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Analyzing Customer Brand Based Equity in a Lifestyle Entrepreneurship Context

Guillermo Abascal Gamarra

*Master in, Business Administration*

Supervisor:

Prof. Álvaro Dias, Marketing Department, ISCTE Business School

November, 2021



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## **ABSTRACT**

Customer Brand Based Equity has been the subject of study in recent years as a marketing strategy due to the influence it has to generate value to a specific brand or service and at the same time keep it at a high level of acceptance by consumers. For this it is necessary to develop the concepts of co-creation, lifestyle perception, environmental responsibility, Link to place and social responsibility, which are directly related to the dimensions that make up brand equity (brand awareness, brand loyalty, perceived quality and brand association). In this study a literature review of the different concepts mentioned above was made, establishing hypotheses that relate them directly to the Customer Brand Based Equity , these were then measured through interviews with open questions using a likert scale of five items in a sample of fifty male and female people in an age range between 20 and 50 years old taking as reference for the questions a questionnaire with variables and measure items obtaining as results that the application of the Customer Brand Based Equity will improve considerably and maintain the value of the brand.

**Key words:** Business Customer Relationship, Consumer Research, Marketing, Consumer Sentiment, Entrepreneurship.

**JEL:** M30 and M31

## RESUMO

O Customer Brand Based Equity tem sido objeto de estudo nos últimos anos como estratégia de marketing devido à influência que tem para gerar valor para uma marca ou serviço específico e ao mesmo tempo mantê-lo em um alto nível de aceitação pelos consumidores. Para isso é necessário desenvolver os conceitos de cocriação, percepção de estilo de vida, responsabilidade ambiental, vínculo com o lugar e responsabilidade social, que estão diretamente relacionados às dimensões que compõem o valor da marca (reconhecimento da marca, fidelidade à marca, qualidade percebida e marca Associação). Neste estudo foi feita uma revisão da literatura sobre os diferentes conceitos mencionados acima, estabelecendo hipóteses que os relacionam diretamente ao Customer Brand Based Equity, estes foram então medidos por meio de entrevistas com questões abertas utilizando uma escala likert de cinco itens em uma amostra de cinquenta homens e mulheres na faixa etária entre 20 e 50 anos tomando como referência para as questões um questionário com variáveis e itens de medida obtendo como resultados que a aplicação do Customer Brand Based Equity irá melhorar consideravelmente e manter o valor da marca.

**Palavras-chave:** Relacionamento com o cliente empresarial, Pesquisa do Consumidor, Marketing, Opinião do consumidor, Empreendedorismo.

**JEL:** M30 e M31

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## **CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION**

If we compare how brands are managed today to how they were several decades ago, we will realize the evolution that this has had in the market. Currently, brands have a great market dominance, good and high quality products dominated a few years ago when demand exceeded supply (Kotler, 2000). The evolution of the market was based on the standardization of products, making supply exceed demand, generating doubts in the consumer when deciding on a brand.

Entrepreneurship is a way of life that manages to combine entrepreneurial activities with quality of life (Fadda 2020). People adopt an entrepreneurial style that is more in line with their personal interests (Wang and Altinay 2012). The studies being conducted on entrepreneurship are realizing a reality where the entrepreneurial process is influenced by a cultural context (Gehman and Hollerer 2019). In other words, cultural changes are influencing the new business models that are being constituted in the same society giving an idea that these changes will continue to occur making the tendency to start a business activity with an entrepreneurship lifestyle model continue to increase.

Within these cultural changes, social networks have been established as an important means that allows these entrepreneurs to start a business project based on what they are passionate about, developing entrepreneurship as a lifestyle (Peters, Frehse and Buhalis, 2009). The objectives of entrepreneurship are not focused on the merely economic, they have as main objective to have a lifestyle where there is a balance between works and personal, it is a business where the entrepreneur enjoys this particular lifestyle.

In the literature there is a shortage, especially in the concept of lifestyle perception, so it was necessary to conduct a deeper research that would lead us to have an idea of what this implied within the Customer Brand Based Equity.

The study developed in this work focuses firstly on the research question based on the measurement of the items of the different variables shown, leaving aside those investigations that although they dealt with the topic of lifestyle entrepreneurship, they did it from the customer's approach and not from the entrepreneur's. Subsequently, the theoretical framework is developed with a review of the literature to show the importance of this study.

The hypothesis formulation of each concept of Customer Brand Based Equity (Co-creation, lifestyle perception, environmental responsibility, Link to place, social responsibility) was followed by relating each one of them to lifestyle entrepreneurship as a new business model. A quantitative analysis was performed with the data collected through a survey with open-ended questions and selected answers. The study was concluded by presenting a discussion and its implications.

For consumers, brands are something personal, unique, giving them a subjective value. Thus one finds "various, often divergent, views on the dimensions of brand equity, the factors that influence it, the perspectives from which it should be studied and the ways to measure it" (Ailawadi et al., 2003: 1).

The methodological approach was based on the information given by 50 clients of different ages and demographics, information that will then be analyzed to establish the marketing strategies that will help the entrepreneur in the business model to follow and the implications of this in the context of their lifestyle, the information will also help to establish the most and least determinant to know where to direct their attention.



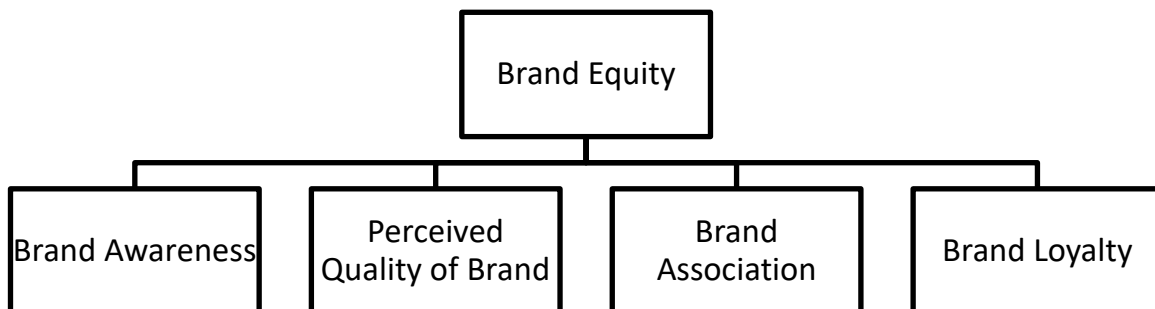
## CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 BRAND EQUITY

Because of its tremendous functionality, marketing has used it extensively in recent times to achieve its purposes (Kotler, Bowen & Makens, 2013). Branding strategies usually focus on generating more value to either a particular product or service. The advantages that can be obtained from this are the main purpose of applying the strategies through the structuring, maintenance and use of the brand. Thus, has become in a high interest topic that for many years experts have shown (Erdem et al., 1999). The value of a brand can also be used as a measure of the interest shown in a brand in the past and predict the possible interest in a brand in the future (Pike, 2007, Pike, 2010).

At least two different perspectives have been described with which the study of brand equity can be carried out, being the financially based brand equity and the Customer Brand Based Equity, the latter being the one that concerns this study. To understand brand equity from a financial perspective, they try to associate it with the increase in financial profit in the future, and also define it as the cost of replacing the brand or its liquidation value (Simon and Sullivan, 1993). On the other hand, some studies state that brand equity is considered an aspect of the perceived value found in the minds of customers, which causes customers to opt for branded products and services over those that do not have any brand equity (Biel, 1997). There is a position of the authors regarding brand equity by stating that if a consumer appreciates a specific product with high brand equity, this translates into a positive thought about it (Keller, 1993) and this will have an impact when deciding to make a purchase (Kim, 1990).

Figure 1. Aaker model (1991)



## **A conceptual framework for measuring Customer Brand Based Equity by using the conceptualization of five dimensions of brand equity**

### **¿The proposed model of the five dimensions of Brand Equity is carried out?**

The model proposed by Aaker (1991) is considered as one of the theoretical bases for the measurement of Brand Equity and aims to make clear how brand valuation is structured and managed to take into consideration that the strength imposed by a brand does not only apply to consumer markets. Brand Equity can have a more significant effect on the product market than on the consumer market (Aaker, 1991). The basic premise should be the definition of the brand, which is the asset and liability associated with a brand, as well as its name and symbol (Aaker, 1991); this is how the series of qualities that are linked to the name and symbols that make up the brand is determined, increasing the value of the product through awareness of the brand name, perceived quality, brand associations, brand loyalty and market behavior (Aaker, 1996). In Aaker's method, five elements or variables of Brand Equity related to the brand name or symbol are identified on a large scale that manages to show the creation of value.

