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Brand app engagement: a theoretical model

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Resumen

Objetivo: El objetivo principal de este trabajo es proponer un modelo teórico que pueda ser útil para medir los antecedentes y consecuencias del *customer brand app engagement*, de manera que las empresas que ya incursionaron o están por comenzar a utilizar las aplicaciones móviles como canal de comunicación con el cliente pueda establecer una estrategia adecuada al sector de la industria en el que se encuentra, al tipo de cliente dirigida y el producto o servicio ofrecido.

Diseño / metodología / enfoque: Es un trabajo meramente documental.

Originalidad / valor: Una de las contribuciones teóricas de esta investigación es un nuevo modelo conceptual para medir el *customer engagement* en un entorno móvil específicamente enfocado a las aplicaciones móviles de marca, el cual es un tema emergente e innovador en mercadotecnia.

Palabras clave: brand app engagement, satisfacción, lealtad, brand app experience.

Abstract

Objective: The main aim of this work is to propose a theoretical model that can be useful to measure the background and consequences of customer brand app engagement, so that companies that have already dabbled or are about to start using mobile applications as a communication channel with the client you can establish a strategy appropriate to the sector of the industry in which you are, the type of customer addressed and the product or service offered.

Design/methodology/ approach: It is purely documentary work.

Originality / Value: One of the theoretical contributions of this research is a new conceptual model to measure customer engagement in a mobile environment specifically focused on mobile brand applications, which is an emerging and innovative theme in marketing.

Keywords: brand app engagement, satisfaction, loyalty, brand app experience.

JEL: M310, O310, O350, M370

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Introduction

The growing popularity of technologies and information systems is forcing companies to develop new communication and customer relationship channels (Brodie, Ilic, Juric & Hollebeck, 2013; Schamari and Schaefers, 2015; Machado, 2016), fostering ways of interaction between companies-clients and clients-clients, totally different from traditional models, where the client becomes an active and essential part in the production and communication of companies (Machado, 2016). As Sashi (2012) mentions, the traditional roles of the seller and the customer have changed.

In this sense, the extensive use of intelligent mobile devices and the introduction of mobile applications provide an opportunity to connect, share and exchange information with customers at any time and place (Machado, 2016). These characteristics of locality, mobility and sociability (Marsden & Chaney, 2013) of the modern consumer are influencing their purchasing behaviour, and companies, therefore, require a deep understanding of this phenomenon (Tarute, 2017), so that they do not remain only in customer satisfaction and loyalty, but go beyond obtaining a real competitive advantage (Kumar, Aksov, Donkers, Venkatesan, Wiesel & Tillmanns. 2010).

With the exponential growth of mobile communication technology, an unlimited number of mobile smartphone applications have been permeating in each and every one of the activities that are carried out in daily life (Kim, Lin & Sung. 2013).

Such applications serve as a hub for a variety of content and services that mobile users can access anytime, anywhere. Mobile phone applications allow consumers to use their smartphones to handle all daily tasks. A consumer can use an application to buy products, pay bills, locate ATMs, find local businesses, get directions to reach a destination and find menus and reviews of local (and not so local) restaurants, among other functions. Marketing professionals have now begun to create a brand communication channel that reaches their current and potential consumers and is known as branded mobile applications.

This paper aims to propose a theoretical model that analyzes the relationships between brand app experience, satisfaction and loyalty, as a background for customer brand app engagement, and WOM and participation as its consequences; so that companies can evaluate the strategy used or be used through this channel according to consumer behaviour and their relationship and acceptance of brand applications.

Branded mobile applications

Mobile applications already represent more than 80% of the time that people spend using mobile phones. Downloading in 2017, a total of 178.1 million applications in the world, the most used

being those of social networks (ditrendia, 2018). Given this scenario, how an application is defined and what role they have for companies and brands.

