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“WHY DO I HAVE FIFTY PAIRS OF SHOES?”
CHARACTERIZING AND EXPLAINING ACQUISITIVE BUYING BEHAVIOR

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

in

E. J. Ourso College of Business (Marketing)

by

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ABSTRACT

Why do some of us have the fourteenth black shoe? Fifty pens? Thirty fishing rods? While some motivations relate to compulsive, impulsive or excessive buying, others relate to collecting, hoarding, fixated buying and stockpiling. However, there is a set of consumers who purchase recurrently, have an inventory far greater than that of a typical consumer and yet do not share the negative characteristics of the extreme buyers mentioned earlier. This set of consumers is termed 'acquisitive buyers' and little research exist to understand them.

This dissertation establishes the significance of acquisitive buying as a new buying type in terms of defining, characterizing, and explaining the phenomenon. Three essays have been developed. The first essay reveals emergent themes regarding this phenomenon based on sixty two in-depth interviews of students and non-students. Additionally, concept mapping helped validate the results. The second essay differentiates acquisitive buying from all other types of extreme as well as mainstream buying. Citations used in extant literature and those from in-depth interviews with acquisitive and mainstream buyers provide insights. Besides, a typology of extreme buying helps position acquisitive buying amongst the other buying types. Essay three is a quantitative reflection of the distinguishing aspects of acquisitive and mainstream buyers. T-tests help understand the distinctions. Besides, an attempt was made to distinguish the two buying types based on a combination of constructs using logistic regression and discriminant analysis. Finally, this essay tries to understand the relationship between some of the distinguishing constructs using regression analysis.

Results establish the existence of acquisitive buying as a distinct buying type. Acquisitive buyers have inherent needs, refined preferences and an elaborate knowledge that helps them to stay prepared for anticipated future events. Self-control, lack of financial problems and low post-purchase regret distinguish these buyers from others with negative consequences. The extreme buying typology based on self-control as the underlying factor

positions acquisitive buying in the same platform as mainstream buying. However, fourteen out of eighteen constructs demonstrated differences between the two buying types. Results were consistent across three product categories suggesting that this phenomenon transcends product boundaries and is more trait-based.

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

“I like shopping but I think I am not a compulsive buyer. When I find something I like and want to buy it, I normally sleep it through and then when I think I still want it, then I head to the shop – in spite of this plan, I have 73 pairs of shoes.”

-- Anonymous shopper

Why do some of us have the fourteenth black shoe? Why do we have fifty pens around the house? Why do we need thirty fishing rods? A cross-cultural experience and observations of purchase and consumption differences across individuals, groups and cultures have helped develop and describe a purchasing and consumption phenomenon different from those that have been studied in extant literature. While using a single product for multiple purposes has been my everyday consumption pattern, I observed that individuals have multiple products for multiple uses and set out to understand why people adhere to such modes of purchase and consumption.

A review of the extant literature showed that my fundamental research question of why people purchase a large number of products of a particular product category has been deliberated elaborately and diverse explanations exist in extant literature. While some motivations relate to compulsive buying (O’Guinn and Faber 1989), others involve impulsive buying (Rook 1987) and still others refer to stockpiling (Ailawadi and Neslin 2001), excessive buying (Ridgway, Kukar-Kinney and Monroe 2006; Wu, Malhotra and van Ittersum 2006), collecting (Arnould, Zinkhan and Price 2004) and fixated buying (Schiffman and Kanuk 2007). One common theme among these categories of buyers is the extreme and unregulated form. Additionally, most of these phenomena relate to negative consumer purchase psychology. However, there is a set of consumers who purchase recurrently, have an inventory far greater than that of a typical consumer and yet do not share the negative characteristics of some of the extreme forms of buying mentioned earlier. This set of consumers is termed ‘acquisitive buyers’ and little research exist to understand them.

Only four sources of inquiries related to acquisitive buying have emerged. These works relate to certain aspects of acquisitive buying but do not necessarily unfurl this phenomenon. However, it is important to discuss these sources to explain the need to understand this new stream of consumption behavior. First, in her book, *Why People Buy Things They Don't Need*, Danziger (2002) used 37 different product categories to highlight the shopping and ownership experience of consumers. She suggests that consumers buy products because they need them to gratify desires based upon emotions. "The act of consuming, rather than the item being consumed, satisfies the need." (p. 1). Fourteen justifiers have been suggested that give consumers the "permission" to buy: pleasure, beautifying the home, education, relaxation, relief from stress, impulse buying and status to name a few. Although consumers buy based on needs, it is suggested in this research that purchasing may have profound underlying requirements that are not solely based on satisfying inner emotions and desires. Consumers may be motivated to buy based on an ever-increasing ability to differentiate amongst products that help in better understanding their needs.

Second, in a related topic, Trocchia and Janda (2002) also suggested motivations for product purchase and subsequent non-consumption. Primary motivations for buying included self-presentation, self-improvement, satisficing, impulse purchase, salesperson influence, unintended purchase and acquiring competence. Reasons for non-usage included self-consciousness, lack of enthusiasm, disappointing results, maintenance difficulties, concern about injury, use difficulties, unmet expectations, contingency reasons and displaced by current possessions. Though the authors have tried to extricate the factors affecting purchase and non-consumption, they have failed to clearly understand the underlying motivations behind purchase factors such as self-presentation, self-improvement or acquiring competence.

Besides, the authors have dealt with non-consumption whereas consumers may tend to use the items that they purchase.

Third, Strack, Werth and Deutsch (2006) used the dual-system model of consumer behavior to explain buying behaviors of individuals. They suggested that human behaviors are a joint function of reflective and impulsive mechanisms that act differently. The reflective system serves regulatory and representational goals that complement the functionality of the impulsive system and behavior is the result of reasoning that leads to a decision about the desirability and feasibility of a purchase. Vohs (2006) has added to this line of research by suggesting that the self-regulatory resources power the reflective system. The impulsive system reacts by considering the external stimuli and internal conditions such as positive and negative affect, cognitive feelings or feelings of hunger and thirst and self-perceived behavioral tendencies. The authors have implied that consumer purchasing is affected by the degree a particular system is pre-dominant over the other. While this article works towards explaining the processes that are involved in buying, it is unclear about the needs of consumers and its role in the buying process.

Finally, only one source (Lewis and Bridger 2000) has highlighted the characteristics of 'New Consumers' who tend to look for authenticity of products. The authors suggest that the choices consumers make are dictated by a need to satisfy an inner hunger rather than an external appetite. Their purchasing decisions are inwardly determined by the desire to grow and develop as individuals, rather than to provide outward displays intended to impress those around them. Interestingly, this book points us to consumers in the 'New Economy' who possess characteristics different from traditional consumers. However, not all New Consumers act the same way and not all purchasing motivations are based on the need for authenticity, thus calling for a better understanding behind the need to purchase. Besides, this study does not allude to the rationale for large inventories of certain products. In sum, the

above four studies have identified buyer characteristics and motivations in non-consumption, but they have failed to acknowledge the underlying intent of buying a great many products in certain categories.

1.1 Motivations for Studying Acquisitive Buying

1.1.1 Little Research Explains Acquisitive Buying

A review of existing literature was conducted early in the process of understanding acquisitive buying to ensure that the phenomenon has not been hitherto studied and therefore, necessitates attention. To ensure completeness of the literature review, extensive database search was conducted in the fields of marketing, psychology, sociology and anthropology. Specifically, extensive search was conducted using terms that are related to shopping and purchasing such as: Excessive / excess / overbuying / impulsive / compulsive / buying / shopping / purchasing / inventory / goal directed behavior / emotions and buying / buying process / consumption / purchase and non-consumption / discretionary planned buying / conspicuous / status / collecting / process / variety seeking / ordinary / fixated / conspicuous / hoarding / needs and others. Databases other than marketing such as PsychInfo Index and Social Sciences Citation Index (Kirca, Jayachandran and Bearden 2005) were searched to check whether similar shopping patterns were studied. Besides, the references from the seminal articles related to shopping and purchasing were examined to crosscheck and ensure that extant research was well scrutinized before embarking on this project.

None of the articles that were reviewed examined a buying pattern that closely resembles acquisitive buying and yet this is a phenomenon powerful enough to warrant broader investigation. This fact has increased my confidence in experiencing the need for understanding this buying behavior. However, I can document research that supports the importance and the plausibility of the occurrence of acquisitive buying. It is important to point that elaborate research exists on the various aspects of acquisitive buying, such as

variety seeking nature or switching behavior of the acquisitive buyers. Yet, acquisitive buying comprises of a phenomenon that forms the whole based on the sum of the parts. It is my endeavor to bring the parts together to create the emergent picture of acquisitive buying. Hence, a brief review of relevant extant literature concerning will help make the case for studying acquisitive buying. The subsequent review emphasizes the distinguishing characteristics of various buying types that have been studied earlier and speculate how acquisitive buying differs from them on certain key dimensions.

1.1.2 Previously Researched Buying Patterns Are Associated With Negative Connotations

This research has stemmed from trying to understand why people possess and continue to purchase a great many products within certain product categories. However, this research question has been addressed in the past in various ways. Concepts that map the domain of buying include compulsive buying, impulsive buying, excessive buying, collecting, conspicuous and status buying, fixated buying and hoarding. All these forms of buying have been studied elaborately in terms of their processes and factors that affect them. Though all these buying types relate to repetitive purchases, they are different from one another; a brief description of which is given below:

1.1.2.1 Compulsive Buying

This phenomenon relates to a compulsion; an abusive and adjunctive behavior that may be addictive (O'Guinn and Faber 1989). Such buyers have low levels of self-esteem (Scherhorn, Reisch and Raab 1990), high levels of depression (Scherhorn et al. 1990, Valence, d'Astous and Fortier 1988) and anxiety reactions and obsession (O'Guinn and Faber 1989) and such buying occur in response to negative feelings. Purchases under these circumstances provide the individual with short-term self-gratification (Faber et al. 1995, Christenson et al. 1994, O'Guinn and Faber 1989), but result in long-term guilt and financial stress. They derive more pleasure and satisfaction from the buying process than from actually

owning the product and may not even be able to justify rationally why they make certain purchases (O'Guinn and Faber 1989).

1.1.2.2 Impulsive Buying

Impulsive buyers have sudden, strong and irresistible urge to buy (Beatty and Ferrell 1998, Rook 1987, Goldenson 1984). Such purchases are spontaneous and not consciously planned but arise immediately upon confrontation with a stimulus (Wolman 1973). Recent definitions relate to spontaneous and non-reflective desires to buy without thoughtful consideration of why and for what reason a person should have a product (Rook and Fisher 1995, Verplanken and Herabadi 2001, Vohs and Faber 2007). Rook (1987) and Rook and Hoch (1985) suggested that impulse buying is hedonically complex and more emotional than rational.

1.1.2.3 Excessive Buying

Ridgway, Kukar-Kinney and Munroe (2006) elucidated upon excessive buying, using the theoretical foundations of compulsive buying, obsessive-compulsive disorder, impulse control disorder and obsessive-compulsive spectrum disorder. They based their understanding of excessive buying on the premise that excessive buyers tend to be obsessive and chronically repetitive, and preoccupied with buying. They also suggest that excessive buying helps alleviate negative feelings and elicit positive feelings (Kukar-Kinney, Ridgway and Monroe 2007). Excessive buying has also been defined as the “inappropriate individual type of buying behavior whereby consumers repetitively spend more than what (they think) they can afford” (Wu, Malhotra and van Ittersum 2006, p. 401).

1.1.2.4 Fixated Buying

Fixated buyers have been characterized to have a deep interest in a particular object or product category (Schiffman and Kanuk 2007). Such individuals are willing to go considerable lengths to secure additional examples of the product category.

1.1.2.5 Stockpiling

Stockpiling is defined as buying larger quantities of a product and/or shifting purchase times to buy before the expected time of next purchase (Blattberg and Neslin 1989).

Stockpiling mainly relates to product categories that offer pricing or promotional benefits to consumers (Blattberg and Neslin 1989, Mela, Jedidi and Bowman 1998, Neslin 2002, Blattberg et al. 1981). This phenomenon is based on complex inventory control management wherein consumers consider such uncertain factors as: 1) the future price of the good, 2) the future consumption rate, 3) the value of alternative investments, 4) the costs (either psychological or literal) of storing the good, 5) the transaction costs of acquisition and, 6) the size of existing inventory (Meyer and Assuncao 2001).

1.1.2.6 Collecting

Collecting has been defined as “the selective, active and longitudinal acquisition, possession and disposal of an interrelated set of differentiated objects...that contribute to and derive extraordinary meaning for the set itself” (Arnould, Zinkhan and Price 2004, p. 146).

Belk (1995) defined collecting as the process of actively, selectively and passionately acquiring and possessing things removed from ordinary use and perceived as part of a set of non-identical objects or experiences. Thus, collecting differs from other types of buying in terms of the passion invested in obtaining and maintaining the objects and the lack of functional capacity or ordinary use to which the collected objects are put. According to Hughes and Hogg (2006), collectors tend to gain recognition among professionals and group pressure exists to better the standard of the collectibles.

1.1.2.7 Hoarding

Hoarding relates to collecting different kinds of things and consumers may have cupboard full with old bills, notes, hundreds of pairs of shoes, and underwear. These objects are not used, but the consumer is afraid of throwing them away because they may come in

handy one day (Emmelkamp and van Oppen 2001). More recent research on compulsive hoarding shows that it is closely associated with compulsive buying and the frequency of association of products discarded by others. Strahle and Bonfield (1989) have suggested that consumer panic may be an important reason for hoarding behavior.

One common theme that characterizes the above types of buying is their negative consequences and connections. Mainly, lack of self-control, guilt and financial problems characterize some of the buying types discussed above. These factors are discussed in brief below.

1.1.3 Negative Issues with Some of the Above-Mentioned Buying Types

1.1.3.1 Lack of Self-Control

Mainly, lack of self-regulation has been attributed to most of the buying patterns (except for conspicuous and status buying). Self-control has been defined as the command over oneself to bring the self in line with a desirable outcome or goal (Baumeister 2002, Baumeister et al. 1998, Carver and Scheier 1998, Mischel and Shoda 1995, Hoch and Lowenstein 1991). According to Baumeister (2002), self-control failures occur owing to three causes. First, conflicting goals and standards undermine control, such as when the goal of feeling better immediately conflicts with the goal of saving money. Second, failure to keep track of one's own behavior renders control difficult. Third, depletion of self-regulatory resources makes self-control less effective.

A number of studies have been conducted to explain the factors affecting self-regulation. Ferraro, Shiv and Bettman (2005) have found that mortality salience affects self-regulation while Mukhopadhyay and Johar (2005) suggest that consumers' lay theories of self-control have an effect as well. Vohs and Faber (2007) have extended the theory on self-regulatory resources and suggested that consumers have a finite reservoir of self-regulatory resources; using will power and self-control in one setting may deplete the resources required

for the next setting. These researchers empirically showed that resource-depleted people feel stronger urges to buy, are willing to spend more and actually spend more money in unanticipated buying situations than do people with intact resources. In situations when self-regulation is minimal, the rational purchase decisions of unregulated buyers may be overwhelmed by product stimuli (as in the case of impulsive buyers) or by mounting life crises (in the case of compulsive buyers) (LaRose and Eastin 2002). In such cases, consumers tend to be extreme in their purchasing behaviors as seen in compulsive (Hirschman 1992), impulsive (Vohs and Faber 2007), excessive (Wu et al. 2006) and fixated buyers (Belk, Wallendorf, Sherry, Holbrook and Roberts 1988) and collectors (Belk et al. 1988).

In contrast, preliminary in-depth interviews in this research have shown that acquisitive buyers do tend to demonstrate self-control and exert restraint in their purchasing behavior. These consumers have scored low on compulsive and impulsive buying behavior scales and tend to buy based on specific needs. At the same time, they tend to have an inventory far above a typical or mainstream buyer. In fact these consumers showed considerable self-control in their shopping behaviors in terms of not buying products that may not fit into their schema of needs. This apparent contradiction has piqued greater curiosity to understand the underlying factors and processes and has become the main motivational factor to initiate this research.

1.1.3.2 Guilt and Financial Problems

Compulsive and impulsive buyers specifically, tend to suffer from guilt or shame upon purchasing items. O'Guin and Faber (1989) showed that compulsive consumers exhibit significantly greater degree of remorse following shopping. Compulsive buyers typically are ashamed and embarrassed by their behavior and feel that others cannot understand them. They sometimes describe themselves as unloved and rejected because of their behavior. Similarly, such individuals have been known to face financial problem in terms of high debt

loads. Rook (1987) reported that 80 percent of the interviewed consumers indicated that they had some kind of problems while 56 percent said that they experienced financial problems as a result of their impulsive buying. Excessive buyers tend to buy too much and too frequently (Ridgway et al 2006) but may or may not always suffer from financial problems. According to Belk (1995), collection can also create financial issues for the individual and the family members as money that might otherwise be spent on joint or individual consumption by other family members may be spent on the collector and collection. Danet and Katriel (1986) interviewed a woman who feels guilty because she spends money on a pipe collection that she feels should have been spent on family and household needs. However, preliminary interviews with acquisitive buyers have shown very little evidence of guilt or shame as a result of buying or any financial problem. Hence, the question that comes to mind is whether acquisitive buying is a phenomenon on its own standing and why would people buy repeatedly and not experience a sense of guilt regarding their purchases.

1.1.4 Popular Press

In recent years, hundreds of popular press articles, books and websites have been dedicated to the problems of shopping (Adams 2003, Benson 2000, Chaker 2003, Ethridge 2002, etc.). In most cases, the popular press has hailed excessive shopping as a problem amongst consumers. In fact, excessive shopping was defined as an illness called 'Oniomania', a Latin word '*onos*' meaning price by a German psychologist Emil Kraepelin nearly 90 years ago. "The euphoric fog that shopping triggers can result in impaired judgment, which is why over-spending, impulse purchases, and remorse following shopping are so common." (Sheth 2007). Chatzky (2006) has suggested that consumers should stay away from the mall and have even provided guidance towards efficient shopping. She quotes Reverend Billy Talen as saying, "People are walking around in a daze...they're feeling a kind of knowing emptiness and they don't know why. So they keep buying more and more, trying

to fill the hole in the soul...” The central question that arises is: is shopping always considered a problem as portrayed by the popular press? I believe that there is an aspect of shopping that needs to be brought to the fore. This aspect suggests that shopping may be based on particular needs that fit certain criteria and consumers may not express the kind of ‘emptiness’ as proclaimed by the popular press. In essence, this research also tries to understand whether repeatedly buying certain products do create problems in consumer’s lives, financially or otherwise.

1.1.5 Shopping, As a Topic, Necessitates Greater Attention

In the United States, 275 million consumers living in 100 million households spend five trillion dollars on products and services, corresponding to two-thirds of the GDP (Lascu and Clow 2007). Rapid technological advancement has fuelled the growth of various retail channels such as television and the Internet, increasing consumers’ easy access to purchasing opportunities. Hence, consumer shopping and its underlying motivations continue to be a source of attention and investigation in consumer psychology and academicians and practitioners are constantly trying to find out what makes shoppers purchase. To this end, shopper typologies have been created (Rohm and Swaminathan 2004, Arnould and Reynolds 2003, Reynolds, Ganesh and Luckett 2002, Westbrook and Black 1985). However, this research is based on the argument that certain types of consumers are yet to be identified that demonstrates underlying motivations and characteristics different from those that have been studied earlier. Acquisitive buyers tend to express their shopping patterns through needs that have yet been studied. Hence, shopping as a field of study is incomplete without understanding all types of buyers that comprise this domain.

1.1.6 A Commonly Occurring Phenomenon

Finally, I believe that acquisitive buying is a commonly occurring phenomenon and comprises a broad set of consumers. This phenomenon can be positioned in the same

spectrum as the typical or mainstream buyers in terms of lack of negative connotations and consequences and the demonstration of self-control and away from the spectrum of the buying types discussed earlier. Yet acquisitive buyers are different from the typical buyers in terms of finely distinguishing needs that are ever growing. A commonly occurring phenomenon, acquisitive buying has gone unnoticed and this research is the first attempt to explain and characterize it.

Thus, this program of study contributes theoretically in the field of consumer psychology by examining whether the phenomenon of acquisitive buying exists and by understanding the characteristics, rationale and outcomes of this buying type. Unlike other extreme buying types, acquisitive buying is a phenomenon that is unknown and hence, not established in the academic world. Hence, attempt must be first made to ascertain whether this pattern of buying truly exists. Since, acquisitive buying has been considered a buying type different from all others that have been studied in extant literature, it is important to understand how this buying type is different from the others. Consequently, attempts will also be made to understand how this buying type differs from the other extreme buying types that have been mentioned earlier. Furthermore, it is important to understand how acquisitive buying is different from ordinary or typical or mainstream buying.

To achieve the above objectives, this program of study is divided into three essays: first essay deals with the identification of acquisitive buyers and establishing whether the phenomenon exists. To elaborate, the purpose of this essay is to: (1) define, describe and differentiate acquisitive buying and (2) understand the underlying psychological and/or social processes, motivations and factors attenuating acquisitive buying and its consequences. This research will also contribute to the field of consumer psychology by introducing a concept mapping technique as a way of explaining how acquisitive buyers make sense of their inventory of products and shopping. Though concept mapping is well employed in marketing

(Roedder John, Loken, Kim and Monga 2006; Zaltman and Coulter 1995; Henderson, Iacobucci and Calder 2002, 1998), the technique used here is an analytic one used in social networks analysis. It differs from the analytic technique used by Henderson et al (2002, 1998) in that it will use in-depth interviews to elicit data and no elaborate statistical techniques will be employed to create the map. Besides, respondents will not be asked to generate associations amongst concepts. Since concepts are unknown, grounded theory will be used to understand them, simple algorithms will be used to create an aggregate map depicting the sense making of products purchased and owned by acquisitive buyers.

The second essay will deal with understanding how acquisitive buying is different from the other types of buying such as compulsive buying, impulsive buying, excessive buying, compulsive and non-compulsive collecting, hoarding, fixated buying and stockpiling. This will help delineate acquisitive buying as a unique type of buying that holds its own position and necessitates further research. Further, it is also important to establish how this buying type is different from ordinary or mainstream buying. The use of qualitative research and citations from extant literature will help establish the uniqueness of acquisitive buying. Finally, a typology of extreme buying will help position acquisitive buying vis-à-vis all the other buying types discussed before.

Acquisitive buying appears to be a type of hyper normal buying. There seems to be an apparent similarity between acquisitive and mainstream or ordinary buying. Therefore, it is of utmost importance that this buying type be separated from mainstream buying. The third essay will be dedicated towards understanding how the two buying types are different. Essay two will account for this differentiation qualitatively. Essay three will takes a step further in differentiating the two buying types quantitatively based on a number of constructs that would be identified in essay one.

In summary, the purpose of this program of study is to take the first step in establishing a line of research that has both theoretical and managerial implications. In identifying a new buying type, the research will help managers identify this new set of customers and find ways to create new products to satisfy them, in turn increasing their repeat purchase probability and the ultimate bottom line. In addition, this research will help consumer behaviors to understand the psychology of buyers better and fine tune the types of buyers existing in the marketplace.

CHAPTER 2. ESSAY 1: “WHY DO I HAVE FIFTY PAIRS OF SHOES?” - CHARACTERIZING ACQUISITIVE BUYING BY CREATING A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The purpose of essay one is to provide a definition for this new phenomenon, to characterize acquisitive buying and to explain some of the factors, processes, mediators and moderators that ground the phenomenon. This is the first step towards establishing the legitimacy of this buying type. It helps understand the core concepts that govern this phenomenon that delineates it from other types of buying. Besides, this essay will help understand some of the characteristics and personality traits of acquisitive buyers that are important in driving their behaviors.

The essay is organized as follows: first, an attempt will be made to define and characterize acquisitive buying based on some preliminary observational research. Next, the methodology will be discussed in terms of data collection and analysis. Following this, a detailed description of the phenomenon of acquisitive buying as it emerges from qualitative data analysis will be undertaken. Finally, validation of the emergent data through quantitative development of a concept map will be discussed.

2.1 Defining and Characterizing Acquisitive Buying

Acquisitive buying may be defined as an extensive acquirement of products to augment one's inventory of goods (of a certain category such as shoes, clothing, tools and others), for which logical justification, defensible in the mind of the buyer, exists. Six possible elements characterize acquisitive buying:

1. More articulated needs per product category and average or more products per articulated need resulting in an expanding list of items that need to be acquired.
2. An ability to differentiate products based on very minute differences owing to an in-depth knowledge and understanding of their own refined preferences.

3. Existence of high levels of self-control in shopping, with no purchases made at times if the product does not fit certain preference criteria.
4. An 'insider-outsider' phenomenon in which the buyer (insider) justifies the purchase and does not consider his or her purchase as excessive or extreme while the observer (outsider) deems the purchase superfluous.
5. No pronounced feelings of regret or guilt on the part of the buyer, who may even view the results of buying as generally positive with little or no negative outcomes.
6. Lack of financial stress upon purchase of the products.

Certain aspects of acquisitive buying are highlighted in the section below and some others are discussed to give the reader a greater understanding of the characteristics of this phenomenon to help delineate it from the other buying types.

2.1.1 Needs or Wants?

A discussion of needs and wants is fundamental to understanding acquisitive buyers. The usual approach is to think about needs as those things that are essential and wants as those that are superfluous. Thus, the traditional approach would be to think of the basic groceries, such as bread and milk as needs and the extras, such as flowers, as wants. Similarly, consider the shopper who needs a car – this might be either an inexpensive, no-frills model that satisfies the shopper's basic need, or it might be a costly upscale car, laden with features, that satisfies the buyers wants. In essence, traditional belief is that basically people can do without wants. They have to have the basic food and clothing but upscale cars and designer jeans are wants.

In recent times, practically most purchases reflect genuine *needs* on the part of consumers as opposed to the wants (Pooler 2003). Certain specific types of clothes may be so important to the consumers that nothing less will suffice. The particular type or style of car may hold such specific meaning to the consumer that it is absolutely necessary to have the

car. Consumers have moved from basic needs to products that satisfy their wants. What was considered a want not long ago is, today, considered a need. According to Pooler (2003), “We need to see what is happening when a want becomes a need, when a product that is viewed as a superfluous or excessive want, become instead a highly demanded necessity. This is an area of consumer demand that is almost beyond comprehension. It is obscure and puzzling.” (p. 21) It may be that Pooler’s (2003) comments may throw light in the direction of acquisitive buyers and this research is a quest to understand what he characterizes as “obscure and puzzling” characteristics of this particular set of consumers.

In essence, central to the phenomenon of acquisitive buying are the fine-grained, thin-slicing ‘needs’ for which ever-expanding lists of products necessitate buying. Such needs relate to consumer’s perceptions of their requirements or necessities for different products suitable for different purposes and functionalities in terms of differences in internal and external attributes of the products:

“...but they all have different benefits because they each look different and have different qualities and they are all different and they are used for different types of music. So, that’s one reason why you have more than one guitar. You play a different style of music and so you use a different one.” (Adrian, age 29)

As the excerpt suggests, there is an inherent need for different types of guitars to play different types of music. Thus, acquisitive buyers tend to have a greater propensity to use specific products for specific purposes and thus have multiple needs for different products, as they tend to satisfy different purposes, unlike typical or mainstream buyers who do not feel the need to possess multiple products for multiple needs but might have multiple uses out of a single product as hinted in this excerpt:

“But I suppose if you haven’t got anything left, you’re supposed not to buy them...you’re supposed to make do with what you’ve got.” (Dittmar and Drury 2000, p.124).

The excerpt refers to the use of what is already there (namely, a single product) rather than buy products to satisfy various needs.

References of such inherent needs have been made by Lewis and Bridger (2002) in their discussion of the New Consumers. They suggest that these consumers are far more concerned with satisfying their wants, which frequently focus on original, innovative and distinctive products and services. Through their emphasis on authenticity, these consumers ensure that even when their purchases are totally different, they still possess unity in terms of their originality and uniqueness.

2.1.2 Knowledge

Additionally, Burnett and Hutton (2007) have mentioned a variety of recent studies that show that today's customers have a predominant need for knowledge and authenticity. Evolutionary products bring about such knowledge and authenticity. Acquisitive buyers tend to possess such expertise in terms of a highly developed consumption vocabulary (West, Brown and Hoch 1996) that helps better understand and articulate their needs. Consumption vocabulary is defined as the taxonomy or framework that facilitates identifying product features, evaluating the levels of those features and identifying the relationships between those features and consumer's own evaluations of the product (Hoch and Deighton 1989, Lynch 1985). In other words, a consumption vocabulary serves as a function similar to that of language in an interpersonal social context: improving information transmission and sharing. The difference is that in purchase situations, the dialogue is internal, since the consumers are basically talking to themselves rather than to other people (Hoch 2007). West et al (1996) suggest that consumption language simplifies the execution of preference-related thoughts by offering a basic category of knowledge structure, thereby allowing customers to make few errors and express preferences (Hunt and Agnoli 1991). This basic category schema gives consumers a platform to build allowing them to apply their understanding of features isolated and identified by the consumption vocabulary to other, analogous features (Holyoke 1985). This vocabulary allows consumers to increasingly become experts as they discover additional

implicit attributes and use these attributes in their thinking and choices during purchases. West et al.'s (1996) work is utilized here to understand the mindset of acquisitive buyers and also extend it by suggesting that the consumption vocabulary facilitates consumers in understanding the intricacies of products and aids in thinking about and assimilating information from the external environment and expressing their inherent needs for product purchases.

2.1.3 Refined Preferences

Intrinsic to the concept of articulated needs and knowledge or consumption vocabulary is the issue of the development of refined preferences for products differentiated on the basis of minute differences. Refined preferences, in this context, relate to the liking and ability to differentiate products based on minute differences. Acquisitive buyers tend to be fine-grained in their effort to understand how products differentiate from one another. It is suggested that an outcome of such ability to differentiate products is the low levels of satiation or the decline in enjoyment in terms of buying certain products of a product category. Satiation depends on how much repetition people perceive in their buying behavior (Redden 2008). The more similar the products are, the more they tend to categorize the products as similar to the prototypes and this leads to greater chances of satiation. Redden (2008) has identified that subcategorization helps individuals focus on differentiating aspects of products of a particular category; making the episodes of buying those products seem less repetitive. Consumers start categorizing products in a refined manner, thus, reducing satiation. Acquisitive buyers tend to have more developed schemas that let them better identify and process the variety that exists in their mind in terms of differentiating the products. This research extends Redden's (2008) concept of satiation by suggesting that it is the inherent 'need' within certain type of individuals that drives them to differentiate and

subcategorize products to help them understand the subsequent set of items that ought to be explored and acquired.

2.1.4 Self-Control, Guilt and Financial Problems

As discussed in the earlier section, in contrast to the extreme buyers, acquisitive buyers tend to exhibit higher levels of self-control and may not buy products that do not fit their needs or may be beyond the resources that they possess. In fact, such buyers may delay their purchases to find the perfect product that matches their requirements in terms of functionalities and styles as well as the cost. Since products are bought such that they fit certain criteria, such products are of need and hence, acquisitive buyers are able to rationalize their purchases. Needless to say, such purchases do not lead to feelings of post-purchase guilt and remorse. Similarly, since products are bought taking into consideration the monetary situation of the buyers, such buyers rarely tend to fall into financial hardships.

2.1.5 Insider-Outsider Phenomenon

The terminology insider-outsider refers to the perspectives taken by the insider or the buyer and the outsider who observes the buyer. Bristor (1993) has used the insider-outsider perspective to explain her inner struggle as consumer researcher who is both the insider and the outsider. As a consumer research insider, she is trained in the theories and methodologies of consumer research. She also views herself as a consumer research outsider, as she is a feminist in a male dominated discipline. Acquisitive buyers adopt a similar perspective wherein the insider is the buyer though the outsider is a different person observing the inventory and/or the activities of the insider. It is considered that the insider or the buyer tends to view his or her inventory as a requirement with certain form and purpose. Nothing in the inventory is bought without a purpose in mind and hence, in the overall assessment, the inventory of the buyer is not regarded as large. The outsider, on the other hand, considers the inventory and the continued purchase of products superfluous and unwanted.

2.2 An Exploratory Method to Characterize Acquisitive Buying

Having described certain central characteristics of acquisitive buyers, it is important to determine various other characteristics and processes associated with this phenomenon as well as to establish the relationships amongst the characteristics in light of the perceptions of this set of consumers. To this end, a qualitative method of inquiry based on grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss 1967, Strauss and Corbin 1990) was the most appropriate method for data collection and analysis, as this process would help explore acquisitive buying and determine whether it exists as a phenomenon. Rather than determining the conceptualizations or drawing hypotheses based on previous work, the emphasis here is on theory that emerges as directly as possible from the respondents themselves. Testimony can be obtained from consumers that are structured from their own worldview and represents to the maximum extent, the beliefs and sense making of the participants themselves (Hirschman 1992, Bergadaa 1990, Thompson, Locander and Pollio 1989, 1990). Unlike other shopping patterns that are already well established in the literature, acquisitive buying does not have any background literature to rely on. The story told here and the phenomenon revealed is emergent. Therefore, this procedure can elicit new and different issues important to respondents and can enhance the chance to gain insight into the level of sophistication and reflexivity with which the respondents can comment on their socio-cognitive states or behavior relevant to this research topic (Spiggle 1994, Pidgeon 1998). Besides, qualitative differences can be understood between acquisitive buying and other types of buying patterns, which will help delineate the former and help establish the phenomenon in its own right.

The central concern in this research endeavor was to understand why certain consumers tend to possess multiple items in a particular product category. In order to find the story and then explain it, an extensive data collection process was undertaken over a period of fifteen months. Table 1 elaborates the sequence of data collection activities, the rationale

guiding these efforts and the time line for the different activities. The table suggests iteration between data collection techniques. At each stage and especially during phases one and two, the data collection techniques were refined to better improve the process of identifying acquisitive buyers and to better understand the emergent themes (Arnould and Price 1993).

Table 1: Research Sequence and Timeline

		Year 200		Year 2007												Year 2008											
Workstep		Purpose		Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul			
Phase 1	Participant Observation	Input for developing research question																									
	Literature review	Development of research question and identifying factors and traits that differentiate acquisitive buyers from other types of buyers																									
	Development of questionnaire	To identify acquisitive buyers from other types of buyers																									
Phase 2: Students	Identification of student acquisitive buyers	For in-depth interviews																									
	In-depth interviews with identified student acquisitive buyers, n=20	To understand the products that individuals possess, the quantity, why they buy them, etc.																									
	Writing and analysis of pictures provided by student acquisitive buyers																										
	Transcription of data																										
	Analysis and interpretation of data	To generate emergent themes																									
	Member check																										
	Refining of questionnaire to identify non-student acquisitive buyers																										
Phase 3: Non-students: Step 1	Finding interview participants	For in-depth interviews																									
	In-depth interviews with identified non-student acquisitive buyers, n=42	To understand the products that individuals possess, the quantity, why they buy them, etc.																									
	Transcription of data																										
	Analysis and interpretation of data	To generate themes and check for differences between student and non-student responses																									
	Member check																										
	Use of QDA Miner software for analysis	To develop concept map to understand the relationships amongst the concepts																									
Phase 3: Step 2	Analysis of data based on nearest neighbor algorithm																										
	Formation of concept map																										
	Linking back results to literature																										
	Final report																										

In the first phase of this study, participant observation was undertaken to observe what products consumers tend to buy more than others and how they consume the products. Effort was also made to understand whether the buying process was based on any underlying negativities (as seen in compulsive, impulsive and excessive buyers and hoarding) or were purchased owing to social influences or for the purposes of collection. Participants were told about the desire to observe their belongings and questions were asked regarding their inventory as and when opportunities arose. The procedure followed was similar to that used by Belk, Wallendorf and Sherry (1989). Data was gathered through unstructured responses from informants (Briggs 1986). Notes were maintained, informing about the interactions with the informants.

Before and during fieldwork and throughout post fieldwork coding and further analysis, extensive literature review was conducted that addressed various types of buying to make sure at every step that I was not studying a phenomenon that has already been researched. Unlike data collection using surveys or experiments, which evaluates extant literature to discover gaps to address additional research, this study was not based on literature-based problems. Rather, field observations and interviews prompted literature review, which in turn, led to additional fieldwork (Belk et al. 1989), especially, in phases one and two of the study. This iterative process continues in what Glaser and Strauss (1967) calls the constant comparative method. Rather than data collection followed by analysis, data collected previously formed the basis for an interpretation, which then defined what data were still required for the purposes of interpretation. The process continued until conceptual categories were saturated and reached a point of redundancy, making further data collection unnecessary. For example, by the time the thirtieth non-student interview was done, the team of researchers knew a number of concepts or themes in terms of the factors affecting

acquisitive buyers and their inherent traits. Neither the number nor type of interviews needed to reach this point of saturation could be specified a priori.

2.2.1 Phase 2: Identification of Acquisitive Buyers and In-Depth Interviews

2.2.1.1 Identification of Acquisitive Buyers

An important component of data collection was the identification of acquisitive buyers. Such buyers needed to be delineated from all the other types of buyers such as compulsive, impulsive and excessive buyers, fixated buyers, status and conspicuous buyers and collectors to ensure that the right category of buyers were being studied. For this purpose, a screener questionnaire was developed to identify the acquisitive buyers. The basic premise was to identify typical buyers; buyers who bought based on negative internal anxieties as seen amongst compulsive, impulsive and excessive buyers and self-identified collectors and fixated buyers. The acquisitive buyers were selected by a process of elimination: buyers who showed characteristics of different buying types discussed above were eliminated from the respondent pool and the balance interviewed. To identify the various types of buyers, items from existing scales were used (compulsive buying – Faber and O’Guinn 1992, impulsive buying – Rook and Fisher 1995, conspicuous buying – Deeter-Schmelz et al. 2000, status buying – Eastman, Goldsmith and Flynn 1999). Excessive buyers were considered to have traits of compulsiveness and impulsiveness (Ridgway et al. 2006) and hence, separate items to identify them were not incorporated. Items were generated for identification of fixated buyers and collectors (see Appendix A). Besides, items from other scales such as self-control (Baumeister 2002, Baumeister et al. 1998), guilt and financial problems were also incorporated. Individuals who reported low levels of self-control and financial problems and high levels of guilt were deselected from the respondent pool. The questionnaire also asked whether the respondents considered themselves as buyers of certain products of a category. They were asked to write the products that they possess and buy more than others, the

reasons for buying the products and whether they considered their buying ‘more than average,’ ‘average’ or ‘less than average.’ This process helped in understanding what may be considered average in terms of the number of products and thus to help eliminate typical buyers from the respondent pool.

2.2.1.2 In-Depth Interviews with Students

The purpose of interviewing students was to determine the possibility of exploring the phenomenon of acquisitive buying on a larger scale. If acquisitive buying exists and certain individuals possess traits related to this form of buying, then evidence of such a phenomenon should exist amongst students and non-students.

Students from two undergraduate sections were administered the identification questionnaire. Students who showed high levels of self-control, low levels of guilt and financial problems and who did not score high on any of the buying types discussed earlier were considered for the interview process, resulting in 32 potential acquisitive buying candidates. They were explained the purpose of the interviews and were asked to bring photographs of the products that they owned and purchased more than others. Twenty students from a pool of 32 volunteered for the interview process. Interviews were conducted by one researcher, trained and experienced in conducting interviews. I was keen to understand what were the products that participants possessed in abundance and bought repeatedly? What happened to the products that were bought? How did these participants shopped? Were their shopping patterns different from other types of buyers? What did they think about the products? How did they feel when they bought the products? What were the long-term outcomes of possessing such an inventory? The interviews started with a discussion of the photographs that the respondents brought and was followed by a meticulous description of the inventory of products that they possessed and bought more than others. The photographs acted as a tool for the visual display of the fine distinctions associated with the

products and helped the respondents to discuss them in detail. (For consistency, grocery and other perishable items were not considered during the interviews.) Next, respondents were asked to explain the reasons behind their purchases and the significance of such purchases. They were also asked to describe a recent shopping trip for buying the products under discussion. The purpose was to understand the process of buying. Though an interview guide (see Appendix B) was prepared for the purposes of consistency, flexibility was maintained by adapting the questions to the individual respondent and to the course of the interview (Flick 2007). Especially in this phase of the research process, questions varied to a certain extent from one interview to the next so as to understand the nuances of the buying behavior, factors and processes and to delve deeper into aspects that were brought out during the analysis of the previous interviews. Interviews lasted from 30 minutes to over an hour and were carried out over a period of two months. Notes were made during each interview in such a manner that it did not intervene with the interview. The interviews were recorded, transcribed and analyzed. The themes that emerged from our data analysis were narrated to the participants for correction and/or amplification (Hirschman 1992).

2.2.1.3 Data Analysis

Data analysis included activities related to categorization, abstraction, comparison, dimensionalization, integration, iteration and refutation (Spiggle 1994).

1. Categorization is the process of classifying and labeling chunks of data. Various coding techniques have been specified by Glazer and Strauss (1967), Lincoln and Guba (1985), and Strauss and Corbin (1990). In this research, coding was done in two ways:
 - a. Initial coding of the transcribed interviews was done on a line-by-line basis (Charmaz 2006) (Table 2). Though coding every line may seem like an arbitrary exercise because not every line contains a complete sentence and not every

sentence may appear to be important, it helped in the initial stages of the research by providing a detailed understanding of the transcribed text. Besides, fresh data and line-by-line coding helped to remain open to the data and to see the nuances in it, for example, understanding the tacit assumptions such as being perceptive to the fact that acquisitive buyers tend to be perfectionists. Such an assumption was realized after through the data in great detail. This method also helped in comparing current data with the previous ones and identifying gaps in the interpretation that helped ask pertinent questions in subsequent interviews.

- b. Focused coding was the second phase of coding. These codes were more directed, selective and conceptual than line-by-line coding (Glazer 1978). After establishing some analytic directions through initial line-by-line coding, focused coding was used to synthesize and explain large chunks of data. Focused coding uses the most significant and/or frequent earlier codes to sift through large amounts of data. One goal was to determine the adequacy of those codes. Focused coding required decisions about which initial codes made the most analytic sense to categorize data incisively and completely (Charmaz 2006). Table 2 provides examples of the coding techniques used.

Analysis was conducted by a team of three researchers. The interviewer read the transcripts repeatedly and coded the data. Next, all the members of the team met twice every week to analyze and code the interviews. Coding was done line by line initially and then focused coding was used subsequently as we found certain concepts common across the participants. The emergent codes were discussed and recorded and new questions or queries that arose from the deliberations were discussed in subsequent interviews. Codes were created so as to be as grounded to the data as possible.

Table 2: Examples of Line-by-line and Focused Coding

Example of line-by-line coding	
	I: If browns and blacks are dominant, why would you have so many browns and blacks?
Note minute differences	A: Because every shoe has a different texture, a different edge,
Pull together different aspects	different stitch and to me they'll pull a different part of an outfit out.
	To me, like last night I wore a pair of black flats with jeans and I had
Very observant	a shirt that was sort of a casual look and so those were more of a
Matching important	rounded toe. Those went more with my shirt, my total outfit but I
Note minute differences	have the same pair of black flats that are a pointy toe, which I wear
	when I want to dress it up a little more. Because even though they are
Variety	the same color, they go with different things so it gives me variety to
Need differences	make me feel like my outfit is a little different.
Example of focused coding	
	Interviewer: Whatever comes to your mind?
Knowledge	Amy: I have a pair of brown flats that are kind of suede with a tiny
	little bow that has kind of a leather stitching. Those are more of like
	a rugged casual; they are just kind of not fancy at all. Then I have a
	pair of brown flats that have more of a silk bow and they are more
	sophisticated looking so I'll wear those when I want to look a little
	more sophisticated. Then I have some brown heels that have a
	wedge heel that are just an open toe that sometimes I wear with a
	skirt when I don't want to have a closed toe because I want my legs
Differentiate products	to look a little longer so it opens up the way, your legs look longer
	Interviewer: Lets start from the bottom. Why 15-20 jackets?
High attachment	Amy: Well one reason is I need to get rid of some. One thing I do
	tend to do with clothes is that I hang on to them because I think they
	are going to come back or I'll buy things on sale sometimes. Usually
	I have to like it, really like it to buy it even if its on sale and then
More needs per product category	know that eventually I'm going to find a piece that completes the
	outfit or whatever. Why so many jackets let me get back to that
	question. I do wear a lot of jackets though. I'm always putting a
	jacket on. I've got a lot of tan ones or beige ones, like a blazer,
	ones more casual its like a blazer but it's a different shape than a
	blazer, it buttons up different. So I guess I don't know because I
Differentiate products based on minute differences	guess they all go with different things and they work with different
	outfits I guess. I probably need to get rid of a few of them.

2. Categorization led to abstraction – empirically grounded categories were collapsed into higher order conceptual constructs (Spiggle 1994, Miles and Huberman 1984).

This process helped to group a number of more concrete instances found in the data

that share certain common features. It also helped to understand the general relationships of constructs with one another.

3. Comparison: Glazer and Strauss (1967) and Strauss and Corbin (1990) have detailed the process of comparison, which deals with exploring differences and similarities across incidents within the data. The similarities observed were categorized under a single label. As analysis proceeded and the categories developed, incidents in the data were compared to the emerging categories and not to other incidences.
4. Dimensions of emerging categories were developed by identifying various properties and characteristics of the categories. The purpose of dimensionalization is to clarify and enrich the conceptual meanings of the constructs or themes (Bagozzi 1984). For example, acquisitive buyers show a number of empirical variations in explicating their needs for products in the form of varied looks and styles of products and also in the form of differences in purposes.
5. Integration – Strauss and Corbin (1990) have suggested two methods of integrating the categories and constructs and determining relationships amongst them: axial coding and selective coding. Axial coding refers to the process of delineating a category or construct and understanding the conditions giving rise to it, the context in which it is embedded, the action and interaction strategies by which it is handled and the outcomes of the strategies. Selective coding involves moving to a higher level of abstraction with the construct of interest and specifying the relationships of other constructs with the core construct (Spiggle 1994). Although axial or selective coding was not used in the manner described by Strauss and Corbin (1990), their broad framework was applied and subcategories of categories were developed and links between them were deciphered (Charmaz 2006).

6. Iteration relates to moving through data collection and analysis in such a way that preceding operations shape subsequent ones. Iteration took place between data collection and data inference and within the inference phase. Iterative back-and-forth process was followed to relate part of the text in each interview to the whole and interpretation were continuously revised (Thompson et al 1989, 1990) especially in the initial phases of the analysis. Besides, iterations also occurred to understand categories between one interview (part) and the rest of the interviews (whole). Iteration has several advantages: One, it helps to develop provisional categories for further exploration and helps in the induction process – developing constructs and categories from the data. It allows for a unified interpretation of data by going back and forth between the part and the whole and thus assisting in refining the concepts and drawing out theoretical implications.
7. Refutation involves subjecting one's inferences to empirical scrutiny (Spiggle 1994) and numerous ways can be applied for this purpose (Hirschman 1992, Belk et al. 1989). The procedure used here is similar to that used by Hirschman (1992). Based on purposive sampling, data was collected from typical or mainstream buyers and compared to that of acquisitive buyers. Though there were some similarities in characteristics, there were a number of distinguishing features that signaled that acquisitive buying is a phenomenon that has its own standing.

2.2.1.4 Reliability

An independent judge coded the data to ensure greater reliability of the data. The themes that emerged from the data were used as a basis for checking the reliability. Discrepancies in the assignment of codes were handled through discussions and consensus was reached (Spiggle 1994).

2.2.2 Phase 3: Step 1: In-Depth Interviews with Non-Students

For ease of preliminary identification of acquisitive buyers, three questions were asked to non-student buyers:

1. “Do you tend to own and buy a large number of certain products such as shoes, clothing, electronics, jewelry, purses, household items, hunting and fishing equipment, etc. (example, owning 40 – 50 pairs of shoes)?
2. Do you shop more frequently than average buyers?
3. When you buy products, do you feel better - less upset and/or sad?”

Participants with affirmative answers to the three questions were then administered the questionnaire for identification of acquisitive buyers for further screening before interviewing them. In seeking participants for the study, different avenues of contact were tried out. Local companies were contacted to interview their employees. Besides, advertisements were posted in university-sponsored newspaper. However, the best way to identify participants and interview them was the snowballing technique. If acquisitive buyers referred buyers similar to them, this has been referred to as the insider’s perspective and identification procedure. Similarly, if other types of buyers such as mainstream buyers identified the acquisitive buyers as people who tend to buy frequently and own a considerable inventory of products but do not demonstrate negative reactions to buying, this has been referred to as the outsider’s perspective and identification procedure. The snowballing technique helped in two ways: one, it added an extra layer of screening process in identifying the right participants for this study. Two, it helped to develop rapport with the participants and gave a head start to the interview process.

Participants were interviewed at locations where they were comfortable and had privacy while taking part in the interview process: their homes, coffee shops and offices or conference rooms in their respective offices. The interviews lasted from thirty minutes to

three hours. Wherever possible, photographs were obtained to better understand the types of inventory of products described by the participants. The interviews were more structured compared to those with the students for the purposes of consistency (Charmaz 2006) and followed a sequence as discussed earlier. Extensive notes were taken during the interviews. After each interview, the interviewer discussed the notes and the narratives provided by the participant who was asked to correct or elaborate on the issues talked about. All interviews were recorded, transcribed and analyzed.

2.2.3 Phase 3: Step 2: Triangulation of Data through Concept Map

This phase uses the data collected from the non-student participants to develop a concept map. This process helps in understanding the relationships amongst the various concepts that have emerged from phases two and three. A quantitative method has been used to develop the concept map. This approach helps triangulate the results to give greater strength to the emergent relationships amongst the concepts.

2.3 Results

2.3.1 Participant Observation

Participants were mainly found to purchase and own products ranging from individually used possessions such as shoes, clothes, jewelry, purses, watches, hunting and fishing equipments to more generally used items such as electronics, kitchen and dining sets, stationeries, food items and decorative items. Care was taken to check with the participants to identify whether the items were considered collectibles or items that they utilized. Though many of the items were used on a regular basis, some were used infrequently and others were not used at all. Such products were not available on display as they were mainly for personal consumption. The items may have been in their possession for a long period of time and no effort was made to remove them.

2.3.2 Identification of Acquisitive Buyers

Twenty students and forty-two non-students were identified as acquisitive buyers, based on the responses from the questionnaire administered to identify them. The results of the responses for the students and non-students are discussed below:

2.3.2.1 Students

Out of twenty students, nine were males and eleven were females. The age of the students ranged from 20 to 38, the average age was 21.9 (Table 3). The products that they purchased more than others were mainly clothes and shoes though jewelry, purses, make-up, fishing and hunting equipments, musical instruments, DVDs and CDs, perfumes sunglasses, video games and other electronic equipments were also discussed. The majority of them (53%) went shopping once in two weeks, followed by once a week (12%). As shown in Table 4, the students showed low levels of compulsive and impulsive or excessive buying pattern. The students rated themselves, on an average, 1.6, 1.7 and 2.6 on the compulsive buying items. All items were based on a seven-point scale where 1 was “strongly disagree” and 7 was “strongly agree.” Scores were fairly low on the impulsive buying items (2.95, 2.7, 2.2, 2.6) and guilt (2.9, 1.4). 133 themes emerged from the interviews with the students, which were aggregated and 31 themes were used in the final analysis.

2.3.2.2 Non-Students

42 non-students were interviewed, ranging from 20 years to 68 years, the average was 41.5. The majority were females (34). It was difficult to get access to male interviewees, as a number of them were not comfortable discussing about their shopping patterns and also, the interviewees identified more females than males as people who shopped and purchased products more often. The majority of the interviewees were housewives (11) and corporate executives (10). Others were healthcare professionals (5), administrators (6), working for the

church (2), musician (1), teacher (1), owner of a firm (1), retired executive (1) and others (4)
(Table 5).

Table 3: Demographics of Interviewed Students

	Name	Age	Products bought
1	Amy	20	Clothes, make-up
2	Kendal	21	Make-up, clothes
3	Ashley	20	Shoes, clothes, electronics, accessories
4	Gia	21	Clothes, shoes
5	Adrian	38	Musical instruments, automobiles
6	Leon	21	DVDs, cologne, Video games
7	Brook	21	Clothes, jewelry, beauty products
8	Kelly	20	Shoes, Clothes, make-up
9	Ashlen	21	Shoes, Clothes, hair products
10	Scot	20	Shoes, perfumes
11	Kasey	21	Shoes, clothes, hair products, makeup, toiletries
12	Ashley W	22	Shoes, sunglasses
13	Scotty	22	Sunglasses, DVDs
14	Kori	20	Clothes, shoes, make-up
15	Robert	22	Clothes, shoes
16	Alex	22	Clothes, shoes
17	Chris	22	Clothes, shoes
18	Daveron	21	Clothes
19	Megan	22	Make-up
20	Mick	22	Clothes, fishing rods

Table 4: Average Scores of Screener Items for Students

	Average score
Compulsive Buying Item 1	1.55
Compulsive Buying Item 2	1.67
Compulsive Buying Item 3	2.58
Impulsive Buying Item 1	2.95
Impulsive Buying Item 2	2.71
Impulsive Buying Item 3	2.22
Impulsive Buying Item 4	2.55
Guilt Item1	2.86
Guilt Item2	1.41
Self Gratification Item1	4.56
Self Gratification Item2	4.35
Self Gratification Item3	2.95
1=Strongly Agree, 7= Strongly Disagree	

Table 5: Demographics of Interviewed Non-Students

	Name	Age	Occupation	Products bought
1	Heather	36	Corporate executive	Home decorations, clothes, shoes, makeup
2	Amy	27	Housewife	Clothes, shoes
3	Melissa	30	Healthcare professional	Clothes, shoes, decorations
4	Justin	24	Construction expert	Golf balls, spices, hunting and fishing equipments, tools
5	Keith	37	Healthcare professional	Clothes, shoes
6	David M.	56	Corporate executive	Tools
7	Carol	39	Housewife	Clothes, shoes, candles, home decorations, cooking utensils
8	Tim	52	Education counselor	Clothes, Antiques, Cooking utensils
9	Mary	52	Administrator	Books, CDs, Clothes, jewelry
10	Joyce	49	Education counselor	Clothes, jewelry, shoes
11	David	43	Ad-agency owner	Gadgets, DVDs, clothes
12	Bettyjean	60	Church ministry	Pens, notebooks, calenders, candles
13	Essie	59	Administrator	Clothes, shoes
14	Jackie	49	Housewife	Home decorations, cut crystals, shoes
15	Brian	30	Musician	Guitars, music equipments, CDs
16	Jenna	23	Housewife	Clothes, shoes, pottery, furniture
17	Lee	25	Healthcare professional	Shoes
18	Dan	42	Corporate executive	Clothes, ties, hair priducts
19	Sarah	25	Corporate executive	Clothes, shoes
20	James	54	Corporate executive	Electronics, clothes, music CDs
21	Amanda	22	Corporate executive	Clothes, shoes
22	Melanie	46	Corporate executive	Shoes
23	Joanne F.	68	Housewife	Decorations, jewelry
24	Jessica	20	Corporate executive	Clothes, shoes
25	Monica	42	Corporate executive	Clothes, shoes
26	Letti	49	Faculty	Clothes, shoes, jewelry
27	Pamela	60	Corporate executive	Shoes, plants
28	Gwenn	54	Administrator	Picture frames and mirrors, pillows, crosses
29	Connie	67	Housewife	Kitchen gadgets
30	Ronda	27	Housewife	Books, Purses, Clothes
31	Dayna	27	Housewife	Clothes, Shoes
32	Brook	36	Church ministry	Arts and Crafts, Books, Clothes, Shoes
33	Gwendolyn	59	Administrator	Lawn and Garden Items, Cooking utensils, Clothes, Shoes
34	Joanne	65	Retired executive	Jewelry, clothes, electronics
35	Virginia	55	Administrator	Shoes
36	Rebecca	22	Teacher	Clothes, shoes
37	Elizabeth	43	Housewife	Shoes
38	Melissa	36	Housewife	Clothes, shoes
39	Sonia	34	Housewife	Clothes, Shoes, Arts and Crafts
40	Ana	27	Healthcare professional	Hair products
41	Shelly	38	Healthcare professional	Clothes
42	Sarah L.	36	Administrator	Pens, papers

Like the students, the non-students also showed low levels of compulsive (1.45, 1.23, 2.26) and impulsive (2.21, 2.68, 1.68, 1.63) buying and guilt (1.63, 2.5, 1.81). The anchors of

the scales were similar to those used to identify the students. They also showed higher levels of self-control (4.84, 5.63, 4.86) and lower levels of status buying (2.0). It was not clear from the questionnaires whether the interviewees were fixated buyers or collectors as their responses averaged 4.14 and 3.47 (Table 6). This may be because of the wordings of the items as these items were generated rather than taken from a scale. Further refinement of these items needs to be undertaken to better develop the questionnaire. Analysis of the interviews resulted in the generation of 166 items, which were collated to give 33 major concepts. Three concepts appeared influential amongst the non-students than the students and hence these items were added to the non-student list of concepts. These are “buy based on needs,” “mental organization,” and “think a lot while buying.”

Table 6: Average Scores of Identification Items for Non-Students

Scale	Item 1	Average Score
Compulsive buying	1	1.45
	2	1.23
	3	2.26
	4	2.00
Impulsive Buying	1	2.21
	2	2.68
	3	1.68
	4	1.63
Guilt	1	2.51
	2	1.81
Self-gratification	1	4.00
	2	3.73
	3	3.08
Fixated buying	1	4.75
	2	4.41
	3	3.28
Self control	1	4.84
	2	5.63
	3	4.86
Collecting	1	3.13
	2	3.81
	3	3.47
Status Buying	1	2.00
1=Strongly Agree, 7= Strongly Disagree		

2.3.3 In-Depth Interviews

2.3.3.1 Partial Case Narrations

To provide the reader with an exemplar of acquisitive buyers and the type of information provided by the participants, as well as to illustrate some emergent themes resulting from the study, partial case narrations of two participants are presented below (Hirschman 1992).

2.3.3.1.1 Dan (Male, Age 42)

Dan discussed, among other products, about his 100 ties, 25 gray suits and 40-50 broadcloth shirts. A sales person in a financial organization, Dan shops once a week though he declares that he does not necessarily shop every time he goes to the mall. “And, you know, I have no problem walking into a place, doing a loop around, and just walking right out if I don’t see anything that kind of catches my eye right off the bat. And I have done that numerous times...” While purchasing, he makes sure that he can “see them (products) fitting somewhere” in his life. “I would never buy something that didn’t fit, if that makes (sense) – and so...I always buy something that fits within my world. I don’t buy things that are just out there.”

In his explanation of why he has multiple sets of clothes, he is vociferous about his stubbornness in letting things go. “I don’t throw them out because the widths change so often. A fatter tie might be in with a bigger knot. I mean, that wasn’t the case a few years ago, so why get rid of it when it’s going to come back in style in a couple of years? I am not a thrower-outer...actually it’s everything in my life. Don’t let it go. I’m never going to use them again. But it seems wasteful to get rid of it.”

Dan substantiates his purchases by elucidating that he uses all the products that he buys. “So it’s basically whether I have two pairs of khaki shorts or six or eight pairs or however many pairs I have. Ultimately, you know, if you were to wear the same two pairs of

shorts all the time, your shorts are going to wear out pretty quick. But if you're rotating a series of them, it will just extend that further into the future. It's a purchase I can justify within myself and if I have to justify to my wife – she thinks I'm nuts – you don't need another pair of khaki shorts or another white shirt but you know what? Ultimately, I'll use it and I'll wear it out and so I'll get my money's worth." He may not use the products that he buys right away but he knows that he would use the product one day as he has based his purchase on some specific needs. Thus, for him, value in the product is gained through the use of the products. Though Dan does not articulate his need for different types of products ("If I needed something, chances are that I already have it), he repeatedly refers to using different types of clothes for different purposes and different occasions. A self-declared 'perfectionist' in terms of dressing for office work, Dan argues he needs to look perfect and that "Off-ties are bad!" Therefore, he needs to constantly supplement his inventory with new and different types of ties.

Dan's description of his suits and ties is meticulous and detailed. He describes each tie he displayed before the researcher not only in terms of the dots, spots, stripes and animal prints but also in terms of the differences in widths and knots. He understands the choice of the colors of his suits better than his wife. According to him, they have had conversations about his gray suits and why he needs to buy the same type of suits. "I wish she (his wife) wasn't here – I feel they are different. I can see a difference in them. She cannot. She thinks they're all gray. And to a degree she's right. My suits are similar, but there are different nuances in every one, so I can say that I'm not wearing the same gosh darned suit every day. So I know what the suit looks like. I know I look good in it." He loves the subtleties of the blue though he mentions that the subtleties should be within his "box" or zone of liking.

Dan spends considerable time shopping, whether on the Internet or physically at the store. While shopping, he goes through the "mental catalogue" of his suits to see whether his

ties would fit the suits, whether he would be comfortable wearing it and whether it “meets his personality” so that “you don’t feel bad all day long and every time you look in the mirror you feel like, “This damn tie.”” Accordingly he changes brands and can buy Brooks Brothers over Ralph Lauren to suit his specific requirements.

Shopping, according to Dan, is a happy affair. He enjoys the process of shopping and says, “I don’t shop when I’m sad. It’s not a depression type of thing. It’s definitely an upper.” Rather he suggests that he avoids going to the mall or any other store when something is amiss or he is not in a good mood. According to him, he loves products and loves buying them and does not like to associate a happy event like shopping with a sad occasion.

2.3.3.1.2 Amanda (Female, Age 22)

Amanda believes that if she thought about a product for a really long time, then it was worth acquiring. “Most of the time, my theory is, if I’m still thinking about it tomorrow, I obviously really liked it and if I don’t think about it ever again, then obviously it wasn’t that important.” She shared her natural shopping process by revealing, “And so I waited and I waited. And I kept going back and they still had them and I would try them on and walk around the store in them and three months ago, they went down and so I ended up getting those and another pair.” The right price and the right look and style dominated the conversation while she discussed about her 50 pairs of shoes.

Like Dan, Amanda talked about her specificity in terms of the need for particular types of products. She normally has her mind set in terms of the product that she is likely to purchase when she goes shopping and knows what she is looking for and what she needs. And like Dan, she is specific about her needs and her purchases are well thought out. “I wanted a blue jean skirt from Abercrombie for the last game. And I already have one blue jean skirt (laughs) but I wanted a darker one. So I went to the store to get this blue jean skirt that I had tried on and really liked previously.” Her need for specificity concerning her

utilization of products is such that she is meticulous in her observation of the minute details on her jeans and prefers wearing particular shoes for particular purposes as highlighted in this statement: “I had bought some jeans with some brown on the back and so you couldn’t really wear black because brown and black don’t – I mean you can wear brown and black, but I don’t really like to. So I needed some brown shoes to go with my jeans.”

Amanda describes her inventory of shoes by summarizing that her shoes not only look different but they also have different purposes. “They’re different you know. Some are pumps, some are open-toed, some are sling-backs, some are flats, some are high boots, some are medium boots, some are short boots, and then some are summer flip-flop types.” Her need to have a wide range of products serves the purpose of being “cute and presentable” because “you never know where you’re going to go and whom you’re going to meet. I mean, I may go tomorrow out to dinner and may meet someone who could offer me an awesome job and I mean if I’m dressed in – my hair’s all sloppy and I’m not dressed, then his first impression may be “She wasn’t very presentable. So that’s why it’s just that looking presentable is important to me.” She relates her being dressed properly to her sense of organization and having different aspects of her life planned well. According to her, if people are put together, probably, their lives are also well put together.

In her overall evaluation of her inventory, Amanda considers herself to be an average buyer. She believes that her friends and relatives tend to have many more shoes than what she possesses. She prefers spending her money on clothing and shoes rather than on food and according to her, if she could afford, she would buy more. “If you go to work every day, you got to need more of clothes and shoes. Or if you sit around, you need different ones. So it depends what you need. Everyone’s needs are different.”

2.3.3.2 Emergent Themes

The lives of the two protagonists in this research displayed several themes (see Appendix C) that were common to the interviews with other acquisitive buyers and consistent with the theoretical structure presented earlier. The themes or concepts have been named such that they relate closely with the narratives of the participants. The analysis discussed mainly refers to the interviews of non-students, though a few excerpts from the student data are also presented. The emergent themes are divided into two main sections: the explanations of a large inventory and the needs and processes associated with the inventory. The first section relates more to the apparent reasons for possessing a large inventory. On further expansion of their deliberation on their inventory and purchasing behavior, deeper and more profound reasons emerged that related to their inner need and desire for more products that fulfill their expanding needs. Thus, a different set of concepts emerged that mainly dealt with psychological reasons and processes. The details are discussed below.

2.3.4 A. Explanations of Large Inventory

2.3.4.1 Self-Report of Large Inventory (T1)

Just as Dan referred to his 100 ties and gray suits while explaining his purchasing and consumption pattern, Bettyjean talked about her 100 pens and so did Sarah, who has 30-40 pens available at her house at any given time. Gwen discussed in great detail her use of the six different types of shovels that she uses in her daily gardening purposes while Connie talked about her four types of graters. Shoes and clothes were the center of conversation for many participants with Sonia talking about her 75 pairs that she wears for various occasions. Essie discussed her 75 pairs of pants and 50 or more jackets and said, “I’ve got easily 1000 pieces of clothes!” Justin’s 60 bottles or more of spices and David’s 500 pieces of tools are a source of great satisfaction, as they talked in-depth about their knowledge of each of the items within their inventory. Thus, all the participants reported multiple items in the same

category of products and discussed why they possessed and purchased multiple pieces. While explaining the existence of a large inventory, the participants discussed several issues that may be characterized as behavioral. These themes are discussed next.

