

Matters of the hearts: Unraveling the Brand Love-Repurchase Intention Nexus through a Systematic Literature Review

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ABSTRAK

Tujuan Penelitian ini mengeksplorasi konsep penting dari kecintaan terhadap merek dan bagaimana pengaruhnya terhadap perilaku konsumen, terutama dalam konteks niat membeli kembali. Kecintaan merek merupakan ikatan emosional yang kuat antara konsumen dan merek, yang dapat mempengaruhi keputusan pembelian dan loyalitas merek. **Metodologi** Penelitian ini menggunakan studi literatur dengan penambahan metode bibliometrik untuk memperkuat analisis. Artikel yang diperoleh untuk analisis bibliometrik sebanyak 62 artikel dan artikel yang telah disaring untuk dibahas terdapat 3 artikel yang sesuai. **Temuan** Dengan memahami hubungan antara kecintaan terhadap merek dan niat membeli kembali, bisnis dapat mengembangkan strategi pemasaran yang efektif untuk meningkatkan keterlibatan konsumen, mendorong penjualan, dan memperkuat loyalitas merek. **Saran** Penelitian ini memberikan wawasan berharga bagi para praktisi pemasaran dan pengusaha untuk memanfaatkan kecintaan terhadap merek sebagai alat untuk menciptakan hubungan yang mendalam dengan konsumen dan mencapai keunggulan kompetitif yang berkelanjutan.

Kata kunci: Cinta merek; Niat membeli kembali; Bibliometrik; Tinjauan literatur.

ABSTRACT

Purpose This study explores the important concept of brand love and how it influences consumer behavior, especially in the context of repurchase intention. Brand love is a strong emotional bond between consumers and brands, which can influence purchasing decisions and brand loyalty. **Methodology** This research uses literature study with the addition of bibliometric methods to strengthen the analysis. The articles obtained for bibliometric analysis were 62 articles and the articles that had been filtered for discussion contained 3 suitable articles. **Findings** By understanding the relationship between brand love and repurchase intent, businesses can develop effective marketing strategies to increase consumer engagement, drive sales, and strengthen brand loyalty. **Suggestion** This research provides valuable insights for marketing practitioners and entrepreneurs to utilize brand love as a tool to create deep relationships with consumers and achieve sustainable competitive advantage.

Keywords: Brand love; Repurchase intention; Bibliometric; Literature review.

INTRODUCTION

In today's dynamic and competitive global market, understanding consumer behavior and the factors that influence their purchasing decisions is crucial for business success. Among the various factors that impact consumer choices, brand love has emerged as a significant determinant of repurchase intention (Verma, 2021). Brand love goes beyond

mere brand loyalty or satisfaction; it represents a deep emotional attachment and passion for a brand, leading to a strong desire to engage with the brand and repurchase its products or services (Carol & Ahuvia, 2006; Ghorbanzadeh & Rahehagh, 2020). As consumers increasingly connect with brands on an emotional level, understanding the relationship between brand love and repurchase intention is essential (Huber et al., 2015; Singh & Wagner, 2023) for businesses to develop effective marketing strategies that resonate with consumers and drive sales.

Brand love is a complex concept that has been defined in various ways. Some scholars define it as an intense emotional attachment to a brand, characterized by feelings of passion, intimacy, and commitment (Palusuk et al., 2019). Others emphasize the transformative power of brand love, suggesting that it can alter consumer perceptions, behaviors, and even self-identity (Haq et al., 2024; Singh & Wagner, 2023). Research on brand love has gained significant traction in recent years, driven by the growing recognition of its impact on consumer behavior and brand loyalty (Osmanovic, 2020; Osorio et al., 2023).

Repurchase intention refers to a consumer's willingness and likelihood to repurchase a particular product or service (De Toni et al., 2022). It is a key indicator of consumer demand and a crucial factor for businesses to consider when making marketing and product development decisions. Repurchase intention is influenced by a multitude of factors, including product attributes, price, brand reputation, marketing communications, and personal factors such as lifestyle and values. While these factors play a significant role, brand love has emerged as a powerful predictor of repurchase intention, suggesting that consumers are more likely to repurchase products or services from brands they love (Gumparthi & Patra, 2020).

