Factors Affecting Fast Food Restaurant Image in Peshawar: Moderating Role of Customer Personality Traits

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Abstract

Relating unique identity of product with consumer buying behavior is not so straight forward. Many factors need to be studied in order to investigate this relationship. This study was conducted to see the direct effects of various marketing elements including brand name, service quality, food price and the ambient factors on customer perception about the restaurant image as well as the moderating influence of consumers' personality traits on such relationship. Data was collected from two hundred and forty customers in six well known restaurants of Peshawar in order to examine the hypothesized relationships. The findings of the study support the hypothesized relationship between the study variables and hence all the hypotheses of the study are supported. The study findings particularly the moderating role of personality traits of restaurant customers' in building customers' restaurant perception is of immense importance for academicians in general and restaurant management in particular. The study also presents valuable future research directions which will further this inquiry in future.

Keywords

Introduction

Restaurants are playing a strategic role in the economic growth of any country and the fast food sector has become one of the world's largest emerging sector (Anita and Singh, 2007; Baldwin, 2018). The global perspective of restaurant industry unveils that this industry is among the fastest growing sectors (Cravy, 2018). For instance, the global analysis shows that total revenue generated from fast food restaurants in united states amounted to 799 billion dollars at the end of 2017 employing more than 14.7 million people which is 10 percent of the total US workforce and it is projected that only restaurant industry will create 16.3 million jobs by 2027. The total business volume of restaurant industry in UK was worth 73.6 billion euros followed by 50 billion euros in France, 40 billion euros in Germany and 19 billion euros in Netherlands (Cravy, 2018). The Asia pacific market as the expert says is

the most fastest growing largest market for restaurant industry with 10 percent growth rate annually which contributed to 1.1 trillion dollars in 2014 and is projected to reach to 1.5 trillion dollar sales between 2015 and 2019 (Cravy, 2018). According to Shaikh and Zahid (2018), Pakistan is ahead of all developing countries in annual spending on eating out which is more than 11.78 billion. They further assert that according to the State Bank of Pakistan, Pakistanis are spending almost 40 percent of their income on readymade food. This all implies that the fastest growing restaurant industry does not only provide jobs and career opportunity to millions of people but also serves as the engine of economic growth as well as positively influence other associated industries which further leads to greater economic growth (Shahzadi e al., 2018). It is also paramount to mention that due to exponential growth in the number of restaurants, the competition among restaurants has risen much than ever. Despite

that there is a sufficient size of loyal customers, a large segment of restaurant customers is price-sensitive (Shaikh and Zahid, 2018). Customers want value for their money and are always in search for more affordable options.

Amid of such competitive environment and to ensure that restaurants remain sustainable and have a sound base of loyal customers who should regularly visit for dinning, it has been stated that customer is the most important marketing tool who influences and assesses the quality and image of the restaurant (Kukanja, 2014). Numerous factors have been stated to influence customers' decision to choose a restaurant. These include both tangible and intangible aspects of customers' consumption experience including service quality, type and quality of food served, location of a restaurant, the prestige of the restaurant, and ambiance etc (Pedraja and Yagüe, 2001). However, extant literature on restaurant also evidences that the importance of various factors in customer selection of a restaurant differs and it depends on particular factors that drive an individual to visit a restaurant (Tichaawa and Mhlanga, 2018; Alonso et al, 2013; Akbar and Alaudeen, 2012). Hence, studying the decision making pattern of restaurant customers considering different restaurant related elements has become the core area of interest for researchers and restaurant management (Tichaawa and Mhlanga, 2018). Among these factors, the restaurant image has been a keen area of interest for researchers since positive image of a restaurant has been predominantly advocated to influence the restaurant customers' decision about choosing a particular restaurant (Aziz and Chok, 2013; Akbar and Alaudeen, 2012; Chung and Kim, 2011).

Aziz and Chok (2013) assert that any image is a combination of impressions and emotions perceived by consumers. Literature on restaurant image identifies numerous factors covering both factual as well as emotional factors. This includes price, quality of service, restaurant environment etc (Chung and Kim, 2011). Besides, literature on marketing and brand management also declares the effects of branding and ambient factors that affect customers' perception about a brand (Keller, 1993). Each of these factors has its own contribution in forming customer perception about the brand. Despite the positive outcome of these various factors, it is however worth to mention that these factors have also been the part of a crucial debate in enhancing restaurant image (Akbar and Alaudeen, 2012). Researchers have identified

many other factors that influence customers' image of a restaurant. However scholars have the agreement that difference in factors affecting restaurant image is due to factors such as cultural, ethnic and economic background and hence they have different criteria in determining the restaurant image (Chung and Kim, 2011). Tichaawa and Mhlanga (2018) while comprehensively covering the factors affecting restaurant image conclude that such difference is mainly due to customers' individual characteristics such as economic, demographic as well as personality related factors. They assert that investigating the factors determining restaurant image in isolation to such factors is incomplete.

