

IMPACT OF MATERIALISM ON IMPULSIVE BUYING: MEDIATING ROLE OF CREDIT CARD USE AND BRAND LOYALTY

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Abstract. The purpose of this study is to investigate the influence of materialism on impulsive buying behavior considering credit card use and brand loyalty as mediators between the relationship of materialism and impulsive buying in the Pakistani context. Paper, as well as electronic questionnaires, were used to collect data from consumers. In order to examine the hypotheses, regression analysis was performed. In addition, hierarchical regression method was used to test the mediators. The findings of the study indicated that materialism positively impacts credit card use, brand loyalty, and impulsive buying. Furthermore, credit card usage and brand loyalty mediate the relationship between materialism and impulsive buying. All hypotheses were supported except one regarding the association between brand loyalty and impulsive buying. The study was conducted on consumers of Pakistan. It might be possible that consumers of different regions may have different attitudes. The findings are beneficial for firms and marketers who always try to achieve a match between their offerings and consumer's dispositions. The study contributes to the existing literature by examining the

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mediating role of brand loyalty which was not previously examined at large.

Keywords: Credit card use, Brand loyalty, Impulsive Buying, Consumers

I. INTRODUCTION

Impulsive buying can be defined as an unreflective and instant purchase that consumers have not planned (Jones, Reynolds, Mothersbaugh, & Beatty, 2007). Previous studies investigated and extended our understanding of the significant antecedents of impulsive buying (Jalees, 2009). However, most of the studies on impulsive buying were conducted in western nations and little research has been done in third world countries like Pakistan (Jalees, 2009). Research indicated that economic improvements positively impact impulsive buying (Kacen & Lee, 2002) and the economic condition of Pakistan is improving as its GDP continued to raise over 5% and reached at 5.79% in the fiscal year 2018 that is highest in 13 years (Pakistan Economic Survey, 2018). Therefore, it becomes important to study impulsive buying in the Pakistani context. Moreover, Ali, Ramzan, Razi, Khan, and Fatima (2012) noted that materialistic thinking of Pakistani people is increasing. Materialistic people determine their achievement by the value of their possessions (Richins & Dawson, 1992), therefore, they are likely to make more impulsive purchases (Tatzel, 2002; Ubel, 2009). Past researches indicated that consumer's spending level and usage of credit card is positively influenced by their degree of materialism (Pinto, Parente, & Palmer, 2000; Watson, 2003). In Pakistan, credit card transactions have been growing because consumeristic and materialistic societies perceived it as a boon for themselves and this increase in credit card usage positively influences impulsive buying (Thomas, Desai, & Seenivasan, 2010). In a similar way, materialistic consumers are also brand loyal because they do not desire variety in products that they possess (Troisi, Christopher, & Marek, 2006). However, these brand loyal customers are not likely to be impulsive buyers as brand loyalty is described as the continuing buying of a particular brand toward which the customer has a positive attitude (Wilkie, 1994) while impulsive buying involves a shift from routine tasks (Sharma, Sivakumaran, & Marshall, 2010). Hence, the main purpose of

this paper is to investigate the relationship between materialism, credit card use, brand loyalty, and impulsive buying. The two variables i.e. brand loyalty and credit card use are treated as mediators between the relationship of materialism and impulsive buying. Given that, the following research questions are developed:

RQ1: Does materialism impact on credit card use, brand loyalty and impulsive buying?

RQ2: Does credit card use and brand loyalty mediate the association between materialism and impulsive buying?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

IMPACT OF MATERIALISM ON BRAND LOYALTY

“Materialism has been defined as the importance one attaches to worldly possessions” (Belk, 1984, p. 291). Materialism is a concept in which materialistic acquisitions provide happiness to individuals (Richins & Dawson, 1992). Belk (1984) suggests non-generosity, possessiveness, and jealousy as three estimates when materialism is considered as a personality trait. For materialistic consumers, the personal achievement is largely determined by the value of possessions that they possessed (Richins & Dawson, 1992). Wang (2016) recently studied the interrelationship between materialism, social stratification, post materialism, and consumption. However, the literature is scarce about the association between materialism and brand loyalty (Goldsmith, Flynn, & Clark, 2012). As the rapid advancements are taking place in Pakistan, therefore, it is necessary to consider the dispositions such as materialism of its people. However, a little research has done on materialism so far in Pakistan.