Santiago, Trbaldo, Kamijo and Fernández (2005, p. 7) define them as "any computer application designed to run on smartphones, tablets and other mobile devices." They are usually available through distribution platforms, operated by companies that have mobile operating systems such as Android, iOS, BlackBerry OS and Windows Phone, among others (cited in Lee, 2008). These small programs can come pre-installed on the device, for download from the Internet for free or install them after purchase (Krum, 2010; Ryan and Jones, 2012). Its objective is to add functionalities and extend the capabilities of mobile devices by increasing their value because they allow users to perform particular tasks (Chiem et al. 2010; Purcell, Entner and Henderson, 2010).

From marketing, Krum (2010) pointed out that applications could "be developed and sold as independent income generation programs or as marketing tools to help promote a specific brand, product or service" (cited in Sproson, 2014, p. 20).

With the above, some academics and marketing professionals focused on establishing the definition of mobile applications oriented to marketing, calling them as mobile brand applications (mobile brand application, in English). Bellman, Potter, Treleaven-Hassard, Robinson and Varan (2011) are pioneers in studies on the effectiveness of mobile applications.

They were defined as "downloadable software for a mobile device that prominently shows the identity of a brand, often through the name of the application and the appearance of a logo or icon of the brand, throughout the user experience "(Bellman et al. 2011, p. 191).

By providing consumers with unique experiences associated with their brands, companies can use branded applications to interact with consumers (current and potential) more effectively (Kim et al. 2013).

Also, Bhavé, Jain & Roy (2013, p. 65), adds that "the brand application provides valuable utility to the consumer and establishes an emotional connection with them [...] and is useful in brand building".

The study by Bellman et al. (2011) examined the effectiveness of brand applications in terms of brand attitude and brand buying intention. However, to date there are very few studies that have examined how global marketing specialists try to involve consumers with branded applications (Bellman, et al. 2011; Kim and Yoon, 2013; Magrath and McCormick, 2012 and 2013; Rishi, 2012; Wang, Liao and Yang, 2013; Sproson, 2014). Kim et al. (2013) in their study examine how marketing professionals use brand applications and particularly how they incorporate in their brand applications the significant engagement attributes suggested in the literature (for example, O'Brien and Toms 2008): vitality, novelty, motivation, control, personalization, feedback and multiplatform.

Brand applications are simply another form of interactive advertising and marketing communications but more attractive than the traditional web format (Bellman et al. 2011). As such, marketing specialists understand that the engaging experiences that consumers have with this form of brand communication can affect their responses. This can happen in three ways. First, such experiences are due to the high level of attention that mobile users give to smartphones. In general terms, people's acceptance of these brand-related messages may be affected by the concentration they have towards their smartphones (Hutton and Rodnick, 2009).

Second, a variety of interactive features of mobile applications allows marketers to offer unique brand experiences that are not available with traditional mobile web experiences (Moceri, Smud, Vitualich and Wright, 2011). Users not only find brands while surfing the Internet through mobile devices but actively interact with them. Third, they are not perceived as an advertisement that interrupts the mobile experience (Hutton and Rodnick, 2009). They are welcome as useful tools (Bellman et al. 2011) because they offer information to help users make consumption decisions and provide entertaining experiences.

Brand app engagement

The term engagement in the field of marketing is relatively new for both the academic and business world (Dessart, Veloutsou & Morgan-Thomas, 2015), which is why it is necessary first to establish the theoretical basis of the concept and the point where it emerges.

The exploratory studies that develop the conceptual domain of consumer engagement are mainly based on the recent evolution of marketing towards a new logic, relational marketing (for example, Brodie & Smith, 2011a; Brodie, Hollebeck, Juric & Ilic, 2011b; Vivek, 2009; van Doorn *et al.* 2010); which considers consumers as endogenous instruments in the process of value creation of the company and, therefore, requires that consumers actively participate in the process (Kuzgun, 2012); the co-creation of value and interactive experience in marketing relationships (Jaakkola and Alexander, 2014). Lusch, Vargo and Tanniru (2010) proposed this philosophy as the Logic of the dominant Marketing Service (S-D Logic). They suggested this theoretical approach as co-creative experiences of value with companies and / or other interested parties (Lusch and Vargo, 2006), where the co-creation of a personalized experience and the perceived value with a client is achieved through an active, explicit and continuous dialogue with the company (Vargo and Lusch, 2008).

