

The role of store brand love in online shopping behavior. An application of the S-O-R model to the online fashion retailing.

Simona D'Amico¹, Giada Mainolfi², Donata Tania Vergura³

Abstract

The paper aims to enhance the knowledge on the phenomenon of brand love in the fashion online retailing context. It builds on the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) model in order to identify the determinants of store brand love and its impact on patronage intention and store loyalty. By including price, assortment, global service and communication as stimuli, the adopted theoretical framework may shed light on the mechanism underlying the formation process of love toward the store brand and its role in the consumer's decision-making process. Data were collected through an online survey with a sample of 323 Italian consumers. Results showed that assortment, global service and price convenience act as stimuli for brand love, which in turn is capable of positively influence patronage intention and store loyalty.

At the theoretical level, the study supports the adequacy of the S-O-R model for explaining the role of store brand love in the online consumer decision-making process. From a managerial perspective, the findings highlight the factors that practitioners can leverage to increase store brand love and, consequently, loyalty and purchase intention.

Keywords: e-commerce, fashion, store brand love, store loyalty, patronage intention

1. Introduction

To successfully compete in a dynamic scenario animated by the presence of a growing number of businesses and brands, it is no more sufficient to satisfy customers, organisations must aim to establish profitable relationships based on trust and emotional attachment. Recent studies have demonstrated that consumers can feel a sentiment of love for their favourite brand (Batra et al., 2012). This

¹ Docente a contratto di Marketing Strategico presso l'Università di Roma La Sapienza e di Marketing Digitale presso l'Università degli Studi Internazionali di Roma.

² Professore associato di Management e Marketing Internazionale presso l'Università degli Studi Internazionali di Roma.

³ Ricercatrice di Economia e Gestione delle Imprese presso l'Università degli Studi di Parma.

feeling can increase the chance to build a strong brand relationship and increase brand loyalty. Carroll and Ahuvia (2006) defined brand love as the emotional bond a satisfied consumer has with a specific brand. Therefore, brand love entails passion for the brand, attachment, and positive evaluation of the brand. Brand love is a relatively new topic in the marketing. Research so far has investigated some antecedents of brand love. For example, brand image and brand personality were found to affect brand love (Ismail and Spinelli, 2012; Unal and Aydin, 2013; Bairrada et al., 2019; Roy et al., 2016). Other scholars have analysed the impact of brand identification (Alnawas and Altarifi, 2016) and brand trust (Albert and Merunka, 2013) to find a positive influence on brand love. Then, past studies have explored how relational constructs may explain brand love. Love is a relational dimension; thus, it should relate to other relational variables (Albert and Merunka, 2013). The attention toward brand love is still in an emerging stage and despite the growing interest toward the construct there is still a dearth of research examining its antecedents. Moreover, Karjaluoto et al. (2016) maintain that studies should widen the analysis of brand love's antecedents by adding factors capable of influencing the emotional bond customers establish with the brand, such as brand equity, perceived value and perceived quality. Such scientific gaps have also compromised the advancement of knowledge of the construct in the retail context (Ferreira et al., 2019; Roy et al., 2016; Ortiz and Harrison, 2011) where dimensions such as perceived value and quality are crucial in activating long-lasting ties with customers (Shujaat et al., 2018). Moreover, research on brand love has been more focused on traditional (physical) contexts paying less attention to online context. The widespread of Internet and, consequently, of e-commerce channels have created an additional space for communication and distribution, thus providing a new reality for brand experiences.

This study aims at providing a theoretical contribution on how e-retailer's qualities affect brand love and how brand love influences patronage intention and e-store loyalty. Specifically, we consider two key research questions:

RQ1: To what extent price, assortment, global service and communication of the e-retailer affect brand love?

RQ2: How does brand love relate to patronage intention and store loyalty in the context of e-commerce?

By addressing these questions, the study responds to the concern about the lack of investigation in online retail context (Kim et al., 2008). This study attempts to increase the understanding of the phenomenon of brand love in fashion online retailing context. By including price, assortment, global service and communication as stimuli, the adopted theoretical framework may shed light on mechanism underlying the formation process of love toward the store brand.

2. Theoretical background

The Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R; Mehrabian and Russell, 1974) framework has often been used by literature to explain the consumer's decision-making process and his purchasing behavior, which would be linked not only to factors internal to the individual, but also to a set of stimuli from the environment (Bagozzi, 1986).

Within the S-O-R framework, the second element, i.e., the organism, is the internal state of the individual, which creates a connection between environmental stimuli and behavioral responses (Donovan and Rositer, 1982; Baker et al., 1992; Chang et al., 2011; Chebat and Michon, 2003; Eroglu et al., 2001; Eroglu et al., 2003; Islam and Rahman, 2017; Kang and Sohaib, 2015; Kim and Lennon, 2013; Mollen and Wilson, 2010; Rose et al., 2012).

On closer inspection, the process activated by the S-O-R approach is not linear. An input does not automatically correspond to an output: not all consumers, in fact, are subject to the same stimuli and, even if they were, they would not react in the same way. This is because each subject processes the stimuli in a different way in a single decision-making procedure, according to their own cultural, social, personal and psychological characteristics.

The conceptual model of this paper relies on the theoretical advances related to the S-O-R framework (Mehrabian and Russell, 1974), which we use to study store brand love in online shopping behavior in the fashion industry.

Brand love is defined as “the degree of passionate emotional attachment a satisfied consumer has for a particular trade name” and it is a construct of marketing that “helps explain and predict variation in desirable post-consumption behaviors among satisfied consumers” (Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006).

The literature on brand love is very wide and highlights the long-term emotional relationship between consumers and brand (Batra et al., 2012). In this relationship, very similar to the one established between two individuals (Shimp and Madden, 1988; Keh et al., 2007; Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006; Whang et al., 2004; Albert et al., 2008), brand is perceived as unique and, therefore, irreplaceable (Fournier, 1998; Shimp e Madden, 1988; Keh et al., 2007; Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006; Whang et al., 2004; Albert et al., 2008).

According to Albert et al. (2008, 2009), in line with the interpersonal love literature, brand love is characterized by six first- and four second-order dimensions. First-order dimensions include idealization, intimacy, pleasure, dream, memories, and uniqueness, whereas second-order ones are passion and affection. Ahuvia (2005) explains that brand love includes passion for the brand, attachment to the brand, positive evaluation of the brand, positive emotions in response to the brand, and declarations of love for the brand.

Prior literature has thoroughly analyzed brand love by mainly examining the consumer-producer relationship, while far fewer studies focus on the consumer-retailer relationship (Kim, 2008; Kim et al., 2010; Ortiz and Harrison, 2011; Nikhashemi et al., 2019; Sarkar et al., 2019).