#### **2.1.1 Brand Loyalty**

The brand value is measured basically by the loyalty that customers have for it. Loyalty is to some extent the interest a customer shows in a brand. It also determines how likely the customer is to replace the brand if the brand shows significant changes in price, quality, appearance, etc. This means that depending on the degree of importance that the consumer gives to the brand determines the value of the brand. In terms of equity, brand loyalty serves as a good indicator of future earnings. In other words, as long as a consumer is satisfied with a brand, it will maintain loyalty that will continue in the future. Brand equity will often form the basis for building consumer brand loyalty (Aaker, 1991). However, when there is strong customer loyalty to the brand, they do not take much into account the price at the time of purchasing the brand, this mentality may change when the quantity is chosen. There is no dispute that the price of a brand will define consumer loyalty, because if it is above what the customer can afford, loyalty will undoubtedly drop (Krishnamurthi et al, 1991).

As long as there is no customer satisfaction with the brand, customer loyalty cannot be established. In this regard, Bloemer et al, (1995) pointed out that customer satisfaction is essential for loyalty to exist since this is what can bind the customer to a specific brand. According to customer satisfaction will be the customer's loyalty to the brand, since according to these levels will be set the degree of loyalty. Another way of determining loyalty is through the periodicity with which the consumer purchases the brand's product (Tucker, 1964).

### **2.1.2 Brand Awareness**

Brand awareness represents in terms of building brand equity its foundation (Gartner and Konecnik Ruzzier, 2011). (Tasci and Kozak, 2006, Woodside and Lysonski, 1989) in their research were able to identify at least four levels of that brand awareness. In the first stage, it alludes to a complete lack of awareness. Customers at this stage are unaware of the existence of the brand. In stage two, customers recognize the brand to some extent but fail to recognize its name. In stage three, brand recognition is alluded to; at this stage, customers manage to remember the brand name after others mention it. In the last stage, customers have high brand recognition; here there is already a relationship between the brand and its products without the need for others to remember it. Since customers usually tend to buy recognized products, it is also very important that there is name recognition, since it would then enter the group of products with the consumer's option to buy (Tasci and Kozak, 2006, Woodside and Lysonski, 1989).

As we have seen, brand recognition is given by the ability of consumers to recognize and remember a specific brand (Keller, 1993). It is practically impossible for a person who does not know the name of a specific brand to feel affinity for it, since he/she would not be able to experience any sensation of its quality. This is why brand recognition is the origin of brand equity (Gartner and Konecnik Ruzzier, 2011).

### **2.1.3 Brand Association**

Aacker (1991) states that brand associations represent in terms of everything that is linked to the memory of the brand all the assets and liabilities of that brand. Keller (1998) defines it as the informational connections that the brand has and what it means to consumers.

Brand associations are widely used by marketing experts, they know their importance for marketers and consumers and because of that they use positioning strategies to make the customer see the positive features and benefits of a specific product, for that it is necessary to create positive attitudes and feelings towards the brand. For consumers, the way to use brand associations is through the processing, organization, and retrieval of information located in memory, which allows them to obtain help in their final purchase decision (Aaker, 1991, pp. 109-13).

Brand association does not present a concrete conception; it is established more as a concept of abstraction that according to its level will distinguish it. Benefits are linked to the attributes, since the consumer adds personal value to them, and is also associated with brand satisfaction. Attitudes are given by the evaluations that the consumer gives to a brand. Brand associations associated with functions are characterized by a higher degree of abstraction than those linked to attributes; they are accessible which allows them to be retained longer in the consumers' memory. (Chattopadhyay and Alba, 1988). It can be understood that a brand with value represents a positive element and this will be higher depending on the level of brand association that they have.

#### **2.1.4 Perceived Quality**

To Aaker (1991), perceived quality has the power to give value to a brand in different ways, if any product has high quality, this will be a strong reason for the consumer to buy it, making the brand different from others, making the price higher, and possessing elements that allow the extension of the brand.

Perceived quality is nothing more than the perception of quality realized by the consumer of a product or service, giving it a higher level concerning other products with similar characteristics (Zeithaml, 1988), Swinker and Hines (2006) managed to classify perceived quality in four categories: intrinsic, extrinsic, appearance and performance.

### **2.2 CUSTOMER BRAND BASED EQUITY**

The success of a brand is basically due to the attitude that the customer has towards it. The use of Customer Brand Based Equity (CBBE) is to show the connection that exists between

such attitude and the success of the brand. Brand equity is not a new concept since from the beginning of the eighties it has been gaining more and more popularity because brands have been taking more importance in their conceptualization and what they represent in the life of the consumer, even reaching to be a lifestyle that satisfies their dreams and elevates their emotional state by purchasing a product. The evolution of this concept makes the brand manage to represent the identity of a good, service, territory, person, or event. The big challenge to the marketing of companies is to position the brand in the mind of the customer since the competition is not in the points of sale but in the consumers who face a combination.

(Aaker, 1996), defines brand equity as the set of qualities and/or responsibilities that is associated with everything that identifies the brand such as the name or logos, and that increases or decreases the value provided by a product or service.

Table 1 – Definition of the Brand Equity concept

Leuthesser (1988)	"It represents the value of a product over and above that of any other identical product without the brand name. In other words, Brand Equity represents the degree to which the brand name alone adds value to the offering."
Farquhar (1989)	It is the "added value" that the brand confers to a product and can be seen from the perspective of the company, the trade or the consumer.
Aaker (1991)	"The set of assets and liabilities related to a brand, its name and symbol, which are added to or deducted from the value provided by a product or service to a company and/or its customers."
D Chernatory & McDonald (1992)	"The added value or difference between a brand and a commodity. The brand transforms the value of a simple product, becoming an important input in the value creation process."
Simon & Sullivan (1993)	"The incremental cash flows that accrue in favor of the branded product that are over and above those that would result from the sale of an unbranded product."
Keller (1993)	"Differential effect that consumer awareness of a brand has on their response to the marketing of that brand."
Swait et al. (1993)	"Implicit consumer valuation of the brand in a market with differentiated brands relative to a market without brand differentiation. Brands act as a signal or indication about the nature of the products and services quality and reliability and image/status."
Kamakura & Russell(1993)	Consumer-based Brand Equity "occurs when the consumer is familiar with the brand and has some favorable, strong, and unique brand associations in memory."

Lassar et al. (1995)	It is "consumers' perception of the overall superiority of a product bearing that name, compared to other brands".
Feldwick (1996)	The term Brand Equity is used in three senses:  As a financial value, being an asset of the company, and the purpose is to set a price that reflects its value in the market, finally it will be reflected in the accounting.  As brand strength, referring to the attributes defined by Aaker (1991), brand loyalty, brand recognition, perceived brand quality, brand associations and other brand assets.  As brand image, being a description of the perceptions, associations and beliefs that the consumer generates in his mind about the brand.
Kotler & Keller (2012)	They define consumer-based Brand Equity as "the differential effect caused by brand awareness on consumers' response to the marketing efforts implemented to drive it"

In other words, Customer Brand Based Equity (CBBE) is focused on working to establish a solid brand, so it is essential to know what the consumer thinks about the product. If you want the consumer feel love for the brand and choose it, it is necessary to apply the necessary strategies that allow the consumer to experience positive things that translate into positive value towards the brand. According to the Clootrack website, Customer Brand Based Equity is built on five important elements: value, performance, trust, social image, and commitment. But it is important to understand that these elements are in the minds of consumers, and it is here where brands must focus their strategies to shape a positive customer attitude towards a brand. The relationship must be built around the customer's needs because when the customer feels that the product best fits his needs, a brand-customer relationship begins to be established.

### **2.2.1 Customer Brand Based Equity Model**

The most widely accepted model of CCBE is the model devised by marketing professor Kevin Keller in 2007 and published in a book entitled Strategic Brand Management.