2.3.4.2 More Articulated Needs per Product Category (T12)

Perhaps the most prevalent theme that emerged out of the in-depth interviews was a detailed expression of the requirements based on which informants purchased their products. To the question of why the participants possessed multiple items in a product category, they revealed their fastidious nature regarding the particulars of their products and the functionalities and needs for them and articulated them with great care. Like Dan, Dayna displayed her 13 jackets with great enthusiasm while taking pictures of them. She pointed out that the jackets had different purposes: she needed some to act as windbreakers, some were for sports used like a blazer, others were warm ones and still others were her “cute ones” that were short, medium and long lengths. She also detailed the differences that she sees in the jackets in terms of color: her blues and greens and blacks and suggested that she needed them all as they were of different types and colors that would suit different outfits and occasions. She discussed with similar aplomb about her 34 pants saying that the pants of the same color had different lengths to suit different types of shoes that she had and emphasized that she “really didn’t have too many of the same type” of pants. David methodically explained that his power saws were handy in different ways.

“Power saws for cutting wood, I have a cordless one and then I have one that you plug in. The one that you plug in is more powerful but it’s not real handy to use. Then I have a big table saw for cutting bigger pieces of wood. Then I have a smaller power saw that I use for cutting trim wood, (at) different angles. So there's four saws there that use circular blades and then I have a couple of reciprocating saws that have a straight blade but it’s got little teeth on it and little saw blading and I have one that is handheld and I have a bigger one for cutting bigger material.”

Gwen is very specific about the shoes that she wears: while discussing her “fun” pair of shoes, she talked about the pair of red shoes that she bought for one suit and that “it really

goes with one suit.” In her description of her shoes, she elaborated how she selected specific shoes that would go with specific outfits and that she was cautious not to wear “any shoe with any outfit.” Her “darling pair of black shoes with a big white flower” goes with “one dress” and she would not wear it with others. Essie shared similar sentiments as she discussed the way she picked her clothes. She ensures her shoes are “tailored” to the various situations that call for specific needs of shoes.

“I have every shape, every color. I try to buy shoes in different colors so that they can go with my specific sets of clothes. I like to have flats in those colors and heels in those colors depending on whether I really need to dress up or not.”

“If I have, say brown shoes, I have brown shoes that I wear with a pantsuit, I have brown that I can wear in a situation where I can wear a flat, just a loafer to be in jeans and stuff and then I have flats that are stylish that look real good with long skirts because I wear a lot of long skirts. So if I need to dress up a little bit, but I'm going to be in a situation where I am standing a lot or walking a lot, then I'm going to wear pretty flats instead of the pretty heels. Some are kind of funky and most are a little more tailored depending on what the situation might be.”

What emerges robustly across the interviews helps us infer about the needs that are inherent to the functions and lifestyles of the participants. Additionally, it also helps understand the specificity with which people tend to use their products for specific purposes. Most of the participants have provided elaborate explanations in terms of how they use, in some cases, a single product for a single purpose as in the instances of Amy, Essie or Gwen, who wear specific shoes or pants with certain outfits and would not be comfortable to wear the same shoe on another occasion or for a different purpose. Intuitively, acquisitive buyers require different products to satisfy their requirements for different purposes. Such needs are in sharp contrast with the needs of more mainstream or typical buyers wherein one product may cater to multiple needs (see later section on mainstream buyers). The ‘thin slicing’ of needs for specific purposes amongst acquisitive buyers refers to Pooler’s (2003) comment of redefining needs. He refers to yesterday’s wants as becoming a heavily demanded necessity

and Amy and Dayna's descriptions support this conjecture. As shown below, Sonia's excerpt provides a summary of the needs in question:

"Well, you need your leather, you need your fabric, you need your running shoe, you need your flats, some are sandal shoes, you need your black boot shoes, black boots with heels."

A different type of need is seen in Justin's discussion of fishing poles. He suggests that though his poles may be similar, he keeps a number of them around him while on a fishing expedition as he can avoid changing his lures constantly. In this case, there are multiple items of the same product category and they may look the same and may have the same functionality. However, multiple items help in averting repetitive work and speeding up the work process involved in a certain situation.

"If I am in some lilly pads, I can run a buzz bait right over the top of them so it's different circumstances for different areas without changing lures all the time while my buddy is over there casting with his three poles, getting all the good casts in while I'm over there tying all these knots."

It is important to state that not all participants talked explicitly about their "need" for the products under consideration. Amy was careful in pointing out during the process of member check as to how need is defined. Her comments are given below:

"It depends on how you define a need though. I mean I don't have to have more clothes, it's really a luxury to have the right jacket or to have a new dress so it's not like I need to have more clothes. I really...in my closet I have everything I need but I guess in my mind I think I would like to have a new dress. I would like to have a new dress that I don't have and if I can find it at a price that is reasonable in my mind. I guess at some point it is a need because you don't want to wear old clothes all the time but I don't really need 20 skirts."

As evident from her comments, she is cautious about the use of the word "need" and apparently reasons out the duality of the requirements and the hesitation in calling them her "needs." We debated on this dilemma and based on the interview excerpts of the participants, decided to use the term "need" as the way to express the inherent wanting for certain products that suit specific purposes.

2.3.4.3 Refined Preferences – Differentiate Products Based On Minute Differences (T2)

An understanding of the refined liking and ability for differentiation of products based on finer differences is important in understanding acquisitive buyers. Joanne, while describing majority of her 40 necklaces spends considerable time relating, in intricate details, the appreciation she has for the different colors of her necklaces. She is fascinated by the depth of color and shades of her white, blue and orange jewelry. Her eyes can recognize the slight nuances of shades, unknown or unappreciated by others. She is open about her ability to differentiate the colors of the beads in her necklaces in terms of their uniqueness and also understands that others may not recognize such differences that she so much enjoys and adores. In other words, Joanne's understanding of the intricacies of the products is so refined that she appreciates and understands minute differences.

“A lot of people may look at them and say, they're all blue, but some are green-blue, or some tend to be purpler. Some have very little blue; some are very dark blue -- the beads I'm talking about. So I wouldn't say that any of them are exactly alike. They all have sort of a unique character in my mind, something different about them.”

Joanne's comments show similarity to Dan's who explained that the grays in his suits were of different shades and to him such shades were unique to a particular item in his inventory.

Joanne also has an eye for understanding minute differences amongst her jackets as she discussed about the different textures. According to her, it is not only the color but also the texture of the jackets that can make a difference: the shine or the lack of it can bring about a casual or a dressy appearance. Letti's description of her 75 pairs of shoes showed that she differentiates each of her shoes in terms of variations in looks and functioning. She refers to different types of open-toed shoes as purposeful during the summers while her close-toed ones were more useful during the colder months. Acquisitive buyers also tend to express their refined preferences in terms of the functionalities of the products. Amy explicitly detailed her understanding of her shoes and how it helped her in particular types of functionalities,

whether the goal is to look sophisticated or casual. Even the nominal details are observed and brought out in the discussion. She is careful to note the texture, stitches, the shapes and the edges of her shoes and how it her overall image.

“I have a pair of brown flats that are kind of suede with a tiny little bow that has kind of a leather stitching. Those are more of like a rugged casual; they are just kind of not fancy at all. Then I have a pair of brown flats that have more of a silk bow and they are more sophisticated looking so I'll wear those when I want to look a little more sophisticated. Then I have some brown heels that have a wedge heel that are just an open toe that sometimes I wear with a skirt when I don't want to have a closed toe because I want my legs to look a little longer so it opens up the way. Your legs look longer when you don't have them closed in sometimes so I'll wear those. I have a brown pair of just pointy plain pumps that go great if I want to just wear them with a jean so they point just so you can see the end of the shoe.”

“Because every shoe has a different texture, a different edge, different stitch and to me they'll pull a different part of an outfit out. To me, like last night I wore a pair of black flats with jeans and I had a shirt that was sort of a casual look and so those were more of a rounded toe. Those went more with my shirt, my total outfit but I have the same pair of black flats that are a pointy toe, which I wear when I want to dress it up a little more. Because even though they are the same color, they go with different things so it gives me variety to make me feel like my outfit is a little different.”

Differences in products are not only apparent through variations in color and texture but also evident in the differences in other attributes. Brian, a musician and performer, has six guitars, three of which are electric while the rest are acoustic ones. He methodically explained that his 12-string guitar produced different sound than his six-string one and he needed both for different sounds. As regards his three electric guitars, he clarified:

“I have two of them that look very similar but because of the woods that are used or the pickups that are on them, they sound very different. So that's why I have two that would look the same and the casual observer would think they are the same thing. The third one looks slightly different than the first two but it enables you to play electrically and acoustically, it gives you both sounds from it and its sound is different than the other two that look the same. They all serve different functions and actually there are other ones that I want that sound differently than those. It's kind of like clothes, there's 100 different kinds that you could get and they all have a little feature that makes them different and makes them sound better.”

As with Joanne and Dan, Brian also suggested that his understanding of the differences in sound made the guitar appear different from others though to the casual outsider, it appears that he possesses two very similar guitars. As quoted earlier, Adrian's thoughts echoed that of Brian's in that the former suggested that the different types of guitars produced different

types of sounds and that the type of music the musician prefers (whether jazz or blues and others) to play at any point of time determines the type of guitar he/she would use. This is suggestive that the inherent need of the participants plays a role in fine-tuning him/her to understand the nuances in product attributes in the form of color, shape, sound, texture or functioning. Every detail is important and taken note of. Such 'fine-grained' differentiation of attributes is contrary to the more 'coarse-grained' distinctions found among mainstream buyers. The penchant for minute details in product attributes and/or functioning amongst acquisitive buyers is related to the needs of the situation. Such inherent needs are also related to the lack of satiation (Redden 2008) for the product category and there is always the next item to be excited about and be bought.

2.3.4.4 Products Help to Stay Prepared (T8) – Need For Control

While attempting to reason out why participants purchased and possessed multiple items in a product category, they suggested that products helped them to be prepared for any current or anticipated events that might transpire. Dan, while buying clothes for his newborn son, bought different sizes: ones that would fit a six, 12 and 18 months old. It is his way of being prepared, as he knows that he would need clothes as his son grows up. Both Bettyjean and Sarah have pens dispersed across their homes and by their telephones, in their purses and cars for the simple reason that they have access to them whenever required. In fact Sarah says that she needs to write things down, as she is concerned that she might forget her tasks at hand.

“(I have pens) somewhere really, really close. They're stashed in the kitchen in the drawers. I have a couple in the living room. There's a couple in the bedroom, some in the bathroom.”

Virginia provides a different reason for her sense of staying prepared: Her parents had talked about depression when she was a child and she thinks that it could be an explanation as to why she always had the need to have different things for any eventuality. It gives her a “form of security.” Melissa says in a matter of fact way that she would never throw away her

very heavy woolen sweaters, as she “just might need it one day.” Rhonda says that she has formal clothes that she would wear occasionally as in “once in three years” but she likes to keep the clothes as she could “wear that shirt 3 years from now for that formal occasion and not need to go buy something else.” Besides, she is always prepared for the special occasion like a family event or for going to church. She introspects deeper into the subject and says that there is a feeling that people need to control the circumstances that they are in and try to avoid “bad situations” they anticipate might be “around the corner.”

“My husband and I recently talked about, you know, we lived through 9/11 and so I think it really makes you stop a little bit. I mean even just having food on hand in your freezer or a generator, with Katrina as well. Even things you know like food or water or electricity are basic needs and we aren't guaranteed that something like that would never happen again but we just talked about what are the sorts of things we would need provided that would happen. I think there is a feeling that we can take care of what your circumstances might be like when you're in a bad situation, definitely. I mean basic things like clothing, it's a lot harder to plan for the future but if you ever needed to, you know.”

Sonia, like the majority of others, shops ahead of time. She thinks ahead of when she “needs it.” If she knew that a party was coming, she would purchase her outfits and accessories well in advance and she would buy presents for the birthday party that her kids would attend in the coming future, again, ahead of time. Like Elizabeth, she does not like to be “unprepared.” Justin is constantly updating his set of spices for the new recipe that he may prepare. He started acquiring the spices so that he does not need to go to the store just to buy one product should the recipe require. His ability, like Sonia's to differentiate products helps him to purchase products and store among others for those occasions when he needs particular spices for particular applications.

“Convenience. If I open a recipe book and I think I have almost everything and all of a sudden this random spice jumps off the page and it says ¼ teaspoon of Slap Ya Mama, I want it. I don't want to have to go to the store just to get that spice. I want it to be right at my fingertips if I think I'm going to use it. Like in a spice rack it kind of becomes your basic ones and then also you're off the wall ones that you don't buy every day. That way when you open that recipe book and it has a couple of the ground gingers, sesame seeds, ground mustard or whole mustard it's like well that spice racks probably got it, like bay leaves. I'm like oh! I have it now whereas before, I would have never bought bay leaves in the store and said I'm

putting that on that because a bay leaf looks like a leaf and I just don't know what to do with it until I read about it in a recipe.”

The sense of staying prepared for any eventuality perpetuates over time for acquisitive buyers. Most participants did not throw away items that were not in use. Dan holds on to his ties of different widths, “coz you never know and the style may be back!” Dayna, Joyce and Lee explain:

“Why haven't I thrown it away? I don't know, I need to because seriously some of them I haven't worn in like four years. You think one day you might wear it, you know but I need to just throw it away probably. I just have that thought of one day I might use it so I'll keep it.”

“So I probably could give away more, but you know, I'm not as bad as some people I know, but I have this fear if I give it away it will come back in style, so I hang on to it and I wish I hadn't given it away.”

“So even though it is nice and new and I can't get rid of it. It's still a good shirt. So I feel I shouldn't throw it away so I would probably not wear it as often and get a new one that fits me better and has more embroidery than the other shirts I had one similar to.”

Notice that Lee, in the last statement, is not sure whether she would wear the shirt and might purchase another and yet does not dispose the product as an item that she might use in the future. Also, notice her reference to the details in terms of differentiating one shirt from another. This refers to her ability to differentiate products at a minute level and she thinks that such modifications in products helps her better stay prepared for any occasion.

Past research has shown that need to control the environment is most central to the human species (White 1951). However, individuals differ according to the extent they like to exert control over their environment (Parks 1989). As discussed through the various examples, acquisitive buyers tend to possess high need for control in a bid to anticipate events and stay prepared for them.

2.3.4.5 Shopping a Positive Experience (T9)

A number of informants consider shopping to be a pleasing experience. The product, the search, the appreciation of the intricacies of the products, the love for products and the enjoyment of the experience as a whole are regarded in positive light. Since the product helps

them to be in control of their environment, for most, the process is also a happy one. For Virginia, it is the search for the new that makes her happy in terms of finding the next product that augments her inventory and satisfies her need for multiple products for multiple purposes. For Letti, the time she spends teaching her daughter to shop makes it a joyful experience. For Amanda, spending time shopping is something she feels “most excited about.”

“When I buy something it’s probably going to stay with me to use when I need it and, it was probably a good buy. If I got the tool I am looking for on a good deal I usually feel good after I bought it because I feel like either I’m going to use it or make more money with that tool. I usually feel good when I shop, and when I buy something I’m usually like alright, this was a good buy.”

“Most of the time it’s a joy, most of the time it’s fun. There are times that you have to go. Most of the time I don’t mind.”

Not all participants deem shopping is positive light at all times. Keith shares a mixed feeling about shopping. If he does not find something specific that he is looking for, he feels frustrated. At the same time, when he acquires the product that fits his criteria, he feels that he has accomplished a task. Note that he mentions that he tends to search for “something specific.” This fact again points out to the direction of specific needs of the participant and his focused, deliberate intention to achieve the product that satisfies that particular need. Such a product would help him in his current and future endeavor, again making him stay prepared for the future.

“I’m normally looking for something specific and if I can’t find it, I get frustrated. At the same token, if I’m able to go in, if I need three things and I’m able to get those 3 things that I want and even if I pay excessive amounts of money for them, then I almost feel like I have accomplished my goal or I got what I needed so you’re done and you can go home.”

2.3.4.6 Brand Switching (T3) and Lack of Loyalty for Particular Brands

Still another reason for possessing a large inventory related to the purchase of different brands and different types of products that match certain purchasing criteria. 38 of the 42 informants held that they are not loyal to any particular brand but would switch around. The central issue in terms of purchasing brands is whether they fit into the scheme of

things that interest the participants. Bettyjean likes her candles to be drip less and that burns well while Virginia is clear that she would buy a pair of shoes if she liked them and they fit her even if she did not know the brand name. Amanda equates brand switching with the prices that she feels comfortable to buy her clothes and shoes. She is quick to respond that she is not brand loyal at all and would buy a product whether the price was “two dollars or seventy five dollars.” Sonia respects a Wal-Mart brand just as other more famous brands while to Rebecca, the style and fit is more important than the brand name of the product.

“I will buy a thing on its own merit not because it’s, like if it’s a Tommy Hilfiger shirt, I’m not just going to go buy it because it’s a Tommy Hilfiger shirt. If there was a Wal-Mart t-shirt and I liked it better, I’d buy the Wal-Mart t-shirt.”

“Style and fit, not necessarily brand, so if it’s something that I find, and I tend to find things that I like for that season. Like, I like bell sleeves right now, and if I see one anywhere I’ll go try it on. It doesn’t matter the brand.”

It is important to clarify that some informants made the distinction between being brand conscious as opposed to being brand loyal. Dayna discussed that she would not mind paying an extra amount for a name brand as opposed to a product without a brand name but she did not particularly care for specific brands.

“I’m ok, like those red pair of shoes, I bought them at Payless. I don’t have to have a certain brand but if I see a brand and it’s on sale, I would spend a little bit more for that name brand than I would if it wasn’t a name brand. So knowing it was that particular brand I’d be willing to spend \$10 more, knowing that it was a name brand rather than a no name pair of shoes I’d be willing to spend that little bit extra.”

Joyce explained her understanding of loyalty and why she was not particularly brand loyal. She acknowledges that her brand loyalty is “pretty shallow” and what mattered to her was how the jeans were made and their cut and fit.

“all it takes is one time with a brand I really like and something’s not right about the fit and that brand loyalty is severed. So, it’s not a very deep loyalty, as long as it works, you know. So there’s a favorite store, I would say, that’s brand loyalty. I go there first, and I did buy a pair of pants there, but that was a couple of years and then a couple of years I did not like the way the jeans fit. They were cutting them different, making them different, so my brand loyalty was really severed. It’s really more about finding something I like and to me it doesn’t matter what the label says.”

Motes and Castleberry (1985) suggest that individuals may have product specific as opposed to brand specific loyalty. In case of acquisitive buyers, such brand specific loyalty is low as participants purchase products based on certain requirements. Their outward purchasing activities allude to more product specific requirements to suit their specific purchasing criteria. Any brand that fits the product specifications that the acquisitive buyers are searching for would correspond to their requirements. Hence, product, rather than brand specificity is of utmost importance to them.

Other explanations for a large number of items for a particular product category related to three factors: short span of product usage (T7), accumulation of unused products (T6) and attachment for the products (T5).

2.3.4.7 Accumulation of Products (T6) and Do Not Like To Give Away Products - Attachment for Products (T5)

Melissa has stacked her maternity clothes at the bottom of her baskets and doubts her ever using them again. Similarly, her extremely thick woolen sweaters wait to be worn when she goes up to New York again. Dayna has not “touched” a cabinet full of clothes since she got married five years ago. Both Melissa and Dan and many others do not prefer discarding items that they have acquired over time.

“I’ll work out and I’ll use a t-shirt, but I probably have 60, 70, 80 t-shirts, a whole basket full of t-shirts and do I use all of them? No. Do I throw them out? No.”

“I go in the closet and say, “Why don’t I get rid of these things?” And something in the back of my head goes, “You never know when you are going to need it.”

Some products may be as old as ten or twenty years while others may have more recent history. Dan has discussed this issue repeatedly over the hour and a half interview. His main contention is that they might be useful “one day.” His sense of trying to control his surroundings and stay prepared for the future that brings this feeling of holding on to products. His ties with different widths are a case in illustration of his belief that they might be back in fashion and he could sport them again. He becomes pensive for a moment and

poses this question: “Or is it for security you think?” Tim explains the storing of items as a means of security for the future by providing a brief about his childhood. Coming from a rural background and a family with modest means, he did not always get what he desired. His stored clothes are a means to hold on to things for future use so that he always had in hand what he needed.

“maybe one of the reason why I keep things...again it’s because...ahhm maybe growing up when I wanted to have something. I didn't have it...and so now as kind of a response to that, I keep things that I might not use. But I still have 'em if I need 'em. Does that make sense?”

Jessica is not fond of parting with her clothes and shoes either. “I do not get rid of anything” is how she explains her large inventory. She feels “attached” to them and as Gia says, “I have not yet said goodbye to them” sums up their feelings about their products. Such material attachment shows the relationship that Jessica and Gia have with their products (Klein, Klein and Allen 1995). The authors suggest that possessions to which there is attachment help narrate a person’s life story, to help them maintain their identities (Ball and Tasaki 1992, Belk 1988, Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton 1981, Dittmar and Pepper 1992, Kamptner 1991, Wallendorf and Arnould 1988). By their very nature, material objects help us maintain a “personal museum or archive” (Belk 1988, p. 159) providing a sense of permanence in the world (Klein et al 1995). By not saying goodbye, Gia and Jessica may be hanging on to a part of the past associated with the product to bring continuance to the present. They may perceive that such products may even help them connect to the future even though they may not actually use the products any more.

2.3.4.8 Short Span of Product Usage (T7)

Virginia enjoys the trends of the season and wears her pointed shoes while the season lasts. Next, they loom large in her closet and though she goes through to throw them, her inner voice prevents her from doing so. Amanda follows Virginia’s train of thought: she wears her new shoes “for a while” though not every day, when the opportunity arises to wear

them with specific outfits. Rather than referring to the change of styles per season, she mentions that specific shoes coordinate with particular outfits and she may sparingly wear the shoes, probably “a couple of times a year.” Thus, specificity of product usage is discernible in Sonia’s comments.

“...it might be like a couple times a year. Some of them (shoes) are made to wear with that dress and it's a formal dress and you just don't wear it that much.”

Rebecca, on the other hand, feels uncomfortable repeating her clothes. If she wears a particular jean once, she would not like to wear it for “at least a couple of weeks” before thinking of repeating. Joyce does not like repeating, not so much to show others but because she “gets bored of wearing the same ones over and over.” As an example, if she has worn a sweater for two months, she is “done with it.” As the examples demonstrate, the products bought have a short span of usage before they are discarded or stored either because they are out of style or functionality or the needs have changed or they warrant a high degree of specificity in terms of usage. On posing the question of whether she would ever wear a particular shoe under discussion, Lee exclaims: “Of course, I would wear it again. It might be once a year. Once every two years, I don't know.”

2.3.4.9 Do Not Consider Inventory to Be Large - Insider-Outsider Phenomenon (T4)

An interesting and exciting aspect was apparent when participants were asked to evaluate themselves in terms of whether they consider their inventory as average, above average or below average. The point of comparison was their knowledge of the shopping patterns and products of other people that they know. 76% of the acquisitive buyers mentioned that they considered themselves average in terms of their purchases of the product categories under discussion. As an insider to their buying behavior, acquisitive buyers like Melanie, Dayna, Rhonda, Sonia, Rebecca, Joyce, Justin, Keith, David and others consider themselves average buyers.

“I’d probably say I’m probably on the low end.” (Melissa has more than 200 shirts and pants)

“I don’t think that I have a lot but someone else may think.” (Dayna has 45 pairs of shoes)

“Okay. I would say not above average. And I’m not -- I would say probably average, but if you happened to say, squeak yourself over the line, I would say below average. I think most woman shop more than I do. But I really don’t poll them and ask them, but I would say average or a tad less than average.” (Joyce has 100 pieces of jewelry)

Perhaps, Sonia’s comment sums the case under discussion. Her realization that she is an average buyer occurs when she compares the number of similar products her friends possess. Even with 75 shoes, she feels that she is an average shopper, whereas, to the interviewer (the outsider), the number was considered high.

“I used to think I had a lot of shoes and when we built this new house I counted the space in my shoe rack and it has room for 75 pairs of shoes and I just thought that was an immense number and since I’ve talked to other friends and other people at school and stuff, they’re like oh I have 120 pairs of shoes that wouldn’t fit in a rack so I was like wow. I used to think I was above average but now I think I’m just an average one because I know people don’t buy as much but apparently they buy a lot more than we do!”

A different perspective emerges through the interviews. Dan admits that his wife thinks he is “nuts” about his ties and suits and considers it frivolous to purchase another khaki shorts. Similarly, he believes that he can distinguish the grays of his suit and hence each suit has a value to him but not to his wife. Joanne and Brian expressed similar feelings that they can perceive minute differences that others cannot distinguish. In all the examples, it becomes apparent that the fine-grained insider preferences distinct from the coarse-grained outsider. Anna, Justin’s wife said that she has difficulty in “pulling him out of the spice aisle” as he spends considerable time searching for the specific spice that he needs to augment his inventory. To her, such purchases are frivolous and uncalled for as they have sufficient spices in their inventory for day-to-day cooking. Justin, on the other hand, realizes the shortcomings of the outsider (Anna in this case) in failing to recognize the subtleties in the products under discussion.

As a note, while beginning to study this phenomenon, an outsider-based name was given – exorbitant buyers (Burns et al. 2007). With the progress made, the value-laden name

based on the outsider's perspective gave way to a new name based on the understanding of the insider's perspective: "acquisitive buying" was coined to better fit the phenomenon under study and to better represent the viewpoints of the insiders.

2.3.5 B. Acquisitive Buyer's Explanation of More Articulated Needs

This section deals with discussions that went beyond the apparent reasons for possessing a large inventory and leads one to understand the mindsets of the participants. The participants elaborated on what they understood and felt about their need for multiple products for multiple purposes. The themes portray certain characteristics of the participants, as well as a deeper understanding about the reasons and processes behind their purchases.

2.3.5.1 Defend Purchases -Rational Justification of Purchases (T13)

Among the themes that are evident in understanding what participants mean by multiple needs for multiple products is the ability and intent of participants to justify their purchases. Such justifications are wide ranging from satisfaction of everyday needs as in "I will need several styles of khaki pants otherwise, I've got to do laundry everyday and I'm not going to do that" and "saving a trip to the store" to more specific wants – "Because I have one pair that I only wear to parties that are less than 3 hours because they hurt." Interestingly, participants defended their purchases in terms of their consistent use of products, as evident in Sarah's elucidation:

"I never remember stuff, so I always have to write stuff down. So I've always got pens in my purse, pens on the desk, pens inside the desk, and pens in the car, everywhere. So that's one of the reasons I have so many because I'm deathly afraid that I'll need to write something down, and I won't be able to. You know what I mean; I won't have a pen... They're stashed in the kitchen in the drawers. I have a couple in the living room. There's a couple in the bedroom, some in the bathroom. Like, there are pens everywhere. You can open almost any drawer in the house and find an ink pen."

Participants made certain that the researcher understood that their purchases neither were mindless acts of shopping nor were they mechanical feats during transitory shopping stopovers. Rather there was meaningful purpose behind their purchases and each acquisition

involved distinct and specific thoughts. In most cases, they rationalized each of the items in a particular product category in terms of their intended functions, looks and styles, monetary benefits and the value they would acquire through current or future consumption.

“I'm not going to buy stuff that does not have a purpose so I may go to the store and just run across something I absolutely love but I have to have a reason if I'm going to love it. It's not just because, like there were these really pretty sparkly Christmas trees with glitter and jewels and everything at Target and I would love to have one but I just don't know what I would do with it, where I would put it so I just look at it every time I pass it. I've learned to be pretty good about things having a purpose before I bring it home.”

Similarly, Dan discussed the power of justification in his purchases by suggesting that it was one of the most important things that he associates with his buying. For most of the informants, such reasoning is essential more for themselves than for any other outsider or family member.

“Justifying the purchase is important. I can't be like, "Why the hell did I buy that?" So I have to be able in my mind to justify – like, I will never go out and buy an automatic pan mixer that I don't know how to use.”

Most participants found it easier to describe their products while justifying why they purchased them. Gwen discussed how she had different sets of pillows for the different seasons and occasions throughout the year and that she would change the pillows around the house as the seasons changed. On the other hand, Pam discussed about gardening and described her use of different types of shovels for raking leaves, manure or hay. In their elaborate description of the different uses of the products, the participants provided explanations for their purchases. In most cases, the rationalization was not only cognitive in terms of justifications of lower prices as in “cheap” but also emotional as in “they're fun and great!” However, majority of the justifications were a combination of emotional and cognitive responses.

“Yeah, different colors but the exact same jacket. I just bought two of the same jacket in different colors, camel and red. I bought them because they were cheap, they were cute and I loved them!”

Such rationalization amongst acquisitive buyers is in sharp contrast to the purchases made by other extreme buyers such as compulsive shoppers wherein the informants suggested that they perceived less utility for the products after they had purchased them (O'Guinn and Faber 1989). This is evident in the excerpts quoted below; informants did not show a purpose behind their purchases, nor were they able to give reasons why they bought certain products:

"I couldn't tell you what I bought or where I bought it. It was like I was on automatic."

"I really think it's the spending. It's not that I want it, because sometimes, I'll just buy it and I'll think, "Ugh, another sweatshirt." (O'Guinn and Faber 1989, p.219)

2.3.5.2 Knowledge - Consumption Vocabulary (T16)

It is apparent from the above discussion that the acquisitive buyers have elaborate knowledge regarding the product category in which they buy products repeatedly. Adrian conversed in detail the elements in his guitar, and elaborated how the sounds play differently as he switches the "positions" in his guitar.

"...it has 5 positions which you will use to change the sound of it. So, if you wanted to play, let's say, country, you would put it in position 1. Then if you added, if you wanted to play rock music and you wanted to play solo, then you would keep it in that position. Well, if you wanted to play jazz music, then you can switch to the third position. And then if you wanted to play blues, then you move it to the fourth and fifth position. And the second and fourth position is mainly used for play folk style guitar like Prince and James Brown kind of stuff."

Adrian discussed his learning of the variations in guitars' pickups and sound effects as he graduated over time from a novice to an expert (Alba and Hutchinson 1987). He argued that he spent his spare time at a guitar store and researched and played different types of guitars to understand the features characteristic of each guitar. Over time, he identified the product features, evaluated the levels of the features and then identified the relationships between the features and his own assessment of the products (Hoch and Deighton 1989, Lynch 1985). His awareness offered a basic category structure upon which he developed his knowledge base on guitars. Such knowledge structure helped him make fewer mistakes and appreciate additional attributes of the guitars (West et al. 1996). In-depth consumption

vocabulary also helped him to understand the nuances of the existing products and assisted in understanding the needs for buying the next set of products. While buying his fifth guitar, Adrian knew that he would not buy guitars made of certain types of materials as he had identified the sounds they produced. Hence, after testing and trying out different guitars, he had developed his own evaluations of the attributes of the guitars and the sounds that they produced.

Thus, it is argued here that Adrian's inherent *need* for different products for different purposes relates to his better development of a consumption vocabulary and his immersion in the process of knowledge acquisition. His need to play different types of music is key to his need to acquire more information regarding the wood type, pickup type, the coils used, the hollowness of the guitar and the overall quality of the sound effects. Such knowledge also informed his existing and future needs and thus helped him make the appropriate choices when the time came to purchase the guitar.

“...most guitars are solid inside. But this guitar is big and hollow inside. This is to produce different sound that you use for jazz music. And you wouldn't play country music or rock music on it. It is strictly for jazz... the other guitar that I just named, its sound is different and is not as thick. It has a lighter sound. More like you could say...maybe like, more like a woman's voice and I needed both to play different types of music...”

2.3.5.3 Buy Based On Needs (T15) and Buy within Means (T14) – Self-Control

However much they feel the need to purchase different products to suit their varied needs, acquisitive buyers tend to demonstrate higher levels of self-control than other extreme buyers such as compulsive, impulsive, excessive and fixated buyers, collectors and hoarders. The descriptive accounts of acquisitive buyers reveal that they manifest self-control in two ways: they tend to buy within their available resources and they tend to buy based on certain needs for acquiring products that fit within their criteria of selection. Both these concepts are discussed next.

Buy within means. Gwen loves to have large mirrors, pillows and pictures around the house. She knows that she has an expensive taste and that she would need to have enough money to buy them. She says that she does not like to be “urgent or stressed” about buying the ones that she likes. She knows that she would find them at a price that is affordable so that she was not going “into debt” to buy them. “If I have to wait a couple of years then I will” is how she takes purchasing her prized products. Going above her budget was not a possibility for her and she has certain tactics to stay within budget: she does not charge her credit card for her purchases.

“I would rarely go over my budget; I don't like to have a balance on my credit card at all. Normally for me I would wait until I had the money and just look for it and try not to get in a hurry and get stressed out about “Oh I have to have a pillow by this weekend”. I wouldn't do that.”

Melanie's strategy is to avoid buying, to wait for the sale or to ask her husband for a gift as a means to get a product that she “really, really” liked. It was clear from her viewpoint that she would not buy the product if it did not match her price range even if she found something “tempting.” This delay of gratification (Evans and Beran 2007) is common across most acquisitive buyers and consists of two processes. Melanie's deferred reward of receiving the product as gift over Christmas over instant reward is referred to as delay-choice task. Her delay maintenance strategy relates to her decision to delay gratification, even if the instantaneous reward is available to her (Mischel 1974).

“And even if I pick something up, even though I really, really like it, if it's too expensive, nine times out of ten I'll put it down and wait for it to go on sale, or tell my husband for my Christmas present.”

Dayna brings out the elements of acquisitive buyers that differentiate them from compulsive, impulsive or excessive buyers by suggesting that she questions herself about the need for the product and that she could have spent her resources elsewhere.

“I could have spent the money on something else. Sometimes I just think about did you really need to spend the money? It's not like I don't have the money, but you know you could have

saved that money. Did you really need that item? So I don't have that high of "Oh I bought this, I feel great!"

On the other hand, Letti has taken up the strategy of teaching her daughter the nuances of shopping. At the same time, she suggests that she teaches her daughter not to "go overboard" with buying. "You can't have everything you see" is what she believes and hence, passes on to her daughter as a lesson early learnt in life. For David, getting the right value is important as a stimulant to purchase. He likes to be wise about his resources and suggests, "You can't afford it, you simply can't afford it!" For him, it is selfish to spend money on things if the product does not provide value at the end of the day.

A number of participants compared their purchases to other extreme buyers they know. Such comparisons helped them express how they considered themselves different and did not overspend to buy a product that they truly loved. Sarah discussed her friend's habit of buying shoes for every outfit. She suggested that even though she had the resources to overspend, she did not find the need to do so.

"She's the girl that has every shoe possible. She's the one that has the pink Steve Madden pumps. She's very fashionable, wears what's in fashion. She's a Starbucks person but her husband put a stop to that, he bought her some ice coffee or something that was like Starbucks so she can make that before she goes to work. ...She's the one that went to Las Vegas and tried to get, I'm not sure if she went through with the \$300 pair or not but her husband was like if you really, really have to have them. But me if I look at the price I just put it down. Even if I have that much money in the future, I'm not sure I'd want to buy that. Unless it's something you can wear every single day like a suit or something."

Carol contrasted her sister's buying pattern from hers. Rather than storing her clothes for future use, she held that her sister purchases new sets of clothes as her weight fluctuates. On the other hand, Carol wore her different maternity pants till she felt comfortable to buy new clothes for herself. For her, it is a "mental issue" to buy a particular size and subsequently buy the next size as the weight changes. Although not all informants follow the rigidity that Brook and her husband maintains, she provides a distinct example regarding their method of managing their expenses.

“We're disciplined, but we're not strongly on our budget. For example, Paul created an excel spreadsheet for our budget each week. We have a specific amount for our toiletries, a specific amount for groceries, and a specific amount for gas, and then we have other which involves everything else. Car repair, health, it involves entertainment; it involves frivolous buying of a gadget he liked at Best Buy or yarn that I wanted to buy. Some dirt or annual flowers I wanted to buy.”

A different type of comparison is revealed when acquisitive buyers distinguished themselves from impulsive buyers. They suggested that they would not necessarily be impulsive in their purchases as their purchases needed to make sense to them. David's comments support this contention:

“I try not to, I'm not a very impulsive person I rationalize a good bit. I would probably talk to my wife and see what she thought but generally speaking we don't spend a lot of money on ourselves.”

Ramanathan and Williams (2007) have found support for experiments that suggested that “prudents” with strong avoidance motivations are low in impulsivity. It is suggested here that acquisitive buyers may be related to prudents such that they are conscious of their purchases and exhibit considerable self-control in their purchasing behavior. They show high levels of conscientiousness that underlines constraint and willpower (Tellegen 1982). The examples quoted above exhibit various levels and mechanisms of willpower and constraint demonstrated by acquisitive buyers.

Buy based on needs. Dan's declaration of buying something that “fits” his world and not “something that is out there” is echoed across other acquisitive buyers. Bettyjean talks about her love for paper and pens and how it facilitates her job as a communicator.

“And I like the quality of my paper and the quality of my pen is very important to me, so. I like to match a picture with the words. And that's the one thing, if I find pretty paper I won't necessarily--I will go looking for paper if I need it and as you can understand, I need them a lot!”

Both Gwen and Amanda were direct in suggesting that they do not like to “just go shopping for no reason” and have certain things in their minds regarding their purchases before heading out for shopping. Rather Amanda's comment, “If I can't wear it tomorrow,

then probably I won't buy it" shows that she needs to find a use of the product before shoe buys it. In other words, there is certain amount of thinking involved regarding the purpose of the purchase and whether she really needs the product. The active goals for the shopping trips that Gwen, Amanda and Sarah take are to satisfy specific needs they have in their mind. In the same vein, Sarah suggested that she would be in a particular store to buy shoes or clothes because she knew what she wanted to buy.

"I am kind of like I know I need a new pair of sandals and oh I know I need a new pair of black shoes. I kind of already have it in my mind and that's the reason why I am over there unless it is like I don't have anything to do and oh they have got new shoes out. But normally or lately, it has been like oh I need something."

Justin suggests that he "does not sling things in his cart" while shopping and he does not like to get home and say, "Oh! I don't need that, I shouldn't have bought it!" David suggests that an Iphone does not make sense, as his Blackberry is very useful for his work, though an Iphone to him is to "die for." He suggests that it needs to "make sense" to him to buy another black shirt if he has one already. He would not buy another shirt just to increase his inventory.

"In my mind, I've got a black shirt. I've got two black shirts, so I don't need another one. Even though I like that black shirt, I'm not going to buy it because I've got two others because that doesn't make sense."

Even though people might think that she is "out there" with her 75 pairs of shoes, Letti added that she never goes out shopping when she is sad. As an example, she suggested that:

"I was sad because my husband lost the election, but I didn't go out and buy anything, and I didn't go spend my money or do anything like that. I guess it gives me some comfort but it's not comfort that I need when I'm sad."

These excerpts give a clear indication that acquisitive buyers understand their needs and buy products that suit their particular needs. The goals for the shopping trips do not necessarily relate to spending but more so to acquire specific products. Unlike situations where individuals aimlessly go for shopping and purchase products that they may or may not know why they bought, acquisitive buyers tend to know what they are buying and the

purpose behind the purchase. What is interesting is that acquisitive buyers tend to buy more because they have specific purposes for specific products and they have numerous needs to be satisfied.

Extreme buyers, on the other hand, may not buy because they do not have specific reasons for buying products. Compulsive, impulsive and excessive buyers may not be able to articulate the purpose behind some of their purchases as their primary purpose may be to attain satisfaction through the process of shopping than through the acquisition of products (O'Guinn and Faber 1989). For example, compulsive buyers are less concerned with the acquisition of the product as a motive for purchase. Rather, the positive attention from people, the purchase of gifts to please others and the emotional lift from the process of shopping bring positive feelings (O'Guinn and Faber 1989).

2.3.5.4 Constant, Active, Goal-Directed Search (T24)

With ten watches to use in different occasions and for different purposes, Keith is getting ready to search for a Swatch with certain characteristics that he thinks is “cool to have.” He has already searched online and would be heading to the store soon after the interview was over. He plans to get a first-hand look at the watch and investigate the features that he has researched previously. Next, when the time comes, he would order it online from a specific vendor in California from whom he can purchase at a discount. Keith's purchase is symbolic of the detailed thought process involved in the purchase of the products that acquisitive buyers are involved with. Dan spends 45 minutes every day looking on eBay, Overstock and others “to see what is out there. He knows the brands and the size of his suits. Whenever he sees the “right” suit, he orders it but till then, he “goes on looking.” Bettyjean spends time checking what new and different pen is available since her last visit, while on a shopping trip. She needs to “look and see how it is going to feel.” It is important to understand how it feels in her hand and how it writes and how fine the point is. She is picky

in terms of her selection of her pens she finds it hard to find a pen that: “just does for me what I need for it to do.” Her fastidious nature is apparent when she does not buy one if it “does not feel right.” She waits for the right one, even if it is for a month or more before saying, “Wow! I really like it!”

“I always, always do a lot of research and it will have to do with quality, it will have to do with price. I--even in that particular item I might have gone to at least ten to twenty different websites looking for a similar item. Even after I found this one that was the right price and the right kind, it was a special, and I thought it was what I was looking for. I suppose the Internet is perfect for me because I can open up multiple windows...”

“Sometimes I'll say, I'm just going to go look and not buy, just look sometimes. I'll say, let's just go see what they have and what is in style, the look and feel of the shoes. Let's go to the mall and see what they have or let's just go, you know, down to a little shoe store, Bella Bella, down the street from us. I just go to look. It makes me feel good, and if I see a pair of shoes that are \$60, I really don't need to spend \$60 on a pair of shoes right now.”

“Then I just walked around the store and just enjoyed looking at the different things and making mental notes and ideas, to me it's just kind of relaxing.”

Participants mentioned that they did not always go to the stores to make purchases. A number of times, they browse around and make mental notes of the inventory in the store and understand the details of the products available. While Amy makes her “mental notes” walking around the store and noticing products, Connie and Sonia make their notes of products by browsing through catalogues. Connie reads the “advantages of the products” and their attributes and then goes to scrutinize at the store.

It is important to note at this point that some of the discussions of the shopping processes showed a behavior with a purpose: an active, goal-directed search pattern. Markman and Brendl (2000) have suggested that people value products to the extent that they are perceived instrumental to the satisfaction of an active goal. The goal in case of acquisitive buyers is to obtain products that match particular needs. There is constant search as seen in Dan's everyday ritual of spending some time on the Internet. At the same time, the search is very specific in terms of looking at certain attributes of products that are still not part of the inventory and that needs to be obtained to expand the scope of the inventory. The purpose is

to possess a particular product for a particular occasion or event, whether current or anticipated. Thus the eventual purpose is to satisfy a particular need that the acquisitive buyer had anticipated.

2.3.5.5 Lack of Financial Problems (T33)

None of the participants interviewed mentioned that they have faced financial problems owing to their shopping habits. Rather, their constant search mode is facilitated because of the lack of any financial problems. Some, like Gwen and Amanda, have mentioned that they would wait for a particular product to go on sale before buying them so that they are not under any financial anxiety as a consequence of their purchases. Specifically, Gwen mentions that she does not feel anxious to own a product, as she does not fancy going into financial debt.

“I don't want to be urgent or stressed about it. I know I'll find them and they'll be at a price I can afford so I'm not going into debt to buy them. If I have to wait a couple of years then I will.”

“I would rarely go over my budget; I don't like to have a balance on my credit card at all. Normally for me I would wait until I had the money and just look for it and try not to get in a hurry and get stressed out about “Oh I have to have a pillow by this weekend”. I wouldn't do that. I would wait until I found what the right thing was because for me I'm going to keep it for years and years so I would like to take my time and make sure it was the right product for what I want.”

Joanne manages the financials of her family. Her husband and she have an agreement that unless they went in excess of a particular dollar value, they would not talk to one another about spending. She fixes an amount that she can spend each month on products that she appreciates and needs to buy. This strategy thwarts financial stress as a result of acquiring her many shades of necklaces. Other extreme buyers such as compulsive and impulsive buyers, and collectors may face financial stress owing to their overspending (O'Guinn and Faber 1989, Rook 1987, Rook and Fisher 1995) as they may underestimate the long-term consequences of their shopping behavior (Ainslie and Haslam 1992b).

2.3.5.6 Need to Be Perfect (T19) and Pickiness in Selection (T20) – Perfectionism

Though participants discussed their liking for different types of products, they were very precise regarding the products that they would select and the need to be ‘perfect.’ Since their needs are very specific, they feel the need to find the perfect product to match their varied needs. Amanda’s case narration reveals that she is quite specific in the way she dresses and presents herself. Her specificity is evident from the fact that she is particular about wearing brown shoes to coordinate with the brown intonation at the back of her jeans. Amanda is specific in terms of the types of outfits she wears, as she does not like to dress sloppily, even while “going to Wal-Mart.” She does not like to give others the opportunity to say, “She wasn’t very presentable” to the point that she would prefer to go hungry than to look less than perfect. Echoing Amanda’s sentiments, Melanie says that she has a pair of pink flip-flops to go with her “everything pink” and that she even gets teased for it. However, for Melanie, matching everything is very important, right to the last details. To her, “And if I don't feel like I look right, whether it's matching or I feel it doesn't look right on me and if I wear it anyway, it affects my mood that day, you know, I'm just not as comfortable. I don't feel good about what I'm wearing.”

Similarly, Dayna says that she has to “have the perfect outfit.” Letti suggests that she is a “perfectionist” in the way she looks and dresses and makes sure that everything matches. Her accessories in terms of shoes, jewelry and purses need to be coordinated with her outfits as she says that was how she was raised as a child. Letti goes on to describe that she lays out her clothes and checks the outfits that would look best on her it may take a long time for her to dress. She might be dressed in two or three outfits before finalizing because: “that is the look that I want to have that looks best on me.” Rebecca’s story of how she was upset when her boyfriend’s gift of a watch did not meet her approval and fell short of her liking goes to provide further evidence of her need to be perfect in terms of how she looks and what she wears.

“Well, it was kind of an expensive watch and took me eight hours and I was acting all weird and, you know, finally he was like, “What's wrong?” Because I feel like if he spent the money on it and I want to really like it and wear it all the time instead of say thanks and never wear it, so I told him and he was fine with it, because he knows. I guess I'm really picky.”

Rebecca is very fashion conscious and needs to have her outfits fit her the right way. Sarah feels the same way regarding her need to be perfect in terms of presenting herself. Her different shades and different sizes of heels of brown and black shoes must coordinate with the different shades of her outfits.

“And then there are different shades of brown, you've got to have a different shade for the outfits, I'm really picky about the colors matching, or at least coordinating. I have different shades of brown, different shades of black, different heel heights. Some are kind of funky and some are a little more tailored depending on what the situation might be.”

To Justin, perfectionism is a way of life and that he tries to achieve and be as perfect as one can be in everything that he does. While discussing his passion for knowing all about spices and utilizing them in various recipes, he poses this question to the researcher:

“Because I mean don't you try for perfection in whatever you are doing in the kitchen? I mean isn't there a perfect way to cook a recipe? I guess it's by someone else's opinion but I'm always searching on my accord for the perfect flavor, the perfect taste, what I think tastes good, not necessarily what you think tastes good but what I think tastes good. I'm always searching until that's it, that's the perfect recipe for my taste buds and my mouth and I'm not going to change it at all. It's kind of a gambling risky too much of this, too much of that, not enough of this, and then when you finally get it you are like “Aha!” I got it, don't touch it, you know you kind of remember the exact amounts that you put in, a dash of this, a dash of that.”

Note that he considers his opinion about tasting his cooking more important than anyone else's. To him, a recipe needs to be perfected. Till then he would labor towards it and he considers it “gambling” by adding different spices to create the masterpiece. Heathers' 10th lip-gloss and Shelly's 10th pair of black pants are examples of a similar sense of perfectionism that they are trying to achieve: the perfect taste, the perfect look or the perfect fit.

Acquisitive buyers have been found to exhibit positive perfectionism (Stoeber and Otto 2006). Perfectionism is commonly characterized by striving for flawlessness and setting

of excessively high standards for performance accompanied by overly critical evaluations of one's behaviors (Flett and Hewitt 2002a, Frost, Martin, Lahart and Rosenblate 1990, Hewitt and Flett 1991). According to Hamacheck (1978), perfectionism is of two types: positive perfectionism in which individuals enjoy pursuing their perfectionistic strivings and neurotic perfectionism in which individuals suffer from their perfectionistic strivings. Acquisitive buyers match the profiles of positive perfectionists in terms of striving towards a healthy and positive end goal. None of the participants considered their pickiness in looking good or the need to be perfect as an act that has brought harm to them.

2.3.5.7 Expanding List to Be Acquired (T21)

Another important theme that emerged during a discussion of buying is need for a list of items that warrants acquisition in the near future. Elizabeth, like Letti and Virginia, likes to update her looks so that she does not look like a "42- year old mom." She has bought the leopard printed shoes for the current season but knows that the style is temporary and would need another set of shoes for the next season based on the trends. Sonia calculates that she buys twenty pairs of shoes a year. She "figures out" what she needs for the season and then goes on a mission to search for them. In spite of having 45 shoes, Dayna exclaims that she lacks shoes and desires for more.

"I think that I could wear the cutest outfit and I never have a pair of shoes that look cute and I never buy them because shoes are so expensive. So I didn't think I had this many shoes, and I feel like I need more shoes. I really do, I feel like I need more shoes."

"Then in flipping through the rack I found a beautiful black coat, like a double breasted wool wintertime that I always wanted to have but either couldn't afford it or it wasn't the right, this was my size marked down to \$53 and I bought it."

In her description of her shopping process, Shelly talks about her beautiful black coat that she always wanted but could not afford. In this case, Shelly had the desire for the black coat. She did not specifically go for shopping to buy the black coat but as soon as she saw it, her innate desire to possess it arose. The need to acquire it was present and the situation

prompted her to act. While discussing about her skillets and other kitchen items, Gwen's need for a whisk with certain attributes became apparent even though she had a functioning whisk at hand. Soon, she mentioned that she preferred three whisks: one large, one medium and one small as she wanted "all the sizes." Amanda's example of wanting to buy a new pair of darker colored jean skirt in spite of having one shows the need amongst acquisitive buyers to obtain products with structural, functional or aesthetic variations. Soon after purchasing the Wii gaming machine, Jim's mind was set on acquiring the next electronic item – the Iphone with the latest accouterments. A point to note here is that the participants do not necessarily yearn to buy the same product but look towards expanding their inventory by purchasing different products (related to their variety seeking nature) to suit their different needs (related to more needs per product category).

The question therefore arises: is there no stopping to this rush for the "next one?" the incessant desire and passion for the subsequent gadget, shoe, skillet or outfit? Coombs and Avrunin (1977) suggest that good things satiate. Then why is it not applicable to the acquisitive buyers? As discussed earlier, Redden (2008) suggests that satiation depends on the features that people attend to and that satiation decreases when people consider the attributes of products to be in different categories. Subcategorization first focuses people's attention on the aspects that differentiate the attributes. This "increased attention to the details subsequently lowers perceived repetition, resulting in less satiation and greater enjoyment." (Redden 2008, p. 624). Acquisitive buyers are better at subcategorizing the attributes of products and hence, are better at staying focused and involved in the products that they purchase and consumer. Additionally, it is proposed in this research that the inherent, ever-expanding need for different products within a product category among acquisitive buyers helps in focusing attention to the infinitesimal details of the attributes as substantiated through Virginia's eye for appreciating the various shades of brown. Similarly Dayna's

exclamation of her need for more shoes based on her meticulous observation of the details of her inventory goes to illustrate that none of them are satiated with the product category.

Rather, there is always the wanting for more.

“I may see something and say I don't have anything exactly like this or exactly this shade of brown, by this designer.”

“I really don't have too many of the same type of jeans, they all have a different purpose or a different look. I need some darker ones and plan to look for some over the weekend.”

2.3.5.8 Look for Different Things (T22) - Variety Seeking

Although acquisitive buyers look for specificity in the types of products that they acquire, they tend to seek different types of items within a product category of interest to match their ever-expanding needs. Variety seeking is a novelty seeking behavior (Kahn, Kalwani and Morrison 1986) and is a deliberate tendency to stay away from the product purchased on the last occasion or more. It is considered a personality trait (Inman 2001). Variety seeking may be explained in two ways: 1. derived motivation in which the varied behavior is the result of some other motivation such as multiple uses, multiple situations or multiple users and 2. direct motivation, in which varied behavior is the result of a desire for change per se due to interpersonal or intrapersonal motivations (McAlister and Pessemier 1982). Rather than being derived variety seekers in terms of having external motivations, acquisitive buyers have been found to look for novelty because of the drive to find specific products that they have in mind. Thus, variety seeking is based on direct or internal motivation in this case. A few cases are described to explain this aspect. Sue uses multiple types of skillets for multiple purposes. She looks for different types of skillets as she needs to make omelets using one, sauté with another, stir-fry with a third and deep fry with another. Virginia feels the same way about her shoes. She says that she may look at a shoe and then tell herself,

“I may see something and say I don't have anything exactly like this or exactly this shade of brown, by this designer.”

“I can wear this pair of flats with everything I own, but you know, it’s good to have a high-heel. You might have a tan one, you might want a black one, and I have tweed one, I have a cream one. And then you’re talking about an open-toe and your blacks and another pair of blacks and so on.”

Virginia is unambiguous in mentioning that she appreciates the differences in her brown shoes and she likes to have the different colors and styles of her shoes as her own way of explaining her variety seeking motivation. Thus, a very common description of the products and buying patterns of acquisitive buyers relate to “different styles, different colors and different types.” However, informants do not go for any random type of product just to bring about a change. There is a certain degree of specificity in terms of their buying as discussed by Virginia, even though they are not purchasing the same type of product. Letti likes to wear “flamboyant” shoes. If she buys a camel colored shoe this time, she might go for an animal print the next time simply because she does not possess that particular kind as yet. Sonia explains her idea of variety seeking while shopping in this way:

“It has to be something that really catches my eye. Like this season the open toe, or the peek-a-boo toe are in and I did not have any of them. Actually I have a pair in navy but you can’t wear that with a black dress and so I saw these and I said those are really cute, I like those.”

While Sonia talked about differences in the characteristics of the shoes, Rebecca discussed the differences in colors as well.

“I have probably 15 different colors of V-neck shirts and regular t-shirts because I like them going to class. I’ll get a couple different color of pants of same style but I’ll never get the same exact pair of anything, the same color, same size, same style.”

The above examples show that the informants have a need for variety (Van Trijp, Hoyer and Inman 1996, Baumgartner and Steenkamp 1996, Mittelstaedt et al 1976, Steenkamp and Baumgartner 1992, Steenkamp and Van Trijp 1991). Besides, past literature has explained variety seeking in terms of variations in product attributes. McAlister (1979, 1982) suggests that consumers tend to satiate at the attribute level and are not likely to repurchase the products possessing those specific attributes. As one consumes the same product attribute, the level of incongruity declines until at some point, the level of stimulation

falls below the desired level (Avrunin and Coombs 1971). Variety seeking on the attribute is then undertaken to increase the incongruity (Inman 2001). It is suggested here that the chances of satiation is higher in case of acquisitive buyers and hence, they tend to look at different attributes to keep their level of curiosity at an optimum level. Amy's description of her shoes and their shapes, colors, edges and stitches provides an excellent example of the support of this contention that, "even though they are the same color, they go with different things so it gives me variety to make me feel like my outfit is a little different." Such differences fill the need for a wide array of products required to suit different purposes. Hence, acquisitive buyers have an increasing need to purchase different products to fill in the different needs.

2.3.5.9 Love Products/Emotional Connections with Products (T23)

For Bettyjean, her books and pens are her "weaknesses" and she does not consider them her collections that are "out there to be shown to others." There is an emotional relationship with the products and she loves the feeling when she searches for them and acquires them to expand her inventory. In case of Mary, her books bring a great sense of joy, because "it's kind of cool to have all of these books." Besides books help her to "relax and freshen up" and she would always search out for more books. David enjoys buying tools that aid in working on home projects; his tools act as a mechanism to release him since he spends most of his time "at the desk." He exclaims, "I enjoy using them, I enjoy buying them." Products, for acquisitive buyers, are a means to attain certain goals, be it relaxation for David and Mary or to be unique as in case of Letti. Acquisitive buyers use products for specific purposes and thus, associate positive feelings them, with little or low levels of regret when they acquire them.

2.3.5.10 Low Price and Sales (T27)

As has been discussed in numerous previous researches, participants are sensitive and aware of the promotions of low prices and “sales.” Amanda waits for the sale to purchase certain products that she spends months trying out. She visits the mall frequently to make sure that she does not miss the opportunity of sales. Needless to say, sales were an important theme that featured during the interviews. However, it is important to state that in spite of sales, participants did not buy randomly but purchased those products that met their fastidious scrutiny and fitted into their expanding list of products that they had in mind.

2.3.5.11 Look Through Details in Inventory (T25)

Most of the participants mentioned that they “scan through” the inventory in the store; scrutinize the details of the inventory and try out before making a decision regarding purchases. None of them mentioned that they go for a single product and leave the store. Their screening process helps them understand the styles available, the craftsmanship of the products and the intricate details such as the stitches, bows and buckles for Letti and the textures, edges and stitches for Amy.

“You'd see me go through the whole store and look at racks. I'll go through all the racks, and then I'll go to the bargain rack, because there's always a sale rack in the back, and then I'll come back and I'll go through the shoes again and pick up some pairs, put them in my basket. Well really, this is what I do. I see the shoes, look at the stitches, the bows and the buckles and I think, I may want them...”

Dan, while searching for his ties, shirts and suits, also thinks about his existing inventory of products. He makes a “mental note” in his mind of his current sets of products so that he does not purchase a product that he already possesses. The details in the products must match his requirements of those that are missing from his inventory. Similarly, Sonia mentions that she knows the composition of the shoes in her closet to make sure that she does not repeat any type of shoes that are already in her possession.

“I have a mental picture in my mind of what I have. If I see something -- I know what I have. If I see something -- it's not hard to picture in your mind.”

“I mean I have in mind what's already in my closet so I don't get two, like at the moment I would not buy another 3 inch heel because I have enough 3 inch heels unless I bought a red dress and I needed red heels, either plain or probably with a tiny bow but other than that there's really no reason for me to do that.”

2.3.5.12 Try Out (T30), Refer To Products While Shopping (T29) and Think While Purchasing (T28)

Product purchase is not a mindless act of shopping. Participants shop frequently and while shopping, trying out products before buying is important to the participants. Like Adrian, who spends time at the music store playing and trying out the guitars before making a decision to purchase, Rhonda tries out “twenty sweaters” to assess the attributes of the products before making a judgment. Again, the purpose is to satisfy the fastidious nature of the acquisitive buyers, to make sure that they are making the correct purchase decision. Although Connie has six graters in her inventory, she took a long time to acquire her particular type of grater with large holes to make hash browns like her sister makes. After going through the catalogue and checking the product attributes at the store, she asked for a product demonstration before purchasing the grater.

Participants make sure that they purchase products that suit their purposes. They refer to their existing inventory to make sure that no products are repeated and only new products that warrant acquisition are purchased. Every aspect of the product is well understood, inspected and thought out before heading towards the billing section of the store. Such aspects relate to the ever-expanding needs that need to be satisfied for which different products with specifications are purchased. Letti's thoughts are recorded below:

“...so then I'll go to the side and I'll stop and I'll look at the shoes that I have in by basket and decide, is this what I want? Is this really comfortable? Do I need this? What's the price of this? And so, I'll do that, and then a lot of times I'll put many shoes back because they don't fit into my criteria, and then I go through the dresses, skirts, shirts, pants.”

“I will stand there for 30 minutes and think, is this really the right thing? Do I really need a pair of shoes, because I have so many pairs? If I feel like it will be good as far as being practical, I will buy it. But of course, I'll say I have a closed-toe shoe already, but this is an open-toe.”

“Yeah I think about does it just match this one outfit or does it go with 3 or 4 outfits? Can I use it to go to church in and go to a party in or can I just use it for a party? Like how many places can I wear it? Or if it were really uncomfortable, how long would I actually want to wear these shoes? Because I have one pair that I only wear to parties that are less than 3 hours because they hurt.

Letti questions her decisions and her choices before purchasing, as does Sonia. If Letti thinks about the nuances of the shoes, Sonia thinks about the functionality and the purposes that the shoe will cater to. Both pay attention to the price of the product to determine their final call. There is an intense thought process that involves weighing of attributes, needs, functionalities and price.

2.3.5.13 Product Helps Expression of Self (T17) - Self-Concept

It is well established that self-concept issues influence the nature of products that consumers purchase (Sirgy 1982). Rooted in Roger’s (1951) theory of individual self-enhancement, Grubb and Grathwohl (1967) specified that:

1. “Self-concept is of value to the individual, and behavior will be directed toward the protection and enhancement of self-concept.
2. The purpose, display and use of goods communicate symbolic meaning to the individual and to others.
3. The consumption behavior of an individual will be directed toward enhancing self-concept through the consumption of goods as symbol.” (Sirgy 1982, p. 289)

Extant literature shows that products can be used to satisfy psychological needs, such as actively creating one’s self-identity, and allowing one to differentiate one-self and assert one’s individuality (Ball and Tasaki 1992, Belk 1988). Acquisitive buyers, like other buyers, use products as an expression of their inner self-identity. Two examples provide support for this contention. For Letti, shoes define her personality because she feels that they help her feel unique. She goes to the extent to mention that shoes come to her mind before anything else when the opportunity arises for an event.

“I’ve already established an identity. People know me and like I said, now people know me for my shoes. Okay. I can do that and its okay.”

“And the minute somebody says, “You are invited to dinner,” I’m immediately thinking, what shoes am I going to wear? It’s not, you know, who’s going to babysit my daughter. The first thing I think about is what I’m going to wear because that’s who I am. Which is really kind of crazy, but it’s who I am. That’s how God made me. That’s the process He put in my mind, and I enjoy it.”

Similarly, Dan’s comment earlier regarding wearing a tie that is “not you” and “doesn’t meet your personality” demonstrates that his products help him be comfortable and facilitate in self-expression. An off-tie makes him feel bad all day and every time he sees himself in the mirror, he feels like “This damn tie!”

The inherent need of acquisitive buyers as discussed earlier plays an important role to enhance the expression of the self. The more the needs, the more are the products that are purchased and the more the possibility of communicating aspects of acquisitive buyers to themselves and to others. Everyone knows Letti for her shoes and they match the description of being flamboyant. Her trendy shoes, her animal prints, her gold shoes and others help portray this feeling of extroversion and boldness. She prefers shoes that are not “typical pumps” and prefers shoes that are “out there” because “that is who I am.” Not everyone shares Letti’s need to be unique as an expression of identity. For Joanne, it is more for herself than for others. She dresses because she likes it.

“I’m still at the point I’m almost 60, where I look in the mirror and say, “Who is that person?” Because in my head, I’m younger than that now. So I don’t really dress to be beautiful or gorgeous, or what have you, I dress because I like it.”

Her necklaces and her silk suits in all their different hues and textures are an integral part of how she carries herself. Every color is matched to express her deep understanding of the artist in her and to stimulate her creative instincts. She has set a standard for herself in terms of how she coordinates the colors of her attire that brings out an aura of grace, firmness and strength.

Certain differences between extreme buyers and acquisitive buyers necessitate discussion at this juncture. Acquisitive buying differs from other extreme buying such as compulsive and impulsive buying as the shopping lists are more open and receptive to sudden, unexpected buying ideas in the case of the latter (Rook and Fisher 1995). Besides, thinking may not be reflective of their needs and may be prompted by the proximity to a desired product, dominated by an emotional attraction to it, and absorbed by the promise of immediate gratification (Hoch and Lowenstein 1991, Thompson, Locander and Pollio 1990). Additionally, for some of the extreme buyers, the process of shopping may be of prime importance compared to the need for products. Since the products are bought in an attempt to satisfy particular needs, however refined they are, the importance of the product compared to the process is higher for acquisitive buyers. In contrast, the process of shopping is of paramount importance for compulsive, impulsive and excessive buyers (O'Guinn and Faber 1989, Rook 1988). Acquisitive buyers use the products that they purchase as the products are bought based on some specific criteria that match their schema of likings and needs. There is a motivation behind each purchase as opposed to a mindless act or an exploit to achieve temporary emotional relief. On the other hand, for some of the extreme buyers mentioned earlier, products may stay unused (O'Guinn and Faber 1989), since the ultimate purpose of the purchase is to experience an emotional upswing as shopping progresses.

2.3.5.14 Partial Case Narration: Typical or Mainstream Buyer

Now that we looked at the lives of acquisitive buyers and at certain points, differentiated them with some of the extreme buyers, let us understand how more typical or more mainstream buyers view their lives with respect to their inventory of products. Some of the characteristics of acquisitive buyers presented this far show similarity with mainstream or typical buyers, such as rational justification of purchases and buying based on needs. Hence, it is important to understand how a typical buyer differs from acquisitive buyers. How do

they perceive themselves in terms of shopping? What are their thought processes and are these thoughts any different from those of acquisitive buyers? We begin this section by describing the partial case narrative of Rose, a 39-year-old education counselor.

On referring to the issue of products that she bought more than others, Rose took time to think of some. She finally mentioned her inventory of 15 shoes and clothes that she has been wearing for the past four years. She purchases based on her requirements and does not “go get a lot of blouses or any item in particular.” Her purchases are never “overly abundant or so.” She acknowledges that her styles is “not even at par” and all she ensures is that she has the “basics and that’s it.” She does not feel the need to “have a variety of coats or sweaters” to match her “socks and shoes.” She shops infrequently, once every two or three months and she may “go in and see what’s available” but may not buy anything.

She described her shoes to be of three types: sandals, loafers and boots. She does not like high heels and prefers “plain and simple get around shoes.” She does not go for anything latest or new in style. Her loafers were “all-purpose” as she does not like to “get things that are too seasonal.” If she had to buy another pair of shoes, it would be “almost in tune with the loafer look.” She prefers clean lines and simplicity. She mainly buys shoes to replace the old ones rather than to add to the inventory though, to her, 15 pairs of shoes was “more than enough.” She would buy blacks or browns and within brown it would be a tan that stays “in the middle” so that she could wear the pair with different types of outfits.

