
The Contribution of Strategic Alliances to Marketing Performance

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Abstract:

In a time of rapidly changing markets and intense competition, strategic alliances have become one of the main tools that organizations rely on to enhance their ability to innovate and achieve a sustainable competitive advantage. This research aims to explore how alliances contribute to developing marketing practices and raising the level of marketing performance of organizations, focusing on the factors that determine the success of these partnerships, such as resource integration, compatibility between partners, and market environments. Through a qualitative analysis of companies that have adopted alliances as a central strategy, the research provides an in-depth view of how alliances can be invested in fostering innovation, expanding markets, and strengthening brands, while providing a conceptual framework that can guide researchers and practitioners alike in understanding and investing in the potential of these partnerships.

Keywords: alliances; strategic alliances; performance; marketing performance; Innovation.

Jel Classification Codes : Q13, L19.

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1. Introduction :

“Strategic alliance is a cooperation that has strategic importance to the companies involved, these alliances are usually bilateral and often between competing or potentially competing companies with the condition of preserving strategic autonomy of allied companies” (Garrette et al., 2019). Access to resources, knowledge, technology, skills and markets is a key driver behind the formation of strategic alliances. Companies engage in alliances with varying levels of commitment, ranging from short term, transactional partnerships to long term collaborations built on trust. Strategic alliances enable firms to acquire vital resources, improve information flow and enhance organizational stability and performance. Previous studies have identified multiple types of interfirm arrangements such as licensing, franchising and mergers and acquisitions through which companies capitalize on new market opportunities and drive growth.

Strategic alliances enable firms to expand their search for new opportunities across industries and technologies, while also facilitating a more efficient reconfiguration of value chain activities. The advantages associated with such alliances include economies of scale (Garrette et al., 2019), accelerated access to knowledge and markets, reduced capital requirements and risk exposure, and enhanced influence over competitive dynamics. Key success factors encompass the alignment of partner objectives, the creation of synergistic potential, a clear understanding of each partner's value contribution, and balanced participation in product development, manufacturing, and marketing activities. Moreover, strategic alliances may stimulate market entry, support international expansion, and strengthen environmental scanning capabilities to identify emerging opportunities.

“Companies that cooperate, on average, return higher performance levels than companies that do not cooperate” (Abramovsky et al., 2009). Strategic alliances represent innovative interorganizational arrangements designed to enhance competitiveness in environments characterized by agile and rapidly evolving rivals. Empirical evidence suggests that firms engaged in strategic alliances often outperform those that rely solely on vertical integration. By improving economies of scale and scope, alliances enable organizations to reinforce market power, enhance operational efficiencies, secure access to critical resources, and facilitate entry into new markets. Over the past two decades, such alliances have become integral components of corporate competitive and growth strategies, with numerous large firms allocating substantial assets and research investments to collaborative initiatives. In the current economic climate, marked by heightened uncertainty and intensified competition, organizations increasingly prioritize exclusive resources -particularly knowledge and capabilities- leading to structural transformations that transcend traditional organizational boundaries. Strategic alliances thus constitute an effective mechanism for accessing intangible assets and adapting swiftly to evolving market demands.

Thus, strategic alliances have become a necessary option to improve organizational and marketing capabilities. The importance of this study lies in the fact that it seeks to clarify the role that strategic alliances can

play in developing organizations' marketing practices. From this perspective, this research aims to understand how do these alliances impact marketing performance and identify the factors that enhance or limit this impact. This helps organizations make more effective decisions when entering into future alliances.

However, the impact of these alliances on the actual development of marketing practices remains a topic that requires further study and understanding, and that leads us to raise the following problem: **How do strategic alliances contribute to the development of marketing performance?**

2. Literature review

Achieving superior marketing performance constitutes a fundamental priority for managers across a wide range of industries. As marketing activities serve as the principal interface between firms and their customers, they play a critical role in shaping the value propositions offered to the market. Strategic alliances represent an important mechanism through which firms can influence and enhance their marketing performance. In many contexts, managers expect that organizations engaged in alliances will attain stronger marketing outcomes, benefiting from the partner's brand reputation, customer base, market expertise, or related assets. According to Davis and Eisenhardt as cited in Emami et al; 2022, marketing performance reflects the degree to which an organization's marketing activities achieve their intended objectives. The existing literature provides substantial evidence that strategic alliances can positively influence marketing performance. Empirical studies in sectors such as telecommunications (Emami et al., 2022) , transportation (Davis & Eisenhardt, 2011), and high-technology industries (Akkaya, 2007) consistently show that firms participating in alliances report superior marketing performance compared to those operating independently.

