

Experiential, Entertainment, and Aesthetics Marketing in Cultural Brand Positioning: an Empirical Study in Aguascalientes, Mexico

**David Salvador Garcia Gonzalez¹, Gonzalo Maldonado Guzmán²,
Luis Enrique Valdez Juárez³ and María del Carmen Martínez Serna⁴**

Abstract

Experiential marketing, entertainment marketing, and aesthetic marketing are topics of wide interest in the social, economic, and business sciences. The literature shows that experiential, entertainment, and aesthetic marketing are related to different disciplines, in addition, theoretical and empirical studies have shown their importance in various sectors. There is a broad consensus in the scientific, academic, and professional community on the importance of applying these three versions of marketing in different commercial sectors, especially in those that contribute to the economic and social development of countries. However, most existing studies have neglected the cultural sector, an important sector for social and economic development. Therefore, the objective of this research is to analyze, empirically, the influence of experiential, entertainment, and aesthetic marketing on the positioning of a cultural brand in Aguascalientes, Mexico, a prone place to the study of the cultural sector. This study used a sample of 427 people, the data analysis was through of Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The results show that experiential, entertainment, and aesthetic marketing have a positive and significative influence on cultural brand positioning.

JEL classification numbers: M21, M30, M31.

Keywords: Experiential, entertainment, and aesthetic marketing.

¹Autonomous University of Aguascalientes, Science Center Economic and Administrative.

²Autonomous University of Aguascalientes, Science Center Economic and Administrative.

³Technological Institute of Sonora, Faculty of Business Administration.

⁴Autonomous University of Aguascalientes, Science Center Economic and Administrative.

1. Introduction

For the economic and social development of any sector is important the use of marketing and its variants (Kotler and Armstrong, 2008). Some research theoretical and empirical has shown the importance of marketing in different sectors, as well as its relationship with other disciplines and its evolution through variants such as experiential, entertainment and aesthetics (Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982; Pine and Gilmore, 1998; Schmitt, 1999, 2003, 2006; Kotler and Armstrong, 2008; Cuellar and Henao, 2015). However, few studies have studied in a timely manner the relationship between marketing variants and brand positioning, specifically, in the cultural sector (Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982; Pine and Gilmore, 1998; Schmitt, 1999, 2003, 2006). Therefore, this research studies the relationship between experiential, entertainment, and aesthetic marketing whit cultural brand positioning.

Given the importance of contributing to economic and social development in different places and sectors, such as culture, the study of experiential marketing is relevant, theoretical, and empirical research has demonstrated its interdisciplinarity and applicability in various contexts (Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982; Pine and Gilmore, 1998; Schmitt, 1999, 2003, 2006; Addis and Holbrook, 2001; Gilmore and Pine, 2002; Carú and Cova, 2003; Addis, 2005; Lenderman and Sánchez, 2008; Barrios, 2012; Moral and Fernández, 2012; Ortegón and Gómez, 2016; Muñoz et al., 2020; Sabogal and Rojas 2020). In addition, the study of experiential marketing has grown in recent times since showed that traditional marketing is not efficient to detect the new needs of consumers or trends in current markets (Ortegón and Gómez, 2016; Sabogal and Rojas 2020).

For its part, entertainment marketing generates social identity and improves the relationship between consumers and brands, is based on a structural and systematic thinking applicable in various places (Cuellar and Henao, 2015). In general, organizations have the purpose of providing entertainment and fun to consumers, elements that make them remember the brand (Schmitt, 1999). In this way, a relationship between entertainment marketing and cultural brands is observed (Addis, 2005; Cuellar and Henao, 2015; Arosa and Chica, 2020). Another variant studied here is aesthetic marketing, where it was demonstrated, from the hedonic and symbolic perspective, that feelings and emotions influence consumer behavior (Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982).

The three variants mentioned contain elements that improve the consumption and positioning of brands, however, the research conventional neglect part important of the experiences, emotions, and aesthetics in the consumption (Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982; Schmitt, 1999; 2006; Lenderman and Sánchez, 2008; Caridad et al., 2015). Therefore, the purpose of this research is to analyze the relationship of experiential, entertainment, and aesthetic marketing with cultural brand positioning, where symbolic and hedonistic elements are observed. (Ries and Trout, 1989; Kotler et al., 2000; Lane, 2008; Hernández, 2012).

