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The effect of celebrity on brand awareness, perceived quality, brand image, brand loyalty, and destination attachment to a literary festival

ABSTRACT

This study assessed whether a celebrity writer endorsement affects festival brand equity and attachment to a festival destination. Subjects were non-residents who attended a local literary festival. Among celebrity attributes, expertise was revealed to be most related to brand equity and destination attachment. Additionally, loyalty to the festival was found to affect attachment to the festival destination, while festival brand awareness had a positive impact on festival brand loyalty. Results provide theoretical implications related to how celebrity endorsements influence destination brand, and festival community attachment. The results of this study also have practical implications related to how festival organizers can more efficiently promote visitation to the host destination. It is also believed results significantly contribute to understanding the efficacy of endorsements in an event context.

Keywords:

Celebrity, brand, festival, loyalty, image, destination attachment, Korea

1. Introduction

Successful festivals contribute to the local economy, and create job opportunities. The revenue from hosting festivals can overflow to neighboring regions and across an entire country (Kim, Han, & Chon, 2008; Kim, Prideaux, & Chon, 2010). More specifically, festivals can generate a range of non-market benefits including: positive images of the host community, community pride, and enhancement of the community's quality of life (Kim & Morrison, 2005). Festivals may also help to preserve local heritage resources through the income they generate (Prentice & Andersen, 2003). Therefore, local festivals/events have been suggested as tools to enhance local brand values and images (Jago, Chalip, Brown, Mules, & Ali, 2003; Manthiou, Kang, & Schrier, 2014).

This study interweaves multiple concepts: literary festival tourism, celebrity, brand equity, and destination attachment. The literary festival examined in this study is held annually in a small mountain town. The event features a variety of literary presentations in memory of a famous author, and the venue offers a good opportunity for visitors to enjoy countryside scenery and agricultural tourism activities. For example, festivals related to William Shakespeare are globally prominent. His birth town, Stratford-upon-Avon in the U.K., is inundated with literary tourists attending poetry or literary festivals as well as visiting his birthplace. These local festivals have been found to: be educational, inspire imaginations, motivate literary activities, and communicate with contemporary writers. Beyond festivals in his birth town, numerous Shakespeare-related festivals have been hosted by local governments and educational institutions in other British regions, Commonwealth countries, and the U.S. (Geigner, 2015; Shevtsova, 2014).

This study focuses on the 'Hyo-seok Literary Festival' in Bongpyung, Korea

dedicated to the writer Hyo-seok Lee (1907-1942), a literary genius who died young. Since the festival is situated in Hyo-seok's mountainous highlands (altitude 800m), non-locals are unlikely to visit without a special reason. Since 1999, the Hyo-seok Literary Festival has been held for 10 days in September, when buckwheat flowers cover the village and countryside. This arts festival is held both in honor of the writer and to promote the village's agricultural products. In 2014, the festival attracted 743,823 people, motivated mainly by interest in Hyo-seok Lee and the attraction of the pastoral region (Hyo-seok Lee Literary Festival Association, 2015). Since the area is very isolated (surrounded by mountains), it was not well known to Koreans beyond the festival.

Even though the importance to understand literary festivals from a tourism attraction development perspective has been addressed (Driscoll, 2015; Robertson & Yeoman, 2014; Weber, 2014), few studies have examined either the role of brand equity or celebrity endorsement in festival tourism. Additionally, research exploring the role of a literary celebrity in a local festival has been not empirically conducted in the academic literature. These research gaps motivated this study.

Thus, this study attempts to assess whether celebrity writer endorsement affects festival brand equity and attachment to a festival destination. It has several specific purposes including to: 1) assess the effects a festival title and celebrity attributes have on brand equity; 2) investigate the influence of celebrity attributes on attachment to the festival town; and 3) explore whether festival brand equity leads to attachment to the festival destination.

2. Literature review

2.1. Celebrity endorsement and related attributes

In contemporary culture, the public idolizes many celebrities including movie

stars and professional athletes (Koernig & Boyd, 2009; Lord & Putrevu, 2009). Respect for celebrities lives on even after their death through revival and reproduction of their work. For example, even though Elvis Presley, two of the Beatles, and Michael Jackson have passed, their popularity continues through their music, movies, and advertisements. Since people tend to be interested in the lives of celebrities, celebrities have become increasingly prominent in the mass media (Stern, 1994). In particular, a myriad of celebrities now endorse products in TV advertisements and act as human brands acclaimed by the public in our other-directed society (Han & Ki, 2010; Ketchen et al., 2008). Celebrity endorsements thus exert a powerful influence over consumer behavior.

The effects of symbolic communication between consumer and product can be maximized when the characteristics of the endorser and those of the product match (Kim, Wang & Ahn, 2013). This has been validated by numerous previous studies indicating which types of endorsement are most effective (Chang, Wall, & Tsai, 2005; Hsieh & Chang, 2005; Kim et al., 2013; Kim, Wang, Jhu, & Gao, 2016; Lin et al., 2008; Wang, Hsieh & Chen, 2002; Wang, Chou, Su, & Tsai, 2007; Wang, Kim, & Agrusa, 2018).

Even though there are research streams relating to celebrity endorsement, it is imperative to focus on purpose of this study, that is, an understanding of celebrity endorsement attributes and their influence festival brand equity, festival brand loyalty, and attachment to the host community. The celebrity endorsement attributes of trustworthiness, familiarity, and expertise have been widely adopted by previous research (Dholakia & Sternthal, 1977; Han & Ki, 2010; Kim et al., 2013; Lord & Putrevu, 2009; Magnini, Honeycutt, & Cross, 2008; Ohanian, 1991; Till & Busler, 2000; Wang et al., 2018). Trustworthiness refers to the degree to which a celebrity is perceived by customers as transferring a message of integrity, honesty, and believability through advertising (Ketchen, Adams & Shook, 2008). Trustworthy endorsers have been found

to: improve the credibility of a brand, alleviate doubts, and promote economic gains (Erdogan, 1999; Gilchrist, 2005).

