



Engagement towards a product vs. towards a brand: A scale for the Mexican context

*Engagement hacia un producto vs. hacia una marca:
una escala para el contexto mexicano*

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Abstract

The concept of consumer engagement has recently received increased attention as a relevant factor in marketing. This has led to several studies aiming to achieve better understanding and measurement for this construct. Engagement is distinct from other constructs such as involvement and participation; it also has been proposed as an antecedent to variables such as satisfaction and brand loyalty. In this article, a hypothesis about the difference between the level engagement (in its three dimensions) towards a product category and the level of engagement towards a particular brand in this category is discussed, tested and confirmed. In order to test the hypothesis, the process of adapting and debugging a scale to measure engagement in the Mexican context is also presented. The results of a series of empirical tests to verify the reliability and validity of the scale with Mexican consumers of grain coffee are presented as part of the process of refining the scale. Moreover, throughout predictive validity tests, engagement is confirmed as an antecedent of satisfaction and brand loyalty.

JEL Code: M31, M39, C18

Keywords: consumer engagement; consumer involvement; customer satisfaction; brand loyalty; brand engagement; product engagement

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Resumen

La atención hacia el concepto de engagement del consumidor se ha incrementado recientemente como un factor relevante en mercadotecnia. Esto ha motivado a realizar diversos estudios con el objetivo de lograr una mejor definición y medición de este constructo. El engagement se diferencia de conceptos como el involucramiento y la participación, siendo también un antecedente a variables como satisfacción y lealtad de marca. En este artículo, se propone y se pone a prueba la hipótesis de que existe una diferencia entre el grado de engagement (en sus tres dimensiones) hacia una categoría de producto y el grado de engagement hacia una marca particular dentro de esta categoría de producto. Para poner esta hipótesis a prueba, se presenta el proceso de adaptación y depuración de una escala para medir engagement en el contexto mexicano de consumo de café en taza. Se presentan los resultados de pruebas empíricas con las que verificó la confiabilidad y validez de la escala. Mediante pruebas de validez predictiva se corrobora al engagement como un antecedente de la satisfacción y de la lealtad de marca. Finalmente se presentan evidencias que confirman la hipótesis sobre la separación perceptual del engagement hacia la categoría del producto y hacia una marca.

Código JEL: M31, M39, C18

Palabras clave: engagement del consumidor; involucramiento del consumidor; satisfacción del cliente; lealtad hacia la marca; engagement con la marca; engagement con el producto

Introduction

Engagement refers to several ideas, including connection, emotional attachment, participation, state of mind, and interactive social behavior toward a certain object (Brodie, Hollebeek, Jurić, & Ilić, 2011). The conceptual framework below discusses specific differences between this and other concepts. Several researchers have conducted studies in recent years to better define and measure engagement (Bowden, 2009; Brodie & Hollebeek, 2011 a; Vivek, Beatty, & Morgan, 2012). For this work, a search was conducted in the Spanish literature regarding this concept to determine whether the terminology used in this language has been consistent and distinct from other related concepts. As part of the interest in understanding the approaches to this construct in a language other than English, there was also the need to have a measurement scale to accompany its definition in Spanish. The review of the literature indicates that up to this moment, no tool has been previously published in the Spanish language that enables the indicators associated with the dimensions of engagement. Thus, the present work has two main objectives.

On the one hand, to empirically analyze whether it is possible to differentiate the levels of engagement with the consumption of a product category (brewed coffee) and the consumption of a brand within this same category (Starbucks). Second, to present an adaptation (validity and reliability) of a scale to measure consumer engagement in the Mexican context. Although previous studies have shown the difference in engagement between different types of objects, as mentioned below, no previous studies were found to test this particular difference. Thus, this constitutes an original contribution of this study to

the literature. This difference is relevant since distinguishing between the perception of products and their different brands is a way of analyzing the value that a particular brand can add or not to a product. In addition, the notions associated with the construct and its possible usefulness for future research and practical applications are stated.

In this study, the product category — brewed coffee — was selected based on the identification of a growing consumption trend that involves new market dynamics, from production to consumption, where consumers have shown an incremental interest in this product (Carvalho, Paiva, & Vieira, 2016; Fischer & Victor, 2014). In Mexico, coffee is a product that has been part of the culture for many years. Nevertheless, as one of the main producing countries internationally, it is part of an environment that in recent years has become highly competitive both in production processes and in the way demand and consumer needs and preferences are met (Morales Hernández, Mendez, Nolasco Ruíz, & Cerón López, 2018). Additionally, there has been an increase in the variety of coffee products and brands sought by consumers and a rise in the prices they are willing to pay for it (Jones, 2016). This situation tends to put pressure on members of the coffee industry in terms of being able to understand changes in demand in order to be able to respond to them with innovations and adaptations. Moreover, there is a global trend toward the consumption of better quality coffee, which has coincided with the appearance of a group of consumers who have shown increasing interest in this product (Fischer & Victor, 2014; Hernandez, 2016). This renewed interest and the changes in the industry and the market demonstrate the need to adequately measure the degree of engagement within this category, which would contribute to understanding this trend of market sophistication in a producing country such as Mexico.

