

The Influence of Emotional Value of Sanrio Co-Branded Products on College Students' Repurchase Intention

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Abstract

The present paper explores the value of emotional value as a predictor of the willingness to buy Sanrio co-branded merchandise by college students. The research design used quantitative research because it was aimed at showing the connection between emotional value (happiness, comfort, attachment to the character, and self-expression) and purchase intention. The findings reveal that there is a positive relationship between emotional value and repurchase intention and between co-branding value and repurchase intention. The observations indicate that emotional value is one of the most important determinants of repeat purchasing behavior.

Keywords

Sanrio; Emotional Value; Consumer Behavior; Co-branding; Repurchase Intention.

1. Introduction

The emotional consumption is one of the most significant phenomena of modern consumer behavior against the background of an ever-evolving market of consumers. New customers, particularly college students, are no more driven to purchase things by products and services alone but are seeking spiritual pleasure, emotional comfort and self-expression more than before. This taste of consumers has led to the creation of the cute economy. In this setting, the emotional and aesthetic characteristics of products are important aspects that determine the purchasing behavior of consumers. There are brands like Sanrio that have developed emotionally meaningful products that can increase consumers perceived value and their satisfaction [1] [2].

This kind of brand partnership is a significant marketing initiative, which has been actively used by organizations to promote the value of products and their marketability. Co-branded products combine the power of several brands, adding a unique symbolic meaning to the product and various values to the consumer. These products meet the practical consumption demands as well as the emotional self-expression demands, and are very popular with college students. Nevertheless, the majority of the current studies on brand collaborations are devoted to general purchase intentions of consumers. Emotional value in the context of brand collaborations has not yet reached its full potential and thus it needs additional research. Brand loyalty and long term branding are essential prerequisites of repurchase intention. It is a collective effect of perceived value, satisfaction and emotional attachment [3] [4]. At present, college students who are traditionally regarded as emotionally vulnerable and impulse buyers do not pay enough attention to repurchase intention [3].

The present study is based on these premises, which look at the role played by emotional value in the repurchase intention of college students with regard to products offered by Sanrio collaborations. Also, the four aspects of emotional value are examined in terms of their effect on the repurchase choices of younger customers. The results are meant to clarify what the emotional value and collaboration strategy can do to the consumer behavior.

2. Literature Review

The present chapter gives a general review of the available literature on emotional value, co-brand value, purchase intention, and repurchase intention. The paper is a systematic review of the conceptual definitions, dimensional properties, and research development of these variables. Moreover, it presents the connections between emotional value, co-brand value, and consumer repurchase intention. This leads to a clear understanding of the present situation of research.

2.1. Emotional Value

The emotional value is an emotional benefit that could be achieved by consuming a product, which means that a good or service can bring positive emotions or remove negative ones. Various methods have been applied to measure the emotional value. It may be investigated by researchers in terms of particular affective conditions like happiness, comfort, and pleasure using the notion of emotional value as a multi-dimensional construct with various affective elements [1]. A second approach is to view it as the emotional content of the brand experience and the benefits associated with identity-related and psychological benefits [2]. Although emotional value has traditionally been treated as distinct from functional or utilitarian value, which refers to the functionality of a product, there are studies indicating the presence of an interaction between emotional value and other value dimensions. As an illustration, Guo and Li indicate that emotional value affects the decisions made by consumers indirectly by mediating perceived value [5]. This concept of emotional value can thus be defined as being influenced by other processes. Emotional value has also been demonstrated to be significantly important in the decision-making process among younger consumers, such as college students, who are in the process of developing an identity and seek products that reflect this identity and offer emotional satisfaction [3].

2.2. Purchase and Repurchase Intention

While purchase intention and repurchase intention may seem like synonymous concepts, they actually refer to different stages in the consumer decision process. The former is defined as consumers' propensity towards making initial purchases, while the latter reflects consumers' inclination to reuse and revisit previously chosen brands and products. Repurchase intention has been extensively examined as a measure of consumer loyalty and brand sustainability. According to Sharma et al. Three factors determine repurchase intentions: perceived value, brand trust, and emotional satisfaction [4]. These researchers discovered that consumers are more inclined to revisit brands and products which can provide satisfying experience emotionally and functionally. Acar further demonstrated that congruency between brand's lifestyles and consumers' personal identity, especially if combined with high brand satisfaction, positively affects consumer decisions regarding repurchases. Hussin provided an extensive review of repurchase intention studies and established emotional attachment and post-purchase experience to be the key factors predicting consumers' future decisions to revisit particular products and brands [5]. Finally, Owusu revealed the important impact of post-purchase communications on the continuity of consumer engagement and repurchases [6]. Overall, the above studies show that emotional aspect of consumer experience plays an instrumental role in developing positive attitudes and ensuring sustained repurchase intention [7].

