

Leadership and Associativity in the Association of Homebrewers of Peru

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Abstract

The Asociación de Cerveceros Caseros del Perú (ACECAS) is a non-profit civil organization that was formed in 2017. During its existence, it has constantly dedicated itself to promoting the production of craft beer and the dissemination of the "beer culture" in Peru and mainly in the city of Lima. To achieve its objective, ACECAS, has been in charge of associating at least 100 homebrewers who before its existence were dedicated to the production of the product in an amateur way and only following the steps that they themselves could find out from their own experience. ACECAS has managed to train new homebrewers with a projection to develop in the world of artisan production for their own benefit or for an eventual commercialization of their products; In addition, the association has been in charge of promoting workshops, courses, visits to plants, joint cooking, and other types of collaborations to bring together the associates and thus promoting networking between them. During the pandemic, the association managed to continue with its activities taking advantage of virtuality, thus being able to reach more people not only from Lima, but from other parts of Peru who also consider themselves lovers of craft beer. The purpose of this article is to explore the results of the study carried out in order to verify whether ACECAS actions effectively have an impact on the associativity of its members and on the leadership that the same organization exercises over them.

Keywords Union; Organization; Leadership; Craft beer; Homebrewer; Beer culture

1. Introduction

For many years the production of beer in Peru was linked to the commercial action of some companies that knew how to take advantage of the popularity of this drink. The brands competed with each other until little by little they began to merge into a single corporation that was awarded almost the entire beer market in the country. This meant not only that the proceeds of such sales went to the coffers of a single company, although sometimes competitors would appear demanding tiny portions of the cake, but it also meant that the Peruvian public was exposed to only one type of beer, Lager, and the occasional variation of the same globally popular commercial style.

Every time a new alternative came out for the consumption of the local public, it was unable to grow due to the little or almost non-existent marketing machinery at its disposal to compete in a market that was already taken and had, in the minds of the Peruvian consumers, various beers with very marked characteristics in the Peruvian mind. "The friend's beer", "The best beer", "The champion of quality", among other phrases were used to describe these brands that up to now outsold any other alternative that comes their way. However, this was not an impediment for many beer lovers tired of the little variety to decide on their own to prepare and cook various recipes of the many styles that exist in the world (at least more than 30 according to the BJCP 2015 guide). Most of these beer lovers became homebrewers in order to satisfy their personal need for a variety of self-made beers. At the same time, as they tried new recipes, they also

began to perfect their own skills and began to make others try their new creations. Thus, by 2015 there were already in the Peruvian market at least 20 different brands of craft beer that made space in the bars and shelves of Lima and other provinces.

Interest grew and others began to follow suit, not necessarily to satisfy a business need, but to experience first-hand what it was like to make their own beer. When there was a significant number of hop lovers who were beginning to cook their own recipes, the need arose to get together to share knowledge. First, the commercial nature Peruvian Craft Brewery Union (Unión de Cervecerías Artesanales del Perú - UCAP) was founded, gathering together the main craft beer brands in a sort of guild, to later found the Association of Home Brewers of Peru (Asociación de Cerveceros Caseros del Perú - ACECAS), who has, as main objective, the diffusion of the beer culture in the country.

It is important to study the issue of the perception of association and leadership of ACECAS since the organization, through its actions, aims to promote the training of homebrewers and their union in order to form ties between themselves leading them to professionalize their brewing work. ACECAS, through its leadership, sought to motivate the new members to not only be lovers of beer that they prepared at home in a rudimentary way, but also that the new creations are tailored to international standards and various existing styles of a liquid that for the common citizen it is only presented in a commercial form that is repeated from market to market. By bringing these entrepreneurs together, it generates an associativity that is felt in the sense of commitment that the members have when pushing together the collective effort of the association.

