

**【Conceptual Research paper】**

## **Models of brand equity – a transfer from the production to tourism settings and their application**

Basic parameters of a successful destination brand

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### **(Abstract)**

The study provides insight into the theory of brand equity models, which are predominantly used for non-tourism settings and the discussion of the applicability in tourism destinations. The contribution of this article is to try to think out of the box and use some principles of branding and brand measurement also in tourism destinations, at least to be able to understand some different concepts. The results of research and study revealed that the brand equity research in tourism destinations is still underdeveloped and only some of studies discussed models suitable in tourism settings, which confirmed a need for further research of models of brand equity in tourism destinations.

**Keywords:** Models of brand equity; Brand equity measurement; Competitive advantage and innovations

### **1. Introduction**

Branding as one of possible way of the competitive advantage improvement of destinations has been studied during the last decade and even earlier (after 2<sup>nd</sup> World War in production settings) by academics or by practitioners (DMOs, governmental or private marketing and planning bodies, etc.) Branding belongs to the topic popular especially due to its internal meaning and strength, which could be expressed by branding equity. Howard Schultz, the founder of Starbucks mentioned that “the most powerful and enduring brands are built from the heart. They are real and sustainable. Their foundations are strong because they are built with the strength of the human spirit, not an ad campaign” (<http://www.ultraupdates.com>).

The importance of self-expression and emotional attachment, which is embedded in brands, enables to boost competitiveness of tourism destinations, especially by stronger attachment and loyalty and so called kinship of destination. These components build a structure of models of branding. Brand equity measurement and application of models is emerging and the academics became more curious how the existing practices and models are applicable and if they are applicable in real settings and what is the benefit of their use or application for destinations and communities. This question became even more striking due to the fact that the future of marketing will be a battle of brands (Pike, 2005).

#### **1.1. Methodology and Goals**

In order to be able to understand brands, principles of branding and brand equity creation and measurement, the aim of the paper is to explain how the principles of brand models and brand equity have been constructed in production and transferred into tourism concepts. Several models have been specifically used in production settings and specific models have been constructed for tourism settings; however, their applicability or measurement of brand equity has still not been fully explored. The most important argument, which has influenced this type of conceptual search is the question if really a brand fulfills the brand promise and if the brand equity models should be created from the supply side or demand side or both sides (more versatile) and especially which elements should a successful brand (and model of brand equity) contain in order to fulfill it. For this reason our methodology will follow the specific goals of research:

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- a) make review of different chosen set of brand models (common, even suitable for production, and tourism destinations)
- b) set up criteria for their comparison (supply side, demand side, both sides - versatile, production and tourism settings)
- c) determine crucial items (dimensions) for each group of models
- d) create own model comprising the demand and supply side perspective and combining both sides in order to fulfill the promise of a tourism destination
- e) discuss and explain the principles and methods of measurement of brand equity and implementation constraints

The study has been based on a research of selected academic literature dealing with branding, models of brand equity, brand management in production and in tourism settings, comparison of different approaches to brand models and discussion about these differences. The goal of this study was to combine together the existing knowledge on brand equity measurement and selected brand equity models. These models have been chosen especially due to their possible implementation in tourism destination setting. The choice of models is selective and there exist several different models of brand equity, which were not included. However, we claim that the models used in this research are suitable for the comparison and the explanation of principles of functioning in tourism destinations. A selection of models of brand equity was based on former research dealing with brand equity concepts and the fact that the concept of customer-based brand equity has been developed at highly qualitative level by the studied authors as Aaker, Keller, Cai, Boo, Busser and Baloglu (2009) model, etc.

The study could be used as an exploratory conceptual research for further measurement and implementations of specific concepts in tourism destinations and become a source of inspiration for developing of methods of brand equity measurement in tourism regions, destinations or tourism generally. The goal is not to discuss specific examples or cases, but to compare the models and their concepts, discuss their applicability (strengths and weaknesses) and find among those models some useful and inspiration components for tourism managerial practice.

## **2. Literature review**

### **2.1. Brand equity**

Brand equity as a source of wealth and “added value” has emerged enormous interest among tourism marketers and academics despite of the fact that brand equity is rooted in financial disciplines, for instance in the accounting. Thode and Maskulka (1998) defined positive brand equity in financial content as corresponding to a situation when “the producer is able to sell their product at a price above the commodity (bulk) price and the premium price can be attributed to the bond itself.” Additionally, Wood (2000) pointed out that “the brand construct has proliferated into multiple meanings. Accountants tend to define brand equity differently from marketers, with the concept being defined both in terms of the relationship between customer and brand (customer-oriented definition), or as something that accrues to the brand owner (company-oriented definitions).” Dual approaches to the brand equity creation and perception of brands inferences the construction of models of branding.

Brand equity creation could be perceived from two paradigm angles – the neoclassical and the relational. Neoclassical approach in marketing is based on the micro-economic perspective with a predominant function of marketing mix tools. However, in this period of time, the relational paradigmatic approach to branding is becoming more popular in the most successful marketing strategies. In order to support this statement, Ambler (1997) distinguished “the underlying discipline of the marketing mix or neoclassical paradigm is microeconomics, whereas the relational paradigm is about people and draws its substance from the other social

sciences.” A shift from classical marketing and branding theory to the place marketing and branding by offering the relational and network marketing paradigms and alternative branding perspectives (relational branding) have demarcated a contemporary development of marketing and the growing importance of brand equity function even in tourism destinations.

Pritchard and Morgan (1996) suggested that a successful brand builds an emotional link between product and consumer and that “mood marketing” is a useful method of destination branding; where brand saliency is created through the development of an emotional relationship with the consumer through highly choreographed and focused communication campaigns.” The emotional attachment to tourism destinations can be fulfilled via attitudes, attributes of a place, especially through the sophisticated management of a tourism system in a place (place branding and management), management of brand attributes (natural environment, history, culture, heritage as well as services offered in a tourism destination and their quality). Several authors as Pyo, Mihalik & Uysal (1989) underlined a multidimensional character of the motivation of tourists seeking an experience and the emotional attachment in tourism destinations.

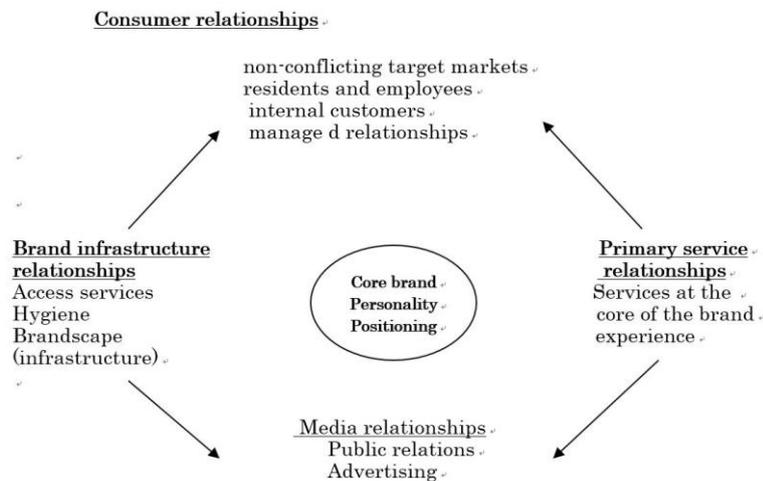
For this reason, it is important to evaluate in branding a historical potential, heritage, character of destinations (city, town, rural place, coastal or mountainous destinations). The role of history and culture in branding of places has been supported also by academics Go and Govers (2009) who described in their the 3-gap place branding model based on the idea of the 5-gap service quality analysis model by Parasuraman et al. (1985) in the Place identity (Anchor) section the importance of authenticity and history, culture and religion for successful place branding strategies. Experience, imagery and emotional bonds are the results of the implementation of culture, history and heritage into the branding strategies of destinations.

The emotional bonds and motivation are formed on a demand side; however a tourism destination’s desire is to create favorable conditions and to motivate and attract more visitors. Hence, as has been mentioned by Kozak (2003), on the supply side, the trip is not a single product; it is made up of components supplied by a variety of organizations with different objectives. For this reason, the process of branding and branding equity creation could be a really peculiar, and the author added that “all these elements make a contribution to the tourists’ cumulative experiences with the vacations”. The attributes as a part of brand equity may influence the emotional attachment, attitudes, brand loyalty, and the awareness as one of the most influential factors of the brand strength jointly with the brand attributes. A complexity of destination product in tourism destinations consists also from a local community and the representatives of public and private sector. Important is a mutual co-operation of these entities and especially the co-operation with the community and local people. This process is crucial for a successful branding process and the participation of local community influences better authenticity and mutual co-operation and co-creation processes. It is a process of improvement of mutual relationships among brand creators, community (setting of a brand, a place) and the brand users (visitors, customers), which influences a loyalty growth.