Customers who feel affectionate to a retailer's brand show a positive attitude towards and have a better image of the retailer. They positively judge their experience with the retailer (Khan and Rahman, 2015; Wallace et al., 2014; Aro et al., 2018), are more willing to repeat the purchase over time from their preferred retailer, even if they buy at higher prices.

Some empirical evidence shows that perceived relationship investment, hedonic and symbolic store experiences are key drivers of customer love. A higher level of competitive insulation, which is found to be linked with customer love and symbolic store experience, is able to determine the loyalty in the consumer behaviour (Kim et al., 2008).

Subsequent studies have explored brand love in the context of online retail brands. The ability of online retail brands to communicate brand personalities (Okazaki, 2006; Opoku et al., 2007; Roy et al., 2016) and form "love-like" attachments with customers has been demonstrated in some research (Ortiz and Harrison, 2011; Kim, 2008; Kim et al., 2010; Vlachos and Vrechopoulos, 2012; Roy et al., 2016).

This paper contributes to prior literature and proposes four antecedent variables as external stimuli which can determine store brand love and, consequently, patronage intention and store loyalty. The antecedent variables are some of the core elements of the online offer, namely price, assortment, global service and communication, and are discussed in the next section.

3. Research model and hypotheses

The conceptual foundations of the proposed model and related hypotheses are drawn from three different research streams: *perceived value* (Jalil et al., 2016; Swaid and Wigand, 2012; Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006; Sweeney and Soutar, 2001); *brand love* (Batra et al., 2012; Karjaluoto et al., 2016; Unal and Aydin, 2013); *patronage intention* (Garaus, 2017; Nair, 2018); *store loyalty* (Balabanis et al., 2006; González-Benito and Martos-Partal, 2012). Thanks to a review of relevant literature, we selected the most robust constructs according to their relevance and expected validity for the purpose of the study. From a structural point of view, the research model is composed by seven main constructs, derived from the literature review: a) *price convenience*, resulting from consumers' beliefs that retailer's prices are low and convenient compared to other stores (Handelman and Arnold, 1999); b) *assortment*, resulting from consumers' judgments related to the variety of products and brands provided by the retailer (Verma

and Sharma, 2017); c) *communication* can be defined as consumers' beliefs that the store communication is clear, transparent and complete (Guenzi et al., 2009); d) *service*, which refer to assessments about services provided by the retailer (Yang and Kang, 2009); e) *brand love* defined as the emotional attachment a consumer has for a particular brand (Albert et al., 2009); f) *patronage intention*, defined as the probability that the consumer will buy products from the store in the near future (Grewal et al., 2003); g) *store loyalty* defined in terms of behavioural response of revisit over time (Watson et al., 2015; Cronin, 2017).

As shown in Fig. 1, the main underlying hypothesis of the proposed model is that price convenience, assortment, global service and communication act as stimuli for brand love, which in turn is judged capable of positively influencing patronage intention and store loyalty.

Influence of price, assortment, global service and communication on brand love

The study proposes four antecedent variables as external stimuli which can impact the consumer-online retailer relationship in terms of brand love and, consequently, patronage intention and store loyalty. We analyze some of the core elements of the online offer: price, assortment, global service and communication

This study examines the potential impact exerted by the price variable on the store brand love in the fashion industry, where consumers follow utilitarian as well as hedonic motivation to shop online (Vignali and Reid, 2014). The literature has so far mainly investigated the function of the price variable as a consequence of the brand love (Krishnamurthi and Raj, 1991; Batra et al., 2012; Albert and Merunka, 2013; Hegner et al., 2017).

The most beneficial factor of shopping online was identified as the possibility to compare prices (Moshrefjavadi et al., 2012) and buy at a lower price (Baubonienė and Gulevičiūtė, 2015). Reed (1999), Chiang (2001) and Park and Kim (2003) suggest that consumers' intention to shop online is significantly affected by price convenience. At the same time, consumers' perception of price influences their perception of value, purchasing decisions and post-purchase behavior (Thomson et al., 2005; Matzler et al., 2006; Munnukka and Järvi, 2012), loyalty formation and consumption (Hartline and Jones, 1996; Karjaluoto et al., 2016; Thomson et al., 2005).

Based on these arguments, our first hypothesis can be stated as follows:

H₁: Price convenience of products offered by online fashion retailer positively influences store brand love.

Consumers often do not know which specific variant of the product they wish best fits their needs (Cachon et al., 2005). From this perspective, assortment plays a fundamental role in store choice (Kelley and Stephenson, 1967; Zimmer and Golden, 1988; Briesch et al., 2009) and turns out to be a strategic positioning tool for customer acquisition and retention (Grewal et al., 1999; Kahn, 1999; Koelemeijer and Oppewal, 1999). Assortment is also a main factor for retail patronage (Arnold et al., 1983; Baker et al., 2002; Pan and Zinkhan, 2006) because the composition of the assortment not only attracts consumers to the store but shapes their preferences and affects both current and future product choice (Simonson, 1999; van Ryzin and Mahajan, 1999).

According to Kautish et al. (2020), who investigated the effectiveness of product assortment on consumers' online purchase intentions for fashion apparel shopping, product assortment generates value for customers (together with order fulfillment) in terms of customer experiences related to convenience (Jain et al., 2015, 2017), availability (Boyer and Hult, 2006), and time saving (Peinkofer et al., 2016).

Based on these arguments, our second hypothesis can be stated as follows:

H₂: Assortment of products offered by online fashion retailer positively influences store brand love.

Prior literature suggests that over time retail stores have significantly invested in offering excellent sales services (Dabholkar et al., 1996; Gouthier et al., 2012), which exceed customer expectations (Horwitz and Neville, 1996) and increase their satisfaction (Edvardsson and Enquist, 2011; Gouthier et al., 2012). This is even more true in online retailing, where it is easier to access information and prices are easy to compare, which is why providing superior customer service is important to attract and retain customers (Mero, 2018). Quality of online service is one of the key drivers of the success of online retailers and Jun et al. (2004) suggests that a significantly positive relationship between overall service quality and satisfaction does exist. More recently, Panchapakesan and Wagenseil (2018) also verified that retail service excellence positively influences brand love.

Based on these arguments, our third hypothesis can be stated as follows:

H₃: Global service offered by online fashion retailer positively influences store brand love.

Prior literature shows that store communication influences the creation of customer trust when it is perceived as credible, clear and complete (Duncan and

Moriarty, 1998; Bendapudi and Berry, 1997; Doney and Cannon, 1997; Morgan and Hunt, 1994; Spreng et al., 1996).

The quality of store communication fosters all three levels of customer trust: customer to sales associates, customer to store branded products, and customer to the store itself (Guenzi et al., 2009).

