



Determinants of Consumer Advocacy for Personal Luxury Products through Brand Loyalty: Egyptian Consumers' Case Study

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ABSTRACT: Background: Over the past 20 years, luxury brands have attracted a lot of research attention in the marketing literature. Studies have focused on building and keeping long-term relationships between brands and their customers, as well as coming up with ideas for premium brand features. Also, customer advocacy for personal luxury brand products in Egypt hasn't been looked at in a lot of studies. In addition, relatively few researchers have looked into the relationships between luxury consumer brands and cosmopolitanism. Egyptians are rumored to strive to display products with perceived prestige through social recognition in flamboyant displays in order to express their economic standing in the most overt manner possible. Therefore, brand love and personal luxury brand products have been selected to be used in this study because they help consumers manage their self-image, give their owners status and prestige, and foster a personal connection. Objective: The current study aims to test the relationship between perceived luxury values dimensions (perceived financial value, perceived functional value, perceived social value, and perceived individual value), brand love, E-WOM, cosmopolitanism, and brand loyalty, and to understand the relationship between brand loyalty and consumer advocacy for personal luxury brand products. Methodology: A mono-method quantitative research design is adopted, where data is collected from Egyptians who purchase personal luxury brand products, with a total sample size of 496 consumers. Results: The findings revealed a positive relationship between perceived financial values and brand loyalty, as well as positive relationships between perceived functional values and brand loyalty, perceived individual values and brand loyalty, perceived social values and brand loyalty, and a positive relationship between brand love and brand loyalty. Additionally, there is a positive relationship between E-WOM and brand loyalty. Also, a positive relationship is found between cosmopolitanism and brand loyalty. Finally, there is a positive relationship between brand loyalty and consumer advocacy. Conclusion: To keep consumers from looking for competing brands and engaging in cross-shopping, most brand managers work to create favorable relationships with their clientele. Marketing departments should focus their efforts on developing and communicating these values to clients. In addition, maintaining a specific standard of product quality and the shopping experience is crucial since luxury buyers could view high levels of utilitarian and hedonistic qualities as fundamental requirements for luxury brands.

Keywords: Values, Brand Love, e-WOM, Cosmopolitanism, Loyalty, and Advocacy

INTRODUCTION

Luxury brands have garnered much research attention in marketing literature during the past 20 years. In addition to conceptualizing premium brand attributes, research was focused on establishing and preserving a sustained engagement between consumers and brands. The link between luxury consumer-trademark interaction and trademark commitment, faith, satisfaction,

and loyalty has been examined in recent studies. For several reasons, consumer advocacy is crucial for premium businesses (Shimul and Phau, 2018). According to Dhaliwal et al. (2020), consumers' motivations and perceptions regarding using luxury consumption have changed, and there is an increase in the general public's favorable attitudes toward purchasing. Due to the status enhancement, socio-psychological advantages, individual value, social value, and mass prestige luxury brands offer, they are in high demand. Congruence between customer value and brand value is crucial because the strategic purpose of luxury brands is based on the idea that they provide enough value to offset the high product price. Customer value creation through more personal and intimate connections fosters satisfaction, trust, affective commitment, and loyalty. As a result, creating a solid relationship based on consumer value is seen as the key to success for luxury brands (Kim et al., 2019).

