Traditional Fashion And Brand Marketing – A Sustainable Approach

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Abstract

Sustainability is a critical issue in today's society. Organizations can no longer consistently grow their businesses without society's cooperation. Marketing managers thus focus on satisfying consumers' socio and ethical needs, such as through providing cultural promotion, nvironmental protection, and disaster relief activities. Sustainability encompasses an organization's economic, social, and environmental responsibilities, provoking the question of how to implement them effectively. This study focuses on the traditional fashion market's sustainable marketing activities and their performance. The results demonstrate that the traditional fashion market's sustainable activities have a positive effect on brand image, trust, and satisfaction. Moreover, they have a positive influence on building brand loyalty. The results offer meaningful implications for corporate executive officers and marketers to create more effective sustainable management strategies.

Keywords: Traditional fashion market, CSR, Sustainable marketing activity, Brand image, Customer loyalty.

1. Introduction

Organizations preferentially consider sustainability to maintain consistent growth in their businesses. Sustainability encompasses an organization's economic, social, and environmental responsibilities, provoking the question of how to implement them [1]. In this work, an organization practices economic sustainability by hiring employees. Further, CSR activities are generally conducted for sustainability. Organization considers green management as environmental sustainability such as using green materials or doing demarketing activities. By carrying out a variety of activities for sustainability, organizations lay the foundation for long-term growth.

Marketing activities of organizations focus on satisfying consumers' socio and ethical needs, such as through providing cultural promotion, environmental protection, and disaster relief activities [2]. Sustainability marketing activities have a positive effect on brand image enhancement, corporate profit growth, and longevity [3]. CSR activities are useful for long-term development by forming customer loyalty to the brand rather than just contributing to short-term profit [4,5]. Thus, sustainable marketing activities of an organization build positive brand image and attitude toward customers; in return, an organization gains competitive advantages based on brand equity [6,7].

Sustainable marketing activities need to consider cultural factors to improve cooperation with society and enhance customer–organization communication for sustainable growth [8]. Culture is closely related to attitudes and behaviors in certain societies. People from different cultures make different evaluations of the same product or service [9]. Thus, organizations should understand the various cultural characteristics of stakeholders in society and should establish marketing strategies based on this to establish better communication. However, prior research on sustainability centers on economic, social, and environmental responsibilities while leaving cultural factors under-studied. To this work, this study applies sustainability to a traditional fashion market, which is not only a space for commercial functions and cultural attractions but a place for local communities to carry out community activities. A traditional fashion market as a fashion organization is the center of the fashion network that supplies about 30% of the products in the Korean apparel market [8].

However, the traditional fashion market in the Republic of Korea is losing its competitiveness due to global fast-fashion brands and other organization competitors such as department stores and outlets. Thus, this study will contribute to sustainability of the traditional fashion market by examining the relationship among sustainability marketing activities, brand image, consumer trust, satisfaction, and loyalty.

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to examine the effects of a traditional fashion market's sustainable marketing activities on brand image. Also, the relationship among brand image, consumer trust, satisfaction, and loyalty formation is analyzed. The results of this study will likely provide academic implications as well as practical implications by suggesting the need for traditional fashion markets to pursue sustainable marketing, thus identifying the effects of sustainability on the coexistence of companies and communities.

2. Literature review

2.1. Sustainable marketing activity

Elkington claims that sustainable marketing activities should contain three factors: economic, social, and environmental [10]. Sustainable marketing refers to the decision-making process and business activities by the local community and consumers, such as production and sales, and their social environment and environmental-friendly ethics. Cultural activities aim at recognizing cultural diversity [9,11,12]. The conceptualization of sustainability has prompted active discussion in various fields [13,9,14]. As society's interest in sustainability grows, companies use sustainability management activities to get closer to customers [15].

Recent sustainable marketing activities have evolved into an era of shared value management beyond corporate CSR [16]. Furthermore, sustainable marketing activities pursue mutual growth and harmony among factors such as the economy, environment, society, and culture [17].

