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Article

The Power of Online Branding: A Closer Look at Canary's Fashion Industry

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Abstract: The present study seeks to assess the Brand Equity in the network of new fashion designers in the Canary Islands. To this end, we have adapted the Brand Equity model to an online context and proposed a set of metrics for four dimensions: estimate, relevance, awareness, and differentiation. The multidimensional approach to online Brand Equity was employed to measure the online Brand Equity of 129 fashion designers from the Canary Islands. The study's findings revealed that the number of social media profiles significantly impacts brand awareness and differentiation. Moreover, the digital maturity level influences brand relevance and overall Brand Equity. Our study highlights the practical value of web data-driven metrics for measuring online Brand Equity, which can be utilised for diagnostic, evaluative, or predictive purposes. The study's outcomes have substantial implications for marketers in the fashion industry aimed at improving online Brand Equity.

Keywords: brand equity; brand strength; brand stature; fashion design; social media; digital marketing

1. Introduction

In recent years, there has been a growing interest in digital marketing and its role in boosting digital transformation across all industries [1]. Technology and digitalisation have played a pivotal role in supporting businesses, particularly through digital marketing. Research has shown that social networks such as Meta Group, TikTok, and Twitter, now known as X, can provide valuable user information [2]. Furthermore, web metrics have emerged as a critical avenue of interest for brands [3]. Websites and social media platforms can help brands position themselves among consumers and gain insights into their behaviour and preferences. In this context, the structural brand dimensions of awareness, estimation, relevance, and differentiation can be measured and operationalised to manage organisations on the internet effectively [4,5].

The fashion industry has experienced rapid growth thanks to the online context [6]. As such, fashion designers must build Brand Equity based on online metrics. By leveraging the power of digital marketing and web metrics, businesses can gain valuable insights into their target audience and position themselves for success in the digital age.

Researchers have explored the various aspects of Brand Equity, emphasising elements such as brand awareness and relevance and Brand Equity on social media [7,8]. This highlights the evolving nature of the concept in recent years. Brand Equity is defined as the value consumers attribute to a brand across four dimensions, and it can significantly affect their purchasing decisions and overall experiences [9]. [10–12] argue that Brand Equity should be defined from the customer's perspective rather than product and service features. In this context, [13,14] suggest that Brand Equity comprises

several dimensions: awareness, esteem, relevance, and differentiation. Therefore, fashion brands with a digital presence should consider aspects like stature and strength when building Brand Equity. Brand Stature is linked to awareness and esteem, while Brand Strength is associated with relevance and differentiation.

The concept of Brand Equity has been extensively explored in the context of brick-and-mortar businesses and has also been applied to the emerging fashion industry [15]. However, there is growing interest among researchers in developing new measurement tools that can capture the social media and digital marketing aspects of Brand Equity [16]. Adopting novel methods to assess intangible values and performance is imperative [17]. Against this backdrop, this study aims to evaluate the measurement and explication of online Brand Equity within the networks of fashion designers in the Canary Islands' new fashion industry. Furthermore, it aims to offer insights into enhancing the online presence of fashion designers by utilising social media strategies and data-driven web technologies to improve their fashion brand effectively and efficiently.

To provide clear direction for our present study on the new fashion industry in the Canary Islands, we have formulated a set of research questions. These questions include:

RQ1: How can we adapt the Brand Equity model to the online marketplace?

RQ2: What are the antecedents of Brand Stature in the online market?

RQ3: What are the antecedents of Brand Strength in the online market?

RQ4: What are the antecedents of Brand Equity in the online market?

To address those questions, we assessed online Brand Equity within the emerging network of fashion designers in the Canary Islands. We adapted the Brand Equity model to the online context of the fashion designer network and considered the most appropriate digital metrics. Additionally, we identified the factors contributing to Brand Strength and stature by examining dimensions such as awareness, esteem, relevance, and differentiation. Finally, we identified the online factors influencing Brand Equity and measured the overall structural impact of Brand Strength and stature on Brand Equity .

The present study is organised into five distinct sections in addition to the introduction. The first section, a comprehensive literature review, identifies and systematises critical online metrics and precursors of the Brand Equity phenomenon. The second section delves into the methodological framework, encompassing the fieldwork, measuring instruments, and research context. The third section presents a statistical analysis and empirical evidence derived from the research. Next, a discussion section examines the significance of the findings in the context of other studies. Finally, the article concludes with a summary of its theoretical contribution, limitations, and future research directions.

2. Literature Review

This section of the literature review is divided into two fundamental parts. The study will delve into the concept and measurement of Brand Equity as well as the determinants thereof. Firstly, the study will explore how Brand Equity is defined and measured, examining the various approaches used in academic literature. Secondly, the study will address the antecedents of brand value.

Brand Equity and Online Metrics

The present study postulates that Brand Equity constitutes a multifaceted construct encompassing several dimensions, including awareness, estimation, relevance, and differentiation [13,14]. The first dimension, i.e., awareness, is crucial in Brand Equity growth. It denotes the extent of recognition and visibility consumers have with the brand, allowing them to identify it under any condition [2]. In the online context, brand awareness can be evaluated through web traffic and social media reach, as these metrics are inherently linked to awareness [18]. Developing robust digital marketing strategies can enhance brand-consumer engagement, enabling consumers to establish a stronger connection with the products and services offered through websites or social media platforms [19,20]. Furthermore, digital metrics can measure awareness and effectiveness of a brand's

online presence [21]. Based on this evidence, we confirm that there is sufficient proof to suggest that online brand awareness can be measured with digital metrics.

According to [22], brand estimates result from consumers' perspectives. In the online environment, this estimation process is comparable to the traditional context, which incorporates metrics such as backlinks, visit duration, page views, bounce rate, and social media likes. These metrics directly relate to the consumers' outlook towards the brand and signify approval or appreciation. The metrics are interdependent, and it is reasonable to assume that consumers would not link to a website stay longer, view pages, or express their favorability if they do not value their visit [23]. In contrast, if the consumer does not appreciate the visit, the consumer is likely to bounce from the website [24].

Moreover, the level of Brand Stature is also contingent upon the estimate level. This concept indicates the level of admiration that the consumer holds for the brand [25]. In summary, digital metrics can be employed to measure online brand estimate.

When choosing a brand, relevance is a crucial factor that reflects the strength of the brand [26]. Brand relevance can be obtained through domain authority (DA) and social media engagement. DA is a critical metric for analysing search engine optimisation (SEO) as it calculates various elements like linking root domains and the total number of links [27]. This metric can predict the web page's chances of appearing and ranking in the search engine results page (SERP) [27]. Additionally, social media engagement measures consumers' interactions with the brand's social networks. Consumers are more receptive to social media content and interact with them by sharing, liking, and other means [28]. Therefore, in the online context, brand relevance is measured by the level of engagement in social media and DA. Hence, we can conclude that digital metrics can measure online brand relevance.

