



How Brand Jealousy is an Antidote for Premium to Pay More in the Presence of Materialism and Brand Attachment?

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ARTICLE INFO

Article History:

Received: April 12, 2021

Revised: June 28, 2021

Accepted: June 30, 2021

Available Online: June 30, 2021

Keywords:

Brand Jealousy

Brand Attachment

Materialism

Willingness to pay more

PLS-SEM

ABSTRACT

Brand jealousy is a widely used concept seen in recent literature of brand management and consumer behavior. This study intends to explore the affiliation of brand jealousy and willingness to pay more as well as the mediating roles of brand attachment and materialism. To examine the relationship of framework we used the Partial Least Square Structure Equation Model (PLS-SEM). The results of the study depict a positive relationship between brand jealousy as well as willingness to pay more. The outcomes of this study offer new practical insights for marketing and brand managers by introducing various strategies in their integrated marketing communication to influence the framework of brand jealousy and customers' willingness to pay more for various brands.



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1. Introduction

An Old Russian maxim is that "jealousy and love are sisters." Jealousy and love both are associated with emotional phenomenon experience and both arise in the same brain part (Hart & Legerstee, 2013). Past researches have examined that jealousy has an impact on interpersonal associations (Lennarz, Lichtwarck-Aschoff, Finkenauer, & Granic, 2017) and depicted that females are more prostrate towards jealousy (Zimmer-Gembeck et al., 2013). Envy and jealousy are characteristics of psychological ideologies that change in the presence of a rival (Hancock, Adams, Breazeale, & Lueg, 2020; Stenner, 2013).

Jealousy is a kind of interpersonal difference and it helps in sustaining an already existent tie between one person to another from changing or ending (Bevan, 2015). Researchers have examined that psychology has an impact on interpersonal relationships (Attridge, 2013a, 2013b; Harris & Darby, 2010; Knobloch, Solomon, & Cruz, 2001; Kokkinos, Kountouraki, Voulgaridou, & Markos, 2020; Lennarz et al., 2017). Many researchers adopted jealousy in branding as a new dimension (Bıçakcıoğlu, Ögel, & İlter, 2017; İlter, Bıçakcıoğlu, & Yaran, 2016; Sarkar, Krishna, & Rao, 2014; Sreejesh, 2015).

Based on the prior discussion, the study has three objectives; (i) to inquire the impact of brand jealousy, brand attachment, and materialism on willingness to pay more; (ii) to investigate the interconnection amongst brand jealousy, materialism, brand attachment, and willingness to pay more; (iii) to examine whether brand attachment and materialism have any intervening impact between brand jealousy and willingness to pay more.

This study provides both managerial as well as scholarly addition to brand management literature in various dimensions. The existing study fills the gap by studying a new mediating

variable i.e. brand attachment in the context of Pakistan while examining the relationship between brand jealousy and willingness to pay more. This study expands theories on social anxiety (self-presentation and social exclusion theories) in materialism and brand jealousy circumstances.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Brand Jealousy in Branding

Many researchers adopted brand jealousy as a new dimension (Bıçakcıoğlu et al., 2017; İltter et al., 2016; Sarkar et al., 2014; Sreejesh, 2015). Brand jealousy has materialized in the field of consumer research as being the new psychological construct and it has been studied in interpersonal relationship development literature (Attridge, 2013b; Knobloch et al., 2001) which afterward adopted in the context of the brand by the researchers (Bıçakcıoğlu et al., 2017; İltter et al., 2016; Sarkar et al., 2014; Sarkar & Sreejesh, 2014).

2.2. Social Anxiety & Self Presentation Theory

The theories of social anxiety and self-presentation are relevant in the context of this study. Under self-presentation theory, people face social anxiety to impress others but unable to do that (Schlenker & Leary, 1982). The social excluded theory describes that the prime cause of this social uncertainty is the fear of being rejected (Leary, 1990).

