

The Role of Social Media Usage on Conspicuous Online Consumption among Millennial Consumers

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ABSTRACT

The ubiquity and maturation of the Internet and social media have given rise to social phenomena that impact consumer behavior, particularly in the realm of conspicuous online consumption. This study builds upon prior research by examining the factors influencing conspicuous online consumption among millennials in Jakarta who engage with social media platforms like YouTube and Instagram. The research methodology involved an online survey administered to 400 respondents, with data subsequently analyzed through a structural equation model, utilizing SmartPLS 4.0 software. The results illuminate a noteworthy positive correlation between the four variables studied. Moreover, they indicate that feelings of envy and materialism serve as mediating factors in the relationship between social media usage and conspicuous online consumption. In sum, this study offers valuable insights into the comprehension of conspicuous online consumption and its associated variables, bearing significance for both theory and practical applications. However, it's important to note certain limitations, such as the exclusive focus on the millennial cohort in Jakarta and the fact that the selected social media platforms were not explicitly linked to the mediating variables. Future research endeavors should explore the attitudes of other cohorts toward conspicuous online consumption among social media users.

ABSTRAK

Keberadaan dan kematangan Internet dan media sosial telah memunculkan fenomena sosial yang berdampak pada perilaku konsumen, terutama dalam hal konsumsi online yang mencolok. Penelitian ini merupakan kelanjutan dari penelitian sebelumnya yang meneliti faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhi konsumsi online yang mencolok di kalangan milenial di Jakarta yang menggunakan platform media sosial seperti YouTube dan Instagram. Metodologi penelitian melibatkan survei online yang diberikan kepada 400 responden, dengan data yang kemudian dianalisis melalui model persamaan struktural, menggunakan perangkat lunak SmartPLS 4.0. Hasilnya menunjukkan adanya korelasi positif yang penting antara empat variabel yang diteliti. Selain itu, hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa perasaan iri dan materialisme berperan sebagai faktor mediasi dalam hubungan antara penggunaan media sosial dan konsumsi online yang mencolok. Singkatnya, penelitian ini menawarkan wawasan yang berharga tentang pemahaman konsumsi online yang mencolok dan variabel-variabel yang terkait, yang memiliki arti penting bagi teori dan aplikasi praktis. Namun, penting untuk mencatat beberapa keterbatasan, seperti fokus eksklusif pada kelompok milenial di Jakarta dan fakta bahwa platform media sosial yang dipilih tidak secara eksplisit terkait dengan variabel mediasi. Penelitian di masa depan harus mengeksplorasi sikap kelompok lain terhadap konsumsi online yang mencolok di antara pengguna media sosial.

1. INTRODUCTION

Over the last decade, there has been a notable surge in the acquisition of luxury goods, particularly within the realm of "new luxury" items, spurred by advancements in organization and technology (Verdugo & Ponce, 2020). Additionally, the proliferation of technology and social media has markedly amplified the scope of conspicuous consumption in the online sphere (Tio & Sobari, 2021). For example, the act of show-

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casing one's possessions on social media has emerged as a contemporary form of conspicuous consumption. This enables users to openly display their affluence and demonstrate their ability to attain or maintain social status through their acquisitions (Duan & Dholakia, 2017). Social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, among others, have facilitated a direct connection between individuals and products or services, allowing users to present themselves as discerning consumers. Currently, nearly half of the global population is active on social media, with projections estimating that social media users will reach 4.41 billion by 2025 (Statista, 2020a; Statista, 2020b). Indonesia, boasting 170 million users or 61.8% of its total population, ranked among the countries with the highest social media penetration rates in January 2021, at 73.7% (Kemp, 2021). A diverse array of social media platforms continues to emerge in the contemporary landscape, enticing individuals to share aspects of their daily lives and even alter their purchasing behaviors. In fact, 71% of Internet users expressed willingness to make purchases from brands they follow on social media (Barysevich, 2020). This evolving phenomenon has engendered a transformation in consumer lifestyles and behaviors, with conspicuous consumption now playing a more pervasive and integral role in mass society.

Based on Statista's population census statistics (2023), it is reported that millennials constitute 25.8 percent of the Indonesian population. This demographic group, born between 1981 and 1996 according to Beresford Research (2022), stands out from earlier generations due to their early exposure to the Internet and their heavy reliance on social media, which has become an integral aspect of their daily lives (Soares et al., 2017). Research conducted by Salim et al. (2019) suggests that millennials in Indonesia are primarily driven by hedonistic motives when making purchases on social media, potentially leading to conspicuous consumption. Additionally, shifts in people's lifestyles and behaviors, combined with the pervasive influence of social media, may be influencing consumption patterns in emerging economies like Indonesia. Given the escalating number of social media users and their inclination towards conspicuous consumption, it is imperative to delve into the fundamental attributes governing the use of social media and conspicuous consumption among Indonesian millennials. However, further research is warranted to comprehensively understand these variables. Previous studies by Tio & Sobari (2021) focused on Generation Z, while the research by Burnasheva & Suh (2020) centered on South Korea's millennial population.

Despite its widespread popularity and the typically hedonistic motivations driving consumption, the use of social media may inadvertently diminish overall well-being, giving rise to feelings of envy. As outlined by Lin et al. (2018), various content categories, such as travel and leisure, financial affluence, career and academic achievements, personal relationships, and physical appearance, often serve as triggers for envy on social media platforms. Given the role of conspicuous consumption in social signaling, Loureiro et al. (2020) postulated that it could potentially be utilized as a means of self-improvement in response to feelings of envy. Notably, research indicates that envy serves as a motivating factor for individuals to allocate greater financial resources towards obtaining a prominent item, intending to bridge the perceived gap between themselves and the object of their envy (Agarwal et al., 2018).

