Research article

The effect of brand love on brand performance: the role of brand loyalty

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Abstract

This article focuses on brand love, an increasingly important research theme, but still neglected in the Tunisian context. This work aims to explore the effect of brand love on brand performance through loyalty. A literature review allowed us to develop a conceptual model integrating brand love, loyalty, brand performance and causal links, which we validate, based on an empirical study on fashion products and carried out with 190 consumers. To test the conceptual model we used the structural equations method. More specifically, we have adopted the PLS (Partial least square) method to study causal links. The results show that the relationship between brand love and brand performance depends on behavioral and attitudinal loyalty.

Key words: Brand love, performance, brand loyalty, word of mouth, PLS.

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, 2006, 2008; Moulins and Roux, 2008; Ismail AR and Spinelli G, 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. Companies that own loved brands are better at differentiating themselves, gaining a competitive advantage (Leila Ghodratabadia, Maryam Taghizadehb, 2017) and achieving performance (Roberts, 2006). Studies of brand love show that it has a significant impact on several marketing constructs

and consequently on the brand's performance. Faced to a wide range of products the love brand makes the choice of the consumer easier and more emotional. The more the consumer loves a brand, the more easily he becomes loyal and ready to pay a higher price for having it. If consumers love a brand, then the volume of brand sales will increase, because the brand love is transformed into loyalty. However, the measures and the impact of brand love have been questioned by some researchers (eg Romaniuk, 2013), mainly because of the lack of evidence of the relationship between brand love and behavioral measures. Therefore, it is crucial to understand the love relationship between consumers and their brands and the impact of this relationship on commercial performance and company profitability. Indeed, researchers have highlighted the various antecedents of brand love (Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006; Albert, Noel, D. Merunka and P. Valette-Florence, 2010; Albert Noel, Dwight Merunka and Pierre Valette-Florence, 2013) with a focus on product and brand variables. They find that hedonic product categories and self-expressive brands are associated with stronger brand love.

Later in this same research stream Lars Bergkvist and Tino Bech-Larsen (2010) try to broaden the understanding of the individual antecedents of brand love by focusing on brand identification and the meaning of the community. However, little research has focused on the positive spin-offs of brand love and its impact on performance. We suggest that the company's performance is closely linked to brand love and that it is predictive of superior performance. To fill this lack of knowledge, our study seeks to determine the effect of brand love on brand loyalty and performance. In this study, we identify the effects, of the brand love on brand performance through loyalty. This work is structured as follows: the first section provides insight into the notion of love towards the brand and then defines the conceptual model and the research hypotheses. The second section is devoted to the presentation of the methodology of our research and the development of measurement scales. The third section presents the results of our quantitative research related to the verification of our hypotheses. The last section is devoted to the conclusions of the study.

2. Material and methods

2.1. Conceptual development and research hypotheses
The purpose of the conceptual development of this study is to explain the relationship between love and brand loyalty, as well as the relationship between brand loyalty and performance.

a) Brans love
Shimp and Madden (1988) were the first to study the concept of love in the field of consumption. They developed the "consumer-object-love" model, based on Sternberg's (1986) triangular theory (intimacy, passion, decision / commitment) of love, and pointed out that the relationship of a consumer with an object (for example, a brand) is based on three components: affect, desire and decision / commitment. Based on these three dimensions, Shimp and Madden (1988) identify eight kinds of consumer-object relationships: nonsense, taste, infatuation, functionalism, inhibited desire, utilitarianism, desperate desire, and loyalty. To show the existence of a real feeling of love for objects, Ahuvia (2005) carried out an empirical study, he showed that numerous consumers feel love for objects. In a comparative study Ahuvia (2005) also found that there are more similarities than differences between interpersonal love and love in consumption contexts. Other researchers have tried to extend the concept of love to associate it with the brand. Fournier S (1998) who clarified the different relationships that consumers develop with their brands has thus highlighted the importance of love in the long-term relationship of consumers with their brand. Carroll and Ahuvia (2006) define brand love as "the degree of passionate emotional attachment a satisfied consumer has for a particular trade name". In this definition, the authors focus on emotion and passion and consider love brand