The concept of consumer engagement emerges later and attracts substantial attention from academics and professionals. In 2009, it became a key research priority for the Marketing Science Institute (MSI) in its 2010 - 2012 Research Guide (MSI, 2010), as well as in recognized journals such as the Journal of Service Research Special Issue (2010), Journal of Strategic Marketing

Special Issue (2010) and several articles in the Journal of Services Research (2011). Similarly, for 2015, Gambetti, Biraghi, Shultz and Graffigna described it as the "hot new topic in strategic marketing and branding" (p. 1).

However, it is important to note that despite the emphasis that has been given in the field of marketing, it has not been possible to homogenize its denomination, conceptualization and dimensions, as well as its background and consequences, as they vary depending on the researcher, the focal entity (e.g. brand, company, client, communication channel) and the context in which the study is carried out (offline, online, mobile).

Despite this, most researchers have used cognitive, emotional and behavioural components for the construction of engagement, which has been present in any definition of consumer engagement. Therefore, the definition that Hollebeek (2011a) proposes as a multidimensional construct is considered the most comprehensive. The author defines customer engagement as "the level of cognitive, emotional and behavioural investment of the client in interactions with a specific brand" (p. 555).

In a mobile context, where market research and customer engagement are even more recent, some pioneering studies can be identified that attempt to define it concerning mobile technology or more specifically with brand applications.

Dwivedi (2015) in a mobile technology context, uses the term engagement to the consumer brand, defining it as "the positive mental state, satisfactory and related to the use of the brand that is characterized by safety, dedication and absorption" (p. 100).

On the other hand, Kumar and Pansari (2015) used the mobile service provider as the focal entity of the study and defined the term engagement as "the attitude, behaviour and level of connection 1) between customers 2) between customers and employees and 3) of clients and employees with the company" (p. 3).

Subsequently, studies such as Kim's, Wang and Malthouse (2015), Viswanathan *et al.* (2017) and Fang, Zhao, Wen and Wang (2017) focused on the engagement to mobile applications and defined it as follows:

"Consumer engagement is a set of brand application experiences that motivate consumers to try to happen repeatedly in their lives" (Kim, Wang and Malthouse, 2015, p. 54).

"Behavior of mobile engagement: the interactive experience of customers with the focal brand mobile media" (Viswanathan *et al.* 2017, p. 38).

"Engagement behaviour refers to the continuous interaction of users with a mobile application after adoption that also includes sustained value-added social interactions, positive word of mouth,

collaboration with other users and co-creation of customers" (p . 270) ... "Behavioral interaction is the continuous interaction of users with a mobile application" (Fang *et al.* 2017, p. 271).

On the other hand, Kim and Baek (2017) stated that "the engagement of the mobile application is the quality of the motivational experiences that patients have when having a mobile application and how those experiences meet their functional, experimental and social expectations" (p . 149)

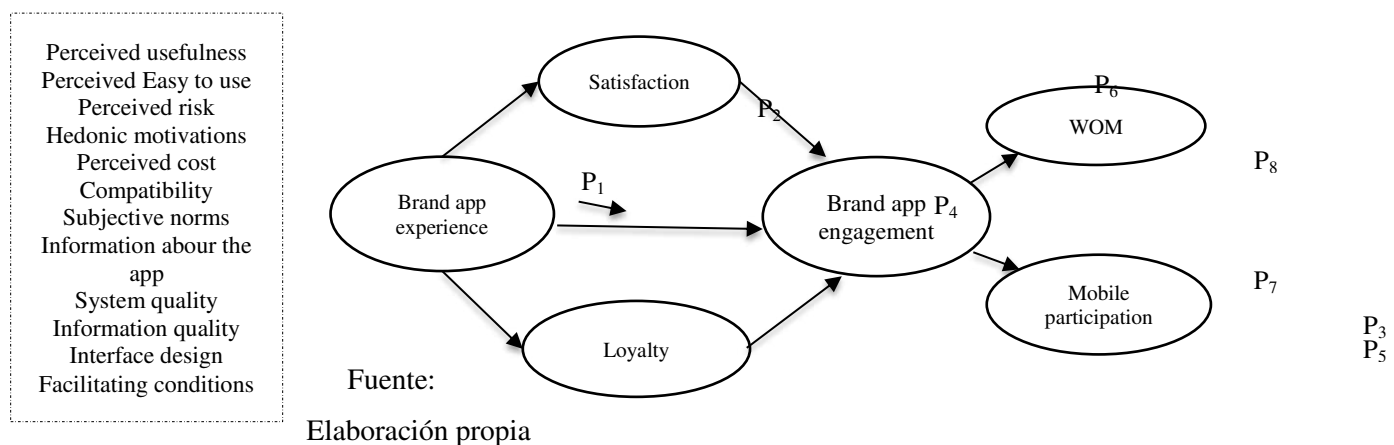
Finally, according to Thakur (2018), the customer engagement is a psychological state that causes constant interactions with the focal object (in this case mobile applications) that not only seek the purchase-sale transaction but may be due to utilitarian or hedonic reasons (p. 49).

