold. Even after checking the item-total statistics, the researcher found no items that could be deleted in order to improve the Cronbach’s alpha.

4.8 Overall Measurement CFA Model Fit

Until this point, the fit of the measurement models has been tested individually for all the dependent and independent variables in the proposed model. Through this process, four items have been excluded from the CFA model in order to achieve a better fit of the data.

These composite scales, which are an acceptable way to test variable according to Hair (2019) were subjected to a CFA, the results of which are provided in

Table 4.28. The fit indices suggested a very high adequacy of the fit elevated χ^2 and RMSEA. An examination of the materialism loadings indicated that the standardized regression weights were all very high, above 0.9. There is a discussion among scholars regarding very high standardized loading, which may be a sign of multicollinearity and of high correlation since some of the items in the scale may be measuring the same construct (Hair et al., 2019). However, Becker et al. (2013) stated that if items with very high loadings are based on a well-established theory, they are still valid and therefore can be used (Becker, Rai, & Rigdon, 2013).

The composite construct reliability for this three-item measure is .98, which is well above the acceptable level as indicated in the literature (Hair, Risher, Sarstedt, & Ringle, 2019). This indicates that the three retained items are considered both reliable and valid for this construct measure. However, the composite construct reliability for the five-item measure of impulse buying behaviours is .73, which is above the threshold of 0.7.

Table 4.28 Summary of overall confirmatory factor analysis measurement model

Fit Indices	Initial (23 items)
2χ (df)	288.713
CMIN	1.054
GFI	.949
CFI	.998
RMSEA	.012
SRMR	.0204
NFI	.97

Table 4.29 Confirmatory factor analysis unstandardized regression weights

			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
Pos	<---	Materialism	1.000			
Non	<---	Materialism	1.026	.018	57.203	***
Env	<---	Materialism	1.031	.018	58.423	***
SMContentView	<---	SMI	1.000			
SMEngagement	<---	SMI	1.004	.047	21.491	***
SMContentCreation	<---	SMI	.992	.043	22.919	***
C2	<---	C	1.000			
CON1	<---	CON	1.000			
CON2	<---	CON	1.030	.062	16.710	***
CON3	<---	CON	1.008	.060	16.840	***
IMP1	<---	IMP	1.000			
IMP2	<---	IMP	1.089	.128	8.492	***
C4	<---	C	1.141	.070	16.405	***
C5	<---	C	1.052	.067	15.717	***
C6	<---	C	1.066	.067	15.879	***
C7	<---	C	1.111	.069	16.114	***
CON4	<---	CON	.969	.059	16.341	***
CON5	<---	CON	1.038	.063	16.520	***
IMP4	<---	IMP	1.028	.126	8.183	***
IMP3	<---	IMP	.910	.117	7.743	***
C1	<---	C	.952	.062	15.264	***
C3	<---	C	1.055	.066	15.937	***
IMP5	<---	IMP	.820	.114	7.184	***

Table 4.30 Summary of confirmatory factor analysis standardized loadings

Items	Items Wording	Initial Standardized loadings
Possessiveness	Pos	.979
Non-generosity	Non	.965
Envy	Env	.967
Materialism Composite Final Construct Reliability		.98
Materialism Composite Construct AVE		.94

Table 4.30 Summary of confirmatory factor analysis standardized loadings (cont.)

Items	Items Wording	Initial Standardized loadings
Attitudes Towards Social Media Advertisement	SMADV	-
Attitudes Towards Social Media Advertisement Composite Final Construct Reliability		.98
Attitudes Towards Social Media Advertisement Construct AVE		.92
Attitudes Towards Social Media Brand Generated Content	SMBGC	-
Attitudes Towards Social Media Brand Generated Content Composite Final Construct Reliability		.96
Attitudes Towards Social Media Brand Generated Content Construct AVE		.75
Attitudes Towards Social Media User Generated Content	SMUGC	-
Attitudes Towards Social Media User Generated Content Composite Final Construct Reliability		.92
Attitudes Towards Social Media User Generated Content Construct AVE		.56
Social Media Content View	SMContentView	.906
Social Media Content Engagement	SMEngagement	.896
Social Media Content Creation	SMContentCreation	.912
Social Media Intensity Composite Final Construct Reliability		.93
Social Media Intensity Composite Construct AVE		.81

Table 4.30 Summary of confirmatory factor analysis standardized loadings (cont.)

Items	Items Wording	Initial Standardized loadings
C1	C1	.97
C2	C2	.987
C3	C3	.979
C4	C4	.989
C5	C5	.98
C6	C6	.987
C7	C7	.97
Compulsive Buying Composite Final Construct Reliability		.98
Compulsive Buying Composite Construct AVE		.96
CON1	CON1	.759
CON2	CON2	.770
CON3	CON3	.775
CON4	CON4	.756
CON5	CON5	.763
Conspicuous Buying Composite Final Construct Reliability		.88
Conspicuous Buying Composite Construct AVE		.89
IMP1	IMP1	.92
IMP2	IMP2	.893
IMP3	IMP3	.893
IMP4	IMP4	.893
IMP5	IMP5	.936
Impulse Buying Composite Final Construct Reliability		.95
Impulse Buying Composite Construct AVE		.82

Table 4.31 Covariances: (Group number 1 - Default model)

		Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
Materialism	<--> SMI	.259	.023	11.173	***
Materialism	<--> C	.509	.044	11.581	***
Materialism	<--> CON	.538	.046	11.655	***
Materialism	<--> IMP	.288	.035	8.245	***
SMI	<--> C	.300	.028	10.668	***
SMI	<--> CON	.329	.030	10.875	***
SMI	<--> IMP	.200	.024	8.329	***
C	<--> CON	.566	.053	10.594	***
C	<--> IMP	.326	.040	8.088	***
CON	<--> IMP	.358	.044	8.183	***
Materialism	<--> SMADV	.539	.040	13.322	***
Materialism	<--> SMBGC	.259	.023	11.462	***
Materialism	<--> SMUGC	.295	.025	11.662	***
SMADV	<--> SMBGC	.313	.025	12.360	***
SMI	<--> SMADV	.324	.027	12.086	***
C	<--> SMADV	.556	.048	11.687	***
CON	<--> SMADV	.595	.050	11.829	***
IMP	<--> SMADV	.343	.040	8.594	***
SMADV	<--> SMUGC	.235	.025	9.398	***
SMI	<--> SMBGC	.187	.016	11.706	***
C	<--> SMBGC	.293	.027	10.898	***
CON	<--> SMBGC	.322	.029	11.130	***
IMP	<--> SMBGC	.193	.023	8.277	***
SMBGC	<--> SMUGC	.085	.014	5.951	***
SMI	<--> SMUGC	.074	.013	5.561	***
C	<--> SMUGC	.219	.025	8.653	***
CON	<--> SMUGC	.230	.027	8.516	***
IMP	<--> SMUGC	.086	.019	4.642	***

Table 4.32 Correlations: (Group number 1 - Default model)

	Estimate
Materialism <--> SMI	.807
Materialism <--> C	.963
Materialism <--> CON	.942
Materialism <--> IMP	.804
Smi <--> C	.859
Smi <--> CON	.874
Smi <--> IMP	.905
C <--> CON	.945
C <--> IMP	.852
CON <--> IMP	.948
Materialism <--> SMADV	.913
Materialism <--> SMBGC	.712
Materialism <--> SMUGC	.731
SMADV <--> SMBGC	.788
SMI <--> SMADV	.897
C <--> SMADV	.944
CON <--> SMADV	.945
IMP <--> SMADV	.878
SMADV <--> SMUGC	.533
SMI <--> SMBGC	.868
C <--> SMBGC	.825
CON <--> SMBGC	.839
IMP <--> SMBGC	.800
SMBGC <--> SMUGC	.312
SMI <--> SMUGC	.310
C <--> SMUGC	.555
CON <--> SMUGC	.541
IMP <--> SMUGC	.323

Table 4.33 Discriminant Validity

Materialism <--> SMI	
<i>Squared Root AVE</i>	<i>Correlation</i>
Materialism .96	.807
SMI 0.90	
Valid	
Materialism <--> C	
<i>Squared Root AVE</i>	<i>Correlation</i>
Materialism .96	.963
C 0.97	
Valid	
Materialism <--> CON	
<i>Squared Root AVE</i>	<i>Correlation</i>
Materialism .96	.942
CON 0.94	
Valid	
Materialism <--> IMP	
<i>Squared Root AVE</i>	<i>Correlation</i>
Materialism .96	.804
IMP 0.90	
Valid	
Smi <--> C	
<i>Squared Root AVE</i>	<i>Correlation</i>
Smi .90	.859
C 0.97	
Valid	
Smi <--> CON	
<i>Squared Root AVE</i>	<i>Correlation</i>
Smi .90	.874
CON 0.94	
Valid	
Smi <--> IMP	
<i>Squared Root AVE</i>	<i>Correlation</i>
Smi .90	.905
IMP 0.90	
Valid	
C <--> CON	
<i>Squared Root AVE</i>	<i>Correlation</i>
C .96	.945
CON 0.94	

Table 4.33 Discriminant Validity (cont.)

Valid	
C <--> IMP	
<i>Squared Root AVE</i>	<i>Correlation</i>
C .96	.852
IMP 0.90	
Valid	
CON <--> IMP	
<i>Squared Root AVE</i>	<i>Correlation</i>
CON .94	.948
IMP 0.90	
Not Valid	
Materialism <--> SMADV	
<i>Squared Root AVE</i>	<i>Correlation</i>
Materialism .96	.913
SMADV 0.95	
Valid	
Materialism <--> SMBGC	
<i>Squared Root AVE</i>	<i>Correlation</i>
Materialism .96	.712
SMBGC 0.87	
Valid	
Materialism <--> SMUGC	
<i>Squared Root AVE</i>	<i>Correlation</i>
Materialism .96	.731
SMUGC 0.75	
Valid	
SMADV <--> SMBGC	
<i>Squared Root AVE</i>	<i>Correlation</i>
SMADV .95	.788
SMBGC 0.87	
Valid	
SMI <--> SMADV	
<i>Squared Root AVE</i>	<i>Correlation</i>
SMI .90	.897
SMADV 0.95	
Valid	
C <--> SMADV	

Table 4.33 Discriminant Validity (cont.)

<i>Squared Root AVE</i>	<i>Correlation</i>
C .97	.944
SMADV 0.95	
Valid	
CON <--> SMADV	
<i>Squared Root AVE</i>	<i>Correlation</i>
CON .94	.945
SMADV 0.95	
Valid	
IMP <--> SMADV	
<i>Squared Root AVE</i>	<i>Correlation</i>
IMP .90	.878
SMADV 0.95	
Valid	
SMADV <--> SMUGC	
<i>Squared Root AVE</i>	<i>Correlation</i>
SMADV .95	.533
SMUGC 0.75	
Valid	
SMI <--> SMBGC	
<i>Squared Root AVE</i>	<i>Correlation</i>
SMI .90	.868
SMBGC 0.87	
Valid	
C <--> SMBGC	
<i>Squared Root AVE</i>	<i>Correlation</i>
C .97	.825
SMBGC 0.87	
Valid	
CON <--> SMBGC	
<i>Squared Root AVE</i>	<i>Correlation</i>
CON .94	.839
SMBGC 0.87	
Valid	
IMP <--> SMBGC	
<i>Squared Root AVE</i>	<i>Correlation</i>
IMP .90	.800
SMBGC 0.87	

Table 4.33 Discriminant Validity (cont.)

Valid	
SMBGC <--> SMUGC	
<i>Squared Root AVE</i>	<i>Correlation</i>
SMBGC 0.87	.312
SMUGC 0.75	
Valid	
SMI <--> SMUGC	
<i>Squared Root AVE</i>	<i>Correlation</i>
SMI 0.90	.310
SMBGC 0.87	
Valid	
C <--> SMUGC	
<i>Squared Root AVE</i>	<i>Correlation</i>
C 0.97	.555
SMUGC 0.75	
Valid	
CON <--> SMUGC	
<i>Squared Root AVE</i>	<i>Correlation</i>
CON 0.94	.541
SMUGC 0.75	
Valid	
IMP <--> SMUGC	
<i>Squared Root AVE</i>	<i>Correlation</i>
IMP 0.90	.323
SMUGC 0.75	
Valid	

In conclusion, all measurements in the models were subjected to an initial statistical factor analysis and a CFA, as illustrated in the charts and discussion on the previous pages. Furthermore, the measurement model achieved the required degree of fit indices. These findings were attributed to the strong support for the overall measurement model, which is unidimensional and covers the measures' convergent validity (Voss & Parasuraman, 2003). In particular, all GFI and CFI scores ranged from .90 to 1.00. Furthermore, the Chi square to degrees of freedom ratios (CMIN/DF) were all between the desired level of fit of 5 or less (Barrett, 2007). The RMSEA and SRMR values for confidence were also within the marginal fit range (Rigdon, 1996). However,

other supporting recommended standards of fit statistics, as well as the significant and high standardized loading ratings, which were all above .50 except for IMP3 and IMP5, supported the model. The fit statistics justify the deletion of four items from different construct measures.

Furthermore, the MIs with expected changes in statistics affiliated to the error covariances revealed five relatively high scored misspecifications (MI scores were around 10 or above in the final measurement model) associated with five different items. However, these MIs do not represent any significant evidence of cross-loading and are, in effect, meaningless. Upon drawing covariances among those items and re-running the overall measurement model again, it was found that the impact on the overall analysis was very minimal. As these modifications were found to have not much impact on the overall measurement model fit statistics, they were removed. Either way, this was an *ad hoc* examination as a sample towards verification of the impact of larger error covariances and regression weights associated with the observed, endogenous variables.

Finally, it was evident that all items loaded satisfactorily on their respective factors and that no cross-loading of items onto a different factor occurred. Thus, this further affirmed that the items for each construct are converged into their single factor model and that each measure is discriminated from the others in the overall model.

The average variances extracted were then explored by performing model analysis using retained items in SEM to obtain theoretical precision from the results. In the SEM procedure, using the correlation matrix enabled a comparison of the composite reliability scores and correlations between the variables, which aided in the reporting of the measure's convergent and discriminant validity.

4.9 Validity of the Constructs

During the validation process, there are two basic validities, namely content and construct, that can be assessed to get the uniqueness of the measures. Content validity is the subjective assessment of the measures affiliated with the face validity for informal evaluation of the scales and opinions from experts (Malhotra, 2002). The content validity has already been addressed in an earlier section and further discussed along with the face validity of the measures in the respective measurement sections.

Convergent and discriminant coefficients are used to support or refute a claim of construct validity (Zhu, 2000). Convergent validity refers to the extent to which the scale correlates positively with other measures of the same construct and discriminant validity is the extent to which a measure does not correlate with other constructs from which it is supposed to differ (Malhotra, 2002). For assessing convergent and discriminant validity, inter-item correlations, standardized item alpha, correlation coefficients and measurement of constructs in CFA along with standardized loading should be reviewed and discussed.

In order to demonstrate convergent validity, inter-item correlations revealed that all retained items (in CFA) in the respective measures were positively correlated with moderate to high coefficients. Further, the CFA findings indicated that all construct measures were unidimensional, which suggests that the construct measures achieved not only convergent validity but also discriminant validity.

In order to assess discriminant validity, Gaski (1984) also recommended that the correlations among composite constructs be lower than the respective standardized composite reliabilities. Considering this approach, the composite reliability scores were compared to the construct correlations where the lowest composite reliability score was .58.

This low to moderate level of correlations between the variables is normally expected, but these levels of correlations satisfy the discriminant validity of the measures, indicating the measurement scales' ability to discriminate between measures that are supposed to differ (Campbell & Fiske, 1959). As a result, discriminant validity is supported. Furthermore, the average variance extracted (AVE) are greater than all corresponding construct correlations, which is additional evidence of the discriminant validity of the constructs (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

The model developed through the literature review in this study strived to identify the valid and reliable antecedents of negative consumption behaviours in the social media environment. The structural model was proposed to verify the mediating roles of users' attitudes towards social media content and social media intensity between materialism and the three negative consumption behaviours. By using 26 reliable and validated measurement items for eight construct measures, the proposed structural models are tested and assessed in this section.

4.9.1 Testing the Structural Model and Fit Indices

To achieve model fit between the data and the theoretical model, all possible exogenous latent variables were allowed to covary in the proposed structural model (Holmes-Smith et al., 2004; Kline, 2005). The fit indices adopted for evaluating the model are presented in Table 4.34.

Table 4.34 Proposed model: Structural equation model test output, fit indices and desired level of fit

Model Fit						
Fit Measures	CMIN/DF	RMSEA	SRMR	GFI	CFI	NFI
Acceptable Scale for Good as well as Adequate Fit	< 2	< .08	> .08	> .90	> .90	> .90
Composed Model Fit	1.798	.074	.05	.83	.934	.907
2 χ (df) in Proposed Model	3.2					

The proposed model is shown in Figure 4.12 with the estimated standardized regression coefficients in the path links.

