

“Integrated marketing communications as a tool for building strong retail chain brand loyalty: case of Lithuania”

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ARTICLE INFO

Vilma Tamulienė, Aušra Rašimaitė and Živilė Tunčikienė (2020). Integrated marketing communications as a tool for building strong retail chain brand loyalty: case of Lithuania. *Innovative Marketing* , 16(4), 37-47.
doi:[10.21511/im.16\(4\).2020.04](https://doi.org/10.21511/im.16(4).2020.04)

DOI

[http://dx.doi.org/10.21511/im.16\(4\).2020.04](http://dx.doi.org/10.21511/im.16(4).2020.04)

RELEASED ON

Wednesday, 09 December 2020

RECEIVED ON

Wednesday, 09 September 2020

ACCEPTED ON

Thursday, 19 November 2020

LICENSE



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JOURNAL

"Innovative Marketing "

ISSN PRINT

1814-2427

ISSN ONLINE

1816-6326

PUBLISHER

LLC “Consulting Publishing Company “Business Perspectives”

FOUNDER

LLC “Consulting Publishing Company “Business Perspectives”



NUMBER OF REFERENCES

38



NUMBER OF FIGURES

1



NUMBER OF TABLES

4

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BUSINESS PERSPECTIVES



LLC "CPC "Business Perspectives"
Hryhorii Skovoroda lane, 10,
Sumy, 40022, Ukraine
www.businessperspectives.org

Received on: 9th of September, 2020
Accepted on: 19th of November, 2020
Published on: 9th of December, 2020

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INTEGRATED MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS AS A TOOL FOR BUILDING STRONG RETAIL CHAIN BRAND LOYALTY: CASE OF LITHUANIA

Abstract

In Lithuania, there is an intense competition happening between large retail chains for consumer loyalty. The research investigates the impact of retail chain brand factors and integrated marketing communication on retail brand loyalty. Two main brand outcomes are established for the study, i.e., retail brand factor and retail brand loyalty. For the retail brand factor five largest food and non-food retail chains in Lithuania: Maxima, Lidl, Rimi, Iki, and Norfa are selected. The relationships between integrated marketing communications (IMC), brand factors, and retail brand loyalty are examined. An online survey questionnaire was used to collect data from 272 consumers. For data analysis, statistical, mathematical methods such as correlation and regression analysis were applied. The research results revealed a statistically significant impact of retail brand identifiers and integrated marketing communication regarding consumers' behavior to the retail brand chains' choice. Regression is statistically significant and the coefficient of determination R² is more than > 0.20, and the ANOVA p-value is less than 0.05, and a non-standardized coefficient of impact (non-standard β-coefficient) In terms of IMC tool impact on retail brand Maxima = 0.682, Lidl = 0.663, Rimi = 0.522, Iki = 0.469, Norfa = 0.540. The impact of the retail brand Maxima on customers' retail brand loyalty is 0.961; Lidl is 0.882; Rimi is 0.824; Iki is 0.780; Norfa is 0.836, the impact of retail brand IMC tools on customers' retail brand loyalty perceived values is Maxima = 0.721; Lidl = 0.558; Rimi = 0.737; Iki = 0.465; Norfa = 0.715

The paper's value is reflected by identifying factors affecting consumer loyalty to retail chain brands through IMC in the retail market in Lithuania. Retailers should consider these factors as they impact consumer decisions to stay in a long-term relationship with them.

Keywords integrated marketing communication, retail chain brand, grocery stores, consumer behavior, consumer's loyalty

JEL Classification M30, M31

INTRODUCTION

Innovative technologies and globalization are radically changing the decisions consumers are making when purchasing and collecting information about a product. The consumer can buy a product in any location and get it delivered with just a few keystrokes on his computer or mobile device. That is why scientific literature today is explored for new outlooks on the retail business caused by fluctuations in the ever-changing technologies and consumer choices. Research provided by Sorescu et al. (2011, p. 3) reported that "innovations in the retail business are best viewed as changes in how the activities are organized, the type of activities executed, and the level of participation of the actors engaged in performing those activities. Current customers can choose between many products and services, due to the large and variable supply retail businesses are fighting for the top position. When



