

Structural Relationship between Benefit of Ski Wear Brand, Brand Emotion, Brand Satisfaction, Brand Trust, and Repurchase Intention

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to provide implications by conducting research on brand benefits for skiwear brand customers. For this purpose, a structural equation model was established and empirical research was conducted by selecting brand convenience as a hygiene variable and brand emotion, brand satisfaction, and repurchase intention as endogenous variables. In order to analyze the general characteristics of the subjects, frequency analysis was conducted using SPSS 25 and Cronbach's alpha analysis was conducted using the same statistical program. Confirmatory factor analysis and path analysis were conducted using AMOS 21. In addition, the benefits of skiwear brand, which is an independent variable, were composed of two sub-dimensions, and psychological benefits rather than functional benefits were found to have a stronger impact on brand emotion, suggesting practical implications.

Keywords: *Brand Benefit(functional, psychological), Brand Emotion, Brand, Satisfaction, Brand Truth, Repurchase Intention.*

1. Introduction

Today's sports goods are no longer available to consumers by emphasizing the excellence of the product, and the importance of the brand itself is increasing to the extent that it expresses that consumers buy products rather than buy them with functional benefits[1]. Skiing became known as winter sports and became a representative winter sports and leisure culture, and the ski population peaked at 6.86 million in the 2011-2012 season, but fell to one-third of 2.13 million in 2021-2022 [2]. This is because outdoor activities have shrunk due to the influence of COVID-19 that occurred in 2020.

However, the more fundamental problem is that the younger generation is decreasing due to abnormal high temperature phenomenon, low fertility and aging, and the younger generation is avoiding intense sports participation due to the growth of the smartphone game market. Due to this market situation, related industries are also on the decline, and some companies are closing or maintaining their production lines due to sluggish sales of ski-related products[3].

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In this situation, the sharp decline in the number of ski participants is threatening the ski goods and ski wear industries. According to an e-commerce company, sales of ski and snowboard goods fell 26% year-on-year until November 2022, and a buyer in charge of sports at a department store said, "The regular ski goods stores already left four to five years ago, and occasionally hold pop-up events in the winter season, but their performance is not good[4]."

For skiwear brands, preferred brands are foreign brands such as Descente, Goldwin, Phoenix, Spider, Mizuno, Salomon, Atomic, and Onone. The domestic skiwear industry is very weak at home and abroad. Therefore, in order to understand the importance of benefits pursued by consumers, this study selected brand benefits as exogenous variables by dividing them into functional benefits and psychological benefits. In addition, we intend to provide meaningful information for skiwear brand research by empirically analyzing and analyzing the structural equation model by consisting of brand emotion, brand satisfaction, brand trust, and repurchase intention as exogenous variables.

2. Study Hypothesis

The current study established hypothesis based on theoretical bases from previous literature. The causal relationships among brand benefits, brand emotion, brand satisfaction, brand trust, brand repurchase intention were the focus of the study. The following sections discuss the detailed relationship between these concepts, based on the model of the current research.

2.1 Relationship between Brand Benefit and Brand Emotion

Many studies on benefits and emotions have been conducted on how they affect customers' emotions, focusing on relational benefits. In this regard, previous studies have shown that psychological benefits, economic benefits, and customization benefits have a statistically significant effect on positive emotions in the study of how relationship benefits of tourism restaurant consumers affect positive emotions [5]. In addition, research on brand benefits and consumers' emotional responses, which are more closely related to this study, was also conducted. In Kim's study, brand benefits were divided into three dimensions (function, experience, and symbol), and the causal relationship between customer's emotional response and love was empirically analyzed. As a result, all three dimensions had a statistically significant effect on love [6]. Based on the results of these previous studies, the benefits of ski wear brands are expected to affect brand emotions.

Hypothesis 1. Brand benefit(1a: functional, 1b: psychological) will have a significant effect on brand emotion.

2.2 Relationship between Brand Emotion and Brand Satisfaction

Positive emotions formed about the product increase the overall user satisfaction with the product [7]. The empirical study on brand emotion and brand satisfaction is as follows. First, in the study on the brand experience of sporting goods consumers related to this research topic, consumers' positive emotions have a positive effect on customer satisfaction [8]. In addition, the study of family restaurant customers also showed that customers' favorable feelings had a positive effect on brand satisfaction [9]. The study of hotel customers also examined the effect of brand emotion on customer satisfaction [10]. Based on the previous studies, the following hypotheses were established.

