

# The Effect of Perceived Store Image on Purchase Intention in Service Environments: The Causal Role of Self-Congruity and Affective Commitment

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The purpose of this study is to confirm the influence of service environment factors such as employee services, design, and atmosphere on store image, and to explain the causal role of self-congruity and affective commitment in the relationship between perceived store image and repurchase intention.

As a result, customers who favorably perceived the store's physical environment turned out to be positive for self-congruity, which in turn brought affective commitment to customer and influenced repurchase intention.

Therefore, in order to differentiate from online shopping malls, markets must not only provide differentiated products to customers, but also improve the service environment so that excellent customers can stay at store for a long time.

Keywords: Service Environment, Perceived Store Image, Self-Congruity, Affective Commitment, Repurchase Intention

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## I. Introduction

In the past, retail businesses such as department stores sought to differentiate themselves from competitors based on product, location, price, and various promotions. However, as digital-based commerce has recently become popular, they are facing a serious business crisis due to a drop in sales as a results of customer churn. In particular, as non-face-to-face consumption has increased due to the spread of COVID-19, online purchases have recently been increasing rapidly. Even in luxury goods purchases, Online channels(48.8%) are even approaching offline channels(51.2%) for luxury

goods purchases(Kim 2020). Accordingly, department stores are spurring the introduction of new luxury brands that are not found in competitors and online shopping malls to attract customers, and at the same time, are striving to provide consumers with a different consumption experience newly introduced luxury stores(Kim 2020). For example, Galleria Department Store is increasing the competitiveness of fashion brand products to strengthen its competitiveness and expanding VIP services through luxury goods halls(Park 2019). This can be interpreted as meaning that shoppers have a differentiated image of the shopping place, and this eventually affects the perception of store image according to the environment

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in which the service is provided. In environmental psychology, it was found that people make inferences about objects based on environmental cues(Baker, Grewal and Parasuraman 1994). In other previous studies, shoppers held stereotypes about differentiated stores. In other words, some department stores were perceived to be preferred by upscale shoppers, while others were perceived as being frequently used by working-class shoppers to establish some degree of intimacy(Sirgy, Grewal and Mangleberg 2000). As described above, it can be seen that the image of a store is perceived through the various environments provided by the store. In a previous study, the store environment was said to be composed of social factors including in-store employees and shoppers, aesthetic design factors composed of visual elements including layout, decoration, color, and materials, and ambient non-visual factors such as temperature, music and scent(Baker 1987; Baker, Grewal and Parasuraman 1994). Other studies have suggested that the store environment can largely be divided into physical attributes and social attributes(Akhter, Andrew and Durvasula 1994). In addition, the store environment is composed of service workers, and servicescapes that include elements such as the surrounding situation or spatial layout, decorations and direction signals, and these constructs affect the corporate image(Ngugen 2006). Based on such prior research, the factors that can affect consumers' perception of store image can be classified into service employees and service landscapes such as design and atmosphere. On the other hand, it is said that a store's image has a positive and direct effect on consumer evaluation(Beneke, Brito and Garvey. 2015) and positively affects the customer's revisit

intention(Kim 2015). The store image perceived by one customer has an effect on purchase intention (Grewal et al., 1998) and has an important effect on loyalty(Sirgy and Samli 1985). Likewise, in an early study on the relationship between store image and repurchase intention, it was confirmed that there is a positive causal relationship between the two variables. However, in other studies, consumers' attitudes toward a product or product purchase are affected by a combination of self-concept and product user's image(Sirgy 1982). It was said that the greater the match between a favorable store image and a consumer's self-concept, the more likely the attitude toward the store to be used becomes more favorable (Sirgy, Grewal and Mangleberg 2000). This means that the store image perceived in the service environment affects the self-concept, which in turn affects the consumer's an emotional state. Based upon the above theoretical research, perceived store image in the service environment can directly affect repurchase intention, but on the other hand, it affects self-congruity, emotionally immersing consumers, which can affect repurchase intention. However, in research on the relationship between store image and loyalty, the causal role of self-congruity and affective commitment has not been confirmed. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to understand the effect of service environment factors on perceived store image and to explain the causal role of self-congruity and affective commitment in the relationship between perceived store image and repurchase intention.

## **II. Theoretical Overview of Constructs and Hypotheses**

### **1. Service Environment**

In the early research on the retail environment, the main factors were social factors such as employees and shoppers, design factors such as layout, decoration, color, and materials, and ambient factors such as temperature, music, and scent (Baker 1987). These can be divided into two factors: social factors composed of human factors such as the number of employees who provide services inside the store and shopping customer, and servicescapes composed of physical factors such as design and atmosphere inside the store. Among the social factors, most previous studies related to service employees have suggested that the role of service employees is very important because employee behavior in the process of service delivery affects customers' perception of services (Lovelock and Wright 2002). It is said that the behavior of excellent service employees has a positive effect on the corporate image (Nguyen 2006). In addition, previous studies have said that the ability of environmental factors to create and communicate a corporate image should be well recognized by service organizations (Ward and Barnes 2001). And in other studies, the consumption or production of services occurs simultaneously in a physical environment or servicescape created and controlled by a service organization (Nguyen 2006). Nguyen (2006) stated that service environment factors include service workers and servicescape, and that these constructs are an important factor in determining the success of the

service delivery process and that help define the image of a company and attract target customers. As in the above studies, the construction of an image through servicescape in a service organization was explained. In addition, Nisson and Ballantyne (2014) argued that the service environment should be described in terms of physical aspects and social interactions between customers and employees.

