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A new perspective of brand equity: the case of pottery craft village collective brand in Vietnam

Nam Hoai Nguyen¹, Quang Van Ngo² and Ha Thu Thi Vu³

Abstract

Brand equity is one of the most critical factors that significantly affect the success of any business. With 860 samples, this study indicates that the brand equity of a collective Vietnamese pottery craft village is constituted by four factors, including brand awareness, brand association, perceived quality, and brand loyalty. Particularly, brand awareness has the strongest and most positive impact on the pottery village collective brand equity. This study is a way to confirm the difference between brand awareness and brand association (two variables are measured by independent scales), therefore, it is impossible to combine these two variables in testing and measuring brand equity as done by controversial studies in recent years. This study has revealed that “age” contributes as the regulatory moderation impacts the relationship between brand awareness, brand association, perceived quality, brand loyalty and collective brand equity of pottery craft village. This research also has proposed suggestions to help the pottery village collective brand owner increase their brand value.

Keywords: Brand equity; collective brand; pottery craft village; Vietnam; emerging country

Introduction

The Vietnamese government has always put rural industrial development on top priority. To achieve this goal, the government has employed two main measures, including the establishment of industrial zones and the development of traditional craft villages; in which development of traditional craft villages plays an utmost important role in creating income and job opportunities for a large number of rural workers that accounts for 68.1% of the national workforce, doubling the number of workers in urban areas (Results of 2019 Census). Among the traditional crafts in Vietnamese rural areas, pottery is one of the most ancient and traditional ones. In the context of global integration where new-generation free trade agreements are implemented (e.g., ETA), promoting pottery is not only to preserve and develop the national cultural identity but also to contribute to maintaining the sustainable economic development of rural areas. This study is useful and essential for Vietnam since Vietnamese pottery craft villages are facing increasingly strong competition from imported or industrially-produced ceramic products. Both craft villages and households haven't got an awareness of the importance of brand equity (perceptions and behaviours of customers towards the brand) and trademark. Therefore, there is no effective solution to build and develop brands so as to increase customer loyalty and product competitiveness.

In Vietnam, there are 12 traditional pottery craft villages. In fact, the North of Vietnam is the birthplace of pottery craft; today, the largest and most distinctive pottery villages are in the

¹ Nam Hoai Nguyen, Banking Academy, Dong Da, Hanoi, Vietnam. E-mail: namnh@hvn.edu.vn.

² Quang Van Ngo, Hanoi University of Industry, Vietnam. E-mail: quangnv@hau.edu.vn.

³ Ha Thu Thi Vu, Banking Academy, Dong Da, Hanoi, Vietnam. E-mail: havtt@hvn.edu.vn.



North. The northern provinces of Vietnam converge the prominent cultural features of Vietnamese society, including language, beliefs of worship, religion, customs, arts, etc. These cultural features are converted into pictures and patterns on pottery products as national pride. Thanks to the relatively dense network of rivers and streams, the pottery craft villages in the North have been endowed with abundant raw materials available in place. Thereby, pottery craft villages in the Northern provinces are well-developed with more unique and diversified pottery products than other craft villages. The differences in quality of clay, glazes, associated with the cultural identities of traditional rural craft villages in the Northern provinces of Vietnam lead to the differences in measuring and testing the influence of constituting factors on consumer-based brand equity (CBBE).

Theoretically, there are many ways to approach brand equity. Some scholars approach this concept from a financial perspective, such as Simon and Sullivan (1993); Srinivasan et al (2005); Ferjani et al (2009); Buil et al (2008), etc. Other scholars approach it from customer perspective, such as Aaker (1991); Keller (1993); Yoo et al (2000); Yoo and Donthu (2001); Buil et al (2013). Besides, there are some approaches from the employee perspective, such as King and Grace (2009); Youngbum Kwon (2013); Ashforth and Mael (1989). However, customer-based brand equity (CBBE) is the dominant approach that attracts most of the researchers because “if a brand has no meaning or brings no value to the consumers, in the end, it makes so sense to investors, manufacturers, retailers, and employees” (Cobb-Walgre et al., 1995).

Due to such importance, this paper has chosen CBBE to study in the specific case of collective brand equity of pottery craft village in the North of Vietnam.

