



## Drivers of brand loyalty in the chain coffee shop industry

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### ABSTRACT

The present study aimed to examine patrons' loyalty generation process for a chain coffee shop brand by considering the role of cognitive drivers, affective drivers, brand satisfaction, and relationship commitment. A field survey was conducted in chain coffee shops located in the popular shopping districts of a metropolitan city in South Korea. The proposed model was evaluated by using a structural equation analysis. The results revealed that cognitive and affective factors were in general significantly interrelated; such associations along with brand satisfaction and relationship commitment significantly influenced brand loyalty; and, the brand satisfaction was the most important contributor to building brand loyalty. In addition, the mediating role of study variables was identified. Overall, the proposed theoretical framework contained a sufficient level of explanatory power for brand loyalty. With a lack of research about coffee shop customers' purchasing behavior, the findings can be meaningfully used for the enhancement of customer loyalty.

### 1. Introduction

Coffee shops have definitely never been out-of-style. In fact, the business is increasingly gaining favor from geographically diverse groups of consumers. The 9.1% global sales growth between 2014 and 2015 has evidently proven the rapid expansion of this sector in the international market (Rompaey, 2016). In the U.S., there are a total of 131,000 coffee outlets currently in operation aiming to reach a receipt of \$85 billion by the year 2025 (Coffee Talk, 2016). Likewise, coffee shop sales in the U.K. have made an impressive hike of 28% from 2010 to 2015 and are expected to achieve another 26% growth in the next five years (Mintel, 2016). Not only does the industry immensely flourish in Western countries, the cradle of coffee-drinking lifestyles, but also actively reaches out to different unexploited, yet highly lucrative nations within the Asia-Pacific area, such as Korea and Japan (Friend, 2016). The diversity of players in the coffee chain sector has thus become accumulatively deepened. Starbucks and McCafe are globally operating 22,557 outlets and 5044 outlets, respectively, and thus are the biggest and most intimidating brands. Nevertheless, a huge number of other chains such as Costa Coffee (3036 outlets), Doutor Coffee (1108 outlets), Coffee Bean and Tea Leaf (925 outlets) and Caffè

Nero (683 outlets) are putting their best effort to gain international recognition over these giant corporations (Rompaey, 2016).

Due to the intense competition among international coffee players, brand loyalty has become a strategically critical factor in order for each and every coffee organization to sustainably thrive in today's marketplace. This is because loyal customers are willing to purchase frequently, try other products and services (facilitate cross-buying intentions), bring in new customers as well as create a positive public image for the firm (Tu et al., 2012). It is discovered that a 5% increase of customer retention subsequently results in an astounding 25–75% profit enhancement (Reichheld and Sasser, 1990) and keeping a customer loyal surprisingly costs a company five times lesser than attracting new potential ones (Wills, 2009). According to Kotler and Keller (2009), customer loyalty is the fundamental key ingredient in the recipe of making a truly strong brand. Therefore, many organizations are enormously yearning for a “systematic and well-assisted development of loyalty behaviors among their customers” (Alok and Srivastava, 2013, p.140).

However, coffee shops are currently facing the issue of gaining loyal customers. In a national study, it is found that more than 50% of Starbucks' customers often purchase at its competitors including

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Dunkin Donuts and McDonald's, who are also known as 'roamers'. Dunkin Donuts and McDonald's were also found to maintain a relatively high percentage of roamers of 53% and 38% respectively (Business Wire, 2011). The high proportion of roamers has apparently illustrated the lack of loyal customers within the coffee chain sector. Evidently, the fragmentation within the retail space offering consumers with too many choices has made consumers become less loyal to brands than ever before (Russo, 2014). Consequently, there is a pressing need for a more comprehensive investigation into brand loyalty's precursors in the context of coffee shop chain industry.

Given the crucial role of customer loyalty, it is not surprising that a substantial amount of research has been devoted to investigating the antecedents of customer loyalty (Han et al., 2008; Pan et al., 2012). Research on brand loyalty in the coffee shop chain industry, however, is scant. While ample hospitality literature has examined the causal relationships between cognitive responses, affective responses, and customer loyalty (Chua et al., 2015; Gracia et al., 2011; Han et al., 2011; Li and Petrick, 2010; Nam et al., 2011), little empirical evidence has been presented on how chain coffee shop operators can promote their offerings, and consequently, affect customer loyalty. Customer loyalty is a complex and multifaceted concept involving dynamic interactions and exchanges (Dick and Basu, 1994). The degree of customer loyalty to a brand is reflected in customers' intentions to repurchase and in their willingness to recommend the brand to others (Guadagni and Little, 1983). However, behavioral measures (i.e., repurchase intentions, word-of-mouth recommendations) are insufficient to explain the reason behind customer loyalty (Pritchard et al., 1992). Customers who are spuriously loyal to a brand purchase the product/service of the brand for a variety of reasons, such as affordable price, easily accessible, and convenient location. On the other hands, customers who are truly loyal to a brand show affection toward the brand in addition to consistently purchasing the product/service of the brand over time (Dick and Basu, 1994). In an increasingly saturated coffee shops marketplace, the success of marketing coffee shops should be guided by a comprehensive analysis of customer loyalty and its interaction with customers' cognitive and affective responses. An understanding the antecedents of customer loyalty would allow chain coffee shop operators to concentrate on the key factors that lead to customer retention.

Furthermore, an examination of hospitality literature reveals limited research has simultaneously tested the relative influence of cognitive factors on customers' affective responses. Examining customers' evaluations simultaneously in one study allows scholars to assess the relative importance of the predictors on subsequent outcome variables (Ostrom and Iacobucci, 1995), thus increasing understanding of customer decision-making process. Thus, it would be meaningful to examine ways to enhance customer loyalty based on an understanding of how customers' cognitive responses are translated into affective responses. In hospitality services, where both evaluative and affective factors can influence customer loyalty (Henning-Thurau et al., 2002), integrative models that represent the interrelationships among constructs are needed.

In the services marketing literature, a number of empirical studies have suggested perceived quality and perceived value as determinants of customers' affective responses (Cronin et al., 2000; Jang and Namkung, 2009; Kim and Moon, 2009; Ladhari et al., 2008; Ryu and Jang, 2007). The theoretical explanations for the relationship between brand awareness, brand image, and customer emotions are reflected in the role of advertising, in which advertising serves as a multi-function tool (e.g., brand reinforcement, stimulation, and familiarity) which, in turn, induces emotions (Hyun et al., 2011; Stout and Rust, 1993; Strasheim et al., 2007). Studies examining the relationship between cognitive and affective constructs tend to use subsets of constructs (e.g., brand awareness and brand image or perceived quality and perceived value) that are theoretically associated but seldom examined together (Han et al., 2008). Consensus has not been achieved on which cognitive factors are critical drivers of customers' affective responses.

Consequently, this present study attempted to develop an integrative brand loyalty model in the chain coffee shop context addressing current research gaps. The detailed objectives of this research include 1) investigating the relationships among cognitive drivers (brand awareness, perceived quality, brand image, and perceived value), affective drivers (pleasure and arousal), brand satisfaction and relationship commitment in the formation of brand loyalty, 2) examining the relative importance among study variables in determining patrons' loyalty for a chain coffee shop brand, and 3) testing the mediating role of research constructs within the proposed theoretical framework.

