

# The Impact of Emotional Marketing Strategies on Consumer brand loyalty: A Case Study of Lululemon

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## Abstract:

In an increasingly competitive market, user-centered marketing strategies are continually evolving. Addressing consumers' emotional needs and establishing emotional bonds between brands and consumers has become crucial for enhancing consumer brand loyalty. This study focuses on Lululemon, utilizing literature analysis to examine the mechanisms through which emotional marketing strategies impact consumer brand loyalty. By collecting data from Lululemon's offline stores, online shops, official websites, social media accounts, and sports communities, this research summarizes Lululemon's emotional marketing strategies, primarily reflected in product value, brand ambassadors community building, and service. To further explore the impact of these marketing strategies, a questionnaire was designed around the four dimensions of product value, brand ambassadors and community, service, and consumer loyalty. An empirical analysis of the questionnaire data was performed. The findings reveal that the emotional marketing pathways—product value, brand ambassadors community building, and service—are all significantly positively correlated with consumer brand loyalty. This suggests that these pathways enhance consumer loyalty to the Lululemon brand to varying degrees. Notably, the impacts of brand ambassadors and community building, as well as service, on consumer brand loyalty are more pronounced compared to product value.

**Keywords:** Emotional Marketing; Marketing Strategy; Consumer brand loyalty.

## 1. Introduction

In contemporary society, the pressures of competition and social roles have led people to alienation,

loneliness, and anxiety, making emotional needs increasingly urgent. As market competition intensifies, traditional product-centered marketing strategies are no longer sufficient to meet consumers' demands [1].

User-centered marketing strategies are evolving, emphasizing the importance of addressing consumers' emotional needs to establish emotional bonds between brands and consumers. This study focuses on Lululemon, an international athletic leisure brand, and poses the following three research questions: what emotional marketing strategies does Lululemon employ? what are the underlying mechanisms through which these emotional marketing strategies influence consumer brand loyalty? Third, what are the effects of these emotional marketing strategies? This paper employs literature analysis to review relevant materials and documents, summarizing and integrating insights regarding Lululemon's emotional marketing strategies and their influence on consumer brand loyalty. On this foundation, a questionnaire was designed specifically around Lululemon's emotional marketing strategies to quantify the scores of various variables. Subsequently, descriptive statistics, reliability and validity tests, correlation tests, and regression analysis were conducted. This comprehensive approach aims to further understand the impact of emotional marketing on consumer behavior and to provide valuable guidance for businesses seeking to enhance their brand awareness and loyalty.

## 2. Lululemon's Emotional Marketing Strategies

Consumer brand loyalty is closely tied to emotional marketing, which successfully incorporates theories from consumer behavior, psychology, and marketing to bolster consumer brand loyalty. First, from the perspective of consumer behavior, Lululemon establishes a strong connection with positive lifestyle images associated with health and fashion, thereby enhancing communication and engagement with consumers to achieve emotional resonance. This fulfills consumers' needs for self-identification and social recognition, which in turn prompts repeat purchases and strengthens consumer brand loyalty [2-4].

Second, from a psychological standpoint, emotional marketing strategies elicit consumers' feelings, providing them with a sense of happiness and belonging. This emotional fulfillment not only fosters empathy towards the brand but also stimulates consumers' desire to purchase, making them more inclined to pay for the brand's services [5].

Third, from a marketing perspective, many brands harness emotional brand management by utilizing brand storytelling and community building to enhance consumer loyalty. This approach effectively creates a more comfortable and harmonious marketing environment, fostering emotional connections that lead consumers not only to be satisfied

with the products but also to develop a profound loyalty to the brand [6].

Having understood the mechanisms by which emotional marketing influences consumer brand loyalty, this study collects extensive data from Lululemon's offline stores, online shops, official website, social media accounts, and sports communities to encapsulate Lululemon's emotional marketing strategies. These strategies are primarily manifested in product value, the role of brand ambassadors and community building, and service.