The model is represented by a pyramid that exposes the different procedures that must be followed to generate a strong brand value focusing on the perception of customers because

the strategies designed are based on them. It is worth recognizing that a strong brand-customer connection generates positive brand value.

Keller's model uses a pyramid divided into different levels where the creation of brand value is shown, in such a way that it is the company that has to understand the customers in order to design its strategies accordingly.

#### **2.2.1.1 Level 1: Brand identity**

This first stage is where brand awareness must be created. At this stage, the consumer does not yet identify your brand and does not differentiate it from others.

#### **2.2.1.2 Level 2: Brand significance**

Once a brand manages to capture the attention of customers, you proceed to provide more product information to consumers.

#### **2.2.1.3 Level 3: Brand response**

For users, there is a certain expectation about a brand, when it meets that expectation it generates customer satisfaction, and the customer, in turn, shows positive feelings towards the brand.

#### **2.2.1.4 Level 4: Brand resonance**

This last stage is the most difficult of all because at this stage brand-customer has established a solid relationship.

At this stage, customers already make recommendations of the brand to their closest circle, placing the brand above the others and not accepting another brand above this one. That is why this stage is the most difficult to achieve.

An example of this can be seen with Apple products, where even when prices are higher, customers feel identified with it, staying with it and defending it.

### **2.2.2 The Brand**

It represents a very valuable asset for the company, even though it is an intangible asset; it is capable of valuing itself (Morales Nieto, 2007). Allowing the company to implement strategies aimed at building and sustaining the brand over time.

In addition, trademarks contribute to the simplification of product control by facilitating product organization and inventory control, not to mention accounting records. Another contribution achieved is to provide legal protection through copyrights or trademarks, including patents and copyrights in the manufacture of the product (Kotler & Keller, 2012), thus ensuring the quality that translates into an increase in the level of customer satisfaction.

For Philip Kotler, who presents one of the most accepted concepts of brand, this is represented by elements by one or a combination of several of these elements: name, a term or symbol that have affinity with the manufacturer or seller of a specific product or service and that are able to differentiate it from other similar products or services. (Kotler & Armstrong, 2008).

As described above, the American Marketing Association (AMA) defines it as "a name, term, design, symbol, or any other characteristic that identifies a marketer's good or service and differentiates it from other competing marketers" (American Marketing Association, 2013).

For Kotler & Keller (2012), it is: "a product or service whose dimensions differentiate it, in some way, from other products or services intended to satisfy the same need. The differences may be functional, rational, or tangible: related to the performance of the brand". Taking this concept to terms of intangible business assets, Daft (1983) states that this represents a source of competitive utility that the company controls and allows it to implement and carry out strategies that allow it to improve both effectiveness and efficiency.

### **2.3 CO-CREATION**

The concepts of brand co-creation and value co-creation are closely linked (Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2004; Vargo and Lusch, 2004). These authors define value co-creation as the interaction between the customer-supplier with respect to co-design and co-development efforts. In marketing articles we can find that values can usually be elaborated while the co-creation process of customers is doing, thus moving from being a passive audience to an active partner working directly with suppliers (Gronroos, 1997; Payne et al. 2009; Prahalad



& Ramaswamy, 2000, 2004; Vargo & Lusch, 2004). This generates a transition from a goods-dominant logic to a customer-focused logic (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2000).

In the same context, Prahalad and Ramaswamy (2000) suggest that customers are an important element in the competition between companies and that it would be convenient for them to provide more support to them to create a long-term relationship and thus stop focusing on the production of commodities. Taking as a reference the customer-centered logic (Sheth, Sisodia, and Sharma, 2000) and the market-driven logic (Day, 1999), Vargo and Lusch (2004) proposed a dominant logic<sup>1</sup> in services and where they highlight the good results obtained when customers dialogue and interact with suppliers, thus becoming excellent co-creators of values. Vargo & Lusch (2004).

Due to substantial changes in certain paradigms, the value generated by the customer through co-creation is adjusted to different forms of brand management (Christodoulides and De Chernatony, 2010; Hatch and Schultz, 2010; Merz et al., 2009; Payne et al., 2009). The management of brand value will no longer be done unilaterally as companies used to do in the past, here the participation of stakeholders is of great importance and value to establish a strong brand as a result of the customer-brand relationship (Swaminathan, Page and Gürhan-Canli, 2007). Merz et al. (2009).

### **2.3.1 Company support for customers to co-create**

Innovations in services and offers have undergone an evolution in the sense of giving more participation to customers in co-creation tasks (Fuchs and Schreier, 2011). The contribution that customers can give to the operations which are in the process makes them have more versatility when providing such service, the participation of customers in these processes is directly done. This variability, according to Frei (2006), can be divided as follows:

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<sup>1</sup> The concept of dominant logic has been handled through a double perspective.

The "representationalist" perspective proposed by Prahalad and Bettis (1986: 490), defining it as the way in which the business is interpreted by managers, which leads them to make decisions for the allocation of resources.

The "antirepresentationalist" perspective proposed by von Krogh and Roos (1996; 732), where business is interpreted from a cognitive point of view, establishing the thought that the business world is not managed in a predetermined and predefined way but from a subjective position.

Arrival variability (i.e., different moments in which customers request the service).

Request variability (i.e., different customer needs).

Subjective preference variability (i.e., customer's opinions about what it means to them a well treatment).

Capability variability (i.e., skills and knowledge of customers on how to co-create a service).

Effort variability (i.e., different efforts of customers in the co-creation task).

In the customer-company relationship, this variability is taken into account, because it can be overcome when better communication is achieved. One factor that changes the form of communication between the company and the customer is the service-dominant (S-D) logic (Lusch, Vargo, and Wessels, 2008; Vargo and Lusch, 2004). The S-D logic is directed towards company-customer communication and they jointly create a service, whereas previously with the goods-dominant logic, communication was dominated by a unidirectional character that is usually done through e-mails or advertisements.

Referring to Tynan, McKechnie, and Chhuon (2010) defend the social creation of the market theory, it makes value more in its essence in both exchange and use. In their opinion, they consider that in luxury brands, co-creation must take place between owners, employees, and customers; therefore, managers must manage those means of communication that keep them at the forefront in a constantly evolving and competitive market, being able to innovate constantly (Tynan et al., 2010).

### **2.3.2 Co-creation and firm performance**

The way how usually the success measures are divided is in attitudinal measures represented in the image and satisfaction of the customer, and adopting behavioral measures that become in financial capital benefits such as income, some benefits, and a good stock price (Gupta and Zeithaml, 2006). We can affirm, that through the results obtained by the actions undertaken by the company and the expenses that in services the customers do may influence in a positive way the financial state of the company always had as a clear objective the satisfaction and loyalty of the customers towards the company. Customer satisfaction is

mainly based on the paradigm that confronts confirmation and disconfirmation, that is, it can be understood as the comparison of the expectations generated by the customer with the performance (Oliver, 1977).

For this paper, customer loyalty refers to the desire to visit again and recommend it. To understand it a little better, we can take as an example the moment when customers intend to buy a tourism package, there is a greater probability that they will buy it from the same company rather than from another one, and at the same time, they will recommend it to others. Similarly, it can be said that there should be a positive relationship between satisfaction and loyalty.

### **2.3.3 Customer Brand Based Equity satisfaction with the co-creation process**

Among the social benefits offered by co-creation is the improvement of their social status because they are recognized as an esteemed source of information for companies. Customers in turn, when they interact with other people who have the same interests the communication skills tend to improve and social contacts and fun are generated through communities that are created for that purpose (Etgar, 2008).

When a product is born from co-creation that meets the needs of customers, this effort applied in the process is manifested positively and adds subjective value to the product. This is because the efforts made in the co-creation process are not seen as a discouraging experience; on the contrary, they perceive it as a pleasant experience that has an impact when evaluating the value of the product (Franke and Schreier, 2010).

Any positive effect resulting from the value of co-creation towards customers and customer-based brand value can be hypothesized as described above. This can be possible by following the guidelines of the consumer culture theory (Arnould and Thompson, 2005), which means that when a customer experiences for himself the symbolic and socio-cultural attributes of this theory it becomes possible to give more value to any product or service. That is why when a brand decides to co-create value together with its customers it generates more value to the brand.

