Information Management and Business Review (ISSN 2220-3796)
Vol. 17, No. 2(S), pp. 530-540, August 2025

Effects of Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE) on Guest Experience in Beach and Island Resort

Nor Diyana Mohammed Shobri
Universiti Teknologi MARA, Department of Entrepreneurship and Marketing Studies, Malaysia
Email: nor_diyana@uitm.edu.my

Abstract: This study investigates the effect of customer-based brand equity (CBBE) on guests' experience in the beach and island resort settings. A survey method was adopted by using a self-administered questionnaire. Purposive sampling was employed, and data were collected from 200 guests who had stayed at beach and island resorts in seven destinations. A Structural Equation Model (Partial Least Squares-SEM or PLS-SEM) approach was applied to analyze the data. The findings in this study reveal that the hypothesized relationship between brand association and guests' experience and perceived quality was supported. However, the findings failed to support the hypothesized relationship between brand awareness and guests' experience. This study offers several theoretical contributions, followed by managerial implications and outlines potential directions for future research.

Keywords: *Customer-Based Brand Equity, Guests' Experience, Resort.*

1. Introduction and Background

In an increasingly competitive and experience-driven hospitality landscape, resorts must leverage every strategic advantage to differentiate themselves and build lasting customer loyalty. One of the most influential yet underexplored assets in this regard is Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE). Aaker (1991) defined brand equity as a name and symbol that gives value to a firm's product or service. It is also viewed as a brand asset and a liability to a firm. Brand equity is a major element that affects a brand, which gives several advantages to a firm. For instance, it can reach a price premium, high demand from customers, generate brand extension easily and make communications on the brands more easily accepted among the customers. According to him, CBBE is shaped by the perceptions of brand awareness, associations, perceived quality, and loyalty. Recent studies have reaffirmed the critical role of CBBE in shaping customer attitudes and behaviors, highlighting its potential to enhance customer experiences in service-intensive sectors like hospitality (Rather, 2020; Cervova & Varvova, 2021). Thus, this indicates that brand equity has become crucial to the hospitality industry, where competition has become very strong (Nuseir, 2021).

Pine and Gilmore (1998) described customer experience as a personal construct that exists entirely in the minds of individuals who have been engaged emotionally, physically, intellectually, and spiritually. Given that experiences in resorts are largely intangible and co-created, the perceived strength and trustworthiness of a brand can substantially influence a guest's pre-stay expectations, on-site satisfaction, and post-visit loyalty (Hanaysha, 2022). For instance, The Ritz-Carlton is extensively recognized as a benchmark in the luxury hospitality industry, largely due to its strong CBBE. One of the most compelling elements of Ritz-Carlton's brand equity is its exceptional service delivery, personalized guest interactions, and an unwavering commitment to excellence, creating strong emotional and cognitive brand associations in the minds of consumers (Kandampully, Zhang & Bilgihan, 2018).

Although previous research studies have explored the individual impacts of CBBE components on customer behavior, few studies have directly examined how an integrated framework of CBBE contributes to the overall customer experience in the resort context. With rising consumer expectations and the resurgence of travel post-COVID-19, understanding this relationship has never been timelier (Sunder & Dixit, 2023). This study seeks to address this gap by exploring the influence of CBBE on customer experience within the resort industry, offering both theoretical insights and managerial implications for enhancing their brand and guests' experience.

2. Literature Review

Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE)

A brand can be described as the way customers perceive its reputation (Wantini & Yudiana, 2021). Thus, when a specific brand has a good reputation, this indicates that the brand has the potential to get a high brand equity (Haudi, Handayani, Musnani, Suyoto & Prasetion, 2022). Aaker (1991) defined brand equity as a name and symbol that gives value to a firm's product or service. It is viewed as a brand asset and liability. He further asserted that brand equity will generate several values for both customers and organizations. High brand equity will provide a competitive advantage for a company. In addition to that, it can also increase customer loyalty and retain the company's present customers. Therefore, a company must develop a high brand equity to compete with its competitors. Brand equity was introduced by Aaker (1991) and Keller (1993). Even though their brand equity concept are different, both their theories are based on the consumer's perspective. Aaker (1991) conceptualized brand equity based on customers' memory (cognitive psychology) to provide further understanding of how customers respond to a brand. This model emphasizes that customer response occurs when a customer believes that a brand is well-known with a positive, strong and exceptional brand association. Aaker (1991) divided brand equity into two main categories: customer perception and customer behavior. He mentioned that these categories should be combined to form the foundation of customer-based brand equity. Accordingly, he identified four key dimensions for measuring it.