### 2.1 Perceived Product Value

Lululemon's products reflect its "human-centered" philosophy. The brand places great emphasis on high-quality fabrics and innovative technologies, dedicating itself to the development of materials that offer excellent texture, stretch, moisture-wicking capabilities, and breathability, such as its Silverescent anti-odor technology. Its patented fabrics, like Luxtreme and Nulux, not only provide outstanding stretch but also boast good breathability and quick-drying characteristics. The flatlock seams reduce friction and offer a seamless fit. Additionally, Lululemon pays attention to detail in design, incorporating features such as hidden pockets, seamless crotch seams, special linings tailored to women's body structures, reflective strips on pant hems for nighttime safety, and thumbholes in cuffs to effectively cover skin and prevent sunburn. These details illustrate the brand's relentless pursuit of optimal user experience.

Furthermore, Lululemon engages in interactions and interviews with consumers to gather feedback on products, styles, and fabrics. Before launching products, the brand conducts wear-testing to obtain consumer insights, allowing it to meet customer needs and improve any shortcomings. Through this interactive engagement, Lululemon not only fulfills consumer preferences but also strengthens emotional connections and loyalty to the brand.

### 2.2 Brand Ambassadors and Community

Lululemon's brand ambassadors and community play a crucial role in connecting individuals with shared interests, facilitating communication, information sharing, and mutual support among consumers to foster emotional bonds.

Lululemon's brand community is categorized into three groups: brand ambassadors, product educators, and consumers. Brand ambassadors encompass athletes and celebrities who embody Lululemon's brand spirit and possess the status, charisma, and influence to effectively promote the brand through their networks. Product educators are store associates who share similar interests with consum-

ers and can better recommend products and convey brand culture through their communication skills, thereby establishing emotional connections with consumers. They also assist in identifying and recruiting brand ambassadors, reinforcing the values and emotional ties between the brand and its consumers.

Consumers engage with each other and with brand ambassadors to gain a deeper understanding of the brand culture. Those with similar interests share product experiences and stories about the brand, which strengthens their reliance on the products. Through offline interactions and gatherings, consumers develop a sense of belonging, which further enhances the brand's image.

### 2.3 Service Experience

Lululemon establishes profound emotional connections with consumers by sharing brand stories and lifestyles that convey its brand philosophy. The release of the "2023 Global Happiness Report" aims to engage consumers in discussions about actively pursuing happiness, aligning with Lululemon's brand vision. The brand has consistently conveyed the message of "Be all in" and the "sweatlife" philosophy, promoting a vibrant and healthy lifestyle through various activities such as yoga, running, hiking, and tennis. These efforts reflect the brand's core values and culture, helping individuals achieve more meaningful life goals [7].

The concepts of "self-identification" resonate with users who share the brand's values, affirming their self-worth through purchases. "Ideal living" encourages users to believe that embracing the brand equates to adopting a beautiful lifestyle. "Diverse aesthetics" asserts that every appearance deserves love and that everyone has the right to pursue beauty. Lululemon subtly shapes a passionate, focused, and courageous image of individuals who confront fears and live in the moment, instilling positive psychological feelings in users and fostering a sense of brand

recognition and belonging. This, in turn, leads consumers to be willing to pay a premium for the brand.

Lululemon also focuses on optimizing the service environment and consumer experience. The design of Lululemon stores emphasizes creating a comfortable and upscale shopping atmosphere, enabling consumers to enjoy a pleasant shopping experience while selecting products. In-store product educators provide personalized shopping advice based on their extensive product knowledge and attentive service, catering to diverse consumer needs. Beyond the in-store experience, Lululemon maintains close interactions with consumers through social media, official websites, and other channels. It launches online shopping platforms and digital educator services to offer more convenient, efficient, and personalized shopping experiences.

