

FACTORS INFLUENCING ONLINE CONSPICUOUS CONSUMPTION BEHAVIOR

NHÂN TỐ TÁC ĐỘNG ĐẾN HÀNH VI TIÊU DÙNG PHÔ TRƯƠNG TRỰC TUYẾN

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research is to find out what factors influence online conspicuous consumption behavior and how social media usage affects those factors. Applying a quantitative approach, an integrative model is proposed based on social comparison theory and a sample data size of 472 is collected from social media users. To perform data analysis, the author employed construct reliability test, convergent validity test and discriminant validity test, the data analysis process omits one item measuring envy and four items measuring xenocentrism due to their invalid outer loading values. Meanwhile, the measurement and structural model using partial least squares equation modelling (PLS-SEM) indicates a good model fit. The results show that social media usage, materialism, narcissism and envy strongly influence online conspicuous consumption, which is consistent with previous studies results. On the other hand, the present research's results rejected the direct effect of materialism on online conspicuous consumption. The findings of this research provide new insights for other researchers regarding the online aspect of conspicuous consumption and the role of consumer xenocentrism. Besides, managers can benefit from profound understanding of the results and implications as it may serve to aid them in developing effective marketing strategies and tactics.

Keywords: Online Conspicuous Consumption; Xenocentrism; Social Media Usage.

TÓM TẮT

Mục đích của nghiên cứu này là tìm hiểu những nhân tố ảnh hưởng đến hành vi tiêu dùng phô trương trực tuyến và cách sử dụng mạng xã hội tác động đến những nhân tố đó. Tác giả đã áp dụng phương pháp định lượng để tổng hợp một mô hình đề xuất dựa trên lý thuyết so sánh xã hội và mẫu dữ liệu thu thập thông qua mạng xã hội từ 472 đáp viên. Để thực hiện phân tích dữ liệu, tác giả đã sử dụng các kiểm định độ tin cậy của khái niệm, kiểm định hợp lệ hội tụ và kiểm định hợp lệ phân biệt, quá trình phân tích dữ liệu loại bỏ một mục đo lường sự ghen tị và bốn mục đo lường chủ nghĩa duy ngoại do giá trị tải ngoại không hợp lệ. Trong khi đó, mô hình đo lường và mô hình cấu trúc sử dụng mô hình phương trình cấu trúc tối thiểu bình phương (PLS-SEM) cho thấy sự phù hợp tốt của mô hình. Kết quả cho thấy việc sử dụng mạng xã hội, chủ nghĩa vật chất, chủ nghĩa tự yêu và sự ghen tị ảnh hưởng mạnh mẽ đến hành vi tiêu dùng phô trương trực tuyến, phù hợp với kết quả của các nghiên cứu trước đó. Mặt khác, kết quả nghiên cứu hiện tại đã bác bỏ tác động trực tiếp của chủ nghĩa vật chất đối với hành vi tiêu dùng phô trương trực tuyến. Những phát hiện của nghiên cứu này cung cấp cái nhìn mới cho các nhà nghiên cứu khác về khía cạnh trực tuyến của việc tiêu dùng phô trương và vai trò của chủ nghĩa duy ngoại của người tiêu dùng. Ngoài ra, các nhà quản lý có thể hưởng lợi từ sự hiểu biết sâu sắc về kết quả và ý nghĩa của nó, có thể giúp họ phát triển các chiến lược và tác vụ tiếp thị hiệu quả.

Từ khóa: Tiêu dùng phô trương trực tuyến, Chủ nghĩa duy ngoại, Cách dùng mạng xã hội.

1. Introduction

The trend of consumers buying expensive and unnecessary products has become increasingly prevalent in modern society (Qattan and Khasawneh, 2020). People consume products and/or services not only because of the need to use them, but also

because we want to achieve social status, promote ourselves and show off what we

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have to other people. Those needs are becoming important to one's life (Qattan and Khasawneh, 2020). As a result, recently conspicuous consumption has attracted a considerable number of scholars such as Taylor (2016), Zakaria et al. (2020), Nguyen and Pham (2021).