As guided by marketing literature in general, the role of an individual personality in customers' decision making in many other aspects of life has been a major research debate. Researchers have conceptualized an individual personality as the sum of psychological characteristics that determine a person ability to perform (Tichaawa and Mhlanga, 2018). The two common characteristics of personality in literature are the locus of control (LOC) and self-monitoring. Locus of control means how an individual perceives its external environment with regard to the rewards that he/she has achieved so far (Tichaawa and Mhlanga, 2018). Thus a person with greater internal or external locus of control will behave differently towards the external environment. A consumer with greater internal locus of control is said to have more positive attitude compared to the one having greater external locus of control. Contrarily, consumers with external locus of control (LOC) are more concerned in the business dimensions linked with societal properties and moderates the relation with servicing business (James and Wright, 1993). Similarly, the other aspect of personality, the self-monitoring, is the gauge of motivation used for attitudes and its two forms are high and low self-monitor personalities which differentiate individuals in different processes such as psychological, intellectual and emotional process in different consumers (James and Wright, 1993). As James and Wright (1993) found, various groups differed significantly with different inner emotions, attitudes and expressions. Even studies from psychology evidenced that highly self-monitors are more reactive to situational cue that improves the positivity of the self-images compared to low self-monitor (Krosnick, 1990). Moreover, in restaurant industry too, self-monitoring was found to have a significant moderation effect on customers' minds

(James and Wright, 1993). Hence, we believe that consumers with different personality characteristics (Locus of control Vs Self-Monitoring) may have different response while assessing the effects of various marketing variables on consumers perception about the restaurants they visit.

The current investigation therefore aims to further deepen the understanding of how different personality traits of restaurants' customers moderate the intensity of effect of various determinants of fast food restaurant image. More specifically, the study empirically investigates the moderating effect of personality traits of restaurant customers on the relationship between different factors influencing the restaurant image. The extant literature evidences that restaurant image has been least studied from the perspective of customer personality traits (Tichaawa and Mhlanga, 2018). As indicated by literature and also stated earlier, it is more likely that restaurant customers with different personality traits may behave differently towards the factors affecting image of the restaurant (Tichaawa and Mhlanga, 2018). Hence, this study is an effort to find the impact of marketing variables like restaurant name, food prices, consumer services and atmospherics on restaurant's image with the inclusion of consumer personality traits as a moderating factor.

Research objectives:

1. To investigate the direct effect of various marketing elements (brand name, service quality, food price and the ambient factors) on restaurant image.
2. To investigate the moderating effect of customers' personality traits on the relationship between various marketing elements and restaurant image.

Research questions:

The broader questions this research will address are as under:

1. What is the role of marketing variables (brand name, price, customer service, and ambient factors) in relation to the development of restaurant image?
2. What is the moderating role of different consumer personality traits on the relationship between various marketing variables (brand name, price, customer service, and ambient factors) and restaurant image?

Image is the mixture of complete idea of factual and expressive feelings (Oxenfeldt, 1975).

Consumers respond to restaurant's characteristics factually and psychologically (Oh, 1995). According to Chung and Kim (2011), restaurant image is the complete inkling that is supposed by customers. Restaurant image is a vital feature of the consumer satisfaction and a crucial factor for customers' choice of a restaurant. Downs and Haynes (1984) predict that there exists a positive association between restaurant success ratio and its successful image. The center of attention and efforts for a high-quality restaurant is to create the image in the minds of target consumers through advancement in decoration and internal design. Wang (1990) suggests that the visits of target customers to the restaurant depend on the image of particular restaurant in a customer mind. Restaurant image plays an important role to draw consumers and make strong marketplace contained by the competitive atmosphere (Rosenbloom, 1981; Tabassum and Rahman, 2012). To have an aggressive improvement, restaurants should generate distinctiveness in its values and images which should be different and unique from other fast foods restaurant. The trustworthiness of the consumers becomes vital when it is connected with the high-quality image of the restaurant (Rosenbloom, 1981).

Quite earlier, Lessig (1973) found a positive association between restaurant image and consumer's devotion with the name of the restaurant. Investors and owners of the restaurants wash-out billions of dollars for design, building structure and renewal of restaurant to generate a high-quality image in the minds of their potential consumers. One study explores that physical appeal of a name and image of the restaurant in customer mind is significantly correlated with patronage aim (Darden et al, 1983). Restaurant name makes energetic image in consumer's mind. Findings by Zimmer and Golden (1998) suggest that customer frequently use hotel names to clarify the idyllic position.

