

Identifying and ranking of factors affecting customer experience for purchasing luxury brands

Seyede Roghaye Hashemi^a, Hossein Moeini^{b,*}, Hossein Shirazi^c

^aDepartment of Business Management, Qom Branch, Islamic Azad University, Qom, Iran

^bDepartment of Management, Hazrat-e Ma'soumeh University, Qom, Iran

^cDepartment of Technology Management, Qom Branch, Islamic Azad University, Qom, Iran

(Communicated by Madjid Eshaghi Gordji)

Abstract

This research aimed to identify and rank factors affecting customer experience for purchasing luxury brands. Therefore, a phenomenological approach was used in the qualitative stage to identify the components of the customer experience for purchasing luxury brands. Then, the model was tested and ranked using the SWARA method and structural equations. The data collection instrument was a semi-structured interview with Apple brand products sales managers. In order to ensure the return of a sufficient questionnaire (10% confidence margin), the sample number of 384 customers and sales manager of the Apple brand was determined, and the questionnaire was randomly distributed. The researcher achieved theoretical saturation through 18 interviews and finally provided 130 concept codes in six main dimensions, including luxury brand, consumer experience, brand prestige pricing, brand trust, brand thinking, and brand satisfaction.

Keywords: Customer experience, Brand, Luxury brand, Phenomenology, Ranking

1. Introduction

In the consumer behavior culture, the word "customer experience" has been around for a long time. Companies are spending extensively in understanding the customer experience because they perceive it as a vital determinant in success in the new world. As a result, the importance of customer experience as a strategic element in the success of manufacturing companies is apparent today. The growing importance of economic and trade exchanges has created the circumstances for

*Corresponding author

Email addresses: sara.srh2008@yahoo.com (Seyede Roghaye Hashemi), moeini61@yahoo.com (Hossein Moeini), hosseinshirazi63@gmail.com (Hossein Shirazi)

Received: November 2021 Accepted: December 2021

forming a network of interconnected systems and organizations. One of the essential tasks for every organization's senior management is to develop solid names and brands that may grow in strength and capability through time while keeping their promises and obligations. A competitive advantage can be gained by creating a customer experience [2].

2. Theoretical literature of research

2.1. Customer experience

The concept of customer experience was first introduced by Holbrooke and Herchman. This concept initially focused more on customers' rational decision-making to fulfill their promises and commitments to improve their behavior over time, as they tend to behave. Studies have shown that the customer experience effectively increases the financial performance of businesses, which can improve the position of businesses in the minds of customers. Customer experience requires strategic thinking in managing the customer and company experience and has a special place. Recognizing the factors affecting consumer behavior helps organizations drive their strategies in customer and brand to achieve maximum goals [26].

Investing in customer experience has been touted as a strategic advantage, and companies are aware that they need to build credibility for their business to improve the quality of their brand value. A strong brand results from a positive customer service experience, which can be the basis for creating an engaging and unique experience [3].

According to studies, customer experience reflects a company's performance, which is divided into three parts:

1. The customer experience allows customers to shape their perceptions based on the technical performance of the services provided (task section).
2. Physical and tangible factors related to services (mechanical part).
3. The behavior and appearance of service providers reflect the human part of customer experience management.

3. Definition of customer experience

Everyone believes that the customer experience is a product of the interactions between people, processes, systems, and relevant emotions.

- Morio et al. believed that the customer experience is a creative and analytical process that focuses on strategy and performance. This process challenges organizations is completely customer-focused and can differentiate organizations [27].
- Kim et al. stated that customer experience management is a concerted effort to achieve specific goals by improving the quality and continuity of customer interaction. Some people define customer experience as a state in which a customer feels value and remembers it, with characteristics such as freshness, learning, personal communication, or delighting customers. Customer experience, according to this definition, is the consequence of a consumer's mental reaction to direct or indirect communication with a brand, which encompasses all aspects of a product and service, such as capabilities, advertising and promotion, appearance, reliability, and so on. It also incorporates messages such as which brand, how and by what means, and by which customers should be sensed and defined as part of service marketing [22].

- According to researchers, the customer experience is described as obtaining pleasurable enjoyment from interacting with a brand. Every time a consumer and an organization contact, the customer learns something about the company and alters their behavior because of their interactions, which affects the company's profitability.
- A new technique to measure customer satisfaction, according to Kranzbühler et al., is the customer experience, which helps managers in organizations and creates a strong relationship foundation. This strategy uses technological advantages to ensure the best possible communication between the consumer and the company [24].

The customer experience aims to take customers from satisfaction to loyalty and advocacy. Creating a high level of customer focus, i.e., the stage of operational efficiency, income production, and assisting in the maximization of customer satisfaction, is the consumer experience [4].

4. Dimensions of customer experience

Researchers such as Mahours and Hares consider the customer experience as a set of interactions between the customer and the product, identified as different dimensions of the customer experience. This identification is a strategy and performance-oriented creative and analytical approach. Based on customer knowledge, improving customer satisfaction leads to a pleasant experience since customers appreciate the quality of their contacts with the organization just as much as the quality of the products and services, and the organization is responsible for creating this perception. Payne and Gilmour address the value of experience in today's society, as well as the benefits that businesses may receive by providing positive client experiences [25].