## 3. Empirical Research

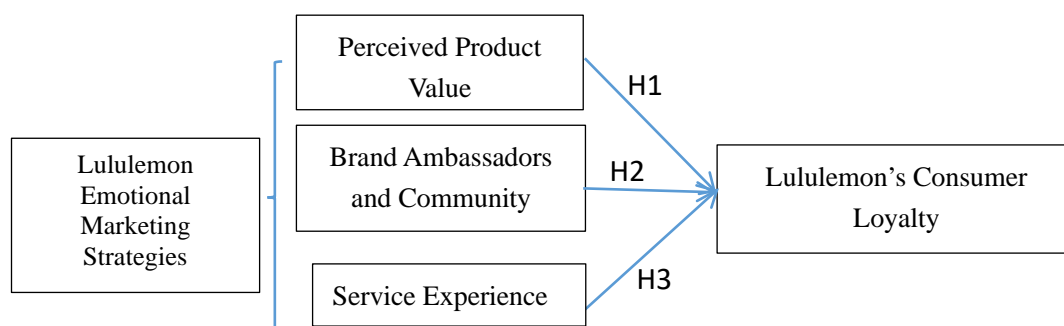
### 3.1 Questionnaire Design and Variable Description

Product value, brand ambassadors and community, and service are the three main strategies for Lululemon's emotional marketing. Following the previous discussions, this study aims to explore the direction and extent of the impact of Lululemon's emotional marketing strategies on consumer brand loyalty, leading to the following hypotheses:

H1: A significant positive correlation exists between perceived product value and Lululemon consumer brand loyalty.

H2: A significant positive correlation exists between brand ambassadors and community building and Lululemon consumer brand loyalty.

H3: A significant positive correlation exists between service experience and Lululemon consumer brand loyalty.



**Fig. 1 Research framework**

Based on the framework presented in Figure 1, this study employs a questionnaire survey method targeting individuals with fitness habits. The study uses a five-point Likert

scale to test the hypotheses and the model. The questionnaire is designed to cover product emotional marketing, brand ambassadors and community building, service, and

consumer brand loyalty, allowing for the calculation of scores for each dimension and enabling regression analysis to determine the direction and effects of these emotional marketing strategies on consumer brand loyalty.

This research involves four dimensions: perceived product value (PPV), brand ambassadors and community (BA), service experience (SE) as explanatory variables, and consumer brand loyalty (BL) as the dependent variable. A total of 22 questionnaire items are designed to measure these four dimensions. Seven items focus on product value, examining whether Lululemon’s product design addresses consumers’ increasingly refined functional and fashion needs and whether consumers believe purchasing Lululemon products helps them achieve their ideal selves. The next six items explore the influence of KOLs (key opinion leaders) and sports communities on consumers’ stable connections with the brand. Five additional items assess whether Lululemon’s conveyed brand concept and its choices in online and offline stores resonate with consumers, achieving alignment with their values and providing a better consumption experience, thereby fostering a deeper emotional connection with the brand. Finally, four items quantify respondents’ consumer brand loyalty to Lululemon.

### 3.2 Descriptive Analysis

A total of 200 valid questionnaires were collected for this study. As shown in Figure 2, females account for 56%, while males account for 43%, indicating a relatively balanced gender distribution with a slight predominance of females.

The age distribution of respondents is depicted in Figure 3. The survey sample primarily consists of individuals aged 20 to 50, a demographic characterized by a strong desire and capacity for sports and fitness consumption. Respondents come from various industries, reflecting a balanced industry distribution. The majority of respondents hold educational qualifications at the level of vocational college, associate degree, bachelor’s degree, or higher, accounting for 93.5%. Detailed data can be found in Figure 4.

