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경영학 석사학위논문

**Compensatory Consumption of Unique Products:
Power Drives Desire for Perceived Autonomy**

독특한 상품 소비를 통한 보상적 소비

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Abstract

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This research investigates how consumers' spending on identity-relevant unique product might be affected by temporary shifts in their states of power. Through pilot study, experiment 1A and 1B, it was found that individuals in powerless state increase their willingness to pay for products associated with uniqueness in identity-relevant domain, while in less identity-relevant domain they decrease their willingness to pay for unique products. Consumers' increased desire for unique products in identity-relevant product domain may have roots in compensatory motive, and moderated mediation effect was found which indicates that low power individual's higher willingness to pay for identity-relevant unique product was mediated by perceived autonomy varying on the level of identity threat.

This article makes new contributions to appreciating how the willingness to pay for

unique identity-relevant products varies as a function of states of power and identity threat, and increases our comprehension of the role of power in consumer behavior. The link between powerless state and compensatory consumption has expansive implications both for consumers' well-being and for comprehension of the psychological dynamics of power. These findings shed light on a novel compensatory perspective regarding powerless state and, by doing so, advance our comprehension of the psychological dynamics of power.

Keywords: Power, Identity threat, Autonomy, Uniqueness

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INTRODUCTION

*“I am no bird; and no net ensnares me:
I am a free human being with an independent will.”
(Charlotte Brontë, Jane Eyre)*

The quote at the beginning of this article highlights the aspect of individual as a free human being with an independent will and this article accentuates the validity of this view. Depending on the state of power one can have shaken view of oneself, which might lead individuals to desire to establish self. Anyone might have confronted the moments when they felt powerless at least once in a life time, even for those who occupy a position of power might have those moments when he or she feels particularly powerless.

Individual's daily life is affected by power, which is defined as an asymmetric control over other people or valued resources (Magee and Galinsky 2008). Editor in chief might have greater control over resource than do authors who are waiting for their article to be accepted. In social life, bosses might possess bigger control over both people and resources than do their employees, while professors possess control over their students in terms of credits and have bigger resources in terms of knowledge in school life.

However, one important fact is that power is complicated than it appears. Even CEO who seems to occupy a position of power might be powerless, despite having absolute control over the consequences of one's employees. If individual who occupies a position of power feels like he/she is getting little respect, or feels as if others possess more knowledge than one does, this might prompt a powerless state of feeling (Rucker and

Galinsky 2008). State of powerlessness might originate not only from lacking control over third parties but from deprivation in knowledge and respect (French and Raven 1959).

For a precise comprehension of power construct, distinguishing power construct from seemingly similar constructs are critical. Prior research shows that it is essential to take into account how power as a psychological state is different from control and learned helplessness. Often power is regarded as a common state of dependence or independence, and according to Rucker and Galinsky (2008) power is a state which might stem from various inputs, not solely from control. Learned helplessness is frequently pointed out by negative affect, a feeling that individual's behavior which is isolated from affecting a situation, and a lack of self-efficacy (Abramson et al. 1978). Power as a psychological states, however, does not require change to be accompanied by affective state of people (Galinsky et al. 2003). Furthermore, findings from the past research have discovered that the effects of power are not stimulated by self-efficacy (Anderson and Galinsky 2006). Therefore, in this context, Rucker and Galinsky (2008) describe power not as a subset of learned helplessness, but rather describe learned helplessness as a subset of power. This implies that chronic states of feeling powerless ultimately ends up being caught up in a perception that he or she is helpless.

Considering the fact that psychological states of power could have various inputs, power might not merely bide by any specific input (Rucker and Galinsky 2008). To elaborate, two individuals might possess comparable economic resources but could be in a different state of power due to their position in a social organization, and these two individuals might show a different behavior with regard to their willingness to pay for

unique products in identity-relevant domain.

To sum up, designing the prerequisite and results of power in the context of consumption may be an attractive task for researchers who are concerned in consumer behavior. This present article deals a forthright but an essential question: does a state of powerlessness leads to an increased desire to acquire particular types of product, especially unique product in identity-relevant domain?

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND HYPOTHESES

STATE OF POWERFUL VS. POWERLESS

Individuals can be categorized by powerful versus powerless states. To elucidate how and when power emerges, researchers have frequently defined power as the capacity to control resources (Magee and Galinsky 2008), and this control over resources may stem from a diverse origins, such as expertise, respect from others, economic resources (French and Raven 1959). However, depending on the context or situation the state of power can be reversed such as when students fill out the teaching evaluations, leave the class or when an employee quits for other job. Therefore, power alters by context and from situation to situation (Rucker and Galinsky 2008).

A bulk of prior work has substantiated that power is a psychological state. State of powerful or powerlessness may be simply activated by shifting one's role or situation, or

even by reminding an experience from the past in which an individual possessed or lacked power (Magee et al. 2007). This indicates that the state of power and powerless can simply be evoked by mere episodic prime instructing participants to recall past incidents when they felt powerful or powerless and exert the equivalent effects as those attained using imagination task adapted from Dubois et al (2010). Power has been demonstrated to possess a numerous widespread effects on how people feel about themselves, as well as how they perceive themselves. Power as psychological states have been demonstrated to have essential influence on how individuals think, behave and choose.

The state of powerless has been depicted as an aversive state compared to the state of power (Keltner et al. 2003). Powerlessness frequently comes along with real or perceived loss of control over behavior of one's own. Undoubtedly, being unable to have one's own control over own condition is linked to negative feelings, such as learned helplessness (Abramson et al. 1978), feelings of actual uncertainty (Anderson and Galinsky 2006; Briñol et al. 2007), which in itself is aversive (Weary et al. 1993). Moreover, compared with the state of powerful, powerless state is also connected with less access to both physical and social rewards (Buss 1996; Operario and Fiske 2001).

PSYCHOLOGY OF SHAKEN SELF AND BUFFERING THE THREAT

Self and Powerless State

Self is composed of a number of identities, each representing an individual's perception of oneself (Stryker 1980). Individuals are motivated to maintain a well-defined view of self (Gao et al. 2009), proposing that individuals would protect against threats

posed to beliefs which are closely related to the self. Diverse experiences such as confronting a primary reorganization process in which one's career might be at risk (Lind and Van den Bos 2002) or getting an adverse feedback in interpersonal relationships (Maas and Van den Bos 2009) may result in powerless state. There is a need to take a step further into psychological processes with regard to state of power and the coping management.