Furthermore, Thoumrungroje (2018) examined the link between social media and materialism, discovering that individuals who engage more with social media and place significant importance on owning luxury items to signify wealth, accomplishment, and happiness tend to exhibit higher levels of materialism. Consequently, this study posits that consumers with heightened materialistic tendencies are more inclined towards conspicuous consumption. These emotional inclinations could further fuel the inclination of users to engage in conspicuous online consumption of positional goods, highlighting the significance of these aspects.

The advent of social media has revolutionized traditional theories of conspicuous consumption, as virtually all consumption now has the potential to be conspicuous contingent on how individuals leverage social media platforms. Past research underscores various factors that prompt social media users toward conspicuous consumption, with prior studies predominantly exploring Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM) (Thoumrungroje, 2014), narcissism (Niesiobędzka & Konaszewski, 2021), and self-presentation (Chen et al., 2020) within the realm of social media use. However, there remains a paucity of knowledge regarding the mediating mechanisms that underlie the connection between social media utilization and conspicuous online consumption.

After reviewing the prior literature, it is evident that there remains a need for further exploration and resolution of the topic at hand. Numerous unresolved debates persist regarding the subject under scru-

tiny, warranting additional research into the correlation between social media usage and conspicuous consumption. Moreover, there is a dearth of understanding concerning the underlying mediating mechanisms, including feelings of envy and materialism.

Millennials, given their substantial purchasing power and intensive use of social media (Burnasheva & Suh, 2020), hold heightened academic interest in this context. The surge in social media adoption among millennials, coupled with their inclination towards conspicuous consumption, underscores the necessity to delve into the mechanisms that underlie the nexus between social media usage and conspicuous consumption (Krause et al., 2019). Salim et al. (2019) posit that Indonesian millennials exhibit a hedonistic inclination towards shopping on social media, which is believed to significantly contribute to conspicuous consumption, especially among urban residents. Additionally, Utomo & Heriyanto (2022) reported that social media usage ranks as the second most popular online activity among Indonesian millennials, trailing only behind online purchasing (at 84 percent and 50 percent, respectively). Given the escalating use of social media and the characteristic traits of consumptive and hedonistic lifestyles in Indonesia, it is imperative to scrutinize the factors influencing social media use and conspicuous consumption among Indonesian millennials. To bridge these gaps, the present study aims to probe into a mediation model elucidating the underlying connection between social media use and conspicuous online consumption. This study will further elucidate how feelings of envy and materialism may manifest within the realm of social media usage and impact millennials' propensity to engage in conspicuous consumption.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND HYPOTHESES

Conspicuous Online Consumption

Conspicuous consumption pertains to the acquisition of goods or services based on the perceived social status they confer (Ismail et al., 2018). The term was initially introduced by Veblen in 1899, describing affluent individuals who invest substantial sums in expensive items to signify their societal standing (Oh, 2021). Individuals partake in conspicuous consumption with the aim of garnering social attention, conveying prestige, and enhancing their image in the eyes of others (Oh, 2021). Krause et al. (2019) further substantiate this notion, asserting that conspicuous consumption is driven by a desire to make an impression, bolster one's social standing, and amass prestige, rather than considerations of quality. Historically, conspicuous consumption has been closely linked with luxury goods (Eckhardt et al., 2015), encompassing diverse expressions of individual attributes, cultural identity, interests, value signaling, sexuality, age, and various other facets of personal identity (Wai & Osman, 2020).

Technological advancements have streamlined the sharing of purchasing and consumption experiences. As posited by Duan & Dholakia (2017), the act of showcasing and exhibiting goods on social media platforms can be viewed as a contemporary digital manifestation of conspicuous consumption, as it serves to publicly display one's affluence with the aim of acquiring or upholding social status. Social media platforms, an outgrowth of increasingly sophisticated technology, have burgeoned in recent years, providing an array of applications for human interaction (Wai & Osman, 2020). Through these interactions, many individuals present their hobbies and lifestyles, effectively elevating their social standing. Those who peruse the uploaded content may, in turn, be prompted to engage in conspicuous consumption (Wai & Osman, 2020).

Social Media Usage

Social media encompasses online platforms enabling users to create profiles within a closed system, maintain lists of connections, and peruse the connections of others, including friends, colleagues, and organizations. These platforms support various formats including text, images, videos, audio, and community-based interactions. Presently, one-third of daily Internet activity revolves around social media, with the average individual dedicating two hours and fifteen minutes per day to social media and messaging activities (Global Web Index, 2017). Hence, some scholars posit that social media serves as both a social platform and a personal digital archive, documenting users' social connections and preferences (Chen et al., 2020). Usage intensity, an indicator of a participant's active engagement with social media, quantifies the proportion of time devoted to active utilization (Wai & Osman, 2020). A study by Schivinski et al. (2019) introduced COBRAs ("Consumers' online brand-related activities") as a framework to describe actions within social media usage, encompassing three dimensions: consumption, contribution, and production, which can lead to positive behavioral outcomes. Additionally, Burnasheva & Suh (2020) highlighted two pivotal dimensions of social media use:

usage actions, encompassing activities like sharing, searching, consuming, contributing, and engaging; and usage intensity, gauging the duration and frequency of engagement.