Literature review

The factors affecting CBBE are divided into four main groups: (1) Brand awareness, (2) Brand association, (3) Perceived quality, and (4) Brand loyalty. The main research model of most studies is based on the theoretical framework of customer-based brand equity given by Aaker (1991). Some of these studies use quantitative research methods to evaluate the impact of factors on CBBE, such as Netemeyer et al. (2004), Atilgan et al. (2005), Orth et al. (2005). However, the number of studies using a combination of both qualitative and quantitative research methods still dominate, such as Yoo et al., 2000, 2001; Washburn et al., 2002; Pappu et al., 2005; Buil et al., 2008, 2013; Nguyen Viet Bang, 2015; Nguyen Tien Dung, 2017; Le Thanh Tam et al., 2017; Tho and Trang, 2002, 2011. The qualitative research method is to modify and complement the scale of research concepts; the quantitative research method uses SPSS and AMOS running on tools of SPSS to test the reliability of the scale, the appropriateness of the model, and test the hypotheses. CBBE model has been applied and tested in a variety of contexts (see Table 2.1).

Most of the CBBE-related studies were conducted in the United States and Europe. Some studies are conducted in Asia, but the samples are students (Yoo and Donthu, 2001, 2002; Chen, 2001, etc. Additionally, there have been only a few studies on brand equity in Vietnam, especially on pottery craft village brand equity in the context of rich culture and diverse features of pottery craft villages in the North of Vietnam.

The implementation of the study on pottery craft village brand equity in Vietnam has contributed to complementing the collection of brand equity studies in Asia. This paper is



also one of the latest studies on the brand equity of pottery craft villages in Vietnam to examine Aaker's model in the context of brand equity research in Vietnam.

Table 1. Product categories applied in customer-based brand equity research

Product categories	authors/ year
Food (sausage/barbecue, beverage, soft drinks, alcohol, milk).	Washburn and Plank (2002); Netemeyer et al. (2004); Atilgan et al. (2005); Buil et al. (2008); Atilgan et al. (2009); Taglioni et al. (2011).
Daily necessities (bleach, toothpaste, mouthwash, tissue, shampoo, etc.).	Park and Srinivasan (1994); Washburn and Plank (2002); Netemeyer et al. (2004); Thọ and Trang (2011).
Durable goods: Televisions, watches, electronics, cameras, printers, computers, cars, washing machines, refrigerators, rice cookers, dishwashers, jeans, sports shoes, etc.	Lassar et al (1995); Yoo et al (2000, 2001); Chen (2001); Vazquez et al (2002); Pappu et al (2005); Buil et al (2008); Tong and Hawley (2009); Buil et al (2013); Saydan (2013); Nguyễn Trường Sơn and Trần Trung Vinh (2011).
Services: Finance, insurance, restaurant, hotel, hospital, school, online products, food service, airline service, banking.	Kim and Kim (2004); Christodoulides et al (2006); Shankar et al (2008); Kim et al (2008); Chen and Tseng (2010); Phạm Thị Minh Lý (2014); Lê Thanh Tâm et al (2017);
Local products: Wines, agricultural products, Texan wine, Galician wine, dragon fruit, etc.	Orth et al (2005); Tregear and Gorton (2005); Morrison and Eastburn (2006); Duban et al (2006); Kim (2012); Welch (2014); Spielmann (2014); Nguyễn Viết Bằng (2015).

Source: Collected by the authors

Therefore, the research questions of this study are: What are internal factors affecting CBBE in the case of pottery craft village collective brand in Vietnam? and To what extent that constituent factors pottery craft village collective brand affect CBBE?

Research hypothesis

Relationship between brand awareness, brand association, perceived quality, brand loyalty and customer-based brand equity.

Brand awareness is the strength of the brand identity of pottery craft village collective equity in the customer's mind. The stronger the brand identity is, the more deeply the brand is imprinted in the customer's mind. Thereby, it affects the perception and behaviour of the customer, as well as the evaluation and reaction of the customer towards the brand; as a result, brand equity increases. In previous studies, it has been shown that there is a positive effect of brand awareness on brand equity (Yoo et al., 2000; Yoo and Donthu, 2001; Washburn and Plank, 2002; Kim and Kim, 2004; Pappu et al., 2005; Atilgan et al., 2005, 2009; Villarejo-Ramos and SanchezFranco, 2005; Tregear and Gorton, 2005; Duhan et al., 2006; Buil et al., 2008, 2013; Kim et al., 2008; Chen and Tseng, 2010; Saydan, 2013; Welch, 2014; Spielmann, 2014; Nguyen Viet Bang, 2015; Nguyen Tien Dung, 2017; Le Thanh Tam et al., 2017; Pham Thi Minh Ly, 2014; Tho and Trang, 2011; Nguyen Truong Son and Tran Trung Vinh, 2011. Following these studies, the authors propose the following hypothesis:

H1: Brand awareness has a positive impact on the collective brand equity of pottery craft villages in Vietnam.