Powerless state creates an uncomfortable or aversive feeling, and this inconvenient feeling may be translated into an implicit or explicit experience of threat to self or one's identity. Self-threat refers to devaluation, or reduction of self-concept and self-esteem, perceived or actual doubt (Leary et al. 2009). When confronted with imbalance from social force it is natural to protect oneself from it. People pursuing or maximizing positive experiences and avoiding or minimizing negative ones are certainly "psychology's most fundamental and immutable behavioral law" (Alicke and Sedikides, 2009, p.1)

Self-threat and Compensatory Consumption

Past research has demonstrated the fact that when an individual is challenged by discrepant feedback, or have a feeling of being restricted from self-expression, individual compensates by reestablishing one's own shaken self-concept by putting one's effort to choose highly symbolic items (Gao et al. 2009). According to Gao et al. (2009), individuals who doubted their competence were more likely to choose intelligence symbolic products. The fact is that when people sometimes find themselves in trouble that threaten their desired identities, confronting the occurrence of predicament-creating incidents, individuals participate in remedial activities which are designed to protect own identities

(Leary 1995).

Prior research on threat and consumption shows that individuals are likely to pursue products which symbolize the particular facet of the threatened self (Heine et al. 2006). Past work shows that self-threat have influence on behavior in a specific pattern like symbolically fulfilling the facet of threatened self (Wicklund and Gollwitzer 1982), self-threats associated with power (Rucker and Galinsky 2008), intelligence (Gao et al. 2009), and freedom (Levav and Zhu 2009). In addition, people try to compensate for one's self-threat on a particular domain by inflating own self-views on other domain (Baumeister and Jones 1978; Greenberg and Pyszczynski 1985; Van Tongeren and Green 2010). According to Mandel and Smeesters (2008), individuals who are reminded of their own mortality led to increased consumption activity of eating cookies, even though consumption of cookies did not relate to threat of mortality.

DESIRE TO ESTABLISH SELF

Identity-relevant Consumption

Self-protection attempts are diluted or negated when a psychological resource is amplified, and eventually takes a role as psychological buffer against threat phenomenon which is known as self-affirmation (Sherman and Hartson 2011; Lazarus and Folkman 1984). Substitution principle refers to the fact that psychological resources are often interchangeable, which implies that one resource can take a role as a buffer for another (Tesser 2000).

Identities represent different aspects of the self which differs across the context which is a basic motivator of behavior (Oyserman 2009). Consumers use identities to express who they are (Reed et al. 2009) and communicate, define identities by consumption (Belk 1988; Berger and Heath 2007). Past work in marketing has confirmed that products show information about the identities of their owners (Shavitt 1990; Shavitt and Nelson 1999). There is evidence of behavior that self-affirmation has examined product choice as a response to threat (Gao et al. 2009) and materialism has been described to be an outcome of threats to one's culture and mortality salience (Arndt et al. 2004). When belief of self is shaken, individuals turn to fundamental and readily shared venues to enhance the self.

Consumption is one of the methods in which individuals may compensate for battered self-concept or bruised self-esteem (Gao et al. 2009). Past research has demonstrated that conspicuous consumption (Pettit and Sivanathan 2011), and consumption of high-status goods (Rucker and Galinsky 2008; Sivanathan and Pettit 2010) is one way to compensate. Individuals pursue to express one's own identity through the products they possess and the activities they seek (Belk 1988; Berger and Heath 2008; Rucker and Galinsky 2008).

Consumer researchers have acknowledged for a lasting period of time that individuals consume in ways which are coherent with their sense of self (Levy 1959; Sirgy 1982). Past researches demonstrate that consumers use one's possessions and brands to develop their self-identities and communicate these particular selves to others and vice versa (Belk 1988). Prior research has concentrated on expansive conceptual issues regarding consumers and their sense of self, however, this research paper will take a more granular approach, breaking down the relationships between the construct of power and self-identity on

consumer behavior.

REGAINING AUTONOMY THROUGH UNIQUENESS

As individuals put an effort to regain control when it is intimidated or deprived (Roth and Kubal 1975), people who lack power pursue to improve their relative status (Rucker and Galinsky 2008, 2009) and those whose choices are limited participate in behaviors aimed at restoring their freedom (Brehm 1966; Fitzsimons 2000).

In other words, when individuals are deprived of one source of personal control like power, they are able to pursue and satisfy the need for control through a separate source (Insei et al. 2011). This idea of substitutability is compatible with prior research demonstrating that individuals are quite flexible in deploying distinct but interchangeable means to regain losses (Baumeister and Leary 1995). French and Raven (1959) recognize that power could arise from diverse origins, such as possessing knowledge in the form of expert power, the ability to control others or coercive power, and by possessing qualities that others find desirable which could be referred as referent power.

These research is coherent with studies that demonstrates consumers pursuing to make a change in their self-identity by means of experiential purchases (e.g., Arnould and Price 1993; Celsi et al. 1993; Schouten 1991). Past researches provide instances that by participating in an act, individuals pursue particular self-identity through sky diving (Celsi et al. 1993), white-water rafting (Arnould and Price 1993), or plastic surgery (Shouten 1991). By intentionally consuming these types of experiential purchases, individuals could have an impact on their sense of self and reinforce self-esteem. However, even when the

good is not an experience, it can exert psychological, behavioral, and even neural effect on individuals. In other words, psychological empowerment is composed not only of the actual ability to control one's environment but also of the "perception" that one can successfully do so (Diener and Biswas-Diener 2005).

Autonomy through Uniqueness

Autonomy refers to the extent to which individual follows its own motivations or character irrespective of the beliefs, norms, and expectations of others. In this research willingness to pay for differentiated or unique products to establish self would contribute to perceived autonomy. Considering the fact that autonomy is a function of internal motivations, autonomy must be inferred from behavior since it cannot be observed explicitly (Jones and Davis 1965).

