

Brand Equity Components of Tourist Destination: the Case of CALABARZON Region

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Abstract – This study focuses on the components of brand equity of a tourist destination more specifically in the CALABARZON Region. As a result, brand value is seen as a crucial notion in business, as a strong brand may give marketers with advantages. Marketers look at the value of a brand from a range of perspectives. Customer-centered techniques are making the specific customer's point of view one of the most critical elements for product and service improvement. The researcher made use of a descriptive survey method to assess the brand equity components of the tourist destination among the 335-local tourist in the region. The tourism product in the CALABARZON area is regarded as safe and dependable. The tourism attractions and destinations in the region may be readily remembered. The region's tourism attractions stand out as being more unique than those in other areas. Also, as stated by the respondents, Attractions in the CALABARZON are favored while choosing a destination. It was recommended to Assessment on High quality tourism products and services may be included in the Tourism Destination Accreditation Matrix. The study is limited on the settings and perspective of the tourist destination in CALABARZON, thus future studies may be conducted on another region.

Keywords – Brand quality, Brand awareness, Brand Image and, Brand Loyalty, Tourist Destination

INTRODUCTION

The brand equity refers to "the differential impact of brand awareness on consumer response to a brand's marketing. "in using various marketing communication tools and activities may increase the products' and services' asset value of the corporate brands; hence, achieve the aiming goals as to dominate over the market rivalry.

It contributes significantly to the creation of additional value for the destination by obtaining a competitive advantage. To promote a destination, it must be relevant to the consumer, and it must also attract and retain customers. Because, unlike most other goods and services, a vacation is not an urgent or emergency purchase, and it is a once-a-year or less purchase, particularly when it comes to an international trip. As a result, policymakers must understand what visitors expect from the destination while making strategic marketing choices in order to please them and attract new tourists [1].

As a result, brand value is viewed as a critical concept in business since a good brand can provide advantages to marketers. Marketers examine brand value from a variety of angles. Customer-centered approaches is getting the precise consumer's point of

view turn as one of the important element for improvement of products and services. In that case, brand equity is interrelated to the perception of the consumers. In the field of customer-based brand equity, it is essential to understand it very well. Customers dictates the law of demand and supply as it can happened in many tourism destination branding. It must include a more integrative conceptualization of brand equity in order to create a conceptual framework for future research.

The consumer brand equity described the different impacts of brand awareness on the context of consumer responses to brand marketing activities (consumer perception, preferences, and behavior). Comparing the branded products and service to non-branded of the same level is about brand equity which described as the difference in customer choices. As observed, the non-branded products guarantees brand equity which will create higher sales and impressive margins in the market place. It is an aggregate that offers greater, longer-lasting, and differentiated advantages over rivals. Since a product or service has a branded name, it is expected that it will gain a favorable marketing effect (e.g., gained high customer loyalty, high market share, or remarkable revenue) [2]. It may obtain consistent profit growth, and loyalty to which

stand as the influencing factors of brand equity. Thus, it is closely relevant to the tourism destination brand equity, as viewed by the researchers that this dimensions of destination brand equity has a casual relationships to profit and growth [3].

The quality of products' brands as described superior with expressive t performance in the tourism market, in that context the perceived quality is the consumer's assessment of a product's overall superiority standing. On the other hand, unlike the objective quality, perceived quality is practically subjective among the consumers. It is when customers think about a products and services provides their satisfaction or disappointment. In this study, the customer perceived quality is the overall quality of a destination's tourism goods and services as a tourism destination [2].

There is a connection between brand recognition and purchasing intent [4]. As a result of the high brand recognition, there are more chances of brand preferences and purchasing intent. Brand awareness is described as the "power of the brand node in consumers' minds." Nonetheless, brand recognition "represents the consumer's ability to identify or recall a brand's name with or without external assistance," according to the authors [5]. When customers' perceptions of product and service price fairness improve, brand value improves. Thus, the tourism destination branding has an impact to the increase of public awareness of a destination. Commercialize may enable to compete with other destinations in the market, and assist in the formation of tourism experiences. Meanwhile, the brand value will place potential tourism destination as preferred destination by the tourists, the product may improve as to become the weighing factor for gaining merits and attractions of choice among visitors.