A systematic literature review (SLR) is a rigorous and transparent research method that provides a comprehensive and unbiased synthesis of existing literature on a specific topic. It involves a structured process of identifying, evaluating, and analyzing relevant research studies to draw meaningful conclusions and identify gaps in the current knowledge. SLR is particularly valuable in areas with extensive research, such as the relationship between brand love and repurchase intention, as it allows for a systematic and objective assessment of the existing body of knowledge.

This research aims to conduct a systematic literature review of the past decade to investigate the relationship between brand love and repurchase intention. By examining the current state of knowledge in this area, the research will provide valuable insights for businesses and marketers on how to leverage brand love to enhance consumer engagement, drive sales, and foster brand loyalty. The review will also identify areas for future research to further advance the understanding of this complex and dynamic relationship.

Theoretical Underpinnings of Brand Love Development

The concept of brand love has gained significant traction in recent decades, driven by the growing recognition of the role of emotions in consumer behavior. Theoretical frameworks such as interpersonal closeness, emotional satisfaction, brand trust, and social identity theory have provided a foundation for understanding brand love (Vernuccio et al., 2014; Lee & Hsieh et al., 2022).

Interpersonal closeness theory suggests that brand love mirrors the characteristics of close interpersonal relationships, characterized by feelings of intimacy,

passion, and commitment (Vernuccio et al., 2014). Emotional satisfaction theory posits that brand love stems from positive emotional experiences with a brand, leading to a strong emotional attachment (Smith et al., 2016). Brand trust theory emphasizes the importance of trust in fostering brand love, as consumers are more likely to develop deep emotional connections with brands they perceive as trustworthy (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001). Social identity theory suggests that brand love can enhance self-esteem and social identity by associating consumers with a brand that aligns with their values and aspirations (Brown & Kicker, 2013).

Defining Brand Love: A Multifaceted Perspective

Brand love has been defined in various ways by scholars, highlighting its multifaceted nature. Albert, Wesford, Merunka, and Valette-Florence (2009) define brand love as "an emotional force that links consumers to brands, characterized by feelings of love, passion, and intimacy". Vernuccio et al. (2014) offer a more comprehensive definition, conceptualizing brand love as "a complex emotional state involving feelings of love, passion, and intimacy towards a brand, resulting in a strong and enduring attachment to the brand".

While these definitions share common elements, they also reflect the nuances of brand love as a multifaceted construct. Lee & Hsieh (2022) emphasize the distinction between intimacy and attraction as key dimensions of brand love. Intimacy refers to feelings of closeness and connection with the brand, while attraction represents feelings of passion and excitement towards the brand.

Measuring Brand Love: Capturing the Emotional Dimensions

Researchers have developed various scales to measure brand love, with varying dimensions and approaches. Vernuccio et al. (2014) propose a three-dimensional brand love scale, encompassing intimacy, passion, and commitment. Two-dimensional brand love scale, focusing on intimacy and attraction (Rahman et al., 2021; Sarkar et al., 2012). These dimensions reflect the diverse emotional aspects of brand love and provide a framework for assessing its intensity and impact.

Brand Love: Distinct from Other Brand Variables

Brand love stands as a distinct concept from other brand variables such as brand quality, brand image, and brand trust. Brand quality refers to consumer perceptions of the superior attributes of a brand's products or services. Brand image encompasses the overall associations and perceptions consumers hold about a brand. Brand trust reflects consumers' belief that a brand will consistently deliver on its promises and act in their best interests.

Brand love, in contrast, delves into the emotional realm, capturing the deep and enduring attachment consumers develop towards a brand. It goes beyond mere satisfaction or trust; it represents a passionate connection that transcends rational considerations and influences consumer behavior in profound ways.

