



THE CONSTRUCTION AND VALIDATION OF A CONSUMER ORIENTATION QUESTIONNAIRE (SCOI) DESIGNED TO MEASURE FROMM'S (1955) 'MARKETING CHARACTER' IN AUSTRALIA

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An instrument (SCOI) was designed to measure Fromm's (1955) marketing character, which is based on the notion that the self may be experienced as a commodity whose value and meaning are externally determined. In study 1 ($N=80$ & 302), the hypothesis that the SCOI would be positively correlated with Conformity, Authoritarianism and Anger Expression was supported, providing support for Fromm's (1955) theory that these latter three traits would be evident in those individuals defined by the marketing character. The hypotheses that the SCOI and Materialism (Richins & Dawson, 1992), would be positively correlated with both Commercial Television Viewing and Anxiety were also supported. In study 2 ($N=87$), the hypotheses that the SCOI and Materialism would be positively correlated with Depression and negatively correlated with Voluntary Simplicity were supported. The hypothesis that the SCOI would be negatively correlated with Life Satisfaction was not supported, although Materialism was significantly and negatively correlated with Life Satisfaction. In study 3 ($N=80$), the hypotheses that the SCOI and Materialism would be negatively correlated with Empathy and Neuroticism were not supported, the latter result suggesting that neuroticism may not be an adequate indicator of psychological health per se. In study 4 ($N=101$), the hypotheses that the SCOI and Materialism would be negatively correlated with Biophilia and Environmentalism were also supported. Further, the SCOI was able to discriminate both between Ss from Newcastle, NSW (one of two preferred test markets in Australia) and Ss from a permaculture community in south-east Queensland, Australia, and between Ss enrolled in management and Ss enrolled in arts/science at the University of Newcastle, NSW, Australia. Hence, the SCOI generally performed as expected in tests of convergent, divergent and discriminant validity.

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Fromm (1955, 1976 & 1981) was particularly critical of western society and its basis on what he termed the 'marketing character', in which he asserted that the self is experienced as a commodity whose value and meaning are externally determined. However, Fromm failed to operationalise his concept of the marketing character, and no known contemporary researchers have published one, hence it has not been possible for researchers to test core assumptions underlying Fromm's (1981) theories, which include the assertion that the marketing character should be associated with neuroticism. With this in mind, a new psychometric instrument (the SCOI) was constructed with the aim of measuring and assessing the marketing character within an Australian sampling frame.

Fromm (1947) believed that, humans were distinct from other animals in that their facility to reason has torn them away from their prehistoric union with nature. The fact that reason enables humans to be self-aware of their isolation from nature leads to what Fromm calls the 'human dilemma'. This dilemma has been named "the burden of freedom" (Feist, 1994, p. 269) which is a feeling of being alone in the world and arises from having the freedom to think and make choices for oneself (Fromm, 1947), while asking the fundamental existential questions such as 'who am I?', 'why am I here?', and, 'is this all that there is?'. This burden is thought to produce basic anxiety (Ewen, 1988).

Fromm (1955) proposed that although the rise of capitalism has given people more economic and political freedom, only a few people have achieved a unique and individual sense of self. Because freedom engenders a sense of isolation and loneliness in those people afraid to seek answers to these existential questions, they may try to flee from freedom through several escape mechanisms, of which Fromm (1955) lists conformity as the most common in western society. Arguably, though, although conformity may indeed be prevalent in western society, it would be necessary to some degree at least in any ordered, structured society (Callan, Gallois, Noller & Kashima, 1991). That is, no culture could survive - as have traditional societies for centuries - without some consensus of thought and behavior which could be classified as conformist.

Fromm (1955) asserts that people conform to try to escape from a sense of loneliness (i.e. the burden of freedom) by giving up their individuality and becoming whatever others desire them to be. They do not know what they want, feel, or think, and, in consumer-driven western society, might look to advertising to provide the answers. This is the basis of the marketing society, in which Fromm proposes the self is experienced as a commodity whose value and meaning are externally determined: "I am as you desire me to be" (Fromm, 1947, p. 73). Indeed, Callan et al. (1991) warn that, while some degree of conformity within a society can make life simpler because people can rely on others to behave in a certain way (eg. traffic rules), "unthinking conformity can result in missed opportunities for the expression of our unique sense of individuality" (p. 99).

The marketing society is based upon the dictum that the consumer cannot be satisfied; indeed, it will do its utmost to ensure that he is satisfied for the shortest time possible. If consumers were more easily satisfied, then the marketing-based society would grind to a halt as continued economic growth is imperative (Kidron & Segal, 1987). Thus, the future of the marketing society rests upon its ability to engender and promote the belief that the source of all good is to be found outside of individuals (Fromm, 1955). To achieve this aim, an illusion of individuality is promoted whereby people may be differentiated by what they possess, instead of by what they are. This has led to a massive increase in the significance of the domestic market, resulting in mass production and its accompanying goal of mass consumption (Fromm, 1955). We are urged to buy and buy, even if we cannot afford it now, hence the increased reliance upon credit (Kidron & Segal, 1987). The process and mechanism of exchange are seen as ends in themselves and "the concept of happiness is tied to consumption" (Fromm, 1970). Thus, the marketing society depends upon its constituents' chasing a circular goal of consumption. Alternatively, though, it could be argued that the marketing society does not promote self-sufficiency and autonomy as opposed to a diminution in individuality.

