

FACTORS AFFECTING CHINESE CONSUMERS'
PURCHASE INTENTIONS FOR LUXURY CLOTHING

by

LINI ZHANG

(Under the Direction of Brenda J. Cude)

ABSTRACT

The research objective of this dissertation is to systematically and thoroughly explore and examine factors affecting Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing. More specifically, there were two research questions in this study. The first research question explored whether attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control, components in the Theory of Planned Behavior, have significant influences on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing and if so, which of the three has the greatest influence. The second research question further examined which of the major factors within the three antecedents has the greatest influence on Chinese consumers' purchase intention for luxury clothing. Based on the previous literature, three general hypotheses and 15 specific hypotheses were developed to examine the relationships between the specific factors within each of the three antecedents and Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing. The hypotheses were tested using survey data collected from 452 Chinese luxury clothing consumers. The findings showed that among the three antecedents, attitude toward luxury purchasing behavior had the greatest impact on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing, followed by perceived behavioral control. Subjective norms had the least impact on Chinese consumers' purchase

intentions for luxury clothing. More specifically, the results showed factors including brand image, product quality, consumers' household income and luxury good knowledge had significant and positive impacts on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing, while social media and practicality had significant but negative impacts on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing. The results of this study are valuable both to improve researchers' understanding of luxury consumers and to help luxury brand manufacturers and retailers develop effective marketing strategies in Chinese luxury goods market.

INDEX WORDS: Purchase intentions, Chinese consumers, Luxury clothing, Theory of Planned Behavior, Attitude toward behavior, Subjective norms, Perceived behavioral control

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Luxury goods consumption is an important part of modern lifestyles in both developed countries in the West and emerging markets in the East (Bian & Forsythe, 2012). The luxury retailing industry has enjoyed worldwide steady growth even during the economic downturn (Tsai, Yang, & Liu, 2013). The global sales volume of luxury goods has increased dramatically, up to \$130 billion in 2007 (Hung et al., 2011), \$175 billion in 2008 (Truong & McColl, 2011), and \$236 billion in 2009 (Bian & Forsythe, 2012). According to statistics provided by Statista in 2016, the value of the personal luxury goods market worldwide was €208 billion (\$226.61 billion) in 2013, which increased to €224 billion (\$244.04 billion) in 2014, and €253 billion (\$275.63 billion) in 2015.

Along with the significant growth of luxury consumption, studies about luxury consumption also have burgeoned in recent years (Hung et al., 2011). Recent research has focused more on luxury consumption in Asia, especially in China, a rapidly growing emerging market, rather than the developed countries (Chen, Zhu, Le, & Wu, 2014; Zhan & He, 2012; Zhang & Kim, 2013). The trend in research can be considered as a reflection of the trend in luxury consumption. As the world's second-largest economy, China has shown its potential to be the largest luxury market. Survey data have revealed that Chinese consumers make one of every four luxury brand purchases, both domestically and during their travels abroad (Bain & Company, 2012). Gucci, an important luxury brand, achieved double-digit growth in the Chinese market in recent years (Tsai, Yang, & Liu, 2013). To appeal to Chinese luxury consumers, top

luxury fashion brands such as Dior and Valentino have integrated patterns and colors from Chinese traditional porcelain in their collections (Fredericson, 2014).

Luxury is a slippery term to define as different experts have different opinions about what luxury is. However, providing a clear definition of luxury is important for every researcher studying luxury consumption because they not only have the responsibility to provide the readers with a clear understanding of the focus of their study, but also to offer the participants a unified perception of which products are the bases for the survey questions.

Mortelmans (2005) defined luxury products as those scarce products with an objective or symbolic extra value, with a higher standard of quality, and with a higher price than comparable products (p. 507). Luxury products have more than the necessary characteristics compared to other products in their categories, which include their relatively high level of price, quality, aesthetics, rarity, extraordinariness, and symbolic meaning (Heine, 2010, p. 141).

In recent studies, many researchers already have noted that luxury includes two important components: a unique set of characteristics, such as high price, material scarcity, premium quality, and craftsmanship; and social or symbolic meanings, such as high recognition and good reputation, indicating the social status and wealth of the owners (Koh, 2013; Li, Robson, & Coates, 2013; Zhang & Kim, 2013).

In this research, luxury goods are defined as goods with high price, extraordinary quality, and scarcity. They are the products of famous brands that have a long history and culture. Luxury goods can present the status of the owner, but they are not a necessity for everyday life. Luxury goods can be divided mainly into seven categories, which are jewelry, handbags, watches, clothing, cosmetics, cars, and houses.

Among the seven categories of luxury products, this research will focus on luxury clothing. This product was chosen for three reasons. First, the price of a piece of luxury clothing is not extremely high compared to luxury cars and luxury houses; thus, average luxury consumers can afford a piece of luxury clothing. Second, compared to luxury jewelry and handbags, luxury clothing are gender-neutral products that both males and females can wear. Third, luxury clothing is a type of luxury good that the buyer can wear throughout the day and is obvious enough for other people to notice that the buyer is a luxury consumer.

Researchers have reached consensus about the importance of using a theoretical framework in modern research. Theories can be used to describe, predict, and guide intervention with specific behavioral and psychological phenomena (Herbert, Gaudiano, & Forman, 2013). The quality of the theoretical explanation in a paper directly reflects the quality of the research. However, previous research in the area of luxury consumption has failed to provide a strong theoretical framework to explain the mechanism by which different factors influence consumers' luxury purchase intentions. In addition, most previous research has mainly focused on the impact of only one or two categories of factors, with a maximum of seven factors such as culture, income, attitudes or perceptions, and reference group that influence consumers' purchase intentions for luxury goods. Little previous research has systematically analyzed a more complete set of factors. Thus, the research objective of this dissertation is to systematically and thoroughly explore and examine the factors affecting Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing using a strong theoretical framework.

The research question in this study is to explore whether attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control, components in the Theory of Planned Behavior, have significant influences on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing and if so, which of the

three has the greatest influence. The work is performed using data collected in the Chinese luxury market, one of the largest and fast-growing luxury markets in the world.

This dissertation examines a range of factors that may affect Chinese consumers' luxury purchase intentions. The results of this study are valuable both to improve researchers' understanding of luxury consumers and to help luxury brand manufacturers that produce luxury clothing to better satisfy consumers' needs in luxury consumption.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Despite the considerable volume of research in the luxury consumption area, much remains to be understood about the different factors that influence consumers' purchase intentions for luxury brand products. This study focuses on understanding consumers' purchase intentions rather than their behaviors because intentions have wider implications and directly affect an individual's actual behavior (Ajzen, 1991). The following review of the literature first provides a summary of the definitions of luxury goods and luxury consumers used in previous research. Then, the definitions of luxury products and luxury consumers used in this study are provided. Next, the theories used in previous research are discussed, and the Theory of Planned Behavior is introduced as the theoretical framework used in this study to systematically examine the factors affecting consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing. Next, previous research about how to define and measure consumers' purchase intentions is reviewed. The final section organizes the factors that influence consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing using the framework of the Theory of Planned Behavior.

Definitions of Luxury Goods and Luxury Consumers

As explained in Chapter 1, luxury goods are characterized by their high price, extraordinary quality, exclusiveness, and the symbolic meaning conveyed to others. However, it is not enough for researchers to merely provide a clear summative definition of luxury goods in their studies. To ensure that all of the survey respondents and readers of this dissertation

understand the definition of luxury goods in the same way, a more intuitive and easier to distinguish definition of luxury goods is needed.

In previous research, most researchers defined luxury goods based either on brand name or product category. Hung et al. (2011); Li, Robson, and Coates (2013); and Romani, Gistri, and Pace (2012) defined luxury goods by the brand names. Hung et al. (2011) chose six brands (Burberry, Celine, Coach, Dolce & Gabbana, Gucci, and Louis Vuitton), while Li, Robson, and Coates (2013) specified eight brands (Chanel, Louis Vuitton, Dior, Hermes, Gucci, Prada, Giorgio Armani, and Burberry) in their research. Luxury goods were defined as only two brands (Gucci and Valextra) in the experiment conducted by Romani, Gistri, and Pace (2012).

Other researchers have defined luxury goods by product categories. Kaefer, Heilman, and Ramenofsky (2012) specified the luxury product category diamond jewelry to study luxury consumption. Tsai, Yang, and Liu (2013) used luxury watches as the product category because of their gender-neutral, highly symbolic properties, and socially visible nature. Unlike the research just cited, Yoo and Lee (2012) specified five product categories, designer handbags, shoes, apparel, sunglasses, and jewelry, to define luxury goods in their study. Alligator leather apparel was the product category in Summers, Belleau, and Xu's (2006) research to examine consumers' purchase intentions for controversial luxury apparel products.

Only a few previous studies used both brands and product categories to define luxury goods. Bian and Forsythe (2012) used luxury apparel and accessories as the product categories in their study. They collected data through a survey questionnaire distributed in two countries, and specified Ralph Lauren Polo and Coach as luxury brands for U.S. respondents, and Louis Vuitton and Nike as luxury brands for Chinese respondents. Chen et al. (2014) specified Giorgio

Armani sunglasses, Versace home pillows, Calvin Klein handbags, Calvin Klein perfumes, and Louis Vuitton handbags as luxury goods in their experiments.

In my opinion, specifying both brands and product categories to define luxury goods is critical because some brands considered as luxury in one product category may not be considered as luxury in other product categories. For instance, while Estee Lauder is a luxury brand when considering cosmetics, it is not luxury in the handbag category. Similarly, some product categories considered as luxury in one brand are not recognized as luxury in another brand. For example, while diamond jewelry is a luxury product category when thinking about Tiffany & Co., it is not luxury if the retailer is Kay Jewelers.

Among those researchers who specified both luxury brands and a luxury product category when defining luxury goods in their research, one study focused on luxury apparel. To study parental influence on the purchase of luxury brands of infant apparel in Hong Kong, Prendergast and Wong (2003) specified a list of luxury brands (Burberry, Dior, Donna Karen, Emporio Armani, Versace, Moschino, Paul Smith, and Ralph Lauren) of infants' clothing in Hong Kong. However, for luxury clothing, specifying brands is still not enough because survey respondents and potential readers also need a definition of luxury apparel.

In this study, luxury clothing refers to haute couture and ready-to-wear trench coats, coats and jackets, suits, blazers and vests, T-shirts and Polos, blouses and tops, trousers and shorts, skirts and dresses, ponchos, cardigans and knitwear, denim jeans, and beachwear. The definition is proposed based on the classification of apparel provided by luxury brands' websites. In addition to the product category, the most popular and well-known luxury-clothing brands were selected based on the brands' availability and their market share in China (IberChina, 2015). Twenty luxury clothing brands were chosen, which were Louis Vuitton, Chanel, Burberry,

Gucci, Dior, Prada, Valentino, Giorgio Armani, Hermes, Versace, Dolce & Gabbana, Fendi, Michael Kors, Celine, Lavin, Givenchy, Dunhill, Bottega Veneta, Cerruti 1881, and Loewe. The combination of a definition of apparel and specification of brand names provides a clear, common, and correct understanding of the definition to potential luxury clothing consumer survey respondents and readers of this dissertation.

Despite confusion about the definition and identification of luxury consumers, most researchers agree that a basic definition of luxury consumers must rely on their luxury good consumption (Heine, 2010). However, it is not enough to differentiate between luxury consumers and non-luxury consumers because “access to luxury is no longer a dichotomous state, but a matter of degree” (Dubois & Laurent, 1995, p. 69). Thus, consumers with previous luxury consumption experience can be further categorized into once-in-a-while luxury consumers and day-to-day luxury consumers. In this study, a purchase frequency question was asked in the survey to learn whether Chinese luxury consumers are once-in-a-while luxury consumers or day-to-day luxury consumers.

In addition to the purchase frequency, the price of luxury products is another criterion previously used to define luxury good consumption. Dubois and Duquesne (1993) suggested distinguishing between “accessible” luxury products and “exceptional” luxury products. Accessible luxury products referred to those that cost less than \$500 such as luxury cosmetics or watches that are affordable for most consumers. Exceptional luxury products referred to the products that cost more than \$500 such as luxury jewelry or clothing that only a small group of consumers can afford.

Based on the distinction between the two levels of luxury products, Dubois and Duquesne (1993, p. 38) further came up with the definition that a luxury consumer is a person who has

acquired at least three products belonging in their “accessible” luxury category and at least two products in the “exceptional” luxury category. In other words, luxury consumers were defined both by their purchase frequency and the price of the luxury products. Although this definition was proposed in 1993, it has been used as the definition of luxury consumers in recent studies (Heine, 2010; Husic & Cicic, 2009).

In this research, luxury clothing has been specified as the product category and is defined by one of the 20 luxury clothing brands. Luxury clothing is considered an “exceptional” luxury good; one piece of the top brands’ luxury clothing usually retails for \$500 to \$10,000 (i.e., ¥3,250 to ¥65,000). Based on previous literature, luxury consumers in this study are defined as those consumers who bought at least one piece of luxury clothing in the past year that cost more than \$1,500 (¥9,750) or at least two pieces of luxury clothing in the past three years that cost more than \$3,000 (¥19,500) in total either domestically and during travel abroad.

Although there is a growing base of literature about the marketing of luxury products, many researchers have hesitated to target luxury consumers (Heine, 2010). Much of previous research about luxury good preferences used data collected from college students (Bian & Forsythe, 2012; Chen et al., 2014; Koh, 2013; Kim, Ko, Xu, & Han, 2012; Tsai, Yang, & Liu, 2013; Yoo & Lee, 2012). Others have collected data from samples of consumers that included those with no previous luxury good purchasing experience (Kim & Ko, 2012; Li, Li, & Kambele, 2012; Li, Robson, & Coates, 2013). Only a few researchers have executed a study using a sample of non-students with luxury goods purchasing experience (Kastanakis & Balabanis, 2012).

It is questionable whether students or consumers with no previous luxury good purchasing experience can imagine themselves in the role of experienced luxury consumers due to the fact that almost all college students and at least some ordinary consumers cannot afford to buy luxury

goods. It seems unlikely that factors affecting college students or consumers with no luxury good purchasing experience are representative of actual luxury consumers. Thus, actual luxury consumers are used as the sample in this research.

Theories Used in Previous Research About Luxury Consumption

In previous research about luxury goods purchase intentions, two ways were used to establish a theoretical framework. One way was to combine existing theories to guide and support the research (Bian & Forsythe, 2012; Truong & McColl, 2010; Truong, McColl, & Kitchen, 2010; Yoo & Lee, 2012). The other was to create a conceptual framework based on the variables used in the research (Kastanakis & Balabanis, 2012; Kim & Ko, 2012; Li, Li, & Kambele, 2012; Li, Robson, & Coates, 2013).

Among studies about luxury goods consumption that used existing theories as the theoretical framework, four theories were the most commonly used: Conspicuous Consumption Theory, Theory of Reasoned Action, Symbolic Interaction Theory, and Self-determination Theory. Each of these theories is described in the following paragraphs.

Conspicuous Consumption Theory argues that wealthy people tend to consume highly conspicuous goods to display their wealth and gain social status, which also is known as the Veblen Effect (Veblen, 1899). Based on the assumption that individuals are rational and make systematic use of information available to them, the Theory of Reasoned Action suggests that a person's behavioral intention depends on the person's attitude toward the behavior and subjective norms (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). Subjective norms refer to the pressure individuals feel when performing a certain behavior (Ajzen, 1985). Symbolic Interaction Theory, or Symbolic Interactionism, posits that all communication, both from language and behavior, is symbolic and based upon interaction and meanings it conveys to other people (Charon, 1979).

Self-determination Theory addresses the development and functioning of personality within social contexts and asserts that humans are active organisms with a natural tendency toward psychological growth and development (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

Conspicuous Consumption Theory has been used in previous research to explain the mechanisms by which attempting to gain higher status through conspicuous consumption shapes consumers' preferences for products (Truong & McColl, 2011; Truong, McColl, & Kitchen, 2010). The theory also has been widely used to explain consumers' preferences for luxury counterfeits (Hieke, 2010; Romani, Gistri, & Pace, 2012), where luxury counterfeiting refers to the act of producing or selling a product containing an intentional and calculated reproduction of a genuine luxury brand (Li, Li, & Kambele, 2012). Symbolic Interaction Theory has been used to explain that some consumers who purchase luxury goods focus more on external social needs rather than internal individual needs; thus, even low-income consumers have strong desires and purchase intentions for luxury goods (Zhang & Kim, 2013). Symbolic Interaction Theory also has been used to explain consumers' consumption of luxury counterfeits (Chen et al., 2014). Self-determination Theory has been used to distinguish between extrinsic and intrinsic goal pursuits when studying motivations for luxury good consumption (Truong & McColl, 2011; Truong, McColl, & Kitchen, 2010). Intrinsic goal pursuits include personal growth, relatedness, and community feeling, while extrinsic goal pursuits cover social recognition, wealth, and material values (Hudders & Pandelaere, 2012). However, researchers using Conspicuous Consumption Theory, Symbolic Interaction Theory, and Self-determination Theory simply introduced these theories in their literature reviews, but failed to apply these theories to their research questions to guide the formation of their hypotheses. In addition, these theories failed to

provide a model or framework to organize the constructs, which is essential for future researchers to test the propositions in the theory and apply the theory to their own studies.

Compared to Conspicuous Consumption Theory, Symbolic Interaction Theory, and Self-determination Theory, the Theory of Reasoned Action seems to be a better choice to study consumers' luxury purchase intentions because it has prediction power and is a clear model that is testable and applicable to a research question related to intentions to purchase luxury clothing. The Theory of Reasoned Action usually has been used to analyze how attitude and subjective norms affect consumers' luxury fashion goods consumption and purchase intentions (Bian & Forsythe, 2012; Zhan & He, 2012). While the Theory of Reasoned Action is applicable when the behavior in question is under volitional control, issues may arise with the model when behaviors are not under conscious and volitional control.

Theory of Planned Behavior

To overcome the limitations of the theories that previous researchers have used, and to enhance the predictive power of the Theory of Reasoned Action, the Theory of Planned Behavior was proposed by Icek Ajzen in 1985 as an extension by taking perceived behavioral control into consideration. The Theory of Planned Behavior focuses on a person's motivation and ability as influences on an individual's actual behavior and behavioral intentions. According to the Theory of Planned Behavior (see the framework in Figure 2.1), behavioral intentions are influenced by three antecedents: attitude toward the behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control (Ajzen, 1991).

Behavioral intention is an indication of an individual's willingness to perform a specific behavior (see Figure 2.1). This dissertation focuses on exploring and examining factors affecting Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing. Thus, the targeted behavior in this

study is luxury clothing consumption, and behavioral intention refers to Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing (See Figure 2.2).

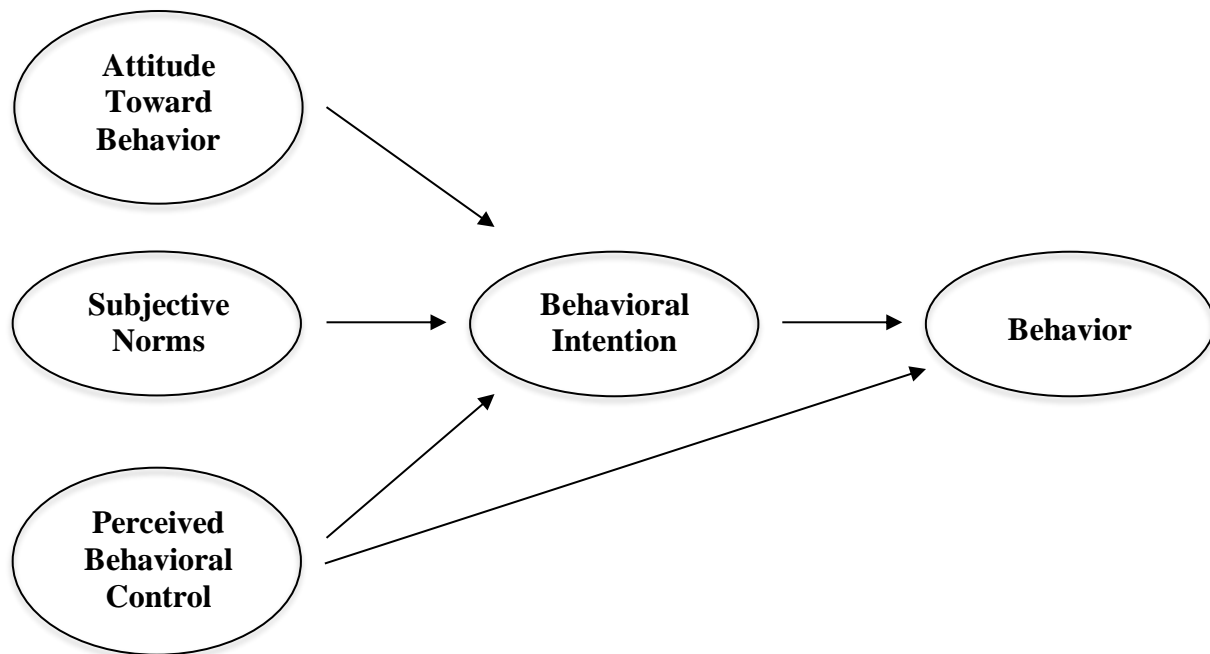


Figure 2.1. The Theoretical Framework Presented in the Theory of Planned Behavior.

