Business Branding: a Case Study of Nepalese Restaurant, Lumbini

Rijal, Purushotam

2016 Leppävaara

**Laurea University of Applied Sciences**
Leppävaara

Business  Branding: a Case Study of Nepalese Restaurant, Lumbini

Purushotam Rijal
Degree  Programmme  in  Facility
Management
Bachelor's Thesis
December, 2016

**Laurea University of Applied Sciences**          **Abstract**
Degree Programme  in Facility Management
Bachelor`s Thesis


Purushotam Rijal

Business  Branding: a Case Study of Nepalese Restaurant, Lumbini

| Year | 2016 | Pages | 35 |
|------|------|-------|----|

The main purpose of this thesis project is to find out the ways to develop an ethnic Nepalese restaurant as a restaurant brand. There are hundreds of ethnic restaurants in Finland which are operated by independent entrepreneurs and the idea of author is to develop an ethnic Nepalese restaurant (case company) as a restaurant brand.  This thesis will provide insights into the brand development and examine the best branding practices used in another ethnic restaurants in Finland.

This thesis consists an introduction, theory, methodology & findings and conclusion. In the first part an introduction to the thesis and the background to the  case company are  presented, while in the theoretical section branding is discussed. The third part details the methodology and the results that are executed from the research and followed by the a conclusion at the end.

The case company of this thesis is the restaurant, Lumbini, which offers authentic Nepalese cuisine and beverages in the Helsinki area. Lumbini has two restaurants, one in Lauttasaari and the other in Munkkiniemi and both restaurants are taken as case companies. In this case study, the author has applied qualitative research methods such as benchmarking, and customer reviews from different webpages, to gain the targeted results. At the end, SWOT analysis of the case company has been done according to the author`s observations.

In addition, the author has observed different restaurant premises and compared it with the case company. Literature, journals and articles were reviewed and analysed to get knowledge about the  theoretical background of case study.

The main results of the research show that a strong brand and customer satisfaction are interrelated. Simplicity, a clear vision and mission are important for a strong brand and, as the outcome of the research, different development ideas are suggested to the case company Lumbini.




Keywords,     brand, branding, brand, development

**Laurea-ammattikorkeakoulu**
Unit
Program

Name(s)

**Title of the Thesis**

| Vuosi | 201x | | Sivumäärä | xx |

Finnish translation of the abstract begins here

Keywords row 54

**Tiivistelmä**

Table of contents

# 1    Introduction

Trend of food culture is changing all around the world and Finland is also a part of this change.  As the life style of Finns has changed in recent decades, the eating habit has also converted the Scandinavian country people from traditional food eaters to different ethnic food. Even the Finnish food is known for the best hygienic and healthy food among the foreigners as it come from the fresh nature, but most people from the country wants to explore different varieties of tasties from all around the globe. The first ethnic culinary experiences were offered in the 1970s and since then country's food dimension has changed in diverse food culture.  Globalization, tourism and migration are the main reasons behind the growing trend of ethnic food, so the brand of the ethnic food business. (Visithelsinki 2016)

According to Raento & Husso (2002), the most popular ethnic restaurants are Chinese restaurants and pizza-kebab and salad restaurants, then the other ethno-regional restaurants such as Mexican, Indian, Russian and other Asian restaurants.

The first Nepalese restaurant in Finland came in operation in 1990s and since then every year the number of restaurants are growing in the list. In the beginning, there were few restaurants around Helsinki but in recent years the entrepreneurs found place all over Finland. In the present, most of the biggest cities in Finland there are offer of Nepalese food.  The biggest presence of the business is near Helsinki metropolitan area and Nepalese cuisine is the second most popular ethnic food after Chinese according to (Reijosfood, 2014).

The main objective of this thesis is branding of Nepalese Restaurant Lumibini as there are two restaurants operating already with the same name. These restaurants are offering authentic Nepalese food in Lauttasaari and Munkkiniemi in Helsinki. Owners of the Restaurant Lumbini are interested to develop Lumbini as an ethnic restaurant brand and the author got consent to do this thesis project to find out the possibilities and development idea. There are several other Nepalese restaurants in Helsinki and all over Finland with same Nepalese theme, food and interior design so, the main aim of the research paper is how can we develop Lumbini as ethnic restaurant brand in Finland?

Structure of thesis



- Introduction
- Theory
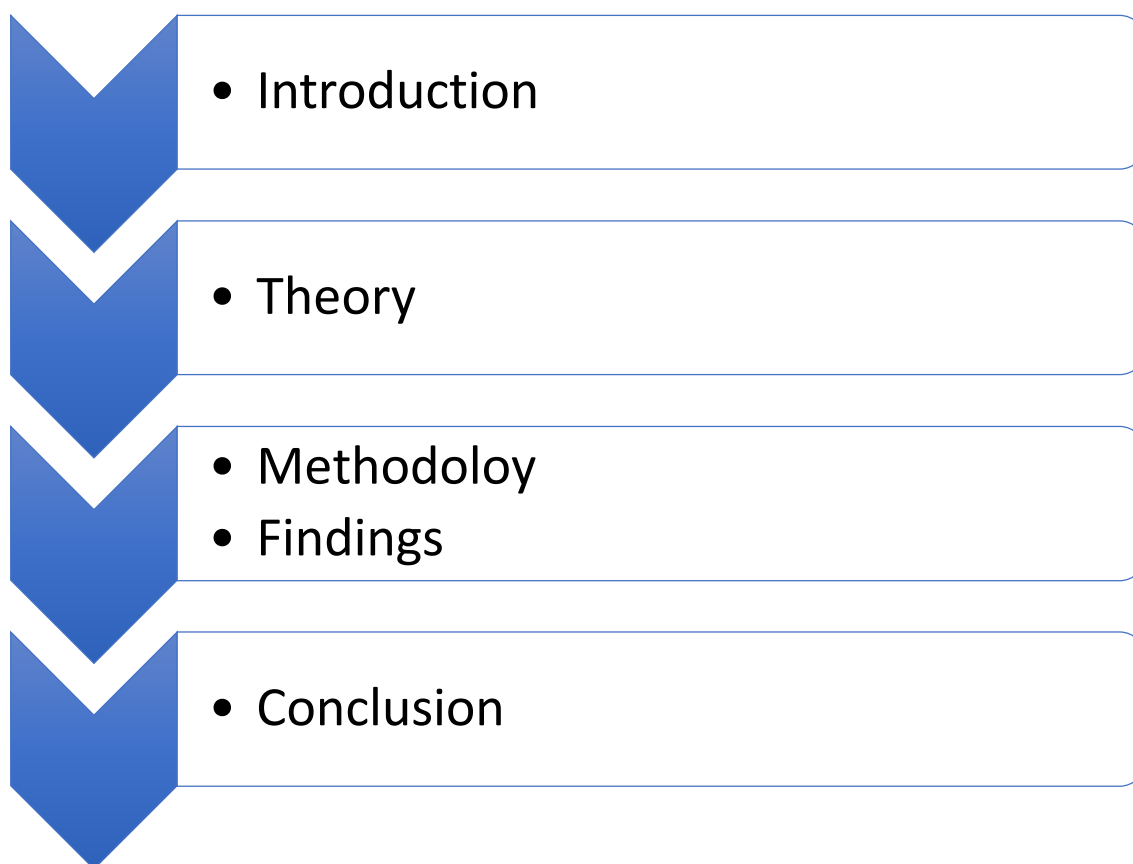- Methodoloy
- Findings
- Conclusion

Figure 1: Thesis Structure

Figure1. illustrates the structure of this thesis. In general, this thesis consists three parts with introduction and purpose of thesis in the beginning, following with theory and background in the middle, methodology, findings and conclusion in the latter part.

