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Why Do(n't) We Buy Second-Hand Luxury Products?

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Abstract: Global sales of second-hand luxury products are steadily increasing. To better understand key drivers for purchasing second-hand luxury products, a survey was conducted including 469 respondents. The study not only includes existing customers, but also non-customers and thus potential future clientele. Based on the theory of planned behavior, the components of attitude, subjective norms, perceived behavioral control, and individual motivators (creative, economic, ethical, nostalgic, sustainable) were investigated. Using structural equation modeling, the results support the influence of attitude, past purchase experience, perceived behavioral control, and subjective norms on purchase intention. Attitude, in turn, is mainly impacted by economics and ethics as individual motivators. Further, subjects were asked to state their own definition of luxury and to name individual reasons for and against second-hand luxury products. Thereby, quality turned out to be double-edged: on the one hand, second-hand products were able to prove their quality, on the other hand, the fear of counterfeits and unhygienic products was cited. Overall, consumers of second-hand luxury goods are heterogeneous and have different buying experiences with one or more of the three categories: new luxury goods, second-hand luxury goods, and second-hand products. The study thus expands the understanding of the transformation within the (second-hand) luxury industry.

Keywords: consumer behavior; luxury; pre-owned; purchasing behavior; second-hand; sustainability; theory of planned behavior

1. Introduction

Overall, the sensitivity of customers towards waste and recycling, as well as the throwaway society, is increasing [1]. Especially, the increased pressure for sustainability and demand for thoughtful use of resources [2] call for counter-reactions that require strategic considerations, which include the used goods market [1,3]. The term second-hand goods describes items that have previously been owned or used [4], meeting expectations that go far beyond an economic advantage [1,5]. The trend towards second-hand also spreads into the luxury goods industry [6–9]. Despite its strong connection with tradition and heritage [10] including a traditional perception of restrictive and exclusive distribution [2,11,12], traditional retailers are starting to expand second-hand departments and arrange swap meetings or trade-in events [1]. The worldwide market volume of used personal luxury goods increased from 26 billion euros in 2019 to 28 billion euros in 2020 [13], and about 33 billion euros in 2021 [14]. This growth represents an increase of 65 percent in 2021 compared to 2017 [15]. Due to their high quality, luxury products are not only suitable for second-hand customer involvement, but even for third-hand use [3].

In this context, the second-hand luxury market also influences luxury brands due to the extended product life cycle and the spread of the consumption of luxury products–even among consumers who might otherwise not have bought a luxury product at all [3,16]. Therefore, companies in the luxury goods industry need to realign their business strategy to be able to draw a competitive advantage [16,17]. Targeting marketing activities and understanding purchase intent and client motivation is crucial [18]. Research on purchase intention is particularly important because, unlike "luxury consumers", "consumers of luxury brands" can be characterized as a heterogeneous customer group who are considered

a suitable target for various consumption patterns ranging from mass to luxury fashion [3] (p. 60). To examine customers' motivators, Ajzen's [19] theory of planned behavior (TPB) is a well-researched model that has been shown to predict behavioral intention in a variety of situations [20] and demonstrated to be applicable and robust [21]. Thus, in the existing literature, the theory has been applied for the examination of general shopping behavior (e.g., [22,23]), specifically in the fashion context (e.g., [24,25]), luxury context (e.g., [26–28]), and second-hand context [29,30], but it misses the intersection of luxury and second-hand.

Even though the previous literature has acknowledged the growing importance of the used luxury goods market, most studies and luxury brand retailers focus on new luxury products [3,7,31,32] and lack investigations on second-hand luxury items [3,33]. Quantitative research is especially missing within the second-hand luxury context since most studies are concentrated on qualitative methods such as interviews with a small sample size (e.g., [3,8,9,32]). Moreover, many studies only involve current market participants, i.e., customers who have already purchased a second-hand luxury product [3,8,9,32–34], and neglect potential future clientele. Within this, Turunen and Pöyry [32] argue that it is essential to understand not only current second-hand luxury customers but also the intention of (previously) non-customers.

Hence, this paper examines the significance of second-hand trade in the context of the luxury goods industry by including a more heterogeneous sample and using a questionnaire with both open and closed questions. Herein, the following research questions are pursued:

- RQ1: What key factors drive individuals' intentions to purchase second-hand luxury products?
- RQ2: What key factors drive individuals to not buy second-hand luxury products?
- RQ3: Does the experience with second-hand luxury products influence the intention to purchase a second-hand luxury product?

The overarching aim of the paper is to expand the understanding of second-hand luxury purchase intentions of second-hand luxury consumers and present non-consumers. Within this, previous work will be challenged and extended. First, the work investigates how second-hand luxury consumers, as well as current non-consumers, evaluate second-hand luxury products. Second, the work complements existing qualitative studies within second-hand luxury research (e.g., [3,8,9,32]) by using a mixed-method approach. Third, the work provides a holistic examination by including all genders rather than focusing on female consumers, as most previous works have done [3,8,32,34].

The remainder of this paper is structured as follows: the Section 2 deals with the theoretical underpinnings, including the clarification of the term luxury and the market for second-hand luxury products as well as the theory of planned behavior. Section 3 includes hypotheses derivation and the research model, followed by the methodology in Section 4, and a discussion in Section 5. The paper ends with a conclusion and suggestions for further research.

2. Literature Background

In the following, the concept of the second-hand luxury industry as the investigated industry and the theory of planned behavior (TPB) as the applied theory will be illustrated in greater detail.

2.1. Luxury and Second-Hand Luxury

The luxury segment is considered one of the fastest-growing segments in the world [26,35]. Even though the luxury sector has grown steadily since 1990 [11], and although the luxury market is characterized by numerous luxurious brands, products, and services, no universally valid definition of the term "luxury" exists [2,36–38]. Frontier Economics Ltd. (London, UK) [36] divides the luxury market into the following product groups: watches and jewelry, fashion, perfumes and cosmetics, accessories, leather goods, gastronomy, furniture and furnishing, designer household equipment, cars, yachts, wines and spirits, hotels and leisure experience, retail and auction houses, and publishing. According to Kapferer

and Bastien [39], luxury is characterized by two components in particular: the product must be (at least partially) handmade and an exclusive service must be offered. Overall, luxury products are associated with "product excellence" [39] (p. 316). Roberts [2] also cites the highest quality, sophistication, and rarity as characteristics of current luxury goods associated with a wealthy, comfortable, and opulent lifestyle. Dubois et al. [12] identify the following six characteristics to describe luxury: a very high price, scarcity and uniqueness, aesthetics and polysensuality, ancestral heritage and personal history, superfluousness, and excellent quality.