Social anxiety theory states that if a person's status is jeopardized in a social group this creates anxiety (Leary, 1990). The social circumstances refer to when a person is judged by others (Bıçakcıoğlu et al., 2017). The self-presentation theory says that people feel socially concerned when they want to impress others under circumstances of judgment by others (Schlenker & Leary, 1982). According to social exclusion theory, when an individual fails to impress others, social anxiety arises which pushes the individual to maintain the relationship with any particular social class where there is no fear of being excluded (Leary, 1990).

2.3. Materialism

Materialism is significant in recent literature particularly in analyzing consumer behavior (Bıçakcıoğlu et al., 2017; Yang & Stening, 2016). In literature, a scale for materialism has been measured and analyzed as a personality trait by Belk (1985). This possessiveness desire provokes a jealous attitude in the minds of materialistic customers (Attridge, 2013b; Bıçakcıoğlu et al., 2017).

2.4. Brand Attachment

As a conceptual property, the brand attachment can be considered as the power of bond attaching the brand with self, and brand pertinent thoughts become more obtrusive (Park, Deborah J. MacInnis, Joseph Priester, Andreas B. Eisingerich, & Iacobucci, 2010). When a person is attached to a brand, a bonding of brand love and trust is created among them which ultimately formed a long-term relationship with the brand (de Figueiredo Marcos & da Silva, 2020). The emotional bonding and connection can be with places, destinations (Yuksel, Yuksel, & Bilim, 2010) as well as with some celebrity which in turn leads to brand attachment (Ilicic, Baxter, & Kulczynski, 2016).

2.5. Willingness to Pay More

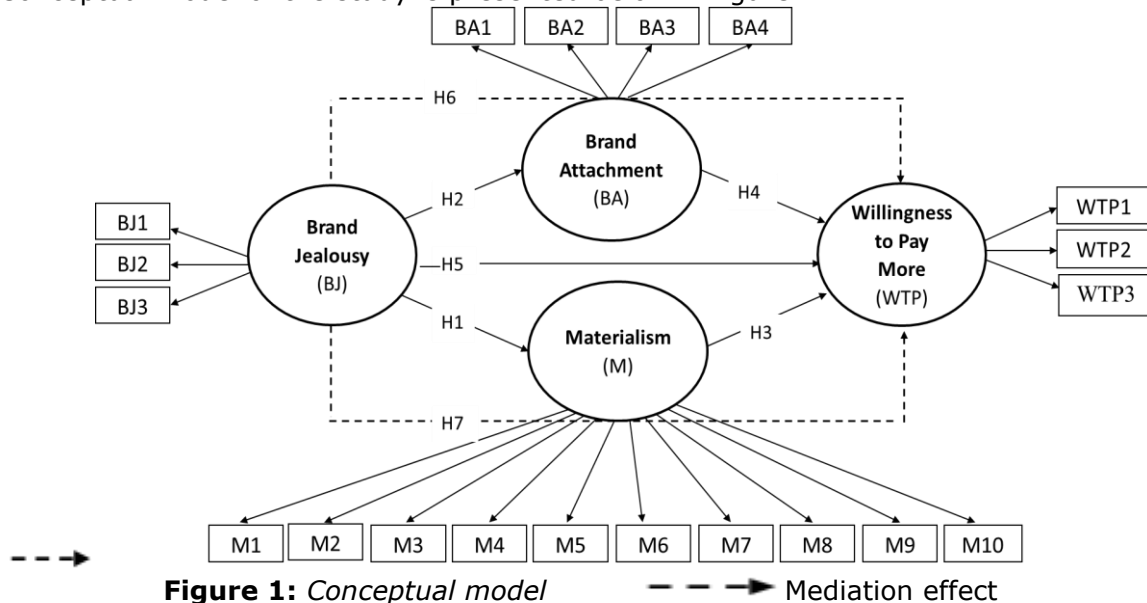
It is defined as the price in which a customer agrees to pay extra in comparison to a comparable brand of equivalent quantity and size (Netemeyer et al., 2004). The marketer needs to understand the mechanics and parameters of customers' willingness to pay and the preferences for alternate brands (Ligas & Chaudhuri, 2012) which eventually results in more profitability and sustainability in cutthroat competition with rival firms (Casidy & Wymer, 2016).