User-facing communication is an important factor although it is provided using text, color, graphics and animation rather than by personnel. Since it is linked with customer informing and listening activities, e-commerce communication can also be used to describe service, feedback and customer confidence (Cox and Dale, 2001). Lee and Lin (2005) argue that in online shopping the availability of high-quality information, i.e., accuracy, timeliness, relevance and understandability, increases satisfaction with both the user experience and the product purchase.

Based on these arguments, our third hypothesis can be stated as follows:

H₄: Communication adopted by online fashion retailer positively influences store brand love.

Influence of brand love on patronage intention and store loyalty

Prior literature shows that the emotional connection with a brand has positive influences on purchase intention. Emotional feelings for a brand may create a strong desire to possess it to the point of buying and making repeat purchases (Matzler, 2006). Roy et al. (2013) posited that purchase intention is a significant consequence of brand love. Consumers who reveal love towards a brand tend to purchase more from that brand. Consumers who develop an emotional bonding with a brand begin by displaying a generally positive attitude towards the brand and, consequently, with an accumulated experience they decide to buy it (Palusuk et al., 2019). Despite the significant role exerted by brand love on behavioural patterns of consumers, several scholars have pointed out that there is a need for further research aimed at establishing this outcome (Trivedi and Kishore, 2020). Moreover, there are still a few studies that look at brand love in the context of retail (Ferreira et al., 2019). Starting from these assumptions, we hypothesise that:

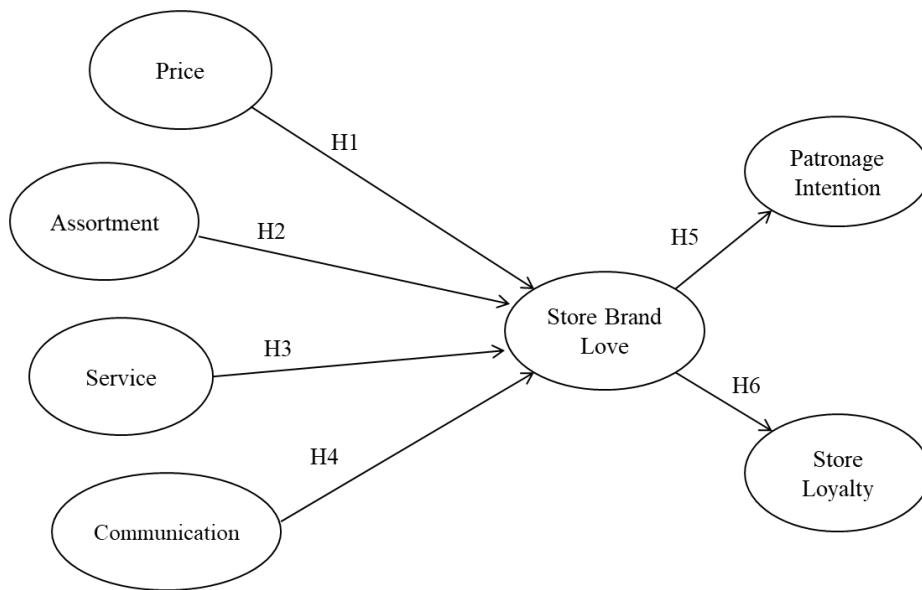
H₅: Brand love positively influences patronage intention

One of the most studied outcomes of brand love is brand loyalty in its main forms (Bergkvist and Bech-larsen, 2010; Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006; Koo and Kim, 2013; Unal and Aydin, 2013). Carroll and Ahuvia (2006) found that brand love positively influences brand loyalty. Other scholars have subsequently empirically supported this influence (Albert et al., 2013). Koo and Kim (2013), based on the stimulus-

organism-response (S-O-R) model, found that store love, when affected by design and merchandise, positively influences store loyalty. The present study includes store loyalty as an outcome of brand love in order to replicate this aspect in the context of online retail. Thus, based on above considerations, it is hypothesised that:

H₆: Brand love positively influences store loyalty

Figure 1. Research model and hypotheses



Source: our elaboration.

4. Method

Procedure and measures

To test the proposed model, an empirical study was conducted via online survey. The invitation with the URL link to the questionnaire was posted on some social networks users' accounts. Participation was voluntary, non-incentivised, and responses were collected between May and June 2021. In total, 547 Italian consumers were reached. An introductory message was used to assure respondents of the anonymity of all data and confidentiality of the study (Chang et al., 2010). Then, respondents were immediately asked if they

had bought fashion products online in the past 6/8 months and, subsequently, if they had ever purchased fashion products from the online retailer Yoox. Only those who answered “yes” were able to complete the questionnaire, thus reducing the sample size to 323 online shoppers. The choice to focus the research on Yoox is motivated by the evidence that it is one of the world leaders in online luxury and fashion and its founder has been defined by the New York Times as “the man who brought fashion to the web” (Vogue Business, 2019). In addition to the socio-demographic data (gender, age, place of residence, education, occupation, and annual income), the questionnaire also included measurement scales for the research variables coming from established literature and adapted to fit the research context.

Assortment was detected with the 4-items scale by Srinivasan et al. (2002). Price convenience was measured through the three items developed by Handelman and Arnold (1999), while the 3-item scale by Guenzi et al. (2009) was used for measuring the communication variable. Starting from previous literature (e.g., Davari et al., 2010; Long and McMellon, 2004; Rolland and Freeman, 2010) ten items were developed to measure the service offered by the online retailer. The measure for brand love consisted of six items selected from the scale proposed by Albert et al. (2009) while store loyalty was assessed through three items adapted from Watson et al. (2015) and Cronin (2017). Finally, patronage intention was measured through the 3-item scale proposed by Grewal et al. (2003). All items were constructed using a 7-point anchored scale. The questionnaire was carefully designed to promote clarity and increase respondents’ understanding (Podsakoff et al., 2003). The items of the scales are shown in Table 1.

Analytical procedure

Data underwent two phases of analysis. First, the measurement model was analysed through a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and Cronbach’s alphas estimation to obtain evidence of convergent and discriminant validity of the measurement scales. Second, the paths of the hypothesised relationships were explored.

For the analysis of the measurement model and of the conceptual model, structural equation modelling (SEM) was performed using the IBM SPSS statistical software (SPSS Inc, Chicago, IL; release 26.0) and the LISREL software (release 8.80), employing the maximum-likelihood method.

5. Results

Sample characteristics

The sample was represented by 71% of females and 29% of males, with a mean age of 29.1 (min = 18; max = 68). The respondents were well-educated: 58% had graduated or post-graduated, 42% completed high school and 1% completed primary school. The income level is quite varied: 39% have an annual income of less than 5,000 euros; 41% earn between five and twenty-five thousand euros; 13% earn between twenty-five and fifty thousand euros; 7% declared an annual income exceeding 50,000 euros.