The term second-hand includes products that have already been used, regardless of whether they are from previous decades or from a more recent collection, i.e., regardless of their age [34]. Thus, the term second-hand represents items that have previously been in possession or use [4]. Sometimes the terms "pre-owned" or "pre-loved" are used [40]. Consequently, the term second-hand luxury is composed of the two components, luxury and second-hand, including luxury items that were already owned or used by others. Within this new form of consumption for the luxury goods industry, a permanent exchange of goods takes place [9]. Therefore, the second-hand market offers another distribution channel that complements the luxury ecosystem and is experiencing growing relevance and interest [15]. While the growth of luxury brands slows, the second-hand trade in luxury products is booming [33]. Overall, the second-hand luxury market has recently stepped out of the niche and is becoming more established in the market [16]. The trend is also reflected in the fact that global sales of second-hand luxury products reached a value of 33 billion euros in 2021 [14]. In addition to the widening of product portfolios and the expansion of brands offered, second-hand luxury platforms increasingly provide expanded services [16]. Furthermore, luxury businesses more frequently provide a combination of online and offline stores [16]. Overall, luxury platforms can help to facilitate the exchange of used luxury goods from consumer to consumer, or from business to consumer [9].

Although the focus of the literature continues to be on either the second-hand sector or the luxury sector, more attention has been paid to second-hand luxury development lately. Prior research related to the second-hand luxury market has investigated different aspects: for example, Miller and Brannon [41] studied purchase intentions for cars and found that customers have a greater preference for luxury models in used cars compared to customers of new cars. Further, based on twenty-two interviews, Turunen and Pöyry [32] investigated decision-making styles in the context of second-hand luxury purchases and identified nine dimensions (e.g., high-quality consciousness, fashion consciousness, recreational shopping consciousness) to cluster the styles. Turunen et al. [8] looked at the supply side, using eighteen interviews to explore why individuals sell luxury products and serve the second-hand market. Cervellon et al. [34] focused on (luxury) vintage products, which usually originate from a specific time (1920s to the 1980s), and differentiated these products from second-hand products. Christodoulides et al. [9] used twenty-five interviews to investigate new ways of consuming luxury products that include co-ownership (e.g., SeaNet), on-demand economy (e.g., Airbnb Luxe), product-service economy (e.g., RentTheRunway), and second-hand consumption (e.g., Luxury Closet). Thereby, second-hand consumption represents a sequential exclusive use of a specific product or service at a certain time [9].

2.2. Theory of Planned Behavior

At the center of the theory of planned behavior (TPB) is a person's intention to engage in a particular behavior [19]. Thereby, intentions capture the motivating factors impacting a behavior and give an indication of how strongly people are willing to try and how much effort they will exert to perform a specific behavior [19]. This is based on the general rule that the stronger a person's intention to perform a behavior, the more likely they are to perform it [19]. TPB consists of the following three factors: attitudes, subjective norms, and perceptions about behavioral control (PBC) [42]. Thereby, attitudes can be described as an individual's overall evaluation [42]. Since attitude refers to the extent to which a person views the behavior in question positively or negatively [19], it plays an essential

part in the intention to perform a certain behavior [43]. Similarly, Jiang et al. [44] support the positive relationship between one's attitude and purchase intention. Subjective norms include an individual's efforts to behave as others think one should behave [19,20,42,45]. This puts a certain amount of social pressure on the individual as to whether or not they should perform a certain behavior [42]. Kastanakis and Balabanis [46] suggest the term "bandwagon consumption", which refers to the influence of others who also engage in certain patterns of consumption. PBC is concerned with individuals' perception of the ease or difficulty of performing a particular behavior, whereby this perception depends on the situation and action [19]. The availability of a person's resources and opportunities serves, to a certain extent, as a prerequisite for performing a specific behavior [19], which includes, in particular, knowledge about and access to these goods, as well as the ability to acquire them at the appropriate time and place [47]. TPB plays a key role in applying behavioral theory in a more complex context based on different types of behavior rather than using a simplistic and volitional model approach [42].

Beyond the three basic elements of TPB mentioned above, the literature supports the addition of variables adapted to the context under study to increase the predictability of the model [48]. Within this, Jain et al. [26] claim that attitude is in turn influenced by intrinsic (personal) factors. Regarding the luxury goods industry, TPB has been applied especially to new products (e.g., [26–28,49–52]). Overall, Kessous and Valette-Florence [33] state that the investigation of determinants and motivators for second-hand luxury products is very rare in the literature. Based on interviews with ten Finnish women, Turunen and Leipämaa-Leskinen [3] suggest pre-loved treasure, the real deal, risk investment, sustainable choice (including ethical and ecological aspects), and unique finds as meanings of second-hand luxury possessions. Following Cervellon et al. [34], frugality, eco-consciousness, bargain hunting, and fashionable uniqueness are the main antecedents to purchasing second-hand; still, it should be noted that the study included second-hand luxury products, but not exclusively. Kessous and Valette-Florence [33] identified that second-hand purchases of luxury goods are driven by the search for a piece with brand heritage including nostalgia, eco-conscious concerns such as ecology and ethics, social climbing, and windfall. Bringing together the proposed antecedents and the TPB, economic, sustainable, ethical, nostalgic, and creative motivations emerge for the individual intrinsic factors. So far, none of the studies on the second-hand luxury market have included all these aspects.

Furthermore, Carr and Sequeira [53] state that behavioral intention can be affected by prior experience. In addition, Frambach et al. [54] and Fuchs and Reichel [55] claim that the intention behind a behavior is influenced by prior experience. Jun [56] highlights the impact of past experience when investigating a behavioral intention. Regarding luxury counterfeits, for example, Yoo and Lee [57] (p. 284) argue that past behavior is even "the strongest antecedent of purchase intention of counterfeits".

3. Hypotheses Derivation

The hypotheses are derived based on the TPB and its inherent subdivisions of attitude, subjective norms, PBC, and the individual motivators (economic, sustainable, ethical, nostalgic, and creative).