2.3. Emotional Value and Purchase

An extensive literature review has revealed several direct and indirect relationships between the emotional value of a product and purchase intentions among consumers. According to Fan & Tham, the influence of the emotional value on purchase intentions among consumers is

substantial and positive and can be mediated by attitude towards the product[4]. This means that emotionally attached consumers tend to have a positive disposition towards the company and thus increase their willingness to make purchases. Likewise, Liu & Chelliah found out that emotional value improves consumers' loyalty to the brand through increasing affective commitment and hence influencing purchase behavior in terms of repurchases. The role of emotional value in increasing purchase intentions and creating a sense of loyalty among consumers is equally important in the context of co-branding where a combination of various elements increases the perceived product quality and uniqueness that positively impacts repurchases. This relationship was explored by Basiya who proved the significance of emotional value associated with co-branded products as an effective driver of repurchase intentions by generating additional functionality and symbolism [8].

Furthermore, the role of emotional value as a significant predictor of purchase intentions for intellectual property co-brands was confirmed by Huang. The literature review has provided evidence of how emotional value, whether produced by products, brands or co-brands, can influence consumers' behavior in terms of repurchases due to shaping their attitudes and perceptions. At the same time, there is limited evidence of this mechanism in relation to young college students and character-based and co-branded products in particular. Therefore, the current paper will focus on assessing the impact of the emotional value of Sanrio co-branded products on college students aged between 18 and 24 years old.

2.4. Co-Branding Value and Consumer Behavior

Co-branding is a marketing approach wherein two or more brands work together to create a new joint product or marketing campaign by utilizing each one's brand equity in order to bring more perceived value to consumers [9]. Several researchers have shown that co-branded marketing approaches help create an additional sense of uniqueness and desirability in order to positively influence consumer purchase decisions [8]. In terms of consumer psychology, the use of co-branded goods creates symbolic and functional value, because the combination of brand identities leads to a positive halo effect [9].

The value of character-based intellectual property (IP) in co-branding efforts becomes more evident when applied in conjunction with fashion, food, and lifestyle brands, such as Sanrio's brand. The presence of co-branded products that feature such characters creates an additional emotional value that affects consumer choice [7]. In this respect, according to Cao and Liu, college students show the greatest preference for those products, which can be considered as the extension of their personal identity and taste. Therefore, emotional value is an essential component in purchasing choices made by students[3].

On the other hand, existing research in relation to co-branding efforts mainly concerns general consumer groups and their intention to buy. As a result, the relationship between co-branding value and repurchase intentions has not been examined in depth. This research project fills this knowledge gap, investigating the value of co-branded products as well as the influence of emotional value on college students' repurchase intentions.

According to the reviewed literature, it is evident that emotional value, co-branding, and repurchase intention are theoretical concepts that are well developed and that newer findings have established correlations among the three. However, there are also some shortcomings in the earlier literature. To begin with, most of the studies were based on adults and they were used as the target respondents, whereas college students represent another consumer subgroup being emotionally sensitive yet financially constrained. Second, this relationship between emotional value and purchase intention remains unproven by empirical evidence in case of character-based co-branded products. Finally, no comparative examination of the effects of individual aspects of emotional value on purchase intention has been conducted. To overcome all these limitations, this paper uses the empirical data collected in the course of a

quantitative study of 100 college students who are aged 18-24 years old about their repurchase intentions of Sanrio co-branded products.

Altogether, the above material can be said to explain the concepts, dimensions and operational features of emotional value, purchase and repurchase intentions as well as co-brand value. Theoretical connections between these three variables have been established by previous research and this forms a strong theoretical basis in supporting other studies on consumer behavior.

At present, most available studies are mainly centered on the generic adult consumer population, whereas there is not enough consideration given to the college student population which is highly emotionally sensitive, searches for a distinct identity and has limited resources of spending.

Moreover, there is not much of an empirical study on character IP collaboration products with Sanrio as an example. It is necessary to further validate the process by which emotional value can affect the repurchase intentions of college students in these circumstances.

2.5. Research Hypotheses

From the review of previous literature, the following research hypotheses can be proposed for testing:

H1: There is a significant positive impact of emotional value on repurchase intention for Sanrio co-branded products by university students.

H2: There is a significant positive impact of co-branding value on repurchase intention for Sanrio co-branded products by university students.

H3: Happiness and emotional comfort are two most important aspects of emotional value that significantly predict repurchase intention. These hypotheses will be analyzed through Pearson's correlation analysis, with significance evaluated at the $p < .05$ level.