## 2    Company Background

Ravintola Lumbini is an ethnic restaurant which serves authentic Nepalese food and drinks in Helsinki. There are two restaurants with the same name; one is in Lauttasaari area and other in Munkkiniemi. Lumbini offers different ethnic beverages such as (ethnic beers, lassi, cocktails) that are not available in normal supermarkets and other restaurants. Founded by the chef with two decades of experience, the main strength of the restaurants is food quality and taste. Even though, the location is not that ac-

cessible in Lauttasaari, the restaurant is operating successfully because of its dedication to quality and service. The main customers for both restaurants in lunch time are office employees and families in the evenings and weekends.

**Ravintola Lumbini Lauttasaari**

Ravintola Lumbini Lauttasaari is oldest restaurant and it is operating since 2008. It is located in Vattuniemenranta 2, 00210 Helsinki. The restaurant is under the company Susma Avoin Yhtiö and it is a family owned company. The offerings of restaurant are tasty and spicy lunch buffet from Monday to Friday in the afternoon and Ala Carte menu and drinks in the evenings and weekends.

Lauttasaari is an Island located near from the Ruoholahti area and according to lauttasaari.fi there are 22000 people currently residing there. The main customers for the restaurant at the day time is local office employees since the area is has quite many office buildings. The restaurant itself is under the office building it get lot of customer during the lunch time. Families and couples are the main customers for the Ala Carte menu. The peak season of the restaurant is from August to April. During summer time restaurant is quite slow because of the holiday season.

**Ravintola Lumbini Munkkiniemi**

Ravintola Lumbini Munkkieniemi is newly opened restaurant in Munkkiniemi area as an expansion of Lumbini Lauttasari. The location of the restaurant is Huoplahdantie 13, 00330, Helsinki and operating under the company Bhim & Dila Oy. Basically, the offerings are same with the old restaurant there are some changes in style of offerings. For example, there is lunch menu and lunch is offered in dishes by the waiter unlike to Lumbini Lauttasaari.

The main strength of this restaurant is its location as it is located on the way to Turku Highway and local areas Huopalahti and Pitäjänmäki. People who travel by the road can easily see the restaurant and it is easily accessible because of good transportation and parking space. There are some big offices buildings such as IBM and Pfizer; located near from the restaurant form where it gets lunch customers. The industrial area of Pitäjanmäki is just few kilometers away from the restaurant, so there is huge potential for the restaurant in terms of lunch customer.

3    What is Brand & Branding?

In the 21st century brand is vital for every business and, plays big role for the success of businesses. Brand is a sign, logo or name of the business that comes in customer's mind while thinking about any product or service. Business dictionary defines ``*brand is unique design, sign, symbol or combination of these employed in creating an image that identifies a product and differentiates if from its competitors*``. The definition portrays that it is a symbol and face of the company and make different from others. The ``brand ``word was derived from the word brand in Old Norse that was the language spoken during 9th to 13th century in Scandinavia and its territories and later brand made its way to Anglo-Saxon. In the early stage, it was used in livestock trading. Farmer who has good reputation with healthy and quality animals were considered as good brand while farmers with less quality were avoided as much as possible or traded carefully. As time developed, potters around the Mediterranean region start to mark their signs in their products so that, it can be identified easily. From then to now, brand has played a role as a guide to choose different products and services. (Clifton & Simmons 2003,14)

When the industrial revolution began in late 19th century, producers started to mark different name and colors in their packages (e.g. sugar, soda, biscuits).  Development in communication and manufacturing in mass production industry in the late 19th and 20th century gave the developed world the new phenomena of marketing of their brand. Later, trademark legislation came into effect to protect brands as the property of the company which helps to develop more brands that exists in the market at present. However, company like Coca-Cola was far forward to mark their soda drinks as Coke. When it started to produce drinks in 18th century, there was much similar kind of drinks in the market so; company find out the idea to mark their product because of that, customers can easily find the Coke from the stack of drinks. The demise of communism after II World War, invention of internet, mass broadcasting technology and advancement of modern communication and transportation system, the brands are making world economies closer to the demand-led system unlike to command-led system. (Clifton & Simmons 2003,15)

An experience and perception that comes in the mind of any person while using service or product is brand. It is an imagination that comes in customer's mind while thinking about brand. For example, when we see Mc Donald's logo or restaurant, its burgers

come in our mind. Experience can be different from person to person but while we see some brands logos and marks we think about the products and service we get from them. Logos, brand color and marketing are important to develop a brand but the important thing is good customer experience and customer value. The biggest brands around the world were developed from the best customer experience. (Hammond 2008,14)

| Rank 2016 | Rank 2015 | Brand | Domicile | Sector | Brand Value (USDm) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 1 | Apple | USA | Technology | 145,918 |
| 2 | 3 | Google | USA | Technology | 94,184 |
| 3 | 2 | Samsung | South Korea | Technology | 83,185 |
| 4 | 8 | Amazon | USA | Tech/Re-tail | 69,642 |
| 5 | 4 | Microsoft | USA | Technology | 67,258 |
| 6 | 5 | Verizon | USA | Telecom | 63,116 |
| 7 | 6 | AT&T | USA | Telecom | 59,904 |
| 8 | 7 | Walmart | USA | Retail | 53,657 |
| 9 | 11 | China Mobile | China | Telecom | 49,810 |
| 10 | 15 | Wells Fargo | USA | Banking | 44,170 |

Table 1: World`s top 10 valuable brands of 2016 (Business Insider, 2016)