Familiarity has been defined as ‘knowledge of the source through exposure’ (Erdogan, 1999: p. 299). Consumers can become more familiar with a celebrity through exposure to his/her physical appearance, dress and accessories, beauty, elegance, sexual appeal, manners, and politeness. Familiarity is transferable in that the physical features or images derived from celebrities may be transferred to the products they endorse (Belch & Belch, 2013; Dwivedi, Johnson, & McDonald, 2015; Gakhal & Senior, 2008; Ilicic & Webster, 2011; Lord & Putrevu, 2009; Ravi & Saxena, 2015; Thomas & Fowler, 2015; Um & Lee, 2015).

Perceived expertise has been defined as an individual’s skill, experience, and knowledge in decision-making (Lord & Putrevu, 2009; Magnini et al., 2008). Expertise has also been associated with competence, qualification, expert ability, mastery, and authoritativeness (Han & Ki, 2010; Ketchen et al., 2008; Magnini et al., 2010). Because consumers often lack specific product knowledge, which in the hospitality sector relates to the intangibility of many of the services offered, they may be willing to rely on recommendations by a trusted authority figure (i.e., a celebrity). The greater the celebrity endorser’s perceived level of expertise in an advertisement, the more persuasive or effective the advertisement is likely to be (Herstein & Mitki, 2008; Magnini et al., 2008; Wang et al., 2007).

2.2. Brand equity

Brand equity addresses the value of products, services, and corporate brands, and has recently been expanded to measure the brands of cities and nations (Elliot et al., 2011; Kim, Schuckert, Im, & Elliot, 2017). From a customer viewpoint, customer-based

brand equity (CBBE) is defined as “the differential effect that brand knowledge has on consumer response to the marketing of that brand” (Keller, 1993: p. 8). The CBBE model was first advocated by Aaker (1996a, 1996b) and has since been applied to diverse academic disciplines including: the brand equity of tourism destinations (Bianchi, Pike, & Lings, I. (2014; Boo et al., 2009; Gomez, Lopez, & Molina, A. (2015; Horng et al., 2012; Im et al., 2012; Kim et al., 2015; Kladou & Kehagias, 2014; Konecnik & Gartner, 2007; Lim & Weaver, 2014), hotels (Dioko & So, 2012; Nam, Ekinci & Whyatt, 2011; Oh & Hsu, 2014; Prasad & Dev, 2000; Xu & Chan, 2010), restaurants (Hyun, 2009; Kimpakorn & Tocquer, 2010; Lu, Gursoy, & Lu, 2015; Namkyung & Jang, 2013), conferences and exhibitions (Camarero, Garrido, & Vicente, 2010; Jin et al., 2010; Kim, Moon, & Choe, 2016), and festivals (Manthiou et al., 2014).

In conceptualizing customer-based destination brand equity (CBDDBE), a four-part structure incorporating brand awareness, perceived quality, brand image and brand loyalty has been most popular (Horng et al., 2012; Hyun & Kim, 2011; Kim et al., 2003; Lu et al., 2015; Nel et al., 2009). Brand awareness refers to ‘the ability of a potential buyer to recognize or recall that a brand is a member of a certain product category’ (Aaker 1991, p. 61). It has been found to be an important indicator that intensifies from no awareness to recognition to recall to top-of mind (Aaker, 1991). Brand awareness is an initial step toward consumer commitment to a brand and has consistently been found to be related to brand loyalty (Hsu, Oh, & Assaf, 2012). In hospitality and tourism contexts, it has been applied to diverse contexts (Im et al., 2012; Oh & Hsu, 2014).

Perceived quality refers to ‘a consumer judgment resulting from comparisons made by consumers between expectations and the perception of the service performance’ (Lewis & Chambers, 1989, p. 313). Tourists’ behavioral intentions, including loyalty to the destination, typically develop from a combination of expectations, services, and

perception (Konečnik & Gartner, 2007). Brand quality is one of the key components of brand equity as applied to a destination (Boo et al., 2009). As a result, perceived quality is likely an important construct for explaining tourists' attitudes toward a destination.

Brand image has been defined as 'perceptions of the brand that reflect consumer associations in the mind of the consumer' (Keller, 1993, p. 3). Brand image has also been suggested to be an organization or cultural activity's hallmark that sets it apart from others (Camarero et al., 2010). Local festivals in particular typically attempt to create a unique and distinguished image that will encourage tourists to visit the festival and make them regular visitors. Loyalty refers to strong commitment to repurchase a preferred product or service. In a tourism destination context, repeat visitation and intention to return or recommend a place to others are representative items to for measuring loyalty (Kim et al., 2016).

In summary, previous literature has consistently shown that brand equity includes brand awareness, perceived quality, brand image and brand loyalty (Camarero et al., 2010; Dioko & So, 2012; Horng et al., 2012; Hsu et al., 2012; Kimpakorn & Tocquer, 2010; Manthiou et al., 2014; Nam et al., 2011; Oh & Hsu, 2014; Prasad & Dev, 2000; Šerić, Gil-Saura, & Ruiz-Molina, 2014; Xu & Chan, 2010). In this study, brand equity is conceptualized to play a crucial role which is postulated to mediate the effect of celebrity endorsement on tourists' attachment to a literary festival destination.

2.3. Place attachment

Place attachment has been defined as a 'physical element, activity and meaning tangled in an individual's experience of a place' (Shamai, 1991) or the result of 'local symbols reflect[ing] and enhance[ing] sense of place' (Peterson and Saarinen 1986). It has also been found to be the process by which persons formulate emotional bonds to a

place' (Yukel et al., 2010). The sense of physically being and feeling in particular places is considered as a sign that an individual creates emotional tie to a place.

The concept of place attachment has been actively applied to tourism destination research (Gu & Ryan, 2008; Kyle, Graefe, Manning, & Bacon, 2004; McCool & Martin, 1994; Um & Crompton, 1987), and has been found to be affected by the experiential values tourists encounter (Gross & Brown 2008; Prayag & Ryan, 2012; Yeh, Chen, & Liu, 2012). Place attachment has been found to help explain many different behaviors and preferences for leisure activities (Kyle et al., 2004), including repeat visitation (Kim et al., 2017; Lee et al., 1997). It is thus believed to be important to investigate the concept of destination attachment in environmental settings that are meaningful to tourists (i.e., a literary festival).

