

**Boosting Material Products' Value via Posting Product Pictures on Social Media:  
An Experiential Transfer**

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THESIS

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## SUMMARY

The conspicuous consumption of status-signaling products is a common pursuit of a high-status. Paradoxically, high-status acquisitions are not highly dependent on owning or showcasing superior product qualities or luxury brands, but on social interactions revolving around products. Consumption experiences after the purchase, thus, have the potential to illuminate whether and how consumers attribute the expected high-status to their products. However, previous conspicuous consumption research mostly focused on consumer motivations and product perceptions prior to the purchase. The present research investigates how the act of conspicuous consumption influences owners' consumption experiences at the post-purchase phase. Viewing conspicuous consumption as an antecedent of product valuation, this study inspects how material product displays on social media shifts owners' product perceptions and valuation.

Results of four experiments show that sharing material product pictures on social media boosts products' experiential characteristics which, in turn, positively impact owners' product valuation (Study 1a and 1b). Disclosing high-status brand information along with product pictures and receiving high levels of social recognition for these pictures elevate owners' experiential perception and product valuation (Study 2); whereas, obtaining ambiguous comments hinders the experiential transition reducing the product valuation (Study 3).

This research suggests that showcases of digitized material products are capable of turning product perceptions from material to experiential and enhancing owners' consumption experience. These findings can inform marketers on managing and benefiting from the post-purchase phase of consumption. Implications for luxury consumption and product ownership, and directions for future research are discussed.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 The Research Question

Imagine purchasing new eye-glasses and being pleased with your item. You are eager to share this new look with others. Many compliments have surfaced from personal contact with family/friends. However, after taking a picture and sharing it on Facebook, you have reached out to more family and friends who are not able to see you in-person at the moment. Throughout ensuing days, you receive likes from Facebook friends and have conversations regarding your glasses and new look. Assuredly, your other Facebook friends observe these likes and conversations although they have not reacted to your post. How does *your own* product perception change in response to these new associations with the product? In particular, to what degree is the perception of the product changed from that of a material object to an experiential one? The processes through which aspects of conspicuous consumption can influence the consumption experience is the focal research question this dissertation attempts to answer.

Traditionally, conspicuous consumption is defined as the overt display of affluence to create or sustain high status in the eyes of others (Page, 1992; Veblen, 1889/1994). Luxury products, which are associated with high desirability and low attainability, are considered proper social markers for conspicuous consumption despite promising little additional functional utility (Appadurai, 1986; Berry, 1994; Han, Nunes and Drèze, 2010). Prior research mainly focused on the motivations for and intentions behind engaging in conspicuous consumption of affluence-signaling products (Braun and Wicklund, 1989; Griskevicius et al., 2007; Han et al., 2010), which referred to consumption dynamics prior to the purchase. Recent research has started to explore how high-status is created during the purchase itself (Dion and Borraz, 2017), how people consume high-status products (e.g., Duan, 2016; Marwick, 2013), and what spectators



think about consumers and brands after online and offline product displays (Ferraro, Kirmani, and Matherly, 2013; Sekhon et al., 2018). To my knowledge, no research has examined how *consumers' own attitudes* change after purchasing high status products nor has prior research investigated whether owners indeed garner the intended social recognition after the product display, which is the primary motivation for conspicuous consumption (Mason, 1981; Rucker and Galinski, 2009).

This research examines the post-purchase phase of consumption and investigates how the act of conspicuous consumption influences the consumption experience for owners of material products. Although the purchase of tangible products is usually associated with the intention of owning and keeping them (Carter and Gilovich 2012; Van Boven and Gilovich 2003), consumers of high-status products also aspire to be recognized and identified with their products, and to derive social attention from them (Mason, 1981; Wicklund and Gollwitzer, 1981, 1982; Veblen, 1889/1994). Given that consumers can adjust their product attitudes based on their consumption experiences (Diehl, Zauberaman, and Barasch, 2016), it might be valuable to view conspicuous consumption behavior as an antecedent of product valuation.

In a sense, material products can be compared to experiential ones. When engaging in conspicuous consumption, consumers wish to gain life experiences from their possessions, which is analogous to the intent behind experiential purchases (Van Boven and Gilovich, 2003). More specifically, consumers of experiential products hold more social, narrative and identity-representative product perceptions (Van Boven and Gilovich, 2003), which can lead to slower adaptation (i.e., a slower decline in the consumption value attached to the product) compared to the consumption of material products (Nicolao, Irwin, and Goodman, 2009, Van Boven, 2005). Given the fuzzy boundary between material and experiential purchases (Mann and Gilovich,

2016; Rosenzweig and Gilovich, 2012), this research posits that status-seeking consumers might be motivated to shift the boundary of material purchases to encompass aspects of consumption typically associated with the consumption of experiences in order to extend their product enjoyment.

Of relevance, considering the increasing social media use by consumers, the public and interactive nature of social media communications (Donath, 2007; Marwick, 2015) might motivate product owners to shift their product perceptions in a way that material products assume the properties typical of experiences. This might be accomplished by the act of posting pictures of possessions on social media. When consumers share their products' pictures on social media, they can tangibly monitor the level and nature of social recognition collected at the post-purchase phase in addition to the implied social recognition (assuming social media friends have seen the shared picture). Furthermore, incorporating possessions in social media communications can amplify social recognition due to the creation and exhibit of various high-status symbols without time and space restrictions (Belk, 2013; Marwick, 2015). Notably, social media users can create their own status symbols, which are not limited to affluence, such as smart consumption or professional success (Anlamlier et al., 2015; Anlamlier, Torres, and Gal, 2016). This ability to demonstrate products with and without high-status brands enlarges the scope of conspicuous consumption and enables consumers to construct and utilize a high-status in various ways. Thus, this research predicts the conspicuous consumption on social media to change owners' valuation for diverse products via the transformation of product perceptions.

Across four studies, the current research inspects how the act of conspicuous consumption influences the consumption experience at the post-purchase phase. Study 1a and 1b investigate whether posting about a variety of products on social media alters owners' product

perceptions and valuation. Product perceptions of consumers who (1) posted about their purchases on social media before the current study (already posted group), (2) were instructed to post a picture of their purchase during the current study (recently posted group), and (3) did not post anything about their purchases (control group) are compared. Results show that prior posting of product information (of the already posted group) increases product valuation (product liking, brand liking, and perceived product status) due to elevated experiential perceptions (narrative fulfillment, status value, and self-centrality). These results suggest that posting itself does not increase experiential product perceptions and product valuation. Yet, aggregated social reactions (implied and/or realized) over time lead to material products' experiential perception and extended valuation.

Therefore, Study 2 inspects specific social media dynamics that can turn owners' product perceptions from material to experiential and elevate product valuation. Findings demonstrate that sharing high-status brand information along with product pictures (i.e., brand hashtags) and garnering high levels of social recognition for posted pictures (i.e., many likes) improve owners' product liking and perceived product status. Parallel to Study 1a and 1b results, this value improvements are due to extensions in products' experiential perception. In Study 3, a boundary condition of garnering ambiguous social feedback on social media is explored. Receiving ambiguous comments for the shared product pictures is expected to impede owners' narrative fulfillment (one of the key experiential characteristics) and reduce product valuation. Findings partially confirm these expectations. Ambiguous comments decrease owners' product valuation through lessened narrative fulfillment, only for the participants who receive high level of social recognition (i.e., many likes).

Across four studies, the present research demonstrates that conspicuous consumption on social media enriches owners' consumption experience when consumers share their products' high-status brand information or receive high levels of positive recognition, as these factors boost material products' experiential perception. These findings suggest that owners' product presentation strategies, as well as the level and content of social recognition they receive after the purchase determine how conspicuous consumption impacts the consumption experience. Thus, despite high-status attributions prior to the purchase of some products, if owners do not exploit the right display strategies or do not receive high level of positive acknowledgment, their product valuations might quickly decrease after the purchase.

The present research contributes to the conspicuous consumption and social media literature by utilizing novel approaches and tools. Conspicuous consumption is conceptualized as an antecedent of product valuation, although it has mostly been studied as a consequence of high-status seeking. This research focuses the post-purchase phase to study whether and how consumers acquire the intended high-status based on their consumption experience, given the possibility that expected high product status might not be realized after the product purchase. Furthermore, this study investigates product demonstrations in the social media context. Social media provides the proper tools to detect how owners' product perceptions and valuation evolve since it can distinctively reveal product presentation strategies; the implied and realized social recognition; and the level and nature of social recognition. Of importance, analyses of social media displays and interactions elucidate the transient nature of product perceptions.

Finally, the present findings suggest that conspicuous consumption, usually considered as an excessive and boastful behavior, can be instrumental in extending product valuation when performed on social media and encourage consumers to perceive higher status via transforming

product perceptions from material to experiential. Moreover, spending on expensive high-status products might not always be necessary to acquire high-status through consumption. Contrary to the common beliefs, the current findings indicate that conspicuous consumption is not limited to the showcases of luxuries and can elevate various other types of status (e.g., smart consumption or stylish taste) in addition to affluence.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Conspicuous Consumption

Conspicuous consumption is defined as the explicit consumption of wealth-signaling items to attain or sustain a high social status (Page, 1992; Veblen, 1889/1994). People generally desire high status as it refers to a powerful position in a society and is associated with respect and envy from others (Eastman, Goldsmith, and Flynn, 1999). Thus, high status can grant individuals self-esteem (Berger et al., 1972), power (Rucker and Galinski, 2008), self-affirmation towards current self-threats, or psychological buffers against future self-threats (Sivanathan and Pettit, 2010). It can also confer individuals with a sense of belonging, distinctiveness (Berger and Heath, 2007; Deshpandé and Stayman, 1994; Gentina, 2014; Han, Nunes and Dreze, 2010), or competitiveness (Wang and Griskevicius, 2014). Whenever individuals lack one of these aforementioned positive characteristics or aspire to secure themselves for future threats, they may be motivated to acquire, purchase or use high-status products (Mandel et al., 2017). In sum, conspicuous consumption represents a series of symbolic actions helping individuals perceive high status and enjoy various benefits associated with it.

Indeed, fundamental indicators of high-status are having cultural capital (i.e., acquired tastes due to social origin; Bourdieu, 1984), social capital (e.g., family, social networks) or attaining educational/occupational achievements (e.g., degrees, job titles; Lin, Ensel, and Vaughn, 1981; Lin, 1999). However, one may need to spend much effort and time to acquire social status by these means. On the contrary, conspicuous consumption, as a common marker of wealth (Corneo and Jeanne, 1997; Futagami and Shibata, 1998), could be a relatively easy way to alter status perceptions (costly signaling theory; Zahavi, 1975). In other words, conspicuous

consumption appears to be a convenient social tool to alter both one's own and observers' status perception.

Previous literature examines how people become motivated to engage in conspicuous consumption and the types of products they desire to consume, which illuminate *the pre-purchase phase* of the consumption experience (Braun and Wicklund, 1989; Griskevicius et al., 2007; Han et al., 2010; Sivanathan and Pettit, 2010). For example, Rucker and Galinski (2009) have determined preference for conspicuous consumption by assessing favored logo size, visibility, noticeability, and brand label conspicuousness. The bigger, more visible and noticeable the brand logo is, the more conspicuous the consumption. Han et al. (2010) have also demonstrated that people can utilize subtle signals or counterfeits based on their means and whom they are targeting to impress. In sum, these studies often focus on the antecedents of conspicuous consumption and view this behavior as a consequence of various motivations for and intentions of high-status signaling. However, as a symbolic self-completion attempt, conspicuous consumption experience is indeed broader than the pre-purchase phase encapsulating the purchase, usage, and social dynamics around products in addition to motivations for acquisition (Mandel et al., 2017).

Previous studies seldom investigate the interaction between consumers and observers during and after the act of conspicuous consumption. Recently, researchers examine how retailers shape the consumption experience by teaching consumers the practices to grant high-status to products and conclude it is in fact social relationships that create high-status, not the products or brands (Dion and Borraz, 2017). This is in line with Goffman's (1967) understanding that people claim and negotiate status via social interactions. Thus, observers' perceptions about high-status product owners and high-status brands alter after product showcases - both offline

and on social media - (Ferraro, Kirmani, and Matherly, 2013; Sekhon et al., 2018). Nevertheless, limited research has explored how people actually utilize high-status items and how different consumption patterns impact owners' consumption experience at the post-purchase phase (e.g., Duan, 2016; Marwick, 2013).

