

Research article

Brand love: antecedents and outcomes

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Abstract

This research examines the impact of self-brand image congruence, the brand trust and the brand satisfaction on love of this one, as well as, the consequences of love towards the brand namely the brand loyalty, the word of mouth and the intention to pay a high price for the brand. It also tests several extant theories and models. A review of the literature allowed us to define our central concept and to develop an abstract model integrating the selected variables and the causality links, which we were able to validate based on an empirical study led with the 188 consumers. The data collected is processed using a bi-varied analysis. We have also used the structural equations method to test the conceptual model. More specifically, we adopted the PLS method (Partial Least Square) to study the causal links. The results released demonstrate that love towards the brand depends on self-brand image congruence, brand trust and brand satisfaction and as direct consequences are brand loyalty, word of mouth and the intention to pay a high price for the brand.

Key words: Brand love, brand loyalty, word of mouth, premium pricing, confirmatory analysis.

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1. Introduction

Brands play a major role in developing relationships with consumers and determining the performance of companies. The literature has identified different types of relationships that consumers have with brands such as loyalty, attachment, trust, commitment, love (Fournier and Yao, 1997; Frisou, 2000; Lacoeuilhe, 2000; Chaudhuri and Holbrook, 2001; Gurviez and Korchia, 2002, Thomson and al., 2005; Bozzo and al., 2008; Moulins and Roux, 2008; Ismail, and Spinelli, 2012). Our research is part of a relational perspective and tries to deepen the study of consumer-brand relations by emphasizing the love of the brand as a recent marketing concept that is beginning to attract attention and interest of academics and practitioners (Bergkvist and al., 2010). Today, businesses are realizing that the feeling of love towards the brand is a crucial factor in developing a good relationship with consumers. The most loved brands are more successful in gaining a sustainable advantage and in competing (Roberts, 2006).

Studies of brand love show that it has a significant impact on several marketing constructs. Thus, the more the consumer loves a brand, the easier he becomes

loyal and ready to pay a higher price to have it. Faced with a wide range of products the love of the brand makes the choice of the consumer easier and more emotional. The love of consumers should be greater with brands that care about their identities. Understanding the love relationship between consumers and their brands is crucial for businesses because of the significant impact of this relationship on the profitability of the business. Therefore, it is important not only to understand how this relationship is established between consumers and brands, but we must also clarify the antecedents and consequences of this relationship. The number of studies that identify the factors behind the brand's love is limited. Carroll and Ahuvia (2006) have already studied the antecedents of brand love by focusing on product and brand variables. They find that hedonic product categories and self-expressive brands are associated with stronger brand love. Later Lars Bergkvist and TinoBech-Larsen (2010) seek to broaden the understanding of the individual antecedents of brand love by focusing on brand identification and the sense of community. Thus, knowledge of the factors that make consumers feel the love for a brand seems to be

limited. Therefore, it is important to fill this lack of knowledge. This study attempts to identify the antecedents of brand love that enhance the understanding of the engines of an important marketing construct, as well as, the positive spinoffs of that love. In this study, we identify the effects of self-brand image congruence, brand trust as well as brand satisfaction on the brand's love. As well as the consequences of brand loyalty, namely brand loyalty, word of mouth and the intention to pay a high price for the brand. The research is structured as follows. The first section first provides insights into the notion of brand love and then defines the conceptual model and research hypotheses. The second section is devoted to the presentation of the methodology of our research and to the development of measurement scales. The third section presents the results of our quantitative study related to the verification of our hypotheses. The last section is devoted to conclusions of the study.

2. Material and methods

2.1. Conceptual development and hypotheses of research

a) The concept of brand love

Shimp and Madden (1988) were the first ones who studied the concept of love in the field of the consumption. They developed the model "consumer-object-love", based on the Triangular theory (intimacy, passion, decision / commitment) of love outcome of the interpersonal relations of Sternberg (1986) and they specified that the relation of a consumer with an object (for example, a brand) is based on three components: the affect, the desire and the decision / the commitment. The affect refers to the intimate feelings for the brand, the desire makes a reference to the passion for a brand which takes the shape of various types of excitement, the decision refers to the recognition by the individual of the taste and the desire of the short-term brand and the commitment makes a reference to the repeated purchase of the brand by the consumer over a longer period. According to Shimp and Madden (1988), the presence of these three components leads to the brand loyalty. Based on the three dimensions, Shimp and Madden (1988) identify eight sorts of relations consumer-object: the nonsense, the taste, craze, the functionalism, the inhibited desire, the utilitarianism, the succumbed desire and the loyalty.

