A Study on the Effects of City Brand-Self Congruity on Attitudes toward City and Moderating Effect of City Brand Personality

Soyoung Park

Business and Economics Research Institute, Gyeongsang National University, Research professor

도시브랜드-자아일치성이 도시태도에 미치는 영향과 도시브랜드개성의 조절적 역할에 관한 연구

> 박소영 경상대학교 경영경제연구소 학술연구교수

Abstract The purpose of this study is to investigate the effects of the actual self congruity and the ideal self congruity on positive attitudes toward city through fictitious city brand experiments. Additionally, the moderating role of city brand personality in relationship between brand-self congruity and positive attitudes are examined. This research conducted a survey after developing scenarios of two city brand personality. Frequency analysis to identify the characteristics of respondents, t-test to check the experimental manipulation, multiple regression analysis and chow test for hypothesis testing were performed through the SPSS Statistics 21 program. The self congruity of city brand had significant effects on attitudes toward city, but the moderating role of city brand personality was not significant. Theoretical and managerial implications of the findings were discussed and self congruity is an important variable in brand-consumer relationship in city brand. Finally, limitations of this study and future research directions were discussed

Key Words: Self Congruity, City Brand Personality, Attitude toward City, Residence Intention, Tourism Intention, Chow test

요 약 본 연구는 가상의 도시브랜드를 대상으로 도시브랜드에 대한 현실적 자아일치성과 이상적 자아일치성이 긍정적 태도형성에 미치는 영향을 실험연구하고, 도시브랜드-자아일치성과 긍정적 도시태도의 관계에서 도시브랜드개성의 조절적역할을 조사하고자 하였다. 도시브랜드 시나리오를 개발한 후 설문조사를 실시하였으며, SPSS 21을 활용하여 표본 특성을살펴보기 위한 빈도분석, 실험조작을 점검하기 위한 독립표본 t검정, 연구가설을 검토하기 위한 회귀분석과 차우검증을 실시하였다. 연구결과, 도시브랜드에 대한 자아일치성은 도시에 대한 태도형성에 유의한 영향을 미치는 것으로 나타났으나, 도시브랜드개성의 조절적 역할은 유의하지 않게 나타났다. 연구결과에 대한 논의를 통해 학문적, 실무적 시사점을 제시하였으며, 도시브랜드에서도 자아일치성은 브랜드-소비자 간 관계 형성의 중요한 단서임을 알 수 있었다. 마지막으로 연구의한계점 및 향후 연구 방향을 논의하였다.

주제어: 자아일치성, 도시브랜드개성, 도시태도, 거주의도, 관광의도, 차우검증

*Corresponding Author: Soyoung Park(psyida@gnu.ac.kr)

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1. Introduction

As cities become the center of the global economy, city governments are trying to improve their competitiveness by communicating with consumers by applying brand concepts to cities in order to strategically manage cities. The positive effect of city brand marketing in New York, centered on the slogan "I love New York," is well known. City brand is the perception of the city that reflects the associations in the memory of the consumer[1]. It is an important concept of city marketing that makes it different from other cities by identifying the city, and forms the expectation of the consumer about the city. One way to build a strong city brand is to create a distinctive city brand personality and to pursue congruity with the consumer's self image, and form a high brand relationship. Consumers have an expressive needs to communicate their image or their desired image to others. Consumers may enhance their image through a particular brand, and may not prefer the brand if the brand's image is inconsistent with their image. Consumers have positive attitudes toward brand when they feel that self image and brand image match[2-4]. Brand-self congruity is a reaction that occurs when consumer's self-expression needs are satisfied, and becomes a source of strong relationship between a consumer and a brand. Therefore, it is necessary to examine consumer perception, self congruity, and attitude toward city in order to strengthen competitiveness of city in view of utilization of strategic city brand. However, studies on brand-self congruity have so far focused on explaining the effects of self-image and product brand congruity on consumer preference, purchase intention, and repetitive purchasing[5].

This study attempts to investigate the effects of self congruity on positive attitudes toward the city. Most studies on city brands have limitations in surveying and analyzing specific real cities without properly controlling exogenous variables[6]. This study tried to

overcome this by minimizing the experiential effect of respondents by expressing the characteristics of city brand by manipulating scenarios for the fictitious city brand through experimental method and trying to examine only consumer behavior according to city brand. In addition, the role of city brand personality, which is a consumer's perception of city identity, will be further examined. Brand personality provides a link between the emotional and self expressive benefits of a brand and it is the basis for forming a customer-brand relationship[2]. Brand management focuses on positioning strategies that emphasize the unique personality of a brand.