Adapted from “The Theory of Planned Behavior” by I. Ajzen, 1991, *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 50, p. 182. Copyright 1991 by Academic Press, Inc.

Attitude toward a behavior is defined as the positive or negative feelings individuals have toward a behavior, which is based on their beliefs (See Figure 2.1). Based on the Theory of Planned Behavior, attitude has a direct impact on individuals' behavioral intention (Ajzen, 1991). Attitude is composed of salient behavioral beliefs that affect outcome behaviors (Ajzen, 1991). Conner and Armitage (1998) expanded on the components of behavioral beliefs. They suggested splitting the category of attitude toward behavior into spontaneous impacts and affective reactions. Spontaneous impacts are based on previous deliberations, rational thinking,

and careful planning, while affective reactions are based on the individuals' anticipated feelings after performing a certain behavior (Rutherford & DeVaney, 2009).

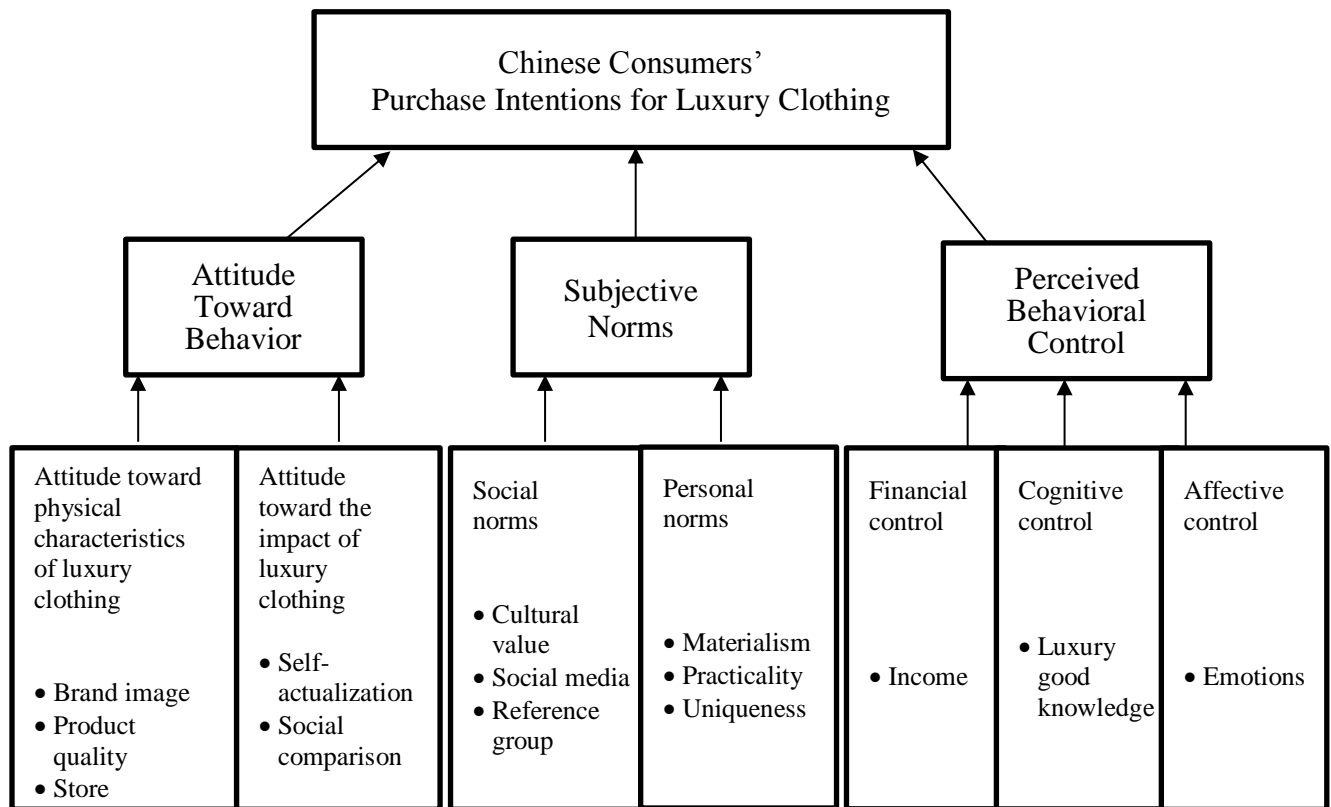


Figure 2.2. Application of Theory of Planned Behavior to Chinese Consumers' Purchase Intentions for Luxury Clothing.

Specifically, when applying the Theory of Planned Behavior to analyze Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing, attitude can be divided into attitude toward physical characteristics of luxury clothing (spontaneous impacts) and attitude toward the impact of luxury clothing (affective reactions). Supported by previous research (Bian & Forsythe, 2012; Deeter-Schmelz, Moore, & Goebel, 2000; Wang, Sun, & Song, 2011), attitude toward physical characteristics of luxury clothing can be measured by consumers' attitude toward luxury brand

image, product quality, and store atmosphere, while attitude toward the impact of luxury clothing can be measured by self-actualization and social comparison (see Figure 2.2).

Subjective norms represent the pressure individuals feel when performing a certain behavior (see Figure 2.1). Based on the Theory of Planned Behavior, individuals' behavioral intentions are affected by subjective norms (Ajzen, 1991). Subjective norms consist of social norms and personal norms that form an individual's belief about whether he/she should engage in the behavior. Social norms dictate that lifestyles and expectations of others influence an individual's intentions and decisions to perform a particular behavior (Conner & Armitage, 1998). Personal norms differ from social norms in that they refer to internal standards concerning a particular behavior rather than reflecting externally imposed rules (Doran & Larsen, 2015).

When studying Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing using the Theory of Planned Behavior, subjective norms also can be divided into social norms that are created by society and significant others as well as personal norms that are formed internally by the individual himself/herself. Previous research (Chen & Kim, 2013; Kim & Ko, 2012; Koh, 2013; Li, Li, & Kambele, 2012; Li & Su, 2007; Zhan & He, 2012) supports use of social norms such as cultural values, social media, and reference group and personal norms such as materialism, practicality, and uniqueness to measure subjective norms in the Theory of Planned Behavior (see Figure 2.2).

Perceived behavioral control refers to an individual's perceived ease or difficulty of performing the behavior (see Figure 2.1). According to the Theory of Planned Behavior, an individual's intention and behavior can be predicted by his/her perceived behavioral control of performing the targeted task (Ajzen, 1991). Perceived behavioral control is determined by the total set of accessible control beliefs, which refers to beliefs about the presence of factors that

may facilitate or impede performance of the particular behavior (Madden, Ellen, & Ajzen, 1992). Perceived behavioral control is reflected by individuals' possessed resources and confidence or feelings that they are capable of performing the behavior.

When it comes to analyzing Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing, perceived behavioral controls include income, luxury good knowledge, and emotions. While income provides financial control for consumers to purchase luxury clothing, luxury good knowledge and emotions provide cognitive control and affective control, respectively. Previous research (Esch, Langner, Schmitt, & Geus, 2006; Godey, Lagier, & Pederzoli, 2009; Hudders & Pandelaere, 2012) supports the selection of income, luxury good knowledge, and emotions to measure perceived behavioral control when studying consumers' purchase intention for luxury goods (see Figure 2.2).

While the Theory of Planned Behavior provides a clear framework to apply, it presents the relationship between consumers' behavioral intentions and consumers' actual behavior as unidirectional. Randall and Wolff (1994) have argued that the unidirectional relationship only holds under the assumption that the time interval between forming the intentions and the behaviors is short enough to ensure that intentions have not changed. While the Theory of Planned Behavior is unidirectional (intentions influence behaviors but not vice versa), Towler and Shepherd (1992) added past behavior as a variable in the Theory of Planned Behavior to study consumers' consumption of potato chips. Using a sample of 288 subjects recruited in a county in the United Kingdom, they found that past behavior had an independent effect on intention. Therefore, only those Chinese consumers with previous luxury clothing consumption experience were included in this study.

The primary purpose of this study is to examine the relative influence of each of the three antecedents (attitude toward behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control) in the Theory of Planned Behavior on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing. The following section reviews previous research about how to define and measure consumers' purchase intentions. In addition, the literature that provided the categorizations and measurements of the components of attitude toward behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control are summarized in the final section.

Purchase Intentions for Luxury Goods

The construct purchase intentions for luxury goods measures consumers' desire and willingness to buy luxury products in the near future. This study focused on purchase intentions rather than behavior, because intentions have wider implications and directly affect an individual's actual behavior. This has been supported by many scholars who studied the significance of purchase intentions in the context of luxury consumption (Chen et al., 2014; Hung et al., 2011; Koh, 2013; Yoo & Lee, 2012).

Based on previous research, Hung et al. (2011) developed a three-item scale to measure consumers' purchase intentions for luxury goods. The three items were "I have strong possibility to purchase Luxury Brand X's product," "I'm likely to purchase Luxury Brand X's product," and "I have high intention to purchase Luxury Brand X's product." All items were rated from 1 ("strongly disagree") to 5 ("strongly agree"). Tested among 1,380 Chinese consumers in Taiwan, the Cronbach's α for the measurement was 0.91.

While a general question such as "I have strong possibility to purchase Luxury Brand X's product" has been widely used to measure consumers' purchase intentions for luxury goods (Bian & Forsythe, 2012; Li, Robson & Coates, 2013), researchers also have noted a question to

measure intention is stronger if it specifies the time period (such as within the next year) (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980; Park, Rabolt, & Jeon, 2008). Based on this principle, in addition to the general question “I would like to buy luxury fashion goods,” Zhang and Kim (2013) added the question “I intend to purchase luxury fashion goods within the next year” to measure purchase intentions for luxury fashion goods in their study.

To follow the rule of specifying behavior type, purchase objective, and time period in the measurement of purchase intentions, three questions were used in this dissertation to measure consumers’ purchase intentions for luxury clothing. These three questions were “I have a strong possibility to purchase luxury clothing,” “I have a strong possibility to purchase luxury clothing within the next year,” and “I have a strong possibility to purchase luxury clothing within the next three years.” All three items were rated from 1 (“strongly disagree”) to 5 (“strongly agree”).

Factors That Influence Consumers’ Purchase Intentions for Luxury Clothing

Attitude Toward Behavior

Attitude toward a behavior in the Theory of Planned Behavior is defined as the positive or negative feelings individuals have toward a behavior based on their beliefs. When applying the Theory of Planned Behavior to analyze Chinese consumers’ purchase intentions for luxury clothing, attitude can be divided into attitude toward physical characteristics of luxury clothing and attitude toward the impact of luxury clothing. Based on previous research (Bian & Forsythe, 2012; Deeter-Schmelz, Moore, & Goebel, 2000; Wang, Sun, & Song, 2011), attitude toward physical characteristics of luxury clothing can be measured by consumers’ attitude toward luxury brand image, product quality, and store atmosphere. Attitude toward the impact of luxury clothing can be measured by self-actualization and social comparison.

Brand Image. Luxury brands are regarded as images in the minds of consumers that comprise associations about a high level of price, quality, aesthetics, rarity, extraordinariness, and a high degree of further non-functional associations (Heine, 2010). Luxury brand image can be reflected through the top designers, innovative design, advertising message and style, and the lifestyle that the brand projects. For instance, glamorous represents Valentino's brand characteristics (Valentino, 2012).

Based on experiments conducted among undergraduate students, Batra and Homer (2004) found that consumers' brand image beliefs made a significant incremental contribution to the brand purchase intention. Using survey responses completed by 315 young consumers ages 18 to 25 years old, O'Cass and Frost (2002) concluded that young consumers' luxury consumption tendencies were significantly affected by whether the brand image conveyed the consumers' own self-image. Similarly, the results of Bian and Forsythe's (2012) research also showed that both U.S. and Chinese consumers had a greater intention to purchase their favorite luxury brand products when the luxury brand image was consistent with their intrinsic beliefs. Their results were based on data collected from a survey conducted among 194 U.S. students and 200 Chinese students.

Based on both Self-Completion Theory and Attribution Theory, Deeter-Schmelz, Moore, and Goebel (2000) developed a PRECON scale, a five-dimension instrument that included brand image, product quality, fashion involvement, patron status, and store atmosphere and measured an individual's preference to shop in luxury clothing stores. Brand image was measured by four items scored on a 7-point scale ranging from 1 ("strongly disagree") to 7 ("strongly agree"). Example items included "I consider the brand name when purchasing clothing for myself" and "I

will pay a higher price for clothing that is made by a popular designer or manufacturer.” Tested among 321 individuals from United States, the Cronbach’s α of the four-item scale was 0.82.

Based on previous research, Shukla (2011) developed a two-item instrument to measure brand image on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (“strongly disagree”) to 7 (“strongly agree”). The two items were “I tend to buy luxury brands that really make me look good in front of my friends” and “I avoid buying a luxury brand, which has a very cheap/poor image.” The Cronbach’s α for the two items tested among 277 Indian respondents was 0.67, while the Cronbach’s α tested among 291 respondents from the United Kingdom was 0.70.

According to Hung et al. (2011), consumers’ attitude toward luxury brands has both a symbolic and an experiential dimension. In their study, the experiential dimension was captured by five items (example: “Luxury brand product is precious,” “Luxury brand product is rare,” and “Luxury brand product is unique”). The symbolic dimension was measured by three items (“Luxury brand product is conspicuous,” “Luxury brand product is expensive,” and “Luxury brand product is for the wealthy”). All of the items were scored on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (“strongly disagree”) to 5 (“strongly agree”). Tested with a sample of 1,380 consumers from Taiwan, the Cronbach’s α for the experiential dimension was 0.875, while the Cronbach’s α for the symbolic value was 0.787.

In this dissertation, the eight items in Hung et al.’s research were modified slightly to fit the topic of luxury clothing and used to measure brand image. This measurement was chosen because it captures consumers’ attitude toward luxury brands and has a strong internal consistency. Based on previous literature, brand image is hypothesized to have a positive influence on Chinese consumers’ purchase intentions for luxury clothing.

Product Quality. Superior quality is one of the most salient attributes of luxury products (Hudders & Pandelaere, 2012). Using the most comfortable fabrics, luxury clothing is normally handmade by designers and always represents high quality (Husic & Cicic, 2009). Perfectionist consumers may perceive more value from luxury products because they offer superior product quality and performance (Vigneron & Johnson, 2004).

In four studies conducted with non-student adults in a southeastern city in the U.S., Netemeyer et al. (2004) confirmed that perceived quality was a direct antecedent of the willingness to pay for a brand. In addition, Park and Park (2003), using data collected among Korean consumers, also found that the quality of a product significantly increased consumers' purchase motivations. Using data collected in Shanghai through an online survey, Zhan and He (2012) noticed that Chinese consumers distinguished a luxury brand from other brands by the superior quality of the products, and consumers' perceptions of luxury product quality were positively related to their purchase intentions.

A review of the literature revealed three different Likert scales used in previous research to measure product quality. Deeter-Schmelz, Moore, and Goebel's (2000) PRECON scale measured product quality by three items scored on a 7-point scale ranging from 1 ("strongly disagree") to 7 ("strongly agree"). The three items were "I prefer to shop at stores that carry high-quality merchandise," "I usually buy high quality clothing," and "When I buy clothes for others as a gift, I buy clothes of superior quality." The Cronbach's α for the three product quality items tested among 321 individuals from United States was 0.80.

Truong and McColl (2011) used a three-item 7-point Likert scale to measure product quality. All of the items in their scale were different from those in the PRECON scale. The three items were "Product quality superiority is my major reason for buying a luxury brand," "I place

emphasis on quality assurance over prestige when considering the purchase of a luxury brand,” and “A luxury brand preferred by many people that does not meet my quality standards will never enter into my purchasing considerations.” The scale was tested with 587 adults aged between 21 and 41 living in a high-income neighborhood of a major French city. The Cronbach’s α was 0.75.

To measure consumers’ attitude toward product quality, Hung et al. (2011) used a four-item 5-point Likert scale with items such as “Luxury brand product is handmade (crafted)” and “Luxury brand product has the best quality.” Using data from 1,380 consumers from Taiwan, the Cronbach’s α for the scale was 0.867.

The four-item scale used in Hung et al. (2011) was adopted to measure consumers’ attitude toward luxury good product quality in this study because of its strong Cronbach’s α . Based on previous literature, product quality is hypothesized to have a positive influence on Chinese consumers’ purchase intentions for luxury clothing.

Store Atmosphere. The construct store atmosphere includes all of the tangible and intangible aspects that make up a store’s environment, such as layout, customer service, decoration and displays, lighting, music, and even scents (Deeter-Schmelz, Moore, & Goebel, 2000). These different elements of retail store atmospherics combine to create a mood that can serve as a cue to infer prestige (Dawson, 1988).

Based on an investigation of a sample of 30 graduate business students who acted as subjects and were each asked to visit two or three retail outlets on a different day and at a different time of the day, Donovan and Rossiter (1982) demonstrated that store atmosphere could stimulate specific shopping behavior within the store. To examine the influence of the store atmosphere in the context of a luxury goods store, Grewal, Baker, Levy, and Voss (2003) used

videotapes to simulate a store atmosphere and set their research in a jewelry store located in a southeastern U.S. city. Based on the analysis of data from 213 graduate business students recruited from a large southwestern U. S. university, they reported that the higher the overall store atmosphere evaluation, the more positive the store patronage intentions were.

In the PRECON scale developed by Deeter-Schmelz, Moore, and Goebel (2000), store atmosphere was measured by four items scored on a 7-point scale ranging from 1 (“strongly disagree”) to 7 (“strongly agree”). Examples included “It is important to me that a clothing store has a warm, inviting atmosphere” and “I shop at stores that have artistic looking displays.” The Cronbach’s α for store atmosphere tested among 321 individuals from United States was 0.77.

Based on its reliability, the four items in the PRECON scale were used in this study to measure store atmosphere. In this study, the items in the PRECON scale were paraphrased into “Luxury clothing stores have a warm, inviting atmosphere,” “Luxury clothing stores are attractive with artistic looking displays,” “The clerks in luxury clothing stores are well-dressed and provide enthusiastic and thoughtful service,” and “Luxury clothing stores provide great personalized service” to better measure consumers’ attitude toward luxury clothing store atmosphere. Based on previous literature, store atmosphere is hypothesized to have a positive influence on Chinese consumers’ purchase intentions for luxury clothing.

In addition to attitude toward physical characteristics of luxury clothing such as consumers’ attitude toward luxury brand image, product quality, and store atmosphere, Chinese consumers’ purchase intentions for luxury clothing also can be influenced by their attitude toward the impact of luxury clothing. In this study, attitude toward the impact of luxury clothing is measured by self-actualization and social comparison.

Self-actualization. Self-actualization comes from consumers' inner feeling of self-fulfillment and self-satisfaction (Truong, McColl, & Kitchen, 2010). The feeling of pleasure comes from consumers' subjective experience, and it has nothing to do with others. Self-Completion Theory suggests that the use and possession of symbols contributes substantially to the construction and preservation of an individual's identity or self-image (Deeter-Schmelz, Moore, & Goebel, 2000). Self-actualization is used to measure consumers' attitude toward the impact of luxury clothing on their self-confidence in this study.

In their investigation of the luxury auto market among 498 consumers who had purchased either a luxury American car (Cadillac or Lincoln Mercury), a luxury German car (Mercedes or BMW), or a luxury Japanese car (Infiniti or Lexus) within the last year in the United States, Sukhdial, Chakraborty, and Steger (1995) illustrated that self-fulfillment was one of the important predictors of luxury car ownership. Wang, Sun, and Song (2011) argued that when using luxury products, consumers feel they are successful and thus more confident than usual. Their study further showed that elitist consumers who viewed luxury consumption as suitable for a small number of elites instead of a large audience were more likely to buy luxury products for self-actualization than others. By conducting and analyzing 40 in-depth interviews with Italian customers in a fashion luxury goods store in Italy, Amatulli and Guido (2011) demonstrated that self-confidence and self-fulfillment were the main hidden final value for consumers when buying and consuming luxury goods.

In research conducted by Wang, Sun, and Song (2011), a three-item scale measured on a 5-point Likert format ranging from 1 ("strongly disagree") to 5 ("strongly agree") was adapted to reflect consumers' feeling of self-actualization. Items included "Luxuries are special and wearing them makes me feel different," "I feel successful when buying luxuries," and "Using luxuries

increases my self-confidence.” Tested with data collected from 473 residents living in a large cosmopolitan city of China, the Cronbach’s α for the measurement was 0.76.

Wang, Sun, and Song’s three-item scale was used to measure consumers’ feeling of self-actualization in this study. Based on previous research, self-actualization is hypothesized to have a positive influence on Chinese consumers’ purchase intentions for luxury clothing.

Social Comparison. Social comparison reveals consumers’ desire to be recognized by others (Vigneron & Johnson, 1999). This type of satisfaction does not come from the consumers themselves, but from other people’s admiration and flattery. According to Social Comparison Theory, people have a drive to evaluate themselves by comparison with others when objective means are not available (Festinger, 1954). Social comparison was used to measure consumers’ attitude toward the impact of luxury clothing on their social images in this study.

