Determinants of the Relationship between Brand Experience and Brand Love and Behavioural Results of Brand Love[1]

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Marka Deneyimi ile Marka Sevgisi Arasındaki İlişkinin Belirleyicileri ve Marka Sevgisinin Davranışsal Sonuçları	Determinants of the Relationship between Brand Experience and Brand Love and Behavioural Results of Brand Love

Öz	Abstract
Bu çalışma, tüketici-marka ilişkisi teorisi çerçevesinde marka deneyimi ile marka sevgisi arasındaki ilişkide marka düşkünlüğünün düzenleyici rolünü, marka prestiji ve marka güvencesinin aracı rolünü araştırmaktadır. Ayrıca marka sevgisinin davranışsal çıktıları olan yeniden satın alma niyeti (YSN) ile yüksek fiyat ödeme isteği (YFÖİ) üzerindeki etkilerini incelemektedir. Araştırma markayı olumlu deneyimleyen tüketicilerin marka sevgisini şekillendirmedeki süreçlerin anlaşılmasına odaklanmıştır. Apple akıllı telefon kullanıcıları üzerinde yapılan araştırma sonucunda marka düşkünlüğünün düşük, orta ve yüksek olduğu durumlarda marka deneyiminin marka sevgisi üzerindeki etkisini daha da artırdığı görülmüştür. Marka prestiji ve marka güvencesinin ise orta değere yakın bir etki büyüklüğüne (K^2) sahip olduğu tespit edilmiştir. Ayrıca marka sevgisi YSN ve YFÖİ üzerinde önemli bir etkiye sahiptir.	This study investigates the moderator role of brand dependence (BD), the mediator role of brand prestige (BP), and brand credibility (BC) in the relationship between brand experience (BE) and brand love (BL) within the framework of consumer-brand relationship theory. It also examines the effects of brand love's behavioural outputs on repurchase intention and willingness to pay premium price (WTP). The research focused on understanding the processes that shape brand love among consumers who experience the brand positively. As a result of the research conducted on Apple smartphone users, it has been observed that when BD is low, medium, and high, the BE further increases its impact on BL. It has been determined that BP and BC have an effect size close to the median (K^2). Also, BL has a significant impact on repurchase intention and WTP.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Marka Deneyimi, Marka Sevgisi, Marka Güvencesi, Marka Prestiji, Marka Düşkünlüğü	**Keywords:** Brand Experience, Brand Love, Brand Credibility, Brand Prestige, Brand Dependence
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1. Introduction

Today's most successful brands aim to deliver appealing and enjoyable experiences for achieving strategic objectives (Shamim and Butt, 2013). This positive BE ensure a psychological and emotional consumer commitment, and initiate consumers brand prioritizing their preferences (Loureiro, 2020). Therefore, BE is a critical component that engages consumers and creates a long-lasting impression (Ramaseshan and Stein, 2014; Garg et al., 2015). In addition, firms consider BL as a way of fostering positive sentiments in consumers through forming emotional bonds and thus for building long-term relationships with consumers (Roberts, 2004; Kang, 2015). Consumers who love the brand form an intimate relationship with it, and they often defy unfavourable brand information, convey positive comments about it, and defend the brand (Batra et al., 2012; Huang, 2017; Turgut and Gültekin, 2015). BL fosters brand loyalty by decreasing the possibility of consumers switching to a competing brand (Huang, 2019; Song et al., 2019). Therefore, BL offers competitive advantage to firms (Yang and Peterson, 2004).

The brand name is a significant cue about the brand as it provides unique information and serves as an external indicator of product quality to consumers (Janiszewski and Van Osselaer, 2000; Bristow et al., 2002). When consumers acknowledge a need, they consider the brand name as their selection criteria and tend to prefer the brand they are most familiar with (Bristow et al., 2002). Consequently, consumers rely more on the brand name and display a brand dependency (Pak and Kasnakoğlu, 2014).

When consumers encounter a positive BE and recognize that product information is accurate, then the credibility of the brand increase in their minds (Erdem and Swait, 1998; Goldsmith et al., 2000). Therefore, consumers evaluate brands that are deemed truthful and credible, distinctively and tend to love those brands (Bairrada et al., 2018). Since BC facilitates generating BL (Albert and Merunka, 2013). Thus, BC is one of the most crucial antecedents of BL (Bairrada et al., 2018; Kiatkawsin and Sutherland, 2020). Consumers often tend to exhibit their lifestyles to others by enhancing their social image, and self-image (Baek et al., 2010). To do so, consumers motivate themselves through buying prestigious product (Choi et al., 2017). Consequently, consumers exhibit a desire-based behavior and begin to love the brand since prestigious brands help them distinguish themselves from others (Bairrada et al., 2018; Kim and Kim, 2018). Thus, consumers' perception of BP is a significant antecedent of developing BL (Bairrada et al., 2018).