2. Preliminary Notes

Theoretical and empirical research has demonstrated the evolution of marketing to variants such as experiential marketing, entertainment marketing and aesthetic marketing and it has proven its relationship with various disciplines like the brand positioning (Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982; Pine and Gilmore, 1998; Schmitt, 1999, 2003, 2006; Kotler and Armstrong, 2008; Cuellar and Henao, 2015). This evolution arose from the observation that traditional marketing is not efficient in detecting new consumer needs or trends in today's markets (Ortegón and Gómez, 2016; Sabogal and Rojas 2020). However, few research has studied the relationship between these variants and the brand positioning, in specific, in the cultural sector (Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982; Pine and Gilmore, 1998; Schmitt, 1999, 2003, 2006).

Theoretical and empirical study of experiential marketing has had a boom in the latest years between researchers from different disciplines (Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982; Pine and Gilmore, 1998; Schmitt, 1999, 2003, 2006; Addis and Holbrook, 2001; Gilmore and Pine, 2002; Carú and Cova, 2003; Addis, 2005; Lenderman and Sánchez, 2008; Barrios, 2012; Moral and Fernández, 2012; Ortegón and Gómez, 2016; Muñoz et al., 2020; Sabogal and Rojas 2020). Research has shown that consumers purchase products for their entertainment, fun and pleasure and not just for their functional use (Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982; Kao, Huang, and Yang, 2007; Cuellar and Henao, 2015). This, since the consumers markets have changed (Ortegón and Gómez, 2016; Sabogal and Rojas 2020).

The aesthetic marketing, by its part, noted that since a perspective hedonic and symbolic, the feelings and emotions help determine the consumer behavior (Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982). However, the conventional research neglect important part of the consumer experience, which includes aspects like leisure activities, symbolic meanings, creativity, emotions, aesthetics, hedonism, and psych resources (Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982; Schmitt, 1999; 2006; Lenderman and Sánchez, 2008; Caridad et al., 2015). It was observed that cultural brand positioning contains symbolic and hedonistic elements, therefore, there is a relationship between experiential, entertainment, and aesthetic marketing with cultural brand positioning (Ries and Trout, 1989; Kotler et al., 2000; Lane, 2008; Hernández, 2012).

When studying the positioning of cultural brand in Mexico, it was found that it has had an important development in the last decade, due to the obtaining of stimulus from different disciplines and areas as well as numerous factors of interest, such as democratizing policies and cultures, and even a better commodification of said cultural industry (Rosas, 2002). A problem detected in the positioning of cultural brand, is the little identification of organizations, and cultural goods and services (Ortega, 2009). In this regard, a factor that affects Mexico is the lack of studies that promote the identification of cultural brands (Rosas, 2002; Ortega, 2009). In this sense, issues related to cultural consumption are relevant for researchers and organizations (Ortega, 2009). Therefore, it is important to determine whether

experiential marketing influences cultural brand positioning.

Recent evidence shows that marketing, through its new variants, influences the generation or increase of consumption, in this case, cultural (Arosa and Chica, 2020). Experiential, emotional, and aesthetic approaches consider consumers as rational and emotional human beings, who seek to achieve pleasurable experiences (Schmitt, 1999). Therefore, for the consumers, factors like the social environment, technology, variety, price, the atmosphere, and the brand positioning are factors determinants in the consumption (Verhoef, Lemon, Parasuraman, Roggeveen, Tsiros, and Schlesinger, 2009). In this way, this study shows the relationship between marketing variants such experiential, entertainment and aesthetics and their relationship with cultural brand positioning. The objective of this research is to analyze, empirically, the influence of experiential, entertainment, and aesthetic marketing in the positioning of a cultural brand in Mexico, a country prone to study of the cultural sector.