Economic marketing activities represent sharing economic benefits through economic support within a region. The activity should share economic benefits with customers, employees, partners, and stakeholders in the community; it should also promote company growth through profits [18]. Amalrick and Hauser argue that innovation, creation of value, and efficient management should generate profits through new products and services as well as share profits with local stakeholders [19]. Economic accountability also has a positive impact on revenue growth [3]. Thus, economic marketing activities should maximize profits based on the efficiency of management through the establishment of an e-commerce environment, enhancement of store environment, and modernization of facilities.

Social marketing activities are social contribution activities that achieve other objectives of a company, besides business tasks aimed at pursuing profits [20,21]. Social activities also have a positive effect on consumers' beliefs about a company. A company's social activities help customers remain tied to their behavioral intentions, such as their reactions and attitudes toward a company's products [22,23]. As a member of society, companies are aware of their roles and carry out their social responsibilities to the local community. Then, companies can evolve into social enterprises from a long-term perspective. For example, social contribution activities include sharing food with community members, conducting free health examinations for residents, and other community volunteering activities.

Environmental marketing activities means, "all activities designed to generate and facilitate any exchanges intended to satisfy human needs or wants, such that the satisfaction of these needs and wants occurs, with minimal detrimental impact on the natural environment" [24]. Examples include the development of environmental- friendly fashion products through recycling shopping bag sharing events, re-use of recycled

banners, and protection of nature for green growth. These activities are important, as consumers are becoming increasingly interested in eco-friendly consumption.

Sustainable marketing activities should not just rely on a single dimension of the triple bottom line (TBL) but cover social activities in all areas of sustainability [13]. The incorporation of culture should serve as the driving force for TBL, promoting the harmony of consumer and community welfare companies and genuine sustainable growth. Thus, this study includes cultural aspects as a variable of sustainability.

Cultural marketing activities are "the consideration, preservation, and presentation of tangible and intangible heritage, artistic production, as well as the knowledge and skills of various social groups, communities, and nations" [25]. In this decade, the role of culture is emphasized as the center of sustainable development [13,26,27]. This trend has evolved to focus on psychological factors such as experience, story, history, and service in rapidly changing industries such as design, production, prices, and brands [28]. Cultural marketing activities are related to the role a company plays in society, explicitly crafting a culture, and they help promote a company's various cultural characteristics applicable to its society [29].

2.2. Brand image

Brand image involves the symbolic meaning associated with specific attributes of a brand. In other words, the consumer's cognitive picture is the sum of the beliefs, thoughts, and impressions that an individual has about a particular object [30]. Image can also apply to corporations or other government agencies. For example, a brand image for a particular firm is formed based on all the information (perception, reasoning, and belief) related to a company or product that people remember [31]. Thus, brand image is a set of perceptions reflected in consumers' association with a brand [30,32].

Aaker suggests that a positive brand image helps establish brand positioning, enhances brand performance, and protects brands in competition [33]. Besides, brand image is a mediator that determines whether or not customers should choose a brand, thus influencing their purchase [34]. Image can also describe the effects of customer loyalty and purchase intention [35]. A positive brand image is likely to increase consumer loyalty through customer engagement [36]. Thus, corporate CSR activities can be an essential source of competitive advantage by building a positive brand image and creating positive consumer attitudes [7].

A variety of studies confirm that corporate sustainability marketing activities have positive effects on corporate brand image. Maignan and Ferrel argue that economic sustainability marketing activities have a positive effect on brand image enhancement, corporate profit growth, and longevity [37]. The image of a company that is evaluated to practice social responsibility excellently is more favorable than that of a company that does not. Therefore, it forms a favorable brand attitude of consumers [38,39]. If a company invests in improving its ability and willingness to fulfill its social responsibilities, consumers will benefit from these activities, appreciate the company, and generate corporate awareness [40]. To practice green management, environmental sustainability marketing activities share environmental protection with not only companies but also members of local communities [41]. Cultural sustainable marketing activities that acknowledge diversity can enhance brand image and achieve harmony of diverse cultures [29].

H1. Perceived sustainable marketing activities (economic, social, environmental, and cultural) have a positive impact on brand image.