Repurchase intention is influenced by the emotional commitment that brand-loyal customers develop with the brand, which allows them to form a potential long-term relationship with the brand (Batra et al., 2012; Garg et al., 2015). The brand-loyal consumers might potentially perceive the brand as one-of-a-kind and would have a higher WTP, while experiencing a decreasing desire for consumption for the competing brands (Siew et al., 2018). Thus, the conjecture is that customers' love toward the brand leads to emotional commitment, and their voluntary behaviors show their WTP (Matzler et al., 2006) and in turn, they might have a higher repurchase intention for the brand (Garg et al., 2015). We argue that more study be conducted to determine which elements are affected when BL emerges in customers who have encountered the brand and to address this gap (Barbara, 2008; Batra et al., 2012). This issue becomes significant and can be investigated within the context of theoretical research and suggestions. Despite the relevance of BE and BL, little research has been done on the mechanisms that explain the relationship between these two dimensions.

Accordingly, the study's goal is to investigate the mediating role of BP and BC and the moderator role of BD in the relationship between BE and BL. In addition, the impact of BL on repurchase intent and WTP will be investigated.

The remainder of this article begins with an overview of the consumer-brand relationship's underlying idea. The following sections include a literature review, a research model, hypotheses, methodology, results, and discussions regarding the important variables.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Consumer-Brand Relationship Theory

The consumer-brand relationship theory is considered as a strategic process that develops with the level of relationship dynamics and is established by psychological bonds, based on the experiences of the individual. This situation causes consumers to establish long-term relationships with the brand (Fournier, 1998). Determining, establishing and developing long-term consumer brand relationships is an important structure that takes place through BE (Chang and Chieng, 2006; Kumar and Kuashik, 2020). BL is a factor that determines the deep bond established in the consumer brand relationship (Gomez-Suarez et al., 2017; Gomez-Suarez, 2019). In addition, consumers rely on a strong consumer-brand relationship to minimize the risk they will face while exhibiting their purchasing action such as BC and brand loyalty (Lee et al., 2016). At the same time, BP helps to increase brand relationship quality (Lakanie and Mojarrad, 2015). The consumer, who has a BL, can also exhibit repurchase intention and WTP (Batra et al., 2012; Garg et al., 2016; Liu et al., 2018).

2.2. Brand Experience (BE)

Experience is a consumer's subjective and internal reactions to brand-related stimuli (Huaman-Ramirez and Merunka, 2019). Consumers have a variety of experiences in the process of searching, purchasing and consuming a product (Brakus et al., 2009). Therefore, the degree of experience of the situational and individual consumers differs (Pine and Gilmore, 1999). The essence of BE is that brands provide attractive experiences and make sense of those experiences (Schmitt, 2009). The experience of consuming a product/service is more important than the product or service (Ueachornkit and Cohen, 2011). BE is important in explaining how consumers interact with brands in a holistically (Chang and Chieng, 2006; Zarantonello and Schmitt, 2013). BE is expressed as internal (emotional, emotional and intellectual) and behavioral responses to brand-related stimuli of a brand's design and identity, packaging, communications (Brakus et al., 2009). The continuous experience of consumers with the brand contributes to the creation of a psychological and emotional loyalty (Loureiro, 2020). Businesses must provide an exciting BE for their customers in order for them to continue to buy and remain loyal to their brands. This provides a distinctive advantage among its competitors (Ramaseshan and Stein, 2014). Since the BE has an impact on customer satisfaction, loyalty and trust (Brakus et al., 2009; Şahin et al., 2011), businesses should strive to create positive experiences for consumers at every contact to leave a lasting impression on consumers (Garg et al., 2015).

2.3. Brand Prestige (BP) and Brand Credibility (BC)

BP is defined as a positive assessment of a brand's reputation and high status (Baek et al., 2010; Stokburger-Sauer et al., 2012). In other terms, BP is the high position of the brand's product or service in the consumer's mind (Steenkamp et al., 2003). The brand, which is strongly identified with the consumer's self, elicits a higher level of interest (Moslehpour et al., 2014). Customer satisfaction is enhanced by BP, which improves an individual's social and self-image (Baek et al., 2010). As a result, consumers with high brand awareness, BP has a significant impact on establishing a sense of well-being (Hwang and Hyun, 2012). Customers associate five values with a brand's prestige: remarkable value (wealth/social status), perceived unique value (rareness), social value (the social group to which an individual belongs), perceived hedonic value (emotional/attractiveness), and perceived quality value (technical superiority) (Vigneron and Johnson, 1999; Kim et al., 2019). The first three values are related to social or interpersonal consequences, whereas the latter two are related to personal effects (Kim et al., 2019).