As suggested above, for any society to perpetuate, it must have the wholehearted cooperation of the majority of its constituency. To do so, Fromm (1955, p. 79) asserts that it is necessary to 'mould' individuals into people who will want "to act as they have to act", rather than by merely responding to coercion. Hence, 'escape' from freedom - i.e., conformity - must be made as attractive and palatable as possible. Therefore, it has been argued that western society needs, and creates, people with an amplified value of work, a false need for things and an endless desire to consume (i.e., 'will want to buy only what others want them to buy'), no deep feelings or convictions, standardised tastes, and above all, they must be suggestible and uncritical (Schumaker, 1994). Such people are said to possess the 'marketing character' (Fromm, 1955). According to Fromm (1970, cited in Funk, 1993, p. 68), the marketing character represents "homo consumens ... a total consumer ... for whom *everything* becomes an object of consumption" (italics mine). However, Skinner (1971) might argue that individualism, freedom, and independent judgments are also things that we learn to need and consume.

Fromm (1955) listed two other mechanisms through which individuals could reduce the burden of freedom and the basic anxiety associated with living in a marketing-based society: authoritarianism - to give up one's independence and unite with a powerful partner; and destructiveness - expressing hostility towards other people or things. However, one must again be wary of over-inclusive thinking. While there may exist evidence to support Fromm's notion that authoritarianism and, particularly, destructiveness are associated with market-driven societies, one would, of course, be mistaken to assume a priori that these traits cannot be found in both contemporary and historical non-marketing societies.

CONSTRUCTION OF CONSUMER ORIENTATION QUESTIONNAIRE

In view of Fromm's failure to operationalise his 'marketing character', a new psychometric instrument (SCOI - Saunders Consumer Orientation Instrument) was designed to address this issue. An important consideration in the construction of any new instrument involves ensuring that items are not included which, although relevant to the construct in question, are potentially prone to eliciting social desirability effects. Therefore, although Fromm (1955, 1976) stressed the importance of caring for our environment and the deleterious effect of the marketing machine on it, it is arguably important not to assess environmental issues directly, especially given the attention that these issues have received in local and international media over the past couple of years. However, one can attempt to globally assess conformity to marketing ideals, the impermanency of personal identity, media and consumer preferences.

While specific questions involving individuals' actual income and product ownership may appear to be of some relevance to Fromm's marketing character, they are arguably more likely to elicit social desirability effects and also raise ethical concerns: Further, materialistic values appear to be unaffected by the usual determinants of social and economic status. For example, Richins and Dawson (1992) reported no significant correlations between materialism and income, marital status, household size, or education.

METHOD

PARTICIPANTS

The participants were 136 second year psychology students (37 males: range: 18-56yrs, mean age: 23.4yrs; 99 females: range: 18-48yrs, mean age: 21.7yrs) from the University of Newcastle, who participated in the study voluntarily as part of a coursework-related exercise.

PROCEDURE

An item pool of 62 statements pertinent to Fromm's (1955) notions of what constituted the marketing orientation was presented to a colleague well acquainted with Fromm's theories (lecturer and author, Dr. John Schumaker). Fundamental criteria included the notion of marketing-orientated persons as being eager to consume and waste, dispose and replace; having standardised tastes; being uncritical; holding the value-based notion that "having makes me more"; being future-orientated; having a tendency to publicise and promote oneself; and to experience oneself as a commodity whose value is determined by possessions and the opinions of others, and for whom everything becomes an object of consumption (Schumaker, 1994; Funk, 1993 & Fromm 1955). Further, considerations included the proposition that the purchase and subsequent ownership of material goods may "confer

status and recognition upon the owner" (Kanner & Gomes, 1995). Hence, a consumer orientation scale must include items which measure individuals' affinity with advertising and therefore also the most powerful medium for promoting marketing values: television. Of course, individual alignment with the values and norms of any given society also requires a degree of conformity. The researchers then selected 44 statements from the original pool as those which best accorded with the theory of Fromm's (1955) marketing personality. Further, suggestions were made to include other pertinent items, such that the pilot instrument consisted of 65 items.

These statements comprised a combination of both values and behaviors thought to underlie the concept of Fromm's (1955) marketing orientation. While some researchers believe that it may be better to focus on behaviors rather than on values (eg, Keisler, Collins & Miller, 1969), there is empirical evidence to support the position that the judicious operationalisation of values can establish significant associations between values and behaviors (Shama & Wisenblit, 1984). Further, some aspects of the definition of Fromm's (1955) marketing character would be rather difficult to assess by questioning respondents about their behaviors, especially considering the likely impact of social desirability.

A five point Likert type scale was constructed for each of the 65 statements on a "Not at all like me" to a "Very much like me" continuum. This preliminary instrument was then administered to the 136 undergraduate students, together with the shortened version of the Marlowe-Crowne Scale of Social Desirability (Crowne & Marlowe, 1965), designed by Strahan and Gerbasi (1972).

RESULTS

Final selection of 35 items (see Table 1) was made by using the criterion of item-total correlation (as per Nunnally, 1978, pp282-286) ($p < .01$), and noncorrelation of the item to the shortened version of the Marlowe-Crowne measure ($p < .05$). That is, the selection process removed items significantly correlated with social desirability and retained those items which correlated significantly with the total score. Of the final 35 items, only one item had a correlation with the total score of less than the benchmark .30 recommended by Williams and Page (1989) (see Table 2).

