

# The Impact of Emotional Value on Purchase Intention and the Mediating Role of Purchase Attitudes

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## Abstract

China's second-hand luxury goods market shows rapid growth momentum and considerable potential space. This study aims to investigate the impact of emotional value on purchase intention, as well as the mediating role of purchase attitudes in this relationship. The research was conducted with a sample of 426 customers in China. Data were collected through a questionnaire method between April and May 2024. The data analysis employed descriptive statistical methods, exploratory factor analysis, reliability analysis, correlation analysis, and the path coefficient method to ascertain the mediating role. The analyses were conducted at a 95% confidence interval, revealing a strong positive correlation among the variables of emotional value, purchase attitudes, and purchase intention. The findings of this study indicate that emotional value significantly influences both purchase attitudes and purchase intention. Additionally, another key outcome of this research is the identification of a mediating effect of purchase attitudes on the relationship between emotional value and purchase intention. The findings offer valuable theoretical insights and practical guidance for the advancement of the second-hand luxury goods industry.

## Keywords

Purchase Intention; Purchase Attitudes; Second-hand Luxury; Emotional Value; Consumer Perceived Value.

## 1. Introduction

The sharing economy has gradually emerged in recent years, gaining recognition from various stakeholders for its significance. Garcés-Ayerbe emphasize the critical role of the circular economy in fostering sustainable development[1]. As transactions within the second-hand market increasingly adopt a market-oriented approach, consumers are becoming more receptive to purchasing pre-owned items[2]. The term "second-hand goods" refers to items that have been previously owned or utilized[3], which offer benefits that extend well beyond mere economic advantages[4][5]. Second-hand luxury goods particularly prioritize ecological and sustainable consumption principles, thereby contributing positively to the economic cycle while providing excellent value for money[6].

In recent years, the market size of China's second-hand luxury goods industry has exhibited a steady growth trend. By 2021, the market size reached RMB 29.625 billion, reflecting a year-on-year increase of 32.56% and a five-year compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 24.62%. Looking ahead, there remains significant potential for further expansion in this sector. It is projected that the market size will reach approximately RMB 34.8 billion by 2025, with an anticipated CAGR of 15%. The Chinese second-hand luxury goods market will continue to be primarily driven by categories such as jewelry and merchandise, watches, clothing, and bags. As these items gain popularity among young consumers in China, an increasing number of individuals are beginning to recognize and appreciate their value[6]. The relatively lower prices

associated with second-hand luxury goods cater to those who desire luxury products but have limited purchasing power[7]. Furthermore, the rise of e-commerce platforms in recent years is expected to significantly enhance the development of this cost-effective segment within the luxury goods market. The consumer demographic in China's second-hand luxury goods market is distinctly trending towards youthfulness. According to relevant reports, 52% of second-hand luxury consumers in China are under the age of 30[2]. With the increasing purchasing power and desire for luxury among younger consumers, the growth potential of the second-hand luxury market is anticipated to expand significantly[8]. The most prevalent business model for second-hand luxury retailers in China combines smaller brick-and-mortar stores with online e-commerce platforms.

Despite the rapid growth of this trend, there is a notable scarcity of empirical studies examining second-hand luxury consumer behavior within the academic literature[9][10][11]. Most previous research has given insufficient attention to the motivations behind purchasing second-hand luxury goods, as this phenomenon is relatively new[12]. The motivations driving consumers to purchase second-hand luxury fashion products differ significantly from those associated with acquiring new luxury items or non-luxury second-hand goods[9][10][11][13][14][15]. Research on consumer perceived value has predominantly focused on luxury and second-hand consumption. Despite growing interest, there remains a notable gap in research focused on understanding how consumer perceived value is formed, especially within the context of the second-hand luxury market. Understanding the perceived value of second-hand luxury goods provides a fresh framework for exploring this market segment[16].