Rindfleisch, Burroughs, and Wong (2008) examined the relationship between brand loyalty and materialism, and results indicated a minor association among them. Goldsmith et al. (2012) found that clothing brand loyalty is positively influenced by materialism. Similarly, Sprout, Czellar, and Spangenberg (2009) indicated that the concept of brand engagement is near to the concept of materialism and found that a relationship exists between brand loyalty and brand engaged status

consumption (BESC). As the possession of materialistic goods is a source of happiness for materialistic societies, therefore, they are likely to stay away from different brands because the risk factor associated with them bring unhappiness. In such instances, they will keep buying products that they trust to make them happy (Ailawadi, Neslin, & Gedenk, 2001). Based on the above literature, we hypothesize that materialism positively impacts brand loyalty.

H1: Materialism has a positive impact on brand loyalty.

IMPACT OF MATERIALISM ON CREDIT CARD USE

Credit card is a critical possession that has the potential to push the worldwide obsession of possession (Pinto *et al.*, 2000). In Pakistan, the use of credit cards is increasing continuously as according to the (*Payment Systems Review Report*, 2018), the number of transactions made through credit cards in the fiscal year 2018 was 85.5 million and the value of these transactions was Rs. 201.5 billion. Moreover, in comparison with the previous year, a growth of 37.3% in volume and 31.2% in value was reported. The positive impact of materialism on credit card usage has been reported (Pinto *et al.*, 2000) which is later confirmed (Pirog & Roberts, 2007). They examined the influence of credit card use on college students and they found that the possession of credit cards influence the purchasing patterns of materialistic students, and they spend more as compared to those who use other modes of payment (Soman & Gourville, 2001). Watson (2003) also found that the credit card balances of highly materialistic people are likely to be high as compared with those who are less materialistic and they prefer to use installment credit and borrow money.

Moreover, credit cards, as a tool of money, encourage materialistic consumers to achieve their materialistic goals and have the capacity to enhance one's self naturally (Pradhan, Israel, & Jena, 2018). Most studies on credit card use have been conducted in western cultures. However, materialism may produce varying effects in different cultures (Ogden & Cheng, 2011). In addition, the relationship between materialism and credit card use also vary among different segments based on different characteristics including income, gender, residential place, educational qualification and income (Pradhan *et al.*, 2018). Thus, the following

hypothesis is proposed in a context that is different culturally and demographically from the west.

H2: Materialism has a positive impact on credit card use.

IMPACT OF MATERIALISM ON IMPULSIVE BUYING

Individuals who give importance to the quantifiable possessions are likely to have an assortment of goods which improve and exhibit their status, authority, and position in society. Impulsively purchased goods represent self-identity and because such possessions provide happiness to the materialistic consumers (Dittmar, Beattie, & Friese, 1995; Featherstone, 2007), they are likely to show a favorable attitude towards impulsive buying (Tatzel, 2002). Impulsive buying behavior can be influenced by consumer's short term mental position (Rook & Fisher, 1995) or by situation-specific factors (Vohs & Faber, 2007), and is related to the concept of materialism (Richins & Dawson, 1992). For comfort-seeking buyers, the value derived by making an impulse buying is likely to be more important as compared to the disutility derived from long-term downside (Ramanathan & Menon, 2006; Ubel, 2009). Richins (2011) highlighted that materialistic consumers spend more impulsively as compare to other consumers because they believe that they can achieve social position through physical possessions. Moreover, expenditures on unnecessary or relatively unimportant things are positively viewed by materialistic consumers (Amos, Holmes, & Keneson, 2014) which leads to fortify the confidence in consumers and enhances societal position (Badgaiyan & Verma, 2014; Richins, 2011). Based on the above discussion, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H3: Materialism has a positive impact on impulsive buying.

