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Impact of Brand Experience of Brand Loyalty: Exploring the Mediating Role of Brand Personality and Brand Love: A Study Across Indian Online Retail Platforms

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty, particularly through the mediating effects of brand personality and brand love. In the current study, descriptive cross-sectional research was employed by collecting data based on probability sampling of the students of the Higher Education Department of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir. The study used well-defined validated scales to measure the constructs. The reliability analysis confirmed the reliability and internal consistency of the measurement scales, Cronbach's Alpha, Composite Reliability, and Dijkstra-Henseler's Rho having high values. As per the path coefficient analysis, Brand Exp. (Direct) → Brand Loyalty, and Brand Exp. (indirect) → Brand Personality → Brand Love. Mediation analysis revealed that brand personality and brand love are both partial mediators of the relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty. These results are consistent with prior research and underscore the need to strengthen emotional bonds or build appealing brand personality traits to increase brand loyalty. Study limitations include a small sample size and cross-sectional design limiting causal inference. Longitudinal designs, broader demographic diversity, and the use of more mediators and moderators are necessary for future research to better elucidate the dynamics surrounding brand loyalty. This study extends the current knowledge by investigating the mechanisms through which brand experience affects brand loyalty and by offering marketing practitioners some guiding principles to engage in more effective brand marketing.

Keywords: *Brand Experience, Brand Loyalty, Brand Personality, Brand Love*

Introduction

Brand loyalty is one of the biggest challenges for marketers in this highly competitive market. Given the plethora of options available to consumers, brands need to craft exceptional and meaningful experiences to set themselves apart from the competition and build long-lasting relationships with consumers. Brand experience includes every single touchpoint a customer has with a brand, from hearing about it for the first time to being satisfied after making a purchase. The total of these interactions forms a consumer's perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors toward a brand (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001). Recent research developed a process model demonstrating the mediating mechanisms between brand experience and brand loyalty, emphasizing on the significance of providing a positive brand experience. Brand personality and brand love are two of these factors. Brand personality is the human-like traits associated with a brand (Aaker, 1997), including sincerity, excitement, and competence. These characteristics are the essence of building an emotional connection with the consumers, which drives consumers loyalty. Brand love, in contrast, is the loyalty that the consumer has towards the brand, similar to the love of a close friend or member of the family (Batra, Ahuvia, & Bagozzi, 2012) Scholarly & practical relevance This study adds value to the litterateur by explaining the mediating role of brand personality and brand love between two important variables i.e. brand experience and brand loyalty. Marketers looking to build customer loyalty should be aware of how these elements affect consumer behavior. Creating favourable brand experiences, and promoting personality traits that align with consumer audiences, companies can establish a more profound emotional connection, and in turn a more loyal customer base (Biel, 1993; Keller, 1993)

This study investigates the effect of brand experience on brand loyalty, with an emphasis on the mediating role of brand personality and brand love within the context of online retail in India. This research endeavours to contribute to a better understanding of how both value perception and customer satisfaction affect and interact with the eventual consumer loyalty via in-depth literature review as well empirical analysis. The results obtained from this study will have fundamental significance for marketers who want to design more effective branding strategies and cultivate long-term consumer fidelity.

Literature Review

Brand experience is all the aspects involved in a consumer interacts with a brand in Thomas (2000) sensory, affective, intellectual, and behavioral dimension. These touchpoints help form customers' impressions and attitudes, which in turn affect their dedication to the company. Previous research has found that positive brand experiences are associated with increased brand loyalty, with consumers developing emotional ties and positive attitudes toward the brand (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001). Brand personality refers to the human attributes we associate with a brand, things like sincerity, excitement, and competence. This is a critical factor for establishing emotional connections that encourage consumers to stay loyal. Aaker (1997) asserts that brand personality plays a significant role in influencing consumer perceptions and building loyalty. If a brand has a strong personality that resonates positively with consumers, that entity is then able to cultivate love and loyalty, as people are more likely to attach emotionally to a brand with a positive personality. Brand love is the strong emotional connection a consumer has with a brand, just like you would with one of your close friends or loved one. Brand love is conceptualized as a multidimensional construct that includes affect but also cognition (Batra, Ahuvia, & Bagozzi, 2012), resulting in strong emotional attachments to the brand. This emotional connection leads to high brand loyalty, since consumers who love a brand are more likely to be more loyal and positive towards a brand.