The dimensions related to customer perception are brand awareness, brand association, and perceived quality, while brand loyalty represents the dimension of customer behavior. Aaker (1991) identifies brand awareness as the first dimension of customer-based brand equity. It refers to a customer's ability to recognize and recall a brand in the marketplace. This dimension plays a crucial role in shaping consumer perceptions and can significantly influence brand preference and loyalty. The second dimension is brand association, which is described as any thought, image, or connection that a customer links to a brand in their memory. The third dimension, perceived quality, is defined as the customer's evaluation of the overall excellence or superiority of a product or service in comparison to competing brands. It encompasses the perceived value and benefits that drive purchasing decisions. Lastly, brand loyalty represents the fourth dimension and defines it as the strength of a customer's commitment or emotional attachment to a brand.

On the other hand, Keller (1993) defined brand equity as customers' knowledge about a specific brand after they have responded to the marketing activities. He argued that customer-based brand equity only occurs when a customer is familiar with a brand. He described that customers would react to brand marketing communications and get familiar with the brand, thus holding a favorable brand association in their memory. According to him, brand knowledge plays a crucial role in customer-based brand equity because customers will react more favorably to the brands' marketing communications that they know rather than an unknown brand. To explain more about brand knowledge, Keller (1993) suggested that brand knowledge can be described from two main dimensions: brand awareness and brand image. Brand awareness is the ability of a customer to identify a specific brand under different situations. He emphasized that a customer is only aware of the existing brand in the market after they can recognize and recall the brand. Thus, he further classified brand awareness into two sub-dimensions: brand recognition and brand recall. Brand recognition is viewed as the ability of a customer to remember a brand based on prior experience, seeing or hearing about the brand. On the other hand, brand recall is conceptualized as the ability of a customer to retrieve a brand based on a given cue (e.g., product category). Brand image is defined as a customer's perception of a brand, which is imitated by brand association held in the customer's memory. Brand association is viewed as the information about a brand that contains a brand meaning to a customer, for instance, favorability, strength and uniqueness (Keller, 1993). According to this concept, a customer holds several brand association characteristics in their memory, which lead to a positive association towards a brand.

Even though both scholars view brand equity differently, both concepts are considered two important, vital views in brand equity literature that provide a valuable approach to customer-based brand equity knowledge. There are similarities in the two models in which Aaker (1991) described brand association and perceived quality as two single dimensions, but Keller (1993) described these two dimensions as one and referred to it as brand image. Thus, it can be concluded that these two models complement each other rather than competing. Most research studies in hospitality are based on Aaker's and Keller's model. However, Aaker's model is the

most applied within this industry (Martínez & Nishiyama, 2019).

Given this, brand equity received huge attention from many researchers, specifically in the hospitality industry. For instance, Piriyakul, Kunathikornkit and Piriyakul (2024) evaluate brand equity in the hotel industry by integrating customer journey analysis with text mining. Zhang, Filimonau and Tlemissov (2024) examined brand equity from employees' perspectives and how it influences customer experience in multinational chain hotels. Nuseir (2021) examined how brand equity and customer experiences influence brand loyalty and explored the relationship between brand equity and the quality of customer experience in leading hotels across the United Arab Emirates. Khanh and ThiHoai (2020) investigated the influence of brand equity on brand loyalty in the hotel context. This study also examined whether customer satisfaction moderates the relationship between brand equity and brand loyalty.

Customer Experience

Since the mid-1980s, research on customer experience has expanded considerably (Skard, Nysveen, & Pedersen, 2011). Scholars in marketing have discovered and refined the concept of customer experience through various theoretical lenses. A foundational contribution came from Holbrook and Hirschman (1982), who emphasized the significant role of emotion in consumer behavior. They argued that consumers are not purely rational decision-makers but also engage in hedonic consumption driven by emotional experiences. Over time, the concept of customer experience has attracted increasing academic interest and is now regarded as an important theoretical addition to the literature. As a result, the idea has also been developed into a practical managerial concept, gaining prominence in marketing and management studies. Notable developments in this area include experiential or experience marketing (Pine & Gilmore, 1998; Schmitt, 1999; Tynan & McKechnie, 2009), customer experience management (Verhoef, Lemon, Parasuraman, Roggeveen, Tsiros & Schlesinger, 2009), and experience design (Pullman & Gross, 2004; Skard, Nysveen, & Pedersen, 2011).