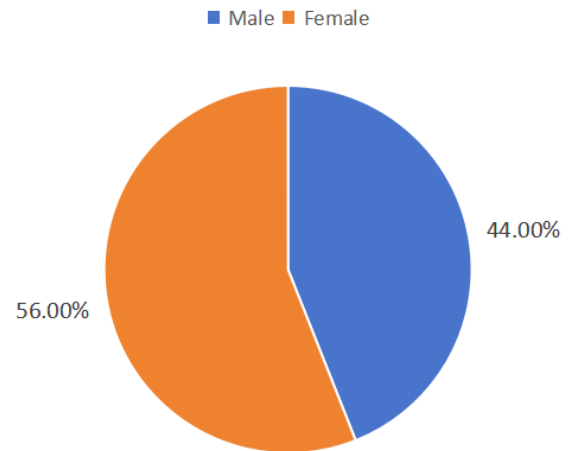


Fig. 2 Distribution of respondents’ genders

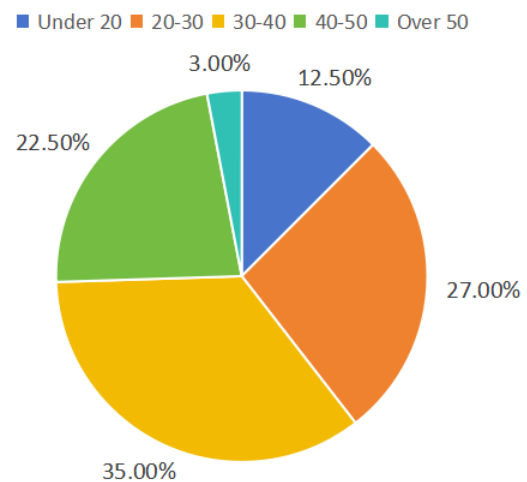


Fig. 3 Distribution of respondents’ ages

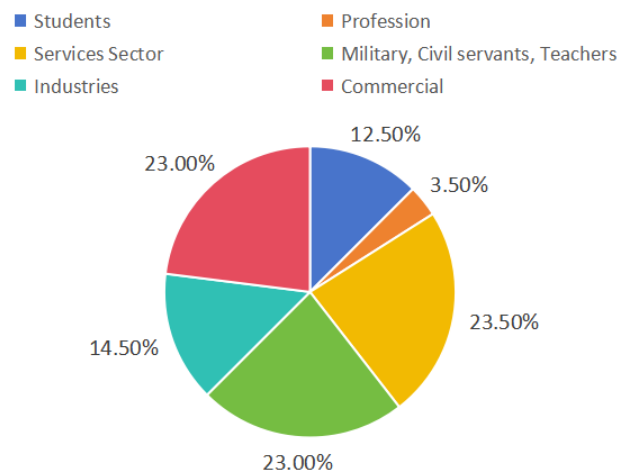


Fig. 4 Distribution of respondents’ occupations

### 3.3 Reliability and validity test

Internal consistency reliability reflects the degree of cor-

relation among the items in a questionnaire, typically measured by Cronbach's  $\alpha$  coefficient. The value of Cronbach's  $\alpha$  ranges from 0 to 1, with higher  $\alpha$  values indicating better inter-item correlation and suggesting greater internal consistency reliability.

As shown in Table 1, the reliability coefficients for product emotional marketing (PPV), brand ambassadors and community (BA), service (SE), and consumer brand loyalty (BL) are 0.920, 0.905, 0.887, and 0.871, respec-

tively. The reliability coefficient for the 22 standardized questionnaire items is 0.922, indicating a good correlation among the items and demonstrating a satisfactory level of reliability.

Using KMO and Bartlett's tests for validity verification, the KMO coefficient is 0.917, and the Bartlett's chi-square value is 2651.782 (Sig.=0.000 < 0.01), indicating that the overall validity of the questionnaire is excellent.

**Table 1. Reliability and Validity Testing**

Dimension / Variable	Number of Items	Cronbach's $\alpha$
All Dimensions	22	0.922
Perceived Product Value (PPV)	7	0.920
Brand Ambassadors & Community (BA)	6	0.905
Service Experience(SE)	5	0.887
Consumer brand loyalty (BL)	4	0.871

### 3.4 Regression Analysis

Prior to conducting regression analysis on the full sample, correlation tests were performed. The sign of the correlation coefficient indicates whether the relationship is positive or negative. As shown in Table 2, overall, the ex-

planatory variables of product emotional marketing (PPV), brand ambassadors & community (BA), and service (SE) are all significantly positively correlated with the dependent variable of consumer brand loyalty (BL), allowing for the establishment of a regression model to further explore their interdependence.