IMPACT OF BRAND LOYALTY ON IMPULSIVE BUYING

Although impulsive and compulsive buying are two different concepts in qualitative aspect in terms of output, both have much resemblance (Flight, Rountree, & Beatty, 2012; Kwak, Zinkhan, DeLorme, & Larsen, 2006) and determinants of both are same, such as identity concerns and materialism (Verplanken & Sato, 2011). According to some researchers (Clark & Calleja, 2008; d'Astous, 1990; Thompson & Prendergast, 2015), impulsive and compulsive buying lies on the same

behavioral scale where impulsive buying occurs lies on early stage while compulsive buying lies on the upper extremity. They identified impulsive buying as a lighter indication of compulsive buying. The nature of compulsive buyers is variety seeking, therefore, their level of brand engagement is low while non-compulsive buyers have believed on their best-loved brand and perceive riskier to buy different brands (Horváth & Birgelen, 2015). The concepts that supported the variety seeking in literature includes “satiation, boredom, curiosity, novelty, change and stimulation” which appear to associate with the idea of impulsive buying behavior (Punj, 2011). Sharma *et al.* (2010) argued that customers feel excitement and novelty in their shopping experience with variety seeking and impulse buying and it offers customers to take a shift from boredom. However, on the other side, brand loyalty determines the level of the consumer’s attachment to a specific brand (David, 1991; Podoshen, Li, & Zhang, 2011). Brand loyalty with its behavioral and attitudinal elements (Kim, Morris, & Swait, 2008) is central to brand equity (Kaynak, Salman, & Tatoglu, 2008). In a similar way, Wilkie (1994) highlighted that brand loyalty refers to the consistent buying of a specific product toward which the consumer has a favorable attitude. Oliver (1999) also described brand loyalty as the repeat and continuous buying of a specific brand. However, Sharma *et al.* (2010) highlighted that both variety seeking and impulsive buying makes the shopping experience novel and excited, enable customers to eliminate boredom by shifting from routine tasks.

Based on the above discussion, we can hypothesize that brand loyal customers would not likely to show impulsive buying behavior.

H4: Brand loyalty has a negative impact on impulsive buying.

IMPACT OF CREDIT CARD USE ON IMPULSIVE BUYING

Feinberg (1986) argued the mere presence of credit cards encourage people to spend more and the availability of money positively related to the IB (Beatty & Ferrell, 1998). However, Hunt, Chatterjee, Florsheim, and Kernan (1990) attempted to replicate these findings but failed. Therefore, further studies are required to examine the association between credit card use and impulsive buying.

According to Bearden and Netemeyer (1999), impulsive shoppers are influenced by the sudden shopping related stimuli because they tend to be more responsive to the surprising and unanticipated thoughts while shopping. The availability of credit cards provides an opportunity to spend beyond what a person can if only cash was available, thus resulting in impulsive buying (Pradhan et al., 2018). Research conducted by Feinberg (1986) indicated that those college students spend more who use credit cards. In a similar way, Hayhoe, Leach, Allen, and Edwards (2005) also concluded that college students prefer to buy with credit cards as compared to other means.

In addition, it is very easy for today's creditors to give revolving credit due to technological improvements (Durkin, 2000). Consumers always spend more than necessary on their consumptions when they are using credit cards (Soman & Gourville, 2001). Moreover, Karbasivar and Yarahmadi (2011) indicated that impulsive buying is directly influenced by credit card use, especially in apparel purchases. Credit cards have the potential to meet the sudden need for money which leads consumers to spend more than necessary (Ger & Belk, 1996), and ultimately encouragement of IB (Roberts & Jones, 2001). Based on the above discussion, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H5: Credit card use has a positive impact on impulsive buying.

MEDIATING RELATIONSHIPS

Materialistic people have a favorable attitude toward status consumption and they are more involved in the consumption of those objects that are more evident to society (Tatzel, 2002). It suggests that materialists are likely to express the social status and credit cards have the capacity to make those purchases possible that otherwise could be difficult otherwise (Bernthal, Crockett, & Rose, 2005). Inform of credit cards, there is a huge amount of money available for materialistic people which weakens their impulse and ultimately results in IB (Beatty & Ferrell, 1998).