“low cut, a low heel or no heel, cushioned, simple, no stars, no stones, no nothing on it. Just plain and simple. Usually black or brown – tan, my shade of brown doesn’t typically go too far to the tan color because you can’t do too much with that. I go for something in the middle so it gives me a bit of room because I think with camel I’d be very stuck with, ok, what shade of khaki am I wearing? What shade of black am I wearing? What shade of blue jeans am I wearing with that? Because the tan definitely throws off some of the color mixture I think.”

Rose prefers her clothes to be generic. Her clothes would last for three or four years and may continue till eight years. Her preference for “all purpose,” button down shirts and loafers was evident as she repeatedly compared herself to other excessive buyers.

“...you couldn’t gauge the year with me because it’s the same button down shirt, the same khaki pants, so it’s always the same. It’s not like I buy the latest fashions or anything like that.”

She did not need things that “perfectly had to go.” She knew people who needed to match and “go paired up” because it “limits” her. For her beige khakis, she could “get a range out of that and it could go with whatever.” Her black pants or her blue jeans would go with a host of other blouses. She could change the sweater or blouse and could still wear the same slacks.

Rose likes to shop quickly as shopping is a chore to her that needs to be taken care of. As a child, she would sit inside the fitting room while her mother searched for clothes. All she would want to do was pick her skirt and go away. She suspects that her lack of enthusiasm for shopping is attributed to her childhood experience. She prefers shopping at Gap and goes to the rack containing the product of choice. She has knowledge of the store’s layout and knows the “racks that don’t have her type of jeans.” She knew that she would only visit the two places to pick her two items and would not be looking at any other racks. She walks over to her racks and looks for her size and if she sees certain “curvy or boot cut or something,” she knows that she knows that she would not find her type of clothes.

“I’m not going to find myself standing over looking at this cute little stuff with a little bow on the front, I’m not doing it. I go in thinking it’s going to be simple, straight to the point and look like it represents me and then I’m gone.”

Similarly, she knows that she would not walk over to where the heels are sold and look at the loafers and “the flat black shoes and the little boots.” She goes past the products that does not interest her and “does not even look.”

Rose does not like to switch brands. She uses her same Dial soap and buys the same brand of jeans. Even at the grocery store, she does not need to create a list, as she knows exactly the items she would buy because she always uses “the same staple items.” She prefers specific brands because:

“Because you kind of realize what you like and what you don’t like. There’s not much to differentiate between if you’re trying on something new, is it going to be up to par for you or

not. You evolve over time and where you caught me, I have decided on the brand. People in the world try more different things than others; sometimes you just realize I don't want to be bothered with trying. I've tried already. Years ago I did that. I'm done. DelMonte right here, I'm getting this piece from DelMonte because I trust the brand, you know?"

According to Rose, "less" is her personality. She has two posters in her apartment and she really does not care about having too much because she thinks "it's too flamboyant!"

2.3.5.14.1 Similarities and Differences between Acquisitive Buyer and Mainstream Buyer

There are certain similarities between Rose and Dan and Amanda. All of them may go for shopping and may not buy products if they do not match their buying criteria. This factor shows a high degree of self-control, a characteristic different from a number of extreme buyers. In addition, they do not regard shopping as a panacea for inner tensions or anxieties. Rose would rather watch a movie when upset or stay on her own. Dan would prefer to spend time with his family on a sad day. Such behavior differs from compulsive or impulsive buyers who may use shopping as a mechanism to deal with crises in life. Besides, both sets of participants can justify their purchases and defend their buying of specific products, another characteristic that sets them apart from some of the extreme buyers. Also, both these groups of participants purchased products for their own consumption rather than for display to others, characteristic that differentiates them from status or conspicuous buyer. They also use their products repeatedly as opposed to displaying them for others to appreciate, thus differentiating them from conspicuous buyers. Finally, they do not tend to stockpile products based on any underlying internal or external crisis, which differentiates them from hoarders.

However, typical buyers like Rose show marked differences in shopping patterns compared to Dan or Amanda, the acquisitive buyers. One, Rose uses a single product for multiple uses more than Dan or Amanda as seen in her repeated use of her khakis or jeans and shoes. Her clothes have lasted three to four years or up to eight years and she is always seen in her slacks and button down shirts and loafers. On the other hand, Dan uses multiple

products for multiple uses when he wears a different tie everyday and Amanda does not like to repeat the same jeans skirt in the subsequent game. Two, the inventory size of Rose is narrower than Amanda. Amanda wears her different shoes on different days and different occasions. Three, Amanda is more receptive to the finer details of products in terms of their niceties of bows and stones and stitches. Similarly, Dan appreciates the subtle differences in the grays of his suits whereas, to Rose, the comfort and functionality of the shoes was of utmost important. The niceties are brushed past, as she does not want to go through the “hassle and mess.” Simplicity and functionality are adequate criteria for shopping. Four, Amanda and Dan buy different kinds of products when they buy that fit their specific criteria whereas, Rose buys the same type of product to replace the old or buy something very similar. Rose has gone through the process of trying things and knows her likes and dislikes and purchases based on them. Her inner curiosity to try new things is lower when compared to Dan or Amanda. Both of them shop for the next different thing on their list. Their list goes on expanding even though more products are acquired. In their mind’s eye, they view each product with a difference and hence the need to acquire another product different from all other they possess is stronger among them than with Rose. Rose does not feel the need to have more than required. She does not need the mp3 or the Iphone or the Ipod. For her these are frivolous items. Amanda and Dan are continuously looking for the latest, the authentic and the innovative. Five, both Amanda and Dan shop regularly. In fact, Dan scans the Internet everyday to get to know “what is out there.” Rose shops less frequently and when she does, it is mainly to replace an old product, when the need arises. She does not like to go through catalogues to know the latest or the products that have been newly launched. Six, brand switching is an important trait for Dan and Amanda whereas Rose prefers to stay with her brand of Dial and Gap pr her brand of jeans. Dan may be brand conscious but switches from Brooks Brothers to Ralph Lauren and others based on the brand that fits his criteria.

Rose had “done trying” and she stays with the brand that she trusts. None of the acquisitive buyers have used the terms “trust” or “reliability” that are commonly used by the more typical buyers like Rose. Seven, while shopping, Rose walks through all the products displayed and directly reaches for the racks that she knows she can get her products. She completes her shopping in a short time and heads out of the store. For her, shopping is a chore just like “filling the tank.” Amanda loves shopping, and goes looking for products often. She meanders through the aisles and browses through the racks to check the latest and the details that stores offer. She regards shopping as a form of enjoyment and a source of “joy.”

The above brief description of the differences between acquisitive buyers and typical buyers show that the two sets of buyers have marked differences in characteristics and processes of shopping. Such differences help to delineate acquisitive buyers in the backdrop of other typical or mainstream buyers, an important factor that helps establish acquisitive buying as a phenomenon in its own right. The next section provides substantiation of the relationships amongst the themes that emerged from data analysis of acquisitive buyers and involves a quantitative technique to create a concept map.

2.3.6 Phase 3: Step 2. Triangulation of Data through Concept Mapping

The grounded theory discussed above helps us understand the concepts and categories central to acquisitive buying and how acquisitive buyers make sense of their inventory of products. In this research, we further substantiate the relationships between the concepts through the process of triangulation. Triangulation is the combination of methodologies in the study of the same phenomenon (Denzin 1978). Triangulation can be both between methods and within methods (Jick 1979). Between methods triangulation relates to cross validation when two or more distinct methods are found to be comparable and yield comparable data. For example, the effectiveness of a leader can be studied by interviewing the leader and

evaluating performance records. Within method triangulation (Denzin 1978) relates to using multiple techniques within a method to cross check for internal consistency or reliability. We use a quantitative technique in this study to check whether the relationships amongst the emerged various concepts or categories in acquisitive buying show similarities with those that emerge from the qualitative study discussed earlier.

2.3.6.1 Concept Map

A concept map generated by using quantitative techniques was drawn to understand the relationships amongst the various concepts and categories. Concept maps harness the power of vision to explain complex information. Developed in the 1970s by Novak (1977), these maps are typically viewed as being organized in a network in a manner consistent with associative network models of memory (Ellis and Hunt 1992, Anderson 1983, Anderson and Bower 1973). Knowledge has been considered to be represented as links of associations among concept nodes (Sirsi, Ward and Reingen 1996) where the nodes are the storehouses of information. The links make various associations by connecting nodes together to form a network of ideas, or a knowledge structure (Henderson, Iacobucci and Calder 2002).

As shown in table 7, many methods are available to construct concept maps that may qualitative or quantitative techniques. Some of these techniques are complex such as the Z-MET (Zaltman and Coulter 1995), requiring lengthy personal interviews by interviewers trained in neuroscience and psycholinguistics and labor-intensive quantitative analysis. Others are simpler (Roedder-John, Loken, Kim and Monga 2006) using simple sets of rules to develop maps. Still others have used analytic techniques using laddering or repertory grid technique (Kelly 1956) to form maps (Henderson et al 2002). In this study, an analytic technique developed in social psychology (Farr and Moscovici 1984, Nicolini 1999) has been used. The basis of this technique is to develop an analysis of similarity (analyse de similitude, Flament 1986) that has become a widely used technique to discover relationships among

themes (Degenne and Verges 1973, Nicolini 1999). It is founded on the assumption that the relative position of each concept in a concept map is reflected in the degree of agreement that participants have with respect to these concepts. In other words, the more frequently concepts are used or discussed together, the closer these concepts are in the map. Agreement is therefore, operationalized as co-occurrence of concepts across participants (Pawlowski, Kaganer and Carter 2007, 2006).

Table 7: Types of Concept Maps

Author	Type of map	Technique used
Roedder-John, Loken, Kim and Monga (2006)	Brand concept map - consumer mapping technique; qualitative and quantitative	Elicited attributes from consumers; individual maps were generated by consumers based on the attributes developed earlier. Finally, aggregate map was generated using decision rules
Slaughter, Baskerville and Levine (2006)	Qualitative and quantitative methods	Semi-structured interviews with managers helped elicit concepts. Cluster analysis and discriminant analysis were performed to understand patterns and groups.
Trochim and Carbera (2005)	Qualitative and quantitative methods	Idea generation by consumers (brainstorming); MDS used to analyze data, followed by cluster analysis.
Schuck and Liddle (2004)	Qualitative and quantitative methods	Participants elicited responses in phase 1 and then rated or sorted items generated from phase 1. Concept map software was used to analyze data in phase 2 and MDS and cluster analysis was used to create concept map.
Henderson, Iacobucci and Calder (2002)	Analytic technique based on network analysis	Used repertory grid technique to elicit brand associations. Associative networks were compared pre and post experiment. Next, a quantitative technique using centralities, cliques and equivalence substitutes was used to form the map.
Henderson, Iacobucci and Calder (1998)	Analytic technique based on network analysis	Compared four maps. Maps were elicited using qualitative method in the form of free associations or using quantitative method of pairwise similarities, judgments, repertory grid technique.
Joiner (1998)	Quantitative technique	Respondents were shown a concept map example from Lord et al (1994) and asked to create a similar concept map. Each map was scored on 6 conceptually relevant quantitative measures, based on which aggregate map was created.
Zaltman and Coulter (1995)	Zaltman's Metaphor Elicitation Technique - qualitative and quantitative technique	Individual maps were elicited from consumers using personal interviews conducted by interviewers trained in cognitive neuroscience and psycholinguistics.
Lord, Pugh, Desforges, Fein and Lepper (1994)	Quantitative technique	Survey based data elicitation technique, direct and indirect associations were calculated from the survey to form the aggregate map.

This mapping technique was used over the existing ones used in marketing because for three reasons. One, although the technique shown by Roedder-John et al (2006) is simple and easy to follow, it requires data collection in two phases: first, for creating the themes and

next for asking participants to form individual maps that are then aggregated. Data collection, in this study, is a time and resource consuming process since participants need to be screened thoroughly before collecting data from them. The technique discussed here does not require an additional set of participants and the data collected from phase three can be used for further analysis. Two, this technique is not as complicated as that used by Zaltman and Coulter (1995) and does not require specialized training for data collection. Three, our research is exploratory and repertory grid technique as used by Henderson et al. (2002) does not fit the framework of analysis used here. Data collected from the non-students were used for developing the concept map.

The first stage of this phase related to coding of data using software QDA Miner 3.0. The next stage in data analysis involved two steps. First, the participant by attribute or concept data matrix was transformed into an inter-attribute similarity (IAS) matrix (see Appendix D), where each cell of the matrix contained a Jacquard's similarity coefficient, indicating a degree of co-occurrence for a given pair of concepts (Hammond 1993). In step two of the procedures; important relationships among the concepts of the map were identified by constructing the 'maximum tree' (Flament 1986) of the system based on the pair-wise similarity indexes from the IAS matrix. Flament's (1986) notion of 'maximum tree' is equivalent to the minimum spanning tree concept originating in graph theory (Doise et al. 1993). Minimum spanning trees search for the shortest path to connect all nodes within a graph in such a way that there is only one link between any two concepts. In this context, Flament's maximum tree seeks out to single out those relationships among all the concepts that maximize the overall similarity within the representation of the map. In order to construct the maximum tree, the nearest neighbor algorithm was run on the IAS matrix.

The nearest neighbor algorithm followed to create the maximum tree is given as follows: Three parameters were used in the analysis: (1) the pair-wise attribute or concept

similarity from the IAS matrix, (2) concept's absolute frequency of appearance (AF) also known as the salience of the concepts (Table 8), and (3) Sum similarity of the concepts. Sum similarity relates to the summation of all associations of all the concepts in the IAS matrix. The higher the sum similarity, the greater would the concept have relationships with other concepts and greater would be the chances of the concept to occupy a more central position in the map. The process was started with all the concepts (X) that were elicited through coding.

1. From the set of X concepts, the one with the highest AF was selected and included it in the map.
2. From the set of (X-1) concepts, the one with the highest relationship or similarity (highest Jacquard coefficient taken from the IAS matrix) to the concept already in the map was included in the map.
3. Whenever there were multiple concepts with the same similarity, the one with the highest AF was picked (Kruskal 1956). If the AF was also same for the concepts, then their sum similarity was calculated and this was used to break the tie.
4. Next, from the set of (X-2) concepts, the one with the highest similarity to the concepts in the map was used; again AF and sum similarity was used to break ties.
5. This iterative method was continued till all the concepts were moved to the map.
6. Calculation of relatedness measure: To establish how much a peripheral theme is related to a more central theme, new path coefficients were constructed as follows: co-occurrence of concepts or themes X and Y times occurrence (percent of cases column in Table 8) of the smaller theme Y. Thus, two measures are considered: the relative importance derived from the Jacquard coefficient and the relatedness measure. The relatedness measure helps rank order the degree of relatedness of the concepts. Ranking the relatedness of the concepts is important since a number of concepts are tied in their relative importance. This makes it difficult to decide which

relations are more important and therefore, require greater attention. Even though there are ties amongst the rankings of the various concepts, both relatedness measure and relative importance measure help us to decide the rank order of the relationships of the concepts for the purposes of discussion.

Table 8: Absolute Frequencies of the Concepts

Code	Count	% Counts	Cases	% Cases
T12_More articulated needs per product category	229	6.80%	42	100.00%
T1_Self-report of large inventory of products	102	3.00%	41	97.60%
T2_Differentiate products based on minute differences	211	6.20%	40	95.20%
T14_Buy within means	147	4.30%	40	95.20%
T13_Defend purchases	172	5.10%	40	95.20%
T20_Pickiness in buying	130	3.80%	39	92.90%
T19_Need to look/be perfect	158	4.70%	39	92.90%
T21_Expanding list to be acquired	141	4.20%	39	92.90%
T24_Constant, Active search to make the right choice	141	4.20%	39	92.90%
T3_Brand switching	66	2.00%	38	90.50%
T16_Knowledge	123	3.60%	38	90.50%
T17_Product helps in expression of self	118	3.50%	38	90.50%
T15_Buy based on needs	234	6.90%	38	90.50%
T25_Look for details in inventory in store	83	2.50%	38	90.50%
T22_Look for different things	151	4.50%	38	90.50%
T8_Helps stay prepared	116	3.40%	37	88.10%
T27_Sale/Bulk/Low price	105	3.10%	36	85.70%
T6_Accumulation of unused products	111	3.30%	35	83.30%
T33_Lack of financial problems	61	1.80%	34	81.00%
T4_Don't consider inventory to be large	58	1.70%	32	76.20%
T26_Shop frequently	42	1.20%	31	73.80%
T18_Use products rather than display	49	1.40%	30	71.40%
T23_Love products/emotional connection with products	69	2.00%	30	71.40%
T9_Shopping a positive experience	53	1.60%	29	69.00%
T5_Do not like to give away products	83	2.50%	28	66.70%
T29_Refer to what inventory already exists	39	1.20%	25	59.50%
T30_Try out	44	1.30%	25	59.50%
T28_Think while purchasing	68	2.00%	25	59.50%
T7_Short span of product usage	40	1.20%	25	59.50%
T31_Mental organization	38	1.10%	24	57.10%
T11_Shop to treat/reward	26	0.80%	20	47.60%
T32_Learnt from parents/friends	25	0.70%	16	38.10%
T10_Love product more than process	20	0.60%	14	33.30%

The commentary on the relationships of the concepts that follows is mainly based on the rank ordering of the relatedness of the smaller nodes to the larger ones. It is important to mention that according to graph theory convention, the map does not reflect the actual locations of the

A close look at the map shows two parts. The first part relates to explanations of why participants possess a large inventory and the second part concerns the sense making of participants when they discussed their need for multiple products for multiple purposes. In the second part, the participants delve deep to explain their inventory and in the process, their traits, processes and other characteristics are revealed. The relationships among the concepts of these two major aspects are discussed next. It is important to point out that the relationships among the concepts represent their co-occurrences and are not causal.

2.3.6.2.1 Explanations of Large Inventory

Participants were asked for the reasons that they possessed and purchased a large inventory of products (T1).

1. The most crucial reason that emerged from the analysis was the inherent, thin-slicing need for more products to suit particular needs (T12). Notice the strong link between the participants' report of their large inventory (T1) and the apparent needs that emerged through their sense making of their inventory. The large inventory exists because of the innate articulated needs for certain products that fit certain criteria. This need for more products is the most fundamental of all the concepts since majority of the concepts are related to this central node. More of the relationships of this concept with other concepts are discussed later.
2. Another important main reason is the natural inclination of participants to make fine-grained distinctions of their products (T2). Since they differentiate at a minute level, they tend to possess different products that match these minor distinctions and hence they need a large number of products that are differentiated finely in their mind's eye. The purpose may be to stay prepared at all times for any eventuality (T8) such as Sonia's specific shoes for wearing with specific formal attire. Sonia finds out the products in fashion for the season and buys them for

later use for any party that she has to attend to. With a social life marked by frequent dinners and parties, she feels the need to be prepared for every occasion. Participants have a positive feeling towards shopping (T9), as it is the means to stay prepared for any current or future eventuality.

3. Participants also tend to switch brands (T3), another reason why they tend to possess as many products. By switching, they tend to avail the flexibility to consume products that suit their particular criteria rather than be restricted by one or few brands that may or may not fit their needs.
4. Accumulation of a large number of products (T6) over time has been found to create a large inventory of products. Participants have also reasoned that they utilize products sparingly. In other words, they have a short span of product usage (T7), either because of the specificity of the products (only specific shoes can be worn with specific outfits) or because participant's desire to "move on." from one product to the next. This creates a large inventory as participants may have certain unused products at all times.
5. Participants discussed the 'insider-outsider phenomenon' (T4) in relation to their inventory. They do not consider their inventory to be large enough. Intuitively it can be supposed that in their minds, they do not believe the need to discontinue making purchases. Additionally, while they can justify their purchases and consider their inventory similar to any mainstream buyer, their significant others, friends or relatives or outsider consider their inventory exorbitant. The outsider can only visualize the inventory and not realize the rationality behind it while the insider holds valid reasons for such purchases.
6. A higher level of attachment for products is evident amongst the participants, as they find it uncomfortable to part with their inventory of products (T5). Several

reasons were discussed during the course of the interviews; the two major reasons being their potential for future use (“I will use then one day”) and the participants’ emotional attachment for them (“I have not said goodbye yet”). This explanation also adds to the reasons for the augmentation of inventory.

2.3.6.2.2 Sense Making of More Articulated Needs per Product Category (T12)

This part of the concept map relates not so much about the reasons for a large inventory but more so about the intrinsic, underlying traits, factors and processes involved with possessing the inventory.

1. Participants’ abilities to rationalize and defend their purchases (T13) in terms of their needs are apparent as it appears as one of the most noteworthy nodes. Dan and Amanda’s elaborate reasons for justification of their purchases and how they match certain requirements that they have provides evidence for a relationship between their defense of their purchases and their needs.
2. The narration of the protagonists earlier illustrates that participant’s exhibit control over their purchases because they buy them within their means (T14) in the sense that they did not over-purchase. The interesting point is to understand how these concepts of self-control are related to more needs. The link between the “more needs” node and “buy within means” node suggest that even though participants have more needs, they maintain certain degree of restraint and discipline such that they can account for their purchases to themselves and at the same time, manage their finances so that they can make the right purchases to satisfy their needs. It is not difficult to understand why participants have control over their purchases as they buy products that match specific needs (T15). They are mentally organized (T31) in terms of their inventory and they know their needs for products. They try out their products (T30) considerably before

purchases so that the resources that they spend on the purchases are well worth their exertion.

3. To satisfy their needs for multiple products for multiple purposes, participants tend to embark on constant, active, deliberate, goal-oriented search (T24) for products that would fit their criteria. This passion for directed search helps them align products that match their needs that are varied. The lack of financial problems (T33) helps them in this process. Without worrying about their finances, participants can focus their attention on their search that they conduct either by visiting the stores or over the Internet.
4. Another characteristic of acquisitive buyers relates to their need for perfectionism. In this map, this characteristic is visible in terms of their need to be or look perfect (T19) and their pickiness in selecting products in their purchase process (T20). It is intuitive that both these concepts are linked to the central need for more products (T12), since participants are very fastidious in selecting their products to satisfy a particular need amongst their whole gamut of needs. Not every product will satisfy their specific needs and hence, considerable degree of selectivity is required for this purpose. Besides, to look perfect with a particular shoe or tie matching a particular outfit to craft the ideal appearance, participants need to have a whole range of products and hence, they have more needs per product category.
5. Participants' need for more products is apparent in their expanding mental list of the products that warrants acquisition (T21). This is another important node that branches out in several directions. Participants tend to look for different things (T22). The variety seeking nature of the participants is apparent because of their nature to search for different types of products (T22) within the realm of their product category. They tend to have an emotional connection with their products

as different types of products bring out different emotional aspects in them (T23). Purchases are also influenced by external factors such as product promotions and participants pay special attention to reduced price or sale items while purchasing (T27). Participants tend to process considerable information by thinking a great deal during purchasing products (T28). Low prices can quickly result in excess purchases. However, participants' deliberate thinking while purchasing helps them to purchase products that pertain to their particular needs. Participants shop frequently (T26) ranging from twice a week to once a month, which contributes to nurturing their expanding list of products to be purchased. While shopping, they tend to refer to their existing inventory (T29) so they contribute rather than hinder to their needs. In other words, reference to their existing inventory helps them to negate the products that have already been purchased and be better shoppers in purchasing that satisfy their needs and contribute to the list of products that need to be acquired.

6. Participants also tend to look into the details of their inventory (T23) that relate to the specific needs that products cater to. Such penchant for details is important, as they would not prefer to purchase products that do not fit into their scheme of needs and would therefore, be superfluous.
7. An important aspect related to more needs is the elaborate knowledge (T16) or consumption vocabulary that the participants possess regarding the products that match the needs. Their need for specific products for specific purposes may dictate the degree of knowledge that they gather over time.
8. Finally, participants' strong consideration of the relation between their self-identity (T17) and their products are authenticated in this map. Because products are strongly related to the self-concept, products are used extensively for the

purpose of satisfying particular needs. The more the need for the products (T12) to satisfy particular aspects of the self, the better is the expression of the self. This means that the products are for personal consumption rather than for displays (T18) as established amongst collectors (Belk 1995).

The story that emerges from the concept map validates the discussion earlier for the most part. However, there are a few issues that need further scrutiny. One would expect a linkage between the refined preferences for differentiation of products (T2) and more needs (T12) that would show that the refined preferences for fine distinctions amongst attributes of products are related to the thin slicing need for products that are considered to be different based on minute differences. This link has also been established in the literature (West et al. 1994). However, such a link is not evident on the map despite the evidence of a strong association between these two concepts in the IAS matrix (.952). Although the nearest neighbor algorithm precludes such a linkage, it is important to consider this linkage to understand the bird's eye view of the phenomenon. Nonetheless, the map substantiates majority of the relationships that were discussed earlier and further discusses a few more. Thus, the triangulation method provides concrete evidence of the phenomenon of acquisitive buying in its entirety.

2.4 Discussion

Acquisitive buying is the extensive acquirement of products of a certain category to augment one's inventory of goods. Such buyers tend to provide rational justification for their purchases and exhibit more articulated needs per product category. This form of buying has characteristics and factors that differ from those of other forms of extreme and mainstream buying. Little research exists to delineate this phenomenon. Findings from this research will contribute theoretically to an understanding of acquisitive buying: first, by recognizing the existence of the phenomenon, second, by gaining an understanding of the underlying factors

and processes that are involved and third, by understanding the relationships amongst the various important concepts that are involved with this phenomenon. This research also brings in a new technique of developing concept maps that is fairly easy to compute and comprehend.

A number of themes have emerged from the in-depth interviews. The drive for more products to satisfy more needs is probably the overarching theme that projects robustly. These needs are not in the ordinary but are thin sliced to the extent that acquisitive buyers tend to prefer individual products for individual functionalities, looks, styles or performances. It is by no means to say that they use a particular product for one time, never to use it again. What they hint at is their preference for a product that fits a particular functionality. The never ending needs tend to help acquisitive buyers develop a great depth of knowledge about their product categories and also help them distinguish and discriminate products in their mind that may not be visible to the typical buyer. Their need to be demanding about their selection of products mainly relates to their need to purchase those products that exactly augment the inventory that is missing from their repertoire. However, they show flexibility in terms of choosing different types of products and monotony in terms of purchasing a product of the same kind is not an option for them. The relationships of the themes as portrayed through the concept map lend greater support to the overall representation constructed through the analysis of the in-depth interviews. Through both the methods, the main relationships of the concepts are validated.

One might ask how acquisitive buyers are different from other forms of extreme buyers such as compulsive, impulsive and excessive buyers, hoarders, collectors, fixated buyers and status and conspicuous buyers and from other mainstream or typical buyers. Various aspects of acquisitive buyers have been compared with the above-mentioned extreme buyers to demonstrate the differences. Lower self-control, guilt and financial problems may

be characteristic of compulsive and impulsive buyers, collectors, hoarders and fixated buyers whereas acquisitive buyers do not experience these issues. This fact is evident as none of the participants referred to issues of guilt and financial problems during the in-depth interviews. Rather, many of them referred to budgeting and their ability to hold back on purchases when necessary.

One of the strongest factors that differentiate acquisitive buyers is their ability to rationalize their purchases in terms of minute details. These detailed observations of differences in products are purposeful: acquisitive buyers purchase products that vary on minute differences to match their many needs for such products and to supplement their inventory. It can be argued that collectors may also have the ability to observe and understand the nuances of the products that they collect. However, such collections may not be utilized for personal consumption. Rather, products may be purchased for display and to attain group membership. Hence, motivations for outward admiration may also be a factor influencing collectors. Acquisitive buyers, on the other hand, use the products mainly for their own consumption and not for outward display. It is also important to mention that acquisitive buyers differ from status and conspicuous buyers in that the products purchased and consumed are for inner satisfaction of certain inherent needs as opposed to display and external appreciation and envy. Finally, acquisitive buyers are also different from mainstream or typical buyers in a number of ways. The narrative discussed earlier showed that though typical buyers tend to rationalize their purchases, they do not have the need to purchase specific products for specific purposes and hence, their consumption vocabulary and need to differentiate products is not as powerful as acquisitive buyers.

2.4.1 Limitations

Though attempts were made to interview males and females in equal numbers, the data is skewed more towards the females. Analysis of the data separately for males and

females did not show much difference in the factors and processes affecting their purchasing and consuming process. However, attempt should be made to interview more males to have better representation of their views. Besides, interviews were conducted amongst Caucasians mainly and with a few African-Americans. Hence, this research does not truly represent a phenomenon predominant amongst various ethnic groups. Future research needs to be conducted keeping this aspect in mind to understand whether this phenomenon exists amongst other ethnic groups as well.

CHAPTER 3. ESSAY 2: “WHY DO I HAVE FIFTY PAIRS OF SHOES?” DIFFERENTIATING ACQUISITIVE BUYING FROM OTHER BUYING TYPES

3.1 Overview

The exploratory research on acquisitive buying discussed in essay one helped develop a fundamental understanding of its characteristics, factors, processes, mediators, moderators and consequences. Acquisitive buying, a form of extreme buying wherein consumers possess a large inventory of products of a particular product category, is based on the concept of innate, fine-grained, thin-slicing needs for which an ever-expanding list of products necessitate purchasing. Such needs relate to consumer’s perceptions of their requirements for different products suitable for different purposes and functionalities in terms of differences in internal and external attributes of the products. Inherent to the needs is the ability to differentiate products based on very minute differences owing to an in-depth knowledge and understanding of their own refined preferences. Besides, acquisitive buyers tend to exhibit higher levels of self-control and may not buy products that do not correspond to their needs or may be beyond the resources that they possess. In fact, such buyers may delay their purchases to find the perfect product that matches their requirements in terms of functionalities and styles as well as cost. Since products are bought such that they fit certain criteria, such products necessitate purchase and hence, acquisitive buyers are able to rationalize their possessions. Needless to say, such purchases do not lead to feelings of post-purchase guilt and remorse. Similarly, since products are bought taking into consideration the monetary situation of the buyers, such buyers rarely fall into financial hardships.

One concern with acquisitive buying is its similarity with a number of extreme buying types that have already been studied, namely, compulsive buying, impulsive buying, excessive buying, collecting, stockpiling, hoarding and fixated buying. Some of these buying

types have certain negative connotations and may manifest as a result of inner psychological problems. Acquisitive buying stands out from these sets of buying as this buying type is not based on the platform of negative psychological setbacks and may not lead to negative consequences. Yet it shows some similarities with these buying types. For example, a person may own 50 pens and may be considered an acquisitive buyer or fixated buyer or an impulsive, compulsive or an excessive buyer. Hence, it is important to understand the underlying motivations and pointers of these various buying types before categorizing the consumer into a particular buying type.

Another question of prime interest regarding acquisitive buyers follows from the discussion above. If these buyers are different from those discussed above and are not associated with negative connotations and consequences, then how are they different from ordinary or mainstream or typical buyers? Would owning a larger inventory of products be the only difference between these two categories of people? More importantly, can acquisitive buying be labeled as a buying type in its own right? This essay makes an attempt to answer these questions.

Third, extant literature has discussed both online and offline shopping typologies at length (Rohm and Swaminathan 2004, Kau, Tang and Ghosh 2003, Westbrook and Black 1989, Stone 1954). Various motivations have been used to classify buyers into various types. Only one study discusses a typology that considers one of the extreme buying types: compulsive buying (DeSarbo and Edwards 1996). However, the creation of a typology of extreme buyers – buyers with a large inventory of goods of certain product categories – that takes into consideration buying based on negative and positive psychological factors has largely remained unexplored. Such a typology would help tie the various extreme buying types together on a platform. Besides, it would help further distinguish acquisitive buying

from other buying types such that the former can be distinguished as a phenomenon that is unique and deserves further attention.

Therefore, this essay contributes to the shopping literature in three ways:

1. Understand how acquisitive buying is different from the other buying types that have already been studied, namely, compulsive buying, impulsive buying, excessive buying, compulsive and non-compulsive collecting, stockpiling, hoarding, and fixated buying.
2. It is also important to understand how acquisitive buying is different from ordinary or mainstream or typical buying.
3. Development of a typology of extreme buyers. This essay is divided into the following sections: First, a brief methodology for data qualitative data collection will be provided. Second, descriptions of the various extreme buying types will be undertaken and similarities and differences of each buying type with acquisitive buying will be discussed. Third, an overall differentiation of all the different buying types with acquisitive buying will help position this buying type as distinct from all others. Fourth, a typology of extreme buyers will be created followed by an overall discussion.

3.2 Methodology for Qualitative Data Collection

In this study, comparisons of acquisitive buyers have been made with the various types of extreme and mainstream buyers. Such comparisons were conducted using verbatim from extant literature and from the data collected through in-depth interviews. Specifically, wherever possible, verbatim discussed in past literature were used to explain and compare various buying types (namely, compulsive buying, impulsive buying, excessive buying, hoarding, collecting and fixated buying) with acquisitive buying. Quotations related to acquisitive buying was used from data collected through in-depth interviews, the

methodology of which has been discussed in essay one. Since acquisitive and mainstream buying share commonalities and since little information exists in extant literature regarding mainstream buying, special attempt was made to collect information regarding this set of buyers. Thus, for collecting information regarding mainstream buyers, in-depth interviews were conducted. The pre-screener for identifying mainstream buyers was similar to that of acquisitive buyers and related to three questions:

1. The total inventory of products in certain product categories (clothes, shoes, accessories etc.),
2. The frequency of shopping, and
3. Whether consumers felt guilty after shopping for products in the specific product categories.

Consumers who mentioned a low level of inventory (compared to acquisitive buyers), a lower frequency of shopping (compared to acquisitive buyers) and did not experience post-purchase guilt were considered for in-depth interviews. They were then provided with a screener questionnaire that contained questions regarding the details of their inventory, items related to compulsive, impulsive, fixated buying, hoarding, fixated buying, status buying, guilt, financial problems and self-control. Consumers with low scores (below 3 on a 7 point scale) on all but self-control and high scores (above 5 on a 7 point scale) were considered for in-depth interviews. They were further screened during the interviews to ensure that data was collected from the right type of consumer. Semi-structured interviews were conducted at home, workplace or public places depending on the preferences of the respondents. All interviews were taped, transcribed and analyzed. A total of eleven interviews with mainstream buyers were conducted. Data was analyzed based on the procedure used by Spiggle (1996).

3.3 Understanding Various Buying Types and Distinguishing Them from Acquisitive Buying

The goal of this section is to understand various types extreme buying and mainstream buying and to distinguish them from acquisitive buying. Though most of these buying types share certain similarities with acquisitive buying, there are certain distinct factors and characteristics that set acquisitive buying apart from these buying types. This section endeavors to tease out the similarities and differences and help readers understand that the new phenomenon of acquisitive buying is different from all the other phenomena studied earlier. This section comprises of a discussion of various types of extreme buying (compulsive buying, impulsive buying, excessive buying, fixated buying, hoarding, compulsive and non-compulsive collecting, stockpiling) and mainstream buying. Before differentiating these buying types from acquisitive buying, a brief description of each of the buying type in terms of definitions, characteristics, factors, processes, consequences and prevalence is provided. Next, similarities and differences of acquisitive buying with each buying type are provided. Wherever possible, quotations from past literature are provided except for acquisitive and mainstream buying. Quotations from collected data are provided for the latter two types of buying. It is believed that the quotations will better help highlight the above-mentioned distinctions.

3.3.1 Compulsive Buying

3.3.1.1 Definition

Compulsive buying has been thought of as a chronic tendency to purchase products far in excess of a person's needs and resources (Mittal, Holbrook, Beatty, Raghurir and Woodside 2008). O'Guinn and Faber (1989) have identified compulsive buying as a form of compulsion or "repetitive and seemingly purposeful behaviors that are performed according to certain rules or in a stereotyped fashion" (American Psychiatric Association 1985, p. 234). Compulsions are excessive and ritualistic behaviors designed to alleviate tension, anxiety or

discomfort aroused by obtrusive thought or obsession. Although in the strictest sense compulsions refer to behaviors that are ego-dysfunctional (that is, against the conscious will of the individual), the term is frequently used to classify a number of different repetitive behaviors driven by an irresistible urge and ultimately harmful to the individual (American Psychiatric Association 1985).

According to O'Guinn and Faber (1989), compulsive buying appear as chronic, repetitive purchasing, that occurs as a response to negative events or feelings. The alleviation of these negative feelings is the primary motivation for buying. Buying provides individuals with short-term positive rewards, but result in long-term negative consequences.

Edwards (1992) defines compulsive buying as “an abnormal form of shopping and spending in which the afflicted consumer has an overpowering, uncontrollable, chronic and repetitive urge to shop and spend as a means of alleviating negative feelings of stress and anxiety” (p. 7). Consistent with Edwards (1993), DeSarbo and Edwards (1996) liken compulsive buying to addiction, as a behavior triggered by internal psychological tension and accompanied by relief and frustration or as a disruptive consumer behavior performed repeatedly despite negative consequences. Like other addictions, compulsive buying is characterized by lack of impulse control and denial of negative consequences (DeSarbo and Edwards 1996). Individuals find great difficulty in controlling buying even after its detrimental effects are recognized. Hirschman (1992) characterized addictive and compulsive buying as rooted in feelings of inadequacy. She described compulsive buying as an addictive “process” or as an addictive “experience”: an addictive process whereby one tries to escape from stress and resulting anxiety via the compulsive buying activity itself (Edwards 1992) and as an addictive experience such that one tries to escape from anxiety and tension by preoccupying himself or herself.

DeSarbo and Edwards (1996) suggest that addiction to spending occurs progressively when the recreational buyer, who may occasionally shop and spend as an escape, finds the “high” to be an easy way to deal with stress or negative emotions. A crisis causing anxiety overload then triggers the individual to buy compulsively. Experiencing less relief with each spending spree, the person requires “redosing” (p.232) and comes to depend on shopping and spending as the primary means of coping with anxiety.

The latest research on compulsive buying suggest that compulsive buying is characterized by both obsessive-compulsive behaviors as well as lack of impulse control (Ridgway, Kinney and Monroe 2008). Today, compulsive buying is regarded as Therefore, in this study, compulsive buying is defined as a consumer’s tendency to be preoccupied with buying that is revealed through repetitive buying and a lack of impulse control over buying.

3.3.1.2 Characteristics

Since compulsive buyers have been known to manifest compulsion of varying degrees, they have been found to have other forms of compulsive behavior including substance abuse and excesses in work, exercise and sex (O’Guinn and Faber 1989).

3.3.1.2.1 Fantasy

The ability of individuals to temporarily escape negative feelings through fantasies of personal success and social acceptance (Jacobs 1986) has been regarded as an important component of compulsive buying. Some authors believe that fantasies may be important in reinforcing compulsive behaviors by allowing people to mentally rehearse anticipated positive outcomes of these activities (Bergler 1958, Feldman and MacCulloch 1971). It has also been suggested that fantasies and compulsive buying serve as means of avoiding one’s true problems by interfering with focusing on these problems (Kaplan and Kaplan 1957, Orford 1985). O’Guinn and Faber (1989) found that compulsive buyers who fantasized were better able to focus on their thoughts and feelings, which may allow them to effectively

escape reality in shopping situations. Alternatively, a vivid imagination may allow them to more easily dissociate negative consequences from antecedent behaviors, regarded as grandiosity (Salzman 1981).

3.3.1.2.2 Self-Esteem

Compulsive buyers have been found to have lower levels of self-esteem than typical buyers. Being bad, guilty, unattractive, and lacking a clear identity were some of the examples that O'Guinn and Faber (1989) uncovered through their qualitative interviews.

3.3.1.2.3 Time Inconsistent Preferences

A common concept that has been tested amongst compulsive buyers is that of the occurrence of a high discount rate for future utility and preference for the present over the future (Norum 2008). Compulsive buyers tend to engage in activities that bring about immediate satisfaction rather than delay gratification and thus be more short-sighted as their time preference for the present becomes greater (Becker and Murphy 1988). Specifically Becker and Murphy (1988) have suggested that such buyers tend to have present-orientation rather than future-orientation.

3.3.1.2.4 Dependence

Compulsive buyers tend to exhibit a dependent personality (DeSarbo and Edwards 1996). They are prone to rely on others for determining their own behavior, driven to look worthwhile on others' eyes or to be concerned about what others think of them in determining their own behavior (O'Guinn and Faber 1989, Valence et al. 1988).

3.3.1.2.5 Approval Seeking

Compulsive buyers are thought to have a need for approval of others in terms of a desire to please (Edwards 1992, O'Guinn and Faber 1989). Thus, a need to obtain approval by responding in a culturally appropriate manner may induce compulsive buyers to seek transient and temporary approval which may not always be socially acceptable.

3.3.1.2.6 Locus of Control

Compulsive buyers have a greater need to gain control in order to deal with insecurity, fear and anxiety. According to DeSarbo and Edwards (1996), compulsive buyers may perceive themselves as controlled externally, and they seek a sense of control via the spending activity.

3.3.1.2.7 Depression

Depression causes many individuals to seek escape through addiction. After each buying binge, a compulsive buyer, although temporarily uplifted, experiences an emotional crash and further depression. The compulsive buyer may tend to respond to stress with high levels of anxiety and to use avoidance coping mechanisms (Lazarus 1966, DeSarbo and Edwards 1996).

3.3.1.2.8 Denial

Compulsive buyers who have fallen into a vicious cycle of addiction may also be in denial about the extent of the problem (Faber et al. 1987), especially in the early stages of the addictive process and may hide their purchases from family and friends (Edwards 1992, O'Guinn and Faber 1989). The problem of overspending is denied and the deeper psychological problems are avoided through self-deception.

3.3.1.2.9 Materialism

A number of studies have shown positive relationship between compulsive buying and materialism. However, although compulsive buyers exhibit traits of materialism, they do not tend to be possessive about their products (O'Guinn and Faber 1989, DeSarbo and Edwards 1996). This implies that compulsive buyers are more involved with the process of shopping and spending than with owning the items they purchase.

3.3.1.2.10 Comorbidity

Comorbidity is defined as the coexistence of multiple compulsive behaviors (Faber et al. 1995, McElroy et al. 1991, Valence et al. 1988). Some compulsive buyers may acquire

other types of chronic and destructive habits such as drug and alcohol use, gambling and lottery playing. Research on brain activity and chemical intervention is suggestive of this physiological linkage. Genetic evidence also supports that individuals suffering from compulsive buying behavior are likely to have other impulse disorders such as pathological gambling, substance abuse, eating disorders etc. (Faber et al. 1995, Hirschman 1992, McElroy et al. 1991, Valence et al. 1988).

3.3.1.3 Factors

3.3.1.3.1 Familial: Family Structure

Parental tendencies towards compulsive buying and presence of dysfunctional behaviors in the immediate environment tend to trigger compulsive buying activities (Gwin, Roberts and Martinez 2005). Several family environment variables have also been shown to impact compulsive buying: parental yielding, family stressors, and socio-oriented communication patterns that produce pleasant social relationships in the family (as opposed to concept-oriented communications that focus on positive constraints that help a child to develop his/her own views about the world (Moschis 1985) affect compulsive buying. Besides Gwin et al. (2005) have shown that females have a higher tendency to demonstrate compulsive buying behavior compared to males. Tangible family resources such as the ability to spend money have been found to have a positive effect on compulsive buying (Gwin et al. 2005).

3.3.1.3.2 Sociological Influences

A number of sociological factors have been considered to affect compulsive buying: TV viewing, frequency of shopping, and the irrational usage of credit card (Roberts 1998).

3.3.1.3.3 Psychological Influences: Mood

Faber and Christenson (1996) suggested that pre-shopping mood (especially negative mood states) and extreme moods (both positive and negative) may affect their shopping

patterns and that compulsive buyers may be using buying behavior to manage undesirable mood states.

3.3.1.4 Consequences

Higher debt load (O'Guinn and Faber 1989) and more credit cards (Roberts 1998) were common occurrences amongst compulsive buyers. Besides, Hassay and Smith (1996) showed that compulsive buyers exhibit a higher incidence of product return behavior and have greater concern for retail return policies. On the emotional front, compulsive buyers commonly develop feelings of shame or guilt following shopping associated with their behavior. Feelings of alienation, legal problems, and marital difficulties are some of the consequences of compulsive buying. The compulsive buyers typically feel ashamed and embarrassed with their behavior and feel that others do not understand them. In addition, a feeling of frustration at the inability to control one's own behavior has an emotional impact on the compulsive buyer.

3.3.1.5 Process

3.3.1.5.1 Low Perceived Utility of Products

O'Guinn and Faber (1989) found that informants suggested little perceived utility of the products after the purchase. In some extreme cases, the products were not even removed from their packages or brought home. The purchased object seemed to cease to matter once it was purchased.

3.3.1.5.2 Rewarding Aspect of Shopping

Interaction with salespeople, and the emotional lift or heightened arousal (the need to feel alive) has been suggested as important aspects of compulsive buying. Hence, the shopping process and the stimulation it creates therefore, reinforces the behavior (O'Guinn and Faber 1989).

3.3.1.6 Prevalence

Faber and O'Guinn (1989, 1992) had suggested that compulsive buyers constitute 1% to 6% of the adult population (Trachtenberg 1988). A 2006 survey conducted by Koran et al. (2006) showed that 6% of women and 5.5% of men were found to buy compulsively. However, according to Manolis and Roberts (2007), the tendency of compulsive buying appears to be on the rise (Benson 2000). Estimates of compulsive buying among young adults, for example, range from 6% to 12.2% (Hassay and Smith 1996, Roberts 1998, Roberts and Jones 2001). Roberts (1998) argues that 1% to 3% of baby boomers, 5% of generation X-ers and 10% of millennials demonstrate compulsive buying behavior.

3.3.1.7 Distinguishing Acquisitive Buying From Compulsive Buying

3.3.1.7.1 Similarities between the Two Buying Types

Both acquisitive buying and compulsive buying show certain similarities though such similarities are limited in scope. The following similarities are discussed in brief:

3.3.1.7.1.1 Large Inventory

Both compulsive and acquisitive buyers are characterized by the presence of a large inventory of products that they tend to purchase. O'Guinn and Faber (1989) discussed clothing, cosmetics and gifts as products frequently purchased. However, most research on compulsive buying does not provide a detailed account of the type of inventory purchased. It is assumed that a straightforward indicator to an outsider would be the amount of inventory purchased and compulsive buyers do provide the indication of purchasing multiple products. Acquisitive buyers, tend to purchase multiple products from a wide array of categories: products that they tend to appreciate and find utility for.

3.3.1.7.1.2 Repetitive Purchase

As suggested by Ridgway et al (2008), repetitive purchase is one of the important characteristics of compulsive buyers. Acquisitive buyers also buy products of a certain category repetitively, suggesting another similarity between the two types of buying.

3.3.1.7.1.3 Outsider's Identification of Buying Products in Excess

A person who does not purchase products in excess, referred to as an outsider in this context, may consider both compulsive and acquisitive buyer as excessive in their purchasing behavior. With frequent and repetitive purchases and excess of inventory, the outsider would identify both as buyers who purchase more than they require.

3.3.1.7.2 Difference between Compulsive and Acquisitive Buying

In spite of the apparent superfluous similarities between acquisitive buying and compulsive buying, there are numerous differences between the two, some of which are discussed below. A number of verbatim responses will be used to demonstrate the differences between the two types of buying.

3.3.1.7.2.1 Purpose behind Purchasing

One of the greatest differences between compulsive and acquisitive buying is the inherent motivation for purchasing products. According to O'Guinn and Faber (1989), for compulsive buyers, the products are of little perceived utility after the purchase. The products may not be used and may cease to matter once they were purchased.

Compulsive buyer: "I really think it's spending. It's not that I want it, because sometimes, I'll just buy it and I'll think, "Ugh, another sweatshirt."" (O'Guinn and Faber 1989)

The verbatim above shows the low level of interest in the product purchased and suggests that the motivation behind purchasing was not based on the utility of the product. Acquisitive buyers, on the other hand, tend to be different from compulsive buyers in a number of ways in terms of the utility of products, more needs per product category, refined preferences and purchases based on needs.

1. Utility of products: Acquisitive buyers tend to highlight the gain in the overall utility of their inventory upon acquisition of a particular item in a product category. They tend to purchase those products that they lack in their inventory and would not purchase products that did not "fit" their strict purchasing criteria.

Acquisitive buyer: “I would buy them almost compulsively because I could see them fitting somewhere in my life. I would never buy something that didn't fit, if that makes any (sense).”

2. More needs per product category: Moreover, acquisitive buyers tend to be fastidious regarding the products that they purchase as each product has distinct purposes, styles or functionalities and no two exact products would be purchased. Hence, even though acquisitive buyers show similarities with compulsive buyers in terms of possessing a large inventory of products, each item in the inventory has specific purposes that are well-articulated by the purchaser. For an outsider, it may appear that the buyer has an excessive number of products, but each of the products has specific purpose in the mind of the acquisitive buyer that may not be well understood by the outsider.

Acquisitive buyer: “Power saws for cutting wood, I have a cordless one and then I have one that you plug in. The one that you plug in is more powerful but it's not real handy to use. Then I have a big table saw for cutting bigger pieces of wood. Then I have a smaller power saw that I use for cutting trim wood, (at) different angles. So there's four saws there that use circular blades and then I have a couple of reciprocating saws that have a straight blade but it's got little teeth on it and little saw blade and I have one that is handheld and I have a bigger one for cutting bigger material.”

3. Refined preferences of acquisitive buyers: It is worthy to point out that for the acquisitive buyer, the rationalization for the purchase of each item is very detailed and the description of each item, minute. None of the participants in the data collected suggested that they did not know why they purchased a particular product, a sharp contrast to the rationalization discussed by the compulsive buyer in the verbatim provided earlier. Every shoe purchased fitted a specific criterion for buying owing to the refined preferences of the acquisitive buyer and every shoe was considered different, leading to a wide range of products in the inventory.

Acquisitive buyer: “I have every shape, every color. I try to buy shoes in different colors so that they can go with my specific sets of clothes. I like to have flats in those colors and heels in those colors depending on whether I really need to dress up or not.”

4. Purchases based on needs: Another interesting observation is that acquisitive buyers tend to justify their purchases in terms of an inherent need for the product that they

did not possess in their inventory. For compulsive buyers, though they rate high on materialism, they do not always purchase because there is an inherent need to acquire a product that adds to an existing inventory, unlike acquisitive buyers. The 'need' for particular products is a major motivation for their purchases and hence, the possession for those products is of prime importance to them. This is because the product would be utilized in future rather than kept unopened or unused.

Acquisitive buyer: "Well, you need your leather, you need your fabric, you need your running shoe, you need your flats, some are sandal shoes, you need your black boot shoes, black boots with heels."

3.3.1.7.2.2 Time Preference

An inherent difference between compulsive and acquisitive buyers is the perceived time preference for the two types of buyers. Compulsive buyers, as discussed earlier, tend to value the present and may engage in activities that provide means of satiation in the present at the cost of the well being of the future. They tend to be risk takers and more likely to have a present-orientation rather than a future-orientation (Becker and Murphy 1988, Finke and Houston 2003). Delay in gratification may not be an option for compulsive buyers and thus they tend to be short sighted as their time preference for the present becomes greater (Norum 2008).

Though no research exists on this aspect, acquisitive buyers have been found to be concerned more with the acquisition of the right or perfect product and they may wait for considerable amount of time before they might acquire the product. Hence, a sense of immediate gratification is not an important motivation for purchases for acquisitive buyers.

Acquisitive buyer: "And even if I pick something up, even though I really, really like it, if it's too expensive, nine times out of ten I'll put it down and wait for it to go on sale, or tell my husband for my Christmas present."

This delay of gratification (Evans and Beran 2007) is common across most acquisitive buyers and consists of two processes. Melanie's deferred reward of receiving the product as

gift over Christmas over instant reward is referred to as delay-choice task. Her delay maintenance strategy relates to her decision to delay gratification, even if the instantaneous reward is available to her (Mischel 1974).

3.3.1.7.2.3 Self-Esteem, Inner Anxiety and Depression

A common theme across compulsive buyers is the inner stress and anxiety (Edwards 1992, Valence et al. 1988). Escape from anxiety is widely cited as the primary motivation of persons exhibiting compulsive behaviors (Freud 1936, 1959, 1962, Jacobs 1986). Compulsive buyers use the shopping and spending activity as a means to relieving stress and its associated anxiety (DeSarbo and Edwards 1996). Anxiety motivates defense types of coping mechanisms (i.e. compulsive buying); avoidance behavior allows for escape from anxiety (Lazarus 1966). Shopping helps reduce anxiety and relieve stress for compulsive buyers. As mentioned earlier, compulsive buyers exhibit lower levels of self-esteem.

Compulsive buyer: "...And then there is (informant's name) and my mother did my school work ever since I was in fifth grade. She did all of my school work, even my college papers. It's not much to be proud of." (O'Guinn and Faber 1989, p. 153)

In contrast, acquisitive buyers do not face this inner tension or anxiety. They tend to have a high degree of self-confidence and shopping is based on satisfaction of unfulfilled inherent needs.

Acquisitive buyer: I am very oriented to what I need at a particular time and buying is-- buying something is not the-- that's not what drives me. I am pretty sure of what I want, otherwise I don't buy."

3.3.1.7.2.4 Goal Orientation

Goals and values are vehicles through which people's needs are met and some may be more conducive to need satisfaction than others (Schmuck, Kasser and Ryan 2000). Roberts (2004) differentiated between extrinsic and intrinsic goals and suggested that extrinsic goals are motivated primarily by defensiveness and security needs and are reflected in pursuits for wealth, status, possessions, social recognition and physical attractiveness (Sheldon and Kasser 2001). Ultimately, these goals are contingent upon the approval of others, and can

thus be frustrating and unsatisfying. Besides, extrinsic goals orient individuals to engage in activities that may be stressful and anxiety provoking. Roberts and Pirog (2004) demonstrated that extrinsic goals are partially responsible for the increased incidence of compulsive buying possibly through the tension such goals create. For example, the desire for material wealth and attractive appearance may result in tension which finds its release in the spending of money in the hopes of appearing attractive and financially successful (Rindfleisch, Burroughs and Denton 1997).

In contrast, intrinsic goals are more related to satisfying innate psychological needs for autonomy, competence and growth (Schmuck et al. 2000). Such goals are likely to lead people to engage in behaviors that are satisfying in their own right and that contribute strongly to individual's growth and psychosocial development (Roberts and Pirog 2004). Thus, such goals orient individuals to satisfying their own needs (Sheldon and Kasser 2001). It is suggested in this essay that acquisitive buyers focus more on intrinsic goals rather than extrinsic ones. Pursuing such goals tend to lead individuals to understand his/her inner needs and to be more satisfied when such needs are met. Individuals, therefore, tend to have higher self-esteem, reduced narcissism and are less prone to drug and alcohol abuse (Kasser and Ryan 1996, Sheldon and Kasser 2001).

3.3.1.7.2.5 Perfectionism

Perfectionism is commonly characterized by striving for flawlessness and setting of excessively high standards for performance accompanied by overly critical evaluations of one's behaviors (Flett and Hewitt 2002a, Frost, Martin, Lahart and Rosenblate 1990, Hewitt and Flett 1991). Perfectionism is a characteristic of many addicted individuals (Nakken 1988). Perfectionism is evident in persons with excessive personal expectations for superior achievement. However, their unfulfilled and unrealistic expectations result in depression, anxiety and self-doubting. DeSarbo and Edwards (1996) suggest that perfectionism may be

one of the reasons that compulsive buyers may spend excessively in an attempt to attain competence, control and self-respect and a temporary sense of self-efficacy.

However, acquisitive buyers have been found to exhibit positive perfectionism (Stoeber and Otto 2006). According to Hamacheck (1978), perfectionism is of two types: positive perfectionism in which individuals enjoy pursuing their perfectionist strivings and neurotic perfectionism in which individuals suffer from their perfectionist strivings. Acquisitive buyers match the profiles of positive perfectionists in terms of striving towards a healthy and positive end goal.

3.3.1.7.2.6 The Purchase Process

1. Purposive search: Compulsive buyers, as discussed earlier, tend to consider purchasing as a respite from negative inner tensions. Hence, the products purchased may have little value and the purchase process may not involve intensive information processing regarding the present and future perceived utility of the product. The purpose, for compulsive buyers, is to achieve a temporary high in shopping experience and they may not know the purpose behind their purchases and hence may not engage in a specific, purposive buying process.

Compulsive buyer: “I couldn’t tell you what I bought or where I bought it. It was like I was on automatic.” (O’Guinn and Faber 1989)

Acquisitive buyers, on the other hand, purchase products that follow strict purchasing criteria as the utility of the product is of prime importance. Hence, they tend to be on the lookout for products that fit their purchase criterion and may search for a considerable period of time before they decide on the purchase. Thus, such acts are deliberate to fit their exacting needs.

Thus, buyers ensure that they purchase products that suit their purposes, functionalities and styles. They refer to their existing inventory to make sure that no products are repeated and only new products that warrant acquisition are purchased.

Every aspect of the product is well understood, inspected and thought out before heading towards the billing section of the store. Such aspects relate to the ever-expanding needs that need to be satisfied for which different products with specifications are purchased.

Acquisitive buyer: “I always, always do a lot of research and it will have to do with quality, it will have to do with price. I--even in that particular item I might have gone to at least ten to twenty different websites looking for a similar item. Even after I found this one that was the right price and the right kind, it was a special, and I thought it was what I was looking for. I suppose the Internet is perfect for me because I can open up multiple windows...”

Acquisitive buyer: “...so then I'll go to the side and I'll stop and I'll look at the shoes that I have in by basket and decide, is this what I want? Is this really comfortable? Do I need this? What's the price of this? And so, I'll do that, and then a lot of times I'll put many shoes back because they don't fit into my criteria, and then I go through the dresses, skirts, shirts, pants.”

2. Product vs. process: For compulsive buyers, the process of buying gets precedence over the product purchased. The strong need for an emotional uplift or change in arousal has been suggested as a necessary though not sufficient condition for the development of compulsive behaviors (Jacobs 1986). O'Guinn and Faber (1986) have reported a feeling of heightened arousal among compulsive buyers who feel alive and stimulated by their surroundings.

Compulsive buyer: “But it was like, it was always like my heart was palpitating, I couldn't wait to get in to see what was there. It was such a sensation...” (O'Guinn and Faber 1989, p. 153)

Besides, interactions with sales persons and the positive attention compulsive buyers received in the shopping environment also enhance their self-esteem and serve an important compensatory function. Such social benefits rather than the worth of the product purchased are important for compulsive buyers.

Compulsive buyer: “The attention I got there was incredible. She waited on me very nicely, making sure that it would fit and if it didn't they would do this and that...” (O'Guinn and Faber 1989, p. 153)

For acquisitive buyers, the converse is mostly applicable. It is important to point out the shopping process is also a pleasant experience for majority of the buyers.

However, since the main purpose of a shopping endeavor is to acquire a particular product that is missing from the inventory, the product takes precedence over the process.

Acquisitive buyer: “I have to say gaining the shoe. Although I like shopping for it but I think the end result it is more important - to end up with what I want.”

3.3.1.7.2.7 Attachment for Products

Compulsive buyers have been shown to be positively related to materialism (O’Guinn and Faber 1989, Dittmar 2005, DeSarbo and Edwards 1996). However, O’Guinn and Faber (1989) make a distinction between materialism and possessing. They demonstrated that compulsive buyers may not have a strong desire to own things. A comparison of the mean scores for object attachment for compulsive and non-compulsive buyers showed that the former were less concerned with the object as a motive for purchasing. The gratification of buying has been mainly linked to interpersonal contact, emotions and positive self-esteem rather than from anything derived from the product per se.

In contrast, acquisitive buyers have been found to be attached to their products and do not like to give away their products. A strong justification exists behind holding on to their products. A majority of the acquisitive buyers tend to think that products help them stay prepared for future events and giving away or disposing products come in the way of their preparedness for the future. This is one way of staying in control of one’s surrounding or environment. Past research has shown that need to control the environment is most central to the human species (White 1951). However, individuals differ according to the extent they like to exert control over their environment (Parks 1989). As discussed through the various examples, acquisitive buyers tend to possess high need for control in a bid to anticipate events and stay prepared for them.

Acquisitive buyer: “So I probably could give away more, but you know, I’m not as bad as some people I know, but I have this fear if I give it away it will come back in style, so I hang on to it and I wish I hadn’t given it away.”

Acquisitive buyer: "I go in the closet and say, "Why don't I get rid of these things?" And something in the back of my head goes, "You never know when you are going to need it."

3.3.1.7.2.8 Consequences - Financial, Legal and Marital Problems, Regret

A common financial problem incurred by compulsive buyers is credit card debt.

Additionally, they pay fewer of the credit cards in full each month (O'Guinn and Faber 1989). Besides, they have more credit cards with \$100 of their limit. Living from paycheck to paycheck and borrowing between paychecks is something that compulsive buyers have documented as a habit (O'Guinn and Faber 1989). Other than financial problems, there are negative emotional consequences as well. Feelings of shame or guilt associated with excessive buying is another common outcome. Feelings of alienation, legal problems and marital difficulties and embarrassment over their behavior are frequent among compulsive buyers.

Compulsive buyer: "I would always have to borrow between paychecks. I could not make it between paychecks. Payday comes and I'd pay my bills, but then I'd piss the rest away..." (O'Guinn and Faber 1989, p.155)

Compulsive buyer: "...My husband hates me. My kids hate me. I've destroyed everything. I was ashamed and I wanted to die." (O'Guinn and Faber 1989, p.155)

Acquisitive buyers do not tend to go through such financial or emotional turmoil characteristic of compulsive buyers. They tend to watch what they purchase and may not purchase products if they do not fit their needs or their budget. Hence, financial problems are rare and emotional issues are something that did not emerge from the interviews conducted.

Acquisitive buyer: "I don't want to be urgent or stressed about it. I know I'll find them and they'll be at a price I can afford so I'm not going into debt to buy them. If I have to wait a couple of years then I will."

Acquisitive buyer: "I would rarely go over my budget; I don't like to have a balance on my credit card at all. Normally for me I would wait until I had the money and just look for it and try not to get in a hurry and get stressed out about "Oh I have to have a pillow by this weekend". I wouldn't do that. I would wait until I found what the right thing was because for me I'm going to keep it for years and years so I would like to take my time and make sure it was the right product for what I want."

3.3.2 Impulsive Buying

3.3.2.1 Definition

Rook and Fisher (1995) have defined impulse buying as “a consumer’s tendency to buy spontaneously, unreflectively, immediately and kinetically.” (p. 306). Highly impulsive buyers are more likely to experience spontaneous buying stimuli, their shopping lists are more open and receptive to sudden, unexpected buying ideas and their thinking is relatively unreflective, prompted by physical proximity to a desired product, dominated by a complex, hedonic emotional state and absorbed by the promise of immediate gratification (Hoch and Loewenstein 1991, Thompson, Locander and Pollio 1990).

Goldensen (1984) describes impulsive buying as a sudden and strong, irresistible urge that prompts individuals to act without deliberation. An impulse is not consciously planned, but arises upon contact with certain stimuli (Wolman 1973). Earlier research suggested that impulse buying is more product-oriented. However, Rook (1987) suggested that impulse buying is more a personality trait rather than a product based phenomenon.

Various explanations exist to explain impulse buying. Lack of self-control has been attributed by many researchers as a probable explanation for impulsive buying. As discussed earlier, depletion of self-regulatory resources has been found to create conditions that result in the loss of self-control (Vohs and Faber 2003). This leads people to buy impulsively and they are more willing to spend more money on a variety of products. Thus, when self-control capacities are impaired, people are more likely to engage in ill-considered and unwise spending behaviors.

A different explanation of impulsive buying is evident from the theory forwarded by Burroughs (1996). A cognitive explanation of impulse buying consists of two components – holistic information processing and self-object meaning matching – whereby the symbolic meanings of objects are holistically matched to salient images of the self. First proposed by

Thompson et al. (1990), this view suggests that stimuli are processed as gestalt wholes where the individual determinants of a particular stimulus are collapsed into an overall representation of the object (Foard and Kelmer Nelson 1984, Pomerantz 1981). Because each component of the stimulus is not processed, holistic information processing (as opposed to analytic information processing) provides the advantage of speed, and reduced cognitive effort (Kelmer 1983, Smith and Kelmer Nelson 1988). Extending the discussion into self-object meaning matching, the self appears to represent an integral part of information processing regardless of processing strategy. Burroughs (1996) suggests that impulse buying appears to be set into motion by information (product stimuli) that is processed holistically and is considered highly self-relevant (Hoch and Loewenstein 1991, Rook 1987). Besides, impulse buying urge appears to arise spontaneously or automatically and the speed with which impulse buying urge takes place further implicates a holistic processing style. Holbrook and Hirschman (1982) and McInnis and Price (1987) both note that highly self-relevant information will encourage elaborated aspects of fantasy and possible imagery. The salience of this meaning matching may encourage the individual to become even more involved in holistic processing style. This momentary imbalance inhibits any more analytic assessment of the purchase situation and it is only later, when the balance is restored, that the consequences having made the purchase becomes fully apparent; hence regret.

3.3.2.2 Characteristics

Rook (1987) suggested the following characteristics of impulse buying:

3.3.2.2.1 Spontaneous Urges to Buy

Such urges are unexpected and urges the consumer to buy immediately. This sudden urge may be triggered by a visual confrontation with a product or a promotional stimulus or may be triggered by a thought.

3.3.2.2.2 Impulse Buying Urge Feels Intense

Consumers reported a compelling, obsessive and desperate feeling to purchase. The impulse occurs quickly and becomes intensely preoccupying. Consumers described the force behind their buying impulses as being “like a hunger,” even “animal-like.”

3.3.2.2.3 Excitement and Stimulation

Many consumers consider the sudden urge to buy as exciting, thrilling or wild. The urge comes in as a surprise and provides spontaneity and novelty. Such extraordinary stimulation can induce feelings of being out-of-control.

3.3.2.2.4 Product Animation

The need to possess the object often appears to the individual to go beyond a merely personal decision; it is as if the object itself comes to have a stake in the purchase. Consumers may be involved in the transference of guilt about buying or even having the impulse, onto the product itself. It may have been a case of willing seduction, but it is psychologically relieving to blame the product as the aggressor.