Based on a relational network of a brand and place branding concept (Hankinson’s place marketing and branding concept, Scheme 1), a success of branding and brand equity depends on the coexistence and co-operation of brand creators (supply side) and brand users (demand side) and a congruence of their perceptions of attitudes and attributes offered by a tourism destination. Building a destination brand and creating of brand equity requires a fulfillment of an expected experience and promise. The above discussed ideas were expressed in a definition of brand as a “name, symbol, logo, word or other graphic that both identifies and differentiates the destination, furthermore it conveys the promise of a memorable travel experience that is uniquely associated with the destination, it also serves to consolidate and reinforce the recollection of pleasurable memories of destination experience “(Goeldner et al., 2000, p. 653). The most important in this definition is the idea of a promise, which needs to be explained and especially to understand a necessity of a holistic approach to branding

process. A holistic approach to branding enables to implement a holistic view of all important attributes, e.g. tangible (utilitarian and environmental), intangible (symbolic) and experiential (based on Keller, 1993).

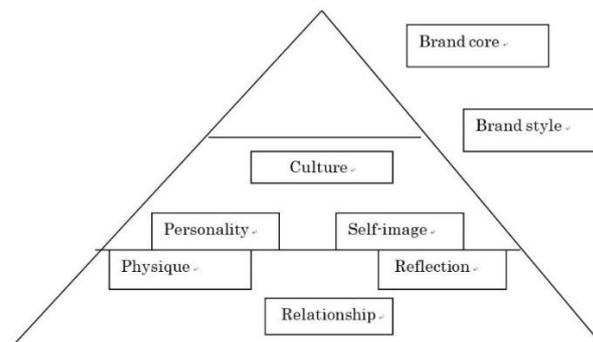
Scheme 1: The relational network brand



Source: Hankinson, G, 2004.

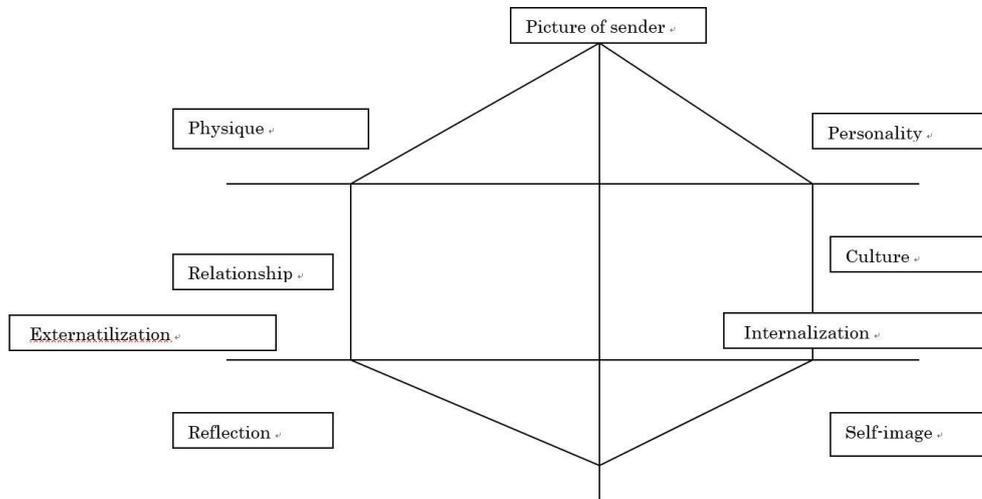
The models of brand management (identity, equity, and brand architecture), constructed by Aaker (1991), Kapferer ((2004), and Keller (1993), contain main principles of branding based on methods of benchmarking. For this reason, the most useful strategies and tactics for data collection have become a priority of branding researchers. To create these strategies or tactics, two main approaches are familiar in branding – management of brands (supply side) and consumer culture and brands (demand side); however, another familiar approach involves mixing of both in order to achieve a congruency. For instance, Kapferer’s model (Scheme 2, 3, and 4) includes six facets: physique, personality, relationship, culture, reflection, and self-image. Consumers perceive a destination from a bottom-up perspective. Scheme 6 explains the logistic of brand management and brand perception. Consumers perceive first the tangible character of a destination; however, before a visit, they create attitudes and beliefs. Consumer’s image is created by the organic image (knowledge about a destination from different source, and media), or the induced image (promotional and marketing activities). Crucial for trustful image creation is a principle of respecting the brand core identity. Brand and image building needs to stem from the brand core identity, and the image has to be created before the identification of the brand core identity (Kapferer, 1995). This fact influences congruency of destination image (represented by a brand) and self-image (a consumer’s perception and feelings during a visit).

Scheme 2: The Brand Pyramid and the Identity Prism



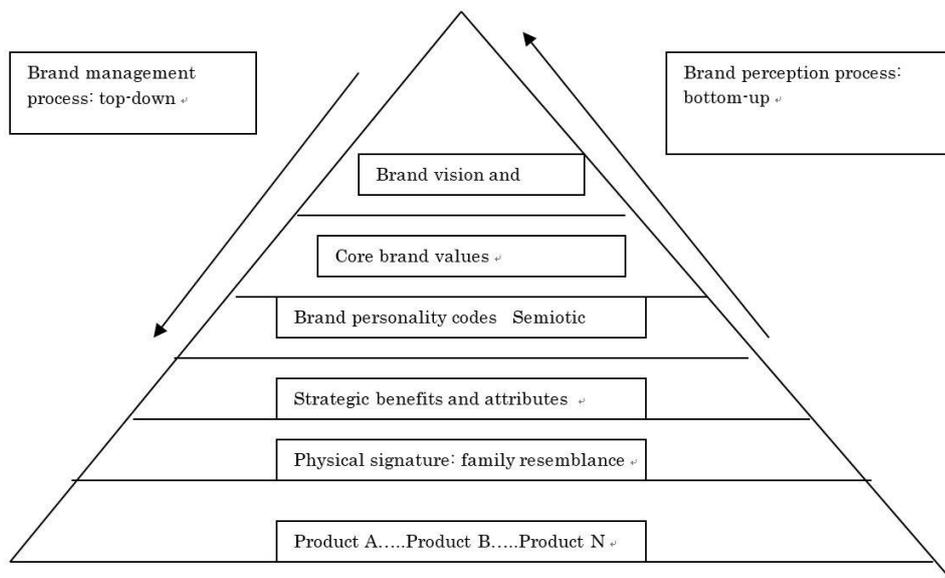
Source: Kapferer, J. N., 1995.

Scheme 3: The Brand Pyramid and the Identity Prism



Source: Kapferer, J. N., 2004.

Scheme 4: The brand system

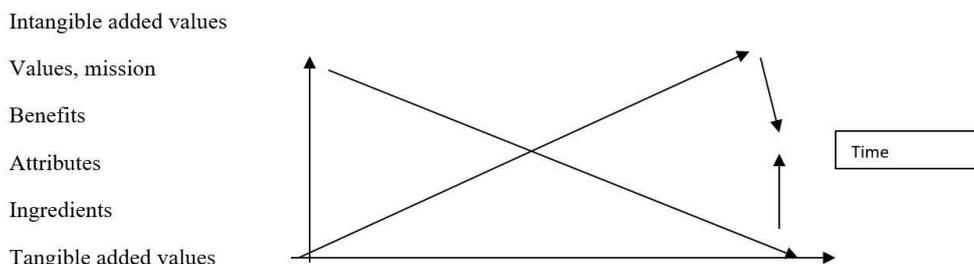


Source: Kapferer, 2008.

The Kapferer's brand prism model (Scheme 3) contains an emerging salient component (physique) – the tangible added value. Physique contains the characteristics of a destination, its qualities. Kapferer (2008) stressed the importance of material benefits even for the image-based brand. Physique is the backbone of the brand with its representative qualities. In addition, it has a tangible character and means the icon of a destination. The problem with brands, representing physical facets, can be in their weak functional added value caused by the intangible character of services. In a service sector as tourism, the intangible character of services originates a case wherein many brands start as ideas and not as tangible added values. For this reason, in tourism branding based on the emotional connection to a destination, stronger factor as the physique, would be for visitors the emotional attachment and experiences.

The two-legged concept, described by Kapferer (2008), confirms the importance of emotional branding, creation of pleasant attitudes, image, and the appreciation of attributes of a tourism destination. Figure 1 illustrates the concept of brands as two-legged value consisting of intangible and product values. This concept supports the idea that effective branding of tourism destination has to be grounded on the emotional content and the intangible values are primary sources of brands.

Fig. 1: The two models of brand building



Source: Kapferer, J. N., 2008.

Some authors claim that experiences can be managed as products (Zeithaml & Bitner, 2003), which supports the importance of experiences for both – consumers and tourism destination marketers. Kapferer’s model enables to understand the principles of brand identity building and its components, for example culture and history, which influence the uniqueness of a destination.

