

**ROLE OF BRAND LOVE IN DEVELOPING CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT
EXAMINING THE MEDIATION OF BRAND JEALOUSY AMONG GENERATION
Y WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO LIQUOR INDUSTRY IN NORTH CENTRAL
PROVINCE OF SRI LANKA.**

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ABSTRACT

The literature on interpersonal love indicates that love begets jealousy. The scope of this study is Brand Love and its impact on Customer Engagement within the highly distinctive liquor industry setting in Sri Lanka's North Central Province, targeting consumers from Generation Y and focusing on the mediating factor of Brand Jealousy within the process. This study has profoundly highlighted the importance of understanding the emotional dynamics of consumer behavior, as intense emotional attachment towards brands significantly influences purchasing decisions. The direct and indirect influences of Brand Love on Customer Engagement form the major focus of the study, while Brand Jealousy, a relatively under-researched concept in the liquor industry, is examined as a mediating variable. A quantitative research design was employed with data gathered from a sample of 384 respondents using a judgmental sampling technique. To ensure robust results, the authors used structural equation modelling to analyze the relationships between Brand Love, Brand Jealousy, and Customer Engagement. The results showed that Brand Passion and Brand Emotion significantly affect Customer Engagement, underpinning the depth of emotional attachments that Generation Y consumers create with their favorite liquor brands. More importantly, Brand Jealousy partially mediated the relationship between Brand Love and Customer Engagement, suggesting that higher levels of Brand Love invoke possessive feelings when others use the same brand, which, in turn, positively influences consumer behavior. This study provides empirical evidence that supports the mediating role of Brand Jealousy in the relationship between Brand Love and Customer Engagement. The findings contribute new knowledge to the understanding of emotional dynamics in the liquor industry while also helping marketers design appropriate strategies aimed at influencing consumer engagement and loyalty regarding a specific brand. This paves the way for further investigation of the emotional and psychosocial drivers of consumption across various industries and regions.

Keywords: Brand jealousy, brand love, customer engagement, liquor industry