## 2. Review of the literature

### 2.1. The chain coffee shop industry

The coffee sector has recently become one of the most globally lucrative industries in the food and beverage (F&B) realm. Markedly, a total receipt of \$18 billion was earned in 2014 in which sales generated from specialty coffee, generally known as coffee with a distinctive character and no primary defects such as iced coffee, frozen coffee beverages, cappuccino, cafe mocha, latte mocha and espresso (Brown, 2015), contributed 8% of that total and are growing at an astounding rate of 20% in sales yearly (Freidlin, 2014).

Therefore, coffee shops, which are those companies typically selling specialty coffee drink along with various F&B products for consumption either on premises or takeaway, have witnessed a tremendous growth both in their volumes and revenues. With an impressive turnover rate of 9.1% between 2014 and 2015 according to the Euromonitor International data, the industry has significantly outrun leading industries' global sales including the hospitality sector's and fast food branch's by 5.7% and 5.8% respectively (Rompaey, 2016).

Astoundingly, the chain coffee shop industry's rocketing growth has been relatively consistent in all walks of the world, encountering both highly mature and emerging market regions. While North America and Western Europe, normally known for their long successful history of coffee shop businesses, are forecasted to achieve a total of \$3.3 billion dollars and \$1.7 billion, respectively in new value growth between 2016 and 2020, the Asia Pacific region, a highly potential new marketplace, has projected to be the home of the largest sales increase in chain coffee shop industry, expecting to gain more than \$3.7 billion over the same period (Friend, 2016).

The diversity of international coffee chain's players is also comparatively noteworthy. It is undeniable that Starbucks and McCafé are the only two long-standing giant brands, which have truly made their presence at the global scale in terms of the geographic coverage. Nevertheless, a massive number of international brands, especially those emerging from the Asia-Pacific regions, are making great attempts to gain a good share of the global coffee shop sector (Rompaey, 2016). Exceedingly, Doutor Coffee, a Japanese chain, has predominantly covered other attractive Asian markets like South Korea and Taiwan. More impressively, Café Bene chain from South Korea has cast its net even broader into not only their neighboring country (China), but also those located on the other side of the world such as the US, and has cleverly made full use of Korean pop-culture entertainment's high influence in these areas to promote its products (Friend, 2016).

Subsequently, the competition among various players in the chain coffee sector has turned into an intense battlefield in which every firm irrespective of size are embracing different loyalty strategies to build long-term relationships with their customers. Starbucks is noble for being one of the leading chains having a large database of loyal customers. It was ranked 23rd out of 293 companies in the 2015 'Temkin Loyalty Index' and 5th out of 22 fast food chains, only behind Chick-fil-A, Popeye's Louisiana Kitchen, Panera Bread, and Papa John's (Temkin, 2015). Some of its loyalty initiatives include its loyalty rewards system,

which has built more than 3 million members in the US and account for 35% of transactions in its store (Matherson, 2013). 200 million Starbucks's signature seasonal favorite, pumpkin spice latte has been sold since its launch in 2002. In addition, Starbucks has strategically acquired Teavana, Evolution Fresh and La Boulange providing its customers with all-day offerings. In 2013, Starbucks's mobile payments and loyalty mobile app generated approximately \$1 billion, with 10 million sign-ups and 5 million transactions being made via the app weekly.

## 2.2. Cognitive drivers

Cognition is defined as “the mental process of knowing, including aspects such as awareness, perception, reasoning, and judgment, which comes to be known, as through perception, reasoning, or intuition” (Brandimonte et al., 2006, p.3). In the context of branding, cognition would involve consumer's knowledge of the brand (brand awareness), their perceptions (brand image) and judgments of it (perceived quality and perceived value). Thus, brand awareness, brand image, perceived quality and perceived value are the four key concepts under cognitive drivers in this study.

### 2.2.1. Brand awareness

Brand awareness is described as consumer's abilities to identify or recall a brand in specific product category (Homburg et al., 2010). Therefore, there are two key components associated with brand awareness, namely brand recall and brand recognition. While the former looks into the consumer's capabilities of retrieving the brand when its product category, category needs or certain types of cues are mentioned, the latter relates to consumer's ability to affirm prior experience with the brand when it is provided as a cue (Keller, 1993). Brand awareness undeniably plays a pivotal role in consumers' buying decision-making process. First, it was found that there is a positive relationship between raising brand awareness and the probability that the brand becomes part of the consumer's evoked set (Baker et al., 1986). Moreover, it enacts a decisive role in the set of brands intriguing consumers during their selection process (Lin, 2013). For instance, it was discovered that consumers typically tend to buy only familiar and well-established brands (Roselius, 1971).

### 2.2.2. Perceived quality

In the service industry, perceived quality is defined as consumer's “overall evaluation of a specific service firm that results from comparing that firm's performance with the customer's general expectations of how firms in that industry should perform” (Parasuraman et al., 1988, p.17). If expectations are greater than performance, perceived quality will be considered as low, and thus customer dissatisfaction will occur (Lewis and Mitchell, 1990). According to Jiang and Wang (2006), customers are likely to assess the service quality on the scale of how much pleasure they received from the service encounter. In addition, unlike tangible products, service products are simultaneously produced and consumed in the presence of both the customer and the service provider. Hence, attitudes and behaviors of contact employees can tremendously influence customers' perceptions of service quality (Schneider and Bowen, 1985). Taylor and Hunter (2002) postulated that high degree of perceived quality leads to favorable outcomes including customer satisfaction, auspicious marketing results and customer's loyalty in the form of making repurchases and/or eliciting positive word-of-mouth.

### 2.2.3. Brand image

Brand image is identified as the representation of a brand in the consumer's mind (Dobni and Zinkhan, 1990), or a set of perceptions about a brand, either objective or subjective (Aaker, 1991). Hence, it can be defined as “the reasoned or emotional perceptions consumers attach to specific brands” (Low and Lamb, 2000, p. 352). Oliver (1997) and Han and Ryu (2012) emphasized the exceptional importance of

brand image for service firms because when the customers use service, they see the firm and its resources based on their evaluation of the interaction between them and their service providers. In most cases, the customers formulate an image of a certain brand as they see the firm's various elements and from which develop their perceptions. Apparently, service serves as the most salient phenomenon that customers can experience and perceive; hence, the quality of service primarily establishes the image of that particular brand.

### 2.2.4. Perceived value

Perceived value regularly relates to customer's total judgment of the trade-off between perceived quality and its affordability within a choice set (Oh, 2000). Monroe (2002) indicated that perceived value is the benefits attained from the service or products relative to the perceived sacrifice by spending certain amount of money (perceived cost). While perceived value involves consumer's perceived quality, as well as other extrinsic and intrinsic features, perceived costs comprise not only monetary price, but also non-monetary price since both of which are salient to the consumers (Zeithaml, 1988). In the service industry, perceived value is defined as the consumer's overall evaluation of the economic, technical and relational benefits they receive in return for the payment charge in relation to the firm's competitive alternatives. Interestingly enough, it is the perceived value, rather than satisfaction level, which significantly encourages the consumers' repurchases (Han et al., 2011). Similarly, Wathne et al. (2001) stated that perceived value promotes re-patronage intentions and discourages switching behaviors.

## 2.3. Affective drivers

Affect is known as “a complex state of the organism, involving bodily changes of a widespread character-in breathing, pulse, gland secretion, etc.- and, on the mental side, a state of excitement or perturbation, marked by strong feeling, and usually an impulse toward a definitive form of behavior” (Smith and Lazarus, 1990, p. 610). Pleasure and arousal are conceived as the two key indicators of affect (Zajonc and Markus, 1984), and thus are chosen as the affective drivers in this study.