Brand love has emerged as a critical factor in understanding and influencing consumer behavior. Its ability to foster deep emotional connections with consumers makes it a powerful tool for businesses seeking to enhance loyalty, drive sales, and achieve sustainable competitive advantage. By delving into the theoretical underpinnings, diverse definitions, measurement approaches, and strategic implications

of brand love, this literature review provides a comprehensive foundation for further research and practical applications.

Cultivating Brand Love: A Strategic Imperative for Businesses to repurchase intention

Developing brand love offers compelling benefits for businesses. Brand love can enhance consumer loyalty (Bıçakcıoğlu et al., 2018; Sta et al., 2018), repurchase intention (Hsu, 2023; Suetrong et al., 2018). Consumers who love a brand are more likely to recommend the brand to others, resist switching to competitor brands, and pay premium prices for the brand's products or services.

Brand love can also serve as a powerful differentiator in a competitive marketplace. By fostering emotional connections with consumers, brands can create a unique and enduring customer experience that sets them apart from rivals. This emotional loyalty can translate into sustained profitability and market share growth.

METHODOLOGY

This systematic literature review research was taken from Google Scholar with the keywords "Brand love", "Purchase intention", and "Elsevier". Data collection using Publish or Perish (PoP), 440 articles emerged which were then filtered based on suitability of the content of the abstract and publication. The filter results obtained 62 articles. These selected articles are then processed with bibliometrics from VosViewer. Apart from the bibliometric results, the analysis continues by sorting based on the full paper and the content of the material only explains the relationship between brand love and repurchase intention or rerepurchase intention.

DISCUSSION

Bibliometric

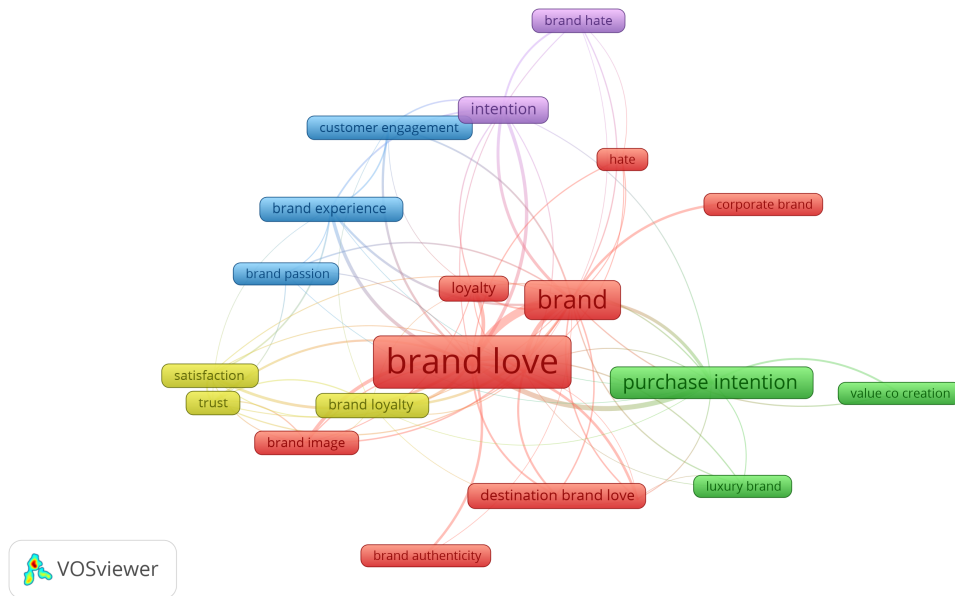
The results of the bibliometric process with Vos Viewer show that research on brand love and repurchase intention is divided into five clusters. These results can be seen in Figure 1. The five clusters are divided into red, green, blue, yellow and purple.

