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Brand value of Chilean pisco: contributions from the Pisco region of Chile

Valor de marca del pisco chileno: aportes desde la región pisquera de Chile

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Abstract

In the current competitive environment of pisco industry, it´s essential to differentiate the offer in the market. In this context, the brand represents an attribute of significant value that allows the consumer to identify the origin of the good and, to the company to differentiate its products and services. The aim of this research was to analyze the brand value of Chilean pisco (the most important Chilean distillate) in the main pisco area of the country: Coquimbo Region. A questionnaire was developed, based on the multidimensional brand value model of Aaker (1991), which was applied to a probabilistic sample of 254 consumers. The results showed that the factors with the greatest and least relevance are of behavioral type: notoriety and brand loyalty, respectively. This would reveal a customer who recognizes the characteristics of the product (cognitive loyalty), but that doesn't necessarily buy the product (behavioral loyalty). In addition, the examination of the variables according to the participant's profile, allowed to find significant differences, according to sex and income (in the notoriety dimension); and age (in the perceived quality and brand associations dimensions). It's concluded that there are determinant attributes of brand value for consumers, whose right management would allow improving the positioning and competitiveness of Chilean pisco in the market.

Resumen

En un entorno globalizado y competitivo como el de la industria pisquera, es fundamental distinguir la oferta propia de la de otros competidores. En este sentido, la marca es un atributo de valor significativo que permite al consumidor identificar el origen del bien y a la empresa diferenciar sus productos y servicios en el mercado. El objetivo de esta investigación fue analizar el valor de marca del pisco chileno (el destilado más importante de Chile) en la principal zona pisquera del país: la Región de Coquimbo. Se elaboró un instrumento de medición, basado en el modelo multidimensional de valor de marca de Aaker (1991), que fue aplicado a una muestra probabilística de 254 consumidores del destilado. Los resultados mostraron que los factores con mayor y menor relevancia son de tipo comportamental: notoriedad y lealtad de marca, respectivamente. Esto devela un cliente cuya lealtad es mayormente cognitiva, que valora y reconoce las características del producto, pero no necesariamente adquiere la bebida (lealtad conductual). Además, el examen de las variables según el perfil del participante permitió advertir diferencias significativas, según sexo e ingresos (en la dimensión notoriedad); y según edad (en las dimensiones de calidad percibida y asociaciones de la marca). Se concluye que existen atributos determinantes del valor de marca para los consumidores, cuyo develamiento y gestión adecuada permitirían mejorar el posicionamiento y la competitividad del pisco chileno en el mercado.

Keywords | palabras clave

Brand equity, brand loyalty, quality, Aaker model, consumer profile, distillate, pisco, Chile.
Valor de marca, lealtad de marca, calidad, modelo de Aaker, perfil del consumidor, destilado, pisco, Chile.

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1 Introduction

In the current competitive and global context, consumer satisfaction has become a topic of great research interest, closely linked to customer loyalty and company profitability (Valencia & Nicolás, 2011). For this reason, organizations have focused their efforts on identifying those attributes of the good, tangible and intangible, that are decisive for its achievement.

Among the most recognized intangible elements of a product, the brand stands out, which is understood as the name, term, sign, symbol, or design, or a combination of them, which is intended to identify the goods and services of a seller or group of sellers and differentiate them from the competition (Lin et al., 2021). The brand is attributed the inherent power of positioning companies in a market, by helping a product to be particular and, therefore, manage to mean something different than its competitors in the mind of the consumer (Levy, 2020).

A brand is valuable to consumers because it denotes a series of advantages related to the quality, reliability, safety and recognition of the good; a guarantee that you will acquire a series of benefits for what you are willing to pay. Likewise, a brand is valuable for companies because it is an element that is difficult for the competition to imitate, and therefore constitutes a powerful mechanism to establish a competitive advantage (Gupta et al., 2020; Handayani & Herwany, 2020; Keller, 2013; Levi, 2020). Hence the importance of discovering the value that consumers attribute to it and its determining qualities (brand value).

Chilean pisco is a type of grape alcohol produced in the Atacama and Coquimbo regions. It is made by distillation of genuine drinkable wine and is characterized by the aroma of the original fruit, especially the Muscatel-type grape, whose production requires a dry and highly luminous climate, such as that which identifies the northern zone of Chile. It was delimited as a Denomination of Origin (DO) in 1931, and today it constitutes an essential productive sector for the country, especially for the pisco industry in the Coquimbo region, which has about 95% of the surface of the pisco vines and it generates 89% of the entire national production of pisco (Araya-Pizarro & Ruiz-Vega, 2019).

However, even when it is a distillate with a unique production in the country, its per capita consumption is low (2.1 liters) compared to the consumption of other alcoholic beverages such as wine (16.2 liters) or beer (50 liters) (Association of Beer Producers of Chile, 2018; International Organization of Vine and Wine, 2018). In addition, there is a growing volume of imports from Peru, the only competitor worldwide (Fajardo, 2017).

Based on the above, the research question is: What is the brand value of Chilean pisco according to the perspective of the consumer of the pisco region of Chile? Specifically, the study aims to analyze the brand value of Chilean pisco in the Coquimbo region. It is hypothesized that there are determining attributes of brand value for consumers, the disclosure of which would improve the competitiveness of the local pisco industry. The findings are expected to contribute to the examination of brand value in the spirits market and, in particular, of pisco, a traditional and emblematic drink of Chile.

1.1 Brand value

Branding is a strategy that interrelates brands with customers, and consists of transmitting the power of a brand to products and services, essentially, through the creation of factors that distinguish them from other goods (Mancheno & Gamboa, 2018). In other words, branding creates mental structures and helps consumers organize their knowledge about products and services in a way that clarifies their decision-making and provides, at the same time, value to the company (He & Calder, 2020; Keller, 2013).

This value can be reflected in the way consumers think, feel and act regarding the brand, as well as in the prices, market share and profitability it generates for the company (Orellana, 2016; Sajtos et al., 2021; Sandhe, 2020). For this reason, the importance of evaluating the capital or brand value (or brand equity) which is understood as the added value or differential effect that is assigned to a product or service from the brand (Lim et al. al., 2020).