*H1: Co-creation is positively related to Customer Brand Based Equity*

## **2.4 SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

Taking into consideration the current situation of the environment and how it has been deteriorating over time, perhaps through more in-depth research, future generations will understand how they will value the different spaces and how to enforce certain restrictions on the use of resources, especially the most susceptible ones (Toman, 1994).

### **2.4.1 Theory of CSR**

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is the commitment acquired by the company on a permanent basis through which it must perform ethically contributing directly to the economic and social development of the community where it carries out its activities, including raising the quality of life of its employees and their families. (Kotler and Lee, 2005).

CSR is also defined by the international financial corporation as a commitment that companies have to develop economically and sustainably together with the entrepreneurs who carry out activities in the same community, improving the quality of life in general and defining what is good for the development of the business.

### **2.4.2 Stakeholder theory**

Since the 70's, the concept of CSR has been applied, which is also known as stakeholder theory, this theory is related to the policies and standards applied to stakeholders, compliance with legal aspects, the values of the company, good coexistence with the community and respect for the environment, without neglecting the faithful commitment that companies must have in contributing to sustainable development.

Companies owe their continuity to the intervention of stakeholders, hence the need to count on it; this means that the company's activity is summarized in the search for this support; among the elements that are established as part of the dialogue between the company and stakeholders is social disclosure (Gray, Kouhy, & Lavers, 1995). The company cannot function on its own, it needs the intervention of stakeholders to be able to do so; stakeholders must receive benefits from companies (Gray et al., 1995).

### **2.4.3 Theory of corporate reputation**

This theory, according to Fombrun (1996), deals with how reputation is born in the business identity, being reflected as the first indication in the name of the company and other valuations such as reports. In a work done by Chiu et al. (2014) where the object of study was the environmental awareness practiced by ecotourists with the application of the structural equation modeling (SEM) technique, concluding that when there is active participation with a high level of satisfaction, in addition to the perceived value the ecotourist performs in a positive way with respect to environmental responsibility.

Lai et al. (2015), conducted a study in which they revealed that brand equity can be influenced by the activities it does and the reputation that a company has, in this study also revealed that brand equity is given by brand loyalty, perceived quality, brand awareness, brand association and brand satisfaction. Tuan (2014), studied the relationship that could exist between corporate social responsibility, leadership and brand value, showing that interactive type leadership is related to the legal and economic responsibility of the company, while transformational leadership gives more strength to the moral responsibility of the company, affecting at the same time positively the brand value. Given this background we can define the following hypothesis:

*H2: Environmental Responsibility positively influences Customer Brand Based Equity*

*H2b. Link to Place mediates the relation between Social Responsibility and Brand Equity*

## **2.5 LINK TO PLACE**

According to Antoni Serra (2011), a distinction is usually made between tourist, to define the visitor who stays overnight at the destination, and excursionist, as the visitor who arrives and leaves during the same day. Chris Cooper (2007, p. 57) in his Introduction to Tourism argues that "tourists represent a heterogeneous group of individuals with different personalities, demographic characteristics, experiences" and needs. The difference with the tourist 2.0 is that they manage their own trips and destinations. With the incursion of digital social media in the field of tourism, these characteristics of the traveler are modified.

The displacement of a certain part of the episodes of collective action to the communicative terrain and the space generated by new technologies and digital media has been a sociologically complex and varied phenomenon (Sádaba, 2012). Social media have made it possible for many Internet users to interact and share experiences and opinions. They manage to have virtual identities grouped in social networks and that can influence each other (García-Galera, del Hoyo-Hurtado & Fernández-Muñoz, 2014).

Tourism demand influences the increase and multisegmentation of supply, with the process of selecting and purchasing a product becoming increasingly complex. Tourism manifests itself when a person or group of people feels the need to travel, regardless of the motive of such need. Then the consumer begins to search for information that fits his needs. Then he begins to study all the offers found to finally decide which of them is the most convenient from the point of view of his needs.

Ortega and Rodríguez (2012) state that the tourists' purchasing decision process does not end with the choice of destination and the usual contracting of accommodation and transportation; the process continues from the arrival at the destination, where they will have the opportunity to enjoy their stay and must make different decisions on the contracting of services such as: restaurants, recreational visits or attendance at shows from which various experiences are derived. These decisions that take place in the chosen destinations have been described in the academic literature as secondary decisions, as opposed to the main or fundamental decisions that take place in the outbound markets where travelers usually reside. All approaches are related to the needs of the tourist 2.0. Mediano-Serrano (2002), highlights that there are several approaches that have been used when studying consumer behaviour. Thus, he states:

The economic approach,

The motivational approach, and

The psychosociological approach

The economic approach is closely linked to the satisfaction of people's needs. Based on Maslow's studies, these needs are presented in a hierarchical manner, with primary needs

being essential to satisfy first, followed by those related to security, socialization, esteem and self-fulfillment. Once the basic needs have been satisfied, the investment of economic resources can be used to cover vacations, but the selection and purchase process is influenced by other variables such as the motivation to do so.

Motivations are the desires or reasons why the tourist decides to make a trip: although they are diverse and related to the personal situation of each individual, they can be classified into four groups (Mediano Serrano, 2002):

Physical Motivations

Cultural Motivations

Interpersonal Motivations

Social or Prestige Motivations

The selection that the tourist makes among different vacation destinations depends on a decision making process in which a main factor will be the positive perception of the destination in terms of its capacity to satisfy his or her travel motivations. In this case, perception is understood as the process by which the tourist selects, organizes and interprets the information he receives about the destinations, and which allows him to form a mental image of them. Motivations, on the other hand, are the set of unconscious psychological factors that cause the tourist to have certain behaviour with respect to the trip (Acerenza, 2004). During this selection process is the right time for tourist destinations to apply promotion and diffusion strategies to attract travellers.

Sara Campo and María de Jesús Yagüe (2011, p. 28) apply the well-known AIDA model (Attention - Interest - Desire - Action), which defines consumer behavior and argues that when a company launches a commercial stimulus, in order to be effective, it must provoke the following of four phases by the audience:

- The first of these corresponds to the cognitive objective - they try to elicit a response on the individual's knowledge towards the brand - and refers to awakening the audience's attention towards what is being offered, which implies "breaking" a barrier called

"indifference". The call for attention can have multiple objectives, for example, to inform about the existence of a product, to draw attention to a brand or to try to ensure that the brand is not forgotten.

- The second phase of the perception concept consists of arousing the public's interest in the brand or product. If this is achieved, the individual's desire to purchase the product will follow. These phases coincide with the affective objective, related to the audience's feelings towards the brand.

- The consequence of stimulating desire for the product corresponds to the behavioural objective -they try to influence the individual's action or behaviour towards the brand- and are called action.

The action that the company is trying to achieve is the purchase of the product, when it seeks to attract new customers and/or brand loyalty. In this sense, social media are the ideal communication channels to reach tourists with the tourist offer and arouse interest in the experience offered by the tourist destination. According to Alonso (2016), through ICTs the new digital consumer can enjoy more interactive and personalized experiences; and companies, through digitization, can achieve new levels of productivity, optimize their costs, or redefine the way they interact with their customers and their own business models.

*H3: Link to Place positively influences Customer Brand Based Equity*

## **2.6 ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY**

Previously, the objective of companies was to have economic performance in order to amortize the investment that their shareholders made in it. Then, taking advantage of the development of the markets, they began to satisfy their needs within their priorities, as well as any other additional need indicated by their customers, since they knew that this would represent profits for their shareholders.

Subsequently, as time went by, some groups that were directly or indirectly related (known as stakeholders) began to pay more attention to the actions taken by companies and the consequences of these actions, and demanded that companies respond to these interests.



Over time, customers, in the purchasing process, needed to know what companies were capable of doing to satisfy stakeholder interests.

Therefore, Corporate Social Responsibility is born as the answer to the interested parties on how to give them the satisfaction they demand, the interested parties are composed by: customers, shareholders, suppliers, families, collaborators, community, State, environment, among others.

