

Exploring the Determinants and Consequences of Emotional Brand Attachment among Moroccan Consumers

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Abstract:

This study examines the brand-related and social factors associated with emotional attachment to a preferred brand and the relationships between attachment, loyalty and recommendation among Moroccan consumers. An informal exploratory phase involving 15 consumers informed the questionnaire but is not presented as a stand-alone qualitative study. The online survey was administered only in French from 4 July to 12 September 2023 and yielded 103 usable responses. Variables were measured mainly through observed, single-item, five-category indicators. Ordered logistic regressions were estimated and compared with heteroskedasticity-robust linear models. An indicative sensitivity analysis shows that this sample provides 80% power to detect, under a five-predictor regression approximation, effects of at least $f^2 = .132$; smaller effects may therefore remain undetected. Personality congruence was associated with stronger emotional attachment (OR = 2.57, 95% CI [1.61, 4.10]), as was community participation (OR = 1.74, 95% CI [1.14, 2.65]). Identity congruence was significant in the primary ordered model but less stable in sensitivity analyses. The perceived role of quality and general connection to other consumers showed no significant independent association. Emotional attachment was associated with loyalty (OR = 2.89) and recommendation (OR = 2.03). The findings add exploratory evidence from an underrepresented consumer setting and suggest that enacted community participation may complement established brand-related factors. They do not support causal inference or representative generalisation because of the non-probability sample, preferred-brand framing, single-item measures and cross-sectional design. Replication with larger samples and validated multi-item measures is required.

Keywords: emotional brand attachment; personality congruence; brand community participation; loyalty; Morocco.

JEL Classification: M31; D91.

Paper type: Empirical Research

1. Introduction

Consumers may develop relationships with brands that extend beyond satisfaction and functional preference. These relationships can involve affection, identification, passion and a desire to maintain proximity to the brand. Relationship theory treats brands as active relational partners whose meaning develops through consumers' lived experiences (Fournier, 1998). Research on brand love has formalised one particularly intense form of this bond and linked it to loyalty, positive word-of-mouth and relationship continuity (Carroll & Ahuvia, 2006; Batra et al., 2012; Albert & Merunka, 2013; Sajtos et al., 2021). Emotional brand attachment is related to this literature but remains conceptually distinct: it concerns the strength of the emotional bond connecting a consumer to a brand and has been developed and validated as a specific construct (Thomson et al., 2005; Park et al., 2010).

The geographical evidence base remains uneven. Much of the established literature was developed outside North Africa, while Moroccan studies remain comparatively limited and often sector-specific. Elyamani and Aomari (2019) examined nostalgia and attachment in Moroccan mass consumption, and Boubker et al. (2023) studied emotional attachment and attitudinal loyalty in the Moroccan dairy industry. These studies establish the local relevance of affective consumer-brand relationships, but they leave room for cross-brand evidence that jointly considers symbolic, functional and community-related factors. Morocco is therefore treated here as an underrepresented empirical setting, not as proof that attachment necessarily operates in a culturally unique way.

Against this background, the study asks which factors are associated with emotional attachment to a preferred brand among Moroccan consumers and how attachment is related to loyalty and recommendation. Five predictors are examined: identity congruence, personality congruence, the perceived role of quality, community connection and participation in brand-related communities. The distinction between community connection and enacted participation permits a cautious examination of whether a behavioural form of involvement adds explanatory value alongside established brand-related factors.

The empirical design follows directly from these questions. Informal exploratory discussions informed a French-language questionnaire, which was then administered online to Moroccan residents. The final sample comprises 103 usable responses. Because the outcomes are ordered and the measures are predominantly single-item indicators, ordered logistic regression is used as the primary method, while robust linear models serve as sensitivity analyses. The analysis remains associational and does not claim construct development, latent-variable modelling or causal identification.

