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A Study on the Impact of Brand Innovativeness, Brand Commitment, and Brand Value Congruence on Brand Loyalty: A Case Study of Luckin Coffee

By

Yanfei Jia^{1*}, Wah Kian Mooi²

^{1,2}Centre for Postgraduate Studies, Kuala Lumpur University of Science and Technology, Malaysia



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Abstract

In an increasingly competitive market environment, brand loyalty serves as a critical driver of sustainable competitive advantage. This study investigates the direct effects of brand innovativeness, brand commitment, and brand value congruence on brand loyalty, using consumers of Luckin Coffee as the research sample. A quantitative research method was adopted. Data were collected from consumers who had purchased Luckin Coffee products via an online questionnaire platform, yielding 420 valid responses from respondents aged 18 to 59 years. Established scales were employed to measure the four constructs. Data analysis was performed using SPSS 26.0 and AMOS 26.0, including descriptive statistics, reliability and validity analysis, correlation analysis, and structural equation modeling. The results indicate that brand innovativeness has a significant positive impact on brand loyalty; brand commitment has a significant positive impact on brand loyalty; and brand value congruence has a significant positive impact on brand loyalty. The measurement model demonstrated good fit, and all scales exhibited strong reliability, with Cronbach's α coefficients ranging from 0.833 to 0.910. The findings reveal that brand value congruence exerts the strongest effect on brand loyalty, followed by brand commitment and brand innovativeness. This study extends the theoretical boundaries of brand loyalty research by integrating three key drivers within a single framework and validating their relative importance in the Chinese market context. Practically, the results suggest that enterprises should continuously invest in product and service innovation, uphold brand commitments, and actively align brand values with consumer values to effectively enhance brand loyalty.

Keywords: brand innovativeness; brand commitment; brand value congruence; brand loyalty; Luckin Coffee

1. Introduction

In a business environment deeply integrated with globalization and digitalization, consumer brand choices are becoming increasingly diverse, making the cultivation and maintenance of brand loyalty a major challenge for enterprises (Kobets et al., 2024). Brand loyalty is not only a vital source of corporate profit but also a key indicator of brand competitiveness (Parris & Guzman, 2023). Industry data show that the average customer retention rate in the consumer goods industry fell from 68% in 2015 to 59% in 2023, while the average cost of acquiring new customers increased by 64% during the same period (Gazi et al., 2025). This trend highlights the importance of developing effective long-term customer loyalty strategies.

At the same time, China's coffee consumption market is experiencing rapid growth (Wang, 2025). According to data from iiMedia Research, China's coffee market size is expected to exceed 500 billion yuan in 2025, with an average annual compound growth rate of over 15%. As a typical representative of China's new retail coffee, Luckin Coffee, after undergoing a financial crisis, has successfully achieved brand revival and enhanced consumer loyalty through continuous product innovation, brand reshaping, and value delivery (Gao et al., 2025). This unique brand development trajectory provides an ideal research sample for examining the impact of brand innovativeness, brand commitment, and brand value congruence on brand loyalty.

Academia has extensively explored the antecedents of brand loyalty, accumulating a rich body of research. Regarding

*Corresponding Author: Yanfei Jia.



brand innovativeness, Pappu and Quester (2016) demonstrated that brand innovativeness indirectly and significantly influences brand loyalty by enhancing perceived quality. Lin et al. (2019) explored the direct and indirect effects of green brand innovativeness on brand loyalty, finding that green perceived value plays a significant mediating role. In a study on the Chinese smartphone market, Tu and Xu (2023) found that brand innovativeness positively affects brand loyalty through brand identification. However, existing research on brand innovativeness has largely focused on the product technology dimension, often overlooking the importance of marketing and value innovation, thus failing to fully capture the multi-dimensional nature of brand innovativeness.

In terms of brand commitment, research by Jamshidi and Roustafard (2021) indicates that brand commitment is a core driver of brand loyalty, indirectly enhancing it through factors such as brand trust, brand image, and consumer satisfaction. Na et al. (2023) showed that brand commitment significantly influences both the behavioral and attitudinal dimensions of brand loyalty, mediated by brand trust and brand love. Nevertheless, existing studies primarily focus on consumers' one-way commitment to the brand, with insufficient discussion on the mechanisms through which brands signal and fulfill their commitments to consumers.

Regarding brand value congruence, Rather and Camilleri (2019) found that value congruence can significantly enhance brand loyalty through brand identification and brand engagement. Šerić et al. (2020) demonstrated that consistent brand marketing communication messages enhance consumer brand trust and loyalty. Chieng et al. (2022) pointed out that self-congruity functions similarly to brand value congruence, promoting brand loyalty by strengthening consumer brand attachment and brand experience.