3. Research Design

3.1. Research Approach

The research design that was used in this study is a quantitative research design where a questionnaires survey was done to determine the correlation between emotions and repurchase intentions with regard to Sanrio co-branded products. The design was acceptable since it enabled measuring consumer perceptions and consumer behaviors, which helped interpret the data in terms of the variables of interest. As Slater and Hasson state, quantitative research design would be the most suitable to determine relations among variables and deduce findings of the collected data [10]. Questionnaire survey was used to define emotional value, perceived value, and repurchase intention as variables of this study. The research approach used in this study was also convenient because it allowed the researcher to collect information about various respondents with the use of a questionnaire survey. This made sure that the data obtained were of the same pattern and could be compared.

3.2. Target Population

The subjects of the study were college students who were aged between 18-24 years old. This target group was chosen in the present study because it is a critical part of the Gen Z customers, who have been labeled as very active in emotional brands and symbolic consumption. Previous studies have indicated that younger consumers are more prone to search for emotional fulfillment, self-expression, and value in their purchase decisions than older consumers [1] [11]. In addition, young consumers have a small amount of financial means that impact their consumption behavior. Hence, this target group was selected in this study because it could be

useful in exploring what is behind the psychological process of repurchase intention in a specific target segment.

3.3. Sampling Method

A convenience sampling method was employed in the selection of the respondents. A total of 100 university students, who were 18-24 years of age, had been sampled. It is a reasonable figure to analyze quantitatively and carry out the correlation test [12]. Convenience sampling cannot be generalized in full scope. Nevertheless, it is widely applied in explorative consumer studies that rely on student samples

3.4. Design of Questionnaire

The questions in the questionnaire sought to provide the information that is relevant under the following main areas: demographics, emotional value, consumer behavior, and repurchase intention. The initial section of the questionnaire asked simple demographic data including age, gender, and disposable income. It assisted in knowing the simple behavior of consumers. The second part of the questionnaire related to emotional value, and questions were also included on emotional comfort, happiness, personality expression, and emotional attachment to Sanrio characters. The questions were adjusted based on the scales that were applied in the earlier research studies aimed at measuring emotional value within consumer behavior [1] [2] .

The third part of the questionnaire was devoted to consumer behavior. The questions that this section contained were related to how often the purchases are made, how much money is spent and the rate at which decisions are made. This was a good insight on the behavior which was associated with emotional purchasing. The last part of the questionnaire was on repurchase behavior and word of mouth. All the questions in this section were according to the Likert scale. In the whole questionnaire, the Likert scale has been used since it enables quantifying attitudes and perceptions. It also allows the analysis and comparison of the data gathered through the questionnaire [9] .The questionnaire was organized in a manner so that it began with easy questions and then moved on to the difficult ones.

3.5. Ethical Considerations

Through the entire research process, ethical considerations were considered to ensure the ethical protection of the research process and the participants. The participants in the survey study voluntarily participated in the study, and they were also informed of the reason for the research study before they started providing answers to the questions in the questionnaire. The participants in the study gave their informed consent to participate in the study by voluntarily participating in the study. The confidentiality and anonymity of the participants in the study were ensured by not collecting any information from the participants. The participants in the study also had the option to pull out of the study at any stage in the research process. This is in line with the ethical guidelines for carrying out social research, which includes respecting the participants, confidentiality, and transparency in the research process. The entire research process ensured ethical compliance and at the same time ensured the reliability and validity of the data collected in the study.

3.6. Data Collection Process

The process of data collection in this study was in the form of an online questionnaire that was disseminated among college students via electronic media such as messaging services and online groups. The reasons for choosing the online media in the dissemination of the questionnaire were based on the efficiency, accessibility, and expediency of the approach. The participants were requested voluntarily to participate in the data collection process. The data collection process was brief, since it was based on the practicality of the research. The quality of the data collected during the process was ensured by scrutinizing the questionnaire for

completeness. The incomplete questionnaires were excluded in the data collection process. The data collection process ensured that all the questionnaires collected were in compliance with recognized research requirements. The use of the self-report questionnaires in the data collection process ensured that interviewer bias was minimized since the participants were free to participate voluntarily.

3.7. Data Analysis Methods

Data analysis was performed using Microsoft Excel software. Before conducting hypothesis testing, screening of data was done to ensure that there were no missing values and all data were coded accurately. For internal consistency of the multi-item scale, Cronbach's alpha coefficient based on the covariance matrix between items was computed. All constructions demonstrated acceptable to high reliability, as confirmed by Cronbach's alpha coefficients reported in Table 1. Moreover, visual representations were used to aid in data analysis and presentation of results in an easy manner. This was an effective method in data analysis because, as Wiebels and Moreau noted, visualization tools were effective in presenting data analysis in an easy manner [13]. Descriptive statistics such as frequency, mean, and standard deviation were applied in describing respondents' attributes and research variables. Finally, Pearson's correlation coefficient analysis was done to examine the linkage between emotional value, co-branding value, and repurchase intention. The use of Excel was effective in this case because it provided an easy working platform to carry out data analysis without using other advanced data analysis tools. Content validity was assessed using the development of items in the questionnaire from existing literature on emotional value, perception of consumers, and intent to repurchase.