In the past, conspicuous consumption was common in developed countries (Zakaria et al., 2020). The trend, however, has been noticed in the middle classes of developing nations lately (Rahman et al., 2017). Vietnam is one of those countries. According to McKinsey (2021), Vietnam's middle class is projected to grow by 36 million people by 2030. With the rise of the middle class, Vietnam has seen purchase of more luxury goods, which leads to the trend of conspicuous consumption. Nowadays, it is not uncommon for Vietnamese consumers to purchase products and/or services with the main purpose of showing them off. Social media platforms make it even easier as they can spread information very quickly. According to Statista (2021), the estimated number of internet users in Vietnam is 72.53 million and by 2025, the online audience is expected to grow to 82.25 million users. Being one of the fastest-growing countries regarding the number of social media users, Vietnam has seen a wave of online conspicuous consumption. This phenomenon is consistent with what was suggested by Duan and Dholakia (2017). Meanwhile, Ellison et al. (2007) argued that the scope and character of social networks have been transformed by social media, enabling individuals to not only showcase themselves but also to generate, expand, and maintain their social connections.

Additionally, when it comes to foreign products, consumers in developing economies are more likely to purchase them conspicuously. Unlike consumers in

developed countries who tend to prefer domestic brands, those in developing countries like Vietnam usually have a xenocentrism tendency. In these countries, the term "imported" refers to a variety of symbolic meanings, including high social position, good quality, and fashion (Batra et al., 2000). As a result, consumers concerned about their social status in emerging countries are always managing to obtain imported products, despite their higher pricing (Ger et al., 1993). Thus, they prefer foreign brands as they view them as symbols of social status as well as conspicuous consumption (Batra et al., 2000).

The majority of prior research on conspicuous consumption has focused on the consumption aspect of Veblen's theory (Qattan and Khasawneh, 2020). Furthermore, they usually overlooked the "online" perspective of the phenomenon as well as the role of consumer xenocentrism towards conspicuous consumption behavior. Although there are scholars investigating online conspicuous consumption in emerging markets such as Qattan and Khasawneh (2020), most of them did not investigate consumer xenocentrism. Despite the fact that there is a considerable number of studies on conspicuous consumption and xenocentrism separately, not much is known about their relationship, especially online conspicuous consumption. Applying social comparison theory, this research aims to bridge the gap by investigating "Factors influencing online conspicuous consumption behavior". The results of this research contribute to the existing literature, helping global managers and marketers gain better understanding of Vietnamese consumer's online conspicuous consumption behavior, hence they can execute marketing strategies and tactics to improve their businesses in Vietnam.

This research aims to answer two research questions:

- What are factors that influence online conspicuous consumption behavior?
- How does social media usage affect those factors?

2. Theoretical Background

2.1. Conceptual Background

2.1.1. Social comparison theory

Festinger (1954) first gave the idea of social comparison theory, arguing that when a variety of people are available for comparison, someone who is close to one's own ability or opinion is chosen. According to Festinger (1954), people tend to compare their opinion and abilities with others. People are more likely to prefer a "standard setter" who is superior in comparison, according to previous research (Goethals, 1986).

Social comparison theory is the basis of various studies on conspicuous consumption (Qattan & Khasawneh, 2020). Taylor & Strutton (2016) examined the influence of envy and narcissism on online conspicuous consumption, while Aagerup & Nilsson (2016) investigated the relationship between green conspicuous behavior and social comparisons. Qattan & Khasawneh (2020) discovered that most of their respondents indicated that they compare their possessions with others because of conspicuous consumption, claiming people cannot help but compare themselves to online friends when those friends show off what they bought on social media, which often leads to negative feelings.

Applying social comparison theory, Taylor & Strutton (2016) then examined the role of envy and narcissism towards online conspicuous consumption. The effect of narcissism under the context of social comparison theory was also investigated by other researchers such as Kong et

al. (2020), Ozimek et al. (2018); whereas envy was studied by Latif et al. (2020), Krasnova et al. (2015). Other researchers using social comparison theory to investigate consumer behavior also considered the crucial role of materialism (Islam et al., 2018; Hu & Liu, 2020).