Although the antecedents of brand loyalty have been extensively discussed in academia, the following research gaps remain: First, a lack of integrated investigation. Most existing studies focus on the impact of a single variable on brand loyalty, lacking an integrated examination of the three key variables—brand innovativeness, brand commitment, and brand value congruence—making it difficult to reveal their relative importance and synergistic mechanisms in the formation of brand loyalty. Second, insufficient validation of theoretical frameworks in local contexts. Research on the formation mechanism of brand loyalty within the Chinese market context is relatively limited, and the applicability of Western theoretical frameworks (such as Commitment-Trust Theory, Brand Resonance Model, and Self-Congruity Theory) within the Chinese cultural context needs verification. Chinese consumers' perception of brand image relies more heavily on the activation of cultural archetypes and collective memory (Chiu et al., 2022), a unique characteristic that may influence the strength of the effect of variables like brand value congruence on loyalty. Third, insufficient attention to specific research contexts. Existing studies often focus on mature brands or traditional industries, paying insufficient attention to corporate contexts where brand revival has been

achieved after major crises. Luckin Coffee's transition from a financial fraud crisis to brand reshaping provides a unique research context for studying the restoration of brand commitment and the reconstruction of brand value congruence.

Based on these research gaps, this study aims to investigate the direct effects of brand innovativeness, brand commitment, and brand value congruence on brand loyalty. Using consumers of Luckin Coffee as the research sample, this study seeks to answer the following core questions: In the context of China's new retail coffee market, how do brand innovativeness, brand commitment, and brand value congruence affect consumer brand loyalty? Among these three drivers, which one has the most significant impact on brand loyalty?

This study employs a quantitative research method, surveying consumers who have purchased Luckin Coffee products, with data collected through an online questionnaire platform. Mature scales, both domestic and international, are used to measure brand innovativeness, brand commitment, brand value congruence, and brand loyalty. Data analysis is conducted using SPSS 26.0 and AMOS 26.0, including descriptive statistics, reliability and validity analysis, correlation analysis, and structural equation modeling to test the research hypotheses. Grounded in the Commitment-Trust Theory, the Brand Resonance Model, and the Self-Congruity Theory, this study constructs an analytical framework for the formation mechanism of brand loyalty, providing theoretical support for hypothesis development.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Relevant Theories

This study takes the Commitment-Trust Theory, the Brand Resonance Model, and the Self-Congruity Theory as its core theoretical foundations to construct an analytical framework for the formation mechanism of brand loyalty. These three theories explain the intrinsic mechanisms underlying the establishment of relationships between brands and consumers from different perspectives, collectively providing solid theoretical support for this research.

2.1.1 Commitment-Trust Theory

The Commitment-Trust Theory was formally proposed by Morgan and Hunt in 1994 and is considered one of the most influential theoretical frameworks in the field of relationship marketing. This theory posits that the key to successful relationship marketing lies in the trust and commitment established between the two parties. In this context, trust is defined as the confidence one party has in the reliability and integrity of the other party; commitment refers to the enduring desire of both parties to maintain a valued relationship (Morgan & Hunt, 1994).

The Commitment-Trust Theory has been widely applied and validated in brand loyalty research. Lee et al. (2025) applied the Commitment-Trust Theory to the context of online brand communities and found that trust and commitment significantly influence brand loyalty within spontaneously

established brand communities, where a sense of belonging and information quality are key antecedents for building brand connections. Zondiros et al. (2016) integrated the Commitment-Trust Theory with the relationship investment model to study the formation mechanism of brand loyalty among mobile internet service users. Their results showed that brand loyalty is primarily determined by commitment to the service provider, which in turn is influenced by trust, satisfaction, investment size, and the quality of alternatives. Furthermore, the Commitment-Trust Theory has been widely used to explain consumer brand relationship-building processes in various contexts, such as technology-mediated self-services and social media brand interactions. Based on this theory, this study posits that brand commitment is a core driving factor in establishing stable consumer-brand relationships and, consequently, brand loyalty.

2.1.2 Brand Resonance Model

The Brand Resonance Model was proposed by Keller in 2001 and is a classic theoretical framework in the field of brand management. This model emphasizes the need to build deep, psychological connections between brands and consumers, where the strength of this connection determines the long-term value of the brand. Keller defines brand resonance as the intensity and depth of the psychological bond that consumers have with the brand, categorizing it into four levels: Behavioral Loyalty, Attitudinal Attachment, Sense of Community, and Active Engagement (Keller, 2001).

The Brand Resonance Model has been thoroughly validated in empirical research. Huang (2017), studying mobile phone brands, examined the applicability of the Brand Resonance Model to the relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty. The study found that sensory experience is a primary driver of brand love, and that brand love and brand trust mediate the relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty. Nizarikhutama and Murwanti (2024) investigated the impact of brand resonance and brand trust on brand loyalty, verifying the predictive role of various dimensions of brand resonance on consumer loyalty behaviors. The Brand Resonance Model provides a theoretical basis for understanding how brand innovativeness and brand value congruence enhance the psychological connection between consumers and brands: innovativeness can stimulate positive consumer emotions and cognitive evaluations, while value congruence contributes to fostering a sense of belonging and identification, both jointly driving the formation of brand resonance.