Four primary avenues through which alliances contribute to enhanced marketing performance can be derived from these initial insights. First, organizations may seek to expand or penetrate markets through alliance-driven marketing activities (Akkaya, 2007). Second, alliances can support the strengthening of brand equity or the pursuit of co-branding opportunities. Third, firms frequently leverage alliances to acquire new customers or retain existing ones through improved marketing capabilities. Finally, organizations may anticipate greater innovation, accelerated product development cycles, or reduced time-to-market as a result of collaborative relationships. Collectively, these observations provide a more detailed understanding of how strategic alliances influence specific dimensions of marketing performance.

Despite the widespread acceptance -both in practice and in academic literature- of the near-essential role of strategic alliances, the concept itself remains insufficiently and inconsistently defined. Such conceptual ambiguity risks generating misunderstandings that may, in turn, limit the precision of scholarly inquiry. To address these concerns, strategic alliances can be more rigorously situated within a theoretical framework by

conceptualizing them as interorganizational collaborations formed by relatively equal partners pursuing mutually attainable objectives across various functional domains. Organizations enter such alliances for a multitude of reasons that extend well beyond marketing-related aims. Therefore, a thorough examination of marketing performance dimensions, related metrics, and the categorization of alliance types is necessary to establish a robust analytical foundation for the investigation.

3. Mechanisms Linking Alliances to Marketing Outcomes

Strategic alliances influence marketing outcomes through several key mechanisms, including the enhancement of brand equity and co-branding potential, improved customer acquisition and retention, expanded market reach, reduced new product development cycles, and accelerated speed-to-market. These effects are often shaped -either mediated or moderated- by factors such as governance structures, resource complementarity, market conditions, partner compatibility, cultural alignment, and broader competitive dynamics.

Brand equity and co-branding represent two closely interconnected facets of marketing performance. The establishment of an alliance can strengthen a firm's brand equity, as well as associated dimensions such as brand awareness, brand associations, brand loyalty, and perceived quality, by augmenting its portfolio with complementary partner brands (Olufemi A. et al., 2015). This positive influence is particularly likely when the marketing strategies and business models of the partner firms align or complement one another (Emami et al., 2022). Moreover, alliances may give rise to joint co-branding initiatives and collaborative promotional campaigns, thereby amplifying communication efforts and enhancing overall advertising impact.

4. Effects on Marketing Performance: Dimensions and Metrics

Strategic alliances influence marketing performance across several key dimensions. Partnerships enable firms to expand their market reach and improve market penetration by enhancing customer access to combined offerings and strengthening each partner's ability to attract customers (Wilson, 2013). The development of shared distribution channels widens geographic coverage, while alliances with firms operating in specific foreign markets facilitate entry into those markets, support the acquisition of export knowledge, and ultimately improve export-related performance. Moreover, alliances positively shape brand equity by enabling co-branding with reputable partners, thereby facilitating entry into new market segments and accelerating the acceptance of new products.

Alliances also contribute to customer acquisition and retention by granting access to unique or tacit knowledge regarding customer needs, preferences, and behaviors. When a partner possesses prior experience with the target customer segment, the alliance benefits from deeper customer insight an advantage particularly important when penetrating unfamiliar markets (Dzisi & Ofosu, 2014). Furthermore, strategic alliances strengthen innovation capabilities and improve product-development tend to show greater willingness to try new products introduced through partnerships, while alliances reduce required investment levels and allow firms to test

technical or market hypotheses more rapidly (Smith, 2012). Working closely with customers in high-growth markets and collaborating with local partners during product trials are examples of alliance-driven initiatives that accelerate speed-to-market.

