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1 Introduction

In view of a growing consciousness amongst consumers to embrace a more sustainable lifestyle as well as a rising number of on- and offline resellers of secondhand goods that make it easier than ever for consumers to shop clothes secondhand today, the secondhand fashion market is currently experiencing record growth rates on a global level (e.g., Khusainova, 2021; Kearney, 2022; Thredup, 2022). Moreover, depleting natural resources and a growing consumer demand for sustainable clothing options are forcing the fashion industry to overthink existing production processes, making the market for secondhand clothes more relevant than ever today (D'Adamo et al., 2022). This highlights the need to re-examine the types of consumers that engage in secondhand fashion consumption. While the market for secondhand clothes traditionally served to provide affordable fashion items to underprivileged communities (Cote, 2021; Ho, 2022), it has long become a popular shopping option for well-situated consumers in search of unique and sustainable styles (Cote, 2021; MacGregor, 2022; Nguyen, 2021). Secondhand clothes enable consumers to save money, find unique pieces of clothing not available in regular fashion stores, and reduce their impact on the environment (Thredup, 2022). Existing findings suggests that especially high-status individuals often embrace secondhand fashion as a way to create unique outfits at a low budget (Ferraro et al., 2016; MacGregor, 2022), to voluntarily reduce their consumption (Leonard-Barton, 1981) and/or oppose mainstream consumption channels (Lee & Ahn, 2016; Steffen, 2017). Low-status consumers on the other hand can perceive the consumption of secondhand clothing as symbolic of their poorness and inability to participate in mainstream consumption, making them embarrassed to buy then (Mukherjee et al., 2020; Williams & Paddock, 2003). In fact, the perceived stigma linked to secondhand clothes as products for poor people who cannot afford to buy new clothes, has repeatedly been shown to deter consumers from purchasing used fashion items (e.g., Habinc, 2018; Hur, 2020; Kim et al., 2021a; Lang & Zhang, 2019). Thus, consumers' relative status position seems to play an important role in their decision to purchase secondhand fashion items. However, to the best of the authors knowledge, literature on the potential influences of consumers status level on their secondhand shopping behavior is scarce and has only been addressed by qualitative research designs in existing literature (e.g., Mukherjee et al., 2020; Williams, 2002; Williams & Paddock, 2003).

Moreover, there seems to be a lack of research on the influences of conspicuous consumption motives on consumers' purchase intention in the secondhand fashion market (Mukherjee et al., 2020). The theory of conspicuous consumption describes consumers' tendency to purchase visible and symbolic products with the goal of communicating a high social status to others curated self-image to others (e.g., Dubois & Ordabayeva, 2015; Kumar et al., 2021; Patsiaouras & Fitchett, 2012) and can play an essential role in consumers' fashion shopping behavior as clothing is an important indicator of social status (e.g., Coelho & McClure, 1993; Loureiro et al., 2017; Nelissen & Meijers, 2011; Piacentini & Mailer, 2004). Analyzing the influence of conspicuous consumption motives on consumers' intention to purchase secondhand clothes can therefore help to better understand potential differences between consumers of different status levels. Upwards comparisons of low-status consumers to better situated peers can hereby lead to an increased wish to engage in conspicuous consumption to compensate for negative feelings of inferiority (Koles et al., 2018; Mazzocco et al., 2012) and to create the appearance of belonging to a higher status level themselves (Christen & Morgan, 2005; Feltovich et al., 2002; Jaikumar et al., 2018). Thus, the current research paper addresses the question how the perceived social status of consumers affects their purchase decision in the secondhand fashion market based on the theory of conspicuous consumption.

Furthermore, potential effects of perceived social status on consumers' assessment of social value and product perception attributed to secondhand fashion items are addressed, as both constructs play an important role in consumers' decision to purchase secondhand clothes (cf., Hur, 2020; Kim et al., 2021a; Laitala & Klepp, 2018; Ramkumar et al., 2021). Regarding the social value linked to secondhand clothes, both the risk of social stigmatization, as well as the positive social value of publicly engaging in sustainable and socially conscious consumption play a key role in determining consumers' intention to purchase secondhand products (e.g., Hiller Connell, 2009; Hristova, 2019; Na'amneh & Al Husban, 2012). Likewise, a negative product perception due to concerns about quality (Hur, 2020; Laitala & Klepp, 2018) or bad hygiene (Edbring et al., 2016) has repeatedly been linked to consumers' reluctance to purchase secondhand clothing (e.g., Edbring et al., 2016; Hur, 2020; Kim et al., 2021a; Laitala & Klepp, 2018).

Lastly, the effects of consumers' environmental concerns in the form of green consumption values on product perception, social values and purchase intention are analyzed.

In view of climate change and the negative effects of established consumption models on the environment, re-examining the influence of green consumption values on consumers' intention to purchase secondhand fashion products is of unprecedented importance today (Esposito et al., 2018). The influence of green consumption values has repeatedly been shown to positively influence consumers' willingness to buy secondhand goods (Borusiak et al., 2020; Edbring et al., 2016; Guiot & Roux, 2010; Wilts et al., 2021; Yan et al., 2015). Moreover, green consumption values can influence consumers' buying behavior among high- and low-status consumers alike (Akhtar et al., 2021; Al Mamun et al., 2018; Park & Ha, 2012) and can lead to an increased wish to consume sustainable purchase options as a form of conspicuous green consumption, signaling environmentally friendly behavior to others (e.g., Beall et al., 2021; Sexton & Sexton, 2014). Thus, green consumption values could both positively influence consumers' intention to purchase secondhand fashion as well as their general product perception and perceived social values attributed to secondhand clothing items.

By incorporating social values, product perception and green consumption values into the research framework, the current study can provide detailed insights into the impacts of consumers' relative social status on their attitude towards and purchase intention of secondhand fashion.

2 Literature Review

The phenomenon of secondhand fashion consumption

Consumers today are highly fashion-conscious (Camargo et al., 2020) and can draw on an abundance of affordable fast fashion products that are dominating the fashion landscape (Pookulangara & Shephard, 2013). The resulting ever faster changes in current fashion trends (Gardemin & Kleinhüchelkotten, 2017) have led to the fashion industry producing almost double the amount of clothing than two decades ago (Niinimäki et al., 2020). However, in view of climate change it is becoming clear, that the fashion industry is posing an increasing threat to the environment due to resource intensive production processes (Niinimäki et al., 2020) and the waste produced after disposal of fashion items (Stanescu, 2021). Moreover, the poor working conditions of people involved in the clothing production cycle that enable the cheap prices of fast fashion items have long been a major point of consumer criticism (Gardemin & Kleinhüchelkotten, 2017). As a reaction, consumers are increasingly demanding more sustainable and ethical options of fashion consumption (Granskog et al., 2020).

Circular economy models that involve the recycling, reuse, and repair of existing products could enable the needed change in the fashion industry (D’Adamo et al., 2022). Thus, the secondhand market for clothes is predicted to play an essential role in the future of the fashion industry (D’Adamo et al., 2022). Secondhand products are defined as used or pre-owned goods which are associated with a cheaper price compared to the products’ original sales price due to the usedness of the product and consequent value depreciation (Roux & Guiot, 2008; Turunen & Leipämaa-Leskinen, 2015; Wilts et al, 2021). These products can be bought directly from other consumers through personal connections, via flea markets, personal advertisement, at thrift stores or at specialized secondhand stores (Williams & Paddock, 2003). Secondhand shopping can thus be defined as “the acquisition of secondhand objects through methods and places of exchange that are generally distinct from those for new products” (Guiot & Roux, 2010, p. 356). Unlike vintage fashion which describes clothing items of a “specific style of couturier or era” which are “previously owned, but not necessarily used items” (Turunen & Leipämaa-Leskinen, 2015, p.59), secondhand clothing can involve both contemporary fashion pieces as well as older clothing items (Cervellon, et al., 2012).

To understand the antecedents of secondhand shopping from a consumer perspective, Guiot and Roux (2010) highlight the importance of a motivation-based approach and define three overarching categories of motivations to buy secondhand clothes: “critical motivations”, “economic motivations” and “hedonic/recreational motivations” (p. 361f.). Critical motivations entail the wish to distance oneself from mainstream consumption channels as well as ethical and environmental concerns, economic motivations entail resourcefulness and getting a fair price, and hedonic motivations involve treasure hunting, the wish for originality, the experience of social contact as well as fondness towards nostalgia (Guiot & Roux, 2010). More recent studies support these findings with secondhand shoppers most frequently mentioning the good value for money of secondhand goods as a reason to purchase secondhand clothing, followed by the hedonic experience of treasure hunting and finding unique products, as well as a positive impact on the environment and society through the conservation of natural resources and contributions to charity (e.g., Hur, 2020; Wilts et al., 2021).

Thus, while cost savings might be one of the main motivators, to purchase secondhand clothing (e.g., Hur, 2020; Wilts et al., 2021), many consumers are driven towards purchasing secondhand goods based on personal idealistic convictions (e.g., Guiot & Roux, 2010; Shaw & Newholm, 2002).

Since high-status and low-status consumers differ in their access to material resources and face fewer constraints to pursue their personal life goals compared to consumers of a low social status (Dubois & Ordabayeva, 2015; Kraus et al., 2012), consumers' status background should thus play a major role in their purchase decision process in the secondhand market.

Influences of social status on consumer behavior

Social hierarchy based on social class and status differences is one of the most fundamental features of social life (e.g., Anderson & Kilduff, 2009; Dubois & Ordabayeva, 2015; Kraus et al., 2012). Rooted in evolutionary theory, status is representative of individuals' ranks in society, thereby determining their chances at survival and reproduction (Coelho & McClure, 1993). As a sociological concept, social status can be defined as "an individual's prominence, respect, and influence in the eyes of others" (Anderson & Kilduff, 2009, p. 295). A high social status is associated with higher income and power (Bhattacharya, 2012), greater respect and attention from others (Dubois & Ordabayeva, 2015), higher self-esteem (de Botton, 2004), enhanced prospects to succeed in the workplace (Highhouse et al., 2016), and even better health and longer life expectancies (Adler et al., 1994). Moreover, social status plays an important role in the formation of an individual's social identity and self-concept (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) and leads to distinctive social cognitive patterns based on social class differences (Kraus et al., 2012).

The concept of social status must further be differentiated into the objective socioeconomic status people hold based on education, occupation, and income, as well as their perceived or subjective socioeconomic status based on individual class identification (Jackman & Jackman, 1973). Together, both objective and subjective social status dimensions can be considered to build the social class context of individuals, determining how they think of themselves and how they relate to others within society, leading to distinctive social cognitive patterns based on social class differences (Kraus et al., 2012). Generally, people with the highest objective socioeconomic status are on the top of the social hierarchy, working the most prestigious jobs, gaining the most income and being the most educated whereas people of low objective socioeconomic status are located at the bottom of the hierarchy, working the least prestigious jobs, gaining the least income and being the least educated (Kraus et al., 2012; Adler, 2000).

While objective socioeconomic status plays a defining role in how people perceive their own social status (Adler et al., 2000; Hoebel et al., 2015), subjective social status is further determined by personal interests and social relationships which can occur within or across different social classes (Jackman & Jackman, 1973). To analyze the psychological effects of status on human behavior, subjective social status should thereby be the preferred tool of measurement as it serves as an indication of how individuals perceive their relative status position in society rather than measuring the absolute, context dependent factors of objective socioeconomic status (Bjornsdottir et al., 2017). Moreover, other status characteristics like a person's ethnic origin, biological gender and any visible attributes which are linked to these categories (Ridgeway, 2001) as well as highly valued personality traits and social behaviors can influence the amount of status a person holds within a social group (Anderson & Kilduff, 2009; Kraus et al., 2012).

All status dimensions are based on a collective agreement over what status characteristics are deemed valuable by members of a given social group (Berger et al., 1972) and are both ascribed to a person through birth or can be obtained through personal achievements (Dubois & Ordabayeva, 2015). Thus, people can achieve higher social status by enhancing the perceived value they provide for the group, for instance, by signaling selfless behavior, competence, and commitment to the group (Anderson & Kilduff, 2009). Both the actual achievement of providing value to the group and the appearance of it are efficient measures to increase personal status (Anderson & Kilduff, 2009). Moreover, people can achieve status through the adaptation or imitation of lifestyles (Bourdieu, 1984) or via the consumption of status symbols that are associated with a high-ranking social class (Dubois & Ordabayeva, 2015). Thus, consumption can become an important tool for individuals to acquire status, especially for those who lack the possibilities to achieve other status dimensions like holding a high education or working a prestigious job (Jaikumar, 2018).

Lastly, people's perceived social status position is fundamentally shaped by comparisons to other members of society (Festinger, 1954; Locke, 2003). Comparisons to individuals of a higher social status can lead to feelings of inferiority, whereas comparisons to people of a lower social status can evoke feelings of superiority (Locke, 2003). Consequently, low-status individuals are more likely to negatively connotate their own social identity compared to high-status individuals who are more likely to hold a positive self-image (Tajfel & Turner, 1979).