3.1. Attitude

According to Bian and Forsythe [18], attitudes toward luxury itself and luxury brands influence the purchase intentions of luxury products. Regarding second-hand products, Seo and Kim [58] cite a divided overall attitude of people for and against these very products. For instance, some of the interviewed sellers of second-hand luxury products would not buy these products for themselves as described in the study by Turunen et al. [8]. Based on this, the following is examined:

Hypothesis 1 (H1). *Attitude will positively affect an individual's behavioral intention to purchase a second-hand luxury product.*

3.2. Subjective Norms

Buying a luxury product can be assigned to status consumption [7,35,59–62]. Thereby, Pipyrou [63] and Rudawska et al. [7] mention that, especially in the past, thrift stores were out of bounds for wealthier individuals, because these stores were associated with poverty and the lower working class. Turunen et al. [8] emphasize that the social factor persists within the second-hand luxury industry: for example, respondents indicated that they pass on used luxury products, especially to people whose status is lower than their own, which gives sellers the feeling of belonging to a higher social class. Therefore:

Hypothesis 2 (H2). *Subjective norms will positively affect an individual's behavioral intention to purchase a second-hand luxury product.*

3.3. Perceived Behavioral Control

One motivating factor for consuming second-hand luxury products is the acquisition of a limited edition or a classic that is no longer produced [3,4], wherein finding these precious products can require a great deal of effort. In the context of digitalization and the usage of social media, the trend towards second-hand trade is increasing [16,64,65]. Overall, more and more (large) second-hand luxury retailers are on the market (e.g., Vestiaire Collective, Vite EnVogue). Thus, there is an ever-increasing supply of used luxury goods with extended services, a wide range of brands, and a large product selection [16], which might help to strengthen awareness and access to corresponding offers. Because of these developments, the following is examined:

Hypothesis 3 (H3). *Perceived behavioral control will positively affect an individual's behavioral intention to purchase a second-hand luxury product.*

3.4. Second-Hand Luxury Purchase Experience

Considering consumers who buy new luxury products, it can be observed that they hardly buy any second-hand luxury products [16,32]. In contrast, second-hand luxury consumers rarely buy new luxury products first-hand [16]. Nevertheless, regarding the second-hand luxury sector, the clientele continues to grow and attracts not only existing customers [16]. Since the previous literature has mostly included existing customers in their studies [3,8,9,32,34], and there is a call to include consumers who have no previous experience with used luxury goods [32], the following is examined:

Hypothesis 4 (H4). *Individuals' experience with second-hand luxury purchases will positively affect an individual's behavioral intention to purchase a second-hand luxury product.*

3.5. Intrinsic (Personal) Factors (Economic, Sustainable, Ethical, Nostalgic, Creative)

3.5.1. Economic Motivation

Overall, the lower price of second-hand products is a frequently mentioned reason why consumers buy second-hand products rather than new ones [3,5,6,32,34]. New luxury goods are considered needlessly expensive [66], therefore economic aspects can be of great importance in promoting the intention to purchase second-hand luxury products. Still, second-hand pieces are not necessarily cheaper compared to new ones, especially when they belong to a specific collection [16]. For vintage pieces, for example, the price might exceed that of modern luxury items [34]. Thus:

Hypothesis 5.1 (H5.1). *Economic motivation will positively affect an individual's attitude towards second-hand luxury products.*

3.5.2. Sustainable Motivation

According to Osburg et al. [67], luxury goods can be considered sustainable. For instance, due to the high product quality, luxury goods are even suitable for second- or third-hand customers [3]. For example, luxury watches with a cult character go on the aftermarket for a long time [68]. Buying second-hand luxury products can thus be seen as a strategy against overconsumption [3]. This seems to be particularly relevant because following Kapferer and Michaut-Denizeau [66], luxury is often associated with extras that go beyond what is necessary. However, consumers' preferences can be negatively impacted by sustainability aspects such as the use of recycled materials in luxury items [69]. Given that sustainability has hardly been taken into account in the marketing of luxury brand manufacturers [3] and Kapferer and Michaut-Denizeau [66] encourage the investigation of sustainability in the context of luxury, the following will be analyzed:

Hypothesis 5.2 (H5.2). *Sustainable motivation will positively affect an individual's attitude towards second-hand luxury products.*

3.5.3. Ethical Motivation

The production and consumption of luxury goods can have a wasteful and socially divisive effect in an era of abundance in the West [2]. Overall, awareness of ethical issues is leading individuals to question their own consumer behavior [70,71], whereby striving for ethical behavior can motivate customers to buy second-hand [1]. However, the evaluation of ethical issues has a lower priority in the purchase of luxury goods compared to consumer durables [72]. Following Davies et al. [72], many respondents stated that they had not yet given consideration to ethical aspects when making luxury purchases. Therefore, the following is assumed:

Hypothesis 5.3 (H5.3). *Ethical motivation will positively affect an individual's attitude towards second-hand luxury products.*

3.5.4. Nostalgic Motivation

At present times, several businesses are faced with the so-called "retro trend" and the revival of once outdated technology, also known as retro technology, to modern market-places [73], which can be effectively used to promote a product [74,75]. Following Arslan and Oz [76], the retro concept has spread throughout the world, including in the luxury goods sector [34]. According to Cervellon et al. [34], one of the core reasons for buying retro products—which are also referred to as vintage products—is nostalgia, which arouses feelings for a certain time. Thereby, it is irrelevant whether the people themselves lived in the corresponding time [34]. Further, Guiot and Roux [1] consider nostalgic reasons as a motivational factor for the acquisition of second-hand goods. Contrary to this, Brown [77] (p. 138) characterizes the 21st century as an era of "retro shock", but claims that emotional connections to the past are not critical to the success of retro products in the 21st century. Turunen et al. [8] note that vintage and second-hand items are not interchangeable and do not attract the same buyers. Given these inconsistencies, the following is examined:

Hypothesis 5.4 (H5.4). *Nostalgic motivation will positively affect an individual's attitude towards second-hand luxury products.*

3.5.5. Creative Motivation

In accordance with Hemetsberger et al. [78], retro brands and products are often consumed and valued by consumers for fashion reasons, which, in turn, are a core driver for the consumption of luxury brands. Regarding watches, for example, the international Red Dot Design Award currently shows a strong trend towards watch designs from the 1950s and 1960s [79]. The interest in design awards [80] corresponds with the statements by Dubois et al. [12] and Kapferer and Bastien [39], underlining the great connection of luxury

to art. Following Ferraro et al. [5] and Ruvio et al. [81], second-hand shopping also helps to create uniqueness and a personal image. Creativity and the ability to combine are also mentioned by Kapferer [61], according to whom it is a common practice among Western youth to combine luxurious accessories with ordinary clothes. Thus:

Hypothesis 5.5 (H5.5). *Creative motivation will positively affect an individual's attitude towards second-hand luxury products.*

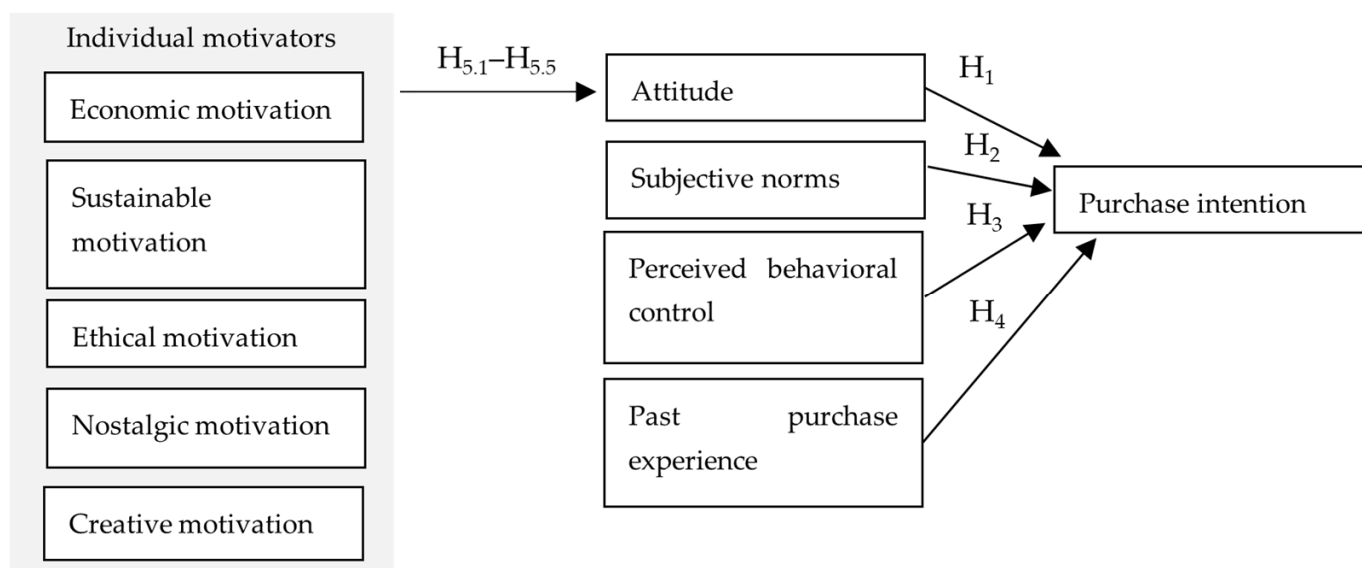Figure 1 presents the research model including the hypotheses derived from the literature.

Figure 1. Research framework.

4. Methodology

4.1. Measurement and Questionnaire Design

To measure the constructs and the relationships, as well as to get further insights into individual perceptions and motivations, an online survey was conducted via Unipark [82] using both open and closed questions. On the entry page, participants were assured of the anonymity of the data collection [83]. To assess previous shopping behavior, participants were asked about their experiences with luxury products, second-hand products, and second-hand luxury products within the last three years. In a further step, attitude, subjective norms, PBC, motivators (economic, sustainable, ethical, nostalgic, creative), and purchase intention were recorded using a five-point Likert scale, whereby "1" indicates "strongly disagree" and "5" represents "strongly agree". Scales and items were taken from the established literature and adapted to the current research topic (see Appendix A, Table A1). Additionally, open text fields were offered. At the beginning of the questionnaire, participants had the opportunity to name up to three keywords they associated with the term "luxury" in an open text box to get a first impression of their understanding of the subject. At the end of the questionnaire, all participants were offered two further open text fields with the questions "I would buy a luxury product second-hand, because ... " and "I would not buy a luxury product second-hand, because ... " to share their personal opinion [84]. The free text fields were offered since open-ended questions are specially designed to gain insights into individual values and assumptions [85]. Thereby, participants could express themselves freely, without restrictions, by using their own words. Overall, the lack of an interview guide when filling out the questionnaire [86] was taken into account by a clear structure and a scale that was as uniform as possible.

A pre-test was conducted in September 2021 to check operationalization [87], as a result of which optimizations were made. In addition, the pre-test served to check for

content validity [87]. The data were analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics as well as IBM SPSS Amos for structural equation modeling (SEM). Cronbach's alpha was invoked to ensure reliability, assuming an internal consistency for values above 0.7 [88] and Spearman–Brown for those scales with two items (see Appendix B, Table A2). As a result of the reliability analysis, the items A4, ECM4, ETM4, PBC3, NM1, and NM4 were deleted (see Appendix A, Table A1). To capture the participants' understanding of the concept of luxury as well as to identify potential further influencing factors, the open questions were analyzed by applying the content analysis by Mayring [89]. A descriptive approach was taken for the demographic parts of the survey [90].

4.2. Data Collection and Sample

In order to reach participants, respondents were recruited through various channels such as social networks [91], e-mail [92], and the online platform SurveyCircle. The survey was available online between September 26th of 2021 and October 27th of 2021 and was answered by 607 participants. After removing incomplete questionnaires, the sample size was 469. Among the participants, 402 indicated their gender as female, 58 as male, one as diverse, and seven wished not to disclose their gender. The participants' ($n = 465$) ages ranged from 16 to 70 years with an average of 30.67 (SD = 10.023) and a median of 27. Four participants did not mention their age. A total of 438 of the 469 valid participants claimed Germany to be their current country of residence.

5. Results

Within the past three years, almost 30 percent ($n = 140$) of the 469 respondents have purchased a second-hand luxury product, 53 percent ($n = 250$) a luxury product, and 82 percent ($n = 386$) a second-hand product (see Table 1).

Table 1. Description of the sample.