2.1.2. Social Media Usage

The fundamental idea behind social media is to connect computer networks in order to share information, emotions, and thoughts. According to Taylor & Strutton (2016), Seo & Park (2018), social media is an online platform where users are allowed to compose and share their profiles and interact with other members in a specified system (Taylor & Strutton, 2016; Seo & Park, 2018). In terms of social media usage, Bolton et al. (2013) point out two components including usage actions and usage intensity; usage actions comprise sharing, searching, consuming, contributing and participating, whereas usage intensity comprises duration and frequency.

2.1.3. Envy

According to Smith and Kim (2007), envy is a combination of unpleasant and often hurtful feelings induced by comparison with someone or a group of persons who has something we yearn to". According to Belk (2008), Crusius and Mussweiler (2012), and Folkes (2011), envy occurs when individuals covet possessions that others have which are considered superior. This often leads to negative emotions such as frustration (Maurya, 2012) and even depression (Etchegoyen and Nemas, 2003; Malone et al., 2006). Taylor & Strutton (2016) point out that envy may cause havoc on consumers' minds, make them feel less well about themselves or even lead to viscerally felt degrees of distress amongst afflicted persons. In social media, users can evoke envy by presenting high-end goods either explicitly or

implicitly, intentionally, or unintentionally (Taylor & Strutton, 2016).

2.1.4. *Narcissism*

Narcissism is considered a dimensional personality trait including an impressive self-identity as well as activities and manners intended to keep this self-identity in the face of reality (Emmons, 1984; Morf & Rhodewalt, 2001). Sedikides et al. (2004) identified self-centrism, entitlement, dominance, and manipulative interpersonal orientation as key defining characteristics of narcissism. Narcissists seek high-status things (i.e., extravagant, unique, spectacular) to reinforce their magnificent self-concept, they are more concerned with the symbolic rather than the utilitarian value of goods and use their materialistic possessions to set themselves apart from others (Cisek et al., 2014).

2.1.5. *Materialism*

Belk and Pollay (1985a, 1985b) defined materialism as the notion that material possessions and financial wealth are the primary means to achieving happiness and social advancement. Materialists consume more than other consumers, with an obvious purpose to consume products that provide the owner with social recognition or status (Mason, 2001). Cleveland et al., (2009) point out consumers with high levels of materialism often use belongings to judge people's success. Trinh & Phau (2012) suggest these consumers frequently exhibit acquired possessions to set themselves apart from others.

2.1.6. *Xenocentrism*

Xenocentrism is defined by Cleveland & Laroche (2012) as the appreciation or preference of a certain cultural outgroup or outgroups above one's own cultural in-group. From the consumer viewpoint, xenocentrism is believed to be the belief, normative, and

ethical acceptability of customers purchasing goods that are created outside their nations (Shimp & Sharma, 1987). Consequently, people are willing to pay more for imported goods than they would for locally created goods (Stier, 2010).

2.1.7. *Online Conspicuous Consumption*

O'Cass and McEwen (2004) define conspicuous consumption as "the tendency for people to enhance their image by displaying their wealth in a way that others can see". Qattan and Khasawneh (2020) argue that social media has provided consumers with a new technological platform to display and share their conspicuous consumption behaviors. As a result, online conspicuous consumption has emerged as a digital extension of traditional conspicuous consumption, whereby individuals showcase their luxurious possessions or experiences (Taylor & Strutton, 2016; Qattan & Khasawneh, 2020).

2.2. *Hypothesis Development*

2.2.1. *Social Media Usage and Online Conspicuous Consumption*

According to Khan and Dhar (2006), hedonic and deluxe goods choices take precedence over the utilitarian and basic ones if a consumer has encountered a action that created a goof self-concept. Because conspicuous products are ones that display great wealth through extravagant spending that satisfies a person's demand for prestige (Podoshen and Andrzejewski, 2012), the consumption of expensive goods serves a more pleasant objective than an essential one. Taylor & Strutton (2016); Wilcox & Stephen (2013) pointed that that social media usage can lead people to make illogical decisions by increasing their spending on conspicuous things. Therefore, a hypothesis is suggested:

H1: Social Media Usage will positively affect Online Conspicuous Consumption.

