THE INFLUENCE OF BRAND SATISFACTION AND BRAND TRUST ON REPURCHASE INTENTION IN E-COMMERCE: EXAMINING THE MEDIATING ROLE OF BRAND LOVE

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ABSTRACT
In the rapidly evolving e-commerce landscape, understanding the drivers of customer loyalty is paramount for sustainable business success. This study investigates the influence of brand satisfaction and brand trust on repurchase intention, incorporating brand love as a mediating factor. Drawing on the Theory of Planned Behavior, Emotional Attachment Theory, and the Cognitive-Affective-Conative Model, the research examines how cognitive evaluations transform into affective commitments that motivate repeat purchases. Data were collected through a structured survey of 350 online shoppers, and analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The findings reveal that both brand satisfaction and brand trust significantly and positively impact repurchase intention. Moreover, brand love partially mediates these relationships, indicating that emotional attachment strengthens the effects of satisfaction and trust on customer loyalty. This highlights the necessity for e-commerce firms to adopt a dual approach, combining functional excellence with emotional engagement strategies to foster deeper consumer connections. The study advances theoretical understanding by integrating cognitive and affective constructs into a unified framework explaining repurchase behaviors in digital retail. Practical implications suggest that enhancing user experience, ensuring secure transactions, and cultivating brand love through personalized communication are vital to retaining customers and promoting long-term loyalty. Overall, this research contributes valuable insights into the complex interplay of satisfaction, trust, and emotional factors in shaping online consumer behavior, offering actionable guidance for e-commerce brand management.

Keywords: Brand satisfaction, Brand trust, Brand love, Repurchase intention, E-commerce, Customer loyalty, PLS-SEM

Introduction

The rapid proliferation of e-commerce platforms has significantly altered consumer-brand dynamics, making customer loyalty a critical determinant of business survival in digital marketplaces (Ahsan et al., 2025). Unlike traditional retail, e-commerce lacks physical touchpoints and relies heavily on intangible experiences such as website design, user interface, and online customer service (Bilgihan, 2016). As e-commerce grows intensely competitive, businesses find customer acquisition relatively easy due to aggressive promotions, but retaining these customers is challenging. Customer loyalty, often proxied by repurchase intention, reduces marketing costs and enhances profitability (Reichheld & Schefter, 2000). Moreover, loyalty fosters positive word-of-mouth and brand advocacy, which are vital in the crowded online space where consumers face choice overload (Suryani & Suryani, 2021). Hence, understanding the cognitive and emotional drivers behind loyalty is essential for e-commerce firms to build lasting customer relationships.

Brand satisfaction refers to a customer's cognitive and affective evaluation of whether a brand meets or exceeds their expectations (Oliver, 2014). It is the post-consumption assessment that directly influences repurchase intentions (Pappu & Quester, 2016). In e-commerce, satisfaction encompasses various facets including product quality, website usability, payment security, delivery efficiency, and customer support (Bilgihan, 2016; Aldhabi et al., 2019). Brand trust, on the other hand, is defined as the consumer's willingness to rely on a brand's ability to deliver promised benefits consistently and behave in the customer's best interest (Delgado-Ballester, 2004). Trust reduces the perceived risk inherent in online transactions and provides psychological safety, especially in environments with anonymity and virtual interactions (Islam et al., 2018). While satisfaction often stems from immediate transactional outcomes, trust is cumulative and more durable, built through repeated positive experiences over time (Hegner et al., 2017). Both constructs are foundational cognitive antecedents of repurchase intention, but the literature highlights their limitations when used independently, necessitating exploration of affective elements (Albert & Merunka, 2013).

Repurchase intention is a consumer's conscious plan to buy the same brand again in the future, serving as a robust indicator of customer loyalty and a predictor of actual repeat purchase behavior (Hellier et al., 2003; Han et al., 2018). In e-commerce, repurchase intention is particularly critical due to low switching costs and the vast availability of alternatives at consumers' fingertips (Bilgihan, 2016). Retention of customers through repurchase not only enhances customer lifetime value but also reduces acquisition costs, which can be five to seven times higher than retention costs (Reichheld & Schefter, 2000). Factors influencing repurchase intention include customer satisfaction, trust, perceived value, and customer experience. However, with the rise of digital personalization and social media influence, emotional drivers like brand love increasingly explain variations in repurchase behavior beyond rational assessments (Roy et al., 2013). Given the digital nature of e-commerce, where physical sensory experience is absent, emotional bonds formed via digital storytelling, social proof, and personalized experiences become key to sustaining repurchase intentions.

