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## Influence of Brand Love on Hedonic and Utilitarian Product Consumption in Emerging Markets

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### **Abstract:**

*This research focuses on the antecedents and consequences of brand love and adapts the conceptual model with a priori set of variables from the literature for testing the effect of brand love on both hedonic and utilitarian product categories along with its impact on consumers from emerging market. It concentrates on the dimensions of brand love and the ways in which brand love influences consumer behaviour based on gender. For conducting research, the responses from 132 Indian consumers were gathered. The respondents were asked to mention their favorite luxury watch brand and toothpaste brand. The luxury watch brand symbolized hedonic product category, and the toothpaste brand represented utilitarian product category. The hypotheses were then tested by using Chi-square. The gender-wise difference was tested for both hedonic and utilitarian product categories using independent sample T-tests. The findings revealed that brand love for hedonic product is significantly different for both male and female consumers, thus indicating vital managerial inference towards the adaption of appropriate promotional method that is based on the concept of brand love in relation to gender. Further, the study on the application of the concept of brand love to Indian context is a new idea, thereby keeping into consideration both hedonic and utilitarian consumption. Furthermore, Indian luxury consumers have been rarely taken into consideration in the existing marketing literature, thus contributing to the emerging market research.*

**Keywords:** Brand love, hedonic product, utilitarian product, gender differences, Indian consumers

### **1. Introduction**

In academics as well as praxis, the notion of branding has gained prominence. According to Kapferer (1992, p. 46-7), branding does not simply mean attaching a product with any brand name, rather “brands are a direct consequence of the strategy of market segmentation and product differentiation.” Consumers are becoming increasingly brand conscious, be it hedonic or utilitarian. Hedonic products are the products that are purchased for the pleasure and fun derived out of consumption (Dhar and Wertenbroch, 2000). Therefore, the reasons behind purchasing hedonic products are related to experiencing efficacy of a product beyond its mere utility, whereas utilitarian products are purchased for their functionality and benefits (Voss et al., 2003), so purchasing these products are not inherently affect-laden. The choices related to purchasing of products are likely to be dominated by consumer cognitive processes rather than consumer affect.

Successful brand gives the companies a competitive advantage. Firms spend resources in marketing their brand and thus arouse preference for the brand among consumers. Consumers’ exhibit strong preference and we often find people talking about branded products and the brand they love. But do these people actually know what makes them love a brand and how this feeling influences their behaviour? The present study highlights the impact of brand love on consumer behaviour and aims to study the ways in which brand love influences the behaviour of the consumers in different product categories, basically hedonic and utilitarian. Thus, it is targeted at finding the factors that lead to brand love and its consequences.

The primary objective of the study is to adapt the conceptual model depicting the relationship among self-congruence, brand equity, affective brand experience on positive word-of-mouth, brand loyalty, and active engagement mediated by brand love in the context of hedonic and utilitarian consumption. In addition, the study explores the gender differences.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. Brand Love