### **2. Perceived Store Image**

In previous studies, images were defined as expressions of the beliefs, attitudes, and impressions that a person or group has about an object such as a product, brand, place, person, or company (Barich and Kotler 1991). Therefore, in the case of a retail store, an overall impression can be formed in the mind of a shopper (Nesset, Nervik and Helgessen 2011), which can be defined as a store image. Other studies have defined store image as a store in the mind of a customer according to functional characteristics such as the physical attributes of the store or product, or psychological attributes such as the personality attributes of the store (d'Astous and Levesque 2003). In addition, although the impression of the importance of store image may be true or false, the image is important because it induces or guides consumers to purchase behavior. It was said that there was a need to improve store image by identifying weaknesses (Barich and Kotler 1991).

### **3. Self-Congruity**

After a study (Stern, Bush and Hair 1977) suggested that consumers tend to shop at stores with images

similar to their own image, a study on the relationship between self-concept and store image interaction was presented (Sirgy 1982). After that, a self-congruity theory (Sirgy and Samli 1985) suggested that the product, brand, or store image and the self-image have a coincident effect as a result of the interaction between the product user or the affinity image and the self-image. This can be explained by a concept similar to the theory of self-concept theory (Graeff 1996), in which consumers generally have a favorable attitude toward a product or brand that they perceive to be consistent with their image. In other studies, consumers purchase products not only for utility benefits, but also for self-expressive benefits (Park, Jaworski and McInnis 1986). By saying that motivation for oneself leads to purchase of a product or service (Sirgy 1982), the importance of the interaction between the image of the object and the self-image in purchasing behavior was discussed. In a study on the results of self-congruity, it was found that the self-consistency of a store or product has a positive effect on various consumer behaviors such as brand attitude, brand preference, purchase motivation, brand satisfaction, and brand loyalty (Sirgy et al., 2008). In a recent study, it was mentioned that self-congruity is an important component in understanding consumers' psychological behavior because consumers are more likely to reflect their image when purchasing a particular brand (Chua et al., 2019).

#### 4. Affective Commitment

Commitment arises from the theory of attachment, which has been defined as a constant desire to maintain a valuable relationship (Morgan and Hunt

1994). It is said that strongly engaged customers have a strong belief in the target (Mugge, Schifferstein and Schoormans 2010), have a high resistance to negative information (Eagly and Chaiken 1993), and exhibit more frequent purchase behaviors (Donio 2006). This refers to the importance of commitment in an exchange relationship. Commitment was described as an affective and a continuance component in the multiple-component model of organizational behavior (Allen and Meyer 1990), and these constructs later used in marketing research. Among the three elements of commitment, affective commitment, in particular, plays a very important role in maintaining and strengthening relationships in mutual exchange. In previous studies, it was also said that the essence of affective commitment is that consumers develop emotional attachment to the other party in a consumption relationship, and that when consumers like something, such as a brand or service provider, they experience an emotional state (Fullerton 2003).

#### 5. Repurchase Intention

Purchase intention has been widely used in previous studies as an index of continuous purchase prediction (Grewal et al., 1998). In this related study, this can be confirmed because loyal customers are described as people who make continuous purchases (Nguyen and Leblanc 2001). From this point of view, repurchase intention can be defined as a customer who has a purchasing experience with an intention to continuously purchase in the future. However, although the repurchase intention and loyalty are similar, they can be explained by different construct. In other words, a customer with high customer loyalty is a person who

makes continuous purchases, but customer loyalty can't always be measured by purchasing behavior because purchasing decision for a brand can be influenced by other modulating variables such as social norms or situational factors (Nguyen and Leblanc 2001). Also, since loyalty is greatly influenced by the relative strength of the relationship between attitudes and behaviors (Dick and Basu 1994), the psychological dimension expressed in the form of attitudes or preferences must be included in the concept (Nguyen and Leblanc 2001). Therefore, there is a difference in concept from repurchase intention, which is used as a concept of simple purchase prediction.

## 6. Hypotheses and Research Model

Because the store environment creates an image of the for shoppers, and this can affect product evaluation and purchasing behavior (Gardner and Siomkos 1986), it is important to manage the service environment that affects the image. In particular, in retail stores such as department stores, shoppers perceive various factors in the service environment, and among these, certain individual factors affect store image and thus purchase behavior, so it is necessary to confirm these relationships. Other studies have suggested that the exposure of a large amount of information about the store's organizational culture can alter customer perceptions of the store (Yurchisin, Park and O'Brien 2010). Through this, it can be confirmed that the service environment provided to the customer makes the customer perceive store image. In previous studies, store image elements perceived by customers were human elements such as employees and shoppers, design environments