Good brand associations towards pottery craft village collective brand would lead to positive attitudes and emotions in the consumer's mind, which is a good signal that urges the customers to choose the brand at the time of purchase, leading to the change in their

perceptions and buying behaviours, so as to increase the brand equity. Therefore, most researchers propose the hypothesis that brand associations influence brand equity. In line with the previous studies, the authors propose the second hypothesis:

H2: Brand association has a positive impact on the collective brand equity of pottery craft villages in Vietnam.

Because perceived quality brings value to the customers by giving them reasons to purchase (behaviour) and distinguish the brand (perceptions) from other brands, perceived high quality will motivate the consumers to choose the collective brand of pottery craft village instead of other competing brands. Sharing the same point of view, the authors propose the third hypothesis:

H3: Perceived quality has a positive impact on the collective brand equity of pottery craft villages in Vietnam.

Brand loyalty urges the customers to buy one brand regularly and resists switching to another brand. If customer loyalty is high, their trust and commitment will increase, resulting in their recommendation of the brand to others; thereby, the business's assets also increase positively. Assuming that the relationship between brand loyalty and CBBE is positive, the authors propose the last hypothesis:

H4: Brand loyalty has a positive impact on the collective brand equity of pottery craft villages in Vietnam.

Relationship between brand awareness, brand association, perceived quality, brand loyalty.

Aaker (1991, 55) suggested that "brand loyalty is the measure of attachment that a consumer has towards a brand". As a matter of fact, to be loyal to the pottery craft village collective brand (brand loyalty), first of all, the customer needs to distinguish the pottery products made by the craft village through the identical signs such as glazes, logos or names which remind them of the brand (brand awareness). That is completely consistent with the study results of Yoo et al. (2000, 2001), Pappu et al. (2005), Xiao Tong et al. (2009), Nguyen Viet Bang (2015) that brand awareness has a positive impact on brand loyalty. Therefore, the hypothesis of the relationship between brand awareness and brand loyalty is proposed:

H5: Brand awareness has a positive impact on brand loyalty.

Aaker (1991,132) stated that "brand association is anything that is seated in the customer's mind about a brand". To have the positions in their minds, the customers need be able to recognise and recall what is related to the brand (brand awareness). The more the consumers remember about the brand-related things, the clearer the strength, the difference and the sustainable characteristics of the brand are. Study results of Pappu et al. (2005), Xiao Tong et al. (2009), Buil et al. (2013) have also confirmed the relationship between brand awareness and brand association. Therefore, it is possible to hypothesise that:

H6: Brand awareness have a positive impact on brand association.

The brand that comes first in the customer's mind is the main basis for subjective reviews of the consumer (perceived quality). If brand awareness is higher, perceptions, feelings, and subjective assessments of consumers will be stronger. This relationship has been confirmed



by the studies of Yoo et al. 2000, 2001; Nguyen Dinh Tho et al., 2002; Pappu et al., 2005; Xiao Tong et al., 2009; Buil et al., 2013; Le Dang Lang, 2014; Nguyen Viet Bang, 2015. The hypothesis is proposed as:

H7: Brand awareness has a positive impact on perceived quality.

For most brands, under any circumstance, creating different, unique and sustainable identities for the brand is a must because it provides the reason why the customers choose one brand instead of its rival's brands (Aaker, 1991). Such a reason is derived from the perception, subjective assessment of the customer on the product quality, and other brand-related factors (perceived quality). Therefore, the higher the perceived quality is, the more positive brand association is. This result is confirmed by Yoo et al., 2000, 2001; Pappu et al., 2005; Xiao Tong et al., 2009; Nguyen Viet Bang, 2015. The hypothesis of this relationship is as follows:

H8: Perceived quality has a positive impact on brand association.

The greater the feelings, beliefs, and knowledge of consumers about the brand of the pottery craft village are, the higher the customer's loyalty to the brand is. That means the more brand association is, the greater customer loyalty is, as shown by study results of Yoo et al., 2000, 2001; Pappu et al., 2005; Xiao Tong et al., 2009; Buil et al., 2013; Le Dang Lang, 2014. Hypothesis H9 is proposed:

H9: Brand association have a positive impact on brand loyalty

Once the customer's assessment of product quality is better compared to alternative products, the customer will engage with the brand (Aaker, 1991; Tho and Trang, 2011). It means that if brand association increases, brand loyalty will increase. This result has been confirmed by Yoo et al., 2000, 2001; Nguyen Dinh Tho et al., 2002; Pappu et al., 2005; Xiao Tong et al., 2009; Le Dang Lang, 2014. The hypothesis of this relationship is proposed:

H10: Perceived quality has a positive impact on brand loyalty.

In conclusion, there are four hypotheses about the relationship between the constituent variables and the collective brand equity of the pottery craft village; and six hypotheses about the relationships among these variables.