This is the first study related to the Association of Home Brewers of Peru. Being a relatively new association, other studies have not focused their efforts on understanding the importance that ACECAS has been acquiring for the local home producer. Moreover, they have focused on other associations also related to the craft beer sector such as the Peruvian Craft Brewery Union (UCAP), an organization that brings together craft breweries in the national territory, but when carrying out their research they have focused on the commercial factor to see sales strategies, marketing and market share, since the aforementioned organization is the formed by formal breweries that are dedicated to the sale of beer and not to the creation of beer culture through the promotion of training of homebrewers. (Chiroque and Gheresi, 2017).

In the present study, two variables were set to consider, leadership and associativity. In order to understand the implication of both, it was proposed to identify if the type of leadership applied by the organization was a transformational leadership that would seek the recognition of the members and their training for the benefit of all those involved as indicated by Burns, considering that the Transformational leadership is achieved in the long term through collaborations between subordinates and the leader generating a sense of belonging, commitment, ethics and motivation (Burns, 1978).

By achieving this degree of commitment proposed in the previous paragraph, ACECAS is exercising its leadership through the leader and promoting the development of the associativity of its members, who use the knowledge acquired and the contacts formed to professionalize and cook more interesting and better beers. Thus, both ACECAS and its members consolidate their commitment and are able to promote the organization's vision of promoting beer culture. According to Martínez (2001), "associativity is a response on the part of small and medium-sized companies to bring together the changes typical of the global village". In this case, ACECAS brings the homebrewers together, associating them together to achieve the main objective, which is the promotion of beer culture in the country. We will call beer culture to that

set of teachings on history and types of beer, providing an overview of the production process, ingredients, styles, and different origins of this drink (Instituto Cervezas de América, 2020). Through this study we tried to consolidate the basic concepts of the theory about leadership and associativity that are practiced in the Association of Home Brewers of Peru. It was possible to observe the type of leadership that is used in the association that, although it is not given in a conscious and theoretical way, it follows the trends of today's companies and organizations. In addition, it was possible to understand what type of association holds the organization together with its members.

As main objectives, we sought to know the perception of associativity by the members of ACECAS with respect to their organization and if this in turn generated a perception of leadership in its members. As a final objective, it was proposed to understand the implications generated by the leadership of ACECAS in the degree of associativity that its members have. To carry out this study, a qualitative approach was applied through descriptive and ethnographic research. Through different tools, it was sought to know the perceptions of leadership and associativity present in the association, as well as in its members. A survey was carried out to mediate each of the variables, the association of ACECAS members and the leadership of the association in its members, as well as interviews with different members of the organization. The proposed variables were studied following dimensions that described different characteristics of the variables. In the case of leadership, the dimensions of communication, perception of objectives, recognition, and discipline were considered; and in the case of associativity the dimensions of unity, benefits, achievements, and cooperation. The members of the association that were considered for this study were obtained through the data saturation criterion, which gives us a series of results that are repeated without giving more new data after a certain number of participations. In total, 54 homebrewers from the city of Lima were identified and after choosing the inclusion and exclusion criteria, 34 people were surveyed and 10 members of the ACECAS organization were interviewed.

<u>Inclusion Criteria</u>	<u>Exclusion Criteria</u>
To be active members of ACECAS from the city of Lima (2 or more years).	To be an old member fo ACECAS from the city of Lima not associated for more than a year.
To be of age	To be a minor
To be a producer of beer for comercial or private consummption.	To be a member who does not produce beer.
To actively participate of the activities organized by the association.	To not participate regularly of the activities organized by the association.