Zhang and Kim (2013) proposed that in Chinese society people need acceptance to identify with their peers. Thus, consumers choose to possess luxury goods to impress others with the desirable status of luxury goods. Their study, based on 161 Chinese consumers, demonstrated a significant relationship between social comparison and attitude toward purchasing luxury fashion goods. In an analysis of data from a survey of secondary school students in Hong Kong, Chan and Prendergast (2007) also indicated that social comparison with friends and social comparison with media figures both had positive effects on attachment to worldly possessions among Chinese adolescents. Schiffman and Kanuk (2004) posited that individuals could make downward comparisons with people slightly worse off than themselves as well as upward comparisons with idols such as movie stars and singers. Research conducted with Japanese consumers showed that upward comparison had a positive relationship with an individual’s purchasing intentions (Ogden & Venkat, 2001). Similarly, another study conducted among U.S.

college students also illustrated that comparisons to successful others are likely to influence one's brand preferences, particularly for luxury brands (Mandel, Petrova, & Cialdini, 2006).

Two measures of social comparison have been used in past research. Chan and Prendergast (2007) measured social comparison as social comparison with media figures and friends on a four-item 5-point scale. Items included statements such as "I pay attention to what brands my favorite movie stars and pop singers are using" and "I pay attention to what my close friends buy." Zhang and Kim (2013) used this scale to measure social comparison in their study among 161 Chinese consumers and reported the Cronbach's α for the scale was 0.76. Wang, Sun, and Song (2011) used a three-item 5-point scale ranging from 1 ("strongly disagree") to 5 ("strongly agree") to measure social comparison in their study. The items were "I want other people to know that I own expensive luxuries," "I am satisfied when other people compliment on my luxuries," and "When I use luxury products, I feel other people's impressions about me have changed." In data from 473 respondents living in a large cosmopolitan city of China, the Cronbach's α for the measurement was 0.80.

Wang, Sun, and Song's (2011) three-item scale was used in this dissertation to measure consumers' attitude toward social comparison due to the strong Cronbach's α among Chinese consumers. Based on previous literature, social comparison is hypothesized to have a positive influence on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing.

Subjective Norms

Subjective norms represent the pressure individuals feel when performing a certain behavior. When studying Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing in research guided by the Theory of Planned Behavior, subjective norms also can be divided into social norms that are created by society and significant others as well as personal norms that are formed

internally by the individual himself/herself. Previous research (Chen & Kim, 2013; Kim & Ko, 2012; Koh, 2013; Li, Li, & Kambele, 2012; Li & Su, 2007; Zhan & He, 2012) supports use of social norms such as cultural values, media publicity, and reference group and personal norms such as materialism, practicality, and uniqueness to measure subjective norms in the Theory of Planned Behavior.

Cultural Value. Traditional culture has a huge impact on consumer values. Different cultural values influence consumers' purchase intentions for luxury brands in different ways (Wong & Ahuvia, 1998; Zhu, 2006). Rooted in Chinese culture, consumption is regarded more as a tool to serve higher-order social needs than as an activity in its own right, which also is known as face-saving consumption (Li & Su, 2007). Since culture is such a broad concept and is difficult to measure, face consciousness, as an important reflection of Chinese consumers' culture values, is used to measure Chinese consumers' cultural values. In this context, face refers to a sense of favorable personal image that people intend to have in public relationships (Brown & Levinson, 1987).

Using data collected from 120 Chinese students and 106 U.S. students, Bao, Zhou, and Su (2003) showed that Chinese consumers were more face conscious than their American counterparts. Due to the heavy influence of face, Li and Su (2007) further proposed that Chinese consumers believed they must purchase luxury products to enhance, maintain, or save face. Based on a sample of 117 Chinese students, the results of Li, Zhang, and Sun (2015) revealed that face consciousness was positively related to Chinese consumers' status consumption. However, using data collected from 201 Chinese consumers ages 18 to 40 years, Chen and Kim (2013) demonstrated that face consciousness did not have a significant impact on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for either self-use or gift giving.

Bao, Zhou, and Su (2003) developed a four-item 7-point Likert scale in which 1 represented “strongly disagree” and 7 represented “strongly agree” to measure the construct of face consciousness. A sample of 120 Chinese students was recruited to respond to items such as “It is important that others like the products and brand I buy” and “Name products and brands purchase can bring me a sense of prestige.” However, the Cronbach’s α was only 0.69 for these Chinese respondents.

Due to the lack of a reliable instrument to measure face consciousness, Zhang, Cao, and Grigoriou (2011) developed an 11-item scale. The items included “I hope people think that I can do better than most others” and “It is important for me to get praise and admiration.” A total of 173 third-year Chinese undergraduate students majoring in a range of disciplines, including management, economics, physics, mathematics, and engineering, responded to each item on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (“strongly disagree”) to 7 (“strongly agree”). The Cronbach’s α for Zhang, Cao, and Grigorious’s scale was 0.82.

The 11-item scale used in Zhang, Cao, and Grigorious (2011) was used in this study to measure face consciousness. Based on previous literature, cultural value (face consciousness) is hypothesized to have a positive influence on Chinese consumers’ purchase intentions for luxury clothing.

Social Media. Social media can have a significant impact on consumers’ desire for luxury brands (Mandel, Petrova, & Cialdini, 2006). Advertisements and promotions on TV as well as the Internet are designed to affect consumers’ preferences. Thus, social media marketing activities are very important for luxury products (Kim & Ko, 2012). An American study concluded that the Internet has more influence on luxury purchase decision-making than any other media (Seringhaus, 2005).

Based on data collected from 311 respondents by distributing a survey link through a posting on the German-speaking MINI Facebook brand page, Hutter, Hautz, Dennhardt, and Füller (2013) demonstrated that engagement with a Facebook fan page had positive effects on consumers' purchase intentions, which indicated that social media activities indeed affected the purchase decision making process. After recruiting 143 undergraduate students to explore Louis Vuitton's Facebook page and complete an online survey, Jin (2012) concluded that consumers' utilization of Facebook for online shopping-related search increased their intentions to visit a luxury brand's social media, and that intention to visit the luxury brand's social media positively predicted consumers' intentions to research online and purchase offline.

Based on previous studies about luxury brands' social media attributes, Kim and Ko (2012) developed an 11-item 5-point Likert scale to measure luxury social media in which 1 represented "strongly disagree" and 5 represented "strongly agree." The measurement included items such as "Using luxury brands' social media is fun" and "Luxury brands' social media enables information sharing with others." Tested using data collected from 362 consumers who had purchased any luxury fashion item within the past two years in Korea, the Cronbach's α for the media publicity scale was 0.77. The results also confirmed that social media marketing activities of luxury brands had a positive effect on consumers' purchase intentions.

Because the scale developed by Kim and Ko (2012) focused on luxury brands' social media rather than general social media such as Facebook and Twitter, it was adapted for use in this study. Based on previous literature, it is hypothesized that a positive relationship exists between social media and Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing.

Reference Group. Bearden and Etzel (1982) defined a reference group as a person or a group of people that significantly influences an individual's behavior (p. 184). When the concept

of a reference group first appeared, only individuals and groups that maintained face-to-face relationships such as friends and family were considered a reference group. However, today individuals and groups that have an indirect relationship with an individual, such as film actors, singers, and politicians, also are included in the definition of a reference group (Koh, 2013).

The reference group has a strong impact on consumers' purchase intentions for luxury brands. Based on data collected among 645 nonstudent adults in the U.S., Bearden and Etzel (1982) concluded that the reference group had a significant impact on consumers when choosing a brand. The influence of a reference group was larger in the purchase of luxuries than for necessities. Based on survey data collected from 255 college students in Korea, Koh (2013) found that the influence of a reference group was positively related to the students' purchase intentions for luxury goods. Based on 473 non-student respondents in a large cosmopolitan city of China, Wang, Sun, and Song (2011) also confirmed that reference group had a strong positive effect on purchase intentions for luxury brands.

Koh (2013) used a scale to measure the influence of reference group. The scale included five items such as "I buy luxury goods in regard to the response of my friends and family" and "I buy luxury goods because of my favorite masses star." All items were measured on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 ("strongly disagree") to 5 ("strongly agree"). Tested among 255 Korean college students, the Cronbach's α for the measurement was 0.91.

Because the English wording of the scale in Koh (2013) is not easy to understand, the scale was modified to measure the influence of reference group. Koh's (2013) scale revealed that the luxury consumption behaviors of one's reference group influence both whether consumers buy luxury goods and the brands they select to buy. After modification, two items in Koh's (2013) scale ("Possession of luxury goods represents the image of my own to others" and

“Luxury goods can help me show my presence to others”) were deleted, and one item measuring the influences of idols on consumers’ luxury clothing brands selection was added. Finally, four items were used to measure the influence of reference group in this study. Based on previous research, reference group is hypothesized to have a positive influence on Chinese consumers’ purchase intentions for luxury clothing.

In addition to social norms such as cultural values, social media, and reference group, Chinese consumers’ luxury goods purchase intentions also can be influenced by personal norms. In this study, three categories of personal norms that may affect consumers’ purchase intentions for luxury goods are evaluated. These three categories are materialism, practicality, and uniqueness.

Materialism. Materialism has been defined as a set of attitudes which regard possessions as symbols of success and a central part of life, including the belief that more possessions lead to more happiness (Chan & Prendergast, 2007, p. 214). Several previous studies reported that people in the collectivist cultures of the East are more materialistic than their Western counterparts (Tatzel, 2002; Wong & Ahuvia, 1998). Many of these studies have shown that materialism has a significant positive impact on consumers’ purchase intentions for luxury products.

Richins (1994) noticed that highly materialistic people were more likely to value expensive and publicly displayed possession items, which signal success and social status. Based on survey data collected in China, Chen and Kim (2013) concluded that consumers with high vs. low levels of materialism were more likely to have a strong intention to purchase luxury fashion products for both self-use and gift giving. In addition, Hudders and Pandelaere (2012) proposed that luxury consumption could bring more benefits for materialistic consumers than for less

materialistic consumers in the short term, and materialists tended to be locked in their lifestyle to consume luxury goods.

However, other studies have suggested different perspectives about the influence of materialism on luxury consumption. In a study that used a sample of college students in Seoul, materialism did not significantly affect consumers' attitude toward luxury brands (Kim et al., 2012). Similarly, based on data collected in the three most populated cities in China, Zhang and Kim (2013) also failed to show a significant relationship between materialism and attitude toward luxury brands.

To measure materialism, Richins (1987) developed a scale scored on a 7-point Likert-type format ranging from 1 ("strongly disagree") to 7 ("strongly agree"). The scale included six items such as "It is important to me to have really nice things" and "I would like to be rich enough to buy anything I want." Tested with a sample of 114 students from two private women's universities in Seoul, the Cronbach's α for the materialism scale was 0.73 (Kim et al., 2012). The scale also has been used in other research to measure materialism (Prendergast & Wong, 2003).

Based on the successful use in previous studies, Richins' (1987) scale was used to measure materialism in this study. Based on previous literature, materialism is hypothesized to have a positive influence on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing.

Practicality. Some consumers pay special attention to the practicality of products (Ghosh & Varshney, 2013). They do not care very much about appearance, but they do care about whether the products are useful to them. The practical value of luxury products allows consumers to utilize them for different occasions varying from everyday to special events (De Barnier, Rodina, & Valette-Florence, 2006). Kim (2005) proposed that the personal importance

consumers put on function and practicality may have a different effect on how one evaluates an apparel product compared to consumers who are more attuned to brand image and fashion.

Based on a cluster analysis of data collected in Seoul, Ko et al. (2007) found that for “sensation seekers” (i.e., consumers who value aesthetic elements in clothing), “utilitarian consumers” (i.e., consumers who are concerned about the comfort and functionality of clothing) and “conspicuous consumers” (i.e., consumers who value clothing that is of high quality and is associated with high social status), practicality had a significant positive effect on consumers’ luxury purchase decisions. By studying four groups of Chinese consumers (consumers who had bought only counterfeit luxury fashion brands, consumers who had never bought either genuine or counterfeit luxury fashion brands, consumers who had bought both genuine and counterfeit luxury fashion brands, and consumers who had bought only genuine luxury fashion brands), Li, Li, and Kambele (2012) pointed out that consumers who assign a higher priority to the practical aspects of fashion, such as comfort and necessity, demonstrated a greater willingness to pay for luxury fashion brands.

Practicality was measured by a three-item scale on a 7-point evaluative scale where 1 represented “strongly disagree” and 7 represented “strongly agree.” The items included “When selecting clothing, I look for their function rather than their color or design,” “I usually wear clothes that are comfortable,” and “I make purchases only when there is a need.” The reported reliability was 0.86 (Ko et al., 2007). When applying the scale to study Chinese consumers, Li, Li, and Kambele (2012) modified the measurement into a new three-item 7-point Likert scale. Items in the new scale were “I usually wear clothes that are comfortable,” “I am unlikely to purchase clothes that are difficult to maintain, even though I prefer these clothes,” and “I make

purchases only when necessary.” Tested with a sample of 480 respondents collected both online and offline in China, the Cronbach’s α for the modified practicality scale was 0.80.

The scale used in Li, Li, and Kambele (2012) was modified to fit this study. After modification, the scale contained three items: “Practicality and necessity are my shopping standards,” “I’m not likely to buy something that is not practical,” and “I make purchases only when necessary.” Based on the conclusions of previous literature, practicality is hypothesized to have a positive influence on Chinese consumers’ purchase intentions for luxury clothing.

Uniqueness. Consumers’ need for uniqueness is a personality trait characterized by the need to show individuality in acquiring, using, and displaying distinctive consumer goods (Tian, Bearden, & Hunter, 2001). Vigneron and Johnson (2004) posited that luxury brands’ distinctive image, along with their scarcity value, can meet consumers’ need for uniqueness.

Based on their theoretical analysis and empirical support from a laboratory experiment conducted among 40 business school students in U.S., Amaldoss and Jain (2005) argued that the demand for products among consumers who desire uniqueness increased as its price increased. By conducting a survey among 194 U.S. students and 200 Chinese students, Bian and Forsythe (2012) found that Chinese students had a greater need for uniqueness than U.S. students with respect to similarity avoidance. Using data collected from Shanghai through an online survey, Zhan and He (2012) concluded that a negative relationship existed between consumers’ need for uniqueness and their purchase intentions toward the best-known luxury brands, which indicated that the best-known luxury brands are not good options for consumers who want to express their uniqueness.

Tian, Bearden, and Hunter (2001) developed a 5-point (“strongly disagree” to “strongly agree”) Likert-type response scale of 60 items to measure consumers’ need for uniqueness.

Example items included “I collect unusual products as a way of telling people I’m different” and “I have sometimes purchased unusual products or brands as a way to create a more distinctive personal image.” Tested with several groups of students, some items were deleted and the final scale contained 31 items with a Cronbach’s α of 0.85. Due to the length of the questionnaire, Zhan and He (2012) chose three items from the original scale to measure consumers’ need for uniqueness. The three items were “When a product I own becomes popular among the general population, I begin to use it less,” “I often try to avoid products or brands that I know are bought by the general population,” and “Products do not seem to hold much value for me when they are purchased regularly by everyone.” Tested with 448 Chinese consumers, the Cronbach’s α was 0.84 for the three-item measurement.

In this study, the three-item measurement developed by Zhan and He (2012) was used to measure consumers’ need for uniqueness. Consumers’ need for uniqueness is hypothesized to have a positive influence on Chinese consumers’ purchase intentions for luxury clothing.

Perceived Behavioral Control

Perceived behavioral control refers to an individual’s perceived ease or difficulty of performing the behavior. When it comes to analyzing Chinese consumers’ purchase intentions for luxury clothing, perceived behavioral control includes income, luxury good knowledge, and emotions. While income acts as the financial control for consumers to purchase luxury clothing, luxury good knowledge and emotions provide cognitive control and affective control, respectively. Previous research (Esch, Langner, Schmitt, & Geus, 2006; Godey, Lagier, & Pederzoli, 2009; Hudders & Pandelaere, 2012) supports the selection of income, luxury good knowledge, and emotions to measure perceived behavioral control when studying consumers’ purchase intention for luxury goods.

Income. An economic definition of luxury goods is based on the concept of income elasticity in economics. Ghosh and Varshney (2013) defined a luxury good as a good for which demand increases more than proportionally as income rises, in contrast to a necessity good, for which demand increases less than proportionally as income rises (p. 149). Many producers of luxury goods also tend to believe that their customers come primarily from the upper-income classes; thus, their media priorities tend toward high-end fashion magazines such as *Vogue*, and their shops are situated in prime locations such as Place Vendome in Paris and 5th Avenue in New York (Husic & Cicic, 2009).

Much previous research has shown that the higher the income of an individual, the greater the propensity to purchase luxury goods (Dubois & Duquesne, 1993; Hudders & Pandelaere, 2012). Based on data from 198 luxury consumers satisfying the criteria (consumers who had acquired at least three products belonging to the “accessible” luxury category and at least two products in the “exceptional” luxury category) created by Dubois and Duquesne (1993) and collected in Sarajevo, Husic and Cicic (2009) noticed that luxury consumption differed greatly between various income categories. Although consumers in all income categories used luxury products, respondents with an annual income above €35,000 spent the greatest amount on luxury goods. However, recent studies have observed that many young people who have no personal income also are luxury consumers; a marketing survey reported that approximately 90% of Chinese students studying in the United States had purchased luxury goods (Tsai, Yang, & Liu, 2013). According to the Hurun Report (2012), more than 85% of high net-worth Chinese individuals sent their children abroad for school, which indicated that the overseas Chinese student population with no personal income constitutes an influential luxury consumer segment because of their high household income.

Thus, the previous literature suggests household income as an important influence on Chinese consumers' (especially young consumers') luxury consumption. In addition to the previous research that focused only on the impact of individual income on consumers' purchase intentions for luxury goods, this study also considered household income when measuring the impact of income on Chinese luxury consumers' purchase intentions for luxury goods. In this study, both household and individual income are hypothesized to have a positive influence on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing.

Luxury Good Knowledge. Consumers' knowledge of luxury goods refers to consumers' general knowledge about different luxury brands in a specific product category (Zhan & He, 2012). Investigations from McKinsey & Company showed that most Chinese consumers could name only one or two luxury brands in any product category (Atsmon & Dixit, 2009). In a pretest conducted by Zhan and He (2012) asking 105 Chinese respondents to list all of the luxury fashion brands they knew, 25.7% of the respondents named brands that were not truly luxury brands (e.g., Nike). To address Chinese consumers' lack of knowledge about luxury brands, this study provided a clear definition of luxury clothing by specifying the 20 best-known luxury brands in China.

Based on survey data collected from 355 business student respondents at a large European university, Esch, Langner, Schmitt, and Geus (2006) found that consumers' knowledge of luxury brands had a positive effect on their current and future luxury purchases. Consumers with more knowledge of luxury brands were more likely to buy luxury goods, while people who had little or no knowledge of luxury brands were less likely to buy luxury goods. Based on data collected in Shanghai through an online survey with a final sample of 449 Chinese consumers, Zhan and He (2012) reached a different conclusion. Their results showed that as consumers learned more

about luxury brands, they tended to evaluate the best-known brands more negatively as uniqueness-seeking became a more important goal.

Many researchers identified the difference between consumers' objective knowledge (i.e., what they really know) and subjective knowledge (i.e., what they think they know) in various contexts (Alba & Hutchinson, 2000; Moorman, Diehl, Brinberg, & Kidwell, 2004). Based on a meta-analysis, Carlson, Vincent, Hardesty, and Bearden (2009) concluded that objective and subjective knowledge were strongly related for products used in public (such as most luxury goods), and they recommended the use of a subjective knowledge measure as a surrogate for objective knowledge when the measure of the latter is difficult.

Thus, this study used a subjective knowledge scale developed by Kleiser and Mantel (1994) to capture consumers' knowledge about luxury clothing. The survey itself provides certain objective information to the respondents (i.e., brand names). Consumers' luxury good knowledge was measured by three items on a 5-point scale where 1 represented "strongly disagree" and 5 represented "strongly agree." Items were "I consider myself knowledgeable about brands of luxury goods," "I enjoy learning about brands of luxury goods," and "I can recognize almost all brand names of luxury goods." Tested among 449 Chinese consumers in Zhan and He's (2009) research, the Cronbach's α for the scale was 0.77. Based on previous literature, consumers' knowledge of luxury goods is hypothesized to have a positive influence on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing.

Emotions. Emotions developed from consumers' previous luxury purchasing experience have been shown in previous research to have a strong effect on their future purchase intentions for luxury goods (Wang, Sun, & Song, 2011). Based on the framework of Pine and Gilmore (1999), which suggested that experiences should be evaluated across two bi-polar constructs

(consumer involvement and intensity), Atwal and Williams (2009) argued that unlike traditional marketing frameworks that view consumers as rational decision-makers focused on functional features of luxury goods, luxury retailers should focus on consumers' experiences that provide sensory, emotional values to consumers. They further suggested that luxury marketers achieve the greatest long-term success by connecting with the luxury consumer using brand-related emotional experiences.