The contribution is deliberately bounded. First, the study reports transparent exploratory evidence on emotional consumer-brand relationships in Morocco. Second, it compares brand-related and community-related variables in one multivariate model. Third, it examines the associations of emotional attachment with loyalty and recommendation while reporting model fit, confidence intervals, proportional-odds diagnostics and robustness specifications. The remainder of the article develops the conceptual background and hypotheses, explains the methodology, presents the results, discusses their implications and concludes with limitations and directions for future research.

2. Conceptual Background and Hypotheses

2.1. Emotional Attachment and Brand Love

Fournier's (1998) relationship perspective established that consumers can form meaningful, evolving relationships with brands. Within this broader domain, brand love has been defined as passionate emotional attachment to a brand (Carroll & Ahuvia, 2006) and later conceptualised

as a broader constellation of feelings, cognitions and behaviours, including self-brand integration, long-term orientation and anticipated separation distress (Batra et al., 2012). Emotional brand attachment is not identical to that broader constellation. Thomson et al. (2005) developed an attachment measure organised around affection, passion and connection, while Park et al. (2010) distinguished brand attachment from attitude strength through brand-self connection and prominence. The present questionnaire contains one direct ordinal indicator of emotional attachment rather than a validated multidimensional scale. Emotional brand attachment is therefore the empirical term used throughout; the results are relevant to brand-love research but do not represent a complete measure of brand love.

2.2. Brand-Related Factors

Self-congruity theory proposes that consumers evaluate and choose products or brands partly through perceived correspondence between brand-user images and dimensions of the self (Sirgy, 1982). Brand identity can therefore provide symbolic meanings through which consumers recognise personal values and express who they are or wish to be. Consistent with research on self-brand connections (Escalas & Bettman, 2003, 2005), greater identity congruence is expected to be positively associated with emotional attachment.

Brand personality refers to the human characteristics associated with a brand (Aaker, 1997). When consumers perceive similarity between their own personality and that of a brand, the brand may become more self-relevant and relationally meaningful. Personality congruence should consequently be positively associated with emotional attachment.

Quality evaluations provide a functional foundation for continuing consumer-brand relationships. Reliable performance may reduce disappointment and support favourable experiences. The available questionnaire item, however, measures the perceived role of quality in affection for the brand rather than a conventional multi-item perceived-quality construct. A positive association is expected, but interpretation must remain limited to that wording.

2.3. Community-Related Experiences

Brand communities embed the consumer-brand relationship within relationships among consumers. Shared consciousness, rituals and moral responsibility can sustain community membership (Muniz & O'Guinn, 2001), while the customer-centred view of brand community emphasises a network linking customers, brands, products and other customers (McAlexander et al., 2002). Consumer engagement research further suggests that interactive community experiences can accompany identification and commitment (Brodie et al., 2013; Pedeliento et al., 2020; Santos et al., 2022).

The questionnaire distinguishes perceived connection from enacted participation. Community connection captures the feeling of being connected to other consumers of the preferred brand. Community participation captures reported frequency of involvement in online or offline brand-related communities. From a social identity perspective, perceived belonging can reinforce a self-relevant group identity; from an engagement perspective, repeated participation can make the relationship more cognitively and emotionally salient. Both should therefore be positively associated with attachment. Nevertheless, the cross-sectional design cannot determine whether participation precedes attachment, follows it or forms part of a reciprocal process.

2.4. Loyalty and Recommendation

Strong affective brand relationships are commonly associated with favourable relational responses. Loyalty reflects commitment and preference for maintaining the relationship, while recommendation communicates favourable evaluations to others. Brand-love studies report positive relationships with loyalty and word-of-mouth (Carroll & Ahuvia, 2006; Robertson et al., 2022), and Moroccan dairy-industry evidence also links emotional attachment to attitudinal

loyalty (Boubker et al., 2023). Comparable positive associations are therefore expected in the present cross-brand sample, without assuming causal direction.

2.5. Research Questions and Hypotheses

RQ1. How are identity congruence, personality congruence, the perceived role of quality, community connection and community participation associated with emotional attachment to a preferred brand among Moroccan consumers?

