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## Trademark Influence and Brand Experience on Consumer's Loyalty to Fast Fashion Brands

*Influencia del amor y la experiencia de marca en la lealtad a la moda rápida*

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### ABSTRACT

This work investigates the relationship between Brand love and Brand Experience with Brand Loyalty in fast fashion consumers in the ZMG. A quantitative instrument was built from whose answers it is intended to know if there is a positive relationship between the concepts of Love and Brand Experience and Brand Loyalty. From the results obtained, it sought to know the characteristics of the market, as well as the purchasing behavior and which of the brands studied is a favorite. The ANOVA was used to check whether the hypotheses were approved or rejected and to know the most critical consumer dimensions when developing loyalty to a fast fashion brand. The results reveal a positive relationship between the Brand Loyalty and Brand Experience and Brand Love scales. Therefore, the 2 Hypotheses presented for this study were accepted.

Keywords: Brand love; Brand experience; Brand loyalty

JEL code: M3



### **RESUMEN**

El presente trabajo busca investigar la relación que existe entre: Amor de marca y Experiencia de Marca con la Lealtad a la Marca en consumidores de moda rápida en la ZMG. Se construyó un instrumento cuantitativo de cuyas respuestas se busca conocer si existe una relación positiva entre los conceptos de Amor y Experiencia de Marca con el concepto de Lealtad a la Marca. De los resultados obtenidos se busca conocer las características del mercado, además del comportamiento de compra y cuáles de las marcas estudiadas es su favorita, se usó el ANOVA para comprobar si las hipótesis se aprueban o rechazan, y saber cuáles son las dimensiones más importantes para los consumidores al momento de desarrollar lealtad hacia una marca de moda rápida. Los resultados conseguidos revelan que hay una relación positiva entre la escala Lealtad a la Marca y las escalas Experiencia de Marca y Amor de Marca, por lo que, las 2 Hipótesis presentadas para este estudio, fueron aceptadas.

Palabras clave: Amor de marca; Experiencia de marca; Lealtad de marca.

Código JEL: M3

## INTRODUCTION

This paper investigates the relationship between Brand Love and Brand Experience with Brand Loyalty (Robertson et al., 2022; Kim et al., 2023) in fast fashion consumers in the Guadalajara Metropolitan Area. The fashion industry is one of the largest in the world (Abdelmeguid et al., 2022).

Mexico is one of the leading markets for fast fashion since it is growing for the expansion of international brands that seek to cover the Latin American market. In addition, Mexican fast fashion brands increasingly must compete with more international companies expanding into the country, so they must be prepared to know what the local market is looking for and needs (Brooksworth et al., 2022).

For this reason, it is crucial to study the fast fashion market in the Guadalajara Metropolitan Area, and to carry out this study, three of the most essential fast fashion brands in the world were chosen: Zara, H&M, and Forever 21, and a Mexican brand, from the city of Guadalajara: LOB, with more than 30 years of history in the city.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This section presents a review of the main theoretical aspects of the subject. First, the concepts of brand, brand love, and brand experience are described, and other constructs related to these concepts are considered relevant to this study.

### *Brand*

Although the brand concept has yet to have a well-defined origin, there are counts of its existence since ancient times. Accounting records dating from 2250 B.C. in which pictorial symbols were used, even accompanied by text, to differentiate products and suppliers (Moore & Reid, 2008; Haigood 2001).

These pictorial symbols are named by the authors Moore and Reid (2008) as 'proto-brands.' Since then, they have fulfilled the aim of helping consumers to differentiate the recognized brands with which they could be negotiated more safely (Goulart et al., 2014) since its birth in the Indo Valle Market segmentation, Greece, 336 BC (Moore & Reid, 2008).

However, it was not until after the Industrial Revolution when the use of brands became widespread, leading companies to develop their brands to boost the growth of their business

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(Goulart et al., 2014) since the products that they began to be commercialized on a large scale now they needed a much more precise identification to differentiate themselves from their competition (Goulart et al., 2014; Gobe, 2010).