When analyzing the studies on customer engagement in a mobile context where the focus was on mobile applications, it was found that Bellman *et al.* (2011) was an experimental study, and that of Parker and Wang (2016), which was a phenomenological exploratory study. Among the quantitative and empirical studies on the subject, those developed by Kim, Lin and Sung (2013), Wu (2015), Kim, Wang and Malthouse (2015), Dovaliene *et al.* (2015), Dinner, van Heerde & Neslin (2015), Dovaliene, Piligrimiene & Masiulyte (2016), Tarute, Nikou & Gattautis (2017), Fang *et al.* (2017), Viswanathan *et al.* (2017), Kim & Baek (2017) and Thakur, 2018, among others.

Proposed research model and premises

Figure 1 presents the conceptual model of this research with the main variables and the hypothetical relationships between them. Consequently, this section analyzes the relationships between brand app experience, satisfaction and loyalty, as a background for mobile brand app engagement, and WOM and participation as its consequences. All this in a context of branded mobile applications.

Figure 1. Theoretical model and research hypothesis



Background of brand app engagement

Acceptance and use of technology

Customer engagement in virtual contexts is associated with advances in information technology (Cheung *et al.* 2014), such as frequent adoption of smartphones, tablets, laptops and many other mobile technologies with internet (Zhang, 2016). In this area, different theoretical approaches have been used with respect to the use of electronic or online environments as places for customer engagement (Gefen, Karahanna and Straub, 2003), such as the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) developed by Davis (1989) and Davis, Bagozzi and Warshaw (1989) and modified by Venkatesh and Davis (2000) where they demonstrate that the perception of utility and ease of use of the task to be performed determines the actual adoption of information technology. Alternatively, also the Rogers Innovation Diffusion Theory (1962), where it explains how social systems play a role in the dissemination and adoption decisions of customers (Zhang, 2016). On the other hand, social capital research offers significant advances to determine the dimensions of online customer engagement, emphasizing the social influence on the motivations of individual engagement within online communities (Lee, Kim and Kim, 2011). The perspectives of mass communication reinforce the proposal that the exhibition of information and communication channels create and enhance customer engagement with brands/organizations on virtual platforms (Brodie, Ilic, Juric and Hollebeek, 2013). Individual clients who have the opportunity to access many information and communication channels are more willing to learn about innovations, such as online participation functions and facilities (Jung, Kim and Kim, 2014).

In a digital environment, the adoption of technology (be it a computer or mobile device) as part of life is considered the starting point for consumer engagement, regardless of the brand, product or service in question. Kim *et al.* (2013) define technological acceptance as “the stage in which something (for example a computer or mobile device) is selected for use by an individual or an organization” (p. 361).

In the case of brands it is necessary first that the user has chosen and is using a mobile device as part of his life (stage of technological acceptance), second that he is familiar with the use of mobile applications, and third will come to the evaluation of whether you are or are not using the brand’s mobile application (living the experience) that allow you to determine your satisfaction and loyalty to later generate that engagement with the technology first and in turn with the mobile application of the brand that offers the products or services in question.

