

# Personal Brand and Consumer Purchase Intention: The Mediating Role of Perceived Emotional Value

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## Abstract

*This study investigates the relationship between personal brand and consumer purchase intention, with a specific focus on the mediating role of perceived emotional value. In today's highly competitive marketplace, personal branding has emerged as a powerful tool for influencing consumer behavior. While previous research has explored the direct impact of personal brand on purchase intention, the mechanisms through which it exerts this influence remain less clear. This study proposes that perceived emotional value—a consumer's emotional response and attachment to a brand—plays a critical mediating role in this process. Data were collected from telecommunication of large- and mid-sized companies in China. Survey data from 271 team members were tested using PLS-SEM modeling analysis. By examining a sample of consumers across various industries, the study finds that personal branding significantly enhances purchase intention when consumers perceive emotional value in the brand. These findings highlight the importance of emotional engagement in personal branding strategies and suggest that brands seeking to increase consumer purchase intentions should prioritize cultivating emotional connections. The research offers theoretical contributions to the understanding of personal branding and practical insights for marketers looking to optimize consumer decision-making through emotional value creation.*

## Introduction

In the increasingly digital and interconnected marketplace, personal branding has gained prominence as a strategic tool for individuals to establish distinct identities and build meaningful relationships with their target audiences (Ma & Li, 2022). Unlike traditional corporate or product branding, which focuses on the values and characteristics of a company or its offerings, personal branding is centered on the persona, reputation, and unique attributes of an individual. From social media influencers and public figures to entrepreneurs and business leaders, personal brands serve as powerful assets in influencing consumer perceptions and behaviors. Research has shown that strong personal brands enhance consumer trust, credibility, and loyalty, which can directly impact consumer purchase intention, or the likelihood of a consumer choosing to purchase a product or service associated with a personal brand (Aiello, G. et al., 2022).

Despite the acknowledged importance of personal branding, much of the existing literature has concentrated on its direct effects on consumer attitudes and behaviors. However, the mediating factors that explain how and why personal branding drives consumer purchase intention are less understood. One critical but underexplored mechanism in this relationship is perceived emotional value (Akoglu & Özbek, 2021). Emotional value refers to the psychological and emotional benefits that consumers associate with a

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brand, such as feelings of trust, admiration, attachment, or even joy (Kim & Sung, 2009). It is the emotional connection that forms when a personal brand resonates deeply with a consumer's emotions, beliefs, and desires. This study posits that perceived emotional value plays a pivotal mediating role in the relationship between personal brand strength and consumer purchase intention, suggesting that personal brands that evoke stronger emotional responses are more likely to drive consumer purchasing behavior.

The core hypothesis of this study is that while personal branding can directly influence purchase intention, its impact is significantly enhanced when consumers perceive a high level of emotional value (Dörnyei & Lunardo, 2021). For example, when an influencer or entrepreneur's personal brand conveys authenticity, relatability, or shared values, consumers are more likely to form an emotional attachment to that brand. This attachment can, in turn, increase their intention to make a purchase. In contrast, personal brands that fail to evoke emotional engagement may struggle to convert awareness into actual consumer action, despite their visibility or expertise.

This research addresses two critical questions: How does personal branding influence consumer purchase intention? and What role does perceived emotional value play in mediating this relationship? By examining these questions through a detailed empirical analysis, this study aims to fill a gap in the literature by offering a more comprehensive understanding of the emotional drivers behind consumer behavior in the context of personal branding.

The study will utilize a quantitative approach to assess the impact of personal brand strength on purchase intention, with perceived emotional value as a mediating variable. Data will be collected through surveys targeting consumers who interact with various personal brands, such as social media influencers, entrepreneurs, and professionals. The results will be analyzed using structural equation modeling (SEM) to test the hypothesized relationships.

By focusing on the mediating role of perceived emotional value, this study offers both theoretical and practical contributions. On a theoretical level, it provides a deeper understanding of how emotional factors bridge the gap between personal brand perception and consumer decision-making. On a practical level, the findings can guide marketers, influencers, and personal brand strategists in crafting branding strategies that go beyond visibility and credibility, emphasizing emotional engagement as a critical driver of consumer purchase intentions. Understanding the emotional dimensions of personal branding is essential for building brands that not only capture attention but also foster long-lasting consumer loyalty and drive sales.

