The Effects of Service Convenience, Satisfaction, Commitment on Loyalty to Retail Service Brand

Kuan-Yin Lee  
Department of Marketing and Logistics Management, Chaoyang University of Technology

Yin-Chieh Hsu*  
Department of Marketing and Distribution Management, National Kaohsiung First University of Science and Technology

Shan-Heng Fu  
Doctoral Student, Department of Business Administration, National Chung Hsing University

Abstract

Researchers have acknowledged the growing importance of service convenience for consumer value, yet little research has explored the relationship between service convenience and retail service brand. This cross-sectional study, therefore, seeks to empirically examine the service convenience to influence brand satisfaction, continuance commitment and affective commitment, and further enhance loyalty to retail service brands. Based on three retail service brand settings in different retail formats examined, service convenience directly and positively affects brand loyalty. In addition, service convenience indirectly affects brand loyalty through brand satisfaction, continuance commitment, and affective commitment. Brand satisfaction and brand loyalty have an insignificant relationship. Then, practitioners should emphasize service convenience, including decision convenience, access convenience, transaction convenience, benefit convenience, and post-benefit convenience, as these constructs are key for developing consumer brand loyalty in the service industry and serve as a source for competitive advantages.

Keywords: service convenience, brand satisfaction, continuance commitment, affective commitment, brand loyalty

* Corresponding author  E-mail : hsu0519@nkfust.edu.tw  Tel : 07-6011000#4219
Retail service stores use brand to build loyalty in much the same way that manufacturers do (Ailawadi & Keller, 2004). A retail service brand is essentially a promise of future patronage because strong service brands not only increase consumers’ trust, but also reduce consumers’ perceived monetary, social, or safety risk in buying services (Berry, 2000; Keller, 2003; Ailawadi & Keller, 2004; Kayaman & Arasli, 2007; Lee, Huang, & Hsu, 2007, Das, Datta, & Guin, 2012; Badrinarayanan, & Laverie, 2013). Thus, retail service branding has become an important contributor to retail differentiation and the basis for building store loyalty in consumers.

A number of elements can serve to enhance consumer brand loyalty and value creation. As Berry and Parasuraman (1991) found, brand impact shifts from product to company as service plays a greater role in determining consumer value. Moreover, convenience is acknowledged to be increasingly important to consumer value (Pura, 2005; Aagja, Mammen, & Amit, 2011; Gupta, & Sharma, 2014; Rahman, & Parisa, 2014) and is the primary consideration for most consumers. The continued rise in consumers’ demand for convenience has been attributed to socioeconomic changes, technological progress, more competitive business environments, and opportunity costs that have risen with incomes (Etgar, 1978; Berry, 1979; Seiders, Berry, & Gresham, 2000; Aagja, Mammen, & Amit, 2011; Rahman, & Parisa, 2014). Yet little research has explored the relationship between service convenience and retail service brand. Therefore, this paper proposes a model of service convenience to influence consumers’ perceptions of convenience, brand satisfaction, continuance commitment and affective commitment, and further enhance loyalty to retail service brands.

This paper examines the service convenience through which consumers become loyal to retail service brands. First, the study offers a discussion of the nature of service convenience. Second, it develops a conceptual model of the relationship among the constructs in order to develop several hypotheses. The methodology is then used to examine the model. Finally, the results are
discussed in terms of managerial relevance, and potential implications for further research are provided.

**The nature of service convenience**

Intrinsic to consumers’ perceptions of service convenience are the time and effort required to buy or use a service (Berry, Seiders, & Grewal, 2002). First, consumers assess the time expenditure from psychological cost (Osuna 1985; Pruyn & Smidts, 1998) and affective reactions (Taylor, 1994; Hui & Tse, 1996). Consumers desire convenience and value for their time. In other words, the greater the time costs associated with a service are, the lower consumers’ perceptions of service convenience are. In addition, Kahneman (1973) observes that, although two mental tasks may take a similar amount of time, one might be perceived as requiring more effort than the other. As a result, the more effort spent by a services consumer, the stronger that consumer’s commitment is to the service outcome—and the higher the potential for frustration (Hui, Thakor, & Gill, 1998).