such as layout, decoration, color and materials, and ambient environments such as temperature, music, and scent (Baker 1987; Baker, Grewal and Parasuraman 1994). In later studies, this was classified into social attributes, which are human factors, and physical attributes such as design and interior atmosphere (Akhter, Andrew and Durvasula 1994). From the above studies, the factors that influence the image of a department store can be suggested by the service of employees and the servicescape such as designs and atmospheres. The relationship between service employees and store images can be explained by models of identification. In other words, in models of identification, the employee/organization image is consistent and the attractiveness of the organization is a prerequisite variable for organizational identity (Bhattacharya and Sen 2003). Therefore, it can be seen that when the image of an employee providing a service is favorable, the attractiveness of the store increases and the favorability of the store image also increases. In other studies, the human factor contacted during a service experience was suggested as affecting the corporate image in service companies (LeBlanc and Nguyen 1996). In previous studies on the relationship between the design environment and store image, a corporate aesthetics management (CAM) framework was proposed, which is more than a company's identity and statements in order to provide value to consumers. It is said that the image is a spiritual concept of various constituents of a company, such as customers, employees, and investors, and that the public maintenance of a company is based on the result of aesthetics (Schmitt, Simonson and Marcus 1995). So it can be seen that aesthetic factors such as physical designs influence the image. In another

studies, it was found that factors that influence corporate image are tangible cues such as layout and decoration have an influence(LeBlanc and Nguyen 1995). In a study on the relationship between atmosphere and store image, the first impression of a store is based on what can be seen or heard, such as product display, lighting, music, etc., and this suggests that store affinity can be determined by making consumers infer the store(Schlosser 1998). In addition, it is said that store image has an effect on inference about the product quality, which affect the store image (Schlosser 1998). According to the inference theory, individuals make inferences and give meaning based on clues such as music and decoration in a special physical environment (Ray and Chiagouris 2009). Based on the above research, store atmosphere can be interpreted as affecting store image by making consumers infer the store.

H1: Employee services have a positive effect on perceived store image.

H2: Design has a positive effect on perceived store image.

H3: Atmosphere has a positive effect on perceived store image.

In previous studies, it was suggested that the attribute-based perspective and the holistic perspective exist in relation to the conceptualization of store images. In the attribute-based perspective, store image is explained as including both cognition and affect (Martineau 1958), whereas in the holistic perspective, store image was said to be an overall impression formed in the mind of customers(Yoo, Park and MacInnis 1998). In this study, store image is defined as meaning that various store environments influence

the overall impression of the store. On the other hand, according to a study on the interaction relationship between self-image and store-image, it was explained that consumers shop at stores similar to their actual and ideal images(Sirgy 1982). In other studies, self-image and store-image are significant predictors of store loyalty(Bellenger, Steinberg and Stanton 1976). In addition, the consumer's attitude toward purchasing a product or service is affected by the combination of the product user's image and self-concept(Sirgy 1982), and in the retail environment, the image is mediated and affects self-congruity(Sirgy, Grewal and Maangleburg 2000).

H4: Perceived store image has a positive effect on self-congruity.

Commitment refers to a constant desire to maintain a relationship(Morgan and Hunt 1994), and the utility and desire for one party to maintain a long-term relationship with the other(Gruen 1995). Consumers are more likely to overcome potential obstacles when their level of commitment in their relationship with others is stronger(Dick and Basu 1994). In particular, affective commitment refers to the desire of the consumer to continue the relationship with the other person because of the pleasure of the relationship(Bloemer and Oderkerken-Schröder 2003). Involvement with or emotional attachment to a specific organization is influenced by image(Ogba and Tan 2009). In other words, the consumer expresses emotions and desires to maintain a relationship with an object as a result of deeper intrinsic factors such as the image of the customer's perspective and brand meaning. Therefore, it can be inferred that images have an effect on affective commitment.

H5: Perceived store image has a positive effect on affective commitment.

Corporate image is a very important criterion for consumers to make decisions (Park and Park 2018). In previous studies, corporate image has been an important concept because one company can differentiate itself from its competitors, and a positive image is very important because it effectively leads to market dominance (Bouchikhi and Kimberly 2003). For retail stores, this can be inferred as meaning that the higher the store image perceived by the consumer, the more influence it has on purchase or purchase intention. In a study related to servicescape, there was a positive relationship between store image and purchasing behavior or loyalty. Specifically, it was said that store image has an important effect on customer loyalty (Sirgy and Samli 1985), and perceived store image has an effect on purchase intention (Grewal et al., 1998). And it was said that store image had a positive effect on the intention to revisit (Kim 2015).

H6: Perceived store image has a positive effect on repurchase intention.

In self-concept theory, consumers generally have a favorable attitude toward objects that match their self-image (Graeff 1996). Attitude is the same as affective in a single-dimensional view (Hwang et al., 2012), so self-congruity can be interpreted as meaning that one has feelings toward an object. Sheth and Mittal (2004) noted that affect is the feelings a person has toward an object or emotions that the object evoked for the person. In another study, consumers who have an attachment to an object become

committed to the object, and consumers can be emotionally attached to a brand or product, and develop strong feelings even for the small things of such objects (Yusef and Ariffin 2016). Because of this, it is said that a consumer's attachment to an object can predict commitment because it generates emotional bonds (Yusef and Ariffin 2016). In addition, in a study on the relationship between self-image and affective commitment, it was explained that consumers influence affective commitment by making decisions based on the degree to which they are connected to their image when choosing a particular service provider (Bloemer and Oderkerken-Schröder 2003). In this study, it is possible to confirm that self-image congruence affects emotional commitment. Therefore, based on the preceding studies above, it can be interpreted that the stronger the self-congruity, the more favorable feelings and attachments to the object, resulting in commitment.

