

Influence of Self-Monitoring and Materialism on Fashion Clothing Involvement

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Abstract

Being a principal component of consumption decisions, fashion has social and cultural importance for people. Women, who are the most powerful consumers in the world, make up the largest and fastest-growing market and are an interesting group of consumers to marketers. Previous studies suggest that self-monitoring and materialism are influential on fashion clothing involvement of women. Female consumers involved in fashion are considered to drive the fashion adoption process. This study was conducted by administering a questionnaire to non-working female consumers interested in fashion. Research data were obtained via face-to-face survey. While self-monitoring and materialism were taken as antecedents, fashion clothing involvement was taken as the outcome of the research model. The results point to a significant positive effect of materialism and self-monitoring on fashion involvement. They also show that there is a positive relationship between self-monitoring and materialism.

Keywords: Materialism, Self-monitoring, Fashion Product Involvement, Fashion Product Purchase Involvement

Introduction

Fashion may be the only issue which dominates people so much in social and cultural terms. Fashion is one concept having a considerable influence on consumers' purchase decisions and product preferences today. As a concept, fashion describes changes in people' moods as well as consumption and purchase behaviors in social and cultural terms. Fashion is at the center of our daily consumptions. It constitutes a considerable amount of our daily consumption decisions. Shortly, it is a phenomenon observable at the center of everyday events. It provides insights into what we eat, where we go, what we wear, and even what we think. Moreover, it makes up the dynamic of change in consumers' lifestyles. In this dynamic structure, women represent a rapidly developing fashion market (Barletta, 2003). Having greater awareness than men, women interested in fashion have become the determiners of the fashion adaptation process. Women adapt their behaviors to conform to those approved by society in order to raise their levels of social acceptance. Thus, they attach importance to material purchases. They think that fashionable clothes provide others with insights into themselves

and reflect their social acceptance in the best way possible. Such opinions lead them to be interested in fashion clothes and purchase decisions (O’Cass, 2001: 48). Also, it is important to investigate factors that influence individuals’ purchasing and consuming certain types of products, such as involvement, self-monitoring, and materialism. Considering the high social status and image people associate fashion clothes consumption with and the large amount of money spent on fashion, these factors have social and economic aspects, especially in the case of products like fashion clothing. Specifically, with its symbolic code, fashion clothing can be used as an instrument of showing others the status and success achieved, which are highly important to materialists and self-monitors. High levels of self-monitoring and materialism affect consumers’ fashion involvement. Because they are one of the key innovators in the fashion adaptation process, consumers that are interested in fashion constitute an important group for fashion business. Additionally, the results of fashion involvement can vary from a group of consumers to another. It is seen that particularly the females with a high level of self-monitoring stand as opinion leaders in clothing and make use of clothing in order to gain social approval (Davis and Lennon, 1985). Hence, gender also seems to be essential for self-monitoring as well as its influence on product choices and involvement. In this regard, fashion involvement may be used by fashion business as a tool of segmentation based on gender.

Although women attribute such an important role to fashion in terms of its social influence, there are only a limited number of studies regarding their fashion involvement. Hence, this study focuses on the analysis of the influence of female consumers, examining characteristics such as self-monitoring and materialism in terms of fashion clothing involvement. This study is comprised of two sections. The first section includes theoretical information regarding fashion involvement while the second section includes a survey study on fashion involvement and its results. In the study, fashion clothing involvement was dealt with from two aspects: product involvement and product purchase involvement. Focusing on fashion involvement types and using women as the basis will help better understand the structure of fashion involvement and gender-based marketing strategies.

Theoretical Framework and Literature Review

Materialism and Self-monitoring

Materialism is a concept depicting that people’ possessions have an important place in their lives; a higher level of materialism means greater individual satisfaction for people (Ryan and Dziurawiec, 2001: 185). Materialism can be categorized into three areas: success, centrality, and happiness. Success materialism refers to individuals’ evaluations of their own or others’ success based on their possessions and money. Centrality materialism refers to people making their possessions and properties the ultimate purpose of their lives. Happiness materialism refers to a state in which possessions, properties, and money are the only path leading to happiness. According to some consumers life satisfaction is closely associated with the properties they have (Richins and Dawson, 1992: 309).

Self-monitoring is the extent to what an individual adapts and controls his/her behaviors according to the situation and behaviors that occur around him/her. That is to say, individuals observe and control their expressive behaviors as well as self-presentation depending on social cues. The concept of self-monitoring was fundamentally restricted to the capacity to change self-presentation and sensitivity to others’ expressive behaviors (Lennox and Wolfe 1984). In addition, Darley and Lim (1992) suggests that a person has two dimensions: (1) sensitivity to the reaction showed by others and (2) ability of self-monitoring to control such reactions.

Fashion Involvement

Involvement refers to consumers' perceptions toward the product, brand, advertisements, and purchase depending on their beliefs, needs, and value judgments (Rabolt and Solomon, 2004). Each product and brand bears different meanings for different individuals, and individuals may display involvement different from one another. Involvement appears in the forms of product involvement, product purchase involvement, advertisement involvement, and consumption involvement. Involvement is a phenomenon experienced in relation to fashion clothes most of the time. Therefore, it appears as product involvement when a specific product is concerned and as purchase involvement when the act of purchasing is concerned (Slama and Tashchian, 1985: 74). Product involvement is an indicator of the person-object relationship (Martin, 1998: 8). It refers to a situation in which a product plays an important role in the consumer's life. If a product has an important role in meeting the needs and values of a consumer and increases his/her social acceptance, involvement toward that product rises (Mittal and Lee, 1989: 370). Fashion clothes are one such product with the aforementioned characteristics. Product purchase involvement refers to the interest and attention paid by the consumer to carry out his/her decision of purchasing (Mittal and Lee, 1989: 371).