4. Results

4.1. Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics of key variables are provided in Table 3 based on a sample of 100 college students. On the whole, it can be seen that the results show rather high emotional engagement in terms of using co-branded Sanrio products. Specifically, the emotional value of interaction with the products is relatively high, having been estimated at $M = 4.05$ ($SD = 0.84$). In other words, consumers have experienced rather positive emotions associated with the usage of the products, including happiness, emotional comfort, and attachment.

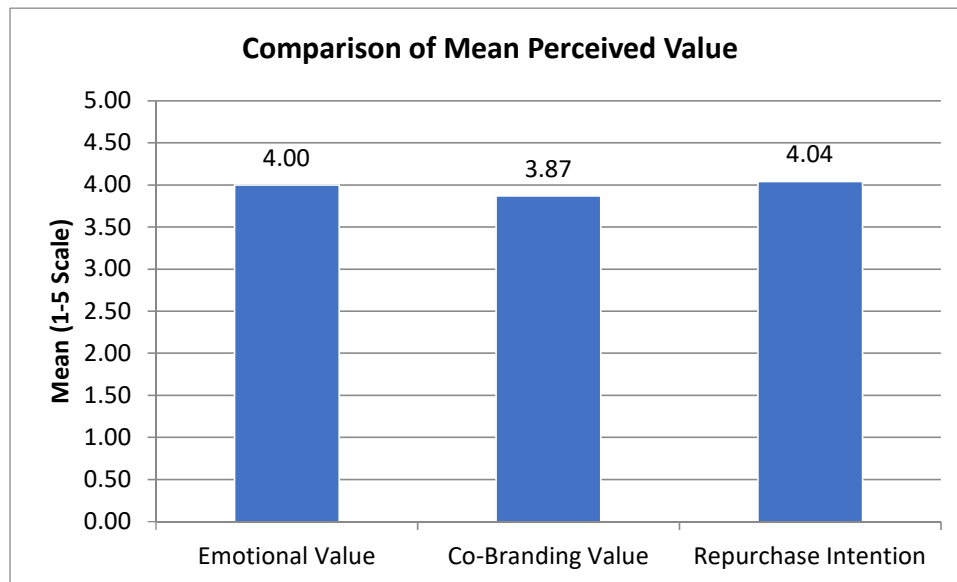
In addition, it should be pointed out that the component measures of emotional value have rather high scores (Figure 1). Especially, happiness and comfort in feeling are the most mean values that can indicate the importance of their role on consumer behavior.

The perceived value of co-branded products is fairly high, and is equal to $M = 3.94$ ($SD = 0.81$). It can thus be stated that the respondents think that the purchase of products made by co-branded Sanrio is valuable since it enhances the uniqueness of the products bought by the users and makes them more significant to them.

Conclusively, the buy-back behavior was relatively high and was equivalent to $M = 4.01$ ($SD = 0.88$). It indicates that the respondents can be expected to buy the same products again. At another end, the internal consistency of every scale applied in the present research was analyzed prior to conducting further analysis based on the values of Cronbach's alpha coefficient. All three variables were above the acceptable level of .70, as it can be observed in Table 1, indicating a good reliability of variables. Especially, the Emotional Value scale has shown a very high reliability ($\alpha=.861$), the Repurchase Intention scale has shown a high reliability ($\alpha=.813$), and the Co-Branding Value scale is also sufficiently reliable ($\alpha=.746$).

Table 1. Reliability Analysis Results

Construct	Items	Cronbach Alpha
Emotional Value	4	.861
Co-Branding Value	2	.746
Repurchase Intention	2	.813

**Figure 1.** Comparison of Mean Perceived Values

4.2. Demographic Profile of Respondents

Table 2 below shows the demographics of 100 respondents. The majority of the respondents were female respondents (n=65, 65.0%), while male respondents (n=30, 30.0%) and the few who chose not to reveal their gender identities comprised the rest (n=5, 5.0%). For age demographics, the highest age range was the 18-20 age range (n=47, 47.0%), followed by 21-22 (n=39, 39.0%) and 23-24 (n=14, 14.0%). As for monthly disposable incomes, most respondents had income amounts ranging from £100-300 (n=50, 50.0%), followed by those whose monthly disposable income amounts were below £100 (n=33, 33.0%), £300-500 (n=13, 13.0%) and above £500 (n=4, 4.0%). This is an income distribution similar to that expected of full-time college students.