The degree to which CALABARZON was differentiated from other cities is also considered as brand awareness; the pros and cons of using the tourism products and services has the degree of knowledge about CALABARZON as a tourism destination. Consumers' initiatives to remember a specific brand product is a brand familiarity as well, which is a combination of whether a specific brand is retained in their mind. The ability to recall one specific brand increased brand recognition the stronger associations and repeated positive exposure creates brand awareness. This study contributes to the growing body of knowledge investigating on the Brand quality,

awareness, Image and Loyalty as perceived by the tourist towards the tourism in CALABARZON Region.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study aims to assess the Brand Equity Components of Tourist Destination in the Region. More specifically, the study aims to assess the Brand equity in terms of Brand quality, awareness, Image and, Loyalty. As a result, the researcher proposed an action plan for enhancement of the tourist destination.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Design

The researcher made us of a descriptive survey method to assess the brand equity components of the tourist destination. This method aims to investigate the views and perspective of the respondent on a given phenomenon.

Participants

The respondents were the 335 local tourists who were able to visit the top five (5) attractions in CALABARZON based on the latest tourist arrival as of 2018. The total number of respondents for each province was computed based the effective size of 0.25, a power probability of 0.95 and an alpha level of 0.05 using G* power 3.1.9. During the conduct of research, respondents were selected at random sampling method.

Instrument

The instrument used is an adopted survey questionnaire from Kim and Lee [2], to determine the brand equity components of the region as a tourist destination in terms of perceived quality, brand awareness, brand image and Brand Loyalty. The instrument undergone into a content validation and pilot test. The reliability tests for these categories have a Cronbach's alpha for brand perceived is 0.729; brand awareness had 0.699, and brand image (0.752). Therefore, these variables are relatively high internal consistency, and the reliability is secured. For brand loyalty the Cronbach's alpha coefficient is 0.746 with relatively high internal consistency

Data Analysis

Weighted mean and Rank were used to determine the components of brand equity of the region as a tourist destination in terms of perceived brand quality, brand awareness, brand image and Brand loyalty. A four point Likert scale as use in the instrument using the

scale of 4= To A Very Great Extent (VGE); 3 = To A Great Extent (GE); 2 = To Some Extent (SE); 1 = Not At All (NA)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1.

Brand Equity Components of Tourist Destination in terms of perceived Brand Quality

Brand Quality	WM	VI	R
1. The quality of tourism products in the destination is outstanding.	2.85	GE	2.5
2. Tourist destinations provide a high-quality tourism products and services.	2.30	SE	4
3. Tourism products in the destinations are reliable and trustworthy	2.93	GE	1
4. Attractions perform better as a tourist destination than its competitors.	2.85	GE	2.5
Composite Mean	2.73	GE	

Table 1 shows that the Brand equity components of the Tourists in CALABARZON in terms of perceived brand quality were to a great extent with a weighted mean of 2.73.

Tourism products in the destinations are reliable and trustworthy was at the topmost with a weighted mean of 2.93 and was to a great extent to the respondents.

Tourism items are available in the destination for tourists to purchase. This may take the form of physical resources, facilities, or psychological experiences that tourists have when visiting the destination. It provides a variety of facilities such as tourist attractions, locations, transportation, and lodging, as well as entertainment and events. These items are given to visitors to round out their experience. Tourists visiting the region will enjoy both natural and man-made attractions. Mountains, lakes, rivers, seas, slides, caves, volcanoes, and national treasures can be found in any province. CALABARZON, on the other hand, has many historical monuments, heritage structures, and villages, as well as music, arts, festivals, and museums. In addition, there are small and large tourism and hospitality properties available for rent. All these tourism goods and facilities are well-kept and monitored.

These products and services must then be delivered in a timely manner. In addition, the principles and reputation of the respective location must be promoted such that future customers and users are aware of all the

benefits [6]. Regions, infrastructure, and a mix of tourism goods and services make up the overall tourism experience. In most cases, the manufacturer does not have complete control over the tourism product [7].

In contrast, Tourist destinations provide a high-quality tourism products and services was to some extent with a 2.30 weighted mean. Tourist destinations are capable to influence decision-making of the tourists. In CALABARZON, there are tourist destinations that need to have further innovations specifically historical and art museums.

They wanted to learn more about the role images in the market segment's destination choice, so they conducted research. It was discovered that people would apparently compartmentalize their mental images and rate each image according to its significance in deciding about the final option. Image, on the other hand, influences not only pre-visit tourists' behavior and decision, but also during and after a visit. The power of image certainly can affect the tourists' decision process of selecting and planning their trips [7]. Because replication is required for scientific progress, papers submitted for publication must provide sufficient information to allow readers to perform similar experiments or calculations and use the reported results. Although not everything need be disclosed, a paper must contain new, useable, and fully described information.

Table 2.