Other drivers of willingness to pay are service quality (Fullerton (2005) and satisfaction (Homburg, Koschate, and Hoyer (2005) in the experimental study. Sreejesh (2015) found that brand commitment and brand attachment are the strong predictors of willingness to pay more in the existence of jealousy, where high jealousy results in high aspiration of consumers and

vice versa. Price premium tends to have an essential position in branding theory (Anselmsson, Vestman Bondesson, & Johansson, 2014).

3. Research Model and Hypotheses Development

The Conceptual model of the study is presented below in figure 1:



The research framework depicted in figure 1 shows the theoretical structure that brand jealousy is the predecessor of willingness to pay more, whereas brand attachment and materialism are the mediators between the two.

3.1. Relationship Among Brand Jealousy and Materialism

Few researchers researched the framework of love and jealousy (Sarkar & Sreejesh, 2014) and some on the framework of desire and jealousy (Sarkar et al., 2014). The people who are anxious in a relationship with one person to another, are more inclined to jealousy, that resulting in a negative outcome of jealous behavior (Kim, Feeney, & Jakubiak, 2017). Consequently, our first hypothesis is formulated as under:

H₁: There is a positive relationship between brand jealousy and materialism.

3.2. Relationship Among Brand Jealousy and Brand Attachment

In consumer research, brand aspiration is referred to as when an individual is fantasizing about the image of a particular brand in his or her mind (Sarkar et al., 2014). In an interpersonal relationship, attachment is considered as secure as well as insecure. Secure attachment is described as acceptance and openness from others with warm feelings whereas insecure attachment is immaturity which is described as worrisome, scare, inattentive, and ignoring attitude (Marazziti et al., 2010). Brand jealousy is the sensation that would lead to generating emotions of possessing the desired brand (Sarkar et al., 2014) and brand attachment. Therefore, our second hypothesis is postulated as follows:

H₂: There is a positive relationship between brand jealousy and brand attachment.

3.3. Relationship between materialism and willingness to pay more

Materialistic people tend to gain possession of objects against the amount of money and try to hold the status-conscious rather than just the satisfaction (Bıçakcıoğlu et al., 2017). Materialistic humans consider the attainment of things to be the utmost mission of their life (Richins & Dawson, 1992). Therefore, the third hypothesis is postulated as follows:

H₃: There is a positive relationship between materialism and willingness to pay more.

3.4. Relationship Among Brand Attachment and Willingness to Pay More

Marketing managers require commitment/ motivation in customers for repeat purchases (Sarkar et al., 2014). Individuals who are attached to a brand show repeated behavior for sustainable brand associations (Park et al., 2010). Such brand attachment makes the customers more loyal resulting in positive word of mouth in their social circles (İlter et al., 2016) which in return generates loyalty and customers' willingness to pay premium price (Thomson, MacInnis, & Park, 2005). Therefore, the fourth hypothesis of the study is formulated as follows:

H₄: There is a positive relationship between brand attachment and willingness to pay more.

3.5. Relationship Among Brand Jealousy and Willingness to Pay More

Jealousy is an alarming behavior in social relationships (Mattingly, Whitson, & Mattingly, 2012; Pytlak, Zerega, & Houser, 2015). The consequences of positive or negative jealousy are more intensifying amongst people who have higher attachment anxiety (Dandurand & Lafontaine, 2014). People are attached emotionally and willing to maintain the relationship in a satisfied manner by investing more in alarming situations (Bevan, 2008). Such an active engagement in the context of branding motivates customers to purchase and possess a particular brand (Sarkar & Sreejesh, 2014). Thus, the fifth hypothesis developed was as under:

H₅: There is a positive relationship between brand jealousy and willingness to pay more.