In the mid-19th century, brands that are still successful today were born, such as Gillette and Quacker (Fullerton & Low, 1994). However, at the beginning of this stage, there was a period of resistance from consumers since they had more confidence in their local distributors than in a brand offered by a stranger (Goulart et al., 2014).

It was not until the beginning of the 20th century that the brands were incorporated into the daily life of American families, who now recognized an increase in their quality of life. It is how brand management was born as a new function in business organizations (Fullerton & Low, 1994).

The American Marketing Association (AMA) establishes that the brand definition is a "name, design, sign, symbol or combination of them whose intention is to identify goods or services of a seller or group of vendors to differentiate themselves from the competition" (AMA, 2023). Conversely, the discipline of Marketing evolved with the discipline of Administration (Nicolau et al., 2014).

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However, it was not until the 50s, after World War II, that a new paradigm in the industry emerged, mainly initiated by advances in the military area, mathematical influences, companies such as Ford Motor Company, and business schools that began to conduct research in the marketing area (Jones & Shaw, 2005; Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982; Iacobucci, 2002).

Then, the evolution of marketing thought had different currents: from functional, commodities, and product classification to institutional approaches, which discussed the role of intermediaries in the distribution channels (Goulart et al., 2014).

The same authors also establish that a well-designed brand must have tangible and intangible aspects developed by its marketing department, which transmit to its consumers a set of information that makes them experience it, generating a taste for it when consuming it so that they repeat the act of consumption.

When a brand is presented to the market, it needs to maximize its visibility and the added value it gives to its products and services, so it is essential that it has this set of qualities and intangible attributes that help to convince the consumer to choose at the time of purchase. (Spence et al., 2010; Aaker & Joachimsthaler, 2007; Aaker, 2004))

Marketing managers must understand what motivates their customers and needs and what specific brand characteristics satisfy them. It is the only way companies can motivate consumers to be loyal to their brand (Goulart et al., 2014).

It is vital to highlight the attributions of the brand that the American Marketing Association also makes, which establishes that "a brand is the consumer experience that is represented by a collection of images and ideas." This definition leads to the conclusion that the brand is not only a symbol; it is also an experience and therefore can create more vital impressions on consumers.

Kotler and Keller (2012) indicate that brand equity is how customers associate a brand according to what they perceive and based on their experiences with it. In conclusion, the brands acquire a more significant position in the market, which is bombarded by brands that compete, but in the end, the consumer has the last word on which brands he will offer his loyalty.

*'Fast fashion concept'*

The 'fast fashion' business model is based on offering customers, mainly young people, fashion trends in 'almost real' time (García, 2012). It means that the production and mass consumption of fashion products increases at the same rate as trends change (Acosta, 2014).

So instead of consumers having to wait four to six months to buy what they see on the catwalks - as is the case with 'high fashion' brands - stores that are part of the 'fast fashion' segment' offer their customers new models of clothing and accessories every two weeks, on average, and at a much more accessible price than their counterparts in the 'high fashion' sector, this being a process known as quick response, which was developed in the United States in the eighties, but it was not until the nineties when it began to gain popularity in the fashion industry (Esa, 2012).

This quick response represents a challenge for merchants. According to Bruce and Daly (2006), retailers must adapt their internal processes to manage the fast fashion cycle and inspect the supply base to meet fast fashion cost and time requirements.

In this way, the strategy used by fast fashion companies is redefined by Byun and Sternquist (2008) by summarizing what was stated by Guercini (2001), Moore and Fernie (2004), noting that it is a marketing approach that responds to the fashion trend of continually updating merchandise through a short renewal cycle and allowing for quick sales of inventories; so a short refresh cycle and low supply are the two main elements of a fast fashion strategy.

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This 'fast fashion' model has become a mass phenomenon, making the Spanish Amancio Ortega, owner of the Inditex Group and industry pioneer, the wealthiest man in the world in 2017 (Martin & Taylor, 2017) and in 2020 he was at number 6 on the Forbes billionaire list (2020) with 64.9 billion dollars.