This study differs from previous studies in that it deals with brand-self congruity and brand personality for city brand through fictitious city brand experiments. The purpose of this study is summarized as follows. First, this study is to investigate the effects of the actual self congruity and the ideal self congruity on positive attitudes toward city. Next, the moderating role of city brand personality dimensions between brand-self congruity and positive attitudes are examined. This study is going to derive the academic and administrative implications through the results.

2. Theoretical Background

2.1 City Brand Personality

The study on the city brand personality was the study of definition, measurement method and major personality dimension of city brand personality in the beginning. City brand personality means a set of human characteristics associated with the city that can be expressed differently according to the goal or strategy to pursue[7, 8]. However, most of the related studies have a theoretical basis for Aaker(1997)'s brand personality assessment scale[8, 9]. Although measurement methods and personality dimensions are slightly different, studies on city brand personality have suggested that city brand personality can be utilized for

differentiated positioning of cities. City brand personality is the results of city identity and recognition by consumer experience.

Thereafter studies on the role of city brand personality in consumer-brand interaction were developed. Brand personality typically enhances consumer's preference and emotional bond, thereby enhancing brand commitment, attachment and loyalty[10-12].

Kim et al.[13] suggested that city brand personality positively influences loyalty through satisfaction and commitment. Yoo et al.[8] suggested that city brand personality positively influences consumers' attitude toward city, and it is necessary to establish city identity centering on major city brand personality dimensions that affect consumers' attitude toward city. Oh[14] argued that there is a need to examine consumer behaviors in terms of multidimensional viewpoints such as investment location, residential areas, tourist destinations, and examined the city brand personality that influences residence intention and tourism intention in addition to overall attitude toward city.

2.2 City Brand-Self Congruity

Research on congruity has been conducted in the field of social psychology, mostly in relation to self-concept[15]. Self-concept refers to the attitude of a person to himself/herself. In relation to the self-concept, people experience a congruity with the organization when beliefs about that particular organization help to define the self[16]. High levels of congruity are the driving force for people to immerse themselves in the organization and to prefer the organization[17, 18]. If a city provides attractive and meaningful social self to consumers, consumers will pursue congruity with the city. There have been many studies on congruity to examine the relationship personality between brand and consumer behavior [19-22]. Consumers have a desire to express their own images or images they want to others, and choose products, brands, organizations, and cities that match their self-image.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research hypothesis

The study of brand personality initially revealed the dimension of brand personality and studied the effect of brand personality on consumer attitude, but gradually it became more interested in the effect of the congruity of the brand personality and consumer's self-concept on consumer behavior[2, 23, 24]. Self image congruity is an individual's mental comparison between brand image and consumer self image and self image congruity significantly affect consumers satisfaction and brand loyalty[25-27]. Self image congruity was suggested as a multidimensional concept consisting of four concepts but in previous empirical studies identified that ideal and actual self congruity are two distinctive factors[25, 28, 29]. Previous Studies identified that the role of actual self congruity and ideal self congruity, and found that both actual and ideal self congruity were significant predictors for consumer behavior[30, 31]. In Kuenzel and Halliday[28]'s study, the greater the match between the brand personality and the consumers' self-concept, the higher the customer has positive attitudes toward the brand. These results can be applied to city brands, and it is necessary to examine consumer behavior from a multidimensional point of view such as residential areas and tourist destination[32]. Given that, this study proposes that the level of match between city brand personality and consumers' actual self concept positively affects attitude toward city, Residence Intention and Tourism Intention and also the level of match between city brand personality and consumers' ideal self concept positively influences attitude toward city, Residence Intention and Tourism Intention. Accordingly, hypothesis 1 and 2 are as follows.