Generally, autonomy is inferred from behaviors that does not confirm to norm (Bellezza et al. 2014). Through accumulating positive impressions in the minds of other individuals, idiosyncratic credits, a member of the group can be said to achieve and retain increased status (Hollander 1958). Depending on the degree to which individual is able to deviate from group norms free from restrictions, this accumulation is reflected. Therefore, powerful individuals are able to afford to deviate from conventional behavior and common expectations without the concern of social disapproval (Cartwright 1959; Galinsky et al. 2008; Haslam 2004; Sherif and Sherif 1964).

However, powerless individuals are not allowed to deviate as powerful individuals, while identity-relevant unique product would provide perceived autonomy to powerless

individuals. In the past consumer literature, the inclination to participate in differentiated consumption has been linked to establish one's uniqueness and distinctiveness (Ariely and Levav 2000; Simonson and Nowlis 2000).

In this article, I suggest that identity-relevant unique product can be perceived as providing a sense of autonomy. To sum up, prior research agree on the notion that the state of powerless is aversive. Therefore, based on past research it is reasonable to hypothesize that individuals are willing to ameliorate negative feelings of powerlessness. Actually, prior research implies that individuals might surely pursue to ameliorate their powerless state. To elucidate, when individuals feel that their freedom of behavior is intimidated, they reveal psychological reactance (Brehm 1966), and when individuals are faced with uncertainty, they are inclined to make an effort to reduce their confronted uncertainty (Tiedens and Linton 2001). By an analogical manner, when people lack power they might take an action in a way to compensate their lack of power.

HYPOTHESES

This research assumes that shift of power might result in different levels of threat to identity, and proposes that desire to establish self might serve as a coping resource. That is, by attempting to establish self, one can buffer the impact of psychological threat or distress for individuals who are in powerless state and identity-relevant unique product would provide perceived autonomy to powerless individuals depending on identity threat level.

H1: Placing consumers into a low state of power will increase their willingness to pay for products associated with uniqueness in identity-relevant product domain, and will demonstrate a higher willingness to pay compared to both control and high-power conditions.

H2: Placing consumers into a low state of power will decrease their willingness to pay for products associated with uniqueness in less identity-relevant product domain, even though low-power consumers will demonstrate a higher willingness to pay compared to both control and high-power conditions.

H3: Low-power consumer's willingness to pay more for an identity-relevant unique product will be mediated by the perception that the identity-relevant unique product will provide them with an increased perceived autonomy, which would be moderated by identity threat level.

PILOT STUDY

Before conducting a main experiment, an understanding of consumer's motive of consumption is required, and it is worth considering what consumers perceive through that consumption. Therefore in this pilot study, open-ended responses were collected to examine what consumers perceive through consumption and what type of product consumers would desire; pretest of product domain was also conducted to figure out which product domains are more or less identity-relevant; and relationship between power and identity threat was investigated.

Participants and Design

One hundred and nineteen people (69 males, 50 females) were recruited to complete an online survey via Amazon Mechanical Turk. Participants were restricted to those residing in the United States. Participants were randomly assigned to 2 conditions of low and high power.

Procedure

Participants first completed the power manipulation, which consisted of imagining themselves in the role of a boss or employee (see Dubois et al. 2010). Next, participants responded three items of collective self-esteem: 'At the moment I am pleased to be a boss [employee]'; 'At the moment I have a good feeling about being a boss [employee]'; and 'At the moment I am satisfied about the fact that I am a boss [employee]'; Doosje, Ellemers, and Spears, 1995; Jetten et al., 1997). Responses were indicated on a Likert scale ranging from 1 = "strongly disagree" to 7 = "strongly agree". Scores on the three

items were summed to give an aggregate collective self-esteem score. This measure was reliable ($\alpha = .98$). Then, participants answered to six items (i.e., unhappy, threatened, attacked, maligned, challenged, and impugned) on 7-point scales (White, J. Argo, and Sengupta 2012), from “not at all” to “very much”. Ratings were summed to measure feelings of threat ($\alpha = .89$). In the end, participants responded to demographic questions.

Independent Variables

Power. For the manipulation of power, participants were asked to imagine how they would feel, think, and act in a particular role associated with low or high power (Dubois et al. 2010). In the high- (low-) power condition, participants were told: “We would like you to imagine you are a boss [employee] at a company. Read about the role below and try to vividly imagine what it would be like to be in this role (i.e., how you would feel, think, and act).”

Participants in the high-power condition then read: “As a boss, you are in charge of directing your subordinates in creating different products and managing work teams. You decide how to structure the process of creating products and the standards by which the work done by your employees is to be evaluated. As the boss, you have complete control over the instructions you give your employees. In addition, you also evaluate the employees at the end of each month in a private questionnaire—that is, the employees never see your evaluation. The employees have no opportunity to evaluate you.”

In contrast, participants in the low-power condition read: “As an employee, you are

responsible for carrying out the orders of the boss in creating different products. The boss decides how to structure the process of creating these products and the standards by which your work is to be evaluated. As the employee, you must follow the instructions of the boss. In addition, you are evaluated by the boss each month, and this evaluation will be private, that is, you will not see your boss's evaluation of you. This evaluation will help determine the bonus reward you get. You have no opportunity to evaluate your boss."

Domain Ratings. Adapted from Berger and Heath (2007) studies, separate groups of participants rated the same domains either on self-expression ("how much it contributes to self-expression .i.e., a person's ability to express their identity") or identity inference making ("how much people use it to make inferences about others. .i.e., people think they know a lot about a person based on their choice in this domain"). Consistent with identity-signaling perspective, the ratings of self-expression and identity inference making were highly correlated ($r = .83$), so I averaged them to form an index of domain identity relevance. All ratings were on seven-point scales.

Dish soap demonstrated lowest identity relevance ($M_{dish\ soap} = 2.04$, $SD = 1.32$), then toilet paper ($M_{toilet\ paper} = 2.07$, $SD = 1.38$) and toothpaste ($M_{toothpaste} = 2.17$, $SD = 1.42$) showed lowest identity relevance. On the other hand, sunglass ($M_{sunglass} = 5.05$, $SD = 1.24$), shoe ($M_{shoe} = 5.51$, $SD = 1.20$), and car showed the highest identity relevance ($M_{car} = 5.57$, $SD = 1.21$).