TABLE 1

FINAL 35 ITEMS IN SCOI (SAUNDERS CONSUMER ORIENTATION INSTRUMENT)

1. The best thing about living in a city is the choice of shops and availability of services
2. I do not have a lot of personal possessions
3. It doesn't matter what something costs as long as it looks good
4. My friends are not very fashionable
5. It is important to move in the right circles
6. Other people's opinions are very important to me
7. A well paid career is important
8. I don't shop for second-hand clothes
9. You don't need money to be happy
10. I prefer not to watch the commercial television stations
11. In our home, we put more into recycling than in the garbage bin
12. I enjoy shopping
13. It's important for me to have the latest fashions
14. Advertising helps people decide how best to spend their money
15. A boring, but well paid job, is more important than an interesting, low paid job.
16. I prefer disposable items (eg, razors, paper towels, nappies)
17. I enjoy staying at home more than shopping
18. All things being equal, having money can improve your happiness
19. I try to keep up with the latest fashions
20. When I shop, value is more important than brand name
21. I prefer old things to new things
22. I would prefer a simpler lifestyle
23. Advertising is informative
24. I would like to have more money so that I can buy the things I want
25. I watch more documentaries than dramas
26. Gift wrapping presents is wasteful
27. Advertisements on TV are necessary
28. I go to garage sales
29. I usually throw vegetable scraps in the garbage
30. I read the advertising material left in my letter box
31. Advertising is useful
32. It is important to be popular
33. If money was not a problem, I would prefer an expensive car
34. The best thing about having a job is the money it provides
35. If I'm feeling sad, I go shopping

Bolded items are reversed scored.

Note also that the items chosen do not require any detailed knowledge, physical aptitude, or other potential confounds which may favor one population (such as communities characterised by self-sufficiency) over another and thus should increase the generalisability of the final instrument.

The Cronbach coefficient alpha was used to assess internal consistency of the final 35 item instrument, and an alpha of .85 was obtained. The mean item/total correlation is $r = .43$. Note that, in the final instrument, there were no significant negative correlations between any items, and the highest positive correlation ($r = .80$) was between items 18 and 32. While this result is high, it is still low enough (i.e., below $r = .90$) to suggest that the respective items are not interchangeable.

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

The distributions of 32 of the 35 items and Total scores were normal (Ryan-Joiner test for normality), while items 15 ($p = .048$), 25 ($p = .042$) and 35 ($p = .032$)

were almost normal. The mean score was 99.75, the SD 16.79, with a maximum score of 141 out of a possible 175, and a minimum of 60. Total scores on the SCOI decrease slightly with increasing age ($r = -.19$; $p < .05$), but are not significantly correlated with gender ($r = -.05$). These results are supported by Richins and Dawson (1992) who found that, while scores on their materialism instrument decreased with increasing age ($r = -.19$), they were not influenced by gender.

Item Characteristics

Table 2 summarises item correlations with the total score, together with the mean and standard deviation of each of the 35 items in the final instrument. The items in this table are based on a rescoring of the final 35 items from the preliminary 65 item instrument which was administered to the sample. Note that of the 35 final items, only three did not receive a full range of responses.

TABLE 2
ITEM CHARACTERISTICS OF FINAL 35 ITEM INSTRUMENT

Item	Item-total Correlation	M	SD
1	.42	3.60	1.05
2	.34	3.66	1.02
3	.38	2.40	1.18
4	.33	3.52	1.14
5	.39	2.16	1.01
6	.28	2.90	.97
7	.55	3.38	1.04
8	.63	2.83	1.53
9	.35	2.63	1.06
10	.36	3.37	1.30
11	.39	3.57	1.20
12	.62	3.37	1.20
13	.65	2.29	1.02
14	.39	1.85	.94
15	.39	1.61	.77
16	.36	2.06	1.03
17	.37	2.85	1.15
18	.42	3.35	1.01
19	.68	2.37	1.05*
20	.32	2.18	1.09
21	.47	3.08	1.04
22	.44	2.84	1.36
23	.45	2.36	.88
24	.52	3.89	1.04
25	.37	3.48	1.24
26	.45	3.46	1.32
27	.31	2.11	.90*
28	.34	3.54	1.38
29	.43	3.02	1.54
30	.41	3.15	1.35
31	.36	2.54	.80
32	.44	2.37	.91*
33	.55	3.31	1.37
34	.36	2.84	1.06
35	.49	1.90	1.10

* item responses ranged between 1 and 4 only

Reliability: A three week test-retest using 119 of the original 136 participants was used to assess reliability, with a result of $r = .935$. The mean (total) score in the pilot test was 100.26, and 100.97 in the re-test (based on the same 119 participants), which did not represent a significant difference. Further, the standard deviations, quartiles, and range of scores were nearly identical in both tests (see Table 3):

TABLE 3
COMPARISON OF PILOT SURVEY AND THREE-WEEK RE-TEST RESULTS

Variable	N	Mean	Median	SD	Min	Max	Q1	Q3
Total (Pilot test)	119	100.26	103.00	17.07	60.0	141.0	88.0	114.0
Total 2 (Re-test)	119	100.97	103.00	17.64	58.0	138.0	88.0	114.0

In summation, the final instrument has 35 items of which 11 are con-trait items. The SCOI demonstrated acceptable internal consistency and test-retest reliability.

VALIDATION OF THE SAUNDERS CONSUMER ORIENTATION INDEX (SCOI)

The new SCOI was tested for divergent, convergent, and discriminant validity in a series of five studies. In the first study, the SCOI was administered to the sample along with Altemeyer's (1981, 1988) Right-Wing Authoritarianism Scale (RWA-Scale), Comrey's Conformity v. Rebelliousness sub-scale (from the Comrey Personality Scales) and Spielberger, Johnson et al.'s (1985) Anger Expression Scale. These three scales were chosen as operationalisations of Fromm's escape mechanisms - i.e., conformity, authoritarianism, and destructiveness - and it was hypothesised that each of these would be significantly and positively correlated with scores on the SCOI.