4.1 Market Reach and Penetration

Strategic alliances represent a foundational component of contemporary marketing strategies, offering firms an effective mechanism for achieving competitive advantage. Marketing managers rely on alliances to improve the likelihood of achieving key objectives such as market expansion, increased visibility, and enhanced brand equity (Akkaya, 2007). Marketing performance in alliance contexts is commonly measured through indicators such as market share, co-branding success, market development, and lead or inquiry generation.

Alliances grant organizations access to new markets, products, customers, and services, thereby improving their capacity to penetrate additional segments. Co-branding -where multiple brands are combined within a single offering- serves as a particularly valuable tool for increasing brand visibility, introducing new products, and leveraging brand equity across partners. Joint marketing efforts also shorten the time between product development and commercialization.

Research has demonstrated that many firms now allocate dedicated marketing budgets to alliance-related initiatives (Wilson, 2013). In sectors such as biotechnology, strong market orientation -supported by customer and competitor intelligence- and a deliberate alliance orientation -rooted in partner scanning and coordination- correlate with enhanced business performance. The strategic alliances literature highlights the critical roles of partner compatibility, governance mechanisms, and market characteristics. A growing body of conceptual work emphasizes the joint development of complementary marketing and technological capabilities as a driver of innovation, commercialization success, and competitive advantage.

4.2 Brand Equity and Co-Branding Effects

In branding literature, brand equity is defined as the differential effect that brand knowledge has on consumer responses to marketing activities, encompassing brand awareness and brand image (Muravskii & Smirnova, 2015). Co-branding occurs when multiple brands with distinct identities are promoted jointly (Cigdem Kutlu, 2015). Strategic alliances facilitate the transfer of brand associations from one partner to another, enhancing overall brand equity.

These co-branding arrangements produce dual brand-related effects. Evidence suggests that, in alliances involving a dominant market leader and a lower-tier partner, the market leader exerts a stronger influence on the partner's brand image than the reverse. When brands from different product categories collaborate, prestige or luxury brands often contribute disproportionately to co-brand equity, particularly in private-label partnerships.

Brand equity and co-branding effects are therefore central considerations in shaping marketing communication strategies. Firms often seek partnerships with financially stable allies possessing substantial brand equity. Establishing a balanced co-branding model among partners is essential for maximizing value. Even firms that do not explicitly pursue co-branding strategies should remain aware of potential brand-related spillovers resulting from their promotional activities. Collaborative marketing support can generate considerable co-brand-equity benefits when both partners contribute meaningfully to shared communication efforts.

4.3 Customer Acquisition and Retention

In today's competitive environment, customer acquisition, retention, and market expansion are critical to firm survival and long-term growth. Acquiring new customers is inherently costly, complex, and competitive, whereas retaining existing customers is generally more efficient and less risky. Customer retention fosters repeat purchasing, enhances cross-buying, and promotes positive word-of-mouth, all of which strengthen the firm's market position at comparatively low cost (Bauer et al., 2020).

Loyal customers contribute positively to brand reputation and often advocate for the firm within their social networks, driving additional acquisition without deliberate marketing intervention. As such, retention and acquisition represent interconnected processes that simultaneously stabilize and increase revenue streams. Retention is widely recognized as a cornerstone of sustainable business success (Nyongesa et al., 2018). It involves cultivating a favorable brand image, fostering long-term customer engagement, and ensuring consistent patronage. Effective retention reflects robust customer-management practices and lays the foundation for future customer acquisition.

4.4 Innovation, Product Development, and Speed-to-Market

Firms increasingly face market pressure to reduce innovation and product-development cycle times. Strategic alliances mitigate these challenges by enhancing innovation capacity, improving development efficiency, and accelerating market entry. Collaborating with partners possessing complementary technological and marketing capabilities enables organizations to pool design knowledge, engineering expertise, testing infrastructure, and other critical resources (Dievska et al., 2016).

Cross-institutional collaboration also enriches access to market, competitor, and technological insights, thereby stimulating creativity and generating diverse ideas. Joint efforts in developing innovative products, processes, and marketing solutions are frequent outcomes of well-managed alliances. Effective governance structures, streamlined processes, and skilled personnel amplify these benefits. Alliances increase strategic flexibility and enable firms to adjust development priorities in response to evolving customer needs, technological advances, or competitive dynamics (Leung et al., 2013).

