CONSUMERS' REPURCHASE INTENTION OF LUXURY GOODS: EXAMINING THE RELATIONSHIP AMONG STATUS CONSUMPTION, NEED FOR UNIQUENESS, MATERIALISM AND AFFECTIVE RESPONSE

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Consumers' Repurchase Intention of Luxury Goods: Examining the Relationship among Status Consumption, Need for Uniqueness, Materialism and Affective Response

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CERTIFICATE OF ORIGINALITY

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_____ (Signed)

CHAN WING YIN (Name of student)

Dedicated to my Family

for their Love and Support

ABSTRACT

Status-conscious consumers buy luxury goods to satisfy their need for status. Luxury goods consumption has been a conspicuous practice throughout the best part of human history. Over recent decades, studies of status consumption have emerged incessantly, most of which focus on examining interpersonal influence, social influence, personal influence, socio-psychological factors and situational factors. Status consumption is an individual difference variable regardless of income level or social class. With the ever-changing consumer taste, the luxury goods market becomes increasingly complex and competitive. Thus far, little academic effort has been made to address the behavioral intention of status-conscious consumers although consumers' repurchase intention of luxury goods is a vital piece of information for luxury goods marketers. The act of repurchase consists of both intention and probability to purchase. It is a major building block for brand loyalty which provides luxury goods marketers with a competitive edge in business strategies. Given the fact that status consumption fulfills consumers' hedonic needs, affective response generated from luxury goods purchase behavior is linked to a display of wealth and symbolic meanings from one's social standing. However, studies of consumers' affective response influencing their repurchase intention of luxury goods are scant, which calls for

in-depth research to help advance the existing literature by providing comprehensive theoretical models.

The proposed model in this research is grounded in the traditional attitude model. The literature review shows that status-conscious consumers wish to meet their need for uniqueness and believe in the significance of materialism. In this study, the research variables of the theoretical model are need for uniqueness, materialism, status consumption, affective response, and repurchase intention. With specific research objectives, this research investigates consumers' repurchase intention, examines their motivation, and shows how status consumption affects affective response. A sample of 568 respondents was collected by a questionnaire survey. By cross-validating the results with holdout samples, the study model developed has strong predictive power. The confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and structural equation modeling (SEM) technique were employed in this study.

This research is the first academic attempt to incorporate affective response into repurchase intention when analyzing luxury goods consumer behavior. With the use of the model developed in this study, indicative factors that affect the repurchase intention of luxury goods have been identified. Apart from the

findings that are consistent with the proposed relationships discussed in previous studies, more intriguing results are found resultant of this research. Its findings show that affective response has the most direct and significant impact on repurchase intention. Status consumption is found to have a direct, positive, and significant relationship with affective response which in turn creates a direct, positive, strong effect on repurchase intention. In fact, about 60% of total variance in repurchase intention can be explained by both affective response and status consumption in the proposed theoretical model. About 42% in status consumption can be explained by two antecedent variables (i.e. need for uniqueness and materialism) and 15% in affective response can be explained by status consumption. The findings have further revealed some indicative factors that are particularly important for studying status consumption behavior. One of the most influential motivations of status consumption is to avoid consuming products that are similar to those of their surrounding significant others.

PUBLICATIONS

Referred journal articles:

- Chan, Winnie, W.Y., Chester K.M. To, Alice, W.C. Chu and Zhi-ming Zhang (2014), "Behavioral determinants that drive luxury goods consumption: a study within the tourist context". *Research Journal of Textile and Apparel*, 18 (2), 84-95.
- Chan, Wing Yin, Kin Man To, Wai Ching Chu and Zhi-ming Zhang (2014), "Materialistic consumers who seek unique products: How does their need for status and their affective response facilitate the repurchase intention of luxury goods?" *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services* (Under second review)
- Chan, Wing Yin, Kin Man To, Wai Ching Chu and Zhi-ming Zhang (2014), "Chinese tourists' luxury shopping behavior: how desire for possessions, avoidance of similarity and self-esteem influence consumers' affective response". *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing* (Under review)

Conferences proceedings:

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- Chan, Winnie, Alice Chu, and Zhi-ming Zhang (2010), "A Study on the purchasing behavior of mainland tourists in buying fashion and apparel items in Hong Kong," in *Proceedings of the 12th International Foundation of Fashion and Technology Institutes (IFFTI) Annual Conference*, Taiwan: Department of Textiles & Clothing, Fu Jen Catholic University, 632-642.

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Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Research background

The luxury goods industry is operated by multi-billion dollar global corporations emphasizing retail sales growth, strong brand awareness and high visibility. Luxury fashion brands are regarded as the most profitable and fastest growing segment among luxury categories (Miller and Mills, 2012). Industry manufactures and markets apparel items, leather goods, shoes, silk scarves and neckties, watches, jewelry, perfume and cosmetics can express a high social status and a luxurious lifestyle. Nowadays, most luxury products are not necessarily luxuries, such as eyewear, accessories and fragrances, and are no longer limited to apparel and accessories. Luxury fashion specializes in status, authenticity, uniqueness, craftsmanship, innovation, premium quality and premium pricing for brand image and identity (Okonkwo, 2007). The World Luxury Association (World Luxury Association, 2012) released a list of the world's top 100 most valuable luxury brands, with the top five being Hermes, Chanel, Louis Vuitton, Christian Dior and Salvatore Ferragamo. Luxury brands possess desirability values exceeding their basic functions and offer consumers a perceived status. Their appeal and desirability are a result of their scarcity and their associations with particular consumer segments. Riley et al. (2004) argued

that luxury goods are targeted at consumers who passionately hunt for status, prestige and heritage. Vigneron and Johnson (2004) argued that luxury goods carry social codes and private value expressive of one's significance and sociability.

The worldwide personal luxury goods market trend has seen a double-digit growth since the socio-economic turbulence in 2009. According to the Luxury Goods Worldwide Market Study 2013 conducted by consultancy Bain & Co. (D'Arpizio, 2013), accessories, including leather goods and shoes, contributed to the largest segment in luxury goods market, accounting for 4% growth in 2013 and reaching 28% of the total, while apparel accounted for a quarter of the market with 1 % growth. As reported by Ren (2014), China nearly accounts for one-third of the luxury market, contributing the greatest growth ever in luxury goods, as attested by the spending of USD56 billion in 2013, or 29% of the total.

1.2 Rationale of study

The luxury goods market is increasingly complex and competitive. To enhance the responsiveness to the consumer market, luxury brands need to bring in a detailed consumer insight so that even food or drink brands can strive for sales improvement (D'Arpizio, 2014). Therefore, while luxury goods still shows a

steady but insignificant growth, luxury brands have shifted their focus to creativity and product development to spike sales figures.

Based on the above discussion, luxury goods marketers would better understand why luxury goods are purchased and how to prompt more repeat purchases. The buying behavior of luxury goods contributes to social status perceived by owners and their surrounding significant others, indulgence experience, premium quality, and expensive pricing that embrace psychological, symbolic and emotional values (Wiedmann et al., 2007; Kapferer and Bastien, 2009; Kapferer, 2012). Luxury goods consumption is also regarded as status or conspicuous consumption (O'Cass and McEwen, 2004). Status consumption is defined as a motivational process by which individuals strive to improve social standing by consuming products conspicuously to symbolize status both for the individual and surrounding significant others (Eastman et al., 1999). Status consumption is 'principally irrational' (psychological) in its motivation and expression (Shukla, 2008). Eastman et al. (2013) emphasized that status consumption is an individual difference variable that concerns a consumer's motivation to consume for status or social prestige conferred on product owners, regardless of income level or social class. In other words, consumers purchase luxury goods mainly for their symbolic values to project one's psychological needs.

Previous studies of consumer behavior in buying luxury goods mainly investigated the antecedents of status consumption, for example, based on interpersonal influence (e.g. self-monitoring, fashion consciousness, and materialism) (Lertwannawit and Mandhachitara, 2012), social influence (e.g. informational influence, normative influence and social comparison), personal influence (e.g. tendency to conform and need for uniqueness) (Clark et al., 2007; Ruvio, 2008), socio-psychological factors (e.g. social gains, esteem indication and ostentation behavior), management/market controlled brand features and situational factors (e.g. social occasions) (Shukla, 2010), and self-related factors (e.g. self integrity, self-ego and self-threat) (Sivanathan and Pettit, 2010). These studies showed well-intentioned attempts to include all possible and relevant antecedents of status consumption. However, few studies have investigated how status consumption influences the affective response of consumers and motivates consumers' repurchase intention. Given the fact that status consumption meets hedonic consumption needs (Eng and Bogaert, 2010), luxury goods buying behavior is most likely linked to a display of wealth and symbolic meanings of social standing.

To better understand how consumers are motivated to buy luxury goods, affective response should be considered. Affective response is derived from

feelings generated from luxury brands (Sweeney and Soutar, 2001) and is found twice more likely to account for purchase intention than cognition response (Knight and Kim, 2007), thus exerting a strong influence on one's cognitive-affective purchase intention of fashion brands. Affective response is post-satisfaction which affects consumers' repurchase intention (Ha et al., 2010), which consists of purchase intention and probability to repurchase (Yi and La, 2004). Prior studies showed that consumers' affective response has positive and significant influence on purchase intention of luxury goods (Czellar, 2003; Knight and Kim, 2007; Latter et al., 2010; Bian and Forsythe, 2012). However, traditional social psychological theories of attitude and behavior seldom touch on repurchase intention. Also, studies of repurchase intention are largely fragmented and the corresponding factors are complicated (Söderlund, 2002; Hellier et al., 2003). The conventional intention and subjective probability measures are often used interchangeably to predict future behavior. In measuring behavioral expectation, a repurchase probability indicator can outperform behavioral intention when predicting the next purchase. The repurchase rate on the same brand can be a measure of brand loyalty. However, brand loyalty is different from repurchase intention. Brand loyalty is a repurchase commitment; in their next purchase, consumers will not change their loyalty to a brand even in different situations, and will still buy their preferred brand (Oliver, 1999). Brand

loyalty means that consumers will not consider other brands when buying a product because they prefer a certain brand (Baldinger and Rubinson, 1996; Cavero and Cebollada, 1998). Brand loyalty also includes factors that are related to behavior and attitude. Loyal behavior is representative of repurchase behavior, and a loyal attitude means psychological commitment to a brand. Thus, purchase frequency is not an indication of loyalty. For example, the repurchasing of a product by consumers does not mean that they like the product, but likely, they are paying for the convenience; it is the occasional purchase of a certain specific product. Therefore, real brand loyalty should include a psychological process (decision making and evaluation) towards brand preference and repurchase behavior, which leads to the long term commitment of a brand. In this study, the aim is to measure the repurchase intention of consumers in buying luxury goods to enhance their status. Since brand loyalty is associated with brand preference and long-term repurchase behavior, it is difficult to measure the psychological commitment of consumers in their pledge to remain faithful to their brand preferences regardless of the circumstances. Therefore, this study measures repurchase intention as the means to enhance predictive power instead of brand loyalty.

Provided that status consumption has a direct relationship with need for

uniqueness (Clark et al., 2007; Latter et al., 2010) and materialism (Heaney et al., 2005; Goldsmith and Clark, 2012; Lertwannawit and Mandhachitara, 2012), this study regards these two constructs as major antecedents of status consumption and develops a theoretical model to examine how status consumption influences consumers' affective response and how affective response ultimately influences one's repurchase intention of luxury goods. The behavioral-based pathway that is proposed in this research originates from the traditional attitude model. The pathway regards attitude as an evaluation of the purchase of luxury goods, which has cognitive, affective, and behavioral components. In this research, the need for uniqueness, materialism, and status consumption are the cognitive components that comprise the beliefs, thoughts and attributes associated with luxury goods. The affective component is a construct of affective response which refers to the feelings or emotions derived from luxury goods. Lastly, the behavioral component is a construct of repurchase intention which represents the self-reported likelihood of consumers to engage in further repurchase behaviors.

1.3 Research questions and specific objectives

The above issues prompt the following research questions. Firstly, what roles do need for uniqueness and materialism play in the context of status consumption? Secondly, how does status consumption impact on consumers' affective response

in buying luxury goods? Thirdly, how does consumers' affective response influence repurchase intention of luxury goods? Lastly, what are the major factors in consumers' repurchase intention in buying luxury goods?

The first question concerns the importance of need for uniqueness and materialism in status consumption. Prior studies examined the antecedents of status consumption, focusing on interpersonal, socio-psychological, brand-related, and self-related factors. Buying luxury goods signifies enhancement of consumers' social standing through public consumption. Status-conscious consumers tend to maintain interpersonal difference by consuming luxury brands because of their perceived high status, premium pricing, exclusive and uniqueness value. Status consumption emphasizes a public display of expensive material possessions. It is obvious that both need for uniqueness and materialism are major antecedents of status consumption; however, studies of the two constructs are scarce.

The second question is about the relationship between status consumption and affective response. Luxury brands carry symbolic meanings and feelings. Status-conscious consumers are concerned with brand names and make affective judgment on purchase intention. Consuming status goods induces consumers'

affective state as a sensory pleasure, personal reward and fulfillment. These psychological benefits indicate a consumer's self-gratification and satisfaction associated with the product and the related shopping experience. The nature of status consumption is more related to affective response than the products' utilitarian value. Most of the previous studies focused on the antecedents of status consumption and seldom discussed how status consumption generates affective response. The present study aims to address these limitations by assessing whether status-conscious consumers gain sensory pleasure and make affective judgment.

The third question concerns the influence of affective response on repurchase intention of luxury goods. In terms of attitude, affective response is twice more important to account for repurchase intention than cognition dimension. Particularly, affective response has a strong influence on the formation of cognitive-affective repurchase intention of fashion brands because a public display of products can create both affective and symbolic appeal in front of significant others.

The last question deals with major factors in consumers' repurchase intention. The theoretical model developed in this study aims to find out the most important

factors in repurchase intention, and provide theoretical and practical insights for both academic researchers and luxury goods marketers to formulate better strategies to motivate more luxury goods purchases.

The primary objective of this research study is to examine the structure of consumers' repurchase intention in buying luxury goods with the aim of developing a behavioral study framework to investigate and analyze consumer behavior regarding status consumption. The specific objectives of the research are outlined as follows:

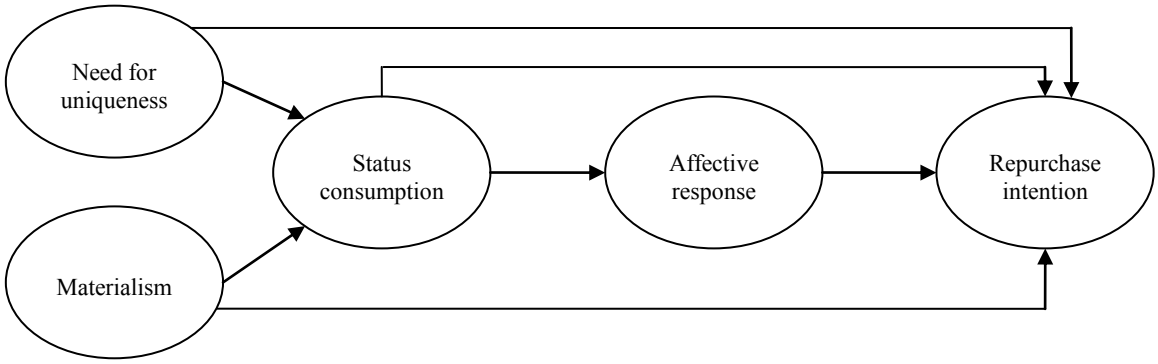
- Empirically examine the causal relationship among need for uniqueness, materialism, status consumption, affective response and repurchase intention
- Investigate key dimensions of need for uniqueness affecting status consumption
- Explore what beliefs in materialism consumers hold in buying luxury goods to enhance status
- Examine how affective response is influenced by status consumption
- Identify key factors in motivating consumers' repurchase intention in buying luxury goods
- Develop a reliable and valid measurement scale to assess consumers' repurchase intention of luxury goods

- Ascertain a theoretical model to help academic researchers and luxury industry practitioners formulate and execute effective marketing strategies targeting status-conscious consumers in buying luxury goods

1.4 Proposed theoretical framework

This study aims to study consumers' repurchase intention of luxury goods and investigate various factors, including need for uniqueness, materialism, status consumption, affective response and repurchase intention. A theoretical framework is developed to answer the research questions and achieve the specific objectives. In the study, need for uniqueness and materialism are conceptualized as exogenous variables in the framework, and are hypothesized to directly affect status consumption and repurchase intention independently, either positively or negatively. Accordingly, status consumption, affective response and repurchase intention are conceptualized as endogenous variables in the framework. Status consumption is hypothesized to directly influence affective response while affective response is hypothesized to directly influence repurchase intention. On the other hand, need for uniqueness, materialism and status consumption are also hypothesized to have a direct impact on repurchase intention of luxury goods. The proposed theoretical framework of the study is shown in Fig. 1-1.

Fig. 1-1. Proposed theoretical framework



1.5 Significance of study

As suggested by D'Arpizio (2014), the global luxury goods market is maturing, stabilizing and consolidating. More importantly, it is more responsive to a global consumer base, and less reliant on market booms for growth. Therefore, it is strongly recommended that worldwide luxury brands focus on maintaining business growth. In particular, the luxury goods industry is becoming more challenging. Luxury goods marketers need to develop strategic imperatives to sharpen their competitive edge. Exploring how and why status consumption affects purchasing behavior remains critical for the marketing of luxury brands. Most consumers, regardless of their income level or social standing, are willing to spend a large sum of money on luxury products to enhance status. To engage in status consumption, most consumers buy luxury goods by using credit cards or joining financial credit packages to meet their personal desire (Bernthal et al.,

2005). Almost all luxury goods consumers have a similar belief and perform this kind of consumption behavior (Husic and Cicic, 2009). In a dynamic luxury goods market, one should understand the psychological determinants of status consumption as a prominent factor in increasing market share. However, consumer researchers appear not to understand how the repurchase intention of luxury goods is affected by status consumption.

Nowadays, consumers make themselves more visible in the eyes of surrounding significant others through conspicuous consumption of luxury goods. Many studies of status consumption have emerged in recent years, but it is noticeable that most of these studies mainly discuss all possible antecedents of status consumption, and the actual behavioral consequence of status consumption is largely overlooked. Consumer satisfaction has been considered an important factor in repurchase behavioral intention, which in turn develops brand loyalty. Without considering the impact of affective response and repurchase intention on status consumption, prior studies unanimously failed to capture consumers' self-reported likelihood of engaging in the next purchase. In addition, a review of literature shows that both need for uniqueness and materialism play important roles in status consumption.

This study aims to answer the above-mentioned research questions by a quantitative research approach and addresses the above knowledge gap by developing a comprehensive model to study the determinants of consumers' repurchase intention in buying luxury goods. The results of the study provide valuable information for both academic researchers and luxury goods practitioners. Not only does the study document a broad landscape of status consumption, it also yields insights into repurchase intention of luxury goods. In addition, the findings are found comparable with those from other studies of status consumption, whatever the region, target market or product category. Therefore, this research has potential to contribute to luxury goods research and provides practical implications for marketing luxury goods worldwide.

1.6 Organization of thesis

The thesis is divided into five chapters. Table 1-1 shows the flow of the research and the basic structure of the thesis.

Table 1-1. Flow of research

Chapter	Content
1: Introduction	Research background
	Rationale of study
	Research questions and specific objectives
	Proposed theoretical framework
	Significance of study
	Organization of thesis
	Chapter summary
2: Literature review	Introduction
	Luxury value
	Status consumption
	Need for uniqueness
	Materialism
	Affective response
	Repurchase intention
	Chapter summary
3: Methodology	Introduction
	Research design
	Data collection method
	Sampling strategy
	Measure of constructs
	Instrument development
	Data analysis strategy
	Chapter summary
4: Data analysis	Introduction
	Data analysis for main study
	Descriptive statistical analysis
	Model estimation and hypothesis testing
	Chapter summary
5: Discussion and conclusion	Introduction
	Recalling research questions
	Summary of main findings
	Conclusions
	Theoretical and practical implications
	Direction for further research
	Chapter summary

1.7 Chapter summary

This first chapter discusses the foundation of this thesis. It begins with the explanation of research background, including the meaning of luxury brands, luxury goods, consumer markets and status consumption. The research questions and specific objectives are addressed. The research background prompts this study to develop a theoretical framework to examine consumers' repurchase intention in buying luxury goods by investigating various factors, including need for uniqueness, materialism, status consumption and affective response. Next, it discusses the significance of the study. Upon the mentioned research objectives and questions, the research is justified. The organization of the thesis as well as the research scope is illustrated at the end.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter tracks and documents the literature on luxury value, concepts and the corresponding hypotheses. It begins with a discussion on luxury value. In Section 2.3, it reviews the literature on status consumption and its relative research gaps. The conceptual framework of the study model is articulated in the same section, and develops research variables used in this study and re-structures a skeleton for literature review in the subsequent sections. Sections 2.4-2.7 examines the other constructs, including need for uniqueness, materialism, affective response and repurchase intention. Based on the literature review, the proposed theoretical model with the corresponding research hypotheses is presented in Section 2.7. Finally, this chapter ends with a summary in Section 2.8.

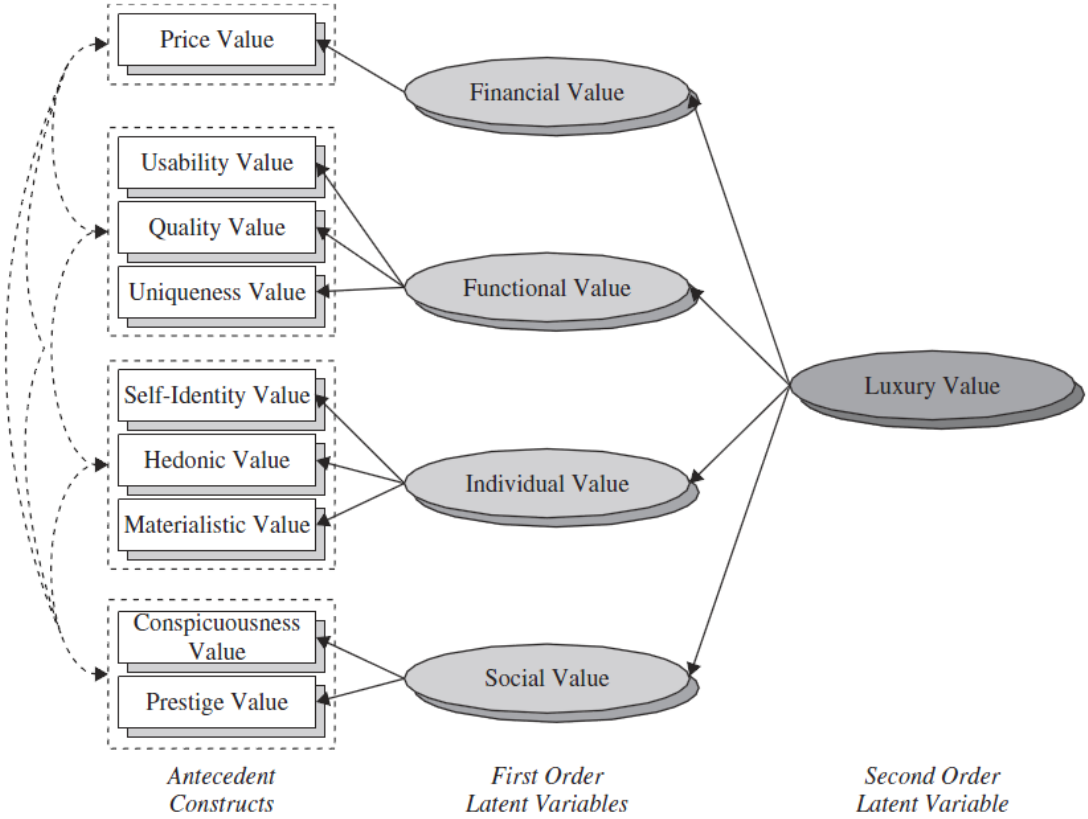
2.2 Luxury value

Luxury goods symbolize a consumer's personality and social identity. One of the most important dimensions of brand luxury is status (Vigneron and Johnson, 1999, 2004). In general, luxury brands, or status goods, have been regarded as

consumer products which bring prestige or status to the owner. A consumer's personal preference for shopping helps create a particular prestige level (Deeter-Schmelz et al., 2000). Some consumers buy luxury brands simply because these products give them a sense of superiority and differentiate them from their peers. Luxury brands signify quality, prestige, status and class, and are regarded as status products for self-rewarding (internal reason) or showing off wealth (external reason). In other words, the value of luxury brands is related to personal orientation. This personal matter is more visible among consumers who evaluate status products with individual-based standards and derive self-directed pleasurable experience. As a matter of fact, consumers purchase luxury goods mainly for their symbolic values to project one's image and social identity to satisfy one's ego, psychological and functional needs (Vickers and Renand, 2003). This kind of consumer particularly likes to draw attention from their significant others and fashion serves as a competitive advantage in building social communication and enhancing status in a social hierarchy.

Wiedmann et al. (2009) develops a multi-dimensional framework of luxury value as a foundation for different value-based segments of luxury consumers. The model is shown in the figure below:

Fig. 2-1. Value-based segmentation model of luxury (Wiedmann et al., 2009)



Fashion consumption is an expression of one's self-image (Belk et al., 1988; Banister and Hogg, 2004; Grant and Stephen, 2005). Generally, dimensions of values are categorized as affective for hedonic enjoyment; symbolic for internal selves; and utilitarian for functional purposes (Eroglu et al., 2005; Lin and Xia, 2012). More specifically, five types of perceived value are identified: a) perceived conspicuous value to express one's status and wealth; b) perceived hedonic value to satisfy a buyer's emotional desire; c) perceived unique value to represent one's exclusive style; d) perceived social value to symbolize group

membership; and e) perceived quality value to express superior production craft (Tsai, 2005). Some product types have much stronger brand-oriented influence on these personal orientations because of "Veblen Effect" (Bagwell and Bernheim, 1996), which refers to a psychological force to pay a premium price for a quality-equivalent product creating a perception of prestige and status in a consumer's mind.

Luxury brands carry symbolic and emotional value to consumers, and are status symbols that offer high perceived quality and prestige. Status-enhancing brands are a powerful tool to create a desired image on significant others through symbolism. People who are status-conscious or fashion-conscious are potential customers to the luxury goods market. Luxury brands are increasingly viewed as an important tool to create an individual identity expressing a sense of achievement and projecting a self-image. The significant connection of brands and status illustrates the need to understand how brands gain status, success and value.

2.3 Status consumption

Eastman et al. (1999) defined status consumption as "the motivational process by which individuals strive to improve their social standing through the conspicuous

consumption of consumer products that confer and symbolize status both for the individual and surrounding significant others (p.43)". O'Cass and Frost (2002) defined status consumption as the process of gaining status from the acquisition of goods that both for the individual and surrounding significant others perceive to have a high status. Status consumption is 'principally irrational' (psychological) in its motivation and expression (Shukla, 2008). Consumers communicate meaning of themselves to their reference groups through the consumption of status goods as symbols (Husic and Cicic, 2009). Eastman et al. (2013) emphasizes that status consumption is an individual difference variable that concerns one's motivation to consume for status or social prestige regardless of income level or social class. Status-conscious behavior is the driving force to enhance social standing through the public consumption of luxury products that symbolize personal wealth, status and power (Eastman et al., 1999; Vigneron and Johnson, 2004). Luxury brands publicly convey status to consumers and significant others. Branded products have much stronger brand-oriented influence because of "Veblen Effect" (Bagwell and Bernheim, 1996), which refers to a psychological force to pay a premium price for a quality-equivalent product which ultimately creates a perception of prestige or status in a consumer's mind. Most consumers who purchase luxury goods are motivated by the need for status.

Status is the relative standing or position of a member in the hierarchy of a group or society in terms of specific status factors, including wealth, prestige and honor awarded to an individual by other members (Clark et al., 2007). Luxury goods help consumers to fulfill the need for status. Consumers acquire, own, use and display certain goods to enhance their own sense of self, project their self-image, express what they feel and think, and show what types of social relationship they expect to have. When considering the construct of status consumption, status is typically referred to as relative esteem or respect (Rucker and Galinsky, 2008). In other words, an individual's status is best understood from others' point of view. Through status consumption, consumers wish to promote their status and offer psychological rewards to themselves. Vickers and Renand (2003) argued that luxury goods concern personal identity, featured by symbolic interactionism, and fulfill consumers' needs for self-enhancement and identity. Consumers' desire in acquiring status goods suggests a high degree of ego-enhancement and a need for being a member of a superior group.

Researchers often link status consumption to conspicuous consumption. Luxury goods consumption can be considered as status or conspicuous consumption (O'Cass and McEwen, 2004). Status consumption is based on conspicuous consumption (Eastman et al., 1999). Some studies significantly overlap the

definitions of these two concepts. In the literature on luxury branding, status and conspicuousness are considered a single dimensional construct (Vigneron and Johnson, 2004). For example, the scales used to measure the perceived conspicuousness of brands include status-related items. Status consumption does not only concern the purchase of prestigious products in order to display wealth, but is different from materialism for consumers' own sake (Clark et al., 2007). Status consumption is influenced by self-monitoring and interpersonal factors whereas conspicuous consumption is influenced only by interpersonal factors (O'Cass and McEwen, 2004). In terms of status consumption, a consumer is conscious of displaying their status and possessions. Status consumption is more concerned with a consumer's desire to gain prestige from acquiring status products and brands, and his personal sense of owning status-oriented possessions, which may or may not be publicly demonstrated in front of others. Conspicuous consumption is more focused on a visual display of products and brands in others' presence, emphasizing wealth or position by showcasing expensive material possessions (Truong et al., 2008). Conspicuous consumers get satisfaction from others' reaction to the affluence on display instead of the product itself.