Table 1 illustrates the most valuable brands of 2016 leading by Apple for two successive years with the brand value of 145,918 million US dollars. A pioneer in phone and computer technology, Apple has helped by its simplified computer and iPhone to become most valuable brand in the world. Followed by another tech giant Google which is also a US based corporation which is widely popular for web search engine and phone operating system Android as well as other technologies such as Google Maps and software. The South Korean giant conglomerate which main business is mobile phones and a leader in mobile phone technology, Samsung holds third place on most valuable brand in 2016. Table shows that its value has been slipped a little than in year 2015, then, it was in second place. The retail and tech giant Amazon holds fourth place and the pioneer of windows operating system, Microsoft holds fifth. All the top six place are

taken by technology and telecom brands. The American retailer Walmart lies on seventh place followed by China mobile respectively. Banking sector comes only on tenth place with Wells Fargo bank. It all shows that, most of the valuable brands 2016 are technology brands because of the technology boom on the recent decades and years which is fulfilling the communication gap all around the world. (Business Insider, 2016)

## 4    Elements of Brand

Brand is a mixture of different elements. Develop a strong brand takes time and effort as well as elements should be matched together.  Figure2.  shows the brand elements and it has been discribed below:
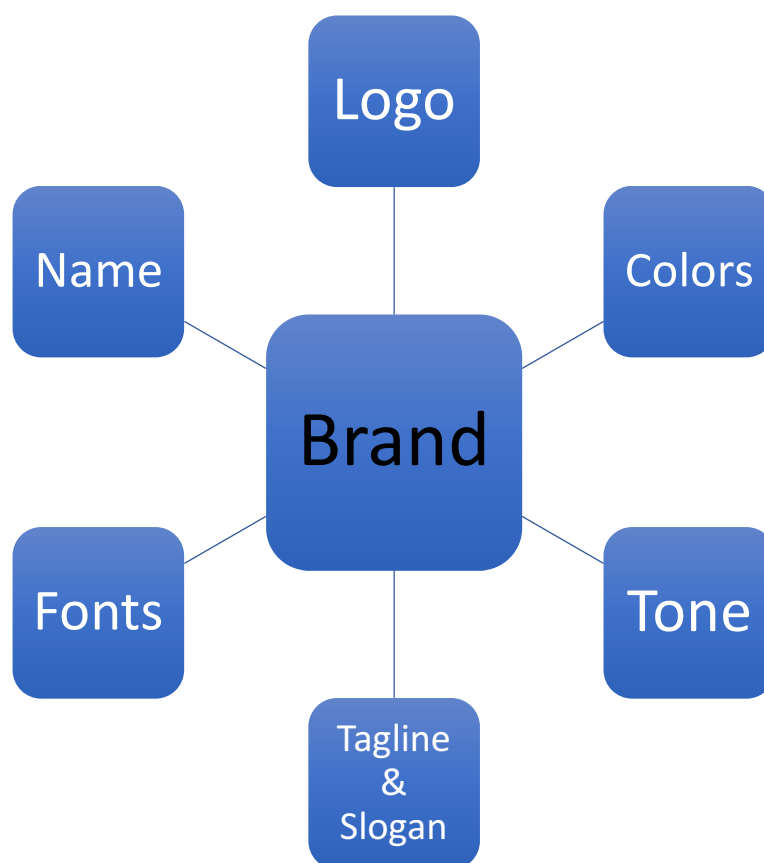


Figure 2: Brand Elements

The most important element of the brand is its name. From small business to multinational corporations the name carries the best value of the brand. It holds an emotion while talking or using the name of the brand. Brand name should be always constant even though there are some changes in other elements. (Matista, 2013)

Logo or sign of the business is a visual part of the business and core of the business. There should be combination with the name and logo to be a recognizable brand. In some businesses logo, can be just word mark and in other there can be logo separately. Memorable design of the logo or word mark portrays the uniqueness of the business. There are many examples of brands that are without logo such as Nokia, FedEx, and Coca-Cola but still they have uniqueness. (Matista, 2013)

Signature color of the business plays vital role for brand identity. In retail and clothing branding color affects the purchasing habit of the customer. It depends on every individual experience but it must be chosen carefully for the brand. Colors should be matching with the brand. For example, products and services for children brands tend to be with bright colors while adults should be more light brand color. (Matista, 2013)

Tagline or slogan is an effective way to increase the brand identity and awareness with the customers. Every business does not have slogans but sometimes helps more than the logo itself to recognize the brand. For example, Nike with ``Just do it`` Nokia with ``Connecting People`` and Mc Donald's with ``I´m lovin it``; these are the examples of slogans that differentiates the brand. (Matista, 2013)

Fonts or style of ads, business letters, brand logo and business cards and other company materials should be to make sure all the visual elements to look consistent. It gives the customers feeling of brand. (Matista, 2013)

Tone of brand means how the company or the brand that contacts or shown up in what kind of language to its customers and other businesses. It is a brand language and used in all department and branches. In multinational companies, there should be similar tone inside the company around the globe. Some companies use very formal tones while others use informal or funny tone. For example, brand with educational materials tend to make formal tone while entertainment brand; funny and informal tones. (Matista, 2013)

5    Corporate Branding

Corporate branding is a way of promotion of corporate name or brand. The activity that involves in corporate branding is different than product or service branding as it is much broad thinking. It is a behavior of the organization or corporation and everyone is paying attention of the activities of the organization. (Nilson 2009, 88)

In the competitive business environment, big corporations and brands are getting difficult to stand alone with the uniqueness and competition; as they are investing huge sum of money for research & development, maintain marketing capabilities and unique brand. The global organizations are aware about the enhanced value provided by the corporate branding strategies. In general branding means creating a unique identity of the product or services, that is different from the competitors while it is offered to customers. Product or service branding methodology is applied to the corporate branding while the focus of branding is not only consumer of the product or brand but the stakeholders (investors, suppliers, media, public, shareholders and government etc.). It is always necessary to have tremendous effort and attention from the senior management level and personnel to meet the objectives and goals of corporate branding strategy. (Roll, 2009)

The entire corporation can be benefited from strong corporate branding strategy while it adds a significant value in the brand, helps to create long term vision and mission for the management level, and differentiates the brand from in the business. It adds further tangible and non-tangible assets of the company and excellence of corporate branding. Companies around the globe, Apple, Nike, Google, Mercedes and many others are the best examples of corporate branding. They have bought many small businesses and start-ups and have implemented the corporate culture of the parent company on them successfully. (Roll, 2009)

6    Services Branding

The developed economies around the world are in transition from industry and manufacturing industry to services industry as the demand is increasing for financial and recreational services. There has been only focus on product brand traditionally but now-

adays service brand is important for the service industry to get advantage in the growing competition of service industry. Service providers should offer quality services with the promise they committed to ensure customer satisfaction. Service branding is always challenging than product brand because it is intangible and there are many touch points while using service that is unlike in product branding. Service experience is always unique and it depends on everyone. (Clifton & Simmons 2003,21)

For a strong service brand, relationship between the customer and staff comes to first place. Services are always the same to the competitors and the only thing that distinguishes from the competitor is the way of delivery of the service. Contrast to product brand, in service Brand, Company itself is a primary brand. The product is intangible and the deliverers of the product are staffs. Service product is produce while consuming, so the production and the consumption happens at the same time. Service is heavily depending on the employee and only they can make difference in the company and its service. Hammond (2008,110) has mentioned that there is more likely to evade service or product by customers even though it is better than its competitors, if there is not good body language or contact with the customers by staff. It shows that where there is good customer communication by staff there is more possibility of customer loyalty and establishment of strong brand.