	All Participants	Participants with Purchasing Experience of Second-Hand Luxury Products within the Last Three Years	Participants with Purchasing Experience of Luxury Products within the Last Three Years	Participants with Purchasing Experience of Second-Hand Products within the Last Three Years
Number of participants	100% ($n = 469$)	30% ($n = 140$)	53% ($n = 250$)	82% ($n = 386$)
Age	16–70; average: 31; median: 27	18–70; average: 31; median: 28	16–70; average 31; median: 27	16–70; average: 30; median: 27
Gender	female: 86% ($n = 402$) male: 12% ($n = 58$) diverse: 0.2% ($n = 1$) no answer: 1.4% ($n = 7$)	female: 86.4% ($n = 121$) male: 10.7% ($n = 15$) diverse: 0.7% ($n = 1$) no answer: 2.1% ($n = 3$)	female: 83.2% ($n = 208$) male: 14.8% ($n = 37$) diverse: 0.4% ($n = 1$) no answer: 1.6% ($n = 4$)	female: 88.6% ($n = 342$) male: 9.6% ($n = 37$) diverse: 0.3% ($n = 1$) no answer: 1.6% ($n = 6$)

It should be noted that subjects may also have experience related to more than one of these categories, resulting in intersections. Thus, having purchase experience with second-hand luxury and luxury products was indicated by 23 percent ($n = 110$), experience with luxury second-hand and second-hand products by 29 percent ($n = 136$), experience with luxury and second-hand products by 41 percent ($n = 191$), and experience with the three categories second-hand luxury, second-hand, and luxury products by 23 percent ($n = 108$).

Referring to the product categories of those with second-hand luxury experience, most of them purchased fashion, perfume, and cosmetics (48.2 percent, $n = 68$), accessories (23.4 percent, $n = 33$), leather goods (23.4 percent, $n = 33$), watches and jewelry (16.3 percent, $n = 23$), and furniture and home furnishings (16.3 percent, $n = 23$).

The results of the qualitative analysis can be categorized as follows: to define luxury, a majority ($n = 277$) of 63 percent of the participants ($n = 443$) mentioned an economic term such as a high price, followed by superfluousness (52 percent, $n = 232$), excellent

quality (17 percent, *n* = 76), aesthetics and polysensuality (15 percent, *n* = 66), scarcity and uniqueness (13 percent, *n* = 59), status (9 percent, *n* = 39), as well as ancestral heritage and personal history by one person. Among all descriptions, 42 percent (*n* = 184) used immaterial terms to describe luxury. Almost 28 percent (*n* = 126) mentioned a specific item (e.g., watch, house, car, private plane), and 12 percent (*n* = 52) a specific trademark (e.g., Chanel, Dior, Gucci) or the term trademark itself. Table 2 summarizes the advantages that speak in favor of buying and the disadvantages that speak against buying a second-hand luxury product.

Table 2. Second-hand luxury purchases: pro and contra.

Category	Pro Second-Hand Luxury Total (*n* = 384), second-hand luxury experience [1] (*n* = 99), no second-hand luxury experience [2] (*n* = 285)	Contra Second-Hand Luxury Total (*n* = 378), second-hand luxury experience (*n* = 99), no second-hand luxury experience (*n* = 279)
Subjective norms	Total: 1% (*n* = 4) Second-hand luxury experience: 1% (*n* = 1) No second-hand luxury experience: 1% (*n* = 3) e.g., status, prestige	Total: 1.6% (*n* = 6) Second-hand luxury experience: 2% (*n* = 2) No second-hand luxury experience: 1.4% (*n* = 4) e.g., others' expectations, image
Perceived behavioral control	Total: 9% (*n* = 33) Second-hand luxury experience: 7% (*n* = 7) No second-hand luxury experience: 9% (*n* = 26) e.g., limited edition, classic, knowledge, access	Total: 6.6% (*n* = 25) Second-hand luxury experience: 8% (*n* = 8) No second-hand luxury experience: 6% (*n* = 17) e.g., no knowledge, no access, no availability
Attitude	Total: 7% (*n* = 26) Second-hand luxury experience: 2% (*n* = 2) No second-hand luxury experience: 9% (*n* = 26) e.g., I like second-hand (luxury) shopping, overall positive attitude	Total: 19% (*n* = 70) Second-hand luxury experience: 11% (*n* = 11) No second-hand luxury experience: 21% (*n* = 59) e.g., I do not like second-hand luxury shopping
Creativity/fashion	Total: 13% (*n* = 50) Second-hand luxury experience: 14% (*n* = 14) No second-hand luxury experience: 13% (*n* = 36) e.g., fashion, art, design, personal image	Total: 3% (*n* = 10) Second-hand luxury experience: 5% (*n* = 5) No second-hand luxury experience: 1.7% (*n* = 5) e.g., old-fashioned, not my style
Economics	Total: 70% (*n* = 268) Second-hand luxury experience: 87% (*n* = 86) No second-hand luxury experience: 64% (*n* = 182) e.g., lower price, cheaper	Total: 15% (*n* = 57) Second-hand luxury experience: 6% (*n* = 6) No second-hand luxury experience: 18% (*n* = 51) e.g., still too expensive, high price
Ethics	Total: 0.8% (*n* = 3) Second-hand luxury experience: – No second-hand luxury experience: 1% (*n* = 3) e.g., ethical	
Nostalgia	Total: 6 % (*n* = 23) Second-hand luxury experience: 8% (*n* = 8) No second-hand luxury experience: 5% (*n* = 15) e.g., retro, nostalgic, past	
Quality	Total: 12% (*n* = 47) Second-hand luxury experience: 23% (*n* = 23) No second-hand luxury experience: 8% (*n* = 24) e.g., high quality (ingredient/component/material)	Total: 34% (*n* = 129) Second-hand luxury experience: 38% (*n* = 38) No second-hand luxury experience: 33% (*n* = 91) e.g., low quality, signs of use, unhygienic Fear of counterfeits: Total: 12% (*n* = 46) Second-hand luxury experience: 17% (*n* = 17) No second-hand luxury experience: 10% (*n* = 29) e.g., counterfeits, no warranty, dubious, fake
Sustainability	Total: 53% (*n* = 202) Second-hand luxury experience: 70% (*n* = 70) No second-hand luxury experience: 46% (*n* = 132) e.g., sustainable, recycling, longer life cycle, environmentally friendly	

Source: Own data. [1] second-hand luxury experience = participants who purchased a second-hand luxury product within the past three years; [2] no second-hand luxury experience = participants who did not purchase a second-hand luxury product within the past three years.

Using SPSS Amos, SEM was conducted on purchase intention as the dependent variable. CMIN/DF, which is "the minimum sample discrepancy divided by the degrees of freedom" [93] (p. 92) and should be between two and five according to Danish et al. [94], is 3.459. The root mean squared error of approximation (RMSEA) is 0.072, and therefore below 0.08, which is suggested by Hu and Bentler [95] and Schumacker and Lomax [96]. The Comparative Fit Index (CFI) is 0.889 and thus close to 0.90, as suggested by Hu and Bentler [95] to determine that a model is acceptable. In addition, the Normed Fit Index (NFI) is 0.851, which is acceptable following Forza and Filippini [97] and Shore and Tetrick [98], since the value is greater than 0.80. Due to the acceptable values, hypotheses testing and their interpretation followed (see Table 3).

