

Chinese Consumer Response to AI Functions on Online Secondhand Platforms

Jiahang Zou^{a*}, Worawan Ongkrutraksa^b

^aIndependent researcher, China, ^bChulalongkorn University, Thailand

ABSTRACT

This study examines Chinese consumers' perceptions of AI functions on online secondhand platforms and their impact on purchase intention. Drawing on the technology acceptance model and perceived cyber risk, the research investigates perceived usefulness (PU), perceived ease of use (PEU), perceived enjoyment (PE), perceived cyber risk (PCR), and purchase intention (PI). A quantitative survey of 200 mainland Chinese consumers with prior experience or intent to use AI functions on secondhand platforms employed correlation and multiple regression analyses. Results indicate moderate levels of PEU ($M = 2.83$) and PCR ($M = 2.85$), high PU ($M = 3.08$), and relatively low PI ($M = 2.19$). Regression findings show that only PEU and PCR significantly predict PI, with PEU emerging as the strongest positive predictor ($\beta = 0.270$) and PCR exerting a negative effect ($\beta = -0.261$). The model accounts for 30.2% of the variance in PI (adjusted $R^2 = 0.302$). These findings highlight the importance of user-friendly AI design that minimizes consumer effort in secondhand shopping, alongside transparent and trustworthy data practices that mitigate privacy and security concerns, thereby enhancing consumer confidence in AI-mediated secondhand commerce.

Article Info

Received December 14, 2025

Revised March 27, 2026

Accepted April 17, 2026

Keywords: Online secondhand platforms, Artificial Intelligence, Consumer behavior, Technology Acceptance Model, China

Introduction and Significance of Research

In recent years, online secondhand platforms in China have expanded rapidly, driven by consumption upgrading, shorter product life cycles, and growing awareness of resource reuse. The economic shock of the COVID-19 pandemic further encouraged consumers to monetize idle goods while intensifying concerns about sustainable consumption (Xu et al., 2024). Environmental sustainability has also gained policy priority through carbon neutrality and circular economy initiatives, which legitimize reuse and resale practices. By 2022, the market size of China's online secondhand e-commerce had reached 4.8 trillion RMB, with platforms such as Xianyu and Zhuanzhuan

becoming important nodes in the national circular economy (QuestMobile, 2024a).

Understanding consumer decision-making in this market is vital because secondhand purchases involve persistent uncertainty and trust barriers that directly shape whether sustainable consumption can be realized at scale. Alongside the macro growth of the resale sector, Chinese consumers increasingly view secondhand consumption not only as a way to save money but also as a lifestyle aligned with sustainability and individuality (Sun, 2023). Their motivations extend beyond economic benefits and flexibility of access to include symbolic and hedonic reasons such as the desire for uniqueness,

CONTACT

Jiahang Zou (M.A., Chulalongkorn University, Thailand) is an independent researcher in Lichuan City, Hubei Province, China.

Worawan Ongkrutraksa (D.Arts, Tokai University, Japan) is Professor, Department of Public Relations, Faculty of Communication Arts, Chulalongkorn University, Thailand.

***Corresponding author's email:** jiahang664@gmail.com

nostalgia, and the excitement of discovering unexpected bargains (Borusiak et al., 2021). At the same time, ecological concerns are not always the dominant driver, especially in sectors such as secondhand fashion (Cervellon et al., 2012). This mix of rational and emotional motives suggests that consumers' responses in the resale context are multifaceted and cannot be explained by economic considerations alone.

Within this emerging ecosystem, Xianyu and Zhuanzhuan occupy a central position. These platforms provide convenient C2C and C2B2C channels while extending product life cycles and promoting sustainable consumption. Xianyu primarily adopts a C2C model that allows individuals to establish online stores and interact directly with buyers, whereas Zhuanzhuan employs a C2B2C model supported by professional inspection, refurbishment, and resale, which can enhance consumer confidence (Chen et al., 2018; Zeng et al., 2023). Despite rapid growth, however, persistent challenges remain. Information asymmetry, uncertain product quality, and counterfeit risks make it difficult for consumers to assess the true value of secondhand goods, especially online (Calvo-Porrall et al., 2023; Li, 2021). Cultural stigma surrounding pre-owned items and fragmented after-sales services further restrict consumer trust and the sustainable development of the sector (Geng & Chen, 2024; Huang, 2023).