Beginning with customers' advocacy to enable people to explore a distinguished brand, consumer advocacy sets itself apart from other comparable categories (Jayasimha and Billore, 2016). When researching a deluxe brand, the premium company looks for information about the manufacturing process and other consumers' memories. Consumer advocacy now significantly impacts what luxury consumers choose to purchase. Second, it has been found that sources of information provided by people are more trustworthy than those produced by firms for marketing purposes. It is believed that high-end shoppers will react to this idea better. Third, wealthy consumers frequently change brands and are not influenced by traditional loyalty cards or rebate schemes. Luxury brands can start consumer advocacy campaigns and build consumer reputations by supplying reliable and authentic brand information (Shimul and Phau, 2018). Consumer advocacy is also very interesting to study in Egypt, given its limited studies (Shimul and Phau, 2018) and its scarcity of application in the Egyptian market. As a result, the current study seeks to investigate the relationship between perceived luxury value dimensions (perceived financial value, perceived functional value, perceived social value, and perceived individual value), brand love, E-WOM, and cosmopolitanism with brand loyalty, as well as to comprehend the relationship between brand loyalty and consumer advocacy for personal luxury brand products as applied to Egyptians who buy personal luxury brand products. The study aims to contribute greatly to both the practical and academic worlds. The theoretical contribution of this study is to develop a new conceptual model to examine the relationships between the variables under study. The study contributes to knowledge by using a quantitative method with rich data from the current empirical study of participants from both cities to clearly understand Egyptian consumers. The data were collected using a mono method and then analyzed using SEM.

The present article has eight parts as a consequence. In contrast to the introduction in part one, the problem statements are in part two. Part 3 has a display of the literature review. The methodology is addressed in Part 4 before a summary of the findings and conclusions, Part 5 and a discussion, and part 6, respectively. Consequently, part 7 contains the recommendations, while part 8 contains the constraints and suggestions for more research.

Problem Statements

Despite the focus on luxury brands, which are seen as a social concept that makes it possible to convey a person's value and identity, especially for those who value prestige, distinctiveness, value, superior quality, uniqueness and craftsmanship over functionality and objective physical brand attributes (Kasber et al., 2022). There is still a lack of knowledge about how perceived luxury values, E-WOM, brand love, brand loyalty, cosmopolitanism, and customers' memories from their research about a deluxe brand relate to buying personal deluxe brand products in Egypt, particularly in Alexandria and Cairo. Furthermore, little research has been done on the connection between brand loyalty and E-WOM. Additionally, studies on brand loyalty and brand love were carried out. Additionally, cosmopolitanism and brand loyalty were investigated. Some believe customer advocacy must be included in the loyalty ladder architecture. Combine all of these characteristics in Alexandria and Cairo. Nevertheless, has not been the subject of any investigation. However, it has been demonstrated in other studies that cosmopolitanism and consumer advocacy only have a negligible effect on research on luxury companies.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This section will discuss some of the previous studies that focused on the relationship between variables.

Relationship between Consumption Values and Brand Loyalty

In the subsection that follows, previous research on the connection between brand loyalty and the luxury consumption values dimensions (financial value, functional value, social value, and individual value) will be reviewed.

In Jeddah, Tzavlopoulos et al. (2019) investigated the relationship between brand loyalty and customer satisfaction and consumer perceptions of car values. The relationship between store qualities and brand loyalty was also revealed by Nikhashemi et al. (2016) to be influenced by perceptions of shop brand value. The outcomes show that a store's attributes directly influence customers' perceptions of value and brand loyalty. Furthermore, through customers' perceptions of the value of the store's trademark, the store attribute also indirectly affects a consumer's loyalty. This finding agrees with Lin et al. (2017), Xie and Lou (2020), and Lou and Xie (2021).

Fusva et al. (2020) showed how loyalty and a financial standpoint are related. Questionnaires were used in this study to collect information from Indonesian customers of Islamic banks. The data shows that loyalty levels and economic outlook have a significant association. The two factors, however, have a negative association, according to some studies. This conclusion agrees with Marakanon et al. (2017) and Hichri and Ltifi (2021). In contrast, Ramaseshan et al. (2013) looked at the impact of consumer equity on loyalty from the perspective of customer trust. According to the research, client trust mediates between value equity, relationship equity, and client loyalty. Conversely, no impact was discovered between financial value, consumer loyalty and trust.

Yeh et al. (2016) examined how age and gender differences affect the process of identifying smartphone brand loyalty and developed hypotheses about the factors that influence this loyalty based on consumer value perspectives, perceived social value, and customer brand recognition. The results demonstrate that brand recognition, social significance, emotional significance, and functional relevance positively impact smartphone brand loyalty. However, the results also show that brand loyalty declines with age and that the connections between social relevance, emotional significance, and recognition are weakening. Thus the result is consistent with the study of Han et al. (2021).