3.6. Mediation Response of Brand Attachment in The Relationship of Brand Jealousy and WTP More

There are several factors responsible for brand attachment, where brand commitment is tested as an outcome variable for brand aspiration with brand jealousy as a moderator (Sreejesh, 2015). Marketers need to create brand jealousy to persuade potential customers for purchasing a particular brand or product (Sarkar & Sreejesh, 2014). In this way, individuals would be intended to buy that particular brand and willing to pay more. Therefore, the sixth hypothesis is formulated as under:

H₆: The relationship between brand jealousy and willingness to pay more is mediated by brand attachment.

3.7. Mediation Response of Materialism in The Relationship of Brand Jealousy and WTP More

In the case of a brand, social fears develop when a person perceives a favorable brand as a threat being in belongingness of someone else according to self-presentation theory or the threat of being excluded from a social class according to social exclusion theory. Materialism and brand jealousy emerge acquisitiveness, which advances towards paying more price (Richins, 2011; Richins & Dawson, 1992), it is anticipated that materialism mediates the relationship between brand jealousy and willingness to pay more. Therefore, the hypothesis is formulated as under:

H₇: The relationship between brand jealousy and willingness to pay more is mediated by materialism.

4. Methodology

4.1. Questionnaire Development

The brand jealousy items were opted from Sarkar and Sreejesh (2014), whereas items for materialism have opted from Goldberg, Gorn, Peracchio, and Bamossy (2003), brand attachment items were opted from (Park et al., 2010) and finally, items for willingness to pay

more have opted from Thomson et al. (2005). All constructs are measured on five points Likert scale classifying as 1=strongly disagree to 5= strongly agree in the questionnaire.

4.2. Sampling And Collection Of Data

A non-probability sampling technique (judgmental sampling technique) was chosen to collect the sample from the targeted population containing teenagers and youngsters between 15-29, which were having more tendency to feel jealousy and social anxiety as compared to elder persons (Culotta & Goldstein, 2008). The questionnaires were distributed amongst 411 individuals of Punjab, out of these 372 responses were chosen for further analysis having a response rate of 90.51%. Afterward, all filled questionnaires were analyzed using SPSS software, and then we applied the SEM-PLS procedure to the data.

Youth (15-29 years) are just under half of the total population of Pakistan according to World Bank data. The below-mentioned sample size was premeditated from the online sample size calculated with a 95% confidence level and 5% as an error. The target population and sample size are calculated as follows:

Table 1
Description of Variables

Description	Figures
Total population (2017)	197015955
% of Youth	57.3
Youth in numbers	112830274
29% between 15-29	32720779.54
sample size	385

5. Findings of Quantitative Study

PLS-SEM is applied to empirically test the hypotheses of the study. This segment appraises about the convergent and discriminate validity of the constructs to reassure the validity as well as reliability. Next, bootstrapping with a subsample of 3000 is practiced by Smart-PLS 3 to agree or reject the path coefficient because alone PLS-algorithm does not support the t-statistics, p-value, and standard error (Chin, 1998).

5.1. Assessing the Measurement Model

The study inspects the discriminant and convergent validity of the measurement model (Hair, Hult, Ringle, and Sarstedt (2016). Due to the limitation of true reliability of Cronbach alpha's in the population, composite reliability values are selected for further analysis. Table 2 shows the factor loading values of each construct being greater than 0.7 which is a better indication of internal consistency (Nunnally, 1978). Table 1 also shows composite reliability for brand attachment (BA), brand jealousy (BJ), materialism (MT), and willingness to pay more (WTP) where the values are 0.870, 0.838, 0.849, and 0.817 respectively. Few items are rejected due to low internal reliability as compared to threshold value of 0.7 i.e. MA_3 ($\lambda=0.606$), MA_4($\lambda=0.613$), MA_5 ($\lambda=0.604$), MA_7 ($\lambda=0.554$), MA_9 ($\lambda=0.614$) (Hair et al., 2016). Hence, fifteen items were retained out of a total of 20 items.