Brand has been always about trust, and it is instructive to reflect on how the level of trust we may have in the brand. Service is more about, what we trust and believe on service provider while consuming product. Banks are the trustable service providers in our daily financial situations and we believe on them for our all financial activities. Medical and Security service providers are also critical for the private information of the customers and they should always maintain the trustiness between the customer and company. (Clifton & Simmons, 2003, 22)

Lindberg-Repo, Mehra, Gupta, Dube & Kaul (2009,79) has mentioned` [*The uniqueness of service branding] is that human interactions between the service provider and the customer are commonly part of the innovation and must be planned and built in innovation to make it successful*. Uniqueness is the key of successful service brand and the uniqueness is built around the business idea and vision of the company. Employees are main beam of the service brand where they will play main role to help and communicate to the customers and suppliers.

## 7    Brand Development

Every strong brand in the global market that exists, has one thing is common and that common thing is brand strategy. To make a better brand and develop it as solid brand, strategy plays vital role. Brand development is more efficient while there is business and product management as well as creative marketing. It must be clear that what is the vision & mission of the company to develop a good brand. According to Yarian (2011), while developing a brand three key steps should be considered carefully:
The current value of brand
Understanding who are the customers
Who has concerns about brand
 (Davis 2009, 48-49)

From these three key elements, while developing a brand, firstly, brand owner needs to know where the company stands now and what does it specialize for. Then companies should have brand communication with the customers through different means to make clear the value of brand. (Yarian,2011)

Similarly, gather knowledge about the potential customer is crucially important while developing brand. Companies need to know who are the target customer in specific because all products and services are not made for all people. Companies create different customer profile and there should be defined customers age, sex, profession, ethnicity and other common features, so products and services can be easy to target to customers. Customers tend to buy single products for different reasons, and understanding the reason, why they need such products and services is important. (Yarian,2011)

Understanding what is the company, who are the customers, third part is to know what makes customers to buy such products and services. Collecting data of different customer profiles and knowing the main motivator to approach such brand will help to understand the customer's perception towards brand. Sometimes, there are powerful motivators than others in some customer profiles and that can be known from real data collection. (Yarian,2011)

## 8    Brand development model

While choosing the products and services for the first time, customers first rely on the messages that company provide through different communication means, such as advertising or word-of-mouth and customers take the decision to buy products. First experience of products and services decides the customers repetition of using such products and service again. Nilosn (2009, 63), argues that to get customers back, all the information that are provided to the customers should be true and should meet the expectations that customer perceived through the communication means.

Attraction of products and services decides customer`s purchasing decision while there are more options of similar products and services. It has been already explained that brand should be distinct, visual identity of the brand makes differences in the competitive market. Attraction of stores, packaging of product, staff`s behavior towards customer and attraction of interiors and service delivery distinct effect in brand building. (Nilosn 2009, 63)

Building up to strong brand, customers must have feeling that, brand should have attraction values and high-class than competitive brands, which creates added value to use such brands. The repetitive use of brand is key to grow up a strong brand and a strong, successful brand management ensure the repetitive use rate. Satisfied customer is tending to repeat using brand but for the brand builder satisfied customer is not enough. It is always important to offer more than customer expectations and make them over-satisfy what makes brand strong through customer experience and word-of-mouth and build up customer loyalty at the same time. Over-satisfied customers feel easy to use same brand, which also build up positive impression and comfort to customer. (Nilson 2009,64)
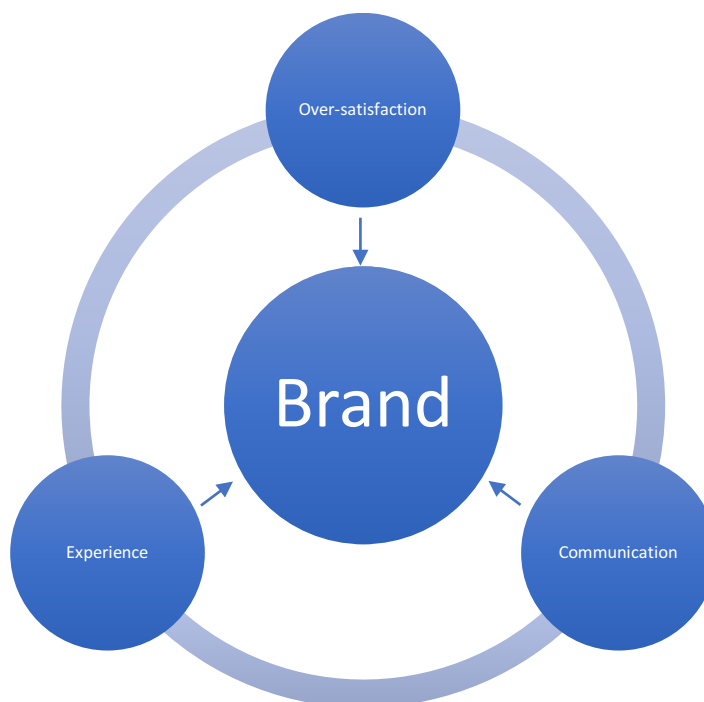
Figure 3: Brand development model (Nilson 2009,65)

By experiencing or through communication brand is created in customer's mind. Figure 3 The Brand Building model illustrates the brand building process which starts from the experience or communication of the service or products by customer, where by customer perception brand values are created. The next customer encounter to the brand will be determined by the customer experience, depending on negative or positive experience. Brand experience creates brand perception on customer mind, and it is important to make sure that all brand touchpoints are positive which makes customer over-satisfied. By creating such positive experience there becomes brand cycle where each positive and perceived.

9    Brand Communication

To make understand the value of the brand to its customers, brand or owner Company of the brand should communicate. Clifton & Simmons (2003,128-129) argues that, the way packs are designed, the words used, the way phones are answered, products name, the shops in which they are sold; all these things says the power of about brand. Different means such as advertising, company premises, staff and the company´s vehicles and services providers portrays the image of the company.   Brand name is the

first thing that comes in customers mind first and foremost, and the signs, presentation of brand, publicity and advertising of the brand comes after.