Among the different measurement proposals collected in the literature, those models that approach the phenomenon from a multidimensional perspective, and that are based on consumer perception stand out (Buil et al., 2013; Forero & Duque, 2014).

Consumer-centric approaches, whether an individual or an organization, recognize that the power of a brand lies in what consumers have seen, read, heard, thought, and felt about it over time (Keller, 2013). In this line, different measurement methodologies have been developed (Aaker, 1991; Dick & Basu, 1994; Green & Krieger, 1995; Keller, 1993) among which the contribution made by Aaker (1991) stands out. It provides the advantage of deepening the origin of brand value, under recognized fundamental dimensions, and its approach has been collected by various authors (Brochado & Oliveira, 2018; Le-Hoang et al., 2020; Orellana, 2016; Sandhe, 2020; Tiwari & Loyalty, 2019; Tsordia et al., 2018).

1.2 Aaker's brand value model

Brand equity, according to Aaker (1991), is a multidimensional entity made up of four basic components related to the consumer. The first corresponds to brand loyalty and represents repeated purchase behavior, which shows the consumer's conscious decision to continue buying it. This loyalty can be initiated by a preference based on objective reasons, however, once the brand has been in the market for a long time and has been widely disseminated, it can also cause an emotional bond, based either on the consumer's self-image or in its association with past experiences (Solomon, 2018).

The author also proposes five levels of loyalty that describe the relationship of the commitment to the brand by the consumer. This pyramid shows the existence of different types of buyers, ranging from a price-oriented customer (no loyalty) to a committed buyer (full loyalty) (See Figure 1).

Figure 1

Pyramid of brand loyalty dimensions

Note. Own elaboration based on Aaker (1991).

The third dimension is perceived quality, understood as the customer's perception of the overall quality or superiority of a product or service, with respect to its purpose among available alternatives. It consists, therefore, in a subjective assessment of the excellence of the good, which is commonly pointed out in the literature as one of the key components in the construction of a strong brand (Buil et al., 2010).

Finally, there is the association of the brand (or brand image), which is defined as a set of thoughts and ideas that individuals have in their memory in relation to it (Colmenares et al., 2009). These links give rise to a strong network of brand knowledge organized in the buyer's memory, based on verbal, visual, sensory impressions (taste, aroma or sound), and emotional impressions. Therefore, the brand image is understood as the reality perceived by the consumer (Vega & Egüez, 2017). This dimension, according to Aaker, is evaluated through three perspectives of brand associations: (i) measuring the perceived value as a product, (ii) measuring the personality of the brand, and (iii) measuring those responsible for managing the brand (as an organization) (Aaker, 1996; Buil et al., 2010).

Figure 2

Brand awareness dimensions

Note. Own elaboration based on Aaker (1991).

It should be noted that studies referring to the brand value of spirits are scarce, with no recent articles being found that apply Aaker's model in the scrutiny of pisco or other similar types of distillates. However, it is possible to find works that have used this method to study the brand value of alcoholic beverages such as beer and wine (Brochado & Oliveira, 2018; Calvo-Porral et al., 2013; Vinh, 2017) or soft drinks. (Atilgan et al., 2005; Jarquin et al., 2019; Khudri & Farjana, 2016; Sahari et al., 2015).

In general, the results show a relevant contribution of all the dimensions of the Aaker model on the brand value of beverages, highlighting, in particular, the significant and direct influence of brand loyalty (Atilgan et al., 2005; Brochado & Oliveira, 2018; Calvo-Porral et al., 2013; Sahari et al., 2015). For example, Brochado and Oliveira (2018), when studying the main determinants of the brand value of a variety of wine from Portugal, found that brand loyalty is the most influential dimension. Likewise, Calvo-Porral et al. (2013), in a study on beer in Spain, found that brand loyalty together with perceived quality constitute the most relevant variables. Also, the research developed by Vinh (2017), in the beer market in Vietnam, highlighted the positive and direct effect on the brand value of the factors: brand loyalty, perceived quality, brand knowledge and brand association. And in the case of soft drinks, Atilgan et al. (2005), Sahari et al. (2015), and Kudhri and Farjana (2016) obtained similar results. This reflects, in terms of brand loyalty, that consumers are emotionally attached to their preferred brand. Therefore, the loyal customer functions as a "brand evangelist", that is, an active promoter of the brand that he prefers.

For the rest, other authors have applied Aaker's model to examine the relationship of brand equity with other commercial variables, such as advertising (Jarquin et al.,

2019) or sponsorship (Adedoyin & Adeyeri, 2019), demonstrating the applicability of the model and the significant contribution of brand awareness and associations.

2 Materials and method

The research had a quantitative approach, non-experimental design, descriptive type, and cross-sectional scope. The universe of study consisted of people over 18 years of age, pisco consumers, residing in the Coquimbo Region.

For the calculation of the sample, an infinite universe (N> 100,000), a confidence level of 95%, a heterogeneity of 50% and a margin of error of 6.15% were considered. A stratified systematic random sampling was used with proportional allocation based on the three provinces that make up the Region: Elqui (66%), Limarí (22%) and Choapa (12%). In this way, the sample size (n = 254) was distributed as follows: 168 for Elqui, 55 for Limarí and 31 for Choapa. The questionnaires were applied in different supermarkets and regional liquor stores, using an elevation coefficient of five (k = 5). It should be noted that the instrument included filter questions, which made it possible to exclude those who did not meet the selection criteria.

The data collection technique was an ad hoc survey, whose questionnaire mainly consisted of closed questions to characterize the pisco consumer, and included an open question to evaluate the spontaneous positioning of the distillate brands. This instrument was applied during the months of February and March 2020. It should be noted that a generational categorization was used for the classification of age groups, based on the work of Díaz-Sarmiento et al. (2017). Thus, the Baby Boomer generation was comprised of people born between 1946 and 1964; Generation X, for those born between 1965 and 1981; and Generation Y or Millennials, for those born between 1982 and 2004.

seven-point Likert scales were used (1 = Strongly disagree to 7 = Strongly agree) from which the statements were extracted and adapted from previous research, particularly from the methodological guidelines proposed by Buil et al. (2013). Thus, brand awareness used the proposal of Yoo et al. (2000) and Netemeyer et al. (2004). The scale used for the global measurement of perceived quality was based on the work of Pappu et al. (2006). Brand loyalty was measured through a scale adapted from Yoo et al. (2000). Brand association was measured by items proposed by various authors (Aaker, 1996; Lassar et al., 1995; Netemeyer et al., 2004; Pappu et al., 2005; Pappu et al., 2006) and included, according to with the contributions of Aaker (1996) and Keller (2013), personality and organizational associations (Buil et al., 2013).