TABLE 1

IDENTITY RELEVANCE OF THE PRODUCT DOMAIN

IDENTITY RELEVANCE OF THE PRODUCT DOMAIN		
Dish soap	2.04	(1.32)
Toilet paper	2.07	(1.38)
Toothpaste	2.17	(1.42)
Sunglass	5.05	(1.24)
Shoe	5.51	(1.20)
Car	5.57	(1.21)

NOTE-Standard deviations in parentheses.

Analysis of Identity Threat. There was significant main effect of power on identity threat $F(1, 119) = 40.05, p < .001, \eta^2 = .25$. Participants reported feeling more high identity threat in the low-power condition ($M = 20.11, SD = 8.05$) than in the high-power condition ($M = 11.72, SD = 6.27$). Thus, power and identity threat was shown to have a relationship which individuals in low state of power feel higher identity threat compared to those in the high state of power.

TABLE 2
EFFECTS OF POWER ON IDENTITY THREAT

Power	Mean	SD
Low	20.11	(8.05)
High	11.72	(6.27)

NOTE-Standard deviations in parentheses.

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	2092.94	1	2092.94	40.05	.00
Intercept	30168.37	1	30168.37	577.32	.00
Power	2092.94	1	2092.94	40.05	.00
Error	6113.84	117	52.25		
Total	38511.00	119			
Corrected Total	8206.79	118			

Consumer's underlying motive. The goal of the open-ended survey was to seek specific type of consumption, which might provide powerless state of consumers to feel powerful, a sense of control, or autonomy. Therefore, open-ended survey was conducted only to separate group of thirty low power condition participants who responded with their opinion which consumption makes them feel powerful, provide them a sense of control, or sense of autonomy.

Most of the respondents answered in similar forms, which could be classified in few categories. A lot of respondents answered identity-relevant products as products which make them look nice or feel special, provide them a sense of control or freedom. Also, many respondents answered products which are unique, exclusive, rare, or which people do not have much access as their own response to the open-ended question. Table 1 shows these examples of sample responses which was answered in this manner (see Appendix A, for full answers of whole respondents).

TABLE 3

OPEN-ENDED RESPONSE EXAMPLES

Open-ended Response Examples	
Identity- relevance & Uniqueness	Buying a unique product that establishes myself- or makes me feel unique and special- which makes me feel powerful and like a leader. A different kind of outfit that others don't have access to for example. A special kind of electronics to make me more advanced and efficient.
	A car and jewelry. That makes me feel really special and look nice
	I like buying unique pieces of jewelry, they are handcrafted so I won't see them anywhere else.
	I like buying unique pieces of jewelry, they are handcrafted so I won't see them anywhere else.
	A product or service that is a bit different makes me feel special and powerful, but especially if it's one that I have taken the time to research thoroughly and have learned a lot about it and what makes it special and unique.
Perceived Autonomy	Buying exclusive products
	buying unique products. I like buying things others don't want or like.
	A type of product that has made me feel powerful is my Playstation 4 because it is very popular at the moment and I have control of the whole game.
	Any product that can be customized to my specifications (i.e., build a bear) gives me a sense of control. In real life, these products tend to be a bit expensive and there aren't a lot of products that fit this description.
	My car because I can drive anywhere and do anything.
	Something that gives me freedom like a bicycle. I don't have to rely on buying gas, I just rely on my two feet. My bike gets me from point A to point B in an affordable manner. Affordability is another thing that makes me feel powerful. I am not chained to corporations and paying their CEO's high paycheck.

NOTE____. Typos are not corrected, since the responses are exactly copied from respondents without any modifications.

EXPERIMENTS

EXPERIMENT 1A

Experiment 1 examined whether a state of power affected consumers' willingness to pay for identity-relevant unique products. Specifically, in this research it was predicted that if powerless state evokes a compensatory process, it would be possible to observe an increased willingness to pay for products that primarily have strong associations with uniqueness in identity-relevant product domain. Particular product domains are more often used in the communicating identity (e.g., cars as opposed to detergent; Berger and Heath 2007), and if these effects are related with identity, then they should be stronger in identity-relevant domains. Products which have strong associations with uniqueness in identity-relevant domain would provide perceived autonomy, which in turn would lead consumers in powerless state to increased willingness to pay compared to consumers in high state of power.

Participants and Design

Ninety nine people (51 females, 48 males) were recruited to complete an online survey via Amazon Mechanical Turk. Only participants who had an approval rate of 98% or higher and lived in the United States were permitted to participate. Participants were randomly assigned to conditions in a 3 (power: control, low, high) \times 2 (product association: unique, not unique) mixed design with object serving as a within-participants factor in more or less identity-relevant product domain.

Procedure

Participants first completed an episodic priming manipulation of power. Specifically, participants were randomly assigned to recall an event during which they felt powerless or powerful including control condition. Procedure adapted from Rucker and Galinsky (2008), participants were given instructions for an ostensibly unrelated study interested in examining consumers' bidding for products in different contexts. Participants were told that they had been assigned to help the researchers understand the type of reserve prices consumers set in online auctions (e.g., eBay). Products were presented one at a time with a simple picture of the product and a label of the product (e.g., "Sunglass"). Participants indicated their willingness to pay after seeing each product.

Independent Variable

Power. Power was manipulated via an episodic prime adapted from Galinsky et al. (2003). In the high-power condition, participants read: "Please recall a particular incident in which you had power over another individual or individuals. By power, we mean a situation in which you controlled the ability of another person or persons to get something they wanted, or were in a position to evaluate those individuals. Please describe this situation in which you had power—what happened, how you felt, etc."

In the low-power condition, participants read: "Please recall a particular incident in which someone else had power over you. By power, we mean a situation in which someone

had control over your ability to get something you wanted, or was in a position to evaluate you. Please describe this situation in which you did not have power—what happened, how you felt, etc.”

Additionally, control condition was included which consisted of having participants write about the last time they went to a grocery store (see Galinsky et al. 2003). In order to ensure that manipulation of power induced different states of power, participants were asked immediately after the manipulation the extent to which they felt powerful on a 7-point scale (1 =not powerful, 7 = powerful).