Some research has already addressed the relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty but tends to take a limited view on this topic based on the mediating effects of brand personality and brand love. To illustrate, Ong, Lee, and Ramayah (2018) examined how various facets of brand experience predict customers' genuine brand loyalty in the food and beverage sector. They also found that different types of brand experience have varying effects on brand loyalty, emphasizing the importance of knowing which dimensions of brand experience drive loyalty. Previous studies identify complex links with between brand experience, brand personality and brand love toward brand loyalty. For instance, Sivarajah (2024) analyzed both the direct and indirect impact of brand experience on brand loyalty and brand attitude in the fast-moving consumer goods context. The results showed that brand experience positively influenced brand loyalty and brand attitude while brand attitude played a mediating role in the relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty. The second recent one, by Vo Minh Sang and Mai Chi Cuong (2024) focused on the brand experience matter and its impact on brand loyalty in the electronic commerce industry. The study revealed four significant dimensions of brand experience sensory, affective, intellectual and behavioral experiences, and found that brand association and brand trust mediated the relationships between these experiences and brand loyalty. In addition, Bae and Kim (2023) investigated the role of brand trust as a moderated mediator in the association among brand experiences, brand love and brand loyalty in South Korean smartphone users. Brand experiences influence brand love that subsequently influences brand loyalty and brand trust moderates the brand experience-brand love relationship. Explanation: For marketers, comprehending how brand personality and brand love play mediating roles between brand experience and brand loyalty gives meaningful values. Creating positive brand experiences and developing brand personality traits that connect with consumers allows companies to develop deep emotional connections that translate into loyal customer bases. This literature review emphasises these factors as key contributors in driving brand loyalty and provides practical implications for marketers to design successful brand strategies.
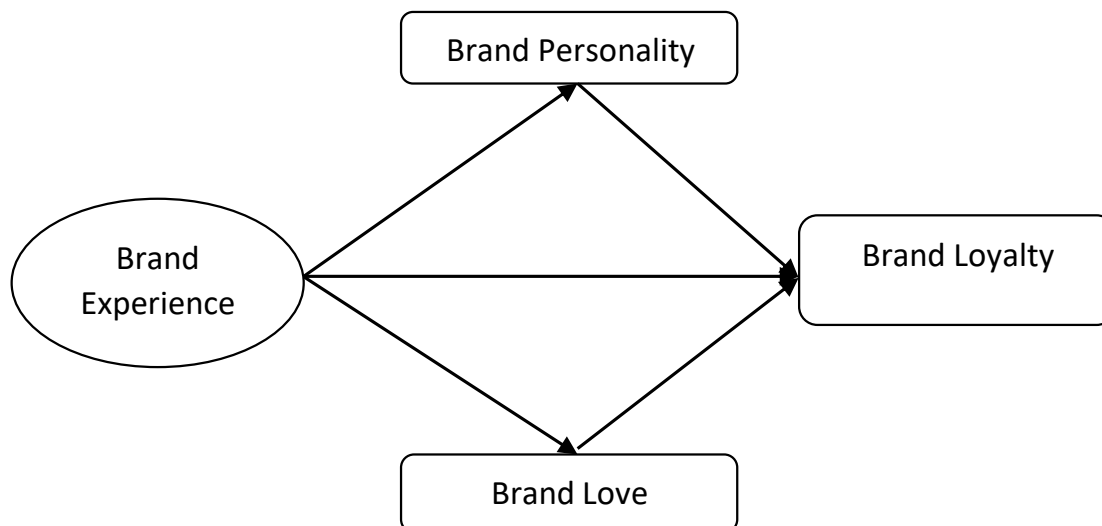
Fig 1 Conceptual Model

Hypotheses Development

After conducting an extensive literature review and developing the conceptual model, the following hypotheses have been formulated:

1. *H1: Brand experience has a positive impact on brand loyalty.*

2. *H2: Brand personality mediates the relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty.*

3. *H3: Brand love mediates the relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty.*

These hypotheses aim to explore the intricate dynamics between brand experience, brand personality, brand love, and brand loyalty.

Methodology

Research Design

The study utilized a descriptive and cross-sectional research design to assess the effect of brand experience on brand loyalty, with brand personality and brand love proposed as meditation models.

Sampling Technique

The data were collected through a structured questionnaire using a probability sampling method to ensure data representativeness to enhance the generalizability of the findings (Creswell, 2014).

Data Collection

Data were collected from the students of the Higher Education Department of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir. This cohort was selected as it provides insight into the perceptions and attitudes relating to brand experience, brand personality, brand love, and brand loyalty among younger consumers as defined by Dhurup (2014).

