The role of marketing communication mix on Korean customers' coffee shop brand evaluations

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Abstract

Purpose – This study investigates relationships among components of the marketing communication mix, brand identification, brand image, brand love and brand loyalty. The focus of this study is advertisement spending, customers' attitudes toward the advertisement, monetary promotion and non-monetary promotion as marketing communication mix elements.

Design/methodology/approach – Proposed relationships are investigated with 683 previous coffee shop customers, based on a cross-section, online, self-administered survey in South Korea.

Findings – Results identify advertising spending, attitude toward the advertisement, monetary promotion, and non-monetary promotion play key roles in influencing brand identification; however, they do not influence brand image. Both brand identification and brand image further influence brand love on brand loyalty.

Originality/value – This study is the first to investigate the marketing communication mix elements in a coffee shop context.

Keywords Advertising, Sales promotions, Brand image, Brand identification, Brand love, Brand loyalty, Coffee shop industry

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

The branded coffee shop chain segment is increasing by 3.1 percent in outlets; and the coffee shop market is expected to reach $85 billion by 2025 (ctPRESS, 2016). Due to the intense competition among coffee brands, developing customers' brand loyalty is a crucial factor in sustaining business in the coffee shop industry (Han *et al.*, 2018). To cultivate strong brand loyalty, coffee shops launch innovative promotion programs. For instance, Starbucks offers a happy hour with a BOGO (buy-one-get-one-free) offer to boost sales. It also provides special offers to Starbucks Rewards members only, such as the opportunity to redeem rewards points in exchange for a planner at the beginning of the year.

The brand relationship paradigm, which explains customers' long-lasting relationships with the brand (Fournier, 1998), is important to better understand brand loyalty. Research into the brand relationship paradigm proposes and tests various concepts, such as brand image (Park *et al.*, 1986) and brand identification (Escalas and Bettman, 2003). These different concepts are important to understand customers' brand loyalty (Oliver, 1999). As a matured industry, the coffee shop business is highly competitive; thus, marketers need to search for innovative ways to improve brand loyalty and attract more customers (Cha *et al.*, 2016).

Academics show an increased interest on the effectiveness of marketing communication mix since it is considered a key benefit for developing a strong brand (Keller, 2009). The communication mix is a set of components that reintegrate with each other to attain desirable marketing objectives (Kotler *et al.*, 2006). The communication mix positively influences

organizational performance and the development of customers' brand loyalty (Berezan *et al.*, 2016). However, research in the relationship between the marketing communication mix and customers' brand evaluation is scant and calls for more investigation in the hospitality industry (Yoo and Bai, 2013). Previous researchers point out the importance of understanding coffee shop brand marketing management techniques (Choi *et al.*, 2017). Despite the significance of understanding brand loyalty, prior study has not examined how marketing communication influences brand loyalty in the Korean coffee shop industry. Thus, this study explores relationships among the elements of a marketing communication mix, brand identification, brand image, brand love and brand loyalty. Based on the Buil *et al.*'s (2013) study, this study investigates four components of the communication mix in the coffee shop industry-advertising spending, customers' attitude toward the advertisement, monetary promotion and non-monetary promotion.

Results of this study provide academic and managerial implications. This study is the first research to provide a theoretical framework that identifies effects of marketing communication mix elements on customers' brand evaluations in the coffee shop industry. Also, this study investigates various aspects of customers' brand evaluations, including brand identification, brand image, brand love and brand loyalty, as a way of sustaining the relationship between customer and brand. As the coffee shop industry undergoes intensified competition, findings of this study suggest coffee shop brands forecast desirable customer behaviors by effectively utilizing their marketing communication mix activities.

Literature review
Four components of the communication mix
Communication is a human activity that creates relationships between or among people (Duncan and Moriarty, 1998). It serves as a way to expand, organize and share knowledge to each other (Duncan and Moriarty, 1998). Marketing develops communications to create awareness of products and services and generate interest in business offerings to customers (Hsu and Chen, 2018). Marketing communication mix elements are important in developing customers' brand equity (Yoo *et al.*, 2000). Porcu *et al.* (2019) identify the importance of marketing communication on market performance in the hospitality industry. In particular, they identify the importance of adopting integrated marketing communication in efficiently managing hospitality organizations.

Following the Buil *et al.* (2013) study, this study explores four components of the communication mix. The first component, advertisements, is one of the most discernible marketing activities in the communication mix, sharing a brand's functional and emotional values (de Chernatony, 2010). The success of the advertising and its ability to influence people depends on how well the advertising fits the organization's objectives (Kotler *et al.*, 2006). Advertising spending increases the scope and frequency of brand appearance, which enhances brand awareness (Chu and Keh, 2006).

Attitude toward an advertisement is the second component and refers to customers' affective reactions to the advertisement itself. It is one of the most important customer responses when evaluating advertising effectiveness (MacKenzie and Lutz, 1989). Advertisements create brand awareness, link strong customer-brand associations and stimulate positive brand judgements (Keller, 2007). Customers' attitudes toward advertisements play an important role in influencing brand equity (Cobb-Walgren *et al.*, 1995) and their purchase behaviors (Lu *et al.*, 2014).

The third component, promotion, is one of the most important elements in the process of marketing communication (Van Waterschoot and Van den Bulte, 1992). Different types of promotional tools have different effects on sales, profitability or brand equity (Srinivasan and

Anderson, 1998). For instance, sales promotion is a key marketing tool in communication programs that influence brand equity (Valette-Florence *et al.*, 2011). Huang *et al.* (2014) identify when customers perceive price promotions at Starbucks in Taiwan as a reward or incentive, those promotions enhance customers' favorable evaluations. They identify price promotion positively influences food quality and service quality, which further shows positive effects on satisfaction and repeat purchase intention.