2.2.2. Social Media Usage and Envy

Explaining social comparison, Festinger (1954) argued that “there exists, in the human organism, a drive to evaluate his opinion and his abilities”. Research has shown that social media makes it easier for users to evaluate and compare themselves to other users. Information that users use includes conversations, photos, status updates (Burke et al., 2010). Duffy and Shaw (2000) found that more information leads to a higher level of envy. Similarly, other researchers have discovered the close relationship between social media usage and envy. Therefore, a hypothesis is suggested:

H2: Social Media Usage will positively affect Envy.

2.2.3. Social Media Usage and Narcissism

Social media has a number of characteristics that make it appear to be an ideal instrument for showing grandiosity and attracting desired attention (Barry & McDougall, 2018). Due to the widespread use of social media on mobile devices, individuals now have constant access to these platforms, allowing narcissists to constantly manage and promote an idealized online self, and receive frequent feedback on their efforts (Casale & Banchi, 2020). In addition, Mehdizadeh (2010) discovered a positive correlation between social media usage and narcissism scores, and Dahling et al. (2009) and O'Dell (2010) confirmed that social networking sites have an impact on users' narcissistic tendencies and online conspicuous consumption (Alloway et al., 2014; Buffardi & Campbell, 2008; Taylor & Strutton, 2016). Therefore, the hypothesis is proposed that:

H3: Social Media Usage will positively affect Narcissism.

2.2.4. Social Media Usage and Materialism

The prevalence of social media usage among diverse demographic groups suggests that social media content is likely to reflect characteristics of consumer culture (Lewis et al., 2008). Dubow et al. (2007) contend that frequent exposure to consumption-related content has the potential to shape attitudes about material possessions and wealth, particularly among young users who may be more susceptible to media influence. Specifically, users' views on spending, ownership, and consumption may gradually align with those of their peers as they engage with consumption-related content shared by others on social media (Ellison et al., 2014). Therefore, it is proposed that:

H4: Social Media Usage will positively affect Materialism.

2.2.5. Envy and Online Conspicuous Consumption

Envious social media users may express or simply accept sentiments of longing, inferiority, and resentment (Parrott, 1991), leading them to self-promote to assuage these feelings. Alternatively, they may try to elicit jealousy in others so as to elicit bad feelings in others and alleviate their own negative emotions (Taylor, 2016). Taylor (2016) also argued that users on social media sites might elicit jealousy by displaying positional goods, either overtly or implicitly, and unintentionally or purposefully. Additionally, according to Veblen (1989), when individuals engage in conspicuous consumption with the intent to provoke jealousy in others, it is referred to as invidious consumption. As a result, the following hypothesis is put forward:

H5: Envy will positively affect Online Conspicuous Consumption.

2.2.6. Narcissism and Online Conspicuous Consumption

Oltmanns and Emery (2005) have stated that narcissism is characterized by grandiosity, a desire for admiration, and an inflated sense of self-importance, which is why exhibitionist behaviors like showy consumption are common among narcissists. Narcissists tend to buy high-end clothing and brand-name products to showcase their superiority (Sedikides et al., 2011; Woodruffe-Burton, 1998), and Buffardi and Campbell (2008) found that individuals with higher levels of narcissism were more likely to engage in self-promotion on social media. Mehdizadeh (2010) also found a positive correlation between narcissism and social media usage. Based on these findings, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H6: Narcissism will positively affect Online Conspicuous Consumption.

2.2.7. Materialism and Online Conspicuous Consumption

Huddres and Pandelaere (2012) found that there is a positive association between purchasing luxury goods and life satisfaction among those who place a high value on material possessions. Mason (1981) suggested that individuals who place high value on material possessions tend to consume and display items that signal their status. Additionally, Ger and Belk's (1996) cross-cultural qualitative research on materialism suggested that materialism is often associated with a competitive display of status and achievement. Hence, the following hypothesis is suggested:

H7: Materialism will positively affect Online Conspicuous Consumption.

