Section A-Research Paper
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How brand experience can be turned into brand love in Millennials and GenZ

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Abstract

Introduction - Academicians are focused on marketing and relative strategy and identify that consumers approach brands that nurture their memory and provide a unique experience. Positively, brand experience promotes favourable consumer reaction for the brand and allows emotional connectivity to proactively participate with consumers buying behaviour and perception through attracting, inspiring toward developing the brand love.

Objective - The motive of the research is to seek brand love and brand experience and try to frame the work from the lens of Millennials and Gen Z. Further, analysing brand experiences of Millennials and Gen Z can be turned into Brand love.

Methodology - Research mainly explores how brand experience transformed into brand love. To fulfil the object research utilise the Partial Least Square-Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) approach. The sample size is 100 and SPSS 26 and WrapPLS 7.0 tool is used to analyse the data.

Results - The research takes five components under consideration (brand passion, brand relation and affection and connection, brand commitment, consumer brand identity) and identifies their association with BE and BL. The paper indicates that BE eventually impacts on building brand love through brand satisfaction among the consumers who belong from generation Z and Millennials.

Keywords : Brand Experience, Brand Love, perception of Millennials and Gen Z toward brand experience and brand love.

1. Introduction

Brand Experience (BE)

Consumers are more fascinated in today's digital world as the survey published by eMarkter, (2020) revealed that around 65% of the customers are positively influenced by brand experience throughout their purchasing. Conventionally brand unable to highlight how brand is administrating the consumer and brand relation based on emotional beliefs although, differentiating brands from competitors rely on the capability to develop experienced consumers such as being conveniently recognisable, fun, appealing, inspiring and so on (Akoglu&Özbek, 2022).

Brand Love

Brand love is identified as an emotional connectivity toward a brand based on the consumer satisfaction, brand loyalty and its connectivity with users. Customer love for specific brands impacts on preferable marketing strategies such as passion, connection, optimistic WOM publicity regarding product and true affection for the company through brand loyalty (Joshi &Garg,2021). It is a response which is expressed by satisfied consumers and plays an influencing role on consumer-brand relationships. Because brand love found correlation with loyalty, consumer satisfaction, and attachment with specific brands, thus, it attained enormous interest in the research world to explore the impact of brand love (Kang, A, 2015).

Generation Z is identified as a generation born after 1995 and recognised as a cohort born, Moreover generation Z holds 32% of the world demography and this makes this segment of population as one of the most emerging, largest contributor and diverse generation of the global population. They belong to a sober generation category which have personal ambition and have enormous awareness as they do not directly shop but they research and explore possibilities before buying. On the other hand, millennials are known as generation Y, net generation or eco boomers who are born in the 80's and 90's. Presently, generations Y are a group of people who hold 23% of the global population (Mandagi, D. W., &Aseng, A. C. 2021). Both the generations often sink together because they share several features such as highly educated experts in technology believe in innovation and creative approach. They are considered the future of a global economy which is already knocking the door. Both the generations play a vital role in influencing market strategies based on their beliefs and buying behaviours (Gutfreund, J, 2016).

1.1 Background

The market size of Indian retailing is projected to accelerate with a base of 9% from 2019 to 2030 and become USD 1407 billion in 2026 which optimistically crosses the USD 1.8 trillion till 2030. Virtual retailing which acts as a backbone in pandemic situations and government identified boom acceleration in the e-retail market with promising growth of USD 140 billion by 2026 (IBEF, 2022). Presently India holds the third largest position in e-shopping . The main fueling ingredient in the retailing marketplace is favourable demographics, increasing urbanisation, harness technology, rising consumer expectation and satisfaction, growing preferences of brand choice and higher inspiration. Brand diversity indicates that companies attain enormous interest in Indian markets because of Indian consumers which provide them a ray of hope for accelerating growth and driving the marketplace. Future, among all different consumers segment millennials and generation Z act as a most crucial segment. Both the generations are liberal, open minded, technical savvy, highly dynamic individuals, and constantly transforming their buying behaviour make the market more flourishing and diversified.