According to [29] research, differentiation is one of the intrinsic aspects of brand management. Therefore, a brand's strength is also influenced by the level of differentiation in terms of content originality and social media interactions [30]. Differentiation, in essence, refers to the degree of uniqueness a brand exhibits compared to its competitors. Consequently, the originality of content can be measured by assessing whether similar or duplicate pages exist, which is an essential factor in Brand Equity. Brands must generate original content to enhance their SEO and build customer loyalty. In addition, social media comment interactions are a crucial aspect of brand differentiation. This refers to the number of times and manner in which consumers communicate with a brand [31]. The engagement and differentiation that social media comments provide are critical for brands. Depending on the platform, consumers can react with an emoji, mention another consumer account, or write a text. Therefore, in online contexts, brand differentiation encompasses content originality and social media comment interactions, which require consumers to come up with distinct responses. There is sufficient theoretical foundation for measuring online brand differentiation using digital metrics.

Online Precursors of Brand Equity

A multidimensional approach must be adopted to comprehend the antecedents of online Brand Equity. An amalgamation of factors such as digital capability, social media resources, content marketing quality, and product line diversity have been identified as crucial dimensions contributing to online Brand Equity development. Thus, for fashion designer brands, the online precursors of Brand Equity must be based on these dimensions, and all of them must be employed to measure online stature and strength, considering its non-tangible attributes.

Regarding digitalisation, skills beyond IT are crucial in improving and implementing digital strategies to enhance Brand Equity [32]. This includes specialised technologies like social media and website solutions [33]. Digital marketing capability involves fusing marketing strategy with technology, making it vital in building Brand Equity. As such, fashion brands must prioritise online presence by improving consumer experience, SEO, and engagement for greater impact [34].

[35,36] have identified six stages of marketing capability, ranging from null to excellence. At the lowest level, an organisation lacks a website or any social media presence. In the second stage, the

organisation gains mentions on social media through other consumers, even if it does not have a website or use any social media platforms [37]. The presence of a brand in the search engine results page (SERP), as noted by [38], can be considered a significant achievement, even if the brand does not have a website or social media presence. However, possessing a simple blog-style website can be deemed a higher maturity level, indicating a more established online presence. Moving further up the maturity ladder, the fourth level is achieved when a brand has a website and profiles on various social media platforms. As outlined by [39], the fifth level of marketing maturity is characterised by a mobile-friendly website with forms that allow consumers to request information and price quotes. Finally, the pinnacle of online marketing maturity is attained when businesses have the ability to conduct online commercial transactions using e-commerce capabilities, as suggested by [40].

[41] assert that modern technologies have revolutionised social interactions and influenced consumers' purchasing behaviour, particularly in the retail industry, such as fashion design. In addition, a successful online presence can also strengthen brand credibility [42]. Fashion brands with a significant online presence are more likely to be perceived as relevant by consumers. As such, it is critical for these brands to clearly differentiate themselves from their competitors [43]. Achieving this requires a focus on consumers' sensory and emotional experiences in the digital context [44]. Therefore, the digital realm plays a pivotal role in establishing the differentiation and relevance of Brand Strength.

Developing a digital marketing strategy that can help establish a strong brand presence is crucial. A high level of digital presence can increase brand awareness among consumers in technological environments. Digital channels can create a more positive experience for consumers and ultimately influence the consumer's emotional response towards the brand [45] [46]. The level of digital presence determines the brand's awareness stature. Moreover, a robust digital presence can impact the brand's esteem, which includes brand loyalty, consumer knowledge, perceptions, and experiences towards the brand [47]. Therefore, the digital level determines the brand's esteem stature as well. Based on this, the following hypotheses are put forward:

H1: The digital level determines Brand Equity.

H1a: The digital level determines the brand's awareness.

H1b: The digital level determines the estimation of the brand.

H1c: The digital level determines the brand's relevance.

H1d: The digital level determines the brand's differentiation.

The role of social media in marketing is significant [48]. Social media is not only considered a reliable source of information but also an effective channel for generating Brand Equity, as demonstrated by the increased brand visibility, engagement, and interactions on these platforms, which, in turn, can improve a brand's perception, loyalty, and other benefits [49] [34]. Moreover, social media plays a vital role in creating favourable connections between brands and consumers, enhancing Brand Equity [50]. Brands with a strong presence across social networks are more likely to increase their Brand Equity.

Research has shown that social media platforms can effectively boost a brand's awareness among its followers [51–53]. To achieve this, it is crucial for social networks to create high-quality content that appears authentic to consumers [54]. Additionally, leveraging influencer marketing can be an effective social media strategy to increase brand awareness [55]. Furthermore, enhancing a brand's reputation on social media can be achieved by growing its follower base, increasing engagement rates, and fostering positive interactions.

On the other hand, a brand's relevance is determined by the level of importance consumers place on it. Social media plays a crucial role in enhancing relevance and improving a brand's quality, trust, and loyalty [56,57]. Social marketers must engage consumers in their marketing strategies to achieve

this, ensuring active interaction between the content and their followers. This includes "likes," comments, replies, shares, and other forms of engagement [58]. However, it is essential to note that positive interactions have the greatest impact.

Moreover, social media platforms are significant tools for highlighting, distinguishing, and communicating the unique attributes of a brand. This allows for differentiation from competitors and enables consumers to compare and contrast brands. Therefore, it is essential to use various platforms to communicate the brand while maintaining brand consistency through a strong brand identity and image [59] [60]. On this basis, the following hypotheses are put forward:

H2: The number of social media platforms used determines Brand Equity.

H2a: The number of social media platforms used determines the brand's awareness.

H2b: The number of social media platforms used determines the estimation of the brand.

H2c: The number of social media platforms used determines the brand's relevance.

H2d: The number of social media platforms used determines the brand's differentiation.

Content marketing quality is a crucial precursor to success online, as it encompasses how brands utilise various content formats and multimedia elements [61]. From posts and live streams to videos, infographics, and newsletters, the internet offers a wide range of content formats to choose from. However, it is not the quantity of content that matters most but rather the quality of consumer engagement and behaviour [62]. Therefore, it is essential to have diverse and attractive content formats, which can help establish an effective strategy for increasing brand awareness [61,63]. By adapting the content format style to the brand's target audience in online channels, engagement can be increased [64]. Ultimately, a variety of content can boost the relevance of the brand image, strengthening the brand's connection with its consumers [65].