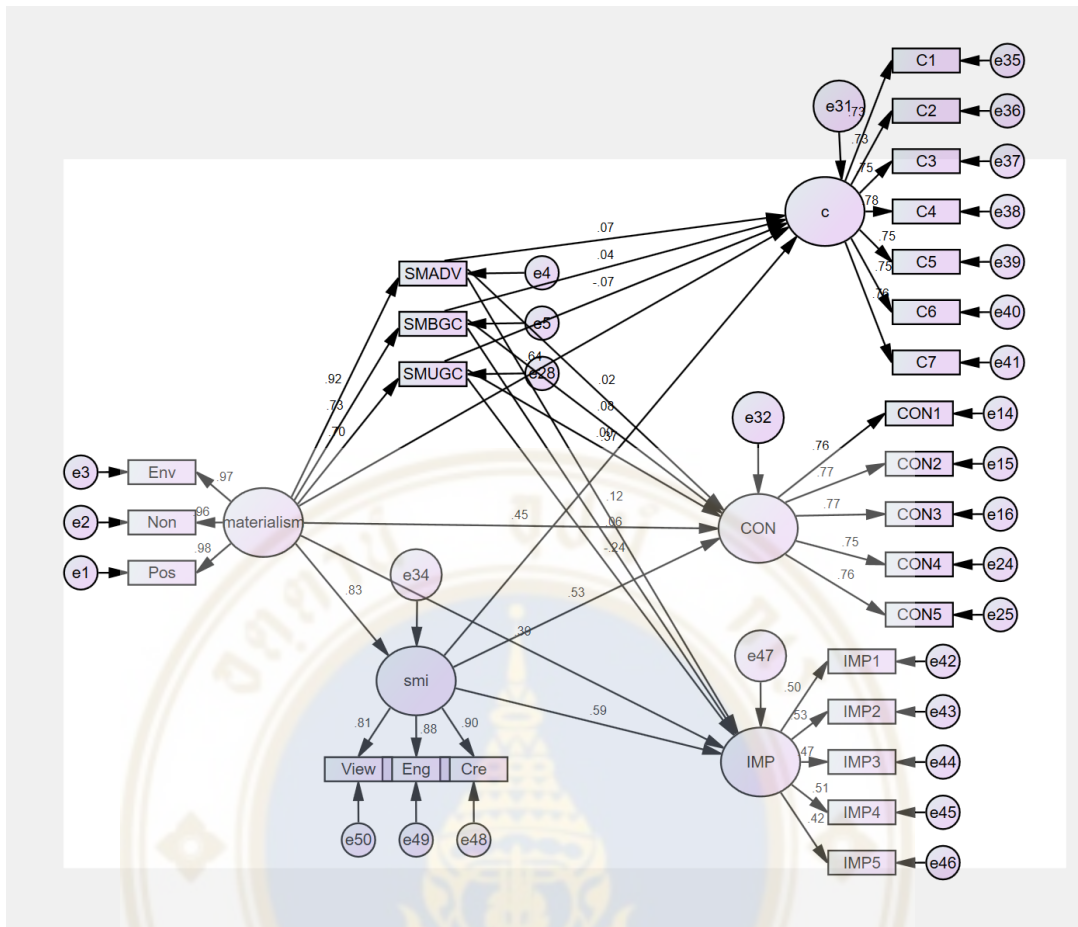


Figure 4.12 Proposed structural equation model

Table 4.35 Regression weights: (Group number 1 - Default model)

			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
SMI	<---	Materialism	.485	.022	22.442	***
SMUGC	<---	Materialism	.522	.028	18.924	***
SMBGC	<---	Materialism	.494	.024	20.735	***
SMADV	<---	Materialism	1.008	.024	41.487	***
C	<---	Materialism	.587	.065	9.016	***
CON	<---	Materialism	.472	.082	5.759	***
IMP	<---	Materialism	.245	.108	2.282	.022
C	<---	SMI	.586	.063	9.288	***
CON	<---	SMI	.943	.088	10.708	***
IMP	<---	SMI	.642	.114	5.650	***
C	<---	SMADV	.057	.039	1.457	.145
CON	<---	SMADV	.022	.052	.425	.671
IMP	<---	SMADV	.067	.069	.968	.333

Table 4.35 Regression weights: (Group number 1 - Default model) (cont.)

		Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
C	<--- SMBGC	.054	.034	1.571	.116
CON	<--- SMBGC	.120	.046	2.604	.009
IMP	<--- SMBGC	.056	.062	.914	.360
C	<--- SMUGC	-.089	.029	-3.009	.003
CON	<--- SMUGC	-.005	.039	-.135	.892
IMP	<--- SMUGC	-.201	.055	-3.651	***
Pos	<--- Materialism	1.000			
Non	<--- Materialism	1.028	.018	55.958	***
Env	<--- Materialism	1.032	.018	56.572	***
CON1	<--- CON	1.000			
CON2	<--- CON	1.031	.062	16.536	***
CON3	<--- CON	1.009	.061	16.644	***
CON4	<--- CON	.970	.060	16.172	***
CON5	<--- CON	1.038	.064	16.329	***
C1	<--- C	1.000			
C2	<--- C	1.050	.070	15.063	***
C3	<--- C	1.107	.071	15.545	***
C4	<--- C	1.199	.075	16.000	***
C5	<--- C	1.104	.072	15.344	***
C6	<--- C	1.120	.072	15.504	***
C7	<--- C	1.168	.074	15.744	***
IMP1	<--- IMP	1.000			
IMP2	<--- IMP	1.090	.136	8.028	***
IMP3	<--- IMP	.911	.124	7.326	***
IMP4	<--- IMP	1.029	.133	7.739	***
IMP5	<--- IMP	.818	.121	6.781	***
SMContentCreation	<--- SMI	1.000			
SMEngagement	<--- SMI	1.028	.039	26.392	***
SMContentView	<--- SMI	1.017	.047	21.791	***

Table 4.36 Standardized regression weights: (Group number 1 - Default model)

	Estimate
SMI <--- Materialism	.832
SMUGC <--- Materialism	.699
SMBGC <--- Materialism	.733
SMADV <--- Materialism	.922
C <--- Materialism	.637
CON <--- Materialism	.451
IMP <--- Materialism	.389
C <--- SMI	.371
CON <--- SMI	.525
IMP <--- SMI	.593
C <--- SMADV	.067
CON <--- SMADV	.023
IMP <--- SMADV	.116
C <--- SMBGC	.039
CON <--- SMBGC	.077
IMP <--- SMBGC	.060
C <--- SMUGC	-.072
CON <--- SMUGC	-.004
IMP <--- SMUGC	-.238
Pos <--- Materialism	.976
Non <--- Materialism	.965
Env <--- Materialism	.966
CON1 <--- CON	.755
CON2 <--- CON	.768
CON3 <--- CON	.772
CON4 <--- CON	.753
CON5 <--- CON	.760
C1 <--- C	.726
C2 <--- C	.732
C3 <--- C	.755
C4 <--- C	.775
C5 <--- C	.745
C6 <--- C	.753
C7 <--- C	.764

Table 4.36 Standardized regression weights: (Group number 1 - Default model)
(cont.)

	Estimate
IMP1 <--- IMP	.502
IMP2 <--- IMP	.535
IMP3 <--- IMP	.466
IMP4 <--- IMP	.505
IMP5 <--- IMP	.418
SMContentCreation <--- SMI	.904
SMEngagement <--- SMI	.882
SMContentView <--- SMI	.805

It should be noted that while the fit indices for the proposed model achieved a sufficient level of fit, the model fit was reduced from the CFA and therefore it could be slightly improved. Taking this concern into account, conducting a review of the overall measurement model and initial model results is considered appropriate to determine whether the model fit could be improved.

The review of the MIs for the regression weights revealed three parameters with large scores: (i) Attitudes Towards Social Media Advertising and Social Media Intensity, (ii) Attitudes Towards Social Media Brand-Generated Content and Social Media Intensity, and (iii) Attitudes Towards Social Media User-Generated Content and Social Media Intensity. In order to achieve a better structural model fit, these modifications were essential to minimize the χ^2 difference and to improve other fit indices between the proposed structural model and the adjusted structural model. Accordingly, on an *ad hoc* basis, by adding these paths in the alternative model, the results revealed significant improvement in the overall fit indices (χ^2 is 1.815 with df 280).

Table 4.37 Modified proposed model: Structural equation model test output, fit indices and desired fit level

Model Fit						
Fit Measures	CMIN/DF	RMSEA	SRMR	GFI	CFI	NFI
Acceptable Scale for Good as well as Adequate Fit	< 2	< .08	> .08	> .90	> .90	> .90
Composed Model Fit	1.815	.045	.0357	.909	.976	.948
2 χ (df) in Modified Model	1.8					
2 χ (df) in Proposed Model	3.2					

The modified model is shown in Figure 4.13 with estimated standardized regression coefficients in the path links.

Table 4.38 Regression weights: (Group number 1 - Default model)

		Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
SMUGC	<--- Materialism	.531	.027	19.623	***
SMBGC	<--- Materialism	.484	.024	20.074	***
SMADV	<--- Materialism	.997	.025	40.025	***
SMI	<--- Materialism	.105	.036	2.898	.004
SMI	<--- SMADV	.368	.028	12.934	***
SMI	<--- SMBGC	.250	.026	9.682	***
SMI	<--- SMUGC	-.213	.023	-9.293	***
C	<--- Materialism	.559	.063	8.949	***
CON	<--- Materialism	.444	.083	5.334	***
IMP	<--- Materialism	.226	.098	2.308	.021
C	<--- SMI	1.050	.180	5.842	***
CON	<--- SMI	1.733	.274	6.317	***
IMP	<--- SMI	1.167	.292	3.999	***
C	<--- SMADV	-.142	.074	-1.911	.056
CON	<--- SMADV	-.330	.111	-2.978	.003
IMP	<--- SMADV	-.167	.119	-1.398	.162
C	<--- SMBGC	-.086	.057	-1.522	.128

Table 4.38 Regression weights: (Group number 1 - Default model) (cont.)

			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
CON	<---	SMBGC	-.125	.083	-1.503	.133
IMP	<---	SMBGC	-.108	.092	-1.171	.241
C	<---	SMUGC	.036	.050	.727	.467
CON	<---	SMUGC	.210	.075	2.821	.005
IMP	<---	SMUGC	-.054	.083	-.650	.516
Pos	<---	Materialism	1.000			
Non	<---	Materialism	1.027	.018	57.517	***
Env	<---	Materialism	1.031	.018	58.125	***
CON1	<---	CON	1.000			
CON2	<---	CON	1.029	.063	16.435	***
CON3	<---	CON	1.007	.061	16.540	***
CON4	<---	CON	.968	.060	16.056	***
CON5	<---	CON	1.039	.064	16.265	***
C1	<---	C	1.000			
C2	<---	C	1.052	.070	15.065	***
C3	<---	C	1.109	.071	15.528	***
C4	<---	C	1.199	.075	15.962	***
C5	<---	C	1.105	.072	15.317	***
C6	<---	C	1.120	.072	15.461	***
C7	<---	C	1.167	.074	15.687	***
IMP1	<---	IMP	1.000			
IMP2	<---	IMP	1.090	.135	8.095	***
IMP3	<---	IMP	.911	.123	7.384	***
IMP4	<---	IMP	1.028	.132	7.801	***
IMP5	<---	IMP	.819	.120	6.844	***
SMContentCreation	<---	SMI	1.000			
SMEngagement	<---	SMI	1.011	.039	26.048	***
SMContentView	<---	SMI	1.008	.047	21.482	***

Table 4.39 Standardized regression weights: (Group number 1 - Default model)

	Estimate
SMUGC <--- Materialism	.712
SMBGC <--- Materialism	.720
SMADV <--- Materialism	.914
SMI <--- Materialism	.190
SMI <--- SMADV	.729
SMI <--- SMBGC	.305
SMI <--- SMUGC	-.289
C <--- Materialism	.610
CON <--- Materialism	.428
IMP <--- Materialism	.356
C <--- SMI	.630
CON <--- SMI	.920
IMP <--- SMI	.971
C <--- SMADV	-.169
CON <--- SMADV	-.347
IMP <--- SMADV	-.287
C <--- SMBGC	-.063
CON <--- SMBGC	-.081
IMP <--- SMBGC	-.115
C <--- SMUGC	.030
CON <--- SMUGC	.151
IMP <--- SMUGC	-.063
Pos <--- Materialism	.978
Non <--- Materialism	.966
Env <--- Materialism	.967

Table 4.39 Standardized regression weights: (Group number 1 - Default model)
(cont.)

	Estimate
CON1 <--- CON	.754
CON2 <--- CON	.765
CON3 <--- CON	.769
CON4 <--- CON	.750
CON5 <--- CON	.758
C1 <--- C	.725
C2 <--- C	.734
C3 <--- C	.755
C4 <--- C	.775
C5 <--- C	.745
C6 <--- C	.752
C7 <--- C	.762
IMP1 <--- IMP	.504
IMP2 <--- IMP	.537
IMP3 <--- IMP	.468
IMP4 <--- IMP	.507
IMP5 <--- IMP	.421
SMContentCreation <--- SMI	.903
SMEngagement <--- SMI	.863
SMContentView <--- SMI	.788

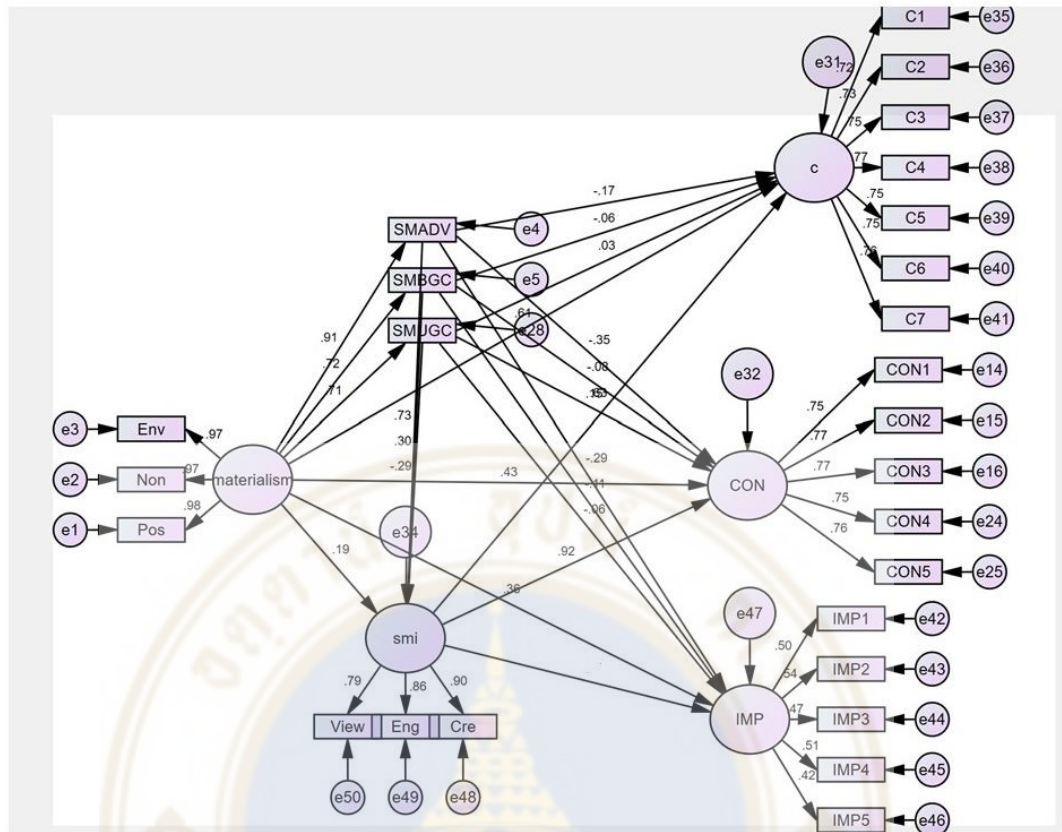


Figure 4.13 Modified structural model with three added paths; SMADV→SMI, SMBGC→SMI and SMUGC→SMI

Table 4.40 Overall structural model and modified structural model fit indices

	Overall Structural Model	Modified Structural Model
χ^2 (df)	3.2	1.8
CMIN	1.798	1.815
GFI	.831	.909
SRMR	.0515	.0357
CFI	.934	.976
RMSEA	.074	.045

The additional three paths in the modified proposed model need theoretical underpinnings to demonstrate that these paths are not simply data driven but also theoretically acceptable (Hair et al., 1998). The added paths between attitudes towards social media advertising, attitudes towards social media brand-generated content, attitudes towards social media user-generated content and social media intensity could be explained from the perspective of the theory of planned behaviour (Ajzen, 1991).

The theory of planned behaviour proposes that attitudes towards certain things may lead to certain behaviours and therefore persons who have positive opinions of social media content may engage more in using social media platforms (Lee & Hong, 2016).

The gratifications theory (Ruggiero, 2000) is another concept which helps explain the link between attitudes in social media content and the level of engagement of its users. The theory can be viewed as a theoretical concept which can help: (1) To comprehend the social and psychological origins of needs, (2) which generate expectations from social media, (3) leading to differential patterns of media exposure (or engagement in other activities), (4) resulting in need for gratifications (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1973).

While earlier research focused on conventional mass media such as radio and television (Rubin, 1981), more recent research has linked the uses and gratifications theory to cell phones (Leung & Wei, 2000), the Internet (Korhan & Ersoy, 2016), and social media applications. Instant messenger services like ICQ (Leung, 2001), microblogs like Twitter (Chen, 2011), and review and recommendation sites like Yelp (Hicks et al., 2012) are all examples of social media innovations. The majority of studies (Dolan, Conduit, Frethey-Bentham, Fahy, & Goodman, 2019; Evans, Pearce, Vitak, & Treem, 2017; Ifinedo, 2016; Lim & Kumar, 2019; Malik, Dhir, & Nieminen, 2016; Phua, Jin, & Kim, 2017; Wirtz, Göttel, & Daiser, 2017) have concentrated on social networks, especially Facebook. The uses and gratifications theory (Severin & Tankard, 1997) provides a framework for understanding why and how people deliberately choose such media to meet specific needs.

Attitudes developed after viewing an ad can lead users to pursue a variety of actions on social media, including knowledge enhancement, relaxation, diversion, and escape, as well as social experiences and companionship (Ko, Cho, & Roberts, 2005). Social media studies (Dolan et al., 2019; Lim & Kumar, 2019; Paul & Bhakar, 2018; Phua et al., 2017; Reeves et al., 2012) have affirmed the applicability of the uses and gratifications principle in the social context by demonstrating that people use this novel media form to meet the aforementioned needs and discover new ones (Chen 2011; Leung 2013; Park et al. 2009). The more satisfaction and positive attitudes internet users find in content presented on social media, the more they will use social media, Leung (2013) concluded.

In summing up, the adopted iterative process identified the modified proposed model as the best model to test and report the hypotheses. One direct antecedent of the three negative consumption behaviours was hypothesized, with all three of them positive and significant at 95%. Additionally, in order to understand the role played by both attitudes and social media intensity in the relationship between materialism and negative consumption behaviours, the following mediation effects were assessed.

