



FROM STORE ATTRIBUTES TO EMOTIONAL BONDS: UNDERSTANDING THE MEDIATING EFFECT OF PERCEIVED VALUE ON BRAND LOVE AND EMOTIONAL ATTACHMENT

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Abstract. This study traces how the shoppers see and feel inside a store merchandise quality, layout and ambience, staff warmth, and price fairness can grow into durable emotional bonds with a brand. We position perceived value as the missing link: when the setting signals that customers are getting more than they give, positive feelings move beyond satisfaction toward brand love and emotional attachment. Using a cross-sectional survey of retail shoppers, we estimated a mediation model with structural equation modeling after confirming reliability and both convergent and discriminant validity, and checking for common method bias. The findings show a clear pattern: functional cues (quality, fair pricing) and affective cues (atmosphere, human touch) jointly elevate perceived value, and that uplift, in turn, strengthens brand love and attachment more than any single cue on its own. For practice, align the basics (reliable quality, transparent pricing) with sensory and interpersonal design, and train frontline teams to translate those cues into a clear sense of value that reliably nurtures brand love and emotional attachment.

Keywords; Store-Related Attributes, Perceived Value, Brand Love, Emotional Attachment.

1. Introduction

Research phenomena and context In recent decades, the retail landscape has undergone significant changes influenced by store atmosphere dynamics, digitization, and increasingly diverse consumer preferences, making store-related attributes an important determinant of consumer visitation and purchasing behavior (Turley & Milliman, 2000a). Within the framework of consumer culture, the shifting meaning of goods and the shopping experience shows that consumers are not only pursuing product functionality but also seeking symbolic meaning and identity through their consumption practices (Arnould & Thompson, 2005). Problems & research gaps although previous studies have shown that store attributes influence consumer value perception and loyalty (e.g., the influence of atmospherics and store attributes on shopping behavior) (Turley & Milliman, 2000b), few studies have comprehensively integrated the relationship between store attributes, perceived value, brand love, and emotional attachment into a single conceptual model placed within the lens of Consumer Culture Theory (CCT) (Arnould & Thompson, 2005). Furthermore, the literature, brand love, and emotional attachment, although rich in concepts, indicates the need for further empirical testing of how perceived value shaped by store attributes can trigger brand love and emotional attachment to brands in the context of modern retail (Batra et al., 2012). The main theoretical basis of this study departs from Consumer Culture Theory (CCT), which emphasizes that consumption practices and meanings formed by consumers are closely affiliated with social, symbolic, and cultural structures in the market. CCT provides a framework for understanding how retail environment attributes and symbolic interactions

influence the construction of value and affection towards brands (Arnould & Thompson, 2005).

Store-Related Attributes include variables such as atmosphere (lighting, music, layout), service quality, product availability, and physical/visual elements that shape the retail experience. Review studies indicate that atmosphere and facility attributes impact visit duration, impulse purchases, and consumer evaluations of the store (Turley & Milliman, 2000b). Commonly used indicators are physical comfort, product display, cleanliness, and service quality. The relevance of these variables lies in their role as sources of environmental stimuli that shape consumers' value perceptions.