Restaurant image, being the collection of customers mental perception has got widespread attention and thus numerous factors have been identified that form this mental schema (Tichaawa and Mhlanga, 2018). Researchers have used marketing and brand management literature as theoretical foundation to further towards identification of factors that form restaurant image (e.g., Tichaawa and Mhlanga, 2018). These include brand name effects, price of food served, customer perception of service quality and the ambient factors (e.g., Tichaawa and Mhlanga, 2018). These factors and its association with restaurant image are discussed

hereafter. Further, as advocated in the psychology literature, the consumers'' personality traits (Locus of control and Self-monitoring) have been found to influence an individual behavior (Krosnick, 1990). Thus, the next section also highlights the moderating influence of restaurant customer personality traits on how the various marketing variables influence the restaurant image.

Linkage between brand name and brand image

Brand name is one of the fundamental components of brand building process and hence the brand equity (Keller, 1993) Brand name reflects the collection of knowledge about the product (Richardson et al., 1994) and is one of the basic significant factors which captures the main theme or primary association of a product (Keller, 1993). According to Keller (1993), companies and marketing professionals must be very cautious about naming their products since successful brands among many other factors share a good strategic brand name. He further elaborates that a strategic brand name should be catchy, short, and repetitive. He illustrates few such renowned brand names as "Kit-Kat, Coca Cola, Bizzinet etc. Further, a good brand name resonates the product quality. In other words, the brand name should be meaningful and should reflect the benefits of the product such as Comfort, Tough, Executive etc. (Keller, 1993). Indeed, a good strategic brand name has been advocated to build greater positive brand equity by forming greater awareness as well as positive perception and image associations (Keller, 1993). The customers' quality perception of the product has been often found to relate positively with brand name (Keller, 1993). Olshavsky (1985) study on retail store image recommends that positive restaurant image in customer's memory depends on valuable brand name. Even much earlier, Lessig (1973) found a close positive relationship between restaurant image and consumer's devotion and commitment with the name of the restaurant. Hence, the study hypothesizes that stylish and good restaurant name would have a positive relationship with restaurant image.

Price and brand image

Price is much commonly used as a differentiation tool such that customers relate high price with high quality (Keller, 1993). The knowledge about price has been stated to be one of the top behavioral consideration in the last four decades and hence a strategic tool for marketing professionals. (Dib and Alhaddad, 2014). Price has been one of the important marketing mix element (Wise and King, 1973). Moreover, price is an important

selection factor for consumers (Agárdi and Bauer, 2000). It is recognized that consumers encode the price information into memory in various representative forms. Even the amount customers pay has a strong effect on customers' assessment of the product quality, thus equating high price with premium quality and vise verse. Price has also been stated to influence customer awareness (Kenesei and Todd, 2003) which refers to the ability of customers to recall the price paid (Monroe, 2003). Kenesei and Todd (2003) further elaborate the concept of price awareness by stating that price awareness can be in the form of a price paid by customer, intensity of price search and thirdly the intensity with which shoppers compare prices.

Akbar and Alaudeen (2012) reported that price of a brand extensively affects consumer perception about the product quality. Fornell (1994) reported that customer satisfaction can be obtained by giving them a positive best favorable price for the reason that consumers always compare the prices with the quality of products and services particularly in shopping and expensive products. Moreover, research by Tichaawa and Mhlanga (2018) confirms that consumers perceive price level as an instrument for improving the brand image such that a higher brand price is perceived by customers as better brand image. Hence, this study assumes that restaurants with high meal prices will also generate consumers' positive perception of these restaurants.

Customer service and brand image

The crucial issue of the hotel and restaurant industry is the quality of service to its customers (Chung and Kim, 2011). The service quality literature reveals that customers remain more sensitive to the service elements and their perception about the quality of the service offered by an organization significantly influence their buying behavior (Keller, 1993). The service quality has been found to be one of the crucial factors that lead to greater customer satisfaction (Chung and Kim, 2011). According to Tichaawa and Mhlanga (2018), quality of customer service is the major aspect of consumer's overall happiness and satisfaction. Further, there has been abundance of literature evidence on the favorable outcome of customer satisfaction on company brand equity (Tichaawa and Mhlanga, 2018) of which brand image is one of the significant factor (Keller, 1993). Aydin and Ozer (2005) conclude that high service quality is one of the central factor to combat competitors in the service market and has a direct effect on customer satisfaction as well

as customer trust. This also implies that a customer is satisfied when he / she gets more than what he expected before purchase. Even the performance of the service provider is mainly judged by the service quality. Besides, there are numerous studies in food sector confirming a close significant relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction. Service quality has been measured in terms of food quality, physical environment, employee service (Dutta et al., 2014). For instance, Ryu et al. (2012) stressed on the significance of quality of food as a measure of customer satisfaction in food sector. According to Qin and Prybutok (2009), food quality in restaurants has a significant positive effect on customer satisfaction. Satisfied customers have more positive word mouth for advocating the organization and thus it is believed that customers favoring a restaurant on its service quality would also have a positive image of the restaurant.

