

Determining the Relationship between Mental Health and Occult Superstitious Consumption

By

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Abstract

This piece of research is instigated by the growth of interest over recent decades in the occult/superstitious and in their consumption. The phenomenon is investigated by a thorough and critical literature review with special reference to psychological, philosophical and theological perspectives. From the literature, a number of research questions were formulated, namely the lack of knowledge concerning the relationship between occult and superstitious consumption; and mental health. This is despite a number of studies within psychology that have established a relationship between occult/superstitious beliefs and cognitions with mental health indicators.

This study adopts a positivist approach to investigating this relationship and uses a survey approach as its main methodological choice. A survey of 474 members of the British public forms the study sample. A conceptual framework linking occult/superstitious beliefs and consumption to life satisfaction and psychological distress – as correlates of mental health – with attitude to advertising acceptability is developed and tested using structural equation modelling. The results confirm the occult/superstitious consumption-mental health link for the first time in the literature. The discussion highlights the implications of the findings for public policy and the management of a growing occult/superstitious consumption culture within the UK.

This study is the first study to actually determine the positive effect of occult/superstitious consumption on mental health and as such raises the alarm even further on

the regulation of the occult practices as a clear and positive pathway was found. Furthermore as mental health develops then attitude towards advertising regulation reduces further raising concerns that a vicious cycle may be operating of mental health consequences of occult consumption which are having a society wide relaxed approach to harmful occult consumption practices.

Dedications

*Thanks to my daughter Sara for her patience, this is
for you.*

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The focus of this research is on the growing interest in the occult over recent decades and how it has become a commodity which attracts a growing number of consumers. The research will aim at discovering how and why occult products and services have become so popular that occult consumology is now a significant industry. Two aspects of this growing trend will be considered. The first is the growth of occult consumology itself, the sale of occult items such as charms and amulets, occult art and music and objects for use in occult rituals such as pendulums, runic stones, incense burners and Ouija boards. Indeed, there has been a significant growth in shops dedicated especially to the sale of what is called “New Age” products. Also, occult services have grown in popularity with horoscopes and palm reading available especially over the internet through credit card payment for the services.

The second aspect of consumology to be explored in this research will be the utilisation of occult themes to advertise conventional products. Chocolate boxes have carried the name “Black Magic”. Harry Potter themes are quite common in advertising aimed at younger viewers. Magic themes are used for holidays building on the desire of people to escape to a new environment. Indeed, “Disney World” is presented as such a magical fantasy escape. The dream of winning a “life-changing” sum of money on the National Lottery is advertised with the magical finger logo pointing downwards from the skies and reminding the potential customer “it could be you” even though the odds of winning are

in excess of 14 million to 1, odds that make winning the jackpot scarcely possible in a lifetime of playing the lottery. Indeed, lottery games represent an aspect of occult consumology because, although it is not directly occult, it still operates in the same way as occult practices by offering the illusion of a better and happier life. Only the ritual is different, that is playing the lottery weekly or twice weekly. The lottery is promoted using the occult imagery of “Mystic Meg” and reference to “your lucky numbers for this draw”.

1.2 Background

Growth of interest in the occult is also evident in the rise of popular literature with themes of the supernatural such as witchcraft in the Harry Potter books as well as an increase in books on witchcraft, horoscopes and divination. There is also pop music, heavy metal bands such as Black Sabbath not only market themselves by recourse to the occult, and their music actually incorporates Satanic and occult themes. A recent pop release by Nicki Minaj called “Pink Friday: Roman Reloaded” has received significant interest, especially since the singer, in an interview, claimed that she is possessed by a demon called Roman Whitney, 2012). It reached No 1 in the charts with sales of over 250,000 in just one week. According to this website, the demon called Roman is the spirit of the film director and producer Roman Polanski. However apocryphal that may be, the point here is how the occult factor has aroused popular interest and boosted sales. The word occult comes from the Latin “occultus” meaning “hidden” or “secret” but is generally used to refer to activities or rituals, such as charms, spells, magic or fortune

telling claiming to be supernatural in nature. Evidence of the growth of interest in the occult over recent years is provided in (MacDowell & Stewart, 1992) who cites the results of a Gallop poll of social trends in the US in 1990. Part of the poll focused on “beliefs” and revealed significant rises in many occult beliefs and practices over a similar poll conducted 12 years previously in 1978. Asked about 18 different types of paranormal phenomena, only 17% denied believing in all 18 which implies that 83% admitted to belief in at least one of these paranormal practices. Belief in the Devil rose from 39% to 55% and almost all the other phenomena showed some increases.

One way in which this growth can be understood is the shift from modernism to postmodernism which has occurred over recent decades. This involves a shift away from the rationality of science towards more anti-religious views of life called New Age. This movement has seen a growing interest in the use of crystals and horoscopes and a certain readiness of people to accept these irrational sources as equally valid ways to find knowledge or live one’s life. Such a movement towards the irrational calls for an explanation in psychological terms and a literature review of current and more classical psychological explanations will be undertaken. However, as this movement is also a feature of a paradigm shift from modernism to postmodernism, the literature review will need to include philosophical explanations also. Finally, as occult practice resembles religious ritual, theological explanations will also feature in the literature review.

For a research project which is essentially exploratory in nature, the starting point will be an extensive and critical literature of explanations of the phenomenon. Studies will also be critiqued which establish links between occult practice and mental illness. This is not

to propose that occult practice is a causal factor. It might well be the case that people who are already ill have recourse to the occult. If that is the case, it needs to be established whether such recourse is helpful in dealing with the illness or whether it further exacerbates the depth of the illness.

First, psychological explanations are studied and these are also critiqued. From a behaviourist perspective, occult ritual and the use of occult objects will be examined and the role of conditioning and reinforcement will be identified in occult promotion and advertising. Trait theory explanations will be studied in their attempts to propose a “superstitious” type of personality, i.e. a personality type which presents a certain predilection for the occult or paranormal. Cognitive approaches will examine claims made for the mental processes that may underlie occult behaviour. Since this research is also focused on occult consumerism, occult product promotion which utilises strategies based on cognitive psychology will be examined.

Following the literature review, it will be necessary to draw on the insights of writers in the field in order to formulate some research questions. These questions will need to be well focused and may need refinement and expression in a set of sub questions. From these questions, consideration will be given to the Research Design. Of the many approaches to research, a mixed method will be proposed – a sequential exploratory mixed method whereby a qualitative method will be utilised and, based on an analysis of its findings, a quantitative method will follow. The appropriateness of a mixed method is justified here due to the exploratory nature of the research which requires depth as well as breadth in its findings.

The previous chapter has shown how interest has grown in the occult over recent decades, especially in developed countries. Side by side with this growing interest occult consumology has also grown. Some more evidence for this growth both in interest and in consumption is presented here from the existing literature and research in the field. Then psychological, philosophical and theological perspectives will be presented from the literature.

1.3 New Age Movement and the decline of Mainstream Religions

As was mentioned in the introductory chapter, growth of interest in the occult and in occult consumption can be viewed as one dimension of the paradigm shift which has taken place from modernism to postmodernism. This shift has been characterised as a movement away from the rationality of science towards more irrational views of life called New Age. The New Age movement is characterised by a growing interest in the use of crystals and horoscopes and a certain readiness of people to accept these irrational sources as equally valid ways to find knowledge or live one's life. Equally, products and services based on these paranormal phenomena have formed a vibrant section of manufacturing and retail.

The growing interest in the occult has also been happening at the same time as the mainstream religions have been declining. In the West, Christianity has been in decline throughout the 20th century, but especially since the 1960's. Christianity, Islam and Judaism have all either condemned occult practices or have at least warned of the dangers of such practices. (Arendzen, 1911) although quite dated, has explained the occult in

terms of a decline of authentic religion. He provides evidence that in Christianity, Islam and Judaism, as well as in Hinduism and Buddhism, that these religions were, in their origins, free from superstition and the occult.

(Kramer & Block, 2007) argue that since the three main Abrahamic faiths strongly disapprove of or prohibit such practices, superstition should therefore not be viewed as a religious phenomenon but as a personality trait where individual differences are to be found in terms of the strength of this trait. This view is also supported by Carlson, et. al. (Carlsen, A. N., Chua, & Timothy, 2009; Carlsen, A. N., Chua, & Timothy, 2009). He rejects a view commonly held, that religion grew out of superstition and witchcraft. In fact, the opposite is the case. The occult is actually a decay or decline of authentic religion in its original form. For example, in Hinduism, one of the oldest Sanskrit writings, the Rig Veda, has no trace of superstition or occult practices (Griffith 1896 - 1897) Such beliefs and practices belong to a later stage when Hinduism was experiencing decline.

He sees the same thing occurring with civilisations. For example, he provides evidence that when the Roman Empire was at its height, the occult was not viewed as rational (Pliny, 1949-1954) Magic was condemned by Tacitus and Cicero. It is only with the decline of the Empire that growing interest in the occult appears. Following Arendzen's 1911 cited in (Bogdan, Introduction: Modern Western Magic, Aries Vol. 12 Issue 1) argument, then, we can understand the current rise of interest in the occult against the crisis in Western civilisation, which appears as cultural, philosophical, economic and religious confusion. Perhaps the statement often attributed to Chesterton "When people

stop believing in God, they don't believe in nothing – they believe in anything” (Whitley, 2008) is a witty summary of what is taking place. This quotation is actually from (Cammaerts, 1937).

The decline of religious practice in the UK is documented in the 2001 census (UK Census, 2001) which revealed that 76.8% of the population responded that they had a religion. However, the British Social Attitudes Survey (Survey, 2001), the same year as the census, found that pressing the question only 58% declared that they belonged to a religion (National Centre for Social Research, 2001). (Placeholder5) Later, in 2003, an Ipsos MORI Poll (Poll, 2003) found that, although 60% stated that they believed in God, only 43% regarded themselves as “a member of an organised religion”. But the European Social Survey (April, 2009) (Placeholder7) reported that only 12% of British people belonged to a church (www.europeansocialsurvey.org). These bare figures would suggest a very sharp decline during the last 10 years. However, some caution is required as the questions were posed in different ways. The latter figure of only 12% belonging to a church is probably accurate. This is not to equate church membership with religious adherence. Nevertheless, it points towards a sharp decline with an accompanying rise of interest in the occult. (UK Census, 2011) shows a decline in Christianity from 71.7% in 2001 to 59.3% and an increase in those declaring no religion rising from 14.8% in 2001 to 25.1% in 2011. A report in the Guardian 2010 found evidence that the long term decline in religious practice has in fact stabilised and some slight evidence of increasing again (Hewitt, 2010). The average attendance for the C of E is 1.7 million, and for Roman Catholic .9 million weekly (Hewitt, 2010). But what is

really surprising in this article is the steady week day attendance reported. Figures for Islam were not reported as the report focused on Christian Churches. However, both of the censuses have shown a rise in Islamic adherence during the period. Again, some caution must be exercised in seeing any causal link between the decline and in religious adherence and the rise of occult practices and is it not intended to make such an inference, at least at this point in the study.

Of note here is the growth of Satanism. This is different from reliance on charms or horoscopes in that it appears to be a pseudo religion involving devotion and worship of Satan. So seriously is this development taken by established religions, that in March, 2011, a 6 day Conference was held in Rome on the subject of exorcism, the casting out or release of individuals from Satan or evil spirits (Squires, 2011). The aim of the conference, which was attended by clergy, doctors, psychologists, psychiatrists, teachers and youth workers, was to study the phenomenon of the growing interest in Satanism with scientific rigour, avoiding any superficiality or sensationalism. Genuine possession by the Devil was still viewed to be relatively rare and should only be asserted after psychiatry had failed to reach a proper diagnosis. The main concern was the ease of access provided by the internet allowing people to access Satanic rituals.

The occult, is in itself, a commercial enterprise. Although information is freely available on the internet, charms and pendants, books and periodicals represent the commercial side of the occult. Clairvoyants and fortune tellers offer their services in return for a charge and this is readily available on the internet by charging a credit card. An example is the medium Tara (tara@news.tara-medium.com), who provides horoscopes and lucky

numbers with instructions for their use. (Hirschman, 1986) sees the use of charms and omens as “consumology”

One aspect of the crisis in Western society is that whereas in the more recent past there was a public perception that superstitious people were generally of low intelligence (Vyse, 1997), it may be that people who are superstitious are unwilling to admit it (Gallup & Newport, 1991). (Jueneman, 2001) found that less extreme forms of the occult such as reliance on horoscopes were viewed as normal. In this respect, a distinction is sometimes made between “white” and “black” witchcraft so that white witchcraft can be presented as friendly, acceptable and fun. (Ezzy, 2006) argues that “white witchcraft” has been used in marketing and advertising in ways that have actually promoted witchcraft itself. He claims that the purveyors of “white witchcraft” have acted without any sense of ethics or self-criticism. The sole justification is that it serves the goals of consumer capitalism.

The growing interest in the occult and in Satanic worship among younger people has been widely commented on. Time magazine (Time, 1972) in an article entitled “The Occult: A Substitute Faith” links this growth with the decline of mainstream faiths in the US. It cites the sociologist Truzzi as seeing the occult as a kind of “pop religion” and regards it as more healthy than dangerous. The article describes the gathering of young college students before midnight, where naked, they take part in a black mass worshipping Satan. Their enthusiasm for the ritual is commented on as well as their desire to progress through the 5 different ranks of membership. The article does not hide the commercial aspects of this growth of the occult, as advancement through the ranks is more linked to one’s wealth and status than to the fervour of one’s devotion to Satan. It is also noted that

America's most famous witch, Sybil Leek, now lived in a luxury home in Florida and had become a millionaire from the proceeds of her books and publications. Although this article was focused on the US, evidence is cited of the growth of the occult in Europe, especially in the UK, Germany and France.

The danger of exploitation of individuals through witchcraft on television, prompted the Independent Television Commission (ITC) to draw up a code of conduct on the broadcasting of occult material. Exorcisms, séances and black magic cannot be directly broadcast. They can only be broadcast when part of an investigative programme into the occult or paranormal. Demonstrations of exorcisms or séances cannot be broadcast. Horoscopes and palmistry can only be broadcast as entertainment. Such broadcasting must also be restricted to later in the evening to protect younger and more vulnerable people. This has also been of concern to the Central Religious Authority Committee (CRAC) which advises television and radio authorities. CRAC warned about the growing number of programmes where psychics claim to gain knowledge of the future from "the other side" (Sancho, 2001). It was noted in this study, that people identified as vulnerable such as the recently bereaved, were aware of the temptation to seek some kind of comfort from mediums and psychics and appeared to be aware of the need to avoid or resist such temptation. However, despite being generally tolerant on the use of horoscopes, 21% regarded this practice as occult. At the other end of the scale 90% viewed Satanism as an occult practice. Nevertheless, on the issue of the broadcasting of palmistry and horoscope, the percentage of those who disapproved rose to 48%.

The report mentions the TV advertised psychic services offered by "Maharaji" and its

claim to 100% success guarantee for advice in important areas of people's lives including advice on health matters. A complaint was made and the 100% success rate could not be evidenced, so the advertisement was withdrawn as misleading. (Sancho, 2001) research reveals that there is concern among the viewing public at large the potential harm on a wide scale that was possible through TV advertising.

Growth of interest in the occult is further evidenced by Sky dedicating channel 886 to psychic phenomena. Broadcasting authorities have assumed that confining it to a dedicated channel would minimise any offence to the public. (Sancho, 2001). CRAC commented that the issue with this channel was not offence but harm to vulnerable people through exposure to these programmes over time.

Attitudinal surveys have been conducted to measure public perceptions of the acceptability of broadcasting programmes on the occult and psychic phenomena. One such survey, conducted by CRAC found that alternative practices such as FengShui and Yoga were viewed as normal activities. Similarly, horoscopes and astrology were viewed as harmless. Practices such as voodoo and black magic, however, were viewed as dangerous. Respondents were drawn from the British viewing public. To questions regarding disclaimers, it was felt that this should be done. The use of the occult in advertising was generally not viewed in a favourable light. On the question of special channels dedicated to psychic practices most respondents did not object to this as long as it was restricted to late night viewing to protect children and younger people. Some expressed concern that people recently bereaved represented a vulnerable group. In these circumstances, the appeal of mediums could short-circuit the grieving process and result

in longer term mental or emotional damage. Based on the above the key research gap can be summarised as follows:

- ¥ No study has explored mental health consequences from Occult consumption levels.
- ¥ Previous studies are based on occult beliefs; not on behaviours or consumption patterns.

As a result a series of research objectives can be formulated to guide this research project forward and summarised below

1.4 Research Objectives

- To determine the nature of occult and superstitious consumption
- To determine if occult and superstitious consumption, beliefs and attitudes lead to mental health issues such as reduced self-esteem or depression.
- - To assess whether occult and superstitious beliefs and attitudes are linked to attitude towards regulating such practices.
- - To develop policy making guidelines to ensure management of the detrimental effects of occult and superstitious consumption, beliefs and attitudes.

The implications of this research are far reaching and extend beyond the domain of marketing alone. The main contribution of this study is clearly from a social marketing

and management perspective – that determining the link between occult and superstitious consumption with mental health indicators provides evidence of the negative or dark nature of this marketing phenomenon. For the first time this study sets out to map this relationship between such consumption practices and mental health indicators. Although some research has been conducted in the psychology field to demonstrate the link between occult and superstitious beliefs with mental health indicators no previous study has set to establish this link between occult and superstitious consumption and attitudes towards regulation of this industry with mental health indicators. Given the growing trend within this consumption sector especially since the Harry Potter effect and a rising number of younger consumers engaging with occult and superstitious consumption the need to conduct this study has never been more urgent.

This study, therefore, aims at exploring the nature of the links between occult consumer behaviour and to determine what, if any, are the antecedents of mental illness which lie within the domain of occult behavior and consumption patterns. Clearly, the study was expected to have ethical implications regarding the marketing of occult products and services as well as for the use of themes and motifs in advertising. In order to clarify these issues, a comprehensive survey of the relevant literature is presented in Chapter 2, taking into consideration psychological, philosophical and theological perspective

From the literature review, the underlying constructs of occult and superstitious behaviour (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003) were identified as well as behavioural constructs of mental illnesses. Although this study is primarily focused on

behavioural patterns, these cannot be separated out from underlying cognitive aspects of behavior based on trait theory. Thus, while the primary focus was on behavior, underlying traits are also taken into account (French & Wilson, Cognitive Factors underlying Paranormal Beliefs and Experiences in Tall Tales about the Mind and Brain., 2007). It was also important to consider antecedents of superstitious behaviour and to consider the issue of whether mental illness was an antecedent rather than a consequence of superstitious or occult behaviour (Dohrenwend, Shrout, Egri, & Mendelsohn, 1980). A careful longitudinal study, based on assessing putative antecedent factors after 10 years (Chapman et al., 1994) was particularly informative in the design of this study.

The rationale underlying the study was based on the rise of superstitious behaviour and occult beliefs based on comparisons of the (UK Census , 2001) and (Census, 2011). (Survey B. S., 2001) and (Survey E. S., 2009) provided further evidence for the growth of superstitious beliefs and practices in the UK. This study is important as it addresses a gap in current research by focusing on behaviour. The findings have clear implications, not only for businesses based on the supply of occult products and services but also for conventional businesses which make use of occult motifs and themes in promoting their products and services. Ethical implications were also considered.

Based on the constructs identified in the literature, a set of variables were established for measuring superstitious behaviour and mental health following (Irwin H. J., 1993)I and (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). The more qualitative study of psychic beliefs and behaviours of (Wiseman & Watt, 2006) were also considered in establishing the variables. These variables were then used to develop a set of attitudinal statements

following (Gerbing & Anderson, 1988) and (DeVellis, 1991). Analysis of data was carried out using SPSS and the method of analysis was by Structural Equation Modelling (SEM). The works of (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, Multivariate Data Analysis. Seventh Edition, 2010), and (Byrne, 2010) were followed in conducting the method and interpreting results.

The aims and objectives of the study were to identify antecedent superstitious behaviour patterns and to discover the nature of any relationships between these and mental illness. The findings of the study were discussed with reference to the relevant literature and implications for further research as well as for business practice were drawn. Some recommendations were made and limitations in the study were noted.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

2.1 introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the key literature of studies of relevance to understanding the nature of occult and superstitious psychology and therefore consumption. It first therefore provides an overview of the key psychological theories relevant to understanding occult or superstitious consumption patterns and then provides a more detailed overview of the literature within the domain of marketing that has examined occult or superstitious consumption.

To omit philosophical and theological perspectives would be disadvantageous for a number of reasons. Firstly, as will be shown in the philosophy of Theodor Adorno, the growth of interest in the occult and in occult consumerism cannot just be viewed as a market trend, but can be viewed as a fundamental shift in human sensibility. Secondly, close connections between occult beliefs and practices and those of the more orthodox religions imply that occult practices mirror or parody those of the mainstream religions. In fact, a major finding from the literature is that the occult emerges at times of religious decline or when a civilisation is in crisis. A full treatment of the phenomenon of the growing interest in the occult will, therefore, be enhanced by the inclusion also of some theological perspectives.

The previous chapter has shown how interest has grown in the occult over recent decades, especially in developed countries. Side by side with this growing interest occult consumology has also grown. Some more evidence for this growth both in interest and in consumption is presented here from the existing literature and research in the field. Then psychological, philosophical and theological perspectives will be presented from the

literature

2.2.1 The decline of Mainstream Religions and the rise of the New Age Movement

As was mentioned in the introductory chapter, growth of interest in the occult and in occult consumption can be viewed as one dimension of the paradigm shift which has taken place from modernism to postmodernism. This shift has been characterised as a movement away from the rationality of science towards more irrational views of life called New Age. The New Age movement is characterised by a growing interest in the use of crystals and horoscopes and a certain readiness of people to accept these irrational sources as equally valid ways to find knowledge or live one's life. Equally, products and services based on these paranormal phenomena have formed a vibrant section of manufacturing and retail.

The growing interest in the occult has also been happening at the same time as the mainstream religions have been declining. In the West, Christianity has been in decline throughout the 20th century, but especially since the 1960's. Christianity, Islam and Judaism have all either condemned occult practices or have at least warned of the dangers of such practices. (Arendzen, 1911) although quite dated, has explained the occult in terms of a decline of authentic religion:

“It is a corruption of religion, not a preliminary stage of it as Rationalists maintain, and it appears as an accompaniment of decadent rather than of rising civilisation. There is nothing to show that in Babylon, Greece and Rome the use of magic decreased as these

nations progressed; on the contrary, it increased as they declined.....in reality, magic is but a disease of religion”

He provides evidence that in Christianity, Islam and Judaism, as well as in Hinduism and Buddhism, that these religions were, in their origins, free from superstition and the occult. He rejects a view commonly held, that religion grew out of superstition and witchcraft. In fact, the opposite is the case. The occult is actually a decay or decline of authentic religion in its original form. For example, in Hinduism, one of the oldest Sanskrit writings, the Rig Veda, has no trace of superstition or occult practices (Griffiths, 2009); (Bogdan, Introduction: Modern Western Magic, Aries Vol. 12 Issue 1).

There is no suggestion of magical ritual here to manipulate the deity but rather an openness to accept whatever blessing the deity may grant. Magical beliefs and practices belong to a later stage when Hinduism was experiencing decline.

Of course, prior to the establishment of the main religious traditions there existed mythological explanations of reality. But it cannot be posited that the main religions grew out of these mythologies as the main religious traditions made claims contrary to the tenets of mythology. Generally, mythological explanations see man as at the mercy of forces represented by mythological creatures. Ritual practices were attempts to appease these forces or somehow manipulate them. The mainstream religions, particularly the Abrahamic faiths of Judaism, Christianity and Islam, all stress the priority of one transcendent God before whom ritual and worship serve a completely opposite purpose which is to place the worshipper at the mercy of God and the acceptance of His will

whatever that may, as it seen as impossible to influence God through ritual practice. The hallmark of those three religions is submission to God, whereas mythological rituals were attempts to control the deity.

(Arendzen, 1911) sees superstition and the occult as rising in prominence when an authentic religion falls into decline. He sees the same phenomenon as occurring with civilisations. For example, he provides evidence that when the Roman Empire was at its height, the occult and magic were not viewed as a rational belief (Pliny: Natural History, Book 30, ch.1):

“In the previous part of my work I have often indeed refuted the fraudulent lies of the Magi, whenever the subject and the occasion required it, and I shall continue to expose them. In a few respects, however, the theme deserves to be enlarged upon, were it only because the most fraudulent of arts has held complete sway throughout the world for many ages. Nobody should be surprised at the greatness of its influence, since alone of the arts it has embraced three others that hold supreme dominion over the human mind, and made them subject to itself alone. Nobody will doubt that it first arose from medicine, and that professing to promote health it insidiously advanced under the disguise of a higher and holier system; that to the most seductive and welcome promises it added the powers of religion, about which even today the human race is quite in the dark; that again meeting with success it made a further addition of astrology, because there is nobody who is not eager to learn his destiny, or who does not believe that the truest account of it is that gained by watching the skies. Accordingly, holding men's

emotions in a threefold bond, magic rose to such a height that even today it has sway over a great part of mankind, and in the East commands the Kings of Kings.”

According to (Arendzen, 1911):

“The Romans were too self-reliant and practical to be terrified by magic....(they) were conscious of their common sense in these matters”

Pliny informs the reader that magic had its origins in Zoroastrianism in Persia, where reference is also found to the origins of the word “magic”. Originally the word was of Sumerian origin meaning “deep” or “profound”. In Persia, Zoroastrian priests were known as “magos” meaning a person endowed with secret knowledge and power who could perform miracles. It was through Persian influence that magic spread to Greece.

However, magic was particularly prevalent in Chaldea, in Southern Babylon where the earliest written records of magic occur around 800 BC. These were Assyrian translations of older Babylonian writings. These consisted mainly of astrology, medicine and magic. The division between “white” and “black” magic is found at this time also with the Kashshapi being viewed as unauthorised practitioners who use “black” magic in the form of curses.

Following Babylon, Egypt was also renowned for magical practices but generally these were exorcisms against all kinds of illnesses. In Egypt, astrology and fortune telling was rare, magic was generally concerned with medicine.

Magical practices were also to be found among the Jews as is evidenced by strict laws

forbidding its practice, e.g.:

“Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live” (Exodus 22:8)

“Let no one be found among you who sacrifices their son or daughter in the fire, who practices divination or sorcery, interprets omens, engages in witchcraft, ¹¹ or casts spells, or who is a medium or spiritist or who consults the dead.¹² Anyone who does these things is detestable to the Lord;” (Deuteronomy 18:10 -12)

Despite this magic continued to be practiced and was prevalent just prior to the birth of Jesus.

As pointed out earlier, the religions of India, at least in their earliest forms were free of magic and superstition, neither of which are found in the Rig Veda. However, in the later Hindu Scriptures, the original pure religion has become overgrown with magical practices.

Magic was condemned by Tacitus and Cicero. Officially, laws of the Empire prohibited “malefic” and “mathematici” forms of magic and reinforced by Caesar Augustus, Tiberius and Claudius, although, unofficially some of them dabbled in it and Nero actually studied it. However, when magic failed to work for Nero, he is said to have abandoned it with disgust. It is only with the decline of the Empire that growing interest in the occult appears. Following Arendzen’s argument, then, we can understand the current rise of interest in the occult against the crisis in Western civilisation, which appears as cultural, philosophical, economic and religious confusion. Perhaps the

statement often attributed to G. K. Chesterton “When people stop believing in God, they don’t believe in nothing – they believe in anything” (Whitley, 2008) is a witty summary of what is taking place. This quotation is actually from (Cammaerts, 1937)

2.2.2 Evidence for Decline in Religious Adherence in the UK

The decline of religious practice in the UK is documented in the (UK Census , 2001) which revealed that 76.8% of the population responded that they had a religion. However, the British Social Attitudes Survey (Survey, 2001), the same year as the census, found that pressing the question only 58% declared that they belonged to a religion. (National Centre, 2001). Later, in 2003, an Ipsos MORI poll found that only 43% regarded themselves as “a member of an organised religion”. But the European Social Survey (Survey E. S., 2009) reported that only 12% of British people belonged to a church. These bare figures would suggest a very sharp decline during the last 10 years. However, some caution is required as the questions were posed in different ways. The latter figure of only 12% belonging to a church is probably accurate. This is not to equate church membership with religious adherence. Nevertheless, it points towards a sharp decline with an accompanying rise of interest in the occult. UK Census 2011 shows a decline in Christianity from 71.7% in 2001 to 59.3% and an increase in those declaring no religion rising from 14.8% in 2001 to 25.1% in 2011 (www.ons.gov.uk/guide-method/census/census-2011/index.html). A report in the Guardian 2010 found evidence that the long term decline in religious practice has in fact stabilised and some slight evidence of increasing again (Hewitt, 2010). The average attendance for the C of E is 1.7 million, and for Roman Catholic 0.9 million weekly (Hewitt, 2010). But what is really surprising in

this article is the steady week day attendance reported. Figures for Islam were not reported as the report focused on Christian Churches. However, both of the censuses have shown a rise in Islamic adherence during the period. Again, some caution must be exercised in seeing any causal link between the decline and in religious adherence and the rise of occult practices and is it not intended to make such an inference, at least at this point in the study.

2.2.3 Growth of Satanism

Of note here is the growth of Satanism. This is different from reliance on charms or horoscopes in that it appears to be a pseudo religion involving devotion and worship of Satan. So seriously is this development taken by established religions, that in March, 2011, a 6 day Conference was held in Rome on the subject of exorcism, the casting out or release of individuals from Satan or evil spirits (Squires, 2011). The aim of the conference, which was attended by clergy, doctors, psychologists, psychiatrists, teachers and youth workers, was to study the phenomenon of the growing interest in Satanism with scientific rigour, avoiding any superficiality or sensationalism. Genuine possession by the Devil was still viewed to be relatively rare and should only be considered after psychiatry had failed to reach a proper diagnosis. The main concern was the ease of access provided by the internet allowing people to access Satanic rituals (Squires, 2011).

2.2.4 New Age Occultism as a Commercial Enterprise

The occult, is in itself, a commercial enterprise. Although information is freely available on the internet, charms and pendants, books and periodicals represent the commercial side of the occult. Clairvoyants and fortune tellers offer their services in return for a

charge and this is readily available on the internet by charging a credit card. An example is the medium Tara (tara@news.tara-medium.com), who provides horoscopes and lucky numbers with instructions for their use. (Hirschman, 1986) sees the use of charms and omens as “consumology”.

To distinguish itself from the darker side of the occult and Satanism itself, New Age occultism often presents itself as “white witchcraft”, which is seen as safer and more beneficial to those who are its consumers. In fact, (Ezzy, 2006) sees white witchcraft as nothing more than a marketing label for occult consumption that resonates with consumer capitalism. Ezzy goes even further by stating that not only do the purveyors of white witchcraft not call into question nor challenge the goals of consumer capitalism, they actually celebrate such goals.

One aspect of the crisis in Western society is that whereas in the more recent past there was a public perception that superstitious people were generally of low intelligence (Vyse, 1997), it may be that people who are superstitious are unwilling to admit it (Gallup & Newport, 1991). Ju (Jueneman, 2001) found that less extreme forms of the occult such as reliance on horoscopes were viewed as normal. In this respect, as previously mentioned, a distinction is sometimes made between “white” and “black” witchcraft so that white witchcraft can be presented as friendly, acceptable and fun. (Ezzy, 2006), argued that “white witchcraft” has been used in marketing and advertising in ways that have actually promoted witchcraft itself. He claims that the purveyors of “white witchcraft” have acted without any sense of ethics or self-criticism. The sole justification

is that it serves the goals of consumer capitalism.

2.2.5 Growth of occult practices among young people

The growing interest in the occult and in Satanic worship among younger people has been widely commented on. Time magazine (Time Magazine, 1972) links this growth with the decline of mainstream faiths in the US. It cites the sociologist Truzzi as seeing the occult as a kind of “pop religion” and regards it as more healthy than dangerous. The article describes the gathering of young college students before midnight, where naked, they take part in a black mass worshipping Satan. Their enthusiasm for the ritual is commented on as well as their desire to progress through the 5 different ranks of membership. The article does not hide the commercial aspects of this growth of the occult, as advancement through the ranks is more linked to one’s wealth and status than to the fervour of one’s devotion to Satan. It is also noted that America’s most famous witch, Sybil Leek, now lived in a luxury home in Florida and had become a millionaire from the proceeds of her books and publications. Although this article was focused on the US, evidence is cited of the growth of the occult in Europe, especially in the UK, Germany and France.

2.2.6 Presentation of Occult Practices on Television

The danger of exploitation of individuals through witchcraft on television, prompted the Independent Television Commission (ITC) to draw up a code of conduct on the broadcasting of occult material. Exorcisms, séances and black magic cannot be directly broadcast. They can only be broadcast when part of an investigative programme into the occult or paranormal. Demonstrations of exorcisms or séances cannot be broadcast.

Horoscopes and palmistry can only be broadcast as entertainment. Such broadcasting must also be restricted to later in the evening to protect younger and more vulnerable people. This has also been of concern to the Central Religious Authority Committee (CRAC) which advises television and radio authorities. CRAC warned about the growing number of programmes where psychics claim to gain knowledge of the future from “the other side” (Sancho, 2001) . It was noted in this study, that people identified as vulnerable such as the recently bereaved, were aware of the temptation to seek some kind of comfort from mediums and psychics and appeared to be aware of the need to avoid or resist such temptation. However, despite being generally tolerant on the use of horoscopes, 21% regarded this practice as occult. At the other end of the scale 90% viewed Satanism as an occult practice. Nevertheless, on the issue of the broadcasting of palmistry and horoscope, the percentage of those who disapproved rose to 48%.

The report mentions the TV advertised psychic services offered by “Maharaji” and its claim to 100% success guarantee for advice in important areas of people’s lives including advice on health matters. A complaint was made and the 100% success rate could not be evidenced, so the advertisement was withdrawn as misleading. (Sancho, 2001) research reveals that there is concern among the viewing public at large about the potential harm on a wide scale that was possible through TV advertising.

Growth of interest in the occult is further evidenced by Sky dedicating channel 886 to psychic phenomena. Broadcasting authorities have assumed that confining it to a dedicated channel would minimise any offence to the public. (Sancho, 2001). CRAC

commented that the issue with this channel was not offence but harm to vulnerable people through exposure to these programmes over time. Sancho's report is unequivocal:

“Occult Practices, namely Satanism, Black Magic, Ouija and Voodoo were viewed as fringe, and as having negative intent. Regardless of whether people believed in such phenomena or not, the intention behind occult practices was felt to be about exerting influence, rather than fostering personal development or enlightenment. They were considered risky and therefore dangerous.”

Attitudinal surveys have been conducted to measure public perceptions of the acceptability of broadcasting programmes on the occult and psychic phenomena. One such survey, conducted by CRAC found that alternative practices such as Feng Shui and Yoga were viewed as normal activities. Similarly, horoscopes and astrology were viewed as harmless. Practices such as voodoo and black magic, however, were viewed as dangerous. Respondents were drawn from the British viewing public. To questions regarding disclaimers, it was felt that this should be done. The use of the occult in advertising was generally not viewed in a favourable light. On the question of special channels dedicated to psychic practices most respondents did not object to this as long as it was restricted to late night viewing to protect children and younger people. Some expressed concern that people recently bereaved represented a vulnerable group. In these circumstances, the appeal of mediums could short-circuit the grieving process and result in longer term mental or emotional damage.

The possible associations between the occult and mental health is an issue which the

researcher will return to in another section of this review. But first, a critique of the New Age Movement will be presented in the following section.

