

# A new scale of brand lovemarks

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## Abstract

**Purpose of the paper:** *The current study attempts to provide a new lovemarks scale that predicts consumers' behavioral outcomes. This scale also bridges over some of the inconsistencies of the measurement of "brand love" that also measure "brand respect".*

**Methodology:** *In order to test the Lovemarks scale, 3 studies were conducted. Study 1 applied Exploratory Factor Analysis using Principal Component exploratory factor analysis. Study 2 used second-order confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) with a maximum likelihood fitting function of the two-component solution. Study 3 measured the nomological validity of the assessed Lovemarks scale by testing its relations with four other relevant scales.*

**Results:** *Using EFA and CFA, the reliability and validity of the scale were divided into four different product categories: dairy companies, cellular network providers, banks, and fashion retail chains. The scale does have strong positive correlations with attitude, preference, price premium and recommendation.*

**Research limitations:** *The main limitation of the current research is that Study 2 used CFA testing only for second-order factors and not third-order factors, which would have also enabled the testing of the antecedents of the scale's items (such as intimacy or trust).*

**Practical implications:** *This scale helps to predict consumer behavior and set an effective marketing strategy for the brand. It thus gives directions for product adjustments and establishes effective advertising, marketing communication strategies and brand pricing strategy.*

**Originality of the paper:** *The current study is testing a new Lovemarks scale on the basis of four different product categories: dairy companies, cellular network providers, banks, and fashion retail chains.*

*Key words: lovemarks; brand; love; respect; recommendation; price premium*

## 1. Introduction

The current study has tested a new scale of "Lovemarks" that may predict consumers' behavioral outcomes. The Lovemarks theory, introduced by Kevin Roberts (2004), CEO of Saatchi and Saatchi, suggests that two components for "Lovemarks brands", "love" and "respect", are the main drivers of brand loyalty. The importance of this theory and the construction of a short and simple scale is based on the idea that "Lovemarks" may explain why consumers feel loyalty and attachment to one brand and not to another. As Roberts described it, the loyalty for "Lovemarks" brand is "loyalty beyond reason" (2005, p. 66) when citing a loyal Apple user - "After 14 years I am still in love. To be honest I don't know why I feel that way..." (Roberts, 2005, p. 200).

A recent study by Batra *et al.* (2012) has distinguished between “love emotion” and “love relationship”. This study suggests that brand love as a “love emotion” is temporary and episodic while a “love relationship” can last for years. However, the Lovemarks theory (Roberts, 2004) argues that “love emotion” combined with “respect” can determine the consumer’s relationship with a brand. Kevin Roberts (2004) suggests that *both* components for “Lovemarks brands” can affect satisfaction and loyalty. To date, no research offers an explicit scale which effectively measures a brand’s Lovemarks.

Despite its importance, Roberts (2004, 2005) did not offer a published measurement scale to measure brand Lovemarks and research on the Lovemarks theory has been light and limited so far (Cho *et al.* 2015; Pavel, 2013, Pawle and Cooper 2006; Shuv-Ami, 2011; Shuv-Ami, 2013). However, related marketing literature on “brand love” attracted much attention in recent years (e. g. Batra *et al.*, 2012; Broadbent, *et al.*, 2010; Maxian *et al.*, 2013; Ortiz and Mary, 2011; Patwardhan and Balasubramanian, 2013; Cho *et al.* 2015; Rossiter, 2012; Rossiter and Bellman, 2012; Sarkar, 2011). This stream of research has mainly focused on the conceptualization of “brand love” but has used different types and inconsistent measurement in relation to “brand love”. Furthermore, the marketing literature has neglected the other decisive component of brand Lovemarks, i.e., “brand respect”.

For example, Batra, Ahuvia, and Bagozzi (2012) published a new measurement of “brand love” in the *Journal of Marketing* that was harshly criticized by Rossiter (2012) in a study published in *Marketing Letters*. The purpose of the current study is to provide a scale that will bridge over most of the inconsistencies of the measurement of “brand love” and will offer a new scale of Lovemarks that also measures “brand respect”. This documented research will test this new Lovemarks scale on *four different product categories*: dairy companies, cellular network providers, banks, and fashion retail chains.

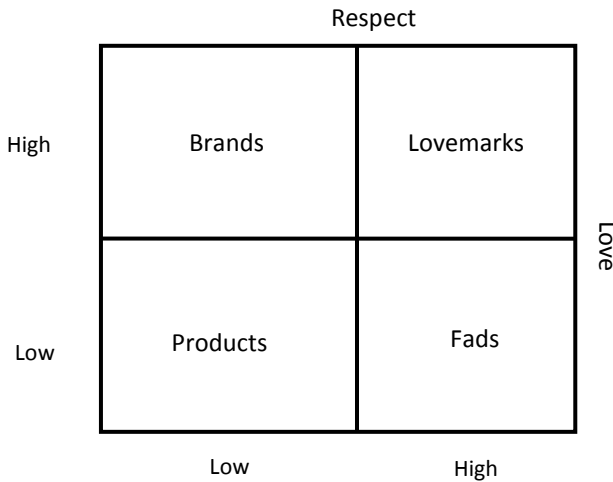
## 2. Theoretical conceptualization

The Lovemarks theory suggests (Figure 1) that brands with low love and low respect are merely available “products”. Brands with high love and low respect are “fads” that will eventually disappear. Brands with low love and high respect are “real brands”. Brands with both high love and high respect are “Lovemarks”, brands with “loyalty beyond reason”. Respect, according to Roberts, represents the more functional attributes of the brand. Such attributes determine consumer perceptions of a product/brand and the way consumers assess a brand’s functional performance, especially quality and reliability. The sums of these characteristics reflect consumer preference for the brand (Roberts, 2005, pp. 60-63). Love, on the other hand, represents the brand’s associated emotional attributes of “mystery”, “sensuality” and “intimacy”, which denote the relationship of the user to the brand (Roberts, 2005, pp. 78-79). Such intimacy raises passion in the user and ensures the user’s deeply felt loyalty and commitment to the brand. Mystery is driven by great stories, myths and icons; “sensuality”