To show the existence of a real feeling of love for objects Ahuvia (2005) led an empirical study, he showed that numerous consumers feel love for objects. During a comparative study Ahuvia (2005) also noticed that there is more similarity than differences between interpersonal love and love in the contexts of consumption. Other researchers tried to spread the concept of love to associate it with the brand. Fournier S (1998) said the different relationships that consumers develop with their brands and has highlighted the importance of love in long term relationship with their

consumer brands. Carroll and Ahuvia (2006), define love of the brand as "the passionate degree of emotional attachment that a satisfied consumer feels towards the brand". In this definition the authors focus on the emotion and the passion and consider love towards brand as an emotional and passionate relation. Love of the brand includes the following aspects: the passion of the brand, the link / attachment in the brand, positive emotion in response to the brand, and the brand's declaration of love (Paula Rodrigues and Raquel Reis, 2013). According to Keh and al., (2007), besides the emotion and besides the passion love of the brand includes a long-term commitment to the brand. Then to love a brand is a stage towards the loyalty. As for Rossiter (2012), he defines love of the brand by the deep affection of the consumer for the brand product and the distress of the separation if the product is not available.

A more thorough analysis of the phenomenon of love establishes by Albert and al (2009) shows that love of the brand consists of two dimensions; "affection" and "passion", which in their turn contain several components. "Affection" for the brand is expressed by: the uniqueness, where the consumer sees the unique brand and/or special; the intimacy, that is the consumer feels close to the brand; the duration, which reflects the long-term relation between the consumer and the brand; the memories, on the base of which the consumer associates the brand with his past life; and dream, regarding the presence of the brand in the minds of consumers. "Passion" for the brand: pleasure, which indicates the pleasure offered by the brand to the consumer; and idealization, which expresses the magical relationship between the consumer and the brand (cited in Lia Zarantonello, Marcello Formisano and Silvia Grappi, 2016). Belk, Ger and Askegaard (2003) have shown that passion in the form of desire motivates a large part of contemporary consumption. They also proved that the idealization of the brand is an immediate consequence of passion.

Bergkvist and al., (2010) specifies that interpersonal love is bidirectional whereas the brand love is unidirectional, and that in passionate interpersonal love there can be sexual intimacy that is impossible with brands.

b) The antecedents of brand love

1. The self-brand image congruence

Beyond its guarantee and easy-to-find functions (Kapferer, 1996), the brand is considered as a vector of identity communication and a tool for belonging to certain groups or social categories (Elliot and Wattanasuwan, 1998; Muniz and Guinn, 2001). Consumption is an important source of symbolic benefits by which the consumer defines his personality and he expresses it to others.

Consumers do not buy brands solely for their functional benefits, but also for their values, symbolic or experiential benefits that are consistent with their

self-concept, in order to build and cultivate the image they have of themselves and that they want to project to others. Beyond its functional utility, the brand is perceived by the consumer as a symbolic entity to which he entrusts a personality (Ferrandi JM and Valette-Florence P, 2002; Halim, RE, 2006).

The degree of integration of the brand into the concept of self can help the consumer to identify his image and externalize it. According to the theory of congruence (Sirgy JM, 1982) a consumer tends to focus on brand and develop an emotional feeling towards it if the personality and image of the brands are in line with the concept of self.

The results of Smaoui's research (2008) show that image congruence between the consumer and the brand contributes significantly to the development of an emotional connection between the brand and the consumer. For Harrison-Walker, LJ (2001) the consumer is more likely to love a brand with which he feels strongly identified. Therefore, the brand love develops if the brand plays an important role in building the identity of the consumer.

A loved brand expresses the deep values of the consumer and emphasizes his identification with it (Carroll, Barbara A. and AC Ahuvia, 2006). According to Hans H. Bauer, Daniel Heinrich and Isabelle Martin (2007) a self-expressive brand encourages love towards it. The authors find a significant link between the congruence of self-brand image and the concept of love towards the brand. Thus, when the consumer identifies a certain match between the image of the brand and the image he wants to externalize, he is ready to develop an emotional feeling towards it. Albert Noel, Dwight Merunka and Pierre Valette-Florence (2013) have also shown that the self-brand image congruence has a strong influence on the brand love.

The self-brand image congruence seems to be critical for establishing a sense of love for the brand (Methaq Ahmed Sallam, 2014). We therefore propose the following hypothesis :

H1: There is a positive relationship between the congruence of self-brand image and brand love.

2. The brand trust

The literatures on brand love and the brand trust are rarely associated while they belong to very close territories. It can be understood by the fact that the concept of brand love is relatively recent. Based on the theoretical foundations of relationship marketing Gurviez (2002) defines consumer trust "As the assumption by this one that the brand as personified entity makes a commitment to have a predictable action and in compliance with its expectations, and to maintain this long-term orientation".

This definition considers the trust as a concept multi-facets, including two components, a cognitive component, a credibility perceived from the brand and

an emotional component, perceived loyalty of the brand or benevolence. The credibility is realized by two dimensions: the honesty of an object as a source of information and the degree of expertise, that is, the ability of the object to fulfill the terms of the exchange concerning expected performance (Erdem T. and Swait J, 1998). Maathuis, Rodenburg and Sikkel (2004) add the attractiveness as the third dimension. The attractiveness is "The degree of evaluation of an object in term of sympathy and affection". According to the authors, the credibility of brand is due to cognitive aspects that emotional.