Perceived emotional value is a fundamental aspect of second-hand luxury goods. The affective appeal of second-hand luxury shopping is deeply rooted in the abundance of available items, the thrill of treasure hunting, social interactions, the authenticity of products, and the nostalgic allure they evoke[4][17]. Hansen and Wanke contend that second-hand luxury goods provide substantial hedonic and experiential value, offering consumers an escape from the monotony of daily life[18]. Nostalgia as an affective value encompasses not only personal memories but also emotional responses to historical periods that individuals may not have directly experienced, thereby fostering a connection to the past[19]. A review of existing literature indicates a scarcity of studies examining how emotional value motivations influence consumer behavior regarding second-hand luxury goods. Furthermore, most current research predominantly employs qualitative methods through interviews. This study aims to empirically investigate the relationship between affective value and purchase intention for second-hand luxury goods while considering purchase attitude as a mediating variable. The findings from this research will contribute significantly to existing literature by providing insights into what motivates Chinese consumers to engage with second-hand luxury markets. These important results will offer valuable guidance for luxury fashion companies in developing marketing strategies and effectively communicating their sustainability initiatives[20].

## 2. Literature Review

Emotional value is characterized as a multifaceted amalgamation of hedonic and experiential value, encompassing the thrill of treasure hunting, social interaction, and the captivating essence of nostalgia[4][17][18][19]. Shoppers actively engage in the pursuit of their preferred items from an extensive selection of pre-owned luxury goods, deriving enjoyment from the experience. This endeavor becomes particularly rewarding when consumers uncover rare or limited-edition products that are no longer available in mainstream markets, thereby enhancing the appeal of the shopping process through an added layer of nostalgia.

Researchers commonly define and measure attitudes as multifaceted systems that include an individual's beliefs, emotions, and behavioral tendencies toward a specific object or category of objects. A person's attitude is shaped by their salient beliefs, which act as predictors and explanatory factors for their behavior[21]. Consumers' attitudes toward products are reflective of their cognitive evaluations based on personal values and self-concepts, which result in either positive or negative affective tendencies. In this study, the purchase attitude toward second-hand luxury goods refers to the consumer's overall evaluation of acquiring pre-owned items, such as clothing, bags, hats, and other goods, and whether they view this practice positively or negatively[22].

Intention is a significant concept in psychology, defined as the subjective probability or likelihood that an individual wishes to engage in a specific action. While there is no universally accepted definition of purchase intention within academic circles, researchers generally concur with the definition put forth by Ajzen and Fishbein[21]. They assert that the core aspect of purchase intention lies in the likelihood that consumers make personal decisions regarding the acquisition of goods or services based on their subjective psychological perceptions. Scholars such as Dodds characterize purchase intention as the probability that consumers intend to buy a particular product, which reflects a subjective predisposition towards certain products or services[23]. This inclination not only embodies consumer attitudes but also indicates the potential for actual purchasing behavior to occur. Consequently, employing purchase intention as a measurement variable to forecast subsequent purchasing actions is deemed valid.

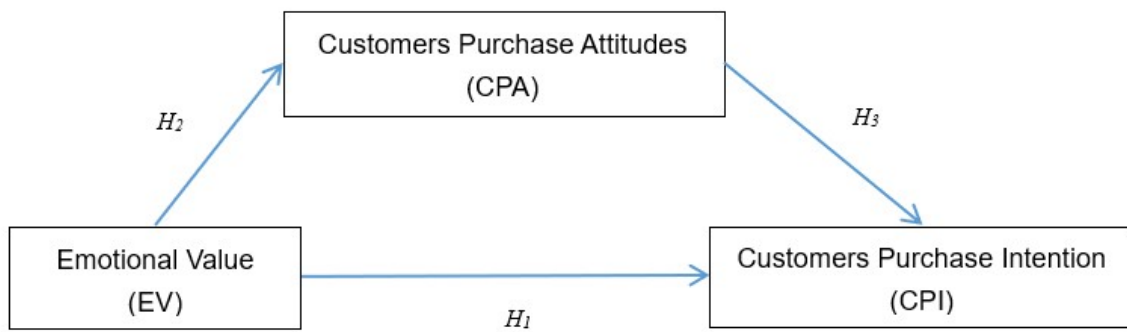
Table 1 shows the empirical review of the study.