Therefore engagement is beyond the simple adoption or acceptance of mobile technology. The adoption precedes and is a subset of the engagement (Kim *et al.* 2013) previously forming the brand app experience, being considered as the first antecedent of the mobile brand app engagement.

Moreover, derived from this technological adoption in the first place to generate the brand app experience, the first twelve premises of table 1 arise:

Table 1. Premises and supporting literature on acceptance of mobile brand applications as generators of the brand app experience

Premises	Estudios previos que respaldan la relación
Premise 1a: Perceived usefulness → Brand app experience	Rose, Clark, Samouel & Hair (2012), Partala & Saari (2015), Bilgihan, Kandampully & Zhang (2016), Bilgihan, Kandampully & Zhang (2016), Azwa & Hazri (2017), McLean, Al-Nabhani & Wilson (2018), Huang, Chang, Yu & Chen (2019) Rose, Clark, Samouel & Hair (2012), Partala & Saari (2015), Azwa & Hazri (2017), McLean, Al-Nabhani & Wilson (2018), Huang, Chang, Yu & Chen (2019), Azwa & Hazri (2017), Micu, Bouzaabia, Bouzaabia, Micu & Capatina (2019) Partala & Saari (2015), McLean, Al-Nabhani & Wilson (2018), Bilgihan, Kandampully & Zhang (2016) Bilgihan, Kandampully & Zhang (2016), Azwa & Hazri (2017), Rose, Clark, Samouel & Hair (2012), Lee & Jin (2019), Muzellec, Feenstra, de Faultrier & Boulay (2016), Bilgihan, Kandampully & Zhang (2016).
Premise 1b: Perceived easy to use → Brand app experience	
Premise 1c: Perceived risk → Brand app experience	
Premise 1d: Hedonic motivations → Brand app experience	
Premise 1e: Perceived cost → Brand app experience	
Premise 1f: Subjective norms → Brand app experience	
Premise 1g: Compatibility → Brand app experience	
Premise 1h: Facilitating conditions → Brand app experience	
Premise 1i: Information about the app → Brand app experience	
Premise 1j: System quality → Brand app experience	
Premise 1k: Information quality → Brand app experience	
Premise 1l: Interface design → Brand app experience	

Fuente: Elaboración propia

Brand app experience

The experience of the brand is defined as “the perception of consumers, in each moment of contact they have with the brand, whether in the brand images projected in advertising, during the first contact with the brand, or the level of quality referring to the personal treatment received” (Alloza, 2008, p. 337). Alternatively, it is also understood as the “sensations, feelings, cognitions and behavioural responses evoked by stimuli related to the brand that is part of the design and identity of the brand, packaging, communications and environments or environments” (Brakus, Schmitt & Zarantonello, 2009, p. 53). Therefore, the brand experience arises as consumers interact with multiple brand signals, such as logos, colours, songs, characters, stories and other signs associated

with the brand (Iglesias, Singh & Batista-Foguet, 2011; Morgan-Thomas and Veloutsou, 2013; Nysveen *et al.* 2013).

Technological advances and the change in the demographic structure of society have caused changes in the patterns of production and consumption of goods and services and how brands relate to potential and real customers (Lee & Jin, 2019). Given the nature of technology, these digital (virtual) environments have given rise to new consumer experiences and the brand (Ha and Perks, 2005; Lee and Jeong, 2014; Morgan-Thomas and Veloutsou, 2013), so the type and nature of the brand experience differs depending on the means of communication used by the company to reach the consumer, in addition to the creation of an environment of joint co-creation of company-client experiences (Kohler *et al.* 2011).

Given this scenario, the question arises whether a customer experience or brand experience is the same as user experience. So it is necessary to clarify their similarities and differences, and this arises from the so-called Customer Journey, whose understanding of companies and/or brands is a critical point.

The Customer Journey can be understood as the whole path or route that a customer makes along with the many points of contact through the multiple channels used by companies or brands, and whose central focus is the customer. In this case, technology has been a fundamental tool in improving this aspect, as it has accelerated the fragmentation of media and communication channels, and omnichannel management has become the new rule. With this, it has become increasingly difficult for companies to create, manage and try to control the customer's experience and contact with the brand (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016).

