Luxury Brand Management: Global Research Trend Mapping

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Article Info	ABSTRACT
	This study aims to systematically map the global research landscape of Luxury Brand Management by employing a bibliometric approach to identify its intellectual structure, dominant themes, collaborative patterns, and evolving research trends. Using bibliographic data retrieved from the Scopus database, the study applies co-authorship, affiliation, keyword co-occurrence, citation, density, network, and overlay analyses through VOSviewer. The findings reveal that luxury brand management research is strongly anchored in brand management, marketing, and consumer behavior, forming the core theoretical foundation of the field. Over time, the research focus has expanded from traditional, exclusivity-driven branding perspectives toward more relational, digital, and sustainability-oriented themes, including social media, fashion, innovation, and sustainable development. The results also highlight a fragmented yet interconnected global collaboration structure, with a limited number of influential authors and institutions acting as key knowledge hubs. By providing a comprehensive and data-driven overview, this study contributes to a clearer understanding of the field's evolution, identifies research gaps, and offers valuable insights for both scholars and practitioners seeking to advance theory development and strategic decision-making in contemporary luxury brand management.

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1. Introduction

Luxury brand management has emerged as a critical field of inquiry within marketing, management, and consumer behavior studies due to the sustained global growth of the luxury industry. Traditionally associated with exclusivity, craftsmanship, heritage, and premium pricing, luxury brands have evolved beyond niche markets to become influential players in the global economy [1], [2]. The expansion of high-net-worth individuals, rising middle classes in emerging economies, and increased global connectivity have significantly contributed to the growing

relevance of luxury brands [3]. As a result, scholars and practitioners alike have shown heightened interest in understanding how luxury brands are created, communicated, and sustained in highly competitive and dynamic global markets [4], [5].

The concept of luxury itself has undergone substantial transformation over time, prompting extensive academic debate [6]. While classical perspectives emphasized rarity, symbolic value, and social distinction, contemporary interpretations incorporate experiential value, emotional attachment, sustainability, and cultural meaning. This evolution has broadened the scope of luxury brand management research, leading to interdisciplinary approaches that integrate marketing strategy, psychology, sociology, and cultural studies [7], [8]. Consequently, luxury brand management has become a complex research domain characterized by diverse theoretical frameworks, methodological approaches, and contextual settings [9].

Globalization has further intensified scholarly attention toward luxury brand management. Luxury brands increasingly operate across borders, requiring them to balance global brand consistency with local market adaptation [10], [11]. Issues such as cross-cultural consumer behavior, global brand positioning, international retail strategies, and country-of-origin effects have become central themes in the literature. Moreover, the rise of digital platforms and social media has disrupted traditional luxury branding paradigms, challenging the long-held notion that luxury must rely on controlled distribution and limited accessibility. These changes have spurred a growing body of research examining how luxury brands leverage digital transformation while preserving exclusivity and brand prestige [12], [13].

In recent years, sustainability and ethical considerations have also reshaped luxury brand management research. Consumers are becoming more conscious of environmental and social issues, pressuring luxury brands to demonstrate responsible

sourcing, transparent supply chains, and ethical labor practices [14], [15]. This shift has led to new research streams exploring sustainable luxury, circular business models, and the integration of corporate social responsibility into luxury brand strategies. As sustainability becomes a strategic imperative rather than a peripheral concern, academic interest in this area continues to expand, adding further complexity to the research landscape.

Given the rapid expansion and diversification of luxury brand management research, the volume of academic publications has increased substantially. Studies are published across a wide range of journals, disciplines, and geographic contexts, making it challenging to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the field's intellectual structure and evolution. While narrative literature reviews have contributed valuable insights, they often rely on subjective selection criteria and may not fully capture the breadth of global research trends. Consequently, there is a growing need for systematic and data-driven approaches to map the development of luxury brand management research, identify dominant themes, influential authors, and emerging research directions at a global level.

Despite the growing volume of scholarly work on luxury brand management, there remains a lack of comprehensive and systematic analyses that map global research trends in this field. Existing studies tend to focus on specific themes, regions, or methodologies, resulting in fragmented knowledge and limited visibility of the field's overall structure and evolution. Without a holistic research trend mapping, it is difficult for scholars to identify intellectual foundations, research gaps, and future opportunities, thereby constraining theoretical advancement and informed decision-making for both academics and practitioners. The objective of this study is to systematically map and analyze global research trends in luxury brand management using a structured and data-driven approach.