In essence, status-seeking consumers' main incentive is to receive social recognition, not to enjoy the material benefits (e.g., functionality) (Griskevicius et al., 2007; Mason, 1981; Rucker and Galinski, 2009). Hence, consumers need to ensure in the *post-purchase* phase that their acquisitions are realized by other people (Braun and Wicklund, 1989; Wicklund and Gollwitzer, 1982). Despite the general consensus on material characteristics and types of status-signaling products by both consumers and observers, such as high quality and superior features (Bearden and Etzel, 1982; Han, Nunes and Dreze, 2010), these products' acquisitions may not always guarantee high levels of social recognition. Thus, individuals may strategically broadcast status signals (e.g., high-status brands) and consume products in a way that they can measure the level of positive social recognition (e.g., the number of people who appreciate one's ownership).

To my knowledge, no research inspected whether and how consumers' own attitudes shift at the post-purchase phase based on their consumption experience. Given consumers can adjust their product attitudes based on how they consume their products (Diehl, Zauberger, and Barasch, 2016), conspicuous consumption can be viewed as an antecedent of product valuation. Therefore, this research studies the post-purchase phase and examine how the act of conspicuous consumption influences the consumption experience and product valuation for the owners.

## 2.2 **Material and Experiential Product Perceptions**



This research particularly inspects conspicuous consumption of material products. Although the main purpose of making a material purchase is the ownership (Carter and Gilovich, 2012), possessing a high-status material item is not enough for conspicuous consumers, as they aspire others recognize this ownership (Mason, 1981; Rucker and Galinski, 2009). Additionally, they need to experience that displayed high-status products are acknowledged and reflected to their identity (Braun and Wicklund, 1989; Wicklund and Gollwitzer, 1982). On the other hand, when products are conceived as experiential purchases, the main intention of which is to gain life experiences, they are perceived more social, narrative and more closely tied to one's identity (Carter and Gilovich, 2012; Van Boven and Gilovich, 2003). Therefore, experiential purchases deliver more, longer-lasting satisfaction and happiness than material purchases do because they stimulate social relationships more, represent a larger part of one's identity, and are less comparable to other experiences (Carter and Gilovich, 2010; Carter and Gilovich, 2012; Kumar and Gilovich, 2015; Gilovich, Kumar, and Jampol, 2015; Howell and Hill, 2009; Van Boven et al., 2010; Van Boven and Gilovich, 2003). Given varying benefits of material and experiential purchases, status-seeking consumers might acquire lower status when they consume material products.

However, the boundary between experiential and material purchases is often blurred (Gilovich, Kumar, and Jampol, 2015). The same product could be framed in experiential or material terms based on one's intention, and such intentions can be altered (Mann and Gilovich, 2016; Rosenzweig and Gilovich, 2012). Until now, only through experimental manipulations, material purchase intentions can be altered to experiential ones (Mann and Gilovich, 2016; Rosenzweig and Gilovich, 2012). Knowing that experiences lead to more socialization, identity-representation, and product enjoyment, status-seeking consumers, who aspire to be associated

with the high-status item and pursue social recognition and feedback (e.g., Braun and Wicklund, 1989; Mason, 1981; Veblen, 1889/1994), might be motivated to alter their material perceptions to experiential ones.

Although status-signaling material products are durable, have higher quality and superior features (Rucker and Galinski, 2009) justifying their high prices, they provide short-lived gratification (Van Boven and Gilovich, 2003). If material products are perceived in experiential terms, consumers might adapt to these products in an extended period because the intangible, dynamic, and indeterminate nature prolongs positive experiences' impact (Alba and Williams, 2013; Bar-Anan, Wilson, and Gilbert, 2009; Nicolao, Irwin, and Goodman, 2009; Wilson, Centerbar, Kermer, and Gilbert, 2005). Further, the slow rate of adaptation for status-signaling products can confirm products' high status, as well as its reflection to the consumers' identity. Thus, consumers can benefit from avenues that transition their material product perceptions to experiential ones.

### 2.3 **Consumption on Social Media**

Conspicuous consumption on social media can motivate owners to conceive their status-signaling material products in experiential terms. Social media has already been utilized to share consumption-related information to enjoy new purchases (Duan, 2016) and expose different aspects of identity through brands (Arvidsson and Caliandro, 2015). It enables individuals to create and broadcast various types of status symbols without time and space restrictions (Belk, 2013; Van Dijck, 2013; Marwick 2015). Social media posts allow users to receive immediate reactions from other people in forms of likes, emoticons, and comments. For example, one can

utilize improved focus (e.g., sharing pictures, Diehl et al., 2016) and labelling specific information (e.g., including brand names to one's posts, Nam, Joshi, and Kannan, 2017) to showcase possessions. Therefore, product demonstrations on social media can concretely manifest the level and nature of social recognition gathered at the post-purchase phase.

Sharing product pictures on social media can be viewed as the online version of word-of-mouth or conspicuous consumption (Anlamlier et al., 2015; Duan, 2016). Once material product pictures are included in social media communications, they trigger reactions and conversations with others. Although talking about material purchases in offline contexts can be a stigma (e.g., Van Boven, Campbell, and Gilovich, 2010), boastful behaviors seem less intimidating when performed on social media (Belk, 2013). People tend to share more pictures of experiential purchases than material purchases (Duan, 2016). Sharing experiential purchase pictures with others increases consumers' enjoyment when the experience is not very engaging (Diehl et al., 2016); whereas, it diminishes the enjoyment when the experience is already engaging (Barasch, Zauberaman, and Diehl, 2018). Therefore, taking pictures of material products can also extend consumers' enjoyment, as these products are normally characterized with short-lived gratification and fast adaptation (Nicolao, Irwin, and Goodman, 2009; Van Boven and Gilovich, 2003).

When material products are placed in social media communications, they become objects of social experiences. The need to belong and seek interpersonal agreement are major motivations to enjoy an experience of sharing stimuli with others (Raghunathan and Corfman, 2006; Ramanathan and McGill, 2007). Moreover a material product consumed in a social context is valued more than a material product consumed solitarily (Caprariello and Reis, 2013). In particular, consumption on social media is shown to complement offline consumption due to

socialization and increase positive consumer responses toward products (Yuksel, Milne, and Miller, 2016). When people receive enthusiastic reactions from others, they value and further enjoy their experiences (Lambert et al., 2013; Reis et al., 2010).

Indeed, consumption experiences are shown to determine the level of status enacted (Dion and Borraz, 2017). Therefore, product showcases on social media have widened the scope of products and status types extending boundaries of conspicuous consumption. In addition to affluence, users can display products symbolizing other types of status, such as professional success and smart consumption (Anlamlier et al., 2015; Anlamlier, Torres, and Gal, 2016). Considering that identity is created not only by the information one shares, such as on social media, but also by others' reactions (Cristofides, Muise, and Desmarais, 2009; Van Dijck, 2013), the high social recognition on social media might eliminate the need to utilize high-status brands for high-status acquisition. Thus, the capability to interchangeably demonstrate products with and without high-status brands on social media enables us to inspect how consumers create high status and attribute it to their products and identity.

### 3. THE PRESENT RESEARCH

This research particularly focuses on material products' display on social media. I suggest sharing product pictures on social media can turn owners' material product conceptions into experiential ones. When a possession is showcased on social media, the act of placing it to one's personal account, the following social reactions, and interactions between the observers and product owners (Donath, 2007; Marwick, 2015) can alter how owners view their products. Thus, I anticipate that products shared on social media are more strongly associated with self, elicit conversations, and improve perceived acknowledgment, more so than showcasing the product in the offline world.

Given the characteristics of social media communications, I propose conspicuous consumption on social media (via posting product pictures) activates three experiential characteristics: (1) the status value, degree to which a product is capable of elevating one's social status (Sweeney and Soutar, 2001), (2) narrative fulfillment, degree of enjoyment from conversing about the product (Kumar and Gilovich, 2015), and (3) self-centrality, degree of a product's closeness to one's identity (Van Boven et al., 2003). Such an interactive and public process can motivate product owners to regard the product's online consumption as more of a status-enhancing experience than of a standard material product. Thus, posting products pictures on social media is expected to increase owners' self-centrality to the product, narrative fulfillment and status value. Since experiential products are valued more (e.g., Van Boven et al., 2003), elevated experiential characteristics are anticipated to increase material products' valuation, as well.

H1: Conspicuous consumption on social media will increase products' experiential characteristics.

H1a: Posting about a material purchase on social media will increase products' *narrative fulfillment* for owners.

H1b: Posting about a material purchase on social media will increase products' *status value* for owners.

H1c: Posting about a material purchase on social media will increase owners' *self-centrality* to products.

H2: Products' experiential characteristics will mediate the relationship between conspicuous consumption and owners' product valuation.

H2a: Products' *narrative fulfillment* for owners will mediate the relationship between posting product pictures and product valuation.

H2b: Products' *status value* for owners will mediate the relationship between posting product pictures and product valuation.

H2c: Owners' *self-centrality* to products will mediate the relationship between posting product pictures and product valuation.

Moreover, this research aims to uncover particular strategies consumers can utilize to trigger the experiential perception of material products. Sharing high-status brand information along with posted product pictures and garnering a high level of social recognition are expected to boost material products' experiential characteristics. Previous research suggests including high-status brand information in social media posts, similar to traditional brand displays in offline contexts, can boost experiential perception because the high-status brand information can

increase products' status value (Bastos, 2013; Gatignon and Robertson, 1986) and narrative fulfillment (Berger and Iyengar, 2013; Kumar and Gilovich, 2015). Garnering high levels of social recognition, regardless of high-status brand information, can also elevate experiential perception due to the product's increased status value (Caprariello and Reis, 2013; Raghunathan and Corfman, 2006) and self-centrality (Han et al., 2010). This unconventional expectation stems from the broadened array of product and status types consumers can display on social media. In sum, high-status brand information and a high level of social recognition are expected to result in an experiential transfer of material perception, leading to more product favorability and higher product status perception. Therefore, the high-status brand information on social media posts and high level of social recognition for them is expected to increase favorable product/brand attitudes. Furthermore, products' experiential perception is predicted to mediate the relationship between high-status brand information and favorable product/brand attitudes; between the level of social recognition and favorable product/brand attitudes.

H3: High-status brand information on social media posts will increase favorable product/brand attitudes.

H4: Products' experiential perception will mediate the relationship between high-status brand information and favorable product/brand attitudes.

H5: High level of social recognition for social media posts will increase favorable product/brand attitudes.

H6: Products' experiential perception will mediate the relationship between the level of social recognition and favorable product/brand attitudes.

However, not all types of social media communications can lead to experiential transformations and escalate owners' product value. Some reactions might hinder owners' experiential perception, plummeting owners' product valuation. This research explores a boundary condition that might diminish the narrative fulfillment, which is one of this research's focal experiential characteristics. Thus, receiving ambiguous comments is expected to reduce the level of narrative fulfillment and then, favorable product/brand attitudes.

H7: Receiving ambiguous comments will reduce the level of narrative fulfillment and in turn, favorable product/brand attitudes.

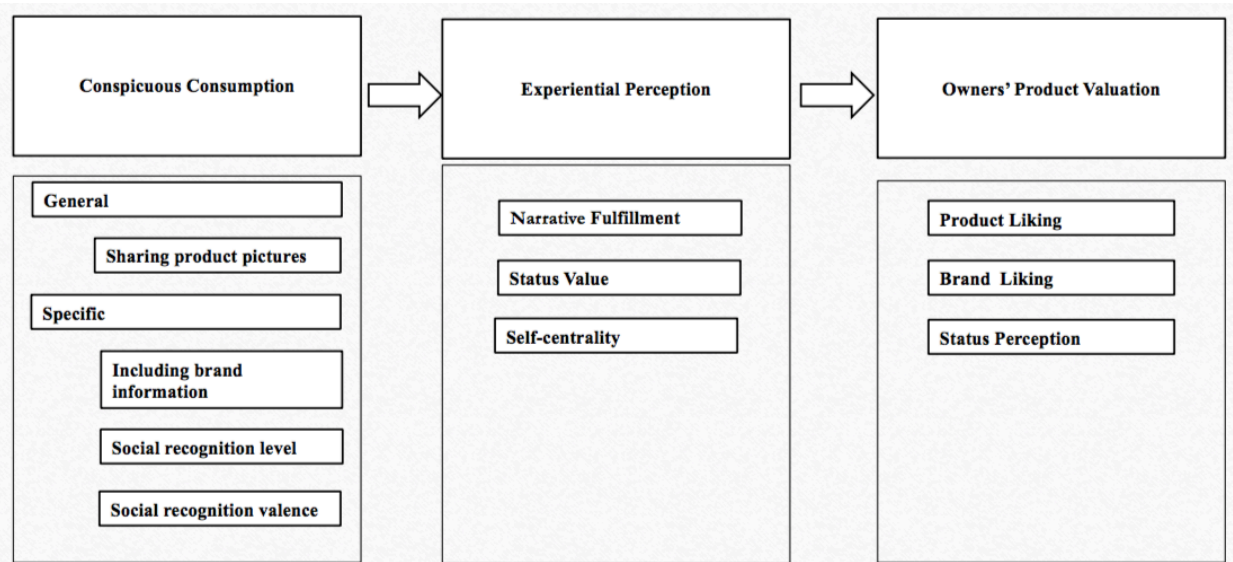
### 3.1 **Summary of Studies**

Across four experiments, the current research aims to (1) examine whether and how conspicuous consumption on social media (i.e., sharing product pictures on social media) impacts owners' product perceptions (material vs. experiential) and valuation; (2) uncover factors that can boost products' experiential perception and valuation on social media; and (3) explore boundary conditions that can block the experiential transformation and reduce owners' product valuation (Figure 1). Study 1a and 1b examine whether the mere act of posting about new purchases on social media impacts owners' product perceptions on experiential characteristics and valuation. Study 2 discloses two factors that boost products' experiential perception, then valuation. It demonstrates both sharing high-status brand information (i.e., including high-status brand hashtags in posts) and receiving high social recognition (i.e., receiving many likes and positive comments for posts) independently motivate owners to perceive their products in more experiential terms and value them highly. Finally, Study 3



investigates a boundary condition that receiving ambiguous comments reduces the experiential perception (i.e., the level of narrative fulfillment), then the product valuation.