4.10 Indirect Effects Analysis

1. Materialism → Attitudes Towards Social Media Advertising → Compulsive Buying

Estimate	Lower	Upper	P
-.141	-.326	.007	.052
c <--- materialism			.610

Significant at a 90% significance level

Significant direct effect:

Materialism → Compulsive Buying

2. Materialism → Attitudes Towards Social Media Brand-Generated Content → Compulsive Buying

Estimate	Lower	Upper	P
-.069	-.161	.005	.054

Significant at a 95% significance level

3. Materialism → Attitudes Towards Social Media User-Generated Content → Compulsive Buying

Estimate	Lower	Upper	P
.019	-.039	.079	.557

Not significant

4. Materialism → Social Media Intensity → Compulsive Buying

Estimate	Lower	Upper	P
.110	.013	.238	.028

Significant at a 95% significance level

5. Materialism → Attitudes Towards Social Media Advertising → Conspicuous Buying

Estimate	Lower	Upper	P
-.329	-.621	-.086	.013
CON <--- materialism			

Significant at a 95% significance level

6. Significant direct effect: Materialism → Conspicuous Buying

7. Materialism → Attitudes Towards Social Media Brand-Generated Content → Conspicuous Buying

Estimate	Lower	Upper	P
-.061	-.176	.009	.085

Significant at a 90% significance level

8. Materialism → Attitudes Towards Social Media User-Generated Content → Conspicuous Buying

Estimate	Lower	Upper	P
.112	.043	.216	.004

Significant at a 95% significance level

9. Materialism → Social Media Intensity → Conspicuous Buying

Estimate	Lower	Upper	P
.181	.015	.381	.034

Significant at a 95% significance level

10. Materialism → Attitudes Towards Social Media Advertising → Impulse Buying

Estimate	Lower	Upper	P
-.166	-.449	.084	.177
IMP <--- materialism			

Not significant

Significant direct effect: Materialism → Impulse Buying

11. Materialism → Attitudes Towards Social Media Brand-Generated Content → Impulse Buying

Estimate	Lower	Upper	P
-.052	-.176	.057	.312

Not significant

12. Materialism → Attitudes Towards Social Media User-Generated Content → Impulse Buying

Estimate	Lower	Upper	P
-.028	-.114	.110	.713

Not significant

13. Materialism → Social Media Intensity → Impulse Buying

Estimate	Lower	Upper	P
.122	.017	.294	.023

Significant at a 95% significance level

14. Materialism → Attitudes Towards Social Media Advertising → Social Media Intensity → Compulsive Buying (m → smadv + → smi + → c +)

Estimate	Lower	Upper	P
.385	.275	.585	.003

Significant at a 95% significance level

15. Materialism → Attitudes Towards Social Media Advertising → Social Media Intensity → Conspicuous Buying (m → smadv + → smi + → CON +)

Estimate	Lower	Upper	P
.635	.441	.930	.003

Significant at a 95% significance level

16. Materialism → Attitudes Towards Social Media Advertising → Social Media Intensity → Impulse Buying (m → smadv + → smi + → IMP +)

Estimate	Lower	Upper	P
.428	.214	.718	.003

Significant at a 95% significance level

17. Materialism → Attitudes Towards Social Media Brand-Generated Content → Social Media Intensity → Compulsive Buying (m → smbgc + → smi + → c +)

Estimate	Lower	Upper	P
.127	.080	.195	.004

Significant at a 95% significance level

18. Materialism → Attitudes Towards Social Media Brand-Generated Content → Social Media Intensity → Conspicuous Buying (m → smbgc + → smi + → CON +)

Estimate	Lower	Upper	P
.210	.132	.321	.005

Significant at a 95% significance level

19. Materialism → Attitudes Towards Social Media Brand-Generated Content → Social Media Intensity → Impulse Buying (m → smbgc + → smi + → IMP +)

Estimate	Lower	Upper	P
.141	.075	.278	.002

Significant at a 95% significance level

20. Materialism → Attitudes Towards Social Media User-Generated Content → Social Media Intensity → Compulsive Buying (m → smugc + → smi - → c +)

Estimate	Lower	Upper	P
-.119	-.184	-.069	.006

Significant at a 95% significance level

21. Materialism → Attitudes Towards Social Media User-Generated Content → Social Media Intensity → Conspicuous Buying (m → smugc + → smi - → CON +)

Estimate	Lower	Upper	P
-.196	-.292	-.118	.005

Significant at a 95% significance level

22. Materialism → Attitudes Towards Social Media User-Generated Content → Social Media Intensity → Impulse Buying (m → smugc + → smi - → IMP +)

Estimate	Lower	Upper	P
-.132	-.255	-.069	.003

Significant at a 95% significance level

By reading the above stated results we can conclude that mediation effect was established for the following relationships. Attitudes towards social media advertisement and brand generated content were negatively mediating the relationship between materialism and compulsive buying behaviour while social media intensity was found to positively mediate the relationship between materialism and compulsive buying behaviour. Attitudes towards social media advertisement and brand generated content were negatively mediating the relationship between materialism and conspicuous buying behaviour, while attitudes towards social media user generated content and social media intensity were found to positively mediate the relationship between materialism and conspicuous buying behaviour. Social media intensity was the only construct able to positively mediate the relationship between materialism and impulse buying behaviour.

Using estimands in AMOS the researcher was able to establish the double mediation values of several constructs. Attitudes towards social media advertisement had a positive and significant impact over social media intensity and both constructs positively mediated the relationships between materialism and compulsive, conspicuous and impulse buying behaviour. Attitudes towards social media brand generated content positively impacted social media intensity and both constructs positively mediated the relationships between materialism and compulsive, conspicuous and impulse buying behaviour. Attitudes towards social media user generated content positively impacted social media intensity which negatively impacted each of the three consumption behaviours.

In conclusion, the modified proposed model was recognized as the best model to test and report the hypotheses where 15 direct antecedents of negative consumption behaviours were hypothesized using the adopted iterative model. Ten direct significant effects were discovered. The following chapter explains how the hypotheses were tested.

CHAPTER V

HYPOTHESIS TESTING

5.1 Overview

Sample validation and measurement models for the constructs were discussed in the previous chapter. When the levels of model fit in both SEM models were compared, it showed that the modified proposed model had far better theory-driven results, and the decision was made to report the modified proposed model for hypothesis testing. As a result, the outputs of the structural equation modeling (SEM) of the modified proposed model (hereafter referred to as the "modified model") are presented and discussed in this chapter. Also in this chapter, three additional paths in the updated model are discussed in terms of their theoretical consequences, which is followed by a summary report of the hypothesis testing results.

The objectives of this chapter are to:

- Provide a brief description of the direct and indirect effects of the antecedents of negative consumption behaviours
- Test, report, and discuss the hypothesis testing results
- Report the consequences of the additional directions in the model
- Summarize the hypothesis testing and discussion results

5.2 Bootstrapping: Predictors and Mediators of Negative Consumption Behaviours

The central research question was posited to identify the antecedents of negative consumption behaviours in social media and to determine the mediators of the relationships between materialism and negative consumption behaviours. The proposed model integrated four direct antecedents of the three unsustainable behaviours. As indicated in the previous chapter, three intervening paths were also added to the original

model. The results of the modified proposed model indicate that 16 of the 22 direct paths were significant, among which, the three additional paths were significant as well. The final modified model presented includes a standardized regression coefficient beta for each path. However, it is important to explore the indirect effects of the variables on negative consumption behaviours in order to explain the casual effects of the paths in the model. Therefore, all standardized indirect effects of the relevant variables are presented in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1. Standardized indirect effects (IE)

Dependent Variables →	Compulsive	Conspicuous	Impulse
M1: SMADV Significance Level (P value)	-.141 (.052)	-.329 (.013)	-.166 (.177)
M2: SMBGC Significance Level (P value)	-.042 (.179)	-.061 (.085)	-.052 (.312)
M3: SMUGC Significance Level (P value)	.019 (.557)	.112 (.004)	-.028 (.713)
M4: SMI Significance Level (P value)	.110 (.028)	.181 (.034)	.122 (.023)
M5: SMADV*SMI Significance Level (P value)	.385 (.003)	.635 (.003)	.428 (.003)
M6: SMBGC*SMI Significance Level (P value)	.127 (.004)	.210 (.005)	.141 (.002)
M7: SMUGC*SMI Significance Level (P value)	-.119 (.006)	-.196 (.005)	-.132 (.003)

Bootstrapping was used while running the structural equation model. This technique assigns accuracy measurements to sample estimates (bias, variance, confidence intervals, prediction error) (Efron & Tibshirani, 1993). This allows an estimation to be made of the sampling distribution of almost any statistic using random sampling methods (Varian, 2005). When sampling from an approximate distribution,

bootstrapping estimates the attributes of an estimator (such as its variance) by measuring those properties (Efron, 2003). Bootstrapping can be used for hypothesis testing as well. When the assumption of a parametric model is in doubt, or when parametric inference is impracticable or involves high standard errors, it is frequently employed as an alternative to statistical inference based on that assumption (Efron, 1992).

The bootstrap approximation obtained by constructing two-sided bias-corrected confidence intervals based on 5,000 bootstrapped samples exhibits the magnitude of the level of effects and their level of significance (P Value).

5.3 Attitudes Towards Social Media Content Indirect Effects Analysis

The indirect effects of attitudes towards social media advertising in mediating the relationship between materialism and compulsive buying behaviour is significantly different from zero at .1 and the direction is negative suggesting negative impact on compulsive buying behaviour.

Attitudes towards social media advertising in mediating the relationship between materialism and conspicuous buying behaviour is significantly different from zero at .05 towards conspicuous buying behaviour, and the direction is negative suggesting negative impact on conspicuous buying behaviour.

Attitudes towards social media advertising in mediating the relationship between materialism and impulse buying behaviour is not significantly different from zero at .05 and therefore there is no significant impact on impulse buying behaviour. This suggests that attitudes towards social media advertising have a negative impact on both compulsive and conspicuous buying behaviour.

The indirect effects of attitudes towards social media brand-generated content in mediating the relationship between materialism and compulsive buying behaviour is not significantly different from zero at .05 and therefore there is no significant impact on compulsive buying behaviour.

Attitudes towards social media brand-generated content in mediating the relationship between materialism and conspicuous buying behaviour is significantly different from zero at .1 towards conspicuous buying behaviour, and the direction is negative suggesting negative impact on conspicuous buying behaviour.

The indirect effects of attitudes towards social media brand-generated content in mediating the relationship between materialism and impulse buying behaviour is not significantly different from zero at .05 and therefore there is no significant impact on impulse buying behaviour. This suggest that attitudes towards social media brand-generated content has a negative mediation impact only between materialism and conspicuous buying behaviour.

The indirect effects of attitudes towards social media user-generated content in mediating the relationship between materialism and compulsive buying behaviour is not significantly different from zero at .05 and therefore there is no significant impact on compulsive buying behaviour.

Attitudes towards social media user-generated content in mediating the relationship between materialism and conspicuous buying behaviour is significantly different from zero at .05 towards conspicuous buying behaviour, and the direction is positive suggesting positive impact on conspicuous buying behaviour.

Attitudes towards social media user-generated content in mediating the relationship between materialism and impulse buying behaviour is not significantly different from zero at .05 and therefore there is no significant impact on impulse buying behaviour. This suggest that attitudes towards social media user-generated content have a positive impact mediating the relationship between materialism and conspicuous buying behaviour only.

5.4 Social Media Intensity Indirect Effects Analysis

Social media intensity in mediating the relationship between materialism and compulsive buying behaviour is significantly different from zero at .05 the direction is positive suggesting positive impact on compulsive buying behaviour.

Social media intensity in mediating the relationship between materialism and conspicuous buying behaviour is significantly different from zero at .05 the direction is positive suggesting positive impact on conspicuous buying behaviour.

Social media intensity in mediating the relationship between materialism and impulse buying behaviour is significantly different from zero at .05 the direction is positive suggesting positive impact on impulse buying behaviour. This suggest that

social media intensity has a positive impact mediating the relationship between materialism and all three consumption behaviours.

When analyzing the two mediators and adding attitudes towards social media content as an antecedent of social media intensity in accordance with the gratification theory, the following results can be observed: the indirect effects of attitudes towards social media advertising and social media intensity in mediating the relationship between materialism and compulsive buying behaviour are significantly different from zero at .05. Attitudes towards social media advertising has a positive impact on social media intensity, which consequently has a positive impact on compulsive buying behaviour.

Attitudes towards social media advertising and social media intensity in mediating the relationship between materialism and conspicuous buying behaviour are significantly different from zero at .05. Attitudes towards social media advertising has a positive impact on social media intensity, which consequently has a positive impact on conspicuous buying behaviour.

Attitudes towards social media advertising and social media intensity in mediating the relationship between materialism and impulse buying behaviour are significantly different from zero at .05. Attitudes towards social media advertising has a positive impact on social media intensity, which consequently has a positive impact on impulse buying behaviour.

Attitudes towards social media brand generated content and social media intensity in mediating the relationship between materialism and compulsive buying behaviour are significantly different from zero at .05. Attitudes towards social media advertising has a positive impact on social media intensity, which consequently has a positive impact on compulsive buying behaviour.

Attitudes towards social media brand generated content and social media intensity in mediating the relationship between materialism and conspicuous buying behaviour are significantly different from zero at .05. Attitudes towards social media advertising has a positive impact on social media intensity, which consequently has a positive impact on conspicuous buying behaviour.

Attitudes towards social media brand generated content and social media intensity in mediating the relationship between materialism and impulse buying

behaviour are significantly different from zero at .05. Attitudes towards social media advertising has a positive impact on social media intensity, which consequently has a positive impact on impulse buying behaviour. This suggest that attitudes towards social media brand-generated content have a positive impact on social media engagement, which consequently has a positive impact on compulsive, conspicuous and impulse buying behaviours.

Lastly, the indirect effects of attitudes towards social media user-generated content and social media intensity are significantly different from zero at .05. Attitudes towards social media user-generated content has a positive impact on social media intensity, which then has a negative impact on compulsive buying behaviour.

Attitudes towards social media user-generated content and social media intensity are significantly different from zero at .05 in mediating the relationship between materialism and compulsive buying behaviour. Attitudes towards social media user-generated content has a positive impact on social media intensity, which then has a negative impact on compulsive buying behaviour.

Attitudes towards social media user-generated content and social media intensity are significantly different from zero at .05 in mediating the relationship between materialism and conspicuous buying behaviour. Attitudes towards social media user-generated content has a positive impact on social media intensity, which then has a negative impact on conspicuous buying behaviour.

Attitudes towards social media user-generated content and social media intensity are significantly different from zero at .05 in mediating the relationship between materialism and impulse buying behaviour. Attitudes towards social media user-generated content has a positive impact on social media intensity, which then has a negative impact on impulse buying behaviour. This suggest that attitudes towards social media user-generated content have a positive impact on social media intensity, which consequently has a negative impact on compulsive, conspicuous and impulse buying behaviours. The following section discusses the results of hypothesis testing.

5.5 Hypothesis Testing

To answer the research question posed in Chapter 1, a proposed framework and a set of hypotheses were developed. These will now be tested in this section by using the outputs from the SEM. The hypothesized path results of the modified proposed model are reported in this section to test the hypotheses. The path terms used in the table are:

- MAT = Users' level of materialism
- SMADV = Users' attitudes towards social media advertising content
- SMBGC = Users' attitudes towards social media brand-generated content
- SMUGC = Users' attitudes towards social media user-generated content
- SMI = Social media intensity
- COM = compulsive buying behaviour
- CON= conspicuous buying behaviour
- IMP = impulse buying behaviour

Table 5.2 Structural equation modeling output for hypothesized path relationships in the modified proposed model

Hypotheses	Paths	Standardized (β)	S.E.	C.R.	P-Value	Results*
H1: "Facebook and Instagram users with higher materialistic values will have more positive attitudes towards social media ads (SMADV)".	MAT → SMADV	.914	.025	40.025	.000	Supported
H2: "Facebook and Instagram users with higher materialistic views will have more positive attitudes towards user-generated content (SMUGC)".	MAT → SMUGC	.712	.027	19.623	.000	Supported
H3: "Facebook and Instagram users with higher materialistic views will have more positive attitudes towards brand-generated content (SMBGC)".	MAT → SMBGC	.720	.024	20.074	.000	Supported
H4: "Facebook and Instagram users with more positive attitudes towards social media advertising (SMADV) will have higher scores for compulsive buying".	SMADV → COM	-.169	.074	-1.911	.056	Significant at .1 but results are not in the predicted direction
H5: "Individuals who have positive attitudes towards social media ads (SMADV) will tend to display more conspicuous buying behaviour".	SMADV → CON	-.347	.111	-2.978	.003	Significant at .05 but results are not in the predicted direction

* Results Supported at Significance Levels equal to: $p \leq .001$, $p \leq .01$, $p \leq .05$, and $p \leq .10$

Table 5.2 Structural equation modeling output for hypothesized path relationships in the modified proposed model (cont.)

Hypotheses	Paths	Standardized (β)	S.E.	C.R.	P-Value	Results*
H6: "Facebook and Instagram users with more positive attitudes towards social media advertising (SMADV) will have higher scores for impulse buying".	SMADV → IMP	-.287	.119	-1.398	.162	Not significant
H7: "Facebook and Instagram users with more positive attitudes towards social media user-generated content (SMUGC) will have higher scores for compulsive buying".	SMUGC → COM	.030	.050	.727	.467	Not significant
H8: "Facebook and Instagram users who have a positive attitude towards social media user-generated content (SMUGC) will tend to display more conspicuous buying behaviour".	SMUGC → CON	.151	.075	2.821	.005	Supported
H9: "Facebook and Instagram users with more positive attitudes towards social media user-generated content (SMUGC) will have higher scores for impulse buying".	SMUGC → IMP	-.063	.083	-.650	.516	Not significant
H10: "Facebook and Instagram users with more positive attitudes towards social media brand-generated content (SMBGC) will have higher scores for compulsive buying".	SMBGC → COM	-.063	.057	-1.522	.128	Not significant

* Results Supported at Significance Levels equal to: $p \leq .001$, $p \leq .01$, $p \leq .05$, and $p \leq .10$

Table 5.2 Structural equation modeling output for hypothesized path relationships in the modified proposed model (cont.)