The rage for Zara and other 'fast fashion' brands in the international market is easy to explain when one considers the low prices of the garments and the trends based on the latest catwalks by world-renowned designers, which allows the 'democratization' of fashion (García, 2012; Figueiredo et al., 2010).

Marketing plays a crucial role in 'fast fashion', since, in addition to the fact that stores must provide a pleasant and suitable shopping experience for the market they are targeting, one of the main characteristics of this sector is the promotion of a sense of urgency to purchase new products and the creation of a desire in consumers to wear the latest trends (Esa, 2012), even if this implies discarding these garments when they are no longer in use.

However, the market changes in a vertiginous way, and the case of the segment in which the fast fashion sector is focused is no exception. Many consumers have adopted an ideology based on "Buy less but better" (McSpirit, 1998; McKenzie et al., 2011). Additionally, young people were previously focused on "buying cheap fashion that only used one season." (Morgan & Birtwistle, 2009; Holmlund et al., 2011)

They have focused on buying garments designed by brands that offer "quality over amount" (Lang et al., 2013). However, this phenomenon of 'fast fashion' brands has not yet reached its limits, especially in the young segment of the middle class in developing countries and even in those countries whose economies are in crisis (García, 2012).

The main challenge for fast fashion brands is to adapt to changes in the youth market, improve the quality of product manufacturing, and seek sustainable solutions that counteract the rapid disposal of garments and the high levels of pollution that generate its process of production.

### *Brand love*

One of the first authors to investigate the ability of consumers to develop an ability to 'love' certain products and the way they consume those products was Ahuvia in the early 1990s (Ahuvia & Carroll, 2006). Ahuvia's first findings, which he made through an interpretive paradigm, were the existence of "love products," defined as anything other than a person, and the emotional attachments that many consumers develop towards them.

In other studies, the author compared the model with which consumers identify interpersonal love with their descriptions of their love objects, and although he discovered some fundamental differences between the concepts of interpersonal Love and Love in consumption contexts, thanks to his investigations, a finding of a close relationship between both concepts was made (Ahuvia & Carroll, 2006).

Other authors, such as Fournier (1998), establish that a consumer's love for a brand is essential to a long-term relationship between a consumer and a brand. However, it must be remembered that just because there are specific essential differences between 'interpersonal love' and 'branded love' does not mean that 'branded love' is not a 'real' type of Love (Ahuvia et al., 2012).

Just as there are different characteristics between the different types of interpersonal love, and they are all "real loves," so 'branded love' is also genuine love and, therefore, must be studied with different metrics than those used for the construct of 'interpersonal love' (Ahuvia, Bagozzi & Batra, 2012).

Then, it was not until the research of Ahuvia and Carroll (2006) that the 'brand love' construct was established, which aimed to create a love construct specifically for brands so that it helps to increase awareness of them to achieve influence the consumer in the way they want.

Therefore, we can use the investigation of the authors Ahuvia and Carroll (2006) to define the construct 'brand love' as "the grade of passionate, emotional attachment that a satisfied consumer has towards a commercial name." This construct 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 (Ahuvia & Carroll, 2006). Therefore, the 'brand love' construct can serve as an instrument to know the level of relationship between a consumer and a particular brand, influencing both the purchase intentions and consumer attitudes (Bizarría, 2014).

It is important not to confuse the constructs of 'brand love' and 'satisfaction', since the love for a brand is a type of satisfaction not experienced by all satisfied consumers (Ahuvia & Carroll, 2006). The key differences between the satisfaction and brand love constructs are mainly based on the relationship between the consumer and the brand.

For example, satisfaction is recognized as a "cognitive judgment" (Ahuvia & Carroll, 2006), while brand love has a more practical approach. Likewise, we can consider satisfaction because of a specific transaction, while brand love implies that the consumer has a long-term relationship with the brand. Finally, the essential characteristic of brand love comes from the willingness to declare love for it, which implies that the consumer integrates the brand into

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its own identity, which is not necessary in the case of the satisfaction construct (Ahuvia & Carroll, 2006).