**Table 2. Correlation Test of Explanatory and Dependent Variables**

Dimension / Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	Perceived Product Value(PPV)	Brand Ambassadors & Community (BA)	Service (SE)	Consumer brand loyalty (BL)
Perceived Product Value (PPV)	3.319	0.980	1			
Brand Ambassadors & Community (BA)	3.282	0.946	0.415***	1		
Service (SE)	3.458	0.955	0.395***	0.420***	1	
Consumer brand loyalty (BL)	3.335	0.989	0.344***	0.397***	0.399***	1

\*\*\*p < 0.001, \*\* p < 0.01

Using perceived product value (PPV), brand ambassadors & community (BA), and service (SE) as independent variables and consumer brand loyalty (BL) as the dependent variable, the linear regression analysis reveals the model equation as follows:

$$BL = 1.163 + 0.154 * PPV + 0.244 * BA + 0.250 * SE$$

As shown in Table 3, the adjusted R-squared value is 0.230, indicating that perceived product value (PPV), brand ambassadors & community (BA), and service (SE) explain 22.950% of the variance in consumer brand loyalty (BL). A check for multicollinearity shows that all VIF

values are below 5, suggesting no multicollinearity issues. Additionally, the D-W value is around 2, indicating no autocorrelation. The model passes the F-test (F = 20.758, p = 0.000 < 0.001), confirming that at least one of the variables (PPV, BA, SE) significantly influences consumer brand loyalty (BL).

The specific analysis reveals that the regression coefficient for perceived product value (PPV) is 0.154 (t = 2.145, p = 0.033 < 0.05), indicating a significant positive impact on consumer brand loyalty (BL). The regression coefficient for brand ambassadors & community (BA) is 0.244 (t =



3.245,  $p = 0.001 < 0.01$ ), suggesting a significant positive effect on consumer brand loyalty (BL). The regression coefficient for service (SE) is 0.250 ( $t = 3.386, p = 0.001$

$< 0.001$ ), indicating a significant positive impact on consumer brand loyalty (BL).

**Table 3. Linear Regression Analysis Results (n=200)**

	Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	t	p	VIF	R	Adjusted R	F
Constant	1.163	0.283	4.110	0.000		0.241	0.230	F(3,200) = 20.758, p = 0.000
Perceived Product Value(P-PV)	0.154	0.072	0.152	2.145	0.033	1.301	0.241	0.230
Brand Ambassadors & Community (BA)	0.244	0.075	0.233	3.245	0.001	1.333	0.241	0.230
Service (SE)	0.250	0.074	0.241	3.386	0.001	1.307	0.241	0.230
a Dependent Variable: Consumer brand loyalty (BL)								
D-W: 2.101								

\*\*\* $p < 0.001$ , \*\*  $p < 0.01$

#### 4. Conclusion

Using SPSS for analysis, this study tests the validity of the hypotheses. A regression analysis was conducted on the full sample to examine the relationships between Lululemon’s emotional marketing strategies—product value, brand ambassadors and community, and service—and consumer brand loyalty. The regression results indicate that all three explanatory variables passed the significance test. Thus, hypotheses H1, H2, and H3 are all confirmed. From the perspective of specific impacts, first, Lululemon’s current emotional marketing pathways concerning product value, brand ambassadors community building, and service are all significantly positively correlated with consumer brand loyalty. This suggests that these three pathways can enhance consumer loyalty to the Lululemon brand to varying degrees. Second, based on the derived linear regression model, among the three emotional marketing pathways, the impact of brand ambassadors and community building, as well as service, on consumer brand loyalty is more significant compared to product emotional marketing.

This study is limited by various factors and can only quantify the scores of each dimension through a limited number of survey questionnaires. Therefore, more detailed and specific consumer emotional responses and consumption experiences cannot be fully captured. Future research could involve in-depth interviews with representative consumer groups of Lululemon to explore deeper insights

into consumer psychology and behavior. Additionally, since this study is a one-time quantitative research endeavor, it can only test consumers’ current feelings and attitudes, lacking a control group for comparison. Subsequent research could involve conducting another survey after Lululemon implements new marketing strategies, allowing for a more detailed understanding of the effects of explanatory variables on the outcome variable.

#### Authors Contribution

All the authors contributed equally and their names were listed in alphabetical order.

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