Mehrabian and Russell (1974) confirmed individuals were more likely to spend money in a pleasant shopping environment by proposing three basic emotional responses, known as PAD, which represents pleasure, arousal, and dominance. In the three PAD dimensions, pleasure – displeasure refers to the degree to which the person feels good, joyful, happy, or satisfied in the situation; arousal – nonarousal refers to the degree to which a person feels excited, stimulated, alert, or active in the situation; and dominance – submissiveness refers to the extent to which the individual feels in control of, or free to act in, the situation. The pleasure dimension was measured by six items such as “Happy – Unhappy” and “Pleased – Annoyed,” the arousal dimension was measured by six items such as “Stimulated – Relaxed” and “Excited – Calm,” and the dominance dimension also was measured by six items such as “Controlling – Controlled” and “Influential – Influenced.” A numerical scale of +4 to -4 was used for each dimension (e.g., +4 was assigned for extremely happy, and -4 for extremely unhappy).

Donovan and Rossiter (1982) applied the PAD scale to retailing research and found that two major emotional dimensions, pleasure – displeasure and arousal – nonarousal, were adequate to represent individuals' emotional responses to shopping behaviors; the dominance – submissiveness dimension was not related to consumers' shopping behaviors. Thus, they suggested removing the dominance – submissiveness dimension from the PAD scale when

measuring consumers' emotions. Recent research (Bigne, Andreu, & Gnoth, 2005; Yüksel, 2007) also has supported removing the dominance dimension and measuring the bi-dimensional character of emotions (pleasure and arousal dimensions). Bigne, Andreu, and Gnoth (2005) reduced the 12 items to 10 items with six items in the pleasure dimension and four items in the arousal dimension to measure emotions on a 5-point scale. Yüksel (2007) further reduced the 10 items to eight with four items in each dimension to measure emotions, also on a 5-point scale.

Due to the wide consensus in previous studies to use pleasure and arousal dimensions to measure emotions experienced while shopping, that approach was adopted in this study to measure consumers' emotions when shopping for luxury clothing. The simplified eight-item 5-point scale used in Yüksel (2007) was adapted in this study to measure emotions. Based on literature, emotions are hypothesized to have a positive influence on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing.

Summary

To examine the impact of three antecedents in the Theory of Planned Behavior on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing, a survey was conducted composed of the existing scales to measure:

- Attitude toward behavior
 - Attitude toward physical characteristics of luxury clothing: attitude toward luxury brand image, product quality, and store atmosphere
 - Attitude toward the impact of luxury clothing: self-actualization and social comparison
- Subjective norms
 - Social norms: cultural values, social media, and reference group

- Personal norms: materialism, practicality, and uniqueness
- Perceived behavioral control
 - Financial control: income
 - Cognitive control: luxury good knowledge
 - Affective control: emotions

The sample was luxury clothing consumers in China who bought at least one piece of luxury clothing in the past year that cost more than \$500 (¥3,251) or at least two pieces of luxury clothing in the past three years that cost more than \$1,500 (¥9,751) either domestically and during travel abroad.

Table 2.1 summarizes the definitions of all constructs used in this study. The methodology for this research is explained in the next chapter.

Table 2.1

Summary of Definitions of Constructs

| Constructs | Definitions of Constructs |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Purchase Intentions for Luxury Goods | Purchase intentions for luxury goods measures consumers' desire and willingness to buy luxury goods in the near future. |
| Brand Image | Brand image refers to the luxury brand image in the minds of consumers that comprise associations about a high level of price, quality, aesthetics, rarity, extraordinariness, and a high degree of further non-functional associations. |
| Product Quality | Product quality refers to the craftsmanship and superior quality related to luxury clothing. |
| Store Atmosphere | Store atmosphere includes all of the tangible and intangible aspects that make up a store's environment, such as layout, customer service, decoration and displays, lighting, music, and even scents. |
| Self-actualization | Self-actualization comes from consumers' inner feeling of self-fulfillment and self-satisfaction. The feeling of pleasure comes from consumers' subjective experience, and it has nothing to do with others. |
| Social Comparison | Social comparison reveals consumers' desire to be recognized by others. This type of satisfaction does not come from the consumers themselves, but from other people's admiration and flattery. |
| Cultural Value | Rooted in Chinese culture, consumption is regarded more as a tool to serve higher-order social needs than as an activity in its own right, which is also known as face-saving consumption. Thus, face consciousness, as an important reflection of consumers' culture values, is used to measure Chinese consumers' cultural values. In this context, face refers to a sense of favorable personal image that people intend to have in public relationships. |
| Social Media | In general, advertisements and promotions on TVs well as the Internet can be treated as social media. In this study, social media refers to luxury brands' social media rather than general social media such as Facebook and Twitter. |
| Reference Group | Reference group is defined as a person or a group of people that significantly influences an individual's behavior. Individuals and groups that maintained face-to-face relationships such as friends and family were considered a reference group. In addition, individuals and groups that have an indirect relationship with an individual, such as film actors, singers, and politicians, also are included in the definition of a reference group. |
| Materialism | Materialism has been defined as a set of attitudes which regard possessions as symbols of success, where possessions occupy a central part of life, and which include holding the belief that more possessions lead to more happiness. |

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Practicality | Practicality refers to the attitude that consumers care about more about the practical value of luxury products, which allows consumers to utilize them for different occasions varying from everyday to special events. |
| Uniqueness | Consumers' need for uniqueness is a personality trait characterized by the need to show individuality in acquiring, using, and displaying distinctive consumer goods. |
| Income | Income is measured by both individual income and household income in this study. |
| Luxury Good Knowledge | Consumers' knowledge of luxury goods refers to consumers' general knowledge about different luxury brands in a specific product category, which is luxury clothing in this dissertation. |
| Emotions | Consumers' emotions represent consumers' sensational experiences created by luxury consumption which they express through pleasure-displeasure and arousal-nonarousal. |

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

As introduced in the first chapter, this study aimed to explore whether the three antecedents in the Theory of Planned Behavior have significant influences on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing and if so, which of the three has the greatest influence: attitude toward behavior, subjective norms, or perceived behavioral control. This study further explored which of the major factors within the three antecedents has the greatest influence on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing. Based on previous research and the theoretical framework discussed the second chapter, three general hypotheses and 15 specific hypotheses were developed to examine the relationships between the specific factors within each of the three antecedents and Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing.

The hypotheses were tested using data collected via a survey conducted among Chinese luxury consumers. The survey included previously-used scales to measure each variable. The questionnaire was initially written in English, and then translated into Chinese for use among Chinese luxury consumers.

Hypotheses and Questionnaire Design

Based on literature and the Theory of Planned Behavior presented in Figure 2.2 of the second chapter, three general hypotheses and 15 specific hypotheses were developed for this study. All of the factors examined in this dissertation were proposed to have a positive relationship with Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing.

H1: Attitude toward behavior has an impact on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing.

H1a: Brand image has a positive influence on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing.

H1b: Product quality has a positive influence on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing.

H1c: Store atmosphere has a positive influence on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing.

H1d: Self-actualization has a positive influence on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing.

H1e: Social comparison has a positive influence on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing.

H2: Subjective norms have an impact on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing.

H2a: Cultural values have a positive influence on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing.

H2b: Social media has a positive influence on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing.

H2c: Reference group has a positive influence on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing.

H2d: Materialism has a positive influence on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing.

H2e: Practicality has a positive influence on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for

luxury clothing.

H2f: Uniqueness has a positive influence on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing.

H3: Perceived behavioral control has an impact on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing.

H3a: Individual income has a positive influence on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing.

H3b: Household income has a positive influence on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing.

H3c: Luxury good knowledge has a positive influence on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing.

H3d: Emotions have a positive influence on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing.

All of the hypotheses were tested using survey data collected from Chinese luxury clothing consumers. In the introduction to the questionnaire, the definition of luxury clothing as one of 20 luxury brands and one of 19 specific types of clothing (such as trench coats and suits) was provided to respondents to ensure they had a clear, common, and correct understanding of luxury clothing in the survey.

The initial five questions in the survey were screening questions to identify luxury consumers based on the study's definitions. The questions asked about the dollar amounts respondents had spent on luxury clothing during the last year and the past three years, the number of luxury clothing respondents had bought during the last year and the past three years,

and how often respondents had purchased luxury clothing during the last year. Only respondents who qualified as luxury clothing consumers based on the definition (luxury clothing consumers were those who bought at least one piece of luxury clothing in the past year that cost more than \$500 (¥9,750) or at least two pieces of luxury clothing in the past three years that cost more than \$3,000 (¥19,500) either domestically and during travel abroad) were included for further data analysis.

Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing were measured using a three-item 5-point Likert scale (see Table 3.1). The independent variables used to test the 15 specific hypotheses were measured using 13 existing scales (summarized in Table 3.1) plus two questions written by the author to measure respondents' household and individual income. Of the 13 existing scales, most were originally rated on 5-point Likert scales except store atmosphere, face consciousness, materialism, and practicality, which were originally rated on 7-point Likert scales. To maintain consistency and based on recommendations in previous research (Li, Li, & Kambele, 2012), all of the items in this study were rated on a 5-point Likert-type scale in which 1 represented "strongly disagree" and 5 represented "strongly agree." In addition to the 66 items in the 13 scales, three demographic questions were asked. These questions asked about the respondents' gender, age, and occupation. The answer choices were developed based on previous surveys conducted among Chinese luxury consumers. Finally, consumers were asked their country/region of origin and the countries/regions in which they currently live and shop for luxury clothing. All of the respondents indicated that they were either born in or currently live in China.

Grammatical errors in previously-used items were corrected and the questionnaire was initially written in English. It then was independently translated into Chinese by three bilingual

researchers. Using this method, the bilingual researchers reached a final agreement on a common version to be used among Chinese consumers. Furthermore, the translated questionnaire was back-translated by two other bilingual researchers and compared to the original questionnaire to verify the reliability of the translation and ensure that the Chinese version of the items maintained the original meanings of the English version.

After translation, a sample of 30 Chinese students studying at the University of Georgia were recruited to do a pretest to check the reliability of translated scales. Reliability may be calculated in a number of ways, but the most commonly accepted measure to assess a scale's internal consistency is Cronbach's α which tells how well the items measure the same construct (Price & Mueller, 1986). For practical intents and purposes, reliability varies on a dimension from 0 to 1, with higher values being suggestive of greater test reliability (Grable, Archuleta, & Nazarinia, 2011). Saad, Carter, Rothenberg, and Israelson (1999) suggested the following interpretations: 0.90 or higher = excellent, 0.80 to 0.89 = good, 0.70 to 0.79 = adequate, and 0.69 and below = may have limited applicability.

The Cronbach's α for each scale was calculated based on the responses of the 30 Chinese students who pretested the questionnaire. The calculated Cronbach's α values were used to determine whether the scales were internally consistent and could be used as is in the survey among Chinese consumers. All scales adapted in the questionnaire showed reliability above 0.70 among the Chinese students who pretested the questionnaire. The Cronbach's α values of most of the scales could not be further improved by removing any items, so they were used as is in the formal data collection procedure. However, for the scales for face consciousness, social media, and materialism, the results showed that the Cronbach's α values could be further improved by removing some items. One item was removed at a time and the improvement in the Cronbach's

α was examined until the Cronbach's α could not be improved by further deleting any additional items. Ultimately, four items were removed from both the face consciousness and social media scales, and two items were removed from the materialism scale. After removing the four items in the scale of face consciousness (number 5, 6, 10, and 11 in Table 3.1), the Cronbach's α improved from 0.798 to 0.848. After removing the four items from the scale of social media (number 6, 9, 10, and 11 in Table 3.1), the Cronbach's α improved from 0.844 to 0.922. After removing the two items (number 5 and 6 in Table 3.1) in the scale of materialism, the Cronbach's α improved from 0.769 to 0.865. The final scales used in the survey were summarized and numbered in Table 3.2, while the translated scales were presented in the Appendices.

Data Collection

This study used online channels to recruit respondents. Both the Chinese and English versions of the questionnaire were uploaded to the Qualtrics.com website, and the two links (one link for the Chinese version and one link for the English version) were posted on Wechat and Sina Weibo, the two most popular social connection apps used among Chinese consumers (Fang, 2016). Respondents were asked to complete the survey online using their smart phones, tablets, or personal computers. The survey was open for three months (from July 15th to October 15th) of the year 2016 to get the maximum number of usable responses. The target was to collect data from at least 300 respondents for analysis.

After the three-month period, 387 Chinese consumers completed the online survey. Among the 387 respondents, only 144 Chinese consumers who met the study's definition of luxury consumers (consumers who spent more than \$500 in the past year or spent more than \$1,500 within the past three years on luxury clothing) had completed the survey without any

missing values. The other 243 respondents had no previous experience with luxury clothing. Thus, the Chinese data collection company SoJump was recruited to continue the data collection. The researcher paid \$3 to the company for each “qualified” response from an individual who satisfied the study’s definition of a Chinese luxury consumer and completed all of the questions in the survey. In a two-week period (from November 1st to November 14th), 308 usable responses were obtained. In addition to the previous 144 luxury consumers, the final total sample size of luxury clothing consumers was 452.

Data Analysis

It is important to assess the factors and loadings of scale items to determine whether the chosen items appropriately measured the constructs in this study. Confirmatory factor analysis with maximum likelihood estimation was conducted to verify that all items were reliable measures of intended constructs in this study before using them in the regression analysis. The results of confirmatory factor analysis based on the sample of 452 Chinese luxury clothing consumers are shown in Table 3.3.

The results in Table 3.3 suggested a good model fit: Chi-square = 3,496.373 (df = 1,861), $p < 0.001$, CFI = 0.902, TLI = 0.893, RMSEA = 0.044, SRMR = 0.050. All of the reported model fit indices suggested the measurement model fitted data well. In addition, all standardized factor loadings were significant and most were greater than 0.50 except for two items measuring brand image (BI7 and BI8), one item measuring materialism (M2), and one item measuring emotions (E4). In the reliability tests, Cronbach’s α values of all of the variables ranged from 0.741 and 0.896, suggesting high internal consistency. For construct validity, items were retained in the factor if they loaded above 0.50 (Arnold & Reynolds, 2003). Thus, items loaded below

0.50 were deleted and the confirmatory factor analysis was re-run. The results of confirmatory factor analysis after deleting items that loaded below 0.50 are reported in Table 3.4.

The results in Table 3.4 suggested a better model fit: Chi-square = 2,982.377 (df = 1,619), $p < 0.001$, CFI = 0.913, TLI = 0.905, RMSEA = 0.043, SRMR = 0.048. All of the reported model fit indices suggested the measurement model fitted data well. After removing the four items that loaded below 0.50, all standardized factor loadings were significant and greater than 0.50. In the reliability tests, the Cronbach's α values of all variables were above 0.70, suggesting high internal consistency. Thus, the items listed in Table 3.4 were used in descriptive statistics and regression analysis.

Stepwise multiple regression procedure was used as the data analysis method to test the hypotheses in this study. In the stepwise regression, Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing was the dependent variable and the null model included three demographic variables – age, gender, and occupation – as independent variables. Then variables that assessed the three antecedents that influence Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing – attitude toward luxury good purchasing behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control – were added into the model in three steps.

Attitude toward luxury good purchasing behavior was measured by five variables listed in Table 3.4. Subjective norms were measured by six variables also listed in Table 3.4. Perceived behavioral control was measured by three types of control also listed in Table 3.4.

In each step in the regression analyses, the set of variables measuring each antecedent was added to the null model and the changes in R-squared and adjusted R-squared were examined to determine the extent to which the addition of the variables improved the explanatory value of the model.

Each of the independent variables was measured on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (“strongly disagree”) to 5 (“strongly agree”). The measure used in the regression analyses for each was the sum of the responses to each scale item. Thus, each of these variables was a continuous variable. The values depended on the number of items in the scale, ranging from 3 to 15 for a three-item scale to 11 to 55 for an 11-item scale.

Because income was measured by both individual income and household income in this study, each stepwise regression procedure was repeated to use the two measures of income. The dependent variable was Chinese consumers’ purchase intentions for luxury clothing in all stepwise regression procedures. Descriptive statistics and the results of the stepwise regression analysis are reported and discussed in Chapter 4.

Table 3.1

Scale Items of Major Study Variables

| Variable | Scale Type | Items | Sources |
|--|------------|---|--|
| Purchase Intentions | 5-point | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I have a strong possibility to purchase luxury clothing. 2. I have a strong possibility to purchase luxury clothing within the next year. 3. I have a strong possibility to purchase luxury clothing within the next three years. | Modified based on Hung et al. (2011) |
| <i>Attitude Toward Behavior</i> | | | |
| Brand Image | 5-point | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Luxury brand clothing is precious. 2. Luxury brand clothing is rare. 3. Luxury brand clothing is unique. 4. Luxury brand clothing is attractive. 5. Luxury brand clothing is stunning. 6. Luxury brand clothing is conspicuous. 7. Luxury brand clothing is expensive. 8. Luxury brand clothing is for the wealthy. | Hung et al. (2011) |
| Product Quality | 5-point | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Luxury brand clothing is handmade (crafted). 2. Luxury brand clothing has the best quality. 3. Luxury brand clothing is sophisticated. 4. Luxury brand clothing is superior. | Hung et al. (2011) |
| Store Atmosphere | 5-point | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Luxury clothing stores have a warm, inviting atmosphere. 2. Luxury clothing stores are attractive with artistic looking displays. 3. The clerks in luxury clothing stores are well-dressed and provide enthusiastic and thoughtful service. 4. Luxury clothing stores provide great personalized service. | Modified based on Deeter-Schmelz, Moore, and Goebel (2000) |
| Self-actualization | 5-point | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Luxury clothing is special and wearing it makes me feel different. 2. I feel successful when buying luxury clothing. | Wang, Sun, and Song (2011) |

| | | | |
|-------------------|---------|--|----------------------------|
| | | 3. Wearing luxury clothing increases my self-confidence. | |
| Social Comparison | 5-point | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I want other people to know that I wear expensive luxury clothing. 2. I am satisfied when other people compliment on my luxury clothing. 3. When I wear luxury clothing, I feel other people's impressions about me have changed. | Wang, Sun, and Song (2011) |

Subjective Norms

| | | | |
|--------------------|---------|--|----------------------------------|
| Face Consciousness | 5-point | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I hope people think that I can do better than most others. 2. I hope that I can talk about things that most others do not know. 3. I hope that I can possess things that most others thirst for. 4. It is important for me to get praise and admiration. 5. I hope to let people know that I have association with some big names. 6. I hope that I have a better life than most others in others' view. 7. I always avoid talking about my weaknesses. 8. I try to avoid letting others think that I am ignorant, even if I really am. 9. I do my best to hide my weaknesses before others. 10. If I work in an organization of bad reputation, I will try not to tell others about that. 11. It is hard for me to acknowledge a mistake, even if I am really wrong. | Zhang, Cao, and Grigoriou (2011) |
| Social Media | 5-point | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Using luxury brands' social media is fun. 2. Contents shown in the luxury brands' social media seem interesting. 3. Luxury brands' social media enables information sharing with others. 4. Conversation or opinion exchange with others is possible through luxury brands' social media. 5. It is easy to deliver my opinion through luxury brands' social media. | Kim and Ko (2012) |

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|-----------------|---------|---|--|
| | | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Contents shown in luxury brands' social media is the newest information. 7. Using luxury brands' social media is very trendy. 8. Luxury brands' social media offers customized information search. 9. Luxury brands' social media provides customized service. 10. I would like to pass along information on brand, product, or services from luxury brands' social media to my friends. 11. I would like to upload contents from luxury brands' social media on my blog or micro blog. | |
| Reference Group | 5-point | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I buy luxury goods because my friends and family do. 2. I buy luxury goods because my colleagues do. 3. I often select the luxury brands that people around me wear. 4. I often select the luxury brands that favorite idols wear. | Modified based on Koh (2013) |
| Materialism | 5-point | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It is important to me to have really nice things. 2. I would like to be rich enough to buy anything I want. 3. I'd be happier if I could afford to buy more things. 4. It sometimes bothers me quite a bit that I cannot afford to buy all the things I want. 5. People place not enough emphasis on material things. 6. It's really true that money can buy happiness. | Richins (1987) |
| Practicality | 5-point | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Practicality and necessity are my shopping standards. 2. I'm not likely to buy something that is not practical. 3. I make purchases only when necessary. | Modified based on Li, Li, and Kambele (2012) |
| Uniqueness | 5-point | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. When clothing I own becomes popular among the general population, I begin to wear it less. | Zhan and He (2012) |

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|--|--|---|--|
| | | 2. I often try to avoid clothing or brands that I know the general population buys. 3. Clothing doesn't seem to hold much value for me when it is purchased regularly by everyone. | |
|--|--|---|--|

Perceived Behavioral Control

| | | | |
|-----------------------|---------|--|---------------------------|
| Luxury Good Knowledge | 5-point | 1. I consider myself knowledgeable about brands of luxury clothing. 2. I enjoy learning about brands of luxury clothing. 3. I can recognize almost all brand names of luxury clothing. | Kleiser and Mantel (1994) |
| Emotions | 5-point | When I shop in a luxury clothing store, I feel 1. Annoyed – Pleased 2. Unsatisfied – Satisfied 3. Unpleasant – Pleasant 4. Depressed – Contented 5. Unhappy – Happy 6. Relaxed – Stimulated 7. Calm – Excited 8. Sluggish – Frenzied | Yüksel (2007) |

Note. All of the items listed in the table were evaluated on 5-point scales, in which 1 represents “strongly disagree,” and 5 represents “strongly agree.” The purchase intention scale was modified based on the scale used in Hung et al. (2011). The brand image scale combined the experiential value and symbolic value of brand provided in Hung et al. (2011). The store atmosphere scale was modified based on the scales provided in Deeter-Schmelz, Moore, and Goebel (2000). The luxury consumption behavior of reference scale was modified based on Koh (2013). The practicality scale was modified based on Li, Li, and Kambele (2012). The detailed scale selection procedure was summarized in the literature review in Chapter 2.