Theoretical framework

The term engagement has been used in various disciplines, including sociology, psychology, organizational behavior, and more recently in marketing, approaching it from different perspectives, among which the engagement of a person with a certain product, brand, or organization stands out (Hollebeek, 2011, a). In the field of marketing, although the areas of application, background, and consequences of engagement have been diverse, studies mainly focus on a consumer who presents a certain level of engagement with a certain object, such as a product, a brand, or an organization (Dessart et al., 2016; Hollebeek, 2011, a). The review of the literature presented below includes the main definitions of the construct, the distinction of the construct regarding other related terms, and the analysis of various measurement scales.

Vivek et al. (2012) define consumer engagement as the intensity of an individual's participation and connection to an organization's product, with individuals understood as current or potential clients.

Brodie et al. (2011), on the other hand, consider engagement to be a psychological state that occurs after interactive experiences of the client with a focal agent or object that manifests as an iterative and dynamic process in a relation of value co-creation. Value co-creation refers to consumer participation in creating the product, including shared invention, design, or production activities (Lusch & Vargo, 2006). Engagement has also been considered a psychological state and a cognitive process that culminates in an individual's behavioral attachment to an object (Brodie et al., 2011). In marketing, this construct would represent a state of mind and a process that can lead the consumer to demonstrate loyalty to a brand, service, activity, or some other type of business product (Vivek et al., 2012). Van Doorn et al. (2010) define engagement as the manifestation of behavior toward a brand or company after purchase, resulting from certain motivations.

Consumer engagement has taken on special relevance in business environments after being identified as relevant to achieving business objectives, including improved performance, increased sales, and competitive advantage (Brodie et al., 2011). Thus, there is evidence that superior engagement, which can generate a closer connection between the client and the brand, has had a significant effect on behaviors such as customer satisfaction and brand loyalty (Hollebeek, 2011, b). This evidence has motivated, in parallel, an increase in the analysis of this concept in academic works where its theoretical bases, background, and applications have been studied, as well as its usefulness as a predictor of behavior. Client engagement is relevant to marketing because it refers to a behavioral manifestation that is closely related to business transactions (Verhoef, Reinartz, & Krafft, 2010). Over the last two decades, implementing strategies to manage client-company/brand/product relations has been a constant trend. It is important to emphasize that, although relations marketing has also received much academic attention, the latter tends to be directed toward the company's actions, while engagement seeks to understand from the client's point of view (Vivek et al., 2012).

Vivek et al. (2012) found that engagement can occur with brands, products and services or activities such as shopping and participating in seminars. Meanwhile, Brodie et al. (2011) reviewed the concept in the academic literature and its definitions, finding that each adopts either a cognitive, emotional, or behavioral approach. The cognitive approach focuses on how the individual relates to learning about the object. The emotional one refers to the level of attachment to it. The behavioral one focuses on the interactions of the individual with the object. The latter is the one that receives the most attention from marketing research since the behaviors include variables that are generally considered targets for practitioners in this area, such as brand loyalty (in its attitudinal and behavioral component through purchase) and brand commitment (Vivek, Beatty, Dalela, & Morgan, 2014).

Engagement has been related to several widely studied constructs in marketing research. It is important to distinguish and explore these other concepts' relation to engagement. One is consumer

involvement, defined as the perceived relevance of an object based on inherent needs, interests, and values (Zaichkowsky, 1985). Involvement is a construct that indicates a mental state of personal relevance but is not identified as a behavior, so it is positioned as an antecedent to engagement through a positive association between the level of involvement and the intensity of engagement with a given object or activity (Vivek et al., 2012). The more involved the subject is, the greater the intensity of engagement with a given object or activity. Thus, involvement has typically been defined as an internal state of excitement and importance that a consumer may feel for a product category related to their personal interests and value system, which motivates information seeking (Bowden, 2009) and, in some cases, engagement (Hollebeck, 2011, a).

