

FACTORS INFLUENCING THE BRAND SUPPORTING BEHAVIOR OF EMPLOYEES IN ELECTRICITY SUPPLIERS

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ABSTRACT

The Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was used in the study. Research data were collected from 245 employees working in electronics suppliers, and research results have shown that Organizational culture and Internal brand building play an important role and impact on the Work motivation, thereby promoting employees' Brand supporting behavior more actively. Among the factors that directly influence the Brand supporting behavior, Work motivation has the greatest impact on the Brand supporting behavior of the employees. Many administrative implications are proposed to enhance the brand supporting behavior of the employees in electronics suppliers.

Keywords: behavior, brand supporting, employee, electronics suppliers

1. PROBLEM STATEMENT

In today's highly competitive business environment, corporates are always making efforts to build closer relationships with their clients by providing better values and fulfilling their commitments. However, because of the competitiveness of the market, it is becoming a more and more challenging task for marketers. According to Zikiene and Bakanauskas (2006), the consumer switching behavior is the behavior of consumers in shifting their attitude from one brand (product) to another brand (product). Therefore, brand plays an integral role in purchasing decision of a product or service's brand instead of another brand's product or service. Furthermore, employees are one of the most critical factors in supporting the brand-image building activities. De Chernatony & Dall'Olmo Riley (1997) claimed that building brand in service section depends strongly on employees' attitude and behaviors as they are the center of implementing brand promises and directly affect brand imagery on consumers. When employees are aligned with the brand values, a corporate (service) brand could achieve a sustainable competitive advantage (Pringle & Thompson, 2001). In this way, a service organization needs to

ensure that their employees are delivering the service at the quality level promised by its brand (Punjaisri et al., 2009). Therefore, employees' brand supporting behavior is of an important rule and need to be performed consistently (Henkel et al., 2007). Employees performing the desired behavior of the organization is an integral factor in creating satisfaction and customer retention (Heskett et al., 1994).

In Vietnam, the retail electrical market is thought to reach a saturation point when a significant number of brands that were popular had to exit the market. However, according to experts, Vietnam is still a large market for electronics which is not fully exploited. As stated in the market research report of GFK Retail And Technology Market Research Vietnam Limited, expenditure of Vietnamese people for electronic products is about 157,000 billion VND and electronics consumption will increase by 11.9% by 2020 (Ai Van, 2016).

It is not a surprise that numerous big electronics retailers are still ambitious in the race to expand their chains of stores to acquire each share of the market. For that reason, building a brand image to increase competitiveness is the top strategy of electricity suppliers. Accordingly, the brand supporting behavior of employees in the electrical supermarket has always been put into serious consideration by managers.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Theoretical background

Brand and employees' brand supporting behavior

According to Kotler and Keller (2012), a brand is "a name, term, sign, symbol, or design, or a combination of them, intended to identify the goods or services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competitors." Brands can be used to signify quality and trustworthiness (King và Grace, 2009).

As stated by Henkel et al., (2007), the brand supporting behavior of employees plays an important role and should be done consistently with the brand that employees perform in keeping with the brand promise principle. Any employees' behavior, whether verbal or non-verbal, directly or indirectly, determines the brand experience and brand value for the customer. Moreover, Bloemer and Odekerken-Schröder (2006) claimed that employees actively communicate with customers about the brand, carry out work according to the standards that the company set, with brand supporting behavior every employee positively keep the brand promise.

The relationship between internal brand building, work motivation and brand supporting behavior

Punjaisri et al., (2009) argued that internal brand building is a tool affecting employees' attitude and shape their behavior in line with the brand by creating employees' understanding about brand values and engaging them in practicing branding in work.

Besides, internal brand building and its tools can create brand attachment and brand loyalty of employees (de Chernatony and Cottam, 2006). In line with that, Holland (1997) suggested that regularly transferring brand promise will create trust and loyalty that make sure employees work stably. Besides, maintaining promise and employees' performance will guarantee the reputation of the organization. Most of the literature agrees that internal brand building influences brand supporting behavior (de Chernatony and Cottam, 2006; Hankinson, 2002; Kotter and Heskett, 1992).