Linkage between ambient factors of restaurants and brand image

Developing an environment of right mood is a crucial factor in customer satisfaction particularly in food sector (Ariffin et al., 2011; Mattila and Wirtz, 2001; Basera et al., 2013). Even restaurants are using the ambiance factors as a tool of competitive advantage which implies that perception about the quality of food is also influenced by the atmospherics in which customers are served (Zeithaml and Bitner, 2003). It has been argued that restaurant providing a pleasing ambiance attracts more customers to stay and spend money compared to those not providing such ambiance. Such ambiance includes everything such as interior of a restaurant, building color and design, decoration, exterior appearance, room temperature, walls texture, background music, lighting, and aroma etc. (Omar et al, 2011; Zeithaml and Bitner, 2003).

Levy and Weitz (2009) suggest that restaurant's atmospherics are referred to the main characteristics that endeavor and strengthen the restaurant atmosphere with the mixture of diverse signs such as lights, paints, melodies, and fragrance. What customer eats, drinks and feel are deeply prejudiced by senses of tastes and smell. Feldman (2009) reported that a normal person sense of taste is able to detect more than one thousands different odors and those persons have strong abilities to simply remember odors connected with lengthy forgotten events. Therefore, if a consumer is not satisfied with an experience to some restaurant, that consumer might be highly memorizing it

every time when he / she sniffs that fragrance. From an imaginative point of view, paints of restaurant have the capability to revoke thoughts, expressions, and behavior of different customers (Tichaawa and Mhlanga, 2018). Since the coloring and painting attract consumer`s mind, therefore it may create both the positive or negative feelings. Similarly, lighting appears in a multiplicity of shapes and is used for many purposes like background lighting, task lighting, attractive lighting, vital lighting, and drawl lighting. When the restaurant atmosphere is bright enough, customers are more able to examine and touch the products in the restaurants (Feldman, (2009). Similarly, Mattilia and Wirtz (2001) predict that different sound melodies are a significant part in improving overall customer thoughts and emotions. Research findings of Ryu and Jang (2008) also evidence that restaurant ambiance such as aroma, music, temperature etc. has a significant effect on the emotional responses of restaurant customers which also influence their post-dining behavioral intentions. Hence, it is postulated that restaurants with good ambiance would help customers develop good feelings and emotions and hence would also develop positive associations about the restaurant.

Factors affecting fast food restaurant image: consumers' personality traits as a moderator

Individual's personality has been a major research debate in many fields including science, arts and creativity. Personality of an individual is the sum of psychological characteristics that determine a person ability to perform (Tichaawa and Mhlanga, 2018). The two common characteristics of personality in literature are the locus of control (LOC) and self-monitoring (James and Wright, 1993; Rotter, 1966). Much earlier, Rotter (1966) gave the concept of locus of control for the very first time in his research study from societal learning theory, and subsequently gained a very vital and positive attention towards behavioral researches. These concepts have been modified and developed largely in many fields like service business (James and Wright, 1993) health sectors (Wallston and Wallston, 1976) and finance sector (Duxbury et al., 1996). First, theory of locus of control (LOC) was produced in psychology literature as an individual typology and then practically applied on managerial level and specifically in the business management fields like restaurant sectors (Hodgkinson, 1992). Rubin and Rubin (1992) research reveal that locus of control became an important psychosomatic ancestor to how

and why persons correspond interpersonally. They suggest that locus of control can be internal as well as external.

Consumers having greater internal locus of control are more in self-controls and have more positive serviceable attitudes and are more likeable to come back to restaurants or repurchasing abilities than consumers with greater external locus of control (James and Wright, 1993). Consumers with external locus of control (LOC) are more likeable to be concerned in the business dimensions linked with societal properties and moderates the relation with servicing business (James and Wright, 1993). The consumers of service organizations like restaurants may be better if a customer thinks of himself or herself as complete employ of the particular restaurant, and has control during the dealings (Tichaawa and Mhlanga, 2018).

The other dimension of personality trait, self-monitoring, is a gauge of the motivation used for attitudes and forecasts the way that attitudes lead by actions. The two forms of self-monitoring are high and low self-monitors which differentiate individuals in different processes like psychological, intellectual and emotional processes (James and Wright, 1993). They found different results for groups with different inner emotions, attitudes and expressions. Some research findings of psychology can be relevant to service related behaviors too. For instance, Krosnick (1990) found that highly self monitors are more reactive to situational cue that improves the positivity of the self-images compared to low self-monitors. Even in restaurant industry, self monitoring was found to have a significant moderation effect on customers' judgment (James and Wright, 1993). Johar

and Sirgy (1991) reveal that efficiency of restaurant image in opposition to instructive marketing can differ depending upon a variety of viewers' factors including self-monitoring, where highly self-monitors react more positively to restaurant image and societal uniqueness and lower self-monitors react more positive to informative (functional) demands (Krosnick, 1990). Thus, it is believed that consumers with different personality characteristics (Locus of control Vs Self-monitoring) will have different response for the effects of marketing variables on consumers perception about the restaurants they visit.

