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IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCERS AND MATERIALISM ON COMPULSIVE BUYING BEHAVIORS

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Abstract: *This study investigated the relationship between a consumer's celebrity worshiping and their values orientation for materialism and its role in shaping their tendency toward compulsive buying. The study sample of 336 consumers from different cities in Saudi Arabia was analyzed. Despite the significant research on the impact of social media on people's lives, little is known about the extent to which social media impacts compulsive buying behavior (CBB). This study addresses this gap in knowledge by examining the relationships between social media celebrities' worshiping and consumers' values orientation for materialism and their influence on consumers' tendency to compulsive buying behavior. The results reveal that celebrity worship affects consumers' values orientation for materialism, influencing consumers' tendency towards compulsive buying behavior. Given the significant relationship found between celebrity worshiping and consumers' values orientation for materialism, it is likely that celebrity endorsements could be an effective way to increase sales and boost brand awareness among consumers in Saudi Arabia. This study highlights the importance of considering the impact of celebrity culture on consumer behavior in Saudi Arabia. It provides valuable insights for marketers seeking to influence consumption patterns in the region. By leveraging the influence of celebrities positively, it may be possible to promote more responsible and sustainable consumption habits among consumers in Saudi Arabia.*
Keywords: *Consumer behavior, celebrity worship, materialism, compulsive buying behavior (CBB), influence of celebrities.*

INTRODUCTION

The impact of celebrity worshiping religion on consumers' tendency towards compulsive buying behavior in the Saudi market is a complex issue that can be influenced by multiple factors (Abd Malek, 2020; Ooi et al., 2023; Tokgoz, 2020). First, celebrity worshiping may encourage consumers to imitate their favorite celebrities, which can in turn lead to extensive purchases (Dinh and Lee, 2022). Second, celebrity endorsement of products can contribute to a consumer's tendency towards compulsive buying (Parmar et al., 2020). Third, social media platforms have made it easier than before ever for consumers to follow their favorite celebrities (Aw and Labrecque, 2020). This constant exposure to celebrity lifestyles and endorsed products can contribute to a culture of consumerism and materialism (Dinh and Lee, 2022), which can further increase consumers' tendencies that may lead to

compulsive buying. Celebrity's effect on customers' buying behavior can be considerably different in some aspects of cultural and social norms (Lavuri and Thaichon, 2023).

While the growth in social media in Saudi Arabia creates possibilities and obstacles for individuals and organizations, they both, pave the path to success. Social media users' increase in Saudi Arabia has triggered a marketing mix approach change in business (Basri, 2020). Many businesses are now using social media platforms for marketing purposes, and this includes the use of social media influencers and celebrity marketing (Qutteina et al., 2019). By utilizing the influencers of celebrities, businesses can border their access to the audience and promote their products in a more interactive way (Garg and Pahuja, 2020). Especially influencers have become increasingly important in the marketing environment, businesses use popular social media personalities to promote their products to their followers (Nurfadila and Riyanto, 2020). This is because consumers tend to trust and value the opinions of influencers' more than traditional brands. Consumers have more trust and confidence in the influencer than in traditional advertising (Berne-Manero and MarzoNavarro, 2020). This is because influencers are often seen as more authentic than traditional celebrity endorsements or advertisements. They are often seen as normal people who share their experiences and opinions on social media, and their followers see them as a trusted source of information and advice (Rao Hill and Qesja, 2023). However, in Saudi Arabia, where Islamic principles and values are deeply involved in the culture, the impact of celebrities on consumer behavior may be different than in other countries with different cultural values (Niazi et al., 2019). Therefore, the impact of celebrities on consumers' tendency towards compulsive buying in the Saudi market is an issue that requires further research and understanding.

This study focused on the influence of social media celebrities on consumers' value perceptions of materialism and its role in the compulsive buying behavior of consumers. Understanding personal attitudes toward social media celebrities and their influence on their buying behavior can provide marketers with valuable insights. The assumption that there is a strong positive correlation between an individual's attitudes toward social media celebrities and their tendency toward purchase addiction is supported by previous research on the influence of social media on consumer behavior (Aragoncillo and Orus, 2018; Chen, 2014; Chopra et al.,
2020; Maccarrone_Eaglen and Schofield, 2023; Voramontri and Klieb, 2019). This study examined the prevalent effect of social media celebrities on compulsive purchasing behaviors, a fast-developing concern in the digital consumerism era. Despite several research into the general effects of social media on lifestyle and behavior, the specific pathways through which celebrity endorsements influence consumer materialism and subsequent compulsive purchasing habits are not investigated in depth, particularly in Saudi Arabia's unique cultural and regulatory landscape. This study attempted to address a large vacuum in knowledge by offering empirical insights into the psychological mechanisms at work and investigating the broader societal consequences. Moreover, this investigation is among the first to quantitatively measure the impact of celebrity worship on compulsive buying tendencies in a Middle Eastern context, where traditional values often intersect uniquely with modern consumer culture. By focusing on Saudi Arabian consumers, the study offers a critical perspective that contributes to the global understanding of digital influence on consumer behaviors, providing stakeholders with

data crucial for shaping responsible marketing strategies and consumer protection policies in similar contexts.