Peña et al. have identified the dimensions of experience, including emotional and cognitive experiences (thought), physical (action), and social identity (relationship) [1]. Reyhani considered the customer experience a set of perceptions, emotions, and thoughts that include feelings, cognition, relationships, and behavior, and a multidimensional concept that includes cognitive, emotional, behavioral, emotional, and social components [31]. [21] intended three dimensions, including brand experience, service experience (service provider), and after-consumption experience, to measure and measure consumer experience [21].

5. Brand experience

This dimension of consumer experience relates to the time before purchase, consumer perceptions about the brand, features, and criteria in the decision-making process. Options in the evaluation process reflect brand experience, consumer perception of product value, and pricing against competitors' services.

Service Experience (Provider): this section of consumer experience includes consumer perceptions of ease of use and access to various channels, employee encounters, and the environment in which products are delivered.

Post-purchase experience (consumption): This dimension of the consumer experience is related to post-purchasing and acquired experience.

Brau et al. referred to organizational processes and stated that brand would process can be a critical factor in creating a pleasant experience and remains in the customer's mind. According to this study, there are numerous examples where the deployment of technology and systems helps to create potential customer experiences. In addition, low-cost processes can significantly imffect customer experience without implementing an extensive system [5].

Table 1: Organizational factors affecting the customer experience

The process of implementing and designing Customer Experience Customer experience design Measuring customer experience	2016	Kranzbühler (2018).
Customer experience strategy Leadership		
Customer understanding Prioritization Designing Presentation measurement Culture	2016	Johnston. (2018).
Cultural mindsets Strategic orientations Company capabilities		
	2017	Jain, (2017).

6. Luxury brand

The interest in luxury is inherent in people as a fascinating matter so that even the most rational managers and analysts of marketing and consumer behavior are affected. Luxury brands are usually more popular than their peers. Furthermore, these managers are superior customers of these brands who have high and quickly expendable income and mental preparedness for purchasing things that reflect the taste and social status [6].

Money is a measure of wealth in today's capitalist world, and the luxury of the brand reflects the social class of individuals from past times [19].

For example, the rich in ancient Rome and Greece used expensive clothes and perfumes to show their greatness to other classes. This high price made them feel more proud, prevented the access of the lower classes, and maintained their uniqueness for a long time.

Luxury goods are usually expensive, and according to studies, brand luxury is a cultural phenomenon among affluent people, which is unique, high-quality, leading to distinction, high social class, and a sense of superiority and specialness [7].

7. Reason for luxury brand attractiveness

According to Schiffman, a theorist in consumer behavior, people use luxury brands to show their higher social base to others rather than their needs. Hence, people use the luxury brand to demonstrate their social base higher, and these brands usually have a strong focus on differentiation strategy. For example, expensive Adidas shoes, MacBooks, or Apple phones usually differentiate people, give them a sense of power and distinction, and induce the idea that they have a higher social class. The luxury brand is a multidimensional and conceptual structure and includes physical and psychological values in functional and symbolic terms. There are other definitions of luxury brands, such as exclusivity, scarcity, price, and (much) higher quality [8].

There are two reasons why people become interested in luxury brands:

7.1. *Luxury brand profitability*

Luxury brands' financial charts show that luxuryism remains an ATM that can generate high income and capital returns. Louis Vuitton's net profit-to-investment ratio in 1994 was more than 120%, while the optimal minimum ratio of financial managers in other industries was 15%. The same ratio was not available to all companies, but it could be on the other side of the coin.

7.2. *Tendency and desire*

Creative designers are born every day to add new codes of taste and excellence and create their fashion and luxury homes. These people should remember the three primary conditions for creating a luxury strategy at the beginning of the activity:

- The product should create social value for its owners.
- The product should have the power of dreaming for a sufficient number of people.
- The company must be small enough [15].

8. **Luxury brand and customer experience**

Today, customer experience management has a unique position in all industries, even mobile and computer equipment, because identifying factors affecting consumer behavior helps companies achieve their customer and brand strategies to obtain maximum marketing goals [17].

Investing in quality products is a strategic advantage, and many companies increase the value of their brand for the customer by raising the level of products [9].

The customer experience of the luxury brand is the main challenge of this research because today, the experience can engrave in the customer's mind as one of the most potent factors that can lead the customer to return and purchase or recommend the organization to others.

The customer experience has several significant benefits:

1. Improving and maintaining existing customers by creating a pleasant experience
2. Improving the long-term customer loyalty
3. Increasing customer retention
4. Reducing the cost and time of training
5. Enhancing income from cross-sectional and continuous sales
6. Making the relationship between central values of the organization
7. Ensuring the acceptance of laws and regulations
8. Creating a competitive differentiation [10].

Organizations invest in customer experience management to ensure steady and positive customers interaction and reduce costs. The primary element of the customer experience is the quality review, organization assessment, and human resource training. Generally, customer experience management is based on a 360-degree cycle of continuous performance improvement.

A good product can be made, but creating an excellent experience for return is not easy. From product shows, such as music concerts to high-quality advertising, and physical and online stores

that have transformed the shopping experience indicate that Apple has transformed the customer experience. An important aspect of Apple advertising is storytelling to create an experience in the customers, engage their emotions, and convert an ordinary purchase of Apple into an exciting event [14].

Apple never engages in price warfare, generally keeps the price, which is often high, steady, and pays attention to its unimaginable, beautiful, and well-made value instead of thinking about price. Apple always emphasizes enriching the user experience through its products and accessories. Every time Apple launches a product, it ensures that it is worth paying this high price. This method can be used for any product and service by distinguishing the whole market [11].