Hwang and Kandampully (2012) found that the connection of self-concept positively associates with brand love. Customer engagement is regarded as an antecedent to “affective commitment, word-of-mouth, value, trust, loyalty and brand community involvement” (Vivek et al., 2012). As defined by Carroll and Ahuvia (2006, p. 81), brand love is “the degree of passionate emotional attachment a satisfied consumer has for a particular trade name.” Emotional attachment is “a relationship based construct that reflects the emotional bond connecting an individual with a consumption entity (e.g., brand, person, place, or object)” (Park et al., 2006, p. 17). Through profound and parallel inspection of highly cited articles of Carroll and Ahuvia (2006), Park et al. (2006), and Moussa (2015), it is critiqued and argued that brand attachment and brand love are mere different names for the same construct. Batra et al. (2012) investigated the nature and consequences of brand love to explore the ways in which consumers’ experience their love for a particular brand, and thus emerged with both the first-order and higher-order structural models. A higher-order model yields seven core elements: (1) passion-driven behaviour shows high desire toward using and investing in the brand that gets reflected through our activities; (2) self-brand integration reflects on the ability of a brand toward articulating authentic and desired identities of consumers, associating with life’s profound meaning and imparting inherent reward as well as recurrent thought related to the brand; (3) positive emotional connection is more than mere positive feelings and constitutes optimistic attachment and spontaneous perception of “rightness”; (4) feeling of distress arising from the anticipation related to the discontinuation of the brand; (5) envisaging vivid use of the brand in future and maintaining long-term dedication towards it; (6) positive attitude valence; and (7) attitudes held with high certainty and confidence. Both the first order and higher-order brand love models envisage faithfulness, word of mouth, opposition, and endow better discernment rather than summarizing measures related to brand love (Batra et al., 2012). Consumer responses to brands encompass, amongst other things, loyalty (Jacoby and Chestnut, 1978), attachment (Thomson et al., 2005), and brand love (Fournier, 1998; Ahuvia, 2005; Batra et al., 2012). Fournier (1998, p. 363) found that “at the core of all brand relationships was a rich affective grounding reminiscent of the concepts of love in the interpersonal domain.” Consumers’ love includes the following characteristics: “(1) passion for a brand, (2) brand attachment, (3) positive evaluation of the brand, (4) positive emotions in response to the brand, and (5) declarations of love toward the brand (Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006, p. 81).”

Amid the prevailing differences in the conceptualization of brand love based on the available literature, there is consistency in their assertion that self-brand integration is the construct of brand love (Wallace et al., 2014). Similar to couples sharing same values, brand love increases through congruence amid self-image and product image (Albert et al., 2008). Thus, consumers may love a brand due to “self-image motives and self-esteem motives” (Albert et al., 2008). Affective commitment is analogous to emotional attachment and predicts loyalty as well as positive word-of-mouth. Thus, it may be inferred that customer engagement leads to love, as brand love is one of the antecedents of word-of-mouth.

Since love for brand encompasses liking, satisfaction, contentment, it is important to know the ways in which brand love differs from them. Brand love is probably the most intense and profound satisfaction of all and is experienced by some, but not all, satisfied consumers (Fournier and Mick, 1999). Brand love differs from satisfaction in several ways. Firstly, satisfaction is specifically related to transaction, and hence it is considered as a cognitive judgment, whereas brand love is based on long term relationship of customer with the brand, and thus it has an affective focus. Secondly, satisfaction is often associated with expectancy disconfirmation paradigm unlike brand love, where the consumer very well knows what to expect from the brand, as he experiences strong emotional response to the brand in the absence of cognition. Thus, there is either very little or no disconfirmation. Thirdly, there is keenness of showing affection in brand love and this even includes assimilation of brand image in a consumer’s identity, but for satisfaction these two characteristics are not necessary (Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006).

Brand love also differs from brand “liking”. This is supported by the research which shows that interpersonal love is not merely a more intense form of interpersonal liking, but it is conceptually and empirically distinct construct (Seligman et al., 1980). For example, extrinsic rewards for partners decreased “love” but not “liking. On similar lines, there is a conceptual difference between brand love and liking (Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006). Firstly, it involves integration of brand into consumer’s sense of identity which is not required in simple brand affect. Secondly, in simple brand affect, consumers do not have any “particular feeling” for a brand of reference, and they are satisfied at a cognitive level. Therefore, unlike conceptualizations of simple affect, brand love doesn’t involve negative feelings for the brand (e.g. “disliking,” hate).

### 2.2. Association with Brand and Self-congruence

Self-expressive brand is defined as “consumer perception of the degree to which the specific brand enhances one’s social self and/or reflects one’s inner self” (Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006). Self-expression is a key factor in consumer preference and choice (Belk, 1988). Attachment represents the extent of linkage perceived by an individual between himself or herself and the particular object. As per Kassarian (1971), consumers prefer brands that exhibit similarity in personality traits of the individual and the brand. A consumer loves a brand when he feels that the brand is part of his own identity. Research explored interpersonal love as the merging of lover and beloved and observed the ways in which love affects one’s sense of self (Aron and Aron, 1986). Similar observations about the centrality of identity issues are found in the literature on consumer–brand relationships (Fournier, 1998) and object love (Ahuvia, 2005). Furthermore, Belk (1988) asserted that a) identity issues are essential to consumption, and b) possessions are a part of the self. The author supported that consumers use key possessions to extend, expand, and strengthen their sense of self and focused on the ways in which consumption helps to define people’s sense of who they are. “That we are is what we have is perhaps the most basic and powerful fact of consumer behaviour” (Belk, 1988, p. 139). Belk (1987) demonstrated that individuals felt more connected to