However, the idea that internal brand building can form employees' brand supporting behavior is mostly based on the hypothesis that, when employees understand and commit to the inherent brand values in brand promise, they will act in ways that satisfy client's needs (de Chernatony and Cottam, 2006). Therefore, this relationship still in need of empirical evidence, so the following hypotheses are proposed: *H1: Internal brand building affect employees' brand supporting behavior positively; H2: Internal brand building affect employees' work motivation positively.*

The relationship between work motivation and brand supporting behavior

The research of Güngör (2011) proved that work motivation is a factor that maintains and manage employees' behavior. Motivation has a two-way impact on loyalty and employees' long-term attachment to work and brand. As claimed by Punjaisri et al. (2009), when employees are proud of their membership in the organization, their behavior will be stimulated to increase the brand image of the organization.

In the opinion of Nguyen Thi Phuong Dung and Nguyen Hoang Nhu Ngoc (2012), work motivation affects the work behavior of office employees. The research of Nguyễn Thanh Trung (2015) pinpointed that brand attachment can be utilized to predict the brand supporting the action of employees. In the light of the above studies, the following proposition is constructed: *H3: Work motivation affects brand supporting behavior positively*

The relationship between organizational culture, internal brand building, work motivation and brand supporting behavior

According to Trivellas and Dargenidou (2009), organizational culture is the atmosphere, work environment created by professional interactions of individuals in the same organization and based on principles, values, regulations in management and communication. MacIntosh (2010)

suggested that corporate culture is a motivation characterized by the way employees dealing with clients and can influence the attitude and behavior of employees as well as the organization's performance.

Hoogervorst et al. (2004) were also of the opinion that organizational culture affects employees' attitude and outlines their behavior. Corporate culture influences not only employee's attitude and work motivation but also their service quality towards their job. Corporate culture works as a social control system, affecting the attitude and behavior of employees through values and beliefs controlled in a company (Halliburton và Bach, 2012).Halliburton and Bach (2012) claimed that corporate culture is an essential part of communication and encouragement which leads to influence on employees' behavior. Besides, Adewale and Anthonia (2013) claimed that organizational culture could affect human resource development program to some certain extent, support and provide opportunities for the development of professional skills and the behavior of human resource in the organization.

Carr et al., (2003) argued that organizational culture has a direct relationship with employees' work motivation, support for training and development. Therefore, the following propositions are constructed: *H4: Organizational culture affects internal branding positively; H5: Organizational culture affects employees' work motivation positively; H6: Organizational culture affects brand supporting behavior positively.*

2.2 Research model

Based on the literature review, this research used group discussion (qualitative research) with six employees working in electronics suppliers to recognize factors influencing employees' brand supporting behavior thus the following research model is proposed:

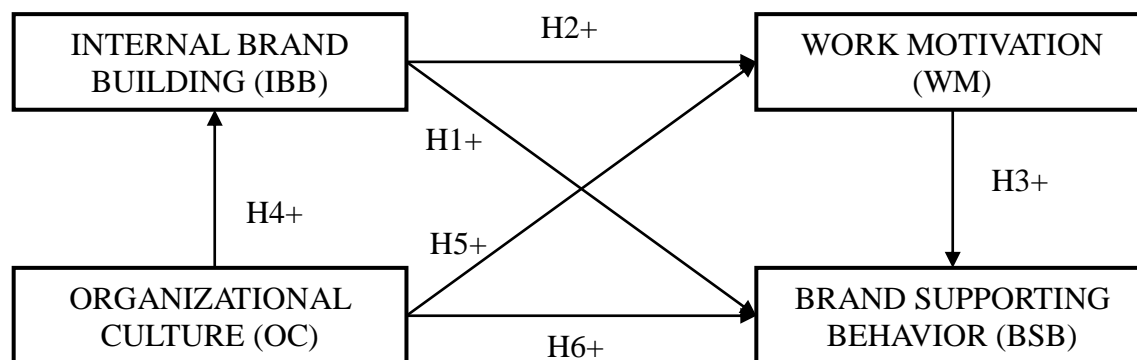


Figure 1: Proposed research model

Table 1: Explaining the variables in the research model

Definition	Variables	Scale	Reference
Work motivation (WM)	WM1: I'm satisfied with salary rate, bonus, welfare	Liker 1-5	Güngör (2011), Punjaisri et al. (2009), Nguyen Thanh Trung (2015)
	WM2: I want to have an opportunity to develop my career.	Liker 1-5	
	WM3: My seniors always support and help me.	Liker 1-5	
	WM4: The relationship between colleagues is close.	Liker 1-5	
	WM5: Work environment is excellent.	Liker 1-5	
	WM6: I'm proud to be attached to the brand.	Liker 1-5	
	WM7: I'm proud to receive the positive response from clients.	Liker 1-5	
Internal brand building (IBB)	IBB1: My skills and manners are trained to be appropriate to the organization's values	Liker 1-5	Punjaisri et al., (2009), de Chernatony and Cottam (2006), Holland (1997), Hankinson (2002), Kotter and Heskett (1992)
	IBB2: I was quickly informed of new information and policies.	Liker 1-5	
	IBB3: How the organization works inspire me	Liker 1-5	
	IBB4: My viewpoints are respected in meetings	Liker 1-5	
	IBB5: I am always reminded of brand responsibility during work	Liker 1-5	
	IBB6: I'm awarded and encouraged to keep up with reform and innovation in behavior	Liker 1-5	
Organizational culture (OC)	OC1: Behaviors are controlled under clear policies and regulations	Liker 1-5	MacIntosh (2010), Hoogervorst et al. (2004), Halliburton and Bach (2012), Adewale and Anthonia (2013), Carr, et al., (2003)
	OC2: There are exemplary leadership, coordination, and smooth operation	Liker 1-5	
	OC3: Management style is characterized by members' security, relevance, and stability in relationships.	Liker 1-5	
	OC4: Systematization is crucial for the organization to operate smoothly	Liker 1-5	
	OC5: The organization emphasizes performance and stability	Liker 1-5	
Brand	BSB1: My working abilities meet the basic	Liker 1-5	Henkel et

supporting behavior (BSB)	requirements of the organization		al.,(2007),
	BSB2: I can fulfill the responsibilities specified in the job description	Liker 1-5	Bloemer and Odekerken-Schröder (2006), Morhart et al., (2009)
	BSB3: I feel that I always behave appropriately towards clients	Liker 1-5	
	BSB4: I always respond satisfactorily to clients' needs in situations.	Liker 1-5	

Source: Author's proposition, 2017

2.3 Analytical methods

The research model was tested through the following steps: scale credibility test by Cronbach's Alpha, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) and Structural Equation Analysis (SEM). In this study, the scales for evaluating the observed variables are in the form of a 5-level Likert scale, with level 1 = strongly disagree and increased to level 5 = strongly agree.

2.4 Data collection methods

This research used quota sampling to collect data. Structural Equation Analysis requires a bigger sample size because it is based on the sample distribution theory (Raykov & Widaman, 1995). According to Hoelter (1983), the sample size in SEM needs to be at least 200. The research collected 245 observations by direct discussions. The subject is the employee working in electronics suppliers (Xanh, Cho Lon, VinPro) in provinces and cities in Mekong Delta. Accordingly, the sample size meets the requirement and guarantee the credibility to test the research model.

3. RESEARCH RESULT AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Scale reliability test

Cronbach's Alpha Analysis

This research used Cronbach's Alpha to test the reliability of the scale. Cronbach's coefficient is used to eliminate specific variables having a Corrected Item-Total Correlation lower than 0.3 (Nunnally, 1978; Peterson, 1994; Slater, 1995). The scale can be chosen when Cronbach's Alpha is higher than 0.6 (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994).

The results displayed in Table 2 shows that all 4 factors with 22 variables have relatively high Cronbach's Alpha (more than 0.7) and all have the Corrected Item-Total Correlation higher than

0.3. This shows that the variables were reliable and could be used for the Exploratory Factor Analysis.

Table 2: Result of scale reliability test

No	Scale	Number of variables	Cronbach's Alpha	Corrected Item-Total Correlation
1	Work motivation	7	0.877	0.564
2	Internal brand building	6	0.847	0.555
3	Organizational culture	5	0.807	0.480
4	Brand supporting behavior	4	0.900	0.743

Source: Surveyed figures, 2017

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)

The result of EFA was achieved with these guaranteed tests: (1) Reliability of variables (factor loading > 0.5); (2) Research model's suitability test ($0.5 < KMO = 0.926 < 1$); (3) Bartlett's test for correlation of variables ($Sig. = 0.000 < 0.05$); (4) Cumulative variance test = 58.76% > 50%. WM3 (factor loading < 0.5) should be eliminated from the model because it won't ensure the practical significance (Hair et al., 1998). The result shows 4 factors with Eigenvalue coefficient = 1.174, and there is no variables disturbance between factors, so their names remain unchanged.