Literature Review

Fashion clothes develop a social identity that secures acceptability within society (Auty and Elliott, 1998). Certain personal characteristics, such as self-monitoring and materialism, drive consumers to use fashion clothes for social acceptance. Individuals with high levels of such characteristics believe that their social acceptance will rise depending on their clothes. Therefore, they deem clothes as a source of happiness and are more interested in purchasing them (Goldsmith et al., 2006). However, only a limited number of studies deal with these characteristics together within the context of fashion involvement (O'Cass, 2000a). Previous studies have generally focused on fashion involvement in terms of demographic information (Elliott, 1994; Browne and Kaldenberg, 1997; Auty and Elliott, 1998). Some previous studies have dwelt on the influence of self-monitoring on consumer behaviors (Bell et al., 1991; Shavitt et al., 1992; Hogg, et al., 2000). Others have concentrated on involvement and materialism together (Mittal and Lee, 1989; Richins and Dawson, 1992; O'Cass 2000a). Still other studies have handled the reactions displayed by self-monitoring behaviors in response to product advertisements, the use of media, certain personal characteristics (e.g., prestige sensitivity, self-confidence, and public self-consciousness), and the influence of price perception on wealthy female consumers' involvement (Shavitt et al., 1992; Belleau et al., 2008). Some recent studies dealing with the relationship among fashion involvement, materialism, and self-monitoring are discussed below.

O'Cass analyzed the relationships among age, gender, motive, materialism, self-monitoring, and involvement types (purchasing and product involvement) in a study conducted in 2001. According to the results, age, gender, symbolic motives, and materialism have significant influences on levels of involvement, but no relationship exists between self-monitoring and materialism and involvement. Moreover, self-monitoring levels showed no difference by gender and age. O'Cass also studied inputs and outputs of fashion involvement in a study conducted in 2004. According to the results, age, gender, and materialism have a positive influence on fashion involvement while fashion involvement has a positive significant influence on product information and purchase decisions. In a study conducted in 2005, McFatter analyzed the relationship between wealthy female consumers' fashion involvement

and the use of media, personal traits, and the perception of price. According to the results, consumers' use of media is the best determinant of fashion involvement; however, personal traits such as the consumer's social perception and self-confidence are not associated with fashion involvement. Belleau et al. (2008) explored the media use, price perceptions, personality traits, and selected demographics as well as the fashion involvement of affluent female consumers. According to the results, fashion involvement influenced variance in media use and the price perceptions higher and lower than socio-economic characteristics. In 2008, O'Cass and Choy studied the influence of fashion involvement of Generation Y in China on the reactions of consumers regarding the brands. The results indicated that involvement influences consumers' brand status and brand involvement. Güllülü et al. (2010) analyzed the influence of self-monitoring and personal interaction on status consumption. Self-monitoring and inter-personal influence play an important role in tendencies related to conspicuous consumption. Hourigan and Bougoure (2012) investigated the input and output variables of fashion involvement. Their results revealed that gender and materialism significantly influence fashion involvement, and shopping for pleasure, purchase decision involvement, identity, mavenism, and ongoing shopping are significantly influenced by fashion involvement. Investigating the fashion clothing involvement of adults, youth, and teenagers consumers chosen from Bangalore city, Nandini and Jeevannanda (2014) attempt to explore the relationship between the factors of fashion involvement and demographic characteristics. According to the results, customers younger than 30-years old have a tendency to perform higher fashion clothing involvement. Correlation analysis indicated a significant positive correlation between the factors of fashion clothing involvement and purchase knowledge, social consciousness, confidence, and materialism. Aslay et al. studied the influence of materialism on status consumption in 2013. They found that status consumption is more common among people with high materialist tendencies, who stay away from simplicity and chase happiness by possessing material things. Rahman et al. (2014) analyzed the influential factors in the process of adapting to fashion. The results indicated that fashion involvement is an important factor in adapting to fashion. Vazifehdooost et al., (2014) explores how involvement in fashion, hedonic consumption tendency, personality characteristics, and store environment influence customers' fashion-based impulse buying. According to the results of the investigation of the research hypotheses, fashion involvement has a both an indirect and direct influence on customers' impulsive purchase. The indirect influence occurs through inspiration of positive feelings. It was found out that personality traits and store environment have significant direct influences on fashion-based impulse purchasing. Furthermore, hedonic consumption tendency was determined to have an indirect positive influence on fashion-based impulse buying. The indirect influence was found to occur through inspiration of positive feelings. In 2015, Koparal and Çalık studied the product involvement inputs and outputs in relation to the products and services for which fashion involvement is important. According to their results, one of the factors influencing fashion involvement is materialism. In 2015, Kim and Hahn investigated the influence of self-monitoring tendency on mobile dependency of young adult consumers. The results showed that individuals with a higher sensitivity to self-monitoring obtained significantly higher mean scores in fashion involvement, mobile dependency, and experimenting with appearance. A similar result was obtained for those with a higher level of ability to self-monitor, too. Kim et al. (2015) attempted to propose a research model in which body esteem has an influence on purchase intentions, taking self-monitoring as a moderator. According to the empirical results obtained, there is a negative relationship between body esteem and intentions to purchase

online fashion products, and self-monitoring has a moderating effect between body esteem and intentions to purchase online fashion products.