In addition, in order to describe the consumer's perception of Chilean pisco with respect to Peruvian pisco, a semantic differential item with seven paired response options was established. The adjectives considered were: modern-traditional; common-exclusive; cheap expensive; lower quality-higher quality; worst taste-best taste; less aromatic-more aromatic; and less accessible-more accessible.

The internal consistency of the instrument scale was measured through Cronbach's alpha coefficient, whose computation showed high reliability (greater than .7) in global and dimensional terms (global: $\alpha = .94$; notoriety: $\alpha = .83$; perceived quality: $\alpha = .95$, loyalty: $\alpha = .81$, brand associations: $\alpha = .85$, brand personality: $\alpha = .77$ and organizational associations: $\alpha = .87$). Likewise, all the factors showed significant ($p < .01$) and direct correlations, which confirmed the high degree of existing association (Spearman's r coefficients between .4 and .7). Also, it is worth mentioning that the research included a pilot previously applied to 30 pisco consumers, and had the validation of three experts from the fields of strategic management, communication, and sociology.

The analysis of the information collected included the use of basic descriptive statistics, tests of independence for categorical variables, and tests for contrasting means for quantitative data. Specifically, indicators of central tendency (arithmetic mean) and dispersion (standard deviation) were calculated. In addition, association tests (chi-square test of independence) and parametric (T-test and analysis of variance), and non-parametric (Mann-Whitney U test and Kruskal-Wallis test) comparison of means were performed, on compliance with the criteria of independence, normality, and homoscedasticity (Kolmogorov-Smirnov test and Levene's test).

Finally, it should be noted that all calculations were performed using the statistical program IBM SPSS Statistics, version 24.

3 Results

3.1 Sample characterization

Of the total number of respondents, 44% were women and the remaining 56% were men, with incomes below US$666.67 (68%) and without children (56%). The majority achieved secondary education as their maximum educational level (47%), followed by higher university studies (25%) or professional technical level (15%). 63% were workers and 28% students. By age, 73% were Generation Y, 21% Generation X, and 6% Baby Boomers (See Table 1).

Table 1

Characterization of the sample (n = 254)

Criterion	Segment	Percentage
Sex	Female	44.1
	Male	55.9
Education	Complete Basic Education	8.2
	Complete middle school	46.9
	Technical Training Center or Institute	15.0
	University education	24.8
	Postgraduate	5.1
Monthly income (in US$)	Less than 266.67	27.9
	Between 266.67 and 400.00	14.6
	Between 400.00 and 666.67	25.2
	Between 666.67 and 1,333.33	18.5
	More than 1,333.33	13.8

Criterion	Segment	Percentage
Ocupation	Student	28.3
	Worker	62.6
	unemployed	2.4
	Homeowner	5.9
	Retired	0.4
	Pensioner	0.4
Children	Yes	44.5
	No	55.5
Generation	Baby Boomers	5.9
	Generation X	20.9
	Generation Y (Millennials)	73.2

Regarding consumer behavior, it stands out that they mainly make monthly purchases (43%) or fortnightly (31%), in supermarkets (64%), and in liquor stores (32%). They prefer to buy the medium format (39%) for which they are willing to pay up to US$13.33. They consume pisco at home (77%) and with company (99%), mostly with friends (68%) and relatives (21%). In general, they buy it as a complement to other drinks (42%), to share or socialize (25%), and to enjoy its flavor (24%). Otherwise, the respondents indicated that drinking pisco gives them joy (68%), relaxation (26%), and freedom (4%) (See Table 2).

Table 2

Pisco consumer behavior (n = 254)

Criterion	Segment	Percentage
Preferred place of purchase	Supermarkets	64.2
	Liquor stores	31.5
	Pisqueras	2.4
	Other	1.9
Preferred format	Single bottle (up to 250 cc)	0.8
	Medium bottle (700 cc and 750 cc)	38.6
	Large bottle (1,000 cc)	30.7
	Neither	29.9
Frequency of consumption	More than 1 time a week	9.4
	Each 15 days	30.7
	1 time a month	43.3
	Every 2 or 3 months	13.8
	Occasionally	2.8

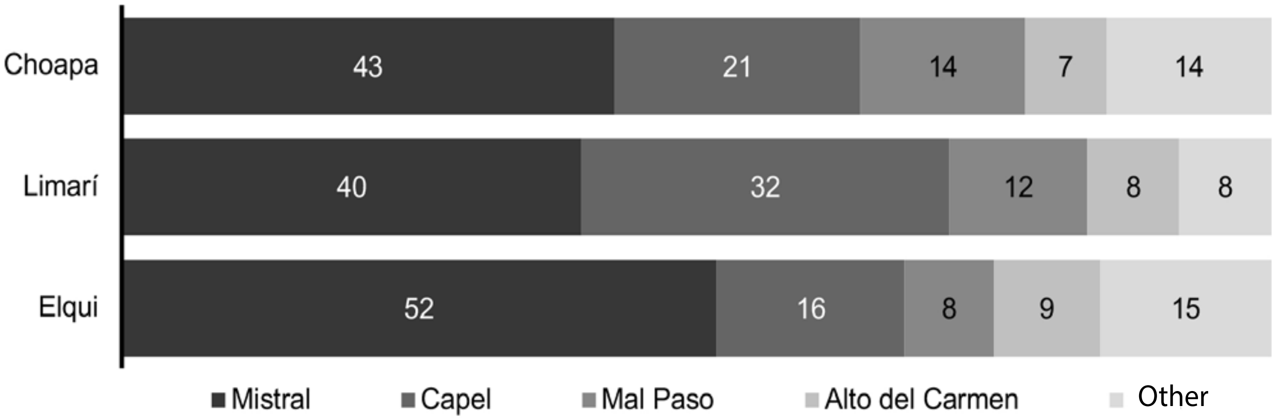
Criterio	Segmento	Porcentaje
With whom do you consume?	Friends	68.1
	Significant other	9.8
	Relatives	21.3
	Alone	0.8
Preferred place of consumption	Restaurant	3.9
	Nightclubs	10.6
	Pub	8.7
	House	76.8
Willingness to pay (700-750 ml)	Less than $6.67	32.3
	Between US$6.67 to US$13.33	53.1
	Between US$13.33 to US$26.67	11.8
	More than $26.67	2.8
Main reason for consumption	Enjoy a product of origin	6.7
	Enjoy its taste	24.0
	Complement of other drinks	42.1
	Share and socialize	25.2
	Other	2.0
Feelings when consuming	Relaxed	26.4
	Happy and sociable	67.7
	Free	4.3
	Drunk	1.6

