

Brand Love in Gen Z Perspective: A Scoping Review

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ABSTRACT

This study explores brand love from the perspective of Generation Z through a Scoping Review approach. The objective is to identify antecedents and consequences of Brand Love, particularly those related to Generation Z, across various countries. A scoping review method was used to map relevant literature on Gen Z's perceptions of brand love and the factors associated with it. Findings are synthesized through the PRISMA framework to highlight the central role of brand love and how it works. The results of the current study indicate that in Generation Z's perceptions, brand love is a variable that can act as an antecedents, consequences, and mediators. The results provide theoretical and managerial contributions by offering deeper insights into how Generation Z develops and responds to Brand love. However, the limitations of this study can be addressed by expanding the study of brand love across sectors, including demographics, geography, and/or other determinants.

INTRODUCTION

To secure lifetime customer loyalty, marketers need to design strategies that ensure consumers do not switch to alternative options offered by competitors. This can be achieved by providing compelling reasons for them to love the brand. Customers who have developed brand love will have no reason to abandon or move to another brand. Given the differences in generational characteristics, marketers must understand the appropriate strategies to anticipate the diverse attitudes of each generation and their responses to marketing campaigns. It is noted that it is much easier for marketers to retain Generation X compared to Generations Y and Z (Rosário & Casaca, 2025). This is because earlier generations tend to prioritize value, function, and habitual product or service usage, making them less easily influenced by social media and influencers than Generation Z. Their low intensity of social media interaction also reduces their tendency to switch brands or try new ones. This contrasts with Generation Y, who are more accustomed to social media, and Generation Z, who are recognized as digital natives. They not only use the internet for work purposes but also for education, socialization, and shopping.

Research on brand love has been conducted since its conceptual introduction and continues to evolve in terms of literature, methodology, novelty, as well as theoretical and practical contributions. To date, studies on brand love have been examined through Systematic Literature Reviews (SLR) and Meta-Analyses (Gumparathi & Patra, 2020; Watanuki & Akama, 2020), focusing primarily on the relationships among constructs that influence the formation of brand love. However, these studies did not take demographic factors into account, which constitutes the focus of the present study. Therefore, to address this gap, the current research focuses on the perspective of Generation Z in understanding brand love, adopting a Scoping Review approach.

The objective of this study is to identify the antecedents and consequences of brand love, particularly those related to the perspectives of Generation Z across various countries. The findings will be analyzed and synthesized using the PRISMA matrix to uncover the role of Brand Love. The results of this study are expected to contribute to both marketers and practitioners in comprehending the central role of Brand Love, especially from the viewpoint of Generation Z.

THEORETICAL REVIEW

Brand Love

The term *brand love* was first introduced as a construct measuring the emotional attachment of satisfied customers toward a brand (Carroll & Ahuvia, 2006). Their findings revealed that brand love tends to emerge more strongly in hedonic products compared to utilitarian ones, since hedonic products offer symbolic benefits that can drive loyalty and word of mouth. Research on brand love has attracted the attention of marketing scholars, who have restructured the concept and identified its dimensions (Albert et al., 2008). Their findings established eleven dimensions of brand love: (1) passion (for the brand), (2) duration of the relationship (the long-term existence of the brand relationship), (3) self-congruity (alignment between self-image and product image), (4) dreams (the brand fulfills consumer dreams), (5) memories (evoked by the brand), (6)

pleasure (that the brand provides to consumers), (7) attraction (feelings toward the brand), (8) uniqueness (of the brand and/or of the relationship), (9) beauty (of the brand), (10) trust (the brand has never disappointed), and (11) declaration of affect (expressed feelings toward the brand). Since then, brand love has increasingly gained recognition and become a focal interest of both marketers and academics.

The body of literature on brand love continues to evolve, expanding in terms of contexts, methods, and theoretical as well as practical contributions. Studies initially focused on consumer goods or retail but have extended into diverse sectors, both products and services. In healthcare, research has associated brand love with consumption value, customer involvement, and purchase intention (Chakraborty & Paul, 2023). In education, applying the brand personality scale to universities, brand love emerged as one of the tested constructs (Rauschnabel et al., 2016). In the field of sports science, brand love has been examined through online marketing strategies of the Real Madrid football team (Baena, 2016). Within the tourism sector, research has linked celebrity endorsement with destination brand love (Zhang & Xu, 2024). Prior studies have also examined brand love in relation to customer satisfaction with airline services (Pabla & Soch, 2023). In hospitality, investigations of service authenticity and brand authenticity have employed multi-analytical hybrid SEM-ANN approaches for hotel guests experiencing robotic services (Wu et al., 2023) and restaurant visitors in Korea (Kim et al., 2023). Even in digital spaces, research connects brand love with online networking, particularly social media platforms such as Facebook (Wallace et al., 2017), and the use of advanced technologies such as augmented reality to provide visual and physical brand-related information (Kumar et al., 2024; Rauschnabel et al., 2019). Other studies include the role of websites and mobile applications in online marketing strategies (Baena, 2016).