This concept emphasizes that, beyond seeking functional benefits, customers also desire memorable experiences from businesses. These experiences are regarded as products themselves, for which customers are willing to pay. Pine and Gilmore (1998) proposed that experiences can be defined by two key dimensions, which are the level of customer participation and the nature of their interaction with the environment. The level of customer participation distinguishes between passive and active participants. Passive participants are those who simply observe the experience without direct involvement, while active participants are fully engaged and take part in shaping the experience. In contrast, the environmental relationship level focuses on the depth of the customer's connection with the experience itself. Pine and Gilmore (1998) advocated the Experience Economy concept, which refers to the customer experience dimensions as entertainment, educational, escapism, and aesthetic experiences. They described entertainment experience as an individual's feelings of fun, pleasure, and relaxation. This development occurs when customers can engage in any form of activity. For instance, the entertainment experience offered by a resort to its guests included enjoying live music performances from the resort's resident artists of the month at their café or lobby lounge. Education-based experiences occur when customers enrich their knowledge and expertise, which could influence them to explore and participate in new endeavors. Within the context of a resort, an educational experience could include inviting guests to take part in cooking lessons with local chefs and sampling local and exotic food. Aesthetic experience is when the customers engage with the physical environment, such as the resort's ambience and decoration.

Lastly, escapism experience explains the individuals' desire to escape their everyday lives at home and office and the stress that may follow from the unchanging routines. For example, guests may enjoy listening to the relaxing resonances of nature from the comfort of their resort rooms. However, for this study, only aesthetic and escapism experiences are considered and exclude entertainment and educational experiences. This is because this study argues that most guests visit beaches and island resorts to relax, rejuvenate and enjoy the environment only. Escapism is a prominent theme in the hospitality industry, especially in beach and island resort settings (Maru & Dey, 2024). These resorts provide an escape from everyday life where guests can enjoy themselves and relax on the beach and in nature. In addition to that, aesthetics such as interior design, architecture and ambience are also important to beach and island resorts. These elements will influence initial impressions of the guests and establish an emotional connection with the resort. For instance, these resorts integrate traditional architecture such as wood carving, stone and bamboo. It has an open-air design, such as a

beachfront cottage, that allows guests to enjoy the ocean view.

Most of the previous studies in the hospitality and tourism industry are based on Pine and Gilmore's (1998) Experience Economy Concept. For instance, a study by Paisri, Ruanguttamanun, and Sujchaphong (2022) examined the effect of customer experience on electronic word of mouth (eWOM) and revisit intention towards Thailand tourist destinations and whether commitment mediates the relationship between customer experience, eWOM and revisit intention. A similar study by Ali and Gaber (2022) explores customer experience in Taladtongchom, one of the popular local cultures in Thailand. Another study by Lee, Jeong and Qu (2020) adopted the Experience Economy Concept to explore theme park visitors' experience on satisfaction and revisit intentions. In the context of culinary, Hoang (2023) explores the Experience Economy Concept dimensions to develop scales in measuring culinary experience in Vietnam. In the context of hotels and resorts, Manhas (2019) explored the dimensions of customer experience and how it varied among different chains of hotel brands in North India. A recent study by Ojha (2025) adopted the Experience Economy Concept to examine the effect of guests' experience on brand loyalty towards boutique hotels in Kathmandu Valley.

The Relationship Between Brand Equity and Customer Experience

The quality of customer experience has been shown to have a strong connection to brand equity, which plays a crucial role in driving repurchase behavior and entails a promise for quality experience (Harris & De Chernatony, 2001). In addition to that, a recent study by Sato, Yoshida, Doyle and Choi (2023) emphasizes the significance of brand identification in shaping consumer experiences. The research highlights that consumers often rely on brand cues to facilitate quicker decision-making, especially when faced with time constraints. This reliance on familiar brands helps streamline choices, enhancing the overall consumption experience. Another study by Nusier (2021) found that there is a substantial influence of brand equity and customer experience on the hotel industry in the United Arab Emirates.