Moreover, integrating suppliers and customers into the innovation and development process accelerates delivery timelines and reduces costs. Triadic collaboration among a lead firm, customer, and supplier is particularly effective. Customer insights help refine market positioning, while supplier capabilities complement internal technical expertise. Speed-to-market is a critical determinant of competitive advantage, profitability, and uncertainty reduction. Cross-functional teamwork and continuous knowledge exchange shorten development cycles and improve the quality of output. Learning - both during development and implementation - plays a central role in sustaining innovation and maintaining competitive edge.

5. Moderating and Mediating Factors

To enhance marketing performance through strategic alliances, organizations must account for several mediating and moderating factors that shape alliance outcomes. Among the most influential are alliance governance, resource complementarity, partner fit, cultural compatibility, market conditions, and competitive dynamics, all of which can substantially condition the nature and extent of performance gains (Sun, et al., 2022) A deeper understanding of these factors is particularly critical for managers who retain discretion in designing the structural configuration of their alliances.

5.1 Alliance Governance and Resource Complementarity

Strategic alliances expand organizations' resources through coordinated collaborations (Furlotti & Soda; 2018). They can significantly enhance strategic marketing, forming mutually advantageous cooperation through resource integration, allowing partners to achieve marketing objectives unattainable individually. Alliance governance degree of control exerted by an organization and how partners cooperate and resource complementarity correlation between a partner's resources and a firm's strategic needs moderate alliances' impact on marketing performance, including market reach, brand equity, customer acquisition and retention, and innovation.

Governance encompassing equity or control arrangements motivates partner investment and incentivizes cooperation, while contractual safeguards specify restrictions and joint decision-making modes. Governance protects partner investments against unwanted appropriation, reducing opportunism risk. Stronger commitment, safeguarding, and investment levels favor marketing improvement, and governance type influences other parameters such as resource interdependence. Resource complementarity also plays a role: the less partners' resources meet a firm's strategic marketing needs, the stronger training, commitment, or investment must be for the alliance to enhance marketing.

5.2 Partner Fit and Cultural Compatibility

For partners to effectively combine their resources through alliances, they must share a solid organizational fit. Some studies define partner fit through strategic aspects such as industry and business model

similarity (Sun et al., 2022). Others define it as functional areas and marketing objectives alignment. In the context of marketing control alliances, fit encompasses the proportion of compatible campaigns, advertising product features, targeted customer segments, and overall communication objectives. Partner fit restricts transference and restricts advertising influence, thus reducing positive marketing performance spills.

Cultural compatibility is an indivisible aspect of partner fit. The existing literature prescribes both formal elements, such as procedures, structure, and objectives, and informal elements, such as values, priorities, and norms. Cultural and organizational fit lowers the likelihood of detrimental outcomes like future conflicts and renegotiation of the initial contract costly administrative tasks that detract from value-adding activities.

5.3 Market Conditions and Competitive Dynamics

Strategic alliances enable firms to leverage the complementary resources and capabilities of their partners in the product development process. Strategic alliances may improve marketing performance through an increased ability to reach target markets, mutually reinforcing brand equity, enhanced customer acquisition and retention, a greater capacity for product and service innovation, and a reduction in time-to-market (Akkaya, 2007). Environmental factors that moderate and mediate the impact of strategic alliances on marketing performance constitute an important dimension of the strategic marketing–alliances relationship. Conditions of strategic relevance can vary in type and intensity (Emami et al., 2022). An alliance tends to deliver greater value to clients in environments characterized by intense competition, rapid technological change, an extended product or service development cycle, frequent modifications to client specifications, and a threshold number of existing products in an offering. Conditions of large firm size, slow technology evolution, low product diffuseness, and limited resource availability diminish the expected improvements from alliances. The use of mechanisms that reward partners for cumulated inputs improves the outcome of alliances when clients seek complete solutions.