A fact that tourism is predominantly a service sector, has implications for branding and the impact of relationships among the service providers and consumers. The inner relationship with a brand is expressed in the self-image of the brand user. The brand identity prism model contains the ideas and relationships, which are useful for explanation and comparison of models of consumer brand equity, their efficiency, and efficacy. In addition, the model confirms the importance of relational marketing and explains the construction of a brand. In order to understand how consumers decide and where their decision is rooted emerges a need for the competitive environment. Measurement of brand equity and the implication of brand equity models dealing with the consumer based equity needs to implement a decomposition approach (discussed by Aaker and Keller). The following discussion will highlight some main principles of these models and their conceptual base, their strengths and weaknesses and possibilities of the implementation of some of their characteristics into tourism settings.

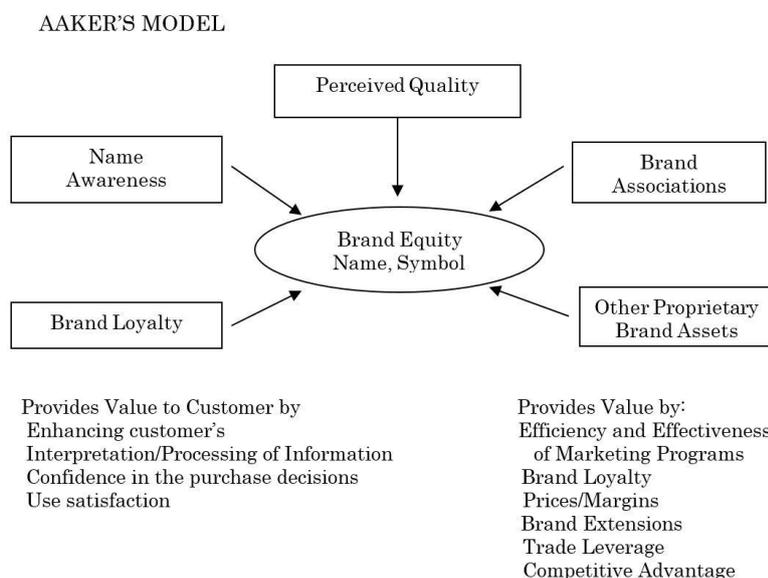
## 2.2. The Aaker’s and Joachimstahler’s model of consumer brand equity

The importance of brand identity building with a core and extended identity has been confirmed also by Aaker. Aaker (1991) is one of few academics dealing with models of brand equity who combined the concepts of consumer perception (awareness, brand associations, and perceived quality) with the consumer behavior (brand loyalty).

The author grouped 12 dimensions of brand identity into four perspectives: “brand-as product (product scope, product attributes, quality/value, users, and the country of origin), brand-as-organization (organizational attributes, local versus global), brand-as a person (brand personality, brand-customer relationship), and brand-as-symbol (visual imagery/ metaphors and brand heritage)” (Keller & Kotler, 2006). Aaker’s model is considered the most generally accepted model, and represents the demand and supply side of branding with a strong managerial and marketing impact.

Aaker (1991) discussed the difference between the classic brand management model and the brand leadership model, where in the second type of model a brand equity principle is rooted in the strategic, visionary approach. The first version of the model (Scheme 5) was created by Aaker and later developed by Aaker and Joachimstahler (2000). The model is based on a systematic analysis of branding and a strategic vision, which are important for systematic and pragmatic models. Brand loyalty, brand awareness, perceived quality, brand associations, and other proprietary assets (patents, trademarks, and channel relationships) are five assets of the model. Aaker (1991) defines brand equity as “a set of brand assets and liabilities linked to a brand, its name and symbol that add or subtract from the value provided by a product or service to a firm and/or to that firm’s customers” (p.15).

Scheme 5: Managing Brand Equity



Source: Aaker, D. A., 1991.

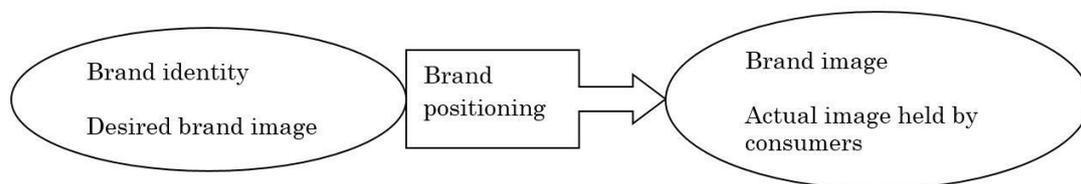
Brand loyalty measures the consumer’s commitment or attachment to the brand and refers to repeated purchases or visits to a destination. Some authors define brand loyalty from the attitudinal or behavioral perspectives, where a former means commitment to some specific value of the brand and the latter refers to a preference for a specific product or service. Brand loyalty increases chances of a target market to be competitive by the strengthening of components of brand equity (Aaker, 1991, 1996). It is the only one component of this model, which cannot exist without a personal experience or use. For this reason, brand loyalty is one of the most important components of brand equity. Awareness, associations, and perceived quality (customer’s subjective opinion) are not so strictly based on personal experiences with a brand.

Brand awareness is consumer’s ability to recall a brand. The strongest factors influencing awareness and recall involve product and service quality, and brand associations (the set of information and characteristics known about brand). The level of awareness stretches from mere recognition to brand dominance. Aaker (1991, 1996) distinguishes two factors associated with brand awareness – brand recognition and brand recall, where the latter means to retrieve a brand from memory. Perceived quality is rooted in subjective evaluation of quality by a consumer. A gap between quality of tourism products, services, and perceived quality originates a decreased trust, popularity of a destination, and means a decrease of competitiveness.

The reason to buy a product or visit a destination is incorporated in brand association, and customers express through their positive attitude their relationship to a brand. Aaker (1991, 1996 b) added that the most influential

brand equity's components, which are part of brand associations, are brand personality and organizational associations. Positioning is a tool used in competitive destinations and its powerful character stems from the creation of strong associations and differentiation (Aaker, 1992).

Figure 2: Managerial and consumer-based approach presenting the role of brand positioning



Source: Aaker, D.E., 1996.

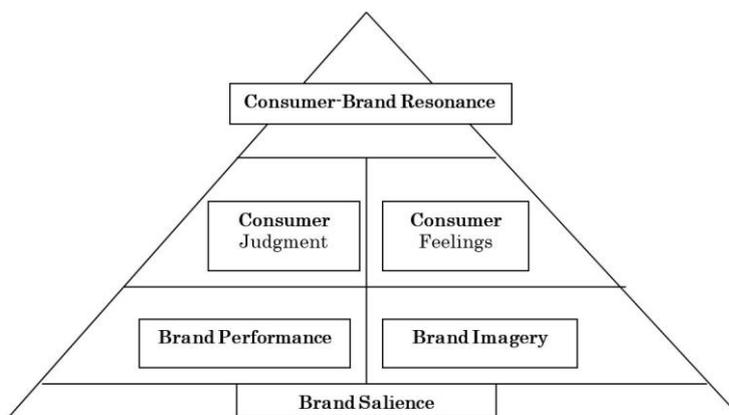
The strongest bond with brand associations involves brand awareness, especially through the implementation of names, symbols, slogans associated with tangible physical attributes or intangible attributes of tourism destinations. Hankinson and Cowking (1993) matched the consumer's physical needs with the functional attributes and the psychological needs with the symbolic values of a brand. For this reason is important to create strong brands fulfilling the brand promise and enabling to combine the managerial and consumer-based approach (versatility in the use) with a strong commitment to fulfill the expectations of visitors.

### 2. 3. Keller's customer-based brand equity model (CBBE)

Keller confirmed in this model the Aaker's idea of combining physical and imagery components in order to create a strong and rich brand. Aaker and Jacobson (2001) explained that emotional needs are satisfied by emotional concerns and utilitarian needs by rational concerns. Keller's model is less versatile as Aaker's and Joachimstahler's model because it is based on a consumer's behavior and a managerial (marketing and management) approach.

These concepts of Keller's model are based on the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1985, 1987, 1991) and the theory of reasoned action (Fischbein & Ajzen, 1975). Keller originated three types of models - Brand Positioning Model (identifying the differences and point of parity of products), Brand Value Chain Model (suitable for financial settings), and Brand Resonance Model. For our research interest, Customer Based Brand Equity Model (CBBE) or the Brand Resonance Model (Scheme 6) will be explained.