Consumers perceive time and effort costs related to each type of service convenience. Researchers in marketing recognize that overall convenience is a second-order construct that consists of five convenience types (Berry et al., 2002; Seiders, Voss, Grewal, & Godfrey, 2005; Aagja, Mammen, & Amit, 2011; Rahman, & Parisa, 2014): decision, access, transaction, benefit, and post-benefit convenience. Decision convenience refers to the idea that consumers who desire a particular performance devote time and effort to deciding how to obtain it. Access convenience means consumers’ perceived time and effort expenditures for initiating service delivery. Transaction convenience describes consumers’ perceived expenditures of time and effort in effecting a transaction. Benefit convenience refers to consumers’ perceived time and effort expenditures required to experience the service’s core benefits, such as being transported in a taxi or watching a movie. Finally, post-benefit convenience involves the consumer’s perceived time and effort expenditures when reinitiating contact with a firm after completing the benefit stage of the service.
Development of a conceptual framework

Service convenience and brand satisfaction

Service convenience is affected by a variety of firm-related factors, including the physical service environment, information provided to consumers, company branding, and service system design (Kelley, 1958; Nickols & Fox, 1983; Gross & Sheth, 1989). Consumers’ convenience perception and their effect on service evaluation are influenced by attributes of firm-related factors. When consumers feel convenience in retail service store, they satisfied (Seider & Berry, 1998; Tax & Brown, 1998; Tax & Chandrashekaran, 1998; Kaura, 2013; Sharifi, & Esfidani, 2014; Wang, Chen, Xiu & Zhang, 2014). Berry et al. (2002) and Yen (2005) also suggest that the consumers’ perceptions of service convenience affect their satisfaction. Accordingly, the following hypothesis is proposed:

\[ H_1. \] Service convenience is positively related to brand satisfaction with retail service brand.

Service convenience and brand loyalty

The goal of retail service brand should be to position itself in the same strategy while offering superior value compared to rival offerings (Richard, Foster, & Morgan, 1998; Harris & Chernatony, 2001), such as service convenience (Berry et al., 2002). Consumers seeking service convenience are willing to pay a premium for the retail service brand offering service convenience. Some empirical findings indicate that convenience—including both location and service process convenience—is significantly related to consumer loyalty (Brown, 1990; Andaleeb & Basu, 1994; Keaveney, 1995; Rust, Katherine, & Zeithaml, 2004; Seiders et al., 2005). Accordingly, the following hypothesis is proposed:

\[ H_2. \] Service convenience is positively related to retail service brand loyalty.

Service convenience and continuance commitment, affective commitment
The second-order construct of service convenience reflects the stages of consumers’ activities as related to buying or using a service (Berry et al., 2002, Seiders et al., 2005). Moreover, consumers’ perceived time and effort costs relate to each type of service convenience, thereby affecting consumers’ overall convenience evaluations (Seiders et al., 2000; Pura, 2005; Aagja, Mammen, & Amit, 2011; Gupta, & Sharma, 2014; Rahman, & Parisa, 2014). Yen and Gwinner (2003) propose that increased service convenience in the form of providing access to services should have a positive influence on perceptions of special treatment benefits.

The retail service brand that offers a convenient service helps consumers reduce costs not only by establishing an enduring and valued relationship, but also by creating a desire to visit a specific retail service brand whose service convenience is better than its competitors (Ailawadi & Keller, 2004; Hunt, Geiger-Oneto, & Varca, 2012). Thus, when the retail service brand demonstrates service convenience, consumers develop continuance and affective commitment. Therefore, the following hypotheses can be proposed:

\[ H_3. \] Service convenience is positively related to continuance commitment toward retail service brand.

\[ H_4. \] Service convenience is positively related to affective commitment toward retail service brand.

**Brand satisfaction and continuance commitment, affective commitment**

The unique offerings, various elements of a retailer’s in-store environment, and retailers’ brand image provide good opportunities for creating continuance commitment among consumers. As Fullerton (2005a, 2005b) discovered, consumers may also become dependent on the brand because it becomes important to them. Thus, it is expected that consumers experience continuance commitment to the brand when they are satisfied with it (Lee et al., 2007; Rafiq, Fulford, & Lu, 2013; Ranaweera, & Menon, 2013).