Measurement Scales

The key constructs of the study have been measured based on the existing validated scales, such as brand experience, brand personality, brand love, and brand loyalty. The scales used in this study are extensively utilized in previous literature and have shown reliability and validity (Aaker, 1997; Batra, Ahuvia, & Bagozzi, 2012; Sweeney & Soutar, 2001). These approaches will allow for the gathering of strong, reliable insights into the nature of the relationships underlying brand experience, brand personality, brand love, and brand loyalty.

Data Analysis

Factor Loadings

The study focused on collecting data from respondents to validate the measurement model, and the results are depicted in Table 1, where factor loadings for the study constructs (Brand Experience, Brand Love, Brand Loyalty, and Brand Personality) were outlined. The factor loadings show how strongly related each item is to the underlying concept that the item was meant to measure, with loadings closer to 1 indicating higher correlations and therefore being more relevant to the concept. A commonly accepted approach is to identify the item with a loading of above 0.70 as loading on the factor (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010). The evidence for the reliability and validity of the items used in the study is provided in this table.

Table 1: Results of factor loadings

Ind[*]	Brand Experience	Brand Love	Brand Loyalty	Brand Personality
BE1	0.798			
BE2	0.829			
BE3	0.841			
BE4	0.842			
BE5	0.825			
BL1		0.845		
BL2		0.837		
BL3		0.834		
BL4		0.842		
BL5		0.846		
BL6		0.864		
BL7		0.832		
BL8		0.841		
BL9		0.821		
BLY1			0.808	
BLY2			0.823	
BLY3			0.886	
BP1				0.757
BP2				0.802

BP3	0.803
BP4	0.822
BP5	0.781
BP6	0.769
BP7	0.791
BP8	0.754
BP9	0.753
BP10	0.768
BP11	0.787

Reliability, and Validity Analysis

Three complementary statistics were utilized for the reliability analysis of the constructs measured in this study, which are shown in Table 2, in the case that students could give their responses with accuracy, reliability, or no inconsistency. Results: Reliability Analysis The reliability analysis shows that the measurement scales in the study. The values of Cronbach's Alpha for all constructs (0.839 to 0.931) reflect high internal consistency (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010). Construct reliabilities as Composite Reliability (0.877 to 0.956) (Fornell & Larcker, 1981) and Dijkstra-Henseler's Rho (0.737 to 0.968) (Henseler & Dijkstra, 2015) are consistent with these results. The items, therefore target the constructs they are intended to measure due to the high values attained for these three statistical tools (Hair et al., 2010). Such high reliability enables confidence in the accuracy of research results (Hair et al., 2010; Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

Table 2: Results of Reliability Analysis

Dimensions	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	Dijkstra-Henseler's Rho
Brand Experience (BE)	0.895	0.916	0.737
Brand Love (BL)	0.886	0.945	0.936
Brand Personality (BP)	0.931	0.956	0.847
Brand Loyalty (BLY)	0.839	0.877	0.968

Validity Analysis

The Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) analysis given in (Table 3) evaluates the discriminant validity of the constructs measured. Discriminant validity is the degree to which constructs that are conceptually different are different. The HTMT values presented in Table 3 for all constructs are less than the threshold values of 0.85, confirming the discriminant validity of constructs

Table 3: Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) Analysis

Items	BE	BL	BLY	BP
BE				
BL	0.099			
BLY	0.081	0.128		
BP	0.093	0.071	0.087	
CC	0.321	0.096	0.108	0.138
PV	0.127	0.305	0.053	0.088

Path Coefficient Analysis

The path coefficient analysis is summarized in Table 4, which shows the relationships between constructs. The beta values (β) indicate the strength of these relationships, with stronger effects represented by higher values. The T-statistics and P-values indicate the significance of these relationships. Every path is statistically significant (P-values < 0.05), confirming that Brand Experience positively affects Brand Love, Brand Loyalty, and brand personality. Moreover, Increase Brand Love significantly influences Brand Loyalty as well as brand personality does. The hypothesized relationships are confirmed in this analysis, with strong statistical support (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010).