To address these frictions, artificial intelligence (AI) is increasingly embedded in secondhand e-commerce platforms, making it a critical and timely factor in shaping consumer experience and purchase decisions. AI-enabled functions such as image recognition for product identification and standardized descriptions, recommendation systems for personalized suggestions, dynamic pricing models, and fraud detection tools aim to improve shopping efficiency and safeguard platform integrity and consumer data (Borges et al., 2021; Chen et al., 2018; Pillai, 2023). At the national level, China has made AI a strategic priority, investing heavily in infrastructure and applications, which accelerates AI research growth and deployment (Arcesati, 2024; Hung, 2025). This environment creates fertile ground for examining how AI adoption in online secondhand platforms influences consumer behavior and sustainable consumption outcomes.

To systematically analyze consumer behavior in this context, a robust theoretical framework is required. The technology acceptance model (TAM) highlights perceived usefulness (PU) and perceived ease of use (PEU) as key determinants of technology adoption (Davis, 1989). Later extensions introduced perceived enjoyment (PE) to capture affective responses (Abdullah & Ward, 2016) and emphasized perceived risk and trust in

high-risk digital transactions (Featherman & Pavlou, 2003). Building on this stream, perceived cyber risks (PCR) related to data privacy, fraud, and system security have become increasingly salient in shaping trust and purchase intention in digital commerce (Al-Adwan et al., 2023). However, despite extensive TAM-based research, empirical evidence is still lacking on how AI-driven functions on Xianyu- and Zhuanzhuan-type platforms jointly influence PU, PEU, PE, PCR, and consumers' purchase intention toward secondhand products. Moreover, the communicative dimension of green marketing, particularly how platforms frame AI functions and sustainability messages to reduce perceived cyber risks, has received limited empirical attention.

This study addresses these gaps by integrating TAM with PCR to examine the factors shaping Chinese consumers' purchase intention toward secondhand products when using AI functions on online secondhand platforms. The research contributes to theory by extending TAM to incorporate cybersecurity-related concerns in an AI-mediated resale context and by situating these constructs within green marketing communication. Practically, the findings can guide platform operators in designing user-friendly AI interfaces and transparent data practices that balance technological innovation with user trust, thereby supporting sustainable consumption and strengthening platform competitiveness in China's evolving secondhand economy.

The objectives of this study are twofold. First, it seeks to investigate Chinese consumers' perceptions of online secondhand platforms in terms of perceived usefulness (PU), perceived ease of use (PEU), perceived enjoyment (PE), perceived cyber risks (PCR), and purchase intention (PI). Second, it aims to examine how PU, PEU, PE, and PCR influence consumers' purchase intention toward these platforms, thereby providing insights into the factors that shape consumer adoption of AI-enabled secondhand commerce.

Literature Review

This section provides a detailed literature review of the core theoretical constructs central to this study: perceived usefulness (PU), perceived ease of use (PEU), perceived enjoyment (PE), perceived cyber risk (PCR), and purchase intention (PI), grounded in the technology acceptance model (TAM) and related risk perspectives. Based on this comprehensive review, specific hypotheses are developed to examine how AI-driven functions on online secondhand platforms influence Chinese consumers' purchase intention toward secondhand products.

Artificial Intelligence

Artificial intelligence (AI) refers to computer systems that perform tasks typically requiring human intelligence (Mariani et al., 2021). Since McCarthy introduced the term in 1956, AI has evolved into a data driven socio technical technology enabled by advances in machine and deep learning (Haupt et al., 2022; Holm et al., 2023). Capability-based classifications distinguish among reactive machines, limited-memory AI, theory-of-mind AI, and self-aware AI (Hintze, 2016). Although recent large language models show early signs of perspective taking, the latter two categories remain largely theoretical (Strachan et al., 2024). In practice, AI is widely applied in analytics, prediction, and generative tasks across industries, including autonomous navigation and digital entertainment personalization (Bojarski et al., 2016; Kinkel et al., 2022; Vall et al., 2019). AI also plays a transformative role on online secondhand platforms by improving buyer item matching (Bae et al., 2022), enabling automated tagging and quality assessment via computer vision (Ma et al., 2018), supporting pricing optimization (Han et al., 2019), and strengthening authenticity checks through fraud detection (Chen et al., 2018).