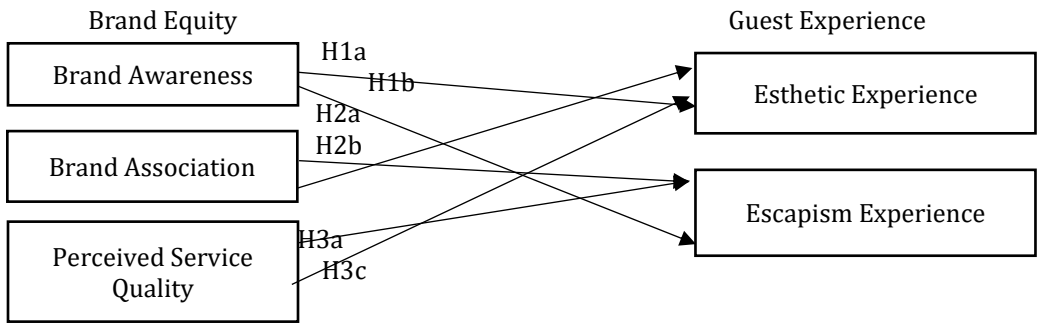
According to Aaker (1991), brand awareness is a key component of customer-based brand equity, as it can shape customer perceptions and promote brand preference and loyalty. In relation to the resort context, customers who are aware of the resort's brand could develop familiarity among consumers and lead to some anticipation of the experience. In addition to that, a firm's brand association also contributes to a greater customer experience and is considered an important customer experience development (Phong, Nga, Hanh, & van Minh, 2020). Recent research underscores the significance of perceived service quality attributes such as product quality, service quality, product freshness, and time-saving as key indicators in shaping customer experience (Xie & Sun, 2021). Accordingly, this study hypothesized that:

H1a: Brand awareness significantly influences aesthetic experience.
H1b: Brand awareness significantly influences escapism experience.
H2a: Brand association significantly influences aesthetic experience.
H2b: Brand association significantly influences the escapism experience.
H3a: Perceived quality significantly influences aesthetic experience.
H3b: Perceived quality significantly influences escapism experience.

The Conceptual Framework

The proposed conceptual framework exploring the relationship between brand equity and customer experience is exhibited in Figure 1. It is predicted that brand equity significantly influences customer experience. Brand equity is suggested to contribute value to the customers. It will help the customers to interpret and process information, increase confidence in purchase decisions and influence the quality of customer experience. This is because the development of brand equity, driven by marketing activities such as advertising, can influence the quality of the guest's direct experience.

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework



3. Research Methodology

Sampling and Data Collection

The targeted respondents of this study comprised local guests who had stayed for at least one night at beach and island resorts located in destinations such as Penang Island, Langkawi Island, Port Dickson, Tioman Island, Perhentian Island, Desaru Beach, and Pangkor Island. These destinations were chosen because they are considered among the top tourist destinations in Malaysia (Tourism Malaysia, 2023). For data collection, a non-probability purposive sampling method was employed. A total of 200 questionnaires were distributed to respondents over three months at the selected destinations. This sample size aligns with the general guideline for Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) proposed by Hair, Black, Babin, and Anderson (2010), which recommends a minimum sample size of 100 or more.

The Instrument

The questionnaire was developed to collect data from the respondents. The first part of the questionnaire captured general demographic information, which included gender, age, level of education, marital status and occupation. The section of the questionnaire included research constructs used to measure the two main variables of the study, namely customer-based brand equity (CBBE) and customer experience.

As for CBBE, the measurement items were adapted from Kim, Jin, Sun & Kim (2008). Brand awareness, brand association, and perceived quality were each measured using four items. To measure the construct of customer experience, the instruments were also adapted from Ali, Hussain and Ragavan (2014). Customer experience was measured through two dimensions, namely aesthetic experience (four items) and escapism experience (five items).

Data Analysis Tool

For this study, data analysis in the initial phase was carried out using IBM SPSS version 23.0. The software facilitated data screening procedures, including the detection of missing values, identification of outliers, and assessment of normality. Additionally, descriptive statistics such as frequencies, means, and standard deviations were computed.

In the second phase, Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) was employed to evaluate both the measurement and structural models. SEM is particularly valuable for researchers in the behavioral and social sciences, as it allows for the assessment of latent constructs that cannot be directly observed. Its widespread adoption in recent years is attributed to its numerous advantages (Hair, Hult, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2017). Furthermore, the literature identifies SEM as one of the most robust methods for multivariate data analysis (Hershberger, 2003).

4. Results

Respondents Profile

Out of 200 questionnaires distributed to the respondents, only 135 data can be used to be carried out for data analysis. As shown in Table 1, most of the respondents were female (N=90; 67%) as compared to male respondents (N=33; 45%). With regards to marital status, most of the respondents were married (N=87; 64%),

followed by single (N=46; 34%), and the remaining respondents were categorized as others (divorced and widowed) (N=2, 2%). Most of the respondents have also completed their postgraduate studies (N=69; 51%), followed by 33 respondents having undergraduate level qualifications, while 33 (24%) respondents had high school/ diploma level or lower qualifications. The respondents' occupational status was also derived from the results. Most of the respondents are unanswered on their occupational status (N=55, 41%), followed by government servants (N=31, 23%) and the private sector (N=23, 17%). The remaining respondents were students (N=15, 11%), unemployed (N=4, 3%), self-employed (N=3, 2%) and retired (N=4, 3%).