Despite being a newly created construct, different investigations have been developed by other authors around the world. However, more studies must be developed to consolidate it critically (Bizarria, 2014). On the other hand, in Latin America and mainly in Mexico, the construct has not been explored in depth, so it is essential to carry out more research that includes this construct to find differences in its application in the Latin and Mexican markets.

On the other hand, it should also be taken into account that hedonic products, which do not meet a basic or utilitarian need but whose primary benefit is fun or pleasure, are the ones that tend to generate more robust emotional responses (Chandon et al., 2000), and this is why, when considering the fashion industry as a sector of hedonic products, it is essential to include the brand love construct in this research, using the study by the authors Ahuvia and Carroll (2006) as a basis.

### *Brand experience*

The brand experience refers to all the stimuli related to the brand that the consumer is exposed to when searching for, buying, and consuming brands (Brakus et al., 2009), which generates subjective internal responses in the consumer, as well as behaviors caused by brand stimuli to which he was exposed. Among these stimuli, we can find different characteristics that identify brands and are part of their design and identity, such as logos, slogans, distinctive colors, and mascots.

These characteristics usually appear in packaging, communication and marketing actions, and other environments where the brand is promoted or sold (Brakus et al., 2009). Then, the consumer's internal and subjective responses and the behaviors resulting from brand stimuli are the basis for conceptualizing the 'brand experience' construct (Brakus et al., 2009). However, not all brand experiences are equal since certain brands evoke more intense experiences than others and can influence consumer loyalty (Shahid et al., 2022; Na et al., 2023; Tran & Chang, 2022).

It should be noted that current brand management models take, for the most part, a traditional vision focused on promoting the product's functional characteristics and basing competition on its price (Delgado & Fernández, 2011). However, according to the experiential perspective, the management of a brand must focus on being a "source of varied and diverse experiences" (Schmitt, 1999), which comes from the fact that the consumer goes through situations in which the brand has a significant presence.



Even though traditional management is the vision that most companies have, more and more of them seek to create experiences for their consumers that manage to add value to the functional characteristics of their products (Brakus et al., 2009) since more and more frequently, consumers assume that the functional characteristics and technical advantages of the products are relatively similar between them and for this reason, they seek a distinction through experiences (Delgado & Fernández, 2011).

Returning to the theoretical point of the construct, it is also necessary to differentiate the 'shopping experience' from other brand constructs (Brakus et al., 2009). For example, a brand-related stimulus generates evaluations or opinions about it. It triggers a brand experience for the consumer that can include sensations, feelings, thoughts, and behaviors triggered by a stimulus related to the brand. So, only a tiny part of a consumer's brand experience has to do with the general attitude of the customer towards the brand and with which the stimulus experienced is related (Brakus et al., 2009).

On the other hand, for a consumer to seek to approach a product or a brand, he must have a need, values, and interests that motivate him to make this approach. However, a consumer can have a 'brand experience' even though he feels disconnected or interested in getting closer to it.

The fact that a consumer seeks to approach a brand implies that he or she has a need, values, and interests that motivate a consumer to approach an object such as a brand (Brakus et al., 2009). Which, as mentioned above, is optional to have an experience with a brand. The 'brand experience' builds an emotional bond between the consumer and the brand. However, this is only an internal result, and the 'brand experience' construct should be distinct from the concept of emotional relationships.

In addition, it is essential to highlight that experiences with the brand occur every time the consumer has a direct or indirect interaction with it or if they remember an essential episode for them in which the brand was linked (Delgado & Fernández, 2011), not only after buying or consuming it (Brakus et al., 2009). A consumer may make repeated purchases of the same brand with a very low experience intensity or may never purchase a brand with a very high experience intensity.