As it is evident from the literature, there are more study about self-monitoring, materialism and fashion involvement. But, only a few studies have presented the relationships between such variables all at the same time. The studies generally focused on fashion clothes. However, no study focused on the revelation of familiarity and preferability of fashion products to consumers. Also, there has been little research done regarding fashion involvement) of female consumers (O’Cass, 2000a; O’Cass, 2001; Belleau, 2008). Due to the importance of gender for involvement, as shown in the literature and based on the assumption that involvement generally appears in the forms of purchase and product involvement, this study attempts to reveal the influence of self-monitoring and materialism on non-working women who interest in fashion.

Methodology

Fashion involvement is the basic indicator of the relationship between people and objects and has become an important phenomenon for understanding consumers’ purchase behaviors (O’Cass, 2000a). Based on this importance, this study aims to reveal the influence of personal traits, such as self-monitoring and materialism, on women’ fashion involvement. The scope of the study covers non-working women consumers residing in Istanbul. Because İstanbul is the first big city in Turkey and most of the fashion stores and most of the women consumers are in Istanbul. Also, the fashion involvement of non-working women may be different from working women. But it was not taken into account in previous studies. Although there are so many studies about working women, in the literature studies about non-working women are very limited.

The sample was selected via the convenience sampling method. Firstly, data were gathered by survey method. Convenience sampling, one of the non-probabilistic sample methods, was employed for determining the study group. The prepared survey forms were administered to the respondents around the fashion shopping centers or stores in Istanbul during all the weekdays and weekends for one month in February 2016. A total of 420 survey forms were administered, and 385 were determined to be valid. Before the definite survey was applied, a group survey involving 20 participants was conducted. Four hundred surveys were completed within a 95% range of reliability and a 5% margin of error. The questions in the survey fell within four categories. The first category included questions on factors having an influence on self-monitoring, the second group included questions on involvement, third group included questions to identify materialism and fourth group included demographic characteristics, descriptive questions about fashion clothes and the most purchased fashion clothes. After excluding deficient and incorrectly completed surveys, 385 surveys remained for the analysis. Fourteen types of fashion clothes were selected as a result of the pretest. Then they were given to the respondents, who were asked to indicate which ones had been recent trends. The respondents were asked to mark the clothes they considered in fashion and mention which clothes they had bought during the last six month. Among the scales used in the study, the self-monitoring scale was adapted from O’Cass (2000b) study, the materialism scale was adapted from Richins and Dawson’s (1992) study, and the fashion clothes product involvement and purchase decision involvement scale was adapted from O’Cass (2001). The variables were measured using a 5-point Likert-type scale (5=I strongly agree; 1=I strongly disagree; 1=I am absolutely involved; 5= I am not involved by any means). The data were analyzed via SPSS 16.0 and Lisrel 8.7. The model test employed confirmatory

factor analysis, structural equation modeling, and correlation analysis.

Research Hypothesis

Involvement constitutes the dynamic of consumer behaviors and makes it easier to understand the nature of fashion product categories (O’Cass, 2000a: 569). Because of such a role, this study aims to reveal the effects of self-monitoring and materialism on involvement types. The hypotheses are explained next.

Self-monitoring refers to a person’s controlling him-/herself in accordance with social situations (Lennox and Wolfe, 1984). It is a person’s adjusting his/her behaviors according to the people they are with or the environment. With its potential to be used for its symbolic value, clothing is used by individuals with a high level of self-monitoring to modify self-presentation (O’Cass, 2001: 47). In this regard, those with a high level of self-monitoring are likely to see clothing as a way of exhibiting image and thus may have a high concern of image concern while purchasing and wearing fashion clothing. That is to say, it is argued that self-monitors have a higher interest in products like fashion clothing, and therefore, they need more confidence in their decision-making capability for these kinds of products (O’Cass, 2000b: 403-404). Therefore, self-monitors attach importance to products’ appearance and fashionability and shop accordingly.

H₁: Self-monitoring has an influence on fashion involvement.

Materialism plays an important role in consumers’ developing a relationship with an object (O’Cass, 2004). High levels of materialism may lead to considering an object as the source of happiness, unhappiness, and/or success in the center of life (Richins and Dawson, 1990: 170). Materialists believe that the things possessed by a person reflect the person’s individual qualifications, group membership, and social acceptance (Richins, and Rudmin, 1994). As a matter of fact, products like cars, houses, clothing, and houses have high symbolic meanings. People associate materialism with possessions serving as part of a communication or a signal that informs them of who an individual is and what his/her position or status is (Isherwood and Douglas, 1979). Hence, materialism may be a key variable in a consumer’s involvement with and attachment to certain products which allow fulfilling such values. It is claimed that it has an influence on product involvement, which is concerned with the process used to evaluate product qualifications, and purchase decision involvement, which is concerned with the process used to evaluate purchase decision (Browne and Kaldenberg, 1997: 32). In this sense, it is believed that materialism is a key variable in developing consumers’ involvement with fashion clothes.

H₂: Materialism has an influence on fashion involvement.

