

# Impact of Co-Branding Image on Customer Loyalty in Indian Restaurant Industry -Mediation Approach using Customer Satisfaction

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## Abstract

The main idea that concerns the brand image is that the customer procures not only the service or product but also the image connected with the same, hence for any organization it is highly vital to keep its brand image unique and profitable. In today's competing market the success of any product or services depends on its Co-branding image. Co-branding image leads to enhanced sales, enriching brand image and receive trust from customer's in the restaurant industries. In spite of the growing focus on co-branding image, the interconnections among the brand loyalty, co-branding, and customer satisfaction continue to be greatly persistent area for discussion. Thus, this paper attempts to explore the extent to which brand loyalty is influenced by co-branding image through customer satisfaction in Indian restaurant industry. The outcome of the result is that co-branding has an impact marketing policy of Indian restaurants which leads to customer satisfaction and brand loyalty.

**Keywords:** Increased brand image, Enhanced customer satisfaction, Co-branding, Indian restaurant sector.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

The restaurant chains are trending business world -wide which interlinks different nation and varied culture. Many such industries especially number of foreign chain restaurants are established in Korea in recent years. [32] Specifically, with the idea of enhancing positive image to their products marketers have now a days started to connect their brands with the already existing one which has a renowned image. The classical conditioning is the method of co-branding that develops association and have provided samples of the organisation that has succeeded by using this technique.[23] Each firms have started to concentrate on building a powerful brand image so as to fulfil the objectives and motives of their business.[21] To build an image and awareness about the product in the customers' mind, integrating marketing communications uses various channels and mixing strategy choices [33]

The restaurant image plays a major role from the view point of customers, and hence their perceived value is an important factor in predicting the satisfaction and behavioural intentions of the customer[30]. The strategy for keeping up the idea of concept-image linkage relies upon the experiential, symbolic and utilitarian nature of the brand. Keeping up this linkage ought to altogether improve the brand's market execution. [11,12] Brand equity can be obtained by affording explicit brand associations or gestures to consumers. The associations between brand equity and brand association impact the image and attitude of customers, which in turn impact brand equity. [10] The co-branded product is lower in cost because of its low marginalization in a vertically-integrated solution. [18] It was also an established fact that the brands with equal level of equity as that of the co-branding gains the equivalent equity and brands with lower equity than that of the alliance gains better equity than that of the partner with higher

equity. The study also proposed that the leading restaurants may gain bigger functional benefits through the co-branding policy in the restaurant. [22] Co-branding approaches such as price gains and services after sales is a very impressive strategy for marketing which helps the restaurants to develop customer loyalty and customer satisfaction. [44] Brand image has a predominant role in developing a brand, which is strongly connected with the reliability and reputation of the brand which in future becomes the 'guideline' for the consumers to buy and use the service or product in turn framing a certain knowledge on the brand. The scope of this research on brand image includes identity, personality, association, attitude & behaviour of any brand and also benefit & competence of brand. It is the main reason for many restaurants to step into co-branding. Though there is a growth in the area of co-branding image, the interconnection among the customer satisfaction, co-branding image and customer loyalty stays undetermined largely. Thus, this research work attempt to explore whether customer loyalty derive from image of co-branding, celebrity image, and loyalty of the customer through customer satisfaction as a mediator, food industry in India. The literatures on customer satisfaction, customer loyalty and co-branding image were recorded. The implementation of selecting the celebrity, co-branding and brand among selected chain restaurant in India. Responses from chain restaurant customers were collected through distributing questioner survey, so as to study the effect of cobranding image on customer satisfaction and brand loyalty. This paper provides valuable data for emerging researcher and restaurant business entrepreneurs to know the predictors influencing satisfaction of customers and customer loyalty.

## II. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

### A. Co-branding

Though co-branding has been in vogue from the past many years, it has gained acceptance as a widespread approach in consumer marketing of products only from the early 1990s. The other terms that mark Co-branding are brand alliance [23] and extension (1), strategic coalition and

making partnerships in the markets. [2] It's not a surprise that no proper definition is still coined for co-branding. Generally, it is defined as the collaboration of many brands in the development, marketing, production of technology at the same time remaining independent as a unique business entity. [40] It can be defined as a grouping of many branded goods (essential brands) to form a unique and solo product (composite brand). The writers believe that it is the best policy to present innovative product. [24] In addition it is also a method in which a single product or service uses multiple brand names to offer better value and service to the customers.