Pleasure is regarded as the hedonic quality of stimuli (Feldman, 1995) and is described by the extent to which a person feels good or bad, happy or sad, and contented or dissatisfied in a situation (Mehrabian and Russell, 1974). In other words, pleasure is generally related to human positive or negative feelings whose continuum is ranged from significant unhappiness at one hand to tremendous ecstasy at the other hand. However, in another research, pleasure was expressed quite disparately in which references such as excitement, relaxation, love, and tranquility at one end and cruelty, humiliation, disinterest and boredom at the other end were adopted (Mehrabian, 1996).

On the other hand, arousal is normally known as a human subjective condition ranging from sleeping mode to drowsiness followed by alertness to frenzied excitement (Russell and Mehrabian, 1974), which accounts for the vigor, rather than the quality or direction, of a specific behavior. Mehrabian and Russell (1974) considered arousal as merely an emotional state. Mehrabian (1996) defined arousal as a mix of both mental alertness and physical activity. In particular, arousal was addressed mostly via connotations such as “sleep, inactivity, boredom and relaxation” at the lower end to “wakefulness, bodily tension, strenuous exercise and concentration at the high end” (Bakker et al., 2014, p. 5). The impact of arousal on individuals' evaluation and behavior often fluctuates according to different time, place, and situation.

The role of pleasure and arousal in studying consumer behaviors is said to be exceedingly meaningful (Ladhari, 2007). Past studies have shown that a variety of responses including shopping satisfaction (Machleit and Mantel, 2001), time duration spent in the shop (Sherman et al., 1997), affection towards the shop, purchasing quantities (Sherman et al., 1997), as well as willingness to purchase (Fiore et al.,

2005), are evidently affected by pleasure and arousal.

#### 2.4. Brand satisfaction

Satisfaction can be investigated either as a transaction-specific satisfaction or as a cumulative satisfaction (Tu et al., 2012). In a particular service encounter, satisfaction occurs as a result of the brand's performance being able to meet the consumer's expectation (Oliver, 1997). Correspondingly, Nam et al. (2011) referred to brand satisfaction as an evaluative summary of direct consumption experience mostly judged by the difference between prior expectation and the actual performance perceived after consumption (Tu et al., 2012). However in this study, brand satisfaction is defined by Grisaffe and Nguyen (2011) addressing it as the cumulative satisfaction, which is also known as the consumer's ultimate assessment according to their overall experience with a brand of product or service. This is because, since the 1990s, numerous researchers have highlighted satisfaction in their work as customers' accumulative, post-purchase, and total evaluation of purchasing behavior (Engel and Blackwell, 1982; Oliver, 1997).

#### 2.5. Relationship commitment

Relationship commitment is chiefly defined as a notion consisting of “developed cooperative sentiments, strong preference for existing partners and propensity for relation continuity”. Along the same lines, Morgan and Hunt (1994) described commitment as the belief that the continuously positive relationship between the company and its partner is eminently critical and hence requires maximum efforts to maintain it indefinitely. Relationship commitment is of great importance for every firm because it not only leads to instrumental results such as lower turnover rates (Han and Ryu, 2012), along with greater staffs' motivation (Farrell and Rusbult, 1981). There are primarily two types of commitment, namely affective and continuance commitment (Mathieu and Zajac, 1990). While affective commitment is the aspiration to cultivate a positive long-term relationship led by loyalty and affiliation (Gundlach et al., 1995), continuance commitment commonly stems from consumer's rational motives focusing on termination or switching costs (Mathieu and Zajac, 1990).

#### 2.6. Brand loyalty

Brand loyalty is commonly connoted as “the biased (non-random) behavioral response (purchase) expressed over time by some decision-making unit with respect to one or more alternative brands out of a set of brands and is a function of psychological processes” (Jacoby, 1971, p. 25). There are a total of six dimensions involved in brand loyalty, which particularly involves re-patronage intentions, satisfaction level, brand preference, price premium, switching cost and brand commitment (Aaker, 1991). Brand loyalty is commonly spotted as the key focus of every firm's marketing strategies, especially in the service industry, whose markets are comparatively tough and highly undifferentiated (Fournier and Yao, 1997). Organizations achieving greater number of loyal customers are said to be capable of subsequently gaining higher market shares, earning higher return on investment rates, enhancing bargaining power from different suppliers and distribution channels, and eliciting positive word-of-mouth communication (Nawaz and Usman, 2011).

#### 2.7. Relationships between cognitive and affective drivers

According to cognitive appraisal theories, cognition is the antecedent of emotion (Frijda, 1986; Schoefer, 2008). Lazarus (1999, p. 127) argues that “cognitive activity causally precedes an emotion in the flow of psychological events, and subsequent cognitive activity is also later affected by that emotion”. In the service context, the consumers establish a holistic mental image according to various components

included in the service encounter, which then affects their affective responses. Subsequently, cognitive appraisal and interpretation of those affective responses would occur to finally determine consumer's behaviors such as approach or avoidance behaviors (Baek and Ok, 2017; Bitner, 1992; Donovan and Rositter, 1982; Eroglu et al., 2003; Lee et al., 2008; Lin, 2004; Mehrabian and Russell, 1974).

This kind of response pattern reflects the fundamentals addressed in the classical “information perspective” presupposing that consumers react as problem-solving cognitive individuals aiming for a rational decision (Kassarjian, 1981), and would typically process a stimuli from its most basic stages to the most abstract and complex ones (Dubois, 2000). In particular, consumers would first exploit their cognitive resources to build up beliefs and perceptions toward the product or service's features, which then result in the establishment of their general feelings for those offerings. Such feeling might consequently influence the consumer's emotional states, especially if the consumer's aspirations and wishes have a strong connection with their chosen products and services.

In this study, it is postulated that the cognition dimensions: brand awareness, brand image, perceived quality, and perceived value, have a positive impact on two key affective drivers: pleasure and arousal. Specifically, consumer's cognitive perceptions towards different service encounter elements in the coffee shops, including brand awareness (e.g., new menu items), brand image (e.g., logo, name, colors), perceived quality (e.g., beverage and dessert quality), and perceived value (e.g., pricing), are anticipated to place a positive influence on consumer's pleasure (e.g. happy or satisfied) and arousal level (e.g. excited or astonished). The theoretical explanation for these links can be attributed to Bagozzi's (1992) model: appraisal → emotional response → coping. The model suggests that the cognitive evaluation of an encounter leads to emotional response which in turn, influences behavior. Applying Bagozzi's (1992) model to a coffee shop context suggests that cognitively-oriented evaluations of service encounter lead to emotional responses.