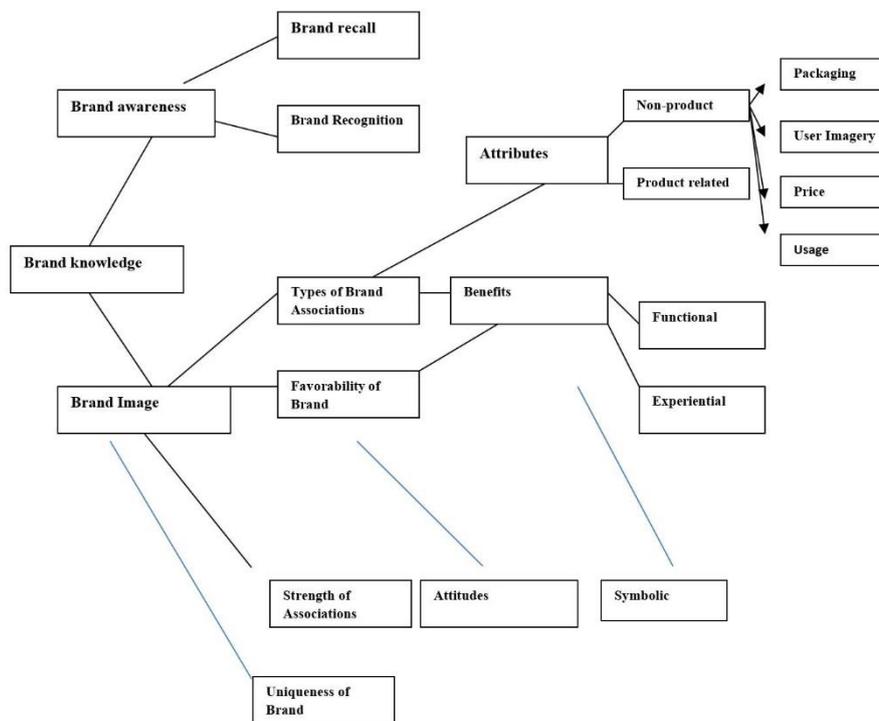
Scheme 6: Keller's CBBE model



Source: Keller, K.L. (2003).

The model was primarily constructed for production setting, but some principles and concepts are also flexible for tourism destinations. Three major characteristics shape the model – brand knowledge, brand awareness, and image. All three concepts have been transferred from a cognitive psychology (associative network memory models). A major idea concerning strength of branding, is that minds of consumers are the most powerful weapon (Keller (1993), i.e., the brand knowledge is presented by thoughts, feelings, images, perceptions, and attitudes. Knowledge of brands and consumers’ response is a determinant of the customer-base brand equity. The origin of knowledge and its impact on consumer behavior is an influential factor. Heding et al. (2009, p. 88) explained that in cognitive psychology, “knowledge in memory consists of nodes and links and is structured into associative networks...the nodes vary in strength; some associations are stronger than others.” Recognition of brand knowledge consisting of brand image and awareness, classification of brand associations, attributes, attitudes, brand recall, is important source of information for consumers, as has been presented in the Scheme 7.

Scheme 7: Dimensions of brand knowledge



Source: Keller, K.L., 1993.

Keller stressed the importance of image and brand awareness in his model; however also other factors are influential. For example, in order to understand the imagery, a demographic and psychographic characteristic of consumers is required. Performance building block contains service effectiveness. The evaluation of historical, heritage potential is rooted in the imagery. Important source of data is the evaluation of attitudes and attributes and the image of a destination. Burmann et al. (2009, p. 393) claimed that “the level of benefit provided to buyers by the brand corresponds to the amount of brand strengths ascribed to the brand”, which means that the brand strength is crucial for the creation of a strong brand equity.

Except “Brand knowledge” as one component of a strong brand, Keller (2002) agreed that differentiation, positioning, and a response of consumers to marketing are decisive factors for creation of strong brands. Differentiation and positioning belong to the recognized influential factors of competitive strategy by Porter (1980). Another important factor of a strong brand is a consumer response to marketing. Keller (2001)

underlined that in the first phase of model preparation is crucial to recognize brand identity, especially the relationship of a customer to the brand associations and a search for meaning of brand in the minds of customers. The brand knowledge creation scheme contains steps, which enable to recognize attitudes of consumers and to evaluate attributes and benefits (functional, experiential, and symbolic). Functional attributes represent the tangible character of a tourism product whereas the emotional (symbolic) attributes fulfill social and personal needs of consumers and create self-esteem (Keller, 1993; Hankinson & Cowking, 1993; de Chernatony & Mc William, 1989). The feelings about a brand and emotional aspects are embedded in the experiential attributes.

Keller's CBBE model and especially brand ladder building follows a vertical and horizontal division with a bottom-up direction. Division of the model into two horizontally and vertically separated parts explains the approach to the creation of brand equity and the approach applied to the brand equity building. The right side of the pyramid contains the emotional characteristics (imagery, feelings). The rational characteristics (judgments, performance) are predominant on the right side of the pyramid. The bottom – top approach determines a priority of primary search for brand awareness through the salience identification. Model consists of six building blocks – brand salience, brand performance, brand imagery (foundation for the construction of the three remaining building blocks – consumer judgments, consumer feeling and consumer-brand resonance).

Salience measures the effectiveness of brands (consumption, purchase), which means a probability to be chosen by a consumer (Kotler & Keller, 2006; Keller, 2001). Awareness, recognition, and recall are the most important factors of salience and create a deep awareness in the minds of a target market. Depth and breadth of awareness enables a creation of salient brands allowing customers to recognize and recall easier a brand. The salient brand resides in a mind in the top position, in the right time and place (Keller, 2001). Mathieson and Wall (1982) explained in their sequential model of consumer decision making how the awareness is created in the process of decision. Meaning of a brand is embedded in the imagery or image building from more intangible components. The use of brands by different people evokes different meaning for various social groups based on demographic and psychographic factors. Image and brand associations, consisting of attributes, benefits, and brand attitudes, are basic concepts of a model. The character of attributes influences the brand imagery creation, i.e., the tangible attributes as scenery, history, heritage, which could be easily captured in customer's memories. The intangible attributes are, for instance, the atmosphere of a place, a character of the environment, services, quality of infrastructure. The implementation of symbolic attributes, such as the atmosphere of a place (ambience), is crucial; however a peculiar character of symbolic attributes and their uniqueness complicate the process of communication in branding. A success of branding influences the richness of symbolic experiences (Gnoth, 1998). The importance of symbolic attributes also means a stronger protection against copying of brands.

For this reason, image has an enormous impact on the success of branding despite the fact that image is not branding...it is only one step closer to branding and brand equity creation. Image, consisting of a variety of dimensions (cognitive, affective), has been identified by Henderson (2000) as construct of the knowledge, feelings, beliefs, opinions, ideas, expectations and impressions about a tourism destination. Brand image is closely interrelated to the feelings dimensions of a destination as a part of the CBBE model, for example, the feeling of security, social approval, etc. and is associated with the recognition of brand by consumers. The evaluation of quality and satisfaction with services belong to the building block "judgments" as well as the differentiation and the evaluation of credibility of brand. Quality and satisfaction with services are evaluated from the consumer's perspective, which means a subjective approach based on different criterion as for instance a quality of services measured by specific standards constructed by service providers.

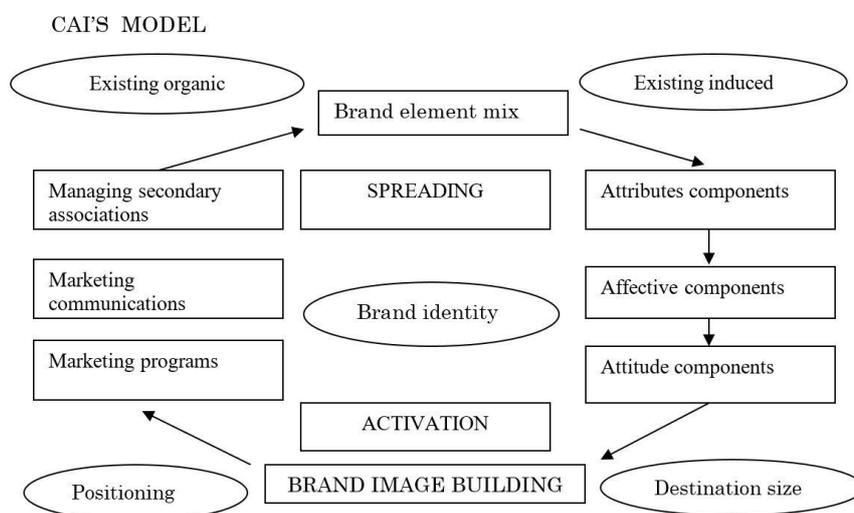
The final steps in building a model of consumer-based brand equity reveal the responses of customers to brand meaning and a creation of brand loyalty between the customer and creator of brand (a tourism destination and its entities). The most sensitive indicator of the consumer's loyalty and attachment is the consumer-brand

resonance, which contains the affiliation to the community (kinship), attachment to brand (attitude to the brand). The final step of the attachment and relationship to brand is the engagement with a brand through a personal involvement. It means to become involved in the supporting groups, fun clubs of a particular brand in a tourism destination. The most important requirement for the brand resonance fulfillment is a situation when a congruence of the expectation has been achieved (Keller, 2001).

## 2.4. Cai's destination brand model

Cai's model of destination branding (Scheme 8) is merging the branding concepts from a perspective of brand creator (tourism destination) and user (customers). Cai agreed with William and Palmer (1999, p. 737) that "brand image is a pivotal aspect of a marketing strategy for a destination".

Scheme 8: A model of destination branding



Source: Cai. L., 2002.