**Table 1.** Empirical review

Hypothesis	Findings	Author(s) / Year of Publication, Country
Relationship between Emotional Value and Customers Purchase Intention	Treasure hunting; Experiencing joy and pleasure; discovering sought-after second-hand luxury items from a diverse selection; uncovering unique and limited editions that are unavailable in mainstream markets; evoking nostalgia and enhancing collectability.	Lou et al. (2022)[20] USA
	Emotional fulfillment; a profound connection to historical heritage; eliciting an emotional resonance that transcends both time and space.	Li (2022)[2] China
	Emotional value exerts the most considerable influence among the various values examined.	Zhong (2021)[16] China
	Consumers derive satisfaction from various factors, including the thrill of treasure hunting, the significance of vintage appeal, and the creation of a sense of excitement and fulfillment reminiscent of uncovering hidden treasures.	Kessous and Valette-Florence (2019)[9] France
	Enjoying the process of searching for and discovering unique items that one has never encountered before; the motivation behind treasure hunting; the allure of the narratives associated with each product. These stories evoke curiosity and foster emotional connections.	Almeida (2019)[25] Monaco
	Recreational shopping mindset; engaging in brick-and-mortar stores is perceived as an adventurous journey, characterized by exploration and treasure hunting, while immersing oneself in the distinctive ambiance.	Turunen and Pöyry (2019)[11] Finland
	A source of entertainment during moments of boredom; the thrill associated with hunting; a heightened sense of excitement compared to discovering a sale at a conventional retail store; and a touch of nostalgia.	Antola (2017)[14] Finland

	Treasure Hunt: Classic luxury items that are no longer in production; Nostalgia: A connection to the previous owner; More unique than a standard luxury item.	Turunen and Leipämaa-Leskinen (2015)[13] Finland
Relationship between Emotional Value and Customers Purchase Attitudes	Koay et al. (2022) investigated the factors that shape individuals' attitudes towards second-hand clothing by analyzing a questionnaire survey conducted with 290 Malaysian Chinese participants. The results reveal that emotional value plays a significant role in enhancing people's perceptions of second-hand apparel. The acquisition of pre-owned items fosters emotional attachment and elicits positive sentiments, thereby contributing to the promotion of social and environmental well-being.	Koay et al. (2022)[26] Malaysia
	Kim et al. (2021) conducted a study involving 850 Korean consumers in their twenties and thirties to explore how the perceived value of second-hand clothing within the framework of recycled fashion apparel influences product attitudes. The findings indicated that all four dimensions of consumers' perceived value—emotional, social, cognitive, and environmental—positively impacted product attitudes. Notably, emotional value, characterized by feelings of happiness and pleasure, exerted the most significant influence among these factors.	Kim et al. (2021)[24] Korea
Relationship between Customers Purchase Attitudes and Customers Purchase Intention	Attitudes toward the positive effects of second-hand purchases on sustainable consumption are positively correlated with intentions to purchase second-hand items.	Borusiak et al. (2020)[27] Poland
	Attitude is the most positive influence on purchase intention in the luxury purchasing industry.	Mu (2019)[28] China
	Chinese consumers' attitudes about luxury clothing are the most crucial factor influencing their purchase intentions.	Zhang (2017)[29] China
	Consumers who view luxury products as desirable and valuable, and those who prioritize personal standards of quality and performance over external expectations, are more inclined to purchase luxury fashion items.	Chen and Kim (2013)[30] China
The mediating role of Customers Purchase Attitudes towards second-hand luxury goods	The researcher proposed a conceptual model illustrating the relationship between motivations and barriers in the second-hand luxury fashion industry and actual shopping behavior, with purchase attitudes serving as a mediating variable. The study's results confirm support for the hypothesis.	Tangri and Yu (2023)[31] USA
	Economic factors and ethical considerations are key influences on individual attitudes. Using structural equation modeling, the findings confirm that attitude significantly impacts purchase intention.	Stolz (2022)[32] Germany
	Ek Styvén and Marian's (2020) study examines the factors influencing consumers' willingness to purchase second-hand clothing via sharing economy platforms. The research highlights the roles of perceived sustainability, economic motivations, and a desire to distance from mainstream consumption, showing how these factors positively impact attitudes toward buying second-hand goods, which in turn shape behavioral intentions.	Ek Styvén and Marian (2020)[33] United Kingdom
	The attitudes of Chinese international students toward luxury fashion consumption were significant predictors of their purchase intentions. Additionally, attitudes served as the mediating variable within the conceptual framework of this study.	Mu (2019)[29] China

The following hypotheses were developed based on the conceptual model in Figure 1.