2. Method

This study employed a bibliometric research design to systematically map global research trends in luxury brand management. Bibliographic data were retrieved from the Scopus database, selected for its comprehensive coverage of high-quality, peer-reviewed journals across disciplines. A structured search strategy was applied using relevant keywords related to luxury brand management within titles, abstracts, and author keywords, and the search results were refined based on predefined inclusion criteria to ensure relevance and data quality. The final dataset was exported in a compatible format and analyzed using VOSviewer software, which enabled the visualization and examination of bibliometric networks. Specifically, co-authorship analysis was conducted to identify influential authors and collaboration patterns, while co-occurrence analysis of keywords was used to uncover dominant research themes and emerging topics within the field. Additionally, citation analysis were performed to determine the most impactful publications, thereby revealing the intellectual structure and evolution of luxury brand management research at a global level.

3. Result and Discussion
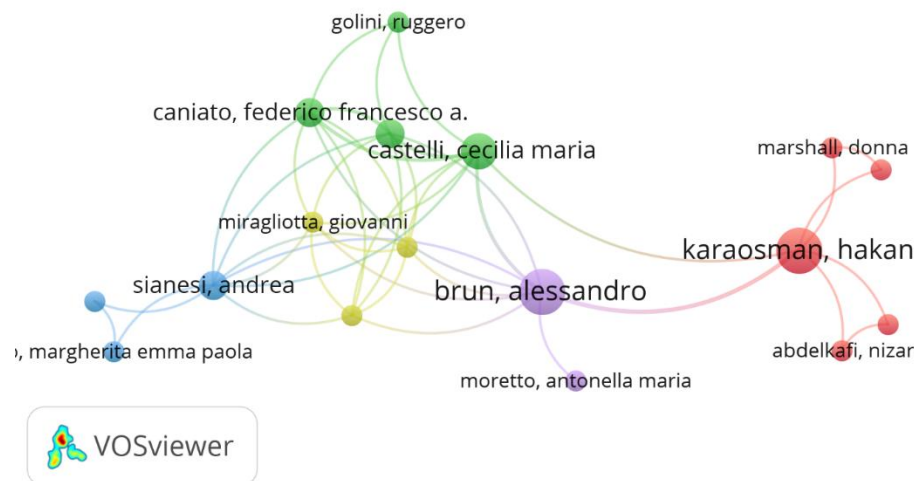**Co-Authorship Analysis**

Figure 1. Author Visualization
Source: Data Analysis

Figure 1 reveals a structured yet fragmented global research landscape in Luxury Brand Management, characterized by several tightly connected scholarly clusters with limited cross-cluster collaboration. The central cluster, dominated by authors such as Alessandro Brun, Cecilia Maria Castelli, Federico Francesco A. Caniato, and Ruggero Golini, indicates a strong European research core focusing on managerial, operational, and strategic dimensions of luxury brands, reflected by dense interconnections and high centrality. Adjacent authors like Giovanni Miragliotta and Andrea Sianesi function as secondary connectors, suggesting interdisciplinary or methodological bridging roles within this core group. In contrast, a more isolated cluster led by Håkan Karaosman, together with Donna Marshall and Nizar Abdelkafi, highlights a distinct research stream (likely emphasizing sustainability, ethics, or supply chain responsibility in luxury) showing strong internal ties but weaker integration with the main network.

Figure 2. Affiliation Visualization
Source: Data Analysis

Figure 2 highlights a small number of universities acting as pivotal hubs within an otherwise loosely connected global research structure. The National University of Singapore emerges as a central bridging institution, linking research activity across geographically and thematically distinct clusters, which suggests its strategic role in integrating Asian and Western perspectives on luxury brand studies. On one side, institutions such as Arizona State University (Tempe) appear more peripheral, indicating localized or project-specific contributions with limited sustained collaboration. On the other side, the College of Hospitality and related hospitality-focused institutions form a closely connected cluster, reflecting the strong association between luxury branding research and hospitality, tourism, and service management disciplines.

