INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF RESEARCH IN COMMERCE, IT & MANAGEMENT

IJRCM

CONTENTS

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF RESEARCH IN COMMERCE, IT & MANAGEMENT   v

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REVIEW OF LITERATURE

NEED/IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

OBJECTIVES

HYPOTHESIS (ES)

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

FINDINGS

RECOMMENDATIONS/SUGGESTIONS

CONCLUSIONS

LIMITATIONS

SCOPE FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

REFERENCES

APPENDIX/ANNEXURE

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BOOKS

- Bowersox, Donald J., Closs, David J., (1996), "Logistical Management." Tata McGraw, Hill, New Delhi.

- Hunker, H.L. and A.J. Wright (1963), "Factors of Industrial Location in Ohio" Ohio State University, Nigeria.

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CONFERENCE PAPERS

- Garg, Sambhav (2011): "Business Ethics" Paper presented at the Annual International Conference for the All India Management Association, New Delhi, India, 19–23

UNPUBLISHED DISSERTATIONS

- Kumar S. (2011): "Customer Value: A Comparative Study of Rural and Urban Customers," Thesis, Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra.

ONLINE RESOURCES

- Always indicate the date that the source was accessed, as online resources are frequently updated or removed.

WEBSITES

- Garg, Bhavet (2011): Towards a New Gas Policy, Political Weekly, Viewed on January 01, 2012 http://epw.in/user/viewabstract.jsp

UNVEILING THE BRAND LOVE: A BIBLIOMETRIC ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to examine articles on brand love over an 18-year time span (2005-2023) to develop a comprehensive and better understanding about the concept. Scopus database was used and regardless of the approach used within the papers, a total of 964 results were obtained, out of which 227 (only open access papers were taken into account) documents were subjected to bibliometric analysis. This study identified seven main research areas (humanizing brands, brand love, consumer behavior, corporate social responsibility, sustainable development, social media marketing and word of mouth), which were analysed and discussed, seeking to identify the relationship between research in each area. This study adds to the body of knowledge on the subject by offering a systematised understanding of brand love and also offers insights about how brand love can be leveraged by institutions and managers. Additionally, this study outlines its limits, demonstrating that even while this body of knowledge is expanding, the complexity faced by managers when it comes to execution offers several opportunities for future research, which are discussed towards the end.

KEYWORDS
brand love, brand loyalty, bibliometric analysis, self-expressive brands, consumer-brand relationship.

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M31

1. INTRODUCTION

Consumer-brand relationship goes through various highs and lows and brands need to put in their best efforts relative to the competitors in order to create love for their brands. In simple terms, brand love may be viewed as a concept that captures the intense emotions and emotional connection that delighted customers feel towards brands. This definition of brand love is based on affective judgement as well as long-term interactions, enabling customers to have a strong emotional bond. One of the primary goals of branding is to create and foster a relationship with the consumers which facilitates satisfaction of their needs and wants, followed by a greater number of purchases which ultimately leads to loyalty. How ever, there is a significant distinction between satisfaction and loyalty. Satisfaction is a brief cognitive assessment post a brand transaction, whereas loyalty denotes a sustained emotional bond with the concerned brand (Amaro et al. 2020). Brand love has been receiving a lot more attention nowadays *(See figure 1)* which is evident from the increasing research being undertaken around it. Due to rising income levels and increased standards of living, consumers are buying more luxury products than our previous generations and the concept of masstige marketing (marketing luxury goods to the masses) has come up mainly because of this reason only. Through brand positioning, masstige aims to improve consumers' perceptions of and attachment to the brand (Paul, 2018). And it is not just a fad, but a trend encompassing social, economic and technological implications. Since, brand love has a crucial role to play in it, it becomes important to uncover major themes related to brand love. The current study aims to- identify research methodologies used in connection to brand love, major contributions being made to the literature, verify research gaps if any and uncover prominent themes.