Non-monetary promotions, such as free gifts, free samples and sweepstakes, are the fourth component of the communication mix, which are important in promotional strategies (Palazón and Delgado, 2009). Non-monetary promotions help differentiate brands and improve brand equity (Chu and Keh, 2006). Unlike monetary promotions, non-monetary promotions do not influence customers' internal reference prices (Campbell and Diamond, 1990), which lead to a less negative influence on perceived quality. Non-monetary promotions evoke more associations related to brand personality, enjoyable experiences and emotions (Buil *et al.*, 2013).

Brand identification
Brand identification refers to customers' perceptions of sameness between the brand and the consumer (Tuškej *et al.*, 2013). Brands are able to represent significant aspects of the customer identity (Fournier, 1998). Different factors influence brand identification. Stokburger-Sauer *et al.* (2012) investigate antecedents of brand identification, identifying brand-self similarity, brand distinctiveness, brand prestige, brand social benefits, brand warmth and memorable brand experiences as drives of consumer-brand identification. In addition, brand identification plays an important role in the hospitality industry. So *et al.* (2013) identify the role of customer-brand identification in influencing service quality, perceived value and brand trust, which all influence brand loyalty.

Brand image
Brand image refers to "perceptions about a brand reflected by the brand associations held in consumer memory" (Keller, 1993, p. 3). Brand image is the heart of an organization's promotional activity (Bendapudi *et al.*, 1996) since it shapes customers' attitudes toward the brand and influences customer behavior (Romaniuk and Nenycz-Thiel, 2013). Brand image is emphasized in many different contexts, including hotels (Chiang and Jang, 2007), destinations (Chen and Tsai, 2007), restaurants (Ryu *et al.*, 2012) and coffee shops (Han *et al.*, 2018). For instance, Han *et al.* (2018) identify brand image as a factor of cognitive drivers of brand loyalty in the coffee shop industry.

Customers develop brand identification and brand image, reflected by the four elements of marketing communication mix. Prior research identifies the positive influence of advertising spending on brand equity (Yoo *et al.*, 2000), perceived quality (Moorthy and Hawkins, 2005) and brand image (Meenaghan, 1995). In addition, the influence of price discounting on customers' reference price leads to favorable quality evaluations (DelVecchio *et al.*, 2006). On the other hand, the frequent use of price promotions leads to a negative impact on perceived quality and brand association because customers use price as an extrinsic cue to infer product quality (Agarwal and Teas, 2002). Negative influences of monetary promotion are due to the relationship between internal reference price and deteriorated perceived quality perception (Buil *et al.*, 2013). Moreover, non-monetary promotion strategies enhance brand equity (Montaner and Pina, 2008) and brand associations to the brand (Palazón and Delgado, 2009). Therefore, when a coffee shop offers different marketing communication elements, customers are predicted to evaluate the coffee shop brand. Thus, the following hypotheses are proposed.

H1. Customers' perceptions of a coffee shop brand's advertising spending positively influence (1) brand identification and (2) brand image.

H2. Customers' attitudes toward a coffee shop brand's advertisement positively influence (1) brand identification and (2) brand image.

H3. Customers' perceptions of a coffee shop brand's monetary promotion positively influence (1) brand identification and (2) brand image.

H4. Customers' perceptions of a coffee shop brand's non-monetary promotion positively influence (1) brand identification and (2) brand image.

Brand love

Brand love refers to the degree of customers' passionate, emotional attachments toward a brand (Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006). The self-inclusion theory of love supports brand love (Aron and Aron, 1986). Customers develop brand love when a brand attains a high and desired level of integration with the customers' sense of self (Albert and Merunka, 2013). Scholars emphasize the importance of brand love. Carroll and Ahuvia (2006) propose that brand love includes passion, attachment, positive evaluations of the brand, positive emotions in response to the brand and declarations of love for the brand. In addition, Song *et al.* (2019a) identify the moderating role of brand love in a name-brand coffee shops context. They find lovemarks, brand love and brand respect, have a significant moderating effect between satisfaction and brand loyalty and between brand trust and brand loyalty. Song *et al.* (2019b) also identify the importance of brand love that influences brand loyalty in the context of a name-brand coffee shop.

The relationship between brand identification and brand love is predicted to be positive. Albert and Merunka (2013) identify positive effects of brand identification on brand love and brand commitment. Tuškej *et al.* (2013) also confirm the positive relationship between brand identification and positive word-of-mouth. Therefore, the following hypothesis is posited.

H5. Brand identification positively influences (1) brand image, (2) brand love and (3) brand loyalty.

In addition, when customers form favorable brand images, they have better value perceptions and develop deeper purchase intentions (Chiang and Jang, 2007). Therefore, it is predicted that brand image has a positive impact on brand love and brand loyalty, proposing the following hypothesis.

H6. Brand image positively influences (1) brand love and (2) brand loyalty.

Brand loyalty

According to Kotler and Keller (2009), the essential value of a brand is its ability to develop loyalty. Brand loyalty plays a powerful role in influencing potential customers' decision-making processes (Drennan *et al.*, 2015). Due to the intensified competitions in the coffee shop industry, brand loyalty is emphasized for coffee brands (Song *et al.*, 2019a). For instance, Busser and Shulga (2019) investigate the importance of loyalty as an antecedent of trust and its outcomes of transparency, authenticity and involvement with consumer-generated advertising in the US-based coffee shop brand.