Brand name is the first thing that comes in customer's mind while purchasing or consuming service brand. While the service is intangible the only thing customer can trust is brand name. The main characteristic that brand name should have is; it must be simple, familiar and different form other brand; these are the things one take into consideration while purchasing brand. There is always connection in customer's mind with the brand that comes from either form the brand name or other communication with the company and staffs. (Hermansson & Larsson, 2005)

Advertising of brand increases the sales of the brand in the short term but in the long term it also helps to build a brand. Sales is everything for the companies and that generates the profit to shareholders. There is always 40-50 percent of probability that customers will buy the same product that was advertised; they have seen before buying it. In other means advertising of brand changes the buying behavior of customers. People tend to buy things that they are familiar, recognizable and that comes in their mind at first. (Hermansson & Larsson, 2005)

Brand advertisement creates shared meaning to customers. People always prefer to buy popular brands because they think it is popular. Customers want to socialize themselves and among the groups that they are in, and tries to fit them in same way, the brand that is advertised. (Hermansson & Larsson, 2005)

Signs & Symbols of the brand are important means of brand communication to the customers. While presented proucts or services to the customers, facing to the customers by staffs, e.g uniform, personality has great impact on impression of brand. In service business while there are many customer touch points, service delivery is important touch point. It determines the quality of the service and employees should have good communication with customers. (Hermansson & Larsson, 2005)

Word of mouth is one and only way of communication to the customers that does not cost anything to the company. It plays vital role for the success of the brand and especially in service industry where the service is intangible and hard to compare.

Quality of the service can be descirbed only description and WOM provides lot of information to the potential customer. (Hermansson & Larsson, 2005)

According to Hermansson & Larsson 2005,  advertisied message of the brand and the WOM message should match for the postitive marketing for the company. When there is no matching between WOM and advertising, there is no meaning of advertisiment. Positive WOM comes when there is satisfied customers and good relationship between customers and company staffs, while negative comes as the customers are dissatisfied with the company or product.Hence, one of attributes that brands should haves is satisfied and happy customers.

Publicity is a part of public relations of the company. Oxford online dictionary defines that publicity means to ``*notice or attention given to someone or something by media*``. For example publicity is articles about the company`s corporate social responsibiltiy, news about new product, business deals which helps companies to deliver the news without advertising.Corporations and brands use publicity as their marketing stratgey and make positive attitude of public to their firms and products.However, It is not always guranteed that publicity brings positive attitude but sometimes might bring negetive.  (Hermansson & Larsson, 2005)

Although, advertising is controlled by the company and it delivers the message that company intend to deliver, publicity is uncontrolled. Compararing  to advertising it is cheap but does not deliver the intended message but is higly creadible. (Hermansson & Larsson, 2005)

10   Research Methods & analysis

In this thesis, quantitative research methods are applied to gather information. Bench-marking, observation  and swot analysis are the main methods that are applied in this thesis. Benchamrking is done through observation of the premises and different online sources that are aviaible, to compare datas.

Benchmarking

Benchmarking is a process where there is comparison between similar best companies and business in the industry. Comparisons between quality, time, cost, money and

performance are general practices in benchmarking. It is widely used in the companies and business all around the world to get better performance and to realize where the business stands now. `` *Benchmarking is a method of measuring and improving* ``*our`` organization by comparing ourselves with the best``* *(*Stapenhusrt 2009,18). As it is defined by Stapenhurst, it is a process of comparing ourselves and organization with the organization, that is like ours or us and improve the best practices that fit better in organization. After benchmarking, if there is needed to adapt, best practices from the competitors are adopted or changed to enhance the competition level like the competitors. Stapenhusrt (2009,4) mentioned that it is a continuous process to learn from other business and people. Benchmarking can be applied on products, services or practices of an organization but it can be applied more broadly in performance level of others and learn from them. Benchmarking is most commonly used for the comparison of performance level and practices that has been used in the similar field.

*Benchmarking projects are typically initiated to help organizations improve their processes, resulting in higher quality products or services, reduced costs, and/or other benefits.* ( Stapenhusrt 2009,15)

Organizations conduct benchmarking for different reasons and the main reasons that makes them to do is improve organizational culture, improvement process, goals and target setting and specific problem solving. It makes them to realize where is gap between best performing organizations and provides opportunity to improve in the area. Benchmarking; a useful tool that helps to prioritize goals, find solution of problem and identify suitable performance level to gain goals. Benchmarking can be done with only one individual and there is control of researcher on who to choose at participants, how to obtain data, what to benchmark and what practices can be recommended. (Stapenhusrt 2009,11)
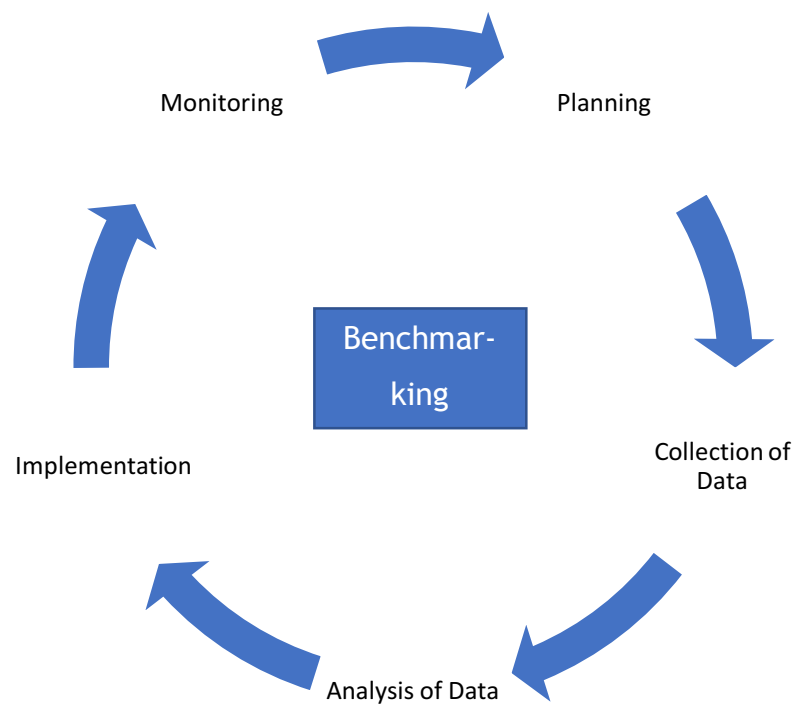
Figure 4: Benchmarking process (Tutorialspoint,2016)

Figure 4 illustrates that benchmarking is a continuous process. In this process, there are different steps of benchmarking. The first step of benchmarking is preparation and planning, second is collection of data and followed by data analysis, implementation and monitoring. Monitoring is important after implementation because that is resulting phase of benchmarking process. After that, there can be seen, is there any progress in the organization or not after benchmarking.

