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*The factors that influence the success of co-branding in the perspective of the consumer. The interactions between brand fit and categories product .*

## Abstract

The subject of this research is co-branding, defined as an alliance between two or more known brands that are presented simultaneously to the consumer, giving rise to a new offer or an offer perceived as different from the consumer, thanks to the support and presence of a second brand (brand invited).

The theoretical background is represented, in particular, by the theoretical and empirical contributions on the factors that proved decisive in the success or failure of co-branding. One of these, is definitely brand fit, namely the similarity in terms of the image of the brand involved in the co-branding.

The objective of this research was to confirm the impact of brand fit on customer perceptions in the context of co-branding emerged in the literature and to advance the hypothesis that the impact of brand fit depends on the product categories involved in the alliance. On the assumption that consumer behavior and emotions are different depending on the category of product to purchase, have been analyzed in the context of co-branding, the dynamics of the transfer of values between the host brand and brand hosted.

Therefore, have been verified and analyzed the results achieved in this line of study through empirical research conducted through the development, administration and analysis of a structured questionnaire based on items that can enhance the main theoretical constructs (brand fit and values dilution) measuring the variables of interest in two hypothetical alliances characterized by the absence of brand fit.

The research results have shown that, when the alliance involves product categories to which the consumer associates rational values, such as the quality of the ingredients in a food product (convenience goods), the values' transfer associated with the hosted brand is weaker than co-branding relate to purchase products featuring "emotional", such as the categories products of clothing or accessories. In

addition, the dilution of the values associated with the host brand perceived as high quality in an alliance in the food category, it is more evident when compared to an alliance with the same characteristics in the clothing-accessories category (shopping goods).

The results of the research, of course, have significant methodological limitations, especially related to the size of the reduced sample ( $n = 60$ ), but they do not impact on the objective pursued, which is to prove, without presuming to arrive at generalizations, the possible presence of an interaction between brand fit and product categories involved in an alliance of this kind, which impacts on the success of co-branding.

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