

The copyright © of this thesis belongs to its rightful author and/or other copyright owner. Copies can be accessed and downloaded for non-commercial or learning purposes without any charge and permission. The thesis cannot be reproduced or quoted as a whole without the permission from its rightful owner. No alteration or changes in format is allowed without permission from its rightful owner.



**THE INFLUENCE OF BRAND EXPERIENCE, TRUST, PERCEIVED
VALUE AND SELF-BRAND CONGRUITY ON LOYALTY IN CHINA**

WANG, HUILI



**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
UNIVERSITI UTARA MALAYSIA
December 2025**

**THE INFLUENCE OF BRAND EXPERIENCE, TRUST, PERCEIVED
VALUE AND SELF-BRAND CONGRUITY ON LOYALTY IN CHINA**

WANG, HUILI (905681)



UUM
Universiti Utara Malaysia

**Thesis Submitted to
Othman Yeop Abdullah Graduate School of Business
Universiti Utara Malaysia
In Fulfilment of the Requirement for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**



Othman Yeop Abdullah Graduate School of Business

Kolej Perniagaan
(College of Business)

Universiti Utara Malaysia

PERAKUAN KERJA TESIS / DISERTASI
(Certification of thesis / dissertation)

Kami, yang bertandatangan, memperakukan bahawa
(We, the undersigned, certify that)

WANG, HUILI

calon untuk Ijazah
(candidate for the degree of)

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (MARKETING)

telah mengemukakan tesis / disertasi yang bertajuk:
(has presented his/her thesis / dissertation of the following title):

**THE INFLUENCE OF BRAND EXPERIENCE, TRUST, PERCEIVED VALUE AND SELF-BRAND
CONGRUITY ON LOYALTY IN CHINA.**

seperti yang tercatat di muka surat tajuk dan kulit tesis / disertasi.
(as it appears on the title page and front cover of the thesis / dissertation).

Bahawa tesis/disertasi tersebut boleh diterima dari segi bentuk serta kandungan dan meliputi bidang ilmu dengan memuaskan. Sebagaimana yang ditunjukkan oleh calon dalam ujian lisan yang diadakan pada:
24 Jun 2025.

(That the said thesis/dissertation is acceptable in form and content and displays a satisfactory knowledge of the field of study as demonstrated by the candidate through an oral examination held on:
24 June 2025.

Pengerusi Viva
(Chairman for Viva)

: **Prof. Dr. Salniza Binti Md. Salleh**

Tandatangan
(Signature)

Pemeriksa Luar
(External Examiner)

: **Prof. Dr. Lennora Putit (UITM)**

Tandatangan
(Signature)

Pemeriksa Dalam
(Internal Examiner)

: **Dr. Waida Irani Binti Mohd Fauzi**

Tandatangan
(Signature)

Tarikh: **24 Jun 2025**

Nama Pelajar
(Name of Student) : Wang, Huili

Tajuk Tesis / Disertasi
(Title of the Thesis / Dissertation) : The Influence of Brand Experience, Trust, Perceived Value and Self-Brand Congruity on Loyalty in China.

Program Pengajian
(Programme of Study) : Doctor of Philosophy (Marketing)

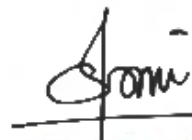
Nama Penyelia/Penyelia-
penyelia
(Name of Supervisor/Supervisors) : Prof. Dr. Sany Sanuri Bin Mohd. Mokhtar



Tandatangan
(Signature)



Dr. Azanin Binti Ahmad



Tandatangan
(Signature)

UUM
Universiti Utara Malaysia

PERMISSION TO USE

In presenting this report in partial fulfilment of the requirements for a postgraduate degree from Universiti Utara Malaysia, I agree that the University Library may make it freely available for inspection. I further agree that permission for copying this report in any manner, in whole or in part, for the scholarly purpose may be granted by my supervisor(s); Prof. Dr. Sany Sanuri Bin Mohd. Mokhtar and Dr. Azanin Binti Ahmad, or their absences by Director of Postgraduate Studies Unit, Othman Yeop Abdullah Graduate School of Business where I did my thesis. It is understood that any copying or publication, or use of this report or parts of financial gain shall not be allowed without my written permission. It is also understood that due recognition shall be given to me and Universiti Utara Malaysia for any educational use which may be made of any material from my report.

Requests for permission to copy or to make other use of materials in this thesis, in whole or in part, should be addressed to:

Dean of Othman Yeop Abdullah Graduate School of Business
Universiti Utara Malaysia
06010 UUM Sintok
Kedah Darul Aman
Malaysia



ABSTRACT

The highly competitive sports brands market necessitates fostering a loyal customer base to achieve long-term success. Generation Y, characterized by substantial purchasing power and distinctive psychological attributes, has drawn considerable scholarly attention. Researchers have increasingly examined factors associated with social identity theory (SIT) and social exchange theory (SET) to gain deeper insights into this cohort's consumer behavior. However, limited research has explored the theoretical application of these concepts within the context of the sports brands sector. Based on this research gap, the purpose of this study is to develop a conceptual research framework that integrates relevant constructs from social identity theory (SIT) and social exchange theory (SET), and addresses gaps in the sports brands context. It aims to explore the effects of brand experience, brand trust, customer perceived value, and self-brand congruity on brand loyalty. It also explores the mediating role of consumer-brand identification in these relationships. Additionally, nostalgia is examined as a moderating variable in the relationship between consumer-brand identification and brand loyalty. This study employs quantitative research and self-administered surveys to achieve the objective. PLS-SEM was utilized to analyze data from 432 valid responses obtained from Chinese Generation Y consumers of sports brands. The findings indicate that brand trust, customer perceived value, and brand experience are positively correlated with brand loyalty. The mediating role of consumer-brand identification and the moderating role of nostalgia are supported in this study. However, the relationship between self-brand congruity and brand loyalty is not significant. By establishing a conceptual framework grounded in the joint theoretical basis of SIT and SET, and empirically validating its SIT/SET-aligned constructs, this research demonstrates how their synergistic integration guides sports brands in cultivating enduring customer loyalty.

Keywords: Brand loyalty, customer perceived value, brand experience, brand trust, consumer-brand identification.

ABSTRAK

Pasaran jenama sukan yang sangat kompetitif menuntut pembentukan asas pelanggan yang setia bagi memastikan kejayaan jangka panjang. Generasi Y, yang mempunyai kuasa beli yang tinggi dan ciri psikologi yang unik, telah menarik perhatian besar dalam kalangan penyelidik. Seiring dengan itu, semakin banyak kajian dijalankan untuk meneliti faktor-faktor yang berasaskan Teori Identiti Sosial (SIT) dan Teori Pertukaran Sosial (SET) bagi memahami dengan lebih mendalam tingkah laku pengguna dalam kumpulan ini. Namun, kajian yang mengaplikasikan teori-teori tersebut dalam konteks jenama sukan masih terhad. Berdasarkan jurang penyelidikan ini, kajian ini bertujuan membangunkan satu rangka kerja penyelidikan konseptual yang mengintegrasikan konstruk relevan daripada SIT dan SET bagi mengisi kekosongan pengetahuan dalam konteks jenama sukan. Kajian ini bertujuan meneroka kesan pengalaman jenama, kepercayaan terhadap jenama, nilai yang dirasakan pelanggan, serta kesesuaian diri dengan jenama terhadap kesetiaan jenama. Selain itu, kajian ini meneliti peranan pengantaraan pengenalan pengguna terhadap jenama dalam hubungan antara pemboleh ubah bebas dan kesetiaan jenama. Elemen nostalgia turut diperincikan sebagai pemboleh ubah penyederhana yang mempengaruhi hubungan antara pengenalan pengguna terhadap jenama dan kesetiaan jenama. Bagi mencapai objektif tersebut, kajian ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif melalui edaran soal selidik sendiri sebagai kaedah pengumpulan data utama. Analisis PLS-SEM telah dijalankan terhadap 432 respons sah yang diperoleh daripada pengguna Generasi Y di China bagi jenama sukan. Dapatan kajian menunjukkan bahawa kepercayaan terhadap jenama, nilai yang dirasakan pelanggan, dan pengalaman jenama mempunyai hubungan positif dengan kesetiaan jenama. Selain itu, peranan pengantaraan pengenalan pengguna terhadap jenama serta penyederhanaan nostalgia turut disokong. Walau bagaimanapun, hubungan antara kesesuaian diri dengan jenama dan kesetiaan jenama didapati tidak signifikan. Dengan membangunkan rangka kerja konseptual berasaskan teori SIT dan SET serta mengesahkan konstruk yang sejajar dengan teori tersebut, kajian ini menunjukkan bagaimana integrasi sinergi SIT dan SET dapat memandu jenama sukan dalam memupuk kesetiaan pelanggan yang berkekalan.

Kata Kunci: Kesetiaan jenama, Nilai yang dirasakan pelanggan, Pengalaman jenama, Kepercayaan terhadap jenama, Pengenalan pengguna terhadap jenama.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to many individuals who have played a pivotal role in making this thesis a reality. First and foremost, I extend my deepest thanks and appreciation to my two supervisors, Professor Sany and Dr. Azanin, for their invaluable support, guidance, time, advice, feedback, and encouragement throughout the entire process of writing this thesis. Their expertise and dedication have been instrumental in shaping the outcome of this work.

I would also like to convey my sincere gratitude to my parents, family, and friends for their unwavering support and encouragement during the completion of this thesis. Over the years, my family has provided me with both financial assistance and emotional encouragement, which have been crucial in enabling me to carry out and complete my research successfully.

Finally, I wish to express my profound gratitude to all the respondents from Chinese sports brands for their effort and cooperation. Their willingness to dedicate their valuable time and patience to completing the questionnaires provided me with essential and insightful data for my research. This project would not have been possible without the support and contributions of all the respondents who participated in the survey.

Moreover, I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM) for granting me this exceptional opportunity to pursue and achieve my educational goal of earning a Doctor of Philosophy degree here.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PERMISSION TO USE	i
ABSTRACT	ii
ABSTRAK	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS	v
LIST OF TABLES	xi
LIST OF FIGURES	xiii
LIST OF APPENDICES	xiv
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	xv
CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Background of Study	1
1.3 Problem Statement	7
1.4 Research Question	17
1.5 Research Objectives	18
1.6 Scope of Study	19
1.7 Significance of Study	19
1.7.1 Theoretical Significance	20
1.7.2 Practical Significance	21
1.8 Operational Definition of Terms	22
1.8.1 Brand Loyalty	22
1.8.2 Brand Experience	22
1.8.3 Brand Trust	22
1.8.4 Customer Perceived Value	23
1.8.5 Self-Brand Congruity	23
1.8.6 Consumer-Brand Identification	23
1.8.7 Nostalgia	23
1.9 Organization of the Thesis	23
CHAPTER TWO LITERATURE REVIEW	25
2.1 Introduction	25
2.2 Social Exchange Theory	25

2.2.1 Social Exchange Theory and Variables of This Study	25
2.3 Social Identity Theory	31
2.3.1 Social Identity Theory and Variables of This Study	31
2.4 The Combination of Social Exchange Theory and Social Identity Theory	36
2.5 Brand Experience	44
2.5.1 The Definition of Brand Experience	44
2.5.2 Dimensions of Brand Experience	46
2.5.3 Past Research on Brand Experience	49
2.6 Brand Trust	51
2.6.1 The Definition of Brand Trust	51
2.6.2 Dimensions of Brand Trust	53
2.6.3 Past Research on Brand Trust	54
2.7 Customer Perceived Value	56
2.7.1 The Definition of Customer Perceived Value	56
2.7.2 Dimensions of Customer Perceived Value	58
2.7.3 Past Research on Customer Perceived Value	61
2.8 Self-Brand Congruity	63
2.8.1 The Definition of Self-Brand Congruity	63
2.8.2 Dimensions of Self-Brand Congruity	64
2.8.3 Past Research on Self-Brand Congruity	66
2.9 Consumer-Brand Identification	68
2.9.1 The Definition of Consumer-Brand Identification	68
2.9.2 Dimensions of Consumer-Brand Identification	70
2.9.3 Past Research on Consumer-Brand Identification	72
2.9.4 Consumer-Brand Identification as a Mediator	74
2.10 Nostalgia	76
2.10.1 Nostalgia as a Moderator	78
2.11 Brand Loyalty	80
2.11.1 The Definition of Brand Loyalty	80
2.11.2 Dimensions of Brand Loyalty	81
2.11.3 Past Research on Brand Loyalty	85
2.12 Generation Y Consumers	87
2.13 Conceptual Framework	91

2.14 Research Hypotheses	92
2.14.1 Brand Experience and Brand Loyalty	92
2.14.2 Brand Experience and Consumer-Brand Identification	94
2.14.3 Brand Trust and Brand Loyalty	95
2.14.4 Brand Trust and Consumer-Brand Identification	96
2.14.5 Consumer-Brand Identification and Brand Loyalty	98
2.14.6 Customer Perceived Value and Brand Loyalty	99
2.14.7 Customer Perceived Value and Consumer-Brand Identification	100
2.14.8 Self-Brand Congruity and Brand Loyalty	102
2.14.9 Self-Brand Congruity and Consumer-Brand Identification	103
2.14.10 The Mediation Effect of Consumer-Brand Identification on the Connection Between Brand Experience, Brand Trust, Customer Perceived Value and Self-Brand Congruity on Loyalty Relationships	104
2.14.11 The Moderation Effect of Nostalgia on the Connection Between Consumer- Brand Identification and Brand Loyalty	107
2.15 Hypotheses Summary	109
2.16 Chapter Summary	110
CHAPTER THREE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	112
3.1 Introduction	112
3.2 Research Design	112
3.3 Sampling Design	113
3.3.1 Sampling Population	113
3.3.2 Unit of Analysis	115
3.3.3 Sample Size of Determination	116
3.3.4 Sampling Technique	117
3.4 Data Collection of Procedure	121
3.4.1 Operational Definition/Variable Measurements and Instrumentation	121
3.4.2 Brand Experience	121
3.4.3 Brand Trust	122
3.4.4 Customer Perceived Value	122
3.4.5 Self-Brand Congruity	123
3.4.6 Consumer-Brand Identification	124
3.4.7 Nostalgia	125

3.4.8 Brand Loyalty	125
3.4.9 Questionnaire Design/Measurement Scale	126
3.4.10 Pretesting and Pilot Study	127
3.4.11 Reliability and Validity Test	129
3.4.12 Face Validity	129
3.4.13 Reliability	130
3.5 Evaluation of Measurement Model	131
3.5.1 Data Analytical Procedure	132
3.5.2 Construct Validity	133
3.5.3 Convergent Validity	134
3.5.4 Discriminant Validity	134
3.5.5 Collinearity Assessment	135
3.5.6 Path Coefficients Significance	136
3.5.7 Coefficient of Determination (R^2)	137
3.5.8 Effect Size (f^2)	137
3.5.9 Predictive Relevance of the Model (Q^2)	138
3.6 Chapter Summary	138
CHAPTER FOUR RESULTS AND DATA ANALYSIS	140
4.1 Introduction	140
4.2 Initial Data Cleaning Procedures	140
4.2.1 Survey Response Analysis	140
4.2.2 Data Screening and Treatment	141
4.2.3 Assessment and Treatment of Outliers	142
4.2.4 Normality Test	143
4.2.5 Multicollinearity	144
4.2.6 Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents	145
4.2.7 Testing for Sampling Adequacy	147
4.3 Testing No-Response Bias	148
4.4 Tests for Common Method Variance	152
4.5 Descriptive Statistics	153
4.6 Evaluating the Result of PLS-SEM Path Model	155
4.7 Measurement Model Assessment	155
4.7.1 Assessment of Reliability	157

4.7.2 Assessment of Convergent Validity	158
4.7.3 Assessment of Discriminant Validity	160
4.7.4 Structural Model Assessment	166
4.7.5 Testing Direct Relationships	167
4.7.6 Testing the Mediating Effect	169
4.7.7 Testing the Moderating Effect	170
4.7.8 Variance Explain (R^2)	172
4.7.9 Assessment Effect Size (f^2)	173
4.7.10 The Predictive Relevance(Q^2)	174
4.8 Findings Summary	176
4.9 Chapter Summary	176
CHAPTER FIVE DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION	178
5.1 Introduction	178
5.2 Summary of Findings	178
5.3 Discussion	180
5.3.1 Brand Experience and Brand Loyalty	181
5.3.2 Brand Experience and Consumer-Brand Identification	182
5.3.3 Brand Trust and Brand Loyalty	183
5.3.4 Brand Trust and Consumer-Brand Identification	184
5.3.5 Customer Perceived Value and Brand Loyalty	185
5.3.6 Customer Perceived Value and Consumer-Brand Identification	187
5.3.7 Self-Brand Congruity and Brand Loyalty	188
5.3.8 Self-Brand Congruity and Consumer-Brand Identification	189
5.3.9 Consumer-Brand Identification and Brand Loyalty	190
5.3.10 Consumer-Brand Identification as a Mediator	192
5.3.11 Nostalgia as a Moderator	196
5.4 Contribution of the Study	197
5.4.1 Theoretical Contribution	198
5.4.2 Practical Contribution	203
5.5 Limitation of the Study	208
5.6 Recommendation for Future Research	210
5.7 Conclusion	211
REFERENCES	213

APPENDICES APPENDIX A	261
The Questionnaire of the Study	261
APPENDIX B.....	267
KMO and Bartlett's Test	267
APPENDIX C	269
CMV	269
APPENDIX D.....	271
Questionnaire Distribution Address	271
APPENDIX E.....	272
Publications From the Ph.D. Research	272



LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.1	Research Gaps	17
Table 1.2	Research Focus	43
Table 1.3	Questionnaires Distribution	120
Table 1.4	Items Used to Measure Brand Experience	121
Table 1.5	Items Used to Measure Brand Trust	122
Table 1.6	Items Used to Measure Customer Perceived Value	123
Table 1.7	Items Used to Measure Self-Brand Congruity	124
Table 1.8	Items Used to Measure Consumer-Brand Identification	125
Table 1.9	Items Used to Measure Nostalgia	125
Table 2.0	Items Used to Measure Brand Loyalty	126
Table 2.1	Summary of Reliability Study	130
Table 2.2	Questionnaires Distribution and Retention	141
Table 2.3	Test of Normality- Skewness and Kurtosis	143
Table 2.4	Multicollinearity Test Based on Tolerance and VIF Values	145
Table 2.5	Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents	145
Table 2.6	KMO and Bartlett's Test	148
Table 2.7	Group Statistics for Early and Late Responses	149
Table 2.8	Non-Response Bias	151
Table 2.9	Descriptive Analysis of the Latent Constructs	154
Table 3.0	Reliability Analysis	158
Table 3.1	The Convergent Validity Assessment Result	158
Table 3.2	Discriminant Validity Analysis Second Stage	161
Table 3.3	Fornell & Lacker of the First Order	162
Table 3.4	HTMT of the First Order	163
Table 3.5	Loadings and Cross Loadings	164
Table 3.6	Loadings and Cross Loadings Second Stage	165
Table 3.7	Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)	166
Table 3.8	Hypotheses Testing Results	168
Table 3.9	Meditation Results	170
Table 4.0	Moderating Effect	171
Table 4.1	R-Squared Results	172

Table 4.2	Effect Size	174
Table 4.3	Findings of Summary	176



LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.1	Sports Brands Market Share in China 2020-2023	3
Figure 1.2	China Sports Brand Year-on-Year Growth Rate 2020-2023	4
Figure 1.3	SIT and SET Dual-Path	42
Figure 1.4	The Conceptual Framework of the Study	92
Figure 1.5	Measurement Model	157
Figure 1.6	First Order Reflective Measurement Model	160
Figure 1.7	Measurement Model of the Second Order	167
Figure 1.8	Structural Model (Mediation Effect)	170
Figure 1.9	Structural Model (Moderation Effect)	172
Figure 2.0	Structural Model (R^2)	173
Figure 2.1	Structural Model (f^2)	174
Figure 2.2	Structural Model (Q^2)	175



LIST OF APPENDICES

APPENDIX A	The Questionnaire of the Study	261
APPENDIX B	KMO and Bartlett's Test	267
APPENDIX C	CMV	269
APPENDIX D	Questionnaire Distribution Address	271
APPENDIX E	Publications From the Ph.D. Research	272



LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AVE	Average Variance Extracted
BL	Brand Loyalty
f^2	Effect Size
BE	Brand Experience
BT	Brand Trust
CPV	Customer Perceived Value
SBC	Self-Brand Congruity
CBI	Consumer-Brand Identification
N	Nostalgia
HTMT	Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio
SIT	Social Identity Theory
SET	Social Exchange Theory
PLS	Partial Least Square
R²	R-Squared
Q²	Q square
S.E.	Standard Error
SEM	Structural Equation Model
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
CMV	Common Method Variance
CFA	Confirmatory Factor Analysis
VIF	Variance Inflation Factor

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the problem statement, research objectives, questions, and the scope of the study, which serves as the landmark to the success of the study's targets have been all introduced in this chapter. This chapter additionally consists of the definitional sub-topics of the key phrases that are applicable to the learning about title and frameworks, whilst it will cease after a summarization of this research.

1.2 Background of Study

In the contemporary globalized milieu, the swift advancement of information technology and artificial intelligence has escalated competition among enterprises, particularly within the rapidly evolving clothing industry. Present-day consumers are inundated with a plethora of brand choices. The empowerment brought by information technology addresses the diverse needs of consumers while simultaneously fostering elevated expectations and refined tastes. Consequently, clothing brands must delve into the evolving preferences of consumers to cultivate enduring relationships and secure competitive advantages and profitability. Some scholars advocate for fostering brand loyalty in the apparel industry by sustaining long-term relationships between organizations and customers amidst relentless competition and escalating customer expectations, thereby achieving sustainable profits and growth (Kulawardena & Kalpana, 2024).

The sports industry, particularly sports brands and products, has garnered significant scholarly attention as a rapidly expanding sub-sector of the apparel industry (Akoglu & Özbek, 2022; Rincon et al., 2023). Globally, the growth rate of sports apparel

industry has been remarkable in recent years, particularly within the sports brands sub-sector, rendering the industry highly competitive. Furthermore, Akoglu and Özbek (2022) assert that investigating the determinants of brand loyalty in the sports industry is paramount for securing competitive advantage and ensuring the sector's success.

With consumers increasingly valuing a multifunctional and comfortable leisure lifestyle, sports products have become particularly popular among young people (Zahari et al., 2022). This trend has contributed to the remarkable growth of sports apparel in recent years. According to a Euromonitor report, the compound annual growth rate of the global sports shoes and clothing market from 2011 to 2019 was 4.08%. In 2021, following a brief downturn, the market experienced a robust rebound, surging by 21.18% year-on-year to \$364.486 billion (Northeast Securities, 2023). From 2018 to 2023, the global sportswear and footwear market expanded from \$331.2 billion to \$395.5 billion, growing at a 4% CAGR. Dominated by professional sports equipment and activewear (86% combined market share), these segments reached \$175.3 billion and \$163.5 billion respectively in 2023. (JRJ.com, 2024).

Moreover, international sports brands Nike and Adidas continue to dominate the Chinese market, leveraging their long-standing brand heritage and an array of iconic products that resonate with young consumers. Despite the presence of local sports brands, consumers still exhibit a stronger preference for international brands. In 2022, Ipsos conducted a survey of 2,000 Chinese sportswear consumers, revealing that the top sports brands were Nike and Adidas. According to the survey, over 74% of respondents would consider purchasing Nike, and 67% would consider Adidas when buying sportswear. Additionally, more than 50% of consumers identified Nike and Adidas as their first or second choice brands (Ipsos, 2023).

Similarly, Chinese sports brands have experienced remarkable growth in recent years. From 2013 to 2019, the market size of China's sports shoes and apparel expanded from \$18.86 billion to \$44.79 billion, with a compound annual growth rate of 15.51%, significantly surpassing the global market growth rate. In some of China's local sports brands can be traced back to the 1990s, a period when international sports brands had already entered the Chinese market and were widely popular among consumers. Competing with these well-established international brands was challenging at the time. However, following a series of reforms, local sports brands have gradually won the favor of young Chinese consumers. According to iimedia report, 53.7% of Chinese consumers purchased sports products for their daily life (iimedia, 2021). The annual reports of each brand from 2020 to 2023 indicate that the market share of local sports brands has increased year by year, with significant growth in year-on-year growth rate, as seen in Figure 1.1 and 1.2.



Figure 1.1 Sports Brands Market Share in China 2020-2023
Source: Sina Finance

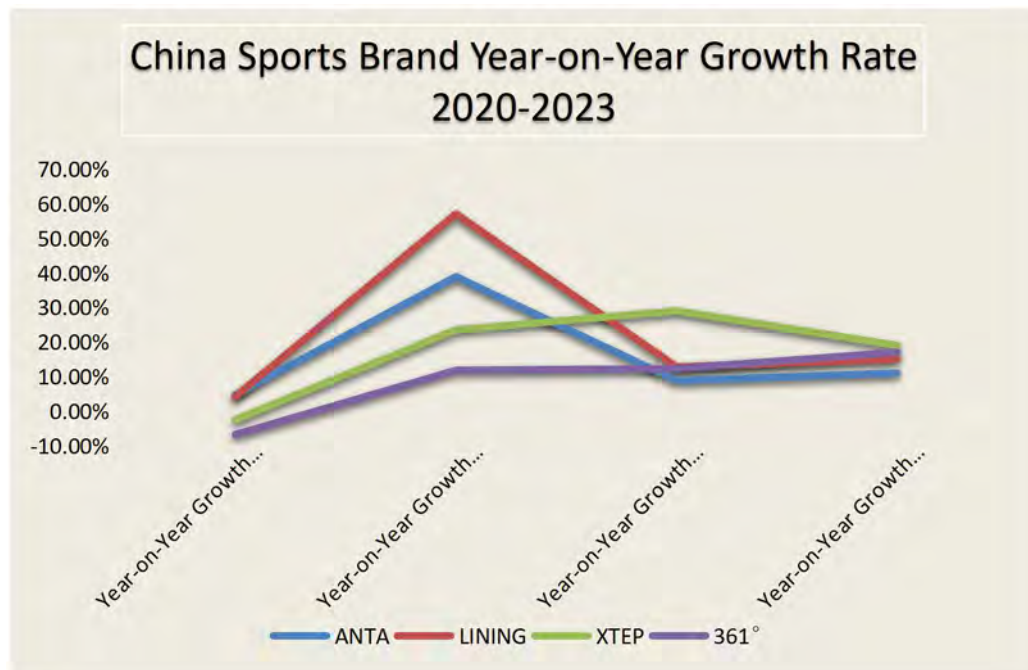


Figure 1.2. China Sports Brand Year-on-Year Growth Rate 2020-2023
Source: Companies' annual earnings reports.

Despite the impressive growth momentum of China's sports industry, sports brands face several challenges, particularly in building enduring relationships with consumers. First of all. Market share competition: The intense competition in the sports apparel market makes it difficult for domestic brands to replace international giants like Nike and Adidas as representatives of first-class brands (Luo & Xie, 2023; Xue, 2024). Intense competition often leads to price wars where brands continuously lower prices to attract customers. This can make consumers more price-sensitive and less loyal to a specific brand, as they are always looking for the best deal. In the race to expand market share, brands may diversify their product lines too much, losing focus on their core offerings. This can dilute the brand's identity and weaken the emotional connection with loyal customers. In other words, retaining loyal consumers remains a significant hurdle for these brands (Jiang, 2023).

Second. Homogenization issue: The apparel industry is experiencing severe homogenization, leading to substantial customer attrition. Homogeneity in the garment industry means that many brands and products look and feel very similar.

This happens when companies copy popular styles and trends to stay competitive. When all brands offer similar products, it becomes hard for any single brand to stand out. This makes it difficult for consumers to remember and prefer one brand over another. When products are very similar, brands often compete mainly on price. This can lead to lower profit margins and financial strain for companies. If consumers see no difference between brands, they are less likely to remain loyal to one. This can result in customers frequently switching brands, making it harder for companies to build a strong, loyal customer base. Consequently, establishing a loyal customer base has become a crucial goal for the sustainable development of clothing enterprises (Cui & Lin, 2021; Li et al., 2021; Sharma et al., 2023).

Third. Lack of effective communication: Domestic sports brands often lack effective interactive communication with consumers, resulting in insufficient psychological understanding of their customers. This deficiency contributes to low brand loyalty and stickiness (Wang, 2023). With the diversification of consumer preferences, customers are less likely to remain loyal to a single brand, which adversely affects brand loyalty and the development of potential consumers (Luo & Xie, 2023; Xue, 2024). In the same vein, some scholars suggest that the disloyalty among contemporary young consumers has contributed to the decline in clothing sales (Miao et al., 2024). Young consumers do not consistently purchase their favorite brands, nor do they have a history of frequent purchases. Hence, brand disloyalty has become one of the most significant obstacles in the apparel industry, including sports brands, hindering the establishment of long-term relationships and competitive advantages between enterprises and consumers (Li, 2019; Shafiq et al., 2023).

Therefore. This study addresses a critical gap in understanding brand loyalty, particularly within the context of Generation Y (Gen Y) consumers and the Chinese sports apparel industry. While traditional loyalty models (e.g., the satisfaction-loyalty

chain) emphasize functional and economic value drivers (Rafidinal et al., 2024; Cho et al., 2024), they inadequately account for loyalty formation where consumption is intrinsically linked to self-concept and social identity construction – a defining characteristic of Gen Y's engagement with sports brands. A systematic integration of brands as social identity symbols (e.g., trendsetter, proponent of cutting-edge technology, or membership within specific communities) into loyalty-driving models is notably absent, especially given Gen Y's heightened demand for personalization and identity recognition (Valaei & Nikhashemi, 2017; Agrawal, 2023).

Contextualizing within the broader Chinese apparel industry reveals a specific predicament for sports brands. Intense competition has fostered price sensitivity among Gen Y consumers. However, attempts to compete on price without commensurate brand premium support have often intensified perceptions of alternative availability. This dynamic encourages transactional behaviors like promotion-driven stockpiling (Zeta, 2025), rather than fostering deep-seated, emotional loyalty rooted in brand identification. For Gen Y, sports consumption serves as a key medium for self-expression, homogeneous product offerings fail to satisfy their need to cultivate a unique persona.

Furthermore, this generation places significant value on brands' social responsibility and resonant spiritual propositions. Domestic brands frequently prioritize functional attributes in communication, neglecting holistic relational experiences and the cultivation of multi-dimensional value perceptions. This oversight contributes significantly to the observed fleeting loyalty among Gen Y consumers within the Chinese sports apparel market (Zeta, 2025; Ramotion Agency, 2025).

This focus on Gen Y consumers – defined as individuals born roughly between 1980-2000 – is central to this study. Their distinct consumption patterns, particularly the

emphasis on identity-driven purchasing and conditional loyalty, warrant specific investigation compared to other generational cohorts. While Gen Z exhibits highly conditional loyalty based on continuous innovation, relevance, and authenticity. Gen X, though somewhat more traditionally brand loyal, is increasingly influenced by similar digital convenience and value factors as younger generations. Gen Y may shift allegiance for better value or stronger social responsibility alignment (prioritizing personalization and frictionless experiences). Against the backdrop of the constantly changing Chinese market, the status of Gen Y presents unique challenges and opportunities for cultivating brand loyalty. Domestic sports brands should offer products that meet the value and identity needs of Gen Y consumers to retain them.

Consequently, this research prioritizes understanding the specific drivers of attitudinal and behavioral loyalty within the critical Gen Y segment in China's sports apparel sector, addressing calls for more dedicated research in this domain (Bennur & Jin, 2017) and the significant efforts sportswear companies invest in customer retention (Akoglu & Özbek, 2022; Shoffian et al., 2021).

1.3 Problem Statement

In 2023, the total scale of the national sports industry accounted for 1.15% of the gross domestic product (GDP). It increased by 0.07% compared with the previous year (Government of the People's Republic of China, 2024). By 2025, the total scale of the sports industry will reach 5 trillion yuan. The proportion of added value to GDP reached 2% (General Administration of Sport of China, 2024). Among them, domestic sports brands have made certain contributions in China's economy, steadily expanding their market share and possessing the ability to compete with internationally renowned brands.

However, Anta and Li-Ning have shown strong performance, they have not yet fundamentally challenged Nike and Adidas' market dominance (IMD, 2024). Industry expert Cheng Weixiong notes international brands maintain control of China's premium segment through three key advantages: 1) localized strategies, 2) superior digital operations, and 3) aggressive expansion into lower-tier cities (tiers 3-5) (China Business Journal, 2025). These factors continue to drive their steady growth across all market segments.

The influx of niche international companies such as Brooks (which will re-enter China in 2023), HOKA and On Running has intensified the competitive pressure in the domestic Chinese market, and these companies are rapidly gaining appeal. Although domestic brands have increased investment in research and development, the reported R&D expense ratios are generally below 5%, significantly lagging behind the 5-10% of Nike and Adidas (China Business Journal, 2025). According to an iiMedia Research report (iiMedia, 2024), 46.75% of consumers prioritize technical proficiency—particularly safety features and technological sophistication—when purchasing athletic footwear. Consequently, inadequate investment in R&D may undermine brand credibility and compromise product experience, presenting a critical barrier to sustained consumer loyalty.

Furthermore, the market is confronted with inherent resistance: Despite the existence of per capita consumption potential, the consumption capacity of the mass market for sportswear is approaching saturation. This has led to a continuous decline in the return on investment for brands, forcing them to seek new growth paths in the face of intensified competition and compressed profits (China Business Journal, 2025). Consequently, ambitious local brands face a strategic dilemma: How to sustain growth momentum and capture market share while preserving distinct brand identity and differentiation (McKinsey & Company, 2025).

Compounding the issue of industry homogenization, sports brands face a significant behavioral challenge: The pervasive sedentary lifestyle among contemporary consumers, particularly younger demographics including Generation Y (Gen Y). Despite well-documented health benefits, physical inactivity rates have risen substantially, with the proportion of non-exercising adults increasing from 26% (2010) to 31% (2022). The World Health Organization projects this trend will escalate further, anticipating 35% of the global population will be physically inactive by 2030 (McKinsey & Company, 2025).

Further complicating matters, brand loyalty has markedly diminished among these younger consumers. Multiple studies have confirmed that Gen Y consumers are increasingly reluctant to remain loyal to specific brands (Zeta, 2025; Piepiora et al., 2024; Linus et al., 2021; Adriel et al., 2024). To secure sustainable competitive differentiation and cultivate enduring customer loyalty within the Chinese market, domestic sports brands must address consumer needs at the psychological level. This requires strategically integrating identity construction with multi-dimensional value perception, thereby enabling consumers to align brand experiences with their self-concept. The widening behavioral segmentation between inactive populations and fitness-engaged consumers underscores this imperative.

For the latter cohort, physical activity has transitioned from recreational pursuit to an essential health preservation practice and a determinant of identity formation. By curating distinctive brand experiences that amplify perceived value through this identity lens, domestic brands can unlock unique engagement opportunities. Such experiential alignment not only fosters deeper consumer connections but serves as a critical catalyst for long-term loyalty in a fragmented market (McKinsey & Company, 2025).

Interestingly. The rise of Chinese domestic sportswear brands is underpinned by profound cultural-psychological mechanisms. Confucian *yuanfen* principles—encompassing interaction beliefs, intimate interactions, and well-being—significantly enhance brand preference by strengthening consumer-brand emotional bonds, with product-country image serving as a critical mediator in this process. When consumers perceive cultural values embedded in local brands, their identification translates into actual purchase behavior (Yang & Song, 2024). Further research reveals a refined pathway for cultural identity's role in driving Guochao (national trend) brand consumption.

Empirical analysis of brands such as Li-Ning demonstrates that cultural identity not only directly strengthens brand attachment but also indirectly stimulates purchase intention by enhancing consumers' perceptions of self-esteem fulfillment (Zhai, 2023). This pathway, where cultural identity drives brand attachment and subsequently influences consumption behavior through the fulfillment of self-esteem needs, clearly illuminates how Guochao consumption fundamentally externalizes cultural confidence.

Multiple brand-specific studies further confirm that when consumers perceive domestic brands as cultural symbols, their purchasing decisions transcend functional attributes and instead seek cultural belongingness and self-actualization (Hu & Shen, 2021; Xianyu & Ma, 2025). Consequently, the competitive advantage of local sports brands is transitioning from cost-performance ratios to cultural premiums. Within this transformation, the synergy between cultural identity and self-esteem needs constitutes the pivotal driving lever.

In literature review. Despite the significance of brand loyalty in marketing and it grabbed a great attention among researchers, there are few empirical findings

regarding brand loyalty in the sports apparel industry (Akoglu & Özbek, 2022; Rincón et al., 2023). Both Erdumlu et al. (2017) and Dai and Chen (2017) asserted that sportswear companies must have a comprehensive understanding of the attitude and behaviour of loyal consumers. Particularly in China's sports brands industry, brand loyalty is an effective method for increasing higher market share (Lai & Teo, 2019; Li & Tang, 2020). Hence, in recent years, brand loyalty has been a worrying issue for commercial enterprises in order to effectively retain consumers, and the sports industry is no exception to it (Mills et al., 2022; Gaurav et al., 2020).

Hence. This study addresses gaps mentioned earlier by developing an integrated model that merges social exchange and social identity theories, given their shared interactive and social nature. Despite the theoretical fit, the impact of consumer-brand identification and self-brand congruity on loyalty intentions remains under-explored, particularly in the sports apparel sector (Aziz & Ahmed, 2021; Chen & Wang, 2021). In particular, Chinese domestic sports brands combine culture with modern trends to cater to the Gen Y consumers' recognition of trendy and fashionable identities, thereby enhancing self-esteem and confidence and establishing a lasting connection with the brand.

Social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) fundamentally addresses identity construction — a process where individuals derive self-concept from group membership. For Gen Y consumers of Chinese sports brands, this manifests as self-brand congruity triggering consumer-brand identification when brand symbolism (e.g., Li-Ning's Guochao aesthetics) aligns with cultural identity narratives. This identification satisfies Gen Y's desire for self-expression through collective belonging, particularly in the Guochao era where domestic brands represent national pride (Wang, 2022). Crucially, CBI transforms brands into social labels that externally communicate consumers' cultural values, explaining why Gen Y prefer

local brands with heritage symbolism over global competitors (Wang, 2022).

Conversely, social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) centers on reciprocal benefit exchanges that sustain relationships. Here, brand experience (e.g., immersive flagship stores) and customer perceived value (price-quality-equity trade-offs) generate brand trust through repeated positive interactions. This trust functions as relational currency: Consumers commit loyalty only when brands consistently deliver value exceeding costs (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). For example, Anta's proprietary nitrogen technology sneakers justify premium pricing through demonstrable performance benefits, fulfilling Gen Y's utilitarian expectations within an exchange framework.

According to the report released by talking data (Talking data, 2022), Gen Y consumers pay more attention to functionality, product quality and branded products, while Gen Z consumers are more concerned about product price. 73% of Gen Z consumers prefer to purchase local sports brands (iimedia, 2022). The author found that the literature on the purchase of China-Chic brands focuses more on Gen Z consumers (Zhang & Lu, 2022), believing that they are the main force driving this trend. However, the number of Gen Y consumers in China is larger than that of Gen Z, and they have stronger purchasing power (Muralidhar & Raja, 2019). Furthermore, Gen Y consumers are the least satisfied and low level of loyalty customers compared to other generations (Bilgihan, 2016; Moreno et al., 2017).

The combination of social identity theory and social exchange theory is more common in the field of organizations, studying the behavior of employees (Liu & Qi, 2022; Simbula et al., 2023), yet, limited studies have utilized SET and SIT to elucidate consumer willingness to engage in in-role behavior, such as brand loyalty, in sports brands industry. Especially there are few empirical articles exploring the

predictors of brand loyalty from the perspective of social psychology of Gen Y (Jab, 2017), and unique psychological characteristics (Muralidhar & Raja, 2019). Since the nature of the clothing market includes changing consumer tastes and styles, it is worth noting that some scholars have proposed that understanding the basic psychology of clothing consumption (Gruber et al., 2024; Nielsen et al., 2023) is the essential factor shaping the attitudes and purchasing behaviors of young consumers.

In line with this notion, some scholars, such as He et al. (2012) and Mishra and Mund (2024), have illuminated the importance of social exchange factors—like perceived value, trust, and brand experience—in understanding consumer behavior, much less attention has been devoted to the role of social identification factors, such as consumer-brand identification, in fostering brand loyalty (Coelho et al., 2018; Fatma & Khan, 2023). Articles revealed that trust is critical to creating brand loyalty (Bernarto et al., 2020; Mabkhot et al., 2017). Especially the relationship between brand trust and brand loyalty in the sports brand industry (Akoglu & Özbek, 2022).

Clothing is closely associated with an individual's self-concept, encompassing aspects such as personal identity, social status, and personality traits (Khare, 2014), consumers are considered cautious to choose appropriate clothing products to enhance their physical appearance and identity. Brand identification is a critical concept, and it is also considered to be a very important mediator variable in the sports industry, since it can be seen as a variable to predict loyalty (Mills et al., 2022) and considered to be a key concept used to explain consumers' long-term commitment to clothing brands. Unfortunately, the effect of consumer-brand identification on brand loyalty in sports brand is underexplored (Mills et al., 2022).

Consequently, Coelho, Rita, and Santos (2018) suggested that future research should focus more on the apparel industry and that quantitative analysis will shed light on

the role of these structures in brand loyalty models by using brand trust and consumer-brand identification as a way to measure consumer perception of a brand.

Nowadays, loyalty is a major concern of entities (Anaya-Sanchez et al., 2020). And what is more, there is no unified perspective regarding the measurement of loyalty (Tabaku & Zerellari, 2015). It is necessary to adopt new variables into the model of measuring brand loyalty, which are positively related to it (Cuesta-Valiño et al., 2021). First. Self-congruity achieved a great deal of attention in brand loyalty studies (Tran et al., 2022; Zhang, 2022). However, there is still a dearth of knowledge on its direct and positive effect on brand loyalty (Zhang, 2022). Self-brand congruity is a concept that reflects the similarity of specific attributes between individual and brand. This similarity refers to the fit between consumers and organizations, assuming that consumers will be attracted to organizations that share similar values. It is a concept that can be used to boost the relationship between consumer and the brand emotionally and physically.

However, some of studies failed to provide empirical results. In addition, Magin et al. (2003) found that there is no significant relationship between self-congruity and customer loyalty. Zogaj et al. (2021) found that actual self-congruity has no positive and significant effect on loyalty. As an indicator of its importance in decision-making, while some articles have shown the significance of self-congruity to predict brand loyalty (Kang et al., 2015; Liu et al., 2019; Zhang, 2022). Besides, empirical studies on self-brand congruity are in the context of western culture, mainly focusing on the United States, and few studies demonstrate its impact in other cultural backgrounds (Sung & Choi, 2012).

Secondly. In order to differentiate from competitors, companies need to create an exciting and unforgettable brand experience for consumers so that they have

repurchase intention and be loyal to the brand (Rehman & Shafiq, 2019). Hence, sports brands launch new products every year to attract and retain consumers. They should understand and respond to consumers' preference and changing trends (Nikhashemi et al., 2019; Nikhashemi & Valaei, 2017). Brand experience is one of the solutions. It is a strategic weapon that can meet or even exceed consumers' expectations as firms are aware of the fact that is positive brand experience helps induce desired outcomes, i.e. willingness to pay more, loyalty, repurchase intention (Japutra & Molinillo, 2019; Iglesias et al., 2019). However, the empirical results on brand experience and its impact on brand loyalty are limited (Rasool et al., 2021).

Thirdly. Nostalgia has a great driving role in influencing behavioral intentions. It is not only associated with advertising, but also related to purchase intentions and brand loyalty (Muehling et al., 2004; Muehling et al, 2014; Kim, Kim, Nosrati & Badu-Baiden, 2024). However, empirical studies on the effect of nostalgia on consumer behavior outcomes are inconsistent. Rhajbal et al. (2017) revealed that nostalgia did not moderate the relationship between friendship attachment and brand loyalty. Chen et al. (2020) also supported that nostalgia has no direct influence on loyalty. Whereas Kim, Kim, Nosrati and Badu-Baiden (2024) investigated that nostalgia has a positive effect on customer loyalty in restaurant industry.

Nostalgia as Strategic Leverage: Building emotional loyalty in Chinese sports brands

in consumer behavior research, nostalgic sentiment—a profound emotional connection to the past—has emerged as a core strategy for domestic brands to cultivate user loyalty. Illustrating this, Li-Ning's 92 Dunhuang collection revived design elements from China's 1992 Barcelona Olympics podium attire (e.g., red-yellow color schemes, cloud embroidery), embedding collective memories of the nation's 1990s athletic resurgence into contemporary sportswear. This symbolic resurrection resonated strongly with consumers, driving significant market traction

upon release (China Sports Daily, 2025).

The underlying logic of such nostalgia-driven marketing lies in consumers' emotional projection onto historical brand symbols. A paradigm case is Xtep's 2021 brand film *To the Special You*, which leveraged the classic song *Special Love for Special You* as its soundtrack while tracing a protagonist's life journey—from childhood sports dreams to adult career challenges—through an iconic No. 11 jersey. By fusing nostalgic artifacts with generational narratives, Xtep anchored its identity to consumers' formative memories, bridging past and present selves to evoke profound emotional resonance. This campaign contributed to Xtep's record-breaking sales during the 2021 Double Eleven shopping festival (ChinaSo.com, 2021).

These cases reveal a differentiated competitive pathway for Chinese sports brands: While international rivals prioritize technological supremacy, domestic players activate cultural memory codes to establish irreplaceable emotional anchors in consumers' psyches. This strategy transforms nostalgia from transient sentiment into sustainable brand equity.

Fourthly. The studies examined antecedents of customer-brand identification are scant (Elbedweihy et al., 2016; So et al., 2013; Tuškej & Podnar, 2018). As well brand loyalty as one of consequences of CBI (Coelho et al., 2018; Rather & Sharma, 2016; Stroebe et al., 2021). Some scholars have verified the relationship between brand trust and brand identification (Becerra & Badrinarayanan, 2013; He et al., 2012; Kumar & Kaushik, 2017). The relationship between perceived value and brand identification (Abd Aziz & Ngah, 2019; He et al., 2012; Han, 2020; So et al., 2013). The relationship between customer experience, brand identification and customer loyalty (Bu & Fen, 2021; Kumar & Kaushik, 2020). In addition, self-brand congruity is one of antecedents of CBI (Lam et al., 2013; Sihvonen, 2019; Torres et al., 2017).

Therefore. This study will fill the gaps by examining the effect of brand experience, brand trust, customer perceived value, self-brand congruity, brand experience and brand loyalty. Consumer-brand identification mediates these relationships. Nostalgia moderates the identification-loyalty link in sports brands industry in China. The gaps to be addressed in this study are shown in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1
Research Gaps

Knowledge principle	Knowledge gaps
Contextual Gap	There are limited articles aims to explore the significant role of brand loyalty in sports brands industry.
Empirical Gap	Previous research on the relationship between consumer-brand identification and brand loyalty in the sports apparel industry has been notably limited.
	There are few articles on sports brand loyalty of Gen Y consumers.
	The relationship between self-brand congruity and brand loyalty is under-explored.
	The moderating role of nostalgia on the connection between consumer-brand identification and brand loyalty has not been tested so far.
	The driving role of consumer brands as mediator in brand loyalty has been underestimated.
Theoretical Gap	There are limited articles combined social identity and social exchange theory as underpinning theories to the model of brand loyalty.
Methodological	This study aims to improve the validity of key constructs by using refined multiple-item measurements, such as brand experience, customer perceived value and self-brand congruity.

1.4 Research Question

This study will attempt to answer the following questions:

- i. What is the relationship between brand experience, brand trust, customer perceived value, self-brand congruity and brand loyalty among Gen Y consumers in sports brands industry in China?
- ii. What is the relationship between consumer-brand identification and brand loyalty among Gen Y consumers in sports brands industry in China?
- iii. What is the mediating effect of consumer-brand identification in the relationship between brand experience, brand trust, customer perceived value, self-brand congruity and brand loyalty among Gen Y consumers in sports brands industry in China?
- iv. Does nostalgia moderate the relationship between consumer-brand identification and brand loyalty in sports brands industry in China?

1.5 Research Objectives

- i. To examine the impact of brand experience, brand trust, customer perceived value and self-brand congruity on brand loyalty among Gen Y consumers in sports brands industry in China.
- ii. To examine the effect of consumer-brand identification on brand loyalty among Gen Y consumers in sports brands industry in China.
- iii. To examine the mediating effect of consumer-brand identification on the relationship between brand experience, brand trust, customer perceived value and self-brand congruity on brand loyalty in Gen Y consumers in sports brands industry in China.
- iv. To examine the moderating effect of nostalgia on the relationship between consumer-brand identification and brand loyalty in sports brands industry in China.

1.6 Scope of Study

First, this study is to verify the predictors that motivates Chinese Gen Y consumers loyalty intention in sports brands industry. Consumer-brand identification (CBI) as a mediator in the relationship between brand experience, brand trust, customer perceived value, self-brand congruity and brand loyalty. In addition, nostalgia as a moderator in the correlation between CBI and brand loyalty. Secondly, this study takes China's local sports brands industry as the target industry, involving brands such as Anta, LiNing, Xtep and 361°. The questionnaire will be collected in Jinjiang City, located in Fujian Province, southeast China.

As a national hub for the sports industry, Jinjiang hosts headquarters of leading domestic sportswear brands (e.g., Anta, Xtep). Its industrial cluster effect provides insights into local brands' strategic trends and consumer engagement, ensuring industry representativeness (McKinsey & Company, 2022; Jinjiang Economy News, 2021). The target consumers of this study are Gen Y consumers in Jinjiang, born between 1980 and 2000. As the primary drivers (aged 25-40) of sports brands consumption, Gen Y combines purchasing power with brand loyalty formation (Thangavel et al., 2021; Kumar, 2018). Their openness to local brands and health-conscious lifestyles offer critical insights into domestic brands' competitiveness.

The unit of analysis is individual Gen Y consumers (aged 25–40) residing in Jinjiang. A total of 558 self-administrated questionnaires were randomly distributed to respondents who lived in Jinjiang city in order to gather data. Finally, the methodology adopts the method of quantitative research.

1.7 Significance of Study

This study will discuss the brand loyalty of local sports brands. It emphasizes the

relationship between brand experience, brand trust, customer perceived value, self-brand congruity, consumer-brand identification and nostalgia and brand loyalty. This study will provide certain theoretical and practical implications for the study of sports brands in China.

1.7.1 Theoretical Significance

Theoretically speaking. A key theoretical contribution of this study lies in integrating customer perceived value (CPV) and brand experience—two under-explored constructs in social exchange theory (SET) (Gupta, 2022; Mishra & Mund, 2024)—into a unified framework combining SET and social identity theory (SIT). This integration clarifies the dual psychological drivers of brand loyalty (Rather, 2017), where CPV reflects SET-based utility calculations (e.g., cost-benefit trade-offs) and brand experience functions as an SET-driven relational catalyst (e.g., emotional engagement).

These variables activate SIT's identity constructs: CPV fosters brand identification through transactional fairness, while brand experience fuels emotional investment through internalize brands. The integration of two theories reveals consumer-brand identification as a cognitive-affective synthesis (Lam et al., 2013). More importantly, this conceptual framework explains the entire brand relationship life cycle of consumers, from attraction to retention. In this process, nostalgia provides a depth of time for identity-loyalty by building a bridge of consistency between the past self and the current self.

This study explains the complexity of the proposed model and provides a more explicit role for testing brand loyalty among Chinese Gen Y consumers. The existing literature on the influence of loyalty behavior of sports brands is basically based on

the western cultural background, and the research on brand loyalty in China's local sports brands industry is relatively limited (Li, 2019).

Some studies on the sports brands industry focus on Gen Z consumers (Zhang & Lu, 2022), while ignoring Gen Y consumers, who have greater consumption potential. In particular, the attitudes and behaviors of Gen Y consumers towards local sports brands have changed a lot. And their current change in the level of identification with sports brands may further affect the loyalty willingness of sports brands. In particular, the current development trend of sports brands is facing some challenges. The author believes that the development of sports brands needs a combination of long-term accumulation and short-term opportunities so that local sports brands can seize the opportunity to attract consumers to retain with good brand experience, high-quality product performance, deep brand value and strong trust of consumers, and obtain a larger number of loyal consumers.

Furthermore, the results of the study are also valuable to other researchers who intend to continue to focus on the broader field of China's sports brands industry from the end of this study, based on the fact that the contribution of the sports industry to China's GDP will continue to be prominent.

1.7.2 Practical Significance

From a practical perspective, this study holds significant value as it offers new insights into brand loyalty within the sports brand sector, particularly amidst intense market competition and product homogenization. By identifying and understanding the factors influencing brand loyalty, this research aids sports brand companies in developing and implementing targeted marketing strategies that effectively enhance consumer retention and engagement. This contribution is crucial for businesses aiming to differentiate themselves in a competitive landscape and foster sustained

customer loyalty, ultimately driving long-term success and stability. In particular, the managers of sports brand enterprises should attract consumers to buy brands in terms of brand trust, perceived value, brand personality and social responsibility, and brand experience, so as to generate brand loyalty.

These insights are valuable for addressing current challenges faced by sports brands and fostering enduring relationships with consumers, thereby promoting positive consumer engagement with the brand. Additionally, the findings can assist Chinese sports brands in distinguishing themselves within a competitive market, securing a larger share, and enhancing the brand's global presence and influence. This, in turn, contributes to economic growth at a national level by elevating the brand's status and visibility on an international scale.

1.8 Operational Definition of Terms

1.8.1 Brand Loyalty

Brand loyalty represents consumers' consistent behavioral preference for specific brands, demonstrated through repeated purchase choices over competing alternatives. This pattern stems from a sustained positive commitment to the brand, where psychological allegiance translates directly into behavioral fidelity (Jacoby & Chestnut, 1978).

1.8.2 Brand Experience

Brand experience is the consumer's internal responses (subjective experiences) and potential behavioral reactions triggered by controlled brand elements (Brakus et al., 2009).

1.8.3 Brand Trust

Brand trust is consumer's confidence in relying on the brand to deliver its promised functions reliably (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001).

1.8.4 Customer Perceived Value

Consumers' subjective assessment of a product's net utility, derived from evaluating perceived benefits against perceived costs (Zeithaml, 1988).

1.8.5 Self-Brand Congruity

The perceived congruence between consumers' self-concept and their mental representation of a brand's typical user image (Helgeson & Supphellen, 2004).

1.8.6 Consumer-Brand Identification

Consumer-brand identification arises when individuals perceive their self-concept to overlap with a brand's identity. This psychological state is fundamentally motivated by consumers' need for belongingness, wherein brand affiliation serves to fulfill their desire for self-definition and social connection (Stokburger-Sauer et al., 2012).

1.8.7 Nostalgia

The experience of sentimental longing for past entities (experiences, objects, or brands) among consumers (Baker & Kennedy, 1994).

1.9 Organization of the Thesis

Chapter One outlines the study's structure, offering a framework to enhance understanding of the research design. It provides an in-depth overview of the research background, articulates the problem statement, and introduces the research questions and objectives, establishing the foundation for subsequent chapters.

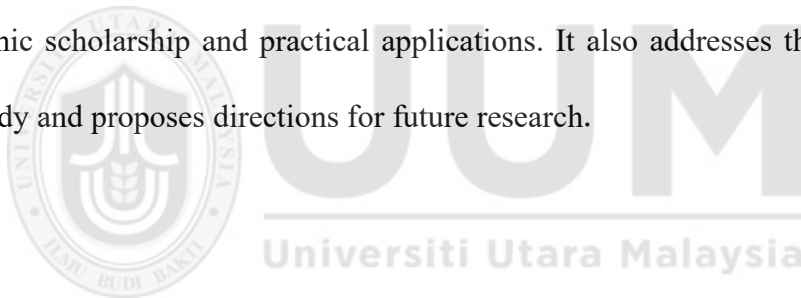
Chapter Two presents a comprehensive review of the relevant literature, synthesizing

various academic perspectives and findings to deepen the understanding of the variables pertinent to this study and facilitate the development of hypotheses. Additionally, it elaborates on the conceptual framework underpinning the research.

Chapter Three outlines the research methodology employed to achieve the study's objectives. This includes the research design, sampling strategy, the construction of survey instruments for each variable, pilot testing and its outcomes, procedural details, the timeline of the study, and methods for data collection and analysis.

Chapter Four provides an in-depth analysis of the collected data and presents the findings in a detailed manner.

The final chapter discusses the implications of the research outcomes for both academic scholarship and practical applications. It also addresses the limitations of the study and proposes directions for future research.



CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The main purpose of this chapter is to explore the research results of different driving variables of brand loyalty in the way of literature review, and find research gaps in numerous empirical studies, so as to construct the mechanism of driving brand loyalty of Chinese Gen Y consumers from a comprehensive perspective. Based on social exchange theory and social identity theory, this chapter explains the reasons for the changes in attitudes and behaviors of Gen Y consumers towards Chinese local sports brands, in order to have a deeper understanding of the psychological needs of Gen Y consumers and provide a more comprehensive and powerful perspective for the establishment of brand loyalty model. Lastly, the author integrated the materials and provided a conceptual framework as well hypotheses in this study.

2.2 Social Exchange Theory

2.2.1 Social Exchange Theory and Variables of This Study

Social exchange theory (SET) was first applied to the study of workplace behavior. But its history can be traced back to, social psychology (Gouldner, 1960) and sociology (Blau, 1964). Although SET is related to different disciplines, theorists have reached a consensus on a series of interactive aspects based on obligations. These interdependent transactions generate high-quality relationships in specific situations (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). The application of SET in organizations emphasizes the importance of norms. Relationships based on resource exchange can include social factors such as social influence, love, and status, as well as economic factors such as money, goods, information, and services (Wang et al., 2019).

Social exchange theory recognizes that the interaction between individuals and organizations is aimed at maximizing returns and minimizing costs. Therefore, interpersonal communication is an exchange behavior of individual actors in order to obtain benefits (Blau, 1964). On the contrary, when one party does not receive corresponding benefits or value, they will seek to correct this situation by "speaking out" to change the dynamics of unequal relationships. If a brand or enterprise cannot do this, individuals (consumers) will "exit" or "ignore" this relationship (Farrell, 1983).

In this study, consumers and brands are based on the principle of reciprocity norm. Consumers evaluate whether they identify with a brand or not by the value acquired, product quality and performance, service, personality congruity and brand experience. If the brand cannot meet these needs of consumers, consumers will choose to switch brand behaviors. If consumers believe that the brand can provide the above benefits and meet their needs, consumers will be loyal to the brand. Due to the wide applicability of social exchange theory, scholars have applied it in different contexts to verify the association between different variables in order to better understand consumption behavior. For example, based on the social exchange theory, Lian and Yoong (2017) verified that the relationship between satisfaction, trust, control mutuality and customer loyalty with relationship quality as mediator variable in the local telecom business target market, empirical results showed that the positive correlation between relationship quality and customer loyalty.

Zheng et al. (2015) proposed a research model depended on SET to explain how brand loyalty is developed through user engagement on the online social platform (Facebook). The empirical results also indicated that perceived benefits are an important factor in motivating users to generate brand loyalty. Drawing from social

exchange theory, Quaye et al. (2022) adopt South Africa retail bank customers as the target group and examined the positive correlation between customer support and brand loyalty through the series mediation of brand trust and brand relationship quality. The findings highlighted the critical role of brand relationship quality and brand trust in promoting brand loyalty.

Khan et al. (2023) constructed a model of customer engagement, customer experience and customer loyalty intention mediated by customer relationship quality based on SET. The results showed a stronger positive correlation between customer engagement/customer experience and relationship quality/loyalty intentions in mobile app-based interactions (as opposed to desktop browsers). Through the above analysis of loyal customer behavior based on social exchange theory, most literatures were intended to explore the relationship between consumers and enterprises (brands), and verify the relationship between relationship quality, trust, customer experience and engagement and customer loyalty.

Consumer-brand identification is an important component of consumer-brand relationship. While scholars including Quaye et al. (2022) have elucidated the critical role of social exchange related factors (e.g., customer trust, brand advocacy) in better understanding brand loyalty, the literature to date has given limited attention to social identity related factors (e.g., consumer-brand identification) in brand loyalty (Elbedweihy et al., 2016). To address this theoretical gap, this study develops a model that integrates concepts related to social exchange and social identity, which exhibit a significant theoretical fit based on their common interactive and socio-psychological nature.

In addition, the influence of consumer-brand identification, self-brand congruity and brand experience on brand loyalty in the field of sports brand needs to be further

studied. The authors construct a framework that allows these theoretical perspectives to be investigated simultaneously, collectively generating a better understanding of the underlying relational processes of sports consumers.