2.1.3 Self-Congruity Theory

The Self-Congruity Theory was systematically proposed by Sirgy in 1982 and is an important theoretical framework for explaining consumer brand choice behavior. The theory suggests that consumers tend to choose brands whose images are congruent with their own self-concept. Self-concept includes two dimensions: the actual self (i.e., the traits an individual believes they actually possess) and the ideal self (i.e., the traits an individual aspires to possess). When a consumer's perceived brand image matches their self-concept, self-congruity occurs, which in turn enhances positive

attitudes toward the brand and purchase intentions (Sirgy, 1982).

Self-Congruity Theory has received widespread support in brand research. Sung et al. (2012) studied the impact of brand-situation congruence on persuasion, finding that self-construal (independent self vs. interdependent self) and brand commitment moderate the brand-situation congruence effect, with consumers possessing an interdependent self-construal being more sensitive to situational congruence. Haddad (2026), focusing on celebrity brands, explored the impact of self-congruity on brand authenticity and emotional brand attachment. The study found that both actual self-congruity and ideal self-congruity enhance consumers' positive word-of-mouth intentions by increasing the perception of brand authenticity. These studies collectively demonstrate that self-congruity (including value congruence) is a crucial psychological mechanism linking consumers and brands, holding significant theoretical value for understanding the formation of brand loyalty.

2.2 Brand Innovativeness and Brand Loyalty

Brand innovativeness refers to consumers' subjective perception of a brand's degree of innovation and its ability to sustain innovation in the future (Shams et al., 2015). Innovation is key for firms to achieve differentiated competitive advantage. When perceived by consumers, innovation influences their attitudes and behaviors toward the brand (Rogers et al., 2014).

From a theoretical perspective, the Brand Resonance Model (Keller, 2001) posits that brand innovativeness can enhance the psychological connection between the brand and consumers, extending loyalty from the behavioral level to the emotional level. Concept combination theory suggests that innovativeness, as a core brand attribute, enhances perceived quality by modifying brand image and value, thereby strengthening consumers' positive attitudes and emotional attachment. Furthermore, the Commitment-Trust Theory (Morgan & Hunt, 1994) emphasizes that brand innovativeness strengthens trust and drives brand loyalty by meeting consumers' expectations of brand commitment.

Empirical research provides substantial support for this relationship. Pappu and Quester (2016) found that brand innovativeness indirectly and significantly influences brand loyalty by enhancing perceived quality. Lin et al. (2019) explored the direct and indirect effects of green brand innovativeness on brand loyalty, finding that green perceived value plays a significant mediating role. Research by Arham and Dwita (2021) shows that brand innovativeness positively influences brand loyalty by enhancing brand image. Yi et al. (2022) indicated that brand innovation activities indirectly drive the formation of brand loyalty by increasing consumers' brand knowledge and brand preference. Tu and Xu (2023), in a study on the Chinese smartphone market, also found that brand innovativeness positively affects brand loyalty through brand identification. Gözükarar and Çolakoğlu (2016) found that brand innovativeness significantly enhances brand loyalty by increasing consumers' sense of trust in the brand. Based on

the above theoretical analysis and empirical evidence, this study proposes:

H1: Brand innovativeness has a significant positive impact on brand loyalty.

2.3 Brand Commitment and Brand Loyalty

Brand commitment represents consumers' emotional and behavioral loyalty to a brand, manifested as their long-term concern and enduring support for the brand (Jamshidi & Roust, 2021). Garbarino and Johnson (1999) define brand commitment as consumers' emotional attachment and long-term concern for a brand, including feelings of pride, belonging, and loyal advocacy.

From a theoretical perspective, the Commitment-Trust Theory (Morgan & Hunt, 1994) emphasizes that brand commitment is a core driver of relationship stability and brand loyalty. By signaling long-term investment to consumers, brands build trust, which in turn prompts positive emotional and behavioral responses from consumers. The Brand Resonance Model (Keller, 2001) also indicates that commitment enhances the emotional connection between consumers and brands, promoting the extension of loyalty from the behavioral level to the attitudinal level.

Empirical research provides important support for this relationship. Jamshidi and Roust (2021) found that brand commitment is a core driver of brand loyalty and indirectly enhances it through factors such as brand trust, brand image, and consumer satisfaction. Wantini and Yudianta (2021) emphasized the important mediating role of brand trust and brand equity in the relationship between brand commitment and brand loyalty. Rizwan et al. (2014) found that brand commitment enhances consumers' sense of security and trust in the brand, leading to positive brand behaviors. Sami et al. (2022) found that brand commitment not only influences brand loyalty but also promotes consumers to become brand advocates through a loyalty spillover effect. Na et al. (2023) demonstrated that brand commitment significantly affects both the behavioral and attitudinal dimensions of brand loyalty, mediated by brand trust and brand love. Based on the above theoretical analysis and empirical evidence, this study proposes:

H2: Brand commitment has a significant positive impact on brand loyalty.