3.2 Positioning of Chilean pisco brands

In order to measure the positioning of Chilean pisco brands, respondents were asked about the first brand they remember (top of mind). The results highlighted four exponents that, in total, comprise almost 87% of the mentions. However, it was Mistral who collected almost half of the responses (48.3%) followed by Capel (20.5%), Mal Paso (9.3%) and Alto del Carmen (8.8%). Other brands mentioned were Tres Erres (3.9%), Campanario (3.4%), Control (2.9%) and Horcón Quemado (2.9%). For its part, the examination of brand positioning revealed significant differences between the regional provinces [$\chi2$ (18, N = 254) = 32.51, p = .019]. In particular, it was observed that the Mistral brand is more remembered in the province of Elqui, while the Capel brand is more remembered in Limarí and the Mal Paso brand in Choapa (See Figure 3).

Figure 3

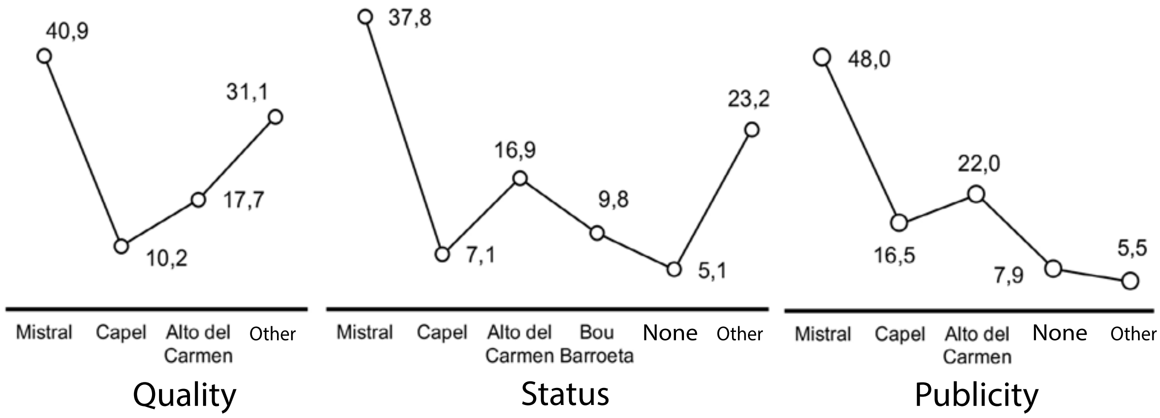
Positioning of Chilean pisco brands by province (%)



In addition, in order to identify the attributes that affect the positioning of the brands, three questions were established linked to the attributes of quality, status and publicity. The findings, illustrated in figure 4, show similar appreciations, highlighting Mistral, Alto del Carmen and Capel on all the edges. Only in the case of status, a different brand stood out (Bou Barroeta). Specifically, the brands associated with quality were Mistral (41%), Alto del Carmen (18%) and Capel (10%), while those associated with status were Mistral (38%), Alto del Carmen (17%), Bou Barroeta (10%) and Capel (7%). Lastly, the recognized brands with the best publicity were Mistral (48%), Alto del Carmen (22%) and Capel (17%).

Figure 4

Positioning of Chilean pisco brands according to quality, status and publicity (%)