Now, entering the concept of CSR, this has been experiencing a constant evolution over time and acquiring importance in different contexts (Atehortúa, 2008), since many authors seek to describe what they mean when they speak of a socially responsible company, immediately interpreting this concept with the responsibility that companies have for the social and environmental impacts resulting from their activities (Rosero, 2015, p. 255).

Bower (1995), determined that the initial focus of CSR was economic, recalling Friedman's statement that social responsibility sought to produce profits for its shareholders. Along the same lines, to complement the economic point of view, it was necessary to incorporate into the concept the expectations of society in terms of the legal, ethical and discretionary framework, Carroll (1979).

Table 2. Types of responsibilities of entrepreneurs

<b>Types of responsibilities of entrepreneurs</b>	
<b>Type of responsibilities</b>	<b>Synthesis</b>
Philanthropic	To be an honest businessman with the greatest willingness to help the community and substantially improve the quality of life.
Ethical	To have the obligation and commitment to do things the right way without prejudice to anyone where justice and equity prevail.
Legal	Respect laws, differentiating between right and wrong.
Economical	Generate profitability; it represents the livelihood of all the others.

A review of the literature on corporate social responsibility (CSR) reveals that the impacts it generates are a matter of discussion. In this context, Friedman (1970) states that if an act of CSR generates some profitability for the person performing it, then this activity should not be called CSR. Any social action carried out to generate economic benefits is considered vulgar hypocrisy.

Reinhardt (2008), stresses that the social responsibility applied by companies must be focused on sacrificing economic profit for social benefit. Economic benefits cannot go hand in hand with social benefit, but many companies adopt a strategy of social responsibility without thinking about the essence of what such an action can give to a person, group of people, community, etc.; on the contrary, they apply this strategy to use their resources and conduct business to increase their financial profit. New opportunities are generated for interaction with "green" consumers who do not mind paying a higher price for cleaner products, today companies are more proactive and make changes before they are pressured by the public. It is well defined that the environmental responsibility of organizations encompasses many factors of ecological and environmental nature of companies and this can be a reason for failure in the decisions to be taken and company policies.

For some companies, carrying out actions of socio-environmental responsibility is synonymous with reduced profits. On the other hand, those in favor of the sustainable business model affirm that the environmental responsibility of many companies can be strongly associated with generating long-term economic benefits. It can be said that from carrying out some socially responsible activity can generate profits at some point, since socially responsible activities and profitability are related Reinhardt (2008).

The influence of environmental sustainability on brand equity is obtained through the implementation of environmental strategies and practices that affect its positioning, identity and image and, consequently, affect brand equity. It is important for companies to implement the strategies and practices necessary to improve the brand value.

*H4: Environmental Responsibility positively influences Customer Brand Based Equity*

*H4b. Link to Place mediates the relation between Environmental Responsibility and Brand Equity*

## **2.7 LIFESTYLE PERCEPTION**

Several organizations continually conceive that success depends directly on customer satisfaction; therefore, companies lately attach the importance of quality to the service sector, as well as to other sectors. From the enormous competition that exists in the markets (including tourism services), which seek the implementation of quality in the provision of services, as the most effective tool for the viability and survival of companies (Del Pozo, 2012).

In the market, the environment in relation to tourism is becoming very competitive, since these tourism companies make a continuous effort not only to offer products or services of increasingly higher quality, but also to increase the competitive capacity of the companies, since the qualitative improvement of these services will converge in meeting the needs of customers. Likewise, the quality of services is determined by customers and this is based entirely on the perception of reality, so that the result of the personal evaluation made by each customer on the level of service is intrinsically compared by the expectations generated in the beginning, which leads to satisfaction or dissatisfaction (De la Torre, 2011). Heizer & Render (2009), noted that quality is more focused on product quality, however, it should be understood more broadly, referring to the search for excellence; satisfying the needs and expectations of the buyer, taking into account the price he is willing to pay, since the customer does not only go to a company for the product it offers, but for evidence of the elements or attributes complementary to the purchase of that product. Shahin & Janatyan (2011) expressed that normally the highest quality of service should generate an increasingly higher quality perception in the customer, the higher the quality service offered by the agency, the higher the evaluation of the post-purchase of the company's service will be perceived as an important value for the customer's expectation.

### **2.7.1 Tourism**

The World Tourism Organization (2011), stated that tourism activity is conceived more as a means than as an end, complemented with other economic activities that converge in higher levels of both social and economic development around the local population; jobs generated, income received, growth of material welfare levels and business and professional

culture are the effects derived from tourism activity in a region (Guerrero & Ramos, 2014). According to what was said by the UNWTO (2011), tourism activity is one of the strong means with the highest level of economic development, which is a great contribution to the progress of the country, since, being a very powerful economic activity, it has great possibilities of generating foreign exchange for the national patrimony and for its population in general, besides that this action is accompanied by the professional education that this activity entails. Hunziker and Krapf (1942) were one of the pioneers of the concept of tourism with social thinking which was approved by the International Association of Scientific Experts in Tourism (AIEST), they determined this concept as the sum of everything experienced in the travel and temporary stays of foreigners, this concept does not apply to those stays that are permanent or that have any economic benefit (Guerrero & Ramos, 2014). Korstanje (2012) gave a conceptual proposal of tourism, defining it as a cyclical process, whose function is identity dislocation and physical displacement to a space outside the place of residence or usual place for recreational purposes for a subsequent reinsertion, temporarily fulfilling the psychic needs of evasion,

### **2.7.2 The Tourist**

A tourist can be defined as a person who seeks to spend the night in an environment or accommodation, whether private or collective, in the country or place visited, not considering those who travel to the interior of a country to establish residence, for paid employment, temporary work, or people with a fixed residence (World Tourism Organization, 2011).

### **2.7.3 Type of tourists**

Demand, made up of consumers of tourism goods and services, i.e., all types of tourism-related travelers, called visitors, who can be classified into the following basic tourism units (Guerrero & Ramos, 2014).

#### **2.7.4 International visitors**

It is the person who makes a trip with a time limit that does not exceed twelve months to another country different from that of his residence and where because of this trip does not generate any economic benefit from any work activity (Guerrero & Ramos, 2014, p. 38).

#### **2.7.5 Internal visitors**

A person who resides in a country and travels without leaving it with a time limit that does not exceed twelve months to another country different from that of his residence and where because of this trip does not generate any economic benefit from any work activity (Guerrero & Ramos, 2014, p.38). In both cases, the UNWTO differentiates, according to the length of stay, between tourists or overnight visitors and excursionists or day visitors.

#### **2.7.6 Domestic Tourist**

Secretariat of Tourism (2007), cited by Guerrero & Ramos (2014), stated that domestic or national tourism is a resident of a country who travels within the country for a duration of no more than 12 months to a place other than their usual place of origin, and where because of this trip does not generate any economic benefit from any work activity. So we can say that the domestic or national tourist is the person who moves from one city to another within its country, with certain characteristics such as having at least one overnight stay and carrying out some activity that generates income for tourism.

#### **2.7.7 Quality**

Quality, objectively, does not exist. It is a concept that always involves something subjective. Given that it exists as a factor that determines the experience in tourism, the attitude stands out, in other words, there would be a bias in the perception of quality based on the previous attitude (expectation) towards the service. It can be said then, that quality is what the customer expects to receive for what he is willing to pay (Maynes, 1976, cited by Hernandez, 2010). It concerns a factor that leads to progress or improvement through the creation of networks or profitable effective alliances, likewise, it stimulates and drives the undertaking of novel projects, etc., strategies aimed at generating innovations as continuous learning to

meet expectations and even exceed them, in order to achieve the loyalty of its key demand, in addition, to a competitive and sustained permanence in its business environment, transcending in a dynamic and complex context (Vargas & Aldana, 2014).

Quality encompasses the different attributes or characteristics possessed by goods and services, product of the effective interaction of productive operations respecting the specifications given by the entity, which must meet the expectations or desires demanded by the target customers. On the other hand, it is based on the competitive reduction of costs as time to make an adequate delivery, as well as the promotion throughout the organization of a culture of quality in accordance with the requirements desired by the demand (Cuatrecasas, 2012). In this sense, it constitutes an effective advantage that helps to attract a greater number of customers for the acquisition of various products designed by a specific entity, and also constitutes a crucial and determining element in the comparative evaluation carried out by the demand in a meticulous way in relation to the offer developed by the competition, to decide for a good that best suits their requests, whose prices denote a complete and fair value, which favors the registration of loyal customers and identified with the brand on a regular basis (Pérez, 2010).