Content format variability is crucial in establishing Brand Equity as it generates differentiation, enhances engagement, and drives loyalty [66]. The ability of consumers to evaluate the value and position of the brand image in their minds can be improved, which ultimately contributes to enhancing brand estimation and overall consumer experience in the online context [67]. Marketing format content is paramount as it enables brands to connect emotionally with their consumers through effective format management. On this basis, the following hypotheses are put forward:

H3: Content format variety used determines Brand Equity.

H3a: Content format variety determines the brand's awareness.

H3b: Content format variety determines the estimation of the brand.

H3c: Content format variety determines the brand's relevance.

H3d: Content format variety determines the brand's differentiation.

In the realm of Brand Equity, product positioning plays a crucial role as consumers' perception of brands varies and is dependent on the fashion industry's product diversification [68]. According to [69], brand loyalty and engagement are rooted in brand image and perception. Hence, a creative and innovative fashion collection can contribute to enhancing brand reach and engagement [70]. The variety of product lines a brand offers can also impact brand awareness, as consumers are more likely to associate the clothes, patterns, designs, and accessories with the brand.

In the fashion industry market, a wide range of product lines exist, and segmenting their management is crucial. The most prominent are the haute couture, ready-to-wear (prêt-à-porter), and mass market or fast fashion segments. In the case of the latter, the Canary fashion designers' product

lines manifest as ceremony, swimwear, ready-to-wear, and accessories. Therefore, offering a diverse range of products can improve the brand's relevance, awareness, and perception.

The classification of fashion products is based on the design and production strategies employed by companies and the way in which these products appeal to consumers. In this regard, high-quality products are more likely to evoke positive emotional responses from consumers, enhancing Brand Equity [71]. Product line diversity plays a significant role in this regard, enabling brands to differentiate themselves from their competitors and innovate in response to changing consumer needs [72]. By catering to a diverse range of lifestyle and consumption preferences, fashion brands can effectively communicate their unique value proposition to consumers [73]. Based on this, the following hypotheses are put forward:

- H4: Diversity of product lines determines Brand Equity .
- H4a: Diversity of product lines determines the brand's awareness.
- H4b: Diversity of product lines determines the estimation of the brand.
- H4c: Diversity of product lines determines the brand's relevance.
- H4d: Diversity of product lines determines the brand's differentiation.

According to [74], a brand that exhibits a high level of digital maturity tends to be perceived in a favourable and positive light by consumers. This, in turn, significantly influences consumers, resulting in the development of strong Brand Equity [75]. The digital maturity of a brand is based on various factors, such as its online presence and technological capabilities [76]. Furthermore, the number of social media platforms utilised by a brand is critical in establishing a solid connection with the audience, thereby boosting its online presence and Brand Equity [77–79].

Therefore, the number of social media will be able to determine the Brand Equity and the online presence [80]. The variety of content formats, including videos, infographics, and reels, among others, is also crucial in enhancing brand awareness and offering an enjoyable experience to consumers [81]. The utilisation of such attractive content can significantly influence the development of Brand Equity. Finally, brand loyalty can be fostered by satisfying consumer needs through diverse product lines [82]. Thus, the greater the number of product lines a brand offers, the more significant its influence on Brand Equity. Based on these findings, we propose a conceptual model, as illustrated in Figure 1.

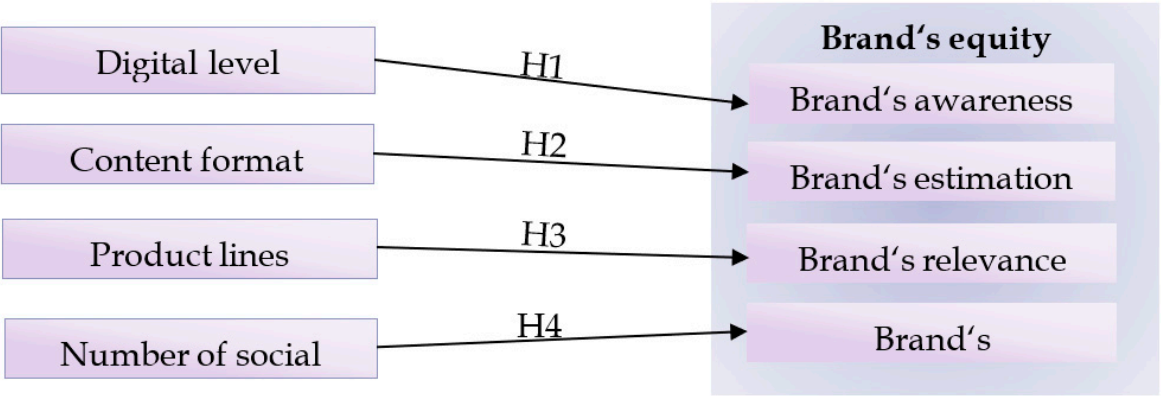


Figure 1. Conceptual model.

3. Methodology

We developed a comprehensive database sampling framework to conduct a survey that aligns with our stated objectives. Our sampling framework comprises 129 fashion designers hailing from the Canary Islands. Although we initially set a theoretical sample size of 100 fashion designers, this

number increased during our fieldwork. Our sample units were selected using a simple random procedure, which employed a probabilistic method to gather data from fashion designers affiliated with five different official networking platforms, namely Moda Cálida, Isla Bonita, Tenerife Moda, Moda Lanzarote, and Moda Fuerteventura, which are funded by The Canary Islands government, as well as independent new fashion creators from the same region. We assumed a 7% sampling error and established a reliability interval of 95.5%, Table 01.

To gather and collate information about the universe of new fashion designers, we recruited 100 students of a market research course for tourism from the University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, who were instructed to extract the necessary metrics from the sampling units' websites after being assigned one different designer to each student and survey taker. These students collected and tabulated metrics in April 2023, operating from the computer classroom of the Faculty of Business, Economics, and Tourism, under the careful supervision of authors and lecturers to ensure that all operations were well-coordinated. Following the gathering session, the authors meticulously scrutinised the database, detecting and resolving internal inconsistencies, missing values, and omitted responses.

Table 01. Technical sheet of the research.