BC is a term derived from the resource credibility literature (Rosli et al., 2019) that impacts the perceived quality of a product and defines the validity of the information contained in the brand (Erdem and Swait, 2004). The thoughts that explain post-consumption behaviours are referred to as BC (Kiatkawsin and Sutherland, 2020), and the thoughts created by the sum of past activities drive the brand's future (Erdem et al., 2002). Brands give consumers the credibility that the stated features of the brand will be delivered, increasing BC and establishing strong and long-term consumer trust (Alam et al., 2012). Consumers' decision-making and perceptions of brands are influenced by BC (Erdem et al., 2002; Swait and Erdem, 2007). In this context, BC reveals the long-term customer connection by enhancing the expected benefit (Erdem and Swait, 1998), lowering the perceived risk and information cost, and improving the consumer's perception of quality (Srivastava et al., 2020). As a result, consumers increase their trustworthiness by minimising the risk of brands that provide BC (Kemp and Bui, 2011) while also reducing uncertainty and information processing costs (Ladeira et al., 2020).

2.4. Brand Dependence (BD)

BD is expressed as the tendency of the consumer to buy the branded product by constantly paying attention to the brand name in the goods and services they want to buy. Therefore, BD is a tendency rather than an attitude, since it is aimed at purchasing behavior rather than influencing the consumer (Bristow et al., 2002). This inclination also brings with it an action to purchase a product as well as the decision-making process. However, as the brand name becomes the only noteworthy feature, the consumer may become dependent on the brand name, rendering the decision-making process dysfunctional (Sarabia-Sanchez and Ostrovskaya, 2014).

While the brand name is a significant criterion for customers in decision-making, it is also a strategic feature for businesses (Sarabia-Sanchez and Ostrovskaya, 2014). A brand name is the degree of information that consumers can remember in their memory (Turley and Moore, 1995). If a consumer feels that there is a genuine difference between brands in a category, the brand name is critical information in making a decision to purchase (Bristow et al., 2002). Because consumers look for clues in the brand name (Janiszewski and Osselaer, 2000). Simultaneously, buyers regard the brand name as one of the exterior indicators of product quality. A customer claims to take action by assessing all of the clues at the same time and

then making the proper guess. As a result, the brand name specifies that it is simultaneous rather than sequential, and it contains unique information. When a consumer lacks product expertise, he or she selects a well-known brand to avoid learning and disappointment. In the face of complex items, the buyer avoids taking chances and chooses for the brand he is most familiar with (Bristow et al., 2002).

2.5. Brand Love (BL)

BL is defined as the consumer's degree of deep emotional commitment to the brand (Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006). BL is a key factor that ties the customer to the brand and elevates the brand to the next level by creating an emotional bond (Kang, 2015). The process of communicating, persuading, and establishing meaningful relationships with consumers is known as BL (Roberts, 2004). Furthermore, because BL builds a strong and permanent relationship with the brand, the consumer cannot fill the void left by the brand, and even when the consumer is deprived of the brand, they may sense "something is missing" and suffer (Albert and Merunka, 2013; Zhou et al., 2020). In this setting, the likelihood of brand-loyal customers transferring to another brand decreases (Huang, 2019). BL, which is a key emotional component between the consumer and the brand, enhances short-term consumption and long-term brand loyalty (Song et al., 2019).

Fournier (1998) stated the importance of BL in long-term relationships. The power of BL is revealed when a customer interacts with a brand with a strong emotional focus, proclaims love without expectations, and integrates with the brand in a long-term relationship (Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006). In addition, at this time when negative information about brands spreads rapidly through digital communication, how consumers' reactions and perceptions are shaped becomes important. BL ensures that consumers do not deliberately talk about negative feelings or actively defend the brand against other consumers (Dalman et al., 2019). Because customers are more forgiving of brands they love (Hegner et al., 2017).

2.6. Repurchase Intention and Willingness to Pay Premium Price (WTP)

Repurchase intention refers to an individual's tendency to repurchase the brand, taking into account current and possible conditions. The repurchase decision is often based on the result of the consumer's multiple experiences with the brand. Thus, achieving customer satisfaction demonstrates a strong behavioral intention of the consumer to return to the service provider (Hellier et al., 2003). As a result of this, consumers reflect their desire to repeat the experience they had (Ebrahim et al., 2016).

WTP is defined as "*the amount a customer is willing to pay for his/her preferred brand over comparable/lesser brands of the same package size/quantity*" (Netemeyer et al., 2004). Consumers that have a strong emotional tie to a brand are WTP for it (Thomson et al., 2005). Consumers who are loyal to the brand will continue to purchase even if the price rises. Along with the emotional commitment and motivation that comes with brand loyalty, there is also the WTP (Albert and Merunka, 2013; Khan et al., 2020). The WTP varies as much as the consumer's perception of his brand's worth (Aaker, 1991).

3. Hypotheses Formulation

BE is the set of emotions, sensations, cognitions, and behaviors for brand-related stimuli (Rodrigues et al., 2015). BL is an important emotional state that results from a positive experience with the product (Pandowo, 2016). BL is the consumer's deep emotional attachment for a brand (Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006). BL is based on consumers' multi-cognitive experiences with the brand (Batra et al., 2012). As a result, BE is an important antecedents of BL (Sarkar et al., 2012). According to the research, the foundation of BL is based on consumer experiences with brands (Fournier, 1998; Batra et al., 2012), and sensory experience is the most powerful driving force of BL (Huang, 2017). Furthermore, when purchasing things on the market, consumers use brand names as a guide (Janiszewski and Osselaer, 2000). Thus, consumers are more likely to base their purchasing decisions on a brand name rather than an attitude (Bristow et al., 2002).