Tests of the measurement model

Cronbach's alphas and a CFA were estimated to assess the reliability and the convergent and discriminant validity of the measurement scales. The internal consistency reliability was very high for almost all constructs, as demonstrated by the alpha indexes that were greater than the threshold value of 0.70 (Nunnally, 1978). Only one item from the "assortment" scale was removed as it showed a low item-total correlation and reduced the alpha value for the construct below the threshold value. After removing the item, the internal consistency of the scale increased and all the remaining items showed a high item-total correlation, indicating their ability to tap the construct.

As the normality assumption was violated, the CFA model was estimated using the Satorra-Bentler method (Satorra and Bentler, 1994). The fit indices showed that the measurement models fit the data well: $\chi^2 = 1489.816$, $df = 413$, $p < .001$, $CFI = 0.97$, $RMSEA = 0.09$, $NNFI = 0.97$, $SRMR = 0.05$. All items substantially and significantly loaded onto the expected latent construct (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988). All constructs also showed satisfactory levels of Composite Reliability (CR) and Average Variance Extracted (AVE), exceeding the recommended cut-off points for the adequacy of 0.70 and 0.50, respectively (Fornell and Larcker, 1981; Steenkamp and Van Trijp 1991). Next, discriminant validity was assessed by Fornell and Larcker's (1981) criterion: the average variance explained by the latent variables was greater than any of the squared correlations involving the variable, except for store brand love. Table 1 reports the reliability and validity indices for each construct.

Table 1. Measurement scales reliability and validity

Scale Items	CR	AVE	Cronbach's Alpha
<i>Price Convenience</i> <i>(Adapted from Handelman and Arnold, 1999)</i> A shopper will find the store prices to be, on average, lower than the competition. The store offers its customers very low prices. The store prices are lower than their competitors' prices.	0.93	0.82	0.93

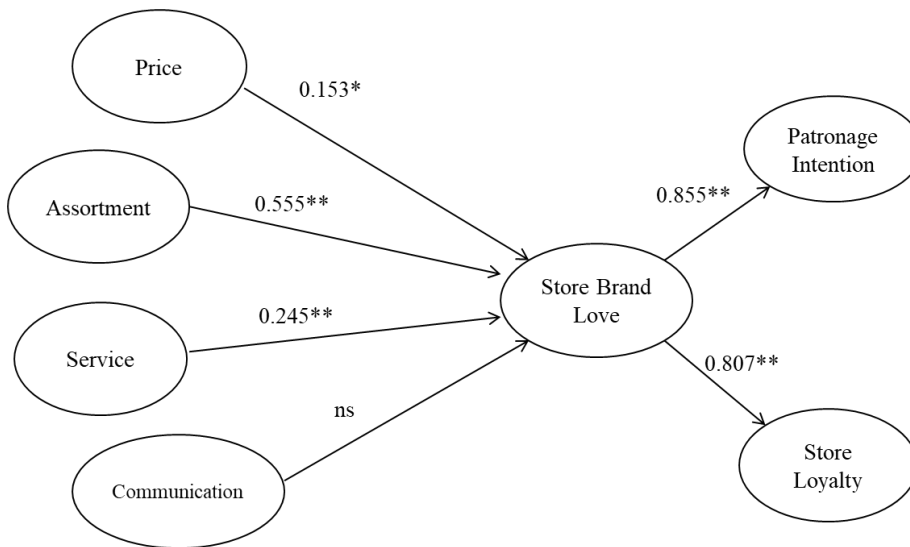
<p>Assortment (Srinivasan et al., 2002)</p> <p>This online store provides a "one-stop shop" for my shopping. This online store satisfies a majority of my online shopping needs. The choice of products at this online store is limited (r) This online store has a wide selection of products to choose from.</p>	0.87	0.69	0.86
<p>Communication (Guenzi et al., 2009)</p> <p>Communication of this online store is transparent Communication of this online store is complete Communication of this online store makes me want to buy here</p>	0.92	0.79	0.91
<p>Global service (Developed by the authors)</p> <p>Punctuality of deliveries Management of returns and refunds Correspondence between the images on the website and the real characteristics of the product Ease of use of the platform Variety of payment methods Quality of customer service (pre and post sales) Loyalty program Quality of the contents conveyed through the newsletter Discounts and promotional activities App usability</p>	0.95	0.67	0.95
<p>Store Brand Love (Albert et al., 2009)</p> <p>This online retailer is unique By buying from this online retailer, I take pleasure Discovering new products from this online retailer is a pure pleasure I take a real pleasure in using this online retailer I do not intend to interact with another online retailer I dream about this online retailer since long</p>	0.93	0.67	0.92
<p>Patronage Intention (Grewal et al., 2003)</p> <p>The likelihood that I will purchase products from this online store is very high I would be willing to buy products from this online store I would be willing to recommend this online store to my friends</p>	0.96	0.87	0.96
<p>Store Loyalty (adapted from Watson et al., 2015 and Cronin, 2017)</p> <p>I consider myself loyal to this online retailer I prefer to buy fashion products on this website over any of the alternatives. This online retailer is the superior choice for buying fashion products</p>	0.92	0.79	0.91

Tests of the structural model

Overall, the results showed a good fit of the conceptual model (Satorra-Bentler $\chi^2 = 614.58$, $df = 200$, $p < .001$, CFI = 0.98, RMSEA = 0.07, NNFI = 0.97, SRMR = 0.09) (Table 3). The model explained 46% of variance for store loyalty and 51% for patronage intention. Path coefficients and levels of significance are displayed in Figure 2.

Results from the data were found to support all hypotheses, except H4. Specifically, the role of price, assortment and global service as external stimuli was confirmed: their effect on store brand love was positive and significant, supporting H1 ($\beta = 0.153$, $p < 0.05$), H2 ($\beta = 0.555$, $p < 0.01$), and H3 ($\beta = 0.245$, $p < 0.01$). H5 and H6 were also supported by empirical data. The consumer's emotional attachment to the store increased the willingness to buy its products ($\beta = 0.855$, $p < 0.01$). Contextually, developing a sentiment of love toward the store brand strengthened the tendency to be loyal to the retailer ($\beta = 0.807$, $p < 0.01$).

Figure 2. Structural model with standardized coefficients



Source: our elaboration.