Table 2. Demographic Characteristics of Respondents (N = 100)

Variable	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Female	65	65.0
	Male	30	30.0
	Prefer not to say	5	5.0
Age Group	18-20	47	47.0
	21-22	39	39.0
	23-24	14	14.0
Monthly Disposable Income	Under £100	33	33.0
	£100-£300	50	50.0
	£300-£500	13	13.0
	Over £500	4	4.0

4.3. Descriptive Statistics of Scale Items and Constructs

Table 3 presents the descriptive statistics of item and composite scales of all constructs employed in the research. As far as the emotional value scales are concerned, the highest mean score ($M = 4.05$, $SD = 0.70$) was attained for Emotional Comfort; after that come Character Attachment ($M = 4.03$, $SD = 0.74$), Personality Expression ($M = 3.98$, $SD = 0.80$), and Happiness ($M = 3.94$, $SD = 0.74$). The above-average values obtained for the emotional value measures prove that the subjects felt a high degree of positive affect toward the four varieties of emotional value. Regarding the co-branding aspect, the Co-Branding Appeal measure achieved somewhat higher mean scores ($M = 3.94$, $SD = 0.71$) as compared to the Co-Branding Uniqueness measure ($M = 3.80$, $SD = 0.74$), implying more significance attributed to the appeal aspect of co-branding. On the composite scale level, the scales with the highest mean scores were Emotional Value ($M = 4.00$, $SD = 0.63$) and Repurchase Intention ($M = 4.04$, $SD = 0.68$), while Co-Branding Value showed somewhat lower, yet still quite high mean scores ($M = 3.87$, $SD = 0.65$).

Table 3. Item-Level and Composite Descriptive Statistics ($N = 100$)

Variable	Item	M	SD	Min	Max
Emotional Value	Q4: Emotional Comfort	4.05	0.70	2	5
	Q5: Happiness	3.94	0.74	2	5
	Q6: Personality Expression	3.98	0.80	2	5
	Q7: Character Attachment	4.03	0.74	2	5
	Composite	4.00	0.63	2.00	5.00
Co-Branding Value	Q8: Co-Branding Uniqueness	3.80	0.74	2	5
	Q9: Co-Branding Appeal	3.94	0.71	3	5
	Composite	3.87	0.65	2.50	5.00
Repurchase Intention	Q13: Repurchase Intention	4.02	0.79	2	5
	Q14: Recommendation/WOM	4.06	0.68	3	5
	Composite	4.04	0.68	2.50	5.00

4.4. Consumer Behavior Patterns

There are consumer behavior variables that can help comprehend better the spending pattern of college students on Sanrio products. Most of the customers buy Sanrio products two to five times every year. Purchases monthly were very uncommon, because of the small amount of money college students have as their budget.

Regarding the cost, most of the participants stated that they typically have a spending range of between £10 to £30 on their items, which means that affordability should also be considered a significant consideration in consumer decision-making. Only a few participants spent over £50 to buy each item, which is consistent with the statement that price is highly significant to college students. The next significant variable is the decision-making process. Most of the participants said that they take a quick decision or a decision in a small amount of time which indicates that they are sensitive to the emotional cues. As a result, the appeal of the characters and the visual design of Sanrio goods become significant factors in consumer choices.

4.5. Emotional Value and Repurchase Intention

In the analysis of the relationship between emotional value and repurchase intention, the Pearson correlation was carried out between the Emotional Value composite (mean of Q4-Q7) and the Repurchase Intention composite (mean of Q13-Q14). The correlation coefficient value was $r = 0.46$, and this showed a very moderate positive relationship between the emotional value and the repurchase intention. This meant that emotional value scores and repurchase intention scores were positively related for all the 100 respondents.

The second Pearson correlation analysis was carried out between the Co-Branding composite (average of Q8-Q9) and the Repurchase Intention composite to answer the second research question. This also resulted in a positive significant correlation coefficient value of $r = 0.49$, showing that the value of co-branding was also positively linked to the intentions of repurchase. Table 4 represents both of these correlations.