Figure 1. The conceptual model



### 3.2 **Study 1.a: The Influence of Posting on Product Perceptions and Valuation**

#### 3.2.1 **Design and Procedure**

This study inspects whether conspicuous consumption influences products' experiential perception and valuation for owners. Specifically, it investigates how posting about new purchases on social media impacts owners' product perceptions on experiential characteristics (i.e., status value, narrative fulfillment, and self-centrality) and valuation (i.e., product liking, brand liking, and perceived product status).

I collected data from 613 Amazon Mechanical Turk workers who lived in the U.S., had an active Facebook or Instagram account, and were at or over the age of 18. The workers took the online survey and answered eligibility criteria questions. The non-eligible workers were not allowed to continue the study. The eligible were paid 25 cents for completing the survey. I further excluded participants who were instructed to post but did not (55 workers from the recently posted group, 105 workers from the control group); did not clearly explain their purchases (15 workers); and described an intangible purchase or a purchase done for someone else (94 workers). The final dataset had 344 Amazon Mechanical Turk workers (230 females, 114 males), aged 18-65 years ( $M=34.63$  years,  $SD= 10.45$  years).

*Product selection and explanation task.* Similar to the study design of Duan (2016), participants were requested to describe an important purchase they had conducted in the past six months and then state whether they had posted about these purchases on social media or not. The participants who posted about the purchases were assigned to *the already posted group (AP)*. Half of the participants who had not posted on social media were randomly assigned to *the currently posted group (CP)* and were asked to post a picture of their purchase along with textual information (i.e., caption) on their Facebook or Instagram account. The remaining participants were instructed to proceed to the next section in the experiment and represented *the control group (CG)*.

*Posting manipulation.* The already posted group was requested to explain how included the product in their social media picture and what they wrote as a caption. They also reported how many likes and what type of comments they received for that post. (Appendix A, Section 1). The currently posted group was requested to leave the survey page and post a picture of the item they selected on their Facebook or Instagram account, so their friends could see them. Then, they

were asked to explain how they included the product in their Facebook/Instagram picture and what they wrote as a caption. Furthermore, they were requested to guess the number of likes they might receive and the valence of the comments they might collect (e.g., positive, negative, neutral; Appendix B).

*Experiential characteristics.* Next, participants rated their selected products' experiential characteristics. First, the product's self-centrality, the extent to which the post sharer perceived the product central to his/her identity, was measured using Carter and Gilovich's (2012) circle method (adapted from Markus and Kitayama, 1991) where participants chose how much the circle representing their self was close to the circle representing their product (Appendix C). Second, the product's status value was measured using an adapted version of the social value scale by Sweeney and Soutar (2001). Some example items of this scale were: "The product helps me to feel accepted," "The product improves the way I am perceived" (Appendix D). Third, the product's narrative fulfillment, the degree of enjoyment from conversing about the product, was measured with items developed by me. One sample item from this scale is: "How likely would you be to talk about your product from now on with other people?" (Appendix E). The measures demonstrated acceptable reliability levels ( $\alpha_{\text{Status value}} = .92$ ,  $r_{\text{Narrative fulfillment}} = .76$ ); composite items for narrative fulfillment and status value constructs were created by averaging the individual items. All single and composite items for narrative fulfillment and status value were measured on a 7-point Likert scale except the self-centrality measure that had 5 options.

*Product valuation.* Participants reported three key product attitudes for product valuation. First, they rated their product liking, which refers to the degree of favorability of the chosen product. Second, they rated their brand liking, which represents the degree of brand favorability of the chosen product. Third, they rated their chosen products' prestige, uniqueness, coolness,

stylishness, value, and superiority, which were combined to compose the perceived product status variable, the degree the owner thinks the product represents a high-status ( $\alpha = .85$ ). All single and composite items were measured on a 7-point Likert scale (Appendix F).

*Additional posting task for the control group.* This time, the control group were requested to leave the survey page and post a picture of the item they selected on their Facebook or Instagram account, so their friends could see them. Then, they were asked to explain how they included the product in their Facebook/Instagram picture and what they wrote as a caption. Additionally, they were requested to guess the number of likes they might receive and the valence of comments (e.g., positive, negative, neutral) they might collect (Appendix B).

*Manipulation checks.* To check if participants completed the posting task, the currently posted and control groups were asked whether they had actually posted on social media or not. They were informed that their answers would not influence the payment decision to ensure honesty. The participants who stated not to have posted a picture about their purchase were excluded. The control group participants who did not post a picture of their product were excluded from the analyses to equalize the selection criteria for the currently posted group and control group.

We also measured the general experiential perception of posting behavior to check whether participants viewed their products as part of an experience. Participants were requested to report to what extent they thought posting about their product on social media was part of an experience. Lastly, we measured whether participants' overall status perceptions for their products changed or not. They were asked to report the extent their product was a status product. These items were measured on a 7-point Likert scale.

*Control measures.* Materialism was measured with the scale, which was developed by

Richins and Dawson (1992) (Appendix G). Extraversion was measured with the scale developed by Benet-Martinez and John (1998) (Appendix H). Lastly, susceptibility to interpersonal influence was measured with the scale developed by Bearden, Netemeyer, and Teel (1989) (Appendix I).

### 3.2.2 **Results**

This study compared the product perceptions and attitudes of the already posted, currently posted, and control group (Table 1). I expected that posting product pictures would alter owners' product valuation. One-way ANOVA results partially supported my expectations. Ratings of these groups did not differ in terms of product liking ( $F(2, 341) = 1.43, p = .24$ ) and brand liking ( $F(2, 341) = .41, p = .67$ ). However, the main effect of posting on perceived product status was significant ( $F(2, 341) = 5.67, p = .004$ ). Participants who already posted about their purchase on social media perceived higher product status ( $M_{AP} = 5.47, SD = 1.06$ ) compared to the participants who recently posted ( $M_{RP} = 5.10, SD = 1.23$ ) and who did not post ( $M_{CG} = 5.02, SD = 1.15$ ). These results suggest that owners' perceived product status (but not their product liking and brand liking) elevates due to posting product pictures on social media.

Furthermore, I expected that posting product pictures before or during the study would elevate experiential characteristics. One-way ANOVA results supported these expectations only for the group who posted pictures prior to this study, but not during the study. Prior posting about new purchases increased all three experiential characteristics. First, the main effect of posting on narrative fulfillment was significant ( $F(2, 341) = 14.59, p = .00$ ). The already posted group ( $M_{AP} = 5.65, SD = 1.16$ ) reported their product provided more narrative fulfillment than the recently posted group ( $M_{RP} = 4.67, SD = 1.50$ ) and control group ( $M_{CG} = 5.15, SD = 1.42$ ). Second,

TABLE I. MEANS (AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS) FOR KEY VARIABLES (STUDY 1.A)

<b>Study 1a</b>	<b>Already Posted Group</b> N= 132	<b>Recently Posted Group</b> N= 93	<b>Control Group</b> N= 119
<b>Experiential Characteristics</b>			
Status Value	4.42 (1.50)	3.64 (1.76)	3.67 (1.70)
Narrative Fulfillment	5.65 (1.16)	4.67 (1.50)	5.15 (1.42)
Self-centrality	3.22 ( .92)	2.81 (1.06)	2.94 (1.04)
<b>Product Valuation</b>			
Product Liking	6.41 (1.03)	6.19 (1.21)	6.40 ( .89)
Brand Liking	6.04 (1.19)	5.89 (1.25)	5.98 (1.15)
Status Perception	5.48 (1.06)	5.10 (1.23)	5.02 (1.15)

Note: (N = 344). All variables were measured along 7-point rating scales except the 5-point self-centrality variable.

the main effect of posting on status value was significant ( $F(2, 335) = 2.70, p = .00$ ). The already posted group ( $M_{AP} = 4.42, SD = 1.50$ ) reported their product had higher status value than the recently posted group ( $M_{RP} = 3.64, SD = 1.76$ ) and control group ( $M_{CG} = 3.67, SD = 1.70$ ). Third, the main effect of posting on self-centrality was significant ( $F(2, 341) = 5.10, p = .01$ ). The already posted group ( $M_{AP} = 3.22, SD = .92$ ) believed their product was more central to their self than the recently posted group ( $M_{RP} = 2.81, SD = 1.06$ ) and control group ( $M_{CG} = 2.94, SD = 1.04$ ). These results suggest that the changes in experiential characteristics could be based on the duration of product display on social media, not the posting behavior only. These results support H1a, H1b, and H1c if posting about a material purchase is seen as a process.

Experiential characteristics are expected to mediate the relationship between posting about a material purchase and product valuation. Bootstrap analyses with 5000 samples

supported these expectations. Posting product pictures on social media increased products' narrative fulfillment for owners and, in turn, elevated their product liking ( $b = .07$ ,  $SE = .02$ ,  $95\% CI = -.1213, -.0273$ ), brand liking ( $b = .08$ ,  $SE = .03$ ,  $95\% CI = -.1437, -.0275$ ), and perceived product status ( $b = .11$ ,  $SE = .04$ ,  $95\% CI = -.1777, -.0392$ ). Similarly, posting product pictures on social media enhanced owners' status value, then elevated their product liking ( $b = .05$ ,  $SE = .02$ ,  $95\% CI = -.0905, -.0139$ ), brand liking ( $b = .06$ ,  $SE = .02$ ,  $95\% CI = -.1082, -.0175$ ), and perceived product status ( $b = .12$ ,  $SE = .04$ ,  $95\% CI = -.1876, -.0536$ ). Finally, posting advanced products' self-centrality for owners, eventually heightening their product liking ( $b = .05$ ,  $SE = .03$ ,  $95\% CI = -.1049, -.0069$ ), brand liking ( $b = .05$ ,  $SE = .03$ ,  $95\% CI = -.1073, -.0060$ ), and perceived product status ( $b = .05$ ,  $SE = .03$ ,  $95\% CI = -.1102, -.0081$ ). H2a, H2b, and H3c were supported. These results suggest that posting product pictures raise owners' product valuation due to boosted experiential characteristics.

### 3.2.3 **Discussion**

The current findings showed that posting product pictures on social media heightened owners' experiential product perceptions. Furthermore, owners' experiential product conception resulted in high product valuations. These findings suggest that conspicuous consumption on social media alters owners' consumption experience, as it boosts material products' experiential perception increasing their likability and perceived status.

Levels of experiential perception and product valuation were significantly higher for the already posted group compared to the recently posted group. Interestingly, these levels did not differ for the control and recently posted groups. These results indicate that posting behavior itself does not change the products' experiential perceptions and valuation. The high levels of

experiential perception and product valuation for the already posted group could be due to the aggregated social reactions over time, or the already posting group' positioning these products already in experiential terms (which has led them to post).

Lastly, prior posting had a main effect on perceived product status but not on product liking and brand liking. These results suggest conspicuous consumption on social media does not directly increase owners' product favorability but elevates their perceived product status. However, mediation results demonstrated that prior posting boosts owners' product liking, brand liking and perceived product status through increased levels of experiential perception. The next study tested whether these results hold for a different sample and another set of product choices.

### 3.3 **Study 1b: Replication of the Influence of Posting on Product Perceptions**

#### 3.3.1 **Design and Procedure**

This study aims to replicate the findings of Study 1a. Once again, this study examined whether conspicuous consumption on social media impacts owners' experiential product perceptions and valuation utilizing a similar design to Study 1a.