Consequently, the trust in the brand becomes established by making a reference to cognitive and emotional aspects and can generate emotional feelings to the brand. So there can be a positive link between trust brand trust and brand love. According to Albert et al., (2010), Thomson et al., (2005), the brand trust influences positively the emotional constructs and brand love.

In the same logic the results of certain studies showed that the brand trust has a positive impact on the brand affect (Chaudhuri, Has. and Holbrook, Mr. B, 2001; Halim, R. E, 2006; Fatih Geçti1 and Hayrettin Zengin, 2013; Albert Noel, Dwight Merunka and Pierre Valette-Florence, 2013). Consequently, it is possible to say that when the consumer trusts in the brand of a product which he uses, also has and at the same time a positive emotional reaction for this brand. From where the following hypothesis:

H2 : There is a positive relationship between brand trust and brand love.

3. The brand satisfaction

Satisfaction is a post-consumer evaluative judgment (Mano and Oliver, 1993) both cognitive and affectif (Almeida and Nique, 2005).

Many researchers have found that the transition from satisfaction to loyalty is possible only when satisfaction is maintained for a longer period and becomes deeper (Jones and Sasser, 1995). Some satisfied consumers change their brand after a certain period (Reichheld, 1996). Therefore, satisfaction is translated into loyalty only for satisfied customers who love the brand (Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006). Carroll and Ahuvia (2006) consider that the brand love is an antecedent to brand loyalty and satisfaction is an antecedent to the brand love. In his study Westbrook (1987) found that feelings are directly related to product satisfaction judgments.

Carroll and Ahuvia (2006) suggest that high levels of satisfaction experienced by consumers affect their love for brands. For Lupiyoadi (2001) "customers will be satisfied if their evaluation results indicate that the products they use are of quality". The result of the Punniyamoorthy and Prasanna Mohan (2007) study shows that the quality of the product has a positive and significant influence on the brand love. In the same logic, Thomson, MacInnis and Park (2005)

state that satisfaction following consumption for a long time is likely to lead to a passionate emotional attachment to a brand and multiple interactions with it. This implies that cumulative satisfaction over a period tends to create an emotional connection between the consumer and the brand. The satisfaction of a brand is the prerequisite to fall in love with it (Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006). Hence the following hypothesis :

H3: There is a positive relationship between brand satisfaction and brand love.

c) *The outcomes of brand love*

1. Brand loyalty

Loyalty is for a large number of authors, the dimension that best expresses the strength of the brand (Aaker DA, 1991). It is important to distinguish a passive loyalty actually linked to a routinization of purchasing behaviors (behavioral approach of loyalty) and a more active loyalty linked to an attitude (attitudinal approach of loyalty) very favorable even a strong assignment to the respect of the brand (Benoît H , 2003). Moulins JL (1998) thus proposes a definition that emphasizes the distinction between behavioral loyalty and attitudinal loyalty, namely: "Brand loyalty cannot be reduced to mere repetition of even intentional purchase, but is based on the trust given to the exchange partner. It is defined as the desire to anchor the commercial relationship in the long term, by developing a common history".

For Punniyamorthy and Raj (2007), "Brand loyalty can be considered as a special case of relationship marketing, where the consumer has a strong psychological attachment to the branded entity consumed".

Brand loyalty studies offer two explanations that reflect the intentional nature of such behavior (Lacoeuilhe J, 1997) the belief in the functional and utilitarian superiority of the brand over competing brands, the formation of an emotional connection between the brand and the individual, expressed by the notion of attachment to the brand.

Fournier (1998) notes that, in total, there are six broad categories of relationships that customers can have with a brand, including the love of the brand. Thus, the love of the brand is more significant and lasting than a mere preference that customers have for the brand. Brand love can be a motivating factor in forming and maintaining brand relationships (Reimann et al., 2012). Love is related to positive emotions, including the pleasure that can influence how long a client can relate to a brand (Albert et al., 2008). The most loved brands are likely to have greater loyalty and a competitive advantage

(Orth et al., 2010). More the consumer is linked to a brand more easily he becomes loyal.

Carroll and Ahuvia (2006) consider loyalty to the brand because of love and show that the love of the brand is positively related to this outcome variable. If

the consumer starts to love a brand, he becomes very emotional and passionate about it (Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006) and this strong emotional connection drives the consumer to repeatedly buy the same brand by ignoring other competing brands. Thus, love will tend towards loyalty.

The literature review allows us to say that there are some studies revealing the relationship between brand love and brand loyalty. These studies show that brand love has significant impacts on behavioral and attitudinal loyalty (Taylor et al., 2004; Matzler et al., 2008; Jahangir et al., 2009). Fatih Geçti1 and Hayrettin Zengin (2013) indicate that when brand love is important, brand loyalty must also be higher. Brand love should be considered an important antecedent of brand loyalty (Matzler et al., 2006). Paula Rodrigues and Raquel Reis (2013) also showed that brand loyalty and premium price are the results of brand love.