Hening-Thurau and Klee (1997) results suggest that satisfaction
positively influences affective commitment. A high level of satisfaction provides the consumer with repeated positive reinforcement, thereby creating commitment-inducing bonds. In line with this conceptualization, brand satisfaction in this paper refers to a feeling of fulfillment and pleasure experienced during the process of receiving a service from the retail service brand. When consumers are satisfied with the brand, they will have positive emotional connections with it (Fournier, 1998, Keiningham, Aksoy, Andreassen, Cooil, & Wahren, 2006; Rafiq, Fulford, & Lu, 2013; Ranaweera, & Menon, 2013), or an affective commitment to the brand. This suggests the following hypotheses:

\( H_5. \) Satisfaction with retail service brand is positively related to continuance commitment toward retail service brand.

\( H_6. \) Satisfaction with retail service brand is positively related to affective commitment toward retail service brand.

**Brand satisfaction and brand loyalty**

Consumers become loyal to retail service brands through satisfaction judgments about the brands they consume (de Chernatony, Harris, & Christodoulides, 2004). Consumer satisfaction has been regarded as an overall evaluation of the experience (Fournier & Mick, 1999). The American Consumer Satisfaction Index provides empirical support for the relationship between positive satisfaction and loyalty (Fornell, Johnson, Anderson, Cha, & Bryant, 1996; Fullerton, 2003; Ibáñez, Hartmann, & Calvo, 2006; Svein, 2007). Delgado-Ballester and Munuera-Aleman (2001) also assert that brand satisfaction can be conceptualized as an overall summative evaluation of the entire brand-use experience(Grant, Juntunen, Juga, & Juntunen, 2104). As a result, marketing researchers generally agree that a satisfactory evaluation of the retail service brand positively relates to consumer brand loyalty. Thus:

\( H_7. \) Satisfaction with retail service brand is positively related to retail service brand loyalty.

**Continuance commitment, affective commitment and brand loyalty**
The impact of continuance commitment on consumer loyalty, including brand loyalty, remains relatively unstudied in existing marketing literature. However, organizational behavior researchers have studied the effects of continuance commitment on contractual arrangements (Anderson & Weitz, 1992), side-bets (Becker, 1960), scarcity of alternatives (Allen & Meyer, 1990), and switching cost (Sharma & Patterson, 2000; Gilliland & Bello, 2002). In the service context, the relational base of continuance commitment shows consumers depend on the retailer’s special offerings or the store’s pleasurable atmosphere which superior to competitors (Gustafsson, Johnson, & Roos, 2005; Lee et al., 2007; Iglesias, Singh, & Batista-Foguet, 2011; Zhang, Zhou, Su, & Zhou, 2013). In such cases, extending the image-based switching cost and consumer’s continuance commitment to the brand will lead to brand loyalty. Thus,

\[ H_8. \] Continuance commitment toward retail service brand is positively related to retail service brand loyalty.

Affective commitment reflects an emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in an organization (Morgan & Hunt, 1994; Meyer & Smith, 2000). In the service context, this effective force binds the consumer to the retail service brand, reflecting the individual’s “psychological bond” (Gruen, Summers, & Acito, 2000) with the retail service brand. In recent years, a number of studies have examined the relationship between affective commitment and brand loyalty (Harrison-Walker, 2001; Fullerton, 2005a; Gustafsson et al., 2005; Liang & Wang, 2006; Kaura, 2013; Zhang et al, 2013) and found an uniformly positive and strong impact on affective commitment and brand loyalty. Therefore,

\[ H_9. \] Affective commitment toward retail service brand is positively related to retail service brand loyalty.