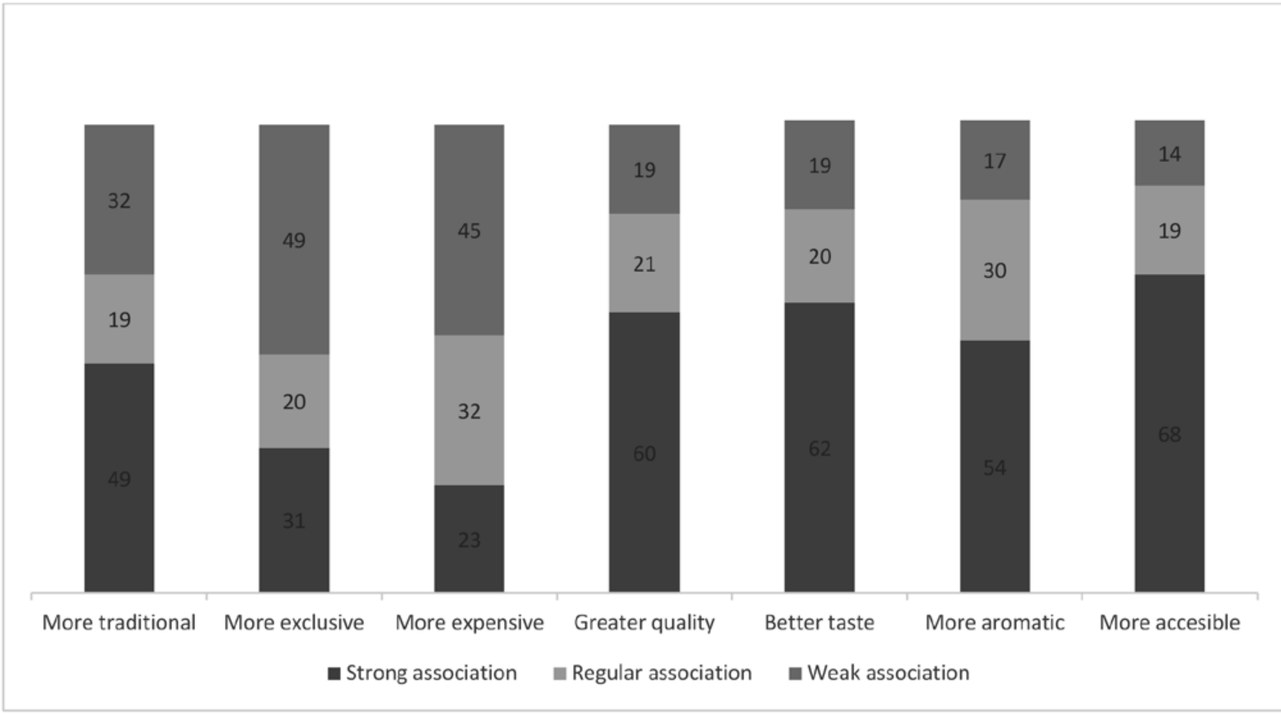


3.3 Perception of Chilean pisco in relation to Peruvian pisco

The analysis of the perception that consumers have about the attributes of Chilean pisco with respect to the Peruvian one (the only competitor), determined that the national product is perceived as more accessible (68%), better flavor (62%), higher quality (60%), more aromatic (54%) and more traditional (49%). On the other hand, Peruvian pisco is seen as a more expensive product (77%) and more exclusive (69%) (See figure 5).

Figure 5

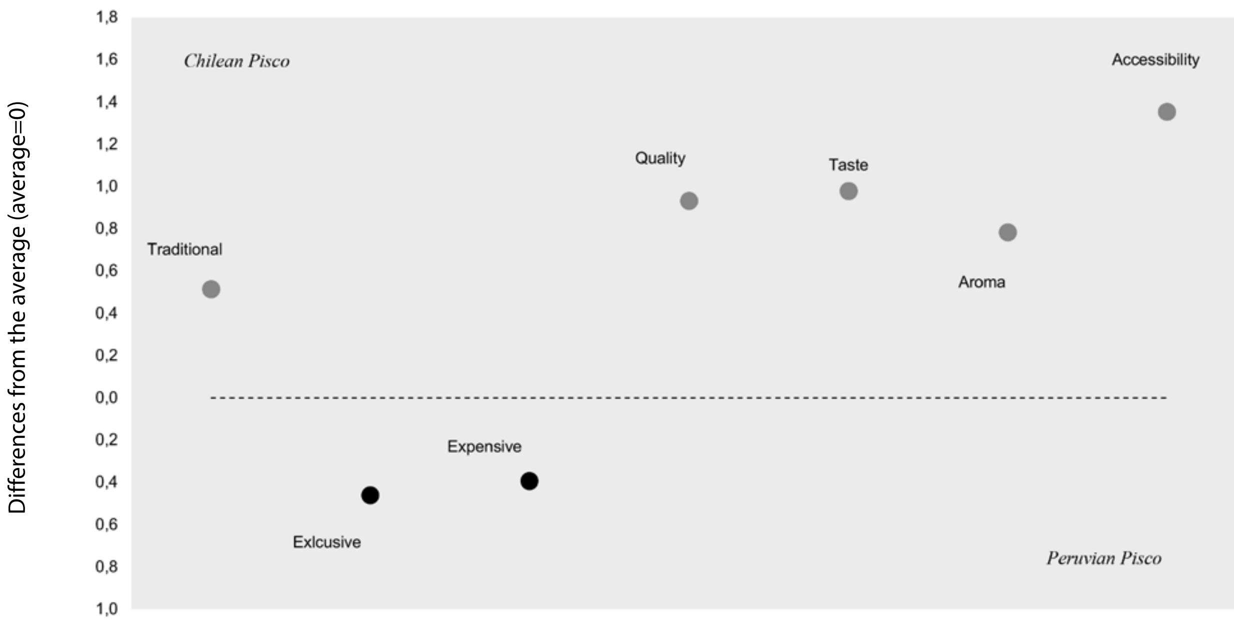
Perception of Chilean pisco in relation to Peruvian pisco (%)



From the previous results, it can be concluded that Chilean pisco is recognized as a popular, traditional and quality distillate, whose qualification is based on organoleptic characteristics such as flavor and aroma. Peruvian pisco, on the other hand, stands out as an exclusive product with a high price (See figure 6).

Figure 6

Attributes associated with Chilean pisco and Peruvian pisco



The examination of the valuation of the attributes according to the consumer profile only revealed significant differences with age, specifically with the factors: quality [F(2, 251) = 4.83, p < .01], taste [F(2, 251) = 7.24, p < .01], aroma [F(2, 251) = 5.78, p < .01] and accessibility [F(2, 251) = 9.11, p < .01]. Specifically, even when the hierarchy of the attributes was equivalent, it was the younger consumers who related the least those attributes to Chilean pisco and the older were the ones who showed a stronger association with them (See Table 3).

Table 3

Assessment of pisco attributes according to generation, in percentage (n = 254)

	Generation Y			Generation X			Baby boomers		
Attribute/ Level	Strong	Regular	Weak	Strong	Regular	Weak	Strong	Regular	Weak
Higher quality	55.4	24.2	20.4	73.6	15.1	11.3	73.3	6.7	20.0
Better taste	54.3	25.3	20.4	83.0	5.7	11.3	80.0	0.0	20.0
More aromatic	48.9	31.7	19.4	62.3	24.5	13.2	80.0	20.0	0.0
More accessible	60.2	23.1	16.7	86.8	5.7	7.5	93.3	6.7	0.0

3.4 Measuring the dimensions of brand equity

Table 4 summarizes the results obtained from the measurement of the reagents that make up the dimensions of the brand value of Chilean pisco. It is observed that the highest averages resulted from the questions linked to the categories of notoriety and perceived quality. This reveals that the Chilean pisco brand enjoys positioning due to its familiarity (M = 6.3) and brand awareness (M = 6.3); and it is preferred for its qualities that distinguish it as a product of excellence, good quality, reliable and consistent (M = 5.9).