Figure 3. Density Visualization
Source: Data Analysis

Figure 3 reveals that luxury, brand management, and marketing constitute the core intellectual foundations of global research on Luxury Brand Management, as indicated by their highest concentration and central positioning. Surrounding these core themes, closely related topics such as consumer behaviour, branding, marketing strategy, and luxury consumption reflect a strong emphasis on understanding how consumers perceive, experience, and engage with luxury brands. The presence of brand loyalty, customer relationship management, and customer satisfaction highlights the managerial focus on long-term relationship building and value retention in luxury markets. Emerging and complementary themes, including social media, innovation, product development, and fashion, suggest a growing interest in digital engagement and creative processes shaping contemporary luxury branding. Additionally, the visibility of sustainable development indicates an expanding research trajectory toward ethical and sustainability-oriented luxury, signaling a shift from traditional exclusivity-driven narratives toward more responsible and value-driven luxury brand management.
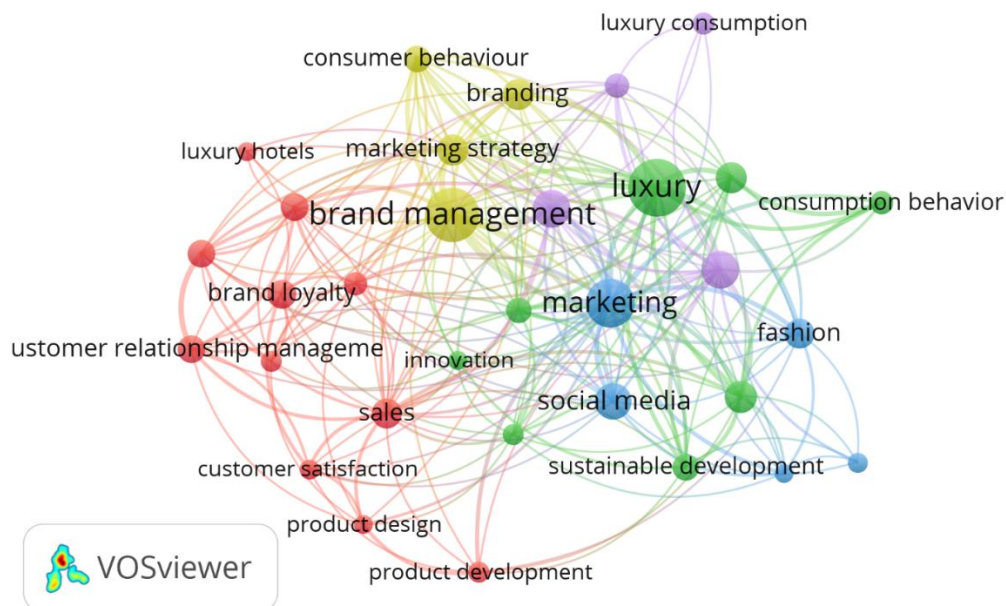
Keyword Co-Occurrence Analysis

Figure 4. Network Visualization
Source: Data Analysis

Figure 4 illustrates a highly interconnected intellectual structure in Luxury Brand Management, with brand management, luxury, and marketing occupying the most central positions. These nodes act as integrative anchors that connect multiple thematic clusters, indicating that research in this field is strongly grounded in strategic branding and marketing perspectives. Their prominence reflects the dominant focus on managing brand value, identity, and differentiation within luxury contexts, serving as the conceptual backbone for more specialized research streams. One prominent cluster, centered around brand loyalty, customer relationship management, customer satisfaction, sales, and product development, represents a managerial and relational perspective on luxury branding. This stream emphasizes long-term value creation through customer engagement, experiential quality, and post-purchase satisfaction. The dense interconnections within this cluster

suggest that scholars increasingly view loyalty and relationship management as inseparable from product and service innovation in sustaining luxury brand equity.