Several determinants of brand love have been identified. Customers with positive experiences and trust in a brand's performance are more likely to develop brand love compared to those who are first-time users or have experienced brand failures (Bae & Kim, 2022; Na et al., 2023). Therefore, brand quality must exceed that of competitors in the same industry (Wong, 2023). Supporting studies highlight brand relationship quality and customer engagement as antecedents of brand love (Paruthi et al., 2023). In addition, brands that effectively foster brand identification, gamification, and self-expressiveness can stimulate stronger brand love among consumers (Hsu, 2023).

Brand love also produces significant outcomes such as brand addiction, word of mouth, and willingness to pay premium prices (Le, 2023). A study on luxury and high-tech product users in Vietnam revealed that brand addiction arises from brand love, mediated by obsessive passion that strengthens the emotional state of customers, making them willing to pay higher prices. Consumers attached to a brand often build brand communities, which in turn encourage brand loyalty (Wong, 2023), expressed both attitudinally and behaviorally (Na et al., 2023). These findings, however, contrast with earlier

research that emphasized strong brand community identification as a prerequisite for brand love (Paruthi et al., 2023).

Beyond this, brand love plays an important role as a mediator or moderator in construct relationships. For instance, brand love mediates the relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty (Bae & Kim, 2022). Similarly, brand experience can influence satisfaction through the mediating effect of brand love (Pabla & Soch, 2023).

Brand Love and Generation Z

Research specifically linking brand love with Generation Z remains limited. Generation Z, born between 1997 and 2012, is characterized by openness, adaptability to change, and social responsibility toward the environment (Kautish & Sharma, 2019). They are adolescents and young adults in the phase of seeking self-esteem and identity, often pursuing satisfaction through products and brands that symbolize luxury and exclusivity (Eastman et al., 2018).

Generation Z are active social media users, trend followers, and celebrity worshippers who often adopt celebrities as role models (Suprawan et al., 2025). They are recognized as digital natives, for whom the internet and mobile technologies serve as primary tools for interaction (Ayuni, 2019), including active participation in reviews and information exchange (Duffett, 2017). Although often perceived as disloyal, their brand-switching behavior is not necessarily due to dissatisfaction but rather based on rational assessment of products offering the best value (Priporas et al., 2017). Despite frequent brand-switching, emotional attachment remains an important factor in their brand love (Kowalczyk & Pounders, 2016).

Generation Z's attitude toward brands reflects their rationality as selective consumers with strong brand preferences. Developing brand love within this generation requires careful consideration of determinants that can arise from both internal and external factors. Both factors can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1. Brand Love and Gen Z

Author(s)	Years	Determinants
Sharma & Nagdev	2021	Brand awareness
Suprawan et al	2025	Celebrities
Santos & Schlesinger	2024	Brand experience
Pillay	2021	Information adoption
Vernuccio et al	2025	Brand anthropomorphism
Wallace et al	2022	Social media

Internal determinants refer to psychological aspects of individuals that generate brand love, such as ephemeral content and brand awareness (Sharma & Nagdev, 2021), celebrity worship (Suprawan et al., 2025), as well as social, functional, monetary, emotional, and epistemic values that contribute to brand love (Santos & Schlesinger, 2024), including positive past experiences that encourage repeated brand use. External determinants, on the other hand, consist of external stimuli offered by products or brands that can encourage brand love,

such as adoption of information from others (Pillay, 2021), brand anthropomorphism (Vernuccio et al., 2025), and the influence of social media usage (Wallace et al., 2022).

METHODOLOGY

This study employs a Scoping Review approach, which is a form of reference-based research encompassing a wide range of variations. A Scoping Review is a method used to identify literature related to a particular research topic. Its purpose is to synthesize prior research evidence—in this case, specifically concerning *Brand Love* from the perspective of Generation Z. Within this method, lessons learned can be utilized to better understand consumer behavior, particularly how Generation Z perceives and evaluates a brand.

In its design, the Scoping Review follows the protocol of the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Review and Meta-Analyses Extension for Scoping Reviews (PRISMA-ScR). The research stages include (Tricco et al., 2018):

1. Data Sources (Identification)

Article searches were conducted using *Publish or Perish* with the keywords *brand love* and *Gen Z* through the Scopus and Crossref databases. Data retrieval was carried out on September 4, 2025.

2. Screening

The collected data were screened by four of the five researchers. Completeness of articles served as the initial criterion for selection. The review team eliminated articles identified as duplicates.

