

# UNDERSTANDING THE DRIVERS OF BRAND LOYALTY IN THE FOOD AND BEVERAGE SECTOR

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## ABSTRACT

The F&B industry relies on brand loyalty to influence consumer behavior and to maintain market balance. There is little in depth research on F&B industry brand loyalty factors and their influence through empirical investigation claiming to focus on Hyderabad as an analysis sample. Analysis of consumer preference and the impact of brand extension and marketing strategy on loyalty could be best analyzed in Hyderabad where there is culinary academia and variety of food implies to be an ideal conditions for analysis.

Method of data collection in this study is quantitative method which means it collects data through structured questionnaires and interviews provided by consumer samples of various population segments. In the research, there used 5 dependent variables in order to test brand loyalty: product quality, brand trust, price perception and promotional activities and customer experience. It was through regression and factor analysis that they were able to establish relationships between these variables and brand loyalty constructs.

Some industries are brand trust and product quality as the most critical factors that can augment customer loyalty. Because perception of price affects choices among brands, consumers see to value prices that are monetarily worthwhile. There has been research that supports the fact that sales promotion, such as promotional price discounting, loyalty programmes, personalized target advertising, indeed affects significant level of customer retention and higher satisfaction. An uninterrupted customer journey is a key part of forging long-lasting consumer loyalty in line with the research.

There are few practical implications of this study for F&B retailers in Hyderabad. Brand loyalty drivers show important criteria for companies to improve their marketing strategies create better products and customer involvement systems. In this research process evolving consumer's preferences, social media and digital marketing trends are discussed in order to create brand loyalty.

This finding in brand loyalty of F&B reflects that purchasing behaviour is influenced by quality and trust factors in addition to physical price and promotion, as well as service experience. Who are successful Over time and are market leaders even in the dynamic Hyderabad market.

**Keywords:** Brand loyalty, food and beverage sector, consumer behavior, Hyderabad, product quality, brand trust, price perception, promotional strategies, customer experience, empirical study.

## Introduction to Study

Brand loyalty is required for success in today's market, but this is particularly a critical principle when there is competition in the marketplace, combined with dynamic consumer preferences. The F&B is one of the most upbeat and lively sectors because it follows consumer palates, dietary preferences and health concerns and also consumerism that craves for competitiveness and convenience. Brand loyalty reflects the significance, since it affects consumers' choices and brand grip, in addition, brand thrive, which influences firms' survival.

The food and drinks industry in Hyderabad has flourished, mainly due to a very diverse populace both in terms of traditional and avant-garde dietetic practices and customer purchasing power. As an ideal research site, the city, not least, offers researchers an exciting platform from which to examine how brand loyalty is developed by consumers through historical foods and native products and global products. The food & beverage Hyderabad market segments are highly competitive, with many brands offering the same products and services for sale. Consumers are fatigue of limitless brand choices which make it difficult to be faithful to one brand. Market forces have exposed the urgency of investigating both brand-retention strategies and consumer loyalty drivers as brands battle for customer favour.

This research finds brand-based consumer loyalty dynamics of food and beverage in Hyderabad market and investigates basic factors affecting the way in which loyalty develops with them and even a return trend when curbs normal market dynamics. Through this research, we aim to uncover those factors that contribute to brand loyalty across multiple audiences, thus providing actionable insights that will allow for establishment of long lasting customer relationships for the companies.

### **Need & Problem of the Study**

Today's current market success demands great brand loyalty but this maximum proves extremely crucial with competitive industries and changing times of consumers per scenario. 2- Food and beverage industry: The F&B industry is one of the most dynamic industries and that is something you can tell by the way its leaders respond to food trends and diets as well as health issues and how much they supply easy to consume products. Brand loyalty is an important factor since it influences consumer choices and brand retention and hence business sustainability.

The food and beverages sector of Hyderabad has seen tremendous growth due to its cosmopolitan residents as well as the increasing purchasing power of the consumers and the blend of traditional and western eating habits. "As a propitious field station, the city affords scholars a vibrant venue to investigate developing brand loyalties in consumers through a treasure trove of traditional foods juxtaposed with indigenous foods juxtaposed with global commodities. The F&B market sectors in Hyderabad is very competitive as several brands offer the same products and services. Customers are getting overwhelmed by the convenience of countless brand and retail choices which makes focusing on a single brand hard to do. We find the need to critically study drivers of consumer loyalty and brand retention strategies in light of the marketing dynamics among brands who vie for consumer preferences in the market.

