

The effects of sustainability management on brand attitude of coffee specialty shops

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Abstract

The purposes of the study are to investigate the effects of sustainability management which is economic responsibility, social responsibility, and environmental responsibility on brand attitude of coffee shops. An online survey was conducted with 328 customers who visit coffee shops more than once a month. Data were analyzed using SPSS 24.0 software and hierarchical regression was performed. Consumers' perceptions of economic, social, and environmental responsibility were found to have a positive effect on brand attitude. According to the hierarchical regression analysis of sustainability management activities and brand attitudes, economic responsibility has the greatest influence on brand attitude, followed by social responsibility and, lastly, environmental responsibility.

Keywords: Sustainability management, School foodservice, Dietitian, Knowledge, Attitude¹

1. Introduction

In today's society, the concept of sustainability grows in importance as we pay significant economic and social costs and face social conflicts due to serious environmental issues[1][2]. As a result, the management environment across all industrial sectors has converted to the one that requires sustainable development and corporate social responsibility[3][4][5][6]. Under the new management environment, many businesses pursue sustainability management by considering not only economic performance but also environmental soundness and social responsibility[6][7].

Elkington (1997) defined sustainability management as the "management paradigm which pursues consistent growth based on the interaction among economic profitability, social responsibility and environmental soundness, with the economic, environmental and social values as its triple bottom line[8]". Under such a paradigm, a company cannot be highly evaluated despite excellent financial performance unless it pays attention to resolving environmental and social issues[9][10]. Faced with this new paradigm, a number of businesses are paying attention to environmental and social issues and making efforts to secure a competitive advantage through sustainability management. The rapidly growing coffee specialty shop market, in particular, is using sustainability management as a differentiating marketing tool[11].

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2. Methodology

2.1. Research model and hypotheses

To analyze the impact of sustainability management activities of coffee specialty shops on brand attitude. This study uses the research model as described in Figure 1. Previous studies on the relationship between sustainability management activities and customer attitudes indicate that sustainability management activities enhance the value of the company[12] and form positive customer behavior intentions[13]. Moreover, a company’s social responsibility activities tend to be positively evaluated, influencing brand attitude and loyalty[14]. Ajzen and Fishein (2000) reported that a restaurant’s environmentally friendly activities create subjective value and affect the attitude of customers[15]. Chen (2010) also reported that customers’ environmental concerns significantly impact their attitude toward restaurants that practice environmentally friendly activities[16]. Consequently, this study presents the following hypotheses:

- H1: Economic responsibility activities will have a positive (+) effect on brand attitude.
- H2: Social responsibility activities will have a positive (+) effect on brand attitude.
- H3: Environmental responsibility activities will have a positive (+) effect on brand attitude.

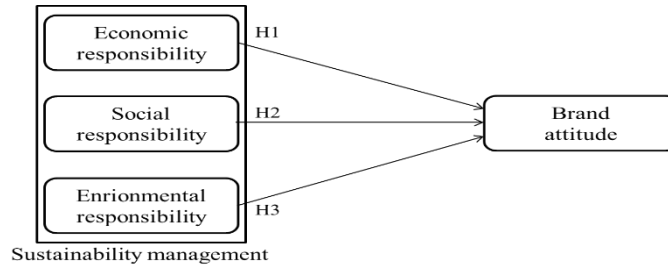


Figure 1. Research design

2.2. Research subject and method

A survey was conducted with coffee specialty shop consumers to investigate the relationship between sustainability management activities and brand attitude. An online survey agency was hired and the survey was conducted in March 2018. Among those registered with the survey agency, consumers in their 20s and 30s who currently reside in Seoul and visit a coffee shop one or more times a month were asked to respond to the online survey. A total of 328 people submitted the questionnaire.

2.3. Investigation details

The questionnaire consists of four sections of questions regarding sustainability management of coffee shops perceived by coffee shop customers, brand attitude, and general characteristics. Sustainability management was classified into economic, social, and environmental responsibility activities based on the results of previous studies and measured with 10 items; there were also 3 questions on sustainable development concerns and 5 questions on brand attitude[3][12][13]. Sustainability management activities perceived by coffee shop customers, sustainable development concerns, and brand attitude were measured using a Likert 5-point scale (1: Absolutely disagree ~ 5: Absolutely agree).

2.4. Data analysis

Descriptive statistics were used to calculate the frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation of economic, social, and environmental responsibility activities, brand attitude, and general characteristics. Hierarchical regression analysis was conducted to confirm the relationship between sustainability management and brand attitude.

3. Results

3.1. Profile of respondents

Of the total respondents, 51.2% (168 people) were males and the age of respondents was evenly distributed from their 20s to 40s. As for educational level, college graduates comprised the majority at 70.4% (231 people). Employees made up the majority of the occupations at 61.0% (200 people) with students following at 13.7% (45 people). The largest number of respondents earned a monthly income of \$2,000~2,999 at 28.0%, followed by the income range of \$3,000~3,999 at 20.7% and that of \$1,000~1,999 at 15.9% .

3.2. Reliability of measurement items

Cronbach's alpha of the assessment items was calculated at 0.710~0.882, indicating internal consistency (see Table 1). Sustainability management activities were classified into the three categories of 'economic responsibility activities', 'social responsibility activities', and 'environmental responsibility activities', measured through a total of 10 questions. Brand attitude was measured through 5 questions .

