

**Examining U. S. and Chinese Students’
Purchase Intention Formation for Luxury Brands**

by

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Abstract

Drawing on the conceptual theories of Functional Theories of Attitude, Cognitive-Affective Model of Buying and Theory of Reasoned Action, this study examines the effects of individual characteristics (i.e. need for uniqueness and self-monitoring) and brand-associated variables (i.e. self-expression attitude and self-presentation attitude, and affective attitude) on consumers' purchase intention for luxury brands among both U. S. and Chinese consumers. In addition, the study also examines the difference in their purchase intention for luxury brands between U. S. and Chinese consumers.

A total of 194 U. S. students and 200 Chinese students participated in a survey to collect data to measure each construct in the study. Using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), this study finds that self-expression and self-presentation attitude toward luxury brands were related. In order to examine purchase intention among both U.S. and Chinese students, the study merged self-expression attitude and self-presentation attitude together as value-expressive attitude which was aroused by consumers' self-monitoring and influence consumers' purchase intention for luxury brands indirectly through affective attitude.

The study also finds that Chinese consumers have a stronger need for uniqueness than U.S. consumers.

Though self-expression attitude and self-presentation attitude were related in this study, an exploratory study was performed to further examine how individual self-expression attitude and self-presentation attitude influence consumers purchase intention. The

exploratory study found that generally consumers' need for uniqueness positively influences self-expression attitude toward luxury brands, and consumers' self-monitoring positively influences self-presentation attitude toward luxury brands. Both self-expression attitude and self-presentation attitude have a positive influence on purchase intention through affective attitude. In addition, consumers' self-expression attitude has a positive effect on purchase intention; Chinese students' self-presentation attitude positively influences their purchase intention.

Implications for luxury brands' marketing strategies are provided.

The study used student samples to examine consumers' purchase intention for luxury brands; future study should utilize other consumers sample which are more representative of the entire consumer population.

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Chapter 1. Introduction

Consumers worldwide purchase luxury brands. Since luxury brand markets are no longer limited to developed countries in the West, but have expanded to “new rich” markets in the East (Sherman, 2009), it is important to understand whether consumers’ motivations to purchase luxury brands differ by culture, and what accounts for those differences. The U.S. and China represent two of the most important luxury brand markets in the world. Extant studies on cultural comparison are limited to examining the impact of cultural differences on consumers’ purchase intention for luxury brands (Li & Su, 2007; Wong & Ahuvia, 1998). This study aims at a richer understanding of the purchase intention formation for luxury brands by examining how consumers’ personal characteristics such as need for uniqueness, self-monitoring, value-expressive attitudes and affective attitude impact purchase intentions for luxury brands among consumers in Eastern collectivism and Western individualism cultures.

The U.S. is the largest national economy in the world and China is the leading developing country. Chinese luxury market sales totaled 8.6 billion in Chinese currency (around \$1.26 billion) from the beginning of 2008 to January 2009 (Zhou, 2009). It is estimated that by 2015, China will become the world’s second largest consumer of luxury products and have a 29% share of the world’s luxury products’ market (Windle, 2005). Because China and the U.S. reflect collectivist and individualistic cultures respectively, consumers in these two countries are likely to behave differently toward luxury brands due to different attitudes and values. Therefore, different marketing strategies may be required to successfully meet consumers’ needs for luxury brands in these two markets.

Luxury brands represent a significant portion of consumer product sales; global sales

of luxury brands amounted to 132 billion euros (about \$198 billion) in 2002 (D'Arpizio, 2004). Louis Vuitton Moet Hennessy (LVMH), the world's leading luxury products group, recorded revenue of €7.8 billion (about \$11.42 billion) in its first half of 2009 (LVMH, 2009). However, as a result of the current economic downturn and the recent trend toward cheap trendy fashion that encroach on the luxury market (Sanchanta, 2009), luxury retailers have experienced a sales decrease (Clifford, 2008; Saranow, 2008). Growth in global sales of luxury brands is expected to further decline 7% as consumers are more reluctant to purchase luxury brands in a poor economy (Sherman, 2009). A clear and actionable understanding of the factors that influence consumers to purchase luxury brands is necessary to inform marketing strategies for global luxury brands.

Consumption of luxury brands is largely determined by social function attitudes (self-expression attitude and self-presentation attitude) as consumers express individuality and exhibit social standing through luxury brands (Wilcox, Kim, & Sen, 2009). Luxury consumption is also becoming prominent in developing countries where higher income disparities and status mobility is increasing (Kumar, Lee, & Kim, 2009). Wishing to portray an affluent lifestyle, consumers in both Western culture and Eastern culture seek to purchase luxury brands and enjoy the intangible benefits that luxury brands bring (Nueno & Quelch, 1998; Vigneron & Johnson, 2004).

Luxury brands' upscale image along with their scarcity value meets consumers' need for uniqueness (Vigneron & Johnson, 2004). Need for uniqueness may arouse self-expression attitude (Katz, 1960) that directly and/or indirectly impact purchase intentions. Also, self-monitoring predicts individual self-presentation attitude (Snyder & DeBono, 1985). In addition to the social function of self-expression and self-presentation attitudes,

consumers choose luxury brands for their affective attitude (Batra, Ramaswamy, Alden, Steenkamp, & Ramachander, 2000), as luxury brands provide individuals with hedonic rewards and sensory fulfillment (Vigneron & Johnson, 2004).

Cultural differences between U.S. and Chinese consumers are expected with regard to individual characteristics such as need for uniqueness, self-expression attitude and self-presentation attitude; therefore, the motivation of purchase intention for luxury brands will differ for consumers in these two cultures. Since Chinese consumers represent a collectivist (versus individualist) culture, they pay more attention to 'face' and to their reference group's opinion than do US consumers (Li & Su, 2007). Collectivism may weaken Chinese consumers' need for uniqueness and intensify their self-presentation attitude; while individualism is likely to strengthen U.S. consumers' need for uniqueness and bolster their self-expression attitude. As a result, self presentation attitude is expected to be a stronger determinant of Chinese consumers' purchase intention for luxury brands, while self expression attitude is expected to be a stronger predictor of purchase intention for luxury brands among U.S. consumers. Therefore, it is expected that the U.S. and Chinese consumers will differ in their need for uniqueness and their social functional attitudes toward luxury brands (e. g. self-expression attitude and self-presentation attitude).

Wilcox et al. (2009) have called for research into the relationship between attitude and cultural identity both within and across cultures. The current study examines the relationships between need for uniqueness, self-monitoring, social functional attitudes, affective attitude, and resulting purchase intentions for luxury brands in two cultures. The study not only contributes to the literature on the role of need for uniqueness, self-

monitoring, social functional attitudes and affective attitude on consumers' buying intentions in two different cultures (collectivist versus individualist), but also provides important implications for luxury brands' branding strategies both within and across cultures.

Chapter 2. Literature Review

Luxury Brands

Luxury brands, generally regarded as non-necessities, are commonly associated with “indulgence of the senses, regardless of price” (Nueno & Quelch, 1998, p.62). Although luxury brands possess the characteristics of premium quality, a heritage of craftsmanship, recognizable style, premium price, uniqueness, and global reputation (Nueno & Quelch, 1998), consumers buy luxury brands primarily for symbolic reasons to reflect their status and social goals (Wilcox et al., 2009).

Luxury brands have a low ratio of functional utility to price and high ratio of intangible utility to price (Nueno & Quelch, 1998) and possess diverse dimensions including perceived conspicuous value, perceived unique value, perceived social value, and perceived hedonic value (Vigneron & Johnson, 1999). However, consumers’ perceptions of luxury brands are not consistent across market segments, primarily because luxury is a subjective concept (Phau & Prendergast, 2000) that depends on consumers’ perceptions of indulgent value, functional value and price. Therefore, different consumers may perceive different brands to be luxury brands depending on their experiences. One consumer’s luxury brand can be another consumer’s non-luxury brand. This study defines luxury brands as those brands that provide the consumer with indulgence and are perceived as expensive for the individual. Thus, the brands perceived as luxury brands will differ for different consumers.

Conceptual Model

Functional Theories of Attitude

This study draws on the functional theory of attitude (Katz, 1960; Shavitt, 1989; Smith, Bruner, & White, 1956) which suggests that attitudes serve important value-expressive functions such as allowing self-expression and facilitating self-presentation (DeBono, 1987; Grewal, Mehta, & Kardes, 2004; Katz, 1960; Shavitt, 1989; Wilcox et al., 2009). A self-expression attitude toward luxury brands is defined as an orientation to respond toward luxury brands so as to display individual identity and underlying values (Shavitt, 1989; Wilcox et al., 2009) and communicate central beliefs (Katz, 1960; Wilcox et al., 2009); a self-presentation attitude toward luxury brands is defined as predisposition to use luxury brands to convey social image.

Self-expression attitudes help people communicate their beliefs, attitudes and values to others (Katz, 1960). Consumers motivated by a self-expression attitude choose a brand as a form of self statement to communicate their individual personality or lifestyle. Self-presentation attitudes help people develop and maintain relationships (DeBono, 1987) so consumers are motivated to consume the brand to gain or retain social approval. Prior researches suggest that consumers may purchase a luxury brand because it reflects their central values or beliefs (self-expression) or because it reflects the image they wish to convey (self-presentation) or both (Shavitt, 1989; Wilcox et al., 2009).

Cognitive-Affective Model of Buying Intentions

Many researchers agree that the power of attitude is reflected in cognitive (what we think and believe) and affective (what we feel and experience) responses (Keller, 2001;

Morris, Woo, Geason, & Kim, 2002; Petty, Wegener, & Fabrigar, 1997). Both self-expression and self-presentation attitudes reflect consumers' cognitive responses toward luxury brands, given that consumers attempt to communicate their central beliefs and social status through luxury brands. In addition to cognitive response, consumers' affective attitude also plays an important role in their cognitive-affective purchase intention formation (Zajonc & Markus, 1982; Kumar et al., 2009; Lee, Kim, Pelton, Knight, & Forney, 2008); this recognition is based on the understanding that consumers are both rational and emotional (Zajonc & Markus, 1982).

Consumers' affective attitude toward luxury brands are derived from the feelings generated by the luxury brands (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001). Previous cognitive-affective models suggest that affective attitude as well as cognition impacts consumers' purchase intentions (Li, Monroe, & Chan, 1994), and that affective attitude has a stronger association with purchase intention toward fashion products than cognition. For example, affective attitude, but not cognition, was found to have a positive influence on purchase intentions for an apparel brand among both Mexican and Indian consumers (Kumar et al., 2009; Lee et al., 2008). Clearly, affective attitude impacts purchase intention and may explain why consumers are willing to pay a premium price for luxury brands even though they can achieve similar functions through non-luxury brands.