2.2.7 The New Age Movement as the Religion of modernity – a critique

A comprehensive study of the New Age Movement, the breeding ground of much occult consumerism, is presented by (Heelas, 1996) . He describes the movement as “the lingua franca of self-spirituality”. One of the great themes of the Movement is “that we malfunction because we have been indoctrinated....by mainstream society and culture”. This indoctrination prevents us from experiencing the real “self” which in itself, in New Age terms is to experience God. Experiencing the real self is described in a number of ways such as “the God”, “the Goddess”, “the Source”, “the way of the heart” or “the inner child”. Very often, New Age language speaks of “inner spirituality” (Heelas, 1996) However (Heelas, 1996) sees nothing particularly modern or postmodern in this Movement and traces its origin to the modern occultism of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Examples of this are Spiritualism and the Theosophical Movement. The key pillar of these movements was to “detraditionalise” religious faith, making it an internalised affair. Adherents were to rely on their own “inner voice” rather than on any external authority or tradition. (Heelas, 1996) states that the New Age Movement is exactly what a religion should look like when the sole authority is that of the “Self” (Heelas, 1996) Thus, by spiritualising the secular world and transforming religions such as Buddhism or Christianity. New Age deserves to be called the “religion of modernity”.

However, Heelas goes on to indicate what phenomena lie within the range of the New

Age. It can be considered as countercultural, yet it affirms the capitalist culture of mainstream magic. Whilst at first sight, the New Age could be viewed as a break with modernity (and therefore postmodern rather than modern), (Heelas, 1996), nevertheless, Heelas elsewhere presents the New Age as “sacralising” many aspects of modernity (Heelas, 1996)

However, Heelas avoids dealing with the various fraudsters and charlatans who have operated under the broad umbrella of New Age. Equally, Marx’s critique that the new religion was being characterised by “commodity fetishism” is avoided.

New Age is described as a movement – a discourse – yet it is not a new religious movement (Heelas, 1996). So, how does one join or become a New Ager? (Heelas, 1996) speaks of conversion yet elsewhere denies that there is any leap of faith involved and one simply joins through “practice”. However, New Age, with its emphasis on the inner self and inner voice, might be better described as a movement of magic than a religion. Magic is always seen as a private and secret activity compared with religious rituals which are always communal and public. Magic is also much more experimental than the relatively fixed and orthodox beliefs and dogmas that characterise religions.

Central to New Age thinking is the view that all religions have a central core of wisdom around which dogmatic beliefs and ritual practices grew over time. This idea of New Age has been robustly refuted by (Arendzen, 1911) , as presented earlier in this chapter, where magic and the occult are convincingly shown to be a decadent accretion to earlier and purer forms of religion. (Arendzen, 1911) also shows how occult and magic tend to

prevail in civilisations in decline or in crisis such as the Roman Empire in the 3rd and 4th centuries or in European civilisation in the 20th and 21st centuries.

In fact, New Age is inseparable from magical consumption and it is difficult to avoid drawing parallels with the rise of “magical practice” that characterised the decline of Roman civilisation in the 3rd and 4th centuries and beyond. The New Age insistence on its “detraditionalisation” of earlier established religions is, thus, difficult to maintain. Heelas argues that this “detraditionalised” self of the New Age is an empirical fact and not a mere construction of the New Age discourse. However, his view is refuted by (Rose, Detraditionalisation, 1996) who sees it as an “infolding” of external forms of authority. One of these forms of authority is the very discourse of the New Age which seeks authority within themselves. However, (Rose, Detraditionalisation, 1996) proceeds to demonstrate that the New Age opposition to external authority usually means other forms of authority. (Rose, Detraditionalisation, 1996) emphasizes that these external forms of authority, rejected by the New Age movement are not simply confined to traditional forms of authority. He argues that the “unified self” of the New Age is merely a desirable illusion rather than an empirical fact. In a similar vein to (Heelas, 1996) Heelas, (Campbell, 1998) sees the New Age discourse of self-spirituality as belonging to the Romantic critique of the Enlightenment which he considers to be linked to consumerism. He argues that this “romantic ethic” underlies the spirit of consumerism, in which the wishful thinking of the bourgeois personality emerged. The feeling of incompleteness and lack of self-fulfilment was to be satisfied by consumption. (Campbell, 1998) argues that this splitting of the personality between wishful thinking

and the rejection of reality is the very bedrock of consumerism. Thus, the New Age movement does not stand in opposition to consumerism. Rather, consumerism lies at the very heart of the New Age. (Hacking, 1995), has argued that almost all of the founding fathers of psychology, including Wundt, James, Freud, Janet and Charcot experimented with mesmerism, telepathy and extra-sensory perception before behaviourism became the normative psychology in academia. With this view, (Heelas, 1996) concurs strongly by his insistence on the crucial role played by psychology and psychotherapy in the birth of the New Age. (Hanegraaff, 1996) has shown how the modern magic of Blavatsky and Crowley have been completely psychologised. (Heelas, 1996) has recourse to the “confessions of the self” and the narratives of conversion captured by polls and questionnaires but without taking into account Foucault’s analysis of such discourse as being simply “the technology of the self” of modern society. In these ways, New Ageism dismisses traditional external authority and, uncritically, replaces it with the authority of personal opinion and the self. Thus, New Ageism is a phenomenon that deserves a critique from without rather than the promotion of the movement from within, which is the fundamental flaw in the work of Heelas.

2.3 Managing Occult and Superstitious Practices in the UK

The occult and superstitious practices have long been a part of the social and political worlds in Great Britain, from Stonehenge to the present, but in the past, these practices were embraced by the British monarchy rather than regulated—a factor that caused the occult to proliferate. During the 19th century, occultic research and experimentation enjoyed great popularity, and the social elite—and renowned literary

men such as Lord Tennyson and Lewis Carroll—attended séances and occult experiments (Pile, 2006). At the time, the occult was not considered to conflict with either modernity or Christianity but was rather influenced by the Victorian concept of progress, in which it was used “to provide holistic understandings of the universe that included both scientific and spiritual understanding” (Pile, 2006). Metaphysical notions such as alchemy and astral time travel and the calling of spirits were the order of the day, and metaphysical and occult societies sprang up in support of them (Pile, 2006). The Order of the Golden Dawn was founded by freemasons for training initiates in ritual magic (Pile, 2006).

In subsequent eras, London became the hub of “occult globalisations” in which occult practices from many other cultures were attracted to and became a part of the occultic world of London (Pile, 2006). These occult globalisations refer to the introduction of occultic practices from other countries in the world—West African witchcraft, South African multi grade, views on life and death derived from Buddhism, mystical Christianity, North American spiritualism, and London’s own occultic and spiritualist organizations such as the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn (Pile, 2006).

This globalisation of the occult in London produced “entanglements” across London that gave rise to today’s “substantial culture of occult and superstitious religions and practices in the United Kingdom (UK). This longstanding development of the occult in the UK has made the occult pervasive and entrenched in UK society. Occultic practices now occur in the UK in wide variety, “everything from Wicca to séances, from psychic fayres to spiritualist home circles, from sympathetic magic to new age philosophising, and even from mathematics to prayer” (Pile, 2006).

The ritualistic murder of “Adam” in 2001, whose body was found in the River Thames, increased awareness of the potential for harm in allowing occultic practices to take place, especially where the media attract people into the occult through advertising and other programming (Pile, 2006). (Pile, 2006) posits that it was, in fact, London’s “long-standing magical traditions” that prompted Adam’s murder in London rather than somewhere else.

Today there is a substantial culture of occult and superstitious religions and practices in the UK as a result of an increase in religious diversity in general and in pagan religions in particular. Paganism is defined by (Weller, 2008) as “a religious outlook that can broadly be characterized as nature-venerating” . Paganism is not restricted to a single deity but recognizes many gods and goddesses (Weller, 2008). Moreover, since there are many pagan traditions within the context of paganism, similar to the various denominations within Christianity, no single pagan tradition can serve to define them all. Wicca, Druidry, Odinism, and Shamanism are just a few of the pagan traditions that currently exist in the UK (Weller, 2008). According to (Weller, 2008: 44), “There are significant differences between these groups, but all Pagans share in a sense of the organic vitality of the natural world...”

According to figures from the Office for National Statistics on the 2011 UK census, the number of pagans in the UK has nearly doubled since the 2001 census, increasing from 30,569 (www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/census/2001) to 56,620 (www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/census/2011). Individual pagan religions also increased, some of them exponentially. Wiccans increased from 7,227 to 11,766

(Wizzley, 2011). Druids increased from 1,657 to 4,189 (Wizzley, 2011). Celtic Pagans nearly quadrupled from 508 to 1,958 (Wizzley, 2011). Heathens made a huge increase from 278 to 1,958, while witchcraft—which was not formerly counted—has 1,279 members (Wizzley, 2011). These dramatic increases in the pagan population of the UK demand a response in terms of policy by the UK government and UK broadcasters and advertisers.

As the UK's premier broadcaster, the BBC sets the tone for broadcasters' policies on the occult. There are a number of types of advertising that the (BBC, 2013) prohibits, including political advertising, religious advertising, advertising for pornography and sexual services, advertising for tobacco products, advertising for weapons and gun clubs, and advertising for the occult. (BBC, 2013) prohibits these categories of advertising in addition to those prohibited due to local regulations. However, despite this prohibition against advertising designed to promote the occult, the (BBC, 2013) does in certain situations allow advertising for services such as horoscopes or tarot card readings as long as the content is not aimed at children. One such situation is when "the audience is likely to regard [the advertisement] as merely entertainment," and another is when the advertisement purports to "offer generalised advice that would be applicable to a large section of the population" (BBC, 2013). However, even in those cases, the advertisements must still be referred to on the relevant Advertising Standards Guardian to make sure it is considered appropriate for entertainment and for the BBC product or service with which it is associated (BBC, 2013).

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2.3.1 Regulation of Occult Advertising

When the television industry began in the UK in 1955, there was no regulatory framework for it. (White et al., 2010) Regulation did not seem to be needed as the industry was proactive in regulating itself, and there was a desire on the part of the Molony Committee investigating consumer protection in 1962 to preserve the independence and quality of non-broadcast media (White et al., 2010). However, the Molony Committee examined instances of public controversy over possible detriments to the public by way of the non-broadcast media and determined that self-regulation of these media should be guided by two policy bodies—the Committee of Advertising Practice

(CAP) and its newly developed British Code of Advertising Practice (CAP code) (White, Blair, & Taffe, 2010). The CAP code's rules cover non-broadcast advertising such as print and online adverts as well as sales promotion and direct marketing such as via telesales and email. In 1962, the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) was established to administer the code independently and to act in a supervisory role over the new self-regulatory system (White, Blair, & Taffe, 2010).

By the year 2000, four separate advertising regulators, including the ASA, were in place (White, Blair, & Taffe, 2010). This proliferation of regulators confused the public and made it complicated for the affected businesses to navigate the regulatory landscape (White, Blair, & Taffe, 2010). There was a need to consolidate the regulatory framework and create a “one stop shop” for advertising complaints, so the Communications Act 2003 was enacted to legally entrust Ofcom with exploring “the potential for the use of effective self-regulation” (White, Blair, & Taffe, 2010). Ofcom was given the power to contract out appropriate functions under the Deregulation and Contracting Out Act 1994 (White, Blair, & Taffe, 2010). Subsequently, the government developed the Contracting Out (Functions Relating to Broadcast Advertising) and Specifications of Relevant Functions Order 2004, in which Ofcom and the ASA became co-regulators and Ofcom remained the “backstop regulator” with the retention of its statutory functions (White, Blair, & Taffe, 2010). A formal deed was drawn up between Ofcom and the ASA, BCAP and the Broadcast Advertising Standards Board of Finance (White, Blair, & Taffe, 2010). In 2010, the ASA strengthened its co-regulatory partnership with Ofcom to include the regulation of advertisements that accompany video-on-demand (VoD) services (White,

Blair, & Taffe, 2010).

There were seven primary mechanisms that were delivered from this new regulatory framework. Mandatory “proportionate, evidence based, and targeted” Advertising Codes were developed and enforced through two industry bodies representing advertisers, agencies, media owners, and direct marketers (White, Blair, & Taffe, 2010). These included the Committee of Advertising Practice (CAP), which governed non-broadcast media, and the Broadcast Committee of Advertising Practice (BCAP), which governed TV and radio (White, Blair, & Taffe, 2010).

The second mechanism delivered was the ASA’s role as independent administrator of the Advertising Codes (White, Blair, & Taffe, 2010)

The third mechanism consisted of regulatory activities (White, Blair, & Taffe, 2010). These included a pre-publication advice service, free service for the approximately 29,000 complaints and investigations that took place per year, monitoring and compliance, advice and training, and pre-clearance of radio and TV ads by two organizations—Clearcast and the Radio Advertising Clearance Centre (RACC) (White, Blair, & Taffe, 2010).

The fourth mechanism was compliance and enforcement. In this role, the ASA answers complaints from the general public and the industry about advertisements that might mislead, harm, or offend the public (White, Blair, & Taffe, 2010) Further, since 1970 it has conducted proactive surveys and monitored adverts to ensure compliance and encourage good practice (White, Blair, & Taffe, 2010). The ASA bases its decisions on

compliance with the code rather than on the number of complaints it receives about an issue (White, Blair, & Taffe, 2010).

The fifth mechanism was the ASA Council's empowerment to engage in independent decision-making . The ASA can now adjudicate on complaints, and it is also the final arbiter in determining whether the Advertising Codes have been violated (White, Blair, & Taffe, 2010). Through its 15 members representing "a wide cross-section of society," two-thirds of whom are lay members and the other third being members of the industry, complaints are addressed and the adjudications by independent reviewer Sir Hayden Phillips are reviewed (White, Blair, & Taffe, 2010).

The sixth mechanism is ASA sanctions (White, Blair, & Taffe, 2010). Since the ASA is a non-statutory body, it is not authorized to collect fines or sue advertisers, but it does have the power to impose four types of sanctions: publishing ASA adjudications weekly to attract media attention to a problem, requesting that an advertisement be removed or amending, asking CAP to consider withdrawing or removing trading privileges, and requiring that persistent offenders have their materials pre-vetted before publication (White, Blair, & Taffe, 2010).

Although it happens only rarely, the ASA can refer non-broadcast advertisers that refuse to adhere to the self-regulation framework, engaging in misleading or unfair advertising, to the Office of Fair Trading (OFT) (White, Blair, & Taffe, 2010). The OFT can impose fines or withdraw their broadcasting license, although most advertisers agree to withdraw the offending advert to avoid that action (White, Blair, & Taffe, 2010).

The seventh mechanism is arm's length funding, in which the ASA's funding comes completely from the industry but at arm's length so that the ASA can remain independent (White, Blair, & Taffe, 2010). In the only part of the system that is voluntary, the Advertising Standards Board of France (Asbof) and the Broadcast Advertising Standards Board of Finance (Basbof) collect a 0.1% levy on airtime and media space spend and on 0.2% of the Royal Mail's Mailsort contracts (White, Blair, & Taffe, 2010)

The UK regulatory body for broadcasting, the Office of Communications (Ofcom) has instituted guidelines for ads that sell psychic and occult services (Pitzl-Waters, 2011). These new guidelines come in the wake of a rise in the number of programs that promote "participation" or "teleshopping" to sell psychic solutions to life's problems, such as *Psychic Sally* (Pitzl-Waters, 2011). These programs have a three-way requirement to label themselves as being "for entertainment purposes only," avoid using customer testimonials, and avoid giving bad news (Pitzi-Waters, 2011).

The guidelines ban sales of occult services on British television and restrict tarot and astrology programs (Pitzi-Waters, 2011). The guidelines state, "Television advertisements must not promote psychic practices or practices related to the occult (Pitzi-Waters, 2011). In addition, the guidelines enumerate the types of psychic and occult-related practices that fall under these restrictions; they include "ouija, satanism, casting of spells, palmistry, attempts to contact the dead, divination, clairvoyance, clairaudience, the invocation of spirits or demons, and exorcism" (Pitzi-Waters, 2011). There is some leeway for advertising for "personalized and live services that rely on

belief in astrology, horoscopes, tarot and derivative practices,” which are allowed if they are aired on channels that are licensed to promote those services and are labeled appropriately (Pitzi-Waters, 2011). Appropriate labeling requires that the advertisement itself and the product or service being marketed must “state that the product or service is for entertainment purposes only” (Pitzi-Waters, 2011). Certain props, for example, such as chicken bones, crystal balls, tea leaves and other props, although deemed “not in principle problematic,” should never be used to “imply a prohibited psychic practice or practice related to the occult” (Plunkett D. , 2011). The use of “spirit guides” was also allowed but subject to the same limitations (Plunkett, 2011).

Ofcom’s guidelines specifically prevent presenters from predicting what Ofcom terms “negative experiences or specific events” in personalised astrology, horoscope, or tarot card readings that relate to births, deaths, marriages, or new jobs (Pitzi-Waters, 2011); (Plunkett, 2011) . In addition, presenters are prohibited from giving “live-changing advice” about an individual’s health or finances (Pitzi-Waters, 2011). Ofcom stated, “Psychic readings cannot stray beyond the carefully circumscribed area of entertainment and should never be presented as reliable, substantiated or offering anything other than a form of entertainment” (Plunkett, 2011) .

(Pitzi-Waters, 2011) points out that Ofcom also regulates mainstream religious bodies the same way, prohibiting them from making supernatural claims in advertising. However, it can be difficult to distinguish a belief system from an occult practice, and (Pitzi-Waters, 2011) opines that this is “murky ground.” The regulations do not specify whether Wicca, for example, is considered occult or whether it falls under the broader

religious guidelines (Pitzi-Waters, 2011).

In (Ofcom, Safer Children in a Digital World , 2008) statement on appropriate regulatory solutions, it identified several principles for analyzing self- and co-regulation. One of these principles stated in part, “We will adopt a pragmatic and flexible approach to applying our principles, and take additional factors into account as appropriate to a specific case. In every instance, we will look to engage stakeholders in discussions on how best to achieve the desired outcome. (Ofcom, Safer Children in a Digital World , 2008).

(Ofcom, 2010) also mandates in Section 2 on “Harm and Offence” that when exorcism, the occult, the paranormal, divination, or any of their related practices are demonstrated and purport to be real rather than merely entertainment, they “must be treated with due objectivity.” When any such demonstration is for entertainment purposes, “this must be made clear to viewers and listeners,” per (Ofcom, 2010) guidelines. Thus, whether these demonstrations are real or for entertainment, they are allowed by Ofcom, but their intent must be clearly stated so that viewer knows which type of demonstration they are viewing. Moreover, any such demonstration must not contain life-changing advice directed at individuals unless they are religious programmes, although films, dramas, and fiction are usually not held to this rule (Ofcom, 2010) . (Ofcom, 2010) defines “life-changing advice” as that which is direct for individuals and “upon which they could reasonably act or rely about health, finance, employment or relationships.”

2.3.2 Occultism and Superstitions and their Relation to Mental Disease

Occultism and superstitions are an integral part of the human experience. While references to occultism and superstitions are abundant in the popular culture of the United Kingdom, as evidenced by the highly successful Harry Potter series or TV series involving vampires and other supernatural forces, it is important to point out that occultism and superstitions are not considered a prevalent problem. Before modern sciences enlightened human perceptions about the universe and human existence in it, occultism and superstition were common cultural practices. In Victorian England, for example, occult practices were highly popular among members of the middle class (Owen, *Place of Enchantment : British Occultism and the Culture of the Modern*, 2010). It is safe to say, however, that today strong beliefs in occultism and superstitions are viewed as inappropriate, uneducated, or plain silly. Moreover, with advances in the fields of psychology, psychiatry, and mental health care in general, individuals who “truly” believe in occultism and superstitions are often believed to have an underlying mental disease. 2 The following literature review aims at assessing current knowledge of the relationship between occultism, superstitions and mental disease as it pertains to the United Kingdom. The literature review assesses literature from a variety of sources including peer reviewed journals and grey literature (non-academic sources such as government websites, nongovernmental organizations, etc.). One of the major findings of the literature review is that there is a marked dearth of research and generally available information about the relationship between occultism/superstitions and mental disease. While a vast body of research literature discusses delusions or superstitions as a symptom of mental disorders such as schizophrenia or obsessive compulsive disorders, the relationship to occultism and superstitions remains unclear.

For example, to the author's knowledge not a single study has tried to identify whether or not individuals with mental disease are at a higher risk of practicing occultism or joining an occult cult. The following literature review is consequently not able to give a clear answer on how mental disease and occultism/superstitions are linked; however, the review will demonstrate the need for further research and inquiry.

3 Methods

To investigate the link between mental disease, superstitions, and occultism, the author conducted a comprehensive search of research literature. The author searched the EbscoHost PsychArticles database for the keywords "occultism" and "mental disease." Surprisingly, this search only returned two results; both of which were irrelevant for the purpose of this review. The author then ran another search on the same database using the search terms "occult beliefs" and "mental disease." This search generated four results; however only one article was relevant to this review (Shipley, 1988). The author reran the search using "Occult beliefs" and the search terms "Schizophrenia", "delusions", and "Obsessive-compulsive" – none of these searches generated any useful results. The author then changed the search phases to "superstitions" and "schizophrenia." This search generated a total of 53 results. Of these results only 5 contained some information about the relationship between superstitions and schizophrenia. However, none directly addressed this issue.

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The author then ran a number of additional searches on EbscoHost PsychArticles using the search terms "superstitions", "delusions", "life satisfaction", "psychological distress", "obsessive compulsive disorder", "occultism", and "occult beliefs" or a combination thereof. This search only generated one additional result that had not been identified through the previous searches. The searches described above were repeated on a number of other

databases including PubMed and JStor. These searches did also not generate any meaningful results. A search for “occultism” and “Great Britain” on JStor on the other hand generated a handful of meaningful results. However, these search results mostly pertained to occultism as a cultural, religious, or historical phenomenon in Great Britain and did not refer to mental disorders. However, since this author believes that concepts such as “occultism” and “superstitions” are deeply rooted not only in cultural but also in scientific and medical discourses, it is helpful to review this literature to better understand how medical discourse and discourses of the occult have historically been intertwined (Foucault, *Power/knowledge: Selected interviews and other writings* 1972/1977, 1980). Accordingly, this literature review will include an in-depth discussion of occultism and superstitions from theological, cultural, and historical perspectives. Finally, the author ran searches on the search engine Google and Google Scholar. This search generated some results; however, as expected, these results are mostly grey literature and their scientific value is questionable at best.

Defining Occultism and Superstition

Defining occultism and superstitions is a challenging task. The definitions of these terms depend to a great extent on who is trying to define these terms. Many religious scholars, for example, define anything as occultism that constitutes a quasi-religious belief outside of organized religions (Otto & Stausberg, 2014). The Catholic Encyclopaedia (Arendzen, 1911), for example, equates occultism with magic. It states, that [occultism/magic] is understood to be an interference with the usual course of physical nature by apparently inadequate means (recitation of formularies, gestures, mixing of incongruous elements, and other mysterious actions), the knowledge of which is obtained through secret communication with the force underlying the universe (God,

the Devil, the soul of the world, etc.); it is the attempt to work miracles not by the power of God, gratuitously communicated to man, but by the use of hidden forces beyond man's control. Its advocates, despairing to move the Deity by supplication, seek the desired result by evoking powers ordinarily reserved to the Deity. It is a corruption of religion, not a preliminary stage of it as Rationalists maintain, and it appears as an accompaniment of decadent rather than of rising civilization. There is nothing to show that in Babylon, Greece, and Rome the use of magic decreased as these nations progressed; on the contrary, it increased as they declined. It is not true that "religion is the despair of magic"; in reality, magic is but a disease of religion. (Arendzen, 1911). The definition cited above is rather extensive. Most importantly, it highlights that occultism, at least from a religious perspective, is understood as an "illegitimate" form of religious belief. Occultism is heresy, yet at the same time, the definition cited above also validates occultism because denying occultism as a somewhat "real" practice and human experience would also call into question the validity of "proper" religious beliefs, i.e. those that are part of organized religion. From the perspective of the social sciences, occultism is a broad term that encompasses a number of cultural beliefs and practices that are directed towards, the hidden aspects of reality, those that are commonly held to be inaccessible to ordinary senses; an activity that simultaneously shares a certain similarity with both science and religion but that cannot be reduced to either one of them. (Bogdan & Djurdjevic, 2014). In contrast to the religious definition of occultism, the definition presented above does not attach any value or judgement to the occultism. Rather, occultism and superstitions are viewed as cultural practices that are shared by many societies throughout history. In fact, as anthropologist (Morgain, 2013) points out,

occultism and superstitions are an essential part of the human experience and while modern science still has an “uncomfortable relationship with ‘no rational forms’ of knowledge”, criticism of occultism especially in Western societies constitutes a form of colonialism that is vehemently rejected by many postcolonial people, activists, and researchers. What the definition presented by (Bogdan & Djurdjevic, 2014) cited above further highlights is that occultism can come in a wide variety of forms and shapes. It may encompass Western esotericism, New Ageism, witchcraft, paganism, freemasonry, or simply the consumption of occult products and services. Moreover, any other form of spiritual movement or activity that tries to uncover “hidden truths” can be considered occult. As such occultism at least in Western societies also always has a “counterculture” element to it as the “hidden truths” pursued by practitioners of occultism always only exist in opposition to rationalism and the knowledge, truths, and realities it engenders (Bogdan & Djurdjevic, 2014). Since human knowledge is ever evolving, the content of the specific occult beliefs may change over time. However, what does not change is the draw of the unknown and mysterious that brings people to occultism and its associated social practices.

2.3.3 Occultism and cults.

While occultism occupies a space between science and religion and often signifies on “alternative” belief systems, occultism is also closely linked to cults. (Singer, 1995) maintain, that cults are groups, programs, or “organized relationships” that meet a number of specific criteria. Specifically, (Singer, 1995) makes the following points:

- group members displays excessively zealous and unquestioning commitment to the group’s leader (whether he is alive or dead)

- group members regard the belief system, ideology, and practices of the group (and often “revealed” through the leader) as the Truth and the Law
- group members are discouraged to ask questions, show doubts, or dissent leadership
- mindaltering practices (meditation, chanting, speaking in tongues, denunciation sessions, and hard labour or debilitating work routines) are used to keep group members “busy” and prevent them from “asking questions”
- group leaders dictate group members every aspect of life (how to act, think, feel, whom to socialize with, how to dress, etc.)
- the group is elitist and claiming to be special or to possess special knowledge that can “save the world” or a select few
- the group cultivates an us versus them mentality, often leading to conflicts between the group and its members and society at large
- group leaders believe they are not accountable to outside authorities – they often claim that the government, the state, or organized religions are not legitimate
- consequently, cult leaders believe that their supposedly exalted ends justify any means (violence, bribery, violation of human rights, etc.)

The list presented above is quite extensive and covers a whole array of groups that can be classified as cults. Particularly the notion that cult members have knowledge that others do not have and that knowledge ultimately makes them superior to other

members of the general population, links cults to occultism with its focus on hidden knowledge and truth. Psychological strategies. Significantly, as (Langone, 1992) points out, cults use a variety of psychological strategies to recruit new members and keep current members in co-dependent relationships. (Singer, 1995) have identified seven psychological strategies used by occult groups/cults; specifically, these are:

1. Psychological persuasion

2. Hypnosis

3. Naturalistic trance induction

4. Guided imagery

5. Indirect directives

6. Peer pressure and modelling

7. Emotional manipulation

Because cult leaders and the leading members of cult groups are so apt at using psychological techniques to draw members into the occult group, there is also the possibility that certain individuals are at a particularly high risk for occultism and/or membership in a cult/occult group. For example, individuals with pre-existing mental disease or those who find themselves in a crisis may be particularly vulnerable to occultism. The relationship between occultism and mental health will be discussed in greater detail in the following sections of this literature review.

2.3.4 Superstitions

While occult groups/cults represent one end of the spectrum of the cultural practice

known as occultism, superstitions represent the other end of this social and psychological phenomenon. Superstitions are rather common; their impact on social and emotional functioning and health depends to a significant degree on the nature of the superstition and the individual's propensity to act on superstitions. A vast body of research literature has been dedicated to the role of superstitions in health beliefs. (Caplan, 2013), for example, maintains that in order to provide culturally sensitive healthcare to minority patients in a community setting, it is necessary that healthcare providers are aware of the cultural superstitions predominant in a given ethnic or religious group. In some cases superstitions directly relate to physical or mental health, however, the relationship between superstitions and mental health is so far unclear. For example, it is not known at what point a superstition becomes "harmful" or whether or not individuals with mental health issues are more prone to adhere to superstitions and act on them. The relationship between superstitious beliefs and mental health will be discussed later in this literature review. This discussion will attempt to glean insights from research literature and attempt to demarcate adaptive from maladaptive superstitious beliefs that may indicate mental illness.

2.3.5 A Brief History of Changing Perceptions

So far, it has become clear that occultism and superstitions evade easy and clear cut definitions. The lines between harmless practices and beliefs and those that have negative effects on social, emotional, and psychological functioning are often blurred. Likewise, whether or not an individual with mental health issues is more likely to be drawn to occultism and/or superstitions, or whether the belief in occultism/superstitions constitutes an instance of mental disease is difficult to determine. In this context, it is also important to highlight that what is perceived as occult or superstitious depends to a

significant degree on historic and cultural context. The following section of this paper will discuss occultism from a historical perspective. As the discussion of research literature shows, occultism especially in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century has been closely intertwined with emerging mental health discourses in the fields of psychology and psychiatry.

Occultism in Historical Perspective

Occultism is as old as mankind. In his monumental work on the history of occultism (Eliade, 2012) points out that the occult has often provided the blueprint for beliefs that would emerge into organized religions. In fact, many Christian religious practices such as the celebration of Christmas or All Saints have in fact emerged out of older pagan traditions that were prevalent before the Christianization of Europe (Eliade, 2012). Significantly, as (Eliade, 2012) further highlights, even our contemporary cultural production signifies on pagan and occult traditions. Great literary works such as James Joyce's *Ulysses*, for example, signify on the "endless wandering and fortuitous meetings" common in Aboriginal Australian mythology. The core thesis of (Eliade, 2012) work is that the occult has throughout the history of the West been part of cultural fashions. Significantly, this not only means that occultism played a major role in visual arts, literature, and music but also that the occult was frequently part of medical and legal discourses. For example, in his comprehensive account of witchcraft in Early Modern Europe and colonial America, (Levack, 2013) demonstrates that the persecution of alleged witchcraft and the occult have been a powerful means of social control that has helped manifest religious and secular power structures in early modern societies. In England persecution and trials of individuals suspected of witchcraft and sorcery were a common occurrence in the sixteenth and seventeenth century. According to (Ewen, 2013) witch hunting in England reached its climax in 1645 when, according to the author, a "holocaust", or

purging, of entire social circles in England took place. Significantly, the trials were often politically motivated and it is rather reasonable to assume that individuals were put on trial even if they did not engage in occult practices. The mere accusation that someone was behaving suspiciously was often enough to find a person guilty. The hysteria associated with witch hunting subsided in the eighteenth century in no small part because of the paradigmatic changes that took place during the Enlightenment (Davies & De Blécourt, 2004). Advances in science and medicine led to the rationalization of “common sense” and the perception that occult forces existed was more and more cast aside. Nonetheless, although witchcraft, magic, and thus the occult became decriminalized and hence less “scandalous” it did not cease to exist. Rather, as (Davies & De Blécourt, 2004) point out, during the Enlightenment period witchcraft became renegotiated and was pursued as part of legitimate scientific endeavours. Many scientists experimenting with elements, for example, would draw in their experiments and perceptions about the empirical observations they made in the laboratory from occult or The development of printed media in during the second half of the seventeenth century facilitated the dissemination of information. This was a crucial step in the emergence of the rational society in which occultism took on a distinctly different role than it had two centuries earlier. However, although print media helped advance rationality and reason in society, the information that was spread in the seventeenth and eighteenth century does not always strike one as “rational” or “particularly” enlightened when measured against today’s standards (Davies & De Blécourt, 2004). Understanding that the rationalization of Western societies, including the United Kingdom did not occur over night, is particularly important with regard to occultism and its practice and consumption in society. While occultism blended in many instances with the physical

sciences during the seventeenth and eighteenth century, it was not until the nineteenth century that occultism took a strong hold in the emerging “popular” culture of the United Kingdom. Significantly, at the same time occultism also became a subject of interest in the emerging “behavioural sciences.” (Lachapelle, 2011). The following section of this literature review will discuss the findings and insights about occultism in Victorian England and describe how occultism negotiated cultural sentiments at the time but also how these sentiments intersected with medial discourses.

2.3.6 Occultism in Victorian England.

Throughout the nineteenth century occultism was all the rage in the United Kingdom (Bown & Burdett, 2004). Not only did the Victorians delight in ghost stories and fairy tales, they also indulged in “pantomimes and extravaganzas full of supernatural machinery; in gothic yarns of reanimated corpses and vampires”. (Bown & Burdett, 2004) Upper middle class Victorians would get together to “visit Venus” or seek contact with the deceased in a séance (Owen, Place of Enchantment : British Occultism and the Culture of the Modern, 2010). At the time they were part of a larger spiritual awakening that took hold of society. As (Owen, Place of Enchantment : British Occultism and the Culture of the Modern, 2010) states, Characteristic of this “spiritual movement” was an upsurge of interest in medieval and Renaissance Christian mysticism, heterodox inspirational neo-Christianity, and, most notably, a nondenominational sometimes non-Christian – interest in “esoteric philosophy,” or occultism. The importance of occultism in the culture of Victorian England abound. Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley’s iconic book *Frankenstein, or the Modern Prometheus* which was first published in 1818 became hugely popular in no small part because it combined the occult with science. In the book, the Victor Frankenstein in ingenious scientist creates a humanlike creature from

body parts he harvests from corpses. Although, the character of Victor Frankenstein signifies on modern sciences, his monster only comes to life through a “pinch of magic” (Buchen, 1977) – something inexplicable that gives Frankenstein’s creature the spark it needs to come to live. In (Buchen, 1977) reading of the novel Frankenstein and the entire genre of Gothic literature is a negotiation of cultural sentiments that embrace 19 science while at the same time expressing anxiety about the “rationalization” of society. In this reading, occultism serves as psychological strategy that allows the writer and her audience to express ambiguous feelings about the societal, political, and economic changes that take place as society faces increased modernization including industrialization, rationalization, and urbanization. The presence of occultism in Victorian culture, however, was not limited to literature or the practice of occult rituals such as séances performed in “good company.” Rather, occultism was also practiced through secret societies. While the golden era of freemasonry was according to (Olausson, 1985) the eighteenth century, it was not until the nineteenth century that freemasonry became an “esoteric brotherhood” that no longer operated in the public but rather in secret. An occult order itself, freemasonry nonetheless played a major role in the emergence of other occult orders of the nineteenth century, as the rituals and occult interests of freemasons were adopted by other occult orders. The Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn is probably one of the better known secret orders that had comparatively high 20 membership numbers in the nineteenth century. The Golden Dawn was a late Victorian revival order that was dedicated to revitalizing the practice of ritual magic (Owen, 2007). The Golden Dawn furthermore aimed at teaching its members the theory and practice of ritual magic and practical occultism. Significantly, the immense appeal that the Golden Dawn had on Victorians was not just that it

satisfied a general interest in magic, the occult, and alchemy but rather that it also aimed at promoting progress and social advancement. In fact as (Owen, 2007) points out, The Order demanded and received a level of commitment that threatened temporal careers, and it served as a leveller of gender and financial distinctions at a time when these still operated as significant factors of exclusion. Perhaps most important, the Order was responsible for fashioning a uniquely modern magical tradition with its roots in a “lost” and arcane past and its aspirations directed towards ideals of progress and future generations. Despite its significant influence at the fin de siècle, the Order all but disappeared at the beginning of the twentieth century. The same holds true for most other occult beliefs and 21 practices that were en vogue in the nineteenth century. Significantly, while the beliefs and cultural practices that engendered occultism in the Victorian era were quasi-legitimized through science and the belief in progress and betterment of mankind, it was also science and medical and scientific discourses that brought an end to occultism’s golden age (Geoghegan, 2015). Whereas researchers such as William Ralph Inge gave lectures on the “research findings” in the field of parapsychology in the late nineteenth century, it were texts by Sigmund Freud that led to the end of occultism as a legitimate scientific field of inquiry (Owen, *Place of Enchantment : British Occultism and the Culture of the Modern*, 2010).