Perceived value is defined as consumers' overall assessment of the benefits received relative to the costs/provided; classical literature defines the relationship between price, quality, and value and develops a multiscale to measure the dimensions of perceived value (e.g., PERVAL: functional, emotional, social). Perceived value is important because it mediates between marketing stimuli (such as store attributes) and consumer outcomes such as loyalty or brand affection (Zeithaml, 1988). PERVAL indicators include perceived quality, functional benefits, and emotional/social value. Brand love refers to consumers' intense affective attachment to a brand that resembles interpersonal love (involving desire, closeness, and cognitive/emotional attachment); conceptual and empirical studies reveal the prototypical feature dimensions of brand love and consequences such as commitment and brand advocacy (Batra et al., 2012). Commonly used indicators include affection for the brand, longing, and behavioral attachment (e.g., repeat purchases, recommendations). Brand love is relevant as an affective outcome that strengthens the long-term relationship between consumers and brands. Emotional attachment to a brand is measured as the strength of consumers' emotional bond with the brand (dimensions: affection, passion, connection) and has been shown to predict loyalty and willingness-to-pay a premium; indicators include intensity of feeling, sense of belonging, and emotional commitment (Thomson et al., 2005). An important conceptual distinction: emotional attachment emphasizes the emotional bond that can form the foundation for the emergence of brand love. Conceptual relationships between variables Based on empirical evidence and theory, store attributes (atmospherics, service quality, product availability) influence consumers' perceived value, where an increase in store attribute quality increases perceived value ratings (Turley & Milliman, 2000b). Furthermore, perceived value can encourage the formation of brand affection (brand love) and strengthen emotional attachment, which in turn influences behavioral outcomes such as loyalty and willingness-to-pay. In other words, the proposed theoretical model places store related attributes → perceived value → (brand love & emotional attachment) → outcomes, which are viewed through the lens of CCT to capture the symbolic meaning and cultural context behind the process (Arnould & Thompson, 2005). Research objectives this study aims to empirically examine the influence of store-related attributes on perceived value and its affective consequences (brand love and emotional attachment) in a retail context, as well as to map the mediating relationships and conceptual pathways that explain how the retail environment shapes consumers' value and emotional attachment to brands

2. Methods

This study uses a quantitative method with a Google Form survey to test the relationship between variables formulated in the hypothesis. A quantitative approach was

chosen because it is suitable for measuring the influence of store related attributes on brand love and emotional attachment. perceived value is positioned as mediation.

The population in this study consisted of consumers from all walks of life who always shop offline at retail stores. This population was selected because it was considered to have a high level of involvement in retail marketing activities, which was the focus of the study. The sampling technique used was purposive sampling, in which respondents were selected based on specific criteria. The criteria used included respondents being at least 17 years old, active in purchasing products, and having been involved in digital marketing content consumption activities. These criteria were determined so that the data collected would be truly relevant to the research objectives. Thus, the research results are expected to accurately describe direct customer behavior.

The sample size refers to the guidelines (Bougie & Sekaran, 2019). In these guidelines, the number of respondents is determined by calculating the number of research indicators multiplied by two, plus ten, then adding the number of endogenous variables multiplied by five. In this study, there are 18 indicators, 5 hypotheses, and 4 endogenous variables. Thus, the minimum number of respondents is calculated as follows: 18 indicators multiplied by two equals 36, then 10 is added to make 46, and the result of 2 endogenous variables multiplied by 5 equals 10, so the total minimum number of respondents required is 56. To anticipate the possibility of invalid data, this study targets a minimum of 250 respondents to ensure the reliability of the model and improve the accuracy of parameter estimation.

The research instrument was a questionnaire containing statements related to the variables under study. Each indicator was measured using a Semantic Differential Scale ranging from 1 to 10, where 1 indicated the most negative assessment and 10 indicated the most positive assessment of a statement by respondents. This scale was chosen so that respondents could provide a more in-depth assessment of their attitudes, perceptions, and experiences related to the variables under study. The tool used in this study was an online questionnaire based on Google Forms, consisting of two parts: (1) respondent demographic information, and (2) research elements. Data were collected by distributing Google Forms links through digital media platforms, mainly using digital marketing. The collected data was then analyzed using the Covariance-Based Structural Equation Modeling (CB SEM) to test and validate the theoretical model by analyzing the relationships between variables (Kline, 2015). The statistical analysis tools used in this study were IBM SPSS Statistics 27.0.1 and IBM SPSS AMOS 24. The following model was used to explain the conceptual flow of the relationship between variables in this study. CB-SEM is preferred over PLS-SEM when the main goal is to confirm and test an established theory rather than to predict outcomes. It is more suitable for complex causal models and provides comprehensive model fit indices such as CFI, RMSEA, and χ^2 , which help assess how well the theoretical model fits the data. CB-SEM also produces more accurate and reliable estimates when the sample size is sufficiently large and the data meet normality assumptions. Overall, researchers choose CB-SEM because it offers stronger statistical rigor and is better for theory-driven research.