Table 4. Pearson Correlation Results

Correlation	Repurchase Intention
Emotional_Value	0.46
Co-Branding composite	0.49

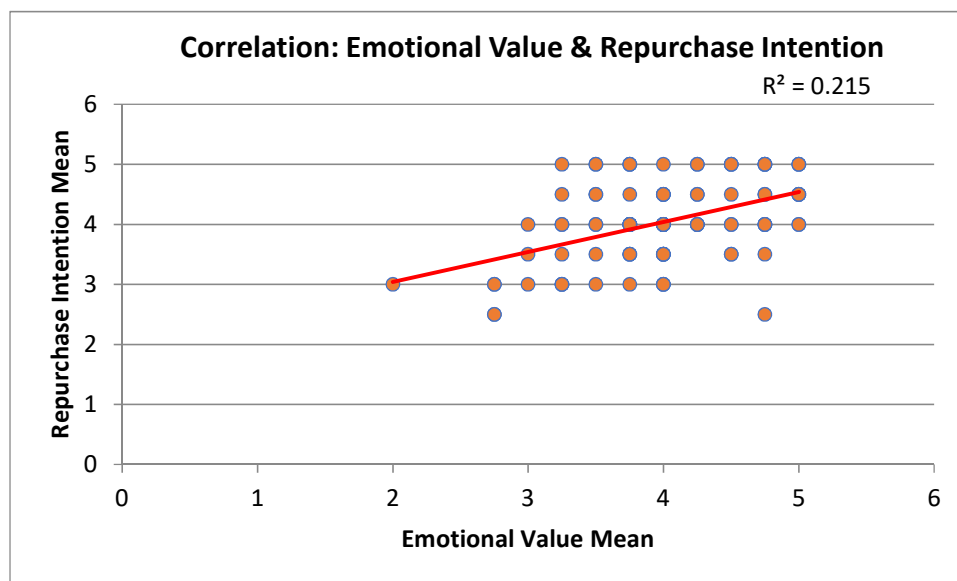


Figure 2. Scatter Plot of Emotional Value vs Repurchase Intention

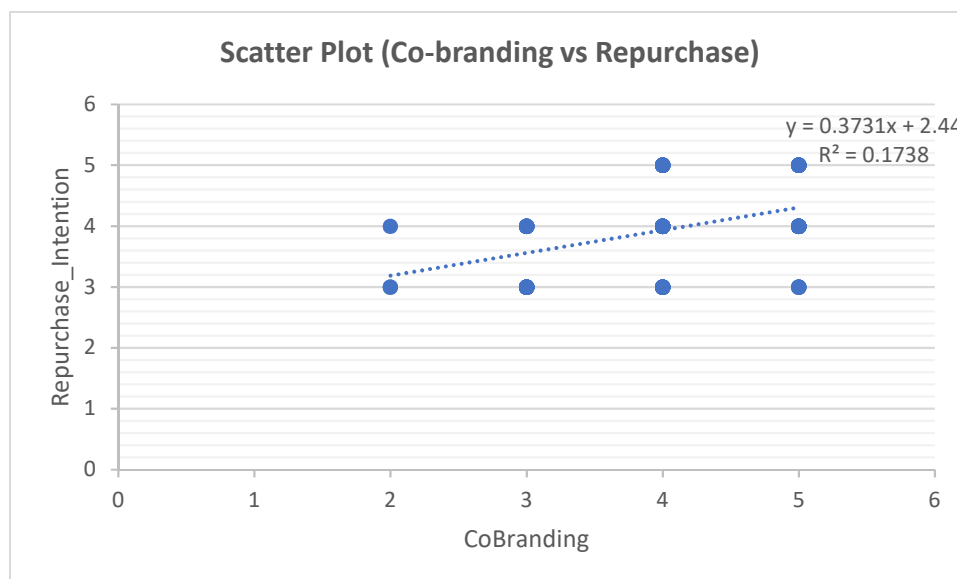


Figure 3. Scatter Plot of Co-Branding Value vs Repurchase Intention

4.6. Interpretation of Key Findings

The results confirm that emotional value and co-branding are significant drivers of repurchase intentions in young consumers. The high mean scores for different aspects of emotional value imply that the respondents are moderately emotionally attached to Sanrio products through

feelings of comfort, connection, and self-expression. The correlation coefficient calculations also confirm that there are moderate correlations ($r = 0.46$, $p < .001$) between emotional value and repurchase intentions and ($r = 0.49$, $p < .001$) between co-branding and repurchase intentions. Hence, the findings suggest that emotional value and co-branding influence repurchase intentions; however, they do not determine them fully.

In addition, behavioral findings also support the conclusion since, according to the participants' responses, they often make quick purchase decisions when the prices are relatively low. Hence, the findings conclude that the behavior of the students who participated in this research was driven by emotion and symbol, as well as economic considerations.

This is supported by the data of behavior. The results of the study on immediate and same-day buying behavior, particularly on the younger female segment with low levels of disposable income, prove that the emotional appeals of the character-based and co-brand products of Sanrio is a viable way of circumventing the deliberation process. This further supports the impulsive and emotional consumer profile of this demographic segment that was earlier introduced in the literature.

5. Discussion

The results from this research have demonstrated significant empirical evidence for the contribution made by emotional value to purchase intentions in the acquisition of co-branded goods produced by Sanrio among college students. High average values and positive correlations obtained during data analysis show that emotions play an important part in fostering customer loyalty in this case. This conclusion can be viewed in line with the previous research, which shows that emotions have a key role in shaping consumer preferences [14].