This study's methodology employs advanced statistical methods, such as partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM), to explain the intricate links between celebrity worship, materialism, and compulsive purchasing behaviors. This technique not only enhances the analysis but also allows for a more nuanced explanation of materialism's mediating effects, resulting in a full model of consumer behavior dynamics that has not before been described in the literature. Employing PLS-SEM allows this study to address both the measurement and structural models, providing clarity on the direct and indirect effects of the constructs involved. This dual focus is significant, as it uncovers the underlying dimensions of compulsive buying behavior that are often obscured in conventional regression analyses used in similar studies.

In addition, the study sample comprises diverse consumers from various cities across Saudi Arabia, representing a wide range of various demographics. This sample diversity is particularly crucial given the socioeconomic and cultural heterogeneity of the Saudi population, which is influenced by both rapid modernization and strong traditional norms. The study's findings are therefore reflective of a broad spectrum of consumer experiences and attitudes, providing deeper insights into the segment-specific impacts of celebrity influence. This research is an attempt to answer the following question: How does the worship of social media celebrities influence consumers' value perceptions of materialism and their compulsive buying behavior in the Saudi Arabian market? The research aimed to: investigate the relationship between celebrity worship and consumers' compulsive buying behavior in the Saudi market and examine the mediating role of materialism in the relationship between celebrity worship and compulsive buying behavior.

The research into the influence of social media celebrities on compulsive buying behaviors is structured into six sections, the first section reviewed existing research related to the impact of celebrity worship and materialism on compulsive buying behaviors. The review identified gaps in current knowledge, particularly the specific impact of celebrity endorsements in Saudi Arabia, and framed the research questions and hypotheses of the study. The second section elaborated on the methodological approach the research adopted. The third section presented the research results. Then the research pressed to the fourth section which provided a discussion of the results. The fifth section concentrated on conclusions and implications. The sixth section discussed limitations and future research.

Theoretical framework and hypotheses development

The evolution and enlargement of pathways like offline channelization have created the possibility for consumers to quick-hit products. That has resulted in consumer behavior which is not used as a response to the need but as a desire (Nurfadila and Riyanto, 2020; Pahlevan et al., 2022). On the other hand, the aggressive and continuous media publicity enhanced the pressure on consumers to consume mindless and unique fashion trends (Çengel and Öztek, 2023; Johan et al., 2023). The consumers are already under the bombardment of advertisements and marketing messages which are, in most cases, designed to make the consumers intractable to withstand the urge to buy products that do not mean anything to them. However, it should be acknowledged that not everyone has the same targeted behaviors as others, and some people carefully think of their purchases than others (Chopra et al.,

2020). Research has confirmed that compulsive shoppers can meet social and emotional needs through consumerism, at times at the cost of both themselves and their environment. Compulsive buying refers to the tendency to purchase items that are not necessities, in small quantities, and often without any prior purchase plans. It is characterized by an act of uncontrolled buying with little thought given to the implications of such acts. Gratification shopping can finally end you up with financial debts and a sense of helplessness when it comes to your common financial affairs (De Graaf, 2002).

It may also be a cause of pressure on personal relationships and also on their lives. There are emotions of guilt, shame, and anxiety also arising in the individual. In some instances, materialism is so comprehensive that it even causes compulsive buying or even hitting the limit for addiction (Wang and Zhai, 2022). This is because excessive buying demands are not free of side effects and one need to be cautious of getting the signs of this behavior and take the action it demands otherwise. Therapies and support groups can be found to be helpful actions for people who are dealing with compulsive buying behaviors and also take control of their expenditures effectively (Perdigones and Gómez-Suárez, Al Oraini 2023). Several research investigations have been done to manage compulsive buying behavior. Bighiu et al. (2015) studied the interplay between online shopping, compulsive purchasing habits, and associated psychological factors. The research which involved 100 students who are from the Faculty of Business and Economics in Romania was conducted the research showed the significant effect of online shopping on the tendency for compulsive buying behavior, in fact, the more people seriously engaged in social network shopping platform, the higher possibility it was for them to demonstrate the compulsive behavior. Not only did the study reveal the connection between low self-esteem, strong materialism, and high compulsivity but also empirical evidence showed the relationship between autonomy support and less compulsive behavior. The study stresses the significance of analyzing what causes people to fall into compulsive buying behavior and examines the contributions of e-commerce to the rise in this behavior type. The research also indicated that women showed compulsive purchasing behavior more often than men, resulting in similar results as found in the previous studies (DeSarbo and Edwards, 1996).

Black (2001) suggested shopping as a very popular leisure pattern in developed societies, particularly among women. He brings to light the fact that what used to become a form of entertainment and a way of socializing with friends and families. Nevertheless, he emphasized that links between shopping obsession and mental health complications (including financial problems and emotional turmoil) are not that obvious. Nevertheless, Faber and O'Guinn (1989), asserted that a market-based economy which is a composition of consumerism and advertising of products and services constantly creates an environment that would propel the desire for buying and might lead to compulsive buying habits. They all point to the ways marketing and consumer culture can nowadays dictate compulsive buying behavior. Even though shopping and consumerism may seem benign and normal, they can result in severe disorders when shopping becomes compulsive and hurts one's healthy life.