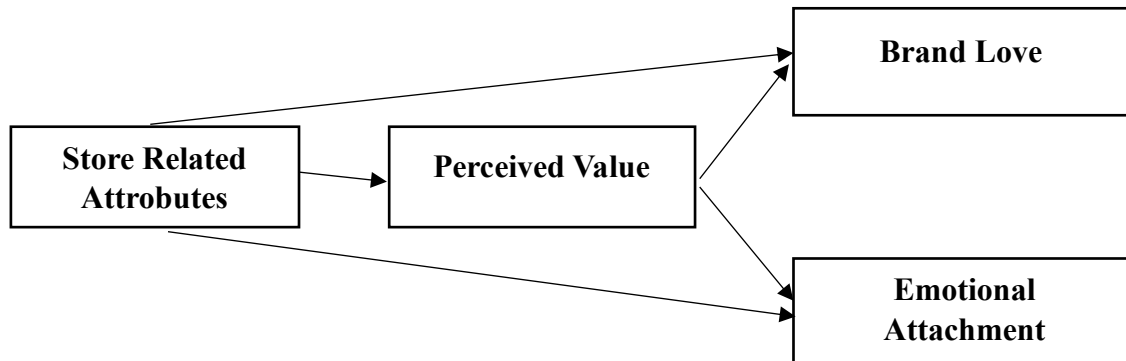


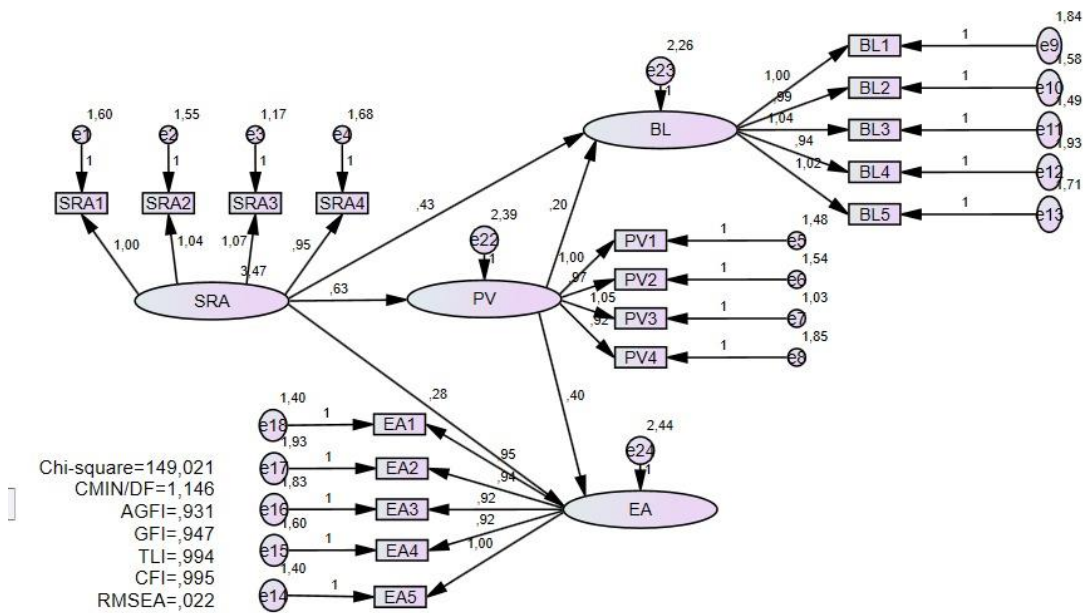
Fig 1. Research Model

Table 1. Characteristic Responden

Characteristics	Attribute	Total	%
Gender	Male	110	44
Gender	Female	140	56
Age	<17 years old	48	19,2
Age	17–25 years old	100	40
Age	26–33 years old	50	20
Age	33–40 years old	46	18,4
Age	≥40 years old	6	2
Frequency of purchasing retail products every 6 months	1–2 times	65	26
Frequency of purchasing retail products every 6 months	3–4 times	123	49,2
Frequency of purchasing retail products every 6 months	5 times or more	61	24,8
TOTAL		250	100