2.3.7 Occultism and medical discourses at the fin de siècle.

The status of occultism as a legitimate “alternative” belief system, however, did not get dismantled overnight. At the beginning of the twentieth century, occultism and its practice was still alive and well. In 1925, for example, German psychiatrist Albert Moll faced libel charges in Berlin for having defamed the medium Maria Vollhardt (alias Rudloff) in his 1924 book *Der Spiritismus* [Spiritism] (Wolffram, 2012). Moll was

eventually acquitted but the trial that stretched over the course of several weeks 22 illustrated how hotly debated the issue of occultism was at the time. One of the key questions of the trial and of the larger social debate that took place at the time was whether or not parapsychology qualified as a real science (Wolffram, 2012) . Moll held that occultism was a trick and a manipulation designed to fool gullible “customers.” The acquittal of Moll spoke to the changes in the perception not only of medical professionals but also in the perception of the public about the legitimacy of occultism. Today membership in an occult movement or the belief in superstitions is frowned upon at best, and condemned as mental illness at worst. The sea change in the perception of how occultism and superstition are viewed in society came with the advent of modern psychology. While Sigmund Freud (Freud, The occult significance of dreams, 1937) himself expressed interest in occultism as an opportunity to study the workings of the human mind, it was his work that in no small part led to the formation of modern psychology and hence the rejection of occultism and superstition as legitimate spiritual experiences 23 In Totem and Taboo, applies psychoanalysis to an anthropological context. In the book (Freud S. , TOTEM AND TABOO, 19019) links the belief in animism, magic and the use of totems to signify on parental lineage and social order with mental disease namely neuroticism. Freud maintains that primitive societies are horrified by incest and hence while the totem in primitive societies serves the main purpose of defining clans and thus providing social order it also serves as a symbol of sexual repression, namely, the taboo of having sexual relations with a member of the same totem. Significantly, Freud’s discussion of totemism, animism, and magic not only serves the purpose of applying psychoanalysis to an anthropological context, Freud also extrapolates that the same mechanisms of sexual repression are at work in individuals

that exhibit neurotic symptoms. Consequently, (Freud, 19019) theory of psychoanalysis in no small part contributed to the notion that the belief in occultism and superstitions or the practice of occultism is linked to some kind of mental defect that makes an individual more prone to believing in the occult. In other words, occultism and superstitions began to be viewed as symptoms of underlying mental afflictions. (Freud's, 19019) contribution to anthropology have been widely discredited since their inception; nonetheless, Freud's theory of psychoanalysis which predated Totem and Taboo (Freud, 19019) played a major role not only in the emergence of the field of psychology but also in the pathologisation of occultism. (Jung, 2013), Freud's student built on Freud's theory in his seminal work Psychology and the Occult. In the book (Jung, 2013) describes the occult as glimpses into the unconscious that break out and "cause symptoms" when the Oedipus complex remains unresolved. While the importance of psychoanalysis has diminished and more research-oriented schools of thought have then hold, psychoanalysis has in no small part contributed to the contemporary perceptions of the occult as unreasonable and "not normal". Today earnest beliefs in occultism, superstitions, and associated behaviours and practices are viewed with suspicion not only by mental health professionals but also by the general public.

2.3.8 Michel Foucault.

A discussion of the evolving perceptions of mental health in history would not be complete without mentioning Michel Foucault. Foucault was a French philosopher who gained tremendous influence especially in the United States 25 not only as a cultural critic but also as a critic of science and legal discourses. In his seminal work Madness and Civilization 1965, Foucault traces the evolution of the concept of madness since the Renaissance. In the book, (Foucault, 1965) argues that whereas Renaissance society

believed that the mad had higher level of (occult) perception and were somewhat able to “see” invisible forces in the universe, society in the late seventeenth and most of the eighteenth century with its emerging modern medical discourses increasingly perceived of the mad and their occult “knowledge” as problematic. The response of European societies at the height of the Age of Reason was to separate the mad from the general population and displace them to the margins of society along with other “undesirables”, i.e. prostitutes, vagrants, etc. In his discussion of madness, (Foucault, 1965) attributes special significance to medical and legal discourses. He maintains that medical and legal discourses since the seventeenth century have created the subjects that they were eventually going to rule. In other words, by pathologising certain undesirable and “unreasonable” behaviours, medical discourses legitimized the removal of people deemed insane from the general population. 26 Insane asylums and prisons were created to completely isolate the insane and protect the general population from the corrupting influences of those who were unable to reason and think rationally (Foucault, Power/knowledge: Selected interviews and other writings 1972-1977, 1980), (Foucault, Madness and Civilization, trans, 1965). (Foucault, Madness and Civilization, trans, 1965) contributions to the history of science and medicine are in so far important to the topic of occultism as they highlight the historical changes in what is perceived of as normal and healthy behaviour and what would be considered a sign of a mental disease today. Freud’s psychoanalysis is a prime example of the mechanisms Foucault identified in his work. Although Freud’s major objective was to alleviate the suffering of individuals who struggled emotionally or who had underlying mental disease, the discourses he generated through his theory nonetheless have contributed significantly to the perception that believing in occultism or superstitions is the result of an unresolved

oedipal complex. Interestingly, Freud does not distinguish markedly between occult and religious beliefs. In his 1907 book, *Obsessive Actions and Religious Practices* (Freud S. , 1959), maintains that religion and the belief in God is based on the infantile need to have a strong father figure. He further suggests that religion shares features with neurosis in that they both breed compulsive behaviours and rituals. In modern clinical psychology the occult is mostly neglected. Rather than taking a grand psychoanalytic approach to the occult, behaviours and practices that may have occult elements are rather considered a “specific flavour” of underlying mental diseases that are diagnosed based on specific symptoms. The following section of this literature review will discuss the contemporary psychological framework of identifying and classifying mental diseases and how this relates to occultism. Moreover, this section will also discuss the scant evidence on the prevalence of occultism in the United Kingdom today. Prevalence of Occultism and Superstition in the UK Research on the prevalence of occultism and superstition in the British population is very limited. To understand the prevalence rates of occultism and superstitions in the United Kingdom it is helpful to look at survey studies that assess religiosity and beliefs in the British population. The Gallup poll “Religion in Great Britain: 1939-1999” (Field, 2015) 28 provides some insight into the issue of occultism prevalence in the United Kingdom. It is, however, important to point out that the information provided in the report is dated and does not help to understand the current prevalence of occultism and occult beliefs in British society. Such information would, however, be helpful to understand how prevalent the problem of occultism actually is and to understand in how far occult beliefs may or may not intersect with mental disease based on the known prevalence rates of a number of mental conditions that may lead sufferers to hold occult beliefs or practice occultism. The Gallup poll (Field,

2015), overall, shows that religiosity has been on the decline in Great Britain; for example, while in 1941 54% respondents agreed that religion or spirituality provided them with comfort, only 44% subscribed to this statement in 1990. Similarly, whereas 8% of respondents declared no religious affiliation in 1946, the number of non-affiliated Brits was 36% in 1990. Significantly, the major religious denominations (Church of England, Church of Scotland, Roman Catholic Church, etc.) all lost members which makes it very likely that those who maintained that they are not affiliated with a religion were formerly members of these major denominations. Gallup Questions about Occultism/Superstitions A number of questions in the survey pertained to occultism and superstitions (Field, 2015). Under the section “Paranormal Beliefs”, the survey lists the following questions (Field, 2015):

1. Do you believe it to be possible for the living to be exchanging messages with the dead?
2. Are there any superstitions you believe in?
3. Do you...
 - a.... throw salt over your shoulder?
 - b.... touch wood?
 - c.... walk under ladders?
4. Do you believe in thought transference (telepathy)?
5. Do you believe in ghosts?

6. Have you ever seen a ghost?

7. Did you ever have any of the following experiences – felt as though you were really in touch with someone who had died?

8. People sometimes talk about certain kinds of personal experience which involve a non-everyday awareness of a presence or power. Here is a list of some of the kinds of things they talk about.

Have any of these ever happened to you?

If so, how often once, twice, several times, or constantly?

[an awareness of a presence of a dead person] .

Different things such as products or ideas, can be popular, “in” fashion, or “out” of fashion. I am going to read out some items and would like you to tell me whether you think they are “in” or “out” at present – belief in ghosts.

10. Do you believe in foretelling the future by any of the following?

11. Have you ever paid to have your fortune told?

12. Which of these do you believe in – black magic?

13. Which of these do you believe in – faith healing?

14. Which of these do you believe in – flying saucers?

15. Different things such as products or ideas, can be popular, “in” fashion, or “out” of fashion. I am going to read out some items and would like you to tell me whether you

think they are “in” or “out” at present – belief in flying saucers?

16. Which of these do you believe in – horoscopes?

17. Different things such as products or ideas, can be popular, “in” fashion, or “out” of fashion. I am going to read out some items and would like you to tell me whether you think they are “in” or “out” at present – belief in horoscopes?

18. Which of these do you believe in – hypnosis?

19. Which of these do you believe in – lucky charms or mascots?

20. Which of these do you believe in being able to forecast that something is going to happen before it actually happens.

21. People sometimes talk about certain kinds of personal experience which involve a non- everyday awareness of a presence or power. Here is a list of some of the kinds of things they talk about. Have any of these ever happened to you? If so, how often once, twice, several times, or constantly? – Knowing that something is going to happen, i.e. premonition. 22. Have you ever been somewhere or has something ever happened to you , when you’ve thought that you’ve been there before or that it happened before? [déjà vu]

23. Which of any of the following to you believe in – astrology?

The 23 questions listed above were used in the survey to assess occult beliefs in the UK population. The individual items checked in the survey included a number of themes and practices related to occultism; specifically, the pollsters asked about participants’ beliefs in (1) communication with the dead, (2) superstitions and specific practices associated

with superstitions, (3) transference/telepathy, (4) ghosts, (5) the presence of dead people or a power, (6) fortune telling, (7) black magic, (8) faith healing, (9) flying saucers, (10) horoscopes/astrology, (11) lucky charms/mascots, (12) hypnosis, (13) premonitions, and (14) déjà vu.

The list is helpful for the overall purpose of the present research project as it enumerates the various occult beliefs and practices that people may engage in. It does, however, not account for the superstitious and occult beliefs of non-Christian minority populations that may have entirely different occult and superstitious beliefs. One of the most significant findings of the Gallup poll on occultism in the United Kingdom from 1939-1990 is that overall the prevalence of occult and 33 superstitious beliefs remained stable; however, there are a few exceptions that will be discussed below.

Communication with the dead. For the theme “communication with the dead”, 14% of respondents believed that communication with the dead was possible in 1940. In 1995, 13% affirmed their belief that communication with the dead was possible.

Superstitions. The question “Are there any superstitions you believe in?” was answered with “yes” by 35% of respondents in 1946; however, in 1986 (last data point) only 26% of respondents indicated that they believed in superstitions. Similarly, the questions pertaining to specific superstitions (throwing salt, walking under ladder, etc.) remained surprisingly stable between 1946 and 1986.

Transference/telepathy. One exception to the overall trend pertains to the theme of transference/telepathy. Whereas only 39% of participants in 1949 believed that transference was possible, 45% of respondents in 1995 believed that telepathy was possible.

Ghosts. Similar to the upward trend in the belief in transference/telepathy, the belief in ghosts also increased 34 between 1950 and 1995. In

1950, only 10% of respondents claimed to belief in ghosts, by 1995 this number had risen to 31%. Significantly, the trend for the entire period was a continuous upward slope. The reasons for this increase are, however, not addressed in the survey. Reported sightings of ghosts were also up from 2% in 1950 to 10% in 1993. Significantly though, the self-reported awareness of the presence of ghosts and the perceptions about whether or not ghosts were “in” or “out” of fashion remained relatively stable over the course of the study varying only by one percent point. Fortune-telling. The belief in fortune telling on the other had remained relatively stable with 80% of people denying that they believed in fortune telling versus 75% denying the validity of fortune telling in 1995. Importantly, the incidence of people paying to have their fortune told was actually down 30% in 1973 to 24% in 1995. Black magic. The belief in black magic also remained stable over the period of this longitudinal study. Only 10% of respondents indicated that they believed in black magic in 1973. That number remained unchanged by 1986. Likewise, black magic 35 was only considered to be fashionable by 19% (1973) and 21% (1986) respectively. Faith healing. While the percentage of people believing in faith healing remained relatively stable from 1973 (38%) to 1995 (39%), it is noteworthy that almost 40% represents a rather high number for an occult belief that is clearly not supported by research. This raises questions about the reasons for the high rates of belief in faith healing. Again, these questions are not addressed in this descriptive study of religious beliefs in the United Kingdom. Flying saucers. The prevalence of beliefs in flying saucers also remained mostly stable over the course of data collection from 1973 to 1995. In 1973, 15% of respondents stated that they believed in the existence of flying saucers. By 1995, 24% of respondents stated that they believed in flying saucers. It is, however, important to point out that there is quite a bit of variance between data

collection points. For example, in 1989 21% of respondents indicated their belief in flying saucers. At the next point of data collection in 1993 only 17% of 36 respondents maintained that they believed in flying saucers. Two years later, in 1995, the number was up again to 24%. Horoscopes. The percentage of respondents indicating that they believed in horoscope remained relatively stable across time, right around 22%. Similarly, around 60% of all respondents indicated in all years the survey was conducted that they believed that horoscopes were in fashion. Hypnotism. The belief in hypnotism stayed constant from 1973 when the question was first asked to 1995. In 1973 42% of respondents indicated that they believed in hypnotism. The survey conducted in 1995 also showed that 42% of the population of participants believed in hypnotism. Lucky charms/mascots. The belief in lucky charms and mascots also remained constant. In 1973, 16% indicated that they believed in lucky charms or mascots; the same number as in 1995. Across time, there was only very little variance in this specific belief. Premonition. Within the survey's questions about occult beliefs, premonition is an interesting case. In 1973, 46% of respondents stated that they believed in premonitions. In 1995, 37 45% of respondents confirmed that they believed in premonitions. Not only the variance across different years is relatively small (+/- 1%), the fact that almost half of the population of respondents believed that something could be forecast before it actually happened is quite remarkable. This may also speaks to the fact that not all occult beliefs are created equal, namely that there are some occult beliefs and superstitions that find wider acceptance in the population (such as premonitions), while others such as flying saucers or horoscopes have relatively low levels of acceptance. Déjà vu. Déjà vu is another item on the list of occult beliefs that has very high approval ratings in the sample of respondents. In 1973, 50% of respondents stated that they believed in

déjà vus. In 1996, as many as 65% of respondents stated that they believed in déjà vus. The reason for this high prevalence rate is once again not given. However, it may be possible that déjà vus are actually real in the sense that they constitute a common human experience that is related to specific neurological processes (Brazdil, Mareček, Urbanek, & Kašparek, 2012). Research indicates that epilepsy or other neurological disorders can cause déjà vus. From the Gallop poll (Field, 2015), it is, 38 however, not clear how respondents attributed déjà vus. It is for example, possible that many respondents were aware of research that explains déjà vus as a neurological phenomenon.

2.3.9 Astrology.

A question about beliefs as they pertain to astrology have been included in the Gallup poll in two years: 1985 and 1995. In 1985, 23% of respondents stated that they believed in astrology. In 1995, 29% of respondents stated that they believed in astrology. Discussion of Gallup Poll Findings. To the author's knowledge, the Gallup poll (Field, 2015) cited above is the only study that gives some insights into the prevalence of occult beliefs in the United Kingdom. One of the major drawbacks of this compendium of data is that the data is dated with the last poll taking place in 1995. Given that the prevalence of occult beliefs remained relatively stable of the course of almost fifty years, it is fairly unlikely that a sharp rise since 1995 in the practice and consumption of occultism has occurred. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) states that Census data indicates that as of 2011, only 0.4% of the population in England and Wales identified as "pagan, spiritualist, or other" (ONS, 2011). Whether or not this includes a wide variety of beliefs and 39 affiliations that can be considered occult is, however, not clear. The Gallup data, is, however, in so far relevant as it indicates that superstitious and occult beliefs are

relatively prevalent with some items on the survey receiving up to 50% support from respondents. The high prevalence of occult beliefs such as premonitions further suggests that not everyone who holds occult or superstitious beliefs suffers from mental disease, as the incidence rate of mental disease is lower (Peters, Joseph, & Philip, 1999); (Whiteford, Degenhardt, Rehm, & Baxter, 2013). Research in Psychology The research in the fields of psychiatry and psychology as it pertains to occultism and superstitions is basically non-existent. As the discussion of the literature search at the beginning of this literature review already mentioned, the search only generated very few articles that pertain to mental health and occultism. Significantly, none of the articles discusses mental health as it relates to occultism; rather occultism is mentioned somewhere in the article or study because the individual patient held occult or superstitious beliefs that were believed to be a symptom of an underlying condition. The following section will discuss the few articles and studies that mention occultism. As the discussion will show, the articles are mostly unrelated to one another and cover a wide, disconnected field. Illusions of control and anxiety disorders. In their study (Blanco & Matute, 2015) investigated illusions of control. Illusions of control typically occur when there is a high probability of the outcome occurrence (PO) and a high probability of performing the action (PA). The illusion of control is frequently as the authors maintain linked to beliefs in lucky charms or mascots. Both lucky charms and mascots qualify as occult or superstitious beliefs. Illusions of control occur when people believe that their actions are effective in generating specific outcomes, e.g. kissing a lucky charm will prevent bad luck/bring a good outcome. These types of behaviours have been linked to Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) in which individuals develop strange repetitive

behaviours such as turning a light switch ten times before leaving a room because they believe that this will prevent bad luck (Dèttore & O'Connor, 2013). The major focus of the study conducted by Blanco (Blanco & Matute, 2015) was to investigate whether there are differences between preventative scenarios versus generative scenarios in illusion of control situations. The authors did not find that there were differences. Significantly, while the authors mention occult/superstitious beliefs, it becomes apparent that symptoms associated with OCD are most likely to lead to illusions of control. The specific belief, however, can vary and include any number of behaviours. Theoretically, it may for example, be possible that a patient with OCD feels that praying gives him/her control over specific situations. It is therefore not entirely clear how one would distinguish between occult/superstitious beliefs and religious beliefs that are somewhat considered more acceptable in society. The connection between OCD and occult beliefs has also been investigated by (Amir, Freshman, Ramsey, Neary, & Brigi, 2001). The authors found that individuals with OC symptoms gave higher ratings to the likelihood of negative events happening as a result of their negative thoughts. Individuals with OC symptoms also rated the likelihood that they would prevent harm by their positive thoughts higher than did individuals without OC symptoms. The studies cited above provide evidence that individuals with OCD may be at a higher risks for occult and superstitious beliefs than the general population. (Beck & Forstmeier, W., 2007) on the other hand argue that superstitious beliefs are the inevitable by product of adaptive learning strategies. They emerge when individuals interact with their environment and try to understand cause and effect of their actions. This evolutionary perspective may also help explain why superstitions are relatively prevalent in the population. However, research has yet to demarcate normal from unhealthy levels of

superstitions and their mental disease correlates. Magical ideation. A significant body of research has addressed delusions and hallucinations as a symptom of schizophrenia. Clinical measures such as the Magical Ideation Scale (Eckblad & Chapman, 1983); (Eckblad & Chapman, Development and validation of a scale for hypomanic personality, 1986) have been validated in clinical research. The Magical Ideation Scale measures the tendency to believe that occult forces operate in everyday life. 43 Significantly, psychological research frequently does not distinguish between religiosity/spirituality and occult beliefs. (Agorastos, Metscher, Huber, & Jelinek, 2012), for example, investigated the relation between religiosity/spirituality, personal beliefs, and mental health especially in individuals with anxiety disorders (OCD and others anxiety disorders). Specifically, the authors tried to find out whether there were differences between religious beliefs and magical thinking (=personal beliefs) in individuals with OCD, other anxiety disorders, and healthy controls. The authors found that negative religious coping was the only parameter showing significantly higher scores in OCD and anxiety disorder participants when compared to healthy controls. The study also found that negative religious coping was also associated with an increased risk for membership in non-healthy religious groups. However, since the study operationalised occult beliefs as strictly personal beliefs no conclusion can be drawn about the relationship between anxiety disorders and membership in what the previous part of this literature review described as “cult.” This on the other hand shows that conceptually occultism is not well defined and the distinction between occultism and religiosity is not entirely clear. 44

Conceptual models. Occultism and occult practices are, as previously mentioned, poorly conceptualised in psychological research. This problem is addressed in (Krippner, 2002) discussion of shamanism. Shamanism is a common cultural practice in non-western

societies. It is typically considered an occult practice, since shamans often claim to, modify their attentional states and engage in activities that enable them to access information not ordinarily attainable by members of the social group that has granted them shamanic status. (Krippner, 2002) In his article on the topic of shamanism, (Krippner, 2002) engages in a meta- discourse on competing schools of thought as they pertain to shamanism. The author highlights that descriptions and evaluations of shamanism, especially from a Western perspective, were often ideologically loaded. For example, religious discourses would use a demon model, whereas discourses of the enlightenment including medical discourses would subscribe to a charlatan model of shamanism. Likewise, medical discourses and psychological discourses often place shamanism in the realm of schizophrenia, hence pathologising this human experience. However, as (Krippner, 2002) further 45 points out, shamanism may in fact be able to generate a different level of consciousness that may in the future be backed up by neurological research. This, however, requires that the community of mental health professional ceases to view shamanism either as a symptom of a mental disease or as an act of manipulation of others. (Shipley, 1988) also proposes that Shamanism should be conceptualized similarly to the well documented placebo effect, rather than an undesirable act of deception. The question of what constitutes paranormal, superstitious, magical and supernatural beliefs and what distinguishes them has been addressed in detail by (Lindeman & Svedholm, 2012). The authors conducted a comprehensive review of literature of the last two decades and found that in psychological research there is very little agreement on what constitutes paranormal, superstitious, magical and supernatural beliefs. The authors found that conceptual definitions could be grouped into seven groups. Five of these seven groups were domain

general (false beliefs, beliefs in scientifically impossible phenomena, and associative biases, i.e. covariation bias, laws of sympathetic magic, and irrational acts). Two sets of the definitions 46 identified in research literature were domain specific, i.e. they depended on content. These were counterintuitive and intuitive beliefs about physical, biological, and psychological phenomena. Moreover, the author's review of empirical research found that paranormal, superstitious, magical and supernatural all pertained to the same or similar items; however, domain general definitions were found to be quite imprecise and therefore of limited utility. The review of literature conducted by (Lindeman & Svedholm, 2012) is in so far valuable as it highlights the need for the development of a stringent conceptual framework of occultism and superstitions in the behavioural sciences. Moreover, content measures need to be developed that can be used across different studies and research interests within the field of psychology.

2.3.10 Conclusion.

The present literature review has shown that whereas cultural studies, sociology, anthropology, religious studies and history have generated a rich body of research literature on occultism in the United Kingdom, the field of psychology somewhat lacks behind. The reason for this is not only rooted in 47 the rejection of the occult paradigm (e.g. parapsychology) at the beginning of the twentieth century but also in the fact that occultism and superstitions are often viewed as symptoms of other underlying mental diseases. The lack of a coherent conceptual framework of occultism in psychology further makes it difficult to investigate the relationship between mental disease and occultism and to distinguish occultism from religious beliefs.

2.4 Origins of Occult Beliefs and Superstition

There are alternative views of the origins of superstition and occult beliefs and practices.

Rudski (Rudski, 2001) and Ninness (Ninness, H. A. & Ninness, 1998) see superstition as arising within culture and tradition. Another view is to regard it as a personality trait (Jueneman, 2001). In other words, some people are simply superstitious by nature. The origins of superstition lie in ancient rituals and the dark arts. In Arendzen (Arendzen, 1911) view they represent a decline of original religions. As the Roman Empire collapsed in the 4th century, Europe entered the Dark Ages during which superstition and the dark arts flourished. These continued into the Middle Ages, despite the Church's repeated condemnation of such practices. It is interesting that (Eco, 1983) sees the emergence of postmodernism as "the return of the Middle Ages" (Eco, 1983).

A psychological perspective on the superstitious views it as a short cut problem solving device (Carlsen, A. N., Chua, & Timothy, 2009). Superstition as the guide for low level decisions might not be of such concern, but recourse to superstition has been employed to help decide on buying a house or playing the stock market. Thus, a simple heuristic ritual device can have far reaching consequences. For example, the avoidance of working on Friday 13th due to superstition is estimated to cost the US economy almost a billion dollars (Roach, 2004). It is often found that in numbering hotel rooms, the number 13 is deliberately omitted. One example is a recently built housing estate in the city of Bradford in the UK where number 13 has been omitted. Whether the estate management itself was superstitious or not, it was probably realized that it might be difficult to sell that particular house or it might have to be sold at a reduced price. (For example: Where is

No. 13 Argent Way Bradford?).

(Kramer & Block, 2007), argue that since the three main Abrahamic faiths strongly disapprove of or prohibit such practices, superstition should therefore not be viewed as a religious phenomenon but as a personality trait where individual differences are to be found in terms of the strength of this trait. This view is also supported by (Carlsen, A. N., Chua, & Timothy, 2009) .

2.4.1 Psychological Theories of Occult Behaviour

A number of Psychological explanations of Occult Behaviour and occult consumption will now be presented and each one will be evaluated and critiqued.

2.4.1.1 Behaviourist Explanations

Behaviourist explanations base their account on observation and theory as to why humans behave in certain ways and how human behaviour can be modified. In fact, learning is understood as primarily a matter of the modification or changing of human behaviour. One alternative psychological explanation of superstition to that of a heuristic ritual as presented in C (Carlsen, A. N., Chua, & Timothy, 2009) is presented in (Vyse, 1997) who understands it in terms of operant conditioning. Based on animal behaviour, operant conditioning was first proposed by (Skinner, 1948) where his experiments demonstrated how animal and human behaviour could be modified or conditioned through rewarding the desired behaviour and withholding reward from the undesired behaviour. Thus superstitions like crossing one's fingers to avert something unpleasant is reinforced each time it is perceived to be successful. Unsuccessful outcomes are explained away as "not properly crossing the fingers".

Consumer psychology has shown a preference for Behaviourist underpinnings, understanding consumer behaviour in terms of operant conditioning and actually utilises this. The consumer is led to believe that, by performing certain rituals, benefits will result as a reward. This is classical reinforcement of desired behaviour. Success is then attributed to having performed the ritual and results in the reinforcement of that ritual practice. Consumer psychology exploits this across a wide range of products. For example, breakfast cereals will work on the ritual of making sure that you receive “the 5 essential daily helpings of.....” Such advertising, basing itself on behaviourist psychology, reinforces the need for this cereal which is then eaten regardless of whether the person is hungry or not. Citrus fruits are promoted in the autumn to avoid cold or flu in the winter and cod liver oil capsules are recommended to forestall the onset of arthritis. These are just two examples of how belief systems are propagated and promoted and then, reinforced so that a behaviour pattern becomes embedded for the benefit of industry and retail outlets. There may be some truth in these rituals such as citric acid helping the immune system to fight colds. Scientific evidence, however, suggests that the causes of cold or flu are not greatly affected by eating lots of citrus fruits. “An apple a day keeps the doctor away” is an earlier form of reinforcing behaviour. (Gill, 1993) arguing from a psychodynamic perspective views such superstition as learned behaviour from childhood for the relief of anxiety. The psychodynamic explanation of superstition will be more fully detailed in a later section of this review.

Once superstitious practices become normalized in a person’s belief system, (Vyse, 1997) argues that neurological changes occur and the formation of cognitive schemas so that the

outcome of events become related to the performance of the ritual or reinforced behaviour pattern. (Jueneman, 2001) commented that in the Judeo-Christian-Islamic view, such behaviour is related to low levels of education. But (Carlsen, A. N., Chua, & Timothy, 2009) disagrees with this view arguing that if that was true, marketers would not build their strategies on reinforcing rituals. In fact, ritual is part of religious observance, and although in its purest form it is not superstition, there is little doubt that some activities bordering on superstition are often found, e.g. the saying “touch wood” to avert danger (meaning touch the wood of the cross).

Occult consumerism has been understood in terms operant conditioning within a Behaviourist understanding of human personality. This was based on Pavlov’s classical conditioning of reflex actions by a stimulus-response mechanism. Operant conditioning developed this further in Skinner’s work on pigeons and their application to human behaviour. According to this view, learning in humans involved a process of conditioning human behaviour in certain directions. The stimulus-response mechanism required some process of rewarding the desired behaviour and discouraging undesirable behaviour by withholding any reward. This had many applications for learning theory and was used in schools especially in the 60’s and 70’s. It still has its applications especially to the acquisition of skills. The insights provided into human motivation to learn have been most beneficial such as the rewarding of good behaviour or rewarding the correct application of what has been learned. This reward can be as simple as saying “well done, Jane”. Translating this into consumerism as “learned behaviour” (considering advertising and product promotion as stimulating the consumer to prefer product X and thus “train”

the consumer to always buy that product), the reward is the satisfaction that product brings.

Behaviourist explanations based on operant conditioning are outlined in (Ninness, H. A. & Ninness, 1998), (Rudski, 2001) and the classical studies of conditioning are those of Pavlov, Skinner and Hull. The behaviourist approach to understanding human behaviour generally and occult consumer behaviour in particular, is based on a number of assumptions. One of these is an evolutionary understanding of human behaviour and the transference of what is learned in animal behaviour to humans. But can such an approach explain the totality of human behaviour in all its complexity? Also, how valid is it to draw inferences from animal behaviour and apply them to human behaviour? For example, humans display altruistic behaviour involving self-sacrifice for a perceived greater good. Altruistic behaviour can be seen in one human being risking their life by diving into the sea in order to save a fellow human being who is drowning. Behaviourists will cite rudimentary forms of altruism in animal behaviour where animals will fight to the death to protect their young. Such animal altruism, however, is largely instinctual and subconscious whereas human altruism is a much more cognitively based pattern of behaviour.

Useful as behaviourist theories have been, they have tended to adopt an over-simplistic view of human behaviour. For example, a learning theory based on Behaviourist assumptions reduces human learning to a process of trial and error learning, stimulus-response reflex actions, conditioning, reward for desired behaviour (and withholding of

reward for undesired behaviour) and reinforcement to strengthen the stimulus-response. Finally, the process of extinction explains how a certain pattern of behaviour can be allowed to die out when one product is replaced by another. Thus, the original stimulus, the older version of the product, is allowed to become extinct, as the desired new conditioned response is to the new version of the product. Hence, television advertising speaks repeatedly about “new improved X washing powder” rather than the older product. A similar type of stimulus conditioning was seen in marketing the “new” Labour Party led by Tony Blair, where there were repeated references to “new” Labour to distinguish it from the Labour Party of the recent past.

Advertising (or political campaigning) employing these techniques of operant amounts to the manipulation of the general public in the view of Theodor Adorno of the Frankfurt School who is highly critical of modern marketing as a tool of late consumer capitalism (Adorno T. , 2003).

Adorno’s criticism based on manipulative aspects of modern advertising can be seen in the powerful effects of subliminal advertising, where one single frame in a reel of film contains a stimulus which is not consciously perceived but registers subconsciously. This can affect a sudden desire to buy ice cream during the interval of a movie. These and many other techniques have been discussed by (Packard, 1964) However, subliminal advertising is considered unethical and is illegal in most countries. It does, however, support Adorno’s view of the manipulative nature of most advertising.

2.4.1.2 Trait Theory Explanations of Occult consumer Behaviour

Are there any common traits which might help to identify superstitious individuals and who might develop associated mental disorders as a result? Or, do paranormal believers exhibit certain common cognitive deficits? These questions lie at the heart of investigations into superstitious beliefs and behaviours and possible links to mental disorders (French & Wilson, 2007); (Irwin & Watt, 2007) .

The traditional understanding of the term ‘paranormal’ is used in (French, 1992) and includes Extra Sensory Perception (ESP) and Psychokinesis (PK).

2.4.1.3 Early Studies based on Trait Theories

Previous studies showed how individuals with low tolerance for uncertainty and a desire to control, were more likely to have developed superstitious beliefs and practices than others (Irwin W. , 2000). Superstitious practices helped to alleviate feelings of anxiety arising from feelings of loss of control in situations of uncertainty. Prayer and intercession to God, does not give this sense of control, as such prayer is always in terms of what is in accordance with the will of God. Magical and superstitious thinking involves an attempt to control the deity or demon so that it fulfils the person’s needs or desires. This is quite different from prayer in a Christian context where very often God is beseeched to give the person inner strength to face the uncertain situation. Magic shifts the responsibility to the deity or demon. By performing the magic ritual, the deity or demon invoked should comply with the person’s wishes (Malinowski, Magic, Science and Religion (1925) , 1992) .

Explorations based on trait theory are generally based on the work of (Allport, 1955), who produced a classification of personality traits divided into three main categories: Cardinal Traits, Central Traits and Secondary Traits. Since then, many researchers have developed Allport's theory and classification further. Research into the relationship between the occult and mental health who use personality trait theory as a basis include: (Gilovich, 1991); (Vyse, 1997).

Since Allport, there have been many different attempts to classify traits. However, underlying this theory is the understanding of human personality types dependent on underlying traits. Thus, one personality type might be more superstitious in nature than another.

Authors who understand the phenomenon of occult behaviour in terms of personality traits, include, for example, (Jueneman, 2001). This understanding will be critiqued in this part of the literature review as being based on a partial explanation of human personality. Alternative or complementary views will be put forward which embrace a more holistic view of humankind. This would also be a plea for a review of the ethics of advertising.

While trait theories share the belief that personality can be described as traits, there is considerable disagreement about the number of these traits. Trait theories, however, possess an advantage over Psychoanalytical approaches such as Freud's, that is that they are more objective and empirically based.

Nevertheless, there are a number of criticisms of the theory. It would seem that human

personality is basically “free”; that is, that high scores on certain traits may have an influence on human behaviour but is not a determinant of human behaviour.

Secondly, trait theories, in presenting an outline of the components of human personality, fail to give an adequate explanation for why individual differences develop or emerge.

Thirdly, (Jungmyer, 2006) is highly critical of trait theories for what he terms as their “naivety in measurement”. They often are based on “limited, impoverished or otherwise idiosyncratic construals of these dispositional traits that were fixed earlier in psychoanalytical discourse.” (Jungmyer, 2006) is critical of questionnaires that attempt to measure the presence of these traits by the use of questions which will elicit evidence of just that trait and no other. The assumptions underlying the questions are highly subjective and prone to present a distorted picture of the human personality.

Type-trait theorists frequently react to any attempt to criticise their findings from a moral philosophy perspective. This reaction is based on the belief that the theory is supported by a rigorously scientific methodology. This methodology is based on regression and factor analysis. According to this methodology, it is possible to establish, by correlations, whether certain traits are independent of each other or whether they belong to a more fundamental underlying trait. However, (Jungmyer, 2006) argues that there may be many hidden variables and that “trait theory cannot assure us that the variables the analysis has identified are relevant for personality, since that concept has a normative dimension that may reduce the importance of factors the models include, or point to the importance of factors it has not even tried to test for” (Jungmyer, 2006).

For example, the Myers Briggs Personality Type Inventory (MBPTI), tends to see such trait-contrasts as “gifts” (Hence the title: “Gifts Differing”). The trait theorists are at pains to adopt a morally neutral stance and avoid any ethical considerations of particular personality configurations. There is no attempt to pass any judgement on an individual. However, this ignores the virtue-theory of moral psychology which ascribes to the human personality a freedom of choice and that whatever a person’s predispositions may be, human responsibility implies that individuals must develop virtues or “good habits” and learn to overcome vices or “bad habits” through work and development. The obligation to continue to develop “virtues” is well recognised and advocated by the mainstream religions, particularly the Abrahamic faiths of Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Thus, one major criticism of trait theory is that it downplays the role of the human will and leaves no room for “a middle part of the soul” (Jungmyer, 2006) and see personality as revolving around the rational versus the emotional.

