Is brand love real?:The nature of brand love and its conceptualization

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Abstract

Brand love plays an important role in recent competitive market which has been needed to investigate on how consumers truly perceive and experience toward a brand. Brand managers and marketers tend to create strong emotional brand attachment which makes customers fall in love with their brands in order to build a long-term relationship with them. Although there are some previous academic works of brand love conceptualization and its antecedents and consequences, there is a lack of research reporting in precise the meaning and components of brand love. Therefore, this conceptual paper has purpose to study and extensively investigate the nature and conceptualization of brand love by differentiatebrand love from its proximal and distal covariates as it will benefit for both academics and practitioners.

Key words: brand love, brand relationship, relationship theory, interpersonal relationship, emotion, brand liking, brand attachment, brand passion, satisfaction, brand affection

1. Introduction

Brand love plays a critical love in recent marketing construct and context. This concept is progressively increasing interest among academics and practitioners. Carroll and Ahuvia(2006, p.81) defined brand love as "the degree of passionate emotional attachment a satisfied consumer has for a particular trade name". This highlights passion and emotional attachment are two elementary key components of brand love. Passion is conceptualized as a strong brand desire with the higher-arousal emotions (Batra et al., 2012), whilst emotional attachment is a strong and specific bond between person and a certain object (Thomson et al., 2005). Brand attachment is also the antecedent of brand love (Loureiro et al., 2012).

This concept is very similar to the definitions of interpersonal love types including passion for a brand, attachment to the brand, positive evaluation of the brand, positive emotions in response to the brand, and declarations of love for the brand. Nevertheless, some researchers argue that brand love is not similar to interpersonal relationship because it could be regarded as unidirectional or emotion (Bergkvist and Bech-Larsen, 2010) or parasocial love relationship (Fetscherin and Conway-Dato-on, 2013). This affirm by Lagner et al (2015), unlike personal love, brand love was driven by rational perceptions while interpersonal love is often found as altruistic nature. So, interpersonal love scale should be cautious when transferring to brand love context. Likewise, brand love is dissimilar to brand liking as brand love is far more arousing than brand liking. Even though the results of this research are reliable, the alternative explanation especially a clear definition of "liking" and "loving" should not be excluded. As brand love is very important to marketing perspective, however there is restricted research with a clear brand love conceptualization or where its root comes from. Thus, this present study proposes to provide a clear nature of brand love and its conceptualization.

In spite of a decline in conceptual paper in marketing field, there are various contributions can be provided in different ways to researches. MacInnis(2011) suggest thatconceptual paper is thought-based approach which provides four main contributions; debating, explicating, relating and envisioning. Therefore, this paper is written as a conceptual paperin order to clarify brand love definition and its characteristics in which differentiate its conceptfrom other proximal constructs to use investigate in future studies.

2. Research Questions
1. What is brand love? How brand love concept differentiate from its proximal and distal covariates?
2. How do consumers love brands?

3. Literature reviews

3.1 Love towards object
It has been widely noted that the role of consumer-object relationship has been developed increasing interest in the context of love towards objects that consumers purchase or consume (Ahuvia, 2005; Shimp and Madden, 1988;Fournier, 1998; Albert, Merunka, amdValette-Florence 2008;Bergkvist, and Bech-Larsen, 2010;Albert and Merunka, 2013; Carroll and Ahuvia 2006; Batra, Ahuvia, and Bagozzi, 2012). The general of love theory has been applied through psychological process to a wide range of contexts including interpersonal love, ideas, activity and other person-object relationship (Ahuvia et al, 2009). In the consumption context, consumers mostly use the term to express their thoughts and feelings towards superior objects or distinct brands that they hold linking to human-like characteristics (Ortiz and Harrison, 2011). The term of love objects is different from the psychoanalytic concept of general love in personal relationship (Ahuvia et al, 2009). That is also confirmed by Lastovicka and Sirianni(2011), as there is distortion of consumer-object relationship from human relationship. Additionally, "love" is the second most used word when consumers are asked regarding their feelings towards objects that they have emotionally attached with (Schultz, Kleine and Kernan, 1989).