Chart 1 –**Inclusion and exclusion criteria.** Source. Self-made

Once the participants had been identified, a survey was applied in which questions were considered that sought to qualitatively cover the perception of the members regarding associativity and a second part with the same intention, although touching the leadership variable. The results obtained were interpreted qualitatively based on coincidences within the

responses of the respondents. In turn, a semi-structured interview was conducted with members who were able to give more details about their experience within the association. Semi-structured interviews are defined by a question guide in which the interviewer has the freedom to choose which ones he uses and which ones he does not, and can even ask additional questions to deepen the knowledge of what has been studied. (Hernández, Fernández and Baptista (2006) In addition, the interviewees were able to give a better interpretation to the results already obtained in the survey. According to these authors, the interview is defined as "a meeting to exchange information between one person (the interviewer) and another (the interviewee) or others (interviewees). In the latter case it could perhaps be a couple or a small group like a family. "

Finally, the personal experience of the researcher was considered and ethnography was applied, defined as the most basic tool for social research that uses data collection, observation and analysis (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1994).

Having been a participant in the evolution of the organization since the researcher worked in the artisanal field for a time, it was also decided to apply the Participant Observation so that, with the experiences of the different activities programmed and motivated by ACECAS, a point can be given more empirical point of view when interpreting the results of the tools used. According to Hernández, Fernández and Baptista (2006), the social researcher can participate in the object of study for his understanding and observation, and with what he has experienced he can draw conclusions from the situations that arise in front of him. The researcher does this actively and finally reflects his thinking on the study.

2.Results

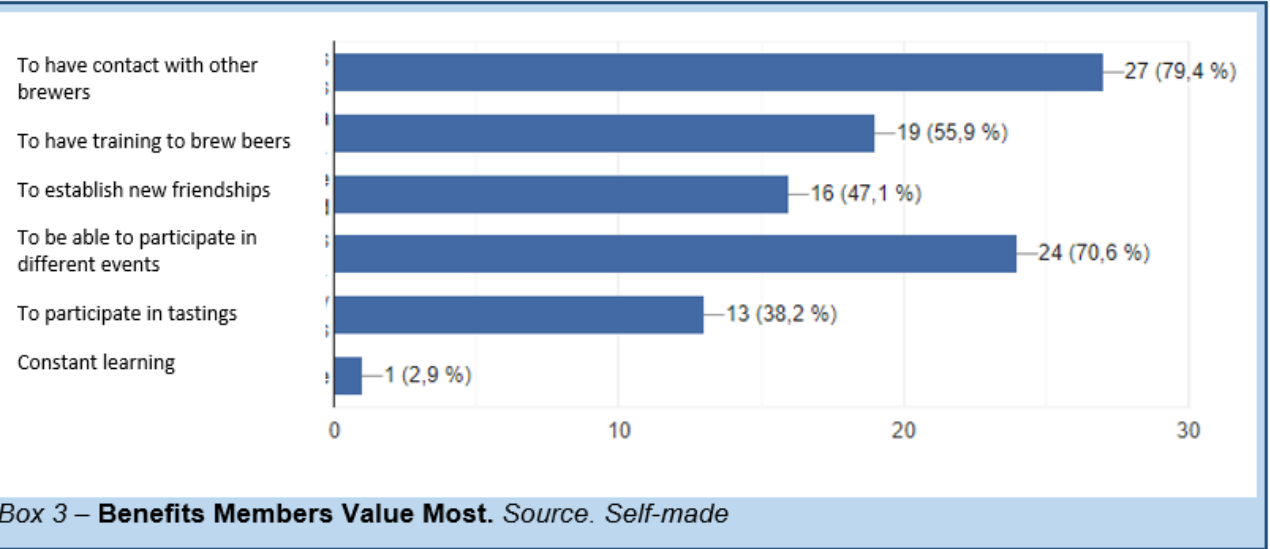
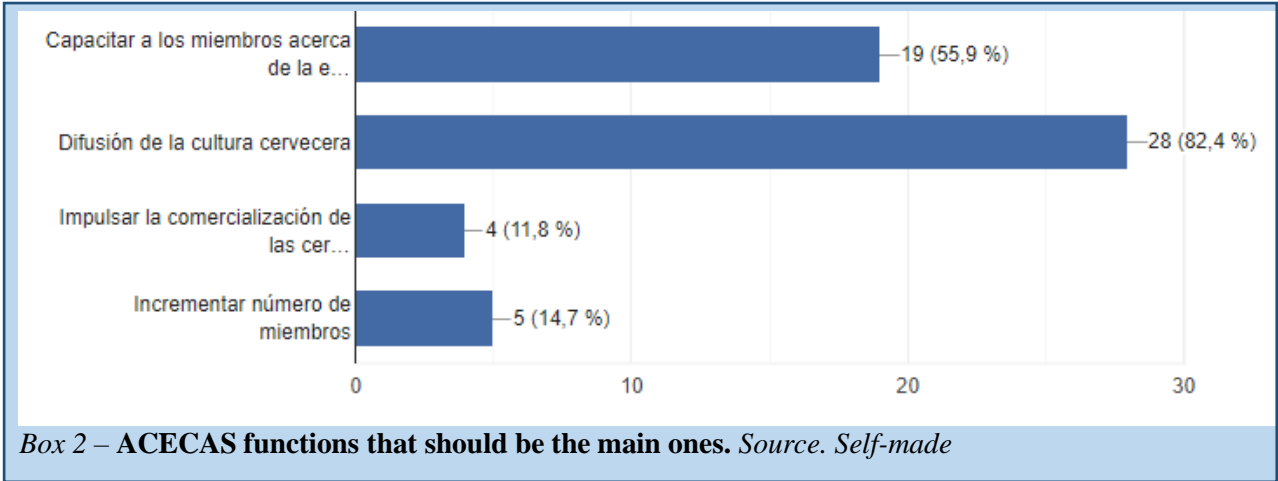
There were several results that the tools used for this study yielded according to the chosen categories and the dimensions within them. In this article we are going to describe some of the most outstanding ones in order to give an idea of the importance of knowing how ACECAS Leadership has positively influenced the Associativity of its members. In general, it was possible to verify that there was a perception of Associativity and Leadership on the part of the members, since the answers obtained gave as a result that in most cases ACECAS fulfilled the objectives that were set and made the associates feel belonging to the association and recognize its leadership.