2.2.8. Materialism and Xenocentrism

Previous research found that materialism has a relationship with the value and status buying behavior (Duan and Dholakja, 2018). Meanwhile, the considerable relationship between materialism and material buying of foreign products was proved by previous empirical study (Ahmed et al., 2014). Additionally, Bevan-Dye et al. (2013) addressed that materialistic consumers in developing countries are more likely to consider their native cultures as inferior and to have positive biases toward foreign countries. Similarly, Nguyen and Pham (2021) pointed out that those consumers view foreign products as having a greater status and quality. Consumers with a stronger xenocentric perspective are more likely to have a high level of materialism (Nguyen and Pham, 2021). As a result, the following hypothesis is formed:

H8: Materialism will positively affect Xenocentrism.

2.2.9. Xenocentrism and Online Conspicuous Consumption

Xenocentrism is a frequent cultural phenomenon, with recorded data proving that people see alien culture as superior to all others, even their own (Prince et al., 2016). Purchasing imported items and brands is considered akin to purchasing luxury goods in some nations, particularly developing countries (Correia et al., 2016, in Zakaria et al., 2020). Furthermore, Batra et al. (2000) pointed out that imported and foreign products are considered as symbols of social status in these countries. Thus, despite their higher pricing, people in developing countries who are concerned about their social status always manage to purchase those imported products (Ger et al., 1993).

By doing so, they “show that one’s social status has changed” (Mueller et al., 2015). Hence, the following hypothesis is suggested:

H9: Xenocentrism will positively affect Online Conspicuous Consumption.

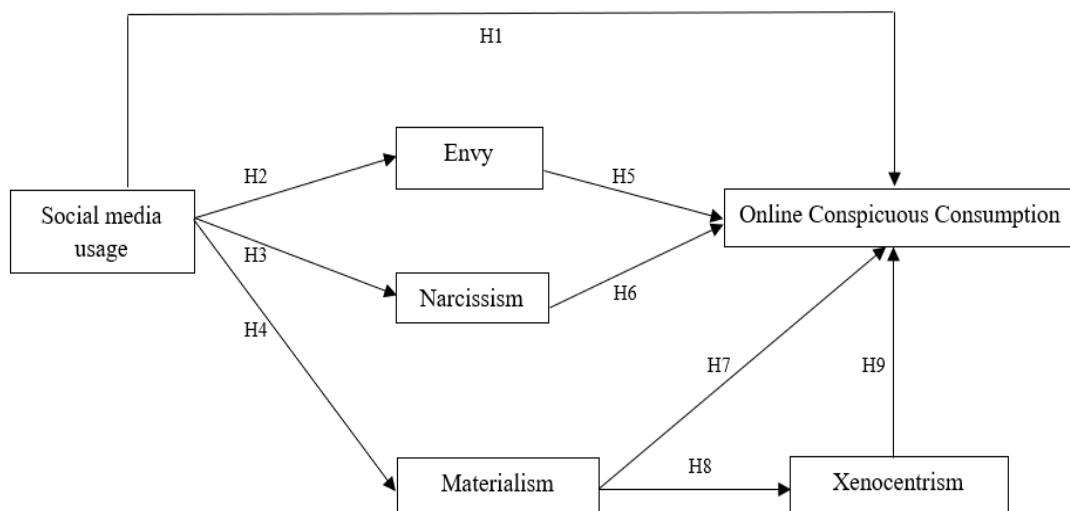


Figure 1. Proposed research model

3. Research method

This study conducted the quantitative method to find out the factors affecting online conspicuous consumption. The study employs convenience sampling due to constraints in resources and time. To collect data for the study, a self-administered survey was developed using Google Form and distributed through online-based platforms such as Facebook. The survey was conducted in March 2022, and a total of 526 responses were collected. After the screening process, 54 questionnaires with missing data were

eliminated, leaving a final sample of 472 responses for data analysis.

To measure the six main constructs of the study, the researchers used scales that were based on previous studies. A total of 40 items were used, which are presented in Table 1. Participants were asked to rate their level of agreement on each item using a five-point Likert scale. The questionnaire was divided into three parts: an introduction, demographic information section, and the evaluation of the 40 items. The data collected were analyzed using SPSS 20.0 and SmartPLS 3.0.