Apple has a long history of promoting its products through brand ambassadors and prominent people. Actors and actresses promote Apple products and participate in Apple advertisements on their social media platforms, such as Instagram. When a highly influential person introduces a product and tells their fans that it is good, a long and fruitful process begins [16].

Every year, the Interbrand Institute announces the world's most valuable brands, and its most recent report (2020) published a list of the finest brands in the world, in which Apple is still one of the ten most valuable brands. This Institute evaluates a company's entire worth based on three factors: financial performance, brand impact on customer decisions, and brand strength. Many celebrities, actors, musicians, and athletes worldwide use Apple phones concerning the attractiveness of the products of this brand [13]. People who use Apple products, such as celebrities, think that they are more attractive to others. Apple products have a considerable profit margin, and Apple does not want to change this approach. Given that in today's young society, people are influenced by virtual media, celebrities, and their attitudes toward brands, one of the tools of difference are the use of Apple products, which have a relatively higher price than other phones [18].

One of the reasons that attract Iranians to buy Apple iPhones is related to the feeling of luxury and opulence. Rich people like to flaunt their expensive possessions on social media, and Apple iPhones are a popular choice. Therefore, Apple is considered a symbol of luxury, and those who purchase an Apple product feel superior to their peers. Buying Apple in Iran, especially the newer models offers a sense of luxury because of the way the company designs and prices its products.

The second point is to create a sense of self-confidence. Apple iPhones, for example, have excellent technological features and appeal, which instills confidence in its users [12].

This research aimed to rank factors affecting the customer experience by using luxury brands, which is acceptable for the audience to be luxurious and includes a wide range of customers in addition to the high price so that they can use the interview to find out more about the customer experience. Therefore, this research considered the products of the Apple brand (iPhone or iPad and tablet) as a luxury brand, which have been accepted by young people because of the sense of distinction. According to the researchers' review, no research has been conducted on the customer experience of purchasing luxury commercial brands using qualitative and phenomenological approaches. Therefore, the main problem of the research is understanding the customer experience of purchasing luxury commercial brands using a phenomenological approach.

9. Research methodology

The research population was the purchasers of Apple products, including iPad, iMac, iPhone, Apple Watch, Apple TV, and Apple tablet, as well as academic experts who investigated in the field of customer experience and luxury brands. The sampling was continued until theoretical saturation, and phenomenology and mixed-method were used to conduct the research. The two basic approaches in phenomenology were descriptive and interpretive phenomenology.

An interpretive approach was used to deeply interpret the participants' experience, in which the researcher and participants have a prior understanding of the subject, which cannot be interpreted. Six steps have been recommended for hermeneutic phenomenological strategy, which has also been used to consider components in sampling in qualitative research. These steps include orienting towards the nature of the experience of living, explaining the experience as it is lived, analyzing the data using phenomenological cognitive reflections, phenomenological writing similar to grounded note-taking, maintaining a continuous and robust relationship with the phenomenon, and establishing balance in the research context. The phenomenological cognitive reflections can identify concepts, themes, and categories similar to coding in other qualitative methods such as grounded theory. Therefore, sampling in this section is based on objectives in applied research to identify the factors affecting the customer experience of purchasing luxury brands. Hence, 18 people were selected to participate in this study using the snowball method. The critical point of selecting participants was purchasing Apple products in the past year. In addition, it is crucial to pay attention to theoretical adequacy (saturation) regarding the sample size and volume in qualitative research. The saturation adequacy was achieved when adding new units to new information to build a theme in this study after 17 people reached saturation adequacy. Table 2 shows the demographic characteristics of the interviewees, who were 13 female and 5 male between the ages of 17 and 38.

Table 2: Demographic characteristics of the participants

Interviews		Sex		Age range	Marital status		Occupational status		Educational status (student graduated)		
Quantity	Time average	Female	Male	Age	Single	Married	Employed	Unemployed	Diploma	Bachelor's degree	Masters' and higher
18	40 min	13	5	17 to 38	18	0	10	8	2	14	2

The researcher studied young people aged 19 to 30 in Tehran who have bought Apple products such as iMac, iPhone, Apple Watch, Apple TV, and Apple tablet from specialized shopping malls and passages of phones and computer equipment such as Paytakht, Reza, Aladdin, and Kourosh. The sampling was performed by the convenience method according to the assurance of adequate return of the questionnaire (10% confidence margin) and the use of Cochran's table (384 questionnaires). The questionnaire consisted of 28 questions based on a five-point Likert scale from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). The Structural Equation Model (SEM) technique was used by Partial Least Squares (PLS) path modeling method to evaluate the validity of the structure (convergent and divergent validity). In addition, three criteria of Factor Loading coefficients, Cronbach's alpha, and Composite Reliability were used to evaluate the reliability of the questionnaire.

10. Results

The results of the interviews were analyzed by phenomenological method, and the text of the interviews was reviewed several times. Then, the data were broken down into semantic units in sentences and paragraphs related to the primary meaning, which were reviewed several times. Then, the appropriate codes of each semantic unit were written, and the codes were classified based on semantic similarity. The analysis process was repeated in the same way with the addition of each interview, and the interviews continued until theoretical saturation was reached. The criterion for achieving theoretical saturation was repetition in the extracted codes. In the open coding stage, 130 codes were identified, presented in Table 3 with the considerations made to the six main dimensions.