Methodological procedure	Analysis of web metrics and social networks. Database
Population	N=250
Sample error	The assumed sample error was 5.95% for a reliability interval of 95.5%. (Z=1,96)
Geographical scope	Canary Islands
Contact form	Through the designer platforms: Moda Cálida, Isla Bonita, Tenerife Moda, Moda Lanzarote and Moda Fuerteventura. Also, reports on fashion fairs and events in the Canary Islands.
Sample	129
Sample selection method	Random simple sampling by assigning one or two fashion designers to each student from ULPGC
Fieldwork date	April 2023

The database boasts eleven distinct dimensions. Upon analysis, it has come to light that the variables within the said database can be broadly classified into four distinct categories concerning the dimensions of Brand Equity . This classification has been duly illustrated in Figure 2 for reference and clarity.

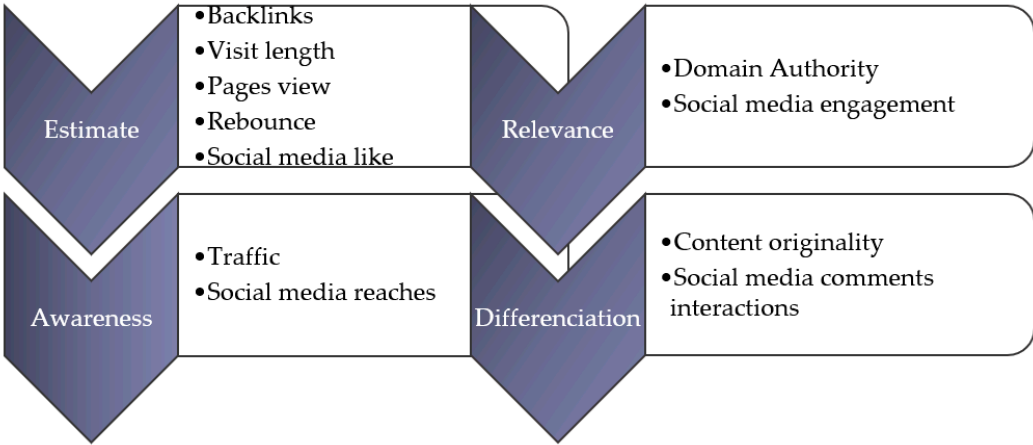


Figure 2. Brand Equity and online metrics.

Upon collecting identification information for the new fashion designers, our team proceeded to extract the remaining metrics using specialised software, as presented in Table 02. The measurement indicators on the dimensions of Brand Equity were extracted from diverse software tools, except social media metrics, which were extracted manually.

Table 02. Description of metrics and software.

DIMENSION	SOFTWARE	METRICS	DESCRIPTION
Estimate	Semrush	Backlinks	A link that connects one website to another
	Semrush	Visit length	Average time per visit
	Semrush	Pages view	Average number of times a page was viewed
	Semrush	Rebound	% visitors entering a website and exiting without interaction
	Manual	Social media like	Average number of likes on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok, Linkedin, Pinterest
Awareness	Semrush	Traffic	Number of visitors
	Reach	Social media reaches	Scope impressions
Relevance	Moz	Domain Authority	Domain score
	Keyhole	Social media engagement	Engagement CTR on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok, Linkedin, Pinterest
Differentiation	Sitelineer	Content originality	% of original content
	Mediatoolkit	Social media comments interactions	Average number of comments interactions on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok, Linkedin, Pinterest

Table 03 presents specific information related to the research study. The table contains dichotomous variables that indicate the existence or absence of various product lines and content formats. Additionally, the table shows a variable that provides details about fashion platforms. This variable has six values associated with each new fashion designer platform, which connects to a different island. Furthermore, the table exhibits variables for social media platforms, which gather information about the designers' community and network management. Finally, the table includes a variable that describes each new fashion designer's digital marketing maturity level. This variable has six dimensions, which provide a comprehensive overview of the digital development stage achieved by each designer. In addition, there are some variables regarding the classification details of the fashion designers, such as their names, fashion brands, contact numbers, email addresses, product line diversity and URLs.

Table 03. The specific information about the new fashion designers.

VARIABLES	VALUES
New fashion designers' platforms	(1) Moda Cálida, (2) Isla Bonita, (3) Tenerife Fashion, (4) Lanzarote Fashion, (5) Fuerteventura Fashion and (6) independent designers.
Product lines	Accessories, ceremony, ready-to-wear men, ready-to-wear women, swimwear, women's swimwear, men's swimwear, children's fashion, and lingerie
Content marketing formats	Post, PPS, video, infographic, newsletter, case study, whitepaper, ebook, report/review, webinar, live streaming, games, contest, quizzes, press release, radio, TV, guides, celebrity endorsement, rating, events, interactive demos, checklist, databases and calculators
Social media	Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok, Linkedin, Pinterest, Whatsapp, Youtube and Vimeo.
Digital maturity levels	(0) no website, no social media, (1) no website, no networks, but has mentions in social media, (2) no website, no social media, but appears in SERP, (3) has a simple blog-style website, (4) has a simple blog-style website and profiles on social media, (5) has a mobile-friendly website, requests information with forms and allows price inquiries, (6) has a website that allows commercial transactions

New variables have been generated changing the original values, which will be used in a subsequent statistical analysis. In order to make meaningful comparisons, we had to standardise the values or carry out basic calculations like adding and subtracting. Furthermore, this also involved transforming the initial 88 variables into 20 new ones listed in Table 04.

Table 04. Transformation of original variables into new ones.

NEW VARIABLE	FORMULA WITH OLD VARIABLES
V1 Traffic	Standardised number of visitors from the website
V2 Reaches	Standardised sum up total of reach rate (Facebook) + reach rate (Twitter) + reach rate (Instagram) + reach rate (TikTok) + reach rate (Pinterest) + reach rate (Linkedin)
V3 Brand Stature Awareness	Sum up V1 Traffic + V2 Reaches
V4 Backlinks	Standardised number of links that connect one website to another
V5 Visit length	Standardised times a page was viewed
V6 Rebound	Standardised % visitors

