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Status consumption as coping with fear of death: The mediating role of death avoidance and the moderating role of materialism

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Abstract

Individuals employ various coping mechanisms to deal with the fear of death. While materialism and status consumption are commonly recognized in the literature as such strategies, no study has yet empirically tested this premise. Accordingly, this study examined the mediating role of death avoidance in the link between the fear of death and death-related status consumption (DRSC). Data obtained from 346 participants were analyzed using structural equation modeling. The results showed that fear of death significantly and positively influences DRSC and that death avoidance partially and positively mediates this relationship. Results also revealed that materialism strengthens the relationship between fear of death and DRSC, while it does not significantly moderate the relationship between death avoidance and DRSC. These results support the conclusion that death-related status consumption may play a critical role as an avoidance mechanism in coping with the fear of death. This study, being among the few that investigate death-related consumer behaviors, enriches both terror management theory and the literature on consumer behavior in crises.

Keywords: Fear of death, death avoidance, therapeutic consumption, death-related status consumption, materialism, terror management theory

Introduction

Recent estimates indicate that the funeral home market in the United States was valued at $18 billion in 2022, an increase of more than $2 billion from 2021 and the highest annual growth rate between 2015 and 2022 (Statista, 2022). Additionally, funeral products and services rank as

consumers' third-largest expense during their lifetime (Kopp & Kemp, 2007). Many of these expenses consist of grief-related costs (Fox et al., 2014). Despite their importance and the industry's growth, funeral products and services are still considered unwanted and sometimes avoided. Because these products and services evoke negative emotions during the purchasing process, are not commonly discussed, and are unfamiliar to many, consumers tend to overlook or actively circumvent items that are linked to death (Dobscha, 2016; Kopp & Pullen, 2002). However, these products and services remain necessary, and the funeral industry is widely accepted by society (Bi & Ploeger-Lyons, 2022).

While consumer researchers generally define death as the end of life, death researchers do not consider death-related consumer behavior as part of their domain. As a result, death-related consumption has been caught between these two disciplines, significantly affecting the quantity and quality of research on death-related consumption. Researchers have generally overlooked the factors that influence individuals' death-related product and service preferences after the loss of loved ones or when planning their funerals. The limited number of studies conducted on this topic have emphasized that funeral consumers make decisions under time constraints (Gentry et al., 1995), act emotionally, are unable to make rational decisions (Korai & Souiden, 2017), and are vulnerable to emotional manipulation by the industry (Mitford, 1998; Kopp & Kemp, 2007). The common theme of these studies is to criticize the funeral industry for its marketing strategies and to emphasize the need for consumers to be protected against such manipulative practices. Trompette (2007) defines funeral customers as lost customers in the market for this reason.

Despite this awareness in academia around the funeral industry's practices, little is known about the motivations of consumers when purchasing products and services related to death (Turley & O'Donohoe, 2011). The perception of funeral products and services as unwanted goods

has negatively impacted the number of studies conducted in both death and consumer research literature. However, especially after the 1980s, consumer researchers started to pay attention to the assumption that death, as a universal phenomenon, could be associated with various consumer behaviors. Nevertheless, most marketing and consumer researchers still either see death as the end of consumption activity or focus more on life-related consumption.

Most studies on the relationship between death and consumption have been conducted using the lens of the terror management theory (TMT). TMT assumes that human behavior is shaped by mortality salience, which is the awareness that one's death is inevitable (Greenberg et al., 1986). Accordingly, when individuals consider this inevitability, they interpret the world differently, and their behaviors are shaped according to this new reality. The more aware individuals are of their mortality, or in other words, that they will die, the more their behavior and attitudes will be affected by this awareness (Greenberg et al., 1990). An individual's consciousness of death is also likely to affect their behavior as a consumer (Fransen et al., 2008).

Consumer researchers have linked TMT with concepts such as status consumption and materialism in the literature. These studies mainly aimed to reveal how the individual's feelings in the face of death affect consumer behavior. In other words, these studies examine the traumatic transformation experiences of individuals who lost their relatives or thought about their deaths in terms of their tendencies to own or spend. So far, these studies have mainly focused on examining the consumption of life-related products. Korai et al. (2022) draw attention to the significance of understanding consumer emotions and behaviors within the funeral industry, underscoring the necessity of developing theoretical frameworks or conducting empirical studies to delve deeper into this crucial area. To fill this gap in the literature, this study aims to examine the relationship between death attitudes and death-related status consumption and the mediating role of death

avoidance in this relationship. In light of previous research, this study seeks to answer these three research questions: (1) Does fear of death impact death-related status consumption? (2) Does death avoidance mediate this relationship? and (3) Does materialism strengthen the relationship between death attitudes and death-related status consumption relationship?