2.1 Experiential marketing and cultural brand positioning

Experiential marketing attends various levels in the consumption process, for its use, Schmitt (1999) proposed the experiential modules that includes aspects like feel, think, act, and relate. In addition, in later studies, it was found that experiential marketing uses symbolic stimuli to obtain positive emotional responses, influences the decision-making process and generates emotional, sensory, cognitive, behavioral, and relational values for consumers (Schmitt, 1999, 2006; Tsaor, Chiu and Wang, 2006; Moral and Fernández, 2012; Alonso and Grande, 2017; Sabogal and Rojas, 2020).

Experiential marketing variants influence the generation or increase of consumption, in this case, cultural, for example, from the paradigm of relational marketing, relationships between organizations and consumers, promote the exchange of knowledge that impacts on innovation for consumers, thus on consumption (Arosa and Chica, 2020). The experiential approach considers consumers as rational and emotional human beings who are concerned with achieving pleasurable experiences (Schmitt, 1999). The science observed through a conceptual model for the creation of experiences, that for consumers, factors such as the social environment, technology, variety, price, atmosphere, and brand are determining factors for consumption. Furthermore, previous experiences can influence future ones. (Verhoef, Lemon, Parasuraman, Roggeveen, Tsiros, & Schlesinger, 2009). Thus, considering the information presented, it is possible to propose the following research hypothesis:

H1. The experiential marketing has a positive and significative influence in the cultural brand positioning in the state of Aguascalientes, Mexico.

2.2 Entertainment marketing and cultural brand positioning

Entertainment marketing innovates and renews the experience, is present in the qualities of the product or service, and in the content of the message emitted to the consumer, both in its narrative and aesthetics structure, in this way, entertainment marketing ensures a social and experiential impact on consumers which increases their satisfaction (Cuellar and Henao, 2015). Some traditional theories such as promotion theory and sales theory have demonstrated a relationship between entertainment marketing and cultural brand positioning, stressing the importance of a new focus on products and services, build specific audiences and meet the needs and preferences of different types of consumers, to create an identity between these and the brands they consume (Valencia et al., 2019).

In new marketing trends, entertainment has aspects such as branded entertainment, which suggests the production of entertainment content by brands through hybrid communication (Aguilera et al., 2015). Entertainment marketing generates social interaction, which creates experiences for consumers. For its part, the consumption of art and culture includes education and entertainment, so that the consumer learns and enjoys at the same time (Addis, 2005; Valencia et al., 2019). Thus, considering the information presented, it is possible to propose the following research hypothesis:

H2. The entertainment marketing has positive and significative influence in the cultural brand positioning in the state of Aguascalientes, Mexico.

2.3 Aesthetic marketing and cultural brand positioning

In a hedonic, symbolic, and aesthetic perspective, some authors such as Holbrook and Hirschman (1982), examined the nature of consumption, as a result, detected that the feelings and the emotions help determine consumer behavior. However, conventional research neglected an important part in the analysis of consumer experience, leaving aside aspects such as leisure activities, symbolic meanings, creativity, emotions, aesthetics, hedonism, and psychology resources aspects necessary to have an expanded vision of cultural consumption (Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982; Schmitt, 1999; 2006; Lenderman and Sánchez, 2008; Caridad et al., 2015). Also, the playful activities, the sensory pleasures, fantasies, aesthetic appreciation, and emotional answers influence in the cultural consumer decision making (Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982). In the literature review, elements were observed that imply a relationship between experiential, entertainment and aesthetic marketing, and cultural brand positioning (Schmitt, 2006; Lenderman and Sánchez, 2008; Caridad et al., 2015). Thus, considering the information presented, it is possible to propose the following research hypothesis:

H3. The aesthetic marketing has positive and significative influence in the cultural brand positioning in the state of Aguascalientes, Mexico.

To confirm the research hypothesis, an empirical study was performed, applying a structured survey instrument to a sample of 427 people in the state of Aguascalientes,

Mexico. Since there is no information to indicate the exact number of people who have contact with cultural brands in Aguascalientes (INEGI, 2020), a sample was obtained from the statistical formula for infinite population. Therefore, the suggested sample for this research was at least 385 people, this with 95% confidence and a 5% error. To measure the constructs that make up the theoretical model of this research, the questionnaire was created from measurement scales, and applied in a simple random way (Hair et al., 2019). The questionnaire was structured through Likert scales, which included numerical values from 1 to 5, where 1 is to disagree and 5 is to agree (Bertram, 2008; Matas, 2018). The questionnaire was divided into blocks to measure each variable. The scales were adapted and previously used in various contexts, also, showed efficiency and reliability.