Table 1. Measurement scales for constructs in the model

Construct	Code	Questionnaire Item	Source
Social media usage	SU1	On social media, how often do you comment on friends’ page?	Krasnova et al. (2013), Taylor & Strutton (2016)
	SU2	On social media, how often do you check out what friend are up to?	
	SU3	On social media, how often do you post status updates about yourself?	
	SU4	On social media, how often do you look	

		through the conversations friends are having?	
	SU5	On social media, how often do you browse the profiles of other people?	
	SU6	On social media, how often do you send direct messages to friends?	
	SU7	On social media, how often do you look through your news feed?	
Envy	EV1	When on social media, how often do you find yourself envious of how successful others are in general?	Krasnova et al. (2013), Taylor & Strutton (2016)
	EV2	When on social media, how often do you find yourself envious of the abilities others have?	
	EV3	When on social media, how often do you find yourself envious of the success others have in their career?	
	EV4	When on social media, how often do you find yourself envious of how much of the world others have seen?	
	EV5	When on social media, how often do you find yourself envious of the travel, leisure and vacations others enjoy?	
	EV6	When on social media, how often do you find yourself envious of the possessions of others?	
	EV7	When on social media, how often do you find yourself envious of the things others are able to buy?	
Narcissism	NA1	I am an extraordinary person	Ames et al. (2006), Taylor & Strutton (2016)
	NA2	I think I am a special person	
	NA3	I am more capable than other people	
	NA4	I always know what I am doing	
	NA5	I know that I am good because everybody keeps telling me so	
Materialism	MA1	I admire people who own expensive homes, cars, and clothes	Richins (2004)
	MA2	I like a lot of luxury in my life	
	MA3	I'd be happier if I could afford to buy more things	
	MA4	The things I own say a lot about how well I'm doing in life	
	MA5	I enjoy spending money on things that aren't practical	
	MA6	My life would be better if I owned certain thing I don't have	

Xenocentrism	XE1	Using foreign products enhances my self-esteem	Balabanis & Diamantopoulos (2016)
	XE2	People that buy domestic products are less regarded by others	
	XE3	I prefer foreign to domestic brands as most of my acquaintances buy foreign brands	
	XE4	Buying foreign products makes me trendier	
	XE5	I purchase foreign brands to differentiate myself from others	
	XE6	There are very few domestic products that are of equal quality to foreign products	
	XE7	I cannot think of any domestic brands that are as good as the foreign ones I purchase	
	XE8	I trust more foreign than domestic companies because they are more experienced and have more resources	
	XE9	In most product categories, foreign brands outperform domestic ones	
	XE10	I trust foreign products more than the domestic ones	
Online conspicuous consumption	OCC1	On social media, I show off thing I buy if they are expensive	Eastman et al. (1999), Taylor & Stratton (2016)
	OCC2	I am more likely to highlight my possessions on social media if they have some snob appeal	
	OCC3	My social media page includes products and brands that are prestigious	
	OCC4	When I buy things, I like to show them off on social media	
	OCC5	I "like" brands on social media because they have status	

4. Results

4.1. Demographic information

As the demographic data reveal, among 472 participants, 287 are females and 185 are males. These findings suggest that women are more concerned about the study's subject and pay more attention to online conspicuous consumption. Most of the respondents (59.1%) are 19-25 years old so the research findings may be more relevant to young adults between 19 and 25 years old than persons in other age group. Besides, 51.5%

of the respondents are pursuing undergraduate programmes while 6-10 million Vietnam Dong is the most common monthly income.

4.2. Measurement model

Prior to evaluating the proposed structural model, the measurement model is evaluated through empirical methods. This is achieved by using PLS to investigate the construct reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity of the variables that are included in the proposed model. The

reliability of each construct in the research framework, as assessed by Cronbach's alpha, was greater than 0.7 when analyzed with full samples. Additionally, the composite reliability values, ranging from 0.864 to 0.921, demonstrate the internal consistency of the construct indicators (Henseler et al., 2009).

The measurement model's convergent validity is assessed through two criteria: outer loadings and average variance extracted (AVE), as outlined by Hair et al. (2014). The majority of the items had outer loadings that exceeded the threshold of 0.7, except for five items (one measuring Envy and four measuring Xenocentrism) that had lower outer loading values and were therefore removed from the analysis. Moreover, the AVE values for all constructs were greater than 0.5, ranging from 0.550 to 0.634 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981), indicating a

high level of convergent validity in the measurement model.