is driven by our senses (sound, sight, smell, touch and taste); and “intimacy” is impelled by the relationship the user has with the brand. Such relationship includes empathy and commitment, as well as the passion the brand arouses in users. Pawle and Cooper’s (2006) findings support the concept of the Lovemarks theory that intimacy, mystery, and sensuality - as well as trust, reputation, and performance - decisively influence the consumers’ love and respect for specific brands. Those feelings that most strongly shape consumer choice are the emotional factors which lead to brand “love”.

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Fig. 1: Lovemarks brand classification



Pawle and Cooper, 2006, p. 39

However, Cho *et al.* (2015), in testing the dimensions of “Brand Lovemarks” as suggested by Roberts (2004), found that, contrary to Roberts’ theory, mystery and sensuality are more related to respect than love. The current study offers a new and different scale of Lovemarks. Similar to Roberts’ theory, the present scale measures both *respect* for a brand’s functional performance and *love* that represents its emotional associations with the brand. However, instead of using intimacy, mystery and sensuality to represent love, the current study is using intimacy, longing and joy, which are well established in the marketing literature (e.g., Ahuvia, 2005, Albert *et al.* 2008, Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006; Sarkar, 2011; Sternberg, 1986; Whang *et al.*, 2004). The notion that consumers are influenced by both the brand’s functional attributes and the brand’s emotional associations is well-established in brand equity literature (Aaker, 1996; Keller, 1993, 2008; Keller and Lehmann, 2006). While the influence of perceived quality performance on consumer decision-making has been extensively examined (e.g., Helson, 1964; Howard and Sheth, 1969; Mano and Oliver, 1993; Oliver, 1980; Tsiotsou, 2006; Weaver and Brickman, 1974), little research has been conducted on the way love can affect the process of consumer choice and brand selection (e.g., Ahuvia, 2005; Batra *et al.* 2012; Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006; Bergkvist and Bech-Larsen, 2010; Sarkar, 2011).

## Love

The current study proposes that love has three dimensions; *intimacy*, *longing* and *joy*. Love of a brand, in the marketing literature, is mainly considered as a romantic sort of love (e.g., Ahuvia, 2005; Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006; Sarkar, 2011; Whang *et al.*, 2004) animated by intimacy and passion (Sternberg, 1986). Carroll and Ahuvia define love for a brand as “the degree of passionate emotional attachment that a person has for a particular trade name” (2006, p. 5). Sternberg’s research (1986) offered a tri-component model of love that includes intimacy, passion and commitment. Shimp and Madden’s (1988) tri-component model of love consisted of liking, yearning and commitment. According to Sarkar both Sternberg’s research (1986) and Shimp and Madden’s tri-component models “perfectly correspond” since romantic brand love is “a combination of emotion (or intimacy or liking) and passion (or yearning) for a brand” (2011, p. 83). However, a commitment that represents a series of attachments (Keller and Lehmann, 2006; Shuv-Ami, 2012) is probably a result of love and not love itself. The drivers of love in the Lovemarks theory are mystery, sensuality and intimacy (Roberts 2005). *Intimacy*, or liking, may be derived from a romantic emotion towards the loved brand. Passionate *longing*, or yearning for a loved brand, may be a result of brand mystery and sensuality. Whang, *et al.* (2004) used Rubin’s scale (1970) for studying bikers’ love for their motorcycles. Such a scale directly measured the romantic emotion of *intimacy* and passionate *longing*. While *intimacy* was measured by the statement: “I am in love with my bike”, passionate *longing* was measured by the statement “If I could never be on my bike, I would feel miserable”. Similarly, Bergkvist and Bech-Larsen (2010) measured brand love with two items, one measuring expressed love relating to the *intimacy* of romantic love and the other measuring *longing* as a passionate or romantic sense of loss in case of unavailability.

Batra *et al.* (2012) suggested a new and complex measurement of “brand love” that includes enduring passion, self-brand integration, long-term relationship, positive emotional connection, anticipated separation distress, overall attitude valence and attitude Strength. This measurement was criticized by Rossiter (2012) on two grounds: first, he argued that “Brand love is a discrete, categorical, emotional state which cannot be validly measured on a continuous answer scale” (p. 7). However, he didn’t offer a completely new measure of “brand love”, but merely suggested a that “brand love” should not be represented just with its positive aspect (ranging from liking to loving) but also with the negative emotions’ of “brand hate” (a 5-level scale of “hate - dislike - neutral - like - love”). He therefore offers a new type of scale - a continuous and single item of “Brand Love-Hate” scale and not a “Brand Love” scale. The second criticism was that the new scale of brand love of Batra *et al.* (2012) did not measure only love but also “off-attributes” (e.g., “involvement”, “commitment”, “very attached”, “satisfaction”, and “compares well with ideal product”) and “additive” components (e.g. “positive-negative”, “favorable-unfavorable”, “meets needs perfectly” and “makes life worth living”). Moreover, Rossiter argued that “Brand love is achieved only when ‘Deep Affection’ (not ‘Positive Affect’, which is too weak an attribute) and ‘Separation Anxiety’

(not 'Anticipated' anxiety, which is an oxymoron) are *jointly* felt in relation to the potential love object" (p. 908). While it seems that Batra *et al.* (2012) used many "off-attributes" and "additive" components, they also measured the deep affection of passionate desire leading to a likely separation anxiety. Despite this disagreement and while answering to Rossiter's critique, Ahuvia, Bagozzi and Batra (Ahuvia *et al.* 2014) agree with Rossiter on the "importance of brand love" (p. 242) in predicting behavioral outcomes.