## Literature review and hypotheses development

### Personal brand and consumer purchase intention

Personal branding has a profound impact on consumer purchase intention by leveraging several psychological, emotional, and social factors (Petraavičiūtė, K. et al., 2021). One of the primary ways personal brands positively influence purchase intention is through the creation of trust and credibility. When individuals such as entrepreneurs, influencers, or professionals consistently demonstrate expertise and

authenticity, they establish a foundation of trust, which makes consumers more likely to consider their recommendations and purchase the products or services they endorse. Personal brands also create strong emotional connections with consumers by sharing relatable stories, values, or experiences, allowing consumers to feel personally aligned with the brand (Jain et al., 2017). This emotional engagement fosters a sense of attachment and loyalty, driving higher purchase intentions.

Authenticity plays a crucial role in this process, as consumers are drawn to personal brands that appear genuine and transparent. Authenticity enhances the emotional bond between the brand and the consumer, making it more likely for the consumer to trust the brand's recommendations. In addition, personal brands benefit from social proof, where the visible support or admiration of others reinforces the brand's influence. Consumers tend to follow the choices of individuals they admire, further increasing the likelihood of making a purchase based on the brand's endorsements (Wiedmann et al., 2009). Personal branding also fosters a sense of community among followers, encouraging them to support the brand by purchasing products or services as a way to strengthen their sense of belonging.

Moreover, personal branding increases visibility and awareness, making it easier for consumers to be exposed to the individual's products or services. This heightened visibility translates into greater familiarity, which in turn boosts purchase intention. Personal brands also shape consumer identity by positioning themselves as aspirational figures. Consumers often make purchase decisions based on their desire to align their identity with that of the personal brand, whether it's through adopting similar values or lifestyles (Hung et al., 2011). Finally, when personal brands advocate for ethical or social causes that align with the consumer's values, such as sustainability or diversity, consumers are more likely to make purchases as a way to support both the individual and the cause they represent. Overall, personal branding exerts a powerful influence on consumer purchase intention by fostering trust, emotional connections, and value alignment, making it a critical tool for influencing consumer behavior. Therefore, we propose the following hypothesis :

H1: Personal brand was positively related to consumer purchase intention

#### Personal brand and perceived emotional value

Personal branding has a significant impact on perceived emotional value by fostering emotional connections, trust, and authenticity. One of the key ways personal brands enhance emotional value is through authenticity and transparency. When personal brands communicate honestly and share personal stories, they build genuine connections with their audience, making consumers feel more emotionally engaged (Saeed et al., 2013). Authenticity reduces the distance between the brand and its followers, allowing them to connect on a personal level. Relatability also plays a crucial role, as personal brands that align with consumers' values and experiences evoke stronger emotional responses. When consumers see their own beliefs reflected in the brand, it deepens their attachment, increasing the perceived emotional value.

Storytelling is another powerful tool that personal brands use to engage emotionally with their audience. By sharing personal journeys, challenges, and triumphs, brands create narratives that resonate with

consumers, fostering empathy and emotional engagement. This emotional connection is further strengthened when personal brands create a sense of personal relationship with their audience (Kaufmann et al., 2016). Unlike corporate brands, personal brands offer a one-to-one connection, making consumers feel as though they are interacting with someone they know, which increases emotional attachment and perceived emotional value.

Vulnerability is another factor that enhances emotional authenticity. When personal brands express vulnerability and share their struggles, they humanize themselves, making it easier for consumers to connect on a deeper emotional level. This sense of closeness and mutual understanding elevates the emotional bond, enhancing the brand's emotional value. Personal branding also creates a sense of belonging by fostering a community where consumers feel part of a larger movement or group (Knight et al., 2007). This sense of community amplifies emotional bonds, leading to higher emotional value as consumers derive emotional satisfaction from being part of a shared experience.