Consumers are motivated to achieve high status, and luxury goods not only

satisfy material needs but also social needs. Through status consumption, consumers make themselves more visible in the eyes of surrounding significant others. 'The more a consumer seeks status, the more he or she engages in such behavior, such as the consumption of status symbols that increase their status' (Eastman et al., 1999). The key research works relevant to status consumption and their relative findings are shown below (Table 2-1):

Table 2-1. Previous studies of status consumption

Researchers (Year)	Relevant issues discussed and the findings
Eastman et at. (2013)	Status consumption is an individual difference variable that concerns a consumer's motivation to consume for status conferred on product owners. It is a consumption-related need for status regardless of income level or social class. The findings show that status consumption is a positive antecedent to Consumer Styles Inventory's shopping styles (Sproles and Kendall, 1986): brand consciousness, novelty and fashion consciousness, recreational and shopping consciousness, impulse/carelessness, and habitual/brand loyalty, but not to the characteristics of a perfectionist, confused by overchoice and price consciousness.
Geiger-Oneto et al. (2013)	Status consumption is a social antecedent of brand type choices. Status seeking influences consumers' selection of brand types. As status consumption becomes increasingly important, the likelihood of choosing a non-luxury brand decreases. However, status consumption is not found to significant when choosing between authentic and counterfeit luxury brand types.
Lertwannawit and Mandhachitara (2012)	Indirect effects provide insight into the influences of interpersonal factors on status consumption. High and low materialism plays a moderating role in the relationship between fashion consciousness and status consumption. For high-materialistic males, susceptibility to interpersonal influence alone has an indirect effect via fashion consciousness on status consumption. On the contrary, low-materialism males require self-monitoring as an additional antecedent of status consumption.

Goldsmith and Clark (2012)	The study demonstrates the relationship between materialism, status consumption and consumer independence. Consumer independence is an enduring tendency to pay minimal attention to the prescribed norms of other consumers and to make product and brand choices based on personal preferences. The association between materialism and consumer independence is wholly mediated by status consumption. Materialism motivates consumers to be status-conscious so they follow social norms in making purchase decisions, but status consumption is avoided by less materialistic and independent consumers.
Latter et al. (2010)	This study examines the causal relationships among status consumption, need for uniqueness, brand perception (e.g. brand judgments and emotional value), and purchase intention for status and non-status consumers. It shows that brand judgment has the strongest effect on purchase intention. Among the three dimensions of consumers' need for uniqueness, creative choice counter-conformity is found to be a more significant predictor of purchase intention than unpopular choice counter-conformity or avoidance of similarity.
Shukla (2010)	In a cross-national context, the study addresses the status consumption process in an individualistic and mature developed market (the UK) in comparison to a collectivist and rapidly growing market (India). Socio-psychological, brand and situational factors are found to be significant antecedents of status consumption. It also finds that some key status consumption characteristics may be common across all cultures and countries, but their influence may greatly vary with each place.

Sivanathan and Pettit (2010)	The study explores consumers' psychological need for self-integrity as a motivation for status consumption. Individuals consume status products for repairing their egos. Individuals seek ownership of high-status goods to nurse their psychological wounds. When they pay their way to repair self-integrity, the intention to seek these products decreases. It also finds that low-income groups with lower self-esteem drive their willingness to spend on high-status goods. As affirmational commodities, the compensatory role of high-status goods can reduce consumer debt.
Clark et al. (2007)	The study contrasts status-seeking consumers with role-relaxed consumers across personal (need for uniqueness), social influence (social comparison), and market influence (opinion leadership) factors. The results show that status-seeking consumers: (a) tend to conform to group norms, (b) maintain a need for uniqueness, (c) are susceptible to normative but not necessarily informational interpersonal influence, (d) can be opinion leaders, but not necessarily opinion seekers, and (e) have a tendency that contrasts sharply with a role-relaxed consumer tendency.
Heaney et al. (2005)	The study examines the relationship of status consumption with materialism and attention-to-social-comparison-information. The findings show that these three constructs are interrelated.
O'Cass and Frost (2002)	The findings indicate that status-seeking consumers are more likely to be influenced by feelings aroused by the brand and the degree of congruency between the brand-user's self-image and the brand's image. When the brands' symbolic characteristics are significant, stronger positive feelings can be aroused by the brand, and the congruency between the brand-user's self-image and the brand's image becomes stronger.

Eastman et al. (1999)	The study describes the scale development and validation to measure status consumption which is a tendency to purchase products for status or social prestige conferred on their owners. Differences in self-reported status consumption are shown to be positively correlated with the brand's ownership.
Eastman et al. (1997)	The study investigates the individual difference variables of materialism and status consumption among college students in the USA, China and Mexico. The results show that these two constructs are significantly different in the three countries. There are also significant differences in materialism levels across the three countries but there are no significant differences in the level of status consumption, meaning that status consumption has equal importance across the three countries.

The above summary shows that the previous studies investigated status consumption from three major aspects, a significant portion of which examined the antecedents of status consumption, focusing on interpersonal influence (e.g. self-monitoring, fashion consciousness, and materialism) (Lertwannawit and Mandhachitara, 2012), social influence (e.g. informational influence, normative influence and social comparison) and personal influence (e.g. tendency to conform and need for uniqueness) (Clark et al., 2007), socio-psychological factors (e.g. social gains, esteem indication and ostentation behavior), management/market controlled brand features and situational factors (e.g. social occasions) (Shukla, 2010), brands' symbolism/familiarity/feelings (O'Cass and

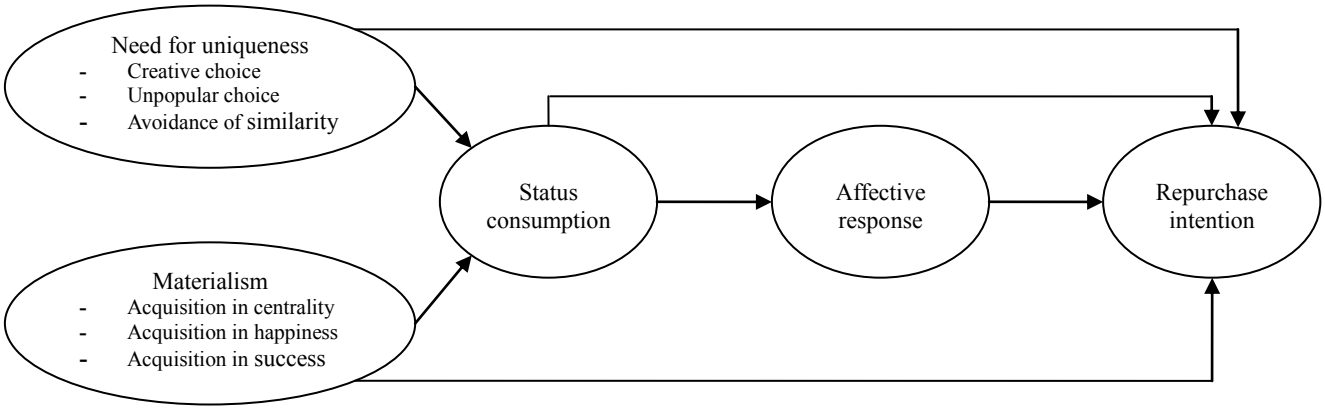
Frost, 2002), and self-related factors (e.g. self integrity, ego and self-threat) (Sivanathan and Pettit, 2010). As observed from the past literature, few studies touched on the topic of status consumption influencing the formation of affective response. The exact nature of the relationship among status consumption, affective response and repurchase intention has yet to be specified. Eng and Bogaert (2010) stressed that status consumption actually fulfills consumers' need of hedonic consumption. Affective response or attitude is derived from feelings generated from luxury brands (Sweeney and Soutar, 2001). Knight and Kim (2007) argued that affective response is found to be twice more likely to account for purchase intention than cognition response. Affective response affects repurchase intention which is defined as consumers' self-reported likelihood of engaging in further repurchase behavior of goods (Seiders et al., 2005).

The study conducted by Clark et al. (2007) showed that status-conscious consumers can be opinion leaders, but not necessarily opinion seekers. Although this study compared and contrasted status-seeking consumers and role-relaxed consumers, the source of data was limited and the product category was not specified. The study conducted by Geiger-Oneto et al. (2013) provided a valuable insight in three alternative processes of brand type choice. However, the scope of this study was limited. The model proposed by Latter et al. (2010) showed that

the influence of status consumption and need for uniqueness on brand perception ultimately affects purchase intention. However, it failed to capture the impact of status consumption on repurchase intention of luxury goods.

The present study aims to address the limitations of the previous studies by developing a theoretical framework to explore status-conscious consumers' repurchase intention of luxury goods. Since the previous studies showed that there is a close relationship between status consumption, need for uniqueness (Clark et al., 2007; Latter et al., 2010) and materialism (Eastman et al., 1997; Heaney et al., 2005; Goldsmith and Clark, 2012; Lertwannawit and Mandhachitara, 2012), this study uses these two constructs as key antecedents of status consumption and collects data from real-life consumers. A conceptual framework of the study is shown in Fig. 2-2.

Fig. 2-2. Conceptual theoretical framework of present study



Status consumption in the proposed model refers to the motive or need for consuming luxury goods for status. Fig. 2-2 illustrates that this study uses two major correlated antecedents of status consumption: need for uniqueness and materialism. Unique items help to build up a consumer's sense of self and identity. Due to limited quantity and premium quality, status-conscious consumers have the need for personal uniqueness in consuming luxury goods. Prior studies showed that consumers' need for uniqueness has a significant influence on consumption of status products (Clark et al., 2007; Latter et al., 2010) as they are symbolic of uniqueness (Vigneron and Johnson, 2004). The value of the product increases when the perceived uniqueness of the product increases, thus leading to enhancement of an individual's status in a social hierarchy (Fitzmaurice and Comegys, 2006). Therefore, the first research hypothesis is proposed as follows:

H1: Need for uniqueness has a positive influence on consumers' status consumption of luxury goods.

The need for status affects the reaction to brands and the desire for interpersonal difference through material possessions. Consumers acquire material goods to differentiate themselves from significant others. Material possessions signify personal success, social status and self-satisfaction. Materialistic consumers prefer a public display of luxury goods to symbolize their success and social status (Belk, 1985, 1988; Richins and Dawson, 1990, 1992; Richins, 1994a, 1994b). Materialism dictates what consumers desire from their acquisition of possessions and what kinds of product can fulfill their needs. Prior studies reported that materialism has direct effect on status consumption (Heaney et al., 2005; Goldsmith and Clark, 2012; Lertwannawit and Mandhachitara, 2012). Thus, the following research hypothesis is proposed:

H2: Materialism has a positive influence on consumers' status consumption of luxury goods.

The proposed model (Fig. 2-2) attempts to demonstrate the causal relationship among status consumption, affective response and repurchase intention of

status-conscious consumers in buying luxury goods. Affective response affects repurchase intention of luxury goods. The details of the two constructs will be examined in Sections 2.6 and 2.7 respectively.

2.4 Need for uniqueness

The first key antecedent of status consumption is need for uniqueness. Status-conscious consumers tend to maintain interpersonal difference (Workman and Kidd, 2000; Clark et al., 2007). Consumers' need for uniqueness originates in Snyder and Fromkin's (1977) uniqueness theory, which manifests itself in an individual pursuit of material goods to differentiate oneself from others and enhance one's self-image (Simonson and Nowlis, 2000; Knight and Kim, 2007). When the need for uniqueness is aroused, scarce items act as a tool to build a person's specialness as unique items are an important source for defining a persons' sense of self (Snyder, 1992). Due to high price and exclusive product styles, consumers can differentiate themselves from significant others. Tian et al. (2001) defined need for uniqueness as a situation in which a person pursues brands and products to express uniqueness in order to develop and enhance his personal image and social identity. The theory suggests that the need to differentiate is aroused when an individual is acutely aware of his similarity to others in a social environment. Need for uniqueness is regarded as a

multi-dimensional construct consisting of three behavioral dimensions: (1) creative choice counter-conformity, (2) unpopular choice counter-conformity, and (3) avoidance of similarity.

Creative choice counter-conformity

For creative choice-oriented consumers, even they want to express self-identity and uniqueness by consuming new brands and exclusive products, they might still want to be accepted and conform to social norms (Tian et al., 2001; Knight and Kim, 2007). Creative choice counter-conformity means that consumers look for social difference but still choose products considered as good choices in the eyes of others. In order to present uniqueness and gain acceptance from others, status goods with unique style and of limited quantity are the best to offer distinction. For example, "*I'm often on the lookout for new products or brands that will add to my personal uniqueness*" is one of the uniqueness measurement scales proposed by Tian et al. (2001). Some consumers like innovative product designs, but also expect to gain acceptance from their social peers. Brand names that can offer distinguishing attributes, such as status and exclusivity, appeal to consumers who demonstrate this type of behavior. Their needs for uniqueness motivate them to pursue status consumption because status goods can differentiate themselves and improve their self-image.

Unpopular choice counter-conformity

For unpopular choice-oriented consumers, they are likely to risk social disapproval by choosing unique brands that deviate from social norms (Tian et al., 2001) as they cannot seek effective ways to differentiate themselves in a socially approved way. Unpopular choice counter-conformity refers to a situation in which consumers use deviant brands or products to differentiate themselves. However, this behavioral dimension also produces similar results to creative choice counter-conformity by enhancing one's self-image and social image. Negative comments from others usually do nothing to uniqueness-seeking consumers. Instead, they buy bizarre things on purpose (Simonson and Nowlis, 2000) and disregard criticisms from peers. For example, "*I have often violated the understood rules of my social group regarding what to buy or own*" is one of the uniqueness measurement scales under this dimension (Tian et al., 2001). Status-conscious consumers who belong to this group may prefer to dress up either overly exaggerating or unnatural in order to seek attention from others and express their uniqueness. Interestingly, such risky behavior may ultimately enhance their self-image.

Avoidance of similarity

For similarity avoidance-oriented consumers, they try to avoid brands considered

common and therefore discontinue consuming popular brands to avoid similarity and distinguish themselves from others (Tian et al., 2001; Knight and Kim, 2007). They, not without snobbishness, wish to have unique products in limited supply and of a higher value because they dislike shopping in stores that their friends frequent (Husic and Cicic, 2009). Similarly, it also helps enhance one's self-image and social image. For example, "*The more commonplace a product or brand is among the general population, the less interested I am in buying it*" is one of the measurement scales under this dimension (Tian et al., 2001). This kind of consumers may stop using luxury goods when they become popular. More importantly, they may develop a variety of strategies to avoid such similarity. For example, they may shop at vintage stores or purchase discontinued product styles. The need for uniqueness can have a significant effect on a consumer's purchase decisions.

Consumers' need for uniqueness is conceptualized as adherence to one's personal taste, a breach of social rules or avoidance of consumption of common products. To status-conscious consumers, a status product is valuable in terms of uniqueness and luxury.

2.5 Materialism

The second key antecedent of status consumption is materialism. There is a close relationship between need for uniqueness and materialism. Both of the constructs are parallel antecedents of status consumption. As discussed earlier, need for uniqueness creates an influence on branding and one's desire for interpersonal difference through acquiring material possessions. On the other hand, materialistic consumers are possessive or acquisitive (Belk, 1988; Richins, 1994a, 1994b), and are motivated to draw attention to their social status (Eastman et al., 1999). Status-conscious consumers acquire material goods to differentiate themselves from others (Simonson and Nowlis, 2000; Knight and Kim, 2007). Therefore, each of the antecedents correlates with need for uniqueness and materialism.

Materialists, who have a greater desire for possessions, rely heavily on external cues, favoring a public display of possessions to achieve self-satisfaction. Materialism carries a necessary value for those with a more innovative personality and higher involvement. There are two prevailing theoretical perspectives in conceptualization of materialism: (1) materialism as a personal trait and (2) materialism as a value.

Materialism as personal trait

According to Belk (1985), materialism is defined as "the importance a consumer attaches to worldly possessions". The concept of materialism is viewed as a personality-like trait combining three dimensions – possessiveness, non-generosity and envy. These factors capture the degree to which an individual values his or her material items, dislikes sharing his or her items and feels envious when others acquire more goods or more valuable goods than him or her. In Belk's theory, the first dimension, possessiveness, is a personal concern with losing possessions and therefore increases the desire for greater control of material ownership. Experience is an intangible possession. Materialists tend to make their experiences tangible through buying physical souvenirs and taking photographs. This behavior is later re-defined as a new materialistic trait named preservation. The second dimension is non-generosity which is the unwillingness to give or share possessions with others. It also means unwillingness to donate possessions and negative attitudes towards charity activities. The third dimension is named envy. It reflects an individual's desire for other's material possessions. They are envious of those who possess more goods and more valuable goods. Conspicuous consumption and materialism are implicitly linked through the personality-like trait of envy. Expensive items do not have other-oriented function unless such possessions are conspicuous. Envy is closely related to

conspicuous consumption because an individual is only envious of others' possessions when he or she cannot afford comparable goods. Thus, the trait of envy often concerns luxury goods with high status.

Materialism as a value

Building on Belk's work, Richins and Dawson (1990) framed a domain of materialism for measuring development as motivations, expectations, and affective states. They characterized individual beliefs in terms of material possessions. In respect of motivation, materialism has a status component representing the intended and actual use of possessions as a means of symbolizing personal success and social standing. The expectation component of materialism refers to the extent to which an individual believes that materials acquisition brings happiness and enjoyment. Finally, the affective component represents the extent to which an individual actually regards possessions as a source of satisfaction. Further, Richins and Dawson (1992) supplemented Belk's ideas by conceptualizing materialism as a centrally-held personal value or belief in material possessions in one's life, instead of a personality variable or behavior. This individual belief signifies social status, personal success and self-satisfaction, and consists of three beliefs - acquisition centrality, success and happiness. Acquisition centrality refers to the importance that materialists place

on acquired possessions, functioning as a life goal. The role of material acquisition in success refers to the belief that success is measured by one's material possessions. The role of material acquisition in happiness refers to a belief that owning or acquiring right possessions is a key to happiness and well-being.

Richins studied materialism in terms of consumers' materialistic orientations (Richins, 1994a), and defined public and private meanings of possessions (Richins, 1994b). The former study argued that people's materialistic orientation determines their evaluation of products (Richins, 1994a). Possessions do not carry the same level of importance to consumers with different levels of materialism. Highly materialistic consumers focus more on publicly consumed, socially visible and expensive products and are more likely to value products' public meaning in terms of status, success and prestige. Materialism may not only differentiate between consumers' attitudes in acquiring possessions but also affect the meanings conveyed by products. The latter study revealed that products also convey public and private meanings beyond utilitarian functions (Richins, 1994b). Public meanings of products are defined as "the subjective meanings assigned to an object by outside observers (non-owners), that is, by members of society at large". The value of possessions can be transferred to

individual consumers through their public meanings. These consumers make product choices taking account of status, success, prestige, wealth, or taste, according to their personal values.

The perceived status or prestige of possessions is more valued by materialistic consumers who intentionally place monetary value as an important evaluative criterion. Materialism influences the motivation of social status in the attitude formation of luxury fashion brands (Gil et al., 2012). Highly materialistic consumers tend to spend more time and energy on shopping to impress others (Fitzmaurice and Comegys, 2006). Pursing social status in purchasing behavior means that a person acquires and consumes luxury fashion brands as a way to symbolize a group of membership. More importantly, materialism relates to self-satisfaction which builds affective attitude by acquiring material possessions to signify personal success and happiness. Materialism is one of the sources of life satisfaction. Materialistic consumers love to signify wealth, impress others and enhance happiness via luxury goods.

The greatest market segment of luxury brands belongs to materialistic consumers and materialism is the primary factor in the attitude towards luxury brands (Wiedmann et al., 2009; Gil et al., 2012). Possessing status-enhancing goods is

regarded as one of the strongest measures of social success and status, indicating that status-conscious consumers are more likely to purchase goods to show off their success and status (O'Cass and Frost, 2002).

2.6 Affective response

After examining how need for uniqueness and materialism influence consumers to engage in status consumption, this section describes the important role of affective response in shaping the behavior of status consumption and leading to repurchase intention.

Attitude consists of both cognitive (what we think and believe) and affective (what we feel and experience) dimensions (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975). The cognitive dimension refers to the knowledge of a brand or category, and the affective dimension refers to the feelings or emotions associated with a brand or product category (Batra and Homer, 2004). Affective response is twice more likely to account for purchase intention than cognition response (Knight and Kim, 2007). Particularly, affective attitude has a stronger influence on the formation of cognitive-affective purchase intention of fashion brands than cognitive attitude because it is often related to the behavior in response to either affective or symbolic appeal (Lee et al., 2008; Kumar et al., 2009). Symbolic meanings and

feelings of favorable luxury brands affect brand-conscious consumers who make affective judgment on consumers' repurchase intention. Consumers' affective response can be derived from feelings generated from luxury brands (Sweeney and Soutar, 2001). Consumers make evaluation whether a brand satisfies their emotional needs, and are prepared to build affective ties to improve status and affirm individual identity. Status-conscious consumers can achieve affective goals through consuming luxury goods, by either entering a positive affective state or leaving a negative affective state. The affective element for shopping values of consumer goods caters for hedonic enjoyment (Eroglu et al., 2005; Lin and Xia, 2012). Hedonic consumption needs are fulfilled through status consumption (Eng and Bogaert, 2010), and hedonic effect describes a situation in which status-conscious consumers acquire luxury brands to arouse positive feelings and form affective states (Vigneron and Johnson, 1999). Affective response to buying luxury goods is linked to a display of wealth and symbolic meanings from an individual's social standing. Vickers and Renand (2003) differentiates between luxury and non-luxury goods, arguing that luxury goods are geared towards personal or social identity, featured by experientialism and symbolic interactionism. Experiential symbolism offers sensory pleasure and cognitive stimulation, while symbolic interactionism fulfils consumer needs for self-enhancement and identity. From a consumption perspective, luxury goods

not only carry tangible meaning, but, more importantly, also give intangible meaning by which consumers receive both symbolic and material needs. Vigernon and Johnson (1999) argued that there is a perceived hedonic value in luxury goods consumption related to personal effects.

Affective response serves to explain why consumers are willing to pay premium price for luxury brands although they may obtain similar functional benefits from non-luxury brands. The level of commitment determines how norms influence a consumer's affective response. Consuming a luxury product offers status and good quality with a favorable brand name. Status-conscious consumers are affected by symbolic meanings and feelings of a brand and make affective judgment on purchase intention (Malhotra, 2003; Agarwala and Malhotra, 2005; Shukla, 2008). Purchasing luxury goods induces consumers' affective state as sensory pleasure, personal reward and fulfillment (Wood, 2000; Tsai, 2005; Shukla, 2008). It also enhances consumers' self-directed pleasure through consumption of status goods, indicating that a consumer's self-gratification and satisfaction are associated with products and shopping experience. The experience of status consumption should be more strongly related to affective response rather than utilitarian value. Prior literature repeatedly showed that luxury products arouse emotional responses, such as aesthetic beauty and

hedonic enjoyment. Although affective response plays a major role in consumption of luxury goods, few studies have investigated the relationship between status consumption and affective response.

Status-conscious consumers make affective judgment on purchase intention of luxury goods. Consuming luxury goods induces consumers' affective response as sensory pleasure, personal reward and fulfillment. These psychological and personal benefits indicate a consumer's self-gratification and satisfaction from a certain product and the related shopping experience. As discussed above, the nature of status consumption is much more concerned with experiential symbolism offering sensory pleasure than a products' utilitarian value. The present study examines how status consumption generates affective response. Hence, the following hypothesis is propagated:

H3: Consumers' status consumption has a positive influence on the formation of affective response in buying luxury goods.

2.7 Repurchase intention

Hellier et al. (2003) defined repurchase intention as "an individual's judgment on buying a designated service from the same company again, taking into account

his or her current situation and likely circumstances". Seiders (2005) argued that repurchase intention represents consumers' self-reported likelihood of engaging in further repurchase behavior, and affective response facilitates consumers' further behavioral intentions. Ha et al. (2010) conducted a study to examine psychological mediators useful for predicting consumers' repurchase intention. Consumers' satisfaction has been considered as an important factor in repurchase intention, showing that the affective process of post-satisfaction influences consumers' repurchase intention. The attribution theory shows that repurchase intention is facilitated only when previously formed positive evaluations are available in memory and consumers are engaging in expectedly favorable consumption. Positive attitude plays a significant role in the formation of consumer behavior (Kraft et al., 2005). Repurchase intention is derived from loyalty attached to the relationship between consumer' satisfaction and expectations to buy more (Yi and La, 2004). Consumption experiences that exceed consumers' expectations can enhance repurchase expectations which facilitate repurchase intention (Szymanski and Henard, 2001). For example, if consumers have affective response from status consumption, their loyalty is likely to be secured for repeat purchase.

Traditional social psychological theories of attitude and behavior seldom discuss

repurchase intention. Traditional models may fail to explain irrational behavior with emotional variables. Nor can they account for consumers' self-reported likelihood of repurchase behavior. The Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) and the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) demonstrate the significant impact on consumer attitude, intention and behavior in consumer psychology and marketing. According to the TRA, behavior is influenced by behavioral intention, which in turn is influenced by attitude and subjective norms (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975). A consumer's attitude is closely related to the belief that such behavior can lead to certain results. Subjective norms describe a consumer's perception of social pressure in performing the behavior. The TPB (Ajzen, 1991), an extension of TRA, has an extra construct in perceived behavioral control in the new model to deal with the situation in which individuals may not have complete volitional control over the behavior in question. Perceived behavioral control refers to an individual's perceptions of his/her ability to perform a given behavior. This additional construct explains the reasoned behavior that individuals intend to perform without confidence or control.

Both the TRA and TPB demonstrate that intention is assumed to be the immediate antecedent of behavior and is affected by attitude. In a study conducted by French et al. (2005), the results showed that the conventional TPB

overlooks the importance of affective response and precludes personal traits which are regarded as background factors. Personal traits may create an indirect or direct influence on intention and behavior. Although researchers have modified the TPB conceptual framework in studying consumer behavior, attention should be paid when incorporating extra constructs because the benefit of conventional models may be lost.

Prior studies also showed that affective response has positive and significant influence on purchase intention of luxury goods (Czellar, 2003; Knight and Kim, 2007; Latter et al., 2010; Bian and Forsythe, 2012). However, the intention to repeat purchase plays a significant role in consumption behavior. Consumers may have repurchase intention of the same brand even when other options are available. To thoroughly study consumers' attitude, intention and behavior in consumer psychology and marketing, it is advisable to examine how affective response affects repurchase intention. Affective response is one of the antecedents of repurchase intention, which helps develop customer loyalty. Yet, studies of repurchase intention are largely fragmented (Hellier et al., 2003). Although consumers' satisfaction and affective response are closely related to repurchase intention, greater customer satisfaction does not necessarily elevate repurchase tendency (Yi and La, 2004). The factors in repurchase intention seem

to be more complicated (Söderlund, 2002). Personal traits also influence the tendency to repurchase. Therefore, the present study aims to address the above limitations by examining how personal traits, need for uniqueness and materialism affect status consumption, and generate affective response leading to repurchase intention of luxury goods. In line with the above issues, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H4: Consumers' affective response has a positive influence on repurchase intention of luxury goods.

Hypotheses 3 and 4 propose that status consumption affects affective response which in turn influences repurchase intention of luxury goods. Status consumption may directly affect repurchase intention because of social norms. Individuals are motivated to comply with a group's norms or beliefs and behaviors of others in an attempt to align themselves with the expectations of referents (Park and Lessig, 1977). Status-seeking consumers mainly focus on increasing influence on social relationship and demonstrating their competency and ability (Geiger-Oneto et al., 2013). They have the 'will to display' in front of social groups. Frequent purchase of luxury goods is mainly for enhancing status and producing benefits in social interaction (Nelissen and Meijers, 2011). Thus,

the following hypothesis is proposed:

H5: Consumers' status consumption has a positive influence on repurchase intention of luxury goods.

Conspicuous consumption is characterized by consumers' social desires (Gierl et al., 2008). As stated by the uniqueness theory, consumers wish to maintain a sense of individual uniqueness (Snyder, 1992). One of these social desires is to differentiate the self from others by consuming unique products. Scarce products become attractive options to communicate uniqueness to the surrounding significant others. Some consumers believe that high prices come with high status and high quality (Wu et al., 2012). The perceived uniqueness value is likely an explanation for scarcity effects which in turn affects purchase intention. Yet, studies of how need for uniqueness affects repurchase intention of consumers are scant. Based on the above discussion, the following hypothesis is suggested:

H6: Consumers' need for uniqueness has a positive influence on repurchase intention of luxury goods.

