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Research Paper

Brand Experience and Brand Equity: A Review and Future Research Agenda.

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ABSTRACT

Literature review in the domain of brand experience and brand equity is scarce as it is still developing, and most studies have focused on these two concepts separately. The purpose of this study is to understand the relationship between brand equity and brand experience by conducting a systematic review of both concepts. The systematic review is based on the analysis of literature collected from the Web of Science, using a global bibliometric analysis; social network analysis, and a descriptive analysis of the top-cited articles. The study reveals scientific research on the relationship between brand experience and brand equity was initiated in 2007. Brand experience is consistently considered an antecedent of brand equity. However, the data analysed showed a lack of diversity regarding markets, industries, and types of consumers studied. The study also proposes a conceptual framework of the main antecedents and outcomes of brand experience and brand equity that might be used to test and validate the influence of brand experience on brand equity. This study is the first systematic review focusing on the relationship between brand experience and brand equity, making it an original contribution in the field.

Keywords: Brand experience, brand equity, store image, sensory stimuli, bibliometric analysis systematic review

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1. INTRODUCTION

In the dynamic and ever-evolving landscape of business, where companies operate amidst intense competition and changing consumer demands, they are constantly seeking new ways to strengthen their brands and establish a solid and loyal customer base. In fact, brands are one of the strategic and relevant assets driving business organizations in modern times, being a source of differentiation between other competitive offerings in the market. On the other hand, the consumer's role has become more prominent in marketing decisions, as they are becoming more participative in the buying process, (Mandolfo, Chen et al. 2020, Sarasvuo, Rindell et al. 2022), as evidenced by several noteworthy trends, including the increasing emphasis on personalized experiences (Chandra, Verma et al. 2022), the rise of omnichannel marketing (Mishra, Singh et al.

2021), and the use of artificial intelligence to improve customer experiences (Chen, Jiang et al.

2022).

Hence, one approach that has gained increasing attention in recent years is the concept of brand experience, which refers to the overall experience a customer has with a brand across all touchpoints (Brakus, Schmitt et al. 2009, Veloutsou & Guzman 2017). Research has shown that a positive brand experience can have a significant impact on brand equity (Aaker 1996). Considering the commoditization of goods and services, the holistic customer experience is key to establishing an emotional bond with a brand (Fournier 1998), delivering genuine customer value, and helping to build brand equity and a stronger customer-brand relationship. According to Aaker (1996), brand equity is the perceived value of a brand in the eyes of consumers. From a marketing perspective, this construct is understood as the customer's perception and knowledge related to the brand due to the strategic marketing activities of a company (Keller, 1993).

Despite several practical and conceptual research available in this area, literature reviews in the domain of brand experience and brand equity are scarce as it is still developing and most of the studies have focused on these two concepts separately (Andreini, Pedeliento et al. 2019, RojasLamorena, Del Barrio-García et al. 2022). Does brand experience perform undoubtedly as an antecedent of brand equity, or it can also be interpreted as a mediator of relationships between brand experience and other constructs, or even as an outcome of brand experience? For example, a customer's positive experience during the buying process, when it is consistent, can be reflected in its positive perception of the brand and brand loyalty, ultimately increasing the brand's equity. Conversely, when a brand has a strong reputation for quality and reliability, there is a higher willingness to pay for the brand's products, which permits it to charge a premium price. Considering all these aspects, customers have positive expectations of the brand before they even buy it. In order to meet these expectations, the brand focus strategically on positive brand experiences (Kumar & Kaushik, 2020).

Even though scientific research on consumer behavior has been rapidly growing to keep up with the new marketing trends and decode customers' evolving demands, current studies on these relationships are more focused on a managerial approach rather than on a theoretical approach capable of describing such relationships. In fact, despite the recognition of the importance of these relationships by practitioners, the academic marketing literature interconnecting these concepts has been limited. This opens avenues for the theoretical conceptualization of several constructs and their relationships, and consequent practical implications (Snyder, 2019).

Considering such evolution, literature reviews providing integration and synthesis for new conceptual frameworks, contributing to the state-of-the-art concepts analysed in previous research (Fisch & Block 2018, Snyder 2019), and synthesizing several results, are important steps in the scientific process (Palmatier, Houston et al. 2018). Thus, we propose a comprehensive literature review, which encompasses a bibliometric assessment and subsequent systematic literature review of the main studies on the relationship between brand experience (BEx) and brand equity (BEq). Although there are some systematic and bibliometric reviews studying BEx or BEq, individually (Kyanides & Hajidimitriou 2019, Cui & Wang 2020, Zha, Melewar et al. 2020, Gorska-Warsewicz, Debski et al. 2021), to the best of the authors' knowledge, there is a gap of studies considering the relationship of both constructs, namely identifying its antecedents and outcomes. Shamim and Butt (2013) pointed out the necessity to conduct further research on BEx since its focus on defining and measuring the construct has evolved to identify its antecedents and outcomes. Moreover, despite efforts to sign possible consequences of BEx (Morrison & Crane, 2007, Brakus, Schmitt et al. 2009, Zarantonello & Schmitt, 2010), there is room to include

important branding constructs such as brand loyalty, brand attachment, brand attitude, brand equity, or perceived quality. Also, as Beig and Nika (2019) recently suggested "although both brand experience and brand equity are well-researched domains, literature is dearth with studying the relationship between the two in the joint framework".

Thus, our purpose is to fill this void and better understand how past scientific studies have been analysing the relationship between these two constructs. We aim to provide marketers with a better understanding of how businesses could improve by building brand equity through brand experiences for their customers.

This investigation aims to answer the following research questions:

RQ1: How can we systematize and describe advances in the relationship between BEx and BEq research, going through key papers, authors, affiliations, and themes?

RQ2: How has the relationship between BEx and BEq been modelled, and what are the key constructs focused in the current literature?

RQ3: In which contexts are BEx and BEq studied?

RQ4: What are the most applied methodological approaches?

RQ5: What are the gaps identified, consequent directions for future research, and its implications?

To answer these questions, we developed a hybrid literature review (Paul & Criado, 2020). First, we built a bibliometric analysis of a sample of 115 documents published between 2007 and 2023 retrieved from the Web of Science (WoS) (2023) – Core Collection, and Scopus. This enables a global statistical analysis, providing longitudinal and spatial evolutions of the scientific production on BEq and BEx, which is sustained on the use of R-Program (Merigó, Mas-Tur et al. 2015). Second, using Vosviewer, we construct and assess a keywords co-occurrence map that depicts relationships between themes, enabling the observation of conceptual clusters (Callon, Courtial et al. 1983). Finally, we systematically analyse the most cited articles of the sample concerning the modelling of the relationship and the scientific approaches used to obtain answers to the research questions.

This study is of great interest for new researchers who seek to assess the current state-of-the-art of the relationship described, strengthening its foundation of knowledge and helping them to understand how they should mold their upcoming studies based on the prior ones, here synthetized (Snyder 2019, Paul & Criado 2020).

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Brand experience

BEx has been attracting the attention of marketing practitioners who are now realizing how critical it is to understand consumers' experience for developing consistent marketing strategies (Shieh & Lai 2017).

The introduction of consumer experience in marketing is credited to Holbrook and Hirschman (1982), who postulated that consumer experiences encompass hedonic characteristics such as feelings, fantasies, and fun. In the late 90s, the marketing literature also witnessed the emergence of concepts like experiential marketing (Schmitt 1999) and customer experience management (Schmitt, 2003). These theoretical advancements brought a new perspective to the understanding and practice of marketing, emphasizing the importance of creating meaningful and engaging experiences for consumers (Pine & Gilmore 1998). By adopting experience-centered approaches, companies can strengthen their brands, increase customer loyalty, and gain a competitive edge in today's market, where differentiation becomes increasingly crucial (Verhoef, Lemon et al. 2009). Therefore, the incorporation of consumer experience into marketing strategies has become essential for the success and growth of organizations.

Despite the various definitions encountered in scientific literature, BEx is often related to the consumer's buying experience, focused on perceptions, feelings, and sensorial responses. Schmitt (1999) conceptualized five dimensions that compound BEx: sensory, affective, cognitive, behavioral, and social. Also, Brakus, Schmitt et al. (2009) defined this construct as the sensations, feelings, cognitions, and behavioral responses evoked by brand-related stimuli developed throughout the whole process, which can be divided into pre-purchase, purchase, and post-purchase phases (Furquim, da Veiga et al. 2023). Such stimuli shape the relationships and connections between consumer and brand, reflecting the subjective evaluation made by each consumer towards the brand. In this process, several factors are involved, like product quality, service quality, product design, and advertisement, which are part of a brand's design and identity, packaging, communications, and environments (Brakus, Schmitt et al. 2009). Thus, BEx creates an opportunity to increase the "information aggregation process" and, consequently, the attachment to the brand and future re-purchasing intentions (Ortmeyer & Huber, 1991, Baswan & Fatima 2019).