Meanwhile, engagement is crucial to understanding the consumer and the process that leads to a certain behavior (Pansari & Kumar, 2017). It is defined as the intensity of a consumer's connection to a product, service, or activity (Vivek et al., 2012) and as a psychological state that results from the interaction between a consumer and a focal object (brand, company, or activity (Brodie et al., 2011). Therefore, engagement can be more complex than involvement, which includes attitudinal components and behavioral elements that extend to the interactive relation with the brand beyond the simple internal state of the consumer.

Another construct related to engagement is participation in value co-creation, defined as the degree to which a consumer is involved in the service production or delivery process (Dabholkar, 1990). This interaction can produce different levels of enthusiasm and, therefore, greater engagement (Vivek et al., 2012). For this reason, involvement and participation are identified as antecedents to engagement. On the other hand, value, trust, affective commitment, word-of-mouth communication, loyalty, and involvement with a brand community are considered consequences of the brand (Vivek et al., 2012). Commitment and loyalty differ because commitment is more directly related to an attitude. Loyalty, on the other hand, although it contains an attitudinal element, can be more related to behavior. Thus, engagement includes cognitive and behavioral elements (Bowden, 2009).

In addition to seeking a better definition of engagement, it has been necessary to identify whether there are scales that can adequately measure it. Just as the translation of the term itself generates confusion as Spanish-language terms are used interchangeably, when trying to use the construct empirically, it has not been possible to find a valid and reliable tool developed for Spanish-speaking countries. For this reason, a review of the scales available in English was conducted to choose one that would enable its translation and validation for a Spanish-speaking context and simultaneously permit its application to different objects of engagement.

Engagement measurement

Several researchers have proposed different definitions and measurement tools for engagement. This construct has sometimes been considered unidimensional (Balsano, 2005; Catteeuw, Flynn, & Vonderhorst, 2007; Guthrie & Cox, 2001; van Doorn et al., 2010). In other cases, it has been proposed as multidimensional (Bowden, 2009; Higgins & Scholer, 2009; Mollen & Wilson, 2010; Vivek et al., 2012). The multidimensional approach has been predominant in marketing, while unidimensional approaches tend to be linked to fields that include organizational behavior, education, and political science, among others. Thus, for this article, a three-dimensional approach proposed by Vivek et al. (2014) is used, which is further developed below.

The relevance of measuring and understanding consumer engagement lies in its consequences for clients and companies. According to the model proposed by Van Doorn et al. (2010), clients could manifest different degrees of engagement with a brand in response to different strategies, and thus they could contribute to the creation of value in a much more active way. In loyalty programs, for example, where engagement behaviors are shown, the client receives a financial reward. For the company, greater engagement by the client with its brand can result in financial benefits by generating more word-of-mouth communication or greater brand recognition (van Doorn et al., 2010).

Several studies have been conducted to create scales that can measure engagement adequately (Dessart, Veloutsou, & Morgan-Thomas, 2016; Hollebeek, Glynn, & Brodie, 2014; Sprott, Czellar, & Spangenberg, 2009; Vivek et al., 2014). Nevertheless, many of these scales focus on specific objects that generate engagement. Some, for example, focus on engagement with virtual communities (Baldus, Voorhees, & Calantone, 2015; Dessart et al., 2016); others with the tourism industry (So, King, & Sparks, 2014). In addition to the difficulty of applying them in different contexts, all these scales have been developed in English, and their translation has not been validated in Spanish. For this reason, this paper seeks to respond to this need, taking a scale that can be applied in different contexts and also considering the attitudinal and behavioral components that have been consistent in the various engagement analyses.

The scale presented by Vivek et al. (2014), selected for this study, stands out for its generalization nature. This scale, which addresses engagement in multiple dimensions, comprises 10 items encompassed in three dimensions. These dimensions are consistent with previous findings in the marketing literature (Calder, Malthouse, & Schaedel, 2009; Gambetti, Graffigna, & Biraghi, 2012; Haven, 2007; Hollebeek et al., 2014). Thus, the three-dimensional proposal of Vivek et al. is made up of the following dimensions: 1) Conscious attention: the degree of interest that the person has or wishes to have in interacting with the focus of their engagement; 2) enthusiastic participation: reactions and emotions related to the use or interaction of the focus of their engagement; 3) social connection: increased

interaction based on the inclusion of third parties with the focus of the engagement, which would indicate a special reciprocal action in the presence of others. The generalization characteristic derives from the fact that this scale is a multi-object scale, where the design of the items enables them to be adapted to different engagement focuses (product, brand, activity, etcetera.). The three dimensions, which have already been mentioned, refer to engagement's attitudinal and behavioral components. Thus, the fact that the scale considers the possibility of adapting to different sources of engagement facilitates comparisons of levels between objects of different natures.