**Figure 1.** Research model

H1: Emotional value affects customers purchase intention.

H2: Emotional value affects customers purchase attitudes.

H3: Customers purchase attitudes affects customers purchase intention.

H4: Customers purchase attitudes has a mediating role in the effect of emotional value on customers purchase intention.

### 3. Methods

**Table 2.** Demographic characteristics of respondents

Demographics	Grouping	N (%)
Gender	Female	337 (79.1)
	Male	89 (20.9)
Age	19-23	39 (9.2)
	24-30	187 (43.9)
	31-40	127 (29.8)
	41-50	52 (12.2)
	50 and above	21 (4.9)
Educational level	Junior School and below	3 (0.7)
	High School or Vocational School	31 (7.3)
	College Diploma or Bachelor's Degree	296 (69.5)
	Master's degree and above	96 (22.5)
Occupation	Students	47 (11.0)
	Private Business Owner	76 (17.8)
	Government Employee	70 (16.4)
	Company Employee	135 (31.7)
	Others	98 (23.0)
Income or living expenses	5000 RMB and below	43 (10.1)
	5001-10000 RMB	130 (30.5)
	10001-15000 RMB	116 (27.2)
	15001-20000 RMB	91 (21.4)
	20001-25000 RMB	37 (8.7)
	25000 and more	9 (2.1)
Number of second-hand luxury goods owned or purchased	1-3 pieces	172 (40.4)
	4-6 pieces	150 (35.2)
	7-9 pieces	70 (16.4)
	10 or more	34 (8.0)
Main Purchase Method	Online	135 (31.7)
	Offline	291 (68.3)

## Sample

The population of the study consists of all consumers in Shanxi province China, who are aged 18-60 years old, this method involves choosing individuals who are readily available and willing to participate. Non-Probability sampling was used during the sample selection. In this study, data were collected from 628 consumers to strengthen the results of the study and improve the representation of the universe, the number of valid questionnaires answered by consumers is 426. Data collection from consumers with the help of the survey investigation was performed between April 2024 and May 2024. According to our findings obtained from surveys, 79.1% of the participants were female while 20.9% were male. In respect to age of the participants, 43.9% of the surveyed population is between 24 and 30 years old, the proportion of other people surveyed was 29.8% (127), 41-50 years old was 12.2% (52), 19-23 years old was 9.2% (39) and 50 and above years old was 4.9% (21). Other demographic variables are listed in Table 2.

## Data Collection

Electronic questionnaires used to collect data, such as the electronic questionnaires distributed through Wenjuanxing, WeChat and e-mail, which can expand the scope of the research and reduce the time of data collection, which can save a lot of manpower, material resources and time. This study used Wenjuanxing to distribute electronic questionnaires, and adapted other researcher questionnaire to collect data for the current study. To collect the data, the researcher was personally involved and asked consumers to answer pre-designed closed-ended questions.

## Instruments

A survey form consisting of four sections was used as the data collection tool in the study. The socio-demographic characteristics of the study are showed in Table 2.

**Emotional Value Scale.** The scale developed by Lou is used to measure consumers emotional value in this study [20]. This scale consists of 6 statements like "If made me feel very good purchasing second-hand luxury goods", "I have a lot of fun discovering my favorite items from the wide variety of second-hand luxury items and feel like a treasure hunter", "I am happy when I find a second-hand luxury item that matches my personal style", "I feel happy when I can find unique second-hand luxury items that are not available in mainstream stores", "I buy second-hand luxury goods because they have a history, they evoke memories of the past, they resonate with me", "Buying second-hand luxury goods relieves my stress". The statements are grouped under a single dimension at the end of the exploratory factor analysis regarding emotional value. The total explained variance of the scale is 66.61%. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) value of 0.912 and Bartlett's test of sphericity is significant. The Cronbach's alpha value for the scale is 0.899.