Due to their comparative lack of economic resources and power, people with low social status are used to not being able to follow their personal goals and interests without constraints (Kraus et al., 2012). Rather, their decision-making processes are dominated by external forces in the form of real restrictions based on their lower social status and felt restrictions due to expectations about a negative reaction of others to their own life circumstances (Kraus et al., 2012). Compared to high-status individuals, low-status individuals thus pay higher attention to the actions and lifestyles of others and show high levels of conformity towards socially accepted norms (Kraus et al., 2012). Individuals of objectively high social high-status individuals on the other hand face relatively little constraints to pursue their personal interests, leading them to prioritize their individual preferences and to resist influences of external social influences on their own behavior (Kraus et al., 2012). High-status consumers are thus more likely to opt out of traditional behavioral and consumption patterns, (cf. Leonard-Barton, 1981; Shaw & Newholm, 2002; Steffen, 2017). Thus, the relative perceived status position of individuals can play an important role in determining their consumption preferences.

Social status and conspicuous consumption

The influences of social status on consumption behavior have been analyzed extensively in marketing literature (e.g., Chen et al., 2019; Eastman et al., 1999; Dubois & Ordabayeva, 2015; Rucker & Galinsky, 2012). Viewed from a sociological perspective, consumption patterns of individuals are both affected by their membership in different social groups through family, friends, social classes, or occupations, as well as by their desire to achieve membership to desired social groups of reference (McCracken, 1987). Vice versa, consumption and lifestyle choices can function as a reinforcement of individuals' class membership in society through the communication of a certain social status (Belk et al., 1982; Bourdieu, 1984; McCracken, 1987; Piacentini & Mailer, 2004). Rather than purchasing products for their utilitarian value alone, products are thus often consumed for their symbolic value which is essential for how individuals' construct and maintain their sense of self and how they perceive others (Belk, 1988; Shrum et al., 2013).

The theory of conspicuous consumption analyzes this phenomenon of purchasing, owning, and using visible, symbolic products and services with the goal of communicating a distinctive self-image to others (Chaudhuri et al., 2011) and to be perceived as members of a desired social group (Patsiaouras & Fitchett, 2012).

Conspicuous consumption can be defined as “a deliberate engagement in symbolic and visible purchase, possession and usage of products and services imbued with scarce economic and cultural capital with the motivation to communicate a distinctive self-image to others.” (Chaudhuri et al., 2011, p. 217). It enables consumers to show their affiliation to a desired social group, distance themselves from undesired social groups, feel empowered through self-expression, and to create the perception of being a member of a higher social status themselves (Dubois & Ordabayeva, 2015; Kumar et al., 2021). In its original definition by Thorstein Veblen in 1899, conspicuous consumption described individuals’ spending on luxury products to display wealth and secure their superior status position (Veblen & Banta, 2007). Additionally, Veblen theorized that individuals of all social classes are striving to imitate the luxury consumption behavior of the classes above them to move up the social ladder (Veblen & Banta, 2007). Said motivation of upward social mobility influences conspicuous consumption behavior to this day, with many modern consumers trying to emulate the lifestyle of the rich and famous by consuming conspicuous, status symbols in the form of luxury products (Loureiro et al., 2017; Schor, 1999). While luxury products are deemed to be the most effective status symbols as they are expensive and hard to get either through exclusiveness or competition and are often bought for the sole purpose of displaying a certain social rank (Dubois & Ordabayeva, 2015), status signaling is not limited to luxury consumption but can entail the consumption of any products that are deemed status symbols by the particular social groups and lifestyles consumers identify with (Dubois & Ordabayeva, 2015; Trigg, 2001). Thus, the relative status level of consumers thus has substantial impact on their preferences for conspicuous consumption (e.g., Koles et al., 2018; Mazzocco et al., 2012; Rucker & Galinsky, 2012).

Status-based differences in conspicuous consumption behavior

To understand the differences in conspicuous consumption preferences between consumers of varying status levels, the concept of conspicuous consumption can be traced back both to the bandwagon and the snob effect respectively (Kastanakis & Balabanis 2014). The bandwagon effect describes the wish to consume popular luxury products among important reference groups (Kastanakis & Balabanis 2014) and arises out of a “desire not to be associated with the poor” (Corneo & Jeanne 1997, p. 56).

A snob effect on the other hand arises when consumers wish to distance themselves from mainstream luxury consumers, instead opting for unique, scarce products to acquire status through differentiation from the masses (Kastanakis & Balabanis 2014) and appears when people are driven by their wish to be associated with a small group of elite consumers among the rich (Corneo & Jeanne, 1997). Thus, when people are afraid of being associated with the poor, their conspicuous consumption behavior is focused on acquiring those luxury goods that are popular amongst the masses (Corneo & Jeanne, 1997) in an effort to showcase social conformity (Chaudhuri & Majumdar, 2006). The conspicuous consumption behavior of people who exclusively want to be associated with the rich however is driven by a wish for uniqueness and self-expression (Chaudhuri & Majumdar, 2006; Corneo & Jeanne, 1997).

High-status consumers typically have higher self-esteem than consumers of lower social status (Dubois & Ordabayeva, 2015), are confident in their social standing (Phillips & Zuckerman, 2001), and do not require positive reinforcement through conspicuous consumption to uplift their self-concept (Chen et al., 2019). Thus, conspicuous consumption can be interpreted as a sign of insecurity about their own status superiority (Feltovich et al., 2002). Instead, the adaptation of understated status signaling behavior is often preferred amongst high-status consumers as it shows their confidence in their superior social status (Feltovich et al., 2002; Han et al., 2010). For high-status consumers subtle status symbols are preferred as they are only recognizable by a knowledgeable group of elite high-status consumers, thus differentiating them both from high-status consumers who do not possess the knowledge to recognize said status signals, as well as from low-status consumers who try to emulate mainstream conspicuous consumption, in the form of (counterfeit) luxury products (Han et al., 2010). Likewise, high-status individuals can signal their superior status through overt disconformity towards mainstream ideals for instance by consuming products traditionally associated with a low status (Dubois & Ordabayeva, 2015; Chaudhuri et al., 2011). Within groups of high-status consumers, acquiring products associated with a low social status can thereby serve as effective status signals, as their status position is not threatened by seemingly showing off their poorness (Bellezza & Berger, 2020). By mixing low-status products with high-status products, high-status consumers can thereby differentiate themselves more clearly from low-status consumers who try to imitate a luxurious lifestyle, as the latter try to actively avoid being associated with a low social status (Bellezza & Berger, 2020; Feltovich et al., 2002).

Furthermore, ethical consumption alternatives like the consumption of fairtrade goods can serve high-status consumers to signal distinction from lower social status groups (Andorfer, 2013). Both the perception to be of a high social status as well as actual higher social status can lead consumers towards adapting such high-status conspicuous consumption preferences (Bellezza & Berger, 2020). Compared to low-status consumers, consumers of high (perceived) social status are more likely to deviate from conspicuous consumption to distance themselves from individuals of lower status groups (cf. Feltovich et al., 2002).

Contrary, low-status consumers are more likely to feel insecure about their own social standing and to be threatened by the association with people of even lower social status (Phillips & Zuckerman, 2001). The resulting fear of being perceived as poor fosters low-status consumers tendency to engage in high levels of conformity towards mainstream status symbols, whereas any signal of low status is avoided out of fear of association with a lower social class (Phillips & Zuckerman, 2001). Moreover, low-status consumers have been shown to value the perceived image of a product higher than the perceived utility when making a purchase decision (Chen et al., 2022; Rucker & Galinsky, 2009) and can be willing to spend disproportionate amounts of money on conspicuous luxury products to compensate for their felt lack of status (Christen & Morgan, 2005; Mazzocco et al., 2012). Research on the neurological reaction of consumers to utilitarian versus symbolic product descriptions further suggests that consumers of a lower perceived social status show a higher tendency to shop conspicuously than consumers of a high social status (Chen et al., 2022). Additionally, low-status individuals showed higher levels of social anxiety, which was also linked to an increase in conspicuous consumption tendencies (Chen et al., 2022). These findings are in line with compensatory consumption theory, which states that consumers who are concerned with improving their social standing or gain prestige through the consumption of products, prefer conspicuous luxury products and brands over non-prestigious goods (Han et al., 2010; O'cass & McEwen, 2004). When a consumer's actual or perceived social status is not as desired, the wish to engage in overt conspicuous consumption to improve the own status position can increase (Koles et al., 2018; Mazzocco et al., 2012; Rucker & Galinsky, 2012). Furthermore, low-status consumers are prone to use conspicuous consumption as a measure to counter feelings of inferiority, weakness, and helplessness due to their general lack of power to control their own life circumstances (Kraus et al., 2012; Mazzocco et al., 2012; Rucker & Galinsky, 2008, 2009).

Both consumers' objective social status as well as the identification with low social status groups can lead to an increase in the desire for conspicuous consumption (Mazzocco et al., 2012; Rucker & Galinsky, 2008). Therefore, conspicuous consumption is an important tool for consumers of low (perceived) social status to distance themselves from individuals of even lower status groups and to secure their own status position (Feltovich et al., 2002). The acquisition of conspicuous goods can hereby effectively improve the perceived economic well-being of low-status individuals, with comparatively weaker positive effects on the perceived economic well-being of individuals of higher status groups (Jaikumar et al., 2018).

Influences of conspicuous consumption on consumers' fashion choices

Products that are consumed publicly, like cars, cosmetics, home décor, or fashion are most susceptible to be driven by conspicuous consumption motives (Belk et al., 1982; Eastman et al., 1999), driving consumer preferences towards the purchase of expensive products to signal wealth and a high status (Chaudhuri & Majumdar, 2006). Fashion goods in particular have a long history of serving as status symbols and thus indicators of relative social rank that is still relevant today (Coelho & McClure, 1993; de Bottom, 2001) and the development of fashion trends and social mobility has historically been closely interlinked (Polhemus & Proctor, 1987). According to the theory of the "trickle-down" fashion cycle, people at the top of the social hierarchy act as innovators in changes of taste to maintain their differentiation from other classes beneath them as soon as they start to emulate the style of the elites (Partington, 2020; Robinson, 1961). While the rise of mass-market fashion has since led to a disruption of the status bound creation of fashion trends, enabling fashion innovators within all social class ranks to drive the adoption of new fashion trends (Partington, 2020), the increasing importance of social media has led to a reinforcement of conspicuous consumption motives in the fashion industry in recent years with celebrities, top models, athletes, fashion bloggers and similar public figures acting as one of the main opinion leaders for new fashion trends (Loureiro et al., 2017).

Consumers' fashion choices help them to signal wealth and sophistication (Nelissen & Meijers, 2011), gain approval from their friends and family (Loureiro et al., 2017), and are representative of how consumers perceive themselves and others (Piacentini & Maller, 2004). In fact, conspicuous fashion consumption has been linked to a variety of social and even monetary benefits which are attributed to a high social status (Nelissen & Meijers, 2011).

In a series of laboratory and field experiments, Nelissen and Meijers (2011) could show that wearing a branded shirt of a luxury fashion brand led to being perceived as more wealthy and higher in status than wearing an unlabeled shirt. Study participants wearing branded clothes further were perceived as more trustworthy, more suitable for open job positions, and more deserving of a higher salary (Nelissen & Meijers, 2011). Moreover, as an extension of the self, fashion items are closely related to consumers' self-image (Piacentini & Mailer, 2004) and can be seen as the visual representation and a communication vessel of consumers' tastes and values to others (Banister & Hogg, 2004). This is also apparent in the differences in the conspicuousness of fashion product designs within differing price segments (Berger & Ward, 2010). To distinguish high-status fashion from middle-priced goods, the branding of high-status fashion goods often comes in the form of understated design elements which are only recognizable to a knowledgeable elite of high-status consumers (Berger & Ward, 2010). Middle-priced products on the other hand generally show the highest number of explicit logos or brand-related patterns (Berger & Ward, 2010). Thus, how consumer perceive their own social status plays an important role in the purchase decision process of fashion items (Coelho & McClure, 1993; Piacenti & Mailer, 2004) and the preferred level of conspicuousness in fashion products is dependent on consumers' status background (Berger & Ward, 2010; Han et al., 2010; Piacentini & Mailer, 2004).

3 Hypotheses development

The role of perceived social status on secondhand fashion consumption

For fashion items to function as effective status signals, they should be more costly to acquire for low-status consumers than for high-status consumers and be representative of a current fashion trend (Coelho & McClure, 1993). Contrary, fashion goods lose their value as status symbols, when they are adapted by the masses or when the style they represent is no longer considered fashionable (Coelho & McClure, 1993). Thus, the unpredictable availability of secondhand fashion items that fit current fashion trends as well as the aesthetic risk of not fitting one's individual self-image can potentially deter consumers with a high need for conspicuous consumption from shopping fashion secondhand (cf. Kim et al., 2021a).