Figure 1 outlines a conceptual model, consistent with the hypotheses outlined above. The model combined service convenience and relationship quality (brand satisfaction, continuance and affective commitment) perspectives and specifies how they may influence retail service brand loyalty.
2. Method

Data collection and sampling

The hypothesized model was examined using data collected in three distinct retail service brands in different retail formats. The survey was conducted in Taiwan. The first sample was drawn from a major coffee shop in Taiwan: Starbucks. Consumers were randomly approached as they were leaving the store and asked to participate in a short survey on retail service brand. Of the total 121 responses returned, 4 were eliminated due to incomplete responses, ultimately yielding 117 completed surveys. In the second sample, the data were drawn from McDonald’s patrons. Consumers were randomly approached after paying for their purchase and asked to complete a written survey immediately; 156 completed questionnaires were returned, of which 12 had to be left out in the final analysis due to incomplete data. Thus, 144 responses were used in the final analysis. The last sample was collected from the consumers of a well-known international theater, Vieshow Cinemas. The consumers were asked to complete a written questionnaire after buying their tickets. A total of 110 questionnaires were returned, 5 of which were omitted in the final analysis due to incomplete data. Thus, 105 responses
were used in the final analysis.

**Checks**

To ensure diversity among the three retail formats chosen (i.e., Starbucks, McDonald’s and Vieshow Cinemas), ANOVA analyses were conducted on the three retail formats and five constructs (i.e., service convenience, brand satisfaction, continuance commitment, affective commitment, and brand loyalty). These analyses revealed no difference (see Table 1). In other words, no differences are evident among three retail formats. As a result, the subsequent data analyses combined the data from the three sources.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1 ANOVA analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Service Convenience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Levene Statistic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.48)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail format F-test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.82)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Retail format including Starbucks, McDonald’s and Vieshow Cinemas.

**Sample**

For the total sample, approximately 51 percent were male; the majority of respondents were between the ages of 21 and 25. Approximately 49 percent of the respondents were college students. According to the data collected, the number of visits for purchasing activities in Starbucks, McDonald’s and Vieshow Cinemas average 4.4, 3, and 1.5 times per month, respectively. The average amount spent is 190, 160, and 370 NT dollars per month, respectively.

**Questionnaire**

Questionnaires incorporating a seven-point scale were used to measure responses to the five constructs (i.e., service convenience, satisfaction, continuance commitment, affective commitment, and brand loyalty). The second-order construct of service convenience was measured using strongly
agree/strongly disagree scales taken from Seiders et al. (2005). The brand satisfaction measurement was adapted from the four items developed by Fullerton (2005a). Continuance commitment and affective commitment was measured with both three items adapted by Lee et al. (2007) and Allen and Meyer (1990). And, scales taken from Zeithaml, Berry and Parasuraman (1996) measured brand loyalty with three items, which are sufficient for our purpose of theory testing (see table 2).

Table 2 Measurement items and CFA results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Standard Loading</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>Cronbach’s alpha</th>
<th>Composite Reliability</th>
<th>Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Service convenience</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Decision Convenience</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D1</td>
<td>I can easily determine prior to shopping whether X will offer what I need.</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>16.24</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D2</td>
<td>Deciding to shop at X is quick and easy.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D3</td>
<td>I can quickly find information before I shop to decide if X has what I’m looking for.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Access Convenience</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L1</td>
<td>I am able to get to X quickly and easily.</td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td>11.22</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L2</td>
<td>X offers convenient parking.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L3</td>
<td>X offers convenient locations.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L4</td>
<td>X offers convenient store hours.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Transaction Convenience</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tra1</td>
<td>I am able to complete my purchase quickly at X.</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>14.34</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>0.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tra2</td>
<td>X makes it easy for me to conclude my transaction.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tra3</td>
<td>It takes little time to pay for my purchase at X.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Benefit Convenience</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B1</td>
<td>I can easily get product advice at X.</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>10.95</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B2</td>
<td>The merchandise I want at X can be located quickly.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Post-benefit Convenience</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PB1</td>
<td>X takes care of product exchanges and returns promptly.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PB2</td>
<td>Any after-purchase problems I experience are quickly resolved at X.</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>10.44</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PB3</td>
<td>It is easy to take care of returns and exchanges at X.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Brand Satisfaction</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BS1</td>
<td>I am satisfied with X products.</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>19.11</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>0.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BS2</td>
<td>I am satisfied with X brand.</td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td>21.33</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BS3</td>
<td>I am pleased with X.</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>17.01</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Continuance Commitment</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CC1</td>
<td>X has store atmosphere advantages versus other companies.</td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td>23.13</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CC2</td>
<td>X has brand image advantages versus other companies.</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>12.82</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>0.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CC3</td>
<td>It pays off economically to be a consumer of the X.</td>
<td>0.81</td>
<td>17.63</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Affective Commitment</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC1</td>
<td>I feel emotionally attached to X.</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>13.90</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>0.84</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 3. Results

**Analysis approach**

Data analysis proceeds according to the two-step approach recommended by Gerbing and Anderson (1988). That is, first the measurement model is estimated. Then, using LISREL version 8.52, a structural model is analyzed and the path coefficients are estimated.