V7 Likes	Standardised sum up total of like rate (Facebook) + like rate (Twitter) + like rate (Instagram) + like rate (TikTok) + like rate (Pinterest) + like rate (Linkedin)
V8 Brand Stature Estimate	Sum up V4 Backlinks + V5 Visit length + V6 Rebound + V7 Likes
V9 Domain Authority	Standardised the Domain score
V10 Engagement	Standardised sum up total of Engagement rate (Facebook) + Engagement rate (Twitter) + Engagement rate (Instagram) + Engagement rate (TikTok) + engagement rate (Pinterest) + Engagement rate (Linkedin)
V11 Brand Strength Relevance	Sum up V9 Domain Authority + V10 Engagement
V12 Content originality	Standardised % of original content
V13 Social media comments interactions	Standardised sum up total of Interactions rate (Facebook) + Interactions rate (Twitter) + Interactions rate (Instagram) + Interactions rate (TikTok) + Interactions rate (Pinterest) + engagement rate (Linkedin)
V14 Brand Strength Differentiation	Sum up V12 Content originality + V13 Social media comments interactions
V15 Brand Equity	Sum up V3 Brand Stature Awareness + V8 Brand Stature Estimate + V11 Brand Strength Relevance + V14 Brand Strength Differentiation
V16 Number of social media	If it does not exist = 0; If social media profile exists =1 1/0 (Facebook) + 1/0 (Twitter) + 1/0 (Instagram) + 1/0 (TikTok) + 1/0 (Pinterest) + 1/0 (Linkedin) + 1/0 (Whatsapp) + 1/0 (Youtube) + 1/0 (Vimeo)
V17 Product lines diversity	They don't design this product line = 0; They design this product line =1 1/0 (complements) + 1/0 (footwear) + 1/0 (lingerie) + 1/0 (sportswear) + 1/0 (swimwear women) + 1/0 (swimwear men) + 1/0 (swimwear) + 1/0 (ceremony) + 1/0 (ready-to-wear women) + 1/0 (ready-to-wear children) + 1/0 (ready-to-wear men)
V18 Fashion Collection diversity	Sum up (complements + footwear) + (ready-to-wear women + ready-to-wear men + ready-to-wear children) + (swimwear women + swimwear men + swimwear) + Ceremony
V19 Content format variety	If it does not exist = 0; If content format exists =1 1/0 (post) + 1/0 (PPS) + 1/0 (video) + 1/0 (infography) + 1/0 (newsletter) + 1/0 (case study) + 1/0 (whitepaper) + 1/0 (eBook) + 1/0 (webinar) + 1/0 (livestreaming) + 1/0 (games) + 1/0 (contest) + 1/0 (quizzes) + 1/0 (pressrelease) + 1/0 (radio) + 1/0 (TV) + 1/0 (guides) + 1/0 (celebrity endorsement) + 1/0 (rating) + 1/0 (events) + 1/0 (interactives demos) + 1/0 (checklist) + 1/0 (calculators) + 1/0 (databases)
V20 Digital level	No website, no networks = 0; No website, no networks, but has mentions in social media = 1; No website, no networks, but appears in SERP = 2; Has a simple blog-style website = 3; Has a simple blog-style website and profiles on social media = 4; Has a mobile-friendly website, requests information with forms and allows price enquiries = 5; Has a website that allows commercial transactions = 6

It is essential to mention that we conducted a Delphi survey, in which we interviewed five digital marketers who have experience in the new fashion designers' market, Table 05. Our objective was to gather their opinions about the significance of the variables needed, Table 06, to calculate Brand Equity in the Canary Islands marketplace. Our approach involved weighing every variable within the awareness, estimate, relevance, and differentiation dimensions. This will enable us to develop a tool to evaluate the new fashion designers' marketplace.

Table 05. Technical sheet of the Delphi research.

Methodological procedure	Delphi interview
Sample error	The assumed sample error was 5.95% for a reliability interval of 95.5%. (Z=1,96)
Geographical scope	Gran Canaria
Contact form	Through professional social network: LinkedIn
Sample	5
Sample selection method	Digital marketers who have experience in the new fashion designers' market.
Fieldwork date	August 2023

Table 06. Profile of the respondents and their opinion.

Expert	Date	Gender	Age	Education	Profession	Professional experience
1.	17/08/2023	Female	26	Master's Degree in Marketing and International Trade	Bank cashier	2 years
2.	17/08/2023	Female	25	Master's Degree in Marketing and International Trade and PhD Candidate in Fashion Marketing	Project manager	2 years
3.	19/08/2023	Female	31	Postgraduate in Marketing for Hospitality and Tourism	Head of Production, Events and Communication	9 years
4.	19/08/2023	Female	32	Master's Degree in Marketing and International Trade	Design technique	7 years
5.	21/08/2023	Female	37	Degree in Business administration and management	Project manager	11 years

3. Results

The section on the analysis of results is divided into four headings that respond to the research questions formulated in the introduction.

RQ1: How can we adapt the Brand Equity model to the online marketplace?

In this study, we have explored the possibility of measuring Brand Equity dimensions by drawing a logical equivalence between traditional brick-and-mortar indicators and digital metrics. Our review of literature suggests that brand awareness can be represented by traffic and social media reach, while brand estimate can be evaluated based on online metrics such as backlinks, visit length, pages view, rebound, and social media likes. Brand relevance may be judged by examining DA and social media engagement, while content originality and social media comments can indicate the level of brand differentiation in digital marketing. We carefully considered these equivalences during preliminary transformations, as reflected in Table 04. Our results demonstrate that Brand Equity dimensions can indeed be adapted to the online context, owing to the logical similarities between offline and online indicators. Moreover, we have successfully formulated the total market Brand Equity value, as presented in Tables 07 and 09.

As part of our research, we employed a Delphi survey, engaging five experts to evaluate the significance of each dimension and variable in measuring online Brand Equity for emerging fashion designers in the Canary Islands, as presented in Table 08. The results of the survey, presented in Table 5, detail the experts' responses regarding the cruciality of every brand dimension. Based on the survey findings, we identified four primary dimensions for calculating Brand Equity value: awareness, estimate, differentiation, and relevance, as shown in Table 09.

Our analysis indicates that web traffic and TikTok reach are the most significant variables for the awareness category, while page views and visit length are crucial for the estimate category. Furthermore, unique content stands out as a critical variable concerning differentiation. Finally, our study reveals that DA is the most vital variable for relevance.

Table 07. Delphi survey descriptive results.