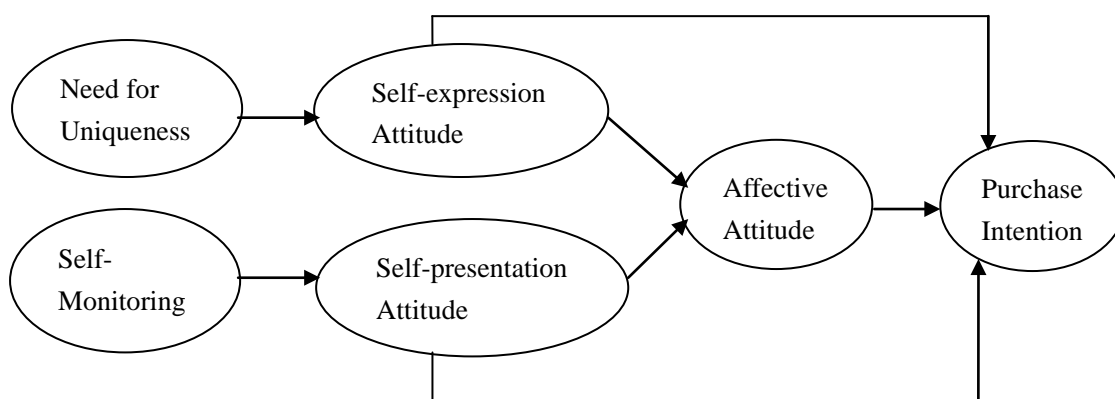
Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA)

The TRA is based on the assumption that individuals are usually rational and make systematic use of the information available to them (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). According to TRA, a person's behavioral intention is determined by the individual's attitude. Considerable

research based on Fishbein and Ajzen's (1975) Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) model shows that attitude has a direct impact on intention toward a behavior (Eastlick & Lotz, 1999; Korzaan, 2003; Penz & Stottinger, 2005; Szymanski & Hise, 2000); both self-expression attitude and self-presentation attitude toward luxury brands are expected to predict purchase intentions for luxury brands.

Individual needs, such as need for uniqueness and self-monitoring, arouse attitude (Katz, 1960), and attitude is related to the individual's affective attitude (Kumar et al., 2009; Lee et al., 2008). This study examines need for uniqueness as an individual characteristic that is antecedent to consumers' self-expression attitude toward luxury brands; self-monitoring is antecedent to self-presentation attitude toward luxury brands. Both of self-expression attitude and self-presentation attitude in turn impact purchase intention for luxury brands directly and indirectly through their impact on affective attitude. Figure 1 shows the conceptual model of consumers' purchase intention formation for luxury brands.

Figure. 1 Consumers' Purchase Intention Formation for Luxury Brands



Hypothesis Development

Influence of Need for Uniqueness on Self-expression Attitude toward Luxury Brands

Need for uniqueness.

Need for uniqueness is a significant variable predicting consumers' behavior regarding fashion choices (Workman & Kidd, 2000); it may be thought of as an individual characteristic to pursue brands and products to convey individual personal and social identity that will distinguish oneself from others (Tian, Bearden, & Hunter, 2001).

Need for uniqueness is a desire to be different or unique through behaving uniquely regardless of other's opinions or traditional rules and defending individuality in the public (Fromkin, 1972). Consumers' uniqueness can be affected by material possessions and related to scarcity value (Fromkin, Olson, Dipboye, & Barnaby, 1971). For example, consumers commonly use products to express the need for uniqueness in an industrialized society (Snyder & Fromkin, 1980). Consumers' unique image can be altered by possession or usage of different or scarce brands or products so as to present self-differentiation (Dolich, 1969; Grubb & Hupp, 1968). Luxury brands are inherently scarce due to their high price, so they can become a tool for self-differentiation among those consumers with a high need for uniqueness.

Need for uniqueness is thought to be a multi-dimensional construct including creative choice, unpopular choice, and similarity avoidance (Tian et al., 2001). Consumers who are motivated to convey their uniqueness through creative choice still want to be accepted and will conform to the social norm (Knight, & Kim, 2007; Tian et al., 2001). Creative choice oriented consumers express self-identity and uniqueness through novel brands or products;

however, they may still tailor their choices to fit within the social norm (Tian et al., 2001).

In summary, creative choice consumers seek social differentiation from most others, but make selections considered a good choice by these others. Thus, while creative choice involves some risk, these choices potentially elicit positive social evaluations of the consumer as one who is unique (Snyder & Fromkin, 1980).

Consumers motivated by unpopular choice are likely to risk social disapproval to express their uniqueness by choosing brands that deviate from social norms (Tian et al., 2001), especially if they cannot identify a means of differentiating themselves in a socially approved way. Breaking the rules or challenging existing norms risk social disapproval. However, unpopular choice, although risky, may actually strengthen the individual's social image as initially unpopular choices may later gain social acceptance and qualify the individual as a fashion leader (Heckert, 1989; Tian et al., 2001). Furthermore, unpopular choice may also result in enhanced self-image and social image if the choice is later affirmed by one's peers.

Similarity avoidance, the third dimension of need for uniqueness, drives consumers to discontinue using brands they initially preferred in order to avoid similarity to brands that are considered part of the mainstream (Tian et al., 2001). Similarity avoidance consumers avoid the purchase of brands considered to be commonplace and therefore will quickly discontinue using popular brands in order to distinguish themselves from others (Tian et al., 2001). They often select brands that are not likely to become too popular in their effort to distinguish themselves from others. These consumers are often early adopters who attract followers with their unique style and image (Tian et al., 2001).

The need for uniqueness may have a significant impact on purchase decisions for luxury brands as consumers often use luxury brands to differentiate themselves in the society. Through their forbiddingly high price and restricted distribution, luxury brands satisfy consumers' needs to be unique (Vigneron & Johnson, 2004). The high prices exclude most consumers who earn an average income, thereby differentiating luxury brands holders from common people (Park, Rabolt, & Jeon, 2008; Tian & McKenzie, 2001). The restricted distribution strategy common to most luxury brands, offers luxury brands only in the largest cities in the U.S. and China, so only a small portion of consumers in either country have access to the luxury brand. Furthermore, luxury brands offer several distinguishing attributes such as unique features, exclusivity and prestige appeal (Knight & Kim, 2007) to satisfy consumers with a desire to express distinctiveness.

Self-expression attitude toward luxury brands.

Luxury brands are often used by consumers to develop and strengthen their unique personal image. Previous research finds that consumers use unique brands to reflect their personalities (Solomon, 2003) given that luxury brands' recognizable designs visibly help to communicate consumers' intrinsic values (Park et al., 2008). Therefore, need for uniqueness may influence self-expression attitude toward luxury brands.

Attitude toward luxury brands is defined as a predisposition to respond in a specific way toward luxury brands (Katz, 1960; Rosenberg, 1960; Tsai, 2005). Self-expression attitudes toward luxury brands communicate central beliefs (Katz, 1960; Wilcox et al., 2009). Thus, self-expression attitudes toward a brand motivate individuals to consume it in order to express their individual characteristics (Snyder & Debono, 1985; Wilcox et al.,

2009).

Conceptually, consumers' personal characteristics, such as need for uniqueness and self-monitoring, shape their attitude (Katz, 1960; Shavitt, 1989) and have been successfully used to predict self-expression and self-presentation attitudes (DeBono, 1987; Snyder & DeBono, 1985). Extending DeBono's (1987) findings, consumers' need for uniqueness also predict their self-expression attitude toward luxury brands, because luxury brand consumers generally prefer brands with an identity consistent with their own values and individuality (Parker, Hermans, & Schaefer, 2004).

The desire to express uniqueness may be driven by any one or more of the three dimensions of need for uniqueness. All three dimensions may positively influence the self-expression attitude toward luxury brands, because individuals will prefer the brands that communicate personal characteristics if they have high need for uniqueness.

H1a: Need for uniqueness will positively influence self-expression attitude toward luxury brands.

Influence of Self-Monitoring on Self-presentation Attitude toward Luxury Brands

Self-monitoring is a personality construct related to individual differences in self-presentation (Snyder, 1974; Snyder, 1979) and is theorized to govern an individual's behaviors (Snyder, 1979). Theoretically, self-monitoring is defined in two ways: the degree to which people can regulate their response to others in social situations, and the extent to which people are sensitive to social cues (Snyder, 1986; Snyder, Berscheid, & Matwychuk, 1988). Self-monitoring is a sense which indicates what self presentation is appropriate and what is not in a certain situation (Snyder, 1974).

As consumers' personal characteristics shape attitude (Katz, 1960; Shavitt, 1989), consumers' self-monitoring may influence their self-presentation attitude toward luxury brands. Luxury brands symbolize social classifications and group affiliations and are often used by consumers to develop and strengthen their social image (Park et al., 2008). Consumers use luxury brands to publicize their success and prestige, to help them fit into certain social situations or reference groups, and to make other people aware that they possess luxury brands (Wilcox et al., 2009).

According to Snyder (1974), an individual who is high in self-monitoring concern about social appropriateness uses these cues to monitor his/her own non-verbal presentation such as dress and appearance. These high self-monitoring individuals are very sensitive to social images (Snyder, 1974) and are likely to tailor their behavior to fit social norms (Lippa, 1976). So consumers who have high self-monitoring are more willing to pay more for products if they are advertised to convey a desired image (Snyder & DeBono, 1985). In this study, consumers' self-monitoring is expected to positively relate to their self-presentation attitude toward luxury brands, as luxury brand consumers desire to bolster their social image by displaying upscale and unique status (Parker et al., 2004).

H1b: Self-monitoring will positively influence self-presentation attitudes toward luxury brands.

Influence of Attitudes toward Luxury Brands on Purchase Intention

According to the TRA model, intention toward behavior is predicted by attitude (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975); therefore, both self-expression attitude and self-presentation attitude toward luxury brands are expected to predict purchase intention for luxury brands.

Influence of self-expression attitude toward luxury brands on purchase intention.

Wilcox et al. (2009) found that consumers with a salient self-expression attitude tend to buy real luxury brands over fake ones because consumers who hold high self-expression attitudes tend to maximize the consistency between the products they consume and their intrinsic beliefs and values. Those consumers who are more self-expression oriented seek good quality and dependable brands to reflect their intrinsic values and beliefs.

Luxury brands that are believed to have superior quality communicate the luxury brands holder's intrinsic values such as high-quality and upscale lifestyle. When consumers perceive that luxury brands are consistent with their underlying characteristics and reflect their intrinsic values, willingness to purchase also increases. Consistent with the findings of Wilcox, et al (2009), a self-expression attitude is expected to predict purchase intentions for luxury brands. Therefore, it is expected that consumers' self-expression attitude toward luxury brands will positively impact their buying intention for luxury brands.

H2a: Self-expression attitude toward luxury brands will positively influence purchase intentions for luxury brands.

Influence of self-presentation attitude toward luxury brands on purchase intention.

Self-presentation oriented consumers are motivated to consume luxury brands for image-related reasons (Shavitt & Lowrey, & Han, 1992; Wilcox et al., 2009). Because luxury brands convey prestige, high social hierarchy, and an upscale image (Grossman & Shapiro, 1988; Nueno & Quelch, 1998), they are highly desired by consumers who have strong self-presentation attitudes and pay more attention to their image. Previous findings show that Korean consumers' self-presentation attitude promote their purchase intentions

toward luxury brands as symbols of prosperity and social status (Park et al., 2008). Other researchers show that consumers who have a strong self-presentation attitude will have a strong willingness to buy premium brands for symbolic value (Park & Young, 1986; Van Kempen, 2003).

H2b: Self-presentation attitude toward luxury brands has a positive influence on purchase intentions for luxury brands.

Influence of Value-Expressive Attitudes -- Self-expression and Self-presentation -- toward Luxury Brands on Affective Attitude

Consumers develop a strong emotional attachment to brands that are linked to central attitudes (Grewal et al., 2004). Affective attitude reflects emotional responses (Wood, 2000), and is derived from feelings or experience (Kumar et al, 2009; Sweeney & Soutar, 2001). Traditionally, affective attitude is measured by consumers' feelings (Keller, 2001), such as joy and pleasure (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001).

Consumers are likely to respond favorably to luxury brands that are perceived to be consistent with their values and goals (e.g., self-expression and self-presentation) because they are guided by their desire to maximize the consistency between their brands and their attitudes (Snyder & DeBono, 1985). Thus, successful self-presentation, by conveying one's status and garnering esteem, strengthens the emotional rewards from possession and their use of luxury brands (Lee et al., 2008; Vigneron & Johnson, 2004). Likewise, self-expression, by conveying ones individuality, also strengthens the emotional rewards from possession and use of luxury brands.