Cluster in red

The first cluster in red, shows that the term brand love is related to the terms brand, hate, corporate brand, brand authenticity, and also loyalty. This term links the words love and hate regarding brands. As in the research of Hu et al. (2018) who revealed that the results of brand rejection are related to hate and love which become brand status. Apart from that, this cluster has a lot to do with brand love and loyalty. Research linking brand love-loyalty shows inconsistent results. Consumers can love the brand without having to be loyal and buy it, furthermore brand love has more of an impact on brand equity than loyalty (Robertson, 2022). Meanwhile, other research shows that brand love influences consumer loyalty (Coelho et al., 2019; Unal & Aidin, 2013). In contrast to research from Song et al. (2019) which revealed that brand love moderates the influence of trust on loyalty.

Green cluster

Meanwhile, in the green cluster, terms related to repurchase intention in research that uses the keyword brand love are related to value co-creation and also luxury brands. This shows that there is still not much research on brand love that links it to repurchase intention.



Picture 1 Network visualization

Source: VosViewer result

Cluster in blue

In this cluster, the brand love-purchase intention link is linked to engagement, experience and passion. The research link that emphasizes brands is shared with the brand-consumer construct (Commitment) and also affective constructs such as brand love and brand passion (Albert et al., 2013). In relation to engagement, engaged customers will increase their love for the brand (Pabla, & Soch, 2023) and engagement is built from consumer experiences regarding the product or service (Bazi et al., 2023).

Yellow cluster

Brand love is also closely related to customer satisfaction and customer trust which leads to loyalty and repurchase intention. Experience with a brand influences customer trust and satisfaction which then increases love for the brand, then this feeling of love increases loyalty (Drennan et al., 2015). This is different from research by Pabla and Soch (2023) which links the experience of influencing satisfaction with the mediation of brand love. Therefore, the relationship between brand love and satisfaction is still a question, whether satisfaction influences brand love or brand love influences satisfaction.

Cluster in purple

In this cluster, the term brand hate appears as opposed to brand love which is associated with not wanting to repurchase. This emerged in research (Curina et al.,

2020) which showed that when feelings of hatred towards a brand arise, this influences the unwillingness to repurchase, and this is mediated by online complaints and negative word of mouth.

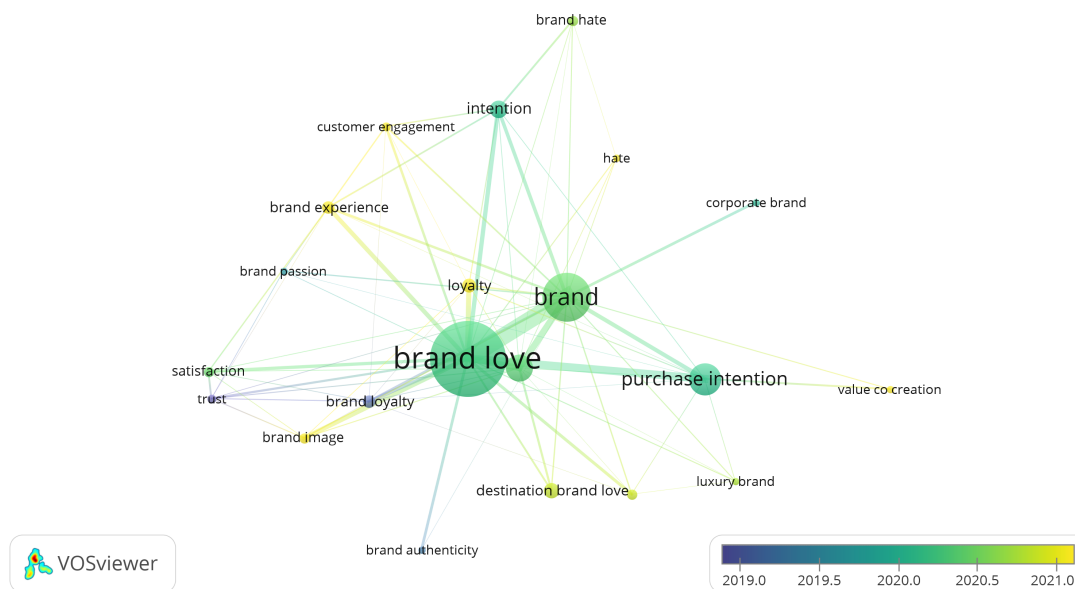


Figure 2 Co occurrence visualization

Source: VosViewer result



Figure 3 Density visualization

Source: VosViewer result

Figure 2 further explains the latest research regarding brand love-repurchase intention. Recent research seems to link brand love with brand hate, destination, brand experience and customer engagement. Apart from that, loyalty and brand loyalty seem to have more strength and a closer relationship. These results are further supported by the