Theoretical framework

Based on the literature review, the following theoretical framework of the study is deduced (Figure 1).

Hypotheses

Based on the literature discussion, the following hypotheses of the study are proposed.

Direct relationship:

H_1: There exists a significant positive relationship between brand name and restaurant image.

H_2: There exists a significant positive relationship between food price and restaurant image.

H_3: There exists a significant positive relationship between customer services and restaurant image.

H_4: There exists a significant positive relationship between ambient factors and restaurant image.

Moderating hypotheses:

H_5: Consumers' personality traits (Locus of control and Self-monitoring) would have a significant moderating effect on the relationships between
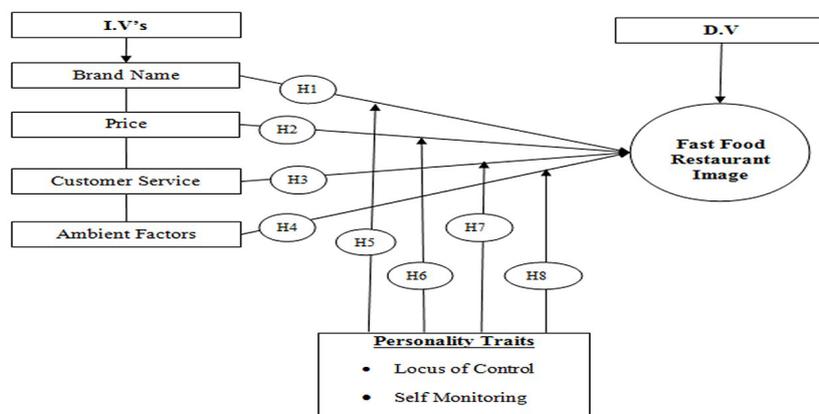
Source: own editing, 2020.

Figure 1: The theoretical framework of the study.

brand name and restaurant image.

H$_6$: Consumers' personality traits (Locus of control and Self-monitoring) would have a significant moderating effect on the relationships between food price and restaurant image.

H$_7$: Consumers' personality traits (Locus of control and Self-monitoring) would have a significant moderating effect on the relationships between customer services and restaurant image.

H$_8$: Consumers' personality traits (Locus of control and Self-monitoring) would have a significant moderating effect on the relationships between ambient factors and restaurants image.

Materials and methods

Data and sampling

In order to test the hypothesized linkages between the study variables, data was collected from fast food customers in six well-known fast food restaurants of Peshawar, the provincial capital city of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. To ensure the validity of the data as well as generalizability of the study findings, six out of nine well established major fast food restaurants were selected, thus representing more than sixty six percent of the total number of fast food restaurant in the capital city. Hence, sufficient representation of the fast food sector in the provincial capital was ensured. To further ensure the generalizability and greater representation of the sample, only those six fast food restaurants were selected which were believed to have greater diversity in terms of customers. Hence a judgmental sampling approach was adopted to select the restaurants. Prior approval of the restaurant was sought and with the help of restaurant manager in each restaurant, questionnaires were distributed to consumers who visited the restaurants for dinning. In each of the six restaurants, forty questionnaires were distributed that led to a total sample size of two hundred and forty restaurant customers. From each restaurant, forty usable questionnaires were returned and hence the response rate was 100 percent.

Study measures

Review of existing conceptualization guided that the measurement of the study variables could reliably be attained through the already established validated measures. Hence, all the study measures including restaurant name (brand name), service quality, restaurant image, and personality type and restaurant ambience were adopted from established literature (Eliwa, 2006). To make the questionnaire more understandable, every item of the questionnaire was typed in both English as well as Urdu (National Language). The first section of the questionnaire consisted of information about restaurant customers' demographics including age of customers, gender, marital and professional status and finally income level. The second section was containing items related to various study variables. The restaurant image, a dependent variable, was measured using six items such as "I usually use this restaurant as my first choice'; "This restaurant has a unique perception in my mind"; "This restaurant is different from other restaurants". Restaurant brand name was measured using eight items such as "Restaurant brands are familiar to me"; "Appropriate brand name of the product enhances the image of the restaurant"; "For better restaurant image good product brand name is mandatory"; "A well-known product brand name creates the value of restaurant in the mind of customer". Customer service at the restaurant was measured with the help of six items such as "Customer service of the restaurant enhances image of the restaurant"; "This restaurant has an excellent reservation system"; "Overall customer service of the restaurant is good". Similarly, customer perception about price of the food and services was measured using five items including "Price of the restaurant products is reasonable"; "Favorable products prices enhance the restaurant image"; "High product prices improve the image of the restaurant at customer mind". Restaurant ergonomics / ambient factors were measured using eight items such as "This restaurant is situated in an excellent geographical location with car parking facility"; "This restaurant has an excellent physical appearance"; "The restaurant internal environment is neat and clean". Lastly, the personality traits of customers (Locus of Control) was measured with the help of five items such as "When I make plans, I am almost certain that I can make them work"; "It is impossible for me to believe that chance or luck plays an important role in my life". The other dimension of personality traits (Self-Monitoring) was measured using five items such as "I find it hard to imitate the behavior of others"; "At parties and social gatherings, I do not attempt to do or say things that others will like"; "I rarely need the advice of my friends to choose restaurant". All the study measures were measured using five point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5).