Previous studies find that consumers' attitudes toward brands or products have a

positive impact on their affective attitude. For example, Mexican and Indian consumers' attitudes toward American products are positively related to their affective attitude (Kumar et al., 2009; Lee et al., 2008). It is expected that consumers' value expressive attitudes -- that is, self-expression attitude and self-presentation attitude toward luxury brands will have a positive impact on the affective attitude of luxury brands (Kumar et al, 2009; Sweeney & Soutar, 2001).

H3a: Self-expression attitudes toward luxury brands will have a positive influence on affective attitude.

H3b: Self-presentation attitudes toward luxury brands will have a positive influence on affective attitude.

Influence of Affective Attitude on Purchase Intention for Luxury Brands

Purchase intention for luxury brands is the consumer's tendency to purchase the brands in the future. Affective attitude is associated with positive feelings and affective statements derived from using the brands and drives purchase intentions (Compeau, Grewal, & Monroe, 1998; Gobe, 2001; Gountas & Gountas, 2007; Jang & Namkung, 2009; Supphellen, 2000; Sweeney & Soutar, 2001; White & Yu, 2005; Yu & Dean, 2001).

Consumers who perceive a more positive affective attitude from luxury brands are more likely to buy the brands.

Because luxury brands satisfy the social function of attitudes (e.g. self-expression and self-presentation), affective attitude is likely to be aroused. This affective attitude will then impact consumers' buying intentions for luxury brands. Affective attitude has been shown to have greater impact on intentions and behaviors than cognition (Batra & Homer, 2004)

suggesting that affective attitude will mediate the impact of attitudes on purchase intentions. This study posits that consumers' affective attitudes positively influence purchase intentions for luxury brands.

H4: Affective attitude will have a positive impact on purchase intentions for luxury brands.

Impact of Cultural Difference on Purchase Intention for Luxury Brands

The U.S. and China represent two very different cultures; therefore, U.S. and Chinese consumers may differ in their need for uniqueness, social function of attitudes toward luxury brands, and their purchase intention for luxury brands.

Cultural differences in need for uniqueness.

The need for uniqueness is likely to differ among U.S. and Chinese consumers. Burns and Brady (1992) examined the consumers' need for uniqueness in two different cultures—U.S. and Malaysia, and found that need for uniqueness varied between Western and Eastern cultures. Specially, U.S. students were found to display their need for uniqueness regardless of others' opinions or ideas. Based on Burns and Brady's (1992) findings, the current study expects that U.S. and Chinese consumers are likely to differ in need for uniqueness.

Chinese society, like Malaysian society, represents Eastern culture and is nonindustrialized societies. Thus, Chinese consumers may be similar to Malaysian consumers with respect to their need for uniqueness.

Need for uniqueness is driven by counter-conformity motivation (Tian et al., 2001), and these two countries represent cultures that differ in conformity motivations. Consumers who have a high need for uniqueness are likely to resist popular brands in favor of scarce

brands to display their differentiation (Grubb & Hupp, 1968; Tian et al., 2001). China is a collectivistic society that promotes conformity (Hofsted, 1991; Li & Su, 2007; Wong & Ahuvia, 1998). Chinese consumers care about their reference group's opinions, give strong consideration to the influence of self behaviors on their reference group, and stay in tune with the feelings of their group (Lee et al., 2008; Wong & Ahuvia, 1998). As a result, U.S. consumers are expected to have a stronger need for uniqueness than Chinese students because consumers in high-conformity societies such as China, compared to individualist societies such as the U.S., rely more on interpersonal relationships to define the social norm and appropriate social behaviors.

H5: U.S. consumers will have a higher need for uniqueness than do Chinese consumers.

Cultural difference in attitude and purchase intention.

Chinese culture places more emphasis on 'we-identity' and social group esteem maintenance (Hofstede, 1991; Li & Su, 2007) and regards individual people in the context of his/ her relations with others. For example, a Chinese man views himself as a son, a brother, a husband and a father (Chu, 1985), therefore, the individual not only represents one's own prestige but also one's family, relatives and friends (Joy, 2001).

Chinese consumers are likely to hold a stronger self-presentation attitude than U.S. consumers for two reasons. First, Chinese consumers have strong ideas about publicly consumed brands, and emphasize public reputation through possession and display of luxury brands to develop one's self-concept in the society (Wong & Ahuvia, 1998). Li and Su (2007) find that Chinese consumers are more likely to be influenced by their reference

group and related product brands to maintain ‘face’ than are the U.S. consumers. Unlike U.S. consumers, Chinese consumers feel they save face when they possess well-known luxury brands, as they are under strong pressure to meet the expectations of others for the sake of face (Li & Su, 2007). Therefore, Chinese consumers need to own the luxury brands which their reference group affirms in order to maintain face. Thus, self-presentation attitude toward luxury brands is likely to be a very strong factor influencing Chinese consumers to purchase luxury brands.

Secondly, Chinese consumers care about their personal hierarchy in the society, and they are more likely to associate brands with prestige and social hierarchy than are U.S. consumers (Li & Su, 2007). The possession of luxury brands implies consumers’ position in society and the reference group to which they belong. Since luxury brands satisfy Chinese consumers need to display esteem and conform to their reference group, their self-presentation attitude is highly associated with affective attitude. Thus, both the self-presentation attitude—affective attitude path and the self-presentation attitude—purchase intention path will be stronger among Chinese consumers.

H6a: Self-presentation attitude will have a stronger impact on affective attitude among Chinese consumers than among U.S. consumers.

H6b: Self-presentation attitude will have a stronger impact on purchase intention among Chinese consumers than U.S. consumers.

Moreover, U.S. consumers are expected to have a stronger self-expression attitude than Chinese consumers. The U.S. culture is more concerned about ‘I-identity’ and personal self-esteem enhancement (Hofstede, 1991; Li & Su, 2007); therefore, self-image is likely to

be more important than social image to U.S. consumers. The U.S. individualist culture emphasizes independence and individual responsibility for decisions (Joy, 2001; Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Reykowski, 1994). Thus, in an individualist culture, individual consumers represent the unit for social behavior and prestige, suggesting that self-expression is likely to be more important for U.S. consumers than for Chinese consumers.

Because U.S. consumers have a strong self-expression attitude that is highly associated with affective attitude, it is expected that self-expression attitude toward luxury brands is not only a dominant factor influencing U.S. consumers to purchase luxury brands, but also highly associated with their affective attitude.

H7a: Self-expression attitude will have a stronger impact on affective attitude among U.S. consumers than Chinese consumers.

H7b: Self-expression attitude will have a stronger impact on purchase intention among U.S. consumers than Chinese consumers.

Chapter 3. Methodology

Research Design and Sample

A survey was conducted to collect data to examine the influence of consumers' personal characteristics (i.e. need for uniqueness and self-monitoring) on their purchase intentions toward luxury brands. Both U.S. and Chinese students were asked to list up to three of their favorite apparel and/or accessory luxury brands and to use their favorite luxury brand (the first one listed) as a point of reference when answering the subsequent questions about luxury brands. Measurement and structural models of purchase intention toward luxury brands were constructed to be used with both U.S. and Chinese students.

Luxury apparel/accessory products are chosen because luxury apparel/accessory represents a huge market. It is estimated that the total luxury apparel market will grow to US\$1 trillion by 2010 in the U. S (Just-Style, 2006). The U.S. has a mature luxury apparel market and China has experienced success in the luxury apparel market in recent years due to growth of high-income population and Chinese government regulatory change to lower tariffs on apparel imports after joining World Trade Organization.

Participants were college students attending a major public university in southeast U.S. and a major public university in Shanghai, China. Students are an important future market for luxury brands and are chosen as the sample for four reasons. First, students are a major consumer group for apparel products; U.S. students spend more than \$5 billion a year on clothes and shoes nationally (Martindale, 2007). Second, since students have more accesses

to the wardrobes and styles of celebrities from media than ever before, they are knowledgeable about luxury brands and likely to desire luxury brands for both self-expression and self-presentation. Third, college students are establishing life-long buying patterns and loyalties, and are likely to become important consumer markets for luxury brands in both the U.S. and China. The major difference between college students and other luxury brand consumers is that most college students are not as wealthy as those who already have professional careers because college students are not yet financially independent. But college students do have exposure to luxury brands and potential to become luxury brand consumers. Fourth, college students represent an easily accessible sample.

The questionnaire was initially developed in English, and then translated into Chinese by the researcher in order to survey Chinese students. A Chinese master's student majoring in English in a public university at Shanghai, China was asked to back translate the Chinese questionnaire into English. The original and back-translated English questionnaire were compared and modified as necessary to eliminate discrepancies between the two versions of the questionnaire in order to verify the accuracy of the translation.

The survey was administered in a classroom setting and students in multiple classes both in U.S. and China completed the self-administered questionnaire on a voluntary basis. After removing incomplete questionnaires, a final sample of 394 usable responses remained, 194 U.S. students and 200 Chinese students. Sixty-three percent of the total sample was female; however, 54% of the U.S. sample was female whereas 72% of the Chinese sample was female. The ages in the U.S. sample ranged from 19 to 38, with a

mean age of 20 years, and the ages in the Chinese sample ranged from 17 to 24, with a mean age of 19 years. The majority of both sample groups are freshman; 85% of the U.S. sample had purchased one of their favorite luxury brands while only 31% of the Chinese sample had purchased one of their favorite luxury brands. However, 82% of the Chinese sample had browsed or shopped at their favorite luxury brand stores; 95% of U.S. sample had browsed or shopped at their favorite luxury brand stores. About 54% of the U.S. sample spent more than 50 dollars per month on luxury apparel and accessories compared to 29% of the Chinese sample who spent more than 50 dollars per month. The most popular luxury brands among U.S. sample are Ralph Lauren Polo and Coach; the most popular luxury brands among Chinese sample are Louis Vuitton and Nike.

Participants used their favorite luxury apparel and accessory brand as a point of reference to answer the brand-associated questions because perceptions of luxury brands vary due to life style, taste, and class. A brand considered as a desirable luxury brand by one consumer may not be considered as a desirable luxury brand by another consumer. This study avoids framing participants' responses with a single brand or a limited selection of luxury brands by examining consumers' attitudes and purchase intentions with respect to luxury brands in general rather than to a specific luxury brand or a limited set of luxury brands.

Construct Measures

Well developed measures were chosen for each of the constructs in this study including individual characteristics (i.e. need for uniqueness and self-monitoring) and brand-associated variables (i.e. self-expression attitude, self-presentation attitude, affective

attitude, and purchase intention for their favorite luxury brand). Each item in the measures was rated on a 7-point Likert-type scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

Need for uniqueness. The scale developed by Tian et al. (2001) to measure the three dimensions of need for uniqueness —creative choice counter-conformity, unpopular choice counter-conformity and similarity avoidance counter-conformity— was used in this study (see Table 1). Tian et al.’s (2001) scale is appropriate for use in this study because it is shown to have good internal consistency reliability, test-retest reliability, discriminant validity and good nomological validity. The original 31 item scale, developed by Tian et al. (2001), is a product and brand oriented scale, so it is proved to be a good choice for the current study. One scale item was modified to relate specifically to luxury brands.