Participants also completed the Richins and Dawson (1992) Materialism scale. Richins and Dawson (1992) propose that once the moral and societal consequences of materialism are removed, three general premises remain. The first - *Acquisition centrality* - implies that the acquisition and possession of material goods and services forms the central goal in an individual's lifestyle. The second - *Acquisition as the pursuit of happiness* - suggests that the reason that the possession and acquisition of goods and services are central to the person is that they are believed to provide a substantial contribution to life satisfaction. If persons within a market-driven society are differentiated by what they possess, rather than by who they are, then it is most likely that they consider both their own and others' value (or worth) as something that is (externally) determined by both the number and quality of possessions accumulated. This is what is meant by the third theme, *possession-defined success*.

Note that while any attempt to construct a measure of Fromm's (1955) marketing character orientation would necessarily include the notion of materialism, it would also necessarily include themes considered irrelevant to Richins and Dawson (1992) when they designed their materialism instrument, such as conformity and authoritarianism. Hence, one would expect mid-range correlations (i.e., $r = .4$ to $.7$) between the SCOI and materialism instruments.

Given that television is, with little doubt, the most salient source of marketing values in contemporary western society, one would expect that any instrument designed to measure individuals' affinity with that lifestyle should differentiate between those who watch relatively little television and those who watch more. Subjects in Sample 2 were also asked to indicate how much time they spent, on average, viewing commercial television each day. It was hypothesised that television viewing would be significantly and positively correlated with both the SCOI and materialism.

Finally, participants in Sample 2 also completed the Beck Anxiety Index (Beck, Epstein, Brown & Steer, 1988). This instrument was chosen as a possible contemporary psychometric equivalent of Fromm's notion of basic anxiety, and it is hypothesised that if behaviors and values associated with the marketing character and materialism do represent an attempt to escape Fromm's 'burden of freedom', then anxiety will be significantly and positively correlated with both the SCOI and Materialism.

In the second study, the SCOI was administered to the sample along with the Richins and Dawson (1992) Materialism Scale, the Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS) (Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin, 1985), and a scale based on values of voluntary simplicity as listed by Shama & Wisenblit (1984) and operationalised for the present study by the author. In view of Fromm's (1955, 1976) social criticisms and Richins and Dawson's (1992) findings that materialism was negatively correlated with all aspects of life satisfaction measured, in the second study it was hypothesised that Satisfaction with Life would be negatively correlated with both SCOI and Materialism. It was further hypothesised that total scores on the SCOI would be negatively and significantly correlated with values consistent with Voluntary Simplicity. Note that similar relationships were expected between Voluntary Simplicity and Materialism.

In this study, participants also completed the Beck Depression Inventory (BDI). In view of Seligman's (1990) assertion that the ten-fold increase in the incidence of depression experienced in North America since WW2 may be largely due to the increase in post-war consumerism and the growth of individualism, it was hypothesised that Depression would be significantly and positively correlated with both the SCOI and Materialism.

In the third study, the SCOI and Richins and Dawson (1992) Materialism Scale were compared with Comrey's Emotional Stability v. Neuroticism and Empathy v.

egocentrism sub-scales. If individuals who score highly on empathy can be described as "helpful, generous, sympathetic people who are interested in devoting their lives to the service of others" (Comrey, 1987) as opposed to being self-centered, then one could hypothesize that such scores would be negatively correlated with both the marketing character (i.e., SCOI) and Materialism (see also Richins & Dawson, 1992 and Belk, 1983).

Fromm (1955, 1981) asserted that individuals with the marketing character would tend to be neurotic, as their existential human needs were not being satisfied under those conditions. However, Fromm's definition of neurosis was psychoanalytic and rather vague (Knapp, 1989), and with this in mind a contemporary psychometric approach was adopted in the present study. According to Spielberger (1982), neuroticism includes a wide range of psychological symptoms including inadequate emotional adjustment, feelings of inferiority and excessive worry. The definition of self in Fromm's (1955) marketing character arguably includes individuals deriving a sense of identity as a result of making market-based comparisons with other individuals. If one were to argue that in a market driven society there will inevitably be individuals who are more marketable than oneself (i.e., in terms of possessions etc), then comparisons made under this pretext may result in feelings of inferiority in the person making the comparison, perhaps providing another basis for neurosis. Therefore, it was hypothesized that those persons who score high on the SCOI and Materialism would score higher on Neuroticism.

In the fourth study, the SCOI and Richins and Dawson (1992) Materialism Scale were administered to the sample along with Ray's Environmentalism Scale (Ray, 1975), and the Attitude to Life (Biophilia) Scale (Maccoby, 1972; Ray, 1984), both of which were designed for use in Australia. Given that Fromm (1955) asserted that the marketing character represented a move away from a love and acceptance of life - i.e., biophilia - then it appears logical to hypothesize that the scores on the SCOI should also be negatively correlated with both of the aforementioned instruments. It was also hypothesized that a similar relationship would be found between Materialism and Biophilia and Environmentalism, as was found by Ray and Lovejoy (1984).

In the fifth study, the SCOI was administered to both respondents from the University of Newcastle, NSW, and residents from a privately-owned permaculture community, known as the Crystal Waters Permaculture Village (CWPV). CWPV is the largest 'self-sufficient' type group in this country, with approximately 150 adult members. All residents at Crystal Waters must abide by 18 by-laws which are based on three ethical principles: care of the earth; care of people (provision for people to access those resources necessary for their existence); and setting limits to population and consumption. These principles represent the underlying philosophy of permaculture, which involves "the harmonious integration of land-

scape and people providing their food, energy, shelter, and other material and non-material needs in a sustainable way" (Crystal Waters Permaculture Village 1997 Guide). In summation, the stated aims of Crystal Waters Permaculture Village appear consistent with (and arguably inseparable from) the notion of voluntary simplicity (e.g., Shama & Wisenblit, 1984), and this was substantiated by both observation and interviews at CWPV by the primary experimenter in January 1998. The CWPV was given a United Nations World Habitat Award (1995) for 'best eco-village' in the world.