**Measurement model**

The correlations in Table 3 provide an initial test of the nine hypotheses. A mean of five constructs ranged from 5.28 to 5.68, and their standard deviation from 0.51 to 0.71. In addition, as illustrated in Table 2, the reliability of the five constructs is considered acceptable, as the Cronbach’s alpha and composite reliability coefficients offer values that, in all cases, are appreciably higher than the recommended value of 0.7 (Bagozzi & Yi, 1998).

To assess the construct validity, the analysis first determined the discriminant validity (see Table 3), which ensures that the square root of each construct’s average variance extracted (AVE) is larger than its correlations with other constructs (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). In addition, convergent validity analysis involved the examination of the sign, size, and significance of the estimated factor loadings. After computing the composite reliability index and AVE to assess how well each construct is measured by its indicators, it was determined that each standardized factor loading had the correct sign and was highly significant \( p < .01 \). All factors loadings are larger than 0.5. The composite reliabilities of all constructs lie above 0.7, while the AVE for each construct is larger than 0.5. Based on these results, these constructs are...
reliable and unidimensional (Baggozzi & Yi, 1988; Gerbing & Anderson, 1988).

Table 3 Descriptive statistics, correlation matrix and average variance extracted

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard deviation</th>
<th>SC</th>
<th>BS</th>
<th>CC</th>
<th>AC</th>
<th>BL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Service Convenience (SC)</td>
<td>5.34</td>
<td>0.51</td>
<td>0.600</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand Satisfaction (BS)</td>
<td>5.57</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td>0.394**</td>
<td>0.844</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuance Commitment (CC)</td>
<td>5.68</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.398**</td>
<td>0.406**</td>
<td>0.707</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affective Commitment (AC)</td>
<td>5.28</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>0.468**</td>
<td>0.360**</td>
<td>0.370**</td>
<td>0.801</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand Loyalty (BL)</td>
<td>5.60</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>0.558**</td>
<td>0.392**</td>
<td>0.467**</td>
<td>0.477**</td>
<td>0.861</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: **p<0.01; \sqrt{AVE} values are show in diagonal.

Structural model

Once the scales for each one of the latent factors were validated, the estimation of the structural model was determined. The proposed hypotheses proved significant, moving in the expected direction. Table 4 outlines the results of the final model. With regard to the antecedents of service convenience, the positive and significant effects of brand satisfaction ($H_1, p < 0.01$), brand loyalty ($H_2, p < 0.01$), continuance commitment ($H_3, p < 0.01$), and affective commitment ($H_4, p < 0.05$) were demonstrated. On the other hand, brand satisfaction demonstrated a significant effect on continuance commitment and affective commitment ($H_5, H_6; p < 0.01, p < 0.05$), but not on brand loyalty; thus, $H_7$ is not supported ($p > 0.01$). Continuance commitment and affective commitment demonstrated a positive effect on brand loyalty ($p < 0.05, p < 0.01$); thus $H_8$ and $H_9$ are supported. The goodness of fit values indicated also acceptable results.

The study further observed the importance of the measurement variable service convenience through results of factor loadings using a confirmation factor analysis. The loading of decision and transaction convenience were 0.78 and 0.71, respectively, while access, benefit, and post-benefit convenience factor loadings were 0.58, 0.57, and 0.55 respectively. Thus, consumers’ perceptions of decision and transaction convenience have a
stronger effect than access, benefit, and post-benefit convenience.