I collected data from 381 Amazon Mechanical Turk workers who lived in the U.S., had an active social media account, and were at or over the age of 18. The workers took the online survey and answered eligibility criteria questions. The non-eligible workers were not allowed to continue the study. The eligible were paid 25 cents for completing the survey. I further excluded participants who were instructed to post but did not (56 workers from the recently posted group, 34 workers from the control group). The final dataset had 291 Amazon Mechanical Turk workers (166 females, 125 males), aged 18-65 years ( $M=34.10$  years,  $SD= 10.62$  years).



The procedure and design of the study were similar to Study 1a except for a few instructional changes. In this study, participants were only required to be active social media users (instead of being active on Facebook or Instagram). Also, the participants were asked to describe an important purchase of a tangible product they have made for themselves in the last six months (instead of a general important purchase made in the last six months). Finally, the participants in the currently posted or control group were required to post a picture of their purchase on one of their social media accounts (instead of Facebook or Instagram accounts).

### 3.3.2 **Results**

This study compared the product perceptions and attitudes of already posted, currently posted groups, and the control group (Table 2). Posting about products on social media was expected to influence owners' valuation. The results of one-way ANOVAs partially supported these expectations. The groups' ratings did not vary in terms of product liking ( $F(2, 288) = .13$ ,  $p = .88$ ) and brand liking ( $F(2, 288) = .75$ ,  $p = .47$ ). However, the main effect of posting on perceived product status was significant ( $F(2, 288) = 4.32$ ,  $p = .014$ ). Participants in the already posted group perceived higher product status ( $M_{AP} = 5.43$ ,  $SD = 1.10$ ) compared to the participants in the recently posted group ( $M_{RP} = 4.94$ ,  $SD = 1.34$ ) and control group ( $M_{CG} = 4.99$ ,  $SD = 1.23$ ). Thus, prior posting about material products only raised owners' perceived product status, not their product liking or brand liking.

Posting product pictures on social media was also anticipated to trigger products' experiential perception. Results of one-way ANOVAs showed that prior posting about material purchases increased all three experiential characteristics. First, the main effect of posting on narrative fulfilment was significant ( $F(2, 288) = 5.80$ ,  $p = .003$ ). The already posted group

TABLE II. MEANS (AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS) FOR KEY VARIABLES (STUDY 1.B)

Study 1b	Already Posted Group N= 85	Recently Posted Group N= 92	Control Group N= 114
<b>Experiential Characteristics</b>			
Status Value	4.44 (1.68)	3.64 (1.74)	3.92 (1.71)
Narrative Fulfillment	5.61 (1.99)	4.97 (1.57)	4.97 (1.56)
Self-centrality	3.48 (.83)	2.90 (1.02)	3.07 (.93)
<b>Product Valuation</b>			
Product Liking	6.29 (1.12)	6.33 (1.13)	6.37 (.93)
Brand Liking	5.93 (1.28)	5.71 (1.50)	5.90 (1.28)
Status Perception	5.43 (1.10)	4.94 (1.34)	4.99 (1.23)

*Note 1:* (N = 291). All variables were measured along 7-point rating scales except the 5-point self-centrality variable (5-point).

*Note 2:* Correlation coefficient for the narrative fulfillment items was .75. Reliabilities for status value ( $\alpha = .93$ ) and status perception ( $\alpha = .85$ ) were acceptable.

( $M_{AP} = 5.61$ ,  $SD = 1.19$ ) perceived more narrative fulfillment than the recently posted group ( $M_{RP} = 4.97$ ,  $SD = 1.57$ ) and control group ( $M_{CG} = 4.97$ ,  $SD = 1.56$ ). Second, the main effect of posting on status value was significant ( $F(2, 288) = 4.70$ ,  $p = .01$ ). The already posted group ( $M_{AP} = 4.44$ ,  $SD = 1.68$ ) reported higher status value for their products than the recently posted group ( $M_{RP} = 3.66$ ,  $SD = 1.75$ ) and control group ( $M_{CG} = 3.93$ ,  $SD = 1.71$ ). Third, the main effect of posting on self-centrality was significant ( $F(2, 288) = 9.10$ ,  $p = .00$ ). The already posted group ( $M_{AP} = 3.48$ ,  $SD = .83$ ) perceived their product as more central to their self than the recently posted group ( $M_{RP} = 2.90$ ,  $SD = 1.02$ ) and control group ( $M_{CG} = 3.07$ ,  $SD = .93$ ). These

results supported H1a, H1b, and H1c; showed that posting material product pictures boosted all three experiential characteristics; narrative fulfillment, status value, and self-centrality.

Moreover, experiential characteristics were expected to mediate the relationship between posting product pictures and product valuation. The results of the bootstrap analyses with 5000 samples partially supported these expectations. First, posting product pictures on social media increased products' narrative fulfillment for owners and, in turn, elevated product liking ( $b = .09$ ,  $SE = .03$ ,  $95\% CI = -.1515, -.0292$ ), brand liking ( $b = .11$ ,  $SE = .04$ ,  $95\% CI = -.1896, -.0428$ ), and perceived product status ( $b = .14$ ,  $SE = .04$ ,  $95\% CI = -.2227, -.0488$ ). Second, posting product pictures on social media advanced products' self-centrality for owners, eventually heightening product liking ( $b = .07$ ,  $SE = .03$ ,  $95\% CI = -.1222, -.0193$ ), brand liking ( $b = .10$ ,  $SE = .04$ ,  $95\% CI = -.1734, -.0327$ ), and perceived product status ( $b = .10$ ,  $SE = .04$ ,  $95\% CI = -.1760, -.0310$ ). However, owners' status value did not mediate the relationship between posting and product liking ( $b = .02$ ,  $SE = .01$ ,  $95\% CI = -.0547, .0003$ ), brand liking ( $b = .04$ ,  $SE = .02$ ,  $95\% CI = -.0882, .0011$ ), and perceived product status ( $b = .07$ ,  $SE = .04$ ,  $95\% CI = -.1520, .0035$ ). These results showed that narrative fulfillment and self-centrality (not status value) mediated the relationship between posting product pictures on social media and product valuation, supporting H2a and H2c.

### 3.3.3 **Discussion**

Findings of Study 1b replicated all of the findings of Study 1a except the status value's mediating the relationship between posting product pictures and product valuation. These parallel results showed Study 1a had robust findings. The findings suggest conspicuous consumption on social media has a positive effect on products' experiential perception and

valuation. The results further indicate that the changes in experiential perception and product valuation are not due to the posting product pictures per se but presumably due to the volume and nature of the implied or realized social interaction between product owner and spectators. The next study explores specific social media dynamics that might explain why posting behaviors leads to perception and valuation changes for the products.

### 3.4 **Study 2: Factors to Boost Products' Experiential Perception**

#### 3.4.1 **Design and Procedure**

Study 2 investigates distinct effects of two social media factors on product owners' product perception and valuation. One is including brand information along with posted product pictures, which refers to a post-purchase strategy utilized by product owners, similar to consuming products with visible brand names or logos in offline contexts. The other is garnering positive social recognition for the posted product picture, which refers to a post-purchase feedback mechanism, similar to compliments received in offline contexts. In particular, this study examines how including high-status brand hashtags in social media posts and receiving many likes after posting distinctly influence product owners' product favorability and status perceptions. This study further inspects products' experiential characteristics (i.e., social value, self-centrality, and narrative fulfillment) as potential mediating mechanisms between social media factors and product valuation.

The study employed a vicarious design showing participants a made-up Facebook post with a product (i.e., glasses) and requesting their guesstimates about the product owner's attitudes. Specifically, participants were asked to anticipate another person's perceptions and

attitudes by looking at her Facebook post. Participants' anticipations for another person's attitudes are believed to be realistic reflections of their own attitudes, as reporting for another person's post could reveal personal tendencies in a more objective manner.

I collected data from 797 Amazon Mechanical Turk workers (594 females, 203 males), aged 18 to 65 years ( $M=35.7$  years,  $SD= 11.8$  years), who lived in the U.S., had an active Facebook account, and were at or over the age of 18 (creating eligibility for them). The workers took the online survey and answered eligibility criteria questions. The non-eligible workers were not allowed to continue the study. The eligible workers were paid 25 cents for completing the survey.

*Brand information manipulation.* Participants were shown a made-up Facebook post including a picture of a woman posing with her glasses and the following caption and hashtag, "I can see clearly now! #newglasses." A randomly chosen group of participants saw an additional hashtag of "#burberry" indicating the high-status brand of the glasses while the control group was not given any brand information. The post with the brand hashtag represented the brand information condition; without the brand hashtag represented the no brand information condition (Appendix J).

*Social recognition manipulation.* The Facebook post participants saw either had four likes and neutral comments from friends (e.g., "Since when?") or eighty-eight likes and positive comments (e.g., "You look great with these"). The former information (i.e., few likes and neutral comments) represented the low level of social recognition condition; whereas, the latter information (i.e., many likes and positive comments) represented the high level of social recognition condition (Appendix J).

*Manipulation checks.* I made sure that participants had paid attention to the post details via manipulation check questions. They were requested to examine the assigned post and report what they see in it by answering multiple choice questions. The ones who could not correctly report posted details (i.e., the product type, brand, number of likes; Appendix K) were not allowed to continue the study, as they did not remember posted features representing the study manipulations. The participants who correctly remembered the posted details continued the study.

*Experiential characteristics.* After examining the Facebook post, participants rated the experiential characteristics of the glasses. First, the glasses' self-centrality, the extent to which the post sharer perceives the glasses central to her identity, was measured using Carter and Gilovich's (2012) circle method (adapted from Markus and Kitayama, 1991) where participants chose how much the circle representing herself was close to the circle representing the glasses (Appendix L). Second, the glasses' social value was measured using an adapted version of a social value scale by Sweeney and Soutar (2001). Some example items of this scale were: "The glasses would help her to feel accepted," "The glasses would improve the way she is perceived" (Appendix M;  $\alpha = .93$ ). Third, the glasses' narrative fulfillment, the degree of enjoyment from conversing about the product, was measured with items developed by us. The measurement items were the following: "How likely would she be to talk about her glasses from now on with other people?" and "How much would she enjoy talking about her glasses with other people?" (Appendix N;  $r = .78$ ). Due to acceptable reliability levels, composite items for narrative fulfillment and social value constructs were created by averaging the individual items. All single and composite items were measured on a 7-point Likert scale, except the 5-point self-centrality measure.

*Product attitudes and status perceptions.* Next, the level of owners' product valuation was measured. 1) Favorability attitudes measured how much the product owner liked the glasses and its brand. 2) Status perceptions measured the degree the product owner thought the glasses represent high-status. Items related to product prestige, uniqueness, coolness, stylishness, value, and superiority were measured ( $\alpha = .85$ ) and averaged to develop a composite status perception item. All single and composite items were measured on a 7-point Likert scale (Appendix O).

*Control measures.* Materialism was measured with Richins and Dawson's (1992) scale (Appendix P). Extraversion was measured with the scale developed by Benet-Martinez and John (1998) (Appendix H). Lastly, susceptibility to interpersonal influence was measured with the scale developed by Bearden, Netemeyer, and Teel (1989) (Appendix I).

### 3.4.2 **Results**

Sharing high-status brand information and garnering social recognition were expected to elevate owners' experiential product perceptions and product valuations. Mean values in Table 3 show both the brand hashtags and receiving many likes increase positive product attitudes in terms of experiential characteristics, product/brand liking, and status perception.

Initially, this study investigated whether including high-status brand information in social media posts increased owners' favorable product attitudes and status perception. The results supported this research's hypotheses. One-way ANOVAs were conducted to compare the effect of brand information on product liking, brand liking, and status perception. First, the main effect of brand information on product favorability was significant ( $F(1, 795) = 6.27, p = .012$ ). Participants who viewed a Facebook post with a Burberry hashtag in the caption (i.e., Brand

TABLE III. MEANS (AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS) FOR KEY VARIABLES (STUDY 2)

Study 2	Low Social Recognition		High Social Recognition	
	No Brand Information	Brand Information	No Brand Information	Brand Information
	N= 272	N= 242	N= 143	N= 140
<b>Experiential Characteristics</b>				
Social Value	4.73 (1.47)	5.00 (1.33)	5.34 (1.35)	5.63 (1.05)
Narrative Fulfillment	5.58 (1.11)	5.74 (1.09)	5.73 (1.10)	5.86 (1.07)
Self-centrality	3.50 (.69)	3.49 (.71)	3.62 (.61)	3.60 (.64)
<b>Product Valuation</b>				
Product Liking	6.29 (.99)	6.43 (.80)	6.38 (.80)	6.54 (.74)
Brand Liking	5.85 (1.10)	6.46 (.79)	5.81 (1.12)	6.52 (.83)
Status Perception	5.68 (.79)	6.16 (.70)	5.76 (.74)	6.25 (.63)

*Note:* ( $N = 797$ ). All variables were measured along 7-point rating scales except the 5-point self-centrality measure.

information condition) anticipated that the product owner favored the product more ( $M = 6.47$ ,  $SD = .78$ ) compared to the participants who saw her post without the Burberry hashtag in the caption (i.e., No brand information condition) ( $M = 6.32$ ,  $SD = .93$ ). Second, the main effect of brand information on brand favorability was significant ( $F(1, 795) = 87.73$ ,  $p < .001$ ).