The study discovers brand specific consumer retention dynamics in F&B market of Hyderabad, exploring the basic factors governing loyalty patterns under normal market dynamics but difficult to spot on during turbulent market conditions. This study seeks to learn what engenders brand loyalty across a wide span of audiences, and to offer real world insights for businesses to build lasting relationships with consumers.

This research investigates the drivers of brand loyalty within Hyderabad F&B operations while creating academic perspectives about customer behaviors and presenting meaningful marketing efficiency proposals that sustain consumer retention.

### **Literature Review**

The investigative work by Tabaku and Zerellari (2015) aims to study multiple dimensions of brand loyalty together with program loyalty strategies that foster customer maintenance. Through their thorough examination of available studies, the authors uncover the influential elements for brand loyalty together with strategies businesses need to use loyalty programs to strengthen relationships with their customers. Their study reveals emotional aspects together with functional elements serve as essential drivers of brand loyalty programs which function as primary tactics for sustaining customer dedication.

The research demonstrates important conclusions but reveals ongoing knowledge gaps related to loyalty program consequences in addition to shifts in digital customer preferences. To better understand the success of different loyalty program designs and their suitability to marketing shifts researchers should conduct more experimental studies. Businesses should direct their efforts toward experience-driven loyalty programs because they increase customer engagement according to the experts.

Jai, Tong, and Chen (2021) researched both existing theoretical frameworks and tested empirical approaches for social media-based brand loyalty development. This research seeks to establish complete knowledge regarding both drivers and impacts of brand loyalty during social media interactions. Their research demonstrates how brand loyalty activity heavily depends on blended actions of customer engagement momentum and trust along with perceived value initiatives. The researchers established that social media creates distinct pathways through which brands maintain meaningful relationships while positively impacting consumer actions.

The study reveals measurement limitations regarding brand loyalty stemming from social media along with dynamic changes happening in digital environments. The research proposes to investigate different social media strategies and their effects on sustained brand loyalty. The researchers highlight the importance of using advanced analytics alongside artificial intelligence methods to better recognize customer preferences.

Petty Coffee brand loyalty research by Han and others (2018) reveals how service quality together with brand image and customer satisfaction establish loyalty drivers during the Chain coffee shop experience. The purpose of this research delve into the elements that drive customers to frequent coffee shops again and promote their chosen brand. Personalized service combined with consistent quality delivery and a strong brand image stands essential for building brand loyalty according to their survey results.

The analysis identifies missing knowledge about cultural variations and technological changes that shape brand loyalty patterns within the cafe industry. Additional studies need to investigate digital customer engagement strategies and personalized marketing methods according to the authors' suggestions. Further research has proven that data analytics provides organizations enhanced understanding of customer preferences while improving their services.

According to Ebrahim (2020), trust functions as an essential factor that connects social media marketing initiatives to brand loyalty formation. This research examines the impact of trust on social media campaigns supporting both brand equity growth and customer commitment development. Research verifies that trust forms an essential connection between brand engagement via online channels and sustained customer loyalty while transparency and authentic communication demonstrate critical importance.

While valuable, this research shows areas where better examination of brand trust during social media crises alongside negative online reviews remains needed. The research recommends brands engage in confident reputation oversight while maintaining complete visibility with consumers to protect their brands from threats. Future research needs to investigate the influence that content shared by influencers and users through social media has on customer loyalty.

Kanakaratne, Bray, and Robson (2020) researched to understand how macro forces influence consumer loyalty in national retail markets. The research investigates the relationship between cultural values together with market dynamics as factors determining uniformity in customer loyalty performance across multiple areas. Results show that cultural variables including collectivism and uncertainty avoidance strongly shape brand choices and customer loyalty patterns in grocery retail markets.