FIGURE 1: INCREASED CONTRIBUTION IN LITERATURE WITH RESPECT TO BRAND LOVE
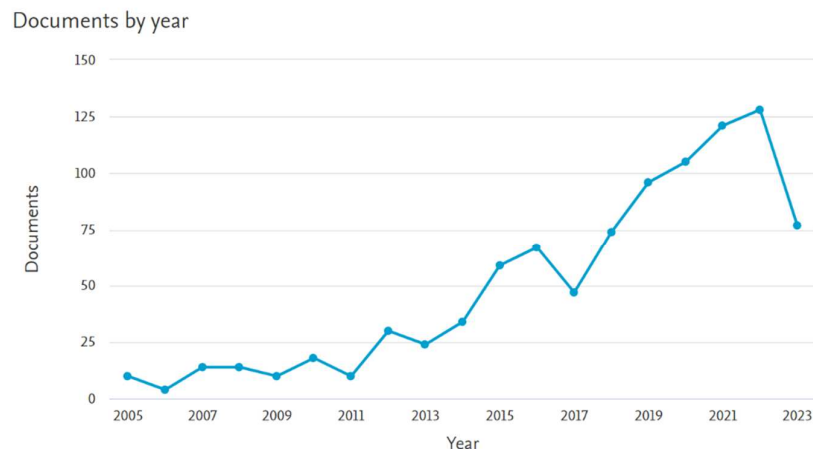
2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY
1. To gain a thorough grasp of brand love by looking at publications from the past 18 years.
2. To provide guidance on leveraging brand love for managers and institutions.
3. To determine areas for future brand love research that still need to be explored.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

After conducting a chronological analysis of literature available on brand love, it can be observed that it has grown from being just a rivalry being shared by the villagers to make their products stand out from other villages, a whole new phenomenon on which companies are betting upon as it would help them charge premium price and flourish in market because of established brand equity.

With a whole new and strategic vision in mind, companies used a variety of strategies in their advertisement (namely rational and emotional) and investigated its effect on brand love. Rational advertising was found to be more effective for utilitarian-value based products whereas emotional advertising was effective for hedonic products. In case of services, it was concluded that emotional advertising is suitable for both utilitarian- and hedonic-value based services.

Further research on consumer-brand relationships highlighted that brand love is a reciprocal, dynamic, multidimensional, and purposeful connection between satisfied consumers and brands. Brand intimacy, brand passion, and brand devotion are its three main elements (Pang, J., Keh, H. T., & Peng, S. 2009).

A digital age ready and effective strategy was sought to be the need of the hour and many research studies were conducted to identify how can with technological advancements brands can now have a greater chance than ever to engage customers in meaningful ways across all channels. Consumers and marketers have access to a seemingly limitless supply of new technology, from smartphones and tablets to dynamic material on billboards (OOH) and intriguing TV advertisements. As media fragmentation grows, this is causing ongoing changes in how consumers engage with and make purchases from companies. Interested in learning how customers navigate this multichannel environment, and given a challenge by marketers who want to discover how technology is altering people's perceptions of companies (Murray, 2011). We know that it is a common saying that 80% of the business comes from those 20% satisfied customers and relationship marketing heavily rests on this principle. It is believed that brands seem to have a relationship with their consumers and hence the concept of humanizing brands is on the rise. Brand-consumer interactions may be tricky, especially when love is involved. Much has been said about the intricacies of people proclaiming their love for a brand, with many contending that a little love goes a long way (Bagozzi et al., 2017). Luxury brands are reaping benefits by kindling love for their brands. With that being said, two major themes that we have been able to identify are as follows:

Consumer-Brand Relationships and Brand Love

Consumer satisfaction is at the core of marketing concept. Customers may develop identifying associations with a brand based on how it meets their requirements (Johnson et al., 2011). When a brand satisfies a psychological need and helps an individual grow their sense of self, identification links are formed. The brand is said to have qualities with which the consumer likes to be recognised and associated with. The social identity theory, which describes this relationship as "the perceptions of oneness with or belongingness" to an organisation or brand, is where this identifying relationship's roots may be found. Through this identification process, the consumer gives their sense of belonging emotional importance and worth, which frequently results in brand loyalty.