H7: Self-congruity has a positive effect on affective commitment.

Shoppers have a store image by inferring characteristics from a retail store's environmental cues, and compare it with their own actual and ideal images. In a preceding study, shoppers' store identification is dependent on environmental characteristics such as service and atmosphere (Sirgy, Grewal and Mangleburg 2000), so it can be confirmed that they have self-congruity by comparing their self-image with the store image. In addition, it was mentioned that self-congruity increases the store loyalty of consumers by enhancing product and service quality (Sirgy, Grewal and Mangleburg 2000). In other studies, the higher the self-congruity, the higher the likelihood that the store

can be perceived as high quality(Haj-Salem et al., 2016), Self-congruity predicts discriminatory types of consumer behavior such as product use, purchase intention, continuing intention, store selection, and store loyalty, which suggests that self-congruity has a direct effect on purchase intention or repurchase intention (Yusef and Ariffin 2016).

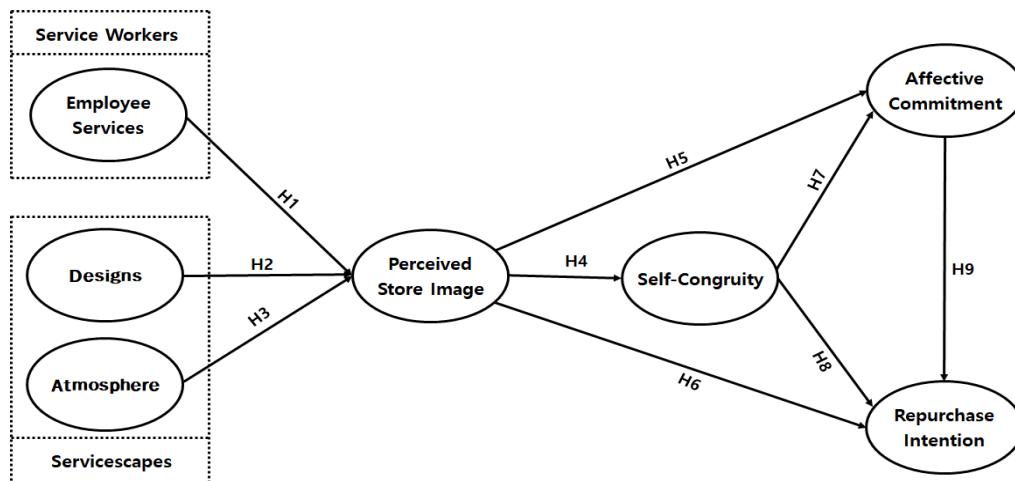
H8: Self-congruity has a positive effect on repurchase intention.

According to the relationship cohesion theory, frequent exchanges between consumers and buyers reinforce commitment by generating positive emotions toward each other(Price and Collect 2012). This can be interpreted to mean that the relationship between the two objects is focused on commitment, and positive emotions eventually trigger committed behavior. In other studies, commitment is an important outcome variable that directly affects the relationship between the supplier and the consumer, and this has a direct

effect on the customer's intention to stay, which reflects motivation for the continuity of the relationship(de Ruyter, Moorman and Lemmink 2001). Through this, it can be identified that commitment has a direct effect on behavioral intention. In addition, it was mentioned that self-congruity induced by self-concept triggered behavior by providing motives such as the need for self-congruity and the need for self-esteem. In other words, it is explained that the greater the self-congruity, the greater the brand loyalty, and that the self-congruity affects behavior or behavioral intention(Kressmann et al., 2006). In addition, the increase in emotional commitment in the service environment was a result of higher levels of engagement in focal behaviors, other-oriented discretionary, and self-oriented discretionary(Jones et al., 2010), which means that affective commitment influences customer response.

H9: Affective commitment has a positive effect on repurchase intention.

< Figure 1> Research Model





### III. Research Methodology

#### 1. Measurement and Operational Definition of Variables

A multi-item scale questionnaire was developed to test the research hypotheses. In the questionnaire, except for the questionnaire to confirm the characteristics of the data and the respondent's demographic characteristics question, all measurements were made on a 7-point Likert scale marked from 1='not at all' to 7='very much'. The questionnaire items for constructs presented in the research model were newly composed by revising and supplementing them to suit this study after reviewing the preceding studies. The questionnaires items and operational definitions for variables are shown in Table 1.

#### 2. Questionnaire Design, Sample and Data Collection

Data was collected through questionnaire to confirm the research hypotheses. The questionnaire contains key variables such as employee services, design, atmosphere, perceived store image, self-congruity, affective commitment and repurchase intention, and variables used to identify the characteristics of the data, and then respondent's demographic variables such as purchased products, number of uses, and variables respondent's demographic characteristics such as gender, occupation, age, residential area, incomes. In general, the selection of survey subjects should be selected in detail according to four criteria such as research subject, sample unit, research scope,

and time. Therefore, according to these criteria, a sample was selected for those who have experienced luxury shopping at luxury department stores in Korea. The data were collected in a face-to-face interview with the population, and the survey period was from September 7th, 2020 to the 26th of the same month.