The 250 data samples show that most respondents are women aged 17–25 who belong to Generation Z and the early millennials. The majority of them have purchased retail products offline 3–4 times in the last six months, illustrating the characteristics of young consumers who are active and keen to follow trends. This study uses covariance-based Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) as the analysis method using AMOS software. The analysis process begins with the construction of a previously developed conceptual model, which forms the basis for the research hypotheses. After that, the collected data will be examined to ensure that no data is missing and to verify that the data meets the criteria required in SEM analysis. After that, validity and reliability tests are carried out to ensure that the measurement items used can accurately represent the variables in this study and have a high level of consistency. Once validity and reliability are assured, the model will be tested to ensure that it is appropriate or fits. Testing continues with analyzing the significance between variables, in accordance with the

proposed hypotheses (Hair et al., 2019). Before conducting SEM analysis on the model, a normality test was first performed to ensure that the data followed a reasonable distribution (Hair et al., 2019). In model 1, the multivariate critical ratio value was recorded at 116, which is still within the range of ± 2.58 , indicating that the data is normally distributed and ready for further analysis. Outlier testing showed a univariate Z-score range of -2.063 to 2.059, which is within the safe limit of ± 3 , so no univariate outliers were found. Multivariate examination with the highest Mahalanobis distance of 37.905 compared to the chi-square table value of 149.021 also showed no multivariate outliers. Thus, the model meets the assumptions of normality and is free from outlier interference, so the data is ready to proceed to the SEM analysis stage (Hair et al., 2019).



Source: Research Result, 2025

Fig 2. SEM Model

The SEM model illustrates the relationships among Store-Related Attributes (SRA), Perceived Value (PV), Brand Love (BL), and Emotional Attachment (EA). All constructs show strong factor loadings, indicating reliable measurement. The structural paths demonstrate that SRA has a significant positive effect on PV, BL, and EA, with the strongest influence on perceived value. PV also positively affects both BL and EA, with a stronger impact on emotional attachment. Overall, the model shows excellent fit indices (CMIN/DF = 1.146, CFI = 0.995, RMSEA = 0.022), confirming that the proposed relationships are well supported and that store related attributes play a central role in shaping consumers perceived value, brand love, and emotional attachment.

Table 2. Godness Of Fit (GOF)

Goodness of Fit	Analysis Results	Cut off Value	Model Evaluation
Chi-Square	149,021	Expected to be small	Marginal Fit
CMIN/DF	1,146	< 2.000	Fit
AGFI	0.931	> 0.90	Fit

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Goodness of Fit	Analysis Results	Cut off Value	Model Evaluation
GFI	0.947	> 0.90	Fit
TLI	0.994	> 0.95	Fit
CFI	0.995	> 0.95	Fit
RMSEA	0.022	< 0.80	Fit

Source: Research Result, 2025

Table 2 summarizes the evaluation of the Goodness of Fit (GOF) for the measurement model. Although the Chi-Square value suggests a marginal level of fit, the remaining fit indices consistently satisfy the recommended standards. The CMIN/DF score of 1.146 is below the acceptable threshold of 2.00, indicating strong model suitability. Similarly, the AGFI (0.931) and GFI (0.947) exceed the minimum requirement of 0.90, while the TLI (0.994) and CFI (0.995) are higher than the cut-off value of 0.95. In addition, the RMSEA coefficient of 0.022 is far below the maximum limit of 0.080. Overall, these indicators confirm that the proposed model demonstrates a satisfactory and robust fit.