In this thesis report, three ethnic restaurants are benchmarked with Restaurant Lumbini namely, Tamarin, Fafa`s and Namaskaar. All restaurants have chain restaurants and are quite popular ethnic brands in Helsinki region. During the benchmarking process, different aspects of branding and brand elements such as, brand color, brand name, brand service and brand offerings are compared.

## 10.1  Research Analysis

As the main aim of this thesis is to develop restauant Lumbini, three ethnic restaurants that are offering ethnic food and beverages in Finland are compared. All three

restaurants are established ethnic restaurant brands in Finland. Qualitaitve datas and information were gathered from webpages of concerned restaurants and obesrvations of the premises by author. Customer satisfaction level datas were gatherd by www.eat.fi; a popular restaurant rating website where customer can write reviews and rate the food quality, overall experience and price of products. According to the webpage customer ratings and reiveiws which are older than two years are not applied. It means that it is reliable source of customer satisfaciton level measurement of restaurants. It is a platform for the customers to find out restuarants, who want to find best dinning place with best quality, memorable experience and fair price.

|  | Tamarin | Fafa`s | Namaskaar | Lumbini: Case Restaurant |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Introduction | Thai restaurant offering Thai cuisine in Helsinki metropolitan area. 9 restaurants all over Finland. | Mediterranean food restaurant. Offering foods in fast food restaurant style. Altogether 10 restaurants all over Finland. | Indian restaurants offering Indian cuisine in Helsinki. | Nepalese Restaurant offering Nepalese cuisine in Helsinki. Altogether 2 restaurants in Helsinki. |
| Name | Easy to remember. | Easy to remember.Distinctive. | Bit hard to pronounce. | Easy to pronounce. |
| Logos |  |  |  |  |
| Brand Color | Green & White | Black & White | Mainly blue. | Mainly red &blue |
| Tagline & Slogan | No | No | No | No |
| Fonts | Fonts are carefully chosen and fonts were wisely used on menus. same fonts and styles in all menus. Brand font is written in Thai writing style. | Bradley Hand font in website and menus. | Not defined | Not defined |
| Advertising | Active on social media. Facebook, Instagram. Beautiful videos of food and picnic in Facebook page. Well managed single Facebook page for all restaurants with more than 4500 likes. | Active on social media. Facebook. | Not active in social media. Not even official Facebook page. There is webpage and it is not organized and not written how many restaurants are operating on the same name. | Both restaurants have Facebook pages. Not active contents posting. Not well managed. |
| Interior design | Well managed with brand colors and all the interior is integrated in brand color. Main colors in the interior are green, wooden and white. | Black & White interior. | Indian style interior with pink and blue curtains. Most restaurants are lunch buffet restaurants. Most are as like normal | Nepalese style with vibrant colors. Both restaurants have different interior and colors. |

| | | | buffet res-taurants. | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Menu de-sign | Simple and easy to read with big fonts. | Simple and fast food style menu | Fast food style menu on buf-fet restau-rants. | Simple traditional menu. |
| Visual iden-tity | Brand letters are not clear as it is on Thai font. Integrated with green color. | Very clear. Neon lights makes the visually clearer. | Not distinc-tive. Only written ``Na-maskaar``out-side. | Not very clear. Restau-rant in Munkkiniemi has neon lights which make visible to customers. |
| Customer ratings | Average eat.fi ratings 2.5. | Average eat.fi ratings 3.5. Negative Facebook ratings and reviews for few res-taurants. | Very poor cus-tomer ratings: Average 2 in eat.fi ratings. Negativie cus-tomer reviews. | Strong eat.fi ratings (4.5). Strong Facebook ratings and positive re-views. |
| Menu On-line | Yes. | Yes | No | Yes |

Table 2: Comparison matrix among ethnic restaurant brands.


Table 2. shows the comparision of brand attributies of different restaurants that are offering ethnic food and beverages in Finland. Table shows Tamarin has strong features that a strong brand should has, in theory. The intention and purpose seems to have a big brand in Finland as  there is simple menu and restaurant, well designed interiors according brand colors and good service delivery.  Advertising through social media is done actively and the content is with quality to impress customers, accroding to it`s official Facebook page. Restaurant`s webpage design is impressive and all the fonts and colors are appllied well, as it is always imortant for a strong brand building. Despite a strong brand, however, there is low customer ratings and reviews in eat.fi (restaurants rating webpage) which shows there is something has to be done with brand management to have a competitive brand with happy customers.

Similarly, Fafa`s is a mediterrian fast food restaurants which offers pitas and falafel and other vegan foods. Fafa`s is in serveral locations in Finland and it applies same menu and pricing to all it`s restaurants. Restaurant business model is simple, as the menu is simple; and it seems an alternative of pizza restaurants and other fast food restaurants such as Mc Donalds, Hesburger and Burger King. Products and services are manily targeted to young and adults who are interested on more healthy than fast food. Fafa`s has developed its own restaurant interior and the wall papers and floors are applied in most of the restaurants. Fafa`s will be benifited if they have single official Facebook and other social media promotion as the targeted customers are young and adults who are more active in social media.

Namaskaar is an ethinc restaurant brand in Helsinki region which offers Indian cuisine and beverages in different locations. Most of the restaurants are lunch buffet restaurnats offering variaties of food such as Indian style lamb, chicken curry, vegterian food and naan breads. Although, it has restaurants in different locations, author could not find any official number of restaurants that are opertaing. There is not organised branding, neither there is offical webpage for all the restaurants. As it is one oldest Indian restaurant in Helsinki, it seems, word-of-mouth has helped to survive the brand unitl now.

Restaurant Lumbini (case company) is discribed in the literature (company backgorund) and author is employed in the same company for more than a year. It has been applied basic elements of branding but there is room for improvements to make it simple and clear to the customers. Such as colors, logos, fonts and staff dress that are not defined yet and it is running in a traditional way. Social media pages are not that active in content advertisng, there should be single social medai page for all restaurants as same like Tamarain to send the message to all customers.

The comparison matrix shows that, Restaurant Tamarin and Fafa`s has applied the best practices for restaurant branding among the restaurants that are compared. When the buisness model of Tamarin is casual dinning restaurant, Fafa`s business model is fast food chain restaurant. However, the theme and  offerings of all the restaurants are different, branding practices could be common according to the literature. As the main aim of this research paper is to develop Restaurant Lumbini as a strong ethnic restaurant brand, Tamarin`s branding model is appropriate branding model. Simplicity and organised operations can be found in Tamarin`s branding model which is best fit in restaurant Lumbini as it is also a casual dinning restaurant with best customer reviews and ratings.