Table 3.2

Selected Scale Items Used in the Survey

| Variables | Items | |
|--|--------------|--|
| Purchase Intentions | PI1 | I have a strong possibility to purchase luxury clothing. |
| | PI2 | I have a strong possibility to purchase luxury clothing within the next year. |
| | PI3 | I have a strong possibility to purchase luxury clothing within the next three years. |
| <i>Attitude Toward Behavior</i> | | |
| Brand Image | BI1 | Luxury brand clothing is precious. |
| | BI2 | Luxury brand clothing is rare. |
| | BI3 | Luxury brand clothing is unique. |
| | BI4 | Luxury brand clothing is attractive. |
| | BI5 | Luxury brand clothing is stunning. |
| | BI6 | Luxury brand clothing is conspicuous. |
| | BI7 | Luxury brand clothing is expensive. |
| | BI8 | Luxury brand clothing is for the wealthy. |
| Product Quality | PQ1 | Luxury brand clothing is handmade (crafted). |
| | PQ2 | Luxury brand clothing has the best quality. |
| | PQ3 | Luxury brand clothing is sophisticated. |
| | PQ4 | Luxury brand clothing is superior. |
| Store Atmosphere | SA1 | Luxury clothing stores have a warm, inviting atmosphere. |
| | SA2 | Luxury clothing stores are attractive with artistic looking displays. |
| | SA3 | The clerks in luxury clothing stores are well-dressed and provide enthusiastic and thoughtful service. |
| | SA4 | Luxury clothing stores provide great personalized service. |
| Self-actualization | S1 | Luxury clothing is special and wearing it makes me feel different. |
| | S2 | I feel successful when I buy luxury clothing. |
| | S3 | Wearing luxury clothing increases my self-confidence. |
| Social Comparison | SC1 | I want other people to know that I wear expensive luxury clothing. |

| | | |
|-------------------------|-----|---|
| | SC2 | I am satisfied when other people compliment me on my luxury clothing. |
| | SC3 | When I wear luxury clothing, I feel other people's impressions about me have changed. |
| <i>Subjective Norms</i> | | |
| Face Consciousness | FC1 | I hope people think that I can do better than most others. |
| | FC2 | I hope that I can talk about things that most others do not know. |
| | FC3 | I hope that I can possess things that most others thirst for. |
| | FC4 | It is important for me to get praise and admiration. |
| | FC5 | I always avoid talking about my weaknesses. |
| | FC6 | I try to avoid letting others think that I am ignorant, even if I really am. |
| | FC7 | I do my best to hide my weaknesses before others. |
| Social Media | SM1 | Luxury brands' social media enables information sharing with others. |
| | SM2 | Conversation or opinion exchange with others is possible through luxury brands' social media. |
| | SM3 | It is easy to deliver my opinion through luxury brands' social media. |
| | SM4 | Using luxury brands' social media is fun. |
| | SM5 | Contents shown in the luxury brands' social media seem interesting. |
| | SM6 | Luxury brands' social media offers customized information search. |
| | SM7 | Using luxury brands' social media is very trendy. |
| Reference Group | RG1 | I buy luxury clothing because my friends and family do. |
| | RG2 | I buy luxury clothing because my colleagues do. |
| | RG3 | I often select the luxury clothing brands that people around me wear. |
| | RG4 | I often select the luxury clothing brands that my favorite idols wear. |
| Materialism | M1 | It is important to me to have really nice things. |
| | M2 | I would like to be rich enough to buy anything I want. |
| | M3 | I'd be happier if I could afford to buy more things. |
| | M4 | It sometimes bothers me quite a bit that I cannot afford to buy all the things I want. |

| | | |
|--|-----|---|
| Practicality | P1 | Practicality and necessity are my shopping standards. |
| | P2 | I'm not likely to buy something that is not practical. |
| | P3 | I make purchases only when necessary. |
| Uniqueness | U1 | When clothing I own becomes popular among the general population, I begin to wear it less. |
| | U2 | I often try to avoid clothing or brands that I know the general population buys. |
| | U3 | Clothing doesn't seem to hold much value for me when it is purchased regularly by everyone. |
| <i>Perceived Behavioral Control</i> | | |
| Luxury Good Knowledge | LK1 | I consider myself knowledgeable about brands of luxury clothing. |
| | LK2 | I enjoy learning about brands of luxury clothing. |
| | LK3 | I can recognize almost all brand names of luxury clothing. |
| Emotions | E1 | Annoyed – Pleased |
| | E2 | Unsatisfied – Satisfied |
| | E3 | Unpleasant – Pleasant |
| | E4 | Depressed – Contented |
| | E5 | Unhappy – Happy |
| | E6 | Relaxed – Stimulated |
| | E7 | Calm – Excited |
| | E8 | Sluggish – Frenzied |

Table 3.3

Confirmatory Factor Analysis Results

| Variables | Items | Mean | S.D. | Factor loading | Cronbach's α |
|---------------------------------|-------|------|-------|----------------|---------------------|
| Purchase Intentions | PI1 | 4.03 | 0.777 | 0.641 | 0.839 |
| | PI2 | 4.17 | 0.861 | 0.683 | |
| | PI3 | 4.35 | 0.778 | 0.597 | |
| <i>Attitude Toward Behavior</i> | | | | | |
| Brand Image | BI1 | 3.88 | 0.775 | 0.542 | 0.861 |
| | BI2 | 3.76 | 0.858 | 0.582 | |
| | BI3 | 4.10 | 0.804 | 0.550 | |
| | BI4 | 4.17 | 0.849 | 0.633 | |
| | BI5 | 3.78 | 0.789 | 0.606 | |
| | BI6 | 4.13 | 0.815 | 0.591 | |
| | BI7 | 4.23 | 0.787 | 0.405 | |
| | BI8 | 3.60 | 0.827 | 0.385 | |
| Product Quality | PQ1 | 4.01 | 0.786 | 0.599 | 0.845 |
| | PQ2 | 4.23 | 0.849 | 0.678 | |
| | PQ3 | 4.21 | 0.816 | 0.651 | |
| | PQ4 | 4.18 | 0.813 | 0.559 | |
| Store Atmosphere | SA1 | 3.98 | 0.822 | 0.650 | 0.839 |
| | SA2 | 4.04 | 0.850 | 0.628 | |
| | SA3 | 4.10 | 0.853 | 0.618 | |
| | SA4 | 4.07 | 0.809 | 0.609 | |
| Self-actualization | S1 | 3.84 | 0.891 | 0.712 | 0.867 |
| | S2 | 3.77 | 0.964 | 0.809 | |
| | S3 | 4.04 | 0.931 | 0.785 | |
| Social Comparison | SC1 | 3.54 | 0.913 | 0.741 | 0.855 |
| | SC2 | 3.90 | 0.896 | 0.711 | |
| | SC3 | 3.73 | 0.907 | 0.755 | |

| <i>Subjective Norms</i> | | | | | |
|-------------------------|-----|------|-------|-------|-------|
| Face Consciousness | FC1 | 3.72 | 0.791 | 0.556 | 0.853 |
| | FC2 | 3.74 | 0.940 | 0.671 | |
| | FC3 | 3.90 | 0.933 | 0.677 | |
| | FC4 | 3.79 | 0.884 | 0.660 | |
| | FC5 | 3.42 | 0.914 | 0.542 | |
| | FC6 | 3.38 | 1.046 | 0.631 | |
| | FC7 | 3.40 | 0.979 | 0.588 | |
| Social Media | SM1 | 3.81 | 0.811 | 0.621 | 0.896 |
| | SM2 | 3.85 | 0.926 | 0.724 | |
| | SM3 | 3.73 | 0.962 | 0.716 | |
| | SM4 | 3.72 | 0.844 | 0.632 | |
| | SM5 | 3.87 | 0.831 | 0.608 | |
| | SM6 | 3.90 | 0.801 | 0.579 | |
| | SM7 | 3.79 | 0.961 | 0.692 | |
| Reference Group | RG1 | 3.03 | 1.047 | 0.888 | 0.874 |
| | RG2 | 3.09 | 1.132 | 0.963 | |
| | RG3 | 3.18 | 1.122 | 0.896 | |
| | RG4 | 3.34 | 1.091 | 0.766 | |
| Materialism | M1 | 3.80 | 0.817 | 0.574 | 0.741 |
| | M2 | 4.20 | 0.781 | 0.456 | |
| | M3 | 4.13 | 0.846 | 0.581 | |
| | M4 | 3.53 | 0.894 | 0.553 | |
| Practicality | P1 | 3.67 | 0.937 | 0.724 | 0.842 |
| | P2 | 3.37 | 1.107 | 0.907 | |
| | P3 | 3.44 | 1.098 | 0.891 | |
| Uniqueness | U1 | 3.48 | 0.950 | 0.757 | 0.864 |
| | U2 | 3.63 | 1.012 | 0.870 | |
| | U3 | 3.45 | 1.021 | 0.832 | |

| <i>Perceived Behavioral Control</i> | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----|------|-------|-------|-------|
| Luxury Good Knowledge | LK1 | 3.61 | 0.881 | 0.719 | 0.813 |
| | LK2 | 3.98 | 0.926 | 0.674 | |
| | LK3 | 3.51 | 0.966 | 0.746 | |
| Emotions | E1 | 4.31 | 0.705 | 0.512 | 0.895 |
| | E2 | 4.20 | 0.773 | 0.535 | |
| | E3 | 4.36 | 0.708 | 0.539 | |
| | E4 | 4.25 | 0.735 | 0.494 | |
| | E5 | 4.35 | 0.702 | 0.538 | |
| | E6 | 4.13 | 0.748 | 0.503 | |
| | E7 | 4.19 | 0.742 | 0.529 | |
| | E8 | 4.25 | 0.737 | 0.550 | |

Note. All factor loadings were statistically significant ($p < .001$).

Table 3.4

Confirmatory Factor Analysis Results After Retaining Only Items Loading Above 0.50

| Variables | Items | Factor loading | Cronbach's α |
|---------------------------------|-------|----------------|---------------------|
| Purchase Intentions | PI1 | 0.643 | 0.839 |
| | PI2 | 0.683 | |
| | PI3 | 0.595 | |
| <i>Attitude Toward Behavior</i> | | | |
| Brand Image | BI1 | 0.545 | 0.867 |
| | BI2 | 0.586 | |
| | BI3 | 0.553 | |
| | BI4 | 0.629 | |
| | BI5 | 0.614 | |
| | BI6 | 0.593 | |
| Product Quality | PQ1 | 0.599 | 0.845 |
| | PQ2 | 0.681 | |
| | PQ3 | 0.651 | |
| | PQ4 | 0.556 | |
| Store Atmosphere | SA1 | 0.650 | 0.839 |
| | SA2 | 0.628 | |
| | SA3 | 0.618 | |
| | SA4 | 0.609 | |
| Self-actualization | S1 | 0.712 | 0.867 |
| | S2 | 0.810 | |
| | S3 | 0.784 | |
| Social Comparison | SC1 | 0.741 | 0.855 |
| | SC2 | 0.711 | |
| | SC3 | 0.755 | |
| <i>Subjective Norms</i> | | | |
| Face Consciousness | FC1 | 0.554 | 0.853 |
| | FC2 | 0.669 | |

| | | | |
|--|-----|-------|-------|
| | FC3 | 0.677 | |
| | FC4 | 0.660 | |
| | FC5 | 0.544 | |
| | FC6 | 0.632 | |
| | FC7 | 0.590 | |
| Social Media | SM1 | 0.621 | 0.896 |
| | SM2 | 0.724 | |
| | SM3 | 0.716 | |
| | SM4 | 0.631 | |
| | SM5 | 0.608 | |
| | SM6 | 0.580 | |
| | SM7 | 0.693 | |
| Reference Group | RG1 | 0.889 | 0.874 |
| | RG2 | 0.963 | |
| | RG3 | 0.895 | |
| | RG4 | 0.766 | |
| Materialism | M1 | 0.570 | 0.703 |
| | M3 | 0.540 | |
| | M4 | 0.587 | |
| Practicality | P1 | 0.723 | 0.842 |
| | P2 | 0.907 | |
| | P3 | 0.892 | |
| Uniqueness | U1 | 0.757 | 0.864 |
| | U2 | 0.869 | |
| | U3 | 0.831 | |
| <i>Perceived Behavioral Control</i> | | | |
| Luxury Good Knowledge | LK1 | 0.719 | 0.813 |
| | LK2 | 0.672 | |
| | LK3 | 0.748 | |

| | | | |
|----------|----|-------|-------|
| Emotions | E1 | 0.512 | 0.887 |
| | E2 | 0.533 | |
| | E3 | 0.539 | |
| | E5 | 0.530 | |
| | E6 | 0.510 | |
| | E7 | 0.533 | |
| | E8 | 0.556 | |

Note. All factor loadings were statistically significant ($p < .001$).

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Results from the statistical analyses are discussed in this chapter. The first section presents descriptive results for the demographics of the sample, frequency of purchase of luxury products other than clothing by Chinese luxury consumers, where Chinese consumers shop for luxury clothing, and descriptive statistics for the responses to the scales used in this study. Tables 4.1 – 4.4 are referenced to provide an understanding of the data. The second section presents results from stepwise regression procedures to test the hypotheses in Chapter 3. Tables 4.5 and Table 4.6 are referenced to show empirical results for each stepwise regression procedure. The final section provides a summary of findings. A summary table of the hypotheses is provided as well in Table 4.7 that outlines which hypotheses the results supported.

Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive results shown in Table 4.1 describe the 452 Chinese luxury consumers in the sample. The final sample of 452 respondents was collected through two different methods: a sample of 144 Chinese consumers collected by the author through Wechat and Sina Weibo and a sample of 308 Chinese luxury consumers collected by the SoJump data collection company. Thus, a dummy variable called “version” was created to test whether there were significant differences in the data collected by the two different methods. In Step 1 of the regression analyses, which included only the three demographic variables, the dummy variable “version” was not significant, indicating there were no significant differences between the data collected from the two different sources. The results are reported in the Appendices.

Almost 80% of respondents were between ages 20 to 39, with the largest group between ages 30 and 39 (48%), followed by those consumers ages 20 to 29 (38.3%). Less than 5% of respondents were older than 50 years old (4.2%). More than one-half (55.3%) of the respondents were female consumers.

The four primary occupations were each represented in the sample. More than one-third (36.7%) of respondents were general managers in the government, business, or an institution. The proportions who said they were senior managers in the government, business, or an institution; ordinary employees in the government, business, or an institution; and teachers, doctors, scientists, technicians, or other professionals were relatively equal in the sample. Less than one-tenth (8.8%) of the respondents were self-employed consumers, while slightly less than 5% of the respondents were students (4.6%). Only 11 respondents were unemployed, retired, or chose “other” to describe their occupation.

While a range of incomes were represented in the sample, the largest proportions reported individual monthly income between ¥5,001 and ¥8,000 (26.1%) or ¥10,001 and ¥15,000 (21.2%). According to statistics provided by Statista in 2017, the mean individual monthly income in China was ¥5,169 in 2015.

For household income, the majority reported monthly incomes between ¥15,001 and ¥30,000 (39.4%) or ¥10,001 and ¥15,000 (22.6%). According to the National Bureau of Statistics of China (2016), the mean monthly household income in China was ¥9,787 in 2015. A minority reported either individual income (3.1%) or household income (0.2%) in the lowest income range or in the highest income range (1.8% and 8.6%, respectively). Because of the one-child policy in China, a typical Chinese household often has three persons in a family with a single earner or dual earners. However, there are no data comparable to the U.S. Census data for

China to show the proportion of single-earner families and dual-earner families in China. In this study, among the 452 respondents, 55 respondents were from single-earner households and 402 respondents were from dual-earner households.

Before conducting the regression analyses, some groups were combined due to small numbers. Specifically, the two respondents who were “less than 20 years old” were combined with those who were age 20 to 29 years old to form the group “less than 30 years old.” The 11 respondents who were retired, unemployed, or chose other to describe their occupation were combined with the student group to form a “currently unemployed” group.

The 14 respondents who reported their individual monthly income as less than ¥2,000 were combined with the group “between ¥2,000 and ¥5,000” to form a new group of “less than ¥5,000.” Similarly, the eight respondents who had individual incomes greater than ¥50,000 were combined with 10 respondents who had individual incomes between ¥30,001 and ¥50,000 and those with incomes between ¥15,001 and ¥30,000 to form a new group of individual income “more than ¥15,000.”

Before conducting the analyses, the household monthly income groups of “less than ¥2,000,” “between ¥2,000 and ¥5,000,” and “between ¥5,001 and ¥8,000,” each of which had 10 or fewer respondents, were combined with the group “between ¥8,001 and ¥10,000” to form a new group, “less than ¥10,000.”

Figure 4.1 reports the frequency of Chinese luxury consumers’ luxury clothing purchases in the past three years. In this study, luxury clothing refers to haute couture and ready-to-wear trench coats, coats and jackets, suits, blazers and vests, T-shirts and Polos, blouses and tops, trousers and shorts, skirts and dresses, ponchos, cardigans and knitwear, denim jeans, and beachwear. In addition to the product category, the 20 most popular and well-known luxury-

clothing brands were chosen, which were Louis Vuitton, Chanel, Burberry, Gucci, Dior, Prada, Valentino, Giorgio Armani, Hermes, Versace, Dolce & Gabbana, Fendi, Michael Kors, Celine, Lavin, Givenchy, Dunhill, Bottega Veneta, Cerruti 1881, and Loewe.

Most Chinese luxury consumers in the sample bought an item of luxury clothing either once (43.6%) or two or three times (39.8%) a year (see Figure 4.1). Relatively small proportions (8.9%) reported buying a piece of luxury clothing more than three times in a year, while only 7.7% reported they bought luxury clothing only once in the last several years.

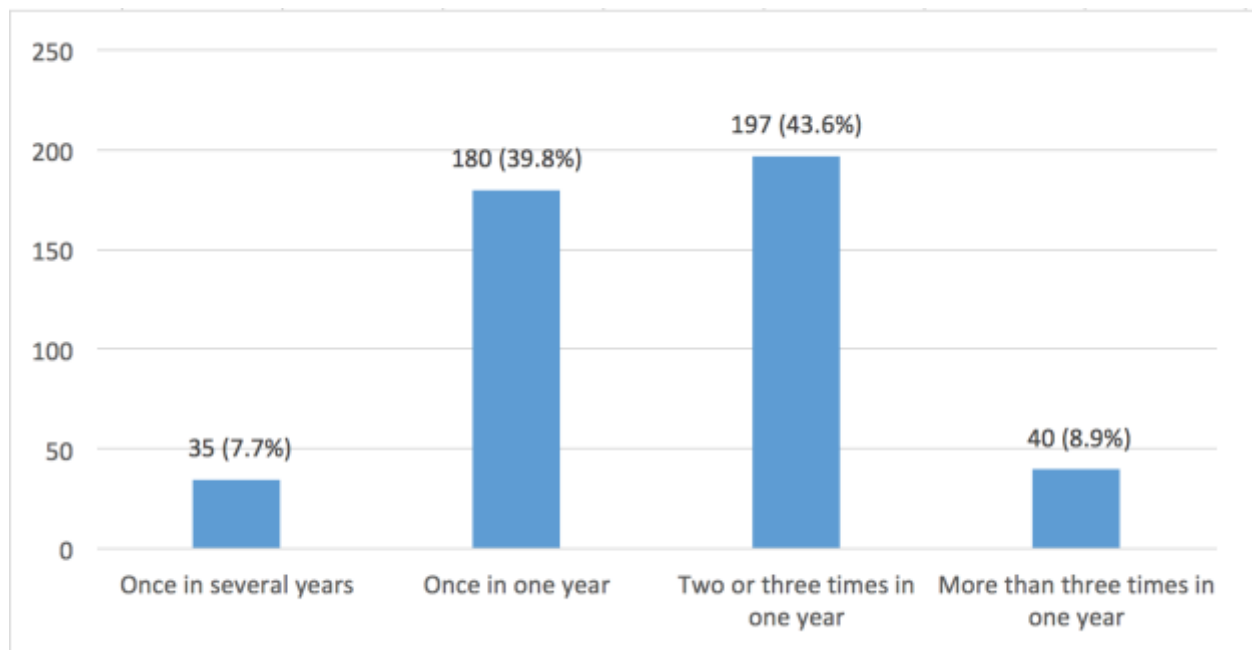


Figure 4.1. Frequency of Chinese luxury consumers purchasing for one item of luxury clothing in the past three years.