Given that, the social-cultural theory postulates that compulsive consumers' behavior is catalyzed by their culture and society which induces consumers and materialism (Vij and Singla, 2023). Consumers who constantly live in an environment full of people who attach their worth to material things and consumption often develop compulsive buying behavior (Raza et al., 2023). According to a social

learning point of view, people might tend to behave compulsively through imitation or looking up to others. This theory posits that children who hail from families in which the spreading of compulsive buying patterns is prevalent have higher risk probabilities of following such patterns (Dewi, 2023). According to the social learning theory, women might develop compulsive buying behavior because they are socialized to give high value to consumerism and shopping to define their identity and connect to others.

Besides, some studies have even disclosed that women may well be the more naive victims of the power of adverts and media messages that enhance materialism and consumerism (Gan and Chen, 2023). Social culture theory adds that specific gender social values about gender likewise tend to be responsible for the gender disparities in shopping addiction (Elhajjar, 2023). Hence, there is mixed understanding of the myriad of components that worsen the disease, yet studies keep confirming this closer link between women than men and being addicted to those aspects of the behavior (Prever et al., 2023). Furthermore, divisions arising from cultural and societal elements may be at play in purchasing addiction in some regions of the world.

Hypothesis development

Schartel Dunn and Nisbett (2023) perceive celebrity as a switch that engages some strata of society, while on the other hand, Aw and Labrecque (2020) describe fame as a social side that screws up lives, leaving an imprint of time on people. One of the main ways to advertise using celebrities is to get them to become the face of a product and thus an ad campaign. Celebrities are instrumental due to business with brands, and the purpose of the word among customers which spurs up brand awareness. Celebrity endorsers are made from any of the sports, arts, or military leaders. They are rarely picked merely for illustration of particular qualities or ideas imparted by them through which the customers would be attracted but also; they influence the audience emotionally which is a byproduct of advertisement. Not only is that a huge plus of celebrities taking part in advertising but also their cultural imbuements tend to serve the promotion objectives, as well. Cheng (2003) conducted a phone survey of 833 Chinese teenagers and found that highfrequency youths who care about celebrities showed the lowest level of identity achievement. Boon and Lomore (2001) interviewed a sample of 75 Canadian university students and about 59% of them said that the celebrity they admire had significantly altered their beliefs, inspired them to keep doing specific activities, and even affected their taste in items. To sum up, these discoveries show that celebrity influence should be properly evaluated before singing on the impact on individuals, especially if they are in their teenage years when the process of identity formation is taking place. Consequently, determining how human characteristics combined with external issues, such as celebrity influences, can result in different behavioral patterns among people is also a consideration. Within the context of literature, the subsequent hypotheses have been formulated:

H1: Entertainment-social and acquisition of centrality have a significant positive relationship.

H2: Entertainment-social and defining success have a significant positive relationship.
H3: Entertainment-social and the pursuit of happiness have a significant positive relationship.
H4: Intense-personal and acquisition of centrality have a significant positive relationship.
H5: Intense- personal and defining success has a significant positive relationship.

H6: Entertainment-social and the pursuit of happiness have a significant positive relationship.
H7: Borderline-pathological and acquisition of centrality have a significant positive relationship.
H8: Borderline-pathological and defining success have a significant positive relationship.
H9: Borderline-pathological and the pursuit of happiness have a significant positive relationship.
To describe materialism, the central value system that is mostly predicated on having things because they demonstrate the social image was use. This is a specific area that has been the most vigorously researched in the field of consumer behavior and covers how materialistic values open doors to a purchase behavior that is not planned or necessary. The orientation towards commodities is usually representative of a person who tends to overuse or is excessive in his purchases. According to Dittmar (2004), materialistic people are the most compulsive buyers. Materialism generally consists of the attitude that material possessions bring a sense of satisfaction and more authority over their social status. Apart from this, Müller et al. (2022) indicated that materialistic values had a positive connection with the habit pattern of compulsive shopping, showing that materialism lies as a factor in promoting such behaviors. Being the key factor in the contemporary materialism landscape, celebrities and influencers heavily use their power to formulate material interests among consumers. They regularly endorse the sales of products, which outline lavish and ultra-rich lifestyles. Such a manner of advertisement affects people all over the world. McCracken (1989) introduced the process of 'the transfer of meaning' to be when celebrities, in their endorsement, transfer the symbolic properties contained by their character to the accompanying products. This transfer is undoubtedly the biggest contributor to consumers' decision-making process mostly influenced by the abundance and enhanced materialistic instants.
The consequences of celebrity endorsements in the materialistic field of consumerism are the multidimensional view. According to research by Moraes, Gountas et al. (2019), this phenomenon of instant purchases by consumers of celebrated goods is not the end of the line but a broader culture of materialism is created. The audience will not only imitate the way they dress or speak but also the kind of products they use, the younger consumers are more susceptible to the attitudes and consumption habits of their favorite celebrities or influencers. These tendencies reveal a downward shift in the values for the things that money can buy and the frenzy to buy things that were associated with blessed status and upper-class living styles. It is the subject matter of the connection between materialistic values and compulsive buying behavior to be explored. The results of the studies indicate the existence of such a direct connection between materialism and a tendency to compulsive buying. Tantawi (2023) explored the persistence of the materialism and compulsive buying behavior connection in Egypt. Similarly, Eren et al. (2012) studied the relationship between materialism and compulsive buying among college students in Turkey, there appears to be a strong correlation between the level of possessiveness and the propensity to partake in the crazes of compulsive shopping. This ultimately implies that there can be a very strong such that those who have the biggest living values tend also to have a higher level of compulsive buying behavior.
The associations between celebrity worshiping and materialistic values have become the concern of various researchers. Studies have revealed that the percentage of materialistic people engaging in celebrity worship is significantly higher compared to their counterparts Green et al. (2014). Consumers