Especially, low-status consumers could thus shy away from purchasing secondhand clothes as their fashion choices are primarily motivated to consume branded mainstream fashion items in an attempt to fit in with their peers and to avoid being perceived as poor (Piacentini & Mailer, 2004). Moreover, clothes that appear cheap are often actively avoided by low-status consumers out of fear of being stigmatized by their peers (Piacentini & Mailer, 2004). Research in the context of secondhand shopping revealed similar results. Here, the wish to belong to the mainstream and to preserve or enhance their own social status was identified as the prime motivator for low-status consumers to purchase secondhand goods (Hur, 2020; Mukherjee et al., 2020). Low-status consumers thus only turn to secondhand channels when they cannot afford newly produced products and are primarily looking for prestigious branded goods (Hur, 2020; Mukherjee et al., 2020). At the same time, low-status consumers are often embarrassed of having bought any item secondhand (Rulikova, 2020; Mukherjee et al., 2020) and try not to disclose their purchases are secondhand (Mukherjee et al., 2020; Rulikova, 2020). Thus, the act of secondhand shopping seems to be stigmatized among low status consumers and purchasing secondhand clothes can be perceived as a “low-status practice” (Valor et al., 2022, p. 79). Due to their increased need for status and social acceptance low status consumers might even be inclined to refrain from buying secondhand clothes altogether due to “concerns about personal and social image and acceptance” (Hur, 2020, p. 10-11).

Contrary, high-status consumers do not feel the need to conspicuously wear expensive clothing, in many instances even refraining from wearing obvious luxury fashion items to avoid being perceived as distasteful and showy (Piacentini & Mailer, 2004). As opposed to low-status individuals who are motivated by their wish to be a part of the mainstream (Hamilton, 2009), high-status individuals have instead been shown to try to differentiate themselves from the mainstream (Feltovich et al., 2002). Further, to socially compete with and differentiate themselves from their peers, high-status consumers often prefer consuming fashion items of scarce and elite brands (Piacentini & Mailer, 2004) and can effectively communicate their superior status position through overt nonconformity in the form of styles typically associated with poor people or not deemed stylish by the mainstream (Bellezza et al., 2014). When analyzing observer’s reaction to nonconforming behavior Bellezza, Gino, and Keinan (2014) found that nonconformity in consumption can act as a source to signal status, when the choice of a seemingly ill-fitting style is acknowledged to be an intentional breach of established norms in a familiar environment.

Likewise, unique, alternative fashion products can be valued by high-status consumers as a sign of their individualism and differentiation from others in their peer group (Piacentini & Mailer, 2004). Thus, contrary to the status consumption motives of low-status consumers, high-status consumers often prefer deviations from generally accepted fashion trends. In the context of secondhand fashion consumption Guiot and Roux (2010) found that affluent secondhand shoppers preferred purchasing second-hand products in order to avoid mainstream shopping channels, to support ethical and ecological concerns of waste reduction and recycling, and to avoid being perceived as ostentatious. Moreover, high-status consumers often view secondhand products as an opportunity to practice anti-consumption, thereby trying to achieve personal growth through intrinsic motivation rather than pursuing status gains (Lee & Ahn, 2016; Steffen, 2017). As an alternative source of consumption, secondhand fashion further services high-status consumers' desires to reduce consumption out of ethical and environmental concerns and embrace a more simplistic lifestyle (Leonard-Barton, 1981; Shaw & Newholm, 2002). Driven by the wish to live a simple life to reduce their carbon footprint and improve their own well-being (Rich et al., 2017), well-situated consumers can be striving to reduce their dependency on mainstream consumption options that lead to the depletion of natural resources and societal problems (Demirel, 2022). Termed "voluntary simplicity", such consumer behavior is defined as the voluntary choice "to limit expenditures on consumer goods and services, and to cultivate non-materialistic sources of satisfaction and meaning." (Etzioni, 1998, p. 620). As this voluntary minimization of consumption is, by definition, only an option for consumers who are not restrained by a lack of material resources or are in any other way forced to reduce their consumption due to governmental or institutional forces (Etzioni, 1998; Leonard-Barton, 1981; McDonald, 2006), high-status consumers are therefore more likely to engage in secondhand fashion consumption to contribute to a simplistic lifestyle.

Overall, it can thus be assumed that the intention to purchase secondhand products is higher among high-status consumers compared to low-status consumers. It can therefore be hypothesized that:

H1: *A high perceived social status is positively influencing consumers' intention to purchase secondhand products. (A low perceived social status is negatively influencing consumers' intention to purchase secondhand products.)*

The role of social values in secondhand fashion consumption

The social value and social risks attributed to secondhand fashion play an important role in determining consumers' intention to purchase secondhand goods (Hur, 2020; Laitala & Klepp, 2018). The social value of a purchasing alternative is based on the association of a product or service with specific social groups and the positive or negative stereotypes linked to these groups (Sheth et al., 1991). Consumers connect the purchase of products both to a high social value which serves the enhancement of individuals' self-concept (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001) as well as to a low social value or social risk which describes "the extent to which purchase decisions are believed to be judged by others and may influence one's social standing" (Schaefer et al., 2016, p. 572). Products with low social value are thus linked to potential embarrassment or disapproval from close peer groups (Mandel, 2003).

As opposed to cheap fast fashion products which can only be made available due to the poor working conditions of low paid workers in the production cycle (Gardemin & Kleinhüeckelkotten, 2017), secondhand fashion is often deemed an equally affordable, yet ethical consumption option linked to a low impact on the environment (Guiot & Roux, 2010). Moreover, when buying the products in thrift stores, the purchase of secondhand fashion leads to a positive contribution to charitable causes (Hur, 2020). The social value of secondhand fashion products can thus be linked to consumers' expectations of being socially recognized and receiving praise from others due to the scarcity, social image, and environmentally friendliness of secondhand fashion (Kim et al., 2021a). When a high social value is attributed to secondhand fashion items, it can lead to a more favorable attitude towards secondhand clothing consumption (Kim et al., 2021a; Ramkumar et al., 2021). Contrary, social risks attached to secondhand clothes can be traced back to consumers' expectations to negative reactions by others due to the perceived contamination and reduced value of secondhand clothes (Kim et al., 2021a). Another major social risk associated with secondhand clothing is the risk of being perceived as too poor to purchase new fashion items, thus threatening consumers' social reputation and image (Hur, 2020; Lang & Zhang, 2019). Social risks have been shown to have a negative effect on consumers' attitude towards pre-owned clothes (Kim et al., 2021) and the intention to consume them (Lang & Zhang, 2019). Thus, consumers' fear of stigmatization through family and friends can act as one of the main barriers to shop secondhand clothing (Hiller Connell, 2009; Na'amneh & Al Husban, 2012).

Compared to low-status consumers, high-status consumers are more likely to link secondhand fashion products to positive social value based on their general attitude towards fashion consumption (cf. Piacentini & Maller, 2004; Phillips & Zuckerman, 2001). Consumers who are opposing mainstream fashion channels are thereby especially prone to purchasing secondhand fashion items in an effort to achieve higher social capital (Laitala & Klepp, 2018). Moreover, high-status consumers are more likely to gain social reputation by engaging in restrictive consumption behavior as a contribution to save the environment, whereas low-status consumers are often viewed as being forced to restrict their consumption when they are engaging in restrictive consumption behavior (Kennedy & Horne, 2020). Thus, even if low-status consumers engage in secondhand shopping out of idealistic conviction to save the environment and/or engage in ethical consumption (cf. Guiot & Roux, 2010), they might not gain positive social recognition by engaging in restrictive consumption behavior (cf. Kennedy & Horne, 2020). Moreover, the stigma of secondhand products as a sign of low social status can act as a deterrent to buying secondhand clothes particularly for low-status consumers (Rulikova, 2020). Among low-status consumers, using secondhand retail channels has been shown to be perceived as an exclusion from the mainstream and as symbolic for their inability to purchase new products (Williams, 2002; Williams & Paddock, 2003). As low-status consumers are also more likely to adapt their behavior according to the expectations of their social environment (Kraus et al., 2012), prejudices against secondhand clothes held by their peers can amplify their aversion towards secondhand shopping (cf. Rulikova, 2020). Thus, consumers of a low social status associate secondhand products with a heightened social risk, which in turn can negatively influence their attitude towards secondhand products (cf., Kim et al., 2021a). It can therefore be hypothesized that the influence of perceived social status on the intention to purchase secondhand clothes is mediated by the social value attributed to secondhand clothes, leading to the following second hypothesis:

H2: *The intention to purchase secondhand is negatively mediated by the social value attributed to secondhand products for low-status consumers. (The intention to purchase secondhand is positively mediated by the social value attributed to secondhand products for high-status consumers.)*

The role of product perception on secondhand fashion consumption

Next to the social value, the functional value of products is commonly considered to be essential for consumers' product perception and purchase decisions (Sheth et al., 1991). The functional value of products can be defined as "the perceived utility acquired from an alternative's capacity for functional, utilitarian, or physical performance" (Sheth et al., 1991, p. 160). In the decision process to consume secondhand clothes, the functional value or perceived lack thereof can act as a major deterrent to consumers' purchase intention (Hur, 2020). For consumers who oppose secondhand shopping, quality concerns have been shown to overshadow the intention to buy secondhand for environmental or ethical reasons (Hur, 2020). In fact, many consumers oppose secondhand fashion as the pre-ownership of secondhand products leads to associations with a reduced value due to traces of usage, bad hygiene, poor product quality and the expectation that secondhand clothes will not last as long as new products (Kim et al., 2021a; Laitala & Klepp, 2018). Especially, the concern of bad hygiene can pose one of the main obstacles to buying second-hand goods and can further be linked to fears of allergies or attracting pests into one's home (Edbring et al., 2016). Moreover, consumers can hold a negative product perception of secondhand fashion items, due to prejudices held against secondhand clothing as ugly, outdated (Valor et al., 2022), or not fitting one's individual style (Kim et al., 2021a). Contrary, consumers who embrace secondhand shopping often hold a positive product perception of secondhand fashion items (e.g., Clausen et al., 2010; Edbring et al., 2016). For instance, secondhand fashion advocates have been shown to view secondhand apparel as fashionable (Ferraro et al., 2016) and as a source of high-quality products at affordable prices, often in the form of textiles at a higher quality than fast fashion products (Clausen et al., 2010; Edbring et al., 2016). Consumers can therefore achieve high functional value from secondhand shopping when they perceive it as a possibility to shop high-quality products that last longer than newly produced items, thus reducing the need to consume many different fashion items (Dutra et al., 2019).

Since high-status consumers are more likely to hold a preferable attitude towards secondhand shopping than low-status consumers (e.g., Steffen, 2017; Williams & Paddock, 2003), their perception of secondhand fashion items should also be more positive than that of low-status consumers. Higher perceived benefits of a product can thereby lead to a more positive assessment of product quality and thus a positive product perception (Lee & Tai, 2009).

High-status consumers are more likely to value secondhand fashion products for their uniqueness and deviation from the mainstream (cf. Piacentini & Mailer, 2004) which has been shown to lead to a more positive attitude towards secondhand products (Kim et al., 2021a). Moreover, compared to low-status consumers, the behavior of high-status consumers is more likely to be driven by high levels of individuality (cf. Kraus et al., 2012) which in turn has been linked to a more positive product perception of secondhand fashion items that can even diminish the negative effects of sanitary risks linked to secondhand fashion items (Kim et al., 2021a). Further, compared to low-status consumers, high-status consumers should hold a more preferable perception of secondhand fashion due the uniqueness of secondhand fashion products (cf. Kastanakis & Balabanis 2014; Piacentini & Mailer, 2004) and the opportunity to distance themselves from the mainstream (cf. Chaudhuri et al., 2011; Dubois & Ordabayeva, 2015; Turunen & Leipämaa-Leskinen, 2015). Thus, consumers who perceive themselves to be of high social status should generally have a more positive product perception towards secondhand products, leading to the following third hypothesis:

H3: *The intention to purchase secondhand is negatively mediated by the product perception of secondhand products for low-status consumers. (The intention to purchase secondhand is positively mediated by the product perception of secondhand products for high-status consumers.)*

The role of green consumption values on secondhand fashion consumption

Due to the palpable effects of climate change and deteriorating resource availability, consumers on a global level are becoming increasingly aware of the need to reduce consumption to save the environment (Haws et al., 2014). Thus, the desire to consume environmentally friendly products and services is increasingly influencing modern consumer behavior (Borusiak, 2020; Moisander, 2007). On the individual consumer level, sustainable consumption behavior entails the purchase of green products as well as reuse and recycling behaviors (Dong et al., 2018). Regarding consumers' fashion consumption choices, purchasing secondhand is one of the most common techniques of ecologically conscious consumers to reduce their carbon footprint and save natural resources (Connell, 2011).