Moreover, social comparison is believed to be a contributing factor to conspicuous consumption (Zheng et al., 2018a), and social media platforms offer an ideal environment for such comparisons. Hence, frequent use of social media is likely to expose individuals to comparison targets and opportunities. Research indicates that as usage intensity rises, individuals are more inclined to engage in social comparison activities, irrespective of the domain being compared (Jang et al., 2016). Consequently, social media platforms amplify comparisons related to wealth and material possessions, thereby heightening motivation. Online interaction further heightens the visibility of purchasing decisions compared to face-to-face interactions, as it doesn't necessarily involve the acquisition of expensive products but rather the portrayal of them as such. Coined by Veblen (1994), "conspicuous consumption" describes a socially evolved strategy for signaling status. From this perspective, the perceived equilibrium between price and status allows the acquisition and display of expensive luxury items to serve as external markers of status. The exposure to a plethora of information about goods and services through social media may lead customers to grapple with conflicting goals, a diminished sense of self-awareness, and a depletion of self-control resources. These conditions collectively elevate the risk of self-control lapses and indulgent behaviors (Thoumrungroje, 2018).

Studies by Widjajanta et al. (2018) and Wai & Osman (2020) highlight that overall conspicuous consumption, particularly in the online domain, is significantly influenced by social media usage (Taylor & Strutton, 2016). With the ubiquity of social media and the Internet, conspicuous consumption has undergone a transformation, with virtually all consumption subject to scrutiny based on social media activity (Yenicioğlu & Suerdem, 2015). For example, sharing a purchase on social media may be regarded as a contemporary form of conspicuous consumption, allowing users to flaunt their affluence and capacity to elevate or sustain their social standing (Duan & Dholakia, 2017). In accordance with previous research, it is hypothesized that increased social media usage is likely to lead to heightened levels of conspicuous online consumption (H1).

H1: Social media usage favorably affects conspicuous online consumption directly.

The mediating role of the feeling of envy and materialism

Envy, as defined by Van de Ven (2016), refers to the discomfort stemming from another person's good fortune. When individuals experience envy towards certain aspects of others' lives, it can lead to a palpable sense of unhappiness (Taylor & Strutton, 2016). There are two distinct forms of envy: malicious and benign (Lange & Crusius, 2015). Malicious envy is driven by a desire to bring the other person down to one's own level, while benign envy is motivated by a desire to elevate oneself to the level of the person evoking the emotion (Lange & Crusius, 2015). Loureiro et al. (2020) observed that benign envy motivates individuals to acquire the coveted item. Conversely, malicious envy prompts envious individuals to allocate more resources to a different product, seeking to differentiate themselves from the envied party. In the realm of social media, it is implied that envy towards fellow platform users heightens users' perceived threat to their self-image in relation to their purchasing behavior (Krasnova et al., 2015).

Numerous studies have found a link between social media usage and exposure to social comparison statistics (e.g., Lee, 2014; Vogel et al., 2014; Krause et al., 2019) along between social media usage and envy (Krasnova et al., 2015). Envy also plays a crucial role in advertising and promotion by researching the "keeping up with the Joneses" phenomenon (Krause et al., 2019). Increased self-promotional wants through visible online consumption on social media may also be driving factors behind other behavioral responses among social media users (Taylor & Strutton, 2016). People who post online about their great new goods can inspire envy in others. Indeed, researchers discovered that social media usage increases envy, reducing life satisfaction and well-being (Krasnova et al., 2015). In line with the prior study, this research hypothesizes that higher social media usage would likely lead to envy (H2).

In addition, a prior study by Taylor (2020) reveals that social media usage causes envy, which interacts with envy to push people to spend more publicly on social media. Moreover, research indicates that envy pushes people to spend more on a superior product to reduce the perceived gap between themselves and the object of their envy (Agarwal et al., 2018). In addition, conspicuous consumption is premised on envy as a motivation for purchasing and displaying status-evoking products (Yu, 2014). As a result, it is acknowledged that envy can result in conspicuous consumption. Consequently, conspicuous consumption may also be a self-improvement strategy against envy (H2). Several scholars have studied the connection between

envy and conspicuous consumption (Loureiro et al., 2020). Nevertheless, this correlation has yielded inconclusive findings. Although feelings of envy have been utilized as mediators in behavioral studies, consumer behavior research on the role of envy as a mediator is limited. According to Krause et al. (2019), envy plays a substantial mediator between social media use and conspicuous online consumption. This study investigated how people respond to envy, how they align with and are influenced by processes of awe and affinity toward the object of envy, and how they tend to engage in moral disengagement via social media. In short, the following hypothesis of the research is constructed:

H2: Social media usage will favorably affect feelings of envy.

H4: Feeling of envy will favorably affect conspicuous online consumption.

H6: Feeling of envy will mediate the association of social media usage with conspicuous online consumption.

Materialism is a value system in which a person prioritizes material goods to pursue pleasure and success (Thoumrungroje, 2018). According to scholars, materialists seek external gratification through material goods, increased financial status, and money expenditure (Islam et al., 2018). Highly materialistic consumers spend money to elevate their social status (Duan & Dholakia, 2018). They pursue luxury as a crucial component of their spending behavior for self-expression and identity formation (Duan & Dholakia, 2018). According to Fu & Liu (2019), materialists value wealth because it can signify social status and reputation. In the contemporary era of online social media contacts, this behavior among customers appears to be promoted. By offering a venue for customers to broadcast their assets and product reviews, this new media encourages more significant influence among friends and peers (Gupta & Vohra, 2019).