3.3.2.2.5 Synchronicity

Consumers perceive an element of synchronicity, that is, the object is perceived to be meant for the individual and the right product was available to the consumer at the right time.

3.3.2.2.6 Hedonic Elements

Impulsive buyers tend to experience hedonic emotions. Such emotions may have a positive and/or a negative element. Some consumers feel happy, satisfied and high while others feel as sense of panic. These extremes of pains and pleasures suggest that impulse buying is hedonically complex.

3.3.2.2.7 Disregard for Consequences

A sudden impulse may induce consumers to purchase products despite an awareness of potentially negative consequences.

3.3.2.2.8 Conflict

The pleasure of the purchase process and the guilt of breaking budgetary rules may lead to consumers feeling guilty about being tempted to give in to their urges. Therefore, to buy or not to buy involves the struggle between being good and bad. For some, it is a way to relieve tension and for others it is the difficulty in having control over their buying impulses.

3.3.2.2.9 Time Inconsistent Preference

The backbone of standard micro-economic theory is the assumption that economic agents have well-articulated, internally coherent and consistent preferences. Just like compulsive buyers, impulsive buyers present a deviation from this rational choice model by having a time-inconsistent preference – the preference at the time of purchase is not consistent with that post purchase (product regret, guilt, etc.). Impulsive buyers discount the future at a rapid rate when they develop the urge to buy a product. Thus, they tend to prefer instant gratification over any delay (Dittmar and Drury 2000, Hoch and Loewenstein 1991). There is a subjective bias in favor of immediate possession (Gardner and Rook 1988, Rook 1987, Rook and Hoch 1985).

3.3.2.3 Factors

The presence of a stimulus (a product or promotion or thought) in the environment (Hoch and Loewenstein 1991, Rook 1987) induces impulsive buying. Though considerable research has been done on the product class that induces impulse buying, Rook (1987) suggested that virtually all products can induce impulsive buying. Hoch and Loewenstein (1991) offer three product conditions which seem conducive to triggering the buying impulse: close physical proximity to the stimulus; close temporal proximity of the stimulus (i.e. the positive outcomes of making a purchase are believed to be experienced immediately, as opposed to at some distal point in time); and a high social comparability of the stimulus (i.e.

impulse buying is considered to be greater if the individual knows that others within his/her social circle already possesses the object).

3.3.2.3.1 Demographic Factors

Age: Bellenger et al. (1978) found that shoppers under 35 years are more prone to impulsive buying than those over 35 years. Older consumers demonstrate greater regulation of emotional expression than younger adults. Thus as consumers age, they learn to control their impulses (Lawton, Kleban, Rajagopal and Dean 1992, McConatha et al. 1994, Siegel 1985).

3.3.2.3.2 Culture

Kacen and Lee (2003) demonstrated that culture plays an important role in understanding impulsive buying. Compared to Caucasian individualist consumers, Asian collectivist consumers engage in less impulsive buying. They found that collectivists tend to maintain inconsistent attitude-behavior relationships and tend to put their personal feelings aside to behave in a socially appropriate manner (Triandis 1995). They tend to suppress their buying impulsiveness trait and act in a manner consistent with the cultural norms.

3.3.2.4 Consequences

Financial problems, disappointment with an impulsively purchased product, feelings of guilt and being the target of someone else's disapproval are some of the negative consequences of impulsive buying. Besides, emotional trauma is also something that impulsive buyers experience as a result of their buying behavior.

3.3.2.5 Distinguishing Acquisitive Buying From Impulsive Buying

3.3.2.5.1 Similarities with Acquisitive Buying

Acquisitive and impulsive buyers do not share many similarities. Nonetheless, two similarities are mentioned below:

3.3.2.5.1.1 Repetitive Purchasing

Acquisitive and impulsive buying phenomena show commonalities in terms of repetitive purchase of goods. Though acquisitive buying relates to repeated purchases in the

same product category impulsive buying may or may not relate to repeated purchase in the same product category. Nonetheless, consumers of both these buying types repeatedly return to their shopping destinations to acquire more goods.

3.3.2.5.1.2 Materialism

Another similarity between acquisitive buying and compulsive buying is the high level of materialism exhibited by both types of consumers. Attachment to material objects in terms of product animation (Rook 1989) and the excitement and urge to buy the product dominates in case of impulsive buyer. Dittmar, Beattie and Friese (1996) have shown that consumers impulse buy to acquire material objects for personal and social identity and have based their knowledge on social constructionist model of material possessions (e.g., Dittmar, 1992) and symbolic self-completion theory (e.g. Wicklund and Gollwitzer, 1982). Acquisitive buyers, similarly, tend to show materialistic tendencies as they tend to remain attached to products that they repeatedly purchase and majority suggest that they do not dispose of them in a bid to use them for future events.

3.3.2.5.2 Differences between Acquisitive Buying And Impulsive Buying:

3.3.2.5.2.1 Impulsive Urge vs. Deliberate Thinking

A clear distinction can be seen between impulsive and acquisitive buyers. Impulsive buyers tend to act on a sudden and intense urge and feel compelled to buy the product that they are drawn towards.

Impulsive buyer: “I was in the Pottery Barn browsing, and saw this crystal candle holder. It came over me instantly.” (Rook 1987, p. 193)

Impulsive buyer: “It’s the feeling of “I want that, and by God I’m gonna get it!” (Rook 1987, p. 193)

Holistic information processing has been suggested as a possible explanation for impulsive buying (Burroughs 1996). Such buyers do not acquire the opportunity to analyze their behavior and treat the stimulus in part but as gestalt. Since holistic processing requires little effort and is fairly easy, impulsive buyers tend to follow such processing style.

In contrast, acquisitive buyers tend to be more deliberate in their thinking about a product. Since their focus is to acquire specific types of products that are different from those already existing in their inventory, they tend to reflect on the product and the benefit that they would get from the product and whether the product fits into their purchase criteria before any purchase is made. This deliberation may take place within the store or the buyers may ponder over the product for several days before purchasing.

Acquisitive buyer: “I will stand there for 30 minutes and think, is this really the right thing? Do I really need a pair of shoes, because I have so many pairs? If I feel like it will be good as far as being practical, I will buy it. But of course, I’ll say I have a closed-toe shoe already, but this is an open-toe.”

As opposed to holistic processing, it is suggested that acquisitive buyers may tend to follow analytical processing. The consumer may attend to each individual stimulus characteristic in order to build up a comprehensive understanding of the product (Hutchinson and Alba 1991). In contrast to holistic processing, analytic processing helps to ensure comprehension accuracy and this typically comes in lieu of processing speed (Hutchinson and Alba 1991). Thus, this processing requires deliberate thinking on the part of the acquisitive buyer.

3.3.2.5.2.2 Product vs. Process

Impulsive buyers are more oriented towards satisfaction of the acute, inner urge that grips them when they are in close proximity to a product or a promotion or they think about a product. The product in question may be important to them but it is not central to their buying behavior. Rather, and as discussed earlier, the most important issue is the intense emotional and psychological disequilibrium that is balanced upon purchase of the product. Hence, the process, rather than the product is of prime importance in impulsive buying.

Impulsive buyer: “There is no stopping me. The urge just comes over me all at once and seems to take control. It is such an overwhelming feeling that I just have to go along with it.” (Rook 1987, p. 195)

For acquisitive buyers, the product, as opposed to the process, takes the central stage. At the core of acquisitive buying is the acquisition of specific products to enhance the inventory that already exists with the buyer. The products purchased are of prime importance though the purchase process is enjoyable to most acquisitive buyers.

Acquisitive buyer: “Probably what I get at the -- I mean, probably what I get at the end of it, but I don't always have to buy something. But if I buy something then, of course, I'm excited and I probably couldn't wait to wear it. I need to go somewhere to wear it, so.”

3.3.2.5.2.3 Self-Control

A major difference that distinguishes impulsive buying from acquisitive buying is the degree of self-control that the two types of buyers have. Past research shows ample evidence of the lack of self-control in case of impulsive buyers (Vohs and Faber 2003, Rook 1987). The lack of control over the urge to buy a product, the breaking of budgetary rules and the yielding to temptations is characteristic of impulsive buying as indicated in the verbatim given below:

Impulsive buyer: “It feels like a disease when you get it, because you can't stop or control it.” (Rook 1987, p. 195)

For acquisitive buyers, self-control is an important issue. Acquisitive buyers exhibit self-control in two ways. They tend to buy within their financial means and do not go overboard with their purchases. Majority of the buyers have suggested that they would wait till they had the financial means to purchase the product that they have set their mind on. Some budget their expenses while others have developed strategies that help them to stay within their means. Still others wait for a price cuts and sales before they purchase a product. Thus, there is a delay in gratification as opposed to an instant fulfillment of a desire. Thus, acquisitive buyers may be related to prudence (Ramanathan and Williams 2007) who show high levels of conscientiousness that underlines constraint and willpower (Tellegen 1982).

Acquisitive buyer: “And even if I pick something up, even though I really, really like it, if it's too expensive, nine times out of ten I'll put it down and wait for it to go on sale, or tell my husband for my Christmas present.”

Besides, acquisitive buyers purchase products that fit their world. In other words, they purchase products based on their needs. They do not tend to purchase products that do not follow their strict purchase criterion. For acquisitive buyers, the novelty lies in purchasing a product that is different from those already purchased and used. Hence, they follow their purchasing patterns based on their needs.

Acquisitive buyer: “In my mind, I've got a black shirt. I've got two black shirts, so I don't need another one. Even though I like that black shirt, I'm not going to buy it because I've got two others because that doesn't make sense.”

3.3.2.5.2.4 Product specificity

Past research on impulsive buying has stressed on the physiological, psychological and behavioral aspects of this buying phenomenon. Though the product is important ingredient in understanding the overall phenomenon, most research has tried to understand the antecedents and processes that occur when a consumer buys impulsively. Rook (1987) has suggested that it is the internal trait that leads consumers to purchase impulsively and impulsivity is not a function of the product type that a consumer encounters. In his study, consumers did not refer to the type of product that they were purchasing as to the experience that they felt when buying the product.

Impulsive buyer: “The pants were shrieking “buy me,” so I knew right then I had better walk away and try to get something else done.” (Rook and Hoch 1985, p. 25)

The specificity of the product that an acquisitive buyer searches is important to the buyer.

Certain characteristics of acquisitive buyers relate to their buying pattern:

1. More needs per product category: Acquisitive buyers tend to possess product items that are different from one another as each of the items has specific purposes, functionalities and styles. Each of the products is based on a specific need comprehensible in the mind of the buyer.
2. Refined preferences: Refined preferences relate to the liking and ability to differentiate products based on minute differences. Acquisitive buyers tend to be fine-

gained in their effort to understand how products differentiate from one another.

Such sophisticated preference for products help consumers to satisfy the greater level of needs that they develop over time.

3. Expanding list of products that need to be acquired: Associated with the need for products in a product category, acquisitive buyers have an unsatisfied need to develop an expanding list that they need to purchase in the near future. This factor helps them to search for the right product when on a buying trip.
4. Variety seeking: Acquisitive buyers tend to look for attribute level variety in the items of a particular product category. Such variety is based on minute differences amongst attributes and such differences fill the need for a wide array of products required to suit different purposes.

3.3.2.5.2.5 Purposive Search

Impulsive buyers tend to buy those products that they are attracted to and for which they experience a strong urge. Such a purchase is not based on purposive, deliberate and active search that acquisitive buyers engage in. There is little analytical processing as the consumers tend to surrender to the urge that they feel to buy a particular product. Acquisitive buyers, on the other hand, tend to search for a product deliberately and will not buy any product that they come across.

3.3.2.5.2.6 Regard for Consequences

Rook (1987) suggests that while on a purchasing spree, impulsive buyers may not consider the consequences of his/her behavior. A powerful urge may prove irresistible; consumers may succumb to their impulses despite an awareness of potentially negative consequences.

Impulsive buyer: “I feel like I’m doing something I’m not supposed to be doing, but am doing it anyway. What the heck! (Rook 1987, p. 195)

Impulsive buyer: "...it's deciding that you want something and going for it, and then worry about the consequences afterwards." (Dittmar and Drury 2000, p. 124)

Acquisitive buyers, in contrast, tend to be conscious of their budgetary means and show considerable self control when on a shopping trip. Since, they process information analytically, they tend to spend time and mull over before purchasing a product. Hence, regard for consequences is important that helps these consumers to gradually increase their inventory of products.

Acquisitive buyer: "That's even if I go, I see something I want, and I can't afford it. I'll put it off and not go until I feel there is money for me versus the kids."

3.3.2.5.2.7 Consequences

Financial problems, guilt, disappointment after purchase and disapproval from others are some of the consequences with impulsive buying. On the other hand, such consequences are rarely reported by acquisitive buyers.

Impulsive buyer: "...Financial considerations didn't enter my head." (Dittmar and Drury 2000, p. 125)

Acquisitive buyer: "I am always concerned that I shouldn't buy anything that goes over my budget."

3.3.2.5.2.8 Emotional Complexity

Some impulsive buyers tend to feel happy and high while others feel sad because of the painful elements that accompany impulsive buying. Consumers may feel an emotional conflict of enjoying the experience and feeling guilty of breaking budgetary rules. Some feel panic, nervous, distressed or helpless while others feel frivolous, naughty and devilish.

Impulsive buyer: "It is so kind of excitement. It is sort of, you give yourself a little thrill as if you, sort of, if you were younger, when you were a child or teenager having a ride at one of those merry-go-rounds at the fair...It can be exhilarating." (Dittmar and Drury 2000, p. 124)

Impulsive buyer: "The feeling I get when I suddenly have the urge to buy something is PANIC – rushing to get to a checkout stand before I change my mind." (Rook 1987, p. 195)

Generally, acquisitive buyers do not feel the emotional struggle that impulsive buyers feel. The process of buying is generally positive for most of the acquisitive buyers and since

considerable thought goes into the purchase of products; such buyers tend to worry about negative thoughts such as panic or guilt upon the purchase of the product.

Acquisitive buyer: ““When I buy something it’s probably going to stay with me to use when I need it and, it was probably a good buy. If I got the tool I am looking for on a good deal I usually feel good after I bought it because I feel like either I’m going to use it or make more money with that tool. I usually feel good when I shop, and when I buy something I’m usually like alright, this was a good buy.”

3.3.3 Excessive Buying

Excessive buying has been viewed in two different ways. Ridgway et al. (2006, 2008) refer to excessive buying in terms of a phenomenon that relates to consumers who buy frequently and excessively but do not have a diagnosis of a pathological disorder. Excessive buyers, in this case are referred to those who tend to demonstrate certain degree of obsessive and impulsive trait. On the other hand, Wu et al. (2006) consider excessive buying in terms of the following types: aspirational, rewarding, out-of-control, remedial and habitual. Hence, though there are similarities between the two types of characterization, there are some marked differences.

3.3.3.1 Definition

3.3.3.1.1 As Viewed by Ridgway Et Al. (2006, 2008) and Dittmar and Drury (2000)

Excessive buying refers to the consumer tendency to be preoccupied with buying, and consequently, to buy more and with greater frequency than others (Ridgway et al. 2006). In comparison to compulsive buyers, excessive buyers may not continuously experience an uncontrollable urge to buy. However, they may occasionally or often exhibit tendencies for buying too much or too frequently. Besides, unlike compulsive buyers, excessive buyers may not always bring harm to themselves through excessive spending (Faber and O’Guinn 1992, Hassay and Smith 1996). Though, in many respect, excessive buyers are similar to compulsive buyers, however, the former comprise of a broader set of consumers.

Dittmar and Drury (2000) refer to excessive buyers as those akin to compulsive buyers or shopping addicts. Hence, in this context, Ridgway et al.’s (2006, 2008) and Wu et

al.'s reference to excessive buyers will be used for further discussion rather than using Dittmar and Drury's (2000) definition of excessive buyers.

3.3.3.1.2 As Viewed by Wu Et Al. (2006)

Wu et al. (2006) defined excessive buying as “an inappropriate individual type of buying behavior whereby consumers repetitively spend more than what (they think) they can afford,” (p. 401). Here, excessive buying is considered a perception-based construct, which rules out the influences of external factors (socioeconomic status) on consumers' buying behavior and is easily operationalized by a psychometric scale. In identifying the different types of excessive buying, Wu et al. (2006) used time-inconsistent preferences theory to explain excessive buying. Conscious excessive buying behavior is conceptualized as a result of either strong desires or self-control failures. Excessive buying behaviors driven by social comparisons, positive emotions and negative emotions are referred to as aspirational, rewarding and remedial respectively. Consumers also tend to buy excessively as a result of self-control failures (Hirschman 1992) and this type of excessive buying is referred to as out-of-control buying. Finally, excessive buying can be induced by habits that are a function of unconscious mental processes. This type of excessive buying is referred to as habitual excessive buying.

Note that there are certain similarities between the two conceptualizations of excessive buying. Repetitive buying, spending more than consumers can afford, using purchasing as a way to alleviate negative feelings and elicit positive feelings and lack of self-control are some of the themes that occur in the discussion of both the conceptualizations. However, Wu et al. (2006) does not refer to the obsessive-compulsive disorder, impulse-control disorder and obsessive-compulsive spectrum disorder that Ridgway et al (2006) refer to. Additionally, Ridgway et al (2006) is silent on non-conscious or habitual processing as a reason for buying excessively.

3.3.3.2 Characteristics

1. Excessive buyers tend to buy repeatedly and may be preoccupied with their purchases (Ridgway et al. 2006).
2. They comprise a broader set of consumers as compared to compulsive and impulsive buyers (Ridgway et al. 2006).
3. Excessive buyers tend to be impulsive in nature (Kukar-Kinney et al. 2007).
4. Excessive buying helps alleviate prior negative feelings and elicit positive feelings amongst buyers (Ridgway et al. 2006).
5. Excessive buying has been found to be related to other trait variables such as low self-esteem, materialism, impulsiveness, loneliness, and obsessive-compulsive disorder (Faber and O'Guinn 1992).
6. Excessive buyers are more likely to spend more than they can afford and experience credit card difficulties (Roberts and Jones 2001).
7. Excessive buyers are more likely to return purchased products back to stores than other buyers (Hassay and Smith 1996).
8. Kukar-Kinney et al. (2007) found that excessive buyers may not completely process product and price information before making a purchase. They tend to use price as a mark of quality indicating that they are more likely to choose higher-priced products relative to non-excessive buyers. Besides, excessive buyers tend to focus on brands that bring prestige and recognition such as well-known and higher priced brands.

3.3.3.3 Distinguishing Acquisitive Buying From Excessive Buying

3.3.3.3.1 Similarities with Acquisitive Buying

3.3.3.3.1.1 Repetitive Shopping

Both excessive buyers and acquisitive buyers tend to shop repetitively. Ridgway et al. (2008) refer to focus group participants who tend to buy pet products every time they go for

grocery shopping. Similarly, acquisitive buyers tend to buy different items in a product category such that, to an outsider, they repeatedly shop for very similar products.

3.3.3.3.1.2 Large Inventory

Another common theme amongst excessive and acquisitive buyers is the large inventory of products they possess. Ridgway et al. (2008) refer to individuals who possess over a hundred handbags. Similarly, acquisitive buyers also tend to own a large of products, namely 75 pairs of shoes, six guitars, 500 units of tools etc.

3.3.3.3.1.3 Liking for Shopping

Focus group participants in Ridgway et al. (2008) refer to their love for shopping. Similarly, majority of the acquisitive buyers have referred to shopping as a positive experience.

3.3.3.3.2 Differences between Excessive Buying and Acquisitive Buying

3.3.3.3.2.1 Product Specificity

Excessive buyers tend to be excessive in a large number of products just as compulsive and impulsive buyers are. Some of the focus group participants in Ridgway et al.'s (2008) study discussed numerous products that they buy for themselves and their pets. Ridgway et al. (2006) refer to excessive buying in terms of obsessive-compulsive disorder, impulsive-control disorder and obsessive-compulsive spectrum disorder. Hence, purchases are more related to relieving symptoms of the various disorders rather than being specific about what products consumers buy and the utilities behind such purchases.

Excessive buyer: "And there really isn't anything I don't like to shop for...For myself, there isn't much I wouldn't buy. (Sally) (Ridgway et al. 2008, p. 394)

Acquisitive buyers, on the other hand, tend to be extremely product specific in their buying habits. As discussed earlier, products provide meaning to them in enhancing their existing inventory and each item on their inventory serves a different purpose, function or style. Each item is bought to satisfy the expanding list of products that they feel that they

need to acquire in a bid to stay prepared for any anticipated future event. This helps them stay in control of their environment. Their more needs per product category is developed as they constantly upgrade their knowledge of the products available and such needs fuel their sense of refined preferences for minute differences in the items in their inventory. At the same time, their variety seeking nature helps them recognize minute distinctions amongst the products that they possess and assists in their decisions to buy products that may differ very slightly. Hence, product specificity, for acquisitive buyers is important compared to excessive buyers.

3.3.3.3.2.2 Self-Control

Excessive buyers, like compulsive and impulsive buyers may tend to overbuy as a result of lack of self-control (Wu et al. 2006). Ridgway et al. (2006) have also referred to impulsive control disorders suggesting lack of self-control during product purchases. Unlike acquisitive buyers who may go on a trip to shop for products or search for products online but may not buy a product, excessive buyers may buy during each shopping trip as suggested in the verbatim below:

Excessive buyer: “I don’t think I could walk through a pet area without picking up a toy.” (Sally) (Ridgway et al. 2008, p. 394)

On the contrary, acquisitive buyers tend to ponder over the product that they need and may not purchase if the product does not fit certain purchase criteria or if the price of the product is high.

Acquisitive buyer: “I do shop with restraints. I don't shop with abandon. There's nothing I buy a lot of...If it's too expensive, I probably won't buy it, even if I want it.”

3.3.3.3.2.3 Disregard for Consequences

Similar to compulsive and impulsive buyers, excessive buyers may disregard the consequences of their actions while purchasing products. The impulsivity may lead to the purchase of products that they may not use later or that may create financial problems. As suggested in the verbatim below, the participant understands and states that she spends excessively during shopping.

Excessive buyer: “I love, love, love to shop for myself. I spend way too much money on everything. I love to shop for shoes. And accessories, huge on that.” (Maria) (Ridgway et al. 2008, p. 394)

Unlike excessive buyers, acquisitive buyers tend to consider the shopping consequences before making purchases. For them, the products that they buy tend to fulfill the need to have products to be prepared for any eventuality. Acquisitive buyers have the need to buy an array of products as they have an expanding list that necessitates acquisition. Hence, a disregard for consequences, especially financial, may not help them in the long run to acquire the items. Besides, they delay their gratification to make prudent purchases (Ramanathan and Williams 2005) such that the products fit their specific range of requirements.

Acquisitive buyer: “If I don't find anything when I'm going to shop, I'm not going to buy it. It's not going to be a bad day for me if I go shopping and I don't come home with anything. If I didn't find anything that fit the needs or what I had in my mind, I would rather wait and find the right shoe with the right stitches and at a price I can afford.”

3.3.3.3.2.4 Financial Problems

Excessive buyers may face financial problems as a result of their buying habit. Wu et al. (2006) mention that excessive buyers spend more than what they think that they can afford. It is important to mention that excessive buyers may not have as much of financial problems as compulsive buyers, but they may go over their budgetary limits or rules to buy products during their shopping trips.

3.3.3.3.2.5 Purposive Search

Though existing research does not suggest much regarding the shopping process of excessive buyers, it is considered that such buyers may not be exacting in their search for the right product at the right price before making a purchase. In fact, Kukar-Kinney et al. (2007) suggest that excessive buyers may use price as a cue for quality to buy products, rendering that they may not involve in analytical thinking that acquisitive buyers tend to undertake before purchasing products.

3.3.3.3.2.6 Product vs. Process

Since excessive buyers may have obsessive-compulsive disorders, impulse control disorders and obsessive-compulsive spectrum disorders (Ridgway et al. 2006), shopping may be a means to relieve such disorders. Hence, the buying process may help them alleviate some of the symptoms. In the example below, Holly and Sally both enjoy the process of indulging their pets with products. Although not made explicit in the quotations, the happiness comes from the process of acquiring products for their pets rather than from the actual usage of the product.

Excessive buyer: The first thing that we do when we go grocery shopping is buy her...a box of treats. (Holly) (Ridgway et al. 2006, p. 394)

Excessive buyer: I don't think I could walk through a pet area without picking up a toy. (Sally) (Ridgway et al. 2006, p. 394)

For acquisitive buyers, the acquisition of the product takes precedence over the shopping process. Majority of participants interviewed suggested that compared to the enjoyment of the process of shopping, having the product and enjoying their utility brings them greater satisfaction.

Acquisitive buyer: "I have to say gaining the shoe. Although I like shopping for it but I think end result it is more important to end up with what I want."

3.3.4 Collecting

3.3.4.1 Definition

Collection has been defined as the "process of actively, selectively and passionately acquiring and possessing things removed from ordinary use and perceived as part of a set of non-identical objects or experiences" (Belk 1995, p. 67). Arnould, Zinkhan and Price (2004) have defined collection as the "selective, active and longitudinal acquisition, possession, and disposition of an interrelated set of differentiated objects (material things, ideas, beings or experiences) that contribute to and derive extraordinary meaning for the set itself" (p. 146). A collector is a person who is motivated to accumulate a series of similar objects where the

instrumental function of the objects is of secondary (or no) concern and the person does not plan to immediately dispose of the objects (McIntosh and Schmeichel 2004).

It is important to point out certain aspects of the definitions that are characteristic of collection and that helps differentiate it from other types of extreme buying. All three definitions refer to repeated acquisition of products that are interrelated but different from one another. Completion of a set (Carey 2008) is an important characteristic of collection. Each of the unit in the set is integral to the completion of the set and though there is marginal contribution of each member to the set, it is the overall value of the set that collectors tend to achieve (Carey 2008).

An important distinction needs to be made amongst collectors. In some aspects, collecting resembles compulsive behavior, which is marked by “abnormal, binge-like buying sprees” (Sherrell, Burns and Phillips, 1991, p. 36). In this case, the collector experiences immediate gratification from the buying spree but later feels guilty about the excessive behavior. In such cases, collecting serves to compensate for feelings of inadequacy or low self-esteem (Long and Schiffman 1997). Belk (1995) referred to a tension between rationality and passion amongst compulsive collectors. On the one hand, such collectors make rational assessments about price, quality and rarity of objects and on the other, they may not be able to resist buying objects when they see them and may spend a great deal of time hunting for them (Danet and Katriel 1989). Thus such collecting is related to issues of lack of self-control but may be considered by society as normal consumer behavior (Sherrell et al. 1991) even when such collectors identify themselves as pathological.

However, what about individuals who collect objects but do not manifest such pathological symptoms? Extant research recognizes such collectors (Carey 2008, Long and Schiffman 1997). Carey (2008) suggests that that collection relates to a rational behavior and is concerned with the completion of a set of interrelated objects. Often, a good's value may

spark the interest in collecting. For example, a person who likes coffee may seek a variety of cups in which to enjoy her java and thus ordinary products may become collectibles for such a person. Such a person may not experience the tension referred to by Long and Schiffman (1997) or the compulsion to buy a particular product as assessed by Belk et al. (1989, 1991). Thus, such individuals may not experience issues related to lack of self-control and sudden urges to buy the products that they fall in love with. The next sections on collection refer to both the types of collectors discussed above.

3.3.4.2 Characteristics

3.3.4.2.1 Uniqueness of the Collectible

Collection is an act towards the accumulation of products that complete a set (Belk 1995). Each member of a collection is unique and different from other members in the same collection. This factor differentiates collection from hoarding and accumulating (Belk 1995). Therefore, there is a continuous quest for different items of the collection towards completion of the set. Long and Schiffman (1997) described this characteristic as the discrimination rule wherein each item must be different from all others in some way that is discernible to the collector (Danet and Katriel 1989).

3.3.4.2.2 Lack of Functional Value of the Collectibles

Extant research has shown that collectors do not use the products that they collect. Even usable items such as salt and pepper shakers that may be viewed as collectibles are not used for fear of the reduction of their value through usage. Thus, the objects of the collection is transformed from profane (i.e., mundane or ordinary) to sacred (i.e., extraordinary), because they have lost their utilitarian roles (Belk et al. 1988). This factor differentiates collectors from hoarders who tend to accumulate utilitarian products and do not view such products as profane and magical. Long and Schiffman (1997) report that a Swatch that is purchase for a collection is never worn as a timepiece; it is kept in its original packaging so

that it remains in mint condition. A serious collector who wants to wear a Swatch may buy two of the same model – one to wear and one to keep in the collection.

3.3.4.2.3 Connoisseurship to Display and Impress

A major factor that characterizes collectors is their innate wanting to be part of a group of connoisseurs. Collectors and collections are found within a social consumption framework that operates in private family settings; in semi-public spaces such as collectors' clubs; in public spaces such as auctions; and in informal spaces such as fairs and car boot sales (Hughes and Hogg 2006). Herrmann (1972) suggested that collecting helps people to socialize with other collectors in ways that may yield satisfaction well beyond the economic aspects of their collection (Belk 2001). Some collectors may become active participants in collectors' clubs or interest groups, meeting on a regular basis with other collectors (Slater 2000, Kozinets 2001). A community provides a sense of social acceptance of the collector and his or her collection. Within the collectors' group, the individuals are normal, accepted, esteemed individuals. They are not judged or ridiculed or outcast. They are part of a tight-knit community where collecting behavior is not only condoned, it is encouraged and rewarded.

Collector: "We're like one big, happy family. These conventions give us a chance to live, talk and drink Coke, 24 hours a day for almost a week. Whether you are a garbage collector or a corporate CEO, you don't have to hide your love for the objects of your desire." (Hugh and Hogg 2006, p. 127)

Besides, for collectors, the clubs and conventions are a great means of socializing and getting the opportunity to meet old acquaintances and be involved in activities with them. It is a great source of exchange of information and camaraderie.

Collector: "I know a lot of collectors, although I might not know them all by name. But I know them by sight and they know that I collect trays. We'll just sit and chat and say did you see this – I found that – I saw that – I was in that room – I didn't see that. It's just a really nice friendly atmosphere." (Hugh and Hogg 2006, p. 127)

Finally, collectors enjoy the opportunity to display their collection, especially amongst other collectors who understand and have a sense of their collections. By showing

off their collections to other collectors, a sense of validation that the collection is good, admired and worthwhile is achieved. Therefore, sharing and letting others view their collections gives collectors a chance to discuss the details of their collections. In fact, collection is differentiated from hoarding wherein the latter is characterized by individuals who tend to hide their accumulated products for fear of being ridiculed.

Collector: "Oh, if you don't share it, it's not worth it. It becomes hoarding, not collecting. And having other collectors see your collection kind of validates it a little more." (Slater, 2001, p. 206)

Collector: "Having people such as Bill and Randy look at your pieces or at your collection, in some way validates the collection. It's an opportunity to brag about what you do to other people who collect." (Slater, 2001, p. 206)

3.3.4.2.4 Competition

Collecting is a very competitive activity (Long and Schiffman 1997). Although traditional economic theory assumes that demand is unaffected by supply, in collecting it may be the very fact of an item's scarcity that makes it desirable. The scarcer an item, the more likely the opportunity for distinction and profit in possessing it (Belk 1982).

3.3.4.2.5 Maintenance of Collections

Collectors spend considerable time, resources and effort in maintaining their collections. Collectors tend to sort, mount, and store their collections to protect them and retain their value. Slater (2001) discusses the efforts of Coke memorabilia collectors as follows:

"Randy and Bill have catalogued their collection, recording the dates and manufacturers of each piece. They used a computer program to layout the placement of the sixty trays that hang along the front landing and the hundreds of if metal signs displayed in the back staircase... They have commissioned, designed, and built special cases that house the smaller pieces in the collection, such as jewelry, cards, knives, thimbles, bottle openers, etc. These people are not just collectors, they are stewards of Coca-Cola." (Slater 2001, p.206)

3.3.4.3 Factors

3.3.4.3.1 Self-Fulfilling or Self-Enhancement Needs

Pearce (1992) has suggested 17 motivations for collecting: leisure, aesthetics, competition, risk, fantasy, a sense of community, prestige, domination, sensual gratification, sexual foreplay, desire to reframe objects, the pleasing rhythm of sameness and difference, ambition to achieve perfection, extending the self, reaffirming the body, producing gender identity and achieving immortality.

3.3.4.3.2 Self-Concept

Collecting is a culturally acceptable device for gaining an expanded sense of self (Belk 1988, Rigby and Rigby 1949) and enhancement in the search for a sense of personal continuity through a focus on collectibles (Formanek 1991). Even children as collectors seem to feel that it is important to have their own material possessions for developing their sense of self (Dittmar 1992). The unifying theme for all collectors is the intrinsic need to re-stabilize the ego in order to regain self composure and equilibrium by means of acquiring possessions (Muensterberger 1994). For some, collecting provides a sense of purpose and meaning in life (Smith and Apter 1977). Collecting may provide a sense of mastery that may be lacking in the workplace (Belk 1991) or lack of career success and recognition.

3.3.4.3.3 Achieving Immortality through Protecting and Creating History

For many, collecting is a self-transcendent passion in which the collected objects become more important than their health, wealth or inner being. The purpose behind this passion is the sense of achieving immortality (Rigby and Rigby 1949). Collecting becomes a religion for such collectors and they envision themselves playing the role of savior of society by preserving all that is noble and good for future generations. As Belk (1995) found out, a collector of elephant replicas who had opened an “elephant museum” described his expectation that future generations would one day “stand in awe” at what he had been able to accomplish in assembling these replicas. Thus, this sense of responsibility of protecting and

preserving the heritage and history through the collections is inherent in many collectors. By participating in creating history for the benefit of current and future generations (Belk et al. 1991), such collectors tend to strive towards achieving symbolic immortality (McIntosh and Schmeichel 2004).

3.3.4.3.4 Utilitarian Factors

One of the driving factors is the financial gain that can be achieved through a collection (Carey 2008, Anderson 1974). Collectors tend to mount their collectibles so as not to reduce the value of the collectible as each of the items in the set of collection has a value that enhances the overall value of the set. Collectors tend to justify their purchases though such justifications may not always be applicable. “My Swatches will pay for my child’s college education” may be an economic reason for collecting. However, other inherent motivations may dominate the purpose behind collecting. Another factor that is paramount to collection is the wanting to complete the set that constitutes a collection. In a study of baseball card collecting, O’Brien and Gramling (1995) refer to set completion as a “labor of love.” Danet and Katriel (1989), as reported in Burton and Jacobsen (1999), “suggest collectors collect to pursue closure/completion/and perfection.” Both Belk (1988) and Danet and Katriel (1989) contend that collecting towards the completion of a set helps collectors to strive for a sense of closure. Completing a set or filling the gaps in a collection helps in the reduction of manageable tension Danet and Katriel (1989) that is created to bring about a closure to a set of collectibles.

3.3.4.3.5 Compulsion

Collection, for some, may be a compulsion that is difficult to ignore and avoid (Slater 2001). Muensterberger (1994) suggests that collectors seek psychological security due to deep feelings of insecurity from childhood. Often times, collectors refer themselves, only half in jest, as suffering from a mania, madness, an addiction, a compulsion or an obsession (Belk

1995). Such collectors tend to lack the self-control as observed in ordinary or typical buyers and their fetish becomes such an obsession that it may not be clear whether the collector controls the objects or the objects control the collector (Ellen 1988). As Belk et al. (1988) encountered:

“A recovering polydrug abuser, he described his current collecting behavior as an addiction. He has accumulated a large collection of Mickey Mouse memorabilia, and often obtained his “Mickey fix” in lieu of paying rent or meeting financial obligations.”(Belk, 1995, p. 480)

“Obsessed collectors...are driven. The acquiring of a certain oil painting or a rare jade carving becomes a matter of life and death. Their possession overrules every other aspect of their lives and they devote every waking minute to thinking and planning how to obtain the next object for their collection or how to display it.” (Goldberg and Lewis 1978)

Collector: “It’s like a mistress, or a habit like drugs. Every so often, you have to have a fix.”(Belk 1995, p. 480)

3.3.4.3.6 Fear of scarcity

Oftentimes, collectors may suffer from the fear of scarcity (Formanek 1991) that may trigger individuals to buy collectibles. Companies may create a sense of shortage through the introduction of limited edition of products (Long and Schiffman 1997). Swatch used the strategy of building customer interest by offering special limited edition watches. Eight hundred people were waiting when the store opened and by early afternoon all the models were sold (Long and Schiffman 1997). By sensing an aura of scarcity, collectors tend to accumulate collectibles for fear that the product may never be available in future and they may miss out on the chance to possess a piece that can help them gear towards set completion.

3.3.4.4 Process

McIntosh and Schmeichel (2004) have elaborated the collection process as follows:

1. Goal formation relates to the decision to collect something. This may be a deliberate or a passionate and spontaneous act or may be triggered accidentally.
2. Information gathering: In order to effectively pursue the goal collectors must become knowledgeable. Collectors tend to attain knowledge that confers “expert” status upon

them and is the first step in building an identity as a “collector of...” wherein interaction with others contributes towards self-determination and autonomy needs (Deci and Ryan 1985) as well as facilitates the formation of a new group identity (Farmanek 1991).

3. Planning and courtship: Collectors, at this point, target one or more items that are needed for the collection and begin searching for them. Formulating a plan for how and where to search for items is largely a cognitive pursuit and is achieved through attending auctions, scouring the internet and dealer catalogues. Collectors start developing attachment with their collectibles and begin to inject special significance to the collectible, which may help explain why collectibles are often related to positive emotions.
4. The hunt: Perhaps one of the most highlighting and enjoyable aspects of collecting is the hunt for the collectible (Long and Schiffman 1997, Belk et al. 1991, Olmsted 1991). The challenge of finding a good deal, negotiating a price, and making the purchase may lead to a flow experience (Csikszentmihalyi 1990) wherein the collector is submerged in a goal-directed motion and may lack self-awareness. An intrinsic motivation permeates the hunt for a collectible as the hunt brings its own rewards (Danet and Katriel 1989).
5. Acquisition: The tension built in the previous stages finds its release in the ownership of the item. Attaining a collectible results in a “rush” that is one of the motivations for collecting. The collectible helps the collector express his or her self-identity (Prentice 1987, Wicklund and Gollwitzer 1982) particularly for individuals who exhibit a strong concordance among possessions, attitudes and values. The collectible is elevated to a level of sacredness (Belk et al. 1991) and the collectors bask in the glory of the acquisition.

6. Post-acquisition: Ownership helps in enhancing identity among the group of collectors that form social networks. Collectors may compare their collections and by associating their collecting self with others within the group. Thus group membership needs and individual needs are simultaneously satisfied.
7. Manipulation/display/cataloging: Collectors tend to restore the collectible to optimal conditions and create the platform for display through cataloging. Such an effort helps in crossing off the items in a bid towards set completion.
8. Return to the previous stages: The process of collecting gets repeated as collectors reevaluate their goals and restart planning and courtship. Since collecting is a regarding experience for them, collectors may forestall completion of a set by collecting in multiple categories at once or by expanding their collecting goals once they are close to completion (Belk et al. 1991).

3.3.4.5 Consequences

Belk (1995) has reported both positive and negative consequences of collecting, both for the individual and the immediate family members. Collections provide a sense of purpose and meaning in life and a sense of mastery and expertise in a particular field. Besides, it helps create a social life outside work and family that help collectors in sharing their common knowledge and beliefs (Christ 1965, Dannefer 1980, DiMaggio 1987). Belk (1995) compares such a relationship amongst other collectors with fellow believers in a religion, sharing a faith that what they are doing is important.

Issues such as guilt and fear of ludicrousness have been reported among collectors. Some collectors have been reported to hide their collections from their family members as they feel guilty of their purchases. Such secrecy and guilt has also been found amongst compulsive buyers. For all but the most affluent, the presence of a collector in a household means that money flows out for the purchase of the collectibles leaving with lesser resources

for consumption by the rest of the family members. While many family members support the collecting behavior, in some cases, strain on the resources can create tensions in the family. Besides, incongruities in lifestyle are common among collectors. On one hand, they spend lavishly on their collections and on the other hand, they lead a fairly austere and stark lifestyle outside this consumption area.

Even where collecting is not done in secret or with shame, it may supplant love of people. Collectors may devote time and affection to the collection that might otherwise be used with family members.

Collector: "These cars are also like an old friend. They are always there are always seem to listen and understand your problems. They're like an old familiar face you can turn to when you have nowhere else to turn." (Belk 2004, p. 274)

Belk (2004) reports of automobile collectors who slip away from their wives and families to spend time alone washing, waxing and admiring their cars. Therefore, some spouses may not condone their husband's addiction as they compete with cars for their husband's attention. Such collections may be viewed as rivals and hence, children of collectors may not prefer taking ownership of such collections.

3.3.4.6 Prevalence

According to the Unity Marketing survey, 42.9 million U.S. households are involved in collecting (Prior 2002) while others report that one third of individuals (O'Brien, 1981) and nearly two-thirds of American households have one or more collectors (Schiffer et al. 1981). Such a high level of prevalence relates to how collectibles are defined. One issue is that virtually anything can lend itself to collecting. Some goods are purposely created for the collectibles market while others inadvertently become part of a collection like toasters and nutcrackers (Carey 2008).

3.3.4.7 Distinguishing Acquisitive Buying From Collecting

3.3.4.7.1 Similarities between the Two Buying Types

3.3.4.7.1.1 Accumulation of Products

Both acquisitive buying and collection are related to the accumulation of products over time. Both types of buying require repeated purchases of products within a product category.

3.3.4.7.1.2 Knowledge

Both types of buying require extensive knowledge regarding the product category in question. Acquisitive buyers tend to gain extensive knowledge and consumption vocabulary to help them refine or fine-tune their needs and develop refined preferences regarding thin slicing of their needs. Similarly, collectors possess extensive knowledge regarding the collectibles to identify the different members of the set that they collect as well as to be part of the group of connoisseurs and generate individual and group identity.

3.3.4.7.1.3 Self-Concept

Both collectors and acquisitive buyers tend to purchase products that help to generate a sense of identity whether in terms of individual or social identity. In both cases, the products that the individuals accumulate help them to reduce the gap between their actual and ideal self image. However, for collectors group association and membership is as important as individual identity. This is where acquisitive buyers differ as the products are mainly used for personal consumption and therefore, the accumulation of products to generate group identity does not play a major role.

3.3.4.7.1.4 Materialism

Another similarity between acquisitive buyers and collectors relate to the materialistic value that both these types of individuals attach to their material possessions. While collectors may consider their collectibles as a way to create history, acquisitive buyers tend to use their products based on certain inherent needs that they have. Though Belk did not find

collectors scoring higher on the materialism scale than those by the general population, other researchers have found evidence of meanings aligned to material culture (Hughes and Hogg 2006). Collectors may feel “ripped apart” when they are not in a position to purchase items of a collection.

3.3.4.7.1.5 Constant Search Mode

Both collectors and acquisitive buyers tend to be in a constant search mode to gather information regarding the products of interest. Collectors visit clubs, flea markets, auctions and online websites to find out members of the set that they are interested in. Similarly, acquisitive buyers tend to constantly search online and/or offline to know about the products available and to check whether such products fit their ever-expanding needs.

3.3.4.7.2 Differences between Acquisitive Buyers and Collectors

3.3.4.7.2.1 Collection a Complex Behavior

Long and Schiffman (1997) have suggested that collection is a complex behavior. It involves the interaction of personal and social behavior. Collectors collect memorabilia because of personal reasons that enhance their self-concept. At the same time, there are formidable elements of social factors that prompt them to collect, namely, the pleasure and satisfaction derived from the display of their products and the sense of respect and appreciation from experts in the field. Such private, semi-private or public displays help in sharing experiences and play a role in group membership (Hughes and Hogg 2006, McIntosh and Schmeichel 2004, Danet and Katriel 1989, Christ 1965). Thus, self-concept is derived from both social identity and personal identity (Turner 1982) and the two components may be integrated (Hughes and Hogg 2006). Acquisitive buyers, in contrast, have strong personal justifications in the form of inherent needs that prompt them to purchase products. Satisfaction originates from the acquisition of products that match their preferences rather

than from the display of products. Self-concept is derived from the consumption of products, which is highly internal, rather than from social identity through group memberships.

Collector: “it’s only thin, tinny-type rubbish really, in the sense of what it’s made of, but it’s lovely.” He (Carl) knows that even an item like this is well valued in the scouting collector circles. He sometimes wears one of his scout badges in the spirit of “Look at me!” (Hughes and Hogg, 2006, p. 127)

Acquisitive buyer: “Only my family members and you know about my cars and my guitars. Outside this, no one really knows what I own. My things are my own to enjoy, really do not talk to anyone about them...why I have six guitars is because each has a role to play in music and you cannot replace one with the other, I mean you can but I like mine to be different.”

3.3.4.7.2.2 Display and Cataloging

Collectors often engage in “possessions ritual” (McCracken 1988) after the acquisition of a collectible. They may make elaborate efforts to restore the object to optimal conditions and create an appropriate setting to display the object (McIntosh and Schmeichel 2004). Often collectors keep record of acquisitions. Cataloging allows the collector to track the progress towards his collecting goals in an explicit and tangible manner (Martin and Baker 1996). Oftentimes, collectors mount their collectibles on specific stands and serialize the collectibles to permit easy goal-setting and cataloging. For example, coins are dated; comic books are numbered, etc. Acquisitive buyers utilize the products that they purchase and therefore do not feel the need to keep records or mount the products on specific stand for display.

3.3.4.7.2.3 Product vs. Process

A stark difference between acquisitive buyers and collectors is that for the former the product is of paramount importance while for the latter, the process of acquisition of the collectible is of greater importance. For collectors, finding the item and making it one’s own is frequently considered the most enjoyable aspect of the process (Belk et al. 1991, Long and Schiffman 1997, Olmsted 1991). The challenge of searching the object, finding a good deal, negotiating a price and making the purchase may lead to a flow experience (Csikszentmihalyi 1990). Flow is characterized by enjoyment, a goal-directed attention and lack of self-

awareness. Collectors report that other aspects of the environment recede from attention while they actively pursue a desired object (Belk et al. 1991). Information relevant to the collector's pursuit becomes highly salient and a sense of intrinsic motivation permeates the hunt (Danet and Katriel 1989). There is a merging of action and awareness while the hunt is on (McIntosh and Schmeichel 2004). The following passage from Rigby and Rigby's (1949, p. 388) work on collecting provides an excellent description of the collector's hunting mentality.

"The true collector is a transformed hunter. Although his hands are seldom bloodstained, his intense concentration, like the hunter's is pointed toward the objective of getting a full bag. Like the hunter, the collector studies his prey and develops his own flair. And like the hunter, he sometimes relishes the sport leading up to the kill as much if not more than the kill itself."

For acquisitive buyers, the process may be important but the enjoyment of consuming the acquired product takes precedence over the process by which it is acquired. This is because the inherent purpose of the product is to satisfy an internal need rather than to go through the joy of the hunt of the product.

Collector: "I have travelled over 300 miles to find a Swatch that I wanted to add to my collection." (Long and Schiffman 1997, p. 506)

Collector: "I like to be first on line at the Swatch store when a new special collectors' model is released." (Long and Schiffman 1997, p. 506)

Acquisitive buyer: "The product has to be something that I can use because if I buy something that's useless then I have lost... So it has to be something that I use in my day-to-day life, my day-to-day existence ...So it's not the process of it, it's the actual ringing of the bell."

3.3.4.7.2.4 Set Completion vs. Expanding List

Set completion is one of the main goals of collectors and collectibles are assumed to exist in sets. These sets may be created by the manufacturer, perceived by the collector or even created by the collector (e.g., the quantity of the collectible needed to fill a certain amount of shelf space) (Carey 2008). Collecting is often times the active pursuit of completing the set. For example, baseball caps from all the professional football teams can form a set in a collection. Sometimes, a set may be infinite and hence, for working towards a

tangible goal, collectors may opt for a subset of a collection (Long and Schiffman 1997). As opposed to achieve the goal of set completion, acquisitive buyers tend to have a divergent, ever-expanding list of products that need acquisition. The acquisitive buyer may know the next set of products in a product category to acquire but would not be in the pursuit of completion of acquisition of a set because the number of products in the product category may be infinite. Such buyers purchase products based on an ever-expanding set of needs and hence, a closure in terms of completion of a set is not the goal of the acquisitive buyer.

3.3.4.7.2.5 Products Removed From Ordinary Use vs. Utility Based Products

For collectors, the products collected may not be utilized as this may reduce the value of the collectible. Such products are removed from ordinary use (Belk et al. 1991). Even though the product that is collected is utilitarian such as salt and pepper shakers, they may be treated as sacred and profane and hence, may not be used on a daily basis. If a collector needs to use a product, he may purchase two of them: one for his collection and the other for ordinary use (Long and Schiffman 1997). Acquisitive buyers, on the other hand, use all the products that they purchase. Thus the satisfaction is in the actual utility of the product that satisfies a particular need or want. Thus, the products are not treated as sacred or magical but are used, even though for a short duration of time.

3.3.4.7.2.6 Marginal Utility of the Products

Carey (2008) suggests that the marginal value of a product for a collector is in the marginal utility of that product in its use as an aesthetic collectible as well as its contribution towards the set. For an acquisitive buyer, the marginal value of a product is in the marginal utility of the product by itself and does not really contribute towards the value of the entire inventory of goods in that product category. The implication is that marginal utility diminishes at a slower rate for a collector, *ceteris paribus*, and, under certain conditions, may even begin increasing as the collection grows (Carey 2008). It may also be possible that the

collector may value an additional unit of a collectible only for its contribution to the collection and not for its value in use (Belk et al. 1991).

3.3.4.7.2.7 Self-Control

For many compulsive collectors as described by Belk et al. (1989, 1991) and Belk (1995), self-control may be an issue. Collectors may not have control over their purchases as they are driven by emotions to purchase collectibles. This may result in financial as well as other problems for himself and his household. In contrast, acquisitive buyers tend to purchase products based on their requirements and financial situations. Hence, issues of self-control are less evident amongst such buyers.

3.3.4.7.2.8 Guilt or Regret

Collectors may feel guilty after a purchase as the resources used in purchasing the collectible could have been used elsewhere. Acquisitive buyers generally, do not feel guilty upon purchase of a product as the products are purchased based on some inherent needs and only after taking financial conditions into consideration.

3.3.5 Fixated Buying

Fixated buying is a topic that has not been studied extensively and little research exists in the realm of marketing to understand it. A database search shows the incidence of 172 journal and non-journal articles. Evidence of fixation has been studied in the field of psychology (Rayner and Pollatsek 1989, Balota, Pollatsek and Rayner 1985), finance (Grant 1985), accounting (Haka, Friedman and Jones 1986, Abdel-Khalik and Keller 1979), and others. However, other than a passing mention (Schiffman and Kanuk 2006, Long and Schiffman 1989), no articles exist in marketing that deals with this very important topic.

3.3.5.1 Definition

A dictionary search on fixated buying refers to ones focus (or attention) and attachment to certain objects or things in an immature or neurotic fashion, forming a fixation (www.dictionary.com). Thus, fixated buyers tend to preoccupy obsessively on products of a

certain product category and spend considerable amount of time to procure them. Sherrell et al. (1991) refer to collectors as fixated consumers, who commonly exhibit behavior closely resembling compulsive behavior (Long and Shiffman 1997). The Times (1987) magazine reports of fixated collectors spending \$39.9 million on Van Gogh masterpieces. However, fixated buyers need not be collectors and need not be fixated on collections only. Certain consumers can be fixated on any product category and therefore accumulate a large number of products in that particular product category.

3.3.5.2 Characteristics

In their discussion of fixation, Haka, Friedman and Jones (1986) discuss how individuals can be functionally fixated on certain information, thereby missing out and interpreting other available information. Using functional fixation, they explained why individuals make suboptimal decisions in accounting. Functional fixation occurs when an individual is accustomed and fixated on one aspect of information and this factor inhibits information processing of other aspects of that information. Abdel-Khalik and Keller (1979) suggest that conditioning and fixation results in ignoring other signals or information. According to them, some individuals are unable to adopt readily new information or changes in rules relating to some variables which they have consistently relied upon in making decisions in the past and decisions continue “to reflect elements of past behavior which should have been forgotten” (Chang and Birnberg 1977, p. 311). As an illustration, fixated buyers tend to be conditioned in the possession of certain products in a product category. They tend to be preoccupied with the thoughts of those products. Even when new information in the form of new product categories is available to them, their initial conditioning with existing thoughts preclude them from processing any subsequent information. They therefore, tend to process information that they are familiar with, that is, thoughts on acquiring products of categories that they are accustomed to and acquiring particular products that they have

been obsessed about. Acquisition of the product may bring relief from the preoccupation with thoughts of that product category.

3.3.5.3 Distinguishing Acquisitive Buying From Fixated Buying

3.3.5.3.1 Similarities

3.3.5.3.1.1 Purchase of Products of Certain Product Categories

Both acquisitive and fixated buying refers to the purchase of products of a particular category. Thus, fixated buyers may be extreme buyers of pens or a sub-category of pens, etc. Similarly, acquisitive buyers may also possess and purchase a large number of pens, etc.

3.3.5.3.1.2 Purchase of Utility Based Products

Although some collectors are referred to as fixated buyers (Sherrell et al. 1991), the latter not only buy products that may form a collection but also products that are utilitarian. They may not always buy products of those categories that are displayed for others to see but may also use the products that they are heavy buyers of. Acquisitive buyers also purchase products of a particular product category and the products are consumed rather than displayed, that is utilization of products is more for the self than for the satisfaction felt on display.

3.3.5.3.2 Differences between Acquisitive and Fixated Buying

3.3.5.3.2.1 Self-Control

One of the differences between acquisitive and fixated buyers that stand out is the degree of self-control that the two groups of consumers possess. Fixated buyers have low self-control as they tend to think obsessively about a product and hunt for the product till they find it. They are very similar to compulsive buyers in this respect, except that that compulsion is mainly related to certain product categories rather than many product categories. Acquisitive buyers, on the other hand, have higher self-control. They have the ability to walk away from a purchasing situation if the product does not fit their purchase criteria and fit into their criteria of needs.

3.3.5.3.2.2 Purchase Motivation

It is speculated that for fixated buyers, the basic motivation is to reduce the fixation for the product that will help bring relief. This aspect is very similar to the behavior of compulsive buyers who purchase products to relieve them from some underlying psychological anxieties (O'Guinn and Faber 1989). Fixated consumers may not prevent themselves from searching and procuring the product till they actually acquire the product. Acquisitive buyers, in contrast, buy the products based on their needs and the refined preferences that they possess. Every product has a definite purpose and usage and hence, the products are not bought simply because there is an urge or compulsion to buy.

3.3.5.3.2.3 Preoccupation with the Thoughts of the Product Dominant amongst Fixated Buyers

Since information processing revolves around a particular theme (in this case a product category) for fixated individuals (Haka et al. 1986), thoughts of the purchase of a particular product predominate and individuals are preoccupied with the thoughts of the purchase till the purchase is made. Acquisitive buyers also spend considerable time searching for the product they need and that fits their particular purchase and consumption criterion. However, they are not fixated in terms of thinking and purchasing the product. They can wait for long before making a purchase that suits their needs.

Acquisitive buyer: "I go visit shops and if I like it and it's there I try it out, not a big deal .If it is not the kind of price that I am looking for, I will not worry about it or think about it. I will just go and check for other things...buying isn't a compulsion for me."

3.3.6 Hoarding

3.3.6.1 Definition

Hoarding can be viewed as a type of non-normative accumulation of products and is associated with various forms of deprivation (McKinnon, Smith and Hunt 1985, Byun and Sternquist 2006). It differs from other forms of accumulation in that the hoarding consumer

1. Perceives a high risk of being deprived of the product,

2. Moves quickly to acquire abnormal quantities of the product,
3. Holds that abnormal inventory level, even when it could be sold at a profit. Yet, the hoarding consumer maintains the hoard. This definition of hoarding implies that hoarders
4. Place great weight on factors other than profit or economic value,
5. Believe they have information about future conditions not available to other consumers, and
6. Are acting emotionally (McKinnon et al. 1985).

3.3.6.2 Characteristics

3.3.6.2.1 Emotional Attachment

Hoarding represents an unusual amount of emotional attachment for a product (Byun and Sternquist 2008, McKinnon et al. 1985). Hoarding individuals invest considerable amounts of emotions in the products that they tend to accumulate and hence, feel tremendous emotional conflict in the event that they were to part with their products. Though a high level of materialism is seen amongst individuals who accumulate products, it is considered to be very high in case of hoarding consumers.

3.3.6.2.2 Impulsiveness

Another characteristic of hoarders is the trait impulsiveness that drives them to purchase products (Frost and Steketee 1998, McKinnon, Smith and Hunt 1985). This factor differentiates it from other accumulating behaviors such as stockpiling, which is driven by rational evaluation of given choices. Hoarding may occur because of an irresistible urge to purchase products of a particular product category caused by a number of 1) External situational factors such as scarcity, uncertainty about product availability, or competition amongst shoppers, 2) Promotional factors such as sales or special offers and 3) Appealing product factors such as design, quality or color (Byun and Sternquist 2008).

3.3.6.2.3 Accumulation of Utilitarian Products

Majority of the studies show that hoarding consumers tend to accumulate products that are of utilitarian value as opposed to collectors who tend to collect products that have aesthetic value (Belk et al. 1988). Objects that are hoarded are typically viewed by the individual as utilitarian and do not become sacred or magical, as do objects placed in a collection (Belk et al. 1988, Long and Schiffman 1997).

3.3.6.3 Factors

3.3.6.3.1 Scarcity and Perceived Perishability

Hoarding has been found to be motivated mainly by a fear of scarcity or unavailability of products (Frost and Gross 1993, Frost, Meagher and Riskind 2001, Lynn 1993). Perceived scarcity increases the desirability of the product and increase consumers' concerns regarding the future availability of their desired product. Hoarders, thus, tend to associate a high level of perceived psychological risk with being deprived of the product and rush to acquire unusual amounts of the product (Tan and Chua 2004). Perishability refers to an item that has a fixed shelf life and looks less desirable after a certain time (Gupta, Sundararaghavan and Ahmed 2003, Voss and Seiders 2003). For example, Christmas products appear less desirable after December 25. Individuals who have the propensity of hoarding tend to perceive that products will perish because companies may plan their obsolescence or other shoppers may acquire them and therefore, tend to accumulate them quickly.

3.3.6.3.2 Minimizing Loss or Perceived Threat of Loss

Hoarding consumers believe that they need to accumulate products in a bid to minimize their losses or the perceived threat of losses even through such losses may not occur in reality (McKinnon et al. 1985).

3.3.6.3.3 Lack of Self-Control

Extant literature has discussed the association between the lack of self-control and hoarding. Ponner and Cherrier (2008), in their discussion of functional hoarders, suggested

that some individuals accumulate objects privately and are unable to dispose the materials without clear conscious motivation or control. Lack of control over their behaviors, thus, may be a trigger factor for hoarding.

3.3.6.3.4 Panic

Another potential factor that can enhance the propensity to hoard is the level of panic amongst individuals. Panic is defined as an ego-centered survival-oriented withdrawal (Strahle et al. 1989). It has been established in extant literature that panic can cause individuals to hoard. Panic occurs because of individuals' perception of a danger stimulus, their inability to cope with the threatening situation and the existence of potential but closing escape routes (Strahle et al. 1989). In case of hoarding in a consumption scenario, even though there may not be a threat in the immediate environment, an individual may perceive the threat and without an ability to cope, may develop panic withdrawals. This situation may enhance an individual's propensity to hoard.

3.3.6.4 Consequences

3.3.6.4.1 Shame and Guilt

Hoarders tend to be ashamed of their collections and the space they fill and tend to keep items hidden from view (Greenberg et al. 1990, Long and Schiffman 1997). This is a chief distinction from collecting wherein collectors tend to display their collections for approval from others, especially, their expert group members. The tendency to hide accumulations amongst hoarding consumers is mainly to avoid being ridiculed by others.

3.3.6.4.2 Withdrawal

Strahle (1989) suggests that in a panic situation, trust and cooperation are rare and this result in the perception of others as an obstacle to the hoarder's safety. Consequently, hoarding consumers tend to withdraw their association from others.

3.3.6.5 Distinguishing Acquisitive Buying From Hoarding

3.3.6.5.1 Similarities with Hoarding

3.3.6.5.1.1 Accumulation of Utilitarian Products

Both acquisitive buying and hoarding are related to the accumulation of products of a certain product category. Additionally, in both cases, the products are utilitarian rather than aesthetical or magical as seen amongst collectors. Hoarders may accumulate clothes, newspapers, strings, technical equipments, clothes and others while acquisitive buyers may increase their inventory of clothes, shoes, jewelry, purses and other accessories and others products that are regularly consumed.

3.3.6.5.1.2 Materialism

Both acquisitive buyers and hoarders tend to exhibit materialism and have a high affinity and attachment for the products that they tend to acquire.

3.3.6.5.1.3 Private Consumption

Consumption for products is a private rather than a semi-public or public affair. This is in sharp contrast to collectors for whom display of their products is important to satisfy individual and social needs. Hoarders do not like to show their accumulated products. In fact, they withdraw from public scrutiny and keep their consumption pattern a private matter. For acquisitive buyers, consumption of products is for the satisfaction of certain inherent needs and though consumption may result in external displays at times, the utilization and purchase of products is based on internal criteria of needs.

3.3.6.5.2 Differences between Acquisitive Buying and Hoarding

3.3.6.5.2.1 Normative vs. Non-Normative Accumulation of Products

Though both acquisitive buyers and hoarding consumers accumulate utilitarian products that are consumed on a regular basis, an important distinction lies in understanding whether such an accumulation is normative and accepted or is considered abnormal. While acquisitive buyers tend to purchase products that are considered normative, hoarding

consumers tend to accumulate products that are not considered normal. The act of holding inventory is a normal activity, where normal is defined as conventional and traditional for the individual and household. For acquisitive buyers, such an act of holding inventory is considered normal while hoarded inventories are less common and high level of psychological risk is associated with hoarding (McKinnon et al. 1985).

3.3.6.5.2.2 Type of Product Accumulated

Hoarding consumers may accumulate multiple units of the same product that look alike and may even function alike. For example, a newspaper hoarder may accumulate newspapers without a sense of distinguishing one newspaper from the other. The purpose is not distinction but amassing for fear that someone else may take the products away and they may become scarce. For acquisitive buyers, the inventory comprises of products that are perceived to be different from one another. Hence, no two products in the inventory is considered the same.

3.3.6.5.2.3 Lack of Self-Control

As mentioned earlier, hoarding individuals lack self-control. They tend to act impulsively and give in to the urge to accumulate products based on their perception of lack of availability and scarcity of the product (McKinnon et al. 1985). Byun and Sternquist (2008) have empirically shown that in-store hoarding is mainly due to perceived scarcity, perceived perishability and low price of products. Hoarding consumers fail to restrain themselves from the urges to hold back on purchase and consumption because of the fear of scarcity due to competition from other shoppers or the probability of a stock out of the product. Acquisitive buyers, on the other hand, exhibit considerable degree of self-control as they tend to purchase products that are based on inherent needs and they do not buy beyond their means resulting in financial problems.

3.3.6.5.2.4 Shame and Guilt

A very common consequence of hoarding is the sense of shame and guilt amongst hoarders (Belk and Wallendorf 1989, Long and Schiffman 1997). Hoarders suffer from the sense that they would be ridiculed for their behavior and therefore, tend to feel ashamed of their habit. Acquisitive buyers, on the other hand do not suffer from any guilt or shame. They are not uncomfortable with their purchases and do not hide the products that they purchase.

3.3.6.5.2.5 Self-Esteem

Compulsive hoarders, like compulsive shoppers, tend to suffer from low self-esteem (Belk et al. 1995). On the other hand, acquisitive buyers demonstrate considerable confidence and esteem.

3.3.6.5.2.6 Motivations behind Purchases

Perhaps the greatest difference between hoarders and acquisitive buyers refer to the motivations behind their purchases. Hoarding consumers primarily tend to purchase and accumulate products because of their fear of lack of availability or scarcity of a product. McKinnon et al. (1985) report that even when external conditions of scarcity are absent, hoarders may not have the capability to stave off such fears, resulting in abnormal accumulation of certain products. Acquisitive buyers, in contrast, do not accumulate exactly similar objects and each product in a product category is different from the others. The basis of such purchases is that they perceive each item in their inventory to be different from one another, mainly because of inherent needs that lead to the development of refined preferences. Each product has a particular purpose and different products fulfill different needs. Hence, there is a deliberate and purposive function for each of the products.

3.3.6.5.2.7 Degree of Consumption

McKinnon et al. (1985) argue that the consumption of accumulated products is proportional to the degree of perceived scarcity of the product. As the degree of perceived scarcity of the product increases, hoarding consumers may reduce the consumption of the

product. This results in a greater degree of accumulation of the product. Acquisitive buyers, on the other hand, tend to consume their products in their inventory based on their requirements. They may consume a product for a short duration and move on to the next, only to have a stock of product so as to use it when the opportune moment arises.

3.3.7 Stockpiling

3.3.7.1 Definition

Stockpiling is defined as buying larger quantities of a product and/or shifting purchase times to buy before the expected time of next purchase (Blattberg and Neslin 1990). Ailawadi and Neslin (1998) suggest that stockpiling is distinct from category expansion because, with stockpiling, consumers compensate for buying more by making fewer purchases or purchasing smaller quantities in the future. Stockpiling is also different as it may be related to buying multiple quantities of the same or very similar products whereas category expansion is related to buying products that are different from one another.

Pure stockpiling is considered to be different from flexible consumption (additional consumption induced by the presence of additional inventory) (Bell, Iyer and Padmanabhan 2002). The authors suggest that in case of pure stockpiling, no consumption increase occurs after purchase on promotion. However, in case of flexible consumption, there is distinct consumption increase after purchase on promotion. However, other researchers have empirically demonstrated that stockpiling may increase post purchase consumption in certain product categories (Wansink and Deshpande 1994, Ailawadi and Neslin 1998).

