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# Effects of Store Characteristics and In-Store Emotional Experiences on Store Attitude

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*This study examines how various characteristics of retail environments influence consumers' emotional responses in the shopping environment, and how these emotions, in turn, influence consumers' store attitudes. It also supplements emerging research on in-store emotions by identifying through ethnographic interviews emotions generated in the retail shopping environment that are not typically tapped by standard inventories of general human emotions. The data, collected from a sample of 294 consumers in Korea, indicate that store characteristics have a pronounced effect on consumers' in-store emotions, and that these emotional experiences serve as critical mediators in the store characteristics–store attitudes relationship. The implications of this research for future work on the retail environment and consumers' emotional responses are discussed.* J BUSN RES 1998. 42:253–263. © 1998 Elsevier Science Inc.

Past research in retailing has found that specific characteristics of stores, most notably product assortment, price/quality, location, service quality, and store atmosphere, affect consumers' store evaluations and store choices (Bearden, 1977; James, Durand, and Dreves, 1976; Louviere and Johnson, 1990; Steenkamp and Wedel, 1991). Moreover, recent work has shown that emotions experienced in the store environment can affect outcome variables of interest to retailers. Donovan and Rossiter (1982) (see also Donovan, Rossiter, Marcolyn, and Nesdale, 1994), for example, found that pleasure resulting from exposure to store atmosphere influenced such in-store behaviors as spending levels, amount of time spent in the store, and willingness to visit again. Gardner (1985) (see also Isen et al., 1978; Westbrook, 1980) hypothesized that transient feelings may have special impact

in retail or service encounters because they may be natural outcomes of the interpersonal and dyadic nature of the retail environment. In line with these projections, Dawson, Bloch, and Ridgway (1990) showed that transient emotions influenced shoppers' satisfaction and future shopping intentions. Finally, Swinyard (1993) showed interacting effects of in-store mood and quality of consumers' shopping experiences on future shopping intentions.

Given these promising findings, research which further specifies the nature and range of emotional experiences encountered at the retail level, the marketing/retail factors that affect them, and their impact on outcome measures of interest to retailers is likely to be useful. This research would seem to have a particularly strong impact given the importance that retailers (e.g., Warner Brothers, Bed Bath and Beyond, and Barnes and Noble) have given to the creation of emotions in the store environment. The purpose of this study is to add to this research stream. We do so in several ways.

First, although understanding how characteristics of the retail environment affect consumers' emotions is managerially relevant, only two studies have examined the effect of environmental characteristics of stores on in-store emotions. Both focused on characteristics of the store's atmosphere and facility—its design, space, layout, lighting, color and music (Donovan and Rossiter, 1982; Ridgway, Bloch and Nelson, 1994). While important, other controllable characteristics of the retail environment (e.g., product assortment, sales help, etc.) may also affect in-store emotions. Thus, more work is needed to identify the variables in the retail context which may affect consumers' emotions.

Second, while past research has shown that store characteristics affect store evaluations and/or choices (e.g., Bearden, 1977; James, Durand, and Dreves, 1976; Louviere and Johnson, 1990; Steenkamp and Wedel, 1991), we know little about whether emotions mediate these effects. Nor do we understand

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how in-store characteristics affect outcomes such as attitude. While some in-store characteristics may affect store attitudes directly, others may do so through their mediational influence on emotions. Thus knowing which store characteristics have a direct vs. an emotional route to store attitudes would be useful.

Third, extant studies on emotions evoked in a retail context have used standard emotions lists which were developed for the purpose of studying human emotions generally. While these lists are useful and potentially comprehensive, they may over represent emotions that are not an integral part of the retail context (e.g., pity), and may under represent emotions that are (e.g., frustration). As Smith and Ellsworth (1985) point out, a preferred strategy in measuring emotional responses is to tap emotions most relevant to the domain of inquiry. Thus developing a list of emotional experiences tailored to the retail context (vs. general human emotions) may be desirable.

Fourth, little work has been conducted on the emotional experiences of consumers in countries outside the United States. While ours is not a cross-cultural study per se, examining the nature and range of emotions encountered in retail settings in other (partially, non-Western) countries adds to our knowledge about store characteristics, emotions, and attitudes toward retail establishments.

Thus, the purpose of this study is to examine the role of store characteristics on non-U.S. consumers' store attitudes, and to examine the mediating role of retail-specific emotions in the store characteristic-attitude relationship.

## Constructs

### *Store Characteristics*

Previous research has identified a host of store characteristics—characteristics which represent one of six store dimensions: product assortment and variety, value of the merchandise given its price, service, location, facilities, and store atmosphere (Schiffman, Dash, and Dillon, 1977; Hirshman, Greenberg, and Robertson, 1978; James, Durand, and Dreves, 1976; Swinyard, 1977; Louviere and Johnson, 1990; Steenkamp and Wedel, 1991; see also Zimmer and Golden, 1988 for a review of descriptors used in previous literature).