After conducting the surveys of the chosen members, it was found that the associates have a high sense of group and community. They have formed not only professional but friendly ties with other participants and have found in mutual cooperation a source of wealth of knowledge that drives them to grow beyond just cooking beer for their own consumption and for their family and friends. It can be confirmed that the respondents (34) have a clear knowledge of the functions of the association and also have definite opinions about what the association should focus on as well without neglecting its main objective.

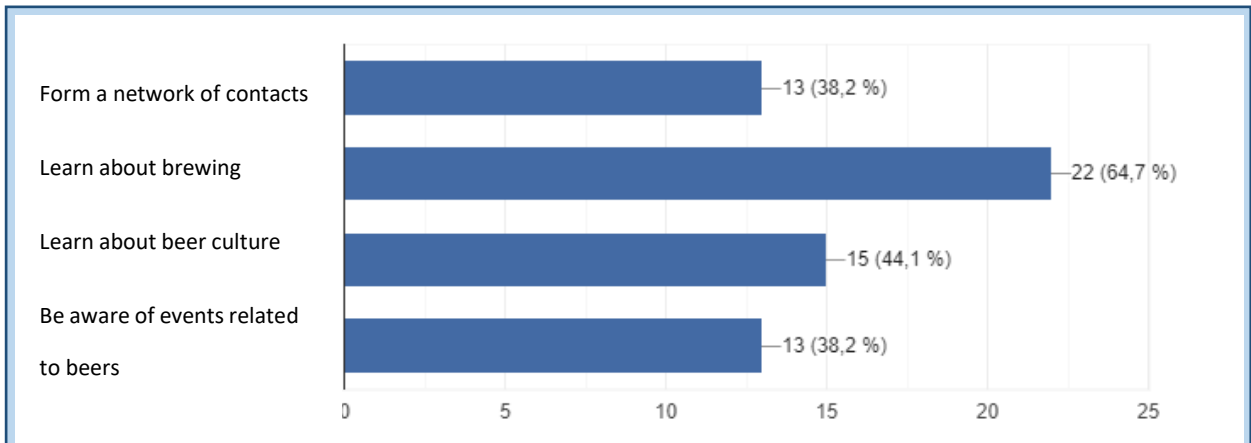
On the other hand, the associates recognize in ACECAS an organization that gives them benefits which contribute in their development as homebrewers, among these are: having contact with other brewers, receiving training to increase their knowledge in brewing beer, participating in different activities organized by the association, establish professional networks, among others. The two main benefits that respondents considered were being able to network between brewers and being able to participate in different events.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promotion of Craft Beers Commercialization of beer Craft beer workshop elaboration Legal defense of the association's members To train all members and support their learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To train members the making of beer Dissemination of beer culture To promote the commercialization of craft beers To increase the number of members
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Box 1 – Knowledge of ACECAS functions. Source. Self-made