Brand love is an emotional construct characterized by passionate attachment, affection, and identification with a brand, which transcends transactional relationships (Batra et al., 2012). Contemporary research emphasizes that cognitive constructs such as satisfaction and trust alone are insufficient to sustain long-term loyalty in highly competitive and affective markets like e-commerce (Albert & Merunka, 2013; Langner et al., 2015). Brand love serves as a vital mediator that transforms cognitive evaluations into stronger emotional commitment and behavioral loyalty (Kaufmann et al., 2016). In the absence of physical interaction, e-commerce brands must leverage emotional branding to foster deeper connections with consumers, encouraging repeat purchases even in the face of competing alternatives or occasional service failures (Islam et al., 2018). The mediating role of brand love is supported by theories such as the Cognitive-Affective-Conative model and Emotional Attachment Theory, which postulate that emotions bridge the gap between rational judgments and actual consumer behavior (Thomson et al., 2005; Ajzen, 1991). Thus, incorporating brand love into consumer behavior models provides a comprehensive framework to explain repurchase intentions in digital markets.

Objectives of the study

1. To investigate the influence of brand satisfaction on repurchase intention in the context of e-commerce
2. To test the influence of brand trust on repurchase intention among online customers

Literature Review

Brand Satisfaction

Brand satisfaction refers to a consumer's overall evaluation of a brand based on their prior experiences and perceived value (Oliver, 2014). In the context of e-commerce, it encompasses multiple dimensions including product quality, website usability, delivery efficiency, customer service, and post-purchase support (Bilgihan, 2016). Satisfactory experiences in these areas positively influence consumers' emotional and cognitive responses towards the brand, enhancing their willingness to repurchase. Studies have shown a strong positive relationship between brand satisfaction and repurchase intention, suggesting that consumers who are satisfied with their online shopping experiences tend to develop loyalty and repeat purchase behaviors (Pappu & Quester, 2016). Brand satisfaction reduces uncertainty and perceived risk in online transactions, which is crucial given the intangible nature of e-commerce shopping (Aldhabi et al., 2019).

Brand Trust

Brand trust is the confidence consumers place in a brand's reliability and integrity, particularly important in online settings where physical inspection is not possible (Delgado-Ballester, 2004). Theoretical foundations of brand trust stem from social exchange theory and risk reduction paradigms, emphasizing trust as a mechanism to mitigate uncertainty and vulnerability in transactions (Gefen et al., 2003). In e-commerce, trust-building involves website security, privacy assurances, transparent policies, and consistent service delivery (Islam et al., 2018). Trust components include competence, benevolence, and integrity, which collectively shape consumers' willingness to engage in repeat purchases (Hegner et al., 2017). Empirical evidence underscores the significant impact of brand trust on repurchase intention, with trust

fostering emotional bonds and enhancing satisfaction that drives consumer loyalty (Bilgihan, 2016; Hsu et al., 2015).

Brand Love

Brand love reflects the emotional attachment and passion consumers develop towards a brand, transcending functional benefits to form strong affective bonds (Batra et al., 2012). It is conceptualized as a multidimensional construct encompassing intimacy, passion, commitment, and self-brand integration (Albert & Merunka, 2013). Brand love acts as a mediator between cognitive evaluations like satisfaction and trust and conative outcomes such as repurchase intention (Kaufmann et al., 2016). Particularly in e-commerce, where physical interaction is minimal, brand love compensates by fostering emotional loyalty and resilience to competitors' actions (Langner et al., 2015). This emotional bond motivates consumers to repurchase and recommend the brand, sustaining long-term loyalty beyond transactional relationships (Thomson et al., 2005).

Repurchase Intention

Repurchase intention is a conscious plan by consumers to buy a brand again and serves as a robust predictor of actual repeat purchase behavior (Hellier et al., 2003). Behavioral theories such as the Theory of Planned Behavior explain repurchase intention through attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control (Ajzen, 1991). In e-commerce, determinants of repurchase intention include customer satisfaction, trust, perceived value, service quality, and emotional connection with the brand (Han et al., 2018). The low switching costs and vast alternatives available online make repurchase intention critical for sustaining customer loyalty (Bilgihan, 2016). Studies consistently find that higher levels of satisfaction, trust, and brand love significantly increase repurchase intention, emphasizing the need for integrated cognitive-affective models in understanding online consumer loyalty (Roy et al., 2013).