Drawing on social exchange theory, trust is the most valuable asset for any enterprise and the cornerstone of its establishment (Benassi, 1999). Rather and Hollebeek (2019) developed a model which is grounded on social exchange-related factors and social identity-related factors to explore the effects on customer loyalty in hotel industry. The findings revealed that brand trust and customer-brand identification have direct and positive impact on customer loyalty. Shulga et al. (2021) revealed that the trust of service providers established is the reciprocal nature of consumers participating in the value co-creation of coffee shops. Drawing on the social exchange theory and service-dominant logic, the research results supported that trust is a necessary condition for successful value co-creation and brand loyalty.

Drawing from SET, Sarmad and Ali (2023) examined the relationship between customer advocacy and brand loyalty in Pakistan's retail banking industry. Brand relationship quality and customer trust play an intermediary role between customer support and brand loyalty. The empirical results highlighted the importance of brand relationship quality and brand trust in promoting brand loyalty and provided some new insights into how these two factors interact to improve brand loyalty.

Xiao et al. (2024) aimed to investigate how the distinctive attributes of travel streamers contribute to the enhancement of destination brand value through a chain-mediated process based on social exchange theory. This process encompasses four key mediators: trust, attachment, participation and citizenship behavior. The results supported that the characteristics of live streamers statistically affected co-creation value behavior and customers perceived destination value mediated by trust and

attachment.

Manzuma-Ndaaba et al. (2018) taking Malaysian universities as the background, a 2S2P model has been developed that includes the relationship between service quality, student satisfaction, perceived image, perceived value, personal reasons, and university loyalty. Based on SET, the research expands the application of SET by conducting empirical tests on this model in the context of higher education. The results showed that perceived value has statistically effect on loyalty.

Gupta (2022) argued that the perspective of social identity and social exchange can explore the influence of relationship benefits on consumer behavior extra-role (civic virtue) and inter-role (consumer loyalty), as well as the mediating role of consumer-firm identification (CCI) and perceived value. The authors suggested that consumers' identification with an organization leads them to strongly perceive values, goals, and norms, even if they are not formal members of the organization. According to SET, the relationship between consumers and organizations is based on mutual benefit. If consumers perceive the benefits to be less than the costs, they will choose other organization. The results indicated that CCI mediates the effects of confidence and social interests on civic virtue and consumer loyalty, while perceived value mediates the connection between confidence, social interests and consumer loyalty.

Phang et al. (2021) developed a theoretical framework based on SET and congruity theory to explore the effects of channel integration quality on repurchase intention and positive word of mouth in the fast food industry. The findings revealed that self-brand image congruity and value congruity has a direct effect on customer engagement, repurchase intention and word of mouth was affected by customer engagement. Wong and Chung (2022) proposed a model combining SET to explore the anthems of online brand community commitment and participation and their

effects on offline purchase intention. The results supported the significant impact of online self-congruity on commitment and engagement, confirming the full mediating role of engagement between commitment and offline purchase intention.

Mishra and Mund (2024) suggested that social exchange is driven by the social and psychological significance attached to the experiences, emotions, and meanings shared by the parties involved, along with the associated costs (e.g., money, time, effort) and rewards (e.g., service quality). This dynamic helps explain why exchanges continue over time. Similarly, the principles of reciprocity and interdependence shape consumers' brand experiences. The alignment of these factors makes SET an ideal theoretical framework for studying brand experiences and consumer behavior. For example, Akarsu et al. (2020) applied SET to examine how the Airbnb platform affects the Airbnb experience and authenticity, which may lead consumers to prefer Airbnb and influence their behavior patterns. In addition, the findings showed that a visitor's experience affects Airbnb's popularity, which in turn affects their willingness to re-visit and recommend to others.

Vilnai-Yavetz et al. (2022) developed a model to examine the impact of shopping mall experience on consumers' willingness to return. Among them, the authors argued that social exchange theory is the idea that individuals make decisions (social and economic) based on subjective cost-benefit analysis in order to maximize their own benefits. That is, the more resources consumers have in the shopping experience, the more loyal they are to the mall.

Drawing on the theory of social identity and social exchange, Löhndorf and Diamantopoulos (2014) linked internal brand outcomes (employee brand fit, brand knowledge, and brand belief) with brand congruent behavior, customer-oriented behavior, and participation in brand development and positive word-of-mouth from a

broader organizational perspective, and takes organizational identity as a key mediator. The empirical results supported that the effect of organizational identification on brand congruent behavior is the strongest of all proposed effects, a finding that further emphasizes the particularity of organizational identification arising from the convergence of personal and organizational identity.

In short, social exchange theory is closely related to brand trust, perceived value, self-brand congruity, brand experience and brand loyalty. However, the author found that there are few articles on verifying the relationship between brand experience and different variables based on social exchange theory. Moreover, drawing on SET to verify brand trust, perceived value, self-brand congruity, brand experience and brand loyalty as a single theoretical model to explore the relationship between consumers and brands in the sports brands industry has not been examined so far. Therefore, SET as underpinning theory is intended to build a theoretical model to explore the relationship between different variables.

2.3 Social Identity Theory

2.3.1 Social Identity Theory and Variables of This Study

Social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1985) is mainly used to explain the formation process of groups and the formation of relationships between groups. SIT theory proposes that individuals define themselves and others by classifying themselves and others into different social organizations. Recently, this theory has been applied to explain the relationship between consumers and brands (Elbedweihy et al., 2016). Since social identity affects consumer behavior, SIT theory explains the relationship between consumers and brands from a psychological perspective (Elbedweihy & Jayawardhena, 2014).

Consumer-brand identification, derived from social identity theory, can also guide customer outcomes, including brand loyalty (He et al., 2012). Services, brands, products and companies, because of their role in self-definition and self-referral, are considered important components of an individual's social identity, and as such, they are also valid targets for customer identification. In this sense, consumers also need to establish social identity relationships to express themselves and construct self-concepts.

According to social identity theory, individuals distinguish themselves from others psychologically based on self and social identity (Tajfel, 1978). Therefore, membership in an organization can be used to meet self-esteem needs. Based on this view, the role of self-brand congruity as an important predictor of customer-brand identification has been established (Lam et al., 2013). The reason is that self-brand congruity reflects the similarity between consumers' self-concept and brand attributes. Consumers are intended to choose organizations that are similar to their own values. This relationship between consumers and brands, or the assimilation of consumers by their organizations, can enhance self-concept and meet the need for self-improvement (Scott & Lane, 2000).

The social identity perspective suggests that consumers' identity motivations, such as self-expression, self-enhancement, and self-esteem serve as foundational elements in establishing meaningful relationships between consumers and enterprises (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2003). Central to these identity motivations is the concept of self, or self-concept, which is primarily shaped by self-esteem, self-continuity, and self-knowledge. Self-esteem, in particular, reflects an individual's desire to attain an idealized self-image.

As Sirgy (1982) argued, brands with high symbolic value not only reinforce

consumers' self-concept but also bolster their self-esteem. "Identity" itself, when associated with individual personality, is a complex and multidimensional construct often described as "self-knowledge" shaped by how individuals define themselves in relation to others. Likewise, the concept of self-brand congruity highlights the importance of alignment between a consumer's self-concept and the perceived brand image, including brand personality. This alignment motivates consumers to choose brands that reflect their identity, allowing them to feel a deeper sense of connection and identification with those brands.

He et al. (2012) investigated the customer-brand relationship through a social identity lens, incorporating essential constructs—namely, brand identity, identification, trust, value, and satisfaction—as predictors of brand loyalty. Their study revealed that brand identity exerts both direct and indirect influences on brand loyalty, complementing traditional predictors such as perceived value, satisfaction, and trust. Furthermore, the findings demonstrated that the social identity framework can be integrated with other theoretical models to map the psychological pathway leading to brand loyalty, with brand identification emerging as a key mediating factor in this process.

Rather (2017) integrates the relationship among the social identity construct (customer-brand identification) and the social exchange constructs (satisfaction, trust, and commitment) and their influence on hotel brand loyalty. The results indicated that customer-brand identification has a positive effect on loyalty, commitment, satisfaction, and trust. Commitment assumes a mediatory role between customer-brand identification, trust, and satisfaction and brand loyalty.

Similarly, Rather et al. (2021) proposed an integrated model combining social identity theory with relationship marketing theory to examine the influence of

customer brand identification, affective commitment, customer satisfaction, and brand trust on customer loyalty intentions in the hotel industry. The findings revealed that CBI directly affected consumer behavioral loyalty intentions, while affective commitment, satisfaction, and trust mediated this relationship. Additionally, these three variables are direct predictors of loyalty, with affective commitment further mediating the effects of satisfaction and trust on loyalty behavior intentions.

Thomas et al. (2023) have anchored social identity theory to provide a suitable framework for developing and testing a conceptual model that consumers' general trust in CRM influences trust in retailers' CRM campaigns, which, in turn, contributes to the intention to donate money to NPOs. The empirical results found that general trust in CRM does not translate into triggering the willingness to donate to CRM private brands, and further validate the mediating role of trust in shaping the willingness to donate money in retailers' CRM activities.

Han et al. (2023) examined social identity theory by conceptualizing it through the lens of perceived brand localness, investigating its impact on consumer trust in foreign brands and purchase intentions within developing Asian markets. Their research confirmed the SIT framework, demonstrating that local perceptions of foreign brands enhance identity-based trust and foster a sense of ownership through self-stereotyping mechanisms. These findings underscore the significance of local brand perception in cultivating trust and elevating purchase intentions for foreign brands in emerging markets.

Social identity theory explores the motivations that belong to and interact with a group. Research suggests that perceived value and prestige may stimulate consumers' self-identification of brands (Proksch et al., 2013). Relatedly, from a SIT-based perspective, Bhattacharya and Sen (2003, p. 77) argued that "self-categorization into

the state of an organizationally defined category" in the identification process helps customers to match their defining characteristics (such as values) with those defining brands/companies. Customer perceived value is a judgment based on the values conveyed by the brand. Therefore, consumers' perception of brand values is consistent with their own, and they are likely to develop a sense of identity with the brand, and thus be willing to establish a connection with the brand.

Similarly, McGowan et al. (2017) proposed that consumers' value perception can be used as a medium to influence consumers' motivation to purchase identity-related products through their identification with social groups. In this study, consumers agree with the values conveyed by sports brands and believe that the benefits they get, including economic and social benefits, meet or even exceed their expectations. Therefore, they are willing to establish associations with brands and even be loyal to brands as a behavioral response to maintain long-term relationships.

Based on social identity theory, brand experience is closely related to identity. And that is, brand experience is related to brand stimuli affected different dimensions of self-identity, so as to meet various needs of customers (Das et al., 2019). Brand experience is closely related to consumers' self-concept, and consumers have the intention to include brand related experiences as part of their self-identity. Schmitt (2013) posited that brand experience functions as a psychological determinant influencing consumers through aspects of allure, empowerment, or self-fulfillment. The multi-dimensional stimuli produced by brand experience attract individuals via sensory and emotional dimensions, offering sensory pleasure to customers. Additionally, it provides functional satisfaction linked to effectiveness and stimulates behavioral responses. By aligning consumer values with brand values, brand experience contributes to self and social identity enhancement, enriching consumers' intellectual and relational experiences, thereby fostering deeper connections with the

brand.

Kumar and Kaushik (2020) argued that a memorable brand experience cultivates brand identification, as it fulfills consumers' needs for self-reference and self-definition, leading to a strong emotional connection with the brand. Extending this idea, the current study posits that if a consumer has a positive psychological association with a sports brand, arising from a significant and enjoyable experience, it will facilitate easier identification with the brand. This emotional and cognitive alignment is likely to strengthen the consumer's bond and commitment to the brand, fostering lasting brand loyalty.

2.4 The Combination of Social Exchange Theory and Social Identity Theory

Social Exchange Theory centers on two core concepts: Rational computation and reciprocal relationships. Its fundamental logic posits that individual behavior stems from a rational cost-benefit analysis aimed at maximizing utility. In the context of consumption, this translates to individuals evaluating tangible economic/practical value – such as product functionality, price, service quality, and the time or energy required. However, consumption behavior is frequently driven by factors beyond pure rationality, notably emotions and identity alignment.

Therefore. The theory's behaviorist assumptions face significant limitations: It tends to overlook the diversity of human motivations and the influence of cultural context within social exchange. This is particularly evident in the theory's difficulty explaining seemingly irrational, emotionally charged, or symbolic consumption acts – such as paying for spiritual fulfillment or purchasing status symbols at a substantial premium (Zafirovski, 2005).

The core of social identity theory is that individuals classify themselves into a certain

group through social categorization and obtain positive self-esteem through social comparison (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Consumption has become a symbol for expressing and reinforcing one's identity. For instance, Gen Y consumers strengthen their group affiliation (such as trendsetters) or self-expression (such as personalized outfits) by purchasing fashionable clothing products or brand choices, and clothing becomes an identity symbol (Helal & Ozuem, 2018; Valaei & Nikhashemi, 2017).

However, social identity theory does not pay attention to the influence of cross-cultural differences such as individualistic and collectivist cultures on the formation and maintenance of social identity. The benefits that individuals obtain from social groups and the expectations of groups for their members vary in different cultures (Demirden, 2021).

Hence, the cultural blind spot of SIT implies that if it is directly applied, it may underestimate the unique and powerful role of group expectations (such as the sense of responsibility to support domestic products and maintain the honor of national brands) in driving loyal behavior, which is particularly prominent in collectivist cultures. It may not be able to fully explain the specific connotation of group interests in the context of Chinese culture.

The benefits that Chinese consumers gain from identifying with and supporting domestic brands are far more than just enhancing self-esteem (the core of SIT), but also include deeper collectivist value satisfaction such as fulfilling social responsibilities, gaining recognition from groups (such as colleagues and family), and maintaining the image of the country/nation. These are different from the benefits in the context of Western individualism. Simply combining SET (focusing on cost-benefit calculation) may also fail to fully capture this intangible benefit and sense of obligation deeply rooted in cultural identity.

Therefore, the combination of SIT and SET to construct a conceptual framework is inevitable and applicable in the context of this study. SET supplements the exchange logic based on value and reciprocity, and the combined framework, by integrating the collectivist cultural context, can simultaneously cover: 1) SIT's identity-driven (such as national pride); 2) The relationship exchange logic of SET and redefine income to include collective values such as social recognition and responsibility fulfillment. This combination effectively fills the cultural blind spot of SIT and provides a more comprehensive theoretical perspective for explaining the loyalty of domestic Chinese brands.

Precisely. That is, consumption is a fusion of economic behavior and social behavior: Rational aspect: Consumers will always calculate whether it is worth it or not (SET). Emotional/Symbolic aspect: Consumers seek who I am/where I belong (SIT) through purchasing behavior. Especially for young consumers in China, including Gen Y, under the impetus of the rise of national trends and cultural confidence, they choose to purchase domestic brands to showcase themselves as trendchasers and enthusiasts of Chinese style, to integrate into specific social circles and identify with traditional Chinese culture. However, at the same time, they are weighing whether the input and output meet their expectations (iimedia, 2024; Helal & Ozuem, 2018).

Social identity theory and social exchange theory, as the core frameworks for explaining individual behavior, the cross-interaction demonstrates unique explanatory power in the fields of organizational management and consumer behavior. From the environmental organization citizenship behavior of employees to the additional contribution and loyalty behavior of consumers, the synergy between the two reveals the driving logic of the identity recognition - benefit reciprocity dual-track model on behavior.

Social identity theory emphasizes that individuals construct their self-concept through group membership and form emotional belonging and behavioral consistency. The social exchange theory focuses on the rational reciprocal behavior of individuals based on the perception of giving and receiving. The convergence point of the two lies in that identity provides an emotional foundation for the exchange relationship, while the exchange mechanism strengthens the sustainability of identity.

The combination of the two theories has also been applied in different industries. Take the airport service industry as an example. The social identity path: Confidence benefits (such as trusting service quality) and social benefits (such as being recognized by enterprises) enhance consumer-company identification (CCI), driving their civic virtues (such as proactively offering improvement suggestions). This reflects identity-driven emotional investment - consumers view the enterprise as an extension of their own identity and voluntarily make additional efforts for the enterprise's interests (such as maintaining brand image and assisting in service optimization). Social exchange path: Relationship benefits influence consumer loyalty (repeat purchase, recommendation) by enhancing perceived value. At this point, consumers maintain relationship with enterprises based on the cost performance assessment (exchange logic) (Gupta, 2022).

The logic of consumption behavior Interwoven with social identity and social exchange theories: Taking hotel loyalty as an example. Social identity enables consumers to view brands as an extension of self-identity (such as choosing high-end hotels to reflect their taste in life), and this emotional belonging drives loyal behaviors such as active recommendations and repeated choices. Social exchange functions through the logic of value reciprocity: When consumers perceive hotel services (such as personalized experiences and trust guarantees) as exceeding the

cost they have paid, it forms satisfaction, trust and commitment, strengthening the willingness to continue consuming.

The interweaving of the two is manifested as follows: Brand identity enhances consumers' tolerance for the value of services (willing to pay a premium for the identified brand), while the exchange satisfaction brought by high-quality services will in turn nourish the depth of identity. This closed loop of identification - exchange - loyalty requires enterprises to not only establish emotional connections through value marketing but also consolidate exchange value with services that exceed expectations, achieving an upgrade from transactional relationship to identity binding (Rather & Hollebeek, 2019).

Other social cognitive theories have some unique insights in analyzing individual intentions/motivations and behaviors. For example, the self-determination theory (SDT) delves deeply into the intrinsic motivations that drive behavior (such as autonomy, competence, and belonging needs) (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Socio-cognitive theories, such as the theory of planned behavior (TPB) reveals how consumers process information and form purchase intentions based on attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control.

However, TPB fails to account for the fundamental conditions that determine why certain activities become desirable in the first place (Deci & Ryan, 1985). While TPB excels at predicting planned actions, it tends to overlook critical influences like social interactions and emotional responses. Even updated versions of the model frequently neglect the crucial process of how consumers evaluate a product's perceived value before forming specific attitudes (Huang et al., 2025). Understanding this pre-attitudinal value judgment is especially important in contexts like fashion consumption, where assessments of quality and worth are paramount (Huang et al.,

2025).

Other theory like self-determination theory (SDT) adeptly identify the underlying reasons for behavioral engagement. Yet, it typically does not detail how this foundational motivation translates into specific intentions and subsequent actions (Hagger & Chatzisarantis, 2009).

The combined TPB/SDT framework still exhibits limitations in explaining brand loyalty toward domestic sports brands in China. While this integrated model incorporates two critical dimensions—cognition-intention formation (TPB) and motivational sources (SDT)—it fails to adequately capture the socio-cultural drivers essential to brand loyalty formation among Chinese consumers. Specifically, the integrated framework has yet to account for the central role of national identity, collective belonging, and socially embedded reciprocity expectations within China's unique market context. These factors often transcend individual-level rational calculations or generalized psychological need fulfillment, being deeply rooted in distinct social structures and cultural values (Lu et al., 2025).

In contrast, the integration of Social Identity Theory (SIT) and Social Exchange Theory (SET) offers a more comprehensive and inherently fitting theoretical lens for explaining brand loyalty towards domestic Chinese sports brands.

Firstly, SIT explicitly addresses how consumers strengthen their identity as Chinese or members of specific social groups (e.g., consumers supporting domestic goods) by identifying with and using local brands (such as Li-Ning, Anta). This sense of national or group-based identity serves as the core emotional driver fostering loyalty to Chinese domestic brands in competition against international giants. Crucially, this driver transcends the more individualized and universal concept of belongingness found in SDT.

Secondly, SET profoundly illuminates the construction of long-term, reciprocal relationships between consumers and brands. Loyalty to domestic brands stems not only from functional product value (e.g., quality, price) but also from the perceived reciprocity of the brand towards the nation/ethnic group (e.g., supporting national industry, undertaking social responsibility) and respect towards consumers (e.g., expressing cultural identity). Furthermore, loyalty arises from accumulated trust, commitment, and relational obligations (renqing) built through long-term interactions. This dynamic process of evaluating reciprocity expectations and relationship quality based on social exchange fails to be fully encompassed by TPB's subjective norms.

Therefore, the SIT/SET integration possesses an inherent comprehensiveness and logical necessity for this context. The specific path diagram of the combination of SIT and SET and the research perspective established by the conceptual framework of this study are detailed in Figure 1.3 and Table 1.2.

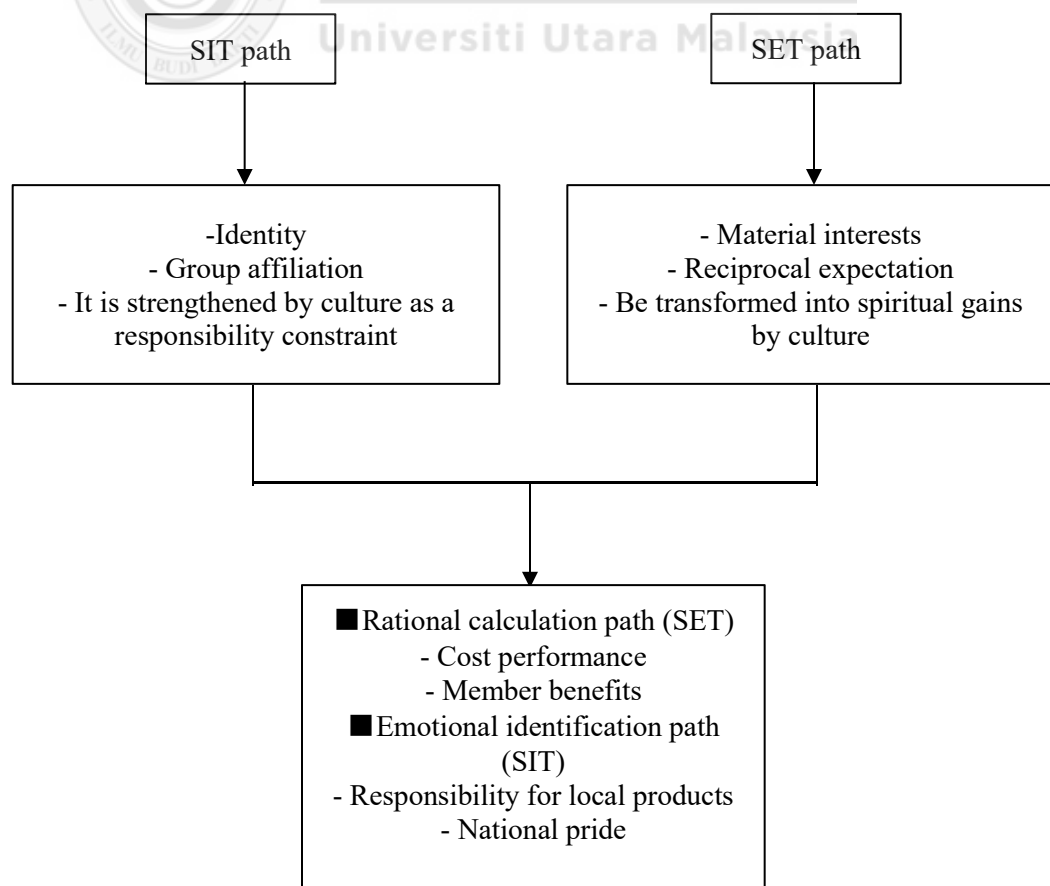


Figure 1.3
SIT and SET Dual-Path

Table 1.2
Research Focus

Year	Conclusion	Limitations/Gaps	Connection and advancement of this study
Rather & Hollebeek, 2019	From the perspective of mixed social identity/social exchange theory, it is applied to the research of customer loyalty in the hotel industry	No specific consumer groups were distinguished	Focus on specific consumer groups and integrate the dual paths of SET and SIT for application in different industries
Gupta, 2022	Research on Consumer Loyalty and Civic virtue in Airport Service Industry from the SIT+SET Perspective	No specific cultural characteristics were taken into account	Introduce the Chinese cultural context and take perceived value as one of the components of the social exchange theory
Mishra & Mund, 2024	This study explores the application of SET in consumer research over the past 52 years (1971-2022) from various publications under the theme of SET	No empirical analysis	Literature suggests that future research should combine SET with brand experience. In this study, brand experience is regarded as a component of SET
Kuo, 2022	Based on SIT theory, this study examined that self-congruity and brand personality as one of antecedents of brand identification in retail industry	Only three dimensions of brand personality were measured	Taking self-brand congruity as one of the antecedent variables of CBI and considering its multi-dimensional possibilities in combination with the research of Lam et al., 2012.
Yang et al., 2025	Based on social exchange theory and psychological resistance theory, this paper explores the impact of omni-channel integration and digital value on the establishment of brand trust	Limited to the retail industry	Regard brand trust as one of the components of the SET theory and apply it to the sports brands industry
Kim, Kim, Nosrati, Badu-Baiden, 2024	This study is based on the S-O-R model to explore nostalgic stimuli and their influence on customer loyalty behavior in the catering industry	The article does not consider the interrelationship between the construct of nostalgia and loyalty, and loyalty is a single dimension	Consider more possibilities between nostalgia and loyalty, as well as regarding loyalty as a multi-dimensional construct
Blazquez-Resino et al., 2025	Verify the relationship between consumer-brand identification and brand loyalty in the fashion industry based on the SIT theory	The direct effect of CBI on attitudinal loyalty was not examined. The samples were mainly young Spanish women	Considering the direct impact of CBI on brand loyalty, the sample took into account generational differences

2.5 Brand Experience

2.5.1 The Definition of Brand Experience

Given the increasingly dynamic and complex nature of the contemporary business environment, coupled with rising customer expectations, scholars emphasize that organizations must develop immersive brand experiences tailored to meet consumer needs and preferences. Such strategic initiatives are essential for cultivating brand loyalty (Valenzuela Quintero & Bellon Álvarez, 2023; Sun & Khan, 2023). Consequently, brand experience has emerged as a critical construct, recognized for its ability to predict brand loyalty across various industries (Kalashi et al., 2021; Liu, Tsai, Xiao & Hu, 2021; Shieh & Lai, 2017; Van der Westhuizen, 2018).

Similarly, it has been asserted in previous research that a distinct competitive advantage is provided to organizations by brand experience, positioning it as a critical element for distinguishing them from their competitors. This concept is recognized as one of the most influential determinants of consumers' behavioral intentions (Ramaseshan & Stein 2014), significantly shaping their decisions and fostering long-term engagement with the brand. Consequently, cultivating meaningful brand experiences is regarded as essential for driving consumer loyalty and sustaining a brand's market relevance. Jiménez-Barreto et al. (2020) argued that the multi-dimensional online destination experience significantly affected consumers' behavioral intentions. Kumar and Kaushik (2020) emphasized that brand experience plays a very important role in explaining consumer-brand relationship as it represents consumer behavior from more comprehensive perspective than other marketing concepts.

Scholars have defined the concept differently. For example, Gray et al. (2002) emphasized that brand experience is the emotional response of consumers to brand

stimuli, including brand communicators, interaction with brand, sensory stimuli, and brand environment. Fulberg (2003) pointed out that brand experience provides consumers with opportunities to interact with it, which aims to generate more positive thoughts and emotions about the brand. O'Loughlin et al. (2004) affirmed that brand experience is the formation of consumers' personal perspectives on brand image and value through advertising and marketing activities.

Brakus et al. (2009) proposed that brand experience refers to the subjective and behavioral reactions of consumers in the process of interacting with the brand. The authors added that the brand experience does not necessarily bring positive, but may be negative, and its impact on consumer behavior is not fixed in time. From the perspective of enterprises, brand experience is the perception, attitude, cognition, emotion and other reactions of consumers triggered by brand related stimuli. From the perspective of consumers, it is the accumulation of a series of events related to the brand during their exposure to the brand or use of products, it is the feelings of consumers in all aspects of purchasing products through contact with brand-related stimuli or media that can represent the meaning of the brand (Bian et al., 2012).

Chuchu et al. (2018) proposed that consumers pay more attention to the enjoyment of multi-dimensional experience when buying clothing products, which will eventually positively affect consumers' behavioral intentions. Nikhashemi et al. (2019) asserted that if a clothing company provides consumers with unforgettable and hedonic brand experience that meets or even exceeds their expectations and demands, consumers are more likely to pay a premium, generate repeated purchase behavior and recommend the brand to other consumers. Na et al. (2023) confirmed that brand experience can build a strong and lasting relationship between consumers and enterprises, and ultimately positively affect brand loyalty in the mobile industry.

This study adopts the definition of brand experience by Brakus et al. (2009). Brand experience refers to that consumers are motivated by brand-related stimuli in the purchase process or consumers have unforgettable brand experience, which affects consumers' identification with the brand and thus affects consumers' loyalty to the brand.

2.5.2 Dimensions of Brand Experience

According to Holbrook and Hirschman (1982) emphasized the significance of various pleasurable and recreational experiences, including sensory enjoyment, imaginative engagement, aesthetic appreciation, and emotional reactions. Their approach to understanding experience incorporates elements of activity, emotion, and sensory perception, serving to enrich cognitive models that focus on information processing. This perspective underscores the association of consumer experiences with symbolism, hedonism, and aesthetic values, highlighting the multifaceted nature of consumer behavior. Their insights bridge the experiential aspect of consumption with deeper consumer meanings, encompassing emotional and sensory dimensions.

Naylor et al. (2008) emphasized that social significance serves as a catalyst for fulfilling symbolic needs. When this significance is understood within the framework of consumption, it is seen as a symbolic aspect. This aligns with Holbrook and Hirschman's (1982) view, which incorporates social meaning or relational aspects as integral dimensions of the consumer experience. Furthermore, Krishnan (1996) classified brand experience into two primary dimensions: direct experience, which includes purchasing and usage, and indirect experience, encompassing word-of-mouth and recommendations. Similarly, Bennett, Härtel, and McColl-Kennedy (2005) described brand experience as encompassing both external information access and internalized values, including unique brand-related emotions and perceptions.

Brakus et al. (2009) based on Schmitt's (1999) five dimensions of experience, proposed a set of measurement scales including four brand experience dimensions, including sensory, affective, intellectual and behavioral. Sensory refers to the consumer's awareness of the emotions evoked by the image of the product or service. Affective is related to consumers' emotions triggered by brand stimuli. Intellectual is the component that can attract consumers to want to explore more about the brand. Behavioral is that consumers are more likely to purchase product. Gao et al. (2011) argued that emotional and intellectual dimensions jointly reflected deep emotional connection and value identification by statistical analysis results, and combined them into identity dimension. Finally, brand experience has four dimensions: Sensory, identity, behavior and relation.

Schmitt (1999) propounded strategic experiential modules (SEMS), where brand experience is dissected into five dimensions: sense, feel, think, act, and relate. Zhang (2003) averred that brand experience encompasses five dimensions: Sensory, emotional, achievement, mind, and spiritual. Simultaneously, the author signified that there exists a pyramidal hierarchical rapport among these five types of experience. In the mobile phone industry, Bian et al. (2012) proffered a brand loyalty model to delve into the relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty, as well as the mediatory role of perceived value and customer satisfaction. In their research, brand experience is disaggregated into three dimensions, namely sensory, emotional, and relational experience.

Song (2014) utilized a combination of qualitative and quantitative methodologies and proposed as well as verified the theoretical model of five dimensions of brand experience, which influenced purchase intention via self-concept consistency, brand attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioural control. It is revealed that the

five dimensions of brand experience exert positive and significant effects on purchase intention through four intermediate variables. Oklevik et al. (2024) developed a model that based on 594 respondents and brands from e banking, mobile, hotel, and restaurant services to explore the correction between co-creation and brand satisfaction through the mediation role of brand experience which is considered to be a multidimensional construct including sensory, affective, cognitive, behavioural and relational dimensions. To sum up, most scholars have a consensus about brand experience is a multi-dimensional variable.

Napalai and Khamwon (2023) demonstrated that brand experience significantly and positively influences perceptions of brand coolness within the clothing industry, specifically in the context of millennial consumers. Their findings further indicate that brand coolness serves as a mediator impacting brand equity. The research emphasizes that brand experience is a multi-dimensional construct, encompassing sensory, affective, behavioral, and intellectual components. This comprehensive approach highlights that each dimension contributes uniquely to how consumers perceive and engage with a brand, ultimately affecting its overall equity. Such insights underscore the importance for marketers to strategically design brand experiences that stimulate these varied dimensions to enhance brand appeal and competitive positioning.

This study took Schmitt's (1999) brand experience model into framework. Considering the five dimensions of brand experience, it is rarely applied to the sports brands industry to verify its impact on brand loyalty. Especially, the social dimension takes into account the influence of external environment. In the author's opinion, brand experience and purchasing decisions are influenced by social environment, as well as family, friends, and other consumers. The interaction between consumers and brands can help gain social identification and praise (Schmitt et al., 2015), and help

them build social-self. For sports brands, brand experience can also help consumers express their personality. Therefore, this study regards brand experience as a multidimensional construct with five dimensions and applies it to the sports brands industry to fill the research gap mentioned above.

2.5.3 Past Research on Brand Experience

The relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty has garnered significant attention in academic research. For instance, Kalashi et al. (2021) found that brand experience has a positive impact on brand loyalty in the sports shoes and clothing industry, but the author did not take local sports brands into account. Rehman and Shafiq (2019) pointed out that brand experience has a statistically positive impact on brand loyalty among sports consumers in Pakistan. Van der Westhuizen (2018) examined the relationship between self-brand connection and brand loyalty among Facebook users, the results showed that brand experience was fully mediated the connection between self-brand connection and brand loyalty.

Shieh and Lai (2017) investigated smart phone users loyalty intentions in Taiwan, the findings indicated that the positive and significant relationship between brand resonance and brand loyalty, brand experience and brand resonance as well. Marliawati and Cahyaningdyah (2020) explored the factors impacted shoppee users in Indonesia, the results revealed that brand trust partly mediated the connection between brand experience and brand loyalty, fully mediated the connection between brand image and brand loyalty. Pratiwi et al. (2021) aimed to develop a model to explore the factors motivated brand loyalty among dairy consumers, the findings found that brand trust, brand experience and perceived value directly and indirectly impacted brand loyalty.

Liu, Tsai, Xiao and Hu (2021) examined the effect of brand experience and brand loyalty in hotel industry, the findings showed that brand experience and brand image has a positive and direct effect on brand loyalty, the mediation impact of brand image and product attribute on brand loyalty were not supported in their study. Mostafa and Kasamani (2021) found that brand experience has a positive and direct effect on brand loyalty, brand passion and brand affection fully mediated brand experience and brand loyalty, self-brand connection partly mediated brand experience and brand loyalty in smartphone industry. Gao and Shen (2024) revealed that sensory experience was one of the main drivers of brand loyalty, and brand attitude and brand-self connection played mediation role of relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty.

Kumar and Kaushik (2020) argued that brand experiences would result in brand identification by meeting consumers' self-referencing and self-definitional needs, in that way to have a sense of strong emotional bond between consumers and brands. Similarly, Stokburger-Sauer et al. (2012) and Lam et al. (2013) affirmed that identification contains cognitive and experiential components. Kumar and Kaushik (2020) asked for future research should focus on the impact of brand experience and consumer-brand identification on brand loyalty.

Through the above analysis, it can be found that brand experience is regarded as an independent variable in most articles and as one of the main driving forces of brand loyalty together with other mediating variables. However, there are limited articles on the mediating effect of brand experience and brand loyalty based on psychological variables (such as consumer-brand identification). Therefore, brand experience is regarded as one of the independent variables with the intermediary variable of consumer-brand identification to predict brand loyalty in this study.

2.6 Brand Trust

2.6.1 The Definition of Brand Trust

Consumers develop trust in a brand through both direct and indirect interactions. Direct experiences include personal use and evaluation of the brand, while indirect interactions involve influences such as advertising and word of mouth. These experiences form the foundation of brand trust. As consumers increase their engagement with a brand over time, the brand becomes more integrated into their daily lives and increasingly relevant to their personal identity. Ultimately, this leads to more favorable associations with the brand in the minds of consumers (Dwyer et al, 1987).

Consumer identification with a brand is rooted in the brand's demonstrated capacity to fulfill its commitments, which leads to enhanced consumer satisfaction and fosters trust in the brand. Additionally, brand trust can be conceptualized as an acknowledgment that the processes of creating, developing, and managing brand value transcend mere consumer contentment with product functions and attributes. This recognition indicates that brand trust involves deeper relational and emotional elements that go beyond basic product satisfaction, reinforcing the brand's credibility and long-term consumer loyalty (Aaker, 1996).

Consequently, brand trust is an important antecedent variable of brand loyalty. According to Moorman et al. (1992), trust is “a willingness to rely on an exchange partner in whom one has confidence” (p. 315). Therefore, from the perspective of consumer psychology, brand trust leads to brand loyalty and commitment because it is based on this highly trusted exchange relationship (Morgan & Hunt, 1994). Therefore, the loyalty and commitment created by trust become an important basis for both parties to continue and maintain the relationship (Chaudhuri & Holbrook,

2001). Thus, the relationship is realized through individual commitment based on trust. This suggests that trust reduces the level of perceived risk associated with partners' opportunistic behavior.

Precisely, building and consolidating trust would reduce the risk of short-term inequality as trust reduces the transaction cost in the exchange relationship and minimizes the cost of establishing the relationship between the two parties. Consistent with this view, some studies provide empirical evidence of the contribution of trust to brand loyalty (Atulkar, 2020; Frassetto et al., 2017; Jung et al., 2020).

Atulkar (2020) proposed that consumers are looking for brands that can meet their expectations in order to establish trusted connections to reduce perceived risks and then stay loyal. Huo et al. (2022) proposed that consumers with high trust in brands will actively seek more opportunities to interact with brands, and they will also recommend brands to others. Their results supported that the positive impact of brand trust on brand loyalty in textile and clothing brands. Frassetto et al. (2017) examined that brand trust has a positive and significant effect on online and offline loyalty in apparel industry. Jung et al. (2020) affirmed that trust is an individual's positive expectation of others' behavior or intention, the empirical results show that customer trust has a positive impact on customer loyalty in the traditional fashion industry.

In short, the concept of brand trust is based on both brands and consumers. Brands can fulfill their promises to consumers and continuously provide high-quality products and services to meet consumers' expectations and reduce the uncertainties and risks they perceive in the shopping process. Consumers, on the other hand, are willing to trust the competence and motivation of the brand and build a lasting

relationship with the brand.

2.6.2 Dimensions of Brand Trust

Johnson-George and Swap (1982) proposed that trust is influenced by a common factor and can be divided into two components: emotional trust and trust in a partner's reliability. This suggests that trust can occur at different levels. However, trust in a partner differs from trust in a brand. Chaudhuri and Holbrook's (2001) work centered on the performance competence dimension of brand trust. The definition of brand trust emphasizes consumers' commitment to relying on the brand's fulfillment of its established functions. This concept led to the development of a one-dimensional measurement scale.

Munuera-Aleman et al. (2003) affirmed that the single dimension of brand trust completely ignores brand intentions, which may lead to the problem of not being able to enrich concept. They included reliability and intention in the scale, thereby enriching the extension of brand trust and expanding the scope of it. It is important for consumers to believe that the behavior of brands motivated by their welfare and interests is trustworthy, so this conceptualization represents an improvement on a single dimensional conceptualization.

Brand trust is a multidimensional construct that has received support from some scholars (Delgado-Ballister et al. 2003), each dimension involving a specific domain and independent of each other. First, the scale development by Hess (1995) comprises three dimensions of brand trust: altruism, honesty, and reliability. Similarly, Delgado-Ballester et al. (2003) confirmed that brand trust comprises two dimensions: brand reliability and brand intention. Brand reliability reflects a brand's ability to meet consumer needs, while brand intention describes consumers'

perception that, should problems arise, the brand will act with motives beneficial to consumer welfare and interests. Supporting this framework, Li et al. (2008) identified brand trust as a second-order construct shaped by the first-order factors of competence and benevolence.

Koschate-Fischer and Gartner (2015) proposed and validated a unidimensional model of brand trust, demonstrating that it is distinct yet related to constructs such as customer satisfaction, customer loyalty, and brand equity. Their study provides empirical support for a unidimensional brand trust measure centered on performance, highlighting the advantage that it does not depend on consumers viewing the brand as a relational partner. Similarly, Chinomona (2016) also treats brand trust as a unidimensional construct, with empirical findings confirming a significant positive correlation between brand trust and brand loyalty. In the same vein, there are some articles that regarded brand trust as unidimensional construct (Mabkhot et al., 2017; Portal et al., 2019; Liu & Liu, 2024), some of them are also examined the relationship between brand trust and brand loyalty in sports industry (Akoglu & Özbek, 2022; Schijns et al., 2016).

2.6.3 Past Research on Brand Trust

The term ‘trust’ was first introduced in social psychology as an essential element of social interactions (Delgado-Ballester & Munuera-Alemán, 2001). Since financial success of the companies depends on building long-lasting relationships with the customers, the researchers working on business management integrated ‘brand trust’ (BT) term into this area and considered it a determinant of brand loyalty. BT reflects the customer perceptions about the reliability and responsibility of a brand. The researcher argued that “The ultimate goal of marketing is to generate an intense bond between the consumer and the brand, and the main ingredient of this bond is trust”

(Hiscock, 2003, p. 1). Hence, brand trust is crucial for successful marketing. Swan and Nolan (1985) emphasized that brand trust is important in maintaining long-term consumer relationships in corporate marketing. After all, brand trust serves as a kind of glue that successfully maintains the relationship between a company and customers, and it is an important element that can develop customer loyalty.

Becerra and Badrinarayanan (2013) verified the relationship between brand trust and brand evangelism with brand identification as the intermediary variable. The results revealed that brand trust plays a positive role in behavioral intention and recommendation intention. Kwan Soo Shin et al. (2019) explored the loyalty intention among South Korean mobile phone users, the results found that brand trust directly affected brand loyalty, and indirectly impacted brand loyalty through brand commitment. Orazgaliyeva et al. (2024) examined the factors that impacted customer loyalty in manufacturing industry. The findings indicated that customer satisfaction and trust have a positive and significant effect on customer loyalty.

Agha et al. (2021) developed a model includes trust, service quality, corporate image and switching cost as independent variables, and customer loyalty as dependent variable in the mobile phone industry, the authors further pointed out that building trust is a long process and it is easy to collapse in an instant. Therefore, it is very important to emphasize the establishment of trust in the current market environment to maintain the relationship between consumers and brands. The results also found that four variables have positive effect on brand loyalty. Liu and Liu (2024) revealed the positive relationship between brand trust and brand loyalty in the context of omni-channel retailing of apparel industry. Moon et al. (2024) indicated that brand trust has positive and significant effect on brand loyalty among Uber users. Noprianta et al. (2024) asserted that brand trust has positive influence on brand loyalty in automotive industry.

Sohaib and Han (2023) found that brand trust has a direct effect on brand loyalty in fashion brand industry among Gen Z and Gen Y consumers. Sun and Moon (2023) revealed that brand trust has statistically impact on brand loyalty in food industry. Rather et al. (2021) affirmed the mediatory role of brand trust between consumer-brand identification and behavioral loyalty and the mediatory role of emotional commitment between customer satisfaction and behavioral loyalty in the hotel sector. Nevertheless, the authors did not contemplate attitudinal loyalty in their study. Moreover, the authors advocate for future studies to incorporate variables such as brand experience and value to prognosticate brand loyalty.

Based on the above analysis, there are few empirical articles aims to explore the relationship between brand trust and brand loyalty in sports brands industry, therefore, this study will fill this contextual gap.

2.7 Customer Perceived Value

2.7.1 The Definition of Customer Perceived Value

The concept of perceived value emerged as a business issue in the 1990s and has received much attention in this century. Customer perceived value is considered as the key to strategic management of an organization. It has become an important weapon to establish and maintain competitive advantage. Loyalty is closely related to creating value for consumers (Fu, 2023). Companies are doing their best to provide consumers with products or brand values that meet their needs.

Several authors stated that perceived value determined brand loyalty in various industries (Atulkar, 2020; Devi et al., 2021; Hussein et al., 2018; Nikhashemi et al., 2016). Researchers believed that customer perceived value is a strategic weapon to attract and retain customers, and one of the most important factors for the success of

service providers (Zeithaml, 1988; Woodruff, 1997). According to Zeithaml (1988), perceived value is a customer's overall evaluation of the utility of a product, based on the perception of what is received and what is given. Woodruff (1997) proposed that perceived value is the result or benefit that customers get from the price they pay for a product/service.

In the business market, value holds a central role in brand management, serving as a critical focus for organizations seeking to understand and enhance their products to deliver value to industrial customers. Furthermore, customer perceived value is regarded as the key predictor of repurchase intention. Recognizing the importance of perceived value underscores the necessity for retailers to create and deliver a high-quality shopping experience, thereby fostering consumers' intention to make purchases.

As Peterson (1995) puts it, consumers can enjoy both the economic benefits of the purchase process and better services tailored to their needs. Other benefits that consumers enjoy in the purchase process are social benefits, which arise as a result of the establishment of a specific relationship. It can be seen that brand experience, customer perceived value and brand loyalty are closely related. Mukerjee (2018) found that the joint effects of perceived value, service quality and brand experience on brand loyalty and word of mouth in the banking industry. Bae and Jeon (2022) revealed that utilitarian value formed through the brand experience of coffee shops is effective in increasing customer brand loyalty. Pratiwi et al. (2021) found that the relationship between perceived value and brand loyalty mediated by brand trust was supported in their study.

Grounded in social exchange theory, the enduring nature of a relationship between two parties are contingent upon mutual benefit. As Zeithaml (1988) defined customer

perceived value, it reflects the consumer's exchange of money for a desired product or service. This notion aligns with the core principles of social exchange theory, which posits that interactions are based on reciprocal exchanges where customers contribute resources (e.g., money and energy) and receive outcomes or rewards in return. The balance of this exchange determines the satisfaction and sustainability of the relationship.

2.7.2 Dimensions of Customer Perceived Value

The means-end theory (Gutman, 1982) proposed that consumers are goal oriented and that customer perceived value can be used as an effective means to meet customer expectations. Zeithaml (1988) proposed four different definitions of value. The first value is low price. Second, consumers want to know the value of the product. Third. Consumers consider the price as one of a measurement of value criteria. Fourth, consumers derive value based on the costs they have incurred. The model added that consumers' perceptions of product quality and value are personal and subjective (Sánchez-Fernández & Iniesta-Bonillo, 2007).

However, Zauner et al. (2015) asserted that customer perceived value is conceptualized as a unidimensional construct, which may be influenced or generated by multiple antecedents, such as perceived quality, it is not a composite concept. Liu, Li, Dai and Guo (2021) found that customer perceived value has a direct and positive effect on purchase intention, and CPV was regarded as multidimensional concept which has functional, emotional and social dimensions. Jiang et al. (2016) explored the impact of perceived value on brand loyalty and perceived value as a single dimensional concept. Similarly, Sánchez-Fernández and Iniesta Bonillo (2007) proposed that both the unidimensional and multidimensional value models play different roles in providing simplified (unidimensional) and complex

(multidimensional) applications of concepts.

Some scholars regard customer perceived value as a multidimensional construct and apply it to different situations to provide a broad and comprehensive perspective. This makes it easier for readers to understand the richness of the concept. Fu (2023) found that perceived value statistically affected loyalty in airline industry and perceived value was seen as multidimensional construct which includes emotional, social, quality and price dimensions. Kim et al. (2023) revealed that hedonic value and social value affected behavioral intention significantly in fashion industry.

In the same vein, the PERVAL composition model proposed by Sweeney and Soutar (2001) contains four interrelated value dimensions. 1) emotional value - utility to create emotional state or feelings. 2) social value - the market offerings can help the individual consumer to strengthen their social self-concept. 3) economic value - the product provided by the utility and the total cost (output/input ratio). 4) function value – product performance and perceived quality. Petrick (2002) proposed five dimensions of perceived value: behavioral price, monetary price, emotional response, quality and reputation. The authors found that perceived value as a multi-dimension concept to measure intangible products (services) does not exist and it is difficult to measure the evaluation of perceived value of services.

Sampaio and Saramago (2016) applied PERVAL model into grocery retail context to predict loyalty intervened customer satisfaction. It is found that there is a significant direct relationship between customer perceived value (CPV) as second-order dimension and customer satisfaction of groceries, customer satisfaction and customer loyalty. In the context of the sports industry, Kunkel et al. (2017) applied the PERVAL model to examine CPV as a multidimensional construct. Given the specific nature of sports team games, they introduced an additional dimension: epistemic

value, capturing the consumer's desire for knowledge and novelty. Through confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and structural equation modeling (SEM), their results demonstrated that five dimensions—functional, social, emotional, epistemic, and economic value—represent the facets of perceived value that consumers associate with sports team experiences. The findings further indicated that these dimensions significantly predict consumers' satisfaction and commitment to their favored teams.

Qian and Li (2024) developed a model that mainly explored the effects of perceived value and local identity on behavioral intention of rural tourism in China. In their study, perceived value was seen as multidimensional construct including social, emotional, value for money and cultural value, which have positive and significant effect on behavioural intention as well as place identity. Aulia et al. (2016) proposed a comprehensive model of customer perceived value, including personal, product, and social dimensions. Among them, the authors added that the perceived value of customers comes from the social environment in which they live, and accordingly, their purchase behavior is also aimed at obtaining social acceptance and appreciation from others.

Several results from previous research suggested that being socially accepted is part of a fundamental need that affects customer satisfaction and loyalty (Gallarza & Gil, 2006). As stated by Sweeney and Soutar (2001), the customer's perception of product value depends on or is related to the characteristics of the social environment. In order for customers to gain recognition or respect in society, they tend to look for products that help enhance social self-concept. Kim and Tang (2020) proposed a model to explore the relationship between customer behavior and perceived value, which leads to satisfaction. Customer perceived value in their research is divided into economic, individual and relational value. The results showed that a customer's

perception of value gains greater impact from citizenship behavior than participation behavior in the restaurant industry.

Based on the above discussion, it can be found that some dimensions of customer perceived value are based on specific situations. Therefore, this study applies PERVAL model and customer perceived value includes four dimensions: economic value, functional value, emotional value and social value. Hence, this is in agreement with the context (environment) of the study area, since sports brands consumers are well known for their emphasis on price, quality, emotional and social value of products/brands.

2.7.3 Past Research on Customer Perceived Value

Previous research endeavors have delved into the connection between customer-perceived value and consumption behavior, and subsequently deliberated on loyalty. For instance, a positive correlation between customers' perceived value and their loyalty intentions has been affirmed in multiple studies (Atulkar, 2020; Hussein et al., 2018; Yang et al., 2014). Hence, it is imperative for organizations to guarantee that they are undertaking every feasible measure to generate value for their customers. Specifically, Yang et al. (2014) studied the connection between perceived value and loyalty as well as satisfaction in the context of tourism industry. The results showed that both emotional value and quality value have strong positive effects on the satisfaction and loyalty of outbound tourists, of which emotional value is the most important. Experience value has a significant impact on passenger loyalty.

Su (2016) studied the nature of the inter-relationships among brand equity dimensions in the fast fashion context and proposed that perceived value was the core factor determined brand loyalty. Molinillo et al. (2017) had a survey of a sample of 412 online clothing shoppers and obtained results supported that an indirect

relationship has been established between satisfaction and loyalty through trust and perceived value of service. Hussein et al. (2018) found that perceived value plays a completely and partially mediating role in the relationship between physical environment and social interaction and customer loyalty in the hotel industry.

Similarly, Atulkar (2020) disclosed that perceived value and other constructs jointly determined brand loyalty among mall shoppers. Cuong and Khoi (2019) propounded that perceived value has a statistically significant influence on brand loyalty as well as satisfaction in convenience stores in Vietnam. Li (2021) found that perceived value has a positive effect on attitudinal and behavioural loyalty in the ecotourism industry. Menidjel and Bilgihan (2021) examined that perceived value mediates the effect of perceived relationship investment on customer loyalty. In addition, perceived value has a positive and significant effect on customer loyalty in clothing stores. Iqbal et al. (2023) discovered the direct and indirect effects of perceived value on brand loyalty in the hospitality industry. Hapsari et al. (2023) investigated that perceived value has a statistically significant impact on brand loyalty in the fashion industry.

Barusman (2024) found that perceived value has direct effect on customer loyalty in food industry. Higuera-Castillo et al. (2024) examined the factors that influencing electric vehicles purchase intention and the results showed that perceived value has a statistically impact on purchase intention. Bernarto et al. (2024) revealed the positive and significant relationship between perceived value and repurchase intention among coffee shop consumers. Katili et al. (2024) also found that perceived value has a direct and positive effect on customer loyalty in ride-hailing industry. Based on the above analysis, this study aims to verify the relationship between customer perceived value and brand loyalty in the sports brands industry.

2.8 Self-Brand Congruity

2.8.1 The Definition of Self-Brand Congruity

Parker (2009) defined self-brand congruity as the alignment between user imagery and brand personality, whereas Sung and Choi (2012) argued that this construct should be understood as the congruence between brand personality and self-concept. Lam et al. (2012) further extended the concept, suggesting that self-brand congruity aligns closely with the idea of person-organization fit. They added that self-brand congruity was also driven by corporate social responsibility. Based on the above discussions, the definition of self-brand congruity in this study is that the congruity between brand personality and consumer personality is part of the real self of consumers, and the congruity of CSR is part of the congruity that consumers perceive as their ideal self.

When purchasing products, consumers seek not only functional benefits but also the symbolic or self-expressive qualities of a brand or product to enhance their self-concept (Sirgy et al., 1991). Rooted in social psychology, self-concept reflects how individuals' personalities are expressed and reinforced through the products, brands, and services they select. It has become a key theme across various psychological factors, as consumers' perceived self-concept influences both brand preference and brand loyalty (Kressmann et al., 2006). Consequently, scholars advocate for a deeper exploration of the relationship between self-congruity and brand loyalty to better understand the mechanisms that drive consumer loyalty (Zhang, 2022).

Moreover, consumers actively seek alignment between their own self-image and a brand's image, fostering positive attitudes and behaviors toward the brand. Self-image congruity, the degree to which consumers feel their self-image matches the brand's identity, plays a crucial role in shaping consumer behavior (Rabbanee et al.,

2020). It is a significant predictor of purchase decisions, as it reflects consumers' expectations regarding the values associated with a brand (Aaker, 1997). For businesses, self-brand congruity offers a pathway to creating sustainable competitive advantages by fostering brand preference (Ahn et al., 2013; Mandal, 2020).

Recent studies highlight the influence of self-brand congruity on consumer loyalty and behavioral intentions. For instance, Nguyen et al. (2023) found that brand personality and self-image congruity have a positive and significant effect on consumers' intentions to revisit. Toteva et al. (2024) further supported these findings, demonstrating a positive impact of self-brand congruity on brand loyalty. Additionally, Kim (2023) revealed an indirect effect of self-congruity on both revisit intention and recommendations, underscoring its importance in influencing repeat patronage and word-of-mouth referrals. These findings emphasize the value of self-brand congruity as a strategic tool in cultivating long-term consumer loyalty and engagement.

2.8.2 Dimensions of Self-Brand Congruity

Self-brand congruity consists of two key dimensions: self-image congruity and functional congruity, both of which play a significant role in shaping consumer perceptions and attitudes toward brands. Self-image congruity refers to the alignment between a consumer's self-image and the values expressed by the brand (Sirgy & Johar, 1999). In contrast, functional congruity relates to the match between a brand's utilitarian attributes, such as performance, and the consumer's expectations or evaluative criteria (Sirgy & Johar, 1999).

Su and Reynolds (2017) further expanded on this by confirming that self-brand congruity encompasses both self-image congruity and functional congruity, with both

dimensions showing a positive correlation with brand attitude. Additionally, they introduced brand personality as an important predictor of both self-image and functional congruity, suggesting that brand personality helps strengthen the alignment between consumers' self-concept and their perceptions of a brand's utility and values. Thus, understanding the interplay between these dimensions and brand personality is crucial for businesses seeking to enhance brand attitudes and foster deeper consumer connections.

Phua and Kim (2018) found that when Snapchat users felt that their self-concept better matched the image of the brand being advertised in geofilter ads, they also had a more positive attitude toward the brand and were more willing to buy their products. In their study, self-brand congruity is a unidimensional construct. According to previous research findings, consumers tend to purchase brands that align with their self-image so that enhance their personal identity and achieve internal self-continuity (Sirgy et al., 1991). Sung and Choi (2012) revealed self-brand congruity has two dimensions including personality and user-imagery, which can predict brand attitude in their study.

In the same vein, authors revealed that self-congruity can help stimulate consumers' positive emotional, attitudinal, and behavioral responses to brands. If consumers are aware of the fact that there is a match between personality and brand image, they may have positive brand attitude and purchase intention (Aguirre-Rodriguez et al., 2012; Wardhani et al., 2024), and be loyal towards the brand (Zhang, 2022). Furthermore, only a few articles have verified the relationship between self-brand congruity and consumer behavioral intention (Guo et al., 2024; Marwat & Yousafzai, 2024).

In conclusion. This study takes two sub-dimensions of self-brand congruity: Brand

personality and corporate social responsibility congruity (Lam et al., 2012). Scholars have proposed that brand personality helps consumers to express self-concept, and also provides a sense of comfortable for consumers who found brands that match their self-concept. Empirical results supported that CSR is positively related to consumer identification (Fatma et al., 2016), by enhancing loyal intention (Le et al., 2024). In addition to the above reasons, the target industry of this study is the clothing industry. Consumers pay more attention to whether the symbolic value brought by clothing is compatible with self-image and personality. Meanwhile, the fulfillment of social responsibility of clothing enterprises will also help them obtain a good social image and stimulate positive reactions of consumers.

2.8.3 Past Research on Self-Brand Congruity

In sundry studies carried out within multiple contexts, affirmative and substantive connections have been discerned between the concept of self-brand congruity and consumer attitudes and behavioral intentions. For instance, Kim and Joung (2016) explored the relationship between brand self-congruity, emotional brand attachment, perceived level of investment, and repurchase intention for luxury brands. The results of path analysis revealed that consumers' self-congruity has a positive and significant prediction on emotional attachment to luxury brands and perception level of brand investment. Their study also ascertained that one's luxury brand-self congruity assumes a significant role in one's repurchase intentions of the luxury brand goods.

Fu et al. (2017) inquired into the link between self-congruity, flow, attitude and brand loyalty. It was empirically established that both self-congruity and flow are the antecedents of visitor attitude and brand loyalty. The relationship between self-congruity and brand loyalty was mediated by flow in the theme park. Su and Reynolds (2017) investigated the connection between self-image congruity and brand

attitude in the hotel context. Employing confirmatory factor analysis and exploratory factor analysis in analyzing the relationships among the variables, it was determined that self-image congruity impacted positively and significantly on purchase intention among leisure travelers rather than business travelers.

Similarly, Ho Lee and Jung (2018) executed a survey employing cluster analysis and discovered that image congruence and involvement are critical constructs influencing brand loyalty, particularly in the aspect of fostering sports fans. The investigation conducted by Liu et al. (2019) endeavored to scrutinize the manner in which brand personification in conjunction with self-congruity impacted the allegiance of tourism customers within the Chinese context. The proffered model was substantiated through the utilization of the SEM technique, within which an affirmative and salient correlation between self-congruity and brand loyalty was ascertained. Additionally, self-congruity mediates the relationship between brand personality dimensions and brand loyalty.

Lee, Hansen and Lee (2020) examined the effect of brand personality self-congruity (BPC) on purchase intention on Facebook. The study empirically validated a positive link between BPC and purchase intention. This indicates that the more consumers perceive incongruity between brand personality and self-image, the less they are prone to engage in brand-related activities and the less likely they are to purchase the brand. Zhang (2022) revealed that consumers with high self-congruity tend to be more consistent in brand personality, and they will be more loyal to the original brand after encountering stock-outs, resulting in more obvious brand loyalty behavior in the apparel industry.

Chieng et al. (2022) on their part, focused on the main goal of examining the link between self-congruity and brand loyalty using data base from 428 Australia

consumers. They adopted SEM method in sampling the respondents. The results showed that social self-congruity has a direct effect on brand attachment. The actual self-congruity and ideal self-congruity have no direct influence on brand attachment, but have indirect influence through brand experience. Brand attachment is an important determinant of brand loyalty.

Hashim et al. (2023) endeavored to explore how consumer buying behaviors are delineated. Product novelty, product difference, product inimitability, brand reputation, value consciousness, along with self-congruity were postulated to be the predictors of purchase intention within the clothing context in Malaysia. Employing the PLS-SEM technique in analyzing the hypothesized interrelationships among the study variables, the outcome of the study empirically substantiated a model that affirmed that self-congruity significantly delineated purchase intention. Equally, the findings showed that self-congruity and value consciousness appear to moderate the relationship between innovative product attributes and brand reputation.

The work of SARITA et al. (2024) proposed a model that examined the effect of personality and traits influence the formation of customer satisfaction and brand loyalty in the context of coffee shops. The data obtained was then explained descriptively using structural equation modeling (SEM). The sample in this study amounted to 400 samples. It was found that self-congruity had a direct and significant impact on customer satisfaction among all the categories of customers. Also, self-congruity significantly influenced their loyalty intention. Based on the above analysis, the relationship between self-brand congruity and brand loyalty needs to be further explored, especially in the field of sports brands.