**Customers Purchase Attitudes Scale.** This study utilized the Customers Purchase Attitudes Scale developed by Kim [24]. Consisting of a single dimension and 5 statements, the scale includes questions concerning the attitudes of the customers purchase (eg, I think it's wise to buy second-hand luxury goods rather than buy brand new ones, I think it's a good idea to buy second-hand luxury goods, In general, my attitude towards buying second-hand luxury goods is approval, I'm interested in buying second-hand luxury goods, I am satisfied with buying second-hand luxury goods rather than buying new ones). The Customers Purchase Attitudes Scale consists of a single dimension. The total explained variance of the scale is 60.16%. The KMO value of 0.856 and Bartlett's test of sphericity are significant. The Cronbach's alpha value for the scale is 0.834.

**Customers Purchase Intention Scale.** The Customers Purchase Intention Scale used in the study was developed by Li [2]. The scale consists of 4 statements (eg, I plan to buy second-hand luxury goods in the future, I will definitely buy second-hand luxury goods in the future, I would like to recommend second-hand luxury goods to friends who are in need, I think second-hand luxury

goods are worth buying). The total explained variance of the scale is 69.44%. The KMO value of 0.815 and Bartlett's test of sphericity are significant. The Cronbach's alpha value for the scale is 0.853.

The scales used were designed using the 5-point Likert scale structure. The number 1 indicates complete disagreement, while 5 represents complete agreement. The participants were asked to select one of the options (ie, ranging from 1 to 5) which suited them best in the surveys. An increase in the agreement rate is considered to be positive.

#### Analyses Used in the Study

By using SPSS 23.0 software, this study made a descriptive analysis of the basic situation of the investigated population, and tested the reliability and validity of the questionnaire, KMO test, bartlett spherical test and the correlation between the scales. The structural equation model was constructed by Amos 27.0 to test the hypothesis.

## 4. Findings

### Correlation Between Emotional Value , Customers Purchase Attitudes, and Customers Purchase Intention

Pearson's correlation analysis was employed to determine whether there is a statistically significant correlation between the variables. The correlation analysis results of the model are shown in Table 3. The analyses illustrated that hypothesis H1, H2 and H3 is confirmed. According to outcomes, emotional value is associated with consumers purchase attitudes ( $r=0.397$ ) and consumers purchase intention ( $r=0.422$ ), and also, another correlation was found between consumers purchase attitudes and consumers purchase intention ( $r=0.444$ ).

**Table 3.** Correlation analysis between variables

	EV	CPA	CPI
EV	1	.402**	.452**
CPA	.402**	1	.444**
CPI	.452**	.444**	1

Note:EV=Emotional Value; CPA=consumers Purchase Attitudes; CPI=Consumers Purchase Intention

\*\*  $P < 0.01$

### Testing the Mediating Relationship of Customers Purchase Attitudes Between Emotional Value and Customers Purchase Intention

Because the correlation coefficient between EV and CPI is significantly correlated,  $r=0.452$  ( $p < 0.01$ ), the correlation coefficient of the path direct relationship between CPA and CPI is significantly correlated,  $r=0.444$  ( $p < 0.01$ ). Therefore, CPA may partially mediate the relationship between EV and CPI, requiring further testing to clarify this indirect connection.

In order to test whether CPA mediates the relationship between EV and CPI, the final SEM model has been tested, and the results show that the standardized regression coefficient of the direct path relationship between CPA and CPI is correlated. Because the standardized regression coefficient of the direct path relationship between EV and CPI is correlated ( $r=-0.452$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), the mediating effect of CPA between EV and CPI needs to be tested to further determine the indirect relationship.