To evaluate the discriminant validity of the measurement model, the square root of AVE for each construct was compared to its correlation values with other constructs, following the approach proposed by Fornell and Larcker (1981). The results showed that the square root of AVE (found on the main diagonal) was consistently greater than the correlations among the constructs, indicating good discriminant validity. Additionally, the model was assessed for multicollinearity by examining the VIF values, which should be below 3 (Hair et al., 2019). The largest VIF value in the model was 2.413, indicating the absence of multicollinearity. These indices suggest that the theoretical model proposed in this study can be used to analyze the observed data in detail.

Table 2. Latent variable correlations, Cronbach's alpha, AVE, and CR

	EV	MA	NA	OCC	SO	XE
Envy	0.742					
Materialism	0.644	0.796				
Narcissism	0.705	0.650	0.748			
Online conspicuous consumption	0.716	0.654	0.651	0.786		
Social media usage	0.710	0.708	0.677	0.729	0.790	
Xenocentrism	0.568	0.716	0.550	0.656	0.605	0.773
Cronbach's alpha	0.836	0.885	0.803	0.845	0.899	0.864
CR	0.880	0.912	0.864	0.890	0.921	0.899
AVE	0.550	0.634	0.559	0.618	0.624	0.597

Table 3. Outer loadings

	EV	MA	NA	OCC	SO	XE
OCC1				0.784		
OCC2				0.801		
OCC3				0.785		
OCC4				0.745		
OCC5				0.816		
EV2	0.770					
EV3	0.769					
EV4	0.743					
EV5	0.724					
EV6	0.727					
EV7	0.716					
MA1		0.782				
MA2		0.791				
MA3		0.792				
MA4		0.801				
MA5		0.790				
MA6		0.822				
NA1			0.741			
NA2			0.730			
NA3			0.755			
NA4			0.788			
NA5			0.722			
SO1					0.829	
SO2					0.743	
SO3					0.796	
SO4					0.824	
SO5					0.777	
SO6					0.792	
SO7					0.764	
XE1						0.796
XE2						0.820
XE3						0.788
XE4						0.761
XE8						0.708
XE9						0.758

4.3. Structural model

According to Henseler et al. (2014), the SRMR (Standardized Root Mean Square Residual) can be used as a goodness of fit measure for PLS-SEM to detect parameter deviation in the model. In this study, the SRMR value was calculated to be 0.047, which is below the recommended threshold of 0.08 and suggests a good fit of the model (Henseler et al., 2016).

PLS-SEM was used for further analysis. Models and hypotheses were assessed through the significance of path coefficient (β) values and the significance levels of each factor.

The model showed that social media usage explained 50.4% of envy, 45.8% of narcissism and 50.1% of materialism. Materialism explained 51.2% of xenocentrism. Social media usage, envy, narcissism and xenocentrism together explained 65.9% of online conspicuous consumption. All five of these indicators have a significant impact on explaining the factors in the model.

H1 predicted that online conspicuous consumption would be positively influenced by social media usage. Results shows that H1 ($\beta = 0.297$, $p < 0.05$) is supported. H2 mentioned the significant positive influence of social media usage on envy ($\beta = 0.710$, $p < 0.05$), supporting H2. Similarly, social media usage showed a significantly positive effect on narcissism ($\beta = 0.677$, $p < 0.05$) and materialism ($\beta = 0.708$, $p < 0.05$), supporting H3 and H4.

Besides, envy ($\beta = 0.278$, $p < 0.05$), narcissism ($\beta = 0.106$, $p < 0.05$) showed a positive effect on online conspicuous consumption, supporting H5 and H6. However, materialism did not show significantly positive effect on online

conspicuous consumption ($\beta = 0.020$, $p > 0.05$), rejecting H7.

In addition, materialism showed a significantly positive effect on xenocentrism ($\beta = 0.716$, $p < 0.05$), hence H8 was accepted. Likewise, xenocentrism did have a positive influence on online conspicuous consumption ($\beta = 0.246$, $p < 0.05$), supporting H9.