H1a. *Identity congruence is positively associated with emotional brand attachment.*

H1b. *Personality congruence is positively associated with emotional brand attachment.*

H1c. *The perceived role of quality is positively associated with emotional brand attachment.*

H1d. *Community connection is positively associated with emotional brand attachment.*

H1e. *Community participation is positively associated with emotional brand attachment.*

RQ2. Is emotional attachment to a preferred brand associated with consumer loyalty and recommendation?

H2a. *Emotional brand attachment is positively associated with loyalty.*

H2b. *Emotional brand attachment is positively associated with recommendation.*

Figure 1. Conceptual Model

Brand-related and community factors	Test 1	Central variable	Test 2	Relational responses
Identity congruence Personality congruence Perceived role of quality Community connection Community participation	Positive associations H1a-H1e	Emotional brand attachment	Positive associations H2a-H2b	Loyalty Recommendation

Source: Authors' conceptualisation based on the literature reviewed.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research Design and Data Collection

The study followed an exploratory two-stage process. First, informal semi-structured discussions were conducted with 15 consumers from the researcher's personal network. The discussions explored preferred brands, emotional connection, identity, quality, recommendation and social interaction. They informed the scope and wording of the questionnaire but were not transcribed or coded for full qualitative reporting. This preparatory phase is therefore not presented as a sequential exploratory mixed-methods study, and no claim of saturation is made.

The quantitative stage used an online questionnaire administered only in French. No translation was required and no separate formal pretest was conducted after the exploratory discussions. The questionnaire was open from 4 July to 12 September 2023. Individual completion time was not recorded. The accompanying invitation targeted Moroccan consumers residing in Morocco, and respondents answered with reference to a preferred brand. The final dataset contained 103 complete and usable responses.

Recruitment relied on a non-probability online procedure. Selecting a preferred brand ensured that respondents could evaluate an experienced consumer-brand relationship but also restricted the range of attachment and may have increased favourable responding. Participation was voluntary and anonymous. No names, contact details or other directly identifying information were collected.

3.2. Measures and Coding

All variables used in the analysis were observed indicators drawn directly from the questionnaire. Respondents selected verbal response categories corresponding to five ordered levels; these categories were recoded from 1 to 5 so that higher values represented more of the named attribute. When a respondent selected adjacent categories, the higher category was used, except for one response combining weak and moderate attachment, which was conservatively coded as weak. No multi-item latent constructs were created.

Table 1 summarises the operational meaning and scale of each variable. The measures are predominantly single-item indicators and should not be interpreted as validated multidimensional scales.

Table 1. Observed Variables Used in the Analysis

Variable	Question or operational meaning	Scale
Identity congruence	Extent to which brand identity corresponds to personal values	1-5 ordinal
Personality congruence	Perceived similarity between brand and consumer personality	1-5 ordinal
Perceived role of quality	Extent to which product or service quality influences affection for the brand	1-5 ordinal
Community connection	Perceived connection to other consumers of the preferred brand	1-5 ordinal
Community participation	Frequency of participation in online or offline brand-related communities	1-5 ordinal
Emotional attachment	Self-reported strength of emotional attachment to the preferred brand	1-5 ordinal
Loyalty	Self-reported loyalty to the preferred brand	1-5 ordinal
Recommendation	Frequency with which respondent would recommend the preferred brand	1-5 ordinal

Source: Authors' calculations based on survey data.

3.3. Sample Profile

Women represented 53.4% of the sample and men 46.6%. The largest age category was 45-54 years (28.2%), while 8.7% were younger than 18. Educational attainment was comparatively high: 51.5% reported a master's degree or doctorate. Table 2 provides the full grouped profile.