Consolidating the above hypotheses and based on the theory of CBBE of Aaker (1991) and the inheritance of study results from previous works, the authors offer the model illustrated in Figure 1.

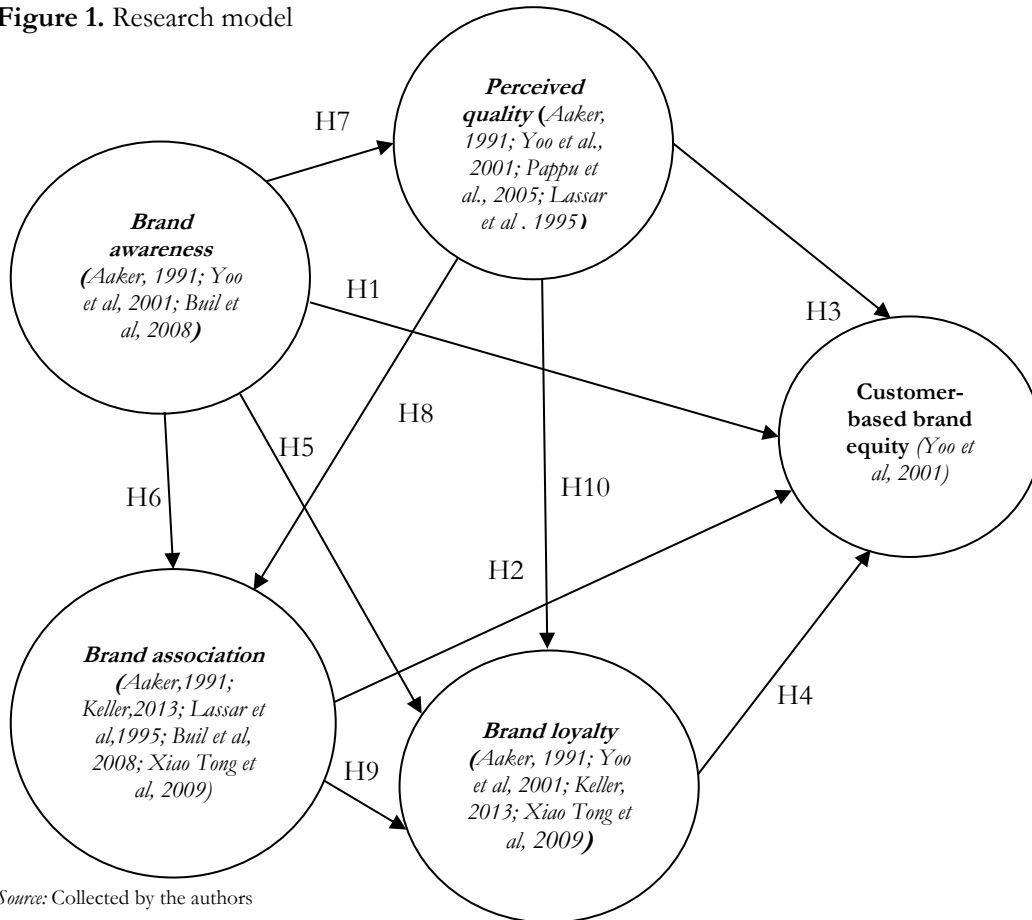
The study is conducted through 3 phases: qualitative research, preliminarily quantitative research, and official quantitative research.

- In qualitative research, experts have been interviewed to discover, adjust, and complement new variables and scales. This method is to measure research concepts based on the understanding of their connotations, the expert's selection of approach, and the research context of pottery craft village collective brand in the North of Vietnam. Besides, it is necessary to check the clarity of words to ensure that the meaning of the sentences is not changing when translated forward and backwards. The respondents are marketing specialists at major universities in Hanoi.

- Preliminarily quantitative phase has been conducted with 210 consumers using the collective brand of the northern pottery craft villages. The objectives of the preliminary research is to test the reliability of the scale (to assess whether the observed variables are reliable to measure the research concept) and to adjust the unqualified scales by using Cronbach Alpha analysis, EFA analysis of SPSS 20.

- The final phase is official quantitative research. This has been done by delivering official questionnaires to people (sample size $n = 860$). This phase has been implemented is to test scale model scales and research hypotheses; and to use multi-group analysis to define the regulatory role of “age” to the relationship between BAW, BAS, PQ, BL and CBBE.

Figure 1. Research model



Source: Collected by the authors

Study results

Qualitative research results

Firstly, the given research concepts achieve a high consensus of 8 experts. However, 1 among 8 experts finds no difference between brand awareness and brand association; the authors acknowledge this opinion for the next study.