certain objects and less to others. In certain studies, subjects were asked to mention their favorite or most cherished possession (Csikszentmihalyi and Halton, 1981), and it was assumed that these items are primarily associated with the self and not listed by the subjects. Therefore, determining one's true preferences, exploring choices, and representing the self—both to oneself and to others—has become one of the key factors in consumption. The fundamental process of individuation and integration should be reflected in material possessions as valued objects reflect self-cultivation wherein integration refers to implementation of “social self” (Csikszentmihalyi and Halton, 1981). Carol and Ahuvia (2006) showed that consumers' love for brands plays a significant role in shaping their identity. Thus, brand association refers to the ways in which a person relates to a brand. It shows whether a person finds congruence between his own personality and personality portrayed by brand. Thus, if a consumer can associate with the brand values and the personality of the brand, then it is likely that such association will lead to brand love.

- Hypothesis 1: Self-congruence influences brand love for both hedonic and utilitarian products.

### 2.3. Brand Equity

Simon and Sullivan (1993) described brand equity to be an increase in discounted cash flow because of a product with a brand name in contrast to the earning from product with no brand name. Studying brand equity from a different perspective, Keller (1993) focused on customer based brand equity that according to him has a differential effect on the knowledge related to a brand on consumer's response to promotion of the brand. Customer based brand equity takes place if the customer is aware about the brand, and hence has certain memories related to the brand that are optimistic, strong, and exceptional. Brand equity states about the commercial value obtained from the opinion of a customer about a brand name instead about a product of the brand. Customer's perception is shaped by the feedback obtained from other customers, and the value delivered by the brand over a long period of time. Higher the brand equity, higher is the expectation from the brand; and it is anticipated that the brand would deliver higher value and satisfaction to the customer and thus develop passion and love towards the brand.

- Hypothesis 2: Brand equity influences brand love for both hedonic and utilitarian products.

### 2.4. Affective Brand Experience

In this era of tough competition, a brand must offer positive experience to its customer. It must appeal to the sense of customers, so that they are bound to choose that particular brand. Affective brand experience comprises of a mental phenomenon, which is exclusively characterized by a state of intentionally experienced subjective feeling, that is, commonly accompanied by vivid emotions and moods (Westbrook, 1987). Affective brand experience has a long term impact on consumer decision making processes. Affective processes not only motivate consumers but also affect information processing and choice (Hoffman, 1986). Pleasant emotional experience is linked directly to an eliciting stimulus with no further attribution search (Weiner et al., 1979). Thus, affective brand experience includes emotions that are experienced by a consumer upon using products of a particular brand. It may be in terms of aesthetics of a store or in terms of past memories evoked by the brand. Affective brand experience is related to brand intimacy. According to the conceptualization of romantic brand love, it is a feeling of intimacy and passion for a brand (Sternberg, 1986). Intimacy is largely derived from affect. Emotional branding appeals consumer's senses and evokes emotions attached to the brand. It helps in developing a profound, enduring as well as esteemed emotional connection with the brand that goes beyond material satisfaction (Gobe, 2001). Thus, an individual might feel close to a brand because it reminds him of the past events or some important people in his life. Today, people not just purchase products and services; rather they make investment in the sensitive experiences related to their purchase (Gobe, 2001). Ratneshwar and Mick (2005) showed that a brand can create strong experience in a number of ways such as attractive designs, logo, store ambience, packaging, etc. The design of brand plays a very important role in creating strong brand experience (Kent, 2003). Attractive product designs always lead to positive brand experience and also enhance consumer interaction (Kreuzbauer and Malter, 2005). It has also been shown that visual symbols have greater impact than words in marketplace (De Mozota, 2003). Recently, branding has gained importance because of brand logo that concentrates on the formation of consumer experiences (Salzer-Mörling and Strannegård, 2004). The aesthetics add value to the consumer with a positive impact on the customer's mind and also aids to improve the performance of organization (Schmitt and Simonson, 1997). Furthermore, it has been established that in an exclusive business outlet of an apparel brand, store environment cues like store design and merchandise form an emotional attachment leading to consumer loyalty towards the store (Koo and Kim, 2013). Thus, brand has a sensory impact on the customers which leads to a feeling of affection among the consumers towards a brand.