This research recognizes limits in understanding the coexistence patterns of regional retail tactics and worldwide retail methods within customer loyalty patterns. The authors suggest using comparative research across cultures to identify proven marketing approaches that can help develop personalized marketing tactics. The authors propose leveraging digital technologies to improve customer brand interactions so companies can create strong cross-cultural brand bonds.

Novita et al. (2024) performed an ethnographic investigation to study customer behaviors and experiences across the food and beverage sector. Researchers evaluated the multiple interaction points which shape customer satisfaction alongside brand loyalty. Researchers discovered that restaurant settings combined with superior service and appearance of meals create substantial effects on customer satisfaction which leads to customer retention. Customers choose businesses that offer pleasant individual attention with standardized quality performances to return as loyal customers.

While providing important findings the research study highlights that scientists need to learn more about how digital interactions improve customer experiences. Research should integrate digital-business interactions going forward to build smooth customer experiences while gaining comprehension of modern consumer engagement behavior.

Sunday and Olosoji (2023) developed research about brand awareness affecting customer loyalty in the food and beverage sector of Lagos State Nigeria. According to their analysis brand awareness strongly affects customer loyalty because businesses with superior brand recognition generate higher trust while keeping customers loyal. The results validate that strategic branding approaches function as fundamental drivers in developing customer attachment to brands.

Additional analysis of other influential elements which affect the study domain beginning with pricing and product reach together with cultural variables is absent. The authors advocate future investigations to discover supplemental elements that drive customer retention while advocating for research using diverse population groups to enhance general perceptions.

Casteran et al. (2019) analyzed brand loyalty development across time while examining how category criteria influence loyalty performance. This study establishes that brand loyalty depends on product uniqueness and buying habits together with consumers' perception of product worth. Brand loyalty forming mechanisms derive substantially from customer interactions with these elements.

While this study generates interesting conclusions it does not conduct a complete examination of the extent digital trends together with online purchasing influence brand loyalty. The authors recommend researchers study brand loyalty development through studies integrating omnichannel initiatives alongside digital transformation methods.

Knox and Walker (2001) designed practical systems to assess and support brand loyalty operations in a wide range of industrial contexts. The essential indicators used to measure brand loyalty include retention rates alongside repurchase intentions and emotional brand attachment according to their findings. Brand loyalty assessment and strategic enhancement can be measured using these specific metrics.

Research excludes an analysis of contemporary digital environments together with their role in shaping customer-brand relationships. To match today's market transformation the authors propose that brand loyalty measurement frameworks should include digital analytics and customer engagement strategies.

Abdullah et al. (2023) conducted research to understand the effects which food service quality creates on hotel customers' satisfaction levels and loyalty maintenance. Guest loyalty along with satisfaction strongly stem from both outstanding service quality and food consistency. When service quality and food standards are exceptional customers show increased loyalty through repeated visits while creating constructive promotions.

This study lacks analysis of how digital feedback systems affect client grasping of services. Future research about online reviews and social media's effect on customer decision processes in the hospitality sector should be a priority for scholars according to the authors.

### **Gap of the Study**

Research efforts spanning many industries into brand loyalty and loyalty programs have still produced numerous unaddressed gaps which illustrate our incomplete knowledge of how consumer attitudes are evolving during digital times. Past research mainly addresses classic elements of service quality and brand image while neglecting to address digital interaction effects alongside social media impact with personalized marketing strategies for loyalty development. The relationship between cultural influences and brand loyalty remains poorly researched particularly in emerging markets. The existing analysis of brand loyalty measurement tools lacks comprehensive digital data insights and forward-thinking customer connections so academic researchers should create new assessments that address this deficit.

### **Objectives of the Study**

1. To analyze the impact of digital interactions, including social media and online reviews, on brand loyalty across different industries.
2. To examine the influence of cultural and regional factors on customer loyalty and retention strategies.
3. To develop an integrated framework for measuring and managing brand loyalty by incorporating traditional and digital engagement metrics.