who are obsessed with material things are more likely to identify them with celebrities and this relationship is especially true for celebrities who are popular with old culture (Green et al., 2014). In this regard, McCutcheon et al. (2021) highlighted the changing notion of success, which was once about wealth and fame, but now individuals are inclined to value the self-faceted notion of goals, competitiveness, and happiness when pursuing certain endeavors as compared to traditional success. People longing for more electronic devices and brands pure for more celebrity racism, trying to find their way by buying additional expensive goods (Green et al., 2014). The consumer well-being of those who have a celebrity worship experience is often so that they try to purchase material things and attain the desired happiness the products will bring (McCutcheon et al., 2021). Among many interconnections between this area with entertainmentsocial, the emergence of centrality as a conspicuous drawback were often seen (Green et al., 2014).

In the context of entertainment-social, the acquisition of centrality may be linked to the ability to engage and influence a large audience (Jia et al., 2023). Individuals or entities that can effectively capture and maintain the attention of a significant number of followers or connections within social networks may acquire centrality within their respective domains. This can be achieved through the creation of entertaining and engaging content, the development of a dynamic personal brand, and the ability to network effectively within the entertainment and social media industry (Jia et al., 2023). Therefore, it can be concluded that materialistic values and celebrity endorsements undoubtedly play a significant role in shaping consumer behavior, particularly in fostering compulsive buying tendencies. Within the context of literature, the subsequent hypotheses have been formulated:

H10: Acquisition of centrality and compulsive consumption has a significant positive relationship.

H11: Defining success and compulsive consumption have a significant positive relationship.

H12: Pursuit of happiness and compulsive consumption has a significant positive relationship.

Based on the above discussion, the research model depicted in Figure 1 holds that Materialistic values have a significant direct effect on compulsive buying behavior and that the level of celebrity worshiping has a significant direct effect on Materialistic values.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Data collection and sample

The present study is descriptive and deals with the accurate and comprehensive depiction of the circumstances or a phenomenon. This method often employs quantitative or qualitative forms of data gathering and analysis, and it targets the increase of awareness and perception about the event under consideration. The descriptive approach is commonly used in humanitarian studies (Kovacs et al., 2019). As it allows researchers to develop a deeper understanding of complex social and cultural issues (Zewde, 2023). The sample comprised 336 individuals residing in Saudi Arabia, both Saudis and non-Saudis, using a convenience sampling method. This method was chosen due to practical constraints and the need to efficiently collect data from a population that is readily accessible. The sample size and demographic diversity (age, sex, income level, and education) allow for a comprehensive analysis of the population of interest, enhancing the generalizability of the study findings within the Saudi context.

To ensure that gender distribution did not bias the results, the sample included a significantly larger proportion of females (76.2%) than males (23.8%). This distribution reflects the targeted

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demographic's social media usage patterns and shopping behaviors, as women are often more engaged in both. The analysis included gender as a variable to examine differential impacts on the dependent variables, thus directly accounting for potential genderbased biases in how celebrity worship influences materialistic values and compulsive buying behavior. The study used Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) version 4.0, for data analysis, which is robust against deviations from normality and is suitable for complex models. This choice of analytical technique ensures that the potential biases in measurement are addressed effectively, allowing for the examination of both direct and indirect effects among the constructs. Overall, the methodological choices were closely aligned with the research objectives, employing reliable and valid instruments and a suitable sample to explore the intricate relationships among celebrity worship, materialism, and compulsive buying behavior in a culturally specific context. Table 1 shows the distribution of the sample individuals based on age, sex, income level, and level of education .