2.9 Consumer-Brand Identification

2.9.1 The Definition of Consumer-Brand Identification

In the literature, consumer identification has been identified as belonging to two disciplines: interpretive/sociological and psychology. The sociological approach provides an explanation for the formation of the identity process, while the psychological perspective provides an explanation at the individual level (Ravasi & Van Rekom, 2003).

The first group attempts to explain consumer behavior from the perspective of an important component of self-construction. Similar to consumer culture theorists and social researchers in the field of marketing, brand, as a symbol of consumer goods, is also important in creating and disseminating consumer identity. Brands and properties help express consumers' uniqueness and identity, and serve as a medium to build relationships with past experience. Even if this relationship is not equivalent to interpersonal relationship, brands are considered to play the role of "others" recognized by consumers, especially if consumers endow brands with vivid image characteristics, humanization or brand personalization (Fournier, 1998). From this point of view, identity is entrusted with meaning as an object. Therefore, for individual consumers, the brand is like a virtual partner, and they perceive the meaning and characteristics contained in the brand as their own.

Therefore, Lam et al. (2010) defined CBI as customers' psychological perception, feeling and evaluation of brand belonging. Stokburger-Sauer et al. (2012) defined it as a state of consumer perception of a brand, with the purpose of seeking how identity is realized in the brand market. Generally speaking, the concept of brand identification stems from the concept of consumer-company identification (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2003) and social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1985). According to social identity theory, individuals seek to enhance their self-concept

and self-esteem by affiliating with particular social groups (Tajfel, 1978). Consequently, consumer-brand identification is understood as the consumer's perception of unity with a brand (Stokburger-Sauer et al., 2012), which aids in fulfilling identity-related needs and expressing personal values through their association with the brand.

In this study, consumer-brand identification highlights the perception of oneness between the brand and the consumer, wherein individuals utilize the brand as a means to construct their social and actual selves. This relationship is not merely transactional but symbolic, as the consumption of sports brands becomes integral to the consumer's national identity and personal self-construction. The act of purchasing and engaging with these brands helps consumers express and reinforce their affiliation with broader cultural and national narratives, thereby contributing to their sense of belonging and identity formation.

2.9.2 Dimensions of Consumer-Brand Identification

According to social identity theory, Kim et al. (2001) defined the level of consumer-brand identification as the extent to which the brand can help express and enhance the identity of consumers. Del Rio et al. (2001) distinguished consumer-brand identification from individual and social aspects. Personal identity means that consumers identify with the brand and feel close to it, while social identity regards the brand as a communication tool, which allows consumers to show their willingness to join or leave a close social group.

In contrast to the perspectives of previous scholars, Lam et al. (2010) argued that brand identification is a multidimensional construct composed of three key dimensions: cognitive, affective, and evaluative. This suggests that brand

identification is not a single, uniform concept but rather a structure that encompasses various psychological processes through which individuals relate to a brand. Expanding on this view, Lam et al. (2012) proposed that the relationship between consumers and brands is influenced by two primary factors: utilitarian and symbolic benefits, highlighting both the practical and expressive roles a brand can play in consumers' lives.

Stokburger-Sauer et al. (2012) further developed this multidimensional approach by integrating social, cognitive, and emotional dimensions of brand identification. They identified several antecedents, including self-brand similarity, brand uniqueness, brand prestige, brand social benefits, brand warmth, and memorable brand experiences, as factors contributing to consumer-brand identification (CBI). However, in their model, CBI itself was conceptualized as a unidimensional construct, suggesting that while various antecedents inform the identification process, the overall connection between consumer and brand could be assessed as a singular construct.

More recently, Kumar and Kaushik (2020) reinforced this unidimensional approach to brand identification, positing that CBI is effectively a single construct and identifying brand experience as one of its primary antecedents. Their work aligns with Stokburger-Sauer et al. (2012) in treating brand identification as unidimensional but underscores the importance of consumer experiences as a key factor driving brand identification. Together, these perspectives highlight both the complexity of factors influencing brand identification and the evolving debate over its dimensionality.

Sihvonen (2019) proposed that self-brand congruity can be seen as a direct antecedent of CBI when addressing the similarity or dissimilarity between the self

and the brand. Büyükdağ and Kitapci (2021) posited a model that aims to examine the effects of self-brand congruity, perceived value, memorable brand experience, brand identity and brand-lifestyle congruity on consumer-brand identification. Moreover, CBI was looked on as unidimensional concept in their study. Delgado-Ballester and Fernandez-Sabiote (2024) found that brand warmth positively affected CBI which was viewed as a single dimensional construct.

Based on the above analysis, consumer-brand identification is regarded as a single dimension in most articles, but different scholars understand its rich connotation by exploring its antecedents. Therefore, in this study, CBI is regarded as a unidimensional construct.

2.9.3 Past Research on Consumer-Brand Identification

In previous articles, consumer-brand identification is considered as an antecedent variable of brand loyalty (Tuškej et al., 2013; Yeh et al., 2016), which can well predict the loyalty tendency of consumers from the perspective of social psychology. For instance, Elbedweihy et al. (2016) proposed a theoretical model that value congruity and customer-to-customer similarity directly or indirectly drive CBI with the brand through brand appeal, which in turn provides a path for the development of a deep relationship with the brand (acquired through brand loyalty and resilience to negative information). Interestingly, the relationship between CBI and brand loyalty has not been supported in their study.

Yeh et al. (2016) explored smartphone consumer's brand loyalty from the perspective of consumer-brand identification and perceived value. They collected data from 157 respondents and used SEM in analyzing the hypothesis that was CBI can be predicted brand loyalty. Popp and Woratschek (2017) aimed to examine the relationship between CBI, brand loyalty and word of mouth, customer satisfaction

and price image as intermediaries in the relationship between different brands. They tested the model empirically with a sample of 1443 respondents from 10 service/product brands, and the results supported that CBI was one of a driving force of customer loyalty.

In addition, Tajuddin et al. (2018) disclosed that consumer-brand identification exerts a positive and significant influence on brand loyalty in fashion brands in Malaysia. Santos et al. (2022) developed a model primarily addressing the significance of CBI and consumer engagement and their interaction effect on brand loyalty in the fast-moving consumer goods category. Their findings are predicated on data from 652 respondents and SEM to test the hypothesis that CBI has a statistical effect on brand loyalty. Yoshida et al. (2021) proposed a model that was intended to integrate organizational social capital theory and consumer well-being into an a priori brand identity model, and to test the antecedents and consequences of CBI over time. Their research unveiled the positive and significant correlation between CBI and behavioural loyalty.

Susanty and Tresnaningrum (2018) examined the effect of customer-brand identification on brand loyalty in the electronic industry, the results showed that the influence of CBI on brand loyalty is stronger than other variables. Fatma and Khan (2023) probed into the relationship between consumer perceived CSR and brand loyalty, with brand identification and brand credibility as mediators in the banking industry. They utilized SEM to analyze the hypothesis that the significant positive effect of brand identification on brand loyalty was supported. Rachmawati et al. (2023) developed a model that aimed to test the relationship between brand identification, brand trust and brand loyalty interceded by the role of brand commitment in the sports brands shoes industry; however, they did not examine the direct effect of brand identification on brand loyalty.

Based on above discussion, consumer-brand identification can be seen as one of antecedents of brand loyalty, yet the connection between the two has not been fully explored in clothing industry, in particular, in sports brands industry. Therefore, this study aims to test the relationship between CBI and brand loyalty in sports industry to fill this gap.

2.9.4 Consumer-Brand Identification as a Mediator

Past articles have attested that the relationship between determinants of brand loyalty is not invariably direct but might necessitate mediation. Consequently, some studies have indicated that consumer-brand identification assumes an intermediary role between various constructs prognosticating brand loyalty. For instance, in the higher education industry, Palmer et al. (2016) undertook a study in which analytical data were procured through CFA, SEM, and path analysis. The outcomes demonstrate that when brand identification is the mediating variable, alumni's brand loyalty can be attained by recollected academic and social experiences. In the tourism industry, Kumar and Kaushik (2017) affirmed that brand identification mediates the nexus between destination personality congruence and destination loyalty. In the like manner, Kumar and Kaushik (2018) also discerned brand identification to be a mediator with brand experience that predicts loyalty in the tourism industry.

Similarly, Fatma et al. (2016) in their study found that CBI to be a mediator with the constructs that predicts brand loyalty in the context of the banking sector. Augusto and Torres (2018) in their study, a theoretical model was proposed to explore the effects of brand attitude and eWORM on customers' willingness to pay premium. Their findings revealed that the direct and positive effect of CBI on electronic word of mouth in banking industry. In the hotel industry, Rather et al. (2018) found that CBI to be a mediator in the relationship between value congruity and brand loyalty,

as well as in the correction between value congruity, customer brand engagement and affective brand commitment. They also suggested that researchers may take customer experience into consideration when it comes to CBI in the future research. In the restaurant sector, Han et al. (2020) found that brand identification fully mediates the influence of self-congruence on brand loyalty. The influence of brand prestige, symbol attractiveness and brand experience on brand loyalty is partly mediated by brand identification.

Kumar and Kaushik (2020) concocted a paradigm that accentuated the significance of brand identification as an intermediary variable amid the dimension of brand experience and consumer brand relationship. The discoveries indicated that brand identification augments the probability of a robust and advantageous affiliation or connection between consumers and the product and service brand. Ultimately, the authors propose that future investigations might scrutinize the influence of brand experience and brand identification on other components of consumer brand relationships, such as trust and loyalty. Shin et al. (2020) conducted a survey to investigate the way hotel loyalty programs are designed to enhance customer identification with hotel brands and develop sustainable customer-brand relationships. The results supported the mediating role of CBI in the three proposed elements of loyalty program experience and customer brand relationship.

Chen and Wang (2021) had a survey based on 240 valid customer samples. Their research found that brand positioning has a significant impact on brand loyalty through the intermediary role played by brand identification and brand personality in the sports industry. In the context of professional football, Yoshida et al. (2021) found that the mediating role of CBI in the effects of social interaction ties and shared vision on behavioral loyalty and purchase frequency was supported.

Rather et al. (2022) collected visitor-based survey data and analyzed the data using CFA and SEM. It is found that CBI plays an intermediary role in the influence of brand value congruence, credibility and experience on consumers' brand advocacy, attachment and loyalty. Gontur et al. (2022) found that CBI mediated the link between service quality and client loyalty in the hotel industry in Plateau State. Gurler (2025) conducted an in-depth investigation into the mechanisms underlying the relationship between service quality and customer loyalty within the airline industry. Specifically, the findings indicate that the positive effects of service quality on customer loyalty are facilitated through both the identification consumers feel with a brand and their perception of the value derived from the services provided. Importantly, the research emphasized that CBI exerts a more significant influence on enhancing customer loyalty than perceived value.

Based on the above discussion, the role of consumer-brand identification as an intermediary to predict brand loyalty has not been fully explored, especially in the sports brands industry.

2.10 Nostalgia

Nostalgia involves complex emotions. Firstly, it is described as a bittersweet emotional response to market stimuli. Pascal et al. (2002) proposed that nostalgia can be used by advertising to stimulate consumers' memories of good past experience. Nostalgia can also be triggered by specific music or odors. Secondly, some scholars believed that nostalgia is a positive emotion that is associated with social connections and self-esteem, and can also be used to resist negative emotions (Pade & Fearer, 2022). Therefore, studies have revealed a strong correlation between nostalgia, social connections, and behavioral responses. For example, when people feel lonely, nostalgia as a medium can enhance individuals' social perception (Zhou et al., 2008).

In addition, some scholars have proposed that nostalgia is not only a memory of the past, but also has an impact on consumers' future behavior (Cheung et al., 2016).

Furthermore. Nostalgia can be construed from both individual and collective standpoints (Zhao et al., 2014). Individualistic nostalgia is self-oriented and pertains to an individual's bygone. For instance, individuals frequently have an objective where they endeavor to extract significance and sentiments via nostalgia, establishing or fortifying their autonomous ideal self. Collective nostalgia alludes to the communal recollections of past generations. Regarding collective nostalgia, the individual aims to mold the ideal self by extracting abstract meanings and feelings from past events (Baker & Kennedy, 1994).

Some scholars argued that nostalgia is a negative emotion (Hertz, 1990) that may be attributed to unpleasant experiences in the past. Divard and Demontron (1997) found that nostalgia to be an emotion that includes both positive and negative emotions. They added that nostalgia can enhance self-identity, support the reconstruction of cultural worldviews and meanings, and improve interpersonal relationships. Hence, nostalgia is a way for consumers to idealize themselves by rebuilding positive experiences from the past and gain strong recognition to enhance themselves (Stern, 1992).

Nostalgia is also seen as a social emotion that restores positive emotions by enhancing perceived social connections and social support (Zhou et al., 2008). Moreover, since nostalgia is a self-related emotion, it helps to inspire self-continuity (Sedikides et al., 2015) as a compensatory mechanism, nostalgia can continuously reinforce self-identity. Previous research has shown that consumers who are nostalgic display higher purchase intentions and less sensitive about money than consumers who are not nostalgic, they tend to follow the options that most people

like (Fan et al., 2020).

2.10.1 Nostalgia as a Moderator

Nostalgia in advertising serves as a strategic tool to foster consumer loyalty, as it leverages positive emotions associated with past experiences (Muehling et al., 2004). By evoking memories of a recent past, brands can trigger temporary emotional responses that reinforce consumers' attachment, thus enhancing loyalty (Ou & Verhoef, 2017). This approach not only strengthens customer retention but also reduces marketing costs by minimizing the need for continuous, intensive promotional efforts (Grębosz-Krawczyk, 2018).

Nostalgia is an emotional state where individuals experience positive feelings by recollecting a familiar object or experience that they had in the past (Stern, 1992). Thus, nostalgia in sports industry, as discussed in this study, is such feelings specific to the sports-related consumption past. Cho et al. (2020) conducted a study whose objective lies on determining how revisit intention predicts both team identification and sport nostalgia in the South Korea professional baseball games context. The analysis of data using SEM method revealed that team identification has a positive and significant impact on revisit intention, mediated by the influence of sports nostalgia.

In the same vein, Sedikides and Wildschut (2019) argued that collective nostalgia can, to a certain extent, strengthen identification with internal groups and make group members tend to exhibit positive, nationalistic attitudes. In other words, collective nostalgia has a certain group tendency. For internal groups, collective nostalgia is an important driver in favor of positive action and can inspire socially relevant attitudes and behaviors. Zhang (2022) found that collective nostalgia can significantly predict individual identity, social identity and collective identity.

Subsequently. Nostalgia serves as a powerful marketing tool due to its positive impact on consumer behavior (Gong et al., 2023; Huang et al., 2016). For example, nostalgic cues can cultivate meaning in consumers' lives, leading to increased customer loyalty (Hwang & Hyun, 2013). Loh et al. (2019) found that the relationship between nostalgia and brand loyalty mediated by childhood brand nostalgia was significant. Kim, Kim, Nosrati and Badu-Baiden (2024) highlight the lack of theoretical models designed to elucidate the effects of nostalgia on consumer behavior, particularly in relation to loyalty intention. Moreover, in the context of sports brands that often neglect the psychological factors can be misdirecting and lacking in terms of its applicability in forecasting cognitive and emotional differences in behaviour.

Therefore. Some of the prior studies treated nostalgia as a predictor (Özhan et al., 2018; Santini et al., 2023; Toledo & Lopes, 2016), however, they overlooked the potential moderating impact of nostalgia (Rhajbal et al., 2017) on the relationship of consumer-brand identification and sports brands loyalty intention. Kremer et al. (2022) examined the nostalgia tendency as moderator in the relationship between evoked nostalgia and product evaluation, the findings revealed that nostalgia has a positive impact on product evaluation, and consumers' positive evaluation of brands or products will further affect their consumption choices and behaviors.

In addition, nostalgia as a psychological construct in tourism industry, limited in sports brands industry, especially, the sport consumer marketing industry considers nostalgic feelings among consumers as a key retaining strategy (Cattaneo & Guerini, 2012; Marchegiani & Phau, 2011). Hence, Lu et al. (2022) recommend that future research examine the moderating role of nostalgia in shaping consumers' intentions to engage in repeat consumption. Additionally, they suggest incorporating other variables to better understand the impact of nostalgia-driven consumption behavior

on repurchase intentions.

2.11 Brand Loyalty

2.11.1 The Definition of Brand Loyalty

Brand loyalty is an important concern for market practitioners and a key area of study for many firms, highlighting its critical role in brand management. Academic literature also reflects this interest, often referring to brand loyalty as brand commitment and retention. Numerous studies highlight the advantages of brand loyalty across industries, emphasizing its impact on organizational development. Bennett and Rundel-Thiele (2005) suggested that brand loyalty serves as a measure of organizational health; with a loyal customer base, firms can lower operating expenses by reducing customer acquisition and promotional costs, ultimately enhancing shareholder value and profitability.

Alnawas and Altarifi (2016) underscored the pivotal role of brand loyalty in the hospitality sector, noting its potential to strengthen competitive advantage. Similarly, Giovanis and Athanasopoulou (2018) explored how cognitive and emotional brand relationships significantly affect brand loyalty, specifically within the Greek broadband service sector, highlighting the importance of both rational and affective consumer connections to brands. Su and Chang (2018) concurred that brand loyalty is particularly advantageous for clothing enterprises, as it reduces the costs associated with acquiring new customers and enhances market share by leveraging established, loyal customer bases.

Focusing on psychological attachment, Atulkar (2020) affirmed that brand loyalty is critical to the success of shopping malls, reinforcing customer retention and attachment. Ledikwe (2020) further emphasized brand loyalty's role in the clothing

industry, suggesting it creates unique competitive advantages that discourage brand-switching behavior. Lastly, Miao et al. (2024) identified brand loyalty as a fundamental component of brand equity, noting its positive impact on financial performance for clothing companies by strengthening customer commitment and trust.

In this study, brand loyalty of sports brand consumers is not only a manifestation of consumer behavior, but also involves consumers' emotional preference for brands and cognitive evaluation process at the psychological level. This loyalty may stem from a high level of recognition of the brand's quality, image, value, or identity, and is manifested through repeated purchases, recommendation behavior, or brand interactions. Based on the above discussion, brand loyalty in this study helps local sports brands gain differentiated competitive advantages to win more loyal customer groups, which results in expanding market share and increasing financial performance.

2.11.2 Dimensions of Brand Loyalty

It is well documented that brand loyalty has two dimensions: Attitudinal and behavioral. However, some scholars may adopt a single dimension to measure brand loyalty, depending on the specific context of their study. Inoue et al. (2017) verified the relationship between behavioral loyalty and corporate social responsibility in Football team in the Australian Football League (AFL). Liao et al. (2014) investigated the relationship between satisfaction, intentional and behavioral loyalty in the context of E-tailing. Agyeiwaah et al. (2022) examined the impact of employee commitment on attitudinal loyalty in the Telecommunication industry. Dandis and Wright (2020) investigated satisfaction and attitudinal loyalty in the bank industry in Jordan.

Behavioral loyalty refers to the proportion of the number of times a consumer buys a particular brand to the total number of brands purchased by the consumer and/or the actual purchase amount. However, Dick & Basu (1994) argued that the definition of brand loyalty from the perspective of repeated behavior ignores the importance of the decision-making process, and does not distinguish it from simple repeated purchase behavior. Therefore, from a behavioral perspective, in the case of repeated purchases, a higher frequency of purchases and a larger share of the wallet spent may be indicators of loyalty, but these might be insufficient to conclude the presence of brand loyalty.

Back and Parks (2003) pointed out that research on brand loyalty from the perspective of behavior fails to evaluate the complexity and richness of the concept. Mellens et al. (1996) argued that behavioral loyalty may be an accidental event, because it is usually based on behavior over a period of time, which is easier to capture than attitudinal. They further proposed that behavior data is the most accurate response to consumers' past behavior, but it may not be well used to predict future consumer behavior, especially in a dynamic environment.

Attitudinal loyalty not only focuses on transaction strategies, such as frequent user projects and giving gifts to repeat customers, but also focuses on attitudinal variables, such as commitment and trust. Attitudinal points out that brand loyalty is not only the result of repeated purchase behavior, but also the result of multi-dimensional attitude of a specific brand. Attitudinal measurement manages to distinguish brand loyalty from repeat purchase as it based on consumers brand preferences, promises or purchase intentions, it emphasized the cognitive elements of brand loyalty. For attitudinal measurement, it is easy to choose the right decision-making unit. Finally, it has insight into the motivations of consumer behavior choices, which are not easily affected by random short-term fluctuations (Mellens et al., 1996).

Based on the above analysis, Back and Parks (2003), and Muncy (1983) revealed some attitudinal factors, such as commitment, involvement, motivation, and so on. However, the selection of these variables is grounded on the process of operation rather than theory. Therefore, the risk that is the concept of low validity is that researchers cannot evaluate the characteristics of all individuals. Mellens et al. (1996) affirmed that attitudinal measurement may not be an accurate response to reality, because it is not based on actual purchases. In addition, it is the reason of data observed at a single point in time. Using longitudinal method may diminish its contingency, but the cost of doing so may quickly become prohibitive. Dugar and Chamola (2021) further pointed out that another issue is that attitudinal loyalty is a psychological parameter compared with behavioral loyalty, which is difficult to capture objectively.

Consequently, several researchers (Bowen & Chen, 2001; Jacoby & Chestnut, 1978) asserted that brand loyalty can be well predicted through the combination of attitudinal and behavioral, and proposed corresponding measurement items. Dick and Basu (1994) affirmed that loyal consumers should not only have attitude commitments, but also include repeated purchases, which has been unanimously recognized (Dikcius et al., 2019). In line with this notion, in order to obtain brand loyalty in a comprehensive perspective, it must be measured from both behavioral and attitudinal. Some researchers admitted that brand loyalty is a complex concept that requires psychological commitment and behavioral intention (Knox & Walker, 2001).

Dick and Basu (1994) proposed a model of brand loyalty driven by attitude and repeat purchase behavior. Huang (2017) agreed that brand loyalty includes two dimensions: attitudinal and behavioral. The empirical results of Nyadzayo et al. (2018) supported this notion, and added that two aspects of attitudinal and behavioral

response indicated consumers' future purchasing intentions, which can predict true brand loyalty. Behavioral loyalty involves that consumers are willing to purchase the brand even they made negative brand evaluation. Lee and Park (2024) supported and examined behavioral and attitudinal loyalty in the small retailers.

Besides, attitudinal loyalty can be used to describe consumers' attachment to brands in order to resist the temptation of competing brands. However, although there seems to be a considerable agreement on the definition of brand loyalty since the work of Jacoby and Chestnut (1978), there is no consensus on the unified perspective of accurately measuring brand loyalty (Mellens et al., 1996; Pan et al., 2012).

Gounaris and Stathakopoulos (2004) proposed brand loyalty has four types. First, no loyalty. There is no purchasing behavior or attachment to the brand, nor will it be influenced by society. The second is covetous loyalty. Consumers show a high degree of attachment to the brand and have a strong positive attitude towards the brand. This is based on the development of consumers' social environment. The brand becomes an extension of consumers' self-perception and personality. Consumers are also willing to trust and recommend the brand to others without actually making a purchase. The third is inertia loyalty, that is, consumers buy brands out of habit, convenience or other reasons, but not for emotional attachment to the brand or real motivation. The last one is premium loyalty. Consumers have a strong attachment to the brand, have a high repeat purchase rate, and they are affected by social pressure.

Based on the above discussion, it can be found that some scholars agree on the measurement of brand loyalty in the two dimensions of attitudinal and behavioral. In view of better capturing the behavioral characteristics of consumers, brand loyalty is regarded as a multidimensional construct in this study.

2.11.3 Past Research on Brand Loyalty

In recent years, brand loyalty and its drivers have become one of the most valued concepts, thus attracting the common attention of academics and practitioners (Chen et al., 2022; Zhao et al., 2022). For enterprises, establishing brand loyalty serves as an effective strategy for reducing marketing costs in enterprises by fostering strong consumer relationships, thereby mitigating competitive threats (Kim et al., 2021). Therefore, the target group of an enterprise should be loyal consumers and provide them with customized products in order to bring higher benefits. Loyal customers are willing to pay a premium for the brand, and they trust the brand very much. Those customers are unlikely to have brand switching behavior. Understanding the formation of brand loyalty is very important for improving enterprise performance (Hwang et al., 2022). It can also attract more loyal consumer groups based on similar characteristics and needs.

For researchers, brand loyalty has been a key focus for scholars, who have examined various determinants across multiple industries. For example, Bernarto et al. (2020) examined the factors that impacted brand loyalty of Indian coffee shop consumers, the results indicated that brand awareness and brand trust had a positive effect on brand loyalty. Hwang et al. (2021) investigated brand loyalty in coffee shops, the findings revealed that brand loyalty was directly influenced by brand satisfaction, brand attitude and brand attachment, and indirectly affected by brand experience. Rimadiaz et al. (2021) examined the relationship between consumer brand engagement, brand awareness, brand image and brand loyalty in tourism industry in Indonesia by using Tik Tok platform, the results showed that consumer brand engagement positively affected brand awareness, brand image and brand loyalty.

Similarly, Zhang et al. (2020) investigated brand relationship and brand loyalty

among consumers who use tablet PCs, the results revealed that brand relationship and brand love directly affected brand loyalty, brand loyalty was also indirectly influenced by brand trust. Azzahra and Fachira (2022) examined factors that influenced corporate social responsibility on the cosmetic products loyalty intention, the study concluded that brand trust and brand love directly affected brand loyalty while brand trust partly mediates the relationship between brand image and brand loyalty, brand love fully mediates the relationship between brand image and brand loyalty. In addition, the result also indicated that brand image fully mediates the relationship between CSR and brand loyalty.

Bae and Kim (2023) investigated the driving forces of brand loyalty among Korean smartphone users, the findings indicated that brand experiences affect brand loyalty directly, and brand love indirectly affect brand loyalty. Atulkar (2020) focused on mall shoppers' loyalty intentions in India, the results revealed that perceived quality and value, perceived satisfaction and brand trust directly affected brand loyalty. Ledikwe (2020) examined that factors affect brand loyalty in apparel industry in Botswana. The results indicated that brand trust has a positive and significant effect on brand loyalty, brand commitment moderated the relationship between brand trust and brand loyalty.

Equally, Akoglu and Özbek (2022) revealed that brand loyalty was affected indirectly and directly by brand trust, perceived quality and brand experience among sports consumers. Anggraini and Marsasi (2024) developed a brand loyalty model for Gen Y and Gen Z of fashion clothing industry and revealed that brand trust is one of predictors, self-esteem, brand love and susceptibility to normative influence as mediators. Rincón et al. (2023) found that symbolic consumption has a direct and positive effect on brand loyalty in sports industry. And they also called for articles to further investigate the impact of experience, self-image congruity and brand trust

which may be as driving forces of brand loyalty.

As mentioned in the previous studies on brand loyalty, the variables that impact it vary widely. Many studies focus on the emotional attributes and functional factors followed by the brand loyalty. Besides, the results indicated that emotional attributes (brand satisfaction, brand love and brand trust) and functional factors (perceived quality and brand image) influence brand loyalty. However, psychological factors (such as brand identification, self-brand congruity) (Phua & Kim, 2018; Rachmawati et al., 2023) and social dimension factors (such as perceived value) were much less investigated in previous studies. Therefore, future research should delve deeper into the influence of psychological and social drivers on brand loyalty.

2.12 Generation Y Consumers

Generation Y (Gen Y) consumers were born between 1980 and 2000, and they get a lot of attention among researchers as a huge generation (Chatzopoulou & de Kiewiet, 2021). In addition, scholars have found that Gen Y consumers' behavior is constantly changing as it is difficult for them to stay loyal (Alam & Noor, 2020; Kachawangsi & Paengkesorn, 2022; Ladhari et al., 2019).

However, Gen Y consumers are widely favored by clothing merchants because of their preference for fashionable clothing. For instance, they are considered a more brand- and fashion-conscious generation compared to other generations (Haris Bin Khalid, 2022). Due to the focus on fashion, 70% of Gen Y consumers spend money on fashion and clothing products, as a result, brands will make great effort to capture their attention, as Gen Y consumers will bring them higher profits (Valaei & Nikhashemi, 2017). In line with this notion, Gen Y represents the future potential of the clothing industry (Nadeem et al., 2015).

Gen Y's distinct psychological and social profile makes them a critical, yet complex, target group for research into loyalty formation for Chinese domestic sportswear brands. This cohort exhibits a unique combination of traits that profoundly shapes consumption patterns: high self-esteem, narcissism, impatience, a strong online orientation, and a pronounced inclination towards creativity (Kachawangsie & Paewngkesorn, 2022). Crucially, their elevated public self-awareness (Fernandez, 2009) drives a significant focus on social perception. This manifests as a clear orientation towards community and group affiliations (Markow, 2005), fostering a powerful desire to project a trendy and socially desirable image.

Within the context of China's dynamic sportswear market, where brands like Li-Ning, Anta, Xtep and 361 Degree are actively leveraging guochao (national trend) aesthetics, technological innovation, and community-building through digital platforms, Gen Y's characteristics create a potent but intricate landscape for loyalty. Their need for creative self-expression aligns with brands offering unique designs and narratives, while their sensitivity to peer influence and desire for group belonging makes them responsive to brands successfully cultivating a strong community identity or cool factor.

Simultaneously, their impatience and online immersion demand seamless, engaging brand experiences. Understanding how these specific traits – the drive for trendy self-presentation fueled by peer awareness, the tension between individual creativity and group conformity, and the demand for instant gratification – interact to foster or hinder genuine, lasting loyalty towards local brands, rather than global giants, is essential. This complex interplay renders Gen Y a uniquely valuable cohort for study, offering deeper insights into building emotional resonance and sustainable loyalty in China's competitive sportswear sector than generations less defined by this specific confluence of social image consciousness and digital engagement.

The selection of Gen Y as the focal cohort for investigating brand loyalty towards Chinese domestic sports brands is strategically justified by their uniquely paradoxical and challenging consumer behavior, distinct from other generations like Gen Z. Crucially, research indicates that while Gen Y exhibits a strong link between perceived value and satisfaction – meaning they readily recognize and appreciate high value – this satisfaction does not reliably translate into intentions to recommend or share their positive experiences via electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM). This renders Gen Y the most enigmatic generation concerning the relationship between value perception, satisfaction, and eWOM intentions within the Chinese market (Wahyuningsih et al., 2022).

The rationale underpinning this observed behavior lies in key generational characteristics identified in foundational studies. As noted by Kolnhofer et al. (2017), Gen Y consumers are inherently pragmatic, environmentally conscious, self-assured, and achievement-focused. Furthermore, Parment et al. (2013) suggested a notable lack of deep emotional connection or traditional brand loyalty within this cohort. This aligns with Gursoy et al.'s (2008) characterization of Gen Y as believing rules are made to be broken, exhibiting a here today and gone tomorrow attitude. Within the dynamic landscape of rising Chinese sports brands (e.g., Li-Ning, Anta, Xtep), which are actively investing in value propositions like guochao (national trend) aesthetics, technological innovation, and sustainability, understanding why highly satisfied Gen Y consumers remain reluctant brand advocates is paramount.

In particular, their pragmatic evaluation of value, combined with low emotional attachment and inherent skepticism towards established norms, creates a significant hurdle for brands seeking to build deep, advocacy-driven loyalty. Consequently, deciphering the loyalty mechanics of this influential yet reticent group, rather than the more predictably vocal or community-driven Gen Z, presents a critical strategic

imperative for domestic brands aiming for sustainable growth and premium positioning. However, empirical articles on the driving force of brand loyalty among Gen Y consumers in sports brands industry are limited (Cham et al., 2018).

Some scholars emphasize the significance of Gen Y consumers compared to other groups from the economic perspective. Thangavel et al. (2021) and Kumar (2018) stressed that Gen Y consumers, who are generally in the mid-career stage, possess both financial independence and discretionary spending power. This demographic represents a highly valuable consumer segment for marketers due to their established income streams and their spending autonomy. With this cohort growing purchasing influence, they offer substantial opportunities for companies seeking to capture and retain long-term customer loyalty, making them an appealing target for businesses aiming to expand market share in competitive industries.

In conclusion, the selection of Gen Y as the focal cohort for investigating loyalty towards Chinese sports brands is not merely advantageous but fundamentally necessary, precisely due to the complex interplay of their defining psychological and social traits and the inherent contradictions they present. This generation epitomizes a unique confluence of characteristics – high self-esteem, creativity, and a drive for self-expression, yet coupled with pronounced narcissism, impatience, and an intense focus on public self-awareness and social validation.

Their powerful desire for trendy self-presentation and group affiliation exists in tension with individualistic tendencies and a documented lack of deep emotional brand attachment. It is this very paradox – the yearning to project a unique, creative identity within a socially approved framework, while exhibiting low traditional loyalty and high susceptibility to peer influence yet reluctance for active advocacy – that makes Gen Y indispensable for study. Understanding how these conflicting

drivers influence their engagement with rising domestic brands like Li-Ning, Anta, Xtep and 361 Degree, who leverage strategies such as guochao aesthetics and cultural identity building directly appealing to Gen Y's social image and creativity, is critical.

Deciphering the mechanisms by which loyalty (or the lack thereof) forms within this complex psychological landscape, navigating the gap between high satisfaction and low sharing intention, and leveraging their need for social belonging despite inherent transience, provides unparalleled insights. These insights are essential for Chinese sportswear brands aiming to transcend mere trend adoption and cultivate sustainable, advocacy-driven loyalty among this highly influential, yet enigmatic, consumer segment. Focusing on Gen Y, therefore, addresses the core challenges and opportunities in building lasting brand value in China's competitive market.

2.13 Conceptual Framework

Based on SIT and SET, the explanation of the model of brand loyalty is provided in this section. Some of the constructs from this model include brand experience, brand trust, customer perceived value and self-brand congruity. In addition, consumer-brand identification will mediate the connection between BE, BT, CPV, SBC and BL. Nostalgia will moderate the relationship between CBI and BL. Please refer to Figure 1.4 for details.

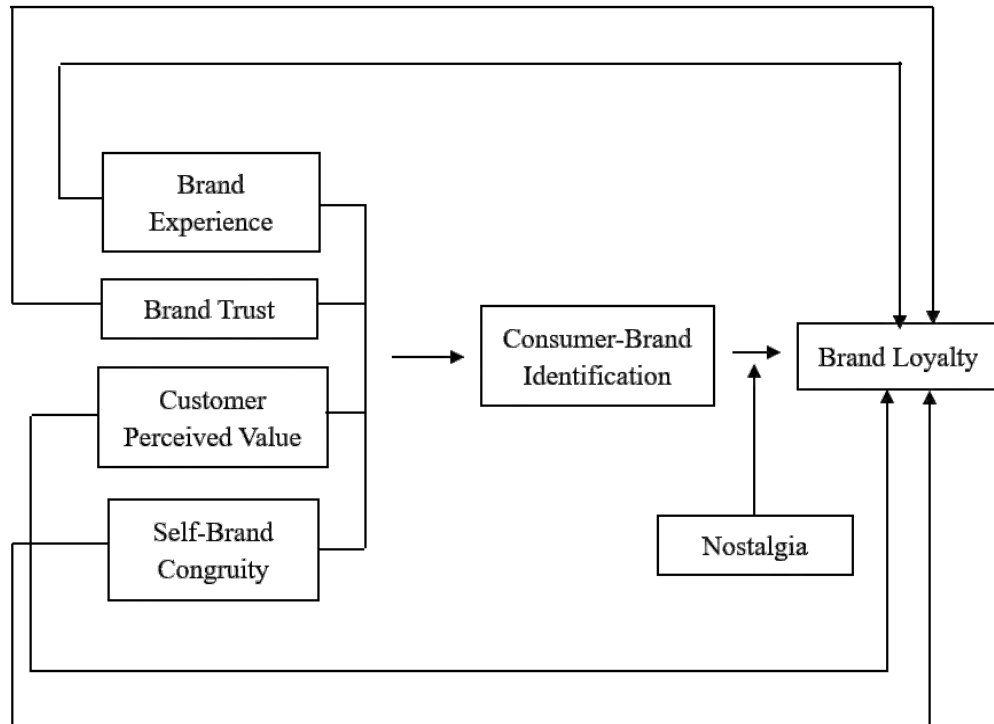


Figure 1.4
The Conceptual Framework of the Study

Note: IV's: Brand Experience (BE) -Brand Loyalty (BL)=H1; BE-Consumer-Brand Identification (CBI)=H2; Brand Trust (BT)-BL=H3; BT-CBI=H4; CBI-BL=H5; Customer Perceived Value (CPV)-BL=H6; CPV-CBI=H7; Self-Brand Congruity-BL=H9. Mediator: CBI mediates IV& DV= H10-H13. Moderator: Nostalgia moderates CBI & BL=H14. DV=Brand Loyalty.

2.14 Research Hypotheses

2.14.1 Brand Experience and Brand Loyalty

Schmitt (1999) asserted the concept of brand experience as a multidimensional construct encompassing five key dimensions: sensory, emotional, cognitive, behavioral, and relational. Brand experience emerges from ongoing interactions between consumers and the brand, engaging them on multiple levels. Each of these dimensions contributes to consumers' holistic perception of the brand, fostering a deeper connection and stronger loyalty. These dimensions of brand experiences are generated through stimuli designed to evoke enthusiasm and enjoyment, which in turn increase consumers' inclination to engage repeatedly with the brand, resulting in

more fulfilling and positive interactions (Ong et al., 2018).

Nevertheless, brand experience is not merely a satisfaction adjudication founded upon past purchases, but also exerts an influence on future loyalty intention (Brakus et al., 2009). Hence, a gratifying brand experience will render consumers more disposed to purchase the brand repetitively and recommend it to others, rather than undergo brand conversion (Yu et al., 2021). Along the same lines, previous studies demonstrated a notable affirmative connection between brand experience and loyalty (Ong et al., 2018). Mostafa and Kasamani (2021) scrutinized that brand experience has a direct and affirmative effect on brand loyalty among smartphone users. Hussein (2018) found that there exists a positive and significant relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty within the context of Indonesian casual dining restaurants.

Kim and Ah Yu (2016) discovered that the affective, cognitive, behavioral, and relational dimensions of brand experiences had significant impacts on brand loyalty; however, the effect of sensory experience on brand loyalty was not significant of branded apps among university students. Anggara et al. (2023) affirmed that customer experience has a direct and positive effect on brand loyalty in the clothing industry. Rini et al. (2024) disclosed that brand experience has a statistically direct and positive effect on brand loyalty in the tourism industry. Al Ghifary and Dellyana (2025) revealed that affective, intellectual, behavioral, and sensory dimensions of brand experiences have direct and significant effect on brand loyalty in clothing industry. Sang and Cuong (2025) found that sensory experience, intellectual experience and behavioral experience have direct and positive impact on brand loyalty. Thus, the hypothesis as follows:

H1: Brand experience is positively related to brand loyalty in Chinese sports brands

industry.

2.14.2 Brand Experience and Consumer-Brand Identification

The enduring and steadfast consumer-brand relationship resides in the fact that brand experience divulges consumers' psychological sense of affiliation with the brand, which constitutes one of the most formidable impediments for consumers to switch brands. Grounded on this vantage point, brand identification is impacted by brand experience (Lin, 2015). To put it differently, consumer identification with a brand is predicated on interaction with the brand. Büyükdağ and Kitapci (2021) probed that a memorable brand experience is one of the catalysts of consumer-brand identification. Stokburger-Sauer et al. (2012) explored that there exists an affirmative and salient correlation between memorable brand experience and consumer-brand identification among German consumers encompassed within four categories: athletic shoes, mobile phones, soft drinks, and grocery stores.

Kumar and Kaushik (2018) found that brand experience is positive linked to consumer-brand identification in tourism industry. Similarly, Harjadi et al. (2023) confirmed that brand experience has a direct and positive effect on brand identification in the cigarette industry. Also, the study of Chen and Liao (2023) confirmed that brand experience has positive and significant impact on brand identification in the smartphone industry in China. Karim et al. (2025) revealed that brand experience has a direct and positive effect on brand identification in banking industry, and brand experience as a multidimensional construct including sensory, affective, intellectual and behavioral experience. Seifollahi and Dehghani Ghahnavieh (2024) examined that sensory experience, effective experience, behavioral and intellectual experience have statistically positive impact on consumer-

brand identification in tourism industry. Henceforth, the hypothesis as follows.

H2: Brand experience is positively related to consumer-brand identification in Chinese sports brands industry.

2.14.3 Brand Trust and Brand Loyalty

Consumers' trust in a brand encompasses their expectation that the brand will consistently fulfill its promises. In marketing, trust is often regarded as the customer's willingness to engage with the brand repeatedly (McKinney & Benson, 2013). Delgado-Ballester and Munuera-Alemán (2001) emphasized that trust is bilateral, involving both beliefs and intentions. Consumers' belief reflects confidence in the brand's promise-keeping, while the brand's intention prioritizes customer interests over its own. Lin and Lee (2012) further asserted that trust represents customers' positive expectations, providing a sense of psychological comfort and assurance toward the brand.

Brand trust, fundamentally defined as the consumer's willingness to rely on a brand and its promises, is widely recognized as a key antecedent predicting brand loyalty (He et al., 2012). This trust stems from the consumer's belief that the brand will fulfill their needs and honor its commitments (Nguyen et al., 2011). When consumers trust a brand, their perceived risk associated with choosing or purchasing that brand is significantly reduced (Lin et al., 2017). This core mechanism of risk reduction is crucial, as it encourages consumers to engage in repeat purchases of the brand's products or services and fosters a willingness to establish long-term stable relationships with the brand (Lin et al., 2017). Hence, theoretically, brand trust lays the psychological foundation for repeat purchasing behavior and enduring commitment—manifested as brand loyalty—by mitigating perceived risk.

A substantial body of empirical research across diverse industries and contexts consistently validates the positive driving effect of brand trust on brand loyalty. For instance, multiple recent studies explicitly confirm that brand trust exerts a significant positive influence on brand loyalty (Attar et al., 2023; Kwon et al., 2021; Kim, Lee & Han, 2023; Moon et al., 2024). This relationship demonstrates not only universality but also holds true within specific sectors: Within the apparel industry (Low et al., 2025) and the sports brands industry (Deng et al., 2025), brand trust has been confirmed as a direct and significant positive predictor of brand loyalty. Based on the robust theoretical foundation and extensive empirical evidence presented above, this study proposes the following hypothesis as follows:

H3: Brand trust is positively related to brand loyalty in Chinese sports brands industry.

2.14.4 Brand Trust and Consumer-Brand Identification

Social identity theory proposed that individuals typically classify themselves as members of specific groups with those who share similar values, attitudes, and behavioral intentions (Torres et al., 2017). According to Neville and Reicher (2011), Reicher and Haslam (2010), and Tyler and Blader (2001), shared social identity cultivates trust, respect, cooperation, mutual aid, and support within groups, culminating in a shift towards intimacy. Based on this view, consumer trust in a brand may affect brand identification. When consumers form a trusting relationship with a brand, they highly value the relationship with the brand and try to maintain it through psychological and emotional commitment to the brand (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2002).

For one thing, social identity theory asserted how consumers identify with retailers

who engage in socially responsible behaviors (Yeh et al., 2016), purchase products and services from such retailers, and build trust with them. Thus, brand identification can be a medium for consumers to prove their sense of belonging to a trusted brand. Similarly, brand identification represents an emotional attachment to the brand, which provides a favorable platform for the development of brand trust (Dunn & Schweitzer, 2005).

For another thing, brand trust confers an eminently elevated degree of certitude with respect to the expected conduct of a brand. It wields a puissant sway in enhancing the allure of a brand's identity and, ultimately, its brand identification. Put differently, when brand trust is instantiated, it intimates that consumers attach considerable import to the brand. The expectancy that brand trust fosters brand identification is additionally buttressed by a substantial number of extant studies which have elicited empirical substantiation in advocacy of this correlation.

Extensive research consistently demonstrates a mutually reinforcing relationship between brand trust and brand identification across diverse consumer sectors. He et al. (2012) identified a significant positive link between these constructs within the mobile phone and skincare industries. This bidirectional association was further supported by Becerra and Badrinarayanan (2013), whose findings indicated brand trust exerts a direct positive influence on brand identification in the clothing and automotive sectors. Subsequent studies corroborate this core relationship: Rather (2017) confirmed its presence in hospitality, Min et al. (2023) established a statistically significant positive effect of trust on identification, and Huang et al. (2024) observed trust's direct positive impact on consumer identification within accommodation platforms.

More recently, Kim, Ko and Choi (2024) again verified the direct positive effect of

brand trust on brand identification. Reinforcing this established pattern, Aurelia and Tajuddien (2025) specifically asserted that brand trust has a direct positive impact on brand identification among Apple users in Indonesia. Therefore, the hypothesis as follows:

H4: Brand trust is positively related to consumer-brand identification in Chinese sports brands industry.

2.14.5 Consumer-Brand Identification and Brand Loyalty

The positive relationship between consumer-brand identification and behavioral intention has been supported in previous studies. For instance, scholars have identified a positive relationship between CBI and brand loyalty, a connection that enhances corporate financial performance and supports long-term organizational success. The marketing literature extensively endorses the concept that consumer identification with a brand fosters a sustained, enduring preference for a company's products, contributing to stable and profitable consumer relationships over time (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2003). Additionally, Lam et al. (2010) showed that CBI is an obstacle for consumers to switch brands. Therefore, CBI can be considered a predictor of brand loyalty, which they define as a deep-rooted intention to consistently patronize or purchase a preferred brand in the future.

Scholarly consensus indicates that consumer-brand identification (CBI) fundamentally stimulates consumer-brand relationships, serving as a critical driver of favorable consumer attitudes and behaviors. As established by Davvetas and Diamantopoulos (2017), this identification process fosters relational bonds that ultimately manifest as brand loyalty. Consequently, empirical research consistently confirms a significant positive correlation between CBI and brand loyalty (So et al.,

2013), positioning identification as a foundational antecedent to loyal consumer-brand relationships.

Robust cross-industry evidence substantiates CBI's direct influence on brand loyalty. Recent investigations demonstrate this causal linkage in manufacturing (Salim et al., 2024), tobacco products (Harjadi et al., 2023), aviation services (Gurler, 2025), cosmetics (Lah et al., 2025), and general consumption contexts (Hawkins et al., 2024). Beyond direct effects, CBI further operates as a mediator between relational constructs like perceived value and customer loyalty (Gurler, 2025). Collectively, these findings confirm CBI's universal role in predicting brand loyalty, leading to the following hypothesis as follows:

H5: Consumer-brand identification is positively related to brand loyalty in Chinese sports brands industry.

2.14.6 Customer Perceived Value and Brand Loyalty

Research has revealed that consumers are less likely to switch brands if they better understand the benefits they receive and the costs they pay. Sirdeshmukh et al. (2002) argued that customers who gain value from the organization have a greater tendency to be loyal to the organization. Similarly, customer perceived value plays an important role in determining brand loyalty, so customers are more willing to recommend brands to others and will not actively search for information about alternative brands.

Extensive empirical research consistently establishes perceived value as a fundamental driver of brand loyalty. He et al. (2012) initially confirmed this positive linkage, while Li et al. (2012) further elucidated how value perceptions strengthen brand identification mechanisms that enhance consumer commitment. Subsequent

investigations across diverse contexts have reinforced this relationship: Nikhashemi et al. (2016) demonstrated significant correlation in retail settings, and Ashraf et al. (2018) empirically validated this connection within service industries including hospitality, education, healthcare, and banking.

Contemporary studies across multiple sectors persistently confirm the robust influence of perceived value on loyalty outcomes. Recent evidence substantiates this relationship among mall consumers (Atulkar, 2020), tourism services (Phi et al., 2024), ride-hailing platforms (Yesitadewi & Widodo, 2024), automotive markets (Rehman et al., 2025), and sports beverage consumption (Kaewkhav et al., 2023). This comprehensive body of research, spanning geographical and industrial boundaries, collectively affirms perceived value's universal role as a significant loyalty predictor. Based on this empirical convergence, the hypothesis as follows:

H6: Customer perceived value is positively related to brand loyalty in Chinese sports brands industry.

2.14.7 Customer Perceived Value and Consumer-Brand Identification

Previous articles revealed that price and quality can determine customer perceived value through enhanced customer identification. Some researchers suggested that personal support and organizational identity are mutually reinforcing processes (Ashforth et al., 2008). Similarly, Social identity theory pointed out that identification of an organization is attributed to the satisfaction of an individual's important needs, that is, the individual is being able to obtain value from the group. When customers have a greater sense of identification with the company or brand, they may be more satisfied with the product (Papista & Dimitriadis, 2012). He et al. (2012) pointed out that consumers' interest in a particular brand stems from their identification with the brand. When the customer has a higher degree of

identification with the brand, the value exchange association with the favorite brand is more likely to meet the needs of both parties.

Perceived value fundamentally shapes consumer-brand identification (CBI) through its influence on emotional and cognitive brand attachments. He et al. (2012) established that identification manifests as emotional attachment, prompting favorable brand evaluations. This relationship is further evidenced by Abedi and Azma's (2019) findings in the food industry, where perceived value significantly strengthens brand identity. Chen and Lin (2019) extended this understanding by demonstrating how value perceptions positively correlate with social identification in community contexts, confirming value's transformative impact on consumer attitudes and behaviors.

Empirical research consistently identifies hedonic and utilitarian value dimensions as critical mediators in identification formation. Li et al. (2024) demonstrated that both emotional value (affective benefits) and functional value (practical utility) mediate the relationship between brand globalness/localness perceptions and identification. Similarly, Dang - Van et al. (2023) confirmed this dual mediation pathway in hospitality contexts, where hedonic value (experiential enjoyment) and utilitarian value (practical efficiency) mediate how green practices and service innovations drive consumer-brand identification. These robust findings collectively validate the mediating roles of experiential and functional value dimensions.

The identification-enhancing function of perceived value operates universally across diverse sectors. Xi et al. (2022) confirmed its impact on social and personal identity in luxury branding, while Qian and Li (2024) established its statistical effect on place identity in tourism. This empirical convergence across industries substantiates perceived value's fundamental role in forging consumer-brand identification. Based

on this evidence, the hypothesis as follows:

H7: Customer perceived value is positively related to consumer-brand identification in Chinese sports brands industry.

2.14.8 Self-Brand Congruity and Brand Loyalty

Self-brand congruity is an indicator to measure the similarity between self and brand, and can be used to predict brand loyalty (Sirgy, 1982; Sirgy et al. 1991). The closer consumers' perceived brand personality is to their self-image, the more positive consumers' attitudes towards the brand will be. Scholars believed this is because consumers strive to maintain cognitive consistency in their beliefs and behaviors (Sung & Choi, 2012). Therefore, self-congruity is shown to have a significant impact on consumer attitudes and behaviors (Mazodier & Merunka, 2012). In addition, self-brand congruity has two dimensions: brand personality and corporate social responsibility congruity.

The influence of brand personality on brand loyalty has been studied extensively (Choi et al., 2017; Sop & Kozak, 2019). For instance, a conceptual study by Mabkhot and Shaari (2015) proposed that there is a link between brand personality and brand loyalty. Previous articles demonstrated that CSR influences loyalty either directly or indirectly. Gürlek et al. (2017) accentuated that actively partaking in social responsibility undertakings can assist companies in attaining more loyal clientele. Analogously, Rivera et al. (2019) scrutinized that CSR has an affirmative effect on brand loyalty among Spanish consumers. CSR has been verified to be a utilitarian instrument for businesses to concentrate on establishing and preserving customer loyalty (Fandos-Roig et al., 2021). Additionally, Akbari et al. (2019) disclosed that CSR has a substantive impact on brand loyalty. Le et al. (2021) investigated that CSR has a positive and significant correlation with brand loyalty among small and

medium-sized enterprises.

Robust empirical evidence consistently positions self-congruity as a significant antecedent of consumer-brand relationships. Vinh (2023) confirmed its positive effect on brand loyalty in tourism contexts, while Zhang (2022) demonstrated parallel outcomes in the apparel sector. Contemporary research further substantiates this relationship across consumer segments: Günay (2025) established self-congruity's direct influence on brand loyalty, and Fernandes et al. (2024) extended these findings by revealing its impact on behavioral intentions—specifically enhancing purchase and recommendation likelihood among young consumers. This cross-contextual validation supports the following hypothesis:

H8: Self-brand congruity is positively related to brand loyalty in Chinese sports brands industry.

2.14.9 Self-Brand Congruity and Consumer-Brand Identification

Self-brand congruity facilitates a stronger sense of brand identification by aligning the consumer's self-concept with the brand (Lam et al., 2013). Sirgy et al. (2016) conceptualize self-brand congruity as both a process and outcome of psychological involvement, where consumers match their self-image with brand personality or user image. This congruence enhances consumer identification. When individuals perceive a brand as reflective of their identity, they are more likely to resonate with it (Palmer et al., 2013). Positive external perceptions of the brand further strengthen this identification (Hwang & Han, 2014). For example, Apple users often see their creative, innovative personas reflected in the brand, which solidifies their identification.

Theoretical and empirical evidence consistently establishes self-congruity as a

foundational antecedent of consumer-brand identification (CBI). Sihvonen (2019) conceptualizes self-brand congruity as a direct driver of identification through similarity assessment mechanisms. This relationship is theoretically anchored in Bhattacharya and Sen's (2003) framework positioning CBI as the mediator between congruity and consumer behavior. Empirical validations further confirm this causal linkage: Lam et al. (2013) identified congruity as a CBI antecedent in mobile technology contexts, while Büyükdağ and Kitapci (2021) demonstrated its significant positive impact across sectors.

Contemporary research continues to substantiate this relationship, that is, self-congruity can boost brand identification (Hassan & Bassiony, 2025). For instance, Ijaz et al. (2024) confirmed the effect among hygiene product consumers. Though Liu et al. (2025) examined behavioral outcomes, their finding pointed out that self-congruity drives positive word-of-mouth in food tourism inherently reflects strengthened identification – as brand advocacy constitutes a recognized behavioral manifestation of CBI (Foroudi et al., 2022). This cumulative evidence supports the following hypothesis:

H9: Self-brand congruity is positively related to consumer-brand identification in Chinese sports brands industry.

2.14.10 The Mediation Effect of Consumer-Brand Identification on the Connection Between Brand Experience, Brand Trust, Customer Perceived Value and Self-Brand Congruity on Loyalty Relationships

Chang and Chieng (2006) proved that both personal experience (sense, feel and think) and shared experience (act and relate) affected the relationship between consumers and brands. Moreover, as unique and beneficial brand experiences yield pleasing results which means consumers tend to build long-term relationships with such

brands through repeated brand experience. A memorable brand experience created a strong emotional bond between the consumer and the brand by meeting consumer's need for self-reference and self-definition to gain brand identification. Kumar and Kaushik (2020) revealed the mediating effect of brand identification on the link between brand experience and consumer-brand relationship.

Chaudhuri and Holbrook (2002) argued that trust can enhance a brand's value by fostering a meaningful relationship between consumers and the brand. To sustain this relationship, consumers demonstrate psychological and emotional commitment, deepening their attachment. Brand identification serves as an effective means of expressing this commitment, especially when consumers trust the brand (Becerra & Badrinarayanan, 2013). According to Bhattacharya and Sen (2003), a brand that cultivates a positive social identity is more likely to foster brand identification among consumers. Trust in a brand can therefore be a key predictor of brand identification, as it provides consumers with confidence in the brand's reliability and consistency in meeting expectations. By aligning themselves with trusted brands that possess desirable qualities, consumers are motivated to shape their self-image in a similar, positive light.

Hence, brand identification is strengthened when consumers demonstrate trust in a brand by believing that its attributes are relevant and socially valuable (Ahearne et al., 2005). In addition, He et al. (2012) revealed that brand trust mediated the effect of brand identification on brand loyalty in mobile phone and skincare industry. Kumar and Kaushik (2017) verified the relationship between trust and brand loyalty mediated by brand identification in tourism industry.

Consumer-brand relationship has several components such as: Brand attachment, brand identification, and brand trust. Khamitov et al. (2019) revealed that each can be

seen as a significant predictor of loyalty in existing research, and each is "core" to the CBR field. Identification is an indicator of the strength of consumer-brand relationship expressed through in-role and extra-role behaviours (Du et al. 2007). Dimitriadis and Papista (2010) proposed a framework to apply consumer-brand identification as a mediator on the link between consumer-brand relationship quality and outcomes including word-of-mouth, resilience and so on, while this study did not receive empirical results. Gontur et al. (2022) investigated consumer-brand identification as a mediator on the connection between perceived quality and customer loyalty in hotel industry.

Kumar and Kaushik (2020) claimed that consumers who have a high degree of identification with the brand are in a state of self-expression that creates a lasting relationship with the brand. Some empirical results also indicated that consumer-brand identification can also lead to brand pride, brand awareness, and brand loyalty (Coelho et al., 2018; Stokburger-Sauer et al., 2012). Brand loyalty is the behavioral result of consumers' strong identification with a certain brand based on the same values and personality of the brand. The same commonalities between consumers and brands enhances brand attitudes and promote brand trust and loyalty (Coelho et al., 2018). Stokburger-Sauer et al. (2012) proposed that a strong brand in the eyes of customers necessarily means that it has a close relationship with the brand, which implies a fit between the brand and consumer self-identity. The level of consumer-brand identification depends on consumer-brand relationship.

Empirical scholarship confirms that consumer-brand identification (CBI) operates as a pivotal psychological mechanism through which value alignment cultivates brand loyalty. This mediating pathway is most directly exemplified by Abd Aziz and Ngah's (2019) investigation within the cosmetics sector, where perceived value was shown to enhance loyalty by strengthening brand identification. This foundational

association is further elucidated by Rather et al. (2018), whose hospitality industry research demonstrated that value congruity drives loyalty outcomes via CBI-mediated processes. Complementing these insights, Gurler's (2025) findings in the airline industry underscored CBI's mediating role between service quality—a critical dimension of value—and customer loyalty.

Researchers argued that the alignment, or congruity, between a consumer's values and a brand's values can foster positive psychological outcomes such as increased trust, satisfaction, and favorable behavioral intentions (Toteva et al., 2024). This perceived fit strengthens consumer-brand identification, particularly when the brand's personality resonates with the consumer's self-concept (Rather & Camilleri, 2019). Furthermore, when consumers identify closely with their favorite brands, they tend to exhibit higher satisfaction and brand loyalty (Lee & Jeong, 2014). This connection deepens when the brand's values mirror the consumer's, leading to stronger identification and a higher likelihood of loyalty (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2003; Michel et al., 2022; Rather & Camilleri, 2019; Sihvonen, 2019). Brands that align with consumers' personal values and self-image create a reinforcing cycle, where emotional ties to the brand encourage ongoing engagement and commitment. The hypotheses as follows:

H10: Consumer-brand identification mediates the relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty in Chinese sports brands industry.

H11: Consumer-brand identification mediates the relationship between brand trust and brand loyalty in Chinese sports brands industry.

H12: Consumer-brand identification mediates the relationship between customer perceived value and brand loyalty in Chinese sports brands industry.

H13: Consumer-brand identification mediates the relationship between self-brand congruity and brand loyalty in Chinese sports brands industry.

2.14.11 The Moderation Effect of Nostalgia on the Connection Between Consumer-Brand Identification and Brand Loyalty

Some previous studies have verified the role of consumer-brand identification in brand loyalty in different research contexts, but the empirical results of these studies are contradictory. For example, some articles revealed that the effect of consumer-brand identification on brand loyalty is not significant (Alnawas & Altarifi, 2016; So et al., 2013; Tajuddin et al., 2018). While other studies indicated that CBI was significant in explaining brand loyalty directly (Popp & Woratschek, 2017; Salim et al., 2024).

Furthermore, Stokburger-Sauer and Teichmann (2014) proposed that when enterprises or brands provide consumers with more opportunities to express themselves or meet their needs, consumers are more likely to place themselves in the social structure constructed by enterprises. Fans with a higher degree of embeddedness will increase the opportunities for interaction and communication between fans and teams, which will have common memories, such as nostalgia. They examined that nostalgia is one of antecedents of consumer-brand identification which had a direct and significant effect on behavioral loyalty. Batcho (2007) stressed that nostalgia promoted a sense of connection with others in order to strengthen ties with the community. Wildschut et al. (2010) also suggested that nostalgia strengthens social bonds. In this sense, nostalgia is seen as a powerful stimulus to influence consumer's loyalty (Leong et al., 2015).

Nostalgia functions as a critical moderator enhancing the relationship between attitudinal determinants and behavioral intentions. Empirical research consistently recommends incorporating this construct given its capacity to amplify positive behavioral outcomes (Kremer et al., 2022; Shields & Johnson, 2016b). Specifically, nostalgia strengthens how cognitive and affective evaluations translate into behavioral intentions (Gu et al., 2021), operating as a catalytic mechanism that intensifies intention formation. While organizational studies demonstrate nostalgia's

group-level effects in strengthening collective bonds and identity (Gabriel, 1993), its most significant consumer application lies in moderating individual-level attitude-intention linkages, ultimately driving actionable consumer behaviors.