A crucial objective of this study is to empirically analyze the difference between engagement with the consumption of a product category (brewed coffee) and with the consumption of a brand within that category (Starbucks). To achieve this objective, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H1 The level of engagement with a product category (in this case, brewed coffee) is different from that with a brand within the same product category (in this case, Starbucks).

H2 The three dimensions of engagement present different levels when measured for a product category (in this case, brewed coffee) than when analyzed at the brand level within the same product category (in this case, Starbucks). This fact gives rise to the following sub-hypotheses:

- H2a A consumer's level of conscious attention to a product category differs from that of a brand within the same category.
- H2b A consumer's enthusiastic involvement with a product category differs from that of a brand within the same category.
- H2c A consumer's level of social connection to a product category differs from that of a brand within the same category.

These hypotheses can be accepted or rejected after having carried out the process of adaptation and validation of the scale and, in turn, contribute to establishing external validity by verifying its generalizability in different contexts. The scale construction process includes an initial qualitative phase to adapt and define the items, a subsequent phase to validate these items with a theoretical basis, a further phase where a series of reliability and convergence-discrimination validity tests were carried out to purify the scale, and finally, an application to test its predictive validity.

Methodology

A writing analysis of the items of the Vivek *et al.* (2014) scale was conducted to perform the adaptation to Spanish. This analysis included a review by five experts in the marketing field. These experts were selected because they are bilingual and have an outstanding track record in the marketing area. They presented valuable suggestions for the terms used in some items. From this first stage, it was determined

to use a product category (brewed coffee) and a brand (Starbucks) as objects of engagement.

Interpretation and selection of items

The initial set of 40 items used by Vivek *et al.* (2014) was used as a basis. After the refinement process, each of the 3 dimensions was left with 6 items for a final scale of 18 items in total. This process of refinement of items was carried out considering those statements whose meaning, once translated into Spanish, generated fewer ambiguities and a better understanding. The Spanish adaptation was enriched with contributions from three experts, whose profiles have been previously described, to choose the most appropriate terms. The eighteen items were tested, assuming that the final scale would consist of a smaller number of items due to the normal process of scale refinement. These 18 items are shown in Table 1.

Table 1
 Consumer engagement scale for the Mexican context; items selected for the first field test

Dimension	Items
Conscious attention	1. Any matter related to _____ catches my attention. 2. I enjoy learning about _____. 3. I pay close attention to everything related to _____. 4. I keep myself abreast of developments related to _____. 5. _____ often catches my attention. 6. There is always something new related to _____.
Enthusiastic participation	1. I spend a lot of my personal time on _____. 2. I consider myself passionate about _____. 3. My days would not be the same without _____. 4. _____ is an important part of my life. 5. I am looking to make room in my schedule to dedicate to _____. 6. I lose track of time when I _____.
Social connection	1. I love _____ with my friends. 2. I enjoy _____ more when I am accompanied. 3. _____ is more fun when there are more people with me who also do it. 4. I like others to see how much I like _____. 5. I look forward to interacting with people who also like _____. 6. I talk to my friends a lot about _____.

As seen in Table 1, the scale's items are designed to be adapted to different objects of engagement: the product category, brewed coffee, and a brand within the category, Starbucks. This brand was selected because it had a high level of recognition for the subjects who participated in the tests. Given the variety of products offered by this brand and to make a clearer comparison with the product category,

it was made clear when applying the scale that only the consumption of Americano-type coffee would be considered to avoid biases.

Final selection of items

A first test was conducted where a sample of n=60 subjects answered a questionnaire with 18 items. The sample size is consistent with recommendations for initial scale development (Johanson & Brooks, 2010). The objectives of this first test were: (1) to identify possible confusions of meaning for the subjects; (2) to determine whether the dimensions proposed by Vivek et al. are replicated in the Mexican context (through confirmatory factor analysis); (3) to identify redundancies. The scale was applied through an online questionnaire sent to the n=60 subjects. For the participation of these subjects, it was verified that they met certain key characteristics for the study: (1) be consumers of brewed coffee, (2) be of legal age and (3) be familiar with the Starbucks brand. Another important characteristic of the sample is that the subjects were selected through non-random sampling by judgment, ensuring a certain homogeneity. Thus, the respondents were selected from a middle and upper-middle socioeconomic level. This segment tends to be consistent with the target market of the selected brand (Starbucks). The items were associated with a 5-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree."