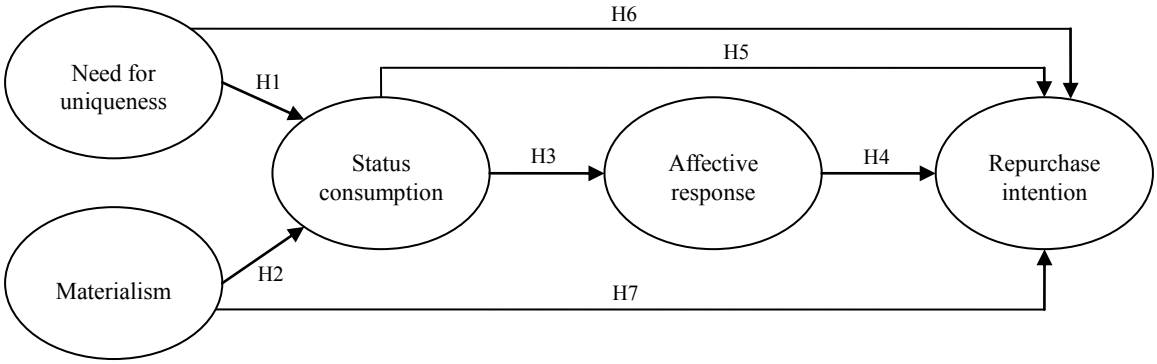
Perceived social status and materialism are internal factors in consumers' purchase intention (Fah et al., 2011). Consumers' repurchase intention is mostly associated with consumers' materialism beliefs (Watson et al., 2002). Highly materialistic consumers are more willing to buy visible goods to signify high social status and personal success (Fitzmaurice, 2008). When materialistic consumers find luxury products as a way to communicate high status to significant others, their repurchase intention becomes high. Studies of how materialism affects repurchase intention of luxury goods are limited. Thus, in line with the above discussed issues, the following hypothesis is propagated:

H7: Consumers' materialism has a positive influence on repurchase intention of luxury goods.

In brief, luxury goods satisfy consumers' hedonic consumption needs and psychological needs for status and identity, exerting a direct impact on future purchase. Repurchase intention of luxury goods is motivated by consumers' desire to reflect social status, reinforce uniqueness, and demonstrate superiority and personal achievement. According to the above review of literature, the present study aims to develop a theoretical consumer behavior model to incorporate constructs of personal traits, need for uniqueness and materialism, as

the antecedents of status consumption which generates affective response and in turn influences repurchase intention. The proposed model with hypothesized paths among constructs is shown in Fig. 2-3.

Fig. 2-3. Proposed model with hypothesized paths



2.8 Chapter summary

This chapter reviews the extant literature on luxury value, status consumption, need for uniqueness, materialism, affective response and repurchase intention of status-conscious consumers. Most early studies focused more on the antecedents of status consumption and overlooked the importance of affective response. There are limited studies of how status consumption affects affective response and repurchase intention, while they show that need for uniqueness and materialism impact on status consumption. Therefore, by addressing the limitations of the prior studies, this study provides a foundation for the subsequent theoretical framework. Corresponding research hypotheses are propagated according to the literature review and the research gaps examined. The model begins with the explanation of status consumption as the central construct. Then the key antecedents of status consumption are reviewed, including need for uniqueness and materialism, and how status consumption affects the formation of affection response and ultimately arouses repurchase intention is discussed. The proposed model of the study with hypothesized paths is presented in Section 2.7.

Chapter 3 Methodology

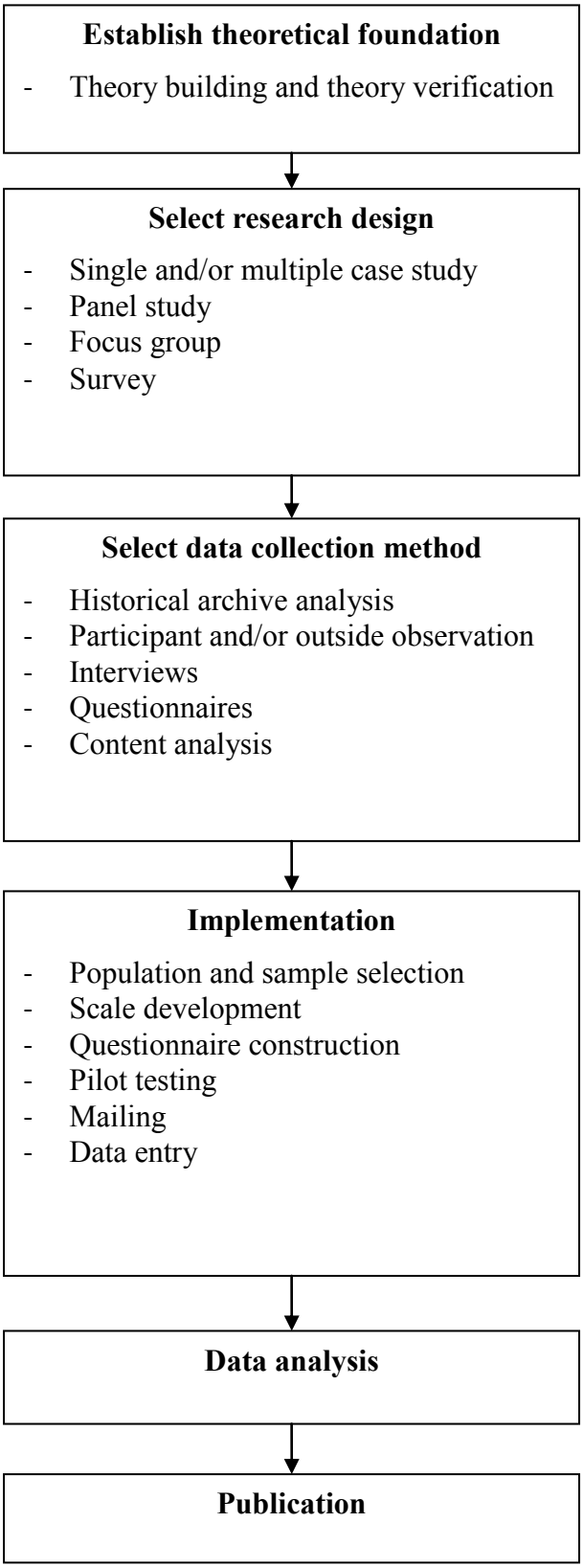
3.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the research methodology employed for developing the measures of constructs, collecting and analyzing data in the study. The method follows the process proposed by Flynn et al. (1990) in business empirical research, and provides a basis for the questionnaire adopted. The instrument development describes the structure of the questions, the checklist for reviewing the questions, and the improvement of the questionnaire in a pre-test. Then it presents the data analysis tools employed in analyzing preliminary data collected from the questionnaire survey. The last section discusses the techniques of hypothesis testing.

3.2 Research design

This study follows the business research method proposed by Flynn et al. (1990). As shown in Fig. 3-1, it involves research design, data collection, sample selection, scale development, questionnaire construction, and pilot testing.

Fig. 3-1. Systematical approach to empirical research suggested by Flynn et al. (1990)



In terms of establishment of a theoretical foundation, empirical business research involves theory building or verification. Theory building focuses on assumptions, frameworks, perceived problems or tentative hypotheses (Flynn et al., 1990). For theory verification, researchers propose hypotheses in advance of data collection and either accept or reject hypotheses by applying inferential statistics and significance tests. This study aims to investigate the repurchase intention of status-conscious consumers in buying luxury goods, placing emphasis on hypotheses testing and model development, but not theory building. In selecting a research design, quantitative research was adopted. The questionnaire survey served as the main tool to collect data. Systematic random sampling was applied to recruit consumers who had bought luxury goods in retail stores and carried those shopping bags. The details of the study's design rationale, data collection methods and implementation strategies will be discussed in the following sections.

In general, researchers come across three major research paradigms (Johnson et al., 2007; Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009), namely (1) positivism for quantitative research; (2) constructivism for qualitative research; and (3) pragmatism for mixed-method research. The decision to adopt a quantitative or a qualitative method depends upon which method can effectively address the research

problem. Conventional quantitative research emphasizes deduction, confirmation, hypothesis testing, explanation, prediction, standardized data collection, and statistical analysis. This study has the nature of theory verification with researchers proposing hypotheses before data collection. Inferential statistics and significance tests are adopted to reject or accept the proposed hypotheses. Therefore, quantitative research was adopted to conduct the present study. To demonstrate the relationship between consumer research variables, quantitative data can provide more evidence and help interpret qualitative judgments. The three basic approaches applied in quantitative research are observation, survey, and experimentation. To select an appropriate research method, three issues need to be considered: (a) the type of research question posed, (b) the extent of control the investigator has over actual behavioral events, and (c) the degree of focus on contemporary as opposed to historical events (Yin, 1993). Based on the review on previous literature, this present research poses the following research questions:

- What roles do need for uniqueness and materialism play in the context of status consumption?
- How does status consumption impact on consumers' affective response in buying luxury goods?

- How does consumers' affective response influence the repurchase intention of luxury goods?
- What are the major factors in consumers' repurchase intention in buying luxury goods?

Archival records analysis is applied to research on historical events. The experimental method can be used to address "how" and "why" questions, but needs control over behavioral events. The nature of the research questions implies that it is more appropriate to adopt surveys in the research design.

Surveys are widely used in most social science and marketing research works to empirically examine the features and causal relationship among socio-psychological variables. Surveys have a number of strengths. Firstly, they allow investigators to collect factual, attitudinal and behavioral data and investigate relationships among sociological and psychological variables (Kerlinger and Lee, 2000). Surveys can be used to investigate many aspects of a phenomenon simultaneously, and allow investigators to collect a large amount of data efficiently. Therefore, surveys are commonly used to identify the extent and nature of a relationship among variables, which experimental methods can hardly achieve (Haslam and McGarty, 2003). More importantly, it is feasible to assess

the reliability and validity of the survey data collected. The researchers can also compare the survey data and results with other outside criteria. When comparing with experimental method, surveys can reflect facts and thus have higher external validity (Roberts, 1999), and are an effective way to measure thoughts and attitudes (Lehmann et al., 1998). Beliefs, values, and attitudes are all the critical measures of the research variables of main interest in this present study. Therefore, survey method is considered as an appropriate strategy to test the proposed research hypotheses.

On the contrary, survey method has its limitation. Researchers do not have the direct control over the independent variables because their manifestations have already occurred or they cannot be manipulated (Kerlinger and Lee, 2000). It implies that it may not able to conclude that which certain independent variables have caused certain dependent variables although evidence shows that significant causal relationship is found between them. Besides, the presence of self-selection is a potential weakness of survey method if the respondents react differently to a research question. Their personal background may create bias to the research problem. Finally, the order and the structure of the survey questions need careful monitoring because it may affect the validity of the survey findings and cause measurement errors. Despite of these limitations, survey method is still very

popular with most of the marketing research.

Based on the literature review discussed in chapter 2, the scale and measurement of the main research constructs were developed, a questionnaire compiled, and a causal study model developed and validated by survey data. A confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was performed to generate a factor structure and assess the validation of the model. Structural equation modeling (SEM) was applied to ensure that the survey data fit the developed causal models and the research hypotheses were tested with measurement errors. The reliability and validity of the SEM model was then assessed to examine the overall model fit and parameter fit by structural equation modeling. This statistical technique will be further discussed in Section 3.7.

3.3 Data collection method

The study involves five constructs with the same rating scales in a questionnaire. The major technique for data collection in this study is a self-administered questionnaire survey. Data were collected from different places at different times in order to maximize external validity. The places were shopping malls of luxury fashion (e.g. Harbour City, Elements, IFC, Times Square and Sogo Department Store), main shopping districts (e.g. Central and Causeway Bay), tourist

attractions (e.g. Avenue of Stars), and major transport junctions (e.g. Hunghom Station and China Ferry Terminal).

3.4 Sampling strategy

Systematic random sampling was adopted for data collection, numbering units in the population from 1 to N. The desired sample size n is determined where the interval size K is equal to the fraction between N and n (K=N/n). Then a number between 1 to k is randomly selected. The sample is selected by taking every k^{th} unit. This method may be systematically biased though. For example, ethnic names are alphabetically clustered. There is a certain degree of under- or over-representation. This method works best when elements on the list are first randomized. In this study, every sixth respondent was invited to do the questionnaire survey. All the respondents were screened and only those who had purchased luxury goods coming out from luxury fashion stores carrying shopping bags were invited to answer the questionnaire.

Determining an appropriate sample size is one of the most important issues for achieving reliable results. It should be noted that a big sample size can incur a higher per unit cost of information. Typically, there are two ways to decide on a sample size. The first is to set an arbitrary sample size within a budget constraint.

When probability sampling is used, the precision of the sample will be measured at the stage of analysis. The second is to calculate the optimal sample size according to the formula of standard error, given a desired level of precision and cost.

An appropriate sample size should demonstrate confidence and precision. Confidence means no data bias, no over- or under- estimation of the population and no systematic variance. Precision means that the selected sample is precise enough to represent the population characteristics based on a sample mean with a low level of error. The sample size depends on the population variability, the degree of precision, the confidence level required and the type of sampling plan. To increase generalizability, it is best to conduct research in a variety of places with different people at different times and replicate the study a number of times. To minimize major threats to external validity, the respondents were interviewed in different places at different times.

To appropriately test statistical significance, there are minimum requirements for the sample size in multivariate research techniques. Hinkin (1995) argued that both exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses are particularly susceptible to sample size. For exploratory factor analysis, a sample size of 150 observations is

considered adequate to obtain an accurate solution. For confirmatory factor analysis, a sample size of 200 observations is suggested. The optimal or critical sample size for structural equal modeling is 200, indicating that a mere five cases per parameter are required for the structural equation modeling analyses, given that measured variables have at least one path coefficient associated with another variable and a residual term or variance estimate. In total, 568 randomly selected respondents participated in the questionnaire survey. The sample size of over 200 is for cross-validation. In this strategy, testing for predictive validity with holdout samples can estimate how accurately a predictive model performs (Bandalos, 1993; Hawkins et al., 2003). Therefore, a sample size of 568 is randomly divided into two equal halves (i.e. training data set and test data set, *ns*=284) for cross-validation. Multivariate techniques, such as confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation modeling, were employed to analyze the collected data.

3.5 Measures of constructs

Scale measurement is usually used to measure theoretical constructs because most variables in social or behavioral research are not directly observable, and it is not practical to assess these variables with any other methods. This study includes five constructs, (i.e. need for uniqueness, materialism, status consumption, affective response and repurchase intention), each of which

contains a number of scale items proposed in prior studies. Considering the appropriate length of the questionnaire, several items are extracted from the initial list of constructs. All construct measurement was rated on a 7-point Likert-scale ranging from (7) strongly agree to (1) strongly disagree.

3.5.1 Need for uniqueness

Tian et al. (2001) defined need for uniqueness as a situation in which a person shows a need to pursue brands to differentiate himself from others, which can be achieved by acquisition, utilization, and disposition of products for developing and enhancing a self-image and social identity. Need for uniqueness is a multi-dimensional construct consisting of three behavioral dimensions: (1) creative choice counter-conformity, (2) unpopular choice counter-conformity, and (3) avoidance of similarity. The original scale consists of 31 items, and there are 11 items each for creative choice counter-conformity and unpopular choice counter-conformity and 9 items for avoidance of similarity. In 2008, the consumers' need for uniqueness scale was analyzed for short-term scale development and validation (Ruvio, 2008). However, the results showed that the inclusion of shopping innovativeness and public self-consciousness resulted in a narrower scope than the original one developed by Tian et al. (2001). Since Tian et al.'s scale (2001) has been widely adopted in most recent studies (Clark et al.,

2007; Knight and Kim, 2007; Ruvio, 2008; Bian and Forsythe, 2012; Zhan and He, 2012) and has achieved acceptable reliability and validity. Therefore, this scale was adopted and two items were borrowed from each dimension. The following six statements were used in the measurement scale:

Creative Choice Counter-Conformity Subscale

- Having an eye for products that are interesting and unusual assists me in establishing a distinctive image.
- I'm often on the lookout for new products or brands that will add to my personal uniqueness.

Unpopular Choice Counter-Conformity Subscale

- When dressing, I have sometimes dared to be different in ways that others are likely to disapprove.
- I have often violated the understood rules of my social group regarding what to buy or own.

Avoidance of Similarity Subscale

- I often try to avoid products or brands that I know are bought by the general population.

- The more commonplace a product or brand is among the general population, the less interested I am in buying it.

3.5.2 Materialism

Among many developed measurement scales to measure materialism, Belk's scale (1985) and Richins and Dawson's scale (1992) are the most influential. Materialism is considered a personal trait associated with envy, non-generosity and possessiveness. Nine items measured possessiveness, which is defined as inclination or tendency to retain control or ownership of possessions. The scales were refined to contain seven items (Ger and Belk, 1990). Belk's measures have been tested in many countries, such as the USA, Turkey, France (Ger and Belk, 1990), Denmark and Romania (Ger and Belk, 1999). However, most studies found that the Cronbach's coefficient alpha values of Belk's scale failed to achieve the minimum cutoff of 0.60 (Churchill, 1979). Building on Belk's work, Richins and Dawson (1990) discovered that four consistent and reliable dimensions of materialism were formed, namely possessions as symbols of success, a source of pleasure, happiness and asceticism. Finally, Richins and Dawson (1992) supplemented Belk's ideas by considering materialism as a centrally-held personal belief in the importance of material possessions placed in one's life. It consists of three dimensional beliefs - acquisition centrality of

possessions in one's life (7 items), possessions as symbol of success (6 items), and possessions as a source of happiness (5 items). This scale has been widely adopted in most studies across different cultures, such as Brazil (Evrard and Boff, 1998; Zhou et al., 2002) and China (Zhou et al., 2002). Evidence shows that this scale has performed better in scale reliability compared with Belk's scale. Therefore, the materialism scale developed by Richins and Dawson's (1992) was adopted in this study. Three major aspects were proposed: Acquisition centrality (Centrality) means that materialists tend to place material possessions and acquisition at the central part of one's lifetime. Possession Defining Success (Success) means that materialists tend to judge their and others' success and status based on the amount or quality of possessions accumulated. Acquisition as the pursuit of happiness (Happiness) explains the tendency of materialists to strive for self-satisfaction and gratification. It consists of 18 items. Similarly, two items from each dimension were selected for this study. The measurement scale is shown below:

Acquisition Centrality Subscale

- I try to keep my life simple, as far as possessions are concerned. (Reversed scale item)
- I like a lot of luxury in my life.

Possessions Defined as Success Subscale

- I admire people who own expensive cars, homes, and clothes.
- I do not place much emphasis on the amount of material objects people own as a sign of success. (Reversed scale item)

Acquisition as the Pursuit of Happiness Subscale

- My life could be better if I owned certain things I do not have.
- It sometimes bothers me quite a bit that I cannot afford to buy all the things I like.

3.5.3 Status consumption

Eastman et al.'s. (1999) five-item scale for status consumption was adopted in this study. This measurement scale has only one dimension to describe the motivation in consuming products for status. The motivational need describes the desire for status products. Consumers' personal desire for status suggests that they need ego-enhancement and membership of a superior group by making themselves more visible in the eyes of significant others through status consumption. Eastman et al. (1999) conducted several studies to purify and validate the status consumption scale. The scale reliability reached 0.80 and the confirmatory factory analyses generated high factor loadings. Some studies

showed that this scale has strong reliability (Clark et al., 2007; Goldsmith and Clark, 2012; Lertwannawit and Mandhachitara, 2012). Since it is the only measurement scale for status consumption, therefore the present study adopted this scale. This scale relates to status-seeking behavior in conspicuous consumption and consists of five items, all of which were used in this study:

- I would buy a product just because it has status.
- I am interested in new products with status.
- I would pay more for a product if it had status.
- The status of a product is irrelevant to me. (Reversed scale item)
- A product is more valuable to me if it has some snob appeal.

3.5.4 Affective response

The feelings generated from luxury brands give affective response. The emotional scale developed by Sweeney and Soutar (2001) has high reliability. Status-conscious consumers achieve affective goals through status consumption when products bring pleasure and make enjoyable consumption. Evidence shows that the emotional dimension is the most important in predicting consumers' behavioral intention. Bian and Forsythe (2012) used this emotional scale to measure affective response, thus leading to purchase intention. The results

showed that the affective measurement scale has strong reliability and validity to predict consumers' tendency to purchase luxury goods. Therefore, the perceived emotional value item scale developed by Sweeney and Soutar (2001) was borrowed for this study as the affective response measurement scale, which consists of 5 items. The original statements were modified to measure the respondents' emotions or feelings about luxury fashion brands. The following is the measurement scale:

- Luxury fashion brand is one that I would enjoy.
- Luxury fashion brand would make me want to use it.
- Luxury fashion brand is one that I would feel relaxed about using.
- Luxury fashion would make me feel good.
- Luxury fashion brand would give me pleasure.

3.5.5 Repurchase intention

Repurchase intention is measured with the two indicators suggested by Yi and La (2004), namely purchase intention and repurchase probability. Intention and subjective probability measures are often used interchangeably to predict future behavior (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980). Repurchase probability indicators measure behavioral expectation which outperforms behavioral intention (Warshaw and

Davis, 1985). In forming repurchase judgment, consumers use their purchase intention as a reference point and make adjustments to reflect the possible impact on non-volitional factors in behavioral intention. Therefore, to enhance prediction accuracy of future behavior, both intention and probability measures should be used to measure consumers' repurchase behavior. The following two measurement items were adopted in this study:

- My intention to repurchase this luxury brand would be high.
- The probability that I will repurchase this luxury brand would be high.

In summary, there were altogether 24 scale items used in this study. All the scale items for the constructs are shown in Table 3-1. This number of statements is chosen because the questionnaire length and respondent fatigue are taken into consideration. The measurement scales for all the constructs demonstrated their reliability and validity in previous marketing studies. The measurement scales for the constructs discussed above were rated on a 7-point Likert-scale ranging from (7) strongly agree to (1) strongly disagree. The Likert scale format allows the respondents to express opinions and researchers to examine different responses to each construct of measurement. This type of scaling is widely adopted in instruments measuring beliefs and attitudes in marketing or psychology research

and previous studies revealed that the Likert scale is a well developed measure (Noar, 2003).

Table 3-1. Scale items for present study

Construct	Scale items	
Need for uniqueness (Tian et al., 2001)	*Creative Choice Counter-Conformity Subscale*	
	Uni1	Having an eye for products that are interesting and unusual assists me in establishing a distinctive image.
	Uni2	I'm often on the lookout for new products or brands that will add to my personal uniqueness.
	Unpopular Choice Counter-Conformity Subscale	
	Uni3	When dressing, I have sometimes dared to be different in ways that others are likely to disapprove.
	Uni4	I have often violated the understood rules of my social group regarding what to buy or own.
	Avoidance of Similarity Subscale	
	Uni5	I often try to avoid products or brands that I know are bought by the general population.
	Uni6	The more commonplace a product or brand is among the general population, the less interested I am in buying it.
Materialism (Richins and Dawson, 1992)	*Acquisition Centrality Subscale*	
	Mat1	I try to keep my life simple, as far as possessions are concerned. (R)
	Mat2	I like a lot of luxury in my life.
	Possessions Defined as Success Subscale	
	Mat3	I admire people who own expensive cars, homes, and clothes.
	Mat4	I do not place much emphasis on the amount of material objects people own as a sign of success. (R)
	Acquisition as the Pursuit of Happiness Subscale	
	Mat5	My life could be better if I owned certain things I do not have.
	Mat6	It sometimes bothers me quite a bit that I cannot afford to buy all the things I like.
Status consumption (Eastman et al., 1999)	Sta1	I would buy a product just because it has status.
	Sta2	I am interested in new products with status.
	Sta3	I would pay more for a product if it had status.
	Sta4	The status of a product is irrelevant to me. (R)
	Sta5	A product is more valuable to me if it has some snob appeal.
Affective response (Sweeney and Soutar, 2001)	Aff1	Luxury fashion brand is one that I would enjoy.
	Aff2	Luxury fashion brand would make me want to use it.
	Aff3	Luxury fashion brand is one that I would feel relaxed about using.
	Aff4	Luxury fashion would make me feel good.
	Aff5	Luxury fashion brand would give me pleasure.
Repurchase intention (Yi and La, 2004)	Rep1	My intention to repurchase this luxury brand would be high.
	Rep2	The probability that I will repurchase this luxury brands would be high.

(R): Reversed scaled items

3.6 Instrument development

Questionnaire items can be established according to pre-determined variables, indicators and corresponding components. The number of questions covered may not be necessary balanced with the number of variables and indicators. Some complicated variables, such as values and attitudes, may require several in-depth questions at different levels for operationalization. There are four sections in the questionnaire, consisting of 37 questions in total. In Section A, questions 1-17 consist of 17 scale items of the first four constructs of the present study. The respondents were asked to indicate their degree of agreement with a list of statements describing the constructs of need for uniqueness (6 items), materialism (6 items), and consuming products for status (5 items). In Section B, in order to minimize possible bias, the respondents were asked to list three of their favorite luxury fashion brands (questions 19-20) as a point of reference in answering the subsequent questions. In Section C, questions 21-27 require the respondents to give their degree of agreement with the statements describing the constructs of affective response (5 items) and repurchase intention (2 items). Finally, in Section D, they were asked to provide demographic information in questions 28-37. Closed-ended questions are practical for a self-administered questionnaire design because they are good at getting answers, maximizing the

return rate of collected data, and facilitating data analysis.

In most academic research, the questionnaire is originally in English and then translated into Chinese and back-translated to ensure meaning equivalence and improve reliability and validity of the questionnaire (Brislin, 1980, 1986). The translation should be conducted by nature speakers but there is still no guarantee that the translation will be faithful. Geisinger (1994) argued that when translators know their work will be back-translated, they will use wording that ensures a second translation will faithfully reproduce the original one rather than use optimal wording in the target language. Another approach is the random probe technique (Behling and Law, 2000). Researchers administer a draft instrument to a group of target-language speakers and ask them to explain their responses to each individual item. Guthery and Lowe (1992) explained that if their justification is strange, it means the intent of the questions cannot be conveyed.

In the present research, I invited a PhD Research Associate in Fashion Business whose native language is Chinese to translate the original English questionnaire into Chinese. To minimize the difference in meanings between the English and Chinese versions, the Chinese version was then back-translated into English by an Associate Professor in Fashion Marketing who has lived in the USA for over

10 years and is proficient in both English and Chinese. Some discrepancies were found. Then I invited another Associate Professor in Fashion Marketing who is fluent in both languages to review both versions and check translation relevance. Lastly, both English and Chinese versions of the questionnaire were finalized for this study.

After checking the wording, length, order and validity of the questions, a pre-test was conducted to test the questionnaire before the main study. The pre-test aimed to check whether the questions covered all variables and indicators. The convenience sampling method was used as it saved time, money and effort. Twelve postgraduate research students participated in the pre-test, six from Hong Kong and six from the mainland China. Balnaves and Caputi (2001) argued that the frame of reference refers to the understanding of the ambiguity of language and the fact that each respondent necessarily interprets spoken or written communication from his or her own viewpoint. The checklist below provides a framework for reviewing the question items in the questionnaire (Balnaves and Caputi, 2001; de Vaus, 2002).

i. Does the item provide data in a format required by research questions or hypotheses?

ii. Is the item unbiased?

iii. Does the item generate data at the level of measurement required for the analysis?

iv. Is there a strong likelihood that most respondents answer the item truthfully?

v. Do most respondents possess sufficient knowledge to answer the item?

vi. Are most respondents willing to answer the item, or is it too sensitive?

vii. Does the item avoid 'leading' respondents to a specific answer?

viii. Is the language used in the questionnaire clear and simple – so that all respondents are able to understand the questions?

Based on the above, the back-translated questionnaire was used to examine if there was room for improvement in wording, sequence and relevance. Since a little problem was found in the sequence, the questionnaire was modified to reduce ambiguity.

3.7 Data analysis strategy

After data collection, the answers of the respondents were entered into SPSS 21,

and data preparation was conducted to check the data and perform necessary coding, editing, screening and cleaning. After data preparation, the data were inspected and analyzed. Appropriate techniques for data analysis were then selected, taking into consideration the research objectives, nature of the data, and the underlying properties of the relative statistical techniques applied. Preliminary data analysis was performed, followed by data analysis for hypothesis testing. The preliminary data analysis included descriptive statistics, frequency distribution, and testing of scale reliability, validity and common method variance. By using AMOS 21, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and structural equation modeling (SEM) were conducted to develop study models and test the proposed research hypotheses. All the variables in this research were measured from consumers' perspective; hence, the unit of the analysis was individual respondents (cases).

3.7.1 Data cleaning and screening

The primary data obtained from the questionnaires had to undergo data cleaning and screening before they could be analyzed using statistical techniques. To check for incompleteness and inconsistencies, data cleaning and screening were performed to test the accuracy and precision of the collected data. Data cleaning involves consistency checks and elimination of missing answers. Missing

answers refer to unknown responses, incurred by ambiguous or improperly indicated answers. Data screening checks whether logical and consistent answers were recorded in questionnaires. For example, a respondent may have the same answer for all the statements. This case will be duly deleted because the respondent does not answer in a serious manner.

There are different methods to deal with incomplete data, such as listwise deletion, pairwise deletion, and substitution of a neutral value. Listwise deletion is a widely used method for dealing with missing data (Byrne, 2001). All cases with a missing value for variables are excluded from computation. This method can seriously reduce the sample size available for analysis and should be handled with caution. On the contrary, pairwise deletion only comes into play when cases or respondents with complete responses are used for analysis. However, it may cause a variety of sample sizes across variables in the data set, thus resulting in different calculations in an analysis. Another method is to replace unobserved values with estimated values. The commonly used value for substitution is the arithmetic mean calculated from the sample. This method may lead to bias in standard errors due to decrease in variance of variables.