Some of the items used by Batra *et al.* (2012) to measure brand love are shared with earlier marketing literature including; passionate "feeling of desire", "feeling of longing" and the "pleasurable" feeling toward brand (p. 8). However, the focus of Batra *et al.* (2012) was not on the passion and joy of brand love but on the related consequences of brand love. Carroll and Ahuvia (2006) measured the joy or pleasure of love with "This brand makes me feel good", "This brand makes me very happy" or "This brand is a pure delight" (p. 84). Sarkar (2011) argued that as a part of love a "romantic person can imagine several things beyond reality and by doing this he/she creates pleasurable experiences surrounding any consumption act" (p. 86). Albert *et al.* (2008) found empirically that French participants who fully agree that they are in love with their brand tend to use words such as "pleasure" and "dream" to describe their love. These researchers concluded that the two dimensions that are explicitly shared by French and Americans are the pleasure and passionate love that are associated with a brand.

### *Respect*

The dimensions of respect, according to Roberts (2005) are functional and represent brand *quality* and reliability or *trust*. The current research also suggests that *honor* toward the brand directly reflects Roberts' notion of consumer respect for that brand.

The concept of brand respect has not been widely discussed in the marketing literature. Pawle and Cooper's testing (2006) for Lovemarks theory found that brand trust, reputation, and performance are the main influences on brand respect. While marketing research does not explicitly measure the concept of respect, it does test the nuanced way respect figures in the process of brand selection.

Research into the functional attributes of products and brands has generally indicated that quality performance *drives brand relationship* and thus has a positive effect on satisfaction, loyalty or commitment and purchase intentions. Oliver (1980), for example, found that consumer satisfaction is a function of expecting a product's quality and that such satisfaction influences post-purchase attitudes and purchase intentions. Conversely, any discrepancy between expectations and perceived quality performance results directly in brand dissatisfaction. Churchill and Suprenant (1982) argued that in relation to durable goods, a direct quality performance-satisfaction link accounts for most of the variance in satisfaction. Mano and Oliver (1993) showed that product quality evaluation (utilitarian and hedonic judgment) has a direct influence on pleasurable effect and a distinct product satisfaction. Bou-Llusar *et al.* (2001) found that overall customer satisfaction acts as a mediating variable on the relationships between a firm, perceived quality and customer purchase. Tsitsos (2006) noted that

perceived quality had both a direct and an indirect effect (through overall satisfaction) on purchase intentions; overall satisfaction had a direct effect on purchase intentions; and involvement had an indirect effect on purchase intentions through overall satisfaction and perceived quality. Xie *et al.* (2015) found that trust is affected by brand quality and affects behavioral intentions. Chaudhuri and Holbrook (2001) examined both the functional and emotional aspects of the brand and showed that brand trust and brand effects (emotions toward the brand) influenced purchase loyalty (purchase intention) and attitudinal loyalty, which was measured as commitment.

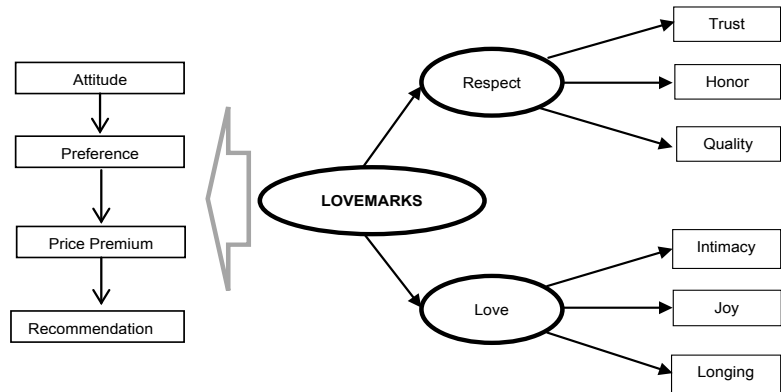
*The model*

The model suggested here proposes that Lovemarks represent the driver of brand relationship. Thus, the combination of the emotional and romantic love toward the brand with respect to its functional performance will drive the relationship with the brand. Based on the above, the current study attempts to define “brand love”, “brand respect” and brand “Lovemarks”.

While the current study supports the notion that romantic love is driven by intimacy and passion, it suggests that the passionate component of love has one aspect of “joy” and one of “longing”. This study seeks to expand Carroll and Ahuvia’s (2006) definition of romantic love and define it as the degree of emotional intimacy and passionate joy and possible longing (in case of unavailability) that a person has for a particular trade name.

Respect is the functional dimension of Lovemarks that represents the perception of brand quality, brand reliability or trust and the overall honor a person has for a particular trade name. Lovemarks are a market position in the mind of consumers that represents both high love and high respect for a particular trade name.