3. Conceptualization and hypotheses

This study adopts a four-dimensional model of brand equity comprising festival brand awareness, perceived quality, festival brand image, and festival brand loyalty, which has been employed by previous empirical studies (Horng et al., 2012; Hyun & Kim, 2011; Kim et al., 2003; Lu et al., 2015; Nel et al., 2009). Results of a preliminary study revealed three prominent attributes related to the celebrity writer: trustworthiness, familiarity, and expertise. These attributes are hypothesized to be transferred to the four brand equity dimensions, and attachment to the festival destination. In particular, the first three brand equity dimensions are expected to influence festival brand loyalty and attachment to the festival destination. Finally, festival brand loyalty is assumed to affect attachment to festival destination. Justification for these proposed associations are given below.

The Relationships between Celebrity Attributes and Four Festival Brand Equity Components and Attachment to Festival Destination

According to symbolic communications theory, the effect of the symbolic imagery attached to a celebrity is transferred to a product and plays a role in increasing product brand equity and purchase intention (Kim et al., 2014; Lord & Putrevu, 2009; Magnini et al., 2008; Ohanian, 1991; Wang et al., 2002).

Literary celebrities in a literary festival have a range of attributes including trustworthiness, familiarity, and expertise (Driscoll, 2015; Johanson & Freeman, 2012; Robertson & Yeoman, 2014; Weber, 2014). The attributes are reasons why festival visitors love the writer who is alive or dead. Likewise, festival visitors of this study likely have an image of the celebrity attributes of the writer Hyo-seok Lee because of his reputation, which has been established through his novels and reinforced by their inclusion in secondary school textbooks. It is thus believed visitors' personal engagement with the festival will confirm their experiential perception of festival brand equity and increase their attachment to the festival location.

Trustworthiness is demonstrated by the credibility, honesty, trust, reliability, sincerity, and dependability of the celebrity (Kim et al., 2014; Lord & Putrevu, 2009; Magnini et al., 2008; Ohanian, 1991). The trustworthiness embedded in a celebrity is likely an important characteristic for travel businesses because tourists often seek customer-created reviews on social media before booking (Kim, Kim, & Heo, 2016). They therefore rely on the truthfulness of businesses' online marketing tools such as websites, customer-generated comments, advertisements, and celebrity endorsements. Effective endorsement by a trustworthy celebrity should thus enhance the credibility of the brand image, assuage negative attitudes toward the brand (Gilchrist, 2005; Ketchen et al., 2008), and reassure customers prepared to put their trust in the celebrity.

Familiarity has been found to be one of the most influential factors explaining the effectiveness of celebrity endorsement (Belch & Belch, 2013; Dwivedi et al., 2015; Ilicic & Webster, 2011; Patra & Datta, 2012; Thomas & Fowler, 2015; Um & Lee, 2015). For example, Dwivedi et al. (2015) noted that celebrities' familiarity is positively correlated with brand awareness, perceived quality, brand association, and brand loyalty for diverse products. Similarly, Thomas and Fowler (2015) found that familiarity plays a moderating role between the number of celebrity endorsers and consumers' attitude and purchase intentions. Further, Um and Lee (2015) examined criteria for selecting a celebrity endorser from the perspective of Korean advertising practitioners, and found celebrities' familiarity among the target audience, was one of the most frequently mentioned criteria when selecting a celebrity.

Characteristics indicating endorser expertise include: competence, mastery, and knowledge. Thus, expert endorsers can help attract customers by promoting the credibility of a brand and encouraging purchase intention (Biswas et al., 2006; Friedman & Friedman, 1979; Kim et al., 2007; Marshall, Na, & Deuskar, 2008; Ohanian 1991; Till & Busler 2000). Successful connections between a celebrity and his/her perceived level of expertise with a product, have been found to increase purchase intentions in part based on the assurance given about service quality (Kim et al., 2007; Marshall et al., 2008; Till & Busler, 2000).

In sum, research has identified trustworthiness, familiarity, and expertise as core dimensions that determine the level of customer belief in celebrity endorsement. These attributes can convey festival imagery to participants by creating a connection between the attendees and the festival brand and host region. It is therefore hypothesized:

H1, H2, H3.: The attributes of a celebrity writer (trustworthiness, familiarity and expertise) will have positive influences on festival brand awareness (Hypotheses 1a, 2a,

and 3a), perceived quality (Hypotheses 1b, 2b, and 3b), festival brand image (Hypotheses 1c, 2c, and 3c), festival brand loyalty, and (Hypotheses 1d, 2d, and 3d) attachment to the festival destination.

The Relationships between Three Festival Brand Equity Dimensions and Festival Brand Loyalty and Attachment to the Festival Destination

As discussed above, most brand equity studies have adopted a multidimensional CBBE scale including: brand awareness, brand image, perceived quality, brand loyalty, and other dimensions. Previous studies have proposed and found differing relationships between these variables and have been aligned differently according to the characteristics of the product or service under study. Yet, most studies have shown that brand loyalty is an outcome of other brand equity dimensions in a destination context (Chen & Phou, 2013; Hsu et al., 2012; Im et al., 2012; Kladou & Kehagias, 2014; Manthiou et al., 2014; Oh & Hsu, 2014; Pike, Bianchi, Kerr, & Patti, 2010; Qu et al., 2011; Šerić et al., 2014). As a consequence, brand loyalty to a festival is likely to be determined by festival brand awareness, perceived quality, and festival brand image. Rooted in these previous studies, it is proposed that the literary festival examined is a place-based brand and that the CBBE is linked to the host destination. That is, the higher the level of festival brand awareness, perceived quality, and festival image, the more likely tourists are to have stronger emotional links to the festival destination. Thus, Hypothesis 4 proposes:

H4: Festival brand awareness, perceived quality, and festival brand image will have a positive influence on festival brand loyalty (H4a, H4b, and H4c) and attachment to the festival destination (H4d, H4e, and H4f).

The Relationship between Festival Brand Loyalty and Attachment to the Festival Destination

A celebrity endorsement often conveys a ‘halo effect’ to a product through processes of symbolic meaning transfer (Kim et al., 2013; Lafferty & Goldsmith, 1999; Lee et al.,

2008). Therefore, a literary festival named for a celebrity writer is expected to assist in creating a positive brand attitude incorporating favorable attitude, positive word of mouth, recommendation to others, and intentions to revisit.