As per Gupta & Vohra (2019), social media platforms have evolved into pivotal digital communication channels through which consumers acquire knowledge about new products, exchange information, and establish connections with brands they consider worthy of purchase. Additionally, researchers frequently apply social comparison theory to comprehend the interplay between media consumption and materialistic tendencies (Thoumrungroje, 2018). According to Islam et al. (2018), engaging in social comparison, particularly when emulating media celebrities, significantly influences the development of materialistic attitudes. Given the substantial time spent on social media and the influence of social comparison theory, it is anticipated that there exists a positive correlation between social media usage and individuals' levels of materialism. In support of this notion, Thoumrungroje (2018) explored the nexus between social media engagement and materialism, revealing that consumers who actively participate in social networking exhibit higher degrees of materialistic inclinations. Building upon this prior research, the present study posits that heightened social media usage is likely to be associated with increased levels of materialism (H3).

Conspicuous consumption refers to the extravagant spending on high-end items and extravagant services as a means to display wealth, social status, or prestige (Podoshen et al., 2014; Thoumrungroje, 2018). Individuals with elevated levels of materialism are inclined towards ostentatious spending, given their inclination to view luxurious possessions as indicators of affluence, accomplishment, and contentment. This predisposes them to potential psychological risks like feelings of inadequacy and self-doubt (Van de Ven, 2016), which, in turn, tends to amplify their valuation of material belongings (Krause et al., 2019). Rooted in the concept defined by Veblen (1899), conspicuous consumption involves the display of wealth through the public consumption of goods, with social validation being a critical element (Oh, 2021). In societies driven by consumerism, individuals may internalize the belief that conspicuous items are requisite for attaining prestige and social recognition (Ismail et al., 2018). Considering that materialistic individuals associate ownership with happiness and perceive the acquisition of luxury items as indicative of affluence, success, and social standing, materialism and luxury consumption are closely intertwined (Sharda & Bhat, 2018). The extensive studies by Podoshen et al. (2014) and Thoumrungroje (2018) examining the nexus between materialism and conspicuous consumption, along with cross-national comparisons, affirm a positive correlation between materialism and conspicuous consumption. Additionally, Sharda and Bhat (2018) found that young Indian consumers gravitate towards expensive luxury brands to fulfill their materialistic aspirations. Consequently, this study posits that individuals with a strong inclination towards materialism are likely to derive greater satisfaction from luxury consumption (H5). Research has elucidated a significant positive relationship between materialism and social media, highlighting the mediating role of materialism in the influence of frequent social media use on the intention for compulsive purchases (Avci, 2023). Moreover, Thoumrungroje (2018) discerned the mediating function of materialism in the relationship between social media usage and conspicuous consumption. Given these insights, it is anticipated that individuals exhibiting higher levels of social media activity are more likely to exhibit materialistic tendencies, which in turn, could lead to conspicuous

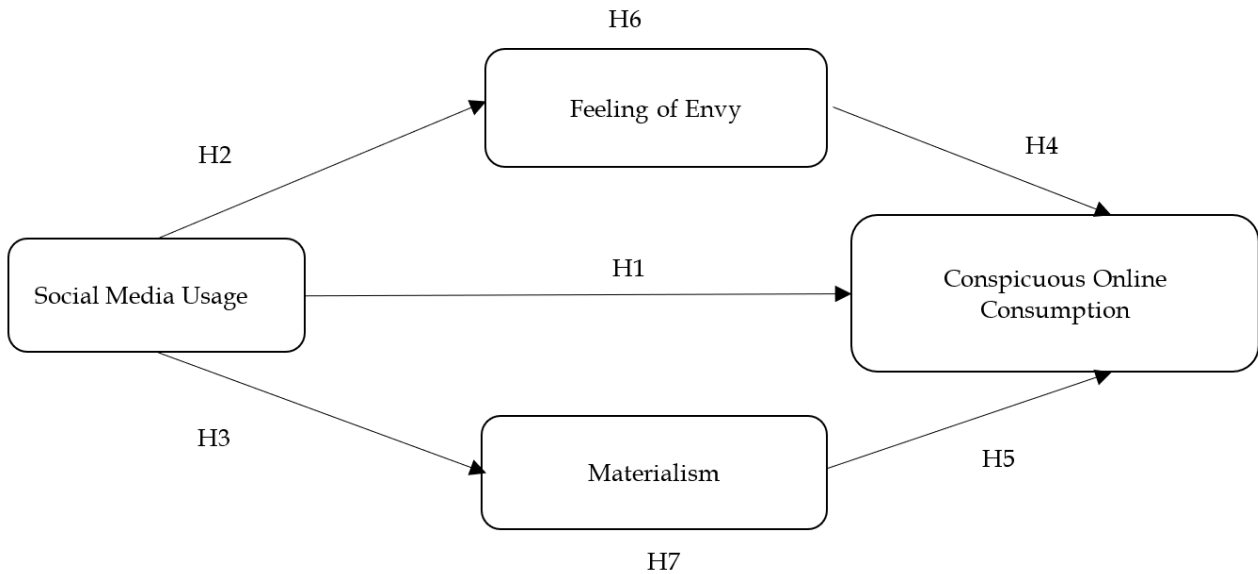


Figure 1. Theoretical framework

consumption. Building on previous research, it is hypothesized that variables like materialism play a motivating role for social media users to engage in conspicuous consumption (H7). In summary, the research hypotheses are as follows:

H3: Social media usage will favorably affect materialism.

H5: Materialism will favorably affect conspicuous online consumption.

H7: Materialism will mediate the association of social media usage with conspicuous online consumption.