Participants who saw the brand name in the post anticipated that the product owner favored product's brand more ( $M = 6.48$ ,  $SD = .80$ ) compared to the participants did not see it ( $M = 5.84$ ,  $SD = 1.11$ ). Third, the main effect of brand information on product's status perception was significant ( $F(1, 795) = 90.28$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Participants who saw the brand name in the post anticipated that the product owner perceived higher status for the posted product ( $M = 6.20$ ,  $SD = .68$ ) compared to the participants did not see it ( $M = 5.71$ ,  $SD = .77$ ). These findings supported H3.



This study further examined whether such improvements were due to boosts in products' experiential characteristic, namely product's narrative fulfillment. The results supported these expectation. One-way ANOVA was conducted to compare the effect of brand information on narrative fulfillment. The main effect of brand information on narrative fulfillment was significant ( $F(1, 795) = 4.08, p = .04$ ). Particularly, participants who viewed a Facebook post with a Burberry hashtag in the caption (i.e., Brand information condition) thought the eye-glasses provided more narrative fulfillment to the product owner ( $M = 5.79, SD = 1.08$ ) compared to the participants who saw her post without the Burberry hashtag (i.e., No brand information condition) ( $M = 5.63, SD = 1.11$ ). Moreover, separate regression analyses showed that narrative fulfillment significantly predicted product liking ( $\beta = .43, R^2 = .18, p < .001$ ), brand liking ( $\beta = .42, R^2 = .17, p < .001$ ), and status perception ( $\beta = .44, R^2 = .20, p < .001$ ). Hence, those who guesstimated high narrative fulfillment for her eye-glasses also reported she favored the them and their brand, and had high status perception.

Further analyses revealed that owners' narrative fulfillment mediated the relationship between the posts' brand information and their product valuation. (1) The indirect effect of brand information on product liking through narrative fulfillment was tested using a bootstrap analysis with 5000 samples. The results indicated the indirect coefficient was significant,  $b = .05, SE = .03, 95\% CI = .0015, .1080$ . Therefore, the relationship between the brand information and product favorability was mediated by the product's narrative fulfillment. (2) The results of the bootstrap analysis with 5000 samples indicated the indirect coefficient of brand information on brand favorability through narrative fulfillment was significant,  $b = .06, SE = .03, 95\% CI = .0023, .1186$ . Hence, the relationship between brand information and favorability was mediated by the product's narrative fulfillment. (3) The results of the bootstrap analysis with 5000 samples

indicated the indirect coefficient of brand information on status perception through narrative fulfillment is significant,  $b = .05$ ,  $SE = .03$ , 95% CI = [.0015, .0955]. Thus, the relationship between brand information and status perception was also mediated by the product's narrative fulfillment. These results supported H4.

Next, this study examined whether improvements in product attitudes were due to boosts in another experiential characteristic, namely product's status value. The results supported this expectation. One-way ANOVA was conducted to compare the effect of brand information on products' perceived status value. The main effect of brand information on status value was significant ( $F(1, 795) = 9.05$ ,  $p = .003$ ). Specifically, participants who saw a Facebook post with the Burberry hashtag in the caption (i.e., Brand information condition) thought the eye-glasses provided more status value to the owner ( $M = 5.24$ ,  $SD = 1.27$ ) compared to participants who saw her post without the Burberry hashtag (i.e., No brand information condition) ( $M = 4.94$ ,  $SD = 1.45$ ). Moreover, separate regression analyses results showed that product's status value significantly predicted product liking ( $\beta = .26$ ,  $R^2 = .07$ ,  $p < .001$ ), brand liking ( $\beta = .24$ ,  $R^2 = .06$ ,  $p < .001$ ), and perceived product status ( $\beta = .36$ ,  $R^2 = .13$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Hence, the ones who guesstimated high status value for the post owner also reported she liked the glasses and its brand, and perceived high product status.

Further analyses revealed that owners' perceived status value mediated the relationship between posts' brand information and their product attitudes. (1) The results of bootstrap analysis with 5000 samples indicated that the indirect coefficient of brand information on product favorability through status value was significant,  $b = .05$ ,  $SE = .02$ , 95% CI = [.0159, .0796]. Hence, the relationship between brand information and product favorability was mediated by the product's status value. (2) The results of bootstrap analysis with 5000 samples indicated

that the indirect coefficient of brand information on brand favorability through status value was significant,  $b = .05$ ,  $SE = .02$ , 95% CI = .0157, .0791. Therefore, the relationship between brand information and brand favorability was mediated by the product's status value. (3) The results of bootstrap analysis with 5000 samples indicated that the indirect coefficient of brand information on status perception through status value was significant,  $b = .05$ ,  $SE = .02$ , 95% CI = .0184, .0930. Thus, the relationship between brand information and status perception was also mediated by the product's status value. These results also supported H4.

This study also studied whether receiving high social recognition for a social media post increased owners' favorable product attitudes and status perception. The findings partially supported these expectations. One-way ANOVAs were conducted to compare the effect of social recognition on product favorability, brand favorability, and status perception. The main effect of social recognition on product favorability was marginally significant ( $F(1, 795) = 2.71$ ,  $p = .10$ ). Participants who saw a Facebook post with 88 likes and positive comments (i.e., the high level of social recognition condition) anticipated that the product owner favored the product more ( $M = 6.46$ ,  $SD = .77$ ) compared to the participants who saw the Facebook post with four likes and neutral comments (i.e., the low level of social recognition condition) ( $M = 6.35$ ,  $SD = .91$ ). However, the main effect of social recognition on brand favorability was not significant ( $F(1, 795) = .08$ ,  $p = .77$ ). Participants who saw the post with high social recognition did not anticipate the product owner favored product's brand more ( $M = 6.16$ ,  $SD = 1.05$ ) compared to the participants who saw the post with low level of social recognition ( $M = 6.14$ ,  $SD = 1.01$ ). Lastly, the main effect of social recognition on product's status perception was marginally significant ( $F(1, 795) = 3.33$ ,  $p = .07$ ). Participants who saw the post with high social recognition anticipated the product owner perceived higher status for the posted product ( $M = 6.01$ ,  $SD = .73$ ) than the

participants who saw the post with low level of social recognition ( $M = 5.90$ ,  $SD = .79$ ). These findings supported H5.

This study further investigated whether improvements in product valuation are due to boosts in products' experiential characteristic, namely product's status value. The results supported this anticipation. One-way ANOVA was conducted to compare the effect of positive social recognition on products' perceived status value. The main effect of social recognition level on social value was significant ( $F(1, 795) = 39.95$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Specifically, participants who saw a Facebook post with 88 likes and positive comments (i.e., the high level of social recognition condition) thought the glasses provided more status value to the product owner ( $M = 5.49$ ,  $SD = 1.22$ ) compared to participants who saw her post with four likes and neutral comments (i.e., the low level of positive social recognition condition) ( $M = 4.86$ ,  $SD = 1.41$ ).

Further analyses revealed that owners' perceived status value mediated the relationship between posts' social recognition level and their product valuation. (1) The results of bootstrap analysis with 5000 samples indicated that the indirect coefficient of social recognition level on product favorability through status value was significant,  $b = .10$ ,  $SE = .02$ , 95%  $CI = .0675, .1477$ . Thus, the relationship between positive social recognition and product favorability was mediated by the product's status value. (2) The results of bootstrap analysis with 5000 samples indicated that the indirect coefficient of positive social recognition on brand favorability through status value was significant,  $b = .12$ ,  $SE = .02$ , 95%  $CI = .0739, .1608$ . Therefore, the relationship between positive social recognition and brand favorability was mediated by the product's status value. (3) The results of bootstrap analysis with 5000 samples indicated that the indirect coefficient of positive social recognition on perceived product status through status value was significant,  $b = .13$ ,  $SE = .02$ , 95%  $CI = .0850, .1749$ . Hence, the relationship between social

recognition level and perceived product status was also mediated by the product's status value. These results supported H6.

Lastly, this study investigated whether improvements in product valuation are due to boosts in another experiential characteristic, namely product's self-centrality. The findings provided evidence for this expectation. One-way ANOVA was conducted to compare the effect of social recognition level on products' perceived self-centrality. The main effect of social recognition level on self-centrality was significant ( $F(1, 795) = 5.47, p = .02$ ). Specifically, participants who saw a Facebook post with 88 likes and positive comments (i.e., the high level of social recognition condition) thought the glasses were more central to the product owners' self ( $M = 3.61, SD = .63$ ) compared to participants who saw her post with four likes and neutral comments (i.e., the low level of social recognition condition) ( $M = 3.49, SD = .70$ ). Moreover, separate regression analyses results showed that product's self-centrality significantly predicted product liking ( $\beta = .21, R^2 = .04, p < .001$ ), brand liking ( $\beta = .16, R^2 = .02, p < .001$ ), and perceived product status ( $\beta = .22, R^2 = .05, p < .001$ ). Hence, the ones who guesstimated high self-centrality for the product owner also reported she liked the glasses and its brand, and had high status perception.

Further analyses revealed that owners' self-centrality mediated the relationship between posts' social recognition level and product valuation. (1) The results of bootstrap analysis with 5000 samples indicated that the indirect coefficient of social recognition level on product liking through self-centrality was significant,  $b = .03, SE = .01, 95\% CI = .0058, .0605$ . Thus, the relationship between social recognition level and product liking was mediated by self-centrality. (2) The results of bootstrap analysis with 5000 samples indicated that the indirect coefficient of social recognition level on brand liking through self-centrality was significant,  $b = .03, SE = .01,$

95% CI= .0043, .0546. Hence, the relationship between social recognition level and brand liking was mediated by self-centrality. (3) The results of bootstrap analysis with 5000 samples indicated that the indirect coefficient of social recognition level on perceived product status through self-centrality was significant,  $b = .03$ ,  $SE = .01$ , 95% CI= .0051, .0544. Therefore, the relationship between positive social recognition and perceived product status was also mediated by self-centrality. These results also supported H6.

### 3.4.3 **Discussion**

The findings demonstrate that both social media factors (including high-status brand information and garnering high social recognition) improve product valuation. They elevate owners' product valuation through boosting different experiential characteristics. On the one hand, including high-status brand information escalates product valuation via triggering products' *status value* and *narrative fulfillment* for owners. On the other hand, receiving high social recognition raises product valuation via heightening products' *status value* and *self-centrality* for owners. These results suggest product presentation strategies and the level of social reactions determine the effectiveness of conspicuous consumption on social media.

## 3.5 **Study 3: Boundary Condition that Hinders Experiential Product Perceptions**

### 3.5.1 **Design and Procedure**

Study 3 explores the influence of ambiguous comments on owners' experiential perception and product valuation. This study inspects the effects of (1) the *valence* of social recognition and (2) the *level* of social recognition on owners' experiential perceptions and

product valuation. Only one experiential characteristic - narrative fulfillment – is predicted to be affected by the valence and level of social recognition, as receiving ambiguous comments has the potential to lessen one's enjoyment of talking about a product.

I collected data from 407 Amazon Mechanical Turk workers (285 females, 122 males), aged 18-65 years ( $M = 35.1$  years,  $SD = 10.8$ ), who lived in the U.S., had an active Facebook account, and were at or over the age of 18 (creating eligibility for them). The participants took the online survey and answered eligibility criteria questions first. The non-eligible participants were not allowed to continue the study. The eligible were paid 25 cents for completing the survey.

Once more, this study utilized a vicarious design with which participants viewed one's Facebook post and guesstimated the owner's attitudes for the gym shoes in the post. This study had a 2 (valence of social recognition: positive vs. positive and ambiguous comments) by 2 (level of social recognition: four vs. 88 likes) between subjects design. In the positive comments condition, participants were shown a post with positive comments (e.g., "Liked this style") whereas, in the ambiguous and positive comments condition, the post additionally included an ambiguous comment ("Is this some type of humble bragging?"). All the conditions had a Nike hashtag in the caption.

*Social recognition valence manipulation.* The Facebook post participants saw either received only positive comments (e.g., "Liked this style") or both positive and ambiguous comments (e.g., ("Is this some type of humble bragging?"). The former information (i.e., only positive comments) represented the positive social recognition condition; whereas, the latter information (i.e., both positive and ambiguous comments) represented the ambiguous social recognition condition (Appendix Q).