Across scientific literature, BEx is recognized as a promoter of satisfaction and loyalty of customers (Khan & Rahman, 2015) and a key construct in predicting marketing outcomes such as recommendation and re-use intention (Raajpoot & Ghilni-Wage, 2019). For example, Verhoef, Lemon et al. (2009) emphasize the need to deliver high customer experiences, such as store environment, store brands, past customer experiences, and service interfaces. Moreover, marketing managers have come to acknowledge the significant role of brand experiences in fortifying brand equity (Beig & Nika, 2019).

BEx has been evolving throughout the times, prompted by technology and social networks that determine a complex system of interactions between users and between the user and the brand. Customers are becoming co-creators of the brand experience by shaping the brand environment, with online websites, smart apps, and social media platforms. Online reviews, for example, portray various levels of engagement with the brand which influence the intention to buy in different forms (Bilro, Loureiro et al. 2019, Lăzăroiu, Neguriță et al. 2020). It is now key to promote an "interactive, individualized but yet communal, brand experience throughout all brand touchpoints for all stakeholders", even the ones not directly involved (Veloutsou & Guzman, 2017).

2.2 Brand equity

BEq is a complex concept built through perceptions of image and meaning reflected on several factors such as the quality and reputation of the product, the service provided, and customers' sense of community (Datta, Ailawadi et al. 2017, Yang 2020). There have been two global lenses to study BEq: financially-based and Customer-based BEq (CBBE) (Keller 1993). In the authors' understanding, this last perspective represents more value to the marketing field. Accordingly, our study explores this approach.

It has long been understood that the strength of a brand's name adds value to the company or the product, but the efforts to conceptualize and delineate theoretically such construct arose in the late 80's. Farquhar (1989) firstly introduced the concept of BEq as "added value" with which a brand endows a product" (p. 24). The author also suggests that BEq leverages the business's value through the engagement of a brand with its consumers. Hence, consumers' recognition of the brand's power increases the likelihood of consumers choosing that brand for which they have a higher willingness to pay, or, in other words, intend to pay a premium price (Farquhar 1989, Aaker 1991). It means that "a brand enhances the value of a product beyond its functional purpose" (p. 25).

Then, other authors followed Farquhar, like Aaker (1991), who defined BEq as the equity and set of assets and liabilities linked to brands that can create value for customers and companies. Additionally, Keller (1993), a key author on this theme, introduced the concept of CBBE, which is brand knowledge-based. He defines the construct as the "differential effect of brand knowledge on consumer response to the marketing of the brand" (Keller 1993). The same marketing mix from different brands reflects a different customer reaction, directly impacting CBBE. This construct has been developed by other authors like Netemeyer, Krishnan et al. (2004) and (Yoo & Donthu, 2001).

Years later, Rust (2000) stated that BEq consists of consumers' subjective and intangible evaluation of the brand, above and beyond its objectively perceived value. Thus, BEq can reflect the thinking, feelings, and actions of consumers relative to the brand and help to increase the value, market share, and benefits of a company's brand value (Lin 2015). It should be noted that brand value is not the same as BEq. While the first corresponds to the financial value that the brand brings to the company, the last is more encompassing since it goes beyond the financial value, including the importance of the brand attributed subjectively by consumers.

In fact, since Farquhar's output, BEq has been more and more developed and has become a central construct in the theory and practice of both marketing and business strategy. Currently, the concept of brand equity is still evolving, and aspects related to sustainability, use of social networks and different forms of interaction among consumers (Veloutsou & Guzman, 2017) contributed to the emergence of new branches of BEq such as Green BEq (Chen 2010), and online BEq (Rana, Bhat et al. 2015, Rezaei & Valaei, 2017).

2.3. Consumer-brand relationships: brand experience and brand equity

The consumer-brand relationship has evolved considerably throughout the past decades due to the emergence of new paradigms, namely technological, social, and cultural, that change consumer interactions and communication patterns (Kapferer 2012).

A brand can be defined as a "name, term, sign, symbol, or design, or combination of them which is intended to identify the goods and services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competitors" (Kotler 1972). A consumer's preference for a specific brand can be moulded by the experience (BEx) associated with the buying process, from the decision-making until the after-sales service, which generates more favourable responses towards the brand (Brakus, Schmitt et al. 2009). These positive responses sustain BEq (Keller 1993). While the last

concept is a long-term route in building brands, BEx is intricate, evolves from the customer perspective, and is highly mutable (Beig & Nika, 2019).

The relationship between brand experience and brand equity documented in several studies has been analysed in various domains, such as luxury brands (Baghi, Gabrielli et al. 2016, Shen, Vel et al. 2016, Zollo, Filieri et al. 2020), food and beverage (Ding Cherng & Tseng Timmy, 2015), and technology (Zarantonello & Schmitt 2013, Rezaei & Valaei 2017, Iglesias, Markovic et al. 2019). Iglesias, Markovic et al. (2019), for instance, analyse consumers in the banking industry and conclude that sensory brand experience increases indirectly to brand equity, through customer satisfaction and customer affective commitment. Beig and Nika (2019) have critically discussed both concepts and their relationship among current scientific research, acknowledging the importance for marketers to ensure their customers have pleasurable experiences with their brand in order to improve brand value.

Nevertheless, current investigations on these constructs lack a theoretical approach able to comprehensively describe such relationships, making the critical analysis of literature performed by Beig and Nika (2019) one of the few exceptions. Veloutsou and Guzman (2017) also identify a need to analyse more in depth the relationship between BEx and BEq, specifically its antecedents and outcomes. The studies carried out by Hamzah, Syed Alwi et al. (2014), Hepola, Karjaluoto et al. (2017), Yu and Yuan (2019), and Zollo, Filieri et al. (2020) offered support for identifying the main methodological approaches and contexts. Within the scope of experiential marketing, Beig and Nika (2019) reviewed existing literature to understand how the constructs of BEx and BEq relate and consequently provide future research directions and insights for marketing managers. This study offered support to establish the research questions of this article, namely on identifying new avenues of investigation and implications for management and theory.

Hence, considering the contributions of both concepts to the consumer-brand relationships field, we analyse how BEx and BEq relate and the most important outcomes that emerged from previous scientific literature, providing the state-of-the-art of this relationship.

3 METHODOLOGY

This research aims to conduct a hybrid literature review (Paul & Criado, 2020) that resorts to a bibliometric study complemented by a structured systematic review. This combo seems to be an excellent way of synthesizing research findings to show evidence on a meta-level and to uncover

areas in which more research is needed, provide evidence to answer certain questions or give an historical overview of the development of an academic field. Through this method, we expect to summarize and categorize knowledge about relationships between BEx and BEq (Fisch & Block, 2018).

3.1 Bibliometric and social network analysis

This study resorts to a bibliometric review that identifies the leading trends in the behaviour of different bibliometric indicators of scientific research on the relationship between BEx and BEq. In general, bibliographic techniques are based on the quantitative analysis of papers, books, or other recognized documents, enabling to understand the evolution of the scientific production of a specific field of knowledge according to different perspectives (Kamran, Khan et al. 2020), such as the topics covered in this investigation.

Following the guidelines of Donthu, Kumar et al. (2021), the bibliometric study of this research encompasses two steps: 1) a comprehensive performance analysis to understand the global evolution of BEx and BEq across time and space in which we weigh the number of publications or citations by country of origin, source or author (Merigó, Mas-Tur et al. 2015); and 2) science mapping, based on Social Network Analysis (SNA), that provides the representation and visualization of relationships between fields (Callon, Courtial et al. 1983, Chen, Chen et al. 2016). Data performance was assessed with the software R-Program (version 3.2.3), specifically with the Bibliometrix package, and SNA was developed with the software VOSviewer (version 1.6.15).

3.2 Systematic review

Posteriorly, a systematic literature review of the main documents identified in the bibliographic coupling network was developed to cover leading topics, most common methodological approaches, contexts of study, and antecedents and outputs of BEx and BEq. Moreover, we synthesized main conclusions, found gaps, and built a research agenda concerning the conceptual and empirical developments of the topics covered. The method applied in this study, systematic review, has become largely recognized to assess the state-of-the-art of a research topic (Callahan 2014) and to accurately discuss and compare different points of view on a specific theme (Marabelli & Newell 2014, Justin & Alex Rialp, 2020).

A literature review can be described as a more or less systematic way of collecting and synthesizing previous research (Tranfield, Denyer, & Smart, 2003). Nonetheless, a good literature review should take one step beyond the mere description of studies, which relies on results interpretation

(Fisch & Block, 2018). A well-conducted review as a research method creates a firm foundation for advancing knowledge and facilitating theory development by integrating empirical findings and perspectives from various previous studies (Snyder, 2019).