Table 2. Sociodemographic Profile of Respondents (N = 103)

Characteristic	Category	n	%
Gender	Women	55	53.4
Gender	Men	48	46.6
Age	Under 18	9	8.7
Age	18-24	14	13.6
Age	25-34	18	17.5
Age	35-44	14	13.6
Age	45-54	29	28.2
Age	55-64	16	15.5
Age	65 or over	3	2.9
Education	Baccalaureate	15	14.6
Education	Two-year tertiary degree	11	10.7
Education	Bachelor's degree	18	17.5
Education	Master's degree	29	28.2
Education	Doctorate	24	23.3
Education	Other qualification	6	5.8
Occupation	Professionally active	76	73.8
Occupation	Student or pupil	17	16.5
Occupation	Retired	5	4.9
Occupation	Not employed or unspecified	5	4.9

Source: Authors' calculations based on survey data.

3.4. Analytical Strategy

Descriptive statistics and Spearman correlations were examined first. Because emotional attachment, loyalty and recommendation were measured on five ordered levels, ordered logistic

regression was selected as the primary multivariate method. Predictors were standardised before estimation; each odds ratio therefore represents the change in the odds of reporting a higher outcome category associated with a one-standard-deviation increase in the predictor, under the proportional-odds specification.

For RQ1 and H1a-H1e, emotional attachment was regressed on identity congruence, personality congruence, the perceived role of quality, community connection and community participation. Age and gender were then added as controls. For RQ2 and H2a-H2b, separate ordered models related standardised emotional attachment to loyalty and recommendation. Heteroskedasticity-consistent HC3 ordinary least-squares models using standardised variables were estimated as sensitivity analyses. Variance-inflation factors ranged from 1.11 to 1.31 for the substantive predictors.

Proportional odds were assessed by likelihood-ratio comparison of each proportional-odds model with a generalised model allowing predictor effects to vary across thresholds. Non-significant tests indicated no evidence against the proportional-odds restriction. Model reporting includes 95% confidence intervals for odds ratios, likelihood-ratio tests against intercept-only models, McFadden and Nagelkerke pseudo-R² values, AIC and BIC. Threshold parameters are reported in Appendix A.

An indicative sensitivity analysis was conducted using a fixed-model multiple-regression approximation with five predictors and $\alpha = .05$. With $N = 103$, 80% power corresponds to approximately $f^2 = .132$. The calculation does not validate the ordinal model and indicates that small effects could be missed; it is reported only to make the exploratory precision of the study explicit (Cohen, 1988).

All analyses are associational. The temporal order implied by the labels determinants and consequences reflects the research question and prior literature, not causal identification.

3.5. Ethical Considerations

No formal institutional ethics approval was sought or obtained. The survey was a non-interventional academic questionnaire, participation was voluntary and anonymous, and respondents were informed of the academic purpose before providing consent and completing the questionnaire. The dataset contains no directly identifying information.

4. Results

4.1. Descriptive Results and Bivariate Associations

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics and Spearman Associations with Emotional Attachment (N = 103)

Variable	M	SD	Median	Range	rho with attachment	p
Identity congruence	3.67	1.22	4	1-5	.370	< .001
Personality congruence	3.26	1.14	3	1-5	.565	< .001
Perceived role of quality	4.05	1.10	4	1-5	.193	.050
Community connection	2.49	1.27	3	1-5	.406	< .001
Community participation	1.57	1.03	1	1-5	.431	< .001
Emotional attachment	2.78	1.15	3	1-5	-	-
Loyalty	3.82	0.96	4	1-5	.501	< .001
Recommendation	3.88	1.15	4	1-5	.361	< .001

Source: Authors' calculations based on survey data.

Community participation was notably lower than the other variables and had a median of 1. Emotional attachment was moderately positive on average, whereas loyalty and recommendation were comparatively high. Attachment had its strongest bivariate association with personality congruence ($\rho = .565$, $p < .001$). Its association with the perceived role of

quality was borderline ($\rho = .193$, $p = .050$); the other reported correlations were positive and statistically significant.

4.2. Factors Associated with Emotional Attachment

Personality congruence was positively associated with emotional attachment (OR = 2.57, 95% CI [1.61, 4.10], $p < .001$), supporting H1b. Community participation was also positively associated with attachment (OR = 1.74, 95% CI [1.14, 2.65], $p = .010$), supporting H1e. Identity congruence reached statistical significance in the primary model (OR = 1.56, 95% CI [1.01, 2.41], $p = .046$), provisionally supporting H1a. The perceived role of quality and community connection were not independently significant; H1c and H1d were not supported.