AWARENESS	Expert 1	Expert 2	Expert 3	Expert 4	Expert 5			
Item	Score	Score	Score	Score	Score	Mean	SD	Mean/SD
Visits	6	10	6	18	5	9	5.39	1.67
Facebook reach	1	2	5	5	5	3.6	1.95	1.85
Twitter reach	1	2	2	7	4	3.2	2.39	1.34
Instagram reach	9	2	5	15	6	7.4	4.93	1.50
Tik Tok reach	4	2	2	15	5	5.6	5.41	1.03
Pinterest reach	1	2	2	1	3	1.8	0.84	2.15
Linkedin reach	1	2	5	8	2	3.6	2.88	1.25
						34.2	23.78	1.44
ESTIMATE	Expert 1	Expert 2	Expert 3	Expert 4	Expert 5			
Item	Score	Score	Score	Score	Score	Mean	SD	Mean/SD
Backlinks	4	0	6	2	4	3.2	2.28	1.40
visit length	6	10	4	1	3	4.8	3.42	1.40
Page view	5	10	6	1	4	5.2	3.27	1.59
rebound percentage	2	5	6	3	2	3.6	1.82	1.98
Facebook likes	1	3	2	0	4	2	1.58	1.26
Twitter likes	0	3	2	1	3	1.8	1.30	1.38
Instagram likes	5	3	2	4	4	3.6	1.14	3.16
Tik tok likes	1	3	2	3	2	2.2	0.84	2.63

Pinterest likes	0	3	2	0	2	1.4	1.34	1.04
Linkedin likes	1	1	2	1	2	1.4	0.55	2.56
						29.2	17.54	1.66
RELEVANCE	Expert 1	Expert 2	Expert 3	Expert 4	Expert 5			
Item	Score	Score	Score	Score	Score	Mean	SD	Mean/SD
Domain authority	8	4	6	2	4	4.8	2.28	2.10
Facebook CTR	1	3	4	0	3	2.2	1.64	1.34
Twitter CTR	1	3	1	0	3	1.6	1.34	1.19
Instagram CTR	6	3	4	3	3	3.8	1.30	2.91
TitTok CTR	2	3	1	2	3	2.2	0.84	2.63
Pinterest CTR	0	3	1	0	2	1.2	1.30	0.92
Linkedin CTR	1	2	4	1	2	2	1.22	1.63
						17.8	9.93	1.79
DIFFERENTIATION	Expert 1	Expert 2	Expert 3	Expert 4	Expert 5			
Item	Score	Score	Score	Score	Score	Mean	SD	Mean/SD
Unique content	25	4	6	2	5	8.4	9.40	0.89
Facebook Commets	0	2	3	0	3	1.6	1.52	1.06
Twitter Comments	0	2	3	1	2	1.6	1.14	1.40
Instagram Comments	4	2	3	1	4	2.8	1.30	2.15
TikTok Comments	3	2	1	2	3	2.2	0.84	2.63
Pinterest Comments	0	2	1	0	2	1	1.00	1.00
Linkedin Comments	1	2	1	1	1	1.2	0.45	2.68
						18.8	15.64	1.20
	100	100	100	100	100	100	66.90	6.10

Table 08. Expert opinion.

Expert	Opinion
1.	The current digital landscape emphasises the critical role of website visits in reaching target audiences effectively. While platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn are well-established, the growing significance of Instagram and TikTok cannot be overlooked. Engagement metrics such as likes and comments, alongside indicators like bounce rates and click-through rates, provide valuable insights into audience interaction and content effectiveness. Ultimately, a comprehensive approach that considers both visitor acquisition and interaction evaluation is essential for understanding and navigating the complexities of digital engagement.
2.	While all social media platforms hold significance, their valuation can differ based on the specific context. For instance, Pinterest may receive a lower score due to limited familiarity with its functionality. However, website visits take precedence over social media likes as they signify a higher potential for actual purchases. This preference also influences the cost per click, as user engagement with advertisements is more likely when there is genuine interest. In the case of Canary Islands fashion brands, the importance of each platform may be re-evaluated, taking into account their capacity to inspire and facilitate sales.

3.	All social media platforms are important, but the assessment of each may vary depending on the context. For example, Pinterest may receive a lower score due to unfamiliarity with the platform. However, website visits are prioritized over likes on social media, as they indicate a greater potential for sales. This also impacts the cost per click, as interested users are likely to engage with advertising content. In the case of Canary Islands fashion brands, the significance of each platform may change, considering their ability to inspire and drive sales.
4.	It needs to focus on content-related items like unique content and authority which contribute to SEO and better positioning. Metrics such as page views and bounce rate also help improve content quality and engagement. Social media metrics, especially reach, were given priority, though their importance varies across platforms and businesses. Likes were treated equally due to limited points. Similarly, CTR and comments were prioritized.
5.	It's essential to emphasize elements related to content, such as originality and credibility, which play a role in SEO and enhanced visibility. Analytical measures like page views and bounce rate aid in refining content quality and fostering engagement. Social media indicators, notably reach, were prioritized, although their significance varies depending on the platform and industry. Likes were uniformly valued due to a constraint in available points. Likewise, emphasis was placed on click-through rates (CTR) and comments.

Table 09. Brand Equity formulation for the new fashion industry in the Canary Islands.

Brand stature		Brand Strength		Brand Equity
Awareness	Estimate	Relevance	Differentiate	
34.2	29.2	17.8	18.8	100
<div><div>Awareness: traffic + social media reach</div><div>+</div><div>Estimate: backlinks + visit length + pages view - rebound + social media likes:</div><div>+</div><div>Relevance: Domain Authority + social media engagement</div><div>+</div><div>Differentiate: content originality + social media comments</div><div>=</div></div>				

It is assumed that assigning a monetary value to every variable weighing its importance will lead to the calculation of the Brand Equity for the Canary Islands' new fashion designer marketplace.

RQ2: What are the antecedents of Brand Stature in the online market?

In order to test Hypotheses 1a, 2a, 3a, and 4a, we conducted two linear regression analyses, with the independent variables being the postulated antecedents of brand stature. As depicted in Table 10, the results suggest that brand awareness is solely predicted by the number of social media profiles

the new fashion designer possesses. However, we found no evidence to support the notion that product line diversity, content format diversity, and maturity level significantly affect brand awareness.

Table 10. Linear regression to explain awareness within brand stature.

Model Summary ^b								
Model						Std.		
1	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square			Er.Estimate	Durbin-Watson	
1	.409 ^a	.167	.140			1.53003	1.988	
ANOVA ^a								
Model		Sum of Squares		df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	
1	Regression	58.330		4	14.583	6.229	<.001 ^b	
	Residual	290.282		124	2.341			
	Total	348.612		128				
Coefficients ^a								
		Unstand.Coefficients		Stand.Coefficients			Collinea.Statistics	
		ts		ts			cs	
							Tolerance	
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.		VIF
	(Constant)	-1.673	.459		-3.648	<.001		
V1	Number of social media	.436	.110	.360	3.963	<.001	.814	1.228
V2	Product lines diversity	.015	.101	.013	.153	.879	.951	1.051
V3	Content format variability	.059	.036	.135	1.635	.105	.983	1.017
V4	Digital level	.016	.086	.017	.188	.852	.827	1.209
Collinearity Diagnostics ^a								
Model	Dimension	Eigenvalue	Condition	Variance Proportions				
1	n	e	Index	(Constant)	V1	V2	V3	V4

Table 11. Linear regression to explain estimate within brand stature.