And as discussed above, brand love is complex, dynamic and multi-dimensional construct. From the perspective of the brand, brand love includes more than just the assurance of dependability and quality. To elicit good emotions, a brand has to work holistically and an integrated marketing communication is the key to that. The conception of brand love as a construct is currently under development (Hegner et al., 2017; Huber et al., 2015). Nevertheless, current research has identified the psychological dimensions of brand love as positive brand feelings, positive brand evaluations, brand passion, and love declarations for a brand. Recent research studies have also identified how the usage of proper names in brand name are likely to affect the product evaluations. For instance, Nails by Nisha or Cakes by Melisa and a comparison was drawn whether such naming affects high vs low quality product evaluations (Rathee et al., 2023). According to (Ahuvia et al. 2008), brand love consists of three components: 1) Cognitive brand love, which refers to thoughts about the brand; 2) Affective brand love, which refers to feelings about the brand; and 3) Conative brand love, which refers to readiness to purchase the brand.

Brand Love, Brand Loyalty and Brand Equity for masstige brands

Brand love targets brand-loyal customers and turn them into their unpaid agents who act as positive word of mouth influencers for the brand. According to (Oliver, 1999), brand loyalty includes behavioural loyalty wherein a consumer makes repeated purchases of a brand, as well as attitudinal loyalty, i.e., brand preference reflecting an emotional connection between a consumer and a brand. Brand love has proven to influence both behavioural and attitudinal loyalty with research data backing up that brand loyalty increases when a consumer falls in love and is emotionally connected with a particular brand (Carroll & Ahuvia, 2006). The art of storytelling and brand love are also intertwined. Upon examination of data, it was observed that the stories consumers associate with their own PANDORA jewellery make them appreciate the jewellery and the brand even more, which signifies that product narrative is an important concept to add value to both the product and the brand (Dias & Cavalheiro, 2021). The love that a consumer feels for a particular brand impacts their decision making and brand commitment (Albert & Merunka, 2013).

Research studies have found that brand love acts as an antecedent of brand loyalty and is a strong predictor of brand equity. Brand equity is the value added to a product by the brand through its conscious efforts. It is often used as benchmark for measuring relationship success. In the masstige literature, the marketing performance of a masstige brand is deep- rooted in its ability to create brand prestige, brand love, as well as brand equity (Kumar et al., 2020; Paul, 2018). Excluding the work by Kumar and Paul (2018), there is a scarcity of research investigating the relationship between brand equity and brand love. While research pertaining to consumer-brand relationships in luxury markets is abundant, the application of these concepts within a masstige context remains under researched.

4. METHODS

Two methodological approaches were integrated to achieve the objectives of this study. The followed sequence was: a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) followed by a bibliometric analysis. Scopus database was chosen to find relevant articles for the SLR as it is said to be the "largest single abstract and indexing database ever built" till date (Burnham,2006). The bibliometric analysis was carried out using the articles from SLR and enabling us to generate network maps with the aim of facilitating a visual representation of the key-concepts related to brand love.

1.1 SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW

First, we conducted the SLR. Literature review is the backbone of any academic research. Effective knowledge advancement happens only when the basics are clear, for which we refer to prior existing work. According to Yu Xiao and Maria Watson (2017), by reviewing relevant literature, we are able to identify relevant gaps if any and spot new avenues for research. Systematic reviews include a clear mission statement of the purpose of the review, are carried out keeping an objective in mind and retrieve relevant research, further involves having a systematic and specific selection criteria, rigorous evaluation, and synthesis of the material that was chosen (Cook et al., 1997). Upon searching the terms "brand" and "brand love" or "customer-brand love" in the search engine, we applied the search to the following fields: "article title," "abstract," and "keywords''. This search was conducted in June2023. Thus, articles that did not have the aforementioned words were not taken into account. Initially, we found 964 articles in our results. After this first selection, we applied the following exclusion criteria: only open access journals to be taken into account so that there are no barriers present facilitating free and quality education. It belongs to our chosen time frame which is 2005-2023, a span of eighteen years to give a comprehensive overview. Paper type was not an issue, as a result all papers irrespective of their approach were included. So, to be precise, we only considered studies that matched with our criteria. After analysis and exclusion from the sample of articles that fit at least one of the criteria, the final sample consisted of 227 papers. The data extraction form's fields for basic information (author, publication date), as well as the study's summary (goal of the study, methodology employed, findings, and recommendations for further research), were then filled out for each of the articles. As a result, we later utilised a comprehensive list of the data to analyse the clusters that the bibliometric methodologies had produced.