3.3 Data collection

Data used in the systematic and bibliometric analysis is composed of scientific documents produced until the 31st of December 2023, collected in the online databases WoS and Scopus, considered by academics as the two of the databases with the most relevant studies in social sciences (Ferreira, Fernandes et al. 2016).

We developed a thoughtful data search process summarized in Figure 1 and followingly described. Through topic search, (including title, abstract, author keywords, and keywords plus), the intersection of the terms "brand experience" and "brand equity" was applied. Initially, the search reflected 123 documents from WoS and 139 from Scopus. Documents from 2024 were excluded to allow an entire year of comparison. Also, paper proceedings were eliminated to maximize the quality of the review. Due to the theme's novelty, we did not apply filters for source's relevance. After importing both databases to R-Program, duplicated items were eliminated. The final database compounds 115 documents from 88 sources published between 2007 and 2023. These documents were mainly written in co-authorship (100) by 281 authors. The collaboration index is 2.81.

Pre- data collection

age

Define search terms:

"brand equity" AND "brand experience"

Define data bases: Web of Science (WoS) and Scopus

Data collection

Search terms on topic (title, abstract, author keywords and keywords plus)

• n = 123 + 139

Define inclusion criteria:

Publication year: January 1900-December 2023 (n=241) Type of document: Article (n=190)

Total: 190 documents

Collect data in RIS format

Post data-collection

Pre-processing – R-Studio

Upload both databases and convert to bibliometrix format.

Eliminate duplicated articles: n=115

Convert data to excel and organize it in categories

Analysis with R-Studio and Vos Viwer:

- Data performance (production, authors, keywords, sources, affiliations)
- SNA (relationships between keywords)

Figure 1 - Data acquisition and pre-processing for bibliometric analysis

4. RESULTS OF BIBLIOMETRIC ANALYSIS

4.1 Global evolution

Considering RQ1, we assess the global evolution of the study on BEx and BEq. Figure 2 shows the scientific production over time from 2007 (one article) to 2023 (thirteen articles), which shows the number of published works in the fields of BEx and BEq has been growing irregularly and it is still low. There was a boost in the output generated from 2014 to 2017 due to relevant works in the conceptualization of both terms BEx and BEq, developed by Hamzah, Syed Alwi et al. (2014), Hepola, Karjaluoto et al. (2017), and Khan and Rahman (2015). In 2018 and 2019 the growing trend inverted, and productivity decreased and stalled, but in 2020 the production recovered and almost doubled in 2021. After a careful analysis of the scientific production in this period, it was verified that Chinese institutions were one of the most important contributors. One possible justification for the increase in scientific output between 2019 and 2021 is the substantial investment in higher education made in China and the consequent growth in academic research and its outcomes (Mellor 2022). However, in the period 2022-2023, the academic productivity diminished significantly. Also, after searching in WoS and Scopus, we verified that from January to June 2024 only five articles on these subjects were written. This evolution may be related with trends in marketing research. Some topics burst for a short period, being replaced by others and so on. Hot topics of the past two years include Artificial Intelligence and User-Generated Content. It seems that higher efforts must be undertaken to study the correlation between both fields more intensively and understand new variables under diverse circumstances that mould the brandconsumer relationship.

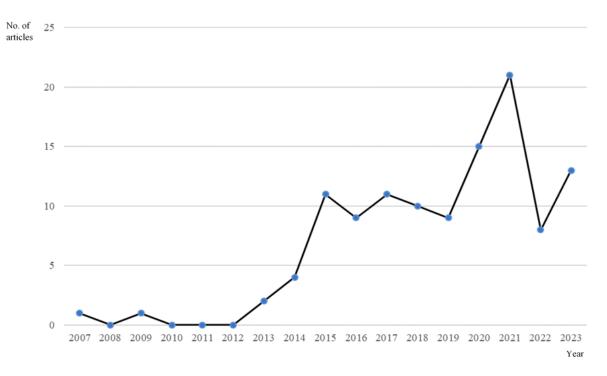


Figure 2 - Scientific production over time

Regarding the key authors in the area, we highlight, on the one hand, Mokhtar, the author that wrote more papers among all the authors from the database, with three publications. He has published along other relevant authors like Farhat and Salleh. On the other hand, the most cited authors were Boo, Busser et al. (2009), with 472 citations in total and 31 citations per year on average (from 2009-2023), who presented a reference model of CBBE; Iglesias et al. (2019), with 254 citations and 50.8 citations per year in average (from 2019-2021), whose article conceptualizes the relationship between sensory BEx and BEq.; and Dolbec and Chebat (2013), with 136 total citations and 13.6 citations per year, whose work explores the relationships between brand image, BEx, brand attitude, brand attachment and BEq using in-store intercept. Moreover, the most cited documents correspond, as expected, to high-ranked journals (Quartile 1), with the Journal of Business Research standing out in this categorization. The countries that most produce are China (22), the USA (21), Malaysia (15), India (14), Pakistan (9), Indonesia (7), Portugal (7), Canada (6) Australia (5), and Italy (5). We observe that Asia is now the strongest geographic cluster in terms of scientific production on the relationship between BEx and BEq, as corroborated by data from

the previous section. The most cited documents are produced in the USA (614 citations), China (508 citations), and France (341 citations).

4.2 Social network analysis

To analyse the main perspectives on the relationship between BEx and BEq, we developed a keywords co-occurrence network, which gives a conceptual structure that delivers the most relevant concepts and themes based on the keywords associated with the articles (Callon, Courtial et al. 1983, Chen, Chen et al. 2016). In this case, the keywords are represented by nodes connected by links, whose closer groups reflect clusters (Chen, Chen et al. 2016) determined automatically by VOSviewer. The clusters may be reformulated *a posteriori* by the authors if needed.

This mapping methodology offers a great opportunity to understand the scientific development of the subjects studied, as the clusters represent meaningful structures in science (van Raan, 2005). A deeper analysis of these structures, permitted by the systematic review, allows perceiving how and why the interactions happen.

4.3 Keywords co-occurrence network

In the keywords co-occurrence network, the terms (author keywords and keywords plus) are clustered based on the degree of association across literature to detect the key themes studied in the field (Callon, Courtial et al. 1983).

When applying this technique with "all keywords", full counting method, and a minimum number of occurrences of four, a density visualization network was generated with 32 keywords. Density visualization was the visualization tool selected because it allows, from the viewer's perspective, to understand the impact and weight of a particular keyword. Therefore, emphasis is given to the essential words to describe the map in a general way and the main concepts in a specific way. In this map, the colours indicate the density of the items (keywords) visualized in the network. The visual representation of density ranges from dark blue to yellow (software defined colors). The greater the links between a given item and its neighboring items, the closer its color is to yellow. Three clusters were determined based on the similarity of topics (see Figure 3): 1) Brand experience; 2) Brand equity; 3) Loyalty.

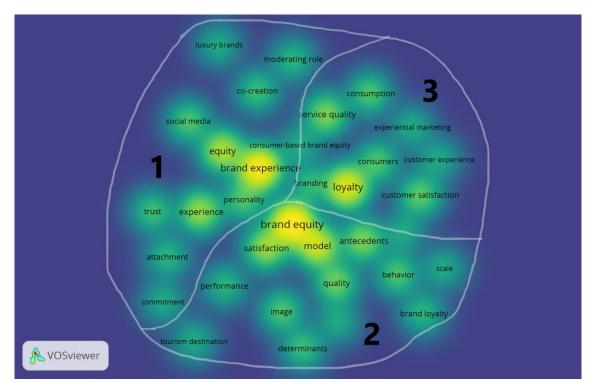


Figure 3 - Density visualization network

Table I presents the clusters and their respective keywords. The central nodes of the clusters reflect the focal concepts of the network and name the respective clusters, which are brand equity (30 occurrences), brand experience (26 occurrences), and loyalty (20 occurrences). It should be noted these terms are connected, share common variables, and explain together consumer-brand relationship to some extent. The link strength (attribute of each link, expressed by a positive numerical value, representing the frequency of co-occurrence of two keywords in the same document) between BEx and BEq is the strongest of the network (equals 13), followed by the link between BEq and loyalty (equals 9), and between BEx and loyalty (equals 7). Another interesting result concerns the difference between loyalty and brand loyalty, supporting that most current works focus on an empirical approach to consumer-brand relationships instead of developing theory.

Cluster 1

The first cluster – brand experience – is more related to the consumer's perception and response towards a purchase experience (sensations, feelings, cognitions, and behavioral responses), from marketing to after-sales service. Once it is a subjective assessment, it may be influenced by

personality traits, since consumers tend to project their own-self onto brands (Brakus, Schmitt et al. 2009). Brand experience impacts factors like trust, commitment, and attachment (Khan & Rahman 2015, Yu & Yuan, 2019). Social media (Beig & Khan 2018, Koay, Ong et al., 2020) and value co-creation strategies (Shrivastava 2016) have been important in maximizing consumer experiences.