3.3.7.2 Characteristics

Extant research on stockpiling demonstrates the following:

1. Stockpiling mainly relates to product categories that offer pricing or promotional benefits to consumers (Blattberg and Neslin 1989, Mela, Jedidi and Bowman 1998, Neslin 2002, Krishna 1994).

2. Stockpiling occurs based on complex inventory control management wherein consumers consider such uncertain factors as: 1) the future price of the good. 2) the future consumption rate, 3) the value of alternative investments, 4) The costs (either psychological or literal) of storing the good, 5) The transaction costs of acquisition and , 6) The size of existing inventory (Meyer and Assuncao 1990).
3. The inventory of the same brand increases resulting in multiple units of the same product as opposed to an inventory of different types of products within a product category (extra inventory – Ailawadi, Gedenk, Lutzky and Neslin 2007).
4. Stockpiling occurs in those product categories in which consumers can be motivated to buy for storage and future consumption (Bell et al. 2002). Hence, this phenomenon is product related and product specific.
5. Consumer stockpiling results in an accelerated purchase of products for future consumption. As a result, such stockpiling tends to create intertemporal demand shifts from the future to the current period (Guo and Villas-Boas 2007). This intertemporal demand shift may influence further price competition amongst retailers in subsequent periods to compete away potential future demands of the competitors.
6. Stockpiling may increase the probability of consumption of the items that are higher in inventory (Helsen and Schmittlein 1992). Wansink and Deshpande (1994) demonstrated that stockpiling appears to have the greatest influence on usage frequency when usage-related thoughts about a product are concurrently salient. Stockpiling can influence usage by increasing a favorable user's perception of the product's versatility.

3.3.7.3 Factors

Stockpiling is greatly affected by promotional and pricing strategies of firms.

Consumer stockpiling is a fundamental consequence of sales promotion (Neslin 2002). It

occurs because the promotion induces consumers to buy sooner or to buy more than they would have otherwise (Blattberg, Eppen and Lieberman 1981, Neslin, Henderson and Quelch 1985). Thus, stockpiling can be induced because stockpiling consumers are motivated to trade off inventory carrying cost to get a better price (Blattberg et al. 1981, Krishna 1992). Shi, Cheung and Pendergast (2005) suggested that price discounts and buy one-get one free are the most effective in inducing stockpiling though coupons, games and sweepstakes may have an influence. Either way, consumers tend to end up with more quantity than they would have had in the absence of promotion. Blattberg, et al. (1981) showed that promotion-induced stockpiling allows retailers to transfer inventory holding costs to consumers.

Long terms promotions also have an effect on stockpiling. It has been shown that households develop price expectations on the basis of their prior exposure to promotions over a long period of time. These expectations, coupled with the costs of inventorying products, affect consumer purchase timing and purchase quantity decisions. Increasing expectations of future promotions lead to 1. Reduced likelihood of purchase incidence on a given shopping trip and 2. An increase in the quantity bought when the purchase is made. This strategy is consistent with a consumer learning to wait for especially good deals and then stockpiling when those deals occur (Mela et al. 1998).

Stockpiling is also influenced by a firm's pricing strategies. Bell et al. (2002) have suggested that consumers who decide to stockpile anticipate that they might indulge in additional consumption. This implies that despite stockpiling, these consumers might need to reenter the market and face price uncertainty and the prospect of ending up purchasing at a higher price. This leads to diminishing marginal utility for the consumers and results in retailers competing with lower prices. Guo and Villas-Boas (2007) have added a new dimension to consumer stockpiling in terms of considering that consumer's preferences may be heterogeneous as opposed to being homogeneous, a factor considered in past research.

They suggest that changing consumer preferences generates differential consumer stockpiling propensity, thereby intensifying future price competition amongst retailers. Thus, if consumer preferences are sufficiently unstable and the firm discount factors are sufficiently lower than that of the consumers, stockpiling as a phenomenon would exhibit greater prevalence.

A third factor that affects stockpiling is the biased estimate of the household inventory. Rather than considering external factors such as firm pricing and promotional strategies, Chandon and Wansink (2006) have shown studied the mental information processing capabilities of consumers as a factor affecting stockpiling. According to them, 1. consumers anchor their estimates on their average inventory and fail to adjust adequately; 2. adjustments follow an inelastic psychophysical power function leading to overestimations of low levels of inventory. Through simulation studies, they have shown that biased estimates increase overstocking and spoilage among stock-out averse consumers.

3.3.7.4 Consequences

Whether stockpiling hurts or benefits consumers depend on their post purchase behavior.

Four types of effects have been articulated by Ailawadi et al. (2007):

1. If the post purchase inventory leads people to consume more of the category, this is a benefit to the manufacturer and such an effect is called ‘consumption effect.’
2. If the extra inventory preempts future purchase of the promoted brand, this is a cost to the manufacturer because the manufacturer’s profit margin is typically lower during promotion periods than during non-promotion periods (Neslin, Powell and Stone 1995). This is called ‘loyal acceleration.’
3. If the extra inventory preempts future purchases of competing brands, this is a benefit to the manufacturer because it takes consumers out of the market for competing brands (Lodish 1986). This is called ‘preemptive switching.’

4. If the extra inventory affects future brand choice after the promotion, this can either hurt or benefit the manufacturer, depending on whether the brand's future purchase probability increases or decreases. This is called 'repeat purchase effect.'

Ailawadi et al. (2007) also suggest that the benefits of stockpiling lead to increased category consumption and preemptive brand switching (the additional inventory of the promoted brand preempts the consumer's purchase of a competing brand in the future). Besides, there is a potential impact on repeat purchases of the stockpiled brand after the promotion. These benefits are substantial and can easily offset the negative impact of stockpiling – purchase acceleration by loyal consumers who would have bought the brand at regular at a later date.

3.3.7.5 Differentiating Acquisitive Buying From Consumer Stockpiling

3.3.7.5.1 Similarities with Consumer Stockpiling

3.3.7.5.1.1 Accumulation of Large Inventory of Goods

Acquisitive buying is similar to stockpiling in terms of large inventory of products. Stockpiling consumers tend to buy multiple units of items in a product category in response to certain pricing and/or promotional strategies or to prevent stock-out of products. Acquisitive buyers also possess multiple items in a particular product category in a bid to say prepared for any future eventuality.

3.3.7.5.1.2 A Forward Looking Behavior

Both acquisitive buyers and stockpiling individuals exhibit forward looking behavior. According to Guo and Villas-Boas (2007), consumers tend to stockpile because consumers tend to take into account their relative preferences for certain products and take advantage the relative opportunities that price differentiation brings them. Based on such price and promotional benefits, they tend to accumulate multiple units of the same product for future consumption. Stockpiling consumers plan their future purchases based on the promotional or pricing activities that they anticipate in the future (Erlem and Keane 1996, Gonul and

Srinivasan 1996). Acquisitive buyers also tend to be forward looking in terms of buying multiple products in a product category to be prepared for anticipated future events. The purchase of the tenth pair of open-toed black shoe to complement a particular outfit results in such an acquisition.

3.3.7.5.1.3 Firm Pricing and Promotional Activities

Both acquisitive buying and stockpiling are affected by a firm's pricing and promotional strategies. The fundamental principle of stockpiling is based on the influence of firm strategies, amongst other reasons. Similarly, acquisitive buyers tend to be affected by firm's strategies such as sales and price reductions. In fact, both types of buyers may wait for such strategies to buy a particular product or units of products.

3.3.7.5.1.4 Post-Purchase Consumption an Important Aspect

Both acquisitive buyers and stockpiling consumers tend to use the products that they accumulate as opposed to storing them for purposes of displaying to others. In fact, extant research has shown that increased consumption is an important consequence of stockpiling for certain product categories (Bell et al. 1999, Wansink and Deshpande 1994, Chandon and Wansink 2006, Ailawadi et al. 2007). From a behavioral learning standpoint, such increased consumption provides reinforcement before the next purchase, such that the behavior of buying the same brand in the next purchase is likely to persist (Rothschild and Gaidis 1981). In the same vein, acquisitive buyers use the products that they purchase. Products may at times be purchased ahead of the time of consumption (just as in case of stockpilers) in anticipation of any eventuality and consumed at the opportune moment.

3.3.7.5.1.5 Self-Control

Though the extant literature does not discuss the relationship between self-control and stockpiling, it is speculated in this essay that stockpilers do exhibit certain degree of self-control. Mela et al. (1998) suggest that consumers may tend to "lie in wait for especially good

deals” (p. 251). This is in sharp contrast to compulsive, impulsive or excessive buyers who prefer to purchase products spontaneously to satisfy some inner anxiety or urge. This pattern of waiting for the right product to be acquired at the right price is also characteristic of acquisitive buyers. Such buyers do not tend to purchase products that do not fit into their purchase criteria and may not buy products that do not match their budget.

3.3.7.5.2 Differences between Stockpiling and Acquisitive Buying

3.3.7.5.2.1 Types of Inventory

Stockpiling relates to the purchase and storing of multiple units of a product category. These units tend to be same or very similar to each other as consumers tend to buy the same product in greater quantity as a result of certain pricing or promotional tactics (Neslin 2002, Ailawadi et al. 2007). This reference to the purchase of multiple items has been summarized in the statement below:

Stockpiler: “I buy lots of things and then go back to the house and see the fridge is full of all the stuff I’ve just bought.” (Chandon and Wansink 2006, p. 118)

Acquisitive buying, on the other hand, relates to the purchase of products that tend to be different from one another at the attribute level. Acquisitive buying is mostly associated with the increase in the width of the inventory of products while stockpiling is related to increasing the depth of products. This means that more products of the same type are added to the inventory. However, acquisitive buyers tend to increase the breadth of their inventory by adding products that are different in the eyes of such buyers.

Acquisitive buyer: “Why I have so many shoes? I guess because they don't all look exactly alike. One has details and another doesn't. One is kind of a loafer but it has a little elastic on it or a little suede here or some leather. I like the way I feel when I have something different, rather than I have one that I think of as my Pilgrim shoes. That’s the reason I would have black sandals or black mules for the summer, or black pumps.”

3.3.7.5.2.2 Motivation

Stockpiling consumers tend to purchase products that are procured in response to pricing and promotional strategies. The basic motivation is the accumulation of products that

are either available at a lower price than would be available otherwise or in response to sales promotions. Such firm strategies induce consumers to buy sooner or to buy more than they would have otherwise (Blattberg et al. 1981, Neslin, Henderson and Quelch 1985).

Acquisitive buying, on the other hand, occurs as a result of the expression of the multitude of needs that the consumer experiences with respect to a particular product category. The refined preferences and the enormous consumption vocabulary of acquisitive buyers help them to differentiate products at a refined level and their needs for different products for different purposes urge them to purchase products that are different from one another. To a typical person, such products may be very similar to one another. However, in the eyes of acquisitive buyers, the need for products with minute differences at the attribute level helps in possessing products that would help the individual to be organized for potential future events.

3.3.7.5.2.3 Post-Purchase Consumption

Stockpiling increases consumption of high-convenience products more than low convenience products (Chandok and Wansink 2002). Ailawadi and Neslin (1998) have shown that faster use-up or flexible consumption is a significant factor in the yogurt and ketchup markets. Similar observations have also been made by Bell et al. (1999), Foubert (2004) and Van Heerde, Leeflang and Wittink (2004). Acquisitive buyers may increase the consumption of a newly acquired product for a short term. However, as interest in the product dies down, the consumption of the product may become more infrequent though such products would be consumed when the occasion arises.

3.3.7.5.2.4 Variety Seeking

Little research exists on whether stockpiling consumers are variety seekers. In a discussion on the effects of stockpiling, Engel, Blackwell and Miniard (1995) suggested that this phenomenon provides a longer post-purchase evaluation period. Mixed responses are evident in stockpiling. From a cognitive learning viewpoint (Ailawadi et al. 2007), under

conditions of low involvement, stockpiling provides more time to establish inertia or induce boredom with the same product (Engel et al. 1995, p. 158-60) and therefore, consumers tend to change their preferences and search for variety. However, under conditions of high involvement, consumers have a greater chance to examine the strengths and weaknesses of the product, leading to greater brand knowledge and higher repeat purchases (Ailawadi et al. 2007). However, amongst acquisitive buyers, variety seeking is a predominant phenomenon. This is mainly because acquisitive buyers are primarily interested and highly involved in the product category of interest. They tend to possess an evolved consumption vocabulary regarding the nuances of the various types of products in that category and variety seeking results from the expression of the refined preferences that the consumers possess. Hence, the motivation for variety seeking is the inherent need to obtain products that have different styles, forms and functionalities. This is in stark contrast from consumers who seek for variety because they are not involved with the stockpiled products or are suffering from boredom.

3.3.7.5.2.5 Attachment

Very little research exists on the traits of consumers who tend to stockpile products. It is speculated that consumers who stockpile brands may not possess a high level of attachment for the products as these products are purchased as a result of pricing and promotional strategies. On the other hand, acquisitive buyers are highly attached to the products that they purchase. These products fit their 'world' in terms of their needs and they tend to expand their inventory as they can avail of the products at the appropriate occasion.

3.3.8 Mainstream Buying

One important distinction that remains is an understanding how acquisitive buying is similar and different from ordinary or typical or mainstream buying. Extant research has discussed ordinary or mainstream buying in terms of identifying general factors, such as

exposure to in-store stimuli (e.g. shelf location), or with developing a theoretical underpinnings of buying and the motivations behind them (Dittmar and Drury 2000). The only literature that was tracked after a thorough literature search provides an account of ordinary versus excessive buyers in the form of compulsive and impulsive buyers (Dittmar and Drury 2000). Hence, it is important to understand acquisitive buyers in the light of mainstream buyers. The discussion below provides in details an account the buying patterns and psychological constructs associated with mainstream buyers with an account of the similarities and differences with acquisitive buyers. Since attempt was made to identify mainstream buyers and conduct in-depth interviews, a detailed account is provided using verbatim for both these two types of buyers.

3.3.8.1 Definition

Mainstream buyers may be defined as those buyers who possess inventory of goods in moderation; purchase products based on their needs and do not face financial problems or experience guilt because of their purchases.

The above definition of mainstream buyers delineates the inventory of goods of certain product categories with respect to other buyers on a spectrum of inventory of goods. In other words, the use of the word ‘moderation’ separates mainstream buyers from extreme buyers of goods, who possess a large inventory of goods of certain product categories such as compulsive, impulsive and excessive, fixated, acquisitive buyers, collectors, stockpilers and hoarders. It also differentiates mainstream buyers from frugal buyers who may not possess an inventory even when they feel the need for products. Another important distinction relates to the lack of financial instability and guilt, which are characteristic of some extreme buyers such as compulsive, impulsive and excessive and fixated buyers, collectors and hoarders. Finally, mainstream buyers tend to purchase products that relate to their needs. Understanding the needs is therefore, crucial to understand mainstream buyers and hence,

distinguish them from acquisitive buyers. The sections below will help understand this aspect and others and better help to distinguish the two buying types.

3.3.8.2 Characteristics

3.3.8.2.1 Moderate Inventory of Products

An average count of the items in product categories such as shoes, clothes and accessories show that mainstream buyers tend to possess a moderate number. For example, an average count of shoes for the mainstream buyers interviewed was approximately fifteen. Besides, these buyers consider their inventory of goods of specific product categories to be moderate as well. On probing whether they consider their inventory to be below average, average or above average, all the respondents suggested that they considered that it to be below average or average at best. The verbatim below refers to the count of the inventory as well as the acknowledgment of low to moderate or average count of inventory.

Mainstream buyer: “I’m going to say fifteen because you have the summer and you have the winter (shoes). So, I’m going to say fifteen, flip flops, whatever.”

Mainstream buyer: “I would consider my wardrobe pretty average for a 21 year old female, I definitely don’t think it’s over, because I haven’t really bought much in a while, it’s kind of what I’ve had for a while, so I consider my closet pretty average.” (Lauren, age 21, has 4-5 pairs of jeans, 15 t-shirts, 6 dresses, 1 black pant, 1 khaki pant, a couple of button down shirts, 1 black skirt, 2 white skirts, 5 dressier tops, a few turtle necks and jackets for wintertime)

3.3.8.2.2 Infrequent Purchasing

Majority of the mainstream buyers do not shop on a regular basis. Most of them tend to buy a few times a year to once a month. The frequency of purchase, of course, depends on the type of product category under discussion. In all, shopping for products in a particular product category is not a repetitive activity for them.

Mainstream buyer: “I only go every couple of months if I feel like I can treat myself...”

Mainstream buyer: “Probably last Christmas I bought another wedge...I am not a shopper and I’m not out there looking for the newest, trying to get something that I really don’t need.”

3.3.8.2.3 Self-Control

Mainstream buyers have considerable degree of self-control and do not tend to purchase products that are unnecessary. A typical line of reasoning that mainstream buyers provide is that they understand what they need and therefore, purchase products that relate to those needs. They generally do not tend to purchase product that are just “out there” and do not go for trends or the latest innovations and trends. Since they do not purchase products that do not fit their needs, they do not go over-purchase. As a result, they do not meet with financial problems in terms of debts. Rather, many mainstream buyers suggested that they budget their expenses and have an understanding of their spending capabilities when on a shopping trip. Besides, such buyers do not find the urge to buy something just for the sake of purchasing. Hence, they may walk away while shopping if the product does not match their needs.

Mainstream buyer: “I would say I usually buy what I need at the time so it’s not like I will find myself going to a sale because it’s a sale and go get a lot of blouses or any item in particular. It’s whatever the need is so I can’t say I really purchase something overly abundant to something else, it’s just whatever the need arises.”

Mainstream buyer: “So the shopping thing, I would say, I may go in to see what’s available but I may not buy anything.”

3.3.8.2.4 Lesser Number of Needs Leading to Multiple Uses for a Product

Mainstream buyers tend to demonstrate lesser number of needs. Most of them suggested that they do not need to have different products for different types of needs. For example, they do not need to have different sets of clothes for different occasions. Rather, one set of product can be used for multiple purposes. For example, Lauren (age 21) either dresses up or dresses down her spring outfit depending whether she is wearing the outfit to work or for an evening party. She wears a jacket over her outfit for office-wear while wearing the same outfit without the jacket as her eveningwear. Thus, versatility of a product is a hallmark of mainstream buyers. Many purchase products with this concept of versatility or finding multiple uses for the same product in mind. The idea is that they would not have to

purchase multiple products for multiple uses and this may be one of the reasons why mainstream buyers function within the boundary of a moderate inventory. The verbatim below suggests that the mainstream buyer purchases such products that are suited for multiple usage:

Mainstream buyer: “Well, I either have the loafers that are all purpose, kind of like a go to in the season so I don’t get things that look too seasonal.”

3.3.8.2.5 Lack of post-purchase regret

Since products are purchased based on particular needs, mainstream buyers do not experience any regret after the purchase of the products. Most of the purchases are well thought out and in fact, some of the products are a direct replacement of an old and existing product. Hence, in such cases, issues of feeling bad or guilty is normally absent amongst mainstream buyers.

Mainstream buyer: “You know golfing shoes...but that’s according to whether they wear out or not, so that’s every two or three years. A golf glove is something that will wear out, so mainly it’s just things that will wear and tear...so when I go out and buy something, why should I feel upset? My purpose was to go out and get it. I need it and so I feel happy actually.”

Mainstream buyer: “More often I go shopping because I really needed something and I’m like oh! I’m so excited about my purchase...”

3.3.8.2.6 Trust and Belief in the Reliability of the Products

For the most part, mainstream buyers have hinted at purchasing and utilizing the same products over time and have expressed their reluctance in changing the brand or the type of product that they have been consuming. Indeed, words related to “trust” and “reliability of the products” was articulated by many to explain why they were resistant to changing brands and trying out different types of products. Some mentioned family history as a reason to continue using a particular brand. Others mentioned of their weariness in going through the trial and error process of finding what brand suited them the most. For most, they had gone through the trial and error process and did not believe they needed to undergo the experience again. Once they garnered satisfaction in terms of the right product that suited their needs, they felt

comfortable to remain rooted to the product rather than continuing the process of discovery of newer products to suit their needs.

Mainstream buyer: “I’m going to buy the trusted one, the one that has longevity. I’d never really so that, buy the latest thing that maybe doesn’t have a history or reputation of quality because it’s going to break down a lot quicker. Again, it might be history related, for some people it’s just the way their family bought and it’s a trusted product. For example, automobiles, appliances or even electronic equipments...some families have a particular car company they’ve trusted, for example, Kenmore Sears is a trusted name.”

Mainstream buyer: “People in the world try more different things than others; sometimes you just realize I don’t want to be bothered with trying. I’ve already tried. Years ago I did that, I’m done. Del Monte right here, I’m getting this piece from Del Monte because I trust the brand, you know?”

3.3.8.3 Process

The shopping process for mainstream buyers is simplistic. Most of them tend to venture into shopping only when they require a particular product. The search for products is not an enduring one. None of them mentioned that they spend considerable amount of time (whether online or offline) to shop for products. A number of times, it is shopping to replace an existing product. Hence, they know the brand and therefore, they know exactly where to purchase the product. For new products, shopping ranged from very terse (going to particular racks and picking up the products) to waiting for something to “jump out” rather than going through the racks to find something that fits the requirements. Majority mentioned that they had designated shops they preferred to shop at rather than go to the mall and “look around.” All of the respondents mentioned that they refrained from shopping impulsively and did not purchase products that would create a situation of debt.

Mainstream buyer: “I have an idea of the racks. So I went to that rack, found my size, tried it on and confirmed it was what I wanted to do. So I got a pair of jeans, perfect fit, I’m ok with that. The boots fit perfect, I’ll walk out with that, I’ll probably be done in 15 minutes. Shopping usually doesn’t take me that long at all. I typically like to shop in a smaller store like the Gap because I can come in and kind of get the sense of where things are where I stand. I kind of go in and look a little bit but I’m not going to find myself standing over looking at this cute little stuff with a little bow on the front, I’m not doing that. I go in thinking it’s going to be simple, straight to the point and look like it represents me and then I’m gone. I don’t really take a long time to shop, I don’t comparison shop, really it’s go in the Gap, figure it out, come out with something or don’t.”

3.3.8.4 Distinguishing Acquisitive Buying From Mainstream Buying

3.3.8.4.1 Similarities with Mainstream Buying

3.3.8.4.1.1 Purchase Based on Needs

Both acquisitive and mainstream buyers tend to purchase products that are based on their needs. Both these sets of consumers do not buy products for the sake of making a purchase. Nor do they purchase to deal with any internal anxiety or urge. Purchasing is the ultimate expression of necessities they need to satisfy.

3.3.8.4.1.2 High Self-Control

Since acquisitive and mainstream buyers purchase products that are based on certain requirements, they exhibit a high degree of self-control. They may shop around for products but if the products do not match up to their expectations, they may decide against purchasing the products. Sometimes, they may wait for the right products to be at the right price before they make the purchases. Unlike other buyers with lower levels of self-control such as compulsive, impulsive, excessive, fixated buyers, hoarders and compulsive collectors, acquisitive and mainstream buyers do not purchase because they are fixated over certain products or to reduce their inner stress or urge. Hence, purchases that do not meet their goals are not necessitated.

3.3.8.4.1.3 Lack of Financial Problems

Since need-based product purchases are the hallmark of acquisitive and mainstream buyers, they do not suffer from financial debts. Credit card over limits, loans and other types of over-expenditures are not things that these buyers appreciate and indulge in. Concern for the consequences drive their purchasing behavior, which is in sharp contrast to buyers with lower self-control.

3.3.8.4.1.4 Lack of Guilt/Post-Purchase Dissonance

Hand in hand with the lack of financial problems is the lack of post-purchase regret or guilt for purchases made by acquisitive and mainstream buyers. In fact, these consumers tend

to appreciate their purchases and may even feel joyous as their purchases match their criteria of needs.

3.3.8.4.1.5 Rational Justification

Both acquisitive and mainstream buyers tend to provide justification of their purchases as opposed to other extreme buyers with self-control issues. Both these sets of consumers do not buy because they have to but buy because there is a purpose behind their purchases. Hence, when asked as to why they purchase the products that they do, these buyers defend their purchases and provide rational as opposed to emotional reasons for their purchases.

3.3.8.4.1.6 Purchases Well Thought Out

As regards the purchase process, both acquisitive and mainstream buyers tend to be deliberate in terms of their purchases. Such purchases are not made based on internal urges but on rational thought processes. For example, Karon (age 49), a mainstream buyer, feels the fabric and verifies whether it would be effortful to clean the fabric. Next, she ensures that the product has multiple uses and does not restrict her to use under specific circumstances only. Further, price is another factor that may increase or hinder the chances of a purchase. Similarly, Amy, an acquisitive buyer, purchases clothes that match her wardrobe. She feels the fabric, checks the details in terms of color and style, makes sure that the price is within her means and spends time at the store thinking about the product before heading to the checkout counter. These examples show that both acquisitive and mainstream buyers plan their purchases before finalizing them.

3.3.8.4.1.7 Product vs. Process

Both acquisitive and mainstream buyers tend to appreciate the product compared to the process of obtaining the products. This is because the products are of prime importance to them and are a source of need fulfillment. In their discussion of the ordinary versus the

excessive buyers, Dittmar and Drury (2000) discussed similar findings regarding ordinary or mainstream buyers. For other extreme buyers such as compulsive, impulsive, excessive and fixated buyers, compulsive collectors and hoarders, the hunt for the product is the source of joy (Ridgway et al. 2006, Dittmar and Drury 2000, Long and Schiffman 1997, Belk 1995, O'Guinn and Faber 1989, Rook 1989). These buyers experience a sense of exhilaration through the process as opposed to the acquisition of the product.

3.3.8.4.2 Differences between Acquisitive Buying and Mainstream Buying

3.3.8.4.2.1 Inventory of Goods

As discussed earlier, there is considerable difference in the inventory of goods for particular product categories for acquisitive and mainstream buyers. Acquisitive buyers tend to have a much larger inventory compared to the mainstream buyers. An estimation of the average count of items in the shoes category amongst the interviewed acquisitive and mainstream buyers showed that the former possessed approximately fifty shoes while the latter owned around fifteen pairs. These total counts included shoes of all seasons, colors and design. Similarly, for the product category of shoes, mainstream buyers suggested that they owned hundred items on an average while that for the acquisitive buyers was around two fifty. As for accessories, mainstream buyers discussed possessing approximately five purses whereas the number was twenty for acquisitive buyers. Thus, the disparity in the total number of items of certain product categories is quite evident amongst mainstream and acquisitive buyers.

3.3.8.4.2.2 Repetitive Shopping

Acquisitive buyers tend to shop for various items within a product category. Hence, there is repetition in terms of the number of products bought, for example, in the product category of shoes, clothes, accessories, musical instruments, etc. As an illustration, Keith (age 44), an acquisitive buyer, possesses ten watches. Some of these watches are for daily formal

wear, some used for various activities like gardening and swimming, others are more formal, worn during special occasions. Keith, at the time of the interview, was searching for his eleventh watch, another formal wear watch with specific characteristics. Thus, Keith tends to purchase repetitively within a specific product category. Jeff, a mainstream buyer, loves to play golf and hence, has purchased certain accessories that are necessary to play golf. He purchased golf shoes three years ago and plans to buy another only when the existing pair wears out. Hence, his basic motivation is to replace the existing pair when the time is right. Thus, we observe that repetitive shopping within a particular product category is the hallmark of acquisitive buyers rather than mainstream buyers. The verbatim given below provide further evidence of this point:

Mainstream buyer: “You know golfing shoes but that’s according to whether they wear out or not, so that’s every two or three years. I don’t need another till this pair is worn out...I’m not out there looking for the newest, trying to get something that I really don’t need.”

Acquisitive buyer: “I appreciate the difference textures and something can be the same color but have very different textures and look very different to me, may be not to a lot of people, but the texture has a lot to do with what makes it look casual or formal in my mind. Something that is shiny like this looks dressier. So you do need your casual and your dressy ones. That is why there are so many pieces (of necklaces)...I keep buying them...”

3.3.8.4.2.3 Frequency of Shopping

Mainstream buyers tend to shop less frequently than their acquisitive counterparts. Amongst the mainstream and acquisitive buyers interviewed, the average number of times that a mainstream buyer shops for shoes is four times a year while the average times an acquisitive buyer shops for the same product category is once every fifteen days. It makes intuitive sense because acquisitive buyers, with greater need for products that fulfill their wanting for products that are slightly different from one another, would obviously need to be on the lookout for products that satisfy their purchase criteria. Conversely, mainstream buyers do not feel that they need to shop for products that differ slightly from one another. Rather, they tend to purchase products to replace old ones or purchase ones that are an utter necessity

to them. Hence, the frequency of visits (either online or offline) to purchase products is lesser when compared to acquisitive buyers. The verbatim below discusses the frequency of shopping:

Mainstream buyer: “On an average I probably buy two purses a year and I will often use the same purse.”

Acquisitive buyer: “I will go into a store, whether it's a department store, whether it's an outlet mall, probably once a week.”

3.3.8.4.2.4 Degree of Inherent Needs

Perhaps the most evident difference between mainstream and acquisitive buyers relate to the inherent needs for certain products. Acquisitive buyers tend to purchase products that have minute differences amongst them. These differences are related to the thin slicing of their needs: each product is different in terms of functionalities, colors and styles and each has a particular place that fulfills a particular need in the complex labyrinth of needs demonstrated by acquisitive buyers. It is important to point to the reader that the need for some may be a want for others and vice versa. We are not necessarily discussing this difference here. Rather, the use of the word ‘need’ relates to an innate wanting for products that differ in looks and /or utility in subtle ways such that to an outsider, these products may almost appear to be the same. For example, Amy (age 26), possesses shoes that are various combinations of black open-toed, peep-toed and close-toed, sling backs and sandals; dressy and casual; three inched ones for wearing with longer pants and flats for wearing with shorter trousers; pointed heels, wedged heels and platforms. Each of these shoes provide a specific purpose and are worn in different seasons and different occasions based on specific needs.

Further, the verbatim below discusses this inherent need:

Acquisitive buyer: “Because every shoe has a different texture, a different edge, different stitch and to me they'll pull a different part of an outfit out. To me, like last night I wore a pair of black flats with jeans and I had a shirt that was sort of a casual look and so those were more of a rounded toe. Those went more with my shirt, my total outfit but I have the same pair of black flats that are a pointy toe, which I wear when I want to dress it up a little more. Because even though they are the same color, they go with different things so it gives me

variety to make me feel like my outfit is a little different. That's why I need different blacks..."

On the contrary, mainstream buyers do not necessarily sense the need for products that differ minutely. Discussions with Rosezelia (age 39) suggested that she preferred to 'regress to the mean.' In other words, she preferred shoes that were a shade of brown that would go with outfits that were either darker or lighter shades. She did not essentially believe in purchasing a shade that is too much in the extreme such that it would be rendered unusable with different types of products. She typically dissociates herself from such buyers suggesting that it was not her style to purchase specific products for extremely specific purposes. Jeff also discusses that he buys what he needs and his needs are not in excess.

Mainstream buyer: "I do not typically go too far to the tan color and don't have a number of browns...I would go with something in the middle so it gives me a bit of room because I think with the camel, I'd be stuck with ok, what shade of khaki am I wearing? What shade of black am I wearing? What shade of blue jeans am I wearing with that? I prefer one shade that can go with many clothes."

Mainstream buyer: "I generally have just about everything I need. Again I go out and play and know what I need. I'm not out there looking for the newest, trying to get something that I really don't need."

3.3.8.4.2.5 Consumption Vocabulary and Interest

Acquisitive buyers possess an intricate and detailed consumption vocabulary (see West et al. 1996). The vocabulary helps buyers to identify product features at the attribute level, to evaluate the levels of the features and finally to identify the relationship between these features and their own evaluations of the product (Hoch and Deighton 1989, Lynch 1985). The vocabulary also helps for an improved understanding of preferences for additional attributes that acquisitive buyers may think are important for the future purchase of additional products. It is believed that acquisitive buyers tend to possess a refined consumption vocabulary that helps them to analyze and appreciate additional attributes at various levels of sophistication and use these attribute information to enhance their understanding of their needs and therefore, their current and future purchases. Besides, the level of interest in a

particular product category for which the consumption vocabulary is developed is also extremely high in acquisitive buyers. The verbatim below provides an illustration of the complex consumption vocabulary of the acquisitive buyer:

Acquisitive buyer: “Because every shoe has a different texture, a different edge, different stitch and to me they’ll pull a different part of an outfit out. To me, like last night I wore a pair of black flats with jeans and I had a shirt that was sort of a casual look and so those were more of a rounded toe. Those went more with my shirt, my total outfit but I have the same pair of black flats that are a pointy toe, which I wear when I want to dress it up a little more. Because even though they are the same color, they go with different things so it gives me variety to make me feel like my outfit is a little different.”

Mainstream buyers may not demonstrate the interest in particular product categories and may not devote time and energy to develop a sophisticated level of consumption vocabulary. For them, basic level of understanding of a product category may suffice as they do not find the need to spend time and energy to learning more about a product category, especially at an attribute level. Since purchases are less frequent and mainly based on requirements that are not as refined as that of acquisitive buyers, these consumers possess a lower level of consumption vocabulary. The verbatim given below provides a sharp contrast to that of the acquisitive buyer. Notice that Rosezelia does not provide any details about her clothes and she mentions the word ‘generic’ to explain her clothing style. This is far different from Amy’s knowledge of style and color.

Mainstream buyer: Real simple, not going to be anything floral, not going to have anybody’s name on it, not the brand thing. It’s not going to be the latest style typically, it’s pretty generic actually. It wouldn’t be something that perfectly had to go. Some people have things that are matching and it has to go paired up because it limits you. But no, it’s beige khakis, so you can get more range out of that.”

3.3.8.4.2.6 Refined Preferences

Related to inherent needs and complex consumption vocabulary is development of refined preferences. Acquisitive buyers have well developed and defined preferences as they tend to pay close attention to new attributes and attach a different level of importance to features (West et al. 1996). Thus, acquisitive buyers, because of well-defined inherent needs

and an elaborate consumption vocabulary tend to exhibit refined preferences. For Virginia (age 49), each of the brown shoes had a different hue in her mind. She needed the entire range of the brown shoes because each represented a different color that would match the different hues of her outfits. Each of the brown shoes occupied a specific place in the gamut of needs and each was important as the functionality of one could not be replaced by another.

Acquisitive buyer: “Like I have one pair of black pants that are Capri’s, which would be more for the summer than a longer pair that I would wear in the winter. Then I have a pair that is a little bit dressier for when I go out and then maybe just another pair that I could use periodically for other different things, for casual wear. But I mean every pair is different and has a different use.”

Mainstream buyers do not process information to the extent that acquisitive buyers do and because their category structure for a particular product category is not as refined as that of acquisitive buyers; their preferences are not as well developed. Rosezelia does not care about the bows, the strings and the minor details in the shoes she buys. Neither does she enjoy spending time admiring such details when she goes out to purchase her shoes. For her, a simple shoe that is comfortable can suffice.

Mainstream buyer: No high heels or anything, just plain and simple get around shoes. I really don’t care about the bows and the strings and the straps that other people talk about. Plain look and that’s it. Very practical, that’s exactly the word I’d use, very practical. It is just not my thing. Even when I go shopping, if it is a khaki I want, it is all I will look for. That’s it. I’m not going to spend my time doing a, “Oh! I want to see if this shirt is on sale and all that.”

3.3.8.4.2.7 Variety Seeking Nature

Acquisitive buyers are variety seekers. According to Redden (2008), while subcategorizing, consumers pay more attention to the aspects that differentiate amongst products that are generally regarded as similar. The increased salience of the distinctive characteristics of the products reduces satiation and increases focus on the differentiating attributes of the products. This activity helps in looking for variety amongst the various attributes. Acquisitive buyers tend to look for such distinguishing features at the subcategory

level, which helps them to avail greater variety amongst the products. The following verbatim provides evidence of the variety seeking nature of acquisitive buyers.

Acquisitive buyer: “One of them is little bit higher heel and two of them are lower heels, so the higher one I wear with a certain kind on pants and the lower ones with another kind of pants, and another kind little kids wear, and the other low-heel pair has a little bit of the shine to it so it's a little bit dressier. So, I do have to say they are all different. One is kind of high heel and the other two a low heel. But one is dressier than the other. I love different types of things. You know, I need things to jazz up. So that's why you have different things. It's fun!”

Mainstream buyers tend to purchase products infrequently and whenever a need arises. Hence, they are not concerned with variety at the attribute level. It is speculated that most mainstream buyers do not pay heed to attribute sub-categorization and hence, reach a satiation level quicker than acquisitive buyer. Therefore, the available variety of products does not activate their interest, which has already reached the level of satiation. The mainstream buyer's verbatim shows the lack of interest in the minute differences characteristic of acquisitive buyers.

Mainstream buyer: “I usually don't take the time to try something on. So if it's very visual, like the first thing on the rack, the colors, I know what colors look good on me and what colors don't at this age, 49. I don't have to worry about trying every single piece on in all these different colors anymore. I know what style looks best on me. I don't need to look at every piece as I have seen things and I just get tired of looking. Then I just give up and try another day.”

3.3.8.4.2.8 Brand Loyalty and Switching

Majority of the mainstream buyers interviewed mentioned that they were loyal to the brands that they purchased. Majority mentioned that they related to specific brands because of a high level of reliability and trust they felt for their brands. They felt that the trial and error phase of trying to realize which brand was most suitable was over and they demonstrated resistance towards trying out new brands. They felt comfortable with their existing brands and preferred to continue with them.

Mainstream buyer: “I always wear Gloria Vanderbilt and that's the only product of hers that I love. I mean I do like a lot of her things but that's the only thing for the smell, for the scent. Since they (her children) were born, I mean I was wearing this in the early 80's and that's the only thing I wear.”

Mainstream buyer: “Because it’s not trendy and I can trust than Ann Taylor is going to, they look at the trend and then they say, but this is how we dress and this is how our customers dress and I trust them. They usually have the styles that I will wear, the fabrics that I will buy.”

Unlike mainstream buyers, acquisitive buyers search for variety. Hence, a single brand cannot provide the necessary variations in the subcategorical attributes that help in renewing interests of these buyers. Thus, such buyers tend to look for different features or attributes in different brands. For these buyers, the brand name does not necessary provide the satisfaction of a purchase. Rather, it is the subcategorical attributes that are of prime interest to the acquisitive buyers. Whichever brand would provide the requisite subcategorical feature would be the product of interest for these buyers.

Acquisitive buyer: “Style and fit, not necessarily brand, so if it's something that I find, and I tend to find things that I like for that season. Like, I like bell sleeves right now, and if I see one anywhere I'll go try it on. It doesn't matter the brand. Or if I want a blouse of a particular color or style, I'll go for the brand that gives me the style and fit. So it is not a particular brand that I am looking for.”

3.3.8.4.2.9 Insider-Outsider Phenomenon

Both mainstream and acquisitive buyers tend to consider themselves to be average purchasers of products if certain product categories. However, the similarity stops here.

Acquisitive buyers purchase products based on innate needs for specific features within a product category. Hence, even though they may possess a fairly large inventory of goods, they may not consider such an inventory as large enough and some of them may even consider the inventory to be inadequate, necessitating a greater degree of purchase. On the other hand, an outsider may consider the inventory as large and excessive. For mainstream buyers, since the inventory is fairly small compared to an acquisitive buyer, outsiders may not necessarily consider the inventory to be excessive.

Acquisitive buyer: “When we built this new house I counted the space in my shoe rack and it has room for 75 pairs of shoes and since I've talked to other friends and other people at school and stuff, they're like oh I have 120 pairs of shoes that wouldn't fit in a rack so I was like wow. I think I'm just an average one because I know people don't buy as much but apparently they buy a lot more than we do!”

Acquisitive buyer: “Yeah, like my husband he would say those are all black shoes. But as you know, he does not understand that the blacks are different and one shoe does not replace the other.”

Mainstream buyer: “I would say below average...I’m not sure if even if I was very wealthy, I still don’t feel like I would need a lot of products and things in my home. I like more clean lines; I like just a traditional look, not excess.”

3.3.8.4.2.10 Positive Perfectionism

Perfectionism is generally related in the negative sense as seen in amongst compulsive buyers. However, perfectionism has been identified as of two types: positive and negative (Hamacheck 1978). It is argued that acquisitive buyers are positively perfectionists (Stoeber and Otto 2006). They tend to be extremely selective in the type of products they desire and purchase. These products should match their self-identity needs and must correspond to the right type of product attribute that is absent from their inventory of goods. Each product feature must tie in and coordinate with the type of need that the buyer experiences. Thus, clothing, shoes and accessories must have the right match for acquisitive buyers to be satisfied as the ideal self needs to fit in with the actual self (Dittmar and Drury 2000).

Acquisitive buyer: “It's like cooking. You can do the right thing with the right tool. You're successful with the right tool. And I'm not a carpenter. I wish I were, but any type of repairs or any type of home improvement things I have done, they work if I have got the right tool, but if I try to make something else fit the purpose, it doesn't look as good. It's like cooking. You have to have the correct spoons.”

Acquisitive buyer: “I went one day and I bought a pair of brown ones because I wanted--I had bought some jeans with some brown on the back and so you couldn't really wear black because brown and black don't--I mean you can wear brown and black, but I don't like to, so.”

It is not argued here that mainstream buyers may not be positive perfectionists. It is contended that these consumers may not be particular about specific product attributes to the extent that acquisitive buyers tend to be. There may be a general sense of coordination amongst the products used to enhance one’s self concept. However, the degree of such coordination varies amongst these two sets of buyers with acquisitive buyers being more particular and selective than mainstream buyers.

Mainstream buyer: As long as I look ok, it is fine with me. I really don't need to match everything from head to toe. I know lots of people do that but that is not me. I just dress fairly plain. I am happy that way."

3.3.8.4.2.11 Materialism

Materialism relates to the material wanting of products (Richins and Dawson 1992, 1990) and the strong attachment that individuals feel towards material objects. Acquisitive buyers tend to possess high attachment for specific products in the categories of interest. Majority of the acquisitive buyers suggested that they find it difficult to give up the products that they have not been using for some time. Such products may not be used per se but a common justification in the form of the probability of future usage prevents them from giving up on such products. This is further strengthened by their love for specific products in a product category. Mainstream buyers, in contrast, do not demonstrate a very high level of attachment to products as many respondents revealed their gladness in giving away the products that were not in use.

Acquisitive buyer: "I don't want to throw them out because the widths change so often. That right now where a fatter tie might be in with a bigger knot. I mean, that wasn't the case a few years ago, so why get rid of it when it's going to come back in style in a couple of years? So they graduate, as far as the width of the tie goes. And I will spill it. And I'm not a good thrower-outer. And I don't like throwing things out. I go in the closet and say, "Why don't I get rid of these things?" And something in the back of my head goes, "You never know when you are going to need it.""

Mainstream buyer: "Probably, thank God, it's out of my closet. I'm tired of all that stuff being in there."

3.3.8.4.2.12 Need for Control

Maintenance of control is a fundamental human motivation (Friedland 1992, Lefcourt 1973, Averill 1972). Control is directly related to person's coping with the external environment. Acquisitive buyers tend to perceive the importance of controlling the external environment as an important factor in their lives. In addition, they use material objects to help them enhance their sense of control so that they are prepared for any eventuality that may be bestowed on them. Dan's (age 42) need for ties that range from three inches in width, to

narrow ones portrays his need to avail of them when the situation arises. He does not throw the ties as in his mind; he could use them whenever he needs them. This sense of security that he is in control gives him a sense of mastery and efficacy (Friedland 1992).

Acquisitive buyer: "Shoes are necessary and I guess having enough of anything is a form of security. It helps to have different shoes, some for casual wear, others for formal wear and office wear. So like, it helps to have the right shoes when you need them rather than having to run to the store and buy them."

The sense of an enhanced need for control is lesser amongst mainstream buyers.

Though they also prefer to have control over the environment, mainstream buyers may not consider the need for material objects to help them achieve it.

Mainstream buyer: "I tend to mix and match and stretch my closet. I don't need to have different clothes just for specific parties or for work. I know of people who have clothes just for one occasion and it is for one occasion only! I can easily wear the same outfit and switch up with a scarf or belt and I am ready to go. All of us have special events to attend. But that does not mean that you have to have special things for it. You can still wear your existing stuff and still feel special."

3.3.8.4.2.13 Constant, Purposive, Deliberate Search

To know about the specific products that match their criteria of needs, acquisitive buyers are on a constant lookout for them. Shopping for products may be online or offline. For example, Dan spends forty-five minutes every day to search for the next gray suit that he wants to acquire. Similarly, Amanda (age 22) goes to the mall once every week to find out the latest in shoes and clothes and she plans to acquire in the near future. Once she picks out the product that she wants to acquire, she does the rounds of the mall to wait and check when the prices are reduced and she would actually purchase the product. Thus, the search is deliberate and purposive, related to the product of interest. This is in contrast to the random purchasing of products representative of buyers with lower levels of self-control. Besides, their level of interest in the product category and their need to develop a consumption vocabulary may entice them to know more about the category of interest.

Acquisitive buyer: "I don't feel like I'm always going shopping to buy stuff for myself but I'm always looking oh! I like that, there's a piece I need for my wardrobe or I need some shoes or

I need something for the house so I'm always looking to see what stores have. It's like oh! I like that. I'm going to keep watching it until they put it on sale.”

Mainstream buyers, on the other hand, spend far less time shopping for products of interest. They tend to shop only when the need arises and their needs are not as frequent as those of the acquisitive buyers. Thus, though their shopping may be thoughtful and deliberate, it may not be constant and at a vigorous pace. Once a product is purchased, the mainstream buyer may not shop for a considerable length of time in that particular product category till the need arises again. Besides, they may not spend time to develop an elaborate product vocabulary and hence, may not experience the need to shop to gain more knowledge.

Mainstream buyer: “I’m not always a shopper; I’m not going to go shopping because it is a hobby. I go shopping when I need something, when I don’t need it, I tend not to go. I could avoid the mall very easily.”

3.3.8.4.2.14 Ever-Expanding List of Needs

Another characteristic feature of acquisitive buyers is the ever-expanding list of needs that necessitates purchase. These buyers move from one acquisition to the next such that each purchase complements the inventory. Each purchase is based on certain requirements of functionality, style and color and the next item to be purchased would be different from all others that already exist in the inventory. Their refined preferences and needs based on minute differences enhance the likelihood of expanding the portfolio of upcoming purchases to be made. Unlike collectors where set completion is important, acquisitive buyers do not generally bring about a closure to the list of products to be bought as these are purchased based on certain inherent needs. Hence, decisions regarding the subsequent purchases are made in advance, again, based on specific requirements.

Acquisitive buyer: “I would like to go shopping for a big whisk, a nice handle, and wide rings to really whip up -- and I would like to shop for a medium one and a little one. I'd like all the sizes.”

For mainstream buyers, purchases of products of a particular product category are infrequent and hence, an ever-expanding list does not normally exist. A product is purchased

when the need is felt, for example, to replace an existing product or to add to the inventory based on necessity.

Mainstream buyer: “I generally have just about everything I need. At one time, I am only having one product, one bottle. If I end up with two, it maybe because I’m running low on the other bottle and I have a backup. I don’t plan to have different types of products as I only use certain brands.”

3.3.8.4.2.15 Preparedness – Future Orientation

It is deduced that acquisitive buyers tend to be more future oriented compared to mainstream buyers. The existing inventory of products and the ever-expanding list that necessitates purchase help acquisitive buyers to be prepared for any eventuality that may chance upon them. Connie’s six different types of graters help her to be prepared for any type of grating that needs to be done, whether course or fine, her products help her to be organized and equipped so that she has the right tool for the right job at the right time. Besides, acquisitive buyers tend not to throw away their products as they perceive themselves using these products for upcoming events. Such preparedness for future events is the hallmark of acquisitive buyers. This behavior is in sharp contrast to mainstream buyers who have fewer tools to manage a situation. It is not to undermine the preparedness of mainstream buyers. Such buyers do not feel the need to possess specific products for specific purposes. Rather, they may use one product for various purposes.

Acquisitive buyer: “Again it goes back to me but if it were something for a formal occasion that I may only experience once every 3 years, but I can wear that shirt 3 years from now for that formal occasion and not need to go buy something else, I would do that.”

Mainstream buyer: I have more clothes for the winter. So I go through my closet and see what I have and maybe I can match a dress with a sweater so I can either dress up or down. Again, I really don’t have clothes that I would wear on only specific time. I just use my existing clothes for many occasions.”

3.4 Summary of Differences amongst All Buying Types

3.4.1 Differences between Acquisitive Buyers and Other Lower Self-Control Buyers

With an understanding of the various types of buying and how acquisitive buying differs from these types of buying, it appears from the above discussion that acquisitive

buying is markedly different from compulsive buying, impulsive buying, excessive buying, compulsive collecting, fixated buying and hoarding (Table 9). A common feature amongst all buying types is the lack of self-control exhibited by the buyers. Besides, purchases are rendered to pacify certain inner anxieties or inadequacies. Hence, these buyers have been grouped together based on their commonalities and have been named 'buyers with lower self-control.' Next, effort has been made to distinguish this set of buyers from acquisitive buyers. The only similarity between acquisitive buying and these above-mentioned negative buying types is the existence of a large inventory and repetitive buying of products. A glance through the list of comparison of acquisitive buying and the other types of negative buying owing shows that there are approximately 23 differences between the former and the latter (Table 10). The differences between acquisitive buyers and other extreme buyers with negative self-control are summarized below:

3.4.1.1 Personality Trait Differences

Acquisitive buyers demonstrate a higher level of self control and self-esteem than negative buying consumers. With an internal locus of control, they tend to have greater self-confidence and need for control than other negative buying individuals. Besides, variety seeking traits are higher amongst acquisitive buyers than the other type of buyers. In addition, acquisitive buyers do not suffer from anxiety and depression that is characteristic of negative buying consumers.

3.4.1.2 Characteristics and Factors

Most negative buying consumers tend to remain preoccupied with thoughts of purchases. Their time preferences are related to the present as they prefer to reduce negative tensions and anxieties through the process of shopping and purchases while acquisitive buyers are future oriented, accumulating products that help them to be prepared for any eventuality.

Table 9: Similarities and Differences between Acquisitive Buyers and Other Extreme Buyers with Lower Self-control

Characteristics & Factors	Compulsive Buying	Impulsive Buying	Excessive Buying	Compulsive Collecting	Fixated Buying	Hoarding	Acquisitive Buying
Large inventory	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Repetitive buying	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Sudden urge		✓	✓				
Preoccupation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Set completion				✓			
Chronic behavior	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
Acute behavior	✓	✓	✓				
Time preference	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Future
Goal orientation	External	External	External		External	External	Internal
Emotional Complexity (Conflict)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Obsessive compulsive disorder	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
Love shopping	✓	✓	✓	✓			Mixed, Majority Enjoy
Functional utility of products	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Display of possessions				✓			
Group membership				✓			
Competition				✓			
Achievement of immortality/creation of history				✓			
Fear of scarcity				✓		✓	
Consumption vocabulary				✓			✓
More needs per product category							✓
Refined preference							✓
Expanding list							✓
Purchase to bring relief from internal discomfort	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Insider-outsider phenomenon							✓
Emotional attachment to product				✓	✓	Unusually high	To a certain extent
Impulse control disorder	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Personality Traits							
Self control	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	High
Self esteem	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	High
Materialism	High	High	High	High	High	High	High
Dependence	✓						
Approval seeking	✓		Probably	✓			
Locus of control	External	External	External	External	External	External	Internal
Negative perfectionism	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	Positive Perfectionism
Self confidence	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	High
Variety seeking							✓
Need for control							✓
Brand loyalty				✓			
Anxiety and depression	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Purchase Process							
Process more important than product	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Purposive, deliberate, thoughtful search							✓
Disregard for consequences	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Information processing	Holistic	Holistic	Holistic	Probably Holistic	Holistic	Holistic	Analytical
Product category specificity				✓	✓	✓	✓
Look for uniqueness of product				✓			✓
Think before buying							✓
Pickiness in selection				✓			✓
Post-Purchase Consumption							
Short span of usage							✓
High attachment				✓		✓	✓
Maintenance / mounting				✓			
Consequences							
Financial problems (debt)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Guilt	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Regret	✓	✓	✓			✓	
Marital problems	✓			✓		✓	
Return products	High	High	High				Low
Withdrawal	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	

Table 10: Summary of Differences between Acquisitive Buyers and Other Extreme Buyers with Lower Self-control

Characteristics & Factors	Extreme buyers with lower self-control	Acquisitive Buying
Preoccupation	√	
Time preference	Present	Future
Emotional complexity (conflict)	√	
More needs per product category		√
Refined preference		√
Expanding list		√
Purchase to bring relief from internal discomfort or anxiety	√	
Insider-outsider phenomenon		√
Personality Traits		
Self control	Lower	Higher
Self esteem	Lower	Higher
Materialism	Higher	Higher
Locus of control	External	Internal
Self confidence	Lower	Higher
Variety seeking		√
Need for control		√
Anxiety and depression	√	
Purchase Process		
Process more important than product	√	
Purposive, deliberate, thoughtful search		√
Disregard for consequences	√	
Information processing	Holistic	Analytical
Consequences		
Financial problems (debt)	√	
Guilt	√	
Withdrawal	√	

Besides, acquisitive buyers do not suffer from emotional conflicts characteristic of negative buying consumers. Certain characteristics common to acquisitive buyers only relate to more needs per product category, refined preferences and an ever-expanding list of products that need to be acquired. Moreover, the insider-outsider phenomenon is characteristic of acquisitive buyers rather than the other set of buyers.

3.4.1.3 Purchase Process

For negative buying consumers, the process related to purchase of products is of prime importance compared to the acquisition of the product per se while it is opposite for acquisitive buyers. Besides, disregard for the consequences of shopping is the hallmark of negative buying. Acquisitive buyers demonstrate constant, deliberate, purposive and thoughtful search process based on satisfying their criteria of needs as opposed to buying products that would satisfy their inner anxiety. Information processing amongst acquisitive buyers is more analytical rather than holistic as seen amongst negative buying consumers.

3.4.1.4 Consequences

Financial problems, guilt and withdrawal are characteristic of negative buying consumers while such consequences are absent amongst acquisitive buyers.

3.4.2 Differences between Acquisitive Buyers and Higher Self-Control Buyers

Thus, acquisitive buyers possess characteristics that set them apart from all other negative buying types and hence, stand out from them. Consequently, one wonders whether acquisitive buying is similar to mainstream buying and is closely aligned to those buyers who do not necessarily suffer from lack of self-control. Table 11 summarizes the distinguishing features between acquisitive buying and other buying related to higher self-control, namely, stockpiling, mainstream buying and collecting. A glance through Table 11 shows that acquisitive buying shows far more similarities with and fewer differences from buying represented by higher self-control compared to those seen earlier. Similarities between acquisitive buying and other buying related to higher self-control are related to rational justification of purchases, deliberate, thoughtful, purposive search process and lack of guilt, regret and return of goods. Besides, all these buyers exhibit high degree of self-control and internal locus of control. However, acquisitive buyers do differ from stockpiling consumers, mainstream buyers and collectors as given below (Table 12).

Table 11: Similarities and Differences between Acquisitive Buyers and Other Extreme Buyers with Higher Self-control

Characteristics and Factors	Stockpiling	Mainstream Buying	Collecting	Acquisitive Buying
Rational justification	√	√	√	√
Inventory	High	Low	High	High
Type of Inventory	Multiple units of same product	Single unit of few products	Single unit of different products	Single unit of different products
Type of Inventory	Functional	Functional	Functional/Sacred	Functional
Type of inventory	More Inventory of same brand			More inventory of different brands
Display of products			√	
Purchase mainly based on pricing & promotional benefits	√			
Delay in gratification		√		√
Use of product for social identity			√	
Use of product for self identity			√	√
Set completion			√	
Consumption vocabulary			Refined	Refined
Refined preferences				√
Ever expanding list				√
Brand switching				√
Repetitive purchase			√	√
Insider-outsider phenomenon				√
Biased estimate of inventory & inelastic adjustments	√			
Love for shopping			√	√
Personality Traits				
Locus of control	Internal	Internal	Internal	Internal
Self control	High	High	High	High
Materialism	Higher	Lower	Higher	Higher
Variety seeking				√
Positive perfectionism				√
More needs per product category				√
Future orientation	√		√	√
Attachment to products	√		√	√
Need for control				√
Purchase Process				
Deliberate, purposive search	√	√	√	√
Thoughtful purchase	√	√	√	√
Constant Search			√	√
Purchase based on future price or promotional uncertainty	√			
Complex inventory management	√			
Product specificity	√		√	√
Pickiness in selection		√		√
Product more important than process	√	√	Maybe	√
Frequency of purchase				High
Post purchase consumption				
Increase in consumption	√			
Preparation for display (mounting & cataloging)			√	
Short span of consumption				√
Consequences				
Guilt				
Return of goods	Low	Low	Low	Low
Regret				
Financial problems			Maybe or may not	
Preparedness for future events	√		√	√

Table 12: Summary of Differences between Acquisitive Buyers and Mainstream and Other Extreme Buyers with Higher Self-control

Charateristics and Factors	Extreme and mainstream buyers with higher self-	Acquisitive buyers
Refined preferences		✓
Ever expanding list		✓
Brand switching		✓
Insider-outsider phenomenon		✓
Personality Traits		
Attribute level variety seeking		✓
More needs per product category		✓
Need for control		✓
Post purchase consumption		
Short span of consumption		✓

3.4.2.1 Differences in Personality Traits

Acquisitive buyers differ from others in terms of possessing a greater need for control, demonstrating more needs per product category and manifesting a variety seeking nature.

3.4.2.2 Characteristics and Factors

Because of their refined preferences and an ever-expanding list of products that necessitate acquisition, acquisitive buyers stand out from other higher self-control buyers. Whereas brand loyalty, brand trust and reliability are characteristic of mainstream buyers and collectors, brand switching is the hallmark of acquisitive buyers. Finally, the insider-outsider phenomenon sets acquisitive buyers apart from the other types of buyers.

3.4.2.3 Post-Purchase Consumption

Unlike stockpiling consumers, mainstream buyers and collectors, acquisitive buyers tend to consume a product for a short span before transferring their attention to the next product. This behavior is closely related to their sub-categorical variety seeking nature that sets them apart from other buyers.

Thus, though acquisitive buyers show some characteristics that overlap with buyers with higher self control, they manifest characteristics that demonstrate their uniqueness and set them apart. In all, the inimitability of these buyers makes them one of a kind and establishes this buying type as a phenomenon that stands on its own. Consequently, this exercise helps establish acquisitive buying as a phenomenon that deserves further review.

3.5 Extreme Buying Typology

This final section helps tie together the study of extreme buying in terms of the development of a typology of extreme buyers. The term extreme buying refers to purchases that result in a large inventory of products. In some types of buying this results in the surge of inventory of a few product categories (for example, in acquisitive buying, collecting, stockpiling etc.) while in others, it may result in purchases in a number of product categories (for example, in compulsive buying, excessive buying, etc.). Along with acquisitive buying, this study considers compulsive buying, impulsive buying, excessive buying, fixated buying, hoarding, compulsive collecting, stockpiling, and collecting as other members of extreme buying. Mainstream buying, though not a part of extreme buying has been added to the typology as it helps us understand how various extreme types of buying differ from this type of ordinary or average buying.

3.5.1 Literature on Shopping Typologies

Extant literature has discussed shopping typology at great length (Westbrook and Black 1989, Bellenger and Korgaonkar 1980, Darden and Reynolds 1971, Stone 1954). The first taxonomy of shoppers was provided by Stone (1954) who characterized shoppers into economic consumers, personalizing consumers, ethical consumers and apathetic consumers. The variety of shopping motivations suggested in the literature (e.g. Tauber 1972) are summarized and framed by the motivational typology suggested by Westbrook and Black (1989). They classified shoppers on seven dimensions of shopping motivation, namely,

anticipated utility, role enactment, negotiation, choice optimization, affiliation, power and authority and stimulation. The more recent classifications deal with online shopping (Rohm and Swaminathan 2004, Kau, Tang and Ghosh 2003) with shoppers classified as convenience shoppers, variety seekers, balanced shoppers and store-oriented shoppers.

Past research has also dealt with typologies related to various types of buying behavior. For example, Edwards and DeSarbo (1996) created a typology of compulsive buying behavior in which two groups of compulsive buyers were identified based on differential drivers of their compulsive buying. However, no research related to the creation of a typology that considers various types of extreme buyers exists in extant literature. This essay, thus, contributes to the body of research on shopping by creating a typology that takes into consideration the various types of extreme buying, namely, compulsive buying, impulsive buying, excessive buying, fixated buying, compulsive and non-compulsive collecting, hoarding, stockpiling and acquisitive buying. This section also contributes in terms of positioning acquisitive buying in the theoretical space occupied by various extreme buying types and helps further delineate this buying type from others.

3.5.2 Self-Control as the Basis of Extreme Buying Typology

One factor that sets acquisitive buyers apart from other extreme buying types is the inner psychological issues faced by the consumers and self-control or self-regulation is one of them. This theme has been discussed throughout the length of this study and hence, forms the basis of the typology discussed subsequently. Self-control has been defined as the command over oneself to bring the self in line with a desirable outcome or goal (Baumeister 2002, Baumeister et al. 1998, Carver and Scheier 1998, Mischel and Shoda 1995, Hoch and Lwenstein 1991). According to Baumeister (2002), self-control failures occur owing to three causes. First, conflicting goals and standards undermine control, such as when the goal of feeling better immediately conflicts with the goal of saving money. Second, failure to keep

track of one's own behavior renders control difficult. Third, depletion of self-regulatory resources makes self-control less effective.

A number of studies have been conducted to explain the factors affecting self-regulation. Ferraro, Shiv and Bettman (2005) have found that mortality salience affects self-regulation while Mukhopadhyay and Johar (2005) suggest that consumers' lay theories of self-control have an effect as well. Vohs and Faber (2007) have extended the theory on self-regulatory resources and suggested that consumers have a finite reservoir of self-regulatory resources; using will power and self-control in one setting may deplete the resources required for the next setting. These researchers empirically showed that resource-depleted people feel stronger urges to buy, are willing to spend more and actually spend more money in unanticipated buying situations than do people with intact resources.

3.5.2.1 Extreme Buyers with Lower Self-Control

Two reasons can be attributed to grouping compulsive, impulsive, excessive, fixated buyers, hoarders and compulsive collectors together (Figure 2). 1) In situations when self-regulation is minimal, the rational purchase decisions of unregulated buyers may be overwhelmed by product stimuli (as in the case of impulsive buyers) or by mounting life crises (in the case of compulsive buyers) (LaRose and Eastin 2002) or by negative psychological factors (as in hoarding, fixated buying and compulsive collecting). In such cases, consumers tend to be extreme in their purchasing behaviors as a means of relieving themselves from internal stressors evident amongst compulsive (Hirschman 1992), impulsive (Vohs and Faber 2007), excessive (Wu et al 2006) and fixated buyers (Belk, Wallendorf, Sherry, Holbrook and Roberts 1988), hoarding consumers (McKinnon et al. 1989) and compulsive collectors (Belk et al 1988). Hence, these types of buyers have been categorized together in the typology of extreme buyers as consumers with lower levels of self-control. 2) The discussions in the previous sections have shown that all these buying types show certain

commonalities other than lack of self-control that act as the basis for grouping them together.

For example, Table 10 shows that these buyers are similar in the following aspects:

1. A large inventory
2. Preoccupation with purchasing
3. Repetitive purchasing
4. A present-oriented time preference
5. Purchases acting as a source of relief from inner anxieties
6. Lower self-esteem
7. External locus of control
8. Lower self-confidence
9. Experience of anxiety and depression
10. Process of purchasing considered more important the acquisition of the products
11. Disregard for consequences of purchasing
12. Financial problems
13. Guilt
14. Withdrawal.

Thus, it can be concluded that these buying types with lower levels of self-control can be grouped together in the extreme buying typology.

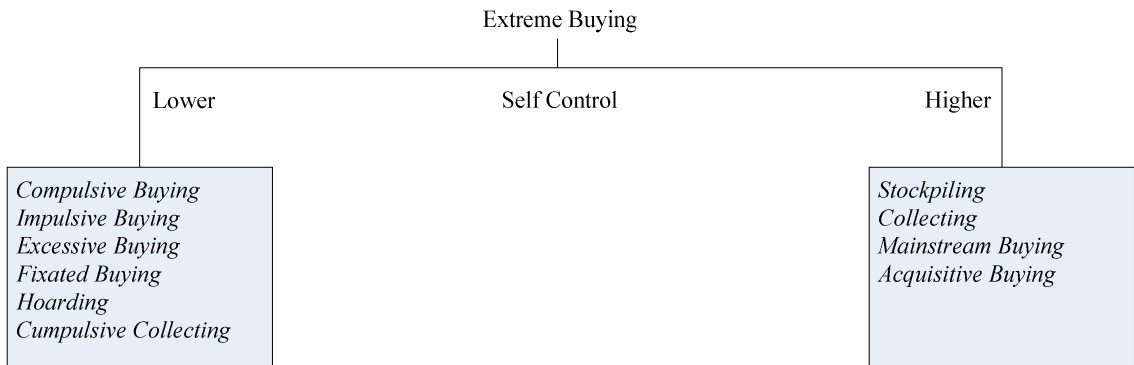


Figure 2: Extreme Buying Typology

3.5.2.2 Extreme Buyers with Higher Self-Control

On the other side of the spectrum lie those consumers who possess higher levels of self-control. The discussions provided in the previous sections of this essay show that stockpiling consumers, ordinary collectors, acquisitive buyers and mainstream buyers demonstrate higher levels of self-control. In fact, this is one of the commonalities amongst these four types of buyers. Hence, these four buying types have been grouped together.

Besides, Table 12 shows a number of other factors that are shared by these buyers such as:

1. Rational justification of purchases
2. Internal locus of control
3. Deliberate, thoughtful, purposive search
4. Low levels of post-purchase guilt and regret
5. Low levels of return of goods.

Thus, these similarities help in grouping these buyers together on the basis of higher levels of self-control.