Moreover, consumers have probability to create their lifestyles matching with their possessions or objects (Lastovicka and Sirianni, 2011). In order to understand individuals' sense of self, the possessions or consumed objects is mainly aid the person's identity (Belk, 1988). Ahuvia(2005) illustrates that love can be integrated to the sense of self and love objects because love objects has been drawn as an important part of lover'sidentity. However, this integration is conditional integration as the relationship between objects and individual's identity can be only created when this integrationis highly desired. Even though there are massive objects that consumers ordinarily purchase or consume, there are few objects that they possibly identify as beloved ones. In that sense, it is obvious that theses chosen loved objects represent the way that consumers belong to and how they present and understand themselves (Ahuvia, 2005).

In addition, loved objects are also used to reduce the problem of consumer identity conflicts, does not only work as a representation of individuals' self. When people face a conflict of

individual's personality, the loved possessions can be viewed as symbolically defend and support the individual's identity (Ahuvia, 2005). Although there are various aspects built in a person's personality, not all of these aspects are loved. Nonetheless, the loved objects constitute a set of identities within the consumers' self. It is acknowledged that consumers principally contribute their time, energy, and money to nurture their beloved objects (Lastovicka and Sirianni, 2011). This supporting behavior habitually strengthens with the chosen beloved object purchasing. As a fact of that, this concept can be seen as an originator to an understanding of brand love.

3.2 Brand love concept derives from interpersonal love relationship theories or emotion or both?

It has been extensivelyacknowledged that most recent brand love researches have been applied from the interpersonal love relationship theory through their components and measurement scale of brand love without critical consideration whether any difference in nature of interpersonal love and brand love. In that respect, the structure of love relationship concerning object (as a brand) is analogous to general personal love structure as stated by Stenberg (1986) (Shimp and Madden, 1988). Batra et al (2012) demonstrate that the conceptualization of brand love should not directly apply from interpersonal love as brand love concept has to be defined from the ground up building towards understanding in depth of how consumers experience it. Similarly, there are emotional different constructs between interpersonal love and brand love in which rational benefits are main drivers of brand love, unlike interpersonal love (Langner, 2015). However, there are limited researches study in a relation to the relationship aspect of consumer-brand relationship including brand love.

Most recently, Hess et al (2011) study in the exchange relationship personalities and how these characteristics have an impact on consumer brand relationship. Also, Fetscherin and Conway Dato-on (2012) attempt to provide initial study on how relationship theories can apply through brand love relationship rather than only emotional perspectives. Nevertheless, their researches have some limitations which only apply to specific sample and do not included considerable brand outcomes including purchase intention and WOM. Across these various approaches, all critical concerns are taken in to serious account on whether interpersonal relationship can use to explain brand love.

1) Brand love in interpersonal relationship

According to Shimp and Madden (1988) the consumer-object relationship structure is actually similar to interpersonal love as specified with triangular love scale by Sternberg (1986). Sternberg (1986) has found the Triangular Theory of Love which indicates there are three main correlated components of interpersonal love; intimacy, passion and decision/commitment. Intimacy refers to the closeness and connected relationship and develops from feeling of emotional in love relationship. Also, it can be recognized when people are happy being together and rely on each other. Passion derives from motivational involvement leading to several physical attraction and psychological arousals. It links to romance, need to reach self-esteem or self-actualization.

Decision/commitment is based on cognitive perception of love. Decision also entails the short term relationship with partners whereas commitment implies the desire of long term loving relationship in the future. Accordingly, a complete love can be described by a combination of these three components. Besides, Sternberg (1986) has suggested eight kinds of interpersonal love regarding to the presence or absences among these three parts (Table 1).

Table 1: Sternberg's (1986) Love Typology

Kind of love	Components of love		
	Intimacy	**Passion**	**Decision/Commitment**
Nonlove	-	-	-
Liking	+	-	-
Infatuated Love	-	+	-
Empty Love	-	-	+
Romantic Love	+	+	-
Companionate Love	+	-	+
Fatuous Love	-	+	+
Consummate/Complete Love	+	+	+

Source: Adapted from Sternberg (1986).

Note: (+) indicates the presence of the corresponding component and (-) indicates the absence of the corresponding component.

The Sternberg's triangular love theory is considered as highly systematic comparing to other love theories as it has been conducted on the level of individual involvement in different love relationship types such as like, love, parents, friend so on and so forth.