Self-monitors and materialists have been assumed to use possessions to portray and manage impressions. They are also associated with self-indulgent purchasing behaviors and keeping possessions instead of disposing of them (Belk, 1984). It is because of such similarity that materialism is considered to be closely associated with self-monitoring. To Browne and Kaldenberg (1997), individuals that are more materialistic are also likely have a higher self-monitoring. In this way, they establish an explicit connection between the two. Both self-monitoring and materialism are significant predictors of symbolic consumption and pleasure consumption motives in the context of fashion clothing, which implies another connection between them. In other words, individuals with a high level of self-monitoring also have a tendency to consider products at the center of their lives, be characterized by acquisition, have a positive attitude towards acquisition, and give a high priority to material possessions. Such characteristic of self-monitoring and materialist individuals involves a proneness both to

see products as props and derive happiness from them, regard them as a sign of success, and give products a prominent and central position in order to represent a particular image (O’Cass, 2001: 57).

H₃: There is a positive relationship between materialism and self-monitoring.

In order to investigate the effect of materialism and self-monitoring on fashion involvement a conceptual framework is developed. The conceptual model shown in Figure 1. Figure 1 depicts the research model based on the hypotheses.

Data Analysis

Respondents’ Demographic Characteristics

Table 1 presents the frequency distributions of the demographic characteristics belonging to the participating respondents. 73.2% of the respondents of the sample were married and 26.8% were single. 71.4% of those were secondary and high school graduates, 24.9% were undergraduate and 3.6% completed their master studies. According to the age groups, 12.7% of the respondents were between 18-21, 36.1% were between the ages of 22 and 25, 34.5% were between 26 and 29, 8.3% were between the ages of 30 and 33, and 8.3% were 33 and over. In terms of income, 70.9% of the respondents of the sample were 500 TL and below, 11.9% were between 501-700 TL, 8.3% were between 701-900 TL, 6.5% were between 901-1100 TL, and 2.3% were above 1100 TL. In Table 1, spending of consumers for fashion brand/product in last six months is shown. 56.9% of respondents spend 500 TL and below, 24.4% between 501-700 TL, 11.2% between 701-900 TL, 6.5% between 901-1100 TL, and 1.0% above 1100 TL.

Table 1.

Demographic Characteristics

Age	Frequency	%	Income (TL)	Frequency	%	Education	Frequency	%	Spending brand last 6 months	Frequency	%
18–21	49	12.7	≤ 500	273	70.9	Secondary and high school	275	71.4	≤ 500	219	56.9
22–25	139	36.1	501–700	46	11.9	Undergrad	96	24.9	501–700	94	24.4
26–29	133	34.5	701–900	32	8.3	Master	14	3.6	701–900	43	11.2
30–33	32	8.3	901–1100	25	6.5	Marital status			901–1100	25	6.5
33 +	32	8.3	≥ 1100	9	2.3	Married	282	73.2	≥ 1100	4	1.0
						Single	103	26.8			
Total	385	100	Total	385	100	Total	385	100	Total	385	100

Characteristics Respondents’ Fashion Clothes and Purchase Decision Involvement

Fashion clothes are preferred in involvement. Therefore, certain fashion clothes types were given to the respondents, who were asked to indicate which ones had been recent trends. Thus, the study sought to reveal non-working women’ fashion awareness. The results are

shown in Table 2. Respondents were then asked which fashion clothes they had bought within the last 6 months to reveal their fashion clothes and purchase involvement. It was seen that tassel clothes were bought at the highest rate (11.7%).

Table 2.

Fashion Clothes and the Most Purchased Clothes

Fashion Clothes	Frequency	%	Fashion clothes frequently followed	Frequency	%	Fashion Clothes	Frequency	%	Fashion clothes frequently	Frequency	%
Check shirt	26	6.6	Check shirt	13	3.4	Leopard clothes	17	4.4	Leopard clothes	34	8.8
Torn jeans	23	6.0	Torn jeans	17	4.4	Culottes	13	3.4	Culottes	32	8.3
Leather jacket	24	6.2	Leather jacket	40	10.4	High-waisted trousers	63	16.4	High-waisted trousers	30	7.8
Jumpsuit	15	3.9	Jumpsuit	17	4.4	Hippie style clothes	11	2.9	Hippie style clothes	4	1.0
Tassel clothes	58	15.1	Tassel clothes	45	11.7	Oversize d t-shirts	30	7.8	Oversize d t-shirts	13	3.4
Transparent clothes	17	4.4	Transparent clothes	34	8.8	Long skirts	17	4.4	Long skirts	34	8.8
Laced clothes	57	14.8	Laced clothes	38	9.9	Flared jeans	14	3.6	Flared jeans	34	8.8

Testing Self-Monitoring, Materialism, and Involvement Scales

First, a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was carried out in order to test all scales. CFA is applied to test if the measures of a construct are consistent with the nature of such construct as understood by the researcher. In this sense, confirmatory factor analysis aims to test if the data fit a hypothesized measurement model. The hypothesized model takes theory and/or previous analytic research as basis. For that reason, confirmatory factor analysis was applied in order to test the validity of the scales of self-monitoring, materialism, and involvement for the sample group.