Table 4. Summary of hypothesis testing results

Hypothesis	Original Sample (O)	P Values	
H1: Social Media Usage will positively affect Online Conspicuous Consumption.	0.297	0.000	Supported
H2: Social Media Usage will positively affect Envy.	0.710	0.000	Supported
H3: Social Media Usage will positively affect Narcissism.	0.677	0.000	Supported
H4: Social Media Usage will positively affect Materialism.	0.708	0.000	Supported
H5: Envy will positively affect Online Conspicuous Consumption.	0.278	0.000	Supported
H6: Narcissism will positively affect Online Conspicuous	0.106	0.018	Supported

Consumption.			
H7: Materialism will positively affect Online Conspicuous Consumption.	0.020	0.757	Not Supported
H8: Materialism will positively affect Xenocentrism.	0.716	0.000	Supported
H9: Xenocentrism will positively affect Online Conspicuous Consumption.	0.246	0.000	Supported

5. Discussion and conclusion

This study investigates how psychological factors and social media usage influence online conspicuous consumption in Vietnam, which is an unexplored potential market with regards to conspicuous consumption behavior. It shows that social media usage, materialism, narcissism and envy strongly influence online conspicuous consumption. In line with these results, previous studies have shown similar results (Mehdizadeh, 2010; Wilcox and Stephen, 2013; Mueller et al., 2015; Taylor and Strutton, 2016). Moreover, this research discovers the importance of xenocentrism towards online conspicuous consumption, which not much research has been conducted on. Under the context of Vietnam, the results also show that materialism plays a crucial role in influencing consumer xenocentrism, which is supported by Nguyen and Pham (2021). This result reaffirms the existing literature on materialism and xenocentrism in developing countries, showing that consumers view foreign products as having a greater status and quality. Consumers with a stronger xenocentric perspective are more likely to

have a high level of materialism (Nguyen and Pham, 2021). Especially, in an emerging economy like Vietnam, products from developed countries usually come with higher prices compared to domestic products. Hence, to materialistic customers in developing countries, products from developed countries may be appealing because materially they are superior and this belief may lead to consumer xenocentrism. Global marketers should make marketing efforts to improve consumer perception towards the country of origin of products and/or services through promoting the country's culture, language and product standards. Positioning foreign products and/or services as highly material ones may help marketers to push online conspicuous consumers to make decisions to consume those products.

On the other hand, the present research's results rejected the direct effect of materialism on online conspicuous consumption, which is incompatible with Mason (1981) and Hudders and Pandelaere (2012). This result implies that in Vietnam, online conspicuous consumers are not always materialists, although materialism can still indirectly affect online conspicuous consumption through xenocentrism. This could be explained that to Vietnamese consumers who do not have a strong xenocentric tendency, there may be more types of products and services that they want to show off online, not only expensive or high-end ones. This result is reasonable, especially because it was conducted during Covid-19 pandemic. The loss of lives during the pandemic may have led consumers to realize that wealth is not everything. Even conspicuous consumers now have other concerns and other things rather than highly material products that they consider valuable and are worth showing off to others. Thus,

consumers may have realized their need for affection and companionship, hence they may shift to conspicuously consume products and services that meet this need. This result may imply a change in conspicuous consumption trend as well as the motives of it in Vietnam. Considering this change and the rejection of the direct relationship between materialism and online conspicuous consumption, future researchers should make efforts to investigate further on this.

This research also contributes to the existing literature in several ways. It investigates factors influencing online conspicuous consumption in Vietnam on a much more in-depth level than what is available in existing literature as there is limited literature on the topic that has Vietnam as the context. Firstly, it focuses on the "online" perspective of conspicuous consumption, addressing the rise of social media use, and the need for scholars to gain a better understanding towards online conspicuous consumption, especially in emerging countries. Secondly, this research adds to the current understanding with five factors that affect online conspicuous consumption. Although this research substantially contributes to the understanding of online conspicuous consumption in the Vietnamese market, there remain limitations. Future research into this topic should investigate the influence of other external factors, such as demographics, electronic word-of-mouth, culture and others, towards online conspicuous consumption. In the future, it would be valuable for researchers to explore the relationship between materialism and online conspicuous consumption in order to gain a better understanding of the results. Additionally, it would be beneficial to conduct future research with a more representative sample that is suitable for generalization.

6. Declaration of competing interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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