Additionally, personal brands that align with consumers' identities or ideals further increase perceived emotional value. When consumers see a brand as representative of their own beliefs or aspirations, they develop a strong emotional attachment, viewing the brand as a symbol of their identity. Finally, personal brands that inspire or empower their audience create a positive emotional impact, leaving consumers feeling motivated and uplifted. This emotional empowerment strengthens their attachment to the brand and raises the emotional value they associate with it (Jun et al., 2012). In summary, personal branding enhances perceived emotional value by building trust, emotional connections, and a sense of belonging, making consumers more emotionally invested in the brand. Therefore, we propose the following hypothesis:

H2: Personal brand was positively related to perceived emotional value

#### Perceived emotional value and consumer purchase intention

Perceived emotional value plays a crucial role in positively impacting consumer purchase intention by fostering emotional attachment, trust, loyalty, and alignment with personal identity. When consumers feel emotionally connected to a brand, they are more likely to prioritize that brand over others, as the emotional bond creates a deeper sense of loyalty and increases the likelihood of repeat purchases. This emotional connection builds trust, as consumers are more confident that the brand will meet their expectations, reducing perceived risk and enhancing purchase intent (Shaukat & Farid, 2023). Moreover, when a brand aligns with consumers' personal values, beliefs, or aspirations, it becomes a tool for self-expression, further increasing the likelihood of purchase. Consumers are more inclined to buy products that reinforce their identity, as the brand provides emotional fulfillment, whether through nostalgia, joy, or inspiration. This emotional satisfaction also reduces price sensitivity, as consumers are willing to pay a premium for the emotional rewards the brand offers. Additionally, perceived emotional value influences decision-making, as consumers often make purchases based on emotions rather than purely rational considerations, leading to quicker decisions and impulse buying (Sheng et al., 2022). Finally, when consumers feel emotionally invested in a brand, they are more likely to advocate for it, driving word-of-mouth and influencing others' purchase intentions. Overall, the emotional value associated with a brand not only enhances consumer attachment

but also increases their purchase intention by making the brand feel more meaningful and fulfilling in their lives. Therefore, we propose the following hypothesis:

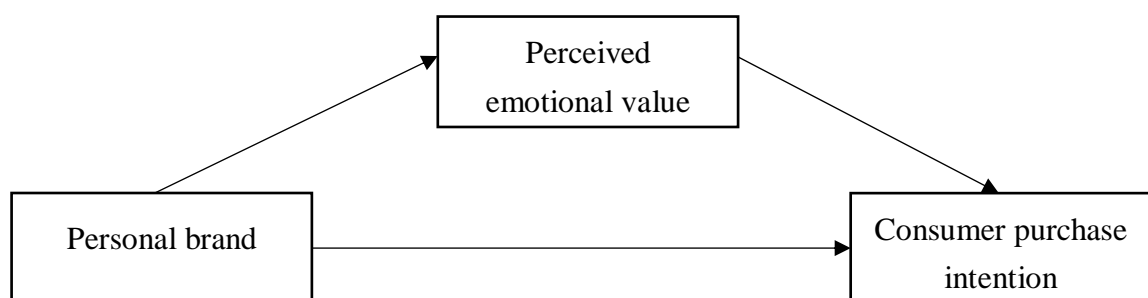
H3: Perceived emotional value was positively related to consumer purchase intention

The mediating role of Perceived emotional value

Perceived emotional value mediates the relationship between personal branding and consumer purchase intention by acting as the emotional link that strengthens the connection between the consumer and the brand. When personal brands evoke emotions such as trust, admiration, empowerment, or joy, these feelings enhance the perceived emotional value of the brand. This emotional value, in turn, influences the consumer's likelihood of making a purchase. Personal brands often create strong emotional connections by being authentic, sharing personal stories, or aligning with consumers' values, which elevates the brand's emotional appeal. As consumers feel emotionally connected, they develop a sense of loyalty and trust, making them more likely to purchase from the brand (Zhou et al., 2020). The emotional value derived from these connections also helps consumers feel confident in their purchase decisions, as it reduces hesitation and increases their belief in the brand's reliability. Additionally, personal brands that align with a consumer's identity or values further increase perceived emotional value, making the consumer more inclined to purchase in order to express their own beliefs. Ultimately, perceived emotional value enhances consumer purchase intention by turning emotional connections into actionable behaviors, with consumers more willing to support brands that fulfill their emotional needs and align with their personal values (Chi et al., 2009). Therefore, we propose the following hypothesis:

H4: Perceived emotional value mediated the relationship between personal brand and consumer purchase intention

Figure 1: Proposed conceptual framework



## Methodology

### *Data and methods*

The target population was the employees working in the telecommunications industry in China. The researchers collected data from the employees in a non-artificial environment and minimized interference

by confirming to the respondents that their information would be kept confidential if they did not wish to provide it to the research. The survey was conducted in the form of a self-administered questionnaire.