Table 3: Customer experience model indicators of luxury brand

Main category	Sub-category
Brand trust	Brand believability, intention to repurchase, increase profitability, word of mouth, better perception of brand quality, brand dependence
Prestige pricing	Better mental image of the brand, more value, brand equity, mental image pricing High customer engagement, social difference
Customer experience	Minimum time to receive the brand, orderliness of the brand sales staff, perceived quality of the brand Verbal advertising of the brand, providing unconditional after-sales service.
Brand Awareness	Luxury brand quality, brand association, brand function, country of origin
Brand satisfaction	Brand assurance, brand honesty, brand evaluation, reasonable price, brand customization, brand love
Luxury brand consumer behavior	Income differentiation, social class differentiation, cultural differentiation, consumption for show off, social differentiation

The researcher determined the weight factors affecting the customer experience of purchasing luxury brands using the Step-Wise Weight Assessment Ratio Analysis (SWARA) method. This method is one of the new multi-criteria decision-making methods introduced in 2010 by Violeta Kershaline and Zavadskas, and Turskis. In this method, the experts first arrange the criteria in order of importance, and the critical criterion is placed first and gets a score of one. Then, the relative importance of each criterion compared to the previous criteria was determined, and finally, the existing indicators are ranked based on the average values of relative importance [23] (Table 7) (S_i).

In the third step of the SWARA method, the coefficient (K_i) was calculated, which is one for the index of creating a pleasant experience, which is the most important. This value has also been calculated for other model indicators of customer experience management. The following equations were used to calculate the initial weight of each criterion.

$$Q_i = \frac{Q_{i-1}}{K_i}$$

$$Q_1 = 1$$

$$Q_2 = \frac{Q_1}{K_2} = \frac{1}{1.09} = 0.917$$

$$Q_3 = \frac{Q_2}{K_3} = \frac{0.917}{1.24} = 0.740$$

These values are listed in the "Initial Weight" column in Table 7. The linear normalization method was according to the following equation to calculate the final weight.

$$W_i = \frac{Q_i}{\sum Q_i}$$

Table 4: Prioritization of customer experience indicators of purchasing a luxury brand using the SWARA method

Sub-category	Medium relative importance	Kj	Initial weight	Normal weight
Brand believability	0.09	1.09	0.917	.01182
Intent to repurchase	0.24	1.24	0.74	0.0953
Increasing profitability	0.05	1.05	0.705	.00908
Word of mouth	0.19	1.19	.0959	0.0763
Better perception of brand quality	0.27	1.27	0.466	0.0601
brand dependence	0.11	1.11	0.42	0.0541
Better mental image of brand	0.05	5.10	0.4	0.0515
More value	0.09	1.09	0.367	0.0473
brand equity	0.12	1.12	0.328	0.0422
mental image pricing	0.21	1.21	0.271	0.0349
High customer engagement	0.18	1.12	0.23	0.0296
social difference	0.25	1.25	0.184	0.0237
Minimum time to receive the brand	0.18	1.18	0.156	0.02
orderliness of the brand sales staff	0.31	1.31	0.119	0.0153
perceived quality of the brand	0.04	1.04	0.114	0.0147
Verbal advertising of the brand	0.11	1.11	0.103	0.0133
providing unconditional after-sales service	0.21	1.21	0.085	0.011
Income differentiation	0.09	1.09	0.078	0.0101
social class differentiation	0.013	1.013	0.077	0.0099
cultural differentiation	0.09	1.09	0.071	0.0091
consumption for show off	0.12	1.12	0.063	0.0081
social differentiation	0.22	1.22	0.052	0.0067
Brand assurance	0.31	1.31	0.039	0.0051
brand honesty	0.07	1.07	0.037	0.0048
brand evaluation	0.011	1.011	0.036	0.0047
reasonable price	0.09	1.09	0.033	0.0043
brand customization	0.21	1.21	0.028	0.0036
brand love	0.04	1.04	0.027	0.0034
Luxury brand quality	0.06	1.06	0.025	0.0032
brand association	0.011	1.011	0.036	0.0047
brand function	0.09	1.09	0.033	0.0043
country of origin	0.21	1.21	0.028	0.0036

11. Evaluation of measurement model variables

11.1. Reliability (factor loads, Cronbach's alpha, and composite reliability)

The most basic reliability criterion is the examination of factor loads, which must be above 0.5 to be approved. The numbers shown in reflective models on the path between structures and representations represent the factor load. The results indicate that the variance between the structure and its characteristics is greater than the measurement error variance of that structure. The factor loads resulting from the implementation of the model reveal that all measures have a proper factor load (Table 5).