3.7.2 Reliability and validity

When data entry was completed, data analysis began to check scale reliability and validity and test whether the collected data were reliable, valid and consistent, thus enhancing the significance of the results of the subsequent analysis. It is crucial in ensuring the reliability and validity of the developed measurement scales (Noar, 2003). Data collected under an empirical design is not useful if they fail to demonstrate a sufficient degree of reliability and validity (Flynn et al., 1990). The reliability of measurement is required, but not sufficient for establishing validity. Strongly valid results of measurement are of little use if data measures are unreliable.

The reliability of a scale refers to the degree to which measures are free from random errors and yield consistent results over time and across situations. Cronbach's alpha reliability test is a commonly used method to check if scale items are highly correlated. High inter-item correlations suggest that all items measure the same thing, indicating internal consistency of scale items. High inter-item correlations also imply strong links between items and constructs. Therefore, a uni-dimensional scale or a single dimension of a multidimensional scale should consist of a set of items that correlate well with each other, and examines if any deleted item can significantly improve scale reliability. A low

coefficient alpha indicates a low internal consistency of scale items. The value of Cronbach's alpha of each construct should be higher than 0.70 (Hair et al., 2010). If scale items are highly correlated, the scale is internally consistent. Bartlett's test of sphericity testing for the presence of correlations among variables and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy were measured to assess data factorability. The KMO value should exceed the acceptable minimum of 0.6.

However, Cronbach's coefficient alpha has limitations. Composite reliability (CR) draws on standardized factor loadings and measurement error for each item (Shook et al., 2004). The CR of each construct refers to the internal consistency of each indicator measuring underlying factors (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). Gerbing and Anderson (1988) argued that "the reliability of the composite score should be assessed after uni-dimensionality has been acceptably established. Even a perfectly uni-dimensional (or otherwise construct-valid) scale is of little or no practical use if the resultant composite score is determined primarily by measurement error, with score values widely fluctuating over repeated measurements". All CRs in the measurement scale should exceed the recommended cut-off of 0.70 for a reliable scale of measurement (Nunnally and Bernstein, 1994).

Validity is the extent to which an instrument and its rules measure what they

purport to measure. An instrument may not be valid but still reliable, but not vice versa. In testing the validity of factor structure and the measurement model, several validity issues were analyzed in the present study: convergent validity, construct validity, internal validity, and discriminant validity. Content validity, also called logical validity, refers to the extent to which a measure represents all facets of a given construct. It has been established through exploratory research and pretesting of the questionnaire. Construct validity is the degree to which a test measures what it claims, and illustrates the operational relationship between variables. A well-formatted questionnaire design is expected to measure what they mean to measure. Construct validity is evaluated by assessing standardized factor loadings within constructs, average variance extracted, and correlations between constructs (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988). Standardized factor loadings on latent constructs should be higher than 0.50 to achieve a more meaningful and interpretable result of measurement (Netemeyer et al., 2003). Construct validity consists of elements of convergent validity and discriminant validity, and examines the existence of a high correlation between measurement results of constructs using different instruments. In other words, it refers to a situation in which scores obtained by two different instruments measuring the same concept are highly correlated. Convergent validity can be assessed by internal consistency, amounting to the degree of interrelatedness among observed items

using uni-dimensionality and average variance extracted (AVE). The AVE is the amount of variance extracted by construct measures relative to measurement error and correlations among latent variables. The AVE estimate is similar to the calculation of composite reliability, and the difference lies in squared standardized loadings before summing them up. All indicators of the AVE should exceed the recommended cut-off value of 0.50 for convergent validity (Bagozzi and Yi, 1988).

On the contrary, discriminant validity is the degree to which measures of different latent variables are unique (DeVellis, 2011), examining the existence of a minimal correlation between measurement results of different constructs using the same instrument. Two variables are expected to be uncorrelated, and the scores obtained are empirically found to be so. Discriminant validity denotes that factors differ from each other, confirming that the AVE is greater than squared correlation coefficients between factors (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). Squared correlations between constructs should be less than either of their individual AVEs. Each construct has more error-free variance than variance shared with other constructs, which confirms the discriminant validity of the construct.

Assessing fit validity only is no longer sufficient (Woodside, 2013). In a

cross-validation strategy, testing for predictive validity with holdout samples can estimate how accurately a predictive model performs (Bandalos, 1993; Hawkins et al., 2003). The holdout method was adopted to perform cross-validation in this study. The whole data set was randomly divided into two sets of equal size, namely training data set and test data set. Function approximators fit a function using the training data set only, and was then used to predict output values for the test data set. First of all, CFA and SEM were conducted for the training data set. The details of SEM analysis will be discussed in Section 3.7.4. The results were cross-validated with the test data set to enhance the predictive power of the model.

CFA was used to assess whether measures of a construct were consistent with the understanding of the nature of that construct, testing how well the actual data conformed to the specified factor pattern (DeVellis, 2011). When comparing with exploratory factor analysis, CFA allows the explicit constraint of certain loadings to be set as zero. The correlations between latent factors can vary or be constrained to zero. Model fit measures assess how well the proposed model captured the covariance between all the items. If the fit was not good, some items under a test might be measuring multiple factors or some items within a factor are more related to each other than others. The common procedure includes

maximum likelihood factor analysis which estimates population parameters from sample statistics collected from the main study. CFA assesses the quality of the factor structure of constructs by statistically testing the significance of the overall model and the item loadings on factors. Various goodness-of-fit indices were used in CFA to examine the significance and the adequacy of measured constructs to explain a model. The value of chi-square was reported most frequently. A smaller chi-square indicates a better model fit. However, it is important to notice that the chi-square value is sensitive to sample size. Therefore, other model fit indices have been used to assess the overall goodness-of-fit. To enhance model adequacy, the practical rule of thumb is that the ratio of chi-square value to degree of freedom is advised to be less than or equal to three (Hair et al., 2010). Although evaluation of fit indices is somewhat subjective, higher values of the model fit indices indicate a better fit to empirical data. It is recommended that fit indices above 0.90 be considered acceptable. The details of the model fit indices applied to the present study will be discussed further in Section 3.7.4.

3.7.3 Common method variance

Common method variance could cause systematic measurement error and further bias the estimation of casual relationships among theoretical constructs because

all the data were self-reported and collected through the same questionnaire and more than two variables were measured. Harman's one-factor test assesses the presence of common method effect on variables (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Common method variance is attributed to measurement methods but not constructs of interest. The items generated from confirmatory factor analysis were entered into an exploratory factor analysis (EFA), using unrotated principal components factor analysis, principal component analysis with varimax rotation, and principal axis analysis with varimax rotation in order to check the number of factors that were necessary to account for variance in all the variables. If the problem of common method variance exists, either (a) a single factor will emerge from factor analysis, or (b) one general factor will account for the majority of covariance among all variables.

3.7.4 Model estimation and hypothesis testing

A causal study model can be developed and validated by survey data if a proposed model is built on a literature review and based on a theory with logical clarity, theoretical foundation and argumentation. After performing CFA and common method variance analysis, an SEM model was developed for model estimation and hypothesis testing. It allows estimation of loadings with other latent factors (Asparouhov and Muthén, 2009). It is a technique with specific

hypothesis about relationships between observed indicators and their supposed primary latent factors. SEM is a statistical methodology that takes a confirmatory (i.e. hypothesis testing) approach to analysis of a structural theory bearing on some phenomenon (Byrne, 2001). SEM has been widely adopted to make survey data fit developed causal models and test research hypotheses with measurement errors. In practice, confirmatory modeling begins with research hypotheses proposed for a causal model. Research variables will then be operationalized for testing relationships among variables in the model. To build a model, there are two different types of variable, namely endogenous variables (dependent variables) and exogenous variables (independent variables). Endogenous constructs may be determinants for other endogenous constructs. In regression, dependent variables (DV) regress on independent variables (IV). Exogenous variables can be recognized in a graphical version of the model, as the variables send out arrowheads, denoting which variable it is predicting. A variable that regresses on a variable is always endogenous. Endogenous variables are recognized as receivers of an arrowhead in the model (i.e. a path diagram). The model is assessed against obtained measurement data to determine the model fit. It is the estimation of multiple interrelated dependence relationships while employing multiple indicators for a single independent or dependent variable.

SEM has several strengths. It has ability to allow constructs to be represented by several indicators (measures) and incorporate measurement errors. It is able to construct latent variables which cannot be measured directly, but they can be estimated in the model from several measured variables. This technique provides researchers with the ability to explicitly capture the unreliability of measurement in the model. In addition, it simultaneously analyzes several dependence relationships, accounting for measurement error in estimating coefficients for each independent variable.

According to Byrne (2001), SEM is a more appropriate data analysis technique than other multivariate methods. Firstly, when SEM is applied, researchers take a confirmatory approach to analysis of collected data for inferential purposes. On the contrary, it is difficult for SEM to test hypothesis using other multivariate methods which are descriptive in nature. Secondly, SEM analysis can minimize inaccuracy caused by error terms in explanatory variables. The structural model allows specification of error term covariances. In contrast, traditional multivariate methods are not able to indicate or assess measurement error. Thirdly, SEM allows measurement of relationships among unobserved and observed variables through covariance analysis among observable variables. It can manage a number of endogenous variables (dependent variables) and

exogenous variables (independent variables), as well as unobserved variables specified as linear combinations of observed variables. Lastly, SEM can estimate both direct and indirect effects of constructs. Two assumptions underline path diagrams. The first is completeness, which means all causal relationships are specified in a path diagram. The second is linearity, which means that relationships among constructs are assumed to be linear.

Goodness-of-fit tests are used to determine if a proposed model is consistent with the pattern of variances and covariances in data. Many criteria have been developed for assessing overall goodness-of-fit in an SEM context and measuring how well one model does. The cutoff criteria for model fit indices should be examined to provide more definitive guidelines for evaluating a model fit. Usually, several models are produced to compare and one competing model outperforms the others. SEM output results consist of matrices of estimated relationships between variables in the model. Formal statistical tests and fit indices can be used to test the validity and fit of the model. Schermelleh-Engel et al. (2003) examined three major categories of goodness-of-fit indices from SEM data analysis: (i) descriptive measures for an overall model fit, such as Chi-square (χ^2), Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), Root Mean Square Residual (RMR), and Standardized Root Mean Residual (SRMR);

(ii) descriptive measures for model comparison, such as the Normed Fit Index (NFI), Nonnormed Fit Index (NNFI), Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Goodness-of-fit index (GFI), and adjusted Goodness-of-Fit Index (AGFI); and (iii) descriptive measures of model parsimony, such as the Parsimony Goodness-of-fit Index (PGFI), and parsimony Normed Fit Index (PNFI). Parsimony serves as a criterion for choosing between alternative models.

Although most of these evaluation criteria are based on the Chi-square statistic, Chi-square is preferred over a test statistic as a measure of fit due to its sensitivity to sample size and deviation from multi-normality. Degree of freedom (df) represents the amount of mathematical information available to estimate model parameters. The value resulted from Chi-square divided by degree of freedom (normed chi-square) having a value equal to or less than three indicated good fit (<=3). RMSEA having values of 0.05 or less is considered a good model fit whereas value is 0.1 or more indicates a poor fit. RMSEA less than 0.08 also indicates an acceptable model fit (MacCallum et al., 1996; McDonald and Ho, 2002). RMR is the square root of the mean of squared residuals. SRMR is a widely used absolute fit indicator and a good model should have an SRMR less than 0.05. Lower RMR and SRMR represent a better fit. NFI is a practical criterion for evaluation of a model fit, but has shown a tendency to underestimate

the fit in small samples (Byrne, 2001). The Nonnormed Fit Index (NNFI), also known as the Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI), solves the disadvantage of the NFI. The CFI was developed from the NFI to take sample size into account. The examination of the CFI largely depends on the average size of correlations in the data. If the average correlation between variables is not high, the CFI will not be very high. CFI values above 0.9 are usually associated with a better fit. For each type of measurement fit, when selecting a more representative good-enough fit test, it is a must to consider other contextual factors such as sample size, ratios of indicators to factors, and overall model complexity. The GFI is a measure of the relative amount of the variance and covariance matrix of sample data for the hypothesized model. It is a fit statistic less sensitive than sample size. The possible range of the GFI is 0 to 1, with higher values (>=0.9) indicating a better fit. The AGFI considers differing degrees of model complexity, and adjusts to degrees of freedom in the model, which makes the AGFI differ from the GFI. Both the GFI and AGFI range from zero to 1.00, with values close to 1.00 indicative of a good fit. AGFI values higher than or equal to 0.9 indicate a good model fit. The PGFI considers the complexity of the hypothesized model in assessment of an overall model fit (Byrne, 2001), which was modified from the GFI and NFI.

Different measures of model fit indices capture different elements of model validity. It is important to report a selection of different fit measures to enhance model validity, and consider multiple criteria in evaluating a model (Bagozzi and Yi, 1988; Schermelleh-Engel et al., 2003). Several models are often constructed in order to compare alternatives and look for a better model fit. By connecting error terms and adding or deleting relationship paths, several models can be generated to compare model fit indices. The resulted model which performs best in validity is accepted as the final SEM model. When comparing models, two models are said to be non-nested if it is not possible to derive one from the other either by parametric restriction or limiting process. The Akaike Information Criterion (AIC) and the Expected Cross-validation Index (ECVI) are good for comparing non-nested models. The AIC focuses on how little fitted values deviate from a saturated model (i.e. how well they are able to reproduce measured values), and can compare non-nested competing models. The criterion can choose among competing models with a smaller AIC. It is not a test to assess whether a model is statistically more significant. The AIC is a decision criterion and a test of relative model fit. The preferred model is the one with the lowest AIC value. In the formula AIC = 2k – 2ln (L), k is the number of parameters in the statistical model, and L is the maximized value of the likelihood of the model. Another index for comparing models is the ECVI, which is used to compare

non-nested models and allows the determination of which model cross-validates best in another sample of the same size. The one with a smaller ECVI should be chosen.

Other approaches to evaluation of nested structural models include sequential chi-square (χ^2) difference tests (SCDTs) and CFI difference tests (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988). The SCDT test examines the null hypotheses of no significant difference between two nested structural models, and generates the chi-square difference ($\triangle\chi^2$) between two alternative models relative to the difference in degrees of freedom ($\triangle$df) between the two models. If $\triangle\chi^2$ between two nested SEM models is significant, it implies that the model with more paths can explain the data better. The model with smaller χ^2 is more favorable. On the contrary, if a null hypothesis is upheld and there is no significant difference between the two nested models, a more constrained model of the two will be tentatively accepted, implying that a more parsimonious or restricted model can explain the data equally better when compared with a fuller model.

3.8 Chapter summary

This chapter describes the research design of this study and its methodological implementation to address the research questions mentioned in chapter 2. Several conclusions about the methodology emerge. The nature of theory verification favors a quantitative research method. A questionnaire survey was conducted to collect sample data and test the proposed research hypotheses. Then measurement scales of the research variables, including need for uniqueness, materialism, status consumption, affective response and repurchase intention, were developed. Appropriate statistical techniques were particularly selected for both preliminary data analysis and hypotheses testing in accordance with the research objectives, nature of the data collected, and the specific properties of the statistical techniques. Confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation modeling techniques were employed for building a factor structure and model estimation. The data analysis procedures of the present study will be discussed in details in the next chapter.

Chapter 4 Data Analysis

4.1 Introduction

After discussing the research methodology for the study, this chapter analyzes the results of the collected data and the findings of the research. Section 4.2 begins with data cleaning and screening. Then demographic information of the respondents is examined and the descriptive statistical analysis of main study is discussed. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the whole data sample was randomly divided into two equal halves (training data set and test data set). The mentioned data analysis procedures were adopted for the training data set first. Then the same procedures were applied to the test data set for cross-validation. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was firstly conducted to purify measurement scales and conform a reliable and valid factor structure for the subsequent data analysis procedures. With the conformed measurement model, structural equation modeling (SEM) was employed for model estimation and hypothesis testing. In the present study, exogenous variables included need for uniqueness and materialism, whereas endogenous variables included status consumption, affective response and repurchase intention. The SEM model validity and fit were assessed. The best SEM model was finalized among competing models

formed. Finally, direct, indirect and total effects on repurchase intention are described.

4.2 Data analysis for main study

4.2.1 Data cleaning and screening

Primary data obtained from the questionnaires were "cleaned" and "screened" before statistical data analysis. In this study, listwise deletion was adopted to handle incomplete questionnaires because the resulting sample size was still valid for performing SEM data analysis. A total of 12 cases (respondents) were deleted for missing data. Another 20 cases (respondents) were deleted because of inconsistent answers. Finally, 568 of 600 respondents were accepted after data cleaning and screening.

4.2.2 Respondents profile

Frequency distribution analysis was performed to present demographic data, kinds of luxury fashion items bought, and money spent on shopping for luxury goods. The profiles of the respondents are shown in Table 4-1. The whole sample consisted of 568 respondents. About 60% were married, more than half (70%) were female, and 82% were between 20 and 39 years of age. Approximately 2% were younger than 20. Most were well-educated, with approximately 85%

holding a university degree or higher. They worked at executive/managerial/ professional level (33%) or in sales/marketing (18%). About 38% reported that their personal monthly income ranged from HKD8,001 to 15,000. The respondents with a personal monthly income ranging from HKD15,001 to 55,000 accounted for 37%. About 9% reported a monthly income over 55,001. Approximately 10% spent HKD400,000 to 600,000 on buying luxury fashion goods. Nearly 70% spent approximately HKD150,000 to 250,000. Their preferred fashion brands were Louis Vuitton (26%), Chanel (26%), Gucci (11%) and Hermès (8%). The response sizes of preferred fashion items were 882 (bags / handbags), 344 (skincare / cosmetics), 252 (clothing), 240 (jewelry / watches / accessories), and 193 (footwear).

Table 4-1. Profiles of respondents

Demographic Characteristics		Percentage of Total Whole sample (ns=568)
Gender	Male	29.9
	Female	70.1
Age (years)	Younger than 20	1.6
	20-29	55.3
	30-39	26.9
	40-49	9.3
	50 or above	6.9
Marital Status	Married	60.0
	Single	38.0
	Other	1.9
Education Level	Senior school or vocational school	14.8
	College or university	64.8
	Postgraduate or higher	20.4
Occupation	Executive/managerial	24.5
	Professional	8.3
	Academic/educator	4.6
	Technical/engineering	6.7
	Service/customer support	6.7
	Clerical/administrative	4.4
	Sales/marketing	17.6
	Student	13.2
	Housewife	4.0
	Self-employed	5.1
	Unemployed/retired/others	4.9
Average Monthly Income	HKD 8,000 or less	16.2
	HKD 8,001 - 15,000	37.5
	HKD 15,001 - 35,000	26.0
	HKD 35,001 - 55,000	10.9
	HKD 55,001 or above	9.3

4.2.3 Descriptive statistical analysis of main study

The present study addresses three research questions. Firstly, what roles do need for uniqueness and materialism play in the context of status consumption? The variables of interest for this research question include scale items for status consumption, need for uniqueness and materialism. Secondly, how does status consumption impact on consumers' affective response in buying luxury goods? The research variables concerned are status consumption and affective response. Thirdly, how does consumers' affective response influence repurchase intention of luxury goods? The variables of interest for this question are affective response and repurchase intention. Lastly, what are the major factors in consumers' repurchase intention in buying luxury goods? The variables of interest for this question include all the constructs in the proposed theoretical model.

For the whole sample, Table 4-2 to Table 4-6 show the maximum, minimum, mean, and standard deviation for all the variables of each construct in the questionnaire. As shown in Table 4-2, in terms of need for uniqueness, item Uni2 "I'm often on the lookout for new products or brands that will add to my personal uniqueness" has the highest mean score (Mean=5.19; SD=1.09), followed by item Uni1 "Having an eye for products that are interesting and unusual assists me in establishing a distinctive image" (Mean=5.14; SD=1.14).

Item Uni3 "When dressing, I have sometimes dared to be different in ways that others are likely to disapprove" has the lowest mean score (Mean=4.63; SD=1.18).

Table 4-2. Descriptive statistics of need for uniqueness

Scale items of Need for Uniqueness		Maximum	Minimum	Mean	Standard Deviation
Creative Choice Counter-Conformity Subscale					
Uni1	Having an eye for products that are interesting and unusual assists me in establishing a distinctive image.	7	1	**5.14**	**1.14**
Uni2	I'm often on the lookout for new products or brands that will add to my personal uniqueness.	7	2	**5.19**	**1.09**
Unpopular Choice Counter-Conformity Subscale					
Uni3	When dressing, I have sometimes dared to be different in ways that others are likely to disapprove.	7	2	**4.63**	**1.18**
Uni4	I have often violated the understood rules of my social group regarding what to buy or own.	7	2	5.03	1.13
Avoidance of Similarity Subscale					
Uni5	I often try to avoid products or brands that I know are bought by the general population.	7	2	5.00	1.23
Uni6	The more commonplace a product or brand is among the general population, the less interested I am in buying it.	7	1	4.68	1.30

For materialism, Table 4-3 shows that item Mat5 "My life could be better if I owned certain things I do not have" has the highest mean score (Mean=4.71; SD=0.96), followed by item Mat3 "I admire people who own expensive cars, homes, and clothes" (Mean=4.67; SD=1.08). Item Mat1 "I try to keep my life simple, as far as possessions are concerned" has the lowest mean score (Mean=4.10; SD=0.99).

Table 4-3. Descriptive statistics of materialism

Materialism		Maximum	Minimum	Mean	Standard Deviation
Acquisition Centrality Subscale					
Mat1	I try to keep my life simple, as far as possessions are concerned. (R)	7	3	**4.10**	**0.99**
Mat2	I like a lot of luxury in my life.	7	3	4.65	1.02
Possessions Defined as Success Subscale					
Mat3	I admire people who own expensive cars, homes, and clothes.	7	2	**4.67**	**1.08**
Mat4	I do not place much emphasis on the amount of material objects people own as a sign of success. (R)	7	3	4.29	1.12
Acquisition as the Pursuit of Happiness Subscale					
Mat5	My life could be better if I owned certain things I do not have.	7	2	**4.71**	**0.96**
Mat6	It sometimes bothers me quite a bit that I cannot afford to buy all the things I like.	6	2	4.40	1.00

Regarding status consumption, the descriptive statistics are presented in Table 4-4. Item Sta5 "A product is more valuable to me if it has some snob appeal" has the highest mean score (Mean=5.33; SD=1.03), followed by item Sta2 "I am interested in new products with status" (Mean=4.84; SD=1.12). The remaining three items had similar values of mean score. The lowest mean score goes to the item Sta4 "The status of a product is irrelevant to me" (Mean=4.77; SD=1.06).

Table 4-4. Descriptive statistics of status consumption

Status consumption		Maximum	Minimum	Mean	Standard Deviation
Sta1	I would buy a product just because it has status.	7	2	4.78	1.21
Sta2	I am interested in new products with status.	7	2	**4.84**	**1.12**
Sta3	I would pay more for a product if it had status.	7	2	4.79	1.09
Sta4	The status of a product is irrelevant to me. (R)	7	3	**4.77**	**1.06**
Sta5	A product is more valuable to me if it has some snob appeal.	7	3	**5.33**	**1.03**

Affective response was measured with five items. Table 4-5 shows the descriptive statistics. All the items have high scores, over 5 out of 7. The results show that most respondents have affective response towards a certain luxury brand. Item Aff2 "Luxury fashion brand would make me want to use it" has the highest mean score (Mean=5.55; SD=0.90), followed by item Aff5 "Luxury fashion brand would give me pleasure" (Mean=5.50; SD=1.00). Item Aff3 "Luxury fashion brand is one that I would feel relaxed about using" has the lowest mean score (Mean=5.26; SD=1.03).

Table 4-5. Descriptive statistics of affective response

Affective Response		Maximum	Minimum	Mean	Standard Deviation
Aff1	Luxury fashion brand is one that I would enjoy.	7	2	5.48	0.98
Aff2	Luxury fashion brand would make me want to use it.	7	2	**5.55**	**0.90**
Aff3	Luxury fashion brand is one that I would feel relaxed about using.	7	2	**5.26**	**1.03**
Aff4	Luxury fashion would make me feel good.	7	2	5.46	0.96
Aff5	Luxury fashion brand would give me pleasure.	7	2	**5.50**	**1.00**

For repurchase intention, as shown in Table 4-6, both of the items have high scores, over 5 out of 7. Item Rep1 "My intention to repurchase this luxury brand would be high." has the highest mean score (Mean=5.73; SD=0.86). Among all the items of the five constructs, repurchase intention has the greatest mean score of 5.73. The results show repurchase intention of luxury brands has quite high scores for most of the respondents.

Table 4-6. Descriptive statistics of repurchase intention

Repurchase Intention		Maximum	Minimum	Mean	Standard Deviation
Rep1	My intention to repurchase this luxury brand would be high.	7	3	**5.73**	**0.86**
Rep2	The probability that I will repurchase this luxury brand would be high.	7	3	5.61	0.84

4.2.4 Reliability and validity

To ensure measurement scale reliability, Cronbach's alpha reliability test was firstly conducted for the training data set. After performing Cronbach's alpha reliability test, the coefficient alpha values of the scale items were adjusted based on the suggested improvement of alpha values if the indicated items were deleted (Table 4-7). In this preliminary stage, Mat1, Mat4 and Sta4 were deleted to maximize the internal consistency of the items. The Cronbach's alpha values were improved after the deletion.

Table 4-7. Summary of Cronbach's alpha of measurement scales

Construct	Before adjustment		After adjustment		
	Cronbach's α	No. of items	Cronbach's α	No. of items	Deleted items
Need for uniqueness	0.77	6			
Materialism	0.78	6	0.82	4	Mat1, Mat4
Status consumption	0.79	5	0.81	4	Sta4
Affective response	0.84	5			
Repurchase intention	0.74	2			

As shown in Table 4-8, before adjustment, the composite reliabilities (CR) of all the constructs are higher than the recommended value of 0.70 and the average variance extracted (AVE) of all the constructs is higher than the acceptable value of 0.50, except for the construct of need for uniqueness. In this case, items with standardized factor loadings below 0.65 (Uni1-4, Mat6, Sta5 and Aff2) were deleted to develop a reliable and valid measurement scale. After adjustment, the CRs were increased, providing evidence of strong reliability of constructs. All the AVEs were higher than the recommended cut-off value of 0.50. Therefore, the convergent validity of the measurement scale was established.

Table 4-9 shows the mean, standard deviation, correlations and AVE for the adjusted measurement scale of the training data set. The mean and SD of

repurchase intention are the highest (Mean=5.69, SD=0.79), followed by affective response (Mean=5.52, SD=0.85). The diagonals are the AVEs of the constructs. The scores on the upper diagonal are the matrix of correlations of the constructs. The scores on the lower diagonal are the squared correlations. The discriminant validity of the constructs was established because the squared correlation between constructs was less than either of their individual AVEs.

Table 4-8. Measurement of latent constructs

		Before adjustment				After adjustment				
Construct	Items	Standardized loadings	S.E.	Composite reliability	Average variance extracted	Remained items	Standardized loadings	S.E.	Composite reliability	Average variance extracted
Need for uniqueness	Uni1	0.43	0.133	0.762	0.367				0.827	0.705
	Uni2	0.47	0.124							
	Uni3	0.40	0.128							
	Uni4	0.56	--							
	Uni5	0.83	0.176			**Uni5**	**0.84**	0.094		
	Uni6	0.80	0.179			**Uni6**	**0.84**	--		
Materialism	Mat2	0.84	--	0.828	0.555	**Mat2**	**0.86**	--	0.857	0.667
	Mat3	0.79	0.065			**Mat3**	**0.79**	0.063		
	Mat5	0.80	0.064			**Mat5**	**0.79**	0.062		
	Mat6	0.50	0.072							
Status consumption	Sta1	0.86	0.085	0.820	0.544	**Sta1**	**0.87**	0.092	0.852	0.658
	Sta2	0.78	0.074			**Sta2**	**0.79**	0.077		
	Sta3	0.79	--			**Sta3**	**0.77**	--		
	Sta5	0.46	0.074							
Affective response	Aff1	0.80	0.130	0.846	0.527	**Aff1**	**0.73**	0.096	0.846	0.582
	Aff2	0.61	--							
	Aff3	0.70	0.140			**Aff3**	**0.76**	--		
	Aff4	0.67	0.131			**Aff4**	**0.66**	0.083		
	Aff5	0.83	0.156			**Aff5**	**0.88**	0.107		
Repurchase intention	Rep1	0.73	0.101	0.738	0.586	**Rep1**	**0.73**	0.101	0.739	0.586
	Rep2	0.80	--			**Rep2**	**0.80**	--		

Table 4-9. Correlation table of measurement scales

		Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5
1	Need for uniqueness	4.95	1.21	**0.705**	0.385	0.457	0.520	0.433
2	Repurchase intention	5.69	0.79	0.148	**0.586**	0.739	0.419	0.242
3	Affective response	5.52	0.85	0.209	0.546	**0.582**	0.346	0.328
4	Status consumption	4.99	1.08	0.270	0.176	0.120	**0.658**	0.564
5	Materialism	4.82	0.97	0.187	0.059	0.108	0.318	**0.667**

Note: SD = standard deviation. The bold numbers on the diagonal are the average variance extracted (AVE) for each construct. The scores on the upper diagonal are correlations. The scores on the lower diagonal are squares of the correlations. Coefficients are significant at $p<0.001$.