The variables showing negative variance, exceeding standard coefficients, or yielding very high standard errors were checked, and in compliant variables were excluded (Hair et al., 1998: 610). Self-monitoring was tested first. The scale's model fit values were not at an acceptable level. After modifications, 3 variables were excluded from the "self-monitoring sensitivity" dimension and 3 variables were excluded from the "self-monitoring ability" dimension to have a scale within the acceptable limits. Next, the materialism scale, including centrality, happiness, and success materialism dimensions, were tested. The model fit values were not at an acceptable level. After modifications, 2 variables were excluded from the success materialism dimension, 4 variables were excluded from centrality materialism dimension, and

2 variables were excluded from the happiness materialism dimension. Finally, the involvement scale including clothes involvement and purchase involvement dimensions were tested. The model fit values were not at an acceptable level. After modifications, 5 variables were excluded from the clothes involvement dimension, and 6 variables were excluded from the purchase involvement dimension. After modification, model fit values were at an acceptable level, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3.

Fit Values of the Self-Monitoring, Materialism, and Involvement Scales

Goodness of Fit Index	Acceptable Fit	<i>Self-Monitoring</i>		<i>Materialism</i>		<i>Involvement</i>	
		Before Modification	After Modification	Before Modification	After Modification	Before Modification	After Modification
χ^2		270.01	6.36	931.93	81.92	1490.44	54.35
<i>Degree of Freedom</i>		53	8	132	32	134	19
χ^2/df	1-5	5.09	0.79	7.06	2.56	11.12	2.86
<i>GFI</i>	$0.90 \leq GFI \leq 0.95$	0.90	0.99	0.79	0.96	0.70	0.97
<i>AGFI</i>	$0.85 \leq AGFI \leq 0.90$	0.85	0.99	0.72	0.93	0.62	0.94
<i>SRMR</i>	$0.05 \leq SRMR \leq 0.10$	0.11	0.015	0.11	0.041	0.100	0.040
<i>RMSEA</i>	$0.05 \leq RMSEA \leq 0.08$	0.103	0.000	0.126	0.064	0.162	0.070
<i>CFI</i>	$0.95 \leq CFI \leq 0.97$	0.85	1.00	0.73	0.97	0.70	0.98

Table 4 shows Standard Coefficients, R^2 values, t values, Cronbach's Alpha Coefficients, and Error Variances of the variables for all scales after CFA. When standardized regression values are considered, these values are seen to be between 0.61 and 0.88. These values are significant at the significance level of 1%.

Table 4.

Self-Monitoring, Materialism, and Involvement Scales after Modification

Variables	Standard Value	R^2	Error Variance	T-Value
Self-Monitoring Sensitivity				
My powers of intuition are quite good when it comes to understanding the emotions and motives of others.	0.77	0.59	0.39	15.58
I can usually tell when others consider a joke to be in bad taste, even though they may laugh convincingly.	0.75	0.56	0.36	15.09
I can usually tell when I've said something inappropriate by reading it in the listener's eyes.	0.76	0.58	0.39	15.41
Self-Monitoring Ability				
In social situations, I have the ability to alter my behavior if I feel that something else is called for.	0.74	0.55	0.45	15.35
I have the ability to control the way I come across to	0.80	0.63	0.40	16.61

people, depending on the impression I wish to give them.				
I have found that I can adjust my behavior to meet the requirements of any situation in which I find myself.	0.79	0.62	0.45	16.35
Success Materialism				
I admire people who own expensive homes, cars, and clothes.	0.70	0.43	0.78	15.12
Some of the most important achievements in life include acquiring material possessions.	0.85	0.73	0.40	20.24
The things I own say a lot about how well I'm doing in life.	0.88	0.77	0.35	21.07
I like to own things that impress people.	0.67	0.45	0.83	14.35
Centrality Materialism				
I enjoy spending money on things that aren't practical.	0.74	0.55	0.46	15.64
Buying things gives me a lot of pleasure.	0.83	0.69	0.33	18.06
I like a lot of luxury in my life.	0.76	0.57	0.52	16.04
Happiness Materialism				
I have all the things I really need to enjoy life.	0.84	0.71	0.45	19.57
I'd be happier if I could afford to buy more things.	0.85	0.72	0.53	19.73
My life would be better if I owned certain things I don't have.	0.80	0.63	0.60	17.99
Product Involvement				
Fashion clothing is important to me	0.76	0.57	0.51	16.26
Fashion clothing is an important part of my life.	0.85	0.73	0.32	19.05
I am very much involved in/with fashion clothing.	0.76	0.57	0.55	16.24
Product Purchase Involvement				
I think a lot about my choices when it comes to fashion clothing.	0.83	0.70	0.39	19.34
Making purchase decisions about fashion clothing is significant.	0.84	0.71	0.36	19.69
Making a purchase decision about fashion clothes requires a lot of thought.	0.85	0.72	0.36	19.76
I attach great importance to purchasing fashion clothing.	0.61	0.37	0.34	12.63

Relationships between Self-Monitoring, Materialism, and Involvement

After CFA for variables, structural equation modelling (SEM) analysis is used for all models. The research model did not suggest any modifications. Model has fit index values. The results of fit index values are shown in Tables 5. Chi-square tests the difference between the observed data and the estimated data. This value is expected to be close to 0. However, in case the number of samples is big, the degree of freedom is an important criterion. X^2/sd ratio's being five or less than five shows that there is a good fit between the model and the datum (Arbuckle, 2006). In the present study, this ratio was calculated to be 1.66. This result shows the existence of a very good fit between the datum and the model.

Table 5.