Cluster 2

Regarding the second cluster, we observe that (perceived) quality and loyalty are two of the four main dimensions of brand equity proposed by Aaker (1996). Nonetheless, brand loyalty is several times associated with brand equity, either as an antecedent (Khan, Rahman et al. 2016, Altaf, Iqbal et al. 2017) or as a consequent (Boo, Busser et al. 2009, Jiang, Luk et al. 2018). Some antecedents of the main concept - brand equity - like satisfaction and brand image, are included in the cluster. In fact, it has been shown that brand equity depends largely on the degree of customer satisfaction (Torres & Tribó, 2011, Iglesias, Markovic et al. 2019), and on brand image, in particular in the destination sector (Boo, Busser et al. 2009). Additionally, some words relate to equation modeling (model, scale, determinants, antecedents), which reflects the various quantitative studies on brand equity that applied the same method, namely partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) derived from survey data.

Cluster 3

Finally, the last cluster is dominated by (brand) loyalty, which may be perceived as a (purchase) preference with respect to a determined brand over another (Tucker 1964). This construct is understood in some scientific literature as an antecedent of brand equity (Dwivedi, Johnson et al. 2015, Veloutsou & Guzman 2017), enhanced by factors like perceived quality (Altaf, Iqbal et al. 2017). Moreover, we observe some terms that relate to brand experience, like customer experience, experiential marketing, and customer satisfaction. According to relevant marketing research, this variable positively influences brand loyalty (Boo, Busser et al. 2009, Iglesias, Singh et al. 2011, Ong, Lee et al. 2018).

Table 1 – Clusters of keywords co-occurrence and its respective keywords

Cluster 1 – BEx	Cluster 2 – BEq	Cluster 3 – Brand Loyalty
brand experience	brand equity	loyalty
experience	satisfaction	branding
trust	performance	consumption
attachment	quality	consumers
commitment	image	customer satisfaction
consumer-based brand equity	tourism destination	customer experience
personality	behavior	experiential marketing
equity	brand loyalty	service quality
social media	model	
co-creation	scale	
moderating role	determinants	
luxury brands	antecedents	

5. RESULTS OF SYSTEMATIC REVIEW

A thorough revision of the articles with a higher level of citations (with more than or equal to fifteen citations) was undertaken, contributing to a summary of the main topics, constructs in the conceptualization of BEx and BEq, contexts of study and relevant outcomes. The selection of only 25 papers based on its academic impact and engagement ensures the quality of the research. Table II presents the top-10 articles in descending order of number of citations, the respective title, cumulative number of citations, average number of citations per year, and the affiliation of the first author. The article of Boo, Busser et al. (2009) is the most cited article, whose approach falls on the construction and debate of a destination brand model utilizing CBBE applied to Las Vegas and Atlantic City. It is also one of the documents with a higher rate of yearly citations. Additionally, the articles from Iglesias, Markovic et al. (2019), Ding and Tseng (2015), and Veloutsou and Guzman (2017)have a higher number of average citations per year. In fact, older articles tend to be more cited than recent ones, given that these are publicly available over more extended periods. The article of Iglesias, Markovic et al. (2019) is an example of a recent publication with great academic engagement, boosting the interest of the scientific community. Another interesting result is that although there has been an increase in scientific production from Asian countries (namely China), European authors, for example, from Spain (Iglesias, Markovic et al. 2019), and France (Zarantonello & Schmitt, 2013) are more cited.

Table 2 – Top cited articles

Authors	Title	Total no. of citations	No of citations per year	Country
Boo et al. (2009)	A model of customer-based brand equity and its application to multiple destinations	472	31.5	USA
Iglesias et al. (2019)	How does sensory brand experience influence brand equity? Considering the roles of customer satisfaction, customer affective commitment, and employee empathy	254	50.8	Spain
Dolbec and Chebat (2013)	The Impact of a Flagship Vs. A Brand Store on Brand Attitude, Brand Attachment and Brand Equity	193	17.55	Canada
Zollo (2020)	Unpacking the relationship between social media marketing and brand equity: the mediating role of consumers' benefits and experience	173	18.67	Italy
Ding and Tseng (2015)	On the relationships among brand experience, hedonic emotions, and brand equity	165	43.25	Taiwan
Veloutsou and Guzman (2017)	The evolution of brand management thinking over the last 25 years as recorded in the journal of product and brand management	162	23.14	Scotland
Zarantonello and Schmitt (2013)	The impact of event marketing on brand equity the mediating roles of brand experience and brand attitude	155	14.1	France
Hepola et al. (2017)	The effect of sensory brand experience and involvement on brand equity directly and indirectly through consumer brand engagement	125	17.86	Finland
Lin (2015)	Innovative brand experience's influence on brand equity and brand satisfaction	123	13.67	Taiwan
Moreira et al. (2017)	Influence of sensory stimuli on brand experience, brand equity and purchase intention	106	15.14	Portugal
Koay et al. (2021)	Perceived social media marketing activities and consumer-based brand equity testing a moderated mediation model	96	24	Malaysia
Chen et al (2019)	How Airline Service Quality Determines the Quantity of Repurchase Intention - Mediate and Moderate Effects of Brand Quality and Perceived Value	73	14.6	China
Yu and Yuan (2019)	How consumers' brand experience in social media can improve brand perception and customer equity	68	13.6	China
Jiang et al. (2018)	The role of pre-consumption experience in perceived value of retailer brands: consumers' experience from emerging markets	65	10.83	Canada
Pina and Dias (2021)	The Influence of Brand Experiences on Consumer-Based Brand Equity	64	16	Portugal
Hamzah et al. (2014)	Designing corporate brand experience in an online context: a qualitative insight	63	6.3	Malaysia
Lee et al. (2018)	A Structural Model for Unity of Experience: Connecting User Experience, Customer Experience, and Brand Experience	62	10.33	South Korea
Javornik et al (2021)	Strategic Approaches to Augmented Reality Deployment by Luxury Brands	57	14.25	United Kingdom
Verma (2021)	The Effect of Brand Engagement and Brand Love Upon Overall Brand Equity and Purchase Intention: a Moderated –Mediated Model	56	14	India

Baek et al. (2020)	Understanding the virtual tours of retail stores: how can store brand experience promote visit intentions?	52	6.67	China
Rezaei et al. (2017)	Determinants of Experienced Tourists' Satisfaction And Actual Spending Behavior: a Pls Path Modelling Approach	43	6.14	Germany
Altaf (2017)	Managing consumer-based brand equity through brand experience in islamic banking	42	6	Malaysia
Beig and Khan (2018)	Impact of social media marketing on brand experience: a study of select apparel brands on facebook	42	7	India
Rezaei and Valaei (2017)	Branding in a multichannel retail environment online stores vs app stores and the effect of product type	38	5.43	Germany
Khan et al. (2016)	The concept of online corporate brand experience: an empirical assessment	37	4.63	India

5.1 Antecedents and outcomes of brand experience and brand equity

To understand how the relationship between BEx and BEq has been modelled, we conglomerate the main definitions of both constructs and their corresponding antecedents and outcomes approached in the current literature. In addressing Research Question 2 (RQ2) of this study, which aims to identify the factors influencing and consequences of this relationship, it should be noted that not all articles provide a linear answer to the subject. Table III introduces the constructs that model BEx and BEq from the ten most frequently cited articles.

Table 3 – Antecedents and outcomes of brand experience and brand equity

Construct	bra	nd experience	brand equity		
Authors	Antecedents	Outcomes	Antecedents	Outcomes	
Boo et al. (2009)	Destination brand awareness	Destination brand value	Destination BEx; Destination brand image	Destination brand loyalty	
Iglesias et al. (2019)			Customer satisfaction; Sensory BEx;		
Dolbec and Chebat (2013)	Store Image	BEq; Brand Attitude; Brand Attachment; Brand loyalty; Word-of-mouth (WOM)	Store image; BEx		
Zollo et al. (2020)		Sub-dimensions OF Consumer- based brand equity (CBBE) - brand loyalty, brand awareness, and perceived quality.	SMM (Social Media Marketing) through the mediation of cognitive, personal integrative, and social integrative benefits.		
Ding and Tseng (2015)		Brand loyalty; Brand Awareness/Association, Perceived Quality	BEx; Traditional functional marketing		
Veloutsou and Guzman (2017)	Technology		Awareness; Associations; Perceived quality; Loyalty		
Zarantonello and Schmitt (2013)		Brand Attitude; BEq	Brand attitude; BEx		
Hepola et al. (2017)			Personal involvement; Sensory BEx; Consumer brand engagement		
Lin (2015)		BEq (through Sensory Innovative BEx); Brand Satisfaction (through Behavior Innovative BEx)	(Sensory and behavior) innovative BEx		
Moreira et al. (2017)	Sensory Stimuli	BEq	Sensory stimuli	Purchase intention	
Koay et al. (2021)	Perceived social media marketing activities	СВВЕ			