To measure the experiential marketing variable (ExpM), 8 items were used (Martín, Cabero, and de Paz, 2008; Pérez, 2008; Hernández et al., 2014; Caridad, Castellanos, and Hernández, 2015). To measure the entertainment marketing variable (EntM), 5 items were used (Holbrook, 1999; Babin and Kim, 2001; Gallarza and Gil, 2006). To measure the aesthetic marketing variable (AesM), 6 items were used (Holbrook, 1999; Gallarza and Gil, 2006). To measure the variable positioning of cultural brand (CulBP), 8 items were used (Schmitt, 1999; Brakus et al., 2009; Zarantonello, and Schmitt, 2010; Fernández and Delgado, 2011). This questionnaire is a valid method for collecting data that can be used in Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling, PLS-SEM (Hair et al., 2010; Hair et al., 2019).

This research analyzed the variables of the theoretical model using structural equation modeling (SEM) based on variance, being the one that best suited to the objectives of the proposed research model. The structural equation modeling (SEM) is essential to avoid the measurement errors and multicollinearity, this is tested through the reliability and validity of the instrument (Hair Jr, Black, Babin, Anderson, & Tatham, 2010; Hair et al., 2019). For the measurement of reliability and validity, the method of partial least squares (PLS) was used, thus, to show the relationships between research variables with a structural equation modeling (SEM) based on variance (Hair et al., 2019). The Partial Least Squares Structural Equations Model (PLS-SEM) was used to analyze the results of this research and to compare the hypotheses (Hair et al., 2018; Hair et al., 2019). To check the theoretical model under modeling proposal was used the SmartPLS 3.3 software suggested for the community scientific to apply bliss modeling (Hair et al., 2019).

The data obtained were analyzed to check its reliability and validity, the analysis went through Cronbach's Alpha (CA) and the Composite Reliability Index (CRI) (Fornell and Larcker, 1981; Ringle et al., 2015). The reliability analysis of the indicators was performed, showing external loads equal to or greater than 0.708, in all the items that make up the measured constructs (Hair et al., 2019). The compound reliability and the Cronbach alpha are interpreted in the same way, these values are between 0 and 1, therefore, the higher the value, the higher the level of reliability. In this way, it was observed that all the values presented here, range between 0.708 and 1, therefore, we have reliability of internal consistency in the measurement models (Hair et al., 2019). To measure the convergent validity, the

Average Extracted Variance (AVE) was analyzed. The AVE with a value of 0.50 or more indicates that the construct explains more than half (50%) of the variance of its indicators (Henseler et al., 2015; Hair et al., 2019). Therefore, convergent validity was observed since all values are higher than the suggested 0.50 values. Therefore, it was observed convergent validity in each of the constructs measured reflectively that make up the theoretical model of this investigation, since all the values are higher than the suggested value 0.50 (Henseler et al., 2015; Hair et al., 2019). Table 1 shows the information.

Table 1: Reliability and validity tests

| Variable | Cronbach's Alpha | CRI | AVE |
|------------------------------------|------------------|-------|-------|
| Aesthetic Marketing (AesM) | 0.894 | 0.919 | 0.653 |
| Cultural Brand Positioning (CulBP) | 0.875 | 0.903 | 0.571 |
| Entertainment Marketing (EntM) | 0.837 | 0.885 | 0.606 |
| Experiential Marketing (ExpM) | 0.799 | 0.861 | 0.554 |

CRI: Composite Reliability Index; AVE: Average Variance Extracted.

In addition, the evaluation of the discriminant validity of the model considers elements such as the Fornell and Larcker criterion (Table 2), which considers the amount of variance a construct obtains from its indicators, and which must be greater than the one shared with other constructs (Ringle et al., 2015).