From the above-developed hypothesis, a theoretical framework of this study is shown in Figure 1. This figure shows the conspicuous online consumption of social media usage, where feelings of envy and materialism also mediate the influence of social media.

3. RESEARCH METHOD

This study adopted a quantitative approach in its research design, focusing on Jakarta-based Millennials or Generation Y who utilize social media platforms as the unit of analysis. The selection of Millennials, born between 1981 and 1996 and currently aged between 26 and 41, was strategic due to their substantial influence in the luxury industry, driven by their escalating purchasing power and extensive use of social media. The study employed a cross-sectional data collection method, capturing information exclusively within a single period. As per Sekaran & Bougie (2019), this approach involved data collection occurring just once, spanning days, weeks, or months, to address the research inquiries.

Data was gathered through a questionnaire administered to a sample drawn from a singular population. Given the prominence of YouTube and Instagram in Indonesia, boasting 139 and 99.15 million users respectively in early 2022, the study's population consisted primarily of millennials in Indonesia. In this context, Jakarta-based millennials served as a representative group, particularly those who follow luxury brands on these social networking sites (Kemp, 2021). According to Jayani (2021), millennials were projected to constitute the majority of Jakarta's population in 2020. The 2020 Population Census by the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) reported that out of the total 10.56 million residents in the capital city, 2.83 million individuals, or 26.78% of the population, fell within the millennial demographic. The study adopted a non-probability sampling technique, specifically employing a purposive approach. This method was chosen for its efficiency, allowing data collection to align precisely with the study's specifications, particularly in light of time constraints (Sekaran & Bougie, 2019).

Additionally, every individual in the population is afforded an equal opportunity to participate as a research sample. Employing the Slovin formula, the study requires a minimum of 400 participants with a 5% margin of error. The sample was gathered through an online panel utilizing Google Forms, and the questionnaire link was disseminated via various social networking platforms. Participants were provided with a consent form outlining their rights as research subjects in the initial phase, irrespective of whether they were Facebook or Instagram users or belonged to the millennial demographic in Jakarta. The measurement scales

utilized in this study were drawn from existing literature, encompassing four primary concepts: social media usage (SMU), the feeling of envy (FE), materialism (M), and conspicuous online consumption (COC). Respondents rated these items on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 “Strongly disagree” to 5 “Strongly agree” (refer to Table 1). This scale was chosen for its ease of comprehension, efficiency in terms of time and effort. To gauge social media usage, items were selected from Burnasheva & Suh (2020), Gupta & Vohra (2019), and Taylor (2020). The measures for the feeling of envy were adapted from the scale developed by Krasnova (2015) and Krause (2019), while seven items pertaining to materialism were derived from Thounrungrroje (2018). Finally, indicators of conspicuous online consumption were sourced from Taylor & Strutton (2016) and Burnasheva & Suh (2020).

Subsequently, the data underwent analysis employing a Structural Equation Model (SEM) based on Partial Least Squares (PLS), which was then processed using SmartPLS software version 4.0. PLS encompasses two defining equations: the inner model, which specifies the relationship between the given construct and other constructs, and the outer model, which delineates the link between the given construct and its indicators. Evaluation involves assessing convergent and discriminant validity for indicators constituting latent constructs, as well as scrutinizing composite reliability and Cronbach’s alpha for the indicator block (Ghazali & Latan, 2015). The operational variables of the model’s hypotheses were tested utilizing the bootstrapping method.

4. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Demographic of Respondents

Table 1 displays the demographic profile. The age range between 16 and more than 46 shows a larger prevalence in the 26–30 age group (62.8%), while the gender split is very large, showing a higher presence in females (66.2%). Participants mostly live in the Jakarta area. Only around (8.9%) were not Jakarta residents. The participants’ average household income was extremely closely divided between Rp.4.500.000 - 6.000.000 and less than Rp.4.500.000. Therefore, around (77.5%) of participants often buy luxury products. In addition, most of the participants are social media users of YouTube or Instagram (99.2%).

Evaluation of Measurement Model

Throughout the entire procedure, 506 survey data were received. However, 103 data were eliminated because of ongoing screening for invalid or incomplete questionnaires, leaving 403 viable survey data. When the survey link was active, the screening was done regularly. To prevent the total number of surveys from exceeding the required 400, invalid and incomplete ones were eliminated.

In this research, a pilot test was conducted on 68 individuals who were recruited as respondents. The result showed that several indicators were invalid, resulting in these indicators being removed. Two measurement

Table 1. Demographic respondent

Category	Frequency	Percentage	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Age			Gender		
16 - 22	71	14.0	Female	229	65.2
21 - 25	5	1.0	Male	171	34.8
26 - 30	228	62.8	Household income		
31 - 35	92	18.2	< 4.500.000	175	35.0
36 - 40	1	0.2	4.500.000 - 6.500.000	177	34.6
41 - 45	2	0.4	6.500.000 - 8.500.000	36	24.3
> 46	1	0.2	> 8.500.000	12	6.1
Domicile			Buying Luxury Goods Frequency		
North Jakarta	56	11.1	Yes	48	9.5
East Jakarta	77	15.2	Often	286	77.5
Central Jakarta	90	17.8	Never	66	13.0
South Jakarta	107	33.2	YouTube or Instagram user		
West Jakarta	70	13.8	Yes	396	99.2
			No	4	0.8

models evaluated for construct reliability and validity used SmartPLS 4.0 to estimate the associations the conceptual model predicted would exist. The scales' internal consistency and reliability were checked using Cronbach's alpha. Through testing for consistency, this process tries to show that the scales are reliable and reproducible in multiple configurations (Krauss et al., 2019). In this context, the composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha values for each construct were examined to examine the reliability of each construct in this study. To be considered reliable, the composite reliability value must be more than 0.70, and Cronbach's alpha value must be greater than 0.60 (Hair et al., 2021).