Table 2 shows the validity test results by convergence and discrimination using a confirmatory factor analysis (with rotation) for the product level (brewed coffee). Similarly, Table 3 shows these results at the brand level (Starbucks). Although, as will be seen, this work uses parametric statistical methods (e.g., factor analysis, regression), and the variables used are ordinal/discrete, there is evidence that linear parametric methods consistently generate reliable results despite certain violations of parametric assumptions such as normality of the data and level of measurement (Norman, 2010). These analyses tend to confirm the three-dimensionality proposed by the original scale, where the items and their factor loadings are grouped congruently with the dimension to which they originally belong.

Table 2
 First field test; confirmatory factor analysis, product level

Items	Dimension	Components		
		1	2	3
My days would not be the same without coffee.	EP3	0.899		
Drinking coffee is an important part of my life.	EP4	0.884		
I try to make room in my schedule for coffee.	EP5	0.82		
I like others to see how much I like drinking coffee.	SC4	0.781		
I spend a lot of my personal time drinking coffee.	EP1	0.757		
I talk a lot with my friends about matters related to drinking coffee.	SC6	0.711		
I lose track of time when I drink coffee.	EP6	0.616		
I look forward to interacting with people who also like to drink coffee.	SC5	0.614		
I consider myself passionate about drinking coffee.	EP2			
I enjoy drinking coffee more when I am in company.	SC2		0.926	
Having coffee is more fun when there are more people with me.	SC3		0.878	
I love drinking coffee with my friends.	SC1		0.623	
I enjoy learning things related to drinking coffee.	CA2			0.944
I keep abreast of new developments related to drinking coffee.	CA4			0.93
I pay close attention to everything related to drinking coffee.	CA3			0.924
There is always something new about how to drink coffee.	CA6			0.684
Any matter related to coffee drinking catches my attention	CA1			0.654
Drinking coffee often catches my attention.	CA5			0.630

Note: Confirmatory factor analysis with oblimin rotation using main components

Scale 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree)

CA=Conscious attention, EP=Enthusiastic participation, SC=Social connection

Factor loadings below 0.5 are omitted

Source: created by the authors

Table 3
 First field test; confirmatory factor analysis, brand level

Items	Dimension	Components		
		1	2	3
I enjoy learning about Starbucks.	CA2	0.962		
I pay close attention to everything related to Starbucks.	CA3	0.913		
Starbucks often catches my attention.	CA5	0.834		
I keep abreast of new developments related to Starbucks.	CA4	0.831		
Anything related to Starbucks gets my attention.	CA1	0.830		
There is always something new related to Starbucks.	CA6	0.674		
Starbucks is an important part of my life.	EP4		-0.972	
My days would not be the same without going to Starbucks.	EP3		-0.926	
I look to make room in my schedule to go to Starbucks.	EP5		-0.833	
I like others to see how much I like Starbucks.	SC4		-0.783	
I spend a lot of my personal time at Starbucks.	EP1		-0.779	
I lose track of time when I go to Starbucks.	EP6		-0.757	
I talk to my friends a lot about Starbucks.	SC6		-0.731	
I look forward to interacting with people who also like Starbucks.	SC5			
I consider myself passionate about Starbucks.	EP2			
I enjoy Starbucks more when I am in company.	SC2			0.870
Starbucks is more fun when there are more people with me than...	SC3			0.826
I love going to Starbucks with my friends.	SC1			

Note: Confirmatory factor analysis with oblimin rotation using main components
 Scale 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree)
 CA=Conscious attention, EP=Enthusiastic participation, SC=Social connection
 Factor loadings below 0.5 are omitted
 Source: created by the authors

Second test and scale validation

Considering the factor analysis results, the items with the lowest factor loadings and those that did not contribute to the explanation of the factor corresponding to the dimension that the literature review indicated were eliminated. Two new items were added to the social connectedness dimension to maintain the scale's balance. Table 4 shows the items selected for the second field test. The selected items were used to develop a new scale, which was applied under the same conditions as the first field test to 60 people with the same characteristics described above.

Table 4
 Consumer Engagement Scale for the Mexican Context

Dimension	Items
Conscious attention	1. I enjoy learning about _____.
	2. I pay close attention to everything related to _____.
	3. I keep myself abreast of developments related to _____.
	4. _____ often catches my attention.
Enthusiastic participation	1. I spend a lot of my personal time on _____.
	2. My days would not be the same without _____.
	3. _____ is an important part of my life.
	4. I look for room in my schedule to dedicate to _____.
Social connection	1. I enjoy _____ more when I am accompanied.
	2. _____ is more fun when there are more people with me who also do it.
	3. _____ is something I share with my friends.
	4. _____ is a great way to spend time with family and friends.

Source: created by the authors

Once the second field test was applied, a new analysis of validity by convergence and discrimination was performed through a factor analysis with rotation. These results are shown in Table 5 for the product level and Table 6 for the brand level.