as an emotional and passionate relationship. The love of the brand includes the following aspects: brand passion, attachment for the brand, positive brand assessment, positive emotion in response to the brand and declaration of love for the brand (Rodrigues and Reis, 2013). As for Rossiter (2012), he defines the 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 express the magical relationship between the consumer and the brand (cited in Lia Zarantonello, Marcello Formisano and Silvia Grappi, 2016). Therefore, if a consumer is passionate about a brand, he engages in a much more emotional relationship with it, to the point of feeling the loss when the brand is not available (Matzler, Kurt, Elizabeth A. Pichler and Andrea Hemetsberger, 2007). 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 et al. (2010) specifies that interpersonal love is bidirectional whereas the brand's love is unidirectional, and that in passionate interpersonal love there can be sexual intimacy that is impossible with brands.

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

For Punniyamoorthy 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 and al., 2008). The most loved brands are likely to have greater loyalty and

a competitive advantage (Ulrich et al., 2010). More the consumer is linked to a brand more easily he becomes loyal. Brand love emphasize the passion and deep affection that consumers feel for their favorite brands (Batra and al, 2012; Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006; Rossiter, 2012). This deep relationship between the consumer and the brand has a positive impact on brand loyalty (Batra and al, 2012; Bergkvist and Bech-Larsen, 2010; Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006; Zarantonello et al., 2016). 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.

For Chaudhuri and Holbrook (2001) positive brand emotions have a positive impact on brand loyalty, both in terms of behavioral and attitudinal loyalty. The literature review allowed us to say that there are some studies revealing the relationship between brand love and brand 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 as an important antecedent of brand loyalty (Matzler et al., 2006). Paula Rodrigues and Raquel Reis (2013) have also shown that brand loyalty is the result of brand love. The latter, is considered as a measure of the potential of the brand, positively related to behavioral loyalty (Zarantonello, et al., 2016). This result released by the authors in a

transnational study supports and broaden the work of researchers who have already found a positive and meaningful relationship between love and brand loyalty.

Therefore, it can be assumed that:

H1: Brand love has a positive effect on loyalty.

c) Brand performance

Several authors have emphasized the importance of brand loyalty as a determinant of brand choice and brand equity (Baldinger et al., 1996; David A.Aaker, 1994). Chaudhuri et al., (1999) suggest a relationship between brand loyalty, market share, and price premiums. If consumers love a brand, then the sales volume of the brand increases because the love of the brand turns into loyalty. Brand loyalty is able to improve market share (Assael, 1998). Chaudhuri (1999) emphasizes the crucial role of loyalty in the relationship between brand equity from the consumer's point of view and measures of brand performance. Chaudhuri and Holbrook (2001) have found that some of the consequences of loyalty correspond to the performance of the brand. Chaudhuri and Holbrook (2001) have found that some of the consequences of loyalty are the performance of the brand. Based on the work of Jacoby and Chestunt (1978) and Reichheld (1996) Chaudhuri and Holbrook (2001) deduce that a consumer loyal to a brand is willing to pay more for this brand because it is different from others. Research results of Rizal Edy Halim (2006) show that brand performance is linked to attitudinal loyalty, while behavioral loyalty, is neglected. However, Chaudhuri and Holbrook (2001) found in their study a positive relationship between attitudinal loyalty and relative price, as well as a positive relationship between behavioral loyalty and the brand's market share. These results are supported by The Double Jeopardy Theory (McPhee, 1963), which specifies that the brand with a low market share will only have a limited customer base and purchase frequency and inversely. Brand love will make a significant contribution to brand performance through attitudinal and behavioral loyalty (Chaudhuri and Holbrook, 2001). Brand loyalty makes consumers less sensitive to rising prices, which increases the effectiveness of marketing tools and improves business performance (Kabiraj and Shanmugan, 2010; Keller, 2003). Park and Srinivasan (1994), Netemeyer and al., (2004) and Paula Rodrigues and Raquel Reis (2013) consider that the consumer's desire to pay a higher price is a basic criterion of brand loyalty, and determines the amount that the buyer is willing to pay for his preferred brand over another brand of a similar product. For Aaker (1996), the premium price is a strong indicator of brand loyalty. One of the consequences of loyalty is that consumers are less sensitive to rising prices, which increases the effectiveness of marketing tools and, in general, improves performance and results (Kabiraj and

Shanmugan, 2010; Keller, 2003). The Brand Equity Relationship Assessment (BERA) platform, which interviews 20,000 people every week, collecting millions of consumer perceptions and ratings for more than 4,000 brands in 200 categories, assure that brand love allows companies to monetize an increased willingness to pay a premium, gain market share, remain competitive and increase profits. The love of the brand actually indicates superior company performance and, ultimately, higher total shareholder return (Barker et al., 2015).