*Social recognition level manipulation.* The Facebook post participants saw either received four likes (i.e., low level of social recognition condition) or eighty-eight likes (i.e., the high level of social recognition condition; Appendix Q).

*Manipulation checks.* To ensure that participants had paid attention to the post details via manipulation check questions, they were requested to examine the assigned post and report what they saw in it by answering multiple choice questions. The ones who could not correctly report posted details (i.e., the product type, brand, number of likes; Appendix R) were not allowed to continue the study, as they did not remember posted features representing the study manipulations. The participants who correctly remembered the posted details continued the study.

Measures for experiential characteristics (Appendix S, T, and U), and product valuation (Appendix V), were similar to Study 2 measures but adapted for the shoes product in the current study and worded gender-neutral.

*Additional manipulation checks.* The general experiential perception of posting behavior were measured to check whether participants viewed sharing product pictures as part of an experience. Participants were also requested to report to what extent they thought the shoes they have seen in the Facebook post was a status product. Lastly, we measured the extent participants thought Nike brand was a status brand. These items were measured on a 7-point Likert scale.

*Control measures.* Materialism was measured with the scale developed by Richins and Dawson (1992) (Appendix G). Extraversion was measured with the scale developed by Benet-Martinez and John (1998) (Appendix H). Lastly, susceptibility to interpersonal influence was measured with the scale developed by Bearden, Netemeyer, and Teel (1989) (Appendix I).



### 3.5.2 **Results**

This study investigated the product perceptions and attitudes based on the social recognition level and valence. Mean levels of separate groups showed that social recognition level and valence interacted with each other to influence owners' experiential perceptions and product valuation (Table 4).

TABLE IV. MEANS (AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS) FOR KEY VARIABLES (STUDY 3)

<b>Study 3</b>	<b>Low Social Recognition</b>		<b>High Social Recognition</b>	
	Ambiguous and Positive N= 105	Positive N= 102	Ambiguous and Positive N= 97	Positive N= 103
<b>Experiential Characteristics</b>				
Status Value	5.45 (1.21)	5.36 (1.32)	5.26 (1.43)	5.61 (1.21)
Narrative Fulfillment	5.58 (1.03)	5.53 (1.63)	5.21 (1.30)	5.70 (1.14)
Self-centrality	3.36 ( .81)	3.26 ( .82)	3.27 ( .82)	3.40 ( .78)
<b>Product Valuation</b>				
Product Liking	6.21 (1.00)	6.30 ( .99)	6.02 (1.05)	6.41 ( .86)
Brand Liking	6.22 ( .92)	6.32 ( .94)	5.94 (1.13)	6.47 ( .77)
Status Perception	5.87 ( .84)	5.75 ( .85)	5.63 ( .88)	5.82 ( .83)

*Note 1:* (N = 407). All variables were measured along 7-point rating scales except the 5-point self-centrality variable.

*Note 2:* Correlation coefficient for the narrative fulfillment items was .80. Reliabilities for status value ( $\alpha = .94$ ) and status perception ( $\alpha = .87$ ) were acceptable.

Receiving ambiguous comments were expected to influence owners' narrative fulfillment but not the other experiential characteristics. The results of one way ANOVAs supported these expectations. The main effect of social recognition valence on narrative fulfillment was marginally significant ( $F(1, 405) = 3.26, p = .072$ ). Participants who saw the Facebook post with

ambiguous and positive comments thought the shoes provided less narrative fulfillment to the product owner ( $M = 5.41$ ,  $SD = 1.18$ ) compared to the participants who saw the Facebook post with only positive comments ( $M = 5.62$ ,  $SD = 1.15$ ). However, the main effect of social recognition valence on status value was not significant ( $F(1, 405) = .95$ ,  $p = .33$ ). Participants who saw the Facebook post with ambiguous and positive comments thought the shoes had less status value ( $M = 5.36$ ,  $SD = 1.32$ ) compared to the participants who saw the Facebook post with only positive comments ( $M = 5.49$ ,  $SD = 1.27$ ). Also, the main effect of social recognition valence on self-centrality was not significant ( $F(1, 405) = .03$ ,  $p = .85$ ). Participants who saw the Facebook post with ambiguous and positive comments thought the shoes were less central to the self ( $M = 3.32$ ,  $SD = .82$ ) compared to the participants who saw the Facebook post with only positive comments ( $M = 3.33$ ,  $SD = .80$ ). Thus, receiving ambiguous comments only decreased narrative fulfillment, not the other experiential characteristics (status value or self-centrality).

Social recognition valence was also anticipated to impact product valuation. The results partially supported this anticipation. The main effect of social recognition valence on product liking was significant ( $F(1, 405) = 6.01$ ,  $p = .015$ ). Participants who saw the Facebook post with ambiguous and positive comments anticipated that the product owner favored the product less ( $M = 6.12$ ,  $SD = 1.03$ ) compared to the participants who saw the Facebook post with only positive comments ( $M = 6.36$ ,  $SD = .93$ ). Moreover, the main effect of social recognition valence on brand liking was significant ( $F(1, 405) = 10.93$ ,  $p = .001$ ). Participants who saw the Facebook post with ambiguous and positive comments anticipated that the product owner favored the product's brand less ( $M = 6.08$ ,  $SD = 1.03$ ) compared to the participants who saw the Facebook post with only positive comments ( $M = 6.40$ ,  $SD = .86$ ). However, the main effect of social recognition valence on perceived product status was not significant ( $F(1, 405) = .98$ ,  $p =$

.755). Participants who saw the Facebook post with ambiguous and positive comments did not expect that the product owner perceived lower status for the posted product ( $M = 5.76$ ,  $SD = .86$ ) than the participants who saw the Facebook post with only positive comments ( $M = 5.78$ ,  $SD = .84$ ). In sum, receiving ambiguous comments decreased product liking and brand liking but not the perceived product status.

A high social recognition level was expected to increase experiential characteristics. The one-way ANOVA results did not support these predictions. The social recognition level did not increase narrative fulfillment ( $F(1, 405) = .61$ ,  $p = .44$ ), status value ( $F(1, 405) = .07$ ,  $p = .80$ ), or self-centrality ( $F(1, 405) = .07$ ,  $p = .80$ ). I further expected the social recognition level would elevate product valuation. One-way ANOVA results did not support these predictions. The social recognition level did not elevate product liking ( $F(1, 405) = .14$ ,  $p = .71$ ), brand liking ( $F(1, 405) = .40$ ,  $p = .53$ ), or perceived product status ( $F(1, 405) = 1.06$ ,  $p = .30$ ). These unexpected results prompted us to look at the interactions between the social recognition level and valence on experiential characteristics and product valuation.

ANOVA results confirmed that the social recognition level and valence interact to impact experiential characteristics and product valuation. The social recognition level moderated the effect of social recognition valence on narrative fulfillment ( $F(3, 403) = 5.79$ ,  $p = .02$ ), marginally on status value ( $F(3, 403) = 2.95$ ,  $p = .09$ ), and marginally on self-centrality ( $F(3, 403) = 2.00$ ,  $p = .16$ ). Receiving ambiguous comments decreased experiential perception if the social recognition level was high (Table 4). Moreover, the social recognition level moderated the effect of social recognition valence marginally on product liking ( $F(3, 403) = 2.89$ ,  $p = .13$ ), on brand liking  $F(3, 403) = 5.11$ ,  $p = .02$ , and marginally on  $F(3, 403) = 3.50$ ,  $p = .06$ ). Similar to

the experiential perception results, garnering ambiguous comments reduced product valuation given the social recognition was high (Table 4).

Finally, valence of social recognition was anticipated to diminish owners' product valuation through lowered narrative fulfillment. The results confirmed these expectations for the posts that received high levels of social recognition. Results of moderated mediation analyses showed the social recognition level moderated the effect of the social recognition valence on owners' narrative fulfillment, in turn product valuation. When the social recognition level was high (88 likes), having shared a post which received ambiguous comments decreased owners' narrative fulfillment and then lowered product liking ( $b = -.19$ ,  $SE = .07$ ,  $p = .00$ ), brand liking ( $b = -.18$ ,  $SE = .06$ ,  $p = .00$ ), and perceived product status ( $b = -.21$ ,  $SE = .07$ ,  $p = .00$ ). When the social recognition level was low (four likes), having garnered ambiguous comments did not have an indirect effect on product liking ( $b = .02$ ,  $SE = .06$ ,  $p = .71$ ), brand liking ( $b = .02$ ,  $SE = .06$ ,  $p = .71$ ), or ( $b = .03$ ,  $SE = .07$ ,  $p = .71$ ) through narrative fulfillment. These results showed that the effects of ambiguous comments were only significant when the post received high social recognition (88 likes), not when it received low social recognition (four likes). H7 is partially supported.

### 3.5.3 **Discussion**

This study suggests a boundary condition that a high level of social recognition can hinder the transformation of product conception from material to experiential lessening owners' product valuation. Previously, the findings demonstrated high social recognition boosts experiential characteristics and the product valuation. Currently, the level and valence of social recognition have been shown to counterbalance each other's effect on experiential perception

and product valuation. If the valence of social recognition is ambiguous, product owners perceive less narrative fulfilment and value their products less, even though the level of social recognition is high. However, the ambiguous valence of social media recognition does not influence narrative fulfillment and product valuation given a low level of social recognition.

The results posit that garnering high social recognition is not enough, but consumers should also avoid ambiguous comments to fully enjoy conspicuous consumption on social media. Ambiguous comments can impede the positive influence of high social recognition on experiential perceptions and product valuation. One explanation can be that ambiguous comments embarrass owners for a product display recognized by many people.

## 4. CONCLUSION

### 4.1 General Discussion

The present research investigated whether and how the act of conspicuous consumption influenced the consumption experience. Across four studies, this research found that conspicuous consumption can enrich product owners' consumption experience via elevating their product valuation. In particular, conspicuous consumption on social media (i.e., showcasing product pictures on one's account) raised material products' liking and status perception, as it boosted owners' experiential product conception at the post-purchase phase. Moreover, sharing product pictures with high-status brand information and garnering high social recognition after sharing product pictures (but not receiving ambiguous comments) were identified as factors to amplify material products' experiential perception, which in turn, increased owners' product liking, brand liking, and perceived product status. These findings show that conspicuous consumption on social media can extend owners' product valuation when the shared brand information or garnered social reactions turn product perceptions from material to experiential. Thus, these findings suggest that conspicuous consumption, which is usually judged as an excessive and ostentatious behavior, might be beneficial for the product owners.

By demonstrating that the process of conspicuous consumption (not the picture posting action per se) can lead to an experiential transition and value expansion for material products, the present research emphasizes the importance of implied and realized social recognition for status acquisition (Griskevicius et al., 2007; Mason, 1981; Rucker and Galinski, 2009). Instead of a mere picture posting, the post-purchase phase might require an extended period of product display, concrete status (e.g., high-status brand hashtags) and social recognition signals (e.g.,

number of likes, comments) to make an impact on owners' product perceptions. Social media communications, such as permanent picture sharing on Facebook or Instagram accounts, can be regarded as proper tools to create conspicuous consumption episodes, as they expand one's audience and the display time allowing various types of reactions (Belk 2013; Marwick 2015). However, not all the social reactions encourage experiential product perceptions and product valuation. Only the intense and positive social acknowledgment is shown to improve owners' experiential product perceptions, followed by elevated product liking and status perception. In contrast, the social acknowledgment with an ambiguous valence can hinder products' experiential perceptions and be detrimental for product valuation when there is high social recognition. Specifically, the present findings suggest the possibility that social recognition is necessary for conspicuous consumption to add value to material products but, it should be positive and intense.

The current findings can also support and extend the recent research's conclusions that material and experiential products are not mutually exclusive; yet, consumers' product conceptions can change based on their usage intentions (Mann and Gilovich, 2016; Rosenzweig and Gilovich, 2012). However, that research only altered product perceptions from material to experiential (or vice versa) through experimental manipulations. The present research unearths a new method that consumers can convert their material product perceptions to experiential ones on their own via placing these products on social media. Although it is not clear whether consumers are aware of the possibility that sharing material product pictures might result in experiential conception and hence intentionally showcase their material products to boost their valuation, conspicuous consumption on social media might be a useful instrument to lengthen the

otherwise short product enjoyment of material products (Van Boven and Gilovich, 2003), thanks to the transient nature of product perceptions.