2.4 Brand Value Congruence and Brand Loyalty

Brand value congruence refers to the degree of match between consumers' personal values and their perceived brand values (Akkaya, 2021). Values are enduring beliefs formed in people's daily lives that guide individual behavior and choices (Srivastava & Banerjee, 2016). Arvidsson (2006) introduced the concept of brand values, using human values to express brands as a product of brand anthropomorphism.

From a theoretical perspective, the Self-Congruity Theory (Sirgy, 1982) suggests that consumers tend to choose brands that are congruent with their own values and self-concept. Brand value congruence is an extension of this theory to the brand level: when consumers perceive a high level of

alignment between brand values and their personal values, their sense of identification and belonging with the brand is enhanced, thereby promoting the formation of brand loyalty. The Commitment-Trust Theory (Morgan & Hunt, 1994) also posits that consistent value delivery is a core manifestation of brand commitment fulfillment, helping to strengthen trust. The Brand Resonance Model (Keller, 2001) indicates that congruence can extend loyalty from behavioral to attitudinal loyalty by deepening emotional connections.

Empirical research provides substantial support for this relationship. Rather and Camilleri (2019) verified both the direct and indirect relationships between value congruence and brand loyalty, finding that value congruence can significantly enhance brand loyalty through brand identification and brand engagement. Budiman (2021) pointed out that brand value congruence can significantly enhance brand loyalty by increasing the fit between the brand and consumers. Šerić et al. (2020) demonstrated that consistent brand marketing communication messages enhance consumer brand trust and loyalty. Susanty and Kenny (2015) emphasized the relationship between brand value congruence, consumer satisfaction, and brand loyalty. Chen et al. (2022) found that consistent brand values can indirectly drive a spillover effect of brand loyalty by enhancing customers' shopping experiences. Chieng et al. (2022) noted that self-congruity functions similarly to brand value congruence, promoting both the emotional and behavioral dimensions of brand loyalty by strengthening consumer brand attachment and brand experience. Based on the above theoretical analysis and empirical evidence, this study proposes:

H3: Brand value congruence has a significant positive impact on brand loyalty.

2.5 Research Framework

Based on the Commitment-Trust Theory, the Brand Resonance Model, and the Self-Congruity Theory, this study constructs an analytical framework for the formation mechanism of brand loyalty. These three theories explain the process of establishing brand-consumer relationships from different yet complementary perspectives. The Commitment-Trust Theory emphasizes relationship stability and long-term orientation, providing the core logic for understanding the role of brand commitment. The Brand Resonance Model focuses on the depth and levels of psychological connection, explaining how brand innovativeness and value congruence drive consumers' progression from behavioral loyalty to attitudinal loyalty. The Self-Congruity Theory centers on value fit and identity, revealing how brand value congruence promotes consumers' sense of identification and belonging. The integrated application of these three theories provides the theoretical basis for this study's investigation into the effects of brand innovativeness, brand commitment, and brand value congruence on brand loyalty. The research framework is shown in Figure 1.

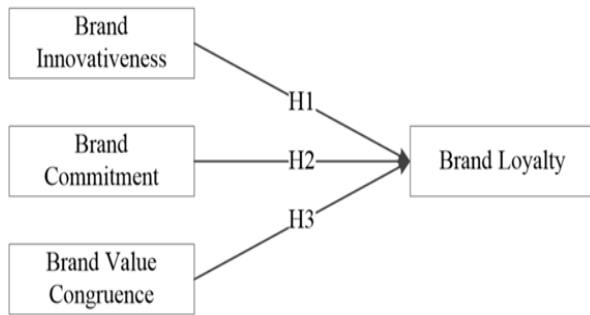


Figure 1. Research Framework Diagram

3. Research Method

3.1 Sample and Data Collection

This study targeted consumers who had purchased Luckin Coffee products. Data were collected using a combination of convenience sampling and online questionnaires. The questionnaire was created on the "Wenjuanxing" platform and distributed through social media channels. The data collection period lasted three months, from January to March 2026.

To ensure sample quality, the following screening criteria were established: First, respondents must have purchased Luckin Coffee products within the past six months; second, respondents were restricted to ages between 18 and 59 years; third, attention check items were included in the questionnaire to filter out invalid responses. A total of 532 questionnaires were collected. After excluding incomplete responses, those with obvious response patterns, and those failing the attention checks, 420 valid questionnaires were obtained, yielding an effective response rate of 78.9%.