According to various studies that have examined this connection, there is a considerable impact between the two characteristics. For example, in a Taiwanese online shopping environment, Chang et al. (2011) examined how customer satisfaction, perceived value, and the quality of e-services influenced consumer loyalty. The results demonstrated that customer loyalty is affected by consumer perceived value and the quality of the e-service, which drives customer satisfaction. Furthermore, this study also discovered that consumers with high perceived value had a greater association between customer loyalty and satisfaction than customers with low perceived value. Thus, the result is consistent with the study of Floh et al. (2014) and El-Adly et al. (2016).

The Relationship between Brand Love and Brand Loyalty

In this sub-section, some previous studies that focused on the connection between love and loyalty towards the brand shall be illustrated during 2013-2018.

Brand loyalty and brand love are significantly correlated, according to earlier studies. Unal et al. (2013) looked into the assessment of the variables influencing Brand Love. This study used a sampling approach and structural equation modelling to examine how brand image, variety seeking, and social self-affect the development of brand love through developing brand love among students at Atatürk University in Turkey. The findings showed that brand image positively influenced brand love, while variety-seeking had no discernible impact on brand loyalty. This result is consistent with Hsu et al. (2018), Alnawas and Altarifi (2016), Huang et al. (2017), and Bıçakcıoğlu et al. (2018).

The Relationship between E-WOM and Brand Loyalty

In this sub-section, previous studies that studied the connection between E-WOM and brand loyalty shall be illustrated during 2018-2021.

E-WOM have a positive, significant association with brand loyalty, according to studies by Syahrivar et al. (2018), Santika et al. (2020), and Budiman (2021). Syahrivar et al. (2018) investigated how E-WOM impacted brand equity and customer choices about imported shoes in Bekasi, Indonesia. The study's findings indicated that E-WOM positively affects all aspects of brand equity and that significant customer involvement in purchasing indicates strong online brand equity. This result is consistent with Budiman (2021) and Zhang et al. (2021).

The Relationship between Cosmopolitanism and Brand Loyalty

In this sub-section, some of the previous studies that focused on the connection between cosmopolitanism and loyalty towards brand will be illustrated during 2012-2021.

The investigations by Riefler et al. (2012) of the targeted cosmopolitan consumers examined the connection between consumer cosmopolitanism and the desire of customers to purchase items from other countries using a cluster analysis approach to examine an empirically grounded typology of cosmopolitan consumers. Members of Austrian alumni groups for United World College (UWC) made up the sample population. Thus, all the variables examined in this research have a tangible link. This result is consistent with Riefler et al. (2012), Al-Zayat et al. (2015) and Mohamed et al. (2020). While it is inconsistent with Pandey et al. (2013), Pandey et al. (2015) and My-Trinh et al. (2021).

The Relationship between Brand Loyalty and Consumer Advocacy

In this sub-section, some previous studies that focused on the relationship between brand loyalty and consumer advocacy will be illustrated during 2015-2022.

In retail banking in South Africa, Taoana et al. (2022) looked into the reasons behind brand loyalty, such as consumer advocacy, trust, relationship quality, and satisfaction. The findings demonstrated a substantial correlation between brand loyalty and other brand attributes, such as consumer advocacy, brand trust, satisfaction with the company, and brand relationship quality. This result is consistent with Wali et al. (2015), Shailesh et al. (2016), Alam et al. (2021), and Taoana et al. (2022). However, at the same time, it is inconsistent with Shimul et al. (2018).

METHODOLOGY

Depending on the paper's aim, the epistemology used is based on resources, data, and facts, reflecting positivism and trying to lead to discoveries and generalizations based on reliable data analysis. This paper began with hypotheses derived from prior studies and literature that examined the factors under investigation in various circumstances. In order to help understand the factors impacting brand loyalty and customers for personal luxury brand products in Egypt, these hypotheses will be tested by gathering data in the study's numerous settings. Therefore, hypothetic deductive research is the research method used in this paper. The research methodology used a mono-method quantitative research design. The population of the paper is Egyptians who purchase personal luxury brand products, with a total sample size 496 consumers. Figure 1 presents the research framework, which formats regarding the paper's aim.