Brands that make the client "happy", or "affectionate" implies a strong attitudinal commitment and behavioral loyalty (Kurt Matzler, Sonja Bidmon and Sonja Grabner Krauter , 2006). Therefore, it can be assumed that:

H4: The brand love leads to brand loyalty.

2. The positive word of mouth

Word of mouth or informal consumer communication is the process of transferring information from one person to another through oral communication (Lo Chung, 2012). For Harrison-Walker (2001), Brown and al., (2005), word of mouth is the propagation of information from one consumer to another either in person or via a means of communication concerning a brand, product, organization or a service. Consumer behavior studies have recognized that word of mouth has an impact on consumer psychology and decision-making higher than that of media communication (Nguyen and Romaniuk, 2014). Word of mouth is perceived by consumers as a credible source that the traditional marketing media communications.

Word of mouth allows consumers to share information and opinions that guide them in their choice of products, brands and services (Hawkins and al, 2004). People who engage in the word-of-mouth process want to share their positive and negative experiences in order to help others in making decisions or to diminish their own doubts about their own behaviors (De Valck, van Bruggen and Wierenga, 2009). Consumers can promote the brand with which they identify. This customer category is ready to engage in promoting the brand by spreading positive word of mouth (Anggraenia and Rachmanitab, 2015). If the consumer likes a brand, it is also expected to praise the brand to others. Word of mouth is considered a relevant and highly effective communication channel (Nguyen and Romaniuk, 2014).

Many previous studies have shown that there is a strong relationship between brand love and word of mouth (Elaine and al, 2014; Ismail and al, 2012; Mark and al, 2014). It is also apparent from the study of AdillaAnggraeniaand Rachmanitab (2015) that the brand love can leads to positive word-of-mouth from customers.

This result confirms that found by Albert and Merunka (2013). In their research, Carrol and Ahuvia (2006), Batra, Ahuvia and Bagozzi (2012), Ismail, AR, and Spinelli, G (2012), suggest that brands that allow consumers to identify themselves are the most loved ones and enjoy greater loyalty and more positive word of mouth.

The study by Swimberghe, Astakhova and Woolridge (2014) also showed that the passion that customers have for a brand will lead to satisfaction and positive word of mouth. On their side Christmas Albert coast, Dwight Merunka and Pierre Valette-Florence (2013) found that brand passion leads to a positive word of mouth and they believe that a consumer passionate about a brand desire to share that passion and encourage friends and parents to feel the same or the consumer seeks to justify a passionate relationship, that appears difficult to understand by others. Positive word of mouth is therefore triggered because talking to others about a passion-inducing brand is an important part of the identity building process of such consumers. Therefore, it can be assumed that:

H 5: The brand love leads to positive word of mouth.

3. Intention to pay price premium

Emotional attachment to a brand is positively associated with maintaining proximity to the brand and the mental distress created by actual or anticipated brand separation. For this reason, the individual will strongly intend to buy the brand he loves and he will be willing to pay the high price (Abhigyan, 2011).

Robust cleared results from studies indicate that more consumers appreciate a brand is more willing to accept a price increase (Aaker, 1991).

Brand love also influences consumer acceptance of a high price (Bauer et al., 2007). If a consumer is emotionally attached to a brand, he would intend to pay a high price for acquiring it (Thomson et al., 2005). Brand love is a combination of emotion and passion for a brand (Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006).

Therefore, if the consumer loves a brand, he will be willing to pay a high price for the brand. Hence the following hypothesis :

H 6: Brand love positively influences the intention to pay more for the brand

2.2. Methodology of research and operationalization of the variables

This section discusses the method of data collection, sample selection, and operationalization of variables.

a) Presentation of the conceptual model

1. Research methodology

The model developed in this research (Figure 1) will be tested using a quantitative survey based on a questionnaire. The questionnaire consists of two parts. The first part deals with measuring the constructs of the study by asking the respondent to think of a fashion brand to which he feels emotionally attached.

The brands of fashion products were selected given that they offer symbolic meanings compared to other categories of products (Escalas and Bettman, 2005) and are capable of projecting the identity of consumers. Consumer behavior of fashion products represents the desire to own certain brands and a way to achieve personal pleasure (O' Cass and Siahtiri, 2013).

Moreover, consumers have become more fashion conscious and wants to be informed about the new trends (Anggraenia and Rachmanitab, 2015).

A list of fashion brands frequently mentioned by students is presented in the appendix. The rest of the questionnaire then relates only to this brand. The second part of the questionnaire presents the demographic information of the respondents (ie sex and age).

The study was conducted using the convenience sampling technique, a total of 188 questionnaires were obtained from the students of The Higher Institute of Applied Studies in the Humanities of Tunis. Our sample is composed of 71.6% of women and 27.8 % of men. 95.2% are between 20 and 24 years and 4.8 % over 25 years old.