Another criticism of trait-type theories is that they are overly deterministic. Trait theories follow Leibniz in assuming that individual differences in attitude and behaviour in a given situation must have an innate cause and this only.

2.4.1.4 Cognitivist and Humanistic Approaches

However, this is not the only perspective on human learning. Theories of learning based on cognitivism emerged in the 70’s and 80’s and there were also theories based on constructivism and humanism. Thus, one critique of understanding Occult Consumerism purely from a Behaviourist perspective, is that Skinner’s Operant Conditioning is but a partial model for understanding consumerism. Human learning, whether as a classroom

student or as a consumer is a more complex matter, and may also involve cognitive and constructivist factors. Cognitivism considers the mental processes which accompany learning as either knowledge or skills acquisition. Thus, while Behaviourism has given the basic constructs of conditioning, reward, reinforcement and stimulus-response, there is a need to consider the cognitive and humanistic factors as well. For example, customer service, especially within the services sector, is viewed as of vital importance and this is more rooted in humanistic psychology. The client centred dimension of Rogerian psychology has led to “child-centred learning” and to “customer –centred consumology” This was based on a more holistic view of the human personality which was set forth by Carl Rogers involving 19 principles, the central tenet of which, was to place the human person at the centre of whatever activity the person was engaging (Rogers, 1951). Thus, contemporary advertising is not simply conditioning the consumer, but also putting the consumer at the centre. Hence, while the behaviourist approach would consider first manufacturing a product and then conditioning the consumer to buy it, a Rogerian approach could be seen in conducting market research to discover the customer’s needs first. Obviously, that Rogerian approach of understanding the customer’s needs is utilised very much in occult consumerism, which is based on an understanding of the consumer’s vulnerability and need for the reassurance (albeit false reassurance) that occult goods and services can bring.

Consumerism, viewed from a cognitive perspective considers the mental processes at work in marketing and delivering products or services. For this purpose, the consumer needs to think the matter through so that it is perceived to be value for money. In the

recent bank loan scandal, where customers were miss-sold protection insurance which they didn't require, the loan companies had hidden the element of insurance in the small print and thus the customer was fooled into paying thousands of pounds they didn't need to pay for unwanted insurances. Cognitive dimensions of consumerism had been ignored and now the banks must repay this as well as suffering loss of esteem and trust by the customer. A misunderstanding of how the human personality operates has resulted in great losses to the banks and finance companies and a need to devise ways of regaining customers' trust.

A major element of cognitive psychology is based on (Chomsky, 1967) critique of Behaviourism. Chomsky's insights into language acquisition and how language conveyed meaning prompted him to be critical of Skinner's method of studying animal behaviour and applying this to human behaviour. Thus, a consumerist approach which confuses the consumer at the point of sale by hiding important information in the small print might result in short term profit but in longer term disaster. The banks are distrusted due to the cognitive understanding that the broad print that was being signed up for was really dishonest as it concealed unwanted services in the small print. As a result, customers are transferring to Credit Unions which are understood on a cognitive level to operate more fairly in the consumer's interest as the consumer effectively becomes a shareholder of the organisation

It might also be useful to return to earlier and more classical works relating the occult to mental health. The starting point is Sigmund Freud. Freud is best known for the

psychoanalytical theory and method which he developed. Some commentators point out the connections between his works and concepts found in the occult elements of the Jewish Kabbala. These include an emphasis on male and female elements, an interest in symbolism and numerology.

Also presented in this section is the work of Carl Jung, a disciple of Freud, who departed from Freud and developed his own understanding of the unconscious. Other post Freudians considered here will include Erikson and Marcia.

Freud's writings show a keen interest in witchcraft and the occult. This was accompanied by distaste for religions in general and for the Catholic Church in particular. He rejected his own Orthodox Judaism and retained only the darker arts found in the Jewish Kabbala. He regarded religion as nothing more than the projection of inner desires and impulses into the external world. In this he was influenced by the philosopher Feuerbach's critique of religion. For Freud, every form of religion involves a Father-fixation, fear and guilt complexes and the Oedipus Complex.

By 1907, Freud's writings appeared to be hostile to religion and he claimed that neurotic behaviour bore many similarities to religious rituals. However, Freud's research was only based on people with mental disorders so there is no commentary on how religious rituals may play a positive role in the lives of healthy people..

Similar to neurosis, breaking the taboo creates an inner need for expiation, acts of penance and ritual purification. There is an archetypal story about some brothers who plotted and killed their father who was a tyrant and forbade them to associate with

women. Filled with guilt, there was a need for expiation and purification and this was projected onto an animal which was to be protected from ever being killed. Freud makes connections with this myth and the Christian religion which imposes on its adherents the need to atone for sins against the Father. He further explores the figure of Moses whom he claims was murdered by his own people. Instead, the Jewish people projected their liberation from Pharoah and Egypt onto Yahweh, the one God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. To expiate the killing of Moses, the Jews projected their hopes on to a desire for the coming of the Messiah. Thus, Freud reduces Jewish and Christian religions to the status of mythology, but without any scholarly evidence.

In 1927 Freud posed the question as to whether in the future man will not need the consolation of religion. This was in his book “The future of an illusion”. There, he claims: “religion is patently infantile, so foreign to reality. It is painful to think that the great majority of men will never be able to rise above this view of life. Religion needs to be replaced by science.”

However, (Vitz, 1988) claims that Freud identified himself with the Anti-Christ and (Velikowsky, 1941) goes further to state that Freud had made a pact with the Devil. Freud’s contribution has been to highlight the importance of the Unconscious in the human personality. Otherwise, his view of the human personality is a bleak one, claiming that we are at the mercy of our inner impulses which are often depraved

It is clear that the founding father of modern psychology was much preoccupied with the relationship between the occult and mental health.

2.4.1.5 The Theory of Carl Jung

The other classical psychologist who explored the occult and mental health is Carl Jung. He was a devoted follower of Freud, but eventually split with Freud considering that his theories were unbalanced especially due to their preoccupation with sex.

Carl Jung worked at the Burghölzli Psychiatric Clinic under Eugen Bleuler the inventor of the term schizophrenia. During that time, in 1902, Jung wrote his doctoral dissertation entitled: “On the Psychology and Pathology of So-called Occult Phenomena”. As with Freud, there appears a strong focus on the occult and an attempt to explain it in more scientific terms. Jung developed his own theory of personality and proposed that each person has a “shadow” side to their personality and it is here that the occult can be located.

Jung kept a personal journal which was kept locked in a vault in a Swiss Bank after his death. In 2009, with the permission of his family, it was released for publication. It is known as “the red book” or the “Liber Novus”. The New York Times described it thus:

“Man skids into midlife and loses his soul. Man goes looking for soul. After a lot of instructive hardship and adventure — taking place entirely in his head — he finds it again.” (Times, 2009).

According to the newspaper article, there are varied opinions about this book. A literary critic who read it has stated that it was so absorbing, that one would want to read it from cover to cover without taking a breath. However, another literary critic regarded it as the work of a psychotic.

The article goes on to explain how Jung's view of human personality was more wholesome than Freud's which saw it as the repository of repressed drives. Instead, Jung sees the unconscious as a basically good part of the human personality and advocates spirituality without the need of institutional religion. Thus, Jung is an inspiration for the New Age movement and also for psychotherapy which is now widely used throughout the developed world.

Jung's original thesis was based on a study of a 15 year old girl who was a medium and appeared to have paranormal powers which caused a dining room table to split in two and the blade of a sharp knife to split into pieces. Jung was sure that it was possible to explore and find a more scientific explanation for such paranormal experiences. It results in assigning the occult, not to the Devil, who is an archetype but to the unconscious. By studying the unconscious, Jung believed that it was possible to achieve integration. In that way, Jung conceived of the relationship between the occult and mental health.

This book shows how Jung induced states of hallucinations in order to access his own unconscious and face down his own demons. Tapping into the unconscious, for Jung, is the way to understand dreams and magic, what he calls "the spirit of the depths".

Both Freud and Jung stand at the origins of modern analytical psychology. All developments in those fields since cannot ignore the contributions made by these two thinkers and practitioners. However, Jung's typology of human personality which underlies the MBPTI referred to earlier is open to the same criticisms already levelled at trait-type theories. Briefly stated, the basic dispositional traits are subjectively chosen so

that we cannot be sure that there are not others. Secondly, these dispositional traits are treated on a par with each other but without any empirical foundation for doing so. The same conclusion reached by (Jungmyer, 2006) applies here, namely, on what basis is an attempt to breakdown the human personality into constituent elements been made? It may well be the case that such a paradigm is not valid at all.

2.4.1.6 Erikson and Marcia

Following in the Psychodynamic tradition of human personality are a number of theorists who have made significant contributions to Psychoanalytical theories of human personalities. It is beyond the scope of this thesis to refer to all of them but just two are noted here because of their importance for consumerism.

Firstly, is the work of Erikson, who described the life cycle of human personality (unlike Freud who stopped at adolescence) from childhood to old age. Each stage of development involves a crisis which must be resolved before the person can successfully progress to the next stage. For example, the crisis of adolescence is that of “identity”. The adolescent is trying to discover who they are in the world and this involves some emotional detachment from family. Similarly, the crisis of old age is that of self- worth. The older person is trying to answer the question as to whether their life has been worthwhile in any sense.

It is easy to see the attraction of the occult for younger people going through their identity crisis. One of the issues faced by younger people in Eriksonian terms is based on ideals, “what ideals will I live by?” Perhaps this signals a danger point of the attraction of the

occult during a period of vulnerability. Equally, at other life stages, the attractiveness of mediums during a period of bereavement is all too real with their pretensions to be able to contact what is “beyond”. However, having recourse to a medium during bereavement may be damaging in interrupting the natural “grieving” process which involves feelings of pain and loss. By short-circuiting the natural grieving process, occult practices may actually contribute to later mental health issues.

Another post-Freudian who may be important for a consideration of consumer behaviour is Marcia (1966). The other world is that of actuality – what we actually are or what the world actually is. It is the interplay of these two worlds which paint a picture of the human person. This point seems to be understood well by the advertising industry with its emphasis on wish fulfilment in advertising. Frequently, advertisements for cars show them travelling through open space – even through the desert – not caught up in traffic jams in city centres which is nearer to the truth of the destiny of most cars – and their drivers. Advertising also frequently appeal to people’s aspirations for a greener planet by presenting their products in eco-friendly ways – again, in Marcian terms, appealing to our sense of wish fulfilment

2.5 Philosophical Critiques of Occult Consumer Behaviour

Finally, no treatment of occult consumption would be complete without viewing the phenomenon from a philosophical viewpoint. The Frankfurt School is proposed because of its critique of modern society in general and of consumerism in particular. The main philosophers of this school are Adorno, Marcuse, Horkheimer and Habermas. (Adorno &

Horkheimer, 1979) It is noteworthy that this school also produced a critique of modern psychoanalysis. The general name for this philosophical school is Critical Theory.

Of the writers in Critical Theory, Theodor Adorno, perhaps, best exemplifies its critique of modern advanced capitalist societies. He speaks of “reification” as the means by which various movements and activities gain an ontological status which is often unjustified. Equally, he develops the notion of ideology to include television. So, for example, positions on various questions are explored in soap dramas. He refutes the view that soap dramas really reflect modern life. Instead, he prefers to see these dramas as the means of manipulation of the public and the normalisation of activities which would otherwise be open to question.

Adorno views advertising and marketing as part of the culture industry. Manipulating the public into consumer activity is nothing less than the capitalistic exploitation of the many to serve the interests of the few. Marketing gains an “aura” of respectability by its inclusion in University programmes. In fact, for Adorno, recent developments in education, means that this activity has now become part of the consumer culture industry with its learning programmes being described as products.

Considering the occult, it too has been transformed into a commodity. The literature shows how it is now a consumer item in its own right. Apart from that, the occult can also be used as part of marketing techniques. The danger of “reification”, to use Adorno’s term, is therefore high. As the occult is given ontological status, a process of “demystification” occurs and the occult is surrounded by an “aura” of normality. The

literature has also commented on the lack of any ethical considerations in this process. Thus, the occult is promoted everywhere in our own culture. Despite the irrational nature of the occult, despite the research linking the occult to mental disorders, it has now become “normalised”. Such a process ought to be of concern in view of the implications for health and welfare especially of younger people. It ought also to be of concern to the occult industry, newspaper and TV advertising, in view of the potential threat in the future of legal action and compensation claims.

Adorno is generally considered as being one of the foremost philosophers of the Continental tradition in the 20th Century. He wrote on issues as diverse as musicology and metaphysics and includes a critical analysis of the metaphysics of Hegel, a critical report on the astrology feature of the Los Angeles Times and jazz music.

Adorno could be regarded as highly critical of many conventional aspects of modern life. He was especially concerned with human suffering and sees the development of modern civilisation as being achieved through the subjugation of nature and through oppressive political ideologies.

It promoted a range of philosophical, sociological, political and economic studies and investigated such social phenomena as music, film and mass entertainment. The school was particularly critical of capitalism and considered how football and pop music has meant the subjugation of human competitive sports and entertainment to the aims of capitalism. This is not to say that the school advocated an uncritical acceptance of Marxism, for it also viewed how Marxism itself as applied in Russia was equally

oppressive and restrictive of human freedom. In fact, even though highly critical of capitalism, the Critical Theorists viewed it as a far more adaptable system than doctrinaire Marxism. This led to a break with Marxism as an oppressive force. However, the school remained highly critical of liberal capitalism.

Critical Theory originated in the Frankfurt School but has now come to be recognised as a distinct field of philosophical inquiry as well as a methodology for conducting research. Yet it does not directly engage in any political acts. Rather it is “a tradition of social thought that, in part at least, takes its cue from its opposition to the wrongs and ills of modern societies on the one hand, and the forms of theorizing that simply go along with or seek to legitimate those societies on the other hand.” (Bernstein, 1995)

Critical Theory is especially opposed to forms of the social sciences which rely on imitating the methodologies of the natural sciences and believe that human behaviour and society could be understood in purely positivistic terms. Thus, modern marketing would be equally critiqued for its reduction of human beings to units of consumption. Adherence to a positivistic approach meant that aspects of human life and behaviour which lay outside the domain of the observable were simply excluded. Thus, positivistic approaches to studying human behaviour were critiqued as presenting a false view of human social action. Furthermore, social reality as presented by positivism was viewed as politically conservative and supported the status quo. It amounted to the reification of an objective social reality without taking into consideration the role of the observer in constructing that reality. Adorno was highly critical of positivistic social science and of its philosophical basis.

This lengthy introduction to the Critical Theory was necessary in order to appreciate a major contribution which he makes to our understanding of occult consumerism. This is mainly drawn on his critique of “the enlightenment”, an essay written jointly with Horkheimer (Adorno & Horkheimer, 1979) and of particular relevance to our understanding of the emergence of occult consumerism.

The essay presents a critical analysis of the phenomenon of “the enlightenment” as well as their treatment of what they term “the instrumentalisation of reason”.

The Enlightenment refers to a period of history spanning 1600-1800s, which involved ideals of human freedom which were thought to characterise modernity. The main thinkers and writers of the Enlightenment shared a vision of a new social and political order which meant the end of what was viewed as previous oppressive and “unenlightened” systems. Individuals were now seen to be free from dogmas that were intellectually indefensible. The means whereby this new order would come about was through the use of human reason. The older dogmatic regimes were seen as having curtailed human reason. The Enlightenment meant the emancipation of human reason. Man was not at the mercy of some deity or godly authority; instead, man was seen as free to use his reason to take ownership of his destiny. Adorno and Horkheimer (Adorno & Horkheimer, 1979) both refused to accept this over-optimistic version of the results of rationalising human society. They asserted, “the Enlightenment has always aimed at liberating men from fear and establishing their sovereignty. Yet the fully enlightened earth radiates disaster triumphant.”

Firstly, it is necessary to mention that Adorno and Horkheimer (Adorno & Horkheimer, 1979) do not understand the Enlightenment in the same way that it is commonly presented. There are several important differences. To begin with, they do not see the enlightenment as confined to the 17th and 18th centuries: “Adorno and Horkheimer do not use the term ‘enlightenment’ primarily to designate a historical period ranging from Descartes to Kant. Instead they use it to refer to a series of related intellectual and practical operations which are presented as demythologizing, secularizing or disenchanting some mythical, religious or magical representation of the world.” ,Jarvis) (1998 .

Adorno and Horkheimer propose two theses which lie at the heart of their critique. These two theses are stated thus: “myth is already enlightenment, and enlightenment reverts to mythology.” (Adorno & Horkheimer, 1979) The second of these theses is a more in-depth philosophical understanding of postmodernism and New Age, the shift away from rationality and the return to mythological or magical interpretations of reality. This is a radical departure from what is often the accepted view of human progress and civilisation which sees such as progress as inevitable and linear. The accepted view sees humanity as progressing cognitively through a number of stages in gaining an understanding and control of reality. It was seen as beginning with mythological explanations; these were overtaken by the main established religions and finally, religion is overtaken by scientific explanations. In this view, the scientific worldview which emerged in the 17th and 18th centuries brought about a radical break with the religious world view which went before it.

This assumption is critically challenged by Adorno and Horkheimer who see that “myth is already enlightenment”. There is a basic continuity in human thought. Both myth and enlightenment are simply modes of representing reality, both are legitimate attempts to explain and give an account of reality.

Their second thesis requires more explanation and is the one that is of particular interest for this research in attempting to give an explanation for the rise of occult consumerism and the “New Age” which characterises postmodernism. It involves a critique of human reason. Adorno and Horkheimer attempt to show how the rationalisation of society, which accompanied the so-called “Enlightenment” actually reverts again to a mythical order. They argue this reversion to the mythical is nothing less than a betrayal of the emancipatory claims that were characteristic of the so-called “Enlightenment”. But they actually see this betrayal as being essentially rooted in this very enlightenment. It is actually a return to an uncritical way of understanding reality. It is a return to a condition where individuals see themselves as having little control over reality.

For Adorno and Horkheimer, the “Enlightenment” was actually a process of demythologisation. The underlying aim of the “Enlightenment” was the assertion of human control of reality and nature itself: the very foundation of the “enlightenment” was attempt at mastering and controlling nature. It entailed the belief that man could comprehend and practically dominate his environment. This belief also held that technological societies could, in time, find solutions to all problems; progress was seen as inevitable. The limitations on such progress were not seen as resting on some mythological deity but in the technology and scientific knowledge currently available to

man. Human sovereignty over nature entailed the abandonment of such mythological beliefs and the very disenchantment of nature itself: “the program of the Enlightenment was the disenchantment of the world; the dissolution of myths and the substitution of knowledge for fancy. From now on, matter would at last be mastered without any illusion of ruling or inherent powers, of hidden qualities.” (Adorno & Horkheimer, 1979) Myth was viewed as a kind of anthropomorphism created by mankind as a way of explaining reality, a pre-scientific way of knowing reality. Thus, the “Enlightenment” replaces and supersedes myth and religion.

Many scholars would not dispute the first thesis, that is that myth and the “Enlightenment” serve the same function as understanding. Adorno and Horkheimer, writing in the 1930’s appear to have been prophetic in predicting the rise again of superstition and the occult. Their claim is that the “Enlightenment” led to the belief that nature was an object to be subdued and controlled by man. Man has become the subject as distinct from the object, a view that is clear in the works of Kant and Descartes: “the concordance between the mind of man and the nature of things that he had in mind is patriarchal: the human mind, which overcomes superstition, is to hold sway over a disenchanted nature.” (Adorno & Horkheimer, 1979) Thus, nature becomes an object of the human will: “myth turns into enlightenment, and nature into mere objectivity. Men pay for the increase of their power with alienation from that over which they exercise their power. Enlightenment behaves towards things as a dictator toward men. He knows them in so far as he can manipulate them. The man of science knows things in so far as he can make them. In this way, their potentiality is turned to his own ends.” (Adorno & Horkheimer, 1979).

Adorno and Horkheimer develop this position further by asserting that this “Enlightenment” view leads to a world view of nature as living independently of human beings and that ultimately, man becomes merely the object of the very form of reason he has, himself, created. Adorno and Horkheimer assert that survival for man within “enlightened” societies demands that he conform to this form of reason.

What Adorno and Horkheimer are claiming is that forms of knowledge to which man must now submit and accept as authoritative is that the only true world is that world which is revealed to us through the instrumentality of human reason alone. Adorno develops this view of modernity by asserting that its claim is that reality can only be known as facts that can be objectively verifiable; any other claims to knowledge are thus viewed as fallacious. Man’s control over nature depends on the accumulation of hard, objective data and that this data, these verifiable “facts” purport to offer us a full and true account of reality. The only legitimate knowledge is that which is founded on objectively verifiable facts. The question as to whether these facts might change is ruled out by enlightened thought as a pseudo-problem. Everything is thus represented as a kind of fate, no less unalterable and unquestionable than mythical fate itself.” Thus, the material world appears as no less immutable than it was to pre-scientific man: “Hence enlightenment reverts to mythology, which it never really knew how to elude. For in its figures mythology had the essence of the status quo: cycle, fate, and domination of the world reflected as the truth and deprived of hope.” (Adorno & Horkheimer, 1979). Facts have assumed the same function that belief in mythical beings or forces once performed by representing reality as something external to which man must conform:

“enlightenment is totalitarian” (Adorno & Horkheimer, 1979).

Reality is thus reduced to an object of calculation, exclusively to that which is quantifiable. There is only one form of reason which is sufficient for this purpose and it is necessarily abstract and formal. Thus, Adorno and Horkheimer argue that the “enlightenment” is driven by a quest to gain mastery over nature and reduce it to being understandable by one single approach which is that of human reasoning.

However, “the means by which nature has been mastered have rebounded upon us”. Morality becomes reduced to a set of formal maxims based on “objectivity” as is found in Kant’s moral philosophy. Concepts of human “well-being” or the “good life” are banished. The concept of “goodness” does not fit with the hard facts of human reason; instead, for example, it is “quality” that matters as is the case with the quality of commodities or of services.

The same point is made succinctly by the poet Eliot in his poem “The Hollow Men”

“Humankind cannot stand very much reality”,

And

“between the Idea

And the Reality

Between the Motion

And the Act

Falls the Shadow

A point also made by Carl Jung:

“ People cannot stand too much reality”

Adorno is highly critical of many of the consequences of “the Enlightenment”. He focuses on many aspects of the mass consumer society. For example, he views mass entertainment as a form of domination. He was one of first philosophers to recognise the potential social, political, and economic power that was possible through the entertainment industry. He called this ‘the culture industry’ which he viewed as characteristic forms of domination operating within capitalist societies. He goes on to show how those aspects of human life such as sports and entertainment which many people regard as free from control are actually subject to capitalist control.

Adorno viewed the culture industry as a key capitalist mechanism for binding individuals, both as consumers and as producers. Many sociologists describe modern societies as fragmented; Adorno disagrees. Despite the diversity of cultures in modern societies, the culture industry creates a uniform system which demands the conformity of all, whatever their cultural values might be. Commenting on critical theory (Held, 1980) has described the culture industry thus: “people are now being treated as objects, machines, outside as well as inside the workshop. The consumer, as the producer, has no sovereignty. The culture industry, integrated into capitalism, in turn integrates consumers from above. Its goal is the production of goods that are profitable and consumable. It operates to ensure its own reproduction.” (Held, 1980)

However, Adorno takes his argument further than this. He asserts that the culture

industry in addition to being profit driven also has the effect of diverting our attention away from developing our critical faculties regarding the social conditions in which we live. He sees it as domination by subverting our psychological development. Not surprisingly, this point is viewed by many as contentious. However, Adorno insists that the commodities of the culture industry merely extend into our free time the same dominating forces which control our working lives. He sees the industrialisation of music and sport as the extension of capitalist domination into our spare time and diverting us away from critical thinking. Thus, the very quality of our leisure time, meant to be a balance to our working time is obliterated so that even precious quality time falls under the domination of capitalism: “amusement under late capitalism is the prolongation of work. It is sought after as an escape from the mechanized work process, and to recruit strength in order to be able to cope with it again. But at the same time mechanization has such a power over man’s leisure and happiness, and so profoundly determines the manufacture of amusement goods, that his experiences are inevitably after-images of the work process itself.”. We remain simply consumers of the culture industry, recipients of what we are presented with but with little opportunity to make any contribution to it. Whether it is a CD recording or a TV show or movie, as consumers, we have no active or interpretive role other than to purchase the products. He sees the culture industry as no more than an endless repetition of the same form of commodity. What appears to be a diverse range of products from the culture industry is actually a standard menu creating the impression that we have the freedom to choose. But in reality, we are restricted to a range of uniform, mass produced products.

Adorno focused, in particular, on the pop music industry. He states, “The counterpart to the fetishism of music is a regression of listening. It is contemporary listening which has regressed, arrested at the infantile stage. Not only do the listening subjects lose, along with freedom of choice and responsibility, the capacity for conscious perception of music, but they stubbornly reject the possibility of such perception. They are not childlike, as might be expected on the basis of an interpretation of the new type of listener in terms of the introduction to musical life of groups previously unacquainted with music. But they are childish; their primitivism is not that of the undeveloped, but that of the forcibly retarded.” (Adorno T. , 1978). On this point Adorno draws on Kant’s distinction between maturity and immaturity. Adorno’s analysis appears to be correct when one considers a country like India, with its very rich tradition of music and its own folklore actually going down the same road as developed economies by creating its own pop music industry and Bollywood which imitates Hollywood and ignores its own rich heritage of folklore.

Consumption of packaged music is but a prime example of what is happening elsewhere in the culture industry and this includes television, sports and astrology. From the perspective of this study, it is worth noting especially Adorno’s analysis of the astrology column of the Los Angeles Times.

Adorno subjected the astrology column of the Los Angeles Times to a critical textual analysis. He aimed at discovering what underlying rationality lay behind astrology as presented in the daily press. Adorno was, thereby, treating astrology as a serious subject. He viewed astrology as symptomatic of the effects of complex, capitalist societies. There is widespread interest in astrology; why else would the press utilise it as a daily feature.

Thus, astrology results from a fetish regarding the conditions in which we live daily through the creation of an illusion that our human destiny is determined by the stars. It is noteworthy that he does not consider astrology as irrational but instead, that it actually introduces a certain degree of rationality by providing people with a ritual or fetish for learning how we can live with social conditions which are outside of our control. Thus, he defined astrology as “an ideology for dependence, as an attempt to strengthen and somehow justify painful conditions which seem to be more tolerable if an affirmative attitude is taken towards them.” .

However, Adorno makes the point that the domination of our lives is not simply the result of one sector of the culture industry. Instead, when taken together, they form a powerful network of control and domination, even of our leisure time, by the forces of capitalism. Our autonomy is prohibited through the mediating roles played by the various sectors of the culture industry. “The form and content of the culture industry is increasingly misidentified as a veritable expression of reality: individuals come to perceive and conceive of reality through the pre-determining form of the culture industry.... the commodities produced by the culture industry may be ‘rubbish’, but their effects upon individuals are deadly serious”.

However, some philosophers have taken Adorno to task over his analysis of the “Enlightenment”. Jurgen Habermas, while agreeing generally with both thesis, points to a contradiction in Adorno’s argument. The argument is that Adorno’s very critique of the “Enlightenment” actually proves that domination is nowhere near as total and complete as he posited, otherwise no critique would be possible. Nevertheless, Adorno has

provided an account and critique of modern consumerism and has presented a deep and reflective account of the rise of the occult and the return of the mythological which has proven to have been most prophetic.

2.6 Theological Perspectives on Occult Consumer Behaviour

2.6.1 Occult Consumology

Earlier in the literature review, note was made of how modern advertising techniques employ associations with magic in appealing to the imagination of the prospective consumer (Vyse, 1997). This is what Hirschman (Hirschman, 1986) had earlier referred to as “consumology”.

Consumology, in general, and occult consumology in particular, can be viewed as outcomes of postmodernism in which there has been a shift away from rationalism and positivistic realism towards the irrational approaches including superstition. As demonstrated in an earlier section, this is understood by Adorno as the return to the mythological. A good example was presented online by “Maria” the clairvoyant in which an appeal was made to the imagination by the use of magic numbers. To receive the full list of lucky numbers, specially personalised, involved a payment by debit or credit card, but as a hook to draw in the prospective consumer, 5 was presented` as the main lucky number. Why 5 was explained to be lucky was as follows: Think of any number (of any size). Now add the next number e.g. if the first number was 426, now add 427. Next add 9. Divide the total by 2. Take away the first number and the remainder is always 5! (<http://lucky-day-uk.com>) Really magic! However, elementary algebra offers a perfectly

rational explanation. If the first number is x then the next number up is $x+1$. The sum of these numbers is $x + x+1 = 2x+1$. Adding 9 makes this $2x + 10$. Dividing by 2 gives a result of $x + 5$. Subtracting the original number x will always leave 5. But I can use this process for justifying any number as lucky, e.g. if I want to make a case for 7 being lucky, instead of adding 9, I simply add 13! Another recent example of online consumerism was based on the date 12th December as being especially auspicious (12/12/12). That people who are vulnerable to this type of online occult consumerism may base important decisions like buying a house or making an investment is clearly a cause for concern. In this second part of the literature review, this practice will be commented on further.

2.6.2 The Paradigm Shift – A Critique

An understanding of this phenomenon finds an apt summary in a remark attributed to the writer G.K. Chesterton: “When people stop believing in God, they don’t believe in nothing - they believe in anything”. In other words, the shift away from scientific realism which is postmodernism has also resulted in the decline in mainstream religions, especially those that were based on rationality. Traditional Christianity, especially Catholicism, was based on rationality, particularly the appeal to reason in giving an explanation of the faith that was worked out in the philosophy of scholasticism, which was the dominant method of critical thought employed in European Universities from around 500 to 1450 C.E. (<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/13548a.htm>). Of course, the “belief in God” element of mainstream religions is sometimes presented as “irrational” by opponents of these religions. However, Scholasticism sees “belief in One God” not as irrational, but rather as “super-rational”. In other words, there are truths and

realities that are higher than human intelligence can grasp, but these are not irrational. Similarly, within Islam, there is, for example, an alternative to conventional banking based on the rationality of Shariah Law which links economic activity to the real value of an asset rather than an artificial value derived solely from monetary growth (Abdul Gafoor, 1995).

2.6.3 The rise of superstitious behaviour

At the same time as mainstream religions have declined, there has been an increase in interest in the occult and in occult consumerism. Sancho (Sancho, 2001) has shown how, by the advent of the new millennium, in a survey of attitudes to the occult, already clairvoyance was being viewed as “normal”. Further evidence of the popular shift towards irrationality is provided by (Roach, 2004) where it is claimed that absences from work due to superstitious beliefs in Friday 13th as “unlucky” was costing the US economy some \$1 billion. Fear of the number 13 has been termed “triskadecaphobia”. The fact that people can base important even life changing decisions on such superstitions is deeply concerning. Friday 13th occurs at least once each year, more frequently twice and rarely three times each year with corresponding costs to the economy due to irrational behaviour based on superstition. In the US, room 13 or floor 13 is often skipped for this reason. Of course, in actual reality, the room now number 14 is actually the 13th room!

2.6.4 Critique of superstitious practices in the Abrahamic Faiths

Each of the mainstream Abrahamic Faiths (Islam, Judaism and Christianity), strongly

prohibit superstitious practices as sinful, as they imply a lack of trust in the providence and care of the One True God. Prayer and petition are seen as reliance on the providence of God but are not attempts to manipulate God as in superstitious practices. Thus, superstition is seen as a parody of true religion. Far from offering an escape route from harsh realities of life, instead what the traditional religions offered was the reassurance that God stands by those who trust Him in their trials and sufferings. Thus, the Book of Job in the Old Testament, presents the character of Job as still holding on to his trust in God, even though everything that was regarded as blessings (fruitful wife, prosperity of land and cattle, long life etc,) has failed in his life. Basing his work on the experiences of the Nazi concentration camps, Viktor Frankl was able to refer back to the figure of Job and his outstanding clinging onto faith in God even in the face of great adversity (Frankl, 2006). Having survived life in the concentration camp, Frankl developed his own approach to psychiatry, based on finding meaning in life even in great adversity. This became known as “Logotherapy”.

Outside of the confines of Christianity, Ernst Bloch was similarly able to draw on the brutalities of the Nazi concentration camps to develop a philosophy of hope (Bloch, 1986). This philosophy of hope, in turn, inspired the theologian Jurgen Moltmann to develop a theology of hope, drawn from the Holocaust experience, as an approach to understanding the harshness of life in the late 20th century in many parts of the world (Moltmann, 1967) . And the paradigm of trust in God, in the face of adversity, is seen in the sufferings and death of Jesus, “the just One”. Indeed, Moltmann’s theology was part

of a movement known as liberation theology which was especially relevant in dictatorial regimes in South America and Latin America.

However relevant religious belief and practice accompanied by liberation theology may be in a Latin American or South American context, there can be little doubt that in North America and Europe the appeal of New Age spirituality with its illusion of immediate gratification has prevailed and most mainstream religions have been in decline.

The point of the above discussion is to show that, within the three Abrahamic faiths, belief in God is not an illusion. They do not offer the comfort zone which is offered in occult consumerism. The researcher here considers it a necessity to discover a critique of occult consumerism other than one based on psychology. Philosophically, such a critique can be found in the Frankfurt School, particularly in Theodor Adorno's critique of modern advertising and the reification of the sports industry. Before saying "I enjoyed watching the Olympics or the World Cup on television", I should pause to consider the extent to which human competition and physical fitness have been transformed into an industry and capitalistic enterprise. But equally, in the light of Adorno's work, the tendency in people towards superstition has also been transformed into commodities for sale and for profit.

However, just as occult practices and superstitions are parodies of authentic religion, a critique based on psychology alone is inadequate. Contemporary occultism and occult consumerism should also be critiqued by theology. A much neglected science in many contemporary universities, (many universities do not have a philosophy or theology

department, as if these bodies of knowledge had little to offer to contemporary scholarly discourse). Theology is the science of man in relationship to his ultimate destiny. It is concerned with the ultimate meaning of life.

The neglect of theology has resulted from a utilitarian approach to human knowledge where academic courses and programmes are now viewed as “products”. Theology is not very useful so it is difficult to market it as a profitable commodity. Thus, even the universities have fallen into what Adorno would view as the transformation of knowledge into a saleable commodity. This is not to say that universities should not meet the needs of the economy and society. But universities should do more than that by promoting speculative sciences and the arts.

Thus, the researcher argues for a critique of occult consumerism based on philosophy, particularly Critical Theory, and on theology. A critique of occult consumerism and superstition from a theological perspective will now be presented.

The theologies based on the mainstream faiths of Islam, Judaism and Christianity must, today, be viewed as counter-culture. The way of life these religions propose to their adherents is not the “opium of the people” as Karl Marx once proposed. Rather it is the occult and superstition which now offers this opium. The consumer society encourages a hedonistic approach to life with a strong emphasis on immediate gratification. Instead of this, the mainstream religions advocate moderation in living, the obligation to share resources with the poor, patience rather than immediate gratification and the need for fasting and abstinence at certain times to avoid being trapped into a purely materialistic

view of life. This is an important point to make. Consumerism, advertising and immediate gratification have now become reified and normalised, so that fasting and abstinence are now considered “weird practices”. The need to combat overweight is met by special diets which are now also commodities for sale and the gymnasium and keep fit industries similarly capitalise on the need for health regimes, a need which was created, in the first place, by the consumer society. The commercialism that surrounds the weeks leading up to Christmas, for example, run counter to the traditional four weeks before Christmas in the Christian Churches, called Advent, which is meant to be a time of prayer, reflection and fasting.

2.6.5 Scholastic Critique of superstition

In the Scholastic Theology of St Thomas Aquinas, superstition is considered as an excess of religion. (Aquinas, 1257 – 1274). At the opposite end of this spectrum is irreligion. True, authentic religion lies in the middle, what Aquinas calls “the virtue of religion”. Thus, superstition is the sin of excess of religion and differs from the vice of irreligion which sins by defect. In the middle lies the theological virtue of religion, neither excessive nor defective. True religion implies “balance”.