1.2 BIBLIOMETRICS

We conducted the bibliometric analysis with the help of VOSviewer software version 1.6.19, applying the following analysis techniques: co-occurrence of keywords and bibliographic coupling. Co-occurrence involves observing how frequently the keywords appear in the chosen sample and how the terms are inter-connected, that is, how often two different keywords appear together in different research articles. For this, all the keywords were firstly examined and the synonymous ones, such as "brand" and "brands", were highlighted and considered as the same. Thereafter, we applied keyword co-occurrence to generate the clustering of the keywords according to their degree of association in the literature. However, it should be carefully done as it has its downsides. For instance, certain words are used in more than one context thus, (re) reading of publications is essential to understand the actual meaning of the relationships between words (Donthu et al.,

2021). To get around this, one solution is to carry out a co-word analysis as an additional tool to deepen our comprehension of thematic clusters identified by co-citation analysis or bibliographic coupling analysis which is exactly why we have included bibliographic coupling too.

Bibliographic coupling is carried out with the assumption that if two articles have same references, their content is also the same and therefore are bibliographically coupled (Kessler, 1963). The more references in common, the more likely they are to be similar in content. Because each cluster created by using the bibliographic coupling approach contains articles with several shared references, we propose that each cluster serves as the foundation for a specific search front. Because the subject clusters are created based on the citing publications, bibliographic coupling as opposed to co-citation analysis—allows specialised and recent publications to become more visible and significant. In that regard, bibliographic coupling is appropriate for academicians who want to learn about a variety of topics and the most recent advancements in the field. The interactions formed by the application of these techniques was used to create network maps where each map was calculated by measuring the interaction force between terms, taking into consideration the number of linkages between the terms (Van Eck and Waltman, 2010; Waltman et al., 2010). Graphically speaking, each node represents a term which can either be a keyword or an article, depending on the analysis. Therefore, each node relates to a particular cluster. In addition, larger nodes represent more significant and relevant terms than smaller ones, and the closer the nodes are to each other, the more related they are even if the nodes happen to be in different clusters.

2.   RESULT

KEYWORDS

To comprehend the published studies on branding, brand love, the inner or societal self-expression of "loved" brands, and the connection between them, we examined the co-occurrence of keywords in papers (Wallace E., Buil I., and De Chernatony L., 2014).

We used the authors' suggested keywords for our study, initially coming up with a total of 95 keywords. We then conducted a synonym analysis, where words like "brandlove," "brand-love," and "love-for-brand" were treated equally. After rectification, 93 different terms were discovered, and all of them occurred three times or more. As a result of our analysis of 82 final keywords, using a resolution of one and a minimum group size of five keywords, we were able to divide the keywords into seven groups and reach an acceptable degree of detail, as the generated map is shown in Figure 2.

FIGURE 2: BIBLIOMETRIC ANALYSIS BY KEYWORDS

The terms "controlled study," "qualitative research," "surveys," and "questionnaire" are all included in Group 1. These are the different research methodologies that have been employed to investigate the phenomenon of brand love like in Patrcia Dias[1] & Rita Cavalheiro[2], 2021. Many studies discuss how various factors positively influence the love that consumers feel for a specific brand and how the various facets of brand personality can influence the intention to give. Additionally, "brand personality" helps to create "brand image," which affects the desire to donate, according to authors like Venable et al. (2005) (Huang and Ku, 2016). This cluster is strongly thus linked to "Brand love" of Cluster 2.