2. Literature Reviews

In the present scenario, customers are not only exploring tangible and characteristics while buying goods and services as they are

willing to seek for "intangible and symbolic features such as distinctive experience. This distinctive experience arises from the brand's environment, interaction", its identity, the service provided by the company and other elements (Ong, C et al., 2018). Henceforth, academicians who are focused on marketing and relative strategy identify that consumers approach brands that nurture their memory and provide a unique experience. Positively, brand experience promotes favourable consumer reaction for the brand and allows emotional connectivity to proactively participate with consumers buying behaviour and perception through attracting, inspiring toward the brand. This indicates that brand experience enhances importance from a marketing perspective as it vitaly considered for emotional consequences with consumers (Hwang, E. et al., 2019)

(Joshi &Garg, 2021) indicates that brand engagement plays a mediating role between brand love and loyalty. Components like brand trust and brand image play a significant role in formulating brand experience which eventually impact on building brand love through brand satisfaction among the consumers who belong from generation Z. Another study (Mostafa&Kasamani, 2021) tried to investigate 278 people who are living in Lebanon and using smartphones and determining the impact of BE on brand loyalty. The outcome shows that BE encourages long lasting brand reality that is based on the pillar of brand passion, connection and affection toward the brand.

The motive of the research (Huang, C. C. 2017) is to investigate the intermediate role of brand love and branch trust on front experience and brand loyalty by focusing on the Gen Y and Gen Z. The finding indicates that sensory experience actors are driving indicators for brand love which assists to develop brand trust. Brand love is crucial to formulate consumer loyalty and shaping the trust of consumers which is eventually responsible for making them satisfactory and have effective brand experience. Safeer, A. et al., (2021) also indicate that sensory and effective experience plays an effective and influencing role on brand love; on the other hand, intellectual and behavioural experience do not have any direct association on brand love. This outcome obtained from 13 Asian countries and 418 consumers exploded who are using global brands.

2.1 Research Gap

In the marketing world "Brand" is always in the limelight because of multiple reasons and its components like brand image, brand trust, brand experience, brand love are seeking from a dynamic perspective to maintain the sustainability of the brand in competitive and tech emerging space. There are a large number of studies available in the academic world which revolve around the theme of brand love, brand emergency in synchronisation with brand trust, loyalty and others. However, the theme of this research makes it noble and one of its own kind because it only emphasises on two vital variables i.e "brand love" and "brand experience" and tries to frame the work from the lens of Millennials and Gen Z.

2.2 Research Question

- To explore the perception of Millennials and Gen Z toward brand experience?
- How Brand experiences of Millennials and Gen Z can be turned into Brand love?

2.3 Importance of the Study

In the market strategic world, brand is one of the most interesting concepts which attain enormous attention in the research domain. In this manner, research related to brand experience and brand love are widely available in electronic resources that enhance the understanding regarding the number of variables associated and perform a significant role in forming brand experience and brand love. Along with branding the generation segment is also influencing market scholars. But the uniqueness of this research is it provides a synchronised phenomena on how brand experience of Millennials and Gen Z can play a dynamic role in converting it into brand love.

2.4 Research Objectives

- To explore the perception of Millennials and Gen Z toward brand experience.
- How Brand experiences of Millennials and Gen Z can be turned into Brand love.

3. Research Methodology

The methodology of study is the process used to collect information and data in order to make business choices. The study chooses qualitative methodology that rely on primary data to execute and investigate the research question and hypotheses. The research design and technique revolves around a qualitative approach that uses self-assessed questionnaires which are assessed by likert scale to illustrate the participants perception.

3.1 Research Method & Design

This research focuses on brand experience and brand love from the eye of millennials and Gen Z. In order to identify their perspective, the research is based on a qualitative analysis approach which uses primary data based on Stratified sampling technique.

3.2 Research Approach

Research mainly explores how brand experience transformed into brand love. To fulfil the object research utilise the "Partial Least Square-Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM)" approach. It is an analytic technique that is used to identify the association between the observation components and prove the hypotheses through a reflected measurement model.