Table 3: New component scales formed from Exploratory Factor Analysis

STT	Variables	Scale name
1	6 variables: WM1, WM2, WM4, WM5, WM6, WM7	Work motivation
2	6 variables: IBB1, IBB2, IBB3, IBB4, IBB6, IBB7	Internal brand building
3	4 variables: OC1, OC2, OC4, OC5	Organizational culture
4	4 variables: BSB1, BSB2, BSB3, BSB4	Brand supporting behavior

Source: Surveyed figures, 2017

Confirmatory Factor Analysis(CFA)

According to the results of CFA, the following conditions are guaranteed: Chi-square/df = 1.846 ≤ 2; TLI = 0.935 ≥ 0.9; CFI = 0.944 ≥ 0.9 and RMSEA = 0.059 ≤ 0.08 – all the conditions meet the requirements. Therefore, if the research model is tested under these conditions, it is considered to be in line with market data. Standardized coefficients of the scale are all greater than 0.5, and unstandardized coefficients are of statistical significance thus the concepts acquire

convergent validity. Besides, correlation coefficients of factors are less than 1 with the standard deviation less than 0.05 hence research concepts acquire discriminant validity.

The calculation result of Composite Reliability, Average Variance Extracted is shown in Table 4 that Composite Reliability is acceptable, Average Variance Extracted is relatively low (< 0.5) but Average Variance Extracted can still be accepted from 0.4 under the condition that Composite Reliability is higher than 0.6 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Consequently, the result shows that all the concepts in the model are of acceptable value and reliability thus this scale is appropriate for Structural Equation Analysis.

Table 4: Result of scale reliability

Variables	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted	Cronbach's Alpha
Work motivation	0.86	0.50	0.856
Internal brand building	0.85	0.48	0.847
Organizational culture	0.81	0.46	0.807
Brand supporting behavior	0.90	0.70	0.900

Source: Surveyed figures, 2017

3.2 The relationship between work motivation, internal brand building, organizational culture and brand supporting behavior

After the Confirmatory Factor Analysis, Structural Equation Analysis (SEM) was used to test the hypotheses of the model. The result of the primary parameter estimates showed that the relationship between work motivation and brand supporting behavior; internal brand building and brand supporting behavior; internal brand building and work motivation; organizational culture and brand supporting behavior; organizational culture and work motivation are all statistically significant ($p < 5\%$). Accordingly, the relationship between the factors is in line with the expectation theoretically.