Strategic marketing continues to develop as a concept, yet there remains no standard definition of the term or general consensus regarding the activities it encompasses. Combined resource bases and capabilities, whether tangible or intangible, constitute two of the theoretical foundations that lie at the intersection of strategic marketing practices and firm alliances. Strategic marketing represents the process of formative, evaluative, and operational design decisions taken by leading businesses; progressive or destination marketing; and co-opetition, in which different parties combine complementary activities to raise the value offer delivered through one or several support networks. Prerequisites and outcomes also delineate an acceptable framework, yet no universally applicable model exists. Nevertheless, technological change remains a driving force, and the application of marketing to technology and knowledge management appears to be at the forefront of present and future models.

6. Strategic Implications for Marketing Managers

Choosing appropriate partner firms for strategic alliances involves assessing their level of integration within a firm's alliance network and their respective contributions. Firms engaged in many alliances track both the number of tied partners and the connectedness of these partners beyond the particular alliance of interest. An alliance might involve only a distribution agreement, but the firm can still benefit from the distribution partner's connections to other firms and from the knowledge about the partners' partners. Suitably monitoring these centralities helps identify which partners to select and how much to invest in them. Every alliance shifts over time, moving from introduction and advance to stabilization and offensive stages. These phases are characterized by changes in the needs for partner firms, for example from technological to marketing experiences. Accordingly, both the choice of partner connections and their complementary resources should also vary over time. Monitoring the development within current alliances informs the identification of potential new partners whose attributes fit the new needs (Emami et al., 2022).

6.1 Alliance Lifecycle Management

A strategic alliance can be likened to a marriage, with a life cycle comprising several stages. The alliance, like a marriage, often begins with an "initiator" who proposes an arrangement. Similar to courtship, the parties conduct extensive mutual exploration to assess strategic fit and cultural compatibility prior to formal agreement. Negotiation of terms closely resembles the initial proffer of a pre-nuptial agreement (Philbin, 2011). Following the conclusion of the formal agreement, the alliance advances into the "mature" phase, characterized by an active, ongoing relationship. In many instances, the need for continued, active engagement by the primary parties diminishes subsequently; however, circumstances can arise that compel re-negotiation, refurbishment or a second courtship (Sukoco, 2016). Just as marital divorce and reformation are relatively commonplace, agreements sometimes terminate and new alliances are formed. Such life-cycle observations are neither new nor unique to strategic alliances. Previous studies of M&As, joint ventures, informal collaborations and various other contractual relationships have examined concepts of these type. The foregoing list provides a basis for exploring the life-cycle concept as it occurs with strategic alliances.

6.2 Performance Measurement Frameworks

Strategic alliances provide a valuable means of managing marketing performance through the formal reply to marketing performance requests. Three distinct dimensions of performance, value created (benefits generated for the customer), value added (benefits generated for the firm), and timeliness and accountability of value added, when jointly evaluated using relevant performance metrics enables the marketing manager of the alliance firms to achieve a quantified measure of marketing performance. Actual results versus planned projections form the

basis of additional measures providing an early warning system on likely pre-launch and post-launch performance delivery.

A variety of distinct marketing metrics that quantify the three dimensions of performance in relation to the distinctive three types of marketing request help marketing management to assess marketing strategic alliance performance. Performance data in relation to the pre-launch requests can be collected from mid-market tracking or internal pre-launch evaluation models enabling rapid identification of potential performance shortfalls.

Monitoring scheduling data to track the staffing of the several request types provides important insights on the timely and accountable marketing delivery of the marketing request. An additional strategic perspective is provided through a project management approach in which the time-to-completion of the planning process is monitored, as well as the time-to doing a collaborative resource based approach across the partners to establish a Marketing Priority Index that evaluates the request based on partner-defined performance criteria (Heikkilä et al., 2014) , (Bruni et al., 2017) , (Wilson, 2013).

6.3 Risk Management and Governance Structures

Strategic alliances can generate specific benefits but also introduce risks that need to be managed. Managers should assess threats and opportunities related to potential alliances and develop action plans to address them. They should also select a governance structure that is appropriate to the type of resources exchanged and related decision rights.

To mitigate the risk that partners do not deliver their share of contributions, the allocation of decision-making rights is a critical governance mechanism in alliances involving the exchange of resources such as joint marketing activities, R&D efforts, or financing (Martynov, 2011). Since input delivery is an essential antecedent to the realization of value, assigning exclusive decision rights on the contribution to one partner would allow that partner to determine not only the type of input shared but also the timing of that input and whether to make modifications. If a hollowness in the former input-sharing form exists, the partner may request for the input from the other partner without sharing anything in return, thereby making the contribution on both sides asymmetrical.