Along with "brand love," Cluster 2 also includes the keywords "brand engagement," "brand engagement," "brand equity," "brand relationship," and even "brand hate.", According to Ferreira, P., S.S. Rodrigues, P. Gabriel C. (2022), brand experience influences brand equity when brand love acts as a mediating factor. To succeed in creating solid and long-lasting relationships with clients, emotional signals, meaning creation, and strategic planning are essential. Additionally, the aggregate of a consumer's experiences may provoke powerful reactions, such as brand loyalty.

Some fundamental brand equity assumptions are shared by a large number of brand equity models created in recent years: (1) the strength of a brand lies in the minds of consumers because of what they have seen, heard, and felt about it; (2) brand equity can come from the added value or benefit perceived by consumers, motivating thoughts, words, and actions, such as repurchase intention; and (3) there are various ways that customers' added value can affect the business, specifically in terms of higher revenue and lower costs (Leone et al., 2006).

Group 3 is associated with "consumer behaviour," "self-expressive brands," "social media marketing," and "ewom," in contrast. Given that internal and external brand management activities can be crucial to the success of brand building, the keyword seems to be more closely tied to internal and external brand management. WOM is regarded as a trustworthy, impartial source of information. EWOM is a method through which one can inform others electronically about a product using social media and other instruments that have an impact on customer behaviour. PWOM behaviours of employees are focused on providing customers with useful information about the brand and product (Kumar, V.; Rajan, B.; Gupta, S.; DallaPozza, I., 2019).

Group 4 is concerned with "brand credibility", "brand commitment" and "perception", which are coupled as Perception shapes commitment and credibility, commitment strengthens perception and credibility, and credibility shapes perception. Together, these elements have an impact on consumer attitudes and behaviours towards a brand.

The terms "brand fidelity," "brand satisfaction," "CSR," and "brand attitude" are used by Cluster 5. Consumers are becoming more concerned about whether businesses are improving society, and corporate social responsibility (CSR) has come under increased public scrutiny. Additionally, it aids in developing brand image, which alters consumers' attitude for a brand. Particularly with generation X, the brand image of consumers has a large and favourable impact on satisfaction, loyalty, and future purchasing intentions. The findings support the claims made by Priester (2004), Kotler (2000), Jamal and Goode (2001), Aaker (1991), and Priester. Their result demonstrates how brand attitudes, which promote brand happiness, loyalty, and repurchasing, can influence consumers' behaviours. Brand Loyalty, unlike brand fidelity, has a strong and favourable impact on future buying intentions, especially in generation X, while faithfulness has a negative impact on loyalty. The results discussed by Reichheld and Sasser (1990), Anderson and Sullivan (1993), and Oliver (1999) are the same as these results.

Last but not least, Cluster 6 and 7 are related to concepts like "innovation," "sustainable development," and "social identity theory." According to Kim, Y.; Legendre, T.S (2021), employee brand love refers to the degree of an individual's emotional attachment to the brand of the company they work for. It goes without saying that businesses with great brands increase their significance and perceived value among both customers and staff (Verma, P., 2021). Only when a person has joy and satisfaction in belonging to a social group can they identify with that group (Verma, P., 2005). The identity of a person is influenced not only by the organisation but also by the outcome of personal elements like its brand (Alnawas, I.; Altarifi, S, 2016).

BIBLIOMETRIC COUPLING

We employed the bibliographic coupling of documents to identify the key research fronts and to better understand the contributions, methodology used, and literature gaps within the theme of Brand Love. The database consisted of 228 documents, 69 of which were bibliographically connected and the subject of this investigation as 9 were removed due to 0 link strength.