A model based on the sensory stimuli that are presented through the five senses was presented by Gobé (2010). The author establishes that "sound, visual, taste, tactile, olfactory stimuli. can build an effective relationship between the brand and the consumer" (Goulart et al., 2014). Other authors have proposed the dimensions that comprise the 'brand experience' construct, including Schmitt (1999), who proposes the following dimensions: senses, feelings, thoughts, actions, and relationships.

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Considering these dimensions proposed by Schmitt (1999), the following research by the authors Brakus, Schmitt, and Zarantonello (2009) also recognizes five dimensions known as sensory, affective, intellectual, behavioral, and social, which will be used in the present investigation, based on the model presented by these three authors in 2009.

In summary, a brand is what the customer experiences since the brand is represented through a series of images and ideas. Therefore, a brand is not only a sign since it also encompasses the experiences that are had with it, making it possible to develop powerful emotions and feelings in customers. For its part, fast fashion offers customers fashion trends in almost real-time, which means that the production and mass consumption of fashion products increases as market trends change.

Regarding brand love, this is the level of enthusiastic sentimental attachment that a satisfied consumer has towards a commercial name that is the brand of the product. Likewise, brand experiences come to be the stimuli that have to do with the brand, which is what consumers are exposed to when searching for, buying, and consuming brands; but it should be noted that not all brand experiences are the same since some brands make more robust experiences than others; coming to influence customer loyalty in different ways.

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### METHODOLOGICAL DESIGN

A quantitative study (Ángeles & Münch, 2009). was carried out in which a questionnaire was sent electronically to 511 fast fashion consumers to obtain 370 answered surveys, of which 324 thoroughly answered surveys were obtained. This quantity was obtained by using the Statistics Calculator from the NetQuest website (<https://www.netquest.com/panel/sample-calculator/statistical-calculators>), which uses the following Gaussian distribution formula for large universes (Ochoa, 2015):

$$n = \frac{Z^2 \cdot p \cdot (1-p)}{e^2}$$

Where n = sample size to be calculated.

Z = deviation of the average value we accept to obtain the desired level of trust (92.8%).

e = maximum error level to be tolerated (5%).

p = proportion to find (using 50% generally).

The questionnaire was applied in Plaza Galerías Guadalajara, located in Zapopan Jalisco, which is considered an ideal point to investigate since, in the same place, can find the four brands selected for the study; it was also sent by email and the social network Twitter.

The questionnaire has four sections: brand personality, brand experience, brand love, and loyalty, whose scales have been selected based on a literature review, specifically in Aaker and Joachimsthaler (1997), Ahuvia and Carroll (2006), Brakus, Schmitt and Zarantonello (2009) and Goulart, Oliveira Santino and Vinhal (2014).

#### Analysis unit

Within the present research project, fast fashion brands were analyzed:

Three of the world's most essential fast fashion brands are Zara, H&M, Forever 21, and a Mexican brand from Guadalajara: LOB.

#### *Sample*

For this research, a non-probabilistic sampling was used, for which the questionnaire was administered as a research tool to 324 fast fashion consumers who live in the Guadalajara Metropolitan Area.

#### *Operationalization of variables*

For this study project, the variables used were operationalized by using questions on the Likert scale, which uses statements that indicate the degree of agreement or disagreement concerning each statement to determine how favorable or unfavorable the point of view of the respondents regarding the questions that were the subject of this study.

#### *Problem Statement*

This research aims to determine the factors that influence consumer loyalty to fast fashion brands, so the problem can be defined with the following research question:

How do brand love and experience influence consumer loyalty and purchasing behavior of fast fashion brands Zara, H&M, Forever 21, and LOB in the Guadalajara Metropolitan Area?

#### *Research objectives*

This study aims to identify the influence of brand love and brand experience on consumer loyalty for fast fashion brands Zara, H&M, Forever 21, and LOB in the Guadalajara Metropolitan Area (ZMG).

The specific objectives arise from the general objective and seek to achieve the following:

- Analyze the 'brand experience' provided by selected fast fashion brands.
- Analyze the 'affective relationship' of consumers with selected fast fashion brands.
- Compare the factors determining a consumer's loyalty to a fast fashion brand.