Measurement

The development of the questionnaire for this study was guided by

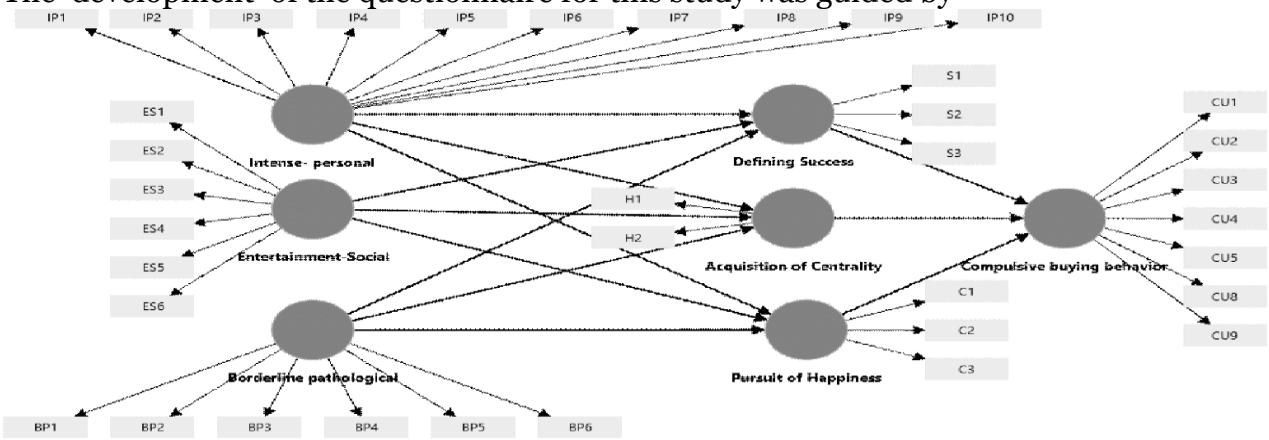


Figure 1. Research conceptual framework.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of participants.

Variable	Response	No.	%
	Less than 20 years	56	16.7 20.2
	From 20 years to less than 30 years	68	27.4
	From 30 years to less than 40 years	92	25.0
Age	From 40 years to less than 50 years	84	
	From 50 years to less than 60 years	28	8.3
	60 years and more	8	2.4
	Less than high school	34	
	High school	60	10.1 17.9
	Diploma	56	16.7
Education	Bachelor's degree	150	44.6
	Graduate degree	36	10.7
	Total	336	100.0

	Male	80	23.8
Sex	Female	256	76.2
	Less than 1000 SR	124	
	From 1000 to less than 8000 SR	74	36.9 22.0
Income	From 8000 to less than 16000 SR	118	35.1
	From 16000 to less than 32000	16	4.8
	More than 32000	4	1.2

The need to capture nuanced aspects of celebrity worship, consumers in Saudi Arabia. The choice of scales was informed by materialistic values, and compulsive buying behavior among their established reliability and validity in previous research,

ensuring that the data collected would be robust and relevant to the research questions. The McCutcheon et al. (2021) scale, a wellrespected instrument in psychology, was used to assess levels of celebrity worship. This scale is chosen because it provides a detailed measure of the emotional, cognitive, and behavioral aspects of celebrity worship, which is central to understanding its impact on consumer behavior. Faber and O'guinn (1992) scale was used to measure compulsive buying, this scale is commonly employed in studies of compulsive buying due to its effective capture of the impulsive and uncontrollable nature of buying behavior, which is a key variable in the study. Richins (2004) material values scale was selected because of its comprehensive approach to measuring materialism as a value system, which influences consumption patterns and potentially leads to compulsive buying. The questionnaire used a five-point Likert scale, allowing for the measurement of degrees of agreement or disagreement with the posed statements, which facilitates nuanced analysis of attitudes and behaviors.

EMPIRICAL RESULTS

The present study used Smart PLS (4.0), a statistical tool to examine the data through partial least square equation modeling (PLS-SEM). This approach has gained much prominence in studies about technology acceptance, eLearning, and related fields (Hair et al., 2012). Hair et al. (2011) suggested using PLS-SEM to predict dependent variables' effects. This study uses PLS-SEM as a verified reporting approach to conduct robust analysis in consumer research. SEM is a second-generation multifaceted data investigation method that examines theoretically developed linear and additive casual relationships (StatSoft, 2013). It allows researchers to examine the relationships between constructs. SME is considered the best approach to measure the direct and indirect paths because it analyses the difficult-to-examine and unobservable latent constructs. SEM consists of inner and outer model analyses, which examine the relationships between independent and dependent variables and relationships between latent constructs and their observed pointers. PLS focuses on variance analysis, which could be done using Smart PLS (Vinzi et al., 2010). Therefore, this approach is selected for the present study.

Measurement model

The current study analyzed the measurement model approach to assess the reliability, composite reliability (CR), and average variance extracted (AVE) of the constructs. To measure the reliability, Cronbach's alpha (CA) and composite reliability was used. The results for CA and CR are presented in Table 2 for borderline – pathological (0.768 and 0.894), acquisition of centrality (0.959 and 0.966), compulsive buying behavior (0.921 and 0.937), entertainment-social (0.950 and 0.959), pursuit of happiness (0.773 and 0.866), Intense-personal (0.952, 0.958) and defining success (0.766, 0.866) respectively. According to Hair et al. (2011), CA and CR values should be higher than 0.70, and this study found the values to be in an acceptable range. Additionally, the convergent validity was examined to obtain AVE values (Table 2), and all the values were greater than the 0.50 threshold (for borderline-pathological, acquisition of centrality, compulsive buying behavior, entertainmentsocial, pursuit of happiness, intense-personal, and defining success. the AVE values were 0.809, 0.826, 0.682, 0.795, 0.685, 0.675 and 0.684 respectively).

Discriminant validity results

Fornell–Larcker (the first value should be more than the other values in the same column), cross-loading (values exposing an association with the variable exceed those exposing associations with different variables), and Heterotrait–Monotrait (values should be lower than 0.90) tests were used to examine the discriminant results. The findings are depicted in Tables 3 and 4 respectively, where valid discriminant validity is observed.