The overall model differed significantly from the intercept-only model and showed a Nagelkerke pseudo- R^2 of .459. The likelihood-ratio proportional-odds test was not significant, providing no evidence that the common-slope assumption was violated.

Table 4. Ordered Logistic Regression Predicting Emotional Attachment (N = 103)

Predictor	b	SE	p	OR	95% CI for OR
Identity congruence	.444	.223	.046	1.56	[1.01, 2.41]
Personality congruence	.943	.239	< .001	2.57	[1.61, 4.10]
Perceived role of quality	.209	.204	.305	1.23	[0.83, 1.84]
Community connection	.367	.224	.101	1.44	[0.93, 2.24]
Community participation	.554	.214	.010	1.74	[1.14, 2.65]

Predictors are standardised. LR chi-square(5) = 58.80, $p < .001$; McFadden $R^2 = .194$; Nagelkerke $R^2 = .459$; AIC = 261.94; BIC = 285.66. Proportional-odds LR test: chi-square(15) = 18.28, $p = .248$.

Source: Authors' calculations.

4.3. Loyalty and Recommendation

Emotional attachment was positively associated with loyalty (OR = 2.89, 95% CI [1.90, 4.40], $p < .001$) and recommendation (OR = 2.03, 95% CI [1.39, 2.97], $p < .001$). H2a and H2b were therefore supported. The proportional-odds tests were non-significant for both outcomes.

Table 5. Ordered Logistic Regressions for Loyalty and Recommendation (N = 103)

Outcome	b	SE	p	OR	95% CI for OR	LR chi-square(1)	McFadden R^2	Nagelkerke R^2
Loyalty	1.062	.214	< .001	2.89	[1.90, 4.40]	27.74	.106	.256
Recommendation	.709	.194	< .001	2.03	[1.39, 2.97]	14.24	.050	.138

Emotional attachment is standardised. All LR model tests $p < .001$. Loyalty: AIC = 243.39, BIC = 256.56, proportional-odds LR test chi-square(3) = 2.06, $p = .560$. Recommendation: AIC = 278.86, BIC = 292.03, proportional-odds LR test chi-square(3) = 1.67, $p = .643$.

Source: Authors' calculations.

4.4. Robustness and Sensitivity Analyses

The robust linear model confirmed personality congruence and community participation as the most stable correlates. Identity congruence was no longer significant in the HC3 model and became marginal after age and gender were controlled, so H1a should be interpreted cautiously. Age and gender were not significant and adding them did not materially change the two clearest results.

Table 6. Synoptic Comparison of Ordered and Robust Linear Results

Relationship	Ordered p	Ordered conclusion	HC3 beta	HC3 p	HC3 conclusion
Identity congruence	.046	Significant	.155	.102	Not significant
Personality congruence	< .001	Significant	.355	.001	Significant
Perceived role of quality	.305	Not significant	.072	.452	Not significant
Community connection	.101	Not significant	.137	.204	Not significant
Community participation	.010	Significant	.233	.002	Significant
Attachment predicting loyalty	< .001	Significant	.459	< .001	Significant
Attachment predicting recommendation	< .001	Significant	.350	< .001	Significant

The HC3 attachment model had $R^2 = .412$ and adjusted $R^2 = .382$; loyalty $R^2 = .211$; recommendation $R^2 = .122$. Source: Authors' calculations

Table 7. Ordered Attachment Model with Age and Gender Controls (N = 103)

Predictor	b	SE	p	OR	95% CI for OR
Identity congruence	.422	.231	.067	1.52	[0.97, 2.40]
Personality congruence	.942	.240	< .001	2.57	[1.60, 4.11]
Perceived role of quality	.215	.206	.298	1.24	[0.83, 1.86]
Community connection	.384	.228	.092	1.47	[0.94, 2.29]
Community participation	.560	.215	.009	1.75	[1.15, 2.67]
Age category	.150	.200	.453	1.16	[0.78, 1.72]
Male gender	-.066	.200	.743	0.94	[0.63, 1.39]

LR chi-square(7) = 59.40, $p < .001$; McFadden $R^2 = .196$; Nagelkerke $R^2 = .463$; AIC = 265.34; BIC = 294.33.

