

REFEREE'S REVIEW

Program:	Master in management
Student:	Acheampong Yvonne Konadu
Title of thesis:	Examining the Relationship of Brand Love & Brand Loyalty to Luxury Fashion Brands in Russia

Justification of the topic choice. Accuracy in defining the aim and objectives of the thesis. Justification of the topic choice; accuracy in defining the aim and tasks of the thesis; originality of the topic and the extent to which it was covered; alignment of the thesis' topic, aim and objectives.	5	4	3	2
Structure and logic of the text flow. Logic of research; full scope of the thesis; alignment of thesis' structural parts, i.e. theoretical and empirical parts.	5	4	3	2
Quality of analytical approach and quality of offered solution to the research objectives. Adequacy of objectives coverage; ability to formulate and convey the research problem; ability to offer options for its solution; application of the latest trends in relevant research are for the set objectives.	5	4	3	2
Quality of data gathering and description. Quality of selecting research tools and methods; data validity adequacy; adequacy of used data for chosen research tools and methods; completeness and relevance of the list of references.	5	4	3	2
Scientific aspect of the thesis. Independent scientific thinking in solving the set problem/objectives; the extent to which the student contributed to selecting and justifying the research model (conceptual and/or quantitative), developing methodology/approach to set objectives.	5	4	3	2
Practical/applied nature of research. Extent to which the theoretical background is related to the international or Russian managerial practice; development of applied recommendations; justification and interpretation of the empirical/applied results.	5	4	3	2
Quality of thesis layout. Layout fulfils the requirements of the Regulations for master thesis preparation and defense, correct layout of tables, figures, references.	5	4	3	2

Each item above is evaluated on the following scale, as applicable: 5 = the thesis meets all the requirements, 4 = the thesis meets almost all the requirements, 3 = a lot of the requirements are not met in the thesis, 2 = the thesis does not meet the requirements.

Additional comments:

Please, elaborate on the above mentioned criteria (we kindly ask you to provide your comments structured as strengths and weaknesses, maximum 5 for each, unless more points are crucial to justify the grade).

The role of branding is not diminishing, and is particularly vital for certain particular product categories. Luxury fashion items are among them, and represents the area where symbolic value is adding the big part to the actual material value of the product.

The thesis is addressing the concept of brand love and its role in defining brand loyalty. Author analyzes the literature to identify the antecedents and to test them later empirically. The results of the analysis are presented in a form of two conceptual models (the first one and the one that is being tested later).

However, there are several points where questions arise while reading the text:

- firstly, Author claims that is searching for the brand love antecedents based on brand loyalty (page 18), but brand loyalty is the dependent variable in the model. How can it be?
- secondly, Author correctly claims that both aspects of brand loyalty should be addressed (p.24), but there is only one construct in the final model (Figure 6, p.25). What kind of loyalty is it?
- thirdly, Author considers luxury as a concept (p. 28), but does not relate this concept to other concepts earlier discussed in the text;
- fourthly, the hypotheses are separated from theoretical part and the constructs used in the hypotheses are different from the ones named in the conceptual model, which creates certain confusion.
- fifthly, how could be justified that those respondents, participating in the study are eligible for the purpose of the study? The way the sample is described is not persuading, and the comment on the snowballing technique is not adding more information – as we need to know who were asked first to snowball to the next respondents;

- and finally, the data analysis is not persuading in its quality. For example, the results of reliability (Cronbach's alpha) are indicated on the base of all items from the questionnaire (30 items), which inflates alpha and does not demonstrates reliability of separate constructs. The results of regression analysis are also not clear – the table indicates which hypotheses have been supported and which – rejected. But the next figure (Figure 11) does not contain information on testing the construct's impact on loyalty, but the impact of separate items (hence why was the reliability analysis needed before if separate items are being tested later?).

All in one, Author aims to meet a very ambitious goal in the thesis, a topical one and relevant for marketing research. However, implementation does not fullfull 100% of expectations and leaves many questions.

Master thesis of Acheampong Yvonne Konadu partially meets the requirements of the Master in Management program, and according to the reviewer's opinion deserves a/an "satisfactory (D)" grade, thus the author can be given the desired degree.

Date May, 30th 2018

Referee: Dr., Associate Professor Vera A. Rebiazina