AVE values are shown in Table 3, where cutoff values are more than 0.5 and convergent validity is therefore ascertained as adequate (Hair et al., 2016).

Table 2
Outer Loading Values

Variables	Construct Items	Standardized Loading	Composite Reliability	VIF Values
Brand Attachment	BA_1	0.830	0.870	1.868
	BA_2	0.765		1.505
	BA_3	0.847		1.986
	BA_4	0.719		1.417
Brand Jealousy	BJ_1	0.871	0.838	1.651
	BJ_2	0.759		1.348
	BJ_3	0.753		1.379
Materialism	MA_1	0.719	0.849	1.369
	MA_10	0.695		1.422
	MA_2	0.750		1.580
	MA_6	0.778		1.464
	MA_8	0.693		1.494
Willingness to Pay More	WTP_1	0.805	0.817	1.370
	WTP_2	0.787		1.326
	WTP_3	0.727		1.224

Table 3
Average Variance Extracted (AVE) as well as Fornell Larcker Criterion Matrix

	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)	BA	BJ	MA	WTP More
Brand Attachment (BA)	0.627	0.792			
Brand Jealousy (BJ)	0.634	0.716	0.796		
Materialism (MA)	0.530	0.399	0.347	0.728	
Willingness to pay more (WTP More)	0.598	0.652	0.574	0.312	0.774

5.2. Assessment of the Path Model

The path coefficients (β) are the standardized path coefficients shown on the corresponding path of figure 2. The level of values will define the level of significance amongst latent variables and the indication of path coefficient either affirmative or negative (Hair et al., 2016).