Product association. Several stimuli of products were tested and 3 products strongly associated with identity and 3 products weakly associated with identity were selected (see Pilot test). The less identity-relevant products consisted of a toilet paper, toothpaste, and dish-soap. The more identity-relevant products consisted of sunglasses, shoe, and car. Products were displayed in two versions, respectively, with regard to unique product it was labeled as unique or limited edition (e.g., unique colored toilet paper, limited edition shoe), while products which are not unique was displayed without labeling.

Dependent Variable

Willingness to pay. Because participants were presented with products from a variety of price tiers, I used an interval scale to reduce the amount of response variance and to guard against outliers. Specifically, participants were asked, “How much would you be willing to pay for the product featured?” Participants will respond on a 12-point scale,

where 1 = 10% of the retail price of the item, 2 = 20% of the retail price of the item, and increasing intervals of 10% per scale point up to 12 = 120% of the retail price.

Results and Discussion

Manipulation Check. As expected, there was a significant main effect of power on reported feelings of power $F(2, 99) = 121.59, p < .001, \eta^2 = .71$, such that participants reported feeling more powerful in the high-power condition ($M = 5.54, SD = 1.01$) than in the control condition ($M = 4.42, SD = 1.31$), and in the low-power condition ($M = 1.67, SD = .77$).

TABLE 4
POWER MANIPULATION CHECK

Power	Mean	Std. Deviation
Control	4.42	(1.31)
Low	1.67	(.77)
High	5.54	(1.01)

NOTE____. Standard deviations in parentheses.

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	267.42	2	133.71	121.59	.00
Intercept	1483.89	1	1483.89	1349.40	.00
POWER	267.42	2	133.71	121.59	.00
Error	105.56	96	1.10		
Total	1878.00	99			
Corrected Total	372.99	98			

Preliminary analyses. Because there was natural variability among both low and high identity-relevant product domains regarding product association (see table 5), I first examined whether it was permissible to collapse across the products within each level of product association for the purpose of analysis. I first examined whether it was permissible to collapse across the products within each level of product domain and uniqueness for the

purpose of analysis. Specifically, as long as the individual variation in products did not interact with power, I could confidently collapse across products to produce two levels of each product association factor. To test whether the specific products interacted with the power manipulation, I employed several different tests. First, I examined whether there was a product \times power interaction in a repeated measures ANOVA where the three unique products were nested within a unique product factor and the three non-unique products were nested within a non-unique product factor for each more or less identity-relevant product domain. This failed to produce a significant product \times power interaction, $F < 1$. I also tested the interaction between power and products by running separate repeated measures ANOVA. Neither of these analyses produced a product \times power interaction, F 's < 1

In short, multiple tests indicated that the individual products within each level of the product association factor did not respond differently to the power manipulation, giving confidence to aggregate across products to create an overall mean for low identity-relevant products and an overall mean for high identity-relevant products.

TABLE 5
IDENTITY RELEVANCE OF PRODUCT DOMAINS

		Toilet paper	Toothpaste	Dish soap
Less identity-relevant product domain	Not-unique	2.39 (2.34)	2.40 (2.20)	2.26 (2.19)
	Unique	2.89 (2.58)	3.46 (2.86)	3.22 (2.79)
Identity-relevant product domain	Not-unique	4.03 (2.93)	4.06 (3.05)	5.21 (3.46)
	Unique	5.20 (3.51)	5.07 (3.55)	8.34 (3.74)
		Sunglass	Shoe	Car

NOTE____. Standard deviations in parentheses.

Primary analyses. I submitted participants' willingness to pay to a 3 (power induction: control, low power, high power) × 2 (product association: unique, not unique) mixed-model ANOVA with repeated measures on the product association factor. There was a main effect of product association such that participants indicated a willingness to pay more of the retail value of products associated with uniqueness ($M = 6.25$; $SD = .26$), compared to those not associated to uniqueness ($M = 5.56$; $SD = .21$), $F(1, 99) = 7.81$, p

= .00, $\eta^2 = .07$) for identity-relevant product domain. However, regarding less identity-relevant product domain, participants indicated a willingness to pay more of the retail value of products not associated with uniqueness ($M = 5.41$; $SD = .26$), compared to those associated to uniqueness ($M = 5.19$; $SD = .24$), $F(1, 99) = 7.81$, $p = .00$, $\eta^2 = .07$. This finding suggests that consumers, in general, seem to recognize that identity-relevant unique products are likely to incur a higher cost.

There was main effect of power, $F(1, 99) = 3.84$, $p = .02$, $\eta^2 = .07$, such that participants experiencing low power had higher reservation prices ($M = 6.22$; $SD = .35$) compared to those in the control ($M = 5.72$; $SD = .36$) and high-power conditions ($M = 4.88$; $SD = .34$). High-power and control conditions did not differ, $F < 1$. There was no significant power \times product association interaction, $F(1, 66) = .03$, $p = .93$, $\eta^2 = .00$.

The results supported hypothesis that products highly associated with uniqueness in identity-relevant domain could serve a compensatory purpose for states of low power. An increased desire to acquire high identity-relevant unique products were found. In addition, relative to a high power condition, the effect relatively appeared strong to be driven by participants in the low power condition, suggesting that a state of low power fostered a greater willingness to pay for products associated with identity and uniqueness.