Hypotheses	Paths	Standardized (β)	S.E.	C.R.	P-Value	Results*
<i>H11: "Facebook and Instagram users with more positive attitudes towards social media brand-generated content (SMBGC) will tend to display more conspicuous buying behaviour".</i>	SMBGC → CON	-.081	.083	-1.503	.133	Not significant
<i>H12: "Facebook and Instagram users with more positive attitudes towards social media brand-generated content (SMBGC) will have higher scores for impulse buying".</i>	SMBGC → IMP	-.115	.092	-1.171	.241	Not significant
<i>H1B: "Facebook and Instagram users with high materialistic scores will have higher scores for compulsive buying".</i>	MAT → COM	.610	.063	8.949	.000	Supported
<i>H14: "Facebook and Instagram users with high materialistic values will tend to display more conspicuous buying behaviour".</i>	MAT → CON	.428	.083	5.334	.000	Supported
<i>H15: "Facebook and Instagram users with high materialistic values will have higher scores in impulse buying".</i>	MAT → IMP	.356	.098	2.308	.021	Supported
<i>H16: "Facebook and Instagram users with high materialistic values will have higher scores for social media intensity usage behaviours (SMI)".</i>	MAT → SMI	.190	.036	2.898	.004	Supported

* Results Supported at Significance Levels equal to: $p \leq .001$, $p \leq .01$, $p \leq .05$, and $p \leq .10$

Table 5.2 Structural equation modeling output for hypothesized path relationships in the modified proposed model (cont.)

Hypotheses	Paths	Standardized (β)	S.E.	C.R.	P-Value	Results*
H1C: "Facebook and Instagram users with high social media intensity usage behaviour (SMI) scores will have higher scores for compulsive buying".	SMI → COM	.630	.180	5.842	.000	Supported
H18: "Facebook and Instagram users with high social media intensity usage behaviour (SMI) scores will tend to display more conspicuous buying behaviour".	SMI → CON	.920	.274	6.317	.000	Supported
H19: "Facebook and Instagram users with high social media intensity usage behaviour (SMI) scores will have higher scores in impulse buying".	SMI → IMP	.970	.292	3.999	.000	Supported
H20: "The relationships between materialism and the three negative consumption behaviours will be positively mediated by the roles of attitudes towards social media ads, attitudes towards social media brand-generated content and attitudes towards user-generated content".	MAT *SMADV, SMBGC, SMUGC* COM, CON, IMP					SMADV and SMBGC positively mediates MAT with CON while SMUGC negatively mediates MAT with CON. The remaining attitudes mediation paths are not significant. Not fully supported
H21: "The relationships between materialism and the three negative consumption behaviours will be positively mediated by the role of social media intensity, and the mediation effect of social media intensity will be stronger than the mediation effects of attitudes".	MAT *SMI* COM, CON, IMP					SMI positively mediates MAT with all three negative consumption behaviours. Supported

* Results Supported at Significance Levels equal to: $p \leq .001$, $p \leq .01$, $p \leq .05$, and $p \leq .10$

5.6 Materialism and Attitudes Towards Social Media Advertising

The SEM findings from the modified model (estimated β value .914, t-value with $p \leq .001$) provide significant support for the hypothesized positive relationship between materialism and attitudes towards social media advertising, thus supporting H1. These results suggest that if a user has a high degree of materialism, he or she will tend to have a positive attitude towards social media advertising content. This positive relationship between materialism and attitudes towards social media advertising is consistent with the theoretical arguments and also lends support to similar findings reported in previous studies regarding materialism and advertising even though those studies were conducted in contexts that were different from social media (Frick et al., 2020; Shareef et al., 2019). More precisely, the findings of this study validate the theoretical assertion that materialism is a personality trait ingrained within someone's personality, which leads individuals to have more positive opinions when reading advertising messages (Belk, 1985). This hints that materialism may be a direct factor influencing attitudes towards promotional messages.

5.7 Materialism and Attitudes Towards Social Media User-Generated Content

The SEM findings from the proposed model (estimated β value .712 with $p \leq .001$) provide significant support for the hypothesized positive relationship between materialism and attitudes towards social media user-generated content, thus supporting H2. These results suggest that a high degree of materialism tends to enhance users' attitudes toward user-generated content in social media in a positive way. This positive relationship between materialism and attitudes towards social media user-generated content confirms the halo effect and the intense desire to be similar to other users, or to "keep up with the Joneses" (Borah & Tellis, 2016), which is something materialists are often eager to do.

User-generated content taps into the social influence concept, for instance, by capitalizing on influencers who are positioned as experts or gurus within the virtual society created by social media platforms (Cotter, 2019). When materialists follow an

influencer, they trust them, as they are perceived to have accurate information. As such, the materialist can be influenced to change their opinions and behaviours to conform.

Other users' photos, videos or comments give viewers a lens into the true life and experiences of others, which can make users feel personally connected. Influencers regularly address their audience directly and, with this feeling of interacting directly with the influencer, a follower can feel a deep sense of connection to the influencer. This personal connection means that users could prioritize and trust influencers just as much as they trust their friends (Cotter, 2019).

5.8 Materialism and Attitudes Towards Social Media Brand-Generated Content

The coefficients for the direct path between materialism and attitudes towards social media brand-generated content (estimated standardized β value .720 with $p \leq .001$) in the modified model provide significant support for H3. This is an indication that a higher degree of materialism has a direct positive effect on attitudes towards social media brand-generated content. This further indicates that users with high levels of materialism hold the messages or posts written by official brand pages on social media in high regard and enjoy them.

While this adds new empirical evidence to the literature, it is consistent with the conceptual argument that materialism influence attitudes of users in social media (Cheng & Khan, 2017). This result also validates the argument that users tend to enjoy messages from brand pages on Facebook for practical reasons, like wanting to receive coupons and regular updates from companies they like (Triantafillidou & Siomkos, 2018).

This finding is analogous with the expostulation that users enjoy Facebook brand pages the most when they feel connected to and understood by the brand. This is the case when they think they will receive a response in return for their comments (Pongpaew, Speece, & Tiangsoongnern, 2017). The findings also boost the concept that see around 70% of Facebook users follow brand pages to take advantage of special offers. Oftentimes, people also recommend brand pages to their peer network to share these special offers and other useful content.

As such, brand pages serve as a news resource providing users with updates from their favorite brands without having to visit a specific website as they are browsing their social media newsfeed. Furthermore, materialists enjoy following brand pages as it presents an opportunity for them to keep up-to-date with all of the important news pertaining to the brand.

5.9 Attitudes Towards Social Media Advertising and Compulsive Buying

The hypothesized positive relationship between attitudes towards social media advertising and compulsive buying was found to be significant in the modified model. The standardized estimated β value was $-.169$ with a p value of $<.1$). However, the outcome for H4 is contrary to expectation.

This finding exhibits a challenging significant impact which symbolizes a non-attachment bond to the advertising-compulsive buying relationship. This is also inconsistent with the findings of (Islam et al., 2017) and various other studies (Mowen & Spears, 1999; Sharif & Khanekharab, 2017). While the bivariate correlation results exhibited a high level of correlation (.83) between attitudes towards social media advertising and compulsive buying behaviour, the SEM findings do not reject the relationship even though the sign is negative. Most importantly, it should be noted that this result is also discordant with the multiple regression results of the same database where attitudes towards social media advertising and compulsive buying behaviour were found to be significantly associated. Within the social media context, ads which are perceived as excessive, disruptive, or irrelevant can be even more detrimental to a brand's image than ads placed next to inappropriate content. This is also confirmed by a large-scale study of ads on eBay which found that brand search ad effectiveness was overestimated by up to 4,100% (Abbasi, Dobolyi, Vance, & Zahedi 2021). A similar analysis of Facebook ads showed a number of ads overestimation equal to more than 4,000%.

5.10 Attitudes Towards Social Media Ads (SMADV) and Conspicuous Buying

The hypothesized positive relationship between attitudes towards social media ads (SMADV) and conspicuous buying behaviour was significant in the modified model. The standardized estimated β value of -0.347 with a p value of <0.05 for H5 is contrary to expectation.

This finding exhibits a thought-provoking significant negative impact on the relationship between attitudes towards social media ads (SMADV) and conspicuous buying behaviour. While the bivariate correlation results exhibited a high level of correlation ($.89$) between attitudes towards social media advertising and conspicuous buying behaviour, the SEM findings do not reject the relationship even though the sign is negative. Most importantly, it should be noted that this result is also discordant with the multiple regression results of the same database where attitudes towards social media advertising and conspicuous buying behaviour were found to be significantly associated.

5.11 Attitudes Towards Social Media Ads (SMADV) and Impulse Buying

The standardized estimated path coefficient for the relationship is close to -0.3 in the modified model (-0.287) and not significant (p value >0.15), thus not supporting H6. This finding strongly rejects the hypothesized relationship between attitudes towards social media ads (SMADV) and impulse buying behaviour commonly claimed within the literature (Aragoncillo & Orus, 2018). In order to examine this contention, a hierarchical regression analysis (in SPSS) was conducted where materialism, SMADV, SMBGC, SMUGC and SMI were ordered in priority of entry in the model to explain impulse buying. The analysis clearly indicates that while SMADV is highly significant in the initial model (with a significant β value at $p <0.001$), it becomes gradually less significant. In the subsequent models after the entry of materialism and SMBGC, it becomes non-significant after the entry of the SMI construct.

5.12 Attitudes Towards Social Media User-Generated Content and Compulsive Buying

The standardized estimated path coefficient for the relationship is close to 0 in the modified model (.030) and not significant (p value $>.50$), thus not supporting H7. This finding strongly rejects the hypothesized relationship between attitudes towards social media ads (SMADV) and compulsive buying behaviour. This is in line with the findings in the literature which claim that users who normally pay attention to other users' reviews do not generally rush into compulsive purchases but rather they check from various sources to find the most suitable product according to their needs (Okazaki, Schubert, Tagashira, & Andrade, 2019).

5.13 Attitudes Towards Social Media User-Generated Content and Conspicuous Buying

In the context of the direct path in hypothesis 8 between attitudes towards social media user-generated content and conspicuous buying behaviour, the estimated positive path coefficients (β value .151 with $p \leq .05$) provide marginally significant support for the hypothesis, thus supporting H8. This confirms that as the degree of attitudes towards social media user-generated content increases, it has a more positive impact on the user's conspicuous buying behaviour. This means that users who hold the comments or reviews of other users in high regard or who prefer to follow influencers have an urge to feel part of a wider community by emulating the behaviours and the purchases made by other users within that community in order to solicit positive feedback from their peer network of reference (Troizi & Tsourvakas, 2020).

5.14 Attitudes Towards Social Media User-Generated Content and Impulse Buying

The standardized estimated path coefficient for the relationship is close to -3 in the modified model (-.063) and not significant (p value $>.05$), thus not supporting H9. This finding strongly rejects the hypothesized relationship between attitudes

towards social media user-generated content (SMUGC) and impulse buying behaviour. However, this is in line with the findings in the literature which claim that users who normally pay attention to other users' reviews or comments do not generally rush into making impulsive purchases but rather they check from various sources within their community to find the most suitable product according to their needs and according to what seems more popular among their group of reference netizens (O'Brien & Toms, 2008).

5.15 Attitudes Towards Social Media Brand-Generated Content and Compulsive, Conspicuous and Impulse Buying

The hypothesized positive relationships between attitudes towards social media brand-generated content and compulsive, conspicuous and impulse buying did not receive significant support in the proposed models, thus not supporting H10, H11 and H12. The standardized estimated path coefficients for compulsive, conspicuous and impulse buying behaviours were: β value -.063, -.081 and -.115 p value <.1), respectively. The results were contrary to the expectations from the hypotheses. These findings exhibit a challenging non-significant impact which indicate that there is no link between the attitudes a user may have towards brand-generated content in social media and that user's consequent negative consumption behaviour. This may be due to the fact that sometimes brand messages are perceived to be less trustworthy than user-generated or influencer messages and therefore they have no or significantly less influence over consumption behaviours.

5.16 Materialism and Compulsive Buying

The SEM findings in the proposed model (estimated β value .610 with $p \leq .001$) provide significant support for the hypothesized positive relationship between materialism and compulsive buying behaviour, thus supporting H13. These results suggest that having a high degree of materialism tends to enhance users' compulsive buying behaviour. This positive relationship between materialism and compulsive

buying confirms what has been widely studied and reported in the literature of materialism whereby people with a higher compulsive buying tendency have higher materialistic and hedonistic values. Related literature has found that people with higher materialistic values also have a higher tendency to engage in compulsive buying behaviours and vice versa (Dittmar, 2005a). This is because as they acquire more luxury things, they become happier.

5.17 Materialism and Conspicuous Buying

The SEM findings in the proposed model (estimated β value .428 with $p \leq .001$) provide significant support for the hypothesized positive relationship between materialism and conspicuous buying behaviour, thus supporting H14. These results suggest that having a high degree of materialism tends to enhance users' conspicuous buying behaviour. This positive relationship between materialism and conspicuous buying confirms what has been widely reported in the literature on materialism which states that materialist consumers have high levels of social status and status consumption. As a user's level of materialism increases, there is also an increased desire for that user to purchase products in order to enhance their status within society. These individuals are thus engaged in the pursuit of finding happiness by acquiring material possessions (Bronner & de Hoog, 2018).

5.18 Materialism and Impulse Buying

The SEM findings in the proposed model (estimated β value .358 with $p \leq .05$) provide moderately significant support for the hypothesized positive relationship between materialism and impulse buying, thus supporting H15. These results suggest that having a high degree of materialism tends to enhance users' impulse or unplanned buying behaviour. This positive direct relationship between materialism and impulse buying confirms what has been widely reported in the related literature. For example, Richins (2011) stated that materialistic consumers spend more impulsively compared to other consumers because they believe that they can achieve a higher social position through accumulating physical possessions. Moreover, expenditure on unnecessary or

relatively unimportant things is positively viewed by materialistic consumers (Amos, Holmes, & Keneson, 2014). This then leads to fortifying the perception of confidence of those consumers that they are enhancing their societal position (Richins, 2011).

5.19 Materialism and Social Media Intensity

The coefficients for the direct path between materialism and social media intensity (estimated standardized β value .190 with $p \leq .005$) in the proposed model provide significant support for H16. This is an indication that having a higher degree of materialism has a direct moderate positive effect on users' level of engagement with social media platforms. In other words, the higher the users' materialism level, the higher their involvement on social media platforms. This further indicates that materialism is a driving factor in social media engagement.

This finding is in line with those of other studies which have claimed that materialism is an important consumption-related consumer value that has been positively linked to media consumption. For instance, several studies have found a positive relationship between materialism and television viewing (Churchill & Moschis, 1979; Goldberg & Gorn, 1978; Richins, 1987). Other studies have found increased materialism in the symbols, cues, and appeals used in national and international magazines (Belk & Pollay 1985). More recently, Chang and Zhang (2008) extended the materialism construct to the area of cyberspace, noting that materialism was a contributing factor in user attitudes and motivations toward online gaming. Others, such as Hye- Jung Park et al. (2007), found that materialism was an important motivational factor in understanding consumer attitudes and behaviours toward Internet usage.

Thus, past research has indicated that individuals with high levels of materialism tend to be highly involved users of media. Social media offers a rich media format that enables brands to provide users with content that combines visual, audio, and motion components, similar to television. However, it also includes consumer interaction and feedback. Furthermore, social media has the advantage that many users identify and seek support from online peer groups (Caplan & Turner, 2007). It also integrates offline social relationships and lifestyle facets into the users' online identities.

According to Lehdonvirta (2010), online arenas have increasingly become a place where material possessions and consumption styles are shared virtually between users.

5.20 Social Media Intensity and Compulsive Buying

The coefficients for the direct path between social media intensity and compulsive buying (estimated standardized β value .630 with $p \leq .005$) in the proposed model provide significant support for H17. This is an indication that having a higher degree of engagement with social media platforms has a strong direct positive effect on the level of a user's compulsive buying behaviour.

Social media platforms seem to fuel compulsive buying tendencies in consumers. This new media facilitates higher degrees of influence on friends and peers by providing consumers with a platform to show off their personal possessions and share their product evaluations. According to Qualman (2012), social media platforms have become a leading digital communication channel through which consumers see new products, learn about their usage, share information on them, and interact with the brands they consider good based on what they learn.

Within the social media context and according to the study by Kumar et al. (2020), the ready availability of products and the strong influence of social media inspires consumer to indulge in compulsive buying. More specifically, some studies have reported that almost half of shoppers purchase goods and services compulsively (Dawson & Kim, 2009). Moreover, with a growing number of individuals accessing e-commerce websites and social media pages from all over the world, compulsive buying is no longer restricted to a particular nation but has become a global phenomenon.

5.21 Social Media Intensity and Conspicuous Buying

The coefficients for the direct path between social media intensity and conspicuous buying behaviour (estimated standardized β value .920 with $p \leq .005$) in the proposed model provide significant support for H18. This is an indication that having a higher degree of engagement with social media platforms has a direct strong positive effect on a user's level of conspicuous buying behaviour.

Social media has been found to increase user's self-esteem (Gonzales & Hancock, 2011). Therefore, when people engage in using social media, they can control the information to be shared, and they consequently tend to present positive information about themselves among their network of acquaintances (Gonzales & Hancock, 2011). Such positive information usually solicits positive feedback, which enhances the users' self-esteem and eventually provides enhanced subjective well-being (Ellison, Steinfield & Lampe, 2007; Valkenburg, Peter & Schouten, 2006). Wilcox and Stephen (2013) not only confirmed this finding, but also observed that higher self-esteem resulting from social media usage is likely to lower a person's self-control, which subsequently leads to more conspicuous behaviour (Khan & Dhar, 2006; Wilcox et al., 2011).

Khan and Dhar (2006) found that hedonic and luxurious product choices supersede the utilitarian and staple ones if a consumer has encountered a prior altruistic or virtuous act that created a positive self-concept. In the same vein, Wilcox et al. (2011) reported that prior self-esteem tends to entice more indulgent behaviour. When people feel good about themselves, their self-esteem is enhanced, and they are more likely to lose control of themselves and may act on the basis of impulse or indulgence rather than rationalization. Since conspicuous products are those that display wealth through luxurious spending that satisfies a person's need for prestige (Podoshen & Andrzejewski, 2012), the consumption of these goods represents more of a hedonic and indulgent rather than a utilitarian purpose. Building on prior studies on the impact of social media, self-image, and self-control (Khan & Dhar, 2006; Wilcox et al., 2011; Wilcox & Stephen 2013) claimed that the intensity of using social media can lead people to make irrational choices by increasing their expenditures on luxurious goods.