Table 4 Results of the final estimate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent variables</th>
<th>Brand Satisfaction</th>
<th>Continuance Commitment</th>
<th>Affective Commitment</th>
<th>Brand Loyalty</th>
<th>Test result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Service Convenience</td>
<td>0.47(7.53)***</td>
<td>0.36(5.58)**</td>
<td>0.22(3.65)**</td>
<td></td>
<td>H1 Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.52(6.70)***</td>
<td></td>
<td>H2 Supported</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.17(2.71)**</td>
<td></td>
<td>H3 Supported</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.07(1.24)</td>
<td></td>
<td>H4 Not Supported</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand Satisfaction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.15(2.96)**</td>
<td>H5 Supported</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuance Commitment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affective Commitment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$\chi^2_{(110)} = 204.79$, RMSEA = 0.049, GFI = 0.94, AGFI = 0.91, NFI = 0.97, CFI = 0.99, SRMR = 0.051

Note: ***p<0.01, **p<0.05, *p<0.1; value in parentheses are t-value.

4. Discussion, Managerial implication and Future Direction

Almost all conceptualizations of brand equity agree that the phenomenon involves the consumers’ perceptions of value-added services (Lasser, Mittal, & Sharma, 1995; Helman & Chernatony, 1999; de Chernatony et al., 2004; O’loughlin & Szmigin, 2007). Several authors have suggested that service convenience has been acknowledged as increasingly important to offering value. With more money and less time, consumers are seeking convenience throughout the consumption process. Researchers suggest that satisfaction, commitment, and loyalty are the outcomes of service convenience (Seiders et al., 2000; Barnes, 2003; Heinonen, 2004; Yen, 2005). The importance of service convenience has been confirmed by the current study; these results can benefit marketing managers by enabling them to understand the consumers’ need for service convenience.

Several important conclusions can be made. First, brand loyalty is a term that researchers and practitioners use to describe a number of phenomena in marketing (Oliver, 1999). The current findings suggest that service convenience is the primary source of brand loyalty. Service convenience also affects brand loyalty through brand satisfaction and
continuance as well as affective commitment. Thus, marketers should ensure that they are addressing consumers’ convenience perceptions through such activities as reducing consumers’ perceptions of delay, advising consumers when they hesitate, and providing a consumer-oriented return policy. As a result, consumers will feel valued by the retail service brand, satisfied with the brand, and willing to sustain a long-term relationship with the retail service brand.

Second, according to the factor loading values of service convenience factors, consumers’ perceptions of decision and transaction convenience demonstrate a stronger effect than access, benefit, and post-benefit convenience. Decision convenience is important because making a decision about an intangible service or a new product never used before can be difficult for consumers. Firms can reduce such difficulty by providing clear information through various media, including the Internet, and focusing efforts on brand strengthening (Berry et al., 2002). The other important factor—transaction convenience—focuses on the transaction process. Consumers believe that one important reward of their brand choice is spending less time waiting to pay. Managers can do much to improve consumers’ transaction convenience. For example, McDonald’s has determined that sales increase by 1 percent for every 6 seconds consumers save in using the drive-through window (Ordonez, 2000).

Although access, benefit, and post-benefit convenience impact service convenience less, they are still important for firms to consider. The service facility location, available parking, and convenient operating hours are the main issues involved in providing access convenience (Seider et al., 2000). Meanwhile, benefit convenience refers to the investments consumers make to receive services. Managers should pay attention to consumers’ needs and provide prompt and appropriate advice. Finally, post-benefit convenience relates to consumers’ need for product maintenance or exchange. Respectfully addressing service failure and maintaining good service experiences for consumers are key issues for managers. Managers should develop effective policy and procedures regarding these service convenience factors as they are
dominant drivers of consumers’ brand satisfaction, commitment, and brand loyalty.

Third, this study demonstrates that service convenience and ongoing commitment—continuance commitment and affective commitment—have a significant and positive relationship. Consumers develop an attachment (affective commitment) to the retail service brand that offers service convenience and perceive the brand’s offerings to be different from competitors’ offerings (continuance commitment), thereby improving brand loyalty. This study’s results further supported the assertion that service convenience is increasingly important to consumer value (Pura, 2005) and can construct consumers’ brand identity (Zarkada-Fraser & Fraser, 2002).