Table 1

Scale Items for the Need for Uniqueness Measure

Variable	Dimensions	Item	Source
Need for Uniqueness	Creative Choice	1. An important goal is to find the luxury brand that communicates my uniqueness (creative1).	Tian, Bearden, and Hunter, (2001)
		2. I have sometimes purchase unusual brands or products to create a more distinctive personal image (creative2).	
		3. I look for one-of-a-kind products or brands so that I create a style that is all my own (creative3).	
		4. Often when buying apparel and accessories, and important goal of mine is to find brands that communicate my uniqueness (creative4).	
		5. I often combine possessions in such a way that I create a personal image for myself that can't be duplicated (creative5).	
		6. I often try to find a more interesting version of run-of-the-mill products because I enjoy being original (creative6).	

7. I seek to develop my personal uniqueness by buying special brands or products (creative7).

8. Having an eye for products that are interesting and unusual assists me in establishing a distinctive image (creative8).

9. The products and brands that I like best are the ones that express my individuality (creative9).

10. I often think of the things I buy and do in terms of how I can use them to shape a more unusual personal image (creative10).

11. I'm often on the lookout for new products or brands that will add to my personal uniqueness (creative11).

Need for Uniqueness	Unpopular Choice	12. When dressing, I have sometimes dared to be different in ways that others are likely to disapprove (unpopular12).	Tian, Bearden, and Hunter (2001)
		13. When it comes to the products I buy and the situations in which I use them, customs and rules are made to be broken (unpopular13).	
		14. I often dress unconventionally even when it's likely to offend others (unpopular14).	
		15. I rarely act in agreement with what others think are the right things to buy (unpopular15).	
		16. Concern for being out of place doesn't prevent me from wearing what I want to wear (unpopular16).	
		17. I enjoy challenging the prevailing taste of people I know by buying something they wouldn't seem to accept (unpopular17).	
		18. I have often violated the understood rules of my social group regarding what to buy or own (unpopular18).	
		19. I have gone against the understood rules of my social group regarding when and how certain products are used (unpopular19).	
		20. When it comes to the products I buy and the situations in which I use them, I have often broken customs and rules (unpopular20).	
		21. If someone hinted that I had been dressing inappropriately for a social situation, I would continue dressing in the same manner (unpopular21).	

22. When I dress differently, I'm often aware that others think I'm peculiar, but I don't care (unpopular22).

Need for Uniqueness	Similarity Avoidance	<p>23. When products or brands I like become extremely popular, I lose interest in them (similarity23).</p> <p>24. I avoid products or brands that have already been accepted and purchased by the average consumers (similarity24).</p> <p>25. When a product I own becomes popular among the general population, I begin using it less (similarity25).</p> <p>26. I often try to avoid products or brands that I know bought by the general population (similarity26).</p> <p>27. I dislike brands or products that are customarily purchased by everyone (similarity27).</p> <p>28. I give up wearing fashions I've purchased once they become popular among the general public (similarity28).</p> <p>29. The more commonplace a product or brand is among the general population, the less interested I am in buying it (similarity29).</p> <p>30. Products don't seem to hold much value for me when they are purchase regularly by everyone (similarity30).</p> <p>31. When a style of clothing I own becomes too common, I usually quit wearing it (similarity31).</p>	Tian, Bearden, and Hunter (2001)
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Self-monitoring. Lennox and Wolfe's (1984) 12-item self-monitoring scale was used to measure self-monitoring in this study (see Table2). Lennox and Wolfe's self-monitoring scale measures people's ability to modify self-presentation and their sensitivity to expressive behavior of others and exhibits good face validity and internal consistency.

Table 2

Scale Items of self-Monitoring

Variable	Items	Source
Self-Monitoring	<p>1. I am often able to read people’s true emotions correctly through their eyes (sensitivity1).</p> <p>2. In conversations, I am sensitive to even the slightest change in the facial expression of the person I’m conversing with (sensitivity2).</p> <p>3. I can usually tell when others consider a joke to be in bad taste, even though they may laugh convincingly (sensitivity3).</p> <p>4. I can usually tell when I’ve said something inappropriate by reading it in the listener’s eyes (sensitivity4).</p> <p>5. If someone is lying to me, I usually know it at once from the person’s expression (sensitivity5).</p> <p>6. In social situations, I have the ability to alter my behavior if I feel the need to do so (ability1).</p> <p>7. I have the ability to control the way I come across to people, depending on the impression I wish to give them (ability2).</p> <p>8. When I feel the image I am portraying isn’t working, I can readily change it to something that does (ability3).</p> <p>9. I have trouble changing my behavior to suit different people and different situation (ability4).</p> <p>10. I have found that I can adjust my behavior to meet the requirements of any situation I find myself in (ability5).</p> <p>11. Even when it might be to my advantage, I have difficulty putting up a good front (ability6).</p> <p>12. Once I know what the situation calls for, it’s easy for me to regulate my actions accordingly (ability7).</p>	Lennox and Wolfe (1984)

Self-expression attitude toward luxury brands. Self-expression attitude toward luxury

brands was measured by the scale developed by Wilcox et al. (2009) to measure

consumers' value-expressive attitude toward luxury brands. The scale showed good reliability. For example, the reliability for item "luxury brands help me express myself" is .89. The original scale statements were modified slightly to assess participants' attitude toward their favorite luxury brand as opposed to luxury brands in general (see Table 3). For example, the original scale item: "Luxury brands reflect the kind of person I see myself to be" was revised to: "This luxury brand reflects the kind of person I see myself to be."

Table 3

Scale Items for Value-Expressive Attitude, Affective Attitude and Purchase Intention

Variable	Dimensions	Items	Source
Value-expressive attitude	Self-expression Attitude	1. This luxury brand reflects the kind of person I see myself to be (express1).	Wilcox, Kim and Sen (2009)
		2. This luxury brand helps me communicate my self-identity (express2).	
		3. This luxury brand helps me express myself (express3).	
		4. This luxury brand helps me define myself (express4).	
Value-expressive attitude	Self-Presentation Attitude	1. This luxury brand is a symbol of social status (present1).	Wilcox, Kim and Sen (2009)
		2. This luxury brand helps me fit into important social situations (present2).	
		3. I like to be seen wearing this luxury brand (present3).	
		4. I enjoy it when people know I am wearing this luxury brand (present4).	
Affective attitude		1. This luxury brand is one that I would enjoy (emotion1).	Sweeney and Soutar (2001)
		2. This luxury brand would make me want to use it (emotion2).	
		3. This luxury brand is the one that I would feel relaxed about using (emotion3).	

	4. This luxury brand would make me feel good (emotion4).	
	5. This luxury brand would give me pleasure (emotion5).	
Purchase intention for luxury brand	1. If I were going to purchase a luxury product, I would consider buying this brand (intention1).	Dodds, Monroe, and Grewal (1991)
	2. If I were shopping for a luxury brand, the likelihood I would purchase this luxury brand is high (intention2).	
	3. My willingness to buy this luxury brand would be high if I were shopping for a luxury brand (intention3).	
	4. The probability I would consider buying this luxury brand is high (intention4).	

Self-presentation attitude toward luxury brands. Self-presentation attitude toward luxury brands was also measured by the four item scale developed in Wilcox et al.'s (2009) study to measure consumers' social-adjustive attitude toward luxury brands (see Table 3). The original scale exhibited good reliability. (i.e. the reliability of item 'luxury brands help me fit into important social situations is .74). Again, the original scale statements were modified slightly to refer to their favorite luxury brand. For example, the attitude was assessed in this study with the statement: "I like to be seen wearing this luxury brand" as opposed to "luxury brands."

Affective attitude. Affective attitude toward luxury brands was measured by the five item scale developed by Sweeney and Soutar (2001) to measure emotional value. This scale was originally created to measure consumers' emotional feeling about brands/products, and exhibited good reliability, factor structure, convergent and discriminant validity. The original scale statements were modified slightly to reflect participants' attitude toward their

favorite luxury brand rather than toward general brands (see Table 3). So, the affective attitude was assessed with the statement as “This luxury brand is one that I would enjoy” as opposed to “The brand is one that I would enjoy.”

Purchase intention. Intention to purchase luxury brands was measured by the four item behavioral intention scale developed by Dodds, Monroe, and Grewal’s (1991) to measure intention to purchasing brands/products. The scale developed by Dodds et al. (1991) showed good reliability and validity. The original items were similarly modified for this study to examine participants’ intention to purchase their favorite luxury brand. For example, ‘this luxury brand’ was substituted for ‘brands/products’ in this study (See Table 3).

Chapter 4. Results and Discussion

The model examining U.S. and Chinese students' purchase intentions toward luxury brands consist of two exogenous variables (i.e. need for uniqueness and self-monitoring) and four endogenous variables (i.e. self-expression attitude toward luxury brands, self-presentation attitude toward luxury brands, affective attitude, and purchase intention toward luxury brands). Hypotheses were tested using structural equation modeling (SEM) because it has the ability to reduce measurement error, test model with multiple dependent variables, test coefficients across multiple groups and test the model overall rather than coefficients individually. Parameters were estimated using the maximum likelihood method. The data analysis, conducted by following the two-step approach (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988), was used to validate the measurement model and test the proposed hypotheses. The former is accomplished primarily through confirmatory factor analysis (CFA); the structural models displaying the relationships among the latent variables were then analyzed to test the hypotheses.

Measurement Model

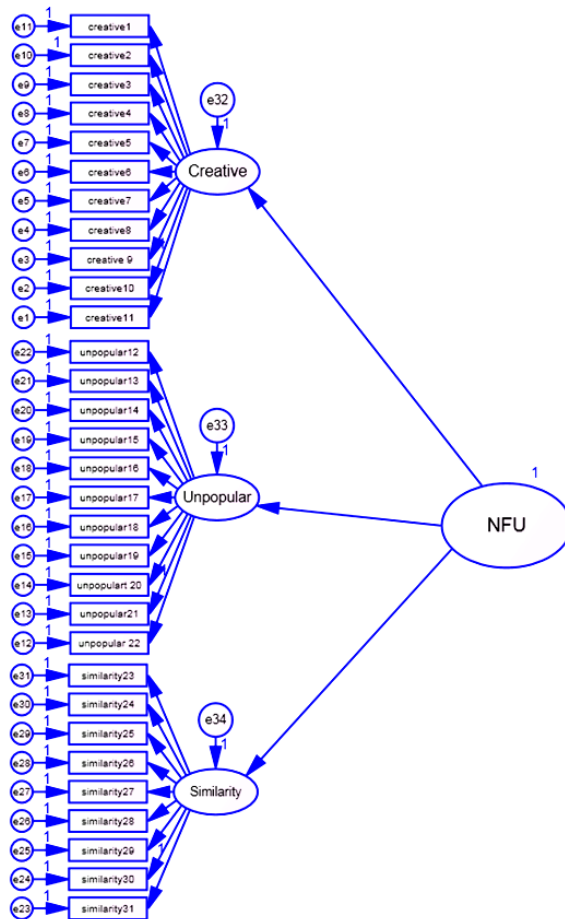
It was important to assess the factors and loadings of measure items to determine whether the chosen items appropriately measured the construct in this study. Each measurement item was examined for the U.S. student group and the Chinese student group separately in order to verify that all items were reliable measures of the intended construct for both students groups.

The need for uniqueness scale exhibits a higher-order factor model structure in which each of the three dimensions are first-order factors (Tian et al., 2001). Following Tian et al.'s (2001) study, need for uniqueness was measured as a second-order factor with the three first-order factors as three dimensions. Then the mean scores of each dimension items were later used as the direct measure items of need for uniqueness in the structural equation models. The confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) result for the 31 items of need for uniqueness as the second-order factor showed a poor model fit as: $\chi^2 (65) = 1,617.27$, $p < .001$; χ^2/df ratio = 3.75; GFI = .770; CFI = .807; RMSEA = .084. Figure 2 shows the graphic model of need for uniqueness as a second-order variable with the original 31 items.