Of importance, the present findings suggest an enlarged scope of conspicuous consumption, which is conventionally limited to seeking high-status via displaying affluence-signals, such as luxury brands (Page, 1992; Veblen, 1889/1994). Although the present findings also confirm that exhibiting high-status brands can elevate a product's status perception, additional findings indicate that consumers can advance their status perceptions of the same product via collecting positive social recognition about it (given the audience does not know its brand). Furthermore, via the acknowledgment on social media, consumers can attribute higher status to products that do not normally symbolize affluence (e.g., furniture of non-luxury brands) or to private goods (e.g., grooming items); and gain different types of status (e.g., good taste, smart consumer) in addition to affluence. These findings support the argument that a high-status is indeed claimed and acquired via social negotiations, depending less on product features or brand characteristics (Dion and Borraz, 2017; Goffman, 1967).

The current research differs from the previous research in several respects. The present findings suggest digitized goods (e.g., eye-glasses whose picture is shared on social media) can be valued more compared to their non-digitized equivalents (e.g., eye-glasses whose picture is shared on social media), as the socialization with digitized goods elevate products' experiential perceptions, such as their closeness to the owners' self. However, Atasoy and Morewedge (2018) argue consumers value digital goods (e.g., e-books) less than their physical equivalents (e.g., hard copy books) due to the lower association with the self. The difference might stem from Atasoy and Carewedge's studying the likelihood of purchasing, willingness to pay, and payment for these goods prior to the purchase; whereas, this research examines product valuation (product



liking, brand liking, and perceived product status) after the purchase. Therefore, changing findings based on the timing of product valuation emphasize the need to scrutinize the post-purchase dynamics (e.g., social interactions) to have a comprehensive understanding of consumption experience and product valuation.

Moreover, the present findings postulate taking pictures of material products and sharing them with others on social media could benefit owners because of the boosted experiential perceptions and elevated product valuation. Nevertheless, Barasch, Zaubermaier, and Diehl (2018) suggest taking pictures of experiences with the intention of sharing them with others reduces owners' enjoyment due to the increased self-presentational concerns and lowered engagement during the experience. These contradictory findings might arise from dissimilar product characteristics consumers initially hold. Taking pictures of experiences might decrease the already high levels of engagement for experiences; yet, it can increase the initial low level of engagement for the material products. Thus, these findings postulate conspicuous consumption could be advantageous for the products associated with low levels of engagement.

The current research might have important implications for research on conspicuous consumption and consumption experience, particularly in the context of social media. First, this research acknowledges that consumers' expected high valuation before acquiring status signaling products can change after the purchase based on the consumption experience. Therefore, conspicuous consumption is conceptualized as an antecedent of product valuation (instead of as a consequence of high-status seeking). Although the previous research mainly focused on the pre-purchase phase of conspicuous consumption (Braun and Wicklund, 1989; Griskevicius et al., 2007; Han et al., 2010; Sivanathan and Pettit, 2010), the current research examines the post-purchase phase to uncover how consumers acquire the intended high-status based on the

expected and gathered social acknowledgement. In particular, it utilizes product demonstrations on social media as proper tools to discern how owners' product perceptions and valuation evolve based on consumers' product presentation and others' reactions. Social media is suitable to study product presentation strategies; implied and realized social recognition; the level and nature of social recognition. The current findings suggest that consumers can enhance their perceived product status via digitizing their possessions and including them in social experiences. Consequently, even non-luxury products can be conceived similarly to luxuries when showcased on social media, which might refer to the democratization of status-signaling consumption.

#### 4.2 **Limitations and Future Directions**

One possible theoretical explanation for the enrichment of consumption experiences could be the slower pace of hedonic adaptation (Frederick and Loewenstein 1999) when people showcase their material products on social media. Material products' higher experiential perception presumably slows down the hedonic adaptation process as if they were experiential purchases (Van Boven, 2005). Therefore, people highly value material products that are displayed on social media as they would value experiential products (e.g., Van Boven and Gilovich, 2003). However, as suggested by Nicolao, Irwin, and Goodman (2009), slower adaptation appears to be beneficial only when the experience is positive. Future research might investigate whether the extended hedonic adaptation is the reason for valuing material products more when they are perceived experiential.

Prior research suggests taking pictures with the intention of sharing them with others might reduce product enjoyment for some consumers due to self-presentational concerns and decreased engagement (Barasch, Zauberaman, and Diehl, 2018). On the other hand, perception of

experiential products might resemble material purchases' perception, which is associated with less consumption-related happiness, if these experiences are not social (Caprariello and Reis, 2013). By sharing solitary experiences on social media via pictures, consumers can add the social aspect to the experiential products and elevate their valuation (Lambert et al., 2013; Reis et al., 2010; Yuksel, Milne, and Miller, 2016). These findings indicate that conspicuous consumption on social media might be beneficial for both material and experiential products but, specific consumer characteristics and motivations should be taken into consideration.

Furthermore, this research has studied the specific impacts of posting material product pictures and collecting likes and comments from other people. Other types of product displays on social media, such as sharing product videos, can require diverse conditions or strategies (e.g., videotaping the product in use other than static product pictures), which might alter experiential perception and product valuation in different ways. Moreover, other social reaction styles, such as sending emoticons, can also influence product perceptions in novel ways this research has not covered. Future research might examine these emerging product displays and social interactions to uncover diverse aspects of and opportunities for conspicuous consumption on social media.

To be able to better capture the conspicuous consumption process on social media, future research can also utilize a simulation that mimics social reactions gathered over time. This design might provide improved control over social interaction manipulations and uncover the real time effects of others' reactions on social media. It might also allow researchers to study various types of positive (e.g., praising the owners' characteristics) negative (e.g., attacking the quality of the product) or ambiguous comments (e.g., questioning the necessity of the purchase), which might boost or hinder different experiential characteristics.

Analyses of product pictures on social media as a proxy for conspicuous consumption might not fully represent conspicuous consumption in offline contexts. The specific capabilities on social media, such as displaying products publicly to an enlarged audience and garnering concrete social acknowledgment, might not apply to some conspicuous consumption attempts in offline contexts. On the other hand, physical brand logos on products can function similarly to hashtags on social media; in-person conversation can operate alike to social media comments. Moreover, most of the current studies are based on Facebook or Instagram and utilize posting picture function. Thus, these findings might not be generalized to all types of communications on social media outlets due to their different foci and features (Van Dijck, 2013). Some functions on Instagram or Facebook, such as sharing stories allowing displays of pictures or videos for only several seconds in a day, are based on more temporary showcases compared to the permanent picture sharing function in the current studies, which lets users exhibit pictures for years. Thus, an experiential transition might not occur when temporary posting functions are used because short display time might limit social reactions and interactions about the showcased product. Furthermore, other social media outlets might be characterized with different practices than sharing everyday pictures and have different purposes than engaging in product-related conversations. For example, Facebook and Instagram are primarily focused on visual and textual communications; whereas, Twitter is mostly based on textual information exchange and Snapchat is for sharing temporary and transformed visual and textual information.

Although the current research posits that conspicuous consumption on social media can boost owners' perceived product status, which consumers aspire to attribute to their own identities, we do not know whether the increase in products' status perception also reflects to owners' identities. Future research might inspect whether conspicuous consumption on social

media elevates consumers' personal status perception or not. In this case, consumers might not need to display status-signaling products in the offline contexts to sustain or elevate their status, they can just take pictures of status-signaling products and post them on social media to attach products' elevated high-status to their identity. This possibility might also encourage consumers to display products that are owned by someone else, counterfeit, or rented (e.g., Anlamlier et al., 2016) as long as they represent a high-status. Access-based consumption and sharing (Bardhi and Eckhardt 2012, 2017; Belk 2014) can further motivate conspicuous consumption of unowned products, as these consumption types enable consumers with limited means to have access to status-signaling products at low prices.

#### 4.3 **Managerial Implications**

The current findings can inform managers who aim to enrich their consumers' consumption experiences and product valuation via utilizing social media. The current research highlights the importance of product presentation and socialization strategies for consumers after the purchase. Managers who are responsible for necessity products can encourage consumers to exploit social media communications and high social recognition to value their possessions more and attribute higher-status to them. Managers who promote luxury products can additionally urge consumers to share the brand information on social media to boost their product liking, as well as perceived product status.

## CITED LITERATURE

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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX A

#### **Product Explanation and Posting Instructions for the Already Posted Group (Study 1a and 1b)**

##### **Product description**

Please think of an important purchase you have made in the past six months. Tell us what that purchase was and why it was important in the below box.

Please explain your purchase in as detailed a way as possible and spend at least 1 minute to answer this question.

##### **Social Media Post**

Did you post a picture of the purchase you just described on one of your social media accounts?

Yes

No

##### **Post explanation**

Please explain how you included the product in your social media picture and what you wrote as a caption.

Please spend at least 1 minute to complete this task.

##### **Number of likes**

How many likes did you receive for this post? (Please go to your account and see the exact number)

##### **Valence of comments**

What type of comments did you receive for this post? (Please go to your account and see the comments)

**APPENDIX A (Continued)**

I did not receive any comments for this post.

I received only neutral comments.

I received mostly positive comments.

I received mostly negative/annoying comments.

I received both positive and negative/annoying comments.

## **APPENDIX B**

### **Product Explanation and Posting Instructions for the Recently Posted and Control Groups**

#### **(Study 1a and 1b)**

##### **Product description**

Please think of an important purchase you have made in the past six months. Tell us what that purchase was and why it was important in the below box.

Please explain your purchase in as detailed a way as possible and spend at least 1 minute to answer this question.

##### **Social Media Post**

Did you post a picture of the purchase you just described on one of your social media accounts?

Yes

No

##### **Posting instructions and explanation**

Please leave this page and post a picture of the item you selected on your Facebook or Instagram account so your friends can see it. Then please come back to this survey and explain how you included the product in your Facebook/Instagram picture and what you wrote as a caption.

Please spend at least 2 minutes to complete the above-mentioned tasks.

##### **Number of likes**

How many likes would you expect to receive for this post?

##### **Valence of comments**

What type of comments would you expect to receive for this post?

I would not receive any comments for this post.

I would receive only neutral comments.

**APPENDIX B (Continued)**

I would receive mostly positive comments.

I would receive mostly negative/annoying comments.

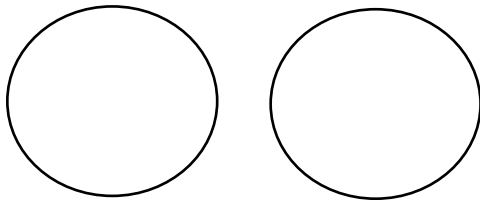
I would receive both positive and negative/annoying comments.

## APPENDIX C

### Self-Centrality Measure (Adapted for Study 1a and 1b)

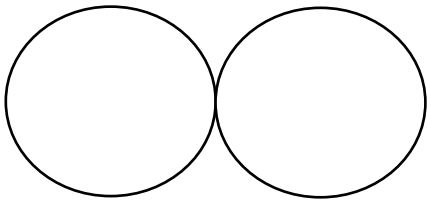
(Carter and Gilovich, 2012; Markus and Kitayama, 1991)

Please look at the below shapes. Imagine that one circle represents your self and the other circle represents the product you previously selected. Which of the images below best represents how close you feel to your product?



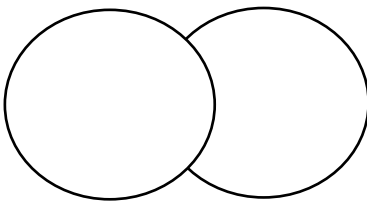
Your self

The product



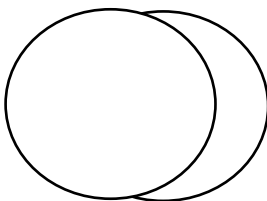
Your self

The product



Your self

The product



Your self

The product





## APPENDIX E

### Narrative Fulfillment Scale (Study 1a and 1b Adaptation)

How likely would you be to talk about your selected product from now on with other people?

1. Extremely unlikely      2.      3.      4.      5.      6.      7. Extremely likely

○      ○      ○      ○      ○      ○      ○

How much would you enjoy talking about your product with other people?

1. Extremely unlikely      2.      3.      4.      5.      6.      7. Extremely likely

○      ○      ○      ○      ○      ○      ○

## APPENDIX F

### Attitude Items for Study 1a and 1b

(1. Product Liking) How much do you like the product in your post?

[illegible]

(2. Brand Liking) How much do you like the brand of the product?

[illegible]

(3. Usage Motivation) How motivated would you be to use the product?

[illegible]

(4. Prestige) You think your product in the post is ...

[illegible]

(5. Uniqueness) You think your product in the post is ...

[illegible]

### APPENDIX F (Continued)

(6. Value) You think your product in the post is ...

1. Not valuable at all	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7. Very valuable
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

(7. Coolness) You think your product in the post is ...

1. Not cool at all	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7. Very cool
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

(8. Stylishness) You think your product in the post is ...

1. Not stylish at all	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7. Very stylish
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

(9. Satisfaction) You think your product in the post is ...