Brand Equity Components of Tourist Destination in terms of Brand Awareness

Brand awareness	WM	VI	R
1. Tourists are well aware of the tourist destinations	2.72	GE	2
2. Tourists can quickly recall the attraction as a tourist destination.	2.73	GE	1
3. Tourist destinations within CALABARZON are easily compared and differentiated from other cities.	2.53	GE	3
Composite Mean	2.66	GE	

In table 2, the brand equity components of the tourists in CALABARZON in terms of brand awareness is shown to be of great extent with a composite mean of 2.66.

“Tourists can quickly recall the attraction as a tourist destination” leads in rank with a 2.73 weighted mean and “Tourists are well aware of the tourist destinations” with a 2.72 weighted mean were to a great extent.

The tourists agreed that they got unforgettable memories once they visited the beautiful places in the region. Nowadays, tourists captured their memories and posted in their blogs, Facebook, Instagram, Tweeter accounts and other social media platforms. Brand awareness among the tourists is about to describe the ability to recall of the brand's logo as well as a level of familiarity and affinity with it. The degree to which a particular brand stands out from a slew of others is referred to as awareness. Tourist destination brand awareness significantly characterized the ability of the tourists to remember and distinguish a particular tourism destination among a variety of locations. A tourism destination's brand image includes the feelings to which elicited by a range of functional attributes and activities [2].

On the other hand, "Tourist destinations within the region are easily compared and differentiated from other cities" was at the last rank with 2.53 weighted mean, yet was still to a great extent to the respondents.

Tourists verified that destinations in the region are comparable to other places based on the findings. In reality, some of the attractions' features or characteristics are identical to those found in other parts of the world or abroad. For example, to compare or contrast Batangas' white sand beaches with Boracay Island's white sand beaches, Tagaytay's cold temperature with Baguio's coldness, Taal's old town and Spanish-inspired houses with Ilocos, and Rizal, Cavite, and Batangas' old churches and bridges. These are only a few of the tourism and hospitality opportunities that are flourishing in the industry. Customers' brand loyalty is significantly converted into brand equity, indicating that if they become loyal to a brand, they can contribute through repeat purchases and encourage it through positive word of mouth [8].

The brand equity components of the tourists in terms of Brand Image was presented in Table 3 All indicators were to a great extent with a composite mean of 2.61. Emerging on top "The features of tourist destinations in the region is more special than other regions" with a 2.69 weighted mean. While, "distinctive image raised up the unique characteristics of the tourist destination.

According to the findings, tourists in the region have a high regard for the places they visited. During their tours in the region, for example, tourists visited cultural and historic sites, theme parks, and eco-tours and boating trips. Furthermore, they had a great time in the hotel/resort accommodations they had leased, while others stayed in the campgrounds.

Table 3.
Brand Equity Components of Tourist Destination in terms of Brand Image

Brand Image	WM	VI	R
1. The Logo and symbol of the tourist destinations highlighted the brand image.	2.57	GE	3
2. Distinctive image raised up the unique characteristics of the tourist destination.	2.68	GE	2
3. The features of tourist destinations in CALABARZON is more special than other regions.	2.69	GE	1
4. Tourist destinations in CALABARZON region have a high level of popular reputation.	2.50	GE	4
Composite Mean	2.61	GE	

The customers associate the brand name in their minds forming a reflection or may say the brand picture of the destination. Therefore, brand image associations are informational nodes that are connected to the brand node in memory and comprise the brand's significance for customers. Brand images are crucial in destination selection, and any destination's ultimate objective is to influence potential tourists' travel-related decision-making and choice through marketing activities [7].

Meanwhile "Tourist destinations in the region have a high level of popular reputation" had the lowest weighted mean of 2.50. Indeed, according to the tourists they know a lot of things about the different tourists' attractions in the region, they have heard many positive feedback from their friends and relatives. Others would say they have read a lot from online reviews posted in different sites and seen in various social media accounts with positive comments.

When a brand image becomes famous, tourists associate it with a variety of advantages and optimistic expectations. Furthermore, the destination image is defined as "an interactive system of thoughts, opinions, feelings, visualizations, and intentions aimed at a specific destination." Considering brand value to be a key factor in differentiation. It is generally accepted that marketing has the ability to positively and greatly influence the growth of a tourist destination [7].

The Brand Loyalty of the Tourists in terms of Brand Loyalty was shown in Table 4 Generally, indicators were to a great extent to the respondents with a composite mean of 2.74.