FIGURE 3: BIBLIOMETRIC COUPLING BY DOCUMENTS
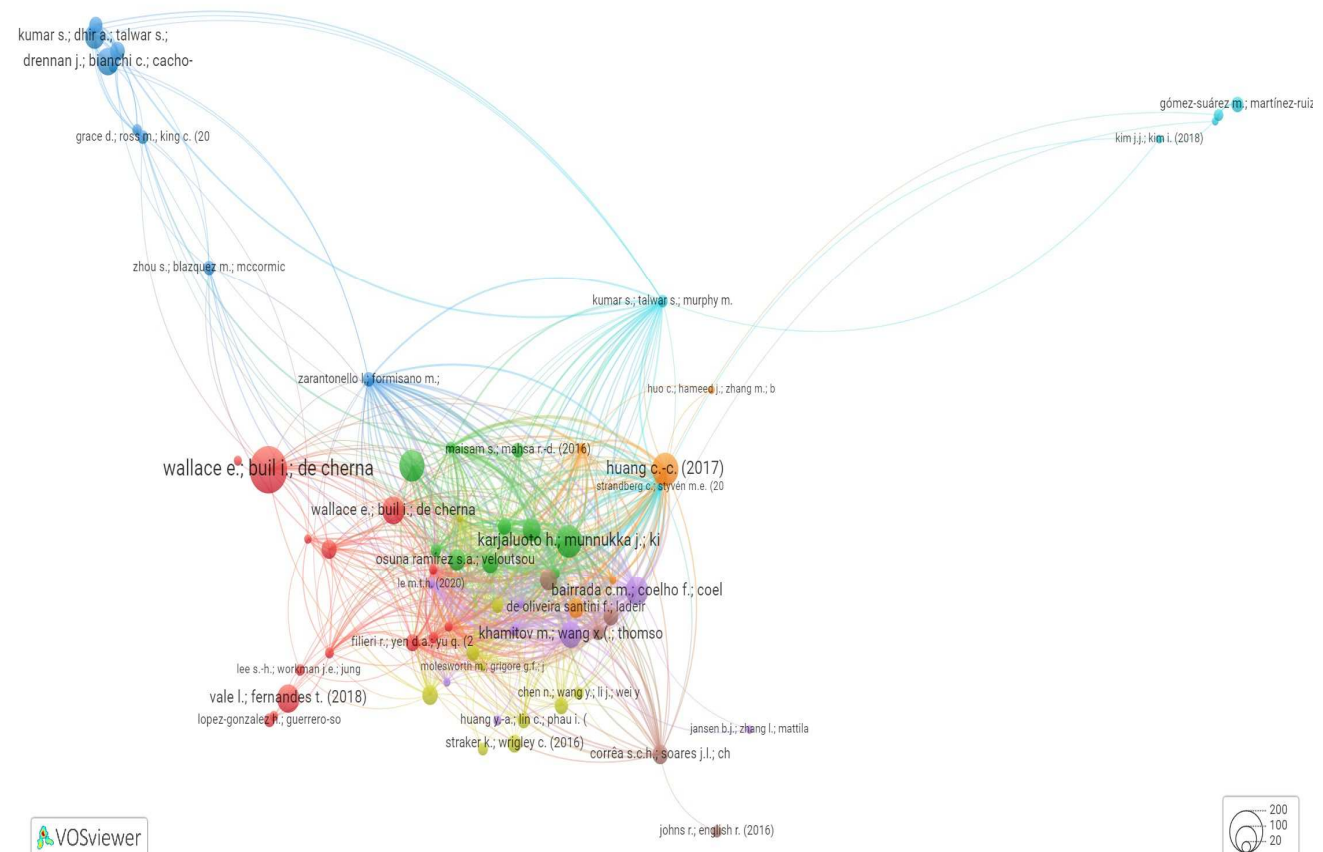
The references for the studies that were chosen studies were not shared by the other seven articles' theoretical framework research. Since we were unable to bibliographically pair them, we excluded them from the analysis. Additionally, a resolution of 1 was established, with a requirement of a minimum of 10 citations. As a result, Figure 3 displays the map that was created, which contains the eight clusters. The map generally has clusters with evenly distributed numbers of items. As seen in figure 3, there is a very noticeable inequality when certain documents have weak links.

But compared to other clusters, Clusters 8 and 9 have less articles. Clusters 2, 3, and 4 each include 10 documents, while Clusters 5 and 6 have eight and seven articles, respectively.