The influences of perceived quality and perceived value on customers' affections have been supported by the services marketing literature. For example, building on Mehrabian-Russell's (1974) model, Jang and Namkung (2009) showed that positive emotions were functions of atmospherics and service quality stimuli. Cronin et al. (2000) demonstrated that perceived value acted as an antecedent to customer emotional reaction. In the marketing literature, it has been accepted that advertising induces emotional responses in viewers (Chang, 2006; Stern, 1992). It is commonly known that advertising is a communication tool used by advertisers to deliver messages of their products/services. Through advertising strategy, consumers develop a sense of familiarity of the brand, thus enhancing the effectiveness of the advertising activity (Tellis, 2004). Because advertising creates consumers' brand awareness and brand image (Lewis, 1981), there is a possibility that both brand awareness and brand image can influence customers' emotional responses. Based on the theoretical and empirical background, the following hypotheses were developed:

**H1.** Brand awareness positively influences pleasure.

**H2.** Brand awareness positively influences arousal.

**H3.** Perceived quality positively influences pleasure.

**H4.** Perceived quality positively influences arousal.

**H5.** Brand image positively influences pleasure.

**H6.** Brand image positively influences arousal.

**H7.** Perceived value positively influences pleasure.

**H8.** Perceived value positively influences arousal.

## 2.8. Relationships between affective drivers and brand satisfaction

Researches testing on affect and its mechanism have been done on a wide array of areas such as festivals (e.g. Lee et al., 2008; Yang et al., 2011); shopping (e.g. Machleit and Eroglu, 2000; Yüksel, 2007), theme parks (e.g. Bigné et al., 2005; Ma et al., 2013), as well as restaurants (Huyn et al., 2011; Jani and Han, 2011). Interestingly, many of these studies have unanimously agreed that affect plays a major role in determining consumer's satisfaction. Studies done particularly on pleasure and arousal also show positive relationships between them with satisfaction (Bigné et al., 2005; Eroglu et al., 2003; Ladhari, 2007). Specifically, it was explored that in a service encounter, the degree of pleasure and arousal acted as the increasing tool of the perceived significance of disconfirmation of expectations, also known as the difference between the perceptions and expectations of a service experience, and thus is typically considered the antecedent of satisfaction (Oliver, 1997). Given the coffee shop context, this means that if the consumers feel happy or excited while recalling or patrolling a particular coffee brand, it is likely that they would subjectively perceive that brand's performances as exceeding expectations (positive disconfirmation), which ultimately results in overall satisfaction towards that brand. In line with past research, the following hypotheses were formulated:

**H9.** Pleasure positively influences brand satisfaction.

**H10.** Arousal positively influences brand satisfaction.

## 2.9. Relationships among brand satisfaction, relationship commitment, and brand loyalty

Previous studies have shown a strong connection between brand satisfaction and relationship commitment (Beatty et al., 1988; Chumpitaz Caceres and Paparoidamis, 2007; Jeong and Oh, 2017; Sung and Choi, 2010). First, it was explored that consumers would become considerably dependent on the brand and experience continuance commitment to the brand when they are generally satisfied with it (Hess and Story, 2005; Lee et al., 2007; Ranaweera and Menon, 2013). The continuance commitment is maintained to provide consumers with benefits such as reduced search cost and lower perceived risks (Hess and Story, 2005). Moreover, high amplitude of satisfaction grants the consumer with high level of trust thus creating commitment-inducing bond, which is also known as affective commitment (Hess and Story, 2005; Story and Hess, 2006). Although this trust-based commitment may take longer to develop as compared to continuance commitment, it is more enduring as the consumers would need to forgo some emotional benefits in order to switch brands (Hess and Story, 2005). In brief, consumers can be functionally committed to a coffee brand if they are satisfied with the brand's performances (e.g. service quality, facilities). However, when they are consistently satisfied with the brand, develop trust and feel personally related to that brand (e.g. the brand's personality matches well with the consumer's self), they will become emotionally committed to it. As such, the following hypothesis was constructed:

**H11.** Brand satisfaction positively influences relationship commitment.

Satisfied customers of a specific brand are found to have greater likelihood of becoming that brand's loyal customers reflecting in behaviors such as making repurchases, putting out positive recommendations, and turning into more disinterested individuals towards competitor's offerings (Fornell et al., 1996; Saleem and Sarfraz, 2014). Numerous studies have also agreed on the fact that satisfaction is a necessary precursor of brand loyalty (Bitner, 1990; Fitzell, 1998; Gronholdt et al., 2000; Lee et al., 2009; Nam et al., 2011; Reynolds and Beatty, 1999; Rust and Zahorik, 1993; Sahin et al., 2011). It is undeniable that the relationship between satisfaction and loyalty has been proved many times in the past. Nevertheless, the impact of brand

satisfaction on brand loyalty in the coffee shop context is still comparatively worth examining due to the uniqueness of its service nature in which satisfied consumers with overall visitation and/or experience in the coffee shops are anticipated to elicit distinct loyal behaviors. Secondly, testing this relationship would help determine the differences between brand satisfaction as a direct and indirect influencer (with relationship commitment being the mediator) of brand loyalty. Thus, the following hypothesis was constructed:

**H12.** Brand satisfaction positively influences brand loyalty.

From past studies, it was found that relationship commitment pose a significant impact on brand loyalty (Amine, 1998; Hur et al., 2011; Jang et al., 2008; Pritchard et al., 1999). In particular, the relational base of continuance commitment encourages consumers to constantly rely on a specific brand's differentiated offerings superior to that of its competitors and the extension of which would ultimately result in brand loyalty (Gustafsson et al., 2005; Lee et al., 2007). This means that when the consumers are committed to a coffee brand due to its ability to provide the most functional benefits compared to its competitors such as perceived highest quality of coffee or customer service, this commitment gradually would create a long-term relationship that encourages consumers keep coming back and repurchasing the brand's products and services. Furthermore, numerous researchers have investigated the connections between affective commitment and brand loyalty (Evanschitzky et al., 2006; Fullerton, 2005; Gustafsson et al., 2005; Iglesias et al., 2011; Mattila, 2001), and consequently discovered an unanimously positive impact of affective commitment on brand loyalty. The affective commitment influences loyalty in a much more higher degree in comparison to continuance commitment and could directly drive behavioral loyalty (Evanschitzky et al., 2006). In other words, consumers with emotional attachment towards a coffee brand will tend to express their loyalty behaviorally and vigorously such as repurchasing, spreading good words or not visiting competitor's stores. For those reasons, the following hypothesis was introduced:

**H13.** Relationship commitment positively influences brand loyalty.

## 2.10. The mediating role of affective drivers, relationship commitment and brand satisfaction

According to Oliver (1993) and Oliver and Westbrook (1993), affect is the mediator between cognitive evaluations and satisfaction. Specifically, Oliver (1993) found that attribute satisfaction, which is "consumer's subjective satisfaction judgment resulting from observations of attribute performance" (p.421), positively affects overall satisfaction in which affect acts as a mediator of the impact of attribute satisfaction on overall satisfaction. For example, some typical satisfaction attributes of a coffee shop include menu variety, service quality, facilities and staffs quality. The evaluation of these attributes would inevitably produce emotions (e.g. happy or annoyed) that ultimately dictate consumer's overall satisfaction towards the coffee shop. Recent service-related literature (Bigné et al., 2005; Cheo and Luo, 2003; Lee et al., 2008; Lin, 2004) also have confirmed the mediating role of affect between perceptions/cognitions and satisfaction. In fact, consumer's affect has become a considerably essential concept that cannot be omitted when testing the relationship between cognitive activities and overall satisfaction.