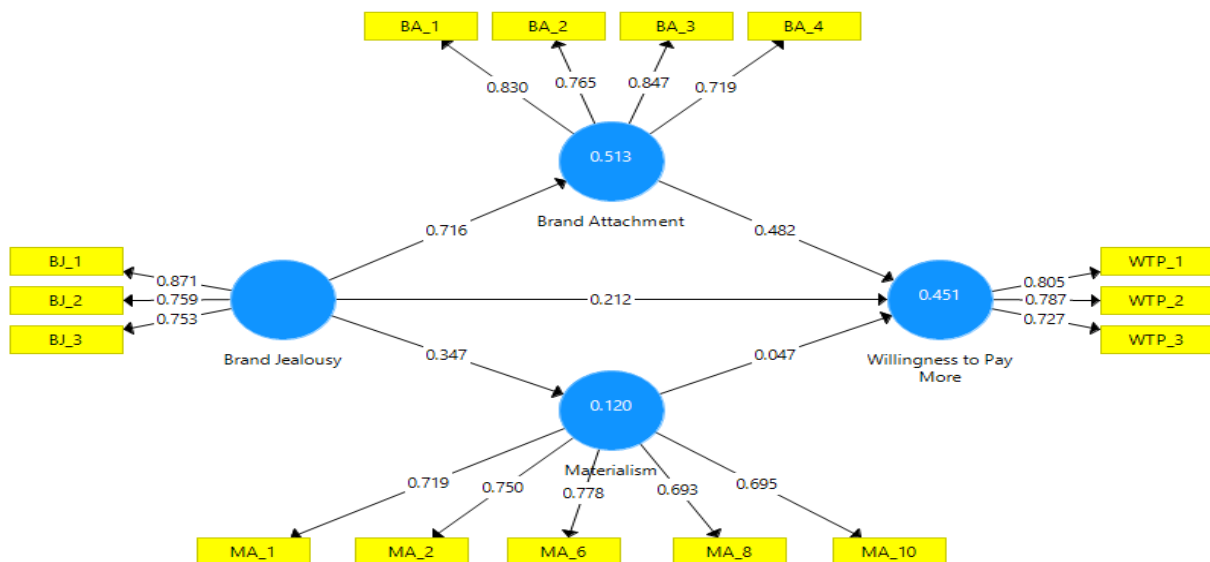


Figure 2: Standardized coefficient Path model

In figure 2, the direct and mediated relationships amongst variables are shown. Brand jealousy has a positive and significant effect on brand attachment, willingness to pay more & materialism having $\beta = 0.716$, $\beta = 0.212$, and $\beta = 0.347$ respectively. Figure 2, also explains the causal relationship of willingness to pay more (WTP) with brand attachment (BA) and materialism (MT)) as coefficients are $\beta=0.482$ and $\beta=0.047$ respectively. Results also show that direct and indirect connection of brand jealousy along with positive and significant WTP thereby referred to as a partial mediation case.

On the other hand, the indirect effect of brand jealousy on the willingness to pay more through materialism is positive but insignificant, emphasizing a case of no mediation.

Table 4
T statistics, β value, p-value

Hypotheses	Path Coefficient (β)	Standard Deviation	T-Statistics	P Values
Brand jealousy -> Brand attachment	0.716	0.028	25.695	0.000
Brand jealousy -> Materialism	0.347	0.048	7.201	0.000
Brand Attachment -> Willingness to pay more	0.482	0.054	8.880	0.000
Materialism -> Willingness to pay more	0.047	0.039	1.209	0.227
Brand jealousy -> Willingness to pay more	0.212	0.057	3.696	0.000
Brand jealousy -> Brand Attachment -> Willingness to pay more	0.345	0.040	8.570	0.000
Brand Jealousy -> Materialism -> Willingness to pay more	0.016	0.014	1.160	0.247

Note: Two-tailed significance at $P < 0.05$

Table 4 shows that the "t" value of brand jealousy to brand attachment is 25.695 and "p" value 0.000 which is greater than the threshold values, supporting hypothesis H2. Whereas "t" Value of brand jealousy to materialism is 7.201, thus supporting hypothesis H1. The "t" value of brand attachment to WTP is 8.880 with a significant p-value, supporting hypothesis H4. On the other hand, the "t" value of materialism to WTP is 1.209 i.e., less than 1.96 as standard, and the p-value is 0.227 which is greater than 0.05, therefore rejecting this hypothesis H3. The value of brand jealousy to WTP is 3.696 and the p-value is 0.000 which is significant, proving this hypothesis H5. One mediation is proving which is the hypothesis H6 as a brand attachment in the relationship of brand jealousy on willingness to pay more having $t=8.570$ and p-value 0.000 while rejecting the hypothesis H7, having the mediating effect of materialism in the relationship of brand jealousy to WTP as $t=1.160$ and $p=2.247$, which is lesser than 1.96 and greater than 0.05 being the two standard values of t and p respectively.