Theoretical Background and Hypothesis Development

Research has shown that individuals are more likely to experience distress when confronted with thoughts or reminders of death and mortality (Menzies et al., 2021). This distress can lead to a range of negative outcomes, including increased anxiety and a reduced sense of well-being (Shear & Skritskaya, 2012; Menzies et al., 2021). The distress can also lead to a range of coping strategies, including avoidance, denial, or the adoption of defensive or protective behaviors (Rosenbloom, 2003). Consumption is an adaptive coping strategy (Duhachek, 2005) and an emotion regulation activity (Kemp & Kopp, 2011), facilitating more desirable emotional states and having a therapeutic quality during and after traumatic life events (Bettany, 2022). It can provide individuals with a means of reducing stress and promoting a sense of well-being. While previous studies demonstrate the healing aspect of life-related product consumption, people also purchase certain products and services to accept, cope with, and give meaning to death (Cengiz & Rook, 2016).

Death attitudes and death-related status consumption

Death attitudes is a multidimensional concept that includes the fear of death and death avoidance (Wong et al., 1994). Although these concepts are commonly used in the literature on death and dying, consumer researchers have focused more on the relationship between the fear of death and consumption. These studies show that fear of death leads individuals to consume more (Kasser & Sheldon, 2000; Rindfleisch, 2009; Sanders, 2012) and use material goods as coping mechanisms

(Audrin et al., 2018; Mandel & Smeesters, 2008). This change is mostly manifested through status consumption (Mandel & Heine, 1999; Vessal & Partouche-Sebban, 2021; Zaleskiewicz et al., 2013). These studies emphasize that fear of death increases the consumption of life-related products.

Death-related status consumption is a process whereby individuals engage in consumption behaviors to signal their social status even after death (Cengiz & Torlak, 2021; Cengiz & Rook, 2016). This can include purchasing high-end funeral goods, elaborate funeral services, and other items or services that reflect the bereaved families' or the deceased's social status or values. The concept is based on the idea that individuals want to leave a lasting impression on others and maintain their social status even after death. Considering that funeral consumers are heavily influenced by their emotions, that they feel powerless during the buying process of death-related products (Korai and Souiden, 2007), and that status consumption allows individuals to feel socially powerful (Ong et al., 2021), we predict that fear of death could direct people toward death-related status consumption. Accordingly, we hypothesize that:

H1: Fear of death will have a positive effect on death-related status consumption

Fear of death can lead individuals to death avoidance as a coping mechanism (Braun et al., 2010). This is a necessary and beneficial defense mechanism for individuals to continue their lives (Anderson et al., 2005; LeDoux et al., 2017). Consumers may turn to this mechanism when they feel an emotion related to a threat (Luce, Payne, & Bettman, 1999). Duhachek (2005:46) redefines avoidant coping behavior from a consumption perspective as "attempts to create psychic or physical distance between oneself and a stressor." Individuals use this form of avoidance to try to divert their attention away from the stressor by engaging in other activities, such as consumption,

to distract themselves. The fear of death thus can lead to the need to create a sense of security and immortality through the accumulation of wealth and status symbols (Arndt et al., 2004). In line with this, previous research supports that fear of imminent death causes post-traumatic stress (Simske, 2022) and leads individuals to engage in maladaptive consumer behavior (e.g., Mandel and Smeesters, 2008; Audrin et al., 2018; Ruvio et al., 2014, Somer & Ruvio, 2014).

In the context of this study, the fear of death is conceptualized as a stressor, death avoidance as a coping mechanism, and death-related status consumption as a death-related coping behavior. Thus, we hypothesize H2 accordingly:

H2: Death avoidance will positively mediate the relationship between fear of death and death-related status consumption

The moderating role of materialism

Coping strategies, which are generally discussed in the context of bereavement and grief, are a prominent research area in the grief and death and dying literature. In individuals who have lost their relatives, negative emotional states such as an inability to make sense of life and death anxiety may develop (Ulmer et al., 1991). Individuals use a variety of coping mechanisms to manage such situations, such as consumption, which serve as a way of avoiding the realization that death is inevitable (Solomon, 2004). As noted in previous research, individuals use materialistic goods and values to cope with negative emotions (Chang and Arkin, 2002; La Barbera and Gürhan, 1997).