Previous studies have consistently shown place attachment influences destination loyalty (Lee et al., 2012; Prayag & Ryan, 2012; Yuksel et al., 2010), yet it is not realistic for first-time visitors to have place attachment (Kyle et al., 2004; Moore & Graefe, 1994). The proposed conceptual model suggests, festival attendants build up loyalty to the festival based on the quality of their experience and that fortification of loyalty to the festival helps extend to attachment to the host community. This logic is justified by previous studies that have shown favorable attitudes toward a local festival can lead to positive attachment to its host destination. (Kyle, Graefe, Manning, & Bacon, 2003; Prayag & Ryan, 2012; Yeh et al., 2012). It is therefore hypothesized:

H5: Festival brand loyalty will have a positive influence on attachment to the festival destination.

4. Methods

4.1. Study setting

The Hyo-seok literary festival has been held in Bongpyung, Korea every September since 1999. Bongpyung is not only Hyo-seok Lee's birth town, but also the setting of his most popular book, *When Buckwheat Flowers Bloom*. The 10-day festival opens with the Hyo-seok national literary contest and ends with a screening of the film adaptation of *When Buckwheat Flowers Bloom*. The festival offers opportunities to learn about Korean traditions, literature, and local natural resources. The Hyo-seok Literary Festival was chosen for this study as it has successfully utilized the local literary celebrity to raise the destination brand equity of the unknown mountain place through

hosting the festival.

4.2. Measurement

Scale items were initially developed via a thorough review of the celebrity endorsement, destination brand equity, and place attachment literatures. Celebrity endorsement items were extracted from previous studies (Chang et al., 2005; Han & Ki, 2010; Hsieh & Chang, 2005; Kim et al., 2013; Kim et al., 2014; Lord & Putrevu, 2009; Magnini et al., 2010; Wang et al., 2002; Wang et al., 2007), as were destination brand equity items (Bianchi et al., 2014; Boo et al., 2009; Horng et al., 2012; Im et al., 2012; Konecnik & Gartner, 2007; Manthiou et al., 2014; Pike et al., 2010), and items indicating attachment to festival communities (Kyle et al., 2003; McCool & Martin, 1994; Prayag & Ryan, 2012; Yeh et al., 2012).

In order to check face validity of the constructs, a pre-test was conducted using a group of 32 graduate students majoring in hospitality and tourism management. After refining items on the basis of their responses, a questionnaire was pilot tested during the first day of the festival. Then, based on comments from 50 respondents, the wording of some questionnaire items were modified and a few items were deleted because of duplication of meaning. All items were measured on a 7-point Likert-type scale where 1 = 'strongly disagree,' 4 = 'neutral,' and 7 = 'strongly agree.'

4.3. Data collection

Since this study was intended to uncover non-residents' perceptions of celebrity attributes, festival brand, and attachment to the festival data was collected from non-residents visiting the festival for leisure purposes only. Thus, only out-of-town tourists to the festival were sampled. A convenience sampling method was adopted because it was

not possible to implement a random sampling approach in such an open outdoor space. Data collection, via an on-site, self-administered survey was conducted at the exits of the festival venue by five, trained hospitality and tourism graduate student interviewers. Respondents were initially asked if they were visitors for the festival. If they informed the host region, they were not asked to further participate in the survey.

Data collection was conducted on two weekdays and two weekend days during the 10-day festival. Of 500 questionnaires distributed, 61 were returned with multiple missing value. Thirty-four others were discarded because they were completed by individuals who were visiting the festival for business purposes. As a result, a sample of 405 questionnaires was used for data analysis.

4.4. Data analysis

Data were analyzed by using IBM SPSS 24 and AMOS software. First, reliability alpha values were computed to confirm the internal consistency of items in each domain. Then, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was used to examine the quality of the items in the proposed measurement model (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010). SEM was then employed to determine how well the data fit the proposed model.

5. Results

5.1. Demographic profile

Table 1 displays the demographic profile of respondents. Approximately one half (46%) of respondents were male, the majority (79.5%) were married, and almost one-third (30.6%) were in their forties. Regarding purpose of visit, the majority (67.4%) answered ‘because of the pastoral countryside.’ Detailed profiles are displayed in Table 1.

Insert Table 1 Here

5.2. Factor analysis and reliability tests

In terms of internal consistency, the reliability alphas for three domains were 0.92, 0.89, and 0.96. They exceeded the threshold (0.60) recommended by Allen and Yen (1979). The reliability alphas for festival brand awareness, perceived quality, festival brand image, and festival brand loyalty were 0.90, 0.92, 0.95, and 0.95. The alpha value of attachment to festival destination was 0.92. As a consequence, the constructs can be seen as having good internal consistency (see Tables 2 and 3).

Insert Tables 2 and 3 Here

5.3. Results of the confirmatory factor analysis

CFA was used to test the proposed measurement model specifying the relationships between the observed variables and the eight latent constructs using maximum likelihood estimation (Table 4). Assessment of a variety of goodness-of-fit measures to evaluate the overall model fit produced the following results: χ^2 (862) = 1653.50 ($p < 0.001$), goodness-of-fit (GFI) = 0.84, adjusted goodness-of-fit index (AGFI) = 0.82, comparative fit index (CFI) = 0.95, root mean residual (RMR) = 0.11, root mean square of approximation (RMSEA) = 0.05, and Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI) = 0.95. All of the goodness-of-fit indices, with the exception of the χ^2 value, were within acceptable limits which is understandable as χ^2 has been found to be sensitive to sample size (Hair et al., 2010).

As shown in Table 4, the composite construct reliability (CCR) values were all greater than the threshold of 0.70 proposed by Fornell and Larcker (1981). Convergent

validity was demonstrated with average variance extracted (AVE) values above 0.50 (Fornell & Larcker 1981). Additionally, the AVE for each construct was greater than the squared correlation coefficients for the corresponding inter-constructs (Tables 4 and 5). Based on these tests, the measurement model was deemed acceptable in terms of both construct reliability and discriminant validity.