To assess the stability of these dimensions in a non-Western country, respondents from Korea (the country studied in this research) were given a list of 42 items representing store features and characteristics culled from the literature. The respondents, 60 students at the University of Ulsan, were asked to remember a department store which they had recently visited, and to evaluate the store based on the list of items. Respondents used 7-point response scales (1 = not at all; 7 = very much) to respond to each item (e.g., to what extent is parking adequate). Factor analysis of these responses revealed seven factors, which generally map onto the factors identified from studies in the United States. One difference was that the

**Table 1.** Store Characteristics

Factor	Items	Coefficient Alpha
Product assortment	Availability of new fashion products	.86
	Variety of products	
Value	Variety of brands	.81
	Availability of popular products	
	Appropriateness of price	
	Value of products on sale	
	Quality of products on sale	
Salesperson's service	Dependability of products	.73
	Quality of products	
	Appropriate knowledge of salesperson	
	Salesperson's kindness	
After sale service	Salesperson's forcefulness	.74
	Appropriateness of salesperson's explanation	
	Return policy	
	Repair policy	
	Delivery service	
Location	Installation service	.67
	Refund policy	
	Location	
Facilities	Transportation	.77
	Space for parking	
	General facilities	
	Store size	
	Space for rest	
	Space for leisure	
	Space for recreation	
	Availability of new information	
Congestion in the store		
Atmosphere	Arrangement of product corners	.82
	Design	
	Lighting	
	Air quality in the store	
	Inside decoration	
	Music in the store	

category of "service" was broken into two separate factors: salespersons' service and after-sale service. The factors, their corresponding items, and their alpha reliability coefficients are summarized in Table 1.

### *In-Store Emotional Experiences*

Prior research on emotional responses in the retail context has examined emotional responses in a way that mirrors various approaches to the study of emotion more generally. One approach to the study of emotions, termed the discrete emotions perspective, proposes that emotions can be conceptualized as a set of discrete and phenomenologically distinct affective states (e.g., Izard, 1977; see Batra and Ray, 1986). In line with this approach, Dawson, Bloch, and Ridgway (1990) measured seven types of emotions (relaxed, content, satisfied, happy, surprised, excited, rewarded) in their study of the effects emotions in the retail environment.

**Table 2.** Procedures of Ethnographic Interviews

Interview	Procedure
1	Developing rapport and eliciting information
2	Asking descriptive questions Examples: Could you describe typical shopping in a store? When did you do shopping most recently? Could you tell me more what you experienced at that shopping? Domain analysis
3	More descriptive questions Examples: Could you tell me more about pride? More domain analyses
4	Asking structural questions Examples: Are there different kinds of emotions you experienced at that shopping? Taxonomical analyses
5	More structural questions Asking contrast questions Examples: Could you tell me any differences between anxiety and nullification? Componential analyses
6	Finishing contrast questions

The second approach, termed the dimensional perspective, has suggested that more basic understanding of the impact of emotions can be derived from reducing the various emotion types into a set of underlying dimensions. For example, a two-dimensional model was developed (pleasure vs. displeasure; arousal vs. sleepiness) that argued that various emotions could be plotted as points on the circumplex of these dimensions. Analogously, Mehrabian and Russell (1974) identified three underlying dimensions of emotions—pleasure, arousal, and dominance (abbreviated PAD; see also Holbrook and Batra, 1987; Onley, Holbrook, and Batra, 1989). These dimensions, rather than the types per se, drive subsequent consumer responses. In the retail environment context, Donovan and Rosciter (1982; Donovan et al., 1994) used Mehrabian and Russell's (1974) PAD scale to assess in-store emotional experiences and their effects on shopping time and spending behavior.

This research does not intend to pit the type against the dimensional perspectives. Instead, recognizing the potential value that each may yield (e.g., specificity vs. parsimony), we examine emotions in a way that conforms to both approaches. However, in contrast to prior research, this research attempts to identify emotional responses that characterize the retail experience. This is a deviation from prior research which has used general scales of human emotions to measure consumers' emotional responses in the store. The decision to focus on retail-specific emotional responses was based in part on the growing acknowledgment that specific contexts (e.g., the retail shopping context) may have specific effects on consumer outcomes like emotions (Park and Smith, 1989; Huffman and

**Table 3.** Emotional Factors

Factors	Items	Coefficient Alpha
Positive feelings	Pleased	.89
	Attractive	
	Excited	
	Contented	
	Pride	
Negative feelings	Satisfied	.92
	Ignored	
	Anxious	
	Nullified	
	Displeased	
	Angry	

Houston, 1993; Ratneshwar and Shocker, 1991), and our own concern that general measures of human emotions may not adequately characterize the nature and range of emotional experiences encountered in the retail context (see also Smith and Ellsworth, 1985).

To study retail-specific emotions, we attempted to identify emotional responses via ethnographic interviews. We elected to use ethnographic interviews (see Wallendorf and Belk, 1989; Arnold and Wallendorf, 1994) because we felt that they would more adequately cover the range of emotions experienced in a retail context, and would more completely recover specific emotions that may not be top of mind for informants. It was also felt that by developing a deeper understanding of emotions in the retail context, we could more adequately consider how various store characteristics might affect specific emotional responses.