### **2.7.8 Quality of service**

Quality of service is considered to be the best approach to exceed customer desires, i.e., the organization must guarantee customers what it will actually offer and must offer more than it can guarantee. In this sense it is said that, if the benefit seen by a given organization exceeds what is expected by the customer, the company is incurring adequate quality. In this way the quality of service can be constituted by the differentiator that companies offer, since they can be seen as 'products', they are differentiated by the levels of satisfaction shown by customers, as well as by the behavior of the same, which is observed in the reliability, legitimacy and relevance to customers (Kotler & Armstrong, 2003).

Customer expectations Concerns the judgments conceived by the customer with respect to what he/she wishes to achieve when opting for the acquisition of services and/or products provided by a given company, manifested by its efficient capacity to provide accurate answers to the concerns raised by customers through active listening in an

individualized manner, conferring security, comfort and confidence with the continuous fulfillment of promises since the beginning of their relationship or link with the company regarding the provision of the service, promoting a formidable environment aimed at creating in the customer a unique and unforgettable experience that encourages them to frequent the consumption of the service in addition to inducing their acquaintances to visit the establishment (Prado & Rivera, 2010). Considering that the quality of service is the product of the difference between what the customer perceives of the service when he/she agrees to acquire it and what he/she expected to obtain from what was offered, i.e., they are appraisals given by the plaintiff transmitted in an excellent or totally negative rating, being an assessment that determines the continued attendance of customers to the establishment, when expectations are equal to or higher than expected, a factor that drives the reengineering of activities and processes to provide a service in accordance with current customer requirements for the growth and competitiveness of the organization in a versatile environment with dynamic trends (Galviz, 2011).

### **2.7.9 Customer perception**

Perception can be explained as the way in which the individual observes the world around him. This perception can be related consciously or subliminally, inducing that people tend to organize perception as unified totalities, in such a way that any stimulus, however simple it may be, is perceived and interpreted by the client as a function of the totality, so that whatever negative or positive stimulus the client receives from the travel agency, it will be appreciated as a totality and will create a perception regarding the quality of that company. In this way, the points of view taken by the client will be the pillars of the image that the user creates about the agency, and this will be perceived depending on the needs and purposes he/she had at the time of carrying out the tourist tour offered by the travel agency. Cantú (2011) mentioned that in relation to the intangible nature of the services, the client tends to evaluate by means of his perception and how he perceives it; the combination of both situations forms in his mind an image that will have an effect in later circumstances; this is clear when entering an establishment where the client perceives everything that surrounds him, and how he is served in that place, it is that perception that he has that in his future will decide if he will return to the establishment or if he will choose to go to the competition.

*H5: Lifestyle Perception positively influences Customer Brand Based Equity*

*H5b: Co-creation mediates the relation between Lifestyle Perception and Brand Equity*



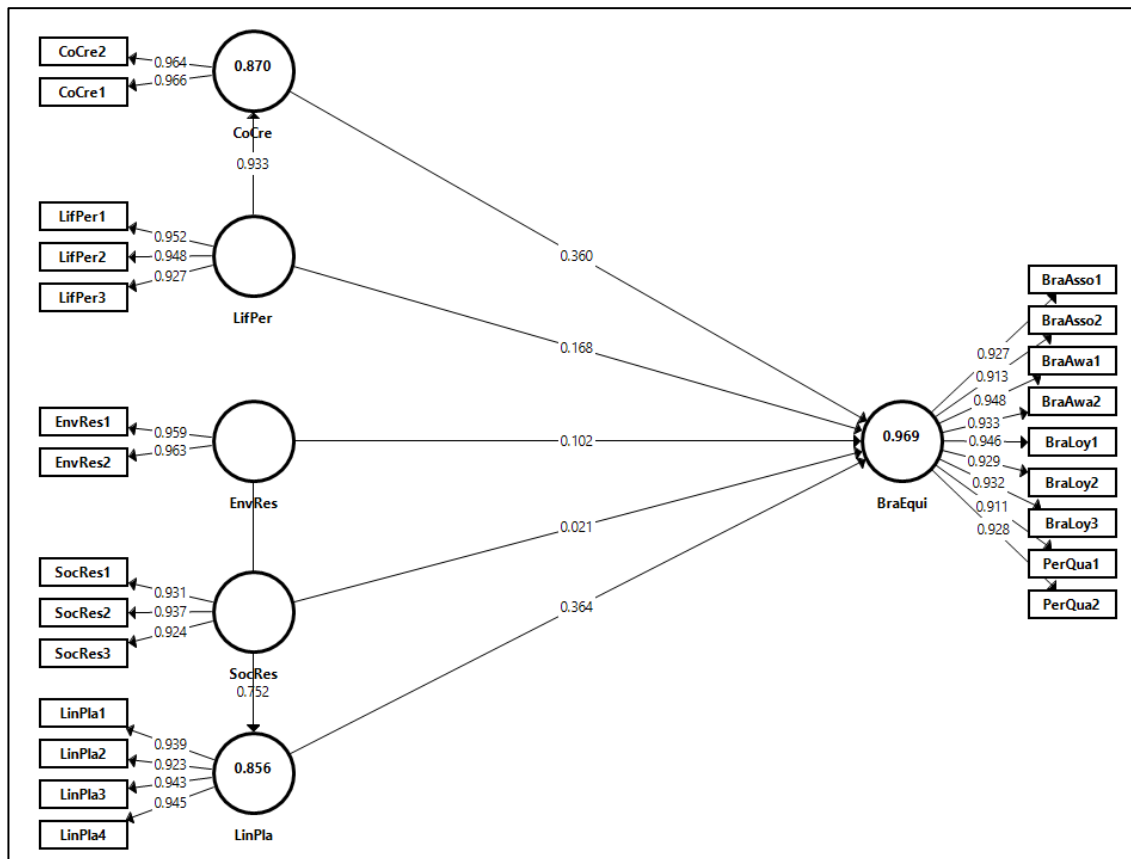
## CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

The methodology of this work was based on a research design with a population of tourists from which a representative sample was taken for the application of the methods and techniques to the established variables. The results were used to collect data that were processed through digital instruments allowing quantitative and qualitative results. The intention would be to estimate the tourists' perception of the quality that generates a Customer Brand Based Equity in a Lifestyle Entrepreneurship Context.

### 3.1 Study of hypotheses

The instrument used in this study consisted of two stages, the validity test and the reliability test. The latter is used to measure the validity of a questionnaire and serves to ensure that there is consistency in the instrument used to perform the measurement.

Figure 2. Customer Brand Based Equity in Lifestyle Entrepreneurship Context



### **3.2 Type and level of research**

The type of study is quantitative because it focuses on data collection to test hypotheses having as a basis for the criterion the numerical measurement with a statistical type analysis to compare different perceptions and test theories with a descriptive level. After all, data was collected for analyzing Customer Brand Based Equity in a lifestyle entrepreneurship context as supported by Hernández, Fernández & Baptista (2014), descriptive research aims to seek through analysis all the most important qualities, traits and characteristics of the object of study.

### **3.3 Research design**

The research design belongs to the non-experimental given that it does not manipulate the variables, collects data in a single time and place, and aims to find out the incidences and values that the variables have.

### **3.4 Population**

The population is constituted by the set of elements that possess the characteristics in place and time, serving as the object of study to fulfill the objectives of this research. The total population used for this analysis was 50 people, a number considered sufficient and collected during a weekend.

### **3.5 Sample**

The convenience sample was formed by the number of representatives of the population, to have all the characteristics of the object of study. The sample selected for this research is the domestic tourists, both men and women in the age range of 20 years and older.

### **3.6 Data collection techniques and instruments**

The method used was that of items measured with a five-level Likert scale. The questionnaire's structure is based on formulated items where only the customer's perception is measured, so it is advisable to apply the specific items and at the end of the questionnaire to elaborate a general one that qualifies the customer's satisfaction.