As 'Crystal Waters' represents the largest relevant sample pool in this country, it is logical (both theoretically and statistically) to use it as the experimental group when making comparisons with 'mainstream' Australians for the purpose of assessing the discriminant validity of the SCOI. It was hypothesized that residents from CWPV would score significantly lower on the SCOI than subjects from Newcastle, NSW (which is one of the two preferred test-markets for consumer goods in Australia).

METHOD

PARTICIPANTS

Study 1. All participants in Studies 1, 2, 3 and 4 were from the University of Newcastle, NSW.

Sample 1: 84 students (31 males and 53 females; mean age 25.9 yrs, range: 18-60yrs).

Sample 2: 302 students (76 males and 226 females) (67 from Management and 235 from Arts/Science with a mean age of 23 yrs, and a range of 17-56 yrs).

Study 2: 87 students (33 males and 54 females; mean age 27.7 yrs, range: 17-60yrs).

Study 3: 80 students (28 males and 52 females; mean age 26.8 yrs, range 18-60yrs).

Study 4: 101 undergraduate psychology students (22 males and 79 females; mean age 25.9 yrs, range 18-55 yrs).

Study 5: 167 undergraduate psychology students (31 males and 136 females; mean age 25.3 yrs, range 17-53 yrs) from the University of Newcastle, N.S.W., and 55 residents (24 males and 31 females; mean age 43 yrs, range 22-69 yrs) from the Crystal Waters Permaculture Community (CWPC: located near Maleny, Queensland).

INSTRUMENTS

SCOI: as described above.

Richins and Dawson (1992) Materialism Scale: This comprises 18 items, using a five-point Likert scale response format. Cronbach's coefficient alpha has been

found to range between .80 and .88 for the entire scale. Test-retest reliability is quoted as $r = .87$.

The Right-Wing Authoritarian Scale (Altemeyer, 1981): consists of 24 items, with both 'pro-trait' items and 'con-trait' items. Higher scores indicate higher levels of Authoritarianism. In comparison with six other, earlier, measures of the authoritarian construct, the Right-Wing Authoritarian Scale (RWA-Scale) produced the highest alpha reliability (.88) and more significant relationships in a number of tests of construct validity (Altemeyer, 1981).

Comrey's (1987) Social Conformity V Rebelliousness Subscale: individuals with high scores "accept society as it is, resent non-conformity in others, seek the approval of society, and respect the law". Split-half reliability of the social conformity v. rebelliousness subscale is reported to be a very high .94 (.88 reported for a sample of 669 Australian subjects). Further, the validity of the subscale has been affirmed in a number of studies (see Comrey, (1987) for a full listing). The Comrey inventory has 20 items and uses dual seven point rating scales, ranging from "always" to "never" (scale X), and "definitely not" to "definitely" (scale Y).

Anger Expression (AX) Scale (Spielberger, Johnson et al., 1985): this scale was constructed to assess how people generally feel or react when they feel angry. The AX Scale comprises 24 items, which may be subdivided into three subscales: Anger-Out (AX/Out) - the tendency to express anger physically and /or verbally toward other people or objects in the environment; Anger-In (AX/In) - the tendency to experience but suppress, angry feelings; and Anger-Control (AX/Con) - the tendency to control the experience and expression of anger. Total anger expression scores are arrived at by way of manipulating the above subscale scores (Spielberger, Johnson et al., 1985). Each item is measured on a four point Likert scale ranging from "almost never" to "almost always". The internal consistency (ie, Cronbach coefficient alphas) of the AX/In and AX/Out subscales have been reported to range between .73 to .84 (Spielberger, Ritterband, et al., 1995).

Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS) (Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin, 1985): is designed to measure global life satisfaction across all age groups, and does not tap related constructs such as positive affect or loneliness (Diener et al., 1985). This scale is reported to have a two month test-retest correlation coefficient of .82, and a coefficient alpha of .87 (Diener et al., 1985). The SWLS consists of five statements, with which participants may agree or disagree by indicating their response on a seven point Likert scale. Further, scores on the SWLS were found to correlate moderately to highly with other measures of subjective well-being (Diener, et al., 1985).

Beck Depression Inventory (BDI): consists of 21 items and was designed to assess attitudes and symptoms that are specific to depression and consistent with those described in psychiatric literature (Beck, Ward, Mendelson, Mock & Erbaugh (1961). Each item consists of four self-evaluative statements. Subjects are required

to pick out the statement from each item which best describes the way that they have been feeling during the past week. Past studies have reported a coefficient alpha as high as .91 (Zauszniewski, 1995), while the construct validity has been assured through comparisons with other rating scale of depression (Beck, Steer & Garbin, 1988).

Beck Anxiety Index (Beck et al., 1988): measures the severity of subjective anxiety and consists of 21 descriptive statements of anxiety symptoms presented in a four point scale format ranging from "Not at all" to "Severely, I could barely stand it". Internal reliabilities (Cronbach coefficient alpha) of between .92 to .94 have been reported (Beck & Steer, 1990), and one-week test-retest reliability has been reported at .75 (Beck, Rush, Shaw & Emery, 1979).

Voluntary simplicity: entails moral and ecological responsibility, low consumption of goods, self-sufficiency and self-actualisation (Shama & Wisenblit, 1984). This construct was assessed in the present studies by using a questionnaire based on a revised version of those values listed by Shama and Wisenblit (1984) as typical of voluntary simplifiers. The items are "I believe in material simplicity, i.e. buying and consuming only what I need"; "I believe in "small is beautiful", e.g. safety issues aside, I prefer smaller cars over large cars"; "I believe that a product's function is usually more important than its style"; "I am interested in personal growth more than economic success"; "I am determined to have more control over my life as a consumer, e.g. refrain from buying on credit"; and "I consider myself ecologically responsible". Participants may agree or disagree with these items by indicating their response on a seven point Likert scale.