Data analysis

The collected data was analyzed using SPSS (v.20). Initially descriptive and reliability analysis were carried out followed by hypotheses testing for direct and moderating relationship using the Baron and Kenny (1986) regression analysis approach.

Results and discussion

The demographic profile of the respondents shows that male respondents were one hundred and forty four out of two hundred and forty comprising of sixty percent of the total sample compared to ninety six female respondents that comprised of forty percent of the total sample size. The age-wise analysis of the sample respondents was as follow: Participants in the age bracket of 20-25 years represent 48 out of 240 members that depicts 20% of the total sample. Sample respondents with ages from 26-30 years and 31-35 years were each twenty five percent respectively. Participants' having ages of 36-40 years and 41-45 years remained 16.9 percent and 13.1 percent respectively. Further, restaurant customers with salary level below Rs. 15000, Rs. 16000-30000, Rs. 31000-45000 and above Rs. 46000 remained 21.9%, 18.1% 17.5% and 42.5% respectively.

Reliability analysis

The collected data on various measures of the study was checked for internal consistency (Table 1). The cronbach's alpha coefficient values for restaurant image, brand name (restaurant name), price, customer service, ambient factor and personality traits were found to be 0.83, 0.83, 0.82, 0.79, 0.81 and 0.84 respectively as evident from Table 1.

Variables	Cronbach's α	No of Items
Brand Name	.83	5
Food Price	.82	5
Customer Services	.79	5
Ambient Factor	.81	5
Restaurant Image	.83	5
Personality Traits	.84	6

Source: Source: own editing, 2020.

Table 1: Reliability of measuring instrument.

Hypotheses testing: direct and moderating relationships

To test the hypothesized relationship (direct and moderation effects), the Baron and Kenny (1986) statitical technique was applied. To test the direct relationship between brand name (restaurant name) and restaurant image (H1) as well as the moderating effect of consumers' personality traits on this relationship (H5), the Baron and Kenny (1986) regression analysis was run. As evident from table 2 below (Step 1), the brand name (restaurant name) was found to significantly affect consumers' image of restaurant (R-Square = 0.786, p<0.05). The R square statistic shows that brand name has a significant effect on restaurant image amounting to 78.6 percent, thus confirming a direct relationship between brand name and restaurant image and hence H1 is supported. Further, the moderation effect was observed by looking into the interactive effects of brand name and personality traits on restaurant image. Results of the analysis (Step 4, Table 2) found that 69.4% variations in restaurant image was explained by multiplied variables i.e. brand name and personality traits. Result depicted that the value of R square increases from 0.618 (Step 1) to 0.694 (Step 4) and the beta weights are

Steps	R	ΔR^2	F	B	T	Sig
Step 1						
BN(IV) ⟶ RI (DV)	.786	.618	255.592	.786	15.980	.000
Step 2						
BN(IV) ⟶ PT(MV)	.862	.744	458.610	.862	21.415	.000
Step 3						
PT(MV) ⟶ RI (DV)	.862	.743	457.794	.862	21.396	.000
Step 4						
BN+BN*PT ⟶ RI(D.V)	.618	.694	177.930	.817	6.230	.000

Note: BN: Brand Name; PT: Personality Traits; RI: Restaurant Image
Source: own editing, 2020.

Table 2: Regression analysis summary for brand name and restaurant image with moderation of personality traits (N=240).

also increased implying that personality traits significantly moderate the relationship between brand name and restaurant image. Hence, H5 is also supported.

To test hypothesis two (H2) stating the direct linkage between price of meal served at the restaurant and restaurant image, as well as the moderating effect of consumers' personality traits on this relationship (H6), the Baron and Kenny (1986) regression analysis (Table 3) found that price of meal has a significant relationship with restaurant image (Step 1) (R-Square = 0.787, $p < 0.05$). As revealed by the R-square statistic, price of meal explains 78.7 % variation in restaurant image, thus confirming a direct relationship between price of meal and restaurant image and hence H2 is supported. Moreover, the interactive effects of food price and personality traits on restaurant image (as can be seen in table 3) was also found significant with increase in R-square value from 0.619 (Step 1) to 0.694 (Step 4) proving that personality traits of consumers interacts with price that

significantly moderates the relationship of price and restaurant image. Hence, H6 is also supported.