Aquinas and Scholasticism in general consider 4 main types of superstition:

- Improper worship of the One True God. This includes the adding-on of improper elements to the simple officially recognised rites and practices of worship of God.
- Idolatry which is the setting up of creatures in the place of the One True God
- Divination, which is the attempt to gain knowledge of future events or things

known only to God

- Vain observances which include the occult arts and magic.

The list of superstitious practices is quite extensive and includes astrology, charms, amulets, palm reading, tarot cards, devil worship and Satanism. Many superstitious practices involve irrational beliefs that carrying out certain rituals will bring about some effect, of which, rationally speaking, that ritual is quite incapable of bringing about. Note that this is diametrically opposed to the worship and rituals of Islam, Judaism and Christianity which only are focused on God and not on the participants in the first place. Those religions do contain prayer of petition in which favours are sought of God, but only if these favours are in accordance with the will of God. Having prayed for something, the believer then waits patiently for God's answer, whatever that may be. This is the direct opposite of magical and superstitious practices which are attempts to manipulate God or other supernatural powers. Accordingly, the mainstream religions of Islam, Judaism and Christianity, in renouncing superstitious practices and occult consumerism, stand in stark opposition to the prevailing culture in consumer societies where people are manipulated into adopting a hedonistic lifestyle based on immediate gratification.

Earlier in this literature review, the connection between occult practices and mental health **had** been elaborated on. Those studies also found little evidence that authentic religious worship in the mainstream religions was causally linked to mental illness. Thus, a critical view of occult practices and occult consumerism raises serious issues

about these practices and should include an ethical critique.

2.6.6 The Occult as a Promotional Tool

Much of the literature has focused on the current interest in the occult and how it has become a commodity in its own right. In addition to the occult itself being a commercial enterprise, the occult is also used to market other unconnected products. In fact, marketers are taking the current interest in the occult seriously enough to use it in their marketing. As previously mentioned, some hotels omit having a Room 13 either due to their own superstitious beliefs or those of customers. 7 is considered lucky and is used in Wal-Mart promotions. The use of magic and fantasy in advertising has been outlined by (Simon, 1978). Advertising targeting children often make use of witches and wizards. Certain advertisements have normalised witches as a best friend of a human. The dangers of such normalisation have not passed unnoticed. Hence, recently the UK Government has made it illegal for psychics to present their services in a normalised way. Such services must clearly state that it is only for entertainment and must also state that it has no scientific basis. Doubtless, psychics can place this “health warning” in the small print. This legislation arose out of an expressed concern that young people and adults were developing mental health disorders due to superstitious beliefs and practices (The Guardian, 2009).

(Campbell, 1998) has pointed out the importance of the “imagination” in modern consumerism. (Brann, 1991) lists six separate approaches to the use of the imagination in marketing and one of these is the use of occult imagination. (Hyman , 1990) stated that the goals of advertising focus on ambiguity and uncertainty, and correlates this to

deception.

Finally, no treatment of occult consumption would be complete without viewing the phenomenon from a philosophical viewpoint. The Frankfurt School is proposed because of its critique of modern society in general and of consumerism in particular. The main philosophers of this school are Adorno, Marcuse, Horkheimer and Habermas. It is noteworthy that this school also produced a critique of modern psychoanalysis. The general name for this philosophical school is Critical Theory.

Of these, Theodor Adorno has addressed modern advanced capitalist societies. He speaks of “reification” as the means by which various movements and activities gain an ontological status which is often unjustified. Equally, he develops the notion of ideology to include television. So, for example, positions on various questions are explored in soap dramas. He refutes the view that soap dramas really reflect modern life. Instead, he prefers to see these dramas as the means of manipulation of the public and the normalisation of activities which would otherwise be open to question.

Adorno sees advertising and marketing as part of the culture industry, manipulating the public into consumer activity is nothing less than the capitalistic exploitation of the many to serve the interests of the few. Marketing gains an “aura” of respectability by its inclusion in University programmes. In fact, for Adorno, recent developments in education mean that this activity has now become part of the consumer culture industry with its learning programmes being described as products.

Considering the occult, it too has been transformed into a commodity. The literature

shows how it is now a consumer item in its own right. Apart from that, the occult can also be used as part of marketing techniques. The danger of “reification”, to use Adorno’s term, is therefore high. As the occult is given ontological status, a process of “demystification” occurs and the occult is surrounded by an “aura” of normality. The literature has also commented on the lack of any ethical considerations in this process. Thus, the occult is promoted everywhere in our own culture. Despite the irrational nature of the occult, despite the research linking the occult to mental disorders, it has now become “normalised”. Such a process ought to be of concern in view of the implications for health and welfare especially of younger people. It ought also to be of concern to the occult industry, newspaper and TV advertising, in view of the potential threat in the future of legal action and compensation claims

2.7 The Occult and Mental Disorders

(Carlson, A. N., Chua, & Timothy, 2009), refer to the findings of (Gallup & Newport, 1991) that some rituals and superstitious beliefs and practices are to be found in educated and well- adjusted healthy people. In that case, how can a link between superstition and mental health disorders be established? (Carlsen, A. N., Chua, & Timothy, 2009) put forward some arguments for such a linkage. They argue that the main thrust behind studies of superstition has been to serve the needs of consumer psychology. Therefore, more attention should be paid in such studies to the individual consumer and any possible adverse effects on the person resulting from this type of marketing tactic. They further argue that if a link could be found between superstitious beliefs and practices that it would have serious consequences for current marketing practices. For example, if

superstition based mental disorders could be attributed to their use in marketing, the floodgates could open for compensation claims as has happened in other marketing situations e.g. the tobacco industry in the US. Sancho (Sancho, 2001) has shown how certain segments of the population are more susceptible to superstitious practices and could, therefore, be viewed as vulnerable people from the point of view of this type of advertising or marketing. An alternative scale for linking superstition to mental disorders has used the Paranormal Scale of Tobacyk (Tobayck & Milford, 1983) to measure actual superstitious belief rather than predisposition. Eckblad (Eckblad & Chapman, 1983) devised a Magic Ideation Scale which actually considers magic ideation in itself as a form of mental disorder. Carlson et. al. (Carlsen, A. N., Chua, & Timothy, 2009) actually established a positive correlation between emotional instability and reliance on astrology. (Carlsen, A. N., Chua, & Timothy, 2009)C constructed a model based on a situational based trait superstition but drawing on other models such as the 3M Model (Carver & Scheier, 1990). (Carlsen, A. N., Chua, & Timothy, 2009) view the superstitious trait as a reflective construct that incorporates the important aspects of surface trait level behaviour. These include sports hero worship as well as astrology. A situational trait represents a certain tendency to consistent patterns of behaviour within a given set of circumstances. Thus, superstition itself is seen as a situational trait in itself rather than the result of a certain predisposition towards superstitious practices. Most commonly, compulsive-obsessive disorders have been associated with superstitious beliefs and behavior (Vyse, 1997). Obsessive thoughts or behaviour patterns are often difficult to treat effectively and have powerful influences on individuals. Vyse (Vyse, 1997) points

out that some of these behaviour patterns have become normalised, such as avoiding walking on cracks in the pavement or not walking under ladders. These may appear quite harmless in themselves but are, in fact, symptoms of mild compulsive-obsessive disorders according to (Vyse, 1997).

Schizophrenia is also associated with superstitious beliefs and practices. The American Psychiatric Association (APA) uses superstition as one of the criteria to look for in assessing or diagnosing schizophrenia. It may manifest itself in a generally superstitious outlook on life which may include a belief in clairvoyance or telepathy and be accompanied by visual or audio hallucinations and delusions. (American Psychiatric Association, 1994)

Superstitious beliefs and thinking can also lead on to psychosis. (Chapman, Chapman, Kwapil, Eckblad, & Zinser, 1994) (Chapman, Chapman, Kwapil, Eckblad, & Zinser, 1994) found high measures on psychosis and schizophrenia scales to be associated with high scores on magic ideation scales. Earlier, Eckblad (Eckblad & Chapman, 1983) Magical Ideation Scale included items representing psychotic thought patterns. A recent posting from the JoyOfSatan666 Yahoo Group (this is in the public domain) will help to illustrate this:

“ ive been using the pendulum to talk to my guardian and other demons for months now, they have shown themselves to me among other things so I know I have been talking to them, but all they are giving me is lies, nothing but lies, they are fucking with my head, I don’t even know what’s the truth and what’s not anymore. I don’t know if I’m talking to

enemies or not, can anyone help me to understand, or to give me advice on how to know for sure who and what I'm talking to, because if not I'm a go crazy I swear. Thanks, to whoever helped me."

However, there is still a need for much research into the linkage between superstition and various mental disorders, especially into the exact nature of the ways in which the two are linked. Agreement is still lacking between experts on what constitutes mild forms of superstition such as horoscopes to stronger forms such as Satan worship. Even within these categories, there can be mild and stronger forms, for example, merely dabbling in Satan worship to actual belief and commitment to Satan as to a deity.

One of the great problems in measuring the severity or extent of various factors is the elimination of bias in self-reporting. This is not to say that valuable insights may not be gained from studies based on self-reporting. However, there is also a need for studies based on more objective criteria. A number of such measuring scales have been developed and noteworthy among them is the General Health Questionnaire of (Goldberg & Williams, 1991) which was used in (Maltby, McCutcheon, Ashe, & Houran, 2001). This type of test allows for expressions of pathology to be identified without being biased by self-reporting. It is not only based on attitudinal responses but also takes actual consumption of superstitious practices into account. Generally, the more developed the form of superstition has become over time, the more difficult it will be to treat. In some cases, psychological damage may be permanent. (Mowen & Carlson, 2003)

A comprehensive treatment of research into the occult and its relationship to mental

health can be found in French (French, 1992); (French & Wilson, Cognitive Factors underlying Paranormal Beliefs and Experiences in Tall Tales about the Mind and Brain. Ed. Sala, S. D, 2007). (Irwin, 1993) ; (Irwin & Watt, An Introduction to Parapsychology. 5th ed, 2007), and (Wiseman & Watt, 2006). Explorations based on trait theory are generally based on the work of (Allport, 1955), who produced a classification of personality traits divided into three main categories: Cardinal Traits, Central Traits and Secondary Traits. Since then, many researchers have developed Allport's theory and classification further. Research into the relationship between the occult and mental health who use personality trait theory as a basis include: (Gilovich, 1991) and (Vyse, 1997).

The intense faith and belief in superstition is related to the emotional disparity like anxiety and neuroticism, as mentioned in the past researches and this is important to acknowledge so the psyche involved in the utilization of magic and superstition is exposed. According to (Irwin W. , 2000) and (Keinan, 2002), people who are inclined towards superstitious beliefs and practices are usually those who are apprehensive towards ambiguity and wish to have more control of things. According to Frazer (1922/1963) and Malinowski (Malinowski, 1948), the wish to control and steer clear of ambiguity is triggered and increased by psychological distress and a series of bad events in life. As a result, one of the most widespread ideologies involved in magical and superstitious thinking is the belief that control can be redeemed and a sense of relief and gratification is acquired by this heightened preference of superstitions.

60 percent of the urban and 90 percent of the rural population first consulted with faith

healers in case of emergency, according to the latest research held in the Indian state of Chennai and Kancheepuram. As stated by Dr R Nambi who is a senior consultant psychiatrist at the Institute of Mental Health, there is similarity between the population of urban and rural areas in this scenario and this heavy burden of superstition and stigma is still prevailing in this country. People still deny that it is a biological issue or a structural problem in the brain no matter how much they are explained, and their belief of evil spirits has not changed.

In developing psychological imbalances among their believers and followers, specific sources like psychics, witches, Satanists and those fortune tellers who do not practice extreme occult traditions play an influential role in these situations. According to the observation of Dr (Russell, 2008). of the University of California at Santa Barbara, there is no ambiguity in the fact that people with unstable mind are most affected by Satanism and they are psychologically scarred by it.

Whenever the experiences and encounters exceed the limit, occultists and their victims mostly admitted into a mental institution and require treatment as a result. He also mentions many Christian psychiatrists who claim that due to occultism being heavily practiced in some regions, the majority of patients in psychiatric clinics are being cured from occult oppression rather than mental disease and this situation is limited to places where occultism is regarded as a common tradition.

If people who associate negative reactions to their psychic experiences are not provided treatment soon, they would fall prey to long lasting psychological injury, as described in “Mental Health Need and the Psychic Community” by late (Rogo, 1973). Furthermore,

Isolation from social relationships, fear impending insanity and serious obsession with psychic experiences are included in the three highly negative consequences of psychic experiences, as emphasized by him.

According to the observations of Roger L. Moore, there are recurring parallel patterns between deeply engrossed occultist and a paranoid schizophrenic. He is a psychologist of religion at Chicago Theological Seminary. People who are very interested in occult practices must avoid involving in such activities as they are more exposed to danger and they are unable to turn it off or on, as forewarned by him. Due to involvement in such practices they have become paranoid psychotics. Altered states of consciousness are triggered by psychic and occult participation naturally and this is in itself a big threat.

According to (Vyse, 1997), Compulsive-Obsessive (C-O) disorders are the ones that are majorly recognized as related to superstitious attitude. As stated by (Vyse, 1997), obsessions, compulsions, reactions to those obsession that mostly occur repeatedly and hard to control, disturbing thoughts and impulses that are repetitive and hard to resist are all identified as the initial indications. Even though (Vyse, 1997) describes these indication as asymptomatic of minor C-O disorder but they are usually declared as normal behaviour in modern society like being scared of black cats and avoiding them, being skeptical of going under the ladder and staying away of cracks.

Containing many symptoms like delusions and hallucinations, schizophrenia is another important mental health disorder that prevails in superstitious people and sometimes

regarded as giving “multiple personalities”. Certainly, as stated in (American Psychiatric Association, 1994), American Psychiatric Association (APA) utilizes the factors like being superstitious, believing in clairvoyance, telepathy or “sixth sense” for calculating schizophrenia. Psychosis can also be developed due to this magical ideation or thinking.

According to the findings of (Chapman, Chapman, Kwapil, Eckblad, & Zinser, 1994), there is no doubt that in the area of psychosis and schizophrenia, the students with high score on their magical ideation received maximum marks. Furthermore, a longitudinal analysis of this research concluded that people with these consistent beliefs and views were likely to have maximum range of psychosis. The (Eckblad & Chapman, 1983) Magical Ideation scale incorporates elements like “There is a possibility that I might not be human and I have a fleeting feeling about it” or “Even though it is not visible, I have often felt the presence of something evil around me”. This scale is related to psychotic thinking and such is the connection between superstitious beliefs and schizophrenia that this is scale is most used to calculate magical ideation.

Even though APA includes assessments regarding superstitious beliefs like having a “sixth sense” and telepathy and it is utilized psychosis and schizophrenia scales, still this method faces a lot of criticism in calculating magical ideation. Hence, it is also claimed by APA that mental health disparity is strongly connected to superstitious beliefs.

Within psychology and social psychological literature, the range of utilizing superstitious

performances like using the service of a psychics, mediums, crystal balls, palmistry or fortune telling, tarot card readers and their connection to mental health is still not explained. Moreover, the concepts like whether utilization acts as a third party between self-reports of superstitious personality characteristics and mental health and calculating whether they are connected to each other are also unexplained.

Based on the above discussion a series of hypotheses are derived and a conceptual model developed to guide the practice of this study. This forms the next section.

2.8 Conceptual Framework and Hypotheses Development:

Occult or superstitious beliefs are an integral part of the human experience across different cultures and epochs. Occult or superstitious beliefs often predate the development of an organized religion and can often exist side by side with established and institutionalized religions that prescribe a certain set of ideas and religious practices (Wallace, 2013).

Similarly to religious beliefs, occult or superstitious beliefs often serve the purpose of explaining the inexplicable or reconciling a dissonance between certain events and the locus of control (Benson & Spilka, 1973). By attributing the locus of control to a higher power, individuals can accept certain events and make sense of seemingly inexplicable events. Significantly, occult and superstitious beliefs also have an impact on an individual's self-esteem. With regard to religious beliefs, (Benson & Spilka, 1973) observed that,

“Persons with different levels of self-esteem may find it difficult to share the same religious beliefs. A theology predicated on a loving, accepting God is cognitively compatible with high self-esteem but it could be a source of discomfort for a believer [with] low self-esteem. It does not make good cognitive sense to be loved when one is unlovable. Consequently, the person can march to a different theology”

As the quote above suggests individuals choose religious, occult, or superstitious beliefs to match their personal level of self-esteem. Because of this, an individual with low levels of self-esteem may be more likely to believe in occult or superstitious ideas as their negative and fateful implications confirm their personal cognitions of themselves and the world. Likewise, an individual with a high level of self-esteem is also more likely to perceive of himself/herself as being in control and will hence pay less attention to occult or superstitious beliefs.

2.8.1 Occult/Superstitious Beliefs or Behaviors and Hope/Life Satisfaction

Similarly to religion, occult or superstitious beliefs can hinder or promote hope and life satisfaction. A significant body of research found that religiosity can have positive effects on hope and life satisfaction; however, whether or not religious beliefs have positive or negative effects on hope and life satisfaction depends on an individual's attributions and interpretations (Fiori, Brown, Cortina, & Anto, 2006). Specifically, whether or not a person's hope and life satisfaction is promoted or hindered by religious beliefs depends on the loci of control (Fiori, Brown, Cortina, & Anto, 2006). An internal

locus of control is generally associated with higher levels of hope and life satisfaction. Conversely, if an individual feels helpless or believes to be lacking control, hope and life satisfaction may be lower. An external locus of control is also associated with the perception that higher powers have control over one's life (Fiori, Brown, Cortina, & Anto, 2006) .

Since religious beliefs and occult/superstitious beliefs are similar in that both attribute to locus of control to a higher power, it is reasonable to assume that occult or superstitious beliefs have a negative effect on hope and life satisfaction. An individual with strong occult or superstitious beliefs may feel less in control of their lives and may hence be less hopeful and satisfied.

Conversely, individuals who believe to be in control of their lives may be less prone to adhere to occult or superstitious beliefs and the notion that a higher power directly affects the course of their lives. It is, however, also possible that success in life in terms of income, for example, is viewed as a sign that a person is "chosen" by a higher power. The doctrine of predestination as incorporated in Calvinist beliefs is one example in which success or failure in life are attributed to a higher power (God). Therefore life satisfaction is used as one correlate of mental health in this study and the classic scale used by (Diener, Emmons., Larsen, & Griffin, 1985) operationalized for this construct given its widespread utility and almost universal endorsement as the most robust measurement scale for life satisfaction. Therefore we can hypothesise,

H1a Occult/Superstitious Beliefs have a negative effect on Life Satisfaction

H1b Occult/Superstitious Beliefs have a positive effect on Psychological Distress

2.8.2 Occult Beliefs/Superstitions and Depression

The relationship between occult beliefs/superstitions and mental disease such as depression has a long history. Before the advent of modern psychiatry and psychology, mental diseases including depression were attributed to spirits, demons, and the devil (Pfeifer, 1999). While these beliefs and superstitions have all but disappeared, albeit that some religious groups still perform exorcisms to rid an individual of mental ailments, occult beliefs and superstitions still play a role in non-Western societies in providing an explanatory framework for mental disease.

Modern psychiatry maintains that occult beliefs and superstitions or behavior do not cause depression or mental disease. Rather, individuals with pre-existing mental disease are more likely to adhere to occult or superstitious belief systems (Meyers, 2014). For example, individuals with psychotic depression may -- based on occult beliefs and superstitions -- commit acts of violence because they believe that a higher power wants them to commit those crimes. Likewise, someone with depression who is also inclined towards superstitious or occult beliefs may interpret certain events as signs that higher powers directly intervene in their lives and may cause misery or sadness.

One study on problem gamblers in China and the United States conducted (Kim, Ahlgren, & Bernhard, 2014) found that depression had a mediating effect on superstitious beliefs associated with problem gambling. Individuals suffering from depression were

more likely to engage in gambling based on superstitious beliefs than individuals who scored lower on the Beck Depression inventory. The authors also noted differences across different cultures, as superstitious beliefs are prevalent in Chinese culture. These findings highlight that overall mental health rather than superstitious or occult beliefs per se affect mental health and by extension behavior. The findings of the study also imply that treatment approaches for problem gamblers and people with depression need to take cultural belief systems into account.

According to (Dohrenwend, Shrout, Egri, & Mendelsohn, 1980), even though mental is not a disease or ailment by itself, it is usually placed in the category of psychological distress and characterized by its existence during the former month along a set of indicators. Furthermore, these indications are not described under any provided mental illness. According to (Kessler, et al., 2002), the K-scale was utilized to calculate the psychological distress. The principles provided by (Kessler, et al., 2002) were the main idea behind the functioning of this scale. For every question asked, a five-point response criterion is utilized that includes: “all of the time (5), most of the time (4), some of the time (3), little of the time (2) and none of the time (1). The diagnosis that indicates that there is no sign of distress is given when the score is as small as 10 and highest score of 50 signifies severe distress.” (Kessler, et al., 2002). Therefore the scale for psychological distress is deemed most relevant to measure depression and is used in this study. Therefore,

H2a Occult/Superstitious Consumption has a negative effect on Life Satisfaction

2.8.3 Regulation of Occult and Superstitious Advertising or Marketing

Advertising and marketing is regulated on a country-by-country basis. In Great Britain, for example, the Independent Television Commission (ITC) regulates advertising and marketing. One of the ITC regulations for the British market states that occult products are unacceptable and can neither be marketed nor advertised (Kolah, 2012) . Likewise, Rule 17 of the ITC regulations states that “No advertisement may exploit superstitions” (Kolah, 2012). The ITC rules do not specify what falls under the category of occult products or references to superstitions; however, advertisers in the UK adhere to these rules and avoid advertising and marketing that is likely to violate this rule.

Regulations of commercial speech – as advertising and marketing is also called in legal jargon -- are also common in other countries. In China, for example, the use of superstitious or occult references is also prohibited in marketing and advertising (Esarey & Xiao, 2011). In the United States, however, commercial speech is protected by the First Amendment, however, to a lesser degree than other speech (Brudney, 2012). This includes advertisement and marketing campaigns. Because commercial speech is not equal to other speech, the protections of the First Amendment do not fully apply. For example, commercial speech that is false or misleading can be banned. Since occult and superstitious content can be viewed as false and misleading, it is possible that regulating authorities ban this type of speech without violating the First Amendment in the states for

instance. The perceptions of attitude towards this advertising regulatory practice towards occult has previously not been explored in any study and this would be the first time that any study seeks to evaluate whether mental health indicators actually seek to develop a more relaxed attitude towards occult regulation. Therefore,

H3 Life Satisfaction has a negative effect on Advertising Acceptability Attitude

H4 Psychological Distress has a negative effect on Advertising Acceptability Attitude

In formulating these hypotheses, the researcher has followed both Kramer and Block (2007) and Carlson et al., (2009) in their view that superstition, despite its similarities to religions, belongs rightly in the realm of psychology and personality trait theory. In particular, one of the hypotheses is based on (Carlsen, A. N., Chua, & Timothy, 2009) view of that for many people superstitious practices are often simply everyday heuristic devices. However, repeated problem-solving devices can, over time, develop into obsessive compulsive disorders so that failure to perform the ritual can lead to anxiety. In that regard, the researcher finds the psychodynamic explanation of (Gill, 1993) quite compelling in that superstitious behavior is understood learned behavior in childhood as a means of relieving anxiety. Also, the behaviourist explanation of (Vyse S. A., 1997) sees superstition as learned behavior but points towards neurological changes which occur through operant conditioning which opens the way for a causal relationship between superstitious practice and the development of mental illness.

From the literature review, the underlying constructs of occult and superstitious

behaviour (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003) were identified as well as behavioural constructs of mental illnesses. Although this study is primarily focused on behavioural patterns, these cannot be separated out from underlying cognitive aspects of behavior based on trait theory. Thus, while the primary focus was on behavior, underlying traits are also taken into account (French & Wilson, Cognitive Factors underlying Paranormal Beliefs and Experiences in Tall Tales about the Mind and Brain. Ed. Sala, S. D, 2007). It was also important to consider antecedents of superstitious behaviour and to consider the issue of whether mental illness was an antecedent rather than a consequence of superstitious or occult behaviour (Dohrenwend, Shrout, Egri, & Mendelsohn, 1980). A careful longitudinal study, based on assessing putative antecedent factors after 10 years (Chapman, Chapman, Kwapil, Eckblad, & Zinser, 1994) was particularly informative in the design of this study.

The rationale underlying the study was based on the rise of superstitious behaviour and occult beliefs based on comparisons of the (UK Census , 2001), and (Census, 2011). The British Social Attitude Survey (2012) and the (Survey E. S., 2009) provided further evidence for the growth of superstitious beliefs and practices in the UK. This study is important as it addresses a gap in current research by focusing on behaviour. The findings have clear implications, not only for businesses based on the supply of occult products and services but also for conventional businesses which make use of occult motifs and themes in promoting their products and services. Ethical implications were also considered.

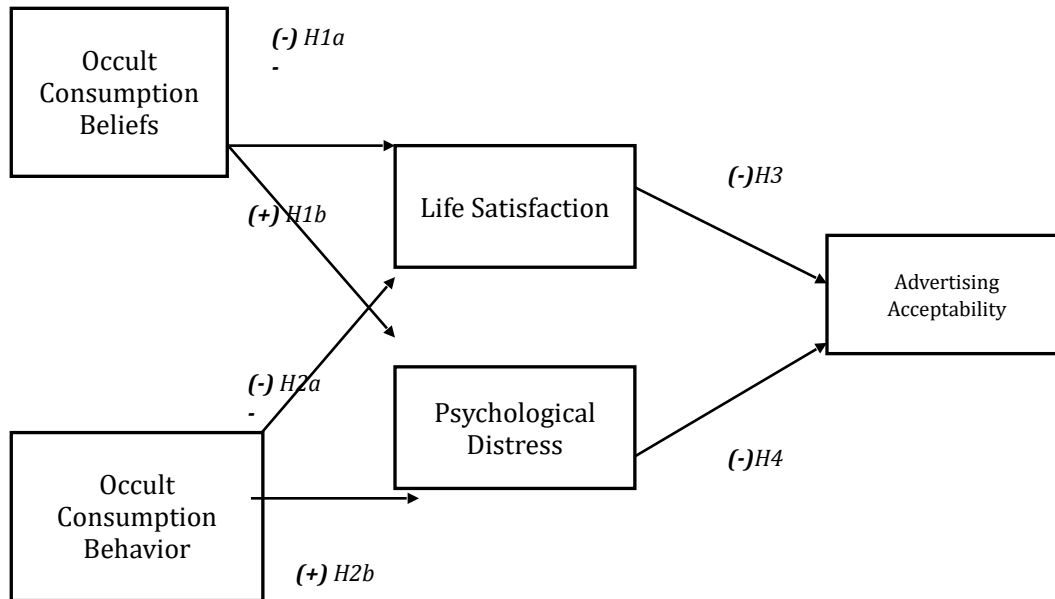
Based on the constructs identified in the literature, a set of variables were established for

measuring superstitious behaviour and mental health following (Irwin H. J., 1993) and (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). The more qualitative study of psychic beliefs and behaviours of (Wiseman & Watt, 2006) were also considered in establishing the variables. These variables were then used to develop a set of attitudinal statements following (Gerbing. & Anderson, 1988) and (DeVellis, 1991). Analysis of data was carried out using SPSS and the method of analysis was by Structural Equation Modelling (SEM). The works of (Hair, 2010) and (Byrne, 2010) were followed in conducting the method and interpreting results.

The aims and objectives of the study were to identify antecedent superstitious behaviour patterns and to discover the nature of any relationships between these and mental illness. The findings of the study were discussed with reference to the relevant literature and implications for further research as well as for business practice were drawn. Some recommendations were made and limitations in the study were noted.

Based on the above the following conceptual framework is proposed to guide this study along with accompanying hypotheses.

Figure 2.1 Conceptual Framework and Accompanying Hypothesis



3.0 Chapter 3. Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The methodology that has been used in the subjective investigation is the focus of this chapter. The research philosophy, the underlying logic as well as the approach have been discussed in the first part. Later in the second part, we have provided a summary of the quantitative approach used before the survey. Generally speaking, we have used post positivist critical realist ontology. In this chapter, we discuss the basic logic and the procedure that has been carried out. To attain the required results exploratory research (secondary data) is performed to obtain data from articles, journals, and the web. This facilitates understanding the scenario of occult consumption, personality attitude influenced by superstitious consumption. On the other hand descriptive research (primary data) is derived from questionnaires and interviews which is important for getting extra information for hypothesis generation.

3.2 Research Methodological and Philosophical Issues

3.2.1 Logic and Conceptual System Development

In this study, we have used a multi-combinational system that comprises of abductive logic (inductive and deductive methods). The subjective approach makes use of the empirical data and uses the theory in existence; it is usually called “post positivist design” comprising of the element of social constructionism in the stages that precedes it. The second constructionist element in the approach is supported by the first, being the

survey methodology and exploratory views gained from the researcher mainly from the literature review respectively. The abductive approach is considered to be quite useful with respect to the exploration of the social realities via the critical realist post-positivist ontology lens.

3.2.2 Establishing Dynamics and Ontogeny of Research Domain

There is a philosophical essence of every research study. It is important that the underlying assumptions of this research are recognized by the researchers to be able to frame the epistemological research values and to define the limitations. The assumptions referred above are important in determining the usefulness of many lenses to the researcher.

The importance of identifying the philosophical assumptions underlying the framework has been highlighted by Creswell (Creswell, 2003) :

“although philosophical ideas remain “hidden” in research ((Burrell, 1979)), they still influence the practice of research and need to be identified” (Creswell, 2003).

The groundwork for a framework involves 4 questions that need to be addressed (Crotty, 1998).

1. What epistemology informs the research (objectivism or subjectivism)?
2. What theoretical perspective or philosophical stance lies behind the methodology, e.g. positivism, post-positivism, interpretivism, critical theory etc.?
3. What methodology (strategy or plan of action linking methods to outcomes)

governs the researcher's choice of methods (e.g. experimental design, survey, ethnography etc.)?

4. What methods are proposed by the researcher (questionnaire, interview, focus groups etc.)?

The researcher is committed to an objectivist approach which is rooted in post-positivism. This involves a belief that whilst we cannot attain absolute truth when studying human behaviour (Phillips & Burbules, 2000), the scientific method offers the best approach to getting, at least approximately, close to the truth of what is being investigated with a high degree of probability. Thus, researchers don't claim to reach "absolute truth" of hypotheses but indicate a failure to reject the hypotheses with a high degree of probability, typically 95% or greater in sociological studies. Research, therefore, involves a process of making claims and then either refining them or else completely abandoning these claims. The aim is objectivity, supported by data which need to be examined to discover any possible biases. Ultimately, it is a matter of testing the theories that are postulated. However, in the mixed method approach which will be proposed by the researcher, these theories will have the benefit of having been formulated following an in-depth qualitative approach.

In selecting an approach, the researcher considers three key criteria:

1. The research problem
2. The researcher's own personal experience (or the possibility of enlarging on this experience)

3. The audience for the final report

In brief, there needs to be a match between the problem and the approach. Despite the researcher's commitment to an objectivist, scientific-realist approach, there is a great advantage to be gained by capturing real lived experiences prior to the formulation of any theories to be tested by a scientific method. A mixed method approach seems to offer the best solution to this problem. Although the researcher will need to become conversant with the chosen qualitative approach, it must be borne in mind that conducting research of this kind will broaden the researcher's knowledge and experience of research methods. However given the caveat of sensitivity of the research topic this was not possible as the University of Hull ethics committee advice deemed a professional trained psychologist would be needed.

It is hoped that this inquiry will make a modest contribution to scholarly discourse in this area and will add something to the University's corpus of knowledge. The researcher has much to gain by a guided approach to research under the direction of the supervisor and augmented by lectures and the opportunity to implement this knowledge through practice. It is also hoped that the findings of this report may contribute to continuing research into the central research question. Finally, it is hoped that the findings will provoke further research into the central question and, ultimately, will have some implications for research in this field.

3.3.0 Research Paradigm

It is essential to have a clear comprehension of the philosophical essence of the research

study (Brand, 2009). The research paradigm refers to certain beliefs, values and assumptions that define the researcher's idea of the subjective research (Kuhn, 1970). A significant issue that researchers need to look into before conducting any research is to ensure the suitability of the selected paradigm with respect to answering certain questions. Various research paradigms are used by the researchers to help them cater to answer various research questions. The researchers make generalizations about people through quantitative research with respect to the statistical results, while with the help of qualitative or secondary research research; they target individuals and their respective perceptions, meanings and experiences (Bryman, Mixed Methods and Organization Studies, 1998) .

We can further break down the differentiation in the paradigms of research. According to (Burrell, 1979), social science can comprise of functionalist, critical, interpretive and post-modern theory. Of these aforementioned paradigms, the ones that correspond to the objective and the subjective views are functionalist and interpretive respectively. They are known as positivist and phenomenological stands. Usually, the functionalist paradigm is linked with quantitative kind of research according to (Burrell, 1979). As per the social constructivist ideology as well as phenomenological ideology, the reality is constructed socially and is different from person to person (Warzlawick, 1984), (Shotter, 1993) ; (Berger & Luckmann, 1966)

According to (Burrell, 1979) the aforementioned approaches do not reconcile with each

other or are not compatible. This tends to be mainly true. It should be observed that approaches that are of mixed methods, that is a combination of qualitative and quantitative research ways as well as their related paradigms are useful too. By using mixed method approaches, researchers are able to form a clear idea of a social phenomenon and are able to look into it from different perspective such as from a theoretical point of view as well as philosophical point of view. It is however, essential that the shortcoming and the strengths of every paradigm are considered.

With respect to this study, we have used the Post-Positivism paradigm of philosophy. The subjective approach is based on the assumption that the reality exists singularly regardless of the perceptions held by individuals. As our main focus relies on the statistical observations of the consumer behaviour, we tend to categorize this assumption quite reasonable. In order to consider the reasoning of the concept, we will first use the exploratory side of the study. This approach tends to be suitable with respect to the exploration of the consumers.

The next task will be to decide how and in what way these questions will be addressed so that valid, reliable and useful knowledge will result. There are 3 broad approaches open to the researcher:

1. A quantitative approach

2. A qualitative approach
3. A mixed method approach (some combination of quantitative and qualitative or secondary research)

Each will now be examined in turn in terms of their merits and demerits, strengths and weaknesses. This examination will not be totally comprehensive (beyond the scope of my overall aims) but will view each approach with particular reference to the research questions rather than in a more generalised way.

3.3.1 Quantitative approach

If, in addressing the research questions the researcher wants to find some hard facts and figures or to gauge the strength of people's views in certain areas, a quantitative approach will yield hard facts and figures that will be capable of testing by statistical methods. A large number of people can be involved and, in fact, if a sample of the population is randomly chosen in a way that is representative of all groups in the population in terms of gender, age, ethnicity, age group and socio-economic background, the results found in the sample can be reliably applied to the population as a whole.

Quantitative approaches work on the belief that "the truth is out there", independent of our minds, and through a scientific realist philosophical stance, the truth can be found, or almost. This approach is most useful to test a theory or hypothesis. If the researcher thinks that a certain explanation or theory answers any of the research questions, this approach will test the hypothesis which will only be accepted as true if statistical tests "prove" it at 95% probability, the level accepted in studies of a sociological nature. 100% certainty is not possible.