The brand associations and organizational associations dimensions also presented favorable results, similar to the previous cases. This indicates that consumers appreciate, on the one hand, the convenience of Chilean pisco due to its value for money (M = 5.7) and, on the other hand, they recognize that the pisqueras do a good job in the distillate production process (M = 5.8).

Regarding the constructs of personality and brand loyalty is worth highlighting that, in terms of the first, the interest that the product presents for the respondents (M = 5.8) and, in terms of the second, that pisco of Chilean origin is considered the main option (M = 5.6).

In addition, it should be noted that there are four aspects that were evaluated with the lowest scores (M < 5.5), two of them linked to loyalty, one to notoriety, and another to brand personality. The joint examination of these antecedents shows that the respondents do not perceive themselves as loyal consumers of Chilean pisco, they are willing to acquire other options. In other words, current loyalty is mostly of a cognitive type, because although they think of the national pisco as the first option, this does not necessarily translate into the final purchasing behavior (behavioral loyalty). For the rest, there is some difficulty on the part of the respondents to recognize the brands of Chilean pisco, and to define a clear profile of who consumes it. Limitations that affect the positioning and value of brands in the market.

Table 4

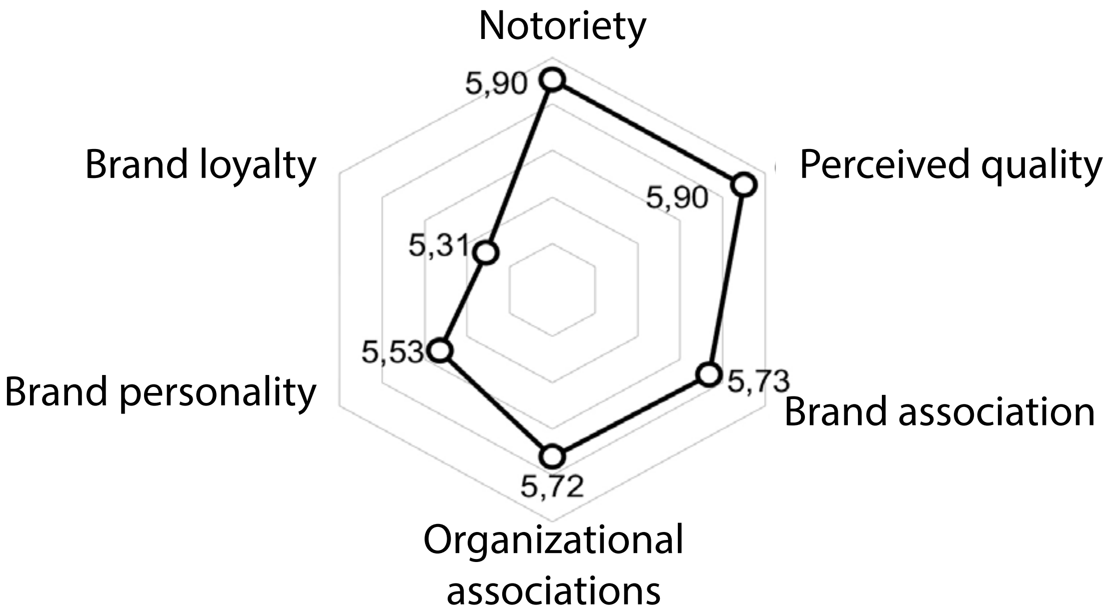
Mean (M) and standard deviation (SD) of the statements according to dimension

Dimension	Statement	M	DS
Notoriety	I have heard of Chilean pisco brands	6.03	1.29
	When I think of spirits, Chilean pisco comes to mind	6.25	1.15
	The term Chilean pisco is familiar to me	6.32	1.04
	I know different brands of Chilean pisco	5.79	1.47
	I can recognize Chilean pisco brands compared to other pisco brands	5.13	1.63
Perceived quality	The pisqueras in Chile offer very good quality products	5.91	1.25
	Chilean pisco brands have consistent quality	5.83	1.22
	Chilean pisco brands are trusted	5.94	1.19
	The pisqueras in Chile offer products with characteristics of excellence	5.91	1.19
Brand associations	Chilean pisco brands are good quality for money	5.72	1.20
	From the distillate market, I consider Chilean pisco to be a good buy	6.02	1.14
	Chilean pisco brands have good value for money	5.47	1.31
Brand personality	Chilean pisco brands have personality	5.46	1.18
	Chilean pisco brands are an interesting product	5.76	1.12
	I have a clear idea of the type of people who consume Chilean pisco	5.36	1.47
Organizational associations	I trust the Chilean pisqueras that make pisco	5.77	1.17
	I like to consume pisco from Chilean pisqueras that I know or identify	5.69	1.32
	Chilean pisqueras have credibility	5.70	1.18
Loyalty	I consider myself a loyal consumer of Chilean pisco	5.27	1.61
	When buying a pisco, Chilean pisco is my first choice	5.63	1.60
	I would not buy other brands of pisco if Chilean pisco were available	5.04	1.74

Figure 7 summarizes the results of the calculation of the total means of each of the dimensions that make up the brand value construct. It shows that, in general, the results were homogeneous with averages ranging between 5.3 and 5.9 (out of a maximum of 7), which shows a satisfactory assessment, but could be improved. The constructs arranged in decreasing order, based on their average rating, are: awareness, perceived quality, brand associations, organizational associations, brand personality, and loyalty.

Figure 7

Brand equity dimensions



The notoriety dimension presented a favorable assessment (M = 5.9) that shows that the respondents have the ability to remember and recognize Chilean pisco brands. That is, based on the pyramid of brand awareness (Aaker, 1991), the phase of spontaneous awareness or memorization (third level) is identified, which implies that consumers are able to remember the brand without the need to be previously exposed to it. In this sense, the examination of the reagents reveals that brand awareness is based on familiarity with the Chilean term pisco and the degree of primary memory, however, it is observed that there is still a certain degree of difficulty for consumers to recognize brands of national origin or deeper knowledge about the offer available in the market (variety).

The favorable average obtained in the perceived quality dimension (M = 5.9) shows that the consumer distinguishes pisco as a product of excellence, a determining attribute to increase customer satisfaction and boost the intention to repurchase and recommend the good. It should be noted that the perceived quality favors the positioning of Chilean pisco brands and their differentiation from the rest of the alcoholic beverages available on the market, and that is why, given a greater perception of quality on the part of the consumer, a greater willingness to pay, which benefits the brand value of the company.