In contemporary societies, funeral ceremonies have become more focused on displaying material wealth than emphasizing the spiritual significance of death (Sher, 1963). The use of materialism as a coping strategy is the primary cause of this change (Arndt et al., 2004; Segev et

al., 2015). Previous research found that death reminders and death attitudes may activate or reinforce materialistic tendencies (Arndt et al., 2004; Dar-Nimrod, 2012, Zaleskiewicz, 2013; Zhao et al., 2023). For example, people who scored high on measures of materialism were more likely to report dreaming about death (Kasser & Kasser, 2001), and a positive association was found between death concerns and materialism (Christopher, 2006). More specifically, in a more recent study, Audrin et al. (2018) confirmed the moderating role of materialism in the relationship between mortality salience and impulsive tendencies in purchasing luxury brands. Previous studies also found that materialistic individuals experience more negative effects (Christopher & Schlenker, 2004). Based on these previous findings, we predict that materialism will positively moderate the DRSC's relationship with fear of death and death avoidance, indicating that materialism will strengthen these relationships. In other words, because materialism is a form of self-expression and associated with personality characteristics (Belk, 1985) that involve status consumption (e.g., Eastman, 1997; Flynn et., al 2016; Goldsmith & Clark, 2012), we predict that materialistic individuals will be more likely to engage in death-related status consumption as a result of death cognitions. Therefore, we hypothesize:

H3: Materialism will positively moderate the relationship between fear of death and death-related status consumption

H4: Materialism will positively moderate the relationship between death avoidance and death-related status consumption

[Figure 1. Conceptual model - near here]

Method

Sample and data collection procedure

Using a survey form, this study involved 346 participants over the age of 18 recruited via Amazon Mechanical Turk's online crowdsourcing platform. The nature and purpose of the study were explained to the participants, and informed consent was obtained before the survey. They were also informed about the protection of their data and the voluntary nature of their participation in the study. The institutional review board at the participating university approved all procedures performed in this study. The selection criteria for participants required a Human Intelligence Task (HIT) approval rate exceeding 95% and residency within the United States. Out of 346 participants, 196 were male (56.65%), and 150 were female (43.35%). 131 were aged between 18–34 (37.86%), 174 were aged between 35–54 (50.29%), and 40 were aged 55 or above (11.56%). The majority were U.S.-born Americans, representing 142 individuals (41.04%), followed by Asians with 126 participants (36.42%), Europeans with 63 (18.21%), and a smaller representation from the Middle Eastern with 3 (0.87%). The category labelled 'Other' included 12 participants (3.47%). Regarding educational levels, undergraduates were the largest group, comprising 206 individuals (59.54%); postgraduates and those with higher degrees accounted for 94 (27.17%), and 46 participants (13.29%) had completed high school or an equivalent or less. All participants were residing in the United States.

Measurement

Fear of death was measured using seven items (e.g., "I have an intense fear of death"), and death avoidance was measured by five items (e.g., "I avoid thinking about death") developed by Wong et al. (1994). The Cronbach's alpha of the original version of the scales was found to be 0.86 and 0.88, respectively (Wong et al., 1994).

Materialism was measured using a six-item (e.g., “I admire people who own expensive homes, cars, and clothes”) Material Values Scale (MVS) by Richins (2004). The MVS was internally consistent, with a Cronbach’s alpha of 0.81.

Death-related status consumption was measured by a ten-item scale (e.g., “The atmosphere of funerals should be magnificent”) developed by Cengiz & Torlak (2021). DRSC refers to the consumer behaviors and attitudes driven by status concerns that individuals exhibit when planning funerals for their loved ones or themselves. DRSC consists of three subdimensions focusing on using status symbols at funerals. The alpha coefficient of the original scale ranged between 0.80 and 0.83 across three samples (Cengiz & Torlak, 2021). Participants were asked to rate all items on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 5 = strongly agree to 1 = strongly disagree.