The purchase of secondhand products poses a viable solution to consume sustainable clothing as it erases the need for production of new items, thereby saving resources and relieving the environment (Wilts et al., 2021) and sustainable consumption motives and environmental concerns have repeatedly been shown to positively influence consumers' willingness to consume secondhand goods (Borusiak et al., 2020; Edbring et al., 2016; Guiot & Roux, 2010; Yan et al., 2015). For environmentally and socially conscious consumers, secondhand clothes are further associated with "a sense of achievement through protecting the environment and a social contribution through preserving and enhancing the welfare of people and nature" (Hur, 2020, p. 7). Moreover, personal norms in the form of felt moral obligation and responsibility towards the environment and society play a crucial role in the secondhand buying behavior of consumers (Borusiak et al., 2020). Thus, sustainable consumption motives should positively influence both the amount of social value consumers attribute to secondhand clothes as well as the general product perception they hold of secondhand fashion items. Moreover, existing findings on the influence of consumers' income level on their willingness to consume green products indicate that, unless green products are linked to a price premium (cf. Junaedi, 2012; Muhammad et al., 2015), there are generally no differences in green product purchases between consumers of varying levels of household income and thus differing status levels (e.g., Akhtar et al., 2021; Al Mamun et al., 2018; Park and Ha, 2012). As opposed to "green" or sustainable products, which often are sold at a price premium due to comparatively high production costs (Chekima et al., 2016), secondhand products offer the possibility to buy products at a cheaper price while also circumventing the negative ecological impact of new production processes to protect the environment (Edbring et al., 2016; Wilts et al., 2021). Rather, consumers' willingness to engage in sustainable consumption behavior is dependent on their overall identification with sustainable consumption trends (Akhtar et al., 2021), as well as their environmental literacy and self-efficacy (Al Mamun et al., 2018). Moreover, feelings of moral obligation and peer pressure can persuade consumers to consume environmentally friendly products to relieve their own conscience of negative feelings due to unethical consumption (Barbarossa & De Pelsmacker, 2016; Salazar et al., 2013). Recent studies on the link between environmental concerns and status motives show that sustainable consumption of products that are consumed in public can even be motivated by conspicuous consumption motives as it signals consumers' status as a prosocial member of society dedicated to protecting the environment (Beall et al., 2021; Sexton & Sexton, 2014).

The consumption of green products thus can enable people to achieve a higher social status by being perceived as unselfish and willing to invest their resources to benefit others (Hardy & Van Vugt, 2006). Green consumption motives could thus increase consumers' willingness to purchase secondhand fashion items by mitigating the effects of a negative social value and product perception of said products.

Due to the ascertained lack of influence of status on the degree of consumers' green consumption values, it is assumed that secondhand products are an attractive sustainable consumption option for any consumers that are concerned about the environment when making a purchase decision and the wish to engage in sustainable consumption should positively influence consumers' purchase intention, product perception, and perceived social value of secondhand clothes. Green consumption values should thus have a positive moderating effect on the relationship between perceived social status on the intention to purchase secondhand for low- and high-status consumers, leading to the last hypotheses:

H4: *Green consumption values positively moderate the relationship between perceived social status and consumers' intention to purchase secondhand products.*

H4a: *Green consumption values positively moderate the mediation of social values on consumers' intention to purchase secondhand products.*

H4b: *Green consumption values positively moderate the mediation of product perception on consumers' intention to purchase secondhand products*

4 Method

Research model

Based on the insights gathered from the literature review, it is assumed that the perceived social status of individuals is positively related to their intention to purchase secondhand products. It is further proposed that this relationship is mediated by consumers' product perception and social value connotated to secondhand products. Lastly it is assumed that green consumption values positively moderate both mediated relationships and the direct effect of status on purchase intention. Thus, a research model was contrived including the suggested parameters and path dependencies.

Paths a1 and a2 show the linear regression of Perceived Social Status on Product Perception and Social Value respectively which is moderated by Green Value. The c'-path indicates the direct effect of Perceived Social Status on Purchase Intention, also moderated by Green Value. Lastly, paths b1 and b2 show the linear regression of Product Perception and Social Value on Purchase Intention (see figure 1).

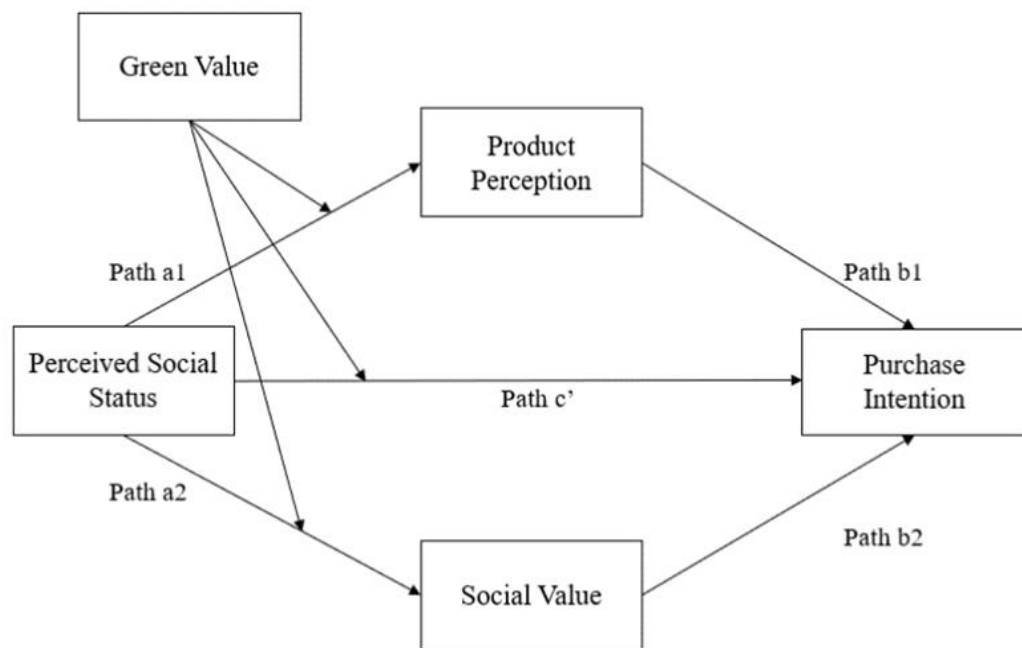


Figure 1 Research model and path description of moderated parallel mediation

Research design

To test the parallel mediation effects of Perceived Social Status through social value and product perception, as well as the moderation effect of Green Value on Purchase Intention, the “PROCESS”, model 8, v 4.1 (Hayes, 2022), was used in SPSS ver. 28. Both the predictor and the outcome variable entailed a minimum of five categories, making them suitable to be treated as continuous interval variables suitable for linear regression analysis (cf. Allen & Seaman, 2007). Further, causality of the variables was assumed based on the underlying theory of the study retrieved from the literature instead of assuming a temporal cause and effect chain (cf. Hayes, 2017).

Data collection

A German online survey targeting mainly participants from the DACH area was created and published using Qualtrics (Qualtrics, 2022). The survey was distributed via the social media channel Facebook (Facebook, 2022), via personal outreach through WhatsApp messenger and via the online survey community SurveyCircle (SurveyCircle, 2022). Since participants of the survey were able to take part independently from their past experience in secondhand clothing shopping, they received both a verbal and visual introduction to the survey. For this purpose, the frontpage of Vinted (Vinted, 2022) was shown in a slightly adapted manner to all participants. Vinted was chosen as basis for the visual representation of an online secondhand store as it is currently the market leader of secondhand online marketplaces in Europe (cf. Cross-Border Commerce Europe, 2022). Moreover, all clothes offered on Vinted must comply with the hygiene regulations defined in the platforms policies of usage (Vinted, 2022a) and the condition of the offered articles must be stated transparently, and any defects must be shown in pictures showing the item for sale (Vinted, 2022b). Thus, Vinted provides the optimal premises for the online purchase of secondhand fashion products (cf. Wilts et al., 2021). To avoid influences of brand preference or the evaluation of the products based on price, participants received no information on price or brand of the products displayed. Participant were asked about their purchase intention prior to stating their opinions on product perception, social value, green consumption values and assessing their own social status. All items were randomized in order.

5 Results

Sample Characteristics

A convenience sample of 177 participants ($MAge = 30.8$, $SDAge = 13.9$, 69% female, 30% male, 1% no gender affiliation) was achieved. The participants of the survey lived almost exclusively in Germany and Austria.

Intention to purchase secondhand products. First, participants' willingness to purchase secondhand items (Purchase Intention) was assessed by asking participants if they were willing to buy clothes secondhand, the next time they need clothes. Purchase Intention was assessed on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = "very low", 5 = "very high"; $MPurchInt = 3.00$; $SDPurchInt = 1.39$).

Product Perception. Product perception (Product Perception) of secondhand clothing was assessed on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = “strongly disagree”, 5 = “strongly agree”; $M_{ProdPerc} = 3.79$, $SD_{ProdPerc} = 0.47$). Five items were introduced based on the product judgement scale of Klein, Ettenson, and Morris (1998) which was previously implemented to measure influences of animosity against the country-of-origin of clothes on product perception. Thus, it was deemed suitable to measure the effects of negative judgments of secondhand clothing based on product perception. The Product Perception scale was not reliable with Cronbach $\alpha = .56 (< .70)$. Corrected Item-Total Correlation should be $\geq .30$ for each item which is not the case for items 1 and 2 further hinting at poor scale reliability of the Product Perception Scale (Field, 2009). The low Cronbach α value could however also be explained by the small number of items (less than 10), thus, to better measure the reliability of the scale, the inter-item correlation was checked (Pallant, 2010). According to Briggs and Cheek (1986) inter-item correlations of the construct should ideally range between .20 and .40 (p. 115). In this case a mean inter-item correlation of 0.21 was shown with values ranging from 0.10 to 0.47, thus there are issues of internal consistency for the Product Perception Scale.

Social Value. The social value (Social Value) attributed to secondhand clothing was assessed on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = “strongly disagree”, 5 = “strongly agree”; $MSocVa = 3.56$, $SDSocVa = 0.56$). Five items were introduced with three items from the original scale by Sweeney and Soutar (2001) and an additional two items introduced from the secondhand motivational study by Hur (2020) to fit the purposes of this study. The Social Value scale was not reliable with Cronbach $\alpha = .61 (< .70)$. Corrected Item-Total Correlation is $< .30$ for items 4 and 5 further hinting at poor scale reliability. A mean inter-item correlation of 0.25 was measured with values ranging from 0.04 to 0.52 indicating problems of internal consistency of the scale. Items 1 and 3 reported sufficient total item correlation whereas Items 2, 4 and 5 showed inter-item correlations of $< .40$. Thus, the Social Value scale was deemed as sufficiently reliable to measure the underlying construct.

Green Consumption Value. The green consumption values (Green Value) of participants were measured on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = “strongly disagree”, 5 = “strongly agree”; $M_{Green} = 3.74$, $SD_{Green} = 0.67$). The mean value of the scale is based on the average value to six items from the original “GREEN scale” by Haws et al. (2014) which measures green consumption values of consumers and was successfully tested for construct validity and reliability by the authors.

The Green Consumption Value scale is a reliable construct of the underlying measure with an estimated internal consistency reliability of $\alpha = .81$ ($> .70$) in the current study. The relatively high mean values of > 3.00 indicate that all mediator and moderator scales were answered positively by most respondents.

Perceived Social Status. Lastly, participants' perceived social status (Perceived Social Status) was assessed via the German version of the "MacArthur Scale" as it is a widely used measurement tool for subjective social status (Adler et al., 2000; Chen et al., 2022; Hoebel et al., 2015). Participants were asked to assess their own social rank in society on a ladder with the people of the lowest social status at the bottom of the ladder while people of the highest social status are located at the top of the ladder (cf. Hoebel et al., 2015). As 11-point Likert scales hold a higher propensity to yield normally distributed values than scales ranging from "1" to "10", the starting point of the scale was adjusted to represent values of "0" to "10" to have a true neutral average rating at "5" (cf. Leung, 2011). Results ranged from "2" to "10" with participants on average locating themselves on the upper end of the MacArthur Scale ($M_{Status} = 6.47$; $SD_{Status} = 1.32$).

Preliminary Analyses

Prior to the analysis of the moderated parallel mediation model, preliminary analyses were conducted to assure the quality of the data. First, the bivariate relationship and linearity of the variables was assessed via correlational analysis. The analysis revealed no significant correlation between the predictor and the outcome variable at a 95% confidence level with Pearson's $r = -.02$ ($p = .78$) for the correlation between Perceived Social Status and Purchase Intention. Significant positive correlations with Purchase Intention were however found for the mediators Product Perception ($r = .44$, $p < .01$), Social Value ($r = .34$, $p < .01$) and the moderator Green Value ($r = .45$, $p < .01$). The predictor only correlates with Green Value at a positive significant correlation of $r = .25$ ($p < .01$), hinting at potential issues of multicollinearity for the regression model when entering Green Value as a moderator variable. The interaction term of Perceived Social Status and Green Value showed a highly significant correlation both with Perceived Social Status ($r = .81$, $p < 0.01$) and Green Value ($r = .76$, $p < .01$). Outside the interaction term, the highest correlation was found between Green Value and Product Perception with a correlation of $r = .45$ ($p < 0.01$) as well as for Green Value and Purchase Intention ($r = .45$, $p < 0.01$). An overview of all correlation coefficients is given in table 1.