Table 1: Respondents' Profile

Profile	Descriptive Profile	Percent	Frequency (n=135)
Gender	Female	67	90
	Male	33	45
Age	18 - 25 years old	14	19
	26 – 35 years old	29	39
	36 – 45 years old	33	44
	46 – 55 years old	18	24
	56 – 65 years old	6	9
	66 and above	0	0
Level of Education	High school/ diploma level or lower	24	33
	Undergraduate level	24	33
	Postgraduate level	51	69
Marital Status	Single	34	46
	Married	64	87
	Divorce	1	1
	Widow	1	1
Occupational Status	Government Servants	23	31
	Private Sector	17	23
	Retiree	3	4
	Self-employment	2	3
	Unemployed	3	4
	Student	11	15
	Unanswered	41	55

Measurement Model

All hypotheses in this study were tested using the partial least squares-structured equation (PLS-SEM) modelling technique (Ringle, Da Silva & Bido, 2015). Based on Anderson and Gerbing's (1988) guidance, this study primarily investigated the measurement model for reliability and validity testing before subsequently assessing the structural model in testing the proposed hypotheses. The first step in the PLS-SEM method is to examine the convergent validity. This study assessed convergent validity using composite reliability (CR), factor loadings, and average variance extracted (AVE)

As shown in Table 2, the findings reveal that composite reliability surpassed the suggested value of 0.70 (Hair et al., 2017). In addition to that, the findings also show that all indicator loadings were above .70. Regarding the average variance extracted (AVE), the results showed that all construct values exceeded the recommended minimum threshold of 0.50 (Hair et al. 2017). Based on the identified data, the constructs explained more than half of the variance of their indicators.

Table 2: Summary of Validity and Reliability for the Constructs

Construct	Dimension	Item	Loadings	CR	AVE
Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE)	Brand Awareness	BAW1	0.757	0.881	0.649
		BAW2	0.770		
		BAW3	0.841		
		BAW4	0.849		
	Brand Association	BA1	0.793	0.863	0.612
		BA2	0.728		
		BA3	0.802		
		BA4	0.804		
	Perceived Service Quality	PQ1	0.761	0.89	0.676
Customer Experience	Escapism Experience	ESC1	0.777	0.934	0.741
		ESC2	0.804		
		ESC3	0.930		
		ESC4	0.900		
		ESC5	0.884		
	Esthetic Experience	EST1	0.903	0.905	0.706
		EST2	0.885		
		EST3	0.824		
		EST4	0.739		

Discriminant validity was further tested in the measurement model. In this study, the Fornell-Larcker Criterion (Fornell & Larcker, 1981) was implemented to evaluate discriminant validity. Using this approach, the indicators should load more strongly on their constructs than on other constructs within the model, and the average variance extracted (AVE) shared between each construct and its measures should be greater than the one shared between the construct and other constructs (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). As presented in Table 3, the value for all key constructs revealed sufficient discriminant validity. Hence, the result indicates that uniqueness does exist between the constructs.

Table 3: Summary of Fornell-Larcker Criterion

	BAW	BA	PQ	ESC	EST
BAW	**0.806**				
BA	0.643	**0.782**			
PQ	0.434	0.598	**0.822**		
ESC	0.402	0.579	0.462	**0.861**	
EST	0.404	0.553	0.553	0.800	**0.840**

Structural Model

Data analysis was then undertaken to test the relationship between independent and dependent variables. This study found that H2a, H2b, H3a and H3b were statistically significant, except H1a and H1b. The standardized estimates for these hypotheses were all significant at t >1.65. Thus, it can be concluded that hypotheses H2a, H2b, H3a and H3b were supported except H1a and H1b. Table 5 illustrates the overall hypothesis testing of the said relationships.

Table 4: Summary of Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Relationship	t-value	Significance (t>1.65)?	Decision
H1a	Brand Awareness > Esthetic Experience	0.795	No	Not Supported
H1b	Brand Awareness > Escapism Experience	0.536	No	Not Supported
H2a	Brand Association > Esthetic Experience	4.866	Yes	Supported
H2b	Brand Association > Escapism Experience	8.193	Yes	Supported
H3a	Perceived Service Quality > Esthetic Experience	1.861	Yes	Supported
H3b	Brand Association > Escapism Experience	4.962	Yes	Supported

Discussion

The growth of the resort industry depends on its capability to develop and achieve a great brand and unforgettable experience for its guests. Thus, the purpose of this study is to examine the influence of brand equity on guests' experience in the beach and island resort context. This study has tested six hypotheses of how dimensions of brand equity (brand awareness, brand association and perceived quality) affect resort guests' experience (aesthetic experience and escapism experience). The study's findings regarding the role of brand equity towards guests' experience provide meaningful theoretical implications.