Table 3. Results of hypotheses testing.

Hypotheses	Estimates	Results
H1: Attitude → Purchase Intention	0.172 ***	supported
H2: Subjective Norms → Purchase Intention	0.228 ***	supported
H3: Perceived Behavioral Control → Purchase Intention	0.247 ***	supported
H4: Past Purchase Experience → Purchase Intention	0.561 ***	supported
H5.1: Economic Motivation → Attitude	0.453 ***	supported
H5.2: Sustainable Motivation → Attitude	0.066	not supported
H5.3: Ethical Motivation → Attitude	0.227 ***	supported
H5.4: Nostalgic Motivation → Attitude	−0.013	not supported
H5.5: Creative Motivation → Attitude	0.194	not supported

*** signifies $p < 0.001$ (two-tailed).

6. Discussion

The present study shows that there are various aspects influencing an individual's intention to purchase a second-hand luxury product. According to the SEM results, attitude has a significant impact on purchase intention, which is consistent with the qualitative results and hence supports Hypothesis 1. Thus, regarding the aspects in favor or against second-hand luxury products, there were participants who either generally agreed or disagreed with these products. Of those who had not yet purchased a second-hand luxury product, 21 percent ($n = 59$) indicated that they are generally not interested in such products. Attitude itself is determined by individual (intrinsic) motivators, which are addressed in the following.

One of the investigated individual motivators is sustainability since second-hand shopping can be classified as sustainable consumption [47]. Sustainability is a current megatrend that simultaneously encompasses cultural, economic, philosophic, political, and technological aspects [99]. Following the qualitative results, 53 percent ($n = 202$) of the respondents mentioned sustainability aspects as a reason for buying second-hand luxury products. The value is particularly high among those participants who have already purchased a second-hand luxury item (70 percent, $n = 70$). Contrary to the qualitative results, sustainable motivation is not evident from the SEM results, wherefore Hypothesis 5.2 cannot be supported. This might be reinforced by the fact that luxury corporations do not communicate sustainability widely to the public [100]. Overall, Kapferer and Michaut-Denizeau [100] emphasize that luxury companies do see sustainability as an important success factor but not as a core value of a luxury brand that still embodies dreams, exclusivity, and craftsmanship. Yet, the meaning of sustainability to luxury companies appears to be changing. For example, in 2018, IWC Schaffhausen [101] became the first Swiss luxury watch brand to release a sustainability report prepared in accordance with the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) standard, representing "global best practice for sustainability reporting" [102].

According to SEM, however, economic motivation has the strongest influence on attitude, which supports Hypothesis 5.1. The significant influence of economic reasons is particularly pronounced among those who have already purchased second-hand luxury products. This great relevance of price discounts in the second-hand business is confirmed by Cervellon et al. [34]. The attraction over price is also evident on the websites of well-known suppliers. For example, The Luxury Closet [103] advertises luxury products by offering "irresistible discounts" and Vestiaire Collective [104] promotes its items by selling them up to 70 percent cheaper than the retail price. Additionally, items are bought for investment reasons. In relation to used watches, buying a pre-owned luxury watch is not only worthwhile for aesthetic reasons, but also for financial incentives: second-hand Patek Philippe and Rolex watches, for example, have performed better than many other investment sectors over the past 20 years; moreover, the circle of buyers is expanding [105]. Despite the reduced prices for a used luxury item compared to the original price, some of the respondents perceive the prices as too high. For many, a high price is, in turn, a logical consequence of the perceived excellent quality associated with luxury goods or services [12].

This coincides with Dubois et al. [12], Ertekin and Atik [106], Kapferer and Bastien [39], and Roberts [2], indicating product excellence as a key characteristic of luxury products. The focus on quality is also emphasized by luxury manufacturers. To underscore its exceptional longevity, the watch manufacturer Patek Philippe launched a campaign in 1996 with the slogan "You never actually own a Patek Philippe. You merely take care of it for the next generation." [107]. For instance, quality also plays a major role among respondents. Seventeen percent ($n = 76$) included the term excellent quality in their understanding of luxury. Additionally, some of the respondents stated that they prefer a high-quality used product to an inferior new one, since its quality had already been proven. Still, 34 percent ($n = 129$) named quality as a reason against buying a second-hand luxury product in the sense of potentially worn, unhygienic, damaged, low quality, or used products. Twelve percent ($n = 46$) cited a missing warranty and the risk of counterfeits when buying luxury products second-hand. Indeed, fraudulent (by the buyer, unknowingly) and non-deceptive (low price, deliberate purchase of a copy) counterfeits of luxury products are on the rise [11]. The volume of international trade with counterfeits can be estimated at USD 464 billion for 2019, which corresponds to about 2.5 percent of world trade [108]. The luxury goods industry, with its luxury watches and fashion apparel, can be considered to be particularly affected [108]. To counteract this, Watchbox [109], for example, "home to the greatest collection of pre-owned luxury watches", offers a warranty of authenticity as well as a two-year warranty. Respondents also assumed high-quality second-hand luxury products to be usable for a long time and hence more sustainable, which is also mentioned by, e.g., Carcano [110], Guercini and Ranfagni [111], and Sun et al. [112].

As another core element of the TPB, the effect of subjective norms on purchase intention was studied and is supported (Hypothesis 2). The literature on luxury purchase intentions estimates the influence of relevant persons (subjective norms) to be high [28,113,114]. This could be due to the fact that luxury goods are often defined as status symbols [7,35,59–62]. In the present study, nine percent of participants described luxury via status, which is accompanied by a certain external dimension. Following Kessous and Valette-Florence [33], the purchase of second-hand luxury products can be connected to social climbing. Thereby, the authors state that "purchasing second-hand luxury products is driven by social considerations: a desire for social recognition, a sensitivity to normative influence and a need to belong" [33] (p. 318). Looking at the seller side, Turunen et al. [8] show that some sellers do not like to communicate the sale of used luxury products because it might be associated with the idea of having to make the sale in order to get money; thus, these sellers want to differentiate themselves from the buyers of used products and maintain an exclusive status.