On China's largest online secondhand platform, Xianyu, AI-driven tools are widely used: (1) AI Recommendation, which filters items based on user preferences such as brand, model, or budget, providing tailored suggestions; (2) AI Rights Protection Assistant, which guides buyers in preparing refund claims by optimizing reasons, assisting with evidence uploads, and thereby improving dispute resolution efficiency; (3) AI Product Comparison, allowing users to select and compare two or three items by factors such as price, delivery service, and seller ratings; (4) AI Authentication, which examines uploaded photos and analyzes features like textures and logos to identify potential counterfeits; (5) AI Agent, which automatically manages listings around the clock, including replying to inquiries, adjusting prices, and prompting sellers to add missing details; and (6) AI Bubble Fish, which helps buyers by chatting with multiple sellers at the same time, generating conversation summaries, and even negotiating on their behalf (Group, 2024).

Similar AI tools are actively used on Zhuanzhuan as well, and they are visible to consumers in everyday use. However, these applications may increase opacity and algorithmic bias, prompting governance approaches such as explainable AI that emphasize transparency, fairness, and accountability (Bellamy et al., 2019; Rana et al., 2022). In the Chinese context, AI development is strongly shaped by state-led industrial strategies and rapid platform commercialization. For example,

national initiatives such as Made in China 2025 and the New Generation Artificial Intelligence Development Plan (AIDP) have positioned AI as a strategic pillar of modernization, suggesting that AI diffusion in China is closely tied to policy mobilization and large-scale implementation capacity.

Green Marketing Communication

Green marketing communication provides an important contextual foundation for understanding consumer engagement with AI driven secondhand platforms. By emphasizing sustainability-oriented messages, platforms can reframe resale from a cost saving practice to a socially responsible behavior aligned with circular economy principles (La Venture & Norgaard, 2016). In China, major platforms already embed such messaging into user interactions.

For example, Xianyu collaborates with Ant Forest, allowing listing and purchasing activities to generate green energy that supports virtual tree planting (Daily, 2025). Zhuanzhuan also highlights large scale recycling through its nationwide on-site collection program, which processes idle electronics and daily goods within a formal recycling system (Radio, 2025). Generational research further suggests that Gen Z responds strongly to ethical and sustainability focused messages shaped by personal norms and altruistic values (Prisco et al., 2025). Gen Y likewise values environmental impact but pays additional attention to product reliability and authenticity, especially during periods of heightened uncertainty (Ongkrutraksa, 2025b). Together, these insights indicate that secondhand platforms may enhance trust and engagement by combining sustainability narratives with clear, verifiable information about product quality.

Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)

The technology acceptance model (TAM), derived from the theory of reasoned action and introduced by Davis (1989), explains technology adoption through perceived usefulness (PU) and perceived ease of use (PEU), which shape users' attitudes and intention to adopt a system (Davis, 1989; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1977). Later extensions incorporate intrinsic motivation, particularly perceived enjoyment (PE), highlighting that affective experiences can influence acceptance beyond utilitarian benefits (Venkatesh & Bala, 2008). TAM has been widely applied across e-commerce, mobile applications, AI, and green technologies, demonstrating its robustness for examining consumer behavior (Dwivedi et al., 2019; Venkatesh & Davis, 2000).

However, classic TAM emphasizes positive drivers and pays limited attention to

inhibitors. In high-risk digital contexts, perceived risk and trust become critical, and cybersecurity, fraud, and privacy concerns are increasingly conceptualized as perceived cyber risk (PCR) (Featherman & Pavlou, 2003; Gefen et al., 2003). In AI-mediated secondhand platforms, where authenticity, seller credibility, and data protection are often questioned, integrating PU, PEU, PE, and PCR offers a more balanced framework to explain consumers' purchase intention (PI).

Hypothesis Development and Conceptual Framework

Based on the literature review, this research proposes the following hypotheses:

H1: Perceived usefulness (PU) has an effect on consumers' purchase intention (PI) toward secondhand products.

H2: Perceived ease of use (PEU) has an effect on consumers' purchase intention (PI) toward secondhand products.