Although the measurement scales for need for uniqueness were well developed in Tian et al.'s (2001) study, the data in this study did not fit the model very well for the entire student sample. Other studies using need for uniqueness developed by Tian et al. (2001) retained fewer items to achieve a better model fit (Knight & Kim, 2007; Kumar et al., 2009). Thus, in order to better define the dimensions of the construct – need for uniqueness – and identify the underlying structure of a relatively large set of need for uniqueness items, an EFA was performed (Green & Salkind, 2008) on data from each country.

The initial EFA results revealed that U.S. students displayed five sub-dimensions of need for uniqueness and that Chinese students displayed seven sub-dimensions of need for uniqueness. After the item-to-item comparison of factor components and factor loadings for each item and removing those items which have high cross-loadings, five items of creative choice, five items of unpopular choice and seven items of similarity avoidance.

Figure 2 Graphic Model of Need for Uniqueness as a Second-Order Variable with 31 items



Notes: $\chi^2(65) = 1,617.27, p < .001$; χ^2/df ratio = 3.75; GFI = .770; CFI = .807; RMSEA = .084.

To confirm the factor structure, a second EFA of the 17 retained need for uniqueness items showed that three items of unpopular choice (unpopular14, 16, 21), three items of creative choices (creative6, 8, 11) and three items of similarity avoidance (similarity25, 26, 27) were grouped together consistently between the U.S. and Chinese groups with high factor loadings. Therefore, these nine items were then subjected to a final EFA; the results showed that the nine items were grouped into three groups and had good factor loadings for both U.S.

and Chinese students (see Table 4). The nine items of three dimensions of need for uniqueness were also showed good reliability for both U.S. and Chinese students (see Table 4).

Table 4

Factor Loadings and Reliability of Nine Retained Items of Need for Uniqueness

Dimensions of Need for Uniqueness	Items	Factor Loading (U.S.)	Reliability (U.S.)	Factor Loading (China)	Reliability (China)	Factor Loading (both)	Reliability (both)
Creative choice	creative6	.810	.810	.881	.727	.819	.769
	creative8	.803		.765		.786	
	creative11	.788		.759		.740	
Similarity avoidance	similarity25	.781	.597	.835	.799	.812	.682
	similarity27	.736		.777		.745	
Unpopular choice	similarity 26	.724		.681		.742	
	unpopular21	.832	.640	.801	.650	.774	.632
	unpopular14	.700		.754		.773	
	unpopular16	.687		.687		.661	

CFA was then performed to examine the construct structure of need for uniqueness as the second-order factor by examining the data separately in two groups (US and Chinese) and also as one combined group. By comparing item-to-item across the two individual groups, it is found that unpopular choice 16 (.439) and similarity avoidance 25 (.447) had a low factor loading among the U.S. group. In order to make all the retained items consistent across both U.S. and Chinese students, unpopular16 and similarity 25 were also dropped.

The seven retained items (creative6, creative8, creative11, unpopular14, unpopular21, similarity26 and similarity 27) were included in a second CFA. The results showed the seven remaining items provided good measures of the constructs across both groups (See Table 5).

Table 5

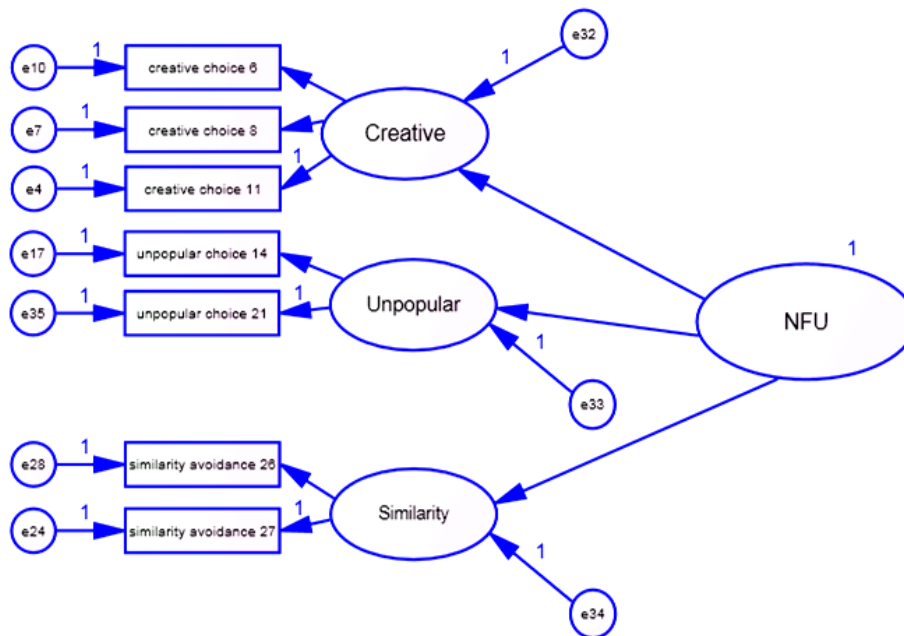
CFA Factor Loadings for NFU as a Second-Order Variable

			Factor Loading (U.S)	Factor Loading (China)	Factor Loading (both)
Creative	<---	need for uniqueness	.803	.777	.753
Unpopular	<---	need for uniqueness	.607	.595	.609
Similarity	<---	need for uniqueness	.806	.783	.829
creative11	<---	Creative	.712	.623	.665
creative8	<---	Creative	.844	.772	.812
creative6	<---	Creative	.751	.679	.706
unpopular14	<---	Unpopular	.930	.547	.745
unpopular21	<---	Unpopular	.549	.741	.674
simiavoid27	<---	Similarity	.782	.669	.722
simiavoid26	<---	Similarity	.892	.912	.909

The retained seven items -- creative choice counter-conformity (3 items), unpopular choice counter-conformity (2 items), and similarity avoidance (2 items) were used to test

the fit of the resulting measure for the second-order variable containing three first-order dimensions was good: $\chi^2(11) = 20.08$, $p = .044$, χ^2/df ratio = 1.825; GFI = .986; CFI = .989; RMSEA = .046. Figure 3 displays the graphic model of need for uniqueness as a second-order variable with retained items. Mean scores for the three dimensions of need for uniqueness were then used as three separate observed items for the need for uniqueness latent variable and tested again using CFA to measure the construct. However, the CFA result showed that unpopular is an inappropriate measurement item of need for uniqueness for both U.S. and Chinese students (see Table 6) because the factor loadings were low (.503; .466), so unpopular choice was deleted from further study.

Figure 3. Graphic Model of Need for Uniqueness as a Second-Order Variable



Notes: $\chi^2(11) = 20.08$, $p = .044$, χ^2/df ratio = 1.825; GFI = .986; CFI = .989; RMSEA = .046.

Table 6

Factor Loading of Need for Uniqueness as First-Order Variable with Three Dimensions as Observed Items

			Factor Loading (U.S.)	Factor Loading (China)	Factor Loading (both)
Creative	<---	Need for uniqueness	.721	.660	.662
Unpopular	<---	Need for uniqueness	.503	.466	.498
Similarity	<---	Need for uniqueness	.737	.679	.741

In order to define the construct's dimensions and identify the underlying structure of the 12 items for self-monitoring (Green & Salkind, 2008), a CFA was used in an exploratory manner to identify the factor structure and to eliminate the scale items with low factor loadings (less than .580) for either U.S. or Chinese students. The factor loadings of five items (sensitivity2, sensitivity3, sensitivity5, ability4 and ability6) were low for U.S students and one item (ability5) was low for Chinese students, so these six items were deleted from further study. Tables 7 and 8 provide the factor loadings of both the original and retained self-monitoring scale.

Table 7

Factor Loading of Self-Monitoring across U.S. and Chinese Students

			Factor Loading (U.S.)	Factor Loading (China)
ability7	<---	Self-monitoring	.698	.633
ability5	<---	Self-monitoring	.753	.573
ability3	<---	Self-monitoring	.704	.654

			Factor Loading (U.S.)	Factor Loading (China)
ability2	<---	Self-monitoring	.681	.743
ability1	<---	Self-monitoring	.669	.684
sensitivity5	<---	Self-monitoring	.529	.547
sensitivity4	<---	Self-monitoring	.624	.755
sensitivity3	<---	Self-monitoring	.483	.670
sensitivity2	<---	Self-monitoring	.502	.663
sensitivity1	<---	Self-monitoring	.598	.616
ability4	<---	Self-monitoring	-.338	.282
ability6	<---	Self-monitoring	-.157	.574

Table 8

Factor Loading of Six Retained Items of Self-Monitoring for Both U.S. and Chinese Students

Construct	Item	Factor Loading (both)	Reliability (both)
	ability7	.714	
	ability3	.615	
Self-monitoring	ability2	.758	.859
	ability1	.742	
	sensitivity4	.793	
	sensitivity1	.637	

The six retained self-monitoring items were then examined using a CFA, resulting in an acceptable model fit: $\chi^2(9) = 35.089$, $p < .001$, χ^2/df ratio = 3.899; GFI = .971; CFI =

.972; RMSEA = .173. Although the chi-square was significant, other fit indices that are relatively insensitive to sample size indicated satisfactory performance.

Self-expression attitude and self-presentation attitude toward luxury brands, developed by Wilcox et al. (2009), were used to measure the extent to which luxury brands communicate individual identity and deliver social standings, respectively. But the EFA of self-expression attitude and self-presentation attitude toward luxury brands showed that self-expression attitude and self-presentation attitude did not discriminate among Chinese students, although these two attitudes did discriminate among U.S. students. This finding necessitated the decision to merge self-expression attitude and self-presentation attitude together as value-expressive attitude to ensure that the construct and model was valid across both students groups. The factor loadings of the measurement items of value-expressive attitude showed that expression4 (.534) and presentation4 (.463) were not good measures among U.S. students because of their low factor loadings, and were deleted from further study. The CFA of the retained value-expressive attitude items showed good factor loadings, indicating that the retained six items are a good measure of the construct (see Table 9).

Table 9

Factor Loading of Six Retained Items of Value-Expressive Attitude

Variable	Factor Loading (U.S.)	Factor Loading (China)	Factor Loading (both)	Reliability (both)
Value- expression1	.733	.818	.802	.885
expressive expresion2	.747	.681	.681	
attitude expression3	.819	.589	.716	

Variable	Factor Loading (U.S.)	Factor Loading (China)	Factor Loading (both)	Reliability (both)
presentaion1	.551	.807	.764	
presentation2	.642	.852	.800	
presentation3	.600	.744	.733	

Items comprising affective attitude were also examined through CFA by group and with the combined groups. The results show that emotion3 failed to measure affective attitude among U.S. students due to its low factor loading (.405); therefore, emotion3 was eliminated from the measurement of affective attitude. A second CFA was then performed to respecify the construct measurement. This result showed that factor loading of emotion2 was too high (.926) among the Chinese student group, so emotion2 was also eliminated. A third CFA was run and the remaining three items of affective attitude were verified as good measurement items (See Table 10).