Table 5: Variables and factor loads

Structure (variable)	Measures (indicators)	factor load
Brand trust	Brand believability	0.559
	Intent to repurchase	0.632
	Increasing profitability	0.634
	Word of mouth	0.881
	Better perception of brand quality	0.614
	brand dependence	0.861
Prestige pricing	Better mental image of brand	0.695
	More value	0.990
	brand equity	0.910
	mental image pricing	0.545
	High customer engagement	0.666
	social difference	0.643
Customer experience	Minimum time to receive the brand	0.929
	orderliness of the brand sales staff	0.602
	perceived quality of the brand	0.626
	Verbal advertising of the brand	0.744
	providing unconditional after-sales service	0.776
Brand Awareness	Luxury brand quality	0.552
	brand association	0.597
	brand function	0.700
	country of origin	0.531
Brand satisfaction	Brand assurance	0.797
	brand honesty	0.551
	brand evaluation	0.992
	reasonable price	0.886
	brand customization	0.601
	brand love	0.526
Luxury brand consumer behavior	Income differentiation	0.722
	social class differentiation	0.883
	cultural differentiation	0.552
	consumption for show off	0.990
	social differentiation	0.824

Cronbach's alpha is an indicator for reliability analysis, representing a solid tradition in structural equations to estimate reliability through the internal correlation of representations. The composite reliability is another criterion with advantages over the traditional Cronbach's alpha method for calculating reliability. In the advantage of composite reliability, the structure reliability is calculated

according to the correlation of their structures. In addition, the indicators with higher factor load are more important to calculate the composite reliability. Therefore, both of these criteria are used to better measure reliability. Values above 0.7 indicate acceptable reliability of the measurement models in the case of Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability. According to Table ??, the reliability of the measurement model is confirmed from the perspective of Cronbach's alpha and the composite reliability.

Table 6: Organizational factors affecting the customer experience

Structure	Brand behavior	Brand trust	Brand Awareness	Customer experience	Pricing Pricing	Brand satisfaction
Alpha \geq 0.7	0.936	0.859	0.926	0.779	0.941	0.869
CR \geq 0.7	0.807	0.830	0.769	0.844	0.852	0.866

12. Validity (convergent and divergent)

Fornell & Larcker introduced the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) criterion for convergent validity, which shows the degree of correlation of a structure with its characteristics. All measurement models of this study have good convergent validity because the value of Average Variance Extracted for all structures is more than 0.5.

Table 7: Organizational factors affecting the customer experience

Structure	Brand behavior	Brand trust	Brand Awareness	Customer experience	Pricing Pricing	Brand satisfaction
AVE \geq 0.5	0.698	0.622	0.557	0.685	0.589	0.698

Divergent validity is another criterion for measuring the fit of measurement models in the partial least squares method. Divergent validity is acceptable when the value of the second root of variance recovered for each structure is more significant than the common variance between that structure and the other structures in the model. Table 8 shows the divergent validity of the model at the structural level in terms of the Fornell-Larcker criterion.

Table 8: Divergent validity of research using Fornell-Larcker matrix

Structure		Brand satisfaction	Pricing	Customer experience	Brand Awareness	Brand trust	Brand behavior
Brand behavior	0.712						
Brand trust	0.299	0.752					
Brand Awareness	0.285	0.175	0.867				
Customer experience	0.112	0.165	0.496	0.748			
Pricing	0.268	0.198	0.295	0.196	0.699		
Brand satisfaction	0.640	0.275	0.332	0.165	0.102	0.687	

13. Structural model evaluation

The fit of the measurement model examines the model, and the relationship of the hidden variables is explained in the structural model. The coefficient of determination and t-statistics are used to evaluate the model among the criteria of path coefficient. The numbers on the path of the structures are called the path coefficient, the standardized beta in regression, or the correlation coefficient in the structure to investigate the direct effect of variables. The numbers inside each circle represent the R Squares (R²) of the parent structure, whose value continuously varies between zero and one. A more significant coefficient of determination indicates that the regression line could better attribute the dependent variable changes to the independent variable.

Table 9: Explained eigenvalues of variables

Main component	Initial eigenvalue			Rotated loads		
	Total	Percentage of variance explained	The cumulative percentage	Total	Percentage of variance explained	The cumulative percentage
Brand believability	13.880	20.412	20.412	4.066	5.980	5.980
Intent to repurchase	3.379	4.969	25.381	3.997	5.878	11.858
Increasing profitability	2.583	3.799	29.179	3.803	5.592	17.450
Word of mouth	2.480	3.384	32.827	2.679	3.940	21.390
Better perception of brand quality	2.326	3.421	36.247	2.569	3.778	25.168
brand dependence	2.059	3.029	39.276	2.511	3.692	28.860
Better mental image of brand	1.982	2.914	42.190	2.469	3.631	32.491
More value	1.846	2.714	44.904	2.425	3.566	36.056
brand equity	1.702	2.503	47.407	2.253	3.313	39.370
mental image pricing	1.666	2.450	49.857	2.125	3.125	42.495
High customer engagement	1.621	2.384	52.240	2.092	3.077	45.571
social difference	1.594	2.343	54.584	1.697	2.495	48.067
Minimum time to receive the brand	1.554	2.286	56.869	1.680	2.471	50.538
orderliness of the brand sales staff	1.508	2.218	59.087	1.676	2.465	53.002
perceived quality of the brand	1.469	2.161	61.249	1.675	2.463	55.465
Verbal advertising of the brand	1.337	1.966	63.214	1.674	2.462	57.928
providing unconditional after-sales service	1.327	1.952	65.166	1.671	2.458	60.386
Luxury brand quality	1.310	1.927	67.093	1.656	2.436	62.821
brand association	1.272	1.871	68.964	1.651	2.428	65.249
brand function	1.215	1.787	70.751	1.638	2.409	67.657
country of origin	1.152	1.695	72.446	1.626	2.391	70.049
Brand assurance	1.089	1.601	74.047	1.605	2.361	72.409
brand honesty	1.055	1.551	75.599	1.595	2.346	74.755
brand evaluation	1.001	1.472	77.071	1.574	2.315	77.071
reasonable price	1.152	1.695	72.446	1.626	2.391	70.049
brand customization	1.089	1.601	74.047	1.605	2.361	72.409
brand love	1.055	1.551	75.599	1.595	2.346	74.755
Income differentiation	1.001	1.472	77.071	1.574	2.315	77.071
social class differentiation	1.215	1.787	70.751	1.638	2.409	67.657
cultural differentiation	1.152	1.695	72.446	1.626	2.391	70.049
consumption for show off	1.089	1.601	74.047	1.605	2.361	72.409
social differentiation	1.055	1.551	75.599	1.595	2.346	74.755