Model Summary ^b								
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson			
1	.092 ^a	.008	-.024	1.84993	1.868			
ANOVA ^a								
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.		
1	Regression	3.587	4	.897	.262	.902 ^b		
	Residual	424.358	124	3.422				
	Total	427.945	128					
Coefficients ^a								
Model		Unstand.Coefficients		Stand.Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinea.Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	-.227	.555		-.410	.683		
V1	Number of social media	-.091	.133	-.068	-.686	.494	.814	1.228
V2	Product lines diversity	.045	.122	.034	.371	.711	.951	1.051
V3	Content format variability	-.001	.044	-.002	-.023	.982	.983	1.017
V4	Digital level	.088	.104	.083	.845	.400	.827	1.209
Collinearity Diagnostics ^a								

Model	Dimensio n	Eigenvalu e	Conditio n Index	Variance Proportions				
				(Constant)	V1	V2	V3	V4
1	1	4.287	1.000	.00	.01	.01	.01	.01
	2	.328	3.615	.00	.00	.25	.72	.01
	3	.225	4.368	.01	.12	.70	.18	.06
	4	.102	6.496	.15	.87	.02	.01	.21
	5	.059	8.533	.83	.00	.01	.08	.71
Dependent Variable: Estimate within Brand Stature								

RQ3: What are the antecedents of Brand Strength in the online market?

In order to test Hypotheses 1c, 2c, 3c, and 4c, we conducted a linear regression analysis to assess the relevance within Brand Strength, as presented in Table 12. Our findings indicate that the maturity level of a new fashion designer is significantly relevant to Brand Strength. However, no discernible influence was observed from social media, content formats, or product line diversity. These results suggest that while social media, content formats, and product line diversity may be important factors in other areas of the fashion industry, they do not seem to impact Brand Strength in this context significantly.

Table 12. Linear regression to explain relevance within Brand Strength.

Model Summary ^b									
Model		R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate		Durbin-Watson		
1		.274 ^a	.075	.045	1.38738		1.969		
ANOVA ^a									
Model			Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F		Sig.	
1	Regression		19.362	4	4.840	2.515		.045 ^b	
	Residual		238.680	124	1.925				
	Total		258.041	128					
Coefficients ^a									
Model			Unstand.Coefficients		Stand.Coefficients		Sig.	Collinea.Statistics	
			B	Std. Error	Beta			t	Tolerance
1	(Constant)		-1.230	.416		-2.956	.004		
V1	Number of social media		.063	.100	.061	.635	.526	.814	1.228

V2	Product lines diversity	.033	.092	.032	.356	.722	.951	1.051
V3	Content format variability	.029	.033	.076	.874	.384	.983	1.017
V4	Digital level	.180	.078	.220	2.317	.022	.827	1.209
Collinearity Diagnostics ^a								
Model	Dimension	Eigenvalue	Condition Index	Variance Proportions				
				(Constant)	V1	V2	V3	V4
1	1	4.287	1.000	.00	.01	.01	.01	.01
	2	.328	3.615	.00	.00	.25	.72	.01
	3	.225	4.368	.01	.12	.70	.18	.06
	4	.102	6.496	.15	.87	.02	.01	.21
	5	.059	8.533	.83	.00	.01	.08	.71
Dependent Variable: Relevance within Brand Strength								

In order to examine Hypotheses 1d, 2d, 3d, and 4d, as evidenced by the data in Table 13, we conducted a linear regression analysis to differentiate within Brand Strength. We found that a higher number of social media profiles for the new fashion designer is positively associated with greater Brand Strength due to the differentiation value. However, no statistically significant correlation was found between product line diversity, content format variety, or digital maturity level.

Table 13. Linear regression to explain differentiation within Brand Strength.

Model Summary ^b								
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson			
1	.236 ^a	.056	.025	1.40874	2.259			
ANOVA ^a								
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.		
1	Regression	14.498	4	3.624	1.826	.128 ^b		
	Residual	246.084	124	1.985				
	Total	260.582	128					
Coefficients ^a								
		Unstand.Coefficients		Stand.Coefficients		Sig.	Collinea.Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	.		

[illegible]

Our findings indicate that the number of social media profiles is a significant factor in determining Brand Strength.

RQ4: What are the antecedents of Brand Equity in the online market?

In order to rigorously examine and quantify the determinants of Brand Equity, we conducted a linear regression analysis to test Hypotheses 1, 2, 3, and 4. The independent variables used for the analysis were consistent with those presented in Table 14. Our findings revealed that digital maturity level had a statistically significant effect on Brand Equity. However, contrary to our original expectations, we could not establish causal links between social media, product lines, content format diversities, and Brand Equity.

Table 14. Linear regression to explain Brand Equity.

Model Summary ^b						
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson	
1	.337 ^a	.114	.085	3.74117	1.726	
ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	222.684	4	55.671	3.978	.005 ^b
	Residual	1735.552	124	13.996		
	Total	1958.236	128			
Coefficients ^a						

Model		Unstand.Coefficients		Stand.Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinea.Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	-4.012	1.122		-3.577	<.001		
V1	Number of social media	.075	.247	.026	.303	.762	.951	1.051
V2	Product lines diversity	.099	.088	.095	1.119	.265	.983	1.017
V3	Content format variety	.339	.209	.151	1.619	.108	.827	1.209
V4	Digital level	.615	.269	.214	2.287	.024	.814	1.228
Collinearity Diagnostics ^a								
Model	Dimension	Eigenvalue	Condition Index	Variance Proportions				
				(Constant)	V1	V2	V3	V4
1	1	4.287	1.000	.00	.01	.01	.01	.01
	2	.328	3.615	.00	.25	.72	.01	.00
	3	.225	4.368	.01	.70	.18	.06	.12
	4	.102	6.496	.15	.02	.01	.21	.87
	5	.059	8.533	.83	.01	.08	.71	.00
Dependent Variable: Brand Equity								

Table 15 shows that 16 hypotheses were rejected, while 4 were verified.

Table 15. Summary of hypotheses testing results.