Model Fit Values

Goodness-of-Fit Index Values		Acceptable Fit	Excellent Fit
χ^2	367.16		
Degree of Freedom	220		
χ^2/df	1.66	1-5	$0 \leq \chi^2/df \leq 2$
GFI	0.92	$0.90 \leq GFI \leq 0.95$	$0.95 \leq GFI \leq 1.00$
AGFI	0.90	$0.85 \leq AGFI \leq 0.90$	$0.90 \leq AGFI \leq 1.00$
SRMR	0.045	$0.05 \leq SRMR \leq 0.10$	$0 \leq SRMR \leq 0.05$
RMSEA	0.042	$0.05 \leq RMSEA \leq 0.08$	$0 \leq RMSEA \leq 0.05$
CFI	0.97	$0.95 \leq CFI \leq 0.97$	$0.97 \leq CFI \leq 1.00$

After SEM, Standard Values, R^2 , Error Variance, T-Values, Structural Validity, Average Variance Extracted and Cronbach Alpha values are shown in Table 6. In the table, Standardized Regression Coefficients are given after non-standardized estimation values. When standardized regression values are considered, these values are seen to be between 0.61 and 0.88. These values are significant at the significance level of 1%. When the structure reliability and variance ratios of the scales used in the research are considered, as seen in Table 6, structure reliability and variance ratios are well above the required lower limit. The scales are seen to be valid and reliable.

Table 6.

Variables of the Research Model

Variables	Standard Value	R^2	Error Variance	t Value	Construct Reliability	Average variance extracted	Cronbach Alpha
Self-Monitoring Sensitivity					0.80	0.57	0.89
My powers of intuition are quite good when it comes to understanding the emotions and motives of others.	0.77	0.60	0.36	8.45			
I can usually tell when others consider a joke to be in bad taste, even though they may laugh convincingly.	0.74	0.55	0.39	12.37			
I can usually tell when I've said something inappropriate by reading it in the listener's eyes.	0.76	0.58	0.39	12.45			
Self-Monitoring Ability					0.82	0.60	0.91
In social situations, I have the ability to alter my behavior if I feel that something else is called for.	0.75	0.56	0.44	9.85			
I have the ability to control the way I come across to people, depending on the impression I wish to give them.	0.79	0.62	0.41	13.25			
I have found that I can adjust my behavior to meet the requirements of any situation in which I find myself.	0.79	0.63	0.44	13.26			

Success Materialism					<i>0.86</i>	<i>0.61</i>	<i>0.86</i>
I admire people who own expensive homes, cars, and clothes.	0.70	0.49	0.78	12.55			
Some of the most important achievements in life include acquiring material possessions.	0.85	0.73	0.40	15.33			
The things I own say a lot about how well I'm doing in life.	0.88	0.77	0.34	15.70			
I like to own things that impress people.	0.66	0.44	0.84	12.13			
Centrality Materialism					<i>0.82</i>	<i>0.60</i>	<i>0.81</i>
I enjoy spending money on things that aren't practical.	0.74	0.55	0.46	10.46			
Buying things gives me a lot of pleasure.	0.83	0.69	0.33	14.11			
I like a lot of luxury in my life.	0.76	0.58	0.51	13.48			
Happiness Materialism					<i>0.87</i>	<i>0.69</i>	<i>0.87</i>
I have all the things I really need to enjoy life.	0.84	0.71	0.45	9.56			
I'd be happier if I could afford to buy more things.	0.85	0.72	0.53	19.13			
My life would be better if I owned certain things I don't have.	0.80	0.64	0.59	17.75			
Product Involvement					<i>0.83</i>	<i>0.63</i>	<i>0.80</i>
Fashion clothing is important to me	0.76	0.58	0.51	10.39			
Fashion clothing is an important part of my life.	0.85	0.72	0.33	15.16			
I am very much involved in/with fashion clothing.	0.76	0.58	0.55	14.12			
Product Purchase Involvement					<i>0.87</i>	<i>0.63</i>	<i>0.86</i>
I think a lot about my choices when it comes to fashion clothing.	0.83	0.69	0.41	10.23			
Making purchase decisions about fashion clothing is significant.	0.85	0.73	0.34	19.18			
Purchase decision about fashion clothes requires a lot of thought.	0.85	0.72	0.34	18.98			
I attach great importance to purchasing fashion clothing.	0.61	0.37	0.70	12.40			

To investigate the measurement model's internal validity, construct reliability (CR) and average variance extracted (AVE) are calculated. Composite reliability points to internal consistency, which means that all the measurement items represent their latent constructs, with this value being minimum 0.7. AVE is a method that evaluates the convergent validity and discriminant validity of a given construct (Fornell and Larcker, 1981; Bagozzi, 1981). Loading of AVE should be $\geq .50$.

As Table 6 shows it, the five constructs have construct reliabilities (CR) in the range of 80 to

87, which are all above the recommended value, which is 0.7 (Hair et al. 1998). The average variances extracted (AVE) of the measures are in the range of 0.57 to 0.69, which are greater than 50% of the variance, which is suggested by Bagozzi and Yi (1988).

Some other assessment criteria were taken into consideration besides the global measures of fit. Cronbach's alpha coefficients, which must be 0.70 to ensure scale reliability according to Hair, et al. (1998), provided strong evidence for measurement reliability in the present study. Internal consistency reliability refers to stable nature of individual measurement items through replications originating from the same source of information. It was evaluated through computation of Cronbach's alpha coefficients, which were greater than 0.70 for the five constructs, thereby representing a reasonable internal consistency level covering the items contained.