- Hypothesis 3: Affective brand experience influences brand love for both hedonic and utilitarian products.

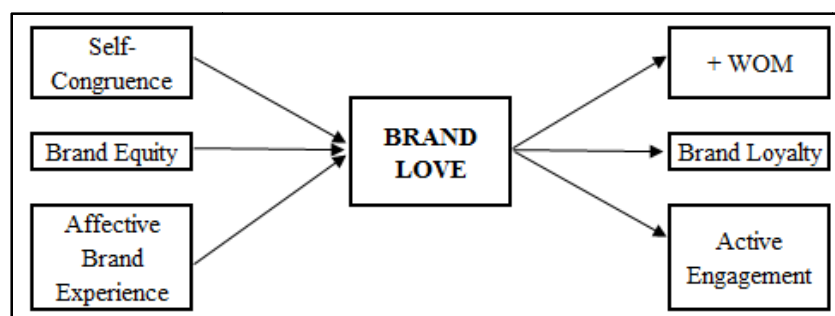


Figure 1: Conceptual Model with predictor and outcome variables of Brand Love

### 2.5. Positive word-of-mouth

Word-of-mouth is defined as casual communication or admiration of a specific product or service regarding which a consumer generally discusses about their utilities, functioning, distinctiveness, or ownership (Westbrook, 1987). It is a suggestion or a recommendation which persuades the consumers to purchase a new product or service (Price and Feick, 1984). It involves conversation regarding excellent experiences with goods and services, thus convincing others to try those goods and services (Reichheld and Sasser, 1990). In the available literature, huge emphasis is given to word-of-mouth in case of relationship marketing because it develops from the relationship established with the customer that generates potential response (Sheth and Parvatiyar, 1995). According to Ettenson and Turner (1997), word-of-mouth communication significantly influences purchase decisions. Positive word-of-mouth is very valuable for goods and services. Customers tend to indulge in positive word-of-mouth if they are convinced that a brand understands their needs and delivers superior value. Customers build a strong relation with the brand, as they feel the brand meets their requirement, and hence communicate the benefits of the brand to others. Thus, on the basis of the above argument, the following hypothesis is proposed:

- Hypothesis 4: Brand love leads to positive word-of-mouth communication for both hedonic and utilitarian products.

### 2.6. Brand Loyalty

Brand loyalty is conative loyalty (Oliver, 1999) or the extent to which the consumer is dedicated toward repurchasing from the brand (Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006). Loyalty comprises of attitudinal and behavioural dimensions. Attitudinal loyalty refers to the degree to which an individual commit to the brand, whereas behavioural loyalty is the willingness to purchase the same brand again (Chaudhuri and Holbrook, 2001). Brand loyalty is a measure of the sustainability of a brand, as loyalty towards a brand prevents the consumers to switch to other competitive brands even when competitors offer more benefits (Oliver, 1999). Uncles et al. (2003), Carroll and Ahuvia (2006) explicitly demonstrated the positive influence of brand love on brand loyalty. Thus, when a consumer is in love with a brand he is expected to make repurchases from the same brand, as he believes that the brand will provide satisfaction and contentment each time the purchase is made. Strong brand connections lead to positive appraisal which helps in developing brand loyalty. Hence, we can hypothesize that brand love influences brand loyalty.

- Hypothesis 5: Brand love leads to brand loyalty for both hedonic and utilitarian products.