Hypotheses	Results
H1: The digital level determines Brand Equity	Accepted
H1a: The digital level determines the brand's awareness	Rejected
H1b: The digital level determines the estimation of the brand	Rejected
H1c: The digital level determines the brand's relevance	Accepted
H1d: The digital level determines the brand's differentiation	Rejected
H2: The number of social media platforms used determines Brand Equity	Rejected
H2a: The number of social media platforms used determines the brand's awareness	Accepted
H2b: The number of social media platforms used determines the estimation of the brand	Rejected
H2c: The number of social media platforms used determines the brand's relevance	Rejected
H2d: The number of social media platforms used determines the brand's differentiation	Accepted
H3: Content format variety used determines Brand Equity	Rejected

H3a: Content format variety determines the brand's awareness	Rejected
H3b: Content format variety determines the estimation of the brand	Rejected
H3c: Content format variety determines the brand's relevance	Rejected
H3d: Content format variety determines the brand's differentiation	Rejected
H4: Diversity of product lines determines Brand Equity	Rejected
H4a: Diversity of product lines determines the brand's awareness	Rejected
H4b: Diversity of product lines determines the estimation of the brand	Rejected
H4c: Diversity of product lines determines the brand's relevance	Rejected
H4d: Diversity of product lines determines the brand's differentiation	Rejected

4. Discussion

This research aimed to assess the online Brand Equity of the fashion designers' network in the Canary Islands. Our approach relied on web data analysis to measure Brand Equity, which is recognised as a crucial factor in achieving online competitiveness [83] [84]. The online Brand Equity of fashion designers in the Canary Islands was evaluated using four dimensions: estimation, awareness, relevance, and differentiation. These dimensions have been extensively documented in academic literature and are widely acknowledged as necessary in assessing Brand Equity [13] [14]. It should be noted that a Delphi study was conducted to reinforce the significance of specific dimensions of Brand Equity. Experts' endorsement of these dimensions provides theoretical validation of their importance in the context of fashion designers in the Canary Islands.

Strong brand awareness is crucial for fashion brands since it improves the attitude towards the brand [85]. According to our research, the number of social media profiles determines brand awareness for fashion design. This finding is consistent with the current theoretical knowledge of social media's impact on online Brand Equity [86] [87] [88]. Regression analysis has also shown that having more social media profiles significantly impacts brand differentiation. With over half of the world's population (4.89 billion) using social media, it is clear that social media provides vast opportunities for raising brand awareness and differentiation [89].

Therefore, it is reasonable for fashion designers to have more social media profiles. Ideally, a fashion designer should have a presence on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok, LinkedIn, Pinterest, WhatsApp, YouTube, and Vimeo. The implication for marketers in the fashion industry is not to be limited to a few social media platforms if aiming to strengthen online Brand Equity. However, the study found that the diversity in product lines, content format, and digital level did not significantly impact brand awareness and differentiation. This provides a better understanding of what can be improved and what does not have an impact.

We have analysed various factors, including the number of social media profiles, product line diversity, content format, and digital level. However, we found no significant impact on the brand estimate dimension. Unfortunately, the existing research also does not provide a conclusive answer on the factors determining brand estimate. Hence, this aspect needs further investigation.

Most research on online Brand Equity needs to address the crucial question of what factors contribute to Brand Strength, which is essential for businesses to stand out in the market [82]. Our findings suggest that fashion designers seeking to enhance their Brand Strength and equity must focus on improving their digital maturity level. In the fashion industry in the Canary Islands, digital maturity is a crucial factor in developing Brand Equity. Therefore, fashion designers should improve

their digital presence and build websites that facilitate commercial transactions, representing the highest level of digital maturity.

The study found no evidence of social media, content formats, or product line diversity affecting Brand Strength or overall equity. As a result, we recommend further examination of the factors that determine Brand Strength and overall Brand Equity.

Our research suggests that the multidimensional Brand Equity model fully adapts to the online marketplace. Our study has also confirmed that a unique combination of specific metrics after the transformation procedure is sufficient to reveal every dimension of Brand Equity. Although these metrics are typically accessible, established Brand Equity measurement methods have not utilised them. Additionally, specialised software packages such as Semrush, Moz, Siteliner, and Mediatoolkit are ideal for extracting web data. Our study contributes to the existing literature by proposing a new Brand Equity measurement strategy based on quantitative data, ensuring objectivity. Research has yet to study online Brand Equity as a multidimensional construct using data explicitly extracted from the web. The suggested Brand Equity measurement framework can be incorporated into Brand Equity monitoring systems.

5. Conclusions

This research contributes to the literature by attempting to adapt and apply the traditional Brand Equity model to the online context. Specifically, the study endeavours to unravel the mechanisms through which Brand Equity is shaped and reinforced in online contexts, thereby providing an alternative interpretation of the traditional brick-and-mortar model.

The present study investigated the antecedents of Brand Equity in the digital realm, focusing on the fashion industry in the Canary Islands. Through a mixed-methods approach, the findings suggest that the number of social media profiles significantly increases brand awareness while the digital maturity level enhances relevance. Notably, the study reveals that Brand Stature and strength have distinct antecedents. Contrary to expectations, there was no evidence that product line diversity or content format variety influences Brand Equity. Nevertheless, experts identified specific variables within each dimension, providing a more nuanced understanding of critical factors that drive Brand Equity in the digital landscape.

Furthermore, the Delphi study highlights that not all metrics are equally important, with web traffic and TikTok reach identified as crucial for awareness. In practical terms, these findings imply that online Brand Equity must be managed by embracing digital transformation and considering the dimensions of digital capability. Social media emerges as a critical tool to increase brand awareness and differentiation, with experts recommending creating a wide range of social media profiles to gain visibility and uniqueness. Unique content and domain authority are also identified as critical factors for differentiation and relevance, respectively.

The results of this study have significant implications for marketers and fashion designers in the Canary Islands, providing clear guidelines for the practical measurement of Brand Equity. By prioritising specific metrics and dimensions, decision-making and resource allocation can be informed by quantitative measures of Brand Equity. Furthermore, the Delphi experts developed a proposal to assign a monetary value to each variable, which can be used to quantify Brand Equity and inform strategic decisions. Ultimately, this research enhances our understanding of the antecedents of Brand Equity in the digital landscape and contributes to developing practical methodologies for measuring and improving Brand Equity.

Further research opportunities arise from the unexpected results. Additionally, it's important to note that quality, rather than quantity, is vital to improving Brand Equity through content marketing. The study found no significant relationship between the variety of content formats and Brand Equity, indicating that the quality of content may be more important than the quantity. This result highlights the need for a greater focus on content marketing quality. The lack of relationship between product line diversity and Brand Equity is also surprising and requires further investigation to identify the factors contributing to this dissociation. Understanding these factors will help improve brand

perception and enhance Brand Equity management strategies for content marketing and product diversity.

The study has several limitations. Firstly, the reliability of the web analytics and monitoring tools used in this research has not yet been tested. Secondly, the study's scoping nature means that contextual interviews and surveys were not conducted, making it challenging to fully comprehend the metrics and/or results.

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