 Insert Table 4 and 5 Here

5.4. SEM results

Table 6 shows the goodness-of-fit indices for the hypothesized structural model. While the χ^2 value was statistically significant $\chi^2(864) = 1800.87, p < 0.001$, the other fit indices were satisfactory: GFI = 0.83, AGFI = 0.81, CFI = 0.95, RMR = 0.22, RMSEA = 0.05, and TLI = 0.94. Of the 22 estimated path coefficients, 14 were statistically significant. Significant ($p < .05$) relationships were found between ‘familiarity’ and ‘festival brand awareness’ ($\gamma_{12} = 0.32, t = 4.35, p < 0.001$), ‘familiarity’ and ‘perceived quality’ ($\gamma_{22} = 0.19, t = 2.55, p < 0.05$), ‘familiarity’ and ‘festival brand image’ ($\gamma_{32} = 0.18, t = 2.52, p < 0.05$), and ‘familiarity’ and ‘attachment to festival destination’ ($\gamma_{52} = 0.15, t = 2.41, p < 0.05$). This means that people who were more familiar with Hyo-seok Lee were likely to indicate higher levels of festival brand awareness, perceived quality, festival brand image, and attachment to the festival destination.

Significant ($p < .05$) relationships were also found between ‘expertise’ and: ‘festival brand awareness’ ($\gamma_{13} = 0.30, t = 4.50, p < 0.001$), ‘perceived quality’ ($\gamma_{23} = 0.29, t = 4.02, p < 0.001$), ‘festival brand image’ ($\gamma_{33} = 0.36, t = 5.47, p < 0.001$), and ‘festival brand loyalty’ ($\gamma_{43} = 0.19, t = 3.43, p < 0.001$). This reveals that people who considered themselves more familiar with the Hyo-seok Lee festival were likely to show

higher levels of festival brand awareness, perceived quality, festival brand image, and festival brand loyalty.

There were also positive, significant relationships between ‘festival brand awareness’ and ‘festival brand loyalty’ ($\beta_{41} = 0.09, t = 2.02, p < 0.05$), ‘perceived quality’ and ‘festival brand loyalty’ ($\beta_{42} = 0.27, t = 6.08, p < 0.001$), and ‘festival brand image’ and ‘festival brand loyalty’ ($\beta_{43} = 0.46, t = 11.00, p < 0.001$). This indicates that people who had higher levels of festival brand awareness, perceived quality, and festival brand image were more likely to show strong festival brand loyalty.

The relationships between ‘perceived quality’ and ‘attachment to festival destination’ ($\beta_{52} = 0.17, t = 3.46, p < 0.001$) and between ‘festival brand image’ and ‘attachment to festival destination’ ($\beta_{53} = 0.21, t = 3.79, p < 0.001$) were also significant. This reveals that people with higher levels of perceived quality and festival brand image were likely to report strong attachment to the festival destination.

Finally, ‘festival brand loyalty’ was found to be positively related to ‘attachment to the festival destination’ ($\beta_{54} = 0.40, t = 5.96, p < 0.001$). This indicates that people who were more loyal to the festival showed strong attachment to the festival destination. Based on these results, Hypotheses 2a, 2b, 2c, 2e, 3a, 3b, 3c, 3d, 4a, 4b, 4c, 4e, 4f, and 5 were supported, while Hypotheses 1a, 1b, 1c, 1d, 1e, 2d, 3e, and 4d were rejected. These results are shown in Table 6 and Figure 1.

Insert Table 6 and Figure 1 Here

6. Discussion

Important findings and practical contributions are as follows. Results revealed the celebrity’s trustworthiness influenced neither brand equity nor attachment to the

festival destination. This result differs from those of previous studies, which have found that trustworthy endorsers lead to positive attitudes toward a brand (Chang et al., 2005; Lafferty & Goldsmith, 1999; Magnini et al., 2010; Till & Busler, 1998). In a tourism context, studies have also stressed the importance of celebrity trustworthiness as a factor that positively influences tourists' attitude toward advertising and intention to visit a place (Johns et al., 2015).

However, trustworthiness had no contributory effect in the context of this literary festival. A reason for this could be that Hyo-seok Lee is famous for his literature and not necessarily as a trustworthy person. It is also possible that his nationwide reputation meant that festival participants assumed his trustworthiness, causing little variance and poor predictability between subjects.

Second, celebrity familiarity significantly affected festival brand awareness, perceived quality, festival brand image, and attachment to festival destination, with the association between familiarity and festival awareness being very strong. This result is similar to past studies which have indicated that celebrity familiarity plays an important role in forming and reinforcing consumers' brand attitudes (Belch & Belch, 2013; Ravi & Saxena, 2015; Thomas and Fowler, 2015). These results also support those of previous studies which have found that an endorser's familiarity directly affects the formulation of a more positive destination image and reinforces attachment to the destination (Lee et al., 2008; Um & Lee, 2015). Thus, repetitious exposure of the celebrity and celebrity-related contents are likely important. For example, the celebrity's face, photos, development of the festival character, and quotes in books written by Hyo-seok Lee would be more beneficial if they were more frequently exposed to tourists during the festival.

Meanwhile, the relationship between familiarity and loyalty was not significant. This result is somewhat different from previous studies which have found celebrity's

familiarity is positively associated with their brand loyalty (Dwivedi et al., 2015; Lee et al., 2008). One possible explanation is that the writer, Hyo-seok Lee is very famous and already familiar to most Koreans. Thus, familiarity itself may not be an effective factor in raising recommendations or intention to revisit the festival.

Results of the SEM analyses also revealed that celebrity expertise strongly influenced festival brand awareness, perceived quality, festival brand image, and festival brand loyalty. Even though expertise did not directly affect attachment to the festival destination, it was found to have a strong, indirect effect on attachment to the festival destination through festival brand equity. This result is consistent with previous studies which have found the endorser's expertise is linked to enhanced brand loyalty (Kim et al., 2014; Lord & Putrevu 2009; Marshall et al., 2008; Wang et al., 2007).

This result likely leads to meaningful managerial implications for the Hyo-seok Lee Literary Festival. The festival's organizer should stress the expertise of the writer in promoting the festival and developing festival programs. Additionally, the festival program should be designed to show and emphasize the writer's literary value. This may contribute not only to positive economic impact for the destination, but also to the enhancement of the brand value of the community.