Finally, Table 13 contrasts the two sets of buyers: consumers with lower self-control versus those with higher self-control. As seen in the Table, there are noteworthy differences between these two sets of consumers. Buyers with lower self-control also exhibit lower self-esteem and self-confidence, greater anxiety and depression, an external locus of control. For them, the process of shopping brings greater satisfaction than the acquisition of products and excessive shopping may lead to financial problems, post-purchase guilt and regret. In contrast, buyers with higher self-control exhibit higher self-esteem and self-confidence and an internal locus of control. For them, the product brings greater satisfaction than the process of shopping and these buyers rarely suffer from post-purchase guilt and regret.

Table 13: Summary Showing Differences between Consumers with Lower and Higher Self-Control

Charateristics and Factors	Buyers with lower self-control	Buyers with higher self-control
Rational justification		√
Personality Traits		
Self-esteem	Lower	Higher
Self-confidence	Lower	Higher
Anxiety and depression	Lower	Higher
Locus of control	External	Internal
Purchase process		
Deliberate, purposive search		√
Thoughtful purchase		√
Consequences		
Guilt	Higher	Lower
Return of goods	Higher	Lower
Regret	Higher	Lower

3.5.3 Discussion

The goal of this essay was to understand how acquisitive buying differs from various types of extreme consumer buying namely, compulsive buying, impulsive buying, excessive buying, fixated buying, hoarding, compulsive and non-compulsive collecting and stockpiling. Little research exists regarding acquisitive buying. Hence, it is important to demonstrate that this phenomenon is different from all the extreme buying types that have already been researched in extant literature and is a construct that has the potential to be studied for its own merit. However, one issue with acquisitive buying is the overlap of some of the features with other buying types. This factor creates challenges in understanding its true uniqueness. This essay underscores the distinctiveness of all the various extreme buying types and helps distinguish acquisitive buying from them and thus contributes to the extant literature. Specifically, acquisitive buying has been considered to be far removed from all the buying

types related to lower self-control, namely, compulsive buying, impulsive buying, excessive buying, fixated buying, hoarding and compulsive collection.

A second contribution of this study results from demonstrating that acquisitive buying is different from ordinary or mainstream or typical buying. Since consumers of both these buying types demonstrate higher levels of self-control, and acquisitive buying is considered a normal buying phenomenon, an important question therefore arises is how this phenomenon is different from normal mainstream buying. This study addresses the issue and clearly demonstrates that though both these buying types share some commonalities, acquisitive buying has certain distinctions in terms of the inherent needs for products that have been developed through refined preferences and an innate consumption vocabulary unique to these buyers. Higher levels of materialism, positive perfectionism, variety seeking behavior and a need to control the external environment separates these consumers from their mainstream counterparts.

A third contribution of this study is the development of an extreme buying typology that has not been deliberated in past literature. Extreme buying relates to the purchase of products that results in a large inventory in certain product categories. Such a typology is important as it helps to tie in various normal and atypical buying behaviors in one typology and helps readers to understand where the various buying types can be positioned in consumer's mind-space. Besides, the typology also helped to establish acquisitive buying vis-à-vis all other buying types. Self-control was used as the basis for creating the typology for three reasons: 1. this theme has been one of the most striking features amongst all the buying types that were discussed, 2. the different buying patterns can be separated using this construct as the basis and, 3. based on the similarities and differences amongst the buying types, they can be classified into types representing consumers with lower self-control (viz. compulsive buying, impulsive buying, excessive buying, fixated buying, hoarding and

compulsive collecting) and consumers with higher self-control (viz. stockpiling, non-compulsive collecting, acquisitive buying and mainstream buying). The typology shows that the former set of buyers differ from the latter with regard to a great number of constructs. In fact, the two groups may be in the opposite ends of the self-control continuum.

3.5.3.1 Limitations

There are certain limitations that are important to mention. First, extant literature does not discuss the level of inventory in case of impulsive buying. However, this phenomenon is discussed as one which results in the accumulation of large inventory. Two reasons can be cited for this: the compulsive and excessive buying literatures (Ridgway et al. 2008, 2006) suggest that both these types of buyers show certain degree of impulsive control disorders. Both these buying types refer to the existence of large inventory of goods. Hence, it is speculated that impulsive buying may also result in the accumulation of a large inventory.

Another limitation of the study is that numerous other buying types have not been considered in our discussion of the typology. Status and conspicuous buyers (McEwen and O'Cass 2004), smart shoppers (Schindler 1998), bargain hunters (Cox, Cox and Anderson 2005, Rich and Portis 1964) and deal prone shoppers (Lichtenstein, Netemeyer and Burton 1995, Blattberg, Buesing, Peacock and Sen 1978) have been omitted from the study. Since acquisitive buying relates to a purchasing behavior that result in a large inventory of products, the extant literature did not illustrate enough evidence to consider that these buying types result in a large inventory. For example, status and conspicuous buying relates to buying what the neighbors buy. Hence, this phenomenon may be more related to the purchase of high end goods for others to take notice of. Such a phenomenon may not necessarily relate to the accumulation of a large inventory or extreme buying. Similarly, smart shoppers, bargain hunters and deal prone shoppers may not necessarily accumulate fifty pairs of shoes, that is, a large inventory.

CHAPTER 4. ESSAY 3: “WHY DO I HAVE FIFTY PAIRS OF SHOES WHILE SHE HAS TEN?” A QUANTITATIVE COMPARISON OF ACQUISITIVE AND MAINTREAM CONSUMERS

4.1 Overview

The last two essays furnished an impression of the phenomenon of acquisitive buying in terms of its characteristics, processes, mediators and moderators. They also helped in laying the foundation for creating the boundaries of acquisitive buying by delineating it from other types of buying, namely, those that are associated with negative connections and consequences (for instance, compulsive buying, impulsive buying, excessive buying, compulsive collecting, fixated buying and hoarding) and those that are considered ‘normal’ (such as, stockpiling, non-compulsive collection and mainstream buying). Acquisitive buying, as suggested earlier, is considered to be a type of extreme buying without having any negative connotations and consequences and therefore, positioned closer to ordinary or normal buying. Though consumers tend to purchase multiple units in a particular product category, acquisitive buying is not associated with issues of post-purchase regret or guilt and financial problems. Besides, consumers do not experience bouts of self-control deficiencies, typical of compulsive, impulsive, excessive, fixated buyers and compulsive collectors and hoarders.

Having set acquisitive buying apart from buying related to lower self-control, the issue of delineating this buying type from those that are considered ‘normal’ is of vital importance. Therefore, this topic has been dealt extensively in the second essay in this program of study. In essence, qualitative study has been used wherever applicable to differentiate acquisitive buying from other normal buying types. Specifically, attempt was made to document how acquisitive buying differs from mainstream or ordinary buying since both the buying types share a number of common grounds. Both sets of consumers possess

high levels of self-control, both can rationally justify the purchase of products in various product categories, both do not suffer from post-purchase regret and financial problems, both purchase products that are based on their needs, for both, the acquisition of the product is more important than the process or the hunt of it and finally, for both, the purchases are not acts of whims but are well thought out. Hence, with so many commonalities between these two buying types, it is imperative to understand whether acquisitive buying is any different from mainstream buying or it is a type of mainstream buying wherein consumers purchase multiple units in a product category. Apparently, the only obvious difference to the common eye is the difference in the inventory of goods of acquisitive and mainstream buyers: acquisitive buyers tend to possess multiple items in a product category while the number of items is less for mainstream buyers. However, a deeper insight into the psyche of both these sets of buyers illustrate that their behavioral differences are emergent from their psychological disparities.

Essay two attempts to understand the psychological and behavioral differences between acquisitive and mainstream buyers. In essence, acquisitive buyers stand out from mainstream buyers in terms of their understanding and definition of their inherent needs, interest, consumption vocabulary, highly evolved preferences and preparedness for future events, to name a few. In-depth interviews of acquisitive and mainstream buyers have assisted in delineating some of these differences, thus, facilitating to establish that acquisitive buyers are a group of consumers that are greatly different from mainstream buyers as well as all the other buyers that have been studied in previous literature. In all, this phenomenon is new and no literature exists to explain the psychological factors, processes and consequences related to this buying type. This program of study is the first attempt to understand and unfurl the psyche of these buyers.

Though attempts have been made to distinguish acquisitive buying from mainstream buying at an exploratory level, it is important to demonstrate the generalizability of this phenomenon. Specifically, the question of why some consumers possess fifty shoes while others possess ten and yet are perceived as ‘normal’ in their behavior is the essence of the theme discussed throughout the program of study. This study follows the earlier studies in determining empirically the differences between acquisitive and mainstream buyers. Do acquisitive buyers differ from mainstream buyers in terms of the constructs that were identified through the qualitative analyses? Besides, a number of other issues related to acquisitive buying that help provide depth to the understanding of this phenomenon is tackled in this study. Specifically, can acquisitive buyers be differentiated from mainstream buyers based on a combination of identified psychological and behavioral constructs? Thirdly, can acquisitive buyers be differentiated from mainstream buyers based on the relationship amongst identified constructs? What are some of the factors that contribute towards the relationships amongst constructs that are important to acquisitive buyers? Are the same constructs important to understand the mainstream buyers? For example, in-depth interviews with acquisitive consumers showed that more needs per product category was the most predominant theme. What does this concept encompass and what relationship does it have with other constructs? Finally, should acquisitive buying be regarded as a phenomenon that is product specific since most consumers tend to buying in excess in certain product categories and not in others?

Thus, the goal of this study is to contribute to the existing literature on buying by: first, distinguishing acquisitive buying from mainstream buying at the construct level. These constructs have been important in identifying psychological and behavioral factors affecting acquisitive buying. This will help reinforce the characteristics and factors that make up acquisitive buying and differentiate it from mainstream buying. Such analyses will also help

provide a detailed descriptive of acquisitive buyers for the purposes of generalizability. Second, an attempt will be made to distinguish between acquisitive and mainstream buyers based on a combination of identified factors. This process will also help confirm the constructs that are central to acquisitive buying compared to mainstream buying, thus further providing an understanding of the factors that are core to the former buying behavior. Third, 'more needs per product category' has been found to be the most central characteristic of acquisitive buyers. Earlier essays have discussed this construct at the qualitative level. An attempt will be made to further elaborate this construct and describing it further. Besides, it is also important to determine the relationships that 'more needs' shares with other identified constructs and how it drives these relationships. Such a model will help determine certain factors, moderators and mediators that are important to understanding the prevalence of more needs amongst acquisitive buying. Fourth, the phenomenon of acquisitive buying will be tested across a number of product categories. This will help determine whether this buying type is product specific or whether it is a phenomenon that is more generalizable as it transcends product categories.

The remainder of the study progresses as follows: first a brief literature review will be conducted regarding the differences between acquisitive buying and mainstream buying based on previously identified key constructs and hypotheses will be ascertained. Next, discussions of the methodology of data collection will be discussed for pretest and the main study. This will be followed by an analysis of the results. Three different types of analyses will be discussed: means test to determine the differences between acquisitive and mainstream buying amongst key constructs, logistic regression to help differentiate the two buying types based on key constructs identified through exploratory research and lastly, a regression and mediation analysis will help determine the model of relationships amongst

needs and other key constructs amongst acquisitive buyers and their mainstream counterparts. Finally, discussion, implications and future research will be discussed.

4.2 Literature Review and Hypotheses Development

4.2.1 Delineating Acquisitive Buyers from Mainstream Buyers at the Construct Level

A number of constructs core to acquisitive buying have been identified in the previous studies. An attempt will be made to determine whether acquisitive buyers differ from mainstream buyers on these key constructs. A brief review of these constructs is given below that will help delineate the two buying types:

4.2.1.1 Differences in Personality Traits

4.2.1.1.1 More Needs per Product Category

Needs are inherent to all and products help satisfy basic needs. Tauber (1973) has suggested that needs are the most important determinant of purchase intentions. A need produces activities on the part of a consumer who maintains this activity until the consumer-environment situation has been altered so as to reduce the need (O'Brien, Tapia and Brown 1977, Hall and Lindzey 1957). For acquisitive buyers, the needs are multifarious and they dominate the reason behind the purchase of products of a particular product category. Even when the environment is altered, the needs may not be reduced for these sets of buyers.

One important way to distinguish acquisitive buyers from their mainstream counterparts is through the understanding of their needs. Earlier, essay one showed this important element that defines acquisitive buying: respondents discussed the various types of needs that are relevant to the various reasons behind the purchase of multiple products within a particular product category. For example, the purchase of various shades of tan colored shoes was related to wearing them with specific outfits. Each shoe has a specific purpose and has been purchased with particular outfits in mind. Such needs are considered inherent and relate to certain degree of specificity based on minute differences as visualized by acquisitive

buyers. To an outsider, the products may appear the same. However, to the acquisitive buyer, each product is different in terms of its functionality, style and purpose and can be used only in particular circumstances. Hence, acquisitive buyers tend to require an array of products to satisfy different needs that are consumed in different situations. This thin-slicing of needs has been identified as the most central construct that characterizes acquisitive buyers and sets them apart from other buyers. Pooler (2006) refers to a fine distinction between needs and wants of consumers. While for some, this inherent cultivation of the needs may be elevated to a want. However, for an acquisitive buyer, this need for different products for different purposes is essential for fundamental functioning. For mainstream buyers, needs are important and satisfy the functioning at a basic level. However, the refinement that is evident amongst acquisitive buyers is ignored by mainstream buyers. Either they may not experience the need to possess different products for different purposes or they may experience the needs but may use one product for multiple purposes and thus satisfy various needs with a single product. Through the exploratory study (see essay 2), it has been found that mainstream buyers do not feel the need to possess different products for different purposes. Rather, they feel comfortable using a single product to satisfy multiple needs. In all, acquisitive buyers tend to experience more needs per product category such that,

H1: The number of needs per product category is greater for acquisitive buyers than for mainstream buyers.

4.2.1.1.2 Knowledge and Consumption Vocabulary

According to Bruner (1964), language and thoughts influence each other and both influence what we experience from reality. It is this relationship between thoughts, language and reality that shapes our world and helps us determine how products shape our lives and which products we like and we need. Knowledge or consumption vocabulary is a taxonomic framework that allows people to identify product features, to evaluate the levels of those

features and to identify the relationships of those features and consumer's own evaluations of the product (Hoch and Deighton 1989, Lynch 1985). Such a vocabulary determines the degree of knowledge that we possess regarding certain product categories and helps determine our preferences for products (West, Brown and Hoch 1996). A consumption vocabulary helps acquisitive buyers to learn more about products in a product category in terms of affecting motivation to know more about the products as well as assisting in developing an analytical framework that helps in identifying relevant product features. An advanced consumption vocabulary also helps in increasing the speed of processing of product attribute related information, thus reducing the probability of errors and increasing the consistency of performance (Hunt and Agnoli 1991). A consumption vocabulary helps in swift learning of product attribute features by providing a pre-existing structure or schema on the category of interest. This fact is consistent with the finding that experts have better-defined and more complex category schemas (Bettman and Sujan 1987, Chase and Simon 1973, Maheswaran and Sternthal 1990, Sujan 1985). Thus, a consumption vocabulary allows acquisitive buyers become increasingly experts as they discover preferences for additionally, implicit attributes and use vocabulary based attributes in a more consistent way. Besides, such a vocabulary also helps to free up additional cognitive capacity to allow acquisitive consumers to discover additional implicit cues (Klayman 1988), hidden for the uninitiated mainstream buyers. Such implicit knowledge may relate to the minute differences that are evident to them as opposed to the mainstream buyers. For the mainstream buyers, the basic structure of the consumption vocabulary may not have developed and hence, their product category schema and language may consist of those that relate to the novice buyers. These differences in the refinement of the product category schema may lead acquisitive buyers to have more intricate knowledge of product differences that is lacking amongst mainstream buyers. Thus,

H2: Acquisitive buyers will have a greater depth of knowledge or more intricate consumption vocabulary than mainstream buyers.

4.2.1.1.3 Interest in Product Categories

One important distinction that has been made very early in the behavior literature is that consumer needs are different from interests in products (Tauber 1977). Acquisitive buyers tend to have a higher level of interest in the product category of choice. They have a higher general level of interest in the product or the centrality of the product to their ego-structure (Day 1970). Thus, interest in a product is related to its perceived value, needs and the consumer's self-concept (Bloch and Richins 1983). Extant literature has treated interest in the light of involvement. Most of the researchers have defined involvement as a long terms interest in a product category (Bloch and Richins 1983). Since both interest and involvement are highly correlated, in this study, effort has been made to assess interest rather than involvement. Acquisitive buyers tend to have a higher interest in the product category of choice compared to the mainstream buyers. This conclusion is fairly intuitive as acquisitive buyers tend to understand better the intricacies of the products and spend effort, cognition and time on understanding these differences. This process helps an acquisitive buyer to participate in complex decision making (Rosenbloom 2007) involving various attributes that are not evident to the uninitiated. A mainstream buyer may not want to spend as much effort and time in developing a more refined vocabulary as he/she may not have the interest in the product category. He/she may purchase a product when the need arises and may not even think about the product category till further needs arise. However, for acquisitive buyers, the interest is ongoing as they tend to learn more of the product category and hone their expertise. Hence,

H3: The level of interest in a product category is higher for acquisitive buyers than for mainstream buyers.

4.2.1.1.4 Materialism

Materialism has been treated as a value that influences the way consumers interpret their environment and structure their lives. Materialism is defined as the importance ascribed to the ownership and acquisition of material goods in achieving major life goals or desired states (Richins and Dawson 1992). Three dimensions of materialism have been identified in extant literature: the use of possessions to judge success of others and oneself, the centrality of possessions in a person's life and the belief that possessions and their acquisition lead to happiness and life satisfaction. Materialism is the hallmark of most of the extreme buying types that have been studied in this program of study. Majority of the extreme buyers including those with lower levels of self-control rank high on the materialism scale. Consumers high on the materialism scale tend to value accumulation of goods as central to their lives, and view possessions as being critical in achieving happiness and well-being. Fournier and Richins (1991) suggest that consumers high in materialism pursue and obtain possessions in order to achieve a valued goal, for example self-affirmation. Acquisitive buyers tend to be higher on the materialism scale as they tend to view material objects, that is, products of interest to be central in achieving certain goals of being prepared for any eventuality. They tend to experience emotional attachment to the products of interest and do not prefer to dispose them as long as they consider that the products will help them in catering to their varied needs and helping them achieving their sense of self-concept. On the other hand, mainstream buyers tend to be less materialistic compared to acquisitive buyers as objects tend to satisfy their needs and may not always be the source of attachment. They may find it easier to dispose of the products when not consumed and may not hang on to them for the purposes of perceived future use. In other words,

H4: Acquisitive buyers tend to manifest higher levels of materialism than mainstream buyers.

4.2.1.1.5 Normal or Positive Perfectionism

Normal or positive perfectionism is defined as those consumers who derive a very real sense of pleasure from the labors of a painstaking effort to achieve a goal and who feel free to be less precise at other situations and as the situation permits (Hamachek 1978). These individuals tend to derive a positive feeling out of their effort, which heightens their sense of well-being and they feel encouraged to continue on and further improve their efforts (Hawkins, Watt and Sinclair 2006). These consumers differ exceedingly from neurotic perfectionists who cannot accept any limitations in their efforts to attain the high standards they set for themselves. These individuals are driven more by their sense of failure than the pursuit of excellence and as a result, fail to obtain satisfaction either with themselves or their performance (Hill, McIntyre and Bacharach 1997, Pacht 1984). Hamachek (1978) suggested that the perception of efforts of neurotic perfectionists never seem to be on par with their expectations as they never seem to do things good enough to warrant a positive feeling. Such neurotic perfectionism is characteristic of extreme buyers with lower self-control such as compulsive buyers, hoarders, fixated buyers and compulsive collectors.

Acquisitive buyers tend to be positive perfectionists (Stoeber and Otto 2006) as their pursuit of excellence helps them to pick products that match their extremely specific needs. Each product is scrutinized for the purpose that it would cater to and only those products that would help achieve the goals towards perfectionistic strivings would be selected. Since acquisitive buyers tend to have specific needs for specific products, a positive perfectionistic attitude helps them to select products that rightly match their specific needs. In addition, since every need is different, hence every product is selected with painstaking care to match the diverse needs. Such acts though, do not reach any neurotic levels and thus, are not deemed compulsive or abnormal. Rather, such strivings to be perfect help them to remain successful in their pursuit for the right product for the right purpose. For mainstream buyers,

perfectionistic strivings are not as important as products are not considered central to their well-being and self-concept. For these buyers, products of particular product categories help achieve certain life goals. Beyond such achievements, products do not play a central role in their understanding of themselves and their daily undertakings. Besides, products do not play a major role in their success and their pursuit of excellence. Hence, these buyers do not tend to manifest high levels of normal or positive perfectionism. Thus,

H5: Acquisitive buyers will exhibit higher levels of positive perfectionism than mainstream buyers.

4.2.1.1.6 Variety Seeking

Variety seeking is a novelty seeking behavior (Kahn, Kalwani and Morrison 1986) and consumers tend to exhibit a greater preference for exploration and trying new things. It promotes greater elaboration and thinking about products that are of interest (Kahn and Isen 1993). Simonson (1990) discussed two motives behind variety seeking. One motive is consumer's need for novelty, change and complexity, which are inherently satisfying (Driver and Streufert 1964, Fiske and Maddi 1961). Another motivation for variety seeking relates to the notion of satiation, suggesting that a change from one behavior to another is attributable to the decreasing marginal value of the original behavior. McAlister (1979) showed that the likelihood of satiation with attributes in which a particular item is rich would lead to the increasing attractiveness of alternative that offer other attributes. However, Simonson (1990) provides additional motivation for variety seeking. According to him, consumers tend to desire for variety and change when they are uncertain about their preferences. Besides, a selection of variety helps reduce risk of disappointment in several periods should the consumer's preference for that item decrease after the purchase is made. And finally, he suggests that in making multiple purchase decisions, selection of the different top candidates

for purchase can simplify the task and save the time and effort needed to determine which alternative is the most preferred.

The core notion behind variety seeking is that consumers tend to recognize the differences amongst attributes and tend to appreciate better the unique features offered by various products. This tendency helps in reducing boredom and satiation (Redden 2008) as consumers tend to search for minute differences at the subcategory level. Expertise and a complex consumption vocabulary help greatly in terms of appreciating the minute differences at the attribute and sub-attribute levels of various products. Such abilities help in creating greater levels of satisfaction and exploration of the novelty and uniqueness of products (see essay one and two for more details).

Acquisitive buyers tend to experience the need to be variety seekers. For them, the intricate organization of the attributes at an extremely minute or subcategorical level entices them to greater information processing. This involvement increases their knowledge or consumption vocabulary and helps them to greater appreciate the products. They feel the need to purchase the product that perfectly fits their requirement as opposed to the ones that are more generic. Once a product that matches their criteria of needs is purchased, the need for the purchase of a similar product may not arise. They then tend to search for the next product that differs ever so slightly at the subcategorical level. This behavior keeps them interested in the product category and helps to increase their expertise through better development of their schema. They tend to store the information of each of the products that are different at the attribute level as an exemplar (Peracchio and Luna 2006). Such information helps in distinguishing attributes of products that have already been acquired and to acquire new products with different attributes. Besides, acquisitive buyers tend to be satiated very quickly and their variety seeking nature helps them to be continuously interested in a particular product category. Third, unlike Simonson's (1990) suggestion that consumers

may be uncertain about their preferences or that their preferences may change after a product is bought and variety helps them to tide over situations when they are uncertain, it is suggested that acquisitive buyers may be fairly certain and stable regarding their preferences (refer to essays one and two). However, their need for specificity for products differing in the uniqueness of various attributes may encourage them search for variety.

Mainstream buyers, in contrast, may not have a well defined schema. They may store information at the basic level in their schema and may not find the need to store exemplars as products that are different from one another. Hence, their understanding of product attributes at the subcategorical level may be limited. They may not comprehend the need to search for products that differ in uniqueness of product attributes. This results in lower levels of variety seeking. Besides, their level of satiation may be lower as preferences may be extremely stable and change may be difficult to adjust to. They may tend to stay with the brands that they have used earlier and feel comfortable about, thus negating the need for the search of variety and novelty every time they purchase a product of a particular category (see essay two). Third, like acquisitive buyers, mainstream buyers may possess stable preferences. However, their lack of elaborate and complex needs prevent them from searching for variety as they tend to avail of tried and tested products. Finally, the sense of trust and reliability of products that have helped them through their daily life may be another reason that they may not be high on variety seeking. Thus, it can be hypothesized that,

H6: Acquisitive buyers will be higher on variety seeking trait than mainstream buyers.

4.2.1.1.7 Self-Concept

The concept of self focuses on how an individual perceives him or herself (O'Brien, Tapia and Brown 1977). Self-concept may be defined as a cognitive schema representing those aspects of the self that are considered, by the person, to be most emblematic of his or her true nature (Schlegel, Hicks, Arndt and King 2009). Of course, the person's assessment of

his true nature may not be the same as his or her real nature. Thus, the self concept consists of what an individual knows about himself, what he thinks of himself, and how he attempts to enhance or defend himself (Hall and Lindzey 1957). Self concept is stable, pervasive and individualistic (O'Brien et al. 1977). Besides, an individual may have more than one self concept: an actual or true self concept (how an individual presently sees himself), an ideal self-concept (a self concept to which he aspires – a more valuable one) and an expected self concept (one that takes up a developmental position between the actual and the ideal) (Humberto, Tapia, O'Brien and Summers 1975).

The notion that there is the concept of the true self has been embraced for centuries in the western society (Anderson 2004, Schneider 1999, 2004). A variety of personality theorists have considered the role of inner core or true self in psychological functioning (Freud 1961, Jung 1953, Miller 1979, Rogers 1951, Winnicott 1960). Though they have used different ways, all of these theorists converge on the central path that understanding the self helps in long term well-being. Using self-determination theory, Kernis and Goldman (2006) have linked self-concept to authenticity. These constructs are positively related to subjective well-being, self-confidence, self-esteem, positive affect and hope (Bettencourt & Sheldon 2001, Harter, Marold, Whitesell, and Cobbs 1996, Neff and Suizzo 2006, Sheldon, Ryan, Rawsthorne and Ilardi 1997).

Self concept is related to understanding the meaning of life. Thus, there appears to be something unique about the relationship between core elements of the self and the experience of meaning. Meaning is not obtained simply from performing well, but from feeling that one is in touch with and enacting goals that are expressions of who one believes he or she really is (see also Waterman, 1993). Choices and actions are thus judged in terms of how they make the self feel, and those acts that make the inner self feel good are deemed valuable. The self

thus provides legitimacy and justification to the behavior and the activities that a person is engaged in.

Self concept is affected by the social interaction process inherent in its development and enhancement. A form of social interaction occurs through the consumption of products that serve as symbols that can be used to communicate meaning to others as well as to the individual. In order to enhance his or her self concept a person associates him or herself with those products that will convey the desired meaning to him and to the others. To the extent that the products involved mean something to the person, that person may enhance his self concept by the selection of certain products and avoidance of others. Thus the selection of products is a function of what the person thinks he or she is and wants to communicate (O'Brien et al. 1977).

Self-concept affects the purchase of products for both acquisitive buyers and mainstream buyers. However, the difference lies in their perception of self concept and hence, these two types of buyers choose different types of products that reflect their personality and therefore, who they are. For acquisitive buyers, the self concept reflects their internal needs. As an illustration, an acquisitive buyer needs specific shoes that pair off with specific outfits – a three inch heel would go with longer length trousers while flats with shorter ones. This choice of products is related to their self concept wherein they visualize themselves in a particular way. For mainstream buyers, a particular shoe would work for both long and short lengths of trousers and hence their self concept, though related to who they are, may not necessarily reflect the intricacies in needs. Thus,

H7: Self-concept will reflect who they are to a greater extent for acquisitive buyers than for mainstream buyers.

4.2.1.1.8 Need for Control

Need for control relates to the need to maintain personal control over one's outcomes and need to control one's environment is central to the human species (Averill 1972, Lefcourt 1973, White 1959). Control is directly instrumental for persons' coping with their environment. In addition, control has a more general value, as an important facet of persons' self-esteem, sense of mastery, and efficacy. The importance of control is attested to by the lengths to which persons might go to preserve it if lost. If need for control is lost in one situation, individuals may try to compensate by asserting control in a different one (Abramson et al. 1978, Liu and Steele 1986, Pittman and Pittman 1980). Besides, need for control may engender illusory perceptions of controllability and individuals may even try to take control over random events (Ayerhoff and Abelson 1976, Langer and Roth 1975). However, we are limiting our study to events that are controllable and are precluding a discussion of excessive control. This is because earlier exploratory research conducted with both acquisitive and mainstream buyers did not demonstrate the manifestation of excessive or uncontrollable levels of the need to control the external environment.

Individuals differ to the extent they are willing to control their external environment (Parkes 1989). According to Burger and Cooper (1979), people's general level of control motivation is considered to interact with certain situational variables to account for behavioral differences. In this case, the situational variables may be the perception of the contexts surrounding acquisitive and mainstream buyers. Acquisitive buyers tend to think that it is extremely important that they take charge in terms of controlling future uncertainty and hence, exhibit higher levels of need for control. Products definitely play a role in helping people to be in control. Different types of graters help grate different types of food materials such that it is important for acquisitive buyers to possess different types of graters so that each can perform a different function. These products help the consumer to do away with any

uncertainty of the performance of the product and thus have greater control of the context they are in. Besides, different products with different styles, functionalities and performances help acquisitive buyers to stay prepared for any eventuality that they might experience, which is another motivation to have control over the environment. The need to selectively place pens and pencils around the house at critical places is one way to avoid the aggravation of remembering things is a simple illustration of how acquisitive buyers tend to exert control over their immediate external environment. Rather than leaving ephemeral thoughts to chance, acquisitive buyers prefer to write down information and hence the pens help them to have greater control in information gathering. While ensuring a planned distribution of their pens, they also tend to have different types of pens that would play a different type of role in the satisfaction of their needs. In contrast, mainstream buyers may not distribute pens all over their place of living because they may not feel the need to be in control of the environment. Thus, they may not feel the need to exert themselves to the extent of having different pens with different purposes in different parts of their living spaces to be in control. This arises because they fundamentally lack the need for such high levels of control. Thus,

H8: Acquisitive buyers will exhibit higher levels of control than mainstream buyers.

4.2.1.1.9 Risk Taking

It is hypothesized in this study that acquisitive buyers tend to be greater risk takers than mainstream buyers. Risk taking is related to the choices individuals make that involve the uncertainty of a potential negative outcome. Risk taking, like risk averseness, is an integral part of our lives (Borsky and Raschky 2009). In general, the decision of an individual to take risks in situations of uncertainty depends on his attitude towards risk. In the traditional theory, individuals are risk averse. However, it has been seen that where the extent of the negative outcome is in the control of the individual decision maker, it is possible to observe that people willingly take the risk for certain degree of pleasure. This pleasure associated

with risk taking increases individual utility and thus results in a positive demand for certain goods. Enjoyable excitement is important for the well-being of individuals and arouses from challenging one's physical or intellectual skills (Scitovsky 1981). Risk taking behavior in life-style activities is recognized to be a volitional behavior towards a risky choice or situation with a potentially negative outcome. Risk taking has been mainly studied in the context of gambling, smoking and drinking. However, individuals also take risk in simple incidences such as purchasing products. The potentially negative outcome relates to the uncertainty about the product performance or the uncertainty related to changes in preferences after the purchase has been made to name a few.

In psychological theory risk taking is considered to be context-dependent and determined by a function containing task, people's decision frames and their information processing strategies (Shoemaker 1993). For acquisitive buyers, the risk taking relates to choosing products that have not been used before and that has the novelty and uniqueness of product attributes different from those that have been purchased and consumed before. Such risk taking is related to the variety seeking nature of the buyers (Kahn and Isen 1993). Since each product is different in the eyes of the acquisitive buyer, a different product is preferred every time a purchase is made. Therefore, a subsequent purchase would not consist of a product that is an exact replica of a previous purchase and it will not satisfy the existing need. A variation with different functionality or performance or style is what acquisitive buyers tend to look for and hence a new product that matches specific criteria is important. Since the acquisitive buyer has not tried this product before, hence, apprehensions regarding its performance are obvious. Yet, these buyers tend to go outside their zone of comfort to purchase the product. Besides, the excitement of a new product adds to the need to take risks and purchase the same. Mainstream buyers, on the other hand, tend to be more risk averse than acquisitive buyers. For them, a product's reliability and trustworthiness is more

important than trying and testing the newness of products. This is not to undermine the fact that mainstream buyers may also test out new products. However, a tried and tested product better matches their requirements. Besides, their lower level of variety seeking plays a role in reducing the threshold of accepting risks. Thus,

H9: Acquisitive buyers exhibit higher levels of risk taking compared to mainstream buyers.

4.2.1.2 Differences Based on Characteristics

4.2.1.2.1 Refined Preferences

As defined in essay one, refined preferences relate to the liking and ability to differentiate products based on minute differences. For economists, preferences are exogenous, stable and are revealed through choice behavior (Samuelson 1952). However, it has been suggested that preferences are subject to outside influences and persuasion (Lutz 1975, Cacioppo and Petty 1985) and consumers tend to manipulate their own preferences depending on their strategic interests (Gibbs 1992). Another view regarding preferences relate to the fact that sometimes consumers may not have a well defined preference but that such preferences develop based on encountered products. Thus, consumers are affected by a variety of contextual influences that govern their preferences. Thus, preferences change when consumers are paying attention to new features and/or they attach a different level of importance to new features. Alternatively, preferences may be so shallow or poorly formulated that choices do not converge on any core preference function (Fischhoff 1991).

Einhorn and Hogarth (1987) suggest that learning about our preferences require forward and backward thinking. In the early stages, we observe our preferences and attempt to understand the determinants of those preferences from effects to causes. This is termed as backward thinking. Predicting our preferences is forward thinking, moving from causes to effects. A well developed consumption vocabulary, as seen in experts help in predicting preferences for consumers. For acquisitive buyers, this development of the consumption

vocabulary is complex and contains exemplars, which help them determine the intricacies of the products that they deal with. These buyers constantly test new product features and understand the particulars of the attributes in question. This leads to greater refinement of the understanding of the products and their preferences for certain attributes and functionalities, performances and styles over others. For mainstream buyers, since their knowledge about products may not be as refined, they may not have an in-depth knowledge about specific attributes of products. Besides, they may not care for such intricacies and may not be open to the degree of forward thinking regarding a particular product category compared to acquisitive buyers. For them, stable preferences help select products that replenish their inventory and thus satisfy their needs. Preferences do not need to change with changes in attributes of products. Acquisitive buyers, in contrast, are more concerned about increasing their inventory rather than replenishing to support their growing needs for products that differ in minute details in styles and functionalities. For them a stable preference based on specific attribute will not suffice as it will not help to satisfy the needs that are inherent to them. Hence, refineness of preferences that understand and appreciate details of products at an infinitesimal level is of utmost important to them to satisfy their needs. Thus,

H10: Acquisitive buyers exhibit higher levels of refined preferences compared to mainstream buyers.

4.2.1.2.2 Preparedness for Future Events

Associated closely with the concept of refined preferences is the need to be prepared for any eventuality. Preparedness relates to a state of readiness for any eventuality that may befall a consumer. Preparedness is a forward looking attitude that consumers adopt such that unfavorable situations such as stock outs and non-availability of products that are required for opportune moments can be dealt with. Just as businesses prepare themselves for future uncertainties, so do consumers. Some prepare themselves by having greater control over their

environment by purchasing different types of products that would help them tide over unfavorable situations. Others prepare by improvising using existing products and still others may wait for the unfavorable environment to come by before taking action. Consumers may be prepared at the strategic as well as at the tactical levels (Saban 2001). Strategic preparedness relates to being prepared at the psychological level in terms of forward thinking while tactical preparedness relates more to the actions that help consumers be in a state of preparedness. For acquisitive buyers, this preparedness relates to the purchase of different products that match different preferences that fit different needs. Different skilletes are purchased as each one has a different functionality and purpose that another may not provide. Thus different types and sizes help a consumer to remain prepared for any anticipated future cooking requirements. For mainstream buyers, this sense of urgency and preparedness may not be as heightened. Hence, multiple products may not be required to stay prepared for any eventuality. Thus, we can hypothesize that,

H11: Acquisitive buyers will exhibit higher levels of preparedness compared to mainstream buyers.

4.2.1.2.3 Brand Switching

The relationship between variety seeking behavior and brand switching has been studied at length (Kahn 1995, Ratner, Kahn, and Kahneman 1999, Pessemier 1985, Bass, Pessemier, and Lehman 1972). Variety seekers tend to change brands to enhance their stimulation for the newness of products. Various explanations have been provided for variety seeking and hence, brand switching. The dominant theory relates to optimum stimulation level – OSL (Hebb 1955, Leuba 1955). When the stimulation is above or below this OSL, consumers tend to adjust through exploration (seek variety) or avoid (inertia mode) (Raju 1980, 1981). Brand switching is considered as a result of internal need for variety (Michaelidou, Dibb and Arnott 2005). Individuals with higher levels of variety seeking tend

to switch brands to a greater extent. Thus, exploration of new product features and attributes leads consumers to change brands.

Earlier, and throughout the program of study, it has been established that acquisitive buyers tend to be variety seekers by nature. Their needs for specific and different products that differ at the attribute levels funnel the need to search for variety. It is proposed that these buyers would change brands because one brand would not be able to cater to all the different types of needs that they desire. Different brands would better cater to the specificity with which they search for products. As opposed to acquisitive buyers, mainstream buyers may not possess a high level of optimum stimulation and may not need products that are different at minute levels. They may not experience the energy and interest to look for such differences. Besides, their tried and tested brands cater to their needs and hence, trying new brands may not be an important task that they would prefer to undertake. A brand that has already been tried and tested and has performed up to their expectations would be reliable and trustworthy and hence they would purchase such a brand repeatedly till the point arrives when the brand fails or does not live up to their expectations. Thus,

H12: Acquisitive buyers will switch brands to a greater extent compared to mainstream buyers.

4.2.1.2.4 Future Orientation

Future orientation has been considered as a general preoccupation with the future or future events. Kastenbaum (1961) defined future time perspective (FTP) as "a general concern for future events" (p. 204). Future orientation is an individual differences variable. At one end of the continuum, there are consumers who do not heed future consequences but are more interested in immediate gratification. Extreme buyers with negative consequences belong to this category. These buyers are not referred to in this essay. However, on the other end of the continuum, there are consumers who consider future outcomes as a matter of

course. These individuals believe certain behaviors are worthwhile because of future benefits, even if immediate outcomes are relatively undesirable, or even if there are immediate costs. They are willing to sacrifice immediate benefits (Strathman, Gleicher, Boninger and Edwards 1994).

It is speculated that acquisitive buyers tend to be individuals with higher levels of future orientation. These buyers need specific products for specific purposes. Hence, they are ready to sacrifice immediate gratification by deferring their purchases and purchasing only when the product matches their needs. Their high level of self control is evident as they tend to defer purchases. For them, having the right product for the right need is important as the product would help them perform tasks that they perceive in the distant future. The purpose is to be prepared for any eventuality that befall them, whether it is a specific black dress for a distant concert that they plan to attend or possessing different types of leaf rakers to rake different types of leaves. For them, preparedness in anticipation of future events is important. Mainstream buyers also have certain degree of future orientation. However, they will not go to the extreme of acquiring products that may not be of use in the short term. They might wait for the right time to procure the product that they need. For them, anticipation and preparation for the future by acquiring specific products for specific purposes does not constitute an important activity. Thus, it is hypothesized that,

H13: Acquisitive buyers will exhibit higher levels of future orientation than mainstream buyers.

4.2.1.2.5 Insider-Outsider Phenomenon

As discussed in essays one and two, insider-outsider phenomenon refers to the perspective that the acquisitive buyer takes vis-à-vis the people external to the buyer. As an insider, an acquisitive buyer may not consider their inventory to be large. The main explanation behind such reasoning is that these buyers purchase products that have specific

purposes. Products are not purchased because they are fancy or nice or out of boredom. Each product purchase is well thought of and hence, there is a rational justification for each product. These products help to develop the breadth of the product category as each is an exemplar in their repertoire of products. Their thin slicing of their needs is responsible for such a unique behavior. However, for an outsider, that is a person who observes the behavior of an acquisitive buyer and does not know and understand their mindset, such excesses in terms of an outstanding inventory may be considered redundant and unnecessary. These individuals may view the increase of inventory in terms of adding on to the depth as opposed to the width. Thus, amongst acquisitive buyers, this phenomenon of a difference of opinion would be considered common. Mainstream buyers do not possess a large number of products in a product category. With a smaller inventory, outsiders do not consider their inventory as excessive and hence, this phenomenon is not characteristic of this type of buyer.

H14: The insider-outsider phenomenon is more characteristic of acquisitive buying as opposed to mainstream buying.

4.2.1.3 Differences in shopping processes and post-purchase consumption

4.2.1.3.1 Constant search for products

Information search and acquisition is considered crucial in decision making process (Einhorn and Hogarth 1981). Decisions are made based on information acquired, computed and integrated into a problem presentation (Klayman 1983). During the search and selection process, the data reorganization requires additional cognitive effort and individuals need to possess the interest, capacity and effort for such processing. Thus, certain individuals prefer to undergo this effortful information reorganization while others avoid (Janiszewski 1998). One of the potentially important factors that affect the propensity to search for products is the degree of knowledge that consumers possess. Previous researchers (Bettman and Park, 1980; Curley, Yates, & Young, 1990) showed that naive decision makers use extensive strategies in

the information search and decision processes. They spend time and cognitive resources both to solve the task in the present and to develop potentially useful criteria for application in future decisions. Therefore, once the decision has been made and the product purchased, such buyers may not want to invest similar amount of cognitive resources and effort to search and purchase another product in the product category till the need arises.

However, knowledgeable decision makers are likely to use a more directed strategy. Because of their specific knowledge, internal rules, and strategies acquired during past experiences, expert participants are better equipped for discriminating between relevant and irrelevant items during the decision-making or problem-solving process (Barrick & Spilker, 2003). Therefore, the expert decision maker is capable of reorganizing the data by discarding irrelevant items and selecting relevant ones. This activity is cognitively demanding but advantageous in terms of the lower number of items to manage and of process efficiency. This activity also helps them develop complex schema and stimulate them in further processing information for their subsequent purchases (Sacchi and Burigo 2008).

Acquisitive buyers, with their elaborate knowledge of the product category of interest tend to process relevant information and leave out irrelevant ones. They can effortlessly process large amounts of information and concentrate on the ones that are salient to them and hence, are efficient in the information search process. Since the search process is less effortful for them, they tend to be in a constant mode of information search, looking for product attributes that match their needs and that are important for the subsequent acquisition of products. Such search is deliberate, constant and purposeful, related to the matching of the right products for the right needs. Mainstream buyers on the other hand, may not have an elaborate schema and information processing for them may be a strenuous process. Thus, once a decision is made regarding a product, future activities may result in the repeated purchase of the same product. Thus, they may not be involved in a constant search process.

H15: Acquisitive buyers will be more prone to be in a constant search mode compared to mainstream buyers.

4.2.1.3.2 Expanding List of Products to Be Acquired

Acquisitive buyers do not stop after buying a product that fits their needs. The process of acquisition is never ending as their needs are constantly expanding. They may not experience satiation of products as they constantly evaluate products at the attribute level (Redden 2008). Their variety seeking nature and high levels of needs propel them to look for the latest in trends or the next set of products that will satisfy the next set of needs. This helps them to increase the width of their inventory to be prepared for anticipated future events. Mainstream buyers may purchase products to meet current needs or to replenish depleted inventory. With an under-developed schema, effortful information processing, and lack of optimal stimulation for variety, these buyers do not experience the need to increase the inventory unless there is a strong need for it. Hence, their need for an expanding list of products for future acquisition is lesser than that of acquisitive buyers.

H16: Acquisitive buyers tend to have an expanding list of products for acquisition compared to mainstream buyers.

4.2.1.3.3 Shopping experience

With a propensity to search for products, acquisitive buyers tend to consider shopping a positive experience compared to mainstream buyers. The needs to look for products that should ideally match their requirements bring about stimulation and help them increase energy and effort in the process of information as well as product acquisition. Shopping is considered more than chores as these buyers are in a constant lookout for the product that matches their needs. For mainstream buyers, once a product is acquired, they do not feel the need to return to shop for products in the same product category. Hence, for them, shopping

for products repeatedly in the same product category is considered monotonous and does not lend a positive experience.

H17: Shopping experience for acquisitive buyers generate greater levels of positive experience compared to mainstream buyers.

4.2.1.3.4 Short Span of Product Usage

Post purchase consumption for acquisitive buyers is related to a short term usage of the products. This happens because of two reasons: First, with their mind already ready to search for the next product, they tend to use the existing product sparingly and focus their attention on the next list of items to be acquired. Second, since items are purchased for specific purposes, the products may not be used unless the need arises. The specific black dress is worn only when the need arises though it may be purchased long ago in anticipation of such a need. Mainstream buyers on the other hand, may repeatedly use a product till the product fails or they feel that they need to acquire a new one to replace or substitute it. Hence, the duration of product usage is longer for mainstream buyers.

H18: The duration of product usage is lesser for acquisitive buyers than for mainstream buyers.

4.2.2 Differentiating Acquisitive and Mainstream Buying Based On a Combination of Constructs

Having differentiated acquisitive and mainstream buyers at the level of constructs, it is important to understand whether these buyers can be distinguished using a combination of constructs. If so, which constructs are predominant in helping in this distinction? This section of the essay attempts to answer these questions. The previous section distinguished the two buying types based on three different sets of constructs, namely constructs related to inherent personality traits, those related to the characteristics of acquisitive buyers and those referring to the shopping processes and post-purchase consumption. It is posited that though characteristics, shopping processes and post-purchase consumption are important

distinguishing features between acquisitive and mainstream buying, it is the personality traits that would best help distinguish between these two buying types. Inherent human nature in terms of their psychological constructs drives the behavioral constructs. Hence, attempt will be made in differentiating the buying types by using a combination of the psychological constructs namely, more needs per product category, materialism, need for control, positive perfectionism, variety seeking, consumption vocabulary and self concept. A review of the literature regarding these constructs has been provided earlier along with the rationale that explains how acquisitive and mainstream buyers are different from each other for each of these constructs. Hence, based on the review discussed earlier, certain hypotheses are proposed below:

H19: More needs per product category, materialism, self-concept, consumption vocabulary, variety seeking nature and need for control will help distinguish acquisitive buyers from mainstream buyers such that higher values of these constructs relate to acquisitive buying and lower levels relate to mainstream buying.

4.2.3 Understanding the Relationship of More Needs with Other Constructs for Acquisitive and Mainstream Buyers

This section attempts at elaborating on one of the most distinguishing features of acquisitive buyers: more needs per product category. Earlier essays have discussed this concept and used it to delineate acquisitive buyers from other types of buyers. For example, this construct have been used to distinguish acquisitive buyers from all buyers with low levels of self-control. It has also been used to differentiate acquisitive buyers from collectors, stockpilers and mainstream buyers. Hence, it is important to further elaborate on how this construct contributes towards our understanding of acquisitive buying. Hence a model of relationships between more needs and other constructs is proposed. Secondly, it is important to understand whether the relationship of needs with other constructs will change based on whether a consumer is acquisitive or mainstream.

4.2.3.1 A Model of the Relationships of More Needs with Other Constructs

West et al. (1996) have established the relationship between knowledge or consumption vocabulary and the establishment of stable preferences for consumers. According to them, when consumers possess a consumption vocabulary or knowledge regarding product attributes, they tend to develop and display better-defined, more consistent and refined preferences. Consumers with well developed knowledge or consumption vocabulary consistently use attributes explicitly included in their vocabulary to understand their preferences and make judgments regarding their purchases. In addition, a well defined consumption vocabulary also tends to free up additional cognitive capacity to allow consumers to discover additional cues or attributes (Klayman 1988). It is posited that buyers who tend to have an elaborate and complex consumption vocabulary, and this increases affects the refinement of their preferences. An underdeveloped knowledge or consumption vocabulary hinders the development of refineness of preferences as seen in novices (Hutchinson and Alba 1991).

Though the relationship between consumption vocabulary and preferences has been established, extant literature does not discuss the factors affecting consumption vocabulary. Hence, this literature is extended by suggesting certain factors that might affect consumption vocabulary in the context of acquisitive and mainstream buyers. It is suggested that the concept of more needs per product category will affect the degree of knowledge that consumers acquire. The more the need for products, the more consumers will be willing and able to collect information and test out the products. Hence, they will develop more knowledge regarding the products. It is posited that buyers with elaborate needs for specific products for specific purposes and functionalities will have a more sophisticated consumption vocabulary. Buyers whose needs are less elaborate have less complex and less sophisticated

consumption vocabulary. They may not find it necessary to identify attributes at subcategoric levels to satisfy their needs. Hence,

H20a: ‘More needs per product category’ will positively affect consumption vocabulary.

The variety seeking nature of consumers is also attributed to developing an elaborate consumption vocabulary. Specifically, the greater the need to look for variety, the greater would be the need to develop an elaborate consumption vocabulary. Since consumers with propensity for variety tend to be optimally stimulated above the threshold, they would be more inclined to search for different attributes each time they shop for products that do not exist in their inventory. Hence, variety seeking nature of consumers would enhance their need for developing an enhanced consumption vocabulary.

H20b: Variety seeking nature of consumers will positively enhance consumption vocabulary.

Positive perfectionism is also posited to affect a person’s consumption vocabulary. As discussed earlier, positive perfectionism relates to being selective in various activities such that the overall satisfaction and well-being is enhanced (Hawkins, Watt and Sinclair 2006). Whether acquisitive or mainstream, consumers tend to strive for success and hence they would strive to enhance their knowledge regarding a product category by increasing their consumption vocabulary.

H20c: Positive perfectionism will be positively related to consumption vocabulary.

Materialism is another personality trait which is considered to be important for the development of consumption vocabulary. The higher the materialism and the need for materialistic products, the greater will be the need to know more about the products and thus develop knowledge about them.

H20d: Materialism is positively related to consumption vocabulary.

H20e: Knowledge will mediate the relationship between needs, materialism, variety seeking and perfectionism and refined preferences.

4.3 Methodology

4.3.1 Pretest

The purpose of the pretest was to understand the following:

1. Whether any differences existed amongst the mainstream and acquisitive buyers on key constructs identified in essay one.
2. Whether the identified constructs were unidimensional and reliable.
3. Whether the differences among mainstream and acquisitive buyers were product-specific.
4. Since acquisitive buyers tend to buy more than average in certain product categories compared to others, would this phenomenon be specific to some product categories than others? Earlier exploratory study discussed in essay one had helped identify some of the product categories of interest to acquisitive buyers. Hence, another goal of the pretest was to validate the product categories of interest to these buyers.

4.3.1.1 Pretest Data Collection

A questionnaire was developed and administered online to students. A screener was introduced in the questionnaire that would help identify and eliminate consumers with negative connections and consequences. The screener consisted of items related to compulsive buying, impulsive buying, excessive buying, collecting, status buying and fixated buying. Besides, items related to post-purchase guilt, self control and general shopping behavior were also incorporated. Four product categories were identified from earlier exploratory research as the most important categories that acquisitive buyers tend to purchase the most: shoes, clothing, accessories (jewelry, watches and purses) and electronics. These categories represented those that both male and female shoppers were interested in. Next, for each of the product categories, the respondents were asked to write down the inventory of products, the needs related to those product categories and the number of products related to

each need. Finally, the respondents were asked to answer questions related to the most important constructs identified through the qualitative interviews. Existing scales were used for most constructs while items were created for those that were new and unique to acquisitive buyers (see Appendix E). Most items were anchored on a 7 point scale where 1=Strongly Disagree and 7=Strongly Agree (see later for a discussion of the measures).

4.3.1.2 Analysis

A total of 381 students took the survey. Thirty responses were incomplete and hence were removed from the analysis. Next, respondents scoring high on compulsive buying, impulsive buying, fixated buying and guilt items (>6 on a 7 point scale) and low on self-control (less than 3 on a 7 point scale) were eliminated from the study and the final analysis consisted of 286 respondents. All analysis was conducted at the product category level such that four sets of analyses were conducted for four product categories.

The dataset was split in two ways to identify mainstream and acquisitive buyers. One way was to divide the dataset for each of the products into an 80-20 split (80% average and 20% acquisitive) based on our understanding of the prevalence of acquisitive buyers in the general population. This notion was derived from a rough analysis of the frequency that was derived while conducting exploratory analysis. This method seemed arbitrary and hence a different method was adopted. In the second method, the dataset was divided based on a quadruple split. This was done to identify frugal buyers and those with 5 or less shoes, 20 or less clothes, 1 or less accessories and 4 or less electronics were eliminated. The rest were added to the mainstream buying categories and thus the two extreme sets of responses were considered (Holzwarth, Janiszewski and Neumann 2006). The split was conducted based on the total number of products in a particular product category. Thus, for the product category shoes, there were 107 mainstream buyers and 79 acquisitive buyers. In all, there were 158 males (56.4%) and 122 females (43.6%). However, an analysis of gender and buying type

showed that males were more likely to be mainstream buyers while females were more likely to be acquisitive buyers ($\chi^2_{(df\ 3)} = 164.9, p=0.000$).

4.3.1.3 Results

Pretest results of the screener questions showed that the compulsive buying impulsive buying items loaded low on the 7 point scale (1=strongly disagree and 7=strongly agree). This showed that the respondents were not necessarily these types of buyers. There were high on self-control (all items above 4.77). Some of The responses were mid-range for conspicuous buying, and fixated buying. Though one item on guilt was low on the scale (2.57), another item was fairly high (4.2). A study of the item showed that wordings needed to be changed for it as well as for other items of collection and fixated buying. Since conspicuous buying does not really relate to extreme buying in terms of the number of units of inventory, it was decided that the main study should not consider this item. Rather items on stockpiling and hoarding should be included (Table 14).

Table 14: Screener Results for Pretest

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Comp_buy1	286	2.24	1.260
Comp_buy2	286	1.80	1.061
Comp_buy3	286	3.08	1.918
Imp_buy1	286	2.91	1.720
Imp_buy2	286	2.45	1.559
Imp_buy3	286	2.13	1.506
Guilt1	286	4.20	1.669
Guilt2	286	2.57	1.570
Cons_buy1	286	3.72	1.630
Cons_buy2	286	4.86	1.539
Cons_buy3	286	4.58	1.589
Fix_buy1	286	3.86	1.654
Fix_buy2	286	3.77	1.655
Fix_buy3	286	3.10	1.606
SC1	286	5.33	1.481
SC2	286	4.77	1.542
Collect1	286	3.38	1.557
Collect2	286	4.50	1.624

Exploratory factor analysis was conducted for all the items of the constructs. The results showed that the all the constructs were unidimensional except for one item each for two items of perfectionism and one item of need for control. In the final analysis for the pretest, these items were removed before computing sum scales. Next, reliability analysis (Table 15) shows that Cronbach's alpha for all items were above 0.8 except for materialism (0.769). Hence, items for the respective constructs were sum scaled for further analysis. The construct of more needs was measured by summing the total number of needs per product category that each respondent had identified.

Table 15: Pretest Reliability Scores

Construct	Cronbach's alpha	Number of items
Interest	0.955	5
Knowledge	0.918	4
Brand loyalty	0.837	3
Materialism	0.769	4
Perfectionism	0.866	7
Information search	0.841	5
Self concept	0.886	5
Variety seeking	0.920	3
Need for control	0.896	5
Refined preference	0.916	7
Preparedness	0.910	5

Mean differences between acquisitive and mainstream buyers were analyzed on the constructs of interest (Tables 16 through 20) for each of the product categories. The first difference tested was the inventory of products in the four respective product categories (Table 16). The average number of shoes possessed by mainstream buyers was 11.77 (SD 7.24) while that for acquisitive buyers was 56.93 (SD 34.46), $t=-17.9$, $p=.000$. Similarly, the average number of clothes possessed by mainstream buyers was 77.79 (SD 40.46) while that for acquisitive buyers was 310.79 (188.41), $t=-16.8$, $p=.000$; average for accessories for mainstream buyers was 13.04 (SD 14.43) while that for acquisitive buyers was 120.45 (SD

215.78), $t=-6.66$, $p=.000$; average for electronics for mainstream buyers was 45.04 (SD 36.62) while that for acquisitive buyers was 478.95 (SD 1267.64), $t=-5.05$, $p=.000$.

Table 16: Total Number of Products per Product Category

		Mean	Std. Deviation	t	Sig
Shoes	Mainstream	11.77	7.245		
	Acquisitive	56.93	34.462	-17.9	0
Clothes	Mainstream	77.79	40.459		
	Acquisitive	310.79	188.413	-16.8	0
Accessories	Mainstream	13.04	14.439		
	Acquisitive	120.45	215.783	-6.66	0
Electronics	Mainstream	45.04	36.622		
	Acquisitive	478.95	1267.645	-5.04	0

Table 17: Difference between Mainstream and Acquisitive Buyers - Shoes

		Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	Sig
Needs	Mainstream	5.0654	2.07533	-10.898	175	.000
	Acquisitive	8.2658	1.90619			
Interest	Mainstream	36.2330	1.48088	-10.027	172	.000
	Acquisitive	38.0205	.90459			
Knowledge	Mainstream	2.9286	1.36214	-9.865	174	.000
	Acquisitive	4.8269	1.22892			
Brand loyalty	Mainstream	4.3084	1.26450	-.981	175	.328
	Acquisitive	4.4829	1.14169			
Materialism	Mainstream	4.8668	1.18278	-2.567	169	.011
	Acquisitive	5.3109	1.14613			
Perfectionism	Mainstream	4.7660	1.19228	-1.034	159	.303
	Acquisitive	4.9567	1.25231			
Information search	Mainstream	4.6090	1.26050	.259	159	.796
	Acquisitive	4.5584	1.32612			
Variety seeking	Mainstream	4.9741	1.24695	-6.021	178	.000
	Acquisitive	5.9524	.93301			
Preparedness	Mainstream	4.3456	1.09157	-6.093	168	.000
	Acquisitive	5.3221	1.04234			
Need for control	Mainstream	5.2699	1.06152	-2.524	175	.013
	Acquisitive	5.6390	.89680			
Refined preference	Mainstream	4.7157	1.20282	-4.856	178	.000
	Acquisitive	5.4675	.87409			
Self concept	Mainstream	5.3748	.93334	-2.200	157	.029
	Acquisitive	5.6987	1.00923			

Table 18: Difference between Mainstream and Acquisitive Buyers – Clothes

		Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	Sig
More Needs	Mainstream	6.6473	2.41482	-4.698	185	0.000
	Acquisitive	8.0833	1.59886			
Knowledge	Mainstream	3.6872	1.58974	-6.864	182	0.000
	Acquisitive	5.2279	1.60557			
Interest	Mainstream	36.465	1.52778	-5.27	185	0.000
	Acquisitive	37.5971	1.5257			
Materialism	Mainstream	4.8635	1.11658	-3.097	180	0.002
	Acquisitive	5.3403	1.1501			
Perfectionism	Mainstream	4.6151	1.20567	-2.548	185	0.011
	Acquisitive	5.0423	1.25727			
Info search	Mainstream	4.5572	1.26305	0.288	185	0.774
	Acquisitive	4.507	1.27598			
Variety seeking	Mainstream	4.9581	1.31351	-5.666	185	0.000
	Acquisitive	5.9333	1.01296			
Preparedness	Mainstream	4.4454	1.11515	-4.941	177	0.000
	Acquisitive	5.2171	1.17152			
Need for Control	Mainstream	5.1913	1.115	-2.348	185	0.020
	Acquisitive	5.5371	0.90059			
Refined pref	Mainstream	4.6832	1.10537	-5.215	178	0.000
	Acquisitive	5.4531	0.94604			
Self control	Mainstream	5.3072	1.03055	-3.169	185	0.002
	Acquisitive	5.7486	0.93417			
Brand loyalty	Mainstream	4.3027	1.23881	-1.393	167	0.165
	Acquisitive	4.537	1.20192			

9 out of 12 constructs for shoes, 10 out of 12 for clothes, 8 out of 12 for accessories and 1 out of 12 for electronics showed significant differences in the means between acquisitive and mainstream buyers. The most striking finding was that the construct of more needs showed the highest mean difference in all the categories except for electronics. For all the product categories, brand loyalty and constant information search were non-significant. This may be owing to the fact that these two concepts are product specific and the pretest had measured them at a more generalized level.

Table 19: Difference between Mainstream and Acquisitive Buyers – Accessories

		Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	Sig
Knowledge	Average	2.8903	1.54205	-6.285	188	0.000
	Acquisitive	4.5455	1.66205			
Interest	Average	35.1281	1.63098	-6.403	187	0.000
	Acquisitive	36.8533	1.54767			
More needs	Average	2.7389	2.40893	-7.946	188	0.000
	Acquisitive	5.7609	1.81579			
Brand loyalty	Average	4.4389	1.23445	-0.669	188	0.504
	Acquisitive	4.5725	1.09919			
Materialism	Average	4.9847	1.10331	-1.946	188	0.053
	Acquisitive	5.3478	1.22755			
Perfectionism	Average	4.7611	1.20122	-0.6	185	0.549
	Acquisitive	4.8841	1.38816			
Info search	Average	4.5574	1.28827	0.204	188	0.838
	Acquisitive	4.5145	1.1961			
Variety seeking	Average	5.1741	1.2996	-3.809	188	0.000
	Acquisitive	5.9565	0.98785			
Preparedness	Average	4.54	1.12422	-4.502	188	0.000
	Acquisitive	5.3826	1.16682			
Need for Control	Average	5.2667	1.08004	-1.727	188	0.085
	Acquisitive	5.5652	0.89869			
Refined pref	Average	4.7675	1.09299	-4.839	188	0.000
	Acquisitive	5.6118	0.89527			
Self concept	Average	5.3856	0.95368	-2.28	188	0.024
	Acquisitive	5.7609	1.15132			

In summary, the pretest results showed the following:

1. The inventory of products was significantly different for mainstream buyers compared to acquisitive buyers.
2. There were significant differences between acquisitive buyers and mainstream buyers.
Hence it can be inferred that such differences can be expected in the non-student population, at least at the trait level since they have been found amongst the student respondents.
3. The construct of more needs per product category showed the greatest difference between acquisitive and mainstream buyers for all the product categories except

electronics. This construct has also been identified as the most important and central construct to acquisitive buying during the exploratory research. The mean difference test between acquisitive and mainstream buyers further confirms the importance of this construct in understanding acquisitive buyers and delineating them from their mainstream counterparts.

Table 20: Difference between Mainstream and Acquisitive Buyers – Electronics

		Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	Sig
Interest	Mainstream	36.7113	1.32152	-2.256	164	0.025
	Acquisitive	37.1695	1.57384			
Knowledge	Mainstream	3.9109	1.35753	-1.436	156	0.152
	Acquisitive	4.2076	1.57783			
More needs	Mainstream	4.125	1.22688	-1.761	152	0.079
	Acquisitive	4.4333	1.09493			
Materialism	Mainstream	4.9535	1.11549	-1.415	161	0.158
	Acquisitive	5.1792	1.00538			
Perfectionism	Mainstream	4.6948	1.15617	-1.611	164	0.108
	Acquisitive	4.977	1.27636			
Info search	Mainstream	4.5133	1.23432	-0.769	166	0.443
	Acquisitive	4.6552	1.28716			
Variety seeking	Mainstream	5.2343	1.24008	0.356	144	0.722
	Acquisitive	5.1667	1.43236			
Preparedness	Mainstream	4.6604	1.19594	0.19	132	0.849
	Acquisitive	4.6276	1.0331			
Need for Control	Mainstream	5.2406	1.07943	-1.455	161	0.147
	Acquisitive	5.4655	0.89864			
Refined pref	Mainstream	4.9043	1.09501	0.063	164	0.95
	Acquisitive	4.8941	1.11993			
Self concept	Mainstream	5.4245	0.99237	-0.421	164	0.674
	Acquisitive	5.4862	0.97052			
Brand loyalty	Mainstream	4.3674	1.20869	-0.751	161	0.453
	Acquisitive	4.5	1.20654			

4. There is a gender effect (at least amongst students) for mainstream and acquisitive buying. More females were found to be acquisitive buyers compared to males
5. The scales were unidimensional and reliable, rendering them useful for the main study.

6. Though the screener proved fairly useful, certain items in the screener needed modification such as those of guilt, collection, fixated buying to name a few.
7. The differences between acquisitive and mainstream buyers were significant for majority of the constructs for three out of four product categories. This fact indicates that acquisitive buying transcends product categories. Besides, differences in the trait level constructs give the indication that this phenomenon is a manifestation of trait level differences as opposed to simply product level differences.
8. Electronics as a product category did not produce significant results. This may be owing to the fact that every respondent has some electronics in the household and hence the questions may have been too generalized and not geared towards specific types of electronics to elicit more specific responses. Since this product category requires greater degree of specificity, it was not considered for data collection for the main study.

4.3.2 Main Study

4.3.2.1 Construct Development

In the main study, a total of eighteen constructs were considered. These constructs were identified from the exploratory study discussed in essay one. Twelve of these constructs were tested during the pretest and the rest were added to the main study, following the confidence that significant differences do exist between acquisitive and mainstream buyers.

Most of the constructs were measured using scales drawn from prior research while some were self-constructed. However, most were modified to suit the context of data collection. The materialism scale was borrowed from the abridged scale developed by Richins (1994). In all, nine items were considered. Some of the items relate to “The things I own give me a great deal of pleasure” and “It is important to me to have really nice things.”

Risk taking was adopted from Burton et al. (1988) and from the risk averseness scale used by Donthu and Gilliland (1996). The items were modified to suit the research objectives. Three items were used to measure risk taking. Some of the items that were adopted were “I avoid risky things,” and “I don’t like to take risks.” These items were reverse coded for further analysis.

Interest in the product category was adopted from several product involvement scales (Cho, Lee and Tharp 2001, De Wulf, Odekerken-Schroder and Iacobucci 2001). A total of 5 items were used to measure interest. Some of the items are as follows: “In general, I have a strong interest in clothes (shoes/accessories),” “Generally, I am someone who finds it important what clothes (shoes/accessories) he or she wears.

