CHAPTER II
THEORETICAL CONCEPTS AND FRAMEWORK

In order to understand the theoretical underpinnings of peer pressure, self-esteem, social anxiety, locus of control, vanity and materialism, this chapter helps us to look at the conceptual framework and theoretical models. The present study investigated the role of self-esteem, social anxiety, locus of control and vanity as moderators in the relationship between peer pressure and materialism.

Materialism

Innumerable efforts have been put forward to operationally define and explain the concept and nature of materialism. An attempt was made in last century to outline the characteristics of materialistic people by Vedder (1964) who stated that materialists are the ones who worship possessions and the pursuit of such possessions takes the place of religion in determining their lives and actions. Ward and Wackman (1971) proposed that materialism was the result of persons viewing material goods as a journey to happiness, contentment and social advancement. Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton (1978) suggested that the purpose of consumption should be taken into consideration while viewing the concept of materialism. He described the following two types of materialism:

![Types of Materialism](image_url)

*Figure 1: Types of materialism (Csikszentmihalyi & Rochberg-Halton, 1978)*

Materialism as a personality trait was defined by Belk (1984). Originally, it measured three personality traits: possessiveness, non-generosity, and envy. Later, Ger and Belk (1996) added a fourth dimension to the personality traits, that is, preservation.
Richins and Dawson (1992) took the research on materialism in different direction and established the materialism as a function of value one gives to material objects. Higher the value of material goods in one’s life, higher would be the level of materialism. They considered materialism as a consumer value that was explained under three subdimensions: acquisition centrality, acquisition as the pursuit of happiness, and possession-defined success.

O’Neil (1997) explained materialism as a disorder that results in desire for material possessions. Materialistic person has character flaws, psychological wounds and behavioural disorders, which are aggravated by the presence money or wealth. Mowen (2000) considered materialism as pursuing goods for success and happiness as
these goods can be important because they are important for survival. Materialism can be useful because they satisfy basic needs by viewing possessions as important. Chan and Prendergast (2007) stated that materialism is related to happiness. Materialism has been associated with identity maintenance and construction of self through acquisition and possession of material goods. Materialism has also been identified as importance one places on possessing material goods and accumulating wealth. The inference was offered that material goods take a fundamental place in the lives of many consumers (Hudders & Pandelaere, 2012).

Materialism is mainly considered as a negative value system as it involves placing acquisition of possessions at the centre of one’s life with the conviction that acquiring more and more possessions leads to happiness (Podoshen & Andrzejewski, 2012). Materialism is an exaggerated phase of consumption which is considered as the main focus of consumer research (Srikant, 2013). Materialism is related to low subjective wellbeing, psychopathology and physical health concerns (Dittmar et al., 2014).

Sources of Materialism

There are two pathways to materialism that exist (Kasser et al., 2004). The first pathway is that materialism develops out of the lack of need satisfaction which takes place mainly during childhood, resulting in feelings of insecurity and inadequacy. This pathway of materialism is linked to low self-esteem and persons with low self-esteem turn towards materialistic goals (Rosenberg, Schooler, & Schoenbach, 1989).

The second pathway is the socialization or media-socialization pathway. The concept of socialization is considered to have evolved from consumer socialization. The main socializing agents that enhance materialism in people are television, social media, family, peers and social environment (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2004).

Perspectives on Materialism

1. **Socio-cultural perspective of Materialism**

   Materialism refers to cultures in which the majority of the persons in the society consider material objects highly (Larsen, Sirgy, & Wright 1999). Ger and Belk (1996) investigated cross-cultural materialism by examining undergraduate and
graduate participants from 12 countries. They concluded that respondents showing the lowest levels of materialism were from, France, Great Britain, Sweden India, Thailand, and Israel.

2. **Materialism: an individual perspective**

In context of individual phenomenon, materialism refers to label a person who values material objects very much (Larsen et al., 1999). Persons who value materialism pursue accumulation of income and wealth (Richins & Dawson, 1992). Individual materialism is increasing day by day (Lim, Ting, Khoo, & Wong, 2012). The proportion of persons who viewed financial success as vital to them grew from 39% in 1970 to 78% in 2009 (Myers, 2012).