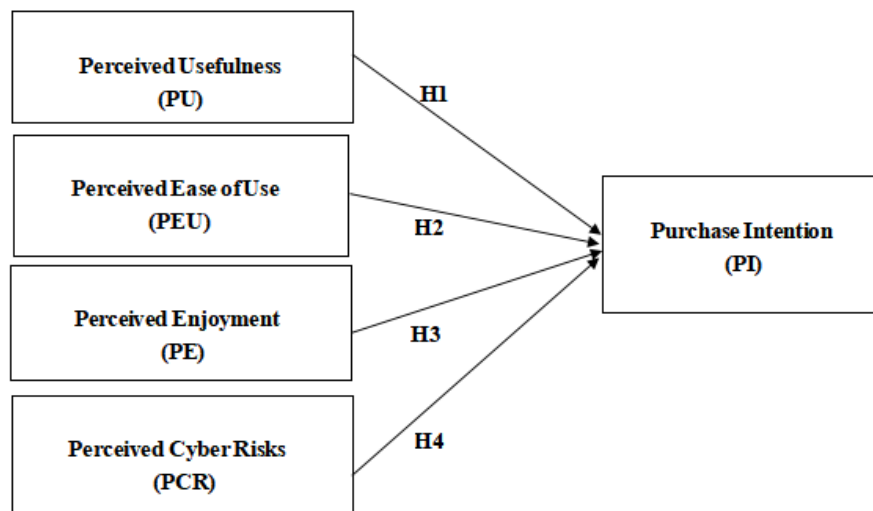
H3: Perceived enjoyment (PE) has an effect on consumers' purchase intention (PI) toward secondhand products.

H4: Perceived cyber risk (PCR) has an effect on consumers' purchase intention (PI) toward secondhand products.

Two-tailed hypotheses are adopted due to mixed findings in the literature regarding these relationships. This approach maintains objectivity and allows for detection of effects in either direction without theoretical predisposition.

This study's conceptual framework illustrates the relationships between consumers' perceptions of AI-driven functions on online secondhand platforms and their purchase intention. As shown in Figure 1, the framework proposes that perceived usefulness (PU), perceived ease of use (PEU), perceived enjoyment (PE), and perceived cyber risks (PCR) each have an effect on purchase intention (PI). Accordingly, H1–H4 test whether PU, PEU, PE, and PCR influence PI. Overall, the model integrates both enabling perceptions (PU, PEU, and PE) and a potential inhibiting perception (PCR) to explain how consumers form purchase intention in an AI-mediated secondhand shopping context.

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework



Methodology

This study employed a quantitative survey design to examine how perceived usefulness (PU), perceived ease of use (PEU), perceived enjoyment (PE), and perceived cyber risks (PCR) influence Chinese consumers' purchase intention (PI) toward secondhand products on AI driven platforms. Using purposive sampling, 200 mainland Chinese adults aged 18–65 with prior or intended AI use on Xianyu or Zhuanzhuan were recruited via Wenjuanxing and social media. Validated items were measured on a five-point Likert scale, with several reverse

worded items. Data were analyzed in SPSS using descriptive statistics and multiple regression.

This study did not require formal ethics approval as all participants were over eighteen and the research posed minimal risk. In accordance with the British Psychological Society (2021), the questionnaire involved no psychological, emotional, or physical harm. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, participation was voluntary, and anonymity of responses was ensured. (Creswell & Poth, 2017).

Research Design and Survey Instrument Development

The quantitative component utilized an online survey in Chinese to collect data. The questionnaire was developed based on the literature review of TAM and perceived cyber risks (PCR), and items were adapted from established scales to ensure content validity and reliability (see Table 1). In addition, Ongkrutraksa's (2025b) framework was used as a supporting reference for understanding consumer behavioral responses in AI-assisted commerce. Participants were screened through initial questions to confirm that they met the target demographic and had used or intended to use AI functions on online secondhand platforms before proceeding to the full questionnaire.

Population and Sample

For this study, the target population is defined as Chinese mainland consumers who have

used or intend to use AI functions on online secondhand platforms such as Xianyu and Zhuanzhuan. The sample is drawn from adults aged 18 to 65 to reflect the main user base of mobile applications and online resale services in China (Centre, 2017). Data are collected via an online questionnaire hosted on Wenjuanxing and distributed through social media channels such as WeChat and Xiaohongshu (Bi, 2025; QuestMobile, 2024a). Purposive sampling is employed to ensure that respondents meet the eligibility criteria related to AI function usage in secondhand shopping. Following the guideline suggested by Hair et al. (2010), the minimum required sample size should be at least five times the number of questionnaire items; with 20 items, the minimum sample size is 100. To strengthen the reliability and validity of the findings, this study adopts a larger final sample of 200 respondents.