Similarly, Shields and Johnson (2016a) supported that nostalgia is directly related to consumer attitudes and loyalty intentions. They added that the effects of nostalgia on consumer attitudes and behavior tend to be positive. In the same vein, Santini et al. (2023) confirmed that nostalgia enhances consumers' attitudes and behavioral intentions. However, merely a paltry number of studies have empirically probed the effect of nostalgia on consumers' behavioral response (Rhajbal et al., 2017; Kang et al., 2025) vis-à-vis clothing products, specifically sports brands.

Grounded on the aforementioned discussion, deriving from the foregoing cogitations regarding the discordant findings and the part of nostalgia in fortifying the nexus between consumers and the brand, a moderating variable is postulated to temper the correlation between consumer-brand identification and brand loyalty. The hypothesis as follows:

H14: Nostalgia moderates the relationship between consumer-brand identification and brand loyalty in Chinese sports brands industry.

2.15 Hypotheses Summary

Based on the conceptual framework in Chart 1.4, the hypotheses proposed in this study are as follows:

H1: Brand experience is positively related to brand loyalty in Chinese sports brands industry.

H2: Brand experience is positively related to consumer-brand identification in Chinese sports brands industry.

H3: Brand trust is positively related to brand loyalty in Chinese sports brands industry.

H4: Brand trust is positively related to consumer-brand identification in Chinese sports brands industry.

H5: Consumer-brand identification is positively related to brand loyalty in Chinese sports brands industry.

H6: Customer perceived value is positively related to brand loyalty in Chinese sports brands industry.

H7: Customer perceived value is positively related to consumer-brand identification in Chinese sports brands industry.

H8: Self-brand congruity is positively related to brand loyalty in Chinese sports brands industry.

H9: Self-brand congruity is positively related to consumer-brand identification in Chinese sports brands industry.

H10: Consumer-brand identification mediates the relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty in Chinese sports brands industry.

H11: Consumer-brand identification mediates the relationship between brand trust and brand loyalty in Chinese sports brands industry.

H12: Consumer-brand identification mediates the relationship between customer perceived value and brand loyalty in Chinese sports brands industry.

H13: Consumer-brand identification mediates the relationship between self-brand congruity and brand loyalty in Chinese sports brands industry.

H14: Nostalgia moderates the relationship between consumer-brand identification and brand loyalty in Chinese sports brands industry.

2.16 Chapter Summary

This chapter provides a comprehensive examination of the key constructs

underpinning the study, beginning with the independent variables—brand experience, brand trust, customer perceived value, and self-brand congruity—by delineating their definitions, dimensional structures, current research landscape, and identified gaps. It then introduces the dependent variable, brand loyalty, along with the mediating variable, consumer-brand identification, and the moderating variable, nostalgia. Grounded in social identity theory and social exchange theory, the conceptual framework offers a robust theoretical foundation for interpreting the relationships among these variables, particularly in the context of Gen Y consumers’ engagement with local sports brands and “China-chic” cultural trends. These theories facilitate a deeper understanding of the psychological and behavioral mechanisms driving brand loyalty within this distinctive market segment.



CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the methodology applied in the study and details the data analysis process. It includes a discussion on research design, variable measurement, and the sample size chosen for the study. Additionally, it describes the procedures for data collection and the techniques employed for analyzing the data. Finally, the validity and reliability of the research instruments were assessed through a pilot study to ensure accuracy and consistency in the results.

3.2 Research Design

This study is grounded in positivist research philosophy, reflecting an ontological view that social reality exists objectively and can be observed and measured through distinct variables. Epistemologically, an objectivist stance is adopted, asserting that valid knowledge about brand relationships can be systematically acquired through empirical observation, quantification, and statistical analysis, independent of the researcher's subjective interpretation.

Consistent with this philosophical foundation, a deductive research approach was employed. This approach commences with established theoretical propositions and aims to empirically test hypothesized relationships through measurable data. The deductive strategy was selected over an inductive approach because the primary research objective is to verify predefined relationships within an existing conceptual framework, rather than to generate new theory from emergent qualitative data.

To operationalize this deductive strategy, a quantitative methodology was adopted.

This methodological choice aligns with Creswell's (1994) definition of quantitative research as a systematic investigation of social or human issues that involves testing a theory composed of specific variables. These variables are quantified and analyzed through statistical methods to assess the validity of the theoretical predictions. Quantitative methods provide the structured, empirical means required to objectively evaluate the proposed relationships between variables and statistically test the generalizability of the conceptual framework.

For data collection consistent with this deductive-quantitative design, a cross-sectional survey methodology was implemented. This approach reflects Lancaster's (2005) assertion that cross-sectional surveys remain optimal for efficiently sampling respondent views on specific constructs. The design enables simultaneous measurement of all variables in the conceptual framework: independent variables (brand experience, brand trust, customer perceived value, self-brand congruity), dependent variable (brand loyalty), with consumer-brand identification as a mediator and nostalgia moderating the consumer-brand identification-brand loyalty relationship.

Through statistical analysis of the quantified dataset, the hypothesized relationships were objectively tested as measurable phenomena, fulfilling the deductive objective of confirming or refuting the theoretical propositions.

3.3 Sampling Design

3.3.1 Sampling Population

The respondents of this study lived in Jinjiang City, Fujian Province, China, which is located in the southeast of China. Gen Y consumers were born between 1980 and 2000. Jinjiang City is the core base of China's sports shoes and clothing industry,

home to 42 well-known Chinese brands such as Anta, Xtep, 361° and Peak, occupying 9 of the top ten sports brands in the country. By 2024, the scale of Jinjiang's footwear and apparel industry will exceed 300 billion yuan, accounting for nearly 40% of the national sports shoe production, the gross domestic product (GDP) reached 364.745 billion yuan, ranking third among all county-level economies in China (CBN, 2025). The city has formed a complete industrial chain covering research and development, production and sales. This industrial cluster effect has led local consumers to have a significantly higher awareness and frequency of contact with local brands than in other regions.

Precisely. Official Lin Jianming, Deputy Director of Jinjiang's Commerce Bureau, highlighted the city's industrial strength: Jinjiang has developed two industrial clusters exceeding 100 billion yuan each (textiles & apparel, footwear) and five clusters surpassing 10 billion yuan each. Companies from Jinjiang have established 90 overseas branches across 23 countries and regions and completed acquisitions of 43 international brands, solidifying its reputation as a widely acknowledged City of Brands (Jinjiang Municipal People's Government, 2025b).

Jinjiang City is committed to building a well-known sports city brand. Local sports brands enhance popularity by sponsoring sports events and increase residents' participation by hosting various events including basketball and badminton. In 2022, the city's sports industry achieved a total output value of 273.968 billion yuan and an added value of 78.697 billion yuan, accounting for 24.54% of the GDP (Fujian Provincial Bureau of Sports, 2024).

Consequently, Jinjiang's unparalleled integration within the sports industry value chain—from manufacturing and branding to event hosting and sponsorship—establishes it as an exceptionally representative and fertile environment for

investigating consumer-brand relationships within the Chinese sports brands sector. Its concentrated industry dynamics offer critical insights applicable to broader national trends.

Moreover, according to the seventh national census, the permanent resident population of Jinjiang City is 2.091 million (Jinjiang Municipal People's Government, 2025a). More importantly, the average age of Jinjiang's resident population is 35.3 years old, 3.5 years younger than the national average. The proportion of the population aged 15-59 in Jinjiang was 5.4, 6.87 and 8.22% higher than Quanzhou, Fujian province and China, respectively (Jinjiang Economy News, 2021). In other words, the proportion of Gen Y consumers in Jinjiang City is higher than the national average.

Therefore, based on the above analysis, Gen Y consumers in Jinjiang City were selected as the cohort for this study.

3.3.2 Unit of Analysis

In accordance with Zikmund et al. (2013) and Sekaran and Bougie (2010), the analytical unit of any research can be either individual or organizational. Henceforth, the unit of the analysis was individual. That is to say, data were garnered from customers in Jinjiang city of Fujian province in China. According to Hair et al (2010), it can be the individuals involved or an organization. The individual is considered the primary unit of analysis, which can manifest in various forms such as social interactions or combinations of organizations and individuals. In this study, the analysis unit specifically focuses on sports brand consumers. The study examines individual factors including brand experience, brand trust, customer perceived value, self-brand congruity and consumer-brand identification, nostalgia, and brand loyalty.

3.3.3 Sample Size of Determination

This study adhered to established guidelines for determining sample size. Krejcie and Morgan (1970) proposed a widely accepted method for calculating minimum sample size in sociological research, particularly for populations exceeding 1,000,000, recommending an optimal sample size of 384. Delice (2001) further indicated that sample sizes ranging from 30 to 500 are generally considered adequate at the 5% confidence level. Nongkynrih (2012) highlighted that to account for potential invalid responses, researchers typically include an additional 10-15% when calculating the required sample size.

Precisely. Using 500 as a conservative baseline and applying the recommended 10–15% buffer for invalid responses yields a target range of 550-575 questionnaires for distribution. The final sample size for this study was 558, which complies with this calculated range, meets the standards cited, and provides sufficient statistical power for Partial Least Squares analysis.

Regarding the total sample size, Ahmad and Halim (2017) indicated that a sample size of 500 is sufficient for complex models containing 7 variables. The sample of 558 exceeds this threshold, enabling it to address challenges posed by low communality or model complexity. Furthermore, Osborne and Costello (2004) and Comfrey and Lee (1992) asserted that sample size of 500 as very good. Clearly, 558 falls within this high-quality range, meeting the fundamental requirement for large samples in Structural Equation Modeling (SEM).

In terms of the participant-to-item ratio, this study includes 57 items. With a sample of 558, the ratio is approximately 9.8:1. This ratio approaches the ideal standard of 10:1 commonly recommended by both sources. Ahmad and Halim (2017) emphasize that this ratio is crucial for ensuring model stability, while Osborne and Costello

(2004) confirm that a higher participant-to-item ratio can effectively reduce errors (such as cross-loadings and parameter estimation bias), particularly when the factor structure is complex.

In conclusion, the sample size of 558 satisfies both the high-quality standard for total sample size and approaches the ideal participant-to-item ratio, fully supporting the requirements for SEM analysis in this study.

3.3.4 Sampling Technique

This study collected data through a self-administered survey tool (questionnaire), that is, the questionnaire will be distributed to consumers living in Jinjiang City, Fujian Province. The advantages of questionnaire survey method are low cost, time and energy efficiency (Sekaran & Bougie, 2013). For this study, mall-intercept sampling was exercised to identify the sample. One way is to conduct regular mall intercept. In the process of interception, researchers not only collect questionnaires, but also listen to the respondents' views about purchasing local sports brands. From a technical perspective, mall intercept is a data collection method frequently used by marketers. That is, researchers intercept samples of pedestrians passing by in the mall and ask them if they are willing to participate in a survey. The agreed interviewees either completed the survey on the spot or were taken to the designated place for interview.

Considering the specific sampling method. This study employed probability sampling (random sampling) as its foundational approach. This methodology ensures every unit in the population has a known, non-zero probability of selection. This principle minimizes selection bias, enhances sample representativeness, and permits valid statistical inference – essential for the reliability and generalizability of findings (Etikan & Bala, 2017).

The specific sampling strategy integrates multi-stage sampling (specifically utilizing cluster sampling) and systematic sampling, selected for the following reasons: A core challenge was the absence of a feasible, comprehensive sampling frame listing all potential shoppers within the target population across Jinjiang's central district, a common issue in social science research (Babbie, 1990). Multi-stage cluster sampling was consequently adopted as the primary strategy (Cooper & Schindler, 2006; Zikmund et al., 2013).

Its suitability stems from: Eliminating the need for a complete individual-level sampling frame by employing sequential sampling stages (e.g., sampling groups first, then individuals within groups). Offering significant operational efficiency and cost advantages, particularly for large, geographically dispersed populations (Cooper & Schindler, 2006; Etikan & Bala, 2017). Application in this study: Focused on shopping malls as natural clusters. Comprehensive analysis of publicly accessible information (e.g., Dianping.com) confirmed that all five large shopping malls in central Jinjiang were identified. Critically, these five malls encompass all large shopping centers in the target area. Therefore, the entire defined cluster population (all large central Jinjiang malls) was included, effectively conducting a census at this cluster level and ensuring comprehensive coverage.

Systematic sampling was implemented within each selected mall (cluster) for individual shopper selection due to its distinct advantages: Operational Simplicity and Low Cost. It is demonstrably easier and more cost-effective to administer in field settings compared to simple random sampling (Etikan & Bala, 2017). Statistical Efficiency, empirical evidence indicates systematic sampling can yield superior efficiency in variance estimation, required sample size, and data point management relative to simple random sampling (Larson et al., 2019). During the designated

research period, in each shopping mall, the interviewers systematically selected shoppers at predetermined intervals, and samples were drawn from the predetermined population ranging from 1 to N, with sampling intervals being multiples of N (Sekaran & Bougie, 2013). This ensures randomness and coverage.

The Multi-Stage Cluster Sampling Method has been widely applied in brand literature containing brand loyalty, with sample sizes ranging from over 300 to over 1700 (Asiabar & Ghasemi, 2024; Gonu et al., 2024; Hussain et al., 2020; Jatiyananda et al., 2021; Langga et al., 2021; Oke & Aniebo, 2023; Rahim, 2016). Therefore, it can be inferred that this sampling method is appropriate to be applied in this study.

Precisely. The cluster sampling technique was employed to separate Jinjiang into five regions based on geographical regions (Sedgwick, 2015); Northern Region, Central Region, Southern Region, Western Region and Eastern Region. As the list of all shopping centers in Jinjiang is not available, randomly selecting different areas helps to reduce the cost of research (Acharya et al., 2013). Then, one smaller area, generally referred to as a sub-district, was picked from these locations.

In the second stage clustering, the central region is clustered into four sub-districts according to its different streets (Qingyang Street, Meiling Street, Xiyuan Street, Luoshan Street). Therefore, the central region with the highest population density is chosen to account for 20% of the total population (Statistics of Jinjiang, 2022). Finally, five shopping malls were chosen as the smallest research area from the sub-districts selected. Five shopping malls were selected randomly based on its total floor area. Data on the number of shopping centers in each area of Jinjiang is unavailable, but these five shopping centers in the central region can almost cover all the large and medium-sized shopping centers in Jinjiang City and are the shopping places that the residents of Jinjiang visit (China Daily, 2015).

In addition, all five shopping malls have physical stores of local sports brands. The questionnaires collected in this study covered five large and medium-sized shopping centers in Jinjiang City. The number of questionnaires distributed was calculated based on the commercial area of these five shopping centers. The specific process is as follows:

Table 1.3
Questionnaire Distribution

Shopping mall	Commercial area (million square meters)	The proportion of each shopping center	Allocate the number of questionnaires
Jinjiang Wanda Plaza	20.26	$20.26/72.76=27.8\%$ $558*27.8\%=155$	155
Jinjiang SM City Square	17.5	$17.5/72.76=24.1\%$ $558*24.1\%=135$	135
Jinjiang Powerlong City Square	12	$12/72.76=16.5\%$ $558*16.5\%=92$	92
Jinjiang Wuyue Square	12	$12/72.76=16.5\%$ $558*16.5\%=92$	92
Jinjiang Sunlight Time Square	11	$11/72.76=15.1\%$ $558*15.1\%=84$	84
	72.76		558

Source: The official websites of various shopping malls (2025)

Finally. Given its cost-effectiveness and the fact that systematic random sampling has been widely employed in brand and customer loyalty research—with empirical validation across diverse industries (Alkhawaldeh, 2018; Chinomona & Maziriri, 2017; Eid, 2015; Onojaefe & Nhepera, 2017; Saha & Ali, 2024; Tee, 2022)—this study adopted the systematic sampling method. The researchers conducted a questionnaire survey on every 5 consumers passing by the collection site to minimize sampling bias (Hair et al., 2008). When selected respondent showed reluctance to complete the questionnaire, the researchers would approach to the next respondent. In addition, in order to reach the respondents quickly, the questionnaire was sent face-to-face (Lancaster, 2005).

3.4 Data Collection of Procedure

3.4.1 Operational Definition/Variable Measurements and Instrumentation

This chapter mainly focuses on the application of variables. In addition, it also emphasizes the measurement of variables adapted or adopted from previous studies.

3.4.2 Brand Experience

A total of ten items were used to analyze brand experience. These items were measured using a 7-point Likert scale, where 1 = strongly disagree and 7 = strongly agree. All scale entries were adapted from Nysveen et al. (2013) and Ding and Tseng (2015). To sum up, the scale items are as follows:

Table 1.4
Items Used to Measure Brand Experience

Dimension	Items	Source	Adopt/ Adapt
Sensory	I have a strong sensory impression of local sports brands.	Nysveen, Pedersen & Skard (2013)	Adapt
	I have interesting sensory experiences on local sports brands.		Adapt
Affective	I have strong emotions for local sports brands.	Ding & Tseng (2015)	Adapt
	I am often emotionally moved by local sports brands.		Adapt
Cognitive	Buying local sports brands can motivate me think about exercise habits.		Adapt
	Being a customer of local sports brands stimulate my curiosity about product functions.		Adapt
Behavioral	Local sports brands make me think about my lifestyle.	Ding & Tseng (2015)	Adapt
	Local sports brands remind me of activities which are being able to enhance my health that I can engage in.		Adapt
Social	I can relate to others by sharing my experience of using local sports brands.		Adapt

Table 1.4 (Continued)

When I use local sports brands, I don't feel left alone because we are all part of a group that likes to purchase local products.	Nysveen, Pedersen & Skard (2013)	Adapt
---	----------------------------------	-------

3.4.3 Brand Trust

A total of seven items were used to analyze brand trust. These items were measured using a 7-point Likert scale, where 1 = strongly disagree and 7 = strongly agree. All scale entries were adapted from Delgado-Ballester and Munuera-Alemán (2001) and Delgado-Ballester et al. (2003). To sum up, the scale items are as follows:

Table 1.5

Items Used to Measure Brand Trust

No	Items	Source	Adopt/Adapt
1	Local sports brands offer me sports products with a constant quality level.	Delgado-Ballester & Munuera-Alemán, (2001)	Adapted
2	Local sports brands help me to solve any problems I could have with the sports products.		Adapted
3	Local sports brands offer me recommendations and advices on how to make the most of the sports products.		Adapted
4	Local sports brands value me as a consumer of its sports products.		Adapted
5	Local sports brands give me confidence and certainty in the consumption of sports products.	Delgado-Ballester et al., (2003)	Adapted
6	Local sports brands would make any effort to satisfy me.		Adapted
7	I could rely on local sports brands.		Adapted

3.4.4 Customer Perceived Value

A total of fourteen items were used to analyze customer perceived value. These items were measured using a 7-point Likert scale, where 1 = strongly disagree and 7 =

strongly agree. All scale entries were adapted from Sweeney and Soutar (2001). To sum up, the scale items are as follows:

Table 1.6

Items Used to Measure Customer Perceived Value

Dimension	Items	Adopt/Adapt
Quality	Products of local sports brands have consistent quality.	Adapt
	Products of local sports brands are well made.	Adapt
	The quality standards of local sports brands are above average.	Adapt
	Local sports brand's products continue to perform well.	Adapt
Emotional	Local sports brands are those that I would enjoy.	Adapt
	Local sports brands are those that I would feel relaxed about using.	Adapt
Price	Local sports brands would give me pleasure.	Adapt
	The products of local sports brands are reasonably priced.	Adapt
	Local sports brands offer value for money.	Adapt
	Local sports brands are a good product for the price.	Adapt
Social	Local sports brands would help me to feel acceptable.	Adapt
	Local sports brands would improve the way I am perceived.	Adapt
	Local sports brands would make a good impression on others.	Adapt
	Local sports brands would give its owner social approval.	Adapt

3.4.5 Self-Brand Congruity

A total of eleven items were used to analyze self-brand congruity. These items were measured using a 7-point Likert scale, where 1 = strongly disagree and 7 = strongly agree. All scale entries were adapted from Aaker (1997), Gallardo-Vázquez and Sanchez-Hernandez (2014) and Turker (2009). To sum up, the scale items are as follows:

Table 1.7

Items Used to Measure Self-brand Congruity

Dimension	Items	Source	Adopt/ Adapt
Brand personality	I think local sports brands are sincerity (e.g. practical, honest, youthful).	Aaker, (1997).	Adapt
	I think local sports brands are excitement (e.g. trendy, cool, imaginative, up-to-date).		Adapt
	I think local sports brands are competence (e.g. technical, reliable, confident).		Adapt
	I think local sports brands are sophistication (e.g. glamorous, charming).		Adapt
	I think local sports brands are ruggedness (e.g. outdoorsy, tough).		Adapt
CSR	Local sports brands provide full and accurate information about its products to its customers.	Gallardo-Vázquez & Sanchez-Hernandez, (2014)	Adapt
	Local sports brands are responsive to the complaints of its customers.		Adapt
	Local sports brands contribute to campaigns and projects that promote the well-being of the society.		Adapt
	Local sports brands strive to create jobs.	Turker, (2009)	Adapt
	Local sports brands participate in activities which aims to protect and improve the quality of the natural environment.		Adapt
	Local sports brands made financial contributions to charities.		Adapt

3.4.6 Consumer-Brand Identification

A total of five items were used to analyze consumer-brand identification. These items were measured using a 7-point Likert scale, where 1 = strongly disagree and 7 = strongly agree. All scale entries were adapted from Stokburger-Sauer et al. (2012).

To sum up, the scale items are as follows:

Table 1.8
Items Used to Measure Consumer-Brand Identification

No	Items	Adopt/Adapt
1	I feel a strong sense of belonging to local sports brands.	Adapt
2	I identify strongly with local sports brands.	Adapt
3	Local sports brands embody what I believe in.	Adapt
4	Local sports brands are like a part of me.	Adapt
5	Local sports brands have a great deal of personal meaning for me.	Adapt

3.4.7 Nostalgia

A total of four items were used to analyze nostalgia. These items were measured using a 7-point Likert scale, where 1 = strongly disagree and 7 = strongly agree. All scale entries were adapted from Sierra and McQuitty (2007). To sum up, the scale items are as follows:

Table 1.9
Items Used to Measure Nostalgia

No	Items	Adopt/Adapt
1	I would like to retrieve the time period from which local sports brands came because those times are better than present times.	Adapt
2	I want to be part of that time period once again because I would like to grow with local sports brands.	Adapt
3	When I am reminded of the time period from which local sports brands came, I long to revisit that era.	Adapt
4	I wish I could return to the time period from which local sports brands came.	Adapt

3.4.8 Brand Loyalty

A total of six items were used to analyze brand loyalty. These items were measured using a 7-point Likert scale, where 1 = strongly disagree and 7 = strongly agree. All scale entries were adapted from Kim et al. (2001) and Huang (2017). To sum up, the scale items are as follows:

Table 2.0
Items Used to Measure Brand Loyalty

No	Items	Source	Adopt/Adapt
1	I will continue to use local sports brands because I am satisfied with them.	Kim, Han & Park (2001)	Adapt
2	I would buy additional products in local sports brands.		Adapt
3	I will recommend local sports brands to other people.	Huang (2017)	Adapt
4	I prefer the sports brands to others.		Adapt
5	I am willing to pay a higher price to buy local sports brands.	Huang (2017)	Adapt
6	If this sports brand is out of stock, I will wait and refuse any substitutes.		Adapt

3.4.9 Questionnaire Design/Measurement Scale

This chapter consists of two parts. The first part covers demographic variables, including respondents' gender, age, marital status, education level, income and occupation. The second part has 57 items to measure four variables, including 10 items of brand experience, 7 items of brand trust, 14 items of customer perceived value, 11 items of self-brand congruity, 5 items of consumer-brand identification, 4 items of nostalgia, and 6 items of dependent variable brand loyalty.

The Likert scale is a widely used instrument in survey research, particularly within marketing and sociology. When applied to measure respondents' attitudes, its standard format presents a series of statements. Respondents indicate their level of agreement, selecting from options such as "strongly agree," "agree," "neutral," "disagree," and "strongly disagree." This format allows for the measurement of both the direction (agreement/disagreement) and intensity (strong/weak) of attitudes. The Likert scale operates as a summative measure, often treated as possessing interval-level attributes. Its measurement properties, along with its ease of administration and interpretation, have made it highly popular in marketing research. In practice, researchers frequently use individual Likert items in marketing studies (Albaum,

1997). Additionally, parametric statistical methods are applicable to Likert data, even in cases of small sample sizes, unequal variances, and non-normal distributions.

Second. This study rigorously adhered to established ethical principles governing academic research. Prior to data collection, comprehensive measures were implemented to ensure participant rights and welfare were safeguarded. Explicit verbal consent was obtained from all respondents after transparent disclosure of research objectives, data usage protocols, and voluntary participation terms. Participants were assured of unconditional withdrawal rights at any stage without consequence. All collected data were anonymized through coded identifiers, with personally identifiable information permanently segregated from response datasets to guarantee confidentiality. Research procedures received institutional review and aligned with international standards for non-invasive behavioral studies in public settings. These protocols were designed to minimize participant burden while maintaining scientific integrity throughout the investigation.

3.4.10 Pretesting and Pilot Study

Systematic pretesting of the research instruments and procedures was undertaken to refine their quality and feasibility, thereby strengthening the subsequent pilot study. As a result, the following precautions were taken prior to the actual pilot testing of the research project. First, consider the opinions and suggestions from four experts in the relevant fields, two of whom are from UUM and two from Chinese universities. Similarly, specific parts were given to a small group of PhD classmates who were familiar with the study's settings. In fact, these measures have produced astonishingly positive effects. These personnel provided feedback and suggestions, which served to improve the quality of the questionnaire items.

Some adjustments made to the original questionnaire items based on the suggestions

and opinions of experts and respondents include changes to the items. For instance, BP1 changed from “Sincerity (down-to-earth, honest, wholesome).” to “I think local sports brands are sincerity (e.g. practical, honest, youthful).” BP2 changed from “Excitement (trendy, cool, imaginative, up-to-date).” to “I think local sports brands are excitement (e.g. trendy, cool, imaginative, up-to-date).” The remaining items within the brand personality dimension of self-brand congruity were modified by incorporating the phrase “I think local sports brands...” to enhance specificity and align more closely with the respondents' perspectives.

As respondents may not know well about the current situation of some sports brands that actively take corporate responsibility. The CSR5 item was revised from “Local sports brands are in favor of reductions in gas emissions and in the production of wastes, and in favor of recycling materials” to “Local sports brands participate in activities aimed at protecting and improving the quality of the natural environment.” SBC12 “Local sports brands are characterized as having the best quality-to-price ratio.” was deleted as this question is not very relevant to corporate social responsibility.

Some of items of brand experience were adjusted based on advice from experts and some respondents. BE6 changed from “Being a customer of local sports brands stimulate my curiosity” to “Being a customer of local sports brands stimulate my curiosity about product functions.” BE9 changed from “I can relate to other people through local sports brands.” to “I can relate to others by sharing my experience of using local sports brands”. SE10 changed from “When I use local sports brands I do not feel left alone.” to “When I use local sports brands, I don't feel left alone because we are all part of a group that likes to purchase local products.”

The pilot study before the formal research has been confirmed by some scholars

(Hair et al., 2017). This study is mainly a small-scale current study before a large number of sample measurements are carried out. The purpose of this study is to determine the additional information that will improve and perfect the measuring instruments before the main study (Rowley, 2014). This is a way to issue questionnaires to small-scale respondents in order to evaluate the applicability of the required instruments. Therefore, a revised questionnaire has been developed, taking into account all the different comments and ideas received. It was then tested on participants in pilot studies. The researchers administered 66 questionnaires to the respondents, just 50 of which were acceptable for study. As a result, modifications to the instrument were made in response to issues reported during the pilot study.

The next subsection will present the reliability and validity results of the pilot study. The final overall details of the questionnaire can be found in the appendix A of questionnaire.

3.4.11 Reliability and Validity Test

Cronbach's alpha can be used to measure the internal consistency of concepts in a pilot study, in accordance to scholars (Sekaran, 2003). Sekaran (2003) added that questionnaire validity refers to the extent to which the measurement tool or means can precisely gauge the things to be measured, whereas reliability refers to the consistency, stability, and reliability of the test results, which are generally expressed in terms of internal consistency. The greater reliable coefficient, the more consistent, steady, and trustworthy the test results. In his work, Greener (2008) highlighted construct validity, face validity, and internal validity. He did, however, endorse that prior to data analysis, construct validity should be given priority.

3.4.12 Face Validity

Face validity, argued by Kreuger and Neuman (2006), indicates scientific judgement given that the indicators measure the exact constructions. Face validity was developed in this study by identifying the relevant literature for experimentally tested questions linked to the indicators of the present research. Furthermore, the adaptation and adoption questions were validated further by consultants, academics, and some potential respondents to verify that they were thoroughly understood and applied.

3.4.13 Reliability

After considering the questionnaire's validity, the author tested the internal reliability of the amended instruments utilized in this study. According to Kothari (2004a, 2004b), reliability is associated with "the accuracy and precision of the measurement process". To that purpose, all factors' inter-item consistency is verified. When researchers do reliability tests, Nunnally (1978) suggests a Cronbach's alpha value of at least 0.65 or higher to be acceptable.

Therefore, a total of 50 data collected from the respondents was conducted to examine the internal consistency of the refined questionnaire. By using Smartpls, all the constructs' measurements were tested. Table 2.1 showed the summary of the reliability results, which indicated that all the constructs understudied have yielded satisfactory internal consistency.

Table 2.1
Summary of Reliability Study

Constructs	No of items	Cronbach alpha	CR
Brand Loyalty	6	0.859	0.895
Brand Experience	10	0.915	0.930
Brand Trust	7	0.869	0.898
Customer Perceived Value	14	0.944	0.951
Self-Brand Congruity	11	0.915	0.928
Consumer-Brand Identification	5	0.882	0.914
Nostalgia	4	0.883	0.917

3.5 Evaluation of Measurement Model

In this research, SPSS and SmartPLS were employed for the analysis of the collected data, thereby obtaining empirical outcomes. Prior to the inference analysis, SPSS was utilized to undertake tests on response rates, respondent profiles, and data screening for various questions, such as response bias, missing data analysis, and multicollinearity tests. PLS-SEM is a causal modelling approach designed to maximize the explanatory variance of the relevant underlying constructs, also referred to as PLS path modelling, is one of the most prevalently utilized multivariate data analysis methods by scholars in business and social science (Memon et al., 2021).

On this basis, the structural equation model of this study is segmented into two processes. The first is the structural model analysis, frequently denominated as the internal model, which demonstrates the relationships (paths) among the underlying structures. The second process encompasses measurement models, also known as external models. The measurement model incorporates a one-way predictive relationship between each potential structure and its associated observed index (Hair et al., 2011).

SmartPLS serves as a graphical user interface software specifically designed for Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). PLS-SEM is a robust statistical technique particularly suited for analyzing complex models comprising multiple indicators and interrelated constructs (Hair et al., 2017). According to Chin (2010), models comprising 50 or more measurement items are categorized as complex. In the context of this study, the measurement items total 57, which justifies the selection of PLS-SEM for model estimation.

Furthermore, PLS-SEM is particularly advantageous due to its statistical robustness

when dealing with data exhibiting normal or non-normal distribution characteristics. However, certain data-related issues, such as the presence of influential outliers and multicollinearity among variables, can significantly affect the outcomes of Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression within the PLS-SEM framework. Therefore, it is imperative to thoroughly evaluate and address these issues to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the results (Hair et al., 2017).

It aims to assess the measurement model, construct validity, internal consistency reliabilities, convergent validity, and discriminant validity. In addition, higher-order models (Cheah et al., 2019), mediation, moderation (Hair et al., 2022). SmartPLS fully supports, if desired, conducting a confirmatory composite analysis (Hair et al., 2020). The software provides additional algorithms to help understand and model composite based models, such as advanced bootstrapping (Hair et al., 2022).

3.5.1 Data Analytical Procedure

Validity and reliability constitute fundamental criteria for evaluating the measurement quality of research instruments in social sciences. Validity pertains to the accuracy with which an instrument captures its intended construct, while reliability assesses the consistency of measurements across contexts and time. To rigorously operationalize these criteria, this study employed exploratory factor analysis (EFA) using SPSS 26 and SmartPLS 3 software to refine the measurement model prior to assessing psychometric properties.

The exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was systematically executed through sequential analytical stages. Initial factorability was assessed in SPSS 26, where sampling adequacy was confirmed via Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin ($KMO > 0.80$) and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity ($p < .001$), while Common Method Variance (CMV) was evaluated. The measurement model was then refined iteratively in SmartPLS 3.0

through diagnostic examination of standardized factor loadings and cross-loadings, applying stringent retention criteria: (1) indicators with loadings < 0.50 were eliminated (Hair et al., 2017), and (2) items exhibiting cross-loadings > 0.40 on competing factors underwent theoretical justification review. Finally, internal consistency reliability was validated in SPSS 26, with Cronbach's α coefficients ≥ 0.70 establishing scale robustness (Hair et al., 2014).

Regarding validity, Peter's (1981) taxonomy recognizes multiple forms including convergent and discriminant validity. Consistent with Greener's (2008) emphasis on foundational validation, this study prioritized: Construct validity established through EFA-driven factor structure alignment. Convergent validity confirmed via average variance extracted (AVE). Discriminant validity assessed using Fornell-Larcker criterion and HTMT ratios. This integrated approach—combining SmartPLS-driven EFA with established psychometric thresholds—ensured robust measurement properties before proceeding to structural model analysis.

3.5.2 Construct Validity

Structural verification necessitates a dual assessment of measurement quality and theoretical foundations, with construct validity serving as its cornerstone. Construct validity represents the extent to which a measurement instrument accurately captures the theoretical concept (construct) it is designed to measure. Informed by Campbell and Fiske's (1959) framework, this validity is evaluated through the simultaneous examination of three critical elements: Convergent Validity (the degree to which indicators theoretically associated with the same construct demonstrate strong intercorrelations, empirically confirmed through high and significant factor loadings in both SPSS 26 and SmartPLS 3 analyses).

Discriminant Validity (the extent to which distinct constructs are empirically differentiable, assessed through cross-loading examination and specific statistical tests within SmartPLS 3), and the Influence of Method Variance (the potential impact of the measurement methodology itself on the observed relationships among constructs). Consistent with Hair et al.'s (2017) PLS-SEM guidelines, factor loadings exceeding 0.50 are considered significant. This study rigorously evaluates the measurement model through: Indicator Reliability: Testing factor loadings to ensure items strongly relate to their target constructs. Internal Consistency: Calculating composite reliability (construct stability) and average variance extracted (AVE) (convergent validity). Discriminant Validity: Analyzing cross-loadings to verify constructs are empirically distinct. This integrated approach ensures the measurement model robustly captures theoretical concepts before testing structural relationships.

3.5.3 Convergent Validity

Convergent validity refers to the degree to which the score of a formally measured construct is related to the score of another construct representing the same concept. Two important factors need to be considered when establishing convergent validity; indicator reliability and average variance extraction (AVE). Reliability of indicators means that the external load of all indicators should be significant and greater than 0.7. Relatively, AVE describes the average square load of all indicators related to the structure, also known as commonality. In order to establish convergent validity, AVE value should be 0.50 or higher. Logically, AVE higher than 0.50 indicates that, on average, this structure explains more than half of its indicator variance, so convergent validity is established.

3.5.4 Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity assesses the degree to which a construct is distinct from other

constructs, measuring divergent concepts. This is typically determined by analyzing correlations between potentially overlapping measures. In this model, items are expected to load strongly on their designated constructs, with the average variance shared between each construct and its own indicators surpassing the variance it shares with other constructs. Once the reliability and validity of the measurement model are confirmed, the next stage involves assessing the structural relationships according to the hypotheses established in the inner model evaluation.

The purpose of structural model evaluation is to perform hypothesis testing, including evaluating the relationship between latent structures in the structural model. In PLS-SEM, hypothesis testing of the structural model is carried out by running algorithms and bootstrapping. Since PLS-SEM has no hypothesis on normal distribution data, it relies on a nonparametric bootstrap procedure to perform a significance test (Hair et al., 2014). Bootstrapping is a resampling technique in which a large number of subsamples (with substitutions) are randomly selected from the sampling population to estimate the model. By doing so, a large number of random subsamples (500 or more) can be used to calculate the standard error of the estimate and then determine the t value. Specifically, collinearity assessment, path coefficients significance (β), level of the R-squared values (R^2), effect size (f^2) and predictive relevance of the model (Q^2) were assessed as suggested by Hair et al. (2014).

3.5.5 Collinearity Assessment

The initial step in evaluating the model is to check for potential multicollinearity issues, where high correlations exist among two or more predictor constructs. This is assessed using the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF), a measure representing the reciprocal of tolerance (Hair et al., 2014). A VIF value under 10 is generally deemed acceptable, indicating minimal collinearity risk, as outlined by Sarstedt and Mooi

(2014) and Sekaran and Bougie (2013). Maintaining a low VIF score is essential to ensure each predictor contributes unique information to the model, enhancing the precision and reliability of the analysis. The lower the VIF, the less redundancy in predictor constructs, which facilitates a more accurate assessment of relationships within the model.

3.5.6 Path Coefficients Significance

The second evaluation of structural models is the relationship in various constructs or path coefficient. On the basis of the hypothesis relationship, the path coefficient estimation describes the strength of the relationship. The standardized range of path coefficient estimation is $-1 \sim +1$, and the value close to $+1$ indicates a strong positive correlation. In contrast, the estimated path coefficients show that a value close to -1 represents a strong negative correlation. The estimated coefficients close to zero indicate that the relationship is weak and usually not significant.

The significance of a coefficient is determined by the standard error obtained from bootstrapping, where it allows t values to be calculated. The bootstrap standard error allows the calculation of empirical t values. Therefore, in this study, the bootstrapping process is helpful to estimate the significance of the path coefficient between brand experience, brand trust, customer perceived value, self-brand congruity and brand loyalty, and the direct effect between consumer-brand identification and brand loyalty. In addition, the evaluation of the path coefficient of the structural model also involves the mediator role of consumer-brand identification, including the moderating role of nostalgia. The level of significance usually depends on the research objectives and fields. For market research, the assumption of the level of significance is 5% (Hair et al., 2014).

The moderator effect is proposed by the systematic influence of other variables,

among which other variables (regulatory variables) may affect the strength or direction of the relationship between independent (exogenous) latent variables and dependent (endogenous) latent variables of the PLS path relationship. PLS path model with moderator variables is also called simple effect. When modeling regulatory variables, it is necessary to explain the simple effect of exogenous variables, the simple effect and interaction effect of regulatory variables. The interaction effect produced by the interaction item focuses on the relationship between independent variables and moderator variables. In this study, smartPLS is used to examine the moderating effect of nostalgia on the relationship between consumer-brand identification and brand loyalty.

3.5.7 Coefficient of Determination (R^2)

The R^2 coefficient, or coefficient of determination, is a widely accepted metric for evaluating structural model quality in quantitative research. This measure assesses predictive accuracy by determining the squared correlation between observed and estimated values of a given endogenous construct. Higher R^2 values indicate greater predictive power, with various thresholds established by researchers to denote levels of explanatory strength. According to Cohen (1992; 2013), an R^2 value of 0.26 or higher suggests substantial accuracy, 0.13 indicates moderate accuracy, and 0.02 reflects weak predictive capability. Alternatively, Chin (2010) proposes thresholds of 0.75 for substantial, 0.50 for moderate, and 0.25 for weak explanatory power for endogenous variables. These benchmarks enable researchers to gauge model robustness across different contexts, aiding in the interpretation of relational strength within structural models.

3.5.8 Effect Size (f^2)

The effect size measures the impact of an exogenous construct on an endogenous

construct within a model, particularly evaluating how predictive power changes when an exogenous construct is included versus omitted. Cohen (2013) provides guidelines for interpreting f^2 values, where 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35 correspond to small, medium, and large effect sizes, respectively. A higher f^2 value suggests that the exogenous variable has a more substantial impact on the endogenous variable, implying a stronger influence within the structural model. These benchmarks are commonly used to assess the practical significance of constructs, alongside statistical significance, in predictive models.

3.5.9 Predictive Relevance of the Model (Q^2)

Additionally, the Q^2 statistic will be assessed as a measure of predictive relevance for the model. In accordance with Hair et al. (2014), Q^2 values are derived through a cross-validated redundancy approach, where values greater than zero indicate that the model possesses predictive relevance for a given endogenous construct. Specifically, a positive Q^2 value suggests that the model can explain variation in the outcome variable, confirming the model's capability to predict across subsets of the data. This is critical in partial least squares (PLS) structural equation modeling (SEM) as it provides a rigorous test for model accuracy beyond the explained variance, aiding in a robust validation of the model's predictive power.

3.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter delineates the methodological framework employed in the present study, detailing the research design, the operationalization and measurement of variables, instrumentation, the conduct of a pilot study, the definition of the target population, the sampling design, the procedures for data collection, and the strategies planned for data analysis. The unit of analysis for this research consists of consumers of sports brands residing in Jinjiang City. To ensure the representativeness of the sample, a

multi-stage area probability sampling technique was adopted. This approach enhances the generalizability of the findings by systematically selecting participants from different geographical areas within the city.

The study investigates a set of key constructs central to consumer-brand relationships. These variables include brand experience, brand trust, customer perceived value, self-brand congruity, consumer-brand identification, nostalgia, and brand loyalty. Each construct is rigorously operationalized, with clearly defined measures established to facilitate precise data collection and robust analysis. The subsequent chapter will present a comprehensive account of the analysis results and the principal findings derived from the empirical data, interpreting their implications in the context of the existing body of knowledge.



CHAPTER FOUR RESULTS AND DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the data validation and analysis procedures. The data underwent rigorous cleaning to address anomalies, missing values, multicollinearity, outliers, and non-normality, thereby enhancing overall quality and reliability. Preliminary analyses also examined respondent characteristics, common method bias, and non-response bias by comparing early and late participants. The validation followed a two-stage approach. First, the measurement model assessed scale reliability (including item and internal consistency reliability) and validity (convergent and discriminant validity). Next, the structural model evaluated path significance, R^2 , effect sizes, and predictive accuracy. Mediation and moderation analyses were also conducted. All analyses were performed after appropriate data encoding.

4.2 Initial Data Cleaning Procedures

Before delving into a thorough analysis of the data, this study applied various data cleansing techniques to ensure the quality and reliability of our findings. This involved screening for anomalies, detecting missing values, assessing multicollinearity and outliers, and testing for normality. These techniques not only helped to filter out any inconsistencies or errors in the data but also enabled us to draw more accurate conclusions from our analysis. Additionally, the author also examined the characteristics of the respondents during this stage, which provided valuable insights into the demographics and psychographics of sample population.

4.2.1 Survey Response Analysis

In this study, 558 questionnaires were distributed among sports brands consumers in Jinjiang city of Fujian province in southeastern China between January 2024 and March 2024. For the purpose of facilitating the expeditious distribution as well as retrieval of the questionnaires, two research assistants were enlisted for the undertaking. To this end, as a result of the diverse efforts exerted, 434 responses out of 558 distributed questionnaires were considered valid, amounting to a 77.8% response rate. This percentage is highly admissible in social science research, as a response rate surpassing 30% is regarded as adequate as indicated in Table 2.2 (Sekaran, 2003).

Table 2.2
Questionnaires Distribution and Retention

Response	Number of questionnaires	Percentage (%)
No. of distributed Questionnaires	558	100
Returned Questionnaires	484	86.7
Invalid Questionnaires	50	0.09
Usable Questionnaires	434	77.8

Source: Field Survey (2024)

4.2.2 Data Screening and Treatment

Following the collection of data, the information was encoded into SPSS 26. Data screening is the initial stage of data analysis. Ensuring this is done correctly at the initial stages of data preparation is vital for achieving optimal outcomes. Therefore, researchers have identified four fundamental concerns that must be taken into account while cleaning the data and conducting preliminary analysis (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). This stage involves conducting some tests and checks before conducting multivariate analysis. These include checking for missing data, verifying the presence of outliers, assessing the normality state, evaluating linearity, mean square error, sample adequacy, and multicollinearity.

After entering all 434 surveys into SPSS 26, the researchers proceeded to filter and

process the data. This was done before the raw data was even entered. Verifying the acquired data for mistakes is a part of this study. Data that is either missing or out of range (outside the range of possible scale values) is a telltale sign of these mistakes. Researchers should therefore take the time to look into issues and deal with them appropriately. Data screening was performed in SPSS 26 with no omissions. Therefore, this data can meet the needs of the missing data, and no additional operations are required on this data.

4.2.3 Assessment and Treatment of Outliers

Hair et al. (2017) defined outliers as extreme responses given by respondents to a specific question or the entire questionnaire, indicating scores that significantly deviate from the majority of the dataset. These outliers are also marked by uncommon values that are either significantly higher or lower than the norm, and can be observed across all variables under study. Consequently, these divergent scores may adversely affect the T-value estimates in the research, casting doubt on the reliability and accuracy of the findings. Furthermore, outliers can provide valuable insights into the underlying patterns and trends of the data. They can be indicators of unforeseen circumstances, unique individual experiences, or even potential data entry errors. By analyzing and understanding these outliers, researchers can gain a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the phenomena they are studying.

Outliers are data points that display exceptional values in a specific variable. Subsequently, the study conducted an analysis of multivariate outliers within the initial dataset comprising 434 observations. The Mahalanobis D^2 measurement was subsequently employed to identify the multivariate outliers as suggested by Tabachnick and Fidell (2007). The Mahalanobis D^2 metric is a statistical technique used to calculate the distance of each observation from the centroid of all observations within a

multidimensional space. It provides a single value for each observation, regardless of the number of variables being considered (Hair et al., 1998). A larger D^2 value indicates a greater deviation of the observed value from the total distribution of observed values in multidimensional space (Hair et al., 1998).

The study included 6 predictors and had 0.01 degrees of freedom, resulting in a Chi-square value of 16.812 ($p < 0.01$). Thus, any Mahalanobis distance beyond 16.812 is regarded as an anomaly. Thus, if the computed value is smaller than the tabular value, it suggests the absence of an outlier (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). Using a predetermined threshold, two cases (coded 375 and 356) was identified as outliers and then eliminated from the dataset. The final dataset for this study consisted of 432 cases after the deletion process.

4.2.4 Normality Test

According to Tabachnick and Fidell (2007), normality is established when there is a linear relationship between two constructs. As stated by Hair et al. (2010), this assumption is regarded as crucial in directing regression and multivariate analysis. As stated by Hair et al. (2014), this will ultimately affect the estimated statistical path coefficients of influence. Consequently, it is crucial to employ PLS-SEM in order to assess the normality of a certain study. Table 2.3 presents the results of the normality test, highlighting the skewness and kurtosis of the data.

Table 2.3
Test of Normality- Skewness and Kurtosis

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Std.	Kurtosis	Std.
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Error	Statistic	Error
BE	4.8660	1.3259	-0.551	0.117	-0.848	0.234
BT	4.8403	1.3481	-0.626	0.117	-0.846	0.234
CPV	4.9970	1.3233	-0.561	0.117	-0.854	0.234
SBC	4.9819	1.2735	-0.625	0.117	-0.805	0.234

Table 2.3 (Continued)

CBI	4.9060	1.3868	-0.657	0.117	-0.704	0.234
N	4.6916	1.4587	-0.452	0.117	-0.930	0.234
BL	4.8735	1.4475	-0.613	0.117	-0.831	0.234

Note: BE=brand experience, BT=brand trust, CPV=customer perceived value, SBC=self-brand congruity, CBI=consumer-brand identification, BL=brand loyalty, N=nostalgia.

In order to achieve a normal distribution of the data, it is necessary for the Skewness value to fall between the range of -1 to +1 (Hair et al., 2013). Any value over this range will be deemed abnormal. Simultaneously, kurtosis values falling within the range of -2 to +2 are considered to be within the usual range (Bachman, 2004). Thus, as illustrated in Table 2.3. The data set indicates that there is no departure from normalcy in this study, and the results demonstrated that all variables exhibit a close approximation to a normal distribution.

4.2.5 Multicollinearity

Multicollinearity refers to the significant interrelationship among predictor variables, which can distort the analysis outcomes if not addressed properly (Hair et al., 2013). According to Tabachnick and Fidell (2007), the presence of multicollinearity can lead to an inflated standard error in regression coefficients, often resulting in coefficients that lack statistical significance. This can compromise the model's interpretability and predictive accuracy. Hair et al. (2010) highlighted that variance inflation factors (VIF) and tolerance values serve as the most effective and widely accepted methods for diagnosing multicollinearity within partial least squares (PLS) path modeling frameworks.

Specifically, Hair et al. (2011) recommended that when the VIF value exceeds 5 and the tolerance level falls below 0.20, there is likely an issue with multicollinearity that needs to be addressed. Monitoring these values is essential for ensuring the robustness and reliability of model interpretations in multivariate analyses.

Table 2.4

Multicollinearity Test Based on Tolerance and VIF Values

Variables	Tolerance	VIF
BE	0.667	1.498
BT	0.603	1.660
CPV	0.637	1.569
SBC	0.573	1.745
CBI	0.394	2.536
N	0.747	1.338

Note: BE=brand experience, BT=brand trust, CPV=customer perceived value, SBC=self-brand congruity, CBI=consumer-brand identification, N=nostalgia.

In fact, Table 2.4 showed that both VIF and tolerance values are within the acceptable threshold range. This indicated that there is no multicollinearity between exogenous potential variables, VIF values are all less than 5, and tolerance values are all above 0 ~ 0.2. The current investigation does not reveal any signs of multicollinearity.

4.2.6 Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

This unit mainly analyzes and discusses the demographic characteristics of the respondents, including gender, marital status, age, education level, employment status and income.

Table 2.5

Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	248	57.4
Female	184	42.6
Age		
23-27	183	42.4
28-32	115	26.6
33-37	76	17.6
38-42	58	13.4
Income (CNY)		
4000-7000	169	39.1
7001-10,000	119	27.5
10,001-13,000	123	28.5
13,001 above	21	4.9
Education		
High School	20	4.6
Diploma	45	10.4
Bachelor Degree	232	53.7

Table 2.5 (Continued)

Post Degree	135	31.3
Occupation		
Public Sector	114	26.4
Private Sector	199	46.1
Self-Employed	36	8.3
Others	83	19.2
Marital Status		
Single	235	54.4
Married	175	40.5
Others	22	5.1

Source: Field Survey (2024)

Given Table 2.5, there are 248 male respondents, representing 57.4% of the total, and 184 female respondents, comprising 42.6%. In terms of age distribution, there were 183 respondents in the 23-27 age group, accounting for the largest proportion (42.4%), followed by the 28-32 age group with 115 respondents (26.6%). The 33-37 years old group had 76 respondents (17.6%), while the smallest number of respondents (13.4%) belonged to the 38-43 years old group, with a total of 58 respondents.

In terms of monthly income, 169 recipients (39.1%) earned between 4,000 yuan and 7,000 yuan. The second group with monthly income between 10,001-13,000 yuan was 123, accounting for 28.5% of the total number of respondents. The third largest group (27.5%) had a monthly income between 7,001 yuan and 10,001 yuan, with 119 respondents. Ultimately, there were 21 respondents who reported a monthly income over 13,001 yuan, or 4.9% of the total. In summary, the majority of the interviewees, who are predominantly young individuals in the early stages of their careers, receive a monthly income ranging from 4,000 yuan to 7,000 yuan.

The data depicts in the chart reveals that a majority of respondents, representing 53.7% of the sample with a total of 232 individuals, hold a bachelor's degree. This is followed by those with advanced degrees, including master's and doctoral qualifications, who account for 31.3% or 135 respondents. In contrast, high school graduates represented

the group with the lowest level of educational attainment, accounting for only 20 respondents or 4.6% of the total sample. Additionally, a further subset of respondents, totaling 45 individuals or 10.4%, reported obtaining a diploma. These proportions indicate that the sample is predominantly composed of individuals with higher education, suggesting that a substantial level of academic attainment characterizes the respondent pool.

In terms of occupations, 46.1% of the respondents were employed in the private sector, whilst 114 respondents, making up 26.4%, were from the public sector. Furthermore, there are respondents who are now in the process of seeking employment or are employed by different sorts of companies. This group consists of a total of 83 individuals, representing 19.2% of the total respondents. Conversely, just 36 respondents are self-employed, making up the smallest fraction at 8.3%. In addition, the table reveals that 235 of the respondents are single, accounting for 54.4% of the total number of respondents, while 175 respondents are married, accounting for 40.5%. Finally, 22 respondents are in other states, accounting for 5.1%.

4.2.7 Testing for Sampling Adequacy

Sampling adequacy assesses the validity of data for factor analysis. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure and Bartlett's test of sphericity evaluate the appropriateness of applying factor analysis and the adequacy of the sample (Hair et al., 2013). KMO values are interpreted as follows: excellent (>0.80), good (>0.70), acceptable (>0.60), or unacceptable (<0.50). As presented in Table 2.6, the results meet the required thresholds, confirming suitability for subsequent analysis.

Table 2.6
KMO and Bartlett's test

		.921
Bartlett Sphericity Test	Approx. Chi-Square	1548.644
	Df	15
	Sig	.000

The chart reveals that the KMO statistic of brand loyalty, 0.921, is greater than 0.80, indicating a relatively sufficient sampling. It is greater than the 0.5 threshold emphasized by Hair et al. (2013). A significance value less than 0.05 indicates a significant relationship among the given variables. The p value is 0.000, which is less than 0.05, indicating that the variables are highly correlated. Therefore, there is a correlation among the original variables, which is suitable for factor analysis. For other variable correlation tests, please refer to (Appendix B).

4.3 Testing No-Response Bias

In survey research, some respondents may intentionally withhold their responses, while others may provide their responses at a later time. It is essential to investigate if the reactions of these respondent types influenced the sample collected for the study. Lambert and Harrington (1990, p.5) defined nonresponse bias as "the discrepancy in responses between individuals who do not respond and those who do respond." Baruch (1999) stated that non-response bias occurs when respondents refuse or have trouble engaging in the research. Zelkowitz and Cole (2016) claimed that the non-response issue can greatly impact the representativeness of the estimated sample within a specific community.

The time gap between early and late respondents may compromise the generalizability of the findings, as data collection for the study extended over a three-month period. A t-test was conducted to assess non-response bias by comparing the mean and standard

error means of the early response group with those of the late response group. A total of 150 individuals were classified as early participants, while 282 individuals were categorized as late participants in the study. According to the time trend extrapolation method of Armstrong and Overton (1977), the respondents were divided into two groups in this study. Respondents who responded immediately were categorized as early responders, while those who responded after the purchase (after the reminder) were categorized as late responders. 150 respondents believed to be responding to the questionnaire immediately. On the other hand, 282 respondents responded after making a purchase and after being reminded by the researchers. Table 2.7 displays the results of the independent sample T-test for each construction.

Table 2.7
Group Statistics for Early and Late Responses

Construct	Response rate	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
BE	Early Respondents	150	4.4590	1.34220	.10960
	Late Respondents	282	5.0820	1.26730	.07550
BT	Early Respondents	150	4.4505	1.34111	.10950
	Late Respondents	282	5.0476	1.30749	.07786
CPV	Early Respondents	150	4.6048	1.28512	.10493
	Late Respondents	282	5.2054	1.29760	.07727
SBC	Early Respondents	150	4.6079	1.28738	.10511
	Late Respondents	282	5.1809	1.22246	.07280
CBI	Early Respondents	150	4.5070	1.42960	.11670

Table 2.7 (Continued)

	Late Respondents	282	5.1010	1.33290	.07940
N	Early Respondents	150	4.4050	1.43911	.11750
	Late Respondents	282	4.8440	1.44841	.08625
BL	Early Respondents	150	5.3488	1.15152	.07312
	Late Respondents	282	5.5833	1.10869	.07840

Note: BE=brand experience, BT=brand trust, CPV=customer perceived value, SBC=self-brand congruity, CBI=consumer-brand identification, BL=brand loyalty, N=nostalgia.

Evidence from Tables 2.7 and 2.8 indicates that there was no violation of Levene's variance equality test in the independent samples (T-tests) used to compare the standard deviations of the early and late groups. There was no statistically significant difference between early and late responders in this study, as all variables had values higher than the significance level of 0.05 (Pallant, 2016). It can be said without a doubt that the study does not suffer from non-response bias.

Table 2.8
Non-Response Bias

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances				t-test for Equality of Means		95% CI of the Difference		
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2- tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
BE	Equal variances assumed	1.235	.267	-4.767	430	.000	-.62320	.13070	-.88020	-.36630
	Equal variances not assumed			-4.684	289.320	.000	-.62320	.13310	-.88510	-.36140
BT	Equal variances assumed	1.229	.268	-4.479	430	.000	-.59714	.13332	-.85918	-.33510
	Equal variances not assumed			-4.444	297.435	.000	-.59714	.13436	-.86156	-.33272
CPV	Equal variances assumed	.001	.982	-4.596	430	.000	-.60066	.13070	-.85754	-.34377
	Equal variances not assumed			-4.609	306.610	.000	-.60066	.13031	-.85708	-.34424
SBC	Equal variances assumed	1.658	.199	-4.553	430	.000	-.57297	.12585	-.82033	-.32561
	Equal variances not assumed			-4.481	290.738	.000	-.57297	.12786	-.82462	-.32132
CBI	Equal variances assumed	3.383	.067	-4.300	430	.000	-.59400	.13820	-.86560	-.32250
	Equal variances not assumed			-4.208	286.194	.000	-.59400	.14120	-.87190	-.31620
N	Equal variances assumed	.033	.855	-3.006	430	.003	-.43897	.14605	-.72603	-.15191
	Equal variances not assumed			-3.012	305.756	.003	-.43897	.14576	-.72579	-.15215
BL	Equal variances assumed	.461	.498	-4.472	430	.000	-.64019	.14316	-.92157	-.35881
	Equal variances not assumed			-4.447	299.370	.000	-.64019	.14395	-.92346	-.35692

Note: EV (Equal Variance), UEV (Unequal Variance). BE=brand experience, BT=brand trust, CPV=customer perceived value, SBC=self-brand congruity, CBI=consumer-brand identification, BL=brand loyalty, N=nostalgia.

According to the table given, the Levene variance equality test findings indicated that the significant values of all variables are higher than 0.05 (Pallant, 2011). Furthermore, in order to determine whether there were noteworthy disparities between individuals who responded early and those who responded late, the Sig. (2 tailed) values were consulted, in accordance with Pallant's (2011) suggestions. The data is divided into two sets: the first row represents values with equal variance, while the second row represents values with differential volatility. Pallant (2011) stated that if the p-value of the Levene test is above 0.05, it indicates that the assumption of equal variance can be assumed. The table revealed that there was no statistically significant variation in replies between individuals who responded early and those who responded late.

4.4 Tests for Common Method Variance

Common method variance (CMV) refers to the variance that is derived from estimate approaches rather than from the underlying structure or construct being measured (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Researchers posited that there is a persistent issue of common technique bias in behavioural research, particularly in studies that rely on self-reported data (Podsakoff et al., 2003). This phenomenon might arise when a single instrument is employed to gather data on both endogenous and exogenous factors within a particular research investigation. Bagozzi et al., (1991) proposed that technique bias is the primary cause of measurement error. Consequently, researchers view this as a significant issue. This measurement error not only skews the conclusions, but also compromises the validity of the measurements, particularly in empirical studies. According to Spector and Brannick (2010), measurement errors, whether they are random or systematic, can result in misleading or inconclusive findings.

Consequently, this study employs certain techniques to mitigate issues related to

Common Method Variance. It adheres to the measures suggested by Podsakoff et al., (2012) and Viswanathan and Kayande (2012), as outlined below. For instance, the words of each item are intentionally crafted to provide clarity and organization, so eliminating any potential ambiguity. Once again, repetitive and retrospective questions are not incorporated. Likewise, the participants were notified that their involvement is optional and their comments were solely for academic purposes. Furthermore, the participants were also informed that there would be no correct or incorrect replies.

The non-rotational factor analysis in this study was conducted using SPSS 26. Harman's (1967) single factor test is employed to include all primary constructions in the principle component factor analysis. The study structure items are subjected to unrotated factor analysis using this technique. Put simply, the test conducts a primary factor analysis on all items, encompassing all 7 variables. The results of component analysis indicate that the first factor accounts for less than 50% of the entire variance, suggesting that CMV is not the primary issue (Podsakoff & Organ, 1986).

The initial factor explains precisely 35.14% of the whole variance. The whole model accounted for 67.3% of the overall variation. According to the rule of thumb, the factor in question should be less than 50% of the covariance. Therefore, there is no methodological bias in the data from this study because the first factor accounts for 35.14% of the total variance. Based on the findings of Harman's univariate analysis, it can be concluded that there was no presence of CMV issue in this study. For more details, please refer to APPENDIX C.

4.5 Descriptive Statistics

This study employed descriptive statistics to offer a comprehensive overview of the key characteristics of the data. The analysis focused on the perspective of the

respondents for each potential variable examined in the study. The descriptive statistics of potential variables are shown in terms of the mean and standard deviation. This provides information on how respondents answered the survey questions and the measurements used (Sekaran & Bougie, 2010). The analysis results of potential variables are shown in Table 2.9. The mean value of all variables ranges from 4.64 to 5.08, which is greater than the median value of the 7-point Likert scale (3.5).