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Conflict of interest statement:
Author(s) reported no conflict of interest

choosing a retail business, the consumer should be the number one priority, followed by the enterprise's location (where the product is being sold to the retailer and the trader supply (what the retailer is selling). Of course, these two factors added value for the consumer and are thus significant when choosing a retail business. During the first stages, retail companies tend to resell products; that is why the assortments of everyday use items in retail companies are usually the same. It is doubtful that the retailer's attention towards the assortment of products impacts the long-term competitive advantage because similar products can easily be found at other retailers. That is why it is important what and where the retailer is selling, but even more important is how the retailer is selling (communication with the consumer). When selling demanded products of everyday use, the retailer is always competing for consumer attention by implementing many communicational marketing strategies and tactics. Many Lithuania retailers have created well defined communicational marketing strategies: a well-defined vision, mission, values, a thought out retail brand logo, slogan, and project – everything towards a specific audience (the consumer). To succeed in reaching a particular market target, a wide range of marketing communication techniques are implemented. As Thaichon and Quach (2016) argued, "companies have widely used marketing communications to reach their target market" as an advertisement, personal name, promotion of purchase, keeping contact with the public, direct marketing, digital marketing, mobile marketing. A question arises, how can a retail company enhance consumer loyalty to the retail brand? Can integrated marketing communications (IMC) tools help this?

The research investigates the impact of both retail chain brand and integrated marketing communication on retail brand loyalty.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW

This research has conducted the theory relevant to the variables of the retail store. It consists of retail chain brand factors like brand, logo, motto, brand functions, brand value by retail location, goods quality, assortment, and brand price image. Integrated marketing communication tools consist of retailers' "newspapers, radio, magazines, television, outdoor advertising, the Internet, public relations, customer service hotlines, company websites, social media sites, a point of sale display" (Thaichon & Quach, 2013, as cited in Thaichon & Quach, 2016, p. 4), personal selling; and customers' loyalty to the retail brand (satisfaction, image, repeat purchase, and word-of-mouth) as a fellow.

1.1. Retail brand

Retailers primarily sell products manufactured by others (Sorescu et al., 2011). A product manufactured by others also has its brands. As stated by Kumar and Kim (2014), "retailers selling multiple brands have a limited control on the branding activities of the merchandise that they sell" (Kumar & Kim, 2014, as cited in Mathews-Lefebvre & Dubois, 2013).

What does a retail brand mean in our research? According to Kotler and Keller (2016), two or more commonly owned and controlled outlets are named chain stores. Their size allows for buying large quantities at lower prices. Only joint management is mentioned; the retail brand is not directly mentioned.

According to other scientists (Zentes et al., 2008), a retailer brand has been as "a group of the retailer's outlets which carry a unique name, symbol, logo or a combination thereof" (Zentes et al., 2008, p. 167). Ailawadi and Keller (2004, p. 332) argued that "a retail brand identifies the goods and services of a retailer and differentiates them from other competitors". There are several approaches to the retail brand concept in scientific research. Some explore claimed that this is a retail owner brand, others that it is a grocery store's brand (retail brand). In practice, these concepts may not be identical and can be understood in different ways. The brand of the retail owner and the brand of the grocery stores (retail brand) can be completely different, e.g., in Lithuania, the retail owner brand is "Palink", while the retail brand is "IKI", and they can also both be the same as with "Norfa".

To succeed, a retail brand must create a market value by brand factors. Common brand factors

include brand names, logos, mottos, characters, sound marks (Chernev, 2017). Other researchers argue that brand functions can fix retail brand factors. Capon and Hulbert (2001) separate them into dual-purpose retail brand functions by the acquired usefulness: customer (consumer) and retailer (manufacturer). Kotler and Keller (2006) found that the customer is often looking at brand functions with reliable quality and lowered buying risk factors. As argued by Davis (2002), it facilitates customer selection. Analyzing brand functions towards consumer usefulness (Urbanskienė & Vaitkienė, 2007) suggested that it provides sensory pleasure while simultaneously symbolizing a set view.

The brand functions for the retailer by Kuvykaite (2001) and Keegan (2003) that the brand helps separate one company's products and assets from another company, it depicts a specific company that is offering a product, it encourages the sale of a product, makes the right choice of products to be chosen and bought. Altogether, that also helps form the customer opinion about a specific retail brand. Their research showed that retail brand functions make it easier for the consumer and retailer to decide which retail brand to choose.