Table 10

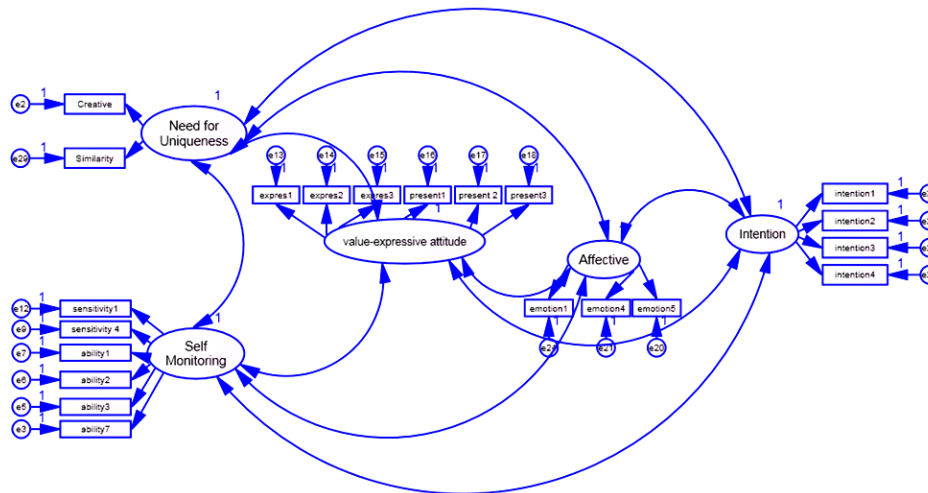
Factor Loading of Six Retained Items of Value-Expressive Attitude

Variable	Items	Factor Loading (China)	Factor Loading (U.S.)	Reliability (both)
Affective	emotion5	.895	.844	.880
attitude	emotion4	.807	.875	
	emotion1	.643	.830	

The purchase intention items were also examined through CFA; all the four items demonstrated a good contribution to the measure of the construct.

CFA was then used to validate the measurement model consisting of five constructs measured by 21 observed items (see Figure 4). During the process of CFA, no standardized residuals were greater than 2.58, indicating that no error items are highly correlated (Schumacker & Lomax, 2004). The final model of five constructs with 21 observed items (see Table 11) shows an acceptable model fit: $\chi^2(179)=550.433$, $p<.001$, χ^2/df ratio = 3.075; IFI = .927; TLI = .913; CFI = .926; RMSEA = .073. Although the chi-square was significant, other fit indices that are relatively insensitive to sample size indicated satisfactory performance.

Figure 4 Graphic Model of Measurement Model



Notes: $\chi^2(179)=550.433$, $p<.001$, χ^2/df ratio = 3.075; IFI = .927; TLI = .913; CFI = .926; RMSEA = .073

Table 11

Measurement Model: Scale Items for Latent Variables

Latent constructs	Scale items	Factor Loading	t-value
Need for uniqueness	Creative choice	.899	9.743***
	Similarity Avoidance	.546	7.925***
Self Monitoring	ability7	.711	15.425***
	ability3	.615	12.798***
	ability2	.744	16.431***
	ability1	.740	16.311***
	sensitivity4	.804	18.339***
	sensitivity1	.643	13.538***
Value-expressive attitude	expression1	.820	19.291***
	expression2	.670	14.507***
	expression3	.736	16.459***
Affective attitude	presentation1	.754	17.041***
	presentation2	.791	18.254***
	presentation3	.716	15.866***
	emotion5	.862	20.930***
	emotion4	.816	19.242***
Purchase intention	emotion1	.846	20.340***
	intention1	.842	20.278***
	intention2	.792	18.464***
	intention3	.889	22.131***

intention4	.813	19.197***
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Note: *** significant at $p < .001$.

The construct validities of the latent constructs were evaluated by both convergent and discriminant validity. All the constructs' composite reliabilities were greater than the minimum criteria of .70 (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994), ranging from .70 to .90 (see Table 12) and all path weights were significant ($p < .001$), thereby demonstrating high convergent validity. In addition to the composite reliabilities, Fornell and Larcker (1981) suggest that the average variance extracted (AVE) provides evidence of the overall convergent validity of each construct as it indicates the amount of variance explained by the construct relative to the amount of variance that may be attributed to measurement error and should exceed .50. Table 13 shows that all AVE values exceed .50.

Theoretically, discriminant validity confirms whether constructs in the study diverge from each other. The study assessed discriminant validity by determining whether the confidence interval around the correlation estimate between the two factors include 1.0 (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988). The results showed that all the upper bound of confidence interval were less than 1.00, indicating that all the constructs in the model have acceptable discriminant validity (see Table 14).

Table 12

Constructs' Composite Reliability Result

NFU	Self monitoring	value-expressive attitude	Affective attitude	Purchase Intention
.70	.86	.88	.88	.90

Table 13

Constructs' Average Variances Extracted Result

NFU	Self monitoring	value-expressive attitude	Affective attitude	Purchase Intention
.55	.51	.56	.71	.70

Table 14

Discriminant Validity Result

	r	SE	Upper bound of confidence interval
NFU-SM	0.416	0.06	0.52
NFU-attitude	0.257	0.059	0.36
NFU-Affect	0.287	0.059	0.39
NFU-intention	0.202	0.058	0.31
SM-Attitude	0.541	0.043	0.6
SM-Affect	0.606	0.039	0.66
SM-intention	0.568	0.041	0.62
attitude-Affect	0.833	0.023	0.85
attitude-intention	0.793	0.025	0.81
Affect-intention	0.899	0.017	0.91

Structural model

The structural model was constructed to examine the hypothesized relationships among constructs. As illustrated in Table 15, the hypothesized model fit was acceptable:

$\chi^2(183)=578.321$, $p<.001$, χ^2/df ratio = 3.160; IFI= .922; TLI= .910; CFI = .921; RMSEA =

.074. Although chi-square was significant, other indices that are not sensitive to sample size showed a good model fit. Figure 5 shows the graphic model of the structural equation model; the hypothesized relationships are shown in graphic model in Figure 6.

Table 15

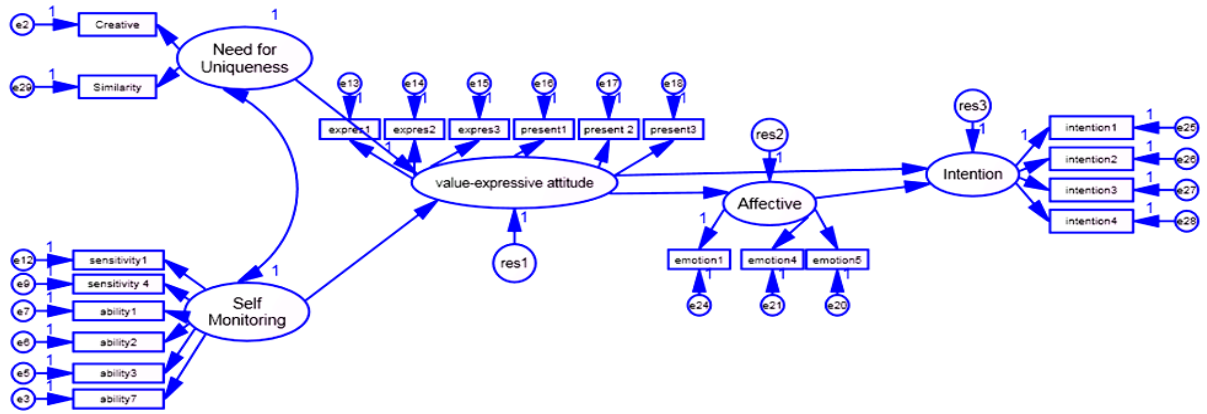
Regression Coefficients and Fit Statistics from the Structural Model

	Hypotheses	Standardized Loadings	Standardized Error	Critical Ratio
H1a	Need for uniqueness → value-expressive attitude	.034	.070	.618
H1b	Self-monitoring → Value-expressive attitude	.565	.076	9.335***
H2	Value-expressive attitude → Purchase intention	.155	.079	1.938
H3	Value-expressive attitude → Affective attitude	.847	.053	15.98***
H4	Affective attitude → Purchase intention	.767	.087	8.829***

$\chi^2(183)=578.321$, $p<.001$, χ^2/df ratio = 3.16; IFI= .922; TLI= .910; CFI = .921; RMSEA = .074.

Notes: *** significant at $p<.001$.

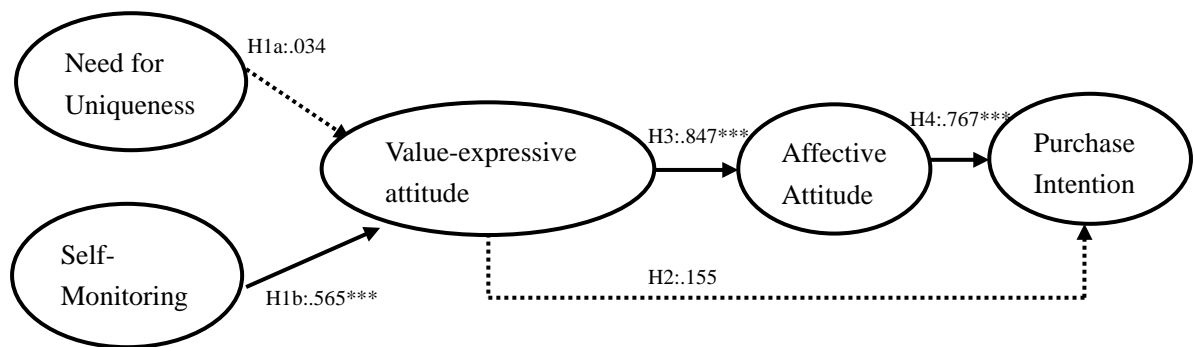
Figure 5 Graphic Model of Structural Equation Model



$\chi^2(183)=578.321, p<.001, \chi^2/df$ ratio = 3.16; IFI= .922; TLI= .910; CFI = .921; RMSEA = .074.

Notes: ***significant at $p<.001$.

Figure 6 Hypotheses Testing Results for Consumers' Purchase Intention for Luxury Brands



—>> Positive significant relationship

- - ->> No significant relationship

Notes: *** significant at $p<.001$; * significant at $p<.05$

Hypotheses Testing and Results

Self-expression attitude and self-presentation attitude toward luxury brands were combined as one variable -- value-expressive attitude toward luxury brands -- in the measurement model and hypotheses testing because these two original attitudes were highly related among Chinese students. Because the hypothesized model of purchase intention for luxury brands examines both U.S. and Chinese consumers' purchase intention as a whole, it is more accurate to combine these two attitudes together to examine consumers' purchase intentions for luxury brands. The hypotheses were then modified to address this combination of constructs as following:

Revised Hypothesis 1a: Consumers' need for uniqueness positively influences their value-expressive attitude toward luxury brands.

Revised Hypothesis 1b: Consumers' self-monitoring positively influences their value-expressive attitude toward luxury brands.

Revised Hypothesis 2: Consumers' value-expressive attitude toward luxury brands positively influences their purchase intentions for luxury brands.

Revised Hypothesis 3: Consumers' value-expressive attitude toward luxury brands positively influences their affective attitude.

Hypothesis 4: Consumers' affective attitude has a positive influence on their purchase intention.

Revised Hypothesis 1a. The revised hypothesis 1 was not supported ($\gamma = .034$, $p = .537$). Contrary to previous finding that consumers generally prefer the luxury brand because the image of the brand conveys consumers' own self image (Parker et al., 2004),

the nonsignificant relationship between need for uniqueness and the more general value-expressive attitude toward luxury brands indicates that need for uniqueness may not influence consumers' attitude about communicating their individual identity and social image through luxury consumption.

Revised Hypothesis 1b. The positive coefficient estimate for the paths from self-monitoring to value-expressive attitude was significant ($\gamma = .565, p < .001$) supporting revised H1b. This supports previous finding that high self-monitoring consumers form favorable attitudes toward objects which are useful as a means for achieving the goals of presenting images (Lippa, 1976; Snyder, 1974; Snyder & DeBono, 1985). Students who are high self-monitors were more sensitive to others' consumption and usage of brands and were more likely to have a positive attitude toward luxury brands as a means to express their individual and social image in the public.