Since consumers think that there are differences between brands, the brand name; becomes the center of information in the purchase decision or repurchase intention. Thus, because the brand name is an important element in the minds of consumers, they tend to have a propensity for brand name dependence (Bristow et al., 2002). Increased brand name recognition and pleasant BE help the brand stay at the top of the consumer's mind and become the most popular brand, thanks to the positive association formed with the brand. In this regard, Chaudhuri and Holbrook (2001); Bristow et al. (2002); Huang and Sarigöllü (2012); Lopez, (2016) suggest that the brand name must be known via experience in order to fall in love with it. The intangible capital for long-term market rivalry is recognizing and loving the brand name (Pandowo, 2016). BL grows as a result of consumer BE (Sarkar, 2011; Batra et al., 2012). As a result, in the effect of BE on BL, the use of the brand name is critical. Therefore, the following hypotheses will be tested in this study to evaluate the relationship between BE, BL, and BD:

H_1: BD has a moderating effect on the effect of BE on BL.

Brands give consumers unforgettable experiences, forming a deep, emotional, and solid link between the consumer and the brand (Morrison and Crane, 2007; Brakus et al., 2009; Zarantonello and Schmitt, 2010; Shamim and Butt, 2013). Consumers' impressions of the brand's credibility are formed as a result of their experience and expertise (Goldsmith et al., 2000). As a result, BE has an impact on BC (Erdem et al., 2002; Shamim and Butt, 2013; Khan and Fatma, 2017; Dwivedi et al., 2018). The fact that a consumer has a positive experience with a product and believes the product information is accurate saves the consumer both risk and cost of knowledge and reveals their love for the brand (Erdem and Swait, 1998). Consumers' perceptions of brands that are correct and reliable are critical in the creation of BL (Bairrada et al., 2018). In this setting, BC is a critical variable that underpins BL (Bairrada et al., 2018; Kiatkawsin and Sutherland, 2020). As a result, the following hypotheses will be used to investigate the relationship between BE, BC, and BL in this study:

H_2: BC has a mediating effect in the relationship between BE and BL.

Brand-related stimuli shape brand perception by imbuing the consumer with a memorable BE (Keller, 1998). It is stated that emotional, sensory, behavioral and cognitive experiences can position a brand in a luxurious way and thus increase the level of BP (Hwang and Hyun, 2012; Choi et al., 2017; Kazmi and Khalique, 2019). Interactions with people (reference group), product features (quality), and hedonic values (sensorial beauty) help brands create

prestige meanings (Vigneron and Johnson, 1999). Consumers' perceptions of BP, according to Ergin and Akbay (2010), are made up of a variety of encounters they have with a brand (Kim et al., 2019). In this way, consumer perceptions of BP are influenced by BE (Lakanie and Mojarrad 2015). BE, on the other hand, has a huge impact on BL (Zhang, 2019). Consumers who have had a positive encounter with a brand may fall in love with it and purchase it if the brand's prestige is enhanced by hedonic values (Vigneron and Johnson, 1999; Pandowo, 2016). BE influences BP favourably (Khalili and Mehrami, 2014; Jin et al., 2015; Choi et al., 2017), and BP plays a key role in explaining the growth of BL (Bairrada et al., 2018). BP, which is a crucial aspect in distinguishing oneself among consumers, develops BL and raises repurchase intention through the benefits it gives (Bairrada et al., 2018). Because customers associate BP with social position and value, they form an emotional link with the brand BL it. At the same time, BP is viewed as a significant factor in the development of passion-driven behaviours toward BL (Kim and Kim, 2018). BP has a mediating effect of BE on BL. As a result of this, the following hypotheses emerged:

H₃: BP has a mediating effect in the relationship between BE and BL.

BL causes the consumer to show a passion-oriented commitment to the brand (Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006). The emotional commitment that a brand-loyal customer develops with the brand influences repurchase intent by allowing him to form a long-term relationship with the brand (Batra et al., 2012; Garg et al., 2015). Repurchase intention is an important result of BL (Turgut and Gültekin, 2015; Garg et al., 2015). Furthermore, a brand-loyal customer sees the brand as distinctive, which diminishes the appeal of competing brands and increases their WTP (Siew et al., 2018). Thus, consumers' passion for the brand develops emotional commitment, which they demonstrate through voluntary acts and a WTP for the brand (Matzler et al., 2006). Furthermore, they are more likely to pay a premium price because they believe that the losses suffered by loyal customers will be greater when the brand is lost (Thomson et al., 2005). In this case, a brand-loyal customer is WTP (Batra et al., 2012; Garg et al., 2016; Liu et al., 2018). Based on this data, it's possible that BL has an impact on repurchase intent and WTP. As a result, the following hypotheses were formed:

H₄: BL has an influence on repurchase intention.