Further, results of the study revealed that festival brand awareness positively affected festival brand loyalty. This finding is consistent with previous studies which have found brand awareness to reinforce CBBE (Hyun & Kim, 2011; Lu et al., 2015; Nel et al., 2009). However, findings also indicate that festival brand awareness was not a significant ($p > .05$) in predicting attachment to festival destination. [This suggests that tourists may not develop attachment to the destination directly from knowing the festival brand itself but may develop attachment to the destination only through brand loyalty.](#)

The findings also demonstrate that perceptions of the quality of the festival

strongly affected festival brand loyalty and attachment to the festival destination. This result is consistent with those of previous studies which have found that perceived quality is an important component in conceptualizing destination brand equity (Gomez et al., 2015; Horng et al., 2012; Kim et al., 2016; Kladous & Kehagias, 2014). This suggests that festival organizers should appeal to potential visitors using the high quality of the festival. Attributes of the festival which should be emphasized likely include: diversity of the programs offered, ease of access to the venue, purchasing local agricultural products, and how well the festival appeals to diverse marketing promotions.

Additionally, similar to Manthiou (2014), brand image was found to be positively and strongly related to brand loyalty and attachment to the festival destination. This suggests it is important for festival marketers to promote positive images of their festivals. This can be done by highlighting the unique attributes that each festival succeeds at. For example, websites promoting festivals should include positive comments from previous visitors describing their unique impressions.

Similar to previous studies, festival brand loyalty was found to positively affect attachment to the festival destination (Jago et al., 2003; Kyle et al., 2003). This reveals tourists are likely to feel increased destination attachment through attending local festivals. In a similar manner, some studies (Haven-Tang & Sedgley, 2014; Manthiou et al., 2014) have found that local festivals not only contribute to the local economy, but may also be used as a tool to enhance destination value. This result confirms the importance of developing distinctive local products to attract tourists who will formulate an attachment to a destination (Gross & Brown, 2008; Gu & Ryan, 2008; Jago et al., 2003; Kim et al., 2015; Kozak, Kim & Chon, 2017; Veasna et al., 2013).

Finally, this study revealed that via the effect of celebrity on festival image, loyalty, and the host community, an advertiser can enhance the efficacy of

communications about festivals with culturally constituted meanings by selecting an appropriate celebrity. Thus, this study supports others who have stressed the importance of a good match between celebrity attributes and advertisement (Kim et al., 2016; Koernig & Boyd, 2009; Till & Busler, 2000; Wang et al., 2007; Wang et al., 2018). As found in this study, Hyo-seok Lee, and the characteristics of the literary festival dedicated to him, contributed to the brand equity of the festival and further influenced the host community's value. In particular, familiarity and expertise, more than the trustworthiness of the literary celebrity had strong effects on brand equity and attachment to the festival destination.

In addition, brand equity was found to be critical in generating attachment to the festival destination. Since a dearth of empirical studies have examined the effect of the brand equity on destination attachment in a festival context, more research is required from different types of festivals (i.e., those which honor patriots, composers, scholars, and/or politicians). Local townships may thus want to emulate this small mountain village's successful festival by creating festivals, centered on local celebrities.

7. Conclusion and suggestions for future study

This study offers an important theoretical contribution to the literature including an amalgam of the effectiveness of celebrity writer endorsement on CBBE and destination attachment in the festival tourism literature. By combining literature on festival tourism and consumer brand equity, this study identified a set of celebrity attributes that help to explain visitors' brand equity of the festival and attachment to the festival destination. The multidisciplinary approach adopted in this study allows for a comprehensive understanding of the literary festival tourism, forming the basis for further research and conceptual elaboration. Thus, it is believed this study has a valuable

contribution to this field because it applied the multi-faceted concepts of celebrity endorsement and the CBBE model to aid in understanding a festival's brand and attachment to the host society.

However, it has some limitations. Firstly, brand loyalty has been measured using affective and cognitive items (Lee et al., 1997; Lee et al., 2012; Nam et al., 2011; Wang et al., 2018). Thus, a future study needs to compare the efficacy of two different measures. Second, it did not analyze the interrelationships among festival brand awareness, perceived quality, and festival brand image. Some studies have indicated that brand awareness and brand image influence brand loyalty through perceived quality (Chen & Myagmarsuren, 2010; Hyun & Kim, 2011; Im et al., 2012; Kladou & Kehagias, 2014). As a consequence, future studies should empirically investigate whether there is a mediating role of perceived quality or brand image within the CBBE model.

Further, this study did not explore the potential differences in the effect of the celebrity writer's attributes, festival brand equity, and attachment to festival destination according to festival tourists' demographic characteristics or travel-related variables. For example, it has been found that the effectiveness of advertising can be perceived differently according to gender (Boyd & Shank, 2004; Lin et al., 2008; Wang et al., 2002). In this study, younger respondents may not have historical knowledge about the literary man, "Hyo-seok Lee" compared to older respondents. Therefore, the moderating effect of age should be examined in future studies to assess whether similar results are reached for different types of visitors. In addition, now that the role of celebrity differs according to frequency of visit (Fakeye & Crompton, 1991; Kim et al., 2017; Lee et al., 1997), it can be meaningful to compare results between first-time visitors and repeat visitors.

This study explored the influence of a celebrity writer's attributes on the attitude

of respondents in a local festival setting, but future research should identify the effect of other influential factors. Perception of the functions, roles, and attributes of celebrity endorsers may differ with interpretations of the cultural meaning of a celebrity (Chang et al., 2005; Gakhal & Senior, 2008; Kim et al., 2016; McCracken, 1989; Wang et al., 2002). Finally, future research also needs to examine whether the results of this study are consistent with different countries and cultural realms.