Fig. 2: The suggested Brand Lovemarks Model



Source: Autor’s elaboration

The three dimensions suggested here for love are “Intimacy” of love, “Joy” of love and passionate “Longing” for the brand. The three dimensions for respect are “Trust” in the brand performance, “Honor” for the brand’s performance and the “Quality” of the brand performance. These two build

brand Lovemarks which affect consumers' relationship with the brand. Such a relationship represents the consumer's attitude toward the brand, their brand preference, their willingness to pay price premiums and recommend the brand to others. Figure 2 represents the model underlying the suggested Lovemarks scale. The combined effect of "love" and "respect" is reflected in the overall Lovemarks scale. Thus, it is a reflective model that affects the overall Lovemarks and whose dimensions are expected to reflect a high correlation (Jarvis *et al.*, 2003).

### *Hypotheses*

Based on the above arguments, hypotheses regarding both the measurement and structural parts of the Lovemarks brand's nomological net were the following:

H1: Two oblique first-order factors - love and respect - suffice to account for the covariations of Lovemarks brand scale items.

H2: The second-order factors that represent the overall brand Lovemarks underlie the first-order factors.

The first two hypotheses, described in Figure 3, show the total structural model hypothesized here.

The last hypothesis attempts to establish the nomological validity of the Lovemarks scale suggested in the current study. This scale's validity is tested against four variables that represent important aspects of brand relationship (Figure 3): *overall attitude, preferred brand, purchase intention and recommendation intention*.

H3: The total score of Lovemarks scale will positively correlate with overall attitude toward the brand, recommendation intention, brand preference and the willingness to pay price premiums for the brand.

## **3. Methodology**

In order to test the Lovemarks scale 3 studies were conducted. The data for all of the studies were collected from an Internet panel.

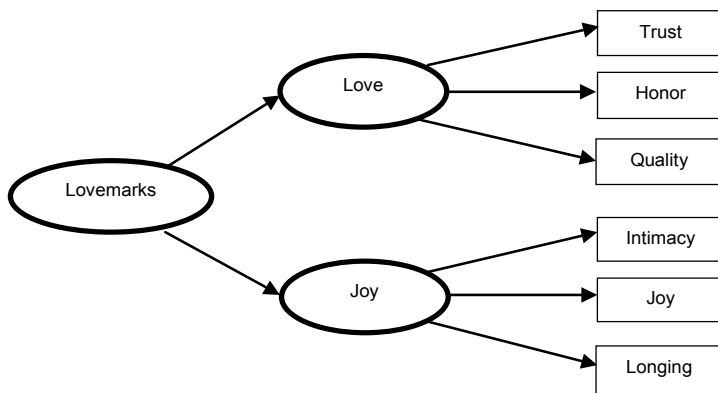
*Study 1* applied Exploratory Factor Analysis using Principal Component exploratory factor analysis with varimax rotation in order to extract a two-factor solution. This analysis examined the dimensionality of Lovemarks, as measured by the 6-item Lovemarks scale.

*Study 2* used a second-order confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) with a maximum likelihood fitting function will be used to specify and confirm the two-component solution obtained from the exploratory factor analysis and to take the hierarchical structure of Lovemarks (see Figure 2) into account. This approach will provide a more rigorous check of the appropriateness of the Lovemarks scale items than its exploratory counterpart to measure their corresponding latent love and respect constructs.

*Study 3* measured the nomological validity of the assessed Lovemarks scale by testing its relations with four relevant scales - overall brand attitude, brand recommendation, intentions, and brand preference - in its hypothesized nomological network. The correlations were estimated by fitting the measurement model for the Lovemarks scale with all possible

correlations between it and the other four variables and among the variables themselves.

Fig. 3: The hypothesized measurement model of the Brand Lovemarks Scale



Note. Ovals represents a latent factor; rectangles represent an observed item (see below); one direction arrows represent a loading (direct effect of a factor on its indicator).

Source: Autor's elaboration

The reliability of all factors for the Lovemarks scale and for all other scales were tested for internal consistency using Cronbach's alpha, and expected to be above .70 (Nunnally, 1978).

The study tested the Lovemarks scale in relation to *four different product categories* that constitute a major part of household consumption: dairy companies, cellular network providers, banks, and fashion retail chains.

### Measurements

The two constructs that constitute the *Lovemarks* scale are love and respect. The current study conceptually follows the notion of brand romantic love as suggested by several studies (Bergkvist and Bech-Larsen, 2010; Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006; Pawle and Cooper, 2006; Sarkar, 2011) to measure love. The current research used three items to measure love. Two of the items were adopted from Bergkvist and Bech-Larsen (2010) and the third item (item 2) was adopted from Carroll and Ahuvia (2006) and represented the pleasure of love or the "joy of love" in using the brand. Item 1 was a direct measure of love that represented "intimacy" love (Bergkvist and Bech-Larsen, 2010) and 3 represents "longing" and a sense of loss of a loved brand. The questions used a 10-point scale asking respondents to agree or disagree with the statements:

Item 1: I love my main brand.

Item 2: I very much enjoy using the products/services of my main brand.

Item 3: I would very much miss my main brand if it were no longer available.



*Respect* was measured through three questions. Following the Lovemarks theory (Roberts 2005), three aspects of respect were measured: the first item dealt with the trust the customer feels towards the brand, the second item dealt with honor of the brand and third item dealt with brand quality. The questions used a 10-point scale asking respondents to agree or disagree with the following statements:

Item 4: My main brand is a brand you can trust.