First, the findings reveal that brand association was found to have a significant impact on guest experience. This indicates that a resort that has a positive image by portraying characteristics such as user-friendly technology, superb guest service, excellent guest room design and function and thoughtful guest amenities will assist guests in predicting the quality of their experience. In this sense, this result is consistent with a previous study by Phong et. al (2020), who exhibit that strong brand associations enhance customers' willingness to pay and contribute to a positive customer experience. This underscores the importance of brand associations as a predictor of favorable customer experiences. Similarly, Safeer and Le (2023) examined the role of brand experience dimensions in predicting consumer loyalty. The study revealed that brand associations, along with brand trust, mediate the relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty. This suggests that brand associations are critical in shaping customer experiences and fostering loyalty.

Second, the finding suggests that perceived quality was found to have an influence on guests' experience. In the context of a resort, this indicates that overall service performance by resort operators could predict guest experience during their stay. In other words, resort operators provide greater service quality, such as concern for the needs of the guests, the staff is always available when needed, the staff responds to the guests' requests promptly and the resort operators provide attractive facilities, and equipment will influence guests' experience. This finding is consistent with a previous study by Ribeiro and Prayag (2019). They found that service quality continues to be a key factor in generating positive emotions and plays a significant role in shaping customers' evaluations of their service experience. Similarly, Mamakou, Zaharias, and Milesi (2023) identify that there is a favorable association between service quality and customer experience.

Finally, the findings from this study failed to support the hypothesized relationship between brand awareness and guests' experience. Brand awareness was found to have no impact on the guest experience. In other words, being aware of a resort's brand did not assist guests in anticipating the quality of their experience. Brand awareness can be defined as the ability of a customer to recall and recognize a brand available in the market (Aaker, 1991). In this context, brand awareness refers to the ability of a guest to recognize a resort's brand from various forms of advertisements initiated by resort operators. Thus, at this stage, guests only form a familiarity towards the resort's brand and may not associate it with the quality of experience. Besides that, awareness of a resort's brand may assist guests in making comparisons between resort brands. This is consistent with a study by Ahmed and Taha (2023). He posited that brand awareness plays a vital role in helping customers compare different products during the decision-making process. Therefore, this could be a major plausible reason behind the findings of this study.

5. Managerial Implications and Recommendations

This study offers critical insights for the resort industry, demonstrating how strategic management of brand equity can directly enhance the guest experience, contributing to the resort industry by helping operators understand how brand equity can predict guest experience during their stay. First resort operators should focus on creating brand associations and perceived service quality, which directly affect guest experience. These findings indicate that hotels and resorts that have strong brand association and good service quality will develop some anticipation of the stay experience in the guests' minds. Resort operators should develop a good image and reputation for their hotels and resorts. They should understand how to preserve and safeguard it, particularly in today's digital age. This involves staying updated with review platforms like Booking.com, Airbnb, and Expedia. Resort operators need to regularly monitor these sites, watch for negative feedback, respond promptly and assist guests, while also encouraging satisfied guests to share positive reviews.

Second, besides brand association, resort operators should also pay attention to providing greater service quality, specifically service quality by the employees. Resort operators should give autonomy to the employees to make decisions and resolve guests' issues promptly. Besides that, resort operators also should create a positive work environment that fosters a caring, friendly and professional environment where the employees feel valued and supported. Enhancing employees' skills is also critical to developing greater service quality. Resort operators should send their employees constantly to the training that focuses on customer service, communication, product knowledge, and problem-solving. During the training, resort operators should also integrate guests' feedback to improve service and enhance guests' experience.

Limitations and Future Research

First, this study only addressed the relationship between brand equity and guests' experience. The results of the study are based on the questionnaire of guests' opinions. Only two variables of guests' experience, which are aesthetic and escapism experience, were used in this study. Future studies should measure all dimensions of experience highlighted in the Experience Economy Concept, thus might provide substantial managerial implications.

Second, this study only addressed local guests who stay at selected beaches and island resorts. Therefore, the findings may not represent the views of foreign guests. Future research should also include foreign guests and should compare Malaysian and foreign guests to fully uncover the relationship between brand equity and guests' experience to further understand the cultural background and expectations. Finally, this study was conducted in the context of a beach and island resort. Thus, the findings may lack generalization and may not be generalized to other types of resorts. Hence, future research should test the proposed conceptual framework in other resort types or tourism industries related to experience creation.