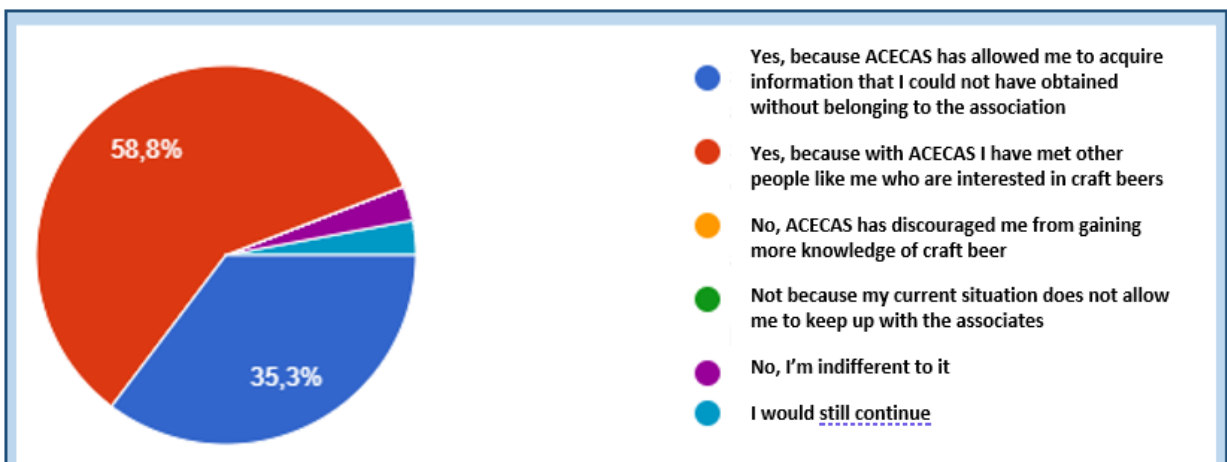


In the study, it was also possible to identify what was the perception of the achievements obtained by the associates when being part of ACECAS. Respondents' responses revealed that their greatest achievement was being able to increase their knowledge of craft beers and its various styles. In addition, being able to be in contact with other brewers gives them the possibility to experiment in their creations, being able to further professionalize the process without ceasing to have a craft essence.



Box 4 – ACECAS objectives more related to the interests of the members. Source. Self-made

To complement the perception of associativity present in the member of the organization, we sought to know their perception of the cooperation they have with each other within the association. The vast majority stated that the association's actions promote the commitment and participation of the members through the different activities carried out and the regulations agreed within the organization's bases. 93.9% of those surveyed considered that the statutes are correct, although they can be modified later. In another question, they were asked if the work of ACECAS encouraged them to continue cultivating their interest in craft beer, to which 58.8% said yes.