- H1-1: Actual self congruity of city brand personality will positively affect the attitude toward city brand
- H1-2: Actual self congruity of city brand personality will positively affect the residence intention
- H1-3: Actual self congruity of city brand personality will positively affect the tourism intention
- H2-1: Ideal self congruity of city brand personality will positively affect the attitude toward city brand
- H2-2: Ideal self congruity of city brand personality will positively affect the residence intention
- H2-3: Ideal self congruity of city brand personality will positively affect the tourism intention

On the other hand, Aaker et al.[2] classified brand personality as sincere brand and exciting brand. They pointed out that consumers judge a brand based on a realistic situation for a sincere brand, whereas an exciting brand judges a brand based on emotional and futuristic reasoning. In other words, sincere brand and exciting brand can play a significant moderating role in the relationship between brand-self congruity and attitudes toward brand. Actual self congruity is related to a sincere brand rather than an exciting brand because it is based on the specific problems facing the present. The sincere brand is more likely to show positive attitudes toward city when actual self congruity is high. The exciting brand, on the other hand, is highly associated with ideal self congruity because it has abstract and emotional characteristics. Therefore, ideal self congruity will have a more positive impact on attitudes toward city in the case of the exciting brand than in the sincere brand. Hypothesis 3 and 4 are as follows.

- H3-1: Actual self congruity of city brand personality will have a greater impact on the attitude toward city brand of the sincere brand than the exciting brand.
- H3-2: Actual self congruity of city brand personality

- will have a greater impact on the residential intention of the sincere brand than the exciting brand.
- H3-3: Actual self congruity of city brand personality will have a greater impact on the tourism intention of the sincere brand than the exciting brand.
- H4-1: Ideal self congruity of city brand personality will have a greater impact on the attitude toward city brand of the sincere brand than the exciting brand.
- H4-2: Ideal self congruity of city brand personality will have a greater impact on the residential intention of the sincere brand than the exciting brand.
- H4-3: Ideal self congruity of city brand personality will have a greater impact on the tourism intention of the sincere brand than the exciting brand.

3.2 Research method

This study investigated the effects of the actual self congruity and the ideal self congruity on positive attitudes toward city through fictitious city brand experiments. And the moderating role of city brand personality dimensions between brand-self congruity and positive attitudes were examined. This paper manipulated the two fictitious city brand according to city brand personality such as sincere and exciting. Terms expressing the city brand personality were derived in the previous research[32-36], and the two city brand was presented using the scenario technique. For example, a city brand with a distinctive personality called exciting has created a scenario that includes the following characteristics: passionate, energetic, humorous, romantic, luxurious, fun, adventurous, enchanting etc. Other variables were measured using the 7-point likert scale using items that were tested for reliability and validity in previous studies. Actual and ideal self congruity were measured based on the study of Marlar et al.[23]. Attitude toward city, residential

intention, and tourism intention were measured based on Oh[32]'s study.

In this study, confirmatory factor analysis was conducted through Amos 21 program to verify reliability and validity. Frequency analysis to identify the characteristics of respondents and multiple regression analysis for hypothesis testing were performed through the SPSS Statistics 21 program. Finally, this study divided the city brand personality into two types of sincerity and exciting and conducted a chow test to verify the moderating role of city brand personality. The reason for the chow test instead of the general ANOVA in this study is that the independent variable of this study is the interval scale, the moderating variable is the nominal scale, and the dependent variable is the interval scale.

The chow test is used to statistically test the assumption that the regression coefficients estimated with the entire data are the same as the regression coefficients estimated with some subset data[37]. In other words, to compare the regression models between two or more groups, the regression coefficients are estimated and compared separately for each group. When the error sum of squares of the regression models of groups 1 and 2 is ESS1 and ESS2, the error sum of squares of the combined regression model is ESSc and the number of estimation coefficients is k. chow test is calculated as follows. Statistical significance can be confirmed by F[38].

$$\frac{\textit{ESS}_c - (\textit{ESS}_1 + \textit{ESS}_2)}{k} / \frac{\textit{ESS}_1 + \textit{ESS}_2}{n-2k} \sim F(k, n-2)$$

4. Results of the Research

4.1 Repondents' Characteristics

This study first shows the scenario for the fictitious city brand to respondents, and then conducted the questionnaire. A total of 200 questionnaires were collected, and 188 were used for the analysis after eliminating 12 questionnaires with irrelevant data and

missing values. Characteristics of respondents are as follows. 33.5% were female and 66.5% were male and the proportion of male was high. In the age group, 30s were the most(45.7%), followed by 40s(29.8%) and 20s(21.3%).