Twenty-one hours of ethnographic interviews were conducted based on the responses of four informants. Three informants (a 45-year-old housewife, a 27-year-old single working woman, and a 33-year-old married working man) completed six interviews of approximately one hour each (for a total of 18 interview hours). There was a one-week lag between the interviews. A fourth informant completed three interviews, however mitigating circumstances made it impossible for her to complete the remaining interviews. Procedures recommended by Spradley (1979) were used to guide the interviews (see Table 2).

The emotions identified from these interviews are noted in Table 3. Several interesting observations can be made about these emotions. First, while Dawson et al. (1990) examined only positive emotions, the ethnographic interviews revealed roughly equivalent numbers of positive and negative emotions. This finding also differs from the items typically assessed using standard emotion typologies (see Holbrook and Batra, 1987; Edell and Burke 1987). The standard typologies typically have a lower proportion of negative to positive emotion items.

Second, several emotions identified here do not show up on standard emotion typologies. A feeling of nullification is

**Table 4.** Potential Effects of Selected Store Characteristics on Selected In-Store Emotions (Based on Ethnographic Interviews)

Factors Affecting Positive Emotions	Pleased	Excited	Contented	Pride	Attractive	Satisfied
Product assortment	*	*	*			*
Value			*	*		*
Salespeople's service	*	*		*	*	
After-sale service	*		*			
Facilities	*	*				
Atmosphere		*		*		

Factors Affecting Negative Emotions	Ignored	Anxious	Nullified	Anger	Displeased
Salespeople's service	*	*	*	*	*
After-sale service		*	*	*	*
Facilities	*			*	*
Atmosphere		*			

aroused when shoppers do not achieve what they want, such as when they plan to buy a product but can not find it in the store. Notably, nullification reflects less frustration (which has a heavy anger component) than a feeling of deflation. Shoppers feel ignored when they are not treated well as shoppers. Pride is also an emotional response that has not been identified in previous work on store emotions. In this particular case, shoppers feel pride when they display their economic ability and social status through shopping (i.e., when they shop in a prestigious department store and purchase high-priced items).

Finally, it is interesting to note that several of the emotions identified through the interviews are socially oriented. The extent to which shoppers feel ignored, proud, or attractive, for example, may be driven by the social benefits or costs encountered in the retail environment.

The same 60 respondents who responded to the previously described pilot study were asked to indicate the extent to which they had experienced each of 11 emotional responses during a specific shopping episode. Seven-point Likert Scales (1 = not at all; 7 = very much) were used as response scales. Consistent with the PAD framework, we anticipated a pleasure, arousal, and dominance factor structure. However, only the pleasant vs. unpleasant factor structure emerged. The two factors clearly represented positive and negative emotions, respectively. Coefficient alphas for each factor are summarized in Table 3.

## Hypotheses and Model

### *Effect of Store Characteristics on In-Store Emotions*

Based on the ethnographic interviews, a set of ideas about the potential relationship between characteristics of stores and consumers' in-store emotions were developed. Table 4, which reflects both the type and dimensional perspectives, summa-

rizes these ideas. Figure 1 provides a general overview of the model to be tested.

As noted in the figure and Table 4, we expect that some store characteristics will primarily affect positive emotional responses. For example, a wide product assortment is likely to make consumers feel excited, pleased, content, and satisfied. Finding products perceived to offer value may engender feelings of contentment and pride. However, other characteristics may affect either positive or negative emotions, depending on how they are handled. For example, depending on salespersons' treatment, consumers may feel ignored and angry or they may feel attractive, excited, proud, and pleased. The availability of after-sale service may make shoppers feel pleased and content, but poor after-sale service such as the refusal of a refund or the inability to return an item may evoke negative emotions. While a well-designed store and pleasant store atmosphere may evoke positive emotions (such as pleased and excited), a poorly designed store and unpleasant store atmosphere may make consumers feel negative (i.e., ignored, angry, displeased). Notably, our informants never linked emotional experiences to the store's location. Based on these exploratory results, we propose that:

- H1:* The greater the perceived product assortment and the greater the perceived value of the merchandise, the more positive consumer's in-store emotions (i.e., the greater their feelings of pleasure, excitement, contentment, pride, and satisfaction).
- H2:* The better the in-store and after-sale service, and the more pleasant the facilities and store atmosphere, the more positive consumers' emotions (i.e., the greater their feelings of pleasure, excitement, contentment, pride, and attractiveness) and the less negative their in-store emotions (i.e., the lower their feelings of being ignored, anxious, nullified, angry, and displeased).
- H3:* There is no relationship between store location and in-store emotions.