5.22 Social Media Intensity and Impulse Buying

The coefficients for the direct path between social media intensity and impulse buying (estimated standardized β value .970 with $p \leq .005$) in the proposed model provide significant support for H19. This is an indication that having a higher degree of engagement with social media platforms has a direct strong positive effect on a user's level of impulse buying.

Unlike off-line consumers, social media consumers are able to shop at anytime and anywhere. This ubiquitous attribute of social media shopping has enabled users to perform online browsing with ease and convenience. Thus, unlike the bricks and mortar business model, e-commerce and social media provide opportunities for online consumers to browse their favorite pages whenever they want. As the frequency of browsing these pages' increases, the possibility of the consumers being enticed by a particular item also rises. Therefore, higher the levels of social media intensity result in higher chances of developing the feeling or urge to buy.

When consumers develop a positive mood towards social media content, the likelihood of them using the Facebook pages more intensively will be higher. Beatty and Ferrell (1998) opined that consumers' positive mood is correlated with the urge to purchase impulsively. Furthermore, Gonzales et al. (2011) found that social media may enhance an individual's self-esteem, and Wilcox and Stephen (2013) asserted that higher self-esteem due to online social media usage may lower an individual's self-control, thus leading to more impulsive purchases. They further theorized that the intensity of social media usage can lead to individuals making irrational choices by increasing their expenditures.

5.23 The Mediating Role of Attitudes Towards Social Media Content

The hypothesized positive mediation effect of attitudes towards social media ads, attitudes towards social media brand-generated content and attitudes towards social media user-generated content between materialism and compulsive, conspicuous and impulse buying behaviours did not receive significant support in the proposed models, thus not fully supporting H20. The standardized indirect effects of attitudes towards social media advertising were significant for compulsive buying behaviour (β value compulsive $-.141$, p value $<.1$) and conspicuous buying behaviour (β value conspicuous $-.329$, p value $<.05$). However, they were not found to be significant for impulse buying behaviour.

In this case, the mediating effects of both hypotheses were contrary to expectations. When interpreting these findings, it can be observed that having higher

levels of materialism will result in users enjoying watching social media advertising content more but engaging less in compulsive and conspicuous buying behaviours.

Although both effects were found to be moderately low, this could be explained by the lack of trust users have towards advertising content in social media platforms, which are characterized by open and unregulated participation, self-supervision, and dynamism. These features enhance social interaction among brands and loosely connected individuals as well as information sharing and knowledge discovery. However, these key features also bring about a challenge, which is that information seekers have to validate the quality of social media content by personally judging the reliability of the content providers.

Currently emerging ads and brand-generated content have a quality control problem; namely the distribution of quality has high variance from very high to very low, while there are also issues with abusive comments or spam. The quality of the content is also sensitive to the individual user's preference, perspective or purpose of seeking information (Savolainen & Kari, 2004).

Social media have democratized the access to paid ads to such an extent that even small players or entrepreneurs can have high reach to potential customers by investing small amounts financially and targeting their niche customers with relevant content (Hesmondhalgh, 2019). Therefore, even though users may enjoy seeing the ads shown to them, this may not automatically translate into more sales for the brand because the users need to validate the reliability of what is proposed to them by seeking additional information, most likely from other users or via another online channel.

The same explanation can be applied to attitudes towards social media brand-generated content, which has only one negative significant indirect effect on conspicuous buying behaviour (β value conspicuous $-.061$, p value $<.1$). However, in this case, the beta standardized value is almost equal to 0. Therefore, we can reasonably assume that the mediating effect is almost non-significant.

On the other hand, only one coefficient for the indirect effect of attitudes towards social media user-generated content in mediating materialism and conspicuous buying behaviour was found to be significant (estimated standardized β value $.112$ with $p \leq .005$) providing weak support. This is an indication that having a higher degree of

materialism has a direct positive effect on attitudes towards user-generated content, which in turn has a slightly positive impact on enhancing conspicuous buying behaviour.

UGC is deemed genuine because it is driven by users' real experiences, ideas, opinions and feedback. Electronic word of mouth (E-wom) is just a form of UGC that affects the buying decisions of other potential customers and a brand's revenue and identity. It has been found that UGC helps with creating and building a sense of trust and reliability about the brand and its products among the consumers. It is necessary to build trust among consumers as it is a key metric that influences their purchase decisions. Brand reliability also increases repeat purchases, leading to greater customer retention. Therefore, by following influencers who they deem reliable and genuine, users may be more inclined to emulate their luxurious lifestyles by purchasing the same products or services they use.

5.24 Materialism and Three Negative Consumption Behaviours Positively Mediated by Social Media Intensity

The hypothesized positive mediation effect of social media intensity between materialism and compulsive, conspicuous and impulse buying behaviours did receive significant support in the proposed models, thus fully supporting H21. The standardized indirect effects estimated for compulsive, conspicuous and impulse buying behaviours were (β value compulsive .110, p value $<.05$), (β value conspicuous .181, p value $<.05$), and (β value impulse .122, p value $<.05$), respectively. The hypotheses on mediation were all supported and matched expectations. The results show that having a higher the materialism and being more engaged with social media platforms will in turn translate into enhances negative consumption behaviours for the users. Therefore, even though the standardized indirect effects may have low betas, this indicates that social media engagement is indeed a predictor of negative consumption.

5.25 Additional Paths in the Modified Proposed Model

As suggested in the modification indices of SEM output, three additional path links were incorporated into the proposed model for the purpose of attaining statistical adequacy. These additional paths also contribute to the more extended mediated model with the indirect effects of attitudes towards social media ads, attitudes towards social media brand-generated content and attitudes towards social media user-generated content on social media intensity and users' negative consumption patterns. These new paths seem to extend the model by identifying the impact that attitudes have on the relationship between social media intensity and negative consumption. The interpretation and implications of the results are discussed below.

5.26 Attitudes Towards Social Media Content and Social Media Intensity

The path between attitudes towards social media ads (SMADV), attitudes towards social media brand-generated content, and attitudes towards social media user-generated content and social media intensity in the modified model are all significant with estimated standardized β SMADV value .729 ($p \leq .001$), β SMBGC value .305 ($p \leq .001$) and β SMUGC value -.289 ($p \leq .001$), respectively. The positive significant results of attitudes towards social media ads (SMADV) and attitudes towards social media brand-generated content are congruous with the theoretical argument of the gratification theory (Dolan et al., 2019). Social media is a communication mechanism that allows users to communicate with thousands, and potentially billions, of individuals all over the world (Appel, Grewal, Hadi, & Stephen, 2020). The basic premise of the uses and gratifications theory is that individuals will seek out content in social media that fulfils their needs and leads to ultimate gratification (Kujur & Singh, 2020). Studies have shown that gratifications received are good predictors of media use and recurring media use (Kaye & Johnson, 2002). Therefore, while widely used in other disciplines as well, the uses and gratifications theory can also be relevant in helping to explain social media intensity.

On the other hand, the standardized estimated effect of attitudes towards social media user-generated content and social media intensity was negative and significant. This finding was contrary to expectations, as it exhibits a challenging negative significant impact which indicates that there is no link between the attitudes a user may have towards a brand's content in social media and consequent negative consumption behaviour. This may be due to the fact that users who enjoy or have a positive opinion regarding other users' content, such as comments or reviews on social media, may not actually engage with the platforms by commenting or contributing to the discussion. Instead, they may prefer browsing users' pages, online forums and communities to gain insights into popular products rather than engaging in content creation and discussion as a way of ensuring they select the right products and or services.

5.27 Summary

This chapter reported the results of multiple path relationships in the modified proposed model that were tested using SEM. Accordingly, all hypothesized links were examined and reported. Twelve out of twenty-one hypotheses in the proposed model were significant and supported. Among the remaining nine, two were significant but in a different direction than previously hypothesized, while seven were found to be non-significant. However, upon inclusion of the three paths, fifteen out of twenty-four hypotheses on the reported model were found to be significant. Within the hypotheses findings the researcher was able to confirm the significant direct positive impact of materialism over all three consumption behaviours and it was possible to identify the mediation role of social media intensity which positively mediated the relationship between materialism and each of the three consumption behaviours, while attitudes towards social media content have not fully established a mediation between materialism and the negative consumption behaviours and where it did mediate the relationship it was a negative mediation. Therefore, having positive opinions towards a certain ad or a certain brand's content may not necessarily result in an automatic willingness to make a purchase. Rather, the findings from this study have shown that such a positive opinion can actually have a negative impact on consumption. The

researcher mainly suspects this is due to the fact that social media platforms allow anyone even with only a minimum budget to create brands and generate many followers, which has resulted in customers becoming more careful in evaluating each offer. While the presence of ads has increased in social media, this has created a general distrust among users who have to verify the information that is presented to them. All the information collected is discussed in the following chapter.



CHAPTER VI

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Introduction

This thesis tested empirically the relationships between different factors which enhance negative consumption behaviours in the social media environment in Thailand with a focus on Facebook and Instagram followers of the three top e-Commerce platforms, namely Lazada, Shopee and Chilindo. This study's methodology encapsulates theoretical reasoning from three marketing theories in a new research setting. The central research questions underpinning this thesis were: What are the predictors of negative consumption behaviours among social media users? What are the mediators of the relationships between materialism and the three negative consumption behaviours? The basic objective of this research was to develop a conceptual framework showing the possible impact of the antecedents and mediators selected through an extensive review of related literature, which was supported by digital tools, on regulating the relationships between materialism and the three behaviours.

To address these research questions and to achieve the research objective, a comprehensive review of potential theories and theoretical literature was conducted and all relevant directions towards identifying the predictors of the three unsustainable behaviours were consolidated throughout the bibliometric literature review. The researcher merged the streams that emerged from the literature review in a quantitative research model proposed for gaining better insight into the attitudes towards social media content and social media intensity. A quantitative model was also developed to verify the mediating effects of attitudes towards social media content and social media intensity. The quantitative models were tested and compared with the collected primary data, and the results were discussed in subsequent chapters.

The findings are summarized in this present chapter in an endeavor to address the theoretical and practical implications as well as the contributions of the

study. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the limitations of the study and future research directions.

6.2 Summary of the Findings

It is often viewed that negative consumption is a rising issue which is often overlooked in sustainability literature, and which has gained more traction only in recent years. However, guaranteeing a world in which consumers are looked after and not exploited is a way to reduce overconsumption and improve social, economic and environmental macro-consequences (Rosenberg, 2004).

Overconsumption has a significant impact on people's daily lives and on the wellbeing of their familial relationship as well as a negative impact on important issues such as labor exploitation, climate change and deforestation. In regard to the social media context, the relationships between materialism and negative consumption behaviours has been acknowledged as an important issue, but it is one that has been largely overlooked by scholars in the specific context (Kuanr, Pradhan, & Chaudhuri, 2020).

It has been revealed that there are some driving factors behind negative consumption which could be contemplated in a model to verify the contentions. To narrow the research question, the following marketing theories were utilized: the theory of planned behaviour to illustrate the role played by attitudes in regulating materialism and negative consumption behaviours, double jeopardy law to describe the effects of frequency and users' engagement with social media platforms and the theory of uses and gratifications to justify the additional links between attitudes and social media intensity. Further, an extensive review of the literature was conducted to specify the antecedents of negative consumption behaviours in social media and many different contexts including those specific to a developing country.

The possible antecedents were identified as materialism, attitudes towards social media content and social media intensity. A research model was developed to validate the proposed effects of these antecedents. Some interrelationships between these factors and the mediating role of some of the factors were also proposed in the model for empirical testing. As discussed earlier a quantitative model was also

developed to verify the contention of the mediating roles of attitudes and social media intensity in the materialism-negative consumptions relationships. The proposed model interconnected three additional paths to demonstrate the mediating roles of attitudes towards social media intensity to the three behaviours.

In order to achieve the research objective, methodological appropriateness was an important consideration when testing the proposed models. Therefore, primary data were collected from a cross-section dataset of Thai social media users. The two-step messages and follow-up messages calls yielded 400 usable responses out of the 3,000 identified potential participants (14.67% response rate) from five basic categories of users (three age groups and two genders).

After the proposed model was tested using AMOS, some modifications were added and this revised version of the model was found to be better than the original model in terms of model fit and explanatory power. The fit indices of the modified proposed model show very good model fit (CMIN=1.815, GFI=.909, SRMR=.0357, CFI=.976, and RMSEA=.045).

The results from this model were discussed in the previous chapter. Among the hypothesized paths in the modified proposed model, fifteen paths (including three new) were found to be significant and theoretically justified. In brief, the results of the modified proposed model output indicated that users' levels of materialism and social media intensity were positive predictors of all three behaviours (supporting H1B, H14, H15, H1C, H18 and H19 respectively).

However, contrary to this study's predictions, most of the attitudes did not significantly predict most of the unsustainable behaviours. Only attitudes towards social media advertising was associated negatively with compulsive buying and conspicuous buying behaviours (not supporting H4 and H5). Attitudes towards social media user-generated content was found to be positively significant only with conspicuous buying behaviour (supporting H8).

In contrast, the study did not find any support for the posited positive impact of attitudes towards social media brand-generated content on negative consumption. The non-significant impact of SMADV and SMBGC were due mainly to co-sharing of variances with other independent variables in the complex model.

6.3 Overall Contributions of the Study

The overall contributions made by this study included information on the factors impacting negative consumption in a number of ways. Most significantly, from a statistical perspective, the theoretical framework developed in this study from existing theories satisfied all conditions with a desired level of fit to the data. The examination of the core findings was conducted with detailed conditions coherently and distinctively.

From the theoretical perspective, the current study has used marketing theories and their arguments as a basic framework to gain a better understanding of social media users' negative consumption habits. As discussed earlier, factors such as attitudes were found to predict social media engagement which in turn was a predictor of enhanced negative consumption. This finding allows us to better understand and better explain how users' consumption habits are developed and which factors have both a positive and a negative impact on them.

This theoretical framework has previously been used to explore these variables in studies on the relationship between materialism and consumption. The present study extends the use of the theory of planned behaviour within the social media context. Further, concerning double jeopardy, while the theory has been used in exploring repeated purchases from big brands, the same concept has been applied in the present study to investigate whether users tend to favor well known social media platforms rather than lesser-known platforms. The study confirmed that Facebook, Instagram and YouTube are the most frequently used platforms among the sample of reference.

By exploring and establishing a conceptual framework that unifies the attitudes element of the theory of planned behaviour, materialism, and negative consumption behaviours, this study adds to the existing literature. A crucial driver of high materialism and negative consumption has been found to be social media intensity. Furthermore, attitudes have a negative key influence in the enhancement of negative consumption values among individuals. Few studies have looked into the significance of materialism in Asian society, particularly Thailand. As a result of the influence of social media intensity has on negative consumption behaviours, the current study fills a gap by providing quantitative evidence that social media intensity is strongly and directly linked to negative consumption behaviours.

Furthermore, in the context of developing countries, social media is considered a new construct and limited research has been done on the impact of social media on behavioural outcomes of individuals. The study found that young adults were highly involved in social media utilization that the intensity of usage is playing a significant role in developing negative consumption behaviours.

A review of related literature revealed inconsistencies and lack of consensus among researchers on the possible antecedents of negative consumption. Although a large number of buyer-seller commitment studies (593) were considered by the researcher, most of those appeared idiosyncratic and *ad hoc* with no integration into a comprehensive framework. Therefore, this study contributes to the literature by validating some of those explanatory variables in a comprehensive model. Intrinsically, as most of the existing consumer behaviour studies investigated users' perceptions, the present study has contributed to the literature by examining both the perceptions and behaviours of users, which did not always correspond.

Finally, through the model specifications and the measurement model in the structural equation modeling (SEM) technique, it was affirmed that these factors are valid and reliable (Schumacker & Lomax, 2016) and explain reasoning constructively in the proposed consumption model. Arguably, users' behaviours are the neglected counterpart of the two-sided coin of attitudes and behaviours among social media users (Boateng & Okoe, 2015). A systematic search of scholarly contributions reveals that, so far, only a few studies have investigated materialism in relation to negative consumption behaviours (Evers, Gruner, Sneddon, & Lee, 2018; Hurst, Dittmar, Bond, & Kasser, 2013; Ismail et al., 2018; Roberts & Clement, 2007; Wong et al., 2011). However, no study has verified the mediation effect of attitudes and social media intensity within this relationship.

Consequently, the present study has contributed to minimizing this striking imbalance in the investigation of materialism and negative consumption habits and strived to fill the contextual gap in the existing literature. Nevertheless, understanding social media users' levels of materialism in relation to the consumption behaviours of users from Thailand, a country with some of the highest social media engagement rates in the world, is important for clear comprehension of the phenomena for academics, managers and policy makers. Therefore, from an exclusively analytical point of view,

this study has contributed to the literature by incorporating Thai country data into the wider empirical generalizations of the findings.

6.4 Theoretical and Practical Implications

The findings of the study as reported and summarized in the previous section have several theoretical and managerial implications.

6.4.1 Implications for the Literature

Theoretical developments describing the underlying arguments in the literature have provided stimulus for investigating the antecedents of negative consumption in the social media context. By combining the theoretical approach from extant theories, a new theoretical model has been tested. The results suggest that social media intensity is, beyond reasonable doubt, an important antecedent of negative consumption habits (Shanahan, Tran, & Taylor, 2019), specifically conspicuous buying behaviour. From a developing country perspective, this study makes a major contribution to the literature.

The results and analysis from this study further imply that all of the identified antecedents extended the directions of use of marketing theories in a new research setting. Theoretical assertions on the role of attitudes towards user-generated social media content and developing negative consumption habits did not work in a theoretical manner in the way that was expected. However, it has emerged, with more robust evidence, that even though users may enjoy viewing ads and brand-generated content on social media, the distrust that those same users experience towards these marketing tools eventually leads to them actually reducing their negative consumption behaviours (Cole, DeNardin, & Clow, 2017).

