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**THE IMPACT OF BRAND LOVE ON WOM: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY ON BRAND LOVERS OF APPLE**

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**ABSTRACT**

**Purpose** – The study aims to discover the positive impact, the relationship between the two variables of this research (brand love, WOM). This paper will be illustrating how Turkish consumers perceive a brand that's is well-known with its high-quality product like the APPLE brand and how they develop an emotional attachment with its products for a long-term relationship.

**Design/methodology/approach** – this study was carried out by using a quantitative research method, the sample group was identified in Turkey in a total of 228 respondents were identified. Regression analysis was used to describing and determining the relationship between variables, survey collected online covers the Turks in Turkey in general and Istanbul in particular.

**Findings** – The result of the study supported strongly the bond and the positive effect between the two variables (brand love, WOM). the relationship between them was accepted strongly, indeed the loved APPLE brand by Turkish consumers which they tend to talk about it and spread positive word of mouth about the meant brand.

**Discussion** – While a customer chooses a brand or a commodity and prefers it to another, in other words, customers may love the use or quality of service that comes with the product, which contributes more to the next tactic of the marketers in the market

**Keyword: Brand love, WOM, APPLE brand.**

## **INTRODUCTION:**

there is a rise in interest with the love among practitioners of marketing and it was not limited among them but also in we can see love subjects in educational researches too, love term is correlated with favorable word of mouth and loyalty (Roberts K. , 2005). This controversy persisted whether to keep concentrate on brand love or not to a large degree, so, most of the marketing studies ignored the exploratory work needed in the early stages of research so they started to determine the shortcomings and contents of the key build for the love in marketing. Sternberg in 1986 started the exploratory study on brand love primarily with detailed psychological literary works on interpersonal love (Sternberg, 1986). Many academical studies started to use love term in their educational researches and relate them to different variables like loyalty and WOM since love (Fournier, 1998). Many researchers defined brand love according to the field their study is about, Love encourages the creation and continuity of strong friendships, with love as the cause and driving force for close and influential relationships ( Reimann, Castaño, Zaichkowsky, & Bechara, 2012). Love is described to be a mixture of different feelings such as respect mixed with happiness and trust also excitement referring to anything untouchable that stuck in our mind and heart (LEVINE, 2005). Love was also defined as the deepest feeling we ever feel it was known very on time ago, almost all the culture with different history agreed on it and known the love somehow and each culture has its own historical symbols that refers or represents the love at that time (Rubin, 1970).

### **1.1 Problem Statement:**

The more the world is developing the more the problems that might manufacturers face especially in marketing field, the world is literally positioned in a small phone that almost everyone is using nowadays, well, the main problem is how to gain the consumer and keep the consumer as long as possible to keep raising the profit oof the company, how can i as a manufacturer or company gain a consumer and all his friends and relatives to use only my product this is what we will discover through understanding the relation between love and WOM during this investigation .

### **1.2 Purpose of Research:**

- Examine Turkish consumer love toward Apple brand products.
- Find the leading Turkish APPLE brand users to spread WOM.
- Examine the direct relationship between brand love and word of mouth in terms of APPLE brand users.

### **1.3 Research Question:**

Question 1: What makes Turkish consumer love APPLE brand products?

Question 2: How does brand love influence WOM?

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Brand and Branding**

A mixture of one or more component may be used to establish a brand name. The trademark shall be referred to as legal protection given to a trademark name (Will, 2017). Having a legal and a unique brand name makes easy for consumer to differentiate it from other brands and some brand even unforgettable just because its name or logo has been chosen in the right way by experts (Aaker, 1991). Because the signal language that the brand is made up of plays an important role in pulling the attention of consumer and not just that, but sometimes even the story behind choosing that name for that brand matters (Chao & Lin, 2017).