2.3. Customer satisfaction

Satisfaction is a positive emotional response to the outcome of a previous experience. It can measure the level of satisfaction post-consumption or the current level of satisfaction [42]. Westbrook and Oliver define satisfaction as "the level of consumer- perceived branded products or services and other outcomes compared to existing brands." [43]. Consumer satisfaction can be seen as the achievement of the consumption goal experienced by the consumer, indicating whether or not service met customer demand and expectations [44]. In other words, consumer satisfaction tells the extent to which the consumer is consistently satisfied with a brand, helping to understand the consumer's long-term relationship with it [45].

According to previous studies, there is a positive relationship between brand image and consumer satisfaction [46,31]. Bloemer and de Ruyter argue that customer satisfaction is the mediator between store image and customer loyalty [47].

Ryu, Han, and Kim confirm that brand image can be an indicator of customer satisfaction and behavioral intention. Thus, companies are conducting various activities to improve their brand image [48]. The positive image formed this way will also enhance consumer satisfaction.

Therefore, brand image can increase overall customer fulfillment with customer satisfaction and sustainable expectation and demand.

H2. Brand image has a positive effect on customer satisfaction.

2.4. Customer trust

Trust is the expectation that opponents will work together to fulfill their duties and responsibilities. It is the belief that the other person's words or promises will meet his or her obligations in a stable and exchangeable relationship [49]. Rousseau, Sitkin, Burt, and Camerer argues that trust is an intention to accommodate others based on positive expectations of other people's actions or objectives [50].

Also, consumers develop brand trust based on expectations of a brand's marketing activities and the products it represents [51]. In other words, trust is an intention to accept vulnerability based on positive expectations about the behavior or intention of others.

A brand is a trust mark for all intangible credibility and is a symbol of guarantee for a particular brand product or activity [52]. The importance of trust-building has already been demonstrated in maintaining an honest relationship between consumer and seller [53,54,49]. Consumers assess service or product based on an overall level such as their previous experience or positive/negative word of mouth. Brand credibility symbolizes the yardstick of credibility, which can reinforce consumers' repetitive buying behavior [54].

Consumer trust is essential to build a strong relationship between consumer and seller, having a positive impact on consumer loyalty [55,56]. Brand image, as perceived by the consumer, can have a significant influence on behavior. For example, a brand image can increase the likelihood of purchase at the time of the transaction, reduce the customer's perceived risk on a company or product, and raise brand credibility [57,58]. CSR generates a positive corporate image and leads to a positive evaluation of the company [59].

Therefore, brand image can bring trust based on belief and positive evaluation of the brand.

H3. Brand image has a positive effect on consumer trust

2.5. Customer loyalty

Oliver defines loyalty as "a strong willingness to buy or visit a consistent, preferred product or service, even if the consumer is in a situation that could trigger a conversion action to select another brand [60]." Loyalty also exists when customers resist the pressure to switch to another brand. Thus, loyalty results in regularly purchasing or reusing a particular product or service or repeatedly consuming the same brand [61]. Loyalty can help companies acquire a stable customer base, reduce acquisition and transaction costs, and lower revenue volatility [62]. Other benefits include lower marketing costs, attracting a more significant number of clients, increasing market share, and willingness to pay premium prices [39,63]. Consumer loyalty, therefore, is a critical factor for a brand's long-term competitive advantage and is an essential goal in the service marketing industry.

2.6. Relationship among brand image, satisfaction, trust and loyalty

Image represents an intangible function that reflects a consumer's social approval, self-expression, or self-esteem for a brand. In general, the better the image, the higher the perceived product quality, customer satisfaction, and loyalty [64]. Thus, image affects the consumers' various attitudes and behavior toward the retailer. A positive brand image leads to customer loyalty [65]. Alhaddad confirms that brand image has positive effects on brand trust and brand loyalty [59].

Besides, Tu and Chih report that brand image positively affects perceived value and customer loyalty; in particular, perceived value positively influences customer loyalty [66]. Therefore, brand image can positively influence consumer loyalty to the overall brand. Mittal, Kumar, and Tsiros note that satisfaction with products and services determine consumer behavioral intentions [67]. Customer satisfaction influences consumer loyalty, which determines repurchase behavior. Positive relationships with products or brands, such as customer satisfaction, have higher levels of brand loyalty [68]. Also, in the communication between consumers and firms, satisfaction is the necessary foundation to generate loyalty.