Accroding to the literature, brands are created on customers mind by experiencing the products and services. Customer satisfaction is most imporant to have a strong brand.In this thesis author has analyzed the customer satisfaction level and customer reviews of these four restaurants that are compared above. Through eat.fi customer ratings the customer satisfaction level can be seen below:

Figure 5: Customer satisfaction level

Figure 5 shows the customer satisfaction level of different four restaurants in three different aspects; food quality, overall experience and price. Customer ratings are collected from the webpage of eat.fi and the restaurants that are available in the webpage. This is a general comparison of restaurants that are available in the webpage.For example there were only four restaurants of Tamarin are registered in the website although it has 9 restaurants operating currently, and the average customer ratings were collected from all four restaurants and merged into one and shom as average point. According to the figure, Restaurant Tamarin has  average food quality with few points more than three out of five points and the price with more than 2,5 points and the lowest points are for the overall experience including service and restaurant environment.

Although, Fafa´s is a fast food chain restaurant, it has better customer ratings than Tamarin`s with 3.6 points for the food quality followed by 3.1 for the experience and 2,7 for the price, respectively. It seems that the price for the products is slightly expensive compare to other fast food chains. There are few similarities between Namaskaar and Lumbini as some food items are same, because Nepal and India shares

the almost same food culture and counrtry boarders as well. Namaskaar has very poor ratings among the restaurants that are compared and all there aspects food quality, experience and price are average level 2 and in customer reviews most of the customers are blaming on price and food quality. Restaurant Lumbini seems to have best in customer satisfaction level among the compared restaurants which has ratings over that 3,5 and food quality is 4,4. The older restaurant has strong customer satisfaction level and the new restaurant in Munkkinimei has only one review in eat.fi so, in the future there is likely to get more positive reviews and ratings, although it has strong 4.9/5 ratings in Facebook with 23 reviews. According to the customer satisfaction level, there is huge potential of Restaurant Lumbini to become a strong brand in the market.

## 10.2 Swot Analysis

SWOT analysis is an acronym of strength, weakness, opportunities and thereats. Developed in 1960s , it gives clear insight of companies and project`s to indendify the strengths and opportunites and minimize the weakness and therats by analysing different aspects. In the table below, Swot analysis of Restaurant Lumbini has been done to identify the positive and negative aspects. Swot Analysis has been done according to the authors obeservation.

|  | Positive | Negative |
|---|---|---|
|  | **Strengths** <br> Best customer ratings <br> Satisfied customers <br> Experienced owners <br> Loyal customers | **Weakness** <br> Location <br> Lack of qualified staffs <br> Brand communication |
|  | **Opportunities** <br> Expanding business <br> Growing customers <br> Ethnic food trend | **Threats** <br> Competition <br> Political issues |

Table 3: SWOT analysis of Lumbini

The main strength of Restaurant Lumbini is the best customer satisfaction, thanks to the quality of the food, price and restaurant environment. Even though there are only two restaurants that are operating at the moment without any promotional activities and advertising, both restaurants have enough customers, which is strength of business. Decades of experience of restaurant business with the owners is a strong and positive side of the restaurant. As every business has loyal customers, restaurant Lumbinin has also loyal customers and according to the author`s observation, there are low numbers of single time coming customer. The main reason behind the loyal customers is that both restaurants (Lumbini Lauttasaari & Lumbini Munkkiniemi) are located in neighbourhood.

Similarly, there are opportunities while there are strenghth of business. As Restaurant Lumbini has strengths there are oppurtinies of expansion and growth of business. When Lumbini opened its door to the customers in Munkkiniemi in July 2016 for the first time, there has been a big discussion in Facebook group of Munkkienimi residents. Restaurant did not need to do any promotional activities because of the quality it has and it spread like a fire within few days. There were many new customers because of the Facebook discussion and most of them had positive feedback. In the introduction part it has been mentioned already that, in Finland there is growing ethnic food trend and it will be an opportunity to expand more restaurants for Lumbini.

In the negative side of Lumbini, the main weakness of the restaurant is it`s locations. Lumbini Lauttasari is located in the office buildings near to the sea side and Munkkiniemi is in better location compared to Lumbini Lauttasaari. In restaurant business, loction is the key element of successful business depending on the food and services, that are offered in the restaurant. Lumbini is a casual dinning restaurat and it can be benifited if the restaurants are in busy locations. Lack of qualified staff is the major problem that ethic restaurant are facing. If there is expansion of the restaurant, there will be needed more kitchen staffs and it is hard to find more qualified staffs in Finland. Although, Lumbini has good customer reputation, the downside is lack of brand communication to the customers. By advertising the restaurant and the speciality about the restaurant as well as promotional activities such as gifts and discounts restaurant will get more customers. At the same time, customers will get to know with the speciality of the restaurant.

In Finland, and paritcularly in Helsinki there are many ethnic restaurants that are growing day by day and the competiiton has increased among ethnic restaurants. Not even among ethnic restaurants, there is growing competition between Nepalese restaurants which are offering the same products as Lumbini, and are coming new restaurants every months. Political issues are also considered as a threat as there is changing rules of Finnish immigration which will affect directly the restaurant staffs and their families.

## 10.3 Development Idea

Research analysis has shown the positive and negative sides of restaurant Lumbini as well as there is room that is needed to improve, to develop a strong brand. As the main aim of this thesis to suggest a brand development idea to the restaurant, it has to improve the brand element that are described in the text (Chapter 4). It has shown in the (table 2) that it lacks many aspects with the other restaurants that are compared such as advertising, marketing and brand elements that are essential.

Based on the research and observation by the author, the main aspect that has to improve is visuality of the restaurants of Lumbini. It has been explained in the theroy part (Brand communication, chapter 9) signs and symbols has great impact on the impression of brand. For example, a creative and well designed logo, which express the visual part of the brand as well as well designed staff dresses, menus & infromation in same font, and simple interior which match with the restaurant theme is recommended.

To recommend, what is best brand model, to restaurant Lumbini, is very complex because every business has different and unique business model. But it can be said based on the research analysis that, it will be benifited by following the branding steps of restaurant Tamarin as it has similar type of offerings as both restaurants (Tamarin & Lumbini) are casual dinning places. Simplicity with organised business model can be found in Tamarin which has a well organised webpage, (Appendix 3) menu for all restaurants as well as social media campaign. Tamarin has the best ethnic restaurant branding efforts even though, it has not enough satisfied customer which is probably, because of lack of communication between the staff and customers. It is explained in (Chapter 6, Service branding) that the only thing that distinguishes service brand is the way of delevery of services. While doing the observation in Tamarin, author found out

that, there were staffs with little knowledge in Finnish language, which makes communication and understading more complicated. To avoid this situation, it is recommended to Lumbini to have staffs with good knowledge in Finnish language who can deliver best customer service and make positive customer experience.

To conclude, restaurant Lumbini can develop a storng brand by improving the visual identity and organised business development with well trained staffs. Developing a distinctive sign and symbols which makes brand unique than its competitors, develop a simple webpage and organized social media marketing will help Lumbini to become a strong ethnic restaurant brand.