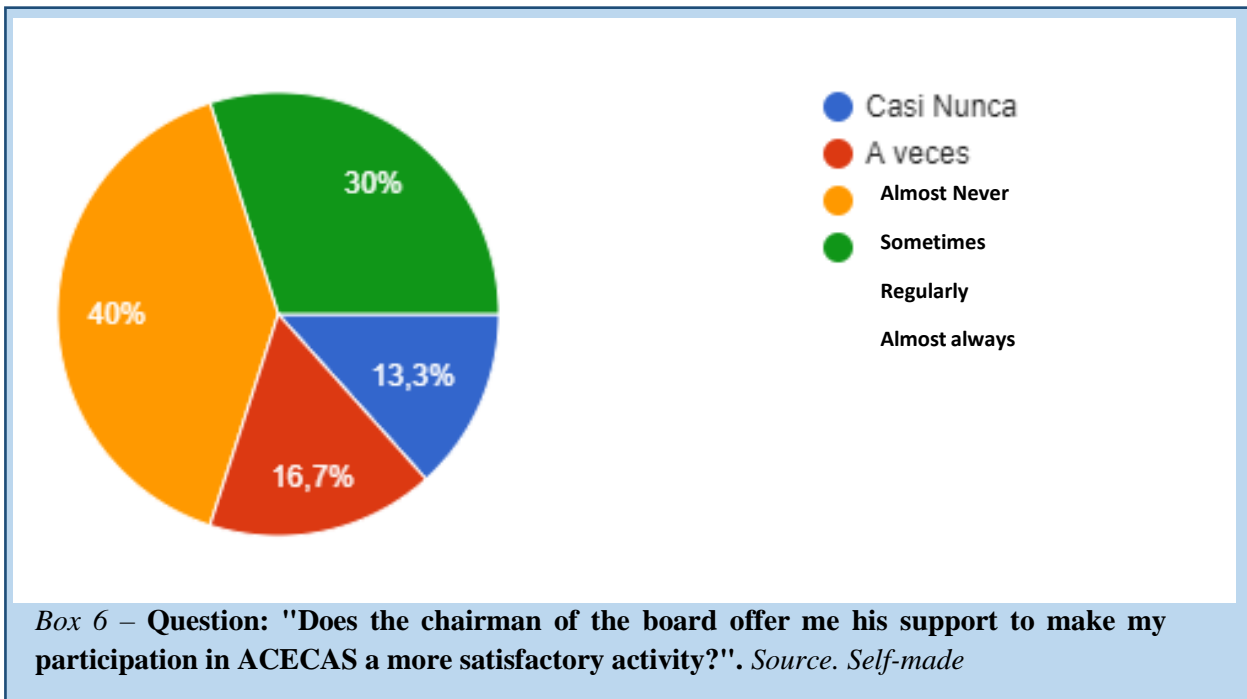


Box 5 – Question: “Does ACECAS work motivate you to continue cultivating your interest in craft beer?”.