On the other hand, attitudes towards user-generated content appeared to be the only construct able to enhance conspicuous buying tendencies, probably due to social proof and users' desire to emulate admired behaviours and community role models. In this regard, practitioners may benefit from additional insights as well as more direction in the academic body of knowledge which is rooted in the theory of planned behaviour processes.

Similarly, social media intensity as a predictor of negative consumption behaviour signifies that user engagement and involvement in the content creation process are distinctive stimuli for making purchases (Loureiro, Bilro, & Japutra, 2019). The vast majority of the conceptual arguments for these theoretical viewpoints achieved empirical validation through this study, which could be of significant interest to academic practitioners.

Nevertheless, when three additional paths were added to the model, attitudes seemed to predict social media intensity very well, which is a valid attestation of the theoretical argument of the gratifications theory (Wirtz et al., 2017). It was argued that users who are enjoying what they are viewing on social media, especially ads and brand-generated content, become more engaged with the pages or the brands. As such, they are more likely to comment and create or disseminate content in the forms of reviews, shares and other behaviours. This trend can translate into enhanced negative consumption.

At the same time, however, users who enjoyed user-generated content seemed to be less engaged with the platforms and then eventually began purchasing more unsustainably. This could be due to the fact that they lurk in the background of the social media platform, as passive members of groups and forums, in search of information for the next product to buy according to its popularity among social media users. Its unique effect was found to be of modest strength, even after adding in the controls for the other variables. Therefore, future researchers can use this finding to generalize the double jeopardy theory by establishing whether brands that seem more popular among social media users are actually the ones which are bought the most.

While the theory of planned behaviour suggests how attitudes may lead to corresponding behaviours, this study has revealed that in the social media context, where virtually everybody even with a very limited budget can create compelling and attractive ads, the fact that a user enjoys seeing the ads does not automatically lead to an enhanced purchase intention and then to a purchase. More precisely, for future studies, researchers may investigate the role of users' trust towards ads and brand-generated content within social media.

While materialism has a positive significant impact on attitudes towards social media content and social media intensity, the positive results indicate that more

materialistic users enjoy ads, brand-generated content and user-generated content, and that they are generally more engaged while using social media platforms. This further implies that materialism may be more of a personality trait that is present in a user's character rather than something which is developed after being exposed to ads and media. The theoretical connotation could be examined in product specific contexts.

6.4.2 Implications for Policy Makers

This study has shed light on potential measures that governing bodies may further elaborate and put into place to better safeguard the interests of consumers using social media platforms. As social media intensity has been shown to have a direct impact on enhancing negative consumption habits, tools that measure and limit the virality of misleading marketing campaigns which target sensitive audiences such as children, the disabled, minorities and elderly people should be implemented. Such tools can, for instance, limit some functionalities such as opt-in features to receive group messages and combat bulk and automated messages.

Social media providers should be required to better inform users regarding the origin of the messages or ads they view. In particular, they should be required to label those messages or posts which have been forwarded and also provide information on the rationale behind why such content has been proposed to the target user. Furthermore, notification mechanisms for illegal content generated by users, and appeal mechanisms for users who have been banned from using such services should be reinforced to prevent mischievous and misleading companies from further targeting users. As another safety measure, platforms should also be required to provide detailed and standardized data to regulators on the number of notices of violations of antitrust laws they have received; the type of entities that issued them, including private parties, administrative bodies, or courts; and the reasons for determining the legality of content or how it infringes terms of service.

Another important takeaway for policymakers is in understanding how the algorithms underlying content moderation, content ranking, content targeting, and social influence are crucial to assessing the dissemination and amplification of marketing content. Platforms should be required to provide clear information to explain the number of times content has been curated, moderated, and ordered by an algorithm employed to

identify content or accounts that violate the antitrust rules for user-generated content, advertising content, and advertisement targeting. Similarly, platforms should be obliged to display clearly the criteria and data used to train the algorithms to identify, moderate, prioritize and personalize content. Information on the collection of data, including personal data, biases in the data, and the use of data in the algorithms' input parameters should also be made available by the platforms. Furthermore, the platforms should disclose how many moderators they have, describing in detail their professional profile (experience, specialization or knowledge), their spatial location and their distribution of tasks (in terms of themes, geographical areas, etc.).

Additionally, it is recommended that social media platforms disclose in real time information on the advertising campaigns viewed on their services. Information on the content of the advertisements should include a copy of the advertisements, the names of any personalities featured in the advertisements, and the issues involved. Information should also be provided on the advertiser, including its contact information, location and source of payment, and on the target audience, including its total size and the selection criteria for targeting recipients as is communicated to advertisers, including the data source, inferred profile, lookalike audiences, custom audiences, and A/B testing practices. Regarding the advertisement, the number of views it receives, together with user engagement beyond viewing the advertisement should also be disclosed. The platforms should also provide clear information on how they market advertisements to buyers and how they target them to users. Finally, the platforms should reveal the date and time of the publication, display, and duration of the ads as well as the rates charged and the revenues received from targeted advertising.

Policy makers may require all dominant platforms to make advertisements available within 24 hours of publication, maintain access going back up to ten years, and create programming interfaces to allow long-term studies. To allow customers to make more informed choices, key disclosures together with the advertisement itself should be made available on the platform, including a visually prominent banner showing that the ad has been placed by a certain political actor or company for funding the ad.

6.4.3 Implications for Practitioners

Organizations have been trying to increase impulse and conspicuous buying purchases through different social media strategies in order to increase their market share. According to the results of the study, more positive attitudes towards user generated content were more successful in generating conspicuous buying purchases. This may be due to the fact that perceived authenticity of social media users' posts and reviews on Facebook and Instagram significantly arouses the users to buy conspicuously. Therefore, social media managers should not focus only on branded advertising; rather, they post users' or celebrities opinion on their websites and pages may provide more insights with higher trustworthiness.

Individuals spend more than two hours per day on average on social media either browsing their timeline or other users' pages where they encounter the peers' interaction along with reviews and other posts. As positive sentiments and observational learning significantly arouse the users desire to buy negatively, marketing managers need to consider interactive factors, i.e., positive sentiments, volume of likes, shares, and comments as a marketing tool for effective social media campaigns. For instance, Thais being collectivists are more inclined to value the opinion of groups, and influencers usually give an open invitation in their digital communities for meetings for sharing opinions regarding products. Businesses may sponsor those events with limited members to generate high observational learning, and positive sentiments or they may offer special discounts within targeted communities regarding their product. Hence, such activities will help other users to come across as more interactive activities and might effectively lead to more well-reasoned purchases.

Third, this study identified that advertisement and brand generated content on social media often discourage users from indulging into negative consumption behaviours. It is also essential to handle consumers' expectations as very often users who are lured into negative consumption behaviours especially individuals who buy impulsively, after the purchase, may experience cognitive dissonance which has negative effects on brand reputation. Therefore, businesses can ensure their active presence in influencers' community to make sure regarding the satisfaction of their customers. Such actions can assist in making the users feel connected and being taken

care, which may lead to design a better environment and a more sustainable shopping habits.

6.4.4 Compulsive Shopping Behaviour and Implications for Sustainability

Compulsive shopping behaviour is considered an addiction in that, much like drugs, it activates pleasure receptors in the brain (Volkow & Fowler, 2000). The addiction worsens as a result of the shame associated with shopping, which contributes to increased depression, which in turn leads to more compulsive purchases. As with any other addiction, it can lead to professional, marital, and familial problems. Although there is still controversy over whether compulsive shopping is a psychiatric illness, the World Health Organization classifies it as an “impulse control disorder” in its International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems (ICD).

Compulsive buying impacts all the three sustainability pillars (Purvis, Mao, & Robinson, 2019). It has severe harmful personal consequences such as high stress levels, increased depression and anxiety disorders, lower self-esteem, and an enhanced sense of guilt. Socially, the disorder can incur harsh criticism of the subjects suffering from it, prompting shame, hiding behaviour, and family arguments.

These problems in more acute cases may lead to criminal problems and legal difficulties which are harmful for the society as a whole. Like addicts, people who suffer from compulsive shopping behaviours may engage more into shoplifting and criminal behaviours in order to sustain their negative unsustainable habits (Joireman, Kees, & Sprott, 2010). Financially, individuals suffering from compulsive shopping behaviours are likely to run into debts which they are unable to pay back. The recent global economic crisis is partly attributed to compulsive buying and to the inability of buyers to pay back their debts, putting banks and financial institutions at risk in the long term (Garðarsdóttir & Dittmar, 2012; Schneider & Kirchgässner, 2009).

Uncontrollable, and unsustainable purchases are due to compulsive spending behaviour, which is encouraged by the presence of shopping malls and more recently by the widespread diffusion of social media and price comparison platforms (Achtziger, Hubert, Kenning, Raab, & Reisch, 2015). Excessive shopping may seem appealing to retailers in the short run; however, it will ultimately affect revenues as

compulsive consumers often return their purchases or spread negative word-of-mouth reviews (Kukar-Kinney, Scheinbaum, & Schaefers, 2016).

Environmentally, compulsive consumers keep purchasing goods and objects which require a high volume of raw resources, such as clothes, shoes and jewelry, which affects the environment through water and air pollution and deforestation. Understanding this behaviour is vital for policymakers, as compulsive buying has a huge effect not only on the individual himself or herself, but also on the society as a whole (He, Kukar-Kinney, & Ridgway, 2018).

6.4.5 Conspicuous Buying Behaviour and Implications for Sustainability

High levels of conspicuous consumption can be interpreted as socially unacceptable on two grounds: First, as this behaviour is often correlated with high income, engaging constantly in conspicuous consumption can be an indication of high income inequality levels which may be considered harmful to the pursuit of sustainable societies (Hicks & Hicks, 2014). In unequal societies, different income groups are impacted in different ways. People with lower incomes may not be able to invest in their education and in their health, which can hamper economic growth in the medium long term. Among middle class workers, if the inequality gap becomes too big, the middle class may reduce its demand for goods and services. For the wealthiest people who supposedly are the ones engaging the most in conspicuous consumption, inequality means rising incomes. They may accumulate savings, which banks can then lend out, thereby increasing investment in the economy. At the same time, wealthy individuals may use their economic power to lobby against policies that do not serve their interests, such as investment in public health and education (Dabla-Norris, Kochhar, Suphaphiphat, Ricka, & Tsounta, 2015).

Secondly, income inequality also affects social capital. Since people's networks of social relationships—their social capital—may not extend beyond their own income group, they may not be useful in helping them to find better remunerated work. Equally, elite groups may use their social networks to exclude “outsiders” from economic opportunities (Paarlberg, Hoyman, & McCall, 2018). Inequality may lead to social unrest. Usually, large wealth gaps can be associated with conflicts, and with

higher security costs, for both businesses and governments. Inequality impacts the country's volatility. It is hard for unequal societies to come to a political consensus, resulting in sudden policy shifts or governments serving the interests of their own supporters at the expense of the greater good (Krieger & Renner, 2020). Conspicuous consumption is often associated with high levels of waste as continuously manufacturing high technology or high status products such as cars, mobile phones and jewelry produce large amounts of waste to be disposed of and deplete natural resources (Mi, Yu, Yang, & Lu, 2018).

6.4.6 Impulse Buying Behaviour and Implications on Sustainability

Impulse purchasing has been described as a hedonic activity motivated by pleasure and excitement (Dhar & Wertenbroch, 2000). According to Verplanken and Herabadi (2001), this tendency is rooted in both cognitive and affective components. The cognitive components are concerned with the processing and evaluation of circumstances, while the affective components are concerned with the emotional responses implicated in the process. This distinction was developed by Coley and Burgess (2003), who distinguished cognitive elements into unplanned purchasing and affective elements into the irresistible desire to purchase, optimistic buying emotion, and mood control.

One of the major unsustainable consequences of impulse purchasing is the increased usage of credit cards and other types of digital currency by consumers, which is particularly emphasized in online shopping (Akram et al., 2018). Widespread usage of credit cards is said to lower the perceived cost of transactions, thus speeding up impulsive shopping decisions (Roberts & Jones, 2001). People who have access to credit have been shown to buy more, with the higher borrowing limits linked to higher purchase frequency (Lachance, 2012) and greater total purchase expenses (Soman & Gourville, 2001).

Therefore, if impulse buying behaviour becomes a habit, it may lead to serious harmful consequences for individuals, especially financially. If consumers consistently ignore their budget and give in to every tempting purchase, they run the risk of getting into debt which they may not be able to pay back, thereby putting their families and even financial institutions at risk as well (Rendall, Brooks, & Hillenbrand,

2021). Excessive impulse purchases may also lead to overconsumption which has well known negative effects on climate change, the contamination of waters due to waste disposal, and the depletion of natural resources (Zeca, Balanica Dragomir, & Stoian, 2020).

Although brands may think that purchases made impulsively can bring revenues in the long term, studies have shown that consumers feel regretful after making an impulsive purchase. The negative consequence of consumer disappointment is that consumers become disloyal and may even spread negative word of mouth reviews of the brand (Risqiani, 2017).

6.5 Limitations

This study examined the specific impacts of materialism, attitudes and social media intensity on negative consumption behaviours. Despite the potency, the findings of this study should be thought through with some caution as such an empirical attempt is rare and unique in the present research setting. This study has investigated a limited subset from a large group of behavioural and contextual aspects of social media users. As such, problems arose in terms of what should be included and what should be excluded. With these concerns in mind, the following important issues would need to be verified carefully in any attempt to generalize the findings:

The findings rely on respondents' self-reported cross-sectional data, rather than longitudinal data. This may not reflect changing situations and the series of relationships between users and their consumption behaviours over time. The cross-sectional data may be affected by the respondent's predispositions regarding any events that have happened in the past or by their mental position at the point of completing the questionnaire.

The data have been collected using a convenience quota sample. This facilitated data collection but also limits the generalizability of the findings. Control of diversity was achieved by representing the different categories of users through the usage of representatives' quotas.

The data have been collected only from Thai social media users who were following well known e-commerce pages on Facebook and Instagram. The findings

from this specific group of social media users might not represent the total picture of social media consumption in all respects.

While acknowledging such limitations, this research exhibits an effective comprehension of negative consumption. Accordingly, the study authenticates the developed framework. This also highlights how social media users should be better protected.

6.6 Future Research Directions

As this thesis was carried out within the Thai context, which is a setting that has been overlooked in the extant academic research, it provides some insights and possible directions for future research by social science academics. More specifically, this study strived to tackle some new challenges by using both existing and some new construct measures to quantify quantitative data and provide a solid foundation for many research avenues. As such, several suggestions are made for further research. Some of the findings can be considered not only challenging new evidence but also tentative unless verified in follow-up studies. Therefore, a research avenue is open for further validation in different country contexts. It can also be noted that as this research explores only Thailand's social media users' perspectives, conducting a study in any similar country context, such as like Vietnam, the Philippines or any other emerging market, could be worthwhile to validate the findings.

Second, the knowledge of social media users' consumption habits could be made more comprehensive by integrating different users' perspectives from different platforms in future research. Therefore, it may be appealing to compare and contrast the present study's findings with those of any future studies. In addition to this, longitudinal data might be more authentic for validating the findings.

Third, Thai social media users in general were included in this study to examine the antecedents of negative consumption. However, more indicatively, it was found that some of the findings were affected due to the approach of using a randomly incorporated sample from five basic categories of users. Therefore, carrying out a separate analysis of social media users' consumption habits could be a more robust approach for future research. In other words, a similar study with a larger sample drawn

from these five groups may be a constructive approach to developing the framework for any future research.

Fourth, products and services are equally important to consider when assessing users' consumption habits. This study intentionally did not choose to focus on a specific category of product or service as the researcher was more interested in theory testing. However, future studies may further test the framework on specific groups of products or services, such as luxury items. It might be of interest to compare whether there is any difference in consumption behaviours on the basis of products and services. This is likely to develop a more robust understanding of social media user's consumption behaviours.

Additionally, researchers may consider carrying out research on whether negative consumption behaviours are affected by age as different generational cohorts may have different online consumption behaviours, especially on social media. Furthermore, the life course paradigm may also be explored as certain life events (birth of a child, a wedding, etc.) may enhance or reduce online consumption behaviours.

6.7 Conclusion

To answer this study's research questions, a basic conceptual model was developed and a framework for conceptual insights was tested. Based on sound reasoning from the modification indices in the SEM analysis, the proposed model was tested and compared with the overall measurement model to identify which model had the better fit. This step identified the modified proposed model as parsimonious and comparatively better with explanatory power as well as a better fit with the data and the theory.

In this model, it was found that materialism, SMADV, SMBGC, SMUGC and SMI are significant antecedents of all or some of the three negative consumption behaviours examined in the study. The mediating roles of attitudes and social media intensity were also established in the model. While the direct effect of attitudes on negative consumption contradicted the theoretical expectation, their direct impact on the social media intensity construct was significant as expected. By contrast, SMUGC was found to have a positive impact on enhancing conspicuous buying behaviour. However,

users who expressed positive opinions regarding user-generated content appeared to have a lower level of social media intensity and therefore contributed less content to social media platforms. This constitutes an impressive recognition of the contribution that this study makes towards social media users' consumption behaviours in an interesting research setting. It is in this context that the contributions of this study can be examined and analyzed.