Variables	Mean	SD	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
(1) Purchase Intention	3.00	1.39	1.00					
(2) Perceived Social Status	6.47	1.32	- 0.02	1.00				
(3) Product Perception	3.79	0.47	0.44**	0.06	1.00			
(4) Social Value	3.57	0.56	0.34**	-0.03	0.39**	1.00		
(5) Green Value	3.74	0.67	0.45**	0.25**	0.45**	0.22**	1.00	
(6) Int_Green	24.44	7.28	0.25**	0.81**	0.31**	0.12	0.76**	1.00

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Table 1 Correlation Matrix

The visualization of the relationship between the model variables supports the results of the correlation analysis with poor correlation between the predictor and outcome variable and visible linear relationships between the mediator and moderator variables with the remaining variables (see figure 6). A further test of linearity between Perceived Social Status and Purchase Intention via comparison of the means indicated that both parameters are not related in a linear fashion with a non-significant result for the linearity test with $\alpha = .78 (> .05)$ but also non-significant deviation from linearity with $\alpha = .52 (> .05)$ (see Appendix A, table 3).

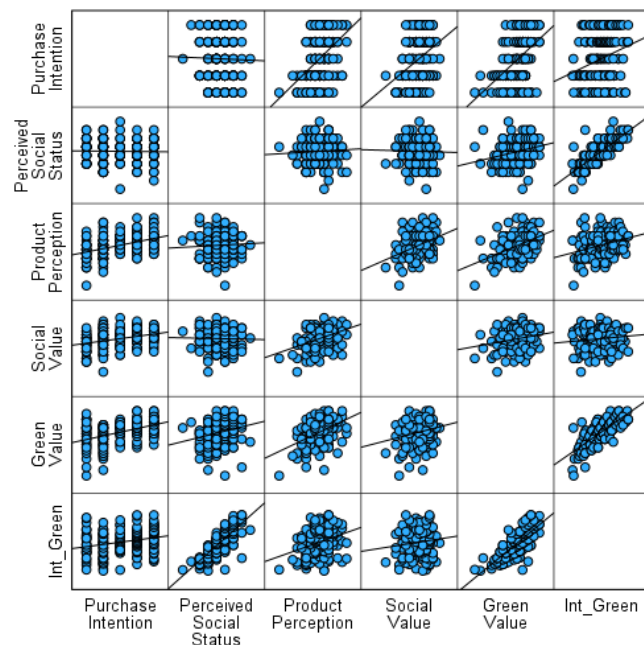


Figure 2 Scatterplots of the model variables with fitted linear line

As PROCESS does not check for regression assumptions, the necessary assumptions for regression models were tested as suggested by Field (2009) and according to the parallel mediation regression model assumptions tests conducted by Kane and Ashbaugh (2017). To test assumptions of residuals, the different regression models as included in PROCESS macro model 8 were recreated in SPSS. Since model 8 cannot be run outside the PROCESS macro, regression models 1-7 were recreated to run parallel mediation model assumptions tests (see Appendix). A violation of normality of residuals was detected and met by bootstrapping the inference for model coefficients with the PROCESS macro (Hayes, 2017). Moreover, PROCESS accounts for issues of normality by mean centering variables with issues of skewness and kurtosis, thus both the predictor Perceived Social Status and the moderator Green Value were mean-centered. Further analyses showed that linearity of residuals can only be partially assumed and that there are issues of heteroscedasticity. Issues of heteroscedasticity were met by using heteroscedasticity-consistent standard errors (HCSE) in PROCESS (Hayes, 2017). Lastly, major issues of multicollinearity were found for the predictor variable Subjective Social Status and the moderator variable Green Value, making it hard to ascertain the importance of each variable as a predictor for Purchase Intention individually (Field, 2009). Likewise, independence of errors could not be shown for the moderated mediation regression model 7 with a Durbin-Watson Test value of 0.74 (< 2) indicating issues of positive autocorrelation between the adjacent residuals of the model (cf., Field, 2009; see Appendix A, tables 4-5).

Comparison of the means

To analyze whether there is a significant difference in purchase intention based on the perceived social status of participants and assuming normal distribution of the data, an independent samples t-test was run. For this purpose, respondents were grouped into three different status classes according to their scores in Perceived Social Status. Participants with scores ranging from 2 to 5 were grouped into a “low status” group, score 6 was redefined as “middle status” and scores 7 to 10 comprised a “high status” group. The main focus was laid on the comparison of the means between the “low status” and “high status” group. Participants of the “low status” group showed a slightly lower purchase intention ($M = 2.79$, $SD = 1.38$) than study participants of the “high status” group ($M = 2.99$, $SD = 1.46$). However, this difference was not significant $t(131) = -0.71$, $p = .44$ and the effect size of the test is small with both Cohen’s d and Hedges’ $g = 0.24$. The assumption of homogeneity of variance is met.

Thus, no statistically significant difference could be shown in the purchase intention of secondhand clothes between low-status and high-status individuals. H1 must therefore be rejected.

Further pre-tests of the differences between “high status” and “low status” respondents in product perception of and social values attributed to secondhand clothes revealed non-significant results. Participants of the “low status” group reported a slightly lower Product Perception score ($M = 3.71$, $SD = 0.49$) than participants of the “high status” group ($M = 3.81$, $SD = 0.47$), $t(131) = -1.22$, $p = .76$. With regards to Social Value, the “low status” group again scored a slightly lower value ($M = 3.55$, $SD = 0.64$) than participants of the “high status” group ($M = 3.58$, $SD = 0.52$), $t(131) = -0.32$, $p = .21$. Thus, the pre-analysis showed no significant differences in the mediators Product Perception and Social Value between “high status” and “low status” participants.

Moderated parallel mediation regression analysis

The PROCESS macro model 8 was run to statistically test the hypothesized moderated parallel mediation model as it tests the indirect effect of a two-way interaction between a predictor and a moderator through up to ten parallel mediators (Hayes, 2012). Both indirect effects of Perceived Social Status on Purchase Intention, mediated via Product Perception and Social Value were checked, while simultaneously assessing potential moderation effects of Green Value both on the indirect effects and the direct effect of Perceived Social Status on Purchase Intention. Statistical significance of potential moderation effects was tested via the index of moderated mediation (Hayes, 2015). The conditioning values for probing interactions was set to ± 1 standard deviation (SD) from the mean. PROCESS macro model 8 was used with bias-corrected 95% confidence intervals ($n = 10,000$) and mean centered continuous predictor variables to deal with deviations from normality in the data. Moreover, a robust standard error (HC3) was used to counteract potential issues of heteroscedasticity. HC3 was chosen as a setting as it is deemed to be the best testing strategy when heteroscedasticity is encountered in linear regression models (Cribari-Neto et al., 2005).

The entire moderated parallel mediation model is statistically significant $F(5,171) = 17.30$, $p < .001$ and predicts 31% of the variance in purchase intention of secondhand clothes among the study participants ($R^2 = 0.31$).

However, the results of the analysis showed no statistically significant effect of the predictor variable Perceived Social Status on the mediators Product Perception (path a1: $B = -0.02$, $B_{SE} = 0.02$, $t = -0.76$, $p = .45$) and Social Value (path a2: $B = -0.03$, $B_{SE} = 0.03$, $t = -0.96$, $p = .34$) or on the dependent variable Purchase Intention (path c' = $B = -0.12$, $B_{SE} = 0.07$, $t = -1.71$, $p = .09$). Meanwhile, Product Perception (path b1: $B = 0.69$, $B_{SE} = 0.23$, $t = 3.00$, $p < .01$), and Social Value (path b2: $B = 0.43$, $B_{SE} = 0.17$, $t = 2.53$, $p < .05$) were both significant predictors of Purchase Intention. No mediation effects of either Product Perception or Social Value could be shown for the relationship between Perceived Social Status and Purchase Intention. H2 and H3 must therefore also be rejected.

The interaction term of Green Value with Perceived Social Status did not show a statistically significant moderation effect on the relation of Perceived Social Status and Product Perception (moderated path a1: $B = 0.01$, $B_{SE} = 0.04$, $t = 0.25$, $p = .81$) or Perceived Social Status and Social Value (moderated path a2: $B = 0.05$, $B_{SE} = 0.05$, $t = 1.01$, $p = .31$). Thus, paths a1 and a2 are not moderated. Likewise, no statistically significant moderation effect of Green Value on the relation of Perceived Social Status on Purchase Intention was found (moderated path c': $B = -0.02$, $B_{SE} = 0.08$, $t = -0.28$, $p = .78$) (see figure 3).

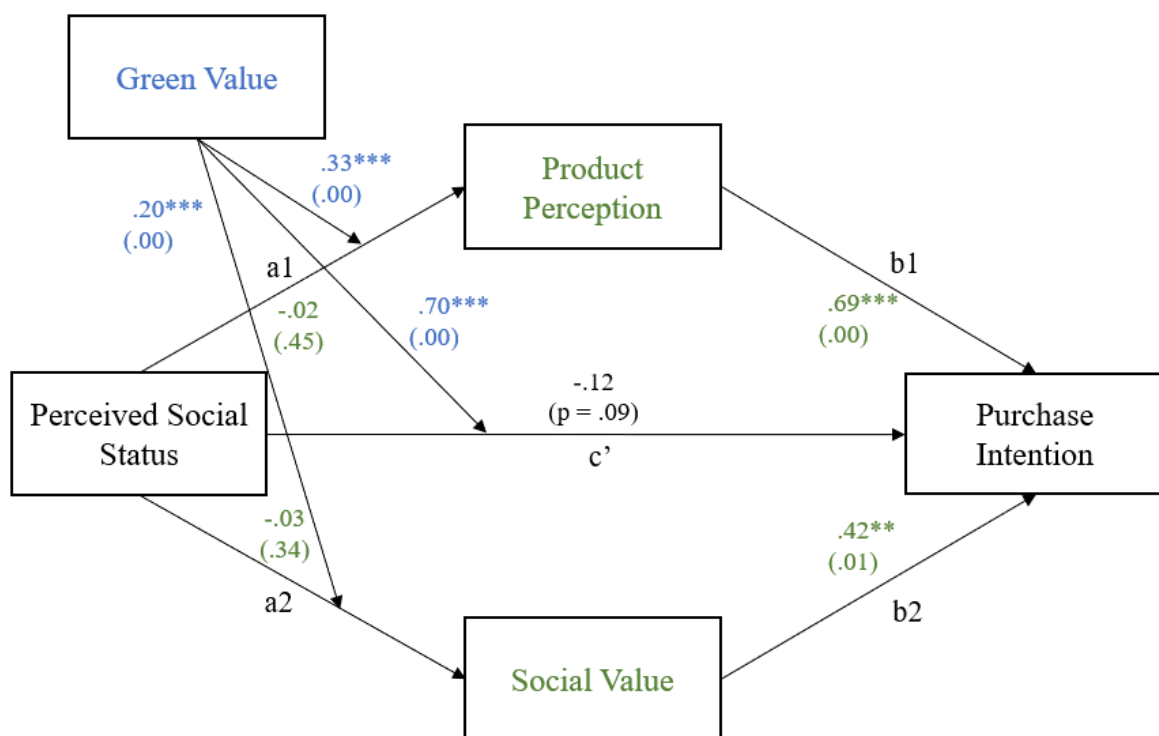
To assess how the indirect effects of Perceived Social Status on purchase intention via Product Perception and Social Value differ based on green consumption values, the effects were measured for three levels of Green Value ($-/+ 1$ SD from the mean and mean value): -1 SD (-0.67), mean (0.00), $+1$ SD (0.67). The indirect effect of Perceived Social Status on Purchase Intention via Product Perception ranged from $B = -0.02$ (95% CI¹ [-0.08 , 0.03]) to $B = -0.01$ (95% CI [-0.06 , 0.02]) and $B = -0.01$ (95% CI [-0.06 , 0.04]) for Green Value at -0.67 , 0.00 and 0.67 respectively. The indirect effect of Perceived Social Status on Purchase Intention via Social Value ranged from $B = -0.03$ (95% CI [-0.01 , 0.05]) to $B = -0.03$ (95% CI [-0.03 , 0.10]) and $B = -0.01$ (95% CI [-0.01 , 0.05]) for the three levels of Green Value $-/+ 1$ SD from the mean. Zero was included in the 95% confidence intervals at all instances, thus, both hypothesized indirect effects were not significant at any level of the moderator (Hayes, 2015).