H₅: BL has an influence on WTP.

Figure 1 depicts the research hypothesis schematically. The research methodologies and studies that were used to test the findings will now be discussed.

4. Methodology

4.1. Sampling and Data Collection

The main purpose of this study is to investigate the antecedents and behavioral outcomes of BL. According to the 2020 data of international organizations (Statista and Statcounter Global Stats), there are 45 million smartphones in Turkey (www.statista.com, 2020). 15.68% of these smartphones are iPhone users (www.gs.statcounter.com, 2020). With, approximately 7 million users iPhone appears to be one of the most popular brands amongst smartphone users in Turkey. As smartphones are one of the high involvement products (Khan et al., 2020), smartphone brands was preferred in our research. For the data collection both online and face-to-face interviews were used. Due to time and financial limitations, convenience sampling and snowball sampling methods were employed to reach an adequate sample size. Hence, 800 questionnaires were distributed, and 434 (54.2%) questionnaires were returned.

31 of the questionnaires were eliminated due to inconsistent and incomplete answers, and 403 questionnaires used for data analysis. 53.8% of the participants are female and 46.2% are male, which indicates that there is a balanced distribution in terms of gender. In terms of age, 61.3% are aged between 19–30, and 26.3% are aged between 31–42. 44.2% of the participants are at undergraduate level and 20,6% are at graduate level. Considering their occupational status, it was found that 34% were private sector employees and 27% were public employees. Considering the monthly income of the participants, 24.6% have a monthly income between 3001 TL and 4500 TL, and 21.3% have a monthly income of 6001 TL or more. 44.9% of the participants have 2–5 years of brand experience, and 31.3% have 6–9 years.

Figure 1: Research Model and Hypotheses
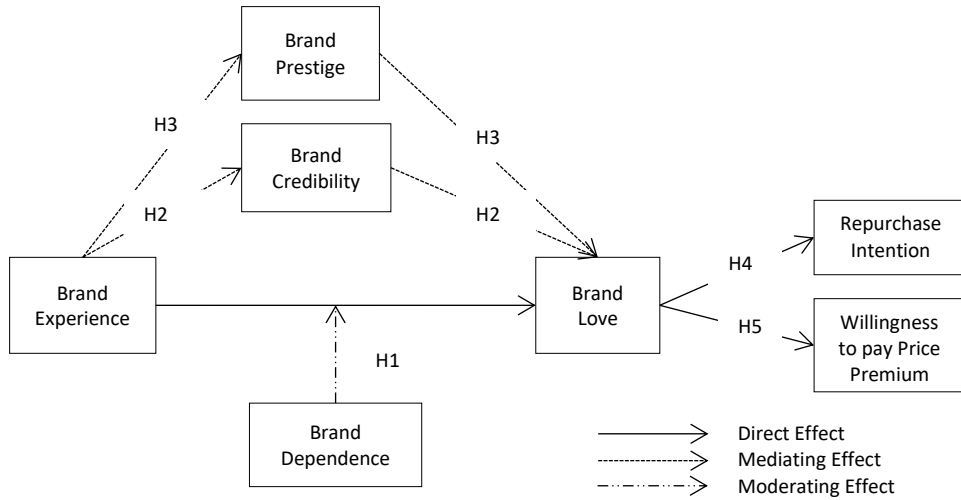
4.2. Data Analysis

Internal consistency analysis (Cronbach's alpha), Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), Process Macro (Hayes methods), and simple linear regression were used to analyse the research data. The bootstrap technique was used to examine the mediating roles of BP and BC (Hayes, 2013, Model 4) and the moderating role of BD (Hayes, 2013, Model 1) in the relationship between BE and BL. In this direction, Process Macro developed by Hayes (2013) was used, and 5000 resampling options were preferred with the bootstrap technique. In order to test the hypotheses in the mediating and moderating effect analyses made with the bootstrap technique, the values in the 95% confidence interval (CI) should not include null (0) value (Gürbüz, 2019). In addition, simple linear regression analysis was used to examine the effect of BL on repurchase intention and WTP.

In EFA the "Varimax" method is used to determine the factor loads. The EFA revealed that the loading of one item is below 0.50, and three items are loaded under theoretically improper constructs, thus, these items are eliminated. Total explained variances and Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) values are found to be greater than 70%. Findings of EFA are detailed in Table 1.