Thus, a positive relationship between satisfaction and loyalty influences consumers' intent to repurchase the service and their willingness to recommend the brand to others [69,62]. Therefore, brand satisfaction is a source of loyalty and can have a positive effect. Trust is an essential variable between consumers and brands [49]. Singh and Sirdeshmukh and Sirdeshmukh, Singh, and Sabol argue that people who lack the intention to

trust a brand in a competitive society will not be loyal [70,71]. In this study, brand loyalty sustains the relationship between consumers and companies by providing sustainable value, thus allowing customers to remain loyal toward a brand [72]. Confidence in customers' perceived management activities also positively affects corporate loyalty [70]. Morgan and Hunt assert that consumer confidence is a high-value consumer place on brands. Loyalty also plays a role in maintaining a close relationship between brands and consumers, a bond created by trust [49,72]. Thus, consumer trust can be a precondition for brand loyalty and has a significant influence.

H4. Brand image has a positive effect on brand loyalty.

H5. Consumer satisfaction has a positive effect on brand loyalty.

H6. Consumer trust has a positive effect on brand loyalty.

2 Objective and methodology

A two fold procedure has been involved

Research problem and model

Measurement tools and data collection

The purpose of this study is to identify characteristics of sustainable marketing activities, based on a brand's appropriate CSR activities, by providing an in-depth look at such factors and validating them. Therefore, the following research problem is derived. Based on the four types of sustainable marketing activities drawn from previous studies, the objective is to discover the relationship between consumers' perceive response and behavioral intention. Besides, this paper examines how consumer response and visit intention differ, if at all, according to each type of marketing activity. Each hypothesis is described below.

A questionnaire was conducted on March 4, 2017, targeting consumers of traditional fashion markets. A total of 272 out of 300 responses were used in the analysis. Questions addressed sustainability awareness, brand image, satisfaction, trust, and loyalty. The questionnaire also gathered demographic characteristics of each stimulus, based on previous research that identified four sustainable marketing activities. A preliminary survey was conducted, and 10 fashion and

marketing experts were asked to verify the suitability of the questionnaire and stimuli.

Variables were derived through literature review and modified according to the purpose of this study. All four sustainable activities and other questions used a 56-point Likert scale. The survey posed five questions each for economic, social, environmental, and cultural activities. First, economic activity questions were based on Arli and Lasmono, Bansal, Maignan, Maignan and Ferrell, and Kim et al. [73,74,3,37,75]. Second, social activities referred to studies conducted by Arli and Lasmono, Kim et al., Sen and Bhattacharya [73,75,22]. Third, environmental questions used studies from Baughn and Mclntosh and Kim et al.,[76,9]. Last, cultural activities questions reflected studies by Sen and Bhattacharya and Kim et al. [22,9].

Besides, brand image, customer satisfaction, trust and loyalty variables are based on Ball, Simoes Coelho, and Machas, Chen, Faullant, Matzler, and Fuller, He and Lai, Jin, Lee, and Huffman, and Nyadzayo and Khajehzadeh [77-82].

Brand image variables are reconstructed to generate six questions. The rest of the survey involves four questions each pertaining to customer satisfaction, trust, and loyalty. Again, all questions are revised based on previous studies.

The final analysis of this study used SPSS 21.0 to conduct exploratory factor analysis and reliability analysis. The hypotheses were verified through confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation model analysis using AMOS 18.0.

3 Discussion and findings

A questionnaire was conducted on March 4, 2017, targeting consumers of traditional fashion markets. A total of 272 out of 300 responses were used in the analysis. Questions addressed sustainability awareness, brand image, satisfaction, trust, and loyalty. The questionnaire also gathered demographic characteristics of each stimulus, based on previous research that identified four sustainable marketing activities. A preliminary survey was conducted, and 10 fashion and marketing experts were asked to verify the suitability of the questionnaire and stimuli.