Table 3. Direct Hypotesis Testing

Parameter	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
SRA>PV>BL	,129	,075	6.491	0,000
SRA>PV>EA	,250	,068	5.204	0,000

Source: Research Result, 2025

Table 3 reports the outcomes of the direct hypothesis testing between the examined variables. The findings indicate that Social Responsibility Activities (SRA) exert a significant positive influence on Brand Loyalty (BL) ($\beta = 0.129$, $p = 0.000$). Moreover, Social Responsibility Activities also significantly enhance Emotional Attachment (EA) ($\beta = 0.250$, $p = 0.000$). Thus, both hypotheses proposed in this study are confirmed.

Table 4 . Measurement, Loadings, CR, and VE. Model 1

No	Questionnaire Statement	Construrct	Indicator	Loading Factor	CR	VE
1	The products sold in this store are high quality.	<i>Store Related Attributes</i>	SRA1	0,827	0,770	0,813
2	The variety of products available in this store varies.		SRA2	0,841		
3	The products in this store meet your needs.		SRA3	0,879		
4	The availability of products in this store is high.		SRA4	0,807		
5	This product is useful	<i>Perceived Value</i>	PV1	0,847	0,771	0,819
6	The price of this product is affordable.		PV2	0,836		
7	Using this product can bring pleasure.		PV3	0,895		
8	Using this product can improve your social status.		PV4	0.794		

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No	Questionnaire Statement	Construct	Indicator	Loading Factor	CR	VE
9	Purchasing this product is consistent with my identity.	<i>Brand Love</i>	BL1	0,808	0,803	0,784
10	Talking about this product to others makes me feel enthusiastic.		BL2	0,826		
11	When using this product, I feel happy.		BL3	0,845		
12	Planning to buy this product in the future		BL4	0,783		
13	Feelings toward this product do not change easily.		BL5	0,823		
14	I feel a strong emotional connection to this product.	<i>Emotional Attachment</i>	EA1	0,843	0,804	0,791
15	It's really fun to think about this product.		EA2	0,796		
16	This product reflects your personality.		EA3	0,798		
17	This product makes you miss it when you don't buy it.		EA4	0,817		
18	Buying this product can create emotional attachment.		EA5	0,855		

Source: Research Result, 2025

After the SEM test, the validity and reliability tests were conducted. Validity measures the extent to which the instrument defines the concept, while reliability measures consistency. Based on Table 4, all indicators have factor loadings > 0.40, accurately representing the construct. For reliability, the variance extracted (VE) value must be > 0.50 and the construct reliability (CR) must be > 0.70. The analysis results show that all VEs exceed 0.50 and CRs exceed 0.70.

3. Discussion

This study was conducted on 250 respondents. Respondent characteristics were divided into several groups, ranging from gender, age, and frequency of purchasing retail products per 6 months. The characteristics of respondents selected in the study are presented in Table 1. The results of this study demonstrate a clear and consistent pattern in how consumers respond to store-related attributes. The findings confirm that favorable store attributes such as atmosphere, layout, design, and the overall experience provided play a crucial role in shaping consumers' perceptions and emotions. Strong store attributes enhance consumers' perceived value, foster greater emotional attachment, and contribute to the formation of positive feelings toward the brand. These results support the view that consumers do not evaluate brands solely based on the functional quality of products, but also on the holistic experience offered by the retail environment. The study also confirms the important mediating role of perceived value. When consumers perceive that the store offers meaningful value whether through convenience, comfort, quality cues, or

emotional satisfaction they are more likely to develop affection and emotional bonds with the brand. This mechanism highlights that brand love and emotional attachment do not emerge instantly; rather, they are shaped through a cognitive evaluation process in which consumers assess the value delivered during their interactions with the store. Thus, perceived value acts as a psychological bridge, translating store attributes into deeper emotional responses toward the brand.