References

Aaker, D.A. (1991). *Managing Brand Equity*. New York: Free Press

Ahmed, A. R. Q., & Taha, A. H. A. (2023). Assessing the Impacts of Consumer Awareness on Consumer Purchase Intention with the Moderating Role of Product Label: Evidence from Consumers of Iraqi Manufacturing Firms. *AgBioForum, 25*(1), 193-202.

Ali, E. H., & Gaber, A. (2022). Influence of Guest Experience on Word of Mouth and Revisit Intentions in the Egyptian Hotel Industry. *International Journal of Tourism and Hospitality Management, 5*(1), 303-320.

Ali, F., Hussain, K., & Ragavan, N. A. (2014). Memorable Customer Experience: Examining the Effects of Customer Experience on Memories and Loyalty in Malaysian Resort Hotels. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences, 144*, 273-279.

Cervova, L., & Vavrova, J. (2021). Customer-Based Brand Equity for a Tourism Destination: The Case of Croatia. *Economies, 9*(4), 1-12.

Fornell, C., & Larcker, D. F. (1981). Evaluating Structural Equation Models with Unobservable Variables and Measurement Error. *Journal of Marketing Research, 18*(1), 39-50.

Hanaysha, J. R. (2022). Impact of Brand Equity on Customer Experience and Loyalty: Evidence from the Hospitality Sector. *International Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Administration, 23*(4), 873–892.

Hair, J. F., Black, W.C., Babin, B. J., & Anderson, R. E. (2010). *Multivariate Data Analysis*, 7th Edition. New Jersey:

Prentice Hall.

Hair, J. F., Hult, G.T. M., Ringle, C. M., & Sarstedt, M. (2017). *A Primer on Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling*, 2nd Edition. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications.

Harris, F., & De Chernatony, L. (2001). Corporate Branding and Corporate Brand Performance. *European Journal of Marketing, 35*(3/4), 441-456.

Haudi, H., Handayani, W., Musnaini, M., Suyoto, Y. T., & Prasetio, T. (2022). The Effect of Social Media Marketing on Brand Trust, Brand Equity and Brand Loyalty. *International Journal of Data and Network Science, 6*(3), 961-972.

Hershberger, S.L. (2003), The Growth of Structural Equation Modeling: 1994-2001*. Structural Equation Modeling, 10(*1*)*, 35-46.

Hoang, T. D. T. (2023). Examination of Tourists' Culinary Experience: Revisiting the Experience Economy in the Case of Hue Cuisine. *Journal of Tourism and Services, 14*(27), 249-264.

Holbrook, M. B., & Hirschman, E. C. (1982). The Experiential Aspect of Consumption: Consumer Fantasies, Feelings, and Fun. *The Journal of Consumer Research, 9*(2), 132 – 140.

Kandampully, J., Zhang, T., & Bilgihan, A. (2018). Customer Loyalty: A Review and Future Directions with a Special Focus on the Hospitality Industry*. International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management, 30*(1), 168–194.

Keller, K. L. (1993). Conceptualizing, Measuring, and Managing Customer-Based Brand Equity. *Journal of Marketing*, *57*(1), 1–22.

Khanh, C. N. T., & ThiHoai, N. D. (2020). Building Brand Equity in the Hotel Industry: The Mediating Role of Customer-Based Brand Satisfaction. *International Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Systems, 13*(2), 47-58.

Kim, W. G., Jin-Sun, B., & Kim, H. J. (2008). Multidimensional Customer-Based Brand Equity and Its Consequences in Midpriced Hotels. *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research, 32*(2), 235–254.

Lee, S., Jeong, E., & Qu, K. (2020). Exploring Theme Park Visitors' Experience on Satisfaction and Revisit Intention: A Utilization of Experience Economy Model. *Journal of Quality Assurance in Hospitality & Tourism, 21*(4), 474-497.

Lemon, K. N., & Verhoef, P. C. (2016). Understanding Customer Experience Throughout the Customer Journey. *Journal of Marketing, 80*(6), 69–96.

Mamakou, X. J., Zaharias, P., & Milesi, M. (2023). Measuring Customer Satisfaction in Electronic Commerce: The Impact Of E-Service Quality and User Experience. *International Journal of Quality & Reliability Management, 41*(3), 915-943.

Manhas, P. S. (2019). Identifying The Dimensions of Customer Experience in the Hospitality and Tourism Industry. *South Asian Journal of Marketing & Management Research, 9*(12), 30-41.

Martínez, P., & Nishiyama, N. (2019). Enhancing Customer-Based Brand Equity Through CSR In the Hospitality Sector*. International Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Administration, 20*(3), 329-353.