A review of the literature on the different measures of the brand performance concept reveals that the majority of researchers measure this concept by market share and relative price. Based on work that measures brand equity by market share and relative price (Aaker, 1996; Bello and Holbrook, 1995; Park and Srinivasan, 1994; Winters, 1991), Chaudhuri and Holbrook (2001), consider the concept of brand performance as similar to that of brand equity, the latter is defined by the Marketing Science Institute (MSI) as « the set of associations and behaviors of the consumers of the brand, the distribution channels and the company to which it belongs, which allow marked products to achieve greater volumes and margins than they would without the brand name, and that give them a strong, sustained and differentiated advantage over their competitors ».

The uniqueness of the associations stored in memory permit the differentiation of the brand products (Changeur and Dano, 1998). The brand is related to certain associations that its competitors possess less strongly (dominance) or not at all (uniqueness).

This characteristic reflects the differentiation of the brand towards other brands, but also towards the product category. As for Halim, R. E. (2006) to measure the brand's performance concept, it used three indicators: relative price, differentiation and 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 either to another in person or via a means of communication concerning a brand, product, organization or service. Studies of consumer behavior have recognized that word of mouth has an impact on psychology and consumer decision-making that is greater 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 et al., 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 (Adilla et al., 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).

Indeed, loyalty is often considered as an antecedent of word of mouth (DeMatos and Rossi, 2008). Word of mouth can turn weak cognitive and affective attitudes towards a brand into strong positive attitudes. This change can have an impact on consumer behavior towards the brand (Smith and Swinyard, 1982).

By linking word-of-mouth to consumer behavior, it can be inferred that positive word of mouth increases the likelihood of consumers choosing the brand, while negative word-of-mouth do the opposite (Leila Ghodratabadia, Maryam Taghizadehb, 2017). Brand loyalty leads to positive word-of-mouth and enables the brand to win new customers, especially when the purchase of the product poses a perceived risk, in view of a good brand loyal customer base is an informal means of communication: word of mouth as the most influential source. The more the consumer is loyal, the more he expresses a favorable word of mouth about the brand and transmits his adherence to others (Bozzo et al., 2008).

In this study we adopt the same measures of performance as the research of Sheth (2001) and that of Rizal Edy Halim (2006) namely relative price, differentiation and word of mouth. The review of the literature on brand loyalty and performance has allowed us to deduce the last three hypotheses which specify the link between the concept of fidelity in its two dimensions (attitudinal and behavioral) and that of performance of the brand under its three components selected: relative price, word of mouth and differentiation of the brand. Based on the above discussion the hypotheses are developed as follows;