Table 1: Questionnaire Variables, Codes, and Statement

Variable	Codes	Questionnaire Statement
Perceived usefulness (PU) Adapted from Holdack et al. (2022)	PU1	Using AI functions on secondhand platforms (e.g., automated product descriptions, recommendations) helps me make better shopping decisions.
	PU2	Using AI functions for secondhand product information makes my life more convenient.
	PU3	Using AI functions for secondhand product information would make my shopping more goal-oriented.
	PU4	Even with AI functions on secondhand platforms, I couldn't get the secondhand product information that I need.
	PU5	If I want to buy secondhand products, I can fulfill my needs through AI functions on the platform.
Perceived ease of use (PEU) Adapted from Holdack et al. (2022)	PEU1	Using AI functions on secondhand platforms provides information that is clear and understandable.
	PEU2	Using AI functions on secondhand platforms requires little effort.
	PEU3	It is easy for me to use AI functions to obtain secondhand product information.
	PEU4	I find AI functions on secondhand platforms easy to use for accomplishing what I want to do.
Perceived enjoyment (PE) Adapted from Liu (2022), Zhou et al. (2021)	PE1	I enjoy the process of using AI functions (e.g., smart product descriptions or recommendations) on secondhand platforms.
	PE2	Using AI functions on secondhand platforms does not make me feel bored.
	PE3	I find AI-powered tools on secondhand platforms engaging and enjoyable to use.
	PE4	AI functions on secondhand platforms increase my interest and motivation to continue shopping.

Table 1: Continued.

Variable	Codes	Questionnaire Statement
Perceived cyber risks (PCR) Adapted from Al-Adwan et al. (2023)	PCR1	I believe that the personal information I provide when using AI functions on secondhand platforms is handled securely.
	PCR2	AI functions on secondhand platforms have sufficient security measures that make me feel safe using them.
	PCR3	I am concerned that AI functions on secondhand platforms may share my data with third parties without my knowledge.
	PCR4	I think AI functions on secondhand platforms are more likely to invade users' privacy compared to traditional non-AI functions.
Purchase intention (PI) Adapted from Vafaei-Zadeh et al. (2022)	PI1	After experiencing AI functions on secondhand platforms, I am likely to buy secondhand products in the future.
	PI2	The experience of using AI-driven functions on secondhand platforms increases my willingness to buy secondhand products.
	PI3	After using AI functions on secondhand platforms to obtain product information, I quickly decided to buy secondhand products.

Data Collection

Quantitative data were collected through a self-administered online questionnaire in Chinese to ensure clarity and accessibility for mainland Chinese respondents. Informed consent was obtained before participation, and the survey began with screening questions to confirm eligibility. To enhance data quality, response IP addresses and timestamps will be screened to eliminate duplicate or invalid entries. The questionnaire then measured the key constructs including perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, perceived enjoyment, perceived cyber risks, and purchase intention, followed by demographic items. To enhance response validity and reduce inattentive answering, several items (including PU4, PCR1, and PCR2) were reverse-worded (Weijters et al., 2013). All construct items were adapted from previously validated scales and measured using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) (Alkharusi, 2022).

Analysis Procedures

The collected responses were processed using SPSS software. The analysis first applied descriptive statistics, including mean, standard deviation, percentage, and frequency, to provide an overview of the demographic characteristics and study variables. In addition, multiple regression analysis was conducted to examine the influence of the independent variables (PU, PEU, PE, PCR) on the dependent variable (PI). To support the hypotheses, a strict significance level was set, where a p -value less than .001 ($p < .001$) was required, indicating very strong evidence against the null hypotheses.

Validity and Reliability

The reliability and validity of the measurement instrument were assessed to ensure the robustness of the quantitative findings. All measurement items were adapted from previously validated studies, with reliability benchmarks informed by Ning Fang (2023). To establish face validity, the questionnaire was reviewed by experts in communication and marketing to evaluate item clarity and language appropriateness (Ongkrutraksa, 2025a). Reliability was then examined through a pilot test with 30 participants who shared characteristics with the target group. Cronbach's alpha coefficients were calculated in SPSS, using .70 as the minimum acceptable threshold (Hill & Lewicki, 2007). The pilot results indicated satisfactory internal consistency for all constructs: PU = .768, PEU = .710, PE = .794, PCR = .771, and PI = .854. In addition, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was conducted to assess construct validity.

Results

This section presents the results of the study based on data collected from 200 respondents aged 18 to 65. It begins with the demographic profile of the sample and descriptive statistics for the five key constructs (PU, PEU, PE, PCR, and PI). Next, correlation analysis and multiple regression analysis are reported to examine the relationships among variables and to test the hypotheses.