The mediating role of satisfaction between affect and brand loyalty is also noteworthy. Specifically, in studies on festivalscape by Lee et al. (2008) and on theme park Bigné et al. (2005), affect has a significant indirect impact on loyalty with satisfaction being the mediator. As previously mentioned, consumer's emotions elicited from certain cognitive activities (e.g. perceived quality, perceived value) can influence a consumer's general satisfaction towards a brand. This final cognitive assessment (whether satisfied or dissatisfied with the brand) would push out consumer's loyalty behaviorally in the form of approach or

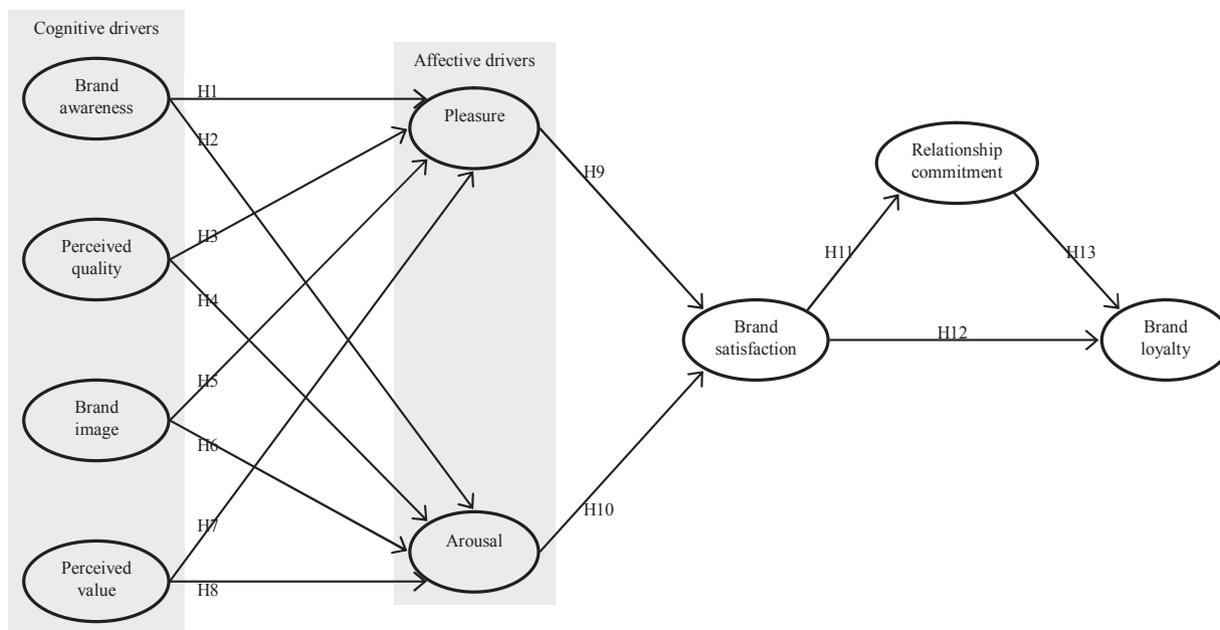


Fig. 1. Conceptual model.

avoidance behavior (Bitner, 1992). In addition, it is discovered that a satisfied consumer tends to be coming back over time (relationship commitment), and eventually to become a loyal customer if well-stimulated (Faria et al., 2013), which explains the mediating role of relationship commitment between satisfaction and brand loyalty (Bricci et al., 2016; Madjid et al., 2013). This emphasizes the importance of relationship commitment in building brand’s loyalty as a satisfied consumer does not necessarily become a loyal consumer. Certain types of attachment either functionally or emotionally need to be established in order to develop and maintain brand loyalty.

2.11. Research model and hypotheses

Our research model is exhibited in Fig. 1. The main interest of this study was to understand the intricate associations among multiple dimensions of cognition (i.e., brand awareness, perceived quality, brand image, and perceived value), affective drivers (i.e., pleasure and arousal), brand satisfaction, relationship commitment, and brand loyalty. Our proposed theoretical model comprises a total of 9 constructs and 13 hypothesized relationships.

3. Methodology

3.1. Measures and questionnaire development

The survey questionnaire was composed of three parts (i.e., research description, questions for study constructs, and personal characteristics). Validated measures for survey items were developed from previous studies in the field of consumer behavior and marketing (Han and Ryu, 2012; Kim and Kim, 2004, 2005; Morgan and Hunt, 1994; Oh, 2000; Oliver, 1980; Oliver and Swan, 1989; Song et al., 2012). In specific, brand awareness was measured with five items adopted from Han and Ryu (2012) (e.g., “I know well the menu sold at Starbucks”). Seven items from Kim and Kim (2005) were employed to measure the construct of perceived quality (e.g., “The beverage and food quality of Starbucks is good”). Brand image was evaluated with five items adopted from Han and Ryu (2012) (e.g., “Starbucks has a differentiated image from other brand coffee shops”). Perceived value was measured according to three items adopted from Oh (2000) (e.g., “Starbucks has a higher economic value than other brand coffee shops”). Pleasure

contained four items (e.g., “I have felt a ‘happy’ emotion in the Starbucks”), and arousal encompassed four items (e.g., “I have felt an ‘excited’ emotion in the Starbucks”). These survey items were adopted from Song et al. (2012). Three items from Oliver (1980) and Oliver and Swan (1989) were used to measure the construct of brand satisfaction (e.g., “Overall I am satisfied with visiting the Starbucks”). Relationship commitment was operationalized according to three items adopted from Morgan and Hunt (1994) and Han and Ryu (2012) (e.g., “I am very committed in the Starbucks”). Brand loyalty was measured with four items adopted from Song et al. (2012) and Han and Ryu (2012) (e.g., “I will continue to visit the Starbucks, even if the price is slightly expensive”). All measurement items were evaluated with a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree).

In order to validate the questionnaire of current survey double translation rule was employed because using double translation rule is useful to validate the measurements of a survey. In specific, the survey items of questionnaire was firstly written in English, and then those survey items in English version questionnaire was translated into Korean by a professional translator bilingual in English and Korean because data collection was planned to be performed for Korean. Next, another professional bilingual Korean-English translator reviewed the Korean version questionnaire with the English version questionnaire to verify any differences between them. In the process, although there was no big translation bias some survey items were revised to fit this research.

3.2. Data collection

The data collection in current research was performed between April 15th and May 15th, 2015 in Korea, in the popular shopping district of a metropolitan city. The shopping district is famous with many stores, restaurants, and name-brand coffee shops and the districts can be regarded as a complex cultural area that is used as a place of meeting and entertainment for many people. Thus, it would be proper for the field survey of this research to be conducted in the shopping district because the districts are usually crowded with major consumer group of name-brand coffee shops. Starbucks was chosen as the subject of research in this study because it is the most known coffee shop chains of Korean consumers and most well-perceived global coffee brands although there are other big coffee shop chains in the survey area in

which people conduct various meetings and activities.

For enhancing the quality of collected data, a research was organized and 6 groups of 37 undergraduate students majoring in hotel and restaurant management were trained. In specific, they were in the 3rd and 4th grades attending a hospitality research methodology class. Before the field survey, basic knowledge about survey, purpose of survey, method of data collection, and specific contents of questionnaire were taught for one hour in the class. Four of the eight Starbucks in the survey area were randomly selected. In those Starbucks coffee shops, trained research groups performed an intercept field survey at various times of the day on three weekdays and the weekends over a one month period. Trained research groups approached Starbucks customers and informed them of a survey purpose. Upon their consent, the research team offered the self-administered survey questionnaires to them. The research team ensured that survey participants had visited the Starbucks at least more than once in the previous month for answering the questionnaire. All participants received a small gift after filling out their survey. A total of 395 questionnaires were gathered during the time period of the survey. After deleting 18 incomplete questionnaires, 379 valid responses were coded as the final data set.

### 3.3. Demographic information

Among the 379 survey participants, approximately 40.4% (n = 153) were men, 58.8% (n = 223) were women, and 0.8% (n = 3) were other. In terms of the education level, the great majority of the survey participants were at least college/university graduates/students. Specifically, about 54.4% reported that they are university graduates/students; approximately 18.5% indicated that they are 2-year college graduates/students; and 15.0% reported that they hold a graduate degree or currently attend a graduate school. In terms of the survey respondents' age, about 57.3% (n = 217) reported that their age was less than 30 years old. In addition, about 35.1% (n = 133) indicated that their age is between 30 and 49 years, and approximately 7.7% (n = 29) reported that their age is over 50 years old. Moreover, about 27.4% of the survey participants indicated that their monthly visit frequency is once or less (30.6%), followed by 5 times or more (24.8%), 2 times (21.4%), 3 times (13.2%), and 4 times (10.0%). A majority of the participants reported that they stay at the coffee shop for about 2 h (38.8%) or 1 h (34.8%).