The need to allocate decision rights on resource-financing input that affects cash flow, capital investment, or investment schedule becomes salient if the cash or capital contributed is under the partner's financial control. The ability to flexibly set financing conditions according to each partner's need varies according to the type of alliance such as joint ventures, equity alliances, or nonequity collaborations.

7. Methodology of the research

In an attempt to answer the research problem, we opted for a qualitative approach in which we chose three different companies as a purposive sample to better understand the impact of the strategic alliances they accomplished on their marketing performance.

The sample for this study was limited to only three organizations. Although this number may appear restricted at first glance, this choice is justified by the qualitative nature of the research, which relies on in-depth interviews and the analysis of practical experiences. These companies were selected specifically based on purposive criteria, as they are among the most active organizations in the field of strategic alliances. Collectively, they have recorded more than 150 strategic alliances in recent years. This volume of alliances indicates the richness and diversity of experiences within these companies, making them an abundant source of data that enables a deep understanding of the mechanisms of alliance formation and their impact on marketing performance.

Furthermore, the choice of a small, yet highly experienced, sample is consistent with the methodological guidelines in qualitative research, which prioritize analytical depth and data quality over a large number of participants, especially when dealing with a complex topic like strategic alliances.

8. Results and discussion

After completing the interviews with the marketing managers of the three organizations, the content of the responses was transcribed and analyzed using thematic analysis. This methodology involves extracting recurring main ideas and categorizing them into analytical themes. The interview analysis revealed a set of common themes that represent the core themes of the study, namely:

First, the data showed that alliances had a tangible impact on improving brand image, with both managers reporting that being associated with a well-known or highly credible partner increased trust in their brand and awareness among a wider range of customers.

Second, regarding Market Reach and Penetration, the results showed that a large percentage of alliances contributed to expanding the market by opening new distribution channels and allowing entry into markets that the company was not previously able to reach (both local and foreign markets). Respondents confirmed that the partner played a pivotal role in accelerating the process of accessing new markets by benefiting from its reputation and customer base.

Third, with regard to marketing innovation, the majority of respondents indicated that alliances contributed to reducing the development cycle of new products and accelerating their referral to the market, thanks to the exchange of technical resources and the implementation of joint development projects.

All managers also agreed that entering into strategic alliances provides access to resources not available internally, especially specialized marketing knowledge, databases, and consumer analytics. They considered that the strategic partner in most of the alliances they formed had directly contributed to improving the quality of their marketing campaigns through the exchange of expertise and modern communication technologies.

Fourth, we notice from the answers of marketing managers that there is a great focus on the financial aspect. In their opinion, the increase in the level of sales is considered one of the most important results of strategic alliances. They also consider it the first factor in addition to expanding the market, which determines whether the alliance is worth continuing or cancelling and searching for a better partner.

Despite these positives, the interviews revealed the existence of some challenges, the most important of which was the difference in working methods between the partners and the difficulty of aligning goals sometimes (especially financial ones), which affected the effectiveness of the alliance and often led to the dissolution of the partnership between the allies.

The study results showed also that the impact of strategic alliances on the development of marketing performance is not only achieved through direct effects such as brand improvement or market expansion, but is also largely shaped by a set of indirect factors that act as mediating or modifying mechanisms for the relationship between alliances and marketing improvements.

Results indicated that alliance governance and resource integration are critical elements in transforming collaboration capabilities into tangible marketing results. Clarity of governance mechanisms, such as defining roles, knowledge exchange rules, and dispute resolution mechanisms, contributes to enhancing trust and reducing uncertainty, allowing for better investment of complementary resources between partners, thus promoting innovation and joint marketing.

The study also showed that the extent of compatibility between partners and cultural and organizational harmony significantly affects the quality of cooperation and the ability of companies to implement joint marketing initiatives efficiently. When organizational values converge and strategic visions align, the level of integration between work teams increases, which is reflected in the effectiveness of implementing joint campaigns and developing new products. Conversely, poor cultural alignment or different marketing logic may slow down decision-making processes and weaken the alliance's marketing value.