Table 1: The Results of Exploratory Factor Analysis Regarding the Variables

Variables	α	Factor Loadings
Brand Experience *(Brakus et al., 2009)*	.885	
BE7.		.897
BE8.		.889
BE9.		.874
BE2.		.914
BE3.		.903
BE1.		.788
BE12.		.906
BE11.		.900
Brand Love *(Carroll and Ahuvia (2006)*	.959	
BL5.		.900
BL9.		.890
BL2.		.888
BL3.		.885
BL8.		.877
BL4.		.873
BL1.		.868
BL7.		.842
BL6.		.788
BL10.		.747
Brand Credibility *(Erdem et al., 2006)*	.966	
BC6.		.940
BC2.		.935
BC4.		.934
BC1.		.919
BC3.		.909
BC5.		.907
Brand Prestige *(Baek et al., 2010; Stokburger-Sauer et al., 2012)*	.955	
BP3.		.965
BP4.		.958
BP2.		.932
BP1.		.900
Brand Dependence *(Bristow et al., 2002)*	.957	
BD3.		.949
BD6.		.938
BD5.		.932
BD2.		.915
BD1.		.901
BD4.		.890
BD7		.738
Repurchase Intention *(Parasuraman et al. 2005; Pavlou and Fygenson, 2006)*	.940	
RI2.		.959
RI1.		.946
RI3.		.931
Willingness To Pay a Premium Price *(Netemeyer et al., 2004)*	.929	
WTP2.		.960
WTP3.		.938
WTP1.		.909

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was conducted to test the construct validity. In CFA, factor loadings should be 0.60 or above (Awang, 2014). The factor loadings for the research variables were found to be BE (0.794-0.903), BL (0.653-0.912), BC (0.878-0.928), BP (0.828-0.980), BD (0.684-0.861), Repurchase Intention (0.883-0.936), and WTP (0.832-0.973). Goodness-of-fit values (χ2/df=3.293, IFI=.91, SRMR, .071, RMSEA= .076) as a result of CFA show that model is compatible with the data. For convergent validity, the Composite Reliability (CR) values for the scale that indicate convergent validity should be above 0.70, and the Average Varience Extracted (AVE) values should be above 0.50. For discriminant validity, the correlation between variables should be calculated, and the square roots of the AVE value should be greater than the correlation values (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). The findings indicated that the research model had both convergent and discriminant validity (see Table 2).

Table 2: Descriptives and Correlation Analysis Results

	Mean	S.D.	AVE	CR	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
BE	3.17	0.94	.78	.96	**(0.88)**						
BL	3.02	1.13	.69	.95	.350**	**(0.83)**					
BC	3.52	1.11	.82	.96	.180**	.625**	**(0.90)**				
BP	3.74	1.22	.84	.95	.190**	.624**	.852**	**(0.91)**			
BD	3.65	1.12	.77	.96	.128*	.519**	.729**	.741**	**(0.87)**		
Repurchase Intention	3.40	1.22	.84	.94	.221**	.593**	.760**	.716**	.660**	**(0.91)**	
WTP	3.04	1.27	.81	.93	.292**	.588**	.642**	.563**	532**	.647**	**(0.90)**

There is a significant relationship at the 0,01 level. * There is a significant relationship at the 0,05 level. **Bold numbers:** AVE Square Root Values

Table 2 shows that, there is a positive relationship between all the variables in the study at p<0.001 and p<0.05 significance levels. A strong and significant relationship was found between BC and BP components (p<0,05; r: 0,852).

4.3. Model Assessment (Hypothesis Tests)

The first part of the model created within the scope of the research is analysed with Model 1 in Process Macro to determine whether BD plays a moderator role in the effect of BE on BL (Hayes, 2013). According to the results of the regression analysis, it is found that all independent variables included in the regression analysis explained approximately 38% (R2=.379) of the change in BL. It is determined that BE (b=.37, p<.01) and BD (b=.47. p<.01) have positive and significant effects on BL. The interactional effect (moderator effect) of BE and BD variables on BL is found to be significant (b=.16. p<.01). When the details of the moderator effect are examined, the higher the BD level (low: b=.222. p<.01; medium: b=.428, p<.01; high: b=.542, p<.01) the greater the effect of BE on BL. As a result of these findings, the H1 hypothesis is supported. Therefore, if BD is high, BE has a greater impact on BL, which means that the relationship between BE and BL is moderated by BD.