Another important retail brand factor is price image. As Chernev (2017) argued, the price image is an essential aspect of a retailers brand because it can influence the decision process of customers, the store that customers choose to visit first, the likelihood that customers will purchase from the store, and the amount of money customers will spend in the store. It also adds value to the retail brand location, assortment, and quality of goods. G. Belch and M. Belch (2004) argue "that the company that understands how consumers" will respond to "various products of different quality, prices, and brand reputation has a great advantage over its competitors".

In this research, the retail chain brand is understood as a grocery store brand that carries a unique name, symbol, logo, or combination terms, ensures quality and reduces purchase risk, facilitates user selection, provides satisfaction by symbolizing the appropriate price image.

1.2. Integrated marketing communications

According to Gabrielli and Baghi (2016, p. 385), "technologies are changing the way "retail stores "and customers communicate" with each other. Kotler and Keller (2006) argued that change comes from "a need for integrated marketing communications (IMC) and IMC involves carefully integrating and coordinating the company's many communication channels to deliver a clear, consistent and compelling message about an organization and its" prod the "message" from retailer to consumer is understood as the retail chain brand. The retail chain brand is presented as a message for the consumer about a retail store's assortment, atmosphere, and services. It is well known that one component of brand tactics is set to create market value and is communicated to the target customers. Marketing communications are the promotion part of the marketing mix (Chen & Green, 2009).

A retailer chain brand can be sent from the traditional marketing communication mix as advertising, personal selling, sales promotion, public relations, or directed marketing. Also, Kotler and Keller (2016) argue that IMC recognizes all the interaction points where the company and customers meet and incorporate a wide variety of messages. From that point of view, the interaction points understood it as the internet (online) marketing. Online marketing includes efforts to market products, services, and the retail chain brand. It also builds customer relationships with the brand over the internet. According to Thaichon and Quach (2013):

"Marketing communications can be presented as any form of traditional and online media, including newspapers, radios, magazines, televisions, outdoor advertising, the Internet, sponsorships, public relations, customer service hotlines, company websites, social media sites, packaging's, logos, a point of sale display, or personal selling" (as cited in Thaichon & Quach, 2016, p. 4).

Retail stores can also promote their retail chain brand on websites and social media. Brand websites are websites specifically designed to build customer loyalty, collect customer feedback, and

supplement other sale channels rather than directly sell the company's products. According to Sorescu et al. (2011, p. 13):

“The extensive involvement of today's consumers with social media is also something that can be leveraged. Many retailers show parts of their assortment on Facebook in an attempt to gauge customer interest. Gathering customer reactions to the retailer's communications on social networking sites can be institutionalized and integrated more systematically with merchandising decisions”.

That is why a retail brand website can be named as a part of the IMC. The IMC can also influence retail chain brand recognition. As stated by Keller (2009), “also pointed out that properly designed marketing communications can lead to increased brand awareness” (as cited in Thaichon & Quach, 2016). Aaker (1997) depicts that suggestive advertising can strengthen a brand's personality, the brand image, and the overall brand awareness over time (as cited in Thaichon & Quach, 2016). So the retail chain brand recognition is also dependent on and is influenced by IMC.

IMC is essential to the retail chain brand because of two fundamental rules. Firstly, communication is the base when organizations are building relations with consumers. Kotler and Keller (2012) state that communications – the voice of an organization and its brand name – help facilitate the dialogue and create and sustain relations with the consumers in the future. Marketing communications help the consumer identify where and when a product should be used, what type of consumer it is aimed at, and facilitate a successful purchase of a product. Secondly, communications are used to increase a product's image value, generate and introduce new customers, grow the retail brand's value, and create a positive consumer opinion about the company (Bakanauskas, 2012).

Using IMC, the consumers are both informed and convinced; they are informed about the product, service, brand name, and the grocery store. Overall, IMC tactics are meant to grow consumer understanding to facilitate interest,

spread information, create demand, and increase a specific brand or company's usage. The most important objective is to create a potential customer, encourage the customer to spread the word about a retail brand, its products, and intern – increase customers' loyalty (Yang & Lee, 2016).