In addition, the results show that dynamic market conditions and intense competition play an important role in determining the extent to which companies benefit from their alliances. In highly competitive markets, alliances serve as a tool to increase market share and accelerate innovation, while in more stable markets, the impact of alliances is less prominent or depends on the partners' ability to create new added value. Sector dynamics

also determine the nature of possible marketing activities within the alliance, whether it is entering new markets, launching joint products, or adopting advanced marketing techniques.

These results confirm that the relationship between strategic alliances and marketing performance is not a direct, linear relationship, but rather one determined by a network of institutional, organizational, and market factors that should be taken into account when designing or evaluating any strategic alliance.

The following table summarizes the main findings from the study

Table N°1: Results summary of the field study

Main category	Results	Descriptions
Direct results on marketing performance	Market reach and penetration	Alliances allow faster entry to new markets with lowest costs
	Brand equity and co-branding effect	Alliances improve brand awareness and loyalty especially with foreign well-known companies, they also generate co-branding opportunity
	Customer acquisition and retention	Benefiting from a shared customer base and the partner reputation
	Innovation product development	Help fasten innovation cycles, reduce R and D costs and shorten the time of adopting new technologies
Indirect factors	Market conditions and competitive dynamics	Alliances give firms more power to face their competitors and improve their positioning
	Partner fit and cultural compatibility	Alliances may reduce conflicts and facilitate the flow of knowledge which positively impact marketing performance
	Alliance Governance	Decision making mechanism and the degree of control are essential to achieve the effectiveness of marketing collaboration
Methodological findings and applied implications	The importance of strategic alliances as a competitive strategy	Alliances give firms good opportunity to enhance innovation and marketing adaptability
	The contribution of strategic alliances depends on their shapes	The results depend on the structure of the alliance, partner type, level of control and activity sector
	The effect of indirect factors is interactive and not linear	The impact of governance appears as a mediator factor not as a permanent direct factor

Source: prepared by researchers based on the results of the empirical study

9. Conclusion

This study has shown that strategic alliances today constitute one of the fundamental pillars upon which organizations rely to enhance their marketing performance and develop their innovative capabilities in an environment characterized by rapid change and intense competition. The results showed that alliances not only provide direct opportunities to improve marketing performance indicators such as strengthening brands, expanding market share, attracting and retaining customers, and accelerating product development processes, but their effects extend to a deeper scope linked to a set of factors that shape the true structure of the added value resulting from these partnerships.

Field analysis has highlighted that alliance governance represents a pivotal factor in determining the level of effectiveness of marketing cooperation between partners, as clarity of decision-making mechanisms and organization of knowledge exchange contribute to ensuring harmony of activities and raising the level of joint productivity. The results also confirmed the importance of integrating resources between allied institutions, especially with regard to knowledge, marketing capabilities, and technology, as this integration makes it possible to develop innovative marketing initiatives that go beyond what each institution can achieve individually. On the other hand, the study proved that the extent of partner compatibility and cultural and organizational harmony constitutes a major determinant of the success of alliances, as it enhances trust, reduces the level of conflict, and supports building common visions towards marketing initiatives. In the absence of this consensus, the effectiveness of joint activities often declines, and the challenges associated with coordinating efforts between parties increase. In addition, market conditions and competitive dynamics profoundly influence the marketing returns of alliances. Extremely competitive contexts and organizations operating in rapidly changing industries push them to use alliances as a tool to keep pace with transformations, quickly access markets, and develop more innovative products.

Overall, the results indicate that adopting strategic alliances has become an existential necessity for many organizations seeking to maintain their position and continue growth. However, their true effectiveness can only be achieved through conscious management of the indirect factors surrounding them. This requires institutions to develop more mature practices in governance management, partner selection, and enhancing organizational integration, while continuously adapting to market dynamics.

Thus, this study contributes to enriching the literature on strategic alliances from a marketing perspective, by highlighting the complex roles of direct impact and indirect underlying factors. It also opens the way for more in-depth future research to analyze how these factors interact with each other, and to explore new models of alliances capable of enhancing marketing innovation in different sectors, whether at the local or international level.

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