Prior research supports the concept that customers experience a feeling of love for their brand (Batra *et al.*, 2012). Prior study identifies outcomes of brand love, which influences brand loyalty (Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006) and active participation in a brand community (Bergkvist and Bech-Larsen, 2010). Based on the well-identified relationship between brand love and brand loyalty (Batra *et al.*, 2012), the following hypothesis is proposed in a coffee shop context.

H7. Brand love positively influences brand loyalty.

A conceptual framework
Developing brand loyalty is important in a highly competitive coffee shop industry (Song *et al.*, 2019a). Based on proposed relationships, Figure 1 illustrates the conceptual framework in this study. The framework explains the role of marketing communication mix elements on customers' brand evaluations in the context of coffee shop industry.

Methodology
Study context and data collection
South Korean markets are saturated with coffee shop business (Lee and Kim, 2016). The total sales of the South Korean coffee industry increase annually, with an estimated market value of 10.8 billion US\$ in 2017. The number of coffee chains is estimated to reach 88,500, a 63 percent increase from 2015, which is roughly one coffee chain for every 600 South Koreans (World Coffee Portal, 2018). The global coffee brand "Starbucks" is ahead of all other domestic coffee brands and is the undisputed leader in South Korea in terms of the number of stores and sales (Park, 2017). This study focuses on domestic coffee brands to provide insight into domestic brand marketing managers on how to stimulate consumer engagement with their brands and, in turn, increase sales.

The study sample consisted of customers who visited coffee shops more than three times a week. This study conducted data collection between August and September 2015 in South Korean districts within the major cities of Incheon, Busan, Seoul, Gwangju, Daegu and Ulsan. To collect data, this study conducted surveys at a total of nine franchise coffee shops including both global brands (Coffee Bean and Tea Leaf, Starbucks) and local brands (Ediya Coffee, A Twosome Place, Hollys Coffee, Angel in-Us, Tom N Toms, Caffé Bene, and Caffé Pascucci). These coffee shop brands were selected because they were popular coffee shop brands in South Korea and Korean customers were familiar with these coffee shop brands. In addition, these brands offered symbolic value to customers carrying their unique brand images.

Field researchers were trained with the basic knowledge of the research purposes and ethical issues on conducting field research visited each coffee shop brand's outlets and asked store managers and/or owners to distribute the survey to their regular customers. Every 10th customer who entered the outlets was asked to fill out the questionnaire by the managers and/
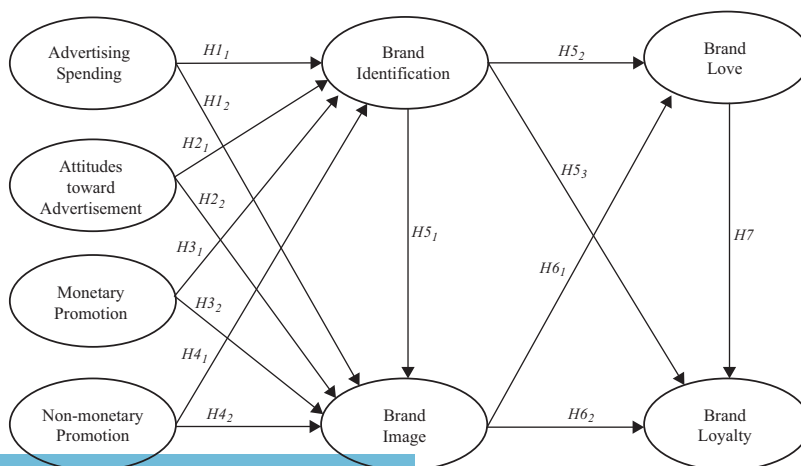
Figure 1.
A proposed model

or owners that agreed to participate in this study. Only customers who were older than 18 years old and visited the coffee shop more than three times a week were selected to participate in the survey. The participants were then provided a free dessert or beverage menu item to minimize non-response bias. A total of 705 responses were gathered. Twenty-two surveys were rejected from inclusion due to missing information and incomplete responses, resulting in an 89 percent response rate. Therefore, a total of 683 surveys were used for data analysis.

Measures

Each item was measured on a 7-point Likert-type scale anchored by "strongly disagree" and "strongly agree." Since customers had little knowledge of actual marketing efforts, the measurements of marketing communication tools relied on perceived marketing efforts (Buil *et al.*, 2013; Yoo *et al.*, 2000). Marketing communication tools were measured with four dimensions of Buil *et al.*'s (2013) study, including advertising spend (customers' perceptions of advertising spend), attitudes toward advertisement (customers' perceptions of advertising as creative, original and different from other competing brands' advertising), monetary promotion (direct discounts and coupons) and non-monetary promotion (free gifts, free samples, sweepstakes and contests). Brand identification was measured with three items from Tuškej *et al.*'s (2013) study. Brand image was measured with three items from Severi and Ling's (2013) study. Brand love was measured with ten items from Carroll and Ahuvia (2006). Brand loyalty was measured with six items adopted from Xie *et al.*'s (2015) study for capturing purchasing intention, willingness to pay and word-of-mouth intentions.

A translation and back translation methods were used to convert the questions from English to Korean (Brislin, 1970). Seven bilingual Korean graduate students and a bilingual professor from the United States repeated three rounds of back and forth translations, with the third version, in Korean, being compared to the original English version. The survey instrument was adopted after two bilingual professors in the hospitality discipline were satisfied with the clarity of the Korean translation. Pretesting of the questionnaire was performed on 30 coffee shop customers to test and improve the clarity of the questionnaire. The pretesting led to minor changes in wording, flow and interpretation of the questions before they were operationalized for use in this study.