3. **Materialism: four perspectives**

It concerns with the framework that uses a 2 x 2 matrix, based on materialism’s antecedents (innate/learned) and consequences (good/bad). The four perspectives are as follows:

(i) **Materialism: innate and good (Epicurean Perspective)**

This perspective holds that materialism is an innate quality, which is good. From the evolutionary perspective, human’s inclination for material objects stems from a universal inclination to signal qualities that might bring a rise in the status of a person (Nelissen & Meijers, 2011).

(ii) **Materialism: innate and bad (Religious Perspective)**

This religious perspective holds that individuals are born corrupt, with an irrational want to accumulate possessions. This religious perspective on materialism is negative because it entails one’s preoccupation with materialistic desires and it tends to thwart one’s spiritual development.

(iii) **Materialism: acquired and good (Bourgeoisie Perspective)**

The term “Bourgeoisie” refers to members of the middle class. Materialism results in the betterment of the society and also adds to one’s personal fulfillment (Twitchell, 1999).
(iv) **Materialism: acquired and bad (Critical Perspective)**

This perspective considers materialism as bad. Consumers belonging to capitalistic societies are influenced by advertisements that create false beliefs that contentment and happiness is achievable through acquisition of material things only. Possessions take priority over religion, friends, and other achievements in one’s life (Richins & Dawson, 1992).

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Innate</th>
<th>Learned</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Good</strong></td>
<td>Epicurean Perspective</td>
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<td><strong>Bad</strong></td>
<td>Religious Perspective</td>
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*Figure 4: Four perspectives on materialism framework (Larsen et al., 1999)*

**Few theories that explain the need for materialistic tendencies are as follows:**

1. **Need Theory**

Murray (1938) identified the following two types of needs in his theory of personality:

(i) **Primary Needs:** They are the basic needs based upon biological demands, such as the need for food, water and oxygen

(ii) **Secondary Needs:** Secondary needs are psychological like the need for achievement, independence and nurturing

Materialistic needs are one of the 24 psychogenic needs given by Murray. These needs include buying material objects that we desire. Such needs force an individual to create new things. Both obtaining and creating items are important components of materialistic needs.

2. **Theory of Symbolic Self-Completion**

Gollwitzer, Wicklund, and Hilton (1982) established that every individual’s sense of self includes a set of several characterizations of himself or herself. These characterizations are termed as self-definitions which are based on personal attributes or roles that one plays. Thus, individuals tend to indulge in behaviours related with symbols to showcase their self-definitions to others and become materialistic to feel a sense of completion.
3. **Theory of Satisfaction with Standard of Living**

Sirgy (1998) affirms that the life satisfaction of a person is concerned with the standard of living which includes wealth, earnings and material possession. Materialists tend to evaluate their standard of living by making social comparisons involving remote referents. This leads to inflated expectations of standard of living in the materialistic individuals.

**Peer Pressure**

Peer pressure is one of the most significant factors that affects adolescents. Adolescents spend less time with their parents and thus, more time is spent with friends, who become a vital source of social support (Brown & Klute, 2003). Adolescents mostly communicate with their peers. Peer is a concept that is defined as being at the same age.

Sim and Koh (2003) defined peer pressure as an effort by one or more peers to coerce a person to follow in the decision or behaviours favoured by the pressuring individual or group. According to Singh and Saini (2010) “Peer pressure is a feeling pressure from age-mates to do something harmful for self and others.”

Adolescents tend to adopt attitudes and behaviours that are endorsed by their popular peers (Brechwald & Prinstein, 2011). Thus, peer pressure starts becoming a real influence in an adolescent’s life as he grows older. The parameters of good and bad replace by ‘what’s in’ and ‘what’s out’. Peer interactions are important as adolescents to learn how to navigate in different social environments.