Theoretical Framework and Hypotheses

This study integrates three foundational theories Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), Emotional Attachment Theory, and the Cognitive-Affective-Conative (CAC) Model to comprehensively examine how brand satisfaction and brand trust influence repurchase intention in e-commerce, with brand love serving as a mediator.

Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) (Ajzen, 1991) posits that behavioral intentions, such as repurchase intention, are shaped by attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. Brand satisfaction and brand trust function as critical components shaping consumers' attitudes and perceived control towards repeat purchasing behavior. A satisfied customer is more likely to develop a positive attitude toward repurchasing, while trust reduces uncertainty, reinforcing consumers' control over the buying process (Bilgihan, 2016). Thus, TPB provides a cognitive-behavioral foundation for understanding repurchase intention based on consumer evaluations.

Emotional Attachment Theory complements this by emphasizing the affective dimension in consumer-brand relationships (Batra et al., 2012). Emotional bonds, encapsulated by brand love, explain why consumers remain loyal even when rational evaluations fluctuate. Brand love represents a passionate, enduring attachment that influences consumers' willingness to repurchase and advocate for the brand (Thomson, MacInnis, & Park, 2005). This theory highlights the transformation from

cognitive satisfaction and trust into emotional commitment, bridging attitudes and actual behavior.

The Cognitive-Affective-Conative (CAC) Model (Bagozzi, 1986) integrates cognition (brand satisfaction, trust), affect (brand love), and conation (repurchase intention), offering a holistic perspective on consumer behavior. According to this model, cognitive evaluations trigger affective responses, which in turn drive behavioral intentions. Therefore, brand satisfaction and brand trust stimulate brand love, which mediates their effects on repurchase intention. This model justifies investigating brand love as a mediating variable to capture the complex interplay between consumers' thoughts, feelings, and actions.

Based on these theoretical underpinnings, the study proposes the following hypotheses:

- H1: Brand satisfaction has a positive and significant influence on repurchase intention among e-commerce customers. Satisfied customers are more likely to demonstrate loyalty through repeat purchases due to positive cognitive evaluations (Oliver, 2014).
- H2: Brand trust positively and significantly influences repurchase intention. Trust reduces perceived risk in online transactions, encouraging consumers to repurchase (Delgado-Ballester, 2004).
- H3: Brand love mediates the relationship between brand satisfaction and repurchase intention. Emotional attachment strengthens the link between cognitive satisfaction and behavioral intention (Kaufmann, Loureiro, & Manarioti, 2016).
- H4: Brand love mediates the relationship between brand trust and repurchase intention. The affective bond fosters loyalty beyond cognitive trust, enhancing repurchase behaviors (Albert & Merunka, 2013).

Together, these hypotheses and theories provide a robust framework to explore how cognitive and emotional factors jointly shape consumer loyalty in e-commerce contexts

Methodology

Research Philosophy and Approach

This study adopts a positivist research philosophy, emphasizing objectivity and quantifiable observations to test hypotheses related to brand satisfaction, brand trust, brand love, and repurchase intention. The positivist approach aligns with the study's goal of identifying measurable relationships among variables through empirical data collection and statistical analysis (Saunders et al., 2019). Consequently, a quantitative research approach is employed to gather numerical data that can be analyzed to validate the hypothesized model.

Research Design

A cross-sectional survey design was utilized to collect data at a single point in time from online consumers. This design is appropriate for examining the relationships between variables and testing hypotheses within a defined timeframe, providing a snapshot of consumer attitudes and intentions in the e-commerce context (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Population, Sampling Method, and Sample Size

The target population comprises online shoppers who have made at least one purchase within the past six months. A non-probability convenience sampling method

was adopted to access respondents easily available through online platforms. A total of 350 valid responses were collected, exceeding the minimum sample size required for robust Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) analysis (Hair et al., 2019).

Data Collection Instrument

Data were gathered using a structured questionnaire developed from validated scales in previous research. The questionnaire included sections on demographic information and items measuring brand satisfaction, brand trust, brand love, and repurchase intention. Responses were recorded using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), facilitating quantitative assessment of consumer perceptions.