Proportional-odds LR test: chi-square(21) = 24.36, $p = .276$.

Source: Authors' calculations.

5. Discussion

The study examined factors associated with emotional attachment to preferred brands and the relational responses accompanying attachment among Moroccan consumers. Personality congruence and community participation produced the most stable findings across ordered and robust linear specifications. Emotional attachment was also strongly associated with loyalty and recommendation. Identity congruence was significant only in the primary ordered model, while the perceived role of quality and community connection did not retain independent significance. The personality result is consistent with self-congruity theory and the relational role of brand personality (Sirgy, 1982; Aaker, 1997). A brand perceived as similar to the consumer's personality may become more self-relevant and emotionally meaningful. This interpretation is also compatible with work on self-brand connections (Escalas & Bettman, 2003, 2005). The result is associational, but it identifies personality congruence as the strongest and most stable brand-related correlate in the available data.

Community participation, rather than general community connection, retained an independent association with attachment. Engagement and social-identity perspectives offer complementary explanations: active participation can increase interaction, shared meaning and identification, while already attached consumers may also seek more community involvement. The present design cannot separate these directions. The result therefore supports H1e as an association, not a claim that community participation produces attachment or constitutes a newly validated construct.

The perceived role of quality showed only a borderline bivariate association with attachment ($\rho = .193$, $p = .050$) and became clearly non-significant after the symbolic and community variables were entered. One plausible explanation is shared explanatory variance: functional appreciation may coexist with identity and personality congruence without contributing a distinct association when these meanings are considered simultaneously. A second explanation concerns measurement. The item asked whether quality influenced affection for the brand rather than measuring quality beliefs through multiple indicators, which limits precision and may attenuate its independent contribution.

The positive loyalty and recommendation results are directionally consistent with international brand-love research (Carroll & Ahuvia, 2006; Robertson et al., 2022) and with Moroccan dairy-industry evidence (Boubker et al., 2023). Direct numerical comparison would be inappropriate because those studies use different constructs, scales, samples and estimators, whereas the present study reports standardised-predictor odds ratios from single-item ordinal outcomes. The defensible conclusion is convergence in direction, not a uniquely stronger or weaker Moroccan effect.

5.1. Managerial Implications

Managers operating in Morocco can use the findings as a basis for local testing rather than as a universal prescription. A coherent and recognisable brand personality should be translated consistently across product experience, communication and frontline interaction. Consumer research can then examine whether intended personality traits correspond to how local target groups describe themselves and the brand.

Community initiatives should create concrete opportunities for participation rather than relying only on audience size or passive follower counts. Locally organised brand clubs, moderated digital groups, consumer ambassador programmes, after-sales communities and small experiential events can be evaluated through participation, repeat interaction and retention indicators. Programmes should be piloted across Moroccan consumer segments and brand categories instead of being imported unchanged from international campaigns.

Finally, emotional connection should complement rather than replace functional quality management. Managers can monitor attachment, repeat preference and willingness to recommend alongside satisfaction and service indicators. Longitudinal tracking is necessary before attributing commercial outcomes to community or personality initiatives.

5.2. Common-Method Considerations

All predictors and outcomes were collected from the same respondents, through the same self-report instrument and at the same time. Common-method variance and consistency motives may therefore inflate some associations. A Harman single-factor test was not appropriate because the study uses predominantly single-item observed indicators and does not estimate a multi-item factor structure. This risk cannot be statistically ruled out with the available instrument and should remain part of the interpretation.