H2: The relative price increases when loyalty grows

H3: Brand loyalty is positively related to word of mouth

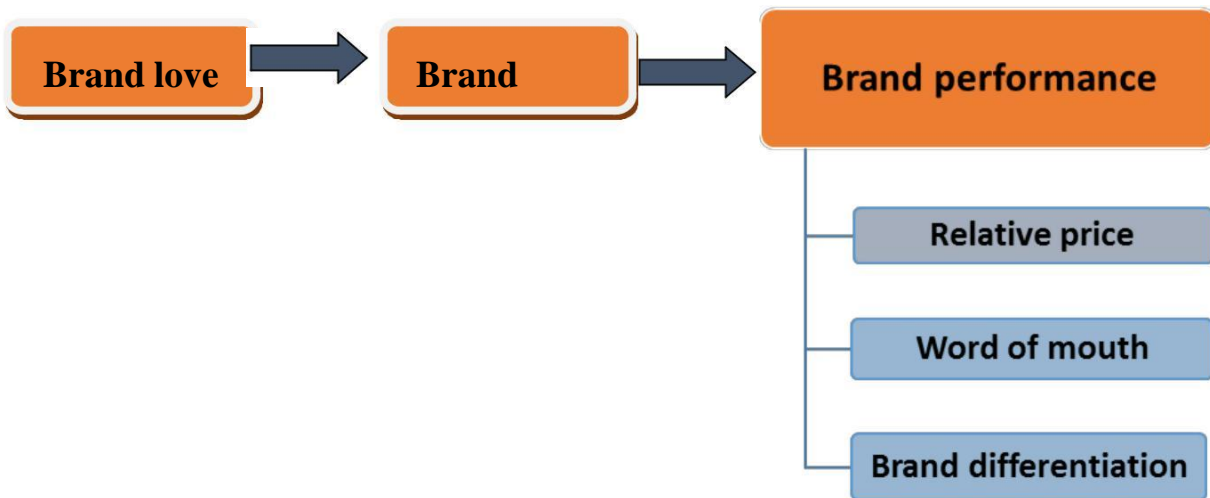*H4: Brand loyalty is positively related to brand differentiation*

Fig. 1: The conceptual model

Table 1: The measurement scales selected

Variables	Scales	Items
Brand love	Caroll and Ahuvia (2006)	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 am very attached to this brand.
Brand loyalty	Chaudhuri and Holbrook (2001)	I will buy this brand the next time i buy (product name)
		I intend to keep purchasing this brand
		I'm committed to this brand
		I would be willing to pay a higher price for this brand over other brands
Brand performance	Halim, (2006)	**Word of mouth**
		I have recommended this brand to lots of people.
		I talk up this brand to my friends.
	Barbara et al., (2006)	I try to spread the good-word about this brand.
		I give this brand tons of positive word-of-mouth advertising.
		Relative 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.
		Differenciation
		I am loyal to this brand because it is different than any other brands.

2.2. Research methodology and operationalization of the variables

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

a) Research methodology

The model developed in this research was tested using a quantitative survey based on a questionnaire. The questionnaire consists of two parts, the first part treats measuring the constructs of the study by asking the respondent to think of a fashion brand to which he feels emotionally attached. This choice is based in particular on the fact that the consumption behaviors of fashion products represent the desire to own certain brands and a means of achieving personal pleasure (O'Cass and Siahtiri, 2013). In addition, consumers have become more fashion conscious and wanted to be informed about new trends (Anggraenia and Rachmanitab, 2015). A list of fashion brands frequently mentioned by the interviewees is presented in the appendix. The rest of the questionnaire then is related only to this brand. The second part of the questionnaire presents the demographic information of respondents (ie sex and age). The survey was conducted using the convenience sampling technique, and a total of 190 questionnaires were administered by direct contact to students at the Tunis Institute of Applied Humanities. Our sample is composed of 60% women and 40% of men. 75.8% are between 20 and 24 years old and 24.2% are over 25 years old.

b) Operationalization of variables

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

3. Results and discussion

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 smaller number of factors, we calculated the Cronbach's alpha for each factor.

Finally, we tested the causal relationships between the different variables, using the PLS method (Partial least square).

3.1. Exploratory Analysis: measurement scales reliability test and principal component analysis

In this section we present the results of the test of reliability of the scales of measurement, and those of the analysis in principal components. This analysis allows us to deduce the factors of each concept and to study the unidimensionality of the scales of measurement.

The reliability analysis makes it possible to study the quality of the measurement scales of the different constructs. It determines to what extent the constructs of a questionnaire are related to each other and provide a general index of consistency of the scale as a whole. Using the correlation coefficient "Cronbach Alpha" we tested the reliability of the measurement scales.

We were forced to remove an item for scales of brand love, brand loyalty, word of mouth and relative price because their elimination increases the value of cronbach's alpha. The results of the test show that most of the found values of cronbach's alpha statistic exceed the threshold of 0.7 recommended by the researchers (Peterson, 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.

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

- The scales studied are unidimensional with the exception of the scale of brand love from which two factorial axes were extracted. A first axis that restores 52.84% of variance explained while, the second axis explains 28.37%.

- 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 (Akrout, 2000). As a result, the analysis performed is acceptable and allows the construction of concepts that are statistically correlated with their items. Thus, the analysis performed is acceptable and allows to construct 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 75.78%.