Measurement Scales and Operationalization of Variables

- *Brand Satisfaction* was measured using a 5-item scale adapted from Oliver (2014), assessing consumer contentment with product quality, service, and overall experience.
- *Brand Trust* employed a 6-item scale based on Delgado-Ballester (2004), evaluating reliability, integrity, and benevolence of the brand.
- *Brand Love* was assessed via a 7-item scale from Batra et al. (2012), capturing emotional attachment, passion, and affection towards the brand.
- *Repurchase Intention* was measured with a 4-item scale adapted from Hellier et al. (2003), focusing on consumers' likelihood to repurchase and recommend the brand.

Data Analysis Methods

Data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with the SmartPLS software. PLS-SEM is suitable for exploratory research and complex models involving mediating variables and latent constructs (Hair et al., 2019). The analysis included assessment of measurement model reliability and validity, structural model evaluation, path coefficient testing, and mediation analysis. Bootstrapping with 5000 samples was conducted to assess the statistical significance of hypothesized relationships

Results

Demographic Profile of Respondents

The study collected data from 350 respondents who had previously made online purchases. Table 1 summarizes their demographic characteristics, including gender, age, education, and frequency of online shopping. The sample was relatively balanced by gender, with 52% females and 48% males. Most respondents were aged between 25-34 years (41%), reflecting the active online consumer group. The majority held at least a bachelor's degree (55%), and 60% reported shopping online at least once a month, indicating a relevant population for studying e-commerce behavior.

Table 1

Demographic Profile of Respondents (N = 350)

Demographic Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	168	48
	Female	182	52
Age	18–24	74	21
	25–34	144	41

	35–44	78	22
	45 and above	54	16
Education Level	High school	87	25
	Bachelor's degree	192	55
	Master's or above	71	20
Frequency of Online Shopping	Less than once a month	70	20
	Once a month or more	280	80

Reliability and Validity Tests

The measurement model was assessed for reliability and validity. Table 2 presents the Cronbach's alpha, Composite Reliability (CR), and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for each construct. All constructs exceeded the threshold values for reliability (α > 0.70, CR > 0.70) and convergent validity (AVE > 0.50), indicating good internal consistency and construct validity (Hair et al., 2019).

Table 2

Reliability and Validity of Constructs

Construct	Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability (CR)	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Brand Satisfaction	5	0.891	0.913	0.622
Brand Trust	6	0.904	0.926	0.647
Brand Love	7	0.918	0.934	0.658
Repurchase Intention	4	0.876	0.902	0.611

Structural Model Assessment

The structural model was evaluated using path coefficients, R^2 values, and predictive relevance (Q^2). The model explained 68.5% of the variance in repurchase intention (R^2 = 0.685), indicating substantial explanatory power (Hair et al., 2019). The Q^2 values obtained via blindfolding were above zero, demonstrating good predictive relevance for the endogenous constructs.

Path Analysis for Direct and Indirect Relationships

Table 3 presents the path coefficients (β), t-values, and significance levels for hypothesized relationships. Brand satisfaction (β = 0.343, $p < .001$) and brand trust (β = 0.417, $p < .001$) both had significant positive effects on repurchase intention, supporting H1 and H2. Additionally, brand satisfaction (β = 0.389, $p < .001$) and brand trust (β = 0.461, $p < .001$) significantly influenced brand love, and brand love showed a strong positive effect on repurchase intention (β = 0.392, $p < .001$).

Table 3

Path Coefficients and Hypothesis Testing

Path	β	t-value	p-value	Result
Brand Satisfaction → Repurchase Intention	0.343	5.28	<.001	Supported
Brand Trust → Repurchase Intention	0.417	6.15	<.001	Supported

Brand Satisfaction → Brand Love	0.389	5.94	<.001	Supported
Brand Trust → Brand Love	0.461	7.23	<.001	Supported
Brand Love → Repurchase Intention	0.392	5.83	<.001	Supported

Mediation Analysis of Brand Love

The mediating role of brand love between brand satisfaction/trust and repurchase intention was tested using bootstrapping with 5000 samples (Preacher & Hayes, 2008). Results showed that brand love partially mediates the relationships:

- Indirect effect of brand satisfaction on repurchase intention via brand love was significant ($\beta = 0.152$, 95% CI [0.098, 0.214])
- Indirect effect of brand trust on repurchase intention via brand love was also significant ($\beta = 0.181$, 95% CI [0.120, 0.256])