Therefore, respondents tended to perceive the variables of the current study at a relatively high level. The mean value of price was the highest ($M = 5.08$, $SD = 1.5389$), indicating that respondents' perceived price was at the highest level. On the other hand, the mean value of the cognitive effect was the lowest ($M = 4.69$, $SD = 1.5488$), indicating that respondents' perception of the cognitive effect was at the lowest level. Standard deviation is the distance between the value and the mean; The larger the SD, the wider the distribution of values near the mean (Andrade, 2020). In this study, the SD value of affective effect was the highest, which is 1.6328. The distribution of values near the mean has the most extensive influence on the affective effect. The SD value of brand trust was the lowest (1.3481). The distribution of values around the mean is the narrowest.

Table 2.9
Descriptive Analysis of the Latent Constructs

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Sensory	432	4.87	1.5550
Affective	432	4.98	1.6328
Cognitive	432	4.64	1.5488
Behavioral	432	4.84	1.5414
Social (BE)	432	4.99	1.5717
BT	432	4.84	1.3481
Quality	432	5.07	1.5524
Emotional	432	4.91	1.4754
Price	432	5.08	1.5389
Social	432	4.92	1.5205
BP	432	4.95	1.3735

Table 2.9 (Continued)

CSR	432	5.01	1.3874
CBI	432	4.91	1.3868
N	432	4.69	1.4586
BL	432	4.87	1.4475

Note: Sensory, affective, cognitive, behavioral, social=brand experience, BT=brand trust, quality, emotional, price, social=customer perceived value, BP and CSR=self-brand congruity, CBI=consumer-brand identification, BL=brand loyalty, N=nostalgia.

4.6 Evaluating the Result of PLS-SEM Path Model

According to Henseler et al. (2009), the structural equation modeling (SEM) process follows a two-stage approach: First, establishing and assessing the measurement model, and second, constructing and evaluating the structural model. The evaluation of the measurement model in this study involved several key components: examining the reliability of each construct, confirming the consistency and dependability of internal coherence, assessing convergent validity, and establishing discriminant validity. Subsequently, the assessment of the structural model required determining the statistical significance of path coefficients, analyzing the R-squared values to understand the variance explained by the model, calculating effect sizes, evaluating predictive relevance, and, finally, testing for any moderating effects.

4.7 Measurement Model Assessment

Evaluating structural models involves a thorough validation of the measurement models to ensure accurate and reliable findings. This process requires a comprehensive assessment of several critical aspects, including internal consistency reliability, indicator reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity (Hair et al., 2014; Henseler et al., 2009). Internal consistency reliability is assessed to confirm that the items measuring each construct consistently produce similar results, commonly evaluated through Cronbach's alpha or composite reliability (Hair et al., 2010).

Indicator reliability examines whether individual indicators reliably measure their respective constructs, typically using factor loadings to verify that each item adequately represents the construct it measures.

Convergent validity evaluates the degree to which indicators of a specific construct exhibit strong intercorrelations, commonly measured using the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Finally, discriminant validity checks that each construct is distinct and that indicators do not measure multiple constructs simultaneously, often confirmed through the Fornell-Larcker criterion or the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio. Together, these evaluations of measurement models provide foundational evidence that the structural model accurately represents the relationships between constructs and supports valid interpretations of study results.

In this study, a hierarchical model (HCM) was then used to evaluate or analyze the remaining aspects of the study, which included self-brand congruity, brand experience, and customer perceived value. According to Hair et al. (2017), HCM is a representation of complex structures, especially higher-order ones, which have some levels and involve abstract ideas on a grand scale. Because of the complexity of these hierarchies, further testing is usually required. Therefore, self-brand congruity, brand experience, and customer perceived value are first appraised as first-order structures and subsequently reevaluated as second-order reflections (Sarstedt et al., 2019).

Interestingly, prior empirical studies have used both BE and CPV as higher-order constructs. For example, Van der Westhuizen (2018) and Japutra and Molinillo (2019) considered BE to be best explained as a second-order construct, while CPV was also used as a second-order construct in past studies (Wan et al., 2017; Wang, Gu et al., 2019), SBC was regarded as a second-order construct in past studies (Su & Reynolds,

2017; Wijnands & Gill, 2020).

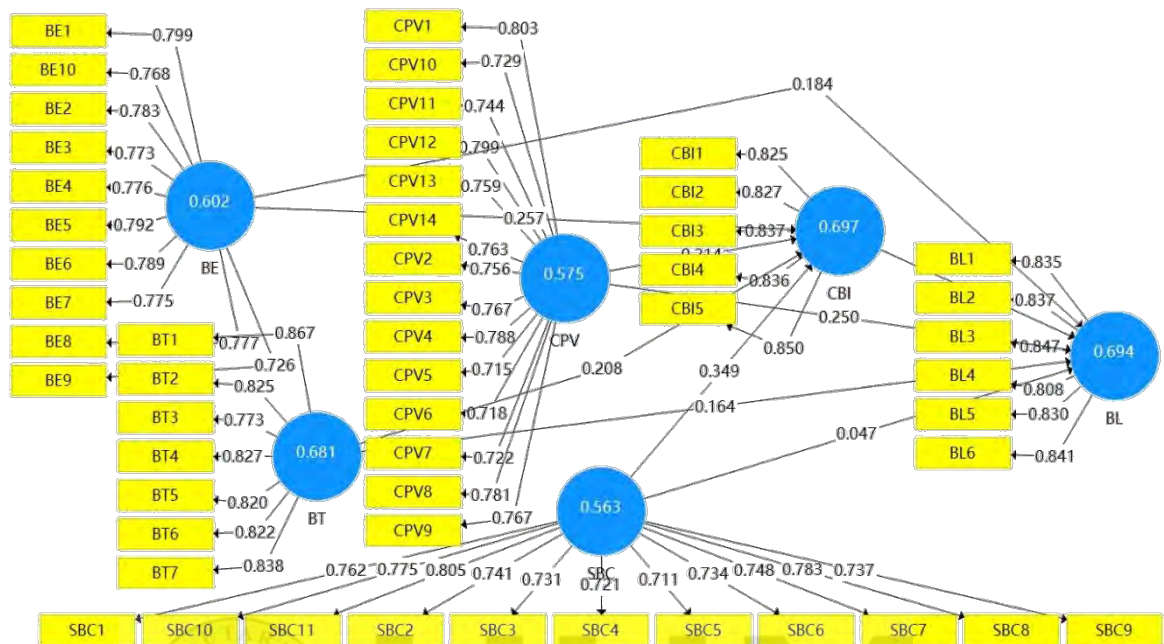


Figure 1.5
Measurement Model

4.7.1 Assessment of Reliability

The assessment of reliability is an essential component in evaluating the consistency and dependability of measurement instruments. In this context, higher reliability values signify greater levels of internal consistency, reflecting the extent to which the items within a scale measure the same underlying construct. Hair, Hult, et al. (2014, pp. 101-102) classify reliability coefficients into distinct categories: values ranging from 0.60 to 0.70 are deemed "acceptable" within the scope of exploratory research, where methodological flexibility is often required. In contrast, values between 0.70 and 0.95 are considered to indicate "satisfactory to good" reliability, suitable for more rigorous and confirmatory analyses. These thresholds provide valuable benchmarks for researchers to interpret and validate the robustness of their measurement tools.

Table 3.0 shows that all variables have Cronbach's alpha values better than 0.8, indicating reliable and consistent measurements.

Table 3.0
Reliability Analysis

Construct	Number of Items	Cronbach's alpha
Brand Experience	10	0.927
Brand Trust	7	0.922
Customer Perceived Value	14	0.943
Self-brand Congruity	11	0.922
Consumer-brand Identification	5	0.891
Nostalgia	4	0.882
Brand Loyalty	6	0.912

Source: Field Study (2024)

4.7.2 Assessment of Convergent Validity

The degree to which an indicator not only correlates with other measures of the same idea but also accurately measures the intended concept is known as convergent validity (Hair et al., 2013). Hair et al. (2014) proposed the use of composite reliability as a measure of internal consistency. This is because composite reliability is more dependable in assessing the true impact of a single indication. Furthermore, convergent validity was assessed using mean variance extraction (AVE), factor loadings, and composite reliability (CR). In order to achieve all conditions for convergent validity, it is necessary for the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value to exceed 0.50, the Composite Reliability (CR) value to exceed 0.70, and for each item's factor load to exceed 0.50 (Hair et al., 2017).

Table 3.1
The Convergent Validity Assessment Result

Construct	Item	Outer Loading	AVE	Composite Reliability
Sensory	BE1	0.799	0.602	0.938
	BE2	0.783		
Affective	BE3	0.773		
	BE4	0.776		
Cognitive	BE5	0.792		

Table 3.1 (Continued)

	BE6	0.789		
Behavioral	BE7	0.775		
	BE8	0.777		
Social	BE9	0.726		
	BE10	0.768		
Brand Trust	BT1	0.867	0.681	0.937
	BT2	0.825		
	BT3	0.773		
	BT4	0.827		
	BT5	0.820		
	BT6	0.822		
	BT7	0.838		
Quality	CPV1	0.803	0.575	0.950
	CPV2	0.756		
	CPV3	0.767		
	CPV4	0.788		
Emotional	CPV5	0.715		
	CPV6	0.718		
	CPV7	0.722		
Price	CPV8	0.781		
	CPV9	0.767		
	CPV10	0.729		
Social	CPV11	0.744		
	CPV12	0.799		
	CPV13	0.759		
	CPV14	0.763		
Brand Personality			0.563	0.934
	SBC1	0.762		
	SBC2	0.741		
	SBC3	0.731		
	SBC4	0.721		
	SBC5	0.711		
CSR	SBC6	0.734		
	SBC7	0.748		
	SBC8	0.783		
	SBC9	0.737		
	SBC10	0.775		
	SBC11	0.805		
Consumer-brand Identification			0.697	0.920
	CBI1	0.825		
	CBI2	0.827		
	CBI3	0.837		
	CBI4	0.836		
	CBI5	0.850		
Nostalgia	N1	0.866	0.738	0.918
	N2	0.859		
	N3	0.842		
	N4	0.869		
Brand Loyalty	BL1	0.835	0.694	0.931

Table 3.1 (Continued)

BL2	0.837
BL3	0.847
BL4	0.808
BL5	0.830
BL6	0.841

Note: sensory, affective, cognitive, behavioral, social=brand experience. quality, emotional, price, social=customer perceived value, brand personality and CSR=self-brand congruity.

The findings presented in Table 3.1 indicate that the AVE value above the acceptable threshold of 0.50, as suggested by Hair et al. (2017). The findings revealed that the AVE values vary between 0.563 and 0.738. Furthermore, the CR values of each variable and the loading values of the measured items satisfy the necessary criteria, ensuring the presence of convergent validity. Both the CR values and loadings surpass the suggested thresholds when they are over 0.7 and 0.50, respectively. Therefore, this suggests a high degree of construct validity.

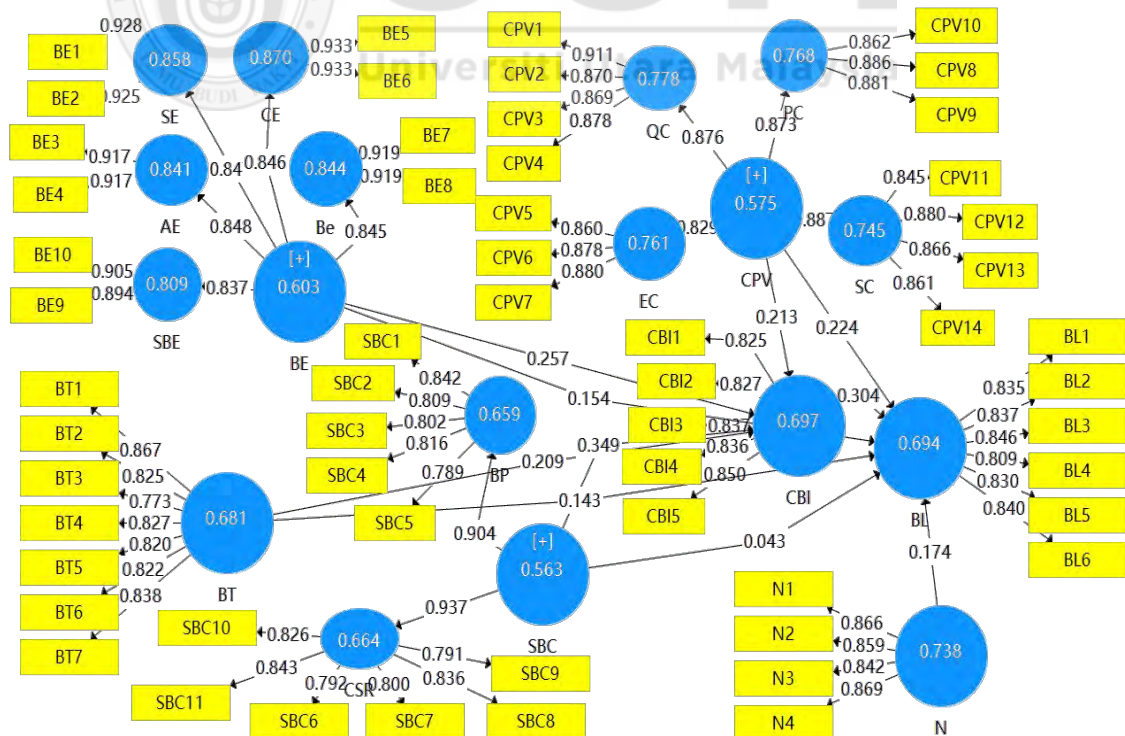


Figure 1.6
First Order Reflective Measurement Model

4.7.3 Assessment of Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity assesses the degree to which one construct is distinct from others in terms of its variance. This assessment is based on the premise that constructs are not inherently related or correlated with one another (Hair et al., 2013). The Fornell-Larcker criterion is a commonly utilized method for determining discriminant validity. According to this criterion, discriminant validity is achieved when the square root of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for each construct surpasses the highest correlation between that construct and any other in the model. This method effectively ensures that each construct uniquely represents its intended variance and is not overly associated with other constructs (Hair et al., 2013). For details, as shown in Table 3.2 and 3.3. All the values meet the standards.

Table 3.2
Discriminant Validity Analysis, Second Stage

	BE	BL	BT	CBI	CPV	N	SBC
BE	0.776						
BL	0.543	0.833					
BT	0.427	0.573	0.825				
CBI	0.545	0.699	0.581	0.835			
CPV	0.366	0.601	0.460	0.561	0.758		
N	0.384	0.518	0.378	0.440	0.375	0.859	
SBC	0.346	0.513	0.474	0.633	0.453	0.321	0.750

Note: BE=brand experience, BT=brand trust, CPV=customer perceived value, SBC=self-brand congruity, CBI=consumer-brand identification, BL=brand loyalty, N=nostalgia.

Table 3.3

Fornell & Lacker of the First Order

	AE	BL	BP	BT	Be	CBI	CE	CSR	EC	N	PC	QC	SBE	SC	SE
AE	0.917														
BL	0.448	0.833													
BP	0.271	0.467	0.812												
BT	0.325	0.573	0.412	0.825											
Be	0.688	0.486	0.264	0.386	0.919										
CBI	0.435	0.699	0.577	0.581	0.436	0.835									
CE	0.620	0.460	0.296	0.376	0.632	0.471	0.933								
CSR	0.218	0.477	0.698	0.456	0.256	0.588	0.267	0.815							
EC	0.223	0.488	0.335	0.400	0.220	0.431	0.240	0.360	0.873						
N	0.314	0.518	0.280	0.378	0.288	0.440	0.340	0.308	0.287	0.859					
PC	0.223	0.483	0.286	0.365	0.212	0.458	0.234	0.328	0.682	0.313	0.876				
QC	0.322	0.552	0.382	0.419	0.294	0.522	0.328	0.409	0.615	0.329	0.685	0.882			
SBE	0.646	0.409	0.274	0.325	0.612	0.438	0.654	0.250	0.194	0.318	0.201	0.240	0.899		
SC	0.271	0.539	0.376	0.401	0.286	0.509	0.236	0.372	0.655	0.357	0.704	0.678	0.235	0.863	
SE	0.633	0.484	0.302	0.384	0.635	0.510	0.658	0.294	0.249	0.359	0.317	0.359	0.642	0.320	0.927

Note: AE=affective, BL=brand loyalty, BP=brand personality, BT=brand trust, Be=behavioral, CBI=customer perceived value, CE=cognitive, CSR=corporate social responsibility, EC=emotional, N=nostalgia, PC=price, QC=quality, SBE=social, SC=social, SE=sensory.

Table 3.4
HTMT of the First Order

	AE	BL	BP	BT	Be	CBI	CE	CSR	EC	N	PC	QC	SBE	SC	SE
AE															
BL	0.521														
BP	0.323	0.524													
BT	0.376	0.625	0.461												
Be	0.846	0.564	0.314	0.445											
CBI	0.512	0.774	0.654	0.639	0.510										
CE	0.747	0.521	0.344	0.425	0.759	0.541									
CSR	0.255	0.526	0.788	0.503	0.299	0.658	0.306								
EC	0.270	0.556	0.390	0.453	0.265	0.497	0.284	0.414							
N	0.370	0.576	0.319	0.420	0.339	0.495	0.392	0.345	0.333						
PC	0.268	0.548	0.331	0.411	0.254	0.526	0.275	0.375	0.806	0.362					
QC	0.375	0.607	0.430	0.459	0.342	0.581	0.374	0.454	0.704	0.368	0.781				
SBE	0.819	0.489	0.336	0.387	0.775	0.530	0.812	0.301	0.241	0.388	0.250	0.290			
SC	0.320	0.599	0.427	0.444	0.336	0.571	0.271	0.416	0.757	0.405	0.811	0.756	0.285		
SE	0.769	0.554	0.354	0.439	0.769	0.591	0.781	0.340	0.296	0.418	0.377	0.413	0.803	0.372	-

Note: AE= affective, BL=brand loyalty, BP=brand personality, BT=brand trust, Be=behavioral, CBI=customer perceived value, CE=cognitive, CSR=corporate social responsibility, EC=emotional, N=nostalgia, PC=price, QC=quality, SBE=social, SC=social, SE=sensory.

Chin (1998) posited that discriminant validity can be evaluated by examining indicator loadings to confirm that indicators align primarily with their intended constructs rather than with others. This is typically done through a cross-loading comparison. In Table 3.5 and 3.6, a comparison of indicator loadings against cross-loadings for reflective indicators is presented. Findings indicated that the loading values for each indicator exceed the cross-loadings with other constructs, thereby providing substantial evidence for the discriminant validity of the constructs and supporting their use in further analyses.

Table 3.5
Loadings and Cross Loadings

	BE	BL	BT	CBI	CPV	N	SBC
BE1	0.799	0.443	0.365	0.456	0.330	0.349	0.309
BE2	0.783	0.453	0.346	0.491	0.348	0.316	0.290
BE3	0.773	0.414	0.324	0.406	0.291	0.285	0.254
BE4	0.776	0.407	0.272	0.392	0.274	0.290	0.228
BE5	0.792	0.442	0.362	0.459	0.312	0.322	0.301
BE6	0.789	0.416	0.340	0.420	0.258	0.313	0.268
BE7	0.775	0.441	0.337	0.392	0.309	0.273	0.261
BE8	0.777	0.453	0.372	0.408	0.242	0.255	0.257
BE9	0.726	0.342	0.293	0.389	0.233	0.297	0.237
BE10	0.768	0.392	0.291	0.399	0.228	0.276	0.271
BT1	0.347	0.455	0.867	0.528	0.370	0.317	0.416
BT2	0.349	0.473	0.825	0.455	0.396	0.304	0.392
BT3	0.332	0.427	0.773	0.430	0.329	0.310	0.389
BT4	0.359	0.483	0.827	0.504	0.379	0.295	0.382
BT5	0.346	0.478	0.820	0.472	0.378	0.292	0.374
BT6	0.390	0.487	0.822	0.468	0.396	0.349	0.426
BT7	0.344	0.506	0.838	0.494	0.403	0.318	0.362
CPV1	0.329	0.504	0.392	0.472	0.803	0.297	0.389
CPV2	0.305	0.485	0.392	0.464	0.756	0.270	0.378
CPV3	0.319	0.467	0.377	0.459	0.767	0.269	0.394
CPV4	0.347	0.492	0.318	0.449	0.788	0.325	0.355
CPV5	0.221	0.410	0.342	0.378	0.715	0.216	0.355
CPV6	0.222	0.429	0.381	0.368	0.718	0.261	0.331
CPV7	0.259	0.438	0.325	0.382	0.722	0.274	0.305
CPV8	0.260	0.434	0.319	0.393	0.781	0.290	0.319
CPV9	0.258	0.450	0.347	0.424	0.767	0.273	0.302
CPV10	0.229	0.384	0.293	0.386	0.729	0.261	0.258
CPV11	0.250	0.416	0.318	0.397	0.744	0.307	0.315
CPV12	0.315	0.503	0.361	0.481	0.799	0.312	0.347
CPV13	0.270	0.445	0.333	0.430	0.759	0.297	0.359
CPV14	0.271	0.496	0.373	0.447	0.763	0.318	0.375

Table 3.5 (Continued)

CBI1	0.441	0.525	0.429	0.825	0.455	0.355	0.522
CBI2	0.455	0.588	0.542	0.827	0.483	0.358	0.521
CBI3	0.428	0.572	0.524	0.837	0.467	0.379	0.549
CBI4	0.449	0.615	0.436	0.836	0.450	0.372	0.506
CBI5	0.499	0.613	0.490	0.850	0.486	0.372	0.545
SBC1	0.264	0.384	0.316	0.447	0.374	0.192	0.762
SBC2	0.284	0.379	0.354	0.488	0.338	0.219	0.741
SBC3	0.290	0.401	0.394	0.496	0.352	0.300	0.731
SBC4	0.249	0.345	0.277	0.458	0.303	0.214	0.721
SBC5	0.269	0.387	0.332	0.453	0.272	0.212	0.711
SBC6	0.251	0.363	0.364	0.482	0.319	0.260	0.734
SBC7	0.259	0.389	0.365	0.485	0.343	0.266	0.748
SBC8	0.244	0.403	0.404	0.462	0.403	0.240	0.783
SBC9	0.228	0.372	0.363	0.458	0.348	0.251	0.737
SBC10	0.252	0.383	0.409	0.489	0.358	0.242	0.775
SBC11	0.263	0.419	0.329	0.501	0.323	0.248	0.805
BL1	0.449	0.835	0.471	0.618	0.491	0.425	0.444
BL2	0.440	0.837	0.435	0.573	0.467	0.412	0.404
BL3	0.462	0.846	0.475	0.604	0.535	0.442	0.471
BL4	0.460	0.809	0.482	0.584	0.465	0.455	0.424
BL5	0.435	0.830	0.511	0.548	0.492	0.410	0.396
BL6	0.469	0.840	0.491	0.564	0.551	0.442	0.420
N1	0.337	0.469	0.316	0.411	0.319	0.866	0.315
N2	0.334	0.436	0.303	0.339	0.317	0.859	0.245
N3	0.297	0.421	0.340	0.355	0.317	0.842	0.258
N4	0.351	0.452	0.340	0.402	0.334	0.869	0.282

Note: BE=brand experience, BL=brand loyalty, BT=brand trust, CBI=customer perceived value, CPV=consumer-brand identification, SBC=self-brand congruity, N=nostalgia.

Table 3.6

Loadings and Cross Loadings Second Stage

	BE	CPV	SBC
Affective	0.846	0.302	0.265
Behavioral	0.845	0.295	0.282
Cognitive	0.845	0.300	0.306
Sensory	0.852	0.361	0.323
Social (BE)	0.835	0.252	0.284
Emotional	0.267	0.842	0.377
Price	0.283	0.880	0.333
Quality	0.368	0.867	0.430
Social	0.320	0.879	0.406
BP	0.334	0.400	0.920
CSR	0.305	0.426	0.923

Note: Sensory, affective, cognitive, behavioral, social=brand experience (BE), quality, emotional, price, social=customer perceived value (CPV), BP and CSR=self-brand congruity (SBC).

A study by Henseler et al. (2015) raised questions regarding the effectiveness of the

Fornell-Larcker (1981) criterion in detecting insufficient discriminant validity in common research scenarios. To address this issue, Henseler et al. (2015) introduced the heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) ratio of correlations, which is based on a multitrait-multimethod matrix, as an alternative method for assessing discriminant validity. Their research, supported by Monte Carlo simulations, demonstrated that the HTMT approach outperforms the Fornell-Larcker criterion in identifying discriminant validity. Consequently, this study also employed the HTMT method, as recommended by Henseler et al. (2015), to validate the constructs' discriminant properties.

Table 3.7
Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)

	BE	BL	BT	CBI	CPV	N	SBC
BE	-						
BL	0.589	-					
BT	0.461	0.625	-				
CBI	0.596	0.774	0.639	-			
CPV	0.386	0.645	0.491	0.609	-		
N	0.424	0.576	0.420	0.495	0.410	-	
SBC	0.373	0.558	0.514	0.698	0.483	0.354	-

Note: BE=brand experience, BL=brand loyalty, BT=brand trust, CBI=customer perceived value, CPV=consumer-brand identification, N=nostalgia, SBC=self-brand congruity.

Henseler et al. (2015) stated that the maximum allowable threshold for htmt should not surpass 0.85 or 0.9. The HTMT values in this study are presented in Table 3.4 and 3.7. All of these values are below 0.90, showing that there is no issue with discriminant validity in this study.

4.7.4 Structural Model Assessment

After establishing the measurement model, the subsequent stage is to assess the structural model, also known as the internal model (Hair, et al., 2013). This necessitates an assessment of external models. The process entails evaluating the capacity of external models to make accurate predictions and analyzing the connections between variables. Thus, it places particular emphasis on the concepts of R-squared, coefficients,

and t-values. Furthermore, the structural model elucidates the predictive correlation of the model (Q^2) and the effect size (f^2) of the individual structure. Structural models specifically assess and analyze the relationships and assumptions between structures through regressions. Thus, this work employed the bootstrapping approach with 5000 samples to assess the statistical significance of the relational path coefficients (Henseler et al., 2009).

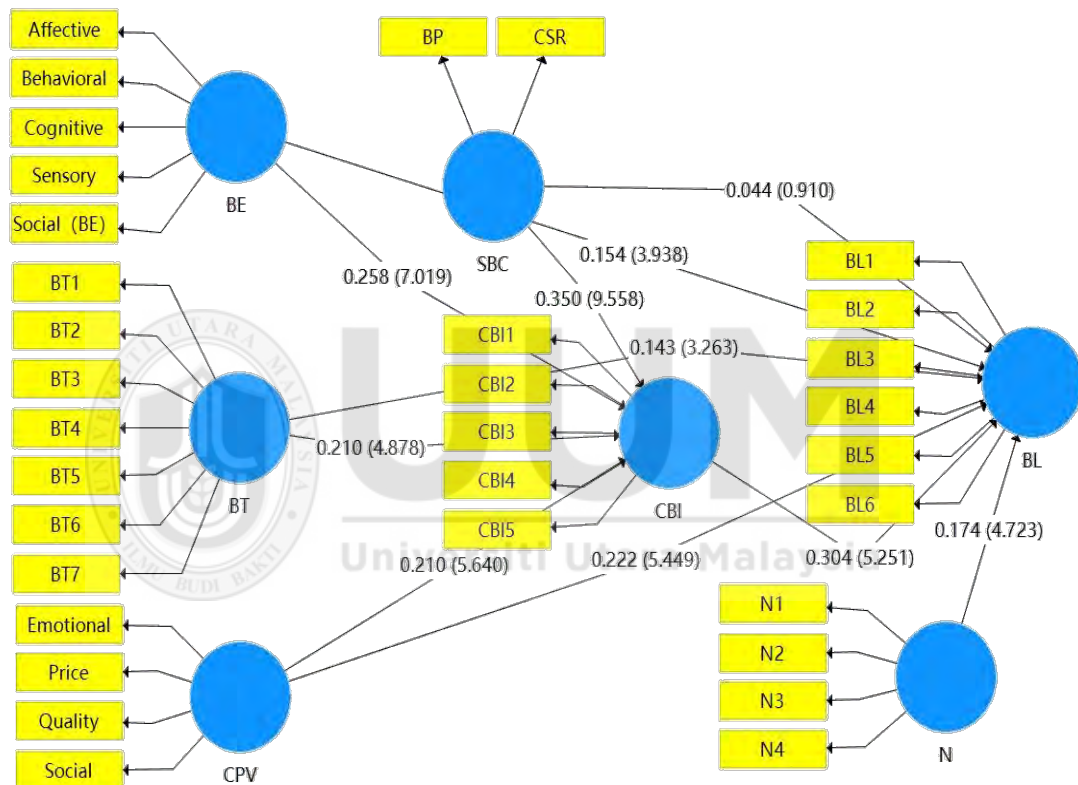


Figure 1.7
Measurement Model of the Second Order

4.7.5 Testing Direct Relationships

In this section, the study presents all direct relationships among variables within the research model. According to Hair, Hult et al. (2014), the bootstrapping method is an effective statistical procedure for estimating the precision of path coefficients in partial least squares (PLS) structural equation modeling. This technique enables the calculation of standard errors by resampling the original dataset multiple times, thus allowing for

the evaluation of the robustness and significance of the estimated paths. Following the guidelines provided by Hair, Hult et al. (2014), this study employed the bootstrapping procedure with 5,000 subsamples using PLS version 3 to generate accurate path coefficient estimates, especially given the sample size ($n=432$). The implementation of bootstrapping with a large number of iterations, as conducted here, provides a robust basis for hypothesis testing and enhances the reliability of the statistical inferences.

Table 3.8
Hypotheses Testing Results

	Std.	Sample	T-	P-	
Hypotheses	Beta	Mean	values	values	Decision
BE -> BL (H1)	0.154	0.154	3.938	0.000	Supported
BE -> CBI (H2)	0.258	0.257	7.019	0.000	Supported
BT -> BL (H3)	0.143	0.143	3.263	0.001	Supported
BT -> CBI (H4)	0.210	0.212	4.878	0.000	Supported
CBI -> BL (H5)	0.304	0.303	5.251	0.000	Supported
CPV -> BL (H6)	0.222	0.222	5.449	0.000	Supported
CPV -> CBI (H7)	0.210	0.210	5.640	0.000	Supported
SBC -> BL (H8)	0.044	0.044	0.910	0.363	Not Supported
SBC -> CBI (H9)	0.350	0.349	9.558	0.000	Supported

*Note: * Significant: $P < 0.10$, ** Significant: $P < 0.05$, *** Significant: $P < 0.01$ based on the two-tailed t -statistics, as t -value greater than 1.65, 1.96 and 2.58. Note: BE=brand experience, BT=brand trust, SBC=self-brand congruity, CPV=customer perceived value, BL=brand loyalty, CBI=consumer-brand identification.*

The table 3.8 reveals that the hypothesis 1 specifically posits that there is a positive association between BE and BL. The beta coefficient (β) has a value of 0.154, the t -statistic is 3.938, the p -value is 0.000, and the hypothesis 1 is accepted. Hypothesis 2 asserts that there is a substantial and positive relationship between BE and CBI, with a beta coefficient of 0.258, a T -value of 7.019, and a p -value of 0.000. The hypothesis 2 is accepted. The data supports Hypothesis 3, which implies a strong positive connection between BT and BL. The regression coefficient (β) is 0.143, with a corresponding T -value of 3.263 and a p -value of 0.001. Therefore, Hypothesis 3 is accepted. Hypothesis 4 demonstrates a strong and statistically significant positive association between BT and

CBI ($\beta=0.210$, T-value =4.878, $p=0.000$), thereby confirming its validity.

Hypothesis 5 supports that there is a positive and significant relationship between CBI and BL ($\beta=0.304$, T-value=5.251, $p=0.000$). Hypothesis 6 demonstrates a statistically significant positive correlation between CPV and BL ($\beta=0.222$, T-value=5.449, $p=0.000$). The relationship between CPV and CBI indicates that there is a statistically significant positive correlation. The beta coefficient (β) is 0.210, the T-value is 5.640, and the p-value is 0.000. Therefore, hypothesis 7 is confirmed. Regarding hypothesis 8 concerning the association between SBC and BL, the finding reveals the link between the two variables ($\beta=0.044$, T-value=0.910, $p=0.363$) is not supported. However, hypothesis 9 demonstrates a strong and statistically significant correlation between SBC and CBI ($\beta=0.350$, T-value=9.558, $P=0.000$). Thus, hypothesis 9 is accepted as a result.

4.7.6 Testing the Mediating Effect

Interventions involving a third variable with two or more structures are considered to have mediating effects (Hair et al., 2017). According to Hayes and Preacher (2010), there are actually two relationships that make up the mediation effect. One is between the independent variable, or predictor, and the mediating variable. The other is between the mediating variable and the dependent variable. This study adopted the bootstrapping method, as recommended by Henseler et al. (2016) and Preacher and Hayes (2008), to examine the mediating effect of consumer-brand identification on various determinants (brand experience, brand trust, customer perceived value and self-brand congruity) and brand loyalty as the dependent variable.

The mediation results presented in Table 3.9 indicate that CBI acts as a mediator in the link between BE and BL in the context of Chinese sports brands, with a mediation coefficient (β) of 0.078, t-value of 4.030, and a p-value of 0.000. The CBI plays a role in connecting BT and BL in the Chinese sports brands business, with a beta coefficient

of 0.064, a t-value of 3.741, and a p-value of 0.000. The association between CPV and BL is mediated by CBI, with a mediation effect size of $\beta = 0.064$, a t-value of 3.921, and a p-value of 0.000. Finally, the outcome confirms that CBI acts as a mediator in the association between SBC and BL, with a β value of 0.106, a t-value of 4.342, and a p-value of 0.000. Therefore, hypotheses H10-13 were supported in this study.

Table 3.9
Mediation Results

Hypotheses	Std. Beta	Sample Mean	T-values	P-values	Decision
BE->CBI->BL (H10)	0.078	0.078	4.030	0.000	Supported
BT->CBI->BL (H11)	0.064	0.063	3.741	0.000	Supported
CPV -> CBI->BL (H12)	0.064	0.064	3.921	0.000	Supported
SBC->CBI->BL (H13)	0.106	0.106	4.342	0.000	Supported

Note: * Significant: $P < 0.10$, ** Significant: $P < 0.05$, *** Significant: $P < 0.01$ base on the two-tailed t-statistics, as t-value greater than 1.65, 1.96 and 2.58. Note: BE=brand experience, BT=brand trust, SBC=self-brand congruity, CPV=customer perceived value, BL=brand loyalty, CBI=consumer-brand identification.

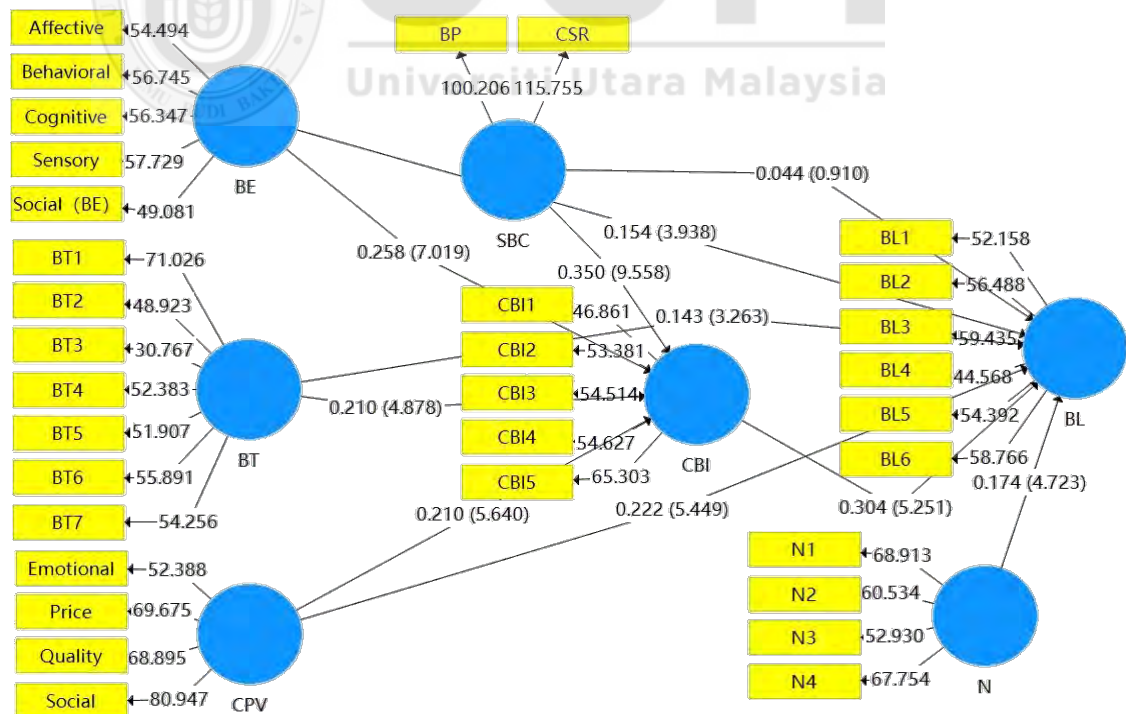


Figure 1.8
Structural Model (Mediation Effect)

4.7.7 Testing the Moderating Effect

According to scholars, a moderating variable is a variable that influences the interaction between other factors in a way that the impact of the predictor on the standard variable changes depending on the degree and value of the moderating variable (Sarstedt, Ringle et al., 2014). In other words, mediating variables have the ability to both enhance and diminish the link between various variables. Hence, moderators have the capacity to exert control over the intensity and orientation of the connection between variables in a structural model (Sarstedt, Ringle et al., 2014).

Henseler and Chin (2010) identified four fundamental strategies for assessing interaction effects using SmartPLS. The methods include the index method, two-stage technique, mixed method, and orthogonal method. This study employs diverse methodologies to ascertain the moderating influence of nostalgia on the association between consumer-brand identification and brand loyalty. The result presented in Table 4.0 demonstrates that the interaction terms of CBI*BL and Nostalgia is statistically significant ($\beta=0.144$, $t=4.557$, $p=0.000$). Consequently, the hypothesis 14 is supported. The T-value of 4.557 is significant and provides evidence for moderation, as indicated by the positive beta coefficient. Indeed, the inclusion of nostalgia actually enhances the bond, rather than diminishing it as previously supposed.

Table 4.0
Moderating Effect

Relationship	Std. Beta	Sample Mean	T-values	P-values	Decision
CBI*BL->BL (H14)	0.144	0.142	4.557	0.000	Supported

*Note: * Significant: $P<0.10$, ** Significant: $P<0.05$, *** Significant: $P<0.01$ base on the two-tailed t-statistics, as t-value greater than 1.65, 1.96 and 2.58. Note: BL=brand loyalty.*

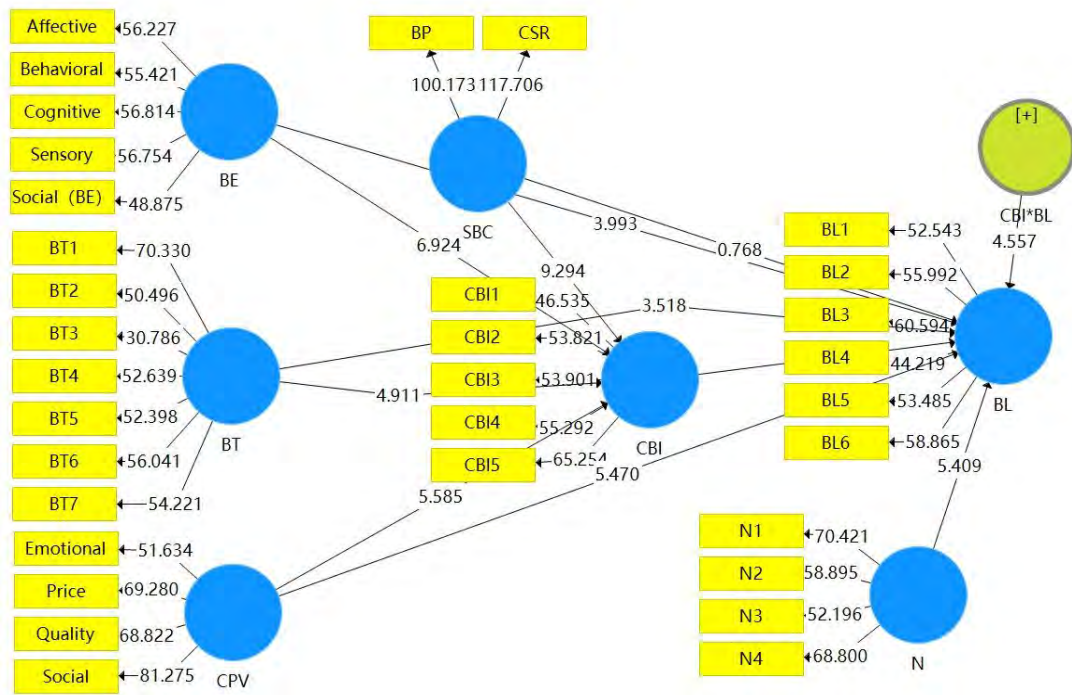


Figure 1.9
Structural Model (Moderation Effect)

4.7.8 Variance Explain (R^2)

The coefficient of determination quantifies the overall impact of the independent variable on the dependent variable. The technique of evaluating structural models by considering the contribution of external factors to endogenous variables is widely employed (Hair et al., 2017). Typically, R^2 values of 0.75, 0.50, and 0.25 are considered acceptable criteria, indicating strong, moderate, and weak values correspondingly (Henseler et al., 2009; Hair et al., 2017). The R-squared values of the two endogenous potential variables in this study are displayed in Table 4.1 and Figure 2.0.

Table 4.1
R-Squared Results

R2	R Square
BL	0.624
CBI	0.602

Note: BL=brand loyalty, CBI=consumer-brand identification.

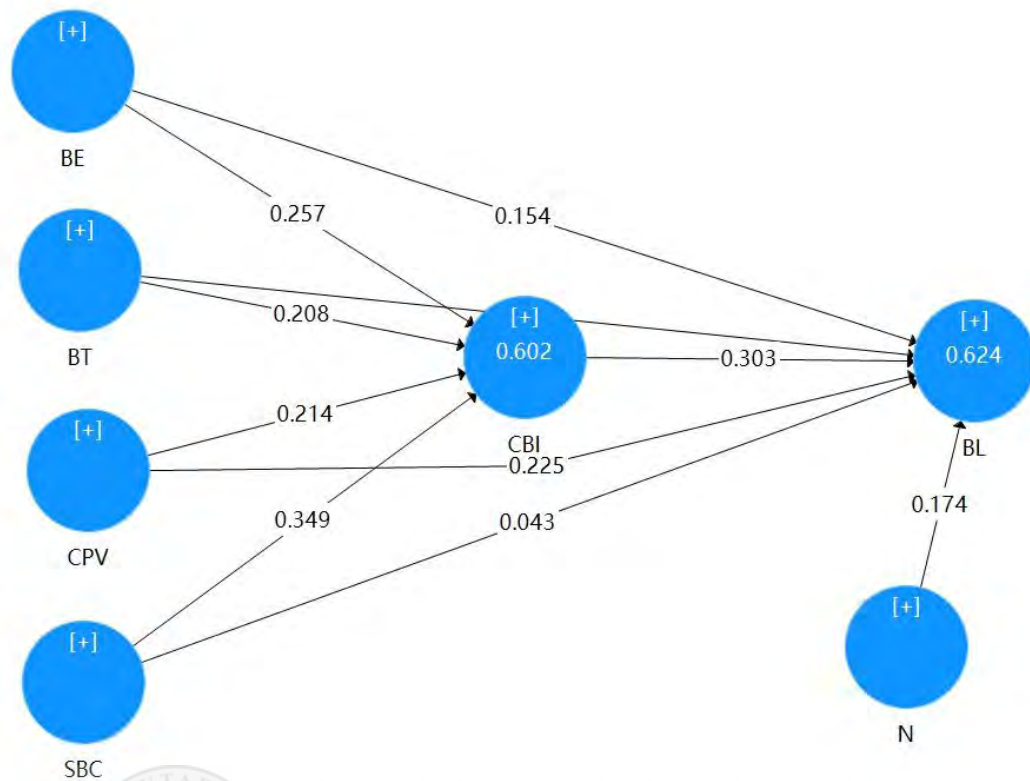


Figure 2.0
Structural Model (R^2)

Table 4.1 and Figure 2.0 illustrate that the research model successfully explained 62.4% of the total variance in brand loyalty and 60.2% of the total variance in consumer-brand identification. These findings indicate that the exogenous latent variables in the study collectively accounted for 62.4% and 60.2% of the variability in brand loyalty and consumer-brand identification, respectively. Consequently, it can be asserted that the two endogenous latent constructs exhibit a satisfactory level of R^2 , which is considered moderate based on the guidelines provided by Hair et al. (2017).

4.7.9 Assessment Effect Size (f^2)

The research measured the effect size to have a better idea of how valuable endogenous variables are. According to Hair et al. (2013), this means that certain exogenous variables have an effect on endogenous variables by changing the mean value of R^2 .

This is an attempt to determine if external structures significantly impact internal variables. Cohen (1998) states that an effect size of 0.02 is deemed weak. When it is 0.15, it is moderate, and when it is 0.35, it is strong. Table 4.2 and Figure 2.1 show that the impact size is below the acceptable threshold range suggested by Cohen (1998).

Table 4.2
Effect Size

Relationship	F ²	Size
BE->CBI	0.127	Moderate
BE->BL	0.042	Small
BT->CBI	0.071	Small
BT->BL	0.032	Small
CPV->CBI	0.080	Moderate
CPV->BL	0.085	Moderate
SBC->CBI	0.212	Moderate
SBC->BL	0.003	Small
CBI->BL	0.095	Moderate

Note: BE=brand experience, BT=brand trust, SBC=self-brand congruity, CPV=customer perceived value, BL=brand loyalty, CBI=consumer-brand identification.

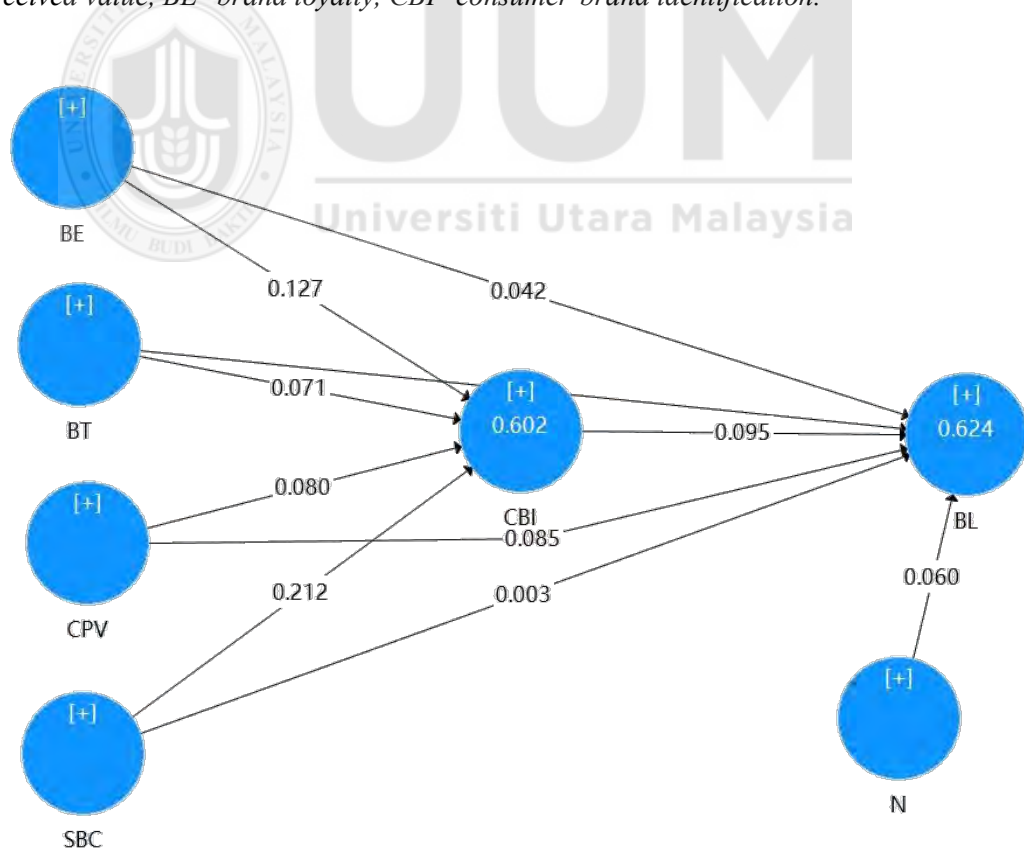


Figure 2.1
Structural Model (f^2)

4.7.10 The Predictive Relevance (Q^2)

Evaluating the predictive significance of a model is crucial as it quantifies the model's ability to make accurate predictions (Vinzi et al., 2010). Predictive correlation seeks to assess the accuracy of predictions made on data that was not used to estimate the parameters of a model (Hair et al., 2017). Thus, Q^2 assesses the robustness of the prediction when applied to new data. Hair et al. (2013) proposed that once the impact magnitude or change in R^2 has been determined, it is important to assess the predictive significance of the model. Nevertheless, this work employs a blindfolding technique, which is a type of sample reuse that involves removing a piece of the data matrix and then using model estimates to predict the excluded area (Hair et al., 2017).

In addition, a Q^2 greater than zero is considered to have predictive importance; this finding is supported by Hair et al. (2014). The predictive relevance of the IV (CBI) on the DV (BL) is all above zero (0.414 for CBI and 0.426 for BL) refer to Figure 2.2.

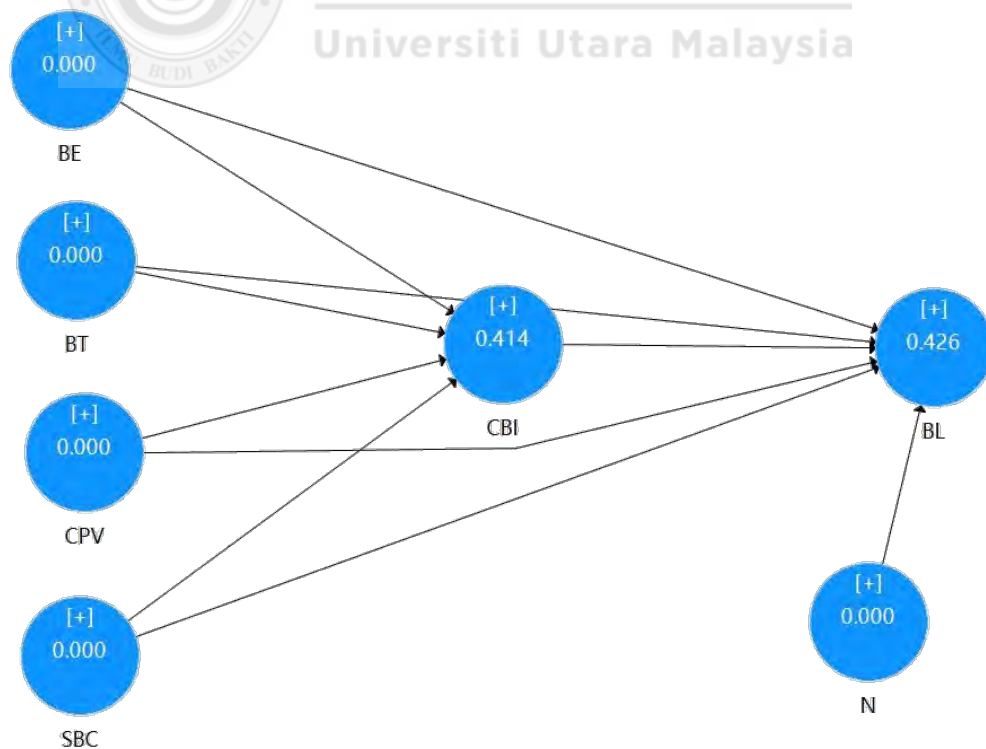


Figure 2.2
Structural Model(Q^2)

4.8 Findings Summary

Based on the data analysis results recorded in this chapter, the findings revealed by this study are as follows:

Table 4.3
Findings of Summary

	Relationship	Decision
H1	Brand experience is positively related to brand loyalty in Chinese sports brands industry.	Supported
H2	Brand experience is positively related to consumer-brand identification in Chinese sports brands industry.	Supported
H3	Brand trust is positively related to brand loyalty in Chinese sports brands industry.	Supported
H4	Brand trust is positively related to consumer-brand identification in Chinese sports brands industry.	Supported
H5	Consumer-brand identification is positively related to brand loyalty in Chinese sports brands industry.	Supported
H6	Customer perceived value is positively related to brand loyalty in Chinese sports brands industry.	Supported
H7	Customer perceived value is positively related to consumer-brand identification in Chinese sports brands industry.	Supported
H8	Self-brand congruity is positively related to brand loyalty in Chinese sports brands industry.	Not supported
H9	Self-brand congruity is positively related to consumer-brand identification in Chinese sports brands industry.	Supported
H10	Consumer-brand identification mediates the relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty in Chinese sports brands industry.	Supported
H11	Consumer-brand identification mediates the relationship between brand trust and brand loyalty in Chinese sports brands industry.	Supported
H12	Consumer-brand identification mediates the relationship between customer perceived value and brand loyalty in Chinese sports brands industry.	Supported
H13	Consumer-brand identification mediates the relationship between self-brand congruity and brand loyalty in Chinese sports brands industry.	Supported
H14	Nostalgia moderates the relationship between consumer-brand identification and brand loyalty in Chinese sports brands industry.	Supported

4.9 Chapter Summary

The core research findings are summarized as follows: Direct Effects: The results of the structural model path analysis clearly indicate that brand experience, brand trust, and customer perceived value all exert a significant positive direct effect on brand loyalty. However, the direct effect of self-brand congruity on brand loyalty did not reach statistical significance. This indicates that, within the context of this study, self-brand congruity is not a key antecedent factor driving brand loyalty. Mediation effect testing via Bootstrap sampling confirmed the mediating role of consumer-brand identification in these relationships.

Moderation effect analysis further revealed that nostalgia plays a significant moderating role in the relationship between consumer-brand identification and brand loyalty. The results demonstrate that the higher the level of consumers' nostalgia proneness, the stronger the positive enhancing effect of identification on brand loyalty, and vice versa. This provides empirical support for understanding the boundary conditions of emotional factors in brand relationships.

In summary, this study employed SPSS for foundational analyses including descriptive statistical analysis, reliability and validity assessments (comprising reliability analysis, Exploratory Factor Analysis - EFA), and tests for common method bias. Subsequently, SmartPLS was utilized to construct a Structural Equation Model (SEM). Key analyses conducted included measurement model evaluation (Confirmatory Factor Analysis - CFA), structural model path analysis, mediation effect testing (using the Bootstrap method), and moderation effect testing, providing a systematic and rigorous empirical examination of the research hypotheses. The findings provide significant empirical evidence for a deeper understanding of the formation mechanisms of brand loyalty.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

The current chapter presents the findings of the preceding chapter. The initial section offers a comprehensive overview of the research, encompassing responses to the research questions formulated in the initial chapter. Subsequently, this chapter delineates the contributions from both theoretical and practical standpoints. Lastly, recommendations for future research are proposed, and the limitations are acknowledged. Ultimately, the conclusion section encapsulates the entirety of the text.

Based on social exchange and social identity theory, the purpose of the present study is to investigate the factors of brand loyalty in sports brands industry in China. The achievement of the research objective would assist sports brands managers and academic researchers to understand and explain the drives and results of behavioral intention and attitude tendency of sports brands consumers in China.

5.2 Summary of Findings

This study effectively enhances the understanding of key factors influencing brand loyalty within the sports brands context, aiming to address the following research questions.

1. What is the relationship between brand experience, brand trust, customer perceived value, self-brand congruity and brand loyalty among Gen Y consumers in sports brands industry in China?
2. What is the relationship between consumer-brand identification and brand loyalty among Gen Y consumers in sports brands industry in China?

3. What is the mediating effect of consumer-brand identification in the relationship between brand experience, brand trust, customer perceived value, self-brand congruity and brand loyalty among Gen Y consumers in sports brands industry in China?
4. Does nostalgia moderate the relationship between consumer-brand identification and brand loyalty in sports brands industry in China?

The second chapter critically examines a substantial body of literature, with a primary focus on previous research pertaining to the seven variables. Drawing from social exchange and social identity theories, this chapter seeks to elucidate potential relationships between these variables. Subsequently, research hypotheses are formulated based on the identified research questions and objectives, which are derived from gaps in prior studies. Furthermore, this study offers a more comprehensive exploration of brand loyalty model and consumer-brand identification as well as nostalgia as potential mediator and moderator.

Research methodology, including study design, sample procedure, sample size, and data analysis approach, is explained in Chapter 3 of this study. Participants in the study were asked to fill out questionnaire on their own time regarding consumption experiences with various sports brands in China. The study used a self-administered survey and a research methodology that included quantitative research approaches. There are 57 questions covering the main research variables and 6 questions covering the demographic profile in the survey. This study did a pilot study to evaluate the measurement tools before collecting data. Therefore, 432 questionnaires out of 558 total respondents were deemed valid.

In order to investigate the hypotheses of the study, the software packages SPSS 26

and SmartPLS 3 were employed. The first step in the process of publishing the findings was to conduct an analysis of the response rate, demographic profile, data screening and treatment, preliminary analysis, measurement and structural model, and hypothesis testing. The results of the investigation suggest that out of the total of fourteen hypotheses, thirteen of them have been supported. These hypotheses are as follows: H1, H2, H3, H4, H5, H6, H7, H9, H10, H11, H12, H13 and H14. In spite of this, the inquiry did not yield any evidence to support the hypotheses of H8.

5.3 Discussion

This study successfully established and empirically validated a comprehensive structural model delineating the direct and positive relationships between brand experience (BE), brand trust (BT), customer perceived value (CPV), self-brand congruity, consumer-brand identification (CBI), and brand loyalty (BL). Critically, the empirical results demonstrate that while a direct relationship between self-brand congruity (SBC) and brand loyalty was not supported, SBC significantly enhances BL indirectly through its positive effect on CBI. Furthermore, the study confirmed CBI's pivotal mediating role in the loyalty formation process and empirically established nostalgia as a significant moderator strengthening the relationship between CBI and BL.

The integrated empirical findings offer a crucial strategic roadmap for local sports brands, particularly in China, by clarifying the synergistic pathway to loyalty: Building distinctive and engaging BE serves as the foundational driver, directly enhancing CPV. This heightened perception of value is instrumental in fostering BT, which subsequently acts as a powerful catalyst for deepening CBI. Critically, it is this strong identification (CBI) – not necessarily direct value or trust perceptions alone – that emerges as the core engine directly propelling BL, especially when

amplified by resonant elements like nostalgia.

Therefore, local sports brands must systematically cultivate superior BE to elevate CPV, leverage this value to build robust BT, and channel this trust towards nurturing profound CBI – recognizing that this interconnected chain is paramount for achieving sustainable loyalty, particularly within collectivist and identity-driven markets. The unsupported direct path from self-congruity to BL further underscores that CBI is the essential conduit through which alignment with self-concept translates into loyal behavior.

5.3.1 Brand Experience and Brand Loyalty

The empirical result showed that among Chinese sports consumers, there is a strong and positive relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty. So, we can conclude that hypothesis 1 is supported. Based on the result, it seems that customers are more loyal, committed, and likely to buy from a company again when they have a positive experience with it. The result is in agreement with previous studies (Bae & Kim, 2023; Lacap & Tungcab, 2020; Mostafa & Kasamani, 2021; Rasool et al., 2021; Van der Westhuizen, 2018).

In order to leave a lasting impression on customers throughout the shopping experience and to build a positive emotional connection with the brands that are acquired, merchants of Chinese local sports brands provide customers with a pleasant environment in which to make purchases. Furthermore, local sports firms have a strong attention to product innovation, which effectively arouses consumers' interest in their products and motivates them to devote time and effort in finding the product's usage experience. This is a significant advantage for the businesses. In addition, the acquisition of sports brands may encourage individuals to participate in physical activities, establish healthy workout routines, and improve their overall

physical well-being.

In the end, the allure of local sports brands is what entices a large number of young customers to make purchases, which in turn helps to strengthen the trust that consumers have in the brand and gives them the opportunity to exhibit their uniqueness. Customers are more likely to develop a long-lasting connection with a brand when they have a positive experience with the brand, and they are also more likely to demonstrate loyalty to the brand.

5.3.2 Brand Experience and Consumer-Brand Identification

The findings in the current study show that brand experience (BE) did significantly and positively relate to consumer-brand identification (CBI), supporting hypothesis 2: There is a positive relationship between BE and CBI. Meanwhile, this result also consistent with the findings of past studies by Feiz and Moradi (2020), Kumar and Kaushik (2020), Harjadi et al. (2023), Kumar and Kaushik (2018) and Rather et al., (2022). The abovementioned studies explored a positive relationship between BE and CBI. The literature further suggests that brand experience plays a critical role in enhancing brand identification across various industries.