**Types of Peer Pressure**

1. **Positive peer pressure** - Peer relationships can be a positive influence in the lives of adolescents. Adolescents choose friends who have qualities or talents that they admire, which motivates them to achieve and act as their friends act. There is a positive relationship between peer group influence and academic success of students (Uzezi & Deya, 2017). Positive peer pressure can help to amend your ways to become a better person. It helps to pick up healthy habits that can shape one’s personality. Peer pressure helps to mobilize adolescents’
energy in a constructive way and encourages them to conform to healthy behaviour.

2. **Negative peer pressure**- Adolescent’s misconduct mainly occurs in presence of peer groups. Across diverse cultures, perceived behaviour and sanctions of friends are among the strongest predictors of an adolescent's misbehaviour (Greenberger, Chen, Tally, & Dong, 2000). Hendricks, Savahl, and Florence (2015) investigated the impact of peer pressure and leisure boredom on substance use among adolescents. Their results revealed that peer pressure was the stronger predictor of substance use. Negative peer pressure includes direct negative peer pressure and indirect, unspoken peer pressure. Direct, spoken, negative peer pressure puts an adolescent on the spot through direct confrontation. In case of unspoken, indirect peer pressure, the peers directly do not influence. Peer pressure is created in the adolescent just by observing their peers.

**Theories of Peer Pressure**

1. **Psychoanalytic Theory**

Erikson (1963) gave a psychoanalytic theory of psychosocial development that included eight stages ranging from birth to old age. An individual experiences a psychosocial crisis during each stage that might have a positive or negative outcome for personality development. In the fifth stage, identity versus role confusion, the peers act as role models. This stage includes adolescents from 13 to 19 years old and this is when the adolescents begin to develop social relationships among their peers.

2. **Interpersonal Relations Theory**

Sullivan (1953) suggested that friendships were formed around the age of 9 or 10 and helped in enhancing interpersonal relationships. These peer groups encouraged interpersonal sensitivity and strengthened feelings of self-worth offering affection and a context for intimate disclosure.

3. **Ecological Systems Theory**

Bronfenbrenner (1979) gave five environmental systems with which an individual interacts- microsystem, exosystem, mesosystem, macrosystem and
chronosystem. The microsystem involves family, school, peer groups as well as the specific culture within which the family identifies. The peers are the most significant factors that influence the adolescent’s psychological development.

4. **Social Learning Theory**

This theory proposed that behaviour is learned from the environment through observational learning (Bandura & Walters, 1977). Children learn behaviours by watching the behaviour of the people around them and imitating them. The people around the child respond with either reinforcement or punishment. Individuals that are observed are called models. The children are influenced by various models, such as parents within the family, friends within their peer group and teachers at school. When the child is rewarded for imitating a model’s behavior, the child is more likely to continue performing the same behavior for being rewarded again and again.

5. **Social Influence Theory**

Social influence takes place when an individual’s emotions, opinions, or behaviours are affected by other individuals. Kelman (1958) recognized three types of social influence.

(i) Identification concerns with persons being affected by someone who is liked and respected, such as a well-known celebrity.

(ii) Internalization is when persons agree to a belief both publicly and privately.

(iii) Compliance is when persons agree with others but in actual reality, they keep their dissenting opinions private.

6. **Persuasion Theory**

Persuasion theory views peer pressure takes place as a result of interactions within the peer groups. The concept of persuasion concerns with the human communication that is designed to influence other individuals by altering their beliefs, thought patterns, values or attitudes (Simons, 1976). This theory deals with changes in attitudes also. Attitudes are learned evaluations and people are
not born with and so attitudes are changeable. Thus, individuals are influenced to alter their attitudes when they succumb to peer pressure.

7. **Symbolic Interactionism Theory**

Individuals are gifted with the capacity for thought which helps them to differentiate right from wrong (Blumer, 1990). This theory considers peer pressure as a result of interaction among individuals that deals with different networks of relationships which influences the decision making process.