These findings support hypotheses H3 and H4, confirming brand love's role in strengthening customer loyalty by bridging cognitive evaluations and repurchase intentions

Discussion

The results of this study demonstrate that both brand satisfaction and brand trust significantly influence repurchase intention in e-commerce, corroborating findings from previous research (Bilgihan, 2016; Pappu & Quester, 2016). Brand satisfaction, grounded in consumers' cognitive evaluation of their purchase experience, was shown to increase customers' willingness to repurchase, consistent with Oliver's (2014) satisfaction-loyalty paradigm. Brand trust, reflecting consumers' belief in a brand's reliability and integrity, also emerged as a strong predictor of repurchase intention, supporting Delgado-Ballester's (2004) and Islam et al.'s (2018) assertions about the critical role of trust in online settings. Furthermore, the mediation analysis revealed that brand love significantly mediates these relationships, suggesting that emotional attachment enhances the impact of cognitive assessments on behavioral intentions. This aligns with Batra et al.'s (2012) theory of brand love, which posits that emotional bonds intensify loyalty beyond mere satisfaction or trust. Thus, the findings confirm that a purely cognitive focus is insufficient to explain consumer loyalty in e-commerce; emotional connections play an equally crucial role.

This study contributes to theory by empirically validating the integration of cognitive factors (brand satisfaction and trust) with affective factors (brand love) in predicting repurchase intention. This integration supports the Cognitive-Affective-Conative (CAC) model (Bagozzi, 1986), which emphasizes that cognition and affect jointly drive consumer behavior. The confirmation of brand love's mediating role extends the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991) by demonstrating that attitudes shaped by satisfaction and trust lead to stronger emotional attachments, which then convert into conative outcomes such as repurchase intention. This multi-dimensional approach offers a more holistic understanding of customer loyalty in digital environments, where emotional engagement compensates for the lack of physical interaction. It encourages future researchers to consider both rational and emotional drivers when examining online consumer behavior and highlights the need for models that encompass affective commitment in addition to cognitive evaluations.

From a managerial perspective, these findings suggest that e-commerce firms should adopt a dual strategy to foster loyalty: ensuring high levels of brand satisfaction and trust while cultivating emotional engagement. Enhancing customer satisfaction through seamless website usability, reliable product delivery, and responsive customer service remains foundational (Bilgihan, 2016). However, to build enduring loyalty, brands must also invest in emotional branding strategies that foster brand love. This can include personalized communication, storytelling, and social media engagement that create affective connections with customers (Langner et al., 2015). Moreover, trust-building mechanisms such as transparent policies, secure payment options, and consistent service quality are crucial in reducing online purchase anxiety (Delgado-Ballester, 2004). Integrating these approaches can strengthen repurchase intentions, reduce customer churn, and amplify positive word-of-mouth, ultimately contributing to sustained competitive advantage in the dynamic e-commerce landscape.

Conclusion

This study highlights the critical roles of brand satisfaction and brand trust in shaping consumers' repurchase intentions within the e-commerce context. The findings demonstrate that both cognitive evaluations how satisfied customers are with their purchase experiences and how much they trust the brand significantly contribute to their willingness to buy again. More importantly, the study emphasizes the mediating role of brand love, an emotional attachment that transforms these cognitive factors into deeper, more enduring consumer loyalty. This suggests that while ensuring functional excellence and reliability is essential, e-commerce brands must also foster strong emotional connections with their customers to sustain long-term relationships. The absence of physical interaction in online shopping makes these emotional ties even more crucial, as they create a sense of belonging and identity that encourages repeat purchasing behavior despite the availability of numerous alternatives.

In practical terms, this research underscores the necessity for e-commerce businesses to adopt an integrated approach combining rational satisfaction and trust-building efforts with emotional branding strategies. Focusing solely on transactional aspects may yield short-term gains but is unlikely to secure customer loyalty in the highly competitive digital marketplace. Developing personalized experiences, engaging storytelling, and interactive communication can deepen emotional bonds and enhance brand love. Additionally, transparent policies, secure platforms, and consistent service delivery remain foundational to building trust and reducing consumers' perceived risks. By leveraging both cognitive and affective drivers, e-commerce firms can not only improve repurchase rates but also cultivate brand advocates who contribute to positive word-of-mouth and sustainable growth. Overall, the study affirms that the pathway to enduring e-commerce success lies in nurturing both the mind and the heart of the consumer.

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