Model of cooperative branding, known as Cai's model, is blending some formerly created concepts of the image projection based on the studies of academics as Hunt (1975), Baloglu and McCleary (1999), Echtner and Ritchie (1993), Gartner (1989), Crompton (1979), Fekeye and Crompton (1991), Dann (1996), Gunn (2001), and others. Despite the image is a crucial factor in destination branding, it is not sufficient for a success in branding. The difference between the creation and branding image means a dual epistemological approach, which influences a deeper understanding of branding and brand equity.

Cai (2002) stated that "the model considers destination branding as a recursive process that revolves around the central axis formed by brand element mix, brand identity, and brand image building" (p. 736). Spreading and activating of model's elements in the clockwise direction logically explains the supply side (left side) and demand side (right side) of brand equity and brand image creation as two-dimensional process (organic, induced image) or three-dimensional (organic, induced, composite). The author, similarly as Kapferer, Aaker, Keller, Hankinson and Melin admitted the importance of brand identity in branding, especially the application of the psychological theory of Adaptive Control of Thought (Anderson, 1983) based on the interconnection of brand identity and image. The idea is rooted in the interconnection of nodes (information) in verbal, visual, or abstract form as a network, which serves as the ignition for activation in the external environment. The most effective approach to strengthening and activating of linkages is through the brand image building.

The concepts of Gartner's image creation corresponded to Cai's perception of destination image creation. Consumers create images and perceive branding messages individually. The cognitive components of image consist of beliefs and attitudes of individuals (consumers) creating a specific mosaic of attributes (Pike, 2004; Garner, 1993). Some beliefs can be based on the former experiences, perceptions of reality; however, some are most present. Fischbein (1967), Pike (2004), and Fischbein and Ajzen (1975) questioned the importance of accepting a difference between individual's beliefs and attitudes. Fischbein expressed the idea that sometimes both terms are understood as "attitude", but the former [belief] is based on the information about the country and the latter [attitude] means the feeling about the country. The second component of image is the affective component, which means a selection of a destination based on motives (Gartner, 1993).

Destination attributes are crucial for a development of the affective image. The final, action consensus of formerly developed cognitive and affective image, is embedded in the conative image. Gunn (1972) opposed the idea of Gartner's three-dimensional image creation and introduced two-dimensional approach as the organic and induced image process. Goodrich (1978) similarly agreed on the two-level division of image – the primary destination image (visit perception) and the secondary image (based on external sources). Fakeye and Crompton (1991) developed the three-dimensional image model – organic, induced, and complex. The most holistic approach to the image creation developed Echtner and Ritchie (1993) in their model consisting of three dimensions – holistic, functional-psychological, and common-unique. The conceptualization of Echtner's and Ritchie's model and Baloglu and McCleary concept (1999) based on the implication of personal factors (psychographic and demographic) and stimulus factors (experience, knowledge) created more consistent body of knowledge on image and contributed to the concepts of branding applied in Cai's model of branding.

The importance of Cai's model could be explained in a connection with a discussed psychological theory (Fischbein, Ajzen), self-image creation, and the image and positioning strategy forming in tourism destination branding. As Cai (2002) explained, "image formation goes beyond the tourist-oriented approach to encompass what image a destination marketing organization (DMO) wants to project through each of the three As" (p. 726), e. g. attributes, affective components, and attitudes. Actual image created by consumers, or brand image represents the destination's image held by visitors or potential visitors, which has multi-attributed character (composite image). Baloglu and McCleary (1999), Gartner (1986), Mayo (1973), Stern and Krakover (1993), Dichter (1985), MacInnis and Price (1987) and others understood imagery as the multi-attribute construct in gestalt. It means that the images are perceived during a visit of a destination as a holistic experience.

The image, originated in the minds of potential visitors and visitors, is rooted in the individual perception of a destination attribute, which is not similarly important in marketing strategies of tourism destinations. The preferences are subjective and a result of it can be a gap between the projected and perceived image. Kozak and Tasci (2006, p. 304) stated that "theoretically, the projected and received images could be different and the fit between the two would depend on the success of the destination marketing activities, eventually contributing to the consumer satisfaction upon visitation." For this reason, the aim of the brand equity and image creation is to match individual attributes and attitudes (brand image) with the brand identity (desired or projected brand image) through the marketing (induced image and the application of the appropriate marketing mix).

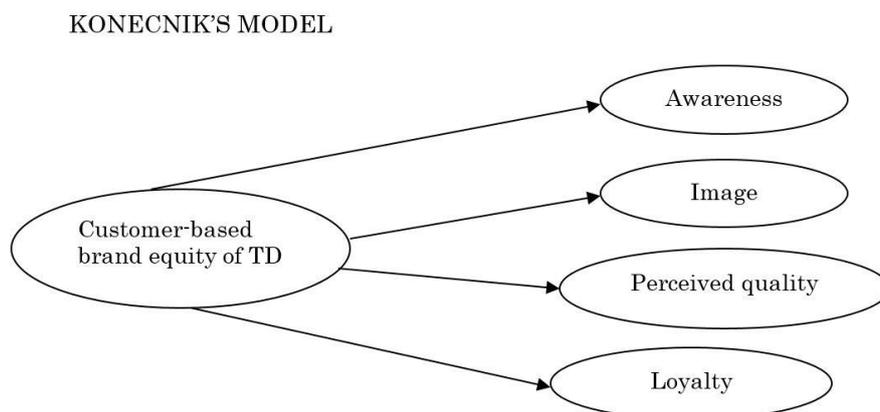
The concept of image, brand identity, positioning and differentiation is crucial for competitiveness, and Poon (1993) stressed the influence of positioning and differentiation on the competitiveness of tourism destinations. Brand positioning means the ability of a tourism destination to compete for a specific market. Branding of destinations includes a task to identify meaningful images of destinations and prompt the emotional visitor's reactions. Positioning means the use of meaningful images to position a destination against the competitor's destination. Cai's model contains a positioning strategy, but also the Aaker's model was based on positioning concept. Pike (2008) presented a scheme of brand positioning (Scheme 9 in appendix) as a source of competitive advantage, which is a good example of the interrelation of image, positioning, and competitiveness.

In the model of destination branding, Cai explained the process of implementation and placement of marketing strategy, differentiation and positioning; however, the model contained also some ideas transferred from the Aaker's model.

## 2.5. Konecnik's CBBETD model

Konecnik's aim was to add into the model of brand equity new dimensions, which will improve the concepts of Keller's model (CBBE model) and some dimensions of Aaker's model. The attempt to shift the study focus of branding equity from the image and perception (Keller's model) by merging of some concepts of Aaker's, Kapferer's and Cai's models, inspired Konecnik to several academic discussions, which enlarged a view on branding (Konecnik & Go, 2008; Konecnik, 2006; Konecnik, 2004). The proposed conceptual CBBETD (consumer-based brand equity model for tourism destination) added to Keller's dimension of CBBE model two components: perceived quality and loyalty (Scheme 10). In our opinion, those dimensions already existed in Keller's model in the building block "brand resonance" (brand loyalty). Perceived quality has been defined by Keller (2003) as performance, features, confirmation quality, reliability, durability, serviceability, style and design and is incorporated in the building block "brand performance". Konecnik, similarly as Cai underlined the importance of image, awareness, quality and brand loyalty for the brand equity concept.

Scheme 10: Conceptual model of the customer-based brand equity for TD



Source: Konecnik, M.,2006.

Konecnik and Gartner (2007) identified brand quality as main dimension of customer-based brand equity. A majority of former studies, concerning quality, has become a part of image studies, as for example the studies of Hunt (1975), Gartner (1986, 1989), Baloglu and McCleary (1999) and later Gallarza, Saura and Garcia (2002), Guthrie and Gale (1991), Chon (1992), Echtner and Ritchie (1993), Opperman (1996). The evaluation of attributes of quality complicates a character of tourism product in a tourism destination, which is predominantly service based. The character of tourism product, defined by Smith (1994) as the construct of the physical plant, service, hospitality, freedom of choice and involvement in the model, described the author as "the progression of elements from the core to the shell is correlated with declining direct management control, increasing consumer involvement, increasing intangibility, and decreasing potential for empirical measurement" (p. 587). The importance of experiences for tourists (consumers) and for the consumer's perception of quality of products and services has been admitted by Murphy, Pritchard and Smith (2000); Mannel and Iso-Ahola, (1987) and Mayo and Jarvis (1981).