Table (4) presents the analysis of direct relationship between customer service at the restaurant and the restaurant image (H3) as well as the moderating effects on it by customer personality traits (H7). Regression analysis for direct relationship between customer service and the restaurant image confirmed a significant relationship (Step 1) (R-Square = 0.79, $p < 0.05$). The R-square statistic shows that there exists a significant relationship between customer service and restaurant image amounting to 79 percent, thus supporting H3. Further, the combined effect of customer service and personality traits on restaurant image (Step 4) was also found significant such that R square increased from 0.624 (Step 1) to 0.698 (Step 4) and the beta weights also increased (0.79 to 0.80) implying that personality traits also significantly moderates the relationship of service quality and the restaurant image. Hence, H7 is supported.

Steps	R	ΔR^2	F	B	T	Sig
Step 1						
P(IV) ⟶ RI (DV)	.787	.619	257.072	.787	16.033	.000
Step 2						
P(IV) ⟶ PT(MV)	.867	.751	477.625	.867	21.855	.000
Step 3						
PT(MV) ⟶ RI (DV)	.862	.743	457.794	.862	21.396	.000
Step 4						
P+P*PT ⟶ RI(D.V)	.619	.694	178.347	.810	6.207	.000

Note: P: Price; RI: Restaurant Image; PT: Personality Traits
Source: own editing, 2020.

Table 3: Regression analysis summary for price and restaurant image with moderation of personality traits (N=240).

Steps	R	ΔR^2	F	B	T	Sig
Step 1						
CS(IV) ⟶ RI (DV)	.790	.624	262.701	.790	16.208	.000
Step 2						
CS(IV) ⟶ PT(MV)	.870	.756	489.841	.870	22.132	.000
Step 3						
PT(MV) ⟶ RI (DV)	.862	.743	457.794	.862	21.396	.000
Step 4						
CS+CS*PT ⟶ RI(D.V)	.624	.698	181.098	.802	6.164	.000

Note: CS: Customer Service; PT: Personality Traits; RI: Restaurant Image
Source: own editing, 2020.

Table 4: Regression analysis summary for customer services and restaurant image with moderation of personality traits (N=240).

Steps		R	ΔR^2	F	B	T	Sig
Step 1							
AM(IV) → RI (DV)		.790	.624	262.335	.790	16.197	.000
Step 2							
AM(IV) → PT(MV)		.870	.756	489.903	.870	22.134	.000
Step 3							
PT(MV) → RI (DV)		.862	.743	457.794	.862	21.396	.000
Step 4							
AM+AM*PT → RI(D.V)		.624	.697	180.331	.802	6.31	.000

Note: AM: Ambient Factors; PT: Personality Traits; RI: Restaurant Image
Source: own editing, 2020.

Table 5: Regression Analysis Summary for Ambient factors and Restaurant Image withmoderation of Personality Traits
(N=240).

Analysis for hypothesis four and eight (H4 and H8) covering the direct relationship between ambient factors and restaurant image (Table 5) was found significant (Step 1) with regression coefficient value of 0.79 implying that ambient factors bring 79% change in building customers' perception about the restaurant. Hence, hypothesis four postulating a direct relationship between ambient factors and restaurant image is supported. The moderation effect analysis shows that the interaction of restaurant ambient factors and consumers' personality traits (Steps 4) has a significant positive effect on restaurant image amounting to 69.7%. Further, the value of R square increases from 0.624 to 0.697 and the beta weights are also increased significantly from 0.79 to 0.80 implying that H8 is also supported.

Conclusion

The findings of this study are two fold; one, that different marketing factors including brand name, price of food served, quality level of customer service and ambient factors were found to have a significant effect on customer image of the restaurant they choose, and secondly; whether different personality characteristics of such customers moderate these relationships. Hence, besides, the factors affecting restaurant image, another interesting and novel findings of this study is the moderating influence of restaurant customer personality traits on the effects of various marketing variables (customer service quality, food price, brand name and ambiance) on restaurant image. All the moderating hypotheses (H5, H6, H7 and H8) were supported such that the value of R-square increased in all the moderations implying that customers' personality traits did influence the relationship among various marketing variables and restaurant image. The findings of this study confirm all previous studies stating a significant positive role of various marketing variables used in this study. For instance, Mhlanga and Tichaawa (2016) empirically found that good quality customers' service, food quality and good ambiance are among the key factors influencing the customer's choice of a restaurant. Similar findings are also reported by Akbar and Alaudden (2012) who found that consumers prioritize restaurants first on the basis of food quality, then trustworthiness and followed by service quality, food price, restaurant environment and finally the location of restaurant. Indeed, it would be safe to conclude that such findings are almost very general (e.g., Josiam and Monteiro, 2004; Mhlanga and Tichaawa, 2016) with the exception that few researchers posit that the type of restaurant also influence customers perception about these marketing variables (Hensley and Sulek, 2007; Kim and Moon, 2009). For instance, Kim and Moon (2009) assert that due to difference in customers' expectations and perceptions about their dining experiences, their criteria for selection of restaurants may also vary when they are deciding where to go and eat. This is also paramount to mention that Kim and Moon (2009) views also somehow matches with the personality traits proposition as used in this study. That is, all marketing variables earlier found to have influence on customers' selection of a restaurant may vary and it depends on customers' personality type as advocated by other marketing (Tichaawa and Mhlanga, 2018) and psychology researchers (Krosnick, 1990; James and Wright, 1993).