Table 2 displays the construct reliability, with all composite reliability scores and Cronbach's alpha values exceeding 0.7, indicating excellent reliability. Item dependability is investigated through the outer loadings of scales measuring reflective structure. As shown in Table 2, the outer loading of each variable in this study equals or exceeds 0.723. Convergent validity will be satisfied if the outer loading value of each indicator is greater than 0.7 and the AVE value is greater than 0.5, respectively (Hair et al., 2021). However, several indicators (M2 and SMU7) were removed to fulfill the outer loading. Regarding convergent validity, the values of AVE (average variance extracted) are higher than 0.5, demonstrating that the variables connected to a particular construct are connected.

Discriminant validity was investigated by comparing the square root of AVE for each construct to its associations with other components (Hair et al., 2021). The square root of AVE for each construct (given in bold on the diagonal in Table 3) was greater than the correlation with other constructs in each column, as can be seen. Two additional methods were applied to evaluate the discriminant validity of the measurement models. An analysis of the indicators' cross-loading in the first step revealed that no indicator loads were greater on the opposing construct. Second, because all HTMT values are below 0.90 (Table 3), neither model is affected by the matrix Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT), which establishes discriminant validity between the two latent indicators (Hair et al., 2021). The result of the matrix Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) will reference discriminant validity in this research.

Evaluation of Structural Model

SmartPLS calculates R-squared (R^2) values for all endogenous model variables. R^2 values between 0.33 and 0.67 indicate a more accurate prediction model for the proposed research model (Hair et al., 2021).

Table 2. Internal consistency reliability and indicator reliability

Construct and Item	Outer Loading	Cronbach's alpha	AVE	CR
Social Media Usage		0.798	0.667	0.857
I use social media to share my purchase experience with a friend	0.834			
I respond to content shared by others.	0.748			
I often post my status updates on my social media page	0.864			
Feelings of Envy		0.864	0.650	0.902
Whenever I use social media, I frequently feel worthless.	0.815			
Observing others' social media success can be a little frustrating.	0.827			
The level of popularity that some people enjoy on social media is quite disturbing.	0.789			
Seeing how many things other people can afford on social media disturbs me in some way.	0.870			
I think I could never afford the level of luxury some people on social media do.	0.723			
Materialism		0.842	0.613	0.888
If I had the money to purchase more stuff, I would be happier.	0.750			
It sometimes causes me considerable distress because I cannot afford to get all I want.	0.768			
I admire people who own expensive goods	0.783			
I enjoy possessing things that can amaze people.	0.805			
The things I own reveal a great deal about my success in life.	0.807			
Conspicuous Online Consumption		0.891	0.755	0.925
I enjoy showing the luxury products I purchase on social media.	0.912			
Luxury products and brands are represented on my social media	0.862			
I show off things I buy on social media if they are prestigious.	0.900			

The findings in Table 4 indicate that the feeling of envy R^2 value is 0.203, indicating that social media usage has a moderate effect of 20.3% on feelings of envy. This conclusion confirmed the findings of Taylor & Strutton (2016) that envy may lead individuals to engage in conspicuous online consumption to reduce feelings of envy compared to significant others. When individuals exhibit positional possessions online, they may consciously or accidentally inspire envy in others. The R^2 value of materialism is 0.295%, indicating that social media usage moderately affects materialism. It confirms the findings of Duan & Dholakia (2017) that indicated customers with a higher materialism preference for material purchases over experiential ones for wealth presentation. Due to the characteristics of social media, displaying experience purchases to engage in conspicuous online consumption becomes as simple as exhibiting material purchases. As a result, consumers tend to be more materialistic when they engage in more social networking activities.

In addition, the R^2 value for conspicuous online consumption is 0.507, indicating that social media usage, feelings of envy, and materialism have a moderate effect of 50.7% on this variable. Although the model has a low R^2 of 0.203 for envy and 0.295 for materialism due to the values being less than 0.33, it has a reasonable R^2 of 0.507 for conspicuous online consumption due to the values being between 0.33 and 0.67 (Hair et al., 2021). Moreover, the value of F-squared is used to determine the influence of the predictor variable on the dependent variable. According to Hair et al. (2021), the f-square value is divided into three categories: small effect (0.02), medium effect (0.15), and significant effect (0.35). According to Table 4, the influence of social media usage on conspicuous online consumption, feelings of envy, and materialism are respectively 0.087, 0.257, and 0.423. It demonstrates that materialism is the most influential factor in social media usage. The results of the significant influence of conspicuous online consumption on feelings of envy, materialism, and social media usage are 0.07, 0.169, and 0.087, respectively. It suggests that materialism is the most significant factor in conspicuous online consumption.

Hypothesis Testing and Discussion

The non-parametric bootstrapping technique involved generating 5,000 random resamples to acquire path coefficient values, their associated standard errors, and t-values for each path coefficient. This was conducted to assess the hypotheses. The SEM underwent testing to scrutinize both the direct and mediated paths of envy and materialism, thereby evaluating the mediation effect posited in this study. The critical threshold for significance was set at 1.96. The path coefficient value indicates the nature and strength of the influence between exogenous and endogenous latent constructs. As all values fell within acceptable parameters, the results demonstrate an overall strong fit for the relationship.