Table 4.2 reports the frequency of luxury products other than clothing that Chinese luxury consumers reported buying. To ensure a clear understanding of luxury products among respondents, the definition of luxury products also was limited to products produced by the 20

luxury brands identified in this study. The brands were Louis Vuitton, Chanel, Burberry, Gucci, Dior, Prada, Valentino, Giorgio Armani, Hermes, Versace, Dolce & Gabbana, Fendi, Michael Kors, Celine, Lavin, Givenchy, Dunhill, Bottega Veneta, Cerruti 1881, and Loewe.

As shown in Table 4.2, more than three-quarters (77%) of respondents who bought luxury clothing also bought luxury handbags and wallets. More than one-half (59.5%) of respondents also bought luxury cosmetics including fragrance, makeup, and skincare products. Slightly less than one-half of respondents reported buying other luxury accessories, including sunglasses, belts, ties, scarves, and gloves (47.3%), as well as jewelry and luxury watches (45.6%). More than one-third (38.1%) of respondents also bought luxury shoes. Only around 2.4% of respondents reported that they did not buy any other luxury items other than luxury clothing.

Table 4.3 shows where Chinese consumers shop for luxury clothing. Among the 452 respondents, 427 lived in Mainland China. Most respondents bought luxury clothing in Asia: around three-quarters (71.7%) of respondents shopped for luxury clothing in Mainland China and more than two-thirds (67%) made purchases in Hong Kong, Macau, and Taiwan, while around one-third (30.5%) of respondents purchased their luxury clothing in countries or areas in Asia other than Mainland China, Hong Kong, Macau, and Taiwan.

The European Union was the second most popular place for Chinese consumers to shop for luxury clothing outside of Asia. Around a quarter (24.8%) of respondents shopped for luxury clothing in the European Union. Next most popular was North America, where more than one-fifth (20.4%) of respondents shopped for luxury clothing. It is also worth noting that the 452 respondents recruited in this study bought luxury clothing all over the world; they made purchases for luxury clothing in every area listed in Table 4.3.

The descriptive statistics for the main variables in this study are summarized in Table 4.4. The descriptive statistics were calculated by adding each respondent's ratings for all of the items used to measure one variable and then dividing the sum by the number of items used to measure the variable. Because all of the items used in this study were rated on five-point Likert scales, where 1 represented "strongly disagree" and 5 represented "strongly agree," the values for each variable range from 1 to 5.

For purchase intentions for luxury clothing, the mean and median were both greater than 4. This indicates that Chinese consumers who had previous luxury clothing purchase experiences have strong intentions to purchase luxury clothing in the future. All of the 13 scales used in this study had a minimum value of 1 and maximum value of 5. The means for all 13 scales were above 3, ranging from 3.16 to 4.26. The median for most scales were above 3, except for social comparison; that median was 2.67. The statistics indicated that on average, the 452 Chinese consumers in this study valued all variables positively except for social comparison. The standard deviations for the 13 scales were less than 1, ranging from 0.56 to 0.94.

Stepwise Regression Results

Stepwise regression was used to test the impact of the three antecedents in the Theory of Planned Behavior – attitude toward luxury purchasing behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control – on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing. As mentioned in Chapter 2, attitude toward luxury purchasing behavior consisted of two types of attitudes – consumers' attitude toward physical characteristics such as brand image, product quality, and store atmosphere, and consumers' attitude toward the impact of luxury clothing such as self-actualization and social comparison. Subjective norms were defined as cultural values (measured by face consciousness in this study) and the influence of both social media and one's

reference group, as well as the personal norms of materialism, practicality, and uniqueness. Perceived behavioral control was measured by income, luxury good knowledge, and emotions. In this study, income was measured as both individual income and household income. The two measures of income were included in separate stepwise regression analyses.

To verify that the regression models satisfy the assumption of no multicollinearity, variance inflation factors (VIFs) were reported in Table 4.5 and Table 4.6. All the VIFs were below 5, which indicated that there was no multicollinearity issue for the two regression models.

Table 4.5 reports the first stepwise regression results with individual income as the measure for income. In the stepwise regression, Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing was the dependent variable and the null model (Step 1) contained three demographic variables – gender, age, and occupation – as independent variables. The reference group for gender was female. The age group “less than 30 years old” was used as the reference group in the regression. The group of “teacher, doctor, scientist, technician, or other professional” was selected as the reference group for occupation in the regression.

Gender was not significant in the null model, while age and occupation were significant. More specifically, the results show that the purchase intentions for luxury clothing of those between 30 to 39 years old were 0.44 units higher than for those younger than 30 years old while holding gender and occupation constant. The purchase intentions for luxury clothing of senior managers in government, business, or an institution were 0.79 units higher than for teachers, doctors, scientists, technicians, or other professionals while holding gender and age constant. The R^2 of the null model was 0.05, which represented 5% of the total variance explained by the three demographic variables.

In Step 2, the variables that measured attitude toward luxury purchasing behavior were added to the null model. Attitude toward luxury purchasing behavior was measured by five variables – brand image, product quality, store atmosphere, self-actualization, and social comparison. Consistent with the hypotheses, the results showed that brand image and product quality both were positive and significantly important in explaining the variance in Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing. More specifically, a one unit increase in Chinese consumers' attitude toward luxury brand image increased their purchase intentions for luxury clothing by 0.21 units while keeping all other factors fixed; a one unit increase in Chinese consumers' attitude toward luxury clothing product quality increased their purchase intentions for luxury clothing by 0.15 units while holding all other factors unchanged.

Adding the attitude toward luxury purchasing behavior variables changed the impact of demographic variables on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing. In the Step 2 regression analysis, the results showed that purchase intentions for luxury clothing of Chinese consumers older than 50 years old were 0.97 units lower than for those who were younger than 30 years old while keeping all other factors the same. Occupation was not significant in this model. The R^2 increased from 0.05 to 0.3713 after adding the attitude toward luxury purchasing behavior variables into the regression model.

In Step 3, the six variables measuring subjective norms were added to the model. Consistent with the hypothesis, the results showed that materialism had a significant and positive impact on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing. Specifically, a one unit increase in materialism increased Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing by 0.12 units while holding all other factors constant. Contrary to the hypothesis, the results showed that practicality had a significant but negative impact on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions

for luxury clothing. More specifically, a one unit increase in practicality decreased Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing by 0.12 units while keeping all other factors fixed. Adding the subjective norm variables into the model did not change the significant influence of the attitude toward luxury purchasing behavior variables. Brand image and product quality were positive and significant in this model as in Step 2, and the coefficients were similar. None of the demographic variables were significant in the Step 3 model. The R^2 further increased from 0.3713 to 0.4064 when the subjective norm variables were added into the regression.

Step 4 represents the full model with the addition of perceived behavioral control variables (see Table 4.5). Perceived behavioral control was measured by three variables – individual income, luxury good knowledge, and emotions. Consistent with the hypothesis, the results showed that luxury good knowledge had a significant and positive impact on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing. Specifically, a one unit increase in Chinese consumers' luxury good knowledge increased their purchase intentions for luxury clothing by 0.21 units while keeping all other factors the same. The attitude toward luxury purchasing behavior variables brand image and product quality were positive and significant in this model as in previous models, and the coefficients were similar. None of the demographic variables were significant in this model. However, adding the perceived behavioral control variables into the model changed the influence of the subjective norm variables. Contrary to the hypothesis, the results showed that impressions of luxury brands' social media had a significant but negative impact on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing. More specifically, a one unit increase in impressions of luxury brands' social media decreased Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing by 0.06 units while holding all other factors unchanged.

Materialism was no longer significant in the full model. The R^2 increased marginally from 0.4064 to 0.4433 after the perceived behavioral control variables were added into the regression.

Table 4.6 shows the second stepwise regression results with household income as a measure for income in the perceived behavioral control variables. Otherwise the variables were the same as in the regression reported in Table 4.5. The household monthly income group of “less than ¥10,000” was the reference group in the regression.

The full model (Step 4) with income measured as household income was very similar to the full model with income measured as individual income with two exceptions. In the household income model, two income groups were significant and positive (see Table 4.6). Specifically, the purchase intentions of consumers in Chinese households who earned between ¥15,001 and ¥30,000 monthly were 0.65 units higher than for those who earned less than ¥10,000, and the purchase intentions of consumers in Chinese households who earned between ¥30,001 and ¥50,000 monthly were 0.67 units higher than for those who earned less than ¥10,000 while holding all other factors constant.

There were many similarities between the model using individual income (see Table 4.5) as a measure for income and the model using household income (see Table 4.6) as a measure for income. None of the demographic variables were significant in the model using household income. The attitude toward luxury purchasing behavior variables – brand image and product quality – both had significant and positive impacts on Chinese consumers’ purchase intentions for luxury clothing. The subjective norm variables – social media and practicality – both had significant but negative impacts on Chinese consumers’ purchase intentions for luxury clothing. In addition, the perceived behavioral control variable luxury good knowledge had a significant and positive influence on Chinese consumers’ purchase intentions for luxury clothing. The R^2 s

in the models with income measured at the household level also were similar to those in the models with income measured at the individual level.

The stepwise procedures were used to understand which of the three antecedents in the Theory of Planned Behavior had the greatest impact on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing, and how adding new variables into the model affected the existing variables in the regression. All of the hypotheses in this dissertation were examined based on the results of the full model presented in Step 4 in both Table 4.5 and Table 4.6. The findings of the regression analyses are summarized in Table 4.7.

There were three types of results based on the two full regression models. Consistent with the hypotheses proposed in Chapter 3, attitude toward luxury purchasing behavior variables – brand image and product quality – had significant and positive impacts on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing. In addition, the perceived behavioral control variables – consumers' household income and luxury good knowledge – also had a significant and positive influence on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing.

Contrary to the hypotheses, however, the subjective norm variables – social media (a measure for social norms) and practicality (a measure for personal norms) – had significant but negative impacts on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing.

Other variables, specifically consumers' attitude toward luxury clothing store atmosphere, self-actualization, social comparison, cultural values (measured by face consciousness), reference group, materialism, uniqueness, individual income, emotions, and the demographic variables, did not have significant impacts on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing.

Among the three antecedents in the Theory of Planned Behavior, attitude toward behavior variables explained 32.13% of the total variance, while subjective norm variables explained 3.51% of the total variance in the regression. Perceived behavioral control variables explained 3.69% of the total variance in the model using individual income and 4.07% in the model using household income. Thus, attitude toward behavior variables had the greatest impact on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing, followed by perceived behavioral control variables. Subjective norm variables had the least impact on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing among the three antecedents.

In addition to the stepwise regression analysis, correlation analysis was conducted and a correlation matrix was provided in the Appendices to report the correlations between variables used in this study. It is interesting to notice that except for practicality and uniqueness, all other attitude toward behavior variables, subjective norm variables, and perceived behavioral control variables had a positive and significant relationship with purchase intentions for luxury clothing. Once all the variables were included in the full regression models, the significance of many variables disappeared. The relationship between social media and purchase intentions even became negative and significant in the regression models.

The following chapter provides further discussion of the results and includes a summary of the research findings, implications for researchers as well as luxury brand manufacturers and retailers, and a discussion of limitations and future research.

Table 4.1

Demographic Characteristics of the Sample Collected from Two Sources

| Variables | Own (n) | Own (%) | SoJump (n) | SoJump (%) | Total (n) | Total (%) |
|--|------------|------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|
| Age | | | | | | |
| Less than 20 years old | 0 | 0.0 | 2 | 0.6 | 2 | 0.4 |
| Between 20 to 29 years old | 44 | 30.5 | 129 | 41.9 | 173 | 38.3 |
| Between 30 to 39 years old | 79 | 54.9 | 138 | 44.8 | 217 | 48.0 |
| Between 40 to 49 years old | 14 | 9.7 | 27 | 8.8 | 41 | 9.1 |
| Above 50 years old | 7 | 4.9 | 12 | 3.9 | 19 | 4.2 |
| Gender | | | | | | |
| Male | 61 | 42.4 | 141 | 45.8 | 202 | 44.7 |
| Female | 83 | 57.6 | 167 | 54.2 | 250 | 55.3 |
| Occupation | | | | | | |
| Teacher, doctor, scientist, technician, or other professional | 17 | 11.8 | 44 | 14.3 | 61 | 13.5 |
| Senior manager in government, business, or an institution | 25 | 17.4 | 55 | 17.9 | 80 | 17.7 |
| General manager in government, business, or an institution | 67 | 46.5 | 99 | 32.1 | 166 | 36.7 |
| Ordinary employee in government, business, or an institution | 23 | 16.0 | 50 | 16.2 | 73 | 16.2 |
| Self-employed | 11 | 7.6 | 29 | 9.4 | 40 | 8.8 |
| Student | 0 | 0.0 | 21 | 6.8 | 21 | 4.6 |
| Retiree | 0 | 0.0 | 1 | 0.3 | 1 | 0.2 |
| Unemployed | 0 | 0.0 | 7 | 2.3 | 7 | 1.5 |
| Other | 1 | 0.7 | 2 | 0.7 | 3 | 0.7 |
| Individual Monthly Income | | | | | | |
| Less than ¥2,000 | 0 | 0.0 | 14 | 4.5 | 14 | 3.1 |

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|----|------|-----|------|-----|------|
| Between ¥2,000 and ¥5,000 | 7 | 4.9 | 37 | 12.0 | 44 | 9.7 |
| Between ¥5,001 and ¥8,000 | 39 | 27.1 | 79 | 25.6 | 118 | 26.1 |
| Between ¥8,001 and ¥10,000 | 36 | 25.0 | 59 | 19.2 | 95 | 21.0 |
| Between ¥10,001 and ¥15,000 | 32 | 22.2 | 64 | 20.8 | 96 | 21.2 |
| Between ¥15,001 and ¥30,000 | 28 | 19.4 | 39 | 12.7 | 67 | 14.8 |
| Between ¥30,001 and ¥50,000 | 2 | 1.4 | 8 | 2.6 | 10 | 2.2 |
| More than ¥50,000 | 0 | 0.0 | 8 | 2.6 | 8 | 1.8 |
| Household Monthly Income | | | | | | |
| Less than ¥2,000 | 0 | 0.0 | 1 | 0.3 | 1 | 0.2 |
| Between ¥2,000 and ¥5,000 | 0 | 0.0 | 6 | 1.9 | 6 | 1.3 |
| Between ¥5,001 and ¥8,000 | 2 | 1.4 | 8 | 2.6 | 10 | 2.2 |
| Between ¥8,001 and ¥10,000 | 12 | 8.3 | 26 | 8.4 | 38 | 8.4 |
| Between ¥10,001 and ¥15,000 | 31 | 21.5 | 71 | 23.1 | 102 | 22.6 |
| Between ¥15,001 and ¥30,000 | 66 | 45.8 | 112 | 36.4 | 178 | 39.4 |
| Between ¥30,001 and ¥50,000 | 26 | 18.1 | 52 | 16.9 | 78 | 17.3 |
| More than ¥50,000 | 7 | 4.9 | 32 | 10.4 | 39 | 8.6 |

Note. In the table, “own” represents the sample of 144 Chinese luxury consumers collected by the author through Wechat and Sina Weibo. “SoJump” refers to the sample of 308 Chinese luxury consumers collected by the SoJump data collection company. “Total” is the final sample of 452 respondents that combines data collected by the author and the SoJump data collection company.

Table 4.2

Frequency of Other Luxury Products (N=452)

| Luxury Product Category | n | % |
|--|----------|----------|
| Handbags and wallets | 348 | 77.0 |
| Shoes | 172 | 38.1 |
| Cosmetics (including fragrance, makeup and skincare products) | 269 | 59.5 |
| Jewelry and watches | 206 | 45.6 |
| Other accessories (including sunglasses, belts, ties, scarves, and gloves) | 214 | 47.3 |
| I didn't buy any other luxury items | 11 | 2.4 |

Table 4.3

Where to Shop for Luxury Clothing (N=452)

| Luxury Product Category | n | % |
|---|----------|----------|
| Mainland China | 324 | 71.7 |
| Hong Kong, Macau, Taiwan | 303 | 67.0 |
| Asia (but not Mainland China, Hong Kong, Macau, and Taiwan) | 138 | 30.5 |
| Africa | 1 | 0.2 |
| Central America | 8 | 1.8 |
| Eastern Europe | 25 | 5.5 |
| European Union | 112 | 24.8 |
| Middle East | 4 | 0.9 |
| North America | 92 | 20.4 |
| Oceania | 18 | 4.0 |
| South America | 9 | 2.0 |
| The Caribbean | 1 | 0.2 |

Table 4.4

Descriptive Statistics of Scales (N=452)

| Variables | Min | Mean | Median | Max | S.D. |
|-----------------------|------------|-------------|---------------|------------|-------------|
| Purchase Intention | 1 | 4.18 | 4.33 | 5 | 0.70 |
| Brand Image | 1 | 3.97 | 4.17 | 5 | 0.63 |
| Product Quality | 1 | 4.16 | 4.25 | 5 | 0.67 |
| Store Atmosphere | 1 | 4.05 | 4.25 | 5 | 0.68 |
| Self-actualization | 1 | 3.88 | 4.00 | 5 | 0.83 |
| Social Comparison | 1 | 3.72 | 2.67 | 5 | 0.80 |
| Face Consciousness | 1 | 3.62 | 3.71 | 5 | 0.68 |
| Social Media | 1 | 3.81 | 4.00 | 5 | 0.69 |
| Reference Group | 1 | 3.16 | 3.25 | 5 | 0.94 |
| Materialism | 1 | 3.82 | 4.00 | 5 | 0.68 |
| Practicality | 1 | 3.50 | 3.67 | 5 | 0.92 |
| Uniqueness | 1 | 3.52 | 3.67 | 5 | 0.88 |
| Luxury Good Knowledge | 1 | 3.70 | 4.00 | 5 | 0.79 |
| Emotions | 1 | 4.26 | 4.29 | 5 | 0.56 |

Table 4.5

Stepwise Regression Results with Individual Income (N=452)

| Variable | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | VIF |
|--|----------|----------|----------|----------|------------|
| (Constant) | 12.15*** | 4.32*** | 5.04*** | 4.51*** | |
| <i>Demographic Variables</i> | | | | | |
| Gender | -0.17 | -0.04 | 0.01 | -0.08 | 1.24 |
| Age (Less than 30 years old) | | | | | |
| Between 30 to 39 years old | 0.44* | 0.16 | 0.17 | 0.02 | 1.38 |
| Between 40 to 49 years old | 0.03 | -0.32 | -0.29 | -0.39 | 1.23 |
| Above 50 years old | -0.43 | -0.97* | -0.74 | -0.54 | 1.18 |
| Occupation | | | | | |
| Senior manager | 0.79* | 0.03 | -0.05 | -0.24 | 2.22 |
| General manager | 0.50 | -0.01 | -0.11 | -0.20 | 2.65 |
| Ordinary employee | -0.19 | -0.36 | -0.36 | -0.34 | 1.96 |
| Self-employed | -0.11 | -0.05 | -0.24 | -0.30 | 1.66 |
| Student, retiree, unemployed, etc. | -0.06 | 0.24 | 0.17 | 0.09 | 1.60 |
| <i>Attitude Toward Behavior</i> | | | | | |
| Brand Image | | 0.21*** | 0.21*** | 0.20*** | 3.09 |
| Product Quality | | 0.15** | 0.17*** | 0.15** | 2.93 |
| Store Atmosphere | | 0.07 | 0.08 | 0.05 | 2.90 |
| Self-actualization | | 0.03 | -0.01 | -0.05 | 3.53 |
| Social Comparison | | -0.07 | -0.10 | -0.11 | 3.04 |
| <i>Subjective Norms</i> | | | | | |
| Face Consciousness | | | 0.01 | 0.01 | 2.21 |
| Social Media | | | -0.03 | -0.06* | 2.68 |
| Reference Group | | | 0.02 | 0.01 | 1.81 |
| Materialism | | | 0.12* | 0.10 | 1.92 |
| Practicality | | | -0.12*** | -0.10*** | 1.18 |
| Uniqueness | | | 0.01 | -0.02 | 1.36 |

Perceived Behavioral Control

Individual Monthly Income
(Less than ¥5,000)

Between ¥5,001 and ¥8,000 0.39 2.61

Between ¥8,001 and ¥10,000 0.47 2.67

Between ¥10,001 and ¥15,000 0.54 2.68

More than ¥15,000 0.61 2.84

Luxury Good Knowledge 0.21*** 2.20

Emotions 0.03 1.57

| | | | | |
|-----------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| R-squared | 0.0500 | 0.3713 | 0.4064 | 0.4433 |
|-----------|--------|--------|--------|--------|

| | | | | |
|--------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Adjusted R-squared | 0.0306 | 0.3512 | 0.3789 | 0.4093 |
|--------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|

Note. $N = 452$.