As mentioned earlier, the Sternberg's interpersonal love theory has transferred to consumer researches in terms of love object relationship including brand love. Shimp and Madden (1988) were the earliest to study consumer-object relationship. Liking, yearning and decision/commitment are the counterparts correspond to intimacy, passion and decision/commitmentcomponents of Sternberg's interpersonal relationship theory consecutively. Liking denotes as the feeling of intimate to the brand. Yearning is defined as the passion or desire to a particular brand deriving from various of arousal types. Decision mentions as the recognition of individual liking and yearning for the brand in specific short period, while commitment refers to the prospective longer relationship between consumers and brand including repurchasing. Consequently, the eight kinds of consumer-brand relationship have been proposed depending on the presence or absence of these main different three constitutes (Table 2). However, Shimp and Madden (1988) have not provided the validity test of this construct.

Table 2: Typology of consumer-brand relationship

Kind of relation	Components of consumer-object love relationship		
	Liking	**Yearning**	**Decision/Commitment**
Nonliking	-	-	-
Liking	+	-	-
Infatuation	-	+	-
Functionalism	-	-	+
Inhibited Desire	+	+	-
Utilitarianism	+	-	+
Succumbed Desire	-	+	+
Loyalty	+	+	+

Source: Adapted from Shimp and Madden (1988).

Note: (+) indicates the presence of the corresponding component and (-) indicates the absence of the corresponding component.

Furthermore, consumer largely use norms of interpersonal relationship as an assessment guideline to build their relationship with brands (Aggarwal, 2004). Rather than Sternberg's theory and triangular love scale, there are many studies relating to other interpersonal relationship theories and their principal measurements. For instance, Masuda (2003) suggests that there are four main love theories constructed by Rubin, Lee, Hatfield, and Sternberg applying to social psychology research. First of all, Rubin (1970) is the first researcher who measure love with psychological scale. His research presents that love and liking are characteristics of romantic love, contrast with platonic friendship which is explained by liking only. Therefore, love scale and liking scale are main dimensions to measure how individual love and like their partners. Secondly, Lee (1973) provides colors of love theory as there are two types of love style; erotic love and companionate love attitudes towards six love styles; Eros, Ludus, Storage, Mania, Agape, and Pragma. Thirdly, there are dichotomous taxonomy of love which separate sexuality from love without sexuality. Passionate love is related to sexuality and intense emotion, on the other hand, companionate love is containing non-sexuality relationship, friendly affection and closeness attachment (Hatfield and Walster, 1978). Lastly, romantic love can be referred to Sternberg's passion and intimacy components of love regarding to triangular love scale (Sternberg, 1986). To conclude, this research represents that love comprises at least two aspects involving sexuality attraction (romantic love) and non-sexuality as a closeness partners' relationship (companionate love).

Besides, Whang et al (2004) adoptthe colors of theory by Lee (1977) to investigate how male motorcycle riders love their motorcycles. The survey shows that bikers have defined their love towards their motorcycles thanks to interpersonal relationship, assembling in passionate, possessive and self-less in nature. Against this background, Carroll and Ahuvia(2006) conceptualized brand love as the degree of emotional and passionate feeling towards a particular

brand. In this perspective, brand love is not explicit equivalence to interpersonal love as it comprises of passion, attachment, positive brand evaluations, positive emotions in response to the brand and declarations of love for the brand. It is only unidimensional of brand love which probably fail to comprehend the complexity of brand love. Therefore, some researches have been developed two-dimensional brand love scale from different interpersonal theories (Albert et al, 1998; Albert and Valettte-Florence, 2010). Albert et al (2008a) proposed that there are 11 dimensions underlining of brand love;

- Passion (for the brand);
- Long Duration of the relationship
- Self-congruity (congruity between self-image and product image);
- Dreams (the brand favors consumer dreams);
- Memories (induced by the brand);
- Pleasure (that the brand provides to the consumer);
- Attraction (feel toward the brand);
- Uniqueness (of the brand and/or of the relationship);
- Beauty (of the brand);
- Trust (the brand has never disappointed; satisfaction);
- Declaration of affect (willingness to declare or state love to the brand)

However, this study fails to discover attachment and commitment approaches of brand love which mainly found in previous researches. Later, Albert et al (2008b) demonstrate that there are six first-order of brand love measurements including pleasure, idealization, intimacy, memories, dream and unicity. The second-order dimensions are found towards passion and affection which constitute in major components of interpersonal love.