Item 5: My main brand is an honored brand.

Item 6: My main brand is a quality brand.

*Overall positive attitude* was measured accordingly: "Please rate from 1 to 10 the way you overall feel and think about the brand you most often use, one indicating 'a very poor brand' and 10 'a very good brand'". *Brand preference* was measured by means of a direct question: "If you had no limitations, please rate how likely are you to prefer your main brand from 1 to 10?" where 1 indicates 'Definitely would not prefer' and 10 means 'Definitely would prefer'. The willingness to pay *price premiums* for the brand was measured by the following question "please from 1 to 10 how much do you agree or disagree with the statement: 'I am willing to pay more to continue to buy my main brand', where 1 means you 'completely disagree' with the statement and 10 that you 'completely agree' with the statement". Brand *recommendation intention* was measured using a modified Markey and Reichheld (2008) advocate measure (Net Promoter Scores - NPS): "Please rate from 1 to 10 how likely you are to recommend the brand you most often use, where 1 indicates 'Definitely would not recommend' and 10 means 'Definitely would recommend'"

#### 4. Study 1: Exploratory factor analysis

##### *Participants*

This study consists of 4 samples corresponding to the four groups of products: banks, dairy products, fashion retail chain, and cellular providers. In the banks sample 185 customers participated, 52% of which were female, mean age 41.1 ( $SD = 15.1$ ). 168 customers participated in the dairy products sample, 51% of which were female, mean age 42.2 ( $SD = 14.7$ ). 174 customers participated in the fashion sample, 47% of which were female, mean age 41.3 ( $SD = 14.9$ ). 181 customers participated in the cellular products sample, 49% of which were female, mean age 42.6 ( $SD = 15.7$ ). All participants were asked to answer the Lovemarks questionnaire with regard to the products of interest. The data for this study was collected from an Internet panel.

##### *Results*

For each sample, the 6 items of the Lovemarks Scale were subjected to exploratory factor analysis (EFA) with varimax rotation. Thus, four EFAs were conducted. According the criterions of eigenvalue  $> 1$  and Screen test (Hair *et al.*, 2006) two factors were extracted. The two factors solution of each sample is presented in table 1. On the basis of hypothesized structure and items content, I labeled the two factors "respect" and "love". These factors accounted for a range from 89.1% to 92.2% of common variance in

the four samples, above the recommended minimum threshold of 60%. In all samples, all items loaded highest on the appropriate factor and had substantive loadings that exceeded .6.

Cronbach's alpha coefficients for the three-item respect scale were high for the four groups of products: for banks  $\alpha = .98$ , for dairy products  $\alpha = .94$ , for fashion  $\alpha = .96$ , and for cellular providers  $\alpha = .96$ . Similarly, Cronbach's alpha coefficients for the three-item love scale were high: for banks  $\alpha = .91$ , for dairy products  $\alpha = .92$ , for fashion  $\alpha = .93$ , and for cellular providers  $\alpha = .94$ . Reliabilities of the total 6 items were also high for all four groups of products; for banks  $\alpha = .96$ , for dairy products  $\alpha = .95$ , for fashion  $\alpha = .96$ , and for cellular providers  $\alpha = .96$ . Correlations among the factors were  $r = .74, p < .001$  for banks,  $r = .80, p < .001$  for dairy products,  $r = .80, p < .001$  for fashion, and  $r = .82, p < .001$  for cellular.

Tab. 1: Factor analysis of the Brand Lovemarks Scale

|                                      | Banks      |            | Dairy      |            | Fashion    |            | Cellular   |            |
|--------------------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
|                                      | Respect    | Love       | Respect    | Love       | Respect    | Love       | Respect    | Love       |
| Trust                                | <b>.92</b> | .36        | <b>.86</b> | .41        | <b>.88</b> | .45        | <b>.91</b> | .36        |
| Honor                                | <b>.91</b> | .42        | <b>.86</b> | .41        | <b>.88</b> | .40        | <b>.89</b> | .41        |
| Quality                              | <b>.89</b> |            | <b>.79</b> | .49        | <b>.84</b> | .43        | <b>.74</b> | .56        |
| Intimacy                             | .47        | <b>.80</b> |            | <b>.88</b> | .35        | <b>.86</b> |            | <b>.90</b> |
| Joy                                  |            | <b>.91</b> | .45        | <b>.82</b> | .53        | <b>.80</b> | .54        | <b>.76</b> |
| Longing                              | .57        | <b>.64</b> | .48        | <b>.82</b> | .52        | .77        | .46        | <b>.84</b> |
| Rotated eigenvalue                   | 3.22       | 2.31       | 2.75       | 2.60       | 2.83       | 2.65       | 2.80       | 2.70       |
| % of explained variance <sup>a</sup> | 53.7%      | 38.5%      | 45.8%      | 43.3%      | 47.2%      | 44.3%      | 46.7%      | 44.9%      |

Note: Loading lower than .35 are not presented.

Source: Autor's elaboration

## 5. Study 2: confirmatory factor analysis

### Participants

This study consists of 4 samples corresponding to the four groups of products: banks, dairy products, fashion, and cellular providers. In the banks sample 239 customers participated, 54% of which were female, mean age 41.6 ( $SD = 14.6$ ). 243 customers participated in the dairy products sample, 48% of which were female, mean age 42.8 ( $SD = 15.7$ ). 214 customers participated in the fashion sample, 49% of which were female, mean age 40.9 ( $SD = 14.1$ ). 230 customers participated in the cellular products sample, 50% of which were female, mean age 42.3 ( $SD = 16.3$ ). All participants were asked to answer the Lovemarks questionnaire with regard to the products of interest. The data for this study was collected from an Internet panel.

