

MATERIALISM AND THE MASS MEDIA: HOURS SPENT ON THE INTERNET PREDICTS MATERIALISTIC VALUES AND BRAND KNOWLEDGE

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SOCIAL INFLUENCE AND THE MEDIA

- Gerbner's Cultivation theory (1958) claimed: by the transmitting of mass messages, agents of mass communication (originally TV) profoundly affect our perception and values
- Much on the Internet tries to change attitudes, values and beliefs!
 - Political Social Media posts, Memes, Internet Advertising, Rating films, book etc.
- Internet could be thought of as the modern TV! But there are differences – e.g., self-publishing, multimedia platform

MATERIALISM AND INTERNET

- Materialism traditionally defined as the importance people attach to worldly possessions (Belk, 1984; Richins & Dawson, 1992)...
- ...Others claim materialistic activities define the self and are linked to desirable symbolic values (e.g., power, happiness etc.) (e.g., Manchiraju, 2013)
- The media has been shown to be associated with materialistic values, although relationship can be complex
 - Pos. association between TV viewing & materialism in China, Australia & the US (but not for American college students), but no relationship in Turkey, & a neg. relationship in Canada (Sirgy et al., 1998)

MATERIALISM AND INTERNET

- Comparatively less research on the Internet and Materialism
- Compulsive Buying linked to Internet (e.g., Müller et al., 2011; Sharif & Khanekharab, 2017 etc.)
- With millennials, increased social media usage was associated with increased brand consciousness, and with an intention to buy luxury products (Chu & Kamal, 2011)
- Social media marketing was further shown to impact on adolescents' attitudes towards brands (Yazdanparast, Joseph, & Muniz, 2016)

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- How is time spent on the Internet, as compared to more “traditional” medias (TV and Magazines/Newspapers), related to Materialism?
- How is time spent on the Internet, as compared to more “traditional” medias (TV and Magazines/Newspapers), related to Brand Knowledge?

METHOD

- Participants
 - 230 participants, reduced to 195 who completed all measures; 151 female, 43 male (1 participant failed to answer the question); ages ranged from 18-66 (mean=34.12, SD=13.15)
 - Asked how many hours per day they spent watching TV, reading *magazines/newspapers*, and using the *Internet*
 - None (0), Less than 1 hour (.5), 1-5 hours (3), 5-10 hours (7.5), 10-15 hours (12.5), more than 15 hours (15)

METHOD

- Scales - Kasser and Ryan's (1996) Aspiration Index
 - *Importance* they attached to and the *likelihood* of achieving extrinsic (materialistic) and intrinsic (non-materialistic) goals on a 5-point scale
 - Extrinsic goals consisted of three subscales: financial success, attractive appearance, and social recognition; e.g., "You will have lots of expensive possessions"
 - Intrinsic goals consisted of four subscales: self-acceptance, affiliation, community feeling, and physical fitness; e.g., "You will work for the betterment of society"
- Also asked to identify logos of 12 Luxury Brands & 12 High Street Brands

RESULTS

Means and Standard Deviations of Measures.

	Mean	SD
Hours TV per day	3.069	1.870
Hours magazines/newspapers per day	1.303	1.224
Hours Internet per day	4.615	3.030
Brand Identification Task	8.730	5.505
Extrinsic Importance	2.499	.744
Extrinsic Likelihood	2.639	.758
Intrinsic Importance	4.168	.464
Intrinsic Likelihood	3.762	.491

RESULTS

Two-predictor model accounted for 8.5% of Extrinsic Importance variance, $F(3, 191) = 5.94$, $p = .001$, with an R^2 of .085 ($R^2_{\text{Adjusted}} = .071$)

Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Extrinsic Importance.

	B	SE	β
Constant	2.402	.130	
Hours TV per day?	-.063	.028	-.159*
Hours magazines/newspapers per day?	.003	.042	.004
Hours internet per day?	.062	.017	.254***

Note $R^2 = .085$; * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

RESULTS

Sig. one predictor model explained 4.6% of Extrinsic Likelihood variance, $F(3, 189) = 3.01, p = .031$, with an R^2 of .046 ($R^2_{\text{Adjusted}} = .030$)

Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Extrinsic Likelihood.