Moreover, past studies examined the patterns in which materialism influences credit card usage (Roberts & Jones, 2001), brand loyalty (Rindfleisch et al., 2008), and impulsive buying (Atulkar & Kesari, 2018). Similarly, prior researches also investigated the effect of credit

card usage on impulsive buying (Pirog & Roberts, 2007; Thomas et al., 2010) and the impact of brand loyalty on impulsive buying (Šeinauskienė, Maščinskienė, & Jucaitytė, 2015).

In addition, Bandyopadhyay (2016) suggested that the role of credit card usage should be investigated in future studies. The researcher argued that in certain situations, the customer may feel an urge to buy impulsively but he/she may not have the required amount of money to make the actual purchase. In those situations, a credit card may facilitate the happening of actual purchase. Similarly, Omid (2016) highlighted that the relationship between brand loyalty and impulsive buying is not much investigated. He suggested relating brand loyalty with impulsive buying in future research. Moreover, a detailed review of the literature revealed that no paper examines the mediating role of brand loyalty between materialism and impulsive buying. Based on the above literature, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H6: Credit card use mediates the relationship between materialism and impulsive buying.

H7: Brand loyalty mediates the relationship between materialism and impulsive buying.

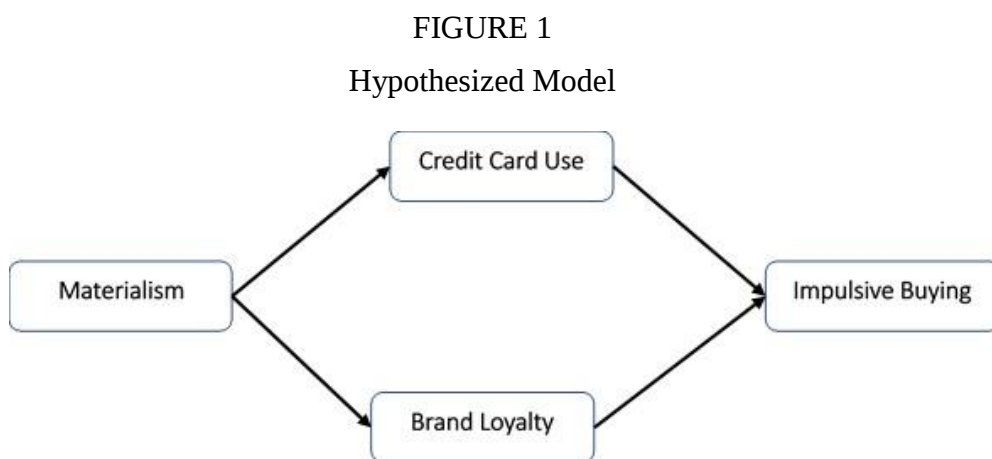
THEORY OF PLANNED BEHAVIOR

Theory of planned behavior is a well-established model to predict the behavior (Ajzen, 1991). Theory of planned behavior is based on three constructs i.e. attitude toward the behavior, subjective norms and perceived control over behavior. Attitude explains the extent to which an individual has a positive or negative assessment of the behavior. Subjective norms explain the extent to which the individual has pressure from referent groups to perform the behavior. And the last construct is perceived behavioral control which refers to the degree to which person perceive comfort or difficulty in performing the behavior. Theory of planned behavior can be used to justify the model of this study. Tatzel (2002) highlighted that materialistic people have a positive attitude towards the consumption of those products that are more evident to society. As theory of planned behavior stated that behavior is based on that person's attitude. Therefore, those materialistic people, based on their attitude are more likely to use credit cards as credit card itself is a status symbol in society (Pradhan *et al.*, 2018) and they become brand

loyal to certain brands which ultimately leads them to the impulsive buying.

III. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In the previous section, the relationship between materialism, credit card use, brand loyalty, and impulsive buying is reviewed and hypotheses are developed. The proposed model for testing the hypotheses is illustrated in Figure 1



IV. METHODS

SAMPLE AND PROCEDURES

The consistently changing lifestyle of customers, due to a developing the economy, has significantly evolved the retail sector of the country. In return, the contributions of the retail sector to the economy are significant. The value of the retail sector of Pakistan was 4.2 billion dollars that equal around 18% GDP for the period 2007-2012 (*Pakistan Bureau of Statistics*, 2012). During this period, if we consider the private sector, a significant increase of 130% in consumption occurred. It suggests that it is significant to understand the purchase behavior especially impulsive buying in the continuously growing retail sector of Pakistan. Moreover, impulsive buying has been studied mostly in the United States and other developed nations, however, a little research has been done on this topic in East countries specifically in Pakistan (Jalees,

2009). Therefore, the current study was conducted on retail customers of Pakistan. The study was conducted in non-contrived settings by using a quantitative approach. As the study involved the variable credit card use, therefore, respondents were required to have at least one credit card. Customers in shopping malls are more likely to have credit cards. For this reason, the data were collected from shoppers in different shopping malls of Lahore, Pakistan. The malls include Emporium Mall, Packages Mall, The Mall of Lahore and other retail stores. As the population of this study was unknown, therefore, the sample size was determined by using item-response theory with criteria of 10 responses against each item of the questionnaire. Then data were collected by using a convenience sampling technique. First, permission was obtained from managers of shopping malls and then questionnaires were handed over to those customers who were agreed to participate. Before circulating questionnaire, the respondents were asked whether they use a credit card. Paper, as well as electronic questionnaires, were used to collect data as per the convenience of respondents. A total of 210 questionnaires were distributed. Out of these 210 questionnaires, 196 received back and the response rate was $(196 \div 210)$ 92.86%. As compared to paper and pencil surveys, the response rate is high in online surveys (Kaplowitz, Hadlock, & Levine, 2004).

Respondents were also evaluated based on certain demographic variables such as gender, age, qualification, age, occupation, and income level. Based on gender, most of the respondents were female ($N = 102$, 52.6%). Based on age, mostly respondents aged between 18 to 29 years ($N = 130$, 67%). In the case of qualification, most respondents were having a master's degree ($N = 76$, 39.6%). By occupation, most respondents were employees ($N = 115$, 59%). Finally, the income of majority respondents was between 25,000 to 60,000 ($N = 87$, 36.5%).

MEASURES

Regarding all constructs used in the current study, all scales were developed by previous authors and operationalized in developed countries. The same scales were adapted to use in Pakistan. A five-point Likert scale ranging from "1-strongly disagree" to "5-strongly agree" was used to elicit the responses.

Materialism: Materialism was measured by using a five-item scale adopted from study of Cakarnis and D'Alessandro (2015) and reported the reliability as 0.76. The scale was developed by Richins (2011). A sample item includes “It is really important to me to have really nice things”.

Credit Card Use: To measure credit card use, eight items were used from a twelve-items scale developed by Roberts and Jones (2001) and reported reliability as 0.77. The 12-items scale was operationalized by Pradhan et al. (2018) and they excluded 4 items because of the low factor loading and used the remaining 8 items. The Cronbach's Alpha of these 8 items was 0.90. Therefore, the same 8 items were used in the current study. The sample item includes “I am less concerned with the price of a product when I use a credit card”.

Impulsive Buying: A four-item scale developed by Sneath, Lacey, and Kennett-Hensel (2009) was used to measure impulsive buying of respondents. The reported Cronbach's Alpha is 0.87. A sample item includes “I buy things I had not planned on purchasing”.