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Table 1. Demographic profiles

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender (n = 405)		
Male	187	46.0
Female	218	54.0
Marital status (n = 404)	79	19.5
Single	322	79.5
Married	3	0.7
Other		
Age (n = 401)	46	11.4
20-29	95	23.5
30-39	124	30.6
40-49	107	26.4
50-59	29	7.2
60 or older		
Monthly household income (n = 388) (10,000 Korean won)		
Less than 100	38	9.4
100 -200	79	19.5
201-300	82	20.2
301-400	80	19.8
401-500	60	14.8
More than 501	49	12.1
Education (n = 397)		
High school graduate	110	27.2
College student	23	5.7
University graduate	227	56.0
Graduate school or above	37	9.1
Occupation (n = 405)		
Professional	67	16.5
Company employee	54	13.3
Manufacturer/technician	16	4.0
Service employee	28	6.9
Government official/teacher	34	8.4
Independent businessman	61	15.1
Student	21	5.2
Unemployed	7	1.7
Housewife	86	21.2
Other	30	7.4
	44	10.9
Purpose (n = 402)		
Because of interest in Hyo-seok Lee himself and his work	273	67.4
Because of the pastoral countryside	22	5.4
Because of the festival's reputation	20	2.5
To identify business opportunities	4	1.0
Visiting home town	39	12.8
Other		
Accompanied person (n = 405)		
Family	245	60.5
Friend	90	22.2
Colleague	36	8.9
Club or package tour	27	6.7
Myself	7	1.7
Length of visit (n = 393)		
Day trip	276	68.1

1 night	90	22.2
2 nights	13	3.2
3 nights	6	1.5
4 nights or more	8	2.0
Information source (n = 403)		
Travel agency	21	5.2
Friends/family	104	25.7
TV/radio	98	24.2
Newspaper	18	4.4
Brochure	5	1.2
Internet	101	24.9
Other	56	13.8

Table 2. Domains and items of celebrity attributes

Domains and items	Mean
Trustworthiness (Reliability alpha = 0.92)	
Trust 1 (The celebrated writer is trustworthy)	4.66
Trust 2 (The celebrated writer is credible)	4.78
Trust 3 (The celebrated writer is reliable)	4.62
Trust 4 (The celebrated writer is sincere)	4.77
Trust 5 (The celebrated writer is honest)	4.67
Familiarity (Reliability alpha = 0.89)	
Familiarity 1 (The celebrated writer is familiar to me)	4.13
Familiarity 2 (The celebrated writer offers me close feeling)	4.03
Familiarity 3 (The celebrated writer offers me comfortable feeling)	4.29
Familiarity 4 (The celebrated writer is easily recognizable)	4.38
Familiarity 5 (The celebrated writer offers awareness)	4.21
Expertise (Reliability alpha = 0.96)	
Expertise 1 (The celebrated writer is qualified)	4.84
Expertise 2 (The celebrated writer is expert)	4.89
Expertise 3 (The celebrated writer is knowledgeable)	4.91
Expertise 4 (The celebrated writer is experienced)	4.71

Note: Items were measured on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = “strongly disagree,” 4 = “neutral,” 7 = “strongly agree”).

Table 3. Domains and items of festival brand equity, festival brand loyalty, and festival attachment

Domains and items	Mean
Festival brand awareness (Reliability alpha = .90)	
Awareness 1 (This festival is well known in this country)	4.43
Awareness 2 (This festival is recognized by my neighbors)	4.23
Awareness 3 (This festival is easily distinguishable from other festivals)	4.46
Awareness 4 (I am familiar with the features of this festival)	4.22
Awareness 5 (This festival comes to my mind very quickly when I think about local festivals)	4.47
Perceived quality (Reliability alpha = .92)	
PQ 1 (The festival content is interesting)	4.39
PQ 2 (The festival programs are diverse and varied)	4.36
PQ 3 (Information acquisition including schedule/content is easy)	4.51
PQ 4 (Experiential programs are fun.)	4.35
PQ 5 (There is detailed information in the festival venue)	4.64
PQ 6 (Excess to the festival venue is easy)	4.65
PQ 7 (Toilets are maintained cleanly)	4.49
PQ 8 (Local special products/gifts reflect this festival well)	4.15
Festival brand image (Reliability alpha = .95)	
Image 1 (This festival is distinguishable)	4.44
Image 2 (The festival has personality)	4.48
Image 3 (The festival has a unique image)	4.53
Image 4 (The festival is unlike any other)	4.39
Image 5 (The festival is intriguing)	4.48
Festival brand loyalty (Reliability alpha = .95)	
Loyalty 1 (I will recommend that others visit this festival)	4.84
Loyalty 2 (I will speak positively about the festival)	4.79
Loyalty 3 (I will participate in this festival next time)	4.63
Loyalty 4 (I am satisfied with my participation in this festival)	4.65
Attachment to festival destination (Reliability alpha = .92)	
Attachment 1 (I have strong ties with this festival's host region)	4.28
Attachment 2 (The region hosting this festival has a lot of meaning for me)	4.35
Attachment 3 (I'd like to spend more time in this festival-host region)	4.46
Attachment 4 (This festival-host region offers me satisfaction)	4.39
Attachment 5 (The region where this festival is held cannot be exchange for other regions)	4.30
Attachment 6 (The region where this festival is held is the most appropriate place to host it)	4.68
Attachment 7 (I feel that the region where this festival is held is part of me)	4.11

Note: Items were measured on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = “strongly disagree,” 4 = “neutral,” 7 = “strongly agree”).

Table 4. Results of the confirmation factor analysis

Construct	Items	Factor loading	<i>t</i> -value	SMC	AVE ^b	CCR ^c
Trustworthiness	Trust 1	.84	- ^a	.710	0.83	0.96
	Trust 2	.93	30.44	.86		
	Trust 3	.93	26.05	.87		
	Trust 4	.90	24.54	.82		
	Trust 5	.94	26.45	.89		
Familiarity	Familiar 1	.75	- ^a	.57	0.58	0.87
	Familiar 2	.72	17.88	.52		
	Familiar 3	.74	14.31	.55		
	Familiar 4	.82	15.73	.67		
	Familiar 5	.76	14.76	.58		
Expertise	Expertise 1	.93	- ^a	.87	0.80	0.94
	Expertise 2	.93	34.07	.87		
	Expertise 3	.88	29.23	.78		
	Expertise 4	.84	25.55	.70		
Festival brand awareness	Aware 1	.74	- ^a	.55	0.64	0.90
	Aware 2	.77	19.05	.59		
	Aware 3	.83	16.41	.69		
	Aware 4	.80	15.77	.64		
	Aware 5	.84	16.62	.71		
Perceived quality	PQ 1	.67	- ^a	.45	0.57	0.91
	PQ 2	.64	11.59	.40		
	PQ 3	.79	14.09	.63		
	PQ 4	.80	14.21	.65		
	PQ 5	.79	14.03	.63		
	PQ 6	.81	14.24	.65		
	PQ 7	.75	13.37	.56		
	PQ 8	.79	13.89	.62		
Festival brand image	Image 1	.91	- ^a	.83	0.77	0.94
	Image 2	.82	23.67	.68		
	Image 3	.89	28.62	.80		
	Image 4	.94	33.31	.89		
	Image 5	.83	24.37	.70		
Festival brand loyalty	Loyalty 1	.94	- ^a	.89	0.82	0.95
	Loyalty 2	.93	35.80	.87		
	Loyalty 3	.91	32.55	.82		
	Loyalty 4	.84	26.10	.70		
Attachment to festival destination	Attach 1	.74	- ^a	.55	0.65	0.93
	Attach 2	.75	18.44	.56		
	Attach 3	.85	17.67	.72		
	Attach 4	.86	17.95	.74		
	Attach 5	.87	18.00	.75		
	Attach 6	.83	17.10	.684		