The above CFA analysis shows that the following scale items are conformed (Table 4-10). The summary shows that the avoidance of similarity subscale (Uni5, Uni6) under the construct of need for uniqueness has the strongest items. For materialism, one item (Mat2, Mat3, Mat5) from each subscale remains. Among all, Mat 2 under the acquisition centrality subscale has the highest standardized factor loadings. In terms of status consumption, the first three items remain (Sta1, Sta2, Sta3), with the highest loadings on Sta1. Four items remain under the affective response construct (Aff1, Aff3, Aff4, Aff5), with the highest loadings on Aff5. Regarding repurchase intention, Rep1 and Rep2 under repurchase intention have high scores.

Table 4-10. Summary of measurement of latent constructs

Construct	Scale items		Standardized factor loadings
Need for uniqueness	*Avoidance of Similarity Subscale*		
	Uni5	I often try to avoid products or brands that I know are bought by the general population.	**0.84**
	Uni6	The more commonplace a product or brand is among the general population, the less interested I am in buying it.	**0.84**
Materialism	*Acquisition Centrality Subscale*		
	Mat2	I like a lot of luxury in my life.	**0.86**
	Possessions Defined as Success Subscale		
	Mat3	I admire people who own expensive cars, homes, and clothes.	0.79
	Acquisition as the Pursuit of Happiness Subscale		
	Mat5	My life could be better if I owned certain things I do not have.	0.79
Status consumption	Sta1	I would buy a product just because it has status.	**0.87**
	Sta2	I am interested in new products with status.	0.79
	Sta3	I would pay more for a product if it had status.	0.77
Affective response	Aff1	Luxury fashion brand is one that I would enjoy.	0.73
	Aff3	Luxury fashion brand is one that I would feel relaxed about using.	0.76
	Aff4	Luxury fashion would make me feel good.	0.66
	Aff5	Luxury fashion brand would give me pleasure.	**0.88**
Repurchase intention	Rep1	My intention to repurchase this luxury brand would be high.	0.73
	Rep2	The probability that I will repurchase this luxury brands would be high.	**0.80**

For cross-validation strategies, the same data analysis procedures were performed for the test data set. After deleting Mat1, Mat4 and Sta4, the Cronbach's alpha values were improved, with all the values for each construct exceeding 0.74. Before adjustment, all the constructs have CRs higher than the cutoff value of 0.70. However, the AVEs for the constructs of need for uniqueness, materialism and status consumption are below the acceptable value

of 0.50. In this case, items with standardized factor loadings below 0.65 (Uni1-4, Mat6, Sta5 and Aff2) were deleted. After such adjustment, the CRs were increased. All the AVEs are higher than 0.50, indicating the establishment of the convergent validity of the measurement scale. In assessing discriminant validity (Table 4-11), the mean and standard deviation of repurchase intention are the highest (Mean=5.57, SD=0.91), followed by affective response (Mean=5.33, SD=1.12). The discriminant validity of the constructs was established because the squared correlation between constructs was less than either of their individual AVEs. The CFA results for the testing set show the same factor structure as the training data set (Table 4-12). The data analysis results for the training data set were cross-validated by the test data set.

Table 4-11. Correlation table of measurement scale (test data set)

		Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5
1	Need for uniqueness	4.73	1.33	**0.701**	.270	.514	.417	.337
2	Repurchase intention	5.57	0.91	.073	**0.607**	.668	.358	.248
3	Affective response	5.33	1.12	.264	.446	**0.598**	.325	.316
4	Status consumption	4.62	1.14	.174	.128	.166	**0.587**	.476
5	Materialism	4.50	1.11	.114	.062	.100	0.227	**0.601**

Note: SD = standard deviation. The bold numbers on the diagonal are the average variance extracted (AVE) for each construct. The scores on the upper diagonal are correlations. The scores on the lower diagonal are squares of the correlations. Coefficients are significant at $p<0.001$.

Table 4-12. Summary of measurement of latent constructs (test data set)

Construct	Scale items		Standardized factor loadings
Need for uniqueness	*Avoidance of Similarity Subscale*		
	Uni5	I often try to avoid products or brands that I know are bought by the general population.	**0.86**
	Uni6	The more commonplace a product or brand is among the general population, the less interested I am in buying it.	0.82
Materialism	*Acquisition Centrality Subscale*		
	Mat2	I like a lot of luxury in my life.	**0.91**
	Possessions Defined as Success Subscale		
	Mat3	I admire people who own expensive cars, homes, and clothes.	0.66
	Acquisition as the Pursuit of Happiness Subscale		
	Mat5	My life could be better if I owned certain things I do not have.	0.74
Status consumption	Sta1	I would buy a product just because it has status.	**0.85**
	Sta2	I am interested in new products with status.	0.78
	Sta3	I would pay more for a product if it had status.	0.65
Affective response	Aff1	Luxury fashion brand is one that I would enjoy.	0.76
	Aff3	Luxury fashion brand is one that I would feel relaxed about using.	0.77
	Aff4	Luxury fashion would make me feel good.	0.75
	Aff5	Luxury fashion brand would give me pleasure.	**0.81**
Repurchase intention	Rep1	My intention to repurchase this luxury brand would be high.	0.74
	Rep2	The probability that I will repurchase this luxury brands would be high.	**0.82**

4.2.5 Common method variance

Harman's one-factor test was adopted to assess the presence of common method effect on the variables for the training data set. The resulted 14 items for 5 constructs generated from confirmatory factor analysis in the previous section were entered into an exploratory factor analysis (EFA), using unrotated principal components factor analysis, principal component analysis with varimax rotation,

and principal axis analysis with varimax rotation to determine the number of factors necessary to account for the variance in all the variables. All the three types of factor analysis generate five distinct factors with eigenvalue higher than 1.0, rather than a single factor. The five factors accounted for 67% of total variance; the largest factor did not account for the majority of the variance. Thus, no general factor is apparent. All the 14 items were loaded on one factor in order to examine the fit of the CFA model. The one-factor CFA model should fit the data well if common method variance mainly accounts for the relationship among the variables. The results show that the single-factor model has a poor model fit: χ^2/df ratio = 12.645; $p< 0.001$; GFI = 0.603; CFI = 0.528; TLI = 0.442; RMR = 0.129; RMSEA = 0.203, suggesting that common method bias did not exist. In addition, the reliability and validity of the measurement scale provide strong evidence that the five factors were distinct constructs, suggesting that common method variance was not a problem during interpretation of results.

4.3 Model estimation and hypothesis testing

4.3.1 Five steps in SEM analysis

Maximum likelihood was used in the SEM analysis. Goodness-of-fit (GOF) demonstrates how well the structural model can reproduce the observed covariance matrix among indicator items, providing evidence for whether the

model should be accepted or rejected. Hair et al. (2010) outlined the five steps in using SEM statistical analysis: (a) define individual constructs and variables; (b) develop and specify the measurement model; (c) design a study to produce empirical results; (d) assess measurement model validity and fit; (e) specify a structural equation model and (f) modify a structural equation model.

4.3.1.1 Define individual constructs and variables

In this study, there are five constructs. The proposed theoretical model consists of two exogenous variables and three endogenous variables. The exogenous variables include need for uniqueness and materialism, whereas the endogenous variables include status consumption, affective response and repurchase intention. Both the endogenous and exogenous variables are identified in the proposed model (i.e. structural model), showing potential causal dependencies between these two types of variable.

4.3.1.2 Develop and specify measurement model

A measurement model shows relations between latent variables and their indicators and a structural model shows potential causal dependencies between endogenous and exogenous variables. Exploratory and confirmatory factor

analysis models show measurement only, while path diagrams in SEM have their structural part in graphical representation. An identified model is a model with a specific parameter, and no other equivalent formulation can be given by a different parameter value. The parameter can be a regression coefficient between exogenous and endogenous variables or factor loadings. When data points are fewer than estimated parameters, the resulting model is justified as an unidentified model because there are not enough reference points to explain all the variance in the model. This problem can be solved by constraining one of the paths to zero, which means that it will not be estimated.

4.3.1.3 Design study to produce empirical results

After the basic model was specified in terms of constructs and measured variables, the issues involved in research design and model estimation should be noted. These issues mainly include types of analyzed data, either correlations or covariances; the effect of missing data; and the influence of sample size.

4.3.1.4 Assess measurement model validity and fit

Fig. 4-1 shows the initial measurement model for the training data set by confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) before modification. The model has an

acceptable fit (Table 4-13): χ^2/df ratio = 2.312; p< 0.001; GFI=0.925; CFI=0.954; TLI = 0.937; RMR = 0.039; RMSEA = 0.068. The value of χ^2/df is less than 3. The GFI, CFI and TLI values are higher than the recommended cut-off of 0.90. However, the AGFI 0.883 is below 0.90. The initial model can be further improved based on the modification indices suggested by the output (Table 4-14). The modification indices suggest that covariance paths can be added to link the error terms within the construct of affective response: between e20-e22, e20-e21, and e18-e21. Fig. 4-2 shows the modified model. After modification, the model fit was improved and had a better model fit (Table 4-15). The AGFI value was increased to 0.900. All the indices performed better after modification. Both the AIC and ECVI were decreased after modification. The results suggest that the modified model has a more acceptable model fit than the initial model, and that this finalized measurement model with satisfactory model validity and fit can be used for developing a structural equation model.

Fig. 4-1. Initial measurement model

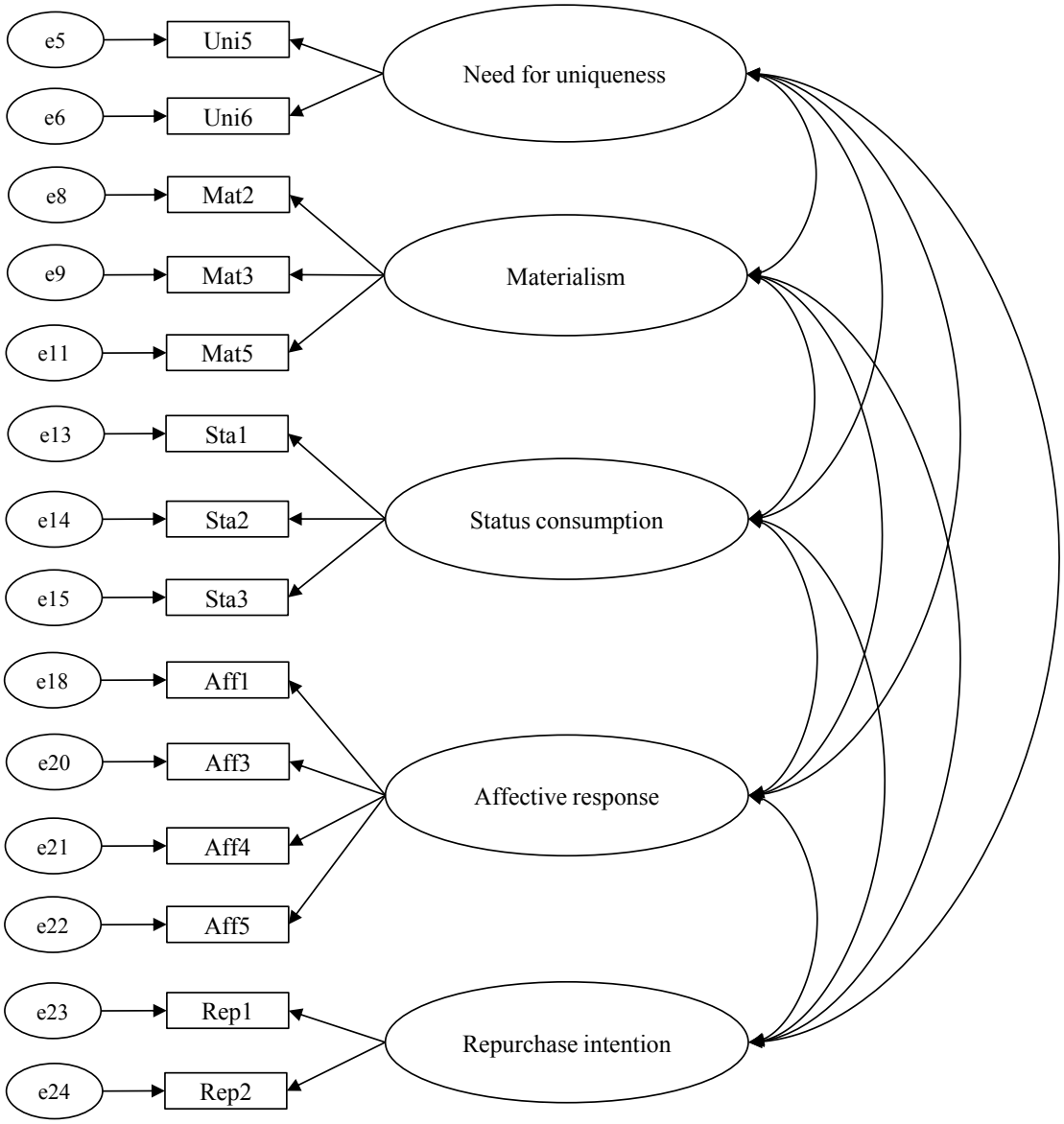


Table 4-13. Initial measurement model validity and fit before modification

Goodness of fit indices for measurement models	Criteria	
Chi-square (χ^2) of estimated model	-	154.909
Degree of freedom (df)	-	67
Chi-square/ degree of freedom(p=0.000) (χ^2/df)	$\leqq 3$	2.312
Goodness of fit index (GFI)	$\geqq 0.90$	0.925
Adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI)	$\geqq 0.90$	0.883
Root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA)	$\leqq 0.08$	0.068
Root mean square residual (RMR)	$\leqq 0.05$	0.039
Comparative fit index (CFI)	$\geqq 0.90$	0.954
Tucker-Lewis index (TLI)	$\geqq 0.90$	0.937
Akaike information criterion (AIC)		230.909
Expected cross-validation index (ECVI)		0.816

Table 4-14. Modification index for initial measurement model

Estimates of covariance			M.I.	Par Change
e6	↔	Status consumption	5.613	.082
e22	↔	Materialism	4.630	.059
e20	↔	Materialism	8.381	-.083
e20	↔	**e22**	**8.627**	**-.062**
e20	↔	**e21**	**6.841**	**.062**
e11	↔	e20	4.355	.050
e5	↔	Status consumption	5.784	-.081
e23	↔	Materialism	4.128	.060
e23	↔	e22	8.995	.068
e23	↔	e21	5.771	-.059
e24	↔	e22	4.795	-.043
e24	↔	e20	8.042	.058
e18	↔	**e21**	**5.244**	**-.053**
e13	↔	e22	5.187	.058
e14	↔	e22	8.461	-.074
e14	↔	e20	4.775	.058
e14	↔	e23	6.134	-.068
e14	↔	e18	4.359	.054
e15	↔	e6	9.385	.112
e8	↔	e13	4.039	.054
e8	↔	e14	5.616	-.063
e9	↔	e20	6.061	-.062
e9	↔	e13	6.599	-.075
e9	↔	e14	4.066	.059

Fig. 4-2. Modified measurement model

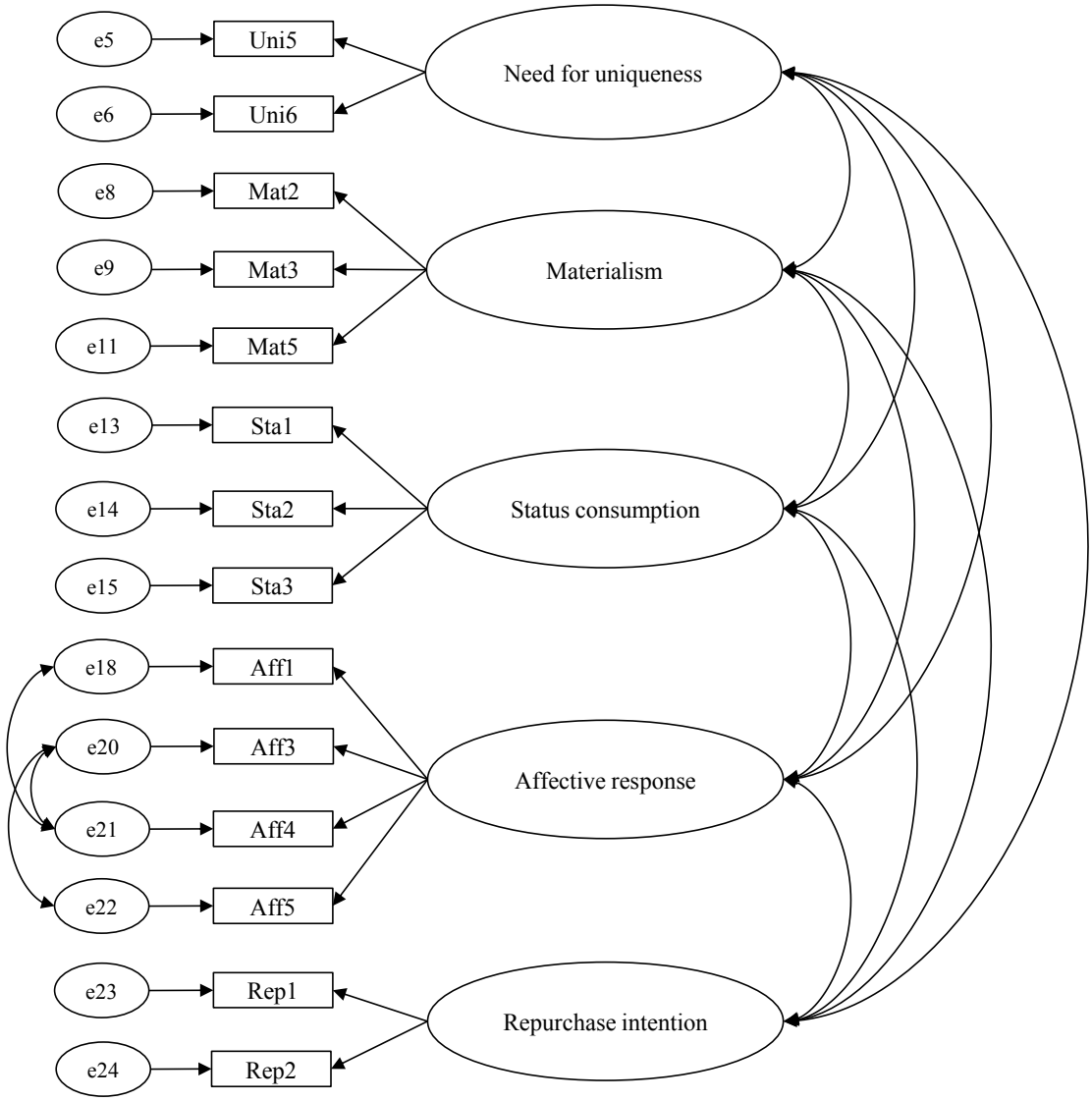


Table 4-15. Measurement model validity and fit after modification

Goodness of fit indices for measurement models	Criteria	Before modification	After modification
Chi-square (χ^2) of estimated model	-	154.909	133.018
Degree of freedom (df)	-	67	64
Chi-square/ degree of freedom(p=0.000) (χ^2/df)	≦3	2.312	2.078
Goodness of fit index (GFI)	≧0.90	0.925	0.936
Adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI)	≧0.90	0.883	0.900
Root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA)	≦0.08	0.068	0.062
Root mean square residual (RMR)	≦0.05	0.039	0.038
Comparative fit index (CFI)	≧0.90	0.954	0.964
Tucker-Lewis index (TLI)	≧0.90	0.937	0.948
Akaike information criterion (AIC)		230.909	215.018
Expected cross-validation index (ECVI)		0.816	0.760

4.3.1.5 Specify a structural equation model

In this study, exogenous variables included need for uniqueness and materialism, whereas endogenous variables included status consumption, affective response and repurchase intention. Correlation paths between exogenous variables were added. Structural paths were then drawn to illustrate the proposed structural equation model. Error terms were added to endogenous variables. Fig. 4-3 shows the initial SEM model with the standardized regression weights and the

percentage of variance explained by each construct. First of all, the modification indices (Table 4-16) were examined to assess if the initial SEM model could be improved, showing that covariance paths could be linked together with error terms within the same construct of affective response: e10-e12, e10-e11, e9-e12. The modified SEM model (M_0) is presented in Fig. 4-4.

Table 4-17 shows the SEM model validity and fit before and after the modification. The results show that the modified model was improved with a better model fit: χ^2/df=2.383; GFI=0.925; AGFI=0.900; CFI=0.952; TLI=0.934; RMR=0.05; RMSEA= 0.070. Further, the modified model has lower values of AIC and ECVI, indicating that the modified model is preferred.

Fig. 4-3. Initial SEM model

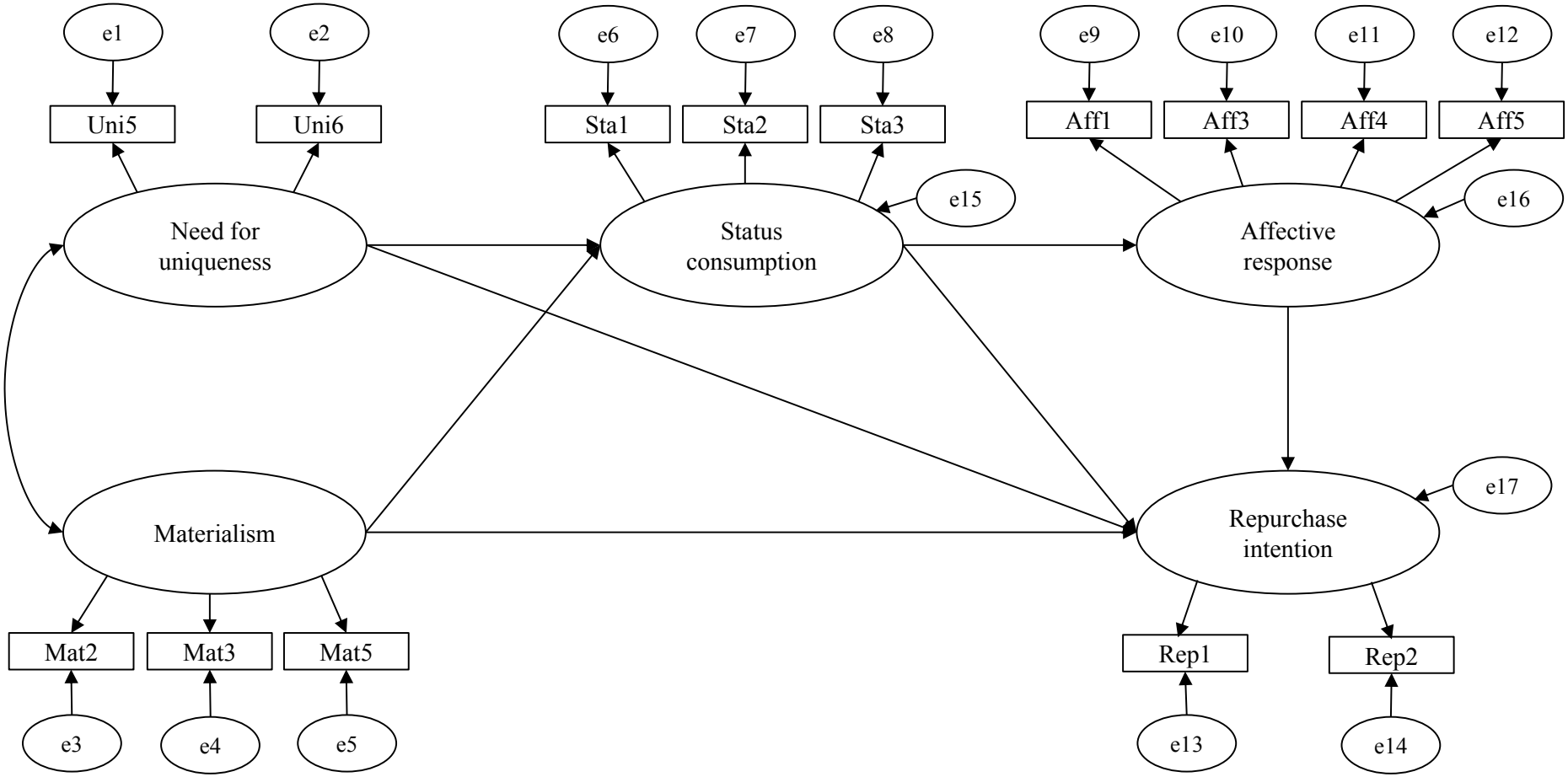


Table 4-16. Modification index for initial SEM model

Estimates of covariance			M.I.	Par Change
e16	↔	Need for uniqueness	9.359	.109
e16	↔	e15	8.358	-.094
e12	↔	e15	5.510	-.073
e12	↔	e13	9.856	.072
e12	↔	e14	5.153	-.045
e11	↔	e13	5.750	-.059
e10	↔	Materialism	5.651	-.065
e10	↔	Need for uniqueness	8.819	.105
e10	↔	e14	7.602	.057
e10	↔	**e12**	8.675	-.063
e10	↔	**e11**	5.839	.057
e9	↔	**e12**	5.639	-.055
e7	↔	e16	6.003	-.066
e7	↔	e13	6.158	-.069
e7	↔	e12	10.654	-.084
e3	↔	e7	5.873	-.065
e4	↔	e10	5.823	-.061
e4	↔	e6	6.192	-.072
e5	↔	e10	4.669	.052
e2	↔	e8	7.088	.097
e1	↔	e16	12.839	.111
e1	↔	e12	4.366	.062

Fig. 4-4. Modified SEM model, M_0

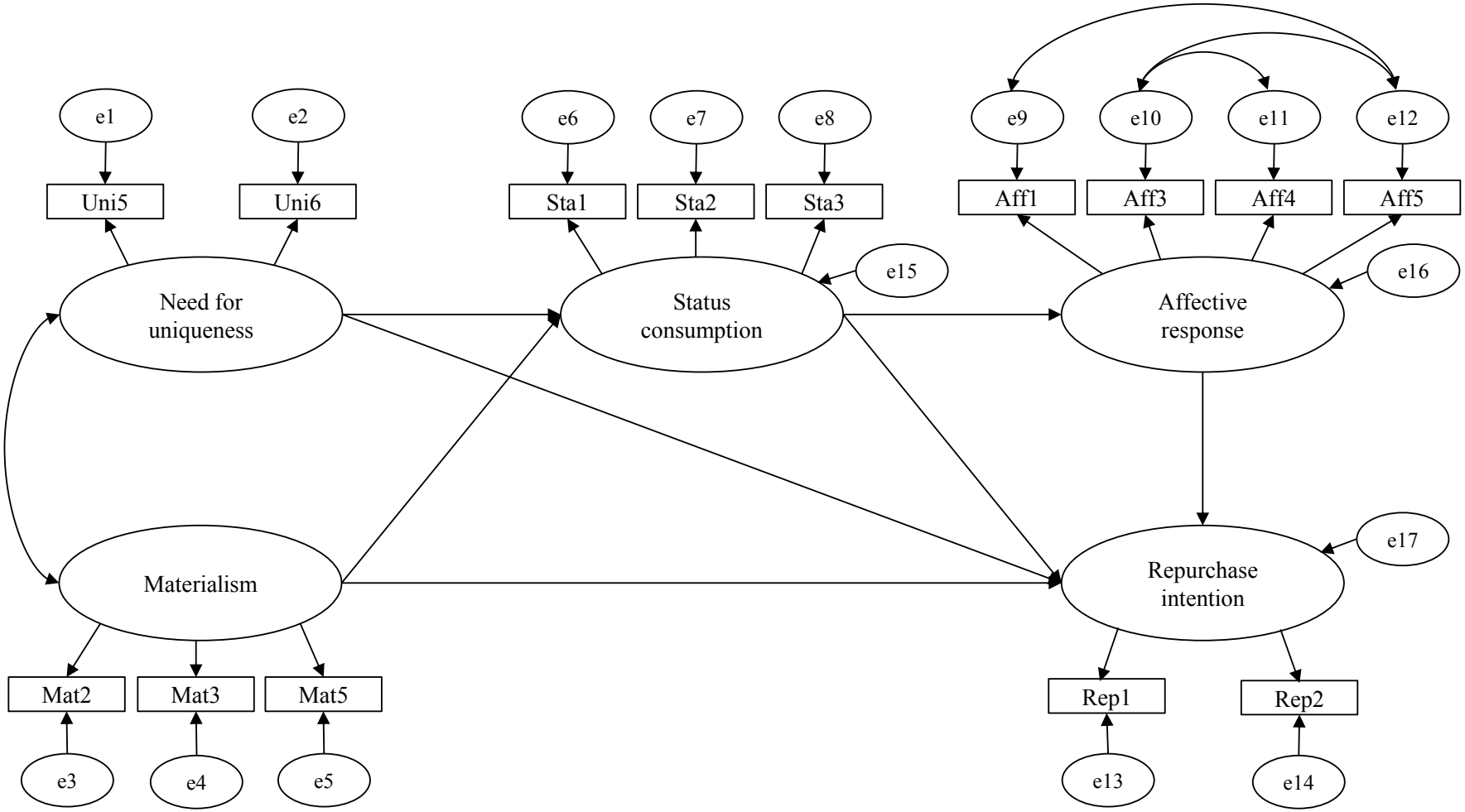


Table 4-17. SEM model (M_0) validity and fit before and after modification

Goodness of fit indices for SEM model	Criteria	Before modification	After modification
Chi-square (χ^2) of estimated model	-	179.223	157.281
Degree of freedom (df)	-	69	66
Chi-square/ degree of freedom(p=0.000) (χ^2/df)	≦3	2.597	2.383
Goodness of fit index (GFI)	≧0.90	0.915	0.925
Adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI)	≧0.90	0.870	0.900
Root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA)	≦0.08	0.075	0.070
Root mean square residual (RMR)	≦0.05	0.05	0.05
Comparative fit index (CFI)	≧0.90	0.942	0.952
Tucker-Lewis index (TLI)	≧0.90	0.923	0.934
Akaike information criterion (AIC)		251.223	235.281
Expected cross-validation index (ECVI)		0.888	0.831

For cross-validation, the same data analysis procedures were conducted for the test data set. The resulted measurement model for the test set shows an acceptable model fit: χ^2/df ratio = 2.953; p< 0.001; GFI=0.915; AGFI=0.900; TLI = 0.902; RMR = 0.05; RMSEA = 0.080. For the SEM model, after assessing the modification indices, the modified model shows a fair model fit: χ^2/df=3.0; GFI=0.900; AGFI=0.90; CFI=0.912; TLI=0.90; RMR=0.06; RMSEA= 0.08. The data analysis results for the training data set were cross-validated by the test data set.