## 4. Results

### 4.1. Confirmatory factor analysis

A measurement model was first generated with the use of a confirmatory factor analysis and maximum likelihood estimation method. Results showed that the goodness-of-fit statistics was satisfactory ( $\chi^2 = 1346.736$ ,  $df = 626$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ,  $\chi^2/df = 2.151$ ,  $RMSEA = 0.055$ ,  $CFI = 0.919$ ,  $IFI = 0.920$ ,  $TLI = 0.909$ ). Table 1 includes the findings from the confirmatory factor analysis. All measurement items were adequately and significantly loaded to their related latent factor ( $p < 0.01$ ). The values of composite reliability ranged from 0.801 to 0.897, highly above the minimum threshold of 0.60 (Bagozzi and Yi, 1988). In addition, the values of Cronbach alpha ranged from 0.771 to 0.895 exceeded the suggested cutoff of 0.70 (Hair et al., 1998). Internal consistency of the measurement items for each construct was therefore evident. Next, average variance extracted (AVE) was calculated for the assessment of convergent validity. The calculated values ranged from 0.508 to 0.686, which exceeded the suggested threshold of 0.50 (Hair et al., 1998). Thus, convergent validity was supported. In addition, these values were greater than the square of between-construct correlations. Discriminant validity was hence established.

**Table 1**  
The measurement model assessment.

Measurement items	Factor loading	Mean	SD	CR	AVE	Alpha
Brand awareness 1	0.681	3.248	0.750	0.839	0.512	0.799
Brand awareness 2	0.816					
Brand awareness 3	0.719					
Brand awareness 4	0.715					
Brand awareness 5	0.633					
Perceived quality 1	0.696	3.475	0.607	0.879	0.511	0.873
Perceived quality 2	0.692					
Perceived quality 3	0.746					
Perceived quality 4	0.718					
Perceived quality 5	0.689					
Perceived quality 6	0.742					
Perceived quality 7	0.717					
Brand Image 1	0.761	3.618	0.598	0.837	0.508	0.771
Brand Image 2	0.729					
Brand Image 3	0.665					
Brand Image 4	0.694					
Brand Image 5	0.710					
Perceived value 1	0.731	2.817	0.750	0.801	0.575	0.797
Perceived value 2	0.842					
Perceived value 3	0.693					
Pleasure 1	0.814	3.170	0.733	0.896	0.683	0.894
Pleasure 2	0.776					
Pleasure 3	0.887					
Pleasure 4	0.825					
Arousal 1	0.806	2.435	0.797	0.887	0.663	0.887
Arousal 2	0.789					
Arousal 3	0.788					
Arousal 4	0.872					
Brand satisfaction 1	0.821	3.245	0.735	0.866	0.684	0.865
Brand satisfaction 2	0.852					
Brand satisfaction 3	0.807					
Relationship commit.1	0.781	2.637	0.735	0.855	0.663	0.857
Relationship commit.2	0.839					
Relationship commit.3	0.822					
Brand loyalty 1	0.840	3.263	0.832	0.897	0.686	0.895
Brand loyalty 2	0.806					
Brand loyalty 3	0.806					
Brand loyalty 4	0.860					

Note1. Goodness-of-fit statistics for the measurement model:  $\chi^2 = 1346.736$ ,  $df = 626$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ,  $\chi^2/df = 2.151$ ,  $RMSEA = 0.055$ ,  $CFI = 0.919$ ,  $IFI = 0.920$ ,  $TLI = 0.909$ .

Note2. All standardized loadings were significant ( $p < 0.01$ ).

Note3. All measures were evaluated with a five-point scale from "Strongly disagree" (1) to "Strongly agree" (5).

### 4.2. Structural equation modeling

A structural equation modeling was conducted. Results of our structural analysis revealed that the model included an acceptable fit to the data ( $\chi^2 = 1823.302$ ,  $df = 646$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ,  $\chi^2/df = 2.822$ ,  $RMSEA = 0.069$ ,  $CFI = 0.868$ ,  $IFI = 0.869$ ,  $TLI = 0.856$ ). Specifically, the  $\chi^2/df$  value of the structural model (2.882) fell within a range of acceptable values from 2.00 to 5.00 (Marsh and Hocevar, 1988). Other goodness-of-fit indices were also above the liberal cutoff of 0.80 (Bollen and Long, 1993). The details about the findings from the structural model assessment are exhibited in Table 2 and Fig. 2. The proposed theoretical framework comprising 8 predictors accounted for about 80.2% of the total variance in brand loyalty. The model also sufficiently explained the variance in relationship commitment (69.3%) and brand satisfaction (64.3%). In addition, the cognitive antecedents accounted for 69.0% and 35.6% of the total variation in pleasure and arousal, respectively.

The proposed impact of cognitive drivers on affective dimensions was tested. Our results indicated that brand awareness had a positive and significant influence on pleasure ( $\beta = 0.303$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and arousal ( $\beta = 0.146$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ); perceived quality ( $\beta = 0.185$ ,

**Table 2**  
The structural model assessment.

Hypothesized relationships				Standardized estimates	t-values
H1	Brand awareness	→	Pleasure	0.303	5.129**
H2	Brand awareness	→	Arousal	0.146	2.041*
H3	Perceived quality	→	Pleasure	0.185	2.113*
H4	Perceived quality	→	Arousal	0.063	0.558
H5	Brand image	→	Pleasure	0.194	1.971*
H6	Brand image	→	Arousal	0.094	0.750
H7	Perceived value	→	Pleasure	0.350	5.924**
H8	Perceived value	→	Arousal	0.409	5.478**
H9	Pleasure	→	Brand satisfaction	0.735	10.803**
H10	Arousal	→	Brand satisfaction	0.123	2.256*
H11	Brand satisfaction	→	Relationship commit.	0.833	13.755**
H12	Brand satisfaction	→	Brand loyalty	0.592	6.866**
H13	Relationship commit.	→	Brand loyalty	0.341	3.968**

<b>Total impact on brand loyalty:</b>	<b>Total variance explained:</b>	<b>Indirect impact:</b>
$\beta_{\text{Relationshipcommit.}} = 0.341$	$R^2$ for BL = 0.802	$\beta_{\text{BS-RC-BL}} = 0.284^{**}$
$\beta_{\text{Brandsatisfaction}} = 0.875$	$R^2$ for RC = 0.693	$\beta_{\text{P-BS-RC}} = 0.612^{**}$
$\beta_{\text{Pleasure}} = 0.643$	$R^2$ for BS = 0.643	$\beta_{\text{A-BS-RC}} = 0.102$
$\beta_{\text{Arousal}} = 0.108$	$R^2$ for P = .690	$\beta_{\text{P-BS-RC-BL}} = 0.643^{**}$
$\beta_{\text{Brandawareness}} = 0.211$	$R^2$ for A = 0.356	$\beta_{\text{A-BS-RC-BL}} = 0.108$
$\beta_{\text{Perceivedquality}} = 0.126$		$\beta_{\text{BA-P&A-BS}} = 0.241^*$
$\beta_{\text{Brandimage}} = 0.135$		$\beta_{\text{PQ-P&A-BS}} = 0.144$
$\beta_{\text{Perceivedvalue}} = 0.269$		$\beta_{\text{BI-P&A-BS}} = 0.155$
		$\beta_{\text{PV-P&A-BS}} = 0.307^*$
		$\beta_{\text{BA-P&A-BS-RC-BL}} = 0.211^*$
		$\beta_{\text{PQ-P&A-BS-RC-BL}} = 0.126$
		$\beta_{\text{BI-P&A-BS-RC-BL}} = 0.135$
		$\beta_{\text{PV-P&A-BS-RC-BL}} = 0.269^*$