Perfectionism was adopted from Kopalle and Lehmann (2001). Since an attempt was made to measure positive perfectionism rather than perfectionism in general, only items related to positive perfectionism were used such as “It is very important for me to be right” and “One of my goals is to be perfect in everything I do.” In all, 10 items were considered. A few items were created to suit the context of data collection, mainly related to perfectionism in shopping. These items were “I am very selective while buying clothes,” “The clothes I choose should live up to my expectations” etc.

Constant search was adopted from external search scale developed by Grewal, Monroe and Krishnan (1998). In all, seven items related to this construct. Some of the items were “Before making a purchase decision, I visit a lot of stores to check their clothes,” and “Before making a purchase decision, I need to search for a lot of information about prices of alternative products.”

Tian, Bearden and Hunter’s (2001) scale was the basis for selecting the items for self-concept. 5 items were used to measure this construct. Some of the items were “I seldom

experience conflict between the different aspects of my personality” and “In general, I have a clear sense of who I am and what I am.” Wherever possible, reverse coding was avoided.

Variety seeking was adopted from the scale created by Donthu and Gilliland (1996). Three items were used to measure this construct and the items were directly used without any modifications. Some of the items were “I like to try different things,” and “I like a great deal of variety.”

Knowledge or consumption vocabulary items were adapted from Mason et al. (2001) though the items were modified for the purposes of the study. Four items were used to measure this construct. Some of the items were “I know a lot about clothes” and “I am very familiar with the features available in the latest clothes.”

The items for refined preference were developed as no reference was found in the extant literature. Seven items were created after testing in the pretest. Some of the items were “I tend to look for minute details in clothes that are of interest to me” and “Finer details help in differentiating clothes from one another.”

Preparedness was also created as no scales related to this construct were found in extant literature. Five items were used to measure this construct. Some of the items were “Different types of clothes help me to be prepared for different events” and “I have various types of clothes as I can use them when the need arises.”

Brand switching was created as the exact essence of this construct applicable in the context of the survey was not available in extant literature. Three items were used. Some of the items were “I like to buy different brands of clothes,” and “I easily get bored of the same brand of clothes.”

Expanding list of products was created and adopted after initial testing during pretest. Four items were created. Some of the items were “I have a list of clothes that I will buy in future,” and “My list of clothes is ever-expanding.”

Need for control was adapted from De Rijk, Le Blanc and Schaufeli (1998). Five items were used to measure this construct. Some of the items were modified to suit the purpose of the study. Some of the items related to “I tend to always have control over what I do” and “I like to set the pace of my tasks.”

Three items were created for future orientation. These are “I consider how things might be in the future and purchase clothes accordingly,” and “I buy clothes based on upcoming needs.”

Shopping experience was adapted from Beatty and Ferrell (1998). Four items were used to understand this construct. Some of the items were “Shopping is entertaining,” and “Shopping is a positive experience for me.”

Another construct that was self-constructed was the insider-outsider phenomenon. In all, four items were used in the main study. These were “Others think that I have a lot of clothes though this is not the case,” and “I buy clothes based on my needs though others think that my clothes are unnecessary.”

4.3.2.2 Questionnaire

The format for the questionnaire was similar to that used in the pretest. Instead of asking all the respondents to describe their inventory for all the three product categories, each respondent was identified for a particular product category. Questions were formulated in such a way such that they referred to one of the three product categories. The respondents were first asked to describe their inventory in detail (see Appendix E). For example, they were asked to mention the number of different types of shoes that they possessed. This was followed by questions eliciting the needs for products in that product category. Various needs pertaining to the product category were mentioned to the respondent based on the responses from the in-depth interviews conducted during the exploratory phase of this program of study. Thus respondents answered those questions related to their needs and mentioned the

number of products they possessed for that particular need. A summation of all the needs formed the basis of the more needs per product category construct.

Next, a screener to further screen for extreme buyers with high levels of negative connotations and connections was provided. This second layer of screening would screen respondents high in impulsive, compulsive and excessive buying, fixated buying, hoarding, stockpiling, and collecting. Questions related to self control and guilt was also added to ensure that the right kind of buyers was tapped.

The third section of the questionnaire related to eliciting items of various constructs identified and discussed in the previous section. Lastly, the questionnaire ended with demographic questions.

4.3.2.3 Data Collection

4.3.2.3.1 Screener for Identifying Mainstream and Acquisitive Buyers

Data for the main study was collected using a panel of consumers. The process of identifying acquisitive buyers and mainstream buyers was different from that used in the pretest. The main drawback of the process used in the pretest was that identification was conducted after data was collected, that is, after the fact. Effort was not made specifically to identify acquisitive and mainstream buyers based on some criteria. In the main study, specific effort was made to identify acquisitive and mainstream buyers, similar to the process used in the identification process used in essay one. This process makes the identification more directed and specific rather than be based on random collection of data followed by an attempt to identify the specific types of buyers. In particular, three questions were asked to respondents in the panel.

1. Approximately how many pairs of shoes (clothes/accessories) do you currently have?
2. How frequently do you shop for shoes (clothes/accessories) – online or in stores?
3. Do you feel bad/guilty after you buy shoes (clothes/accessories)?

An understanding of the characteristics of acquisitive and mainstream buyers from the data collected during qualitative research and the pretest acted as the basis for identification of the specific types of buyers. The respondent's declaration of their inventory of products formed the first step in the identification process. Respondents with greater than 40 pairs of shoes (250 items of clothing/50 items of accessories) were regarded as acquisitive buyers while those with less than the afore-mentioned values were regarded as mainstream buyers. The cut off values were taken from the results of the pretest (Table 16). Values close to those of the pretest were considered though a lesser value was considered for accessories as the number of items for acquisitive buyers was inflated because of the responses of a few acquisitive buyers. The cut off values also corresponded with the findings from the in-depth interviews (Refer to essay one).

Respondents were also asked about their frequency of shopping. In-depth interviews with both acquisitive and mainstream buyers showed that the former shopped more frequently than the latter (average for acquisitive buyers was once every week while that for mainstream buyers was once every three months). Hence, respondents who shopped at least once every two weeks were classified as acquisitive buyers while those who shopped once every month or less were classified as mainstream buyers.

The third question related to eliminating those buyers who may buy in excess but suffer from post-purchase regret (such as compulsive, impulsive, excessive, fixated buyers, hoarders and compulsive collectors). A seven point scale was used (1=Not at all, 7=Extremely). Both acquisitive and mainstream buyers should ideally have lower levels of regret. Hence respondents who scored three and lower on the seven point scale were considered for the survey. Thus, for example, those respondents inventory of 40 or more shoes, who shopped at least once in two weeks and who scored no more than three on post-purchase regret were classified as acquisitive buyers. Those respondents whose inventory

were less than 40 for shoes, shopped once a month or lesser and scored no more than three on post-purchase regret were classified as mainstream buyers. Buyers who answered outside the scope of these pre-requisites were screened out of the survey taking process. Each respondent answered questions related to one product category only.

4.3.2.3.2 Sample

Effort was made to collect equal number of responses from mainstream and acquisitive buyers. Respondents who scored high (greater than 6 on a 7 point scale) on items related to compulsive, impulsive, fixated buying, hoarding, guilt and collection and low on self control (lower than 3) were eliminated from the final analysis. The final sample consisted of 408 responses with 147 for clothes (69 acquisitive and 78 mainstream buyers), 128 for shoes (57 acquisitive and 71 mainstream buyers) and 133 for accessories (53 acquisitive and 80 mainstream buyers).

The sample comprised of 60 males (40.8%) and 87 females (59.2%) for clothes, 47 males (36.7%) and 81 females (63.3%) for shoes and 56 males (42.1%) and 77 females (75.9%). Hence, females were more represented in the samples than males. This may be owing to the fact that females are more oriented to shop and disclose their shopping patterns than males. The age of the respondents ranged from 19 to 72 years. Tables 21 through 30 show the various demographic distribution of the sample. Majority of the respondents (76.2% for clothes, 85.2% for shoes and 83.5% for accessories) were Caucasians, for both acquisitive and mainstream buyers followed by respondents of other ethnicities (Tables 25, 26, 27). As regards the education levels, majority of the respondents had some college/vocational training (32% for clothes, 32.8% for shoes and 26.3% for accessories, Tables 28, 29, 30). No significant differences were observed amongst acquisitive and mainstream buyers regarding ethnicity and education across all three product categories. However, differences in were observed between these two buying types in income across all the three product categories

($\chi^2_{(df 4)} = 11.85$, $p=0.019$ for clothes; $\chi^2_{(df 4)} = 10.86$, $p=0.028$ for shoes and $\chi^2_{(df 4)} = 15.12$, $p=0.004$ for accessories). Consumer with lower levels of income to middle income (upto \$75,000) tended to be mainstream buyers than acquisitive buyers (Tables 22, 23 and 24).

Table 21: Demographic Spread of the Sample – Gender

CLOTHES						SHOES						ACCESSORIES					
			Gender						Gender						Gender		
			Male	Female	Total				Male	Female	Total				1	2	Total
1=Mainstream, 2=Acquisitive	1	Count	36	42	78	1=Mainstream, 2=Acquisitive	1	Count	32	39	71	1=Mainstream, 2=Acquisitive	1	Count	43	37	80
		% within 1=Mainstream 2=Acquisitive	46.2%	53.8%	100.0%			% within 1=Mainstream 2=Acquisitive	45.1%	54.9%	100.0%			% within 1=Mainstream 2=Acquisitive	53.8%	46.3%	100.0%
		% within Gender	60.0%	48.3%	53.1%			% within Gender	68.1%	48.1%	55.5%			% within Gender	76.8%	48.1%	60.2%
		% of Total	24.5%	28.6%	53.1%			% of Total	25.0%	30.5%	55.5%			% of Total	32.3%	27.8%	60.2%
	2	Count	24	45	69		2	Count	15	42	57		2	Count	13	40	53
		% within 1=Mainstream 2=Acquisitive	34.8%	65.2%	100.0%			% within 1=Mainstream 2=Acquisitive	26.3%	73.7%	100.0%			% within 1=Mainstream 2=Acquisitive	24.5%	75.5%	100.0%
		% within Gender	40.0%	51.7%	46.9%			% within Gender	31.9%	51.9%	44.5%			% within Gender	23.2%	51.9%	39.8%
		% of Total	16.3%	30.6%	46.9%			% of Total	11.7%	32.8%	44.5%			% of Total	9.8%	30.1%	39.8%
Total	Count		60	87	147	Total	Count		47	81	128	Total	Count		56	77	133
	% within 1=Mainstream 2=Acquisitive		40.8%	59.2%	100.0%		% within 1=Mainstream 2=Acquisitive		36.7%	63.3%	100.0%		% within 1=Mainstream 2=Acquisitive		42.1%	57.9%	100.0%
	% within Gender		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%		% within Gender		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%		% within Gender		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	% of Total		40.8%	59.2%	100.0%		% of Total		36.7%	63.3%	100.0%		% of Total		42.1%	57.9%	100.0%

Gender distribution also showed a pattern for shoes and accessories than for clothes.

60% males were mainstream buyers and 40% acquisitive buyers while 48.3% females were mainstream buyers and 51.7% were acquisitive buyers for clothes. 68% males were mainstream buyers and 32% acquisitive buyers while 48.1% females were mainstream buyers and 51.9% were acquisitive buyers for shoes. 76.8% males were mainstream buyers and 23.2% acquisitive buyers while 48.1% females were mainstream buyers and 51.9% were acquisitive buyers for accessories (Table 21). Thus, significant gender differences between acquisitive and mainstream buyers was seen in the product categories of shoes and accessories ($\chi^2_{(df 3)} = 4.78$, $p=0.029$ for shoes and $\chi^2_{(df 3)} = 11.16$, $p=0.004$ for accessories) but not for clothes ($\chi^2_{(df 3)} = 1.96$, $p=0.162$).

Table 22: Demographic Spread of the Sample – Income for Clothes

CLOTHES									
			Income						
			1	2	3	4	5	Total	
1=Mainstream, 2=Acquisitive	1	Count	31	26	9	8	4	78	
		% within							
		1=Mainstream	39.7%	33.3%	11.5%	10.3%	5.1%	100.0%	
		2=Acquisitive							
		% within Income	70.5%	56.5%	34.6%	36.4%	44.4%	53.1%	
		% of Total	21.1%	17.7%	6.1%	5.4%	2.7%	53.1%	
		2	Count	13	20	17	14	5	69
			% within						
			1=Mainstream	18.8%	29.0%	24.6%	20.3%	7.2%	100.0%
			2=Acquisitive						
	% within Income		29.5%	43.5%	65.4%	63.6%	55.6%	46.9%	
		% of Total	8.8%	13.6%	11.6%	9.5%	3.4%	46.9%	
		Total	Count	44	46	26	22	9	147
			% within						
			1=Mainstream	29.9%	31.3%	17.7%	15.0%	6.1%	100.0%
			2=Acquisitive						
	% within Income		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	
		% of Total	29.9%	31.3%	17.7%	15.0%	6.1%	100.0%	

Table 23: Demographic Spread of the Sample – Income for Shoes

SHOES								
			Income					
			1	2	3	4	5	Total
1=Mainstream, 2=Acquisitive	1	Count	16	25	18	9	3	71
		% within						
		1=Mainstream	22.5%	35.2%	25.4%	12.7%	4.2%	100.0%
		2=Acquisitive						
		% within Income	66.7%	65.8%	58.1%	42.9%	21.4%	55.5%
	2	% of Total	12.5%	19.5%	14.1%	7.0%	2.3%	55.5%
		Count	8	13	13	12	11	57
		% within						
		1=Mainstream	14.0%	22.8%	22.8%	21.1%	19.3%	100.0%
		2=Acquisitive						
	Total	% within Income	33.3%	34.2%	41.9%	57.1%	78.6%	44.5%
		% of Total	6.3%	10.2%	10.2%	9.4%	8.6%	44.5%
		Count	24	38	31	21	14	128
		% within						
		1=Mainstream	18.8%	29.7%	24.2%	16.4%	10.9%	100.0%
		2=Acquisitive						
		% within Income	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	18.8%	29.7%	24.2%	16.4%	10.9%	100.0%

Table 24: Demographic Spread of the Sample – Income for Accessories

ACCESSORIES								
		Income						
		1	2	3	4	5	Total	
1=Mainstream, 2=acquisitive	1	Count	22	25	23	5	5	80
		% within						
		1=Mainstream	27.5%	31.3%	28.8%	6.3%	6.3%	100.0%
		2=acquisitive						
		% within Income	73.3%	69.4%	65.7%	29.4%	33.3%	60.2%
	2	% of Total	16.5%	18.8%	17.3%	3.8%	3.8%	60.2%
		Count	8	11	12	12	10	53
		% within						
		1=Mainstream	15.1%	20.8%	22.6%	22.6%	18.9%	100.0%
		2=acquisitive						
	Total	% within Income	26.7%	30.6%	34.3%	70.6%	66.7%	39.8%
		% of Total	6.0%	8.3%	9.0%	9.0%	7.5%	39.8%
		Count	30	36	35	17	15	133
		% within						
		1=Mainstream	22.6%	27.1%	26.3%	12.8%	11.3%	100.0%
		2=acquisitive						
		% within Income	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	22.6%	27.1%	26.3%	12.8%	11.3%	100.0%

Table 25: Demographic Spread of the Sample – Ethnicity for Clothes

			CLOTHES					
			Ethnicity					
			1	2	3	4	5	Total
1=Mainstream 2=Acquisitive	1	Count	65	4	6	2	1	78
		% within						
		1=Mainstream	83.3%	5.1%	7.7%	2.6%	1.3%	100.0%
		2=Acquisitive						
		% within Ethnicity	58.0%	50.0%	46.2%	20.0%	25.0%	53.1%
	% of Total	44.2%	2.7%	4.1%	1.4%	.7%	53.1%	
	2	Count	47	4	7	8	3	69
		% within						
		1=Mainstream	68.1%	5.8%	10.1%	11.6%	4.3%	100.0%
		2=Acquisitive						
		% within Ethnicity	42.0%	50.0%	53.8%	80.0%	75.0%	46.9%
	% of Total	32.0%	2.7%	4.8%	5.4%	2.0%	46.9%	
	Total	Count	112	8	13	10	4	147
		% within						
		1=Mainstream	76.2%	5.4%	8.8%	6.8%	2.7%	100.0%
		2=Acquisitive						
% within Ethnicity		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	
% of Total	76.2%	5.4%	8.8%	6.8%	2.7%	100.0%		

Table 26: Demographic Spread of the Sample – Ethnicity for Shoes

SHOES								
			Ethnicity					
			1	2	3	4	5	Total
1=Mainstream, 2=Acquisitiv	1	Count	64	1	2	3	1	71
		% within						
		1=Mainstream,	90.1%	1.4%	2.8%	4.2%	1.4%	100.0%
		2=Acquisitive						
		% within Ethnicity	58.7%	25.0%	28.6%	60.0%	33.3%	55.5%
	% of Total	50.0%	.8%	1.6%	2.3%	.8%	55.5%	
	2	Count	45	3	5	2	2	57
		% within						
		1=Mainstream,	78.9%	5.3%	8.8%	3.5%	3.5%	100.0%
		2=Acquisitive						
		% within Ethnicity	41.3%	75.0%	71.4%	40.0%	66.7%	44.5%
	% of Total	35.2%	2.3%	3.9%	1.6%	1.6%	44.5%	
	Total	Count	109	4	7	5	3	128
		% within						
		1=Mainstream,	85.2%	3.1%	5.5%	3.9%	2.3%	100.0%
		2=Acquisitive						
% within Ethnicity		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	
% of Total	85.2%	3.1%	5.5%	3.9%	2.3%	100.0%		

Table 27: Demographic Spread of the Sample – Ethnicity for Accessories

ACCESSORIES								
			Ethnicity					
			1	2	3	4	5	Total
1=Mainstream 2=acquisitive	1	Count	68	2	4	4	2	80
		% within						
		1=Mainstream	85.0%	2.5%	5.0%	5.0%	2.5%	100.0%
		2=acquisitive						
		% within Ethnicity	61.3%	66.7%	50.0%	50.0%	66.7%	60.2%
	% of Total	51.1%	1.5%	3.0%	3.0%	1.5%	60.2%	
	2	Count	43	1	4	4	1	53
		% within						
		1=Mainstream	81.1%	1.9%	7.5%	7.5%	1.9%	100.0%
		2=acquisitive						
		% within Ethnicity	38.7%	33.3%	50.0%	50.0%	33.3%	39.8%
	% of Total	32.3%	.8%	3.0%	3.0%	.8%	39.8%	
	Total	Count	111	3	8	8	3	133
		% within						
		1=Mainstream	83.5%	2.3%	6.0%	6.0%	2.3%	100.0%
		2=acquisitive						
		% within Ethnicity	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	% of Total	83.5%	2.3%	6.0%	6.0%	2.3%	100.0%	

Table 28: Demographic Spread of the Sample – Education for Clothes

CLOTHES											
			Education								
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total
1=Average 2=Acquisitive	1	Count	4	22	26	5	14	6	0	1	78
		% within									
		1=Average	5.1%	28.2%	33.3%	6.4%	17.9%	7.7%	.0%	1.3%	100.0%
		2=Acquisitive									
		% within Education	66.7%	57.9%	55.3%	45.5%	45.2%	54.5%	.0%	50.0%	53.1%
		% of Total	2.7%	15.0%	17.7%	3.4%	9.5%	4.1%	.0%	.7%	53.1%
	2	Count	2	16	21	6	17	5	1	1	69
		% within									
		1=Average	2.9%	23.2%	30.4%	8.7%	24.6%	7.2%	1.4%	1.4%	100.0%
		2=Acquisitive									
		% within Education	33.3%	42.1%	44.7%	54.5%	54.8%	45.5%	100.0%	50.0%	46.9%
		% of Total	1.4%	10.9%	14.3%	4.1%	11.6%	3.4%	.7%	.7%	46.9%
	Total	Count	6	38	47	11	31	11	1	2	147
		% within									
		1=Average	4.1%	25.9%	32.0%	7.5%	21.1%	7.5%	.7%	1.4%	100.0%
		2=Acquisitive									
		% within Education	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	4.1%	25.9%	32.0%	7.5%	21.1%	7.5%	.7%	1.4%	100.0%

Table 29: Demographic Spread of the Sample – Education for Shoes

SHOES											
			Education								
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total
1=Average, 2=Acquisitive	1	Count	1	13	25	10	14	7	1	0	71
		% within									
		1=Average,	1.4%	18.3%	35.2%	14.1%	19.7%	9.9%	1.4%	.0%	100.0%
		2=Acquisitive									
		% within Education	100.0%	72.2%	59.5%	50.0%	40.0%	70.0%	100.0%	.0%	55.5%
		% of Total	.8%	10.2%	19.5%	7.8%	10.9%	5.5%	.8%	.0%	55.5%
	2	Count	0	5	17	10	21	3	0	1	57
		% within									
		1=Average,	.0%	8.8%	29.8%	17.5%	36.8%	5.3%	.0%	1.8%	100.0%
		2=Acquisitive									
		% within Education	.0%	27.8%	40.5%	50.0%	60.0%	30.0%	.0%	100.0%	44.5%
		% of Total	.0%	3.9%	13.3%	7.8%	16.4%	2.3%	.0%	.8%	44.5%
	Total	Count	1	18	42	20	35	10	1	1	128
		% within									
		1=Average,	.8%	14.1%	32.8%	15.6%	27.3%	7.8%	.8%	.8%	100.0%
		2=Acquisitive									
		% within Education	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	.8%	14.1%	32.8%	15.6%	27.3%	7.8%	.8%	.8%	100.0%

Table 30: Demographic Spread of the Sample – Education for Accessories

ACCESSORIES											
			Education								
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total
1=average 2=acquisitive	1	Count	3	22	18	10	16	9	2	0	80
		% within									
		1=Average	3.8%	27.5%	22.5%	12.5%	20.0%	11.3%	2.5%	.0%	100.0%
		2=Acquisitive									
		% within Education	100.0%	78.6%	51.4%	76.9%	48.5%	56.3%	50.0%	.0%	60.2%
	2	% of Total	2.3%	16.5%	13.5%	7.5%	12.0%	6.8%	1.5%	.0%	60.2%
		Count	0	6	17	3	17	7	2	1	53
		% within									
		1=Average	.0%	11.3%	32.1%	5.7%	32.1%	13.2%	3.8%	1.9%	100.0%
		2=Acquisitive									
	Total	% within Education	.0%	21.4%	48.6%	23.1%	51.5%	43.8%	50.0%	100.0%	39.8%
		% of Total	.0%	4.5%	12.8%	2.3%	12.8%	5.3%	1.5%	.8%	39.8%
		Count	3	28	35	13	33	16	4	1	133
		% within									
		1=Average	2.3%	21.1%	26.3%	9.8%	24.8%	12.0%	3.0%	.8%	100.0%
		2=Acquisitive									
		% within Education	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	2.3%	21.1%	26.3%	9.8%	24.8%	12.0%	3.0%	.8%	100.0%

4.3.2.4 Results

4.3.2.4.1 Screener

The screener questions helped identify further whether the respondents manifested the characteristics of extreme buyers with lower levels of self-control. Table 31 shows the results of the all the items related to various buying types for the three product categories. The overall means of the items of both acquisitive and mainstream buyers show that the respondents have scored low (below 3.5 on a 7 point scale where 1=strongly disagree and 7=strongly agree) on compulsive buying, impulsive buying, hoarding, stockpiling and fixated buying. The mean scores of the compulsive buying items are 2.57, 2.21 and 2.98 for clothes, 2.07, 1.81 and 3.16 for shoes and 1.98, 1.80 and 2.91 for accessories while those for compulsive buying items are 3.11, 2.55 and 2.23 for clothes, 2.75, 2.38 and 2.17 for accessories. The mean scores for hoarding, stockpiling and fixated buying respectively are: hoarding: 2.91 for clothes, 2.37 for shoes and 2.71 for accessories; stockpiling: 3.11 for clothes, 2.57 for shoes and 2.78 for accessories; fixated buying: 2.97, 2.72 and 2.69 for

clothes, 3.14, 2.71 and 2.74 for shoes and 2.84, 2.50 and 2.39 for accessories. The mean scores for guilt were 3.16 and 2.36 for clothes, 2.98 and 2.10 for shoes and 3.01 and 1.93 for accessories. The values for collection were higher: 4.01 and 3.77 for clothes, 4.83 and 3.78 for shoes and 4.11 and 3.90 for accessories. Self control scores were expected to have high values: 5.36, 3.98 and 5.24 for clothes, 5.36, 4.05 and 5.45 for shoes and 5.96, 4.15 and 5.57 for accessories.

Table 31: Combined Screener Results for Mainstream and Acquisitive Buyers

	CLOTHES			SHOES			ACCESSORIES		
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Compulsive buying1	147	2.57	1.58	128	2.08	1.26	133	1.98	1.26
Compulsive buying2	147	2.21	1.44	128	1.81	1.15	133	1.80	1.26
Compulsive buying3	147	2.99	1.85	128	3.16	1.99	133	2.92	1.84
Impulsive buying1	147	3.12	1.85	128	2.75	1.69	133	2.61	1.83
Impulsive buying2	147	2.55	1.76	128	2.38	1.63	133	1.92	1.43
Impulsive buying3	147	2.24	1.57	128	2.18	1.58	133	1.89	1.50
Guilt1	147	3.16	1.74	128	2.98	1.73	133	3.02	1.84
Guilt2	147	2.36	1.63	128	2.10	1.40	133	1.94	1.45
Fixated buying1	147	2.97	1.82	128	3.15	1.81	133	2.84	1.89
Fixated buying2	147	2.73	1.76	128	2.72	1.75	133	2.50	1.68
Fixated buying3	147	2.69	1.78	128	2.74	1.81	133	2.39	1.84
Self_control1	147	5.36	1.54	128	5.37	1.67	133	5.97	1.25
Self_control2	147	3.99	1.76	128	4.05	1.82	133	4.15	1.94
Self_control3	147	5.24	1.53	128	5.45	1.51	133	5.57	1.46
Collection1	84	4.01	2.11	89	4.83	1.77	84	4.12	2.06
Collection2	83	3.77	1.88	89	3.79	1.89	84	3.90	2.13
Hoarding	147	2.91	1.83	128	2.37	1.83	133	2.72	1.40
Stockpiling	147	3.11	1.43	128	2.57	1.63	133	2.78	1.83

In all, the overall mean scores of both average and acquisitive buyers show that they do not score very high on the items that relate to extreme buying related to lower self control. In fact, the high scores for self control items show that both these types of buyers have high levels of self-control as has been characterized earlier.

In an attempt to understand whether acquisitive buyers differ from mainstream buyers as regards to the screener its, results show certain significant differences (Table 32). Two out of three items of compulsive buying shows significant differences with acquisitive buyers

scoring higher on these items than mainstream buyers for clothes and accessories while one out of three items showed significance for shoes.

Table 32: Separate Screener Results for Mainstream and Acquisitive Buyers

		CLOTHES					SHOES					ACCESSORIES				
		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t(1,145)	p	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t(1,126)	p	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t(1,131)	p
Screener_comp1	Mainstream	78	2.40	1.55	-1.42	.157	71	1.93	1.10	-1.50	.137	80	1.86	1.11	-1.38	.170
	Acquisitive	69	2.77	1.61			57	2.26	1.42			53	2.17	1.45		
Screener_comp2	Mainstream	78	1.73	1.12	-4.59	.000	71	1.68	1.13	-1.51	.134	80	1.35	0.71	-5.66	.000
	Acquisitive	69	2.75	1.57			57	1.98	1.16			53	2.49	1.58		
Screener_Comp3	Mainstream	78	2.36	1.44	-4.68	.000	71	2.79	1.87	-2.43	.016	80	2.55	1.82	-2.91	.004
	Acquisitive	69	3.70	2.00			57	3.63	2.04			53	3.47	1.74		
Screener_imp1	Mainstream	78	2.18	1.38	-7.71	.000	71	2.48	1.67	-2.05	.043	80	2.11	1.53	-4.06	.000
	Acquisitive	69	4.17	1.75			57	3.09	1.67			53	3.36	2.00		
Screener_imp2	Mainstream	78	1.99	1.51	-4.39	.000	71	2.15	1.58	-1.78	.078	80	1.55	1.11	-3.92	.000
	Acquisitive	69	3.19	1.81			57	2.67	1.66			53	2.49	1.66		
Screener_imp3	Mainstream	78	1.65	1.09	-5.20	.000	71	1.83	1.28	-2.87	.005	80	1.51	1.14	-3.79	.000
	Acquisitive	69	2.90	1.77			57	2.61	1.81			53	2.47	1.78		
Guilt1	Mainstream	78	2.78	1.59	-2.84	.005	71	2.85	1.68	-1.02	.310	80	2.65	1.77	-2.89	.004
	Acquisitive	69	3.58	1.81			57	3.16	1.78			53	3.57	1.81		
Guilt2	Mainstream	78	1.91	1.22	-3.72	.000	71	1.89	1.38	-1.95	.053	80	1.55	1.15	-4.02	.000
	Acquisitive	69	2.87	1.87			57	2.37	1.40			53	2.53	1.66		
Fix1	Mainstream	78	2.27	1.43	-5.44	.000	71	3.01	1.82	-0.94	.351	80	2.16	1.50	-5.68	.000
	Acquisitive	69	3.77	1.90			57	3.32	1.79			53	3.87	1.95		
Fix2	Mainstream	78	2.08	1.36	-5.17	.000	71	2.42	1.68	-2.17	.032	80	2.11	1.48	-3.44	.001
	Acquisitive	69	3.46	1.88			57	3.09	1.79			53	3.09	1.80		
Fix3	Mainstream	78	1.88	1.10	-6.67	.000	71	2.37	1.51	-2.68	.008	80	1.71	1.27	-5.84	.000
	Acquisitive	69	3.61	1.96			57	3.21	2.04			53	3.42	2.09		
Selfcontrol1	Mainstream	78	5.41	1.65	0.41	.680	71	5.51	1.68	1.06	.293	80	6.15	1.19	2.07	.041
	Acquisitive	69	5.30	1.42			57	5.19	1.66			53	5.70	1.29		
Selfcontrol2	Mainstream	78	3.77	1.89	-1.60	.113	71	3.92	1.83	-0.97	.335	80	3.93	2.05	-1.66	.100
	Acquisitive	69	4.23	1.58			57	4.23	1.79			53	4.49	1.72		
Selfcontrol3	Mainstream	78	5.29	1.64	0.42	.675	71	5.44	1.49	-0.14	.891	80	5.61	1.49	0.40	.692
	Acquisitive	69	5.19	1.41			57	5.47	1.55			53	5.51	1.44		
Collect1	Mainstream	39	3.33	2.06	-2.86	.005	49	4.41	1.80	-2.57	.012	47	4.11	2.16	-0.06	.950
	Acquisitive	45	4.60	1.99			40	5.35	1.61			37	4.14	1.95		
Collect2	Mainstream	38	3.53	1.70	-1.09	.279	49	3.55	1.77	-1.31	.194	47	3.62	2.14	-1.41	.163
	Acquisitive	45	3.98	2.02			40	4.08	2.00			37	4.27	2.08		

All the three items of impulsive buying (for all three product categories) showed significant differences between mainstream and acquisitive buyers; suggesting that this trait is higher among the latter than the former. The degree of guilt experienced by mainstream and acquisitive buyers was also significantly different. With the exception of one item in shoes, all the items for all the product categories showed significant difference. Again the direction of the difference was higher for acquisitive buyers than for mainstream buyers. Similar observations can be made in case of fixated buying for all the three product categories. As for collection, there were no differences between mainstream and acquisitive

buyers for one item across all the product categories while differences were evident for another item across clothes and shoes but not accessories. Self-control was the only exception amongst the measured screener constructs. Except for one item in accessories, all items across all three product categories showed no significant difference amongst mainstream and acquisitive buyers.

In all, majority of the screener items showed significant differences amongst mainstream and acquisitive buyers across the three product categories. Acquisitive buyers tend to exhibit higher levels of the traits compared to the mainstream buyers. However, it is interesting to find that no significant differences existed between mainstream and acquisitive buyers with regard to self-control. This confirms the grouping of mainstream and acquisitive buyers in the category of consumers with higher levels of self-control compared to consumers with lower self-control such as compulsive, impulsive, excessive buyers, fixated buyers, hoarders and compulsive collectors (see essay 2).

4.3.2.4.2 Differences between Acquisitive and Mainstream Buyers at the Construct Level

This first analysis discusses how acquisitive and mainstream buyers are different on a host of constructs described earlier (hypotheses 1 to 18). Each of the product categories were analyzed separately. Items of all the scales in each product category were subjected to exploratory factor analysis. The factors were found to be unidimensional; only two factors showed cross-loadings for all the three products. These were materialism and perfectionism. The cross-loading items were excluded from further analysis. All items for all the products had loadings above 0.6. Next, reliabilities of all the constructs for all the product categories were checked. The reliabilities of all the constructs across all product categories were above 0.7 except for short span of usage for accessories (Table 33). Hence, items pertaining to various constructs were summated and the summated scales were used in further analysis. T tests were conducted for each of the constructs using the summated scales to test the

differences between mainstream and acquisitive buyers (Table 34). Since the distribution of income and gender were significantly different between acquisitive and mainstream buyers, one way ANOVAs were also conducted with income and gender as covariates. The results of the analysis were similar to those seen in t tests. Hence, only t test results are discussed subsequently.

Table 33: Reliabilities for all Constructs for all Product Categories

		CLOTHES	SHOES	ACCESSORIES
Construct	Number of items	Cronbach's alpha	Cronbach's alpha	Cronbach's alpha
Interest	5	0.962	0.954	0.978
Knowledge (consumption vocabulary)	4	0.928	0.911	0.953
Materialism	5	0.894	0.874	0.925
Perfectionism	5	0.852	0.868	0.884
Constant search	7	0.923	0.894	0.924
Variety seeking	3	0.915	0.922	0.915
Brand switching	3	0.773	0.849	0.843
Refined preference	7	0.878	0.921	0.926
Preparedness	5	0.908	0.961	0.963
Expanding list	4	0.942	0.934	0.928
Self-concept	5	0.850	0.920	0.893
Need for control	6	0.883	0.884	0.896
Risk taking	3	0.711	0.796	0.707
Future orientation	3	0.809	0.757	0.773
Shopping experience	4	0.976	0.978	0.98
Insider-outsider phenomenon	4	0.833	0.877	0.854
Short span of consumption	2	0.807	0.768	0.509

4.3.2.4.2.1 Total Number of Products

Acquisitive buyers possess far greater levels of inventory than mainstream buyers. Though the screener for identifying acquisitive and mainstream buyers uses inventory of products as one of the criterion to screen and categorize these buyers, it is important to understand how these buyers differ in terms of their inventory. The mean total number of clothing items reported by acquisitive buyers was 367.63 (SD 149.28) while that for mainstream buyers was 95.21 (SD 58.68) ($t(1, 145) = 14.87, p = 0.000$). Similarly the mean total number of shoes reported by acquisitive buyers was 64.84 (SD 48.39) while that for mainstream buyers was 20.69 (SD 10.38) ($t(1, 126) = 7.48, p = 0.000$); mean for total

number of accessories for acquisitive buyers was 129.67 (SD 179.8) while that for mainstream buyers was 33.23 (SD 48.49) ($t(1, 131) = 4.56, p = 0.000$).

Table 34: Difference between Acquisitive and Mainstream Buyers on a Number of Constructs

		CLOTHES					SHOES					ACCESSORIES				
		N	Mean	Std. Deviation			N	Mean	Std. Deviation			N	Mean	Std. Deviation		
					$t(1, 145)$	p				$t(1, 126)$	p				$t(1, 131)$	p
Total number	Mainstream	78	95.22	58.68	-14.88	.000	71	20.69	10.39	-7.48	.000	80	33.24	48.50	-4.56	.000
	Acquisitive	69	367.64	149.28			57	64.84	48.39			53	129.68	179.80		
Total_needs	Mainstream	78	4.74	2.28	-8.41	.000	71	4.58	3.25	-6.59	.000	80	3.03	2.21	-7.86	.000
	Acquisitive	69	7.72	1.98			57	7.95	2.32			53	5.74	1.46		
Sum_Mat	Mainstream	78	2.97	1.26	-5.67	.000	71	3.17	1.36	-3.40	.001	80	3.71	1.72	-5.86	.000
	Acquisitive	69	4.33	1.60			57	4.07	1.61			53	5.31	1.21		
Sum_Interest	Mainstream	78	3.04	1.53	-8.70	.000	71	3.62	1.48	-5.71	.000	80	2.89	1.99	-6.88	.000
	Acquisitive	69	5.01	1.16			57	5.02	1.26			53	5.01	1.27		
Sum_Knowledge	Mainstream	78	2.89	1.29	-12.33	.000	71	3.38	1.48	-6.90	.000	80	2.93	1.61	-10.33	.000
	Acquisitive	69	5.44	1.21			57	5.11	1.32			53	5.58	1.18		
Sum_Br_loyalty	Mainstream	78	3.22	1.53	-7.62	.000	71	3.96	1.56	-3.26	.001	80	2.88	1.75	-6.48	.000
	Acquisitive	69	5.07	1.40			57	4.86	1.56			53	4.77	1.48		
Sum_Perfectionism	Mainstream	78	4.22	1.10	-4.00	.000	71	3.85	1.23	-3.20	.002	80	4.34	1.87	-5.37	.000
	Acquisitive	69	4.97	1.15			57	4.64	1.58			53	5.85	1.02		
Sum_Constant_search	Mainstream	78	2.74	1.16	-9.47	.000	71	3.20	1.25	-4.87	.000	80	2.95	1.38	-8.24	.000
	Acquisitive	69	4.70	1.36			57	4.32	1.36			53	4.85	1.17		
Sum_Variety_seek	Mainstream	78	4.10	1.49	-5.63	.000	71	4.58	1.40	-4.37	.000	80	4.11	1.67	-7.30	.000
	Acquisitive	69	5.46	1.43			57	5.64	1.32			53	5.92	0.84		
Sum_Br_switch	Mainstream	78	3.76	1.23	-6.56	.000	71	3.95	1.34	-4.12	.000	80	3.63	1.56	-6.96	.000
	Acquisitive	69	5.09	1.22			57	4.94	1.38			53	5.33	1.05		
Sum_Ref_pref	Mainstream	78	4.07	1.11	-6.96	.000	71	4.37	1.28	-5.02	.000	80	4.07	1.54	-6.22	.000
	Acquisitive	69	5.30	1.03			57	5.47	1.17			53	5.53	0.91		
Sum_Prepared	Mainstream	78	4.41	1.31	-6.52	.000	71	4.63	1.44	-4.27	.000	80	3.78	1.85	-5.94	.000
	Acquisitive	69	5.69	1.03			57	5.71	1.41			53	5.49	1.21		
Sum_Expand_list	Mainstream	78	2.70	1.57	-5.62	.000	71	2.55	1.40	-3.78	.000	80	2.25	1.39	-5.52	.000
	Acquisitive	69	4.23	1.72			57	3.63	1.81			53	3.74	1.71		
Sum_Self_concept	Mainstream	78	5.49	1.00	-0.89	.377	71	5.42	1.26	-1.25	.215	80	5.55	1.22	-2.71	.008
	Acquisitive	69	5.64	1.11			57	5.69	1.25			53	6.07	0.83		
Sum_Needforcontrol	Mainstream	78	5.21	0.92	-1.09	.277	71	5.32	1.07	-2.01	.046	80	5.29	1.17	-2.99	.003
	Acquisitive	69	5.40	1.18			57	5.69	0.96			53	5.83	0.77		
Sum_Risk_tak	Mainstream	78	4.92	1.14	2.26	.026	71	5.13	1.26	1.00	.317	80	4.77	1.33	-0.31	.754
	Acquisitive	69	4.47	1.25			57	4.90	1.33			53	4.84	1.13		
Sum_Fut_orient	Mainstream	78	4.51	1.21	-2.20	.029	71	4.40	1.37	-2.85	.005	80	4.27	1.49	-3.48	.001
	Acquisitive	69	4.97	1.31			57	5.06	1.22			53	5.10	1.10		
Sum_Shop_exp	Mainstream	78	4.34	1.74	-5.27	.000	71	4.75	1.67	-2.93	.004	80	4.35	1.95	-6.15	.000
	Acquisitive	69	5.72	1.37			57	5.58	1.49			53	6.14	0.99		
Sum_IO	Mainstream	78	3.66	1.24	-3.60	.000	71	3.34	1.37	-4.37	.000	80	3.17	1.50	-5.44	.000
	Acquisitive	69	4.47	1.49			56	4.46	1.51			53	4.51	1.20		
Sum_Short_span	Mainstream	78	3.66	1.58	-1.52	.131	71	4.78	1.38	4.51	.000	80	4.18	1.45	-0.20	.845
	Acquisitive	68	4.07	1.65			56	3.57	1.64			53	4.23	1.53		

Respondents also provided an in-depth analysis of the various types of products they possessed within the product category under discussion (Table 35). In all the types of products for each of the product category (for example, pants, shirts, dresses, skirts, t-shirts, jackets and suits for clothing; black shoes, white shoes, brown shoes, shoes of other colors, etc.; jewelry, purses, handbags and wallets, and watches for accessories), acquisitive buyers possessed significantly greater number of products than mainstream buyers except for ties.

Table 35: Differences between Acquisitive and Mainstream Buyers based on types of inventories

CLOTHES		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	p
Clothes_pants	Mainstream	78	16.58	12.13	-4.36	144	.000
	Acquisitive	68	76.71	121.20			
Clothes_shirts	Mainstream	78	26.36	21.45	-5.48	145	.000
	Acquisitive	69	84.07	90.22			
Clothes_dresses	Mainstream	76	2.33	4.12	-6.15	143	.000
	Acquisitive	69	19.68	24.20			
Clothes_skirts	Mainstream	76	2.64	8.18	-5.71	143	.000
	Acquisitive	69	18.88	23.27			
Clothes_tshirts	Mainstream	78	23.50	17.52	-6.77	145	.000
	Acquisitive	69	58.41	41.55			
Clothes_jackets	Mainstream	78	6.64	6.17	-4.23	145	.000
	Acquisitive	69	28.58	45.38			
Clothes_suits	Mainstream	77	2.39	5.29	-4.55	144	.000
	Acquisitive	69	13.07	19.85			

SHOES		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	p
Black shoes	Mainstream	71	3.58	3.20	-5.17	126	.000
	Acquisitive	57	14.51	17.47			
White shoes	Mainstream	71	1.54	1.56	-4.62	126	.000
	Acquisitive	57	6.14	8.23			
Brown shoes	Mainstream	71	2.00	1.86	-4.16	126	.000
	Acquisitive	57	8.23	12.45			
Shoes of other colors	Mainstream	71	2.82	4.06	-4.99	126	.000
	Acquisitive	57	17.79	24.91			
Sports shoes	Mainstream	70	2.77	2.47	-4.86	125	.000
	Acquisitive	57	9.51	11.29			
Formal shoes	Mainstream	71	1.87	1.95	-4.32	126	.000
	Acquisitive	57	12.09	19.80			
Sandals	Mainstream	71	2.68	2.87	-4.86	126	.000
	Acquisitive	57	15.21	21.50			
Heels	Mainstream	71	2.23	4.37	-4.25	126	.000
	Acquisitive	57	22.95	40.83			
Flat shoes	Mainstream	71	3.30	4.50	-4.68	126	.000
	Acquisitive	57	12.74	16.25			
Open toed shoes	Mainstream	71	2.35	3.45	-4.23	126	.000
	Acquisitive	57	17.40	29.80			
Close toed shoes	Mainstream	71	5.62	7.18	-5.02	126	.000
	Acquisitive	57	25.46	32.35			

ACCESSORIES		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	p
Jewelry_total	Mainstream	80	15.16	20.71	-4.51	131	.000
	Acquisitive	53	85.89	138.20			
Purses_total	Mainstream	80	5.64	12.03	-3.86	131	.000
	Acquisitive	53	26.40	45.79			
Watches_total	Mainstream	80	3.54	11.06	-2.21	131	.029
	Acquisitive	53	8.32	13.82			
Ties_total	Mainstream	80	8.90	15.59	-0.05	131	.957
	Acquisitive	53	9.08	21.71			

4.3.2.4.2.2 More Needs per Product Category

Hypothesis 1 suggests that acquisitive buyers exhibit more needs per product category than mainstream buyers. The more needs construct was created by summing all the needs that the respondents indicated (out of a total of 9 needs for clothes, 10 needs for shoes, and 7 needs for accessories). This case-wise summation became the basis for the more needs construct. The mean total number of needs for acquisitive buyers for clothes was 7.72 (SD 1.98) while that for mainstream buyers was 4.74 (SD 2.27) ($t(1, 145) = 8.41, p = 0.000$). The mean total number of needs for acquisitive buyers for shoes was 7.94 (SD 2.31) while that for mainstream buyers was 4.58 (SD 3.25) ($t(1, 126) = 6.59, p = 0.000$). Lastly, the mean total number of needs for acquisitive buyers for accessories was 5.74 (SD 1.46) while that for mainstream buyers was 3.03 (SD 2.21) ($t(1, 131) = 7.86, p = 0.000$). Hence, hypothesis 1 is supported.

Further analysis of the needs was conducted to better understand the construct of more needs. Tables 36 through 38 show an in-depth difference of needs amongst acquisitive and mainstream buyers for the three product categories. For clothes, for the more obvious needs such as clothes for winter, clothes for summer and casual clothes, the responses were almost equal for acquisitive and mainstream buyers while the responses were more for acquisitive buyers for professional clothes, workout clothes, fun clothes, evening clothes, and clothes for different events and clothes with different functionalities than mainstream buyers. However, an analysis of the number of items for each of the needs for clothes shows significant difference between mainstream and acquisitive buyers (Table 36) among all the 9 needs. Acquisitive buyers possess significantly greater number of clothes for each of the needs than mainstream buyers. In the same vein, results showed that acquisitive buyers possessed significantly more number of items for each need than did mainstream buyers (Table 37) for all the 10 shoes needs and 7 accessory needs (Table 38).

Table 36: Understanding More Needs – Clothes

		No of responses	Mean of inventory	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	df	p
Needs1_items	Mainstream	72	19.89	20.56	2.41	-6.41	137	.000
	Acquisitive	69	66.02	57.57	7.09			
Needs2_items	Mainstream	72	32.51	25.46	3.00	-7.13	132	.000
	Acquisitive	67	90.00	62.73	7.97			
Needs3_items	Mainstream	64	39.78	37.63	4.53	-4.25	127	.000
	Acquisitive	65	78.07	62.96	8.13			
Needs4_items	Mainstream	31	7.33	13.24	1.89	-4.44	106	.000
	Acquisitive	61	49.07	64.62	8.41			
Needs5_items	Mainstream	34	8.11	11.25	1.50	-3.27	110	.001
	Acquisitive	56	17.13	17.31	2.31			
Needs6_items	Mainstream	31	17.77	24.21	3.32	-2.17	108	.032
	Acquisitive	59	58.33	133.78	17.72			
Needs7_items	Mainstream	24	4.21	8.12	1.17	-2.82	103	.006
	Acquisitive	56	40.40	88.65	11.74			
Needs8_items	Mainstream	16	6.48	16.49	2.43	-3.76	97	.000
	Acquisitive	53	24.25	28.08	3.86			
Needs9_items	Mainstream	16	15.30	28.71	4.38	-2.60	87	.011
	Acquisitive	47	38.59	51.61	7.61			

Table 37: Understanding More Needs – Shoes

		No. of responses	Mean no. of items	Std. Deviation	t	df	p
Need_no1	Mainstream	35	4.97	6.85	-3.52	77	.001
	Acquisitive	48	15.07	15.40			
Need_no2	Mainstream	39	3.63	4.92	-3.74	88	.000
	Acquisitive	50	16.70	21.67			
Need_no3	Mainstream	46	5.49	5.09	-3.54	87	.001
	Acquisitive	49	23.94	32.98			
Need_no4	Mainstream	38	7.69	8.53	-3.70	81	.000
	Acquisitive	49	32.70	39.86			
Need_no5	Mainstream	23	2.79	3.94	-2.65	72	.010
	Acquisitive	46	25.26	44.60			
Need_no6	Mainstream	26	6.00	6.11	-2.69	64	.009
	Acquisitive	40	21.76	31.00			
Need_no7	Mainstream	16	2.42	3.51	-2.57	56	.013
	Acquisitive	32	10.15	14.39			
Need_no8	Mainstream	36	5.35	5.24	-2.68	77	.009
	Acquisitive	44	34.11	62.26			
Need_no9	Mainstream	29	3.76	4.36	-3.77	75	.000
	Acquisitive	49	12.60	12.14			
Need_no10	Mainstream	37	3.94	4.03	-2.65	77	.010
	Acquisitive	46	21.57	39.10			

Table 38: Understanding More Needs - Accessories

		No of responses	Mean no of items	Std. Deviation	t	df	p
Needs_items1	Mainstream	39	6.23	8.09	-2.35	84	.021
	Acquisitive	48	34.14	78.49			
Needs_items2	Mainstream	52	9.16	14.91	-2.37	91	.020
	Acquisitive	47	38.91	87.38			
Needs_items3	Mainstream	40	6.22	9.50	-2.53	87	.013
	Acquisitive	49	29.45	60.75			
Needs_items4	Mainstream	28	3.62	5.00	-2.63	61	.011
	Acquisitive	41	34.45	68.36			
Needs_items5	Mainstream	27	7.12	8.39	-2.18	72	.032
	Acquisitive	46	32.90	68.41			
Needs_items6	Mainstream	32	9.95	17.63	-2.06	72	.043
	Acquisitive	41	55.67	135.88			
Needs_items7	Mainstream	28	6.03	6.99	-2.05	66	.045
	Acquisitive	32	36.34	88.62			

4.3.2.4.2.3 Knowledge or Consumption Vocabulary

Like more needs, level of knowledge or consumption vocabulary was found to be statistically different for acquisitive and mainstream buyers. The mean score for acquisitive buyers for clothes was 5.44 (SD 1.21) while that for mainstream buyers was 2.89 (SD 1.29) ($t(1, 145) = 12.33, p = 0.000$); mean score for acquisitive buyers for shoes was 5.11 (SD 1.32) while that for mainstream buyers was 3.38 (SD 1.48) ($t(1, 126) = 6.90, p = 0.000$) and mean score acquisitive buyers for accessories was 5.58 (SD 1.18) while that for mainstream buyers was 2.93 (SD 1.61) ($t(1, 131) = 10.33, p = 0.000$). This shows that acquisitive buyers possess a higher level of knowledge regarding the product that they buy repeatedly, thus supporting hypothesis 2.

4.3.2.4.2.4 Interest

Interest in specific product categories was found to be higher for acquisitive buyers than mainstream buyers as hypothesized. The mean level of interest for acquisitive buyers for clothes was 5.01 (SD 1.16) and that for mainstream buyers was 3.04 (SD 1.53) ($t(1, 145) = 8.70, p = 0.000$). The interest level in shoes for acquisitive buyers was 5.02 (SD 1.26) and

that for mainstream buyers was 3.62 (SD 1.48), $t(1, 126) = 5.71, p = 0.000$. Lastly, the interest level in accessories for acquisitive buyers was 5.01 (SD 1.27) while that for mainstream buyers was 2.89 (SD 1.99), $t(1, 131) = 6.88, p = 0.000$. Thus, hypothesis 3 is supported.

4.3.2.4.2.5 Materialism

Acquisitive buyers demonstrated greater levels of materialism than mainstream buyers. The mean score for the materialism scale for acquisitive buyers was 4.33 (SD 1.60) compared to 2.97 (SD 1.26) for mainstream buyers for clothes ($t(1, 145) = 5.67, p = 0.000$), while that for shoes for acquisitive buyers was 4.07 (SD 1.61) and mainstream buyers was 3.17 (SD 1.36) ($t(1, 126) = 3.39, p = 0.000$) and that for accessories for acquisitive buyers was 5.31 (SD 1.21) and mainstream buyers was 3.71 (SD 1.72) ($t(1, 131) = 5.86, p = 0.000$). Thus, hypothesis 4 is supported.

4.3.2.4.2.6 Positive perfectionism

Acquisitive and mainstream buyers demonstrated differences in all the three product categories for this construct though the difference was not as high as seen in the previously discussed constructs. For clothes, acquisitive buyers exhibited a mean score of 4.97 (SD 1.15) as against 4.22 (SD 1.10) of mainstream buyers ($t(1, 145) = 4.00, p = 0.000$); for shoes the values were 4.64 (SD 1.58) for acquisitive buyers and 3.85 (SD 1.23) for mainstream buyers ($t(1, 126) = 3.20, p = 0.000$) and lastly, for accessories, the values were 5.85 (SD 1.02) and 4.34 (SD 1.87) ($t(1, 131) = 5.37, p = 0.000$). Thus, this test supports hypothesis 5.

4.3.2.4.2.7 Variety seeking

Variety seeking helps distinguish acquisitive buyers from mainstream buyers for all the three product categories. For clothes, the mean score for acquisitive buyers was 5.46 (SD 1.43) while that for mainstream buyers was 4.10 (SD 1.49), $t(1, 145) = 5.63, p = 0.000$. For shoes, the mean score for acquisitive buyers was 5.64 (SD 1.32) while that for mainstream

buyers was 4.58 (SD 1.40), $t(1, 126) = 4.37, p = 0.000$. For accessories, the mean score for acquisitive buyers was 5.92 (SD 0.84) while that for mainstream buyers was 4.11 (SD 1.67), $t(1, 131) = 7.30, p = 0.000$. These differences demonstrate the support for hypothesis 6.

4.3.2.4.2.8 Self-concept

The mean score for acquisitive buyers for clothes was 5.64 (SD 1.11) while that for mainstream buyers was 5.49 (SD 1.00), $t(1, 145) = 0.89, p = 0.377$. Such lack of significant difference between acquisitive and mainstream buyers was also seen in shoes: the mean score for the former was 5.69 (SD 1.25) while that for the latter was 5.42 (SD 1.26), $t(1, 126) = 1.25, p = 0.215$. However, a significant difference is seen in case of accessories: the mean score for acquisitive buyers was 6.07 (SD 0.83) while that for mainstream buyers was 5.55 (SD 1.22), $t(1, 131) = 2.71, p = 0.008$. These results show partial support for hypothesis 7.

4.3.2.4.2.9 Need for control

Need for control was found to be significantly different for shoes and accessories for acquisitive and mainstream buyers but not for clothes. The mean score for acquisitive buyers for clothes was 5.40 (SD 1.18) and that for mainstream buyers was 5.21 (SD 0.92), $t(1, 145) = 1.09, p = 0.277$; the mean score for acquisitive buyers for shoes was 5.69 (SD 0.96) and that for mainstream buyers was 5.32 (1.07), $t(1, 126) = 2.01, p = 0.046$ and lastly, the mean score for acquisitive buyers for accessories was 5.83 (SD 0.77) while that for mainstream buyer was 5.29 (SD 1.17), $t(1, 131) = 2.99, p = 0.003$. Though significant difference is seen in two out of three constructs, the means do not appear to be far apart. Hence, there is partial support for hypothesis 8.

4.3.2.4.2.10 Risk taking

Risk taking amongst acquisitive buyers was not much different to that amongst mainstream buyers for two out of three product categories. In fact, the risk taking was seen to be greater amongst mainstream buyers than amongst acquisitive buyers for clothes (mean

score for acquisitive buyers was 4.47 (SD 1.25) while that for mainstream buyers was 4.92 (SD 1.14), $t(1, 145) = -2.26, p = 0.026$. The mean score for shoes for acquisitive buyers was 4.9 (SD 1.33) while that for mainstream buyers was 5.13 (SD 1.26), $t(1, 126) = 1.00, p = 0.317$ and the mean score for accessories for acquisitive buyers was 4.84 (SD 1.13) and that for mainstream buyers was 4.77 (SD 1.33), $t(1, 131) = 0.31, p = 0.754$. Thus, hypothesis 9 is unsupported.

4.3.2.4.2.11 Refined Preferences

Acquisitive buyers tend to exhibit higher levels of refined preferences than mainstream buyers as seen across all the product categories. The mean score for acquisitive buyers for clothes was 5.30 (SD 1.03) while that for mainstream buyers was 4.07 (SD 1.11), $t(1, 145) = 6.96, p = 0.000$; the mean score for acquisitive buyers for shoes was 5.47 (SD 1.17) while that for mainstream buyers was 4.37 (SD 1.28), $t(1, 126) = 5.02, p = 0.000$ and lastly, the mean score for acquisitive buyers for accessories was 5.53 (SD 0.91), while that for mainstream buyers was 4.07 (SD 1.54), $t(1, 131) = 6.22, p = 0.000$. This shows support for hypothesis 10.

4.3.2.4.2.12 Preparedness

Significant differences were observed between the two buying types across all the product categories for need to stay prepared for any eventuality. The mean scores for acquisitive buyers for clothes, shoes and accessories respectively were 5.69 (SD 1.03), 5.71 (SD 1.41) and 5.49 (SD 1.21) while those for mainstream buyers were 4.41 (SD 1.31), 4.63 (SD 1.44) and 3.78 (SD 1.85). The t tests for the three product categories clothes, shoes and accessories were $t(1, 145) = 6.52, p = 0.000$, $t(1, 126) = 4.27, p = 0.000$, $t(1, 131) = 5.94, p = 0.000$ respectively. These statistics show support for hypotheses 11.

4.3.2.4.2.13 Brand Switching

Acquisitive buyers demonstrate considerably higher levels of brand switching than mainstream buyers. The mean value for acquisitive buyers for clothes was 5.09 (SD 1.22) while that for mainstream buyers was 3.76 (SD 1.23), $t(1, 145) = 6.56, p = 0.000$; that for acquisitive buyers for shoes was 4.94 (SD 1.38) and mainstream buyers was 3.95 (SD 1.34), $t(1, 126) = 4.12, p = 0.000$. Similarly, the mean scores for acquisitive buyers for accessories was 5.33 (SD 1.05) and that for mainstream buyers was 3.63 (SD 1.56), $t(1, 131) = 6.96, p = 0.000$. These results show support for hypothesis 12.

4.3.2.4.2.14 Future Orientation

Acquisitive buyers tend to demonstrate certain degree of future orientation compared to mainstream buyers across all the three product categories. The mean values for acquisitive buyers for clothes, shoes and accessories for this construct respectively were 4.97 (SD 1.31), 5.06 (SD 1.22) and 5.10 (SD 1.10). Following closely were the means for mainstream buyers for clothes, shoes and accessories respectively: 4.51 (SD 1.21), 4.40 (SD 1.37) and 4.27 (1.49). The t tests showed the following results for clothes, shoes and accessories respectively: $t(1, 145) = 2.20, p = 0.029$, $t(1, 126) = 2.85, p = 0.005$, $t(1, 131) = 3.48, p = 0.001$. These results show support for hypothesis 13.

4.3.2.4.2.15 Insider-Outsider Phenomenon

The insider-outsider phenomenon is more evident amongst acquisitive buyers than amongst mainstream buyers. The mean score for acquisitive buyers for clothes was 4.47 (SD 1.49) while that for mainstream buyers was 3.66 (SD 1.24), $t(1, 145) = 3.60, p = 0.000$. Similarly, the mean score for acquisitive buyers for shoes was 4.46 (SD 1.51) while that for mainstream buyers was 3.34 (SD 1.37), $t(1, 126) = 4.37, p = 0.000$. Lastly, the means score for acquisitive buyers for accessories was 4.51 (SD 1.20) while that for mainstream buyers was 3.17 (SD 1.50), $t(1, 145) = 5.44, p = 0.000$. These results support hypothesis 14.

An in-depth analysis of the insider-outsider phenomenon resulted in this finding: For clothes, 90.6% of mainstream buyers (9.4% acquisitive buyers) considered that they were below average, 56.4% considered themselves to be average (43.6%) and 13.5% considered themselves to be above average (86.5%). Similarly, for shoes, 85.7% of mainstream buyers (14.3% acquisitive buyers) considered that they were below average, 65% (35% acquisitive buyers) considered that they were average while only 17.9% (82.1%) considered that they were above average. The results were very similar for accessories: 88.1% of mainstream buyers (11.9% acquisitive buyers) considered themselves to be below average buyers, 60.9% (39.1% acquisitive buyers) considered themselves to be average buyers and 12.5% (87.5% acquisitive buyers) considered themselves to be above average buyers. These results show that majority of the mainstream buyers consider themselves to be below average or average while majority of the acquisitive buyers consider themselves to be average to above average buyers. This is in contrast to the qualitative findings that suggest that both mainstream and acquisitive buyers tend to consider themselves to be average.

4.3.2.4.2.16 Constant Search

Acquisitive buyers tend to search more for their products compared to their mainstream counterparts. The mean scores for clothes, shoes and accessories respectively for acquisitive buyers were 4.70 (SD 1.36), 4.32 (SD 1.36) and 4.85 (SD 1.17). On the other hand, the mean scores for clothes, shoes and accessories for mainstream buyers were 2.74 (SD 1.16), 3.20 (SD 1.25) and 2.95 (SD 1.38). The *t* test results for clothes, shoes and accessories respectively are $t(1, 145) = 9.47, p = 0.000$, $t(1, 126) = 4.87, p = 0.000$, and $t(1, 131) = 8.24, p = 0.000$, thus supporting hypothesis 15.

4.3.2.4.2.17 Expanding List

For this construct, the mean scores for acquisitive buyers for clothes, shoes and accessories respectively were 4.23 (SD 1.72), 3.63 (SD 1.81) and 3.74 (SD 1.71) while those

for mainstream buyers were 2.70 (SD 1.57), 2.55 (SD 1.40) and 2.25 (SD 1.39). The t tests suggest significant differences between acquisitive and mainstream buyers across all the product categories (t tests for clothes, shoes and accessories were $t(1, 145) = 5.62, p = 0.000$ $t(1, 126) = 3.78, p = 0.000$ $t(1, 131) = 5.52, p = 0.000$ respectively). Thus, hypothesis 16 is supported.

4.3.2.4.2.18 Shopping Experience

The shopping experience is considered to be positive and happy for acquisitive buyers as shown by the higher mean values across the three product categories: 5.72 (SD 1.37), 5.58 (SD 1.49) and 6.14 (SD 0.99) for clothes, shoes and accessories respectively. The corresponding scores for mainstream buyers were 4.34 (SD 1.74), 4.75 (1.67) and 4.35 (1.95). The t tests across all the three product categories show that acquisitive buyers consider shopping a more positive experience than do mainstream buyers (t tests for clothes, shoes and accessories were $t(1, 145) = 5.27, p = 0.000$ $t(1, 126) = 2.93, p = 0.004$ $t(1, 131) = 6.15, p = 0.000$ respectively). These results support hypothesis 17.

4.3.2.4.2.19 Short Span of Product Usage

This hypothesis suggests that acquisitive buyers use their products for a shorter span than mainstream buyers. The results showed significance for only one product category – shoes. The mean value for acquisitive buyers for clothes was 4.07 (SD 1.65) while that for mainstream buyers was 3.66 (SD 1.58), $t(1, 145) = 1.52, p = 0.131$. The mean value for acquisitive buyers for shoes was 3.57 (SD 1.64) while that for mainstream buyers was 4.78 (SD 1.38), $t(1, 126) = -4.51, p = 0.000$. As seen in the case of shoes, it is the mainstream buyers who tend to have a shorter span of product usage rather than acquisitive buyers. Lastly, the mean score for accessories for acquisitive buyers was 4.23 (SD 1.53) while that for mainstream buyers was 4.18 (SD 1.45), $t(1, 131) = 0.20, p = 0.845$. Thus, there is no support for hypothesis 18.

4.3.2.4.2.20 Discussion

In the overall analysis, 14 out of 18 hypotheses found support from the data across all the three product categories. Two hypotheses were partially supported: need for control and self-concept were not supported across all the product categories. Two other hypotheses were not supported at all across all the three product categories: risk taking and short span of product usage.

4.3.2.4.3 Difference between Acquisitive and Mainstream Buyers Based on a Combination of Constructs

4.3.2.4.3.1 Logistic Regression

To test whether there are differences between acquisitive and mainstream buyers based on a combination of constructs, binary logistic regression was used. The dependent variable comprises of the two categorical buying types: acquisitive and mainstream buyers. A number of independent variables that would help discriminate between the two groups were included in the analysis for all the three categories of products: more needs per product category, knowledge, materialism, perfectionism, variety seeking and need for control, constant search, refined preference and preparedness. Since multicollinearity of the independent variables affects the results of logistic regression, correlations amongst were observed. None of the correlations were alarming enough to warrant action. Stepwise method was used to assess the performance of the logistic regression.

4.3.2.4.3.1.1 Assessing Overall Model Fit

The goodness of fit measures are provided in Table 39 for all product categories. The traditional Chi-square goodness of fit tests whether the model with the predictors is significantly different from the model with only the intercept. The omnibus test may be interpreted as a test of the capability of all predictors in the model jointly to predict the response (dependent) variable. The tests showed that there is adequate fit of the data to the model, meaning that at least one of the predictors is significantly related to the response

variable. The Chi-square values for clothes, shoes and accessories are as follows: clothes - $\chi^2_{(df\ 10)} = 84.49$, $p=0.000$, shoes - $\chi^2_{(df\ 10)} = 45.07$, $p=0.000$, accessories - $\chi^2_{(df\ 10)} = 72.44$, $p=0.000$.