Structural model

The Smart PLS (4.0) software was used to assess the structured equation model using 5000 bootstraps. The values of determination of the coefficient (R2) should be > 0.1 (Henseler et al., 2016). This study

found that 0.247 variance occurred in defining success, explained by entertainment-social, intense-personal, borderline- pathological and 0.705 variance occurred in center acquisition of centrality explained by entertainment social, Intense-personal, borderline-pathological. 0.592 variance occurred in the pursuit of happiness explained by entertainment-social, Intense-personal, borderline pathological. 0.818 variance occurred in compulsive buying behavior explained by defining success, acquisition of centrality, and pursuit of happiness.

Hypotheses testing

Using Smart PLS 4.0 software, the results of hypothesis testing as portrayed in Figure 2. Findings in (Table 5), suggest that materialistic values significantly influence compulsive buying behavior. Additionally, the study reveals a significant impact of celebrity worshiping on materialistic values. The study demonstrates a statistically significant and positive correlation between defining success and compulsive buying behavior. This is indicated by an effect size of 0.126, a t-value of 5.799, and a P-value of 0.000. Regarding the association between the acquisition of centrality and compulsive buying behavior, an effect size of -0.171, coupled with a t-value of 8.643, and a P-value of 0.000, strongly indicates a substantial and statistically significant

Table 2. Measurement model.

Variable	Outer loadings	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability	Average variance extracted (AVE)	Rsquare
Borderline-pathological					
BP1	0.909				
BP2	0.930				
BP3	0.899	0.768	0.894	0.809	
BP4	0.905				
BP5	0.874				
Acquisition of centrality					
C1	0.875				
C2	0.871	0.959	0.966	0.826	0.705
C3	0.729				
Compulsive buying behavior					
CU1	0.746				
CU2	0.733	0.851			
CU3	0.888				
CU4		0.921	0.937	0.682	0.818
CU5	0.778				
CU8	0.896				
CU9	0.870				
Entertainment-social					
ES1	0.920				
ES2	0.794				
ES3	0.944				
ES4	0.867	0.950	0.959	0.795	
ES5	0.926				
ES6	0.891				
Pursuit of happiness					
H1	0.872				
H2	0.926	0.773	0.866	0.685	0.592
Intense-personal					
IP1	0.747				

IP2	0.819				
IP3	0.900				
IP4	0.709	0.711			
IP5	0.856				
IP6		0.952	0.958	0.675	
IP7	0.834				
IP8	0.881				
IP9	0.880				
IP10	0.790				
Defining success					
S1	0.828				
S2	0.891	0.766	0.866	0.684	0.247
S3	0.756				

Table 3. Fornell-Larcker criterion.

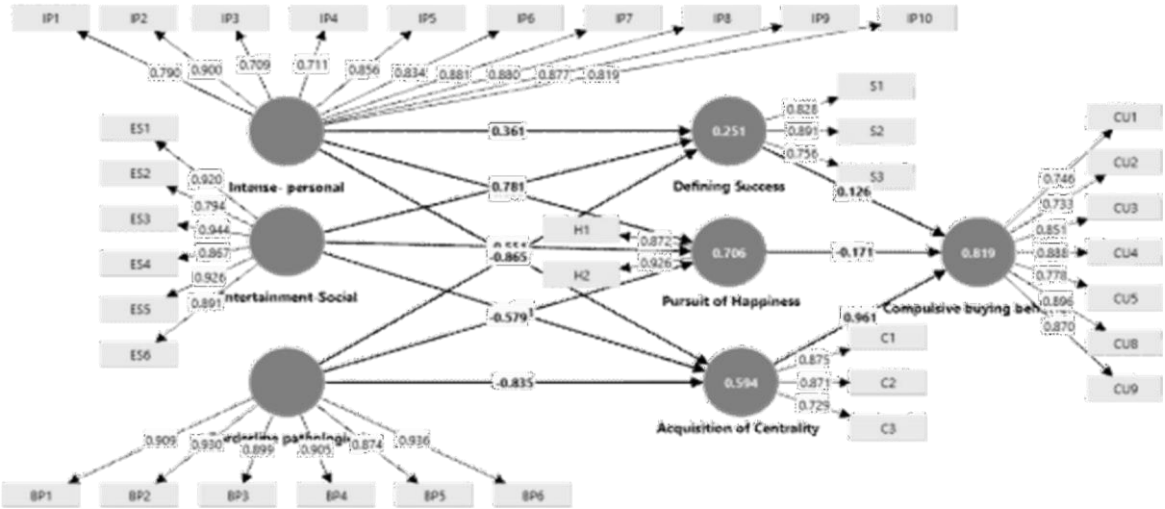
Variable	Acquisition of centrality	Borderline pathological	Compulsivebuying behavior	Defining success	Entertainment -social	Intense personal	Pursuit of happiness
Acquisition of centrality							
Borderline pathological	0.900						
Compulsive-buying behavior	0.323	0.909					
Defining success	0.638	0.128	0.826				
Entertainment-social	0.574	0.132	0.532	0.827			
Intense-personal	0.354	0.885	0.391	0.328	0.892		
Pursuit of happiness	0.666	0.850	0.537	0.303	0.867	0.821	

Table 4. Heterotrait–monotrait.