The demographic characteristics of the sample are as follows: In terms of gender, males accounted for 42.1% and females for 57.9%. In terms of age, 18–24 years accounted for 28.6%, 25–34 years for 35.7%, 35–44 years for 21.4%, 45–54 years for 9.5%, and 55–59 years for 4.8%. In terms of monthly income, below 5,000 yuan accounted for 23.8%, 5,000–9,999 yuan for 33.3%, 10,000–14,999 yuan for 26.2%, 15,000–19,999 yuan for 11.9%, and 20,000 yuan and above for 4.8%. In terms of education level, high school or below accounted for 7.1%, university degree for 61.9%, master's degree for 26.2%, and doctoral degree for 4.8%.

3.2 Variable Measurement

This study used established scales to measure the variables. All scales employed a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree).

Brand Innovativeness: The Consumer Perceived Product Innovativeness Scale developed by Rogers et al. (2014) was used, consisting of 6 items. Example items include: "I think this product is different from other products in appearance design," "By purchasing this product, I can experience new things," and "This product has functions that ordinary

products do not have." In this study, the Cronbach's α coefficient for this scale was 0.833.

Brand Commitment: The Brand Commitment Scale developed by Garbarino and Johnson (1999) was used, consisting of 4 items. Example items include: "I am proud to belong to this brand," "I feel a sense of belonging to this brand," and "I am a loyal advocate of this brand." In this study, the Cronbach's α coefficient for this scale was 0.881.

Brand Value Congruence: The Brand Value Congruence Scale developed by Šerić et al. (2020) was used, consisting of 5 items. Example items include: "I am very familiar with Luckin Coffee's value proposition," "Luckin Coffee's brand values are similar to my own values," and "Luckin Coffee's brand values are consistent with the brand values I expect." In this study, the Cronbach's α coefficient for this scale was 0.910.

Brand Loyalty: The Brand Loyalty Scale developed by Delgado-Ballester et al. (2003) was used, consisting of 4 items. Example items include: "I consider myself loyal to Luckin Coffee," "I am willing to pay a higher price for Luckin Coffee than for other brands in the market," and "I recommend purchasing Luckin Coffee." In this study, the Cronbach's α coefficient for this scale was 0.884.

4. Results

4.1 Descriptive Statistics

This study conducted descriptive statistical analyses of the main variables, including minimum, maximum, mean, standard deviation, skewness, and kurtosis, to understand the basic distribution characteristics of the sample data. All variables were measured using a 5-point Likert scale. The measurement results are shown in Table 1. The analysis results indicate that the mean values of the variables ranged from 3.58 to 3.72, which is above the medium level. Among them, brand innovativeness had the highest mean ($M = 3.72$, $SD = 0.68$), indicating that consumers' perception of Luckin Coffee's brand innovativeness is relatively high; brand commitment had the lowest mean ($M = 3.58$, $SD = 0.71$), suggesting that there is still room for improvement in consumers' level of commitment to the brand.

Regarding the shape of the data distribution, the absolute values of skewness for each variable ranged from 0.108 to 0.214, all below the critical value of 3; the absolute values of kurtosis ranged from 0.023 to 0.156, all below the critical value of 10. According to Kline's (2015) recommendation, when the absolute value of skewness is less than 3 and the absolute value of kurtosis is less than 10, the data can be considered to approximate a normal distribution. Therefore, all variables in this study meet the normality assumptions required for structural equation modeling analysis.

Table 1 Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Min	Max	M	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
Brand Innovativeness	1	5	3.72	0.68	-0.156	0.089
Brand Commitment	1	5	3.58	0.71	-0.108	0.023
Brand Value Congruence	1	5	3.65	0.69	-0.187	0.112
Brand Loyalty	1	5	3.61	0.70	-0.214	0.156

4.2 Common Method Bias

Since all variables in this study were measured using self-report questionnaires and data were collected from a single source at a single point in time, there may be an issue of Common Method Bias (CMB). That is, the covariance between variables might partly originate from the similarity of the measurement method rather than the true relationships between the constructs (Podsakoff et al., 2003). This study employed the Controlling for an Unmeasured Latent Method Factor approach. Based on confirmatory factor analysis, a common method factor was introduced, allowing all items to load simultaneously onto their respective constructs and onto this common method factor. The change in model fit indices before and after adding the method factor was compared. If

the model fit improves significantly after adding the method factor (e.g., an increase in CFI or TLI greater than 0.1, or a decrease in RMSEA greater than 0.05), it would indicate the presence of serious common method bias (Podsakoff et al., 2003).

As shown in Table 2, after adding the common method factor, the changes in the model fit indices (CFI, TLI, RMSEA) did not exceed the critical value of 0.05 (CFI increased by 0.004, TLI increased by 0.002, RMSEA decreased by 0.001), indicating that the addition of the method factor did not significantly improve model fit. This further confirms that common method bias does not pose a serious threat in this study.