Additionally, perceived behavioral control seems to play a role for both sides—buying second-hand luxury products and not buying them. The availability of specific collections and unique pieces makes buying luxury goods on the second-hand market especially

attractive. This coincides with Turunen and Pöyry [32], according to whom second-hand stores offer authentic and original items of current trends. On the other hand, participants claimed that they are not aware of where to buy these items, e.g., one respondent stated "currently, I don't know of a good platform for this". Within this, and due to the increasing popularity and growth of second-hand shopping, e-commerce has opened up many new business opportunities [115], in particular for luxury products. Examples are Chrono24 GmbH [116], Collector Square [117], and Fa. Anke Michels/nobeluhren-store [118]. In the context of digitalization, the usage of social media, and the transformation in consumer behavior, the trend of second-hand trade is not only maintained but even strengthened, leading to a progressive increase in the second-hand market [64,65]. However, availability and access are double-edged in the luxury product context: if a large number can obtain a product—including through a large number of distribution channels—its perceived value decreases, whereas scarce market availability increases value [4].

With regard to the customer group, there are diverging observations in the literature. Abtan et al. [16] and Turunen and Pöyry [32] conclude that people who buy new luxury products rarely buy second-hand luxury products. In the present study, previous purchase experience proved to have an essential impact on purchase intention (support for Hypothesis 4). Among the 140 participants with second-hand luxury experience, 92 percent ($n = 12$) would consider another purchase. However, the present results underline that the circle of consumers of second-hand luxury products is heterogeneous and growing. About 41 percent ($n = 190$) have already purchased both a luxury product and a second-hand product, as well as 23 percent ($n = 110$) a new luxury product and a second-hand luxury product. In thirty cases, respondents stated that they have not bought a luxury product new, but second-hand. This is in line with Turunen and Leipämaa-Leskinen [3], according to whom the second-hand market also reaches consumers who would otherwise not have purchased a luxury product.

Qualitative results emphasize the relevance of intangible luxury, as 42 percent ($n = 184$) described luxury as something intangible such as (leisure) time, freedom, love, vacation, joy of life, and health. This variation also reflects the individual definition and evaluation of luxury [119–122]. Dubois et al. [12] argue that the importance of intangible luxury is increasing. Thus, luxury is not perceived as a product, but rather as a concept that encompasses leisure, the absence of stress, or even freedom from everyday constraints [12]. Sirgy [123] points out that materialism can be at odds with quality of life. Further, the focus on intangible luxuries might be related to the respondents' country of current residence, as 93 percent ($n = 438$) indicated Germany as the country in which they currently reside. According to the World Population Review [124], Germany is the fourth largest economy worldwide (GDP of $4.0 trillion) and has a GDP per capita of $46,560, which ranks 18th in the world. This may contribute to the fact that a certain level of luxury has already been reached and people, therefore, seek intangibles. Similarly, Dubois et al. [12] argue that luxury goods are not crucial for survival.

7. Conclusions, Limitations, and Future Research

7.1. Theoretical Implications

Based on the TPB, purchase intentions for second-hand luxury products were investigated using SEM. The results show that attitude, purchasing experience, perceived behavioral control, and subjective norms impact purchase intention. Attitude, in turn, is mainly influenced by economic and ethical factors as individual motivators. Additionally, qualitative analysis revealed that overall quality and sustainability are highly relevant factors. Within this, quality was viewed ambivalently: on the one hand, excellent quality, selected ingredients, and components were named in favor of buying second-hand luxury products. On the other hand, products being worn out and unhygienic, as well as the risk of counterfeiting, were named as disadvantages. The results also illustrate that the understanding of luxury does not only include material things and associated characteristics. Forty-two percent ($n = 184$) of the respondents included intangible concepts such as

freedom, health, or satisfaction in their understanding of luxury. For instance, luxury also embraces intangibles such as time and health, which are not represented in many classic definitions of luxury. Overall, the results indicate that current and potential customers of used luxury products cannot be narrowed down to a homogeneous group. Some subjects already have experience with one of the three categories (used products in general, new luxury products, used luxury products), while others have already purchased products from several of these categories. Thus, subjects are very heterogeneous in terms of their purchasing experience.

7.2. Practical Implications

The results can be understood as a suggestion for managers to focus on economic aspects within the advertisement of second-hand luxury products. Since purchasers of second-hand luxury products are no homogenous group and the principal purchase intention is also given by those who have not yet purchased a second-hand luxury product, it is important that managers also attract present non-customers by, e.g., offering great deals or organizing special events to show the presence and increase the popularity of the stores and websites. Additionally, even 17 percent ($n = 17$) of the participants with second-hand luxury experience and 10% ($n = 29$) with no second-hand luxury experience named the risk of counterfeits and a missing warranty, which is why traders should pay attention to the originality and certificates of authenticity, avoiding a bad reputation against these products.

7.3. Limitations

There were some limitations in the present study leading to suggestions for further research. First, due to a self-reporting procedure, data collection might be biased due to social desirability [47]. In particular, a green lifestyle coincides with social norms being impacted by social approval or disapproval [125]. Since very few empirical studies on the relationship between luxury and sustainability exist [126], further research in this area is needed to gain a deeper understanding. Second, even though the sample is more heterogeneous with regard to gender compared to other studies on second-hand luxury studies, which solely focused on female respondents [3,8,32–34,127], a limiting factor is the greater proportion of women in the sample. Still, this imbalance is also reflected by the real secondhand market, according to which about seven times as many used women's clothes are offered than used men's clothes [128]. Given that this imbalance seems to change and men increasingly are fashion-conscious and buy clothes more frequently [129,130], also in the second-hand context [131], future research can include more male respondents. Third, online retailing increases within the (second-hand) luxury sector. Since online peer-to-peer second-hand trading companies make heavy investments to entice shoppers to visit their stores, understanding the motivations and behavior is important [6,31,115]. Hence, future research can especially focus on this sub-channel.

Appendix A. Scale Development

Table A1. Questionnaire design.