### 2.7. Active Engagement

Brands use social media platforms like Facebook as a key medium to promote engagement and brand awareness (Malhotra et al., 2013). On Facebook, “likes”, shares, or comments in a brand’s page represents the degree of brand engagement (Chauhan and Pillai, 2013). Though social networking sites provide a great medium for engagement, they also pose challenge to brand engagement process. For example, the network impacts consumer’s communication through the relational structure because within the network members can co-create messages related to the brand on which companies will have no control (Kozinets et al., 2010). As per Bergkvist and Bech-Larsen (2010), there is a strong association between brand love and ‘active engagement’. On the basis of the available literature, the ‘activist’ consumers are those who show high engagement toward a brand (Hollebeek, 2011). Active engagement means consumers’ willingness to spend extra time, effort and money beyond those spent during the purchase and consumption of the brand. Visiting the website of a brand, liking the brand on social networking sites are examples of active engagement. Thus, if a consumer loves a brand, he feels strongly attached to the brand, and therefore, he is likely to spend extra time with the brand. Hence, it can be hypothesized that brand love is positively related to active engagement.

- Hypothesis 6: Brand love influences active engagement for both hedonic and utilitarian products.

## 3. Methodology

The present study employed survey research method to test brand love for both hedonic and utilitarian consumption and further hypothesize that the effect of brand love would differ gender-wise towards both consumption types. Data was collected from loyal consumers under the respective categories, whose selection was a matter of convenience. For the category of hedonic products, we considered luxury watch; and for utilitarian product, we considered toothpaste brands.

### 3.1. Respondents

Questionnaires were filled by the respondents mainly from Kolkata, the capital of West Bengal, India. For gathering data about hedonic products, the respondents considered were those who owned luxury watch of brands such as Longines, Rado, Omega, Rolex, and TAG Heuer. And for utilitarian products, the consumers identified some of the most preferred toothpaste brands such as Pepsodent, Colgate, Closeup, Sensodyne, and Anchor. In order to gather data, we distributed questionnaires. Among 146 returned questionnaires, 14 were rejected because some items were left blank. Thus, there was a final usable response rate of 90% (132 usable responses). Of the total sample, 55% were female. There were people of different age groups among the respondents; 5% were aged between 21-30 years, 32% were aged between 31-40 years, 41% were aged between 41-50 years, and 22% were aged between 51-60 years.

### 3.2. Questionnaire and Survey Administration

The questionnaire was divided into three main sections. Section I was used for the purpose of screening to ensure that consumers were tapped for the survey. The condition was that the clients should own luxury watches. The consumers had to opt or mention the luxury watches they owned, and they even needed to mention the toothpaste brand they prefer to use. Section II was used to gather preliminary information about consumer's demographic information. Section III consisted of seven parts that captured dimensions for this study using established scales.

### 3.3. Measures

The study used established measures from a priori literature. Self-congruence constituting of inner self and social self-measures were adapted by Carroll and Ahuvia (2006). The measurement of self-congruence was carried out by using five-point Likert scale. Affective brand experience scale was adapted from Brakus et al. (2009) and measurement was carried out by using five-point Likert scale. Customer based brand equity was adapted from Kuikka and Laukkanen (2012) and measurement was carried out by using seven-point Likert scale. Both brand love and word-of-mouth were measured by using five-point Likert scale adapted from Carroll and Ahuvia (2006). Brand loyalty was measured by using seven-point Likert scale adapted from Bergkvist and Bech-Larsen (2010). Active engagement was measured by using five-point Likert scale from Bergkvist and Bech-Larsen (2010). Examination of the internal consistency of responses for the items used in the scales, via Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient, showed high reliability ( $\alpha > 0.7$ ).

### 3.4. Analysis and Results

The analysis was done in three phases. In the first phase, the exploratory factor analysis was used for evaluating those constructs proposed in the literature that actually influence brand love for hedonic and utilitarian products in the emerging market context. In the second phase, hypotheses developed for explaining the relationships between the variables presented in the model were analyzed by using the chi-square tests. The third phase tested gender-wise difference related to brand love for both hedonic and utilitarian product categories. This was tested by using independent sample T-tests. The three phases are discussed in the following sections.