Table 2 Comparison of Common Method Factor Models

Model	χ^2/df	CFI	TLI	RMSEA	ΔCFI	ΔTLI	$\Delta RMSEA$
Four-Factor Model	2.220	0.951	0.945	0.054	—	—	—
Five-Factor Model	2.235	0.955	0.947	0.053	0.004	0.002	0.001

4.2 Reliability and Validity

Validity testing includes content validity and construct validity. Regarding content validity, all scales used in this study were adopted from established literature and verified through expert review and pretesting, demonstrating good content validity. Regarding construct validity, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted for testing. The model

fit results showed: $\chi^2/df = 1.893$, CFI = 0.958, TLI = 0.952, RMSEA = 0.046, SRMR = 0.042. All fit indices reached acceptable levels. The standardized factor loadings of the items ranged from 0.68 to 0.89, all reaching statistical significance ($p < 0.001$), indicating that the scales have good convergent validity. The results are shown in Table 3.

Table 3 Summary of Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Variable	Item	Unstandardized Factor Loading	S.E.	C.R.	<i>p</i>	Standardized Factor Loading	CR	AVE
Brand Innovativeness (BI)	BI1	1	—	—	—	0.732	0.836	0.562
	BI2	1.087	0.076	14.304	<0.001	0.775		
	BI3	0.962	0.072	13.361	<0.001	0.728		
	BI4	1.103	0.079	13.962	<0.001	0.753		
	BI5	1.198	0.082	14.610	<0.001	0.784		
	BI6	1.023	0.074	13.824	<0.001	0.748		
Brand Commitment (BC)	BC1	1	—	—	—	0.785	0.882	0.652
	BC2	1.104	0.069	16.001	<0.001	0.823		
	BC3	1.087	0.071	15.310	<0.001	0.801		

*Corresponding Author: Yanfei Jia.



	BC4	1.156	0.073	15.837	<0.001	0.816		
	BVC1	1	—	—	—	0.789	0.912	0.676
Brand Value Congruence (BVC)	BVC2	1.126	0.066	17.061	<0.001	0.843		
	BVC3	1.208	0.069	17.509	<0.001	0.858		
	BVC4	1.189	0.068	17.485	<0.001	0.857		
	BVC5	0.978	0.067	14.599	<0.001	0.757		
	BL1	1	—	—	—	0.804	0.885	0.660
Brand Loyalty (BL)	BL2	0.982	0.060	16.367	<0.001	0.821		
	BL3	0.975	0.061	15.984	<0.001	0.808		
	BL4	1.101	0.068	16.188	<0.001	0.815		

Reliability testing was evaluated using Cronbach's α coefficient. As shown in Table 4, the Cronbach's α coefficients for each scale ranged from 0.833 to 0.910, all exceeding the critical value of 0.7, indicating that the scales have good internal consistency reliability.

The correlation analysis results showed that brand innovativeness was significantly positively correlated with brand loyalty ($r = 0.483, p < 0.01$); brand commitment was significantly positively correlated with brand loyalty ($r = 0.512, p < 0.01$); brand value congruence was significantly positively correlated with brand loyalty ($r = 0.548, p < 0.01$).

The correlation coefficients among the variables were all less than 0.70, indicating that there is no serious multicollinearity problem among the variables.

The discriminant validity test results (see Table 4) showed that the square roots of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for each variable ranged from 0.750 to 0.822, all greater than the absolute values of the correlations between that variable and other variables (maximum 0.548), indicating good discriminant validity among the constructs (Voorhees et al., 2016).

Table 4 Reliability, Correlation Coefficients, and Discriminant Validity

Variable	Cronbach's α	BI	BC	BVC	BL	AVE
BI	0.833	0.750				0.562
BC	0.881	0.412**	0.807			0.652
BVC	0.910	0.438**	0.456**	0.822		0.676
BL	0.884	0.483**	0.512**	0.548**	0.812	0.660

Note: Diagonal bold values are the square roots of AVE; off-diagonal values are correlation coefficients. ** $p < 0.01$; BI= Brand Innovativeness; BC= Brand Commitment; BVC= Brand Value Congruence; BL= Brand Loyalty

4.3 Hypothesis Testing

Structural equation modeling (SEM) was employed to test the research hypotheses. The model fit results are shown in Figure 2 and Table 5. The model fit indices indicated: $\chi^2/df = 2.143$, CFI = 0.951, TLI = 0.945, RMSEA = 0.052, SRMR = 0.045, demonstrating that the model fits the data well.