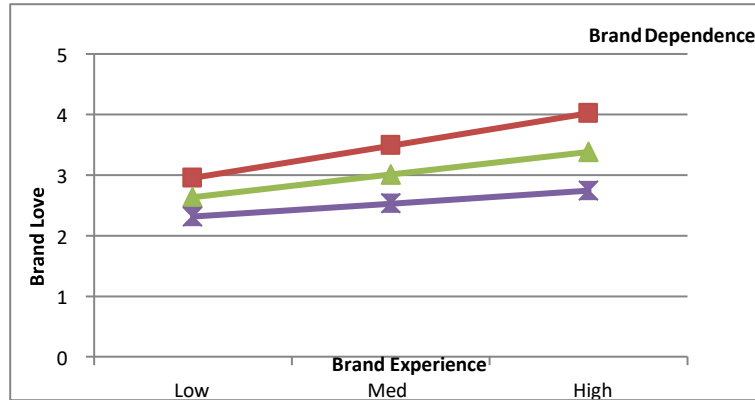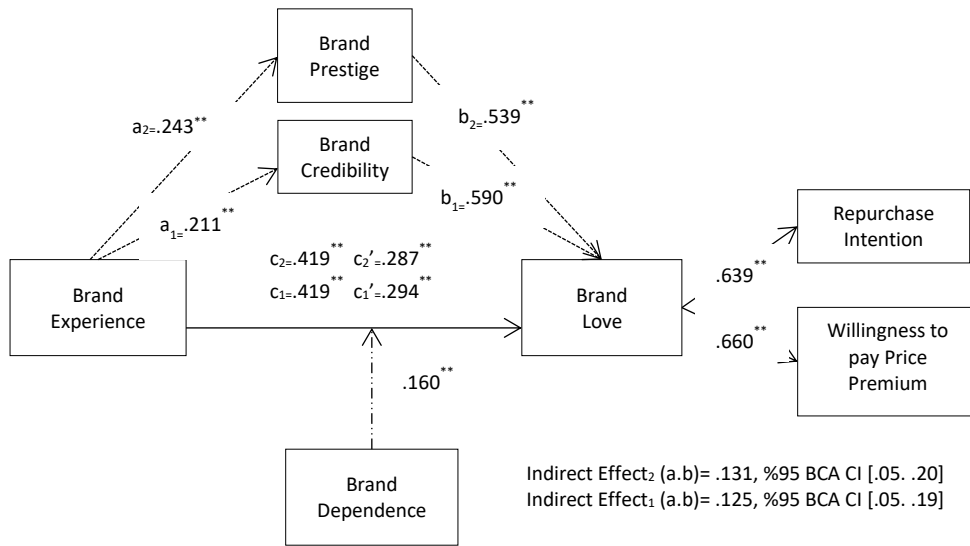Figure 2: Graphical Representation of Moderator Effect of Brand Dependence

Figure 2 is an output of the programme generated by Paul E. Jose (https://psychology.victoria.ac.nz/modgraph/modgraph.php). The low, middle, and high impact lines are not being parallel in the figure confirms that there is a moderator effect. The second part of the research model discussing how BE affects BL and whether BC plays a mediating role in this relationship is tested with Model 4 in Process Macro (Hayes, 2013). Findings show that BE significantly and positively affects BC (b=.211, 95%CI [.0979. .3256], t= 3.657. p< .01). The BE of the participants explains 3% (R^2= .032) of the change in BC. The indirect effect value showing the impact of the BE on BL through the mediating variable (BC) is reported with the confidence intervals obtained by the bootstrap technique. According to the results of the regression analysis examining the mediating effect, it is determined that BC (beta= .125. 95% BCA CI [.0505. .1992]) mediated the relationship between BE and BL. When the full standardized effect size (K^2) of the mediator effect is considered (.104), it possible to say that this value is close to medium effect size; thus, research hypothesis H2 is supported.

The third part of the research model examining how BE affects BL and whether BP plays a mediating role in this relationship is tested with Model 4 in Process Macro (Hayes, 2013). BE has a significant and positive impact on BP (b =.243, 95% CI [.1198. .3676], t = 3.866, p<.01). The BE of the participants explains 3% (R^2= ,035) of the change in BP. The indirect effect value, which shows the effect of BE on BL through the mediating variable (BP), is reported with confidence intervals obtained with the bootstrap technique. According to the results of the regression analysis examining the mediating effect, it is determined that BP (beta= .131, 95% BCA CI [.0589. .2001]) mediated the relationship between BE and BL. When the full standardized effect size (K^2) of the mediator effect is considered (.109), and it can be said that this value is close to medium effect size; therefore, H3 hypothesis is supported.

The last part of the research model investigating the effect of BL on repurchase intention and WTP tested with simple linear regression analysis. Findings of the regression analysis examining to what extent BL affects the repurchase intention reveal that the F value indicating the significance of the model is 217,017, and the observed significance level is 0.000. In the model, BL has a positive and significant impact on repurchase intention (b =,639, t = 14.731, p<.001). In line with this information, H4 hypothesis is supported. Results of the regression analysis investigating to what extent BL affects the WTP point out the F value

indicating the significance of the model is 211,441, and the observed significance level is 0,000. BL has a positive and significant impact on WTP in the model (b =.660, t = 14.541, p<.001); thus, H5 hypothesis is supported. All information regarding the findings is shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Research Findings

$a_2=.243^{**}$ $b_2=.539^{**}$

$a_1=.211^{**}$ $b_1=.590^{**}$

$c_2=.419^{**}$ $c_2'=.287^{**}$
$c_1=.419^{**}$ $c_1'=.294^{**}$

Brand Prestige

Brand Credibility

Brand Experience

Brand Love

Repurchase Intention

Willingness to pay Price Premium

$.639^{**}$

$.660^{**}$

$.160^{**}$

Brand Dependence

Indirect Effect$_2$ (a.b)= .131, %95 BCA CI [.05. .20]
Indirect Effect$_1$ (a.b)= .125, %95 BCA CI [.05. .19]

5. Discussion and Suggestions

Businesses increase the level of interaction with the consumer to achieve their strategic goals. This situation occurs in an effort to maintain its existence by communicating with an emotional bond. The consumer-brand relationship provides an important perspective for a better understanding of the types of relationships that consumers have with brands. Fournier (1998) argues that an effective consumer-brand relationship differentiates businesses from their competitors and provides a strong, permanent, and voluntary bond with consumers. The main point of business success strategies is how brands influence consumers regardless of their identities (Erdem et al., 2006).