4.2 Manipulative check

In order to check the manipulation of the fictitious city brand, the items of sincere and exciting city brand personality were measured by 7-point likert scale. In the case of the sincere city brand scenario, the sincere(M=5.670) brand personality was significantly higher than the exciting(M=4.563) brand personality(t=6.467, p=.000). In the exciting city brand scenario, the exciting(M=5.776) brand personality was significantly higher than the sincere(M=4.510) brand personality(t=6.421, p=.000). Therefore, It was confirmed that the experimental manipulation was successful.

4.3 Reliability and Validity

In this study, CFA(confirmatory factor analysis) was conducted to verify the reliability and validity of all the measurement items used in the hypothesis verification. The results of CFA are as in Table 1. AVE value should be at least 0.5 to be reliability[39]. All variables in this study have an AVE value greater than Self 0.5(Actual Self congruity=.843, Ideal congruity=.817, Residence Intention=.923, Tourism Intention=.861, Attitude toward city=.943). Moreover, the composite reliability was found to exceed the recommendation criterion by exceeding 0.7(Actual Self congruity=.959, Ideal Self congruity=.957, Residence Intention=.983, Tourism Intention=.948, Attitude toward city=.949). Goodness of fit index is acceptable with x 2=73.570, df=44, p=.000, CFI=.989, NFI=.974, TLI=.984, RMSEA=.060. In other words, CFI, NFI and TLI are above 0.9 and RMSEA is small enough to explain the causal relationship between research constructs[39]. These results show that reliability and validity are secured.

Table 1. Reliability and validity test

Variables	Items	Estimates (Standardized) t-value		CR	AVE	
Actual Self congruity	AS1	1.000(.903)				
	AS2	1.049(.937) 21.638***		.959	.843	
	AS3	1.104(.914)	20.194***			
Ideal Self congruity	IS1	1.000(.904)				
	IS2	1.066(.930)	20.716***	.957	.817	
	IS3	1.086(.877)	18.020***			
Residence Intention	RI1	1.000(.994)		.983	.923	
	RI2	.952(.926)	28.181***	.903		
Tourism Intention	TI1	1.000(.951)	.9		.861	
	TI2	1.009(.904)	009(.904) 16.571***			
Attitude toward city	AC1	1.000(.968)		.949	.943	
	AC2	1.015(.974) 34.884***		.949	.943	
Chi-square(p-value)=73.570(.003), df=44, CFI=.989, RMSEA=.060, NFI=.974, TLI=.984						

^{***}p<.01

4.4 Hypotheses testing

The results of multiple regression analysis showed that the effect of actual self-congruity on attitude toward city and residence intention was significant, so hypotheses 1–1 and 1–2 were accepted. However, the effect of actual self-congruity on tourism intention was not significant, so hypothesis 1–3 was rejected. The effect of ideal self-congruity on attitude toward city, residence intention, and tourism intention was significant, so H2–1, H2–2, and H2–3 were accepted. As shown in Table 2, actual self-congruity has a strong influence on residence intention, and ideal self-congruity has the greatest influence on tourism intention.

The chow test was conducted to find out whether the differences in city brand personality play a moderating role in the relationship between actual self-congruity and dependent variable(attitude toward city, residential intention, tourist intention). In order to examine the moderating effect of city brand personality, we divided city brand personality into sincerity and excitement. We collected data of 94 people in sincerity and 94 people in excitement. As shown in Table 3, H3-1, H3-2 and H3-3 of moderating effects were not significant and were rejected.

Table 2. Regression analysis

Dependent variable	Independent variable	В	SE	Beta	t-value	R ²	
Residence Intention	Actual Self	.768	.086	.685	8.981***	.669	
	Ideal Self	.172	.085	.154	2.026**		
Tourism Intention	Actual Self	.118	.103	.132	1.149	242	
	Ideal Self	.334	.102	.376	3.266***	.242	
Attitude toward city	Actual Self	.525	.080	.539	6.559***	.614	
	Ideal Self	.267	.080	.276	3.355***		

^{***}p<.01, **p<.05

Table 3. Chow test for moderating effect (Independent variable: Actual self congruity)