**Self-Esteem**

Self-esteem is a person’s summary evaluation of their worthiness as a human being (Rosenberg, 1979). Self-esteem is the summary judgment of everything a person can evaluate about himself or herself including; who one is, what one does, what one has, the varied levels in how one appears and to whom and to what one is attached (Bailey, 2003). Smith and Mackie (2007) proposed that self-esteem is the positive or negative evaluation of the self. Self-esteem is defined as an individual's subjective evaluation of his or her worth as a person which tends to have an important function on psychological well-being (Orth & Robins, 2014).

Sullivan (1953) explained that our self-system is basically characterized by self-evaluations which describe it as ‘good me,’ ‘bad me’ and ‘not me’. Self-esteem is likely to vary during adolescence as a function of individual and environmental factors (Abela, Webb, Wagner, Ho, & Adams, 2006).

**Types of Self-Esteem**

1. **Explicit self-esteem and Implicit self-esteem**

   Implicit self-esteem concerns with a person’s disposition to evaluate them in a spontaneous or unconscious manner. Explicit self-esteem involves more conscious and reflective self-evaluation of a person (Pelham et al., 2005).

2. **Global and Domain-specific self-esteem**

   Global self-esteem involves an overall or general picture of self-esteem of an individual (Rosenberg, 1965). Conversely, domain-specific self-esteem consists of feelings of self-worth within more specific circumstances such as school self-
esteem and within group inclusion and perceived matrimony value (Kirkpatrick, Waugh, Valencia, & Webster, 2002). Global self-esteem predicts one’s emotional reactions while domain-specific self-esteem predicts one’s cognitive reactions (Dutton & Brown, 1997).

Figure 5: Characteristics of people with high self-esteem and low self-esteem
(Rosenberg, 1979)

Furthermore, there are two types of global self-esteem while explaining cultural differences in self-esteem: personal and collective. Personal self-esteem is self worth at the individual level whereas collective self-esteem is the extent to which people assess and evaluate their groups positively and favourably. Collective self-esteem is used as a technique of maintaining favourable social identity (Crocker & Luhtanen, 1990).

Theories of Self-esteem

1. Self-Determination Theory

Ryan and Deci (2004) stated that true high self-esteem is accounted when the basic psychological nutrients, or needs, of life, that is, relatedness, competency and autonomy) are in complete balance. Personal growth, well-being and vitality are enhanced when social conditions provide opportunity and support to fulfil these basic needs (Chirkov, Ryan, Kim, & Kaplan, 2003).
Figure 6: Self-Determination Theory (Ryan & Deci, 2004)

2. **Terror Management Theory**

According to Greenberg, Pyszczynski, and Solomon (1986), humans develop beliefs to stay away from insecurities caused by the fright of death. The fear of death makes people look for security in the socially sanctioned norms. This makes an individual engage in more consumptions to overcome existential insecurity and forming strong connections to brands (Arndt, Solomon, Kasser, & Sheldon, 2004; Rindfleisch, Burroughs, & Wong, 2009). Thus, self esteem acts as a protective factor and helps in reducing anxiety about life and death. Bryant (2003) also shared similar views and told that self esteem affects one’s ability to maintain positive feelings, mood and emotions. People with high self esteem used more social support and less avoidance coping (Aspinwall & Taylor, 1992).

3. **Need Theory**

Maslow (1987) referred that all individuals want to be evaluated for self-esteem and regard. This evaluation of their strength, position, recognition and importance enhances their well being and satisfies their esteem needs. He included self esteem in the hierarchy of need theory. He explained two different types of esteem, that is, the need for respect from others and the need for self respect. Self-esteem encompasses beliefs and emotions such as triumph, despair, hide and shame. If the need for self-esteem is not fulfilled, individual will be unable to grow and attain self actualization.
4. **Multiple Influence Model**

Wood, Michela, and Giordana (2000) proposed that people having high self esteem tend to focus less on negative self-evaluating thoughts, which in turn, lead to reduction in their negative feelings and emotions. It indicates self-esteem helps us in regulating our mood also.