14. Hypothesis testing and significance coefficients based on the structural model

The correlation of dependent and independent variables is examined in a significant way. The relationship between the two variables higher than the absolute value of 1.96 indicates a significant relationship between the two variables. The model with factor loads analyzes how independent variables affect the dependent ones. In Figures 2 and 1, since the coefficients t for all paths were greater than 1.96, this path is significant, and the model is approved at a 95% confidence level.

Table 10: Research path coefficient

Path	Path coefficient
Customer experience → Luxury brand consumer behavior	14.825
Brand satisfaction → Prestige pricing	7.372
Prestige pricing → Brand thinking	152.56
Prestige pricing → Brand trust	3.193

15. Criterion R Squares (R^2) or the coefficient of determination

The coefficient of determination is the main criterion for evaluating the endogenous variables of the structural model, which varies between zero and one. Determination coefficients of 0.67, 0.33, and 0.19 in PLS route models are described as significant, moderate, and weak, respectively.

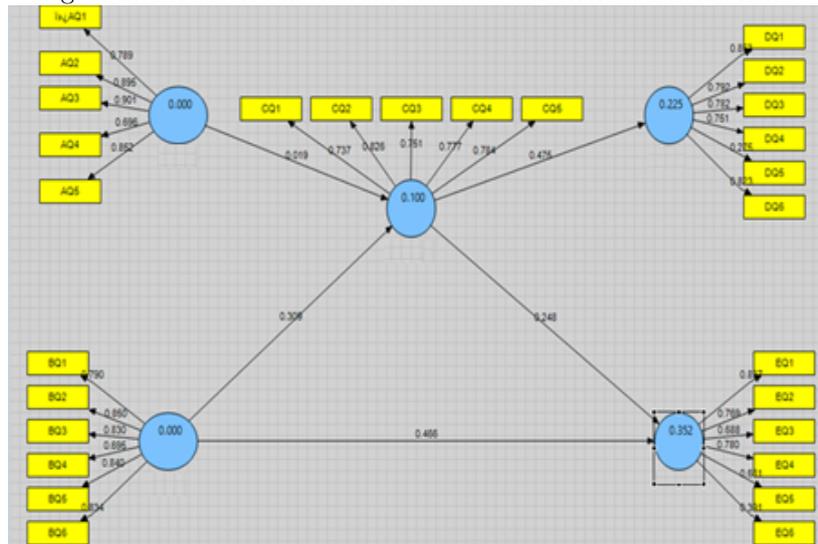
When the structures of a given internal path model describe an endogenous latent variable with a small number (one or two) of exogenous latent variables, the mean coefficient of determination is acceptable. However, when if the endogenous latent variable relies on several latent extrinsic variables, the value of the coefficient of determination must be at a significant level, i.e., more than 0.67. Otherwise, doubts are raised about the theoretical basis of the model, which shows that the model is incapable of describing the endogenous latent variables. The results are as follows after execution in PLS software:

Table 11: Coefficient of determination of variables

Endogenous latent variables	R^2
Brand behavior	0.635
Brand trust	0.780
Brand Awareness	0.823
Customer experience	0.816
Pricing	0.863

According to Table 11, the coefficient of determination for all variables is greater than 0.67, indicating the variables have been correctly identified.

Figure 1: Structural model of research with standard coefficients



16. The Goodness of Fit index (GOF)

This index examines the overall predictive ability of the model to evaluate the success of the tested model in predicting endogenous latent variables. The value is in the range of zero and one, and the value closer to the number one, indicates the appropriate quality of the structural model. This index is the square of the product of the average of the common values and the coefficients of determination. The values of 0.01, 0.25, and 0.36 are described as strong, medium, and weak, respectively. This index is between zero and one, and values close to one indicate the appropriate quality of the model [25]. This criterion is calculated using the following equation:

$$GOF = \sqrt{0.781 \times 0.682} = 0.72$$

The proper goodness of fit of the model is confirmed given the value obtained (GoF = 0.72).