Statistical analyses

Smart PLS 4 software and the PLS structural equation modeling (SEM) approach were used to analyze the data. PLS-SEM was intentionally chosen because it is more suitable for testing causal relationships between constructs in complex research models, including mediation and moderation relationships (Henseler, 2015). The measurement model and structural model were separately assessed in the following sections. To evaluate the measurement model, we assessed indicator reliability, internal consistency, convergent validity, and discriminant validity. Subsequently, we applied PLS-SEM to investigate the structural relationships among latent variables within the proposed model. The PLS-SEM algorithm was used to calculate the path coefficients, with bootstrapping set to 5000 samples. As illustrated in Figure 1, death anxiety was positioned as a mediator, and materialism as a moderator in our research model. The mediating effect was examined using a 95% bias-corrected confidence interval, while the maximum likelihood method,

alongside the bootstrapping resampling technique, was utilized to assess the statistical significance of the model's path coefficients. The moderating effect was evaluated through simple slope analysis at both high (+1 SD) and low (−1 SD) levels of materialism.

Results

Measurement model assessment

To minimize potential common method bias in our study, we followed basic precautions recommended by Podsakoff et al. (2012), such as using clear language and avoiding double-barreled questions. In addition, we also adopted the approach suggested by Kock and Lynn (2012), which involves testing for full collinearity. The inner model VIF values ranged between 1.160 and 1.705 is less than the threshold value of 3.3 (Kock and Lynn, 2012). This indicates that single-source bias is not a significant issue in this study.

We evaluated the measurement model by examining outer loadings, internal consistency, composite reliability, average variance extracted (AVE), and discriminant validity. Composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha values for each construct ranged between 0.76 and 0.94, showing that internal consistency was fulfilled (Nunnally, 1978). One of the items from the DRSC construct was removed from the analysis since its loading was below the recommended threshold value of 0.6 (Hair et al., 2010). The remaining factor loadings were above 0.6 for all constructs. Table 1 shows that the outer loadings of the remaining items were above 0.6 and AVE values above 0.5 (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988), indicating that convergent validity was supported.

[Table 1. Factor loadings and reliability - near here]

To assess the discriminant validity of the constructs, we used both the Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio (HTMT) and the Fornell-Larcker criterion. Following Fornell and Larcker's (1981) recommendation, we first checked whether the square roots of the AVE values exceeded the correlations between the pairs of constructs. We then examined the HTMT ratio and found that the values were below the threshold of 0.90, as suggested by Henseler et al. (2015). The results presented in Table 2 indicate that all the constructs achieved discriminant validity.

[Table 2. Discriminant validity – near here]

Structural model assessment

In PLS, three critical measures are used to evaluate the effectiveness of the structural model: the variance explained in the endogenous variables (R^2), the predictive relevance of the endogenous constructs (Q^2), and the path coefficients (Barroso et al., 2009). According to Falk and Miller (1992), R2 values of 0.10 or higher indicate satisfactory explanatory power. In addition, it is recommended that Q^2 values be higher than zero (Stone, 1974; Geisser, 1975). In our study, R^2 values of death avoidance and DRSC were 0.37 and 0.62, respectively. The Q^2 values for endogenous constructs exceeded 0, indicating that our model has predictive relevance.

As shown in Table 3, all hypotheses were supported except H4. It was hypothesized in H1 that fear of death has a positive effect on DRSC, and the analysis of path coefficients supported H1 with ($\beta = 0.322$, $p < 0.001$, 95%, BCCI [0.232; 0.411]). Mediation results revealed that the positive indirect effect of fear of death on DRSC via death avoidance was also significant ($\beta = 0.185$, $p < 0.001$, 95%, BCCI [0.071; 0.175]), supporting H2. However, since the direct effect was also significant (H1), this mediation effect was partial. Furthermore, materialism was found to positively moderate the effect of fear of death on DRSC ($\beta = 0.241$, $p < 0.001$, 95% [BCCI 0.146;

0.325]), confirming H3. Contrary to our prediction, materialism did not significantly moderate the relationship between death avoidance and DRSC; thus, H4 was not supported (β = -0.051, $p < 0.001$, 95% [BCCI -0.139; 0.042]. The results indicated that while materialism strengthens the relationship between fear of death and DRSC, it does not significantly impact the relationship between death avoidance and DRSC.