**Effects of In-Store Emotions on Store Attitudes**

Previous research has found that in-store emotions affect shopping behavior (Donovan and Rossiter, 1982; Dawson, Bloch, and Ridgway, 1990; Swinyard, 1993). We propose here that the arousal of in-store emotions affects consumers' attitudes toward the store. Several theoretical explanations may underlie the impact of in-store emotions on store attitudes. First, emotional experiences may create positive or negative beliefs that in turn influence consumers' attitudes (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975; Lutz, 1975). For example, consumers who feel ignored by a salesperson may believe that the company simply does not care about its customers—a belief that may undermine their attitude toward the store. Likewise, negative or positive emotional experiences in the store may create a mood that generalizes to their evaluation of the store as a whole. That mood affects consumers' judgments has been amply demonstrated in the consumer behavior literature (see Isen, 1989; Gardner, 1985). Both of these interpretations are consistent with research in other contexts such as advertising which have demonstrated powerful effects of feelings on consumers' brand attitudes (Batra and Ray, 1986; Holbrook and Batra, 1987; Edell and Burke, 1987; Burke and Edell, 1989; MacInnis and Park, 1991). Thus we propose that:

H4: In-store emotions significantly affect store attitudes.

**Effects of Store Characteristics on Store Attitudes**

Some previous research has examined emotions as variables mediating the relationship between store-specific features and

outcome variables. Donovan and Rossiter (1982) and Donovan et al. (1994) examined emotional outcomes of environmental cues associated with store facilities and store atmosphere. However, it is currently unknown whether the other dimensions noted in Table 1 affect store attitudes—either directly or through the mediating influence of positive and negative emotions. Based on the qualitative findings, and the hypotheses noted above, we predict that:

H5: Product assortment, product value, salesperson's service, and after-sale service, store facilities, and store atmosphere exert an indirect affect on store attitudes through their mediational effect on in-store emotions.

H6: Location has a direct effect on store attitudes that is independent of in-store emotions.

**Method**

Two of the largest department stores in the city of Ulsan, Korea, were selected as the store context for this research. Both stores are located in Ulsan's inner city. A booth with tables and comfortable chairs was set up outside one of the main store exits. A random sampling procedure was used, with every 40th shopper who exited being asked to participate. Respondents were approached by a trained administrator who solicited their participation. Gifts of approximately \$2.00 in value were used as incentives for participation. A total of 294 respondents agreed to participate, and nearly every respon-

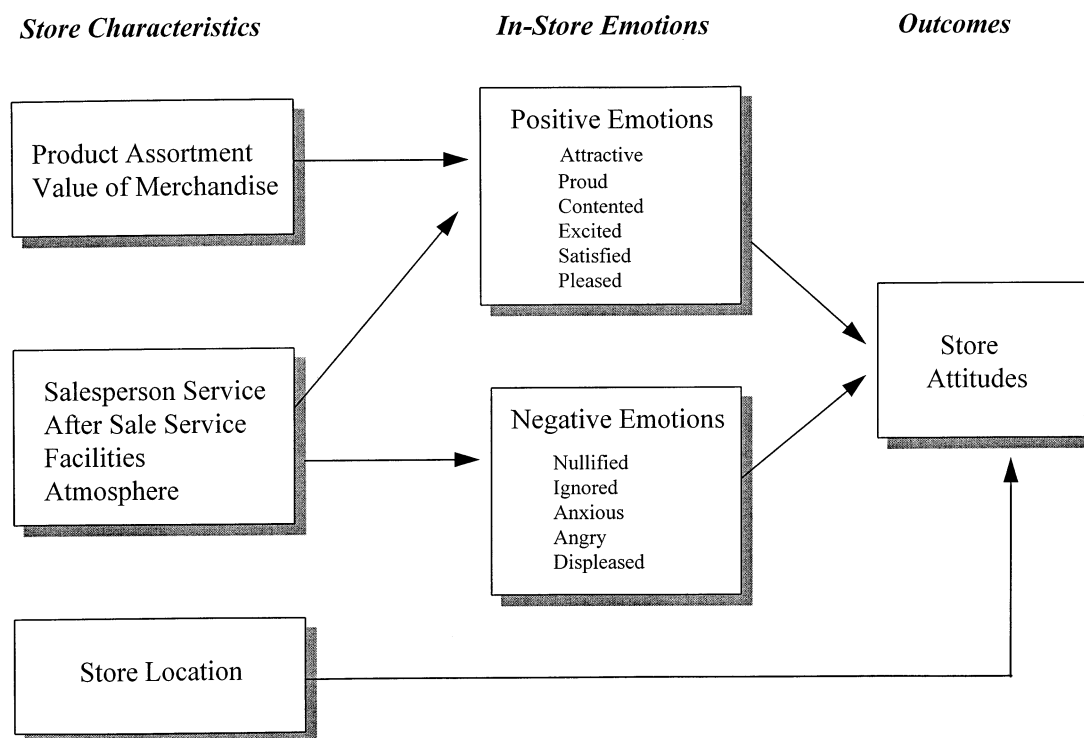


Figure 1. Model overview.

dent who was asked to participate did so. Once they agreed to participate, respondents were seated in the booth and were asked to complete a self-administered questionnaire containing the store characteristics, emotions, and store attitude items. The survey took approximately 20 minutes to complete. To eliminate biases due to time of day or day of week, surveys were conducted during an entire week-long period. A week without special events or sales (suggested by the store manager) was chosen. Compared to the client lists provided by the store managers, the demographic profile of the sample matches the store's typical customer base. Sixty-nine percent were women, 72% were married, and most were between the ages of 26–35 (43%) and 36–45 (38%).