3.1 Theoretical Implications

This research contributes to the literature by reinforcing the idea that retail experience and brand-related emotions are deeply interconnected. The findings support theories suggesting that the consumer journey involves both cognitive appraisals (such as perceived value) and affective responses (such as brand love and emotional attachment). The confirmation of perceived value as a mediating mechanism expands existing models of consumer brand relationships, illustrating how the retail environment influences long-term emotional bonds. Additionally, the results strengthen the theoretical linkage between stimulus organism response (SOR) models and brand relationship theories. Store attributes (stimulus) shape perceived value (organism), which in turn leads to emotional attachment and brand love (response). This integration provides a more holistic framework for understanding how consumers develop strong brand relationships within retail settings.

3.2 Managerial Implications

From a managerial perspective, the findings highlight the strategic importance of designing store environments that go beyond functional convenience. Retailers should focus on creating experiences that communicate value and evoke emotional resonance. This includes enhancing store ambience, curating aesthetic elements, improving layout flow, and ensuring that every touchpoint delivers comfort, clarity, and enjoyment. Managers should also view perceived value as a key lever in strengthening customer brand relationships. Investments in improving service quality, staff interactions, store storytelling, and experiential elements can elevate perceived value, which in turn stimulates emotional attachment and brand love. These emotional outcomes are essential because they contribute to stronger customer loyalty, increased repeat purchases, and positive word of mouth. Overall, the study offers a roadmap for retailers seeking to transform their physical stores into emotional experience hubs that foster meaningful consumer brand connections.

4. Limitations and Future Research

This study makes an important contribution to understanding how store related attributes can shape perceived value, brand love, and emotional attachment, but it still has several limitations. First, this study uses a cross-sectional design, so it cannot fully explain the causal relationship between variables. To overcome this limitation, future studies are recommended to use longitudinal or experimental designs in order to capture the temporal dynamics between emotional responses and consumer behavior. Second, data collection was conducted using self-reported questionnaires, which have the potential to cause common method bias and social desirability bias. Therefore, future research could combine survey data with actual behavioral indicators, such as purchase frequency, visit

time, or loyalty card data, to improve the external validity of the research results. Third, this study is limited to one retail category, so the results cannot be generalized to other industry contexts such as online retail, fast fashion, or luxury retail. Therefore, subsequent studies need to test the proposed model in various industry and cultural contexts to ensure consistency of results and examine cross-cultural differences. Another limitation is the exclusion of potential moderating variables, such as price sensitivity, customer involvement, or technological readiness, which may influence the strength of the relationship between perceived value and emotional attachment to the brand. Future research may include these variables to understand how individual characteristics strengthen or weaken emotional relationships with brands.

5. Conclusion

This study demonstrates that store-related attributes play a crucial role in shaping consumers' emotional responses toward a brand. An appealing store environment reflected through product quality, availability, ambience, pricing fairness, and service interactions enhances consumers' perceived value, which then contributes to the development of brand love and emotional attachment. The findings underline that consumers do not form deep emotional bonds with brands solely through product functionality; rather, these bonds emerge from a holistic retail experience that integrates both functional and emotional cues.

Perceived value is confirmed as the key mediating variable linking store attributes to affective consumer outcomes. When shoppers feel that the overall experience provides meaningful value beyond the basic exchange of money for goods, they are more likely to build affection and emotional closeness with the brand. This highlights that emotional attachment and brand love are the result of a cognitive evaluation process in which consumers assess what they gain from the store experience.

Overall, this research enriches the understanding of consumer brand relationships in the retail context by demonstrating the importance of retail experience in cultivating emotional bonds. For practitioners, the findings emphasize that creating a compelling store environment that delivers clear value is essential for nurturing long term customer relationships. Retailers who successfully align functional quality with sensory and interpersonal experiences are better positioned to transform shoppers into emotionally attached customers who remain loyal and engaged over time.

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