A second cluster revolves around consumer behaviour, branding, marketing strategy, and luxury consumption, highlighting a consumer-centric and psychological orientation in the literature. Research within this stream focuses on symbolic value, status signaling, emotional attachment, and decision-making processes underlying luxury consumption. The strong links between these keywords and core nodes such as brand management and luxury indicate that consumer insights play a critical role in shaping strategic branding decisions in luxury markets. The visualization also reveals an emerging digital and sustainability-oriented cluster, characterized by social media, fashion, sustainable development, and innovation. This cluster reflects a shift toward examining how digital platforms, influencer culture, and sustainability narratives are reshaping luxury brand communication and consumer engagement. The connections between social media and both marketing and luxury suggest that digital transformation is no longer peripheral but central to contemporary luxury brand strategies. The presence of niche yet connected themes such as luxury hotels and product design indicates the sectoral and creative diversification of luxury brand management research. These themes bridge traditional branding theories with industry-specific applications in hospitality and design-driven luxury sectors.
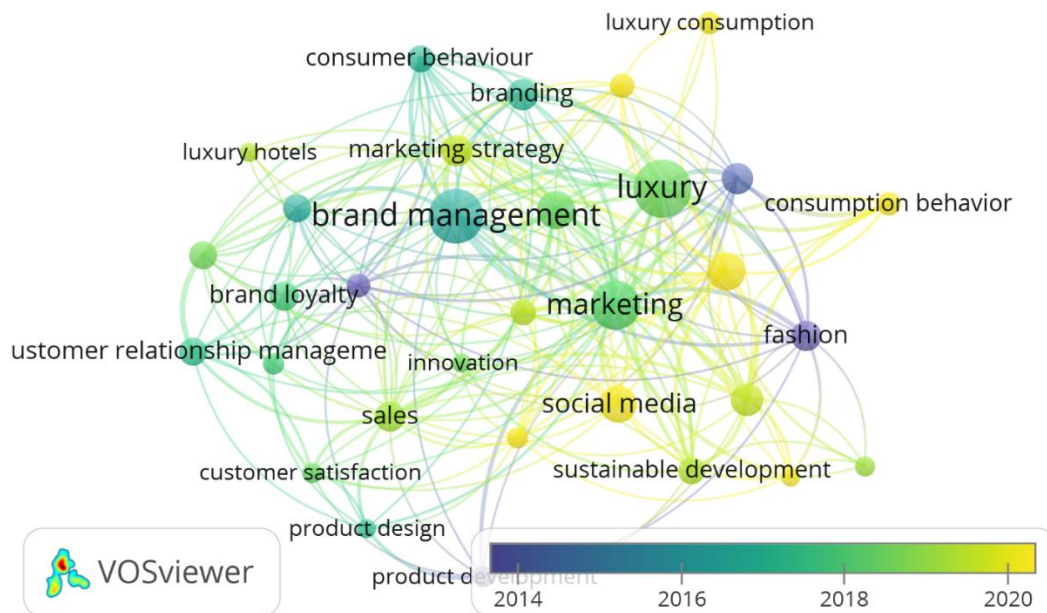

Figure 5. Overlay Visualization
Source: Data Analysis

Figure 5 reveals the temporal evolution of research themes in Luxury Brand Management, showing a clear progression from foundational managerial concerns to more contemporary, consumer- and sustainability-oriented topics. Earlier studies, indicated by cooler colors (around 2014–2016), are concentrated on brand management, branding, marketing strategy, and consumer behaviour, reflecting the field's initial emphasis on establishing theoretical frameworks for managing brand equity, identity, and strategic positioning in luxury markets. As the field matured, research attention expanded toward

relational and performance-driven themes such as brand loyalty, customer relationship management, customer satisfaction, sales, and innovation. These topics occupy a transitional temporal position, suggesting a shift from purely conceptual discussions to more applied and outcome-oriented investigations. This phase highlights the growing importance of customer-centric strategies and experiential value creation as key mechanisms for sustaining competitive advantage in luxury branding.

More recent research trends, represented by warmer colors (2018–2020), increasingly focus on social media, fashion, sustainable development, and luxury consumption behavior. This shift signals the rising influence of digital platforms, sustainability imperatives, and evolving consumer values on luxury brand strategies. The prominence of these newer themes indicates that contemporary luxury brand management research is moving toward integrating digital engagement, ethical considerations, and changing consumption patterns, marking a transformation of luxury from traditional exclusivity toward more transparent, interactive, and socially responsible brand narratives.