Table 4.
Brand Equity Components of Tourist Destination in terms of Brand Loyalty

Brand Loyalty	WM	VI	R
1. Attractions in CALABARZON region are prioritized when selecting travel destination in the future.	2.84	GE	1
2. The tourist attractions in CALABARZON will recommend to other people.	2.79	GE	2
3. Tourist destinations in CALABARZON will be visited again even if costs will increase.	2.60	GE	3
Composite Mean	2.74	GE	

The Brand equity components of the Tourists in terms of Brand Loyalty was shown in Table 4 Generally, indicators were to a great extent to the respondents with a composite mean of 2.74.

Top of these three was “Attractions in the region are prioritized when selecting travel destination in the future” with 2.84 weighted mean and “the tourist attractions in CALABARZON will recommend to other people” with 2.79 weighted mean.

According to the respondents, they are familiar with the provinces of CALABARZON and their well-known tourist destinations. The proximity of Region IV to the National Capital Region (NCR) has become an advantage in attracting visitors who simply want to be in a different area without having to spend a large sum of money to do so. It became the most accessible destination for many local visitors, as well as one of the closest weekend getaways. In reality, the region is accessible, with a well-developed road network and numerous points of entry and exit. The South Luzon Expressway (SLEx) links Metro Manila to CALABARZON's various provinces. As a result, the region became a popular tourist destination for both local and foreign visitors.

Brand loyalty is translated as into financial and non-financial benefits (e.g., brand equity) for a specific brand, making it an important consideration when determining the value of a brand. Consumer brand loyalty is a major factor in establishing brand equity. [3]. Brand loyalty, customer satisfaction, brand recognition, perceived quality, brand affiliation, and partnerships are all important factors that can help a company create brand equity.

The last was “Tourist destinations in CALABARZON will be visited again even if costs will

increase” with a weighted mean of 2.70. Tourist ensured that they will come back again to the place if not they will travel any provinces of the region to experience other attractions. In fact, during the conduct of study there are some tourists have mentioned that it is not their first time to visit the place and in the future they plan to go somewhere within the region to explore other tourist attractions.

Furthermore, brand loyalty encourages customers to make repeat purchases and serves as a deterrent to switching behaviour, eventually resulting in brand equity. High brand loyalty results in favorable customer outcomes such as positive word of mouth, purchasing attitude, and the foundations for charging higher prices for products, all of which improve long-term returns and the value of tangible and intangible assets in the form of brand equity. The destination is the location or geographic space where a visitor or tourist stays for the night or for a period of time, or the end of a tourist's vacation, whether they are traveling for pleasure or company [9].

In summary, as the finding reveals that the component of the brand equity can be considered to a great extent, the follow set of action plan were propose for the continuous enhancement of the tourism destination in the region. In the same manner, this findings is similar with Gutierrez, et al., [10] which show a strong link between “quality-satisfaction-loyalty” in both tourist samples; a chain of effects between awareness, image, and perceived quality, albeit with some significant differences between the two tourist datasets; and a positive influence of cognitive image on affective image in both circumstances.

Table 5.
Proposed Action Plan

KRA	Strategies	Person Involve
Brand Quality Provie a high quality tourism products and services	An annual operational planning and development may be held to ensure high quality tourism products and services.	Department of Tourism Tourism Business Owners
Brand Awareness To promote destination in the region that are easily comparable to other region	Tourism Destination Vlog Campaign may be held to promote the region emphasizing on its natural and cultural gift.	Department of Tourism Travel Agency and Operators

Brand Image Create a high level of popular reputation	CALABARZON Tourism website may be created to boost a high level of popular reputation	Department of Tourism Officers
Brand Loyalty Empower the Loyalty among the visitors despite the cost	Loyalty Card and Promotions may be enhance to ensure that tourist may visit again.	Department of Tourism Destination Management Organization

Table 5 presents the proposed action plan based on the result of the study. The key result area covers the Brand equity components in terms of the Brand Quality, Awareness, Image and Loyalty.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Tourism product in CALABARZON region is considered as reliable and trustworthy. Tourism in the region can be recall quickly as to the tourist attraction and destination. The features of tourist destinations in the region are notable as more special than other regions. Also, Attractions in CALABARZON region is prioritized when selecting travel destination as confirmed by the respondents. Lastly, a proposed action plan was proposed for improvement of the tourist destination in the region.

The researcher recommends for the Tourist Destination Organization to prioritize to tourist satisfaction over profit as this would lead to consistent increase of tourist arrival. Also, Assessment on High quality tourism products and services may be included in the Tourism Destination Accreditation Matrix. The study is limited on the settings and perspective of the tourist destination in CALABARZON, thus future studies may be conducted on another region.

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