Chen et al (2019)		The relationship between brand awareness and perceived value		Repurchase intention; Brand loyalty
Yu and Yuan (2019)	Brand product attributes	Brand attachment, Brand trust		
Jiang et al. (2018)		Brand preference; Perceived brand value; BEq	BEx; Brand attitude; print Ads; WOM; Service/product contact	Brand loyalty
Pina and Dias (2021)	multisensory marketing strategy	CBBE; Brand loyalty; Brand image; Perceived quality	Sensory and affective experiences	
Hamzah (2014)	Corporate visual identity; Functionality; Emotional experience; Lifestyle; Corporate/self-identity			
Lee et al. (2018)	,		User experience; Consumer experience	
Javornik et al (2021)	Ephemeral elevation; Auratic amplification		BEx; Customer journey	
Verma (2021)			Brand love	Purchase Intention
Baek et al. (2020)		Visit intention; BEq		
Rezaei et al. (2017)	Customer perceived relationship marketing	Tourist satisfaction; Actual spending behavior		
Altaf (2017)		Brand Image; Brand awareness	Brand loyalty	
Beig and Khan (2018)	Content sharing and interaction			
Rezaei and Valaei (2017)	Online BEq			BEx; Brand attitude; Brand attachment
Khan et al. (2016)		Brand satisfaction; Brand love		

From the constructs' review, it is understood that twenty articles approach BEx. Most works (85%) acknowledge this construct through the definition of Brakus, Schmitt et al. (2009): BEx is understood as "subjective and internal consumer responses (sensations, feelings and cognitions), as well as behavioural responses evoked by stimuli related to the brand that are part of a brand's design and identity, packaging, communications and environments". It is defined from the consumers' perspective on its relationship with the brand (Veloutsou & Guzman, 2017). According to our database, some antecedents of BEx are: store image (Dolbec & Chebat, 2013), sensory stimuli (Moreira, Fortes et al. 2017), online BEq (Rezaei and Valaei 2017), brand product attributes (Yu & Yuan, 2019), sponsorship (Akaoui 2007), content sharing and interaction (Beig & Khan, 2018), and technology (Veloutsou & Guzman, 2017). The most common outcomes are: BEq (Dolbec & Chebat 2013, Zarantonello & Schmitt 2013, Moreira, Fortes et al. 2017, Jiang, Luk et al. 2018), CBBE (Koay, Ong et al. 2020, Zollo, Filieri et al. 2020, Pina & Dias, 2021), brand attitude (Dolbec & Chebat 2013, Zarantonello & Schmitt, 2013), brand attachment (Dolbec & Chebat 2013, Yu & Yuan, 2019), brand loyalty, perceived quality (Ding Cherng & Tseng Timmy 2015, Pina & Dias, 2021), brand satisfaction (Lin 2015), brand trust (Yu & Yuan, 2019), and customer perceived value (Jiang, Luk et al. 2018)

On the other hand, BEq is studied in eighteen articles, whose majority applied the definition from Farquhar (1989) and Aaker (1991) - the added value of a product to a company or the customers provided by a set of assets and liabilities linked to a brand (such as name and symbol). In these works, BEx is consensually highlighted as an antecedent of BEq. Besides BEx, other variables studied also seem to influence BEq, such as customer satisfaction, customer affective commitment, sensory BEx, personal involvement (Hepola, Karjaluoto et al. 2017, Iglesias, Markovic et al. 2019), brand engagement, sensory stimuli (Moreira, Fortes et al. 2017), traditional functional marketing (Ding Cherng & Tseng Timmy, 2015), brand attitude (Zarantonello & Schmitt 2013, Jiang, Luk et al. 2018), store image (Dolbec & Chebat, 2013), brand recognition, perceived quality, brand loyalty (Altaf, Iqbal et al. 2017, Veloutsou & Guzman, 2017), print ads, word of mouth, service contact, and product contact (Jiang, Luk et al. 2018). Some authors have identified the following constructs as consequences of BEq: brand loyalty (Boo, Busser et al. 2009, Jiang, Luk et al. 2018), andpurchase intention (Moreira, Fortes et al. 2017, Chen 2021, Verma 2021). Against previous findings, Rezaei and Valaei (2017) found that BEq influences positively BEx.

Results support the positive relationship between BEx and BEq, showing BEx as an antecedent of BEq (Boo, Busser et al. 2009, Zarantonello & Schmitt 2013, Ding Cherng & Tseng Timmy 2015, Lin 2015, Moreira, Fortes et al. 2017, Jiang, Luk et al. 2018). This is reinforced by the influence of variables like sensorial experiences that increase affective attachment or commitment that end up reflecting on BEq. Finally, it is noteworthy the recent research conducted by several authors about online branding (Rezaei & Valaei 2017, Yu & Yuan 2019, Zollo, Filieri et al. 2020), whose results show its positive influence on BEx and how social media activities can promote CBBE. Baghi, Gabrielli et al. (2016) perceives a positive effect of counterfeiting on CBBE against past literature's findings. Moreover, it is possible to note that store image and sensory stimuli are common antecedents of the two constructs. Figure 4 presents a framework of the main antecedents and outcomes of brand experience and brand equity to sum up these results.

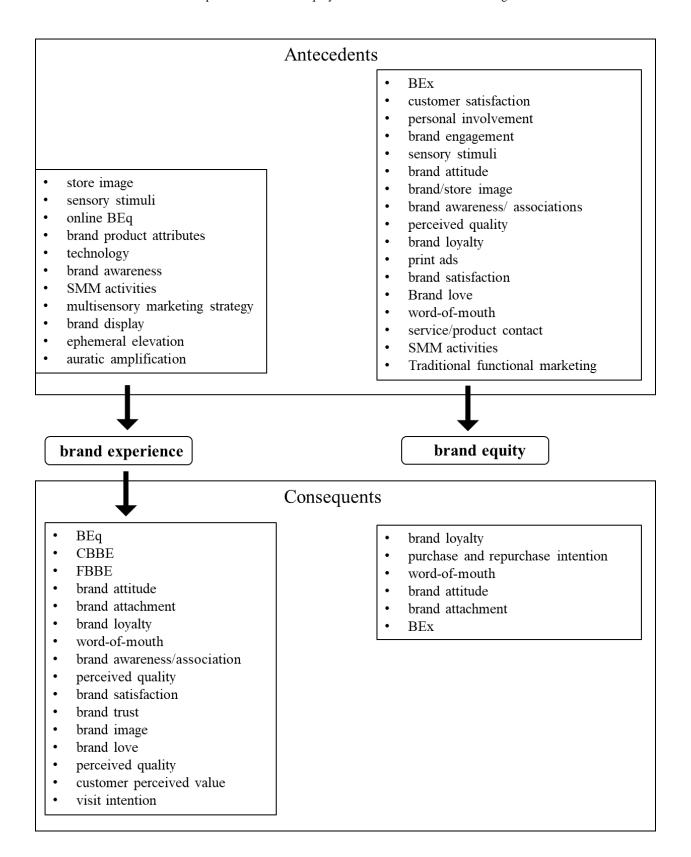


Figure 4 – Framework of the main antecedents and outcomes of brand experience and brand equity

5.2 Context of studies

The systematic review also allowed to perceive the studies' contexts from the most relevant documents, contributing to answer Research Question 3 (RQ3), by identifying brand's categories, industries, and samples' geographical origin (find information from the top-10 most cited articles in Table IV). The largest part of these studies occurred in B2C industries, including sectors like apparel (32%), food and beverage (24%), technology (24%), tourism (20%), banking (16%), and cosmetics (8%) The research commonly features global brands like Apple (Rezaei & Valaei 2017, Iglesias, Markovic et al. 2019, Yu & Yuan 2019, Koay, Ong et al. 2020), referenced in five articles, Nike, featured in four articles (Dolbec & Chebat 2013, Beig & Khan 2018, Baek, Choo et al. 2020, Koay, Ong et al. 2020), and Starbucks (Ding Cherng & Tseng Timmy 2015, Iglesias, Markovic et al. 2019), referenced in two articles. The luxury sector is commonly analysed (16%), through brands like Louis Vuitton, Chanel (Zollo, Filieri et al. 2020), and luxury air travel services (Boo, Busser et al. 2009).

Additionally, the samples were obtained from emergent Asian markets (57%), Europe (26%), and North America (17%). Figure 2 supports these findings, highlighting China and India's growth in academic production. The results demonstrate a research gap in certain brand categories, such as B2B (no brand positioned in this category is analysed), human brands, and service brands (even though analysed, represents 30% of the studies against 70% that cover product brands), which require further analysis. The banking sector and touristic services are the major segments assessed in the literature concerning services.