These results are directionally supportive of hypotheses H1 and H2 insofar as high emotional value is positively correlated with high repurchase intention ($r = 0.46$, $p < .001$) and high co-branding value with high repurchase intention ($r = 0.49$, $p < .001$). In both cases, the relationships between variables can be described as positive, meaning that improvements in emotional and co-branding value will lead to increases in repurchase intentions rather than being correlated with them. The non-experimental nature of the present study does not allow to make any causal claims, but the results are consistent with other studies relying on mediation models [15]. Therefore, it could be seen as an emotional value being a positive antecedent to repurchase intention which is mediated by commitment and brand attitude.

To illustrate, the correlation findings indicated that there was a moderate positive correlation ($r = 0.46$, $p < .001$) between emotional value and repurchase intention. It therefore means that emotional value is not only a secondary variable but also a core variable in altering consumer behavior especially among the college students. It is in line with the original assumption suggested by Fan and Tham which suggests that emotional value can be considered as an antecedent to purchase intentions via attitudinal influences. In addition, Liu and Chelliah also suggested that emotional attachment is also a facilitator of behavioral loyalty [1]. This means that the findings of the current study further supported the idea that emotional value is a dominant factor in determining the initial, as well as repurchase intention.

Theoretically, the findings of this study have been related to the Stimulus Organism Response theory because the emotional and cute designs of Sanrio products were the stimuli, which led to the organism or the internal feeling of happiness and comfort and eventually to the response behavior of buying and rebuying its products. According to Guo and Li, the emotional and social cues in the consumer setting play an important role in determining the internal perceptions that eventually determine behavior [16]. This high correlation found in the current study was used to confirm this theoretical hypothesis which stated that emotional response acted as a mediator between the stimuli and the response behavior. Also, the fact that the impulsive

decision-making behavior of the respondents in this study had such a nature that they reported making purchases on impulse validated the assumption of the SOR theory that emotional response bypasses sophisticated mental processing and finally causes response behavior.

Besides the SOR model, the findings also backed the perceived value theory especially in regard to the role of emotional value as a key element in assessing consumers. In fact, whereas classical consumer behavior theories have traditionally paid attention to the place of functional and economic value in consumer choice, newer studies have been more inclined to acknowledge the significance of emotional and symbolic value in consumer decisions. It was observed by Acar et al. that brand lifestyle congruence and emotional satisfaction were important determinants of repurchase intention indicating that those consumers who find their brands congruent with their personal identity and emotional requirements are more prone to brand loyalty. Equally, Yasri et al. They found that perceived value, through brand experience and preference, was an important factor in determining repurchase behavior[17]. This study found that, in terms of college students and low-cost symbolic goods like Sanrio products, emotional value may even be more important than functional value.

The role of co-branding in enhancing emotional and perceived value was also indirectly confirmed in this study's findings. Although this analysis was primarily focused on confirming the role of co-branding in enhancing emotional value, it was also evident that due to high levels of engagement among respondents, co-branding was also contributing to perceived value in terms of product uniqueness. Basiya noted that co-branding strategies play an important role in enhancing consumer perceptions of product quality and differentiation, resulting in repurchase intentions [8]. Correspondingly, Huang noted that IP co-branding plays an important role in influencing consumer purchase behavior through perceived value, particularly in terms of symbolic and emotional value [9]. In relation to this study's context, it was evident that co-branding was enhancing emotional value among respondents due to the interaction effect with product novelty and familiarity among respondents.

On comparing the results with existing literature, several consistencies and extensions were found. Similar to Sharma, the current study found that perceived value and emotional satisfaction were the most important factors for determining repurchase intention [4]. Likewise, Hussin found emotional attachment and consumer engagement to be the most important factors for determining repurchase intention [5]. This was found in the current study as the emotional scores were very high. However, the current results extended previous literature in terms of the intensity of the relationship with a particular demographic segment. Although many studies have been conducted on determining repurchase intention with a particular segment of consumers, few have focused on college students and their consumption patterns. Sun found that consumers, especially students, have a high tendency for impulsive consumption [7]. The current results provided empirical evidence for this finding as the results showed a very high rate of decision-making.

The behavioral tendencies discovered in the research also enhanced the peculiarity of student consumers. According to the research, the majority of the participants used Sanrio products 345 times per year and their average spending was very low, between 10 and 30 pounds (PS10-PS30). It further confirmed the concept that even though students are not big spenders, they are extremely engaged. This is consistent with the suggestion made by Cao and Liu, who discovered that despite affordability being the number one concern among college students, they look at the emotional and social worth in the decisions they make when purchasing a product[3]. The low financial investment and strong emotional involvement resulted in a behavior pattern of high-engagers.