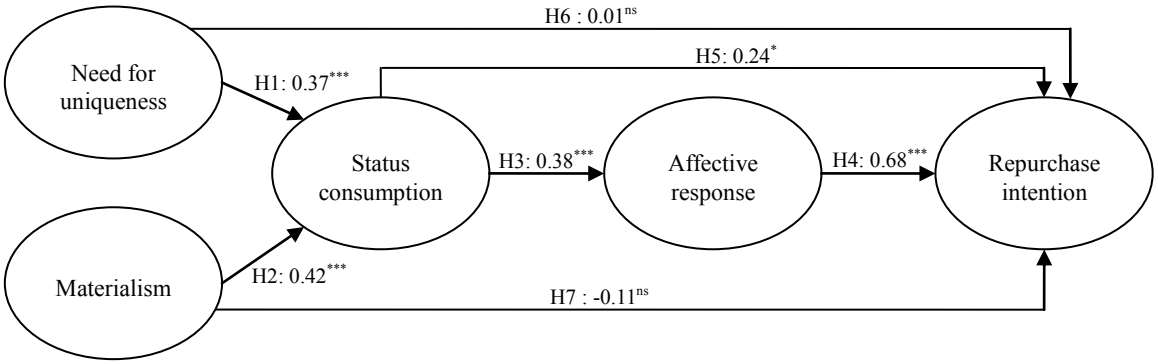
Based on the SEM model (Fig. 4-4), standardized regression weights were examined in order to generate estimates values and test the proposed hypotheses. Table 4-18 shows the hypothesis testing results. The direct effects of need for uniqueness and materialism on status consumption are all positive and highly significant, supporting H1 (E=0.37, $p<0.001$) and H2 (E=0.42, $p<0.001$). Similarly, direct, positive, and highly significant relationships exist between status consumption and affective response, supporting H3 (E=0.38, $p<0.001$). Affective response has a strong and highly significant influence on repurchase intention, supporting H4 (E=0.68, $p<0.001$). The confirmation of H5 indicates that the relationship between status consumption and repurchase intention is positive and significant (E=0.24, $p<0.05$). On the contrary, two hypothesized paths, H6 and H7, are not supported. The direct relationship between need for uniqueness and repurchase intention is not significant, rejecting H6 (E=0.01, $p>0.1$). An insignificant relationship is also found between materialism and repurchase intention, rejecting H7 (E=-0.11, $p>0.1$). The SEM model, M_0 with hypothesized paths is presented in Fig. 4-5.

Table 4-18. Standardized structural equation parameter estimates for SEM model

	Hypothesized path (SEM model, M_0)			Estimate	SE	CR	P	
H1	Status consumption	←	Need for uniqueness	0.367^{***}	0.074	5.257	***	Supported
H2	Status consumption	←	Materialism	0.419^{***}	0.092	6.109	***	Supported
H3	Affective response	←	Status consumption	0.379^{***}	0.042	5.284	***	Supported
H4	Repurchase intention	←	Affective response	0.677^{***}	0.093	7.623	***	Supported
H5	Repurchase intention	←	Status consumption	0.238^{*}	0.054	2.653	0.008	Supported
H6	Repurchase intention	←	Need for uniqueness	0.006^{ns}	0.049	0.072	0.942	Rejected
H7	Repurchase intention	←	Materialism	-0.106^{ns}	0.065	-1.340	0.180	Rejected

Note: * $p<0.05$; ** $p<0.005$; ***$p<0.001$, ns=not significant, SE=standardized error, CR=critical ratio

Fig. 4-5. SEM model, M_0 with hypothesized testing results



The squared multiple correlation coefficients (R^2) of each construct measure how well the observed outcomes can be replicated by the proposed model, as the percentage of total variance is explained by latent variables. The R^2 for status consumption is 0.44, which indicates that 44% of the total variance in status

consumption can be explained by the two antecedent variables (need for uniqueness and materialism). About 15% of total variance in affective response can be explained by status consumption. About 60% of total variance in repurchase intention can be explained by affective response and status consumption in the proposed theoretical model.

4.3.1.6 Modify structural equation model

To improve the modified SEM model (M_0), it is important to modify the model and compare the competing models. The competing models may have to be modified the way the most likely relationships between variables can be estimated. In addition to the SEM output modification indices reporting improvement in the model fit, adding or deleting paths may improve the model fit. As suggested by Fitzmaurice (2008), highly materialistic consumers consider the acquisition of material possessions as a way to achieve happiness and well-being. In other words, they believe that their accumulated luxury possessions are important to their lives and the ownership and quality of possessions arouse favorable feelings of personal success and achievement. Therefore, another hypothesis is proposed (H8): Materialism has a positive influence on the formation of affective response in buying luxury goods. A competing SEM model (M_1) (Fig. 4-6) was also formed by deleting the two

rejected hypothesized paths mentioned in the previous section and adding an extra causal relationship path between materialism and affective response, with the relationship paths connecting need for uniqueness and materialism to repurchase intention being deleted.

Table 4-19 shows the standardized structural equation parameter estimates for the competing model, M_1. All the hypothesized paths are supported. The direct effects of need for uniqueness and materialism on status consumption are all positive and highly significant, therefore supporting H1 (E=0.36, p<0.001) and H2 (E=0.41, p<0.001). Similarly, direct, positive, and significant relationships exist between status consumption and affective response, supporting H3 (E=0.27, p<0.005). Affective response has a strong and highly significant influence on repurchase intention, supporting H4 (E=0.67, p<0.001). The confirmation of H5 indicates that the relationship between status consumption and repurchase intention is positive and significant (E=0.18, p<0.05). The extra relationship path (H8) between materialism and affective response is also positive and significant (E=0.17, p<0.05).

The squared multiple correlation coefficients (R^2) for status consumption is 0.42, indicating that 42% of total variance in status consumption can be explained by

the two antecedent variables (need for uniqueness and materialism). About 15% in affective response can be explained by status consumption. Almost 60% in repurchase intention can be explained by affective response and status consumption in the competing model. Similar results emerge when compared with M_0.

Fig. 4-6. Competing SEM model, M_1

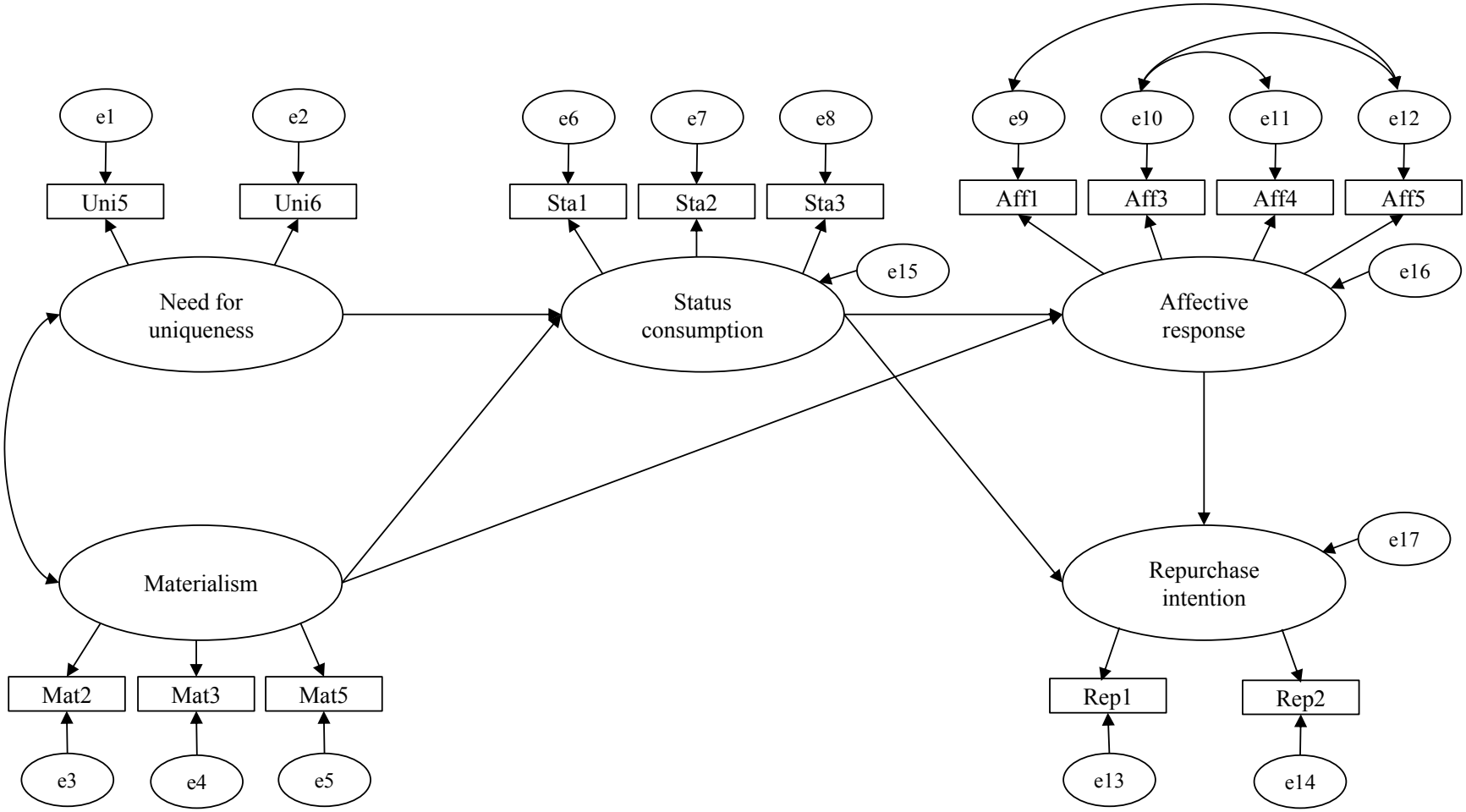


Table 4-19. Standardized structural equation parameter estimates for competing model, M_1

	Hypothesized path (SEM model, M_1)			Estimate	SE	CR	P	
H1	Status consumption	←	Need for uniqueness	0.363***	0.076	5.112	***	Supported
H2	Status consumption	←	Materialism	0.406***	0.094	5.853	***	Supported
H3	Affective response	←	Status consumption	0.265**	0.050	3.142	0.002	Supported
H4	Repurchase intention	←	Affective response	0.674***	0.092	7.338	***	Supported
H5	Repurchase intention	←	Status consumption	0.179*	0.039	2.701	0.007	Supported
H8	Affective response	←	Materialism	0.173*	0.070	1.976	0.048	Supported

Note: * $p<0.05$; ** $p<0.005$; *** $p<0.001$, SE=standardized error, CR=critical ratio

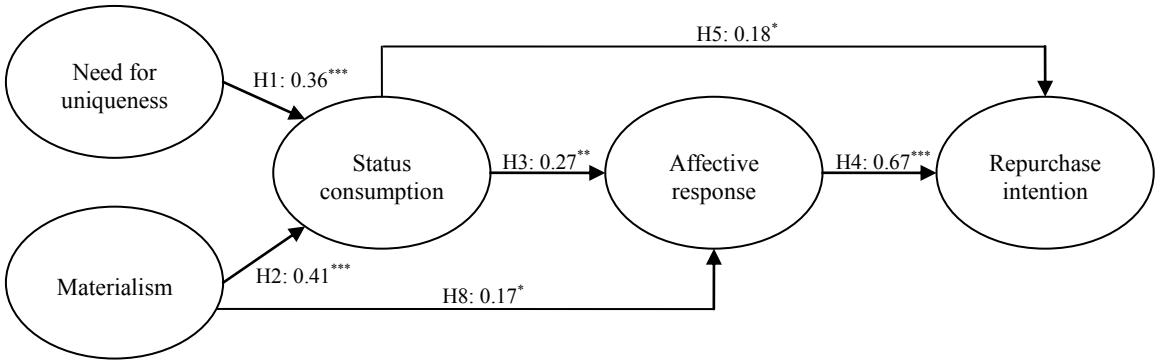
Table 4-20 shows a comparison of the standardized structural equation estimates for the SEM model (M_0) and the competing model (M_1). M_1 has lower values of AIC and ECVI. In evaluating the two models, the sequential chi-square (χ^2) difference tests (SCDTs) between M_0 and M_1 ($\triangle\chi^2$= 2.30; $\triangle$df=1) suggests that M_1 with lower value of χ^2 performs better. Then the model fit indices were assessed and compared. The model fit of M_1 was improved. The value of χ^2/df decreased from 2.383 (M_0) to 2.313 (M_1). The above assessment indicates that M_1 performs better than M_0. The competing model M_1 can be accepted. The finalized SEM model is presented in Fig. 4-7 with an acceptable model fit: χ^2/df=2.313; GFI=0.927; AGFI=0.900; CFI=0.954; TLI=0.937; RMSEA= 0.068.

Table 4-20. Standardized structural equation estimates for SEM model (M_0) and competing model (M_1)

Goodness of fit indices for competing SEM models				Criteria	M_0	M_1
Chi-square (χ^2) of estimated model				-	157.281	154.988
Degree of freedom (df)				-	66	67
Chi-square/ degree of freedom(p=0.000) (χ^2/df)				≦3	2.383	2.313
Goodness of fit index (GFI)				≧0.90	0.925	0.927
Adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI)				≧0.90	0.900	0.900
Root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA)				≦0.08	0.070	0.068
Root mean square residual (RMR)				≦0.05	0.066	0.061
Comparative fit index (CFI)				≧0.90	0.952	0.954
Tucker-Lewis index (TLI)				≧0.90	0.934	0.937
Akaike information criterion (AIC)					235.281	230.988
Expected cross-validation index (ECVI)					0.831	0.816
H1	Status consumption	←	Need for uniqueness		0.367***	0.363***
H2	Status consumption	←	Materialism		0.419***	0.406***
H3	Affective response	←	Status consumption		0.379***	0.265**
H4	Repurchase intention	←	Affective response		0.677***	0.674***
H5	Repurchase intention	←	Status consumption		0.238*	0.179*
H6	Repurchase intention	←	Need for uniqueness		0.006	--
H7	Repurchase intention	←	Materialism		-0.106	--
H8	Affective response	←	Materialism		--	0.173*

Note: * p<0.05; ** p<0.005; *** p<0.001, SE=standardized error, CR=critical ratio

Fig. 4-7. Finalized SEM model with hypothesized testing results



Note: * $p<0.05$; ** $p<0.005$; *** $p<0.001$

The SEM analysis shows that both the relationships between need for uniqueness and materialism with repurchase intention do not exist. The development of the competing model indicates that the causal relationship path between materialism and affective response exists. The finalized model M_1 shows that the following hypotheses are supported:

H1: Need for uniqueness has a positive influence on consumers' status consumption in buying luxury goods.

H2: Materialism has a positive influence on consumers' status consumption in buying luxury goods.

H3: Consumers' status consumption has a positive influence on the formation of affective response in buying luxury goods.

H4: Consumers' affective response has a positive influence on repurchase intention of luxury goods.

H5: Consumers' status consumption has a positive influence on repurchase intention of luxury goods.

H8: Materialism has a positive influence on the formation of affective response in buying luxury goods.

The following hypotheses are rejected (H6-7):

H6: Consumers' need for uniqueness has a positive influence on repurchase intention of luxury goods. (Rejected)

H7: Consumers' materialism has a positive influence on repurchase intention of luxury goods. (Rejected)

4.3.2 Direct, indirect and total effects to repurchase intention

In the finalized model (M_1) as shown in Table 4-21, six direct effects among constructs are indicated. Need for uniqueness has a direct effect on status consumption (E=0.36, p <0.001). Materialism also has a direct effect on status consumption (E=0.41, p<0.001). Status consumption has a direct effect on affective response (E=0.27, p<0.005). Affective response has a direct effect on repurchase intention (E=0.67, p<0.001). In addition, status consumption also has

a direct effect on repurchase intention (E=0.18, p<0.05). Materialism also has a direct effect on affective response (E=0.17, p<0.05). For indirect effect, Table 4-21 shows that although there are no direct effects on need for uniqueness or materialism to repurchase intention, indirect effects are found. Need for uniqueness has an indirect effect on repurchase intention (E=0.13, p<0.001). Materialism has an indirect effect on repurchase intention (E=0.26, p<0.001). It implies that the influence on need for uniqueness and materialism to repurchase intention is through status consumption which serves as a mediator. Apart from the direct effect, status consumption also has an indirect effect on repurchase intention through affective response (E=0.18, p<0.001). The total effect on affective response to repurchase intention is the strongest (E=0.67, p<0.001), followed by the total effect on status consumption to repurchase intention (E=0.36, p<0.001).

Table 4-21. Standardized direct, indirect and total effects on five constructs (M_1)

	Need for uniqueness	Materialism	Status consumption	Affective response	Repurchase intention
Direct effect					
Status consumption	**0.363**	**0.406**	0.000	0.000	0.000
Affective response	0.000	**0.173**	**0.265**	0.000	0.000
Repurchase intention	0.000	0.000	**0.179**	**0.674**	0.000
Indirect effect					
Status consumption	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Affective response	0.096	0.108	0.000	0.000	0.000
Repurchase intention	**0.130**	**0.262**	**0.179**	0.000	0.000
Total effect					
Status consumption	0.363	0.406	0.000	0.000	0.000
Affective response	0.096	0.281	0.265	0.000	0.000
Repurchase intention	0.130	0.262	**0.358**	**0.674**	0.000

4.4 Chapter summary

This chapter reports the data analysis results for the main study of this research. Data preparation was firstly conducted to translate the data collected into a suitable form for analysis. This process was completed through questionnaire cleaning and screening to ensure accuracy and precision of the data. After data cleaning and screening, a total of 32 cases were deleted because of missing data and inconsistent answers. Finally, 568 out of 600 respondents were accepted. With the prepared data, the demographic profiles of the respondents were examined in terms of their characteristics and representativeness. This step was followed by descriptive statistical analysis for the main research variables of interest, including calculations of maximum, minimum, mean scores and standard deviation.

After performing Cronbach's alpha reliability test, the coefficient alpha values for the scale items were adjusted based on the suggested improvement of alpha values if indicated items were deleted. Next, composite reliability, convergent validity and discriminant validity were also assessed to develop a reliable and valid factor structure for subsequent data analysis. Harman's one-factor test was conducted to test the presence of common method variance. The purified measures were then employed in the main study. The results show that the

avoidance of similarity subscale (Uni5, Uni6) under the construct of need for uniqueness has the strongest factor loadings. For materialism, one item (Mat2, Mat3, Mat5) from each subscale performs better than the rest of the items. Among all, Mat 2 under the acquisition centrality subscale has the highest standardized factor loadings. In terms of status consumption, Sta1, Sta2 and Sta3 have the highest loadings. Four items (Aff1, Aff3, Aff4, Aff5) remain under the affective response construct. Regarding repurchase intention, Rep1 and Rep2 have strong factor loadings.

The SEM results indicate that direct effects of need for uniqueness and materialism on status consumption are positive and highly significant. Similarly, direct, positive, and highly significant relationships exist between status consumption and affective response. Particularly, affective response is found to have a strong and highly significant influence on repurchase intention. The relationship between status consumption and repurchase intention is positive and significant. On the contrary, the relationship between need for uniqueness and repurchase intention is not significant. Materialism also has an insignificant relationship with repurchase intention. By deleting the two rejected relationship paths and adding an extra path between materialism and affective response, another competing model (M_1) is formed to find the best fit model. With

improved model validity and fit, M_1 outperforms the previous SEM model and is accepted as the finalized SEM model of the present study. Direct, indirect and total effects among the constructs are also examined. The findings show that although there are no direct effects on need for uniqueness and materialism to repurchase intention, indirect effects are found, implying that the influence on need for uniqueness and materialism to repurchase intention is through status consumption as a mediator. In addition, status consumption also has an indirect effect on repurchase intention through affective response. The total effect on affective response to repurchase intention is the strongest, followed by the total effect on status consumption to repurchase intention. The implications of these results will be discussed in the next and final chapter.

Chapter 5 Discussions and Conclusions

5.1 Introduction

This final chapter serves to conclude the entire research study. It begins with the recall of research questions and the specific research objectives, followed by a recapitulation of major findings from statistical data analysis. Based on the summary of research findings discussed, a number of conclusions are drawn. Both theoretical and practical implications are made. Finally, this chapter ends with some suggested directions for future research.

5.2 Recalling research questions

As discussed in Chapter 1, the research focus of this study is inspired by the continuous market growth, the diversification in business structure and the operation size of the luxury goods market. There is a need to enhance the responsiveness to the consumer market. Consumers buying luxury goods are mainly after status. Most of the previous studies explored the antecedents of status consumption, but failed to account for the importance of status consumption in affecting consumers' behavioral intention. Status consumption arouses favorable feelings. Affective response is found to be twice more likely to

account for consumers' repurchase intention which concerns brand loyalty. For those global luxury goods corporations with recognized reputation which wish to maximize market growth, an in-depth understanding of the consumption behavior of status-conscious consumers is of the greatest importance in formulating effective business strategies and implementing product development plans. Particularly, the present research aims to address three major research questions:

Firstly, what roles do need for uniqueness and materialism play in the context of status consumption? Luxury brands are referred to as status products purchased for self-rewarding (internal reason) or signifying wealth (external reason). The value of luxury brands involves personal orientation which is more visible for consumers who evaluate status products with individual-based standards, and derive self-directed pleasure. Consumers purchasing luxury goods are mainly after symbolic values and status. The review of literature extensively discusses the antecedents of status consumption, mainly focusing on interpersonal, socio-psychological, brand-related, and self-related factors. Consumers wish to maintain interpersonal difference by consuming luxury brands because of high status and unique value attached to luxury goods. Materialistic consumers regard the acquisition of luxury goods as the core belief in their lives and consider a

display of luxury goods as a way to personal success, achievement and happiness. The present study discovers major dimensions from need for uniqueness and materialism which creates the strongest impact on status consumption.

Secondly, how does status consumption impact on consumers' affective response in buying luxury goods? Luxury brands not only have symbolic meanings, but also arouse emotional response. Consumers buy luxury goods because they are brand-conscious and have affective judgment on repurchase intention. Status consumption induces consumers' affective state as sensory pleasure, personal reward and fulfillment. Consumer's self-gratification and satisfaction associated with branded luxury goods and the related pleasurable shopping experience become the psychological benefits of consuming products. In particular, the nature of status consumption is more concerned with affective response than utilitarian value. The present study aims to extend the extant studies of status consumption to incorporate affective response and repurchase intention into a theoretical model.

Thirdly, how does consumers' affective response influence repurchase intention of luxury goods? Consumers' satisfaction is one of the factors in repurchase behavioral intention. Affective response is consumers' post-satisfaction affecting

their repurchase intention. When consumers form positive evaluation of a shopping experience and luxury goods consumed, their repurchase intention is facilitated. The present study discovers that affective response plays a major role in consumers' repurchase intention of luxury goods.

Lastly, what are the major factors in consumers' repurchase intention in buying luxury goods? The present study develops a theoretical model to investigate how need for uniqueness, materialism, status consumption, affective response affect the formation of consumers' repurchase intention. The results address this research questions with statistical justification, and provide valuable insights for both academic researchers and luxury goods marketers to formulate competitive strategies to build consumers' brand loyalty.

The following sections will discuss the major findings of the present study, the conclusions drawn, followed by theoretical and practical implications.

5.3 Summary of main findings

5.3.1 Measurement of latent constructs

The CFA analysis shows that the measurement scales fits the models well. The statistical results show that avoidance of similarity subscale (Uni5, Uni6) under

the construct of need for uniqueness has the strongest items. The similarity avoidance-oriented consumers vow to avoid purchasing any common brands. Item Uni5 “I often try to avoid products or brands that I know are bought by the general population” has a standardized factor loading of 0.84. Item Uni6 “The more commonplace a product or brand is among the general population, the less interested I am in buying it” scores 0.84. Due to high price and scarcity, buying status goods helps consumers maintain their need for uniqueness and differentiate themselves from significant others. On the contrary, the other two dimensions of need for uniqueness, namely creative choice counter-conformity and unpopular choice counter-conformity, have low factor loadings, and therefore are excluded from the measurement scale.

For materialism, one item (Mat2, Mat3, Mat5) from each subscale remains. Among all, Mat2 under the Acquisition Centrality subscale has the highest standardized factor loadings, followed by Mat5 and Mat3. Item Mat2 “I like a lot of luxury in my life” scores 0.86. Acquisition centrality refers to the emphasis that materialistic consumers place on acquiring more possessions, which allows acquisitiveness to function as a goal in their life. Those status-conscious consumers regard the possession of luxury goods as a pursuit of lifestyle. Buying status goods is their interest. Mat5 “My life could be better if I owned certain

things I do not have" under Acquisition as the Pursuit of Happiness Subscale scores 0.79. Material acquisition in happiness refers to a belief that owning or acquiring right possessions is a key to happiness and well-being, reflecting that status-conscious consumers feel unsatisfied with the current situation and wish to own things they do not have. Mat3 "I admire people who own expensive cars, homes, and clothes" under Possessions Defined as Success Subscale scores 0.79. Material acquisition in success refers to the belief that people's success is judged by material possessions that people own, reflecting that status-conscious consumers wish to buy luxury goods to elevate status and enhance social standing in social groups.

In terms of status consumption, the first three items remain (Sta1, Sta2, Sta3), with the highest loadings on Sta1, followed by Sta2 and Sta3. Item Sta1 "I would buy a product just because it has status" scores 0.87. Item Sta2 "I am interested in new products with status" scores 0.79. Item Sta3 "I would pay more for a product if it had status" scores 0.77. The results show that the status value can motivate consumers to buy luxury goods.

Four items remain under the affective response construct (Aff1, Aff3, Aff4, Aff5), with the highest loadings on Aff5, followed by Aff3, Aff1 and Aff4. Item Aff5

"Luxury fashion brand would give me pleasure" has factor loadings 0.88. Item Aff3 "Luxury fashion brand is one that I would feel relaxed about using" scores 0.76. Aff1 "Luxury fashion brand is one that I would enjoy" scores 0.73. Aff4 "Luxury fashion would make me feel good" scores 0.66. In general, the construct of affective response has the highest scores, implying that luxury goods arouse status-conscious consumers' affective response to certain brands. The results suggest that affective response has a stronger influence on fashion brands than cognitive response because it often responds to affective or symbolic appeal (Lee et al., 2008; Kumar et al., 2009).

Regarding repurchase intention, Rep1 and Rep2 under repurchase intention have strong scores. Rep2 has the highest factor loadings, followed by Rep1. Rep2 "The probability that I will repurchase this luxury brand would be high." scores 0.80. Rep1 "My intention to repurchase this luxury brand would be high." scores 0.73.

5.3.2 Results of hypothesis testing

The present study developed a theoretical model to test the following research hypotheses:

H1: Need for uniqueness has a positive influence on consumers' status consumption in buying luxury goods. (Supported)

H2: Materialism has a positive influence on consumers' status consumption in buying luxury goods. (Supported)

H3: Consumers' status consumption has a positive influence on the formation of affective response in buying luxury goods. (Supported)

H4: Consumers' affective response has a positive influence on repurchase intention of luxury goods. (Supported)

H5: Consumers' status consumption has a positive influence on repurchase intention of luxury goods. (Supported)

H6: Consumers' need for uniqueness has a positive influence on repurchase intention of luxury goods. (Rejected)

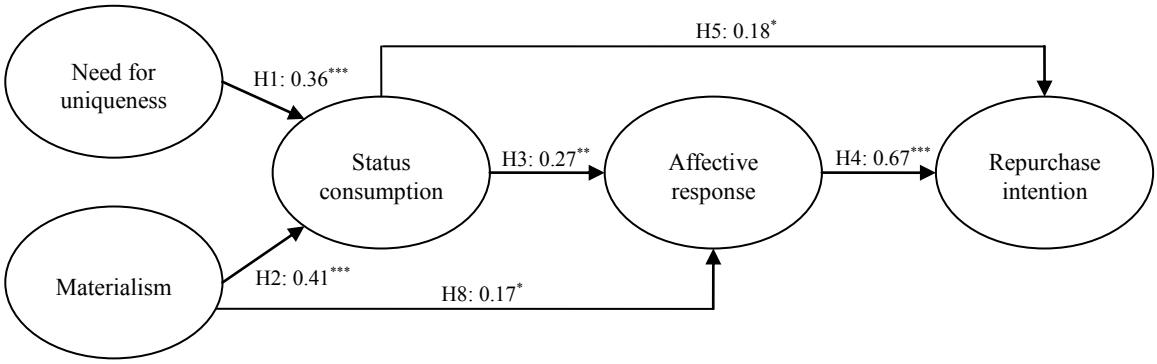
H7: Consumers' materialism has a positive influence on repurchase intention of luxury goods. (Rejected)

H8: Materialism has a positive influence on the formation of affective response in buying luxury goods. (Supported)

The finalized SEM model of the present study is shown in Fig. 5-1, in which the first five hypotheses (H1, H2, H3, H4 and H5) are supported. A competing SEM model was formed by deleting the insignificant hypothesized paths (H6, H7) and

adding an extra path between materialism and repurchase intention (H8).