Table 39: Logistic Regression Model Fit Results for all Product Categories

	CLOTHES			SHOES			ACCESSORIES		
Model summary	Chi-square	df	Sig.	Chi-square	df	Sig.	Chi-square	df	Sig.
	84.490	10	.000	45.069	8	.000	72.441	10	.000
R square values	-2 Log likelihood	Cox & Snell R Square	Nagelkerke R Square	-2 Log likelihood	Cox & Snell R Square	Nagelkerke R Square	-2 Log likelihood	Cox & Snell R Square	Nagelkerke R Square
	56.558 ^a	.563	.752	78.584 ^a	.394	.527	51.554 ^a	.545	.736
Hosmer and Lemeshow test	Chi-square	df	Sig.	Chi-square	df	Sig.	Chi-square	df	Sig.
	11.712	8	.165	3.109	8	.927	13.010	8	.112

A better test for goodness of fit is the Hosmer and Lemeshow chi-square test. This test is considered more robust than the traditional chi-square test, particularly if continuous covariates are in the model or sample size is small. Hosmer and Lemeshow's goodness of fit test divides subjects into deciles based on predicted probabilities as illustrated above, and then computes a chi-square from observed and expected frequencies. Then a probability (p) value is computed from the chi-square distribution with 8 degrees of freedom to test the fit of the logistic model. If the H-L goodness-of-fit test statistic is greater than .05, as we want for well-fitting models, we fail to reject the null hypothesis that there is no difference between observed and model-predicted values, implying that the model's estimates fit the data at an acceptable level. That is, well-fitting models show nonsignificance on the H-L goodness-of-fit test, indicating model prediction is not significantly different from observed values. In this case, the chi-square values for clothes, shoes and accessories show good fit between the

observed and predicted models: shoes - $\chi^2_{(df\ 8)} = 11.71$, $p=0.165$, clothes - $\chi^2_{(df\ 8)} = 3.109$, $p=0.927$, accessories - $\chi^2_{(df\ 8)} = 13.01$, $p=0.112$.

4.3.2.4.3.1.2 Measure of Effect Size

Table 33 shows the Cox and Snell R^2 , the Nagelkerke R^2 and a pseudo R^2 measure based on the reduction in the $-2LL$ value. The Cox and Snell R^2 , the Nagelkerke R^2 values for the three product categories are as follows: clothes – 0.563 and 0.752, shoes – 0.394 and 0.527 and accessories – 0.545 and 0.736. Coupled with the statically based measures of model fit, the models for the three product categories are deemed acceptable in terms of both statistical and practical significance.

4.3.2.4.3.1.3 Classification Accuracy

The third examination of overall model fit will be to assess the classification accuracy of the model in a final measure of practical significance. The classification matrixes represent the levels of predictive accuracy achieved by the logistic model (Table 40). The overall hit ratio for the original sample was 92.2% for clothes, 82.2% for shoes and 89.1% for accessories and that for the holdout sample was 93.3% for clothes, 75% for shoes and 78% for accessories. Since the cutoff percentage was 50%, the overall hit ratios were greater than the proportional chance ratio (Hair et al. 2007, Morrison 1969). The hit ratios for the original and holdout samples for mainstream and acquisitive buyers across all the three product categories show values well above chance. Thus with overall model fit demonstrating acceptable levels of statistical and practical significances, the next important aspect would be to assess the logistical coefficients that have significant relationships affecting group membership.

Table 41 shows the estimated coefficients for the independent variables and the constants for all the three product categories. A commonality can be observed across all the

product categories. Both more needs and knowledge were found to be significant across all product categories.

Table 40: Classification Table for Clothes, Shoes and Accessories

CLOTHES						
Classification Table	Predicted					
	Selected Cases ^a			Unselected Cases ^b		
	2=Acquisitive		%	2=Acquisitive		%
	1	2	Correct	1	2	Correct
Mainstream	50	4	92.6	23	1	95.8
Acquisitive	4	44	91.7	2	19	90.5
Overall %			92.2			93.3
SHOES						
Classification Table	Predicted					
	Selected Cases ^a			Unselected Cases ^b		
	2=Acquisitive		%	2=Acquisitive		%
	1	2	Correct	1	2	Correct
Mainstream	42	8	84.0	17	4	81.0
Acquisitive	8	32	80.0	5	10	66.7
Overall %			82.2			75.0
ACCESSORIES						
Classification Table	Predicted					
	Selected Cases ^a			Unselected Cases ^b		
	2=acquisitive		%	2=acquisitive		%
	1	2	Correct	1	2	Correct
Mainstream	49	6	89.1	20	5	80.0
Acquisitive	4	33	89.2	4	12	75.0
Overall %			89.1			78.0

4.3.2.4.3.1.4 Statistical Significance of the Coefficients

The logistic coefficients for more needs (0.68 for clothes, 0.279 for shoes and 0.797 for accessories) and knowledge (1.329 for clothes, 0.718 for shoes and 1.107 for accessories) and the constant were all significant for all the three product categories based on the statistical tests of the Wald statistic. Besides, for clothes, constant search (logistic coefficient was 0.897) was significant at $p=0.04$ and variety seeking (logistic coefficient was -0.767) was significant at $p < 0.1$. For accessories, preparedness (logistic coefficient was -0.611) was

significant at < 0.1 . This shows partial support for hypothesis 19 as only two out of 6 hypothesized constructs were significant across all the three product categories.

Table 41: Estimated Coefficients for Variables in Equation for Clothes, Shoes and Accessories

CLOTHES						
Constructs	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
More needs	.680	.200	11.537	1	.001	1.974
Knowledge	1.329	.438	9.199	1	.002	3.776
Constant search	.897	.437	4.206	1	.040	2.453
Variety seeking	-.767	.404	3.612	1	.057	.464
Preparedness						
Constant	-9.214	2.485	13.745	1	.000	.000
SHOES						
Constructs	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
More needs	.279	.120	5.361	1	.021	1.321
Knowledge	.718	.365	3.867	1	.049	2.051
Constant search						
Variety seeking						
Preparedness						
Constant	-6.223	2.618	5.652	1	.017	.002
ACCESSORIES						
Constructs	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
More needs	.797	.263	9.212	1	.002	2.219
Knowledge	1.107	.442	6.284	1	.012	3.026
Constant search						
Variety seeking						
Preparedness	-.611	.340	3.240	1	.072	.543
Constant	-8.955	2.398	13.947	1	.000	.000

4.3.2.4.3.1.5 Interpreting the Direction of the Relationships

Both more needs per product category and knowledge showed positive relationship with the predicted probability. As the values of either constructs increase, the predicted probability will increase, thus increasing the likelihood that a buyer will be categorized as

acquisitive buyer. The same is applicable for constant search in case of clothes. For variety seeking and preparedness which show a negative relationship, as the values of either decrease, the predicted probability will decrease, thus increasing the likelihood that a buyer will be categorized as mainstream buyer.

4.3.2.4.3.1.6 Odds Ratio

The odds ratio helps to determine the magnitude of the change in probability due to the statistically significant independent variables. The exponentiated coefficient minus one equals the percentage change in odds. For continuous variables, the odds ratio represents the factor by which the odds (event) change for a one-unit change in the variable. An $\text{Exp}(b) > 1$ means the independent variable increases the logit and therefore increases odds(event). If $\text{Exp}(b) = 1.0$, the independent variable has no effect. If $\text{Exp}(b)$ is less than 1.0, then the independent variable decreases the logit and decreases odds(event). More needs and knowledge have $\text{Exp}(b) > 1$ across all the three product categories suggesting that they increase the odds.

4.3.2.4.3.2 Discriminant Analysis

Although logistic regression shows the separation of acquisitive and mainstream buyers based on a combination of constructs, discriminant analysis was also conducted as an alternative method to verify the results. Table 42 reports the results. Assumptions of normality, linearity and multicollinearity of the independent variables were checked before the actual analysis was conducted. The box's M value for clothes and accessories were significant $p=0.02$ and $p=0.000$, but not for shoes $p=0.066$. However, the sensitivity of the test to factors other than just covariance differences makes these levels acceptable (Hair et al. 2007).

Table 42: Discriminant Analysis Overall Model Fit

Overall model fit									
CLOTHES									
Step	of Variables	Lambda	df1	df2	df3	Exact F			
						Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
1	1	.560	1	1	100	78.686	1	100.000	.000
2	2	.441	2	1	100	62.740	2	99.000	.000
3	3	.421	3	1	100	45.010	3	98.000	.000
SHOES									
Step	of Variables	Lambda	df1	df2	df3	Exact F			
						Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
1	1	.706	1	1	89	37.019	1	89.000	.000
2	2	.621	2	1	89	26.829	2	88.000	.000
ACCESSORIES									
Step	of Variables	Lambda	df1	df2	df3	Exact F			
						Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
1	1	.545	1	1	90	75.171	1	90.000	.000
2	2	.485	2	1	90	47.290	2	89.000	.000
3	3	.457	3	1	90	34.822	3	88.000	.000

4.3.2.4.3.2.1 Overall Fit

Wilk's lambda values for all the three categories showed significance (clothes: 0.421, $F(3, 98)=45.01$, $p=0.000$; shoes: 0.621, $F(2, 88)=26.829$, $p=0.000$; accessories: 0.457, $F(3, 88) = 34.82$, $p=0.000$). The canonical correlation for clothes was 0.761, for shoes was 0.615 and for accessories was 0.737. Thus, the discriminant functions were highly significant. The variance explained by the independent variables was 0.57 for clothes, 0.37 for shoes and 0.54 for accessories. The standardized discriminant functions are provided in Table 26. Group centroids are also reported as they provide a summary of the relative position of each group on the discriminant function. Table 43 reveals that the group centroid for mainstream buyers for clothes was -1.096 whereas that for acquisitive buyers was 1.233.

Table 43: Discriminant Analysis – Variables in Equation, Discriminant Functions and Group centroids for all Product Categories

Variables in equation	CLOTHES			SHOES			ACCESSORIES		
Constructs	Tolerance	F to Remove	Wilks' Lambda	Tolerance	F to Remove	Wilks' Lambda	Tolerance	F to Remove	Wilks' Lambda
Knowledge	.609	43.567	.608	.936	17.171	.742	.467	26.761	.596
More needs	.971	28.836	.544	.936	12.046	.706	.731	15.402	.537
Variety seeking	.596	4.770	.441						
Preparedness							.410	5.307	.485
Discriminant functions									
	CLOTHES	SHOES	ACCESSORIES						
	Function	Function	Function						
	1	1	1						
Knowledge	.636	.583	.613						
More needs	.934	.679	.959						
Variety seeking	-.367								
Preparedness			-.506						
Group centroids of discriminant functions									
	CLOTHES	SHOES	ACCESSORIES						
	Function	Function	Function						
	1	1	1						
Mainstream	-1.096	-.699	-.884						
Acquisitive	1.233	.853	1.314						

4.3.2.4.3.2.2 Assessing Classification Accuracy

Tables 44, 45 and 46 show the classification tables for clothes, shoes and accessories. For clothes, the overall correct classification was 90.2% for the original sample and 86.7% for the holdout sample. For shoes, the overall correct classification was 79.3% for the original sample and 72.2% for the holdout sample. For accessories, the overall correct classification was 89.1% for the original sample and 75.6% for the holdout sample. The results showed that the values were higher than the proportional chance criterion.

4.3.2.4.3.2.1 Interpreting Results

Table 43 shows the variables in the equation. Just as in logistic regression, the results here showed that for all the three product categories, more needs and knowledge were significant in classifying acquisitive and mainstream buyers. Besides, variety seeking was significant for clothes only and preparedness was significant for accessories. Thus, hypothesis H19 is partially supported for more needs and knowledge only.

Table 44: Classification Tables for Clothes

CLOTHES						
				Membership		
				1	2	Total
Cases Selected	Original	Count	Mainstream	48	6	54
			Acquisitive	4	44	48
		%	Mainstream	88.9	11.1	100.0
			Acquisitive	8.3	91.7	100.0
	Cross-validated	Count	Mainstream	48	6	54
			Acquisitive	4	44	48
		%	Mainstream	88.9	11.1	100.0
			Acquisitive	8.3	91.7	100.0
Cases Not Selected	Original	Count	Mainstream	21	3	24
			Acquisitive	3	18	21
		%	Mainstream	87.5	12.5	100.0
			Acquisitive	14.3	85.7	100.0

b. 90.2% of selected original grouped cases correctly classified.

c. 86.7% of unselected original grouped cases correctly classified.

d. 90.2% of selected cross-validated grouped cases correctly classified.

Table 45: Classification Tables for Shoes

SHOES						
				Membership		
				1	2	Total
Cases Selected	Original	Count	Mainstream	40	10	50
			Acquisitive	9	33	42
		%	Mainstream	80.0	20.0	100.0
			Acquisitive	21.4	78.6	100.0
	Cross-validated	Count	Mainstream	39	11	50
			Acquisitive	9	33	42
		%	Mainstream	78.0	22.0	100.0
			Acquisitive	21.4	78.6	100.0
Cases Not Selected	Original	Count	Mainstream	16	5	21
			Acquisitive	5	10	15
		%	Mainstream	76.2	23.8	100.0
			Acquisitive	33.3	66.7	100.0

b. 79.3% of selected original grouped cases correctly classified.

c. 72.2% of unselected original grouped cases correctly classified.

d. 78.3% of selected cross-validated grouped cases correctly classified.

Table 46: Classification Tables for Shoes

ACCESSORIES						
				Membership		
				1	2	Total
Cases Selected	Original	Count	Mainstream	49	6	55
			Acquisitive	4	33	37
		%	Mainstream	89.1	10.9	100.0
			Acquisitive	10.8	89.2	100.0
Cases Not Selected	Original	Count	Mainstream	18	7	25
			Acquisitive	3	13	16
		%	Mainstream	72.0	28.0	100.0
			Acquisitive	18.8	81.3	100.0

a. 89.1% of selected original grouped cases correctly classified.

b. 75.6% of unselected original grouped cases correctly classified.

4.3.2.4.3.3 Discussion

Overall, there is partial support for hypothesis 19. Acquisitive and mainstream buyers can be distinguished based on a combination of constructs identified earlier. Mainly, more needs and knowledge were significant in classifying these two types of buyers across all the product categories.

4.3.2.4.4 Test of the Relationship of More Needs with Other Constructs

To test the relationships between more needs and the other constructs characterizing acquisitive and mainstream buyers, mediation analysis was conducted (Baron and Kenny 1976). Table 47 shows this analysis for clothes, shoes and accessories in that order.

Clothes: More needs, variety seeking, materialism and positive perfectionism were regressed on knowledge. Other than perfectionism, all other variables showed significant relationships. Next, the four independent variables were regressed on refined preferences. All of them showed significant relationships with the dependent variable. Third, knowledge was regressed on refined preference and the results were significant. Finally, when all four independent variables along with knowledge were regressed on refined preferences, only materialism was found to be nonsignificant. All R square changes were significant. This

shows that knowledge completely mediates the relationship between materialism and refined preferences. However, there is partial mediation for more needs and variety seeking while perfectionism has direct relationship with refined preferences.

Table 47: Mediation Analysis for all Product Categories

CLOTHES	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4
Constructs	Knowledge	Refined preference	Refined preference	Refined preference
More Needs	0.214**	0.225**		0.150*
Materialism	0.259**	0.169*		0.083
Perfectionism	0.009	0.153*		0.166*
Variety seeking	0.497**	0.409**		0.254**
Knowledge			0.673**	0.365**
Change in R ²	0.040**	0.017*	0.050**	0.016*
SHOES	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4
Constructs	Knowledge	Refined preference	Refined preference	Refined preference
More Needs	0.276**	0.209**		0.121*
Materialism	0.398**	0.051		-0.076
Perfectionism	0.098	0.162*		0.131*
Variety seeking	0.245**	0.597**		0.519**
Knowledge			0.698**	0.319**
Change in R ²	0.035**	0.032**	0.050**	0.013*
ACCESSORIES	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4
Constructs	Knowledge	Refined preference	Refined preference	Refined preference
More Needs	0.249**	0.125*		0.09
Materialism	0.306**	0.361**		0.367**
Perfectionism	0.046	0.184*		0.150**
Variety seeking	0.366**	0.277**		0.244**
Knowledge			0.740**	0.229**
Change in R ²	0.033**	0.01*	0.005*	0.018*

Shoes: The pattern for shoes follows that of clothes. Perfectionism is nonsignificant in the first step but has a significant effect on refined preference. The materialism is nonsignificant when regressed on refined preference, it shows full meditational effect. Knowledge partially mediated the relationship between more needs and variety seeking and refined preferences.

Accessories: Here, knowledge completely mediated the relationship between needs and refined preferences. However, there was partial mediation of knowledge in case of the relationships between materialism and variety seeking and refined preferences.

Perfectionism, as seen in the other product categories, had no effect on knowledge but had a positive effect on refined preferences.

4.3.2.4.4.1 Discussion

Overall, the results demonstrate the following:

H20a: More needs positively affects knowledge or consumption vocabulary across all product categories. Hence this hypothesis is supported.

H20b: Variety seeking positively affects knowledge or consumption vocabulary across all product categories. Hence this hypothesis is supported.

H20c: Positive perfectionism does not affect knowledge or consumption vocabulary and hence, is not supported.

H20d: Materialism positively affects knowledge or consumption vocabulary across all product categories. Hence this hypothesis is supported.

H20e: Knowledge only partially mediates total needs for two product categories and completely mediates for one. Knowledge partially mediates the relationship between variety seeking and refined preferences for all three product categories. Knowledge completely mediates relationship of materialism on refined preference for all three product categories. Lastly, knowledge does not show any meditational effect between perfectionism and refined preferences. Hence, there is only partial support for H20e.

4.4 Discussion

This essay has been geared towards understanding deeper regarding acquisitive buyers. More so, it is an attempt to understand whether these consumers can be differentiated from mainstream or ordinary buyers. Several attempts have been made to better understand the characteristics of acquisitive buyers and at the same time to distinguish them from mainstream buyers. First, it was hypothesized that acquisitive buyers differ from mainstream buyers on a set of constructs identified in qualitative research done earlier. Specifically 18

constructs pertaining to traits, characteristics and processes related to acquisitive buyers were identified. It was hypothesized that mainstream buyers differ from acquisitive buyers on those 18 constructs. Second, it was suggested that acquisitive and mainstream buyers can also be distinguished on the basis of a set of constructs. Logistic and discriminant analyses were conducted to test for these results. Finally, understanding the most striking constructs in acquisitive buying is imperative. The construct of more needs have dominated the analysis from the initiation of the project. Hence, an attempt was made to understand how this construct affects other identified constructs. Specifically, it was hypothesized that knowledge mediates the relationship of needs and other personality traits with refined preferences. Mediation analysis was conducted to test these hypotheses. Finally, the objective of this essay was to understand whether the phenomenon of acquisitive buying is predominant in a single product category or can be seen across multiple product categories. The latter would suggest that the phenomenon cuts across product categories and is dominant irrespective of the product categories in question. Three product categories were used to test all the hypotheses: clothes, shoes and accessories. These categories were determined from the earlier studies conducted to identify acquisitive buying.

The results showed support for 14 out of 18 hypotheses across the three product categories. This suggests that acquisitive buyers differ from mainstream buyers in a number of constructs: more needs, knowledge, materialism, variety seeking, perfectionism to name a few personality traits. Acquisitive buyers also differ from mainstream buyers in characteristics and shopping processes. They exhibit higher levels of search activities, have an expanding list of products to be acquired, have refined preferences and are in a mode of preparedness for any eventualities. However, they are no different from mainstream buyers in terms of risk taking and short span of product usage. Besides, need for control and self-concept needs are not significantly different between the two types of buyers.

Acquisitive buyers and mainstream buyers can also be differentiated in terms of a combination of constructs. Essentially, more needs and knowledge have been found to help distinguish these types of buyers from the mainstream ones. This factor again establishes the dominance of more needs in the centrality of understanding acquisitive buyers. Since acquisitive buyers have been characterized at a superfluous level to be very similar to mainstream buyers with a large inventory of goods of a specific product category, it was essential to understand the subtle differences between these two types of buyers. The identified combination of constructs helps us to do this. Besides, these constructs help us classify these buyers by asking a few pointed questions, a fact that can have tremendous managerial implications.

Interestingly, essay 2 has used self-control as the basis for differentiating extreme buyers and a typology of buyers was created. Mainstream buyers were also included in the typology to help distinguish it from other buyers with high self-control. This essay confirms that acquisitive and mainstream buyers do not significantly differ in self-control, thus lending support to the proposed grouping of acquisitive and mainstream buyers in the zone of higher self-control.

An anomaly that was observed that differs from previous considerations was the differences amongst mainstream and acquisitive buyers as regards the screener questions. Acquisitive buyers have shown significant differences on the compulsive and impulsive buying scale items compared to mainstream buyers. This is an interesting finding and needs further elaboration.

In an attempt to understand the most important construct of more needs and other personality traits, it was found that more needs affect knowledge and refined preferences. In fact, knowledge partially mediates the relationship. Similarly knowledge completely mediates

the relationship between materialism and refined preferences but such a relationship is partial in case of variety seeking. Perfectionism does not affect knowledge but does affect refined preference. This makes intuitive sense as buyers tend to be perfectionists and it makes them tuned to possess a refined preference. However, it may not always enhance or affect their knowledge.

Finally, the results show that the phenomenon of acquisitive buying is predominant across three product categories. This is an important finding as this shows that the phenomenon transcends products and is evident in various product categories. It is suggested that since acquisitive buying is a trait based phenomenon, it is only natural that this phenomenon will not be bound by the type of products that these consumers buy.

Thus, this essay extends the previous ones by quantitatively experimenting further with acquisitive buyers. More so, non-student sample helped establish this phenomenon as one that stands on its own and is different from all the buying types studied previously.

CHAPTER 5. SUMMARY, IMPLICATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

5.1 Overall Summary of Conclusions

The program of study undertaken as a part of the dissertation is an effort to identify a new buying phenomenon that is yet to be identified in the marketing literature. Acquisitive buying is a type of extreme buying wherein consumers tend to purchase multiple units of products in a product category. Extensive literature search shows the existence of various types of extreme buying: compulsive buying, impulsive buying, excessive buying, fixated buying, hoarding, stockpiling and compulsive and non-compulsive buying. Various factors lead to the various types of buying and each type is characterized by its unique characteristics. Some of these buying types occur as a result of lower levels of self-control while others occur because of manufacturer's marketing activities. However, there is a buying type that is different from the ones mentioned above and it serves the marketing community to understand this buying type for both theoretical and practical purposes.

To identify and characterize acquisitive buying, it is important to first define the phenomenon and delineate it from the other buying types. It is also important to find out the factors that affect acquisitive buying in terms of its antecedents, moderators and mediators. Besides, one needs to understand the processes that operate in the realm of this shopping type. These issues will further help delineate this buying type from other types of extreme buying. Additionally, it is also important to differentiate acquisitive buying from ordinary or mainstream buying. This is especially important as acquisitive buying appears to be a type of hyper-normal buying and hence, do not appear to be any different from mainstream buying. Finally, it is important to understand whether this phenomenon is trait based or product based. Some of these questions have been answered through this program of study resulting

in the establishment of acquisitive buying as a phenomenon that is unique and different from all those that have been studied before and a phenomenon that prevails on its own right.

Three essays have been defined in this program of study to acquisitive buying. Essay one dealt with defining, characterizing and understanding acquisitive buying at an exploratory level. Sixty-two identified acquisitive buyers were interviewed to determine the characteristics, factors and processes that define this phenomenon. A number of characteristics unique to acquisitive buyers emerged from the interviews: acquisitive buyers purchase to satisfy an inherent need for products, a need that determines the ability to distinguish products at a very intricate level and helps them to differentiate products based on refined preferences. An extensive consumption vocabulary develops in the process of purchasing products based on highly differentiated needs. These consumers are variety seekers, brand switchers, in constant search for specific products that match their criteria of needs, have high self-control at the same time, and do not suffer from post-purchase guilt or financial problems. Essay one also established acquisitive buying through triangulation of data by the development of a concept mapping technique that is new to the marketing field though it has been established in social networking research.

Essay two extends from essay one in determining how acquisitive buying is different from other types of extreme buying mentioned earlier. Citations from extant literature were used to differentiate the various buying types from acquisitive buying. Besides, an attempt was made to distinguish acquisitive buying from mainstream buying. Citations from identified and interviewed mainstream buyers were compared with those of acquisitive buyers. Results showed that the former differed from the latter on eighteen constructs, notable amongst them are more needs per product category, consumption vocabulary, materialism, variety seeking, brand switching and insider-outsider phenomenon. Besides, mainstream buyers discussed trust and reliability as important issues related to brand loyalty.

Finally, essay two also contributes to the extant literature by developing a typology of extreme buying. Self-control was used as the basis for segregating the various types of buying phenomena. Acquisitive buyers were placed with stockpilers, non-compulsive collectors and mainstream buyers because of their similarities in terms of higher self-control.

Essay three is based on both essays one and two as it establishes a quantitative basis for characterizing and distinguishing acquisitive buyers from mainstream buyers. Four important tasks were accomplished through this essay. First, it was established that acquisitive buyers are different from mainstream buyers on at least fourteen important constructs characteristic of acquisitive buyers. Second, it was established that these two groups of consumers are different based on a combination of constructs that can be used to classify them. Third, an attempt was made to understand the construct of more needs per product category and how it is related to other constructs. It was found that consumption vocabulary partially mediates the relationship between more needs and refined preferences. Finally, this essay also showed that acquisitive buying is not a phenomenon that is characteristic of a particular product category but cuts across different categories. Overall, it was found that acquisitive buying is more a trait based phenomenon rather than a product based one though more research needs to be conducted to establish this aspect.

5.2 Managerial Implications

Though this program of research has established the theoretical contribution in the realm of marketing, it is important to discuss its practical implications. Managerially, it is important to know about acquisitive buyers. Businesses cater to specific types of consumers. For example, chocolate and magazines are placed at the retail checkout counters to induce impulsive buying. Understanding acquisitive buyers would help in identifying a set of consumers who have specific needs to be catered to. These individuals desire variety in terms of minute differences in the products. Apparel industry, for example, can cater to these

individuals with products that differ minutely in styles, textures and shades of colors so that acquisitive buyers can complement their needs with the right products. Some retailers market products as an entire ensemble. This strategy may be successful with certain acquisitive buyers who find it important to have all products coordinated to their liking so that they feel “put together.” Other retailers may follow this strategy to cater to this broad set of consumers. Businesses have heavily relied on factual point-of-purchase, real-time, computer-generated-and-supplied data. Yet, consumer intelligence as revealed through an in-depth understanding of consumer psychology and buying behavior has sometimes been overlooked. The better our understanding of the various categories of consumer buying, the better our understanding of consumer behavior. This view of consumers reflects their nature as real, complex and sometimes predictable human beings who need to be treated uniquely.

5.3 Future Research

Acquisitive buying as a phenomenon is new in the field of marketing. Therefore, ample opportunity lies in understanding more about this phenomenon. Most importantly, further research needs to be conducted to actually determine whether this phenomenon is trait based. Besides, an overall model of relationships amongst constructs needs to be established for acquisitive buying. Only a limited account of the more needs construct has been studied in this program of research. An overall model would certainly help provide a better understanding of this phenomenon. Another interesting area that needs exploring is to understand how childhood and familial factors influence this buying type. Many of the acquisitive buyers had mentioned that their childhood and parental influences were some of the reasons that influenced their buying patterns. Hence, it would be interesting to understand whether such influences do indeed affect this type of buying.

Why do consumers buy the tenth pair of black shoes or the fourteenth white t-shirt? Questions like these have been examined in various ways and most of the answers relate to

extreme buying with negative consequences. This stream of research is the first attempt to demonstrate a particular set of buyers who do not associate their buying with inner tensions or negative outcomes. Further exploration would help learn more about these fastidious buyers to discern their needs and the importance of these needs in their consumption pattern.

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APPENDIX A: STUDENT SCREENER

Survey on shopping patterns

CONSENT FORM

Shopping is a phenomenon which is common amongst all of us and this survey, conducted by the Department of Marketing is related to our shopping patterns. This department supports the practice of protection for individuals participating in research.

Be assured that your name will not be associated in any way with the research findings. All of your actions will be confidential. Please indicate your understanding of the above information and your agreement to participate voluntarily by including your signature in the space provided below. This information will not be included with the survey, so that your information cannot be connected to your answers and confidentiality is ensured.

I understand that my participation is completely voluntary and that I may withdraw from the study at anytime.

I am aware of the following points:

1. I will not face any significant discomforts or stresses. My participation involves no risk.
2. The results of my participation are confidential and will not be released in any individually identifiable form. All data will be coded by number, thus preserving anonymity.
3. The individual administering the survey will answer any further questions I may have about the study.

If you understand the above information and wish to participate in this study, please sign below and continue with the survey.

(Signature)

Thank you for your participation!

Survey on shopping patterns:

We, as consumers, buy products that may be necessary or may sometimes buy products that are unnecessary and unneeded. Researchers in the Department of Marketing at Louisiana State University are trying to understand the consumer phenomenon of buying and owning a high number of products that may be seen as extensive and repetitive, resulting in a large inventory of items. This survey is conducted to identify the product categories that include these large inventories, the needs for buying and owning a large number of items in the product category, and the thoughts and feelings of consumers who have acquired these large inventories.

To help us understand this phenomenon, please think of all the products that you may have bought, either recently or in the past, and for which you have a large number of items. Shoes, clothing, accessories, tools, electronic items, etc. may be some of the product categories that you are specifically interested in buying. For example, a person may have 10 pairs of black shoes (of similar or different designs) and some of them are used regularly while others are not.

All your responses are strictly confidential and we are only interested in the overall assessment of your thoughts.

Please read the following questions carefully and fill in the details that most accurately apply to you.

1. Are you aware of any product categories wherein you buy and own a large number of items?

Yes _____

No _____

If you have checked “**No**,” please go to question **9**. If you have checked “**Yes**,” please proceed to question **2**.

2. In the space below, please name the product categories for which you buy and own a lot of items. For each of the product categories, compared to an average buyer, please note whether you buy less, average or more than average number of these items.

Product category	Number of items per product category	Approximate number of items for each product category
1.	<input type="checkbox"/> Less than average <input type="checkbox"/> Average <input type="checkbox"/> More than average	
2.	<input type="checkbox"/> Less than average <input type="checkbox"/> Average <input type="checkbox"/> More than average	
3.	<input type="checkbox"/> Less than average <input type="checkbox"/> Average <input type="checkbox"/> More than average	
4.	<input type="checkbox"/> Less than average <input type="checkbox"/> Average <input type="checkbox"/> More than average	
5.	<input type="checkbox"/> Less than average <input type="checkbox"/> Average <input type="checkbox"/> More than average	
6.	<input type="checkbox"/> Less than average <input type="checkbox"/> Average <input type="checkbox"/> More than average	
7.	<input type="checkbox"/> Less than average <input type="checkbox"/> Average <input type="checkbox"/> More than average	

3. Next, please choose any **one** product category from Question 2. In the table given in the next page, please think about all the needs for (reasons for buying) such products in that specific product category and write them down. Then, for each of the needs, please indicate whether you buy less than average, average or more than average number of items compared to other average buyers. For example, if you regularly buy shoes (product category), one of the needs may be to “have warm shoes for winter” and you may have average number of items for that need but may have more than average number of items for a different need.

Product category	Types of needs	Number of products bought for each need
		<input type="checkbox"/> Less than average <input type="checkbox"/> Average <input type="checkbox"/> More than average
		<input type="checkbox"/> Less than average <input type="checkbox"/> Average <input type="checkbox"/> More than average
		<input type="checkbox"/> Less than average <input type="checkbox"/> Average <input type="checkbox"/> More than average
		<input type="checkbox"/> Less than average <input type="checkbox"/> Average <input type="checkbox"/> More than average
		<input type="checkbox"/> Less than average <input type="checkbox"/> Average <input type="checkbox"/> More than average
		<input type="checkbox"/> Less than average <input type="checkbox"/> Average <input type="checkbox"/> More than average
		<input type="checkbox"/> Less than average <input type="checkbox"/> Average <input type="checkbox"/> More than average

4. For this question, please choose another product category from Question 2 (if you listed more than one category). In the table below, please mention the types of needs (reasons for buying items) and indicate whether you buy less than average, average or more than average number of items.

Product category	Types of needs	Number of products bought for each need
		<input type="checkbox"/> Less than average <input type="checkbox"/> Average <input type="checkbox"/> More than average
		<input type="checkbox"/> Less than average <input type="checkbox"/> Average <input type="checkbox"/> More than average
		<input type="checkbox"/> Less than average <input type="checkbox"/> Average <input type="checkbox"/> More than average
		<input type="checkbox"/> Less than average <input type="checkbox"/> Average <input type="checkbox"/> More than average
		<input type="checkbox"/> Less than average <input type="checkbox"/> Average <input type="checkbox"/> More than average
		<input type="checkbox"/> Less than average <input type="checkbox"/> Average <input type="checkbox"/> More than average
		<input type="checkbox"/> Less than average <input type="checkbox"/> Average <input type="checkbox"/> More than average

5. In the next questions, we would like to know more about your thoughts and feelings about buying. Please circle the answer that accurately reflects your feelings about the statements given below:

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
a. I just wanted to buy things and didn't care what I bought	1	2	3	4	5
b. I felt anxious or nervous on days I didn't go shopping	1	2	3	4	5
c. I have bought things though I couldn't afford them	1	2	3	4	5
d. I bought something and when I got home wasn't sure why I had bought it.	1	2	3	4	5

6. Please circle the number that you think is most appropriate.

	Strongly Disagree			Neutral			Strongly Agree
a. As soon as I enter a shopping center, I have an irresistible urge to buy something	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
b. For me, shopping is a way of facing the stress of my daily life and of relaxing	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
c. At times I feel I have little control over my behavior	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
d. I have faced financial problems because of my shopping habit	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

7.

	Very	Never		Rarely		Sometimes	Often
a. At times, I have felt somewhat guilty after buying a product, because the purchase seem unreasonable	1	2		3		4	5
b. There are some things which I buy that I do not show to anybody for fear of being perceived as irrational in my buying behavior	1	2		3		4	5

8.

	Strongly Disagree			Neutral			Strongly Agree
a. I only go shopping when I need to buy something	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
b. I often give myself a "treat" by going shopping	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
c. I often go shopping to escape from my world	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

9.

	Strongly Disagree			Neutral			Strongly Agree
a. Once I have my mind set on a particular product, I have to find it.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
b. It would bother me if I wanted a particular product and I couldn't find it.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
c. I often find myself seeing a product and focusing all my efforts in getting that product.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

10.

	Strongly Disagree			Neutral			Strongly Agree	
a. I keep good track of my expenses for budgeting purpose	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
b. I can effectively prevent myself from buying things I shouldn't buy based on my financial consideration	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
c. I scrutinize and evaluate my buying behavior for budgeting purpose	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

11.

	Strongly Disagree			Neutral			Strongly Agree	
a. I like to collect things	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
b. I use most of the things that I collect	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
c. I like to display my collections for everyone to see and appreciate	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

12. These last questions are for classification purposes.

a. Gender

_____ Male

_____ Female

b. Age (in years) _____

Thank you for your participation in this survey!

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW GUIDE

Questionnaire for In-depth Interviews of Identified Acquisitive Buyers:

Step 1: Explaining what acquisitive buying is and the purpose of the in-depth interview.

Step 2: Explaining the consent form and asking the respondents to sign it.

Step 3: Asking questions with the pictures as the base.

Questions:

(I start with the specific pictures that the person takes, as it would be a good talking point to start the conversation. The pattern will be specific questions to general questions)

1. Please explain why you chose these product categories to take pictures.
2. How many products do they have in each product category?
3. What are some of the reasons you think that you buy products in these categories?
 - a. Ask for reasons for each of the product categories
 - i. Ask how many products they have for any particular reason (this may be difficult for many...in such a case, ask whether they buy more than average, average or less than average for that particular need.
 - b. Probe: Specific, striking examples they remember of things they bought.
4. Pre-shopping behavior: Let's talk about what do you do before shopping? Do you plan? Do you make a list? Do you decide to go shopping any time of the day?
5. Shifting to your shopping experience, what do you think and feel about shopping *in general*?
 - a. Probe: Please think of *any one shopping experience* for products that you have bought a lot: (specific shopping experience)
 - i. What did you buy,
 - ii. what did you think during shopping
 - iii. how did you feel, (specifically whether they feel an emotional high during shopping : this will help understand impulsivity or compulsiveness)
6. How often do you go for shopping?
7. Do you ever shop on an urge? For example, you just decided that you wanted to buy a particular product when you saw it...does that happen to you? (If yes, How often? How do you feel then? What do you think?
8. Think of the last time you shopped. Could you describe the whole process, what you thought, what you did and what you bought?
9. Post-purchase behavior: Please describe how you feel when you have returned from shopping.
 - a. Probe: Do you feel happy or sad?

- b. Probe: Do they feel financial discomfort?
 - c. Probe: Do they think negatively about their shopping experience?
 - d. Probe: Do you feel that the amount of money that you spent was not worth what you bought?
 - e. Probe: Do they think of returning products that they have bought?
10. When you have bought the products in the product categories that you mentioned earlier for which you have a lot of products, what do you do with the products? Do you use or keep them? (This will show their consumption pattern)
11. How would you characterize normal or average buying and how would you suggest that your buying pattern is?
- a. Probe: According to you, if you have 5 shoes, would that be normal? 10 shoes? 15? 20? 25? 30?...50? 75? 100?
 - b. Probe: Use another product category in the same way to find out the limits of average and above average buying.
12. Do you know of anyone who has a buying pattern similar to yours and who buys and owns some product categories? Get the details and tell them they you will be contacting.

Thank you very much for talking to me! It was a great help!

APPENDIX C: THEMES FROM INTERVIEWS

Themes	Definitions	Examples
T1_Self report of large Inventory	Consumer's perceptions of the inventory of products that they tend to possess, in terms of the actual number of products in a particular product category	I mean, if I brought them all out from my closet, how many do I have, 40 in there, 50? I have 40 white broadcloth – I mean, either I can't throw them out.
T12_More articulated needs per product category	Consumer's perceptions of fine-grained, thin-slicing necessities of products of a particular product category such that they tend to have products that cater to different purposes and may have different looks and styles.	<p>I have crêpe skillet that is thin to make crêpes. I have an omelet skillet to make omelets. I have one that is oval that I bought at a garage sale and it does sautéing. Then I have the deep ones that you can really – I don't like frying, I'd rather stir fry, but not grease oil. I like those deep skillets too, like, fry turkey bacon and that kind of thing. Yeah, my skillets are pretty different. My pots are made of different things. I have the iron pot. I have a Pampered Chef pot. I have an aluminum pot. I have a pasta pot.</p> <p>M: Spades? Why would you have six? GF: I have a little one that digs a small hole. I have a flat one. I used to live in the country, really in the country. And I had horses and cows. So my flat one was really for shoveling hay and manure and we kept sand so that we could clean the stalls and put sand in the stalls and those things, I had those probably for the country. But I just moved them. I have a sharp one for digging holes and I have skinny one and I have wide one and I have flat one. M: Oh, so all these things are different? GF: Are different. M: They are all spades but – GF: They are all different for different purposes.</p>

T13_Defend purchases	Consumer's ability to rationally justify purchases of most of their products in terms of different purposes or styles or different looks etc. This aspect shows that these consumers are different from those who buy based on underlying problems such as compulsive, impulsive or excessive buyers.	I have some t-shirts that I can wear to work. I have another drawer that I can wear to lounge around the house or exercise or do work around the house. Then I have another drawer that are t-shirts that I would just wear out casually. Not really dressy but they don't have any LSU or work related logos on them. Some are just plain navy blue or black t-shirts.
T2_Differentiate products	Consumer's ability to see minute differences amongst products such that they consider each product different based on fine differences	Not that I do that every often anymore. And the other ones, they, you know, they maybe in the blue family, but I think because so much of my love for color, they're really different to me, you know. A lot of people may look at them and say, they're all blue, but some are green-blue, or some tend to be more purple. Some have very little blue, some are very dark blue -- the beads I'm talking about. So I wouldn't say that any of them are exactly alike. They all have sort of a unique character in my mind, something different about them.
T14_Buy within means	This refers to consumer's self-control abilities: consumers tend to buy within the limits based on their monetary situation. Consumers may tend not to buy a product if their financial condition does not allow them to or will not buy if the product does not fit their specific buying criteria.	but if it's crazily expensive-- like 2 hundred dollar shoes, then I'm probably not, even though it looks really cute. I probably won't get it.

Right, I don't want to be urgent or stressed about it. I know I'll find them and they'll be at a price I can afford so I'm not going into debt to buy them. If I have to wait a couple of years then I will.

If I don't see anything I'm interested in. I'll want to buy something, but if I don't like it, why buy it? If I don't like the way it smells, I'm not gonna buy it, I don't buy them for decoration, I buy them to burn. I like the way they smell.

T15_Buy based on needs	Consumers perceptions that their purchase decisions are based on inherent needs to suit their specific purposes.	Even if I don't know, I am kind of like I know I need a new pair of sandals and oh I know I need a new pair of black shoes. I kind of already have it in my mind and that's the reason why I am over there unless it is like I don't have anything to do and oh they have got new shoes out. But normally or lately, it has been like oh I need something.
		The next I think I need a new whisk. I would like a good whisk. I have an old one with a wooden handle and they work really well but I need a new whisk. I would go shopping for a good whisk. I've got good spoons now.
		Yeah. I'm fairly specific about going through my inventory and saying do I need a new pair of silver shoes or gold shoes? Would this be practical to wear to work, or teach? I'm fairly good about that. I'm not going to buy just to buy.

T16_Knowledge	Consumption vocabulary of consumers that pertains to detailed knowledge about products in terms of different looks and styles and purposes.	2 make it easy for me to not have to change my lures all the time. I can have one for a worm pole, one for a buzz bait pole and then I can have one for a repal pole, or a live bait pole so I can have different poles rather than having to take time and change each lure, or always trying to find what works, I can have 3 different poles and whenever I run across some stick ups, I can drop a plastic worm down in there. If I am in some lilly pads, I can run a buzz bait right over the top of them so its different circumstances for different areas without changing lures all the time while my buddy is over there casting with his three poles, getting all the good casts in while I'm over there tying all these knots.
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T17_Product helps in expression of self	Consumer's perception of themselves and their belief htat the products that they buy and consume is an instrument that helps express who they are and what they stand for.	<p>I just like the way they look and they define my personality. Quite frankly, everyone knows me by my shoes and I teach accounting and I use examples with shoes... Probably a little flamboyant. I mean, I have some shoes that are unusual -- animal print shoes, gold shoes, trendy shoes. Not your typical pumps. My shoes are very trendy, so I kind of stand out there and do something a little bit different. It just defines who I am and I want to express myself through my shoes.</p> <p>It's not like I'm taking food off the table. My children are all grown and educated and so, but I think my love of design and color and shapes, that's how I manage to bring it to work with me, so to speak. So I don't wear as many bracelets, but I almost always wear a necklace, and then I think it's because of liking the color and I can see it when I look in the ladies' room or where I can look at it. I guess that's probably why. The jewelry, like I said, is all costume jewelry in my mind. It's not anything that's reflects wealth or trying to make anyone envy me, that's not my point at all. My point is liking the art.</p>
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Do not consider inventory to be large (Insider-outsider phenomenon)	Consumer's perceptions that their inventory of products is not large enough while outsiders (other people around the consumer) consider otherwise. For example, when asked how they would rate themselves as a shopper, consumers tend to say that they are average shoppers.	But it's a purchase that I can justify within myself and if I have to justify it to my wife -- she thinks I'm nuts -- you don't need another pair of khaki shorts or another white shirt but you know what?
		Virginia: This is kind of a joke in a way about women and shoes, I don't know if that's an average or not. I've seen comments in the paper where women say they have so many shoes and there's a foot fetish out there in our society. I would say I'm probably average (has 50 pairs of shoes).
		As I said, khaki shorts are never going out of style. So it's basically whether I have two pairs of khaki shorts, or six pairs or eight pairs or however many pairs I have. Ultimately, you know, their life span, you know, if you wear the same two pairs of shorts all the time, your shorts are going to wear out pretty quick. But if you're rotating a series of eight of them, it will just extend that further into the future. Khaki shorts, double pleats, Bermuda length -- they are never going out of style. Or maybe they are out of style and I'm just out of style, who knows. But it's a purchase that I can justify within myself and if I have to justify it to my wife -- she thinks I'm nuts -- you don't need another pair of khaki shorts or another white shirt but you know what? Ultimately, I'll use it and I'll wear it out, and it'll go to Goodwill, so I'll get my money out of it.

T3_Brand switching	Consumers lack of need to purchase of products of a single brand and their preference for brands that suit their specific buying criteria or their need for a variety of things.	If I see a pair of shoes and I don't know the brand but I like them and they fit that doesn't keep me from buying them. I could feel I made a discovery and that's a lot of it, discovery.
		I will buy a thing on its own merit not because it's, like if it's a Tommy Hilfiger shirt, I'm not just going to go buy it because it's a Tommy Hilfiger shirt. If there was a Wal-Mart t-shirt and I liked it better, I'd buy the Wal-Mart.
T5_Do not like to give away products	Consumer's inability to part with products, related to high levels of attachment to the products. Probably high materialism?	Actually I will because you can tuck that in if you have to, but it makes tying it a little difficult. But I have ties that I haven't worn in 20 years, or at least 10, but I don't know why I still own them.
		<p>And that's the same thing with the white shirts. Even when it gets out of my line-up. And my line-up of white shirts is about 15 to 20 that I consider the quality that I will currently wear that after going to the drycleaners they start to get a little dingy, the collars start to fray, but they are still in the damn closet and I don't know why.</p> <p>MT: I have a lot of it is, I have a lot of t-shirts and I might go home and I'll put on a t-shirt. I actually work in a lab over here and I have to wear a t-shirts and I have to take it off because it stinks. I'll work out and I'll use a t-shirt, but I probably have 60, 70, 80 t-shirts, a whole basket full of t-shirts and do I use all of them? No. do I throw them out no.</p>
T6_May have unused products	Consumer's	And these I need to throw away because they are brown as well and I had these before I got these and I just need to throw them away because they are in such yucky shape but I just think one day I might wear them I guess I don't know.

Then I have another boot that I wear in the wintertime that has a heel that's probably about this big, its huge, all the way down I just love them. I call them my Frankenstein boots. I just can't get rid of them you know? I have another pair like this that's an older pair that's kind of worn but I still keep them just in case.

T24_Constant search	Consumer's deliberate, purposive, active search for products that suit their particular needs	Usually I know where in the store the pillows were and I would just walk back there. I would have a few samples of fabric with the right colors so I would take that out of my purse and if I saw a pillow that I thought was right I would hold it up to it and I'd check out the price, make sure it was the right size, whether it was big or small. I would also look for if it was the right fabric that it would go with whatever the décor was. If it had some, like lots of the pillows that I have beads or beaded things on it or tassels or a texture, and I would also look if I can clean it. That's real important in my house, if something would spill on it or whatever I would want to be able to wash it.
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T20_Pickiness in buying	Consumers' requirements of specific products for specific purposes to suit the criteria that are in their minds.	Because I have gone in there and looked at the ties they've had at that sale and sometimes, even though they are expensive, they are just not me. They don't look – they're like way out there or they look like they are worn by 90-year-old men. And normally, you know, I've walked in there tons of times and just browsed around and flipped through the displays and left because it's an expensive store and if I'm not going to wear what I buy, I'm not going to buy it. If I'm not going to wear it, I won't buy it.
-------------------------	--	--

I'm not going to buy just to buy. I know that. I have a purpose in saying, oh, gosh, this is a cute pair of shoes and they would with this dress, these slacks, or whatever. And too, I try it on, and if it feels good, yeah. And it doesn't, no. I'm very particular about what I buy and how it looks. If I think that they are really out there, I'm not going to buy it, really out there -- the high, high heel and the pointy, pointy toe. That's what who I am. So I am, yes, I am purposeful in buying.

T19_Need to be perfect	Consumers' requirements to act/be perfect in terms of using products and is related to their perfectionist nature	Regardless of how often you get them dry-cleaned, the drycleaner never gets out the stain and the tie will never be quite perfect again. It's always a little off.... I wouldn't wear a tie that's off. Off-ties are bad. Once again, it's perception.
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Look for details in inventory	Consumer's need to look through the inventory in the store while shopping to suit needs based on certain requirements.	But I'll go to where the pens are and I'll stand back a little ways so I can kind of get a survey of which kind of pens are there. Then, I will look at the brands that I have found in the past. And a lot of times--I'm pretty sure that at Office Depot--in fact, the last time I went there, I remember noticing they separate the ballpoint pens from the gel tip so I will narrow it down to the type of pen and some of that has to do with how they the things are stocked. So when you get to a brand a brand--a brand and a type, it will then-- then within that you still have some decisions like broad tip, fine tip, you know, what's once it's down it to the millimeters, you know, so you want the smallest number of millimeters. I mean I want that. So then, after I find that I will look at that usually if they've got one that that you can experiment and see how it writes. I'll hold it in my hand, and then at a certain point you just have to make that decision.
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T22_Look for different things	Consumer's tendency to look for variety within a specific product category.	Well let's say I was having a party for a bride, I have different pillows that I would put out on the chairs outside if we were having like a garden party that would go with that kind of a party. Or if it was Christmas time, I have some that are green that would go out and they would go with a different time of year. Some of them are lighter colored for springtime and some are darker colored for winter. I have some that I can interchange with a different look that will go with different themes for a party.
T8_Products help stay prepared	Consumer's perceptions that the products that they buy tend to help them stay prepared in anticipation of any future needs.	Well, for one thing I like to have pens available, so when I find a pen that I like I will buy multiple numbers of those pens so that in my purse I will always have 3 or 4, so that when I want a pen it is there. At my desk, I will have pens. People know I like pens, so sometimes they give me pens. If they get an interesting pen, they will give it to me. By all of my telephones at home I have a whole container of pens...I keep pens at different places, so I always have one available.
		I bought the same baby clothes a couple of times. But they were different sizes. I got a 6 month, a 12 month, and an 18 month. There were on sale, but it was the same thing. But the kids were going to grow, so I could justify the purchase.
		Then yes, I bought--I didn't buy just 1 or 2 pens, which is what you would have done growing up. (Laughs) I bought--I bought 24 pens, so that if for some reason I can't find my pen-- and this happens because I carry pens everywhere. It's almost always in my hand and so if suddenly they call me to the office and I had this in my hand and I accidentally put it down then I came back to my office and I went to write something and couldn't find this pen, I have a supply. You know, I don't have a lot of time to like go hunt that one down so I just know that they'll all turn up in time.

They're stashed in the kitchen in the drawers. I have a couple in the living room. There's a couple in the bedroom, some in the bathroom. Like, there are pens everywhere. You can open almost any drawer in the house and find an ink pen. You might not find any paper, but you'll find an ink pen. I know that's really weird. When you say it out loud it sounds really weird.

Not necessarily cute, but presentable I would like to say because you never know where you're going to go and who you're going to meet. I mean, I may go tomorrow out to dinner and may meet someone who could offer me an awesome job and I mean if I'm dressed in--my hair's like all sloppy and I'm not dressed--I mean even though his first impression was I mean--"She didn't--she wasn't very presentable. So that's why. I mean first impressions. You never know who you are going to see or who you're going to meet. I mean when you go to Wal-Mart, you--especially where I'm from. I'm from a small town, so you usually see people you haven't seen in 10 years, so I mean (Laughs) or 5 years, so. It's just looking presentable is important to me.

T28_Think while shopping	Information processing that takes place during shopping related to needs, existing inventory or the fit of the product with the existing need.	You'd see me go through the whole store and look at racks. I'll go through all the racks, and then I'll go to the bargain rack, because there's always a sale rack in the back, and then I'll come back and I'll go through the shoes again and pick up some pairs, put them in my basket. Well really, this is what I do. I see the shoes, I think, I may want them, so then I'll go to the side and I'll stop and I'll look at the shoes that I have in my basket and decide, is this what I want? Is this really comfortable? Do I need this? What's the price of this? And so, I'll do that, and then a lot of times I'll put many shoes back because they don't fit into my criteria, and then I go through the dresses, skirts, shirts, pants.
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T33_Lack of Financial problems	Consumer's need to manage finances in terms of budgeting their expenses.	I would rarely go over my budget; I don't like to have a balance on my credit card at all. Normally for me I would wait until I had the money and just look for it and try not to get in a hurry and get stressed out about "Oh I have to have a pillow by this weekend". I wouldn't do that. I would wait until I found what the right thing was because for me I'm going to keep it for years and years so I would like to take my time and make sure it was the right product for what I want.
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T23_Love products	Consumer's love for the products that they purchase and possess (of a certain product category) and it relates to the emotional connection that they feel they have with the products.	And I know there's a certain amount of greed involved when I go in my closet and I do have a lot of shoes. But now it's all just a joke. All my family and all my friends, everybody knows me because I am one with all the shoes and I love the shoes.
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T21_Expanding list to be acquired	Consumer's ever-growing mental list of products that require acquisition	I wanted a blue jean skirt from Abercrombie for the last game. And I already have one blue jean skirt (Laughs) but I wanted a darker one so I went to Abercrombie to go get this blue jean skirt that I had tried on and really liked previously, so.
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T27_Sale/Low price	The effect of sale on product purchase	I'd rather get more for my money than something is too expensive and get less.
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T26_Shop frequently	Consumers' tendency to shop within a particular product category on a regular basis, ranging from once a week to once every two weeks to once a month	I would shop at least every other weekend or sometimes even at lunchtime
		I would go more often, even if it's a little bracelet and it only cost me \$10, because I like it. I would definitely go more often, probably once a week.

T18_ Use products rather than display	Products are important for consumption rather than display as seen in collectors	I have a little one that digs a small hole. I have a flat one. I used to live in the country, really in the country. And I had horses and cows. So my flat one was really for shoveling hay and manure and we kept sand so that we could clean the stalls and put sand in the stalls and those things, I had those probably for the country. But I just moved them. I have a sharp one for digging holes and I have skinny one and I have wide one and I have flat one.
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T9_Shopping a positive experience	Consumers' emotional experiences regarding shopping	You know its fun to just walk around and you know just where I am. What's going on in mine surroundings?
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T29_Refer to what inventory already exists	Consumers' reference to the products he already possesses to make sure that they do not purchase a product that has already been purchased.	You'd see me go through the whole store and look at racks. I'll go through all the racks, and then I'll go to the bargain rack, because there's always a sale rack in the back, and then I'll come back and I'll go through the shoes again and pick up some pairs, put them in my basket. Well really, this is what I do. I see the shoes, I think, I may want them, so then I'll go to the side and I'll stop and I'll look at the shoes that I have in by basket and decide, is this what I want? Is this really comfortable? Do I need this? What's the price of this? And so, I'll do that, and then a lot of times I'll put many shoes back because they don't fit into my criteria, and then I go through the dresses, skirts, shirts, pants.
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T30_Try out	Consumers' propensity to try out the products that they purchase to make sure that they really fit the criteria for which they are buying	I try it on, I think of how many different ways I can wear it and how much it will cost each time I wear it. Then I rack my brain to think of how many things I have that I could actually wear with it.
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T28_Think a lot while buying	The need of consumers to think before they make purchases so that the purchases fit the purpose.	Like is it used on beef, is it used on poultry, is it used on pork, hamburgers? Is it more of a spice or a herb seasoning kind of thing? Am I going to use it more for rice or spaghetti, some type of Italian herb, a bunch of basil or oregano, cilantro mixed in one or is it just a salt spice? I guess I've mentioned spices and I've mentioned herbs and I've categorized them all as spice but I have both. When I buy them I do use them.
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T7_Mental organization	Consumers' abilities to be mentally set things right using the right tools for the right job	It's like cooking. You can do the right thing with the right tool. You're successful with the right tool. And I'm not a carpenter. I wish I were, but any type of repairs or any type of home improvement things I have done, they work if I have got the right tool, but if I try to make something else fit the purpose, it doesn't look as good. It's like cooking. You have to have the correct spoons.
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T32_Learnt from parents/friends	The effect of external social factors such as the influences of friends and relatives on purchase and consumption of products	Yeah, I know I got that from my sister because every season she changes all of her pillows in her living room so she has like a spring set, she has a set she uses for summer and winter and then she has a set for the 4th of July because she gives a big party for the 4th of July so she changes her pillows. I got that idea from her, I just kind of picked up on that and I do it in my home also.
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T10_Love product more than process	Consumers' preference for the product as opposed to the process of shopping.	So, I guess there's some gratification in that you get it, you buy it, and it's yours. You get to hold on to it at that point.
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APPENDIX E: SAMPLE MAIN STUDY QUESTIONNAIRE

Survey on shopping !!!

CONSENT FORM

This survey, conducted by the Department of Marketing at Louisiana State University, is about consumer shopping patterns. The purpose of this survey is to identify certain product categories of interest to you, the needs for buying and owning the items in the product category, and your thoughts, feelings and activities related to acquiring and consuming such products.

Be assured that your name will not be associated in any way with the research findings. All of your responses will be confidential. Please read the following assurances and sign below to indicate that you have done so.

I understand that my participation is completely voluntary and that I may withdraw from the study at anytime.

I am aware of the following points:

1. I will not face any significant discomforts or stresses. My participation involves no risk.
2. The results of my participation are confidential and will not be released in any individually identifiable form. All data will be coded by number, thus preserving anonymity.
3. The individual administering the survey will answer any further questions I may have about the study.

If you understand the above information and wish to participate in this study, please write down the 6 digit id that you saw earlier.

Thank you for participation! Need your help for this study please!!

STUDY OVERVIEW:

In this survey, you will find that the questions are mostly related to a single product category: clothes. We are trying to understand your purchasing and consumption pattern of clothes. You will be asked to think about your existing inventory of clothes, the types of clothes that you have and your thoughts, beliefs and attitudes regarding purchase and use of clothes and shopping in general.

SECTION 1: Your inventory of clothes

A. Please list the total number of clothes and the various types of clothes that you own. If you find it difficult to remember the exact number of clothes, please provide an estimate.

Click to write Column 1

	Answer 1
Total number of clothes (including all types)	<input type="text"/>
Number of pants (including jeans, khakis, capris, etc)	<input type="text"/>
Number of shirts	<input type="text"/>
Number of dresses (if applicable)	<input type="text"/>
Number of skirts (if applicable)	<input type="text"/>
Number of t-shirts	<input type="text"/>
Number of jackets	<input type="text"/>
Number of suits	<input type="text"/>

B. A number of reasons for purchasing clothes are given below. Please check on the ones that are most applicable to you and list the approximate number of clothes that you own for each reason (there may be an overlap of the number of products for each reason).

	If you own any clothes for this reason, click.	How many items of clothes do you own for this reason?
	Answer 1	Answer 1
Clothes for winter	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
Clothes for summer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
Clothes for casual wear	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
Professional clothes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
Workout clothes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
Fun clothes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
Evening clothes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
Clothes for different events	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
Clothes with different functionalities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>

C. For this product category, we would like to know your level of interest. Please click on the answer that best reflects your thoughts.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
In general, I have a strong interest in clothes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clothes are very important to me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Generally, I am someone who finds it important what clothes he or she buys	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Generally, I am someone who is	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
interested in the kind of clothes he or she buys	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Generally, I am someone for whom it means a lot what clothes he or she buys	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

D. For the same product category, please click on the answer that best reflects your thoughts.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I know a lot about clothes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I spend a lot of time reading clothes-related magazines	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am very familiar with the features available in the latest clothes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I spend a lot of time shopping for clothes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

E. While shopping, generally...

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I am someone who likes to be a regular customer of a particular brand of clothes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am someone who wants to be a steady customer of the same brand of clothes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am someone who is willing to "go the extra mile" to buy at the same store for clothes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

SECTION 2: General Shopping Questions

A. In the next set of questions, we would like to know more about your thoughts feelings

about shopping. Please select the answer that accurately reflects your feelings about the statements given below.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I just wanted to buy things and didn't care what I bought	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I felt anxious or nervous on days I didn't go shopping	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
As soon as I enter a shopping center, I have an irresistible urge to buy something	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
At times, I feel I have little control over my behavior	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have faced financial problems because of my shopping habit	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I buy things I did not plan to buy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have bought things though I couldn't afford them	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

B. In the next questions, we would like to know more about your thoughts and feelings about buying. Please select answer that accurately reflects your feelings about the statements given below:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I have felt guilty after buying a product, because the purchase seemed unreasonable	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There are some things which I buy that I do not show anybody for fear of being perceived as irrational in my buying behavior	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel anxious if I cannot find a product I am looking for	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I think about a product 24 hours till I find it	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I will do anything to get the product I want	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

C. In the next questions, we would like to know more about your thoughts and feelings about buying. Please select the answer that accurately reflects your feelings about the statements given below:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I can effectively prevent myself from buying things I shouldn't buy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I constantly scrutinize and evaluate my buying behavior	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I keep good track of my expenses	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

D. Collection refers to the accumulation of certain products that are not used but are bought for the purpose of display.

Do you have a collection?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

E. If you have mentioned yes for the above question, please answer the following questions below. If you have mentioned no for the above question, please move to the next section.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I like to display my collections for everyone to see and appreciate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I use most of the things in the collection	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

SECTION 3: Interests and Shopping Behaviors (clothes)

The questions may appear similar but we still need to answer them please!!!

A. The next sets of questions concern your thoughts and beliefs.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
It is important to me to have really nice clothes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The things that I own say a lot about how well I'm doing in life	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I would be happier if I owned nicer clothes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The clothes I own give me a great deal of pleasure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Buying clothes gives me a lot of pleasure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I admire people who own expensive homes, cars, and clothes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Some of the most important achievements in life include acquiring material possessions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I like a lot of luxury in life	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It sometimes bothers me quite a bit that I can't afford to buy all the clothes I like	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

B.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I constantly try to live up to my high standards	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I do not give up till my work is perfect	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
One of my goals is to be perfect in everything I do	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It is very important for me to be right	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I always like to be organized	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I tend to deliberate before making up my mind	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I set higher goals than	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
most people							
I am picky when it comes to selecting clothes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The clothes I choose should live up to my expectations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am very selective while buying clothes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

C. While shopping, we tend to search for clothes that interest us. The next few questions relate to searching before purchasing clothes. Please click on the answer that best represents your opinion.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Before making a purchase decision, I visit a lot of stores to check their clothes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Before making a purchase decision, I need to search for a lot of information about prices of alternative products	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am on a perpetual lookout for clothes that are of interest to me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I spend a lot of time every week to search for clothes of interest	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I spend a lot of time to find the right clothes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I spend a lot of time gathering information about clothes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am always on the lookout for the latest trends in clothes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

D. Which is your most preferred way of shopping for clothes? Click on any one.

☐ Online

- ☐ Physical visit to the store
- ☐ Both online and in-store

E. While shopping...

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I like to try different clothes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I like a great deal of variety	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I like new and different styles of clothes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Different brands of clothes help me to try out different styles	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I easily get bored of the same brand of clothes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I like to buy different brands of clothes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

F.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I tend to look for minute details in clothes that are of interest to me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am easily able to coordinate colors, patterns and styles of clothes that interest me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Finer details help in differentiating clothes from one another	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I can easily tell the difference between the features in clothes that are of interest to me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
For me, clothes are completely different if they have different styles	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
For me, clothes are	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
completely different if they have different functions							
For me, clothes are completely different if they have different colors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

G.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I make sure that I have multiple types of clothes to stay prepared for any eventuality	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Different types of clothes help me to be prepared for different events	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A wide variety of clothes are very important to me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I know that when I have various types of clothes, I do not have to go out to search for them at the last minute	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have various types of clothes as I can use them when the need arises	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

H. In my mind...

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I have a list of clothes that I will buy in future	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I already know the next set of clothes that I am going to buy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A list of clothes help me to acquire different types of products	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My list of clothes is	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

ever-expanding

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
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I.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
In general, I have a clear sense of who I am and what I am	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I seldom experience conflict between the different aspects of my personality	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I express myself based on who I am	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel that I am really the person I appear to be	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The way I project myself is important to me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

J.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree
What happens to me is my own doing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
In my case, getting what I want has little to do with luck	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I tend to always have control over what I do	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I like to set the pace of my tasks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I tend to have control by doing my own planning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I tend to have control over the way I do things	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

K.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I don't like to take risks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I want to be very sure before I purchase anything	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I avoid risky purchases	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I consider how things might be in the future and purchase clothes accordingly	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I buy clothes based on upcoming needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I think of forthcoming events in advance and buy clothes accordingly	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

L.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Shopping is fun	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Shopping is a positive experience for me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I love to go shopping when I find time	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Shopping is entertaining	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

M. Compared to others you know, how do you consider your inventory of clothes to be?

- ☐ Below average
- ☐ Average
- ☐ Above Average

N.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Others think that I have a lot of clothes though this is not the case	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Others do not understand that different clothes have different purposes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I buy clothes based on my needs though others think that my clothes are unnecessary	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I can appreciate fine differences amongst my clothes while others cannot	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I tend to use my clothes briefly as I wear different clothes for different purposes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I tend to use my clothes sparingly	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I tend to wear the same clothes till they are outdated	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. Final Section. The last few questions are for classification purposes only:

Your age (in years):

Gender:

- ☐ Male
☐ Female

Ethnicity:

- ☐ White/Caucasian
☐ Hispanic/Latino/Spanish
☐ African American
☐ Asian
☐ Other

What is the highest level of education you have completed? (check only one)

- ☐ Less than High School
- ☐ High School/GED
- ☐ Some college/vocational
- ☐ Associates degree
- ☐ Bachelor's degree
- ☐ Master's degree
- ☐ Doctoral degree
- ☐ Professional degree (MD/JD)

Your household income level:

- ☐ Less than 30,000
- ☐ 30,000-50,000
- ☐ 50,000-75,000
- ☐ 75,000-100,000
- ☐ 100,000 and above

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!!!

VITA

Mousumi Bose Godbole was born in India in 1969. She received her bachelor's and master's degree in botany from The University of Calcutta, Calcutta, India and her M.B.A. from Ecole Nationale Des Ponts et Chaussees, Paris, France. She worked in the pharmaceutical and healthcare industry for 8.5 years before starting her doctoral studies in marketing at Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, Louisiana. She has taught marketing at Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, Louisiana and at Frostburg State University, Frostburg, Maryland, for the past four years. Her research interests relate to understanding shopping behavior, relationship marketing, creativity and problem solving, advertising messages and gender consciousness. Her teaching interests are advertising, consumer behavior and market research.