¹ CI = confidence interval

	<i>B</i>	95% CI
Outcome: Product Perception		
Constant	3.79***	[3.72,3.85]
Status (mean centered)	−0.02	[−0.07,0.03]
Green (mean centered)	0.33***	[0.19,0.46]
Status * Green	0.01	[−0.06,0.08]
R^2	0.20	
$F(3, 173)$	7.90***	
Outcome: Social Value		
Constant	3.56***	[3.48,3.64]
Status (mean centered)	−0.03	[−0.10,0.03]
Green (mean centered)	0.20*	[0.06,0.34]
Status * Green	0.05	[−0.05,0.14]
R^2	0.06	
$F(3, 173)$	4.44**	
Outcome: Purchase Intention		
Constant	−1.13	[−2.92, 0.66]
Status (mean centered)	−0.12	[−0.26, 0.02]
ProdPerc	0.69**	[0.24, 1.15]
SocVa	0.43*	[0.09, 0.76]
Green (mean centered)	0.70***	[0.40, 0.99]
Status*Green	−0.22	[−0.18, 0.14]
R^2	0.31	
$F(5, 171)$	17.30***	
Index of moderated mediation		
Green (Status → ProdPerc → PurchInt)	0.01	[−0.05, 0.07]
Green (Status → SocVa → PurchInt)	0.02	[−0.02, 0.08]
<i>Note. N = 177. CI = confidence interval.</i>		
* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.		

Table 2 Moderated parallel mediation regression model

To test differences between the two conditional effects at different levels of the moderator Green Value, the significance of potential moderated mediation was further tested via the index of moderated mediation (Hayes, 2015). The index of moderated mediation was positive and non-significant for the Perceived Social Status-Product Perception relation with an index of 0.01 (95% CI [-0.04, 0.07]) and the Perceived Social Status-Social Value relation with an index of 0.02 (95% CI [-0.02, 0.08]). In both instances, zero was included within the CI indicating no significant moderated mediation. There is no statistically significant interaction effect and thus no moderation effect of Green Value on the effects of Perceived Social Status on Purchase Intention (cf. Duffy et al., 2012). H4, H4a, and H4b must therefore be rejected.



*. Coefficients are significant at a .05 level (2-tailed)
 **. Coefficients are significant at a .01 level (2-tailed)
 ***. Coefficients are significant at a .001 level (2-tailed)

Figure 3 PROCESS Model 8 Regression coefficients

6 Discussion

Based on the theory of conspicuous consumption, this study analyzed potential differences in the purchase intention of secondhand clothes between consumers based on their perceived social status. Moreover, the mediating roles of product perception and social values linked to secondhand clothes, as well as the moderating role of green consumption values were analyzed. The statistical analysis of the data revealed no statistically significant results for any of the proposed hypotheses.

First, it was found that there is no statistically significant difference in the intention to purchase secondhand clothes between “high status” and “low status” individuals. Even though “high status” respondents on average showed a slightly higher intention to buy secondhand clothes compared to the “low status” group, the results were not significant at a 95% confidence level. Thus, the differences in clothing preferences based on status as shown in previous research (e.g., Coelho & McClure, 1993; Piacentini & Mailer, 2004) could not be recreated in the context of secondhand fashion. The lack of statistical significance of the results might be explained by the lack of linearity between Perceived Social Status and Purchase Intention as well as the general lack of predictive power of the predictor variable in the focal regression model. This implies that perceived social status is not well suited to predict consumers’ intention to buy secondhand fashion. Moreover, the low variability of the status variable, with most responses ranging from status level “6” to “7”, could have contributed to a lack of statistically significant results. The reason for this uneven distribution could be that the survey did not reach people who perceived themselves to be of actual low social status. The majority of respondents had a background in higher education with 71.2 % of participants indicating a university degree as their highest form of education achieved. People with a high education are typically attributed with high social status (cf. Adler et al., 1994; Jackman & Jackman, 1973; Snibbe & Markus, 2005), which could explain that the distribution of the status answers was clustered at the upper end of the MacArthur Scale. The dominantly positive results of the MacArthur scale could also result from a positivity bias among study respondents, which can occur in self-reports about the own situation in life (Hoorens, 2014). In study scenarios, people usually tend to describe their outlook on life more positively than what would be their current reality (Hoorens, 2014), which might have led to the underrepresentation of low-status responses in the current study.

Regarding the relationship between Perceived Social Status, Product Perception and Social Value attributed to secondhand clothes, results suggest that there is no statistically significant difference between participants of differing status groups for the valuation of both mediators and no statistically significant mediation effect could be shown. This result could again be linked to the poor predictive power of Perceived Social Status and reinforces the assumption that perceived social status is not a fitting predictor of consumers' purchase intention of secondhand clothes. While the direct effect of Perceived Social Status on Purchase Intention was negative and non-significant, Product Perception and Social Value individually had a positive and significant effect on the intention to purchase secondhand clothes. Thus, the results support previous findings on the effects of social value (Kim et al., 2021a; Ramkumar et al., 2021) and quality perception of secondhand clothes (Hur, 2020) on consumers' purchase intention.

Lastly, the interaction term between Perceived Social Status and Green Value was not significant for the moderated parallel mediation model. However, Green Value on its own had a positive, statistically significant effect on both mediators and on Purchase Intention. Both the social values attributed to secondhand clothes and the overall product perception were positively influenced by green consumption values at a statistically significant level (see figure 3), indicating that environmentally concerned consumers evaluated secondhand clothes more favorably than consumers who did not state green consumption values. Thus, green consumption values seem to be a reliable predictor of the intention to purchase secondhand clothes and can positively influence consumers' perception of secondhand clothes. These results support prior findings on the role of environmental consciousness in the context of secondhand consumption (e.g., Edbring et al., 2016; Hur, 2020; Wilts et al., 2021), thereby highlighting the importance of green consumption values for consumers' decision to purchase secondhand clothes. The lack of moderation effects of green consumption values detectable in the overall parallel mediation model might once again be due to the ineptness of the predictor variable Perceived Social Status to determine potential changes in the outcome variable Purchase Intention.

Given the polarity in results of Purchase Intention with almost equal division of observations into a positive ($N_1 = 76$) or negative ($N_2 = 78$) intention to buy secondhand clothes, it is likely that factors, not included in the current research model determined participants' intention to purchase secondhand clothes.

Moreover, the detected violations of the regression assumption tests imply a biasedness of the proposed research model and a lack of generalizability of results for the targeted underlying population. It can therefore be assumed that the variables included in the research model were not a good fit to analyze the underlying research question. Here, it must also be considered that other factors which can also influence the secondhand shopping behavior of consumers like personal style preferences (e.g., Ferraro et al., 2016) or peer pressure (e.g., Herjanto & Hendriana, 2020) were not considered in the current study. As shown by previous research results, style, proneness to nostalgia, the wish for originality, and distancing oneself from mainstream consumption can also be important motivators for secondhand shopping (e.g., Guiot & Roux, 2010; Kim et al., 2021a; Wilts et al., 2021). Likewise, the reduced price of secondhand fashion products often is considered one of the main buying motivators for secondhand products according to past research results (e.g., Guiot & Roux, 2010; Hur, 2020; Joung & Park-Poaps, 2013) and was not addressed by the current research design. Moreover, the impact of brands on purchase intention of secondhand clothes was not considered in this study, with existing findings suggesting that status aware consumers choose secondhand products especially when they are of a preferred brand (e.g., Hur, 2020; Rulikova, 2020). Other underlying factors influencing consumers' buying decision could therefore have contributed to participants' stated intention to purchase secondhand clothes and should be considered for future research designs in the context of status-related secondhand fashion consumption.

Lastly, the sample size might not have been sufficient to test the assumed relationships between the variables entered in the model. A Monte Carlo power analysis based on the observed effect size of the coefficients in the parallel mediation model revealed that the statistical power of the model only yielded a power level of $\beta = .10$ (Schoemann et al., 2022) instead of an ideal power level of $\beta = .80$ (Field, 2009). A bigger sample size might have led to more significant results.

7 Conclusion and Limitations

The results of the study suggest that there are no significant differences in the purchase intention of secondhand clothes based on the perceived social status of consumers. Moreover, no significant differences in the perception of the social values nor in the general product perception of secondhand clothes could be shown when comparing high- to low-status individuals. Adding to a growing body of literature on the influence of status consumption motives in the secondhand goods market, the current study suggests, that perceived social status does not play a role in the purchase decision process for buying secondhand clothes. Considering the positive effects of social values connected to the perception of secondhand clothes on purchase intention, the study provides further statistical evidence of the positive ethical value linked to secondhand products. Like previous research findings suggest, consumers in the current study did connect secondhand clothes with a positive social impact (cf. Guiot & Roux, 2010), while no negative effects due to stigmatized associations with poorness could be detected. These results are especially interesting, considering the rising trend of ethical consumption in the fashion industry (cf. Archer et al., 2022). Moreover, participants of the study overall perceived secondhand clothes to be of good and reliable quality. Together with the results on social value, these findings indicate that secondhand products are generally well perceived and not stigmatized by respondents of the current study. Furthermore, the lack of statistical influence of perceived social status on product perception could be an indicator that consumers are not concerned with threats to their own status when contemplating to purchase secondhand clothes. Lastly, as suggested by previous research (e.g., Borusiak et al., 2020; Edbring et al., 2016; Guiot & Roux, 2010; Yan et al., 2015), the importance of green consumption values on the intention to purchase secondhand fashion products could be statistically shown. This highlights the importance of positioning secondhand clothes as green and sustainable products for future marketing strategies. Moreover, the connection between green consumption values and conspicuous consumption in the context of consumers' secondhand purchasing behavior should be reexamined by future research. This could yield interesting insights into how the consumption of secondhand products is influenced by consumers' wish to showcase sustainable consumption behavior to gain social reputation (cf. Costa Pinto et al., 2019).

To better understand the role of status signaling in secondhand consumption, future research could for instance investigate potential effects of competitive altruism (cf. Costa Pinto et al., 2019; Griskevicius et al., 2010; Hardy & Van Vugt, 2006) and prosocial status signaling (Beall et al., 2021; Sexton & Sexton, 2014) on consumers' decision to purchase secondhand goods.

However, the study also has its limitations. First, the generalizability of the results are questionable due to the comparatively small sample size and relatively homogenous composition of the study participants with almost two thirds of participants indicating a background of higher education. Together with the skewed distribution of the perceived social status scale, the status perception of the study participants likely was relatively homogeneous, making it difficult to capture and analyze the differences between high- and low-status consumer groups with sufficient group sizes. To determine the exact effects of status perception on secondhand shopping behavior, additional research should be conducted with study participants of a more diverse social background. This way more dispersed results could be gathered, making the groups of "high" versus "low" social status better comparable and increasing the validity of the results. Alternatively, an experimental manipulation of status as done by multiple researchers in the past (cf., Griskevicius et al., 2010; Mazzocco et al., 2012; Rucker & Galinsky, 2008) could yield more promising results than the measurement of perceived social status via the MacArthur scale. This way, participants can be primed to perceive themselves to be of high or low social status respectively, therefore making results more clearly differentiated and avoiding the cumulation of status scores around the middle/upper part of the status scale.

Moreover, while the MacArthur scale is a good representation of individuals' perceived status (Adler et al., 2000; Chen et al., 2022; Hoebel et al., 2015), it does not necessarily imply differences in conspicuous consumption preferences between people of different status scores. Previous research suggests that the wish for conspicuous consumption can fluctuate between consumers of the same status group (Han et al., 2010). Moreover, not all low-status consumers are driven by their desire to belong to the mainstream, with some consumers actively choosing an individualistic style to cope with the restrictions of their lower socioeconomic status (Hamilton, 2009). Likewise, consumers of a high and low social status alike could have been opposed to purchasing secondhand products due to their preference for new clothing items (cf. Edbring et al., 2016).

The purchase of clothing is a highly personal and subjective buying decision (Silva et al., 2021) which is closely linked to consumers' self-images (Piacenti & Mailer, 2004), thus study participants might have held different views on secondhand fashion, regardless of their perceived status indication and individual style preferences might have influenced the results of the study. Controlling for participants' preferences for conspicuous fashion consumption might have added more clarity on potential differences in product preferences between consumers within and across different levels of perceived social status. For instance, the status consumption scale developed by Eastman, Goldsmith, and Flynn (1999) could have given insights on the importance of status on participants' purchase intention as it directly measures consumers' wish for status consumption.