[Table 3. Hypothesis test results - near here]

We also conducted a simple slope analysis to further explore the moderation effect of materialism on the relationship between fear of death and DRSC. In Figure 2, the green line represents a high level of materialism, while the red line represents a low level of materialism. The slope of high materialism is steeper than that of low materialism. This indicates that an increase in fear of death results in an increase in DRSC; the rate of increase is higher at a high level of materialism than at a low level.

[Figure 2. Slope analysis for various levels of the moderator variable - near here]

Discussion

This study examined the relationships between death attitudes and death-related status consumption. The findings show that fear of death has a positive effect on DRSC. This result is consistent with previous research findings that fear of death also positively impacts consumers' attitudes toward life-related consumption, as discussed in the theoretical section. This finding demonstrates that the fear of death similarly affects attitudes toward death-related consumption. Another important finding of the study is the confirmation that death avoidance partially and positively mediates the relationship between fear of death and DRSC. This result supports the idea

that individuals turn to DRSC to cope with fear of death and that it is a reflection of death avoidance (H4).

When faced with the ultimate lack of control presented by mortality, individuals often turn to high-status goods as a means to reclaim some measure of power over their existential circumstances (Baek et al., 2023). This unique concept, death-related status consumption, refers to the acquisition of goods and services that symbolically ward off death's imminence or enhance one's status in the face of mortality, a behavior that stems from an intrinsic human desire to assert control and leave a legacy. In the case of these data, the consumption may be more adequately described as bereavement and death-related consumption. Given its novelty, it is crucial to delve into the psychological underpinnings that drive individuals towards such consumption patterns in the shadow of death anxiety. The positive mediation by death avoidance suggests that individuals not only engage in status consumption as a direct response to death fears but also as a strategy to navigate around these fears, thereby reinforcing their social standing and perceived continuity beyond life. This intricate interplay underscores the significance of examining how societal and cultural narratives around death influence consumer behavior, especially in contexts where the confrontation with mortality prompts a reevaluation of one's life priorities and choices.

This study also examined the moderating role of materialism in the relationship between fear of death and death avoidance on DRSC. The results showed that materialism positively moderates the relationship between fear of death and DRSC but does not significantly affect the relationship between death avoidance and DRSC. Accordingly, fear of death tends to lead individuals with high materialistic tendencies to engage in more death-related status consumption. This suggests that for individuals with materialistic tendencies, possessions and status symbols take on a heightened significance in the context of mortality. Materialism, characterized by a strong

attachment to worldly possessions, may amplify the consumption of status-related goods as a means to achieve a form of symbolic immortality. Those with materialistic values may perceive these goods as extensions of the self that can outlast their physical existence, thus providing a buffer against the fear of death. However, the results also showed that the effect of death avoidance on DRSC is independent of individuals' materialistic tendencies, which was contrary to our expectations. Nevertheless, this result could be explained by the fact that fear of death is a more momentary concern, while death avoidance is a coping mechanism and attitude that develops at the end of a process (Kraitenberger, 2021). In addition, as noted by Rindfleisch and Burroughs (2004), materialism is not solely the consequence of death-related thoughts. Although earlier studies (e.g., Arndt et al., 2004; Kasser & Sheldon, 2000; Mishra et al., 2022) suggested that the fear of death may lead people to use materialism as a coping mechanism, our research shows that materialistic behaviors are not only a response to death-related thoughts but can also drive them.

Theoretical and practical implications

The results of this study support the idea that individuals turn to death-related status consumption as a means of escaping the fear and thoughts of death. In this sense, the findings provide important insights into protecting vulnerable consumers, also known as "lost customers," in the funeral industry. Specifically, the link between materialism and death concerns may have negative consequences for individuals and society as a whole. Materialistic tendencies may lead to excessive spending and debt, ultimately resulting in financial and emotional stress.

So far, the practices developed by the American funeral industry have been heavily criticized by researchers (e.g., Mitford, 1998; Trompette, 2007). The industry's potential exploitation of funeral customers' due to their emotional vulnerability has been one of the most

significant concerns. The main reason for these concerns is the service providers' non-consumer-centric approach and failure to accurately identify funeral customers' needs, desires, and motivations (Garman & Kidd, 1928; Mitford, 1998). Bereaved individuals, in particular, do not receive necessary professional, familial, and community support during the grieving process (Breen et al., 2014; Cacciatore et al., 2021). In this regard, bereaved individuals also need the support of funeral service providers during the mourning process (Breen et al., 2017; Lensing, 2001; O'Donohoe & Turley, 2006; Turley & O'Donohoe, 2017; Plaud & Urien, 2022). Understanding and meeting consumers' needs while recognizing their emotional vulnerability is likely to improve funeral providers' image (Aoun et al., 2019). This is of critical importance both in terms of protecting funeral consumers and transitioning from a profit-oriented to a customer-oriented approach, a requirement of modern marketing practices. Therefore, understanding the death-related consumption behaviors of bereaved families should be a priority for researchers and practitioners. Finally, considering that materialism is related to a lower level of psychological well-being (Christopher et al., 2009), funeral practitioners and marketers should be aware of the possible negative consequences of materialistic messages.