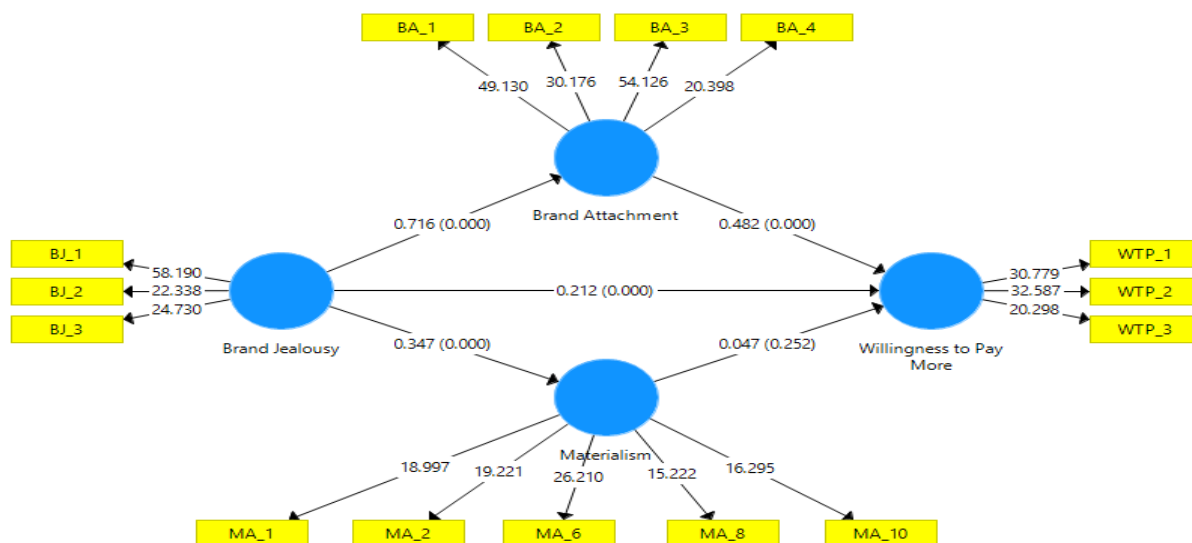


Figure 3: Results of bootstrapping

Figure 3 shows the results of bootstrapping and t-statistics.

5.3. Testing the Model Fit

In Table 5, the materialism (MA) value is 0.120 shows weak, whereas brand attachment (BA) is 0.513 shows average, and willingness to pay more (WTP) is 0.451 also shows the average of the model fit.

Table 5
R² values

Variables	R ²	Q ²
Brand Attachment (BA)	0.513	0.302
Materialism (MA)	0.120	0.056
Willingness to pay more (WTP)	0.451	0.254

Table 5 depicts the Q² values which are obtained having brand attachment as 0.302, materialism as 0.056, and willingness to pay more as 0.254- all of which show the predictive relevancy of the constructs.

6. Discussion of Results

The findings in Table 6 depict the empirical output after applying the PLS-SEM of path coefficient (β), P-value, and result of hypotheses whether accepted or rejected.

Table 6
Empirical Results

Hypotheses	p-value	Empirical Output
Hypothesis 1: There exists a direct positive relationship between brand jealousy and materialism	0.000	Accepted ($\beta=0.347$)
Hypothesis 2: There exists a direct positive relationship between brand jealousy & brand attachment	0.000	Accepted ($\beta=0.716$)
Hypothesis 3: There exists a direct positive relationship between materialism & willingness to pay more	0.227	Rejected ($\beta=0.047$)
Hypothesis 4: There exists a direct positive relationship between brand attachment & willingness to pay more	0.000	Accepted ($\beta=0.482$)
Hypothesis 5: There exists a direct positive relationship between brand jealousy & willingness to pay more	0.000	Accepted ($\beta=0.212$)
Hypothesis 6: There exists a relationship of brand jealousy & willingness to pay more is mediated by brand attachment	0.000	Accepted ($\beta=0.345$)
Hypothesis 7: There exists a relationship of brand jealousy & willingness to pay more is mediated by materialism	0.247	Rejected ($\beta=0.016$)

The value of path coefficient (β) for a direct relationship of brand jealousy on materialism is 0.347 which shows 34.7% considerable impact having $P=0.000$, hence hypothesis (H1) is acknowledged. The value of path coefficient (β) for the direct relationship of brand jealousy on brand attachment is 0.716 having $P=0.000$; therefore, the hypothesis (H2) is supported. Further, β value for the direct relationship of materialism on willingness to pay more is 0.047 having $P=0.227$; therefore, the hypothesis (H3) is not supported. Moreover, the value of brand attachment on willingness to pay more depicts 48.2% impact having $P=0.000$, hence justifying the hypothesis H4. Moving to hypothesis H5, the relationship amongst brand jealousy on willingness to pay more depicts a positive impact of 21.2% with $P=0.000$, proving the hypothesis (H5).

On the other hand, the intervening relationship of brand jealousy with a willingness to pay more by brand attachment is positive with 34.5% impact having $P=0.000$, therefore proving the hypothesis H6. The effect of mediating variable materialism on brand jealousy and willingness to pay more accounts for 16% with $P=0.247$, and consequently the hypothesis H-7 is rejected.