3.2. Confirmatory analysis

We used a confirmatory factor analysis in order to understand the impact of brand love on loyalty and brand performance under its three components: relative price, word of mouth and brand differentiation. 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. Therefore, we start with the evaluation of the model measuring (latent concepts with their manifest variables). Then we evaluate the quality of the structural model.

Table 2: Reliability Test and Principal Components Analysis

Scale	Reliability		PCA				
	Number of items eliminated	Cronbach Alpha	KMO index	Bartelette test	Signification	Percentage variance explained	Number of factors retained
Brand love	1	0.78	0.64	422.25	0	81.23%	2
Brand loyalty	1	0.77	0.61	157.99	0	52.38%	1
Word of mouth	1	0.94	0.58	931.54	0	86.05%	1
Relative price	1	0.90	0.70	386.94	0	83.45%	1
Average		0.84	0.63			75.78%	

Table 3: Evaluation of the measurement model

Mesures	Reliability		convergent Validity		Discriminant validity (AVE and Square correlations)			
Latent variables	Cronbach Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE	Corrélation	Love	Brand loyalty	Word of mouth	Relative Price
Love								
lov1				**0.714**				
lov2	0.723	0.822	0.793	**0.877**	**0.702**			
lov3				**0.887**				
lov4				**0.652**				
lov6				**0.793**				
Brand loyalty								
loy1				**0.758**				
loy2	0.923	0.951	0.866	**0.74**	0.666	**0.79**		
loy3				**0.667**				
Word of mouth								
wom1				**0.938**				
wom2	0.771	0.731	0.667	**0.933**	0.586	0.719	**0.931**	
wom3				**0.921**				
relative Price								
Pr1	0.918	0.961	0.924	**0.961**	0.745	0.705	0.705	**0.961**
Pr2				**0.961**				

Table 4: Evaluation of the structural model

Latent variable	Type	R²
Love	exogenous	
Loyalty	endogenous	0,750
Word of mouth	endogenous	0,517
Relative price	endogenous	0,496
Differenciation	endogenous	0,300
Average		0,516

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

Reliability can be verified by two measurements, Cronbach's Alpha and composite reliability index (Chin, 1998). The values of Cronbach alpha and composite reliability index that we calculated for each latent variable are greater than 0.7, following the recommendations of Tenenhaus and al., (2005) these results are satisfactory.

For convergent validity, Fornell and Larcker (1981) use the indicator AVE (average variance extracted) which must be greater than 0.5. The convergent validity also relies on the examination of the correlations (or loadings) of the measurements with their respective construct. The rule used is to consider that the correlation coefficient must be greater than 0.7, which implies that there is more variance shared between the construct and its measurement than variance error. We can also verify that each item is more correlated with its construct than with the other constructs of the model. From the results of Table 3, we have a measurement model of good convergent validity. In order to verify that there is no correlation between the items of a construct with the items of another; we use the verification of the discriminant validity. Verification is based on the comparison of the square root of the average extracted variance (AVE) of each latent variable with the correlation of the different latent variables two by two (Chin et al., 2010). According to Table 3, the square root of the AVE is greater than the correlations between the different dimensions of our model. Therefore, we can affirm the discriminant validity of the latent variables of our model.

a) Quality of the structural model
The structural model is evaluated on the basis of the predictive relevance of the latent variables. Multiple R^2 should be analyzed. These coefficients are used to get an idea of the contribution of each exogenous variable to the prediction of the endogenous variable.

According to Chin and al (2010) the usual values of R^2 are 0.67 (substantial), 0.33 (moderate) and 0.19 (low). In light of the values shown in Table 4, it can be concluded that the contribution of exogenous variables to the prediction of endogenous variables is moderate; it has a value of 0.516. Therefore, the model is significant.

b) Discussion and validation of research hypotheses
1) Analysis of the relationship between the love of my brand and loyalty
Based on the results of the statistical tests presented in Table 5, we find that the impact of brand love on loyalty is significant. Indeed, love for the brand has positive and significant effect on brand loyalty. The Student's statistic value associated with this variable is 50.538 (t> 1.96) with zero probability indicating that

positive brand emotions will have a positive impact on brand loyalty. This result confirms the hypothesis H1 that "brand love has a positive effect on loyalty".