Maru, C., & Dey, D. K. (2024). Consumer Escapism: A Systematic Review. *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, 1-23. https://doi.org/10.1080/10696679.2024.2404424

Nuseir, M. T. (2021). Assessing The Impact of Brand Equity and Customer Experience on Brand Loyalty in the United Arab Emirates' Hotel Industry. *International Journal of Business Excellence, 25*(4), 459-473.

Ojha, G. (2025). The Effect of Consumer Experience on Brand Loyalty: A Study of Boutique Hotels in the Kathmandu Valley. *Nepalese Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management, 6*(1), 1-20.

Paisri, W., Ruanguttamanun, C., & Sujchaphong, N. (2022). Customer Experience and Commitment on eWOM and Revisit Intention: A Case of Taladtongchom Thailand. *Cogent Business & Management, 9*(1), 1-23.

Pine, B. J., & Gilmore, J. H. (1998). Welcome to the Experience Economy. *Harvard Business Review*, *76*(4), 97–105.

Piriyakul, I., Kunathikornkit, S., & Piriyakul, R. (2024). Evaluating Brand Equity in the Hospitality Industry: Insights from Customer Journeys and Text Mining. *International Journal of Information Management Data Insights, 4*(2), 1-13.

Phong, L. T., Nga, T. H., Hanh, N. T., & van Minh, N. (2020). Relationship Between Brand Association and Customer Loyalty: The Case of the Online Retail Industry. *Management Science Letters, 10*(7), 1543–1552.

Pullman, M. E. & Gross, M. A. (2004). Ability of Experience Design Elements to Elicit Emotions and Loyalty Behaviours. *Decision Sciences, 35*(3), 551-78.

Rather, R. A. (2021). Customer Experience and Engagement in Tourism Destinations: The Experiential

Marketing Perspective. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, *37*(1), 15-32.

Ribeiro, M. A., & Prayag, G. (2019). Perceived Quality and Service Experience: Mediating Effects of Positive and Negative Emotions. *Journal of Hospitality Marketing & Management, 28*(3), 285-305.

Ringle, C., Da Silva, D., & Bido, D. (2015). Structural Equation Modeling with the SmartPLS. *Bido, D., da Silva, D., & Ringle, C. (2014). Structural Equation Modeling with SmartPLS. Brazilian Journal of Marketing*, *13*(2), 56-73.

Safeer, A. A., & Le, T. T. (2023). Transforming Customers into Evangelists: Influence of Online Brand Experience on Relationship Quality and Brand Evangelism in the Banking Industry. *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics, 35*(12), 2947-2964.

Sato, M., Yoshida, M., Doyle, J., & Choi, W. (2023). Consumer-Brand Identification and Happiness in Experiential Consumption. *Psychology & Marketing, 40*(8), 1579-1592.

Schmitt, B. H. (1999). Experiential Marketing. *Journal of Marketing Management, 15*(1), 53-57.

Skard, S., Nysveen, H., & Pedersen, P. E. (2011). Brand and Customer Experience in Service Organizations: Literature Review and Brand Experience Construct Validation. SNF Working Paper, 9, 1–52

Sunder, S., & Dixit, S. (2023). Post-pandemic tourism: An article on the recovery strategies. *Integrated Journal for Research in Arts and Humanities, 3*(2), 174-179.

Tynan, C., & McKechnie, S. (2009). Experience Marketing: A Review and Reassessment. *Journal of Marketing Management, 25*(5/6), 501-517.

Tourism Malaysia (2023). Malaysia Tourism Statistics in Brief. Retrieved March 31, 2023, from https://www.tourism.gov.my/statistic

Verhoef, P. C., Lemon, K. N., Parasuraman, A., Roggeveen, A., Tsiros, M., & Schlesinger, L. A. (2009). Customer Experience Creation: Determinants, Dynamics and Management Strategies. *Journal of Retailing, 85*(1), 31–41.

Wantini, E., & Yudiana, F. E. (2021). Social Media Marketing and Brand Personality to Brand Loyalty with Brand Trust and Brand Equity as a Mediator. *Indonesian Journal of Islamic Economics Research, 3*(1), 1-14.

Xie, C., & Sun, Z. (2021). Influence of Perceived Quality on Customer Satisfaction in Different Stages of Services. *Nankai Business Review International, 12*(2), 258-280.

Zhang, J., Filimonau, V., & Tlemissov, U. (2024). The Effect of Employee-Based Brand Equity on Customer Experience in Multinational Chain Hotels. *Tourism and Hospitality Research*, *0*(0), 1-18.