Regarding the moderating role of customers' personality traits, the study finding implies that customer personality has a crucial role

in the selection of factors that determine customers' restaurant choice as claimed by Tichaawa and Mhlanga (2018) and psychology researchers Krosnick (1990) and James and Wright (993). Tichaawa and Mhlanga (2018) has very rightly said that difference in factors affecting restaurant choice is mainly due to difference in customers' individual characteristics such as economic, demographic as well as personality related factors. The moderating effects of personality factor in this study also substantiate this claim of Tichaawa and Mhlanga (2018) that it is incomplete to investigate the factors determining restaurant image in isolation to cultural and personality factors. Such findings have worthwhile implications for restaurant management which suggest that it is not merely the price, food quality or ambient factors that affect customers' choice of a restaurant, rather personal characteristics of customers also deserve much attention.

It is also paramount to mention that the significant effect of various marketing factors as found in this study including food price, brand name, food quality etc. have enormous implications for the supplies that restaurant industry gets from various suppliers including agriculture industry (Jekanowski, 1999). The growth in expenditures of fast food is evident from the food purchased by the fast food industry. As revealed by Jekanowski (1999), the growth of multinational fast food restaurants can have a significant effect on various segments of the agriculture marketing system. For instance, the annual consumption of Pizza Hut milk consumption is over 3.2 billion pounds, approximately 2.5 percent of the total annual milk production. Similarly, it required approximately 17.5 million pounds of cheese amounting to fifty percent of total cheese production in United States. Same is the case of McDonald which used more than 644 million pounds of beef and 1.35 billion pounds potato representing 2.5 and 3.2 percent of the total annual production of United States (Jekanowski, 1999). Agriculture industry supplies major raw ingredients to food industry which can significantly increase the value added through food industry (Gouk, 2012). This linkage between agriculture sector and food industry covers many other businesses related to food processing, conversion, preparation and preservation and packaging (Gouk, 2012). With the change in lifestyle such as faster pace of work, shortage of time and greater demand of convenience in food as well as other factors including low cost, customers' taste preference and new brands, the fast food industry is growing at a very high rate across the globe even at a faster

rate than the annual GDP growth in some countries (Wang, Wang, Xue and Qu, 2016). With the changes in consumers' life styles, increased population size, increased household income and increased leisure and recreational activities, the fast food industry has long lasting positive consequences for the economic growth. This also indicates that keeping in view the greater potential of fast food industry for economic growth as well as its linkage with agriculture sector, a major economic contributor in Pakistan economy (Rehman, Luan, Abbas, Chandio, Hussain, Nabi and Iqbal, 2015), there is a need for major agricultural reforms such as taxation system reforms, and better marketing systems for agricultural inputs and commodities. Such reforms will ensure that customers of fast food industry get best quality food, as well as consistent supply of required amount of agricultural products.

Recommendations and future research direction

In the light of study findings, the consumer personality traits, a moderating factor and other marketing variables studied in this study can be considered as fundamental in order to build up a good restaurant's image. It means the overall restaurants efficiency could be improved. It is necessary to develop such environment or atmosphere where clients are pleased and satisfied with the best services they may get from that particular restaurant. In this fashion, clients become faithful with that restaurant and their regularity of visits to the same restaurant will more likely increase. It is also highly recommended that customer personality traits also play a significant role in how various marketing variables such as price, food quality, service quality ambiance etc affect customers' choice of a restaurant. Hence, due attention should also be given to personality of restaurant customers. Though the study is a comprehensive endeavor to investigate how consumers' personality traits (Locus of control and self-monitoring) exert influence on the relationship between various important factors (e.g., brand name, service quality, ambient factors etc.) and restaurant image, the underlying mechanism of such relationship may be further studied by including other mediating variables so that these relationships could be more deeply investigated. For instance, how the ambient factors stimulate sensory pleasure and affect the customer satisfaction which in turn may lead to positive restaurant image. Moreover, the study model was tested in six well known restaurants of Peshawar which can be further studied in much detail by extending it to more prestigious hotel chains

of the country. Moreover, greater generalizability of the study findings could be obtained by studying the determinants of restaurant image in a more socially and culturally diverse setting. In the same vein, similar studies can be conducted in other service sectors like insurance and financial services organizations.

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