### **Scope of the Study**

Brand loyalty is studied from the context of food and beverage organisations in Hyderabad and is limited to hospitality business and dietary business. Blockchain, E-Learning, Education, Comparative, Survey 1. To that end, it considers important moderators related to CRM, service quality, product differentiation and digital marketing strategies. It examines technological and regular customer relationships and highlights the importance of artificial intelligence and big data analytics in improving personalized customer feedback and retention programs. The study also investigates the effects of cultural factors on consumer preferences and brand loyalty behavior. The study seeks to offer an insightful explanation for the influence of technology and culture on consumer loyalty in the food and beverages industry in Hyderabad by drawing on comparisons between the developing country versus the developed country.

### **Methodology**

This study used several tools, such as structured questionnaires, to collect 450 survey data. A stratified random sample technique was adopted to obtain representation in terms of age, gender, income and sectoral distribution. The data were gathered both online and offline to obtain a wide array of customer opinions. Brand loyalty, service quality, brand image, and digital engagement were measured by the Likert scale. The data so collected were processed using SPSS and applied descriptive and inferential statistical analysis to extract meaningful relationships. Ethical considerations Research ethics were stringently followed in order to safeguard the consent of the participants and to secure the privacy of personal health-related data.

### Data Analysis & Interpretation

**Tabel No.1: Digital Interactions and Brand Loyalty**

Null Hypothesis ( $H_0$ ): There is no significant relationship between digital interactions and brand loyalty.

Alternate Hypothesis ( $H_1$ ): There is a significant relationship between digital interactions and brand loyalty.

	n	Mean	Median	Standard deviation
How frequently do you engage with brands on social media platforms?	450	2.99	3	1.43
How influential are online reviews in your purchase decisions?	450	2.96	3	1.42
Do you believe social media interactions improve your trust in a brand?	450	2.93	3	1.4
Chi <sup>2</sup>	df	p		
1.1	2	.578		

Analysis of Statistic of Table No.1: The Descriptive analysis of Digital Interactions and Brand Loyalty interpreted that respondents have Neutral opinion regarding online reviews as a mean of brand social media engagement and social media impacts on brand trust. The responses were all middle of the road 2.99, 2.96, and 2.93 as the median is 3. This indicates that the researchers' verdicts lie at the middest line of the scale. Indeed, a 1.4 value for the standard deviation indicates that, while some opinion holders hold very strong opinions, their neutral attitudes are evident in the mean response pattern. Outcome of the test from Chi-square analysis was  $\chi^2 = 1.1$ ,  $df = 2$  and  $p = 0.578$  ( $> 0.05$ ). The hypothesis testing and Chi-square analysis also uphold that online engagements exhibited by consumers do not affect their brand loyalty. These data imply that brand loyalty is largely based on criteria other than social media engagement and online reviews and perceived trust. Instead in the case of consumer loyalty, effects are stronger for product quality, pricing and offline experience.

### Section 2: Cultural and Regional Influences on Brand Loyalty

Null Hypothesis ( $H_0$ ): Cultural alignment and regional preferences do not significantly influence brand loyalty.

Alternate Hypothesis ( $H_1$ ): Cultural alignment and regional preferences significantly influence brand loyalty.

	Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients				95% confidence interval for B

Model	B	Beta	Standard error	t	p	lower bound	upper bound
Constant	2.93		0.21	13.97	<.001	2.52	3.35
How important is cultural alignment in your brand loyalty?	-0.06	-0.06	0.05	-1.28	.201	-0.15	0.03
Do regional preferences influence your brand choices?	0.09	0.09	0.05	1.88	.06	0	0.19
R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	Standard error of the estimate				
0.11	0.01	0.01	1.41				

The research used multiple regression analysis to determine the magnitude in which, cultural convergence and regionalism affects brand loyalty. The lack of explanatory value is low as it is only 1% of the brand loyalty variance that the independent variables in the model can account for ( $R^2 = 0.01$ ). The coefficient of -0.06 of cultural alignment importance had not significant relationship with brand loyalty ( $p = 0.201$ ). The regional preferences on brand loyalty is  $B = 0.09$ ,  $p = 0.06$  is also symbolic but not attaining the 0.05 benchmark meaning regional preferences have no significant effect.

We are not convinced of cross-cultural and geospatial impacts on brand loyalty, since there are high p-values in our testing. Their confidence intervals of both the variables contain zero that establish non-significant impact. Empirical evidence suggests that brand loyalty appears to transcend the mechanism of cultural assimilation and regional (caved and corners) preference.