Scale	Adapted Items—Second-Hand Luxury	Based on
Definition luxury Open text field	Please name 1–3 keywords that you associate with luxury.	
Purchase experience with luxury products Item 1: 1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree Item 2: 1 = never, 2 = rarely, 3 = sometimes, 4 = often, 5 = always	Examples are products from Armani, BMW, Burberry, Calvin Klein, Cartier, Chanel, Dior, Dolce e Gabbana, Gucci, Hermes, Hugo Boss, Longchamp, Louis Vuitton, Patagonia, Ralph Lauren, Rolex, Versace, Yves Saint Laurent, watches made in Glashütte, and so on. ● I often buy luxury products. ● Number of times I bought luxury products during the last three years. Here, you can name the luxury brands from which you bought a product.	Aiello et al. [132], Festing et al. [133], Kastanakis and Balabanis [46], Lee et al. [134], Liu et al. [31], Montanari et al. [135], Shih and Fang [136], Sullivan and Artino [137], Sun et al. [112]
Product group luxury purchases Multiple answer options were possible	Please select the product categories in which you have purchased a luxury product in the last three years: ● Watches and jewelry; ● Fashion, perfumes, and cosmetics; ● Accessories; ● Leather goods; ● Furniture and furnishing; ● Designer household equipment; ● Cars; ● Yachts; ● Publishing; ● Other, please name the category.	Boston Consulting Group [138]
Purchase experience with second-hand luxury products Item 1: 1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree Item 2: 1 = never, 2 = rarely, 3 = sometimes, 4 = often, 5 = always	● I often buy second-hand luxury products. ● Number of times I bought second-hand luxury products during the last three years.	Shih and Fang [136] and Sullivan and Artino [137]

Table A1. *Cont.*

Scale	Adapted Items—Second-Hand Luxury	Based on
Product group second-hand luxury purchases Multiple answer options were possible	Please select the product categories in which you have purchased a second-hand luxury product in the last three years: • Watches and jewelry; • Fashion, perfumes, and cosmetics; • Accessories; • Leather goods; • Furniture and furnishing; • Designer household equipment; • Cars; • Yachts; • Publishing; • Other, please name the category.	Boston Consulting Group [138]
Purchase experience with second-hand products Item 1: 1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree Item 2: 1 = never, 2 = rarely, 3 = sometimes, 4 = often, 5 = always	• I often buy second-hand products. • Number of times I bought second-hand products during the last three years.	Shih and Fang [136] and Sullivan and Artino [137]
Product group second-hand purchases Multiple answer options were possible	Please select the product categories in which you have purchased a second-hand product in the last three years: • Watches and jewelry; • Fashion, perfumes, and cosmetics; • Accessories; • Leather goods; • Furniture and furnishing; • Designer household equipment; • Cars; • Yachts; • Publishing; • Other, please name the category.	Boston Consulting Group [138]

Table A1. *Cont.*

Scale	Adapted Items—Second-Hand Luxury	Based on
Economic motivation 1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree	• ECM1: If I would buy second-hand luxury, I could afford more things because I pay less for second-hand luxury. • ECM2: One can have more things for the same amount of money if one buys second-hand luxury. • ECM3: If I would buy second-hand luxury, I would have lots of things for not much money. • *ECM4: I do not want to pay more for a luxury product just because it is new.* • ECM5: By buying second-hand luxury, I feel I'm paying a fair price for things.	Guiot and Roux [1]
Sustainable motivation 1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree	• SM1: I believe that second-hand luxury buying by me will help in reducing pollution and also help in improving the state of the environment. • SM2: I believe that second-hand luxury buying by me will help in reducing the wasteful usage of natural resources. • SM3: I believe that second-hand luxury buying by me will help in natural resources protection.	Borusiak et al. [47]
Ethical motivation 1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree	If I would purchase second-hand luxury, I would be able to . . . • ETM1: . . . contribute toward a greener way of shopping. • ETM2: . . . play a part in recycling. • ETM3: . . . make more environmentally conscious decisions. • *ETM4: . . . extend the life of luxury products.*	Lo et al. [139]
Nostalgic motivation 1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree	• *NM1: I am attracted more to old things than new ones.* • NM2: Above all, I would buy second-hand luxury products because they are old and have a history. • NM3: I would buy second-hand luxury products because they evoke the past. • *NM4: I would buy second-hand luxury products because I find them authentic.*	Guiot and Roux [1]

Table A1. *Cont.*

Scale	Adapted Items—Second-Hand Luxury	Based on
Creative motivation 1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree	By buying second-hand luxury products, ● CM1: I would be able to combine possessions to create a personal image that cannot be duplicated. ● CM2: I could try to find a more interesting version of run-of-the-mill products because I enjoy being original. ● CM3: I could actively seek to develop my personal uniqueness by buying special products or brands. ● CM4: I would have an eye for second-hand luxury products that are interesting and unusual and assist me in establishing a distinctive image.	Ruvio et al. [81]
Attitude 1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree	Second-hand luxury shopping is . . . ● A1: . . . a foolish/wise idea. ● A2: . . . a harmful/beneficial idea. ● A3: . . . a bad/good idea. ● *A4: Overall, my attitude toward second-hand luxury shopping is unfavorable/favorable.*	Taylor and Todd [140] and Yoon [141]
Perceived behavioral control 1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree	● PBC1: I would be able to buy second-hand luxury products. ● PBC2: I have the resources to buy second-hand luxury products. ● *PBC3: I have the knowledge to buy second-hand luxury products.* ● PBC4: I have the ability to buy second-hand luxury products.	Shih and Fang [136] and Taylor and Todd [140]
Subjective norms 1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree	● SN1: My friends expect me to buy luxury products second-hand. ● SN2: My family expects me to buy luxury products second-hand. ● SN3: Society expects me to buy luxury products second-hand. ● SN4: Most people who are important to me think that I should buy luxury products second-hand when I have to buy something.	Borusiak et al. [47]

Table A1. *Cont.*

Scale	Adapted Items—Second-Hand Luxury	Based on
Purchase intention 1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree	• PI1: It is very likely that I will buy a second-hand luxury product in the future. • PI2: Certainly, I will buy a second-hand luxury product.	Borusiak et al. [47]
Pro second-hand luxury Open text field	I would buy a luxury product second-hand because . . .	
Contra second-hand luxury Open text field	I would not buy a luxury product second-hand because . . .	
Gender	• Female; • Male; • Diverse; • Do not wish to disclose.	
Please enter your age		
In what country do you currently live? Open text field		

Items in italics were deleted as part of the reliability analysis.

Appendix B. Reliability Analysis

Table A2. Reliability Analysis.

Scale	Reliability
Purchase intention	0.919 [2]
Attitude	0.876 [1]
Subjective norms	0.849 [1]
Perceived behavioral control	0.823 [1]
Experience second-hand luxury	0.904 [2]
Economic motivation	0.759 [1]
Ethical motivation	0.849 [1]
Sustainable motivation	0.934 [1]
Nostalgic motivation	0.839 [1]
Creative motivation	0.888 [1]

[1] Cronbach's Alpha, [2] Spearman Brown.

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