Secondly, the relationship between independent variables and the dependent variable is tested. 8/8 experts agree that they find a positive relationship between brand awareness, brand association, perceived quality, brand loyalty and CBBE. The relationship among brand awareness, brand association and brand loyalty proposed by the authors is also agreed upon by 8 experts.

Thirdly, the scales proposed by the authors based on the original scale of Aaker, 1991 and empirical studies in the world obtain the consensus of most of the experts that there is a positive relationship between brand awareness (BAW), brand association (BAS), perceived quality (PQ), brand loyalty (BL) and CBBE. However, scales of some research variables are adjusted to match the research context.

Fourthly, the expert group also reviews and comments on the backward and forward translation of the scales for research concepts.

Fifthly, many experts have agreed that age will regulate the relationship between the independent variables (BAW, BAS, PQ, BL) and the dependent variable (CBBE) of the research model. In fact, many studies has affirmed the regulatory role of age, such as Raziq et al. (2017), Nguyen Quang Dung (2019), etc.

The experts' comments on the regulatory role of age would be important suggestions tested in quantitative research with a large sample size.

Preliminarily quantitative research results:

The preliminarily quantitative study is conducted with the number of elements = 25% of the elements of the official sample size. After removing unsatisfactory survey questions, the authors have $n = 210$ useful sheets. The authors removes 2 observed variables that are unsatisfactory: PQ6 (correlation coefficient < 0.3); BAS6 (factor loading < 0.5). The next study will include the remaining observed variables that explain the research concepts.

Official quantitative research results:

After delivering 1000 survey sheets, the authors collected 860 valid results; the sample statistics are summarised in table 2. Further tables and figures below present the statistical results using SPSS 20.

Firstly, checking the reliability of the scale: Based on the analysis standards of Hair et al. (1998), Nunnally and Bernstein (1994), all scales were satisfactory; no observed variables were removed. Therefore, all scales were included in the EFA exploratory factor analysis.

Secondly, exploratory factor analysis (EFA): Using the testing criteria of Anderson and Gerbing, 1988, the results of the 1st EFA analysis produced 5 factors. However, the observed variable BL3 has a factor loading < 0.5 , thus, the authors removed this variable and run the second EFA for the remaining variables. The second EFA produces 5 factors and no observed variable has a loading factor < 0.5 . A total of 29 observations produced 5 factors that are eligible for further analysis.

Thirdly, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) using Hu and Bentler standards (1999) shows that the model results are consistent with market data; the scales are generally reliable; the factors achieve convergent value, uniqueness; and the concepts achieve reliable values.

Table 2. Sample statistics

Criteria	Components	Number of customers	Rate (%)
Number of customers of 4 pottery craft village collective brands	Bat Trang	236	27.4
	Phu Lang	232	27.0
	Dong Trieu	220	25.6
	Kim Lan	172	20.0
Gender	Female	550	64.0
	male	310	36.0
Age	From 18 to 25 years old	167	19.4
	From 26 to 35 years old	276	32.1
	From 36 to 60 years old	225	26.2
	Over age 60	192	22.3
Average income	Under 5 million VND	138	16.0
	From 5 to less than 10 million VND	273	31.7
	From 10 million to less than 15 million VND	200	23.3
	From 15 to 20 million VND	137	15.9
	Over 20 million VND	112	13.0

Source: Collected by the authors

Table 3. EFA, Synthesis reliability and total variance extracted from the factors

Factor	Observed variables	Load factor	CR	AVE
Brand association	BAS8	0.753	0.900	0.501
	BAS1	0.724		
	BAS10	0.719		
	BAS7	0.707		
	BAS5	0.703		
	BAS2	0.698		
	BAS3	0.694		
	BAS4	0.689		
	BAS9	0.678		
Brand loyalty	BL1	0.822	0.882	0.556
	BL2	0.800		
	BL5	0.767		
	BL4	0.750		
	BL7	0.711		
	BL6	0.606		
Perceived quality	PQ5	0.807	0.864	0.514
	PQ2	0.735		
	PQ1	0.719		
	PQ3	0.689		
	PQ7	0.674		
	PQ4	0.671		
Customer-based brand equity	CBBE4	0.848	0.845	0.578
	CBBE1	0.750		
	CBBE2	0.717		
	CBBE3	0.708		
Brand awareness	BAW4	0.813	0.821	0.536
	BAW1	0.725		
	BAW3	0.691		
	BAW2	0.688		