5. **Attachment Theory**

The concept of attachment refers to a motivational behavioural system that is activated when a person feels threatened. The theory of attachment is based on the assumption that the care of the child and the relationship to the parents determine the child’s self-esteem (Bowlby, 1969; Sroufe & Waters, 1977). If the child’s needs are satisfied, then only the child will feel secure and comfortable. This secure attachment will result in a positive view of the self and the ability to trust others.

6. **Self-Affirmation Theory**

When a person feels uncertain in one domain, they try to compensate by emphasizing certainty about unrelated attitudes, personal goals, values and identification (Steele, 1988; McGregor, Zanna, Holmes, & Spencer, 2001). Individuals whose self-esteem is endangered compensate for low self-esteem through a motivational process called compensatory conviction. They begin to pursue extrinsic goals rather than focusing on fulfillment of their intrinsic needs which worsens their already poor self-regulation (Crocker & Park, 2004). These individuals become more prone to adopt get-rich-quick schemes to get appreciation from others and result in a high self-esteem (Zywica & Danowski, 2008; Sivanathan & Pettit, 2010).

7. **Reflected Appraisals Theory**

The reflected appraisals model has been conceptualized as a concern for need to belong (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Leary, Haupt, Strausser, & Chokel, 1998). According to Cooley (1902), self-esteem results from the appraisals of other individuals. Mead (1934) stated that our self-esteem is influenced by the “generalized other” which is the entire socio-cultural environment. An
individual tends to view their self-worth on the perceptions of others. Interactions with others are good predictors of fluctuations in self-esteem (Denissen, Penke, Schmitt, & Van Aken, 2008).

**Social Anxiety**

Social anxiety is the fear of negative evaluations by other individuals in social situations. The American Psychiatric Association (2013) defined social anxiety disorder (SAD) as a “marked fear or anxiety about one or more social situations in which the individual is exposed to possible scrutiny by others” in the fifth edition of its Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5). However, not all socially anxious persons meet the diagnostic criteria for being labeled as having a social anxiety disorder. Social anxiety is taken as a continuous variable as some persons have low or average social anxiety levels and others having high to very high level (Rapee & Spence, 2004).

Individuals become socially anxious not only when they are presently being evaluated but also when the possibility or of interpersonal evaluation exists. People may experience social anxiety if they worry about how others may regard them in an upcoming interaction, even when they are alone. People may become anxious about those social interactions also that are entirely imagined rather than real.

In its mildest form, it involves momentary social apprehension, happening in response to common social-evaluative state of affairs, whereas it is more severe when it is characterized by disabling, persistent fear and avoidance (Liebowitz et al., 2003; Veale, 2003).

Anxiety about being negatively judged by others or behaving in a way causes embarrassment and ridicule. It was found that highly anxious persons are very vigilant to the possibility of negative judgments and evaluation, particularly when social acceptance is supposed to be at stake (Maner, DeWall, Baumeister, & Schaller, 2007).

Social anxiety is triggered by concerns about making a favourable impression on others and the beliefs that one will not be able to do so. Socially anxious adolescents
face severe adjustment problems, educational underachievement and mood swings (Morris, 2001).

Theories of Social Anxiety

1. **Social Comparison Theory**

Festinger (1954) suggested that people have an innate drive to assess themselves, usually in comparison to others. Persons make all kinds of judgments about themselves and analyze their self in relation to others.

There are two kinds of social comparison:

(i) Downward social comparison: it is when we compare with others who are not as good as ourselves.

(ii) Upward social comparison: it is when we compare with those who we believe are better than us.

2. **Evaluation-Apprehension Theory**

Cottrell, Wack, Sekerak, and Rittle (1968) affirm that awareness of existence of another individual can influence the individual behaviour, the behaviour for which evaluative others can reward or punish the individual (Miller, Hurkman, Robinson, & Feinberg, 1979). It can be defined as an anxiety-toned concern to be positively evaluated from significant others and to keep away from providing reasons for a negative evaluation.