Statistical analysis

The SPSS software was used for the sample characteristics and AMOS was used to test the proposed relationships in this study using structural equation modeling techniques. Cronbach's alphas were used to test the internal consistency of study constructs. Then, this study applied Anderson and Gerbing's (1988) two-step approach to test the proposed hypotheses. Based on the covariance approach of SEM, the overall model fit was assessed for the measurement model and structural equation model (Hox and Bechger, 1998). In addition, the indirect effects were examined with Bootstrap ML and Monte Carlo through the bootstrapping method of AMOS.

Results

Sample characteristics

As shown in Table I, over half of the participants were female (54 percent) or between 18 and 29 years of age (52 percent). Approximately two-thirds (65 percent) of the respondents graduated from or were attending a two- or four-year college. Annual household income range was distributed across the categories, showing 39 percent of participants made less than $50,000-$59,999 and 38 percent made less than $49,999.

Variables (N = 683)	Characteristics	Frequency (%)
Gender	Male	310 (46)
	Female	365 (54)
	Missing	8 (0)
Age	18–29	356 (52)
	30–39	185 (27)
	40–49	93 (14)
	50–59	40 (6)
	60 above	4 (0)
	Missing	5 (1)
Education	High school	173 (26)
	2 or 4-year college	438 (65)
	Graduate school	61 (9)
	Missing	11 (0)
Annual household income	Less than $49,999	258 (38)
	$50,000–$59,999	267 (39)
	$60,000–$69,999	86 (13)
	$70,000–$79,999	24 (3)
	$80,000 or above	35(5)
	Missing	13 (2)

Table I.
Demographic
characteristics

Measurement model
Reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha coefficients, which ranged from 0.898 to 0.965. Coefficients exceeding 0.70 were considered acceptable (Nunnally, 1978). All measures were then subjected to confirmatory factor analysis for validity testing (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988), using AMOS 20.0. Several items, which had factor loadings lower than 0.50, were dropped for further analysis to maintain an acceptable level of convergent and discriminant validity.

As shown in Table II, the confirmatory factor analysis results suggested a good fit: $\chi^2 = 873.826$ (d.f. = 271, $p < 0.001$), GFI = 0.905, AGFI = 0.877, RMSEA = 0.057, NFI = 0.956, CFI = 0.969 (Hair *et al.*, 1998). After the purification process, all standardized factor loadings exceeded 0.50 ($p < 0.01$), signifying evidence of convergent validity. In addition, the variance extracted in each construct exceeded the respective squared correlation estimate, showing evidence of discriminant validity (Fornell and Larcker, 1981) (see Tables II and III).

Confirmatory factor analysis was performed on each pair of primary measures to examine whether the model constraining the measures to be the same was significantly different from the unconstrained model (Rust *et al.*, 2002). The test results suggested evidence of discriminant validity across the constructs (see Table IV).

To test for common method bias, Harman's one-factor test was employed (Chang *et al.*, 2010). This test compared the fit of the proposed model, a multidimensional model, against the fit of a one-factor model. If the fit of the single-factor model was better than the proposed model, it suggested evidence of a common method bias (Podsakoff and Organ, 1986). The one-factor model yielded $\chi^2 = 10{,}973.663$, with d.f. = 299 (compared with $\chi^2 = 873.826$ and d.f. = 271 for the eight-dimensional measurement model). The fit was considerably worse for the unidimensional model, suggesting common method bias was not a serious threat in this study. In addition to Hartman's one-factor test, we controlled a portion of the variance in indicators that attributed to obtaining measures from the same source by re-estimating the structural model after adding a directly measured, "single-source" first-order factor to the indicators of all latent variables in the model (Cadwallader *et al.*, 2010). The results of this test, known as the marker variable technique, provided stronger evidence of our assertion that the

Constructs and variables [a]	Standardized loading	t-value
Advertising Spend (α = 0.905)		
This brand is intensively advertised	0.791	Fixed
This brand seems to spend a lot on its advertising compared to advertising for competing other brands	0.910	27.513
The advertisements for this brand are frequently shown	0.918	27.789
Attitudes toward Advertisement (α = 0.960)		
The advertisements for this brand are creative	0.954	Fixed
The advertisements for this brand are original	0.972	61.783
The advertisements for this brand are different from the advertisements for competing brands of others	0.906	45.213
Monetary Promotion (α = 0.939)		
This brand frequently offers price discounts	0.935	Fixed
This brand often uses price discounts	0.893	38.591
This brand uses price discounts more frequently than competing brands of others	0.919	41.658
Non-monetary Promotion (α = 0.965)		
This brand frequently offers gifts	0.935	Fixed
This brand often uses gifts	0.964	53.498
This brand uses gifts more frequently than competing brands of others	0.952	50.920
Brand Identification (α = 0.936)		
I feel that my personality and the personality of this brand are very similar	0.931	Fixed
I have a lot in common with other people using this brand	0.894	38.203
I feel that my values and the values of this brand are very similar	0.909	40.014
Brand Image (α = 0.898)		
This particular brand has a differentiated image in comparison with the other brand	0.841	Fixed
This particular brand has a clean image	0.905	29.384
This particular brand is well established	0.852	27.151
Brand Love (α = 0.941)		
This is a wonderful brand[*]	–	
This brand makes me feel good[*]	–	
This brand is totally awesome[*]	–	
I have special feelings about this brand[*]	–	
This brand makes me very happy	0.887	Fixed
I love this brand	0.915	36.632
I have particular feelings about this brand[*]	–	
This brand is a pure delight	0.890	34.383
I am passionate about this brand[*]	–	
I am very attached to this brand	0.888	34.196
Brand Loyalty (α = 0.912)		
I believe this coffee shop brand is my first choice for relevant products[*]	–	
I will choose this coffee shop brand next time when I buy this product category	0.835	Fixed
I am willing to try new products of this coffee shop brand	0.781	24.077
I am willing to pay a higher price for this coffee shop brand than others[*]	–	
It is very likely that I will recommend this coffee shop brand to people who ask for suggestion	0.927	31.371
I will speak positively about this coffee shop brand to others	0.867	28.336