Source: Collected by the authors



Table 4. Evaluation of differential validity

			Estimate	S.E	C.R	P
BAS	<-->	BL	0.166	0.039	4.219	0.000
BAS	<-->	PQ	0.127	0.038	3.378	0.000
BAS	<-->	CBBE	0.268	0.037	7.144	0.000
BAS	<-->	BAW	0.134	0.036	3.737	0.000
BL	<-->	PQ	0.169	0.042	3.982	0.000
BL	<-->	CBBE	0.272	0.041	6.612	0.000
BL	<-->	BAW	0.145	0.040	3.613	0.000
PQ	<-->	CBBE	0.251	0.040	6.345	0.000
PQ	<-->	BAW	0.099	0.038	2.565	0.010
CBBE	<-->	BAW	0.264	0.038	6.960	0.000

Source: Collected by the authors

Table 5. Average extracted variance (AVE) of the factors

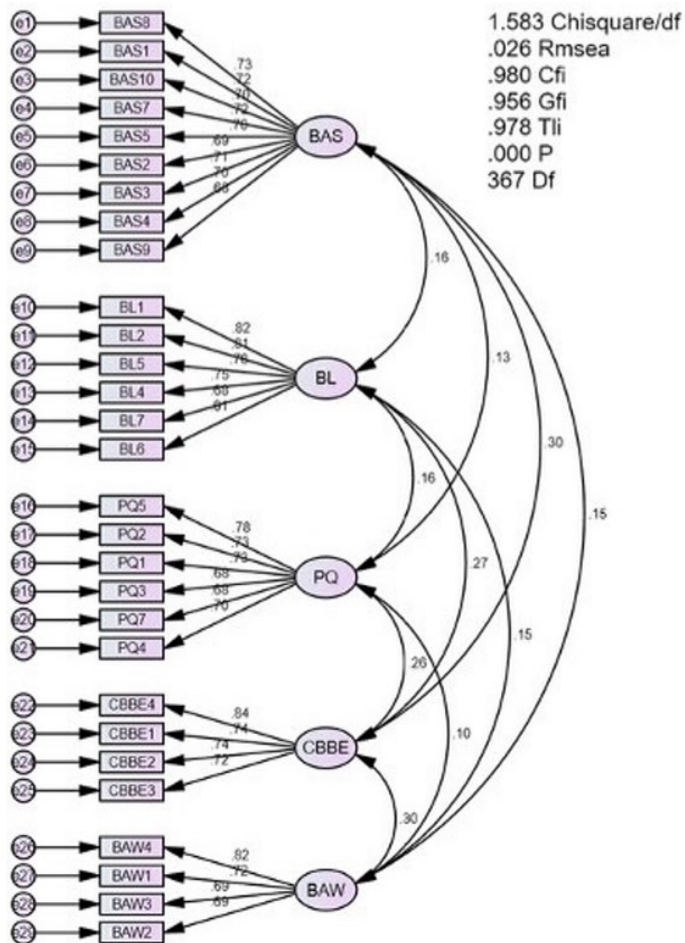
	BAS	BL	PQ	CBBE	BAW
AVE	0.501	0.556	0.514	0.578	0.536
AVE ^{1/2}	0.708	0.746	0.717	0.760	0.732

Source: Collected by the authors

Table 6. Correlative matrix between the concepts

	BAS	BL	PQ	CBBE	BAW
BAS	1				
BL	0.305	1			
PQ	0.371	0.490	1		
CBBE	0.404	0.318	0.403	1	
BAW	0.395	0.375	0.324	0.386	1

Source: Collected by the authors

Figure 2. Results of model conformity assessment

Source: Collected by the authors

Fourthly, test the research models and hypotheses by SEM analysis.

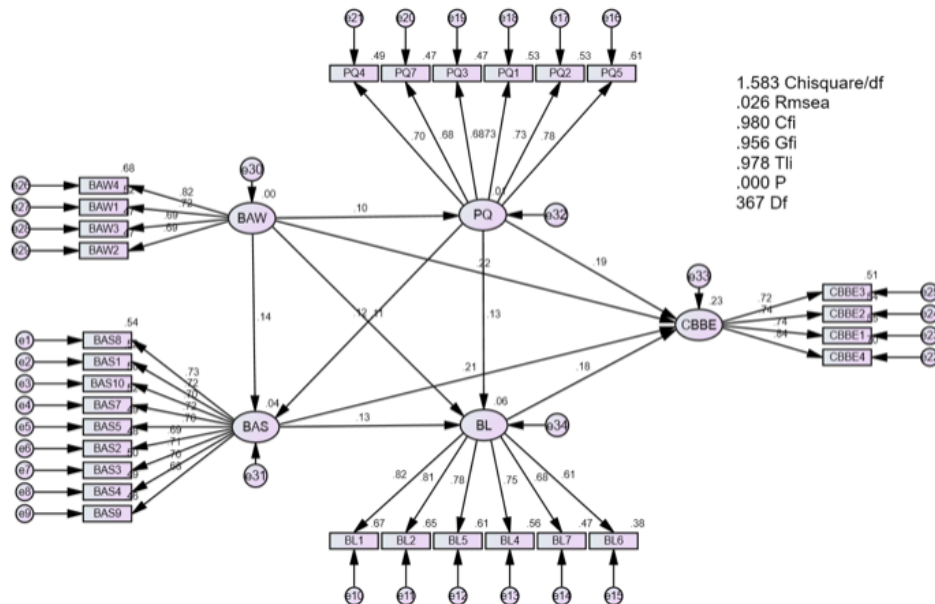
Table 7. Analysis results of Structural Equation Modeling