Each of the items was measured through a numerical scale ranging from a rating scale Totally disagree (1), Disagree (2), Not agree or not disagree (3), Agree (4), and Totally agree (5). The surveys were collected in person, through questionnaires provided to tourists staying at the hotel.

### 3.7 Procedures

The procedures carried out were as follows:

1. After selecting the sample, 50 people who provided the information, we proceeded to carry out the approach with the surveys.
2. The surveys were applied to the sample in a standardized manner, with the intention that they would not feel pressure when answering the questionnaire and complete information would be obtained.
3. The information collected was tabulated in the Microsoft Excel program, for which it was necessary to create tables and figures of the results to be interpreted later.

### 3.8 Survey Results

The following statistics were obtained from the survey, where 56% of the respondents were male and 44% were women.

*Tabla 3. Gender of Respondents*

<b>Gender of respondents</b>		
Gender	Quantity	Percentage
Male	28	56%
Female	22	44%
Total	50	100%

In addition, most of the interviewees were aged between 30-39 years old, and the second biggest group were aged between 20-29 years old.

*Tabla 4. Age of respondents*

#### **Age of respondents**

Age	Quantity	Percentage
20 - 29	11	31%
30 - 39	21	46%
40 - 49	9	14%
50 or more	9	9%
Total	50	100%

### 3.9 Data processing and data analysis plan

After the researcher has coded, transferred, corrected, and saved the data, the next step is to analyze them using a computer program. After the data is collected, the survey is applied to the sample; the data obtained should be analyzed using the Smart PLS software, to have proper management.

### 3.10 Statistic Analysis

Structural equation modeling (SEM) was used to perform an analysis of our conceptual model. More specifically, partial least squares (PLS) was used, which is also a structural equation modeling technique based on variance, which is calculated through the use of SmartPLS 3 software, as explained by Ringle et al. (2015). It was necessary to evaluate the reliability and validity of both the measurement model and the structural model, performing it in that same order, i.e. in two stages so that in this way the analyses and results are reliable. Hair et al. (2017) states that the quality of the measurement model can be assessed by examining the following parameters: individual reliability indicators, convergent validity, internal consistency reliability and discriminant validity. Once the results were obtained, they show in all the items analyzed that the standardized factor loadings were above 0.6 (being their minimum value of 0.911) being all with indications of  $p < 0.001$ , being demonstrated that the individual indicators are reliable (Hair et al., 2017). With the values of Cronbach's alphas and composite reliability (CR) it was possible to confirm the reliability of internal consistency, since all constructs were above 0.7 (Hair et al., 2017). In the case of convergent validity, there were three reasons that served to validate it, as the first one we can mention the positive and significant loading that all items have on their respective constructs as mentioned above, as the second reason, we have the CR values shown by all constructs, which are above 0.70 and thirdly the values in all constructs of the average variance extracted

(AVE) exceeded 0.50 (Bagozzi and Yi, 1988). The evaluation of discriminant validity was carried out guided by two points of view, the first of which was the use of Fornell and Larcker's criterion, based on the square root of the AVE of a construct, which must be above its highest correlation with any construct (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). In the results obtained in our analysis this is fulfilled for almost all but 3 cases. The second approach used was based on the heterotrait-monotrait relationship criterion (HTMT) (Hair et al., 2017; Henseler et al., 2015). As far as can be seen the HTMT criterion seems not to be met, because all ratios are above 0.85 interpreted as the most conservative threshold (Hair et al., 2017; Henseler et al., 2015). The evaluation of the structural model was performed using the sign, magnitude and significance of the structural path coefficients; having as a measure of the predictive accuracy of the model the R2 value for each endogenous variable; and as a measure of the predictive relevance of the model the Stone-Geisser Q2 values are taken (Hair et al., 2017). Still, before evaluating the structural model, the collinearity check was performed (Hair et al., 2017). It could be found that the VIF values had a fluctuation between 1.00 and 1.15, being below the critical threshold of 5 (Hair et al., 2017). Thus showing that there was no collinearity. The coefficient of determination R2 values for the dependent variables BraEqui, CoCre and LinPla were taken as a critical value of 10% (Falk and Miller, 1992). For the dependent variables, the Q2 is above zero. In order to evaluate the significance of the parameter estimates, the bootstrapping resampling method was used (Hair et al., 2017).

Table 5. Composite reliability, average variance extracted, correlations, and discriminant validity checks.

Latent Variables	$\alpha$	CR	AVE	1	2	3	4	5	6
(1) BraEqui	0,980	0,983	0,865	<b>0,930</b>	1,009	0,947	0,999	0,997	0,975
(2) CoCre	0,925	0,964	0,930	0,961	<b>0,965</b>	0,923	1,001	0,989	0,968
(3) EnvRes	0,917	0,960	0,924	0,899	0,851	<b>0,961</b>	0,992	0,928	0,985
(4) LifPer	0,937	0,960	0,888	0,959	0,933	0,922	<b>0,942</b>	0,990	1,000
(5) LinPla	0,954	0,967	0,879	0,964	0,929	0,869	0,937	<b>0,938</b>	0,982
(6) SocRes	0,923	0,951	0,866	0,928	0,895	0,906	0,931	0,921	<b>0,931</b>

**Note:**  $\alpha$  -Cronbach Alpha; CR -Composite reliability; AVE -Average variance extracted. Bolded numbers are the square roots of AVE. Below the diagonal elements are the correlations between the constructs. Above the diagonal elements are the HTMT ratios.

Table 6. Structural model assessment.

Path	Pathcoefficient	Standard errors	T Statistics	P Values
CoCre ->BraEqui	0,360	0,086	4,177	0,000
EnvRes ->BraEqui	0,102	0,074	1,378	0,169
EnvRes ->LinPla	0,188	0,122	1,534	0,126
LifPer ->BraEqui	0,168	0,144	1,163	0,245
LifPer ->CoCre	0,933	0,014	67,022	0,000
LinPla ->BraEqui	0,364	0,098	3,719	0,000
SocRes ->BraEqui	0,021	0,075	0,285	0,776
SocRes ->LinPla	0,752	0,114	6,614	0,000

Tabla 7. Bootstrap results for indirect effects.

Indirecteffect	Estimate	Standard errors	T Statistics	P Values
EnvRes ->LinPla ->BraEqui	0,068	0,046	1,494	0,136
LifPer ->CoCre ->BraEqui	0,336	0,081	4,140	0,000
SocRes ->LinPla ->BraEqui	0,274	0,088	3,125	0,002

### 3.11 Quantitative Results

Based on the results shown in Table 6, we can notice that Co-Creation has a significantly positive effect in relation to Brand Equity ( $\beta$  0.360,  $p < 0.01$ ), on the other hand the relationship of Environmental Responsibility with Brand Equity ( $\beta$  0.102,  $p < 0.169$ ) does not show a significantly positive effect because their p-values are above the 0.001 N.S. threshold so this hypothesis is rejected. The first result provides support for H1, while the second result tells us that H2 has no support for its relationship. Likewise, Lifestyle Perception ( $\beta$  0.168,  $p < 0.245$ ) presents a significantly negative effect with Brand Equity by also having a p-value above 0.001, N.S. This hypothesis is also rejected, which means that H2 also has no support to validate it. For Link to Place and its relationship with Brand Equity ( $\beta$  0.364,  $p < 0.01$ ) having significantly positive support in H5. For the assimilation of Social Responsibility with Brand Equity ( $\beta$  0.021,  $p < 0.776$ ) N.S. this hypothesis is rejected, based on the same p-value criterion.

Considering the number of hypotheses that do not have significantly positive support, it became necessary to create other hypotheses that seek to generate an indirect effect on the relationships with Brand Equity, these hypotheses are as follows:

- *Link to Place mediates the relation between Environmental Responsibility and Brand Equity.*
- *Lifestyle Perception mediates the relation between Co-Creation and Brand Equity.*
- *Social Responsibility mediates the relation between Link to Place and Brand Equity.*

Following the previous criterion we find that the relationship Environmental Responsibility- Link to Place -Brand Equity ( $\beta$  0.068,  $p < 0.136$ ) is valued as N.S. so this hypothesis is rejected. Only, the indirect effects found in Co-Creation mediates the relation between Lifestyle Perception and Brand Equity ( $\beta$  0.336,  $p < 0.01$ ) and Link to Place mediates the relation between Social Responsibility and Brand Equity ( $\beta$  0.336,  $p < 0.01$ ) obtained a significantly positive effect.