Variable	Acquisition of centrality	Borderline pathological	Compulsivebuying behavior	Defining success	Entertainment-social	Intense personal	Pursuit of happiness
Acquisition of centrality							
Borderline pathological	0.362						
Compulsive-buying behavior	0.751	0.387					
Defining success	0.779	0.201	0.633				
Entertainment-social	0.383	0.205	0.394	0.382			
Intense-personal	0.720	0.242	0.540	0.431	0.415		
Pursuit of happiness	0.650	0.211	0.421	0.245	0.312	0.603	

negative relationship. Concerning the link between the pursuit of happiness as a component of materialistic values and compulsive buying behavior, the results point to a positive effect size of 0.961. This, along with a high t-value of 50.666, and a P-value of 0.000, suggests a statistically significant relationship.

The analysis also delves into various relationships between celebrity worshiping and materialistic values. The analysis shows a significant correlation between intense-personal and defining success, with an effect size of 0.361, and a t-value of 4.313,



exceeding the standard significance threshold. A P-value of 0.000 indicates this positive relationship is statistically significant. Also, there's a strong and significant positive correlation between intense-personal and acquisition of centrality, indicated by an effect size of 1.635, and a t-value of 35.229. The P-value is 0.000, suggesting a very strong positive relationship. In addition, the effect size of 0.516, and t-value of 37.723, along with a P-value of 0.000, refers to a strong and significant positive relationship between intense-personal and pursuit of happiness.

Moreover, the negative effect size of -0.865, the standard deviation of 0.129, and the t-value of 11.235, combined with a P-value of 0.000, suggest a significant inverse relationship between borderline-Pathological and defining success. A negative effect size of -0.579, and a t-value of 10.889, with a P-value of 0.000, indicate a significant inverse relationship between borderline-Pathological and acquisition of centrality. The negative effect size of -0.835, and t-value of 26.791, along with a P-value of 0.000, imply a significant inverse relationship between borderline-Pathological and pursuit of happiness.

A positive effect size of 0.781, and a t-value of

Figure 2. Research structural mode.

Table 5. Results of hypotheses testing.

Independent variables	Dependent variable	B	t-value	P value	Result
H1: Entertainment-social	Acquisition of centrality	-0.551	12.563	0.000	Not supported
H2: Entertainment-social	Defining success	0.781	9.581	0.000	Supported
H3: Entertainment-social	Pursuit of happiness	-0.293	7.302	0.000	Not supported
H4: Intense- personal	Acquisition of centrality	0.635	35.229	0.000	Supported
H5: Intense- personal	Defining success	0.361	4.313	0.000	Supported
H6: Intense- personal	Pursuit of happiness	0.516	37.723	0.000	Supported
H7: Borderline pathological	Acquisition of centrality	-0.579	10.889	0.000	Not supported

H8: Borderline pathological	Defining success	-0.865	11.235	0.000	Not supported
H9: Borderline pathological	Pursuit of happiness	-0.835	26.791	0.000	Not supported
H10: Acquisition of centrality	Compulsive buying behavior	-0.171	8.643	0.000	Not supported
H11: Defining success	Compulsive buying behavior	0.126	5.799	0.000	Supported
H12: Pursuit of happiness	Compulsive buying behavior	0.961	50.666	0.000	Supported

12.563, coupled with a P-value of 0.000, indicates a significant positive relationship between entertainmentsocial and defining success. The negative effect size of 0.551, and t-value of 12.563, with a P-value of 0.000, suggest a significant inverse relationship between entertainment-social and acquisition of centrality. The negative effect size of -0.293, and t-value of 7.302, combined with a P-value of 0.000, strongly indicate a significant inverse relationship between entertainmentsocial and pursuit of happiness.

DISCUSSION

This research delves into the intricate dynamics of compulsive buying behavior among consumers in Saudi Arabia, providing valuable insights that enhance our understanding of consumer behavior in this region. This study emphasizes the exploration of how celebrity worship influences materialistic values, subsequently impacting compulsive buying behaviors. Hypotheses related to entertainment-social celebrity worship yielded mixed results. Contrary to expectations, entertainmentsocial celebrity worship did not positively significantly contribute to the acquisition of centrality (H1, $\beta = -0.551$, $p < 0.001$) and the pursuit of happiness (H3, $\beta = -0.293$, $p < 0.001$). This suggests that while individuals may enjoy and follow celebrities for entertainment and social reasons, this does not necessarily translate into a deeper materialistic engagement. However, a significant positive relationship was found with defining success (H2, $\beta = 0.781$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that those who admire celebrities for their social and entertainment value may equate success with material possessions. This aligns with the findings of Aw and Labrecque (2020) that parasocial interactions with celebrities can shape consumers' definitions of success. In contrast, intense personal celebrity worship showed a strong positive relationship with all three dimensions of materialistic values: acquisition of centrality (H4, $\beta = 0.635$, $p < 0.001$), defining success (H5, $\beta = 0.361$, $p < 0.001$), and the pursuit of happiness (H6, $\beta = 0.516$, $p < 0.001$).