There are various of interpersonal love types such as romantic, companionate and parental, however, one type varies from another kind of love in a particular situation. To illustrate, sexual requirement is a fundamental of romantic love but not for parental love or companionate love. Thus, theories of parental love or companionate love cannot be used to describe straightforwardly to romantic love. In the same token, interpersonal love should not be applied directly to brand love (Batra et al, 2012). Even if these transferring interpersonal relationship theories to brand relations are well established, there is still vital question whether brand love perhaps different from interpersonal love as it is not real type of love. Although, brand can be able acted like a relationship partner, yet, it cannot be concluded that the emotional experience in an interpersonal relationship is similar to emotions experiences that consumers undertake through brand love relation. Also, there are lack of sufficient supportive literatures to distinguish between love as relationship and love as emotion. In this study, the distinction between these twoforms of love towards brand is considerably explored.

2) Brand love as emotion

The existing studies related to love do not have adequate discussing to separate between love as emotion and love as relationship. Richin(1997) describes that love emotion is single because it is alike to all emotions as it has specific feeling and similar to affection occurring in a specific short term and episodic. Conversely, the love relationship akin to friendship relationship as it lasts for a longer period and also encompasses several cognitive, affective and behavioral experiences (Fournier, 1998). Currently, some researches on brand love explore brand love based on emotion or only single or one-way relationship, while others mention that brand love involving relationship as it is two-way relationship like interpersonal love relationship. From this highlight, further studies to understand how consumers experience on brand love whether ground on their emotion or relationship are still needed.

The interpersonal love theory has been widely applied to various of cognitions, emotions and actions. In relation to these love faces, emotion plays an important part (Hatfield and Sprecher, 1986; Sternberg, 1986; Hegi and Bergner, 2010). Interpersonal love is considered by the high level of positive emotional valence (Phutchik, 2000; Richins, 1997), extreme physiological arousal (Hatfield and Sprecher, 1986), exclusivity felling and separation anxiety (Bowlby, 1979). Love is largely span abroad in many researches which considered as prototype based on emotion (Barta et al, 2012).

Ahuvia(1993) points out that the self-inclusion theory of love can be adapted to marketing perspective. This research posits people probably feel love towards brands when the brands reach to the high level of real and desired integration according to the consumers' sense of self. In other words, there are empirical researches are mainly explore the ability of consumers to love products and consumption activities. Exploiting an interpretive paradigm, consumers significantly have intense emotional attachments to some love objects including brands, playing a music instrument, pets, books and travelling (Ahuvia, 2005a, 2005b). Sincebrand love can be defined as the level of passionate feeling and emotional attachment that consumer has for a specific brand, brand love is only involved with the emotional aspects that consumers experience with brands. Brand love definition is also described as a brand passion (Bergkvist and Bech-Larsen, 2010). So brand love is likely based on emotion. As such, there are still many illustrations which will not completely parallel to interpersonal love relationship.

Among the previous studies, Batra et al (2012) have excellently contributed to the nature of brand love. This study found that word of "love" can be used in two separate ways; emotion (e.g. love, joy, anger, disgust) and relationship (e.g. love, friendship, enmity). So the different of these two perspectives should not be overlooked. This research also conducted qualitative interviews to reach in depth consumers' feeling towards their favorite brands. The majority result found that when consumers use the word of "love" with their particular brands, they invariably refer to love relationship rather than love emotion as they normally have long-term relationship with their beloved brands. This is related to multiple facets of cognitive, affective and behavioral element

rather than only specific emotion. As love emotion itself is infrequently to explain how consumers experience to love with brands and is not mentioned as part of brand love relationship, while other emotions (really happy when think of brand, feel anxiety if beloved brands are lost) were commonly discussed. Even if this study draws love as a relationship, this relationship can be characterized by wide range of emotion including passion, happiness, sadness, anger, fear, affection and among others. Some emotion is intense describing as passionate love, but others are relaxed and affectionate regarding as companionate love. Therefore, "brand love" can infer to a consumer-brand relationship whereas "brand love emotion" refers to the certain affective state called love.

3) Brand love as a parasocial relationship

The apparent limitation of existing brand love studies is based on the love assumption of bi-directional relationship (interpersonal relationship) rather than one-directional relationship. The process of brand relationship works in different parts of brain than interpersonal relationship (Yoon et al., 2006). In terms of relationship, even though love is outcome of bi-directional relationship but when consumers feel about their beloved objects such brands instead of human, their love feeling become uni-directional (Whang et al., 2004). Presently, Batra et al (2012) suggest that there is no empirical evidence exists to confirm brand love correspondence to interpersonal love. Consequently, these interest researches recommend that brand love needs to be more cautious when applying interpersonal love conceptualization and should look for another alternative relationship theory.