	Attach 7	.71	14.44	.502
Fit indices	$\chi^2(820) = 1610.72(p < .001)$, GFI = .84, AGFI = .82, CFI = .95, RMR = .11, RMSEA = .05, TLI = .95			

Note:

^a In the measurement model, the estimated parameter was fixed at 1.0.

^b Average Variance Extracted (AVE) = $(\sum \text{standardized loadings}^2) / [(\sum \text{standardized loadings}^2) + \sum \varepsilon_j]$, where ε_j is the measurement error.

^c Composite Construct Reliability (CCR) = $(\sum \text{standardized loadings})^2 / [(\sum \text{standardized loadings})^2 + \sum \varepsilon_j]$

Table 5. Correlation (squared correlation) matrix

Construct	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	1.00							
2	0.509 (0.26)	1.00						
3	0.599 (0.36)	0.531 (0.28)	1.00					
4	0.405 (0.16)	0.451 (0.20)	0.495 (0.25)	1.00				
5	0.355 (0.13)	0.325 (0.11)	0.414 (0.17)	0.369 (0.14)	1.00			
6	0.357 (0.13)	0.324 (0.10)	0.467 (0.22)	0.44 (0.19)	0.695 (0.48)	1.00		
7	0.437 (0.19)	0.369 (0.14)	0.553 (0.31)	0.467 (0.22)	0.662 (0.44)	0.741 (0.55)	1.00	
8	0.348 (0.12)	0.396 (0.16)	0.471 (0.22)	0.417 (0.17)	0.591 (0.35)	0.644 (0.41)	0.682 (0.47)	1.00
Mean	4.70	4.21	4.84	4.36	4.44	4.46	4.73	4.37
Standard deviation	1.54	1.29	1.44	1.36	1.16	1.30	1.45	1.21

Note:

Construct 1 (Trustworthiness), Construct 2 (Familiarity), Construct 3 (Expertise), Construct 4 (Festival brand awareness), Construct 5 (Perceived quality), Construct 6 (Festival brand image), Construct 7 (Festival brand loyalty), Construct 8 (Attachment to festival destination)

Table 6. Results of the SEM analyses

	Unstandardize coefficient	Standard error	Standardized coefficient	<i>t</i> -value	<i>p</i> -value	Total effect	Indirect effect	Decision
H1a (γ_{11}) T→ FBA	.06	.06	.06	.96	.337	.06	.00	Rejected
H1b (γ_{21}) T→ PQ	.06	.05	.08	1.10	.270	.08	.00	Rejected
H1c (γ_{31}) T→ FBI	.03	.06	.03	.52	.607	.03	.00	Rejected
H1d (γ_{41}) T→ FBL	.06	.05	.06	1.23	.217	.10	.04	Rejected
H1e (γ_{51}) T→ A	-.04	-.04	-.05	-.97	.330	.01	.06	Rejected
H2a (γ_{12}) F→ FBA	.31	.07	.32	4.35**	.000	.32	.00	Accepted
H2b (γ_{22}) F→ PQ	.16	.06	.19	2.55*	.011	.19	.00	Accepted
H2c (γ_{32}) F→ FBI	.18	.07	.18	2.52*	.012	.18	.00	Accepted
H2d (γ_{42}) F→ FBL	-.01	.06	-.01	-.15	.884	.16	.16	Rejected
H2e (γ_{52}) F→ A	.12	.05	.15	2.41*	.016	.29	.14	Accepted
H3a (γ_{13}) E→ FBA	.27	.06	.30	4.50**	.000	.30	.00	Accepted
H3b (γ_{23}) E→ PQ	.21	.05	.29	4.02**	.000	.29	.00	Accepted
H3c (γ_{33}) E→ FBI	.34	.06	.36	5.47**	.000	.36	.00	Accepted
H3d (γ_{43}) E→ FBL	.19	.05	.19	3.43**	.000	.46	.27	Accepted
H3e (γ_{53}) E→ A	.01	.04	.02	.29	.771	.34	.32	Rejected
H4a (β_{41}) FBA→ FBL	.12	.05	.09	2.02*	.044	.09	.00	Accepted
H4b (β_{42}) PQ→ FBL	.36	.06	.27	6.08**	.000	.27	.00	Accepted
H4c (β_{43}) FBI→ FBL	.50	.05	.46	11.00**	.000	.46	.00	Accepted
H4d (β_{51}) FBA→ A	.02	.04	.02	.49	.628	.06	.04	Rejected
H4e (β_{52}) PQ→ A	.17	.05	.17	3.46**	.000	.28	.11	Accepted
H4f (β_{53}) FBI→ A	.16	.04	.21	3.79**	.000	.40	.19	Accepted
H5 (β_{54}) FBL→ A	.29	.05	.40	5.96**	.000	.40	.00	Accepted

$\chi^2(864) = 1800.87$ ($p < .001$), GFI = .83, AGFI = .81, CFI = .95, RMR = .22, RMSEA = .05, TLI = .94

Note: T: Trustworthiness, F: Familiarity, E: Expertise, FBA: Festival brand awareness, PQ: Perceived quality, FBI: Festival brand image, FBL: Festival brand loyalty, A: Attachment to festival destination

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .001$.

Figure. 1. Structural model of the influence of celebrity on festival destination