### Results

Results are presented in three sections. In the first section, descriptive statistics and Cronbach's alphas are presented for the two Lovemarks subscales: respect and love along with Pearson correlations between the two

sub-scales. In the second section, confirmatory factor analyses are presented for each of the four groups of products. In the third section, the equivalence of the factor structure across the four groups of products is presented.

Table 1 presents descriptive statistics and an indicated intercorrelation for the respect and love subscales. As shown, internal reliability as assessed by Cronbach's alpha was high and exceeded .90 for both the respect and love sub-scales in each of the four groups of products. In addition, as expected, love and respect were significantly and positively correlated in all four groups of products and ranged between .76 and .82. These high correlations may indicate that the two subscales represent a higher order construct, namely Lovemarks.

*Tab. 2: Descriptive statistics, Cronbach's alpha and inter-correlations for the Lovemarks scale*

|                    | Respect  |           |          | Love     |           |          | <i>r</i> |
|--------------------|----------|-----------|----------|----------|-----------|----------|----------|
|                    | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> | $\alpha$ | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> | $\alpha$ |          |
| Banks              | 6.43     | 2.45      | .98      | 5.47     | 2.75      | .96      | .78***   |
| Dairy products     | 6.25     | 2.41      | .94      | 5.60     | 2.53      | .90      | .76***   |
| Fashion            | 5.91     | 2.59      | .96      | 5.65     | 2.67      | .93      | .82***   |
| Cellular providers | 6.27     | 2.87      | .96      | 5.12     | 3.05      | .93      | .77***   |

Note. \*\*\*  $p < .001$

Source: Autor's elaboration

In order to validate the hypothesized one-second order factor model, four Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) were examined, one for each group of products. In addition, two-nested models - a first-order factor model and a two-correlated first-order factor model - were also tested for comparison purposes. CFA was analyzed with AMOS 18.0 structural equation modeling (Arbuckle, 2009) using the maximum-likelihood estimation method. The models' fit was assessed using the following goodness-of-fit indices (see Hu and Bentler; 1999): Chi-square (Tabachnik and Fidell, 2007), Standardized Root-Mean-Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA; Kline, 1998), Normed Fit Index (NFI; Bentler and Bonett, 1980), Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI; Bentler and Bonett, 1980), Comparative Fit Index (CFI; Rigdon, 1996), and Akaike Information Criterion (AIC; Tabachnik and Fidell, 2007). A NFI, CFI, and TLI close to or greater than .95 and a RMSEA equal to or less than .08 are indicative of an acceptable fit (Hu and Bentler; 1999; Tabachnik and Fidell, 2007). Model comparisons were based on the Chi-square per *df* difference and on differences between the models fit indices.

CFA results for the hypothesized model and the additional two comparison models are presented in table 2. As can be seen in the table, the one first-order factor model had unacceptable fit indices for all four groups, suggesting that the most restricted model is inappropriate for explaining the scale's inter-items covariation. The hypothesized one second-order factor model and the two correlated first-order factor models showed acceptable fit to the data. Although the one second-order factor model and the two correlated first-order factor model showed similar fit indices, the

high loadings of the two first-order factors in the second-order factor may suggest that the hypothesized one second-order factor model is preferred.

Tab. 3: Fit indices for alternative measurement models of the Lovemarks scale

| Models  | $\chi^2$  | df | RMSEA | NFI | TLI | CFI | AIC    |
|---|-----------|----|-------|-----|-----|-----|--------|
| <b>Banks</b>  |           |    |       |     |     |     |        |
| One first-order factor model                              | 438.76*** | 9  | .43   | .79 | .52 | .79 | 474.76 |
| Two correlated first-order factor model                   | 34.51***  | 8  | .08   | .98 | .97 | .99 | 72.51  |
| One second-order factor model (Hypothesized) <sup>a</sup> | 34.51***  | 8  | .08   | .98 | .97 | .99 | 72.51  |
| <b>Dairy products</b>                                     |           |    |       |     |     |     |        |
| One first-order factor model                              | 173.02*** | 9  | .27   | .87 | .72 | .88 | 209.02 |
| Two correlated first-order factor model                   | 37.03***  | 8  | .07   | .97 | .94 | .98 | 75.03  |
| One second-order factor model (Hypothesized) <sup>a</sup> | 37.03***  | 8  | .07   | .97 | .94 | .98 | 75.03  |
| <b>Fashion</b>  |           |    |       |     |     |     |        |
| One first-order factor model                              | 265.95*** | 9  | .34   | .84 | .64 | .85 | 301.95 |
| Two correlated first-order factor model                   | 25.39**   | 8  | .06   | .98 | .97 | .99 | 63.39  |
| One second-order factor model (Hypothesized) <sup>a</sup> | 25.39**   | 8  | .06   | .98 | .97 | .99 | 63.39  |
| <b>Cellular providers</b>                                 |           |    |       |     |     |     |        |
| One first-order factor model                              | 312.02*** | 9  | .36   | .82 | .58 | .82 | 348.02 |
| Two correlated first-order factor model                   | 59.21***  | 8  | .09   | .97 | .92 | .97 | 97.21  |
| One second-order factor model (Hypothesized) <sup>a</sup> | 59.21***  | 8  | .09   | .97 | .92 | .97 | 97.21  |

Note. \*\*\*  $p < .001$

RMSEA = Root Mean Square Error of Approximation, NFI = Normed Fit Index, TLI = Tucker-Lewis Index, CFI = Comparative Fit Index, AIC = Akaike Information Criterion,  $\Delta\chi^2(df)$  represent the difference in comparison to the hypothesized model.

a. For identification purposes, the loading of the first item in each first-order factor was set to 1, and the disturbances of the two first-order factors were constrained to be equal.