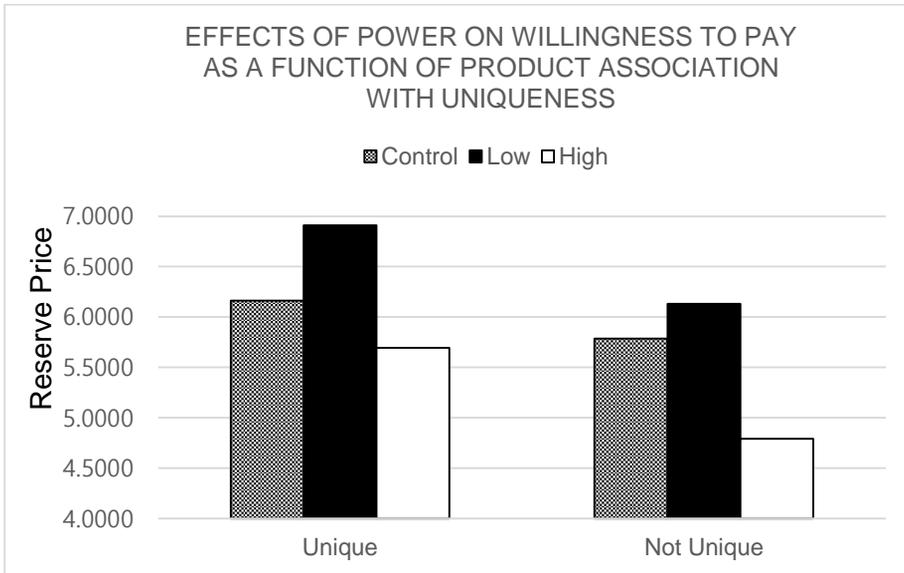
TABLE 6
EFFECTS OF PRODUCT ASSOCIATION AND POWER

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Intercept	12426.46	1	12426.46	765.70	.00
Power	124.78	2	62.39	3.84	.02
Error	1557.96	96	16.22		

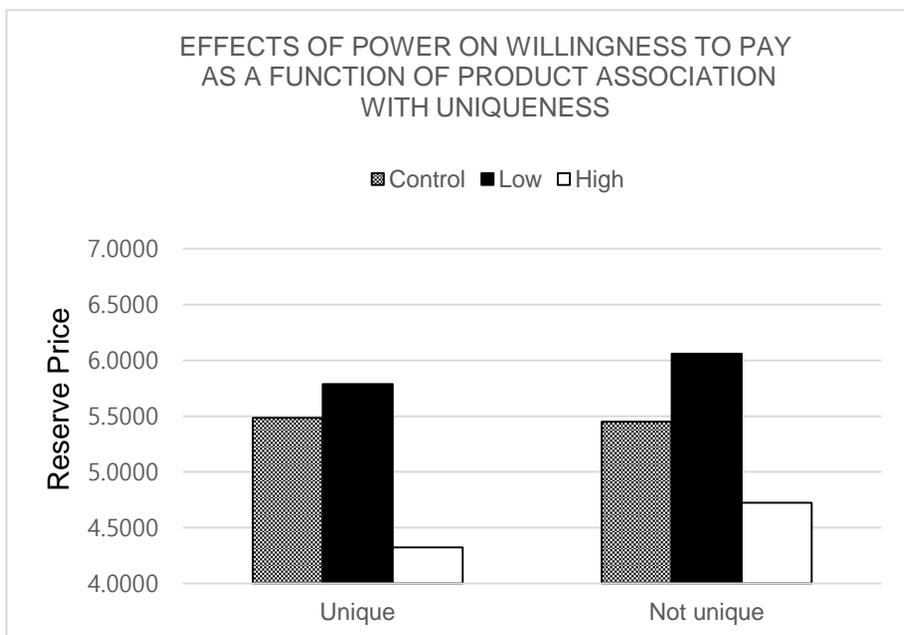
Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	
Product association	Sphericity Assumed	61.87	3	20.62	7.81	.00
	Greenhouse-Geisser	61.87	2.25	27.44	7.81	.00
	Huynh-Feldt	61.87	2.36	26.21	7.81	.00
	Lower-bound	61.87	1.00	61.87	7.81	.00
Product association * Power	Sphericity Assumed	4.81	6	.80	.30	.93
	Greenhouse-Geisser	4.81	4.51	1.06	.30	.89
	Huynh-Feldt	4.81	4.72	1.02	.30	.90
	Lower-bound	4.81	2.00	2.40	.30	.73
Error(factor)	Sphericity Assumed	760.41	288	2.64		
	Greenhouse-Geisser	760.41	216.45	3.51		
	Huynh-Feldt	760.41	226.54	3.35		
	Lower-bound	760.41	96.00	7.92		

FIGURE 1

A. IDENTITY-RELEVANT PRODUCT DOMAIN



B. LESS IDENTITY-RELEVANT PRODUCT DOMAIN



EXPERIMENT 1B

Participants and Design

Sixty four people (38 males, 26 females) were recruited to complete an online survey via Amazon Mechanical Turk. Only participants who had an approval rate of 98% or higher and lived in the United States were permitted to participate. Participants were randomly assigned to conditions in a low or high power conditions.

Procedure

Procedure is similar to experiment 1a with following exceptions. First, participants were asked to negotiate only three unique identity-relevant products from experiment 1a. Second, participants were asked to answer to six items (i.e., unhappy, threatened, attacked, maligned, challenged, and impugned) on 7-point scales, from “not at all” to “very much”. Ratings were summed to measure feelings of threat ($\alpha = .89$). Then, participants were asked “to what extent would having this product make you feel to have control over your environment?” and “to what extent would having this product make you feel to have a sense of freedom?” Both items were assessed on 12-point scales with one anchored with “not at all” and 12 anchored with “extremely.”

Independent Variable

Power. Power was manipulated via an episodic prime adapted from Galinsky et al. (2003). In the high-power condition, participants read: “Please recall a particular incident

in which you had power over another individual or individuals. By power, we mean a situation in which you controlled the ability of another person or persons to get something they wanted, or were in a position to evaluate those individuals. Please describe this situation in which you had power—what happened, how you felt, etc.”

In the low-power condition, participants read: “Please recall a particular incident in which someone else had power over you. By power, we mean a situation in which someone had control over your ability to get something you wanted, or was in a position to evaluate you. Please describe this situation in which you did not have power—what happened, how you felt, etc.”

Identity threat. Participants answered to six items (i.e., unhappy, threatened, attacked, maligned, challenged, and impugned) on 7-point scales, from 1= “not at all” to 7=“very much” (White, J. Argo, and Sengupta 2012). Ratings were summed to measure feelings of threat ($\alpha = .89$).

Dependent Variables

Willingness to pay. Because participants were presented with products from a variety of price tiers, I used an interval scale to reduce the amount of response variance and to guard against outliers. Specifically, participants were asked, “How much would you be willing to pay for the product featured?” Participants will respond on a 12-point scale, where 1 = 10% of the retail price of the item, 2 = 20% of the retail price of the item, and increasing intervals of 10% per scale point up to 12 = 120% of the retail price.