So Lemon & Verhoef (2016, p. 74) conceptualize "the customer experience as the Customer Journey (or customer journey) with a company over time during the purchase cycle through multiple contact points". Considering the customer experience as "an interactive and dynamic process" (p.76) that goes from the search for the product or service until after-sales, and that includes past buying experiences and external factors, as well as points of contact that the company does not control at all.

On the other hand, Bascur, Rusu & Quiñones (2019) mention that it is a strictly personal process and implies the engagement of the client at different levels. Also, throughout this process, there are different types of Customer Journey contact points.

Within the different points of contact with the brand can be identified: word of mouth communication, social networks, website, direct contact with a brand representative, events, phone calls, magazines, promotions, email, mobile applications, among other.

With this it can now be explained that customer experience or brand experience is the result of all the interactions of a customer with a company throughout their relationship, it is not considered a discipline (as it results from various marketing strategies and techniques such as customer service, control quality, market research, among others) and their attention is on the customer's journey from the first contact to the after-sales.

While user experience, it can be considered as a design philosophy that is based on the user's needs to handle a specific software or technology and that results from combining communication, psychology, marketing, graphic design, computer science, and its primary attention is in the user's perception when interacting with the product or service.

In customer experience or brand experience, the customer relationship is multichannel, and the specialist in this area works so that the entire customer process exceeds their expectations. In the case of user experience, it only focuses on the user regarding a specific channel or service, for example, improving the web, or an app, to make it easier, understandable, attractive.

As far as User experience and customer experience or brand experience, they are different but not separate. User experience is part of the customer experience or brand experience.

Brand mobile applications are considered points of contact since they are considered channels that show the identity of the brand to consumers, and when considered a software, it goes into the user experience. So for the present study, since it is only a single point of contact, mobile brand applications, the term to be used will be brand app experience associating with the cumulative phenomenon of consumer experiences in its interaction with the brand through the mobile application of the brand. The customer's interaction with the brand within this environment is what facilitates customer brand engagement (Altschwager *et al.* 2017).

Brand applications allow customers to experience products, services and functions that enhance or support their lifestyles through brand experiences. Brand applications increase consumer engagement, generate immediate responses and can be an excellent marketing tool (Calder, Malthouse and Schaedel, 2009), in addition to these new interaction models offering a set of advantages or capabilities, such as recognition of location, context detection, personalization of the product or service (Zhao & Balague, 2015), portability and convenience of mobile devices, so it can be available at any time and anywhere in the application (Shankar *et al.* 2010; Bellman *et al.* 2011; Zhao and Balague, 2015) and have an experience with the brand.

Brand applications as part of a marketing strategy increase contact points with consumers, making it easier for companies to better understand their lifestyles and thus better meet their needs and desires, as well as, allow users to experience products or services directly on the mobile generating personalized experiences according to their lifestyle, improving the privacy and credibility of a

brand (Lee & Jin, 2019), and can increase engagement and brand loyalty through existing marketing channels, photographs, communications, games and social media services (Bellman *et al.* 2011; Shankar *et al.* 2010; Zhao & Balague, 2015).

Brand experiences in a virtual world influence consumer attitudes towards advertising, attitudes towards the brand and the intention to buy, as well as the success and expansion of the brand (Kim, 2010; McLean & Wilson, 2016; Lee & Jin, 2019).

The consumer's experience with a focal entity (be it brand, company, product, service, or other) defines the type of relationship that is formed, influencing the evaluation that consumers make of their interactions (Dwivedi, 2015). The result of this integrative evaluation of past specific consumption experiences can be considered as satisfaction (Wirtz and Mattila, 2001; Dwivedi, 2015; Calder, Isaac & Malthouse, 2013; Carlson, Rahman, Taylor and Voola, 2017). Consequently, the more positive the customer experience is, the higher their satisfaction will be (Carlson *et al.* 2017; Thakur, 2018), connection with the brand (Mollen & Wilson, 2010; Dwivedi, 2015) and brand engagement (Novak *et al.* 2000; Machado, 2016). Therefore, consumer experience can be considered as a background of satisfaction, of loyalty, but also of customer engagement (Mollen & Wilson, 2010; Brodie *et al.* 2011).