Table 5
 Second field test; confirmatory factor analysis, product level

Items	Dimension	Components		
		1	2	3
I pay close attention to everything related to drinking coffee.	P_CA2	0.925		
I enjoy learning about coffee.	P_CA1	0.901		
Coffee often catches my attention.	P_CA4	0.861		
I keep abreast of coffee-related developments.	P_CA3	0.799		
I enjoy drinking coffee more when I am in company.	P_SC1		0.966	
Drinking coffee is more fun when I am with people who are also...	P_SC2		0.944	
Drinking coffee is something I share with my friends.	P_SC3		0.774	
Drinking coffee is a good way to spend time with family and friends.	P_SC4		0.691	
My days would not be the same without coffee.	P_EP2			0.989
Drinking coffee is an important part of my life.	P_EP3			0.871
I try to make room in my schedule for coffee.	P_EP4			0.711
I spend a lot of my personal time drinking coffee.	P_EP1			0.612

Note: Confirmatory factor analysis with oblimin rotation

Scale 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree)

CA=Conscious attention, EP=Enthusiastic participation, SC=Social connection

Factor loadings below 0.5 are omitted

Source: created by the authors

Table 6
 Second field test; confirmatory factor analysis, brand level

Items	Dimension	Components		
		1	2	3
I enjoy learning about Starbucks.	M_CA1	0.855		
I pay close attention to everything related to Starbucks.	M_CA2	0.845		
Starbucks often catches my attention.	M_CA4	0.814		
I stay abreast of developments related to Starbucks.	M_CA3	0.805		
I enjoy Starbucks more when I am in company.	M_SC1		0.924	
Starbucks is more fun when I am with people who also like it...	M_SC2		0.869	
Starbucks is something I share with my friends.	M_SC3		0.764	
Starbucks is a great way to spend time with family and friends.	M_SC4		0.578	
Starbucks is an important part of my life.	M_EP3			0.943
I look to make room in my schedule to dedicate to Starbucks.	M_EP4			0.924
My days would not be the same without going to Starbucks.	M_EP2			0.898
I spend a lot of my personal time at Starbucks.	M_EP1			0.531

Note: Confirmatory factor analysis with oblimin rotation, forced to 3 factors
 Scale 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree)
 CA=Conscious attention, EP=Enthusiastic participation, SC=Social connection
 Factor loadings below 0.5 are omitted
 Source: created by the authors

Through factor analysis, it was possible to establish the scale's validity by verifying the items' convergence in three factors at both levels (product and brand): conscious attention, enthusiastic participation, and social connection. As for model fit, the KMO test showed an indicator of .809 for the product level and .861 at the brand level. Likewise, the models for both levels were significant in Bartlett's test. This analysis tends to indicate that the model adequately explains the observed variables. On the other hand, internal consistency is shown through Cronbach's alpha coefficients (Table 7), which show levels of reliability that can be considered highly acceptable (Gliem & Gliem, 2003).

Table 7
 Second field test; internal consistency analysis: Cronbach's alpha

Dimension	Number of items	Cronbach's alpha	
		Product: Coffee	Brand: Starbucks
Conscious Attention	4	0.927	0.929
Enthusiastic Participation	4	0.916	0.938
Social Connection	4	0.899	0.904
Engagement Scale	12	0.918	0.938

Source: created by the authors

Predictive validity

Given that it has been previously established that there tends to be an association between brand engagement and brand loyalty, as well as with client satisfaction (Hollebeek, 2011, b), three items were included in this second test to measure indicators of each of these two constructs (Oliver, 1999). Thus, predictive validity tests of the scale were conducted. The items used and the factor analysis results for each (brand loyalty and client satisfaction) are shown in Table 8.

Table 8
 Factor analysis of dependent variables: Loyalty and Satisfaction

		% Variance explained	Cronbach's alpha
Loyalty	Next time I buy coffee, it will be Starbucks.	78.7	0.85
	I would recommend Starbucks coffee to a friend.		
	I would drink Starbucks coffee again		
Satisfaction	Starbucks coffee meets my expectations.	91.06	0.95
	I like Starbucks coffee.		
	Starbucks coffee gives me what I like in coffee.		

Extraction method: Main components

Source: created by the authors

The brand loyalty and satisfaction items were subjected to factor analysis to corroborate their convergent validity. Subsequently, the predictive validity tests used each factor's scores as dependent (latent) variables. Thus, with these two latent variables, two regression models were developed where the independent variables were the factor scores of the components in which the engagement items converged. Unlike previous factor analyses, these factor scores were obtained with varimax rotation. This analysis is an orthogonal rotation to avoid multicollinearity problems of the independent variables in causality models (such as regression models). The results of the regression models are shown in Table 9.