Figure 6. Density Visualization
Source: Data Analysis

Figure 6 shows that brand management, luxury, and marketing form the most intensively studied core of the Luxury Brand Management literature, as indicated by the highest concentration of keywords. This core is closely surrounded by branding, marketing strategy, consumer behaviour, and luxury consumption, underscoring the field's strong emphasis on strategic brand building and consumer-oriented analysis. The prominence of these themes reflects a dominant research agenda focused on understanding how luxury brands create, communicate, and sustain value in highly competitive global markets. Beyond the core, secondary yet increasingly relevant themes such as brand loyalty, customer relationship management, customer satisfaction, and sales highlight managerial concerns related to long-term customer engagement and performance outcomes. At the same time, the visibility of social media, fashion, innovation, and sustainable development signals an expanding research frontier that

integrates digital transformation and sustainability into luxury brand strategies

Citation Analysis

Table 1. Top Cited Literature

Citations	Authors and year	Title
717	[16]	YouTube vloggers' influence on consumer luxury brand perceptions and intentions
646	[17]	Instafamous and social media influencer marketing
614	[18]	Brand community of convenience products: New forms of customer empowerment - The case my Nutella The Community
483	[19]	Impacts of luxury fashion brand's social media marketing on customer relationship and purchase intention
452	[20]	The specificity of luxury management: Turning marketing upside down
424	[21]	The relationship between brand equity and firms' performance in luxury hotels and chain restaurants
388	[22]	The anatomy of the luxury fashion brand
387	[23]	Aesthetics and ephemerality: Observing and preserving the luxury brand
378	[24]	Do counterfeits devalue the ownership of luxury brands?
366	[25]	Examining the impact of luxury brand's social media marketing on customer engagement: Using big data analytics and natural language processing

Source: Scopus Database

Discussion
Practical implications

The findings of this bibliometric study offer several practical insights for luxury brand managers and industry stakeholders. First, the strong centrality of brand management, marketing, and consumer behavior suggests that successful luxury brand strategies should continue to prioritize coherent brand identity, experiential value, and deep consumer understanding. Managers can leverage these insights to design integrated branding strategies that align symbolic value, emotional appeal, and customer experience across multiple touchpoints. Second, the growing prominence of social media, fashion, and sustainable development highlights the need for luxury brands to strategically balance exclusivity with digital accessibility and ethical responsibility. Practitioners should invest in digital storytelling, influencer engagement, and sustainability-driven narratives to resonate with younger and more value-conscious luxury consumers. Finally, the linkage between brand loyalty, customer relationship management, and innovation implies that long-term competitiveness in luxury markets increasingly depends on continuous innovation supported by personalized relationship management systems.

Theoretical Contributions

From a theoretical perspective, this study contributes to the luxury brand management literature by providing a systematic mapping of its intellectual structure and evolution. The results demonstrate that

luxury brand management is not a standalone domain but an interdisciplinary field integrating branding theory, consumer psychology, marketing strategy, and sustainability studies. By identifying core, peripheral, and emerging themes, this study extends existing branding and luxury consumption theories by situating them within a dynamic and interconnected research landscape. Moreover, the temporal analysis reveals a conceptual shift from traditional, product- and exclusivity-centered perspectives toward more relational, digital, and sustainability-oriented frameworks. This evolution supports and enriches contemporary theories that view luxury as a socially constructed and value-driven phenomenon rather than merely a symbol of prestige and scarcity.

Limitations of the Study

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations. First, the bibliometric analysis relies on a single database, which may exclude relevant publications indexed elsewhere or written in non-English languages, potentially limiting the comprehensiveness of the dataset. Second, bibliometric methods emphasize patterns, frequencies, and relationships among keywords, authors, and institutions but do not capture the depth, context, or qualitative nuances of individual studies. Third, the interpretation of clusters and

thematic evolution is inherently influenced by parameter settings and researcher judgment. Future research could address these limitations by integrating multiple databases, combining bibliometric techniques with systematic literature reviews or qualitative content analysis, and extending the analysis to explore methodological trends and theoretical frameworks in greater depth.

4. Conclusion

This study provides a comprehensive overview of the global research landscape on Luxury Brand Management by systematically mapping its intellectual structure, thematic evolution, and emerging research directions. The findings reveal that the field is strongly anchored in brand management and marketing theories, with increasing integration of consumer behavior, digital engagement, and sustainability perspectives. The temporal progression of themes highlights a clear shift from traditional, exclusivity-driven approaches toward more relational, technology-enabled, and ethically oriented luxury brand strategies. By synthesizing these patterns, the study not only clarifies how luxury brand management research has developed over time but also offers a foundation for future scholarly inquiry and managerial decision-making in an evolving luxury market context.

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