Limitations and recommendations for future studies

This study has certain limitations; one notable limitation is that this study did not distinguish between two distinct types of mortality salience: mortality salience of self (MSS) and a loved one (MSLO). As Wang (2015) recommended, future studies could do this. Second, this study collected data from a general population instead of bereaved families who lost their loved ones. Future studies could consider collecting data solely from bereaved families. Following this recommendation, we believe it is beneficial to highlight the importance of broadening the scope of future research to include the psychological constructs of regret, shame and guilt, particularly

in relation to consumption behaviors that follow the death of a loved one. Incorporating such variables could unveil additional predictive factors that are instrumental in shaping consumer responses to painful or catastrophic life experiences. By focusing on individuals who are navigating the bereavement process, we can offer a more nuanced understanding of how individuals employ consumption as a means to cope with and potentially regain a sense of control after enduring such profound personal tragedies. The exploration of these emotional dimensions in relation to death-related status consumption promises to enrich our theoretical framework and provide empirical evidence that may have practical implications for counseling and consumer well-being in the context of bereavement.

The research results generally indicate that individuals see death-related status consumption as an escape from thoughts of death. Audrin et al. (2018) showed that fear of death could lead individuals to maladaptive consumer behavior, such as impulse buying. However, how this form of consumption contributes to the subjective well-being of bereaved families has not yet been examined. Given this gap in the research, future studies should focus on whether death-related consumption is a positive, therapeutic coping mechanism for dealing with fear and anxiety about death or a factor that only leads bereaved families towards maladaptive consumer behavior. Because concepts such as subjective well-being and happiness are familiar to both consumer researchers and death researchers, these research findings are expected to contribute to the link between the two disciplines.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

Data Availability

The dataset is available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

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Table 1. Factor loadings and reliability

Construct	Items	Loadings	*Mean*	*Cronbach's α*	CR	AVE
Fear of death	FOD1	0.754	3.25			
	FOD2	0.843	3.11			
	FOD3	0.858	3.33			
	FOD4	0.884	3.30	0.918	0.924	0.672
	FOD5	0.822	3.37			
	FOD6	0.833	2.96			
	FOD7	0.736	3.18			
Death avoidance	DA1	0.837	3.50			
	DA2	0.867	3.39			
	DA3	0.883	3.19	0.923	0.929	0.763
	DA4	0.897	3.16			
	DA5	0.883	3.33			
Materialism	MAT1	0.768	3.46			
	MAT2	0.661	3.39	0.860	0.765	0.587
	MAT3	0.772	3.26			
	MAT4	0.783	3.60			
	MAT5	0.831	3.63			
	MAT6	0.773	3.28			
DRSC	DRSC1	0.735	3.33			
	DRSC2	0.788	3.25			
	DRSC3	0.811	2.85			
	DRSC4	0.833	2.86	0.900	0.906	0.558
	DRSC5	0.772	2.91			
	DRSC7	0.627	3.49			
	DRSC8	0.761	3.25			
	DRSC9	0.681	3.31			

Abbreviations: CR, Composite Reliability; AVE, Average Variance Extracted

Table 2. Discriminant validity

HTMT					Fornell-Larcker			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
(1) Death avoidance					**0.874**			
(2) DRSC	0.674				0.624	**0.747**		
(3) Fear of death	0.654	0.665			0.614	0.622	**0.820**	
(4) Materialism	0.342	0.667	0.354		0.343	0.556	0.330	**0.766**

Notes: Values on diagonals indicate the square root of AVE.