Comrey's (1987) Emotional Stability v. Neuroticism subscale: consists of 20 items and uses dual seven point rating scales, ranging from "always" to "never" (scale X), and "definitely not" to "definitely" (scale Y). The validity of the subscale has been affirmed in a number of studies (see Comrey, (1987) for a full listing).

Comrey's (1987) Empathy v. Egocentrism sub-scale: this inventory has 20 items and uses dual seven point rating scales, ranging from "always" to "never" (scale X), and "definitely not" to "definitely" (scale Y). Individuals with high scores "describe themselves as helpful, generous, sympathetic people who are interested in devoting their lives to the service of others". Split-half reliability of the empathy vs. egocentrism subscale is reported to be a very high .96 (.94 reported for a sample of 669 Australian subjects). Further, the validity of the subscale has been affirmed in a number of studies (see Comrey, 1987).

Attitude to Life (Biophilia) Scale (Maccoby, 1972; Ray, 1984): was originally designed by Maccoby (1972) to measure Fromm's (1955) concept of Biophilia (i.e., love of life), and later modified for contemporary use in Australia by Ray (1984). This scale consists of 22 items; 19 requiring a response of 'Yes', 'No', or '?', and three requiring a choice from four available alternatives. The internal reliability has been reported at alpha = .77 (Ray, 1984).

Ray's Environmentalism Scale (Ray, 1975). This index is designed to measure attitudes towards environmentalism in Australia, and comprises 20 items, using a five-point Likert scale response format. Ten of the items are reverse scored (randomly). Cronbach's coefficient alpha has been reported at .85 for the entire scale (test-retest reliability was not reported).

PROCEDURE

All participants from Newcastle University completed their questionnaire booklets voluntarily in their own time, and those from the psychology department did so to gain course credit. Approximately 80 adult residents from CWPV were initially approached by telephone by a key informant, who then hand-delivered the questionnaire booklets, and, after ten days, rang again to ascertain whether or not the questionnaires had been completed, and, when they had been, collected each questionnaire in person (note, though, that respondents were provided with envelopes in which to seal their questionnaires prior to returning them). The return rate for completed questionnaires from the CWPC was almost 74%.

RESULTS

Results were analysed using Minitab V11, and correlations between each of the scales from the first four studies can be seen in Table 4.

TABLE 4
CRONBACH ALPHAS AND CORRELATIONS OF SCOI AND MATERIALISM WITH OTHER SCALES

Study No. / n	variable	SCOI	Materialism	gender#	Cronbach alpha
Study 1 Sample 1 (n=84)	Conformity	.55***	.30**	.07	.75
	Authoritarianism	.52***	.27*	-.12	.84
	Materialism	.75***	1.00	.00	.82
	SCOI	1.00	.75***	-.02	.82
Sample 2 (n=302)	Anger Expression	.23***	.33***	.00	.73/.76##
	Anxiety	.16***	.19***	.15	.88
	Commercial TV viewing	.20***	.25***		
Study 2 (n=87)	Life satisfaction	-.10	-.26*	.16	.70
	Vol. Simplicity	-.56***	-.56***	.16	.48
	Depression	.22*	.22*	.08	.83
	Materialism	.67***	1.00	-.07	.85
	SCOI	1.00	.67***	.01	.83
Study 3 (n=80)	Emotional stability	.07	-.17	-.09	.89
	Empathy	-.02	-.09	.23	.83
	Materialism	.64***	1.00	.22	.79
	SCOI	1.00	.64	.11	.81

Table 4 continued

Study No. / n	variable	SCOI	Materialism	gender#	Cronbach alpha
Study 4 (n=101)	Biophilia	-.31**	-.38***	.48	.68
	Environmentalism	-.51***	-.37***	.11	.81
	Materialism	.67***	1.00	-.15	.88
	SCOI	1.00	.67***	.05	.86

Notes: * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

point-biserial correlations, where male = '1', female = '2';

alphas for AX-In and AX-Out respectively

In Table 4 it can be seen that the SCOI is significantly and positively correlated with materialism, Right Wing Authoritarianism, Conformity and Anger expression (AX/EX). The difference in correlations between SCOI, Materialism, RWA, Conformity and AX/EX were analysed using Hotelling's (1931) approach to testing differences between non-independent correlations. The correlation between SCOI and Conformity ($r = .55$) was significantly higher than that between Materialism and Conformity ($r = .31$; $t = 3.69$; $p < .001$). The correlation between SCOI and RWA ($r = .51$) was significantly higher than that between Materialism and RWA ($r = .27$; $t = 3.59$; $p < .001$). The correlation between AX/EX ($r = .33$) and Materialism was significantly greater than that between AX/EX and the SCOI ($r = .23$; $t_{299} = 2.326$; $p < .01$).

In study 2, both Materialism and the SCOI are significantly and negatively correlated with Voluntary Simplicity, and both are significantly and positively correlated with Depression. The SCOI was not significantly correlated with Life Satisfaction, while Materialism was significantly and negatively correlated with the latter. In study 3, neither the SCOI nor the Materialism index was significantly correlated with either Empathy or Emotional Stability.

In study 4, the correlation between the SCOI and Biophilia ($r = -.31$) was not significantly lower than that between materialism and Biophilia ($r = -.38$), while the correlation between the SCOI and Environmentalism ($r = -.51$) was significantly higher than that between materialism and Environmentalism ($r = -.38$; $t(98) = 3.52$; $p < .001$). Hotelling's (1931) solution for dependant correlations). Note that while Biophilia and Environmentalism were significantly and positively correlated ($r = .31$; $p < .01$), only the Biophilia index (Ray, 1984) was significantly correlated with Social Desirability ($r = .22$; $p < .05$).