A total of 419 questionnaires were distributed to the sampled employees. After removing incomplete answers and matching the answers of the employees, a total of 367 questionnaires were obtained. Therefore, the actual sample size was 367, with a response rate of 87.5%. Most of the respondents were males 240 (65.4%), while 127 (34.6%) were females. A total of 145 (39.5%) respondents had 1-3 years of work experience, 101 (27.5%) respondents had 4-7 years of work experience, 76 (20.7%) respondents had 8-10 years of work experience, and 45 (12.3%) respondents had more than 10 years of work experience. Most of the employees belonged to the age group of 31-40 years 209 (57%), 101 (27.5%) respondents had the age group of 41-50 years, 57 (15.5%) respondents had the age group of 20-30 years, out of 367 respondents, most of the employees had degree qualification (249, 67.8%) and Master's degree qualification (118, 32.2%). The demographic information of the respondents is shown in Table 1:

**Table 1: demographic information of the respondents**

Demographic variables	Number	Percentage
Gender		
Male	240	65.4
Female	127	34.6
Age		
20-30	57	15.5
31-40	209	57
41-50	101	27.5
Educational level		
Degree	249	67.8
Master	118	32.2
Working experience		
1-3	145	39.5
4-7	101	27.5
8-10	76	20.7
Above 10 years	45	12.3

### *Measures*

The questionnaire was distributed to employees via an online form, which improved accessibility and encouraged a higher participation rate. In order to comply with ethical standards, all respondents were informed of the purpose of the study and their rights through an informed consent form. The form emphasized the voluntary nature of their participation and guaranteed the confidentiality of their responses. Respondents were required to sign the consent form before continuing to fill in the questionnaire to ensure

that they were fully aware of the terms of the study and the protection of their personal data. All constructs were measured using a five-point Likert scale. All measurement items were taken from past studies after studying the evolution of the variables of interest.

#### *Personal brand*

Personal brand and thriving were calculated with a Likert scale of five points ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The 4-item scale of Kiki Siantar was used for estimation of personal brand. An example includes “Kiki Siantar (@mmehuillet) always consistently displays the theme discussed in every photo on social media”.

#### *Perceived emotional value*

Emotional value was assessed using three items from Lin and Huang (2012). An example includes “Buying the green product instead of conventional products would feel like making a good personal contribution to something better.” The response scale ranged from 1 = “strongly disagree” to 5 = “strongly agree.”

#### *Consumer purchase intention*

Consumer purchase intention was examined by four items (Casaló, L. V. et al., 2017). An example includes “I think I will buy products or services recommended by this YouTuber.” The response scale ranged from 1 = “strongly disagree” to 5 = “strongly agree.”

#### *Data analysis*

Data were inspected for normality and multi-collinearity. The data followed a normal distribution. Multi-collinearity was not observed as the skewness, and kurtosis fall within the recommended range of  $\pm 1$  and  $\pm 3$ , respectively (Tabachnick et al., 2007). The values of variance inflation factor (VIF <10) and tolerance level (>0.1) among the constructs lie amid the acceptable limit.

For the data analysis, SPSS Smart-pls was used. Common method biases (CMB) were checked using the common latent factor and Harman's single factor test (HFT) (Podsakoff et al., 2012). According to HFT, a single factor describes lesser than 50% of the overall variation. Also, the common latent factor results reported slight variance because of CMV and hence no concern about CMB.

#### *Measurement model*

The research constructs' reliability was significantly higher than the minimal requirement of 0.70. Convergent validity (CV) was assessed using factor loadings which ranges from 0.73 to 0.98, which is more than the suggested norm of 0.70 (Bagozzi and Yi, 1988). The CV was also assessed via the average variance

extracted (AVE) (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988), which ranges from 0.55 to 0.68; it meets the 0.50 acceptance requirement (Refer Table 2).