Additionally, the statement that respondents made their purchase decisions in a very short period of time or instantly was also used as supplementary evidence of the presence of the impulsive consumption Behavior. It additionally supported the hypothesis by Mohammadi that

rational evaluation may be eliminated by the presence of habitual and emotional Behaviors in the decision-making process of consumers [11]. Consumers may buy products spontaneously using their instinctive evaluation in emotionally triggered contexts i.e. when they are presented with the stimuli of a cute product. Younger consumers tend to be more susceptible to emotion-driven purchases due to exposure to visual cues. The current research also supported the idea that emotional stimuli (character design and aesthetic appeal) can speed up the decision-making process, causing impulsive purchasing Behavior.

The other important inference of the research findings relates to the importance of emotional value in the formation of long-term consumer relationships. The importance of the post-purchase consumer engagement and emotional value in the creation of the consumer relationship was underscored by Owusu [6]. It was observed that the high repurchase intentions recorded in the study results indicated that emotional value does not only influence the consumer purchasing behavior but also has a role in promoting the growth of long-term consumer loyalty. Emotional engagement is therefore an important element in building consumer loyalty particularly in an industry where products can be substituted with ease. Through emotional engagement, Sanrio will be able to develop a competitive advantage in the market.

6. Conclusion and Implications

The research purpose was to explore the effect of emotional value in the purchase of college students who intend to buy Sanrio co-branded products again. The findings reveal that emotional values like joy, emotional satisfaction and personal connection are strongly related to the repurchasing behavior of college students. It implies that emotional investment plays an essential role in the purchasing and repurchasing decisions of customers.

The research proves that emotional value of a product can have a powerful effect on the intention of college students to repurchase. Moreover, it is one of the main drivers of repeat purchasing behavior. Also, the results indicate that college student customers are emotionally sensitive, financially constrained, and prone to emotional impulse buying. Meanwhile, it was also discovered that consumer involvement and repeat purchase of co-branded products are significantly influenced by emotional branding and symbolic value.

On the basis of the above results, it is possible to make a number of practical marketing suggestions to Sanrio. Firstly, Sanrio could improve the approach of emotional branding by increasing the role of cute aesthetics design, emotional comfort and nostalgia. It will help to improve the consumers view of emotional value and mental satisfaction. Secondly, the brand may optimize its co-branding strategy by teaming with brands that are in line with college student lifestyles and preferences. It will give co-branded products distinct symbolic consumption value. Thirdly, college students targeted marketing plans ought to aim at enhancing product affordability and accessibility so as to balance the emotional value perception with financial limitations. Fourth, Sanrio may use digital media and social media to enhance online interaction and build emotional relationships with the young consumer groups.

All in all, emotional value integration, optimized co-branding and student-centric marketing approaches can contribute to enhancing consumer loyalty and repurchase intention. Even though this paper contributes something, some constraints should also be addressed. One hundred college students are enough to conduct a simple statistical analysis. Nevertheless, the sample was based on convenience sampling which does not allow generalizing the results to other groups of consumers. Besides, it can be stated that the current research is based on self-report questionnaire data. Such data might be prone to social desirability bias and do not necessarily represent the real offline buying behavior of consumers. Convenience sampling of non-probability has an effect of reducing the representativeness of the sample. Hence, the

results ought to be taken cautiously, and additional empirical validation is suggested in future studies.

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Appendix A: Questionnaire (Student Group: 18–24 Only)

Section	Question No.	Question	Response Options / Scale
Section A: Demographics	Q1	Age	18–20 / 21–22 / 23–24
	Q2	Gender	Male / Female / Prefer not to say
	Q3	Monthly disposable income	Under £100 / £100–£300 / £300–£500 / Over £500
Section B: Emotional Value (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree)	Q4	I feel emotionally comforted by Sanrio products	1 – 5 Likert Scale
	Q5	I feel happiness when I see cute Sanrio characters	1 – 5 Likert Scale
	Q6	Sanrio products help express my personality	1 – 5 Likert Scale
	Q7	I feel attached to specific Sanrio characters	1 – 5 Likert Scale
Section C: Co-Branding & Perceived Value	Q8	Co-branded Sanrio products feel more special than regular products	1 – 5 Likert Scale
	Q9	I am more likely to buy Sanrio products when they collaborate with other brands	1 – 5 Likert Scale
Section D: Consumer Behavior	Q10	Purchase frequency	Never / 1–2 times/year / 3–5 times/year / Monthly
	Q11	Average spending per purchase	Under £10 / £10–£30 / £30–£50 / Over £50
	Q12	Purchase decision speed	Immediately / Within a day / Several days
Section E: Repurchase Intention	Q13	I intend to repurchase Sanrio products in the future	1 – 5 Likert Scale
	Q14	I would recommend Sanrio products to friends	1 – 5 Likert Scale