Hypothesis 2. Brand emotion will have a significant effect on brand satisfaction.

2.3 Relationship between Brand Emotion and Brand Trust

The empirical study on the relationship between brand emotion and brand trust is as follows. First, in the study of general apparel buyers, brand emotion has a positive effect on brand trust [11]. In addition, a study on the causal relationship between perceived brand benefits, emotional responses, and brand trust of leisure sports participants showed that functional benefits, symbolic benefits, and experiential benefits had a positive effect on brand trust [12]. Based on the previous studies, the following hypotheses were established.

Hypothesis 3. Brand emotion will have a significant effect on brand trust.

2.4 Relationship between Brand Satisfaction and Repurchase Intention

In order to establish hypotheses about brand satisfaction and repurchase intention, this study focused on purchase-related variables. In addition, in the empirical study on brand equity for sporting goods consumers, brand satisfaction has a positive effect on product purchase [13]. In addition, in the empirical study on brand equity for sporting goods consumers, brand satisfaction has a positive effect on product purchase [14]. In the study related to the repurchase intention of golf apparel consumers, a positive causal relationship was analyzed between brand satisfaction and repurchase intention [15]. Based on the above-mentioned previous studies, the following hypotheses were established.

Hypothesis 4. Brand satisfaction will have a significant effect on repurchase intention.

2.5 Relationship between Brand Trust and Repurchase Intention

In the previous studies on the relationship between brand trust and repurchase intention, brand trust has a significant positive effect on purchase intention in the analysis of the relationship between brand evidence and marketing communication of food service companies on brand attitude, trust and purchase intention [16]. In the study of premium coffee shops, brand trust and attitude were found to affect consumers' behavioral intentions, respectively, and trust and positive attitude toward a particular brand had a positive effect on consumers' future behavior [17]. In the category of sports apparel, Chung's study on golf apparel related to this study presented research results that brand trust affects repurchase intention [18].

Hypothesis 5. Brand trust will have a significant effect on repurchase intention.

Figure 1 shows the research model by synthesizing the research hypothesis presented based on the previous studies examined so far.

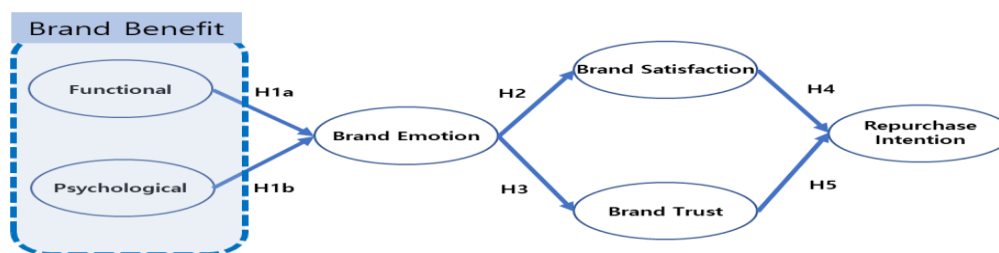


Figure 1. Research model

3. Research Method

3.1 Research Subjects

The subjects of this study were consumers who had purchased ski clothing and used it directly, and the researchers and surveyors visited the ski resort in person and conducted face-to-face surveys and non-face-to-

face mobile surveys. In the face-to-face survey, samples were collected using convenience sampling among non-probability sampling methods. For the mobile survey, a questionnaire was made using a system provided by the Korean Social-Science Data Center (KSDC), and a sample was extracted using the snowball sampling method through the collected information.

The survey procedure was to explain the purpose of the study to the subjects in face-to-face and non-face-to-face, and the questionnaire was distributed with the consent of the subjects. A total of 300 questionnaires were distributed, and 22 questionnaires that were judged to be inaccurate and inappropriate were removed and 278 questionnaires were used as final data.

3.2 Research Tools

The empirical tool of this study is a questionnaire, and the specific questionnaire composition is as follows: As a measurement tool, the items used in the previous studies were modified and supplemented according to the purpose of this study. The questionnaire was measured with 7 questions about brand benefits, which is an independent variable. Brand emotion, the first mediator variable, was measured with 3 items, brand satisfaction, the second mediator variable, was measured with 3 items, brand trust, the third mediator variable, was measured with 3 items, and repurchase intention, the last dependent variable, was measured with 3 items.