Independent Variables: Perceived functional values, perceived financial values, perceived social values, perceived individual values, brand love, e-WOM and cosmopolitanism

Intervening/Mediating Variable: Brand loyalty

Dependent Variable: Consumer advocacy for luxury brand products in Egypt.

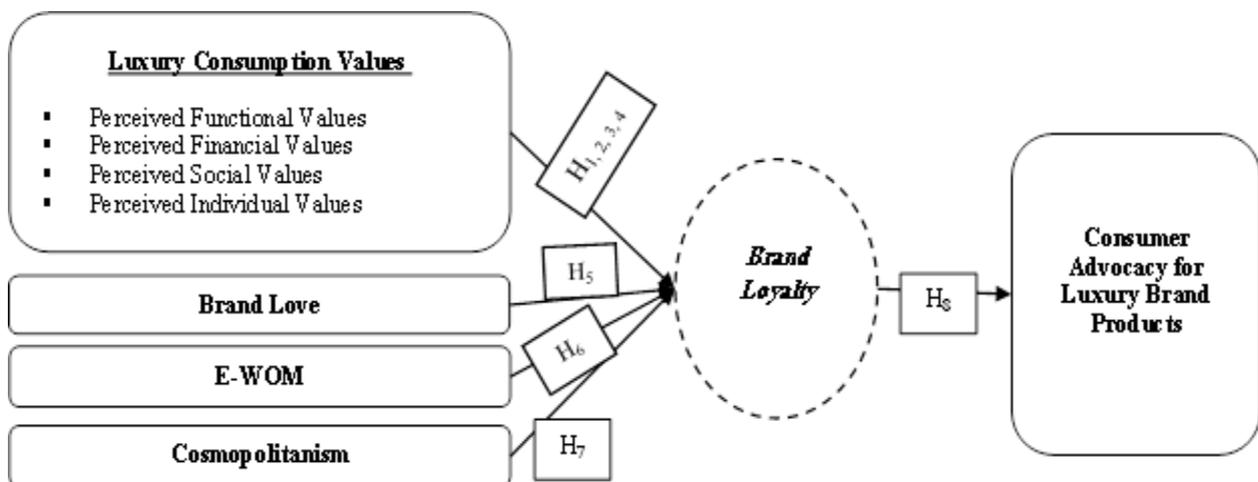


Fig. 1: Research Framework

FINDING AND RESULTS

The main conclusions and outcomes of the data analysis are presented in this section, which also presents the empirical investigation. This section consists of five sub-sections, where the first step is the descriptive analysis presented for the research variables and the respondents' profiles. The second step is testing the research hypotheses using structural equation modeling. Finally, the analysis is applied using SPSS – version 26 and AMOS – version 25.

Descriptive Analysis

Descriptive statistics is a method that describes and offers a full understanding of the features of a certain data collection by giving brief descriptions of the samples and the data measurement techniques. This section will generate means, standard deviations, and frequency statistics for the demographic information and the research variables. Table 1 shows the responder profile.

Table 1: Respondent profile

	Frequency	Percent	Total
Age			
Under 20	79	15.9	496
20 – less than 35	306	61.7	
35 – less than 50	79	15.9	
50 – less than 65	27	5.4	
65 and above	5	1.0	
Highest Completed Level of Education			
High School	118	23.8	496
College Degree	229	46.2	
Post Graduate Degree	141	28.4	
Other	8	1.6	
Gender			