### B. Co-branding in India

A co-branding is nothing but the merging up of brand ideas that has features of two basic concepts. Co-branding share certain subset of ideas from parent category to an extension category in the market. Thus, it combines into a clear composite concept that can be used in the member extension to a new brand category.

### C. Co-branding in the Indian restaurant industry

[23] The outcome of the research shows that co-branding cards have become an impressive tool. It helps to build the behavioural and attitudinal loyalty of customer in restaurants. This strategy helps in making customers to visit frequently and moreover it does not lead to a higher profit margin. [3] Food industry business for increasing new markets shares, and overcoming non-financial barriers, obtaining extra brand exposure, controlling and dropping risk of quick investment profit further proving a fresh way of marketing communication, can be used co – branding image, it provides tactical advantages and longer-term strategic purposes.

### D. Brand Image

#### H1a: Positive Association of Brand image and Customer satisfaction:

[7] It was found that the brand image, trust and satisfaction is positively associated with equity of the brand. In turn green brand image and equity is partly intermediated by the factor satisfaction and trust. Thus, it is of more important to develop a

green brand image, satisfaction, and trust in supporting to improve the equity. [18] Customer satisfaction can be obtained through excellent service and higher customer value. This gain good impression on the restaurant's corporate image and thereby build customer retention. [34] Customer loyalty is affected by practical, communal, experiential, and appearance of brand image. and all has constructive significance with brand image [36].

### **E. Celebrity image**

#### **H2a: Celebrity Image has got positive significance with customer satisfaction.**

[41] It was found to have positive association between Celebrity involvement and behavioural intentions. Moreover, [28] it was identified that partial mediation occurs between perceived value, celebrity involvement and behavioural intentions of customers. [10] It was found that similarity occurs between brand promotion and image of celebrity, consumers and self-image. Thus it adds instructive power to a congruence model of celebrity. [29] Celebrity image has more power to influence customer cultural and economic status.

#### **H2b: Customer Loyalty and Celebrity Image.**

[31] Dealers in understanding the importance of personality congruence among celebrity-brand-user in the creation of brand attitude and intention of purchasing that can be implied in positioning and in developing the advertising efficiency of brands using celebrity endorsement. [5] The results indicate in terms of loyalty the new customers prefer satisfaction than the image but whereas for experienced customers it vice-versa. [35] The type of branding mediates the relationship between "credibility of the endorser and brand and the equity". There is no relationship exist with the types of brand involved.

### **F. Co-Brand Image**

#### **H3a: The positive association of Image Co-branding image and customer satisfaction.**

[24] The brand image is directly associated with advertisements, which automatically influence buying behaviour of the consumer. [20] It is perceived as a positive factor by the customers.

The loyalty of the customer is stronger if the brand is favourable. It is unfavourable if the impact of PRP is insignificant with customer loyalty.

#### **H3b: Co-Brand Image is positively related to customer brand loyalty.**

[[17] There is a positive relationship between clients' dependability and consumer loyalty in connection with the presentation of housekeeping, gathering, nourishment and refreshment, and cost. Customer's looks Performance of housekeeping as most significantly factors in hotel chains. [22]. So as to fabricate consumer loyalty and brand steadfastness, co-marking serves as an important marketing policy in restaurants.

### **G. Customer Satisfaction**

#### **H4: Customer satisfaction is positively related to customer brand loyalty.**

[27] The satisfaction of the consumers partly facilitates the behaviour of the staff, perfect self-harmoniousness and brand recognizable proof on brand devotion. In any case, it completely intercedes the impacts of physical quality and way of life harmoniousness on brand loyalty. [22] The main focus of this research is to analyse the impact of co-marking on consumer loyalty, which thusly prompts client steadfastness in nourishment industry in Korea [37]. The outcome of the study shows that certain forms of co-branding (i.e., price benefits and post-purchase services) may have an impact on the strategies of marketing which helps the restaurants to build satisfaction of the customer and brand loyalty. [19] The loyalty of the customers seems to nurture the positive image of the restaurants fashioned by developing the quality of the service and satisfying customers. [25] To give a wholesome image of the satisfaction drives, the perceived value and service quality proportions must be infused into customer satisfaction models.