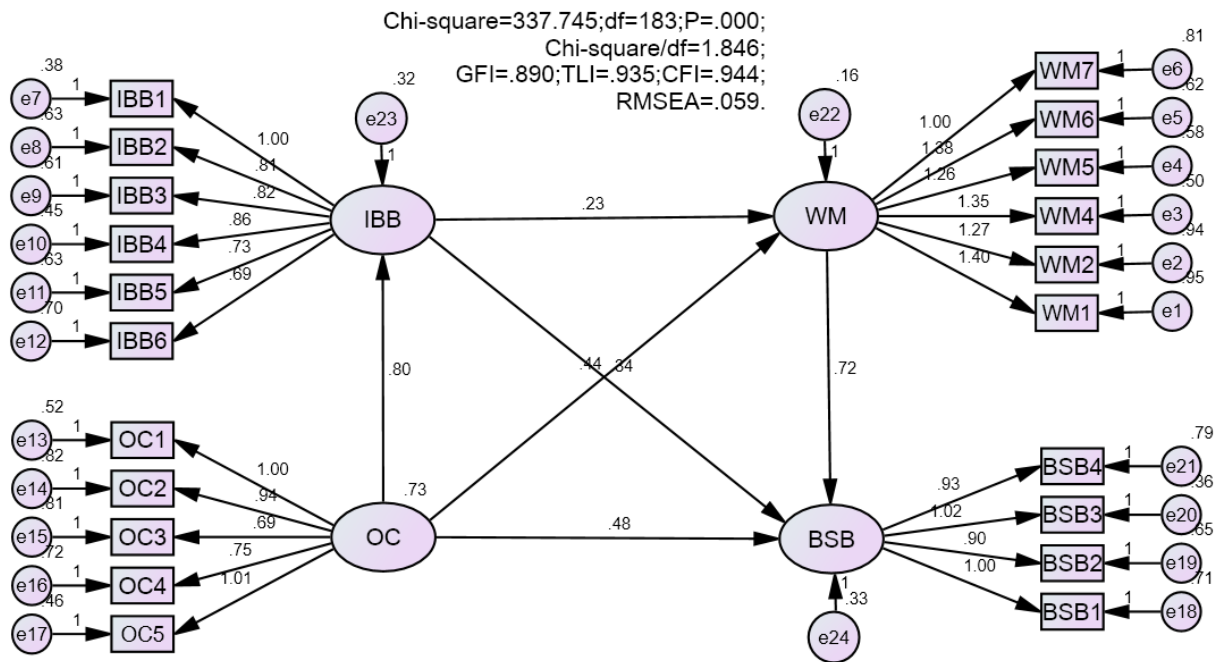


Figure 2: SEM result of research model (standardized)

Source: Surveyed data, 2017

Table 5: The result of estimating relationships in SEM

Relationships	Unstandardized			Standardized	
	Estimated value	S.E.	C.R.	Estimated value	P-value
IBB <--- OC	0.798	0.081	9.836	0.768	***
WM <--- OC	0.438	0.092	4.766	0.556	***
WM <--- IBB	0.226	0.079	2.863	0.298	***
BSB <--- WM	0.719	0.173	4.165	0.389	***
BSB <--- IBB	0.344	0.116	2.964	0.246	***
BSB <--- OC	0.482	0.147	3.276	0.331	***

Source: Surveyed figures, 2017

According to the analysis result in table 5, the Organizational culture influences Internal brand building and Work motivation, thereby affecting the Brand supporting behavior of the employee in electronics suppliers. Also, the Internal brand building also positively influences Work motivation thus promoting employee's brand supporting behavior. Therefore, Organizational

culture factor and Internal brand building both play crucial roles and are a foundation to improve the brand supporting behavior of employees.

Of all the factors positively influencing the employees' brand supporting behavior, Work motivation influences the brand supporting behavior of employees the most with the high influencing coefficient (0.389) and statistic significance (1%). If electronics suppliers have the reasonable salary, bonus, and welfare policies; create the stability in work and clear promotion opportunities; build the close relationship between superiors and subordinates and co-workers relationship; construct a great working environment, the employees' brand building behavior can be highly encouraged.

Similarly, Organizational culture positively influences the brand supporting behavior of employees in electronics suppliers with the influencing coefficient at 0.331 and statistical significance at 1%. This figure shows that, if electronics suppliers can construct clear and specific work regulations, which can ensure equality and work performance, the employees' brand supporting behavior will be encouraged. Finally, Internal brand building factor positively affects the Brand supporting behavior of employees. If the electronic suppliers organize training and communication activities well with respecting personal views and building the sense of responsibility towards the organization, and orientate development direction for employees, the work motivation of employees will be stimulated, and thereby encourages them to perform the brand supporting behavior well.

4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Generally, the research has proved the relationship between 4 factors: Organizational culture, Internal brand building, Work motivation and Brand supporting behavior. Specifically, Organizational culture and Internal brand building are of crucial roles, influencing work motivation, thus promoting brand supporting behavior more positively. Of all factors directly affecting brand supporting behavior, Work motivation influences the brand supporting behavior the most. Therefore, this research proposes some managerial implications to encourage employees' brand supporting behavior in electronics suppliers:

Firstly, build the organizational culture well. Organize a work management system openly, apply appropriate management style and transformational leadership as well as create stability in relationships. Build and develop a code of conduct for violations; between organization and employees, superiors and subordinates, employees and clients, employees and out-side-the-organization activities vice versa.

Secondly, pay more attention to the internal brand building. Managers should consider training and fostering practical and professional knowledge through short-term or periodic training

programs. Establish effective official communication channels to create consistency in the organization's principles and perspectives. Regularly make suggestions and receive feedback from employees in innovation and creativity work of the company to encourage the brand supporting behavior as well as increase work performance.

Thirdly, encourage work motivation. Managers should guarantee that the salary rate is appropriate to employees' abilities, the bonus is suitable to the achievement of each employee, and the welfare policies need to be fitting with the employees' contribution to the organization. Also, they should also diversify employees' income streams to motivate their enthusiasm for work as well as their attachment to the organization. Furthermore, they need to orientate career development for their employees equally through education and promotion opportunities. At the same time, they have to create a happy work environment as friendly co-worker relationships will encourage their work motivation and brand supporting behavior.

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