#### 3. Research Method

In this study, SPSS win 21.0 and AMOS 21.0 Version statistical software were used for empirical analysis. KMO and Bartlett's Test was conducted to confirm the suitability of factor analysis. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and reliability were verified to confirm the validity and reliability of the variables. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted to confirm the construct validity. In order to confirm the reliability, Cronbach's  $\alpha$  coefficients were verified by analysis internal consistency reliability. The discriminant validity was confirmed by comparing the average variance extracted value (AVE) and the squared correlation coefficient ( $r^2$ ) by performing a correlation analysis. Frequency analysis was performed to confirm the respondents' demographics characteristics. After confirming the suitability of the research model using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), the research hypothesis was verified.

&lt;Table 1&gt; Items and Operational Definition of Constructs

Constructs		Items	Operational Definition	Research
Employee Services	ES1	There were many staff in store providing customer services	Customer's perception of employees who provide services to their customers at luxury stores of a department store	Baker et al.(1994): Nguyen (2006)
	ES2	The staff helped their customer well		
	ES3	The staff had a lot of knowledge about products they were selling		
	ES4	The staff were wearing neatly well-equipped uniforms		
Design	DS1	The interior of this store was organized in trendy color	Customer's perception of physical design elements such as layout, decoration, color, and materials inside luxury stores of a department store	Baker et al.(1994): Nguyen (2006)
	DS2	The internal facilities of this store were attractive		
	DS3	The store had a good display of products		
	DS4	The store was well arranged among similar products		
	DS5	The store was organized to make it easy to find inside store		
	DS6	The interior display of this store is impressive		
	DS7	The store was well decorated		
Atmosphere	AT1	The music suited atmosphere of this store	Customer's perception of atmosphere such as temperature, music, and olfactory elements inside the luxury stores of a department store	Baker et al.(1994): Nguyen (2006)
	AT2	The music sounded good to hear		
	AT3	I liked background music		
	AT4	The lighting well lit up store interior		
	AT5	The interior lighting was good		
Perceived Store Image	SI1	This store had a better image than other places	Consumers' overall perception of their beliefs, attitudes, and impressions about luxury stores of a department store	d'Astous & Levesque (2003): Nesset et al. (2011)
	SI2	This store had a good reputation with consumers		
	SI3	This store seems to have excellent management ability		
	SI4	This store seems to be contributing to the community		
	SI5	This store seems to have an entrepreneurial spirit that respects customers		
	SI6	This store keeps its promise to customers		
	SI7	I think this store has high growth potential		
Self-Congruity	SC1	This store is consistent with how I see myself	The degree of fit between the consumers' self-concept and store- image	Sirgy et al.(1985): Orth & Green (2009):
	SC2	I am quite similar to the image of this store		
	SC3	This store is consistent with how I would like to see myself		
	SC4	I would like to perceived as similar to the image of this store		
Affective Commitment	AC1	I personally have a good relationship with this store	The degree to which consumers try to be emotionally attached to have a favorable relationship with other party	Bloemer & Oderkerken-Sc hröder(2003): Evanschizky et al.(2006)
	AC2	I do not use another stores because of a good relationship with this store		
	AC3	I enjoy shopping at this store very much		
	AC4	I feel very happy when I shop in this store		
Repurchase Intention	RI1	I use this department store's luxury store among the luxury goods stores of several department stores	The degree to which customers with purchasing experience are willing to purchase again when they have the next opportunity	Grewal et al.(1988): Nguyen & Leblanc (2001)
	RI2	I plan to use this store again if I have a chance in the future		
	RI3	I will continue to use this store in the future		
	RI4	I want to use this store continuously		
	RI5	If I had known this store before, I would have used it		

## IV. Empirical analysis

### 1. Analysis of Data Characteristics and Respondent's Demographic Characteristics

In this study, 350 questionnaire were distributed and retrieved to consumers with recent purchase or shopping experience at luxury department stores in Korea, and a total of 334 (95.4%) were analyzed excluding 16 incorrect or incorrectly marked responses. Department stores used include Galleria 43(12.9%), Hyundai 33(9.9%), Lotte 81(24.3%), Shinsegae 112(33.5%), AK Plaza 58(17.4%) and 7 others(2.0%). Purchased products include clothing 145 (43.4%), shoes 43(12.9%), bags 53(15.9%), accessories 35(10.5%), cosmetics 22(6.6%), and 36 others(10.8%). The number of times to re-use the luxury department store previously purchased within the last year is: 1 time 150(44.9%), 2 times 90(26.9%), 3 times 33(9.9%), 4 times 23(6.9%), 5 times 19(5.7%) and over 6 times 19(5.7%). The

results of the analysis of the respondents' demographic characteristics are shown in Table 2.