3.3 Data Collection and Analysis Method

To identify the Millennials and Gen Z perception, the study formulated a self-analysis questionnaire which is based on Likert 5-point scale. It is a volunteer activity and based on the willingness of individuals who want to participate in the survey activity and share their views. For determining the accuracy, reliability and the validity of the obtained data the study uses SPSS 26 tool, which is a software used to carry out descriptive statistics and other tests to analyse variables. WrapPLS 7.0 is used for "partial least square structural equation modelling" to measure the correlation for detecting or constructing predictive models. The sample size for this research is 111, out of which 100 samples are suitable for data analysis.

3.4 Hypothesis

Passion is being identified as a most influencing component that found its association with emotional relationship with consumers toward a particular brand. The study propose passion toward brand will have positive impact on brand love experience and formulate first hypothesis-

H1: Brand Passion is strongly connected and effect on Brand Experience and Brand Love

Long term connectivity and engagement between the consumer and brand explore the relationship brands perceive with their customers by fully feeling their desires providing them a feeling of satisfaction and security for using the brand is a consequence of emotional connectivity that is formed between brand and customers. This leads to proposed second hypothesis-

H2: Brand relationships perceive a positive impact on brand love experience.

Another component that frequently utilised by several research is affection and the connection that customer experience with respect to a particular brand. It was recognised that affection and connection are equal significant thus, both the component being a part of a research and assist to formulate third hypothesis-

H3: The level of affection and connection experienced with respect to brand will positively impact on consumer brand love.

Commitment is a phenomenon which indicates stay in relation with engagement towards a brand. This leads to propose the following hypothesis

H4: The brand commitment has a positive influence on the brand love.

It is based on the branding strategy which strengthens the connectivity and analyses how a brand can be self-expressed through its brand image. Thus, proposed the following hypothesis -

H5: Consumer brand identification is significantly associated with brand love.