Revised Hypothesis 2. The revised Hypothesis 2 that value-expressive attitude directly impacts consumers' purchase intentions for luxury brands was not supported ($\beta = .155, p = 0.054$). The nonsignificant relationship between value-expressive attitude and purchase intention indicates that displaying individual and social image may not directly motivate consumers to purchase luxury brands; however, value-expressive attitude may still influence consumers' purchase intention for luxury brands indirectly through affective attitudes (as predicted in hypothesis 3).

Revised Hypothesis 3. A positive relationship between value-expressive attitude toward luxury brands and affective attitude ($\beta = .847, p < .001$) was found, supporting H3 that value-expressive attitude has a positive influence on affective attitude toward luxury

brands. This finding also supports previous findings that consumers' attitudes toward products positively influence their affects toward the product (Kumar et al., 2009; Lee et al., 2008). Consumers who believe that luxury brands communicate their individual-identity and social identity feel pleasure toward these luxury brands. This positive relationship also shows that consumers evaluate luxury brands on the basis of affective benefits and derive positive affect when they believe luxury brands help them to define themselves and gain social approval.

Hypothesis 4. Hypothesis 4 that affective attitude has a positive influence on purchase intention was also supported as the directional influence from affective attitude to purchase intention is significant ($\beta = .767, p < .001$). This finding supports Chaudhuri and Holbrook's (2001) finding that brand affect (affective attitude) influences repurchase intention. It also corroborates previous findings that consumers are affect-oriented when they consider purchasing expensive fashion brands (Knight & Kim, 2007; Kumar et al., 2009; Lee et al., 2006). This study clearly demonstrates that affective attitude is a critical predictor of purchase intention toward luxury brands, for both U.S. and Chinese consumers. Affective attitude, playing the role as a mediating variable, explains the lack of a significant direct relationship between value-expressive attitude (presenting self-identity and social image) and purchase intention for luxury brands by showing that value-expressive attitude impacts purchase intentions indirectly through affective attitude and provides the reason why consumers will spend extra money on luxury brands, even though the function of luxury brands products can be achieved through non-luxury brands. This relationship explains the impact of consumers' love of luxury brands on their purchase decisions.

Cross-Cultural Comparison of Results of Need for Uniqueness

A one-way multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted to test whether there is a difference between U.S. students' need for uniqueness and Chinese students' need for uniqueness. Significant differences were found between the two students groups on their need for uniqueness ($F(2, 391) = 4.49, p < .05, \eta^2 = .022$).

Following the MANOVA test, a one-way analysis of variance (one-way ANOVA) was conducted to determine whether U.S. and Chinese students differ in each of the two remaining dimensions of need for uniqueness. However, the results show that U.S. ($M_{U.S.} = 3.95$) and China ($M_{China} = 4.06$) did not differ in their creative choice ($F(1, 392) = .88, p = .35, \eta^2 = .002$).

However, Chinese students ($M_{China} = 3.89$) were found to display a stronger similarity avoidance dimension of need for uniqueness than U.S. students ($M_{U.S.} = 3.49$), $F(1, 392) = 15.18, p < .05, \eta^2 = .022$. Although consumers' need for uniqueness are thought to be counter-conformity oriented based on Tian et al.'s (2001) study, it is interesting to find that Chinese consumers, famous for promoting conformity culture influenced by collectivism (Hofstede, 1991; Li & Su, 2007; Wong & Ahuvia, 1998), have a greater need for uniqueness than U.S. students in one of the two counter-conformity dimensions. One possible explanation may be that although need for uniqueness is a counter-conformity driven individual characteristic, the scale items to measure need for uniqueness seemed to actually measure individual distinctiveness and uniqueness rather than measuring individual counter-conformity. If individual counter-conformity was not actually measured, that may explain why Chinese students demonstrated a higher need for uniqueness despite a need to conform.

Another possible reason for the result that Chinese consumers have a stronger need for uniqueness might also be that China is in transition, meaning that the Chinese society as a whole is in a stage where distinctions between social strata are very noticeable and transient. Thus, people in a higher social status may want to show off their status while people who are in a lower status may aspire to improve their status and sometimes show their ideal status by adopting luxury brands. Showing a distinction in status in a society in transition may need to be understood rather as conforming to the societal rule than being counter-conformity. Thus, the meaning of words such as “distinction” and “uniqueness” may be different in a transitioning society as compared to a more established society such as the U.S. A possible reason for Chinese higher need for uniqueness may also be because that the Chinese data is highly skewed to female students and female students are more likely to have a stronger need to display their self-identity through clothing than males.

Cross-Cultural Comparison and Results of Value-Expressive Attitude

Although self-expression attitude toward luxury brands and self-presentation attitude were combined into value-expressive attitude because self-expression and self-presentation attitude did not discriminate among Chinese students, it is interesting to know whether there is difference in the influence of the value-expressive attitudes -- self-expression attitude and self-presentation attitude on affective attitude and purchase intention for luxury brands. Research questions were developed as following:

RQ1: Is there any difference in the influence of value-expressive attitude toward luxury brands on purchase intentions for luxury brands across U.S. and Chinese students?

RQ2: Is there any difference in the influence of value-expressive attitude toward

luxury brands on affective attitude toward luxury brands across U.S. and Chinese students?

A multi-group SEM analysis was used to examine the proposed research questions.

First, in the constrained model the coefficient between students' value-expressive attitude and purchase intention was constrained to be equal between the two countries; no constraints of the coefficient were used in the unconstrained model. Comparing the constrained model with the unconstrained model, the results indicated no statistically significant difference in their fit ($\Delta\chi = .134$, $\Delta df = 1$, $p = .714$). Thus, U.S. students do not differ from Chinese students with regard to impact of luxury brands to communicate self-identity and display social status on their purchase intention for luxury brands.

Second, to examine that whether there is a difference in the influence of value-expressive attitude on the affective attitude of U.S. and Chinese students, the coefficient between students' value-expressive attitude and affective attitude was then constrained to be equal between the two countries in the constrained model; no constraints of the coefficient in the unconstrained model. Comparing the constrained model with unconstrained model, the results were $\Delta\chi = 2.196$, $\Delta df = 1$, $p = .138$, indicating no statistically significant difference between the U.S. and Chinese students for influence of value-expressive attitude on affective attitude. According to the multi-group SEM results, value-expressive attitude toward luxury brands plays an equally important role influencing consumers' affective attitude and purchase intentions for luxury brands among both U.S. and Chinese consumers.

This study merged self-expression attitude and self-presentation attitude together to examine consumers' purchase intention for luxury brands. This merged value-expressive

attitude (combining self-expression attitude and self-presentation attitude) cannot detect whether consumers purchase luxury brands because of social image or self-identity or both. Thus, to explore what drives the U.S. and Chinese consumers purchase behavior for luxury brands, the original hypothesized model was further examined with the retained measurement items (see Table 11). The figure 7 displays the graphic model of structural equation model of individual self-expression attitude and self-presentation attitude. The model fit of measurement model is good: $\chi^2(174)=505.684$, $p<.001$, χ^2/df ratio = 2.906; IFI = .934; TLI = .920; CFI = .934; RMSEA = .070. Chi-square was significant, but other insensitive model indices suggested that the model fit is good.

Table 16

Structure Coefficients for Both U.S. and Chinese Students (Exploratory Test)

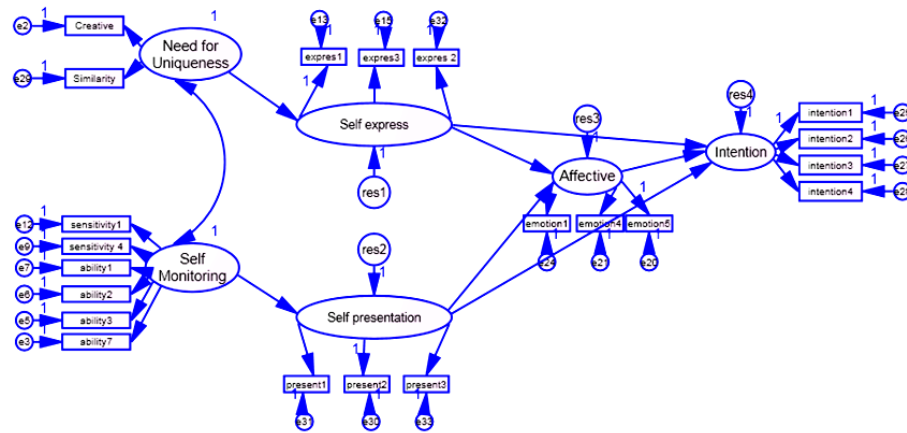
Hypotheses		Factor Loadings	Critical Ratio
H1a	Need for uniqueness → Self-expression attitude	.682	9.903 ^{***}
H1b	Self-monitoring → Self-presentation attitude	.585	10.184 ^{***}
H2a	Self-expression attitude → Purchase intention	.223	3.480 ^{***}
H2b	Self-presentation attitude → Purchase intention	-.035	-.648
H3a	Self-expression attitude → Affective attitude	.569	10.655 ^{***}
H3b	Self-presentation attitude → Affective attitude	.443	8.859 ^{***}
H4	Affective attitude → Purchase intention	.742	8.434 ^{***}

$\chi^2(181)=816.412$, $p<.001$, χ^2/df ratio = 4.511; GFI = .843; CFI = .874; RMSEA = .095.

Notes: ***significant at $p<.001$; *significant at $p<.05$

Figure 7 Graphic Model of Structural Equation Model of Individual Self-

Expression Attitude and Self-Presentation Attitude



Notes: $\chi^2(181)=816.412$, $p<.001$, χ^2/df ratio = 4.511; GFI = .843; CFI = .874; RMSEA = .095.

Result of hypothesis show that consumers' need for uniqueness positively influences self-expression attitude which has both a direct and indirect influence on purchase intention through affective attitude; and that consumers' self-monitoring influences self-presentation attitude which impacts purchase intentions indirectly through affective attitude. The cross-cultural comparison confirms that Chinese students demonstrate a greater need for uniqueness and that the influence of self-presentation attitude on purchase intention differs for U.S. students and Chinese students. However, due to the poor model fit, these results do not have high credit to be generalizability, but maybe

credibility and provide future research direction.

The study originally hypothesized that Chinese consumers' social image would have a greater influence on their affective attitude and purchase intention for luxury brands than U.S consumers. However, Chinese students actually perceived no difference in their self-expression attitude and self-presentation attitude toward luxury brands. The blur of self image and social image regarding luxury brands among Chinese consumers may suggest that Chinese consumers do not perceive any difference between their self image and social image. If, for example, a Chinese man views himself as a son, a brother, a husband and a father (Chu, 1985), then both the self image and social image may be integrated so that he regards himself in the context of his relations with others (Li, & Su, 2007).

Chapter 5 Conclusions and Implications

Drawing on the Functional Theory of Attitude and the cognitive-affective model as the framework, this study examines the impact of individual characteristics (i.e. need for uniqueness and self-monitoring) on consumers' self-expression and self-presentation attitude toward luxury brands, which in turn influence affective attitude toward luxury brands and purchase intention for luxury brands. This study also responds to the call for research into the relationship between attitude and cultural identity both within and across cultures (Wilcox et al, 2009), and the call for research into other variables that impact consumers' attitudes toward brands (Kumar et al., 2009).

The findings contribute to the existing literature by providing a more comprehensive understanding of the roles that individual characteristics (i.e. need for uniqueness and self-monitoring), value-expressive attitudes and affective attitude play in purchase intention motivation for luxury brands. It compares these relationships among consumers in two distinctively different cultures to examine underlying factors that predict U.S. and Chinese consumers' buying behavior for luxury brands.