Parasocial relationship has previously developed from parasocial interaction (PSI) as stated by Horton and Wohl(1956), and this PSI scale has improved by Perse and Rubin (1989). The parasocial relationship is only single or one-sided relationship occurring between one party really know the other and the other party knows nothing. This relationship is obviously seen through friendship relationship or intimacy that individual has with a famous or media person (Schmid and Klimmt, 2011) such as the celebrity-fan relationship (Cohen, 1997) or the relationship between TV influencer and audience teleshopping intension and actions (Curras-Perez et al., 2011). Such this example, the lover has only uni-directional relationship with brands, while brands (like celebrities) do not reciprocate knowledge of them. The othercommon form of relationship is included the relationship among viewers and non-personal or imaginary characters as well such as cartoon characters like Mikey Mouse and Hello Kitty. Such this characters are branded for themselves. Prior studies regarding to the anthromorphism of brand including attributinghuman characteristics (Levy, 1985) or brand personalities (Asker, 1997) advise that there are compelling reasons to apply parasocial relationship to the object or product and service brand.

According to Fetscherin(2014), brand love can be theorized as parasocial relationship rather than interpersonal relationship as the data provide stronger and superior results than interpersonal

relationship. This can be concluded that brand love construct should be conceptualized as single or one-sided relationship rather than two-sided relationship. Also, the parasocial love scale is more applicable than interpersonal love scale when applying to brand love. Analogously, the application of parasocial scale to brand love provides higher intense relationship between brand love and purchase intention as well as positive WOM than interpersonal love scale.

3.3 Other brand constructs related to brand love: multidisciplinary perspectives

1) Satisfaction and brand love

Satisfaction is the lowest intense relationship that consumers have with brands indicating from their positive brand experiences (Ha and Perks, 2005). The more intensity of developing relationship, the more brand satisfaction leading to brand trust and brand loyalty (Horppu et al., 2008). It affirms by Fournier and Yao (1997) that brand satisfaction drives brand trust which resulting in brand loyalty. The consumer satisfaction also has an effect to the willingness to purchase the brand (Eagly and Chaiken, 1993). Satisfaction is also positive evaluation after consumption (Mano and Oliver, 1993). It is not only cognitive judgment but also probably lead to emotional attachment with multiple touch points with the brand overtime (Thomson et al, 2005). It indicates that satisfaction over a longer period is likely convert into an emotional connection and passionate bonding between consumers and brands. This bonding is parallel to the interpersonal love and attachment. Therefore, Carroll and Ahuvia, (2006) found that satisfaction is antecedent of brand love.

Furthermore, Albert et al (2007) investigate dimensions of brand love with projective techniques. They found that long-term satisfactory relationship with the brand is one of elements of brand love. In case of Harley-Davidson, Whang et al (2004) found that the duration of bike ownership has significantly positive affect to romantic love. So they recommend that satisfaction need to be prolonged in order to getting transformation into brand love.

Nevertheless, Carroll and Ahuvia(2006) state that brand love is different from satisfaction in variety viewpoints. Firstly, satisfaction is related to cognitive evaluation comparing brand love rather than rely on affective. Secondly, satisfaction is classically connected to transactions, while brand love is long-term relationship and can be improved over a period. Next point, satisfaction is based on expectancy disconfirmation whereas brand love no need to require these forms. Lastly, satisfaction does not mainly necessitate brand integration to consumer's identity, while brand love does. Such these studies highlight, satisfaction is antecedent and component of brand love.

Overall, satisfaction is fundamental of brand love. Among these studyindications, satisfaction is antecedent and component of brand love. This implies that every brand lover is a satisfied consumer, however, not every satisfied consumer is a brand lover.

2) Brand passion and brand love

Passion is generally related to love feeling (Hatfield, 1988; Lee,1977; Sternberg, 1986). Passion also describes as different names including eros(Hendrick and Hendrick, 1986; Lee, 1977) orromantic love (Rubin, 1970). Hatfield and Walster(1978, p. 9) propose that passionate love is "a state of intense longing for union with another".

Brand passion is a contemporary construct in consumer research. Brand passion defines as "a primarily affective, extremely positive attitude toward a specific brand that leadsto emotional attachment and influences relevant behavioural factors" (Bauer et al.,2007, p. 2190). Keh et al (2007, p. 84) also give a definition to brand passion as "the zeal and enthusiasm features of consumer brand". Brand passion is also an attitude (Bauer et al. ,2007). According to Matzler et al (2007), this study mentions that consumer who feels passion towards a brand will engage much more emotional connection with the brand and will feel loss or anxiety when there is unavailable brand. Additionally, passion describes as "reflects intense and aroused positive feelings toward a brand" (Thomson et al. 2005,p.80).