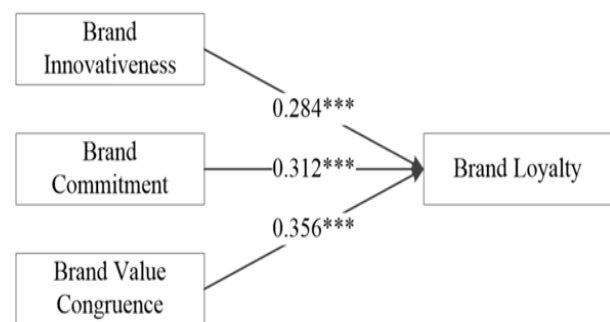


Figure 2. Path Coefficients Diagram

The path analysis results showed that brand innovativeness had a significant positive impact on brand loyalty ($\beta = 0.284, t = 5.167, p < 0.001$), supporting H1; brand commitment had a significant positive impact on brand loyalty ($\beta = 0.312, t = 5.423, p < 0.001$), supporting H2; brand value congruence had a significant positive impact on brand loyalty ($\beta = 0.356, t = 6.048, p < 0.001$), supporting H3.

Table 5 Hypothesis Testing Results

Hypothesis	Path	β	t	p	Result
H1	Brand Innovativeness \rightarrow Brand Loyalty	0.284	5.167	<0.001	Supported
H2	Brand Commitment \rightarrow Brand Loyalty	0.312	5.423	<0.001	Supported
H3	Brand Value Congruence \rightarrow Brand Loyalty	0.356	6.048	<0.001	Supported

5. Discussion and Conclusion

5.1 Discussion of Results

This study aimed to investigate the direct effects of brand innovativeness, brand commitment, and brand value congruence on brand loyalty. Using consumers of Luckin Coffee as the sample, three research hypotheses were tested through structural equation modeling. The results supported all hypotheses, indicating that brand innovativeness, brand commitment, and brand value congruence all have significant positive effects on brand loyalty.

First, the positive effect of brand innovativeness on brand loyalty was verified. This finding is consistent with the research conclusions of scholars such as Pappu and Quester (2016), Lin et al. (2019), and Arham and Dwita (2021). By providing novel and unique products and services that meet consumers' evolving needs, brand innovativeness enhances consumers' positive perceptions and emotional connections with the brand. In the case of Luckin Coffee, the brand's continuous launch of innovative products (e.g., the "Tengyun Americano" co-branded with the game Black Myth: Wukong) not only attracted consumer attention but also strengthened consumers' positive attitudes toward the brand, thereby facilitating the formation of brand loyalty. This finding also corroborates the Brand Resonance Model perspective, which suggests that innovativeness enhances the psychological connection between the brand and consumers, extending loyalty from behavioral loyalty to emotional loyalty.

Second, the positive effect of brand commitment on brand loyalty was verified. This finding is consistent with the research conclusions of scholars such as Jamshidi and Rousta (2021), Wantini and Yudiana (2021), and Rizwan et al. (2014). By signaling reliability and stability to consumers, brand commitment enhances consumers' trust and dependence on the brand. In the case of Luckin Coffee, after experiencing a financial crisis, the brand re-established trusting relationships with consumers through continuous product innovation and strategic adjustments. The fulfillment of this brand commitment contributed to the enhancement of consumer loyalty. This finding also supports the perspective of the Commitment-Trust Theory, which posits that commitment is a key element in maintaining long-term cooperative relationships.

Third, the positive effect of brand value congruence on brand loyalty was verified. This finding is consistent with the research conclusions of scholars such as Rather and Camilleri (2019), Budiman (2021), and Šerić et al. (2020). By enhancing consumers' sense of identification and belonging with the brand, brand value congruence facilitates the formation of brand loyalty. In the case of Luckin Coffee,

through collaborations with IPs such as the Forbidden City culture and the nationally acclaimed game Black Myth: Wukong, the brand communicated value propositions of cultural identity and national confidence, attracting consumer groups whose values align with its own, thereby fostering stronger brand loyalty. This finding also corroborates the perspective of the Self-Congruity Theory, which suggests that consumers tend to choose brands that are consistent with their own values.

Notably, among the three independent variables, brand value congruence had the most significant effect ($\beta = 0.356$), followed by brand commitment ($\beta = 0.312$), and then brand innovativeness ($\beta = 0.284$). This result reflects a distinctive characteristic of consumer brand loyalty formation in the Chinese market context: Chinese consumers increasingly value the cultural connotations and value propositions of brands, and the alignment between brand and consumer values has become a key factor influencing loyalty. This finding also echoes the view of Chiu et al. (2022), stating that Chinese consumers' evaluation of brand image relies more heavily on the activation of cultural archetypes and collective memory.

5.2 Theoretical Contributions

The theoretical contributions of this study are mainly reflected in the following aspects:

First, this study extends the research boundaries of brand loyalty theory. While previous research has mostly focused on the impact of single variables on brand loyalty, this study incorporates brand innovativeness, brand commitment, and brand value congruence into a unified analytical framework, revealing their relative importance in the formation of brand loyalty. The finding that brand value congruence has the most significant effect provides a new theoretical perspective for understanding the formation mechanism of brand loyalty in the Chinese market context.