6. Discussion

The major aim of the study was to investigate the role of store brand love in the fashion online retailing context. It builds on the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) model in order to identify the determinants of store brand love and its impact on patronage intention and store loyalty. Although research on brand love has been mainly focused on offline contexts, both academics and practitioners are interested in exploring consumers' engagement with their online favourite retailers and the determinants of attachment and positive evaluation of the brand. The widespread of Internet as sales channel and the growing investments in improving the user experience have created new spaces for interaction between consumers and retailers and allowed to enrich the relationship with symbolic and emotional elements. Starting from this standpoint, the study has analysed how some of the core elements of the online offer (price, assortment, global service and communication) can impact the consumer-retailer relationship in terms of brand love and, consequently, patronage intention and store loyalty. The results showed that assortment, service and price convenience act as stimuli for brand love, which in turn is capable of positively influence behavioural intention and store loyalty. The study contributes both theoretically and empirically to the understanding of the role of consumers' emotional attachment to online retailers in influencing consumers' behaviour and increasing store loyalty.

7. Theoretical implications

The present study provides empirical evidence to support significance of brand love construct in the context of online retail. Past research has mainly investigated some relational factors that influence brand love (i.e., trust, personality) (Shimp and Madden, 1988; Keh et al., 2007; Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006; Whang et al., 2004; Albert et al., 2008) but rarely studies have focused on antecedents related to the customer perceived value, above all regarding online retail. The present study has tried to contribute to the current knowledge on brand love. First, the study validates previous research supporting the notion that brand love has the ability to positively affect patronage intention and store loyalty (Bergkvist and Bech-larsen, 2010; Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006; Koo and Kim, 2013). Second, the study goes beyond current theoretical approaches by proposing and testing a conceptual model aimed at analyzing the relationship between facets of customer perceived value (price, assortment, communication, service) and brand love in online purchase environment. Findings reveal that price, assortment and service positively impact brand love, which in turn confirms its influential impact on intention to buy and store loyalty. Third, our findings support strengthen past empirical evidence in the context of online retail.

8. Managerial implications

The issue we tackle in this paper is particularly interesting for managers because the COVID-19 pandemic has had a disruptive impact on consumers' purchasing behavior, pushing them towards e-commerce, especially in the fashion sector. From a managerial perspective, this paper suggests online fashion retailing managers to work on the value proposition to build a brand love relationship with their customers. We find that brand love positively influences patronage intention and customer loyalty to the store.

Patronage intention, along with customer loyalty, are fundamental to the survival of online fashion stores in a highly dynamic and competitive environment characterized by the presence of numerous players and the consequent overcrowding of supply. Online shoppers have virtually instant access to the best deals through search engines (Reichheld and Schefter, 2000). In addition, the analysis of the antecedents of store brand love shows that e-retailers who want to develop a brand love relationship with their customers should act on the following variables:

- the price: proposing an economically convenient offer, compared to competitors;
- the assortment: widening the variety of products and brands delivered;
- the global service: offering quality services in all phases of the customer journey: pre-purchase (e.g., correspondence between the images on the website and the real characteristics of the product; quality of the contents conveyed through the newsletter), purchase (e.g., variety of payment methods; discounts and promotional activities) and post-purchase (e.g., punctuality of deliveries; management of returns and refunds).

In addition, the ease of use of the platform must be guaranteed through periodic maintenance since a well-designed navigation structure significantly influences the user experience.

Based on our results, we argue that, in order to personalize the offer from a customer centric perspective, fashion e-store marketing managers should invest in digital analytics, because studying both quantitatively and qualitatively users' interaction with company's website, app and other digital touchpoints, would allow them to access all the information needed to effectively set digital marketing investments. In addition, e-store marketing managers should invest in the adoption of KPIs to measure and monitor store brand love and indirectly affect patronage intention and store loyalty.

9. Limitations and further research

This paper has some limitations: first, the sample may not be representative of the Italian population, which limits the generalizability of our results. Our findings which are also limited to one specific fashion retail brand. Furthermore, the analysis did not adopt a cross-cultural approach.

Future developments of this study may be oriented to an extension of the countries under investigation, comparing, for example, advanced economies with emerging ones, also through the use of larger samples, in order to verify the cross-country validity of the theoretical reference model.

In the end, the study does not consider the level of consumers' familiarity and involvement with digital channels. Therefore, from this perspective, further research could investigate the moderating role of personal innovativeness in the relationship between stimuli and attitudes toward online shopping services.

References

- Ahuvia, A.C. (2005). Beyond the Extended Self: Loved Objects and Consumers' Identity Narratives, *Journal of Consumer Research*, vol. 32, n.1, pp. 171–184.
- Albert, N., Merunka, D. (2013). The role of brand love in consumer-brand relationships, *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, vol. 30, n. 3, pp. 258-266.
- Albert, N., Merunka, D., Valette-Florence, P. (2013). Brand passion: Antecedents and consequences, *Journal of Business Research*, Vol. 66 n. 7, pp. 904-909.
- Albert, N., Merunka, D., Valette-Florence, P. (2009). The feeling of love toward a brand: Concept and measurement, in *NA - Advances in Consumer Research*, vol. 36, eds. Ann L. McGill and Sharon Shavitt, Duluth, MN: Association for Consumer Research, pp. 300-307.
- Albert, N., Merunka, D., Valette-Florence, P. (2008). Conceptualizing and measuring consumers' love towards their brands. Society for Marketing Advances Annual Conference Proceedings, St Petersburg, Florida, USA, pp.108-111.
- Alnawas, I., and Altarifi, S. (2015), Exploring the role of brand identification and brand love in generating higher levels of brand loyalty, *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, vol. 22, n. 2, pp. 111-128.
- Arnold, S.J., Oum, T.H., Tigert, D.J. (1983). Determinant attributes in retail patronage: seasonal, temporal, regional, and international comparisons, *Journal of Marketing Research*, vol. 20, n. 2, pp.149–157.
- Aro, K., Suomi, K., Saraniemi, S. (2018). Antecedents and consequences of destination brand love—a case study from Finnish Lapland, *Tourism Management*, vol. 67, pp.71–81.
- Bagozzi, R.P. (1986). Principles of marketing management, Science Research Associates, Chicago.
- Baker J., Levy M., Grewal D. (1992). An experimental approach to making retail store environmental decisions, *Journal of Retailing*, vol. 68, n. 4, pp. 445-460.