2. Operationalization of variables

To measure the variables in our model we relied on developed measurement instruments for which the respondent should indicate their degree of agreement or disagreement on a five-point Likert scale. The table 1 summarizes all the measurement scales used:

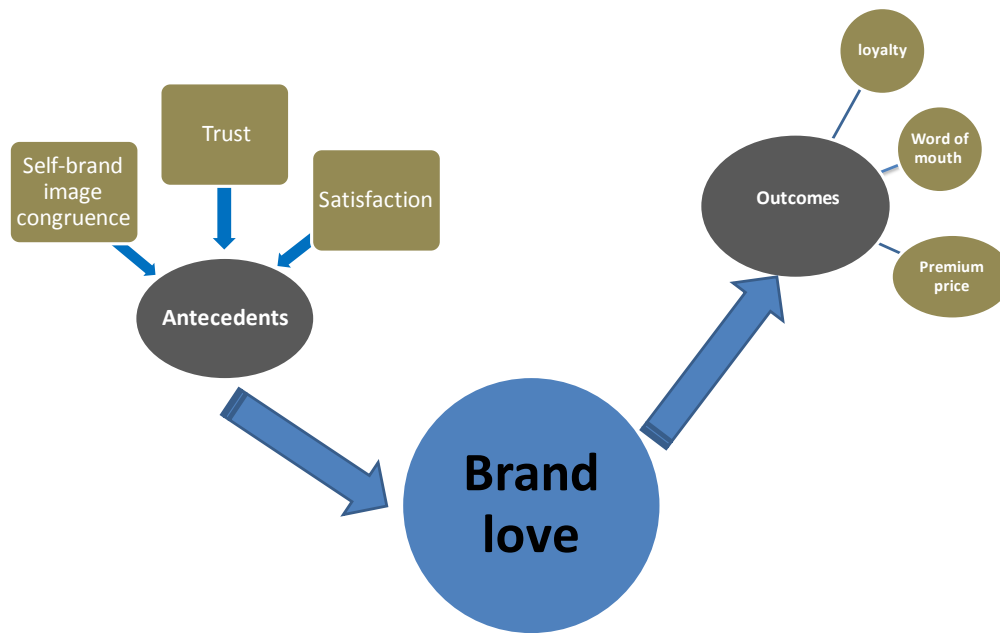


Fig. 1: The model and relationships to be tested are as follows

Table 1: The measurement scales selected

variables	Scales	Items
brand Love	Scale of Carroll and Ahuvia (2006), Paula Rodrigues and Raquel Reis (2013)	This is a wonderful brand. This brand makes me feel good. This brand makes me very happy. I love this brand. I am passionate about this brand. I'm very attached to this brand.
Congruence of self-brand image	Richins (1994), Fournier (1994), Kleine and al (1995) in Lacoeuille (2000)	This brand corresponds to the image I have of myself. This brand corresponds to the image that I wish to have. This brand gives a good image of me. This brand corresponds to the image that I wish to give of myself to others. I think this brand is renewing its products to reflect the progress of research.
Brand trust	Gurviez P and Korchia M (2002)	The products of this brand bring me security. I have confidence in the quality of the products of this brand. Buy products of this brand, it is a guarantee. This brand is sincere vis-à-vis consumers. This brand is honest with its customers. This brand shows interest for its customers. I think this brand is continually looking to improve its response to consumer needs.
Brand loyalty	Carroll, Barbara A., and AC Ahuvia (2006)	I will buy this brand the next time i buy. I intend to keep purchasing this brand. I am committed to this brand. I would be willing to pay a higher price for this brand over other brands.
Word of mouth	Carroll, Barbara A., and AC Ahuvia (2006)	I have recommended this brand to lots of people. I talk up this brand to my friends. I try to spread the good-word about this brand. I give this brand tons of positive word-of-mouth advertising.
Premium price	Netemeyer et al., (2004)	Buy « brand name » seems like a good idea, although more expensive. I am willing to pay a higher price for « brand name». I will continue to buy the « brand name » even identical brands are cheaper.
Satisfaction	Smaoui (2008)	In general, how satisfied are you with this brand?

3. Results and discussion

3.1. Empirical validation of the model and discussion of results

In this section, we test the research hypotheses based on the data collected during the survey. To achieve this, we used SPSS software (version 22.0 for Windows). Thus, we have been able, through this software, to do simple sorting in order to identify some statistics of frequencies and numbers useful for the characterization of the sample. Then, we proceeded to a factor analysis (in principal components) in order to see the possibility to reduce the variables in a more limited number of factors, we calculated the Cronbach's alpha for each scale of measurement. Finally, we tested the causal relationships between the different variables, using the PLS method (Partial least square).

a) Exploratory analysis

1. Measurement scales reliability test and principal components analysis

In this section, we test the reliability of the scales of measurements, and then we carry out a factorial analysis (PCA).

Thus, we calculate the Cronbach Alpha coefficient for the reliability of the scales. Then we calculate the KMO coefficient and perform the Bartlett sphericity test for the PCA (Table 2). The reliability analysis makes it possible to study the quality of the scales of measurement of the different constructs. It allows to determine to what extent the items of each scale are related to each other and to provide a general index of the consistency or internal coherence of the scale as a whole.