Note(s): [a] $\chi^2 = 873.826$, d.f. $= 271$ (χ^2/d.f. $= 3.224$), $p < 0.001$, GFI $= 0.905$, AGFI $= 0.877$, RMSEA $= 0.057$, NFI $= 0.956$, CFI $= 0.969$; [*] Items were deleted during the confirmatory factor analysis

Table II.
Measurement model

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Advertising spend	1							
2. Attitudes toward advertisement	0.691**	1						
3. Monetary promotion	0.419**	0.525**	1					
4. Non-monetary promotion	0.522**	0.608**	0.690**	1				
5. Brand identification	0.338**	0.458**	0.476**	0.493**	1			
6. Brand image	0.276**	0.328**	0.324**	0.360**	0.566**	1		
7. Brand love	0.288**	0.413**	0.406**	0.453**	0.648**	0.658**	1	
8. Brand loyalty	0.204**	0.308**	0.299**	0.322**	0.544**	0.626**	0.643**	1
Mean	4.135	3.785	3.871	3.603	3.793	4.895	4.497	4.772
SD	1.506	1.577	1.533	1.624	1.565	1.223	1.304	1.283
CCR [a]	0.777	0.902	0.857	0.909	0.842	0.833	0.870	0.840
AVE [b]	0.538	0.755	0.666	0.770	0.640	0.625	0.625	0.568

Note(s): ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$; [a] Composite construct reliability; [b] Average variance extracted

Table III.
Construct intercorrelations (Φ), mean and standard deviation

	Constrained χ^2	df	Unconstrained χ^2	df	$\triangle\chi^2$	p^*
Advertising spend vs Attitudes toward advertisement	138.89	9	83.167	8	55.723	0.000
Advertising spend vs Monetary promotion	38.52	9	26.965	8	11.558	0.001
Advertising spend vs Non-monetary promotion	38.71	9	28.013	8	10.700	0.001
Advertising spend vs Brand identification	31.15	9	21.468	8	9.685	0.002
Advertising spend vs Brand image	160.19	9	110.789	8	49.408	0.000
Advertising spend vs Brand love	100.10	14	60.897	13	39.211	0.000
Advertising spend vs Brand loyalty	164.42	14	94.761	13	69.665	0.000
Attitudes toward advertisement vs Monetary promotion	27.65	9	18.207	8	9.448	0.002
Attitudes toward advertisement vs Non-monetary promotion	34.68	9	7.670	8	27.011	0.000
Attitudes toward advertisement vs Brand identification	17.59	9	13.574	8	4.025	0.045
Attitudes toward advertisement vs Brand image	51.17	9	32.972	8	18.206	0.000
Attitudes toward advertisement vs Brand love	64.04	14	43.353	13	20.692	0.000
Attitudes toward advertisement vs Brand loyalty	76.68	14	53.180	13	23.509	0.000
Monetary promotion vs Non-monetary promotion	114.91	9	59.660	8	55.256	0.000
Monetary promotion vs Brand identification	22.22	9	17.001	8	5.228	0.022
Monetary promotion vs Brand image	55.68	9	37.487	8	18.199	0.000
Monetary promotion vs Brand love	55.02	14	37.245	13	17.777	0.000
Monetary promotion vs Brand loyalty	60.85	14	37.986	13	22.873	0.000
Non-monetary promotion vs Brand identification	19.64	9	14.500	8	5.146	0.023
Non-monetary promotion vs Brand image	25.51	9	13.799	8	11.712	0.000
Non-monetary promotion vs Brand love	49.42	14	44.127	13	5.297	0.021
Non-monetary promotion vs Brand loyalty	56.85	14	36.333	13	20.523	0.000
Brand identification vs Brand image	16.81	9	10.394	8	6.425	0.011
Brand identification vs Brand love	83.94	14	41.364	13	42.576	0.000
Brand identification vs BL	49.82	14	39.450	13	10.371	0.001
Brand image vs Brand love	72.60	14	68.372	13	4.233	0.040
Brand image vs Brand loyalty	73.26	14	63.223	13	10.04	0.002
Brand love vs Brand loyalty	92.95	20	87.041	19	5.914	0.015

Table IV.
Chi-square difference test for discriminant validity of the measures

magnitude of standardized estimates and overall pattern of significant relationships were not influenced by common method variance.

Structural model and test of hypotheses
The overall model fit indices suggested the model fit the data well: $\chi^2 = 897.721$, d.f. = 297, $p < 0.001$, GFI = 0.902, AGFI = 0.877, NFI = 0.954, CFI = 0.968, RMR = 0.083, RMSEA = 0.057 (Hair *et al.*, 1998). Maximum likelihood estimates for the parameters of the model are explained in Figure 2 and Table V.

H1 to H4 predicted elements of the marketing communication mix affected brand identification and brand image. The results showed advertising spend (coefficient = 0.174, t-value = 2.407, $p < 0.05$), attitudes toward advertisement (coefficient = 0.362, t-value = 4.757, $p < 0.01$), monetary promotion (coefficient = 0.215, t-value = 4.149, $p < 0.01$) and non-monetary promotion (coefficient = 0.239, t-value = 4.354, $p < 0.01$) influenced brand identification. However, elements of the marketing communication mix did not affect brand image. Therefore, $H1_1$, $H2_1$, $H3_1$, and $H4_1$ were supported, but $H1_2$, $H2_2$, $H3_2$, and $H4_2$ were not supported.