$*p < .05$. $**p < .01$. $***p < .001$

Table 4.6

Stepwise Regression Results with Household Income (N=452)

| Variable | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | VIF |
|--|----------|----------|----------|----------|------------|
| (Constant) | 12.15*** | 4.32*** | 5.04*** | 4.40*** | |
| <i>Demographic Variables</i> | | | | | |
| Gender | -0.17 | -0.04 | 0.01 | -0.02 | 1.19 |
| Age (Less than 30 years old) | | | | | |
| Between 30 to 39 years old | 0.44* | 0.16 | 0.17 | 0.03 | 1.36 |
| Between 40 to 49 years old | 0.03 | -0.32 | -0.29 | -0.39 | 1.21 |
| Above 50 years old | -0.43 | -0.97* | -0.74 | -0.52 | 1.17 |
| Occupation | | | | | |
| Senior manager | 0.79* | 0.03 | -0.05 | -0.23 | 2.20 |
| General manager | 0.50 | -0.01 | -0.11 | -0.23 | 2.64 |
| Ordinary employee | -0.19 | -0.36 | -0.36 | -0.36 | 1.95 |
| Self-employed | -0.11 | -0.05 | -0.24 | -0.25 | 1.64 |
| Student, retiree, unemployed, etc. | -0.06 | 0.24 | 0.17 | -0.11 | 1.57 |
| <i>Attitude Toward Behavior</i> | | | | | |
| Brand Image | | 0.21*** | 0.21*** | 0.19*** | 3.12 |
| Product Quality | | 0.15** | 0.17*** | 0.15** | 2.92 |
| Store Atmosphere | | 0.07 | 0.08 | 0.06 | 2.99 |
| Self-actualization | | 0.03 | -0.01 | -0.05 | 3.61 |
| Social Comparison | | -0.07 | -0.10 | -0.10 | 3.06 |
| <i>Subjective Norms</i> | | | | | |
| Face Consciousness | | | 0.01 | 0.01 | 2.22 |
| Social Media | | | -0.03 | -0.06* | 2.68 |
| Reference Group | | | 0.02 | 0.01 | 1.79 |
| Materialism | | | 0.12* | 0.08 | 1.88 |
| Practicality | | | -0.12*** | -0.09** | 1.21 |
| Uniqueness | | | 0.01 | -0.02 | 1.39 |

Perceived Behavioral ControlHousehold Monthly Income
(Less than ¥10,000)

Between ¥10,001 and ¥15,000

0.45

2.43

Between ¥15,001 and ¥30,000

0.65*

3.00

Between ¥30,001 and ¥50,000

0.67*

2.39

More than ¥50,000

0.70

1.83

Luxury Good Knowledge

0.21***

2.22

Emotions

0.02

1.58

R-squared

0.0500

0.3713

0.4064

0.4471

Adjusted R-squared

0.0306

0.3512

0.3789

0.4133

Note. $N = 452$.** $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$*

Table 4.7

Summary of Hypotheses Supported in the Final Models

| | |
|--|-----------------------------|
| H1: Attitude toward behavior has an impact on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing. | Supported |
| H1a: Brand image has a positive influence on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing. | Supported |
| H1b: Product quality has a positive influence on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing. | Supported |
| H1c: Store atmosphere has a positive influence on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing. | Not Supported |
| H1d: Self-actualization has a positive influence on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing. | Not Supported |
| H1e: Social comparison has a positive influence on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing. | Not Supported |
| H2: Subjective norms have an impact on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing. | Supported |
| H2a: Cultural values have a positive influence on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing. | Not Supported |
| H2b: Social media has a positive influence on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing. | <i>Not Supported</i> |
| H2c: Reference group has a positive influence on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing. | Not Supported |
| H2d: Materialism has a positive influence on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing. | Not Supported |
| H2e: Practicality has a positive influence on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing. | <i>Not Supported</i> |
| H2f: Uniqueness has a positive influence on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing. | Not Supported |

| | |
|--|---------------|
| H3: Perceived behavioral control has an impact on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing. | Supported |
| H3a: Individual income has a positive influence on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing. | Not Supported |
| H3b: Household income has a positive influence on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing. | Supported |
| H3c: Luxury good knowledge has a positive influence on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing. | Supported |
| H3d: Emotions have a positive influence on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing. | Not Supported |

Note. In the table, “Supported” means the hypothesis was supported by results from either or both two stepwise regressions. “Not Supported” means the variable in the hypothesis was not significant in both two stepwise regressions. “**Not Supported**” means that contrary to the hypothesis that proposed there was a positive relationship between the variable in the hypothesis and Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing, the results showed a significant negative relationship exists.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

The overall research objective of this dissertation was to systematically and thoroughly explore and examine the factors affecting Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing guided by the Theory of Planned Behavior. Chapter 1 introduced the research questions and the importance of studying luxury goods consumption in the Chinese market. Chapter 2 first reviewed the literature and summarized the definitions of luxury goods and luxury consumers as well as the theories used in previous research. Then, the Theory of Planned Behavior and the methods used to define and measure purchase intentions and the factors hypothesized to affect Chinese consumers' purchase intentions in this study were presented. Chapter 3 provided three general and 15 specific hypotheses and a description of the data collection and analysis methodologies used. Chapter 4 presented the results of the descriptive statistics and two stepwise regression models. This final chapter includes a summary of the research findings, implications for researchers as well as luxury brand manufacturers and retailers, and a discussion of the limitations of this study and suggestions for future research.

Summary of Findings

The Chinese luxury goods market is currently one of the largest and fastest-growing luxury markets in the world. Manufacturers and retailers of luxury fashion brands such as Gucci, Dior, and Valentino are eager to understand what factors influence Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury goods. The research question in this study was to explore whether attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control, three constructs in the Theory of Planned

Behavior, have significant influences on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing as well as which of these three antecedents has the greatest influence.

The work was performed using survey data collected from Chinese luxury clothing consumers. This study used online channels to recruit respondents. The final sample size was 452 Chinese luxury consumers (defined as consumers who spent more than \$500 in the past year or spent more than \$1,500 within the past three years on luxury clothing). Among the 452 Chinese luxury consumers, 144 respondents were recruited through a survey link posted on Wechat and Sina Weibo, the two most popular social connection apps used among Chinese consumers, while the other 308 respondents were recruited by the Chinese data collection company SoJump. Because there were no significant differences between the respondents recruited by the two channels, the two samples were combined for the regression analyses.

Two stepwise regression models were developed to examine the impact of the three antecedents in the Theory of Planned Behavior – attitude toward luxury purchasing behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control – on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing. Attitude toward luxury purchasing behavior was divided into attitude toward physical characteristics of luxury clothing and attitude toward the impact of luxury clothing. Attitude toward physical characteristics of luxury clothing was measured by consumers' attitude toward luxury brand image, product quality, and store atmosphere; attitude toward the impact of luxury clothing was measured by self-actualization and social comparison. Subjective norms consisted of both social norms created by society and significant others and personal norms that are formed internally by the individual himself/herself. Social norms in this study were measured by cultural values, social media, and reference group while personal norms were measured by materialism, practicality, and uniqueness. Perceived behavioral control included three types of

control, which were financial control, cognitive control, and affective control in this study. Financial control was measured by both individual income and household income, cognitive control was measured by consumers' luxury good knowledge, and affective control was measured by emotions when shopping for luxury clothing. Scales developed in previous research were used to measure most of the constructs.

The findings showed that among the three antecedents, attitude toward luxury purchasing behavior had the greatest impact on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing, followed by perceived behavioral control. Subjective norms had the least impact on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing. The importance of attitude toward behavior variables reflect that Chinese consumers' attitude about luxury clothing has the most critical influence on their purchase intentions. In Chinese consumers' opinion, if luxury clothing has good physical characteristics and can bring positive impacts on self-actualization and social comparison, even if they have restrictions in other areas such as income, they are still willing to purchase luxury clothing. More specifically, consistent with the hypotheses, the results showed that attitude toward luxury purchasing behavior variables – brand image and product quality – had significant and positive impacts on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing. In addition, perceived behavioral control variables – consumers' household income and luxury good knowledge – also had significant and positive influences on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing. Contrary to the hypotheses, however, subjective norm variables – social media (a measure for social norms) and practicality (a measure for personal norms) – had significant but negative impacts on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing.

Discussion

The findings contribute to the existing literature by providing a more comprehensive understanding of the roles that three antecedents in the Theory of Planned Behavior – attitude toward behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control – play in Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing. Most previous research has focused mainly on the impact of only a few factors, such as culture, income, attitude, or perceptions, that influence consumers' purchase intentions for luxury goods. Little previous research has systematically analyzed a more complete set of factors. Thus, this research provides researchers with deeper understandings of the factors by taking into consideration a more complete set of important factors than previous researchers have evaluated.

Consistent with previous research (Batra & Homer, 2004; O'Cass & Frost, 2002), consumers' attitude toward luxury brand image was positively associated with Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing. This indicates that Chinese consumers value the experiential dimension of brand image when purchasing for luxury goods. The more precious and unique they believe the luxury goods are, the higher the purchase intentions they have for the luxury goods. In addition, Chinese consumers also value the symbolic meaning of luxury goods. If luxury goods are conspicuous enough to represent the wealth and high social status of the owner, Chinese consumers will have higher intentions to buy the luxury goods.

As shown in previous studies (Park & Park, 2003; Zhan & He, 2012), consumers' attitude toward luxury product quality also had a significant and positive impact on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing in this study. The results suggest that Chinese consumers emphasize product quality when purchasing luxury goods. Chinese consumers are more likely to buy luxury goods that have superior quality and premium craftsmanship.

As in previous research (Esch et al., 2006), which showed that consumers' knowledge of luxury brands had a positive effect on their current and future luxury purchases, the results of this study also showed that luxury good knowledge was positively associated with Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing. The results suggest that the more knowledgeable Chinese consumers are about luxury goods, the higher their purchase intentions will be.

Individual income was not a significant factor affecting Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing in this study as it was in previous research (Li, Li, & Kambele, 2012). However, this study found that household income had a significant and positive impact on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions. In addition, the coefficients of household income were relatively large. The results indicate that household income, instead of individual income, was a key factor influencing Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing. Thus, household income should be included in future research when studying consumers' purchase intentions and purchasing behavior for luxury goods.

In addition, consistent with previous studies (Hung et al., 2011; Li, Li, & Kambele, 2012), gender was not significant in the regression. When only demographic variables were included in the regression, compared to consumers who were younger than 30, consumers ages 30 to 39 had significant and higher purchase intentions for luxury clothing. After adding attitude toward behavior variables into the model, compared to consumers who were younger than 30, those who were older than 50 years old had significant and lower purchase intentions for luxury clothing. After adding subjective norm variables and perceived behavioral control variables into the model, age was no longer significant in the model.

When demographic variables were included in the regression, senior managers had higher purchase intentions for luxury clothing than teachers, doctors, scientists, technicians, or other professionals. However, the significance of occupation went away when more variables were added into the model. Consistent with previous research (Li, Li, & Kambele, 2012), age and occupation were not significant in the full model. Chinese luxury consumers cannot be defined by specific demographic features, and all consumers can be potential luxury consumers.

Contrary to the results of previous research, however, the subjective norms variables were negatively associated with Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing. More specifically, contrary to previous research (Hutter et al., 2013; Jin, 2012; Kim & Ko, 2012) which concluded that consumers' utilization of social media increased their purchase intentions for luxury goods, social media had a negative impact on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing in this research. This may be because this study only focused on consumers who bought luxury clothing in physical luxury stores, and online luxury consumers who may be more likely to be influenced by social media were not included in this study. This study only focused on consumers who bought luxury clothing in brick-and-mortar stores for several reasons: first, many luxury brands, such as Chanel and Celine, do not sell luxury clothing on their websites. Second, consumers can actually feel the product quality and store atmosphere in physical stores compared to online websites, and consumers' attitude toward product quality and attitude toward store atmosphere are important factors in this study. Third, physical stores offer more exclusivity than an online environment. Clothing offered online is mostly from last season, while the new designs are only available in physical stores.

In addition, contrary to previous research (Ko et al., 2007; Li, Li, & Kambele, 2012) which demonstrated that practicality had a significant and positive effect on consumers' luxury

purchase decisions, this study showed that practicality was negatively associated with Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing. The different result may be because the Chinese luxury goods market was the focus in this study, compared to the research conducted by Ko et al. (2007) that focused on studying more established luxury goods markets including Korea, France, and the United States. Relative to consumers in these markets, consumers in the Chinese market treat luxury clothing as fashion instead of practical clothing. In addition, a sample of luxury consumers with previous luxury clothing purchasing experience was analyzed in this study, while Li, Li, and Kambele (2012) concluded that Chinese consumers with no luxury clothing purchasing experience were more willing to buy luxury clothing when they valued practicality. Thus, the contradiction in results may reflect the differences between samples who are and are not experienced luxury consumers. The results also may reflect that in Chinese luxury consumers' minds, luxury clothing is not about comfort and necessity, but more about fashion and expression of their social status.

Generally speaking, the final model had a large R^2 (0.4471), suggesting a good model fit. Thus, the Theory of Planned Behavior proved to be a useful theoretical framework guiding the study of luxury goods consumption. Consumers' attitude toward luxury brand image and product quality, as well as consumers' household income and luxury good knowledge, had a positive and relatively large significant impact on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing. Social media and practicality, however, had a negative but relatively small significant impact on Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing.

Limitations

Although the data analysis suggested a good model fit, there were some limitations, primarily in the recruitment and data collection procedures. First, Chinese luxury consumers

were recruited online in this study. While online recruitment helped to get a wide range of luxury consumers with different backgrounds, including different income levels and ages, there were only 40 respondents who reported themselves as frequent luxury consumers (those who shop for luxury clothing more than three times in a year).

This study only focused on Chinese consumers who had previously purchased luxury clothing based on the idea that consumers with no previous luxury good purchasing experience could not easily imagine themselves in the role of an experienced luxury consumers. However, it is unknown whether there are significant differences between luxury consumers' and non-luxury consumers' purchase intentions for luxury goods, and the factors that might influence their purchase intentions. This research also does not contribute to our understanding about whether it is appropriate to use student samples as many previous researchers have done.

In this study, luxury clothing was the product category chosen to learn about Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury goods. While Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing can be generalized to understand their purchase intentions for relatively affordable luxury products such as handbags and wallets, shoes, cosmetics (including fragrance, makeup, and skincare products), jewelry and watches, and other accessories (including sunglasses, belts, ties, scarves, and gloves), the conclusions in this study cannot be generalized to understand factors that influence Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for very expensive luxury products such as luxury cars and luxury houses.

Luxury consumers were restricted to Chinese consumers in this study. Thus, the research might not be as applicable in more established luxury goods markets. Although guided by the Theory of Planned Behavior, this study focused on studying Chinese consumers' purchase

intentions for luxury clothing, not their actual purchasing behavior. The limitations in this study provide new research opportunities for future researchers.

Implications for Luxury Brand Manufacturers and Retailers

The findings provide valuable strategic implications for luxury brand retailers who do business in the Chinese market. The results suggest that generally, luxury brand manufacturers should emphasize their brand image and high product quality in their marketing strategies. Consumers care about the brand image and product quality of luxury clothing, and their attitude toward luxury brand image and product quality directly affects their purchase intentions. Advertising campaigns in the Chinese luxury market can emphasize brand equity such as precious and conspicuous, superior brand reputation, and premium craftsmanship in order to leave a positive impression on potential luxury clothing consumers.

The results also suggested that luxury brand manufacturers should implement marketing strategies that target materialistic consumers instead of practical consumers. The nature of luxury goods determines that they cannot be necessities in a human's life, so it is difficult to design luxury clothing suitable for daily use in order to appeal to practical consumers. Thus, luxury good manufacturers and brands are unlikely to be successful in their appeals to consumers who value practicality. To target consumers who are materialists, luxury retailers can design advertising campaigns that convey the feeling of pleasure, the experience of fun, and the idea that wearing luxury clothing is one of the greatest enjoyments in one's life. Because materialistic consumers buy and use luxury products mainly to satisfy their need to have the best things in life, their purchase intentions for luxury clothing will be aroused when they feel luxury clothing is so wonderful that they need to possess and wear luxury clothing to increase their enjoyment and happiness.

Luxury brand manufacturers and retailers also should focus their attention on improving consumers' awareness of luxury brands and communicating with consumers to increase their knowledge of luxury brands and goods. This may be especially important for those who are once-in-a-while luxury consumers, who were the majority of the respondents in this sample. Compared to day-to-day luxury consumers who are normally loyal to luxury brands, once-in-a-while luxury consumers are the group that luxury retailers want to influence to build their loyalty to luxury brands and products. Advertising campaigns in the Chinese market should try to increase once-in-a-while consumers' awareness and their recognition of luxury brands and luxury goods. If consumers can learn the stories of the luxury brands, understand the design concepts behind the luxury goods, and agree with the ideas that luxury products convey to the society, the tendency for them to purchase luxury goods also will be enhanced.

Implications for Future Research

Although the 14 scales used in this research were adopted from previous research that focused on consumers' luxury purchasing behavior, almost all of the scales (except for the scale of social media) were used for the first time with experienced luxury consumers. In previous research, most of the scales (purchase intention, brand image, product quality, store atmosphere, self-actualization, social comparison, practicality, uniqueness, luxury good knowledge, and emotions) were used among ordinary consumers and some of the scales (face consciousness, reference group, and materialism) were used only among college students. In addition, to make the scales more suitable to use in this dissertation to study Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing, modifications were made to several scales (purchase intention, brand image, store atmosphere, reference group, and practicality). Time was added to the purchase intention scale to measure consumers' purchase intentions in general, in the next year,

and in the next three years. The scales of brand image and store atmosphere were paraphrased to measure consumers' attitude toward luxury brand image and store atmosphere. For the scales of reference group and practicality, certain wording was changed while the meaning remained the same to make the scales more suitable for Chinese consumers.

After conducting a pretest among 30 Chinese students studying at the University of Georgia to test the reliability of the 14 scales, four items were removed from both the face consciousness and social media scales, and two items were removed from the materialism scale for data collection. Based on the data collected from 452 respondents, the brand image, materialism, and emotions scales all had at least one item with a factor loading of less than 0.5. Thus, two items in the brand image scale, one item in the materialism scale, and one item in the emotions scale that had factor loadings of less than 0.5 were removed for further data analyses. After removing one item, the Cronbach's α of materialism scale was just above 0.7. In addition, after removing one item, the factor loadings of the remaining items in the emotions scale were marginal. After removing four items in each scale, face consciousness and social media scales had high internal consistency and good factor loadings. Thus, while the modified face consciousness and social media scales can be used in future research, the brand image, materialism, and emotions scales used in this study should be further tested in future research to be sure they are suitable to use among luxury consumers.

Differences might exist between frequent luxury consumers and non-frequent luxury consumers in their purchase intentions for luxury goods. To get a larger sample that includes both frequent luxury consumers and non-frequent luxury consumers, online and offline recruitment of respondents could be combined in future studies. For offline recruitment, future researchers can seek help from luxury stores and high-end shopping malls to collect data.

Future research should explore whether there are significant differences between luxury consumers' and non-luxury consumers' purchase intentions for luxury goods, and the factors that might influence their purchase intentions. It also would be useful in future research to examine the reliability of student samples.

There might be differences between consumers' purchase intentions for affordable luxury goods and very expensive luxury goods. Future research can further focus on these very expensive luxury products such as luxury cars and luxury houses that are not affordable to most consumers to get a better understanding of what factors influence consumers' purchase intentions for those luxury goods.

Among the 452 respondents in this study, 427 lived in China. However, they made luxury clothing purchases all over the world. It is unknown whether this is a specific phenomenon that happens only among Chinese consumers. Thus, future research of interest also may consider comparing Chinese luxury goods markets with other emerging and more established luxury goods markets.

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APPENDICES

Survey Used in Data Collection

The survey is about luxury clothing consumption.

In this study, luxury clothing refers to haute couture and ready-to-wear trench coats, coats and jackets, suits, blazers and vests, T-shirts and Polos, blouses and tops, trousers and shorts, skirts and dresses, ponchos, cardigans and knitwear, denim jeans, and beachwear.

We also have defined luxury clothing as from the 20 luxury brands listed below.

| | | | | |
|---------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|--------------|
| Louis Vuitton | Chanel | Burberry | Gucci | Dior |
| Prada | Valentino | Giorgio Armani | Dolce & Gabbana | Fendi |
| Hermès | Versace | Michael Kors | CÉLINE | Dunhill |
| Lavin | Bottega Veneta | Givenchy | Loewe | Cerruti 1881 |

Luxury counterfeits are not included in this study. Luxury clothing that was bought online is also excluded from this study.

Filter questions

In the last year, how many items of luxury clothing did you purchase?

- a) None
- b) 1 - 3
- c) More than 3

In the last year, how much money did you spend on luxury clothing?

- a) \$0
- b) \$1– \$500 (¥1 – ¥3,250)
- c) \$501 – \$1,500 (¥3,251 – ¥9,750)
- d) \$1,501 – \$3,000 (¥9,751 – ¥19,500)
- e) \$3,001 – \$4,500 (¥19,501 – ¥29,250)
- f) More than \$4,500 (More than ¥29,250)

In the last three years, how many items of luxury clothing did you purchase in total?

- a) None
- b) Only 1
- c) 2 – 6
- d) More than 6

In the last three years, how much money did you spend on luxury clothing?