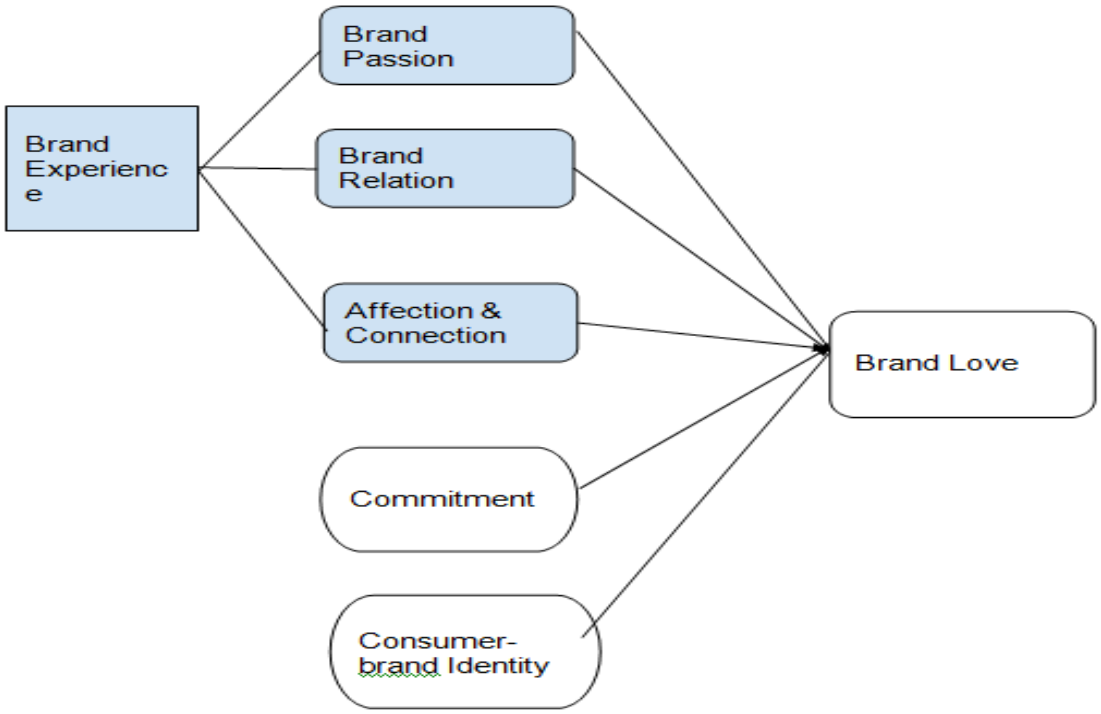

Figure 1: Proposed Framework consists of different color and patterns which reflect the common components and specific components for Brand love and Brand experience.

4. Analysis of Study

The analysis section is categorised into three segments, starting with the demographic description in which the common parameters that take place in the survey were covered and try to provide a clear picture of the people who take part in the survey. Followed by the reliability and validity test which indicates how reliable the survey data is from further research perspective. Eventually, the hypothesis assessment will take place in the form of the SEM approach.

4.1 Demographic Description

Demographic Factors	Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	46	46%
	Female	54	54%
	Total	100	100%
Age-Group	Below 15 years	1	1%
	16-25 years old	74	74%
	26-35 years old	21	21%
	36-42 years old	4	4%
Marital Status	Married	10	10%
	Unmarried	90	90%
Educational Background	High School	1	1%
	Under-Graduate	41	41%
	Post-Graduate	51	51%
	Others	7	7%
Employment Details	Private Employee	36	36%
	Government Employee	3	3%
	Self-Employed	18	18%
	Others	43	43%
Payscale or Income	20 to 40 thousand per month	43	43%
	40 to 60 thousand per month	21	21%
	60 to 90 thousand per month	17	17%
	Above 90 thousand per month	19	19%

Table : Demographic Description

The table comprehensively shows the various components of demographic dividend such as gender, age group, educational background and others.

4.2 Reliability and Validity Test-

Reliability and validity tests are used to check the accuracy of the sample survey that was conducted by self-assessed questionnaire to seek the perception of the participants. Validity test is operated to estimate the accuracy of sample data obtained from surveys. Out of different kinds of validity tests, this research focuses on convergent validity. In the convergent validity, the samples data is firstly interpreted by factor analysis (FA), further FA acts as a fundamental for evaluating other significant values like CR (composite reliability) and AVE (average variance extracted). The conditions that prerequisite to suitably meet under convergent validity are as follows-.

- CR (Composite reliability)> 0.7
- AVE (average variance extracted) > 0.5
- CR>AVE

Meanwhile, the reliability test assists to determine the consistency of the sample data that are available in the form of excel sheet. To check the reliability, the pilot test also called the Cronbach alpha test is most commonly used. The ratio of CA ranges from 0 to 1, the nearer to 1 the more reliable data is sampled, however the range higher than 0.7 is recognised as reliable.

	Passion	Committed	AC	BR	CBI	BE	BL
CR	0.819	0.707	0.845	0.797	0.801	0.796	0.798
CA	0.759	0.731	0.833	0.813	0.704	0.723	0.763
AVE	0.694	0.547	0.732	0.535	0.669	0.557	0.598

The above table clearly manifested that CA, CR And AVE meet the criteria. Further the sample data effectively fulfil the reliability and validity tested and can be considered to accomplish the research question and prove the hypotheses.

4.3 Hypotheses Assessment

Heterotrait –Monotrait Analysis (HTMT) PLS model determines relationship between latent variables to identify cross loading HTMT analysis is used. However, all the values should be less than 0.9 which indicate good discriminant validity.

	Passion	Committed	AC	BR	CBI	BE	BL
Passion							
Committed	**1.198**						
AC	0.454	**1.163**					
BR	0.926	**2.593**	**1.29**				
CBI	0.844	0.68	0.471	0.906			
BE	0.759	**1.221**	0.843	**2.053**	0.582		
BL	0.644	0.645	0.72	**1.761**	0.544	**1.299**	

Table: HTMT table

The above mentioned table indicates mixed results as unbold values fulfil the discriminant validity while bold values unsatisfied the criteria. As indicates that, when HTMT is larger than 1 it implies that "the correlations of items within the constructs are smaller than the correlations with other constructs".