- Baker, J., Parasuraman, A., Grewal, D., Voss, G.B. (2002). The influence of multiple store environment cues on perceived merchandise value and patronage intentions, *Journal of Marketing*, vol. 66, n. 2, pp.120–141.
- Bairrada, C.M., Coelho, F., and Coelho, A. (2018), Antecedents and outcomes of brand love: utilitarian and symbolic brand qualities, *European Journal of Marketing*, vol. 52 n. 3/4, pp. 656-682.
- Balabanis, G., Reynolds, N., and Simintiras, A. (2006). Bases of e-store loyalty: Perceived switching barriers and satisfaction, *Journal of Business Research*, vol. 59, pp. 214-224.
- Batra, R., Ahuvia, A., Bagozzi, R. P. (2012). Brand Love, *Journal of Marketing*, vol. 76, n.2, pp.1–16.
- Baubonienė, Z, Gulevičiūtė, G. (2015). E-commerce factors influencing consumers' online shopping decision, *Social Technologies*, vol. 5, n. 1, pp. 74-81.
- Bendapudi, N., Berry, L.L. (1997). Customer's motivations for maintaining relationships with service providers, *Journal of Retailing*, vol. 73, n. 1, pp. 15-37.
- Bergkvist, L., Bech-Larsen, T. (2009). Two studies of consequences and actionable antecedents of brand love, *Brand Management*, Vol. 17 n. 7, pp. 504-518.
- Boyer, K.K., Tomas, Hult, G.T.M. (2005). Customer behavioral intentions for online purchases: An examination of fulfillment method and customer experience level, *Journal of Operations Management*, vol. 24, n. 2, pp. 124-147.
- Briesch, R. A., Chintagunta, P. K., Fox, E. (2009). How does assortment affect grocery store choice?, *Journal of Marketing Research*, vol.46, n. 2, pp.176-189.
- Cachon, G. P., Terwiesch, C., Xu, Y. (2005). Retail Assortment Planning in the Presence of Consumer Search, *Manufacturing & Service Operations Management*, vol. 7, n. 4, pp.330-345.
- Carroll, B.A, Ahuvia, A. C. (2006). Some Antecedents and Outcomes of Brand Love, *Marketing Letters*, vol. 17, n. 2, pp. 79-89.
- Chang, H. J., Eckman, M., Yan R. N. (2011). Application of the Stimulus-Organism-Response model to the retail environment: the role of hedonic motivation in impulse buying behaviour, *The International Review of Retail, Distribution and Consumer Research*, vol. 21, n. 3, pp. 233-249.
- Chang, S., Van Witteloostuijn, A., and Eden, L. (2010). From the editors: Common Method Variance in International Business Research, *Journal of International Business Studies*, vol. 41, n. 2, pp. 178-184.
- Chebat, J., Michon, R. (2003). Impact of ambient odors on mall shoppers' emotions, cognition and spending: a test of competitive causal theories, *Journal of Business Research*, vol. 56, n. 7, pp. 529-39.
- Chiang, K. P. (2001). Effects of price, product type and convenience on consumer intention to shop online. In Ram Krishnan and Madhu Viswanathan (Eds.), *Proceedings of AMA Winter Educators' Conference*, vol. 12, pp. 163-169. Chicago: American Marketing Association.
- Cox, J. and Dale, B.G. (2001), Service quality and e-commerce: an exploratory analysis, *Managing Service Quality: An International Journal*, vol. 11, n. 2, pp. 121-131.
- Cronin (2017). Creating Ultimate Customer Loyalty Through Loyalty Conviction and Customer- Company Identification, *Journal of Retailing*, vol. 93, n. 4, pp. 458-476.

- Dabholkar, P. A., Thorpe, D. I., Rentz, J. O. (1996). A measure of service quality for retail stores: scale development and validation, *Journal of the Academy of marketing Science*, vol. 24, n.1, pp. 3-16.
- Davari, A., Iyer, P., Rokonuzzaman, M. (2016). Identifying the determinants of online retail patronage: A perceived-risk perspective, *Journal of retailing and consumer services*, vol. 33, pp. 186-193.
- Doney, P.M., Cannon, J.P. (1997). An examination of the nature of trust in buyer-seller relationships, *Journal of Marketing*, vol. 61, n.2, pp. 35-51.
- Donovan, R.J., Rositer, J.R. (1982). Store atmosphere: an environmental psychology approach, *Journal of Retailing*, vol. 58, n. 1, pp. 34-57.
- Duncan, T., Moriarty, S.E. (1998). A communication-based marketing model for managing relationships, *Journal of Marketing*, vol. 62, n.2, pp. 1-13.
- Edvardsson, B. Enquist, B. (2011). The service excellence and innovation model: lessons from IKEA and other service frontiers, *Total Quality Management & Business Excellence*, vol. 22, n. 5, pp. 535-551.
- Eroglu, S.A., Machleit, K.A., Davis L.M. (2003). Empirical testing of a model of online store atmospherics and shopper responses, *Psychology & Marketing*, vol. 20, n. 2, pp. 139-150.
- Eroglu, S.A., Machleit, K.A., Davis, L.M. (2001). Atmospheric qualities of online retailing: A conceptual model and implications, *Journal of Business Research*, vol. 54, n. 2, pp. 177-184.
- Ferreira, P., Rodrigues, P., Rodrigues, P. (2019). Brand love as mediator of the brand experience-satisfaction-loyalty relationship in retail fashion brand, *Management & Marketing Challenges for the Knowledge Society*, vol. 14 n. 3, pp. 278-291.
- Fournier, S. (1998). Consumers and their brands: Developing relationship theory in consumer research, *Journal of Consumer Research*, vol. 24, n.4, pp. 343-373.
- Garaus, M. (2017). Atmospheric harmony in the retail environment: Its influence on store satisfaction and re-patronage intention, *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, vol. 16, n. 3, pp. 265-278.
- Gonzalez-Benito, O., Martos-Partal, M. (2012). Role of Retailer Positioning and Product Category on the Relationship Between Store Brand Consumption and Store Loyalty, *Journal of Retailing*, vol. 88, n. 2, pp. 236-249.
- Gouthier, M., Giese, A., Bartl, C. (2012). Service excellence models: A critical discussion and comparison, *Journal of Service Theory and Practice*, vol. 22, n.5, pp. 447-464.
- Grewal, D., Baker, J., Levy, M., Voss, G. B. (2003). The effects of wait expectations and store atmosphere evaluations on patronage intentions in service-intensive retail stores, *Journal of retailing*, vol. 79, n. 4, pp. 259-268.
- Grewal, D., Levy, M., Mehrotra, A., Sharma, A., (1999). Planning merchandising decisions to account for regional and product assortment differences, *Journal of Retailing*, vol. 75, n. 3, pp.405-424.
- Guenzi, P., Johnson, M. D., Castaldo, S. (2009). A comprehensive model of customer trust in two retail stores, *Journal of Service Management*, vol. 20, n. 3, pp. 290-316.
- Hartline, M.D., Jones, K.C. (1996). Employee Performance Cues in a Hotel Service Environment: Influence on Perceived Service Quality, Value, and Word-of-Mouth, *Intentions. Journal of Business Research*, vol. 35, n.3, pp. 207-215.
- Hegner, S.M., Fenko, A., Teravest, A. (2017). Using the theory of planned behaviour to understand brand love, *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, vol. 26, n. 1, pp. 26-41.