3. Eligibility

The eligibility criteria in this study applied the PICOTS framework (Population, Intervention, Comparators, Outcomes, Timing, and Setting).

Table 2. PICOTS Framework

	Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria
Population	Generation Z	Outside Generation Z
Intervention	Brand Love	-
Comparison	None	-
Outcome	None	-
Timing	2000–2025	-
Setting	Journal articles	Proceedings, Books, Chapters
Language	English	Non-English

4. Inclusion

The review team filtered the dataset based on titles and abstracts and assessed the eligibility of each publication. Differences in perspectives were resolved through discussion to reach consent. In cases of disagreement, an expert researcher provided an active solution. The publication articles agreed upon as eligible for inclusion in this study were then qualitatively analyzed to obtain synthesis and reported narratively.

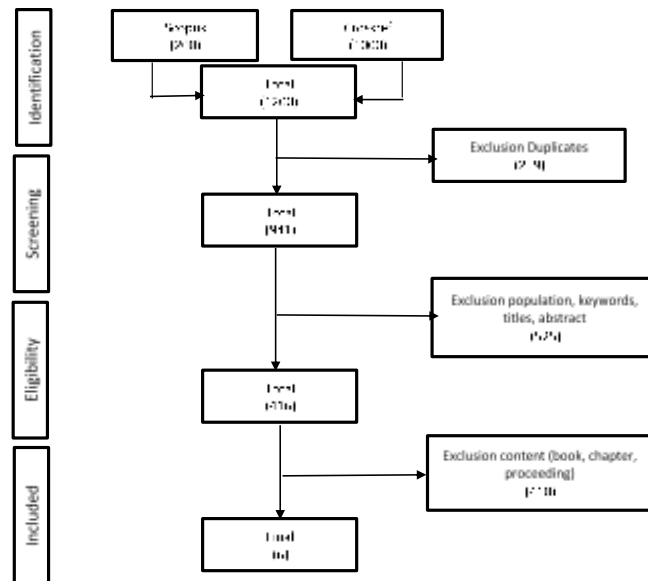


Figure 1. Matriks PRISMA

RESULTS

Through searches conducted in the Scopus and Crossref databases, 200 and 1,000 scholarly works were obtained, respectively. The search was carried out using the keyword “*brand love*” with a publication range of 25 years, using the year 2000 as the baseline. From the total of 1,200 works identified, the exclusion process began with: (1) removing 259 duplicate works, (2) excluding 525 works outside the Generation Z category, and (3) excluding 410 works consisting of books, chapters, and proceedings. As a result, 6 articles were identified as eligible to be used in this Scoping Review. Table 3 presents a summary of the content analysis of these six articles.

Table 3. Summary of Literature Review

No	Authors, Publication	Title	Field/ Sector	Objective	Method	Findings
1	Sharma & Nagdev (2021) <i>International Journal of Technology Marketing</i> , 15(4), 399-421	Impact of short-lived content on brand love and purchase intention of Generation Z	Live content	This study investigates the impact of ephemeral content on brand awareness, brand love, and purchase intention among Generation Z.	Structural Equation Model	The findings indicate that short-lived content contributes to purchase intention both directly and indirectly through the mediation of brand love.
2	Pillay, S (2021) <i>Acta Commercii</i> , 21(1), 1-11	The influence of electronic word-of-mouth adoption on brand love amongst Generation Z consumers	Social Commerce	This study applies an information adoption model to examine the impact of eWOM adoption on brand love among Generation Z consumers.	Structural Equation Model	Results reveal a positive but weak relationship between eWOM adoption and brand love. Argument quality has a strong positive influence on perceived information usefulness, which in turn strongly influences eWOM adoption.
3	Banerjee & Chaudhuri, (2022) <i>International Review on Public and Nonprofit Marketing</i> , 19(3), 475-503	Brand love and party preference of young political consumers (voters)	Politics	This study examines the influence of political party brand love on the political preferences of young voters. It also explores the relationship between party brand love, brand trust, social self, and internal self in shaping party preference.	Structural Equation Model	Findings indicate that brand trust and brand love have a significant positive impact on party preference. These relationships occur both directly and indirectly through internal self and social self constructs.
4	Shin et al., (2022) <i>Journal of Product & Brand Management</i> , 31(3), 394-414	Is it love or just like? Generation Z's brand relationship with luxury	Luxury good	This study aims to provide understanding of Generation Z consumers' relationship with luxury brands, highlighting unique patterns, characteristics, and the influence of internal and external factors	Content analysis based on brand collage construction	Findings show that Generation Z's tendency reflects stronger liking than genuine brand love for luxury products. Although attitudes and behaviors indicate engagement, emotions and passion are not sufficient to constitute brand love.
5	(Sari et al., (2025) <i>International Review of Management and Marketing</i> , 15(4), 181-192	The Path to Brand Love: How Omnichannel Integration Shapes Gen Z Consumer Engagement	Retail	This study explores Generation Z's brand love in the context of high-quality, integrated omnichannel retailing	Structural Equation Model	Integrated omnichannel quality—including interaction, fulfillment, efficiency, and responsiveness—positively affects customer engagement (CE), while CE positively influences brand love (BL) among Gen Z. The study confirms the mediating role of CE between OIQ and BL.