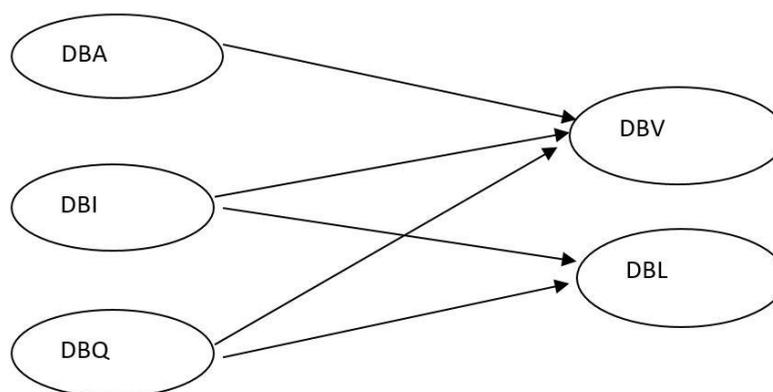
Thus, when we discuss brand quality in a tourism destination, a meaning is the quality of attributes (products and services, environment, etc.) of destination, but for the visitors the most important seem to be social and cultural features of a destination. Based on the study of Mo, Howard & Havitz (1993), the result showed that “the destination’s environment was the primary factor (“Destination Orientation Dimensions”: e.g. social and cultural features), and the destination’s service infrastructure the secondary factor (“Travel Service Dimension”: e.g. transportation, food and lodging services) in the experience desires with the tourism product” (p. 44). The complexity of tourism destinations and the assessment of quality of tourism destination attributes in advance is a challenging process, for this reason, a brand becomes a representation of expected quality and diminishes a risk. Combination of functional and emotional values applied in branding of tourism services allows achieving better effect (Chernatony & Riley, 1999). Perceived quality corresponds to the brand value and means a subjective evaluation of the quality of services from the customer point of view. Lovelock and Wright (1999) admitted differences in the level of expectation of service quality. Desired levels of satisfaction tend to become different depending on the individual expectations. Another approach is setting the specific criteria for the quality of services, initiated by providers, which are called standards of quality. The recognition of quality by consumers, in the form of a specific brand, enables to implement the premium price, which adds to the brand equity. Zeithaml (1988) defined perceived quality as an important part of brand value, which influences a consumer’s preferences. For this reason, service quality in tourism destination influences competitiveness of destinations and has an incremental impact on brand loyalty.

Brand loyalty means that consumers are satisfied and are interested to repeat their visits to tourism destinations. In other words, loyalty is satisfaction with a brand and commitment to the brand – emotional relationship with a brand, which represents some pattern of consumption. Intangible and emotional elements are the most important factors influencing brand loyalty. The mentioned authors of brand equity model (Aaker, Keller, Cai, Konecnik, and Kapferer) omitted the importance of human factor as a component of marketing mix. A fact that services, as a major part of tourism product, depend highly on a human factor, the employees of tourism businesses as well as other type of businesses as part of destination infrastructure, have an influential impact on brand loyalty and brand equity.

## 2.6. Boo, Busser, Baloglu Baseline Model

The model combines the destination brand awareness (DBA), destination brand image (DBI), destination brand quality (DBQ), destination brand value (DBV), and destination brand loyalty (DBL) and the model is depicted in the Scheme 11.

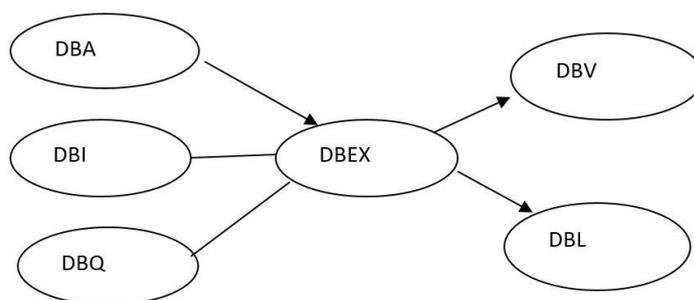
Scheme 11: Baseline model



Source: Boo, Busser, Baloglu, 2009

Upon Boo et. al the most important characteristics in brand management is destination brand loyalty. The authors also proposed baseline model in the alternative form (Scheme 12).

Scheme12: The Alternative model



Source: Boo, Busser, Baloglu, 2009.

Boo, Busser and Baloglu Baseline model seems to be similar to Aaker’s and Konecnik’s concept of brand equity. Despite its customer orientation, the concept of brand experience is an interesting concept of this model (DBEX) and the importance of experience for brand equity creation is incorporated in this model (The Alternative baseline model). This model seems to be the alternative for the improved assessment, evaluation and measurement of brand, despite of a fact that brand personality concept is not directly incorporated into a model (unlike Cai’s model).

## 2.7. The implementation of models in different socio-cultural settings

A generalization and implication of managerial and marketing approaches in different social and cultural settings originates various specifics, for example, the managerial approaches, community responses, and the consumers’ responses. Models can help one to understand the phenomena in tourism, but cannot replace human decisions and fit all different socio-cultural milieu. For example, in a case of brand personality as a part of brand equity in different settings, Phau and Lau (2000, p. 131) mentioned that “understanding cultural meaning in the context of brand personality requires linking it to the cultural dimensions identified by Hofstede.” Foscht, Maloles, Swoboda, Morschett and Sinha (2008) similarly agreed that culturally diversified markets require different approach.

Hofstede (1980) recognized the existence of cultural and social dimensions that significantly influence management processes, for example the collectivism/ individualism, power distance, performance orientation, and masculinity/femininity in a society. Differences arising from these characteristics influence the implementation, perception, mutual understanding (consumers, community, employees) in a tourism destination. For example, collectivistic eastern cultures tend to be less attached to brands than do individualistic and success-oriented western cultures. Foscht et al. (2008) mentioned that in the predominantly collectivist societies ruggedness dimension in Aaker’s model was missing. Dimensions of preferences will influence a choice of functional and especially emotional (symbolic) attributes and attitudes among different cultures. Differences between eastern and western cultures also shape the managerial approach in branding. For this reason, the applicability of models of branding across different cultures might become an obstacle to the brand equity measurement.

Yoo and Donthu (2001, 2002) measured brand equity by the implementation of a brand equity scale across several cultures. Similarly, Erdem (2006) studied changes in consumer choice and brand equity creation in multicultural settings and confirmed differences of brand perception in cross-cultural settings. One of the emerging questions is the applicability of models to different settings consisting of various entities – public, private sector, and a community – citizens living in a destination. Cai (2002), Konecnik, and Gartner (2007) highlighted the importance of stakeholders' collaboration in the implementation of branding and the interests of different stakeholders in a destination. Paucity, governance and power can be influential in branding efficiency and decisive points for the managerial implications of the branding principles into tourism settings. Each destination might be specific; however, some general rules could be applied based on the studied models and branding equity principles.

In order to build a stronger consumer loyalty, confidence, and a long-term attitude, it also requires long-term cooperation of stakeholders in a destination and to understand place marketing and place branding principles. Cooperation and partnerships play an important role in different cultures, but might be approached differently. Important is the sustainability of partnerships because a partnership for ad-hoc reasons cannot create deeper relationships among a destination's stakeholders and visitors. Destinations need to approach a concept of partnerships creation by being more strategic in pooling resources, sharing responsibilities, and developing of a marketing mix that will accept interests of all stakeholders.

### **3. Results**

#### **3.1. Comparison of models and their applicability**

Kapferer's brand pyramid or the identity prism model enables one to understand a creation of brands through a three-tier pyramid. Brand personality concept is the key component of effective branding. The concept of brand identity (personality) has been used similarly in the models of Aaker or Cai. The inclusion of this concept requires growing competitiveness and over-communication among destinations, when brands can be easily copied. Hankinson's model is suitable for tourism setting due to the service concept content and compound product concept and is familiar in place marketing conceptual frame and practical implementation in tourism.

Aaker's and Joachimstahler's brand equity model consists of brand loyalty, awareness, perceived quality, brand associations, and other proprietary assets and respects both perspectives of creation – consumer's and managerial approach. The model belongs to the most systematic, comprehensive, and pragmatic models of brand equity, which allows capturing a congruity between destination image (self-image) and consumer-image construct. Aaker's main argument for the brand equity models is that the attitude of consumers is insufficient for brand equity creation because consumer behavior is a multidimensional concept.

Keller's consumer-based model applied a brand equity perspective from the consumer's perspective by framing of six building block constructions – brand salience, brand performance, brand imagery, consumer judgment, feelings, and consumer-brand resonance. The synchronic interrelations of building blocks of Keller's model have been designated as the most important pre-conditions for reaching the pinnacle - brand loyalty. The Keller's model is more useful for the assessment of brand equity perceived by individuals, but could be useful also in the destination context.