$H5_1$ to $H5_3$ posited brand identification affected brand image, brand love and brand loyalty. The results showed brand identification significantly affected brand image (coefficient = 0.562, t-value = 12.283, $p < 0.01$), brand love (coefficient = 0.536, t-value = 16.110, $p < 0.01$) and brand loyalty (coefficient = 0.120, t-value = 2.265, $p < 0.05$). Thus, $H5_1$, $H5_2$ and $H5_3$ were supported. $H6_1$ and $H6_2$ postulated brand image affected brand love and brand loyalty. The results showed brand image significantly influenced brand love (coefficient = 0.427, t-value = 12.582, $p < 0.01$) and brand loyalty (coefficient = 0.261, t-value = 5.195, $p < 0.01$). Therefore, $H6_1$ and $H6_2$ were supported. Lastly, H7 postulated brand love influenced brand loyalty. The results showed brand love significantly influenced brand loyalty (coefficient = 0.632, t-value = 9.090, $p < 0.01$), supporting H7.

In addition, the indirect effects of marketing communication mix elements on brand love and brand loyalty were analyzed with Bootstrap ML and Monte Carlo through the bootstrapping
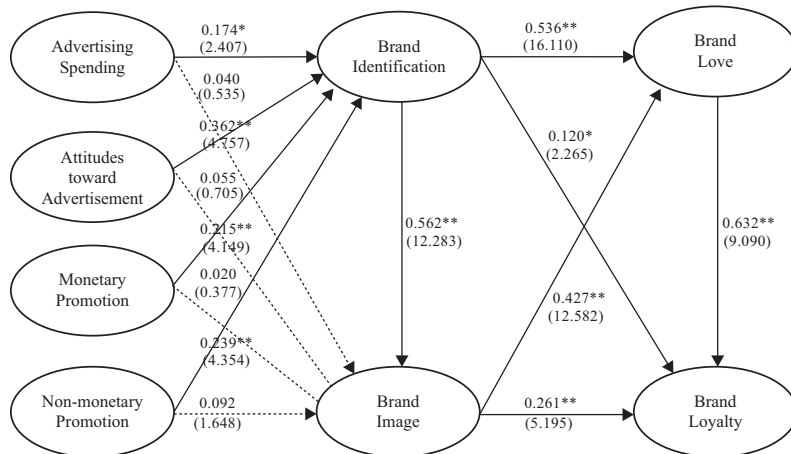
Figure 2.
Estimates of
structural model

Note(s): Standardized coefficient (*t*-value), Solid line: significant path,
Dotted line: insignificant path. ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$

Path	Proposed model [a] Standardized estimates	t-value	Alternative model [b] Standardized estimates	t-value
H1$_1$ Advertising Spend → Brand Identification	0.174	2.407[*]	0.175	2.416[*]
H1$_2$ Advertising Spend → Brand Image	0.040	0.553	0.038	0.516
H2$_1$ Attitudes toward Advertisement → Brand Identification	0.362	4.757[**]	0.363	4.764[**]
H2$_2$ Attitudes toward Advertisement → Brand Image	0.055	0.705	0.053	0.680
H3$_1$ Monetary Promotion → Brand Identification	0.215	4.149[**]	0.215	4.150[**]
H3$_2$ Monetary Promotion → Brand Image	0.020	0.377	0.022	0.410
H4$_1$ Non-monetary promotion → Brand Identification	0.239	4.354[**]	0.238	4.344[**]
H4$_2$ Non-monetary promotion → Brand Image	0.092	1.648	0.098	1.741
H5$_1$ Brand Identification → Brand Image	0.562	12.283[**]	0.560	12.247[**]
H5$_2$ Brand Identification → Brand Love	0.536	16.110[**]	0.536	16.106[**]
H5$_3$ Brand Identification → Brand Loyalty	0.120	2.265[*]	0.095	1.656
H6$_1$ Brand Image → Brand Love	0.427	12.582[**]	0.428	12.590[**]
H6$_2$ Brand Image → Brand Loyalty	0.261	5.195[**]	0.267	5.323[**]
H7$_1$ Brand Love → Brand Loyalty	0.632	9.090[**]	0.631	9.122[**]
Advertising Spend → Brand Loyalty			0.070	1.130
Attitudes toward Advertisement → Brand Loyalty			0.054	0.818
Monetary Promotion → Brand Loyalty			0.029	0.641
Non-monetary promotion → Brand Loyalty			0.083	1.747

Indirect effects	Standardized estimates	p-value
Advertising Spend → Brand Love	0.152	0.025[*]
Advertising Spend → Brand Loyalty	0.111	0.051
Attitudes toward Advertisement → Brand Love	0.205	0.002[**]
Attitudes toward Advertisement → Brand Loyalty	0.216	0.004[**]
Monetary Promotion → Brand Love	0.158	0.003[**]
Monetary Promotion → Brand Loyalty	0.100	0.019[*]
Non-monetary promotion → Brand Love	0.225	0.002[**]
Non-monetary promotion → Brand Loyalty	0.172	0.001[**]

Exogenous variables	SMC (R^2)	SMC (R^2)
Brand Identification	0.345 (34.5%)	0.345 (34.5%)
Brand Image	0.382 (38.2%)	0.382 (38.2%)
Brand Love	0.750 (75.0%)	0.750 (75.0%)
Brand Loyalty	0.570 (57.0%)	0.577 (57.7%)

Note(s): [**]$p < 0.01$, [*]$p < 0.05$; [a] $\chi^2 = 897.721$, d.f. $= 279$, $p < 0.001$, GFI $= 0.902$, AGFI $= 0.877$, NFI $= 0.954$, CFI $= 0.968$, RMR $= 0.083$, RMSEA $= 0.057$; [b] $\chi^2 = 891.420$, d.f. $= 275$, $p < 0.001$, GFI $= 0.903$, AGFI $= 0.876$, NFI $= 0.955$, CFI $= 0.968$, RMR $= 0.085$, RMSEA $= 0.057$

Table V.
Standardized parameter estimates

method of AMOS. The results indicated spending on advertising had a significant, indirect impact on brand love. However, attitudes toward advertisements, monetary promotions and non-monetary promotions had significant, indirect impacts on brand love and brand loyalty, respectively.