Structural equation modelling analysis

During investigating SEM, we need to make sure that the issue of collinearity should be removed. When the "variance inflation factor (VIF)" is greater than 5 it depicts that variables are associated with the issue of collinearity between the parameters. The finding illustrated that VIF values of the SEM comes in between 1.3 to 2.3 which is far less than its threshold value, indicating no collinearity was rectified in the proposed SEM model.

Some other indicators like SRMR and SMAR are explored in the SEM framework to determine the suitability of the model and identify its appropriateness.

	Passion	Committed	AC	BR	CBI	BE	BL
VIF	1.516	1.348	1.494	1.46	1.306	1.932	2.364
Model Fit Values	"Standardised root mean squared residual (SRMR)=0.150, acceptable if <= 0.1" "Standardised mean absolute residual (SMAR)=0.115, acceptable if <= 0.1"						

The proposed model shows the SRMR value = 0.15 which indicates that it is suitably fit in the model, the SRMR value = 0.15 which indicates that it is suitably fit in the model. The proposed model shows the SRMR value = 0.15 which indicates that it is suitably fit in the model.

PLS-SEM

The PLS-SEM analysis model is shown in figure below. The R square value is used to evaluate the explanatory ability of the model which lies between zero and one. The higher the value of R square denotes the higher explanatory power of the model.

Factors	β value	R^2 value	P value	Hypothesis
BE → Passion	0.39	0.15	<0.01	H1 accepted
BE → BR	0.45	0.20	<0.01	H2 accepted
BE → AC	0.40	0.16	<0.01	H3 accepted
BR → Committed	0.03	-	p=0.36	H4 rejected
BR → CBI	0.03	0.59	p=0.32	H5 rejected

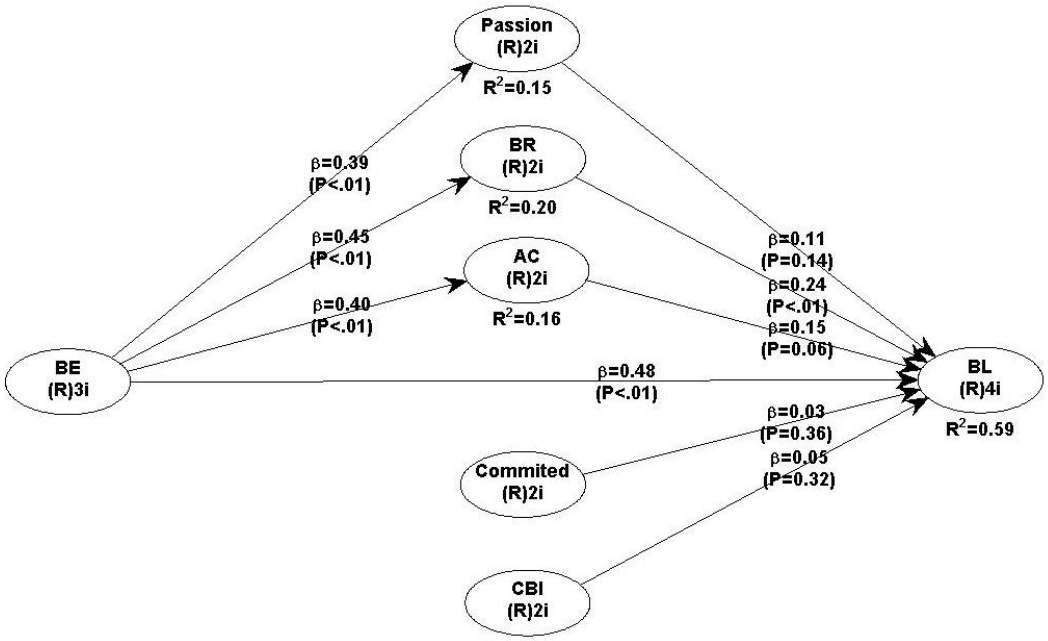

Figure 2: PLS-SEM figure.