Brand Loyalty: To measure brand loyalty of consumers, 4 items scale was used developed by Ailawadi et al. (2001). The same scale was used by Ismail (2017) and reported reliability as 0.86. A sample item includes “I feel confidence in a brand that I always buy”. (See Appendix for Questionnaire)

V. RESULTS

PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS

In a preliminary analysis, data were analyzed for missing values, outliers and data normality as these may impact the results of the study (Graham, 2009). Although the presence of missing values is a common problem in all types of researches, however, no missing value was found in current study data. The possible reasons might be the collection of data through self-administered questionnaires and electronic forms. For outlier analysis, box plot method was used and the data was found to be free from any outlier. The normality of data was examined through two methods. First, to check normality visually, frequency distribution (histogram) and P-P plot (probability-probability plot) methods were

used (Field, 2009). In a frequency distribution, the observed values are plotted with respect to their frequencies which provide a visual estimation about whether the distribution follows a bell-shaped (Peat & Barton, 2008). The data of the current study found to be normal as the distribution values lie within the bell-shaped. Second, measures of Skewness and Kurtosis were used to investigate the normality of data (Kline, 2005). According to Brown and Moore (2012), the standard values of Kurtosis ranges between -10 and +10, and for skewness, it falls between -3 and +3. In the current study, the values of Skewness and Kurtosis for all variables found to be within the acceptable range.

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Table 1 shows the values of mean, standard deviation, Cronbach Alpha and Pearson's correlation of all the variables. The mean scores for all variables range between 3.02 and 3.82 with standard deviation ranging between 0.68 to 0.98. The mean scores show that consumers agreed regarding materialism ($M = 3.82$) and brand loyalty ($M = 3.82$) while they were neutral regarding credit card use ($M = 3.02$) and impulsive buying ($M = 3.42$).

The correlation values indicate that materialism is positively related with credit card use ($r = 0.48$, $P < 0.01$), brand loyalty ($r = 0.55$, $P < 0.01$) and impulsive buying ($r = 0.47$, $P < 0.01$). Similarly, credit card use and brand loyalty are positively related with impulsive buying ($r = 0.52$ and 0.39 , $P < 0.01$ respectively). The reliability values of all variables are above 0.6 which is acceptable (Hair, 2006).

TABLE 1

Mean, Standard Deviation, Cronbach's Alpha and Correlation

Variable	Mean	S.D	Cronbach Alpha	Mat	CC	BL	IB
Mat	3.82	0.68	0.64	1			
CC	3.02	0.82	0.82	0.48**	1		
BL	3.82	0.84	0.73	0.55**	0.43**	1	
IB	3.42	0.98	0.76	0.47**	0.52**	0.39**	1

“Notes: Mat=Materialism, CC=Credit Card, BL=Brand Loyalty, IB=Impulsive Buying, S.D =Standard Deviation, ** $p < 0.01$ ”

REGRESSION ANALYSIS

The values of the Table 2 shows that materialism has a positive influence on credit card use ($\beta = 0.58$, $P < 0.01$), brand loyalty ($\beta = 0.68$, $P < 0.01$) and impulsive buying ($\beta = 0.67$, $P < 0.01$), thus supporting hypothesis H1, H2 and H3. Similarly, brand loyalty and credit card use found to have a positive impact on impulsive buying ($\beta = 0.46$ & 0.61 , $P < 0.01$ respectively) which supported the hypothesis H5 but not supported the hypothesis H4. The values of r-square represent the extent of variation independent variables that are explained by independent variables. The values of r-square ranges from 0.15 to 0.30.

TABLE 2
Regression Analysis

Hypothesis	R ²	β	P	Result
Mat→BL	0.30	0.68	0.00	Supported
Mat→CC	0.23	0.58	0.00	Supported
Mat→IB	0.22	0.67	0.00	Supported
BL→IB	0.15	0.46	0.00	Not Supported
CC→IB	0.27	0.61	0.00	Supported

"Notes: Mat: Materialism; CC= Credit Card; BL= Brand Loyalty; IB= Impulsive Buying"

MEDIATION ANALYSIS

To examine the mediating role of credit card, use and brand loyalty between the relationship of materialism and impulsive buying, the study used hierarchical regression. First of all, the three basic conditions of mediation were investigated (Baron & Kenny, 1986). First, materialism was regressed with impulsive buying to note its significant impact. Second, materialism was regressed with credit card use and noted a significant association. Third, credit card use was regressed with impulsive buying to note its significance thereby all the basic assumptions were fulfilled.