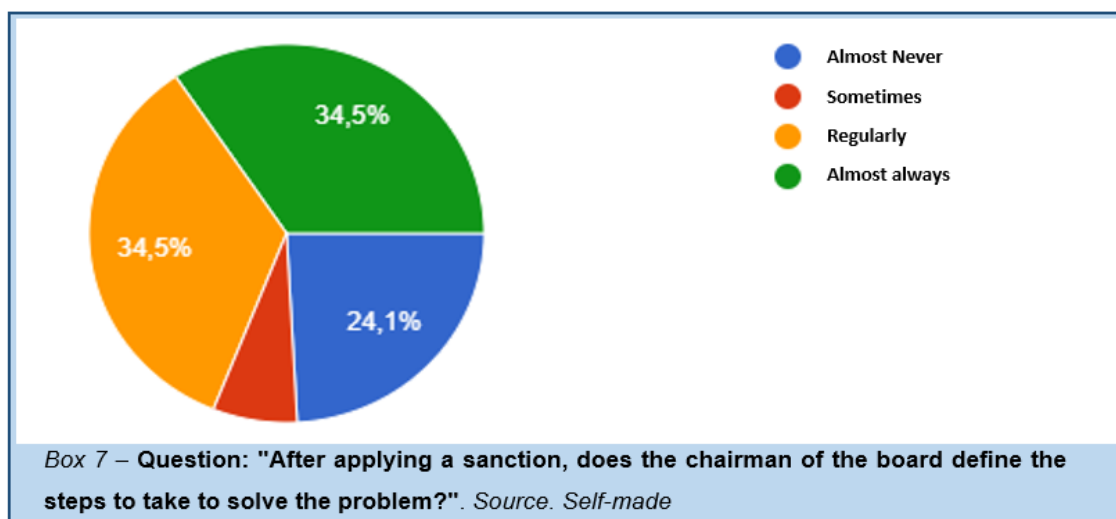
Regarding communication, it was highlighted that there is a horizontal type where all members can talk with each other and with the members of the board of directors, starting with the President of the latter, who is always open to their comments. The associates highlight the kindness of the Chairman of the board to be able to converse with them and the respect for opinions, turns to speak and the clarity to explain the decisions made in the association. Answers that generally receive more than 70% approval.

On the other hand, the objectives of the association are translated into decision-making by the board of directors and especially its president. 51.7% state that it is he who dictates the goals to be set, while the rest think that it is a joint effort. It can be observed that there is a strong perception on the part of the associates that the president has an important control of the progress made by ACECAS (77.4%).

Another important aspect regarding the leadership exercised by ACECAS through its most important members and especially its president is that which has to do with the recognition and perception of them. In this case, 60% of those who answered the question stated that they almost always or regularly received it.



Finally, it was decided to know the perception of discipline in the association. In certain circumstances in which the rules established by ACECAS are not complied with. 72.4% of the participants stated that the president listened to those involved about the reasons why some eventuality could have occurred. In addition, 68.9% concluded that to solve a problem, an agreement was reached together almost always or regularly.



3. Conclusions

The main reason for carrying out this study arose from the need to know if those homebrewers who began their work with the objective of cooking beers for personal consumption, found in ACECAS an organization that supports them and provides the necessary tools to enrich their experience in the world of craft beer. Many of those homebrewers have not considered making beer a way of life, but they do recognize that by connecting with other homebrewers who have that ambition they can learn more and improve their own techniques and styles for their personal use.

In this article we have sought to give a general reference in the larger framework of a work for the preparation of a master's thesis with the same study approach. In this we seek to demonstrate the perception of associativity and leadership on the part of the Association of Home Brewers of Peru (ACECAS) and its members.

In this way, we have concluded that there is a perception of associativity on the part of the people associated with ACECAS and they are clear about the points that we use as axes to know said associativity. The union, benefits, achievements, and cooperation are an important part within the organization to keep its members cohesive, which is revealed in the surveys and questions asked to them. On the other hand, the perception of leadership by the members of the board, especially the president, is based on four points that facilitate the work of the same to maintain order in the association. These points are communication, goals, recognition, and discipline.

Another important point to highlight is the persistence of the association to cope with the adverse situations of today. The context of the pandemic has not prevented members from looking for a way to get together without breaking security protocols. The appearance of tools such as Zoom, Google Meets, and other applications that allow video calls have facilitated sharing by members and at the same time a new way of maintaining contact with those who live in different parts of the country or even abroad.

To conclude, the person who conducted this study is also part of the set of actors that make up the world of craft beer. Having worked, participated and shared with ACECAS members in a professional and friendly way, as well as having the experience of having met other members of the beer community in the form of business owners, workers, suppliers, and others. This study

has served to reaffirm previous knowledge about the importance homebrewers place on networking relationships within and outside of the organization. The existence of an organization like ACECAS facilitates and motivates the appearance of new participants who lose their fear of brewing beer and also increase their knowledge by making truly remarkable creations that have even been awarded nationally and internationally.

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