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Validity and reliability analysis of measurement

Cronbach's α value is calculated to confirm the reliability of the measurement items using SPSS 21.0, whereas confirmatory factor analysis uses AMOS 18.0 to ensure validity. Reliability and confirmatory factor analysis are conducted to verify the reliability and validity of measurement variables. The confirmatory factor analysis reveals that the model is appropriate at model fit:
$\chi2 = 407.788$,
$df = 335$, $p = .000$, CMIN/DF = 1.873, GFI = 0.861, CFI = 0.929, IFI = 0.930, TLI = 0.920, NFI = 0.861, RMSEA = 0.057.

Factor loading, significance, average variance extracted, and construct reliability are also examined to verify the convergent validity of the measurement model. The factor loading of the measurement variables is statistically significant at 0.6 or more. Calculation of AVE and CR values indicates that AVE values are 0.5 or more and CR values are 0.7 or more; therefore, each measurement variable is valid [83]. Cronbach's α analysis is also performed to confirm reliability of the items. Results indicate that all of them satisfy an internal consistency of 0.8 or higher. To verify the discriminant validity of the measurement model, each latent variable's AVE value is compared with the square of the correlation coefficient between each of the latent variables, according to the method proposed by Hair et al [84].

4.3. Hypothesis verification result

A structural equation model analysis is conducted to verify the hypotheses (Table 4). Based on the four types of sustainable marketing activities, this study analyzes the effects on brand image, satisfaction, trust, and loyalty. Analysis reveals a model fit:
$\chi2 = 407.788$, df = 335, $p = .000$, CMIN / DF = 1.873, GFI = 0.861, CFI = 0.929,
IFI = 0.930, TLI = 0.920, NFI = 0.861, and RMSEA = 0.057, respectively.

Thus, the fit index satisfies the criterion to judge the suitability of the model. The verification results are shown in Fig. 2. As a result of examining the effects of sustainable marketing activitiesin traditional fashion markets on brand image, social activities do not affect ethical consciousness but influence economic activity [0.336, $t = 3.505$, ($p = .000$)], environmental activity [0.369, $t = 4.033$, ($p = .000$)], and cultural activity [0.246, $t = 3.053$, ($p = .002$)], thus

having a positive effect on brand image. Therefore, Hypothesis 1–1 and Hypotheses 1–3 and 1–4 are true. Social activities that do not affect brand image imply that there is no effect on the consumer when the direct benefit is given to a third party, rather than the consumer. The effects of economic, social, and cultural environment activities on brand image are supported, with $P = .000$, $t = 8.321$, $p = .000$. Next, this study examines the effect brand image has on brand satisfaction, trustworthiness, and loyalty. They all have a positive effect with brand satisfaction [0.593, $t = 8.191$, (p = .000)], trustworthiness [0.576, $t = 8.321$, ($p = .000$)], and consumer loyalty [0.162, $t = 1.947$, ($p = 0.05$)], respectively. Therefore, Hypotheses 2, 3, and 4 are adopted. These results support Rousseau et al.'s (1998) pre-empirical study. Consumer satisfaction has a positive effect on consumer loyalty [0.458, $t = 6.079$, ($p = .000$)], and consumer trust has a positive effect

on consumer loyalty [0.350, t = 5.055, (p = .000)]. These findings concur with the study of Verhoef that consumer satisfaction and consumer trust are important factors that create positive consumer loyalty.

5. Conclusions

The purpose of this study is to identify the influence of brand image on brand satisfaction, trust, and loyalty formation and to grasp the power of the brand image, consumer satisfaction, and consumer trust in consumer loyalty to form a consistent brand attitude. The results of the
study are as follows.

First, certain sustainable marketing activities (economic, environmental, and cultural) have a positive effect on constructing a positive image of traditional fashion markets. This result confirms that economic activities, such as facility modernization and technological innovation through investment to build an efficient shopping environment, have a positive effect on consumers' positive associations with brands. In other words, brand image is influenced by sharing customers and employees' economic interests. Besides, a traditional fashion market's
efforts to practice green management means it can share global environmental consciousness with consumers, which will affect consumers' perception of a positive brand image. For instance, holding cooking and a song contest for multicultural residents may positively influence consumers' recognition of traditional fashion markets. These results infer that recognizing the diverse cultures of traditional fashion market brands are perceived as increasing consumer acceptance and fulfilling corporate responsibility of addressing social problems.