Table 4 – Contexts of empirical studies developed in the literature

Study	Context/Country	Brand Referred	Variables of Interest
Boo et al. (2009)	USA	Destination Brands: Las Vegas; Atlantic City	Destination BEx; Destination brand loyalty; Destination brand value
Iglesias et al. (2019)	Spain	Santander Bank, Llyod Bank, Macy's, Dell, Starbucks, Apple	BEq; Customer satisfaction; Sensory BEx; Costumer affective commitment; Employee empathy
Dolbec and Chebat (2013)	Canada	ESPN Zone, American Girl Place, Niketown	BEx; BEq; Store image; Brand attitude; Brand attachment; Brand loyalty; Word-of-mouth
Zollo et al. (2020)	USA	Louis Vuitton, Dior, Hermès, and Chanel.	Social media marketing (SMM) activities; CBBE; BEx; Brand Loyalty; Brand awareness; Perceived quality.
Ding and Tseng (2015)	Taiwan	Starbucks Coffe, Burguer King, Cold Stone Creamery, McDonald's, Disney, Singapore Airlines.	BEq, Hedonic emotions; BEx, Brand awareness; Brand association; Perceived quality; Brand loyalty
Zarantonello and Schmitt (2013)	France	Diesel, Vodafone, Illy.	Event marketing; BEx; Brand attitude; BEq
Hepola et al. (2017)	Finland	Finnish tableware brand	Consumer brand engagement; Cognitive processing; Affection; Activation; BEq; Personal Involvement; Sensory BEx
Lin (2015)	Taiwan	Cathay Pacific, Singapore Airlines, EVA Airways, China Airlines, Korean AIR, AIR Asia.	BEx, BEq; Satisfaction.
Moreira et al. (2017)	Portugal	A famous pizzeria in the Centre Region of Portugal	Sensory marketing and sensory stimuli, BEx, BEq, Purchase intentions
Koay et al. (2021)	Malaysia	Nike, Adidas, Apple, Zara, Sephora	Perceived social media marketing activities; CBBE; BEx; Cocreation.
Chen et al (2019)	China	Chinese airline company services	Service quality; Brand awareness; Perceived Value; Repurchase intention; Brand Associations; Memorable BEx; Brand popularity; Brand attractiveness
Yu and Yuan (2019)	China	Samsung, Apple, and HTC smartphone brands.	Brand product attributes; BEx; Brand attachment; Brand trust; Customer equity; Customer lifetime value
Jiang et al. (2018)	China	Cosmetics retail outlets in Hong Kong: Central, Causeway Bay, Mong Kok, TST, and Shatin.	Pre-consumption experience; Consumption experience; Customer perceived value; Retail service; brand loyalty

Pina and Dias (2021)	Portugal	Nespresso	BEx; CBBE; Brand loyalty, Perceived quality; Brand awareness; Brand image; Ssensory and affective experiences
Hamzah et al. (2014)	Malaysia	Online Malaysian banking services	Corporate BEx; Corporate visual identity, Functionality; Emotional experience; Lifestyle; Corporate/self-identity.
Lee et al. (2018)	South Korea	Smartphones from Samsung, LG, and Apple	User experience; Customer experience; BEx; BEq; Usability, Affect; User value;
		Various luxury brands (cars, technology, beauty, and fashion sectors).	BEx; BEq; Customer journey; Ephemeral elevation; Auratic amplification; Bespoke personalization; Effortless continuation
Verma (2021)	India	Various brands of mobiles	Brand love, BEx, overall BEq and purchase intention
Baek et al. (2020)	USA	NikeTown and Gucci	Bex; Visit intention; BEq
Rezaei et al. (2017)	Iran	Hotels' check-out points in Tehran	Service quality; CPRM; Visitor satisfaction; Actual spending behavior; BEx,
Altaf (2017)	Malaysia	Islamic banks	Brand Experience; Perceived quality; Brand Awareness; Brand Loyalty; Brand Image.
Beig and Khan (2018)	India	Puma, Adidas, Spykar, Levis, Nike, Wrangler, John Players, Peter England, US Polo and United Colors of Benetton	Content sharing; Interaction; Sensory; affective, behavioral and intellectual experiences
Rezaei and Valaei (2017)	Germany	Apple, Google play.	Online BEq; BEx; Brand attitude; Brand attachment
Khan et al. (2016)	India	Online Banks	Online Corporate BEx; Brand loyalty; Brand Satisfaction

5.3 Methodological approach

To address Research Question 4 (RQ4), we examined the methodological approaches employed in the selected articles, as outlined in Table V. Notably, a significant majority of the reviewed articles (over 84%) relied on a quantitative approach. However, it is worth highlighting four exceptional studies that deviated from this trend. Veloutsou and Guzman (2017) conducted a conceptual analysis, offering a valuable alternative perspective. Hamzah, Syed Alwi et al. (2014) and Javornik, Duffy et al. (2021) utilized a qualitative methodology, applying the focus-group technique and interviews respectively. Ding Cherng and Tseng Timmy (2015) employed a mixed empirical research design, combining qualitative and quantitative methods. Despite the dominance of empirical analysis, these exceptional studies underscore the importance of embracing varied methodological approaches to enhance the comprehensiveness and richness of marketing research. While empirical and quantitative analysis has traditionally dominated the field, relying solely on this approach can lead to a potential gap in conceptual and qualitative understanding. Future studies should embrace conceptual and qualitative research in this area. Moreover, we acknowledge the need to develop a combined methodology that integrates qualitative and quantitative methodologies. Specifically, it is important to engage in discussions and compare results from previous studies across different contexts, employ empirical research methods such as netnography, conduct experimental studies, or resort to qualitative analysis techniques such as interviews to uncover trends, research questions, and gaps.

5.4 Future research guidelines

Finally, Research Question 5 (RQ5) is addressed by delineating gaps in the existing literature, proposing directions for future research, and highlighting their implications (refer to TableV). The identified information is based solely on the guidelines provided by the reviewed authors. According to our database, the gaps identified can be grouped into three major domains: (1) conducting studies in novel contexts; (2) applying different methodological approaches; (3) analysing new relationships that consider other variables.

(1) Conducting studies in novel contexts.

In particular, many authors suggest extending the performed analysis to other contexts, approaching different industries, products, or brands (e.g., Hamzah, Syed Alwi et al. 2014, Altaf, Iqbal et al. 2017, Hepola, Karjaluoto et al. 2017, Jiang, Luk et al. 2018, Yu & Yuan 2019, Verma

2021), other types and segments of consumers (Hamzah, Syed Alwi et al. 2014) and diverse cultures or countries (e.g., Khan, Rahman et al. 2016, Hepola, Karjaluoto et al. 2017, Yu & Yuan, 2019).

(2) Applying different methodological approaches

To generalize the results obtained, some authors suggest to develop longitudinal data studies (Dolbec & Chebat 2013, Rezaei, Mazaheri et al. 2017, Jiang, Luk et al. 2018, Yu & Yuan 2019, Verma 2021). Moreira, Fortes et al. (2017) propose qualitative studies to reinforce the empirical research so far. Additionally, Zollo, Filieri et al. (2020) and Verma (2021) recommend to explore experimental design.

(3) Analysing new relationships that consider other variables

Several authors have emphasized the need to develop new conceptual models by incorporating additional antecedents and outcomes of BEx and BEq in future research. For example, future studies could consider a CBBE model with dynamic measurement techniques (Boo, Busser et al. 2009). Finally, moderating effects could be observed at a broader extent in order to validate proposed models. This can be achieved by including control variables as moderators and investigating reverse processes between BEx and BEq, while also exploring their impact on brand loyalty and satisfaction (Rezaei & Valaei, 2017). Additionally, examining demographic variables as moderators could lead to interesting results (Pina & Dias, 2021). Furthermore, considering factors like ad type, message characteristics, and brand status can enhance our understanding of the dynamics of marketing communications and their relationship with BEq.

On the other hand, the work developed by Veloutsou and Guzman (2017) points out the importance of a continuous discussion on branding and marketing to tackle global challenges, including environmental and technological transformations. This could be reflected on variables that condense corporate social responsibility, artificial intelligence tools, metaverse, automation and gamification, for example. Lee, Lee et al. (2018) suggest that future studies approach emerging factors like "coolness" in the context of technologies.

 Table 5 - Main goals, methodologies, conclusions and directions for future research.