DISCUSSION

The Scoping Review method in this study aims to identify the roles and impacts of Brand Love from the perspective of Generation Z. From the six articles that became the focus of this literature review, the studies are distributed across various sectors, namely politics, live content, luxury goods, retail, and social commerce. To describe the role of brand love more clearly, the discussion is divided into three categories:

1. Antecedent Factors

Based on Table 2, antecedent factors of Brand Love influencing Generation Z are derived from various determinants. First, in its role as an antecedent factor, ephemeral content (short-lived content broadcast live) not only serves as a determinant but also plays an additional role as a mediator linking brand awareness and brand love. However, it was found to be insignificant in mediating brand love toward purchase intention (Sharma & Nagdev, 2021).

Second, electronic word of mouth (eWOM) influences brand love (Pillay, 2021). For Generation Z, whose communication occurs predominantly via digital platforms, the dissemination of information is faster than through verbal or written means. This differs from earlier generations (X and Y), who preferred traditional word of mouth. A study conducted in South Africa revealed that brand love is

shaped by how brands create feelings of admiration and happiness, thereby making consumers feel better.

Third, due to intergenerational differences in perceptions of luxury goods, hedonic behavior and self-identity expression act as determinants. Unlike earlier generations, for Generation Z, brand trust, commitment, and attachment do not necessarily guarantee the presence of love and passion in consumer-brand relationships (Shin et al., 2022). Thus, the relationship between the two functions more as a facilitator rather than an ultimate goal (Fournier, 2009), primarily driven by hedonic value.

Fourth, brand love is influenced by omnichannel integration quality and customer engagement (Sari et al., 2025). Omnichannel integration strengthens the transition across distribution channels by providing consistent experiences on every platform. Each positive brand experience reinforces consumers' reasons not to switch to alternatives and fosters long-term brand relationships. Moreover, deeper customer engagement intensifies emotional connections, thereby enhancing brand love. In this study, customer engagement successfully mediated the relationship between omnichannel integration quality and brand love. Finally, celebrity worship significantly acts as an antecedent of brand love. Research targeting active social media users revealed that celebrity worship strongly affects brand love and brand advocacy (Suprawan et al., 2025). For Generation Z, celebrities are considered role models worth emulating, including their brand preferences.

2. Consequences

Apart from being influenced by other variables, Brand Love also shapes outcomes such as brand trust, internal self and social self, as well as political brand preference for a particular party (Banerjee & Chaudhuri, 2022). In their study, brand love was applied to political parties, demonstrating that branding theory can be applied cross-sectorally. Their findings highlight five key considerations: (1) young voters' brand love for a political party influences their preferences, increasing voter acceptance, (2) the growth of voter trust must be managed by political marketers based on voters' love for the party, (3) voters' love for a party strengthens their personal identity, (4) voters' trust in a political party influences their attitudes, both internally and socially, and (5) high levels of trust encourage young voters to cast their votes for that party

3. Mediators

One of the distinctive features of brand love as a construct is its ability to serve as a mediator. A study on Generation Z social media users revealed that celebrity worship significantly affects brand love but not brand advocacy. However, when brand love is positioned as a mediator, it transforms the insignificant effect of celebrity worship on brand advocacy into a significant one. Thus, brand love has a strategic role in fostering brand advocacy, encouraging consumers to share brand-related information.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of this review highlight three important roles of Brand Love in marketing literature. First, brand love can act as an antecedent, exerting positive effects on other constructs such as brand preference and brand advocacy. Second,

brand love can serve as a construct influenced by other factors, such as ephemeral content, electronic word of mouth, omnichannel integration quality, customer engagement, and celebrity worship. Finally, brand love becomes more distinctive when functioning as a mediator that links celebrity worship to brand advocacy.

The limitations of employing the Scoping Review method include the tendency toward rapid response bias, which may result in a lack of systematic rigor, uneven quality of literature, and inconclusive synthesis – leading to greater reliance on indication and suggestion.

FURTHER STUDY

Future research should expand the scope of respondents by incorporating other generational cohorts to enable broader generalizability. Additionally, future studies may consider involving other constructs related to brand love.

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