Moreover, rerunning the study in a different cultural setting might have garnered different results. Past research has shown that the cultural background of consumers can determine differences in the value perception and purchase intention of secondhand clothing, with western cultures holding a more preferable view of secondhand clothes (Xu et al., 2014). Thus, consumers' relative status perception as well as potential prejudices held against secondhand clothes might still play a role in the decision process to purchase secondhand clothes in a different cultural setting. For instance, for low-status consumers in Czech Republic and Slovenia, secondhand clothing can still be seen as symbolic of being unable to provide for the own family due to the restrictions experienced during the socialist era of both countries (Habinc, 2018; Rulikova, 2020). Contrary, research in the Jordanian secondhand clothing market suggests that consumers of high social status can be embarrassed of shopping used clothes, feel stressed out by the secondhand shopping experience out of fear of being recognized and will try to hide their secondhand purchases at all costs, sometimes even stating fake store names as source of their purchase (Na'amneh & Al Husban, 2012). Thus, the influence of perceived social status on consumer behavior in the secondhand market seems to vary based on individuals' national identity. It has further been shown that the cultural orientation of consumers can influence their view on sustainable consumption (cf. de Morais et al., 2021) which in turn might influence their openness towards buying products secondhand. Rerunning the study with a sample of international study participants might thus garner clearer insights into the potential role of perceived social status on consumers' shopping preferences in the market for secondhand goods.

Furthermore, it is possible that study results were distorted by participants' assessment of the clothes displayed in the picture of the online secondhand store at the beginning of the survey. While participants did not get instructions to assess the rest of the survey questions based on the products shown at the beginning of the study, they might still have unconsciously linked their impression of secondhand clothes to this first visual stimulus. Research has shown that the information conveyed through pictures is processed more efficiently than textual information and can more readily be recalled (Hockley, 2008). A combination of visual and textual information thereby increases individuals' ability to store and recall new information (Blanco et al., 2010). Since participants of the study were asked to state their purchase intention, right after having seen the picture of an online secondhand store at the beginning of the study, they could have associated the purchase of secondhand clothes with the products shown during the introduction of the study. Thus, respondents might have stated their intention to purchase secondhand products based on their evaluation of the introductory product images rather than based on their general willingness to purchase secondhand clothes. Future research designs could use multiple versions of visual stimuli and randomize the pictures shown to study participants to avoid potential biases towards or against secondhand fashion based on the study design.

Lastly, the setting of the survey as an online buying scenario on a resale platform might have played a role in participants' stated intention to purchase secondhand fashion items. Recent research results in the secondhand market suggest that different secondhand retail channels attract different customer segments (Zaman et al., 2019). Secondhand shoppers can vary according to their preferred shopping channel with online shoppers showing the highest ecological and fashion consciousness among secondhand shoppers whereas the value of anti-materialism was highest amongst thrift store shoppers (Zaman et al., 2019). Moreover, the online shopping setting might have triggered associations of distrust against purchasing secondhand clothes amongst study participants. Due to the experience qualities linked to fashion items, which can only be evaluated by consumers after purchasing the products, the online purchase of clothes is linked to a high level of uncertainty for consumers (Grabner-Kraeuter, 2002). This risk becomes even more palpable in the secondhand retail market due to the uncertainty about the trustworthiness of the reseller (Wilts et al., 2021) and the integrity of the product (Edbring et al., 2016).

Here, comprehensive information and trust in the seller can act as important mechanisms to reduce consumer uncertainty in online shopping (Grabner-Kraeuter, 2002). In the case of secondhand clothes trust can for instance be built by providing information about the products' history (Kim et al., 2021b). However, participants of the study had no information about the source, quality, and history of the showcased products, which could have led to heightened levels of distrust towards purchasing secondhand products in general, potentially distorting the evaluation of the latter survey questions. Thus, rerunning the current study based on a different shopping scenario might lead to differing study results. Future research could analyze the influence of consumers' relative status position on their value perception and purchase intention of secondhand fashion items in the context of differing secondhand sales channels.

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Appendix

Test of Linearity between the predictor and outcome variable

			ANOVA Table				
			Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Purchase Intention * Perceived Social Status	Between Groups	(Combined)	12,319	8	1,540	,789	,613
		Linearity	,159	1	,159	,082	,776
		Deviation from Linearity	12,160	7	1,737	,891	,515
	Within Groups		327,681	168	1,950		
	Total		340,000	176			

Table 3 Test of linearity via comparison of the means

Moderated parallel mediation model assumptions tests

To test assumptions of residuals, the different regression models as included in PROCESS were recreated in SPSS:

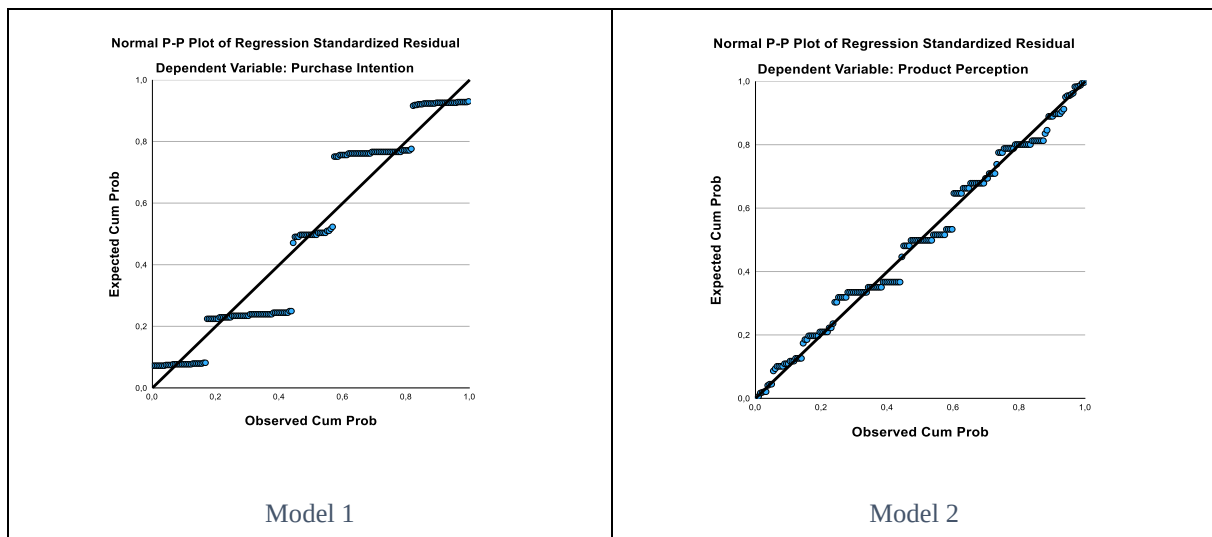
- *Model 1 (c'-path)*: linear regression of Perceived Social Status on Purchase Intention
- *Model 2 (a1-path)*: linear regression of Perceived Social Status on Product Perception
- *Model 3 (a2-path)*: linear regression of Perceived Social Status on Social Value
- *Model 4 (a1-, a2-, c'-path)*: linear regression of Perceived Social Status, Social Value and Product Perception on Purchase Intention
- *Model 5 (moderated a1-path)*: linear regression of Perceived Social Status, Product Perception, Green value, and the interaction term of Green and Status on Purchase Intention
- *Model 6 (moderated a2-path)*: linear regression of Perceived Social Status, Social Value, Green value, and the interaction term of Green and Status on Purchase Intention
- *Model 7 (moderated a1, a2, c'-path)*: linear regression of Perceived Social Status, Product Perception, Social Value, Green value, and the interaction term of Green and Status on Purchase Intention

Normality of residuals

Normality of residuals could not be shown when plotting the residuals of Model 1-7 against a normal distribution line (see figure 4). However, the sample size was bigger than 30 thus normality can be assumed under the Central Limit Theorem (Field, 2009). The assumption of normality of residual distribution was therefore partially supported. Moreover, in PROCESS, the assumption of normality of residuals is met by bootstrapping the inference for model coefficients (Hayes, 2017).

Linearity and Homoscedasticity of residuals

The Loess curve was fitted to the distribution of the regression standardized predicted and residual values to assess linearity of the variables. Linearity can only be assumed partially since the Loess curve centers close to zero but shows major disruptions instead of creating a linear straight line. Moreover, homoscedasticity of the residuals could not be shown as there is a pattern detectable in the dispersion of the standardized residuals. There are issues of heteroscedasticity as the residuals are not randomly scattered around zero for the range of the predicted values (see figure 5). However, PROCESS accounts for heteroscedasticity by using “heteroscedasticity-consistent covariance estimators” (Hayes, 2017, p. 71). HC3 was chosen as setting for the heteroscedasticity-consistent standard errors to account for issues of heteroscedasticity (cf. Hayes & Cai, 2007).



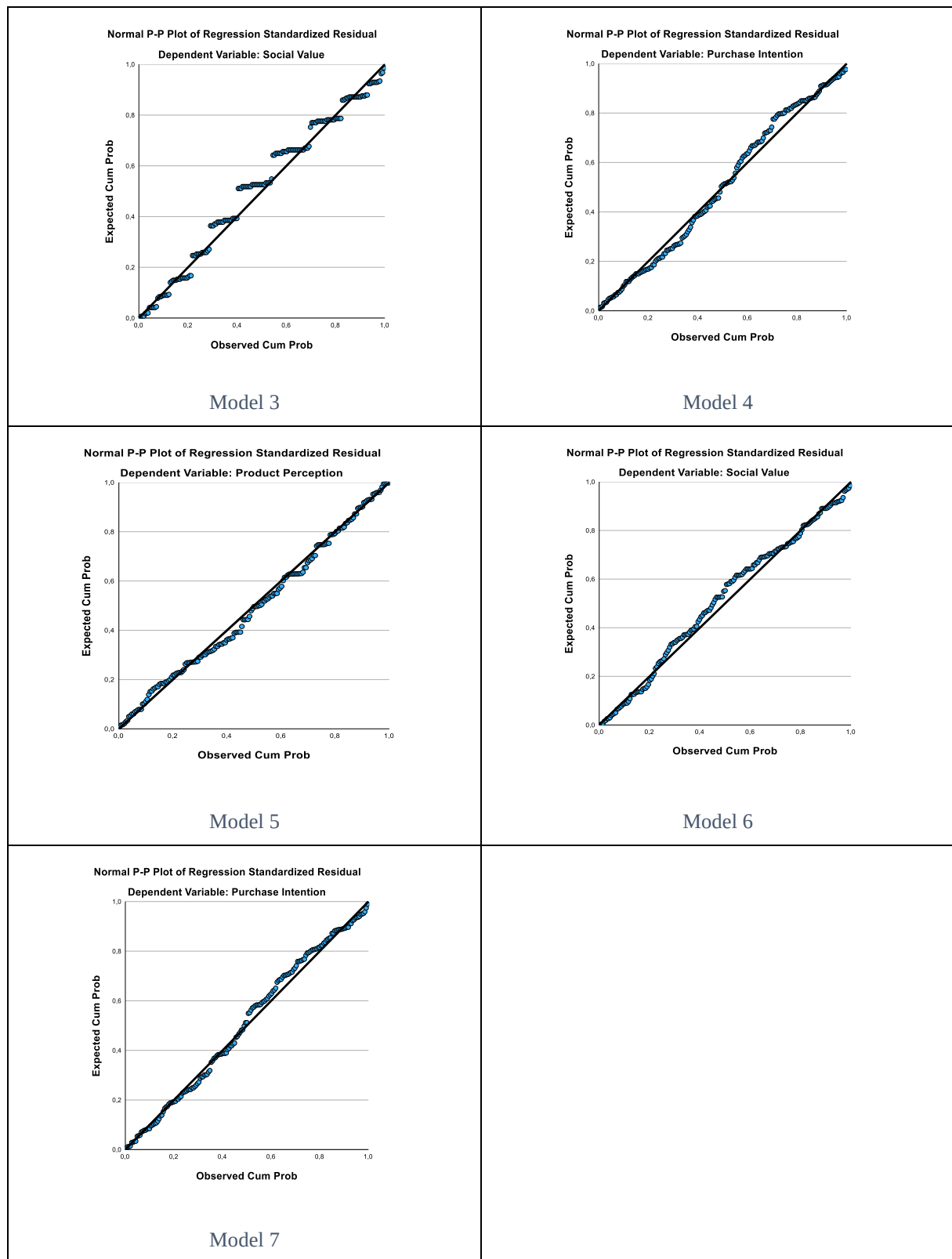
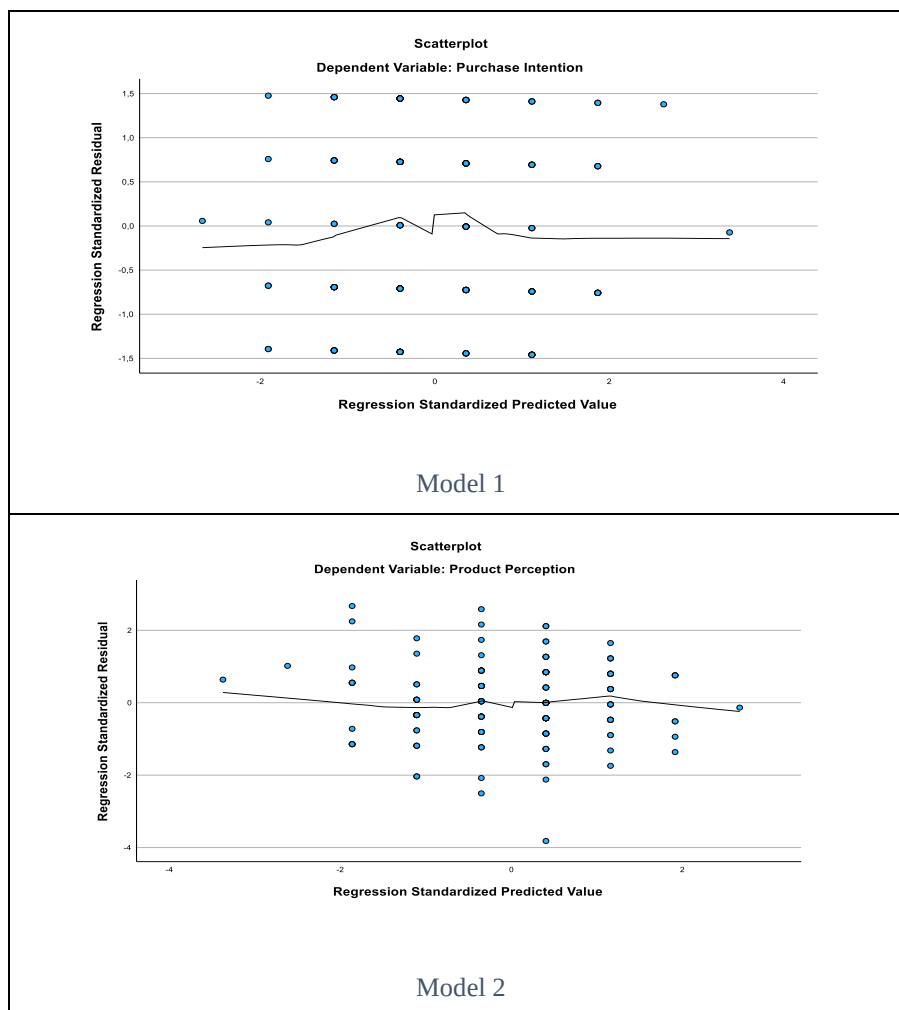
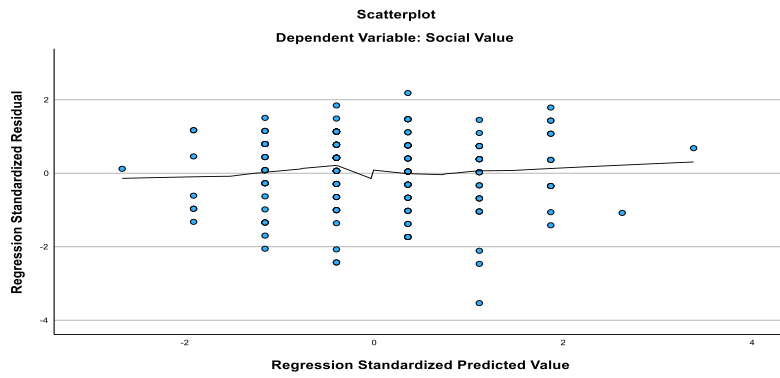