Perceived autonomy. To assess the extent to which participants perceived that owning the product would provide a sense of perceived autonomy, participants were asked, “to what extent would having this product make you feel to have control over your environment?” and “to what extent would having this product make you feel to have a sense of freedom?” Both items were assessed on 12-point scales with one anchored with “not at all” and 12 anchored with “extremely.” Thus, higher numbers indicated a perception that a greater sense of perceived autonomy was provided. These items were highly correlated ($\alpha = .95$) and combined to form an aggregate measure of the extent to which possessing the product would provide autonomy.

Results and Discussion

Moderated mediation Analysis. Moderated mediation analysis was conducted based on Preacher, Rucker, & Hayes (2007, model 7) to test the impact of identity threat and perceived autonomy on willingness to pay for identity-relevant unique products. In this research, biased-corrected bootstrapping was used to generate 95% confidence intervals around these indirect effects, where successful mediation occurs if the confidence interval doesn't include zero (Preacher, Rucker, and Hayes 2007). Specifically, Shrout and Bolger (2002) suggest that if zero falls outside the 95% CI the indirect effect is significant, and, thus, successful mediation can be said to be present. A moderated mediation hypothesis is supported if the path from the independent variable to the mediator is significant, and the effect of the mediator on the outcome variable depends on the level of a moderator variable.

The results show that moderated mediation succeeded when perceived autonomy

served as the mediator. The power manipulation significantly predicted participant's perceived autonomy ($\beta = 3.69, p < .005$), and the effect of perceived autonomy depended on the interaction of power and identity threat being activated ($\beta = -.16, p < .05$). These results suggest that the indirect effect of the state of power willingness to pay for identity-relevant unique product through perceived autonomy varies as a function of the identity threat being activated. Conditional indirect effects were significant, when identity threat was at mean level (95% CI: 3.03, 21.43), or +1SD (95% CI: .03, 10.55). In short, the results of experiment suggest that the increase in participants' willingness to pay was a function of their belief that owning the product would provide them perceived autonomy which varies as a function of the identity threat is activated.

TABLE 7
MODERATED MEDIATION ANALYSIS

Mediator Variable Model				
<i>Predictor</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>P</i>
constant	2.99	.90	3.32	.00
Power	3.69	1.2	3.06	.00
Identity threat	.11	.04	2.70	.00
Power×Identity threat	-.16	.06	-2.43	.01
Dependent Variable Model				
<i>Predictor</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>P</i>
constant	26.72	6.87	3.88	.00
Perceived autonomy	4.49	1.15	3.9	.00
Power	-1.23	4.82	-.25	.79
Conditional indirect effects at Identity Threat = mean and ±1 SD				
<i>Identity threat</i>	<i>Effect</i>	<i>Boot SE</i>	<i>Boot LLCI</i>	<i>Boot ULCI</i>
8.29	10.34	4.66	3.03	21.43
16.57	4.06	2.62	.03	10.55
24.86	-2.21	3.89	-11.68	3.93

GENERAL DISCUSSION

This research provides insight through experiments, demonstrating evidence consistent with the idea that placing consumers in a state of low power increase their desire to acquire identity-relevant unique products through perceived autonomy which varies by identity threat level. Through the results of the studies, I believe current research would contribute to literature in a number of ways.

Contributions to Understanding Consumers' Needs.

Deeper comprehension of consumer's need triggered by particular psychological states is one of essential findings that should be taken into account for the practitioners in real world. Specifically, when would consumers be most likely to desire identity-relevant unique products? In accordance with current article, even consumers who occupy positions of power are liable to situational inducements prompted by powerless feelings. Consumer who occupy position of power might be most likely to make identity-relevant unique purchases in those moments when one feels especially powerless which varies by identity threat.

Further research should take a deeper step to investigate the relationship between consumption with actual spending behavior and state of powerlessness. A deeper comprehension of when powerless state leads to compensatory consumption should call a greater attention for future research.

Contributions to Understanding Consumer's Well-Being.

Additionally, current research demonstrates essential implications for consumers'

well-being. Research outcome proposes that consumers regularly revealed to low state of power might be more inclined to demonstrate overspending consumption and fall into debt due to their increased willingness to pay for identity-relevant unique products. Even though, effects on actual behavior are hypothetical and remain to be further explored, current findings show that it is those in low state of power who are most prone to overspend, continuously spending beyond one's ability in order to compensate for their state of powerlessness. This research highlights the importance of investigating methods to deal with powerless state which might not result in overspending consumption, a greater willingness to pay for products beyond their ability.

Contributions to Understanding the Psychological Dynamics.

Furthermore, current research provides important contributions to literature stream of power. This research demonstrates that power can affect the perceived autonomy which individuals associate with products and, in turn, this perceived autonomy can have influence on consumer's spending behavior which varies by the level of identity threat. This article proposes a novel process in the literature of power and identity threat which sheds lights on the dynamic effects of power and consumer's spending behavior. This presents a critical question for future research in the power literature and exploring one's own behavior, in terms of consumption spending which would provide a direction for future research.

Future Directions and Limitations.

The current research explores the relationship between psychological states of power and consumer's spending behavior. In this context of consumption, taking a step further to

investigate the prerequisites and consequences of power might be an intriguing avenue for researchers who are concerned with consumer behavior. In this line, I believe this research provides an invitation to examine multiple critical topics for future research.

One area for future research can be dedicated to explore other means for consumers in powerless state to compensate. Considering the fact that different brands possess distinct personalities, future research might investigate whether particular brands are associated with uniqueness or identity (Aaker 1997) which might lead consumers in states of low power to be inclined to purchase particular brands.

Another area for future work remains to be explored for researchers to investigate actual spending behaviors in real world instead of hypothetical experiment setting, by examining consumer behavior of when consumers of low state of power tends to spend more versus less. For future research, it should be taken into account that current findings might be moderated by several factors. These would also remain as an intriguing area for future research.

CONCLUSION

This research explored a novel theoretical underlying mechanism of compensatory motive of power and identity literature by examining how psychological states of power influence habits of consumption, such as consumers' willingness to pay for products. Those who are in states of powerlessness, do not passively stand by and watch but desire to over spend on certain products.