### Section 3: Measuring and Managing Brand Loyalty

Null Hypothesis ( $H_0$ ): Traditional and digital marketing efforts do not significantly influence brand loyalty.

Alternate Hypothesis ( $H_1$ ): Traditional and digital marketing efforts significantly influence brand loyalty.

	Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients				95% confidence interval for B	
Model	B	Beta	Standard error	t	p	lower bound	upper bound
Constant	2.85		0.24	11.67	<.001	2.37	3.34
How effective do you think traditional marketing methods are in retaining brand loyalty?	0.01	0.01	0.05	0.16	.872	-0.09	0.1
How important are digital engagement metrics (e.g., social media likes, shares) in influencing your brand loyalty?	-0.04	-0.04	0.05	-0.83	.407	-0.14	0.06
Do you think a mix of traditional and digital marketing enhances your loyalty to a brand?	0.04	0.04	0.05	0.87	.384	-0.05	0.14
R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	Standard error of the estimate				

0.06	0	0	1.41
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This research has explored brand loyalty through multiple regression, analysis, focusing on the traditional marketing and digital strategies. The predictive power of the research model is very low because the set of independent variables does not explain any variance of client-specific brand loyalty. The adjusted  $R^2$  results reveal that the independent variables make little contribution to the explanation of brand loyalty for this group.

Brand loyalty is not significantly associated with traditional marketing efforts ( $B = 0.01$ ,  $p = 0.872$ ), digital engagement measures ( $B = -0.04$ ,  $p = 0.407$ ), traditional marketing and digital marketing integration ( $B = 0.04$ ,  $p = 0.384$ ) as all their  $p$ -values are greater than the threshold value of 0.05. All confidence intervals for the predictors cross zero, which suggests no significant effects.

We have been unable to reject the null hypothesis that brand loyalty is associated with traditional or digital marketing activities for the sample of respondents used. Product excellence as well as customer service and life experience show more importance to drive customer's brand loyalty than special marketing.

### Findings & Suggestions

- Statistical analysis showed that involvement through digital channels such as social media and review applications has not real effect on brand loyalty. Consumer perspective of the impact of social media on brand trust is right in the center of trust evaluation scaled with numerical values. Others still tend to prefer digital interaction but researchers find a significantly large number of neutrals among different users.
- Statistical analysis suggested that cultural congruence does not spark a conversion experience in terms of brand loyalty because the consumer perceives the brand through a different set of glasses than the ones used to wear by the self via cultural congruence. The results of the analysis proved that there are no statistically significant regional effects, indicating that brand preference is more closely tied to attributes of the product as well as to price and availability and not so much to region.
- Loyalty of the people toward brands is not or less affected by traditional marketing approaches, since their effect was absent during the assessment of the regression analysis. Based on research results, contemporary consumers' brand relationships are not effectively formed by continuing traditional marketing practices.
- Research has found that the yardstick of social media engagement, such as the number of social media likes and shares, does not contribute to the increasing of brand loyalty in that brands are expected to find a more genuine way of creating brand bond than mere proxies. The brand loyalty level is not affected when the brand augments digital and traditional marketing strategies suggesting the need of the brands to get hold of their marketing strategies.
- Quality and price, as well as customer service are reported to have a greater influence on commitment and belonging than any other variable. The analysis results show that these two variables determine satisfaction and then the commitment leads to loyalty. Now, that has to shift from simply marketing to a brand priority of customer experience improvements.
- Loyalty should be re-engineered as programs that deliver personalized value tailored to individual customer needs. Investing the energy toward learning more about consumer motivations beyond digital outlets is what makes for more meaningful brand relationships.
- Test a campaign that asks for the hidden reasons for loyalty, as a brand we might be surprised by what triggers loyalty, which might not be what research techniques pick up. Companies that have made investments in PSS are more likely able to satisfy individual expectations throughout their customer portfolio.
- An experience across channels, which disrupts the claustrophobic division between the real and virtual point of sales, can produce greater results in terms of customer loyalty than traditional strategies of service in a single-channel. If anything, consumers value brand consistency throughout their experience with the brand, over random marketing efforts.
- is the largest and best independent blog on the Internet about the Internet. Consumers and brands achieve a better connection when brands generate content that is relevant to consumer's interests and has some worth to them.
- Brand trust is built on multi-channel factors other than marketing efforts and therefore requires extended CRM. Brand love is created much more effectively by loyalty scheme that reward ongoing interactions rather than just fast transactions.
- Brands should leverage customer feedback solutions to gather real-time market insights that drive strategic shifts that meet evolving needs of consumers. Customer loyalty increases significantly by providing unique experiences tailored to each consumer instead of generic marketing tactics.