Using the correlation coefficient "Cronbach Alpha" the reliability of the measurement scales was tested. The results of this study show that most of the found values of Cronbach's alpha statistic exceed the threshold of 0.7 recommended by researchers (Peterson, R.A., 1995). This allows us to consider that the scales studied are statistically reliable. As a result, the internal consistency between items in each scale is high.

We were forced to remove an item for scales of brand love, brand trust and word of mouth because their elimination increases the value of cronbach 's alpha .

Concerning the principal component analysis, the results found make it possible to make the following observations:

- The scales studied are unidimensional with the exception of the scale of brand trust from which two factorial axes were extracted. A first axis that represents the credibility that is materialized by two dimensions : the honesty of the brand as a source of information and the degree of expertise that is to say , the capacity of the brand to fulfill the terms of the exchange concerning the expected performances and a second axis which represents benevolence.

- We have shown that the selected items are the best representatives of each concept. Indeed, the values of

the KMO index are satisfactory and exceed the threshold of 0.5 (Akrouf, 2000). As a result, the analysis performed is acceptable and allows the construction of concepts that are statistically correlated with their items.

- The variance analysis shows that, more than half of the total variance explained is generated by items for of each concept, an average percentage of 65.77%.

2. Bivaried analysis

To investigate the association relationship between the concept of brand love and other variables of the model (antecedents and consequences of brand love), we performed a bivaried analysis using the Chi-square test. The results of this analysis are presented in table 3.

The chi-square test shows that the p-value s calculated is below the 5% threshold allowing rejecting the null hypothesis of independence among the variables studied. This result allowed us to highlight a significant dependence between the brand love and the variables reflecting the antecedents and the consequences of the brand love. However, this test does not allow us to conclude as to the effect of antecedents on the variable of brand love and the effect therefore on the consequences. For this reason, we perform a confirmatory analysis to study the relationships predicted in our model and to analyze conformity of this model with the actual data.

3.2. Confirmatory analysis

To better understand the impact of self-brand image congruence, brand trust and brand satisfaction on the brand love, as well as, the consequences of brand love namely brand loyalty, word of mouth and the intention to pay a high price for the brand, we used a confirmatory factor analysis.

We use the PLS method (Tenenhaus, 1999) as a model estimation procedure. This method has several advantages, namely the flexibility of the underlying assumptions, the normality conditions of the variables and residues are not necessary, the sample size does not matter and there are no particular constraints on the independence of observations. So we start with the evaluation of the model measuring (latent concepts with their manifest variables). Then we evaluate the quality of the structural model. Finally, we examine the quality of the overall model.

1. Quality of the measurement model

The quality of the measurement model depends on three criteria namely the reliability of the manifest variables, the convergent validity and the discriminant validity.

Concerning the reliability of the manifest variables, it is estimated by examining their values of Cronbach's Alpha and the indicator of the Composite Reliability which must be greater than 0.7

For convergent validity, we use correlation between the latent variables and their items.

Table 2: Reliability Test and Principal Components Analysis

Reliability Test			PCA				
Scale	Item eliminated	Cronbach Alpha	KMO	Test of Bartlett	Signification	Percentage variance explained	Number of factors retained
Congruence of self-brand image	0	0.77	0.7	211.89	0	59.27%	1
Brand trust	1	0.76	0.67	372.17	0	59.41%	2
Brand loyalty	0	0.84	0.68	248.11	0	75.68%	1
Word of mouth	1	0.76	0.62	190.59	0	69.05%	1
Premium price	0	0.78	0.69	164.34	0	70.37%	1
Brand love	1	0.83	0.77	392.61	0	60.82%	1
Average		0.79	0.69			65.77%	

Table 3: Chi-square test

Scale	Chi-square-Stat	Signification
Congruence of self-brand image	1014.13	0
Trust 1	2946.22	0
Trust 2	2946.22	0
Brand satisfaction	95.968	0.009
Brand loyalty	931.31	0
Word of mouth	1080.317	0
Premium price	6171.00	0

Table 4: Evaluation of the measurement model

Measures		Reliability		convergent Validity	Discriminant validity						
Latent variables	Manifest variables	Cronbach Alpha	Composite Reliability	Correlations	AVE and Square correlations						
					trust	cong	satis	love	wom	pp	Loyalty
Trust	TRUST1	0.762	0.828	0.775							
	TRUST 2			0.693							
	TRUST 3			0.787							
	TRUST 5			0.785	0.643						
	TRUST 6			0.738							
	TRUST 7			0.78							
	TRUST 8			0.731							
	CONG			CONG1	0.769	0.852	0.657				
CONG2		0.773									
CONG3		0.783	0.230	0.769							
CONG4		0.85									
SATS	Satisfaction		1	1.00	0.118	0.231	1				
LOVE	LOVE 2	0.837	0.885	0.746							
	LOVE 3			0.77							
	LOVE 4			0.691	0.351	0.357	0.241	0.780			
	LOVE 5			0.858							
	LOVE 6			0.822							
	WOM			WOM1	0.770	0.867	0.761				
WOM 3		0.856	0.232	0.295			0.211	0.381	0.828		
WOM 4		0.863									
PP	PREM.P1	0.789	0.877	0.82							
	PREM.P 2			0.867	0.246	0.311	0.138	0.443	0.265	0.839	
	PREM.P 3			0.829							
Loyalty	LOYAL1	0.887	0.923	0.896							
	LOYAL 2			0.911							
	LOYAL 3			0.755	0.317	0.207	0.127	0.344	0.342	0.287	0.866
	LOYAL 4			0.892							