In study 1, sample 2, management students scored higher than did arts/science students on the SCOI (mean scores 106.6 vs. 102.5; $t = 1.98$ $p < .05$), but there was no significant difference in Materialism scores (mean scores 55.2 vs. 52.7). In study 5 (in which respondents completed only the SCOI), Newcastle respondents scored significantly higher on the SCOI than did Ss from CWPC (means scores 101.8 vs. 71.9; $t = 13.77$; $p < .0001$), and, indeed, the highest score from the latter sample (96) was less than the Newcastle mean (101.8). Participants from Newcas-

tle scored significantly higher on 32 out of the 35 SCOI items than did respondents from the Crystal Waters Permaculture Village (CWPV). On the other three items (5, 18, & 26), Newcastle Ss scored higher - but not significantly - than did CWPV Ss. There were no significant differences between the two populations in terms of Social Desirability. The correlation between age and scores on the SCOI amongst students from Newcastle was $r = -.22$ ($p < .01$), and $r = .10$ amongst residents from CWPV and there was no significant difference between these independent correlations. The standard deviations in age for both samples were nearly identical (9.2 vs. 9.8). To further assess the effect of age on SCOI total scores in each sample, an ANCOVA was performed using age as a covariate. The mean scores on the SCOI - adjusted for age - were 100.72 for Ss from Newcastle, and 75.31 for Ss from CWPV, and the difference in these means remained significant: $F(1,219) = 40.74$, $p < .001$.

The correlation between the SCOI and Materialism ranged from $r = .64$ to $.75$ across studies 1-4, while the Cronbach alphas for the SCOI ranged between $.81$ and $.86$. The alphas of the other scales were acceptable, with the exception of Voluntary Simplicity ($.48$).

In Table 4 above, the only scales which correlated significantly with gender were Anxiety and Biophilia. However, the failure of Empathy and Materialism to be significantly correlated with gender in Study 3 was due to sample size rather than to the magnitude of the respective correlations.

DISCUSSION

The hypothesis that the SCOI would be significantly and positively correlated with Conformity, Right-Wing Authoritarianism and Anger Expression was supported, providing evidence of the construct validity of the scale. Given that the SCOI had significantly higher correlations with two out of the three 'escape mechanisms' (i.e., Conformity and RWA) than did Materialism, there is some evidence to suggest that it may be a more valid measure of Fromm's (1955) marketing character and associated escape mechanisms.

The hypothesis that time spent viewing commercial television would be significantly and positively correlated with both the SCOI and Materialism was also supported, providing evidence of the construct validity of the scales.

The hypothesis that Anxiety would be significantly and positively correlated with both the SCOI and Materialism was also supported, suggesting that consumerist values and behaviors might be associated with Anxiety. However, it has been strongly suggested that somewhat conservative criteria should be employed when deciding whether to reject or accept null hypotheses (e.g., Schwartz & Dalglish, 1982, Carver, 1978). Williams and Page (1989) suggest that a correlation must not

only reach statistical significance, but also have an absolute value of $.20$ or greater. Hence, it is suggested that the present results be treated with caution.

The hypothesis that Satisfaction With Life would be negatively correlated with the SCOI was not supported. However, Materialism was significantly and negatively correlated with Life Satisfaction. But, it must be remembered that the SCOI was designed to measure all attributes of the marketing character, and not simply Materialism. Hence, while the possession of goods may be equated with success, happiness, and seen as a goal in itself (Richins & Dawson, 1992), it is not associated with global Life Satisfaction. Perhaps an explanation for this lies in the broader realm of market dynamics: in a volatile and constantly fluctuating market-driven society, where individual worth may be valued according to the acquisition of possessions, someone else will always have more possessions, and the possessions which one does own are unlikely to hold value for long. This in turn might lead to frustration, which is a precursor to Anger Expression (Dollard, Doob, Miller, Mowrer & Sears, 1939).

The hypotheses that Voluntary Simplicity would be significantly and negatively correlated with the SCOI and Materialism were supported. Although the Voluntary Simplicity index constructed for this study produced a low coefficient alpha, the scale *did* perform as expected. Further, the present results suggest that although the SCOI does not assess environmental issues directly (i.e., to avoid Social Desirability, which the SCOI does), it still performed as hypothesised in relation to Voluntary Simplicity. One possible contributor to the low Cronbach alpha in the Voluntary Simplicity scale would be the small number of items in this instrument, as Cronbach's alpha is affected by the number of items in a given instrument. That is, the more items in an instrument, the higher the Cronbach alpha score is likely to be.

The hypotheses that Depression would be significantly and positively correlated with both the SCOI and Materialism were supported. Hence, it would appear that both the marketing orientation and, more specifically, the importance which consumers attach to possessions, are associated with perhaps the most important indicator of mental health: depression (eg, Spielberger et al, 1995; Secunda, Katz, Friedman & Schuyler, 1973; Beck, Resnik & Lettieri, 1974).

If an individual's sense of worth and prestige in a market-driven society should depend largely upon conspicuous possessions (eg, Richins & Dawson, 1992; Bloom, 1995), then the volatility of the market place in western society might induce feelings of helplessness and hopelessness (which underlie depression) in those persons as they continually strive to maintain status in the face of changing market trends. This explanation is consistent with attribution theory, where, in determining the cause of an event, a person usually makes a decision as to whether the particular outcome was due to either internal factors (such as personality characteristics), or to external factors (which are often classified as 'uncontrollable') (Tajfel

& Turner, 1979). Hence, attributions represent subjective attempts to explain the causes of events, and are often biased to preserve individuals' self-esteem (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). In this example, an individual might preserve self-esteem by attributing an inability to keep pace with market trends to an uncontrollable external cause. Such an attribution may also induce feelings of frustration.