Dependent	Moderating	(Coeffic	ient	Model			
variable	variable	В	SE	t	R ²	F		
Residence Intention	Sincerity	.704	.108	6.505***	.619	73.775***		
	Excitement	.860	.141	6.079***	.718	115.783***		
Chow Test, t= .878								
Tourism Intention	Sincerity	.236	.125	1.882	.311	20.510***		
	Excitement	033	.166	201	.241	14.482***		
Chow Test, t=1.295								
Attitude toward city	Sincerity	.616	.089	6.954***	.697	104.471***		
	Excitement	.387	.149	2.597**	.558	57.554***		
Chow Test, t=1.319								

^{***}p<.01, **p<.05

Table 4. Chow test for moderating effect (Independent variable: Ideal self-congruity)

Dependent	Moderating		Coeffi	cient	Model		
variable	variable	В	SE	t	R ²	F	
Residence Intention	Sincerity	.193	.112	1.717	.619	73.775***	
	Excitement	.109	.135	.809	.718	115.783***	
Chow Test, t= .479							
Tourism Intention	Sincerity	.331	.130	2.545**	.311	20.510***	
	Excitement	.410	.158	2.587**	.241	14.482***	
Chow Test, t= .386							
Attitude toward city	Sincerity	.270	.092	2.947***	.697	104.471***	
	Excitement	.332	.142	2.337**	.558	57.554***	
Chow Test, t= .366							

^{***}p<.01, **p<.05

Table 4 shows the results of chow test to examine the moderating role of city brand personality in relationship between ideal self-congruity and dependent variables. H4-1, H4-2, H4-3 were rejected because the moderating effect according to city brand personality was not significant even when the independent variable was ideal self-congruity.

5. Conclusions

The purpose of this study is to investigate the effects of the actual self-congruity and the ideal self-congruity on positive attitudes toward city through fictitious city brand experiments. Additionally, the moderating role of city brand personality in relationship between brand-self congruity and positive attitudes are examined. As the results of this research, The effects of actual and ideal self-congruity on attitude toward city were significant, and actual self-congruity has a strong influence on residence intention, and ideal self-congruity has the greatest influence on tourism intention. However, moderating effects through Chow test were not significant.

The practical implications of these findings are as follows. The results showed that actual self-congruity significantly affects attitude toward city and residence intention, and ideal self-congruity significantly affects attitude toward city, residence intention, and tourism intention. Especially, the results show that actual self-congruity has the greatest influence on residence intention, and only ideal self-congruity has a significant influence on tourism intention. These results can be interpreted as the tendency that people tend to align with actual self-image for brands with low perceived risk, many experiences and knowledge, and tend to match ideal self-image for unfamiliar brands. Therefore, a city that desires an image of a tourist city should focus on the actual self of people, and a city that desires an image of a residential city should focus on the ideal self of people. This study is meaningful in that this research examines the effects of city brand-self congruity in a situation where there are not many studies of city from the perspective of the brand, and in particular, the concept of self congruity is divided into actual self-image and the ideal self-image. City brands also need to develop images to represent city identity for successful positioning, in order for cities to be competitive, it is necessary to consistently position differentiated city images in consumers' minds. In

addition, city brands need a strategy to encourage consumers to feel the city brand and self image congruity.

The academic implications of these findings are as follows. The previous studies on the city brand personality were conducted by surveys on existing cities, but this study used fictitious city brand through experimental method without using existing city brand. It is meaningful that the use of the fictitious city brand was attempted to exclude the external effects of experience and to confirm only the effect of city brand personality. This study suggests to try various research methodologies in the study of city brand in the future by trying experimental research using fictitious brand.

Finally, the limits of this study and future direction of research are as follows. In this study, it is difficult to generalize the results of this study because there is a limitation that the reflection of the characteristics of the sample is not considered. In addition, the results of this study revealed that the moderating role of city brand personality was not significant in both cases where the independent variable was self-congruity and ideal self-congruity. These results are different from the results of previous study[2], and this difference is presumed to be due to the fact that the previous study was conducted for the product which is not the city. Therefore, a research model that reflects more city characteristics is needed in the future.

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Soyoung Park(박소영)

[정회원]



- · July 2017 ~ Current: Research professor, Business and Economics Research Institute, Gyeongsang National University
- · Interests : Consumer behavior, Brand strategy etc.

· E-Mail: psyida@gnu.ac.kr