### 2. Analysis of Validity and Reliability

The KMO and Bartlett's test was analyzed to confirm the validity of the factor analysis. The KMO (Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin) measure of standard formation adequacy was 0.957, and Bartlett's test showing the significance of all correlation values in the matrix showed a significance probability of 0.000 at  $p < 0.05$ , which was statistically significant. It was confirmed that it is suitable for factor analysis. Accordingly, Confirmatory Factor Analysis(CFA) was performed to confirm the intensive validity of the variable. As a result of the analysis, the significance probability ( $p$ )=0.000 was  $\chi^2(282.323)/df(168)=1.680$ , and GFI(0.920), NFI(0.962), IFI(0.984), TLI(0.980), and CFI(0.984) were 0.9 or higher. And RMSEA (0.045) was also found to be less than the standard value of 0.07. This confirmed the optimal fit. The standardized factor

<Table 2> Analysis of Respondent's Demographic Factors

Variables	Attributes	Frequencies(%)	Variables	Attributes	Frequencies(%)
Gender	Male	161(48.2)	Ave. Monthly Household Income	Below 300 Mio	97(29.0)
	Female	173(51.8)		300 Mio-500 Mio	142(42.5)
Occupation	Student	13(3.9)		Age	Over 500 Mio
	Worker	37(11.1)	Below 20		1(0.3)
	Self-Employment	27(8.1)	20-29		52(15.6)
	Officer	141(42.2)	30-39		120(35.9)
	Professionals	54(16.2)	40-49		94(28.1)
	Housewife	39(11.7)	50-59		52(15.6)
	Others	23(6.9)	Over 60		15(4.5)
Educational Level	High School(Below)	72(21.6)	Residential Areas	Seoul & Nearby Cities	65(19.5)
	College or University	230(68.9)		Kyung-ki Province	82(24.6)
	Graduate School	32(9.6)		Metropolitan Cities	33(9.9)
				Local Area	154(46.1)

load was 0.840 to 0.942, and there was no problem with the size. Composite Reliability and Average Variance Extraction Value (AVE) exceeded the standard values of 0.7 and 0.5, respectively, so there was no problem in the final convergent validity. As a

result of an analysis of internal consistency to confirm the reliability of each variable, the reliability was confirmed as the Cronbach's  $\alpha$  coefficient was higher than the baseline 0.7 in all variables. The analysis results are shown in Table 3.

<Table 3> Results of Confirmatory Factor Analysis and Reliability Analysis

Construct	Before CFA	After CFA	Items	Estimate	Standardized Regression Weights	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	Composite Reliability	AVE	$\alpha$
Employee Services	4	3	ES2	1.000	0.050	21.379	0.000***	0.850	0.776	0.916
			ES3	1.063						
			ES4	1.050						
Design	7	2	DS4	1.000	0.055	20.705	0.000***	0.837	0.798	0.911
			DS5	1.131						
Atmosphere	5	3	AS1	1.000	0.034	30.708	0.000***	0.903	0.838	0.955
			AS2	1.058						
			AS3	0.966						
Perceived Store Image	7	4	SI4	1.000	0.038	27.142	0.000***	0.888	0.774	0.937
			SI5	1.044						
			SI6	0.931						
			SI7	0.928						
Self-Congruity	4	4	SC1	1.000	0.037	27.777	0.000***	0.928	0.837	0.954
			SC2	1.014						
			SC3	1.057						
			SC4	1.075						
Affective Commitment	4	2	AC1	1.000	0.048	19.832	0.000***	0.757	0.781	0.928
			AC4	0.957						
Repurchase Intention	5	3	RI3	1.000	0.042	26.237	0.000***	0.875	0.820	0.950
			RI4	1.092						
			RI5	1.048						

$\chi^2(282.323)/df(168)=1.680$ ,  $p=0.000$ , GFI = 0.926, NFI = 0.962, IFI=0.984, TLI=0.980, CFI = 0.984, RMSEA = 0.045  
KMO Measure of Sampling Adequacy(0.957), Approx. Chi-Square(12591.922),  $df(630)$ , Sig.(0.000)

As a result of confirming the discriminant validity by comparing the squared value of the correlation coefficient( $r^2$ ) and the AVE value using correlation analysis, the significance was confirmed as the significance level was <0.05 and the probability of significance was 0.000. The results of discriminant validity analysis and basic statistics analysis are shown in Table 4.

### 3. Testing of the Hypotheses

Model fit analysis result showed that  $p=0.000$ ,  $\chi^2(335.268)/df(177)=1.894$ , indicating that the Q value was less than the standard value of 3, and in the fitness index, GFI (0.912), NFI (0.955), IFI (0.978), CFI (0.974), TLI (0.978), and RMSEA (0.052), confirming the fit of the study model. The research

hypothesis analysis results are as follows. Designs (0.225) and atmospheres(0.277) had a positive effect on perceived store image, but not on employee service. The perceived store image had a positive effect on self-congruity(0.817), affective commitment (0.195), and repurchase intention (0.485). However, self-congruity had a positive effect on affective commitment(0.720), but not on repurchase intention. Affective commitment had a positive effect on repurchase

intention(0.414). Therefore, research hypothesis2, research hypothesis3, research hypothesis4, research hypothesis5, research hypothesis6, research hypothesis7, and research hypothesis9 were adopted, and research hypothesis1 and research hypothesis8 were rejected. The results of research hypothesis analysis, final model and path coefficient are shown in Table 5. and Figure. 2.