3..3.2 Qualitative approach

If, in answering the researcher questions, the researcher wants more than just facts or figures but requires depth of understanding, a qualitative approach is most useful. This approach does not believe that “the truth is simply out there”. This approach looks at reality as something that our minds construct in an attempt to understand. The meaning of a phenomenon such as superstitious practices is what counts. Merely ascertaining that 43% of the population have superstitious beliefs is not the goal, but rather seeking to understand what meaning superstition or occult consumerism has for people. It is more interpretive. Usually a much smaller sample of people is involved through some kind of narrative discourse or some type of interview method. What emerges is data that is rich in meaning and significance

3.3.3 A mixed method approach

This approach combines both quantitative and qualitative or secondary research methods and the aim is to have the best of both worlds. This method allows for the depth found in qualitative or existing studies as well as the width and breadth found in quantitative approaches. There is, however, a problem with regard to the conflicting truth claims found in each approach. Actually, the researcher favours a mixed method for this research as, in addressing the research questions; both breadth and depth would be desirable. The researcher’s philosophical and epistemological stance is that of scientific realism. He believes that truth is not just something our minds construct in understanding occult consumerism but that it is objective and independent of our minds. Absolute truth is not possible in this world, but quantitative methods can lead us very close with 95% or 97.5% or even 99% certainty. That is what is so attractive about quantitative methods –

something is proven to be true or is not proven to be true, almost. However attractive the richness of qualitative data, it somehow lacks the precision of approaches based on scientific realism.

How, then, can the researcher be consistent in their philosophical and epistemological stance if they engage in a mixed method? The solution proposed by the theorists is pragmatism – i.e. what works, works. With this reservation in mind, a mixed method will be used but the researchers will return at a later stage, to consider the problem inherent in all mixed methods – that of conflicting epistemologies.

There are a number of options for proceeding with the mixed method. Firstly, the two methods can be carried out concurrently and independently of each other. In that case, some method of mixing the findings from each must be adopted. However, there is a potential problem if the findings of one method fail to corroborate those of the other method. The second option is to carry them out sequentially, either the quantitative is first completed and analysed before the qualitative is commenced, or else, the method begins with a qualitative or literature review based inquiry which is completed or analysed before the quantitative is commenced. The researcher considers that a sequential mixed method poses less risk of a failure of corroboration, as the findings of one method are used to frame the second phase of the inquiry.

3.3.4 Post Positivist Ontology

The post positivist paradigm will be used by this study. Since under subjective phenomenon is employee identity salience, as well as its consequences, it is generally assumed by the author that there is an existence of reality yet is not perfectly apprehend

able. This situation can be referred to as critical realism with respect to (Cook & Campbell, 1979). According to Cook and Campbell, it is essential that any claim made with respect to reality should be scrutinized in order to carry out proper understanding of the situation.

All the findings that are not falsified are pertained to be true as all the findings in the study undergo the processes of falsification (Guba & Lincoln, 1994).. The chief purpose of using secondary data through a robust literature review is getting abundance of data besides addressing certain intra-paradigm critiques. “Critical multiplism” is focused in this experimental approach, and is considered a better and an enhanced triangulation version. This method is more of falsification than hypothetical verification. With respect to the subject’s scarce research an exploratory nature, the researcher thinks that it is not possible to find out every aspect of this subjective reality. According to him, one can only investigate the topic imperfectly by using the first research.

Multiplexity, according to (Bhaskar, 1998) is based on the assumption that the inquiry of the research is predisposed to a transitive epistemological as well as an intransitive ontological dimension. The chief aim of transitive dimension is uncovering the real mechanisms and structures that are the underlying formation of the events in a surrounding. Besides, the approach that has been adopted tends to be in-line to the general questions of the research.

3.3.5 Philosophical Assumptions for Mixed Method Research

There are certain assumptions that guide the inquiry with respect to mixed methods research (refer to Guba and Lincoln, 2005). With respect to this study, we have adopted

post positivism to be our philosophical paradigm. Post positivism refers to that system where it is believed that the matters of the research tend to be susceptible to investigation and we can form their veracity on the basis of ethnicity (Brand, 2009).

Since the sequential exploratory design has been used to create this study, perspective of critical realist philosophy is adopted by the researcher. This enables him to use the quantitative and secondary research method to carry out the process of the research. The researcher has used the principles of constructivism in this stage since the study started with the qualitative way of data collection. This enables the researcher to have in-depth comprehension of this ideology on a micro level. In the next phase where quantitative method is used, the ground assumptions directly move to post positivism for the identification and measurement of the statistical patterns and variables. The overall process of the research is hence supported in this way.

3.4 Research Design

There exist two kinds of approaches to design mixed methods designs: namely dynamic-based approach and typology-based approach (Creswell and Clark; 2011). In the typology approach, the emphasis is on classification, adaptation and selection of a certain design that is relevant to the purpose of the study as well as the questions it has. On the other hand, the in the dynamic approach, we focus on the process of the design instead of just selecting it from the typology that already exists. With respect to this study, the researcher has used the approach of typology and has selected the exploratory sequential mixed way of design. This choice of design is suitable for the subjective research.

One significant element of this research design is that it tends to comply with an interactive level between various approaches of research with respect to mixed method design. With reference to this study, an interactive level has been chosen by the author, that is both kinds of approaches will notify each other accordingly (Creswell and Clark, 2011). Moreover, the author has chosen the quantitative way instead of the qualitative way as the research paradigm related to the quantitative way of research is more suitable for the subjective research questions as well as the purpose it carries.

Firstly, a robust literature review was used to collect data by the author. Once the collected data was analysed, the author extracted and identified the themes already summarised in chapter and the literature review chapters. The basis of the quantitative part of the study was formed by the aforementioned identified themes. The author has followed a sequential timing for both the parts and has first started with the secondary research followed by the quantitative.

When we combine and integrate the two research strands, we basically create mixing. According to Creswell and Clark (2011), there are two significant points that is mixing strategies and point of interface. As per (Morse & Niehaus, 2009) the interface point refers to that point where the mixing of the quantitative and qualitative or secondary research stands takes place. The mixing takes place at four points: data collection, interpretation, design and data analysis (Creswell and Clark; 2011). With respect to this study, the mixing strategy has been used by the author for during the process of data

collection. The second quantitative stage's instrument was developed through the result of the exploratory literature review stage used prior.

3.5 Research Approach

The researcher is guided by the research approach in terms of his/her theory use in the overall process of the research (Creswell J. W., 1994); (Collis, Hussey, & Hussey, 2003); (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009). The two basic approaches of research are the inductive and the deductive approach (Sekaran, 2006). There are three characteristics of the deductive approach (Saunders, 2009). The general relationship that exists among the variables is defined by it; moreover, it also gathers the quantitative data and finally generalizes the results. According to Bryman (Bryman & Bell, 2007) however, the deductive approach has various issues. The process of measurement for instance, can give a deceptive precision and sense of accuracy. There may not be obvious implications in the study and hence, the approach of theory may fail to describe the social aspect properly.

On the other hand, the inductive approach refers to the study where the observation of the empirical reality is the essence of the development of the theory (Collis, Hussey, & Hussey, 2003). Through the use of the inductive method, the data is collected by the researchers from focus groups and interviews or through secondary data collection or analysis such as from a robust literature review once the data is analysed properly, a new model or theory is created by the researcher. The inductive method provides a greater insight into the issues. Hence, a lot of detail is gathered of the subject under study (Bryman & Bell, 2007).

However, the major shortcoming of the inductive method is that the perceptions and the opinions of the researcher influence the results during the process of data collection and interpretation. This situation is referred to as 'Personal Biasing' (Neuman S. , 2003). As per (Bryman & Bell, 2007), there are various shortcomings that the inductive approach has: the interpretation of the data can be influenced by the subjectivity and bias, where the results will fail to be replicated or generalized.

3.6 Research Ethics

With respect to the code of ethics, the author paid significant attention to the ethical issues during the process of the research. The guidelines were all in compliance to the University of Hull. For example, the participants were not at all pressurised and were fully respected in terms of their decisions. The author ensured anonymity and confidentiality of the participants, complying with the rule of Data Protection Act 1988. It is important that these things are well ensured and that the employees are satisfied and comfortable to express themselves honestly. These surveys were not named. It was also ensured that their responses would be copyrighted for the use in thesis and would not be accessed for the public to add additional reassurance to the sample but also as part of the conditions of the PhD sponsoring body.

3.7 Summary

Consideration was given to various methodological approaches. A qualitative method was considered mainly instigated following the mainly qualitative approach to psychic beliefs and behaviour found in (Wiseman & Watt, 2006). Attractive as that approach was, it was not adopted here as the overall aim was to study superstitious behaviour rather than probing human understandings of such phenomena. As no previous study focused on superstitious behaviour and links to mental ill-health, a more quantitative approach was required to establish empirically the extent of the phenomena in the general population. Associations between such behaviour and mental health issues clearly demanded a quantitative study such as is adopted here. However, a qualitative study based on the findings of this study could be most useful in investigating deeper meanings inherent in the findings. While semi-structured interviews or focus groups would serve this purpose, it is proposed in this study that a phenomenological study could provide the essence of the human meanings (Moustakas, 1994) that participants attach to superstitious behaviour. In particular, it could provide qualitative evidence as to whether superstitious behaviour were based on harmless heuristic devices or whether antecedents of mental health issues were identifiable. Though principally qualitative in nature, the problem of researcher bias is overcome through the epoche method (Moustakas, 1994) and validity assured through inter-subjectivity.

A mixed methods approach (Creswell J. W., 1994); (Morse & Niehaus, 2009) was also considered as a possible approach. In the context of this study which is mainly

exploratory in nature, such an approach would have to be sequential in nature. This would have meant the collection and analysis of quantitative data prior to carrying out a qualitative data where the issues explored would have been drawn from the quantitative findings. This would have added some depth to the quantitative data but that would have been beyond the scope of the aims and objectives of the study stated in Chapter 1.

With respect to this study, significant contribution can be made by critical realism to the scientific perspective front line. It is assumed that an approach of inductive preliminary analysis for understanding the relationship between occult and superstitious consumption and mental health indicators. After the initial phase, a study based on surveys will be followed and it will check the accuracy of any hypothesis and proposed relationship. The quantitative approach has been summarised below.

3.8 Quantitative Research Methodology

3.8.1 Introduction

The methodological procedures that are used in the execution of the survey design have been summarised in this chapter. This chapter covers the description of the quantitative designs nature, its details used in the sampling approach as well as the size, the formats of the measurements and the design issues of the questionnaire. In the end, this chapter covers data analysis details and the techniques used in the study, the model of the structural equation and the results.

3.8.2 Cross Sectional Data

Once the conceptualized variables were operationalized for various constructs, they were

further observed to be studied, thorough a method of survey questionnaire that was distributed to the sample through an online survey provider. Various measurement scales were used to analyse the data that was earlier validated. Collecting quantitative data by the means of survey is advantageous as is not expensive and is very cheap, besides being easy to interpret through the statistical analysis. However, the shortcoming of this method of data collection is that there may be measurement errors, the threat of quantification and reductionism. Given these problems, it is difficult to represent the phenomenon properly (Collis, Hussey, & Hussey, 2003).

With respect to the study's nature and the questions of the research, the most suitable strategy to collect data and to analyse it is a cross-sectional research design (Bryman & Bell, 2007). Through the use of this research design, the researcher is able to make comparisons of the data to be able to cater to certain questions of the research. The relationship that exists between different constructs/variables has been studied in the study; hence, the best approach is the survey to study the correlation studies with respect to the context of theory (Punch, 1998); (Bryman & Bell, 2007); (Collis, Hussey, & Hussey, 2003); (Neuman, Weinstock, & Ammon, 2006). The potential relationships between the variables' antecedents are examined in the study through the use of the cross-sectional survey.

Moreover, with respect to survey methods, the respondents need to record the responses that they give for the questions in a certain order (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 1992); (Punch, 1998). The characteristics of an effective survey are that it contains simple

easy questions, no control to see who fills the survey and a response rate that is low (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 1992). Furthermore, the time effectiveness and the low costs serve as the major advantages of the method.

3.8.3 Sampling Method and Sampling Size

A population, in this research, refers to one that has all the characteristics that are predetermined and decided by the researcher to be present (Sekaran, 2006); (Nachmias & Nachmias, 1976); Kumar, 1999). The most reliability for any quantitative research is provided through large and random samples. Yet, since the resources in this study are limited, a larger sample was selected by the author. The survey comprised of a total number of 470 people who represented 99.9 pc confidentiality intervals.

Using convenience samples do not offer sufficient evidence for the generalization of the population. The results of this research however, can be considered to have reliable generalization with respect to the project. However, it is limited when it is used for a wider global level generalisation in other generic sectors. We will cater to this problem later in the section of limitations present in the concluding chapter.

In this research the target population will be selected from the residents of the UK. This choice was justified since the researcher lives in the UK this will make the collection of data more easy and economically feasible. Quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods frame each of these elements in different ways. It is hoped that what has been proposed

by the researcher to this point does not appear to be over-burdened with philosophical discussion for what is essentially a very practical process.

3.8.4 Measurement Format of Items and Survey Design

The purpose of the questionnaire was the collection of the relevant and related information from the participants with respect to the subjective research issue. It is important that the questionnaire comprises of simple and clear contents that are valid and reliable (Nachmias & Nachmias, 1976); (Malhotra & Birks, 2006). As per (Zikmund, 2003) there are two major characteristics of a good questionnaire: accuracy and relevance. Relevance refers to the fact that no irrelevant information is gathered and that the questionnaire has only the necessary questions that are related to the problem of the research, while the accuracy refers to the validity and reliability of the data (Neuman, Weinstock, & Ammon, 2006; Sekaran, 2006). It is important to make sure that one does not include technical ambiguity, a lot of questions and technical terms when making a questionnaire (Neuman, Weinstock, & Ammon, 2006). Using of these aforementioned elements will only distract the participants from the study's major theme (Sekaran, 2006).

We created an in-detail questionnaire that was set with the aim to observe the general demographics like employment years, age, education, gender with respect to the similar scales of the constructs of the mental health indicators and occult/superstitious consumption. These scales were used and the concepts were studied from the research conducted earlier, fulfilling the requirements of the pilot testing.

It is also of much significance how many questions are present in a questionnaire. According to (Churchill, Jr, & Peter, 1984), there is direct relationship between scale pointed and scale reliability. There is an increase in variance with an increase in scale points, causing an ultimate change in the reliability (DeVellis, 1991), (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). With respect to the current developments of the analytical techniques, it is fine to use at least seven points (Malhotra & Birks, 2006). According to (Malhotra & Birks, 2006) and Weiers (1998), cognitive shortcomings cause the respondents to feel difficult to answer 9 point scales. Hence, this study has used the 7 points Likert scale of format.

We used a 7 point Likert scale for attitudinal items where 7 represented strongly agree and 1 represented strongly disagree. Survey research usually used Likert scales to help people express themselves with respect to categorical levels (Neuman, Weinstock, & Ammon, 2006). The 7 point Likert has been used by many researchers in the research projects. Various other scales such as categorical scales have also been used for certain questions related to demography (Sekaran, 2006).

3.8.5 Reliability

We have demonstrated the reliability of the elements used earlier to measure the variables. Reliability refers to the measurement's consistency that is of two kinds: internal consistency and consistency over time (Punch, 1998). The latter refers to the measurement that gives similar scores with respect to similar situations.

As per (Collis, Hussey, & Hussey, 2003), we can evaluate reliability by test-retest ways and split half ways of internal consistency. With respect to this project, we evaluated the scales that were used on the basis of Cronbach's alpha as recommended by (Malhotra & Birks, 2006). The internal consistency is measured through this approach. Internal consistency refers to the average of the split-halves coefficients that result from various scale item splitting. Several authors have provided different acceptable and valid values for Cronbach's alpha, for instance it needs to be 0.70 as per (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, Multivariate Data Analysis, 2006) and (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). On the other hand, some authors claim that it should be 0.05 and above. The next section discusses these aforementioned reliability tests.

3.8.6 Validity

Validity refers to the height of accuracy measured by an instrument of a certain variable (Punch, 1998). With respect to the research process of findings, the second most important measure is validity. There are three ways to ensure validity: construct validity, criterion-related validity and content validity. The content validity is referred to as subjective but systematic evaluation of the content (Malhotra and Birks, 2003). The criterion validity on the other hand checks the performance of a measuring scale with respect to the other variables selected (Malhotra and Birks, 2003). After this, the construct validity checks the degree to which the items measured represent the construct in theory (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, Multivariate Data Analysis, 2006). According to Malhotra and Birks (2003), the major construct aspects are the convergent

validity and discriminate validity that is discussed later.

3.8.7 Summary

The methods of the research that have been used in the study's quantitative phase are described in this section. Besides, this chapter also discusses the reliability, the construct measurement and the issues of validity. In the subsequent chapters, the quantitative results have been summarised. Hence, to emphasise the chief findings, it is important to give a summary of the findings after having provided the conceptual framework that accompanies the hypothesis already.

3.9 Occult Consumer Belief

The first construct was Occult Consumption Belief measured by strength of agreement or disagreement with the attitudinal survey statements such as one related to black cats being considered unlucky or believing that tarot cards can reveal the future (See Table 4.9 in the following chapter). There is considerable variance in defining occult belief as was shown in Chapter 2. However, in this study, the conceptualization of occult belief presented by (Vyse S. , 2014) is adopted in this study. Vyse points out that although occult beliefs and magical thinking are widespread in Western society, it is mostly harmless and is perhaps a coping mechanism for the uncertainties of life. Nevertheless, he cautions that superstitious beliefs can have many repercussions for society and that "it is important that our understanding not lead to endorsement" (Vyse S. , 2014).

(Vyse S. , 2014), considers superstitious belief as arising from three main situations in life. The first of these is the effect of socialization and operant conditioning. The second

is the desire to be able to control the uncontrollable as for example elderly or cancer sufferers who have been found to benefit a sense of control even though such control is not possible. Finally, the condition of depression which often leads people to seek out expensive online or telephone psychics but advises that “even the most expensive New York movie is a better bargain than the least expensive psychic” (Vyse S. , 2014).

The attitudinal statements (OCC) were based on (Vyse S. , 2014) understanding of occult and superstitious beliefs.

3.10 Occult Consumer Behaviour

The second construct related to occult consumer behaviour which was seen by (Argyle & Hallahmi, 2014) as consequential to occult or superstitious beliefs or to an “occult ideology” (Argyle & Hallahmi, 2014). (Morris & Griffiths, 2013) have traced connection between committed gamblers and superstitious beliefs in which gambling patterns are seen as the acting out of superstitious beliefs to relieve anxiety or boredom. The authors cite Kaplan (1988) who claimed that one third of lottery winners attributed their success to psychic or supernatural forces. However, Following (Vyse S. , 2014) and (Hammerman & Johar, 2013), a conceptualization of superstitious behaviour in terms of operant conditioning was taken as the fundamental approach to superstitious behaviour in this study exemplified in the statements in OCB section in Table 4.9. This explains statements relating to the use of tarot cards, visiting a psychic , wearing charms and palm-reading.

3.11 Life Satisfaction

The third construct was that of Life Satisfaction (LS). This term has often been conflated with happiness or at least with subjective temporal happiness (Kim-Prieto, Diener, Tamir, & Scollon, 2013). For the purposes of this research, life satisfaction is understood in the subjective reporting of respondents at a particular moment in time (Diener, Tay, & Myers, 2011). This is exemplified by statements relating to how respondents viewed their life in general and whether they would not change anything in their lives if they had it to live over again (Table 4.9). Thus a pragmatic approach is adopted in measuring happiness in terms of transitory states of “feeling good” or “feeling bad”. However, deeper dimensions of life satisfaction are acknowledged. For example, in response to the statement about whether one would change anything if they had their life to live over, there is an implied assumption that those who would change nothing must therefore be happy with their lives. However, a person looking back over their lives and recognizing what things could have been better does not necessarily betoken unhappiness. Especially in religions which posit a belief in a transcendent and merciful God, happiness could result from a belief in the love of God for individuals even despite human failure (ArgylHallahmi, 2014)..

Once again, the difficulty arises from the lack of agreed definition. (Kim-Prieto, Diener, Tamir, & Scollon, 2013) attempted to integrate elements of different understandings of happiness. However, (Oishi & Diener, 2013) have noted the generally greater sense of meaning in life in poorer rather than in richer countries. This is because happiness related

to meaning in life as described by Frankl (2006) where meaning in life was possible for some even despite the barbarity of the Auchwitz experience. Nevertheless, the findings of (Ng & Diener, 2014), that financial satisfaction was the highest predictor of life evaluation, suggest the rather ephemeral nature of the life satisfaction construct. A useful survey of the different issues related to life satisfaction and happiness is found in (Sirgy, 2012) who examines aspects of quality of life ranging from a hedonistic way of life through to a eudaimonic one.

(Diener, Tay, & Myers, The Religion Paradox: If religion makes people happy, why are so many dropping out?, 2011) have pointed towards a paradox in religion, whereby, despite the positive association generally found between religiosity and subjective well-being, many people are “dropping out” of religions. Nevertheless, their estimate that for 68% of people throughout the world – 4.6 billion – religious belief played an important role in their daily lives, is hardly an insignificant statistic. They assert that the positive association between religiosity and well-being is stronger in countries which are generally characterized as being religious countries rather than in more liberal economies. However, note is made of the fact that in liberal economies, the association is still found between religiosity and well-being; it is simply that it is not so strong as in more religious societies. But, this is hardly a surprising finding; it is simply stating that religion appears to be more appealing to religious rather than irreligious people, almost a tautological assertion. Moreover, the drop off in church attendance and religious practice does not of itself imply that people are less religious. As a distinction has been made between occult belief and occult behaviour, can it not also be the case that people may retain their

religious beliefs even though, in their behaviour, they are not acting on this belief through religious practice? Not according to (Argyle & Hallahmi, 2014) who have asserted the communitarian nature of religion which implies the need for coming together regularly. It is not, thus, a matter of private aspirations but implies belonging to a community. Life satisfaction, on the other hand, does not necessarily imply community or society; it is a more private affair. The main critique of (Diener, Tay, & Myers, The Religion Paradox: If religion makes people happy, why are so many dropping out?, 2011) lies in their tendency to imply that religiosity is more appropriate as a source of life satisfaction in religious countries rather than in non-religious countries where financial well-being may be more important. But ultimately, faced with the question of human mortality, superficiality is no solution whereas religion does offer an explanation (Argyle & Hallahmi, 2014). In fact, what religious faith offers in the face of adversity is hope, a rich concept explored in philosophy, psychology, theology and nursing, but worryingly absent from economics (Pecchenino, 2011) and (Pecchenino, The economic consequences of despair, 2014). Nevertheless, in this study, a pragmatic choice is made for a construct which can be operationalised and this is the temporal subjective notion of life satisfaction. Hence the attitudinal statements relating to whether one would change anything if they had their life to live over or whether in general one felt happiness in life.

3.12 Psychological Distress

The final construct, psychological distress, lies at the opposite end of the well-being continuum. (Steger, 2012), connects psychological well-being to the finding of meaning

in life which implies a spirituality. Thus, psychological distress is often related to the loss of such meaning in life: “failure to develop the sense that one’s life matters, or losing that perspective, might play a role in the experience of psychological distress” (Steger, 2012). Numerous studies describe psychological distress and relate it to mortality and incidence of cancer. However, (Steger, 2012) sees it as inversely related to a sense of meaning in one’s life. Meaning in life is inversely related to negative affect and emotion (Kennedy, Kathaman, & Palmer, 1994) and (Keyes, C. L. M., Schmotkin, & Ryff, 2002) which include feelings of fear, anger, shame and sadness. Stress is added to the list by (Flannery & Flannery, 1990). Psychological distress has also been found to be inversely related to negative personality traits such as neuroticism and psychoticism. (Flannery & Flannery, 1990) also considered psychological distress as including depression, hostility, anti-sociality and aggression. Sufferers of psychological distress often present themselves with strong needs for psychotherapy and may resort to narcotics or substance abuse.

In the attitudinal statements (Table 4.9) some of the symptoms mentioned above are expressed in terms of how often one feels depressed (frequency was important to distinguish it from normal transitory feelings of depression). Also, the statement relating to feeling tired without any good reason. Thus, the construct validity of the research was assured by reference to understandings of the underlying concepts drawn from the theoretical and empirical studies of these authors.

3.13 Structural Equation Modelling: Missing Data, Outliers and Internal Consistency

The data was prepared for Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) following (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, Multivariate Data Analysis. Seventh Edition, 2010). This method has many advantages over earlier multiple regression models. SEM extends the methods and techniques of univariate and bivariate methods to a larger number of variables hypothesized to be related in some way (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, Multivariate Data Analysis. Seventh Edition, 2010). The possibility of measurement error was considered in drawing up the set of attitudinal statements and determining strength of response (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994) based on a 7 point Likert scale.

Within the SEM approach are correlation and factor analysis which help to establish the robustness of the variables, that there is no significant overlap or construct over or under representation. Factor analysis plays a confirmatory role to the main data analysis. (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, Multivariate Data Analysis. Seventh Edition, 2010).

The main goal of SEM is to establish a parsimonious model based on the principal variables which play a role in explaining the variance in the data. However, this is not to discount the role of other variables as their presence in the model in combination with the principal variables could be important. SEM takes this into consideration in providing the final equation model, the one which provides the optimal result in explaining the variance in the data.

In this research, the problem of missing data was not considered to be serious and was certainly less than the 10% threshold suggested by (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson,

Multivariate Data Analysis. Seventh Edition. 2010). In the analysis chapter, a small number of respondents were removed based on the researcher's assumption that the data was confused or distorted (see Analysis chapter). Missing values, caused by a zero response to one or two items were not found to be high in number, nor was there any discernible pattern to such missing data that might arouse suspicions regarding construct validity. Missing data seemed to just signify that on a particular issue, the respondent had no feelings or opinions and skipped the item rather than return an erroneous response. In this situation where there are no serious doubts regarding underlying reasons for skipping items, SEM deals with the situation by assigning a value based on mean response rates that takes into account the overall pattern in the rest of the responses on that item. In this study, missing or excluded data were not of such a magnitude as to have any discernible influence on the overall response rates. Moreover, SEM has its own inbuilt diagnostic module for checking for randomness in the data. Internal consistency is assured through Cronbach's alpha.

Another consideration is the presence of outliers in the data. The main issue here is whether outliers generally are authentic responses and so reflect the true nature of the data. Alternatively, outliers could arise from a respondent accidentally returning an erroneous response or an error made by the researcher in loading the data for analysis. In the latter case, it is not an onerous task for the researcher to check the original raw data and correct if necessary. However, in the case of a respondent accidentally marking an incorrect response rate, it is not so simple to correct. The issue revolves around whether the researcher is justified in removing an extreme outlier or several of them due to the influence they might have on the final model. There are diagnostic checks in

SEM for such scenarios. Ultimately the researcher must make a prudent decision about each outlier. In general, a conservative approach is recommended by (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, Multivariate Data Analysis. Seventh Edition, 2010) , and this has been followed in this research. In view of the sample size, the researcher decided to investigate outliers in the range of 3 or more standard deviations with a view to removal but only after considering the response which gave rise to the outlier within the overall context. The main rationale for removal is the decision as to whether the response was authentic, however extreme, or whether it reflects a correct variation in the data. It is an important issue due to the leverage such outliers play on the final model. Scatterplots of the data help to detect potential outliers which can then be checked using normality plots (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, Multivariate Data Analysis. Seventh Edition, 2010).

Structural Equation Modelling: Checking Assumptions

SEM also provides for easy checking of the assumptions that underpin the model. Checks for normality of residuals can easily be carried out as also for homoscedasticity and assumptions of equality of variance in the data. The other two assumptions are linearity and absence of correlated errors.

4.0 Chapter Four Results & Analysis

4.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to put forward an outline of the relevant results and thus, summarize the research carried out of the survey fieldwork information. Various features of the outcomes are shortened as:

1. ¥ Analysis response rate
2. ¥ Demographic summary of respondents
3. ¥ Screening of the information
4. ¥ Issues of reliability and validity
5. ¥ Hypothesis testing

To sum up the hypotheses testing, following techniques were employed:

1. ¥ Investigative factor analysis in order to remove low variance objects
2. ¥ Confirmatory factor investigation to confirm the developing arrangement
3. ¥ Structural equation modelling approach to authenticate the suggested theories from the theoretical context.

4.2 Analysis of Results

4.2.1 Basic descriptive findings and sampling.

For this particular analysis, the respondents selected were a random sample of the British public taken from a panel organised by a professional online survey provider. No criterion was used other than a representative sample of the British public this adding to generalizability of results for the British public.

A total of 500 feedback forms were designed for this analysis. Out of the 500 forms, 30 were deemed incomplete and therefore final sample of 470 was utilised for the analysis. It is not possible to calculate a response rate for this survey as the sample was gained from a readymade panel of respondents which online survey provider has.

A mixed demographic profile was generated as expected since the panel composition represented the typical British public profile, therefore the average age was 36, gender split 52% female and 48% male and 34% educated to university level. Average income was between 30 and 45k.

4.2.2 Common Method Variance

In case when extensive cross-sectional facts are being collected from sources, the undergoing investigation probably cultivates mutual technique, partiality producing

incorrect relationships/relations. By adopting appropriate techniques aligned with its suggestions, common method bias can be successfully handled and limited (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003).

Initially, it was important to assure the protection of privacy of the participants. Next, the questions in the feedback form were explained to them and they were requested to answer the feedback form correctly. Furthermore, while designing the feedback form, the ability of the participant to guess any requirements among measurement items is restricted by merging and shuffling all the concepts. Additionally, pre-analysis phase of the survey helped in removing the vague and ambiguous elements.

Moreover, in order to mathematically assess the common method bias, Harman's single factor test was implemented (e.g., Liao, 2007 and (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003). A single element CFA model experiment was performed when all articles were implemented on one concept (Iverson & Maguire, 2000), eventually generating a very incompetent model fit ($df = 982, \chi^2 = 14572.34, p\text{-value} = .000; RMSEA = .154; AGFI = .39; GFI = .45$). Noteworthy development is witnessed in the 5 factors model relative to the one factor model ($\Delta \chi^2 = 134654.84; p < .05; \Delta df = 81$). Therefore, the aforementioned test declared that our sample does not state common method bias.

4.2.3 Data screening and preliminary analysis

A sequence of data screening methodologies were employed in this analysis that are essential in setting up the suppositions of wide-ranging psychometric characteristics in a data model before implementing any procedure relevant to the data analysis (Hair et al., 1998a). The aforementioned procedures included recognition and management regarding

lost data, outliers, regularity and coping with multi-collinearity etc. The distribution of data and characteristics of the sample directly influences the methodologies selected for evaluating the data, which is why such approaches were employed (Fan, Stallaert, & Winston, 2000).

4.2.4 Missing data

It is necessary to solve the issues relevant to the misplaced data before initiating the research as it has great impact on the outcomes of the analysis (for example: (Gold & Bentler, 2005); (Allison, 2003); (Savale & Bentler, 2009). (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, Multivariate Data Analysis, 2006) mentioned that in 16 reverted feedback forms, there were missing observations that did not surpass even half of the total items as a foundation of the overall response elimination from the data set. Thus, in order to fix the issue, scholars altered and adjusted the data accordingly to match the average mean of the response, a process done easily on SPSS by replacing missing values with survey mean response. However, 26 feedback forms were not considered at all as they surpassed 50% of the items according to the observations.

4.2.5 Outliers

Outliers are basically arithmetically separated values as compared to the other values involved in the data set. In order to communicate with these outliers, different methodologies are employed in the contemporary analysis studies. (Hair et al., 2010) said that outliers has the potential to identify either a population comprising of a heavy-tailed dissemination or a probable measurement inaccuracy that occurs within a distribution

accidentally. After the examination of the data set for inaccurate values, figuring out and settling the outliers is a significant step to evade this issue. After thorough analysis of frequency tables, 12 data values were considered as objectionable and later they were altered by the experts.

We can also evaluate the outliers by employing Mahalanobis measure (). (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010) stated that in this method, the position of each value in centre of all the values in the data set is revealed. Cases in which the values of / (the Mahalanobis distance measure divided by the degree of freedom) will surpass the base point i.e. 2.50 are going to be reviewed as possible outliers and these/values were then calculated from the AMOS yield for every model. The highest value, along with the extent of autonomy against each value, has been addressed in the AMOS application. All the models did not note any outliers as every computed value stayed below the suggested endpoint of 2.50.

4.2.6 Multi-collinearity

In the procedure of data screening, the next level is multi-collinearity management. (Kline , 1998) mentioned the reason for its employment is “unbalanced consequences as some values are found to be close to zero or implementation of certain mathematical procedures turns out to be very problematic for the reason that inter-correlations among some variables are so high”. In order to find out any multi-co linearity, squared multiple correlations (SMC) were cautiously evaluated so as to deal with this issue amongst the applied variables. In order to calculate SMC, the following equation is applied: $SMC =$

[1- (indicator Variance/ Error Variance)]

This dimension is just same as coefficient of regression equation. (Kline , 1998) suggested a termination point of 0.90 and the values given in the table did not go beyond this boundary which signified the nonappearance of multi-collinearity amongst these variables.

In this analysis, another methodology was implemented so as to verify multi-collinearity among the variables. In order to accomplish the evidence, a compound variable was produced in the SPSS program alongside every construct and reversion was carried out on one of the major resultant variable, ‘advertising acceptability’. Tolerance scores for each construct are demonstrated in table 5.2. It is to be noted that Variance inflation factor (VIF) was assessed and offered and after the description of co linearity statistics, it got evaluated.

Table 4.1 Collinearity Statistic

Construct	Tolerance	VIF
Occult/Superstitious Beliefs (OSB)	.32	3.65
Occult/Superstitious Consumption (OSC)	.56	1.43
Advertising acceptability attitude (AAa)	.54	4.32
Life Satisfaction (LS)	.72	2.54
Psychological Distress (PD)	.45	1.34

In accordance with the opinion of (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010), the term ‘Tolerance’ can be described as “the amount of variableness of the nominated independent variable that is not simplified by the other independent variables”. In order to calculate tolerance, the following formula is employed: “1 minus the Squared multiple correlation between a variable and the rest of the variables”

(Kline , 1998) stated that the tolerance scores less than 10% turns out to be a shocking indicator for multi-co linearity. The lack of multi-co linearity amongst variables can be witnessed in the table shown above and the values mentioned in the table are abiding by the tolerance test.

Finally, the third step implemented in order to assess multi-co linearity is known as VIF valuation. VIF assessment measures “the influence that the standard error of a regression coefficient acquires from other independent variables” (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson,

2010). It should be kept in mind that if correlation is not implemented on any variable, the values of the VIF can be 1.0. Myers (1990) states that if $VIF > 10.0$, the variable may be duplicated with other variables in the domain model. Table 5.2 demonstrates that all of the VIF values that are less than 10.0, therefore, there is no multi-co linearity in the data.

4.2.7 Construct reliability

It is substantial to solve the issues related to outliers so as to examine the dependability and consistency of each construct in the next step. Reliability can be described as the constancy level in a variable's measure amongst the quantifiable items. The following three methodologies are employed in this analysis in order to evaluate the internal reliability:

1. ¥ Inter-item correlation analysis
2. ¥ Cronbach's alpha coefficient of reliability
3. ¥ Item-to-total correlation analysis.

Inter-item Correlations

The initial level involves the process of addressing each item of the scale separately while assessing consistency and dependability. The aforementioned statement is the reason behind the employment of inter-item correlation by various experts while evaluating scale dependability. Correlation value higher than 0.30 provides a proof of high connection amongst items and demonstrates that similar domain of a specific concept was employed to draw the items (Robinson, Shaver, & Wrightman, 1991). Resultantly, an in-depth

examination of correlation matrix shows that the most of the items inside each measure are exceeding the cut off value of 0.3.

Item to total correlations:

During assessment of construct consistency, another technique to report the connection of the items to the summated scale is called item-to-total correlation. Thus, the items based on same paradigm must be considered extremely related. In accordance with opinion of (Churchill G. A., 1979), in case if it is not high items to total connections, it clearly depicts that same concept was not employed to get the items and will affect the levels of consistency. Additionally, it will cause high level of inaccuracy. Items-to-total correlations of the scale items are demonstrated in the following table for all seven concepts under examination. In case of the removal of items from the from the scales, the scale's Cronbach's alpha as well as the variation in the alpha value are shown in the table. Cronbach's alpha is often carried out following factor examination, nevertheless initial impression of construct dependability can be acquired by employing it (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson , Multivariate Data Analysis, 2006). In accordance with opinion of (Robinson, Shaver, & Wrightman, 1991), item-to-total correlation values more than 0.50 should be substantial. According to this analysis, more or less all the values surpass this cut-off value.