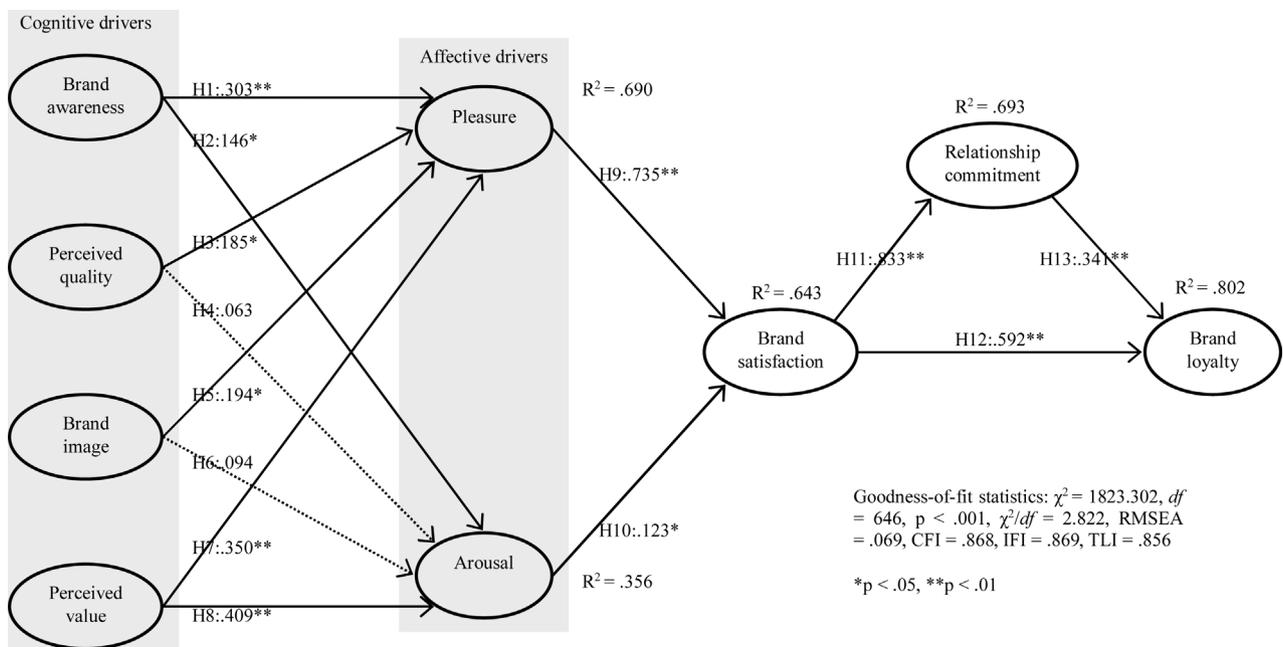
Goodness-of-fit statistics for the structural model:  $\chi^2 = 1823.302$ ,  $df = 646$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ,  $\chi^2/df = 2.822$ , RMSEA = 0.069, CFI = 0.868, IFI = 0.869, TLI = 0.856.

Note. BA = brand awareness, PQ = perceived quality, BI = brand image, PV = perceived value, P = pleasure, A = arousal, BS = brand satisfaction, RC = relationship commitment, BL = brand loyalty.

\*  $p < 0.05$ .  
\*\*  $p < 0.01$ .

$p < 0.05$ ) and brand image ( $\beta = 0.194$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) exerted a significant and positive impact on pleasure; and, perceived value was significantly and positively related to pleasure ( $\beta = 0.350$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and arousal ( $\beta = 0.409$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). These results supported hypotheses H1, H2, H3, H5, H7, and H8. However, the influence of perceived quality ( $\beta = 0.063$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ) and brand image ( $\beta = 0.094$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ) on arousal was found to be insignificant. Thus, hypotheses H4 and H6 were not supported. The hypothesized relationship between affective drivers and brand satisfaction was assessed. As expected, our findings revealed that both pleasure ( $\beta = 0.735$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and arousal ( $\beta = 0.123$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) exerted a significant influence on brand satisfaction. Therefore, hypotheses H9 and H10 were supported. The proposed associations among brand satisfaction, relationship commitment, and brand loyalty were evaluated. The results indicated that brand satisfaction significantly influenced relationship commitment ( $\beta = 0.833$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and that brand loyalty was a positive and significant function of brand satisfaction ( $\beta = 0.592$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and relationship commitment ( $\beta = 0.341$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). These results supported hypotheses H11, H12, and H13.

Indirect influence of study variables was investigated. Our examination revealed that brand satisfaction indirectly and significantly affected brand loyalty through relationship commitment ( $\beta_{\text{BS-RC-BL}} = 0.284$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ); pleasure included a positive and significant indirect influence on relationship commitment ( $\beta_{\text{P-BS-RC}} = 0.612$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ); and, brand awareness ( $\beta_{\text{BA-P&A-BS}} = 0.241$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) and perceived value ( $\beta_{\text{PV-P&A-BS}} = 0.307$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) significantly affected brand satisfaction indirectly through affective dimensions. These results indicated that relationship commitment, brand satisfaction, and affective factors significantly mediated its direct antecedent(s) on its outcome variable. Our close examination further indicated that pleasure significantly influenced brand loyalty indirectly through brand satisfaction and relationship commitment ( $\beta_{\text{P-BS-RC-BL}} = 0.643$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ); brand awareness ( $\beta_{\text{BA-P&A-BS-RC-BL}} = 0.211$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) and perceive value ( $\beta_{\text{PV-P&A-BS-RC-BL}} = 0.269$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) included a significant indirect influence on brand loyalty. That is, affective drivers, brand satisfaction, and relationship commitment acted as independent and group mediators within the proposed theoretical framework. Lastly, our results showed that the total impact of brand satisfaction on brand loyalty ( $\beta = 0.875$ ) was the greatest among study variables, followed by pleasure ( $\beta = 0.643$ ), relationship commitment



Goodness-of-fit statistics:  $\chi^2 = 1823.302$ ,  $df = 646$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\chi^2/df = 2.822$ , RMSEA = .069, CFI = .868, IFI = .869, TLI = .856

\* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$

Fig. 2. Structural model results.

( $\beta = 0.341$ ), perceived value ( $\beta = 0.269$ ), brand awareness ( $\beta = 0.211$ ), brand image ( $\beta = 0.135$ ), perceived quality ( $\beta = 0.126$ ), and arousal ( $\beta = 0.108$ ). This result indicated that patrons' brand satisfaction was the most influential variable in building their brand loyalty.

## 5. Discussion and implications

The main interest of the present research was to identify the possible relationships among multiple cognitive dimensions (i.e., brand awareness, perceived quality, brand image, and perceived value), affective factors (i.e., pleasure and arousal), brand satisfaction, relationship commitment, and brand loyalty by proposing and testing a sturdy theoretical model in a chain coffee shop context. A quantitative methodological approach was used for the achievement of research objectives. The empirical results demonstrated that cognitive drivers in general played an important role in triggering pleasure and arousal; these affective factors act as important drivers of brand satisfaction, relationship commitment, and brand loyalty; affective dimensions, satisfaction, and commitment included a mediating impact; and, brand satisfaction along with pleasure are particularly important in building chain coffee shop customers' brand loyalty within the our theoretical framework. In sum, the proposed research framework satisfactorily accounted for the total variance in brand loyalty; the hypothesized relationships within the model were generally supported.