**<Table 4> Results of Discriminant Validity Analysis and Basic Statistic Analysis**

AVE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. ES	0.776						
2. DS	0.711*** (0.505)	0.798					
3. AS	0.707*** (0.499)	0.733*** (0.537)	0.838				
4. SI	0.484*** (0.234)	0.508*** (0.258)	0.506*** (0.256)	0.774			
5. SC	0.381*** (0.145)	0.441*** (0.194)	0.368*** (0.135)	0.757*** (0.573)	0.837		
6. AC	0.197*** (0.038)	0.288*** (0.082)	0.177*** (0.031)	0.595*** (0.354)	0.657*** (0.431)	0.781	
7. RI	0.410*** (0.168)	0.442*** (0.195)	0.399*** (0.159)	0.726*** (0.527)	0.701*** (0.491)	0.658*** (0.432)	0.820
Mean	4.9588	4.6749	4.8461	4.5868	4.3638	3.8278	4.4772
S.D.	1.20823	1.04512	1.21498	1.11600	1.18287	1.36172	1.28466

Note: 1. a. \*\*\*  $p < .01$ , b. ( ) =  $r^2$

2. a. Employee Services=ES, b. Design=DS, c. Atmosphere=AS, d. Perceived Store Image=SI, e. Self-Congruity=SC, f. Affective Commitment=AC, g. Repurchase Intention=RI

## V. Conclusion

### 1. Discussion of Research Results

In this study, the influence of service environment factors such as employee services, design and atmosphere on perceived store image was confirmed. In addition, the relationship between perceived store image and self-congruity, affective commitment, and

repurchase intention was verified to identify the causal role of self-congruity and affective commitment. As a result of the study, servicescapes, such as designs and atmospheres, affected perceived store image, whereas employee services did not. Perceived store image directly influenced self-congruity, affective commitment, and repurchase intention. Self-congruity influenced affective commitment, but did not affect repurchase intention. Affective commitment influenced repurchase intention.

<Table 5> Results of Hypothesis Analysis

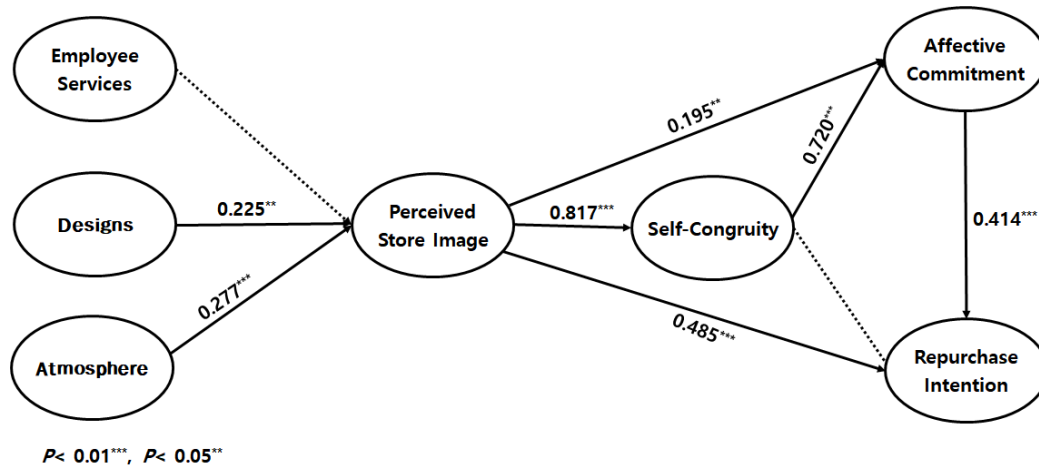
Hypotheses	Path	Estimate	S.E.	t	p	Results
1	ES→SI	0.107	0.088	1.216	0.224	Rejected
2	DS→SI	0.225	0.104	2.170	0.030**	Supported
3	AT→SI	0.277	0.087	3.197	0.001***	Supported
4	SI→SC	0.817	0.050	16.481	0.000***	Supported
5	SI→AC	0.195	0.099	1.977	0.048**	Supported
6	SI→RI	0.485	0.080	6.021	0.000***	Supported
7	SC→AC	0.720	0.099	7.238	0.000**	Supported
8	SC→RI	0.088	0.089	0.988	0.988	Rejected
9	AC→RI	0.414	0.061	6.762	0.000***	Supported

$\chi^2/df(335.268/177)=1.894, p=0.000, GFI=0.912, NFI=0.955, IFI=0.978, CFI=0.974, TLI=0.978, RMSEA=0.052$

Note: 1. a. \*\*\* $p<.01$ , b. \*\* $p<.05$ .