Cronbach's alpha:

In accordance with the opinion of (Robinson, Shaver, & Wrightman, 1991), Cronbach's alpha is basically a common systematic measure employed to evaluate the internal

reliability. In this proposed model, every construct involves summated scale, therefore, Cronbach's alpha calculates for all these constructs and helps in assessing internal reliability. Table 5.3 demonstrates the values for each of the five constructs.

Nunnally (1978) explained the coefficient alpha value as a positive symptom of internal reliability, which should be greater than 0.70. All of the scales surpassed the value 0.70 and the essential internal reliability consistencies were offered in the study outcomes. A termination point of 0.65 was suggested for suitability (DeVellis, 1991).

Table 4.2 Cronbach's alpha

Construct Scales	Cronbach's Alpha
Occult/Superstitious Beliefs (OSB)	.76
Occult/Superstitious Consumption (OSC)	.74
Advertising acceptability attitude (AAa)	.79
Life Satisfaction (LS)	.86
Psychological Distress (PD)	.83

Values exceeding 0.8 are believed to be 'very good'. It is evident from the table that Cronbach's alpha values of two scales are higher than 0.8 value.

4.3 Measurement analysis:

In order to evaluate the collected data (n=474), structural equation modelling (SEM) approach was employed by means of a series of assessments. As a series of multiple regressions analysis can be applied upon every dependent variable of the model, SEM is considered as more effective method of analysis than the conventional ones. (Kline , 1998) provides that SEM also serves to assist Confirmatory factor analysis as for investigating the rationality and dimensionality of each concept included in the concerned model. This method is usually used to analyse a structure of hypothesized equations having multiple dependent variables (Singh, 1995). Furthermore, SEM may also be employed to measure the extent of performance of the model by means of facilitating multivariate goodness-of-fit directions. In this method, the researcher is allowed to control the measurement error for each component of the model (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, Multivariate Data Analysis. Seventh Edition, 2010) .. According to (Kline , 1998), the evaluation of the planned model with other equal and restricted representations can also be executed along with comprehensive assessment of potential model variations. SEM can also help to evaluate a system of equations present in the form of multiple datasets, by means of a multi-group analysis perspective (Singh, 1995). This allows for the calculation of moderating effects within the model. Hence, SEM provides a number of benefits, for example, it provides more accurate justification of the measurement model in comparison to the conventional multiple regressions models.

Three major principles of multivariate techniques constructed upon the supremacy of the

SEM compared to other multivariate techniques are:

1. ¥ Normal distribution
2. ¥ Homoscedasticity
3. ¥ Linear relationships (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, Multivariate Data Analysis. Seventh Edition, 2010).

In order to obtain significant and accurate results, these three principles are required to be fulfilled while determining the conversions and alterations of data set. In this study, this condition was effectively fulfilled, i.e. the criterion for normal distribution, homoscedasticity and linear relationships was achieved. Suitable symmetrical distributions measures for all the scales variables are presented after carefully analysing the concerned kurtosis and skewness values with respect to these three models. This also helps to justify the critical assumption of normality. Normal probability plots were examined thoroughly and realistic degree of linearity was also determined. This exempts the requirement of variable transformation. Bivariate scatter plots were illustrated graphically by drawing on SPSS application and were used to justify the equal distribution of variance among the exogenous variables (independent) of the model. This also supports the construct of homoscedasticity, hence, the need for transformation is ruled out.

4.3.1 Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)

EFA technique is employed to determine the arrangement of a set of variables. The

dataset thus obtained is compacted to a suitable size in such a way that maximum amount of original information remains intact (Field, 2015). The basic levels of correlation between many variables are described by means of Exploratory Factor Analysis. Two main aims can be fulfilled by means of EFA i.e.

1. Data summarizing
2. Data reduction (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, Multivariate Data Analysis, 2006)

(Stewart, 1981) provides that the EFA or Exploratory Factor Analysis is used only in the case when a researcher is familiar with the basic information regarding the concerned data set. However, the CFA or Confirmatory Factor Analysis is more effective in the case when the research is aimed at formulating a theory first and then observing the correlation between different variances. (Gerbing & Anderson, 1988) provided that the application of structural equation modelling is associated with identical sampling of data by using both of the mentioned procedures. Hence, it is necessary to use both the procedures to process the same raw data set owing to the similarity in the nature of reflective and formative structures of data as justified by a few scholars (Bollen, Multiple indicators: internal consistency or no necessary relationship? , 1984); Diamantopoulos & Winklhofer, 2001). Gerbing and Anderson assert that this technique is known as two step approach (Gerbing. & Anderson, 1988). Therefore; confirmatory factor analysis is followed by the exploratory factor analysis in this study. (Bartlett, 19954) and Kaiser (Kaiser, 1958); (Kaiser H. F., 1974) present the most commonly used method for

determining the ‘factorability’ of data. As per this method, in order to conduct a factor analysis of a data, the Bartlett’s test of sphericity should be significant ($p < .05$). This is quite a useful step for research. Moreover, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling acceptability is perceived as an advanced test. Thus, in order to obtain a good factor analysis, it is required to obtain scores of 0.6 or more. In our sample, the KMO was reported as 0.093 (Hair, Anderson, Tatham, & William, 1998).

4.3.2 Principle Component analysis:

According to (Dillon & Goldstein, 1984), principle components examination is fundamentally the common kind of exploratory factor examination and this method has seemed to be most beneficial in marketing projects. In addition to it, it is uncomplicated and it increases variance. According to (Stewart, 1981), its other principle axis factoring becomes more appropriate when supposition of clearly obtained constructs is less and little history is also recognized about the dataset. It requires three kinds of technical decisions to occur which concern:

1. ¥ The number of components derived
2. ¥ The rotation method used, and lastly
3. ¥ The maximal level of item cross loadings and minimum level of item loadings.

Elements can be derived by implementing Eigen value analysis, but they should surpass the termination point i.e. Eigen value > 1 . Graphical representation of the derivation of

elements can be clearly demonstrated by Catell's Scree plot. (Cattell, 1996) defines that individual should observe the elbow point or Scree modulation after imagining the Eigen value plot which suggests an asymmetrical approximation of the highly extracted elements regarding their variance. The varimax technique of rotation was employed due to its extensive usefulness. To conclude, with respect to item cross loadings and minimum levels, according to the suggestions of (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, Multivariate Data Analysis. Seventh Edition, 2010), element loadings of 0.6 on their corresponding constituents and cross loadings below 0.4 are (maintained) retained.

4.3.3 Assessment of reliability:

In accordance with the opinion of (Peter, 1979), the internal reliability of the final component results can be assessed by three fundamental methodologies:

1. ¥ Test-retest
2. ¥ Internal consistency
3. ¥ Alternative forms

Internal consistency measure is the most productive and useful methodology in case of the assessment of internal reliability (Churchill G. A., 1979); (Peter J. P., 1979). Internal reliability can be defined as “the dependability in single analysis measures” (Green, Tull, & Albaum, 1988). In order to determine the internal reliability, the two main techniques are item-to-total correlations and the Cronbach's Alpha co-efficient (Dillon, Madden, & Firtle, Marketing research in a marketing environment, 1994).

For this analysis, the internal reliability was examined by assessing Cronbach's alpha as well as item-total correlations. As mentioned before, desired value of alpha lays between 0.74 and 0.86 (DeVellis, 1991); (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, Multivariate Data Analysis. Seventh Edition, 2010); (Peterson, 1994), even though the common value ranges from 0.30 to 0.60 in situation of item-to-total correlation (Green, Tull, & Albaum, 1988) (Steenkamp, J.E.M. & Van Trijp, 1991). Values surpassing the aforementioned limits were deleted. Moreover, the firstly consequential rotated factor matrix i.e. with no elements removed, is presented in the appendix.

A total of 5 elements were exposed through the study that seemed as predicted from the conceptualization analysis after implementing the Eigen value technique of holding elements by maintaining the standard Eigen value, which was greater than 1. This influence enhances the significance of the study of conceptualization. Nevertheless, the undesired items that scored low on the scale were removed by performing the process of 'cleaning up'. All the acquired elements are categorized and assembled below.

Factor 1: Occult/Superstitious Beliefs (OSB)

Fourteen items loaded on factor 1 as expected but four were removed due to poor Cronbach alpha values. This factor constituted 15.9% of total variance.

Resultantly, we got to know about the suitability of the 10 items for final research process and the removal of four items, that is items 4,5 and 6 and 7 on the basis of their lower loading score (less than 0.5) and moreover, for its influence on internal consistency. Other values relevant to this element involving mean, corrected item to total correlation,

Cronbach's alpha and multiple squared correlation are mentioned below in the table.

Table 4.3 Factor-1 OCB

76..= OCB 10				
Item	Mean	Corrected T - I Correlation	s`Cronbach alpha if item deleted	R^2
OCB1	756.3	.645	.702	534.
OCB2	712.3	.713	.675	498.
OCB3	723.3	.696	.678	634.
OCB4	698.3	.756	.712	554.
OCB5	702.3	.745	.705	647.
OCB6	788.3	.749	.698	512.
OCB7	734.3	.712	.723	534.
OCB8	756.3	.653	.734	456.
OCB9	764.3	.598	.755	487.
OCB10	698.3	.599	.695	497.

If we concentrate on the above table, an alpha co-efficient is 0.76 that shows the probability to perform data diagnostics normality tests for the whole data. Later on, in “SEM data preparation” stage, the problems linked with univariate and multivariate

normality will be considered and reviewed.

In order to check the normal distribution of the data, visualization of the normal distribution plot was carried out.

1. ¥ For any of the factor variable, no outliers were witnessed from boxplots.
2. ¥ The scores' skewness, as well as that of kurtosis, were in the limit as the values of skewness > 1 and the values of kurtosis > 3 requires examination (Hair, et al., 2010).
3. ¥ The scores shown here demonstrate a slightly high value of kurtosis, but this level does not cause any significant problem.
4. ¥ The Kolmogorov-Smirnov statistics is noteworthy (< 0.05), backing the supposition of normality.

The same process was carried out for the remaining factors also and no problems found.

Factor 2: Occult/Superstitious Consumption (OCC)

Six items loaded on factor 2 as expected but none were removed due to poor Cronbach's alpha values. This factor (constituted) accounted for 14.5% of total variance.

Consequently, we obtained the suitability of the 6 items for research analysis and not a single item was removed. Other values relevant to this element involves mean, corrected item to total correlation, Cronbach's alpha and multiple squared correlation are exhibited in the following table.

Table 4.4 Factor-2 Occult/Superstitious Consumption (OCC)

. = ,6 (OCC) <i>Superstitious Consumption/Occult</i>				
.74				
Item	Mean	Corrected T-I Correlation	s`Cronbach alpha if item deleted	R^2
OCC1	432.3	.689	.723	544.
OCC2	345.3	.678	.698	432.
OCC3	454.3	.702	.678	602.
OCC4	378.3	.712	.712	457.
OCC5	563.3	.734	.703	533.
OCC6	543.3	.690	.732	512.

Considering the high internal consistency as shown in the above table, an alpha coefficient is 0.74 which shows the probability to perform data diagnostics normality tests for the whole data. Later on, in “SEM data preparation” stage, the problems linked with univariate and multivariate normality will be considered and reviewed. The methodologies employed for analysis of data and normality matters were almost same as

mentioned and adopted for factor 1.

Factor 3: Life Satisfaction (LS)

Six items loaded on factor 3 as expected but none were removed due to poor cronbach alpha values. This factor constituted 12.7% of total variance.

Consequently, we obtained the suitability of the 6 items for research analysis and not a single item was removed. Other values relevant to this element involve mean, corrected item to total correlation, Cronbach's alpha and multiple squared correlation which are exhibited in the following table.

Table 4.5 Factor-3 Life Satisfaction

86..= ,6 ,(LS) Life Satisfaction				
Item	Mean	Corrected T-I Correlation	s`Cronbach alpha if item deleted	R^2
LS1	454.3	.612	.834	433.
LS2	265.3	.645	.854	423.
LS3	894.2	.634	.812	412.
LS4	973.2	.713	.843	434.

LS5	023.3	.657	.849	512.
LS6	421.3	.609	.865	502.

Considering the high internal constancy as shown in the above table, an alpha coefficient is 0.86 that shows the probability of performing data diagnostics normality tests for the whole data. Later on, in “SEM data preparation” stage, the problems linked with univariate and multivariate normality will be considered and reviewed. The methodologies employed for analysis of data and normality matters were almost same as mentioned and adopted for factor 1.

Factor 4: Psychological Distress (PD)

Eight items loaded on factor 4 as expected but two were removed due to poor cronbach alpha values. This factor constituted 11.3% of total variance.

Consequently, we obtained the suitability of the 4 items for research analysis and none of the four items were removed. Other values relevant to this element involves mean, corrected item to total correlation, Cronbach's alpha and multiple squared correlation and are exhibited in the following table.

Table 4.6 Factor- 4 Psychological Distress (PD)

. , (PD) Psychological Distress.83				
Item	Mean	Corrected T-I Correlation	s`Cronbach alpha if item deleted	R^2
PD1	856.1	.734	.786	511.
PD2	023.2	.673	.801	623.
PD3	934.1	.812	.823	456.
PD4	845.1	.715	.786	451.
PD5	022.2	.653	.698	523.
PD6	689.1	.689	.753	598.
PD7	834.1	.712	.798	602.
PD8	945.1	.744	.811	478.

If we concentrate on the above table, an alpha co-efficient is 0.83 that shows the probability to perform data diagnostics normality tests for the whole data. Later on, in

“SEM data preparation” stage, the problems linked with univariate and multivariate normality will be considered and reviewed. The methodologies employed for analysis of data and normality matters were almost same as mentioned and adopted for factor 1.

Factor 5: Advertising Acceptability Attitude

Five items loaded on factor 5 as expected but none were removed as their **Cronbach's alpha values were high enough to satisfy the criterion for retention.** This factor **(constituted) accounted for 9.6% of the total variance.**

Consequently, we obtained the suitability of the 5 items for research analysis but moreover, due to its influence on internal consistency. Other values relevant to this element involves mean, corrected item to total correlation, Cronbach's alpha and multiple squared correlation and are exhibited in the following table.

Table 4.7 Advertising Acceptability Attitude (AAa)

= ,5 , (AAa) Advertising Acceptability Attitude 79..				
Item	Mean	Corrected T-I Correlation	s`Cronbach alpha if item deleted	R^2
AAa1	231.3	.556	.712	567.
AAa2	023.3	.617	.734	673.

AAa3	323.3	.405	.698	584.
AA4	934.2	.785	.722	569.
AAa5	678.3	.498	.744	563.

Considering the high internal consistency as shown in the above table, alpha coefficient is 0.79 that shows the probability of performing data diagnostics normality tests for the whole data. The methodologies employed for analysis of data and normality matters were almost same as mentioned and adopted for factor 1.

Table 4.8 Final EFA with reduced items and selected items

	1	2	3	4	5
OCB1	0.834				
OCB2	0.886				
OCB3	0.734				
OCB4	0.756				
OCB5	0.743				
OCB6	0.756				
OCB7	0.689				
OCB8	0.698				
OCB9	0.678				
OCB10	0.754				
OCC1		0.798			
OCC2		0.778			
OCC3		0.745			
OCC4		0.798			
OCC5		0.776			
OCC6		0.667			
LS1			0.708		
LS2			0.756		

LS3			0.691		
LS4			0.695		
LS5			0.689		
LS6			0.765		
PD1				0.803	
PD2				0.812	
PD3				0.756	
PD4				0.765	
PD5				0.876	
PD6				0.875	
PD7				0.767	
PD8				0.872	
AAa1					0.798
AAa2					0.756
AAa3					0.854
AAa4					0.789
AA5					0.876

Approximately 71.8% of the variance present in the factor analysis is elucidated by means of the outcomes of all of these five factors that demonstrate the data and analysis potency. The subsequent table is utilised to indicate the set of final items, considered appropriate for confirmatory factor analysis in the SEM as they are formulated on the reliability and EFA analysis where this set incorporates 25 items out of 33 original items

for the evaluation of these 5 factors. The confirmatory analysis present in the Structural Equation Model will be utilising the item list for its confirmatory structure for which merely seven constructs were put forward for utilisation in the next evaluation process. This decision was taken after contemplating the propositions of the researcher (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson , Multivariate Data Analysis, 2006) as it enables the researchers to make use of their preferred constructs in the following evaluation while disregarding the other available constructs.

Table 4.9 Final items in scale selected for analysis

no.	Code	Scale & Items
OCC		
1	OCC1	“Black cats can bring bad luck”.
2	OCC2	“If you break a mirror, you will have bad luck”.
3	OCC3	“The number "13" is unlucky.”
4	OCC4	“Astrology can predict the future”.
5	OCC5	“One's personality is determined by astrological alignments.”
6	OCC6	“Your birth date impacts your future.”
7	OCC7	“Palmistry (the art of telling fortunes from the lines and patterns on the palm of the hand) is harmless.”
8	OCC8	“Tarot (the art of telling people's fortunes using a special deck of pictured cards including the death card) is harmless”.
9	OCC9	“Clairaudience (the claimed ability to hear things beyond the range of the power of hearing e.g. voices or messages from the dead) is harmless”
10	OCC10	“Voodoo (religious witchcraft) is harmless.”
OCB		
15	OCB1	I regularly visit a psychic or ‘shaman’ (or a holy man) for advice.

16	OCB2	Visiting a psychic or 'holy man' or 'shaman' (or a holy man) for advocacy is harmless
17	OCB3	I use good luck charms in my life
18	OCB4	I often wear an amulet
19	OCB5	In the past I have paid for the services of palm or horoscope reading.
20	OCB6	I see no harm in buying what others might describe as 'occult' based products such as crystal balls, wands, or ingredients for potions.
LS		
21	LS1	In most ways my life is close to my ideal.
22	LS2	The conditions of my life are excellent.
23	LS3	I am satisfied with life.
	LS4	So far I have gotten the important things I want in life.
	LS5	If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing.
	LS6	In general, I consider myself a happy person.
PD		
24	PD1	How often did you feel tired out for no good reason?
25	PD2	How often did you feel nervous?
26	PD3	How often did you feel so nervous that nothing could calm you down?
27	PD4	How often did you feel hopeless?
28	PD5	How often did you feel restless or fidgety?
29	PD6	How often did you feel so restless you could not sit still?

30	PD7	How often did you feel depressed?
31	PD8	How often did you feel that everything was an effort?
AAa		
34	AAa1	There should be a government or health warning on adverts promoting psychics.
35	AAa2	Psychics should be banned outright.
36	AAa3	Adverts for tarot card services are acceptable.
37	AAa4	Pre-recorded horoscope phone lines are acceptable.
38	AAa5	Psychics should put a disclaimer on their services or for entertainment only sign or “not substantiated”

The SEM approach can be implemented after providing the utility of the exploratory factor analysis in terms of eradicating the real items' set, but before SEM implementation. Better accuracy outcomes are attained by carrying out a confirmatory factor analysis as it

makes the attained factor solution two times more valid.

4.10 SEM Phase: Confirmatory Factor Analysis

SEM is a better systematic approach in contrast to the conceptualized theoretical structure as it can be utilised for testing the hypothesis, as **asserted** by (Byrne, 2010).. He further claimed that SEM is most appropriate for the construction and testing of models as it owns the potentiality to test diverse hypotheses in order to ascertain the presence of interrelated dependence relationships amid them. In the supposition of (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007) , SEM is more in practice due to its potentiality of testing the relationships while determining complicated and multifaceted elements at the same time. Moreover, SEM approach is more executed by researchers due to its competencies of testing, accepting, rejecting, or mutating the hypothesis statistical and making sure there is “goodness of fit”. SEM is very commonly utilised with latent hypothesis to model and determine the causality of interactions by the application of manifold linear regressions simultaneously. The SEM approach is performed in the following two phases:

- a. i) *SEM Analysis*: It is utilised to test whether the relationships are present in the hypothesis.
- b. ii) *Confirmatory Measurement Stage*: It ascertains that the factorial model structure is genuine. It provides conformity of the outcomes produced from the exploratory factor analysis.

In accordance with (Gerbing & Anderson, 1988), SEM is proportioned into three phases

i.e. the exploratory factor analysis, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and the SEM actual analysis. The last phase is commonly used and produces the most effective outcomes at the time when the presence of certain relationships has to be confirmed in constructs. However, the subsistence of other multifaceted methodologies cannot be neglected, but they are not as efficient as SEM approach and do not display similar characteristics to the SEM as it has the attributes of considering multidimensional elements at the same time with interactions, non-linearities, correlated error terms, correlated independents and measurement errors concurrently.

There are certain significant decisions that have to be taken at the phases of SEM measurement analysis or CFA by incorporating the subsequent steps:

- a. a) *Aggregation Type*: Its disaggregation methodology seems to be most suitable due to its utilisation of single item indicators in terms of numerous measures belonging to the same latent hypothesis (Baumgartner & Homburg, 1996).
- b. b) *Items considered per Construct*: SEM solutions have utilised two items for demonstrating its effectiveness, whereas (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, Multivariate Data Analysis. Seventh Edition, 2010) , has claimed that the approach that utilises at least three items, preferably four, is recommended per factor. Thus, the prerequisite of this study constructs is fulfilled by this approach.
- c. c) *Input Type Matrix*: SEM Analysis makes use of two diverse input matrix types i.e. covariance and correlation. (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson,

Multivariate Data Analysis. Seventh Edition, 2010), has claimed that the utilisation of covariance matrix is more preferred due to its characteristic of providing strong contrast among the un-standardized sample coefficients; but when it comes to correlation matrix; it does not provide this characteristic.

- d. d) *Estimation Procedure:* When the covariance matrix has to be mutated into structural parameters, diverse estimation procedures are taken into account. Such estimation procedures embrace ordinary least squares, generalized least square, maximum likelihood of two-stage least square, and un-weighted least squares. However, in accordance with (Bollen, 1989). (Gerbing. & Anderson, 1988), the MLE (Maximum Likelihood Estimation) is widely utilised due to its dominance of producing healthy items in contrary to assumptions' restraint violations of normality when the sample includes participants exceeding the limit of 100 (Gerbing & Anderson, 1988).
- e. e) *Single or Multiple Step Analysis:* According to (Gerbing & Anderson, 1988), it refers to the implementation of two-way approach in which CFA is utilised after the exploratory phase which appends more sturdiness.
- f. f) *Program Type:* This study has applied SPSS version 20 and AMOS 20 as its appropriate interface which adds to the benefit of this study. Apart from these programs, certain programs are there that perform functions like EQS and Lisrel, and normalization of data which are quite fruitful. Despite of its advantage, normalization of data had produced negligible error in our dataset, but when it is incorporated with AMOS, it serves to be the best chosen software.

In order to examine the hypothesized model, a confirmatory factor analysis was carried out, whereas the measurement model was scrutinized by means of AMOS 20 software. On the other hand, the parameter estimation is scrutinized for the maximum likelihood estimation (MLE) methodology. There are a total of five constructs. When it has to examine the respective loadings of every item belonging to its specific construct, estimation and re-estimation of model are performed. (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, *Multivariate Data Analysis*. Seventh Edition, 2010) asserted that every loading on the construct, in total, was below the measurement of 0.70 which is considered convenient for this process, whereas the significant t-value of these accumulated loadings was greater than 1.96 in absolute terms. Such values are actually demanded by the researchers. When it comes to the SMC (Squared Multiple Correlation), the most demanded value is greater than 0.30 in which the appropriate model is “overall model fit”. In order to transform the data into the model, a few transformations are required to be made for the fulfilment of the given requirements.

Once we have attained pleasing outcomes from the measurement model, we are required to evaluate the elements that will be most appropriate for the measurement model for the purpose of ascertaining that this data set is compatible for it. Consequently, the significant action of uni-dimensionality is performed and then there will be an evaluating procedure of the internal consistency of every single construct. The following section embraces the detailed knowledge of each evaluation. The investigator is required to equip

at least one absolute fit index along with the incremental fit index to support the outcomes of , where such indices endow with sufficient support saying that these are appropriate for the model fit (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, Multivariate Data Analysis. Seventh Edition, 2010) . The explained variance for the degree of complicatedness of the model is regulated by the inclusion of this fit index (Kline , 1998). The table 5.9 shown below depicts t-value, the standardized loadings, AVE, ρ_{η} , and the overall model fit indices that provide satisfactory outcomes for measurement model and act as per the guidelines given in the aforementioned section.

Table 4.11 Summary of the standardized loadings, t-value, ρ_{η} , AVE and the overall model fit indices

Construct	Items	Standardized factor loadings	value-t	R^2	ρ_{η}	AVE	α
OCC	OCC1	81.	12.3	75.	81.	63.	76.
	OCC2	82.	-	64.			
	OCC3	83.	9.5	70.			
	OCC4	92.	12.1	81.			
	OCC5	85.	-	59.			
	OCC5	72.	16.3	53.			
	OCC6	73.	13.2	67.			

	OCC7	78.	12.4	78.			
	OCC8	81.	11.4	63.			
	OCC9	92.	9.5	64.			
	OCC10	78.	-	59.			
OCB	OCB1	76.	10.92	58.	81.	59.	74.
	OCB2	79.	12.32	55.			
	OCB3	81.	10.3	64.			
	OCB5	84.	-	54.			
	OCB6	83.	9.45	52.	.		
LS	LS1	78.	-	53.	78.	63.	79.
	LS2	72.	10.76	53.			
	LS3	80.	12.34	63.			
	LS4	85.	11.32	67.			
	LS5	79.	10.93	56.			
PD	PD1	71.	11.34	53.	71.	56.	86.
	PD2	71.	-	64.			
	PD3	71.	15.3	53.			
	PD4	78.	20.34	54.			
	PD5	72.	32.34	74.			
	PD6	73.	24.3	65.			
	PD7	78.	-	55.			
	PD8	81.	30.32	73.			
AAa	AAa1	92.	12.43	70.	82.	72.	83.
	AAa2	78.	11.2	73.			
	AAa3	82.	9.4	67.			
	AAa4	80.	-	59.			
	AAa5	75.	17.5				

=TLI ;0.93=CFI;1.5 =df/CMIN ;344=df ;342=Square-Chi :Model Fit
 0.048=and RMSEA 92.=RFI ;92.=IFI;0.90=NFI;91.

The elements utilised for the evaluation of the model include reliability, unidimensionality, discriminant validity, and convergent validity, and are briefly described as follows:

- a. 1) *Unidimensionality*: reliability measures, like composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha, can be computed after attaining pertinent data that fits with unidimensionality. The target factor loadings cut-off point was 0.6 from which all the factor loadings exceed and display good factor loadings belonging to each construct. Accordingly, outcomes were more convenient as SEM was utilised in the CFA and the factor loadings also exceeded from the EFA. After acquiring such outcomes, we have the opportunity to load each item in the order of first order constructs that were considered in the used scales. On the contrary, due to the elimination of certain items that were unable to be loaded adequately in accordance with the cut off criteria of 0.6, the EFA was not found pertinent and was removed earlier. When the output was given by the AMOS, the statistical significance is validated as in the output; the t-value and e measure of critical ratio for each indicator was more than 1.96 in case of loading of every item upon every

factor.

- a. 2) *Reliability*: After the evaluation of the constructs' reliability, unidimensionality was launched, for which there are certain processes as stated below:

i) Cronbach's Alpha: In this process, a set of different values ranging from 0.68 to 0.8 is utilised in order to show acceptability. Nevertheless, this process has certain drawbacks in which the most common issue is related to the accuracy of reliability as the reliability scales are underrated frequently when the Coefficient alpha analysis is carried out (Steenkamp, J.E.M. & Van Trijp, 1991); (Baumgartner & Homburg, 1996), (Hulland, Chow, & Lam, 1996); (Bollen, 1989). (Bollen, 1989) concluded that in case the scale comprises of huge set of items, then the coefficient alpha turns to be artificially inflated and this serves to be the major disadvantage of this approach.

ii) The limitations of Coefficient alpha is overcome by making use of a substitute methodology which was specifically designed for this purpose and depicted by certain scholars including (Bollen, 1989), (Steenkamp, J.E.M. & Van Trijp, 1991), Jöreskog & Sörbom (1993), and (Holahan, Moos, Holahan, & Brennan, 1995). In this approach, the computation of reliability is done by proportioning it further into two sub-steps. The first sub-step utilises SMC (Squared Multiple

Correlations) for approximation of the SEM scale reliabilities, whereas the acquisitioned variance and construct reliability significant for computing SEM scale reliabilities is further utilised in the next sub-step.

A) value is utilised for indicating the SMC as it computes that item's reliability. According to (Bollen, 1989), when an approach embraces value as a reliable estimate, then it is a structural equations approach in which the values of reliability indicator will become larger as the values will be higher. A relevant response is present to every item listed in the questionnaire in which the computation of the total variance is elucidated with respect to that specific factor. If $1.0 > \text{value} > 0.5$, then it illustrates the sharing of substantial variance by a specific item and the same thing happens when the evidence of acceptable reliability for that specific item is endowed. Here, the reliability of each indicator should exceed from the value of 0.50 and these values further indicate the fulfilment of requirements in the result (Larcker & Fornell, 1981)

B) In accordance with the propositions of (Kerlinger, 1973) and (Gerbing. & Anderson, 1988), while carrying out the calculations of the composite reliability (CR), structural equation modelling approach is beneficial as high values of CR (exceeding from 0.6) show good construct reliability and high internal consistency (Fornell & Bookstein, 1982)

Reliability can be evaluated by the utilisation of AVE (Average Variance Extracted), that is, a parallel construct quantification trust ability (Larcker & Fornell, 1981). If the value

of AVE is greater than 0.50, there greater trust ability on a particular scale (Larcker & Fornell , 1981).

3) *Convergent Validity*: As per (Kline , 1998) the interpretation of construct scales is demonstrated by construct validity as it contrasts with the reliability that works to symbolize how accurate is the internal uniformity or the construct scales. (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, Multivariate Data Analysis. Seventh Edition, 2010), asserted that the computation and analysis of values of the factor loadings and the corresponding importance is done as per the initial criteria best suited for quantifying the construct validity. These were termed as regression weights in the AMOS. But these are the un-standardized factor loadings linked with constructs and their loadings. The convergent validity is ensured when the factor loadings are greater than the value of baseline 0.60 and its t-value should be greater than 1.96 in the hypothesis. These indicate that cross loadings are smaller than on loadings, (Chin, 1998). The computations and outcomes of AVE, CRs and Alphas were considered for the implementation of the outcomes of convergent validity, where this fact is ignored that the standardized factor loadings are transparently shown in convergent validity. As the values were greater than the baseline, the outcomes were favourable for the overall model (refer to (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). Moreover, the convergent validity is demonstrated by the correlation present among diverse constructs and those can be used as the correlation ranges from 0.4 to 0.7. It demonstrated same kind of latent fundamental theme, and so, at last, the convergent validity was clearly shown.

4) *Discriminant Validity*: (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, Multivariate Data Analysis. Seventh Edition, 2010), claimed that this factor can be used for computing the degree of variation among the constructs where these constructs are contrasted through the utilisation of AVE for every single construct and squared quantities of the approximated correlation among the constructs. When the square of the approximated correlation between it and the other variable is smaller than the AVE quantity of the variable, there is the satisfactory degree of discriminant validity among the variables. Afterwards, the CFA model was re-specified through modifying the variances of total seven variables to the value of 1.0 and the path parameters present among the constructs and their indicators were unsettled, however, estimation was taken of those constructs.

In 1991, (Bagozzi, Yi, & Phillips, 1991), claimed that the discriminant validity for each pair of constructs was formulated by means of independently implementing a series of two-factor CFA model. When it commenced, the correlation was restricted to the value of 1, which is known as the ideal correlation state, but afterwards, it was re-implemented among every two constructs so that the complete procedure for each model can be attained. As per (Bagozzi, Yi, & Phillips, 1991), it showed the discriminant validity clearly among the constructs that are utilised in the model which will happen when a transformation in χ^2 exceeds from 3.84 (df= 1, 5% significance level). The overall approximations were 23 that are attained from the process and it concluded that the nested models are not pertinent for the corresponding unconstrained models showing

discriminant validity. In addition to these conclusions, the chi-square tests have been used through which the evaluation of variations was at the significant level of 0.01. One validity predicament was that the AVE value needs to exceed 0.5 as it demonstrates that the variance attained from the assessment errors is smaller than the variance calculated by a certain item (Larcker & Fornell , 1981); (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, Multivariate Data Analysis. Seventh Edition, 2010). However, every construct fulfil the criteria given.

5) Nomological Validity: Nomological Validity refers to the correlation present among the constructs that is required to be incorporated and fulfil the obligations of theories. As per (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, Multivariate Data Analysis. Seventh Edition, 2010), the computation of this factor is performed by analysing the correlation values present amid the constructs inside the CFA model, in which the value of constructs' variance is 1.0. The signs of the values are used to signify the correlation present among the constructs and its significance remains high for the researchers. As the anticipated directions are given, the correlation matrix for all the variables is built in accordance with it and included in the table of the appendix. The analysis of the structural relationships among the hypothesized constructs is utilised for performing the most important evaluation of the hypotheses in case the measurement model holds satisfying discriminant and convergent validity. This is the fundamental part of the quantitative analysis that has been elucidated in the following segments in detail.

4.5 STRUCTURAL EQUATION MODEL EVALUATION

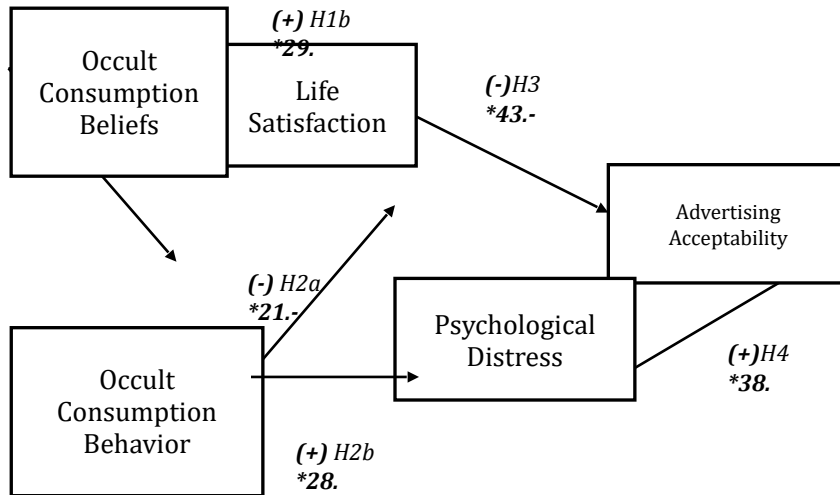
The figure depicted below comprises of the chi-square measurements and the hypothesized model, along with the model fit indexes which are considered suitable for this research study. Moreover, the computation of the structural paths of this model is also included in this phase where the strength of the hypothesized model is evaluated, and its performance is contrasted with rival/competing models or nomological models.

The associated standardized path coefficients and the expected signs signify the hypothesized relation present among the constructs in Fig 5.1. According to significant standardized path coefficients, each path is significant and spurs every hypothesis. For all structural equations, a sign of the fit is provided by the hypothesized model through the stipulation of the R^2 value for each latent construct. Besides this, all the paths have significant level greater than 0.001 and t-value exceeds from 1.96. It is believed that greater path coefficients can connote the multi-co linearity issues so the strength of paths present among latent constructs were also measured, making sure that such probable issues can be present there. As per (Hair et al., 2010), when the values exceed 0.9, the multi-co linearity issues are shown. It was apparent from the outcomes that every path coefficient value is below critical value and smaller than the baseline of 0.38.