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### *Hypothesis*

Goulart and others (2014) developed a conceptual model to study loyalty, considering brand experience and love. For this work, it was decided to add the brand personality construct as a contribution to the model and to corroborate if this construct influences loyalty to a fast fashion brand.

The hypotheses formulated for this study work are:

H1: Brand love positively influences loyalty to selected fashion brands.

H2: Brand experience positively influences loyalty to selected fashion brands.

### *Collection and processing of information*

A questionnaire was prepared for this investigation according to the information obtained from the consulted bibliography. It was attempted to determine which factors influence consumer loyalty to fast fashion brands in the ZMG. Therefore, a questionnaire was made, making distinguishing these factors possible. Once the information was obtained, the results were examined and classified.

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In this section, the results obtained in this investigation will be seen. Therefore, the analysis results with the SPSS program will be described to check the study's reliability. The analyses are the following: Cronbach's alpha and the KMO test. Finally, the results of the factorial analysis and the creation of ANOVAs are described to know the study's variables' interactions and the hypotheses' verification.

### *Field research results and conclusions*

As part of this research project, a study was made on the factors influencing consumer loyalty to fast fashion brands. Within the research instrument used, specific questions that analyze consumer loyalty to fast fashion brands were considered in this questionnaire.

This study was conducted by surveying fast fashion consumers. They were given the questionnaire that was done for this work and that was used to verify the exposed hypotheses. Therefore, this study considered specific questions related to the factors influencing consumer loyalty to fast fashion brands. Additionally, Cronbach's Alpha was determined:

### *Reliability analysis (Cronbach's Alpha)*

A Cronbach Alpha reliability analysis was made, in which the results of the complete instrument were obtained, as well as the results of each dimension that make up the scales that make up the questionnaire.

The value of Cronbach's Alpha, considering all the items that make up the instrument, obtained a reliability level  $> .9$ , so the instrument can be considered 'excellent' reliable according to Frías (2014).

**Table 1**  
**Cronbach's Alpha**

Reliability statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N. of elements
.906	34

Source: Own elaboration based on SPSS results

The value of Cronbach's Alpha considering the items of the Brand Loyalty Scale by Ahuvia & Carroll (2006) obtained a reliability level  $> .8$ , which is why it is considered 'good' according to Frías (2014).

**Table 2**  
**Cronbach's Alpha Loyalty scale to the brand (Ahuvia & Carroll, 2006).**

Cronbach's Alpha	N of elements
.824	4

Source: Own elaboration based on SPSS results

As can be seen in the tables with the statistical reliability results, Cronbach's Alpha is highly consistent since it is close to number 1.

*Hypothesis verification through variance analysis (ANOVAs)*

Variance analyses were performed relating each scale studied with the Brand Loyalty scale to establish whether there is a positive relationship between them according to the data obtained in the study.

With Tables 3 and 4, hypotheses H1 and H2 can be verified since brand love and brand experience have a positive relationship with brand loyalty, with significance levels of .000 and .001, respectively.

**Table 3**  
**ANOVAs Brand Love**

		Sum of squares	gl	Root mean square	F	Sig.
Brand love	Between groups	19.339	16	1.209	3.085	.000
	Within groups	120.296	307	.392		
	Total	139.634	323			

Source: Own elaboration (SPSS)

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As already indicated, the study by Ahuvia and Carroll (2006) indicates that 'brand love' is determined by the emotional attachment of a satisfied customer to a particular brand. This construct 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 (Ahuvia & Carroll, 2006).

That is why the construct of 'brand love,' as indicated by Bizarría (2014), helps to understand the relationship between a customer and a particular brand, which in turn influences their purchase intentions and attitudes toward brands on the part of buyers.

Thus, the specific construct "brand love" suggests that products with a hedonic sense and/or brands of self-expression, such as fast fashion brands, tend to be more loved and encourage favorable post-consumer behavior towards their consumers (Ahuvia & Carroll, 2006). In this regard, Ahuvia (2005) indicates that there are some fundamental similarities between interpersonal Love and Love in consumer contexts, which coincides with the work of other researchers such as Allen and others (2004) and MacInnis, Park and Thomson (2005).