Subsequently passionate interpersonal study (e.g. Baumeister et al., 1999; Hatfield, 1988), Albert et al (2010, p. 2) demonstrate that brand passion is psychological construct and also propose the brand passion conceptualization as "corresponds to the enthusiasm, the infatuation or even the obsession of aconsumer for a brand".Similar to interpersonal passion, brand passion construct comes from three main aspects; cognitive, emotional and behavioural. The cognitive element of brand passion is stated by brand idealization which is in consumer's belief. The emotional component of brand passion is related to the level of attraction and desire to remain the long relationship that consumer has with a brand. This dimension includes some negative emotion if any changes of brand such as brand image. As the final part, the behavioral section of brand passion involves with the actionable behavior including purchasing behavior, positive WOM and convince others to buy.

When compare brand passion to brand love, the previous research shows that brand love is equivalent to brand passion (Bergkvist&Bech-Larsen, 2010). Carroll and Ahuvia(2006) argue that brand love is the degree of emotional and passionate feeling towards a particular brand. That is likely say that passion is component of brand love. It is also confirmed by Albert et al (2008) that the passion feeling for the brand is one of eleven components of brand love.

3) Brand affection and brand love

Brand love differs from simple brand affect such brand liking (Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006). Sternberg (1986) illustrates that interpersonal love is not full more intense than interpersonal liking but it provides distinct conceptualization and unique empirical construct. In a similar way, brand love is stronger emotional response and more conceptually distinct than liking. This is

definitely because it is required the integration of brand into the sense of identity of consumer. In such way, this incorporation needed will not occur into simple brand affect. As brand love is theorized as satisfaction mode, the lower bound of satisfaction is clearly perceived as the absence of this emotional response. For instance, the consumer who satisfies with a product or service brand at a cognitive level does not have a specific feeling for this brand. Unlike simple affect perspective, brand love excludes and prevent the negative feeling towards a brand such as dislike or hate (Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006).

As a fact of that, declaration of love before or after love relationship happening is widely studied in feeling love research (Vincent, 2004). Rather than the declaration of love, the declaration of affect component is named differently in varies of words by consumers to express their feeling of how they experience or even love brand including like, appreciate, adore, love and amorous (Albert et a, 2010).

Moreover, Thomson et al (2005) develop a scale to measure the strength of consumers' emotional attachmentsto brands indicating that affection is one of dimensions to lead consumers have strong emotional brand responses and then can predict brand loyalty in accordance with attachment theory. In the interpersonal love literature, affection and connection are considered as two main basic approaches. Affection can be called as intimacy (Hatfield, 1988) or attachment (Fisher, 2006), whereas connection refers to element describing affection or intimacy. To illustrate, intimacy can be defined as "(...) *feelings of closeness, connectedness, and bondedness in loving relationships*" (Sternberg,1997, p.315). Nonetheless, recent studies on interpersonal love from neurosciences (Fisher, 2006) and social psychology (Hatfield, 1988) state that there are two constitutes found in a love feeling; affection and passion, no connection dimension is included. To conclude, strong brand affection is considerably as a component of brand love.

4) Brand attachment and brand love

According to Park et al (2010), brand attachment is explained as the strength of bond connection that consumer has with a brand. Brand-self connection or brand closeness can be critically described as an important part of attachment-based relationships. Since consumers themselves have a closed relationship with brands, they potentially become attach to the brands alike the way of interpersonal attachment. It can be obvious seen from the instance of person brands such as celebrities (Thomson, 2006), product brands (Thomson et al, 2005), and place brands (Debenedetti et al, 2014). However, Park et al (2010) debate that brand attachment is not only relied on brand-self connections/closeness, but also brand prominence/salience which does not depended on brand-self connections. Brand prominence denotes to the degree of cognitive and emotional connection linking brand to the self which is greatly significant in memories of consumers. The stronger brand attachment, the higher brand connecting to consumers' autobiographicalmemories and then commonly lead to the connection to the self and ones' aims (Park et al.,2010). If brand attachment strong, consumers will engage to brands as their parts of

life and willing to dedicate resources (money, time and reputation) in order to maintain positive relationship with brands.