Initially, participants were primarily Chinese consumers from Generation Z (68.0%) and Generation Y (19.5%). In terms of gender, 59.0% were male and 41.0% were female. For the

remaining demographics, the highest proportions were those earning RMB2,000-10,000 per month (61.5%) and those holding a bachelor's degree or higher (82.5%).

Table 2 summarizes the Mean (M) and Standard Deviation (SD) values for the five key variables in this study (PU, PEU, PE, PCR, and PI), providing an overall snapshot of respondents'

perceptions. The results show that perceived usefulness (PU) has the highest mean score ($M = 3.08$, $SD = 0.75$), followed by perceived enjoyment (PE) ($M = 2.99$, $SD = 0.81$). In contrast, purchase intention (PI) reports the lowest mean value ($M = 2.19$, $SD = 0.71$).

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation of PU, PE, PEU, PCR, and PI

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
PU	3.08	0.75
PEU	2.83	0.79
PE	2.99	0.81
PCR	2.85	0.80
PI	2.19	0.71

Hypothesis Testing

H1: Perceived usefulness (PU) has an effect on consumers' purchase intention (PI) toward secondhand products.

The results from Table 3 show a moderate level of perceived usefulness (PU) of AI functions on secondhand platforms ($M = 3.08$, $SD = 0.75$). Among the five PU items, PU4 reports the highest

mean score ($M = 3.12$, $SD = 1.02$), indicating that respondents generally perceive AI functions as helpful in providing the secondhand product information they need, whereas PU1 has the lowest mean score ($M = 3.04$, $SD = 0.91$). In the regression analysis, PU does not meet the criterion of $p < .001$ employed in this paper ($\beta = 0.169$, $t = 2.695$, $p = .008$). Therefore, H1 is not supported.

Table 3: Results of Multiple Regression Analysis

Variable	B	SE	95% CI		β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
			PL	LL			
(constant)	1.220	.347	.536	1.904		3.516	<.001
PU	.160	.060	.043	.278	.169	2.695	.008
PEU	.242	.056	.131	.352	.270	4.305*	<.001
PE	.152	.054	.045	.258	.173	2.804	.006
PCR	-.231	.056	-.343	-.120	-.261	-4.098*	<.001

Note: $F=22.485$, $R^2=0.316$, $R^2_{adj}=0.302$, $*p < .001$

H2: Perceived ease of use (PEU) has an effect on consumers' purchase intention (PI) toward secondhand products.

The results indicate a moderate level of perceived ease of use (PEU) of AI functions on secondhand platforms ($M = 2.83$, $SD = 0.79$). Among the four items, PEU4 reports the highest mean score ($M = 2.90$, $SD = 0.99$), while PEU2 has the lowest mean score ($M = 2.76$, $SD = 0.95$). In the regression analysis, PEU has a statistically significant effect on purchase intention (PI) ($\beta = 0.270$, $t = 4.305$, $p < .001$). Therefore, H2 is supported.

H3: Perceived enjoyment (PE) has an effect on consumers' purchase intention (PI) toward secondhand products.

The results indicate a moderate level of perceived enjoyment (PE) of AI functions on secondhand platforms ($M = 2.99$, $SD = 0.81$). Among the four items, the highest mean score is

3.06 ($SD = 1.00$) for "Using AI functions on secondhand platforms does not make me feel bored," while the lowest mean score is 2.91 ($SD = 0.98$) for "I find AI-powered tools on secondhand platforms engaging and enjoyable to use." In the regression analysis, PE does not reach the significance threshold ($\beta = 0.173$, $t = 2.804$, $p = 0.006$). Therefore, H3 is not supported.

H4: Perceived cyber risk (PCR) has an effect on consumers' purchase intention (PI) toward secondhand products.

The results show a moderate level of perceived cyber risk (PCR) regarding AI functions on secondhand platforms ($M = 2.85$, $SD = 0.80$). Among the four items, the highest mean score is 2.87 ($SD = 1.01$) for "I think AI functions on secondhand platforms are more likely to invade users' privacy compared to traditional non-AI functions," while the lowest mean score is 2.84 ($SD = 0.94$). In the regression analysis, PCR shows

a significant effect on purchase intention (PI) ($\beta = -0.261$, $t = -4.098$, $p < .001$). Therefore, H4 is supported.

Discussion

Based on the findings of this study, this section discusses the key results in relation to the research objectives.