Table 5 displays the direct effects, revealing that social media usage has a positive impact on conspicuous online consumption ($\beta=0.044$, $t=5.693$, $p<0.001$), as well as on feelings of envy ($\beta=0.045$, $t=9.960$, $p<0.001$), and materialism ($\beta=0.043$, $t=12.631$, $p<0.001$). This indicates that social media usage directly influences consumer behavior, thereby supporting hypotheses H1, H2, and H3. Previous research by Wai & Osman (2020) has also demonstrated that social media usage significantly influences consumers' inclination towards conspicuous consumption. Additionally, findings from Taylor & Strutton (2016) have suggested that social media can encourage ostentatious online consumption. This empirical evidence substantiates the idea that using social media platforms may lead to conspicuous consumption behavior among consumers. Various scholarly investigations have established a link between social media usage and exposure to social comparison metrics (e.g., Lee, 2014; Vogel et al., 2014; Krause et al., 2019). In alignment with H2 and H3, prior studies have shown a positive association between social media usage, experiences of envy, and subsequent reductions in overall life satisfaction and well-being. The connection between social media and materialism has been explored by Krasnova et al. (2015) and Thourungrroje (2018), both finding that individuals engaged in more social networking activities tend to exhibit higher levels of materialism. This provides evidence that the use of social media can evoke feelings of envy and cultivate materialistic tendencies. Sharing information about newly acquired possessions on online platforms has been identified as a trigger for envy in individuals. This phenomenon has been extensively examined, with research consistently indicating a positive correlation between the use of social media platforms and the experience of envy. Moreover, studies have revealed that envy exerts a negative influence on an individual's overall life satisfaction and well-being, as demonstrated by Krasnova et al. (2015).

The statistical analysis revealed a substantial impact of envy on conspicuous online consumption ($\beta=0.052$, $t=4.543$, $p<0.001$), supporting H4. This result, supported by Agarwal et al. (2018), suggested that

Table 3. Discriminant validity

Construct	Fornell & Larcker				HTMT		
	COC	FE	M	SMU	COC	FE	M
Conspicuous Online Consumption (COC)	0.869						
Feelings of Envy (FE)	0.552	0.806			0.624		
Materialism (M)	0.639	0.545	0.783		0.738	0.634	
Social Media Usage (SMU)	0.562	0.450	0.545	0.817	0.668	0.545	0.676

conspicuous consumerism is rooted in the motive of envy, whereby consumers want to diminish the perceived disparity between themselves and the object of their envy. Yu (2014) also posits that conspicuous consumption is rooted in envy as a driving force for acquiring and displaying status-affirming goods. It is, therefore, recognized that envy can lead to conspicuous consumption, and as a result, conspicuous consumption may be viewed as a means of self-improvement in response to envy. Furthermore, there was a statistically significant relationship between materialism, specifically about conspicuous online consumption ($\beta=0.047$, $t=8.003$, $p<0.001$), supporting H₅. Podoshen et al. (2014) established a correlation between materialism and conspicuous consumption. In addition, the act of purchasing luxury goods serves as an indication of one's achievement, affluence, and societal position. It is noteworthy that materialism and the consumption of luxury items are closely intertwined, as highlighted by Sharda & Bhat (2018).

To further confirm the mediating role of feelings of envy and materialism, bootstrapping was also employed. The path between social media usage and conspicuous online consumption was significant, showing that feelings of envy entirely mediate the relationship between social media usage and conspicuous consumption ($\beta=0.028$, $t=7.193$, $p<0.001$), and materialism ($\beta=0.027$, $t=3.898$, $p<0.001$). This result shows support for the self-improvement of the feeling of envy of conspicuous consumption in previous studies, which those consumers who are in low-power circumstances (Krause et al., 2019) and individuals with a higher level of materialism (Thoumrungroje, 2018) depend on the utilization of conspicuous goods to endeavor and adjust their status. Envy has been identified as a potential motivator for individuals to acquire assets to access better positions relative to others (Zheng et al., 2018b). Research has demonstrated that benign envy can prompt consumers to engage in competitive behavior with others to attain more attractive advantages and to consume the same products as their peers, such as cars, clothing, telephones, and travel (Belk, 2011). The desire to possess expensive and luxurious assets that are subject to social comparison and difficult to obtain can elicit feelings of envy.

Furthermore, high levels of envy are linked to a greater valuation of expensive products and a desire to signal one's status to others (Zheng et al., 2018b). Envy also plays a crucial role in advertising and promotion by researching the "keeping up with the Joneses" phenomenon (Krause et al., 2019). Le's (2015) research has confirmed that conspicuous consumption directly results from envy. This finding is further supported by Taylor & Strutton (2016), who revealed that individuals experiencing envy are more inclined to engage in conspicuous consumption on social media. Ahn et al.'s (2018) experimental investigation demonstrated that benign envy increases the desire to purchase economic capital-related products, such as luxury clothing.