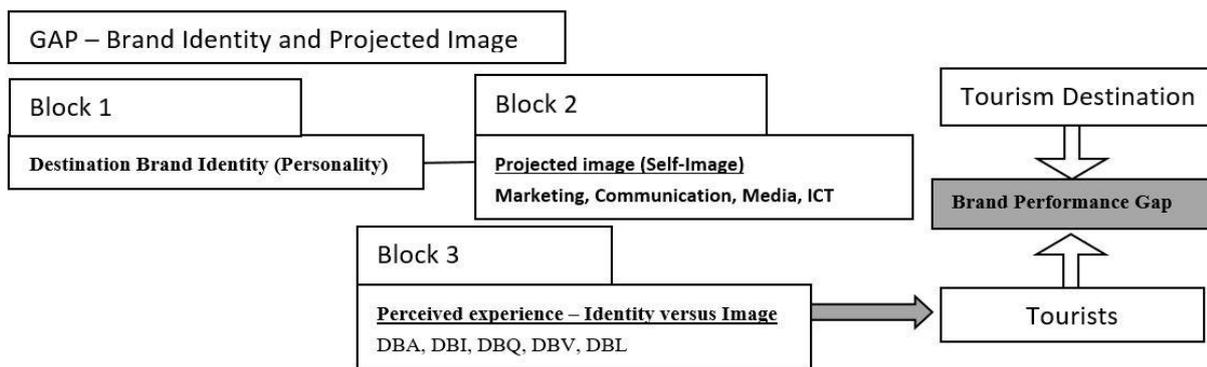
Cai's destination brand equity model, similar to Aaker's model, contains a dual perspective and admits the importance of brand identity (personality) in branding. Cai's concept is based on the connection of brand identity, image (self-image), and consumer's image, aims their congruence among those factors. Congruence can be achieved by the implementation of effective positioning and marketing strategies. Cai's model is one of the most suitable for using the both perspectives (demand and supply side approach) for example in image

measurement, but this model was never used for practical tourism settings. It is a really positive characteristic that the model contains also brand identity concept; however does not discuss how to develop it. The proper understanding and use of the brand identity concept and demand and supply side approach implementation are crucial for tourism destination management and tourism branding success.

Similar to Keller, Konecnik proposed a model representing the consumer’s perspective of brand equity building – as a value for consumers. The model consists of brand awareness (brand recognition, brand recall, and familiarity with a brand), image, perceived quality, and brand loyalty. Two additional dimensions of Konecnik’s model as perceived quality and brand loyalty have been included in previous models under a different structure (in Keller’s model as brand resonance and brand performance). Stronger attention was focused on perceived quality due to the predominantly intangible character of tourism products and the impact of perceived quality on brand loyalty and brand equity.

Boo, Busser and Baloglu Baseline is similar to Aaker’s and Konecnik’s concept of brand equity. Despite its customer orientation, the concept of brand experience is an interesting concept of this model (DBEX) and the importance of experience for brand equity creation is incorporated in this model (The Alternative baseline model).

As a result of comparison of models and their components we tried to create a modified model based on the discussed model (Boo, Busser and Baloglu model, Konecnik and Cai model especially for tourism settings) with the aim to combine the supply side and demand side perspective and incorporating the brand identity concept.



Universal model of brand equity (DBA – Destination Brand Awareness, DBI- Destination Brand Image, DBQ – Destination Brand Quality, DBV – Destination Brand Value, DBL – Destination Brand Loyalty).

Source: amended from the formerly discussed models, own presentation.

The final outcome of this comparison of different models is the following table (Tab.1) containing the studied models (chosen by own suggestion and advice of experts), major dimensions of models, characteristics.

Tab. 1 The comparison of discussed models of brand equity and their characteristics

Model	Items (Dimensions)	Production based	Tourism based	Supply side	Demand side	Versatile (both sides perspective)
Aaker's model	Perceived Quality, Name, Awareness, Brand recognition, Brand recall, Brand Associations, Brand Assets, Brand Loyalty Brand Awareness	X		X	X	X
Keller's model (CBBE)	(Brand recall, Brand recognition), Brand Knowledge, Brand Image (Uniqueness of Brand, Strength of Associations, Attributes), Favourability of Brand (Attitudes)	X			X	
Cai's model	Market associations Induced image Attributes Attitudes Brand Identity		X	X	X	X
Konecnik's model	Awareness Image Perceived Quality Loyalty					
Boo's, Busser's and Baloglu model	Awareness Image Quality Destination brand value Brand loyalty <b>Brand experience</b>		X	X	X	
			X		X	X

Source: own comparison based on studied models

### 3.2. The implementation and constraints of measurement of brand equity

In order to explain the principles and methods of measurement and implementation of brand equity, some authors such as Myers (2003) mentioned the importance of understanding brand equity as it involves consumer perception and consumer behavior. The latter was defined by Biel (1992) as being influenced by consumers' image and perception of a place, incorporated in a brand. Thus, the blending of both concepts – consumer perception and consumer behavior - is crucial for the brand equity effect. It might be crucial not only to understand the brand equity principles discussed in several models below, but also to explain possibilities of measurement. However, these measurement principles are again based on production environment. Despite of it, there might be some ideas of further usefulness also for tourism settings. This was also one of motives of our discussion.

Yoo et al. (2000), Yoo and Donthu (2001, 2002), Washburn and Plank (2002), Netemeyer et al. (2004) and Pappu et al. (2005) presented and tested empirically the scales for the measurement of brand equity. Some authors, such as Erdem et al. (2006) discussed an economic paradigmatic approach and measurement specifics.

You and Donthu (2001, 2002) recognized the complications with the cross-cultural implication of measurement scales of brand equity across different cultures.

The approaches to measurement can be divided into the measurement focused on the mind of customers and the measurement of market behavior. The second approach is based on the characteristics of the components of brand equity, which are incorporated in the models of brand equity, e.g. brand awareness, image, brand associations, and brand loyalty. This approach has been defined by Erdem et al (1999) as being a component based. A component-based approach has been used in models of brand equity by Keller (1993, 1998), Aaker (1991, 1996), Cai (2002), and Konecnik (2006, 2007). The holistic utility-based concept was mentioned by Swait (1993), Park and Srinivasan (1994), and Kamakura and Russel (1991). The difference between component-based and holistic approaches involves logistics and results. In component-based approach are measured the individual elements of a model, and the holistic measurement leads from the specific to the overall measurement. Holistic approaches are used for financial value assessment in a business environment, which is a main distinctive characteristic. For this reason, in the studies of tourism destination brand equity, a component-based approach has to be applied. Another classification of the holistic or component-based approach is direct or indirect, but the former classification means the use of financial measures and the latter is more suitable for branding management, due to easier measurement. The use of parametric and measurable approaches leads to stronger accuracy in brand management and avoids results based only on assumptions; however, both approaches – parametric and non-parametric are used.

To discuss the component-based approach to brand equity measurement, Erdem (1999) admitted that both Aaker (1996) and Keller (1998) used in their models of brand equity awareness measures (e.g. recall and recognition), beliefs, and attitudes. The problem is that some mental processes seem to be more important than a measurable awareness, and the importance of indirect measures might be crucial for research and measurement of brand equity in the future.

Wang, Wei and Yu (2008) criticized that constructs in Keller's model are not operationalized and describe only a relationship of components, and Aaker's model requires an empirical research to prove a validation. Churchill (1979) agreed that quantification of attributes by assigning numbers to objects might be a challenge, and mentioned the possibility to avoid complications in the construct measurement (for example attitude) by applying the multi-item measures, which will be discussed later in the association to the Keller's model of consumer-based equity and its measurement.

Churchill (1979) critically approached the measurement of marketing constructs by stating that “most of our measures are only measures because someone says that they are, not because they have been shown to satisfy standard measurement criteria (validity, reliability, and sensitivity)” (p. 64). In the measurement of efficacy of models brand equity has to be acknowledged the purpose of this measurement. Measurement of brand equity is crucial for the effectiveness and efficacy of branding because brand managers' decisions depend on the empirical results and the economic and especially financial outcome of branding. The reason of investment of enormous financial and other resources into branding is to be profitable; for this reason branding has to bring a return of investment, and this return has to be measurable, even in the long-term perspective. In comparison to the production sector, branding, similarly as marketing, has a longer period for return of investments.

In branding, consumer benefits need to be taken into account, and some authors stressed the opinion that brand equity is determined by a consumer (Farquar, 1989; Crimmins, 1992). Measurement of consumer-based equity seems to become even more complicated due to a separation from the brand, intangible character of branded components of the tourism destination, and the emotional essence of brands. The microenvironment of tourism destination, consisting of natural environment, services (hotels, restaurants), attractions, infrastructure and local residents, and macroenvironment (economic, political, social environment), seems to be too

complicated for consumers to evaluate it in advance or to create a clear picture of it even during a visit. Some evaluation and recollection processes occur after the visit of a destination.

Brand equity creation and measurement seem to be a question of a patient approach, strategic, mostly based on the evaluation of the intangible characteristics, which create the brand equity. Brand equity of services and its measurement is still underdeveloped, which complicates the construction of brand equity models applicable in tourism (predominantly rooted in a service industry), which is another constraint of the effective measurement. Additionally, there exists lack of empirical research on the equity in a service sector. The efficacy and measurement of the models of brand equity influences a fact that originally have been those models (as for example Keller's or Aaker's model) constructed for the production environment and only later have been some principles implemented into the tourism settings. The complication with the measurement of brand equity and the understanding the concept discussed Ambler (2003); and the authors Darvasula et al. (1993) and Mavendo et al. (2003) criticized the testing methods applied for the measurement appropriateness, which need to be more rigorous.