### **H. Customer loyalty**

[4] There is a nonlinear association between customer satisfaction and loyalty [15]. There is an interconnection among the measures of customer satisfaction, loyalty and profitability. Research

reviews on the impact of consumer satisfaction on profitability shows that higher satisfaction leads to higher profitability. The image of the restaurant and the satisfaction of the consumer in terms of housekeeping, delivery, relationship maintenance is related to the customer's loyalty. [39] Hence customer satisfaction is the pathway to achieve customer loyalty

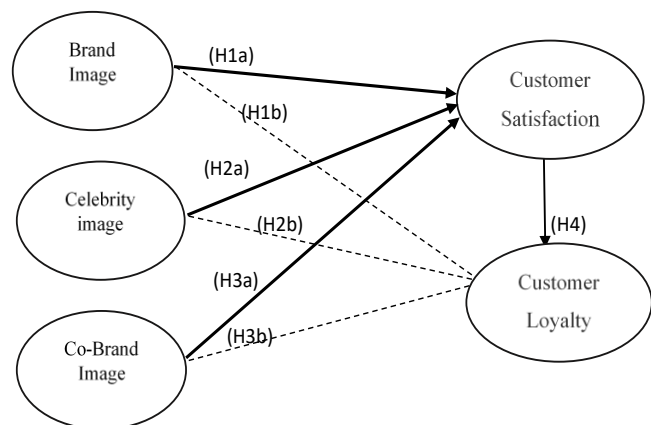


Figure 1: Proposed Model- Co-branding image, Celebrity image and Brand image on customer loyalty mediation approach using customer satisfaction

### III. METHODOLOGY

Attempt has been made in this study to examine the influence of co-branding image on brand loyalty, through the mediating affiliation of customer satisfaction in Indian restaurants. This paper is investigative in nature. A structured survey questionnaire measures the response from the selected population. A 5-point Likert scale questionnaire is utilized. Two pre-tests has been administered before the final data collection through a pilot study consists of hundred samples. Hence, content validity of the questionnaire can be obtained.

Table- I: Demographic Profile of Samples

Characteristics		N	Percentage
<b>Gender</b>			
	a) Male	222	53.11

	b) Female	196	46.89
<b>Total</b>		418	100
<b>Age</b>			
	a) Below 25	87	20.81
	b) Between 26-30	126	30.14
	c) Between 31-35	65	15.55
	d) Between 36-40	80	19.14
	e) 41 and above	60	14.35
<b>Total</b>		418	100
<b>Educational</b>			
	a) School and below	60	14.35
	b) IT/Diploma	40	9.57
	c) Arts degree	42	10.05
	d) Engineering	156	37.32
	e) others	120	28.71
<b>Total</b>		418	100

The organized questionnaire was distributed to a total of 520 respondents, selected through simple random sampling technique. From the Indian restaurant customer, 418 out of 520 valid questionnaires were utilized for analysis after rejecting the biased questionnaire, with a response rate of 80.38%. The data analyses were arrived out by means of statistical package for the social science, analysis of movement structure and software packages for windows. The sampling adequacy for the study is displayed in the table 2

from KMO and Bartlett's Test. It is necessarily important to know the adequacy of sample size used in the study. KMO test output helped the researchers to ensure the sample size is adequate for the study.

Table- II:KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		0.796
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	772.022
	Df	105
	Sig.	0

The reference value for KMO test is  $>0.50$ . The KMO value from the above table shows .796 which is more than the required. As per the KMO test output is confirming that selected sample size is sufficient for the study.

#### IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Appropriate statistical tools such as means and standard deviations were used to analyse the collected data for descriptive statistics results. To check the internal consistency for the scales (Cronbach's Alpha) has found from the table 3, which is explains that adjusted R square value alters the R square by the number of predictor variables in the model.

Table- III:Multiple Regression Model Summary

Model Summary									
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.732 <sup>a</sup>	.536	.369	.67371	.536	3.200	13	36	.003

a. Predictors: (Constant), BL4, Celebrity image CBI3, Brand Equity CBI2, Customer Brand Loyalty, Brand Image CBI1, BL2, BL3, Customer Satisfaction, CS2, Celebrity Equity CBI5, BL1, CS3, Celebrity Endorser CBI4

Using different number of predictor variable in the model we can justify and compare the explanatory power. This will suggest us to find out how many numbers of variables to be included in our regression model. It was identified from the model

that the adjusted R-square value 0.369 which was less than the R square (0.536) value which confirms that the inclusion of another independent variable may result in the complexity to prove the research model.