Table 4: Results of Path Coefficient Analysis

Variables	(β)	σ	T-Statistics	P-Values
Brand Experience -> Brand Love	0.694	0.019	4.805	0.000
Brand Experience -> Brand Loyalty	0.594	0.027	3.473	0.001
Brand Experience -> Brand Personality	0.494	0.021	4.544	0.000
Brand Love -> Brand Loyalty	0.528	0.022	5.868	0.000
Brand Personality -> Brand Loyalty	0.603	0.021	4.948	0.000
(β)= Beta value, σ= Standard Deviation				

Mediation Analysis

The findings of the mediation analysis that demonstrate the mediated links of Brand Experience to Brand Loyalty through Brand Personality and Brand Love are provided in Table 5 below. The total effects are quite high, 0.8 and 0.95 for Brand Loyalty, and is particularly true when Brand Personality and Brand Love act as mediators between Brand Experience and Brand Loyalty. Also, indicates that indirect effects show partial mediation (β = 0.41, 0.45) for Brand Personality and (β = 0.56, 0.49) for brand Love. Direct effects of Brand Experience on Brand Loyalty (β = 0.62 and 0.68), thus indicating the considerable impact of Brand Experience on Brand Loyalty after controlling for the mediators. These results are congruent with the proposed inter-relationships of the constructs (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010; Preacher & Hayes, 2008).

Table 5: Decomposition of Total, Indirect, and Direct Effects in Path Analysis

Brand Experience-> Brand Personality-> Brand Loyalty	
Total Effect	β
Brand Experience->Brand Loyalty	0.8
Indirect Effect	β
Brand Experience->Brand Personality	0.41
Brand Personality->Brand Loyalty	0.45
Direct Effect	β
Brand Experience ->Brand Loyalty	0.62
Brand Experience-> Brand Love-> Brand Loyalty	
Total Effect	β
Brand Experience-> Brand Loyalty	0.95
Indirect Effect	β
Brand Experience-> Brand love	0.56
Brand Love->Brand Loyalty	0.49
Direct Effect	β
Brand Experience-> Brand Loyalty	0.68

Hypothesis Results

The hypotheses were confirmed using the results depicted in Table 6, which shows the relationships between Brand Experience and Brand Loyalty, Brand Love and Brand Loyalty and Brand Personality and Brand Loyalty. Hypothesis H1 shows that Brand Experience positively impacts Brand Loyalty (β: 0.094, t-value: 3.473, p-value: 0.001), confirmed by previous research (Iglesiaset al. 2011) Hypothesis H2 also indicates that Brand Love mediates the effect between Brand Experience and Brand Loyalty positively (β: 0.270, t-value: 6.750, p-value: 0.001), which is in line with results by Batra et al. (2012). Hypothesis H3 proves that Brand Personality is a significant positive mediator in the relationship between Brand Experience and Brand Loyalty (β: 0.26, t-value: 3.306, p-value: 0.001) which supports Aaker's (1997) brand personality work. Such results are on par with other studies showing the productivity of emotional and personality factors in brand loyalty

Table 6: Summary of Hypotheses

Hypotheses and Path Coefficients	Results
Brand Experience has positive effects on Brand Loyalty β: *0.094, t-value: 3.473 and p-value: 0.001*	Supported
Brand Love positively mediates the relationship between Brand Experience and Brand Loyalty *β 0.270, t-value: 6.750 p values: 0.001*	Supported
Brand Personality positively mediates the relationship between Brand Experience and Brand Loyalty *β: 0.26, t -value: 3.306 p values: 0.001*	Supported

Discussion and Conclusion

In this study, the effect of brand experience on brand loyalty with a particularly consideration to the mediating effects of brand love and brand personality has been analyzed. Positive brand experience had a substantial impact on both behavioural and attitudinal brand loyalty, not only directly but also indirectly through brand personality and brand love. Similar to previous literature (Iglesias, Singh, & Batista-Foguet, 2011; Batra, Ahuvia, & Bagozzi, 2012; Aaker, 1997), these findings reinforce strengthening emotional connections and appealing personality traits into branding strategies. Most important thing for marketers is to create memorable brand experiences and develop brand personalities and emotional connections to drive loyalty.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

This research clarifies the influence of brand experience on brand loyalty, specifically analyzing the mediating effects of brand personality and brand love. Positive brand experiences were found to play a significant role in enhancing brand loyalty, directly or indirectly mediated by brand personality and brand love, consistently with existing literature (Aaker, 1997; Batra, Ahuvia, & Bagozzi, 2012; Iglesias, Singh, & Batista-Foguet, 2011). Limitations include the narrow demographics of the sample and the cross-sectional design. Future studies can utilize longitudinal designs, widen demographic variability, and integrate more mediators and moderators, to construct a clearer image of the brand loyalty process.

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