1.3. Retail chain brand loyalty

Only successful marketers carefully cultivate satisfaction and loyalty (Kotler & Keller, 2016). The behavioral aspect of customer loyalty to retail chain brand loyalty is represented as an actual repeat “purchase of products or services that includes purchasing more different kinds of products or services from the same company, recommending the company to others, and reflecting a long-term choice probability for the brand” (Lee et al., 2001, as cited in Rahim et al., 2012, p. 17).

Thus, retail chain brand loyalty can be understood as to how consumer behavior when choosing a trading company is related to repeated purchases. According to Kotler and Keller (2016), successful salespeople diligently develop consumer satisfaction and loyalty. Marketers need to answer the question of how consumers respond to the various efforts a company makes. It is essential to pay attention to how consumers demonstrate their behavior in the search, purchase, use, evaluation, and disposal of products, services, and ideas (Shiffman & Kanuk, 2009).

Companies are always trying to draw their market's attention to their brand from among plenty of other available brands. They aim to capture customer attention and make customers choose their brand and services on future purchase occasions. “Companies are always trying to draw the attention of their market to their brand from among plenty of other available brands. Thus the relation consumer – brand based on a unique brand character contributes to its strengthening and long-term relation” (Grossmanova et al., 2009, p. 67). It is assumed that IMC includes traditional marketing communications and online marketing communication from all of the above. These integrated marketing communications affect consumer loyalty to a particular retail chain brand.

2. AIM, HYPOTHESES AND METHODS

2.1. Research problem

Are there the tools of integrated marketing communication impact, and if yes, what its impact is on customers' retail chain brand loyalty? The theoretical framework of the study is presented in Figure 1.

The research investigates the impact of retail chain brand factors and integrated marketing communication on retail brand loyalty.

The hypotheses are as follows:

- H1: There is a direct and significant relationship between IMC tools and retail chain brand factors.*
- H2: There is a direct and significant relationship between IMC tools and customers' retail brand loyalty.*
- H3: There is a direct and significant relationship between retail chain brand factors and the customers' retail brand loyalty.*

Empirical research was performed to test the theoretical model provided in Figure 1. The data were collected throughout the following two stages.

First, there are five largest food and non-food retail chains in Lithuania: Maxima, Lidl, Rimi, Iki, and Norfa were selected. They are chosen based on such criteria as market share, number of stores, and average price per basket left by the customer (see Table 1).

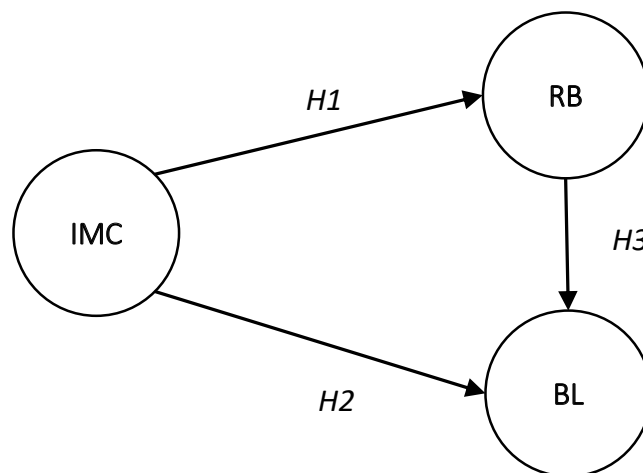
Table 1. Comparison of the biggest retail brand chains in Lithuania

Source: Created by authors from Delfi (2019), Verslo žinios (2019).

Retail characteristics/ retail brand	Maxima	Lidl	Rimi	Iki	Norfa
Establishment	1992	2016	2000	1992	1997
Number of stores in 2018	248	45	61	225	141
Market share in 2018, %	36,1	8,1	7,2	14,3	10,3
Average price of one basket of goods in Lithuania, EUR	25,3	25,01	27,29	26,3	26,02

In the second stage, the quantitative online survey was performed in November 2019. The scope of the research sample is 272. The survey was based on a questionnaire consisting of four blocks. One block consists of 5 questions to identify the socio-demographic profile of the respondents. The survey included 59.9% of women and 40.1% of men. Respondents' age varied from 18 to 71 years (for more characteristics, see Table 3). The second block consists of 2 questions to identify consumer behavior using retail brand stores. Other block consists of 32 statements. The respondents were asked to express their opinion whether they agree

Source: Created by the authors.