6.1. Mediation Testing:

Table 7
Mediation testing

	Path Coefficient (β)	T-Statistics	P Values	Hypothesis Result
Brand jealousy -> Willingness to pay more	0.212	3.696	0.000	Confirmed
Brand jealousy -> Brand Attachment -> Willingness to pay more	0.345	8.570	0.000	Confirmed
Brand Jealousy -> Materialism -> Willingness to pay more	0.016	1.160	0.247	Not Confirmed

The mediating result is shown in Table 7 as a direct relationship of brand jealousy and willingness to pay more is 21.2% whereas it is 34.5% in case of mediating results by brand attachment referred to as partial mediation. Similarly, the mediating variable materialism in the relationship of brand jealousy and willingness to pay more is 1.6% rejecting this hypothesis, whereas the direct relationship of brand jealousy on willingness to pay more is 21.2% accepting this hypothesis consequently as no mediation.

7. Conclusions and Suggestions

The study examined the relationship of brand jealousy with a willingness to pay more in the presence of two mediating variables i.e., brand attachment and materialism in the context of Punjab, Pakistan. Mediating variable of brand attachment is the addition to this original model of brand jealousy. This study is the extent of the existing brand jealousy framework (Bıçakcıoğlu et al., 2017; Sarkar et al., 2014; Sreejesh, 2015) and contributes by adding the brand attachment. The result of the intervening role of materialism in the affiliation of brand jealousy and willingness to pay more is rejected due to various cultural differences in western and eastern values (Yang & Stening, 2016). Moreover, materialistic individuals have varying materialistic values along with attitudes and intentions which will affect the willingness to pay more (Hultman, Kazeminia, & Ghasemi, 2015). Similarly, a materialistic individual is not willing to pay extra as in the context of Pakistan, where living style is based on collectivistic manner, a materialistic individual doesn't need to be willing to pay more because they are more dependent on others in monetary terms.

The study by Bıçakcıoğlu et al. (2017) conducted in Turkey reported a significant effect of social determinants i.e. family, state, and economy but it is in contrast to the context of Pakistan as evident from this study. Since people may value their cultural norms and different ideologies (Leonard, 1984), materialistic people are not always willing to pay more due to various kinds of ideologies and cultural norms.

Brand jealous people demonstrate more desire to own materialistic objects as also supported by Bıçakcıoğlu et al. (2017) and Chen, Yao, and Yan (2014). In the culture of Pakistan, people prefer to live in families and our youngsters are more dependent on parents and thus practically they have lesser personal autonomy. Therefore, youth doesn't need to be always willing to pay more under any kind of circumstances as in western culture where youth is more liberal and autonomous.

8. Contribution to Knowledge and Implication for Practice

In the context of brand management various psychological and interpersonal theories are conforming to test the behaviors of consumers (brand jealousy and brand love). This study extends the previous researches on brand jealousy (Bıçakcıoğlu et al., 2017; Sreejesh, 2015) whereas brand attachment being the major addition and materialism is tested in the branding perspective, which is the novelty of this study.

9. Limitations and Future Directions of the Study

This study is cross-sectional, so a longitudinal study is recommended in the future to open more avenues to see mediating variables. Moreover, studies based on peer-reported data are recommended for future research. Few more limitations are that the data of this study is

only from Pakistan and Punjab region was collected, it can add in other contexts of other countries, a comparison can be made between developed and developing country. Likewise, gender difference can be an interesting avenue and other product categories can be added for further study. Moreover, questionnaire was in English, this can be a limitation of language where only those people's responses were measured who can understand English.

Future researchers can focus upon the opportunity of affiliation and self-monitoring as the moderating variables to test their impact on the relationship of materialism and willingness to pay more. Finally, this study can be tested on a longitudinal research design instead of a cross-sectional. Moreover, different product categories can be evaluated from the empirical perspective as the findings may vary from product to product, and also see the effects of emotions by the customers.

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