Previous research on need for uniqueness appears primarily in fashion consumer behavior studies among U.S. consumers; this study examines the role of need for uniqueness in consumers' purchase intention for luxury brands among U. S. and Chinese consumers and compares the individual difference of need for uniqueness between two consumer groups. Chinese students have a higher need for uniqueness through similarity

avoidance than do U.S. consumers. Understanding consumers' characteristic and discovering the difference cross-culturally help retailers to make appropriate strategies to appear to target consumers.

The findings have important practical implications as they suggest that different marketing strategies should be applied to address the difference in need for uniqueness. For example, a novel message in the advertisement might attract Chinese consumers because Chinese consumers have higher need for uniqueness. Also, limited availability or exclusivity may be an effective marketing strategy for luxury goods in the Chinese market, because this can satisfy Chinese consumers' high need to be unique and avoid similarity from others in general and stay with peer group by using the luxury brand.

Self-monitoring is an important individual characteristic in consumers' purchase intention. Luxury brands retailers can implement marketing strategies such as incorporating messages about the role of the product in facilitating self image and social role to address consumers' characteristic of self-monitoring.

The study also examines the impact of value-expressive attitude (self-expression attitude and self-presentation attitude) toward luxury brands on consumers' affective attitude toward luxury brands and purchase intention. Consistent with the findings of several researchers (e.g., Bearden & Etzel, 1982; Grubb & Grathwohl, 1967) that people consume luxury brands for value-expressive function of attitudes, both self-expression attitude and self-presentation attitudes toward luxury brands play important roles in consumers' purchase behavior for luxury brands. However, by examining self-presentation attitude and self-expression attitude separately, consumers' self-expression attitude is the

only value-expressive attitude that both directly and positively impacts purchase intention for luxury brands. Affective attitude, as a result of value-expressive attitude (self-expression attitude and self-presentation attitude), plays a mediating role between value-expressive attitude and purchase intentions. .

The findings provide valuable strategic implications for luxury brand retailers who do business in both U.S. and Chinese markets. Generally, luxury brand manufactures need to emphasize their high quality and dependability for their global marketing strategy, because consumers care about the consistency between the brand image and their internal beliefs. Global advertising campaigns can impart self-expressive-appealing messages or images to stress the well-established brand equity such as long history, superior brand reputation, and premium craftsmanship in order to inform consumers who are looking for the brand that reflects their internal belief of goodness.

Value-expressive attitude includes self-presentation attitude, so luxury brands manufactures need to implement marketing strategies to add status-associated messages to appeal to consumers of luxury brands. For example, advertising campaign can use elite images to imply the brand's usage group. It seems that luxury retailers enjoy a more advantageous market condition than non-luxury brands, because self-presentation is a more appealing social function with respect to possession of luxury brands. Consumers use luxury brands to display their status, so their purchase intention toward luxury brands is aroused when they feel it is necessary for them to own a luxury brand to show their esteem or wealth. This adds flexibility to luxury retailers' marketing strategy as luxury brand retailers could either attempt to convince consumers of an upscale social image or a reliable

quality.

Affective-appeal is the most important factor to be included in global marketing strategies; this appeal needs to penetrate every possible marketing channel because luxury brands are not the necessities that consumers need to buy in their life, but affects attached to luxury brands create resonance between consumers and brands (Keller, 2001). For example, consumers with strong affect toward a luxury brand would say they love the brand and the tendency for them to purchase it would increase. Affective-appealing messages can be delivered through store layout. Luxury retailers can convey the feelings of pleasure and deliver the experience of fun by offering a well-organized assortment of high-quality products and an upscale ambience. Affective-appealing message can also be delivered through store service, which can generate consumers with fun experience with the brand thereby generating affect associated with the brand. .

Limitations and future study

The use of student sample limits the generalizability of the findings, because students represent only a subset of luxury brands consumers and are not representative of all consumers in a culture. Future research may utilize a sample that is more representative of the entire consumer population including other consumer groups. Researchers may also extend this study to examine other age groups about the impact of their characteristics, value-expressive attitudes and affective attitude on their purchase intention for luxury brands. Also, the study used the well-developed measure items which was developed and verified to examine U.S. consumers' characteristics and behavior. This could be a problem when using these items cross-culturally for Chinese students. For example, Chinese

students might have applied the survey questions of need for uniqueness with regard to others outside their peer or reference groups that would account for the surprising findings.

The study also provides with plenty of future research. The research detects that Chinese consumers perceive self-expression attitude the same as self-presentation attitude; future study can explore Chinese consumer' perceived value-expressive attitude involving self-expression attitude and self-presentation attitude separately with well-developed items targeting at Chinese consumers, so as to examine whether and how their perceived value-expressive attitude influence their purchase behavior. The future study can also work on with the proposed research questions and exploratory cross-cultural research in this study.

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Appendix A Questionnaire

1. Please indicate your agreement with these statements. **Circle the number** that **best** matches your response.

	Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Somewhat disagree 3	Neutral 4	Somewhat agree 5	Agree 6	Strongly Agree 7
1. Often when buying apparel and accessories, an important goal of mine is to find brands that communicate my uniqueness.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. When a product I own becomes popular among the general population, I begin using it less.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. I seek to develop my personal uniqueness by buying special brands or products.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. I dislike brands or products that are customarily purchased by everyone.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. I have often gone against the understood rules of my social group regarding when and how certain products are used.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. I have sometimes purchased unusual brands or products to create a more distinctive personal image.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. I have often violated the understood rules of my social group regarding what to buy or own.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. I often try to avoid products or brands that I know are bought by the general population.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

9. I collect unusual products as a way of telling people I'm different.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10. I rarely act in agreement with what others think are the right things to buy.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11. I often combine possessions in such a way that I create a personal image for myself that can't be duplicated.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12. When products or brands I like become extremely popular, I lose interest in them.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13. I often try to find a more interesting version of run-of-the-mill products because I enjoy being original.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14. The more common a product or brand is among the general population, the less interested I am in buying it.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15. When dressing, I have sometimes dared to be different in ways that others are likely to disapprove.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16. Having an eye for products that are interesting and unusual assists me in establishing a distinctive image.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17. When it comes to the products I buy and the situations in which I use them, customs and rules are made to be broken.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18. I enjoy challenging the prevailing taste of people I know by buying something they wouldn't seem to accept.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19. The products and brands that I like best are the ones that express my individuality.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

20. When I dress differently, I'm often aware that others think I'm peculiar, but I don't care.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
21. I often think of the things I buy and do in terms of how I can use them to shape a more unusual personal image.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
22. When it comes to the luxury products I buy and the situations in which I use them, I have often broken customs and rules.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
23. Products don't seem to hold much value for me when they are purchased regularly by everyone.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
24. I'm often on the lookout for new products or brands that will add to my personal uniqueness.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
25. If someone hinted that I had been dressing inappropriately for a social situation, I would continue dressing in the same manner.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
26. I look for one-of-a-kind products or brands so that I create a style that is all my own.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
27. I avoid products or brands that have already been accepted and purchased by the average consumers.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
28. I often dress unconventionally even when it's likely to offend others.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
29. I give up wearing fashions I've purchased once they become popular among the general public.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
30. Concern for being out of place doesn't prevent me from wearing what I want to wear.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

31. When a style of clothing I own becomes too common, I usually quit wearing it.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
32. I am often able to read people's true emotions correctly through their eyes.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
33. In social situations, I have the ability to alter my behavior if I feel the need to do so.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
34. I can usually tell when I've said something inappropriate by reading it in the listener's eyes.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
35. I have the ability to control the way I come across to people, depending on the impression I wish to give them.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
36. If someone is lying to me, I usually know it at once from the person's expression.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
37. In conversations, I am sensitive to even the slightest change in the facial expression of the person I'm conversing with.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
38. Once I know what the situation calls for, it's easy for me to regulate my actions accordingly.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
39. When I feel the image I am portraying isn't working, I can readily change it to something that does.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
40. I have found that I can adjust my behavior to meet the requirements of any situation I find myself in.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
41. I can usually tell when others consider a joke to be in bad taste, even though they may laugh convincingly.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

42. Even when it might be to my advantage, I have difficulty putting up a good front.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
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43. I have trouble changing my behavior to suit different people and different situations.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
--	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

2. Please list your favorite **luxury apparel or accessory brands** that **provide you with indulgence and are expensive** (please list your **most favorite** luxury brand on line 1, and second and third favorite luxury brands on lines 2 and 3:

(1) _____;

(2) _____;

(3) _____.

3. In this part, please **think of the brand you listed on line 1 above to** indicate your agreement with these statements. Circle the number that best matches your response to each statement.

	Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Somewhat disagree 3	Neutral 4	Somewhat agree 5	Agree 6	Strongly Agree 7
44. This luxury brand reflects the kind of person I see myself to be.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
45. This luxury brand is the one that I would feel relaxed about using.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
46. This luxury brand helps me fit into important social situations.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
47. This luxury brand would give me pleasure.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
48. If I were going to purchase a luxury product, I would consider buying this brand.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
49. I enjoy it when people know I am wearing a luxury brand.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

50. If I were shopping for a luxury brand, the likelihood I would purchase this luxury brand is high.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
51. This luxury brand helps me express myself.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
52. My willingness to buy this luxury brand would be high if I were shopping for a luxury brand.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
53. This luxury brand would make me want to use it.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
54. This luxury brand is a symbol of social status.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
55. This luxury brand would make me feel good.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
56. I like to be seen wearing luxury brands.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
57. This luxury brand helps me define myself.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
58. This luxury brand is the one that I would enjoy.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
59. The probability I would consider buying this luxury brand is high.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
60. This luxury brand helps me communicate my self-identity.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

4. In this part, please answer the demographic questions.

1. What is your age?

I AM _____ YEARS OLD.

2. Your gender:

____MALE ____FEMALE

3. Your major is in which college/ school:

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Sciences and Mathematics |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Forestry and Wildlife | <input type="checkbox"/> Veterinary Medicine |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Liberal Arts | <input type="checkbox"/> Human Science | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Business | <input type="checkbox"/> Nursing | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Pharmacy | |

4. Your year:

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> FRESHMAN | <input type="checkbox"/> JUNIOR |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SOPHOMORE | <input type="checkbox"/> SENIOR |
| <input type="checkbox"/> GRADUATE STUDENT (MASTERS OR DOCTORAL) | |

5. Your current marital status:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> SINGLE | <input type="checkbox"/> MARRIED |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|

6. Which of the following best describes the location of your permanent home residence?

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> URBAN | <input type="checkbox"/> SUBURBAN | <input type="checkbox"/> RURAL |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|

7. In addition to being a student, I am: (Select one that best matches your response)

- | | | |
|---|---|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> EMPLOYED FULL-TIME | <input type="checkbox"/> EMPLOYED PART-TIME | <input type="checkbox"/> NOT EMPLOYED |
|---|---|---------------------------------------|

8. **On average**, how much do you typically spend on all apparel and accessories (e.g. clothes, shoes, purses, belts, watches) **each month**?

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> UNDER \$25 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$201-\$300 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$25-\$50 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$301-\$400 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$51-\$100 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$401-\$500 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$101-\$200 | <input type="checkbox"/> ABOVE \$500 |

9. How much do you generally browse/ shop for luxury apparel and/or accessory brands? (**Check** the one **BEST** describe)

Never Seldom Sometimes Frequently Very Frequent

10. Have you ever purchased luxury apparel and/ or accessory brands?

NO

YES

If YES, 1) list the luxury brand(s) you have purchased _____;

_____.

2) list the item(s) you bought _____;

_____.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!