Effects of Perceived Usefulness on Consumers' Purchase Intention toward Secondhand Products

The findings indicate that perceived usefulness (PU) shows a positive but insignificant effect on purchase intention (H1). This aligns with prior research suggesting that the perceived utility of AI functions does not always translate into stronger purchase intention (Mulyani et al., 2021). One explanation is that current AI tools (e.g., automated descriptions or basic recommendations) may provide only marginal functional benefits, and their interactive experience may still struggle to deliver accuracy and meaningful value (Yin & Qiu, 2021).

In addition, limited familiarity or engagement with AI-assisted functions may constrain their influence, as AI systems may not satisfy the complex requirements of online purchasing where evaluation, authenticity checks, and risk assessment are critical (Jakkula, 2022). Behavioral intentions are also shaped by users' prior habits and technological experience (Sinaga et al., 2021), and secondhand shopping is particularly high-involvement and risk-sensitive, where concerns about authenticity, quality, and seller reliability can outweigh functional benefits (Abidin, 2024). Consistent with this, purchase intention had the lowest mean score in this study ($M = 2.190$), indicating persistent caution. Finally, PU may affect intention indirectly through attitudes rather than directly (Aprilia & Santoso, 2020; Mahendra & Septiany, 2018), which may help explain the nonsignificant result.

Effects of Perceived Ease of Use on Consumers' Purchase Intention toward Secondhand Products

According to the results, perceived ease of use (PEU) has a particularly significant effect on purchase intention (H2), suggesting that when consumers rely on AI tools to evaluate difficult-to-verify secondhand products, the simplicity and clarity of system interaction become the primary determinants of intention. This outcome supports earlier work suggesting that ease of use enhances intention by improving the overall online shopping experience (Liu, 2022). Similar to evidence from Cho and Saginov (2015), smooth navigation and

reduced complexity are important factors that encourage consumers to continue their online shopping journeys.

A possible explanation is that AI tools help streamline traditionally tedious processes on secondhand platforms, thereby improving efficiency and reducing cognitive friction. Unlike traditional online shopping where product information is standardized and provided by manufacturers with guaranteed authenticity, secondhand platforms require consumers to invest significantly more time and effort to assess product conditions, verify seller credibility, and minimize contamination risks. This heightened evaluation burden creates "time risk" (Silva et al., 2021) and "contamination risk" (Koay et al., 2022). When users perceive these AI functions as easy to operate, they experience fewer barriers during decision-making, which strengthens their intention to make a purchase. In essence, when platforms communicate AI functions as making sustainable shopping easy and accessible, the ease of use becomes not just a usability feature but a component of the green marketing narrative since consumers experience shopping as an environmentally positive behavior rather than a burdensome transaction.

Effects of Perceived Enjoyment on Consumers' Purchase Intention toward Secondhand Products

The results show that perceived enjoyment (PE) does not significantly influence purchase intention in this study (H3). Although prior research suggests that enjoyable AI interactions can increase users' intention to adopt technology in some contexts (Liu, 2022; Venkatesh, 2000), this effect appears limited in secondhand shopping, where purchasing used goods requires greater cognitive effort and risk evaluation, reducing the impact of hedonic experiences. As Childers et al. (2001) note, enjoyment becomes less influential when consumers must engage in rational, accuracy-driven decision-making. Moreover, AI features on platforms such as Xianyu and Zhuanzhuan often prioritize functional assistance (e.g., organizing information and identifying potential risks) rather than playful or immersive experiences, which may weaken hedonic perceptions.

This aligns with research distinguishing hedonic value (fun and pleasure) from utilitarian value (usefulness, efficiency, and trustworthy information) (Zaidi et al., 2015). Evidence from Thai Generation Y also indicates that even when browsing is enjoyable, users rely more on utilitarian evaluations (e.g., information credibility and perceived benefits) before purchasing (Yincharoen et al., 2018). Therefore, PE may enhance the overall experience but does not translate into a significant direct effect on purchase intention in this context.

Effects of Perceived Cyber Risk on Consumers' Purchase Intention toward Secondhand Products

Results show that perceived cyber risk (PCR) has a significant effect on purchase intention (H4). This suggests that when consumers believe the platform and its AI features handle information securely, their confidence increases and they are more willing to purchase products. Prior research similarly notes that transparent data use and reliable security practices strengthen user trust in AI-enabled environments (Bellamy et al., 2019; Rana et al., 2022). When concerns about personal data exposure and transaction safety rise, purchase intention tends to decline. This tendency becomes more pronounced on secondhand platforms, where authenticity problems may lead to reputational risk when goods are revealed as counterfeit by other users, coupled with eroded trust in sellers, and quality problems including performance concerns alongside contamination risks from pre-owned conditions (Lou et al., 2022).