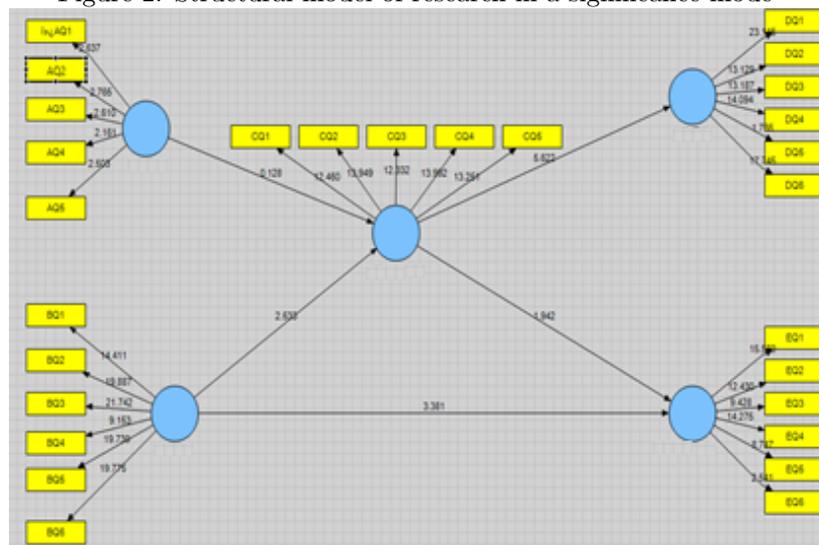
17. Results of confirmatory factor analysis

The overall fit index of the model indicates that the model used has a good fit and the collected data supports the conceptual model of the research. The model is close to its value, determining that the model has a good fit.

18. Discussion and conclusion

The results revealed that a brand that creates value for people beyond meeting the normal needs and necessities of life could be a luxury brand. In other words, luxury brands are distinct from other brands due to their unique characteristics, so purchasing one is more of a differentiating social strategy. Due to their distinct characteristics, marketing these brands necessitates various strategies and a thorough understanding of market conditions. For the successful implementation of marketing strategies in this area, it is critical to understand the behavioral traits and customer decisions of these companies [28]. For a luxury brand, whether a product or a service, branding is one of the most challenging and sensitive marketing operations. The distinctive position of these brands requires different strategies to design their branding elements, including name, color, and logo design, which

Figure 2: Structural model of research in a significance mode



were consistent with those of Rahmani et al. Customers' belief in the luxury brand profoundly affects their experience and loyalty. One of the elements of a pleasant experience of a luxury brand is loyalty, which leads to word of mouth and advice to others. Creating a good brand experience is essential in the successful sale of a new product. Luxury brand marketing is concerned with conveying an image of quality, efficiency, and credibility and seeks to sell an experience relevant to the lifestyle defined for consumers of luxury goods. These results are in line with those of Rahimi et al. who realized that quality and efficiency are part of the luxury brand affiliation strategy [30].

19. Research limitations

Most of the studies in this field have been theoretical, but this research conducted a practical evidence study from the perspective of various experts. Phenomenology in the present study is free from the limitations of quantitative methods (including pre-designed limited answers and options). Therefore, the interviewer is free to ask questions and express enlightening contemplative expressions in each interview, open and interviewed (due to creating an intimate atmosphere and based on research ethics), to provide desired answers in detailed language based on past experiences and away from various concerns. However, no previous study was found whose primary goal was to determine the factors affecting the customer experience while purchasing premium commercial brands. In other words, just a small number of components have been examined (rather than explained) theoretically or practically in previous studies. This study extensively and deeply explained the phenomenon of customer experience of purchasing luxury commercial brands so that some of the concepts extracted in the present study were not considered in previous studies, and therefore the present study could help. Creating a luxurious customer experience is one of the tools to acquire customers. These brands go beyond and provide unique customer service that should always be considered a factor of success [29].

20. Suggestions for future researchers

Researchers should consider that the luxury brand is trying to create a highly focused experience among real customers, which is the opposite of marketing operations in the public product market. Companies have several concentrated efforts together to acquire a wide range of customers.

Public brands define their customers and then place them in the heavy volume of creative advertising to purchase their products.

The simple design used to be enough for luxury brand stores, but now they have to consider multidimensional design so that the presentation space has to be integrated with the brand's beliefs. The luxury brand has the opposite role, and the customers are drawn to it [32].

In other words, extending the customers of a luxury brand reduces their value, and thus only loyal customers remain. The length of interviews with participants, which is especially common in qualitative research, is one of the most common limitations. In this study, the change of interview time and re-coordination occurred many times.