#### 3.4.1. Data Analysis: Phase I

Exploratory factor analysis (with rotated factor matrix) was conducted to identify the scales used for measuring the study constructs by forming separate factors. The principle component factor analysis (PCFA) with varimax rotation was performed and this analysis extracted seven factors (Table 1). The seven-factor solution provided explanation for about 83.68 per cent of the variance; and the eigen values for all the factors were above 1. All the factors were found to have reasonably high level of internal consistency reliability measured through Cronbach's alpha (see Table 1 for factor analysis). The results obtained through exploratory factor analysis indicated that the items used for measuring the intended factors yielded the factor structure proposed in the literature.

Component	Total Variance Explained								
	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	16.475	47.073	47.073	16.475	47.073	47.073	9.572	27.347	27.347
2	3.474	9.927	56.999	3.474	9.927	56.999	5.647	16.134	43.481
3	3.009	8.598	65.598	3.009	8.598	65.598	4.543	12.981	56.462
4	2.200	6.286	71.884	2.200	6.286	71.884	2.931	8.375	64.838
5	1.648	4.707	76.591	1.648	4.707	76.591	2.296	6.559	71.396
6	1.333	3.809	80.400	1.333	3.809	80.400	2.086	5.959	77.355
7	1.149	3.283	83.683	1.149	3.283	83.683	1.741	4.975	82.330
8	1.120	3.201	86.884						
9	.974	2.783	89.667						
10	.783	2.238	91.904						
11	.769	2.197	94.102						
12	.566	1.618	95.719						
13	.417	1.192	96.911						
14	.352	1.005	97.916						
15	.247	.704	98.620						
16	.153	.437	99.057						
17	.100	.286	99.343						
18	.066	.189	99.532						
19	.059	.169	99.702						
20	.041	.117	99.819						
21	.032	.091	99.910						
22	.020	.058	99.967						
23	.011	.033	100.000						
24	2.122E-15	6.064E-15	100.000						
25	1.544E-15	4.410E-15	100.000						
26	1.198E-15	3.423E-15	100.000						
27	9.563E-16	2.732E-15	100.000						
28	2.762E-16	7.890E-16	100.000						
29	6.664E-17	1.904E-16	100.000						
30	-3.350E-16	-9.570E-16	100.000						
31	-5.081E-16	-1.452E-15	100.000						
32	-1.115E-15	-3.185E-15	100.000						
33	-1.352E-15	-3.863E-15	100.000						
34	-2.073E-15	-5.924E-15	100.000						
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.									

Table 1

## 3.4.2. Data Analysis: Phase II

Chi-square tests were performed to tests the six hypotheses.

<b>Hypothesis 1</b>			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	30.000 <sup>a</sup>	25	0.003
Likelihood Ratio	21.501	25	0.664
Linear-by-Linear Association	0.000	1	1.000
N of Valid Cases	132		
a. 36 cells (100.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 0.17.			

Table 2

The value of Pearson chi-square test is 0.003, which is less than 0.05; hence, we rejected the null hypothesis. Therefore, self-congruence (innerself and social self) of consumer has positive influence on brand love.

<b>Hypothesis 2</b>			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	24.000 <sup>a</sup>	20	0.02
Likelihood Ratio	18.729	20	0.540
Linear-by-Linear Association	0.258	1	0.611
N of Valid Cases	132		
a. 30 cells (100.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 0.17.			

Table 3

The value of Pearson chi-square test is 0.02, which is less than 0.05; hence, we rejected the null hypothesis. Therefore, customer has positive influence on brand love.

<b>Hypothesis 3</b>			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	30.000 <sup>a</sup>	25	0.044
Likelihood Ratio	21.501	25	0.664
Linear-by-Linear Association	0.392	1	0.531
N of Valid Cases	132		
a. 36 cells (100.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 0.17.			

Table 4

The value of Pearson chi-square test is 0.044, which is less than 0.05; hence, we rejected the null hypothesis. Therefore, affective brand experience influences brand love.

<b>Hypothesis 4</b>			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	24.000 <sup>a</sup>	20	0.032
Likelihood Ratio	18.729	20	0.540
Linear-by-Linear Association	0.401	1	0.527
N of Valid Cases	132		
a. 30 cells (100.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 0.17.			