Table 2: Fornell and Larcker criterion

| | AesM | CulBP | EntM | ExpM |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| AesM | 0.808 | | | |
| CulBP | 0.562 | 0.756 | | |
| EntM | 0.677 | 0.584 | 0.779 | |
| ExpM | 0.648 | 0.536 | 0.631 | 0.744 |

AesM: Aesthetic Marketing; CulBP: Cultural Brand Positioning; EntM: Entertainment Marketing; ExpM: Experiential Marketing.

And the Heterotrait-Monotrait matrix (HTMT), which is formed by correlations between indicators measuring the same construct, which must be less than 1 (Table 3) (Ringle et al., 2015).

Table 3: Heterotrait - Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)

| Variable | AesM | CulBP | EntM | ExpM |
|----------|-------|-------|-------|------|
| AesM | | | | |
| CulBP | 0.627 | | | |
| EntM | 0.774 | 0.674 | | |
| ExpM | 0.769 | 0.627 | 0.764 | |

AesM: Aesthetic Marketing; CulBP: Cultural Brand Positioning; EntM: Entertainment Marketing; ExpM: Experiential Marketing.

3. Main Results

The analysis of the most relevant information for each construct is presented in this section. It starts with the values found in experiential marketing, followed by entertainment marketing, aesthetic marketing, and finally cultural brand positioning.

3.1 Experiential Marketing

People experience pleasant sensations depending on their five senses when purchasing cultural goods or services.

The attention received from suppliers of cultural goods or services influences consumer satisfaction.

The variety of resources offered by suppliers of cultural goods or services generates satisfaction in consumers.

The perception that people have of cultural institutions, goods, and services, has been formed through the variety of positive experiences is formed through the interaction with said elements.

Cultural institutions that provide additional services within their facilities such as internet, courses, counseling, guides, among others, generate a better experience.

3.2 Entertainment Marketing

- People enjoy the cultural activities completely in the place where they have been performed.
- People enjoy consuming cultural goods or services in their free time.
- During cultural consumption the experiences obtained are pleasant.
- Cultural consumption generates fun.
- Through cultural experiences you get values of enjoyment and fun suitable.

3.3 Aesthetic marketing

- People value the beauty of cultural goods or services they have consumed or want to consume.
- People value the aesthetics of the cultural venues they have visited or want to visit.
- People value the aesthetics of the cultural goods they have acquired or want to acquire.
- People value cultural events such as shows, museums, exhibitions, concerts, cinema, theater, etc., which they have visited.
- People value the beauty of art (monuments, squares, sculptures, etc.) in the cultural goods or services they have acquired or wish to acquire.
- In general, people value the aesthetics and beauty of cultural goods or services.

3.4 Cultural brand positioning

- There is a perception that brands of cultural goods or services stimulate a critical sense.
- When brands of cultural goods or services are used or thought of, imagination develops
- When you see, observe, or listen to the mark of some good or cultural service, inspiration is generated.
- Brands of cultural goods or services are capable of inciting participation.
- Brands of cultural goods or services generate experiences.
- Brands of cultural goods or services encourage interaction between you and them.
- Brands of acquired cultural goods or services allow you to feel part of a cultural community.

The highly recommended *bootstrapping* technique with 5000 samples was used to confirm the hypotheses of this research (Jackson, Gillaspay, and Purc-Stephenson, 2009). To determine the nature of the relationship between the variables, to obtain the level of significance and the contribution of the relationships, the values of the standardized coefficients, the t value and the p value were used. The result is shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Structural Relationship of the Variables

| Hypothesis | Structural Relationship | Path Coefficient | Standard Deviation | t value | p value |
|--|-------------------------|------------------|--------------------|---------|---------|
| H1. The experiential marketing has a positive and significant influence in the cultural brand positioning in the state of Aguascalientes, Mexico. | ExpM>CulBP | 0.194 | 0.051 | 3.784 | 0.000 |
| H2. The entertainment marketing has positive and significant influence in the cultural brand positioning in the state of Aguascalientes, Mexico. | EntM>CulBP | 0.307 | 0.057 | 5.349 | 0.000 |
| H3. The aesthetic marketing has positive and significant influence in the cultural brand positioning in the state of Aguascalientes, Mexico. | AesM>CulBP | 0.228 | 0.062 | 3.660 | 0.000 |

AesM: Aesthetic Marketing; CulBP: Cultural Brand Positioning; EntM: Entertainment Marketing; ExpM: Experiential Marketing.