	Frequency	Percent	Total
Male	219	44.2	496
Female	277	55.8	
Marital Status			
Single	322	64.9	496
Married	152	30.6	
Divorced or separated	19	3.8	
Widowed	3	0.6	
City of residence			
Cairo	388	78.2	496
Alexandria	108	21.8	
Current Occupation			
Manager/Executives	87	17.5	496
Clerks	70	14.1	
Student	204	41.1	
Professionals	23	4.6	
Supervisor	19	3.8	
Administration	78	15.7	
Laborers	15	3.0	
Average monthly household income in Egyptian Pounds			
20,000- less than 25,000	209	42.1	496
25,000 – less than 30,000	66	13.3	
30,000 – less than 35,000	45	9.1	
35,000 – less than 40,000	36	7.3	
40,000 – less than 45,000	30	6.0	
45,000 – less than 50,000	23	4.6	
50,000 and above	87	17.5	
How often did you shop for personal luxury brand products before the Covid-19 pandemic?			
Yearly	204	41.1	496
Monthly	163	32.9	
Weekly	9	1.8	
Every other day	82	16.5	
Everyday	5	1.0	
Other	33	6.7	
How has Covid-19 pandemic affected the frequency of your personal luxury brand product shopping?			
I now shop more online	267	53.8	496
I now shop more instore	109	22.0	
I still buy instore, but the frequency has reduced	120	24.2	
Has the Covid-19 pandemic affected the choice of the personal luxury brand product you purchase?			
Yes	256	51.6	496
No	240	48.4	
To what extent did Covid-19 pandemic affect the amount of personal luxury brand products you buy?			
Greatly	109	22.0	496
Moderately	143	28.8	
A little bit	127	25.6	
Not at all	117	23.6	
To what extent did Covid-19 pandemic affect your decision on considering the purchase of personal luxury brand products?			
Greatly	119	24.0	496
Moderately	153	30.8	
A little bit	112	22.6	
Not at all	112	22.6	