The conclusion of this study support that sports brands can enhance consumers' brand identity by providing consumers with memorable and impressive brand experiences. In particular, affective or emotional experiences generated during brand-stimulating interactions generate favorable attitudes toward the brand, which may further help consumers identify with a particular brand. Therefore, consumers are willing to strengthen strong favorable attitude towards sports brands through unique and enhanced experiences. For example, if a customer has developed a good psychological connection with his/her chosen brand during an enjoyable and

memorable experience, he or she will find it easier to identify with the brand (Fatma et al., 2016). Kumar and Kaushik (2020) revealed that sensory and behavioral experience affected brand identification in both product and service brands. Hence, the experiential stimuli of sports brands tend to evoke favorable responses to local sports brands, which leads to consumers' identification with them.

5.3.3 Brand Trust and Brand Loyalty

The primary query that this study endeavors to address is whether brand trust (BT) exerts a substantive influence on brand loyalty (BL) in the sports brand enterprise. Bearing this survey in contemplation, a postulation is proffered that prognosticates the presence of a marked positive correlation between BT and BL, and this postulation is subsequently verified through empirical inquiries to fulfill this objective. As anticipated, the discoveries of this study furnish adequate substantiation to warrant the acceptance of this hypothesis. These revelations accentuate the reality that there is a considerable positive correlation between BT and BL within the purview of sports brands.

In accordance with the findings, an individual's perception of sports goods and services is interrelated to what guests actually procure, which is mirrored in the notion of brand trust. It can be discerned that the conclusion that there is a significant correlation between BT and BL has been independently buttressed by previous studies (Akoglu & Özbek, 2022; Orazgaliyeva et al., 2024; Sohaib & Han, 2023; Wongsansukcharoen, 2022).

The relationship between BT and BL can be observed at sporting events where, for example, fans may wear sportswear to a game to show their love for their team, and the behavior may be described as particularly passionate. In a similar vein, the

mental characteristics of customers who purchase sports brands are the same. Membership in a group is accorded a significant amount of importance in social identity theory, as well as in social psychology in general. According to Tajfel and Turner (1979), individuals who have a strong identification with the in-group would perceive their sense of self through membership in the group and will act on behalf of the group to fulfil their sense of self.

Consequently, individuals who have a strong sense of identification with their in-group perceive themselves in terms of members of the group, have a sense of closeness to the group, are dedicated to the group, and take actions on behalf of the group (Tanis & Postmes, 2005). According to social identity theory, membership in a group might result in a preference for members of the same group, particularly in terms of trust amongst members of the group. In their study, Neville et al. (2022, page 159) asserted that "a shared social identity leads to trust, respect, cooperation, help, and support among group members - in short, a shift towards intimacy." Therefore, the formation of a close relationship with the customer creates a bridge for the customer to remain loyal to the company. For domestic sports brand owners, fulfilling their commitment to provide consumers with high-quality and low-priced products can win their trust and thereby build a long-term bond with them.

5.3.4 Brand Trust and Consumer-Brand Identification

This study demonstrates that there is a substantial and positive association between brand trust (BT) and consumer-brand identification (CBI). Therefore, consumers of sports brands will enhance their identification as a result of their confidence in the brand. Thus, it is imperative for sports brand proprietors to establish a trust-based rapport with consumers in order to facilitate the acquisition of consumer recognition for sports brands. Sports brand owners must uphold the commitment made by the

brand, deliver products and services that satisfy consumer requirements, and develop a robust consumer-brand trust connection.

Consequently, consumers will develop a feeling of affiliation with the brand through trust and make efforts to sustain the brand relationship. In other words, the more consumers trust the brand, the higher the consumer's identification with the brand. The finding of this study is consistent with the findings of previous researchers who have examined the relationship of BT and CBI (Chua et al., 2024; Min et al., 2023; Kim, Ko & Choi, 2024).

Social exchange theory posits that trust is fundamental to the development of meaningful relationships. It is crucial for businesses to present themselves in a reliable light to consumers. In order to project an image of competence, consumers frequently align themselves with reputable brands. When consumers have a good impression of a company or brand that they believe in and find trustworthy, helpful, and honest, they are more likely to identify with that image (Martínez & Del Bosque, 2013). As a result, building a strong and personal connection between two parties becomes much easier when they have a common vision.

5.3.5 Customer Perceived Value and Brand Loyalty

Customer perceived value (CPV) has a substantial positive effect on brand loyalty (BL) within the Chinese sports brands industry, as indicated by a separate hypothesis that relates to the aforementioned objective. This hypothesis aims to examine the relationship between customer behaviour and their perception of value. The statistical analysis provided by the PLS model reveals a considerable correlation between the perceived value of sports customers and their brand loyalty. Hence, perceived value that a customer derives from a sports brand is closely

correlated with their inclination to maintain loyalty towards the company's products. Hence, the hypothesis 5 is supported. This discovery is in line with the results of previous studies (Barusman, 2024; Kaewkhav et al., 2023; Pratiwi et al., 2021; Steven & Ruslim, 2023).

The notion that social exchange encompasses a sequence of encounters that give rise to duties is widely accepted by social exchange theorists (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). The behaviour in this setting is influenced by the interplay between "cost" and "reward", with a strong emphasis on the desired outcome and perceived value of the transaction. According to Cook et al. (2013), individuals evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of potential results while making decisions. This research focuses on the reciprocal relationship between sports brand merchants and their customers. Trust is believed to grow through reciprocal exchanges, making the nature of the relationship between the individuals involved vital in social exchange theory (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005).

Brands provide products and services that consumers assess by weighing the associated costs and benefits, which can influence their loyalty and subsequent behaviors. Consumers do not merely evaluate the utilitarian and hedonic value of products; they often develop a strong sense of community with others who share similar preferences, particularly favoring domestically produced goods due to collective societal values. This collective identity fosters a higher propensity for brand loyalty within the group. Drawing on social identity theory, consumers align their personal interests with the brand's attributes to maintain and reinforce their group identity, leading to deeper brand commitment and advocacy.

Therefore, it is imperative for local sports brands to strategically elevate consumer perceived value across all touchpoints. By consistently delivering superior value

through product innovation, quality service, and resonant brand experiences, these brands can more effectively strengthen the collective identity underpinning loyalty and secure a sustainable competitive advantage.

5.3.6 Customer Perceived Value and Consumer-Brand Identification

The empirical results from this study indicated a significant and positive influence on the customer perceived value (CPV) and consumer-brand identification (CBI) in sports brands industry in China. Hence, the hypothesis 6 is supported. These results are consistent with other past researches (Abd Aziz & Ngah, 2019; Dang-Van et al., 2023; Tian & Arif, 2023; Xi et al., 2022). Research on customer-company identity shows that when customers meet the need to enhance social identity through interaction with the brand, the brand will become personally relevant, which can lead to strong customer identification with the company, that is, when consumers can get more value from the brand than from competitors' products. They will also buy brands to boost their self-esteem, thus making these images concrete. Consumers, in turn, identify with brands that reflect and reinforce their identity (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2003).

This study focuses on investigating how customers derive both practical and hedonic value from local sports brands. Moreover, it examined how consumers' use of these brands leads to the establishment of social connections and the improvement of their self-perception. As a result, brand identification was not determined solely by its inherent features, but rather by the perceived value the belief that individuals attributed to the brand (Park & Kim, 2006). Consequently, local sports brands must prioritize enhancing multidimensional perceived value – encompassing functional utility, emotional engagement, and social identity reinforcement – as the fundamental catalyst for cultivating strong consumer-brand

identification. Strategically orchestrating touchpoints to consistently deliver superior and culturally resonant value propositions is therefore imperative for fostering deep identification and securing sustainable loyalty within the competitive domestic market.

5.3.7 Self-Brand Congruity and Brand Loyalty

The empirical result from this study indicated an insignificant relationship between self-brand congruity (SBC) and brand loyalty (BL) in sports brands industry in China. Therefore, the hypothesis is not supported. Hence, the result is inconsistent with other previous studies (Zhang, 2022; Liu et al., 2019; Suyoto & Tannady, 2022; Shetty & Fitzsimmons, 2022). The result suggests that Chinese sports brands consumers will not be loyal to the brand due to the consistency of brand personality and corporate social responsibility.

The term "self-brand congruity" refers to the phenomenon in which consumers see a likeness between themselves and a brand depending on the manner in which the personality of the brand is portrayed (Aaker, 1997). Having this resemblance gives customers the opportunity to express themselves. External manifestations of brand value include brand personality as well as the completion of corporate social responsibility obligations. Consumers, in general, have a pragmatic attitude and place a higher priority on aspects that directly influence their own interests, such as the cost of the product or quality and the level of service provided. When it comes to developing a favorable image in the eyes of society and setting a firm apart from others, there is no question that the personality of a brand and the corporate social responsibility of a company are vitally important factors. It is important to note that this procedure calls for a considerable quantity of time. In addition to this, the procedure continues to face a variety of obstacles.

Chinese local sports brands have a short history, and brand image and reputation are still far behind those of international sports brands. It takes time to build a long-term and close relationship with consumers by relying on external aspects such as brand personality and corporate social responsibility. As a result, the findings of this study do not give any evidence to support the hypothesis that there is a connection between self-brand congruity and brand loyalty.

Nevertheless, it remains imperative for local sports brands to proactively implement measures to enhance the communication of their brand identity and diligently fulfill their social responsibilities. These actions constitute strategic imperatives for fostering consumer goodwill and establishing a robust market presence. While the immediate link to loyalty via self-congruity may not be evident now, sustained commitment to these areas is crucial. Forging a strong brand image and ingrained positive perception in the minds of consumers is fundamentally an incremental process, demanding persistent effort and long-term investment.

5.3.8 Self-Brand Congruity and Consumer-Brand Identification

The positive and significant relationship between self-brand congruity (SBC) and consumer-brand identification (CBI) is supported in this study. Most importantly, the finding is consistent with previous studies (Büyükdağ & Kitapci, 2021; Djamaran et al., 2023; Kwon & Ha, 2023). Lam et al (2013) revealed that the concept of SBC can be seen as a direct antecedent of CBI when addressing the similarity or dissimilarity between the self and the brand. Sirgy (1982) defined that the question of congruity denotes both brand congruity with self-image and with ideal self-image as the underlying consumer's motives, which include the need for self-consistency and self-esteem.

In addition, Nandan (2005) reminds us that it is the customer who subjectively ascribes a persona to the brand based on his/her own associations and experiences, so the perceived (in)congruence occurs with brand image rather than with brand identity. Based on the consistency of brand image and consumers' own image, consumers can stimulate the identification of the purchased brand. In other words, the congruity of self-brand is reflected in the perception of brand image, which can deepen the identity of the brand.

Social exchange theory offers a persuasive account of how and why consumers establish, maintain, or terminate relationships with brands (Fournier, 1998). It also explains the fundamental process of consumer attraction to brands through the concept of trait comparison and alignment (Sirgy, 1982). The main motivation for customers to build a connection with sports brands is the alignment between the brand image and the consumer's own image. Similar to interpersonal connections, those who share common interests are more inclined to form friendships. Sports brands aggressively cultivate a positive social image by fulfilling social responsibilities, hence attracting consumers who align with their desired self-image. The distinction between the two can result in personal development (Aron et al., 1991). This personal growth or self-promotion contributes to the formation of a lasting bond between consumers and brands (Fournier, 1998), which is closely tied to the identification of sports brands.

5.3.9 Consumer-Brand Identification and Brand Loyalty

The research question aimed to identify the correlations between the variables of consumer-brand identification (CBI) and brand loyalty (BL), as part of the study's broader objective. Therefore, in accordance with this study topic, a hypothesis was formulated stating that there is a significant and positive correlation between these

two variables. The establishment of a strong alignment between brand identity and consumer's image creates a sense of belonging to the brand, which in turn contributes to the development of consumer-brand identification (Lam et al., 2013).

On the other hand, when customers have a strong connection to a brand, it can enhance their self-esteem by aligning with the image they want to portray (Kressmann et al., 2006). Thus, a brand that aligns with the current and desired identity of consumers will gain the favor of those consumers and consequently foster brand loyalty. The results of this study suggest that Chinese local sports brands have a stronger connection with their intended audience when compared to multinational sports brands. In recent years, Chinese domestic sports brands have been achieving impressive results, leading to a change in consumer perspectives and the gradual development of a strong bond between customers and sports brands.

The empirical results presented in this study lends support to the idea that CBI has a significant impact on BL. The CBI gap refers to the disparity that exists between the way in which a brand is perceived to function and the expectations that customers of that brand have for that brand. In this instance, the positive connection that consumers hold with the sports brand and the extent to which the brand fulfills or surpasses their demands are manifested in consumers' expectations of the brand. If they are content with the experience, they will be more disposed to return and share with others the favorable aspects that sport has brought to their participation.

Consequently, the empirical evidence regarding the influence of CBI on the activation of the loyalty process gathered in this study is in alignment with the outcomes of previous studies (Fatma & Khan, 2023; Namkung & Park, 2021; Noh & Johnson, 2019; Rather & Hollebeek, 2019; Salim et al., 2024). The SIT can perfectly support the foregoing argument (Rather, 2017). The selection of products,

objects, or brands utilized in daily routines serves as a reflection of an individual's personality, contributing to the construction of their unique persona.

Additionally, these choices contribute to the association of positive memories and further underline their distinctiveness (Tuškej et al., 2013). CBI refers to the psychological process through which customers develop a strong emotional connection to a business, which in turn influences the strength of the long-term relationship between the brand and the consumer. As customers further establish their brand identity, this connection will likewise intensify, leading to the natural development of BL. This study investigates how sports brands can enhance consumers' self-perception, ultimately driving brand loyalty. For Chinese domestic sports brands seeking to strengthen consumer identification and foster loyal behaviors, targeted strategies are essential.

Specifically, brands should proactively cultivate distinct consumer identities—such as the athletic achiever, fashion-forward trendsetter, or proud local supporter—through their branding and marketing. Concurrently, enhancing multidimensional value perception is critical. This involves strategically emphasizing both functional value (e.g., competitive price-performance ratios) and unique cultural value (e.g., authentic integration of Chinese traditional cultural elements). By aligning the brand image with these desired consumer identities and delivering multifaceted value, brands can foster a stronger sense of belonging and connection. This deliberate cultivation of identity affiliation and perceived value is a potent pathway for local brands to build lasting consumer loyalty.

5.3.10 Consumer-Brand Identification as a Mediator

Emotional and social connections play a pivotal role in shaping consumer-brand relationships. Stokburger-Sauer et al. (2012) provided evidence that emotional

experiences associated with a brand can significantly contribute to the development of consumer-brand identification (CBI). Furthermore, because consumers often associate sports brands with superior products and services, they expect to derive greater value from these brands. Similarly, Bhattacharya and Sen (2003) highlighted that, according to social identity theory, brands are essential sources of social identity, helping customers enhance their self-improvement and self-esteem.

With this in mind, it is possible to draw the conclusion that the social identity of the brand can be improved by the high-quality characteristics of sports items. CBI was found to be a mediator of the relationship between perceived quality and customer loyalty, according to research conducted by Gontur et al. (2022). It was inferred that consumers can be induced to have subsequent behavioural intention towards retail products if they are offered a reasonable price and a good quality product. This can increase the incentive of identification.

It was also discovered through empirical research that CBI does, in fact, act as a mediator in the connection between BE and BL. This was proven to be the case with regard to the mediating influence of CBI. In addition, this is in keeping with the research that Kumar and Kaushik (2018) have conducted. Despite the fact that there is a scarcity of empirical research that have investigated such associations, this result might not come as a surprise when taking into consideration the setting of the study and, in particular, the purchase behaviours of sports brands domain in China.

To be more specific, the research conducted by Shin et al. (2020), which is a reflection of their empirical findings, demonstrated that CBI acts as a mediator between the memorable brand experience and switching resistance. This suggests that having a positive experience with a brand is directly correlated to increased identification and, consequently, loyalty inside the brand.

The outcomes of this study evince that CBI does exert a salient mediatory role in the rapport between BT and BL. This discovery buttresses the supposition that CBI assumes an intermediary function between BT and BL. In order to forge perdurable relationships between customers and enterprises, the credibility and erudition of brands must be taken into consideration, as well as the capacity they proffer consumers to configure their own identities. According to Batra et al. (2012), these factors also impinge upon the manner in which consumers comport in relation to a brand.

Consumers possess the faculty to express themselves and construct their social identity with the succor of brands. Consumers are capable of identifying with brands that conform to their aspired self-image, which constitutes the reason behind this phenomenon. According to the research of Stokburger-Sauer et al. (2012), the formation of customer brand attitude will transpire in this stage. Thereby, CBI can be employed to illuminate certain consequences that hinge upon customers, such as loyalty (He et al., 2012). In other words, in this study, consumers' trust in sports brands constitutes the basis of brand identification. This is the consequence of their actions, entrenched in their perception that the brand is dedicated to its mission.

Young consumers in China have shown a preference for local sports brands over international brands in recent years. They have faith in the products produced by brand merchants as well as the quality assurance they offer. Additionally, brand merchants are actively committed to resolving the requests and concerns of their clients, such as by offering free return and exchange services within a week's time. Local sports brands are a representation of quality assurance, and good quality also means the manifestation of consumer taste. Additionally, good quality serves as a foundation for customers to create themselves and their social identity.

Therefore, the mediation effect of CBI on the relationship between CPV and BL is identified. The results of this study are consistent with those of previous research (Abd Aziz & Ngah, 2019). Researchers contend that identification may be the most important underlying psychological element that influences the product judgements, positive responses, and favorable product evaluations of consumers towards a particular brand or product (Ahearne et al., 2005). Based on research conducted by Donovan et al. (2006), those who identify with a brand are more likely to engage in acts that are favorable towards the brand.

According to Papista and Dimitriadis (2012), the likelihood of a customer being satisfied with the products offered by an organization increases in proportion to the degree to which the client identifies most strongly with the organization or brand in question. To be more exact, consumer brand attachment is a representation of a consumer's attachment to the brand. As a result, customers who have higher degrees of identification are more likely to have a positive evaluation of the value of an exchange connection with the brand of interest (He et al., 2012).

It is interesting to note that the statistical evidences demonstrated that CBI does, in fact, mediate the relationship between SBC and BL. Although the construct is still in its infancy, there are not many studies that investigate how CBI acts as a mediator in the relationship between SBC and BL. Despite the fact that the study did not find any evidence to support the hypothesis that there is a substantial connection between SBC and BL, it is possible to draw the logical conclusion that when customers are exposed to the items that are given by sports brands, they may have a high level of satisfaction, which can then lead to identification.

Similarly, Boo et al. (2024) emphasized that effective marketing strategies play a pivotal role in fostering alignment between consumers and corporate values.

Through these strategies, businesses can attract individuals whose personal values resonate with those of the company, creating a sense of shared identity. This alignment not only cultivates a cohesive consumer base but also facilitates the development of loyal customer groups who strongly identify with the organization and its mission. By leveraging this shared identification, companies can enhance customer retention and long-term brand loyalty.

5.3.11 Nostalgia as a Moderator

The ultimate objective of this study was purposed to scrutinize the moderating impact of nostalgia on the connections between CBI and BL within the sports brands context. In an endeavor to actualize this objective, the final hypothesis was formulated. It asserts that nostalgia tempers the relationship between CBI and BL in the sports brands industry in China.

Sedikides and Wildschut (2019) believed that collective nostalgia, to some extent, can strengthen the identification of internal groups, so that group members tend to show an attitude of domestic country bias. In other words, collective nostalgia has a certain group tendency. For internal groups, collective nostalgia is an important driving force in favor of positive action and can motivate social-related attitudes and behaviors. The research of other scholars also confirmed that collective nostalgia can strengthen the pro-sociality, group pride and group identity of group members (Wohl et al., 2020; Green et al., 2021).

Precisely, Nostalgia is thought to be a driver of improved attitudes and behavioral intentions, and most companies are likely to welcome it (Santini et al., 2023). For example, Chen et al. (2014) reported that nostalgia has both direct and indirect influences on consumers' consumption intentions in a nostalgic-themed restaurant.

The rationale is inferred that nostalgia has the ability to trigger consumers' feelings of being loved, to enhance consumers' self-esteem and optimism, and to foster consumers' social connectedness. Rhajbal et al. (2017) examined that nostalgia moderated the connection between brand attachment and loyalty.

This study underscores the critical role of nostalgia in the consumption of local sports brands. By connecting consumers to their past, these brands become powerful carriers for identity construction (Escalas & Bettman, 2003). This constant link to cultural heritage and shared social memory fosters a profound sense of group belonging. Crucially, this evoked nostalgia acts as a potent moderator, strengthening consumer identification with the brand and subsequently encouraging behaviors essential for maintaining group membership – namely, brand loyalty.

Therefore, domestic sports brands should strategically harness the power of nostalgia to reinforce this identification-loyalty pathway. Key measures include: Actively reintroducing and modernizing iconic designs, logos, and brand narratives from their own history or relevant national sporting heritage. Weaving authentic elements of local culture, history, and collective memories into product design, marketing campaigns, and brand storytelling. Creating platforms (e.g., online communities, events, archival projects) that encourage consumers to share personal stories and memories associated with the brand or the era it represents. Framing the brand not just as a product seller, but as a preserver and celebrator of shared cultural and sporting legacy.

5.4 Contribution of the Study

Nowadays, sports brands are facing more pressure from competition with the development of world economic integration. In order to maintain core competitiveness, sports brands require their loyal customers to achieve sustainable

development. As the findings of the study have been deliberated in the foregoing section, an endeavor will now be concentrated on the implication as well as the contribution of the study in this section. This study presents several theoretical and practical contributions, as expounded in the following section.

5.4.1 Theoretical Contribution

First of all. This study advances beyond the unidimensional constraints of traditional brand loyalty models by proposing a dual-driver framework integrating Social Exchange Theory (SET) and Social Identity Theory (SIT). This approach addresses critical gaps in existing theoretical paradigms, particularly within the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB). While TPB overemphasizes rational decision-making processes—centered on attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control—it neglects consumers' comprehensive value assessments (e.g., cost-performance ratios, functional utility) preceding attitude formation (Huang et al., 2025). Furthermore, TPB overlooks the pivotal roles of social dynamics (e.g., group pressure, brand community influence) and affective responses (Ajzen & Fishbein, 2005) in future behavior. The SET-SIT framework systematically resolves these limitations.

Self-Determination Theory (SDT) exhibits limitations in explaining consumer behavior. While SDT identifies fundamental psychological needs (autonomy, competence, and relatedness), it fails to elucidate how these needs manifest as specific behavioral intentions—such as repurchase decisions (Hagger & Chatzisarantis, 2009). Furthermore, the theory inadequately addresses mechanisms underlying sustained relationship maintenance, particularly across diverse cultural contexts.

The Deep Integration of SET: It reveals that loyalty toward domestic sports brands

is fundamentally a form of rational reciprocity rooted in cost-reward calculations. Initial attraction originates from functional value (i.e., product quality-price ratio), while long-term retention depends on relational trust (specifically, the fulfillment of brand promises). This fills the gap in TPB concerning "pre-attitudinal value judgment. The Complementary Role of SIT: It deciphers how Chinese Generation Y consumers employ brands for identity construction and social expression. Local brands have evolved into symbols of Guochao (national trend) collective identity, with consumption functioning as an act of cultural affiliation and a proclamation of generational values. This addresses the disconnection in SDT between motivation and action.

Social Exchange Theory (SET) establishes the rational foundation for brand engagement (evaluative judgments such as this brand is worth buying), while Social Identity Theory (SIT) activates emotional commitment (identity-based affiliations signifying this brand represents me). Their integration through consumer-brand identification creates a cyclical reinforcement process, comprehensively spanning the loyalty continuum from cognitive evaluation to behavioral habituation.

This synthesis carries significant implications for the Chinese context, challenging the dominance of Western individualism-centric frameworks. By centering collectivist cultural codes, the study redefines theoretical priorities. Specifically, it demonstrates that collective identity mechanisms—not individual self-expression—serve as the primary drivers of loyalty, establishing the primacy of SIT. Furthermore, it reveals that exchange-based loyalty, as conceptualized through SET, must be culturally mediated through constructs like Guochao (national pride) narratives to resonate effectively. Ultimately, this research establishes a unified rational-emotional-cultural framework for brand loyalty studies in emerging markets.

Second. This study significantly advances SIT and SET by demonstrating how consumer-brand identification (CBI) and nostalgia introduce temporal depth and emotional reciprocity into brand loyalty mechanisms—dimensions previously underdeveloped in both theoretical frameworks.

The empirical justification for the link between CBI and BL, as well as the direction of the associations, appears to be contradictory in the literature. This is the reason why it is necessary to add a moderating variable in the study. Rhajbal et al. (2017) points out that prior research frequently overlooked the significance of nostalgia in terms of its role as a moderator in the connection that involves the goal to remain loyal to a brand. Santini et al. (2023) discovered that consumers' attitudes and behavioural intentions are improved when they experience feelings of nostalgia. In addition, they identify a number of moderators that have an effect on the effects of nostalgia; however, the researchers failed to offer into account the moderating role that nostalgia has in relation to the behavioural intentions of consumers. This study addresses this objective, namely, to confirm that nostalgia plays a moderating role between CBI and BL.

Consumer-brand identification (CBI) plays a certain role in expanding the SIT theory. For instance, CBI extends SIT beyond present-focused identity alignment by serving as a temporal bridge. While prior research acknowledges identity evolution (Lam et al., 2013), it inadequately integrates culturally specific mechanisms. The findings demonstrate that CBI enables Gen Y consumers to reconcile past and present selves—for instance, through local brands that synthesize traditional Chinese cultural heritage with contemporary aesthetics. This process embeds brands within historical narratives, transforming static identity alignment into sustained loyalty. Consequently, SIT evolves from a static who am I framework to a dynamic who am I becoming process, positioning brands as anchors across life stages.

Nostalgia amplifies SET's transactional logic by functioning as a cultural amplifier. Classical SET emphasizes tangible cost-reward exchanges while neglecting emotional drivers (Barbalet, 2018). Nostalgia, however, converts collective memories (e.g., 2008 Olympics) into perceived emotional indebtedness (I should support the brand that grew up with me), triggering irrational reciprocity. Consumers repay this debt through premium purchases and advocacy. Thus, SET expands beyond economic exchange to encompass symbolic repayment of cultural heritage, reframing loyalty as moral obligation.

Critically, CBI and nostalgia synergize through moderated mediation to form a culturally coded loyalty loop. CBI mediates by transmuting SET-driven value assessments into identity fuel (This brand deserves my pride), while nostalgia moderates by intensifying SIT's emotional weight—transforming identification into self-continuity (I used to like this brand very much; my present self must protect it). This synergy generates temporal-emotional lock-in, wherein loyalty persists not merely for current benefits (SET) or present identity (SIT), but to honor past selves and generational legacy.

Third, this study addresses how brand experience (BE) influences brand loyalty (BL) through the mediating role of CBI, specifically within the context of Chinese local sports brands. As consumers process diverse brand stimuli during product and brand engagements, the intensity of BE's impact on identification varies significantly. While prior research (Stokburger-Sauer et al., 2012) has examined the general relationship between brand experience and brand identification, the discrete effects of BE's multidimensional components—and their mediating role in the BE-BL relationship—remain inadequately explored, particularly in emerging markets. Responding to Kumar and Kaushik's (2020) call for research on BE and CBI's

effects on specific relational constructs like loyalty, this study represents a targeted effort to validate these multidimensional pathways. It thus offers strategic recommendations for Chinese sports brands to cultivate distinctive brand experiences that strengthen consumer identification and loyalty.

Fourth. Past empirical studies did not focus enough on conceptualizing and validating the SBC construct, presumably because it is a new marketing construct. Through the SBC idea in the framework, the study offered a major contribution to theory, particularly with CBI triggers. The study also shows that an emerging concept SBC can affect sports CBI. The empirical results show that the direct relationship between SBC and BL is not supported. The possible explanation is that Chinese consumers pay more attention to the actual impact of brand quality, experience and value, while the brand personality and social responsibility contained in SBC are not enough to motivate them to purchase brands repeatedly.

Compared with the long history and brand reputation of international sports brands, local sports brands have a short history and have achieved rapid growth in recent years. Therefore, Chinese consumers still need more opportunities to establish a higher level of association with brands. The empirical results show that the mediating role of CBI between SBC and BL is supported, which also provides another powerful justification for the development of brand loyalty.

Last but not least. This study provides valuable insights into the factors that influence the loyalty of Gen Y consumers in China towards sports brands. It is based on a solid theoretical framework and supported by empirical evidence. The study utilized the PLS-SEM, building upon the consistent findings of previous research. In this study, the model presented stands out as one of the rare attempts to establish a connection between CBI and nostalgia with all elements of SIT and SET. This study

further deepened our understanding of how consumers and brands interact in terms of BE, BT, CPV, CBI and nostalgia, all of which influence their loyalty to sports brands.

5.4.2 Practical Contribution

Since the sports business operates in a very intense, competitive and dynamic environment, sports brand managers should be very interested in discovering what triggers and maintains guest loyalty. The results of this study highlight that loyalty can be effectively strengthened when sports companies give expected consideration to factors that enhance trust, brand experience, and perceived value, while also confirming the importance of nostalgia and enhancing consumer identification. Therefore, the results of the study provide some practical significance for the brand loyalty of sports brands.

In the first place, it was discovered that factors such as CBI, CPV, BE, and BT in the brand all have a substantial impact on BL. The CBI was found to be the most reliable indicators of the influence that sports brands have on the loyalty intention of consumers. With this in mind, marketers should concentrate on cultivating a good sense of identification among customers with regard to sports products in order to increase the consumers' intention to remain loyal to the brand. Through the spread of knowledge about the benefits of wearing sports brands for customers, such as "I feel a strong sense of belonging," as well as the meanings and values associated with such brands, such as "positive confidence and courage," marketers have the ability to build a positive sense of identity.

Also, CBI plays an intervening role in the relationships between BL and factors including SBC, BE, CPV, and BT. As an extra tool for enhancing CPV, managers

can encourage CBI. To start, if a customer has a strong emotional connection to a brand, they may be more willing to overlook flaws in the product or service and give it a higher rating overall. Companies should leverage social influence and the symbolic and psychological antecedents of CBI. A lasting competitive advantage can be achieved, according to Balmer (2008), by incorporating interactive and social components that enhance brand or service engagement. These components can assist build identity based on the brand's value, rarity, inimitable quality, and non-substitutability.

This study observed the factors that contribute to BL. The findings highlight the significance of cultivating a strong connection between the brand and the customer. When a sports brand has a strong identity and is easily recognisable, it enhances the BT and BE, which in turn influences their loyalty towards the brand. So, sports brand managers can not only bring together brand service resources to enhance service quality, but also combine investments in customer-brand interaction. For example, when it comes to product brands, marketers should prioritise creating experiences that are emotionally engaging.

Brand experience has a big impact on how closely they identify with that brand. This means that if a consumer has positive experiences with a sports brand, they are more likely to feel a strong connection to that brand. Thus, marketers have the ability to develop strategies that promote a sense of connection with brands that may initially appear challenging to create distinctive and memorable experiences for. Today's customers expect a seamless omni-channel experience, where they can easily place an order online and conveniently pick it up in the store. It's great to have free Wi-Fi in the store, which adds to the overall satisfaction of the experience.

Take the Amazon Go store, for instance. It lets customers effortlessly grab an item

without having to make a detour to the checkout counter. Thanks to advanced AI and cameras, the purchase is seamlessly recorded and the consumer is automatically charged. This will enhance convenience. H&M has recently introduced voice-interactive mirrors at its flagship store in New York City. The mirrors become active when people gaze at them for extended periods, providing selfies, fashion tips, and discounts. Thus, sports brand retailers can leverage cutting-edge technology to bridge the gap with consumers, foster more chances for engagement, elevate their experiential appeal, and strengthen brand recognition. However, it is crucial for sports brand retailers to fulfil their promises to consumers, promptly address any complaints, enhance customer satisfaction, and ultimately establish trust and authenticity in the eyes of consumers. This will help solidify the brand's reputation and connection with consumers.

In addition, the study discerned that CPV is a crucial determinant of BL. According to the survey outcomes, the majority of consumers are prone to purchase sports products if the clothing is reasonably priced and of superior quality. Consumers will also experience relaxation and felicity when shopping. Discounts from sports brands have also allured consumers. Furthermore, purchasing sports brand products can heighten consumers' self-awareness and create a positive image. Chang et al. (2016) maintains that perceived value is a key factor to impel consumers to remain steadfast to sports products. In this manner, merchants in the sports brand industry accord priority to creating a delightful shopping ambiance for consumers. In addition, the principles and values enunciated by the brand can augment consumer identification with the brand, thereby fostering BL.

Developing a brand personality is crucial for setting your brand apart from competitors. Investing in developing a brand personality that aligns with the target customer is crucial for creating a strong brand identity. Past studies have indicated

that the way consumers think about identity can greatly influence their resistance to change, ultimately strengthening loyalty to a brand (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2003; Kim et al., 2001). Consumers who have a strong sense of self-consistency are more likely to view the utilitarian aspects of products in a positive light (Sirgy et al., 2000). According to Kuenzel and Halliday (2010), when consumers feel a strong connection between a brand and their ideal self-image, they tend to have a positive attitude towards the brand.

In social psychology, this phenomenon is commonly referred to as the "first impression." The initial impression plays a crucial role in how we process subsequent information. Similarly, in the construction of brand personality, what sports brands impress consumers most is endurance. Therefore, sports brand marketers can properly use brand personality publicity to attract consumers, such as charming, intensity, perseverance, passion, etc., can also enhance consumers' perception of sports brand personality.

The findings also indicate that sports brand companies should prioritize the implementation of customer-oriented CSR initiatives. This aspect of CSR image is particularly important for creating customer identification, satisfaction, and loyalty (Pérez & Rodríguez del Bosque, 2015). Through strategic management of corporate image, managers can foster a strong sense of unity and connection among various stakeholders, ultimately encouraging positive attitudes and behaviours towards the organization. Managers should make it a priority to establish a distinctive business brand that is rooted in corporate social responsibility in order to effectively engage with customers.

Investing in CSR can greatly enhance a manager's business strategies. When a company partakes in a multiplicity of socially responsible activities, it is regarded as

competent and genuinely concerned about its consumers, which can offer substantial benefits. In order to genuinely interface with consumers, sports brands ought to endeavor to cultivate a favorable brand image. This can be accomplished not merely by catering to their needs and preferences, but also by proactively undertaking social responsibility. This encompasses the utilization of environmentally friendly materials, enhancing product adaptability, minimizing environmental pollution, supporting charitable endeavors, ameliorating local communities, and providing employees with comprehensive training regimens to augment their motivation and dedication.

Similarly, customer retention tactics should be grounded in practices that prioritize BE, hence enhancing customer focus. Establishing consumer trust in a brand is a time-consuming endeavor. Furthermore, during the buying process, particularly when purchasing clothes items, there are various dangers and uncertainties that can undermine consumer confidence. Hence, sports businesses should prioritize providing a positive brand experience, as it will concurrently diminish the likelihood of consumer apprehension, thereby enhancing brand credibility. This will impact BL and thus influence their inclination to become brand advocates. When building BL, it is crucial for the brand to possess a distinct subject, a well-established history, and a distinctive personality.

Hence, sports businesses can effectively utilize social media platforms to amplify the exposure of their brand's personality and historical background. The focus of this study is specifically on Gen Y consumers, who have a strong association with local sports brands as they have grown up alongside them. Promoting the historical background of a brand is beneficial for fostering consumers' emotional connection with the brand, leading them to become supporters for the brand. Sports brand retailers should effectively distinguish their goods by demonstrating the reasons and

methods by which their brands surpass others, thereby enhancing client involvement in the process of purchasing.

Therefore, it has the ability to alter customers' perception and associated actions, aiding them in assessing companies prior to making purchasing choices, and ultimately establishing BT and BL among customers. Sports brands can effectively utilize renowned athletes to establish credibility and consumer confidence through advertising and thematic campaigns.

Lastly. The government should proactively cultivate an equitable and impartial external milieu to foster the robust competition of sports brands. Secondly, regarding the utilization of eco-friendly materials, it should implement measures such as tax incentives and other policies to mitigate environmental pollution by enterprises. Relevant local government departments can collaborate with local businesses or communities to organize more sports events-such as marathons, badminton, basketball, and yoga-to encourage residents' active participation and enhance their physical fitness. Additionally, these events can involve naming partnerships with sports brand merchants to amplify brand influence. Lastly, government entities might consider establishing a dedicated department to address consumer grievances, providing a direct channel for consumers to report issues encountered during the shopping process, thereby enhancing customer satisfaction.

5.5 Limitation of the Study

Similar to any other study, although this study presents some theoretical and managerial contributions, the findings obtained may be subject to some limitations. It is important to recognize research limitations in order to guide future researchers to expand research opportunities. First of all, the background of this study is Chinese generation Y consumers as the target group, and the category studied is

sports brands. Therefore, the target group and category of this study may not be suitable for other Western countries, and the target group of this study is limited, not covering the whole young consumer group. Secondly, the sports brands in this study include clothing, sports shoes and sports accessories, which are not clearly classified according to the type of sports, such as running, yoga, swimming and so on.

The study adopted a cross-sectional survey rather than a longitudinal approach covering a longer period of time because, in most cases, some study variables such as loyalty are dynamic over time. For example, changes in economic conditions or government policies may affect these variables. However, considering the high cost and insufficient time required by the longitudinal research method, these factors hinder the adoption of the longitudinal method in this study. However, longitudinal design is helpful in understanding the possible causes of changes in consumer psychology and can provide higher research accuracy than cross-sectional studies.

Third, the sampling of this study is comprehensively considered according to several factors such as population, the number of sports brand birth, consumption attitude, and the number of sports brand enterprises. However, according to the urbanization level of each city, the study is limited to a specific city. The study did not include other urban or rural areas that could have produced interesting results.

There is also a weakness in the self-completion (survey questionnaire) used in the study. While this method has been widely used to retrieve data in quantitative research, it is not without its associated problems. For example, due to the time and attitude tendency of some interviewees, the completion of the questionnaire may be subjective, which may lead to misunderstanding, resulting in effectiveness problems. In addition, valid respondents can decide not to participate in the survey. Again, in some cases, respondents may provide expected answers to these questions, or a

pattern response to these questions.

5.6 Recommendation for Future Research

Due to the selected topic and research background, this study has some limitations. Therefore, based on the limitations discussed in the previous section, this study proposes some targeted future research suggestions.

First, there are a number of other variables that may influence brand loyalty among Gen Y consumers that are not discussed in this study. Therefore, for further research, the scope of this study can be broadened to include other predictors and results not considered in this study, such as the impact of social media and artificial intelligence on consumer behavior. Future research can also consider the difference of consumer loyalty intention in different cultural backgrounds. In addition, future studies may also consider the moderating effects of customer engagement and demographic factors such as gender on brand loyalty.

Secondly, further research can be carried out by testing the brand loyalty model in different cultural contexts. In particular, this research framework can be tested in other countries and regions, which may have stronger or different empirical significance. Chinese cultural differences may be defined by these different outcomes and findings. Therefore, comparative learning about specific international locations or regions should be interesting, as its consequences cannot now be generalized to different national situations either. In addition, this study only focuses on Gen Y consumers in China. In future studies, further studies should be conducted in more cohorts, such as Gen X, Gen Z consumers.

Third, due to the cross-sectional design of this study, data need to be collected over a period of time. Therefore, this may not be representative of the long-term

consumption behavior of Chinese Gen Y consumers. In order to fill this gap, future studies suggest the use of longitudinal studies. Hence, in order to examine the causal relationship between endogenous and exogenous variables, longitudinal studies should be a better choice. A longitudinal approach will take longer to validate the same variables investigated in this study, as the relationship between consumers and brands may change over time. Therefore, longitudinal research methods can explain complex relationships over time. In addition, when it comes to collecting time series, the data approach will allow researchers to better understand the cause and effect of relationships.

Fourth, due to the quantitative research method adopted in this study, the findings and results of the study are limited. Therefore, this study suggests that the design for further research may adopt qualitative design or mixed method design. If the model can be investigated by more diverse research designs, then these findings and results will be more meaningful and contribute.

Finally, there is a lack of empirical evidence in the nature of the current research, especially in exploring the factors that influence sports brand loyalty as examples, and research in this area has not been adequately evaluated. Therefore, more in-depth research is needed to explore the relationship between these issues and consumer behavior.

5.7 Conclusion

This study makes a significant contribution to the literature, specifically referring to the concept of brand loyalty, which is supported by empirical evidence. The mediating effect of sports brand identification and the moderating effect of nostalgia on BE, BT, CPV and SBC of Chinese Gen Y consumers were fully studied. In

addition, the findings provide theoretical support for the theories underpinning this study (SIT and SET), which involve associations between the variables used in the study.

The results show that there is a positive correlation between brand trust and brand loyalty. Similarly, the result supported that customer perceived value and brand experience have significant positive predictive effects on brand loyalty. In addition, consumer-brand identification has been found to be a predictor of loyalty. However, self-brand congruity has no significant effect on brand loyalty. At the same time, the findings also revealed that CBI plays a mediating role in brand experience, brand trust, customer perceived value, self-brand congruity and brand loyalty. In addition, nostalgia has a moderating effect on the relationship between CBI and brand loyalty.

Therefore, based on social identity theory and social exchange theory, this study fills the gaps that different variables drive consumer loyalty of sports brands from the perspective of social psychology, and explains how to realize these relationships and the direction of these connections. Evidently, the utilization of SmartPLS in the analysis of this intricate model offers a crucial methodological contribution to the extant literature. Furthermore, the findings possess practical ramifications for sports brands and other sports stakeholders. Moreover, recommendations for future researchers are deliberated. Finally, the contributions of theory, method, and practice are propounded.

REFERENCES

- Aaker, D. A. (1996). Measuring brand equity across products and markets. *California management review*, 38(3). <http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/41165845>
- Aaker, J. (1997). Dimensions of brand personality. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 34(3), 347-356. <http://doi.org/10.1177/002224379703400304>
- Abedi, R., & Azma, F. (2019). Relationship between the Brand Identity with Brand Loyalty due to the Mediating Role of Perceived Value. *Dutch Journal of Finance and Management*, 3(1), em0059. <https://doi.org/10.29333/djfm/5876>
- Acharya, A. S., Prakash, A., Saxena, P., & Nigam, A. (2013). Sampling: Why and how of it. *Indian journal of medical specialties*, 4(2), 330-333. <http://doi.org/10.7713/ijms.2013.0032>
- Abd Aziz, N., & Ngah, H. (2019). The effect of self expressive value and perceived value on Malaysian cosmetic brand loyalty: the mediating role of brand identification & word of mouth. *Asia-Pacific Management Accounting Journal (APMAJ)*, 14(1), 151-178. <http://doi.org/10.24191/apmaj.v14i1-08>
- Adriel, K., Sudarman, M. B., Smith, B., & Mustikasari, F. (2024). The effect of social customer relationships management on customer loyalty in indonesia's ecommerce. *International Journal of Professional Business Review: Int. J. Prof. Bus. Rev.*, 9(3), 1-23. <https://doi.org/10.26668/businessreview/2024.v9i3.4319>
- Agha, A. A., Rashid, A., Rasheed, R., Khan, S., & Khan, U. (2021). Antecedents of Customer Loyalty at Telecomm Sector. *Turkish Online Journal of Qualitative Inquiry*, 12(9), 1352-1374.
- Agrawal, D. K. (2023). "Increasing digital dissemination and online apparel shopping behaviour of Generation Y". *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management*, 28 (1), 28-44. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JFMM-03-2022-0072>
- Agyeiwaah, E., Dayour, F., & Zhou, Y. (2022). How does employee commitment impact customers' attitudinal loyalty? *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Insights*, 5(2), 350-376. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2014.12.010>
- Aguirre-Rodriguez, A., Bosnjak, M., & Sirgy, M. J. (2012). Moderators of the self-congruity effect on consumer decision-making: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Business Research*, 65(8), 1179-1188. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2011.07.031>
- Albaum, G. (1997). The Likert scale revisited. Market Research Society. *Journal.*, 39(2), 1-21. <https://doi.org/10.1177/147078539703900202>
- Ahearne, M., Bhattacharya, C. B., & Gruen, T. (2005). Antecedents and consequences of customer-company identification: Expanding the role of relationship marketing. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 90(3), 574-585.
- Ahn, T., Ekinici, Y., & Li, G. (2013). Self-congruence, functional congruence, and destination choice. *Journal of Business Research*, 66(6), 719-723. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2011.09.009>

- Ahmad, H., & Halim, H. (2017). Determining sample size for research activities: the case of organizational research. *Selangor Business Review*, 20-34.
- Joshi, I., & Fishbein, M. (2005). *The influence of attitudes on behavior*. In D. Albarracin, B.T. Johnson and M.P. Zanna (eds) *Handbook of Attitudes and Attitude Change: Basic Principles*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum, in press.
- Alkhawaldeh, A. (2018). The Effect of Brand Awareness on Brand Loyalty: Mediating Role of Brand Commitment. *European Journal of Business and Management*, 9(36), 38-47.
- Alam, M. M. D., & Noor, N. A. M. (2020). The relationship between service quality, corporate image, and customer loyalty of Generation Y: An application of SOR paradigm in the context of superstores in Bangladesh. *Sage Open*, 10(2), 2158244020924405. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244020924405>
- Al Ghifary, M., & Dellyana, D. (2025). Brand Loyalty as a Catalyst for Growth: Leveraging Innovative Brand Experience to Enhance Market Success for a Small Clothing Brand. *International Journal of Current Science Research and Review*, 7(9), 6941-6952. <https://doi.org/10.47191/ijcsrr/V7-i9-13>.
- Alnawas, I., & Altarifi, S. (2016). Exploring the role of brand identification and brand love in generating higher levels of brand loyalty. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 22(2), 111-128.
- Anggara, A. K. D., Ratnasari, R. T., & Osman, I. (2023). How store attribute affects customer experience, brand love and brand loyalty. *Journal of Islamic Marketing*, 14(11), 2980-3006. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JIMA-01-2022-0002>
- Anggraini, M. C., & Marsasi, E. G. (2024). The Influence of Self-Esteem and Brand Trust to Optimize Brand Loyalty Based on Social Identity Theory in Generation Y & Z. *Jurnal Ecogen*, 7(1), 12-26. <http://dx.doi.org/10.24036/jmpe.v7i1.15604>
- Akarsu, T. N., Foroudi, P., & Melewar, T. C. (2020). What makes Airbnb likeable? Exploring the nexus between service attractiveness, country image, perceived authenticity and experience from a social exchange theory perspective within an emerging economy context. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 91, 102635. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2020.102635>
- Akbari, M., Mehrali, M., SeyyedAmiri, N., Rezaei, N., & Pourjam, A. (2019). Corporate social responsibility, customer loyalty and brand positioning. *Social Responsibility Journal*, 16(5), 671-689. <https://doi.org/10.1108/SRJ-01-2019-0008>
- Akoglu, H. E., & Özbek, O. (2022). The effect of brand experiences on brand loyalty through perceived quality and brand trust: a study on sports consumers. *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*, 34(10), 2130-2148. <https://doi.org/10.1108/APJML-05-2021-0333>
- Anaya-Sanchez, R., Aguilar-Illescas, R., Molinillo, S. & Martí'nez-Lopez, F.J. (2020). Trust and loyalty in online brand communities. *Spanish Journal of Marketing – ESIC*, 24(2), 177-191.

- Andrade, C. (2020). Understanding the difference between standard deviation and standard error of the mean, and knowing when to use which. *Indian Journal of Psychological Medicine*, 42(4), 409-410. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0253717620933419>
- Armstrong, J. S., & Overton, T. S. (1977). Estimating nonresponse bias in mail surveys. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 14(3), 396-402.
- Aron, A., Aron, E. N., Tudor, M., & Nelson, G. (1991). Close relationships as including other in the self. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 60(2), 241-253. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.60.2.241>
- Ashforth, B. E., Harrison, S. H., & Corley, K. G. (2008). Identification in organizations: An examination of four fundamental questions. *Journal of Management*, 34(3), 325-374. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206308316059>
- Ashraf, S., Ilyas, R., Imtiaz, M., & Ahmad, S. (2018). Impact of service quality, corporate image and perceived value on brand loyalty with presence and absence of customer satisfaction: A study of four service sectors of Pakistan. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 8(2), 452-474.
- Atulkar, S. (2020). Brand trust and brand loyalty in mall shoppers. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, 38(5), 559-572. <https://doi.org/10.1108/MIP-02-2019-0095>
- Attar, R. W., Amidi, A., & Hajli, N. (2023). The role of social presence and trust on customer loyalty. *British Food Journal*, 125(1), 96-111. <https://doi.org/10.1108/BFJ-11-2021-1218>
- Asiabar, M. G., & Ghasemi, H. (2024). Examining the Mediating Role of Social Capital in the Relationship Between Brand Community and Customer Loyalty in the Sports Industry. *Preprints.org*. <https://doi.org/10.20944/preprints202411.1774.v1>
- Augusto, M., & Torres, P. (2018). Effects of brand attitude and eWOM on consumers' willingness to pay in the banking industry: Mediating role of consumer-brand identification and brand equity. *Journal of retailing and Consumer Services*, 42, 1-10. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2018.01.005>
- Aulia, S. A., Sukati, I., & Sulaiman, Z. (2016). A review: Customer perceived value and its Dimension. *Asian Journal of Social Sciences and Management Studies*, 3(2), 150-162.
- Aurelia, A., & Tajuddien, R. (2025). The Influence of Brand Trust on Brand Evangelism Through Brand Identification and Passion Among Apple Users. *Journal Economic Business Innovation*, 1(4), 385-402. <https://doi.org/10.69725/jebi.v1i4.130>
- Aziz, M. A., & Ahmed, M. A. (2021). The mediating role of affective brand commitment and customer engagement in developing purchase intention of fashion apparel brands. *International Journal of Management Research and Emerging Sciences*, 11(4). <https://doi.org/10.56536/ijmres.v11i4.159>

- Azzahra, S., & Fachira, I. (2022). The Influence of Bring Back Our Bottle Program on The Body Shop Indonesia Brand Image, Brand Trust, Brand Love and Brand Loyalty. *Asian Journal of Research in Business and Management*, 4(3), 283-295
- Babbie, E. (1990). *Survey Research Methods (2nd ed.)*. California: Wadsworth.
- Bachman, L. F. (2004). *Statistical analyses for language assessment book*: Cambridge University Press.
- Back, K. J., & Parks, S. C. (2003). A brand loyalty model involving cognitive, affective, and conative brand loyalty and customer satisfaction. *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research*, 27(4), 419-435. <http://doi.org/10.1177/10963480030274003>
- Bae, B. R., & Kim, S. E. (2023). Effect of brand experiences on brand loyalty mediated by brand love: the moderated mediation role of brand trust. *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*, 35(10), 2412-2430. <https://doi.org/10.1108/APJML-03-2022-0203>.
- Bae, J. H., & Jeon, H. M. (2022). Exploring the relationships among brand experience, perceived product quality, hedonic value, utilitarian value, and brand loyalty in unmanned coffee shops during the covid-19 pandemic. *Sustainability*, 14(18), 11713. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su141811713>
- Bagozzi, R. P., Yi, Y., & Phillips, L. W. (1991). Assessing construct validity in organizational research. *Administrative science quarterly*, 36(3), 421-458. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2393203>
- Baker, S. M., & Kennedy, P. F. (1994). Death by nostalgia: A diagnostic of context-specific-cases. *Advances in Consumer Research*, 21, 169-174.
- Balmer, J. M. (2008). Identity based views of the corporation: Insights from corporate identity, organisational identity, social identity, visual identity, corporate brand identity and corporate image. *European journal of marketing*, 42(9/10), 879-906. <https://doi.org/10.1108/03090560810891055>
- Barbalet, J. (2018). Guanxi as social exchange: Emotions, power and corruption. *Sociology*, 52(5), 934-949. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0038038517692511>
- Baruch, Y. (1999). Response rate in academic studies - A comparative analysis. *Human Relations*, 52(4), 421-438. <https://doi.org/10.1177/001872679905200401>
- Batcho, K. I. (2007). Nostalgia and the emotional tone and content of song lyrics. *The American Journal of Psychology*, 120(3), 361-381. <https://doi.org/10.2307/20445410>
- Barusman, A. R. P. (2024). What Does Service Quality, Perceived Value, and Customer Trust Have to Do with Customer Loyalty for Go-Food Users in The Gojek App? Using Customer Satisfaction Performs as a Moderator. (Case Study on Students of the Faculty of Economics and Business Univ. *Kurdish Studies*, 12(2), 698-723.
- Batra, R., Ahuvia, A., & Bagozzi, R. P. (2012). Brand love. *Journal of marketing*,

- P. Becerra, E., & Badrinarayanan, V. (2013). The influence of brand trust and brand identification on brand evangelism. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 22(5/6), 371-383. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JPBM-09-2013-0394>
- Bernarto, I., Berlianto, M. P., Meilani, Y. F. C. P., Masman, R. R., & Suryawan, I. N. (2020). The influence of brand awareness, brand image, and brand trust on brand loyalty. *Jurnal Manajemen*, 24(3), 412-426. <https://doi.org/10.24912/jm.v24i3.676>
- Bernarto, I., Purwanto, A., Tulung, J. E., & Pramono, R. (2024). The Influence of Perceived Value, And Trust on WOM and Its Impact on Repurchase Intention. *Revista De Gestão Social E Ambiental*, 18(4), e04983-e04983. <https://doi.org/10.24857/rgsa.v18n4-081>
- Benassi, P. (1999). TRUSTe: an online privacy seal program. *Communications of the ACM*, 42(2), 56-59.
- Bennur, S., & Jin, B. (2017). The mediating role of brand trust and affect in clothing brand loyalty formation: a cross-cultural examination of US and India. *The Journal of the Textile Institute*, 108(1), 1-9. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00405000.2015.1133105>
- Bennett, R., Härtel, C. E., & McColl-Kennedy, J. R. (2005). Experience as a moderator of involvement and satisfaction on brand loyalty in a business-to-business setting. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 34(1), 97-107. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.indmarman.2004.08.003>
- Bennett, R., & Rundel-Thiele, S. (2005). The brand loyalty life cycle: Implications for marketers. *Journal of Brand Management*, 12, 250-263. <https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.bm.2540221>
- Bhattacharya, C. B., & Sen, S. (2003). Consumer-company identification: A framework for understanding consumers' relationships with companies. *Journal of marketing*, 67(2), 76-88. <https://doi.org/10.1509/jmkg.67.2.76.18609>
- Blau, P.M. (1964). *Exchange and power in social life*. New York: John Wiley.
- Blazquez-Resino, J. J., Martínez-Ruiz, M. P., & Tajvidi, R. (2025). Building loyalty in the fast fashion market: The key role of customer brand identification. *Journal of Global Fashion Marketing*, 16(1), 47-70. <https://doi.org/10.1080/20932685.2024.2396620>
- Bian, Y.J., Mao, B.H., & Zhang, Z.X. (2012). Mechanism analysis of brand experience on brand loyalty based on empirical study of restaurant brands. *Journal of Applied Statistics and Management*, 31(4), 670-679. <http://doi.org/10.13860.j.cnki.sltj.2012.04.017>
- Bilgihan, A. (2016). Gen Y customer loyalty in online shopping: An integrated model of trust, user experience and branding. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 61(1), 103-113. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2016.03.014>
- Boo, S., Kim, M., & Kim, T. J. (2024). Effectiveness of corporate social marketing

- on prosocial behavior and hotel loyalty in a time of pandemic. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 117, 103635. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2023.103635>
- Bowen, J. T., & Chen, S. L. (2001). The relationship between customer loyalty and customer satisfaction. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 13(5), 213-217. <http://doi.org/10.1108/09596110110395893>
- Brakus, J. J., Schmitt, B. H., & Zarantonello, L. (2009). Brand experience: what is it? How is it measured? Does it affect loyalty? *Journal of marketing*, 73(3), 52-68.
- Bu, P.C., & Fen, Y.H. (2021). The interactive relationship between brand identification, brand experience and customer loyalty. *Journal of Commercial Economics*, 1, 82-85.
- Büyükdağ, N., & Kitapci, O. (2021). Antecedents of consumer-brand identification in terms of belonging brands. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 59, 102420. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2020.102420>
- Campbell, D. T., & Fiske, D. W. (1959). Convergent and discriminant validation by the multitrait-multimethod matrix. *Psychological Bulletin*, 56(2), 81-105. <https://doi.org/10.1037/h0046016>
- Cattaneo, E., & Guerini, C. (2012). Assessing the revival potential of brands from the past: How relevant is nostalgia in retro branding strategies? *Journal of brand management*, 19(8), 680-687. <https://doi.org/10.1057/bm.2012.16>
- Cham, T. H., Ng, C. K. Y., Lim, Y. M., & Cheng, B. L. (2018). Factors influencing clothing interest and purchase intention: a study of Generation Y consumers in Malaysia. *The International Review of Retail, Distribution and Consumer Research*, 28(2), 174-189. <http://doi.org/10.1080/09593969.2017.1397045>
- China Business Journal. (2025, April 5). *Domestic sportswear brands expand billion-yuan club amid fierce global competition*. Baidu. <https://baijiahao.baidu.com/s?id=1828506321131574829>
- China Business Network. (CBN) (2025, June 11). *Rediscovering China: In China's S-hoe Capital, does a Trillion-yuan Support Help Small Merchants Rise to New Quality Brands?* Baidu. <https://baijiahao.baidu.com/s?id=1834616615109802396&wfr=spider&for=pc>
- China Daily. (2015, May 19). *Shopping in Jinjiang*. <https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/m/fujian/jinjiang/shopping.html>
- ChinaSo.com. (2021, November 15). *Xtep releases brand film "To the Special You," igniting youth nostalgia*. Baidu. <https://baijiahao.baidu.com/s?id=1716485131884140728>
- China Sports Daily. (2025, May 7). *Li-Ning "92 Dunhuang" series: How Olympic nostalgia fuels brand renaissance*. WeChat Official Account "Brand Heritage". https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s?__biz=MzA5OTA2ODYzMg==&mid=2672800402&idx=3&sn=4738ef59f7784eeb1da252b09bcb82eb

- Chang, P. L., & Chieng, M. H. (2006). Building consumer-brand relationship: A cross-cultural experiential view. *Psychology & Marketing*, 23(11), 927-959. <http://doi.org/10.1002/mar.20140>
- Chang, C. C., Wu, H. Y., Lin, H. H., & Chang, H. Y. (2016). A Study of Customer's Perceived Quality, Perceived Value, Expectation and Satisfaction to Its Brand Loyalty: The Case of" Globe Trotter" Sportswear in Taiwan. *ASBBS Proceedings*, 23(1), 112.
- Chatzopoulou, E., & de Kiewiet, A. (2021). Millennials' evaluation of corporate social responsibility: The wants and needs of the largest and most ethical generation. *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, 20(3), 521-534. <https://doi.org/10.1002/cb.1882>
- Chaudhuri, A., & Holbrook, M. B. (2001). The chain of effects from brand trust and brand affect to brand performance: the role of brand loyalty. *Journal of marketing*, 65(2), 81-93.
- Chaudhuri, A., & Holbrook, M. B. (2002). Product-class effects on brand commitment and brand outcomes: The role of brand trust and brand affect. *Journal of Brand Management*, 10, 33-58. <https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.bm.2540100>
- Cheah, J. H., Ting, H., Ramayah, T., Memon, M. A., Cham, T. H., & Ciavolino, E. (2019). A comparison of five reflective-formative estimation approaches: reconsideration and recommendations for tourism research. *Quality & Quantity*, 53(3), 1421-1458. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11135-018-0821-7>
- Chen, Q., Huang, R., & Zhang, A. (2020). A bite of nostalgia: The influence of nostalgia in consumers' loyalty intentions at traditional restaurants. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, 45, 604-614. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhtm.2020.10.016>
- Chen, L., Chen, G., Ma, S., & Wang, S. (2022). Idol worship: how does it influence fan consumers' brand loyalty? *Frontiers in Psychology*, 13, 1-14. <http://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.850670>
- Chen, J., & Liao, J. (2023). The impact of oppositional loyalty on brand identification in online brand communities: the moderating role of self-expression. *Current Psychology*, 42(30), 26651-26662. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-022-03707-6>
- Chen, J. L., & Wang, S. W. (2021). The influence of brand positioning and event marketing on brand loyalty—The mediation roles of brand identification and brand personality: The case of spectator sport. *Journal of Business Administration* (1025-9627), 46(4). <http://doi.org/10.53106/102596272021120464003>
- Chen, S. C., & Lin, C. P. (2019). Understanding the effect of social media marketing activities: The mediation of social identification, perceived value, and satisfaction. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, 140, 22-32. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techfore.2018.11.025>
- Chen, H. B., Yeh, S. S., & Huan, T. C. (2014). Nostalgic emotion, experiential value, brand image, and consumption intentions of customers of nostalgic-themed