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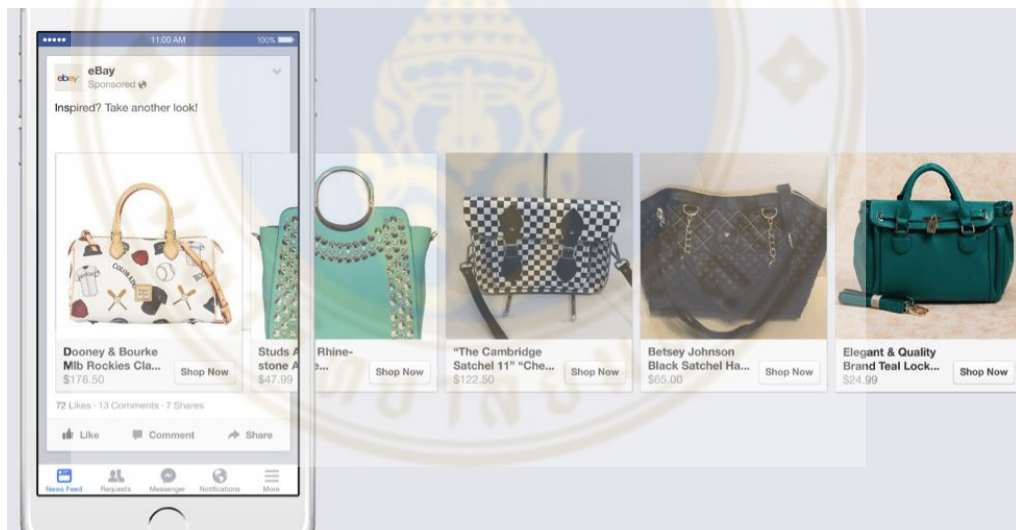
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Appendix A: Figures



Example of limited time offer in social media re-targeting



Example of complementary products in social media re-targeting



Example of flash sale in social media re-targeting

Appendix B: Scales

Materialism (Belk, 1985)

Some items (Renting or leasing a car is more appealing to me than owning one / It makes sense to buy things with a friend and share it

- Renting or leasing things is not more appealing to me than owning
- I tend to hang on to things I should probably throw out
- I get very upset if something is stolen from me, even if it has little monetary value
- I get particularly upset when I lose things
- I usually lock things up
- I would rather buy something I need than borrow it from someone else
- I worry about people taking my possessions
- When I travel, I like to take a lot of photographs
- I never discard old pictures or snapshots
- I do not enjoy having guests stay in my home
- I do not enjoy sharing what I have
- I don't like to lend things, even to good friends
- It does not make sense to buy things with a friend and share
- I prefer not to give rides to those who don't have a car
- I don't like to have anyone in my home when I'm not there
- I do not enjoy donating things
- I am bothered when I see people who buy anything they want
- I know at least one person whose spouse or steady date I would like to have as my own
- When friends do better than me in competition, it usually makes me unhappy
- People who are very wealthy often feel they are too good to talk to average people
- There are certain people I would like to trade places with
- When friends have things I cannot afford, it bothers me

- When actors or prominent politicians have things stolen from them, I do not feel sorry for them

Attitudes Towards Social Media Advertising Scale According to Ling, Chai, and Piew (2010)

Advertising on social media is more enjoyable than advertising on other media and my opinion on advertising on social media is favorable were modified after the pilot test to better fulfil the measurement requirements in the domain of social media

- Advertising on social media is trustworthy
- Advertising on social media is a valuable source of information about products and services
- Advertising on social media tells me which brands have the features that I am looking for
- Advertising on social media is more enjoyable than advertising on other media
- Advertising on social media is funny
- I consider advertising on social media good as it promotes the latest products
- I consider advertising on social media good as it allows me to enjoy the best deals
- Advertising on social media plays an important role in my buying decisions
- My opinion on advertising on social media is favorable

Attitudes Towards Social Media Brand-Generated Content Scale According to Schivinski & Dabrowski (2016)

Removed I am overall more engaged with content posted by brands rather than by users or ads for too low score

- Brand pages on social media are trustworthy
- I think brand pages on social media are a valuable source of information about products and services

- I believe brand pages on social media tell me which brands have the features that I am looking for
- I think brand pages on social media are more enjoyable than other types of content
- Brand pages on social media are entertaining to follow
- I consider brand pages on social media good as they promote the latest products
- I consider brand pages on social media good as they allow me to enjoy the best deals
- Brand pages on social media play an important role in my buying decisions
- I prefer brand pages to users' pages on social media
- I am overall more engaged with content posted by brands rather than by users or ads

Attitudes Towards Social Media User-Generated Content Scale According to Schivinski & Dabrowski (2016)

Removed I prefer influencers or users' pages to brand pages or ads on social media for too low score

- Users' content on social media is trustworthy
- Users' content on social media is a valuable source of information about products and services
- Users' content on social media tells me which brands have the features that I am looking for
- Content posted by users on social media is more enjoyable than other types of content
- Users' content on social media is entertaining
- I consider users' content on social media good as it promotes the latest products
- I consider users' content on social media good as it allows me to discover the best deals

- Users' content on social media plays an important role in my buying decisions
- I prefer influencers or users' pages to brand pages or ads on social media
- I am overall more engaged with content posted by users rather than by brands or ads

Social Media Intensity Scale According to Li, Lau, Mo, Su, Wu, Tang, and Qin (2016) and Schivinski, Christodoulides, and Dabrowski (2016)

- I read posts made by brands while on social media
- I watch pictures/videos or graphics posted by brands on social media
- I follow new brand pages on social media
- I comment on videos posted by brands on social media
- I comment on text only posts made by brands on social media
- I comment on pictures posted by brands on social media
- I click like on videos posted by brands on social media
- I click like on text only posts made by brands on social media
- I click like on pictures posted by brands on social media
- I share content posted by brands on social media
- I tag brand pages in my posts
- I post picture related to brands on social media
- I write reviews on brand pages on social media
- I read posts made by users (Not friends) while on social media
- I watch pictures/videos or graphics posted by users (Not friends) on social media
- I follow users or influencers reviewing products or services on social media
- I comment on videos posted by other users (Not friends) on social media
- I comment on posts made by other users (Not friends) on social media
- I comment on pictures posted by other users (Not friends) on social media
- I click like on videos posted by other users (Not friends) on social media
- I click like on posts made by other users (Not friends) on social media

- I click like on pictures posted by other users (Not friends) on social media
- I share content posted by other users (Not friends) on social media
- I tag other users (Not friends) in posts
- I post pictures related to other users (Not friends) on social media
- I write reviews on users' forums or fan pages on social media
- I send messages to friends on message boards
- I chat with friends via instant messaging function (instant messaging)
- I comment on friends' statuses, logs, and photos
- I browse other users' logs/ photos/ statuses/ albums
- I update my social media status
- I post photos/videos on personal profile
- I write posts
- I update my personal profile (change image/contact information/privacy setting)
- I access entertainment or news content
- I watch videos/listen to music
- I play games/applications on social media
- I buy products or services directly on social media

Compulsive Buying Behaviour Scale According to Faber, and O'Guinn (1989)

- If I have any money left at the end of the pay period, I just have to spend it
- I often feel others would be horrified if they knew my spending habits
- I often buy things online even though I can't afford them
- I take on debts even if I know I do not have enough money in my bank to cover
- I often buy things online in order to feel better
- I feel nervous on days I do not shopping
- I make only minimum payments with my credit card

Conspicuous Buying Behaviour Scale According to Eastman, Goldsmith, and Flynn (1999)

- I would buy a product online just because it has status
- In social media, I am interested in products with status
- I would pay more for products if they had status
- The status of a product is irrelevant to me
- A product is more valuable to me if it has some snob appeal
- When I shop online, I buy things I had not intended to buy

Impulse Buying Behaviour Scale According to Rook, and Fisher (1995)

- I make unplanned purchases online
- When I see something that interests me on social media, I buy it without considering the consequences
- It is fun to buy spontaneously
- I avoid buying things I have not planned to buy

Appendix C: Questionnaire

Survey Screening Questions / แบบสอบถามคำถามแบบคัดกรอง

Do you use social media platforms? If no, you may end the survey here / คุณใช้แพลตฟอร์มโซเชียลมีเดียหรือไม่? หากไม่เป็นเช่นนั้นคุณสามารถจบแบบสำรวจได้ที่นี้

Which of the following social media platform do you use the most? / คุณใช้แพลตฟอร์มโซเชียลมีเดียใดมากที่สุดต่อไปนี้

- Facebook
- Instagram
- YouTube
- Line
- Twitter
- TikTok
- Pinterest
- LinkedIn
- WeChat
- WhatsApp
- Twitch
- Skype
- Snapchat
- Reddit
- Tumblr

Which device do you use when accessing social media platforms? / คุณใช้อุปกรณ์ใดเป็นประจำในการเข้าถึงแพลตฟอร์มโซเชียลมีเดีย

- Computers / คอมพิวเตอร์
- Smartphones / สมาร์ทโฟน
- Tablets / แท็บเล็ต

How long have you been on Facebook? / คุณใช้ Facebook มาเป็นระยะเวลาานานแค่ไหนแล้ว

- I do not use Facebook / ฉันไม่ใช่ Facebook
- Less than 6 months / น้อยกว่า 6 เดือน
- 7-12 months / 7-12 เดือน
- 1-2 years / 1-2 ปี
- more than 2 years / มากกว่า 2 ปี

How long have you been on Instagram? / คุณใช้ Instagram มาเป็นระยะเวลาานานแค่ไหนแล้ว

- I do not use Instagram / ฉันไม่ใช่ Instagram
- Less than 6 months / น้อยกว่า 6 เดือน
- 7-12 months / 7-12 เดือน
- 1-2 years / 1-2 ปี
- more than 2 years / มากกว่า 2 ปี

How many days per week do you access Facebook? / คุณใช้งาน Facebook กี่วันต่อสัปดาห์

- I do not access Facebook / ฉันไม่เข้าระบบ Facebook
- Less or equal to 1 / น้อยกว่าหรือเท่ากับ 1 วัน
- 2 to 4 / 2 ถึง 4 วัน
- 4 to 6 / 4 ถึง 6 วัน
- Everyday / ทุกวัน

How many days per week do you access Instagram? / คุณใช้งาน Instagram กี่วันต่อสัปดาห์

- I do not access Instagram / ฉันไม่เข้าระบบ Instagram
- Less or equal to 1 / น้อยกว่าหรือเท่ากับ 1 วัน
- 2 to 4 / 2 ถึง 4 วัน
- 4 to 6 / 4 ถึง 6 วัน
- Everyday / ทุกวัน

How much time per day do you spend on Facebook? / คุณใช้เวลาบน Facebook ต่อวันนานแค่ไหน

- I do not spend time on Facebook / ฉันไม่ใช้เวลาไปกับ Facebook
- Less than 30 minutes / น้อยกว่า 30 นาที
- 31 to 60 minutes / 31 ถึง 60 นาที
- 61 to 120 minutes / 61 ถึง 120 นาที

- more than 120 minutes / มากกว่า 120 นาที

How much time per day do you spend on Instagram? / คุณใช้เวลาบน Instagram ต่อวันนานแค่ไหน

- I do not spend time on Instagram / ฉันไม่ใช้เวลาไปกับ Instagram
- Less than 30 minutes / น้อยกว่า 30 นาที
- 31 to 60 minutes / 31 ถึง 60 นาที
- 61 to 120 minutes / 61 ถึง 120 นาที
- more than 120 minutes / มากกว่า 120 นาที

How many friends do you have on Facebook? / คุณมีเพื่อนกี่คนบน Facebook

- I do not use Facebook / ฉันไม่ใช้ Facebook
- Less than 100 / น้อยกว่า 100 คน
- 101 to 500 / 101 ถึง 500 คน
- 501 to 1,000 / 501 ถึง 1,000 คน
- More than 1,000 / มากกว่า 1,000 คน

How many followers do you have on Instagram? / คุณมีผู้ติดตามกี่คนบน Instagram

- I do not use Instagram / ฉันไม่ใช้ Instagram
- Less than 100 / น้อยกว่า 100 คน
- 101 to 500 / 101 ถึง 500 คน
- 501 to 1,000 / 501 ถึง 1,000 คน
- More than 1,000 / มากกว่า 1,000 คน

4 points Likert scale: How much do you agree with following statements? / ระดับความเห็นด้วยทั้ง 4 ระดับของลิเคิร์ต (Likert Scale): คุณเห็นด้วยกับข้อความต่อไปนี้มากน้อยแค่ไหน

- 4: Strongly agree / 4: เห็นด้วยอย่างยิ่ง
- 3: Somewhat agree / 3: ค่อนข้างเห็นด้วย
- 2: Somewhat disagree / 2: ไม่ค่อยเห็นด้วย
- 1: Strongly disagree / 1: ไม่เห็นด้วยอย่างยิ่ง

Materialism / วัตถุนิยม

Renting or leasing things is more appealing to me than owning / ฉันสนใจการเช่าหรือการยืมสิ่งของมากกว่าการได้เป็นเจ้าของ

I tend to hang on to things I should probably throw out / ฉันมักจะเก็บสิ่งของต่างๆที่ฉันควรทิ้งไว้

I get very upset if something is stolen from me, even if it has little monetary value / ฉันจะโกรธมากหากฉันถูกขโมยสิ่งของบางอย่าง ถึงแม้ว่ามันจะมีมูลค่าเป็นตัวเงินจำนวนไม่มากก็ตาม

I don't get particularly upset when I lose things / ฉันไม่รู้สึกโกรธเมื่อฉันทำสิ่งของหาย

I do not usually lock things up / โดยปกติ ฉันไม่เก็บสิ่งของโดยล็อกกุญแจ

I would rather buy something I need than borrow it from someone else / ฉันเลือกซื้อสิ่งที่ฉันต้องการแทนการยืมจากคนอื่น

I worry about people taking my possessions / ฉันมีความกังวลว่าจะมีคนมาขโมยทรัพย์สินของฉัน

When I travel, I like to take a lot of photographs / เมื่อฉันเดินทางท่องเที่ยว ฉันชอบถ่ายรูปมาก

I never discard old pictures or snapshots / ฉันไม่เคยลบทิ้งรูปถ่ายหรือภาพถ่ายเก่า

I enjoy having guests stay in my home / ฉันชอบให้แขกมาพักที่บ้าน

I enjoy sharing what I have / ฉันชอบแบ่งปันสิ่งที่ฉันมี

I don't like to lend things, even to good friends / ฉันไม่ชอบให้คนอื่นยืมของแม้แต่เพื่อนที่สนิท

It makes sense to buy things with a friend and share it / การหารกันซื้อของกับเพื่อนเข้าทำกว่าการซื้อเอง

I don't mind giving rides to those who don't have a car / ฉันไม่มีปัญหาในการขับรถรับส่งผู้ที่ไม่มีรถ

I don't like to have anyone in my home when I'm not there / ฉันไม่ชอบให้ใครอยู่ในบ้านของฉันตอนที่ฉันไม่อยู่

I enjoy donating things to charities / ฉันชอบบริจาคสิ่งของให้แก่การกุศล

I am bothered when I see people who buy anything they want / ฉันรู้สึกเป็นทุกข์เป็นร้อนเมื่อเห็นคนอื่น ๆ ซื้อทุกสิ่งที่ต้องการ

I don't know anyone whose spouse or steady date I would like to have as my own / ฉันไม่ต้องการแย่งคู่ครองของคนอื่น ฉันอยากสร้างความสัมพันธ์ขึ้นมาเอง

When friends do better than me in competition it usually makes me happy for them / เมื่อเพื่อนทำได้ดีกว่าฉันในการแข่งขัน ฉันมักจะรู้สึกยินดีกับพวกเขา

People who are very wealthy often feel they are too good to talk to average people / คนที่ร่ำรวยมากมายมักจะรู้สึกว่าพวกเขาดีเกินไปที่จะมาคุยกับคนธรรมดา

There are certain people I would like to trade places with / มีคนบางประเภทที่ฉันอยากแลกเปลี่ยนชีวิตกับเขา

When friends have things I cannot afford it bothers me / เมื่อเพื่อนมีสิ่งของที่ฉันซื้อเองไม่ได้ มันรบกวนจิตใจของฉัน

When actors or prominent politicians have things stolen from them I really feel sorry for them / เมื่อนักแสดงหรือนักการเมืองที่มีชื่อเสียงถูกขโมยสิ่งของ ฉันจะรู้สึกเสียใจมากต่อพวกเขา

Attitudes towards Social Media Advertising / ทศนคติที่มีต่อโฆษณาบนโซเชียลมีเดีย

1. Advertisement on social media is trustworthy / โฆษณาบนโซเชียลมีเดียเป็นสิ่งที่น่าเชื่อถือ

2. Advertisement on social media is a valuable source of information about products and services / โฆษณาบนโซเชียลมีเดียเป็นแหล่งข้อมูลเกี่ยวกับสินค้าและบริการที่มีประโยชน์มาก

3. Advertisement on social media tells me which brands have the features that I am looking for / โฆษณาบนโซเชียลมีเดียบอกให้ฉันรู้ว่าแบรนด์อะไรบ้างที่มีคุณสมบัติสินค้าตามที่ฉันตามหา

4. Advertisement on social media is more enjoyable than advertisement on traditional media (TV, radio, newspaper)/ โฆษณาบนโซเชียลมีเดียเป็นสิ่งที่สนุกกว่าการโฆษณาบนสื่อแบบดั้งเดิม (อาทิ โทรทัศน์ วิทยุ หนังสือพิมพ์)

5. Advertisement on social media is entertaining/ โฆษณาบนโซเชียลมีเดียสร้างความบันเทิง

6. I consider advertisement on social media good as it promotes the latest products / ฉันคิดว่าโฆษณาบนโซเชียลมีเดียเป็นสิ่งที่ดีเพราะเป็นการโปรโมทสินค้าใหม่ล่าสุด

7. I consider advertisement on social media good as it allows me to enjoy the best deals / **ฉันคิดว่าโฆษณาบนโซเชียลมีเดียเป็นสิ่งที่ดีเพราะฉันได้รับข้อเสนอสินค้าที่ดีที่สุด**

8. Advertisement on social media plays an important role in my buying decisions / **โฆษณาบนโซเชียลมีเดียมีบทบาทสำคัญต่อการตัดสินใจซื้อสินค้าของฉัน**

9. My opinion on advertisement on social media is favourable / **ฉันเห็นด้วยกับโฆษณาบนโซเชียลมีเดีย**

Attitudes Towards Social Media Brand Generated Content / **ทัศนคติที่มีต่อเนื้อหาที่แบรนด์สร้างบนโซเชียลมีเดีย**

1. Brand pages on social media are trustworthy / **เพจของแบรนด์บนโซเชียลมีเดียเป็นสิ่งที่น่าเชื่อถือ**

2. I think brand pages on social media are a valuable source of information about products and services / **ฉันคิดว่าเพจของแบรนด์บนโซเชียลมีเดียเป็นแหล่งข้อมูลเกี่ยวกับสินค้าและบริการที่มีประโยชน์มาก**