2. a. Employee Services=ES, b. Design=DS, c. Atmosphere=AS, d. Perceived Store Image=SI, e. Self-Congruity=SC, f. Affective Commitment=AC, g. Repurchase Intention=RI

<Figure 2> Final Model and Coefficients



The discussion of the above research results is as follows. First, in luxury stores in department stores, shoppers perceived the image of the store through physical attributes rather than social attributes. In previous studies, the store environment was divided into social attributes such as the level of service of employees providing services and the level of customers shopping inside the store, and physical attributes that are visible and invisible(Akhter,

Andrew and Durvasula 1994). In environmental psychology, it was mentioned that consumers make inferences about key objects based on environmental cues(Baker, Grewal and Parasuraman 1994). Applying the above research, it can be interpreted that the luxury department store perceives store image by considering physical attributes such as the design of the store interior and a luxurious atmosphere. Therefore, rather than improving service quality

through human factors, it is necessary to establish a favorable store image by improving the service environment inside the store. Second, shoppers who perceived store image had a positive influence on constructs such as affective commitment, self-congruity and repurchase intention. This is the same research result as previous studies showed that there is a positive relationship between each variable. However, perceived store image had a stronger influence on self-congruity than on affective commitment and repurchase intention. This can be said to be the same result as in previous studies (Sirgy, 1982) that consumers like to shop in stores similar to their actual and ideal images. In addition, self-congruity had a strong influence on affective commitment. Therefore, marketers of department stores need to select target customers after segmenting the market and analyzing the psychological factors of customers such as personality and lifestyle, and use them for customer management. Third, self-congruity had a strong influence on affective commitment. In other words, self-congruity did not directly affect repurchase intention, but influence repurchase intention through affective commitment. In previous studies, it was mentioned that people have a favorable attitude toward objects that match their self-image (Graeff, 1966), and consumers who have attachment to one object committed themselves to the object (Yusef and Ariffin, 2016). The previous studies above and the results of this study were consistent. It can be inferred that the above results that the customer who perceives store image has a stronger influence on self-congruity than the direct effect on repurchase intention, which in turn affects affective commitment to form repurchase intention. So, the causal roles of

self-congruity and affective commitment can be inferred in the relationship of these constructs. In summary, the results of this study show that customers who perceive the physical environment of a store will develop a positive and favorable attitude toward the store and increase their immersion by strengthening their attachment if the store matches their actual and ideal image. As a result, they have the intention to purchase again.

## **2. Significance and Limitations of the Study and Suggestions for Subsequent Studies**

The importance of retail store environmental management has been continuously suggested as the competition among retailers intensifies, and research on the relationship between these concepts and store image, or the relationship between environmental factors and store image and customer loyalty has mainly been conducted. However, with recent advances in IT technology and sudden environmental changes such as COVID-19, online distribution has been activated, which has had an impact on the decline in sales even for luxury stores in existing department stores. So, as a way to overcome this, the factors that have a major influence on the perceived store image of customers were identified in this study. In addition, in the relationship between store image and repurchase intention, the causal role of self-congruity and affective commitment was identified by verifying that the influence of self-congruity and affective commitment was relatively larger than the direct influence. This study has significance in the above points. However, this study focused only on the personal attributes and physical attributes suggested in previous studies as

factors affecting the perception of store image. In future research, it is suggested to examine and explain the relationship between these constructs by reflecting various factors that can affect consumers' perception of store image, such as product quality and price level. Recently, bricks and clicks companies, which operate not only online stores, but also offline stores, have become a trend in the retail business. Therefore, it is judged necessary to investigate store image from an online perspective in future research.

### 3. Managerial Implications

The managerial implications of this study are as follows. First, the marketer focuses on visual elements such as layout, decoration, color, and materials, and atmosphere elements such as temperature, music, and scent, in which shoppers can perceive the image of a store favorably rather than human factors such as quality improvement of service employees. Accordingly, the physical environment of the service should be improved. Through this, target customers should be able to perceive the image of the luxury department store favorably. Second, customers who already have a favorable and positive image of a store have a direct intention to repurchase, but if self-image and store image match, they will show emotional attachment and have a positive intention to purchase. Therefore, marketers should focus on customer management, such as finding target customers with high purchase potential, analyzing their psychological elements, and converting them into a database.

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## 서비스환경에서 지각된 점포이미지가 재 구매의도에 미치는 영향: 자아일치성과 감정적 몰입의 인과적 역할

최철재\*

### ABSTRACT

본 연구의 목적은 종업원 서비스, 디자인, 분위기 등 점포 내부의 서비스 환경요인이 점포이미지 지각에 미치는 영향을 확인하고, 또한 지각된 점포이미지와 재 구매의도 관계에서 자아일치성 및 감정적 몰입의 인과적 역할을 설명하는 것이다.

본 연구결과 점포의 물리적 환경을 호의적으로 인식한 고객은 자아일치성에 긍정적인 것으로 나타났으며, 이는 고객의 감정적 몰입에 강한 영향을 미침으로써 재 구매의도가 높아지는 것으로 나타났다.

따라서 마케터는 온라인쇼핑몰과 차별화하기 위해서 고객에게 특화된 상품을 제공하면서 동시에 우수 고객이 점포에 오랫동안 머물 수 있도록 서비스 환경을 개선해야 할 것이다. 즉, 레이아웃, 장식, 색상, 소재 등 시각적 서비스요소와 음악, 온도, 후각요소 등 분위기를 개선하여 호의적인 점포이미지를 구축하고, 이를 통해 자아동일시 및 감정적으로 몰입하게 함으로써 궁극적으로 연속적인 구매를 유도할 수 있다.

주제어: 서비스 환경, 지각된 점포이미지, 자아일치성, 감정적 몰입, 재 구매의도