The brand self-connection and brand prominence are two main components to measure brand attachment scales (Park et al., 2010, 2013a). These scales are used to forecast brand loyalty and brand advocacy behavior. More importantly, brand love construct seemingly exploits to predict much more same outcomes as those predicted by brand attachment. Yet, previous studies recommend that the brand attachment construct based on perceived connection between brand and the self (like brand-self distance) and brand prominence are better to predict closeness feeling rather than does in brand love (Park et al., 2013a, 2013b). In this sense, the way that consumerscontribute their resources to the brand is probably a main important mechanism to differentiate brand attachment from brand love as brand attachment likely rely on self-centered. The extent to which brand love can be defined is quite unclear asit also has been inferred to brand attachment (Carroll andAhuvia, 2006). In addition, brand love reflects a psychological pleasure including feeling romantic, sexy and sentimental (Larosand Steenkamp, 2005). Consumer often informally express their feeling love for the brand to describe overall brand affection (Albert et al, 2008a). There are many emotional antecedents for brand love such as brand-self integration, quality perceived, brand self-connection, and various outcomes including separation distress, attitude valence, long-term relationship and passion driven behavior of closed brand relationship (Batra et al., 2012). Brand love also states as extensive psychological brand relationship relating to the level of intimacy, passion and connection (Shimp& Madden, 1988), and refer to the passionate degree that a consumer has for a particular trade name. In conclusion, such various brand love applications from any different perspectives could be problematic issues which are difficult to generalize understanding in terms of concept, antecedents and consequences of brand love.

5) Brand liking and brand love

When exchange commitment is equal, people will come to like others. For example, friendship relationship is expected more or less of this exchange reinforcement. Conversely, love relationship does not require this condition. As a case in point, parental love is unconditional love like mother feels love for her child regardless his/her behavior (Sternberg, 1987). This could be applied to love feeling towards object like a brand. Consumers perhaps love a specific brand without conditional bound with it. Brand lovers are the most valuable assets for any company as they will love the brand and will not expect to receive love in return, probably at leastreaching their expectation. In contrast, liking feeling for a brand is conditional aspect asking for equally exchange commitment. Consumers are often supposed to gain reward in accordance with their own commitment.

Rather than quantitativesetting,liking and loving are more qualitative unique construct (Sternberg, 1987). This represents that love is not extreme liking but is relevance to liking in different in construct. Love varies from liking by providing intrinsic benefit rather than extrinsic rewards. Brand love reach to a success point when it links to consumer's sense of self-identity.

Consistent with Langner et al (2015), reciprocity is a condition that can exploit to characterize brand love and brand liking. Brand love is apparently less reciprocal than brand liking as it is high emotionality. Both brand love and brand liking are driven by rational benefit such as product quality. So, these two concepts entail the characteristic of strong relationship. In line with positive emotion, both liked brand and loved brand are regularly explained by positive feeling. For loved brand, consumers widely use far more emotional term such as "I love this brand because it's super!". Additionally, when consumer talks about his/herbeloved brand, itassociates to his/her childhood memories which it is beginning point of brand love. In contradiction, consumers rarely indicate liked brands to their memory linkages. Brand lovers do not love only brands but also any activities that brands offer to them. This influence perhaps widespread for brand love rather than brand liking. They also fear of losing their beloved brands as these losses much more difficult to find replacement with other substitutes. However, there is no intense separation anxiety for liked brand. Finally, brand lovers really care and concern about their beloved brands. They ordinarily attempt preserve and keep contact with their loved items rather their liked brands. In conclusion brand love differs from brand liking in a relation to its different in nature. Loved brand is far more arousing than liked brands. Brand lovers experience intense and positive emotion rather than brand liking, resulting in positive consumers' reactions towards the brands.

In conclusion, previous studies relating to different potential related constructs of brand love suggest that brand love can be built based on the degree of customer satisfaction and rational or emotional benefit from product/service brands. Considerable researches also propose that researchers have to take it in account before transferring inter personal love theory and its components and scale directly to brand love study as there is some difference in nature of interpersonal love and brand love. However, brand love is connected to parasocial relationship rather than bi-directional relationship. Moreover, the majority of studies advise that brand passion and brand affection are main components of brand love. These concepts are conceptually distinct. Table 3 summarizes the different prospective related constructs in order to identify brand love characteristics.

