Today’s markets are characterized by a plethora of choice, a mere inter-brand differences, a massive marketing communication and information complexity (Wash & Mitchell, 2010). Along with this phenomenal increase of information from more products sold through number of channels and promoted in various ways, the notion of consumers’ confusion is becoming increasingly important (Mitchell, Wash & Yamin, 2005). Based on the projection by Snider (1993) study, confusion permeates almost every decision that consumers make. It is significant issue for marketers because consumers who are in confused states are less likely to make rational buying decision, to make wiser choice, to choose product offering best quality and to enjoy the shopping experience (Jacoby & Morrin, 1998; Mitchell & Papavassiliou, 1999). Thus, it is evident that consumer confusion can be devastating for a brand or company, since it could result in potential misuse of a product, dissatisfaction, lower repeated sales, consumer loyalty and brand image (Mitchell & Papavassiliou, 1999).

Furthermore, the consumer confusion also intends to show the effects of word of mouth, decision postponement, trust, switching behavior and negative emotion (Huffman & Kahn, 1998; Jacoby & Morrin, 1998; Turnbull, Leek & Ying, 2000).

Despite previous efforts to measure consumer confusion proneness, limited attention has been used on specific markets or cases where consideration has been taken to different moderators, such as product category, level of involvement and so on.

For instance, golf has become one of the most popular sport activities in Korea and the number of golfers has increased more than 200% in the last decade. Along with increase of market demand for golf, the competition among golf product companies also increased. Especially, ever-increasing golf club market made difficult and brought confusion to most of amateur golfers to differentiate and choose suitable clubs for them. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to identify how the three variables of consumer confusion proneness affect consumer’s negative emotion, decision postponement, word of mouth and trust, during the process of purchasing golf clubs. This will make the investigation among the first empirical testing of Walsh, Hennig-Thurau and Mitchell’s (2007) model in the given context. And the derived results will help in the discussion of marketing implications for marketer related to golf clubs.

Approximately 360 questionnaires were distributed to recreational golfers in 7 different golf-driving ranges located in Seoul and Gyeonggi city, with a return rate of 88.3% (318 questionnaires). PASW 21.0 and AMOS 21.0 were used for data analyses (i.e., frequency test, exploratory factor Analysis (EFA), reliability analysis, correlation analysis, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), structural equation modeling (SEM)).

The model was tested using the maximum likelihood method of parameter estimation and the fit indices for the confirmatory factor analysis were acceptable: $\chi^2 = 646.804 (df= 271, p<.001)$, RMR = .046, RMSEA = .066, GFI = .872, TLI = .936, CFI = .947. And model fit indices of SEM analysis also showed an acceptable fit: $\chi^2 = 664.822 (df= 281, p<.001)$, RMR = .053, RMSEA = .065, GFI = .870, TLI = .937, CFI = .946.

The results of the study are as follow. First, all of the subordinate factors of consumer confusion proneness had a significant influence on the consumer’s negative emotion. Second, consumer’s negative emotion had a significant influence on decision postponement. Third, consumer’s negative emotion had a significant influence on word of mouth.
mouth. Fourth, consumer’s negative emotion had a significant influence on trust.

This study proves that consumers feel petulance, anger, and discomfort when experiencing confusion while purchasing golf products, therefore causing results of negative word of mouth and reduced reliability about the brand. This means that marketers in charge of production of the golf products have to consider about giving consumers confidence in choosing the products and will have to minimize their negative emotions when buying products by offering variety of services, because corporate belief is directly effected through consumers’ purchasing experience. In addition, the effort has to be made to understand the root cause of confusion the golf club consumers experience and continuous concern to mitigate and remove those causes have to be conducted.