### **2.2 Brand Love**

Love is what merges with other factors in creatin loyal consumers (Roberts K. , 2004). Brand love refers to the emotional bond that a product of that brand creates with the consumer (Carroll & Ahuvia, 2006). Consumers tend to create love feeling toward the product they like more (Fetscherin, Boulanger, Gonçalves Filho, & Quiroga Souki, 2014). brand love is powered by the social media (Albert, Dwight, & Pierre , 2008). In turkey social media is playing an important role in individual's life, people are easily interacting with their favorite brands through social media applications (Zengin & Berksu , 2018).

### **2.3 WOM**

it is all about how positively the client might evaluate which indeed starts talking about it proudly with communicating with other possible clients directly or indirectly. WOM is one of the strongest results of brand love (Amaro, Barroco, & Antunes, 2020).people tend to talk about what they have such as new phone and their friends tries to imitate them and so on the story of word of mouth takes a step ahead among young users, A client who already experienced the product would always like to talk about it, cause its brand lovers nature to spread their love toward the brand with others (Coelho, Bairrada, & Peres, 2019).

### **2.4 APPLE Brand**

APPLE brand is loved by its consumers and respected by its users (Dan, 2009). Purchasing decisions on a device such as a smartphone are also affected by its distinctive nature and functionality (Amron, 2018). Apple makes many of the services and features that customers use available on any (Apple) computer they use at the time, whether on their desk, lap, fingertips or wrist (Marketing, 2016). Apple completely recognizes that all aspects of the consumer experience are relevant and that the Apple brand must be reinforced by all brand touch-points (Cochran, 2003).

These will develop the following hypothesis:

**H1:** Brand love has positive effect on WOM

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research has been designed and implemented using the quantitative research method. The online self-administered questionnaire used in this study composed of Likert point5 scale. Ranging as follows: (1= strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 =Neither Agree nor disagree, 4 = agree and 5 = strongly agree).

The online questionnaire of the online survey was created by Google forms and available only in Turkish language languages since our target is the Turkish consumers in Turkey, then distributed among Turkish consumers. Regression method was used for analysis. Thereby all the respondents were selected according to the easiness of access.

## ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Demographic questions include questions about the characteristics of the research survey respondents. They provide information about the respondents' gender, marital status, education, occupation, income level, and the Apple products they use. The result were as below:

*Table 4.1: Gender Q1*

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Male	139	60.1%
Female	91	39.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>228</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

More than half of the respondents are males, represent 60% of the total respondents, on the other hand, the remaining 40% are females.

*Table 4.1: Marital status Q2*

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Married	57	25%
Single	171	75%
<b>Total</b>	<b>228</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Most of the respondents as single, they represent 75% of the total respondents, and the remaining 25% are married.

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Air Pods	34	7%
Apple TV	11	2%
Apple Watch	31	7%
Home Pod	1	0%
iMac	13	3%
iMac Pro	3	1%
iPad	67	15%
iPhone	227	50%
iPod touch	9	2%
Mac Pro	21	5%
MacBook Air	38	8%
MacBook Pro	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>455</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

iPhone is the most product from Apple which is used by these research respondents as 50% of the total respondents are using iPhone and 15% are using iPad. The total frequency of this question 455 as some of the respondents are using more than one Apple product.

#### 4.1 Hypothesis Test

There is a direct effect of Apple brand love, to word on mouth (WOM) about Apple products. (supported)

		<b>Estimate</b>	<b>S.E.</b>	<b>C.R.</b>	<b>P</b>
H1	Brand Love ---> WOM	1.124	.137	8.192	***

## **FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS**

in this paper we studied the relationship between the brand love and the word of mouth. the result presented that the beta values and the significance levels illustrated a positive and very strong relationship between the two variables. Consumers with the love feeling toward the brand incline to influence and persuade other consumers by word of mouth, especially that most of the participant are from bachelor degree according to the demographic part, which helps the brand to spread more easily and faster because young people tend to talk about what they have such as new phone and their friends tries to imitate them and so on the story of word of mouth takes a step ahead among young users, A client who already experienced the product would always like to talk about it, cause its brand lovers nature to spread their love toward the brand with others (Coelho, Bairrada, & Peres, 2019).

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