In the structural model presented in Fig 5.1, the value of χ^2 is attained from the quantity of 762 (df = 347, p-value = 0.000). The conclusive model fit for the structural model signified a satisfactory model fit for the gathered information that includes TLI = 0.92,

RFI = 0.90, RMSEA = 0.048, CMIN/df = 1.9; df = 302, NFI = 0.90, Chi-Square = 456, CFI = 0.93, and IFI = 0.94. The below-stated table demonstrates the correlation matrix linked with latent variables.

This Figure 4.1 demonstrates the structural model utilised for this study.



ANTECEDENTS OF MENTAL HEALTH INDICATORS 4.1.

Occult Consumption Beliefs to Life satisfaction 4.4.2

There is a negative impact of this study hypothesized *Occult Consumption Beliefs* upon which H_{1a} is accepted as the estimated parameter of LS (H_{1a}) the Life Satisfaction that is significant at $p < .01$ shows the value of

Occult Consumption Beliefs to Psychological Distress 4.4.3

There is a positive impact of this study hypothesized *Occult Consumption Beliefs* upon which H_{1b} is accepted as the estimated parameter of PD (H_{1b}) the Psychological Distress that is significant at $p < .01$ shows the value of

Occult Consumption Behaviour to Life satisfaction 4.4.4

There is a negative impact of this study hypothesized *Occult Consumption Behaviour* upon the Psychological Distress which H_{2a} is accepted as the estimated parameter of PD (H_{2a}) upon the Psychological Distress that is significant at $p < .01$ shows the value of

Occult Consumption Behaviour to Psychological Distress 4.4.5

There is a positive impact of this study hypothesized *Occult Consumption Behevaious* , H_{2b} is accepted as the estimated parameter of PD (H_{2b}) upon the Psychological Distress .0.1>that is significant at p 28. which shows the value of

Life Satisfaction on Advertising Acceptability Attitude 4.4.6

There is a positive impact of this study hypothesized *Life Satisfaction* upon t *Advertising* which , H_3 is accepted as the estimated parameter of PD (H_3) *Acceptability Attitude* .0.1>that is significant at p 43.- shows the value of

Psychological Distress on Advertising Acceptability Attitude There is a positive 4.4.7 impact of this study hypothesized *Psychological Distress* upon the *Advertising* which , H_4 is accepted as the estimated parameter of PD (H_4) *Acceptability Attitude* .0.1>that is significant at p 38. shows the value of

5.0 Chapter 5: Discussion of Findings

5.1 Introduction

The effects of the outcomes achieved will be elaborated in this chapter in the form of discussion, with its arrangement based on the evaluation of the relevant work and the theoretical model created in the earlier chapters. Furthermore, it will also **cast light on the analysis of the data testing the hypotheses** and their consequences. In addition to it, this part will be adjusted with the rational series of **the hypotheses** and will concentrate on the significant conclusions which will be expressed in the form of suggestions and moral

consideration.

5.2 Main findings

1. The results showed that mental health variables together (consisted of around) **accounted for approximately 35 %** predictive value arising occult beliefs and consumption. Occult beliefs and consumption is an intricate concept ordered on the basis of different predictors. Its determinative nature affirms this and allows a number of factors ranging from major environmental to psychological personality characters to determine its magnitude. The most interesting aspect of it **(being) is** that both consumption and beliefs emerge as distinct constructs and have strong divergent validity. **This leads to the conclusion (concludes) that occult beliefs or psychic favourability have a distinct basis (to) for actual behaviour**, providing a double-ordered structure to it to overall occult/superstitions as a concept. Hence, it can be said that knowledge about **occult belief** and behaviour are intricately connected but also differentiated. **(too)**. This lays the foundation for the case of positive or negative consumption as no subsistent evidence is provided. Such an approach towards the structure of occult beliefs and behaviour provides **that, being a mind-set, occult belief** is closely linked with knowledge and perceptions by means of a repetitive feedback cycle.

2. Advertising acceptability additionally results from mental health indicators and 45% of this attitude is predicted by both life satisfaction and psychological distress alone, which raises a question that whether advertising promotes occult beliefs and consumption or not

through a societal wide attitude which develops first form occult consumption and beliefs. This research implies that advertising plays a very important role in creating a positive impact on beliefs and consumption. Later, in this research, the general population strategy ramifications of this will be deliberated regarding the result of outcomes of beliefs and consumption emphasized in the following segment. It is fascinating that advertising acceptability and occult consumption and beliefs have an extensive relationship. This proposes an influential role for advertisements to have an impact over social perspective concerning occult and psychic beliefs and, therefore, fortifying and shaping real occult and psychic beliefs and effect consumption. (At the end of the day) **In the final analysis**, advertising can effect occult consumption, either by effecting behaviours, beliefs or the emotional perspective or groups at the same time. This discovery (backs up) **supports** the idea that giving more independence to occult and psychic advertisers would lead the wider society to accepting these psychic and occult beliefs, which consequently prompts more consumption. Serious teleological concerns arise for general policy-makers, as has been indicated by Sancho (2005) that **there is already a (lot) considerable amount of psychic and occult (stuff) material on TV** in the general watching times and that it would be beneficial to air these adverts on specific stations rather **than (airing) screening** them when children are most likely **to be watching TV**. Even though the research (provided) **found no empirical evidence that psychic regulation (imparts no) had created any significant impacts**, the relationship was found to be negative in the expected direction. **This provided evidence that the two the major aspects of marketing (i.e. acceptability and regulation and controls) negated each other.**

Regulation perceptions are emerged from the apprehension towards psychics in advertising marketing for which there has been a need to put them under strict regulating structure. This notion is taken as a question in this scale.

3. It was found that both beliefs and consumption have a positive and strong influence on mental health outcomes. In all cases, the levels of association exceed 0.20, **indicating a (moderately large) moderate influence**. Occult beliefs were found to have a stronger influence than behaviours which may **appear (strange) anomalous** at first but indicates that a person's belief system is more strongly tied to his mental and cognitive state. Therefore in this context a person may consume occult or superstitious activities but may not necessarily believe in the values embedded within this practice in which case the influence of behaviours logically would be weaker than having the reverse case; a person having strong beliefs in occult and superstitions but not necessarily actualise these beliefs.

4. If we focus on the outcomes of this subsection of regression evaluations, they have extreme results that are beyond the significance of this research. Without a doubt, the area for this study lies basically in mental wellbeing and psychology as utilization, and actually mysterious philosophies have been observed to be clearly associated with a number of mental health issues. For example, in the past month, occult faiths and utilization predict 5% of recorded historical tension that recommends that the viewpoint of the people of the UK regarding stress and tension is because of occult principles and

utilization. Other than the general devastation results of tension and anxiety, the major consequences includes development of tension into depression and that of depression into neurosis and psychosis. According to a relevant statistics, days off from work owing to stress and anxiety cost the UK government around £5billion pounds **each year**. Other figures show the UK government loses an estimated £25 million because of the occult principles and utilizations. The human costs of incapacitation are not mentioned here as various mental health pointers are basically a result of progress on from tension and anxiety possibly.

5. Psychosomatic medicine concludes that stress and tension are significant factors of various serious diseases and the aforementioned two factors can turn into more critical physical diseases. According to various results obtained in this regard, a shocking 10% of assumed recorded historical illness occurs as a result of occult principles and utilization. Various figures show work leave because of certain diseases costs the UK government an estimated £20 billion and almost £2 billion was because of the occult principles and utilization. The aforementioned statistics do not include the loss of profit because of the medical treatment by the NHS; otherwise this value would rise to billions of pounds.

6. One significant thing that should be noted is that such a large value has stayed outside the sphere of the media or of any analysis that clearly enhances the significance of this study as it has managed to link the occult utilization directly with mental health issues. Moreover, this study will help in putting forward essential understandings and

suggestions through which the health situation in the UK could be reversed. There are several supporters of occult and they consider it holy; additionally, most religions have some groups that promote such principles.

7. The following points will show the inclusion of occult beliefs in various religions;

- [?] The Kabala is a renowned faction for practicing occult beliefs in Judaism.
- [?] Sufism is a famous group in Muslim world to perform such practices.
- [?] Focusing on Christianity, several groups practice occult rituals or have occult beliefs. However, despite the occult origins of the Christmas tree, it became Christianised and to take on the significance of the tree of the Cross on which Jesus gave His life to save mankind. Thus, as used by Christians nowadays, it has no such occult meanings, although New Agers and others often claim that this is the case. (Moreover, such beliefs have transformed in to strong principles like the occult role of the X mass tree.)
- The Abrahamic faiths forbid occult practices (Arendzen 1911) and regard such practices as sinful. In fact, the implication is that those within the Abrahamic faiths who entertain occult beliefs or practices are, ipso facto, outside of orthodox practice of their faith and are in error or heresy.

8. If we concentrate on other religions then they have extensive and recognized outlines for mental and occult phenomenon. Hinduism and Buddhism, both contain occult elements, although Arendzen (1911) has provided scholarly and historical

evidence that in their original pristine forms, both religions were free of occult or magical elements. It is observed that various shopkeepers keep little jade Buddha statue in their shops as they believe that it will bring 'good luck' in their lives. However, many religions use icons and images, not in an idolatrous sense, but rather as the means for communication between God and man. In fact, the correct use of icons in worship is to remind the religious adherent that God observes the person and knows all their thoughts and deeds.

The effects of flourishing concerns against occult and mental experiences for such factions remain argumentative. Nevertheless, this study has managed to link utilization to physical history of illness and thus points out that such practices are not good for mental health.

9. Finally, it is observed that occult belief and consumption causes people to believe they are innately capable of controlling themselves than anyone else since loss is self-esteem and life satisfaction is closely linked to loss of self-control. However, this concept remained arguable owing to the nature of occult and psychic being principally based upon the notion that every life event is controlled by someone else. For believers, even those who use icons or images, the correct and orthodox use of such images serves as a visual aid reminding the believer that God is ultimately in control. This gave rise to discord between the concepts of occult beliefs. The followers of occult may use dissonance methodologies to describe and justify their actions. Hence, they get to feel that they are

actually in control of none other than themselves. Conversely, this result can also be described in the perspective of development of psychic traits within a user which compels them to believe that their actions are controlled by environment and destiny alongside the laws of nature.

The consequences of public strategy and involvement of the government are not clear-cut. The sovereignty of the self is put in danger with occult principles and utilization and certainly, it is proved that such beliefs and utilization schemas cause harm. Cunningham (2001) stated that limitations on self-rule and evidencing damage are major pointers of public strategy involvement; furthermore, the requirement and compulsion for the public policy involvement are also proved in this study.

10. Other than this, it also involves task forces that are made up of multi and varied elements requested to abet offending organizations in terms of administration etc. It was proclaimed on the 28th of March by the UK government that The Witches Act 1775 will be superseded which was considered as an important step as it was taken for the first time in almost two centuries. However, it is important not to overstate the significance of that event as it may simply amount to correcting misunderstandings of a previous age.

Such actions clearly exhibit the government's viewpoint in contradiction to the evidence relating to the dangers of the psychic and occult beliefs and utilization, probably owing to a Home Office analysis recommending a relationship between beliefs and communal

issues. Thus, it is evident that the government has recognized rules and regulations as the simplest way to deal with such issues. As all the relevant issues will be managed by the courts after the aforementioned decision made by the government, former efforts by the Advertising Standards Association to control and organize the advertising zone have been relieved in terms of pressure and stress. If we focus on the renowned case of the Maharishi adverts controlled by the ASA in 2005, we would find out that it would be considered unlawful and would be answerable to the criminal trial.

Saudi Arabia possesses the title of the only state that has designed a set of rules and regulations that ban mental and occult advertising. In accordance with the opinion of (WHO, Wilkinson, & Marmot, 2003), Saudi Arabia has one of the least mental health issues in the world and people living in Saudi Arabia are mentally stable. Saudi Arabia is considered the centre of the Islamic world and Islam completely bans occult and mental phenomena as it is considered as the ultimate sin. Saudi Arabia has implemented many severe restrictions in this regard and the punishment for practicing and promoting occult is death. (There are chances) It is possible that Saudi Arabia is more conscious as compared to other states regarding the connection between mental stability and mental health pointers. Moreover, newspapers in Saudi Arabia such as the Saudi Gazette or the Arab News publish content relevant to the cases mental illness. This situation creates an acid test situation for the nations who have failed to meet the requirements to deal with the psychic and occult.

5.3 Ethical and Public Policy Management

1. With the inflow of advertisements, it likewise makes the path for Occult professionals to falsely trap individuals by proposing facilities like content and happy life, fruitful marriage, kids, effective relationship and ensuring success etc. This has a perilous effect on the customer, morally and psychologically. The administrative bodies in a country should investigate this matter completely and guarantee that even the safe practices of palmistry, tarot card reading are controlled with a renunciation for these facilities that allows practitioners to influence the brain of individuals with fictitious and incidental projections.

2. There could be employed a wide range of advertisement campaigns for Clairvoyance and Occult/Psychic products, as their services are unlimited. However, consumers and non-consumers are apprehensive of the ethical implications of these services. The marketers are exploiting consumers' trust towards their product by means of various techniques whose ethical values are questionable.

To have any certain controlling system, it is required to have a profound arrangement of inquiries to find and know the history behind the ads containing Occult consumption and beliefs and to do massive investigations to ambush the shrouded plan in the ads that have any distant links of Occult/Psychic beliefs and routine.

3. Advertising is an influential instrument **employing tactics** which can easily shape behaviours, traditions, principles, personality and viewpoints of an individual or a whole community (Berger, Bloomberg, Fox, Dibb , & Hollis, 1972) (Peterson, A meta-analysis of Cronbach's coefficient alpha., 1994). In accordance with the opinion of (Kuhns, 1970), advertisements can be taken as an essential instrument that possesses the ability to change or improve the communal life. Conflictingly, the advocates of advertisement state that it basically exhibits the reality of the society and truly depicts the truth regarding that society (Brown, 1981), **(Owing to various reasons) For many reasons, this topic is of great importance.** In case an individual is unable to control himself or herself, advertisements will affect him seriously. Advertisements will have significant impact on the individual and the individual will start picking up various factors from that particular ad like language, theme etc. Self-autonomy is a quality of being in charge of one's own self and the advertisements shown on televisions manage to push the viewers or target audience in to a condition of disenchantment and incredulity and faultily ascribing expectations of immediate success and contentment (Haworth, 19984). Moreover, superseding of self-independence owing to the convincing advertisements highlights the significance of the Advertisement acceptability of Occult consumption and Beliefs.

4. At times, an individual is satisfied with the performance of certain Occult/psychic services or seeing a doctor, thus linking the feeling of contentment or achievement with the practice of services or devoting belief in the doctor. Many advertisements possess the ability to hide the truth and remove the traceability of significant proof to disclose the

reality. Measures that can be employed so as to acquire severe regulatory methods that are based on the moral application of advertisements are focused in the next section.

5.4 Recommendation

1. Advertising Standard Authority played a significant role in imparting knowledge about the undesirable influences of occult practices, consumption and principles on mental wellbeing of the customer. Another way is to implement limitations on ads of any occult related item or facilities. In addition to it, avoiding the advertising of such products in a positive way, like easing tension or employment of occult facilities, brings about rapid success and aids in controlling the issues.

2. It is important to arrange health and warning initiatives that are related to ‘anti-smoking’ or ‘anti drugs’ programs so that the harmful effects of the use of such services and products can be brought to the attention of the public. These services specifically include the ones that are related to occults or psychics. There is a need to create such suitable programs and initiatives that are capable of dealing with this dilemmas at once and also reveal the seriousness of this problem to the minds of the customers and users so that an impression can be created.

3. The clearing out of such stakeholders of Occult/Psychic industry who make phony and bogus assertions must also be done by the regulatory system of Advertising Standard Authority. For instance, they assert that fate can be altered by buying some talisman or stone or taking part in some ceremony. Although the government is making efforts to clear out these vile practices, these products and services somehow come in contact with

the viewers at homes by using legal or illegal channels and programs. Owing to the migration of people and colonization, these traditions and exercises have also reached all over the world and specifically in developing countries, these customs and ceremonies of these practices have highly sinister repercussions <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/CCI/nugget.asp?id=260>.

4. There is a requirement for active participation in the prohibition of these practices and various such traditions can be fatal with grave repercussions. These advertisements declare to cure the issues and dilemmas faced by the people with the assistance of occult practices, ceremonies or buying of stones, talismans etc. at an expensive price. According to (indianexpress.com ,2009), many of these experts have inculcated fear in their customers and encourage the belief that a curse would be placed on them if they decline their offer or advice. This alarming situation requires a more sound and effective strategy to eliminate these culprits as many as possible because the majority of them prosper on the word of mouth and cannot be tracked down in advertisements. However, this fact cannot be denied that the government is making efforts to clear out these psychics and ‘tantriks’.

5. Related to the pre-existing loop holes in the law that regulates the practices and advertisements of Occult/Psychic nature are being discussed in this review of the legislation. There is a need to evaluate the possible dangers of Occult advertisements and as a result they need to be followed by creating policies to minimize its risky impact. In

regulating the Occult advertisement and practices, the government will play a crucial role and put extra effort to contradict the claims of (Polonsky & Scott, 2005). He claimed that Western governments were normally hopeless in reducing these vile practices. Another crucial method that can be utilized to control the frightening impact that Occult advertisement and practice has, is the creation of minimum age checks so that young people can be saved from being badly influenced by coming in contact with Occult.

6. To stop the audiences from being misinformed, severe measures should be taken, that includes the demand of total clearness for doctors or other experts who are linked with this art. Moreover, a disclaimer should be made compulsory on any Occult/Psychic related material aired or printed as systematically unverified or for amusement purpose only, carrying no similarity to realism. Appropriate steps should be taken in this regard for every age group that involves kids of every age. It is quite obvious that children who watch Harry Potter possess a different viewpoint that makes them more open to Occult beliefs and Consumption. Adequate measures should be taken that involve the monitoring of books, cartoons and movies that might affect the opinion of children. It also includes the exercise of encouraging the consumers to analyse and evaluate the risks linked with such advertisements and therefore, avoiding the misconceptions. It is the duty of the government to highlight the elements regarding Occult advertisement and practice regulations and should support robust governing insights. Roust regulatory steps involve provision of devoted psychiatric therapy and helpdesks to stop people from falling for Occult advertisements.

5.5 Challenges to Managing Occult Practices in Media

An area of challenge to managing occult practices in media was the advent of participation TV (PTV). Prior to the development of the newest guidelines, (Ofcom, 2007) noted challenges to the management of occult practices in the media. It pointed out that a number of TV services were at the time allowing adult chat or psychic readings that were permitted as editorial services (Ofcom, 2007). Ofcom (Ofcom, 2007).stated that those services had to maintain their editorial status in order to continue broadcasting, because the BCAP Advertising Code prohibited such advertisements for live adult chat services on unencrypted channels and for occultic or psychic products, services, and practices.

To complicate matters further, although the BCAP Advertising Code prohibits all live and most recorded presentations of psychic services, it does permit the broadcast of content involving the occult and paranormal under the Broadcasting Code, within certain parameters (Ofcom, 2007). However, it can become difficult to determine where to draw the line. The more promotional the content is—i.e., the more often viewers are asked to call a PRS line, the more difficult it can be to discern the point at which editorial service becomes an advertisement (Ofcom, 2007). Article 19's summary of Media Regulation for the United Kingdom relates that the UK does not permit demonstrations of exorcisms or psychic or occult practices in factual programming "except where they are the subject of a legitimate investigation" (Ruth). Determining whether there is a legitimate investigation can be problematic, however, since any group or individual can mount what

is claimed to be such an investigation, and the intent may not be straightforward (Ruth)

5.6 Management of the Practice of Occultic Practices

Managing the practice of occultic practices is not an easy task for any government. Many occultic organizations that engage in such practices are secret organizations that are not registered anywhere and that meet in private under cover of dark, either out in the woods or other secluded natural settings or quietly in darkened rooms of private homes. Thus, for the British government to manage such practices, it has to be made aware of them and to know their location and the identities of individuals that are involved. One group generally recognized as occultic that operates more openly, although they still have secretive practices, is the Freemasons.

Another challenge to managing the influence of the occult and superstitious practices in the UK is the popularity of occultic children's literature and films, such as the Harry Potter series. (Peterson, A meta-analysis of Cronbach's coefficient alpha, 1994) (Diffendal, 2004) points out that the Harry Potter books and films have been condemned for "directly luring children into the occult and desensitizing children to the evil of witchcraft". Even when the UK's regulatory framework is sufficient to control advertising that involves the occult, the ready availability of reading material and movies that exalt wizardry, witchcraft, and the occult and portray them in a desirable manner can so strongly influence children that they develop a desire to engage in such practices.

Although the Harry Potter series has been much criticized by religious and other

groups, it has not been banned in the UK, and as a result it has introduced wizardry, witchcraft, and the occult into mainstream UK culture virtually without hindrance. Despite a variety of activist events protesting the Harry Potter series, including book-burnings and web site responses, the series has achieved in box office alone \$7,216,000,000 worldwide (Statistic Brain, 2014). DVD sales total \$1,878,000,000, rentals total \$607,000,000, and toy sales total \$7,307,500,000, for a sales total for the Harry Potter franchise of \$24,751,000 (Statistic Brain, 2014). These mind-boggling figures indicate that the Harry Potter series has captivated the imagination of the world's children and created an open door for them to enter the world of the occult. Yet the UK co-regulatory system did nothing to stop it because it was clearly intended for entertainment purposes only.

The problem is that entertainment does more than entertain. It raises allegiance, inspires, motivates, and convinces as well. Children who have read Harry Potter books, watched Harry Potter movies, and played with Harry Potter toys are more than just entertained. They are inducted into the imaginary world of Harry Potter, where wizardry wins the day. Wizardry and witchcraft are portrayed as exceedingly desirable, and even as forces for good. Although children may consciously recognize that Harry Potter material is fictitious, the subconscious mind does not differentiate between reality and fiction. To the subconscious, it is all real. Therefore, the influence of Harry Potter books on children is far more profound than parents or children recognize, and far more damaging than the regulatory system is designed to address.

As Diffendal (Diffendal, 2004) notes, films like the Harry Potter movies raise the

fear that children are vulnerable to this type of content and that their morals will be affected by it. She states, “if Harry Potter does require governmental regulation, its enormous popularity raises serious questions regarding how our values in society are shifting” (Diffendal, 2004). Here, she makes a cogent point that underscores the vulnerability of the UK’s current co-regulatory system. The system primarily addresses the technicalities of various practices; it does not control influences on morality beyond those technicalities. The fact that the Harry Potter series is not banned in the UK simply because it is viewed as entertainment completely ignores the fact that it has transmuted UK culture into one that is rife with witchcraft and that witchcraft has been posed as a desirable, righteous, and worthwhile activity. Harry Potter is presented as someone fighting for the power of good, which suggests that witchcraft and wizardry are morally good—at least when used by the “right” people.

The example of the Harry Potter series brings into focus several weaknesses in the regulation of occult media in the UK. In an attempt to remain religiously neutral, the government has made it difficult to prohibit the sales of materials that are primarily considered morally dangerous by religious groups. Many non-religious organizations remain undisturbed by the Harry Potter series, largely because they have not analyzed the impact on our youth of being exposed to this type of influence. Diffendal herself (Diffendal, 2004), who champions the series, questions why “sex and violence remain critical to our definition of obscenity” (p. 56). By attempting to persuade her readers that sex and violence should not be considered obscenity, she is exposing firsthand why this type of material should be banned; it convinces the public that there is really nothing

wrong with the moral universe it is promoting.

In light of the vast proliferation of paganism and occultic practices in the UK in recent years, the ritual murder of Adam as well as other individuals, and the astounding success of the Harry Potter franchise, one must acknowledge that the regulatory and co-regulatory framework for controlling advertising related to the occult in the UK is failing us. While it may seem very sensible on the surface to treat every religion and tradition the same, the fact remains that there are socially undesirable and even criminal practices associated with the occult and that consumption of the occult leads to practices that are immoral, in some cases abhorrent, and even criminal. People's minds—and those of children especially—are shaped by the types of media they consume. The UK's obsession with Harry Potter is a bellwether for an enormous proliferation of and interest in the occult, and occultic practices sometimes lead to ritualistic torture and murder. More often, such practices simply erode the morality of a culture, bit by bit, by making immorality seem acceptable. This is accomplished by contextualizing it in certain ways that mask its underlying corruption. For example, Harry Potter's fight to right wrongs makes him appear to be a charismatic leader for the moral side, and yet the series is anything but that.

The minimalist regulation of occult practices in the UK allows ample room for the occult to flourish in UK society, bringing with it the aftermath in terms of children who are brutalized and murdered like Adam, but even perhaps more importantly, children who can accept in their thinking that there is a valid reason for such murders. While there

may at first glance seem to be a long stretch between Harry Potter and ritualistic murder, the issue is not one of degree but one of moral judgment in any degree, because once a child accepts the premise that Harry Potter is right, the steps to accepting a higher degree are small ones.

The UK has taken important first steps toward controlling the proliferation of occult content in advertising, yet it has taken virtually no action toward curbing the impact of the occult on people in its society. It is certainly vital to begin with restricting or prohibiting certain types of adverts that promote occult activity that can take advantage of susceptible viewers, but the fact that nothing is being done to prevent the dissemination of occultic literature, films, and thinking in UK society indicates that the only exploitation being prevented is the financial kind.

An apt analogy might be the prohibiting of brutal activities such as dogfighting while promoting a love for dogfighting among the populace at the same time. Little substantive good is accomplished through this limited and somewhat myopic stance on the occult. While advertisements for occultic services and predictions are banned, at the same time, there is no restriction on books, films, and businesses devoted to the occult, so the net effect of a massive media culture devoted to the occult is barely tempered at all by a severely limited and somewhat anemic attempt by the government to curtail monetary exploitation regarding the occult. Occultic practices are cultural in nature, not monetary at their most basic level, so the objective of preventing occultic businesses from obtaining money from unsuspecting viewers is only a small part of how occultic practice needs to be circumscribed by regulatory bodies.

The first proposed strategy is to prohibit the sale or distribution of occult media or other materials to children under 18 years old. Materials that are not allowable to be advertised should not be available for children to buy or consume. This includes books, movies, and toys related to the occult, witchcraft, wizardry, and the like. Children's prolific imagination and trusting acceptance, as well as their lack of experience in telling right from wrong makes these types of materials too influential to be exposed to. As we expose children to the occult, we help to create their moral universe, and the moral universe that the occult promotes is one that we will all have to live in if we allow it to prevail and thrive.

The second proposed strategy is to strengthen the co-regulatory framework accordingly. If we do not want to promote the occult throughout our society and among our children and youth, we need to limit education on the topic and the availability of commercial items related to it as well. Teaching about occult practices in the context of learning about other cultures and what they believe in and do is vastly different from creating a story scenario that popularizes and promotes those practices.

No one wants to live in a censored society, and censorship is not the answer. However, no one wants to live in a society in which immorality and ritual murder become the norm, either. Therefore, judicious limitations on the distribution of occultic books, films, toys, and other materials need to be incorporated into our regulatory framework. Reading non-fiction books that merely describe the practices is not nearly as inflammatory and influential as reading stories that make practitioners of the occult into heroes. Thus, one of the first things to prohibit is sensationalized fiction about the occult.

In addition, children under 10 should not be introduced to the occult at all, even in school. They do not have sufficient moral discrimination to protect themselves from what could be deleterious influence if they became captivated by it and began engaging in it for themselves. Children who read about casting a spell, sacrificing an animal, or even sacrificing a human being may develop a desire to participate in such practices.

The third proposed strategy is to incorporate into our regulatory framework an identification of the full trajectory that occult interests have on people and throughout society. When we limit our attention just to advertising, we neglect the human costs of occult practices. The regulations regarding the occult should include an awareness of what exposure to the occult could result in down the line if they are not curbed, or in the case of some practices, prohibited altogether. Since children, especially, are vulnerable to these influences, the strongest prohibitions should be developed for their protection, but it must be recognized that even adults—if continually exposed to objectionable material—can develop a fascination with it and be led to participate in it at some point.

Finally, our government needs to discriminate between occultic practices and religions that do not lead to immorality and harm to people and animals. Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and similar religions rarely promote immorality or violence; rather, they actively promote peacemaking and peaceful coexistence, and religions and traditions that do promote violence cannot be treated on an equal plane with them. The impulse to be “fair” to everyone cannot be used as a pretext to allow harmful influences to flourish in the midst of our society by providing them with license to

influence children and adults. This misplaced intention to create equity can corrupt not only our youth but also our peace, as occultic practices become increasingly prominent.

Ultimately, our responsibility as a nation goes beyond controlling what our advertisements contain. It includes shaping the kind of world we want ourselves and our children to live in. If we allow authors and filmmakers to model occultic practices in their works and then make such works available to the population for their consumption, we are opening a Pandora's box of potential consequences that could change the way we live and reduce the safety that we live in. These are choices that we as a nation can make and that our government can develop mechanisms for satisfying.

Chapter 6.0 Recommendations for further research, Limitations and Conclusion

6.1 Recommendations for further Research

1. Numerous implications for further research arise from this study. This section only provides an overview of the most important implications. Clearly this study is not complete, studies in the future should also consider examining the role of other important issues which may moderate the pathway examined in this study, e.g. cultural values, family history, personality types, etc. Even demographics such as age and gender and psychographics such as lifestyle decisions may be important factors to consider in the future in understanding the development and relationships between occult and superstitious consumption and beliefs with mental health indicators.

2. Critically, though, this study needs a inductive phase or element which seeks the first hand views of people affected by occult consumption in maladaptive ways. Therefore any future study should employ a professional psychologist who is able to interview such subjects about sensitive issues such as mental health effects without causing further distress. Alternatively other target populations with knowledge about this issue such as expert samples, e.g. psychiatric doctors or nurses or counsellors should be selected as

separate studies.

3. Furthermore, cross cultural comparisons can be done to examine if the results of this study compare well or not with comparable or different cultures. For instance Saudi Arabia has already been mentioned as a country which bans occult practices and advertising but which boasts one of the mentally healthiest publics in the world. A comparison can be therefore made and current legislation and advertising norms compared.

4. In order to evaluate and test if advertising acceptability attitude can further influence the promotion of more occult consumption a longitudinal study design should be implemented. For instance a researcher could implement the survey over every four months for two years and assess how changes in occult beliefs and consumption affect advertising acceptability attitudes and how these in turn affect mental health indicators etc.

5. A psychology or health based study could also investigate psychiatric patients with a history of occult induced illness. This would of course have to be initiated by professional health researchers and not from a business studies or management professional. This study could interview such individuals to assess firsthand accounts of their experiences of occult and superstitious consumptions and behaviours and how this has influenced their daily life experiences.

6. A review of occult or spiritual healer websites could also reveal much. A content analysis study of such websites or even adverts could determine how such service

providers play or use sensitive personal issues such as illness, or marriage breakdown as emotional blackmailing levers for business. Indicators of mental health such as self-esteem or hope could also be analysed if used by such services.

Clearly there are many avenues for further research on this area and the list above only provides some options. The next section discusses some limitations of this study. Some have already been mentioned in the discussion but this list provides a summary overview.

6.2 Limitations

1. No study is perfect and this study is no exception, it has numerous limitations. First and foremost it could not access first hand experiences of accounts from consumers who engage in occult consumption. If the study aim was only to investigate occult consumption this would be possible as a mixed method study using inductive interviews. However given that mental health as a consequence of occult consumption was the key aim of this study it was not possible to ask individuals about this sensitive issue given the limited training of the researcher in professional health or psychology based training. It could be if the researcher asked such questions the individual may become distressed more psychologically and this would be against the ethics research policy of the University of Hull Business School. Indeed the researcher pursued this option first but advice from a member of one of research ethics committee advised against this option and recommended a survey option as the only feasible one.

2. Second, the study omitted important variables and constructs such as personality types

or family history or cultural values which could also have important influences on the results. Occult consumption and its relationship to these other interesting and relevant constructs would need a separate and more comprehensive study which this study was not able to do. Moreover, some consideration should also be given to personality typologies which, in effect, become horoscopes or astrology masquerading as scientific inventories. If these lead onto over-dependency or guiding principles for making life choices, there is some room for caution. For example, a typology which indicates the ideal type for the client to marry or enter into a partnership arrangement has clearly become too deterministic and risks jeopardizing human spontaneity.

3. Third, this study is based on a cross sectional survey design and therefore could not infer causality between constructs. As already recommended in the previous section a longitudinal study design would be needed to generate this level of causality over time.

4. This study also is based in the UK and therefore generalisations to other cultures and globally is not possible as each culture and nation has its own perspective and history towards folklores, occult and spiritual practices. For instance, in places like India or Haiti where occult practice are more of the norm then in the UK or elsewhere in the world the scales for occult consumption and beliefs would have to be adapted to suit those cultural contexts. The scale used in this study is appropriate for western cultures but not for places like India or Haiti, Haiti for instance being the world's most prevalent culture for voodoo practices or India with its own Hindu influenced practices. Similarly, in cultures where occult is banned like Saudi Arabia different scales may need to be used. Clearly therefore

the results of this study cannot be generalised to other seemingly different cultures.

Clearly there are numerous limitations of this study and this list only provides the most obvious ones but it shows that this study like all research is not perfect.

6.3 Conclusion.

In light of the vast proliferation of paganism and occultic practices in the UK in recent years, the ritual murder of Adam as well as other individuals, and the astounding success of the Harry Potter franchise, one must acknowledge that the regulatory and co-regulatory framework for controlling advertising related to the occult in the UK is failing us. While it may seem very sensible on the surface to treat every religion and tradition the same, the fact remains that there are socially undesirable practices associated with the occult and that consumption of the occult leads to practices that are immoral, in some cases abhorrent, and even criminal. People's minds—and those of children especially—are shaped by the types of media they consume. The UK's obsession with Harry Potter is a bellwether for an enormous proliferation of and interest in the occult, and occultic practices sometimes lead to ritualistic torture and murder. More often, such practices simply erode the morality of a culture, bit by bit, by making immorality seem acceptable. This is accomplished by contextualizing it in certain ways that mask its underlying corruption. For example, Harry Potter's fight to right wrongs makes him appear to be a charismatic leader for the moral side, and yet the series is anything but that.

The minimalist regulation of occult practices in the UK allows ample room for the occult to flourish in UK society, bringing with it the aftermath in terms of children who

are brutalized and murdered like Adam, but even perhaps more importantly, children who can accept in their thinking that there is a valid reason for such murders. While there may at first glance seem to be a long stretch between Harry Potter and ritualistic murder, the issue is not one of degree but one of moral judgment in any degree, because once a child accepts the premise that Harry Potter is right, the steps to accepting a higher degree are small ones.

The UK has taken important first steps toward controlling the proliferation of occult content in advertising, yet it has taken virtually no action toward curbing the impact of the occult on people in its society. It is certainly vital to begin with restricting or prohibiting certain types of adverts that promote occult activity that can take advantage of susceptible viewers, but the fact that nothing is being done to prevent the dissemination of occultic literature, films, and thinking in UK society indicates that the only exploitation being prevented is the financial kind.

An apt analogy might be the prohibiting of brutal activities such as dogfighting while promoting a love for dogfighting among the populace at the same time. Little substantive good is accomplished through this limited and somewhat myopic stance on the occult. While advertisements for occultic services and predictions are banned, at the same time, there is no restriction on books, films, and businesses devoted to the occult, so the net effect of a massive media culture devoted to the occult is barely tempered at all by a severely limited and somewhat anemic attempt by the government to curtail monetary exploitation regarding the occult. Occultic practices are cultural in nature, not monetary at their most basic level, so the objective of preventing occultic businesses from obtaining

money from unsuspecting viewers is only a small part of how occultic practice needs to be circumscribed by regulatory bodies.

This study is the first study to actually determine the positive effect of occult/superstitious consumption on mental health and as such raises the alarm even further on the regulation of the occult practices as a clear and positive pathway was found. Furthermore as mental health develops then attitude towards advertising regulation reduces further raising concerns that a vicious cycle may be operating of mental health consequences of occult consumption which are having a society wide relaxed approach to harmful occult consumption practices.

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