Note: IMC – Integrated marketing communication for the retail brand; RB – retail chain brand; BL – retailer brand loyalty.

Figure 1. The theoretical framework of the study

Table 2. Provided statements according to other scientific research by the authors and reliability of the questionnaire

Source: Created by the authors.

Provided statements/questions	Number of questions	Authors	Cronbach's alpha
Statements related to IMC and retail chain brand factors	8	Keller (2009), Aaker (1997), Khizar et al. (2016)	0.873
Statements related to IMC and retail brand loyalty	18	Kotler and Keller (2012), Bakanauskas (2012), Oluwafemi and Adebisi (2018), Thaichon and Quach (2015)	0.974
Statements related to retail chain brand and customers retail brand loyalty	6	Lee et al. (2001), Rahim et al. (2012), Grossmanova et al. (2009), Das (2014), Zentes et al. (2008), Sirgy et al. (1997)	0.864

Table 3. Socio-demographic profile of the respondents

Source: Created by the authors.

Demographic attributes	Socio-economic characteristics	Frequency	Ratio, %
Education	Secondary	35	12.9
	Professional	26	9.6
	College	36	13.2
	University	170	62.5
	Other	5	1.8
Income, EUR	No monthly income	24	8.8
	≥ 400	19	7.0
	401-850	90	33.1
	851 ≤	139	51.1
Status	Pupil	9	3.1
	Student	18	6.6
	Working student	47	17.3
	Employee	185	68.0
	Unemployed	6	2.2
	Other	7	2.8

or disagree with the following provided statements (by 5-point Likert scale). To find out whether the questionnaire is reliable or not, it was measured using Cronbach's alpha. Cronbach's alpha test is the most popular method of estimating reliability (see Table 2).

- integrated marketing communication for the retail brand (IMC);
- retail brand factors (RB);
- customer loyalty for the retail brand (L).

The obtained data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS version 23.0). Correlation (Spearman rank correlation coefficient) and regression analysis were applied.

Correlation analysis was used to determine the relationship between the variables/the blocks. According to Pukenas (2005), "to perform the correlation analysis Spearman's ordinal correlation coefficient is used, also criteria *p* (Sig.) (see Appendix A) that identify if the correlation is statistically significant (correlation significant if $p < \alpha$, not significant if $p \geq \alpha$ (here α – level of significance). The results of the correlation analysis revealed that all correlations are statistically significant ($p = 0.000$)" (as cited in Gatautis et al., 2014, p. 68). Because all coefficients are positive, so the correlation between the variables is also positive. The correlation coefficients of the variables range from 0.392 to 0.687, indicated by the average strength relationship. Therefore, it can be said that there is a positive and statistically valid linear rela-

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Results of correlation and linear regression analysis

In the research instrument, the questionnaire consisted of three blocks of statements according to the Likert scale:

relationship between the actions identified in the theoretical part: retail brand factors (RB), integrated marketing communication for the retail brand (IMC), and customer loyalty for the retail brand (L). Correlation analysis among the three blocks' variables showed that there are positive and meaningful relationships between them. Thus another analysis of regression was carried out.

3.2. Results of linear regression analysis

As argued by Kasiulevičius and Denapienė (2008), regression analysis determines the nature of the statistical relationship and describes the dependence of the mean values of the dependent (consequence) variable on the importance of one or more independent (cause) variables. In this paper, a simple linear regression analysis (one independent variable) was performed, which tested the hypotheses.

According to Čekanavičius (2011), three main parameters are taken into account in the linear regression analysis: the coefficient of determination (R^2) acquires values from the range [0,1]; the higher the value of the coefficient, the better the model fits the data. It is not suitable when $R^2 < 0.20$. If the ANOVA p -value is less than 0.05, then the model is appropriate and a non-standardized coefficient of impact (non-standard β -coefficient). Thus, the key data enable the solution related to impact and its meaningfulness (see Table 4).

The data presented in Table 4 are important for testing the three hypotheses are raised in the methods section of this article.

H1: There is a significant direct relationship between retail brand IMC tools and retail brand factors.