In the hierarchical regression process, in the first step demographical variables were added as controlled variables. In the second step, materialism was added to note its significant impact ($\beta = 0.61$, $P < 0.01$). In the third step when credit card use was added as a mediating variable

then the value of materialism in the third step remains significant ($\beta = 0.36$, $P < 0.01$). And the value of credit card used in the third step noted as significant ($\beta = 0.46$, $P < 0.01$). This shows that credit card use partially mediates the association between materialism and impulsive buying (Table 3a).

TABLE 3-A
Results of Credit Card Use Mediation

Variables	M1(β)	M2(β)	M3(β)
Control Variables			
Gender	0.27	0.20	0.17
Age	0.34**	0.20*	0.14
Qualification	-0.10	-0.10	-0.13
Occupation	-0.01	-0.03	-0.00
Income	0.09	0.11	0.12
Independent Variable			
Mat		0.61**	0.36**
Mediating Variable			
CC			0.46**
R Square	0.07	0.24	0.35
ΔR Square	-	0.17	0.11

“Notes: Mat=Materialism, CC=Credit Card, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$ ”

Similarly, the mediating impact of brand loyalty was assessed by following the same procedure. First, materialism was regressed with impulsive buying to note its significant impact. Second, materialism was regressed with brand loyalty and noted a significant association. Third, brand loyalty was regressed with impulsive buying to note its significance thereby all the basic assumptions were fulfilled. Then in the hierarchical regression process, in the first step demographical variables were added as controlled variables. In the second step, materialism was added to note its significant impact ($\beta = 0.61$, $P < 0.01$). In the third step when brand loyalty was added as a mediating variable then the value of materialism in the third step remains significant ($\beta = 0.48$, $P < 0.01$) and the value of brand loyalty in the third step noted as significant ($\beta = 0.20$, $P < 0.05$). This shows that brand loyalty partially mediates the association between materialism and impulsive buying (Table 3b).

TABLE 3-B
Results of Credit Card Use Mediation

Variables	M1(β)	M2(β)	M3(β)
Control Variables			
Gender	0.27	0.20	0.20
Age	0.34**	0.20*	0.19*
Qualification	-0.10	-0.10	-0.10
Occupation	-0.01	-0.03	-0.03
Income	0.09	0.11	0.09
Independent Variable			
Mat		0.61**	0.48**
Mediating Variable			
BL			0.20*
R Square	0.07	0.24	0.26
Δ R Square	-	0.17	0.02

“Notes: Mat=Materialism, BL=Brand Loyalty, *p < 0.05; ** p < 0.01”

VI. DISCUSSION

The present study examines the direct association between materialism, brand loyalty, credit card use and impulsive buying. Moreover, it also examined the mediating role of credit card use and brand loyalty between the relationship of materialism and impulsive buying.

The findings of the current study found a positive association between materialism and impulsive buying that is in line with previous researches (Richins, 2011; Tatzel, 2002), which suggests that materialistic consumers are likely to spend more and make more impulsive purchases. Materialistic people continuously contest and relate themselves with other people in society, therefore, they are more likely to make purchases impulsively in their quest of obtaining more material goods (Pradhan *et al.*, 2018). Similarly, in accordance with previous studies, the study findings suggest that the use of credit card increases

due to the consumer's desire to achieve social status through material belongings (Pirog & Roberts, 2007). There are different views about the materialism of Pakistanis. They are described as fewer materialists in comparison to USA (Ger & Belk, 1996). However, as less developed countries in Asia make efforts towards achieving economic success, therefore, it is very plausible that people of these countries turn out to be more materialistic and places more emphasis on positional values, for example, status display and conspicuous consumption (Batra, Ramaswamy, Alden, Steenkamp, & Ramachander, 2000; Fang & Podoshen, 2017; Podoshen, Andrzejewski, & Hunt, 2014; Podoshen *et al.*, 2011). Moreover, a past study conducted in Pakistan on people of different fields reported that materialistic thinking is increasing in Pakistani society due to the impact of media and materialistic lifestyle (Ali *et al.*, 2012). Further, the study findings indicate that use of credit cards likely to encourage shoppers to make additional purchases by spending impulsively, that is in line with the findings of previous researches (Soman & Gourville, 2001; Thomas *et al.*, 2010). Furthermore, mediation tests indicated that credit card use partially mediates the relationship between materialism and impulsive buying. This reveals that materialistic people make more impulsive purchases when they use a credit card.