The hypotheses that individuals who score high on the SCOI and Materialism would score lower on Empathy were not supported. This finding should also be considered from the perspective that persons who score high on the SCOI and Materialism questionnaires may not consciously or otherwise aim to ignore the needs of others while satisfying their own needs and wants.

A possible explanation for the above behavior can be found in a certain type of behavioral trap known as the 'ignorance trap'. A behavioral trap refers to "a situation in which individuals or groups embark on a promising course of action which later becomes undesirable and difficult to escape from (Plous, 1993). People caught in 'ignorance traps' either do not understand or do not anticipate the likely or possible consequences of their behaviors before undertaking them (Plous, 1993). When one considers ignorance traps combined with the effects of social comparison theory (Festinger, 1954), then (in light of the present results) it could be argued that Fromm's marketing character may be mostly unaware that the pursuit of self-interest may not be in the best interest of either friends and relatives, or the greater community, especially when those with whom one compares oneself with (i.e., similar others within the same community) are behaving in a similar fashion. Such considerations also delineate the difference between Fromm's social criticism approach, and a purely psychological one which aims to understand the underlying causes of behaviour instead of apportioning blame.

The hypotheses that individuals who score high on the SCOI and Materialism would score low on Emotional Stability were also not supported. Given that the validity of the Comrey (1987) Emotional Stability scale has been affirmed in a number of studies (some of which included Australian subjects), these results suggest either that the marketing character and Materialism are not associated with Neuroticism as Fromm (1981) proposed, or, perhaps, that Neuroticism is not an appropriate measure of emotional and psychological health and well-being. Therefore, although there was a significant positive correlation between Depression (i.e., one of several symptoms believed to be associated with Neuroticism) and the SCOI and Materialism in the previous study, it is possible that Neuroticism may not be an adequate indicator of psychological health per se.

The hypotheses that scores on the SCOI would be significantly and negatively correlated with scores on both the Biophilia and Environmentalism instruments were confirmed, providing further evidence of the divergent validity of the SCOI. While there was no significant difference in the correlations between the SCOI and Biophilia and Materialism and Biophilia, the correlation between the SCOI

and Environmentalism (i.e., $r = -.51$) was significantly greater than that between Materialism and Environmentalism ($r = -.38$). There was no significant difference in correlations between Voluntary Simplicity and the SCOI or Materialism (i.e., $r = -.61$ and $.60$ respectively).

The hypothesis that Biophilia scores would be significantly and positively correlated with Environmentalism scores was also supported, which provides evidence of the convergent validity of these scales and also Ray and Lovejoy's (1984) findings. However, one should consider that scores on the Biophilia scale were significantly correlated with Social Desirability.

Participants from CWPV scored lower than did their counterparts from Newcastle on all items, and significantly so on 32 of the 35 items. The exceptions were items 5 ("It is important to move in the right circles"), 18 ("All things being equal, having money can improve your happiness") and 26 ("Gift wrapping presents is wasteful"). It is possible that item 5 may be tapping into a practical, or even a politically-based behavioral construct as opposed to a materialistic or consumerist orientation. That is, it may be measuring a tendency to behave in a certain manner which transcends Fromm's (1955) definition of a marketing character. Similarly, the responses to item 18 by CWPV may simply reflect that, by and large, it is rather difficult to completely separate oneself from the machinations and affects of a market driven society (especially when such a community, although striving to be self-sufficient, is still subject to the same legal and day-to-day practicalities - such as having to pay rates and income tax - associated with living in a market-based country such as Australia). One possible exception might be found among indigenous Australians still living traditional lifestyles in remote areas of this country. It should also be noted that the average age of the student sample from Newcastle is not similar to that of the general Australian population, and hence the results should be treated with some caution.

While there was no aim at the start of the studies to differentiate between management students and 'arts/science' type students, the differences found are indeed interesting and also suggestive of the possible discriminate ability of the SCOI. In hindsight, the differences may not be unexpected if one considers that the management students are enrolled in a subject which aims to introduce them to the fundamentals of management and organisational behavior. Therefore, in light of the exposure that these students have to contemporary management and marketing values and principles it may not be surprising that they tended to score significantly higher on the SCOI. However, scores on Materialism failed to discriminate between the two groups, although this may be due to the greater range of possible scores offered by the SCOI.

The correlations between the SCOI and Richins and Dawson (1992) Materialism index ranged between $r = .64$ and $.75$. Considered in the light of the relation-

ships between those scales and the operationalisations of Fromm's escape mechanisms employed in the present studies, it would appear that the SCOI and Materialism indices are, in fact, measuring different constructs, and although they performed similarly in some instances, are not interchangeable.

Finally, although the samples in each study contained more females than males, it should be noted that only the Anxiety and Biophilia scales were significantly correlated with gender.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

The 35 item SCOI demonstrated acceptable internal validity (with overall Cronbach coefficient alphas ranging from .81 to .86 over the six studies in which it was used) while generally performing as expected in tests of convergent and divergent validity. An assessment test/re-test reliability performed over three weeks also produced an acceptable correlation of .935. In tests of discriminant validity, the SCOI was able to discriminate between (student) participants from Newcastle, NSW, Australia, and those from the Crystal Waters Permaculture Village (CWPV), and also between students from management and arts/science from within the University of Newcastle. Future studies will further assess the relationship between the SCOI (and Materialism) and psychological health, and also examine their relationship with individualism, which has been linked with marketing values (eg, Seligman, 1990). Further, consideration will also be given to shortening the SCOI and investigating its factor structure.

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