### Measures

Items indicating store characteristics and emotional responses are identical to those noted in Tables 1 and 3. Seven-point response scales identical to those used in the pilot study were also used. Three 7-point scales (good–bad; like–dislike; favorable–unfavorable) were used to measure store attitudes (coefficient alpha = .93). These responses were summed to form a composite store attitude variable.

## Results

### Factor Structures

Items corresponding to the store characteristics, in-store emotions, and store attitude variables were factor analyzed. Their resultant factor structures were identical to the factor structures that emerged from the pilot study. Thus, seven store characteristics factors emerged, with times and factors corresponding to the results in Table 1. Two emotions factors similarly emerged, with items loading on the positive or negative emotions factor, respectively. Coefficient alphas ranged from .92 for positive emotions to a low of .71 for salesperson's service.

### Model Specification

The model to be estimated is the structural model represented by the six hypotheses. Tests of the global model that relied on the dimensional interpretation were conducted by a maximum-likelihood estimation procedure using LISREL (Jöreskog and Sörbom, 1983). Each exogenous and endogenous construct was represented by a single-item indicator using the summated scales as indicators (see MacKenzie and Lutz, 1975, for the advantages of indicating constructs by summated scales). Constructs were not assumed to be perfectly indicated as each construct's error term was set at 0.10. While there are no theoretical reasons to assume that the latent independent variables (store characteristics) are independent of each other, location can be reasonably assumed to be uncorrelated with the other store characteristics. Therefore, the covariances between location and the other latent independent variables

were set at zero, and the covariances between the remaining independent variables were allowed to vary.

The overall statistical support for the model is strong ( $\chi^2$  (df = 17) = 23.27,  $p < .18$ . GFI = .97, AGFI = .94, RMSR = .05). The goodness of fit (GFI) and adjusted goodness of fit (AGFI) refer to the relative amount of variance and covariance jointly accounted for by the model. The root mean square residual (RMSR) is a measure of the average of the residual variances and covariances. The Q plot (none of high normalized residuals exceeds 2.0) the  $t$ -tests, and range of values (i.e., no negative variances) suggest that the model is acceptable. Thus the hypothesized model appears to fit the data exceptionally well. The estimates of the structural coefficients provide the basic tests of the proposed hypotheses. Structural equation model estimates are summarized in Table 5. To examine the effects of the store characteristics on the discrete emotions, a set of regression analyses (reported in Table 6) were conducted. All models were significant ( $p < .001$ ).

### Tests of Hypotheses

#### EFFECTS OF STORE CHARACTERISTICS ON IN-STORE EMOTIONS.

Following the model shown in Figure 1, we first address the links between store characteristics and in-store emotions. H1 states that favorable perceptions of product assortment and value of the products affects positive emotions. The results support these effects. As Table 5 shows, product assortment ( $\gamma_{11} = .31$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and value of the products ( $\gamma_{12} = .30$ ),  $p < .001$ ) had significant effects on positive in-store emotions. The regression analyses shown in Table 6 reveal that good product assortment makes shoppers feel pleased, excited, attractive, and satisfied, while the perceived value of products affects shoppers' contentment, pride, and satisfaction. These findings are generally consistent with the predictions shown in Table 4. Interestingly, perceived value of products also has a positive effect on anxiety. Perhaps when shoppers are offered a product perceived to be high in value, its low price makes shoppers anxious about their choice. Alternatively, consumers may feel anxious if products are perceived to offer value because the purchase situation may evoke post-purchase dissonance.

To see the effect of product value on negative in-store emotions in the structural equation model reported in Table 5, a structural path between value and negative emotion was added to the original model, the  $\chi^2$  change between the original and the new model was examined. Notably, the change in  $\chi^2$  (2.55, df = 1), was not statistically significant. Perceived value of the products did not affect shoppers' negative in-store emotions ( $\gamma_{22} = 0.16$ ,  $p > .05$ ). These results may be due to the fact that the summary measure for negative emotions was used.