Study	Objective	Methodology	Findings	Future Research
Boo et al. (2009)	To develop a reliable model of consumer-based destination brands; To empirically assess the dimensions of the destination brand construct; To test the relationship among dimensions in a destination brand construct; And to validate the model construct.	Quantitative	Destination BEx is meaningful construct, driven by top-of-mind awareness. However, tourists who have a positive experience at the destination are not necessarily loyal.	An extension of the research on nature of destination branding is needed to validate the findings. Constructs in the destination BEq model could be studied in order to assess destination's operation and management.
Iglesias et al. (2019)	To investigate the effect of Brand's Sensory Experience on BEq in the banking sector, through customer satisfaction and affective commitment to the customer.	Quantitative	In the banking sector, customer satisfaction with the brand has a positive effect on customer's affective commitment to the brand, which, in turn, positively influences BEq.	To investigate and expand the diversity of service configurations in the sample to find out if the results are consistent across the service sector.
Dolbec and Chebat (2013)	To analyze the relationships between Brand Image, BEx, brand attitude, brand attachment and BEq using in-store intercept.	Quantitative	Store type moderates the relationship between store image and BEx.	It must be considered the longitudinal aspect of the experiments.
Zollo et al. (2020)	To test if consumer benefits deriving from participation in online communities and brand experience mediate the relationship between social media marketing (SMM) activities and CBBE among Millennials.	Quantitative	Cognitive, personal integrative, and social integrative benefits mediate the SMM (social media marketing) –CBBE relationship, unlike hedonic benefits. The hypothesis that BEx impacts CBBE sub-dimensions brand loyalty, brand awareness, and perceived quality was confirmed.	Other contexts could be explored, either in terms of the sample or the brands studied. Moreover, a different methodology, like experimental design, could test the same hypothesis.
Ding and Tseng (2015)	To study the effect of BEx on Brand loyalty as a mediator, integrating the experiential view of consumption and the theory of emotion assessment.	Qualitative and Quantitative	Results prove BEx influences positively Brand loyalty and indicate that the mediation route relatively to the consumer's experiential view exceeds the mediation route relatively to the evaluative theory of emotion.	To develop more empirical research on moderate mediation.

-				
Veloutsou and Guzman (2017)	The paper presents the evolution of brand management research over the past 25 years, as reported in the Journal of Product and Brand Management.	Conceptual	The concepts of brand and consumer-brand relationship have been changing mainly due to technological advances and social media engagement. Also, the globalization has influenced the brands' power of control of customer perceptions. These changes require adaptation of branding strategies.	Research on brand management is needed to track new marketing and business trends, namely due to technological, environmental and global challenges, and to promote the evolution of the field on theory and practice.
Zarantonello and Schmitt (2013)	To assess the contribution of Event Marketing to brand value.	Quantitative	Events influence, directly or indirectly, brand value, through BEx and sometimes, through brand attitude.	It should be analysed a narrower or broader perspective.
Hepola et al. (2017)	To examine the direct and indirect effects of brand's sensory experience on BEq through emotional, cognitive, and consumer brand engagement.	Quantitative	The sensorial experience of the brand and the involvement of the consumer together account for more than half of the variation in BEq. The results show emotional attachment is the major influence on consumer involvement.	To conduct the study in different contexts, such as other cultures or industries.
Lin (2015)	To describe the relationships between innovative BExs, BEq and brand satisfaction for different airlines.	Quantitative	Innovative BExs affect BEq through sensorial and behavior levels, but not so much through intellectual. The passengers of low-cost carriers relatively to the full service carriers' passengers care more about behavior innovative BEx.	To test if advertising space grows before and during major events.
Moreira et al. (2017)	To build a model that explains how sensory stimulation affects brand's purchase intention, BEx and BEq.	Quantitative	The study provides support for the conclusion that sensory stimuli influences BEx and BEq, as well as the pre-behavioral variables that are under this influence, such as purchase intentions.	To analyze qualitative data that can help to better understand the impact of sensory stimuli towards purchasing behavior.
Koay et al. (2021)	To investigate the influence of perceived social media marketing activities on CBBE, mainly predicated on the S-O-R model.	Quantitative	The authors confirmed the positive influence of perceived SMM activities on CBBE. The mediation effect of BEx was supported showing that the positive perception of the consumers towards the SMM activities is performed by the brand. The moderation effect of co-creation behavior on the relationship between perceived SMM activities and BEx was not supported.	Future studies might extend this investigation by comparing other generational age groups or countries. It would also be interesting to employ a longitudinal method and, to lessen heterogeneity, analyze only one type of brand when measuring perceived SMM activities.

Chen et al (2019)	To empirically examine a mediation- moderation model of service quality that depicts China's airline passengers' perspectives as a central mechanism through which service is related to repurchase intention by perceived value and brand awareness of airline service.	Quantitative	The current integrated viewpoint points to the potential benefits of managing brand equity in ways that build on the positive forces associated with destination brand equity, while maximizing passengers' pleasant feelings and image, that are then associated with positive consequences of repurchase intention and loyalty.	
Yu and Yuan (2019)	To investigate factors driving consumers' social media brand experience and its effect on customer equity and customer lifetime value (CLV).	Quantitative	Results showed that consumers' exposure to the utilitarian value and hedonic value of a product in social media affects BEx's. Additionally, it was demonstrated the influence of the hedonic values on BEx is higher than the utilitarian values.	Upcoming investigators might extend this research by providing longitudinal studies. This model can be replicated with other product categories and services, and different cultural backgrounds.
Jiang et al. (2018)	To investigate the combined effect of pre- consumption and consumption experience on consumer perceived value (CPV) and brand preference.	Quantitative	The study provides evidence that favorable experience with the brand's marketing communication activities during the preconsumption stage will elicit positive affective responses to enhance brand preference that contributes directly to perceived value and indirectly to brand loyalty.	Future studies can collect data from multiple retail categories, analyze the moderator effect of different types of print Ads, message characteristics and brand status. Also, critical brand touch points at the post-consumption could be investigated.
Pina and Dias (2021)	To understand how Bex impact on CBBE and to perceive gender differences in the perceptions of these constructs.	Quantitative	Sensory and affective BEx have a positive impact on CBBE. Conversely, intellectual and behavioural dimensions do not play a significant role in this relationship. Based on this knowledge, brands should apply a multisensory marketing strategy to promote a memorable BEx.	Future analysis could predict the stability of the relationship between the two proposed models and use other models to analyse the two concepts. Other types of samples and larger could reinforce the results, as well as other demographic variables, like age, could be used as moderators.
Hamzah et al. (2014)	To explore the concept of corporate BEx through the guidelines contained in the original concept of Schmitt's BEx (1999).	Qualitative	The study found five specific dimensions to represent the corporate BEx in the context of online banking: (1) corporate visual identity, (2) functionality, (3) emotional experience, (4) lifestyle and (5) corporate identity / own.	It should be considered other customers and other service industries, for example, insurance, hotels and airlines.

Lee et al. (2018)	To model the relationship among three domains of experience, user, customer, and consumer; and to analyse the attributes and development of measurement scales of each dimension.	Quantitative	Tested hypothesis demonstrated that user value and affect elements of UX impact CX. This last affects BEq as a mediator of UX.	Compare different smartphone brands regarding its UX. Apply the model to other smart devices, such as AI speakers or smart cars, and use different market contexts. Also, the model could compound emerging factors like "coolness".
Javornik et al (2021)	This study examines how the AR features support luxury brands by analysing illustrative cases of AR implementation in these brands and conducting in-depth interviews with executives and senior managers.	Qualitative	The interviews show that AR can enhance BEx and customer-journey design through four strategic approaches: ephemeral elevation; auratic amplification; bespoke personalization; and effortless continuation.	
Verma (2021)	The author explores whether brand engagement evolves into brand love and examines the combined impact of both variables on overall BEq and purchase intention.	Quantitative	The study demonstrates that brand love and brand engagement are second order constructs and key brand mix elements. The first impacts BEq, while the second does not. Brand love and overall BEq mediate relationships, in specific, the first mediates the interaction between brand engagement and BEq.	Future studies could analyze other product and service categories. Longitudinal or experimental studies are recommended to validate the results and understand the changes over time. Also, the model can be tested from an organizational perspective.
Baek et al. (2020)	The authors propose to answer these questions: 1) Can a store BEx enhance BEq by presenting virtual tours of physical stores to online consumers?; and 2) Can a store BEx eventually attract online consumers to the brick-and-mortar stores?	Quantitative	The study provides a theoretical framework to understand how the four dimensions of store BEx relate to BEq and visit intentions and suggests the possible underlying mechanism that leads to the differentiated effects of each experience dimension. Only emotional and intellectual experiences significantly boosted BEq, whereas sensory and behavioral experiences significantly impacted visit intentions.	The authors suggest that multisensory information could be incorporated in future analysis concerning BEx on virtual tours of stores. Also, the results of this study could be corroborated by other empirical tests, aiming at developing the four dimensions of BEx in the context analysed.
Rezaei et al. (2017)	This work aims at observing the impact of customer perceived relationship marketing (CPRM), service quality, and BEx on tourists satisfaction, and spending behavior in the Iranian hospitality sector.	Quantitative	This research's output presents that service quality, CPRM, BEx, and tourists satisfaction contribute to the tourists' actual spending behavior.	Future research could benefit from understanding the relationships from a longitudinal approach and apply the model to other contexts in order to generalize the results.