The last two parameters (Brand Commitment and Consumer brand identification) are insignificant as the p value (= 0.36, and 0.32) indicate that both the hypotheses are rejected. The parameters that effectively meet the criteria for brand experience as (Passion, Brand Relation and affection and connection) are all significantly and positively associated with BE. On the other hand when Brand love is insignificant with brand passion as p= 0.14, similarly affection and connection is also insignificant with respect to brand love.

5. Results

The components that are covered in this research, to determine the brand experience are brand passion, brand relation and affection and connection. All these three elements are found positively associated with brand experience as SEM proposed and also revealed from finding. On the other hand five components (brand passion, brand relation and affection and connection, brand commitment, consumer brand identity) are the variables which explore from Brand love perspective.

Passion is recognised as a multi-dimensional factor because it assists to explore like and dislike of the consumer there desire and willingness to invest penny on particular product and emotional connectivity of past usage of particular brand which strongly influence and build emotional bonding. Brand passion is associated with Brand experience (β=0.39, r^2=0.15, p=<0.01) although passion is insignificant when it linked with Brand love (β=0.11, p= 0.14).

Long term connectivity and engagement between the consumer and brand explore the relationship of the brands, perceived with their customers by fully feeling their desires providing them a feeling of satisfaction and security for using the brand is a consequence of emotional connectivity that is formed between brand and customers. The finding indicates that Brand Relation is associated with Brand experience (β=0.45, r^2=0.20,

p=<0.01) as well as BR is significantly associated with Brand love (β=0.24, p=<0.01).

Affection and Connection (AC) of the brand, is also connected with emotional attachment as affection reflects the warm feeling customers have for a brand. On the other hand connection is an optimistic emotional feel and attachment that embedded intuitive feeling toward a particular product or brand. The statistical data shows that Brand Affection and Connection is associated with Brand experience (β=0.40, r^2=0.16, p=<0.01) as well as AC is insignificantly associated with Brand love (β=0.15, p=0.06).

Brand commitment acts as a strong pillar to identify brand love because it concerns emotional connectivity which develops consumers' continuous behaviour and thoughts regarding the brand. However, the finding indicates that it is insignificant and do not found any relation with brand love (β=0.03, p=0.36).

Consumer Brand Identification (CBI) is considered to be a crucial ingredient as it is a development procedure used by the consumers to formulate their own self concept and to strengthen their personal identity with respect to their brand. Meanwhile, the data reveals that CBI is insignificant and do not found any link with brand love (β=0.05, p=0.32).

Subsequently, despite of all the variables and their impact and linking with BE and BL, the study also indicate that brand experience eventually impact on building brand love through brand satisfaction among the consumers who belong from generation Z and Millennials as (β=0.48, p=<0.01). This shows that 48% influence was found between BE and BL.

6. Conclusion

The components that are covered in this research, to determine the brand experience are (brand passion, brand relation and affection and connection). All these three elements are found positively associated with brand experience as SEM proposed and also revealed from finding. On the other hand five components (brand passion, brand relation and affection and connection, brand commitment, consumer brand identity) are the variables which explore from Brand love perspective. Out of these five only brand relation is found linking with brand love while all other variables are insignificant as proven statistically. Despite all the variables and their impact and linking with BE and BL, the study also indicates that brand experience eventually impacts on building brand love through brand satisfaction among the consumers who belong from generation Z and Millennials.

6.1 Limitation and Future Scope

The finding of the research prominently indicates several things: first the sample size is very small to determine effective results, second the items selected under the variables do not suitably meet the criteria and unable to provide effective results as other existing studies proved brand love from these five variables.

In future, the study could try to remove the limitations of the research by taking a large sample size and including other prominent components like Brand loyalty, Brand trust in the research and try to evaluate the result along with comparing it with this work.

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