Table 9
 Regression models; effects of dimensions on loyalty

	Dependent variable	Independent variable	Standardized ratios	R	R ²	F
Model 1	LOYALTY	Conscious Attention	0.589**	0.77	0.59	26.9**
		Enthusiastic Participation	0.28**			
		Social Connection	0.407**			
Model 2	SATISFACTION	Conscious Attention	0.483**	0.65	0.43	14.1**
		Enthusiastic Participation	0.149			
		Social Connection	0.418**			

n=60 ** Significance lower than .01

Source: created by the authors

The model for brand loyalty confirms the results obtained in previous studies where this construct is proposed as a consequence of engagement. Brand loyalty has been proposed due to repeat purchases and other behaviors derived from an engagement process with a certain brand (Bowden, 2009). The model obtained supports the relevance of the three proposed dimensions (independent variables) in explaining Starbucks brand loyalty by having significant coefficients. In the case of the model for the satisfaction variable, the enthusiastic participation dimension (independent variable) turned out to be non-significant. This result may suggest the need to review models linking engagement with satisfaction, particularly in the dimension of enthusiastic participation. Similarly, the relevance of each dimension in different product categories could be explored since, although it has been corroborated that the three dimensions are retained in different contexts, their relevance may tend to differ in each of them.

Hypothesis testing: Differentiating between product and brand

Testing the scale in a product category context and a brand context serves to argue the multi-object validity of the scale. In the present study, by analyzing the construct at two levels (product and brand), it was sought to confirm the scale's validity in different contexts and to propose research work that will further investigate the implications of different degrees of engagement at both levels. Interestingly, a subject can present different degrees of engagement with a product category and a brand within this category, as shown by the significant differences in the means between both levels tested (product and brand) for each item, as shown in Table 10. In these tests, in which an average value of the degree of agreement is used for each item, it is evident that the same individual may present a higher degree of engagement for a category than for a specific brand. This duality of observing different levels of engagement between two distinct but related objects has been studied previously when different levels of engagement were found between a brand and a brand community in an internet context (Dessart et al., 2016).

The duality described previously highlights the importance of having scales that recognize and analyze these variations in engagement for different objects (Dessart et al., 2016). Although the construct is defined as multidimensional, the fact that the values of each of these dimensions may be different for the same consumer at different levels of analysis presents significant opportunities for future research. For example, understanding how engagement with different objects can affect behaviors such as brand choice and preference and how each dimension affects these behaviors can lead to better-targeted and more effective marketing strategies. The findings of this study also raise the possibility of establishing a comparison indicator between brands, taking as a reference center the level of engagement for the product category.

Table 10
 Test for differences in means at product and brand levels

Dimension	Items	Product:	Brand:	t	Z
		Coffee	Starbucks		
		Mean	Mean		
Conscious Attention	I enjoy learning about _____.	3.72	2.05	8.3**	-5.565**
	I pay close attention to everything related to _____.	3.23	1.87	6.6**	-5.064**
	I keep myself abreast of developments related to _____.	2.62	1.80	4.6**	-3.967**
	_____ often catches my attention.	3.18	2.10	5.1**	-4.278**
Enthusiastic participation	I spend a lot of my personal time on _____.	2.55	1.55	5.0**	-4.231**
	My days would not be the same without _____.	3.22	1.32	8.3**	-5.555**
	_____ is an important part of my life.	3.17	1.28	8.6**	-5.492**
	I look for room in my schedule to dedicate to _____.	2.63	1.33	6.3**	-4.765**
Social connection	I enjoy _____ more when I am accompanied.	3.55	2.27	5.9**	-4.644**
	_____ is more fun when there are more people with me who also do it.	3.42	2.00	6.4**	-4.799**
	_____ is something I share with my friends.	3.17	1.85	6.6**	-5.013**
	_____ is a great way to spend time with family and friends.	3.67	1.93	7.7**	-5.303**

n= 60 Paired means comparison test

**Test with a significance level of .01 or lower

t= t-test for difference of means; Z= Wilcoxon rank difference test.

Source: created by the authors

To continue analyzing the statistical differences between engagement with the product category and the brand, a factor analysis with forced 2-factor varimax rotation was also performed. A value of 0.78 is obtained in the KMO coefficient and a relevant result in Bartlett's test of sphericity. These results indicate that the two factors obtained adequately represent the observed variables introduced in the analysis. Table 11 shows how the product category engagement items obtain high factor loadings on a factor other than the factor on which the brand engagement items obtain high loadings. Since the varimax rotation ensures zero correlation between the resulting factors, the statistical separation between the two types of indicators

is supported. Thus, the data in Tables 10 and 11 provide evidence of the separation of product/brand engagement from observed and latent variables. Consequently, the results of the study provide evidence that tends to support the hypotheses proposed for the separation of total engagement between the product category and a brand within that same category (H1), as well as the separation of each of the dimensions of engagement (conscious attention, enthusiastic participation, social connection) between the product category and a brand within that category (H2, H2a, H2b and H2c).