4. Results

4.1 Validity and Reliability Analysis

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) using Amos 21.0 was performed to verify the construct validity of the measurement model. Five items that hinder suitability and validity were removed. Finally, a confirmatory factor analysis was conducted on the measurement model that was removed. Looking at the suitability of the modified measurement model, the TLI was .968, the CFI was .962, and the RMSEA was .075. This fitness meets the general criteria. The suitability criteria are presented as general criteria for TLI and CFI above .9 and RMSEA below .08 [19].

Next, in order to verify convergence validity, the statistical significance of the standardized factor load connecting each component and the latent variable was analyzed, and whether the construct reliability exceeded the reference value of 0.7, and the average variance extracted value (AVE) exceeded the reference value of 0.5. The standardization factor load is $p < .01$ it was found to be statistically significant, and both conceptual reliability and AVE exceeded each reference value. The specific results are shown in Table 1 below. Next, it was judged whether or not the hypothesis ($\Phi = 1.0$) that discriminant validity is the same between concepts was rejected. That is, it is determined that there is a discriminant validity if the $\Phi \pm 2 \times \text{standard error}$ is not 1 in the 95% confidence interval [20]. As a result of calculating the calculation formula for the 15 correlation coefficients and standard errors existing in the measurement model, it is judged to be discriminant because '1' is not included in the range of the upper and lower limits <Table 2>.

Cronbach's α reliability analysis of the measurement variable for the latent variable whose validity was verified through confirmatory factor analysis was conducted. The reliability coefficient is .856~.967, and it is judged that the measurement variables have internal consistency, exceeding the general standard of .7 [21].

Table 1. Confirmatory factory analysis & reliability

Factors	Item	β	$1-\lambda^2$	t	AVE	C.R	Cronbach's α	
Brand Benefit	Functional 1	.725	.474		.671	.859	.856	
	Functional 3	.878	.229	13.809***				
	Functional 5	.846	.284	13.412***				
	Brand Benefit	Psychological 1	.916	.161		.799	.941	.939
		Psychological 2	.917	.159	25.681***			
		Psychological 3	.891	.206	23.705***			
		Psychological 4	.850	.278	21.112***			
Brand Emotion	Emotion 1	.915	.163		.848	.944	.941	
	Emotion 2	.969	.061	30.418***				
	Emotion 3	.877	.231	23.066***				
Brand Satisfaction	Satisfaction 1	.784	.385		.707	.878	.877	
	Satisfaction 2	.895	.199	16.697***				
	Satisfaction 4	.840	.294	15.416***				
Brand Trust	Trust 1	.825	.319		.754	.902	.907	
	Trust 2	.858	.264	17.242***				
	Trust 4	.920	.154	19.004***				
Repurchase Intention	Repurchase Intention 1	.927	.141		.909	.968	.967	
	Repurchase Intention 2	.977	.045	34.995***				
	Repurchase Intention 3	.955	.088	32.048***				

*** $p < .001$ **Table 2. Correlation analysis**

Factors	1	2	3	4	5	6
Functional Attributes	1					
Psychological Attributes	.763(.044)**	1				
Brand Emotion	.697(.049)**	.842(.031)**	1			
Brand Satisfaction	.726(.058)**	.737(.050)**	.713(.049)**	1		
Brand Trust	.676(.066)**	.605(.063)**	.637(.059)**	.826(.046)**	1	
Repurchase Intention	.617(.063)**	.676(.049)**	.677(.047)**	.868(.024)**	.800(.055)**	1

** $p < .01$, () is 's.e'

4.2 Hypothesis verification result

TLI, CFI, RMSEA, and indices were used to find out the suitability of the research model. Looking at the specific analysis results, TLI was .926, CFI was .937, and RMSEA was .094, indicating that it met the general suitability criteria presented above.