Table 7.

Test Results of the Study.

Relationships in the Model	Standard Value	R ²	Error Variance	t Value
Self-Monitoring Sensitivity- Self-Monitoring	0.47	0.22	0.58	5.04
Self-Monitoring Ability -Self-Monitoring	0.54	0.30	0.65	5.23
Success Materialism- Materialism	0.95	0.90	0.11	21.20
Centrality Materialism- Materialism	0.76	0.57	0.58	16.02
Happiness Materialism- Materialism	0.59	0.35	0.51	12.09
Product Involvement -Fashion Involvement	0.74	0.54	0.50	6.67
Product Purchase Involvement -Fashion Involvement	0.64	0.41	0.47	9.41
Self-Monitoring -Fashion Involvement	0.31	0.47	0.53	3.24
Materialism-Fashion Involvement	0.54	0.47	0.53	7.41

As seen in Table 7 and Figure 1, materialism ($\beta=0.54$, $p=0.00$) and self-monitoring ($\beta=0.31$, $p=0.00$) have a positive significant influence on fashion involvement. Therefore, hypotheses H_1 and H_2 were supported. In this sense, materialist non-working women with high self-monitoring ability and sensitivity have high levels of involvement. The prominent results regarding materialism, self-monitoring, and involvement are explained below. The self-monitoring ability dimension came to the forefront in self-monitoring. Accordingly, the ability to change oneself according to society influenced respondents more among all self-monitoring behaviors. Success materialism came to the forefront in materialism while clothes involvement came to the forefront in fashion involvement.

The path diagram of the research model is shown in Figure 1.

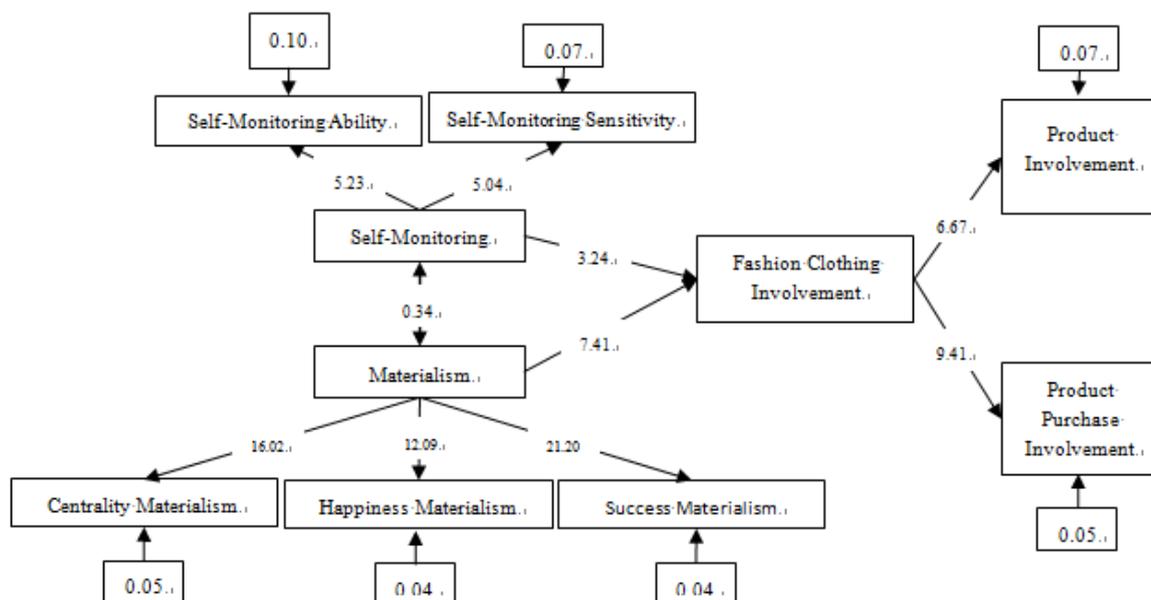


Figure 1. Research Model

In addition, correlation analysis was conducted to determine whether there was a relationship between self-monitoring and materialism of the respondents. According to the results of the analysis, a positive relationship was detected between materialism and self-monitoring ($r=0.34$, $P=0.00$, $t=3.95$), showing a medium level relationship (Cohen, 1977). In other words, self-monitors behave such as materialist. Hypothesis H_3 was confirmed as well. The values belonging to construct reliability of the variables in the research model were on an acceptable level. The relationships between materialism, self-monitoring, and fashion involvement were shown in Table 8.