Additionally, Belk (2011) has concluded that benign envy can prompt individuals to make sacrifices for luxury items, even at the expense of necessary products. In such a manner, feelings of envy and materialism are mediating the relationship between social media usage and conspicuous consumption. The phenomenon of consumptive behavior has shifted away from rational considerations and towards pursuing pleasure and emotional gratification by acquiring specific products or services. Emotional motives, such as personal and subjective factors like status, self-esteem, and love, significantly influence consumer behavior. Consumers driven by emotional motives often disregard the suitability of the goods they purchase concerning their needs and financial capacity, instead prioritizing their expectations of quality. This tendency towards excessive consumption can be attributed to the factors mentioned above. Considering these observations, it can be inferred that consumptive behavior involves the excessive acquisition of goods without due consideration for their alignment with personal needs and financial stability. The contemporary era demonstrates that individuals' pursuit of happiness is contingent upon possessing and displaying commodities widely regarded as luxury goods. This phenomenon is particularly evident among individuals who belong to the upper echelons of society. The discrepancy in access to luxury goods between individuals of the upper social class and those of the lower social class indicates the varying consumption levels within society (Shavitt

Table 4. F-Square and R-Square

Construct	f-Square				R-Square
	COC	FE	M	SMU	
COC					0.507
FE	0.075				0.203
M	0.169				0.295
SMU	0.087	0.257	0.423		–

Table 5. Direct and indirect effect results

Hypothesis	SD	T-statistic	P-value	Test result
Direct effect				
H1: SMU -> COC	0.044	5.693	0.000	Supported
H2: SMU -> FE	0.045	9.960	0.000	Supported
H3: SMU -> M	0.043	12.631	0.000	Supported
H4: FE -> COC	0.052	4.543	0.000	Supported
H5: M -> COC	0.047	8.003	0.000	Supported
Indirect effect				
H6: SMU -> FE -> COC	0.028	7.193	0.000	Supported
H7: SMU -> M -> COC	0.027	3.898	0.000	Supported

et al., 2016). The rationality of consumers within the community system has undergone significant developments and changes, as they now purchase goods not solely based on their needs but rather to satisfy their desires. individuals must also consider fulfilling their desires and basic needs to engage in consumption. consumption is not solely driven by the desire to acquire numerous commodities, which serves as a source of pleasure and self-gratification and facilitates the liberation of needs and wealth accumulation. rather, it encompasses a broader spectrum of human behavior, wherein individuals are not only presented with what they require but also with what they desire, thus supporting h_6 and h_7 (table 5).

5. CONCLUSION, IMPLICATION, SUGGESTION, AND LIMITATIONS

This study addresses a pertinent topic by examining the relationship between social media use and conspicuous consumption, and introduces a mediating model to elucidate this connection. The results demonstrate a significant positive impact of social media usage, feelings of envy, and materialism on conspicuous online consumption. Additionally, feelings of envy and materialism act as mediators in the relationship between social media use and conspicuous online consumption. This study sheds light on how these emotions manifest in the context of social media usage and influence millennials' inclination toward conspicuous consumption.

Primarily, this study enriches the existing body of social media literature by identifying feelings of envy, materialism, and conspicuous online consumption as consequential outcomes of social media use. By doing so, it extends the theoretical framework surrounding the impact of social media usage, particularly in the realms of envy, materialism, and conspicuous online consumption. As anticipated, this research underscores that heightened social media usage correlates with an increased tendency toward conspicuous online consumption. Moreover, this study corroborates and advances prior research by establishing that feelings of envy and materialism serve as mediators between social media usage and conspicuous online consumption. It reveals that the predictive power of social media use on the proclivity for conspicuous consumption is influenced by the mediating role of feelings of envy. This research also augments our comprehension of the relationship between social media usage and materialism, pinpointing materialism as an additional impetus for conspicuous online consumption. Consequently, individuals are more prone to experiencing envy and materialism as their involvement in social networking activities intensifies.

This study offers several pertinent practical implications for organizations. Firstly, it furnishes a comprehensive understanding of the psychological drivers behind online consumer behavior. This insight empowers companies and brands to proactively address customer needs. Managers can facilitate user engagement by encouraging comments, hashtag usage, sharing of innovative ideas, as well as photos and videos on their social media platforms. Secondly, the study underscores the influence of feelings of envy and materialism among social media users on the association between social media engagement and conspicuous consumption. Marketers should tailor their strategies to align with their target audience's sentiments of envy

and materialism. This means that managers and communication agencies targeting millennials, who may engage in social comparison and experience envy towards others, should craft brand messages that reframe these negative emotions into positive drivers for self-improvement. Lastly, in today's materialistic environment, there exists a significant cohort of consumers who highly value possessions and feel compelled to showcase them on social media. Companies can leverage this insight to target materialistic consumers who actively share their purchases on social platforms. By doing so, companies can effectively alert and assist marketing communicators in amplifying the visibility of their products.

There are several limitations to consider in this research. Firstly, the study's focus on a specific sample of millennials residing solely in Jakarta restricts the generalizability of the findings. While this location was chosen for its relevance to the study, it does limit the applicability of the results to populations with potentially diverse socio-demographic backgrounds. Future research endeavors should aim for more diverse samples across various locations and age groups. Secondly, the study's parameter, particularly in relation to social media usage, presents another limitation. YouTube and Instagram were the primary social media platforms examined for brand engagement. However, it remains uncertain whether there exists a causal relationship between these platforms and the emergence of feelings of materialism and envy. It is unclear if social media usage contributes to heightened materialistic tendencies or if materialistic individuals are more inclined to use it. Similarly, it is uncertain whether engaging with social media induces feelings of envy or if it simply encourages more frequent use. Further research should expand on these findings and consider different platforms for comparative analysis. Finally, the ultimate objective of this study was to investigate how materialism and feelings of envy mediate personality-driven motivations for engaging in conspicuous online consumption. These criteria explain a substantial portion of the variance in social media users' conspicuous online consumption. Future researchers should explore the potential moderating effects of additional personality traits or psychological variables, such as self-disclosure and self-consciousness, which may either mediate or alter the relationships outlined in this study.

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