- Horwitz, F.M., Neville, M.A (1996), Organization design for service excellence: A review of the literature, *Human Resources Management*, vol.35, n.4, pp. 471-492.
- Islam, J.U., Rahman, Z. (2017). The impact of online brand community characteristics on customer engagement: An application of Stimulus-Organism-Response paradigm, *Telematics and Informatics*, vol. 34, n. 4, pp. 96-109.
- Ismail, A.R., Spinelli, G. (2012). Effects of brand love, personality and image on word of mouth. The case of fashion brands among young consumers, *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management*, Vol. 16 n. 4, pp. 386-398.
- Jain, S., Khan, M.N., Mishra, S. (2015). Factors affecting luxury purchase intention: a conceptual framework based on an extension of the theory of planned behavior”, *South Asian Journal of Management*, vol. 22, n. 4, pp. 136-163.
- Jain, S., Khan, M.N., Mishra, S. (2017). Understanding consumer behavior regarding luxury fashion goods in India based on the theory of planned behavior, *Journal of Asia Business Studies*, vol. 11, n. 1, pp. 4-21.
- Jalil, N.A.A., Fikry, A., and Zainuddin, A. (2016). The impact of store atmospherics, perceived value, and customer satisfaction on behavioural intention, *Procedia Economics and Finance*, vol. 37, pp. 538-544.
- Jun, M., Yang, Z., Kim, D. (2004). Customers’ perceptions of online retailing service quality and their satisfaction, *International Journal of Quality & Reliability Management*, vol. 21, n. 8, pp. 817-840
- Kahn, B.E. (1999). Introduction to the special issue: assortment planning, *Journal of Retailing*, vol.75, n.3, pp. 289–293.
- Kang, K., Sohaib, O. (2015). Individual level culture influence on online consumer iTrust aspects towards purchase intention across cultures: A SOR model, *International Journal of Electronic Business*, vol. 12, n. 2, pp. 141-161.
- Karjaluoto, J., Munnuikka, J., Kiuru, K. (2016). Brand love and positive word of mouth: the moderating effects of experience and price, *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, vol. 25, n. 6, pp. 527-537.
- Kautish, P., Khare, A., Sharma, R. (2020). Influence of values, brand consciousness and behavioral intentions in predicting luxury fashion consumption, *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, vol. 30, n. 4, pp. 513–531.
- Keh, H.T., Pang, J., Peng, S. (2007). Understanding and measuring brand love. Society for Consumer Psychology, Advertising and Consumer Psychology Conference Proceedings, Santa Monica, pp. 84-88.
- Kelly, R., Stephenson, R. (1967). The Semantic Differential: an information source for designing retail patronage appeals, *Journal of Marketing*, vol. 31, n. 4, Part I, pp. 43-47.
- Khana, I., Rahman, Z. (2015). A review and future directions of brand experience research, *International strategic management review*, vol. 3, n.1-2, pp.1–14.
- Kim, H-J., Kim, Y-K., Jolly, L., Fairhurst, A. (2008). Satisfied Customers' Love Toward Retailers: a Cross-Product Exploration, *NA - Advances in Consumer Research*, vol. 35, pp. 507-515.
- Kim, H., Kim, Y.K., Lolly, L., and Fairhurts, A. (2008). Satisfied customers’ love toward retailers: A cross-product exploration, *Advances in Consumer Research*, vol. 35, pp. 507–515.

- Kim, H.Y., Kim, Y.K., Jolly, L. and Fairhurst, A. (2010). The role of love in satisfied customers' relationships with retailers, *The International Review of Retail, Distribution and Consumer Research*, vol. 20, n.3, pp. 285–296.
- Kim, J., Lennon, S.J. (2013). Effects of reputation and website quality on online consumers' emotion, perceived risk and purchase intention: Based on the stimulus-organism-response model, *Journal of Research in Interactive Marketing*, vol. 7, n. 1, pp. 33-56.
- Koelemeijer, K., Oppewal, H. (1999). Assessing the effects of assortment and ambience: a choice experimental approach, *Journal of Retailing*, vol. 75, n. 3, pp. 319–345.
- Krishnamurthi, L., Raj, S.P. (1991). An empirical analysis of the relationship between brand loyalty and customer price elasticity, *Marketing Science*, vol. 10, n. 2, pp. 172-183.
- Lee, G., Lin, H. (2005). Customer perceptions of e-service quality in online Shopping, *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, vol. 33, n. 2, pp. 161-176.
- Long, M., McMellon, C. (2004). Exploring the determinants of retail service quality on the Internet. *Journal of services marketing*, vol. 18, n. 1, pp. 78-90.
- Matzler, K., Renzl, B., Rothenberger, S. (2006). Measuring the Relative Importance of Service Dimensions in the Formation of Price Satisfaction and Service Satisfaction: A Case Study in the Hotel Industry. *Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism*, vol. 6, n. 3, pp.179-196.
- Mehrabian, A. and Russell, J. A. (1974). An approach to environmental psychology, The MIT Press.
- Mero, J (2018). The effects of two-way communication and chat service usage on consumer attitudes in the e-commerce retailing sector, *Electronic Markets*, vol. 28, n. 2, pp. 3-25.
- Mollen, A., Wilson, H. (2010). Engagement, telepresence and interactivity in online consumer experience: Reconciling scholastic and managerial perspectives, *Journal of Business Research*, vol. 63, n. 9-10, pp. 919-925.
- Morgan, R.M., Hunt, S. (1994). "The commitment-trust theory of relationship marketing", *Journal of Marketing*, vol. 58, n.3, pp. 20-38.
- Moshrefjavadi, M. H., Dolatabadi, H. R., Nourbakhsh, M., Poursaeedi, A., Asadollahi, A. (2012). An Analysis of Factors Affecting on Online Shopping Behavior of Consumers, *International Journal of Marketing Studies Archives*, vol. 4, n. 5, pp. 81-98.
- Munnukka, J., Järvi, P. (2012). The price-category effect and the formation of customer value of high-tech products, *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, vol. 29. n. 4, pp. 293-301.
- Nair, S.R. (2018). Analyzing the relationship between store attributes, satisfaction, patronage-intention and lifestyle in food and grocery store choice behavior, *International Journal of Retail & Distribution*, vol. 46 n. 1, pp. 70-89.
- Nikhashemi, S. R., Jebarajakirthy, C., Nusair K. (2019). Uncovering the roles of retail brand experience and brand love in the apparel industry: Non-linear structural equation modelling approach, *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, vol. 48, pp.122–135.
- Okazaki, S. (2006). Excitement or sophistication? A preliminary exploration of online brand personality, *International Marketing Review*, vol. 23, n.3, pp.279-303.
- Opoku, R., Abratt, R., Bendixen, M., and Pitt, L. (2007). Communicating brand personality: Are the web sites doing the talking for food SMEs? *Qualitative Market Research: An International Journal*, vol. 10, n.4, pp. 362–374.