Therefore, it is confirmed that conducting economic, environmental, and cultural sustainable marketing activities have a significant influence on consumers' positive associations with brands.
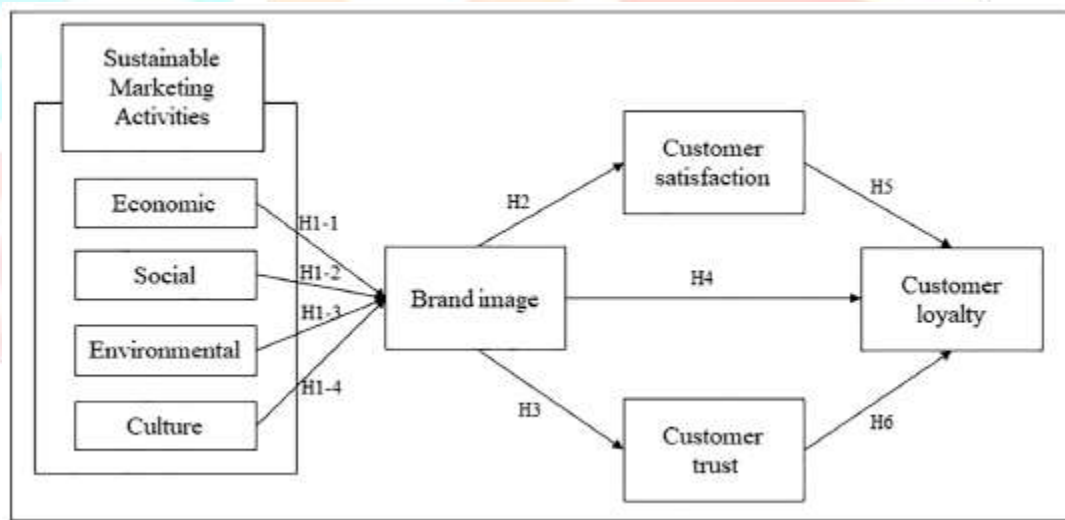

Fig. 1. Research model.

On the other hand, social sustainable marketing activities have no significant impact on brand image. It is difficult to lure consumers to have a positive consciousness through activities for the underclass, such as volunteering or food sharing. Although such activities do not affect consumers' formation of a positive image toward a brand, they can provoke consumers' interest in the company if it shows responsibility through social activities (Sen & Bhattacharya, 2001).

Second, this paper examines the effects of brand image from sustainable marketing activities on consumer satisfaction and trust.

Findings reveal that brand image is positively affected by customer satisfaction and trust. Consumers' perceived image, formed through a traditional fashion market's sustainable marketing activities, responds to consumer demands and expectations. As a result, brand image can lead to consumer satisfaction; this is the consumer's positive emotional response to trust, an expectation that the activities and events of traditional fashion market will faithfully fulfill social responsibilities and obligations. Research on consumer loyalty generated from CSR activities is drawing attention. However, if consumer expectations of the traditional

fashion market can be identified through consumer satisfaction and trust, companies can effectively use this to measure