From the above, the following premises arise:

Premise 2: Brand app experience directly and positively impacts satisfaction.

Premise 3: Brand app experience directly and positively impacts loyalty.

Premise 4: Brand app experience directly and positively impacts brand app engagement.

In the context of branded mobile applications, satisfaction will be the result of a positive experience with its use. So if the experience of using the brand mobile application were negative, it would directly impact on a low level of satisfaction. Similarly, as long as the customer experience is positive with the use of the brand mobile application, its impact will be significant and positive on the brand app engagement.

In other words, satisfaction is the result of multiple companies (brand) - customer interactions (Machado, 2016). With a satisfied customer, the relationship between brand and customer can progress towards engagement (Sashi, 2012). Therefore, satisfaction can serve as a history of customer engagement (Brodie *et al.* 2011; Hollebeek, 2011a). In the same way to the extent that the experience with the brand application has been positive and satisfactory, loyalty is generated by the user, this being considered as an antecedent of the brand app engagement. Formulating the following premises:

Premise 5: User loyalty has a positive and significant effect on brand app engagement.

Premise 6: Satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on brand app engagement.

Table 2. Premises and supporting literature on the background of brand app engagement

Premisas	Estudios previos que respaldan la relación
Premise 2: Brand app experience → Consumer satisfaction	Reichheld, F. (1996), Radder & Han, (2015), Brakus <i>et al.</i> (2009); Keller, (2013); Sharma & Raouf, (2015), Barnes <i>et al.</i> (2014), Brakus <i>et al.</i> (2009), Chen <i>et al.</i> (2014), Ha and Perks (2005), Khan and Rahman (2015a, b), Klaus and Maklan (2013), Lin (2015), Morgan-Thomas and Veloutsou (2013), Nysveen <i>et al.</i> (2013), Nysveen and Pedersen (2014), Shobeiri, Mazaheri, & Laroche, (2015); Verhoef <i>et al.</i> , (2009); McLean, Al-Nabhani & Wilson (2018); Kruger (2018); Khan & Fatma, (2016); Dumistrescu <i>et al.</i> (2012); Bhattacharya & Srivastava (2018); Rose, Clark, Samouel & Hair (2012); Micu, Bouzaabia, Bouzaabia, Micu & Capatina (2019); Khan, Rahman & Fatma (2015); Khan & Fatma (2017); Lemon & Verhoef (2016); Rose, Clark, Samouel & Hair (2012); Jyoti & Raouf (2015), McLean, Al-Nabhani & Wilson (2018), Lee & Jin, (2019), Micu, Bouzaabia, Bouzaabia, Micu & Capatina (2019), Bhattacharya & Srivastava (2018), Al-Dmour, Ali & Al-Dmour (2019)
Premise 3: Brand app experience → Loyalty	Manthiou <i>et al.</i> 2004; Reichheld, F. (1996); Brakus <i>et al.</i> (2009); Keller, (2013); Biedenbach y Marell (2010); Qader y Omar (2013); Brakus <i>et al.</i> (2009), Francisco-Maffezzolli <i>et al.</i> (2014), Iglesias <i>et al.</i> (2011), Ishida and Taylor (2012), Khan and Rahman (2015a, b), Morrison and Crane (2007), Nysveen <i>et al.</i> (2013), Nysveen and Pedersen (2014), Ramaseshan and Stein (2014); Al-Dmour, Ali & Al-Dmour (2019); Shobeiri, Mazaheri, & Laroche, (2015); Verhoef <i>et al.</i> , (2009); McLean, Al-Nabhani & Wilson (2018); Khan & Fatma, (2016); Dumistrescu <i>et al.</i> (2012); Khan, Rahman & Fatma 2015; Khan & Fatma (2017), Kruger (2018)
Premise 4: Brand app experience → Engagement	Altschwager <i>et al.</i> (2017); Calder <i>et al.</i> (2009), Machado (2016), Tafesse (2016), Mersey <i>et al.</i> (2010), Pagani & Mirabello (2011), Hsu, Chiang, and Huang (2012); Kim <i>et al.</i> (2013), Dwivedi (2015), Carlson <i>et al.</i> (2017)
Premise 5: Loyalty → Engagement	Bowden (2009), Kuzgun (2012)
Premise 6: Consumer satisfaction → Engagement	van Doorn <i>et al.</i> (2010), Cambra-Fierro, Melero-Polo & Vázquez-Carrasco (2013), Giannakis-Bompolis and Boutsouki (2014) Flynn (2012), Sashi (2012), Machado (2016), Kim, Kim & Wachter (2013), Dovaliene <i>et al.</i> (2016), Carlson <i>et al.</i> (2017), Thakur, 2018