Table- IV:Mean, Standard Deviation and Construct correlations

Correlations	Mean	Std. Deviation	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Co-Brand Image (1)	4.34	0.84351	1				
Brand Image (2)	4.02	0.71038	.494**	1			
Celebrity image (3)	4.06	1.01325	.614**	.419**	1		
Customer Satisfaction (4)	4.32	0.73691	.408**	.335**	.542**	1	

Customer loyalty (5)	4.29	0.79512	.273**	.294**	.367**	.564**	1
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\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

It reveals that correlations of customer loyalty mediation approach using customer satisfaction model [11]. The correlation between Co – Brand Image and celebrity image is very high with the arrived values  $r = .614$ ;  $p < 0.01$ . The correlation

between Customer Satisfaction and Celebrity image, customer satisfaction and customer loyalty is  $r = .542$ ;  $p < 0.01$   $r = .564$ ;  $p < 0.01$  respectively. Table IV shows that all constructs have reasonably acceptable reliability.

Table- V: Mediation results of direct and indirect effects of the constructs

Path	Direct effect	Indirect effect	Result
Brand Image - -Customer Satisfaction -- Customer Loyalty	0.245(NS)	0.786 (S)	Full Mediation
Celebrity image -- Satisfaction -- Customer Loyalty	0.291(NS)	0.825 (S)	Full Mediation
Co-Brand Image -- Satisfaction -- Customer Loyalty	0.654(S)	0.793 (S)	Partial Mediation

\* (NS) Not Supported

\*(S) Supported

The result of mediation analysis is as shown in the table V. The table reveals the direct and indirect effects of the constructs. The indirect effects for all the three constructs brand image, celebrity image, and co-brand image to customer loyalty the  $p$  – value is significant ( $p < .001$ ), which proves that mediation is occurring and statistically significant. The direct effect of the construct brand image, and celebrity image is not significant, which indicates full mediation occurring from brand image to customer loyalty and from celebrity image to customer loyalty. The direct effect of Co-brand image is significant with customer loyalty which indicates partial mediation occurring from co-brand image to customer

loyalty. The entire amount of variance explains from brand image to customer loyalty, and from celebrity image to customer loyalty is explained through customer satisfaction which indicates full mediation. The entire amount of variance explains the customer loyalty of customers is actually explained to customer satisfaction, whereas for co-brand image, it explains some unique amount of variance in customer loyalty that is not explained by customer satisfaction, whereas in indirect effect the customer satisfaction does explain the amount of variance co-brand image explains to customer loyalty represent partial mediation.

Table- VI: Results of Hypothesized Tests a b

Hypothesis relationship	Partial mediation	
	Standardized path coefficient (t – value)	Result
H1a: Brand Image $\rightarrow$ customer satisfaction.	0.56 (4.32) ***	Supported
H1b: Brand Image $\rightarrow$ brand loyalty	0.07(-.54)	Not supported

H2a: Celebrity Image →	customer satisfaction.	0.56 (4.23) ***	Supported
H2b: Celebrity Image →	brand loyalty.	.01(.02)	Not supported
H3a: Co-Brand Image →	customer satisfaction.	0.37 (3.00) ***	Supported
H3b: Co-Brand Image →	brand loyalty.	0.48(2.12) **	Supported
H4: Customer satisfaction →	customers' brand loyalty.	0.37(3.23) ***	Supported

It was identified from the above table VI that there is a positive significant association between the brand Image and satisfaction of V customer (H1a), Henceforth, it is supported by path coefficient values ( $t= 4.32, p<.001$ ). Meanwhile the relationship between the brand image and the customer loyalty (H1b) is not significant and hence is rejected with path co-efficient values ( $t = -.54, p<.001$ ). Extensive research from the earlier research found that the brand image is a strong predictor of customer satisfaction. [38] Yet from the result it is inferred that brand image did not improve customer loyalty in Indian restaurants. Discussion from the Consumer learning theories and consumer-behaviour theorists results that customer loyalty is not affected by brand image. In the post-promotion period based on brand image, customers who visit chain restaurants, will also visit the Indian restaurant even without brand Image.[42] Hence, the literature from previous studies support our hypothesis in the study. It was found that celebrity Image has significant positive association with customer satisfaction. Hence, the hypothesis (H2a) is supported, with path coefficient values (standardized 0.56,  $t=4.32 P<.001$ ) [6]. It was identified that the relationship between celebrity Image and customer loyalty is not supported H2b, with values (standardized.01,  $t = .02, P<.001$ ) as shown in the table [6].It was found that co - brand image has significant positive relationship with customer satisfaction and brand loyalty. Hence, both the hypothesis (H3a) and (H3b) are proved with its path coefficients values ( $t=3.00,p<.001;t=2.12,p<.001$ ) respectively. The path coefficients values between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty were analysed to prove the hypothesis H4. There is a significant positive effect between customer satisfaction and customer brand loyalty as

proposed in the theory with standardized values .37, and  $t=3.23,p<.01$ . Hence, Hypothesis H4 is proved. Previous research studies result that customer satisfaction is considered as one of the best predictors of customer loyalty [4]. As shown in Table – VI, the results using partial mediation, signifies that customer satisfaction mediates the relationship between Co-branding image and Brand loyalty.