- a) \$0
- b) \$1– \$500 (¥0 – ¥3,250)
- c) \$501 – \$1,500 (¥3,251 – ¥9,750)
- d) \$1,501 – \$3,000 (¥9,751 – ¥19,500)
- e) \$3,001 – \$4,500 (¥19,501 – ¥29,250)
- f) More than \$4,500 (More than ¥29,250)

In the last three years, how often did you buy an item of luxury clothing?

- a) Never
- b) Once in several years
- c) Once in one year
- d) Two to three times in one year
- e) More than three times in one year

In the last three years, except for luxury clothing, what other luxury items did you buy? (Choose all that apply.) The luxury goods items are restricted to the 20 luxury brands listed below.

| | | | | |
|---------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|--------------|
| Louis Vuitton | Chanel | Burberry | Gucci | Dior |
| Prada | Valentino | Giorgio Armani | Dolce & Gabbana | Fendi |
| Hermès | Versace | Michael Kors | CÉLINE | Dunhill |
| Lavin | Bottega Veneta | Givenchy | Loewe | Cerruti 1881 |

- a) Handbags and wallets
- b) Shoes
- c) Cosmetics (including fragrance, makeup and skincare products)
- d) Jewelry and watches
- e) Other accessories (including sunglasses, belts, ties, scarves, and gloves)
- f) I didn't buy any other luxury items

All the following items are rated on a 5-point Likert scale in which 1 represents “strongly disagree” and 5 represents “strongly agree”.

Purchase intentions

I have a strong possibility to purchase luxury clothing.

I have a strong possibility to purchase luxury clothing within the next year.

I have a strong possibility to purchase luxury clothing clothing within the next three years.

Brand image

Luxury brand clothing is precious.

Luxury brand clothing is rare.

Luxury brand clothing is unique.

Luxury brand clothing is attractive.

Luxury brand clothing is stunning.

Luxury brand clothing is conspicuous.

Luxury brand clothing is expensive.
Luxury brand clothing is for the wealthy.

Product quality

Luxury brand clothing is handmade (crafted).
Luxury brand clothing has the best quality.
Luxury brand clothing is sophisticated.
Luxury brand clothing is superior.

Store atmosphere

Luxury clothing stores have a warm, inviting atmosphere.
Luxury clothing stores are attractive with artistic looking displays.
The clerks in luxury clothing stores are well-dressed and provide enthusiastic and thoughtful service.
Luxury clothing stores provide great personalized service.

Self-actualization

Luxury clothing is special and wearing it makes me feel different.
I feel successful when buying luxury clothing.
Wearing luxury clothing increases my self-confidence.

Social comparison

I want other people to know that I wear expensive luxury clothing.
I am satisfied when other people compliment me on my luxury clothing.
When I wear luxury clothing, I feel other people's impressions about me have changed.

Cultural value – face consciousness

I hope people think that I can do better than most others.
I hope that I can talk about things that most others do not know.
I hope that I can possess things that most others thirst for.
It is important for me to get praise and admiration.
I hope to let people know that I have association with some big names.
I hope that I have a better life than most others in others' view.
I always avoid talking about my weaknesses.
I try to avoid letting others think that I am ignorant, even if I really am.
I do my best to hide my weaknesses before others.
If I work in an organization of bad reputation, I will try not to tell others about that.
It is hard for me to acknowledge a mistake, even if I am really wrong.

Social media

Using luxury brands' social media is fun.
Contents shown in the luxury brands' social media seem interesting.
Luxury brands' social media enables information sharing with others.
Conversation or opinion exchange with others is possible through luxury brands' social media.
It is easy to deliver my opinion through luxury brands' social media.
Contents shown in luxury brands' social media is the newest information.

Using luxury brands' social media is very trendy.
Luxury brands' social media offers customized information search.
Luxury brands' social media provides customized service.
I would like to pass along information on brand, clothing, or services from luxury brands' social media to my friends.
I would like to upload contents from luxury brands' social media on my blog or micro blog.

Reference group

I buy luxury clothing because my friends and family do.
I buy luxury clothing because my colleagues do.
I often select the luxury clothing brands that people around me wear.
I often select the luxury clothing brands that favorite idols wear.

Materialism

It is important to me to have really nice things.
I would like to be rich enough to buy anything I want.
I'd be happier if I could afford to buy more things.
It sometimes bothers me quite a bit that I cannot afford to buy all the things I want.
People place not enough emphasis on material things.
It's really true that money can buy happiness.

Practicality

Practicality and necessity are my shopping standards.
I'm not likely to buy something that is not practical.
I make purchases only when necessary.

Uniqueness

When clothing I own becomes popular among the general population, I begin to wear it less.
I often try to avoid clothing or brands that I know the general population buys.
Clothing doesn't seem to hold much value for me when it is purchased regularly by everyone.

Luxury good knowledge

I consider myself knowledgeable about brands of luxury clothing.
I enjoy learning about brands of luxury clothing.
I can recognize almost all brand names of luxury clothing.

Emotions

When I shop in a luxury clothing store, I feel
Annoyed – Pleased
Unsatisfied – Satisfied
Unpleasant – Pleasant
Depressed – Contented
Unhappy – Happy
Relaxed – Stimulated
Calm – Excited
Sluggish – Frenzied

Income

What is your individual monthly income?

- a) Less than ¥2,000 (Less than \$300)
- b) Between ¥2,000 and ¥5,000 (Between \$300 and \$770)
- c) Between ¥5,001 and ¥8,000 (Between \$771 and \$1,230)
- d) Between ¥8,001 and ¥10,000 (Between \$1,231 and \$1,540)
- e) Between ¥10,001 and ¥15,000 (Between \$1,541 and \$2,300)
- f) Between ¥15,001 and ¥30,000 (Between \$2,301 and \$4,620)
- g) Between ¥30,001 and ¥50,000 (Between \$4,621 and \$7,700)
- h) More than ¥50,000 (More than \$7,700)

What is your household monthly income?

- a) Less than ¥2,000 (Less than \$300)
- b) Between ¥2,000 and ¥5,000 (Between \$300 and \$770)
- c) Between ¥5,001 and ¥8,000 (Between \$771 and \$1,230)
- d) Between ¥8,001 and ¥10,000 (Between \$1,231 and \$1,540)
- e) Between ¥10,001 and ¥15,000 (Between \$1,541 and \$2,300)
- f) Between ¥15,001 and ¥30,000 (Between \$2,301 and \$4,620)
- g) Between ¥30,001 and ¥50,000 (Between \$4,621 and \$7,700)
- h) More than ¥50,000 (More than \$7,700)

Demographic questions

What is your gender?

- a) Male
- b) Female

What is your age?

- a) Less than 20 years old
- b) Between 20 to 29 years old
- c) Between 30 to 39 years old
- d) Between 40 to 49 years old
- e) Above 50 years old

What is your occupation?

- a) Teacher, doctor, scientist, technician, or other professional
- b) Senior manager in the government, business, or an institution
- c) General manager in the government, business, or an institution
- d) Ordinary employee in the government, business, or an institution
- e) Self-employed
- f) Student
- g) Retiree
- h) Unemployed
- i) Other (please specify)

Which of the following is your country/region of origin?

- a) Mainland China
- b) Hong Kong, Macau, Taiwan
- c) Asia (But not Mainland China, Hong Kong, Macau, and Taiwan)
- d) Africa
- e) Central America
- f) Eastern Europe
- g) European Union
- h) Middle East
- i) North America
- j) Oceania
- k) South America
- l) The Caribbean

In which of the following countries/regions do you currently live?

- a) Mainland China
- b) Hong Kong, Macau, Taiwan
- c) Asia (But not Mainland China, Hong Kong, Macau, and Taiwan)
- d) Africa
- e) Central America
- f) Eastern Europe
- g) European Union
- h) Middle East
- i) North America
- j) Oceania
- k) South America
- l) The Caribbean

In which of the following countries/regions do you shop for luxury clothing? (Choose all that apply.)

- a) Mainland China
- b) Hong Kong, Macau, Taiwan
- c) Asia (But not Mainland China, Hong Kong, Macau, and Taiwan)
- d) Africa
- e) Central America
- f) Eastern Europe
- g) European Union
- h) Middle East
- i) North America
- j) Oceania
- k) South America
- l) The Caribbean

Chinese Translation of All Scales Used in the Dissertation

| Variables | Items | |
|---------------------|-------|-------------------------------|
| Purchase Intentions | PI1 | 我有很大的可能性购买奢侈品服饰。 |
| | PI2 | 我有很大的可能性在未来一年内购买奢侈品服饰。 |
| | PI3 | 我有很大的可能性在未来三年内购买奢侈品服饰。 |
| Brand Image | BI1 | 奢侈品牌的服饰是珍贵的。 |
| | BI2 | 奢侈品牌的服饰是不可多得的。 |
| | BI3 | 奢侈品牌的服饰是独特的。 |
| | BI4 | 奢侈品牌的服饰是具有吸引力的。 |
| | BI5 | 奢侈品牌的服饰是令人惊艳的。 |
| | BI6 | 奢侈品牌的服饰是引人注目的。 |
| | BI7 | 奢侈品牌的服饰是昂贵的。 |
| | BI8 | 奢侈品牌的服饰是为富人准备的。 |
| Product Quality | PQ1 | 奢侈品牌的服饰是精雕细琢的。 |
| | PQ2 | 奢侈品牌的服饰是质量上乘的。 |
| | PQ3 | 奢侈品牌的服饰是工艺精湛的。 |
| | PQ4 | 奢侈品牌的服装是高端大气的。 |
| Store Atmosphere | SA1 | 奢侈品服饰店具有一种令人愉悦舒适的氛围。 |
| | SA2 | 奢侈品服装店的艺术陈设极具魅力。 |
| | SA3 | 奢侈品服装店店员衣着干练，服务态度热情周到。 |
| | SA4 | 奢侈品服饰店提供高品质的个性化服务。 |
| Self-actualization | S1 | 奢侈品服饰很特别，穿着它让我感觉与众不同。 |
| | S2 | 当我购买奢侈品服饰时，我会觉得自己很成功。 |
| | S3 | 穿着奢侈品服饰让我变得更自信。 |
| Social Comparison | SC1 | 我希望其他人知道我穿着昂贵的奢侈品服饰。 |
| | SC2 | 当别人称赞我的奢侈品服饰时，我感觉到开心和满足。 |
| | SC3 | 当我穿着奢侈品牌的服饰时，我觉得别人对我的印象发生了改变。 |
| Face Consciousness | FC1 | 我希望大家认为我能办成一般人办不成的事。 |

| | | |
|-----------------------|-----|----------------------------------|
| | FC2 | 我希望自己在聊天时总能说出别人不知道的事。 |
| | FC3 | 我希望我能拥有的一般人没有但渴望的东西。 |
| | FC4 | 我很在乎别人对我的夸奖和称赞。 |
| | FC5 | 我一般会尽量避免谈论自己的弱点。 |
| | FC6 | 就算我真的不懂，我会尽量避免让别人觉得我很无知。 |
| | FC7 | 我尽量在别人面前隐藏自己的弱点。 |
| Social Media | SM1 | 奢侈品牌的社交媒体可以实现与他人共享信息。 |
| | SM2 | 在奢侈品牌的社交媒体上可以与他人进行对话和交换意见。 |
| | SM3 | 在奢侈品牌的社交媒体上，我能够很容易地发表自己的意见。 |
| | SM4 | 使用奢侈品牌的社交媒体是好玩的体验。 |
| | SM5 | 奢侈品牌的社交媒体上提供的内容看起来很有趣。 |
| | SM6 | 奢侈品牌的社交媒体提供了个性化的信息搜索功能。 |
| | SM7 | 使用奢侈品牌的社交媒体是一件很时髦的事情。 |
| Reference Group | RG1 | 我想要购买奢侈品服饰是因为我的朋友和家人都这么做。 |
| | RG2 | 我想要购买奢侈品服饰是因为我的同事或同学都这么做。 |
| | RG3 | 我通常想要选择我周围的人经常会穿着的奢侈品服饰的品牌。 |
| | RG4 | 我通常想要选择我喜欢的偶像经常会穿的奢侈品服饰的品牌。 |
| Materialism | M1 | 对我而言，生活中最重要的成就包括对物质的拥有。 |
| | M2 | 我希望自己足够富有，能买任何自己想买的东西。 |
| | M3 | 如果我能买得起更多的东西，我会更加开心和快乐。 |
| | M4 | 我有时会为不能随心所欲的买喜欢的东西而感到苦恼。 |
| Practicality | P1 | 物品的实用性和必要性是我购物的标准。 |
| | P2 | 我不太可能购买一些不实用的东西。 |
| | P3 | 我通常只买我所需要的东西。 |
| Uniqueness | U1 | 当我拥有的服饰在大众中开始流行时，我会越来越少的穿它。 |
| | U2 | 我通常尽量避免购买大家都会购买的服饰或品牌。 |
| | U3 | 当一件衣服越来越多的被大众所购买时，它对我而言就没有什么价值了。 |
| Luxury good knowledge | LK1 | 我认为自己在奢侈品服饰方面知道的比较多。 |
| | LK2 | 我喜欢了解关于奢侈品服饰的知识。 |

| | | |
|----------|-----|---------------------|
| | LK3 | 我可以识别几乎所有的奢侈品服饰的品牌。 |
| Emotions | E1 | 恼火 — 喜悦 |
| | E2 | 不满意 — 满意 |
| | E3 | 不愉快 — 愉快 |
| | E4 | 压抑 — 舒心 |
| | E5 | 不快乐 — 快乐 |
| | E6 | 精神不振 — 精力旺盛 |
| | E7 | 没劲 — 兴奋 |
| | E8 | 索然无味 — 兴致勃勃 |

Results of Regression Analysis with Version as a Dummy Variable

| Variables | Coefficient | p-value |
|--|-------------|---------|
| (Constant) | 12.0685*** | 0.0000 |
| Gender | -0.1518 | 0.4635 |
| Age (Less than 30 years old) | | |
| Between 30 to 39 years old | 0.4183 | 0.0585 |
| Between 40 to 49 years old | 0.0020 | 0.9957 |
| Above 50 years old | -0.4734 | 0.3496 |
| Occupation | | |
| Senior manager in government, business, or an institution | 0.7803* | 0.0297 |
| General manager in the government, business, or an institution | 0.4514 | 0.1545 |
| Ordinary employee in the government, business, or an institution | -0.2110 | 0.5610 |
| Self-employed | -0.1146 | 0.7893 |
| Student, retiree, unemployed, and other | 0.0156 | 0.9731 |
| Version | 0.3402 | 0.1135 |

Note. The dependent variable was Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury clothing. Version was created as a dummy variable, in which data collected by the SoJump was the reference group. Female was the reference group for gender. Before conducting the regression analyses, some groups were combined due to no observation in those groups. Specifically, there was no observation in the group "less than 20 years old" for data collected by the author. Thus, "less than 20 years old" was combined with those who were age 20 to 29 years old to form the group of "less than 30 years old." "Less than 30 years old" was the reference group for age. Because no one was in the groups of "student," "retiree," and "unemployed" for data collected by the author, these three groups were combined with the "other" group to form the group "student, retiree, unemployed, and other." "Teacher, doctor, scientist, technician, or other professional" was selected as the reference group in the regression. The results show that version was not a significant variable in the regression. Thus, there was no significant differences between data collected by the author and data collected by the SoJump.

Correlation Between Variables in This Study

| | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
|---------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 0. Purchase intention | 1.00 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1. Age | 0.03 | 1.00 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2. Male | -0.05 | 0.07 | 1.00 | | | | | | | | | |
| 3. Teacher, doctor, etc. | -0.05 | 0.01 | -0.15 | 1.00 | | | | | | | | |
| 4. Senior manager | 0.12 | 0.17 | 0.01 | -0.18 | 1.00 | | | | | | | |
| 5. General manager | 0.08 | 0.02 | 0.11 | -0.30 | -0.35 | 1.00 | | | | | | |
| 6. Employee | -0.09 | -0.08 | 0.00 | -0.17 | -0.20 | -0.33 | 1.00 | | | | | |
| 7. Self-employed | -0.06 | -0.02 | 0.11 | -0.12 | -0.14 | -0.24 | -0.14 | 1.00 | | | | |
| 8. Student, retiree, etc. | -0.06 | -0.17 | -0.16 | -0.11 | -0.13 | -0.21 | -0.12 | -0.09 | 1.00 | | | |
| 9. Individual income | 0.21 | 0.11 | 0.20 | -0.13 | 0.28 | 0.05 | -0.14 | 0.13 | -0.27 | 1.00 | | |
| 10. Household income | 0.24 | -0.01 | -0.03 | -0.11 | 0.21 | -0.02 | -0.10 | 0.00 | 0.01 | 0.62 | 1.00 | |
| 11. Brand image | 0.57 | 0.14 | 0.02 | -0.10 | 0.18 | 0.11 | -0.08 | -0.07 | -0.15 | 0.21 | 0.16 | 1.00 |
| 12. Product quality | 0.52 | 0.16 | -0.06 | -0.06 | 0.14 | 0.11 | -0.05 | -0.12 | -0.14 | 0.16 | 0.15 | 0.73 |
| 13. Store atmosphere | 0.47 | 0.15 | -0.04 | -0.07 | 0.17 | 0.07 | 0.00 | -0.12 | -0.16 | 0.20 | 0.18 | 0.67 |
| 14. Self-actualization | 0.36 | 0.15 | 0.03 | -0.09 | 0.15 | 0.10 | -0.05 | -0.02 | -0.20 | 0.25 | 0.12 | 0.62 |
| 15. Social comparison | 0.23 | 0.07 | 0.03 | -0.02 | 0.08 | 0.10 | -0.08 | 0.00 | -0.17 | 0.25 | 0.14 | 0.47 |
| 16. Face consciousness | 0.33 | 0.07 | 0.05 | -0.09 | 0.15 | 0.11 | -0.08 | -0.05 | -0.13 | 0.25 | 0.17 | 0.52 |
| 17. Social media | 0.37 | 0.09 | -0.01 | -0.03 | 0.17 | 0.14 | -0.07 | -0.12 | -0.23 | 0.28 | 0.22 | 0.64 |
| 18. Reference group | 0.15 | 0.05 | 0.14 | -0.07 | 0.12 | 0.06 | -0.07 | 0.02 | -0.12 | 0.24 | 0.16 | 0.27 |
| 19. Materialism | 0.34 | 0.03 | -0.02 | -0.02 | 0.06 | 0.05 | -0.08 | 0.02 | -0.06 | 0.14 | 0.13 | 0.45 |
| 20. Practicality | -0.15 | 0.05 | 0.06 | 0.07 | -0.03 | -0.09 | 0.06 | -0.05 | 0.08 | -0.22 | -0.25 | -0.01 |
| 21. Uniqueness | 0.06 | -0.05 | -0.11 | 0.00 | 0.08 | -0.04 | 0.00 | -0.02 | -0.03 | 0.10 | 0.11 | 0.11 |
| 22. Knowledge | 0.48 | 0.09 | 0.01 | -0.13 | 0.19 | 0.11 | -0.10 | -0.06 | -0.12 | 0.28 | 0.24 | 0.53 |
| 23. Emotions | 0.32 | 0.14 | -0.08 | 0.06 | 0.10 | -0.02 | -0.02 | -0.11 | -0.03 | 0.12 | 0.18 | 0.43 |

| | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 |
|---------------------------|------|------|-------|-------|------|-------|------|------|-------|------|------|------|
| 0. Purchase intention | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1. Age | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2. Male | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3. Teacher, doctor, etc. | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4. Senior manager | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5. General manager | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 6. Employee | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 7. Self-employed | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 8. Student, retiree, etc. | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 9. Individual income | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 10. Household income | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 11. Brand image | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 12. Product quality | 1.00 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 13. Store atmosphere | 0.72 | 1.00 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 14. Self-actualization | 0.52 | 0.48 | 1.00 | | | | | | | | | |
| 15. Social comparison | 0.38 | 0.36 | 0.76 | 1.00 | | | | | | | | |
| 16. Face consciousness | 0.44 | 0.45 | 0.56 | 0.58 | 1.00 | | | | | | | |
| 17. Social media | 0.53 | 0.65 | 0.61 | 0.52 | 0.58 | 1.00 | | | | | | |
| 18. Reference group | 0.16 | 0.20 | 0.50 | 0.57 | 0.50 | 0.37 | 1.00 | | | | | |
| 19. Materialism | 0.39 | 0.42 | 0.55 | 0.51 | 0.58 | 0.53 | 0.39 | 1.00 | | | | |
| 20. Practicality | 0.07 | 0.03 | -0.07 | -0.03 | 0.03 | -0.01 | 0.01 | 0.01 | 1.00 | | | |
| 21. Uniqueness | 0.14 | 0.18 | 0.26 | 0.37 | 0.31 | 0.25 | 0.34 | 0.21 | 0.13 | 1.00 | | |
| 22. Knowledge | 0.46 | 0.50 | 0.61 | 0.50 | 0.52 | 0.58 | 0.42 | 0.50 | -0.09 | 0.30 | 1.00 | |
| 23. Emotions | 0.39 | 0.49 | 0.42 | 0.39 | 0.36 | 0.46 | 0.22 | 0.35 | 0.05 | 0.16 | 0.44 | 1.00 |