It was found out that during the improvement of an IMC, there is an increase in retail brand factors (accepted $p < 0.05$), i.e., linear regression is present. Regression is statistically significant and the coefficient of determination is $R^2 = 0.363; 0.346; 0.339; 0.278; 0.210 > 0.20$. In terms of IMC tool impact on retail brand factor, Maxima is equal to 0.682, Lidl is equal to 0.663, Rimi is equal to 0.522, Iki is equal to 0.469, Norfa is equal to 0.540. IMC tools influence retail brand factors, which responds and confirms the first hypothesis.

H2: There is a significant direct relationship between retail brand factors and customers' retail brand loyalty.

The analysis between dependent and independent variables revealed a linear regression between retail brand factors and customers' retail brand loyalty ($p < 0.05$), regression is statistically significant ($R^2 = 0.531; 0.525; 0.474; 0.447; 0.374 > 0.20$). The impact of the retail brand factor for Maxima on customers' retail brand loyalty is 0.961; Lidl is 0.882; Rimi is 0.824; Iki is 0.780; Norfa is 0.836. The values obtained suggest that the second hy-

Table 4. Main impact on variables

Source: Created by the authors.

Independent variable		β	R^2	p	Dependent variable	
IMC tools	Maxima	0.682	0.346	0.000	Maxima	Brand factors
	Lidl	0.663	0.339	0.000	Lidl	
	Rimi	0.522	0.278	0.000	Rimi	
	Iki	0.469	0.210	0.000	Iki	
	Norfa	0.540	0.363	0.000	Norfa	
Brand factors	Maxima	0.961	0.531	0.000	Maxima	Consumer loyalty
	Lidl	0.882	0.447	0.000	Lidl	
	Rimi	0.824	0.525	0.000	Rimi	
	Iki	0.780	0.374	0.000	Iki	
	Norfa	0.836	0.474	0.000	Norfa	
IMC tools	Maxima	0.721	0.437	0.000	Maxima	Consumer loyalty
	Lidl	0.558	0.425	0.000	Lidl	
	Rimi	0.737	0.424	0.000	Rimi	
	Iki	0.465	0.206	0.000	Iki	
	Norfa	0.715	0.513	0.000	Norfa	

pothesis is tested and approved, and the retail brand factors have a significant impact on retail brand loyalty.

H3: There is a significant direct relationship between retail brand IMC tools and the customers' retail brand loyalty.

It was found out that there is a linear regression between retail brand IMC tools and customers' retail brand loyalty as $p < 0.05$ (Table 4). As $R^2 = 0.513; 0.437; 0.425; 0.424; 0.206 > 0.20$, thus, regression is statistically meaningful, the impact of retail brand IMC tools on customers' retail brand loyalty perceived values is Maxima = 0.721; Lidl = 0.558; Rimi = 0.737; Iki = 0.465; Norfa = 0.715. Thus, it can be stated that the hypothesis is tested and approved, and the retail brand IMC tools impact the customers' retail brand loyalty. IMC has a direct impact on retail brand awareness and retail brand loyalty.

The paper's main goal was to explore the impacts of both IMC and retail chain brand on retail loyalty. The research was provided in Lithuania, and the respondents were also Lithuanians. Therefore, the results were obtained for this particular market. However, similarities to other countries could also be envisioned.

A theoretical framework of the study with three hypotheses was tested empirically, which revealed that IMC tools influence customers' retail chain brand and retailer brand loyalty. Comparing the results of our research with the results obtained by other researchers as Das (2014), Zentes et al. (2008), Sirgy et al. (1997) on retail brand and retail loyalty, Oluwafemi and Adebisi (2018) – between the IMC dimensions, customer buying decision and customer loyalty, and Khizar et al. (2016) analyzed the influence of IMC components on brand awareness and customer loyalty. One can see similar results of this phenomenon.

Das (2014) explored the impacts of retail brand personality on store loyalty. That study showed that retail brand personality has a positive impact on store loyalty. The results indicated that retail brand personality ($\beta = 0.283, p < 0.05$) have significant positive impacts on store loyalty. The results are consistent with Zentes et al. (2008) and Sirgy et al. (1997). The effect of retail brand personality on store loyalty was $\beta = 0.283$ (Das, 2014, p. 135).