3. **Sociometer Theory**

People feel socially anxious when they believe that the impression they make will not lead others to value their relationship with them as much as they want (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Socially anxious people are more socially isolated and have inadequate social relationships (Wittchen, Fuetsch, Sonntag, Muller, & Leibowitz, 1999). An adolescent, who has been ridiculed, not listened to, not credited for hard-work rather he/she was doubted, mocked at, isolated, excluded or rejected can be a victim of this debilitating social anxiety where an undue importance is given to the other person as one's own self is treated or if it does not exist.
4. **Cognitive Behavioural Theory**

The thoughts patterns and beliefs play a significant role in the development of social anxiety. One tends to avoid social interactions because of irrational thoughts. Cognitive behavioural theorists have labelled fear of negative evaluation as a core feature of social anxiety (Coles, Turk, Heimberg, & Fresco, 2001; Horley, Williams, Gonsalvez, & Gordon, 2004).

5. **Self-Presentation Theory**

This theory proposes that individuals experience social anxiety when they are encouraged to make a desirable impression on other persons but doubt that they will successfully do so (Schlenker & Leary, 1982). People are understandably stimulated to convey certain desired impressions of them and to avoid making certain impressions (Leary, 1995).

**Locus of Control**

The concept of locus of control comes directly from the psychotherapeutic clinic where it was a frequent observation that psychotherapy was seldom successful if the client did not believe that reinforcements used during therapy were contingent on his behaviour. The concept of locus of control has been applied to a wide variety of endeavours ranging from beliefs about the after-life, to behaviour in organizations, and educational settings.

Rotter's (1966) locus of control proposed that generalized beliefs concerning who or what influences things takes place along a bipolar dimension from internal to external control. Locus of control is a dimension of personality and helps explain one’s traits and behaviours.

According to Nasser and Abouchedid (2006), “individuals with internal locus of control believe that events and their consequences develop as a result of their own behaviour and acts, individuals with external locus of control cannot make correlation between the events and their own efforts and behaviour, and thus they believe that occurrences stem from other’s behaviour or happen accidentally”. Bernardi (2011) defined locus of control as an individual’s belief concerning their control over their environment.
The reference to internals and externals is merely a semantic convenience (Rotter, 1966). People are not viewed as either internals or externals. It is rather a continuum and a person can fall anywhere along the continuum from external at one end to internal at the other. In some particular situations, individual of an external locus of control can exhibit internal locus of control. Therefore, a person does not have a well defined internal or external locus of control because locus of control is a not a dichotomous variable and can vary from situation to situation.

**Characteristics of individuals with external locus of control:**

(i) Are more passive, accepting and agreeable  
(ii) Are less likely to experience expectancy shifts  
(iii) Tend to share praise with those around even if they provided little help  
(iv) Tends to be negative, gives up easily and does not try too hard

**Characteristics of individuals with internal locus of control:**

(i) Emphasize striving for achievement.  
(ii) Engage in actions that will make the situations better  
(iii) Are curious  
(iv) Have a more participative management style.

**The following two theories are the predominant theories in the locus of control literature:**

1. **Social Learning Theory**

An individual learns on the basis of the history of reinforcement, that is, the reward or praise given by others in response to behavior (Rotter, 1954). The
occurrence of behaviour of a person is influenced by the nature or importance of goals or reinforcements and also by the person's expectancy that their goals will occur.

Social learning theory can be represented as: $NP = f (FM + NV)$ where NP is need potential, FM is freedom of movement, and NV is need valence. The expectancies are determined by situational factors and are changeable, whereas stable dispositions are resistant to change across situations.

2. **Attribution Theory**

According to Jones (1972), locus of responsibility is one dimension that can also be used to understand the views of an individual. According to him, the locus of responsibility shows the orientation of the individual to the parties who are responsible for resolving any problems that occur either within themselves, or outside the party or system. Internal locus of responsibility concerns with the belief that the self is responsible for the problems encountered. On the other hand, external locus of responsibility refers to the perception that outside parties are responsible for the problems encountered.