Previous studies show that functional and psychological risks reduce consumers' willingness to buy used goods (Hernández, 2019; Kian Yeik et al., 2022; Kim et al., 2021). When these product-level concerns overlap with worries about digital security, consumers rely more heavily on cues that signal safety and transparency (Jin & Tsujimoto, 2025; Stamkou et al., 2025). From a green marketing communication perspective, high perceived cyber risk may undermine consumers' trust in the platform's green and sustainable proposition, as data security concerns signal potential inconsistency between stated environmental commitments and actual operational practices.

Implications of Research

Theoretical Implications: This study strengthens TAM-based research by situating technology acceptance in the context of AI-driven secondhand platforms, where product uncertainty, information asymmetry, and privacy concerns are more pronounced (Calvo-Porrall et al., 2023). By applying TAM in this resale environment, the study responds to gaps in prior work that has largely focused on AI in general e-commerce. The findings further highlight that PEU and PCR significantly influence purchase intention (PI), with PEU showing the strongest effect, offering a clearer theoretical explanation of how consumers evaluate AI functions when making secondhand purchase decisions. Overall, the study provides a basis for future research on AI-assisted resale, secondhand consumption, and related green marketing strategies.

Implications for Marketers:

Simplify AI interactions (PEU): Since PEU is the strongest predictor of PI and PEU2 ("using AI functions...requires little effort") shows the lowest agreement, platforms should prioritize lowering user effort by improving interface clarity, streamlining comparison and recommendation functions, and reducing cognitive burden during product evaluation.

Strengthen trust and risk reduction (PCR): The significant effect of PCR suggests that privacy, fraud, and data security concerns remain central barriers. Platforms should enhance data transparency, provide clearer privacy prompts, reinforce anti-fraud safeguards, and present more understandable AI-based verification or authentication results to reduce perceived vulnerability and increase willingness to transact.

Integrate sustainability communication: As sustainable consumption becomes more salient in China's secondhand market, platforms can use green marketing communication to reinforce credibility and long-term engagement. Emphasizing the environmental benefits of AI-assisted resale and embedding clear sustainability cues in AI-generated recommendations or listings may strengthen positive attitudes and trust, supporting continued participation in circular-economy practices (Radio, 2025).

Limitations and Future Research

This study has several limitations. First, the sample is demographically imbalanced: although targeting users aged 18–65, most respondents are Generation Z, likely due to heavier distribution via Xiaohongshu and Weibo and a lower response rate from WeChat groups (QuestMobile, 2024b). Second, data were collected within a short period (less than one month), which may limit representativeness and the ability to observe changes over time. Third, participants were included based on having used or intended to use AI functions, which may reduce the accuracy of evaluations if actual AI-feature interaction is limited.

Future research could: 1) compare buyers' and sellers' AI usage with separate models, 2) examine AI-supported dispute-resolution tools like "online courts" on Xianyu and their effects on perceived risk, fairness, and platform trust, 3) test regional or city-tier differences within China, 4) extend the model beyond TAM and PCR by incorporating factors such as trust, perceived security, platform reputation, social influence, and environmental values, and 5) recruit verified AI-function users and adopt longer or longitudinal designs.

Conclusion

This study examines how Chinese consumers form purchase intention toward secondhand products on AI driven platforms by integrating the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) with perceived cyber risk (PCR). Using survey data from 200 mainland Chinese respondents, the findings provide a focused explanation of how both enabling perceptions (PU, PEU, and PE) and risk related concerns (PCR) relate to purchase intention in AI assisted secondhand shopping.

Overall, respondents report moderate levels of perceived usefulness, ease of use, enjoyment, and cyber risk, while purchase intention remains comparatively low, suggesting cautious decision making in this high involvement context. In hypothesis testing, perceived ease of use shows the strongest and statistically significant effect on purchase intention, indicating that reducing effort and improving clarity in AI supported interactions is central to motivating purchase decisions. Perceived cyber risk also shows a statistically significant effect, highlighting that privacy, fraud, and data security concerns meaningfully shape intention in AI mediated resale. By contrast, perceived usefulness and perceived enjoyment don't significantly influence purchase intention, implying that functional benefits and hedonic experience alone may be insufficient to directly increase purchase intention when product uncertainty and trust requirements remain salient.

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