- restaurants. *Journal of Business Research*, 67(3), 354-360. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2013.01.003>
- Cheung, W. Y., Sedikides, C., & Wildschut, T. (2016). Induced nostalgia increases optimism (via social-connectedness and self-esteem) among individuals high, but not low, in trait nostalgia. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 90, 283-288. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2015.11.028>
- Chin, W. W. (1998). The partial least squares approach to structural equation modeling. *Modern Methods for Business Research*, (January 1998), 237-246.
- Chin, W. W. (2010). *How to write up and report PLS analyses*. New York: Springer Heidelberg Dordrecht.
- Chieng, F., Sharma, P., Kingshott, R. P., & Roy, R. (2022). Interactive effects of self-congruity and need for uniqueness on brand loyalty via brand experience and brand attachment. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 31(6), 870-885. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JPBM-12-2020-3250>
- Chinomona, R. (2016). Brand communication, brand image and brand trust as antecedents of brand loyalty in Gauteng Province of South Africa. *African Journal of Economic and Management Studies*, 7(1), 124-139. <https://doi.org/10.1108/AJEMS-03-2013-0031>
- Chinomona, R., & Maziriri, E. T. (2017). The influence of brand awareness, brand association and product quality on brand loyalty and repurchase intention: a case of male consumers for cosmetic brands in South Africa. *Journal of Business and Retail Management Research*, 12(1). <https://doi.org/10.24052/JBRMR/V12IS01/TIOBABAAPQOBLARIACOMCFCBISA>
- Cho, H., Jo, D., & Kim, H. (2024). Understanding Consumer Perception towards Sustainable Apparel: A Parallel Mediation Analysis on Satisfaction and Trust. *Sustainability*, 16(16), 6835. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su16166835>
- Cho, H., Joo, D., & Woosnam, K. M. (2020). Sport tourists' team identification and revisit intention: Looking at the relationship through a nostalgic lens. *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research*, 44(6), 1002-1025. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1096348020926550>
- Choi, Y. G., Ok, C. M., & Hyun, S. S. (2017). Relationships between brand experiences, personality traits, prestige, relationship quality, and loyalty: An empirical analysis of coffeehouse brands. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 29(4), 1185-1202. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJCHM-11-2014-0601>
- Chua, B. L., Kim, S., Baah, N. G., Moon, H., Yu, J., & Han, H. (2024). When hospitality brands go green: the role of authenticity and stereotypes in building customer-green brand relationships. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 32(6), 1118-1141. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09669582.2023.2203406>
- Chuchu, T., Venter de Villiers, M., & Chinomona, R. (2018). The influence of store environment on brand attitude, brand experience and purchase intention. *South African Journal of Business Management*, 49(1), 1-8. <https://hdl.handle.net/10520/EJC-14ba0e2506>

- Coelho, P. S., Rita, P., & Santos, Z. R. (2018). On the relationship between consumer-brand identification, brand community, and brand loyalty. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 43, 101-110. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2018.03.011>
- Cohen, J. (1992). A power primer. *Psychological Bulletin*, 112(1), 155-159.
- Cohen, J. (1998). *Statistical power analysis for the behavioral sciences*. Hillsdale, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Cohen, J. (2013). *Statistical power analysis for the behavioral sciences*. Routledge.
- Comfrey, A. L., & Lee, H. B. (1992). *A first course in factor analysis*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Cook, K. S., Cheshire, C., Rice, E. R., & Nakagawa, S. (2013). Social exchange theory. *Handbook of social psychology*, 61-88.
- Cooper, D. R., & Schindler, P. S. (2006). *Business research methods* (11th ed.). London: MacGraw-Hill.
- Creswell, J. W. (1994). *Research design: Qualitative & quantitative approaches*. Sage Publication.
- Cropanzano, R., & Mitchell, M. S. (2005). Social exchange theory: An interdisciplinary review. *Journal of management*, 31(6), 874-900. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206305279602>
- Cuesta-Valiño, P., Gutiérrez-Rodríguez, P., & Núñez-Barriopedro, E. (2021). The role of consumer happiness in brand loyalty: A model of the satisfaction and brand image in fashion. *Corporate Governance: The International Journal of Business in Society*, 22(3), 458-473. <https://doi.org/10.1108/CG-03-2021-0099>
- Cui, Q., & Lin, M.Q. (2021). Analysis on the development and innovation of Fujian sports brand under the trend of China-Chic. *Journal of Analysis and Discussion*, 10, 28-30. <http://doi.org/10.3969/j.issn.2095-0101.2021.10.012>
- Cuong, D. T., & Khoi, B. H. (2019). The effect of brand image and perceived value on satisfaction and loyalty at convenience stores in Vietnam. *Journal of Advanced Research in Dynamical and Control Systems*, 11(8), 1446-1454.
- Dai, X., & Chen, K. C. (2017). Examining antecedents of brand loyalty on sportswear: an empirical investigation of university students in Hong Kong. *International Journal of Social Science Studies*, 5(7), 87-95. <http://doi.org/10.11114/ijsss.v5i7.2459>
- Dandis, A. O., & Wright, L. T. (2020). The effects of CARTER model on attitudinal loyalty in Islamic banks. *International Journal of Quality and Service Sciences*, 12(2), 149-171. <http://doi.org/10.1108/IJQSS-03-2019-0050>
- Dang-Van, T., Vo-Thanh, T., Wang, J., & Nguyen, N. (2023). Luxury hotels' green practices and consumer brand identification: The roles of perceived green service innovation and perceived values. *Business Strategy and the Environment*, 32(7), 4568-4583. <https://doi.org/10.1002/bse.3381>

- Das, G., Agarwal, J., Malhotra, N.K. & Varshneya, G. (2019). Does brand experience translate into brand commitment? A mediated-moderation model of brand passion and perceived brand ethicality. *Journal of Business Research*, 95, 479-490. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2018.05.026>
- Davvetas, V. and Diamantopoulos, A. (2017). Regretting your brand-self? The moderating role of consumer-brand identification on consumer responses to purchase regret. *Journal of Business Research*, 80, 218-227. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2017.04.008>.
- Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (1985). The general causality orientations scale: Self-determination in personality. *Journal of research in personality*, 19(2), 109-134. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0092-6566\(85\)90023-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/0092-6566(85)90023-6).
- Delgado-Ballester, E., & Fernandez-Sabiote, E. (2024). Brand Stereotypes: On the relationships with gendered brand personality and agentic and communal values in fostering Consumer-Brand identification. *Journal of Business Research*, 177, 114635. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2024.114635>
- Delgado-Ballester, E., & Munuera-Alemán, J. L. (2001). Brand trust in the context of consumer loyalty. *European Journal of marketing*, 35(11/12), 1238-1258. <https://doi.org/10.1108/EUM00000000006475>
- Delgado-Ballester, E., Munuera-Aleman, J. L., & Yague-Guillen, M. J. (2003). Development and validation of a brand trust scale. *International journal of market research*, 45(1), 35-54.
- Delice, A. (2001). *The sampling issues in quantitative research*. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ919871.pdf>
- Del Rio, A. B., Vazquez, R., & Iglesias, V. (2001). The effects of brand associations on consumer response. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 18(5), 410-425.
- Demirden, A. (2021). The critical examination of social identity theory. *Politik Psikoloji Dergisi*, 1(2), 39-56.
- Deng, Y., Wang, X., & Li, D. (2025). How does brand authenticity influence brand loyalty? Exploring the roles of brand attachment and brand trust. *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*, 37(5), 1255-1279. <https://doi.org/10.1108/APJML-06-2024-0782>
- Devi, A. A. D. T., & Yasa, N. N. K. (2021). The role of customer satisfaction in mediating the influence of service quality and perceived value on brand loyalty. *International Research Journal of Management, IT and Social Sciences*, 8(3), 315-328.
- Dick, A. S., & Basu, K. (1994). Customer loyalty: toward an integrated conceptual framework. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 22(2), 99-113. <http://doi.org/10.1177/0092070394222001>
- Dikcius, V., Kirse, S., Casas, R., & Koncanina, A. (2019). Drivers of attitudinal and behavioural loyalty in B-2-B markets. *Engineering Economics*, 30(1), 94-102. <http://doi.org/10.5755/j01.ee.30.1.20182>
- Dimitriadis, S., & Papista, E. (2010). Integrating relationship quality and consumer-

- brand identification in building brand relationships: proposition of a conceptual model. *The Marketing Review*, 10(4), 385-401. <https://doi.org/10.1362/146934710X541348>
- Ding, C. G., & Tseng, T. H. (2015). On the relationships among brand experience, hedonic emotions, and brand equity. *European Journal of Marketing*, 49(7/8), 994-1015. <https://doi.org/10.1108/EJM-04-2013-0200>
- Divard, R., & Demontrond, P. R. (1997). La nostalgie: um thème récent dans la recherché marketing. *Recherche et Applications en Marketing*, 12(4), 41-62. <https://doi.org/10.1177/076737019701200403>
- Djamaran, S., Andiyana, E., & Haryoko, A. E. (2023). How Brand Users Resistance to Negative Information Based on Customer Value. *JURNAL CAFETARIA*, 4(2), 483-498. <https://doi.org/10.51742/akuntansi.v4i2.1069>
- Donavan, D. T., Janda, S., & Suh, J. (2006). Environmental influences in corporate brand identification and outcomes. *Journal of Brand management*, 14(1), 125-136. <https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.bm.2550057>
- Du, S., Bhattacharya, C. B., & Sen, S. (2007). Reaping relational rewards from corporate social responsibility: The role of competitive positioning. *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, 24(3), 224-241. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijresmar.2007.01.001>
- Dugar, A., & Chamola, P. (2021). Retailers with traits of consumer: Exploring the existence and antecedents of brand loyalty in small unorganized retailers. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 62, 102635. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2021.102635>
- Dunn, J. R., & Schweitzer, M. E. (2005). Feeling and believing: the influence of emotion on trust. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 88(5), 736-748. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.88.5.736>
- Dwyer, F. R., Schurr, P. H., & Oh, S. (1987). Developing buyer-seller relationships. *Journal of marketing*, 51(2), 11-27. <https://doi.org/10.1177/002224298705100202>
- Eid, R. (2015). Integrating Muslim customer perceived value, satisfaction, loyalty and retention in the tourism industry: An empirical study. *International journal of tourism research*, 17(3), 249-260. <https://doi.org/10.1002/JTR.1982>
- Elbedweihi, A. M., & Jayawardhena, C. (2014). Consumer-brand identification: A social identity based review and research directions. *The marketing review*, 14(2), 205-228. <http://doi.org/10.1362/146934714x14024778816995>
- Elbedweihi, A. M., Jayawardhena, C., Elsharnouby, M. H., & Elsharnouby, T. H. (2016). Customer relationship building: The role of brand attractiveness and consumer-brand identification. *Journal of Business Research*, 69(8), 2901-2910. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2015.12.059>
- Erdumlu, N., Saricam, C., Tufekyapan, M., Cetinkaya, M., & Donmez, A. C. (2017). Analysing the consumer behaviour and the influence of brand loyalty in purchasing sportswear products. In *IOP Conference Series: Materials*

Science and Engineering, 254(17), 1-5. IOP Publishing.
<http://doi.org/10.1088/1757-899x/254/17/172010>

- Escalas, J. E., & Bettman, J. R. (2003). You are what they eat: The influence of reference groups on consumers' connections to brands. *Journal of consumer psychology*, 13(3), 339-348.
- Etikan, I., & Bala, K. (2017). Sampling and sampling methods. *Biometrics & Biostatistics International Journal*, 5(6), 215-217.
- Fan, Y., Jiang, J., & Hu, Z. (2020). Abandoning distinctiveness: The influence of nostalgia on consumer choice. *Psychology and Marketing*, 37(10), 1342-1351. <https://doi.org/10.1002/mar.21370>
- Fandos-Roig, J. C., Sánchez-García, J., Tena-Monferrer, S., & Callarisa-Fiol, L. J. (2021). Does CSR help to retain customers in a service company? *Sustainability*, 13(1), 300. <http://doi.org/10.3390/su13010300>
- Fatma, M., & Khan, I. (2023). CSR influence on brand loyalty in banking: The role of brand credibility and brand identification. *Sustainability*, 15(1), 802. <http://doi.org/10.3390/su15010802>
- Fatma, M., Khan, I., & Rahman, Z. (2016). How does corporate association influence consumer brand loyalty? Mediating role of brand identification. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 25(7), 629-641. <http://doi.org/10.1108/JPBM-07-2015-0932>
- Farrell, D. (1983). Exit, voice, loyalty, and neglect as responses to job dissatisfaction: A multidimensional scaling study. *Academy of management journal*, 26(4), 596-607.
- Fernandes, T., Guzman, F., & Mota, M. (2024). Purpose is the new branding: understanding conscientious purpose-driven marketing and its impact on brand outcomes. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JPBM-08-2023-4667>
- Feiz, D., & Moradi, H. (2020). Creating consumer-based brand equity for customers by brand experience: Evidence from Iran banking industry. *Journal of Islamic marketing*, 11(6), 1443-1464. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JIMA-03-2019-0055>
- Fernandez, P. R. (2009). Impact of branding on Gen Y's choice of clothing. *Journal of the South East Asia Research*, 1(1), 79-95.
- Frasquet, M., Molla Descals, A., & Ruiz-Molina, M. E. (2017). Understanding loyalty in multichannel retailing: the role of brand trust and brand attachment. *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, 45(6), 608-625. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJRDM-07-2016-0118>
- Fornell, C., & Larcker, D. F. (1981). Evaluating structural equation models with unobservable variables and measurement error. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 18(1), 39-50.
- Foroudi, P., Marvi, R., & Colmekcioglu, N. (2022). Antecedents and consequences of co-creation value with a resolution of complex P2P relationships.

International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management, 34(12), 4355-4388. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJCHM-10-2021-1278>

- Fournier, S. (1998). Consumers and their brands: Developing relationship theory in consumer research. *Journal of consumer research*, 24(4), 343-373. <http://doi.org/10.1086/209515>
- Fu, X., Kang, J., & Tasci, A. (2017). Self-congruity and flow as antecedents of attitude and loyalty towards a theme park brand. *Journal of travel & tourism marketing*, 34(9), 1261-1273. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10548408.2017.1343704>
- Fu, Y. K. (2023). Airline brand image, passenger perceived value and loyalty towards full-service and low-cost carriers. *Tourism Review*, 78(6), 1433-1451. <https://doi.org/10.1108/TR-07-2022-0369>
- Fujian Provincial Bureau of Sports. (2024, January 22). *The "Jinjiang Experience" from the provincial sports work conference leads the high-quality development of the sports industry*. https://tyj.fj.gov.cn/zwgk/xwzx/sxdt/202401/t20240122_6383982.htm
- Fulberg, P. (2003). Using sonic branding in the retail environment—an easy and effective way to create consumer brand loyalty while enhancing the in-store experience. *Journal of Consumer Behaviour: An International Research Review*, 3(2), 193-198. <http://doi.org/10.1002/cb.132>
- Gabriel, Y. (1993). Organizational nostalgia: Reflections on "the golden age." In S. Fineman (Ed.), *Emotion in organizations*, 118-141. Sage Publications, Inc.
- Gallardo-Vázquez, D., & Sanchez-Hernandez, M. I. (2014). Measuring Corporate Social Responsibility for competitive success at a regional level. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 72, 14-22. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2014.02.051>
- Gallarza, M. G., & Saura, I. G. (2006). Value dimensions, perceived value, satisfaction and loyalty: an investigation of university students' travel behaviour. *Tourism management*, 27(3), 437-452. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2004.12.002>
- Gao, F., & Shen, Z. (2024). Sensory brand experience and brand loyalty: Mediators and gender differences. *Acta Psychologica*, 244, 104191. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.actpsy.2024.104191>
- Gao, Y., Li, Y., Meng, X.Z., & Xie, P.H. (2011). How brand experience impacts on brand loyalty-with product involvement as moderator. *Journal of Soft Science*, 25(7), 126-130.
- Gaurav, K., Ray, A. S., & Sahu, N. K. (2020). Factors determining the role of brand in purchase decision of sportswear. *PalArch's Journal of Archaeology of Egypt/Egyptology*, 17(7), 2168-2186. <http://doi.org/10.17576/pengurusan-2019-56-07>
- General Administration of Sport of China. (2024, August 9). *China's sports industry is accelerating its pace*. <https://www.sport.gov.cn/n20001280/n20067608/n20067635/c27991280/content.html>

- Giovanis, A. N., & Athanasopoulou, P. (2018). Consumer-brand relationships and brand loyalty in technology-mediated services. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 40, 287-294. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2017.03.003>
- Gontur, S., Gadi, P. D., & Bagobiri, E. (2022). Service Quality and Customer Loyalty: The Mediating Effect of Customer Brand Identification in the Nigerian Hospitality Industry. *International Journal of Marketing & Human Resource Research*, 3(1), 38-51. <https://doi.org/10.47747/ijmhrr.v3i1.474>
- Gong, X., Zhang, H., Zhang, X., & Wang, Y. (2023). Circular or angular? How nostalgia affects product shape preference. *Psychology & Marketing*, 40(2), 288-299. <https://doi.org/10.1002/mar.21757>
- Gonu, E., Okeniyi, J., & Agyapong, G. K. Q. (2024). Customer relationship management practices and organisational performance of commercial banks in Ghana: a mediation analysis. *Journal of Financial Services Marketing*, 29(2), 607-624. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41264-023-00226-8>
- Government of the People's Republic of China. (2024, December 31). *Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China*. https://www.gov.cn/lianbo/bumen/202412/content_6995657.htm
- Gounaris, S., & Stathakopoulos, V. (2004). Antecedents and consequences of brand loyalty: An empirical study. *Journal of brand Management*, 11(4), 283-306. <http://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.bm.2540174>
- Gouldner, A. W. (1960). The norm of reciprocity: A preliminary statement. *American sociological review*, 25, 161-178.
- Gray, R. E., Fitch, M. I., Fergus, K. D., Mykhalovskiy, E., & Church, K. (2002). Hegemonic masculinity and the experience of prostate cancer: A narrative approach. *Journal of Aging and Identity*, 7(1), 43-62. <http://doi.org/10.1023/a:1014310532734>
- Grębosz-Krawczyk, M. (2018). The impact of nostalgia on brand equity in a post-communist economy. *Economics & Sociology*, 11(2), 216-228.
- Green, J. D., Cairo, A. H., Wildschut, T., & Sedikides, C. (2021). The ties that bind: University nostalgia fosters relational and collective university engagement. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 11, 580731. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.580731>
- Greener, S. (2008). *Business research methods*. BookBoon.
- Gruber, R., Häfner, M., & Kachel, S. (2024). Dressing up social psychology: Empirically investigating the psychological functions of clothing using the example of symbolic protection. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 63(2), 1003-1035. <https://doi.org/10.1111/bjso.12700>
- Gu, Q., Li, M., & Kim, S. S. (2021). The role of nostalgia-evoking stimuli at nostalgia-themed restaurants in explaining benefits, consumption value and post-purchase behavioral intention. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 96, 102955. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2021.102955>

- Günay, A. C. (2025). The Mediating Role of Self-Congruence in the Effect of Influencer Marketing on Digital Natives' Brand Loyalty. *Cumhuriyet Üniversitesi İktisadi ve İdari Bilimler Dergisi*, 26(2), 119-133. [https://doi.org/ 10.37880/cumuiibf.1597562](https://doi.org/10.37880/cumuiibf.1597562)
- Guo, Y., Yu, M., & Zhao, Y. (2024). Impact of destination advertising on tourists' visit intention: The influence of self-congruence, self-confidence, and destination reputation. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, 31, 100852. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jdmm.2023.100852>
- Gupta, R. K. (2022). Effects of confidence and social benefits on consumers' extra-role and in-role behaviors: A social identity and social exchange perspective. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 65, 102879. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2021.102879>
- Gürlek, M., Düzgün, E., & Uygur, S. M. (2017). How does corporate social responsibility create customer loyalty? The role of corporate image. *Social Responsibility Journal*, 13(3), 409-427. <https://doi.org/10.1108/SRJ-10-2016-0177>
- Gurler, H. E. (2025). How does service quality predict loyalty? The serial mediation effects of perceived value and consumer brand identification. *International Journal of Quality & Reliability Management*, 42(3), 920-940. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJQRM-12-2023-0385>
- Gursoy, D., Maier, T. A., & Chi, C. G. (2008). Generational differences: An examination of work values and generational gaps in the hospitality workforce. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 27(3), 448-458. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2007.11.002>
- Gutman, J. (1982). A means-end chain model based on consumer categorization processes. *Journal of Marketing*, 46(2), 60-72. <http://doi.org/10.1177/002224298204600207>
- Hagger, M. S., & Chatzisarantis, N. L. (2009). Integrating the theory of planned behaviour and self-determination theory in health behaviour: A meta-analysis. *British journal of health psychology*, 14(2), 275-302. [https://doi.org/ 10.1348/135910708X373959](https://doi.org/10.1348/135910708X373959)
- Haris Bin Khalid, M. I. K. (2022). Psychographic motives and self-concept resonate: A study of loyalty and advocacy of fashion in the millennial consumers. *Journal of Southwest Jiaotong University*, 57(5). <http://doi.org/10.35741/issn.0258-2724.57.5.42>
- Hair, Joseph F., Black, W. C., Babin, B. J., & Anderson, R. E. (1998). *Multivariate Data Analysis*. Prentice-Hall, Inc (Vol. 1). <https://doi.org/10.1038/259433b0>
- Hair, J. F., Black, W. C., Babin, J. B., & Anderson, R. E. (2010). *Multivariate data analysis: a global perspective* (7th ed.). San Francisco: Pearson.
- Hair, J. F., Sarstedt, M., Hopkins, L., & Kuppelwieser, V. G. (2014). Partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM). *Sage Publisher*, (November 2016), 1-329. <https://doi.org/10.1108/EBR-10-2013-0128>
- Hair, J. F., Jr., Hult, G. T. M., Ringle, C. M., & Sarstedt, M. (2014). *A primer on*

Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications Ltd.

- Hair, Jr., J. F., Hult, G. T. M., Ringle, C. M., & Sarstedt, M. (2017). *A primer on partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM)* (2nd Editio). Los Angeles: SAGE.
- Hair, J. F., Hult, G. T. M., Ringle, C. M., & Sarstedt, M. (2022). *A Primer on Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM)* (3 ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. forthcoming.
- Hair Jr, J. F., Howard, M. C., & Nitzl, C. (2020). Assessing measurement model quality in PLS-SEM using confirmatory composite analysis. *Journal of Business Research*, 109, 101-110. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2019.11.069>
- Hair, J. F., Ringle, C. M., & Sarstedt, M. (2011). PLS-SEM: Indeed a silver bullet. *Journal of Marketing theory and Practice*, 19(2), 139-152. <https://doi.org/10.2753/MTP1069-6679190202>
- Hair, J. F., Sarstedt, M., Pieper, T. M., & Ringle, C. M. (2013). Partial least squares structural equation modelling: Rigorous applications better results and higher acceptance. *Long Range Planning*, 46, 1-12. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lrp.2013.01.001>
- Hair, J. F., Wolfinbarger, M. F., Ortinau, D. J., & Bush, R. P. (2008). *Essentials of Marketing Research*: McGraw-Hill Irwin.
- Han, C. M., Nam, H., & Swanepoel, D. (2023). Perceived brand localness of foreign brands and its impacts on brand trust and purchase intentions in developing countries in Asia: a social identity theory perspective. *International Marketing Review*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IMR-05-2022-0130>
- Han, D. (2020). Perceived value of virtual brand community, brand identity and customer response. *Journal of Commercial Economics*, 9, 84-87.
- Han, S. H., Ekinici, Y., Chen, C. H. S., & Park, M. K. (2020). Antecedents and the mediating effect of customer-restaurant brand identification. *Journal of Hospitality Marketing & Management*, 29(2), 202-220. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19368623.2019.1603129>
- Hapsari, R., Thongkern, T., & Zaini, M. T. (2023). Fashion-preneur and Social Media: A strategy to Enhance Teens' Awareness, Trust and Loyalty towards Indonesian Local Fashion Brands. *APMBA (Asia Pacific Management and Business Application)*, 11(3), 337-346. <https://doi.org/10.21776/ub.apmba.2023.011.03.6>
- Harjadi, D., Fatmasari, D., & Hidayat, A. (2023). Consumer identification in cigarette industry: Brand authenticity, brand identification, brand experience, brand loyalty and brand love. *Uncertain Supply Chain Management*, 11(2), 481-488. <https://doi.org/10.5267/j.uscm.2023.3.001>
- Harman, H. H. (1967). *Modern factor analysis*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

- Hashim, N. M. H. N., Khalid, N. R., Mokhtaruddin, S. A., Al Mamun, A., & Razzaque, M. A. (2023). Innovative attributes, brand reputation and behavioral consequences in the clothing industry: the roles of self-congruity and value consciousness. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management: An International Journal*, (ahead-of-print). <https://doi.org/10.1108/JFMM-10-2022-0209>
- Hassan, H., & Bassiony, G. M. (2025). Antecedents and Consequences of Customer Brand Identification. *Pharos International Journal of Tourism and Hospitality*, 4(1), 24-41. <https://doi.org/10.21608/pijth.2025.356221.1022>
- Hawkins, M. A., Thyroff, A., & Rome, A. S. (2024). Consumer-activity identification: identifying antecedents and outcomes. *Journal of Strategic Marketing*, 32(5), 606-621. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0965254X.2023.2280978>
- Hayes, A. F., & Preacher, K. J. (2010). Quantifying and testing indirect effects in simple mediation models when the constituent paths are nonlinear. *Multivariate Behavioral Research*, 45, 627-660. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00273171.2010.498290>
- He, H., Li, Y., & Harris, L. (2012). Social identity perspective on brand loyalty. *Journal of business research*, 65(5), 648-657. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2011.03.007>
- Helal, G., & Ozuem, W. (2018). Social identity matters: Social media and brand perceptions in the fashion apparel and accessories industries. In Digital marketing strategies for fashion and luxury brands. *IGI Global*, 326-361. <https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-5225-2697-1.ch016>
- Helgeson, J. G., & Supphellen, M. (2004). A conceptual and measurement comparison of self-congruity and brand personality: The impact of socially desirable responding. *International Journal of Market Research*, 46(2), 205-233. <https://doi.org/10.1177/147078530404600201>
- Henseler, J., Hubona, G., & Ray, P. A. (2016). Using PLS path modeling in new technology research: updated guidelines. *Industrial Management & Data Systems*, 106(1), 2-20.
- Henseler, J., & Chin, W. W. (2010). A comparison of approaches for the analysis of interaction effects between latent variables using partial least squares path modeling. *Structural Equation Modeling*, 17(1), 82-109. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10705510903439003>
- Henseler, J., Ringle, C. M., & Sinkovics, R. R. (2009). The use of partial least squares path modeling in international marketing. In Pinkovics & P. . N. Ghauri (Eds.), *Advances in International Marketing*, 277-319. Emerald Group Publishing Limited. [https://doi.org/10.1108/S1474-7979\(2009\)0000020014](https://doi.org/10.1108/S1474-7979(2009)0000020014)
- Henseler, J., Ringle, C. M., & Sarstedt, M. (2015). A new criterion for assessing discriminant validity in variance-based structural equation modeling. *Journal of Academic Marketing Science*, 43, 115-135. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11747-014-0403-8>
- Hess, J. S. (1995). Construction and Assessment of a Scale to Measure Consumer

Trust, in Barbara B. Stern and George M. Zinkhan (eds.), *Enhancing Knowledge Development in Marketing, AMA Educators' Proceedings*, Chicago: American Marketing Association, 20-26.

- Hertz, D. G. (1990). Trauma and nostalgia: new aspects of the coping of aging holocaust survivors. *Israeli Journal of Psychiatry and Related Sciences*, 27(2), 189-198.
- Higueras-Castillo, E., Liébana-Cabanillas, F., Santos, M. A. D., Zulauf, K., & Wagner, R. (2024). Do you believe it? Green advertising skepticism and perceived value in buying electric vehicles. *Sustainable Development*. <https://doi.org/10.1002/sd.2932>
- Hiscock, J. (2003). Most trusted brands 2002. *Marketing*, 1.
- Ho Lee, S., & Jung, K. S. (2018). Loyal customer behaviors: Identifying brand fans. *Social Behavior and Personality: an international journal*, 46(8), 1285-1303. <https://doi.org/10.2224/sbp.6482>
- Holbrook, M. B., & Hirschman, E. C. (1982). The experiential aspects of consumption: Consumer fantasies, feelings, and fun. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 9(2), 132-140. <http://doi.org/10.1086/208906>
- Hu, C., & Shen, Z. (2021). Research on consumers' purchase intention of Guochao sports brands in the context of cultural identity: A case study of Li-Ning brand. *Journal of Vitality*, 18, 79-81.
- Huang, S., Qu, H., & Wang, X. (2024). Impact of green marketing on peer-to-peer accommodation platform users' repurchase intention and positive word-of-mouth: mediation of trust and consumer identification. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 36(3), 691-712. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJCHM-10-2022-1300>
- Huang, X., Huang, Z., & Wyer Jr, R. S. (2016). Slowing down in the good old days: The effect of nostalgia on consumer patience. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 43(3), 372-387. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jcr/ucw033>
- Huo, C., Hameed, J., Zhang, M., Bin Mohd Ali, A. F., & Nik Hashim, N. A. A. (2022). Modeling the impact of corporate social responsibility on sustainable purchase intentions: insights into brand trust and brand loyalty. *Economic research-Ekonomska istraživanja*, 35(1), 4710-4739. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1331677X.2021.2016465>
- Hwang, J., Abbas, J., Joo, K., Choo, S. W., & Hyun, S. S. (2022). The effects of types of service providers on experience economy, brand attitude, and brand loyalty in the restaurant industry. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 19(6), 3430. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph19063430>
- Hwang, J., Choe, J. Y. J., Kim, H. M., & Kim, J. J. (2021). Human baristas and robot baristas: How does brand experience affect brand satisfaction, brand attitude, brand attachment, and brand loyalty? *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 99, 103050. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2021.103050>
- Huang, C. C. (2017). The impacts of brand experiences on brand loyalty: mediators

- of brand love and trust. *Management Decision*, 55(5), 915-934. <https://doi.org/10.1108/MD-10-2015-0465>
- Huang, X., Liu, C., Wang, J., & Zheng, J. (2025). Exploring Chinese Millennials' Purchase Intentions for Clothing with AI-Generated Patterns from Premium Fashion Brands: An Integration of the Theory of Planned Behavior and Perceived Value Perspective. *Journal of Theoretical and Applied Electronic Commerce Research*, 20(2), 141. <https://doi.org/10.3390/jtaer20020141>
- Hussain, I., Mu, S., Mohiuddin, M., Danish, R. Q., & Sair, S. A. (2020). Effects of sustainable brand equity and marketing innovation on market performance in hospitality industry: Mediating effects of sustainable competitive advantage. *Sustainability*, 12(7), 2939. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su12072939>
- Hussein, A. S. (2018). Effects of brand experience on brand loyalty in Indonesian casual dining restaurant: Roles of customer satisfaction and brand of origin. *Tourism and Hospitality Management*, 24(1), 119-132.
- Hussein, A. S., Hapsari, R. D. V., & Yulianti, I. (2018). Experience quality and hotel boutique customer loyalty: Mediating role of hotel image and perceived value. *Journal of Quality Assurance in Hospitality & Tourism*, 19(4), 442-459. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1528008X.2018.1429981>
- Hwang, J., & Han, H. (2014). Examining strategies for maximizing and utilizing brand prestige in the luxury cruise industry. *Tourism Management*, 40, 244-259. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2013.06.007>
- Hwang, J., & Hyun, S. S. (2013). The impact of nostalgia triggers on emotional responses and revisit intentions in luxury restaurants: The moderating role of hiatus. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 33, 250-262. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2012.09.001>
- IMD. (2024, January 7). *Nike dominates Chinese apparel market for now, but Guochao is changing the game*. <https://www.imd.org/ibyimd/asian-hub/nike-dominates-chinese-apparel-market-for-now-but-guochao-is-changing-the-game/>
- Iqbal, A., Shaikh, A., Saleem, S. T., Farooqi, R., & Usman, M. (2023). Unpacking the moderating role of customer satisfaction in the relationship between perceived value and brand loyalty: Insights from Pakistan's hotel industry. *Journal of Positive School Psychology*, 1433-1448.
- Iglesias, O., Markovic, S., & Rialp, J. (2019). How does sensory brand experience influence brand equity? Considering the roles of customer satisfaction, customer affective commitment, and employee empathy. *Journal of Business Research*, 96, 343-354. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2018.05.043>
- iimedia. (2021, August 5). *Data analysis of sneaker wear industry: In 2021, 53.7% of Chinese consumers will buy sportswear for their daily needs*. <https://www.iimedia.cn/c1061/80122.html>
- iimedia. (2022, August 8). *Chinese generation Z consumer sports brand consumption trend*. https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s?__biz=MjM5OTIzNzQwMA==&mid=2650472550&idx=1&sn=bb79aa6aef66d93dfc8dc87c3fbbc73e&chksm=bf312211884

- iiMedia. (2024). *2024-2025 China sports apparel and footwear market operation status and consumer demand data monitoring report*. <https://report.iimedia.cn/repo7-0/43555.html>
- Ijaz, H., Ahmad, M., & Abdul-Wahid, S. (2024). Comparison of Web and App Advertisement with Brand Identification Impact on Purchase Intention: Study on Pakistan's Personal Care Products Industry. *Journal of Management Practices, Humanities and Social Sciences*, 8(3), 75-87. <https://doi.org/10.33152/jmphss-8.3.7>
- Inoue, Y., Funk, D. C., & McDonald, H. (2017). Predicting behavioral loyalty through corporate social responsibility: The mediating role of involvement and commitment. *Journal of Business Research*, 75, 46-56. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2017.02.005>
- Ipsos. (2023, January 2). *Ipsos 2022 sportswear brand competitiveness list*. <https://www.ipsos.com/zh-cn/yipusuo2022yundongfushipinpaijingzhenglibangdanfabu>
- Jab, M. R. (2017). Modern consumer in cyberspace—internet and psychology approach. *Foundations of Management*, 9(1), 111-122. <http://doi.org/10.1515/fman-2017-0009>
- Jacoby, J., & Chestnut, R. W. (1978). *Brand loyalty: Measurement and management*. John Wiley & Sons Incorporated.
- Japutra, A., & Molinillo, S. (2019). Responsible and active brand personality: On the relationships with brand experience and key relationship constructs. *Journal of Business Research*, 99, 464-471. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2017.08.027>
- Jatyananda, C., Nurittamont, W., & Phayaphrom, B. (2021). Understanding the social media marketing activities influence on revisit intention in beauty clinics: The case study in Bangkok, Thailand. *PSAKU International Journal of Interdisciplinary Research, Forthcoming, Asian Administration & Management Review*, 4(2). <https://doi.org/10.14456/aamr.2021.4>
- Jiang, L., Jun, M., & Yang, Z. (2016). Customer-perceived value and loyalty: how do key service quality dimensions matter in the context of B2C e-commerce? *Service Business*, 10, 301-317. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11628-015-0269-y>
- Jiang, W. (2023). Research on brand remodeling strategy of Li Ning under the background of new retail. *Journal of Modern Business*, 11-14. <http://doi.org/10.14097/j.cnki.5392/2023.11.035>
- Jiménez-Barreto, J., Rubio, N., Campo, S., & Molinillo, S. (2020). Linking the online destination brand experience and brand credibility with tourists' behavioral intentions toward a destination. *Tourism Management*, 79, 104101. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2020.104101>
- Jinjiang Economy News (2021, May 29). *The average age of the population is 3.5 years younger than the national average*.

https://jijb.fjdaily.com/pc/con/202105/29/content_74304.html

- Jinjiang Municipal People's Government. (2025, March 11). *This enterprise in Jinjiang has become very popular! The acquisition of an international brand has drawn the attention of central media.* https://www.jinjiang.gov.cn/xxgk/jjyw/202503/t20250311_3147781.htm
- Jinjiang Municipal People's Government. (2025, March 20). *Overview of Jinjiang.* <https://www.jinjiang.gov.cn/yxjj/gkjj/jjgk/>
- Johnson-George, C., & Swap, W. C. (1982). Measurement of specific interpersonal trust: Construction and validation of a scale to assess trust in a specific other. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 43(6), 1306. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.43.6.1306>
- Jung, J., Kim, S. J., & Kim, K. H. (2020). Sustainable marketing activities of traditional fashion market and brand loyalty. *Journal of Business Research*, 120, 294-301. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2020.04.019>
- Kachawangsie, A., & Paengkesorn, R. (2022). The Factor to Create Purchase Intention of Fashion Products Through Online Distribution of Generation Y Consumers in Thailand. *วารสาร บริหารธุรกิจ เศรษฐศาสตร์ และ การ สื่อสาร*, 17(1).
- Kaewkhav, K., Rammas, C., & Khanngoen, C. (2023). The Role of Customer Perceived Value and Product Quality in Building Brand Loyalty in the Sports Drink Industry: Evidence from Thailand. *Service, Leisure, Sport, Tourism & Education*, 1(1), 1-17.
- Kalashi, M., Sahebkar, M. A., Karimi, J., Alahmadi, A. J., & Askarabadi, M. M. (2021). Comparing brand communication model in sports shoes and sports clothing industries. *Journal of New Studies in Sports Management*, 2(1), 82-94. <https://doi.org/10.22103/jnssm.2020.16705.1011>
- Kang, J., Tang, L., & Lee, J. Y. (2015). Self-congruity and functional congruity in brand loyalty. *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research*, 39(1), 105-131.
- Kang, S., Gon Kim, W., & Lee, S. (2025). Using nostalgia to increase tourists' destination loyalty in heritage cities: from imagined to productive nostalgia. *International Journal of Urban Sciences*, 1-26. <https://doi.org/10.1080/12265934.2025.2452511>
- Karim, R. A., Hoque, I. F., Islam, M. W., & Shamsun, F. (2025). Modeling brand experience and brand equity association in the banking industry: mediating role of brand identification, attachment and engagement. *Journal of Modelling in Management*, 20(4), 1265-1283. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JM2-07-2024-0231>
- Katili, F. A., Robby, F. A., & Handayani, P. W. (2024). The influence of the ride hailing apps loyalty program on customer loyalty: A case study in Indonesia. *Transportation Research Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, 26, 101141. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.trip.2024.101141>
- Khare, A., (2014). How cosmopolitan are Indian consumers? A study on fashion clothing involvement. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management*, 18, 233

431-451. <http://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.90.3.574>

- Khamitov, M., Wang, X., & Thomson, M. (2019). How well do consumer-brand relationships drive customer brand loyalty? Generalizations from a meta-analysis of brand relationship elasticities. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 46(3), 435-459. <http://doi.org/10.1093/jcr/ucz006>
- Khan, I., Hollebeek, L. D., Fatma, M., Islam, J. U., Rather, R. A., Shahid, S., & Sigurdsson, V. (2023). Mobile app vs. desktop browser platforms: The relationships among customer engagement, experience, relationship quality and loyalty intention. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 39(3-4), 275-297. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0267257X.2022.2106290>.
- Kim, J. J. (2023). Brand personality of global chain hotels, self-congruity, and self-discrepancy on customer responses. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 114, 103565. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2023.103565>
- Kim, C. K., Han, D., & Park, S. B. (2001). The effect of brand personality and brand identification on brand loyalty: Applying the theory of social identification. *Japanese psychological research* 43(4), 195-206. <http://doi.org/10.1111/1468-5884.00177>
- Kim, E., & Tang, L. R. (2020). The role of customer behavior in forming perceived value at restaurants: A multidimensional approach. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 87, 102511. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2020.102511>
- Kim, J., & Ah Yu, E. (2016). The holistic brand experience of branded mobile applications affects brand loyalty. *Social Behavior and Personality: An International Journal*, 44(1), 77-87. <https://doi.org/10.2224/sbp.2016.44.1.77>
- Kim, J., & Joung, H. M. (2016). Psychological underpinnings of luxury brand goods repurchase intentions: Brand-self congruity, emotional attachment, and perceived level of investment made. *Journal of Global Scholars of Marketing Science*, 26(3), 284-299. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21639159.2016.1174542>
- Kim, J. H., Kim, S., Nosrati, S., & Badu-Baiden, F. (2024). Can nostalgia-themed stimuli predict customer loyalty and continued patronage? *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJCHM-04-2023-0442>
- Kim, J. J., Lee, M. J., & Han, H. (2023). The psychology of vacationers' hotel brand choice in a post-pandemic world. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 29(2), 206-221. <https://doi.org/10.1177/13567667221086325>
- Kim, J. Y., Ko, S. H., & Choi, Y. (2024). Unveiling the power of social influencers in brand trust and brand identification. *South African Journal of Business Management*, 55(1), 12. <https://doi.org/10.4102/sajbm.v55i1.4087>
- Kim, K., Chung, T. L. D., & Fiore, A. M. (2023). The role of interactivity from Instagram advertisements in shaping young female fashion consumers' perceived value and behavioral intentions. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 70, 103159. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2022.103159>

- Kim, Y. J., Park, J. S., & Jeon, H. M. (2021). Experiential value, satisfaction, brand love, and brand loyalty toward robot barista coffee shop: The moderating effect of generation. *Sustainability*, 13(21), 1-16. <http://doi.org/10.3390/su132112029>
- Knox, S., & Walker, D. (2001). Measuring and managing brand loyalty. *Journal of strategic marketing*, 9(2), 111-128.
- Kolnhofer, D. A., Reicher, R. Z., & Szeghegyi, A. (2017). The X and Y generations' characteristics comparison. *Acta Polytechnica Hungarica*, 14(8), 107-125. <https://doi.org/10.12700/APH.14.8.2017.8.6>
- Koschate-Fischer, N., & Gartner, S. (2015). Brand trust: Scale development and validation. *Schmalenbach Business Review*, 67, 171-195. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF03396873>
- Kothari, C. R. (2004a). *Research methodology: methods and techniques*. New Age International.
- Kothari, C. R. (2004b). *Research methodology: Methods and techniques*. New Age International.
- Kremer, P., Feurer, S., Kim, J. Y., & Hoeffler, S. (2022). Overcoming the negative role of nostalgia in consumer reactions to automated products. *Journal of Product Innovation Management*, 39(6), 871-890. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jpim.12641>
- Krejcie, R., & Morgan, S. (1970). Sample size determination. *Business Research Methods*, 4(5), 34-36.
- Kressmann, F., Sirgy, M.J., Herrmann, A., Huber, F., Huber, S., & Lee, D. (2006). Direct and indirect effects of self-image congruence on brand loyalty. *Journal of Business Research*, 59(9), 955-964. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2006.06.001>
- Kreuger, L., & Neuman, W. L. (2006). *Social work research methods: qualitative and quantitative approaches: with Research Navigator*. Pearson/Allyn and Bacon.
- Krishnan, H. S. (1996). Characteristics of memory associations: A consumer-based brand equity perspective. *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, 13(4), 389-405. [http://doi.org/10.1016/s0167-8116\(96\)00021-3](http://doi.org/10.1016/s0167-8116(96)00021-3)
- Kuenzel, S., & Halliday, S. V. (2010). The chain of effects from reputation and brand personality congruence to brand loyalty: The role of brand identification. *Journal of Targeting, Measurement and Analysis for Marketing*, 18(3), 167-176. <http://doi.org/10.1057/jt.2010.15>
- Kulawardena, L. K. R. D., & Kalpana, R. A. S. (2024). The effects of social media advertising on consumers' brand loyalty: With special reference to the apparel retailers. *Asian Journal of Economics, Business and Accounting*, 24(2), 37-51. <https://doi.org/10.9734/ajeba/2024/v24i21218>
- Kumar, V. (2018). Transformative marketing: The next 20 years. *Journal of marketing*, 82(4), 1-12. <https://doi.org/10.1509/jm.82.41>

- Kumar, V., & Kaushik, A. K. (2017). Achieving destination advocacy and destination loyalty through destination brand identification. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 34(9), 1247-1260. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10548408.2017.1331871>
- Kumar, V., & Kaushik, A. K. (2018). Destination brand experience and visitor behavior: The mediating role of destination brand identification. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 35(5), 649-663. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10548408.2017.1401032>
- Kumar, V., & Kaushik, A. K. (2020). Building consumer-brand relationships through brand experience and brand identification. *Journal of Strategic Marketing*, 28(1), 39-59. <http://doi.org/10.1080/0965254x.2018.1482945>
- Kunkel, T., Doyle, J. P., & Berlin, A. (2017). Consumers' perceived value of sport team games—A multidimensional approach. *Journal of Sport Management*, 31(1), 80-95. <https://doi.org/10.1123/jsm.2016-0044>
- Kuo, Y. H. (2022). The retail brand personality—Behavioral outcomes framework: Applications to identity and social identity theories. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 13, 903170. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.903170>
- Kwan Soo Shin, S., Amenuvor, F. E., Basilisco, R., & Owusu-Antwi, K. (2019). Brand trust and brand loyalty: A moderation and mediation perspective. *Current Journal of Applied Science and Technology*, 38(4), 1-17. <https://doi.org/10.9734/cjast/2019/v38i430376>
- Kwon, J. H., Jung, S. H., Choi, H. J., & Kim, J. (2021). Antecedent factors that affect restaurant brand trust and brand loyalty: focusing on US and Korean consumers. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 30(7), 990-1015. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JPBM-02-2020-2763>
- Kwon, S., & Ha, S. (2023). Examining identity-and bond-based hashtag community identification: the moderating role of self-brand connections. *Journal of Research in Interactive Marketing*, 17(1), 78-93. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JRIM-07-2021-0183>
- Lacap, J. P. G., & Tungcab, A. P. (2020). The Influence of Brand Experience on Brand Loyalty Among Mobile Phone Users in Pampanga, Philippines: A Mediation Analysis. *Asia-Pacific Social Science Review*, 20(3).
- Ladhari, R., Gonthier, J., & Lajante, M. (2019). Generation Y and online fashion shopping: Orientations and profiles. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 48, 113-121. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2019.02.003>
- Lah, N. B. C., Singh, K. S. D., Alshdaifat, S. M., & Hanaysha, J. R. (2025). Embedding ESG practices into corporate strategy: a pathway to brand loyalty through consumer brand identification in the cosmetics industry. *Discover Sustainability*, 6(1), 1-16. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s43621-025-01346-y>
- Lai, R., & Teo, S. C. (2019). Analysing the moderating effects of generational cohorts on brand loyalty in the Malaysian footwear industry. *Journal of Pengurusan*, 56, 1-18. <http://doi.org/10.17576/pengurusan-2019-56-07>
- Lam, S. K., Ahearne, M., Hu, Y., & Schillewaert, N. (2010). Resistance to brand

switching when a radically new brand is introduced: A social identity theory perspective. *Journal of Marketing*, 74(6), 128-146. <https://doi.org/10.1509/jmkg.74.6.128>

- Lam, S. K., Ahearne, M., & Schillewaert, N. (2012). A multinational examination of the symbolic-instrumental framework of consumer-brand identification. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 43(3), 306-331. [Http://doi.org/10.1057/jibs.2011.54](http://doi.org/10.1057/jibs.2011.54)
- Lam, S. K., Ahearne, M., Mullins, R., Hayati, B., & Schillewaert, N. (2013). Exploring the dynamics of antecedents to consumer-brand identification with a new brand. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 41(2), 234-252. <http://doi.org/10.1007/s11747-012-0301-x>
- Lambert, D. M., & Harrington, T. C. (1990). Measuring nonresponse bias in customer service mail surveys. *Journal of Business Logistics*, 11(2), 5-25.
- Lancaster, G. (2005). *Research methods in management*. Burlington: Elsevier Butterworth-Heinemann.
- Langga, A., Kusumawati, A., & Alhabsji, T. (2021). Intensive distribution and sales promotion for improving customer-based brand equity (CBBE), re-purchase intention and word-of-mouth (WOM). *Journal of Economic and Administrative Sciences*, 37(4), 577-595. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JEAS-03-2019-0041>
- Larson, L., Larson, P., & Johnson, D. E. (2019). Differences in stubble height estimates resulting from systematic and random sample designs. *Rangeland Ecology & Management*, 72(4), 586-589. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.rama.2019.03.007>
- Le, T. T., Le, M. H., Nguyen Thi Tuong, V., Nguyen Thien, P. V., Tran Dac Bao, T., Nguyen Le Phuong, V., & Mavuri, S. (2024). Prestige over profit, corporate social responsibility boosts corporate sustainable performance: mediation roles of brand image and brand loyalty. *Journal of Global Responsibility*, 15(2), 215-244.
- Le, T. T., Ngo, H. Q., & Aureliano-Silva, L. (2021). Contribution of corporate social responsibility on SMEs' performance in an emerging market-the mediating roles of brand trust and brand loyalty. *International Journal of Emerging Markets*, (ahead-of-print). <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJOEM-12-2020-1516>
- Lee, J. K., Hansen, S. S., & Lee, S. Y. (2020). The effect of brand personality self-congruity on brand engagement and purchase intention: The moderating role of self-esteem in Facebook. *Current Psychology*, 39, 2116-2128. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-018-9898-3>
- Lee, J., & Park, K. (2024). The effects of hedonic shopping values on loyalty towards small retailers: The moderating role of trust. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 76, 103615. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2023.103615>
- Lee, S. A., & Jeong, M. (2014). Enhancing online brand experiences: An application of congruity theory. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 40, 49-58. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2014.03.008>

- Ledikwe, A. (2020). Determinants of brand loyalty in the apparel industry: A developing country perspective. *Cogent Business & Management*, 7(1), 1787736. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311975.2020.1787736>
- Leong, A. M. W., Yeh, S. S., Hsiao, Y. C., & Huan, T. C. T. (2015). Nostalgia as travel motivation and its impact on tourists' loyalty. *Journal of Business Research*, 68(1), 81-86. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2014.05.003>
- Li, F., Kashyap, R., Zhou, N., & Yang, Z. (2008). Brand trust as a second-order factor: An alternative measurement model. *International Journal of Market Research*, 50(6), 817-839. <https://doi.org/10.2501/S1470785308200225>
- Li, G., Li, G., & Kambele, Z. (2012). Luxury fashion brand consumers in China: Perceived value, fashion lifestyle, and willingness to pay. *Journal of business research*, 65(10), 1516-1522. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2011.10.019>
- Li, J. (2021). Impact of tourists' perceived value on brand loyalty: A case study of Xixi National Wetland Park. *Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research*, 26(3), 262-276. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10941665.2020.1862882>
- Li, K.Q. (2019). Research on brand loyalty evaluation of Chinese sports —based on fuzzy comprehensive evaluation model. *Journal of Sports Research and Education*, 34(1), 29-30. <http://doi.org/10.16207/j.cnki.2095-235x.2019.01.006>
- Li, L. & Tang, S.L. (2020). Research on the influencing factors about customers' repurchase intention, *Journal of Xi'an Petroleum University (social science edition)*, 45-79.
- Li, Q., Tan, J., & Jiao, Y. (2024). Research on the formation mechanism of brand identification in cross-border e-commerce platforms—Based on the perspective of perceived brand globalness/localness. *Heliyon*, 10(3). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2024.e25155>
- Liao, Y. W., Wang, Y. S., & Yeh, C. H. (2014). Exploring the relationship between intentional and behavioral loyalty in the context of e-tailing. *Internet Research*, 24(5), 668-686. <http://doi.org/10.1108/IntR-08-2013-0181>
- Lian, S. B., & Yoong, L. C. (2017). The effectiveness of strategic relationship marketing: exploring relationship quality towards customer loyalty. *International Business Research*, 10(12), 159-166. <https://doi.org/10.5539/ibr.v10n12p159>
- Lin, Y. H. (2015). Innovative brand experience's influence on brand equity and brand satisfaction. *Journal of Business Research*, 68(11), 2254-2259. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2015.06.007>
- Lin, M. Q., & Lee, B. C. (2012). The influence of website environment on brand loyalty: Brand trust and brand affect as mediators. *International Journal of Electronic Business Management*, 10(4), 308-321.
- Lin, J., Lobo, A., & Leckie, C. (2017). The role of benefits and transparency in shaping consumers' green perceived value, self-brand connection and brand loyalty. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 35, 133-141. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2016.12.011>

- Linus, H. B., Gisip, I. A., & Guliling, H. H. (2021). Conceptual millennials' brand loyalty to online fashion brands' E-commerce sites. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 16(1), 1231-1239. <http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARBS/v11-i6/10343>
- Liu, D., Wu, M., Zhu, T., Fang, H., & Hu, D. (2025). Self-congruity and functional congruity drive positive word-of-mouth in food tourism through moderating effects of emotional experiences. *Scientific Reports*, 15(1), 10560. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-025-94046-6>
- Liu, F., & Qi, M. (2022). Enhancing organizational citizenship behaviors for the environment: Integrating social identity and social exchange perspectives. *Psychology Research and Behavior Management*, 1901-1914. <https://doi.org/10.2147/PRBM.S370500>
- Liu, K. N., Tsai, T. I., Xiao, Q., & Hu, C. (2021). The impact of experience on brand loyalty: Mediating effect of images of Taiwan hotels. *Journal of China Tourism Research*, 17(3), 395-414. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19388160.2020.1777238>
- Liu, P., Li, M., Dai, D., & Guo, L. (2021). The effects of social commerce environmental characteristics on customers' purchase intentions: The chain mediating effect of customer-to-customer interaction and customer-perceived value. *Electronic Commerce Research and Applications*, 48, 101073. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.elerap.2021.101073>
- Liu, T., & Liu, M. (2024). Does cross-channel consistency always create brand loyalty in omni-channel retailing? *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, 52(1), 125-145. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJRDM-12-2022-0517>
- Liu, Z., Huang, S., & Liang, S. (2019). Does Brand personification matter in consuming tourism real estate products? A perspective on brand personality, self-congruity and brand loyalty. *Journal of China Tourism Research*, 15(4), 435-454. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19388160.2018.1516586>
- Loh, H. S., Gaur, S. S., & Lim, R. J. H. (2019). Childhood Brand Nostalgia, Perceived Self-Continuity and Brand Loyalty. *Journal of Emerging Trends in Marketing and Management*, 1(1), 52-62.
- Löhndorf, B., & Diamantopoulos, A. (2014). Internal branding: Social identity and social exchange perspectives on turning employees into brand champions. *Journal of Service Research*, 17(3), 310-325. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1094670514522098>
- O'Loughlin, D., Szmigin, I., & Turnbull, P. (2004). From relationships to experiences in retail financial services. *International Journal of Bank Marketing*, 22(7), 522-539.
- Low, F. C. S., Goh, Y. N., & Lim, C. N. (2025). Assessing the impact of source credibility on fast fashion brand loyalty. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management: An International Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JFMM-08-2023-0199>
- Lu, M., Wang, L., & Liu, D. (2025). A study of the Impact of China Chic Visual

design on Users Emotional and Aesthetic Perceptions: An integrated Observation of Psychological Reactions and Consumer Behavior. *Mediterranean Archaeology and Archaeometry*, 25(2), 185-195.

- Lu, Y., Lai, I. K. W., Liu, X. Y., & Wang, X. (2022). Influence of memorability on revisit intention in welcome back tourism: The mediating role of nostalgia and destination attachment. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 13, 1020467. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.1020467>
- Luo, Y.P., & Xie, H. (2023). Domestic sports brand marketing strategy under the background of big data. *Journal of Hunan University of Science and Engineering*, 44(3), 46-49. <https://doi.org/10.16336/j.cnki.cn43-1459/z.20230629.001>
- Mabkhot, H. A., & Shaari, H. (2015). The influence of brand image and brand personality on brand loyalty. *Australian Journal of Basic and Applied Sciences*, 9(7), 493-497.
- Mabkhot, H. A., Shaari, H., & Md Salleh, S. (2017). The influence of brand image and brand personality on brand loyalty, mediating by brand trust: An empirical study. *Jurnal penguurusan*, 50, 71-82. <https://doi.org/10.17576/penguurusan-2017-50-07>
- Magin, S., Algesheimer, R., Huber, F., & Herrmann, A. (2003). The impact of brand personality and customer satisfaction on customer's loyalty: Theoretical approach and findings of a causal analytical study in the sector of internet service providers. *Electronic Markets*, 13(4), 294-308. <http://doi.org/10.1080/1019678032000135572>
- Mandal, S. (2020). Employing autobiographical memory perspective to influence self-congruence and brand preference. *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, 19(5), 481-492. <http://doi.org/10.1002/cb.1830>
- Manzuma-Ndaaba, N., Harada, Y., Nordin, N., Abdullateef, A., & Rahim, A. (2018). Application of social exchange theory on relationship marketing dynamism from higher education service destination loyalty perspective. *Management Science Letters*, 8(10), 1077-1096. <http://doi.org/10.5267/j.msl.2018.7.004>
- Marliawati, A., & Cahyaningdyah, D. (2020). Impacts the brand of experience and brand image on brand loyalty: Mediators brand of trust. *Management Analysis Journal*, 9(2), 140-151. <http://doi.org/10.152 - 94 /maj.v9i2.36945>
- Marchegiani, C., & Phau, I. (2011). The value of historical nostalgia for marketing management. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, 29(2), 108-122. <https://doi.org/10.1108/02634501111117575>
- Markow, D. (2005). Children's reactions to tragedy. *Journal of Young consumers*, 6(2), 8-10. <https://doi.org/10.1108/17473610510701052>
- Martínez, P., & Del Bosque, I. R. (2013). CSR and customer loyalty: The roles of trust, customer identification with the company and satisfaction. *International journal of hospitality management*, 35, 89-99. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2013.05.009>
- Marwat, N. A., & Yousafzai, M. T. (2024). Evidencing the Relationship between

Self-image Congruency and Consumers' Purchase Intentions. *The Moderating Role of Product Conspicuousness*, 13(1), 46-58.