H2 states that salesperson's service, after-sale service, facilities, and store atmosphere affect both positive and negative in-store emotions. The results partially support these effects. As predicted, Table 5 shows that salesperson's service had

**Table 5.** Structural Equation Model Estimates

Path	Standardized Estimates	t-value
Proposed		
$\gamma_{11}$ (Assortment $\rightarrow$ positive emotions)	0.31	5.74***
$\gamma_{12}$ (Value $\rightarrow$ positive emotions)	0.30	4.02***
$\gamma_{13}$ (salesperson's service $\rightarrow$ positive emotions)	0.19	2.55**
$\gamma_{14}$ (after-sale service $\rightarrow$ positive emotions)	0.25	3.96***
$\gamma_{15}$ (facilities $\rightarrow$ positive emotions)	0.11	2.01**
$\gamma_{16}$ (atmosphere $\rightarrow$ positive emotions)	0.07	0.82
$\gamma_{23}$ (salesperson's service $\rightarrow$ negative emotions)	-0.28	-3.65***
$\gamma_{24}$ (after-sale service $\rightarrow$ negative emotions)	-0.03	-0.34
$\gamma_{25}$ (atmosphere $\rightarrow$ negative emotions)	-0.22	-2.42**
$\gamma_{26}$ (atmosphere $\rightarrow$ negative emotions)	-0.07	-0.72
$\gamma_{37}$ (location $\rightarrow$ store attitude)	0.17	4.38***
$\beta_{31}$ (positive emotions $\rightarrow$ store attitude)	0.71	11.36***
$\beta_{32}$ (negative emotions $\rightarrow$ store attitude)	-0.29	-5.90***
Additional		
$\gamma_{22}$ (value $\rightarrow$ negative emotions)	0.16	1.60*
$\gamma_{31}$ (assortment $\rightarrow$ attitude)	0.05	0.86
$\gamma_{32}$ (value $\rightarrow$ attitude)	0.09	1.26
$\gamma_{33}$ (salesperson's service $\rightarrow$ attitude)	0.04	0.58
$\gamma_{34}$ (after-sale service $\rightarrow$ attitude)	0.09	1.58
$\gamma_{35}$ (facilities $\rightarrow$ attitude)	0.06	0.91
$\gamma_{36}$ (atmosphere $\rightarrow$ attitude)	-0.07	-1.14

\*  $p < .05$ \*\*  $p < .01$ \*\*\*  $p < .001$ 

significant effects on both positive ( $\gamma_{13} = .19, p < .01$ ) and negative emotions ( $\gamma_{23} = -.28, p < .01$ ). Table 6 shows that shoppers reported feeling pleased, excited, content, and attractive in the hands of a kind and competent salesperson. However, treatment by a salesperson who lacked these characteristics made them feel anxious, nullified, angry, and displeased. These results also generally conformed to expectations noted in Table 4.

The store's facilities also had significant effects on both positive ( $\gamma_{15} = .11, p < .01$ ) and negative emotions ( $\gamma_{22} = -.22, p < .01$ ; see Table 5). As Table 6 indicates, good store facilities made shoppers feel pleased, while poor facilities (i.e., crowding or insufficient parking space) made them feel angry, ignored, and displeased. These results are also generally consistent with the predictions shown in Table 4.

However, in contrast to H2, store atmosphere had no effect on either positive ( $\gamma_{16} = .07, p = ns$ ) or negative ( $\gamma_{26} = -.07, p = ns$ ) in-store emotions. While store atmosphere did affect consumers' feelings of excitement, it had no impact on any of the other discrete emotions shown in Table 6. We surmise that the lack of significant effects for store atmosphere reflect the culture under study. Specifically, while components such as lighting, music, and inside decoration have recently gained attention as important store design elements for U.S. retailers, the lack of significant effects for store atmosphere may stem from the fact that the Korean department stores from which the data were collected have few pronounced or noticeable

design characteristics. Notably, these results do not contradict Donovan and Rossiter's (1982) findings, since the items they examined (e.g., novelty, density, crowding etc.) correspond more closely to our "facilities" construct than our store atmosphere construct.

Finally, after-sale service influenced positive in-store emotions ( $\gamma_{14} = .25, p < .001$ ), but had no effect on negative in-store emotions ( $\gamma_{24} = -.03, p = ns$ ). These results may also reflect the culture under study. While one might logically expect U.S. consumers to feel negative emotions in response to poor after-sale service, shoppers in Korea are not accustomed to high levels of after-sale service. For example, even though the store may refuse to provide a refund or allow for an item's return, consumers may not feel angry because they did not expect these outcomes in the first place. However, if the store accepts a refund or return, shoppers may feel quite pleased and content. Korean retailers have recently become aware of the potential competitive advantages that can be created from superior after-sale service. However the level of service offered is currently less than exemplary. These findings point to the potential role of expectations in guiding certain emotional responses, a point we return to in the Discussion section.