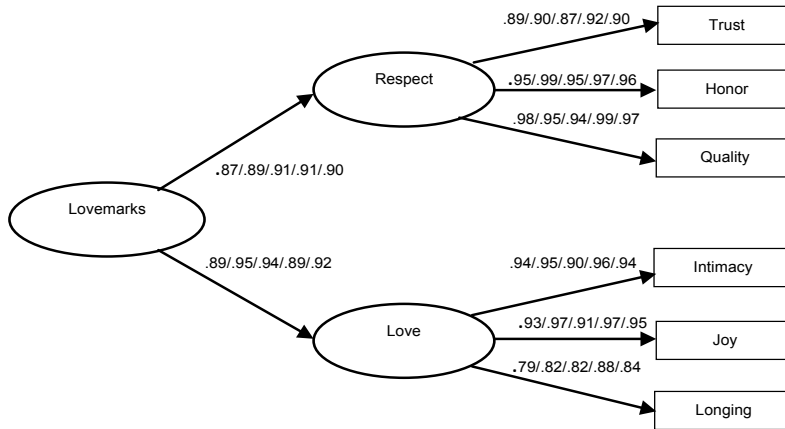
Source: Autor's elaboration

The one second-order factor model standardized coefficients are presented in Figure 4. All items loadings on respective first-order factors were greater than .79, suggesting good convergence. Second order loading exceeded .87, suggesting that higher order factors explain more than the recommended half of the variance in lower order factors. Overall, evidence of convergent validity was gained and the hypothesized model can, thus, be considered a plausible and sufficient measurement for the Lovemarks scale.

To test the equivalence of the strength of the relations among variables in the structural model in the four groups of products, the path coefficients (i.e. loadings) were constrained to equality and this model was compared to the model in which path coefficients were free. For these invariance analyses, Little suggested (1997) that a none significant chi-square difference and TLI, NFI, CFI, and RMSEA differences that do not exceed .05 indicate paths equivalence. Using the multi-group analysis in AMOS, I assessed the fit indices of the free model, a model with no constrained paths. Results indicated an acceptable fit to the data, chi-square (35) = 161.80,  $p < .001$ ,  $NFI = .98$ ,  $TLI = .95$ ,  $CFI = .98$ ,  $RMSEA = .06$ . Next, I examined the equivalence of the paths across products by constraining all

path coefficients. The model that was constrained to equality also showed acceptable fit to the data, chi-square (47) = 176.33,  $p < .001$ ,  $NFI = .97$ ,  $TLI = .97$ ,  $CFI = .98$ ,  $RMSEA = .05$ . Comparing the fit of the constrained model to the fit of a baseline model in which none of the measurement coefficients were constrained yielded a non-significant chi-square difference ( $\Delta\chi^2 = 14.53$ ,  $\Delta df = 12$ ,  $NS$ , and a change in fit indices that is lower than .05 ( $\Delta NFI = .01$ ,  $\Delta TLI = .02$ ,  $\Delta CFI = .0$ , and  $\Delta RMSEA = .01$ ). These results suggest that the strength of the first-order loadings and that of the second-order loadings were equivalent across the four groups of products. Figure 3 presents the standardized constrained coefficients.

Fig. 4: Second order factor analysis of the Brand Lovemarks Scale



Note. Values represent standardized path coefficients for cellular providers, fashion, dairy products, and banks respectively. Bold values represent the standardized constrained coefficients.

Source: Autor's elaboration

## 6. Study 3: nomological validity

### Participants

This study consists of 4 samples corresponding to the four groups of products: banks, dairy products, fashion, and cellular providers. In the banks sample 203 customers participated, 47% of which were female, mean age 42.1 ( $SD = 14.8$ ). In the dairy products sample 212 customers participated, 51% of which were female, mean age 41.3 ( $SD = 15.2$ ). In the fashion sample 206 customers participated, 49% of which were female, mean age 43.6 ( $SD = 14.6$ ). In the cellular products sample 208 customers participated, 51% of which were female, mean age 41.9 ( $SD = 15.1$ ). All participants were asked to answer the questionnaire with regard to the products of interest. The data for this study was collected from an Internet panel.

*Instruments*

Using the Lovemarks scale, the items were the same as in studies 1 and 2. The internal reliabilities for the respect sub-scales were high: for banks  $\alpha = .97$ , for dairy products  $\alpha = .96$ , for fashion  $\alpha = .96$ , and for cellular products  $\alpha = .96$ . Internal reliabilities for the love sub-scales were high: for banks  $\alpha = .90$ , for dairy products  $\alpha = .91$ , for fashion  $\alpha = .93$ , and for cellular providers  $\alpha = .92$ . Internal reliabilities for the overall Lovemarks scale were high: for banks  $\alpha = .95$ , for dairy products  $\alpha = .95$ , for fashion  $\alpha = .96$ , and for cellular providers  $\alpha = .96$ .