**Table 2. Reliability, Factor loadings, and AVE.**

Construct	Indicators	Factor loadings	Cronbach's $\alpha$ /CR	AVE
Personal brand	PB1	0.83	0.86	0.55
	PB2	0.75		
	PB3	0.77		
	PB4	0.74		
Perceived emotional value	PEV1	0.81	0.82	0.58
	PEV2	0.88		
	PEV3	0.86		
Consumer purchase intention	CPI1	0.76	0.91	0.68
	CPI2	0.80		
	CPI3	0.90		
	CPI4	0.82		

The correlation between the independent constructs was less than 0.8, which indicates discriminant validity (Brown, 2014). Also, the square root of these constructs AVE was larger than the equivalent correlation (see Table 3), implying discriminant validity (Fornell and Larcker, 1981).

**Table 3: Correlations**

Constructs	1	2	3
1. PB	0.74		
2. PEV	0.44	0.75	
3. CPI	0.20	0.18	0.81

#### *Structural model*

Structural equation modelling was performed to test the hypothesis. As exhibited in Table 4, the results support all the hypotheses. PB has a positive impact on consumer purchase intention ( $\beta = 0.16$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), supporting H1. Similarly, personal brand ( $\beta = 0.17$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) also found to positively influence emotional value, this supports H2. Also, perceived emotion value ( $\beta = 0.17$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) also found to positively influence consumer purchase intention, this supports H3. Finally, personal brand toward consumer purchase intention was significantly influenced through perceived emotional value ( $\beta = 0.29$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), which supports H4.



**Table 4. Structural model results**

Hypotheses	Path co-efficient	T-statistic	P value	Inference
H1 PB →CPI	0.16	2.11	<0.05	Supported
H2 PB →PEV	0.23	3.25	<0.05	Supported
H3 PEV →CPI	0.177	2.18	<0.05	Supported
H4 PB→PEV→CPI	0.498	2.47	<0.05	Supported

## Discussion

This study aimed to explore the relationship between personal branding and consumer purchase intention, with a particular focus on the mediating role of perceived emotional value. The findings underscore the critical influence that personal brands exert on consumer behavior, particularly through the emotional value they create, which directly impacts purchase decisions. This section discusses the implications of these findings, highlights their contribution to existing literature, and suggests potential applications and future research directions.

### *Personal Brand as a Driver of Consumer Purchase Intention*

The results of this study reaffirm the significant role that personal brands play in shaping consumer purchase intention. Personal branding, when effectively cultivated, establishes a unique connection between the brand figure and the consumer, often resulting in stronger emotional ties than corporate or product-based brands. This is consistent with prior research showing that personal brands, through authenticity, transparency, and emotional engagement, foster trust and loyalty among consumers (Abd Aziz et al., 2019). The current study adds depth to this understanding by showing that personal brands do not only influence purchasing through direct communication but also through the emotional value they create for their audience.

Consumers increasingly seek personal connections with brands, valuing figures who display relatable experiences, vulnerabilities, and values that align with their own. Personal branding enables individuals, whether they are influencers, entrepreneurs, or public figures, to cultivate this emotional rapport. Our findings suggest that personal brands not only elicit emotional responses but also use these responses to deepen engagement, thereby encouraging consumers to take action in the form of purchases. Therefore, personal brands serve as effective vehicles for driving consumer purchase intention, particularly by enhancing perceived emotional value.

### *The Mediating Role of Perceived Emotional Value*

The central finding of this study—the mediating role of perceived emotional value in the relationship between personal branding and consumer purchase intention—is particularly notable. It demonstrates that the emotional connection consumers feel with a personal brand plays a key role in translating brand perception into actual purchasing behavior. Perceived emotional value, which refers to the psychological benefits a consumer derives from engaging with a brand, amplifies the impact of personal branding

(Widodo et al., 2022). Personal brands that successfully create emotional resonance are more likely to generate stronger purchase intentions because the emotional value elevates the consumer's overall experience with the brand.