The 95% confidence interval for the indirect effect of EV is [0.002, 0.065]. The value of 0 does not fall within this interval. The direct path from EV to CPI is also significant. Hence, CPA Towards second-hand luxury goods is a partial mediator in the EV to CPI towards second-hand luxury goods relationships. Consumers' perceptions of the higher emotional value of second-

hand luxury goods can lead to positive attitudes toward them, and such attitudes can motivate people to purchase these products. The table4 and table5 show the detailed results.

**Table 4.** Unstandardized indirect effect

	EV	CPA	CPI
CPA	.000	.000	.000
CPI	.023	.000	.000

**Table 5.** Indirect effects analysis using 5000 bootstrap

	95% Lower Bound			95% Upper Bound			P-value		
	EV	CPA	CPI	EV	CPA	CPI	EV	CPA	CPI
CPA	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.015	.000	.000
CPI	.002	.000	.000	.065	.000	.000	.001	.000	.000

## 5. Discussion

Empirical research on the collected valid questionnaire data indicates that the emotional value perceived by customers has a significant positive influence on their intention to purchase second-hand luxury products. Specifically, when second-hand luxury items evoke a sense of emotional value, customers are more inclined to accept and purchase these products. This emotional value allows consumers to experience pleasure through the products, as they can glimpse the brand's history and the product's background. Additionally, understanding the story behind the former owner and the goods creates an emotional resonance that bridges time and space. This enriched context strengthens the emotional connection between consumers and second-hand luxury items, thereby enhancing their perception of emotional value. This finding aligns with previous research.

Statistical analysis of the study revealed that emotional value has a significant positive effect on people's attitudes while searching for luxury goods. The influence of emotional value is evident among individuals who have purchased second-hand luxury products. When the perceived emotional value is higher, the attitude toward buying second-hand luxury goods becomes more positive.

According to the SEM results, customers purchase attitude has a significant impact on customers purchase intention, which is hence supports Hypothesis 3. A higher perceived emotional value of second-hand luxury goods leads consumers to adopt a more positive attitude toward these items. This positive attitude, in turn, increases their willingness to purchase second-hand luxury goods, thereby supporting Hypothesis 4.

## 6. Contributions, Limitations, and Future Research

Despite the rapid growth of this niche market, second-hand luxury goods have only recently become a focus of scholarly literature. This study proposes and empirically tests a model that illustrates the relationships between emotional motives, attitudes, and purchase intentions. The model advances the literature on second-hand luxury goods by using established frameworks to identify the factors driving purchase intentions in this segment. These insights can guide retail companies on how to stimulate growth and cater to consumer preferences within this market. Additionally, the findings provide a foundation for further research on second-hand luxury fashion, suggesting future research directions in this emerging field. In

summary, this study makes a significant contribution to the field of second-hand luxury goods, offering both theoretical and practical implications. Retailers can use these findings to develop strategies to enhance the appeal of the luxury resale market, while scholars can build on these initial results to explore new discoveries in the realm of second-hand luxury fashion.

The present study has several limitations, which lead to recommendations for future research. This study employed a convenience sampling method, which resulted in a demographic skew, with most participants being female. Additionally, participants were primarily customers from several second-hand luxury stores in Taiyuan, the capital of Shanxi Province. Ensuring a diverse participant background would enhance the generalizability of the study and broaden the applicability of its results. Therefore, a key recommendation for future researchers is to conduct further studies in other provinces of China to obtain more comprehensive conclusions. Another limitation of this study is its concentration on purchase intentions for second-hand luxury goods rather than on actual buying behavior. Although purchase intentions are useful and often predict future actions, these intentions do not directly reflect actual purchasing behavior. There is a discrepancy between stated intentions and actual behavior, as individuals' expressed intentions do not always translate into real-world actions. To achieve a more nuanced analysis, future research should focus on examining actual buying behaviors related to second-hand luxury goods, providing a deeper and more accurate understanding of consumer actions.

In this study, practical considerations led to selecting customers from smaller-scale physical stores and combined online platforms as the primary sample. However, online channels for buying and selling second-hand goods have gained significant popularity in recent years, with numerous platforms specializing in second-hand luxury items. Future research would benefit from distinguishing between online and offline consumers and comparing their characteristics and behaviors when purchasing second-hand luxury goods through these different channels.

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