Levenson (1981) proposed a structure comprising internality, powerful others and chance scales which looks at locus of control from three dimensions. Internal attributing refers to the abilities, effort, kindness and abilities, while the dimension of natural chance refers to an individual who believes wholeheartedly in destiny, fate, fortune and is powerless to stop or change something. The concept of “Powerful Others” refers to the power or action taken by other individuals.

**Vanity**

Vanity is an important personality construct that effects materialistic orientation and usage of products to portray image (Netemeyer et al., 1995). The concept of vanity is frequently related to arrogance, boastfulness, conceit and haughtiness (Chakrabarti, 1992).

Vanity is a multidimensional construct which comprises of four components: (1) a concern for physical appearance; (2) a positive (and perhaps inflated) view
of physical appearance; (3) a concern for achievement, and (4) a positive (and perhaps inflated) view of achievement (Netemeyer et al., 1995). The former two components account for physical vanity, and the latter two belong to the domain of achievement vanity. Thus, the concept of vanity includes both physical vanity and achievement vanity.

Physical vanity can be defined as an excessive pride in one’s appearance, while achievement vanity can be defined as an excessive pride in one’s accomplishments. It is a psychological trait that plays a crucial role in predicting young consumers’ behaviours and product choice (Durvasula & Lysonski, 2008). Vanity deals with an individual’s concern with the perception of both physical appearances and social achievements (Durvasula et al., 2001).

There are mainly two philosophies about vanity. The first philosophy states that vanity is a secondary trait influenced by the socio-economic environment (Mason, 1981). The second philosophy states that vanity is affected by parental socialization and genes and vanity results from primary and biogenic needs (Durvasula et al., 2001).

Persons reinforce their appearance perception, achievement perception and self-concept by modifying their social perceptions, buying decisions and consumer choices (Dunning, 2007). Vanity is an important variable in social comparison because the concerns for physical appearance and achievements and the view of others on one’s vanity can be determined by comparing with others (Workman & Lee, 2011).

**Theories of Vanity**

1. **Impression Management Theory**

   Impression management is a goal-directed conscious or unconscious effort to shape the perceptions of other persons about a person, object or event. Goffman (1959) proposed that impression management is done by modifying information in social interaction. When an individual tries to influence the perception of her or his own image, this is termed as self-presentation. Self-presentation concerns with conveying information about image of oneself to others. Individuals tend
to develop an image of them to present themselves in a manner that is in congruence with that image and to claim personal identity (Schlenker, 1980).

Following are the two basic types of motivations of self-presentation:

(i) To match audience preferences and expectations (Baumeister, 1987).

(ii) To match one's own self-image

2. **Self-schema Theory**

A self-schema is a person’s mental and cognitive representation of how they are and these self-schemas are developed over a period of time. This theory focuses on the cognitive generalizations about the self that are derived from past experiences. These cognitive generalizations guide the processing of self-related information enclosed in an individual’s social experience (Markus, 1977). Individuals feel that appearance is the most indispensable aspect of self-evaluation as well as the evaluation of other persons in information processing. Our society has developed a cultural beauty ideal which makes these appearance self-schematics more likely to internalize this beauty ideal. When these standards of beauty are not met, it results in the development of a negative body image (Jung, 2006).

3. **Looking-Glass Self Theory**

People distinguish the self from others and to see the self as reflected in the eyes of others learn through engaging in social interactions (Cooley, 1902). Extending these ideas to appearance, an individual’s perceptions of their own attractiveness reflects how attractive they think they are in the eyes of other individuals, rather than objective levels of attractiveness. This concept offers insight into our own thinking and assists in forming our identity based on how others see us.

Yeung and Martin (2003) proposed that the looking-glass self includes three main elements.

(i) We develop our self through the judgments others.

(ii) We tend to imagine and then react to what we feel their judgment of that appearance must be.
(iii) We imagine how we must appear to others.

This chapter has provided the conceptual understanding of the various variables. The research has to be based on the review of literature. In the next chapter of review of literature, materialism will be explored with respect to various psychological variables taking into consideration the socio-economic status and gender as demographic variables.