Table 8.
Relationship Between Self-Monitoring and Materialism

Materialism		
Self-Monitoring	Correlation Coefficient	0.34
	T-Value	3.95
	Sig.	0.00

* $p < 0.05$

Conclusion and Recommendations

The study was conducted with non-working women in Istanbul in order to reveal the influence of self-monitoring and materialism on fashion involvement. The results are discussed here. The respondents are familiar with fashion clothes, and fashion involvement strongly influences their preference for such clothes. The test of the research model indicated that self-monitoring and materialism have significant influences on fashion involvement. People with the ability to adjust their behaviors according to the demands of their environment have high levels of fashion involvement. All consumers regard and buy the products as sources of happiness and success and put them at the center of their life. As consumers' levels of materialism and self-monitoring rise, their involvement rises as well. The results are consistent with existing literature (Browne and Kaldenberg, 1997; Auty and Elliott 1998). A positive relationship was detected between materialism and self-monitoring. In other words, consumers with high levels of materialism attempt to adjust their behaviors according to their

environment, and consumers who are trying to adjust their behaviors according to their environment behave more materialistically. This relationship is also reported in the literature (Browne and Kaldenberg, 1997). Regarding materialism types, the non-working women displayed success materialism most. Certain consumers consider themselves successful when they possess products that are desired or reflect the image they desire (Odabaşı, 1999). To Richins and Dawson (1992), material values change depending on a lack of self-confidence, frustration about life, and the desire to have a high level of income. Therefore, materialists deem themselves successful by attributing importance to material assets when they feel themselves inadequate and unsuccessful. This may explain why success materialism was prominently displayed by the non-working women. In terms of involvement dimensions, product involvement was seen to be higher than purchase involvement. This finding is also supported by the literature. The findings indicate that self-monitoring is influential on consumers' fashion clothing involvement. The individuals with high self-monitoring were seen to have a high concern for their appearance and image, which is associated with social and symbolic approval, and to be engaged in taking sensory pleasure by fashion clothing. In this regard, the present study indicates that self-monitoring has a significant effect on fashion clothing involvement, though it is a weak one. Browne and Kaldenberg (1997) reported that women have higher clothes involvement among the involvement types. This may be explained by the fact that non-working women have lower levels of income. Even if non-working women have low purchase decision involvement, they may still be considered to have high levels of fashion clothes involvement. In other words, they may be involved in fashion clothes even when they cannot buy them.

This research informs researchers of that materialistic people tend to be high self-monitors, which points to a relationship between the two consumer characteristics (i.e. materialism and self-monitoring). According to the findings of this research, product involvement is influenced by both materialism and self-monitoring. The results obtained in this study show that all the variables predicted affect purchase decision involvement and product involvement. In this study, the primary aspects of fashion clothing seem to be utility (i.e. function) for most of the respondents. However, for materialists, the important aspect is the capability to display status, prestige, and success and offer pleasure. This study extends the boundaries of other researchers' knowledge by informing them of that consumers with a higher level of materialistic (and self-monitoring) tendency put fashion clothing at the center of their life, make use of it to show the success they have achieved, and gain happiness from consuming it. Self-monitoring is a person's controlling himself or herself depending on the social situations he or she is in. This study makes researchers aware of that consumers controlling themselves according to others may be more involved in fashion.

This study also makes various recommendations to businesses as well as the literature. Consumers who are involved in fashion believe that preferring fashion clothes increases acceptance within society. In addition, they think that wearing clothes that keep up with the fashion trends is a source of success and happiness. Therefore, they place fashion clothes at the center of their life. Hence, for businesses that release products using fashionable images, it would be better if they highlighted their fashionability rather than their performance. It seems that the greater levels of materialism are associated with possessions serving as part of a communication or a signal informing others about who an individual is and what his position or status is, just like in the case of a high self-monitor. In this respect, companies that take fashion into consideration in positioning their products and brands must keep it in mind that consumers prefer their products to be happy and successful and to have an impression

on others. Accordingly, in their promotions, companies should put an emphasis on what kind of an effect having that product will have on fashion involvement. In addition, businesses that position their products and brands according to the fashion should consider that some consumers deem the clothes they purchase as an indicator of success and make preferences to be happy about them. Thus, they should emphasize materialistic feelings that involve the influence of possessing a fashion product on society and what it brings to the customer. Therefore, the expectations of consumers closely involved in fashion will be fulfilled more effectively. Just as businesses can deal with the markets for which they offer products or services as a whole, they can also divide them into elements based on many criteria and apply relevant marketing strategies according to their target market(s). In this sense, gender—and, therefore, female consumers—may be a category criterion for many products or services. Some businesses even offer certain types of products that consider female consumers as a niche market. For businesses to keep up with fashion and select women as their target market, they must be informed about female consumers, who are closely involved in fashion. Businesses may change consumers' attention to fashion clothes into interest in buying by using promotions. However, different female consumer segments have different levels of interest in fashion. For instance, non-working women tend to believe that fashion is something reserved for special occasions. Working women spend their days outside of their homes and thus pay attention to fashion clothing the way they must (Bartos, 1989). Therefore, non-working women' fashion clothes involvement may remain at the level of involvement rather than purchase. Hence, businesses should determine their fashion marketing strategies according to female consumer sub-types (e.g., single, married—no kids). The study takes different types of clothes into consideration and also provides information about the fashion of the year. In this regard, fashion businesses may recognize that women have different levels of materialism and self-monitoring for clothes and may improve their marketing strategies in accordance with their fashion involvement.

The following recommendations are made for future studies based on the previously explained results. Different cultures may involve different fashion involvement levels for product and consumer groups (Tigert, et al., 1980; Bloch, 1982). Therefore, the perception of fashion can be studied in different cultures and product groups as well as from a male perspective. Consumers with high levels of self-monitoring who follow fashion with a feeling of materialism are also opinion leaders and constitute an important share of the market, which should be taken into account (O' Cass, 2001: 49). Thus, fashion involvement can be studied in terms of private consulting groups such as opinion leaders and market mavens. The relationship between fashion involvement and status consumption and conspicuous consumption, which are closely associated with self-monitoring and materialism, may be investigated.

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