Businesses need to provide an effective and unique service in their first contact or experience with consumers. Thus, the first interaction of the consumer with a brand is positive, creating a positive feeling about the brand, and in case of need, it can take the first place in the important point of the mind. In addition, with the integration of these positive experiences with the perception of credibility or prestige by the consumer, a love for the brand develops. On the other hand, if consumers have high BD, the effect of BE on BL is higher. This situation may cause the consumer to exhibit both repurchase intention and willingness to pay high prices in order not to feel the lack of the favorite brand. The findings, which were acquired in accordance with the study's objectives, make theoretical and practical contributions.

5.1. Theoretical Implications and Contribution to Related Literature

This study examines BC and BP in a mediating and BD in a moderating structure. In the study, while examining the effect of BE on BL, analyzes were carried out in terms of BP, BC and BD. In addition, the effects of BL on repurchase intention and WTP were also revealed. In addition, since there are very few studies on the variables that moderate and mediate the relationship between BE and BL in the marketing literature (Garg et al., 2016; Huang, 2017; Sarkar et al., 2019; Prentice et al., 2019; Rodrigues and Brandao, 2020), this study allowed the relationships to be examined in more depth.

According to the results of the study, BC mediates the relationship between the BE and BL. The positive BE increases BC, which causes high BL. Additionally, BP mediates the relationship between BE and BL. The positive BE increases BP, which in turn leads to high BL. Furthermore, BD moderates the relationship between BE and BL. Thus, if BD is high, the effect of BE on BL is greater. This means that the relationship between BE and BL is moderated by BD. In line with the current literature, BE affects BL (Huang, 2017; Prentice et al., 2019; Sarkar et al., 2019; Gumparthi and Patra, 2019; Rodrigues and Brandao, 2020) and BL affects repurchase intention (Turgut and Gültekin, 2015; Garg et al., 2015) and WTP (Batra et al., 2012; Garg et al., 2016; Liu et al., 2018).

5.2. Practical Implications and Contribution to Practice

The conclusions of this study may contribute to the development of an effective, beneficial, and long-term relationship with customers, as well as the acquisition of factors that will improve profitability. Businesses want to keep customers who have used their products. Because reaching and gaining new consumers requires serious effort and cost. Therefore, obtaining the consumer who experiences the brand is vitally important for the existence of the business. The acquisition of the consumer and a love for the brand provide deep and lasting relationships.

If businesses focus effectively on engaging and lasting experiences, they will generate love by creating a strong impression in consumers. In order for businesses to develop and maintain BL, managers should focus on BD, BP and BC, develop policies and strategies in this direction. Thus, innovative approaches will be revealed by presenting credibility and prestige elements at every stage of marketing activities in order to determine the internal needs of consumers and to meet their identity expectations. In addition, to create strong, memorable and awareness-raising brand names, it will be ensured that the brand takes place in the first place in the minds of consumers by both persuading and providing trust with effective advertisements and promotions. This will make it easier for brand names to develop BL. Therefore, businesses transforming their skills into actions that will reveal an effective BL will provide profitability to the business by exhibiting both a long-term consumer-brand relationship and a tendency to repurchase and pay high prices.

Consumers who love their brands will exhibit resistance to negative information about the brand, positive behavior towards the extension of the brand, brand advocacy, emotional commitment, loyalty to the brand, and positive word of mouth. For the continuity and strategic perspective of the businesses, the creation of BL in consumers is indispensable for the life-long value of the business.

Consumers who have BL their brands will resist negative information about the brand (Turgut and Gültekin, 2015; Gumparthi and Patra, 2019), positive attitudes towards brand extension (Garg et al., 2015), brand advocacy (Dalman et al., 2019), emotional commitment (Garg et al., 2015), brand loyalty (Gumparthi and Patra, 2019; Sarkar et al., 2019), and positive word of mouth (Rodrigues and Rodrigues 2019). Creating BL in consumers for the continuity and strategic perspective of businesses is indispensable for the lifetime value of the business.

5.3. Suggestions for Future Studies

As a result of our research, we now have a deeper knowledge of the relationship between BE and BL, as well as the behavioural outcomes of brand-loyal customers. However, in order for study to advance, it is critical that new research be conducted with various factors. Future recommendations are made to scholars in this area. Conducting the study on samples with different demographic characteristics will enable the development of different perspectives. This study was done on smart phones. It is recommended that study be renewed in different sectors such as smart home appliances (robots, etc.) and smart product groups. The study's weakness is that the subject is approached from the perspective of a positive BE. Further research should focus on brand hatred in the context of negative experiences, as well as the unethical views of consumers who adore brands in the face of those firms' poor practises.

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