consumers' acceptance of marketing. Ultimately, increasing this can elevate behavioral intention (Bloemer & de Ruyter, 1998).
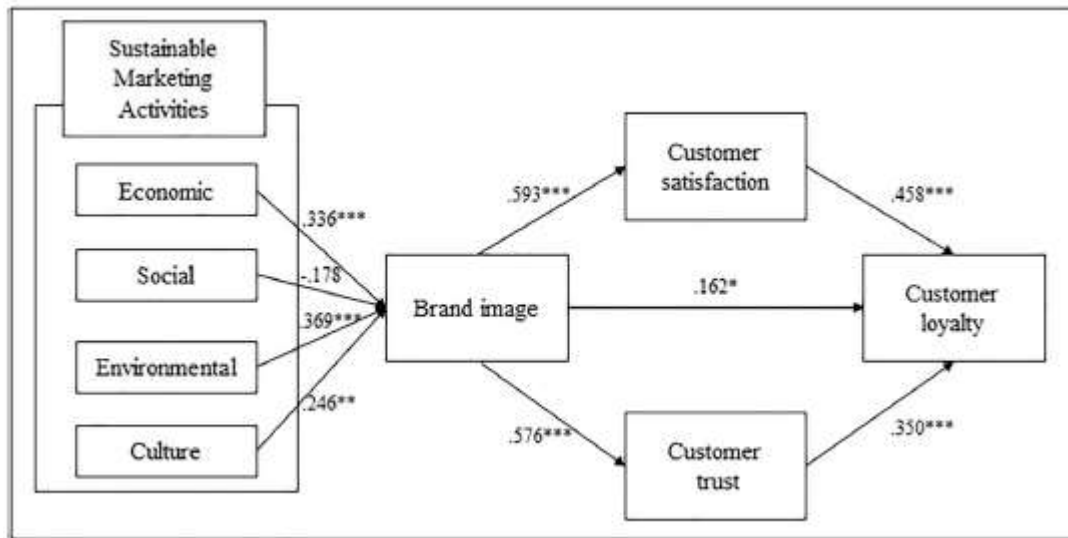

Fig. 2. Results of the structural model test. Model fit: $\chi 2 = 407.788$, $df = 335$, $p = .000$, CMIN/DF = 1.873, GFI = 0.861, CFI = 0.929, IFI = 0.930, TLI = 0.920, NFI = 0.861, RMSEA = 0.057. Note: The path coefficients are standardized, ***$p < .001$, **$p < .01$, *$p < .05$.

Third, this study tries to grasp the power of brand image, consumer satisfaction, and consumer trust in forming consumer loyalty, which can create a consistent attitude toward a brand. Brand image, consumer satisfaction, and trust all have positive effects on consumer loyalty.

These three factors can also influence brand loyalty. Ultimately, the traditional fashion market's sustainable marketing activities will help build lasting relationships between consumers and traditional fashion market brands. In addition, these activities can increase market share and secure a long-term advantage over other traditional fashion markets.

To build a strong relationship centered on traditional fashion markets and consumer loyalty, the above-mentioned brand image, consumer satisfaction, and trust should become the driving force, delivering big synergies from sustainable marketing activities. The academic implications of this study are as follows. First, this study suggests four components of the traditional fashion market's sustainable marketing activities (economic, social, environmental, and cultural) and find that they improve a company's brand image. This finding can provide a basis for further development in related theories. Second, this study confirms the relationship among brand image, customer satisfaction, trust, and loyalty. Although the findings of this study concur with the results of previous studies, this study extends this to the traditional fashion market. Last, there is significance in applying the research model to the traditional fashion market, which is relatively rare. Thus, this study enriches existing academic literature and will help future studies on the traditional fashion market.

The practical implications of this study are as follows. First, environmental activity for sustainability can improve brand image of the traditional fashion market. Thus, marketing managers should operate environmental activities to generate a positive image with customers.

Second, sustainable marketing activities improve brand image; in turn, brand image is positively related to customer satisfaction, trust, and loyalty. Therefore, a traditional fashion market's organizations should improve brand image by pursuing economic, social, environmental, and

cultural sustainable activities. These activities will help them survive in turbulent market environments. Last, practical directions are suggested for marketers researching traditional fashion market strategies, considering traditional fashion market consumers' multidimensional needs.

For example, a traditional fashion market could hold a festival for local people and support social, environmental, and cultural events just like in a general firm. These activities are likely to shape a positive image. The limitations of this study and points that could be supplemented in future research are as follows.

First, a survey of foreigners should be conducted for a side-by-side analysis between countries. As the proportion of foreign visitors who visit traditional fashion markets is increasing, it is necessary to analyze the results through a cross-national comparison. Second, future study can try to understand the difference in the influence of sustainable marketing activities in Korean consumer markets through comparative studies with other countries' traditional fashion markets or companies that are engaged in sustainable marketing activities. Future studies may provide more in-depth marketing implications by considering these factors.

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