- Ortiz, M. H., Harrison, M. P. (2011). Crazy Little Thing Called Love: A Consumer-Retailer Relationship, *Journal of Marketing Development and Competitiveness*, vol. 5, n.3, pp. 68-80.
- Padma, P., Wagenseil, U. (2018). Retail service excellence: antecedents and consequences, *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, vol. 46, n. 2, pp. 422-441.
- Palusuk, N., Koles, B., & Hasan, R. (2019). 'All you need is brand love': a critical review and comprehensive conceptual framework for brand love, *Journal of Marketing Management*, vol. 35, n.1-2, pp. 97-129.
- Pan, Y., Zinkhan, G.M. (2006). Determinants of retail patronage: a meta-analytical perspective, *Journal of Retailing*, vol. 82, n. 3, pp. 229-243.
- Park, C.H., Kim, Y. G. (2003). Identifying Key Factors Affecting Consumer Purchase Behavior in an Online Shopping Context, *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, vol. 31, n. 1, pp. 16-29.
- Peinkofer, S.T., Esper, T. L., Howlett, E. (2016). Hurry! Sale Ends Soon: The Impact of Limited Inventory Availability Disclosure on Consumer Responses to Online Stockouts, *Journal of Business Logistics*, vol. 37, n. 3, pp. 231-246.
- Podsakoff, P. M., MacKenzie, S. B., Lee, J. Y., and Podsakoff, N. P. (2003). "Common method biases in behavioural research: A critical review of the literature and recommended remedies", *Journal of Applied Psychology*, vol. 88, n. 5, pp. 879-903.
- Reed, S. (1999). Online shopping? You Bet! I'll do anything to avoid the mall over the holidays. *InfoWorld*, vol. 21, n. 43, p. 91.
- Reichheld, F. F., Scheffer, P. (2000). E-loyalty: Your secret weapon on the Web, *Harvard Business Review*, vol.78, n.4, pp.105-113.
- Rolland, S., Freeman, I. (2010). A new measure of e-service quality in France. *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, vol. 38, n. 7, 497-517.
- Rose, S., Clark, M., Samouel, P., Hair, N. (2012). Online customer experience in e-retailing: an empirical model of antecedents and outcomes, *Journal of Retailing*, vol. 88, n. 2, pp. 308-322.
- Roy, P., Khandeparkar, K., Motiani, M. (2016), A lovable personality: The effect of brand personality on brand love, *Journal of Brand Management*, vol. 23, n.5, pp. 97-113.
- Sarkar, A., Sarkar, J. G., Bhatt, G. (2019). Store love in single brand retailing: The roles of relevant moderators, *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, vol. 37, n.2, pp. 168-181.
- Shimp, T.A., Madden, T. J. (1988). Consumer-Object Relations: a Conceptual Framework Based Analogously on Sternberg's Triangular Theory of Love, *Advances in Consumer Research*, vol.15, pp.163-168.
- Shujaat, S., Durrani, B., Abrar, K., and Rashid, T. (2018). Brand love some antecedents and consequences: An empirical study in the retail industry, *International Journal of Sales, Retailing and Marketing*, vol. 7, n. 2, pp. 26-38.
- Simonson, I. (1999). The effect of product assortment on buyer preferences, *Journal of Retailing*, vol. 75 n. 3, pp. 347-370.
- Spreng, R.A., MacKenzie, S.B., Olshavsky, R.W. (1996). A re-examination of the determinants of consumer satisfaction, *Journal of Marketing*, vol. 60, n.3, pp. 15-32.
- Srinivasan, S. S., Anderson, R., Ponnnavolu, K. (2002). Customer loyalty in e-commerce: an exploration of its antecedents and consequences, *Journal of retailing*, vol. 7, n. 1, pp. 41-50.

- Swaid, S., and Wigand, R.T. (2012). The Effect of Perceived Site-to-Store Service Quality on Perceived Value and Loyalty Intentions in Multichannel Retailing, *International Journal of Management*, vol. 29, n. 3, pp. 301-313.
- Sweeney, J.C., and Soutar, G.N. (2001). Consumer perceived value: The development of a multiple item scale, *Journal of Retailing*, vol. 27 n. 2, 203-220.
- Thomson, M., MacInnis, D. J., Park C. (2005), The ties that bind: Measuring the strength of consumers' emotional attachment to brands, *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, vol. 15, n.1, pp. 77-91.
- Trivedi, J.P., Kishore, K. (2020). Investigating the factors influencing consumers' purchase intention for electric cars: an emerging market perspective, *International Journal of Economics and Business Research*, vol. 20, n. 2., 117-137.
- Unal, S., and Aydin, H. (2013). An investigation on the evaluation of the factors affecting brand love, *Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences*, vol. 92, pp. 76-85.
- van Ryzin, G., S. Mahajan (1999). On the relationship between inventory costs and variety benefits in retail assortments, *Management Science*, vol. 45, n.1, pp. 1496-1611.
- Verma, P., and Sharma, A.K. (2017). The Influence of Assortment Satisfaction on Customer Loyalty: An Empirical Survey of Students, *International Journal of Online Marketing*, Vol. 7 n. 4, pp. 1-13.
- Vignali, G., Reid, L. (2014). Analysing consumer motivation towards purchasing fashion online, *International Journal of Business and Globalisation*, vol. 13, n. 2, pp. 133-152.
- Vlachos, P. A., Vrechopoulos, A. P. (2012). Consumer–retailer love and attachment: Antecedents and personality moderators, *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, vol. 19, n.2, pp. 218–228.
- Vogue Business (2019), Yoox Net-a-Porter CEO: “We sit on a gold mine of data”, available at: <https://www.voguebusiness.com/companies/yoox-net-a-porter-ceo-federico-marchetti-ynap>, download 12/09/21
- Wallace, E., Buil, I., de Chernatony, L. (2014). Consumer engagement with self-expressive brands: Brand love and WOM outcomes, *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, vol. 23, n.1, pp. 33-42.
- Watson, George F., Joshua T. Beck, Conor M. Henderson, and Robert W. Palmatier (2015). Building, Measuring, and Profiting from Customer Loyalty, *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, vol. 43, n. 6, pp. 790-825.
- Whang, Y.-O., Allen, J., Sahoury, N., Zhang, H. (2004). Falling in love with a product: the structure of a romantic consumer-product relationship, *Advances in Consumer Research*, vol.31, pp.320-327.
- Zimmer, M.R., Golden, L.L. (1988). Impressions of Retail Stores: a content analysis of consumer images, *Journal of Retailing*, vol. 64, n. 3, pp. 265-293.