Table 3. Hypothesis test results

		Path Coefficients	(STDEV)	T value	Decision
H1	Fear of death -> DRSC	0.322	0.046	7.038***	Supported
H2	Fear of death -> Death avoidance -> DRSC	0.185	0.029	6.327***	Supported
H3	Materialism x Fear of death -> DRSC	0.241	0.045	5.312***	Supported
H4	Materialism x Death avoidance -> DRSC	-0.051	0.045	1.114	Not supported

Note: ***$p < .001$., n.s.: non-significant

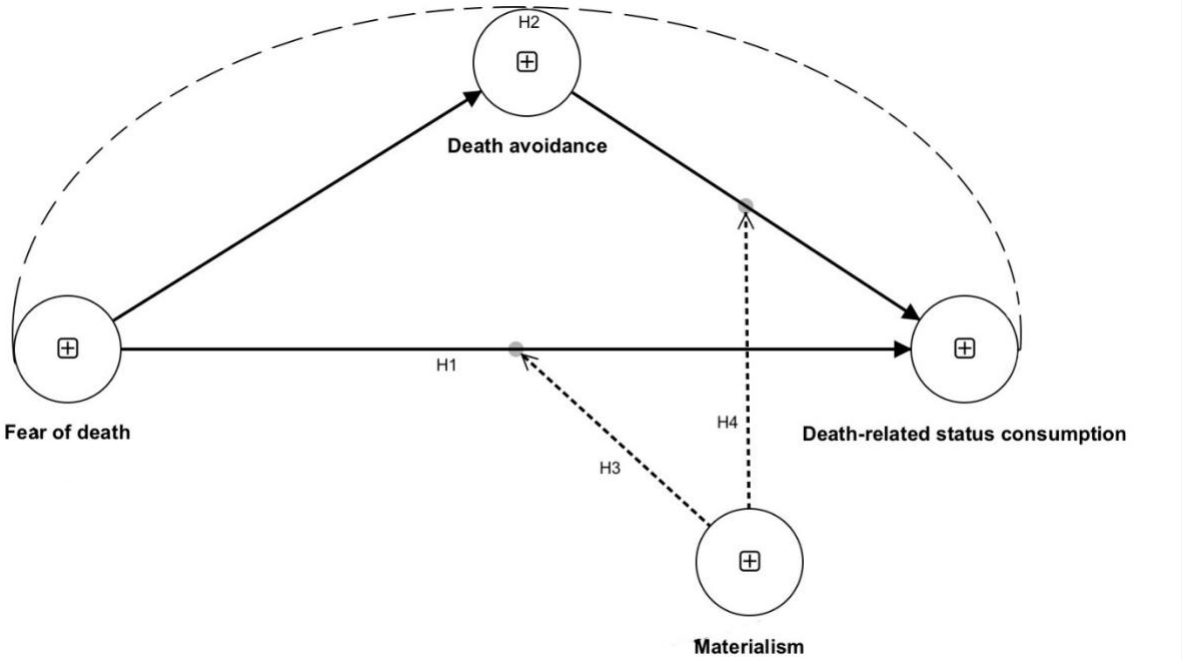

Figure 1. Conceptual model

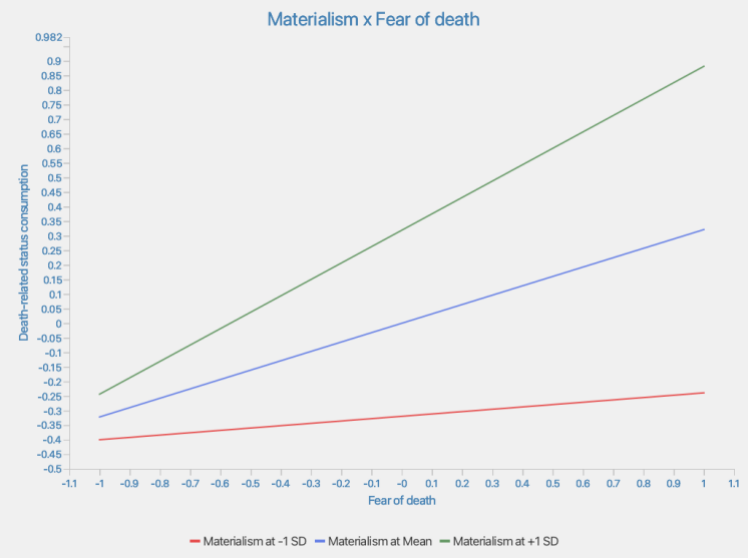

Figure 2. Slope analysis for various levels of the moderator variable