First, current research takes a step further to investigate the dynamics of psychological states of power on consumer behavior based on identity and uniqueness motive. The extensive prior research on power has concentrated on relations of power and status related products. In this respect, current article provides insight to researchers to take a step further to investigate the role of power and consumption behavior under identity and uniqueness motive.

Second, current studies demonstrate that desires to compensate powerless state can lead to increased willingness to pay for products. These findings shed light on a new compensatory perspective regarding states of low power and, by doing so, advance our comprehension of the construct of power. In addition, this research demonstrates compensatory motive for power with regard to products that had the potential to convey identity and uniqueness to establish self.

Third, the present research also reinforces and takes step further of the prior research discovering underlying mechanism of powerless people increasing their willingness to pay for high identity-relevant unique product. Even though, participants were induced into a state of low power, they acted toward identity-relevant unique products in a manner

consistent with a desire to compensate powerless state by perceived autonomy varying by identity threat level. Therefore, this research sheds light on another perspective that power is a multifaceted construct.

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APPENDIX A

OPEN-ENDED RESPONSES

1	I like buying things that are priced right and that everyone likes. This assured that the gift-giver will most likely enjoy it, or can return it easily.
2	A car and jewelry. That makes me feel really special and look nice
3	Dell computers
4	The best gift is one which allows you to treat yourself to an experience you normally are unable to afford or do because of time constraints such as a dinner or spa gift.
5	Buying a unique product that establishes myself- or makes me feel unique and special- which makes me feel powerful and like a leader. A different kind of outfit that others don't have access to for example. A special kind of electronics to make me more advanced and efficient.
6	My car because I can drive anywhere and do anything.
7	A type of product that has made me feel powerful is my Playstation 4 because it is very popular at the moment and I have control of the whole game.
8	The type of product that would make me feel powerful or give me a sense of control would be buying a quality product on sale.
9	buying an expensive product makes me feel powerful
10	Receiving a gift that seems personalized to me.
11	Any product that can be customized to my specifications (i.e., build a bear) gives me a sense of control. In real life, these products tend to be a bit expensive and there aren't a lot of products that fit this description.
12	Just the ability to look through what I want and come to a decision. I think having so much choice with online shopping and so many platforms like ebay and amazon and others makes it very easy to feel unique in what a person buys these days. But having specific hobbies helps. I like collecting records, comics, toys and 16mm movies (the most unique of the four) and so anytime I buy something from what I enjoy makes me feel autonomous and sometimes powerful when I get an item that is rare.
13	I like a product that I am very skilled at using to make me feel powerful.
14	I like buying unique pieces of jewelry, they are handcrafted so I won't see them anywhere else.

15	buying something completely new and unique that will probably become very popular but I got it first. Such as a brand new smartphone that has yet to come to the united states or a new electronic device.
16	When I can buy what I want and auction the price myself
17	Buying home made clothes.
18	A product or service that is a bit different makes me feel special and powerful, but especially if it's one that I have taken the time to research thoroughly and have learned a lot about it and what makes it special and unique.
19	Something that gives me freedom like a bicycle. I don't have to rely on buying gas, I just rely on my two feet. My bike gets me from point A to point B in an affordable manner. / Affordability is another thing that makes me feel powerful. I am not chained to corporations and paying their CEO's high paycheck.
20	I will buying products that work well and suit my purposes. When I do this I feel like I made a wise purchase and I feel good about myself. I also like having somewhat unique purchases that not a lot of people have. I feel special when I have something like that and like I stand out from others.
21	Buying exclusive products
22	I feel powerful and confident when I am able to buy new expensive smartphone just released in the market.
23	Buying nice clothes and nice shoes gives me a good sense of empowerment.
24	I like to buy products that to have more unique qualities or is something I personally know the recipient will use frequently. I even enjoy diy gifts, creating my own work or custom gifts that are very unique. I also like thrift shopping and other open places to look for gifts. Most of the people close to me appreciate this and understand this is something I give an effort to make. Sometimes gifts can be standard, such as a gift card, and even though I enjoy giving others unique and thoughtful gifts, if I know they will truly utilize and enjoy the card/ or whatever I give them that is most important to me. Not being deliberately unique or out of the box, if they enjoy common items or gifts.
25	buying unique products. I like buying things others dont want or like.
26	The type of product/ experience that makes me feel that I'm in control is buying a high quality product at a low price. Getting a product, that is for either I, myself, or as a gift to someone, that I know is a bargain always makes me feel special and powerful. It's sort of like hunting for something and then finding it and saving money too! I feel as if I have discovered a treasure!
27	Get a new car made me feel powerful, having a brand new sporty car I felt that I could speed and be more of a rude driver.

28	Buying a product that's unique and special for a person, something I know they'll love, that's just for them.
29	getting a really good bargain
30	The product I have in mind is a gift basket. They are professional and personal at the same time. To make it better, I could even add a personalized gift card to it.

NOTE___. Typos are not corrected, since the responses are exactly copied from respondents without any modifications.

APPENDIX B

B1. Less identity-relevant products

Not Unique	Unique
	
	
	

B2. Identity-relevant products

Not Unique	Unique
	
	
	

요약(국문초록)

Compensatory Consumption of Unique Products: Power Drives Desire for Perceived Autonomy

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이 연구에서는 power의 상태에 따른 독특한(unique) 상품에 대한 소비자들의 소비성향을 identity relevance가 높은 그리고 낮은 상품 군에 한하여 살펴보았다. Pilot study와 experiment 1A, 1B를 통하여 identity relevance가 높은 상품들의 경우, 독특한 상품에 대한 low power 사람들의 돈을 지불하고자 하는 의사가 높아짐을 확인할 수 있었으나, identity relevance가 낮은 상품들의 경우 낮아짐을 확인할 수 있었다. 또한, identity와 관련된 독특한 상품에 대한 지불의사가 높아지는 효과를 perceived autonomy가 매개하며 이는 identity threat에 따라 조절되는 조절된 매개효과(moderated mediation effect)를 확인할 수 있었다. 결론적으로, 소비자들의 identity와 관련된 상품 군의 독특한 상품에 대한 높은 욕망은 compensatory motive를 근간으로 하고 있으며, 이를 실험들을

통하여 확인하였다.

주요어: Power, Identity threat, Autonomy, Uniqueness

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