Altaf (2017)	The objectives of the study are to investigate the role of brand experience in generating consumer-based brand value in the Islamic banking sector.	Quantitative	The results show that the perceived quality, the brand image, the brand experience, brand loyalty and brand recognition are positively associated and have a significant influence on Bran equity.	Future studies may consider conventional and non-financial banks to support the generalization of these results.
Beig and Khan (2018)	To understand the influence of Social Media Marketing through Facebook on the four dimensions of brand experience (sensory, affective, behavioural and intellectual).	Quantitative	The results confirmed that the content sharing and interaction influence positivelly the four dimensions of brand experience.	This investigation could be extended to different regions, product categories, social media platforms, and samples. Comparative studies concerning these factors could also be applied.
Rezaei and Valaei (2017)	Examines the differences in consumer perceptions of the brand in new retail environments facilitated by technology, that is, online and application configurations.	Quantitative	The value of the online brand is positively associated with the brand experience, attitudes and attachment to the brand.	Future studies should examine whether brand equity and brand experience can impact app loyalty and brand satisfaction.
Khan et al. (2016)	The authors pretend to identify the measures of Online corporate BEx (OCBE), and to test how each of the measures impacts brand loyalty and brand satisfaction.	Quantitative	This study found a significant effect of OCBE dimensions on brand satisfaction and loyalty.	It would be interesting to look more closely at the dimensions of OCBE in another service sector. It would also be important to examine OCBE in developed countries, which have well-developed Internet-related technologies and improved online configurations.

6. AGENDA FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This section presents an agenda for future research on the analysis of the relationship between brand experience and brand equity. Drawing upon the research questions formulated for this study and the analysis conducted on the 25 articles, the following general recommendations for future research emerge with a particular emphasis on contexts and methodological approaches.

The empirical studies conducted in the literature have predominantly focused on the apparel (32%), food and beverage (24%), technology (24%), tourism (20%), banking (16%), and cosmetics (8%). However, there remains a research gap in specific brand categories, including B2B, personal brands, and service brands. Some of the areas that could be explored in future research are retailing, health and welness, education, insurance, and human brands (e.g., online influencers). Additionally, the inclusion of metaverse environments in these studies, particularly in the tourism (e.g., museums) or the gaming industry presents an intriguing avenue for investigation. Furthermore, comparative studies that examine generational, cultural, and geographical contexts would provide valuable insights into the relationship between BEx and BEq. Concerning the methodologies used to study the relationship between BEx and BEq, the use of quantitative methodology was identified as a prevailing trend in academic research. Incorporating other methodologies, such as qualitative research methods (e.g., interviews, case studies, and netnographic analysis), can provide valuable insights into the subjective experiences, motivations, and underlying meanings behind consumer behaviour and market phenomena. Also, conducting comparative studies involving different consumers (based on socio-demographic traits), or examining the same sample over different time periods (longitudinal studies) would be a valuable contribution to the current marketing literature. Lastly, new findings could be triangulated with the findings previously discovered. These alternative methodologies offer a more comprehensive understanding of complex marketing phenomena, enabling researchers to explore nuances, context-specific factors, and deeper insights that quantitative analysis alone may overlook. By embracing a mixed-methods approach, researchers can enrich their findings, enhance theoretical frameworks, and contribute to a more holistic understanding of marketing dynamics.

Finally, future research guidelines proposed by the reviewed authors align with the findings from the content analysis. Some authors suggest extending the studies performed to different samples in order to validate and strengthen the robustness of the models, either using different types of consumers, different brands, or different periods of time (*ceteris paribus*). This approach would enhance the generalizability of the outputs and provide a more comprehensive understanding of the relationship here analysed. With the same purpose, other methodological approaches are recommended, namely qualitative studies and experimental designs. Nonetheless, a novel aspect introduced by the review of the guidelines proposed in the literature is the modelling of the relationship between BEx and BEq. Further research should focus on developing new conceptual models by incorporating additional antecedents and outcomes of BEx and BEq. This includes exploring dynamic measurement techniques, category-specific dynamics, and reverse processes between BEx and BEq. Additionally, studying moderating variables such as demographic data and factors related to marketing communications, as well as perform moderating effects through control variables, can enhance our understanding on the relationship between BEx and BEq.

7. CONCLUSIONS, THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS, AND LIMITATIONS

Despite the emergent interest in the academic and managerial literature about consumer-brand relationships, there have been few previous attempts to determine trends and gaps in the current literature in various fields and to systematize respective models, findings, and issues discussed. This paper fulfils the existing lacuna, by developing an extensive review on the relationship between brand equity (BEq) and brand experience (BEx) using bibliometric and systematic analysis techniques. This review unfolds the evolving literature on the topic according to several themes and trends and reveals its state-of-the-art since its inception to date.

Based on a sample of 115 scientific documents from the literature on the topics of BEx and BEq, a conceptual structure of the fields was developed, which pinpointed the most prominent research perspectives, and offered a future research agenda. Moreover, we examined the conceptual models that cover the relationship between both constructs. A summary respecting the state-of-the-art of the relationship between BEx and BEq is presented in Figure 5.

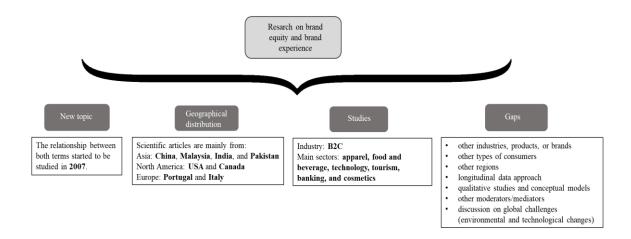


Figure 5 – State-of-the-art of the relationship between BEx and BEq

Findings from the bibliometric analysis provide insight into RQ1, indicating that there has been a growing body of academic research on both BEx and BEq since 2007. Most of this research has been conducted in China, the USA, Malaysia, and India. Through SNA, three distinct keywords clusters emerged, including BEq, BEx, and brand loyalty.

The review of the content of the most cited articles enabled the understanding of the relationship between BEx and BEq across the literature (RQ2), showing a consensual correlation between these variables, being the first an antecedent of the last. Other important constructs incorporated in the modelling of BEx and BEq are brand attitude, brand attachment, CBBE, brand loyalty, and brand satisfaction (Table I).

Concerning the analysis of the samples used in the empirical studies, which meets RQ3 goals, we observe the majority respects to emergent markets in Asia and developed markets in Europe and focuses on large American corporations (e.g., Apple, Nike, and Strabucks), which is, somewhat, limitative. Additionally, these articles explore mainly the apparel (32%), food and beverage (24%), technology (24%), tourism (20%), banking (16%), and cosmetics (8%) sectors. Thus, different markets could be explored using longitudinal approaches, or enabling the comparison between segments, generations or geographic regions. Also, other types of brands could be examined in the future, namely focusing on services, B2B sectors, metaverse strategies, or human brands (specially on online environments like social media networks).

In order to answer RQ4, methodologies implemented in the analysed literature were observed. The quantitative approach is extensively applied to cover BEx and BEq, reflecting a gap in the use of conceptual, qualitative, and mixed methodology approaches. Incorporating qualitative research methods like interviews, case studies, or netnographic analysis can provide valuable insights into the subjective experiences, motivations, and underlying meanings behind consumer behaviour and market phenomena. Comparative and longitudinal studies would also be valuable contributions to the current marketing literature.

Future research guidelines provided by the literature (RQ5) enhance some of the research gaps already debated, reflecting the need to diversify the contexts studied regarding several aspects. For example, consumption patterns between different generations, cultures, less developed markets, and specific segments, as well as towards different brand categories should be investigated. Furthermore, it was identified an opportunity to perform longitudinal studies that could enable the evaluation of changes in the consumer-brand relationship over time. The quantitative approach, the most common, could be enriched with qualitative or theoretical studies, nourishing new conceptual models, constructs, and relationships. Additionally, exploring other antecedents and outcomes of BEx and BEq could contribute positively to marketing research. Future studies could observe moderating effects and variables, by including control variables as moderators. To consider a dynamic CBBE model and investigate reverse processes between BEx and BEq are other recommendations provided by the literature. Also, BEx-BEq modelling could include more factors that express new marketing communication strategies, corporate social responsibility, the ecological footprint, and online transformations.

Finally, we understand this study is not free from limitations: 1) The use of specific keywords in our search is restraining, potentially excluding relevant papers for our analysis that incorporate different terms; 2) The correlation of number of citations and the quality of an investigation should not be considered linear, because of issues such as self-citations and the newness of the article; 3) The novelty of the scientific approach of the relationship between BEq and BEx results in a small final database and 6) Finally, the main purpose of this study was to contribute to academia, so implications for management were not developed.

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The authors report there are no competing interests to declare.

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