This finding aligns with the growing recognition in consumer behavior research that emotions, rather than just rational factors like price and functionality, play a substantial role in purchase decisions. When personal brands generate positive emotions—such as trust, admiration, and a sense of belonging—these emotions enhance the perceived value of the brand's products or services. In turn, this heightened emotional value mediates the relationship between the brand and the consumer's intention to purchase, acting as the psychological bridge that encourages consumer action.

### *Trust, Authenticity, and Emotional Connection*

One of the key insights from this study is how personal brands build trust and authenticity, both of which are fundamental to increasing perceived emotional value. Trust is crucial for purchase decisions, as it reduces perceived risk and builds consumer confidence in the brand. Personal brands, especially when they showcase authenticity—whether through personal storytelling, consistent messaging, or shared values—enhance the emotional connection consumers feel. This emotional connection strengthens perceived emotional value and further solidifies the consumer's intention to purchase.

Authenticity, in particular, plays a significant role in amplifying emotional value. Personal brands that authentically share their personal journeys, struggles, or triumphs create an emotional bond with their audience, making consumers more likely to trust their recommendations and, consequently, purchase the products they endorse. This finding suggests that personal brands should focus on fostering genuine relationships with their audience, as these emotional connections are key drivers of purchase behavior.

### *Practical Implications*

The study's findings have several practical implications for personal branding strategies. Individuals looking to build strong personal brands should prioritize the cultivation of emotional value, as this is a crucial factor in influencing consumer purchase intention. By focusing on emotional engagement, authenticity, and building trust, personal brands can increase the emotional value perceived by their audience, which in turn enhances their likelihood of making purchases.

For marketers and influencers, the results emphasize the importance of storytelling, vulnerability, and relatability in creating emotional connections. Consumers are more likely to respond positively to personal brands that they find authentic and emotionally engaging, and the perceived emotional value generated by these connections can significantly impact purchase decisions. Moreover, brands should consider leveraging emotional messaging and creating personalized experiences for their audience to strengthen emotional ties and drive consumer behavior.

### *Theoretical Implications*

This study contributes to the growing body of literature on personal branding and consumer behavior by highlighting the mediating role of perceived emotional value. While existing research has focused on personal branding's ability to build consumer loyalty and engagement, this study goes further by demonstrating how emotional value acts as a crucial link between personal branding and actual purchase decisions (Kwon et al., 2007). The findings provide empirical support for the idea that emotions play a vital role in consumer behavior and underscore the importance of emotional value as a mediating factor in this process.

From a theoretical perspective, the study advances the understanding of how personal brands influence purchase intention through emotional channels, reinforcing the significance of emotional value in consumer decision-making models. This insight opens new avenues for future research, particularly in exploring how different emotional dimensions (e.g., trust, joy, inspiration) influence consumer behavior across various types of personal brands and industries.

### **Limitations and Future Research**

While the study offers valuable insights, it is not without limitations. One limitation is the reliance on self-reported data, which may be subject to biases such as social desirability or recall bias. Future research could address this by employing experimental designs or longitudinal studies to observe changes in consumer behavior over time. Additionally, the study focused on a general consumer sample, and further research could explore how perceived emotional value mediates the relationship between personal brands and purchase intention across different consumer segments, such as millennials, Gen Z, or specific cultural groups.

Moreover, future studies could examine how different types of personal brands (e.g., influencers, entrepreneurs, thought leaders) affect consumer purchase intention through perceived emotional value in various industries, such as fashion, technology, or wellness. Research could also explore the role of negative emotions and how they impact the perceived emotional value and purchase decisions, particularly in cases where personal brands face reputational challenges or controversies.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, this study highlights the critical role of perceived emotional value in mediating the relationship between personal branding and consumer purchase intention. Personal brands have the power to evoke strong emotional connections with consumers, and the emotional value derived from these connections significantly influences their purchasing behavior. By focusing on emotional engagement, trust, and authenticity, personal brands can enhance the emotional value they provide, ultimately driving consumer loyalty and increasing purchase intention. The findings contribute to a deeper understanding of the emotional drivers of consumer behavior and offer practical insights for individuals and brands looking to strengthen their influence on consumer decision-making.

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