6. Limitations and Future Research

The sample of 103 respondents was recruited through a non-probability online procedure and cannot represent Moroccan consumers. The indicative sensitivity calculation further shows that effects smaller than approximately $f^2 = .132$ may have been missed under a five-predictor regression approximation. A future replication designed for $f^2 = .10$, five predictors, $\alpha = .05$ and 80% power would require approximately 134 respondents; a larger sample would be preferable for multi-item measurement, subgroup comparisons and attrition.

The measures are predominantly single-item indicators. Emotional attachment is not equivalent to a validated multidimensional brand-love scale, and the quality item does not constitute a conventional measure of perceived quality. No separate formal questionnaire pretest was conducted, completion time was not recorded, and the instrument was administered only in French. Future studies should use established multi-item scales, cognitive pretesting, formal translation and back-translation when several languages are used, and direct assessments of reliability and validity.

Respondents selected a preferred brand, which restricts variation and may increase favourable responses. This framing also creates a risk of social desirability and confirmation bias because respondents may defend a self-chosen relationship. Future sampling should include weak, moderate and strong consumer-brand relationships and randomly assigned or category-defined focal brands.

The cross-sectional design cannot identify causal or temporal order, especially for community participation and attachment. Common-source measurement further limits interpretation. Longitudinal, experimental or multi-source designs should address three precise questions: Does participation precede attachment, does attachment precede participation, or is the relationship reciprocal? Do validated attachment measures reproduce the same pattern across

French- and Arabic-language versions? Do the associations vary by brand category and initial relationship strength?

Finally, the exploratory discussions were not documented to the standard required for qualitative findings. Their role remains limited to questionnaire preparation. Future mixed-methods research should preserve recordings or transcripts, document sampling and coding decisions, report saturation considerations and connect themes transparently to subsequent measurement.

7. Conclusion

This study provides exploratory evidence on emotional relationships with preferred brands among Moroccan consumers. Personality congruence and community participation were the most robust factors associated with emotional attachment, while attachment was positively related to loyalty and recommendation. Identity congruence was less stable, and neither the perceived role of quality nor general community connection retained an independent association in the multivariate models.

The study does not introduce a new construct, validate a comprehensive brand-love measure or establish causal processes. Its cumulative contribution lies in adding transparent cross-brand evidence to the still limited Moroccan literature and in showing which relationships merit stronger replication. For managers, the practical implication is to test coherent brand-personality positioning and concrete forms of community participation locally, while continuing to protect functional quality and evaluating relational outcomes over time.

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Declaration of Generative AI Use

During the preparation and revision of this article, the authors used ChatGPT (OpenAI) as a support tool for language editing, clarity, structural organisation, reference verification, and technical assistance with statistical analysis code. The research question, data, methodological decisions, interpretation, and conclusions are those of the authors. All AI-assisted outputs were critically reviewed and validated by the authors, who take full responsibility for the content of the article.

Appendix A. Ordered-Model Threshold Parameters

Table A1. Threshold Parameters for Primary Ordered Logistic Models

Model	Threshold	Estimate	SE	p
Attachment model	1 2	-2.073	.313	< .001
Attachment model	2 3	-.930	.250	< .001
Attachment model	3 4	1.301	.270	< .001
Attachment model	4 5	4.174	.585	< .001
Loyalty model	1 2	-3.635	.532	< .001
Loyalty model	2 3	-2.869	.395	< .001
Loyalty model	3 4	-1.119	.245	< .001
Loyalty model	4 5	1.526	.270	< .001
Recommendation model	1 2	-3.003	.434	< .001
Recommendation model	2 3	-2.318	.334	< .001
Recommendation model	3 4	-.769	.220	< .001
Recommendation model	4 5	.580	.214	.007

Source: Authors' calculations based on survey data.

Declarations

Data Availability

The data supporting the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

Ethics Statement

No formal institutional ethics approval was sought or obtained. Participation was voluntary and anonymous. Respondents were informed of the academic purpose of the research and provided consent before completing the questionnaire. No directly identifying information was collected.