H3 hypothesizes no relationship between location and in-store emotions. Since the structural equation model shown in Table 5 did not model the paths between location on the one hand and positive and negative in-store emotions on the

**Table 6.** Effects of Perceived Store Characteristics on In-Store Emotions

Independent Variable	Positive Emotions	Pleased	Excited	Contented	Pride	Attractive	Satisfied
Product assortment	.31***	.16*	.44***			.54***	.24**
Product value	.17**			.25**	.52***		.49***
Salesperson's service	.19**	.34*	.22**	.16*		.22**	
After-sale service	.17*	.16*		.29**	.17*	.21**	
Facilities	.11*	.21*					
Atmosphere			.20*				
Location							

Independent Variable	Negative Emotions	Ignored	Anxious	Nullified	Angry	Displeased
Product assortment						
Product value	.22*		.36***			
Salesperson's service	-.29***		-.34***	-.31***	-.34***	-.37***
After-sale service			-.21*			
Facilities	-.21**	-.32***			-.45***	-.24*
Atmosphere						
Location						

\*  $p < .05$ \*\*  $p < .01$ \*\*\*  $p < .001$ 

— indicates unexpected effect

other, this hypothesis could not be tested by the current model. To test this hypothesis, two structural paths (between location and positive in-store emotions and location and negative in-store emotions) were added to the original model. The change in  $\chi^2$  between the original and the expanded model indicates whether the inclusion of the additional paths results in a significantly improved model. The change of  $\chi^2$  (change of  $\chi^2 = 1.2$ ,  $df = 2$ ) was not statistically significant, supporting H3. Consistent with these results, Table 6 shows no effects of store location on any of the discrete emotional responses.

**EFFECTS OF IN-STORE EMOTIONS ON STORE ATTITUDES.** H4 states that positive and negative in-store emotions affect store attitudes. As Table 5 indicates, positive ( $\beta_{31} = .71$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and negative ( $\beta_{32} = -.29$ ,  $p < .001$ ), in-store emotions both affected store attitudes. These results support H4.

**IMPACT OF STORE CHARACTERISTICS ON STORE ATTITUDES.** Location was hypothesized to have a direct effect on store attitudes that was not mediated by in-store emotions (H6). In contrast, the other store characteristics were hypothesized to have effects on store attitudes that were mediated by in-store emotions. Since the LISREL analysis is best able to model mediating effects, our test of this hypothesis relies on the analyses presented in Table 5. As the table indicates, location significantly influenced store attitudes ( $\gamma_{73} = .17$ ,  $p < .001$ ), supporting H6.

H5 proposed that each of the store characteristics except location would influence brand attitudes through the mediating influence of in-store emotions. Since most of the paths in the hypothesized structural equation model are from store

characteristics to store attitudes through in-store emotions, the test of the hypothesized model fit can be used as test of H5. The model fit was significant, supporting H5.

To rule out any additional direct effects of the store characteristics on brand attitudes (other than location) the direct effects of product assortment, value, salesperson's service, after-sale service, facilities, and atmosphere on brand attitudes were examined. To test these effects, a structural path from each store characteristic to store attitude was added one by one to see if it resulted in a significantly improved model. If the addition of the structural path does not significantly improve the model's fit, it suggests no direct effect of the store characteristic on store attitudes. As hypothesized, none of the six added paths resulted in a significantly improved model. Moreover, as the bottom portion of Table 5 indicates, none of the modeled structural paths were significant.

## Conclusions

### Summary

The purpose of this article was to examine the role of store characteristics on shoppers' store attitudes, and to examine the mediating role of retail-specific emotions in the store characteristic-store attitude relationship. The results clearly show that store characteristics induce shoppers' in-store emotions. Specifically, five of the seven store characteristics examined here affected shoppers positive emotions, and each of these five store characteristics affected at least one in-store emotion. When shoppers perceive that the store offers a wide product



assortment and that the products offer good value, they feel positive emotions like pleasure, excitement, contentment, pride, and satisfaction. When the store personnel deliver exemplary service, shoppers feel pleased, excited, content, and attractive. Also, positive emotions like pleasure, pride, attractiveness, and contentment are observed when shoppers' expectations of after-sales service are met. Accommodating facilities make shoppers feel pleased.

Negative emotions were also induced by store characteristics. Shoppers felt negative emotions such as anger, anxiety, displeasure, and nullification when treated by an incompetent or unkind salesperson, and they felt angry, ignored, and displeased in facilities perceived to be unaccommodating.

Interestingly, while some store characteristics (i.e., product assortment) had effects on only positive emotions, others (i.e., after-sales service, salesperson's service, facilities) affected either positive or negative emotions depending on how they were handled. One characteristic (value) affected both positive and negative emotion—making shoppers feel proud at finding the value, but also making them somewhat anxious. Store atmosphere and location had no pronounced effect on either positive or negative emotions. While the effect of the latter was anticipated, the lack of an effect for store atmosphere on emotions may be due to the fact that the stores examined in this study contained few characteristics that made store atmosphere noticeable.

The results also showed that perceived store characteristics influenced store attitudes, and that the effects of some store characteristics were direct (location), while the effects of others (product assortment, value, salespersons' service, after-sales service, and store facilities) were mediated through the emotional responses induced by these characteristics.