Figure 4 Normality of residuals for regression models 1-7

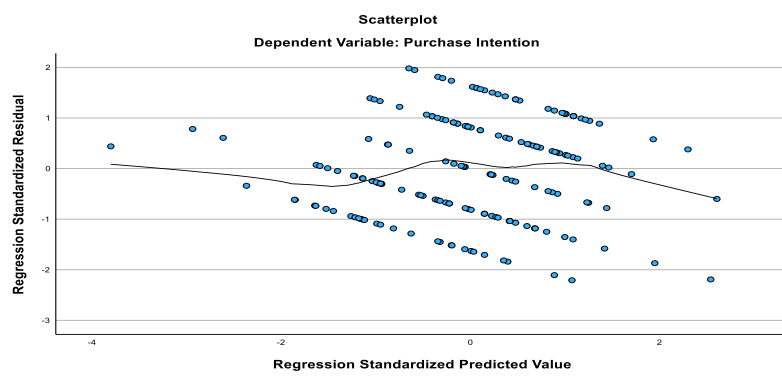
No multicollinearity

Issues of multicollinearity were checked by looking at the Variance Inflation Factors (VIF) for Model 4 and Model 7 as they contain all variables entered in the parallel mediation model and the moderated parallel mediation model run in PROCESS. For Model 4 no issues of multicollinearity were detected with relatively small values of up to $VIF = 1.18$ and a mean VIF of 1.12, indicating that there are no issues of multicollinearity (Field, 2009). For Model 7 major issues of multicollinearity were detected with relatively high VIF values of up to $VIF = 63.93$ for the interaction term of Subjective Social Status and Green Value. The predictor variable Subjective Social Status showed a VIF of 29.25 and the moderator variable Green Value showed a VIF of 23.67 indicating that the residuals of both are highly correlated. While the high VIF of the interaction term can be explained by adding the combined term of the correlated variables into the model again, both VIF values individually indicate major multicollinearity issues, making it hard to ascertain the importance of each variable as a predictor for Purchase Intention individually.

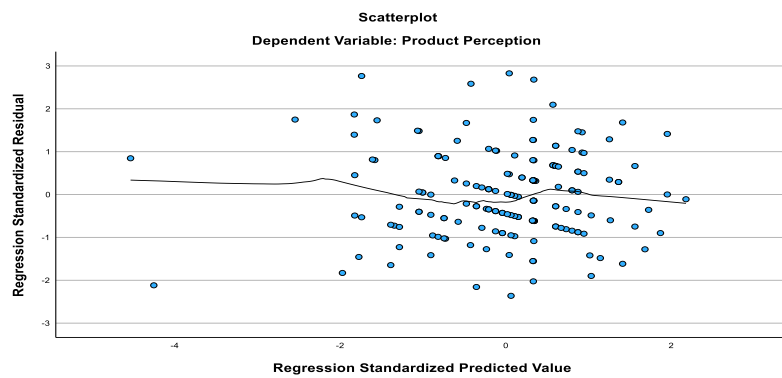




Model 3



Model 4



Model 5

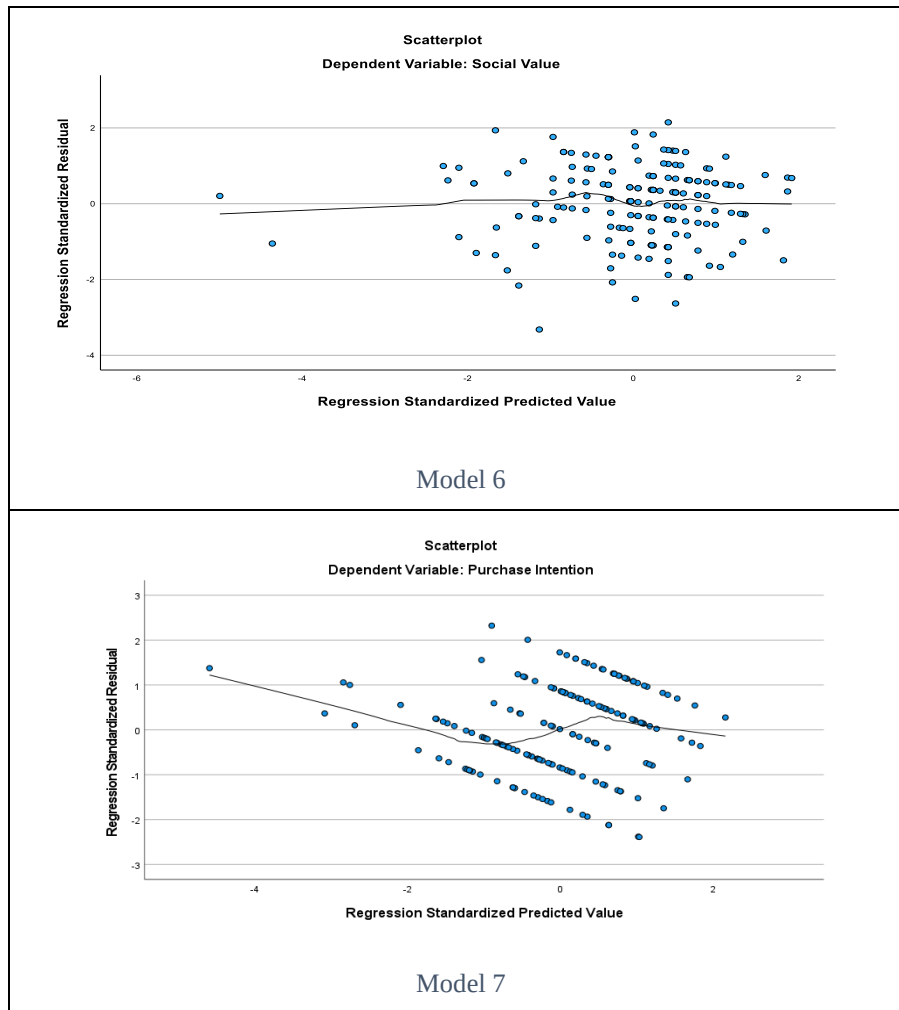


Figure 5 Plot of standardized predicted and residual values for models 1-7

Independence of errors (no autocorrelation)

Independence of errors was again checked only for Model 4 and 7 to detect potential issues of autocorrelation. Therefore, the Durbin-Watson Test value was checked. For Model 4 the Durbin-Watson Test value is 0.73 (< 2) indicating positive correlation of the variables entered in the model (see table 4). For Model 7 the Durbin-Watson Test value is 0.74 (< 2) indicating positive correlation of the variables entered in the model (see table 5). Both results indicate potential issues of autocorrelation (Field, 2009).

Model Summary ^b					
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	,480 ^a	,230	,217	1,230	,725

a. Predictors: (Constant), Social Value, Perceived Social Status, Product Perception

b. Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention

Table 4 Durbin-Watson Test Model 4

Model Summary ^b					
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	,561 ^a	,315	,295	1,167	,738

a. Predictors: (Constant), Int_Green, Social Value, Product Perception, Green Value, Perceived Social Status

b. Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention

Table 5 Durbin-Watson Test Model 7

Abstract:

Growing consumer demand for sustainable and ethical fashion has led to a surge in popularity of secondhand clothes in recent years and has substantially increased the importance of the secondhand market for the future of the fashion industry. Still, the stigma of pre-owned clothes as a product for the poor who cannot afford to buy new fashion items is deterring many consumers from shopping secondhand. Conspicuous consumption motives that entail consumers' wish to signal status through the ostentatious consumption of products and services can increase consumer biases against secondhand fashion items and vary according to consumers' relative status position in society. Due to the sparsity of existing literature on the influences of conspicuous consumption motives on consumers' shopping behavior in the secondhand fashion market, the present paper explores potential influences of perceived social status on consumers' attitude towards and purchase intention of secondhand clothes. To further understand the effects of perceived social status on the level of stigmatization linked to secondhand fashion items, proven influencing factors on the secondhand purchasing process in the form of social values, product perception, and green consumption values are incorporated in the current research model. The quantitative analysis of the research model shall provide new insights into the purchase decision process of different secondhand customer segments and add to the growing body of knowledge on consumer behavior in the secondhand fashion market.

Durch die zunehmende Nachfrage von Konsument*innen nach nachhaltiger und ethischer Mode, hat der Markt für Secondhandkleidung in den letzten Jahren zunehmend an Beliebtheit gewonnen und ist heute von zentraler Bedeutung für die Zukunft der Modebranche. Dennoch hält das bestehende Stigma von Secondhandkleidung als Produkt für einkommensschwache Bevölkerungsschichten, die sich keine neuen Modeartikel leisten können, noch immer viele Konsument*innen davon ab, selbst gebrauchte Kleidung zu kaufen. Das Phänomen des Geltungskonsums, welches den öffentlichkeitswirksamen Konsum von Gütern und Dienstleistungen mit dem Ziel den eigenen Status zu signalisieren beschreibt, kann dieses wahrgenommene Stigma von Secondhandkleidung verstärken und hängt eng mit dem relativen sozialen Status von Konsument*innen zusammen. Da die Einflüsse des Geltungskonsums auf das Konsumentenverhalten im Markt für Secondhandkleidung bisher unzureichend erforscht sind, werden im Rahmen dieser Masterarbeit potentielle Auswirkungen des subjektiven sozialen Status von Konsument*innen auf deren Produktwahrnehmung und Kaufentscheidung von Secondhandkleidung erforscht. Um die Auswirkungen des subjektiven sozialen Status auf den Grad der wahrgenommenen Stigmatisierung der Produkte zu verstehen, werden im aktuellen Forschungsmodell zudem die mit Secondhandkleidung verbundenen sozialen Werte, die allgemeine Produktwahrnehmung, sowie Einflüsse des Umweltbewusstseins von Konsument*innen auf den Kaufentscheidungsprozess im Secondhandmarkt untersucht. Die quantitative Analyse des Forschungsmodells soll neue Erkenntnisse über den Kaufentscheidungsprozess verschiedener Kundensegmente im Secondhand Handel gewinnen und den Wissensschatz im Bereich des Konsumentenverhaltens im Markt für Secondhandkleidung bereichern.