Fourth, the lack of a significant link between brand satisfaction and brand loyalty in this study duplicated the findings previous studies (Aaker, 1991; Jones & Sasser, 1995; Fullerton, 2005a). Several reasons contribute to this finding. Consumers may view the brand favorably, but not engage in repurchasing behaviors because they are not committed to the brand. Fullerton (2005a) also found that brand commitment is a complete mediator of brand satisfaction and brand loyalty; in other words, consumer commitment to the brand is a more important determinant of brand loyalty than consumer satisfaction with the brand. This clear delineation in the consumer-brand relationship is a key feature of the overall process of brand loyalty, and researchers in the field and retail service brand managers should respect the role of commitment, which plays a predominant role in the development and maintenance of brand relationship.

Fifth, it is important to note that this study was conducted in three settings—Starbucks, McDonald’s, and Vieshow Cinemas—where the focal brands were retail service brands. As such, it was expected that the results would enable the exploration of the diversity of these retail service brand. Unfortunately, no difference was evident among of these three retail service brands were have some explanations. First, these retail service brands are famous international brands, and the strong branding enables consumers to
visualize and understand their intangible products better. Given this retail service brand image, the notion of perceived associations with brand image becomes very similar for consumers (Paswan & Sharma, 2004). Moreover, due to the fact that the target consumers of these retail service brands are very similar, they perceive similar images of these retail service brands. For example, the demographic variables indicated that respondents fell primarily in the 21- to 30-year-old range (Starbucks, 65.7 percent; McDonald’s, 48.6 percent; Vieshow Cinemas, 67.8 percent), while 48.8 percent (Starbucks), 68 percent (McDonald’s) and 55.6 percent (Vieshow Cinemas) of the respondents were college students. The number of monthly purchases and dollars spent in Starbucks, McDonald’s, and Wanner Cinemas averaged 4.4 times and 160 NT dollar, 3 times and 190 NT dollar, and 1.5 times and 370 NT dollar, respectively. Thus, in future studies, the role of the consumer-retail service brand relationship should be examined in other retail service settings, such as native retail service brands and retail service brands that have different target consumers, in order to generalize the findings.

Finally, in interpreting the results of this study, a number of limitations as well as possible future directions have been identified. One aspect for future research might be to include the examination of the magnitude of the impacts of the various factors considered in this paper. Although this work represents an important attempt to conceptualize the consumer-brand relationship, the relative importance of the various factors in moderating the consumer-brand relationship—such as involvement, brand trust, and brand knowledge—remains an empirical question.

Moreover, consumer-brand relationships evolve over time. Collecting cross-sectional data, which represent a snapshot of reality, has limited usefulness for explaining such a process. In particular, in those markets where the service context is rapidly changing, consumer-organization exchange relationships will become more dynamic and might be better captured using longitudinal data. It would be desirable for researchers to implement longitudinal research designs in future research on consumer-brand relationships.
Reference


The Effects of Service Convenience, Satisfaction, Commitment on Loyalty to Retail Service Brand

22(2): 97-110.
36. Heinonen, K. (2004), Reconceptualizing customer perceived value: The


零售服務品牌之服務便利性對滿意、承諾與忠誠度影響之研究

李冠穎
朝陽科技大學行銷與流通管理系 助理教授

許英傑*
國立高雄第一科技大學行銷與流通管理系 教授

傅善恆
國立中興大學企業管理系 博士生

摘要

許多研究指出服務便利性是創造顧客價值的重要影響元素，但鮮少研究深入探討服務便利性與零售品牌建構之間之關係。因此，本研究著墨探討服務便利性對品牌滿意、持續性承諾、情感性承諾與零售服務品牌忠誠度之影響效果。透過三業態樣本包括星巴克、麥當勞與華納威秀影城，驗證本研究架構。研究結果發現，服務便利性直接並正向影響零售服務品牌忠誠度。除此之外，服務便利性透過滿意度、持續性承諾與情感性承諾間接正向影響零售服務品牌忠誠度。是故，實務業者可思考透過增加零售場域之決策便利性、地點便利性、交易便利性、利益便利性與購後便利性，以建立零售服務品牌忠誠度與強化該品牌於零售市場之競爭優勢。

關鍵詞：服務便利性、品牌滿意度、持續性承諾、情感性承諾、品牌忠誠度

*通訊作者 E-mail：hsu0519@nkfust.edu.tw Tel：07-6011000#4219