3. DISCUSSION

The articles in this review span the years 2012 to 2023. Thus, via analysis and discussion of these subject topics, we were able to establish links between numerous aspects of brand love over the course of approximately ten years of investigations. The research then starts looking at how for-profit brand ideas (such brand equity, brand perception, and brand engagement) have been adapted. Future research by Kumar, V., Rajan, B., Gupta, S., and DallaPozza (2019) examined how employees' digital and positive WOM activities are centred on giving customers meaningful information about the brand and product.

The findings in the keyword groups, which show the connections between the themes of published studies, are consistent with the directions for further investigation revealed by bibliographic coupling. This demonstrates how the study directions were actually formed by the connected themes. However, some groups contain keywords from more than one cluster, indicating that several themes' study directions are interconnected. This is to be expected given that the main issue (brand love) is the same. In addition, despite the many clusters, Figure 3's centre has a large number of nodes, indicating that the study is closely related.

BOX 1

CLUSTER	MAIN KEYWORD	DEFINITION
1	Human	According to the Oxford Dictionary, a human being is a person who belongs to the Homo sapiens species or one of the other (extinct) species of the genus Homo.
2	Brand Love	Carroll and Ahuvia (2006, p. 81) used the word "brand love" to refer to "the level of passionate emotional attachment a satisfied consumer has" to a brand. As one of several relationship forms that arise when customers experience love-like feelings for brands, Fournier (1998) recognised brand love as one of these relationship types (Gumparthi & Patra, 2020).
3	Social Media Marketing	Pentina and Koh (2012) claim that SMM encourages consumer-to-consumer viral communication across online communities, brand and fan pages, and promotion-related content created by businesses/organizations on well-known networking sites like Twitter, Facebook, and many more. SMM, according to Jara, Parra, and Skarmeta (2014), is a new generation marketing method that uses social networks to encourage greater consumer attention and participation.
4	Consumer Behaviour	The user, payer, and buyer roles are all distinct in the study of customer behaviour, which is based on consumer purchasing behaviour. Even for industry specialists, research has shown that predicting consumer behaviour can be challenging (Armstrong & Scott, 1991).
5	Corporate Social Responsibility	CSR focuses on how the company interacts with its stakeholders in an ethical or responsible way. "Ethically or responsibly" refers to treating stakeholders in a way that is recognised as appropriate in advanced cultures. Economic and environmental responsibility are both social. There are stakeholders both inside and outside of a company. The larger objective of social responsibility is to raise living standards for everyone inside and outside of corporations while maintaining corporate profitability (Hopkins, 2007).
6	Sustainable Development	According to the Brutland Report, sustainable development is "development that satisfies the needs of the present without impairing the capacity of future generations to satisfy their own needs." In light of contemporary disparities and exclusionary processes, social and environmental movements emphasise the social justice aspects of sustainability as well as the economic, social, and environmental components.
7	Word of Mouth	Word-of-mouth is described as oral, one-on-one communication between a communicator and a recipient who views the communication as non-commercial despite the fact that the subject is a name, thing, or service (Arndt, 1967, p. 3).

4. CONCLUSION

The study clarifies the connections between many facets of brand love through analysis and discussion of these research areas. By providing a systematised understanding of the notion and its consequences for institutions and managers, it adds to the body of current knowledge. The study's findings offer insightful information about how to use brand love to improve brand performance and fortify client relationships.

The research does, however, admit its limits and emphasises the difficulties managers encounter when trying to apply brand-love initiatives successfully. Future study in the area is given many chances by these complications. The report emphasises the need for additional research to solve the issues and look at new opportunities for exploiting brand love in its conclusion.

In general, this study advances our knowledge of brand love and its importance in the contexts of management and marketing. It is a useful tool for academics, professionals, and decision-makers who want to harness the power of brand love to build enduring consumer loyalty and deliver good brand experiences. Future studies will be able to delve deeper into the complexity and practical ramifications of brand love in many industries and organisational contexts thanks to the study's thorough analysis and identification of research gaps.

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