## 11 Conclusion

In conclusion, brands are created in customer's mind while consuming services and products. Successful brands around the world are created based on uniqueness than other products and services. Positive customer perception is a key to develop a strong brand while brand should be distinctive, visually appealing, name and logos should be related to the product and services. Particularly, service brands must be trustable such as banks, hospital and medical services while products brands should have quality and emotions in the products to ensure customer loyalty.

Human interaction plays a vital role on developing a strong brand. In service market, services are created by the service provider and consumed by the customer at the same time so, it must make sure that company staff creates the environment positive and warm.

Finally, satisfied customers are the pillars of a brand. The main aim of the thesis is to find ways of develop restaurant Lumbini as a brand. The research of the case company restaurant Lumbini shows that customers are satisfied with the food and overall ser-vices of the restaurants. It means that Lumbini is already a brand but there is lack of brand awareness. In the literature part, it has been mentioned that brand awareness such as advertising and publicity helps to send the message about brand and Lumbini should also follow same methods to have a strong brand. Brand elements, such as colors, tone, font are recommended to make it more distinctive and unique from the competitors.

References

Business Dictionary.2016. Accessed 7 Oct. 2016
 http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/brand.html

Business Insider, 2016. The 10 most powerful brands in the world. Accessed 10 Oct. 2016.
http://www.businessinsider.com/the-10-most-powerful-brands-in-the-world-2016-2?r=US&IR=T&IR=T

Clifton, R., & Simmons J.2003. Brands & Branding. London: Profile Books Ltd

Davis M. 2009. Fundamentals of branding. Laussane: AVA Publishing SA. Accessed 23 Oct. 2016
https://books.google.fi/books?id=oL300lanTTQC&pg=PT49&dq=brand+development&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjmz5OKgrjQAhVOKywKHf8kDrsQ6AEIQjAH#v=onepage&q=brand%20development&f=false

Eat.2016a. Tamarin. Accessed 8 Nov. 2016
http://eat.fi/fi/eat/search/helsinki?searchstring=tamarin

Eat. 2016b. Fafa`s. Accessed 8 Nov. 2016
http://eat.fi/fi/eat/search/helsinki?searchstring=fafas

Eat.2016c. Namaskaar. Accessed 8 Nov. 2016
http://eat.fi/fi/eat/search/helsinki?searchstring=namaskaar

Eat.2016d.Lumbini. Accessed 8 Nov. 2016
http://eat.fi/fi/eat/search/helsinki?searchstring=lumbini

Fafa`s. Profile. Facebook. Accessed 6 Nov. 2016
https://www.facebook.com/Fafas-121332237980729/?hc_ref=SEARCH&fref=nf

Hammond J. 2008. Branding your Business: Promoting your business, attracting customers and standing out in the market place. London, Philadelphia: Kogan Page Limited.

Hermansson F. & Larsson J. 2005. The Service Branding Model: Small firm`s approach to building brand equity. Master's thesis within marketing. Jönköping international business school. Jönköping University. Accessed 25 Oct. 2016
https://www.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:3723/FULLTEXT01.pdf

Lindberg-Repo K., Mehra E., Gupta N., Dube A. & Kaul V.2009. Titans of Branding. Jyväskylä.Gummerus Printing Ltd.

Matista S. 2013. Brand elements to consider for your small business. Accessed 6 Nov.2016
http://www.webs.com/blog/2013/06/10/8-brand-elements-to-consider-for-your-small-business/

Nilosn Torsten H. 1998. Competitive Branding: Winning the Market Place with Value-Added Brands. West Sussex: John Wiley & Sons

Oxford Dictionary. Accessed 9 Oct. 2016
https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/publicity

Raento P. & Husso K. 2002 Cultural Diversity in Finland. Accessed 10 January 2016
http://www.helsinki.fi/maantiede/geofi/fennia/demo/pages/raento.htm

Ravintola Lumbini. Profile. Facebook. Accessed 6 Nov. 2016
https://www.facebook.com/Ravintola-Lumbini-859838530793110/?fref=ts
Ravintola Tamarin. Profile. Facebook. Accessed 6 Nov.2016
https://www.facebook.com/ravintola.tamarin/?fref=ts

Reijosfood, 11.02.2014. Accessed 9 January 2016
https://reijosfood.com/tag/nepalese-restaurant/

Roll, M. 2009. Corporate Branding Strategy Define. Accessed 15 Oct. 2016
http://www.brandingstrategyinsider.com/2009/07/corporate-branding-strategy-defined.html#.WDH94aJ95sN

Stapenhurst T. 2009. The Benchmarking: A how-to-guide to best practice for managers and practitioners. Oxford. Elsevier Ltd. Accessed 26 Oct. 2016
https://books.google.fi/books?id=kaRWPZzRq5cC&printsec=frontcover&dq=the+benchmarking+book+tim+stapenhurst&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjU8dXtmLjQAhWCDSwKHRBVBsAQ6AEIIjAA#v=onepage&q=the%20benchmarking%20book%20tim%20stapenhurst&f=false

Visithelsinki 2016: Food Culture. Accessed 8 January 2016
http://www.visithelsinki.fi/en/professional/why-helsinki/12-reasons-to-visit/food-culture

Yarian N. 2011. A simple brand strategy development. Accessed 18 Oct. 2016
http://www.adherecreative.com/blog/bid/65021/a-simple-brand-development-strategy

Figures

Tables

Appendixes

**Food quality**

2.3 Acceptable

**Experience**

1.6 Some problems

**Value compared to similar**

1.9 A bit overpriced

How are these calculated?

**Food quality**

4.9 Among the best

**Experience**

4.4 Would recommend it

**Value compared to similar**

4.4 Better than average

How are these calculated?

Appendix 1: Customer ratings eat.fi

Appendix 1. shows the customer ratings and the meaning of ratings on eat.fi. The appendix was extracted from eat.fi to make clear understanding of the points. Here is example of restaurant, one with low ratings and one with high ratings.

Appendix 2: How does eat.fi works?

Eat.fi is a restaurant searching and rating webpage in Finland. It is a platform for restaurant entrepreneurs to get more customers by offering quality food and services, while it is a restaurant search platform for customers with best quality food and services with fair price. Founded by Tina Aspiala and later sold to Mtv Oy a media company which owns several media enterprises in Finland is a current owner.

Ratings and customer reviews are depending on the number of ratings and reviews. Restaurants with more ratings get low points and restaurants with few ratings get high points. It has been mentioned in the webpage that, to avoid this situation company has develop a secret algorithm that provides fair ratings and not necessarily depends only on review numbers. It has been called eat.fi`s *secret sauce algorithm* and the reason to keep secret is to avoid manipulation on customer reviews per the site.

Appendix 3: Comparision of webpage