References

- [1] P. AIP, J. DMF and M. MAR, *The effects of perceived value on loyalty: The moderating effect of market orientation adoption*, *Serv. Bus.* 11(1) (2017) 93–116.
- [2] D. Andreini, G. Pedeliento, L. Zarantonello, and C. Soleiro, *A renaissance of brand experience: Advancing the concept through a multi-perspective analysis*, *J. Bus. Res.* 91(61) (2018) 123–133.
- [3] K. Aro, K. Suomi and S. Saraniemi, *Antecedents and consequences of destination brand love—a case study from Finnish Lapland*, *Tourism Manag.* 67(40) (2018) 66–75.
- [4] L. Becker and E. Jaakkola, *Customer experience: Fundamental premises and implications for research*, *J. Acad. Market. Sci.* 25(13) (2020) 410–423.
- [5] R. Bravo, E. Martinez and J.M. Pina, *Effects of service experience on customer responses to a hotel chain*, *Int. J. Contemp. Hosp. Manag.* 46(35) (2018) 110–119.
- [6] R.N. Bolton, J.R. McColl-Kennedy, L. Cheung, A. Gallan, C. Orsingher, L. Witell and M. Zaki, *Customer experience challenges: Bringing together digital, physical and social realms*, *J. Serv. Manag.* 29(5) (2018) 776–808.
- [7] J.D. Chandler and R.F. Lusch, *Service systems: A broadened framework and research agenda on value propositions, engagement, and service experience*, *J. Serv. Res.* 18(1) (2015) 6–22.
- [8] D. Chaney, R. Lunardo and R. Mencarelli, *Consumption experience: Past, present and future*, *Qual. Market Res. Int. J.* 21(4) (2018) 402–420.
- [9] P. Danese, V. Manfè and P. Romano, *A systematic literature review on recent lean research: State-of-the-art and future directions*, *Int. J. Manag. Rev.* 20(2) (2018) 579–605.
- [10] J. Dawes, *Do data characteristics change according to the number of scale points used? An experiment using 5-Point, 7-Point and 10-Point scales*, *International Journal of Market Research.* 50(11) (2018) 61–104.
- [11] C G. Ding and T.H. Tseng, *On the relationships among brand experience, hedonic emotions, and brand equity*, *Eur. J. Market.* 49(7/8) (2015) 994–1015.
- [12] M. Haghghi, T. Roshandel Arbatani, A. Rousta and A. Salehi, *A Model for Multi-sensory Marketing in Tourism Destination Branding*, *J. Bus. Manag.* 9(1) (2017) 63–82.
- [13] R. Hamilton and L.L. Price, *Consumer journeys: developing consumer-based strategy*, *J. Acad. Market. Sci.* 47(2) (2019) 187–191.
- [14] K. Hamilton and B.A. Wagner, *Commercialised nostalgia: staging consumer experiences in small businesses*, *Eur. J. Market.* 48(5/6) (2014) 813–832.
- [15] H.M. Jeon, D.H. Jeon, S.H. Kim and E.H. Ki, *Consumers' perceptions of food service firms' philanthropy: Roles of fit and perceived authenticity*, *Soc. Behav. Pers.* 48(3) (2020) 1–11.
- [16] S. Hung, M. Cheng and P. Chiu, *Do antecedents of trust and satisfaction promote consumer loyalty in physical and virtual stores? A multi-channel Re view*, *Serv. Bus.* 13(1) (2019) 10–23.
- [17] H.W. Jang and S.B. Lee, *Serving robots: management and applications for restaurant business*, *Sustainability* 12(10) (2020), 3998.
- [18] J. Hwang and K.W. Lee, *The antecedents and consequences of golf tournament spectators' memorable brand experiences*, *J. Dest. Market. Manag.* 91(71) (2018) 11–25.
- [19] A.R. Irani, A.R. Farhangi, M.R. Mehregan and S. Irani, *Proposing a model of co-creative participation in tourism market*, *J. Bus. Manag.* 10(4) (2018) 889–904.
- [20] R. Jain, J. Aagja and S. Bagdare, *Customer experience: a review and research agenda*, *J. Ser. Theory Practice* 27(3) (2017) 642–662.
- [21] W.J. Johnston, A.N.H. Le and J.M.S. Cheng, *A meta-analytic review of influence strategies in marketing channel relationships*, *J. Acad. Market. Sci.* 46(4) (2018) 674–702.

- [22] S. Kim, S. Ham, H. Moon, B. Chua and H. Han, *Experience, brand prestige, perceived value (functional, hedonic, social, and financial), and loyalty among grocerant customers*, Int. J. Hosp. Manag. 19(13) (2019) 169-177.
- [23] A. Kranzbühler, M.H.P. Kleijnen, R.E. Morgan and M. Teerling, *The multilevel nature of customer experience research: An integrative review and research agenda*, Int. J. Manag. Rev. 20(12) (2018) 433-456.
- [24] A.M. Kranzbühler, M.H. Kleijnen, R. Morgan and M. Teerling, *The multilevel nature of customer experience research: An integrative review and research agenda*, Int. J. Manag. Rev. 20(2) (2017) 433-456.
- [25] A.A. Mahrous and S.S. Hassan, *Achieving superior customer experience: An investigation of multichannel choices in the travel and tourism industry of an emerging market*, J. Travel Res. 56(8) (2016) 1049-1064.
- [26] D. Marchesani, G. Piccoli and T. Lui, *The impact of IT-enabled customer experience management on service perceptions and performance*, Inf. Commun. Technol. Tourism, Springer, Cham, 2017, pp. 377-386.
- [27] A. Moreira, N. Fortes and R. Santiago, *Influence of sensory stimuli on brand experience, brand equity and purchase intention*, J. Bus. Econ. Manag. 18(1) (2017) 68-83.
- [28] S. Rahimian, M. ShamiZanjani, A. Manian and M. Rahim Esfiddani, *Developing a customer experience management framework in hoteling industry: A systematic review of theoretical foundations*, J. Bus. Manag. 15(10) (2020) 140-149.
- [29] S. Rahimian and M. Shami Zanjani, *Developing a customer experience management framework in hoteling industry: A systematic review of theoretical foundations*, J. Bus. Manag. 12(3) (2020) 521-546.
- [30] J. Rahimi Baghmalek, M. Haghghi and S.A. Mira, *Developing a loyalty model based on the customers' experience in hotel industry using grounded theory strategy*, J. Bus. Manag. 11(1) (2019) 125-140.
- [31] N. Reihani, *Brand attachment in consumer-brand relationship*, J. Syst. Manag. 12(3) (2019) 41-60.
- [32] M. Sigala, *Implementing social customer relationship management: A process framework and implications in tourism and hospitality*, Int. J. Contemp. Hosp. Manag. 46(31) (2018) 15-25.