Discriminant validity means that two different constructs theoretically are also distinct in practice. Discriminant validity can be evaluated by the comparison of the square root of the average extracted variance (AVE) of each latent variable with the correlation of different latent variables two by two (Fornell-Larcker criterion). The result of evaluating the quality of the measurement model is presented in table 4.

The results of the confirmatory analysis show that the composite reliability index values and Cronbach's alpha coefficients exceed the threshold of 0.7. This makes it possible to validate the reliability of the scales of measurements.

We find that the correlations manifest variables with the latent variable are greater or equal to 0.7 in most cases, this that makes it possible to confirm the convergent validity.

. For the discriminant validity, we find that the square root of the average extracted variance (AVE) of each latent variable is greater than correlation of different latent variables two by two.

2. Quality of the structural model

The structural model is evaluated based on the predictive relevance of the latent variables. Multiple R² should be analyzed. These coefficients are used to get an idea of the contribution of each endogenous variable to the prediction of the exogenous variable.

Table 5: Evaluation of the structural model

Latent variable	Type	R ²
Trust	exogenous	
CONG	exogenous	
SATS	exogenous	
LOVE	Endogenous	0.531
WOM	Endogenous	0.356
PP	Endogenous	0.405
Loyalty	Endogenous	0.426
Average		0.430

In the light of the values shown in the table 5, we can conclude that the contribution of exogenous variables to the prediction of variables endogenous is moderate, it has a value of 0,43 (Chin and al, 2010). Therefore, the model is significant.

In addition, the GoF¹ (Wetzels and al., 2009) adjustment indicator (Goodness of Fit index; Tenenhaus and al, 2005) is 0.510 which is well above the required threshold of 0.5. These results make it possible to

¹GoF = $(\sqrt{\text{moyAVE} * \text{MoyR}^2})$

obtain a better evaluation of the structural model.

The quality of the adjustment of the specified model to the data can be judged according to the GoF fit indicator of the overall model (Goodness of Fit Index, Tenenhaus and al., 2005). The values of this index for the different models (relative, absolute, measurement and structural) are presented in table 6:

Table 6: Overall adjustment Indices

Model	GoF
Absolute	0.310
relative	0.895
External model	0.996
Internal model	0.899

Overall, the results obtained for the evaluation of the conceptual model make it possible to retain the proposed model. The results of our study clearly show the validity of the measurement model and the validity of the structural model.

3. Discussion and validation of research hypotheses

Based on the results of the statistical tests presented in table 7, we find that the impact of antecedents on brand love is significant. Indeed, the concept of congruence has a positive and significant effect on the brand love. The value of the Student statistic associated with this variable is 4.157 (t > 1.96) with zero probability indicating that individual-brand image congruence allows to develop emotional feelings resulting in the love of the brand. This result confirms the hypothesis H1 that "There is a positive relationship between individual-brand image congruence and brand love". Similarly, the value of the student statistic associated with the TRUST variable is 4.152 (t > 1.96) with a probability of zero, thus making it possible to highlight a positive and significant impact on the brand love. As a result, a significant link is established between trust and love for the brand. Therefore, the hypothesis H2 relative to this relation is confirmed.

We also note that the value of the Student statistic associated with the STAS variable is 2.131 (t > 1.96) with a probability of 0.034 < 5%. This highlights a positive and significant impact of satisfaction on brand love. From this result it follows, the validity of the H3 hypothesis "There is a positive relationship between satisfaction and the brand love".

Table 7: Impact of antecedents on brand love

Latent variable	Value	t	Pr > t
Constant	0.000	0,000	1,000
TRUST	0.274	4,152 ***	0,000
CONG	0.259	4,157 ***	0,000
SATS	0.148	2,131 **	0,034

Table 8: Impact of brand love on the word of mouth, the premium price and loyalty

	Dependent variable			Dependent variable			Dependent variable		
	WOM			PP			LOYAL		
	Value	t	Pr> t	Value	t	Pr> t	Value	t	Pr> t
Constant	0,000	0,000	1,000	0,000	0,000	1,000	0,000	0,000	1,000
LOVE	0.381	4.725 ***	0,000	0.443	6,982 ***	0,000	0.344	4.781 ***	0,000