Table 1. Results of reliability

Variables ¹⁾		Mean±SD	
Sustainability management	Economic responsibility ($\alpha=0.710$)	Has a high competitive advantage.	3.80±0.77
		Improves the quality of products and services ceaselessly.	3.56±0.74
		Competes with competitors fairly.	3.46±0.73
	Social Responsibility ($\alpha=0.806$)	Uses fair trade coffee beans purchased ethically.	3.13±0.81
		Makes donations or engages in charitable works.	3.13±0.83
		Implements ethical corporate management.	3.17±0.76
	Environmental responsibility ($\alpha=0.739$)	Uses coffee mugs, cups, or tumblers to reduce the use of disposable cups.	3.22±0.93
		Conserves energy and resources.	3.22±0.76
		Uses recycled paper products such as napkins, cup holders, and packaging containers (carriers, shopping bags, and so on).	3.38±0.77
		Executes campaigns or promotional activities for environment protection.	3.25±0.83
Brand attitude ($\alpha=0.882$)	I trust the coffee shop.	3.66±0.74	

I like the coffee shop.	3.75±0.71
The coffee shop is worth it.	3.59±0.74
The coffee shop is useful.	3.75±0.71
I feel good at the coffee shop.	3.68±0.72

1) A 5-point Likert-type scale was used (1: strongly disagree~5: strongly agree)

3.3. Influence of sustainability management on brand attitude

To assess the relative influence of economic, social, and environmental responsibility activities on brand attitude, a hierarchical regression analysis was conducted (see Table 2). To verify the influence of sustainability management on brand attitude, ‘economic responsibility activities’, ‘social responsibility activities’, and ‘environmental responsibility activities’ were set as the independent variables and ‘brand attitude’ was set as the dependent variable for the analysis.

Table 2. Result of hierarchical multiple regression with sustainability management and brand attitude

Model ¹	Independent variables	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	t-value	Multicollinearity	
		B	S.E	β		Tolerance	VIF
Model 1	Constant	1.676	0.168		10.002***		
	Economic responsibility	0.554	0.046	0.556	12.081***	1.000	1.000
R ² =0.309, Adjusted R ² =0.307, F=145.941***							
Model 2	Constant	1.328	0.165		8.072***		
	Economic responsibility	0.302	0.049	0.394	8.028***	0.770	1.298
	Social responsibility	0.296	0.043	0.0339	6.900***	0.770	1.298
R ² =0.397, Adjusted R ² =0.394, F=107.207***							
Model 3	Constant	1.189	0.178		6.7697***		
	Economic responsibility	0.375	0.049	0.337	7.597***	0.747	1.338
	Social responsibility	0.267	0.047	0.296	5.516***	0.644	1.554
	Environmental responsibility	0.098	0.049	0.102	2.024*	0.718	1.392
R ² =0.405, Adjusted R ² =0.400, F=73.518***, Durbin-Watson=2.078							

¹Dependent variable: brand attitude

*P<0.05, ***P<0.001

In Model 1, the explanatory power for the regression equation was 30.9% ($R^2=0.309$) and it was observed that the more highly the economic responsibility activities were perceived, the higher the brand attitude rose ($t=12.081$, $p<0.001$). In Model 2, social responsibility activities were additionally regressed, which accounted for an additional 8.8% compared to Model 1 ($R^2=0.397$). Moreover, it was observed that both economic responsibility activities ($t=8.028$, $p<0.001$) and social responsibility activities ($t=6.900$, $p<0.001$) had a significant impact on brand attitude. Model 3 shows the result of the additional regression of environmental responsibility activities. The regression equation of Model 3 showed the explanatory power of 40.5% ($R^2=0.405$), increasing from Model 2. In Model 3, the analysis results showed that economic responsibility activities ($t=87.597$, $p<0.001$), social responsibility activities ($t=5.516$, $p<0.001$), and environmental responsibility activities ($t=2.024$, $p<0.05$) all had a positive influence on brand attitude.

As a result, H1, H2, and H3 were all adopted. From the assessment result of the relative influence among factors that can enhance brand attitude, it was revealed that economic responsibility activities ($\beta=0.337$, $P<0.001$) had the largest influence on brand attitude, followed by social responsibility activities ($\beta=0.296$, $P<0.001$) and environmental responsibility activities ($\beta=0.102$, $P<0.05$). It can be concluded that there is no problem with multicollinearity, as tolerance limits all showed a value of 0.1 or higher, and the hierarchical regression model was found to be appropriate, as the Durbin-Watson statistic was very close to 2, at 2.078.

4. Conclusions

This study aimed to investigate the influence of sustainability management activities perceived by coffee specialty shop users on brand attitude. An online survey was conducted with consumers who reside in Seoul and visit a coffee specialty shop one or more times a month. A total of 328 questionnaires were collected and used for analysis. It was revealed that economic, social, and environmental responsibility activities all had a positive (+) influence on brand attitude. Furthermore, the hierarchical regression analysis results of sustainability management activities and brand attitude showed that economic responsibility activities ($\beta=0.337$, $P<0.001$) had the most influence on brand attitude, followed by social responsibility activities ($\beta=0.296$, $P<0.001$) and environmental responsibility activities ($\beta=0.102$, $P<0.05$). It was also found that the higher the consumer perception, the higher the attitude toward coffee specialty shop brands, in order of economic responsibility activities, social responsibility activities, and environmental responsibility activities.

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