After the research with Nigerian consumers, Oluwafemi and Adebisi (2018, p. 109) revealed significant positive relationships between IMC dimensions, customer buying decision, and customer loyalty. The importance of IMC activities in the telecommunication industry had a major influence on subscribers' loyalty to a mobile network service provider.

Also, Khizar et al. (2016, p. 64) analyzed the influence "of IMC components on brand awareness and customer loyalty" using primary data collected in a sample of Pakistan consumers by investigating their behavior. The findings showed that IMC positively affects brand awareness and customer loyalty, "research has observed the effect of integrated marketing communication components on brand awareness and customer loyalty".

After the research with Thailand consumers, Thaichon and Quach (2016, p. 11) found the relationship between "two elements of marketing communications – advertising and sales promotion" concerning customer loyalty towards service providers in Thailand. The study was connected only with two elements of traditional marketing communication. Although limited in its choice of marketing communication tools, it revealed the relationship between marketing communication and loyalty.

CONCLUSION

The quantitative study found positive significant (moderate) relationships between IMC tools and retail chain brand factors, retail brand loyalty, and IMC tools and retail brand loyalty. Regression analysis allowed us to investigate the causality of moderate relationships and showed a linear statistically significant influence between retail chain brand factors, IMC tools, and consumers' loyalty to the brand.

This study concludes that integrated marketing communication is reliable for strengthening customers' retail brand loyalty to Lithuania's retail chain's brand stories.

This article is valuable both scientifically and practically. Research studies on how retailers sell through integrated marketing communication tools, but research on retail chain brand, IMC, and retail store loyalty is missing. From a practical perspective, the articles meaning that retailers should think about communication slightly differently than they used to find new ways to express themselves, reach the consumer, and make them loyal. The results of this study may be significant for retail companies in Lithuania. The study results can also be used for future research to analyze companies in other sectors and incorporate other concepts into the IMC and retail loyalty model as trust and satisfaction.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This research is intended for retailers where their retail chain brands as logos are perceived as marketing messages and relevant to their end customers; other key concepts in relationship theory such as trust and satisfaction are not excluded in this study. This could be used for future research.

Another limitation of this study is that the survey was conducted online, and the results would be more accurate if questionnaires were completed retail in-store (especially for older consumers).

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Conceptualization: Vilma Tamulienė, Aušra Rašimaitė.

Data curation: Vilma Tamulienė, Aušra Rašimaitė, Živilė Tunčikienė.

Formal analysis: Vilma Tamulienė, Aušra Rašimaitė.

Funding acquisition: Vilma Tamulienė, Aušra Rašimaitė, Živilė Tunčikienė.

Investigation: Vilma Tamulienė, Aušra Rašimaitė, Živilė Tunčikienė.

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Writing – review & editing: Vilma Tamulienė, Aušra Rašimaitė, Živilė Tunčikienė.

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APPENDIX A

Retail brand factor		Spearman's rho	Retail brands: Maxima, Lidl, Rimi, Iki, Norfa	IMC for retail brands: Maxima, Lidl, Rimi, Iki, Norfa	Customers' loyalty for retail brands: Maxima, Lidl, Rimi, Iki, Norfa
Retail brands	Maxima	Correlation coefficient	1	–	–
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	–	–
	Lidl	Correlation coefficient	1	–	–
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	–	–
	Rimi	Correlation coefficient	1	–	–
Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	–	–	
Iki	Correlation coefficient	1	–	–	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	–	–	
Norfa	Correlation coefficient	1	–	–	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	–	–	
IMC for retail brands	Maxima	Correlation coefficient	.0533**	1	–
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	–	–
	Lidl	Correlation coefficient	0.548**	1	–
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	–
	Rimi	Correlation coefficient	0.441**	1	–
Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	–	
Iki	Correlation coefficient	0.392**	1	–	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	–	
Norfa	Correlation coefficient	0.571**	1	–	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	–	
Consumers' loyalty for retail brands	Maxima	Correlation coefficient	0.687**	0.595**	1
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000
	Lidl	Correlation coefficient	0.653**	0.589**	1
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000
	Rimi	Correlation coefficient	0.657**	0.597**	1
Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	
Iki	Correlation coefficient	0.582**	0.390**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	
Norfa	Correlation coefficient	0.634**	0.683**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	

Note: **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).