4.3 Hypothesis verification analysis

As a result of the suitability verification, the research model was judged to be suitable. Accordingly, next, a hypothesis test was conducted. Hypothesis 1 to Hypothesis 5 was verified. The results of the analysis are as follows. First, as a result of the verification of Hypothesis 1 on the effect of functional attributes on brand emotion, functional attributes are brand emotion [estimated path coefficient .199($t=2.530$, $p <.05$)] was found to have a positive effect, and Hypothesis 1 was adopted. Second, as a result of the verification of Hypothesis 2 on the effect of psychological attributes on brand emotion, psychological attributes are brand emotion [estimated path coefficient .694($t=10.915$, $p <.001$)] was found to have a positive effect and Hypothesis 2 was adopted. Third, as a result of verification of Hypothesis 3 on the effect of brand emotion on brand satisfaction, brand emotion is brand satisfaction [estimated path coefficient .693($t=12.828$, $p <.001$)] was found to have a positive effect and Hypothesis 3 was adopted. Fourth, as a result of verification of Hypothesis 4 on the effect of brand emotion on brand trust, brand emotion is brand trust [estimated path coefficient .641($t=11.848$, $p <.001$)] was found to have a positive effect and hypothesis 4 was adopted. Fifth, as a result of the verification of Hypothesis 5 on the effect of brand satisfaction on repurchase intention, brand satisfaction is repurchase intention [estimated path coefficient .788($t=11.895$, $p <.001$)] was found to have a positive effect and Hypothesis 5 was adopted. Sixth, as a result of the verification of Hypothesis 6 on the effect of brand trust on repurchase intention, brand trust is repurchase intention [estimated path coefficient .391($t =7.544$, $p <.001$)] was found to have a positive effect and Hypothesis 6 was adopted. Specific results are presented in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Hypothesis verification result

Hypothesis	Hypothesis	B	s.e	t
H1a	Functional Benefit → Brand Emotion	.199	.079	2.530*
H1b	Psychological Benefit → Brand Emotion	.694	.064	10.915***
H2	Brand Emotion → Brand Satisfaction	.693	.054	12.828***
H3	Brand Emotion → Brand Trust	.641	.054	11.848***
H4	Brand Satisfaction → Repurchase Intention	.788	.066	11.895***
H5	Brand Trust → Repurchase Intention	.391	.052	7.544***

* $p <.05$, *** $p <.001$

5. Conclusion

This study was conducted to provide meaningful information to related industries, mainly skiwear, in the ski industry, which has plummeted to one-third of the level in recent 10 years. It is expected that the performance of the company will increase if the benefits pursued by the consumers are met. In modern consumption, the importance of psychological benefits as well as the functional benefits of the product itself is also a very important attribute. Therefore, the structural equation model was analyzed to examine the causal relationship between the functional and psychological benefits of skiwear brands and brand emotion, brand satisfaction, brand trust, and repurchase intention.

Structural equation model analysis was analyzed in a two-stage approach method that performs measurement model verification and path analysis. As a result, all the hypotheses established in the study were analyzed at a statistically significant level and all were adopted. The specific results are as follows. First, it

was found that functional and psychological benefits had a positive (+) effect on both brand emotions. Second, it was found that brand emotion had a positive (+) effect on brand satisfaction. Third, it was found that brand emotion had a positive (+) effect on brand trust. Fourth, brand satisfaction was found to have a positive (+) effect on repurchase intention. Fifth, it was found that brand trust had a positive (+) effect on repurchase intention.

These results are summarized in Table 3, which shows that psychological benefits rather than functional benefits can have a strong impact on brand emotion. As mentioned in the introduction, the results of this study show that psychological factors are more appealing to consumers than functional factors, attributes, and benefits in modern consumption. In the case of ski wear, it is necessary to protect the snow and rain in the winter climate environment and to protect the body temperature of the skier in the sub-zero temperature, so the functional benefit will be very important. However, in this study, psychological benefits play a stronger role as an independent variable, and these results provide meaningful implications for ski wear brand companies.

The psychological benefits of ski wear should be compatible with the consumer's style. In addition, it is important to match consumers and ski equipment, and it should fit well with the beliefs and values of the pass. It should also be able to have high customer self-esteem. In the follow-up study, it is expected that qualitative research will be conducted through in-depth interviews or analysis of the value system for attributes, values, and benefits using the loading technique. If such research is conducted, it is judged that it is possible to develop products that reflect psychological benefits as well as functional benefits for the brand of skiwear brand consumers through the research results. Through this, it is believed that it will be possible to improve the performance of skiwear brand companies.

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