The correlation relationship between the factors			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Standardized
PQ	<---	BAW	0.111	0.043	2.583	0.010	0.104
BAS	<---	BAW	0.139	0.040	3.484	0.000	0.138
BAS	<---	PQ	0.112	0.036	3.060	0.002	0.118
BL	<---	BAW	0.126	0.045	2.831	0.005	0.112
BL	<---	BAS	0.146	0.043	3.403	0.000	0.131
BL	<---	PQ	0.135	0.041	3.316	0.000	0.129
CBBE	<---	BAW	0.221	0.039	5.724	0.000	0.221
CBBE	<---	BAS	0.210	0.037	5.654	0.000	0.212
CBBE	<---	PQ	0.174	0.035	4.939	0.000	0.186
CBBE	<---	BL	0.156	0.033	4.699	0.000	0.175

Source: Collected by the authors



Figure 3. Analysis results of Structural Equation Modeling



Source: Collected by the authors

Therefore, the hypotheses from H1 to H10 are all accepted. Fifthly, by considering the difference between the compatibility criteria between variable model and partial invariant model based on hobbies, the results are shown in Table 8.

Table 8. Analysis results about regulating impacts of BAW on CBBE, BAS on CBBE, PQ on CBBE, BL on CBBE.

			18-25 years-old		26-35 years-old		36-60 years-old		Over 60 years-old	
Relationship			Estimate	standardized	Estimate	standardized	Estimate	standardized	Estimate	standardized
CBBE	<---	BAW	0.117	0.110	0.259	0.263	0.249	0.284	0.595	0.549
CBBE	<---	BAS	0.130	0.154	0.320	0.314	0.219	0.232	0.498	0.452
CBBE	<---	PQ	0.470	0.472	0.238	0.266	0.166	0.207	0.147	0.135
CBBE	<--	BL	0.506	0.522	0.253	0.305	0.157	0.201	0.111	0.111

Source: Analysed by the authors

Thus, after having qualitative research results from the experts, the authors puts them into testing with large sample size and finds that:

Age regulates the relationship between BAW and CBBE. BAW has the strongest positive effect on CBBE in the age group of over 60 years-old (0.549); the second strongest influence is from the group of 36-60 years-old (0.284); followed by the age group of 26-35 years-old (0.263); the weakest influence is from the age group of 18-25 years-old (0.110).

Age regulates the relationship between BAS and CBBE. BAS has the strongest positive effect on CBBE in the age group of over 60 years-old (0.452); the second strongest influence is from the age group of 26-35 years-old (0.314); followed by the age group of 36-60 years-old (0.232); the weakest influence is from the age group of 18-25 years-old (0.154).

Age regulates the relationship between PQ and CBBE. PQ has the strongest positive effect on CBBE in the age group of 18-25 years-old (0.472); the second strongest influence is from the age group of 26-35 years-old (0.266); followed by the age group of 36-60 (0.207); the weakest influence is from the age group of over 60 years-old (0.135).

Age regulates the relationship between BL and CBBE. BL has the strongest positive effect on CBBE in the age group of 18-25 years-old (0.522); the second strongest influence is from the age group of 26-35 years-old (0.305); followed by the age group 36-60 years-old (0.201); the weakest influence is from the age group of over 60 years-old (0.111).

Discussion and implications

First, the study confirms the impact of four constituent factors on components of Vietnamese pottery brand equity: In the case of craft village collective brand, on the other hand, the constituent elements themselves also have mutual effects. The study once again confirms Aaker's (1991) argument that four constituent factors are also four factors affecting brand equity, and the relationship between these four factors is not independent. They affect each other. In line with the majority of studies in the literature, the relationship between BAW, BAS, PQ, BL and CBBE was confirmed (See: Yoo et al., 2000; Yoo and Donthu, 2001; Pappu et al., 2005; Buil et al., 2013; Nguyen Viet Bang, 2015; Nguyen Tien Dung, 2017; Kim and Kim, 2004; Tho and Trang, 2011).