These findings suggest that individuals who develop a deep personal connection with celebrities are more likely to internalize materialistic values, viewing possessions as central to their lives, a measure of success, and a source of happiness. This supports previous research by Boon and Lomore (2001) and Green et al. (2014), who found that intense admiration for celebrities can significantly influence personal values and behaviors. Moreover, borderline-pathological celebrity worship was found to have significant negative relationships with all three dimensions of materialistic values: acquisition of centrality (H7, $\beta = -0.579$, $p < 0.001$), defining success (H8, $\beta = -0.865$, $p < 0.001$), and the pursuit of happiness (H9, $\beta = -0.835$, $p < 0.001$). This counterintuitive finding suggests that those exhibiting obsessive and uncontrollable admiration for celebrities might not necessarily view material possessions in a positive light. This form of celebrity worship may be associated with different psychological motivations and attitudes towards materialism, warranting further investigation. This inverse relationship is highlighted in studies by Green et al. (2014), which suggest that extreme celebrity worship can sometimes lead to a rejection of materialistic values. When examining the direct impact of materialistic values on compulsive buying behavior, the results were revealing.

The acquisition of centrality was negatively associated with compulsive buying behavior (H10, $\beta = -0.171$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that individuals who place high importance on possessions may engage in more deliberate and less compulsive buying. Conversely, defining success (H11, $\beta = 0.126$, $p < 0.001$) and the pursuit of happiness (H12, $\beta = 0.961$, $p < 0.001$) were positively related to compulsive buying behavior. These findings suggest that individuals who equate success with material acquisition and those who seek happiness through possessions are more prone to compulsive purchasing. This aligns with findings from previous research by Tarka and Kukar-Kinney (2022) and Vij and Singla (2023) who identified strong links between materialistic values and compulsive buying tendencies.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The study highlights the complex interplay between different forms of celebrity worship, materialistic values, and compulsive buying behaviors. It underscored the importance of understanding the psychological underpinnings of consumer behavior, particularly in a culturally unique context like offer substantial contributions to the literature on materialism and consumer behavior, suggesting practical implications for marketers and policymakers aiming to address the challenges posed by compulsive buying tendencies. Future research should delve deeper into the small differences in these relationships, particularly the unexpected negative correlations associated with borderline-pathological celebrity worship, to develop more effective consumer interventions and support strategies. This study contributes to the existing literature by explaining the relationships between materialistic values, celebrity worship, and compulsive buying behavior. It demonstrates that while certain aspects of materialism and celebrity worship can aggravate compulsive purchasing tendencies, others may have a dilution effect. These findings offer important implications for consumer education and policy-making, emphasizing the need for a more accurate understanding of the factors that contribute to compulsive buying behavior.

Furthermore, the study highlights the importance of distinguishing between different forms of materialistic values and patterns of celebrity worship when examining their impact on consumer behavior.

THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL CONTRIBUTIONS

This study dives into the fascinating world of how celebrity worship and materialistic values shape compulsive buying behavior among consumers in Saudi Arabia. Our findings reveal some expected patterns and a few surprises, providing a richer understanding of consumer behavior in this unique cultural landscape. First, the study found that people who see success as being tied to material possessions are more likely to engage in compulsive buying. This aligns with other research showing that materialistic values can drive individuals to shop in ways that might not be entirely rational or healthy (Tarka and Kukar-Kinney, 2022; Vij and Singla, 2023). Similarly, those who believe that happiness comes from acquiring more things are also prone to compulsive buying. These insights suggest that efforts to reduce compulsive buying should tackle the underlying belief that happiness and success are found in material possessions.

On the other hand, we discovered something interesting about those who place a high importance on their possessions. They tend to buy more deliberately and less impulsively. This counterintuitive finding suggests that focusing on the value and central role of possessions might encourage more mindful shopping habits. This area needs more research to fully understand how different aspects of materialism affect consumer behavior. The study also highlights the powerful role of celebrity worship in shaping our buying habits. People who form deep personal connections with celebrities are more ikely to adopt materialistic values, seeing possessions as central part of their lives, a measure of success, and a source of happiness. Marketers can use these insights to create more effective campaigns that resonate with these values. However, those with an obsessive form of celebrity worship (borderline-pathological) show less materialistic attitudes, suggesting they might not respond to typical

marketing strategies. This highlights the importance of tailoring marketing efforts to different consumer segments based on their patterns of celebrity worship. For policymakers and consumer advocates, these findings underscore the need for educational campaigns that promote critical thinking about consumption. By helping consumers understand the psychological drivers behind their buying habits, these campaigns can encourage more informed and deliberate purchasing decisions.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS OF THE STUDY

The study's findings must be interpreted in light of its limitations, including the potential for self-report biases and the cross-sectional nature of the data, which precludes causal inferences. Future research should employ longitudinal designs to better understand the causality of the relationships identified and explore the psychological mechanisms underpinning these associations. Additionally, further research could examine these relationships in different cultural contexts, as cultural values and norms may moderate the impact of materialistic values and celebrity worship on compulsive buying behavior. Investigating these factors across diverse populations could provide deeper insights into the universality or specificity of the observed relationships.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The author has not declared any conflict of interests.

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