Fig. 5-1. Finalized structural equation model of present study



Note: * $p<0.05$; ** $p<0.005$; *** $p<0.001$

As illustrated in Fig. 5-1, the above assessment shows that affective response has the most direct and significant impact on repurchase intention (H4). The direct effects of need for uniqueness and materialism on status consumption are all positive and highly significant (H1 and H2). Status consumption is found to have a direct, positive, and significant relationship with affective response (H3) which in turn creates a direct, positive and strong effect on repurchase intention (H4). The extra relationship path added to the theoretical model between materialism and affective response is also positive and significant (H8). For the squared multiple correlation coefficients (R^2), about 60% of total variance in repurchase intention can be explained by both affective response and status consumption in the proposed theoretical model. About 42% in status consumption can be

explained by the two antecedent variables (i.e. need for uniqueness and materialism) and 15% in affective response can be explained by status consumption.

The strong impact of affective response is consistent with the past studies. Knight and Kim (2007) argued that affective response is twice more likely to account for repurchase intention than cognition response. In particular, affective response has a stronger influence on cognitive-affective repurchase intention of fashion brands than cognitive response as consumption behavior concerns both affective and symbolic appeal (Lee et al., 2008; Kumar et al., 2009). Luxury brands which carry symbolic meanings and feelings of favorable luxury brands affect brand-conscious and status-conscious consumers who make affective judgment on repurchase intention. Purchasing luxury goods induces consumers' affective state as sensory pleasure, personal reward and fulfillment (Wood, 2000; Tsai, 2005; Shukla, 2008). Studies of how affective response affects consumers' repurchase intention of luxury goods are limited. The present study considers both purchase intention and repurchase probability as predictors for future behavior. Examining repurchase intention is more practical and meaningful because the repurchase probability measures behavioral expectation which outperforms behavioral intention in predicting future behavior. Therefore, by

collecting data from consumers who bought luxury goods, the present study illustrates how strong a role affective response plays in affecting repurchase intention of luxury goods to enhance status.

Status consumption is associated with motivational processes by which consumers strive to enhance social standing by conspicuously consuming products that confer and symbolize status both for oneself and surrounding significant others. Status consumption is found to generate affective response, and the need to consume goods for status motivates consumers to repurchase luxury goods. Both need for uniqueness and materialism are found to be strong factors in status consumption. Consumers are motivated to seek status as luxury goods concern not only uniqueness values and material needs but also, more importantly, social needs. 'The more a consumer seeks status, the more he or she engages in such behavior, such as consumption of status symbols which elevate their status' (Eastman et al., 1999). Fig. 5-1 illustrates that the direct and significant impact of status consumption on repurchase intention is weaker than on affective response. The results are not consistent with the study conducted by Latter et al. (2010). The findings of the present study shows that status value of luxury goods is not the primary factor in motivating brand-conscious consumers to have repurchase intention. Status-conveying luxury goods are not enough to

motivate consumers to repurchase. Factors may include peer influence and other situational factors that consumers encounter when deciding to purchase luxury goods.

The extra causal relationship paths added to the model shows that there is a direct and significant relationship between materialism and affective response. Materialistic consumers regard acquisition of luxury goods as an effective way to achieve personal happiness and well-being, and strongly believe that their accumulated luxury possessions are important to their lives and the ownership and display of luxury goods bring them a sense of personal success and achievement.

Two insignificant relationships are found in the present study. The results show that need for uniqueness and materialism have insignificant effect on repurchase intention. A possible explanation is that unique products, materialistic beliefs, and self-satisfaction do not directly impact on repurchase intention of luxury goods. Although an insignificant relationship is found, need for uniqueness and materialism have indirect effect on repurchase intention. The following section discusses the indirect effect on status consumption and affective response in the proposed study model.

5.3.3 Direct, indirect and total effects on repurchase intention

The direct effect of affective response on repurchase intention is the strongest, followed by the direct effect of status consumption on repurchase intention. In examining the direct, indirect and total effect on research variables, it is found that both need for uniqueness and materialism have indirect effect on repurchase intention. The indirect effect of materialism on repurchase intention is stronger than that of need for uniqueness, implying that the influence of need for uniqueness and materialism on repurchase intention is through status consumption. Status consumption acts as a mediator in the study model. The findings show that status-conscious consumers are materialists whose intention to repurchase status goods is affected by the uniqueness of luxury goods to show happiness, success and achievement to significant others. In addition to direct effect, status consumption also has indirect effect on repurchase intention, implying that status consumption creates both direct and indirect effect on repurchase intention through the formation of affective response. The total effect of affective response on repurchase intention is the strongest, followed by the total effect of status consumption on repurchase intention.

Once again, it is shown that affective response is more likely to account for repurchase intention than cognition response, especially for luxury fashion

brands, implying that affective response should be a prominent research variable in studying status consumption. There are limited studies on how affective response influences consumption behavior in buying luxury goods. The present study shows the strength of affective response in repurchase intention of luxury goods, implying that luxury brands can be projected as a way to achieve sensory pleasure, enjoyable and relaxed consumption experience.

Based on the above summary, the key findings of the research are as follows:

i. Prior studies explored status consumption with need for uniqueness and materialism separately. The present study addresses both need for uniqueness and materialism in the study model simultaneously, when investigating status consumption in buying luxury goods. These two research variables are found to be direct and significant antecedents of status consumption.

ii. In terms of need for uniqueness, the present study shows that avoidance of similarity is found to be the strongest direct factor in status consumption. Buying luxury brands satisfies consumers' need for being unique when comparing themselves with significant others. Consumers try to avoid popular products or brands among the general public. The more popular a

product or brand, the less interested they are in it. They value the uniqueness of products most and may discontinue consumption of brands becoming popular in their social groups. Luxury goods are sold at premium price of limited quantity. They wish to differentiate themselves from peers using luxury goods because exclusive goods can enhance the unique value, implying that avoiding popular luxury goods is the most important to status-conscious consumers. On the contrary, other dimensions under uniqueness theory, including creative choice counter-conformity and unpopular choice counter-conformity, are found to be insignificant in status consumption.

iii. For materialism, status-conscious consumers are found to be materialists who regard materialism as a value, including three major dimensions, namely acquisition centrality, acquisition of success and acquisition of happiness. Acquisition centrality refers to the importance that materialists attach to possessions, allowing acquisitiveness to function as a goal in their life. Status-conscious consumers love a lot of luxury in life. Material acquisition of success refers to the belief that success is judged by one's material possessions. They admire people who own expensive cars, homes, and clothes. Material acquisition of happiness refers to the belief that

owning or acquiring right possessions is a key to happiness and well-being, and their life could be better if they owned certain things they do not have. The three beliefs motivate status-conscious consumers to repurchase luxury goods to enhance status.

iv. A strong repurchase intention means that consumers are willing to repurchase certain luxury brands frequently. Regarding predictive variables for repurchase intention, the results show that the direct and significant determinants of repurchase intention are status consumption and affective response. Affective response is found to be the greatest direct factor. Status-conscious consumers have affective response to luxury brands through consumption of luxury goods. Neither need for uniqueness nor materialism has a direct relationship with repurchase intention, but indirect effect is found. Need for uniqueness and materialism impact on repurchase intention through status consumption, reflecting that status-conscious consumers are materialistic individuals who purchase unique luxury goods to convey status as they try to avoid similarity to others. More importantly, materialistic consumers regard acquisition of luxury goods as an effective way to pursue happiness and success. Those who strongly believe materialism have affective response in repurchasing luxury goods.

v. In summary, the final SEM model in this research not only highlights the impacts of status consumption on repurchase intention, but also reveals the significant role played by affective response in understanding the repurchase behavior of status-conscious consumer in luxury goods.

5.4 Conclusions

The research focus of this thesis has been inspired by the recent phenomenon of luxury goods buying behavior in Hong Kong that borderlines on obsessive. The behavioral-based pathway that is proposed in this research is grounded in the traditional attitude model in which attitude is regarded as an evaluation of luxury goods, and comprises cognitive, affective, and behavioral components. Firstly, the cognitive component refers to the beliefs, thoughts and attributes that are associated with luxury goods. In this research, the need for uniqueness, materialism, and status consumption comprise the cognitive components that are included in the proposed model. Secondly, the affective component refers to the feelings or emotions derived from luxury goods. The construct of affective response is the situation in which consumers evaluate whether luxury goods can satisfy their emotional needs. Lastly, repurchase intention comprises the behavioral component of the traditional attitude model. It represents the self-reported likelihood of consumers to further engage in repurchase behavior.

Previous studies have demonstrated well-intentioned attempts to investigate all the possible antecedents of status consumption, but may have overlooked the behavioral consequences of status consumption. This research therefore aims to address the limitations of previous studies and examines the repurchase intention behavior of status-conscious consumers in buying luxury goods from a multitude of perspectives, including the constructs of the need for uniqueness, materialism, status consumption, affective response and repurchase intention. The final SEM model developed in this research is groundbreaking in that it unravels important cognitive components embedded in the conventional attitude model within the context of status consumption behavior. The findings enrich the existing literature and generate new insights.

The conceptual model developed in this study has been modified into a behavioral-based pathway to provide a holistic view of status-conscious consumers in their buying of luxury goods. The construct of status consumption can be treated as an individual difference variable that is embedded in an attitude model, instead of a whole consumption process. The results demonstrate that the final model has an acceptable fit and validity on both theoretical and practical grounds. The findings illustrate the significant and important roles of the need for uniqueness, materialism, status consumption and affective response in the

repurchase intention of status-conscious consumers in buying luxury goods. They document a broader landscape of status consumption grounded in the conventional attitude model.

The model developed in this study provides indicative factors that affect the repurchase intention of luxury goods. Apart from the findings which are consistent with the proposed relationships discussed in previous studies, more intriguing results are found in this research. The results of the current study have further revealed some significant and indicative factors that are particularly important for studying status consumption behavior. The construct of the need for uniqueness consists of three behavioral dimensions: (1) creative choice counter-conformity, (2) unpopular choice counter-conformity, and (3) avoidance of similarity. According to the findings, not all of these three dimensions are significant for status-conscious consumers. Instead, the most significant dimension is found to be avoidance of similarity. In other words, one of the most influential motivations for consumers to purchase luxury goods to enhance status is because they want to avoid consuming products that are similar to those of their surrounding significant others. This result is not consistent with past studies which emphasize all three dimensions of this construct. This novel result presents new insight into the determinants that affect status-conscious consumers in their

purchase of luxury goods, and provides the basis for a discussion of the conclusions on the research questions as a whole.

In measuring behavioral intention, the construct of repurchase intention is applied in this study to measure the self-reported likelihood of consumers to engage in the next purchase. This is different from the conventional approach of using purchase intention as the only measurement instrument. Repurchase intention consists of two dimensions - purchase intention and repurchase probability. The indicators of the latter allow the measurement of behavioral expectation which is more important than behavioral intention. This is because in the process of making a repurchase judgment, consumers often use their purchase intention as a reference point and make adjustments that reflect possible impacts on non-volitional factors in their behavioral intention. Therefore, in order to increase the accuracy in predicting the future behaviors of consumers, both intention and probability measures should be used to measure the repurchase behaviors of consumers. In this study, additional measurement statements have been used, including “My intention to repurchase this luxury brand would be high” and “the probability that I will repurchase this luxury brand would be high”. Therefore, the findings of the research provide encouraging results.

In short, this research presents an integrated study about the repurchase intention of status-conscious consumers in buying luxury goods from a multi-perspective approach. The results indicate that both the need for uniqueness and materialism do not directly impact the repurchase intention of luxury goods, but directly influence the construct of status consumption, which generates affective responses and subsequently affects repurchase intention. This research is grounded in the conventional attitude model, and consists of cognitive, affective and behavioral components. The final model demonstrates new direct and indirect relationships among the variables and identifies significant indicative factors that influence the repurchase intention of consumers. This breakthrough provides insight into understanding status consumption behavior beyond the factors proposed in the conventional attitude model.

5.5 Implications

The research findings are both theoretically relevant and practically meaningful, and the present study generates insights into the implications of empirical research and a conceptual framework of purchasing behavior.

5.5.1 Theoretical implications

Firstly, previous studies mainly investigated the antecedents of status

consumption, focusing on interpersonal influence (e.g. self-monitoring, fashion consciousness, and materialism) (Lertwannawit and Mandhachitara, 2012), social influence (e.g. informational influence, normative influence and social comparison) and personal influence (e.g. tendency to conform and need for uniqueness) (Clark et al., 2007), socio-psychological factors (e.g. social gains, esteem indication and ostentation behavior), management/market controlled brand features and situational factors (e.g. social occasions) (Shukla, 2010), brands' symbolism/familiarity/feelings (O'Cass and Frost, 2002), and self-related factors (e.g. self integrity, ego and self-threat) (Sivanathan and Pettit, 2010). Studies about the consumers' behavioral intention in the context of status consumption are scant. The present study attempts to extend the research scope of status consumption and explores its influence on repurchase intention through affective response in an SEM model, with need for uniqueness and materialism as major antecedents. Thus, this research has theoretical implications for consumer behavior, marketing, psychology, and sociology by providing a more comprehensive theoretical framework for understanding consumers' repurchase intention of luxury goods.

Secondly, the indirect effect through status consumption and affective response generates theoretical insights into status consumption and repurchase intention.

Need for uniqueness and materialism have indirect effect on repurchase intention through status consumption as a mediator. In addition to the direct effect, status consumption is found to have an indirect effect on repurchase intention through affective response. Prior studies seldom examined the mediation effect of status consumption or affective response. The present study confirms these relationships in the proposed study model. The results suggest that a more integrated view of status consumption and affective response should be taken into account when studying consumer behavior. The finalized SEM model in the present study examines direct, indirect and total effects of research variables on repurchase intention, which provides a basis for further examination of related theoretical paradigms of consumption behavior.

Thirdly, this research examines how a strong affective response plays in repurchase intention of luxury goods from a multi-dimensional perspective. The results show that about 60% of total variance in repurchase intention can be explained by affective response. Affective response plays a major role in the formation of repurchase intention in buying luxury goods. Consumer loyalty affects the probability of repurchasing. Consumption experiences that exceed consumers' expectations can enhance repurchase expectations which facilitate repurchase intention (Szymanski and Henard, 2001). The present study

demonstrates that status-conscious consumers have a higher intention to repurchase luxury goods. Despite the growing research interest in luxury goods buying behavior, there are limited theoretical and empirical research have been conducted to understand the importance of affective response in affecting repurchase intention of luxury goods. This research underlines the importance of narrowing the concept of individual value presented in the multi-dimensional framework of the luxury value model (Wiedmann et al., 2009) and examines other personal and emotional variables affecting consumers' affective response and repurchase intention (Kumar et al., 2009).

Fourthly, the findings show that the effect of status consumption on repurchase intention is weaker when comparing the strong causal relationship between affective response and repurchase intention, implying that consumers may also intend to buy even if they are not totally satisfied. There may be other individual factors in status consumption, such as peer influence, social group motivation or other situational factors. This study generates new insights in the research problem.

Lastly, the data analysis adopted a cross-validation strategy to enhance the predictive power of the model. As argued by Woodside (2013), assessing fit

validity is no longer sufficient. By cross-validating the results with holdout samples, the testing for predictive validity can estimate how accurately a predictive model performs (Bandalos, 1993; Hawkins et al., 2003). A sample size of 568 respondents was randomly divided into two halves of equal size. The CFA and SEM statistical analysis of the training data set was cross-validated by the test data set. Prior studies seldom applied a cross-validation strategy to data analysis. The present study demonstrates the implementation of this strategy and accentuates the statistical significance of the results.

Overall, the findings of this study are encouraging. The results of the structural equation confirm that need for uniqueness and materialism have a direct and highly significant impact on status consumption which influences affective response and in turn affects repurchase intention of consumers in buying luxury goods. The findings also suggest that consumption is an affective process. The present study attempts to contribute to the existing literature in terms of repurchase intention of luxury goods, and gives a fresh impetus to the related field.

Another contribution of this research is to research methodology. By systematic random sampling, data were collected from actual consumers who bought luxury

goods with shopping bags. The collected data are reliable and the results are convincing. This research empirically develops a reliable and valid measurement scale to assess important research variables of repurchase intention in luxury goods. The measures can be further assessed and adopted in other disciplinary studies.

5.5.2 Practical implications

This research offers insightful strategic implications to luxury brand retailers in global marketplace. The theoretical framework proposed in this research ultimately yields a number of practical implications for management and marketers. The implications generated from this research are expected to assist the luxury goods practitioners in formulating and executing marketing strategies for their worldwide business.

The practical implication of this study helps increase the market share of luxury brands. To analytically demonstrate the implication, Porter's generic strategy is borrowed to explain the market significance and justification of the results of the study. Valos et al. (2007) utilizes Porter's generic strategy to examine management of customer relationships and facilitate effective business strategies. Introduced in 1980, Porter's generic strategy involves implementation of cost

leadership, differentiation, and market segmentation (Porter, 1998). Both cost leadership and differentiation have a broader market scope whereas market segmentation (or focus) has a narrower scope. The cost leadership is not relevant to luxury brands because it emphasizes efficiency and economies of scale. The differentiation strategy achieves a competitive advantage through offering products or services unique from competitors. Marketing segmentation can be adopted by differentiators or cost leader.

The results of the study show that avoidance of similarity is the strongest factor in status consumption, affective response and repurchase intention in buying luxury goods. In the competitive and diversifying luxury goods market, understanding of consumers' ever-changing taste and trends in product development is vital for luxury goods marketers. Porter's differentiation strategy (1998) addresses the importance of a product perceived as unique by consumers. Consumers try to avoid those popular products. For luxury practitioners, unique features can provide superior value and high status for consumers. The respondents expected to repurchase unique luxury items to avoid similarity and distinguish themselves. More consumers can afford to buy luxury brands. Unique products can attract status-conscious consumers and sustain a competitive advantage from product differentiation. Luxury goods marketers should have

strong research and product development skills and creativity skills and are able to communicate the product differentiation to the target market. Luxury fashion retailers can launch unique collections at premium prices of limited quantity to encourage repurchases. Luxury retailers should focus on product differentiation to project consumers' prestigious image and express individuality. Developing unique cross-over luxury fashion products is highly recommended. Luxury goods consumers wish to repurchase unique products to differentiate themselves from their peers and signify high status. Marketers are advised to launch innovative advertising campaigns in order to promote differentiation and convince consumers of the brand's uniqueness and prestige.

The results of the study show that luxury goods buyers regard acquirement of luxury goods as a goal in their lives. Luxury goods bring them happiness and generate affective response. This study reveals that three beliefs, namely acquisition centrality, acquisition of success, and acquisition of happiness, directly influence status consumption, and directly influence affective response, and indirectly influence repurchase intention. The centrality of acquisition demonstrates that participants regard acquisition of possessions as their life goal. The findings also indicate that consumers acquire a wide range of luxury items, not only apparel or jewelry. The relationship between material acquisition and

perceptions of success reveals that participants regard material possessions as an indication of success. Participants admire people who own expensive homes, automobiles and clothes. In addition, they regard material possessions as the key to happiness, and opine that their lives will improve if they acquire new items. These consumers regard repurchase of luxury goods as a way to demonstrate personal achievement. Luxury brand retailers are encouraged to implement the market segmentation strategy and create favorable shopping experience by emphasizing materialistic attributes of luxury brands, targeting the wealthy upper classes.

The model demonstrates that affective response plays the strongest role in repurchase intention. Luxury retailers should focus on consumers' intrinsic motivations and tailor sales techniques accordingly. Hedonic-appealing marketing strategy can be an effective way to attract status-conscious consumers, conveying a sense of pleasure and hedonic enjoyment in luxury brand consumption. Affective-appeal messages in store layouts and image advertising can also convey a sense of pleasure and enjoyment in luxury fashion goods consumption.

The research demonstrates that the variables proposed in the conceptual

framework can explain a set of causal relationships underlying the repurchase intention of status-conscious consumers. The theoretical development of the SEM model with empirical data analysis can help luxury goods marketers understand the significant factors in consumers' repurchase intention. While there may be a growing number of wealthy consumers who can afford luxury goods, it does not necessarily mean that they will repurchase luxury brands. To enhance their repurchase intention, a more comprehensive marketing strategy should incorporate private values of luxury goods to serve those who pursue personal differentiation and those who are desperate to impress others. Keeping valued customers is a lot easier than attracting new ones. Understanding how to motivate consumers' to repurchase the luxury goods and build brand loyalty is more practical and meaningful for luxury goods practitioners.

Since intrinsically motivated consumers outnumber extrinsically motivated consumers (Sheldon et al., 2001), luxury marketing studies should focus on the former for luxury goods consumption. Market efforts should concentrate on personal values attached to intrinsic attributes of luxury goods, such as unique quality and hedonic elements. The findings generated in this research have significant and insightful implications for luxury goods marketers who are currently operating or planning to expand its business worldwide. The results can

also be used to compare other emerging luxury goods markets. The findings can also be applied to other disciplines. In this dynamic and ever-growing luxury goods consumer market, luxury fashion companies have started to market luxury goods in diverse luxury industries, including automobiles, homes, banking services, and electronics. These fanatical luxury consumers spend conspicuously to express social standing and status. The conceptual model can serve as a tool for academic researchers, and provide valuable insights into the formulation of competitive marketing strategies. Luxury goods companies could strategically influence the spending habits, shopping taste, and thus enhance the loyalty of these wealthy status-conscious consumers.

5.6 Direction for further research

The above discussed findings and implications of this research provide potential avenues for further research. Both findings and limitations of this research have been taken into consideration and the following recommendations are made.

This study was subject to a number of limitations due to limited time and resources. Firstly, it focused on status-conscious consumers. Although the systematic random sampling strategy was adopted, the data collected might be biased because not all the respondents were willingly to do the survey. To have a

deeper understanding of the repurchase intention of status-conscious consumers, it is advisable to explore possible differences between consumers from different regions. It is believed that the resulted measurement models and SEM models can provide theoretical and practical implications for academic researchers and industry practitioners.

Secondly, this study did not analyze the data in demographic segments. The results might be influenced by demographic variables such as gender, age, and spending power. Respondents from low or high spending groups may react differently to status consumption or repurchase intention. It is advisable to segment data into different groups to see how demographic variables affect purchasing behavior, needs for status, uniqueness, and material possessions. The results may be more focused and convincing.

Thirdly, in developing the measurement scale for construct variables, in order to enhance the response rate and minimize the time to complete the questionnaire, there were altogether 24 statements used for the five constructs when questionnaire length and respondent fatigue were taken into consideration. Given that need for uniqueness and materialism indirectly affect repurchase intention through status consumption, and status consumption indirectly and directly

affects repurchase intention through affective response, these two important relationships need further investigation. It is advisable to include more measurement statements for each construct to enhance the significance of statistical findings in a more focused model.

In brief, this research gave recommendations for future research from a broader perspective. Further research should generalize findings in a broader context across a wide range of product categories of luxury goods.

5.7 Chapter summary

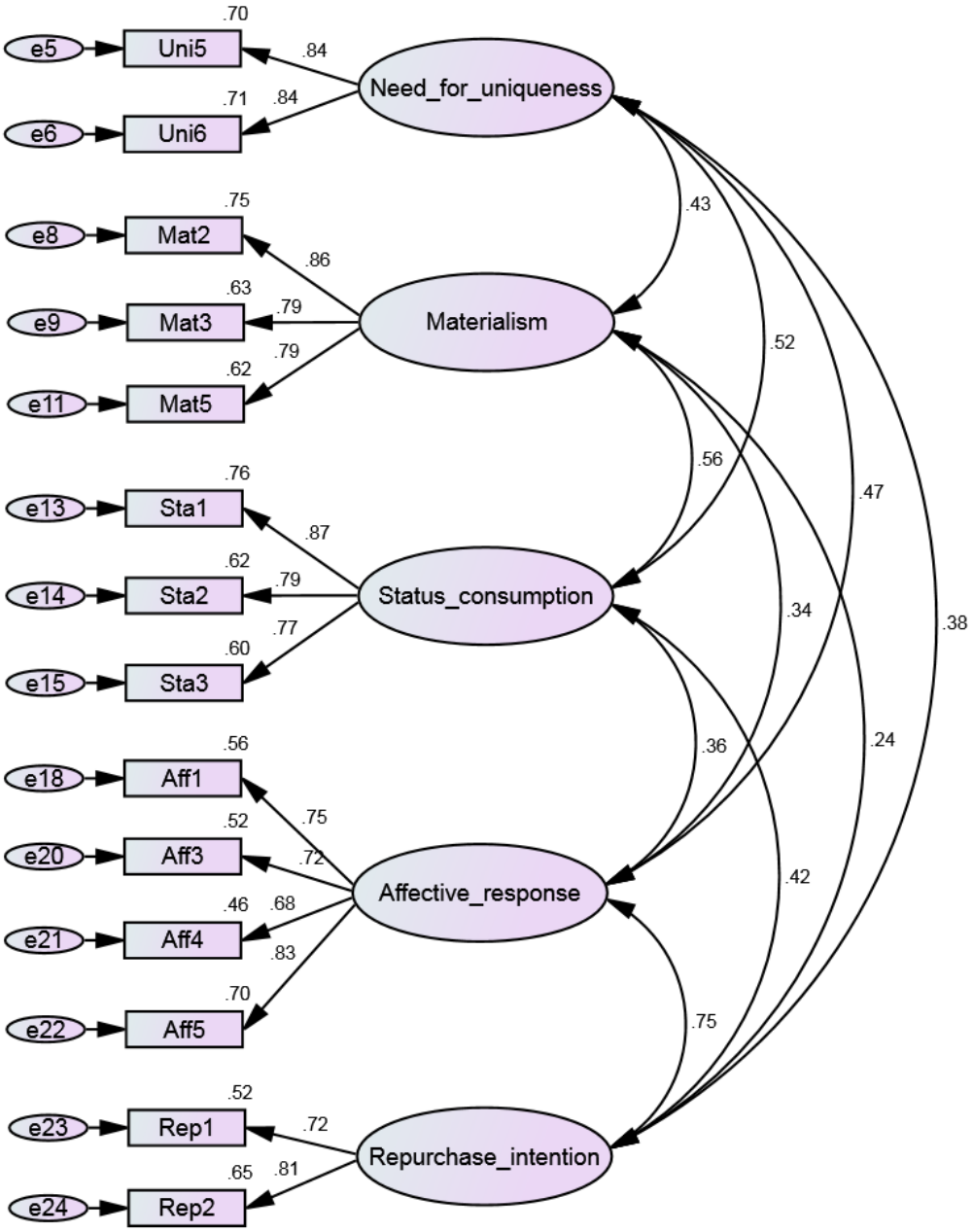
This final chapter begins with the presentation of a summary of findings and conclusions drawn on the research questions, followed by the discussion of theoretical and practical implications of this research, along with the direction for further research. The results show that need for uniqueness and materialism creates indirect influence on repurchase intention through status consumption which serves as a mediator in the study model. Status consumption has both direct and indirect influence on repurchase intention through affective response, which is the greatest factor facilitating repurchase intention. The research clarifies how need for uniqueness and materialism can be included simultaneously in the study model, which addresses the limitations of previous

studies. Furthermore, the indirect effect analysis provides a theoretical foundation for a deeper understanding of status consumption and repurchase intention from a broader perspective. More importantly, by cross-validation, this research develops a reliable and valid measurement scale and a study model with strong predictive power in investigating repurchase intention, uncovering some unknown causal relationships as it extends the conventional study model and considers the consumers' behavioral intention of status consumption leading to affective response and repurchase intention.