For their part, Kohli, Khandai, Yadav, and Kataria (2021) point out that brand love is an aspect of the brand that currently attracts much attention. However, there needs to be more in measuring the effect of brand love and brand hate on the relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty in research conducted in the fashion apparel sector in India. That study collected data from 250 participants using online and offline channels. The results indicate that brand experience is direct.

The results indicate that brand experience is directly related to brand loyalty. In addition, brand love intervenes in the relationship between brand experience and attitudinal loyalty. In contrast, brand hate, ideological incompatibility, and symbolic incongruity influence the relationship between brand experience and attitudinal and behavioral loyalty.

In an investigation they conducted, Bae and Kim (2023) found that brand experience affects brand love, and brand love, in turn, affects brand loyalty. They also found that brand experience affects brand loyalty, and brand love influences the relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty, which coincides with what has already been mentioned by Kohli, Khandai, Yadav, and Kataria (2021).

Likewise, Bae and Kim (2023) point out that brand trust had a moderating effect between brand experiences and brand love but did not have a moderating effect between brand experiences and brand loyalty. Finally, Bae and Kim found that brand trust has a moderating role in mediating between brand experience, brand love, and brand loyalty.

**Tabla 4**  
**ANOVAs Brand Experience**

		Sum of squares	gl	Root mean square	F	Sig.
Brand experience	Between groups	8.021	16	.501	2.586	.001
	Within groups	59.521	307	.194		
	Total	67.542	323			

Source: Own elaboration (SPSS)

As Brakus, Schmitt, and Zarantonello (2009) indicated, the brand experience covers all the stimuli to which the customer is exposed and refers to the brand itself, including the search, purchase, and consumption of said brand. In contrast, the experiential perspective, with more business practice than academic practice, argues that brands should focus on customer experiences when encountering or experiencing certain situations in which it is present (Delgado & Fernández, 2011).

However, Villarejo (2002) mentions that quality serves to evaluate and determine the importance that the client gives to the experience they have with the brand, so the perception of good quality will mean that the experiences they have with the brand will help to differentiate the brand from the others.

Conversely, González, Orozco, and Barrios (2011) carried out an investigation where they examined, among other things, the role of brand equity, as well as the experience one has with the brand itself. Discovering that the preference and the experience with the brand help to achieve a good brand positioning in the client's mind, contributing to buying the brand.

In addition, other studies referring to the brand experience indicate that customers do not only buy a product or service since they also seek an experience with said product (Morrison & Crane, 2007). It means that buyers are not satisfied only with the benefits of a product, since they also want intangible benefits such as the experience with that brand that they acquire from a product or service, which in turn influences more and more the buyers' decision-making (Ong et al., 2018; Prentice et al., 2019; Schmitt, 1999; Walls et al., 2011; Zarantonello & Schmitt, 2010).

For Gentile and others (2007), positive experiences with a brand contribute to developing the relationship between its consumers and the brand itself. Gunduzyeli (2022), in his investigation, that he carried out, whose objective was to determine the effects of different dimensions of the brand experience on brand resonance, found that the dimensions of the affective, behavioral, and intellectual experience of the brand had a significant and positive effect on brand resonance. Therefore, the experiential interactions companies design for their brands will help achieve a loyal consumer base.

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So, both hypotheses are approved:

H1: Brand love positively influences loyalty to selected fashion brands.

H2: Brand experience positively influences loyalty to selected fashion brands.

The results obtained after analyzing the surveys carried out for this study show that there is indeed a positive relationship between the Brand Loyalty scale and the Brand Experience and Brand Love scales.

Therefore, the 2 Hypotheses presented at the beginning of the study are accepted. The Brand Love scale has a slightly more significant relationship since it has a significance of .000, while with the Brand Experience scale, a significance of .001 was obtained. However, due to the few differences between the results, the two are essential for developing loyalty toward fast fashion brands in the Guadalajara Metropolitan Area consumers.