Fuente: Elaboración propia

Consequences of brand app engagement

Engagement is a state characterized by energy, participation and efficiency (Maslach, Schaufeli and Leiter, 2001), and is conceptually described as a flow of behaviour without any intentional mentality: for example, control, attention, focus, curiosity and/or intrinsic interest (Chapman, Selvarajah and Webster, 1999). Rosenberg and Hovland (1960) mention that engagement is not a momentary and specific state, but that it is a more persistent and penetrating cognitive-affective state (Kim *et al.*, 2013). Harter, Schmidt and Hayes (2002) establish that for both organizations and individuals, there is a strong connection between engagement and profitability through customer satisfaction, increased sales, employee retention and productivity. Applied to mobile technologies, O'Brien and Toms (2010) mention that successful technologies should not merely be usable, but should involve users.

Engagement with mobile technology and its ubiquitous service drives the value and satisfaction that can lead to loyal users (Oliver, 1980; Revels, Tojib and Tsarenko, 2010; Kim *et al.* 2013). When companies increase user engagement and build an environment that helps foster participation, they can significantly increase the chances of business success (Harter *et al.* 2002). In addition, engagement as a general term that uses virtual mechanisms to offer a competitive advantage to companies (Baldus, Voorhees and Calantone, 2014) is strongly associated with favorable attitudes and behavior towards the brand / organization (Zhang, 2016), for example, encouraging positive word of mouth (WOM, Baldus *et al.* 2014), intending to buy again (Calder, Malthouse, & Schaedel, 2009), and obtain active customer loyalty (participation) (Cheung, Zheng and Lee, 2014).

Premise 7: The brand app engagement has a positive and significant effect on user participation.

Premise 8: Brand app engagement has a positive and significant effect on WOM.

Table 4. Premises and supporting literature of the consequences of brand app engagement

Premisas	Estudios previos que respaldan la relación
Premise 7: Brand app engagement → Participation	Kuzgun (2012)
Premise 8: Brand app engagement → WOM	Vivek (2009), Vivek <i>et al.</i> (2012) Cheung, Lee & Jin (2011), Kuzgun (2012), Hollebeek and Chen (2014), Bowden <i>et al.</i> (2018), Chan, Zheng, Cheung, Lee, and Lee (2014)

Fuente: Elaboración propia

Conclusions, research contribution and limitations

The growth of mobile technology environments is reaching all kinds of industries. Smartphones and tablets along with the Internet and applications are changing the way we communicate, information search behaviour and lifestyle. With its accessibility features, easy use, intuitive and others, increase the value and satisfaction of users. These devices and tools allow them to control, where and how to participate in the chosen activities that meet their needs, saving time, having fun and interacting with others. These characteristics motivate and boost the engagement of mobile users creating new opportunities for companies.

Both the use of the Internet and mobile applications offer a personalized marketing strategy that often forces us to maintain a constant interaction between the client and the business in activities that previously could not be imagined.

Until now, a large number of scientific articles have identified the background and consequences of consumer engagement in different environments and possible focal entities, without reaching a consensus among them. However, in terms of the use and behaviour of brand application users, research is rapidly emerging due to the commercial opportunity they represent for businesses. Given this scenario, one of the theoretical contributions of this research is a new conceptual model to assess the engagement of the consumer brand application, as well as its background and consequences of contributing to existing literature and in the future can be measured empirically, which represents the unique and main Limitation of this work.

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