Brand awareness appeared as the factor with the most positive and strong impact on the collective brand equity of the pottery village. The results of the study once again confirm that there are differences between the concepts of brand awareness and brand association (independent scales have measured two variables) (See also Washburn et al., 2002; Pappu et al., 2005; Buil et al., 2008; Yoo et al., 2000, 2001). Yoo et al. (2000, 2001) combined two variables of brand awareness and brand association into one and measured by a common scale. This contribution confirms the degree of relationship on overall brand equity.

Second, research has demonstrated that "age" has the effect of regulating the relationship of brand awareness, brand association, perceived quality, and brand loyalty to brand equity can be a pottery village in the North. The study of Orth et al. (2005) confirmed the regulatory relationship of taste to perceived quality with brand equity. However, our results show that hobby only regulates the relationship between brand awareness and brand equity, between brand associations with brand equity. With different preferences, the level of regulation may also be strong or weak.

As brand awareness is now the strongest factor affecting brand equity, collective brand managers need to cooperate with the businesses and business households to promote marketing tools, such as advertising, introducing the brand and creating the distinctive,



recognisable and memorable features for a collective brand through images, colours, and symbols.

Adding keywords effectively on local search tools is important: Many customers have the habit of searching the pottery products with the keywords related to the location where the products are produced. Thus, the database, website, and search engines relating to the pottery craft villages are very important tools.

The measures to improve brand awareness need to focus the most on the age group of over 60 years-olds, followed by the age group of 36-60 years-olds.

It is necessary to show and promote the unique and distinctive features of the products that make up the collective brand, such as unique glazes, the delicate and traditional patterns on the products, etc. Among those features, the glazes and traditional patterns play a key role in creating brand associations of the pottery craft villages. Furthermore, since each craft village has a unique recipe for the glazes, it helps the customers to proactively purchase the right type of pottery they desire and prevent them from buying counterfeit goods.

Completing product development is a particularly crucial step: Focusing on maintaining and ensuring the brand provides all the basic functions of the traditional ceramic product line: decorating, containing, building and using in the ritual beliefs to satisfy the ever-increasing and frequently changing demands of customers. The customer needs in each area should also be carefully researched and controlled, which helps to constantly provide more suitable products to ensure that customers' needs are always satisfied.

The measures to improve brand association of pottery craft villages need to focus the most on the age group of over 60 years-olds, followed by the age group of 26-35 years-olds.

Traditional pottery products need to ensure homogeneous and stable quality (PQ3) without defects or cracks when reaching consumers. In use, it is also necessary to ensure that the traditional pottery products of the craft village brand are not defective or damaged (PQ4). High durability (PQ5) is one of the important quality criteria and is highly appreciated by the customers; thus, technological improvements are essential to improve product quality.

Aesthetics: The patterns, colours, sizes, trendy elements (PQ7), etc. of the traditional pottery products need to be presented harmoniously and attractively. To do so, more official and serious studies on customer needs should be conducted.

The measures to improve perceived quality need to focus the most on the age group of 18-25 years-olds, the age group of 26-35 years-olds, and finally, the age group of over 60 years-olds.

It is essential to build the customer pride in using traditional products of the pottery craft village brand. The portrayal emphasises the Vietnamese cultural identity in each craft village pottery product, which makes customers feel more engaged and loyal to the brand: Will not buy traditional pottery from another brand if the goods of the craft village brand are available in store; they really love the trade village brand and the craft village brand will be the first choice when there is a demand for traditional ceramic products; above all, it is to introduce the trade village brand to friends. The brand must mainly provide products with excellent quality and efficient value to convince the customers to achieve these goals.

The measures to improve brand loyalty need to focus the most on the age group of 18-25 years-olds. This group of customers seems not interested in traditional handicraft products in general and pottery in particular. Therefore, it is very important to promote their purchasing behaviour and maintain their loyalty.

Limitations and directions for the further studies

Firstly, the official research samples are selected by random sampling method, in which the samples are those who buy and use 04 craft village brands. However, if a sampling frame and stepping sampling methods are applied, the study results could be more accurate.

Secondly, the study scope is only limited to 04 collective brands of pottery villages in the northern provinces of Vietnam. The study results could be more accurate if the scope is expanded.

Thirdly, there are many different theoretical schools and proposed factors that can affect CBBE, such as uniqueness, brand trust, brand personality, brand emotion, etc. that have not been examined specifically in this study.

There are many other factors about the collective characteristics of the craft villages that can regulate the impact level of BAW, BAS, PQ, and BL on CBBE. Future studies can discover these factors.

Future studies can expand the study scope to other craft villages and other products to assess the influence of these factors on CBBE.

Future studies can clarify the influence of other factors of exclusive brand equity, such as patents, channel relationships, etc., in the model of Aaker (1991) on the brand equity of pottery craft villages.

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