1. Not satisfactory at all	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7. Very satisfactory
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

(10. Superiority) You think your product in the post is ...

1. Inferior to competing products	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7. Superior to competing products
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Note. Items 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10 are averaged to compose status perception item.

## APPENDIX G

### Short Version of Materialism Scale (Study 1a, 1b, and 3)

(Richins, 2004)

Please indicate how much you agree with the below statements.

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neutral (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
I admire people who own expensive homes, cars, and clothes.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The things I own say a lot about how well I'm doing in life.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I like to own things that impress people.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I try to keep my life simple, as far as possessions are concerned. (R)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Buying things gives me a lot of pleasure.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I like a lot of luxury in my life.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My life would be better if I owned certain things I don't have.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I'd be happier if I could afford to buy more things.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It sometimes bothers me quite a bit that I can't afford to buy all the things I'd like.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Note. (R) refers to a reverse worded item.

## APPENDIX H

### Extraversion Scale

**(Benet-Martinez and John, 1998)**

Please indicate how much you agree with the below statements.

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neutral (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
I am outgoing, sociable.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am talkative.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have an assertive personality.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I generate a lot of enthusiasm.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am full of energy.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am reserved. (R)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am sometimes shy, inhibited. (R)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I tend to be quiet. (R)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Note. (R) refers to a reverse worded item.







### APPENDIX I (Continued)

10. If I have little experience with a product, I often ask my friends about the product.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

11. I often consult other people to help choose the best alternative available from a product class.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

12. I frequently gather information from friends or family about a product before I buy.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

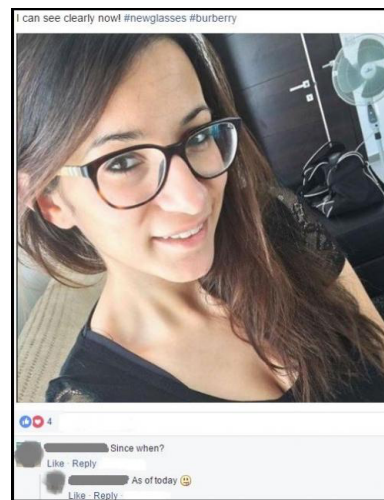
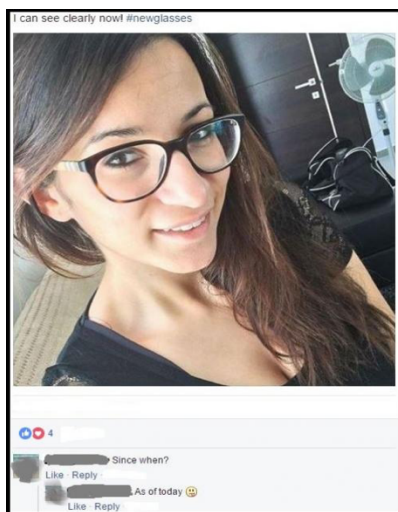
Note. Items 1-8 represent norm dimension. Items 9-12 represent information dimension.

## APPENDIX J

### Brand Information and Social Recognition Manipulations (Study 2)

Please examine the below Facebook post about glasses in detail. Take at least 20 seconds to examine the post. The next questions will be about this post. Please be attentive to the post text, picture and reactions from friends.

1. No brand information & low recognition
2. Brand information & low recognition



3. No brand information & high recognition
4. Brand information & high recognition



## APPENDIX K

### Manipulation Check Questions (Study 2)

Now please answer the below questions about the Facebook post you have just seen. What did she just buy?

- ☐ A phone
- ☐ Glasses
- ☐ A pen

How many Facebook likes did she get?

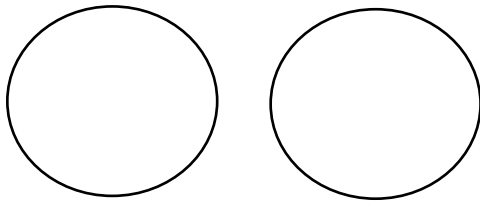
- ☐ 1-10
- ☐ 11-50
- ☐ 51-100

What is the brand of the glasses?

- ☐ Burberry
- ☐ Chanel
- ☐ Not stated

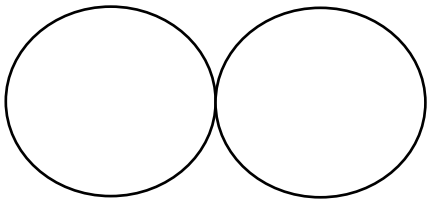
**APPENDIX L****Self-Centrality Measure (Adapted for Study 2)****(Carter and Gilovich, 2012; Markus and Kitayama, 1991)**

Please look at the below shapes. Imagine that one circle represents the woman in the post and the other circle represents the glasses she wears. Which of the images below best represents how close she feels to the glasses?



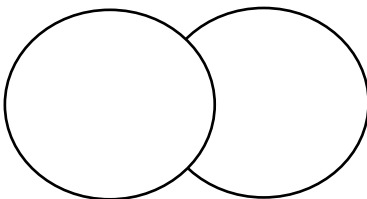
Her self

The glasses



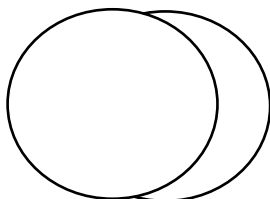
Her self

The glasses



Her self

The glasses



Her self

The glasses



## APPENDIX N

### Narrative Fulfillment Scale (Study 2 Adaptation)

How likely would she be to talk about her glasses from now on with other people?

1. Extremely unlikely      2.      3.      4.      5.      6.      7. Extremely likely

○      ○      ○      ○      ○      ○      ○

How much would she enjoy talking about her glasses with other people?

[illegible]

## APPENDIX O

### Attitude Items for Study 2

(1. Product Liking) How much do you think the woman in the post likes the glasses she wears?

1.Not at all      2.      3.      4.      5.      6.      7.Very much

○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

(2. Brand Liking) How much do you think she would like the brand of her glasses?

1. Not at all      2.      3.      4.      5.      6.      7. Very much

☐    ☐    ☒    ☐    ☐    ☐    ☐

(3. Usage Motivation) How motivated would she be to wear her glasses?

[illegible]

(4. Prestige) She thinks her glasses are...

1. Not prestigious at all      2.      3.      4.      5.      6.      7. Very prestigious

☐      ☒      ☐      ☐      ☐      ☐      ☐

(5. Uniqueness) She thinks her glasses are...

[illegible]

### APPENDIX O (Continued)

(6. Value) She thinks her glasses are...

1. Not valuable at all	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7. Very valuable
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

(7. Coolness) She thinks her glasses are...

1. Not cool at all	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7. Very cool
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

(8. Stylishness) She thinks her glasses are...

1. Not stylish at all	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7. Very stylish
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

(9. Satisfaction) She thinks her glasses are...

1. Not satisfactory at all	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7. Very satisfactory
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

(10. Superiority) She thinks her glasses are...

1. Inferior to competing products	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7. Superior to competing products
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Note. Items 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10 were averaged to compose status perception item.



## APPENDIX P

### Materialism Scale (Study 2)

(Richins and Dawson, 1992)

Please indicate how much you agree with the below statements.

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neutral (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
(1) I admire people who own expensive homes, cars, and clothes.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(2) Some of the most important achievements in life include acquiring material possessions.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(3) I don't place much emphasis on the amount of material objects people own as a sign of success. (R)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(4) The things I own say a lot about how well I'm doing in life.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(5) I like to own things that impress people.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(6) I don't pay much attention to the material objects other people own. (R)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(7) I usually buy only the things I need. (R)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(8) I try to keep my life simple, as far as possessions are concerned. (R)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(9) The things I own aren't all that important to me. (R)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(10) I enjoy spending money on things that aren't practical.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(11) Buying things gives me a lot of pleasure.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(12) I like a lot of luxury in my life.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(13) I put less emphasis on material things than most people I know. (R)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**APPENDIX P (Continued)**

(14) I have all the things I really need to enjoy life. (R)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(15) My life would be better if I owned certain things I don't have.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(16) I wouldn't be any happier if I owned nicer things. (R)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(17) I'd be happier if I could afford to buy more things.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(18) It sometimes bothers me quite a bit that I can't afford to buy all the things I'd like.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Note. Items 1-6 represent success dimension. Items 7-13 represents centrality dimension. Items 14-18 represent happiness dimension.  
 (R) refers to a reverse worded item.

## APPENDIX Q

### Brand Information and Social Recognition Manipulations (Study 3)

Please examine the below Facebook post. The next questions will be about this post. Please **take at least 20 seconds** to attend to the post text, picture, and reactions from friends.

1. Ambiguous and positive valence & low recognition
2. Positive valence & low recognition



## APPENDIX Q (Continued)

### 3. Ambiguous and positive valence & high recognition    4. Positive valence & high recognition



## APPENDIX R

### Manipulation Check Questions (Study 3)

Now please answer the below questions about the Facebook post you have just seen. What was displayed in the post?

- ☐ A home
- ☐ Shoes
- ☐ A phone

How many Facebook likes did the post receive?

- ☐ 1-10
- ☐ 11-50
- ☐ 51-100

What was the stated brand of the shoes in the post caption?

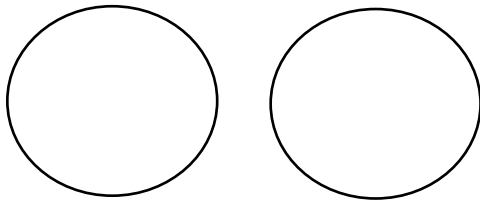
- ☐ Nike
- ☐ Adidas
- ☐ Guess

## APPENDIX S

### Self-Centrality Measure (Adapted for Study 3)

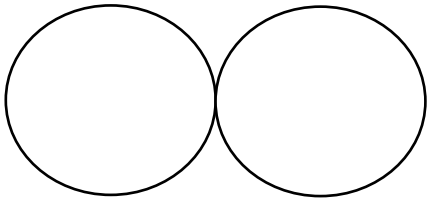
**(Carter and Gilovich, 2012; Markus and Kitayama, 1991)**

Please look at the below shapes. Imagine that one circle represents the person who shared the Facebook post you just saw and the other circle represents the shoes in the post. Which of the images below best represents how close the person feels to the shoes?



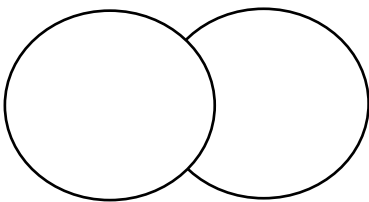
The owner's self

The shoes



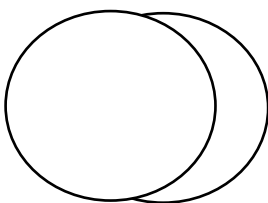
The owner's self

The shoes



The owner's self

The shoes



The owner's self

The shoes

## APPENDIX T

### Social Value Scale (Sweeney and Soutar, 2001; Study 3 Adaptation)

Please try to guess **the owner's thoughts** about the shoes.

[illegible]

## APPENDIX U

### Narrative Fulfillment Scale (Study 3 Adaptation)

How likely would the owner be to talk about the shoes from now on with other people?

[illegible]

How much would the owner enjoy talking about the shoes with other people?

1. Extremely unlikely      2.      3.      4.      5.      6.      7. Extremely likely

○      ○      ○      ○      ○      ○      ○



## APPENDIX V

### Attitude Items for Study 3

(1. Product Liking) How much does the owner like the shoes in the post?

[illegible]

(2. Brand Liking) How much does the owner like the brand of the shoes?

1. Not at all                  2.                  3.                  4.                  5.                  6.                  7. Very much

○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

(3. Usage Motivation) How motivated would the owner be to wear the shoes?

[illegible]

(4. Prestige) The owner thinks the shoes in the post are ...

1. Not prestigious at all      2.      3.      4.      5.      6.      7. Very prestigious

☐      ☒      ☐      ☐      ☐      ☐      ☐

(5. Uniqueness) The owner thinks the shoes in the post are ...

[illegible]

### APPENDIX V (Continued)

(6. Value) The owner thinks the shoes in the post are ...

1. Not valuable at all	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7. Very valuable
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

(7. Coolness) The owner thinks the shoes in the post are ...

1. Not cool at all	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7. Very cool
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

(8. Stylishness) The owner thinks the shoes in the post are ...

1. Not stylish at all	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7. Very stylish
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

(9. Satisfaction) The owner thinks the shoes in the post are ...

1. Not satisfactory at all	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7. Very satisfactory
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

(10. Superiority) The owner thinks the shoes in the post are ...

1. Inferior to competing products	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7. Superior to competing products
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Note. Items 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10 were averaged to compose status perception item.

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## PUBLICATIONS:

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