SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCE, MATERIALISM, FEAR OF MISSING OUT AND IMPULSIVE BUYING IN YOUNG ADULTS

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Dedication

Alhamdulillah, all praise is due to Allah (SWT), the Most Merciful and the Most Compassionate, for granting me the strength, patience, and guidance to complete this work. I dedicate this thesis to my late father, whose values, love, and prayers continue to guide me even in his absence. To my beloved mother, whose sacrifices, unwavering support, and endless encouragement have been the foundation of my journey, and to my dear brothers, who have stood by me with care, motivation, and understanding this accomplishment is as much theirs as it is mine. Finally, I extend my heartfelt appreciation to my respected supervisor, Dr. Rehana Mushtaq whose guidance, patience, and invaluable insights have been instrumental in bringing this research to completion.

Acknowledgement

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This achievement is the result of collective support, encouragement, and shared belief in my goals.

Sara Farooq

ABSTRACT

In 21st century, impulsive buying is increasing drastically specially in young adults. The key factors involved are materialistic values, influence from social media and fear of missing out. The main objective was to explore the correlation between social media influence, materialism, and fear of missing out with impulsive buying, identify their predictive roles, and examine gender differences in young adults. It was hypothesized that social media influence, materialism, and fear of missing out were positively correlated to impulsive buying. Furthermore, social media influence was likely to entrench materialistic orientations but at the same time eliminate the fear of missing out. The gender-based differences would be expected also on all the study constructs and collectively, the above psychosocial variables are attributed to be prime predictors of impulsive buying behavior. This dissertation, based on Social Comparison Theory and Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) model, will pursue the relationships discussed on a quantitative, cross-sectional survey design. A sample of 373 young adults aged 18-25 were recruited and data will be gathered based on the measures such as Demographics, Social Media Affinity Scale, Material Values Scale, the Fear of Missing Out Scale, and the Impulsive Buying Tendency Scale. SPSS version 27 was used for analysis. Correlation and regression methods of analysis would be used to analyze relationships between the variables. It was found that social media influence positively correlate with materialism and impulsive buying behavior and the impulsive buying behavior also had strong connections with materialism. Fear of missing out displayed valuable connection over an impulsive purchase and had sophisticated correlations with both social media and materialism. The regression analysis further revealed that the influence of social media and having fear of missing out built a significant predictability of buying impulsively

since of the three constructs of materialism, only a dimension of materialism appeared significant. This study focused on an under-researched population group in a developing economy and will help to enhance the literature on digital consumers across the world and its social-cultural impacts.

Keywords: social media influence, materialism, fear of missing out, impulsive buying, young adults, Pakistan

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List of Symbols

Symbol	Full Form
α	Alpha Cronbach's Index
β	Standardized Coefficient
f	Frequency
M	Mean
SD	Standard Deviation
%	Percentage
r	Correlation Coefficient

List of Abbreviations

Abbreviations	Full Form
APA	American Psychological Association
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
SMA	Social Media Affinity
MVS	Material Value Scale
MVS-C	Material Value Scale- Centrality
MVS-S	Material Value Scale- Success
MVS-H	Material Value Scale- Happiness
FOMO	Fear of Missing Out
IBTS	Impulsive Buying Tendency Scale
IBTS-C	Impulsive Buying Tendency Scale- Cognitive
IBTS-A	Impulsive Buying Tendency Scale- Affective

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