Second, this study enriches the theoretical connotations of brand innovativeness research. It validates the positive impact of brand innovativeness on brand loyalty in the Chinese market context, responding to scholars' criticisms regarding the insufficient differentiation of innovation types (Wei, 2021; Sprong et al., 2021). The study finds that brand innovativeness includes not only product and technological innovation but also marketing and value innovation. This understanding provides an important complement to the development of brand innovativeness theory.

Third, this study deepens the understanding of brand commitment theory. It validates the positive impact of brand commitment on brand loyalty in the context of a new retail coffee brand in China, extending the applicability of the

Commitment-Trust Theory. The study finds that the fulfillment of brand commitment includes not only product quality and service guarantees but also the consistent delivery of brand values. This understanding provides a new perspective for comprehending the multi-dimensional connotations of brand commitment.

Fourth, this study advances the localized research on brand value congruence theory. It validates the positive impact of brand value congruence on brand loyalty in the Chinese market context, responding to scholars' concerns about the applicability of Western theories in the Chinese market (Zhou, 2023). The study finds that Chinese consumers place greater importance on brand value congruence than Western consumers. This finding provides new theoretical evidence for understanding the characteristics of Chinese consumer culture.

5.3 Practical Implications

The findings of this study provide the following implications for corporate brand management practices:

First, enterprises should continuously invest in brand innovation. The study finds that brand innovativeness has a significant positive impact on brand loyalty, indicating that innovation is an important pathway for enterprises to achieve sustainable competitive advantage. Enterprises should focus on the synergistic development of product innovation, service innovation, and marketing innovation. By providing novel and unique product and service experiences, they can meet consumers' evolving needs and enhance consumers' positive perceptions and emotional connections with the brand. In specific practice, enterprises can learn from the experience of Luckin Coffee by collaborating with IPs from different fields to launch innovative products and co-branded activities, thereby enhancing the brand's innovative image and market appeal.

Second, enterprises should uphold brand commitment. The study finds that brand commitment has a significant positive impact on brand loyalty, indicating that commitment is a key element in establishing and maintaining consumer-brand relationships. Enterprises should clearly communicate their brand value propositions to consumers and fulfill their commitments to consumers through consistent and stable product and service quality. In specific practice, enterprises should establish a robust customer service system, respond promptly to consumer feedback, continuously improve product quality and service levels, and enhance consumers' trust and dependence on the brand.

Third, enterprises should emphasize brand value congruence. The study finds that brand value congruence has the most significant impact on brand loyalty, indicating that the alignment between brand and consumer values is key to enhancing loyalty. Enterprises should deeply understand the value orientations of their target consumers and build a brand image and brand culture consistent with consumer values. In specific practice, enterprises can convey positive brand values through cultural marketing, social responsibility activities, and other means, attracting consumer groups whose values align

with the brand, thereby fostering stronger brand identification and loyalty.

Fourth, enterprises should integrate the use of brand innovation, brand commitment, and brand value congruence strategies. This study finds that all three variables have significant positive effects on brand loyalty and exhibit synergistic effects. Enterprises should integrate these strategies, enhancing brand appeal through innovation, strengthening brand credibility through commitment, and reinforcing brand identification through value congruence, thereby forming a comprehensive pathway to enhance brand loyalty. In specific practice, enterprises can learn from the experience of Luckin Coffee: while launching innovative products, they should uphold their commitments to consumers and communicate value propositions consistent with consumer values, achieving a comprehensive improvement in brand loyalty.

5.4 Limitations and Future Research Directions

This study has the following limitations, which need to be addressed in future research:

First, the limitation of the research sample. This study only focused on consumers of Luckin Coffee, resulting in a relatively narrow sample source. Consequently, the external validity of the findings is somewhat limited. Future research could expand the sample scope to include consumers from different industries and brands, thereby validating the generalizability of the conclusions.

Second, the limitation of the cross-sectional research design. This study employed cross-sectional data, making it difficult to infer causal relationships between the variables. Future research could adopt longitudinal research designs to track the long-term effects of brand innovativeness, brand commitment, and brand value congruence on brand loyalty.

Third, limitations in variable measurement. The measurement of brand innovativeness in this study primarily focused on the product innovation dimension, with relatively less emphasis on marketing innovation and value innovation. Future research could develop a multi-dimensional brand innovativeness scale to more comprehensively capture the essence of brand innovativeness.

Fourth, limitations of the research context. This study focused on the Chinese market context, and the applicability of the findings to other cultural backgrounds needs to be verified. Future research could conduct cross-cultural comparative studies to explore the similarities and differences in the effects of brand innovativeness, brand commitment, and brand value congruence on brand loyalty across different cultural contexts.

Fifth, limitations of the research perspective. This study only examined the direct effects of brand innovativeness, brand commitment, and brand value congruence on brand loyalty, without considering potential mediating or moderating variables. Future research could introduce mediating variables such as consumer trust and brand identification, as well as moderating variables such as consumer characteristics and

product type, to construct a more comprehensive model of the formation mechanism of brand loyalty.

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