- Mazodier, M., & Merunka, D. (2012). Achieving brand loyalty through sponsorship: the role of fit and self-congruity. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 40(6), 807-820. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11747-011-0285-y>
- Mellens, M., Dekimpe, M., & Steenkamp, J. (1996). A Review of Brand-Loyalty Measures in Marketing. *Journal of Tijdschrift voor Economië en Management*, 41(4), 507-533.
- Memon, M. A., Ramayah, T., Cheah, J. H., Ting, H., Chuah, F., & Cham, T. H. (2021). PLS-SEM statistical programs: a review. *Journal of Applied Structural Equation Modeling*, 5(1), 1-14.
- Menidjel, C., & Bilgihan, A. (2021). How perceptions of relationship investment influence customer loyalty: the mediating role of perceived value and the moderating role of relationship proneness. *Journal of Strategic Marketing*, 31(1), 296-319. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0965254X.2021.1900342>
- McGowan, M., Shiu, E., & Hassan, L. M. (2017). The influence of social identity on value perceptions and intention. *Journal of consumer behaviour*, 16(3), 242-253. <https://doi.org/10.1002/cb.1627>
- McKinney, M., & Benson, A. (2013). The value of brand trust. *Journal of Brand Strategy*, 2(1), 76-86.
- McKinsey & Company. (2022, December 8). *2023 McKinsey China consumer report*. <https://www.mckinsey.com/cn/our-insights/our-insights/2023-mckinsey-china-consumer-report>
- McKinsey & Company. (2025, March 4). *2025 global sporting goods report: Striking a new balance—Turning uncertainty into opportunity*. <https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/retail/our-insights/sporting-goods-industry-trends>
- Miao, M., Go, I., Linyuan, C., Ikeda, K., & Numata, H. (2024). How brand loyalty and its marketing activities affect Japanese fashion companies' financial performance. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management: An International Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JFMM-04-2023-0111>
- Michel, G., Torelli, C. J., Fleck, N., & Hubert, B. (2022). Self-brand values congruity and incongruity: Their impacts on self-expansion and consumers' responses to brands. *Journal of Business Research*, 142, 301-316. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2021.12.032>
- Mills, M., Oghazi, P., Hultman, M., & Theotokis, A. (2022). The impact of brand communities on public and private brand loyalty: A field study in professional sports. *Journal of Business Research*, 144, 1077-1086. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2022.02.056>
- Min, J., Kim, J., & Yang, K. (2023). CSR attributions and the moderating effect of perceived CSR fit on consumer trust, identification, and loyalty. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 72, 103274. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2023.103274>

- Mishra, M., & Mund, P. (2024). Fifty-two years of consumer research based on social exchange theory: A review and research agenda using topic modeling. *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, 48(4), e13074. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ijcs.13074>
- Molinillo, S., Gómez-Ortiz, B., Pérez-Aranda, J., & Navarro-García, A. (2017). Building customer loyalty: The effect of experiential state, the value of shopping, and trust and perceived value of service on online clothes shopping. *Clothing and Textiles Research Journal*, 35(3), 156-171. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0887302X17694270>
- Moon, J., Hwang, J., & Lee, W. S. (2024). Impact of corporate social responsibility on brand trust and brand loyalty: Case of Uber. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 26(1), e2629. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jtr.2629>
- Moorman, C., Zaltman, G., & Deshpande, R. (1992). Relationships between providers and users of market research: The dynamics of trust within and between organizations. *Journal of marketing research*, 29(3), 314-328. <https://doi.org/10.1177/002224379202900303>
- Moreno, F. M., Lafuente, J. G., Carreón, F. Á., & Moreno, S. M. (2017). The characterization of the millennials and their buying behavior. *International Journal of Marketing Studies*, 9(5), 135-144. <http://doi.org/10.5539/ijms.v9n5p135>
- Morgan, R. M., & Hunt, S. D. (1994). The commitment-trust theory of relationship marketing. *Journal of Marketing*, 58, 20-38. <http://doi.org/10.1089/cyber.2012.0348>
- Mostafa, R. B., & Kasamani, T. (2021). Brand experience and brand loyalty: is it a matter of emotions? *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*, 33(4), 1033-1051. <https://doi.org/10.1108/APJML-11-2019-0669>
- Muehling, D. D., Sprott, D. E., & Sprott, D. E. (2004). The power of reflection: An empirical examination of nostalgia advertising effects. *Journal of Advertising*, 33(3), 25-35. <http://doi.org/10.1080/00913367.2004.10639165>
- Muehling, D. D., Sprott, D. E., & Sultan, A. J. (2014). Exploring the boundaries of nostalgic advertising effects: A consideration of childhood brand exposure and attachment on consumers' responses to nostalgia-themed advertisements. *Journal of Advertising*, 43(1), 73-84. <http://doi.org/10.1080/00913367.2013.815110>
- Mukerjee, K. (2018). The impact of brand experience, service quality and perceived value on word of mouth of retail bank customers: Investigating the mediating effect of loyalty. *Journal of Financial Services Marketing*, 23(1), 12-24. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41264-018-0039-8>
- Muncy, J. A. (1983). An investigation of the two-dimensional conceptualization of brand loyalty. *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 45, 288A.
- Munuera-Aleman, J. L., Delgado-Ballester, E., & Yague-Guillén, M. J. (2003). Development and validation of a brand trust scale. *International Journal of Market Research*, 45(1), 1-18. <https://doi.org/10.1177/147078530304500103>

- Muralidhar, A., & Raja, A. S. (2019). Understanding the purchase intention characteristics of Gen Y and Gen Z and introspecting the modern demand variables in fashion industry. *International Journal of Scientific and Engineering Research*, 10(12), 144-170.
- Na, M., Rong, L., Ali, M. H., Alam, S. S., Masukujjaman, M., & Ali, K. A. M. (2023). The mediating role of brand trust and brand love between brand experience and loyalty: A study on smartphones in China. *Behavioral Sciences*, 13(6), 502. <https://doi.org/10.3390/bs13060502>
- Nadeem, W., Andreini, D., Salo, J., & Laukkanen, T. (2015). Engaging consumers online through websites and social media: A gender study of Italian Generation Y clothing consumers. *International Journal of Information Management*, 35(4), 432-442. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijinfomgt.2015.04.008>
- Namkung, S., & Park, S. Y. (2021). Who buys our brand? The influence of consumption values and the congruity with brand benefits on brand identification, trust and loyalty. *Asia Marketing Journal*, 22(4), 1. <https://doi.org/10.15830/amj.2020.22.4.1>
- Nandan, S. (2005). An exploration of the brand identity–brand image linkage: A communications perspective. *Journal of brand management*, 12, 264-278. <https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.bm.2540222>
- Napalai, J., & Khamwon, A. (2023). The antecedents and consequence of brand coolness: a case of millennial consumers toward fashion clothing brands. *Uncertain Supply Chain Management*, 11(2), 513-522. <https://doi.org/10.5267/j.uscm.2023.2.013>
- Naylor, G., Kleiser, S. B., Baker, J., & Yorkston, E. (2008). Using transformational appeals to enhance the retail experience. *Journal of Retailing*, 84(1), 49-57. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretai.2008.01.001>
- Neville, F. G., & Reicher, S. D. (2011). The experience of collective participation: Shared identity, relatedness and emotionality. *Contemporary Social Science*, 6, 377–396. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21582041.2012.627277>
- Nguyen, D. T., Nguyen, T. T. H., Nguyen, K. O., Pham, T. T. H., & Nguyen, T. H. (2023). Brand personality and revisit intention: the mediating role of tourists' self-image congruity. *Tourism and hospitality management*, 29(2), 235-248. <https://doi.org/10.20867/thm.29.2.8>
- Nguyen, T. D., Barrett, N. J., & Miller, K. E. (2011). Brand loyalty in emerging markets. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, 29(3), 222-232. <https://doi.org/10.1108/02634501111129211>
- Nielsen, K. S., Joanes, T., Webb, D., Gupta, S., & Gwozdz, W. (2023). Exploring the psychological characteristics of style and fashion clothing orientations. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 40(7), 897-910. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JCM-04-2022-5344>
- Nikhashemi, S. R., Jebarajakirthy, C., & Nusair, K. (2019). Uncovering the roles of retail brand experience and brand love in the apparel industry: Non-linear structural equation modelling approach. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer*

Services, 48(1), 122-135. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2019.01.014>

- Nikhashemi, S. R., Tarofder, A. K., Gaur, S. S., & Haque, A. (2016). The effect of customers' perceived value of retail store on relationship between store attribute and customer brand loyalty: Some insights from Malaysia. *Procedia Economics and Finance*, 37, 432-438.
- Nikhashemi, S. R., & Valaei, N. (2017). What are the building blocks of customer brand loyalty in department stores? A multi-level mediation analysis. *Journal of Relationship Marketing*, 16(4), 302-327. <http://doi.org/10.1080/15332667.2017.1349559>
- Nongkynrih, B. (2012). Sampling, sample size estimation and randomisation. *Indian Journal of Medical Specialities*, 3(2). <https://doi.org/10.7713/ijms.2012.0056>
- Noprianta, D. A., Mugiono, M., & Yulianti, I. (2024). An integrated model of Brand Experience and Brand Loyalty: an examination of the mediation effects of customer satisfaction and brand trust. *Journal of Business and Management Review*, 5(1), 086-104. <https://doi.org/10.47153/jbmr52.8872024>
- Northeast Securities (2023, March 31). *Leading domestic sports brand, professional focus on brand upward*. <https://www.sgpjbg.com/baogao/120609.html>
- Noh, M., & Johnson, K. K. (2019). Effect of apparel brands' sustainability efforts on consumers' brand loyalty. *Journal of Global Fashion Marketing*, 10(1), 1-17. <http://doi.org/10.1080/20932685.2018.1550006>
- Nunnally, J. C. (1978). *Psychometric theory* (2nd ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Nyadzayo, M. W., Matanda, M. J., & Rajaguru, R. (2018). The determinants of franchise brand loyalty in B2B markets: An emerging market perspective. *Journal of Business Research*, 86, 435-445. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2017.09.015>
- Nysveen, H., Pedersen, P. E., & Skard, S. (2013). Brand experiences in service organizations: Exploring the individual effects of brand experience dimensions. *Journal of Brand Management*, 20(5), 404-423. <http://doi.org/10.1057/bm.2012.31>
- Oke, B. R., & Aniebo, C. S. (2023). Sales Promotion Strategies and Retention of Customer Brand Loyalty in Airtel and Globacom in Akwa Ibom State. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science*, 7(4), 1416-1430. <https://doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2023.7518>
- Oklevik, O., Nysveen, H., & Pedersen, P. E. (2024). Exploring the relationship between co-creation (DART), brand experience strength, and brand satisfaction: a brand engagement perspective. *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, 32(1), 1-24. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10696679.2022.2120013>
- Ong, C. H., Lee, H. W., & Ramayah, T. (2018). Impact of brand experience on loyalty. *Journal of Hospitality Marketing & Management*, 27(7), 755-774. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19368623.2018.1445055>
- Onojaefe, D., & Nhepera, N. (2017). The influence of hotel product innovation on customer loyalty in Cape Town. *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and*

- Orazgaliyeva, E., Abuzhalitova, A., Sokhatskaya, N., Smykova, M., & Kazybayeva, A. (2024). Trust as a critical driver of customer loyalty in the pharmaceutical market: A study of Kazakhstan. *Regional Science Policy & Practice*, 100021. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.rspp.2024.100021>
- Osborne, J. W., & Costello, A. B. (2004). Sample size and subject to item ratio in principal components analysis. *Practical Assessment, Research, and Evaluation*, 9(1). <http://PAREonline.net/getvn.asp?v=9&n=11>.
- Ou, Y. C., & Verhoef, P. C. (2017). The impact of positive and negative emotions on loyalty intentions and their interactions with customer equity drivers. *Journal of Business Research*, 80, 106-115. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2017.07.011>
- Özhan, S., Altug, N., & Deniz, E. (2018). The influence of openness to experience and nostalgia proneness on brand loyalty. *Journal of Advances in Management Research*, 15(4), 500-513. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JAMR-11-2017-0106>
- Pade, R., & Feurer, S. (2022). The mitigating role of nostalgia for consumer price unfairness perceptions in response to disadvantageous personalized pricing. *Journal of Business Research*, 145, 277-287. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2022.02.057>
- Palmer, A., Koenig-Lewis, N., & Asaad, Y. (2016). Brand identification in higher education: A conditional process analysis. *Journal of Business Research*, 69(8), 3033-3040. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2016.01.018>
- Palmer, A., Koenig-Lewis, N., & Jones, L. E. M. (2013). The effects of residents' social identity and involvement on their advocacy of incoming tourism. *Tourism Management*, 38, 142-151. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2013.02.019>
- Pallant, J. (2011). *SPSS survival manual: A step by step guide to data analysis using SPSS (4th ed)*. Australia: National Library of Australia.
- Pallant, J. (2016). *A step by step guide to data analysis using IBM SPSS (6th ed.)*. Berkshire England: McGraw-Hill.
- Pan, Y., Sheng, S., & Xie, F. T. (2012). Antecedents of customer loyalty: An empirical synthesis and reexamination. *Journal of retailing and consumer services*, 19(1), 150-158. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2011.11.004>
- Papista, E., & Dimitriadis, S. (2012). Exploring consumer-brand relationship quality and identification: Qualitative evidence from cosmetics brands. *Qualitative Market Research: An International Journal*, 15(1), 33-56. <https://doi.org/10.108/13522751211191982>
- Park, B. J., & Kim, S. W. (2006). A study on the consumption value, brand identification, consumer-brand relationship of Korean-Japanese university consumers: Focused on the famous brand. *Journal of Consumer Studies*, 17(4), 113-143.
- Parker, B. T. (2009). A comparison of brand personality and brand user-imagery con

- gruence. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 26(3), 175-184. <http://doi.org/10.1108/07363760910954118>
- Parment, A., Zwanka, R. J., Buff, C., Gursoy, D., Maier, T. A., & Chi, C. (2013). Generational differences: An examination of work values and generational gaps in the hospitality workforce. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 27(3), 189–199 <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2007.11.002>.
- Pascal, V. J., Sprott, D. E., & Muehling, D. D. (2002). The influence of evoked nostalgia on consumers' responses to advertising: An exploratory study. *Journal of Current Issues & Research in Advertising*, 24(1), 39-47. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10641734.2002.10505126>
- Peter, J. P. (1981). Construct validity: A review of basic issues and marketing practices. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 18(2), 133-145.
- Pérez, A., & Rodríguez del Bosque, I. (2015). Corporate social responsibility and customer loyalty: exploring the role of identification, satisfaction and type of company. *Journal of Services Marketing*, 29(1), 15-25. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JSM-10-2013-0272>
- Peterson, R. A. (1995). Relationship marketing and the consumer. *Journal of the academy of marketing science*, 23(4), 278-281. <https://doi.org/10.1177/009207039502300407>
- Petrack, J. F. (2002). Development of a multi-dimensional scale for measuring the perceived value of a service. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 34(2), 119-134. <http://doi.org/10.1080/00222216.2002.11949965>
- Phang, G., Ng, J. E., & Fam, K. S. (2021). Customer engagement and loyalty issues in omnichannel fast-food industry. *International Journal of Business and Society*, 22(3), 1429-1448. <https://doi.org/10.33736/ijbs.4313.2021>
- Phi, L. N., Phuong, D. H., & Huy, T. V. (2024). How perceived crowding changes the interrelationships between perceived value, tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty: the empirical study at Hoi An. *International Journal of Tourism Cities*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJTC-08-2023-0155>
- Phua, J., & Kim, J. J. (2018). Starring in your own Snapchat advertisement: Influence of self-brand congruity, self-referencing and perceived humor on brand attitude and purchase intention of advertised brands. *Telematics and Informatics*, 35(5), 1524-1533. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tele.2018.03.020>
- Piepiora, P.A., Baginska, J., & Piepiora) Z. N. (2024). Perspective on solving the problem of declining interest in physical activity in Poland. *Frontiers in Sports and Active Living*, 6, 1416154. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fspor.2024.1416154>
- Pratiwi, R. S., Salim, U., & Sunaryo, S. (2021). The Effect of Brand Experience and Perceived Value on Brand Loyalty Mediated by Brand Trust. *Jurnal Aplikasi Manajemen*, 19(2), 310-318. <http://dx.doi.org/10.21776/ub.jam.2021.019.02.07>
- Preacher, K. J., & Hayes, A. F. (2008). Asymptotic and resampling strategies for assessing and comparing indirect effects in multiple mediator models.

- Proksch, M., Orth, U. R., & Bethge, F. (2013). Disentangling the influence of attachment anxiety and attachment security in consumer formation of attachments to brands. *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, 12(4), 318-326.
<http://doi.org/10.1002/cb.1434>
- Podsakoff, P. M., MacKenzie, S. B., Lee, J. Y., & Podsakoff, N. P. (2003). Common method biases in behavioral research: A critical review of the literature and recommended remedies. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 88(5), 879-903.
<https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.88.5.879>
- Podsakoff, P., M., MacKenzie, S. B., & Podsakoff, N., P. (2012). Sources of method bias in social science research and recommendations on how to control it. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 63(1), 539-569.
<https://doi.org/http://doi.org/10.1146/annu-rev-psych-120710-100452>
- Podsakoff, P. M., & Organ, D. W. (1986). Self-reports in organizational research: Problems and prospects. *Journal of Management*, 12(4), 531-544.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/014920638601200408>
- Popp, B., & Woratschek, H. (2017). Consumer-brand identification revisited: An integrative framework of brand identification, customer satisfaction, and price image and their role for brand loyalty and word of mouth. *Journal of Brand Management*, 24(3), 250-270. <http://doi.org/10.1057/s41262-017-0033-9>
- Portal, S., Abratt, R., & Bendixen, M. (2019). The role of brand authenticity in developing brand trust. *Journal of Strategic Marketing*, 27(8), 714-729.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/0965254X.2018.1466828>
- Qian, J., & Li, X. (2024). Perceived Value, Place Identity, and Behavioral Intention: An Investigation on the Influence Mechanism of Sustainable Development in Rural Tourism. *Sustainability*, 16(4), 1583.
<https://doi.org/10.3390/su16041583>
- Quaye, E. S., Taoana, C., Abratt, R., & Anabila, P. (2022). Customer advocacy and brand loyalty: The mediating roles of brand relationship quality and trust. *Journal of Brand Management*, 29(4), 363-382.
<https://doi.org/10.1057/s41262-022-00276-8>
- Rabbanee, F. K., Roy, R., & Spence, M. T. (2020). Factors affecting consumer engagement on online social networks: self-congruity, brand attachment, and self-extension tendency. *European Journal of Marketing*, 54(6), 1407-1431.
<https://doi.org/10.1108/EJM-03-2018-0221>
- Rachmawati, A., Sutrisno, S., & Saiful, S. (2023). The Effect of Brand Trust, Brand Identification and Brand Commitment on Brand Loyalty of Shoes Sports. *Jurnal Ekonomi*, 12(01), 96-102.
- Rafdinal, W., Setiawardani, M., Raharso, S., & Hardiyanto, N. (2024). Brand loyalty model for halal fashion brands: integrating quality-loyalty model, information sources and religiosity-loyalty model. *Journal of Islamic*

- Ramaseshan, B., & Stein, A. (2014). Connecting the dots between brand experience and brand loyalty: The mediating role of brand personality and brand relationships. *Journal of Brand Management*, 21(7), 664-683. <https://doi.org/10.1108/APJML-11-2019-0669>
- Rahim, A. G. (2016). Perceived service quality and customer loyalty: The mediating effect of passenger satisfaction in the Nigerian Airline Industry. *International Journal of Management and Economics*, 52, 94-117. <https://doi.org/10.1515/ijme-2016-0029>
- Ramotion Agency. (2025, July 22). *Generational Differences in Brand Loyalty*. <https://www.ramotion.com/blog/generational-differences-in-brand-loyalty/>
- Rather, R., & Sharma, J. (2016). Brand loyalty with hospitality brands: The role of customer brand identification, brand satisfaction and brand commitment. *Pacific Business Review International*, 1(3), 76-86.
- Rather, R. A., Tehseen, S., & Parrey, S. H. (2018). Promoting customer brand engagement and brand loyalty through customer brand identification and value congruity. *Spanish Journal of Marketing-ESIC*, 22(3), 319-337. <https://doi.org/10.1108/SJME-06-2018-0030>
- Rather, R. A. (2017). Investigating the Impact of Customer Brand Identification on Hospitality Brand Loyalty: A Social Identity Perspective. *Journal of Hospitality Marketing & Management*, 27(5), 487-513. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19368623.2018.1404539>
- Rather, R. A., & Camilleri, M. A. (2019). The effects of service quality and consumer-brand value congruity on hospitality brand loyalty. *Anatolia*, 30(4), 547-559. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13032917.2019.1650289>
- Rather, R. A., & Hollebeek, L. D. (2019). Exploring and validating social identification and social exchange-based drivers of hospitality customer loyalty. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 31(3), 1432-1451. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJCHM-10-2017-0627>
- Rather, R. A., Hollebeek, L. D., Vo-Thanh, T., Ramkissoon, H., Leppiman, A., & Smith, D. (2022). Shaping customer brand loyalty during the pandemic: The role of brand credibility, value congruence, experience, identification, and engagement. *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, 21(5), 1175-1189. <https://doi.org/10.1002/cb.2070>
- Rather, R. A., Tehseen, S., Itoo, M. H., & Parrey, S. H. (2021). Customer brand identification, affective commitment, customer satisfaction, and brand trust as antecedents of customer behavioral intention of loyalty: An empirical study in the hospitality sector. *Journal of Global Scholars of Marketing Science*, 29(2), 196-217, <https://doi.org/10.1080/21639159.2019.1577694>
- Rasool, A., Shah, F. A., & Tanveer, M. (2021). Relational dynamics between customer engagement, brand experience, and customer loyalty: An empirical investigation. *Journal of Internet Commerce*, 20(3), 273-292. <http://doi.org/10.1080/15332861.2021.1889818>

- Ravasi, D., & Van Rekom, J. (2003). Key issues in organizational identity and identification theory. *Corporate Reputation Review*, 6(2), 118-132. <http://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.crr.1540194>
- Rehman, M., Zelin, T., & Hussain, T. (2025). Influence of consumer satisfaction on brand allegiance: An empirical investigation in Pakistan's safety and luxury automobile sector. *Acta Psychologica*, 252, 104667. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.actpsy.2024.104667>
- Rehman, S. U., & Shafiq, M. (2019). Role of Brand Experience in Building Brand Loyalty: Mediating Role of Brand Trust and Brand Commitment. *South Asian Review of Business and Administrative Studies (SABAS)*, 1(1), 41-56. <http://doi.org/10.52461/sabas.v1i1.442>
- Reicher, S. D., & Haslam, S. A. (2010). Beyond help: A social psychology of collective solidarity and social cohesion. In S. Stürmer & M. Snyder (Eds.), *The psychology of prosocial behavior: Group processes, intergroup relations, and helping* (pp. 289–309). Wiley-Blackwell.
- Rimadias, S., Alvionita, N., & Amelia, A. P. (2021). Using social media marketing to create brand awareness, brand image, and brand loyalty on tourism sector in Indonesia. *The Winners*, 22(2), 173-182. <https://doi.org/10.21512/tw.v22i2.7597>
- Rincón, A. G., Barbosa, R. L. C., Mateus, M. A., & Saavedra, N. O. (2023). Symbolic consumption as a non-traditional predictor of brand loyalty in the sports industry, Football club segment. *Heliyon*, 9(4). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2023.e15474>
- Rini, E. S., Rombe, E., & Tarigan, M. I. (2024). Brand destination loyalty: the antecedents of destination brand experience. *Cogent Business & Management*, 11(1), 2320992. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311975.2024.2320992>
- Rivera, J. J., Bigne, E., & Curras-Perez, R. (2019). Effects of Corporate Social Responsibility on consumer brand loyalty. *Revista Brasileira de Gestão de Negócios*, 21, 395-415. <https://doi.org/10.7819/rbgn.v21i3.4003>
- Rhajbal, Z., Khouilid, M., Saligane, L., & Chakor, A. (2017). Brand attachment and brand loyalty: The moderating role of nostalgic connections. *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 22(6), 24-34. <https://doi.org/10.9790/0837-2206082434>
- Rowley, J. (2014). Designing and using research questionnaires. *Management Research Review*, 37(3), 308-330.
- Saha, R. K., & Ali, M. B. (2024). Does enduring brand loyalty in mobile financial service platforms require strong commitment? A stimulus-organism-response (SOR) perspective. *Journal of Financial Services Marketing*, 29(4), 1623-1634. <https://doi.org/10.1108/AJIM-11-2019-0308>
- Salim, G., Arafah, W., & Kristaung, R. (2024). The Influence of Social Media Attachment and Brand Identification on Brand Loyalty by Mediation of Brand Love and Moderation of Self-Esteem Study on The Indonesian Manufacturing Industry. *International Journal of Humanities Education and*

- Sampaio, A., & Saramago, J. (2016). Loyalty in retailing: multidimensional approach to customer perceived value. *European Journal of Applied Business and Management*, 2(2), 96-114. <https://doi.org/10.58869/EJABM>
- Sánchez-Fernández, R., & Iniesta-Bonillo, M. Á. (2007). The concept of perceived value: a systematic review of the research. *Marketing theory*, 7(4), 427-451. <http://doi.org/10.1177/1470593107083165>
- Sang, V. M., & Cuong, M. C. (2025). The influence of brand experience on brand loyalty in the electronic commerce sector: the mediating effect of brand association and brand trust. *Cogent Business & Management*, 12(1), 2440629. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311975.2024.2440629>
- Santini, F. D. O., Lim, W. M., Ladeira, W. J., Costa Pinto, D., Herter, M. M., & Rasul, T. (2023). A meta-analysis on the psychological and behavioral consequences of nostalgia: The moderating roles of nostalgia activators, culture, and individual characteristics. *Psychology & Marketing*, 40(10), 1899-1912. <https://doi.org/10.1002/mar.21872>
- Santos, Z. R., Coelho, P. S., & Rita, P. (2022). Fostering Consumer-Brand Relationships through social media brand communities. *Journal of Marketing Communications*, 28(7), 768-798. 31. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13527266.2021.1950199>
- Sarmad, I., & Ali, R. (2023). How does customer advocacy influence brand loyalty? A serial mediation of brand relationship quality and brand trust. *Pakistan Journal of Commerce and Social Sciences (PJCSS)*, 17(1), 191-213.
- Sarita, R., Bangsawan, S., & Pandjaitan, D. R. (2024). The influence of personality traits and self-congruity on customer satisfaction and brand loyalty at El's Coffee in Bandar Lampung. *International Journal of Environmental, Sustainability, and Social Science*, 5(2), 421-434.
- Sarstedt, M., & Mooi, E. (2014). A concise guide to market research. *The Process, Data, and*, 12. <http://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-642-12541-6>
- Sarstedt, M., Hair Jr, J. F., Cheah, J. H., Becker, J. M., & Ringle, C. M. (2019). How to specify, estimate, and validate higher-order constructs in PLS-SEM. *Australasian marketing journal*, 27(3), 197-211. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ausmj.2019.05.003>
- Sarstedt, M., Ringle, C. M., Henseler, J., & Hair, J. F. (2014). On the emancipation of PLS-SEM: A commentary on rigdon (2012). *Long Range Planning*, 47, 154-160.
- Sedgwick, P. (2015). Multistage sampling. *Bmj*, 351. <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.h4155>
- Sedikides, C., Wildschut, T., Routledge, C., & Arndt, J. (2015). Nostalgia counteracts self-discontinuity and restores self-continuity. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 45(1), 52-61. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.2073>
- Sedikides, C., & Wildschut, T. (2019). The sociality of personal and collective

- nostalgia. *European Review of Social Psychology*, 30(1), 123-173. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10463283.2019.1630098>
- Seifollahi, N., & Dehghani Ghahnavieh, A. (2024). Examining the role of brand value congruence, dimensions of brand experience in the influence of customer-brand identification on tourism brand productivity. *International Journal of Business and Development Studies*, 16(1), 101-122. <https://doi.org/10.22111/ijbds.2024.48713.2111>.
- Sekaran, U. (2003). *Research methods for business: A skill building approach (4th ed.)*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781107415324.004>.
- Sekaran, U., & Bougie. (2013). *Research methods for business: A skill building approach* (6th ed). John Wiley and Sons Inc., New York.
- Sekaran, U., & Bougie, R. (2010). *Research methods for business. A skill building approach*. United Kingdom: John Willey.
- Schijns, J. M., Caniëls, M. C., & Le Conté, J. (2016). The impact of perceived service quality on customer loyalty in sports clubs. *International journal of sport management recreation and tourism*, 24(C), 43-75. <https://doi.org/10.5199/ijsmart-1791-874X-24c>
- Schmitt, B. (2013). The consumer psychology of customer-brand relationships: Extending the AA Relationship model. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 23(2), 249-252. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jcps.2013.01.003>
- Schmitt, B. (1999). Experiential marketing. *Journal of marketing management*, 15(1-3), 53-67. <http://doi.org/10.1362/026725799784870496>
- Schmitt, B., Brakus, J. J., & Zarantonello, L. (2015). From experiential psychology to consumer experience. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 25(1), 166-171. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.jcps.2014.09.001>
- Scott, S. G., & Lane, V. R. (2000). A stakeholder approach to organizational identity. *Academy of Management review*, 25(1), 43-62. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.2000.2791602>
- Shafiq, M. A., Iqbal, S., Kumar, N., & Khan, F. A. (2023). Corporate Social Responsibility and Brand Loyalty in Punjab's Banking Sector: Exploring the Mediating Role of Corporate Branding. *Pakistan Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 11(2), 867-878. <https://doi.org/10.52131/pjhss.2023.1102.0397>
- Sharma, A., Sharma, A., MI, A. F., Sridharan, G., Kumar, B. K., & Aleeswari, A. (2023). A Study on Store Brand Loyalty of Apparels in India. *Resmilitaris*, 13(3), 2699-2709.
- Shetty, K., & Fitzsimmons, J. R. (2022). The effect of brand personality congruence, brand attachment and brand love on loyalty among HENRY's in the luxury branding sector. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management: An International Journal*, 26(1), 21-35. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JFMM-09-2020-0208>

- Shieh, H. S., & Lai, W. H. (2017). The relationships among brand experience, brand resonance and brand loyalty in experiential marketing: Evidence from smart phone in Taiwan. *Journal of Economics and Management*, 28, 57-73. <https://doi.org/10.22367/jem.2017.28.04>
- Shields, A. B., & Johnson, J. W. (2016a). Childhood brand nostalgia: A new conceptualization and scale development. *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, 15(4), 359-369. <https://doi.org/10.1002/cb.1578>
- Shields, A. B., & Johnson, J. W. (2016b). What did you do to my brand? The moderating effect of brand nostalgia on consumer responses to changes in a brand. *Psychology & Marketing*, 33(9), 713-728. <https://doi.org/10.1002/mar.20912>
- Shin, M., Back, K. J., Lee, C. K., & Lee, Y. S. (2020). Enhancing customer-brand relationship by leveraging loyalty program experiences that foster customer-brand identification. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 32(12), 3991-4016. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJCHM-06-2020-0550>
- Shoffian, N. S. B. M., Salim, N. S. B. M., Razali, N. I. B., Saifu, P. Z. I. B. M., Bakar, S. A. B. A., Rossedi, S. N. A. B., ... & Krishnan, I. A. (2021). Influence of branding loyalty on consumer sportswear: A case study on Adidas. *Malaysian Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities (MJSSH)*, 6(11), 454-463.
- Shulga, L. V., Busser, J. A., Bai, B., & Kim, H. (2021). The reciprocal role of trust in customer value co-creation. *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research*, 45(4), 672-696. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1096348020967068>
- Sierra, J. J., & McQuitty, S. (2007). Attitudes and emotions as determinants of nostalgia purchases: an application of social identity theory. *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, 15(2), 99-112. <http://doi.org/10.2753/mtp1069-6679150201>
- Sihvonen, J. (2019). Understanding the drivers of consumer-brand identification. *Journal of Brand Management*, 26(5), 583-594. <http://doi.org/10.1057/s41262-018-00149-z>
- Simbula, S., Margheritti, S., & Avanzi, L. (2023). Building work engagement in organizations: A longitudinal study combining social exchange and social identity theories. *Behavioral Sciences*, 13(2), 83. <https://doi.org/10.3390/bs13020083>
- Sirdeshmukh, D., Singh, J., & Sabol, B. (2002). Consumer trust, value, and loyalty in relational exchanges. *Journal of Marketing*, 66(1), 15-37. <https://doi.org/10.1509/jmkg.66.1.15.18449>
- Sirgy, M. J. (1982). Self-concept in consumer behavior: A critical review. *Journal of consumer research*, 9(3), 287-300. <http://doi.org/10.1086/208924>
- Sirgy, M. J., Grewal, D., & Mangleburg, T. (2000). Retail environment, self-congruity, and retail patronage: An integrative model and a research agenda. *Journal of Business research*, 49(2), 127-138.

- Sirgy, M. J., Johar, J. S., Samli, A. C., & Claiborne, C. B. (1991). Self-congruity versus functional congruity: Predictors of consumer behavior. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 19(4), 363-375. <http://doi.org/10.1007/bf02726512>
- Sirgy, M. J., & Johar, J. S. (1999). Toward an integrated model of self-congruity and functional congruity. *ACR European Advances*, 4(1), 252-256.
- Sirgy, M. J., Lee, D. J., & Grace, B. Y. (2016). Revisiting self-congruity theory in consumer behaviour: Making sense of the research so far. *Routledge international handbook of consumer psychology*, 203-219.
- So, K. K. F., King, C., Sparks, B. A., & Wang, Y. (2013). The influence of customer brand identification on hotel brand evaluation and loyalty development. *International journal of hospitality management*, 34, 31-41. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2013.02.002>
- Sop, S. A., & Kozak, N. (2019). Effects of brand personality, self-congruity and functional congruity on hotel brand loyalty. *Journal of Hospitality Marketing & Management*, 1-31. <http://doi.org/10.1080/19368623.2019.1577202>
- Song, M. Y. (2014). *A study on the relationship between brand experience and consumer purchasing intention in smartphone industry* [Doctoral thesis, Dalian University of Technology]. CNKI. http://43.143.174.75/kns/brief/Default_Result.aspx?code=SCDB
- Sohaib, M., & Han, H. (2023). Building value co-creation with social media marketing, brand trust, and brand loyalty. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 74, 103442. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2023.103442>
- Spector, P. E., & Brannick, M. T. (2010). Common method Issues: An introduction to the future topic in organizational research methods. *Organizational Research Methods*, 13(3), 403-406. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1094428110366303>
- Statistics of Jinjiang. (2022, March 2). *Bulletin of the seventh national census of Jinjiang City*. https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s?__biz=MzI2ODQxNDA0Nw==&mid=2247503107&idx=1&sn=e972a1553c01ded5742df13e4e115741&chksm=eaed7033dd9af9259d7939543fc58ec4b8dbbfad338935af209e2f0126287637d51a25223fb8&scene=27
- Steven, S., & Ruslim, T. S. (2023). Brand Awareness, Brand Image, Perceived Value, and Perceived Quality Towards Brand Loyalty. *International Journal of Application on Economics and Business*, 1(1), 535-642. <https://doi.org/10.24912/ijaeb.v1i1.635-642>
- Stokburger-Sauer, N., Ratneshwar, S., & Sen, S. (2012). Drivers of consumer-brand identification. *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, 29(4), 406-418. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijresmar.2012.06.001>
- Stokburger-Sauer, N. E., & Teichmann, K. (2014). The relevance of consumer-brand identification in the team sport industry. *Marketing Review St. Gallen*, 31(2), 20-31. <https://doi.org/10.1365/s11621-014-0337-z>

- Stroebe, T., Woratschek, H., & Durchholz, C. (2021). Clothes make the fan: the effect of team merchandise usage on team identification, fan satisfaction and team loyalty. *Journal of Global Sport Management*, 6(2), 185-202. <https://doi.org/10.1080/24704067.2018.1531354>
- Su, J. (2016). Examining the relationships among the brand equity dimensions: Empirical evidence from fast fashion. *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*, 28(3), 464-480. <https://doi.org/10.1108/APJML-01-2015-0004>
- Su, J., & Chang, A. (2018). Factors affecting college students' brand loyalty toward fast fashion: A consumer-based brand equity approach. *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, 46(1), 90-107. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJRDM-01-2016-0015>
- Su, N., & Reynolds, D. (2017). Effects of brand personality dimensions on consumers' perceived self-image congruity and functional congruity with hotel brands. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 66, 1-12. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2017.06.006>
- Sun, K. A., & Moon, J. (2023). Assessing antecedents of restaurant's brand trust and brand loyalty, and moderating role of food healthiness. *Nutrients*, 15(24), 5057. <https://doi.org/10.3390/nu15245057>
- Sung, Y., & Choi, S. M. (2012). The influence of self-construal on self-brand congruity in the United States and Korea. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 43(1), 151-166. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022022110383318>
- Sun, Y. P., & Khan, Y. A. (2023). Understanding the effect of online brand experience on customer satisfaction in China: a mediating role of brand familiarity. *Current Psychology*, 42(5), 3888-3903. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-021-01706-7>
- Susanty, A., & Tresnaningrum, A. (2018). Effect of value congruence, brand distinctiveness, brand social, brand warmth, and memorable brand experience on customer-brand identification and brand loyalty (Case study: Brand of ACER laptop). In *E3S Web of Conferences*, 31, 11001. EDP Sciences. <https://doi.org/10.1051/e3sconf/20183111001>
- Suyoto, Y. T., & Tannady, H. (2022). Ideal self-congruence: Its impacts on customer love and loyalty to luxury brands in Indonesia. *International Journal of Professional Business Review: Int. J. Prof. Bus. Rev.*, 7(6), 18.
- Swan, J. E., & Nolan, J. J. (1985). Gaining customer trust: a conceptual guide for the salesperson. *Journal of Personal Selling & Sales Management*, 5(2), 39-48.
- Sweeney, J. C., & Soutar, G. N. (2001). Consumer perceived value: The development of a multiple item scale. *Journal of Retailing*, 77, 203-220. [http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0022-4359\(01\)00041-0](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0022-4359(01)00041-0)
- Stern, B. B. (1992). Historical and personal nostalgia in advertising text: The Fin de siècle effect. *Journal of Advertising*, 21(4), 11-22. <http://doi.org/10.1080/00913367.1992.10673382>
- Stokburger-Sauer, N., Ratneshwar, S., & Sen, S. (2012). Drivers of consumer-brand

- identification. *International journal of research in marketing*, 29(4), 406-418. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijresmar.2012.06.001>
- Tabachnick, B. G., & Fidell, L. S. (2007). *Using multivariate statistics*. Boston: MA: Pearson.
- Tabachnick, B. G., & Fidell, L. S. (2013). *Using multivariate statistics* (6th edn). Boston: Pearson.
- Tabaku, E., & Zerellari, M. (2015). Brand loyalty and loyalty programs; A literature review. *Romanian Economic and Business Review*, 10(2), 71-86.
- Tanis, M., & Postmes, T. (2005). A social identity approach to trust: Interpersonal perception, group membership and trusting behaviour. *European journal of social psychology*, 35(3), 413-424. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.256>
- Tajfel, H. (1978). Interindividual behaviour and intergroup behaviour. *Differentiation between social groups: Studies in the social psychology of intergroup relations*, 27-60.
- Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. C. (1985). *The social identity theory of group behaviour*. In S. Worchel, & W. G. Austin. *Psychology of intergroup relations*. Chicago: Nelson-Hall. <https://doi.org/10.2753/mtp1069-6679200306>
- Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. C. (1979). The social identity theory of intergroup behavior. In S. Worchel & W. G. Austin (Eds.), *Psychology of intergroup relations*, 33-47. Chicago, IL: Nelson-Hall.
- Tajuddin, R. M., Hashim, S. F., & Zainol, A. S. (2018). Impacts of consumer-brand identification for strengthening the sustainability of Malaysian fashion brands. *International Journal of Supply Chain Management*, 7(4), 254-264.
- Talking data. (2022, April 12). *Generation Y and Generation Z Insight into New Consumption Trends -2021 New Consumer Group Report*. <https://max.book118.com/html/2022/0419/5342234210004214.shtm>
- JRJ.com. (2024). *The global sports shoes and apparel market is booming and is expected to reach a scale of 544 billion US dollars by 2028*. <https://baijiahao.baidu.com/s?id=1799086152505180666&wfr=spider&for=pc>
- Thangavel, P., Pathak, P., & Chandra, B. (2021). Millennials and Generation Z: a generational cohort analysis of Indian consumers. *Benchmarking: An International Journal*, 28(7), 2157-2177. <https://doi.org/10.1108/BIJ-01-2020-0050>
- Tee, D. D. (2022). Mediating Effect of Customer Satisfaction on the Relationship between Service Quality and Customer Loyalty in the Ghana Banking Industry. *International Journal of Research and Scientific Innovation (IJRSI)*, 9(4), 17-26. <https://doi.org/10.51244/IJRSI.2022.9402>
- Thomas, S., Patel, R., & Bhatt, V. (2023). Private-label grocery buyers' donation intentions and trust in CRM campaigns: an empirical analysis by employing social identity theory. *Society and Business Review*, 18(3), 401-421. <https://doi.org/10.1108/SBR-12-2021-0247>

- Tian, X., & Arif, L. S. B. M. (2023). Determination of customer brand loyalty on airlines in Malaysia. *Migration Letters*, 20(6), 265-281. <https://doi.org/10.59670/ml.v20i6.3478>
- Toledo, A. C., & Lopes, E. L. (2016). Effect of nostalgia on customer loyalty to brand post-merger/acquisition. *BAR-Brazilian Administration Review*, 13, 33-55. <https://doi.org/10.1590/1807-7692bar2016150007>
- Torres, P., Augusto, M., & Godinho, P., (2017). Predicting high consumer-brand identification and high repurchase: Necessary and sufficient conditions. *Journal of Business Research*, 79, 52-65. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2017.05.029>
- Toteva, I. T., Savas-Hall, S., & Hall, J. R. (2024). Self-concept and brand loyalty: Insights from major life events and coping mechanisms. *Journal of Brand Management*, 31(1), 79-93. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41262-023-00334-9>
- Tran, P. K. T., Nguyen, P. D., Le, A. H. N., & Tran, V. T. (2022). Linking self-congruity, perceived quality and satisfaction to brand loyalty in a tourism destination: the moderating role of visit frequency. *Tourism Review*, 77(1), 287-301. <https://doi.org/10.1108/TR-04-2020-0143>
- Turker, D. (2009). Measuring corporate social responsibility: A scale development study. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 85(4), 411-427. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-008-9780-6>
- Tuškej, U., Golob, U., & Podnar, K. (2013). The role of consumer-brand identification in building brand relationships. *Journal of Business Research*, 66(1), 53-59. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2011.07.022>
- Tuškej, U., & Podnar, K. (2018). Consumers' identification with corporate brands: Brand prestige, anthropomorphism and engagement in social media. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 27(1), 3-17.
- Tyler, T., & Blader, S. (2001). Identity and cooperative behavior in groups. *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations*, 4, 207-226. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1368430201004003003>
- Valaei, N., & Nikhashemi, S. R. (2017). Generation Y consumers' buying behaviour in fashion apparel industry: a moderation analysis. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management: An International Journal*, 21(4), 523-543. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JFMM-01-2017-0002>
- Valenzuela Quintero, A. R., & Bellon Álvarez, L. A. (2023). Trademark Influence and Brand Experience on Consumer's Loyalty to Fast Fashion Brands. *Mercados y negocios*, 24(50), 71-94.
- Van der Westhuizen, L. M. (2018). Brand loyalty: exploring self-brand connection and brand experience. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 27(2), 172-184. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JPBM-07-2016-1281>
- Vilnai-Yavetz, I., Gilboa, S., & Mitchell, V. (2022). "There is no place like my mall": consumer reactions to the absence of mall experiences. *Journal of Services Marketing*, 36(4), 563-583. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JSM-04-2021-0118>

- Vinh, N. Q. (2023). Impact of Self-Congruity and Destination Image on Tourist Loyalty: Evidence from Recreation farm Tourism. *International Journal of Professional Business Review: Int. J. Prof. Bus. Rev.*, 8(4), 34.
- Vinzi, V. E., Trinchera, L., & Amato, S. (2010). *PLS Path Modeling: From foundations to recent developments and open issues for model assessment and improvement*. Berling: Springer Berlin Heidelberg. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-540-32827-8>
- Viswanathan, M., & Kayande, U. (2012). Commentary on “common method bias in marketing: Causes, mechanisms, and procedural remedies. *Journal of Retailing*, 88(4), 556-562.
- Wahyuningsih, Nasution, H., Yeni, Y. H., & Roostika, R. (2022). A comparative study of generations X, Y, Z in food purchasing behavior: the relationships among customer value, satisfaction, and Ewom. *Cogent Business & Management*, 9(1), 2105585. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311975.2022.2105585>
- Wan, X., Wang, T., Zhang, W., & Cao, J. (2017). Perceived value of online customization experience in China: Concept, measurement, and consequences. *The Journal of High Technology Management Research*, 28(1), 17-28. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.hitech.2017.04.002>
- Wang, N. W. (2023). The optimization path of China's sporting goods brand construction in the new consumption era. *Journal of Science and Technology of Stationery and Sporting Goods*, 7, 88-91.
- Wang, Y., Gu, J., Wang, S., & Wang, J. (2019). Understanding consumers' willingness to use ride-sharing services: The roles of perceived value and perceived risk. *Transportation Research Part C: Emerging Technologies*, 105, 504-519. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.trc.2019.05.044>
- Wang, Z. (2022). Implementation of Chinese-styled branding in global fashion: ‘Guochao’ as a rising cultural identity. *Fashion, Style & Popular Culture*, 9(1-2), 149-183. https://doi.org/10.1386/fspc_001111
- Wang, Y., Xiang, D., Yang, Z., & Ma, S. S. (2019). Unraveling customer sustainable consumption behaviors in sharing economy: A socio-economic approach based on social exchange theory. *Journal of cleaner production*, 208, 869-879. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2018.10.139>
- Wardhani, W. N. R., Pratiwi, R., Rohmatika, F., & Nasrullah, D. M. (2024). Buttons carve: Brand Credibility and Self-Image Congruence Towards Purchase Behavior, With Brand Knowledge as A Moderating Factor. *In International Conference On Research And Development (ICORAD)*, 3(1), 33-37.
- Wohl, M. J., Stefaniak, A., & Smeekes, A. (2020). Longing is in the memory of the beholder: Collective nostalgia content determines the method members will support to make their group great again. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 91, 104044. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jesp.2020.104044>
- Wildschut, T., Sedikides, C., Routledge, C., Arndt, J., & Cordaro, F. (2010).

Nostalgia as a repository of social connectedness: the role of attachment-related avoidance. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 98(4), 573.

- Wijnands, F., & Gill, T. (2020). 'You're not perfect, but you're still my favourite.' Brand affective congruence as a new determinant of self-brand congruence. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 36(11-12), 1076-1103. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0267257X.2020.1767679>
- Wong, A., & Chung, S. W. (2022). Retaining consumer engagement in online retail brand communities. *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJRDM-09-2021-0413>
- Woodruff, R. B. (1997). Customer value: the next source for competitive advantage. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 25(2), 139-153. <http://doi.org/10.1007/bf02894350>
- Wongsansukcharoen, J. (2022). Effect of community relationship management, relationship marketing orientation, customer engagement, and brand trust on brand loyalty: The case of a commercial bank in Thailand. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 64, 102826. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2021.102826>
- Xi, X., Yang, J., Jiao, K., Wang, S., & Lu, T. (2022). "We buy what we wanna be": Understanding the effect of brand identity driven by consumer perceived value in the luxury sector. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 13, 1002275. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.1002275>
- Xiao, G., Lee, M., Lee, C. K., & Kim, M. (2024). Tourism live streamers as brand ambassadors: investigating their impact on destination brand value through social exchange theory. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Technology*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JHTT-11-2023-0371>
- Xianyu, J., & Ma, X. (2025). Research on factors influencing purchase intention of Guochao apparel from a cultural identity perspective. *Journal of Shanghai Dianji University*, 28(2), 120-124. <https://doi.org/10.3969/j.issn.2095-0020.2025.02.010>
- Xue, Y.T. (2024). Research on marketing strategy of domestic sports brand under the background of national tide culture. *China circulation economy*, 7, 16-19. <https://doi.org/10.16834/j.cnki.issn1009-5292.2024.07.042>
- Yang, R., & Song, H. (2024). "The spillover effect of Chinese sportswear brands' relationship quality: a perspective of Confucian yuanfen culture". *International Journal of Sports Marketing and Sponsorship*, 25 (5), 1105-1125. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJSMS-02-2024-0049>
- Yang, Y., Liu, X., Jing, F., & Li, J. (2014). How does perceived value affect travelers' satisfaction and loyalty? *Social Behavior and Personality: an international journal*, 42(10), 1733-1744. <https://doi.org/10.2224/sbp.2014.42.10.1733>
- Yang, Z., Hu, D., & Chen, X. (2025). The role of omnichannel integration and digital value in building brand trust: a customer psychological perception perspective. *Internet Research*, 35(3), 1029-1064. <https://doi.org/10.1108/INTR-06-2023-0464>

- Yeh, C. H., Wang, Y. S., & Yieh, K. (2016). Predicting smartphone brand loyalty: Consumer value and consumer-brand identification perspectives. *International Journal of Information Management*, 36(3), 245-257. <http://doi.10.1016/j.ijinfomgt.2015.11.013>
- Yesitadewi, V. I., & Widodo, T. (2024). The Influence of Service Quality, Perceived Value, and Trust on Customer Loyalty via Customer Satisfaction in Deliverer Indonesia. *Quality-Access to Success*, 25(198). <https://doi.org/10.47750/QAS/25.198.44>
- Yoshida, M., Gordon, B. S., & James, J. D. (2021). Social capital and consumer happiness: toward an alternative explanation of consumer-brand identification. *Journal of Brand Management*, 28, 481-494. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41262-021-00240-y>
- Yu, X., Yuan, C., Kim, J., & Wang, S. (2021). A new form of brand experience in online social networks: An empirical analysis. *Journal of Business Research*, 130, 426-435. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2020.02.011>
- Zafirovski, M. (2005). Social exchange theory under scrutiny: A positive critique of its economic-behaviorist formulations. *Electronic journal of sociology*, 2(2), 1-40.
- Zahari, N., Rosbi, S., Ibrahim, S., Kamaruddin, N. S., & Zulkifli, I. (2022). The influences of social value and emotional value on the purchase intention towards sportswear in Perlis, Malaysia. *International Journal of Advanced Research in Economics and Finance*, 4(1), 68-79. <https://doi.org/10.55057/ijaref.2022.4.1.8>
- Zauner, A., Koller, M., & Hatak, I. (2015). Customer perceived value—Conceptualization and avenues for future research. *Cogent Psychology*, 2(1), 1061782. <http://doi.10.1080/23311908.2015.1061782>
- Zelkowitz, R. L., & Cole, D. A. (2016). Measures of emotion reactivity and emotion regulation: Convergent and discriminant validity. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 102, 123-125.
- Zeithaml, V. A. (1988). Consumer perceptions of price, quality and value: a means-end model and synthesis of evidence. *Journal of Marketing*, 52(3), 2-22. <http://doi.org/10.1177/002224298805200302>
- Zeta. (2025). The silent shift in brand loyalty: Why consumers are abandoning tradition. Retrieved from: <https://zetaglobal.com/resource-center/brand-loyalty-shift-transforming-retail/>
- Zhai, Y. M. (2023). *Research on the impact of cultural identity on the purchase intention of national trend brands* [Master's thesis, Beijing Jiaotong University]. Wanfang Data. <https://d.wanfangdata.com.cn/thesis/Y4150958>
- Zhang, H.M. (2003). Brand experience category and its marketing implications. *Journal of Business Economics and Administration*, 12, 22-25.
- Zhang, H.Y., & Lu, C.N. (2022). On the culture identity of Guochao brands consumption in Gen Z. *Cultural Industry Research*, 29, 62-75.

- Zhang, S., Peng, M. Y. P., Peng, Y., Zhang, Y., Ren, G., & Chen, C. C. (2020). Expressive brand relationship, brand love, and brand loyalty for tablet pcs: Building a sustainable brand. *Frontiers in psychology*, 11, 231. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.00231>
- Zhang, X. (2022). Can you represent me? The influence of consumers' self-congruity on their brand loyalty behavior. *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*, 34(10), 2073-2090. <https://doi.org/10.1108/APJML-04-2021-0238>
- Zhao, G., Li, W., Teng, L., & Lu, T. (2014). Moderating role of consumer self-concept on the effectiveness of two nostalgia appeals. *Journal of Promotion Management*, 20(1), 1-19. <http://doi.org/10.1080/10496491.2013.829157>
- Zhao, J., Butt, R. S., Murad, M., Mirza, F., & Saleh Al-Faryan, M. A. (2022). Untying the influence of advertisements on consumers buying behavior and brand loyalty through brand awareness: the moderating role of perceived quality. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 12, 1-15. <http://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.803348>
- Zheng, X., Cheung, C. M., Lee, M. K., & Liang, L. (2015). Building brand loyalty through user engagement in online brand communities in social networking sites. *Information Technology & People*, 28(1), 90-106. <https://doi.org/10.1108/ITP-08-2013-0144>
- Zhou, X., Sedikides, C., Wildschut, T., & Gao, D. G. (2008). Counteracting loneliness: On the restorative function of nostalgia. *Psychological science*, 19(10), 1023-1029. <http://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9280.2008.02194.x>
- Zikmund, W., Babin, B. J., Carr, J. C., & Griffin, M. (2013). *Business research methods* (9th ed.). Mason: Erin Joyner.
- Zogaj, A., Tscheulin, D. K., Lindenmeier, J., & Olk, S. (2021). Linking actual self-congruence, ideal self-congruence, and functional congruence to donor loyalty: the moderating role of issue involvement. *Journal of Business Economics*, 91(3), 379-400. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11573-020-01006-9>

APPENDICES
APPENDIX A
The Questionnaire of the Study

Questionnaire



Dear Respected Respondent,

I am a Doctorate student at University Utara Malaysia and currently conducting a study on brand loyalty towards Chinese sports brands. I would like to extend my appreciation to you for your kind consideration in participating in this survey. Respondents only need 15 minutes to complete this questionnaire and there is NO RIGHT AND WRONG ANSWER, so feel free to answer based on your own experience. The questionnaire is anonymous, and your response will be used for the academic research purpose only.

If you have any questions or concerns about the questionnaire or about participating in this study, you may contact me wang_huili@cob.uum.edu.my.

Thank you for your thoughtfulness and participation.

..... **Wang, huili**.....
WANG, HUILI
Doctor of Philosophy (Marketing)
Othman Yeop Abdullah Graduate
School of Business
Universiti Utara Malaysia
06010 UUM Sintok
Kedah Darul Aman
Email: wang_huili@cob.uum.edu.my

Part A: Demographic Profile:

Please tick (✓) in the boxes where appropriate or fill in the details in the space provided

1. What is your gender?

☐ Male

☐ Female

2. What is your age?

☐ 23-27

☐ 28-32

☐ 33-37

☐ 38-43

3. What is your monthly income (RMB)?

☐ 4000-6000

☐ 6001-8000

☐ 8001-10,000

☐ Above 10001

4. What is your educational level?

☐ High school

☐ Diploma

☐ Bachelor degree

☐ Postgraduate degree

5. What is your occupation?

☐ Civil Servant

☐ Employed by private sector

☐ Self-employed

☐ Others

6. What is your marital status?

☐ Single

☐ Married

☐ Others



PART B:

- Please tick (✓) the best answer that fits you.

Please answer the following questions base on your own experience (1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Slightly disagree, 4=Neutral, 5=Slightly agree, 6=Agree, 7=Strongly agree)

No	Items	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
BT1	Local sports brands offer me sports products with a constant quality level.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
BT2	Local sports brands help me to solve any problems I could have with the sports products.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
BT3	Local sports brands offer me recommendations and advices on how to make the most of the sports products.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
BT4	Local sports brands value me as a consumer of its sports products.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
BT5	Local sports brands give me confidence and certainty in the consumption of sports products.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
BT6	Local sports brands would make any effort to satisfy me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
BT7	I could rely on local sports brands.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
No	Items	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
BP1	I think local sports brands are sincerity (e.g. practical, honest, youthful).	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
BP2	I think local sports brands are excitement (e.g. trendy, cool, imaginative, up-to-date).	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
BP3	I think local sports brands are competence (e.g. technical, reliable, confident).	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
BP4	I think local sports brands are sophistication (e.g. glamorous, charming).	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
BP5	I think local sports brands are ruggedness (e.g. outdoorsy, tough).	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
CSR1	Local sports brands provide full and accurate information about its products to its customers.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
CSR2	Local sports brands are responsive to the complaints of its customers.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
CSR3	Local sports brands contribute to campaigns and projects that promote the well-being of the society.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
CSR4	Local sports brands strive to create jobs.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
CSR5	Local sports brands participate in activities which aims to protect and improve the quality of the natural environment.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
CSR6	Local sports brands made financial contributions to charities.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

No	Items							
BE1	I have a strong sensory impression of local sports brands.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
BE2	I have interesting sensory experiences on local sports brands.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
BE3	I have strong emotions for local sports brands.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
BE4	I am often emotionally moved by local sports brands.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
BE5	Buying local sports brands can motivate me think about exercise habits.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
BE6	Being a customer of local sports brands stimulate my curiosity about product functions.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
BE7	Local sports brands make me think about my lifestyle.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
BE8	Local sports brands remind me of activities which are being able to enhance my health that I can engage in.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
BE9	I can relate to other people through local sports brands.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
BE10	When I use local sports brand I do not feel left alone.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

No	Items							
CPV1	Products of local sports brands have consistent quality.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
CPV2	Products of local sports brands are well made.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
CPV3	The quality standards of local sports brands are above average.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
CPV4	Local sports brand's products continue to perform well.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
CPV5	Local sports brands are those that I would enjoy.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
CPV6	Local sports brands are those that I would feel relaxed about using.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
CPV7	Local sports brands would give me pleasure.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
CPV8	The products of local sports brands are reasonably priced.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
CPV9	Local sports brands offer value for money.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
CPV10	Local sports brands are a good product for the price.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
CPV11	Local sports brands would help me to feel acceptable.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
CPV12	Local sports brands would improve the way I am perceived.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
CPV13	Local sports brands would make a good impression on others.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
CPV14	Local sports brands would give its owner social approval.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

No	Items								
CBI1	I feel a strong sense of belonging to local sports brands.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
CBI2	I identify strongly with local sports brands.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
CBI3	Local sports brands embody what I believe in.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
CBI4	Local sports brands are like a part of me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
CBI5	Local sports brands have a great deal of personal meaning for me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

No	Items								
N1	I would like to retrieve the time period from which local sports brands came because those times are better than present times.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
N2	I want to be part of that time period once again because I would like to grow with local sports brands.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
N3	When I am reminded of the time period from which local sports brands came, I long to revisit that era.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
N4	I wish I could return to the time period from which local sports brands came.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

No	Items								
BL1	I will continue to use local sports brands because I am satisfied with them.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
BL2	I would buy additional products in local sports brands.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
BL3	I will recommend local sports brands to other people.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
BL4	I prefer the sports brands to others.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
BL5	I am willing to pay a higher price to buy local sports brands.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
BL6	If this sports brand is out of stock, I will wait and refuse any substitutes.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

APPENDIX B

KMO and Bartlett's Test

KMO and Bartlett's Test (Consumer-Brand Identification)

		.886
Bartlett Sphericity Test	Approx. Chi-Square	1138.509
	Df	10
	Sig.	.000

KMO and Bartlett's Test (Nostalgia)

		.840
Bartlett Sphericity Test	Approx. Chi-Square	892.013
	Df	6
	Sig.	.000

KMO and Bartlett's Test (Brand Experience)

		.926
Bartlett Sphericity Test	Approx. Chi-Square	2646.144
	Df	45
	Sig.	.000

KMO and Bartlett's Test (Brand Trust)

		.938
Bartlett Sphericity Test	Approx. Chi-Square	1906.690
	Df	21
	Sig.	.000

KMO and Bartlett's Test (Customer Perceived Value)

		.950
Bartlett Sphericity Test	Approx. Chi-Square	4122.873
	Df	91
	Sig.	.000

KMO and Bartlett's Test (Self-Brand Congruity)

		.943
Bartlett Sphericity Test	Approx. Chi-Square	2662.733
	Df	55
	Sig.	.000



UUM
Universiti Utara Malaysia

APPENDIX C

CMV

Total Variance Explained						
Factor	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	20.029	35.139	35.139	20.029	35.139	35.139
2	4.495	7.886	43.025	4.495	7.886	43.025
3	3.927	6.889	49.914	3.927	6.889	49.914
4	2.718	4.769	54.683	2.718	4.769	54.683
5	2.207	3.872	58.555	2.207	3.872	58.555
6	1.553	2.724	61.279	1.553	2.724	61.279
7	1.164	2.043	63.322	1.164	2.043	63.322
8	1.138	1.997	65.319	1.138	1.997	65.319
9	1.129	1.980	67.300	1.129	1.980	67.300
10	0.989	1.735	69.035			
11	0.761	1.335	70.370			
12	0.726	1.274	71.644			
13	0.693	1.216	72.860			
14	0.655	1.149	74.009			
15	0.619	1.085	75.094			
16	0.582	1.021	76.115			
17	0.560	0.983	77.098			
18	0.554	0.972	78.070			
19	0.534	0.937	79.007			
20	0.527	0.924	79.931			
21	0.505	0.886	80.817			
22	0.489	0.858	81.675			
23	0.461	0.808	82.483			
24	0.453	0.794	83.277			
25	0.441	0.773	84.050			
26	0.437	0.766	84.816			
27	0.414	0.726	85.542			
28	0.408	0.715	86.258			
29	0.392	0.688	86.946			
30	0.379	0.665	87.611			
31	0.371	0.651	88.263			
32	0.361	0.634	88.897			
33	0.347	0.609	89.506			
34	0.344	0.603	90.109			
35	0.339	0.595	90.704			
36	0.334	0.586	91.290			
37	0.317	0.556	91.846			
38	0.306	0.537	92.383			
39	0.295	0.518	92.901			

40	0.292	0.512	93.413			
41	0.285	0.500	93.914			
42	0.278	0.487	94.401			
43	0.270	0.474	94.875			
44	0.261	0.458	95.333			
45	0.258	0.453	95.786			
46	0.253	0.445	96.231			
47	0.232	0.407	96.638			
48	0.228	0.400	97.038			
49	0.218	0.383	97.421			
50	0.209	0.367	97.788			
51	0.200	0.351	98.139			
52	0.195	0.343	98.481			
53	0.187	0.327	98.809			
54	0.183	0.321	99.130			
55	0.177	0.310	99.439			
56	0.164	0.288	99.727			
57	0.155	0.273	100.000			
Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring.						



APPENDIX D

Questionnaire Distribution Address

Name	Address
Jinjiang SM City Square	Heping South Road and Fuxing Road intersection northwest corner, Luoshan Street
Jinjiang Wanda Plaza	888 Century Avenue, Meiling Street
Jinjiang Powerlong City Square	Century Avenue and Changxing Road interchange No. 518, southeast of Qingyang Street
Jinjiang Sunlight Time Square	Intersection of Middle Peace Road and Jinxi Road, southwest of Qingyang Street
Jinjiang Wuyue Square	100 meters south of the intersection of Shuanglong Road and Shoedu Road, Xiyuan Street




Universiti Utara Malaysia

APPENDIX E

Publications From the Ph.D. Research

- Wang, H. L., Sany, S. M. M., & Azanin, A. (2024). Repurchase intention in sports brand industry in China: Attributes of live streamers and customer-to-customer interaction of live streaming e-commerce. *Innovative Marketing*, 20(2), 40-53. doi:10.21511/im.20(2).2024.
- Wang, H. L., Sany, S. M. M., & Azanin, A. (2024). The Influence of Social Media Marketing on Brand Loyalty Through Brand Image, Brand Awareness and Perceived Value of Sports Brand Consumers in China. *Journal of System and Management Sciences*, 14 (10), 222-242. doi:10.33168/JSMS.2024.1013.