Table 5

The value of Pearson chi-square test is 0.032, which is less than 0.05; hence, we rejected the null hypothesis. Therefore, brand love leads to positive word-of-mouth.

<b>Hypothesis 5</b>			
	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	30.000 <sup>a</sup>	25	0.000
Likelihood Ratio	21.501	25	0.664
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.234	1	0.267
N of Valid Cases	132		
a. 36 cells (100.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 0.17.			

Table 6

The value of Pearson chi-square is 0.000 which is less than 0.05; hence, we rejected the null hypothesis. Therefore, brand love leads to brand loyalty.

Hypothesis 6			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	30.000 <sup>a</sup>	25	0.009
Likelihood Ratio	21.501	25	0.664
Linear-by-Linear Association	0.033	1	0.856
N of Valid Cases	132		

a. 36 cells (100.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 0.17.

Table 7

The value of Pearson chi-square is 0.000 which is less than 0.05; hence, we rejected the null hypothesis. Therefore, brand love influences active engagement for both hedonic and utilitarian products.

3.4.3. Data analysis: Phase III

- Hypothesis 7: There is no significant difference in brand love for hedonic product category (luxury watch) between male and female consumers.

For brand love, the value of f statistics is 0.000, which is less than 0.005; hence, we considered equal variance and did not assume it. Subsequent to this, we checked the value of Sig (2 tailed) which is 0.031 < 0.05. This means that null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, brand love for luxury watch differs significantly between male and female consumers (Table 8).

Independent Samples Test											
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means							
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
										Lower	Upper
I love this brand	Equal variances assumed	18.256	0.000	-2.311	130	0.022	-0.258	0.111	-0.478	-0.037	
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.187	87.229	0.031	-0.258	0.118	-0.491	-0.024	

Table 8

- Hypothesis 8: There is no significant difference in brand love for utilitarian product category (toothpaste) between male and female consumers

For brand love, the value of f statistics is 0.124, which is greater than 0.005, hence, we took the assumed equal variance. Subsequently, we checked the value of Sig (2 tailed) which is 0.067 > 0.05. This means that null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, brand love for toothpaste does not differ significantly between male and female consumers (Table 9).

Independent Samples Test											
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means							
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
										Lower	Upper
I love this brand	Equal variances assumed	2.400	.124	-1.845	130	0.067	-0.335	0.182	-0.694	0.024	
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.824	117.744	0.071	-0.335	0.184	-0.699	0.029	

Table 9

#### 4. Conclusion and Further Research

This study intends to assess the dimensions underlying the brand love construct related to the consumption of hedonic and utilitarian product in the emerging market context. It addressed the most crucial question: Should marketers invest resources in communication channels with the focus to enhance self-image, experiential marketing, and channelize brand value through consumers' cognitive dimensions? Hence, the focus of the study is on consumer's awareness of brand features and associations and driving attribute perception. This study provided insight about the consumers of Indian luxury goods by focusing on the concept of brand love experienced by both male and female related to hedonic and utilitarian consumption pattern. Brand love differs significantly between genders in the case of hedonic product, whereas it doesn't differ significantly across gender in the utilitarian product category. The study ascertained that inner and social self-image leads to love for preferred brand and emotions from affective brand experience which transpires the love for that brand. It establishes the influence of brand equity on consumers by examining the ways in which stakes of a firm contribute to the emotional relationship through measurable behaviours such as word-of-mouth communication, brand loyalty, and activation. It is important for practitioners to focus on the findings from the consumers of the emerging markets, wherein female consumers perceive hedonic consumption to be more profound, thereby leading to love with a specific brand as opposed to male consumers. This insightful finding can be a basis for developing promotion approach for establishing an emotional association between the brand and consumer. Furthermore, the study clearly identified a gap to explore the ways of generating brand love among male consumers. Elaborate likelihood model focusing on the central and peripheral route of persuasion could be adapted as a foot in door technique to evoke affective brand experience based on consumers' level of involvement. The results yielded testimony to the fact that brand love in both hedonic and utilitarian product consumption leads to word-of-mouth communication, loyalty, and active engagement.

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