	B	SE	β
Constant	2.651	.138	
Hours TV per day?	-.068	.029	-.168*
Hours magazines/newspapers per day?	.034	.044	.054
Hours internet per day?	.033	.018	.132

Note $R^2 = .046$; * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

RESULTS

Sig. two predictor model accounted for 16% of variance of brand identification score, $F(71, 185) = 5.049$, $p < .001$, $R^2 .16$, ($R^2_{\text{Adjusted}} = .129$)

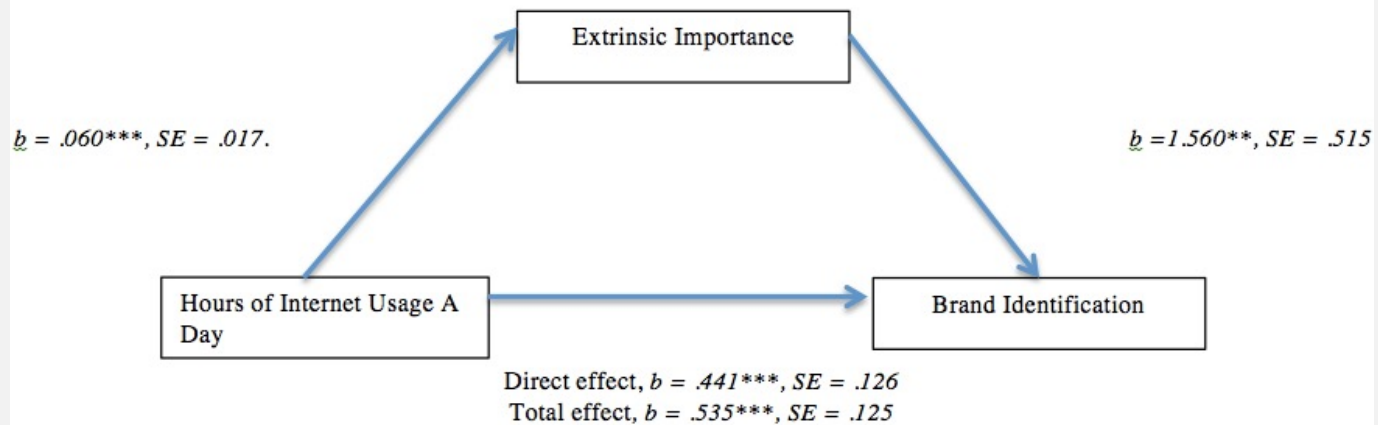
Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Brand Identification Task.

	B	SE	β
Constant	1.408	3.593	
Hours TV per day?	.370	.204	.125
Hours magazines/newspapers per day?	-.566	.307	-.126
Hours internet per day?	.422	.128	.231**
Intrinsic importance	-.035	1.160	-.003
Extrinsic importance	1.960	.717	.261*
Intrinsic likelihood	.282	1.189	.025
Extrinsic likelihood	-.309	.735	-.043

Note $R^2 = .160$; * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

RESULTS

Figure 1: Model of hours of Internet usage a day as a predictor of brand identification, mediated by extrinsic importance



Note ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$, $R^2 = .128$.

Confidence interval for the indirect effect is a bias-corrected bootstrapped CI, based on 1000 samples.

DISCUSSION

- Reported Internet usage was positively associated with *materialistic values*, and the *brand identification task* (arguably a more concrete measure of materialism)
- Hours of Internet a day was partially mediated by extrinsic importance to predict brand identification task
- TV negatively predicted Extrinsic Importance and Extrinsic Likelihood
- Internet a powerful socialising tool? Is Gerbner correct?
- Study can't determine causation, although associations were found between reported time spent on the Internet was certainly associated with materialism in the current study