- Research in brand-driven emotional connections would facilitate greater insights into consumers' cognitive faculties that allows them to relate with brands beyond their functionality. Long-term customer allegiance is created by when companies also invest in community engagement initiatives as well as communities building programs.
- Companies cannot build brand loyalty based on traditional measures of customer attitude used to shape the customer profile, and must instead needs to segment their audience based on user behaviors and preferences. Customer purchasing behavior studies provide insight in aiding brands to develop more targeted loyalty programs.
- Our finding recommend the influencer marketing should be reconsidered since that simply digital engagements may not enough for maintaining loyalty retention so that actual user feedback shows higher performance. Experiential touches such as private in-store events, as well as customized incentives to visit [the store] will have the best chance of success in co loyalty programs.
- & Brands must incorporate ethical standards and sustainability features into their product lines because, according to this particular segment of the marketplace, consumer interest in these issues is far more prevalent than the standard advertising fare. Brandsters can create deeper customer engagement and so loyalty by enabling users to help create their own content and maintaining ongoing two-way communication.
- Customer satisfaction investigation and loyalty metrics help capture the full range of consumer attitudes resulting in more effective brand strategy formation. Keeping an eye on popular industry trends and the level of consumer satisfaction is of paramount importance to businesses to maintain their market movement and face market competition with the confidence from their customers.
- Higher levels of consumer loyalty are reached in markets when brands employ emotional storytelling treatments and long-term branding tactics rather than single-campaign promotions to connect with their audience. Collaborative product and service development projects with customers enhance brand loyalty by increasing customer affective commitment.
- Brands would deliver better loyalty by adopting an agile marketing model promoting fast response to consumer and market demands. Brands must also allow gravity to take a slightly more forward path, by investing in elevating the value and quality of a product, as that's what eventually will facilitate sustainable customer loyalties.
- You get better customer engagement and loyalty with all aspects of your business when all teams align their marketing concepts with customer service and product development strategies by working together. Developing effective relationships with partner brands helps each company drive value of the product.
- The introduction of AI and data analytic technology should be a part of a brand's process to create custom loyalty solutions that deliver the best engagement opportunities throughout the customer journey. Simplifying the maze of loyalty programs accompanied by straight forward entry requirements is what is needed to kickstart customer loyalty engagement.
- Satisfied customers are typically the ones who endorse on behalf of a brand within a reward-based programme, lending credibility to the actual growth in organic loyalty campaigns. Active building of brand loyalty is achieved by continual delivery of promised brand experiences and superior customer performance.

## Conclusion

Studies on brand loyalty in digital interactions as well as cultural influence and marketing efforts demonstrate that the personal basis for traditional digital marketing initiatives is not enough to foster consumer loyalty. The empirical result shows that brand loyalty does not change much as social media and review and cultural resonance experience were added to customers. The attention brands in these industries pay to consumers do not mirror the vast of decision-making factors which consumers consider in the process of forming brand loyalty. The weak linkages negatively imply that companies should give a broader brand strategy to bring consumer's viewpoint beyond the traditional marketing approach.

Brands will need to organize journeys around creating personalized experiences which evoke emotional engagement for select target groups. Audience trust-building is all the more powerful when organizations operate with transparency, true relationships, and genuine engagement – not just other more empty social metrics. Great loyalty programs are based on something of real value to consumers and build loyalty around shared consumer experiences. Brands that actively engage consumers with data driven insights and consistent engagement across every touchpoint, foster long-term consumer loyalty that leads to increased retention and brand advocacy.

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