Hypotheses	Relationship	Results
$H1_1$	Brand's advertising spending → brand identification	Supported
$H1_2$	Brand's advertising spending → brand image	Not supported
$H2_1$	Customers' attitudes toward a coffee shop brand's advertisement → brand identification	Supported
$H2_2$	Customers' attitudes toward a coffee shop brand's advertisement → brand image	Not supported
$H3_1$	A coffee shop brand's monetary promotion → brand identification	Supported
$H3_2$	A coffee shop brand's monetary promotion → brand image	Not supported
$H4_1$	A coffee shop brand's non-monetary promotion → brand identification	Supported
$H4_2$	A coffee shop brand's non-monetary promotion → brand image	Not supported
$H5_1$	Brand identification → brand image	Supported
$H5_2$	Brand identification → brand love	Supported
$H5_3$	Brand identification → brand loyalty	Supported
$H6_1$	Brand image → brand love	Supported
$H6_2$	Brand image → brand loyalty	Supported
H7	Brand love → brand loyalty	Supported

Table VI.
A summary of
hypotheses testing
results

To test the mediating roles of brand identification, brand image and brand love between marketing communication tools and brand loyalty, direct paths from marketing communication tool dimensions to brand loyalty were added (Preacher and Hayes, 2008). A chi-square difference test was conducted to examine if the alternative model was not significantly different from the proposed model. The result showed the alternative model, with direct paths from marketing communication tool dimensions to brand loyalty, had a good overall model fit as well: $\chi^2 = 891.420$, d.f. $= 275$, $p < 0.001$, GFI $= 0.903$, AGFI $= 0.876$, NFI $= 0.955$, CFI $= 0.968$, RMR $= 0.085$ and RMSEA $= 0.057$. The path coefficients of the alternative model are given in Table V. The alternative model did not have any significant path from marketing communication tool dimensions to brand loyalty. Table VI explains a summary of hypotheses testing.

Discussion

Increasing the level of brand loyalty is one of the most critical and challenging issues in the coffee shop industry due to its competitiveness (Han *et al.*, 2018). Brand managers build customers' brand loyalty by understanding the importance of the marketing communication mix. However, customers' brand loyalty formation through the marketing communication mix has not been sufficiently investigated. This study fills the void in the current coffee shop business literature. The proposed conceptual framework explores different elements of the communication mix on customers' responses toward coffee shop brands. This study is one of the first attempts to explain the relationships between the marketing communication mix and brand evaluations in the context of the Korean coffee shop industry.

Results identified the importance of the marketing communication mix on customers' brand identification. Advertising spending, attitudes toward the advertisement, monetary promotions and non-monetary promotions all showed positive effects on customers' brand identification. These communication mix elements helped customers feel connected toward the brand. Results further illustrated advertising spending impacts on brand love, though attitudes toward advertisements, monetary promotions and non-monetary promotions had significant and indirect impacts on brand love and brand loyalty, respectively. Since the

theoretical understanding of exploring the nature of coffee shop marketing communication mix was still an under explored area, the findings of this study reinforced the effects of marketing communication mix elements on customers' brand loyalty formation. The results of this study indicated that advertising spending, attitudes toward the advertisement, monetary promotions and non-monetary promotions were important as direct triggers of brand identification and indirect contributors to brand loyalty.

Marketing communication mix elements did not influence brand image. Results were due to the short-term effects of marketing communication mix elements. Image was different from identity since identity related more to a brand's personality, ideology and values (Bennett and Gabriel, 2003). In contrast, image captured customers' mental representations of a brand, beyond its reputation and identity (Bennett and Gabriel, 2003). Developing brand image required customers' active attention and additional, time-devoted activities (Michaelidou *et al.*, 2015).

Results of this study showed how to develop brand loyalty in the context of the Korean coffee shop industry. It was also worth noting that results of this research indicated very strong values of brand identification, brand image and brand love explained the relationship between brand loyalty and specific marketing communication methods. The relationships among brand identification, brand image, brand love and brand loyalty helped brand managers better understand the value of brand identification. Overall, brand identification, brand image and brand love had positive effects on brand loyalty. The findings of this study suggested brand management should be carefully practiced as different angles of brand management positively influenced the formation of brand loyalty in the coffee shop industry.

Conclusions
Theoretical implications
Given the importance of the marketing communication mix in the coffee shop industry, understanding ways to increase desirable customer behavior is an essential marketing strategy. Even though brand loyalty is investigated in the context of the coffee shop industry (e.g. Kim and Lee, 2017), few studies investigate brand loyalty in relation to the marketing communication mix. To deal with the highly competitive market, investigating ways to develop brand loyalty is important. Scholars call for more research on brand loyalty (Han *et al.*, 2018). The findings of this study fill this research gap by showing the significant effects of marketing communication mix elements on desirable customer brand evaluations. Specifically, this study is the first to investigate the marketing communication mix elements, including advertising spending, attitudes toward the advertisement, monetary promotions and non-monetary promotions and their outcomes in a coffee shop context.