Table- VII Goodness of fit measures for the estimated model

Goodness-of-fit measure	Estimated model	Reference Value	Fitness
( $\chi^2$ ) /DF	3.32	<5.0	Good
(GFI)	0.9	$\geq .7$	Good
(RMSR)	0.52	$\leq .1$	Good
(RMSEA)	0.063	$\leq .05 - .08$	Good
(AGFI)	0.79	$\geq .9$	OK
(NNFI)	0.98	$\geq .9$	Good
(NFI)	0.97	$\geq .9$	Good

The results from the above table prove that the data fit with the model well with P value > 0.05, (5% level of significant). All the dependant and independent variable chosen for the study fit with the model well. SEM was utilized to check the negative error variances, standardized coefficients were checked and such kind of problems were not there[12]. Goodness-of-fit index ( $0.9 \geq .7$ ) proves

that the model fit well with the data which indicates a Good fit, having chi-square value 212,d.f 94 and results a Good fit at (3.32 <5.0) level as shown in the Table -VII. The root-mean-square residual should be <.1, and the estimated model value is 0.52, which is  $\leq .1$ , indicates a good fit. The Adjusted goodness of fit index value should be  $\geq .9$ , and we got 0.79, indicates marginal acceptance level. The root mean square error of approximation has a value between  $\leq .05 - .08$ , the resulted value is 0.063.Hence, all the fit measures indicate that the theoretical framework model fits well with the data and it is acceptable range. Therefore, Customer satisfaction is positively related to customers' brand loyalty.

### V.CONCLUSION

The main idea of this paper is to investigate the effect of image of co-branding on brand loyalty, and arbitration effect of customer satisfaction in Indian restaurants industry. A review on the literatures regarding the co-branding image, consumer satisfaction, and loyalty was also made. It also analyses the impact of co-branding image on post-buying behaviour's such as customer satisfaction, loyalty and additionally examines the distinctions amidst consumer behaviour. The outcome of the research is a highly valuable to the restaurant marketers especially to those who want to adopt the strategic associations with other business entities, by displaying powerful aspects of customer loyalty. This study shows that, consumer satisfaction has a notable impression on the customer loyalty of the restaurants. Number of practical examples have been stated in previous literature to indicate the constructive connection between loyalty and consumer satisfaction, i.e. it is proposed that customer satisfaction play a significant element in gaining brand loyalty. [9] The results of the current study show that there is a positive causal association between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty with path coefficient values 0.37(3.23) within Indian restaurants. Co-brand Image has direct effect as well aberrant impact on client steadfastness through consumer loyalty, there exist a partial mediation and the hypothesis is supported further pathway co efficient positively related to (H3b) Co-Brand image and customer loyalty

standardized .48,  $t=2.12$ ,  $p<.001$ . The outcome of the paper will be useful for research scholar, and business people of food industry in India. Indian food industry can be considered co-brand image is the one among the strategies for increasing customer satisfaction further gets customer loyalty.

### VI. IMPLEMENTATION

On the whole it can be stated that joint promotion is the most authentic tool used by chain restaurant in India to boost the satisfaction on the part of the customers and also break the barrier in this field. Also found that there is a more benefit in any business when customers get back to spend money and gaining customers loyalty. When a customer is not so sensitive towards spending money on a product or service again and again even if the price increases it means that they have trusted the brand. Direct referrals also play an important role in boosting the business as they refer the products or services to others creating an impact about the brand. This is very effective because it does not involve any additional funding. Creating and implementing a loyalty programme is always an essential because retaining a customer is more important when compared to acquiring a new one. As customer retention is cost effective whereas acquiring new customer involves 25% expense.

### VII. LIMITATIONS

This paper has involved many functional items of restaurants as a degree of customer loyalty. Secondly, this study uses survey method for collecting data which is prone to vulnerability and number of errors in sampling including language problems, observations and structured interviews methods can be used to avoid such problem in future. Thirdly, this study is made only on the particular respondents from an Indian family restaurant section in Tamil Nadu, which may not be considered for other sections of the restaurant industries. This study was carried out in Tamilnadu, India which can be judiciously used in other worldwide food businesses.

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