Our results show that there is a positive relationship between individual-brand image congruence and the concept of brand love. In other words, when the consumer identifies a certain adequacy between the personality and the image of the brand and the concept of self he is ready to develop an emotional feeling towards the brand. The self-expressive benefits offered by the brand seem to offer more potential to increase the love of consumers. This result is in line with previous research that has shown a positive relationship between the individual-brand image congruence and the concept brand love (Albert Noel, Dwight Merunka, Pierre Valette-Florence, 2013; Hans H. Bauer, Daniel Heinrich and Isabelle Martin, 2007). Similarly, we have shown that trust in the brand is significantly related to the concept of love. Indeed, the more a brand respects its promises and the more it is considered as a source of expertise and advice, the more the consumer has a positive affective reaction for this brand. This result has enriched the results of previous research on love for the brand, the same research has not tested the influence of trust on love for the brand. We also found a significant relationship between brand satisfaction and the concept of love. Indeed, high levels of satisfaction experienced by consumers positively and significantly influence their brand love.

The results identified in table 8, translate the effect of brand love respectively on the word of mouth, the premium price and the loyalty. In other words, it is about consequences of brand love. Calculated Student statistic values exceed the threshold given by its tabulated value (1.96) (are respective values of 4.725, 6.982 and 4.781 > to 1.96). Consequently, brand love exercises a significant and positive impact on the word of mouth, the premium price and the loyalty.

The results showed that brand love has an important effect on loyalty, word of mouth and the intention to pay a high price for the brand. Thus, the more the consumer loves a brand, the easier it becomes loyal. Brands that make the client "happy", or "affectionate" benefit from attitudinal and behavioral loyalty. The results found show that the brand love can induces positive word of mouth. This result supports that of Albert and Merunka (2013) who have shown that the love of the brand leads to positive word of mouth from consumers. Finally, the love brand positively influences the intention to pay more for the

brand. If a consumer is emotionally attached to a brand, he is willing to pay a high price to acquire it.

Indeed, brands that provide consumers with confidence, a high degree of satisfaction and identification are most loved, enjoy greater loyalty, positive word of mouth and positively influence intention to pay more for the brand.

Therefore, the hypotheses H1, H2, H3, H4, H5, and H6 are validated and corroborated the literature developed regarding this.

4. Conclusion

Our research has shown that brand love is due to the brand trust, to individual-brand image congruence and to the satisfaction of the brand. So, these various determinants have to be considered key factors of success and that must be considered by the managers during the formulation of the appropriate strategies in order to develop brand love of the target customers.

The results of the research also showed that brand love has a significant effect on several marketing constructs. So, more the consumer loves a brand, the more loyal he becomes, willing to pay a higher price for having it and gives brand tons of positive word-of-mouth advertising. Understanding and developing the relationship of love between the consumers and their brands is crucial for companies because of the significant impact of this relationship to their profitability.

This research work presents some limits. The first concerns the choice of a single category of products (the products of fashion); now, it is always difficult to generalize some results of the research in other categories of products. The second concerns the measure of love towards the brand which is based on the scale of Carroll and Ahuvia (2006). To test the links between the various variables, it would be more crucial to choose the measure of Ahuvia, Bagozzi and Batra (2012) where the concept of love is considered a prototype compound of several dimensions.

Future researches should try to reproduce these results with wider samples, in other categories of products to widen the domains of empirical validation of the model. New researches can be also undertaken to enrich the model by introducing, other antecedents of

love towards the brand, for example personality of the brand, personality traits of the consumer. The identification of the other antecedents improves not only the understanding of the engines of an important marketing construction, but can also guide the practitioners in the choice of the activities of marketing to be implemented to increase love towards the brand and, to benefit, of its positive spin-offs. Another future path of research is an investigation in the consequences of love towards the brand.

It is a question for example of determining the impact of love on the success of the brand extension. The results of this research can help and guide managers to focus on the identified antecedent variables while formulating appropriate strategies to transform simply valued brands into preferred brands and make this relationship sustainable. It is a question of encouraging consumption behaviors dictated by passion, of creating brands that symbolize or facilitate the valorization of the desired image, i.e. to design brands in which personality and image comply with the target's self-image, implement strategies to improve the level of satisfaction and trust so that the brand is a source of expertise and advice. Managers must try to maintain the feelings of satisfaction of target consumers for a longer period of time. Communication strategies should also use language that strengthens the emotional aspect for brands to create emotional bonds and intensify the feeling of attachment. The advertisement on the brands should focus on romantic themes to evoke feelings of love for the brand in the minds of the public, as well as for branded products, where the degree of hedonism is low.

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Annex

The most frequently mentioned fashion brands in this study:

Marque	Marque
<i>Nike</i>	<i>Mango</i>
<i>Dior</i>	<i>Levis</i>
<i>Gucci</i>	<i>Esprit</i>
<i>Adidas</i>	<i>Benetton</i>
<i>Givenchy</i>	<i>Yves Rocher</i>
<i>Zara</i>	<i>Lacoste</i>
<i>Guess</i>	<i>Hugo Boss</i>