In operationalization (efficacy) approach and measurement exist two main brand equity approaches, i.e., from the consumer perspective, or managerial perspective. The authors (Aaker, 1991; Keller, 1993; Biel, 1992; Farquar, 1989, Cobb-Walgren et al. 1995) are still not consistent in the approach if the consumer based, managerial perspective, or the holistic view are the ideal base for the implementation of brand equity and especially a measurement. Biel (1992) commented that the behavioral measures are unable to reveal what is in the mind of consumers and originates the brand equity. Measurement of brand equity, the implementation of models in the managerial practice, and the use of both measurements in the brand equity evaluation has been discussed by Keller (1993) and Aaker (1991), Mackay (2001), Agarwal and Rao (1996), Cobb-Walgren et al (1995), Sinha and Pappu (1998), You and Donthu (2001, 2002), Yoo et al (2000), Park and Srinivasan (1994), Farquar (1990), Krishnan and Hartline (2001).

Krishnan and Hartline (2001) commented on direct and indirect measures of brand equity, which are based on assessment principles. Both measures have already been discussed in the association with the possible constraints of measurement. In the direct approach exists direct assessment of added value, but the models of brand equity apply, due to their managerial usefulness and acceptance and better control, the indirect measurement of brand equity.

Value of brand or direct perspective represents the financial perspective or the evaluation of a brand, especially in the production environment (Brasco, 1988; Mahajan et al. 1990; Shocker and Weitz, 1988) where it is easier to perform financial measurements of brand equity benefits. However, tourism destinations are heterogeneous entities built up from various components – natural, historical, business - oriented, community; for this reason, direct equity measurement is really challenging.

Indirect measurement seems to be more practical and useful for brand managers; however, the academics dealing with measurement of brand equity did not find a consensus on the content of indirect measurement tools. Aaker (1991) suggests to use, for example, of repurchase rates, switching costs, level of satisfaction, brand preference, and perceived quality of services as the main dimensions of indirect measurement. Keller (1993) prefers the concept of brand knowledge and the use of top of - mind recall, free association, ratings of evaluations and beliefs of associations. Winter (1991) prefers the measurement of share of mind and esteem, perception of quality, willingness to continue to purchase, level of commitment, profit potential, awareness, liking, and perceived quality. Agarwal and Rao (1996) and Mackay (2001) similarly agree that measurement of awareness (brand recall) is not relevant to brand choice measurement, probably because to recall a brand does not actual equate with using it.

A combination of measuring tools used for single items and complex brand equity would be ideal for measurement of brand equity. Despite the complicated character of direct measurements, some authors recommend the combination of direct and indirect measures. For example, Agarwal and Rao (1996) combined direct measures - brand preference and purchase intention and indirect measures – unaided recall, familiarity (awareness), attitude constructs (weighted attribute, value for money, and quality of brand name).

Creativity and innovation in combination with other measures seems to be a benefit for brand equity assessment. In the future, brand managers will find the information such as market share indicators, which are more efficient at measuring of market behavior than the value for money, because consumers tend to express their implicit preferences based on price premium and not on decreased price levels and the brand quality.

Conceptual models of brand equity, for example Aaker's, Keller's or Konecnik's models focus on a set of specific dimensions (for example awareness, loyalty, perceived quality, etc.), but the proposed measures and some concepts are different. However, some authors such as Yoo and Donthu (2001) have attempted to create an universal scale that can be used in multicultural settings. Despite their concept has been acknowledged by other academics (Washburn & Plank, 2002), the dimensions of measurement of brand equity are still open to further research (Sinha & Pappu, 1998). Thus, the application and measurement of models of brand equity and the empirical research of consumer- based brand equity require further attention of academics and practitioners.

#### **4. Conclusion**

The application of branding principles in tourism destinations has emerged questions concerning a transfer of value incorporated in brand equity in order to improve competitiveness of tourism destinations. Academics developed a variety of models of brand equity, which embraced a number of insights into their applications; however, these models were predominantly constructed for production environment. A change of perception of brands from the brand-centric managerial perspective to the relationship perspective requires more information from consumers with the aim to understand their motives of consumption. A shift from classical marketing and branding theory to place marketing and branding signified by the relational and network marketing paradigms and alternative branding perspectives (relational branding) demarcated contemporary development in marketing and branding.

The models of brand equity, discussed above, contained different approaches to the construction and measurement of brand equity, however, some common features were similar. Disparities exist in the focus of those models, for instance, some models are dealing with the consumer-based brand equity, which means the incorporation of consumers' perception of brand equity. More versatile models merge both dimensions – consumers' perception and tourism destination perception, which is more demanding on measurement, but allows capturing the complexity of destination brands. Some academics developed sophisticated models, which contained holistic approach to branding equity creation, but were not able to explain measurement and implementation of models.

Brand equity measurement in tourism destinations is based predominantly on indirect measurement of components, which is focused on consumer perception and behavior. The implementation and efficacy of models of brand equity, due to epistemological complications and measurement constraints, need to be tested and proved, especially in tourism destinations settings, however there exist the possibilities of transfer of specific approaches to measurement of brand equity from the production environment, which has been discussed in the paper. This attempt, however, might be a real complication due to the fact that tourism destination is a composite product built up from various components as the natural environment, services, internal and external environment of destination and governed by the private and public sectors. These factors might complicate measurement of brand equity. Moreover, disputable is the application of models in real social

environments, communities, destinations, in different cultural settings. Despite of it some principles of the discussed models could be useful for development of own framework and measurement constructs for tourism destinations generally.

Speaking about tourism destinations, new dimensions and factors, which might be important for consumers allowing them to express their individual preferences and life style, tend to become more evident in consumer behaviour patterns. It opens new avenues to creativity, innovation and the application of component based measurement with the application of mental processes and indirect measures of brand equity. Brand managers could be able to mingle the information such as market share indicators and value for money. The former, based on this statement discussed above, is more efficient at measuring of market behavior than the value for money, which has been used in market behavior measurement. Ideal could be a combination of direct and indirect measurement of brand equity, which has been recommended by some authors and discussed in the article. New sources of value and equity rooted in non-material components (creativity, innovation) raise more attention and require further research and managerial practices. Results of the research indicated that the models of brand equity suitable for tourism destinations are still not fully explored and developed and further research and investigation is needed, especially in the area of brand equity measurement and the benefits of branding in tourism regions, cities, countries.

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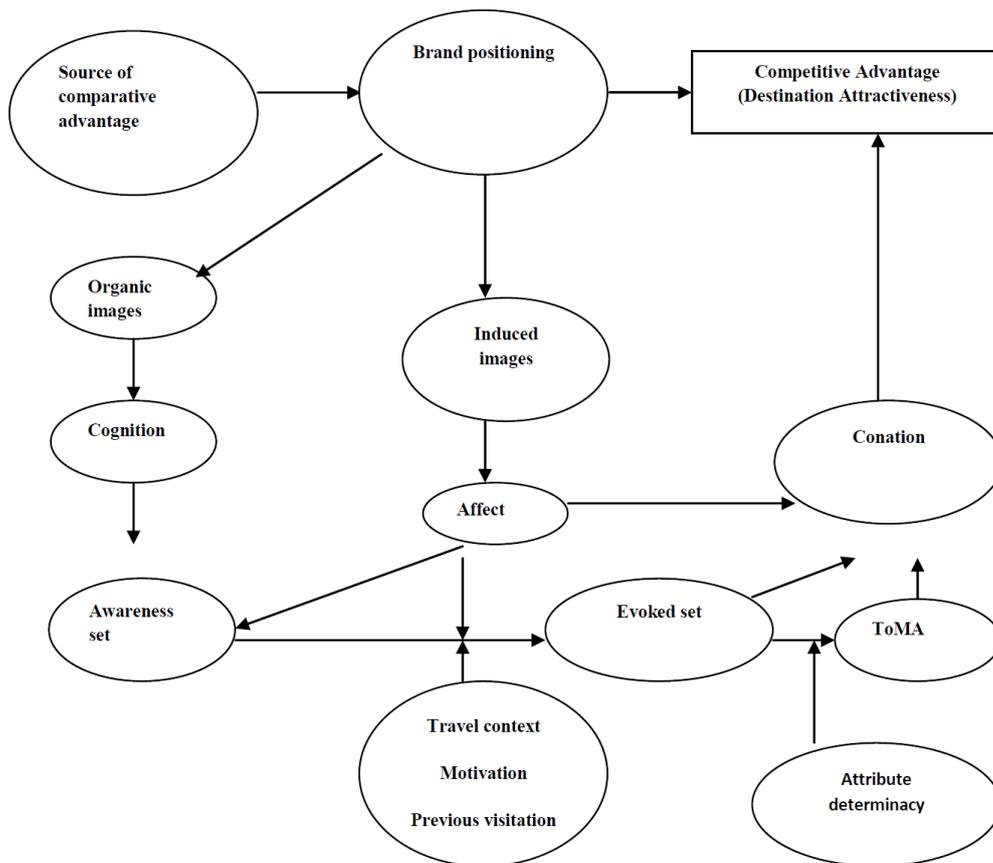
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**Appendix:**

Scheme 9: Brand positioning as a source



Source: Pike, 2008.