Table 3: **Taxonomies of brand love and its related constructs**

Statement	Content	
	Related brand love constructs	**Brand love**
Satisfaction	Satisfaction is the lowest intense relationship that consumers have with brands indicating from their positive brand experiences (Ha and Perks, 2005). In comparison to brand love, satisfaction is related to cognitive evaluation rather than affective. Also, satisfaction is classically connected to transactions which possibly does not happen in a longer period. Moreover, satisfaction is based on expectancy disconfirmation whereas brand love does not(Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006).	Satisfaction is fundamental, component and antecedent of brand love. Brand love is long-term relationship and does not based on expectancy disconfirmation. Also, brand love is related to self-brand integration, while satisfaction does not(Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006).
Passion	Passion is generally related to love feeling (Hatfield, 1988; Lee,1977; Sternberg, 1986).Brand passion can be conceptualize as "corresponds to the enthusiasm, the infatuation or even the obsession of a consumer for a brand" (Albert et al, 2010, p. 2).	Brand love is equivalent to brand passion (Bergkvist&Bech-Larsen, 2010) and is the degree of emotional and passionate feeling towards a particular brand (Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006). Also, love feeling is found as a component of brand love(Albert et al, 2008). Thus, brand passion is one of main components of brad love.
Affection	In a relation to interpersonal love theory, affection is one of main approaches. Affection is regarded as intimacy (Hatfield, 1988) or attachment (Fisher, 2006). Affection is also found as one of dimensions strong emotional responses which can predict the level of loyalty from consumers in accordance with attachment theory(Thomson et al, 2005).	Strong brand affection can be described as brand intimacy and is considerably as a component of brand love.
Attachment	The strength of bond connection that consumer has with a brand can be described as brand attachment (Park et al, 2010).	Brand love can be defined quite unclear as it also has been inferred to brand attachment (Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006).

Liking	Liking is a conditional feeling occurring when exchange commitment is equal. So liking is based on intrinsic benefit rather than extrinsic rewards like love (Sternberg, 1987). This critical concept can be applied to brand liking which varies from brand love.	Even though brand love and brand liking are positive emotion and driven by rational benefits, brand love is seemingly less reciprocal than brand liking. Brand lovers normally talk positively with their beloved brands linking their childhood memories whereas brand likers rarely do so. They usually contribute their effort and keep contact with their beloved brands such as participating any brand activities (Langner et al, 2015). Therefore, there are difference in nature of brand love and brand liking.
Bi-directional relationship (Interpersonal relationship)	Triangular Theory of Love stated by Sternberg (1986) has found three main correlated components of interpersonal love; intimacy, passion and decision/commitment. Shimp and Madden (1988) apply this study to consumer-object relationship which liking, yearning and decision/commitment are counterparts of these three main components of love relationship consecutively.	The interpersonal theories are largely applied to brand love researches (Albert et al, 1998; Albert and Valettte-Florence, 2010). Albert et al (2008a) found that there are 11 dimensions of brand love relating to interpersonal love theory. However, there is still questionable when applying theory of interpersonal love to brand love as it is not real love.
One-directional relationship (Parasocial relationship)	The parasocial relationship is only one-sided relationship happening between one party really know the other and the other party knows nothing such as friendship relationship or intimacy and the celebrity-fan relationship (Cohen, 1997).	Brand love is stated as parasocial relationship or single relationship rather than interpersonal relationship. The parasocial love data provides stronger effect and more applicable than interpersonal love scale when applying to brand love study (Fetscherin, 2014).

According to overall reviews, the main objective of this paper is to conceptualize brand love and its characteristics. Using multi-disciplinary perspectives, the proposed conceptualization of brand love can be applied to this study as following;

"Brand love is a strong affectionand intense passionate relationship linking to a sense of self of a satisfied consumer has for a certain brand which far from brand liking".

4. Theoretical and practical implications

This research aims to have key contributions as follows:

Academic

1. To the best of my knowledge, brand love recently has been gaining importance in academia and business practice but there is little research concerning what the brand love is and its distinct components. So this study will fill the gap of this aspect and extensively investigate in a different construct.

2. Due to an increasing interest in brand love context in academic, this research will be useful for other emotional branding works.

Management Implications

1. As brand love plays a vital role in thesedays, marketers could benefit from this paper by able to convert their brands into lovemarks in the consumers' eyes.

2. Brand love possibly becomes a new success marketing tool in business as people now emotionally purchase any brands or products. Therefore, creating positive emotional feeling and intense connections to the brand would be result in the higher brand loyalty, market performance and brand equity.

3. Marketing practitioners will know a deep understanding how to manage a brand and convince customers to engage their brands with a sense of long-term relationship

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