Another significant finding of this study is the positive association between materialism and brand loyalty. It suggests that marketers with competitive brands can get benefit from these consumers who are high in materialistic values. This is a positive thing from the firm's perspective. However, Fitzmaurice (2008) argued that materialistic people are likely to experience the feelings of regret, and these consumers who fixated themselves with certain brands may reject these brands if the level of regret becomes significant.

Surprisingly, contrary to the proposed hypothesis, the results of the study found that brand loyalty positively impacts impulsive buying. The motivations toward impulsive buying can be used to explain this finding. Prior literature suggests that shoppers be motivated towards impulsive buying in order to get rid of their negative mood or other unwanted emotional states. However, these findings confirmed the results of (Šeinauskienė *et al.*, 2015). Finally, brand loyalty found to mediate the relationship between materialism and impulsive buying suggesting that

materialistic people who are brand loyal are likely to buy more impulsively.

VI. IMPLICATIONS AND LIMITATIONS

The researcher believes that the findings of the study will be beneficial for those companies and marketers who are interested to intersect their marketing strategies with consumer's attitude. As the consumers of Pakistan are becoming more materialists, therefore, those firms are likely to get an edge in the market who recognize these consumer trends. It will enhance consumer's positive attitude toward the firm as past research reported that concern toward consumer's dispositions positively impacts consumer's likeability (Nan & Heo, 2007).

As credit card use noted to be fully mediate the relationship between materialism and impulsive buying which suggests that materialistic consumers are more likely to make impulsive buying when they are provided with credit cards, therefore, it motivates the retail stores to integrate with different credit card companies which in turn motivate consumers to buy their goods (Pradhan *et al.*, 2018).

The penetration of credit cards in Pakistan is low as there are only 1.4 million credit cards in circulation as of June 2018 (*Payment Systems Review Report*, 2018). Therefore, the current study provides insights to credit card companies. As a positive association was found between materialism and credit card adoption and use, it suggests that credit card institutions may increase their sales of cards by targeting these materialistic consumers. In addition, previous studies also reported that materialism is increasing in Pakistani society (Ali *et al.*, 2012), which is also a positive sign for credit card institutions.

In addition, a positive relationship found between materialism and brand loyalty suggesting that materialistic consumers are more likely to buy luxurious and strong brands in order to gain social status in society (Tuu, Olsen, & Cong, 2017). It provides beneficial insights to the marketers of strong brands in getting an edge in the market (Podoshen *et al.*, 2014). As these brand-loyal materialists lead to impulsive buying, therefore, it encourages retail stores to have strong brands in order to increase their sales.

This study also subjects to many limitations; therefore, the findings of the study should be viewed considering these limitations. The data was collected from shoppers residing in Lahore region of Pakistan. It is plausible that consumers in different regions may have different attitudes regarding impulsive buying and its related antecedents. Future researchers should conduct comparative studies between different regions as well as different countries along with their different cultural backgrounds and economic stages in order to identify the different elements that may influence impulsive buying. Like other cross-sectional studies, this study did not determine the causal inferences, therefore, future researchers should conduct a longitudinal study to examine the ways in which materialism impacts impulsive buying.

In future researches, the impact of credit card use (Pradhan *et al.*, 2018) and brand loyalty should also be examined as a moderator between materialism and impulsive buying. As significant developments are taking place in third world nations like Pakistan, so it is interesting to explore the perspective of the younger generation about materialism (Wang, 2016), and its influence on credit card consumption and impulsive buying. As the hypothesis regarding brand loyalty and impulsive buying was not supported, future researchers should examine this relationship in new settings to examine whether similar findings are obtained or not. Furthermore, the future researchers should also study the role of self-control with credit card usage and its association with impulsive buying, as could the moderating impact of self-control on the relationship between materialism and credit card usage (Pradhan *et al.*, 2018). Finally, future research may investigate the current study specifically in an online context.

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