3. I believe brand pages on social media tells me which brands have the features that I am looking for / **ฉันคิดว่าเพจของแบรนด์บนโซเชียลมีเดียบอกให้ฉันรู้ว่าแบรนด์อะไรบ้างที่มีคุณสมบัติสินค้าตามที่ฉันตามหา**

4. I think brand pages on social media are more enjoyable than other types of content / **ฉันคิดว่าเพจของแบรนด์บนโซเชียลมีเดียเป็นสิ่งที่สนุกกว่าเนื้อหาประเภทอื่นๆ**

5. Brand pages on social media are entertaining to follow / **เพจของแบรนด์บนโซเชียลมีเดียเป็นสิ่งที่ให้ความบันเทิงที่น่าติดตาม**

6. I consider brand pages on social media good as they promote the latest products / **ฉันคิดว่าเพจของแบรนด์บนโซเชียลมีเดียเป็นสิ่งที่ดีเพราะเป็นการโปรโมทสินค้าใหม่ล่าสุด**

7. I consider brand pages on social media good as they allow me to enjoy the best deals / **ฉันคิดว่าเพจของแบรนด์บนโซเชียลมีเดียเป็นสิ่งที่ดีเพราะฉันได้รับข้อเสนอสินค้าที่ดีที่สุด**

8. Brand pages on social media play an important role in my buying decisions / **เพจของแบรนด์บนโซเชียลมีเดียมีบทบาทสำคัญต่อการตัดสินใจซื้อสินค้าของฉัน**

9. I prefer brand pages to users' pages on social media / **ฉันชอบเพจของแบรนด์บนโซเชียลมีเดียมากกว่าเพจของผู้ใช้งาน**

10. I am overall more engaged with content posted by brands rather than users or ads / ในภาพรวม ฉันมีส่วนร่วมกับเนื้อหาที่โพสต์โดยแบรนด์ต่างๆมากกว่าเนื้อหาของผู้ใช้งานหรือโฆษณา

Attitudes Towards Social Media User Generated Content /ทัศนคติที่มีต่อเนื้อหาที่สร้างโดยผู้ใช้งานโซเชียลมีเดีย

1. Users' content on social media is trustworthy / เนื้อหาของผู้ใช้งานบนโซเชียลมีเดีย เป็นสิ่งที่น่าเชื่อถือ

2. Users' content on social media is a valuable source of information about products and services / เนื้อหาของผู้ใช้งานบนโซเชียลมีเดียเป็นแหล่งข้อมูลเกี่ยวกับสินค้าและบริการที่มีประโยชน์มาก

3. Users' content on social media tells me which brands have the features that I am looking for / เนื้อหาของผู้ใช้งานบนโซเชียลมีเดียบอกให้ฉันรู้ว่าแบรนด์อะไรบ้างที่มีคุณสมบัติสินค้าตามที่ฉันตามหา

4. Content posted by users on social media is more enjoyable than other types of content / เนื้อหาของผู้ใช้งานบนโซเชียลมีเดียเป็นสิ่งที่สนุกกว่าเนื้อหาประเภทอื่นๆ

5. Users' content on social media is entertaining/ เนื้อหาของผู้ใช้งานบนโซเชียลมีเดียสร้างความบันเทิง

6. I consider users' content on social media good as it promotes the latest products / ฉันคิดว่าเนื้อหาของผู้ใช้งานบนโซเชียลมีเดียเป็นสิ่งที่ดีเพราะเป็นการโปรโมทสินค้าใหม่ล่าสุด

7. I consider users' content on social media good as it allows me to discover the best deals / ฉันคิดว่าเนื้อหาของผู้ใช้งานบนโซเชียลมีเดียเป็นสิ่งที่ดีเพราะฉันได้พบข้อเสนอสินค้าที่ดีที่สุด

8. Users' content on social media play an important role in my buying decisions decisions / เนื้อหาของผู้ใช้งานบนโซเชียลมีเดียมีบทบาทสำคัญต่อการตัดสินใจซื้อสินค้าของฉัน

9. I prefer influencers or users' pages to brand pages or ads on social media / ฉันชอบเพจของผู้ใช้งานหรืออินฟลูเอนเซอร์บนโซเชียลมีเดียมากกว่าเพจของแบรนด์หรือโฆษณา

10. I am overall more engaged with content posted by users rather than brands or ads / ในภาพรวม ฉันมีส่วนร่วมกับเนื้อหาที่โพสต์โดยผู้ใช้งานมากกว่าเนื้อหาของแบรนด์หรือโฆษณา

Social Media Intensity / ความจริงจ้งบนโซเชียลมีเดีย

How often have you performed the following activities on social media platforms in the last month? / ในเดือนที่ผ่านมา คุณได้ทำกิจกรรมต่างๆเหล่านี้บ่อยแค่ไหนบนแพลตฟอร์มโซเชียลมีเดีย

- 4 Very Often (More than 30 times) / 4 บ่อยมาก (มากกว่า 30 ครั้ง)
- 3 Often (from 16 to 30 times) / 3 บ่อย (16 ถึง 30 ครั้ง)
- 2 Not Often (from 6 to 15 times) / 2 ไม่ค่อยบ่อย (6 ถึง 15 ครั้ง)
- 1 Not at All (Never or not more than 5 times) / 1 ไม่บ่อยเลย (ไม่เคยทำหรือไม่เกิน 5 ครั้ง)

1. Read posts made by brands while on social media / อ่านโพสต์ของแบรนด์ต่างๆ ระหว่างที่ใช้โซเชียลมีเดีย

2. Watched pictures/videos or graphics posted by brands on social media / รับชมภาพถ่าย/วิดีโอหรือรูปภาพที่แบรนด์ต่างๆ โพสต์บนโซเชียลมีเดีย

3. Followed a new brand page on social media / ติดตามเพจของแบรนด์ใหม่บนโซเชียลมีเดีย

4. Commented videos posted by brands on social media / แสดงความเห็นต่อวิดีโอที่แบรนด์ต่างๆ โพสต์บนโซเชียลมีเดีย

5. Commented on text only posts made by brands on social media / แสดงความเห็นเฉพาะโพสต์ข้อความที่แบรนด์ต่างๆ เผยแพร่บนโซเชียลมีเดีย

6. Commented on pictures posted by brands on social media / แสดงความเห็นต่อรูปภาพที่แบรนด์ต่างๆ โพสต์บนโซเชียลมีเดีย

7. Clicked like on videos posted by brands on social media / คลิกถูกใจวิดีโอที่แบรนด์ต่างๆ โพสต์บนโซเชียลมีเดีย

8. Clicked like on text only posts made by brands on social media / คลิกถูกใจเฉพาะโพสต์ข้อความที่แบรนด์ต่างๆ เผยแพร่บนโซเชียลมีเดีย

9. Clicked like on pictures posted by brands on social media / คลิกถูกใจรูปภาพที่แบรนด์ต่างๆ โพสต์บนโซเชียลมีเดีย

10. Shared content posted by brands on social media / แชร์เนื้อหาที่แบรนด์ต่างๆ โพสต์บนโซเชียลมีเดีย

11. Tagged brand pages in my posts / แท็กเพจของแบรนด์ต่างๆ บนโพสต์ของฉัน

12. Posted picture related to brands on social media / โพสต์รูปภาพที่เกี่ยวข้องกับแบรนด์ต่างๆบนโซเชียลมีเดีย
13. Written reviews on brand pages on social media / เขียนรีวิวบนเพจของแบรนด์บนโซเชียลมีเดีย
14. Read posts made by users (Not friends) while on social media / อ่านโพสต์ของผู้ใช้งาน (ที่ไม่ใช่เพื่อนของคุณ) ระหว่างใช้โซเชียลมีเดีย
15. Watched pictures/videos or graphics posted by users (Not friends) on social media / รับชมภาพถ่าย/วิดีโอหรือรูปภาพที่ผู้ใช้งาน (ที่ไม่ใช่เพื่อนของคุณ) โพสต์บนโซเชียลมีเดีย
16. Followed users or influencers reviewing products or services on social media / ติดตามผู้ใช้งานหรืออินฟลูเอนเซอร์ที่รีวิวสินค้าหรือบริการบนโซเชียลมีเดีย
17. Commented on videos posted by other users (Not friends) on social media / แสดงความเห็นต่อวิดีโอที่ผู้ใช้งานคนอื่น (ที่ไม่ใช่เพื่อนของคุณ) โพสต์บนโซเชียลมีเดีย
18. Commented on posts made by other users (Not friends) on social media / แสดงความเห็นต่อโพสต์ที่ผู้ใช้งานคนอื่น (ที่ไม่ใช่เพื่อนของคุณ) โพสต์บนโซเชียลมีเดีย
19. Commented on pictures posted by other users (Not friends) on social media / แสดงความเห็นต่อรูปภาพที่ผู้ใช้งานคนอื่น (ที่ไม่ใช่เพื่อนของคุณ) โพสต์บนโซเชียลมีเดีย
20. Clicked like on videos posted by other users (Not friends) on social media / คลิกถูกใจวิดีโอที่ผู้ใช้งานคนอื่น (ที่ไม่ใช่เพื่อนของคุณ) โพสต์บนโซเชียลมีเดีย
21. Clicked like on posts made by other users (Not friends) on social media / คลิกถูกใจโพสต์ที่ผู้ใช้งานคนอื่น (ที่ไม่ใช่เพื่อนของคุณ) โพสต์บนโซเชียลมีเดีย
22. Clicked like on pictures posted by other users (Not friends) on social media / คลิกถูกใจรูปภาพที่ผู้ใช้งานคนอื่น (ที่ไม่ใช่เพื่อนของคุณ) โพสต์บนโซเชียลมีเดีย
23. Shared content posted by other users (Not friends) on social media / แชร์เนื้อหาที่ผู้ใช้งานคนอื่น (ที่ไม่ใช่เพื่อนของคุณ) โพสต์บนโซเชียลมีเดีย
24. Tagged other users (Not friends) in posts / แท็กผู้ใช้งานคนอื่น (ที่ไม่ใช่เพื่อนของคุณ) ในโพสต์
25. Posted pictures related to other users (Not friends) on social media / โพสต์รูปภาพที่เกี่ยวข้องกับผู้ใช้งานคนอื่น (ที่ไม่ใช่เพื่อนของคุณ) บนโซเชียลมีเดีย
26. Written reviews on users' forum or fan pages on social media / เขียนรีวิวบนฟอรัมหรือแฟนเพจของผู้ใช้งานบนโซเชียลมีเดีย

27. Sent messages to friends on message board / ส่งข้อความถึงเพื่อนบนกระดาน
ข้อความ
28. Chatted with friends via instant messaging function / แชทกับเพื่อนผ่านระบบส่ง
ข้อความแบบทันที (instant messaging)
29. Commented on friends' status, logs, and photos / แสดงความเห็นบนสถานะ การ
สนทนาและรูปภาพของเพื่อน
30. Browsed other users' logs/ photos/ statuses/ albums / ดูการสนทนา/รูปภาพ/
สถานะ/อัลบั้มของผู้ใช้งานรายอื่น
31. Updated your social media status / อัปเดตสถานะของคุณบน โซเชียลมีเดีย
32. Posted photos/videos on personal profile / โพสต์รูปภาพ/วิดีโอบน โพรไฟล์ส่วนตัว
33. Written a post / เขียนโพสต์
34. Updated personal profile (changed image/contact information/privacy setting)/
อัปเดตโปรไฟล์ส่วนตัว (เปลี่ยนภาพประจำตัว/ข้อมูลติดต่อ/การตั้งค่าความเป็นส่วนตัว)
35. Accessed entertainment or news content / เข้าถึงเนื้อหาบันเทิงหรือข่าวสาร
36. Watched videos / listened to music / รับชมวิดีโอ/ฟังเพลง
37. Played games/applications on social media / เล่นเกม/ใช้แอปพลิเคชันบน โซเชียล
มีเดีย
38. Bought products or services directly on social media / ซื้อสินค้าหรือบริการ
โดยตรงบน โซเชียลมีเดีย

**4 points Likert scale: How much do you agree with following statements? / ระดับความเห็น
ด้วยทั้ง 4 ระดับของลิเคิร์ต (Likert Scale): คุณเห็นด้วยกับข้อความต่อไปนี้มากน้อยแค่ไหน**

- 4: Strongly agree / 4: เห็นด้วยอย่างยิ่ง
- 3: Somewhat agree / 3: ค่อนข้างเห็นด้วย
- 2: Somewhat disagree / 2: ไม่ค่อยเห็นด้วย
- 1: Strongly disagree / 1: ไม่เห็นด้วยอย่างยิ่ง

Unsustainable Consumption / การบริโภคที่ไม่ยั่งยืน

If I have any money left at the end of the pay period, I just have to spend it / หากฉันมีเงินเหลือในช่วงท้ายก่อนเงินเดือนออก ฉันต้องนำเงินนั้นไปใช้จ่าย

I often feel others would be horrified if they knew my spending habits / ฉันรู้สึกบ่อยครั้งว่าคนอื่น ๆ จะรู้สึกกลัวเมื่อทราบเกี่ยวกับพฤติกรรมการใช้จ่ายของฉัน

I often buy things online even though I can't afford them / ฉันซื้อสินค้าออนไลน์บ่อยครั้งถึงแม้ว่าฉันจะไม่สามารถจ่ายได้

I take on debts even if I know I do not have enough money in my bank to cover for it / ฉันกู้ยืมเงินถึงแม้ว่าฉันจะรู้ว่าไม่มีเงินในบัญชีไม่พอในการจ่ายเงิน

I often buy things online in order to feel better / ฉันซื้อสินค้าออนไลน์อยู่บ่อยๆเพื่อให้รู้สึกดีขึ้น

I feel nervous on days I do not shopping / ฉันรู้สึกวิตกกังวลในวันที่ฉันไม่ได้ซื้อสินค้า

I make only minimum payments with my credit card / ฉันทำการชำระเงินผ่านบัตรเครดิตให้น้อยที่สุด

Conspicuous / ความสะดุดตา

I would buy a product online just because it has status / ฉันจะซื้อสินค้าออนไลน์เพียงเพราะว่าเป็นสินค้าที่ช่วยบ่งบอกสถานะ

In social media I am interested in products with status / บนโซเชียลมีเดีย ฉันสนใจสินค้าที่ช่วยบ่งบอกสถานะ

I would pay more for products if they had status / ฉันจะจ่ายเงินมากหากเป็นสินค้าที่จะช่วยบ่งบอกสถานะ

The status of a product is irrelevant to me / การบ่งบอกสถานะของสินค้าไม่ส่งผลต่อฉัน

A product is more valuable to me if it has some snob appeal / สินค้าจะดูมีค่ามากยิ่งขึ้นสำหรับฉันหากเป็นสินค้าที่ดูดี

When I shop online, I buy things I had not intended to buy / เมื่อฉันซื้อสินค้าออนไลน์ ฉันจะซื้อสิ่งที่ฉันไม่ได้ตั้งใจซื้อ

Impulse / แรงจูงใจ

I make unplanned purchases online / ฉันทำการซื้อออนไลน์โดยไม่ได้อวางแผน

When I see something that really interests me on social media, I buy it without considering the consequences / เมื่อนฉันเห็นบางสิ่งที่น่าสนใจมากบนโซเชียลมีเดีย ฉันจะซื้อโดยไม่คำนึงถึงผลที่จะตามมา

It is fun to buy spontaneously / การซื้อสินค้าในทันทีเป็นสิ่งที่สนุก

I avoid buying things that I have not planned to buy / ฉันหลีกเลี่ยงการซื้อสินค้าที่ฉันไม่ได้วางแผนว่าจะซื้อ

Demographics / สถิติประชากร

What is your age? / คุณอายุเท่าไร

- Below or equal to 17 / น้อยกว่าหรือเท่ากับ 17 ปี
- 18 to 24 / 18 ถึง 24 ปี
- 25 to 34 / 25 ถึง 34 ปี
- 35 to 44 / 35 ถึง 44 ปี
- 45 to 54 / 45 ถึง 54 ปี
- 55 to 64 / 55 ถึง 64 ปี
- Above or equal to 65 / มากกว่าหรือเท่ากับ 65 ปี

Gender / เพศ

- Male / ชาย
- Female / หญิง
- Prefer not to tell / ไม่ต้องการระบุ

What is your estimated monthly income in Thai Baht? / คุณมีรายได้เฉลี่ยต่อเดือนกี่บาท

- Less than 15,000 / น้อยกว่า 15,000 บาท
- 15,001 – 25,000 / 15,001 – 25,000 บาท
- 25,001 – 49,999 / 25,001 – 49,999 บาท
- 50,000 – 89,999 / 50,000 – 89,999 บาท
- 90,000 – 119,999 / 90,000 – 119,999 บาท

- 120,000 – 179,999 / 120,000 – 179,999 บาท
- 180,000 – 200,000 / 180,000 – 200,000 บาท
- Over 200,000 / มากกว่า 200,000 บาท

What is your highest education level achieved? / การศึกษาขั้นสูงสุดของคุณอยู่ในระดับไหน

- Less than high school diploma / น้อยกว่าระดับประกาศนียบัตรมัธยมศึกษาตอนปลาย
- High school diploma / ระดับประกาศนียบัตรมัธยมศึกษาตอนปลาย
- Some college and no degree / ระดับมหาวิทยาลัยแต่ไม่มีวุฒิการศึกษา
- Bachelor degree / ระดับปริญญาตรี
- Master degree / ระดับปริญญาโท
- Doctorate / ระดับปริญญาเอก

What is your current employment status? / โปรดระบุสถานะการทำงานในปัจจุบันของคุณ

- Employed full time (40 or more hours per week) / ทำงานเต็มเวลา (มากกว่า 40 ชั่วโมงต่อสัปดาห์)
- Employed part time (up to 39 hours per week) / ทำงานไม่เต็มเวลา (สูงสุด 39 ชั่วโมงต่อสัปดาห์)
- Unemployed /ว่างงาน
- Student / นักศึกษา
- Retired / เกษียณ
- Self-employed / อาชีพอิสระ
- Unable to work / ไม่สามารถทำงานได้

What's your marital status? / โปรดระบุสถานภาพสมรสของคุณ

- Married / สมรส
- Widowed / เป็นม่าย
- Divorced / หย่าร้าง
- Never married / ไม่เคยสมรส