The average of brand associations (M = 5.7) reflects that consumers value Chilean brands for their convenience, in terms of value for money, and perceived value. For the rest, the results of the organizational associations (M = 5.7) show that the Chilean pisqueras stand out for their quality and good positioning, which they support based on the credibility and trust generated in the market. Additionally, the personality of the brand dimension (M = 5.5) indicates that customers are able to perceive and highlight pisco's own characteristics that determine interest in its purchase.

Finally, the least valued dimension was brand loyalty (M = 5.3), which denotes the moderate link between customers and the brand. In this regard, according to the loyalty pyramid of Aaker (1991), the result obtained would be associated with the level of satisfied customer (or at least not dissatisfied), which explains why there is a certain willingness of the consumer to change the type of distillate and, therefore, define the competitive dynamics present in the market.

3.5 Brand value and pisco consumer profile

In order to detect significant differences in the valuation of the Chilean pisco brand according to the characteristics of the consumer, tests of equality of means were carried out, which showed relevant results for the variables gender and income (in the notoriety dimension), and age the dimensions perceived quality and brand association). Table 5 summarizes the tests for normality, equality of variances, and means for those variables that were significant.

Table 5

Normality tests, equality of variances and means for the significant variables

Dimension	Variable		Normality		Equality of variances		Mean	
			Test	p	Test	P	Test	P
Notoriety	Sex	Female	0.136	<.001	8.94	.003	-2.49*	.014
		Male	0.139	<.001				
Notoriety	Income	< US$ 266.67	0.117	.017	2.32	.058	22.34**	<.001
		US$ 266.67 – 400.00	0.146	.045				
		US$ 400.00 – 666.67	0.151	.001				
		US$ 666.67 – 1,333.33	0.216	.000				
		> US$ 1,333.33	0.192	.002				
Perceived quality	Age	Millennial	0.147	<.001	1.24	.291	13.13**	.001
		Generation X	0.142	.009				
		Baby boomers	0.221	.046				
Brand associations		Millennial	0.147	<.001	0.831	.437	11.49**	.003
		Generation X	0.142	.009				
		Baby boomers	0.221	.046				

Note: * The Mann-Whitney U Test was applied.
** The Kruskal-Wallis Test was applied.

In relation to gender, men gave a higher value to notoriety than women. The examination of the statements that explain this discrepancy made it possible to determine significant differences in the questions referring to the level of knowledge of pisco brands (I have heard of Chilean pisco brands, I know different Chilean pisco brands and I can recognize Chilean pisco brands versus to other brands of piscos), all the items turned out to be superior for men.

Regarding income, a correspondence with brand awareness was appreciated, that is, a greater knowledge of pisco brands in the higher income strata. The main (and significant) differences occurred in the statements regarding the knowledge of different brands of Chilean pisco and their recognition compared to other brands that offer the spirit.

Regarding age, it was the younger consumers who valued the perceived quality dimensions and brand associations less. In particular, the discrepancies were found between generations X and Y, where the group of millennials registered a more critical evaluation for all the reagents of the mentioned constructs (quality, excellence and trust) and a lower satisfaction regarding the relationship cost-benefit (See table 6).

Table 6

Means for the statements of the significant variables according to sex, income and generation

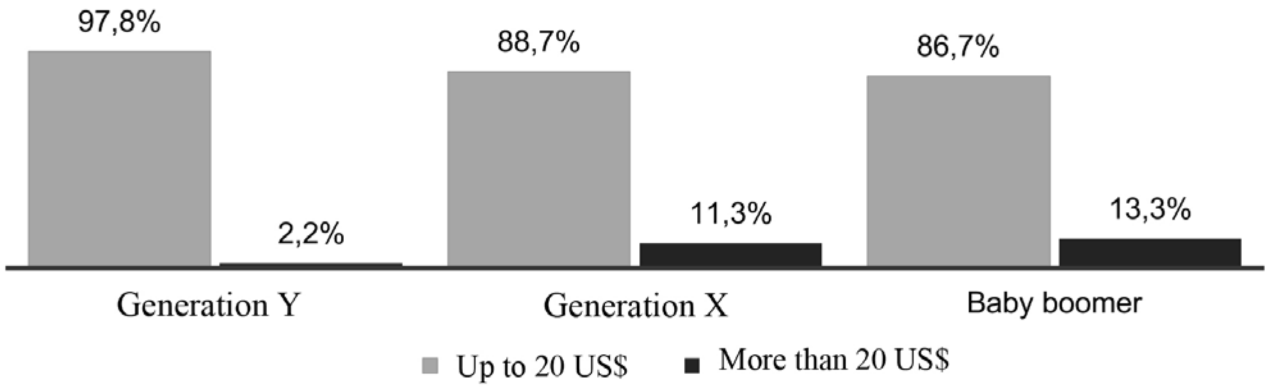
	Sex		Income (US$)			Generation		
Statement	**F**	**M**	**< 267**	**267–667**	**> 667**	**Y**	**X**	**BB**
Notoriety								
…heard of Chilean pisco brands	5.85	6.18	6.10	5.96	6.44	6.08	5.94	5.80
… Chilean pisco comes to mind	6.21	6.27	6.13	6.18	6.39	6.20	6.38	6.33
… Chilean pisco term is familiar to me	6.25	6.38	6.34	6.28	6.45	6.28	6.40	6.53
… different brands of Chilean pisco	5.53	5.99	5.63	5.68	6.31	5.87	5.58	5.47
… recognize Chilean pisco brands …	4.79	5.40	4.76	4.92	5.79	5.17	5.04	5.00
Calidad percibida								
… They offer very good quality pro-ducts	5.89	5.92	6.00	5.87	5.82	5.78	6.36	5.93
… Chilean ones have a consistent quality	5.87	5.81	5.89	5.80	5.83	5.72	6.19	6.00
… Chilean pisco brands are trust-worthy	5.99	5.89	5.93	5.91	5.92	5.81	6.28	6.33
… Products with excellent character-istics	5.95	5.89	5.92	5.91	5.90	5.80	6.26	6.13
Asociaciones de marca								
… They are good quality for money	5.68	5.75	5.66	5.68	5.64	5.61	6.08	5.80
… Chilean pisco is a good buy	6.09	5.96	5.93	5.93	5.97	5.94	6.34	5.80
… Have good value for money	5.50	5.45	5.34	5.35	5.40	5.34	5.91	5.53

Note. F = Female; M = Male; BB = Baby boomers.