### ***Relationship to Previous Research***

The results of this study confirm results established in previous research studies. Consistent with research by Donovan and Rossiter (1982) and Donovan et al. (1994), this research finds significant effects of store facilities on in-store emotions. The significant effects of in-store emotions on store attitudes are also consistent with research which has observed a relationship between emotional states and outcomes of store attitudes—namely shopping intentions (Donovan and Rossiter, 1982; Donovan et al., 1994; Dawson, Bloch, and Ridgway, 1990; Swinyard, 1993). The finding that perceived store characteristics had significant effects on store attitudes (either directly or indirectly) is also consistent with retail preference studies in the literature (see Spiggle and Sewall, 1987, for a review of the literature). However, this research extended these studies by finding that additional store characteristics affect store attitudes, mainly through their mediational effect on emotions.

The use of ethnographic interviews to tap consumers' emotions also resulted in the identification of emotional responses that are not typically included in standard emotion typolo-

gies—although they appear relevant to the retail experience of Korean shoppers. Although the ethnographic interview might not have captured all potential emotional experiences of shoppers, the method does appear to be sufficiently robust to identify emotional responses that are not tapped in traditional inventories. Moreover, a more open-ended and qualitative methodology for uncovering retail-specific emotions, like the one used here, may be well-suited to the study on non-U.S. consumers' emotions, as standard emotional typologies have typically been validated among individuals in the United States.

This study also provides insights into issues of retail management. First, while consumers' store attitudes are based in part on where the store is located, issues associated with the nature and mix of products in the store, and the management of the retail channel itself have pronounced effects on store attitudes via their impact on consumers' emotions. First, consumers' store attitudes are based in part on the nature of products offered at the retail level. A wide assortment of products perceived to offer a good value for the money affect store attitudes by their effect on positive emotional responses. The management of the retail channel, however, has equally important effects on negative attitudes. Stores that offer poor service and non-accommodating facilities engender negative emotions and undermine store attitudes—even when stores have good products to sell. However, accommodating facilities and personnel add value, making shoppers more positive toward the store, and presumably making them more willing to frequent the store in the future. Notably, many of the store characteristics examined here are characteristics that are under the control of retailers.

Second, given the rather clear effects of in-store emotions on store attitudes, enhancing store attitudes may be a matter of managing consumers' emotions. Thus, novel ways of enhancing consumers' positive emotions and reducing their negative emotions may be a critical retail management issue. Moreover, novel and creative emotion-management strategies may provide retailers with a differential advantage. For example, in the United States, Disney and Warner Brothers stores are attracting consumers with in-store entertainment. Some Super K-mart stores manage moods by placing pleasant smelling, mood-inducing bakeries near high traffic areas in the store. Stores which distract consumers from sources of negative emotions (e.g., entertainment designed to reduce attention to long waiting lines), or which find ways to minimize anger and frustration from long waiting lines and the like (i.e., free cookies used at Doubletree hotels) may be similar sources of differential advantage. Thus, not only can retailers manage the specific aspects of stores that influence emotions, they may also manage the emotions themselves.

Another interesting observation from the results was the fairly pervasive effects of salespeople on consumers' emotions and store attitudes. Salespeople are critical links in the service encounter, and they have an important effect on consumers'

emotions and attitudes. These results underscore the recent work on services (Zeithaml, Berry, and Parasuraman, 1988; Bitner, 1990, 1992; Suprenant and Solomon, 1987) and they reinforce recent work on the importance of managing service quality.

Finally, based on several unexpected results, we surmise that consumers' frames of reference and expectations regarding "typical" store characteristics may play a more central role in affecting consumers' emotional responses than the actual store characteristics themselves. If, for example, consumers expect a relatively bland atmosphere and few post-sale services, low levels of these store characteristics may not influence emotions. Rather, emotions may be more salient or extreme when they deviate strongly from consumers' expectations. Better understanding of expectations as variables that moderate the relationship between store characteristics and store emotions is therefore warranted.

### **Limitations and Future Research Directions**

Although this research provides some useful findings, generalizations from this study are limited in several ways. First, only the two largest department stores in Ulsan were used for data collection. Studies which examine in-store emotions from a broader array of stores will provide a more diverse context in which the replicability of these findings can be tested. Second, although items of emotional experiences were based on qualitative ethnographic interviews, the interviews were based on a small sample of consumers. Hence the items revealed from the interviews may not comprehensively represent the range of emotional experiences manifest in the shopping encounter. Notably, however, this issue does not undermine the contribution of this research since our primary purpose was to determine if emotional responses mediate the relationship between perceived store characteristics and brand attitudes. Future research might provide a more comprehensive assessment of which specific emotions (beyond those examined here) play this mediating role.

Despite these limitations, the findings observed from this research suggest several useful research directions. First, the effects of the above-mentioned store characteristics and in-store emotions on the shopping behaviors like time spent shopping, amount purchased, and shopping intentions needs to be investigated. Second, research which examines the effect of consumer characteristics, shopping motive, and shopping involvement on in-store emotions might also be fruitful. For example, stronger or at least different in-store emotions may be experienced when shoppers' motives are purchase-oriented vs. experiential. Third, the effect of product value on anxiety needs further elucidation. Finally, researchers might extend these results to a cross-cultural context, to determine what extent, if any, the observed relationships are replicated in a different culture.

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