Table 11
 Confirmatory factor analysis; separation between product and brand engagement

	Component	
	1	2
I pay close attention to everything related to Starbucks.	0.883	
I spend a lot of my personal time at Starbucks.	0.863	
My days would not be the same without going to Starbucks.	0.837	
Starbucks is an important part of my life.	0.825	
Starbucks often catches my attention.	0.821	
I enjoy learning about Starbucks.	0.814	
I stay abreast of developments related to Starbucks.	0.807	
Starbucks is a great way to spend time with family and friends.	0.802	
I look to make room in my schedule to dedicate to Starbucks.	0.789	
Starbucks is more fun when I am with people who also like Starbucks.	0.747	
Starbucks is something I share with my friends.	0.712	
I enjoy Starbucks more when I am in company.	0.586	
Coffee often catches my attention.		0.836
I pay close attention to everything related to coffee.		0.815
I keep abreast of coffee-related developments.		0.809
I spend a lot of my personal time drinking coffee.		0.806
Drinking coffee is an important part of my life.		0.801
I try to make room in my schedule for coffee.		0.745
Drinking coffee is something I share with my friends.		0.734
I enjoy learning about coffee.		0.723
My days would not be the same without coffee.		0.703
Drinking coffee is a good way to spend time with family and friends.		0.621
Drinking coffee is more fun when I am with people who do it too.		0.573
I enjoy drinking coffee more when I am in company.		0.540

Note: Confirmatory factor analysis with varimax rotation

Loads below 0.5 are omitted

Source: created by the authors

Conclusions

Distinguishing product and brand engagement could be useful for establishing effective marketing strategies. While it is necessary to analyze further the differences between the levels of the three dimensions and the two levels of analysis, identifying a difference is a first step toward a deeper

understanding of this concept. Understanding the differences could provide a useful tool for comparing suppliers in the same product category since higher engagement could reflect an added value that the consumer perceives more clearly. As the results indicate, it was found that the level of engagement in each dimension is higher with the brand (Starbucks) used in this study than with the product category (brewed coffee). This finding suggests that the brand can be an element that can transfer value to the product category covered by enabling an increase in the total level of engagement in the purchasing choice process.

On the other hand, the engagement of a category could be an important indicator of reference and distinction for brands that manage to exceed that level and those that fail to achieve it. Future research could include this relation between perceived value and engagement and the impact of different forms of communication, innovation, consumer education, and others on this indicator. The need for future studies to understand differences in engagement with different focal objects (i.e., product category, brand) and their implications has been remarked (Dessart et al., 2016). This study presents a first approach to the distinction between engagement with different objects, particularly those relevant to branding (the term is accepted in the literature as the process of creating and developing brand value) and communication strategies. In this case, evidence has been provided on the difference between the level of engagement with a product category and that with a particular brand within that category.

In this study, evidence has been presented to provide a scale that can be used to measure the degree of engagement of a consumer with an object. The reported reliability and validity tests generally suggest that the proposed items are useful indicators of their dimensions in a Mexican context. Additionally, based on the results obtained, it was found that engagement can be different for different levels of marketing objects (product category level and brand level). The possibility of continuing the line of research on engagement is presented by the use of a scale that has given certain evidence of being valid and reliable for the Mexican context. Future studies could include developing the generalizability of the scale to other product categories. Having defined the scale's predictive validity, models could be explored for a deeper analysis of the antecedents and consequences of engagement. Additionally, exploring different levels of engagement among different types of consumers could be the basis for identifying an alternative market segmentation.

Engagement research in service categories may require re-evaluating and adapting the measurement scale which would also be a relevant approach for the marketing domain. The limitations of adapting the scale include the particularity of the product category used (brewed coffee). An additional limitation is that the sample corresponds to consumers in urban areas of central Mexico, which could also reflect a certain bias. Future studies could include segmented samples with different preference profiles, geographic areas, consumption habits, category knowledge, or specific consumption of certain brands. Additionally, engagement with coffee could differ given two different markets: on the one hand, it is a

traditional product in a mass consumer market, but on the other hand, it is a product in a market with a recent trend toward sophistication (Carvalho et al., 2016).

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