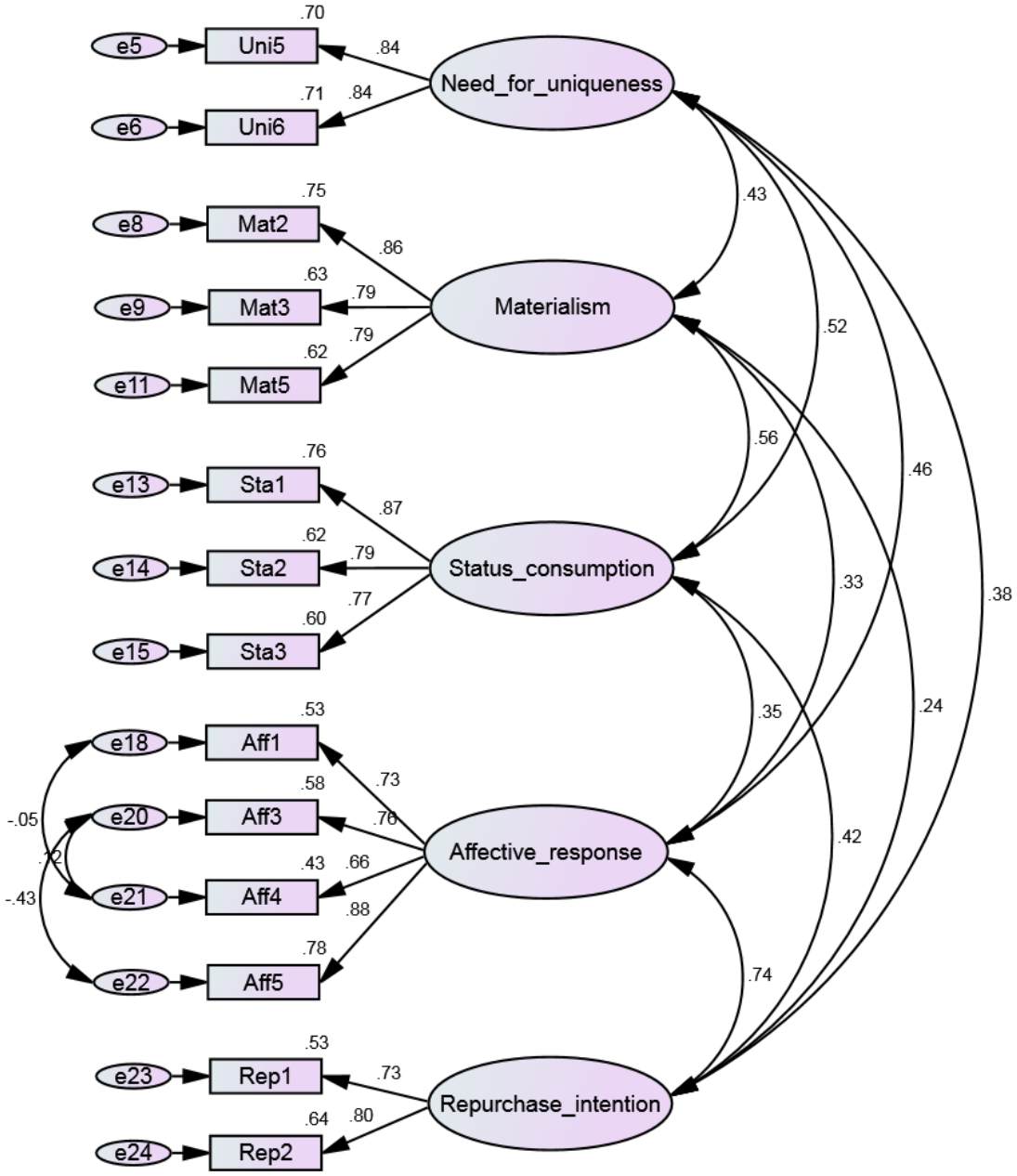
The framework proposed in this research helps academic researchers and luxury industry practitioners to explore a comprehensive view of status-conscious consumers' repurchase intention in luxury goods. To develop and sustain a competitive advantage over competitors, the findings will help luxury goods marketers serve status-conscious consumers by formulating and executing comprehensive and effective marketing strategies for their luxury business worldwide.

Appendix A: CFA and SEM models with standardized estimates

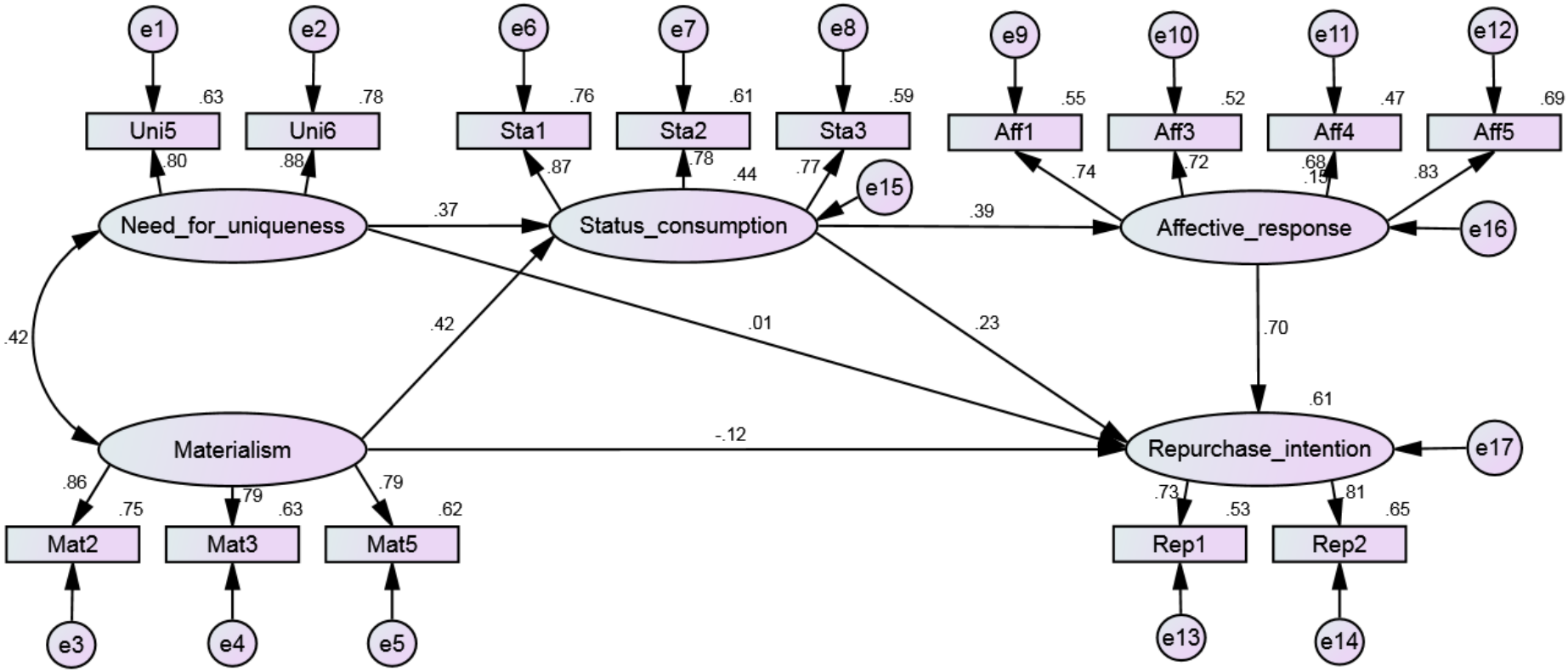
Initial measurement model with standardized estimates (training data set)



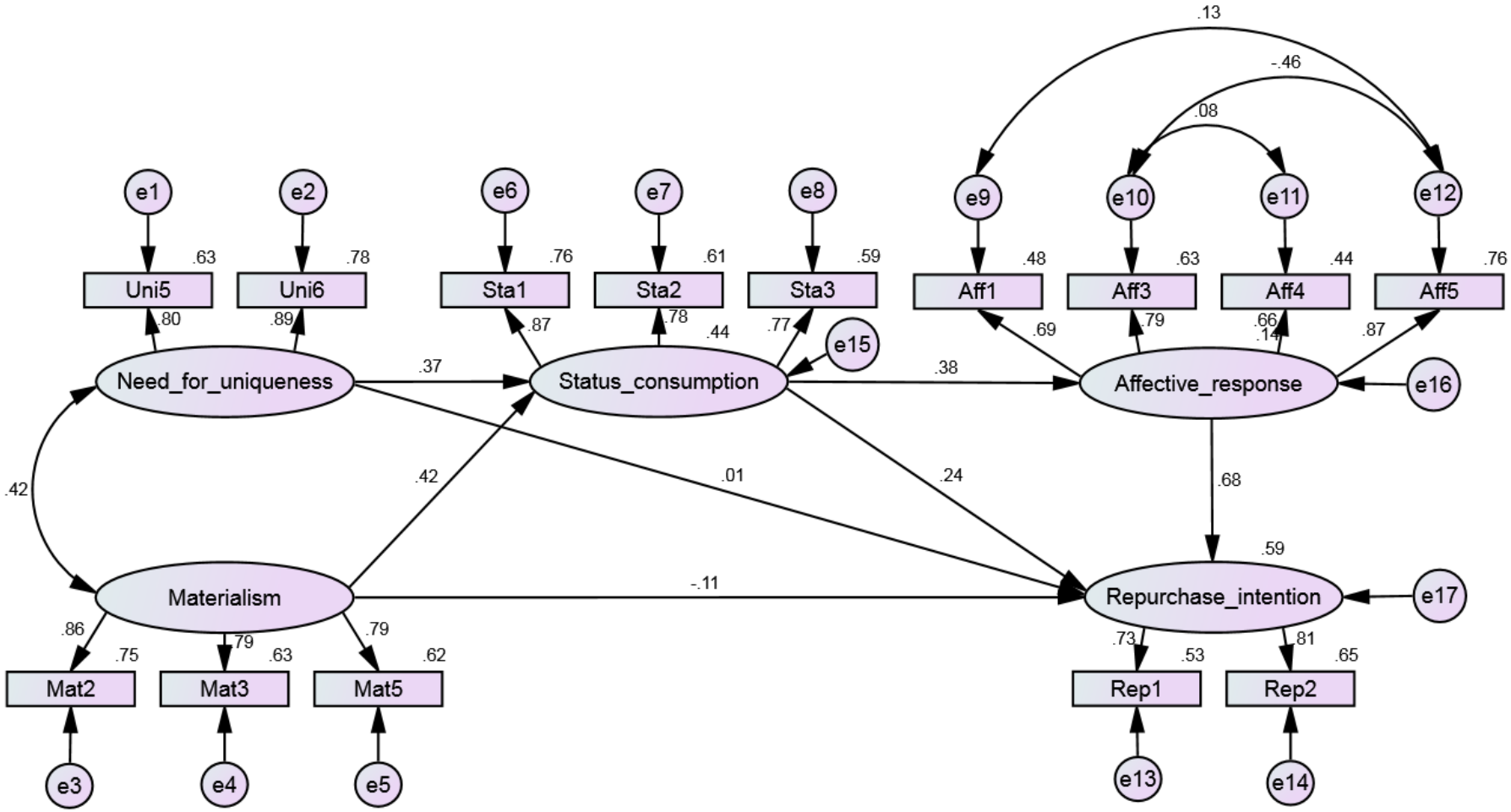
Modified measurement model with standardized estimates (training data set)



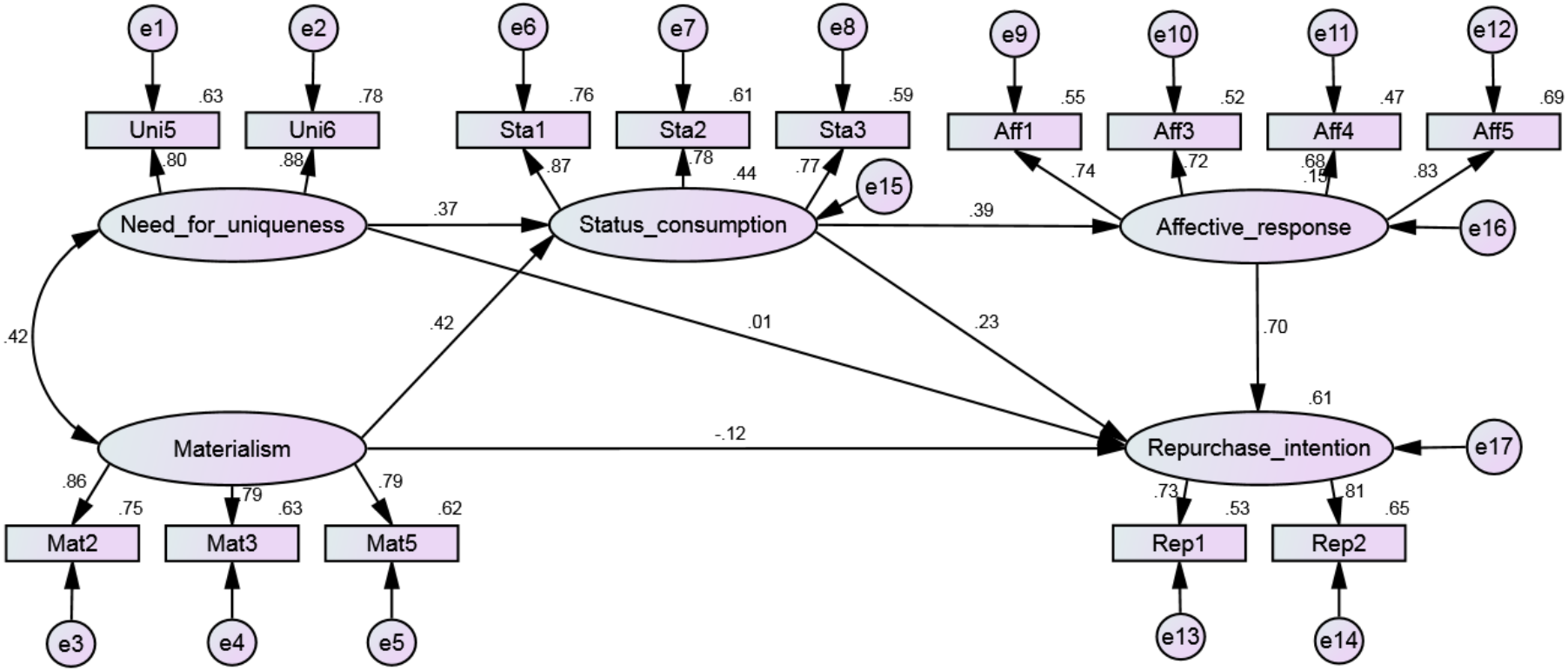
Initial SEM model with standardized estimates (training data set)



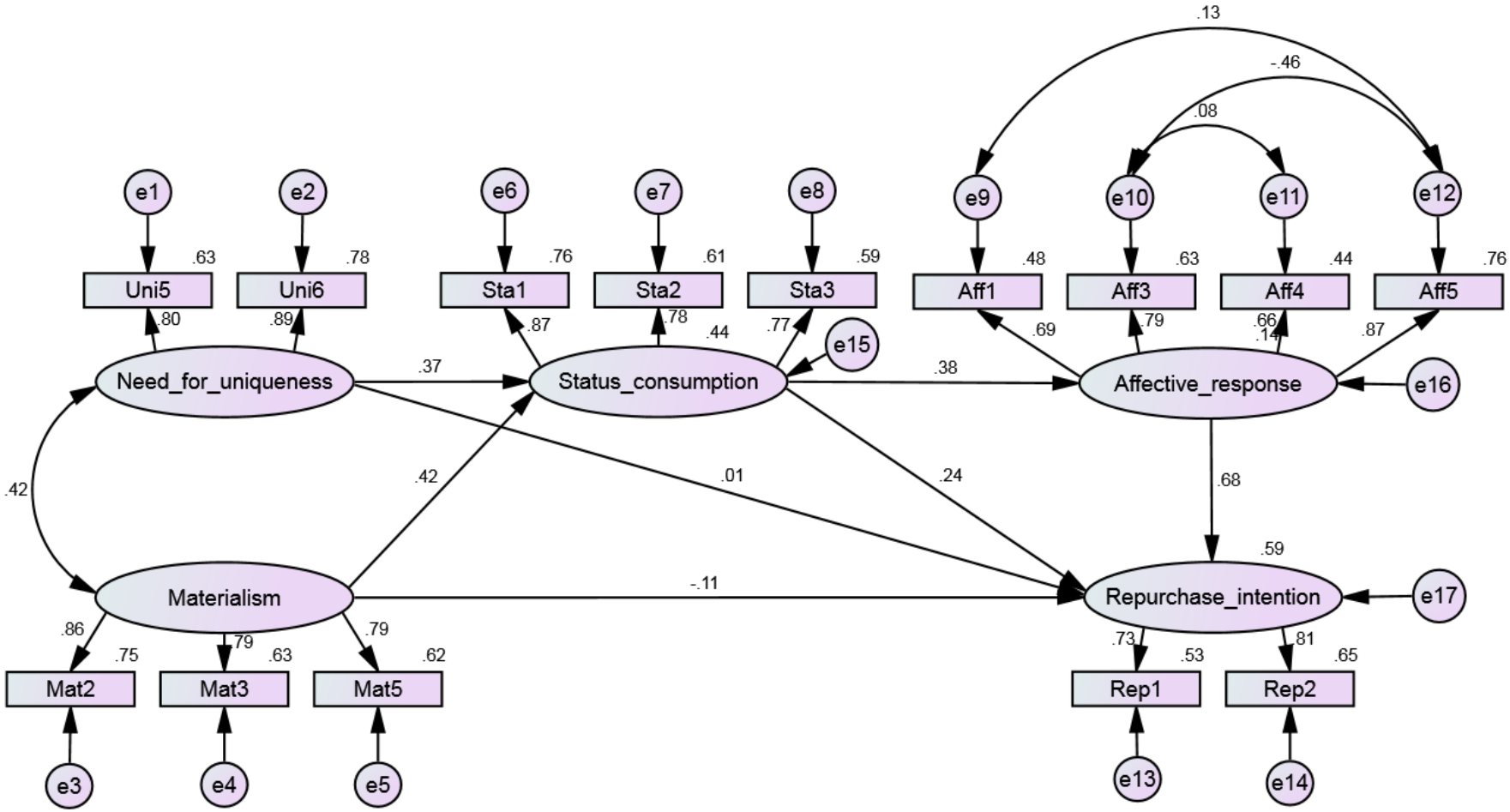
Modified SEM model with standardized estimates (training data set)



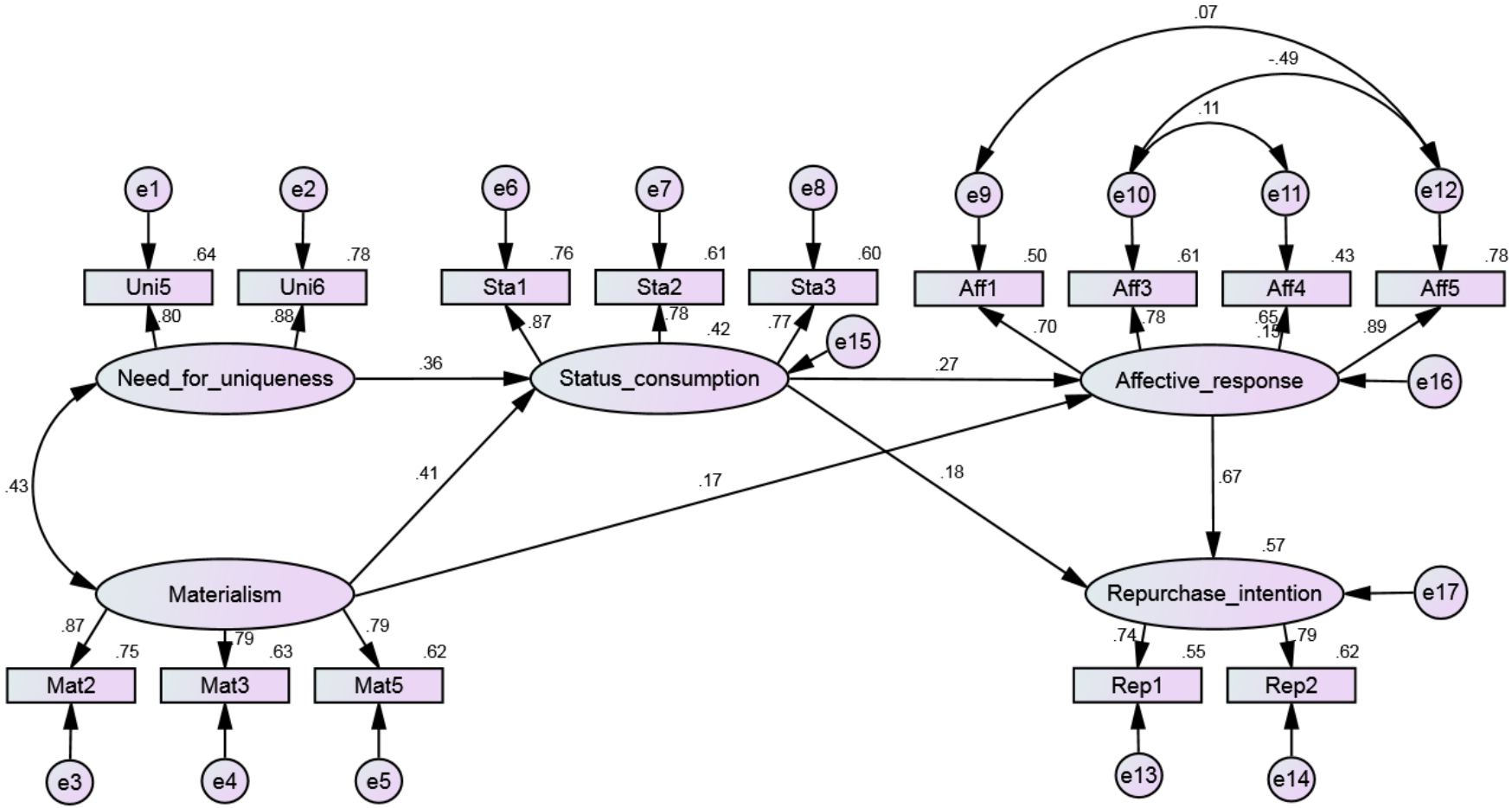
Initial SEM model with standardized estimates (test data set)



Modified SEM model with standardized estimates (test data set)



Competing SEM model, M_1 with standardized estimates



Appendix B: Questionnaire survey on consumers' repurchase intention in luxury fashion goods (English version)

I am a PhD student from the Hong Kong Polytechnic University and am now conducting a research work about consumers' repurchase intention in luxury fashion goods. It aims to provide practical implications for marketing luxury brands in Hong Kong. All the information will be kept confidential and data obtained will be used for academic purposes only. I would be grateful if you would accept this interview and give your opinions honestly. Thank you.

A. From your point of view, please circle the number to represent the most appropriate response to the following statements.

Strongly disagree 1	Disagree 2	Somewhat disagree 3	Neutral 4	Somewhat agree 5	Agree 6	Strongly agree 7

1.	Having an eye for products that are interesting and unusual assists me in establishing a distinctive image.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2.	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
3.	When dressing, I have sometimes dared to be different in ways that others are likely to disapprove.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4.	I have often violated the understood rules of my social group regarding what to buy or own.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5.	I often try to avoid products or brands that I know are bought by the general population.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6.	The more commonplace a product or brand is among the general population, the less interested I am in buying it.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7.	I try to keep my life simple, as far as possessions are concerned.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8.	I like a lot of luxury in my life.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9.	I admire people who own expensive cars, homes, and clothes.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10.	I do not place much emphasis on the amount of material objects people own as a sign of success.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11.	My life could be better if I owned certain things I do not have.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12.	It sometimes bothers me quite a bit that I cannot afford to buy all the things I like.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13.	I would buy a product just because it has status.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14.	I am interested in new products with status.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15.	I would pay more for a product if it had status.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16.	The status of a product is irrelevant to me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17.	A product is more valuable to me if it has some snob appeal.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

B. Please list your favorite luxury fashion brands:

18.	Most favorite
19.	Second favorite
20.	Third favorite

C. According to your <u>most favorite luxury fashion brand,</u> please circle the number to represent the <u>most</u> appropriate response to the following statements.

21.	This luxury fashion brand is one that I would enjoy.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
22.	This luxury fashion brand would make me want to use it.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
23.	This luxury fashion brand is one that I would feel relaxed about using.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
24.	This luxury fashion would make me feel good.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
25.	This luxury fashion brand would give me pleasure.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
26.	My intention to repurchase this luxury brand would be high.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
27.	The probability that I will repurchase this luxury brand would be high	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

D. Please provide the following background information.

28. Which country/city do you come from? _____

29. What kinds of luxury fashion item have you bought / will you buy? *(Check all appropriate items)*

Clothing☐$_1$ Footwear☐$_2$ Bags/handbags☐$_3$ Jewelry/watches/accessories☐$_4$

Cosmetics/skincare☐$_5$ Others:_____ ☐$_6$

30. How much money have you spent on buying luxury fashion items in Hong Kong?

HKD _____

31. What is your <u>primary</u> payment method? *(Choose only one)*

By cash ☐$_1$ By credit card☐$_2$ Others: _____☐$_3$

32. Age

Below 20☐$_1$ 20-29☐$_2$ 30-39☐$_3$ 40-49☐$_4$ 50 or above☐$_5$

33. Gender

Male☐$_1$ Female☐$_2$

34. Marital status

Married☐$_1$ Single☐$_2$ Others☐$_3$

35. Educational attainment

Primary school or below□1 Junior middle school□2

Senior high school or vocational school□3 College or University□4

Postgraduate or higher □5

36. Occupation

Executive/Managerial□1 Professional□2 Academic/Educator□3

Technical/Engineering□4 Service/Customer support□5 Clerical/Administrative□6

Sales/Marketing□7 Tradesman/Craftsman□8 Student□9

Housewife□10 Self-employed□11 Unemployed□12

Retired□13 Others: _____□14

37. Average personal monthly income

HKD 8,000 or below□1 HKD 8,001 - 15,000□2 HKD 15,001 - 35,000□3

HKD 35,001 - 55,000□4 HKD 55,001 or above□5

-The End-

Thank you!

Appendix C: Questionnaire survey on consumers' repurchase intention in luxury fashion goods (Chinese version)

<u>消費者在香港購買奢侈時裝品牌的問卷調查 (中文版)</u>

本人是香港理工大學的博士研究生，現正進行一項有關消費者在香港購買奢侈時裝品牌的意向調查，目的是為營銷奢侈品牌在香港的發展提供切實可行的意見。所有收集的信息將保密處理，獲得的數據將只用作學術用途，如果您能接受這次問卷調查並提供誠實意見，我將不勝感激，謝謝合作。

A. 在下列描述中，選項從 1 到 7 代表你對描述的認可程度。請基於你的實際情況，選擇最適合的一項:

非常不同意 1　不同意 2　有點不同意 3　沒有意見 4　有點同意 5　同意 6　非常同意 7

1.	關注有趣和不尋常的商品能讓我的形象獨特鮮明。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2.	我常常尋找一些能增強個人獨特性的新商品或品牌。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3.	對於衣著，我有時敢於突破常規選擇一些其他人可能不認同的打扮。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4.	對於要購買什麼，我經常打破常規，並不一定遵循周圍人群的規則。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5.	我經常試圖避免購買那些大眾化的品牌。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6.	如果商品或品牌越被大眾所接受，我越不感興趣去購買。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7.	就擁有的物質和財產而言，我盡量保持我的簡單生活。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8.	我喜愛擁有很多的奢侈品。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9.	我羨慕那些擁有昂貴汽車，樓房及名牌衣服的人。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10.	我不刻意把別人擁有的物質看作成功的標誌。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11.	如果我能擁有某些現在沒有的東西，我的生活可能會更好。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12.	我買不起所有我喜愛的東西，這令我有時感到一點困擾。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13.	我會買某種商品，因為它能凸顯身份地位。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14.	我對能凸顯身份地位的新商品感興趣。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15.	假如商品能凸顯身份地位，我願意花更多的錢去購買。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16.	商品能否凸顯身份地位與我沒有關係。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17.	如果商品有一些獨特的吸引力(如限量版等)，它對我會更有價值。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

B. 請列出您最喜愛的奢侈時裝品牌:

18. 最喜愛的
19. 第二喜愛的
20. 第三喜愛的

C. 就您最喜愛的奢侈時裝品牌，請圈出最能表達您對以下句子的同意程度: (1 = 非常不同意; 7 = 非常同意)

21.	這個奢侈時裝品牌可以給我帶來某種享受。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
22.	這個奢侈時裝品牌讓我有購買的想法。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
23.	擁有這個奢侈時裝品牌令我感到輕鬆自在。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
24.	這個奢侈時裝品牌讓我感覺良好。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
25.	這個奢侈時裝品牌給我帶來喜悅。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
26.	我會再次購買這個奢侈品牌的意向很高。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
27.	我會再次購買這個奢侈品牌的可能性很高。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

D. 請提供下列背景資料:

28. 你來自哪個地區/城市?

_____

29. 你已購買了什麼類型的奢侈時裝品牌商品？（請選擇所有合適的項目）

衣服□1 鞋□2 包/手袋□3 珠寶/手錶/配飾□4 化妝品/護膚品□5

其他:_____ □6

30. 在這次購物旅程中，你花費了多少錢在香港購買奢侈時裝品牌商品？

HKD _____

31. 你主要的付款方式是什麼？（只能選擇一個）

現金□1 信用卡□2 其他: _____□3

32. 年齡 20 以下□1 20-29□2 30-39□3 40-49□4 50 或以上□5

33. 性別 男□1 女□2

34. 婚姻狀況　　已婚□1　　單身□2　　其他□3

35. 教育程度

小學或以下□1　　初中□2　　高中或專科□3　　大學□4　　碩士或以上□5

36. 職業

行政管理/主管□1　　專業人士□2　　學術/教育□3　　技術/工程□4

客戶服務□5　　文書/行政□6　　銷售/市場營銷□7　　技工□8

學生□9　　家庭主婦□10　　自僱□11　　無業□12

退休□13　　其他: _____□14

37. 平均個人每月收入

HKD 8,000 或以下□1　　HKD 8,001 - 15,000□2　　HKD15,001 - 35,000□3

HKD35,001 - 55,000□4　　HKD 55,001 或以上□5

- 完 -

謝謝！

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