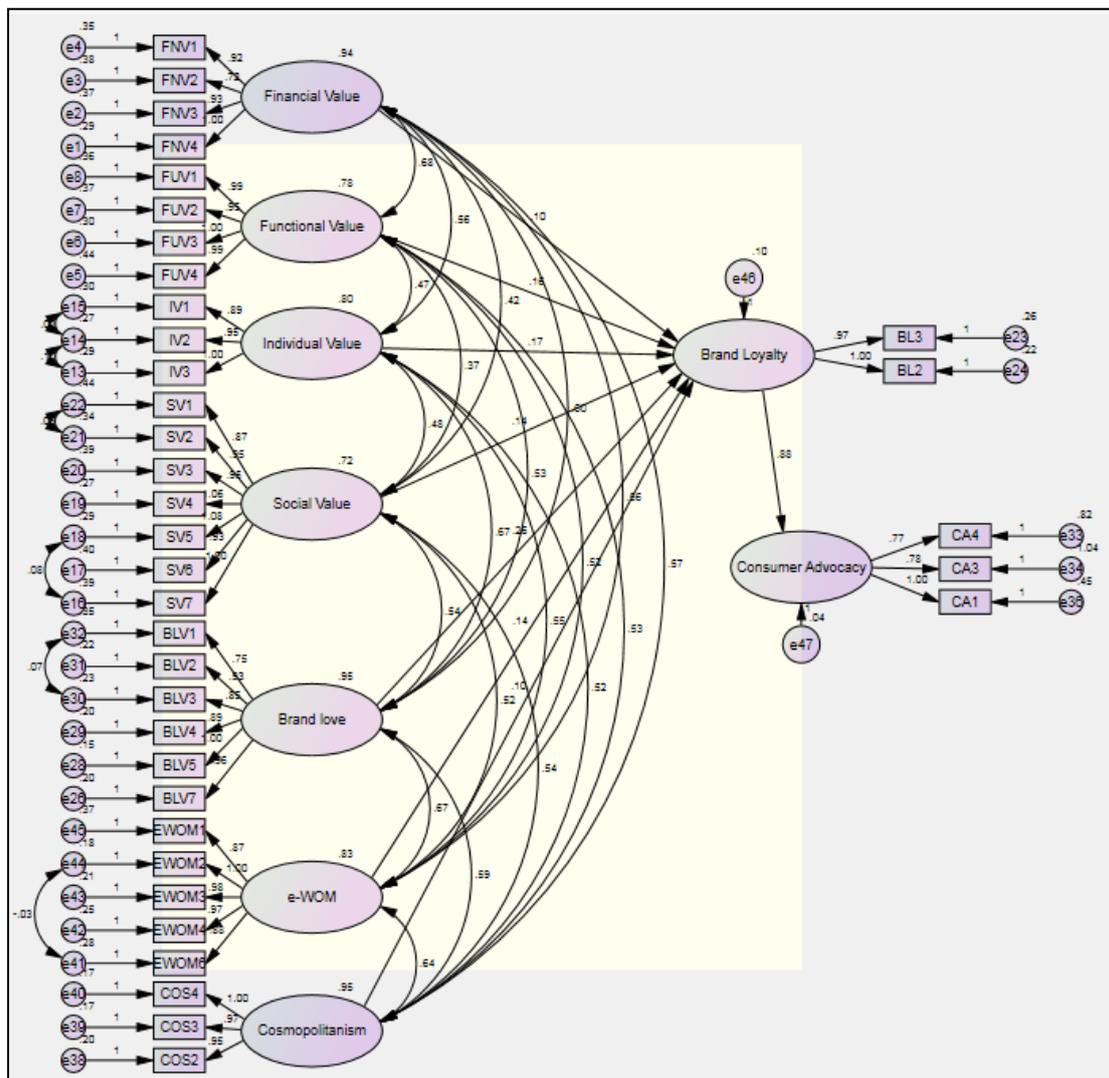
Testing Research Hypotheses

The SEM analysis of the effects of the research variables is summarized in Table 7 in this article. Brand love, e-WOM, perceived social values, perceived individual values, perceived functional values, perceived financial values, and cosmopolitanism all clearly have a substantial impact on brand loyalty (P-value < 0.05, estimate > 0). In addition, it was clear that Brand loyalty significantly influences Consumer advocacy (P-value < 0.05, estimate > 0), suggesting that Brand loyalty may mediate the link between independent factors and dependent variables.

Table 2: The SEM Analysis for the Research Variables

			Estimate	P	R ²
Brand Loyalty	<---	Financial Value	.099	.032	.869
Brand Loyalty	<---	Functional Value	.162	.001	
Brand Loyalty	<---	Individual Value	.166	***	
Brand Loyalty	<---	Social Value	.138	***	
Brand Loyalty	<---	Brand love	.261	***	
Brand Loyalty	<---	e-WOM	.138	.003	
Brand Loyalty	<---	Cosmopolitanism	.104	.005	
Consumer Advocacy	<---	Brand Loyalty	.883	***	.940

The CMIN/DF = 1.448, GFI = 0.917, CFI = 0.983, AGFI = 0.901, and RMSEA = 0.030 model fit indices all fall inside the acceptable range. The SEM model used to determine how the research model influenced things is seen in Figure 2.

**Fig. 2: SEM for the Research Variables**

DISCUSSION

The current study aims to ascertain how brand loyalty is influenced by brand love, electronic word-of-mouth, and cosmopolitanism. Though luxury values include those perceived as financial, functional, social, and individual values. As for brand loyalty and consumer advocacy, the survey also wants to discover how Alexandrians and Egyptians feel about premium brand goods. The study addresses the weaknesses of brands and branding in the face of increased consumer empowerment to increase customer advocacy. It also offers a new framework in which a company's interests and those of its customers can be more closely matched. These new chances for brand-customer conversation and knowledge production are all positive. However, it is unclear whether customer advocacy will eventually supplant conventional modes of commercial trade.