*Results*

The nomological validity of the Lovemarks scale was assessed by testing its relations with four relevant scales in its hypothesized nomological network in all four samples. Table 4 presents the correlations between the research variables. As expected, results indicate significant and strong correlations of the Lovemarks sub-scales and overall scores with overall attitudes, recommendations, preferences, and price premiums. Thus these correlations provide evidence for the nomological validity of the Lovemarks scale.

*Tab. 4: Correlations among the research variables*

|                    | Lovemarks |        |               |
|--------------------|-----------|--------|---------------|
|                    | Respect   | Love   | Overall score |
| Banks              |           |        |               |
| Overall attitude   | .70***    | .64*** | .69***        |
| Recommendation     | .69***    | .66*** | .70***        |
| Preference         | .62***    | .58*** | .62***        |
| Price premium      | .54***    | .76*** | .69***        |
| Dairy products     |           |        |               |
| Overall attitude   | .62***    | .59*** | .64***        |
| Recommendation     | .59***    | .59*** | .63***        |
| Preference         | .54***    | .52*** | .54***        |
| Price premium      | .49***    | .66*** | .62***        |
| Fashion            |           |        |               |
| Overall attitude   | .69***    | .69*** | .74***        |
| Recommendation     | .69***    | .70*** | .74***        |
| Preference         | .62***    | .61*** | .66***        |
| Price premium      | .47***    | .72*** | .64***        |
| Cellular providers |           |        |               |
| Overall attitude   | .55***    | .56*** | .58***        |
| Recommendation     | .55***    | .48*** | .54***        |
| Preference         | .47***    | .45*** | .46***        |
| Price premium      | .51***    | .65*** | .62***        |

Note. \*\*\* p < .001

Source: Autor's elaboration

## 7. Conclusions and discussions

This study developed a new Lovemarks scale for consumer behavior. Lovemarks is a market position in the mind of consumers that represents both high love and high respect for a brand. It is the place for a desired brand and a place where all brands want to be (Kevin, 2004). The reliability and validity of the scale were established in relation to four different product categories. As hypothesized, the EFA showed that a two-factor solution was the preferred measurement model. Also as hypothesized, the CFA showed that the two oblique first-order factors - love and respect - suffice to account for covariations of the brand. The Lovemarks brand scale items and the second-order factors that represent the overall Brand Lovemarks underlie the first-order factors.

Recently, Cho *et al.* (2015) suggested a “Brand Lovemarks” scale using Roberts’ (2004) dimensions of love and respect. The findings of Cho *et al.* (2015) supported Roberts’ theory that Lovemarks have a strong influence on brand loyalty. However, contrary to this theory, they also found that mystery and sensuality are more related to respect than to love. The new scale of Lovemarks suggested here measures love based on well-established marketing literature and suggests that love is reflected by intimacy, longing love (e.g., Ahuvia, 2005; Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006; Sarkar, 2011; Whang *et al.*, 2004) and joy (Albert *et al.*, 2008; Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006). In other words, the love of a brand is not just romantic and therefore animated by intimacy and passion (Sternberg, 1986). Similar to Rossiter (2012), the present study also argues that brand love should not be measured by its related consequences (e.g., “commitment”, “very attached”, “satisfaction”, and “compares well with ideal product”, “meets needs perfectly” and “makes life worth living”), as recently suggested by Batra *et al.* (2012). On the contrary, this study does not support Rossiter’s (2012) criticism of Batra *et al.* (2012) and the long stream of research that sustains that brand love is discrete and categorical. In fact Rossiter (2012) suggested a new type of continuous and single item scale that measures “Brand Love-Hate” (a 5-level scale of “hate - dislike - neutral - like - love”) and not “Brand Love”.

Brand Lovemarks are not just about love. They are also about respect, which represents the functional aspects of the brand - the *quality, trust* and *honor* of the brand. The current study offers new definitions for brand love, brand respect and brand Lovemarks. This study demonstrates that brand Lovemarks have strong and positive correlations with overall attitude towards the brand, brand preference, price premium and brand recommendation. These strong correlations suggest that the brand Lovemarks construct is an important driver for brand relationship. In contrast to Batra *et al.* (2012), emotional love is a decisive factor in developing a prolonged - rather than short term or episodic - relationship with a specific brand.

This scale helps to predict consumer behavior and set an effective marketing strategy for the brand. The scale further provides the ability to evaluate the factual and main emotional strength and weakness of the brand; it thus gives directions for product adjustments and establishes effective advertising and marketing communication strategies. The “Lovemarks” scale suggested here can help marketing managers in the

process of building desired brands in terms of which emphasis is needed for the brand's attributes and communication messages and should it be more emotional (Love) or functional (Respect). The fact that the willingness to pay more (price premium) is strongly associated with the Lovemarks scale may also provide direction for brand pricing strategy. The measured scoring strength on the brand Lovemarks scale may suggest the price level that consumers would be willing to pay for that brand.

The main limitation of the current study is that *Study 2* used CFA testing only for second-order factors and not third-order factors, which would have enabled the antecedents of the scale's items (such as intimacy or trust etc.) to be tested. Future research may test the current scale antecedents and focus on testing the relationship of this Brand Lovemarks scale with brand commitment, brand loyalty and satisfaction with the brand's performance brand image and overall brand personality. It can thus depict the detailed process of purchasing behavior. Such a measurement may even be used for countries as brands and tourist attractions. Moreover, such Lovemarks measurements may be applied to the avid enthusiasm of sports fans for their favorite teams as they rise or fall, or win or lose, during a season.

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