Undoubtedly, increasing the level of brand loyalty has become one of the most critical and challenging issues in the competitive chain coffee shop industry. Nonetheless, patrons' loyalty formation for a specific chain coffee shop brand has not been sufficiently unearthed. This study was to fill such void in the extant hospitality literature. The proposed conceptual framework comprising multiple cognitive drivers, affective factors, satisfaction, and commitment was fully supported, and the particular role of these variables within the model was explicitly identified. The proposed theoretical framework contained a strong explanatory power for patrons' brand loyalty and sufficiently explained such loyalty generation process. Considering that the theoretical basis for comprehending the nature of coffee shop patrons' purchasing behaviors is still in the stage of development, the empirical results would be helpful for subsequent research about patrons' decision-making process and pre-/post-purchase behaviors for a coffee house product. Findings in this research are theoretically meaningful, and thus could be of great value in a hospitality sector. Even though a specific chain coffee shop was considered as the research background of this study, the results may be applied to other chain coffee shop operations.

The present study revealed that brand awareness, perceived quality, brand image, and perceived value showed strong association with pleasure; brand awareness and perceived value were the important drivers of arousal. These results are in line with previous consumer behavior and marketing studies that identified the significant relationship between cognition and affect in diverse contexts (Frank et al., 2014; Han et al., 2011; Oliver, 1999). Also, the results indicated that brand awareness and perceived value are especially important in that these variables are not only the direct triggers of pleasure and arousal but also the vital indirect contributors to brand loyalty generation. Given these important results, practitioners of chain coffee shops should consider making diverse endeavors to improve patrons' brand awareness and perceived value in order to increase the level of customers' affective/emotional experiences at a coffee shop and brand loyalty. For example, regularly communicating with consumers through various promotional efforts, including advertising, direct mail, and direct digital marketing, could help the coffee shop increase its brand awareness. Brand awareness could also be enhanced by establishing creative changes in menu items that may induce customers to patronize the coffee shop. For example, the inclusion of limited edition drinks and desserts to the menu would stimulate brand experience, which accounts for an increase in brand awareness (Huang and Sarigöllü, 2012). In

planning brand awareness, chain coffee shop operators should identify all possible approaches to improving brand experience, such as taking advantages of local availability of food ingredients. In addition, customer perceived value is often derived from consumer comparison between perceived benefits (i.e., a company's actual and augmented products and services) and perceived sacrifices (e.g., money and time spent) (Zeithaml, 1988). Focusing on value implies that chain coffee shop operators must consider product quality in the context of customer sacrifice (Oh, 2000). Pricing must reflect not only quality but also elements that coffee shop patrons truly value. The aroma, tastiness, menu variety, nutritional value, presentation, and freshness of beverages and desserts as well as employee services and physical environment are important in establishing a positive value perception of chain coffee shop patrons. Chain coffee shop operators should also often send personal messages, such as birthday cards and season's greetings, to their patrons as a sign of appreciation. Certainly, all the above strategies to establish brand awareness and perceived value for a chain coffee shop should be tied to the efforts of creating positive cognitive evaluations, which have been identified as significant antecedents of pleasure and arousal.

Satisfaction is often regarded to be one of the most vital factors in generating individuals' purchasing decision/intention and behavior in consumer behavior and marketing (Brunner et al., 2008; Oliver, 1997). This study provided strong support for the prominent role of brand satisfaction in determining customers' loyalty for a specific chain coffee shop brand. Brand satisfaction is most substantial than other study variables, and considerably elicits patrons' relationship commitment with the brand and their loyalty for the brand. Recognizing this salient role of brand satisfaction for the achievement of brand loyalty, chain coffee shop operators must invest various monetary and non-monetary resources on enhancing patrons' satisfactory experiences while consuming their product. The findings of this study revealed that all four components (i.e., brand awareness, perceived quality, brand image, and perceived value) of cognitive evaluation function as significant predictors of patrons' pleasurable experience. Out of all four components, perceived value served as the greatest contributor to chain coffee shop patrons' pleasure. Increasing the chain coffee shop's value contributes to patrons' pleasurable experience which, in turn, raises satisfaction level. Understanding what creates value for coffee shop patrons is an ongoing process as customers and competitors change endlessly. Market research should therefore be conducted periodically in order to investigate the specific elements of value that patrons find pleasurable when they visit a chain coffee shop.

The empirical evidences revealed that pleasure and arousal facets of affective experiences influenced brand satisfaction asymmetrically. While both affective factors are important, pleasure played a more active role in triggering its subsequent variables than arousal. In addition, the relative criticality of pleasure in contributing to brand loyalty enhancement among study variables within our research framework was substantial. Clearly, the role of two affective factors should be viewed differently in explicating chain coffee shop patrons' brand loyalty generation process. Essentially, evoking patrons' pleasurable experiences is one of the necessary ways for the success of chain coffee shop operations. Advertising campaigns can certainly help create brand awareness and brand image. However, the fact is that customers come to know a brand through a broad range of touch points, including external stimuli (e.g., advertising, word-of-mouth recommendation) and personal experience with the brand. Generally, customers will be disappointed if the actual performance falls short of the expectation derived from external stimuli. Consequently, chain coffee shop operators must put much care into managing every touch point. In experiential consumption settings, such as coffee shops, the intangible market offerings are more important than the tangible offerings (Yuan and Wu, 2008). Customers usually patronize a coffee shop and enjoy the experience, such as the atmosphere and coffee. Hence, allocating monetary investment on pleasant environment and good-quality coffee, as

well as providing effective staff training are key strategies for chain coffee shop operators.

Our close examination of the indirect impact of research variables supports for the importance of affective factors, brand satisfaction, and relationship commitment as mediators. In particular, these variables significantly mediated the influence of their direct antecedent(s) on outcome variable(s). This result is coherent with existing studies affirming the mediating nature of these constructs (e.g., Han et al., 2011; Morgan and Hunt, 1994). Cognitive factors (brand awareness and perceived value) significantly induce brand loyalty indirectly through these mediators; pleasure significantly elicit brand loyalty indirectly through satisfaction and commitment; and, satisfaction along with its direct contribution also indirectly triggers brand loyalty through commitment. Employing these constructs as mediators when variables whose nature is cognitive, affective, or conative are involved would be indispensable in theorizing and investigating a variety of coffee house customers' decision-making process, post-purchase behaviors, and loyalty generation process.

## 6. Limitations and future research

Coupled with the insights we have delineated from this research, we offer suggestions for those interested in examining customer loyalty in the coffee shop industry. First, since the data were collected only from Starbucks, applications of the study's results to other coffee shop chains should be done with caution. Future research should be aimed at diverse samples, especially customers of other coffee shop chains. It would be interesting to test the theoretical model in other coffee shop chains in order to generate comparative results. To increase the generalizability of the results, the theoretical model should also be validated with different samples of populations (i.e., extended to independent coffee shops). Second, the robustness of research model can be enhanced by incorporating other important concepts in the marketing field, such as psychographics and demographics, in understanding the loyalty of coffee shop patrons. Studying differences in coffee shop customers' loyalty depending on targeted segments could help in better understanding of coffee shop customers.

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