Customer advocacy-based brands are an excellent way for businesses to better align with the consumer-empowered. However, brand management must first accept the growing forces of customer empowerment before coming up with fresh ideas to better match the organization's activities with the requirements of its customers. The need for a deeper comprehension of customer attitudes, the function of shared knowledge, values, connections, and their perceptions of value are at the core of this revolution in brand management. This means that additional benefits obtained from the new drivers of customer value must be added to the old principles of product, service, and brand value. The study has an objective to contribute greatly to the practical and academic. The theoretical contribution of this study is to develop a new conceptual model to examine the relationships between the variables under study. The study contributes to knowledge by using a quantitative method with rich data for the current empirical study of participants from both cities to clearly understand Egyptian consumers. A mono method was the best method to use to collect the data and data were analyzed using SEM. Consequently, eight hypotheses are generated and tested after obtaining quantitative data. A rundown of the findings is presented in the current section. The first hypothesis is supported. These concluded results are consistent with Tzavlopoulos et al. (2019); Nikhashemi et al. (2016); Lin et al. (2017); Xie and Lou (2020); Lou and Xie (2021).

The second hypothesis is supported. These concluded results are consistent with Marakanon et al. (2017), Fusva et al. (2020) and Hichri and Ltifi (2021), while the results are inconsistent with Ramaseshan et al. (2013). The third hypothesis is supported. The above results are consistent with Yeh et al. (2016) and Han et al. (2021). The fourth hypothesis is supported. The above results are consistent with Chang et al. (2011), Floh et al. (2014) and El-Adly et al. (2016). The fifth hypothesis is supported. The above results are consistent with Unal et al. (2013), Hsu et al. (2018), Bıçakcıoğlu et al. (2018).

The sixth hypothesis is supported. The above results are consistent with Syahrivar et al. (2018), Budiman (2021) and Zhang et al. (2021). The seventh hypothesis is supported. The studies of Riefler et al. (2012) are consistent with the results of the current study, while they are inconsistent with Pandey et al. (2013), Pandey et al. (2015) and My-Trinh et al. (2021). The eighth hypothesis is supported. The above results are consistent with Shailesh et al. (2016); and Taoana et al. (2022). On the other hand, the results of Shimul et al. (2018) are not consistent with the current study.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The analysis results determine the number of recommendations. Recommendations are divided into two parts; the first part is recommendations for decision-makers. Second are recommendations for current and future research. First recommendations for decision-makers: it is recommended that decision-makers always work on keeping customer loyalty to their luxury brands, as loyalty is really a changeable variable for the luxury brand's consumer. Last but not least, decision-makers are advised to uphold the exclusivity of premium brands to ensure that consumer advocacy is implemented inside the specialized market segment. The second recommendation for current and future research is to conduct more research to investigate customer advocacy and the factors that influence this variable, as few studies examine consumer advocacy and its characteristics. Another suggestion is to focus on the independent factors while looking for other variables that could impact consumer advocacy. Additionally, look for additional mediators that could have an impact on the connections between the dimensions of perceived luxury values, brand love, e-WOM, cosmopolitanism, and consumer advocacy.

Limitations and Future Researchers' Suggestions

Some of the problems with this study's limitations could be fixed by doing more research. First, since time is the most important limitation, it is suggested that more research be done over a longer period of time. The second limitation is regarding the sample; thus, it is suggested to target a larger sample. At this point, there is another limitation regarding the country, as this study targeted Egypt as a developing country. Accordingly, it is suggested to target more developing countries as well as apply comparative studies between developing and developed countries. Finally, as this study depends on collecting quantitative data, we are also recommended to collect qualitative data.

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Author's Contributions

The authors have assured contribution for this study as follows: Introduction and Problem Statement: Rana Mohamed Shaaban; literature review: Rana Mohamed Shaaban, Prof. Dr. Ashraf Labib, Prod. Dr. Mohamed A. Nassar; Methodology: Rana Mohamed Shaaban; Findings and Results: Rana Mohamed Shaaban, Prod. Dr. Ashraf Labib, Prof. Dr. Mohamed Nassar ; Discussion: Prof. Dr. Mohamed Nassar; Recommendations, Limitations and future research suggestions: Prof. Dr. Ashraf Labib. Rana Mohamed Shaaban, the study's first author, examined the findings and approved the manuscript in its final form.

Conflict of Interest

The authors have disclosed no conflict of interest.

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