In general, the previous results show that for female and low-income consumers there is a lower link of familiarity or union between brand associations and considerations at the time of purchase. In addition, the younger generations perceive that the value attributes of pisco are less relevant to explain the price they are willing to pay for it (See Figure 8).

Figure 8

Willingness to pay according to generation (bottle 700-750 cc)v



4 Discussion and conclusions

The analysis of the research results revealed that the Chilean pisco consumer in the Coquimbo Region has a similar profile to that described by other studies carried out in Chile on other alcoholic beverages (Araya-Pizarro et al., 2019; Araya-Pizarro & Ruiz-Vega, 2019; Guiñez & Cornejo, 2016). In other words, he is a young, male, working, middle-class adult who buys the distillate monthly in supermarkets to share with friends and family. These findings would ratify the assumption of pisco as a collective and socializing drink, consumed for recreational reasons.

In relation to the positioning of the pisco brands, a concentrated market was observed. Represented by four exponents, but dominated by a particular brand (Mistral), which stood out for its quality, status and, above all, its advertising. This point demonstrates the importance of properly managing the communication of those attributes that support brand positioning. Especially when there is research that demonstrates the impact of brand advertising on consumer loyalty (Bucheli & Brin, 2016) and the link between brand image and perceived quality (Suhud et al., 2022).

For its part, the contrast between Chilean pisco and Peruvian pisco showed that both distillates have their own positioning attributes, with exclusivity being the differentiating variable of preference for the one made from Peru. In this way, Chilean pisco would be recognized as a convenient liquor (price-quality binomial) that is drunk frequently; while the Peruvian pisco would be perceived as an exclusive distillate, intended for special occasions.

Regarding the brand value of Chilean pisco, it is possible to point out that it is based on recognition (notoriety), and the global quality or level of superiority observed compared to the other alternatives present in the market (quality based on intrinsic attributes). This situation demonstrates that the characteristics and recognition of the distillate (perceived quality) are key components for building a strong brand in the alcoholic beverage industry (Buil et al., 2010).

It was also evident that brand associations are perceived favorably, both in the product categories and at the organizational level, verifying the transcendental role they play in the purchase decision and in customer loyalty. In this line, it is worth mentioning that both brand awareness and brand associations have been highlighted for their significant relationship with the marketing activities of companies in the sector (Adedoyin & Adeyeri, 2019; Jarquin et al., 2019). Therefore, they represent key elements to configure a sectoral commercial proposal based on the recognition of the product and the credibility of its suppliers.

Likewise, the examination of the personality dimension of the brand showed positive results, revealing that consumers are capable of perceiving and highlighting the characteristics of pisco, which maintains interest in its consumption. On the contrary, brand loyalty turned out to be the least valued dimension, which reveals a customer whose current loyalty is especially cognitive. That is, customers who, although they think of Chilean pisco brands as their first purchase option, do not necessarily buy the product (behavioral loyalty). This finding becomes critical, considering that brand loyalty has been highlighted by other research on beverages, as the most influential dimension in the value of brand capital (Atilgan et al., 2005; Brochado & Oliveira, 2018; Calvo -Porral et al., 2013; Sahari et al., 2015).

The contrast of the valuation of the brands, according to the characteristics of the consumer, noted significant differences linked to gender, income and age. Specifically, female consumers, and those with lower incomes, have less brand awareness (notoriety) and a lower relationship of familiarity or union between brand associations and considerations at the time of purchase. For the rest, the younger generations consider that the value attributes of pisco are less effective in explaining the price they are willing to pay for the distillate, and express that they consume it as a complementary product (mixture). In this line, it is generation Y, who shows less association with the distinctive attributes of Chilean pisco (quality, flavor, aroma and accessibility).

The foregoing entails the challenge for the pisco industry to promote the communication of the differentiating qualities of the national distillate, especially in the younger generations, which would incline the purchasing preferences and the sense of identity for the local consumer, which was not significant. Also, the findings suggest that the quality of pisco is not linked, mostly, with the concept of exclusivity, which explains why it is perceived as a cheaper product and, therefore, its consumers show a lower willingness to pay higher prices. In this regard, there are authors who, after examining the direct relationship between the price and the perception of exclusivity of a good, argue that exclusive products can help justify higher prices or make a product less vulnerable to competition (Heyes & Lashley, 2017; Upshaw et al., 2017). An aspect that is worth taking into consideration, when observing the competitive dynamics of the sector.

In this way, the aforementioned findings allow us to conclude that in the face of a globalized market, and with a highly competitive production sector, it is not enough just to satisfy customer preferences based on the manufacture of a product of high organoleptic quality, but It is also necessary to generate differentiation in the intangible assets of the brands, which could be developed through the adequate management of the attributes that determine the value of the brand capital, the strengthening of the sense of belonging to the territory, and the enhancement of the concept of exclusivity of Chilean pisco.

As for the final recommendations, it is suggested to replicate the research at the national level, in order to investigate, from a wide geographical scope, the brand value of Chilean pisco and its determining elements. It is also interesting to develop a comparative study between the value attributes of the most consumed alcoholic beverages in Chile, in which the brand is included as a decision factor. Likewise, it is recommendable to carry out research with a longitudinal scope, which allows measuring the evolution of the brand value perceived by different consumers and their preferences over time. On the other hand, regarding the methodological approach, it is recommended to adopt a qualitative perspective, which allows to describe in greater depth the psychographic profile of the consumer and the tangible and intangible elements that support the brand value of Chilean pisco. Finally, based on the findings of the study, two lines of research of interest emerge: (i) examine, from a generational perspective, the value of Chilean pisco brands; and (ii) analyze, from a gender perspective, the factors that explain the differences in brand awareness among consumers.

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