The current study extends existing knowledge of the customer–brand relationship and contributes to customers' brand evaluation behaviors. Even though various marketing communication techniques are applied in the coffee shop industry (Porcu *et al.*, 2019), current literature lacks a holistic investigation of how marketing communication mix elements result in desirable customer brand evaluations in the coffee shop industry. This study empirically demonstrates marketing communication mix elements are effective in developing favorable brand responses. Thus, this study extends customer–brand relationship literature to the marketing communication mix and provides an insightful theoretical lens for future research.

Finally, the current study contributes to the field of marketing for coffee shops by investigating the important role of brand love. Specifically, this study identifies the relationships between antecedents and consequences of brand love in the coffee shop industry context. Understanding brand love is important in the coffee shop industry to better understand the emotional attachment of customers' brand evaluations (Song *et al.*, 2019a).

Even though prior literature explores the antecedents and consequences of brand love (Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006), this study is the first to empirically investigate the role of brand love in relation to the marketing communication mix, especially in the coffee shop industry context. This study also examines how brand love is explained by other customer–brand relationship constructs, including brand identification, brand image and brand loyalty.

Managerial implications

Coffee shop brands need to understand what attributes to customers' brand loyalty and strategically allocate their resources to enhance brand loyalty (Han *et al.*, 2018). Creating and maintaining customer loyalty help companies develop long-term, mutually beneficial relationships with customers (Pan *et al.*, 2012). Results provide suggestions to brand managers on ways to enhance customers' brand loyalty in the Korean coffee shop industry. Results also show the importance of advertising spending, attitudes toward the advertisement, monetary promotions and non-monetary promotions in forming customers' favorable brand evaluations. Coffee shop managers need to strategically allocate their marketing expenses among these communication mix elements to achieve desirable customer behavior. Given these results, coffee shop managers should consider various approaches to foster customers' brand identification, which will eventually increase the level of customers' brand love and brand loyalty toward the coffee shop.

Coffee shops need to create unique and distinctive advertising messages in various communication platforms to develop favorable brand identification. Coffee shops also need to develop favorable, positive customer attitudes toward the advertisement. Advertising should communicate the unique value of the coffee shop's personality. The results of this study confirm that providing stimulating, positive attitudes toward advertisements lead to brand identification. Depending on the location and target market and with the rapid growth of the coffee shop industry, marketers should develop unique concepts for their coffee shops by developing customers' positive attitudes toward the advertisement. A coffee shop's creative advertising strategies can be strongly connected to the coffee shop brand, which enhance developing brand love and brand loyalty.

In addition, coffee shops can incorporate monetary promotions on special occasions to develop favorable brand identification. Considering the negative effects of monetary promotion, coffee shop managers should carefully implement this strategy to keep the value and quality of the coffee shop brand. To efficiently utilize the monetary promotion, managers should identify each customers' preferences and characteristics. For instance, coffee shop managers can offer personalized monetary promotions, such as a complimentary gift to celebrate customer's special occasions or offering a discount to compensate customers' long wait time. Interaction with customers through efficient monetary promotion contributes to strong brand identification, which also enhances brand loyalty level.

Moreover, non-monetary promotions should be used to develop positive brand evaluations. Non-monetary promotion items carry symbolic values of the coffee shop brands, creating positive associations between customers and brands. Coffee shop managers can apply various communication platforms to directly or indirectly interact with customers by using social media or mobile applications. Regularly communicating with customers through various platforms helps coffee shops increase brand identification. Utilizing advanced technology, coffee shop managers should seek customers' opinions and ideas. For instance, coffee shop managers can regularly and frequently communicate with customers to advertise non-monetary promotions, which may make a long-lasting relationship with customers.

To enhance customers' brand loyalty, coffee shop managers should identify all possible approaches to improving brand loyalty. Understanding what creates a pleasant experience for coffee shop customers is an ongoing process. Coffee shop managers should conduct

periodic market research to investigate different ways to trigger a pleasant experience through communication mix elements. All of these different marketing communication efforts lead to customers' positive brand evaluations, which lead to the success of the business. Thus, coffee shop managers should pay special attention to effectively utilize marketing communication mix elements.

Limitations and suggestions for future research
This study had limitations, which suggested an agenda for possible future research. First, this study focused on the Korean coffee shop industry as a study context. Results might be different in different contexts. Some characteristics of the sample used in this study could also be considered a limiting factor. Although careful steps were taken to randomize the sample by allowing managers of the different shops to select participants of this study, participants chosen might not represent the overall, general customer. Additionally, the sample was slightly top-heavy in a few categories. The sample was overrepresented by respondents who made more than the average annual income for the area, with 39 percent of respondents noting an income of $50,000–$59,999. A sample with more diverse or representative participants might yield different results. In addition, the sample was also slightly heavy with female participants (54 percent) and participants who fell between the ages of 18–29 (52 percent). This age distribution might correctly assess the normal customers of coffee shops in Korea; however, it was also possible this sample impacted the results discovered in this study. Future research should seek to apply the method and analysis from this study on different industries and locations to increase generalizability.

Second, this study was conducted based on a cross-sectional study design and did not reflect the dynamic nature of the relationship phenomena that occurred in a customer–brand relationship over time. Future research should investigate the role of marketing communication mix elements on brand loyalty in a longitudinal study design. Third, this study adopted Carroll and Ahuvia's (2006) unidimensional measure of brand love. Future research should apply various dimensions of brand love to catch the complexity (Batra *et al.*, 2012).

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