### **CONCLUSIONS**

The present study was conducted to answer the research problem: How do brand love and brand experience influence loyalty in fast fashion consumers? From these 2, hypotheses were derived that seek to identify if there is a positive relationship between the Brand Loyalty Scale of Ahuvia and Carroll (2006) and the Brand Experience Scale of the authors Brakus, Schmitt and Zarantonello (2009) and the Brand Love Scale from Ahuvia and Carroll (2006). Being a study focused on the fast fashion industry in the Guadalajara Metropolitan Area, four brands with a strong presence in the area were selected: Zara, H&M, Forever 21, and the Mexican brand LOB.

As already indicated, the results show a positive relationship between the Brand Loyalty and Brand Experience and Brand Love scales. Therefore, the 2 Hypotheses presented at the beginning of this study were accepted:

H1: Brand love positively influences loyalty to selected fashion brands.

H2: Brand experience positively influences loyalty to selected fashion brands.

Regarding the Brand Love scale, it was found that there is a slightly more significant relationship than with the Brand Experience scale, since in the case of the Brand Love scale, a significance of .000 was obtained, while the Brand Experience scale had a significance of .001. Therefore, given the little difference in the results, both are very important for developing loyalty towards fast fashion brands among customers in the Guadalajara Metropolitan Area.



Having focused this study on 3 of the most critical fast fashion brands in the world, Zara, H&M, and Forever 21, and one Mexican brand from Guadalajara, LOB, it is essential to delve into the results obtained from them in order to understand better how is that the consumers who selected them as favorites consider their positioning according to the scales studied in this research.

In the case of the Brand Experience scale of the authors Brakus, Schmitt, and Zarantonello (2009), according to the results obtained, it can be concluded that consumers who prefer Forever 21 have a lower brand experience than those who prefer Zara, but more robust than those who prefer H&M, as they are also excited about and impressed by the brand. At the same time, the Mexican brand LOB is the one that offers a weaker brand experience to its consumers compared to the other brands studied in this research, which can affect the development of brand loyalty in its consumers. Therefore, the Zara brand is the one that offers the best experience with the brand for its consumers.

In the case of Ahuvia and Carroll's (2006) Brand Love scale, all brands had a single dimension in which respondents who prefer them as their favorite responded positively with more than half of the answers, except for H&M.

The three remaining brands, Zara, Forever 21 and LOB, gave feedback from their customers that the brand they chose makes them feel happy, so it can be concluded that even though consumers who consider them as their fast fashion favorites do not have such a strong emotional relationship with them if they get a feeling of happiness when having contact with the brand, which can be considered very important when it comes to developing a feeling of loyalty in their buyers, and in this case it is the Swedish brand H&M that is at a disadvantage compared to the three remaining brands: Zara, Forever 21 and LOB, which are its main competitors in the Guadalajara Metropolitan Area.

It would be interesting in future research to delve into the issue of Brand Positioning and its relationship with Brand Loyalty to find out if there is also a positive relationship between the two, as was concluded with the Brand Experience and Brand Love scales in which the present investigation was focused. In the same way, a broader analysis of the fast fashion brands to be studied could be carried out, adding some of those mentioned by the respondents as their favorites that were not part of the four initially selected for this study, and thus see how they compare with the competition in the Guadalajara Metropolitan Area, or further expand the study to other areas of the country, since both Zara, H&M, Forever 21 and LOB as well as other brands mentioned as favorites by those surveyed have a presence in different Mexican cities. Therefore, it would be interesting to investigate whether there is a difference between the consumers of these brands in different areas of Mexico.

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Finally, as a recommendation to the Mexican fashion industry in general, a company needs to be successful in such a competitive environment to focus on the consumer, to know what they are looking for, to leave the maquila aside, and choose to innovate in original creations and own designs so that they can compete not only in the national territory but also in the sphere of the international industry.

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