filtering results at the following stage, namely based on content and full text. Only 3 articles were found that linked brand love and repurchase intention.

Figure 3 further shows the level of frequent emergence of research around brand love and loyalty or brand loyalty. This is supported by when carrying out final filtering of articles, many articles link brand love to loyalty rather than repurchase intention. Meanwhile, the term repurchase intention is much related to other brand terms such as brand equity.

Future research direction

There are still many opportunities for research that links brand love with repurchase intention. These results were obtained from bibliometric imaging results via the Vos viewer. That there is still relatively little research on brand love and is more related to loyalty. Based on VosViewer result, several studies link other brand terms and outcomes such as engagement, as well as research on factors that influence brand love itself.

In this research, it was also found that the relationship between brand love and loyalty has been researched more than the relationship with repurchase intention. This brand love-loyalty relationship is still very varied and there are inconsistencies. So it is hoped that future research directions can also reveal this relationship more deeply.

Apart from that, the relationship between brand love and brand satisfaction or customer satisfaction is still unclear. Based on the research results of Pabla and Soch (2023), brand love mediates the relationship between brand engagement and satisfaction. Meanwhile, according to research by Drennan et al. (2015) brand satisfaction influences or is an antecedent to love of the brand. Therefore, this is something interesting to research, considering the differences in relationships that occur. Further research is needed to explain the position of these two variables, it is possible that there is a reciprocal relationship.

Furthermore, to clarify the future direction of research regarding brand love, it can be seen from the three articles that link brand love with repurchase intention. Research by Kudeshia et al. (2016) provide results that with an increase in the number of fanpage liking, this shows and increases brand love which increases repurchase intention. This is different from the research conducted by Kumar et al. (2021) shows a different relationship, namely by increasing repurchase intention, this desire will increase love for the brand. This is different from research from Nikhashemi et al. (2019) which places brand love as a moderator variable that strengthens the relationship between brand experience and continuous repurchase intention.

Therefore, research on brand love is still very wide open. In terms of the theory or basis used, which concerns the relationship between variables that will be linked, such as the use of social media. Likewise in terms of variable placement as independent, dependent, moderating or mediating variables. How the mechanism of brand love influences consumer behavior, especially intention to repurchase, is still not well explained. One side of brand love influences repurchase intention, but other research shows the opposite, namely that the presence of repurchase intention increases brand love.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion that can be given from the results of the analysis and discussion is that research on the theme of brand love is still very much needed. Future research should focus on the mechanism of how brand love is related to repurchase intention, whether it is a reciprocal relationship. Increasing empirical research for this will provide strong support for the clarity of the relationship between brand love and repurchase intention and other consumer behavior outcomes.

Research implications

The findings of this research hold important practical implications for marketing practitioners. The results indicate that cultivating brand love among consumers can drive higher repurchase intentions. Therefore, companies need to focus on creating strong emotional connections between the brand and consumers. Marketing strategies to consider include strengthening the uniqueness and personality of the brand, actively engaging consumers through compelling content and experiences, and ensuring consistent product and service quality. By effectively managing brand love, companies can enhance consumer loyalty and maintain a competitive advantage in the increasingly dynamic market.

Research Limitations and Suggestions

This research only uses data taken from Google Scholar and is limited to Elsevier publishers. So it is very limited in drawing conclusions. Future research for literature reviews should use a broader and more complete database, so that it can capture better results.

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