This research hypotheses are accepted. It was shown that in the ExpM>CulBP relationship, the experiential marketing explains 19.4% of cultural brand positioning with a t value of 3.784 and p significance of 0.000. In the EntM>CulBP relationship, the entertainment marketing explains 30.7% of cultural brand positioning with a t value of 5.349 and p significance of 0.000. And in the AesM>CulBP relationship, the aesthetic marketing explains 22.8% of cultural brand positioning with a t value of 3.660 and p significance of 0.000. In addition, how was observed in table 1, all factor loads above 0.70, indicating internal reliability (Hair et al., 2019).

Positive and significant relationships were detected within the theoretical model. Therefore, the hypotheses **H1**, **H2**, **H3** are fulfilled by showing positive and significant effects, being **H2** the most significant. Therefore, it is empirically proven that experiential marketing (ExpM) has a positive and significant effect on cultural brand positioning (CulBP); entertainment marketing (EntM) has a positive and significant effect on cultural brand positioning (CulBP) and aesthetic marketing (AesM) has a positive effect on cultural brand positioning (CulBP).

4. Conclusion

The objective of this research was to determine the influence of experiential, entertainment, and aesthetic marketing in the cultural brand positioning in Aguascalientes, Mexico. Therefore, it was empirically demonstrated that experiential marketing, entertainment marketing, and aesthetic marketing have positive and significant influence in the cultural brand positioning, for purposes of this study, was delimited to a geographical area. The reliability and validity of the results were verified. There is a relationship between the topics studied, where it is unleashed that the use of experiential, entertainment and aesthetics marketing generate benefits to consumers such as the generation of experiences, fun and pleasure, which improves their perception about the brands they consume. Therefore, this research also contributes to research concerning experiential, entertainment, aesthetics marketing, and its use in various contexts, in this case the cultural.

The research provided implications for boosting the use of experiential marketing, entertainment marketing and aesthetic marketing in cultural brand positioning, in the state of Aguascalientes, which generates social and economic development in an important sector for the place. In this way, it is concluded that experiential marketing has a positive and significant effect on the positioning of cultural brand, in addition, with the generation of actions that stimulate the senses, the variety of offer of cultural goods and services and the generation of satisfaction and experiences for consumers is improved perception towards cultural brands. Thus, elements of experiential marketing influence the generation or increase of cultural consumption (Schmitt, 1999; Verhoef et al., 2009; Arosa and Chica, 2020).

Entertainment marketing has a positive and significant effect on cultural brand positioning, this is supported through aspects such as fun, generating experiences

and fun, even, in digital scenarios as new forms of entertainment social experiences are obtained (Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982; Choy et al., 1997; Schmitt, 1999; Kao, Huang, and Yang, 2007; Aguilera et al., 2015; Cuellar and Henao, 2015). For its part, aesthetic marketing has a positive and significant effect on the positioning of cultural brand, so to address aspects related to aesthetics, such as pleasure, fun and the generation of beauty in cultural goods or services, a link between consumers and brands influences generation (Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982; Schmitt, 1999; 2006).

In the relationships analyzed, the strongest influence has the entertainment marketing on the cultural brand positioning, therefore, it is more important the use of entertainment marketing to improve the cultural brand positioning. Since most of the research has limitations, it states that the research focused on the population of a single state, in the future, it can be replicated in other regions or countries to carry out cross-cultural analyses, the statistical technique used for the analysis was based on variance, in subsequent studies other techniques may be used that focus on covariance analysis. Finally, to continue the analysis of the phenomenon of experiential marketing, entertainment marketing and aesthetic marketing in the positioning of cultural brand, it is important to continue strengthening this type of models. Therefore, it is recommended to add new constructs, in other contexts, that strengthen and deepen these important topics.

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