2) Analysis of the relationship between loyalty and brand performance
- The results in the table above reflect the effect of brand loyalty respectively on word of mouth, brand differentiation and relative price. In other words, it's about the brand's performance. Calculated Student's statistic values exceed the threshold given by its tabulated value (1.96) (ie values of 13.904; 8.598 and 32.292> to 1.96). As a result, brand loyalty has a significant and positive impact on word of mouth, brand differentiation and relative price, respectively.

- Our confirmatory factor analysis shows that brand love positively influences brand loyalty. This result supports and expands the work of researchers who have already found evidence of the relationship between brand love and behavioral and attitudinal loyalty (Batra et al., 2012; Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006). Thus, the love of the brand appears as a measure of the potential of the brand, particularly related to the growth of loyalty. In turn, loyalty positively influences word of mouth (WOM), relative price and brand differentiation. As a result, there is a positive relationship between brand loyalty and performance measured by relative price, brand differentiation, and word of mouth. The analysis performed shows that loyalty has a positive impact on word of mouth, this result confirms that found by Reichheld (2003, 2006) and Walsh and Beatty (2007). Loyalty also has a positive impact on relative price and brand differentiation. The results of our research prove that the love of the brand leads to greater performance and against says the statement by Romaniuk (2013), that there is no evidence that the love of the brand increases the performance of the brand.

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

Table 5: Impact of brand love on loyalty

	Coefficient	standard deviation	T-Statistics	P Values
Love -> loyalty	0.866	0.017	50.538	0.000***

Table 6: Impact of loyalty on brand performance

	Coefficient	Standard deviation	T-Statistics	P Values
Loy->WOM	0.719	0.052	13.904	0.000***
Loy-> DIF	0.547	0.064	8.598	0.000***
Loy -> RP	0.705	0.022	32.292	0.000***

4. Conclusion

The purpose of this article is to explore the relationship between brand love and the actual performance of the brand. We find that the company's performance is closely tied to "brand love" and that "brand love" is predictive of superior performance. This research attempts to measure the performance of the brand using three indicators, namely, relative price, brand differentiation and word of mouth.

The love of the brand is a rich concept recently appeared in the field of consumer behavior that turns into increased loyalty, intention to pay the high price and positive word of mouth. Thus, marketers should formulate an appropriate strategy so that the brand has a strong emotional appeal and target customers fall in love with the brand. Indeed, a strategy to develop the love of the brand must be based on its antecedents.

Therefore, brand managers should focus on the love dimension of the consumer-brand relationship, and spend in advertising campaigns aimed at intensifying the emotional bond that consumers have with brands. This leads to greater brand loyalty, positive word of mouth, a willingness to pay a high price to have the brand, and ultimately higher sales and profits.

Like any study, ours has a number of limitations that offer opportunities for future research. Our study focused on brands of fashion products, future research should replicate these results, in other product categories with larger samples to broaden the areas of empirical validation of the model. The majority of brand love studies focus on tangible product brands, so future research could explore brand love and its impact on brand loyalty and performance in the service sector.

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Annex 1

Fashion brands most frequently mentioned by the interviewees

Nike	Mango
Dior	Levis
Gucci	Esprit
chanel	Benetton
Givenchy	Yves Rocher
Zara	Lacoste
Guess	Hugo Boss

Annex 2

Cross loading

	AMA	BO	FID	PR
Amour1	0.714	0.391	0.592	0.633
Amour2	0.577	0.241	0.491	0.314
Amour3	0.887	0.411	0.765	0.689
Amour4	0.452	0.313	0.481	0.297
Amour6	0.793	0.655	0.655	0.584
BaO1	0.547	0.938	0.691	0.56
BaO2	0.622	0.933	0.69	0.66
BaO3	0.46	0.921	0.622	0.76
Differ	0.642	0.272	0.547	0.521
Fatt1	0.75	0.506	0.758	0.683
Fcomp1	0.452	0.304	0.64	0.388
Fcomp2	0.534	0.648	0.667	0.325
PXrelatif1	0.745	0.599	0.678	0.961
PXrelatif2	0.688	0.757	0.677	0.961