And from these indirect relationships it can be observed how the initially rejected variables end up affecting Brand equity through other variables. With which, the following new hypotheses should be added:

- *H5b. Co-creation mediates the relation between Lifestyle Perception and Brand Equity.*
- *H4b. Link to Place mediates the relation between Environmental Responsibility and Brand Equity*
- *H2b. Link to Place mediates the relation between Social Responsibility and Brand Equity*

## **CHAPTER 4 IMPLICATIONS AND DISCUSSION**

The results showed that Co-Creation and Link to Place from the beginning had a significantly positive behavior towards Brand Equity, which demonstrates the importance of these two variables that should be taken into consideration when applying strategies that lead to generate value to the business and the brand. The other hypotheses, even when they were rejected, a change in the relationship of variables in the hypotheses was applied, showing a positive change, which also demonstrates that the analysis carried out helps greatly to establish the way in which the different variables can be focused through the hypotheses.

The results found complement the results of previous research (Brodie et al., 2006), which states that when added value is given to customers through the creation of experiences; it is considered a core issue regarding the relationship between the customer and the brand. This research also serves as a guide for brand management leaders to meet customer needs through social interaction.

The research also considers the ability of variables to have multiple assimilations, even up to three, in order to obtain the required results. These innovations that were presented go hand in hand with what was proposed by Yachin (2019) who recognizes the influence that communication capacity can have and how it can affect a business.

The quantitative results show that there is a sequence in the sustainable business models (SBM) that goes from Brand Equity to Social Responsibility implemented in the products and services offered. The starting point is the search for brand recognition through Co-Creation to Brand Loyalty. It is really necessary to focus efforts to generate trust in customers. That is why the results are important to establish strategies that allow a better development of the SBM and to obtain a bond of understanding provided through it. Boons and Ludeke-Freund (2013) and Porter et al. (2018) recognized the need to understand how these links are established and how they contribute to innovation.

Even so, Gambling continues to generate more followers and the perspective of growth is still on the rise, being able to position itself in a few years as one of the most requested stay options in Spain, forcing the large hotel chains to make modifications in their philosophy to be able to face this new modality of hotels.



## CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSION

This study was adjusted in a good way to the literature that was developed in it, having as main base the attitude and perception of the consumer before a brand and the marketing strategies that the companies must carry out to attract more clients, as well as to maintain the ones that are already there. Through the application of the concepts that were studied in this work, favourable results can be obtained, since with them the customer is given more prominence, giving him participation and where his opinion is very important for the company, making him feel that he is part of the positive changes that are generated in them.

Based on the methodology used, we can say that this study may contain certain limitations for future research because the sample used may not be representative to be generalized to other regions or countries. Considering this, it is necessary to take precautions before generalizing the results revealed here; however, it can serve as a guide for future research by taking our conceptual model and testing it with data from other regions or countries through the implementation of a probability sampling procedure.

The links that exist between the different elements that make up the sustainable business models SBM helped us to analyse the variables and to establish a relationship between them with the formulation of other hypotheses. Even so, not all the hypotheses had a significantly positive support between one variable and another, so we must continue analysing the variables until all the hypotheses raised are fulfilled. Hence the need to explore other links.

Another aspect analysed was the understanding of the value of the brand based on the client and the disposition they have when deciding to buy, implying with this the price they are willing to pay, if they remain loyal to the brand or simply opt for another one that is on the market and offers similar characteristics.

Companies have a hard work to give value to a brand, since this comes from making it known to create customer loyalty to it on such a scale that many times is willing to pay a higher price for a product or service for the quality that they perceive of it. It was established that Customer Brand Based Equity can be positively related to the different concepts that strengthen it and generate a good feeling of benefit-quality and price-value.

Although in the literature there are other components that are identified with Customer Brand Based Equity, the four components proposed by Aaker are the most accepted by researchers. The intention in this research was to make these components more clearly known, being brand awareness, brand association, perceive quality and brand loyalty the ones that are best integrated to brand equity.

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**APPENDIX**

**QUESTIONNAIRE**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Measure items</b>	<b>Authors</b>
<b>Brand Equity</b>	<p><b>Brand Awareness</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul> <p>BA 1. Glamping-type hotels provide a balance of brands offered between famous brands and brands with an ecological trend that allows free selection by guests, in order to achieve brand equity</p> <p>BA 2. Glamping seeks to create a sense of awareness through the reputation of brands, especially those that care about the environment with the aim of influencing the decision of customers</p>	<p>Pantea Foroudi</p> <p>Henderson &amp; Cote</p>
	<p><b>Brand Loyalty</b></p> <p>BL 1. They seek to establish loyalty through the motivation of caring for and protecting the environment</p> <p>BL 2. They take advantage of new environmental trends to establish an attitudinal loyalty on the part of the guests</p> <p>BL 3. The higher the level of protection and care that Glamping provides to the environment through its activities, products and services, it can achieve greater loyalty from its customers.</p>	<p>Shen Lei &amp; Luo Chu</p>

	<p><b>Perceived Quality</b></p> <p>PQ 1. Glamping offers better service and customer service than traditional hotels, due to the fact that they focus on the satisfaction of guests, who tend to be small groups instead of the large amounts handled by hotel chains.</p> <p>PQ 2. Employees are actively involved in improving the services offered because they share the ideology of these hotels of caring for the environment and full customer satisfaction.</p>	<p>Sara Joana Gadotti dos Anjos &amp; Aline França de Abreu</p>
	<p><b>Brand Association</b></p> <p>BA 1. Glamping is associated with ecological and environmental culture brands, due to their preference for caring for the environment over large economic gains.</p> <p>BA 2. This preference for green brands on the part of the Gampling generates greater loyalty from their customers</p>	<p>Shahnaz Nayebzadeh &amp; Maryam Farmani</p>
<p><b>Co-Creation</b></p>	<p>The Gampling take into account the criticisms, opinions, comments and / or suggestions made by their clients for the improvement and optimization of their products and services. Therefore, guests feel actively involved in the transformation process of these businesses.</p>	<p>Vargo &amp; Lusch</p>

	<p>Customers feel that there is a genuine interaction between their opinions and the changes developed by this type of business</p>	
<p><b>Lifestyle Perception</b></p>	<p>The ecological tendency of clients and / or tourists influences the moment of selecting the type of hotel in which they will stay, giving preference to those of an ecological type.</p> <p>Environmental care advertising is an influencing factor in attracting more visitors from Glamping.</p> <p>The fact of being able to carry out naturalistic activities and camping without neglecting the luxuries offered by traditional hotels influences the decision-making of visitors</p>	<p>Mohd et al.</p>
<p><b>Environmental Responsibility</b></p>	<p>The commitment and responsibility with the care of the environment, represents one of the main attractions that drive the motivation of customers towards this type of business</p> <p>The environmental responsibility of the users represents their main motivation to attend this type of hotels</p>	<p>Mustafa Demir, Husam Rjoub, Mehmet Yesiltas</p>
<p><b>Social Responsibility</b></p>	<p>Glamping shows a higher level of corporate social responsibility with the communities of influence</p> <p>Employees of this type of hotels show a more active participation and better disposition towards CSR activities than employees of traditional hotels</p>	<p>Juniati Gunawan &amp; Zico Dian Paja Putra</p>

	<p>The Corporate Social Responsibility of Glamping-type hotels directly influences their corporate image and the decision of customers</p>	
<p><b>Link to Place</b></p>	<p>Glamping companies make greater use of social networks as marketing media and brand projection than traditional hotels</p> <p>Glamping have a lower presence on specialized web pages such as TripAdvisor, so they present a competitive disadvantage compared to traditional hotels</p> <p>Glamping makes little use of tools such as CRM, BigData, for market analysis, which generates a competitive disadvantage compared to traditional hotels.</p> <p>The use of Blogs with reviews of the landscapes and services with a link to the hotel's official website, is one of the most popular digital media used by the Glamping</p>	<p>Aurora Garrido-Moreno, Víctor J. García-Morales &amp; Nigel Lockett</p>